# 'Who wants it more - the impact of attitude strength and motivated reasoning on issue-voting in EU referendums.'

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# Daniel Finke, University of Aarhus (finke@ps.au.dk)

# Derek Beach, University of Aarhus (derek@ps.au.dk)

# Abstract

In this paper, we argue that EU-skeptic voters are more likely to engage in *motivated reasoning* then EU-friendly voters because of stronger held underlying attitudes towards the EU. Based on evidence from studies of EU-skepticism and public opinion towards the EU, we should expect that anti-EU attitudes are affect-based, meaning that voters would hold them more strongly (Boomgarden et al. 2011). We assess the effects of stronger held attitudes on voting behavior, assessing: 1) whether motivated reasoning reinforces the relevance of issue voting and reduces the relevance of party endorsements for EU-skeptic respondents (**H1**), whether EU-skeptic voters are more certain about what they should vote and they make up their minds earlier because of motivated reasoning (**H2**), whether EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to follow frames that confirm their ideological position (**H3**), and whether EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (**H4**).

While most of the political psychology literature that has assessed motivated reasoning effects have utilized experimental data, we explore whether we find evidence of these effects in a real-world environment using survey data collected by the authors in the 2015 JHA referendum in Denmark. We find evidence that suggests that EU-skeptical voters were more susceptible to arguments that matched their underlying issue attitudes, were more certain of their vote, and overall engaged in more issue-voting. The implication of our findings is that more information provided by a referendum campaign will not necessarily convince skeptics. Indeed, it might paradoxically make them more certain that they will vote no.

# 1. Introduction

In this paper, we argue that EU-skeptic voters are more likely to engage in *motivated reasoning* then EU-friendly voters because of stronger held underlying attitudes towards the EU, resulting in more issue-voting amongst EU-skeptic voters. The theory of motivated reasoning suggests that voters with strongly-held attitudes will selectively recruit and evaluate information in a manner that gives greater credence to information that matches their pre-existing beliefs. Given that EU-skeptic voters typically have stronger issue attitudes because these are 'affect-based' that focus on sovereignty and identity-related questions (Boomgarden et al, 2011), we should expect that in EU referendums that EU-skeptic voters will be less receptive to cues, partisan endorsements and persuasion, other things equal.

Using observational data from the 2015 Danish referendum on the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) opt-opt conducted by the authors, we analyze the effects of stronger held attitudes on voting behavior, assessing: 1) whether motivated reasoning reinforces the relevance of issue voting and reduces the relevance of party endorsements for EU-skeptic respondents (**H1**), whether EU-skeptic voters are more certain about what they should vote and they make up their minds earlier because of motivated reasoning (**H2**), whether EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to follow frames that confirm their ideological position (**H3**), and whether EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (**H4**).

While most of the literature that has assessed motivated reasoning effects have utilized experimental data, we explore whether we find evidence of these effects in a real-world environment. We find evidence for all four hypotheses, suggesting that motivated reasoning mattered for voter behavior in a real-world setting. For example, on election day the percentage of undecided and, therefore, not mobilized pro-EU voters was three times higher compared to the group of undecided EU-skeptic voters. Although the same information was available to every voter, there were larger shifts in vote intention and learning for voters with EU-skeptic attitudes throughout the campaign. This provides evidence for asymmetric campaign effects due to motivated reasoning, where EU-skeptic voters with strong, affect-based attitudes needed less information to decide what to vote, were more certain about their choice once it was made, and engaged in more issue-voting than EU-friendly voters.

The implication of our findings is that more information provided by a referendum campaign will not necessarily convince skeptics. Indeed, it might paradoxically make them more certain that they will vote no because more information strengthens their issue-voting. On the other hand, the most disinterested EU-friendly voters can be expected to follow cues or endorsements by trusted elites, whereas the more interested will require considerably more information to persuade them to make a choice that is consistent with their underlying pro-EU attitudes than the corresponding EU-skeptic voter.

# 2. Theory and methods

Existing research on voter behavior in EU referendums has provided evidence that issue-voting dominates when voters feel the issue is important enough for them to mobilize the cognitive resources required to process all of the information provided by a referendum campaign (Hobolt, 2006, 2009). Voters engage in issue-voting when their vote choice on the referendum proposition matches their underlying attitudes towards the EU (Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010; Svensson, 2002). In contrast, in lower-salience referendums, second-order factors will be more dominant, where voters express their level of satisfaction with the performance of the incument government instead of basing their choice on their EU attitudes (Franklin 2002; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2004). However, based on what we know from research on motivated reasoning in political and economic decision-making, we can expect that voters with strongly-held attitudes will behave differently than voters with less-strongly held attitudes. The theoretical argument in this article is that there are systematic differences in the reasoning processes amongst EU-friendly and EU-skeptical voters in EU referendum campaigns that lead us to expect that issue-voting dynamics will be more dominant amongst EU-skeptic voters, in contrast to EU-friendly voters where cues, partisan endorsements and persuasion effects will matter more.

## A theoretical model of motivated reasoning and attitude strength in EU referendums

Political campaigns provide information that can inform, prime issues, and persuade voters (Farrell and Schmitt-Beck 2003; Lenz 2009; Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Miller and Krosnick 2000; Valentino, Hutchings and White 2002; Lenz 2009, 2013). In democratic terms, a campaign should ideally enable voters to make a decision that corresponds with their underlying attitudes on the issue. Information provided by a referendum campaign is a critical condition for issue-voting (Gelman and King 1993; Petrocik 1996; Lenz 2013; Hobolt, 2009; Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010; Svensson, 2002; Beach, Hansen and Larsen, 2017). However, EU referendums often deal with quite complex topics that do not typically map onto normal national political cleavages, meaning that this is a context in which we might expect that campaigns could matter more than they do in national election contexts (LeDuc, 2002; de Vreese and Semetko 2004; Hobolt, 2006; de Vreese 2007; Hobolt and Brouard 2011). This means that referendum campaigns can potentially alter how voters perceive issues, or even change their underlying attitudes.

In this article we investigate the reasoning processes involved in the translation of information provided by a campaign with voter choice, assessing whether voters with stronger-held attitudes reason differently than less committed voters. Theories of motivated reasoning assess how prior beliefs impact reasoning processes (Druckman, 2012; Redlawsk, 2002; Houston and Fazio, 1989). Within this literature, there is a large body of evidence that suggests that citizens with stronger-held attitudes are more prone to engage in motivated reasoning, meaning that they are more likely to manipulate incoming information to ensure that it supports their pre-existing attitudes (Epley and Gilovich, 2016; Visser et al, 2003; Visser et al, 2006; Leeper and Slothuus, 2014; Kruglanski et al, 2005).

In relation to EU referendums, voters with relatively EU-friendly attitudes tend to be pragmatic in their support of the EU, often with relatively weakly held attitudes (Boomgarden et al 2011). In contrast, when EU-skeptic voters base their skepticism on concerns about sovereignty or free movement and immigration, they tend to have much stronger held, 'affect-based' attitudes (Boomgarden et al 2011). We explore how a potential asymmetry in the strength of EU attitudes of EU-friendly and skeptic voters impacts on how voters utilize campaign information to engage in an evaluation of the proposition in relation to their underlying EU attitudes.

The following develops our theoretical model of motivated reasoning and attitude strength that leads us to develop four testable hypotheses about expected empirical observables that reflect differences in the reasoning processes of EU-skeptic and EU-friendly voters. Drawing on Epley and Gilovich's model of motivated reasoning (2016), figure 1 (next page) illustrates how motivated reasoning can lead to biased processing of information. The analytical baseline of most theories of motivated reasoning is a simple Bayesian model of updating, where new information is used to update which position one should take on a given issue.

As can be seen in figure 1, motivated reasoning has three distinct stages that can lead to the final outcome of a represention of a choice situation that is systematically biased towards one's prior beliefs instead of being impacted by new information (Fischbach and Ferguson, 2007; Gaines et al, 2007; Taber and Lodge, 2012).

Information from campaign

assessment of epistemic authority of source

assessment of information

utility maximizing choice based on best available information

Selective recruitment

(information selected that matches priors, information that does not match priors is ignored)

*Motivated reasoning*

Discrediting sources

(sources providing information not matching priors are discredited (not trusted))

Evaluation of evidence

(information matching priors is given greater weight in evaluation)

Choice driven by prior beliefs instead of calculated assessment of all available information

Figure 1 - A model of motivated reasoning.

First, motivated reasoning leads actors to engage in a selective recruitment of information, admitting only information that is consistent with one's priors and/or ignoring disconfirming information (Druckman, Fein and Leeper, 2012; Epley and Gilovich, 2016; Visser, Bizer and Krosnick, 2006; Taber, Cann and Kucsova, 2009). This means that voters with stronger-held attitudes might require less information overall to make a decision that maps onto their underlying issue attitude (Holbrook et al, 2005).

Second, people have greater confidence in the epistemic authority of sources of information when they have similar opinions, whereas they discredit sources that provide information that does not match the person's prior beliefs (Kruglanski et al, 2005). Therefore, even when a voter receives information that does not match their priors, they can maintain 'cognitive closure' by discrediting the sources as untrustworthy (Ibid).

Third, in the evaluation of the information collected, there is strong evidence that suggests that voters give greater weight to information that is attitude consistent, leading to choices that are systematically biased towards prior beliefs instead of being receptive to new information that could lead to different conclusions (Druckman and Blosen, 2011; Druckman, Peterson and Slothus, 2013; Gaines et al, 2007; Taber and Lodge, 2006, 2012; Charness and Dave, 2017; Redlawsk, 2002; Rudolph, 2006).

Taken together, the three processes result in choices that are systematically biased towards prior beliefs, irrespective of the potential merits of the proposition under consideration. Applied to EU referendums, this should lead us to expect the following. First, we should expect that EU-skeptic voters are less responsive to *cues* and *endorsement* effects (Downs 1957; Bowler and Donovan 1998; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Hobolt 2006). Elite cues and endorsements can provide voters with heuristic short-cuts that can enable them to make an informed choice 'as if' they had all of the relevant knowledge that would enable them to choose the option that best matches their underlying attitudes (Bowler and Donovan, 1998). However, a reliance on cues and endorsements can also lead voters to make a decision that reflects the position of the party they normally vote for instead of their own issue attitudes (Hobolt, 2006; Kriesi, 2005). In contrast, a voter engaging in motivated reasoning would discount the elite endorsement - even if it comes from a party they normally vote for - if it does match their underlying issue attitude.

Second, we should expect that EU-skeptic voters will be less susceptible to second-order effects, where voters utilize their trust of the sitting government as a heuristic for whether they should accept the proposition they have sent to be ratified in the referendum (Franklin, Marsh, and Wlezien 1994: 102). One reason for this is that voters engaging in motivated reasoning require less information, other things equal, to make a choice, making the second-order heuristic less necessary.

Finally, we should expect that EU-skeptic voters will be less susceptible to persuasion effects, where incoming information about a proposition can lead a voter to change her position on the issue. This means they are less responsive to arguments during the campaign, and are more certain about their vote choice.

Taken together, the theory of motivated reasoning suggests that we should expect issue-voting should be more prevalent amongst EU-skeptic voters. This results in our first hypothesis:

Motivated reasoning reinforces the relevance of issue voting and reduces the relevance of party endorsements for EU-skeptic respondents (**H1**)

We also investigate three other observable implications of motivated reasoning occuring amongst voters with stronger-held attitudes:

EU-skeptic voters will be more certain about what they should vote and they make up their minds earlier because of motivated reasoning (**H2**)

EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to accept frames (arguments) that confirm their pre-existing attitudes (**H3**),

EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (**H4**)

### Methods - utilizing observational data to study motivated reasoning

Most of the existing literature utilizes data from experimental settings because of the difficulties in observing the effects of motivated reasoning in real-world settings. However, while experimental setting enable us to isolate motivated reasoning effects analytically, we still know little about whether they actually are important in how voters decide in the noisy environment of real referendum campaigns.

To assess these effects empirically, we leverage a rolling cross-sectional (RCS) survey of 2,567 voters in the referendum on the Danish Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) opt-out, together with a post-election survey of 1,819 voters. A RCS interviews cross-sections of voters across a longer period of time (Johnston and Brady 2002); in our survey this was done once a week in the eight weeks preceding the referendums. It is an appropriate design for examining reasoning processes, as it enables us to investigate whether voters act differently as the level of information provided by the campaign increases. Whereas panel surveys are good at ascertaining the effect of individual-level variables, like knowledge or attitudes, the RCS excels at identifying the effect of different temporal contexts: such as the effect of information provided by a campaign (Johnston and Brady 2002). Actually, one might reasonably argue that a RCS is a quasi-experiment, in which people are randomly assigned to different stages of the campaign. Some, who were invited to be interviewed early, have not been exposed to the campaign at all, others, interviewed just before the election, have been exposed to the whole campaign (Brady and Johnston 2006).

Even so, there are (at least) two challenges with our design that stem from the fact that it is more like a quasi-experiment than an actual experiment. The first is that it might be different kinds of voters who are likely to accept the invitation to participate in the survey at different stages of the campaign. We try to amend this by controlling for some predetermined factors when estimating effects in our analysis. The second challenge is that we are not able to control for other temporally-correlated contextual factors that might influence voters, such as major events that coincide with the campaign. The most important was the ongoing migration crisis, which led Sweden to close its borders on the 12th of November - something that was frontline news in Denmark and can have made concerns about common immigration policies greater amongst some voters. Additionally, there was a horrific terrorist attack in Paris on the 13th of November - an event that could have made concerns about the EU and the fight against terror more salient. However, there is no reason to expect that these events would have significantly different impacts on the two groups of voters.

Having detailed the advantages and challenges of using a RCS, we now turn to the details of the survey used in the present study. The survey invited respondents every week from the 12th of October until the week of the referendum. In each of the eight waves, between 303 and 347 respondents answered within three days of being invited. Data were collected via a web survey (CAWI) by the polling company Epinion, using an internet panel to recruit respondents. In the appendix, we describe the sample in more detail, presenting descriptive statistics and comparing the sample on demographic variables to the Danish voting age population. We find that the sample is more highly educated and older than the population as a whole. However, this lack of a representativeness is not a substantial threat to inference because we rely on the fact that it was random when panelists were invited to participate in our survey. As such, even though the education of the average participant in the internet panel is higher than that of the Danish electorate, if anything, one would expect less motivated reasoning amongst higher educated persons. Additionally, we are comparing the two groups within the sample instead of comparing with the full population. However, we suggest some caution with generalizing from our study to the full population because of this.

We now turn to a discussion of how we measure our key variables and test hypotheses. We distinguish voters into two groups based on their EU attitudes: EU-friendly and EU-skeptic voters. To do this, we operationalize EU attitude by extracting a factor from a bundle of survey questions addressing integration preferences, perceived benefits of EU membership and self-reported EU attitude.

Unfortunately, we do not have a direct measure of attitude strength, but only rather indirect proxies.[[1]](#footnote-1) We use as proxies the degree to which voters utilized extreme responses to the attitude questions. Other things equal, we expect that voters with strong EU attitudes will utilize more extreme response categories than those with less strongly held views. We see these differences in relation to two questions that tap into the 'affect' and 'identity' based concerns of euro-skeptic voters. These are depicted in figure 2. The best question is the symmetric question where we ask respondents whether they 'feel like an EU citizen'. Here we see that euro-skeptic voters are skewed towards the 'completely disagree' (helt uenig) category, whereas euro-friendly voters are clustered around 'mostly in agreement' (delvis enig), with only a few in complete agreement. The same pattern is evident for how important the delegation of sovereignty to the EU is for voters, although this question is skewed towards anti-EU attitudes and therefore is not as good a proxy. For euro-skeptics, the responses are heavily skewed towards 'very important' (meget vigtigt), whereas the peak response category for euro-friendly voters is 'important'.

Taken together, and combined with the findings of Boomgarden et al. (2010), we feel justified in assuming that euro-skeptic voters as a group have stronger-held attitudes than euro-friendly voters.

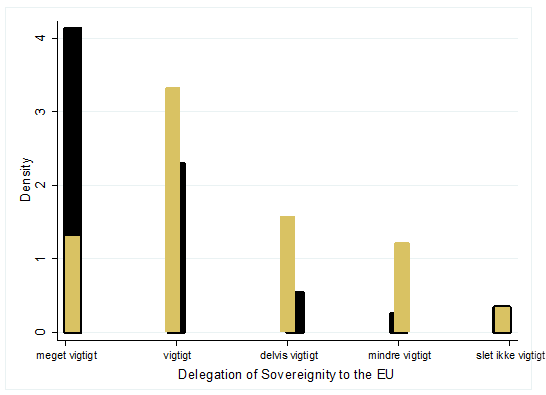
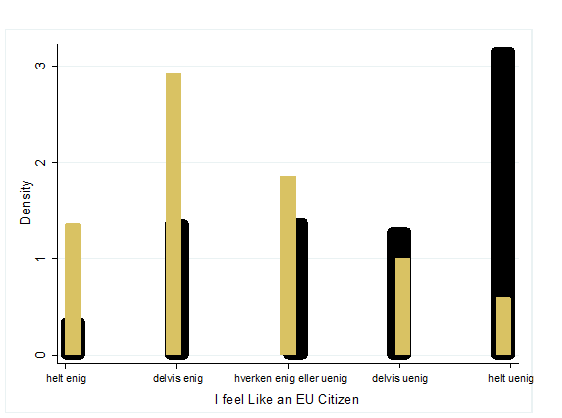


Figure 2 - Comparing the use of response categories for euro-friendly and skeptic voters.

Key : yellow (euro-friendly respondents), black (euro-skeptic respondents).

Analytically, we focus on three different conceptual levels in assessing attitude strength and motivated reasoning. When assessing H1, our dependent variable is *Vote Intention* observed over eight waves prior to Election Day as well as in a post-election survey. Vote intention has three categories, namely ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘undecided/abstained’.

We operationalized *party endorsement* using the self-reported voting behavior in the last Folketing and the last EP election. Specifically, we assume that a respondent who voted for a 'yes-party' in both elections is strongly endorsing yes-parties at the time of the referendum.

Whereas H1 aims at explaining the intention to vote either yes or no, our other hypotheses address different empirical manifestations of motivated reasoning, assessing the differences between yet 'undecided' voters on the one hand and those who decided to vote either yes or no on the other. Specifically, we expect that given their inclination to motivated reasoning EU-skeptic voters are more certain what they should vote and make up their minds earlier (**H2**).

At another layer, we look at changes in *information and beliefs* over the course of the campaign. First, we argue that EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to accept arguments (frames) that match with their own prior beliefs. Specifically, we assess whether EU-skeptic voters found it easier to believe two no-arguments put forward by the Danish People's Party (**H3**). The first argument was that it would be easy to get a parallel agreement on Europol, meaning that Denmark did not have to get rid of the opt-out to enjoy police cooperation with the EU. Another argument that we assess is whether voters believed the no-argument that future parliamentary majorities might opt to join the EU's Common Migration and Asylum policy despite claiming at the time of the referendum that Denmark would not join this cooperation. Specifically, we study the changes of those beliefs in each of the two sub-groups of voters over time. Only this longitudinal perspective enables us to test whether EU-skeptic voters were indeed more receptive to *No-frames* because of *confirmation bias*.

Moreover, we establish that *subjective 'felt' lack of information* explains why voters are still 'undecided'. We expected that EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (**H4**). Tracking the difference in subjective information across the sub-groups of EU-friendly and EU-skeptic voters across time enables us study the mechanism implied in **H2**.

**3. Analysis**

### H1 - Vote Intention – Party Endorsement or Issue Voting

Our first hypothesis investigates the overall thesis that issue voting should matter more than party endorsements for EU-skeptic voters because motivated reasoning affects vote choice via perceived consequences of the competing policy proposals put to vote. The argument explains why voters intend to vote either yes or no, hence we apply and ordered logistic regression. The ‘undecided’ category is conceived as an indifference interval between the two alternatives, ‘yes’ and ‘no’. The two key explanatory variables, EU attitude and party endorsement, are stable predispositions and we expect the effects to be stable over the course of the campaign.

The analysis controls for gender, education, age and left-right self-assessment. Moreover, we include fixed effects for each of the eight waves as well as for the post-election survey. The results are displayed in Table 1, models 1 and 2. With regard to the control variables, we find that female, older and left-leaning voters were less likely to vote ‘No’. However, our two key independent variables reveal the strongest effects, with the expected sign: EU-skeptic voters were almost seven times as likely to vote No compared to EU-friendly voters. Voters endorsing Yes-parties were only half as likely to vote No compared to those endorsing No-parties.

However, the key test for our hypothesis 1 is the interaction effect between party endorsement and EU attitude. The corresponding marginal effects are plotted in Figure 3 below. Looking first at the group where party endorsement disconforms with EU attitudes first: we find that for EU-skeptic voters, endorsing Yes-parties increases the likelihood to vote Yes from 5% to 30% (+25). By contrast, endorsing No-parties increases EU-friendly voters’ likelihood to vote no from 10% to 28% (+18). While this difference is not significant, the picture becomes clearer when studying the confirmation effect of party endorsement: For EU-skeptic voters the endorsement of No-parties increases the likelihood to vote No from 31% to 77% (+46). By contrast, for EU-friendly voters the endorsement of Yes-parties reduces the likelihood to vote No from 68% to 35% (-33). On the confirmation side, the difference is significant and in support of our first hypothesis.

**Table 1 Results of Ordered Logisitic Regression on Y=Vote Intention (0=yes; 1=undecided;2=no).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| N=3165 | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 | M5 |
| Gender | 0.756\*\*\* | 0.752\*\*\* | 0.618\*\*\* | 0.614\*\*\* | 0.614\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0569) | (0.0568) | (0.0495) | (0.0494) | (0.0494) |
| Highest Education | 0.970 | 0.964\* | 0.948\*\*\* | 0.950\*\*\* | 0.950\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0184) | (0.0184) | (0.0187) | (0.0188) | (0.0188) |
| Birth Year | 1.017\*\*\* | 1.017\*\*\* | 1.017\*\*\* | 1.017\*\*\* | 1.018\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00282) | (0.00283) | (0.00294) | (0.00295) | (0.00294) |
| Left-Rigth Self Assessment | 0.920\*\*\* | 0.921\*\*\* | 0.913\*\*\* | 0.915\*\*\* | 0.913\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0134) | (0.0135) | (0.0140) | (0.0140) | (0.0140) |
| EU Attitude | 0.145\*\*\* | 0.108\*\*\* | 0.202\*\*\* | 0.159\*\*\* | 0.105\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0118) | (0.0153) | (0.0169) | (0.0320) | (0.0238) |
| Yes Party Endorsement | 0.431\*\*\* | 0.483\*\*\* | 0.514\*\*\* | 0.519\*\*\* | 0.518\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0197) | (0.0678) | (0.0522) | (0.0528) | (0.0529) |
| Yes Party Endorsement # EU Attitude | | 1.972\*\*\* |  |  |  |
|  |  | (0.233) |  |  |  |
| Europol ‘Easy’ |  |  | 3.528\*\*\* | 3.443\*\*\* | 2.867\*\*\* |
|  |  |  | (0.491) | (0.483) | (0.583) |
| Europol ‘Difficult’ |  |  | 0.530\*\*\* | 0.523\*\*\* | 0.314\*\*\* |
|  |  |  | (0.0653) | (0.0649) | (0.0595) |
| Migration ‘Easy Include’ |  |  | 1.257\*\* | 0.913 | 1.241\* |
|  |  |  | (0.145) | (0.159) | (0.144) |
| Migration ‘Difficult Include’ |  |  | 1.163 | 1.319 | 1.158 |
|  |  |  | (0.144) | (0.248) | (0.144) |
| Migration ‘Easy Include’#EU Attitude | |  |  | 1.709\*\* |  |
|  |  |  |  | (0.381) |  |
| Migration ‘Difficult Include’#EU Attitude | |  |  | 0.785 |  |
|  |  |  |  | (0.194) |  |
| Europol ‘Easy’#EU Attitude |  |  |  |  | 1.336 |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.374) |
| Europol ‘Difficult’#EU Attitude | |  |  |  | 2.437\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.593) |
|  |  | (0.342) |  |  |  |
| 2.Wave | 0.994 | 1.013 | 0.947 | 0.956 | 0.937 |
|  | (0.156) | (0.159) | (0.152) | (0.153) | (0.151) |
| 3.Wave | 0.872 | 0.882 | 0.874 | 0.882 | 0.875 |
|  | (0.137) | (0.139) | (0.140) | (0.141) | (0.141) |
| 4.Wave | 0.921 | 0.932 | 0.888 | 0.913 | 0.898 |
|  | (0.145) | (0.148) | (0.144) | (0.148) | (0.145) |
| 5.Wave | 0.855 | 0.861 | 0.829 | 0.831 | 0.824 |
|  | (0.133) | (0.135) | (0.133) | (0.133) | (0.132) |
| 6.Wave | 0.999 | 1.031 | 0.897 | 0.894 | 0.876 |
|  | (0.157) | (0.162) | (0.146) | (0.145) | (0.142) |
| 7.Wave | 1.019 | 1.032 | 0.757\* | 0.769 | 0.739\* |
|  | (0.159) | (0.161) | (0.123) | (0.126) | (0.121) |
| 8.Wave | 1.249 | 1.261 | 1.015 | 1.013 | 0.993 |
|  | (0.203) | (0.205) | (0.172) | (0.172) | (0.169) |
| 9.Wave | 0.811 | 0.801 | 0.609\*\*\* | 0.606\*\*\* | 0.589\*\*\* |
|  | (0.116) | (0.115) | (0.0928) | (0.0929) | (0.0904) |
| Pseudo R | 0.19 | 0.20 | 0.25 | 0.26 | 0.26 |
| LogLikelihood | -2768.9 | -2762.2 | -2583.6 | -2572.7 | -2572.9 |

seEform in parentheses\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1; cut-off values not shown

**Figure 3: Vote Intention by Party Endorsement and EU Attitude** (based on table 1, model 2)



### H2 - Vote Intention – Difference in Certainty and Decision Time

Our second hypothesis expects that EU-skeptic voters are on average more certain about their vote choice based on motivated reasoning. Furthermore, we expect them to make up their mind earlier. Figure 4 compares the development of vote intention across the two sub-groups over time. The evidence confirms both parts of our argument. At the start of the observation period only 30% of the EU-skeptic voters were still undecided what to vote, whereas 58% had already decided to vote No. By contrast, slightly more than 40% of the EU-friendly voters where still undecided and about the same percentage had decided to vote Yes. In the last wave before election day, almost 80% of EU-skeptic voters had decided to vote No and only 10% remained undecided. By contrast, only 57% of the EU-friendly voters had decided to vote Yes, while 19% remained undecided.

Does this significant difference hold when controlling for respondents socio-demographic characteristics as well as their political predispositions? What explains this difference? To answer that question we ran a multinomial logistic regression on Y= vote intention.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In addition, we add one new question that measures respondents’ subjective level of information by questioning them about whether they feel they have sufficient information (‘completely agree’, ‘agree’, ‘neither-nor’, ‘disagree’, ‘completely disagree’) to take a decision. The subjective level of information is by far the strongest predictor for the category ‘undecided’. Specifically, a respondent who completely disagrees to having sufficient information is more than 12-times as likely to be still undecided than a respondent who completely agrees to having sufficient information. We return to studying this variable and its changes over the course of the campaign below.

Finally, to gauge the effect of EU attitude on the likelihood for being undecided across time, we interacted EU Attitude with Wave number. Figure 5 depicts the estimated marginal probabilities for the category undecided by sub-groups of EU-skeptical and EU-friendly voters. Throughout the campaign the predicted probability for being undecided is 10% to 20% higher for EU-friendly than for EU-skeptic voters. This difference has been significant for all but the first wave. Only after the referendum did the difference between the two groups disappear, with only 10% of respondents saying that they had been undecided (i.e. abstained) at the referendum (compare also figure 3). Overall, the evidence supports our second hypothesis.

**Table 2 Results of Multinomial Logisitic Regression on Y=Vote Intention (Base category: ‘undecided’).**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (N=3165) | YES |  | NO |
| Gender | 2.455\*\*\* |  | 1.712\*\*\* |
|  | (0.261) |  | (0.184) |
| Highest Education | 1.065\*\* |  | 1.004 |
|  | (0.0290) |  | (0.0262) |
| Birth Year | 0.967\*\*\* |  | 0.990\*\* |
|  | (0.00379) |  | (0.00392) |
| Left-Rigth Self Assessment | 1.051\*\* |  | 0.925\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0216) |  | (0.0186) |
| Yes Party Endorsement | 2.626\*\*\* |  | 0.771\*\*\* |
|  | (0.179) |  | (0.0489) |
| Subjective Information | 0.391\*\*\* |  | 0.411\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0196) |  | (0.0203) |
| EU Attitude | 2.616\*\*\* |  | 0.212\*\*\* |
|  | (0.921) |  | (0.0653) |
| 2.Wave | 1.938 |  | 1.108 |
|  | (0.780) |  | (0.313) |
| 3.Wave | 1.166 |  | 0.765 |
|  | (0.469) |  | (0.206) |
| 4.Wave | 1.694 |  | 1.129 |
|  | (0.693) |  | (0.314) |
| 5.Wave | 2.282\*\* |  | 1.300 |
|  | (0.921) |  | (0.368) |
| 6.Wave | 1.184 |  | 1.661\* |
|  | (0.519) |  | (0.489) |
| 7.Wave | 1.430 |  | 2.096\*\* |
|  | (0.641) |  | (0.626) |
| 8.Wave | 2.813\*\* |  | 4.333\*\*\* |
|  | (1.418) |  | (1.586) |
| 9.Wave | 5.253\*\*\* |  | 4.099\*\*\* |
|  | (2.032) |  | (1.158) |
| 2.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 0.322\*\* |  | 0.611 |
|  | (0.153) |  | (0.274) |
| 3.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 0.641 |  | 1.113 |
|  | (0.305) |  | (0.485) |
| 4.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 0.496 |  | 0.612 |
|  | (0.237) |  | (0.278) |
| 5.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 0.492 |  | 0.799 |
|  | (0.232) |  | (0.349) |
| 6.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.055 |  | 0.448\* |
|  | (0.530) |  | (0.207) |
| 7.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.143 |  | 0.596 |
|  | (0.583) |  | (0.265) |
| 8.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 0.706 |  | 0.456 |
|  | (0.400) |  | (0.224) |
| 9.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.658 |  | 1.708 |
|  | (0.812) |  | (0.783) |
|  |  |  |  |
| Constant | 6.640e+26\*\*\* |  | 2.271e+08\*\* |
|  | (5.135e+27) |  | (1.775e+09) |
| Log-Likelihood | -2264.2 |  |  |
| Pseudo R | 0.35 |  |  |

**Figure 4:** Changes in the Percentage of Vote Intention Attitudes in the Group of EU-skeptical (LEFT) and EU-friendly (RIGHT) voters.



**Figure 5:** Predicted Marginal Probabilities for category ‘undecided’ by EU attitude and Wave (based on table 2).



### H3 - campaign effects and No-frames

The No-campaign attempted to shape voter beliefs with regard to two essential consequences of the referendum result. The first problem related to the fact that a large majority of Danish voters was in favor of Danish participation in Europol. But due to the changes in the form of EU cooperation introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon (from intergovernmental to supranational), the existing Danish opt-out made it impossible for Denmark to continue participating when the legal base for Europol became supranational. To deal with this, a modified opt-out protocol for Denmark had been included in the Treaty of Lisbon that would allow Denmark to opt into supranational cooperation in JHA policies. The referendum in December 2015 was convened in order to ratify the modified opt-out. Because Europol was popular, it was imperative for No-parties to convince voters that in case of a No it would be easy for the Danish government to negotiate an intergovernmental 'parallel' agreement with the EU that ensured Denmark’s continued participation in Europol.

Second, a majority of Danish voters rejected Danish participation in the EU’s common migration and asylum policy. Given the unfolding of the refugee crisis, the Danish voters’ resistance to cooperation in this policy area appeared even stronger than before. Consequently, it has been an important part of the No-campaign to remind voters that, in case of a Yes-vote, under the modified opt-out protocol, the Danish parliament (Folketinget) would be able to join cooperation in migration and asylum policies without having to utilize the onerous paragraph 20 procedure for the transfer of sovereignty (requiring either a 5/6th vote in parliament or ratification by referendum), but instead could decide to join based on a simple parliamentary majority. The No-campaign tried to make it appear as if a yes vote would empower an EU-friendly elite in parliament to push more integration in unpopular areas like asylum and migration policies.

Based on the theory of motivated reasoning and attitude strength, we make two arguments (H3). First, we argue that arguments supporting a No position should have a stronger effect on EU-skeptics’ than on EU-friendly respondents’ vote intention. Second, we argue that given their inclination towards motivated reasoning, information provided by the campaign has been more effective on EU-skeptic voters.

In order to test our arguments we resort to the following two questions. First, ‘In case of a No it will be easy for Denmark to join Europol?’ (completely agree, agree, neither-nor, disagree, completely disagree). Second, ‘in case of a yes it will be easy for a political majority to join the EU’s common asyl and migration policy’ (completely agree, agree, neither-nor, disagree, completely disagree). Given the high level of missingness (approx. 30%) on both variables, we recode them as indicator variables with three unordered categories (0=missing or neither-nor; 1=completely agree or agree; 2=disagree or completely disagree).

To test the first part of our argument, we include the two variables into the ordered logistic regression model discussed above (see Table 1, Model 3). The resulting increase in explanatory power forcefully reveals that beliefs mattered for vote intention. Respondent who believe that it is easy to get a Europol agreement are 3.5 times more likely to vote No then the base category (undecided/missing) and approx. 7 times as likely to vote No than respondents who belief that getting a parallel agreement is difficult. The belief in joining the common asylum and migration policy has a considerably smaller effect, increasing the likelihood for a No vote by only 1.4-times compared to both other categories.

However, our argument implies that these effects should differ according to the EU attitudes of respondents. Hence, we include an interaction effect between each of two indicator variables and EU attitude (Table 1, models 4 & 5). The estimated marginal probabilities are depicted in Figure 5 (Europol) and Figure 6 (Migration and Asylum). Let us start with those beliefs on Europol, focusing first on voters whose answers *do not match* with prior EU attitudes: The disbelief in an easy parallel agreement increases EU-skeptics likelihood to vote Yes from 5% to 29% (+24). By contrast, the belief in an easy Europol agreement increases EU-friendly voters’ likelihood to vote No from 12% to 39% (+27). However, this difference is not significant. Next, we turn to those whose answers on the Europol question match prior EU attitudes: The belief in an easy parallel agreement increases EU-skeptics likelihood to vote No from 33% to 78% (+45). By contrast, the disbelief in an easy Europol agreement increases EU-friendly voters’ likelihood to vote yes from 25% to 55% (+30). This difference is significant and in support of our hypothesis which expected that Euroskeptics would be strongly affected by No frames (‘confirmation bias’).

Figure 7 plots the predicted marginal probabilities for the belief about the political majority joining the common migration and asylum policy. Here, the estimated effect on vote intention is smaller and only significant for EU-skeptic respondents to begin with – which, again, supports our argument.

**Figure 6: Vote Intention by perceived EUROPOL Frame and EU Attitude (based on table 3)**



**Figure 7: Vote Intention by perceived Common Migration & Asylum (CMA) Policy Frame and EU Attitude (based on table 3)**



So far we have established that beliefs about the Europol agreement and the likelihood of a political majority joining the EU common migration and asylum policy had a strong effect on Euroskeptics’ vote intention. Next, we test how these beliefs changed over the course of the campaign and how these dynamics differed by EU attitude. For this purpose, we use the two indicator variables generate above as dependent variable in a multinomial logistic regression similar to the one introduced in table 2, depicted in table 3 below.

**Table 3 Results of Multinomial Logisitic Regression on Beliefs in parallel agreement and Opt in to Common Migration and Asylum (CMA) Policy**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Y=Beliefs about Parallel Agreement | | Y=Beliefs about CMA Opt In | |
| VARIABLES | Easy | Difficult | Likely | Unlikely |
| Gender | 1.127 | 0.654\*\*\* | 0.534\*\*\* | 0.978 |
|  | (0.142) | (0.0751) | (0.0562) | (0.109) |
| Highest Education | 1.074\*\* | 1.021 | 0.989 | 1.040 |
|  | (0.0343) | (0.0293) | (0.0263) | (0.0298) |
| Birth Year | 0.998 | 0.999 | 1.008\*\* | 0.998 |
|  | (0.00470) | (0.00424) | (0.00392) | (0.00412) |
| Left Right Self Assessment | 0.968 | 0.969 | 1.016 | 1.006 |
|  | (0.0234) | (0.0215) | (0.0205) | (0.0215) |
| Yes Party Endorsment | 0.738\*\*\* | 0.998 | 0.774\*\*\* | 0.852\*\* |
|  | (0.0575) | (0.0714) | (0.0514) | (0.0603) |
| EU Attitude | 0.249\*\*\* | 1.109 | 1.069 | 0.574 |
|  | (0.111) | (0.420) | (0.369) | (0.220) |
| 2.Wave | 0.612 | 0.571 | 0.713 | 0.465\* |
|  | (0.249) | (0.222) | (0.251) | (0.182) |
| 3.Wave | 0.847 | 0.872 | 0.651 | 0.605 |
|  | (0.358) | (0.352) | (0.228) | (0.230) |
| 4.Wave | 1.219 | 1.437 | 0.895 | 0.701 |
|  | (0.561) | (0.634) | (0.325) | (0.277) |
| 5.Wave | 0.908 | 1.010 | 0.960 | 1.044 |
|  | (0.393) | (0.417) | (0.359) | (0.415) |
| 6.Wave | 0.889 | 0.442\*\* | 0.632 | 0.787 |
|  | (0.362) | (0.178) | (0.230) | (0.303) |
| 7.Wave | 0.935 | 0.361\*\* | 0.644 | 1.045 |
|  | (0.373) | (0.145) | (0.238) | (0.402) |
| 8.Wave | 1.032 | 0.341\*\*\* | 0.548 | 1.119 |
|  | (0.422) | (0.142) | (0.207) | (0.433) |
| 9.Wave | 1.067 | 0.410\*\* | 0.447\*\* | 1.689 |
|  | (0.384) | (0.146) | (0.148) | (0.567) |
| 2.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 2.061 | 1.743 | 1.939 | 2.718\* |
|  | (1.239) | (0.885) | (0.918) | (1.471) |
| 3.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.219 | 1.082 | 1.340 | 1.087 |
|  | (0.756) | (0.561) | (0.613) | (0.575) |
| 4.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.111 | 0.611 | 0.768 | 1.553 |
|  | (0.703) | (0.334) | (0.359) | (0.810) |
| 5.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 2.081 | 1.612 | 0.905 | 0.904 |
|  | (1.312) | (0.875) | (0.428) | (0.474) |
| 6.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.335 | 2.339\* | 1.486 | 1.776 |
|  | (0.801) | (1.206) | (0.700) | (0.915) |
| 7.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 3.807\*\* | 3.421\*\* | 1.354 | 1.920 |
|  | (2.205) | (1.791) | (0.642) | (0.975) |
| 8.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.065 | 2.050 | 0.972 | 0.793 |
|  | (0.625) | (1.059) | (0.459) | (0.403) |
| 9.Wave#c.EU Attitude | 1.849 | 2.144\* | 1.121 | 1.580 |
|  | (0.968) | (0.981) | (0.484) | (0.711) |
| Constant | 145.6 | 30.20 | 3.05e-06\* | 155.6 |
|  | (1,354) | (253.1) | (2.34e-05) | (1,268) |
| Log Likelihood | -2627.1 |  | -2326.2 |  |
| Pseudo R | 0.09 |  | 0.07 |  |

seEform in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. (Base category: ‘undecided/missing’).

**Figure 8:** Predicted Marginal Probabilities of Beliefs about Getting a Parallel Agreement on Europol (Based on estimates in Table 3).



Figure 8 plots the predicted marginal probabilities for each of the three possible beliefs about Europol separately for EU-skeptic and EU-friendly voters. The differences strongly confirm our argument. Over the entire course of the campaign, an estimated 70% to 80% of EU-friendly voters believed that a parallel agreement would be difficult. Only in wave #7 and in the post-election dropped this percentage been marginally below 70 %, which could indicate a minor campaign effect. EU-skeptics, too, started with a 57% belief in the difficulty of an agreement, with only 32% convinced that such an agreement will be easy. However, from wave #6 onwards the Euroskeptics were more likely to belief in the ease of a parallel agreement and at election day we estimate that 52% of Euroskeptics thought an parallel agreement to be easy, whereas only 30% thought it to be difficult. This is most likely a result of arguments put forward by a leading proponent for a No, Morten Messerschmidt (MEP) of the Danish People's Party. He made a clear guarantee in an opinion piece in a Danish newspaper that Denmark would easily be able to get a parallel agreement on the 8th of November (the day before collection for wave #5 took place in our survey). The claim by Messerschmidt was spread widely in the press, and was also used in the campaign material distributed by the party. Not surprisingly, EU-skeptic voters latched onto these argument because it fit their prior beliefs, which can be seen in resonance it had amongst EU-skeptic voters.

**Figure 9:** Predicted Marginal Probabilities of Beliefs about Political Majority joining the Common Migration and Asylum Policy (Based on estimates in Table 3).



Figure 9 plots the predicted marginal probabilities for each of the three possible beliefs about the likelihood of a political majority joining the EU’s common migration and asylum policy at a later stage. With regard to the group of Euroskeptic respondents, the figure resembles Figure 8 on Europol. At the start of the campaign, an estimated 55% thought that a later opt in to be unlikely, whereas 30% believed it to be likely. At Election Day the probabilities for the two beliefs have been about equal. Hence, the No-campaign has been very effective. Looking at the group of EU-friendly respondents we observe a campaign effect, too, but it is considerably weaker. Whereas the probability of a belief in a likely opt-in has increased from approx. 20% to approx. 30%, the probability of a belief in an unlikely opt-in has decreased from 64% to 50%. Consequently, we do find support for our argument that the campaign effect has been particularly strong for EU-skeptic respondents, although the effect size is smaller than with respect to the parallel agreement on Europol.

Interestingly, in the post-election a majority in both groups justified their vote choice with a belief that Folketing might have opted into a cooperation such unpopular areas as migration and asylum policy.

### H4 - campaign effects, subjective information and feeling informed

Above, we demonstrate that fewer Euroskeptic voters have been undecided and that they made their decision earlier than EU-friendly voters did. We also demonstrated that respondents’ subjective level (or ‘feeling’) of information is the most powerful predictor for explaining why voters are undecided. Our fourth hypothesis (H4) argues that EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence. This would explain the different level and dynamic of undecided voters between the groups of EU-skeptic and EU-friendly voters.

The corresponding survey question (In how far do you agree to the statement ‘I have sufficient information to vote’?) offered five categories, ranging from ‘completely agree’ to ‘completely disagree’. We recoded missing values to the mid-category ‘neither-nor’ and then ran an ordered logisitic regression including the full battery of controls introduced above. The results (table 4) indicate that old and male respondents feel better informed. With regard to our argument, we find that an EU-skeptic voters is significantly more likely to feel sufficiently informed than a EU-friendly voter.

In order to test our fourth hypothesis we include an interaction effect between the wave # and EU attitude (table 4, model 2). The resulting marginal probabilities for the two extreme categories (‘completely agree’, ‘completly disagree’) are depicted in figure 10. The difference between the two sub-groups of voters is immediately visible. Among the Eurskeptic voters we can almost never identify a significant difference between predicted probability for ‘completely agree’ and ‘completely disagree’. This would not change if the picture included the other three categories. The only exception is wave # 3 when the probability for ‘completely disagree’ was significantly higher and, importantly, wave #8 immediately before election date, when the predicted probability for ‘completely informed’ reached its peak. This stands in stark contrast to the results for EU-friendly voters, who felt significantly worse informed.

**Table 4 Ordered Logistic Regression on Y= Subjective Level of Information.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (N=3165) | M1 | M2 |
| Gender | 0.410\*\*\* | 0.410\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0272) | (0.0272) |
| Highest Education | 0.997 | 0.996 |
|  | (0.0166) | (0.0166) |
| Birth Year | 1.015\*\*\* | 1.015\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00243) | (0.00244) |
| Left Right Self Assessment | 0.980 | 0.979\* |
|  | (0.0124) | (0.0124) |
| Yes Party Endorsment | 0.968 | 0.967 |
|  | (0.0386) | (0.0387) |
| EU Attitude | 1.384\*\*\* | 1.188 |
|  | (0.0948) | (0.248) |
| 2.wave | 1.049 | 0.769 |
|  | (0.149) | (0.171) |
| 3.wave | 1.354\*\* | 1.496\* |
|  | (0.196) | (0.334) |
| 4.wave | 1.072 | 0.915 |
|  | (0.153) | (0.202) |
| 5.wave | 0.918 | 0.750 |
|  | (0.128) | (0.165) |
| 6.wave | 0.874 | 0.926 |
|  | (0.123) | (0.209) |
| 7.wave | 0.625\*\*\* | 0.620\*\* |
|  | (0.0864) | (0.140) |
| 8.wave | 0.540\*\*\* | 0.442\*\*\* |
|  | (0.0776) | (0.101) |
| 9.wave | 1.595\*\*\* | 1.435\* |
|  | (0.201) | (0.280) |
| 2.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.720\* |
|  |  | (0.498) |
| 3.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 0.805 |
|  |  | (0.236) |
| 4.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.313 |
|  |  | (0.381) |
| 5.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.402 |
|  |  | (0.399) |
| 6.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 0.901 |
|  |  | (0.260) |
| 7.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.014 |
|  |  | (0.289) |
| 8.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.389 |
|  |  | (0.408) |
| 9.wave#c.EU Attitude |  | 1.192 |
|  |  | (0.304) |
| Constant cut1 | 1.016e+11\*\*\* | 1.050e+11\*\*\* |
|  | (4.813e+11) | (4.985e+11) |
| Constant cut2 | 4.431e+11\*\*\* | 4.589e+11\*\*\* |
|  | (2.099e+12) | (2.181e+12) |
| Constant cut3 | 9.566e+11\*\*\* | 9.931e+11\*\*\* |
|  | (4.534e+12) | (4.720e+12) |
| Constant cut4 | 2.776e+12\*\*\* | 2.891e+12\*\*\* |
|  | (1.316e+13) | (1.375e+13) |
|  |  |  |
| Observations | 3,156 | 3,156 |

Figure 10 reveals that up until wave #7 the probability for ‘completely disagree’ was significantly higher than for completely agree. In fact, looking at all categories reveals that until wave # 6 approximately 55% of EU-friendly voters would respond that they either ‘disagree’ or even ‘completely disagree’ to having sufficient information. Immediately prior to election, EU-friendly voters were about as likely to respond having sufficient information as they were to having insufficient information. In retrospect (i.e. the post-election survey) post groups felt significantly worse informed than immediately prior to the election.

**Figure 10** Predicted Marginal Probabilities for two categories of subjective level of information in the group of EU-skeptical (LEFT) and EU-friendly (RIGHT) voters (based on table 4).



Overall, the results confirm our argument: EU-skeptic voters felt better informed than EU-friendly voters from the start of the campaign. Although the subjective level information increased over the course of the campaign, the difference between the two groups remained. According to the analysis above, this felt level of information has been an important explanation as to why EU-skeptic voters revealed lower levels of uncertainty and mind up their minds earlier.

# 4. Conclusions

In this paper, we explored the extent to which EU-skeptic voters are more likely to engage in *motivated reasoning* then EU-friendly voters because of stronger held underlying attitudes towards the EU. Using survey data from the 2015 Danish referendum on the JHA opt-out, we assessed the effects of stronger held attitudes on voting behavior: 1) whether motivated reasoning reinforces the relevance of issue voting and reduces the relevance of party endorsements for EU-skeptic respondents (**H1**), whether EU-skeptic voters are more certain about what they should vote and they make up their minds earlier because of motivated reasoning (**H2**), whether EU-skeptic respondents are more prone to follow frames that confirm their ideological position (**H3**), and whether EU-skeptic voters feel more informed because of their selective recruitment of evidence (**H4**).

We found evidence that motivated reasoning matters for voter behavior. The implication of our findings is that more information provided by a referendum campaign will not necessarily convince skeptics. Indeed, it might paradoxically make them more certain that they will vote no.

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1. - One possible way to measure attitude strength could have been to use quadratic voting question design instead of Likert scales. In quadratic voting responses, voters are forced to allocate points amongst survey response items. Voters are forced to spend a quadratic function for moving from middle to more extreme response categories. There is evidence that the method can capture intensity much better than Likert scales, where extreme responses can be 'cheap talk'. See Quarfoot, Kohorn, Slavin, Sutherland, Konar 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. - We opt for multinomial instead of ordered regression because we do not want to constrain the category ‘undecided’ to a single latent dimension which spans between the substantive ‘yes’ and ‘no’ categories. Alternatively, we recoded the dependent variable to be dichotomous indicating 0=decided and 1=undecided. The substantive results do not change. We add the same socio-demographic and political control variables used in the regression analysis above. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)