





## European Outliers? Rethinking Europeanisation and Euroscepticism in Britain and Denmark

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### ABSTRACT

In the light of Brexit and ongoing doubts about the future of a united Europe, have Britain and Denmark really been outliers to the collective European project, as suggested by their political positioning towards the EU? Despite the Euroscepticism expressed in referenda and public attitudes, we question whether these two countries are inherently less Europeanised, sociologically speaking, than other member states habitually seen as closer to the European project. Using data from the EUCROSS survey about the transnational practices and identifications of ordinary European citizens in five member states, we show that Britain and Denmark have been positioned close to Germany in terms of the degree and type of European cosmopolitanism and transnationalism found in these countries, and are more transnational societies than Spain and Italy. Moreover, in other ways, Britain and Denmark have been exemplary European societies, embodying the EU's cosmopolitan 'normative power' agenda. We suggest that the marked divide between the 'everyday Europeanisation' of these societies and their political hostility to the EU is a paradox that lies at the heart of the democratic crisis of the continent, a schism that may now be directly corrosive to the longer term cosmopolitanism fostered by European integration.

For many, the EU referendum in 2016 and the subsequent ratification of Brexit in the general election of 2019, confirmed a view that Britain is and always has been an outlier to the core EU project.<sup>1</sup> It is 'European but not European enough', as is routinely stated in public discourse as much as in academic work (the quote echoes an archetypal explanation of Brexit by Evans et al, 2018; see also König and Ohr, 2013). Similar things from a 'Nordic' perspective are often said about Denmark (Gundelach 2001; Rosendode 2015), which like Britain has seen its politics marked by the

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success of very visible Eurosceptic parties and referenda set backs for the EU (Sørensen, 2004). The success of Nigel Farage and the UK Independence Party in Britain and the Danish People's Party in Denmark articulated both 'hard' Euroscepticism — referenda rejections of the EU — and 'soft' Euroscepticism — rejecting particular policies, such as open borders (Taggart, 1998; Usherwood and Startin, 2013). The default account for these aggregate national positions on the EU is invariably to link them to measures of strong national versus weak European identifications according to Eurobarometer public opinion indicators, and to explain these differences in terms of exceptionalist cultural particularities.

Political scientists often class these 'identity' based explanations as a kind of 'sociological' reasoning (Favell, 2005). Yet, as we will argue, sociologists are often rightfully sceptical of this problematic 'black box' concept of 'identity', which often masks the obvious, exclusively macro-level circularity, of explaining a nation's distinctive political position in terms of a nation's distinctive history, culture or geographical positioning (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). Do the British and Danish fail to register enthusiastic levels of European identification because their national 'identity' is somehow stronger or distinctive to more Europeanised neighbours? In fact, as we will show, Britain and Denmark are routinely seen as among the most highly globalised, cosmopolitan and open societies in Europe (Dreher et al, 2008), an 'integration' which inevitably contains a very high degree of Europeanisation. Being a highly globalised society in fact implies a *decrease* in a national society's separation from others: *less* not more 'identity'. Moreover, as we will also show, when these aggregates are broken down to the everyday practices of individuals — what we think of in terms of the everyday 'social transnationalism' (Mau, 2010) of citizens across borders, in both physical and virtual terms — the two nations score highly amongst the most porous in the continent. In this light, the emphasis on cultural 'identity' explanations appears to be a circular and arguably ideological reflex.

We question in more grounded sociological terms whether Britain and Denmark really have been outliers to the collective European project, as is often suggested. While the Euroscepticism expressed in referenda and attitudes on European issues is easy to see in these two countries, we argue that typical public opinion and attitudinal research misses important facts about how thoroughly internationalised and Europeanised these two countries are despite their overt political expressions of resistant 'national identity'. We first suggest a shift to thinking about the British and Danish relation to the EU in terms of its 'normative power'

agenda and European ‘cosmopolitanism’. On this score, their solid cosmopolitanism in terms of European normative values closely matches others, *except* where the EU is politically invoked in questioning. When we then turn to the high degree of internationalisation of these countries in terms of social transnationalism, we note, for both economic and geographical reasons, that this is made up of a high degree of what we call ‘everyday Europeanisation’ of these societies (Recchi et al, 2019; Delhey et al, 2014). When this Europeanisation is measured in terms of sociological indicators – i.e. *practices* – to do with intra-EU cross-border flows (migration, travel, tourism, student and retirement mobility), connections (business relations, friendships, knowledge, family experience abroad) or activities (consumption of foreign products, shopping abroad, foreign language use, use of foreign media), on some of these measures the British or Danish may turn out to be *more* Europeanised than others.

Using original individual level survey findings of the internationalisation of ordinary national citizens in Britain, Denmark, Germany, Italy, and Spain, we thus develop an alternative approach to these questions beyond what we argue is the *impasse* of European identity research. What this leaves us with is a paradox, which may in fact now be the growing cause of instability in the European project and its legitimacy. The public opinion and political expression of highly Europeanised and internationalised – and thereby perfectly well ‘integrated’ member states – may have drifted far from their grounded everyday social practices and values. We see this a serious problem of democracy that may lay at the heart of the present European crisis.

### The *impasse* of European identity research

An extensive research industry has grown up in recent decades around the question of European versus national ‘identity’ as the key question of Europe’s success or not. The European Commission’s Eurobarometer instruments, particularly those measuring public opinion about or identification with the EU project, lie at its core. The most used of these is the notorious ‘Moreno question’, which contrasts and orders identification with Europe versus national identification (Mitchell, 2015). The thinness of these measures has not deterred several generations of social scientists from repeatedly using them and other similar indicators as a meaningful dependent variable, reducing the positioning of European nationalities to the dimension of overt identification or not

with the EU (Citrin and Sides 2004; Fligstein, 2008; Hooghe and Marks, 2008; Kuhn, 2015; Luhmann, 2017; de Vries, 2018). Most of this work has been dedicated to diagnosing the growing crisis of the EU seen in the growing Euroscepticism of some counties, and lamenting the 'democratic deficit' it implies. Still other work argued that it was perhaps not necessary to see alternatives of national and European identity as zero sum or mutually exclusive (Duchesne and Frogner, 1995; Risse, 2004; Nebe and Rother, 2009), but work with similar survey questions.

Others have been sceptical of such data's pre-packaged nature. A less well known stream of work has tried to suggest alternative in-depth interviews, focus groups or ethnographic methodologies for getting at the national variation in such questions (Bélot, 2000; Díez Medrano, 2003; Bruter, 2005; White, 2010; Duchesne et al, 2013; van Ingelgom, 2014). In particular, the technical work of Díez Medrano (2010), and Duchesne and associates (2010) stressed how much the very questions being asked about Europe mean very different things in different contexts across Europe. While all of these studies stressed how national particularities determine the meaning of Europe in different countries, all of them simply accepted Britain to be a 'less' European outlier in terms of its geographical, historical and cultural particularities. Scholars attentive to the Nordic point of view have also tended to make similarly circular, confirmatory arguments in geographical or historical terms when they discuss Denmark in 'identity' terms (Østergård, 1998; Jenkins, 2011). A closer, more counter-intuitive examination is needed on these points. Eurobarometer type measures do not help much. Danes are positive on the EU on some measures, but very sceptical on particular policies, for example, those to do with borders (Sørensen, 2004; European Commission 2012). The British, meanwhile, invariably confirm they think of themselves as outliers when asked directly in such surveys. In terms of political expression, as expressed in the Brexit vote of 2016, this status seems clear. Similarly, a recent 'geography of EU discontent' confirmed Denmark as the member state with the highest degree of strong Euroscepticism present in its parliamentary representation (Dijkstra et al, 2018).

While quantitative sociologists might be tempted to avoid these macro-level aggregates by turning to micro-level explanations in terms of variables such as class or education or proximity to borders (as does Kuhn, 2015), the overt and distinctive 'national' political expression by electorates in these two countries is a fact which cannot be avoided. In other ways, though, are these two countries such outliers? As we have

noted, the usual 'sociological' path has simply confirmed this with circular cultural 'identity' arguments. But other comparative approaches are possible. In particular, we suggest Jürgen Gerhards' (2007) unusual work on the EU and diversity in European values suggests an alternative path.

In Gerhard's comparative analysis of all EU member states plus Turkey, he measured the degree to which each state diverges from the EU 'blueprint' on values, an index composed from various official EU sources and declarations. Spheres such as religion/secularism, welfare state, freedom, family norms, and cultural and economic freedoms are considered. Viewed against these measures, Britain is exactly at the mid-point of variation across European states, whereas Denmark lies at the extreme end of 'progressive' values. In this sense, then, these countries have been two variants on hyper-conformism to the European project. It suggests that British citizens should have had no problem positioning themselves in the middle ground on European choices (as British politicians generally did in terms of EU member state voting patterns), whereas Denmark has been a pioneer in following archetypically progressive European notions of freedom, equality, universal aspirations and democratic openness, espoused as part of the 'normative power' agenda that has long directed its foreign policy (Manners, 2002). These values at work in Britain and Denmark may also be identified with the everyday 'European cosmopolitanism' identified in work by Delanty and Rumford (2005) and Delanty (2009). Delanty, for example, argues that even when explicitly contested Europe has provided a space in which European citizens come to work out their position in relation to globalisation, and hence is a source of cosmopolitanism. In other words, there is nothing in these active expressions of values to suggest that Britain and Denmark are any less European than other members, compared to the difficulties in absorbing Turkey or (less dramatically) the Balkan States, who lie at the 'least' European end of the values scale (Gerhards, 2007). Geographically, of course, something can be made of Britain's island status and its Commonwealth or colonial history (Dennison and Carl, 2016). But this is something it shares with both older and newer member states with colonial histories: France, the Netherlands, Spain – and Denmark. And on values Britain and Denmark lie 'closer' to core 'European' values than, for example, Ireland which often diverges much more strongly on certain values measures (i.e. religion and free market norms, according to Gerhards). In terms of their progressive stance on political values of democracy and citizenship, meanwhile,

Britain and Denmark sit at the forefront of nations embodying the normative power agenda. They are squarely ‘European’ in this sense; why should the promotion and extension of these values in an international context be driven by anything different to, say, Germany? This suggests that by dropping the attitudinal focus on overt European identification – i.e. not mentioning the EU in our investigation into Europeanisation and internationalisation in the two countries – their outlier status might well dissipate. If cosmopolitanism is indeed the EU’s most salient normative characteristic, is there *prima facie* reason to think of Britain or Denmark as less cosmopolitan European nations, even if they are perhaps more overtly Eurosceptical? Moreover, on any current measurements of globalisation and openness to the global economy both Denmark and Britain sit at the top of the European range – along with the Netherlands and other Nordic countries (Dreher et al, 2008).

To pursue this line of argument, we develop an approach to measuring aspects of Europeanised cosmopolitanism and internationalisation in Britain and Denmark, adapting the alternate bottom up sociology of Europeanisation that has emerged in recent years (see Diez Medrano, 2008; Favell and Guiraudon, 2009; Saurugger and Mérand, 2010; Heidenreich, 2019). This work has developed concepts, tools and methods able to assess the qualitative and structural changes related to processes of European regional integration within a global context, *independent* of institutional change or policy implementation – that is, Europeanisation as studied by political scientists (i.e. Featherstone and Radaelli 2003). It is still relatively rare for such works to not rely on secondary data. Our original survey built on two such rarities: an interviews based enquiry into the globalisation of everyday life of the population of the North West of England by Savage and associates (Savage et al, 2005), and a pioneering survey by Mau and associates on the German population, which distinguished in unusual detail between dimensions of cosmopolitanism and transnationalism in this highly Europeanised and globalised society (Mau, 2010; Mau et al, 2008). Both of these studies find that there has been a substantial ‘de-nationalisation’ of the population since the high point of the ‘container’ welfare state society in the 1960s. For them, class, education, location (closeness to borders) and specific national ‘geographies’ linked to historical ties, all play a part in the degree of cosmopolitanism embraced by these national populations. Notably, it is a body of work which fills out the qualitative significance and theoretical implications of Kuhn’s (2015) widely noted similar findings using Eurobarometer. In contrast to these works, however, we underline a more

counter-intuitive argument, which emphasises there is no reason to think cosmopolitanism and social transnationalism is in fact *less* Europeanised in Britain and Denmark than in a core European state such as Germany.

## Analysis, data and methods

For our alternate approach, data is drawn from the EUCROSS FP7 project, which was conducted in six EU member states (Recchi et al, 2016). This tailor-made original survey selected cases from the full range of EU members according to historical length of membership in the European project: two original members (Germany and Italy), two which joined in the 1970s (Britain and Denmark), and two more recent accession members (Spain and Romania). Here, to leave aside particularities associated with CEE member states, we focus on variation among the national populations of the five West European countries. Using a large scale telephone survey with CATI technology ( $n = 5016$ ; see Braun and Pöttschke, 2019), the survey gathered detailed evidence, at once about the local, European and international identifications and engagements of the populations, the extent of their ‘physical’ mobilities (travel or migration) and ‘virtual’ mobilities (contact with international media, networks of friends or consumption of products) both within Europe and beyond, as well as the link to potential cosmopolitan values and attitudinal change. The survey questioning went well beyond Eurobarometer techniques, including the one that has most delved into similar subjects, Eurobarometer 65.1 (as operationalised by Mau and Mewes, 2012; Kuhn, 2015; Recchi, 2015), and was complemented by in-depth qualitative interviewing on a follow up sub-sample of each national sample (presented in Favell et al, 2019).<sup>2</sup>

The research enables us to identify a range of transnational practices, both those involving border crossings and those which do not, by which we can gauge the degree to which British and Danes are embedded in internationalised lives and experiences. Which of these are also embedded in a closer regional integration at the European level? Can we then begin to relate these practices to particular values, such as

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<sup>2</sup>Our survey sample was found to be slightly skewed with respect to education and age, when checked against administrative population data from Eurostat. We, therefore, correct with weighting the descriptive estimates in all analyses; age and education are controlled for in the multivariate regression (Table 5). The Stata 14.2 survey (svy) routine was used based on a one-stage cluster design with countries as strata. Since the EUROSTAT data is restricted in terms of age range, we opted here to exclude respondents older than 74 (9.3% of total N) in all analyses using weights resulting in an analytical sample of 4529 observations.



those associated with cosmopolitanism? And what does this reveal about the British and Danish relationship with Europe, particularly how their political expression differs from their practices when asked?

Our first step breaks down and identifies dimensions of cosmopolitanism from the EUCROSS data. We follow Mau et al.'s (2008) insistence, differing from Beck (2007), that cosmopolitan attitudes or values have to be distinguished from transnational practices. If the values expressed by mobile individuals are not separated from their practices (what Beck calls 'cosmopolitisation'), there is a danger of tautology. Drawing on Held (2002), Mau et al proposed a narrow, operational three way break down of cosmopolitanism. We largely shadow their approach in our first three dimensions: distinguishing between attitudes towards diversity, towards foreign products in the media and everyday consumption, and whether respondents feel a citizen of the world. Two further questions looking at how supra-national responsibility is conceived are also offered: whether in the case of a disaster respondents feel nations should step in to help other member states, and whether the EU should be stepping in to solve the crisis economies of Southern Europe.

These measures of cosmopolitanism may then be regressed on the transnational or cross-border practices that European populations are developing. To conceptualise transnational practices, we adopt a four way categorisation explained below, adapted and extended from Kuhn (2015). Our operationalisation enables us to better identify practices relating to border-crossing physical mobilities as well as more virtual mobilities that might nevertheless be part of the everyday experience of otherwise 'static' national populations. From this we construct a transnational index which enables a cross-national and intra-group comparison across the five nations, and use it to pinpoint its statistical association to the above values and attitudes measured in the survey. Related to the multi-dimensional conceptualisation of cosmopolitanism, we aim to uncover further associations between transnationalism and cosmopolitanism not yet specified in the literature.

While some relationship between transnationalism and cosmopolitanism is expected, we are able to statistically control for a wider range of variables than has been used in past studies. We add new measures of everyday transnational practices, and offer a richer conceptualisation of cosmopolitanism. Globalisation, Europeanisation and cosmopolitanism may all prove rather differential and geographically specific. Even given the apparently positive results about emergent post-national or universalist norms compatible with the European normative power mission, it

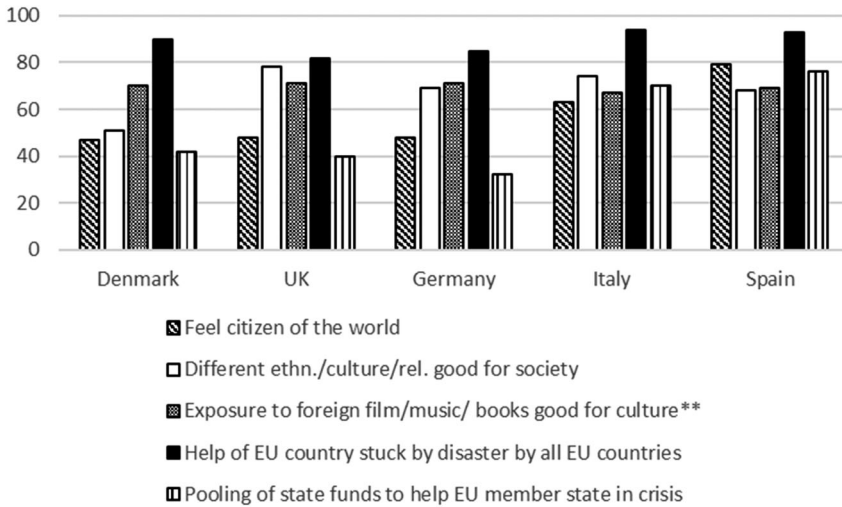


could also be the case that when these trends are explicitly associated with the EU and put to the vote – at least in the minds of Eurosceptic populations – this can lead to a significant falling off in cosmopolitan enthusiasm.

## Findings

Without a doubt, general support for the EU has suffered considerably as a result of the post 2008 economic crisis in Europe and a negative perception of the EU's handling of the situation and other crises since. It is well known Eurobarometer questions on the image and present direction of the EU demonstrate a negative trend in recent years across all member states, with the British the most negative. In terms of *overt* political hostility toward the EU, it has long been suggested there was an implacable Euroscepticism in well over half the population (Evans et al, 2018). It was possible to transform these sentiments into a victory for the Brexit vote in June 2016. The same measures reveal that Denmark is close to the average of EU countries in terms of most questions regarding view of the EU. However, Danes are much more likely than the rest of Europe to associate the EU with 'not enough control at external borders' (see European Commission 2012, p. T48). Having rejected the Euro in 2000, Danes voted forcefully in 2015 to keep their opt outs on aspects of the Maastricht Treaty, especially concerning sovereignty on borders and security (Nordics Info, 2020).

Our central interest is whether this identification or distancing with the EU is strictly a question of political positioning when asked? A first kind of measure concerns the widespread acceptance or tolerance of diversity. On these measures, whether we take a first question about the make up of society by different ethnic, religious or cultural origins as a good or bad thing, or a second about whether foreign forms of media and culture are a bad thing for the national culture, Britain scores high on cosmopolitanism, close to its other West European neighbours. Danes meanwhile feel provoked by the first formulation of cosmopolitan diversity, posting a much lower acceptance, while being more comfortable than other countries about the second, the influx of foreign media and cultural products. Moving to a third measure – identification with the world as a global citizen – Denmark, Britain and German all post similar mid level identifications, somewhat less overtly cosmopolitan than their southern neighbours. Regarding a fourth dimension of cosmopolitanism, about feeling responsible for a neighbouring



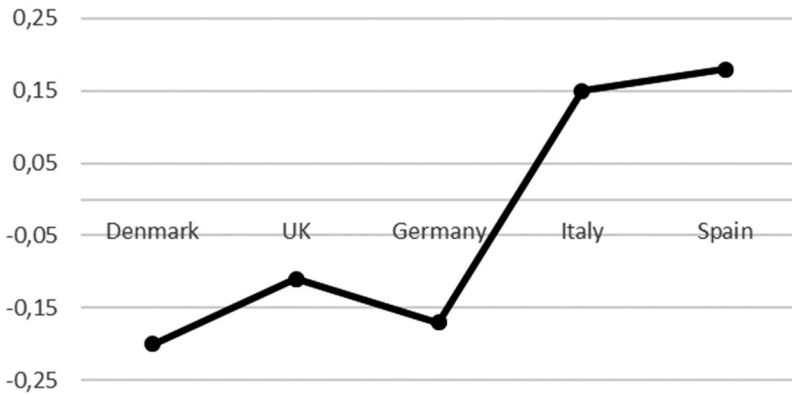
**Figure 1.** Figure 1. Cosmopolitan Attitudes (% of 'yes' responses\*) across 5 EU Countries. Source: EUCROSS Survey (2012), weighted estimates. N = 4,287.

Notes: \*To facilitate interpretation, the items were dichotomized so that the values 4 and 5 on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) represent agreement with the statement (item No 5 however, 'Help of EU member in crisis', has only two response options). \*\*In the original question the formulation 'damaging for culture' was used. The item was reversed so that it fits in the direction with the other items. [The numbers in Figure 1 were reported in a modified version in Favell et al, 2019, p. 174].

nation's fortunes, a further distinction becomes apparent. The British are just a little less solidaristic than their rich Northern European neighbours. But insert EU membership obligations into the question – jointly bailing out a fellow member state in times of crisis – and figures fall quite dramatically for Denmark and Germany, with the Germans (probably in the light of Greece's debt crisis) even more hostile than the British. Only the Southern Europeans retain a sense of European solidarity through thick and thin (Figure 1).

We standardized each of the five items and constructed a simple additive index to assess the overall level of cosmopolitanism in each country (see Figure 2).<sup>3</sup> Whether this index is made up of all five measures cited or the first three (i.e. minus the supra-national EU governance

<sup>3</sup>Cronbach's alpha, the scale reliability coefficient, for this index is .51. While this value is below conventional levels, we find it acceptable for this theoretically derived scale. Furthermore, sensitivity analyses with an alternative index based on factor scores derived from a principal component factor analyses (PCA) for discrete data using the Stata ado 'polychoric' (for details see Kolenikov and Angeles, 2004) very closely mirrored our descriptive as well as multivariate analyses (available on request) which is why we chose to present the simpler additive index.



**Figure 2.** Cosmopolitan Index (std.) across 5 EU countries.

Source: EUCROSS Survey (2012), weighted estimates.  $N = 4,287$ .

Note: Based on an additive index of the five original (five point scale, except item 3) standardized cosmopolitanism items (see [Figure 1](#)).

questions), the Italians and Spanish score as more overtly cosmopolitan, pushed up by an aspiration to be first class global citizens and high minded solidarians with struggling neighbours.

Britain and Denmark average out with a middling score, always very close to that ostensibly much ‘more European’ – and certainly more overtly post-national – core member state, Germany. And on one or other measures, both Britain and Denmark seem to exemplify some of the highest aspirations of the EU normative power agenda, while consistently disliking the framing of these influences in terms of the EU.

There is enough of a puzzle here to suggest a closer look at British and Danish transnational practices to see if these differ from other member states, particularly the core state, Germany. In her Eurobarometer based study, Kuhn (2015) distinguishes between three kinds of transnationalism: transnational family background, cross-border practices, and transnational human capital. Adapting and extending this categorisation, and using the richer EUCROSS data, we distinguish between transnational travel/mobility (six items), transnational social relations (friends and family, two items), transnational communication and consumerism (three items), and transnational human capital (languages, watching foreign language television, two items) (see also Gerhards et al, 2016).

Such transnational practices of course may not be restricted to a European scale. In a parallel study also based on EUCROSS (Savage et al, 2019), we distinguish between familiarity with other countries at a European and international scale; the latter is much less intense for all

**Table 1.** Dimensions of Transnationalism (in per cent) across 5 EU countries.

Types of Transnationalism	Denmark	UK	Germany	Italy	Spain
<i>Travel &amp; Mobilities</i>					
Familiarity with one or more foreign countries	58	61	65	36	44
Lived in another country before turning 18	7	9	6	4	4
Visited at least three countries before turning 18	62	53	60	20	16
Lived in another country for at least 3 month after turning 18	20	21	14	9	11
Participated in EU sponsored exchange program	3	3	4	3	6
3 or more overnight trips abroad in last 24 months	53	37	40	18	17
<i>Relations</i>					
Know somebody living abroad	46	64	50	55	62
Partner with foreign citizenship at birth	3	7	8	4	5
<i>Communication &amp; Consumerism</i>					
At least 10% of all received messages from abroad (email/ phone etc.)	21	28	33	19	24
Sent money abroad (for reasons other than purchasing goods/services)	15	9	9	11	9
Purchased goods abroad	40	36	29	17	18
<i>Human capital</i>					
Command of at least one foreign language	88	35	75	55	57
Watch foreign TV once a month or more	65	8	18	12	17

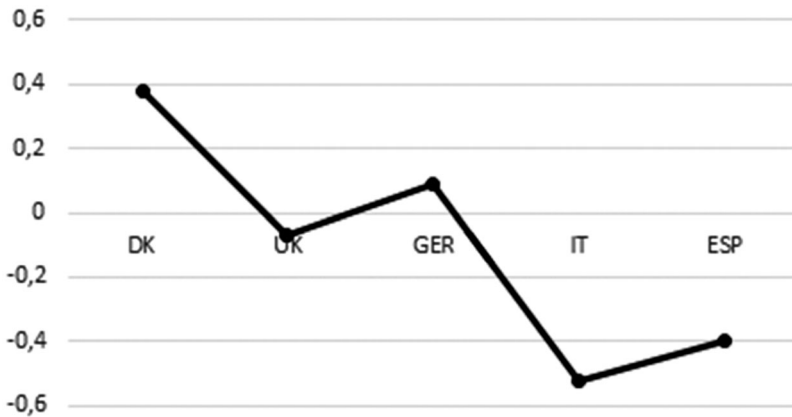
Source: EUCROSS Survey (2012), weighted estimates.  $N = 4427$ .

European countries, and countries such as Germany and Denmark are every bit as globalised in their international ties beyond Europe as Britain. Following on from this, Delhey et al's (2020) unprecedentedly large analysis of secondary data, has shown there is a substantial degree of regional closure in the transnational mobilities and practices of European populations. Here, we are not able to parse our data further, but a number of our measures of transnationalism, such as overnight stays, familiarity with and visiting other countries, and overseas consumerism, are substantially affected by geographical proximity. Only in the weak command of foreign languages do the British stand out as less 'normally' European.

The following measures (Table 1) thus give an indication of just how internationalised European residents have become.

While questions are not necessarily restricted to Europeanised practices, we do see a high degree of internationalisation across the board, encompassing those with more intense regional scale ties and transactions. Markedly in Germany (which we would expect, following Mau) but also especially in Denmark and Britain, there is a higher experience of living abroad, familiarity with foreign countries or knowing people in other countries.

This practical transnationalism is underlined in terms of practices at a scale more obviously linked to European integration. If we ask about whether respondents have bought goods abroad in the last 24 months,



**Figure 3.** Transnationalism Index (std.) across five EU countries.  
Source: EUCROSS Survey (2012), weighted estimates.  $N = 4,427$ .

or the number of overnight trips to other countries in the last 24 months, it turns out that the Danes are the highest, with Germany and Britain closely matched, and the Italians and Spanish much further behind. Only when we put in a question related to a specific EU sponsored programme do the figures drop, as we would expect in Denmark and Britain (although similar to Germany), with Italians and Spanish more Europeanised in this sense. Danes also possess the most transnational human capital, measured in their ability to speak foreign languages – in contrast to the British. On the classic question (table not shown) of whether respondents are willing to move to live and work in another country – something explicitly facilitated by European citizenship – the Southern Europeans not surprisingly post high percentages above 60%: but over 50% of Germans and over 40% of Danes and British would be willing to move – hardly consistent with their professed Euroscepticism.

These various indicators illustrate concrete effects of European integration, suggesting that the Europeanisation of everyday life in Danish and British society is not patterned very differently to Germany's. To formalise these results, we put together a complete additive index of transnational practices, consisting of the thirteen items reported in [Figure 3](#). The index was subsequently standardised to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one.

Danes score almost half a standard deviation, higher than individuals from all other countries. Italians and Spanish seem to be considerably less transnational according to our index while Germans and British are closely matched somewhere in between.

**Table 2.** Individuals with 'High Transnationalism'<sup>1</sup> across level of education & occupational status in five EU countries (in per cent).

	Comp./Secondary Education	Tertiary Education	Odds Ratio
DK	32	59	3.03
UK	14	36	3.57
GER	21	46	3.14
IT	8	29	4.98
ESP	5	31	8.42
	Low Occupational Status (ISEI<70) <sup>2</sup>	High Occupational Status (ISEI>70)	Odds Ratio
DK	35	59	2.65
UK	16	33	2.59
GER	24	40	2.17
IT	9	22	2.78
ESP	10	27	3.19

Source: EUCROSS Survey, weighted estimates.  $N = 4427$ .

<sup>1</sup>Overall, 25.6 per cent of all respondents (not weighted) in the pooled five country sample fall into the high transnationalism category.<sup>2</sup> Missing ISEI values were imputed with Stata's 14.2 'mi impute regress' command using country, age, gender, place of birth and citizenship of partner at birth as predictor variables.

In work based on Eurobarometer (European Commission 2012), Mau and Mewes suggest that these kinds of differences might be accounted for by country level differences, for example relative wealth, or by geographical and cultural specificities in relation to the wider world. While we are not able to address all of this challenge, we are able to control for standard class and sociodemographic variables to check that these results hold across social groups in the various countries.

To illustrate social class differences, Table 2 compares levels of transnationalism in terms of education and occupational status.<sup>4</sup> We recode the transnationalism index into a binary variable differentiating between individuals who engaged in at least 6 out of 13 transnational practices (i.e. the highly transnational, 25% across all countries) vs. everybody else (75% across all countries) and compare percentages. Odds-ratios to measure for inequality between two groups are also reported. We see the educational gradient in terms of transnational practices is very similar across the three Northern European countries, while being more pronounced in Italy and Spain. The results for the occupational status measures are similar, although inequality varies less. Interestingly, these findings contradict results from a recent Eurobarometer-based study that finds that the social gradient in levels of transnationalism is more pronounced in affluent European countries (Delhey et al, 2015). In very broad terms, one can still read these results in terms of Fligstein's

<sup>4</sup>We chose the value 70 of the ISEI scale since occupations placed at this level and higher typically correspond to higher level professionals (see Ganzeboom and Treiman 1996, 221-237).

'Euroclash' (2008), something that has been standardised into a constant narrative of 'winners and losers' in Europe (i.e. Kuhn, 2015; Hobolt, 2016). However, our results suggest nuances are needed in this polarised view of the European crisis. Remarkably, in highly transnational countries such as Denmark and Germany, respondents with only average levels of education have reached levels of transnationalism similar those of the highly educated in the lower ranked transnational countries. There is then some evidence here for a broader 'massification' of the effects of European integration in some countries. It is widely reported that middle class Danes and British (i.e. not just 'elites') are some of the most enthusiastic in utilising their European free movement rights: in terms of buying property abroad or retiring in the South of Europe (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009).

In a last step, we explore whether transnational practices observed in our sample of countries can be systematically related to cosmopolitan values by regressing the cosmopolitan index (e.g. Figure 3) on transnational practices. This analysis is similar to Mau et al.'s study for Germany (2008) as well as Kuhn (2015), although Kuhn's dependent variable is a more restricted measurement about identification with the European Union. We also go beyond previous work by introducing our four dimensions of transnationalism (mobility, relations, consumerism/communication and capital) separately in the model. Furthermore, we use a richer set of control variables.

Table 3 reports unstandardized coefficient estimates from two OLS Regression models based on our pooled country sample. In the first model, transnational practices, a set of basic demographic controls (age, gender place of birth), as well as country dummy variables are included. To test whether a potential association between transnational practices and cosmopolitanism cannot be simply attributed to respondents' socioeconomic position, we introduce measures for respondents' education and occupational status (ISEI) in a second model.

The estimates from Model 1 show that each dimension of transnationalism is significantly related to cosmopolitan attitudes. As would be expected, in Model 2, controlling for respondents' occupational status and education reduces the coefficient size for all dimensions of transnationalism. Nevertheless, the coefficients for all dimensions of transnationalism except transnational mobilities remain statistically significant: note that all four are jointly significant at the 5 percent level in Model 2 ( $F = 11.19$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = 0.019$ ). The coefficients for the country dummy variables (with Britain as the reference category) indicate that



**Table 3.** OLS Regression of Cosmopolitan Index on four Dimensions of Transnationalism and Socio-demographic Control Variables ( $N = 4208$ ).

	Model 1	Model 2
Transnationalism <sup>1</sup>		
Mobilities	.082*	.049
Relations	.062*	.055*
Communication/Consum.	.086*	.068*
Human Capital	.055*	.037*
Country (Ref.: UK)		
Denmark	-.122**	-.087**
Germany	-.056***	-.034**
Italy	.329***	.349***
Spain	.337***	.350***
Female	.046	.044
Age*100	-.019	-.110
Place of birth (Ref.: Ctry. of res.)		
EU country	.006	.026
Outside EU country	.039	.041
Partner from elsewhere (Ref. Ctry. of res.)	-.157	-.140
Tertiary degree (Ref.: degree below tert.)		.078*
ISEI <sup>2</sup> *100		.264*
Constant	-.084	-.207*
R <sup>2</sup>	.127	.143

Source: EUCROSS Survey (2012); \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (corrected standard errors for clustering within countries).

<sup>1</sup>Each dimension of transnationalism is constructed as an additive index based on the standardized indicator variables presented in Table 1, divided by the number of items for each dimension.<sup>2</sup> Missing values imputed (see Table 2).

net of transnationalism and sociodemographic controls, pronounced differences in cosmopolitanism between countries remain. In other words, reducing variation to the individual level across countries does not remove the fact that there are aggregate national differences – differences, we would argue, that show up in the aggregate political expressions of hostility to the EU when people are asked what they think, despite the absence of difference in their degrees of social transnationalism.

## Discussion

Our findings suggest that the well observed British and Danish Euroscepticism, when registered in Eurobarometer type surveys or observed in open politics, has masked a quite considerable everyday Europeanisation of these societies in terms of both cosmopolitan values and transnational practices.

In terms of values, we have shown that cosmopolitan, universalist ‘Euro-values’ are well anchored in these countries, no less than in a ‘core’ West European member state such as Germany. The problem appears rather to be associated with the way questions are asked by EU

surveys, and the Pavlovian reaction elicited – as hostility to Europe or defence of the nation – when the EU has been mentioned in relation to an otherwise established cosmopolitanism. On this point, the EU's prolific search in polling for public support and proof of developing 'European identity' is, we would suggest, largely misplaced, creating an artificial concern about the resistance of certain constructions of national 'identity' to Europeanisation. Even taking countries seen as openly problematic to European goals and aspirations – i.e. Britain and Denmark – the normative power agenda was always being achieved. This does not solve the democratic deficit problem: but it does suggest something different to the idea that this deficit or Euroscepticism in Britain or Denmark is a result of their stronger national identities.

A similar story is confirmed by the analysis of everyday social transnationalism in these countries. What part of the cosmopolitanism found in Britain and Denmark that is accounted for by Europeanised practices and which by those that are global in nature is debatable given the limitations of our data, but we have shown there is *prima facie* little to suggest differences on these sources between Britain and Denmark, or Britain and Germany. Put another way, Europeanisation and globalisation are closely interlinked as a more general internationalisation of social practices affecting all. We do not extend upon Mau's (2008) clear findings about the geography of German globalisation and cosmopolitanism which, in relation to Savage et al's findings on Britain (2005), do point to the country's different positioning in the world (see also Savage et al, 2019). We would suggest, though, that 'varieties of capitalism' arguments (Hall and Soskice, 2001) about the differences (in relation to the US economy) of Britain and Germany are exaggerated, certainly in the light of a broader analysis of European values (such as Gerhards) in which Britain and Germany are two of the closest to European norms and largely indistinguishable. Moreover, Denmark is supposedly the exemplar of an anti-American Nordic social democratic model (Esping-Andersen, 1999), yet has a relationship to globalisation that is closest to Britain's. Meanwhile, at the level of transnational practices, on some of the measures uncovered by EUCROSS as well as other research on European mobilities, we show that the British have engaged in transnational practices in Europe as much if not often more than their ostensibly more enthusiastically European neighbours.

Of course, Britain voted to leave the EU, supposedly confirming politically a national distinctiveness that apparently had little basis in the

everyday sociological values and practices we have studied. This situation is, we submit, a particular instance of a more general problem raised by our comparative analysis. Political identification or support for the EU may have drifted increasingly apart from the sociological reality of values and practices that have been fostered by European integration. This problem is often seen as a problem about the European construction in terms of ‘democratic deficit’, but this might well be turned round and seen rather as a problem of democracy failing to respond adequately to the growing internationalisation of globally and regionally integrated societies. As we have seen with Euroscepticism in highly transnational and globalised nations such as Britain and Denmark, this problem has provided a great deal of political opportunity for nationalist politicians. With Brexit, we may have reached a tipping point in which this highly manipulated anti-European hostility starts to be corrosive, not only of support for the EU, but also for the cosmopolitan values that Europeanisation has hitherto helped to extend and anchor across the continent.

This issue clearly poses a significant question for normative political theory on European democracy. We have also suggested that the overweening focus in EU studies on a thinly sociological notion of ‘European identity’ has not helped political scientists get to grips with this question. Rather, we suggest the sociology of the European Union ought to focus on extending empirical approaches documenting and mapping horizontal or everyday Europeanisation (i.e. Heidenreich, 2019; Recchi et al, 2019) in order to better understand the corrosive paradox identified in this article. Comparative studies of Euroscepticism and populism (i.e. de Vries, 2018; Vachudova, 2021), have identified many political reasons why the European Union is at risk from political hostility to further transnational integration. The British exit may ultimately be explained not by its distinctive degree of Euroscepticism, let alone its ‘national culture’, but contingent factors leading to an unexpected one-off political result in a unique referendum. But this is not to suggest that a Dexit, Frexit, or Nexit might not be possible under the right political conditions. Future research on the EU should consider the interrelation of sociological behaviour and political opinion in these countries in a wider comparative framework of research on social transnationalism in Europe. Whatever the rights and wrongs of EU membership, it is undoubtedly not healthy for democracy that everyday cross-national cosmopolitanism and electoral expressions of disaffection and political nationalism be so far apart.

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