

Public opinion and European security and defense policy¹

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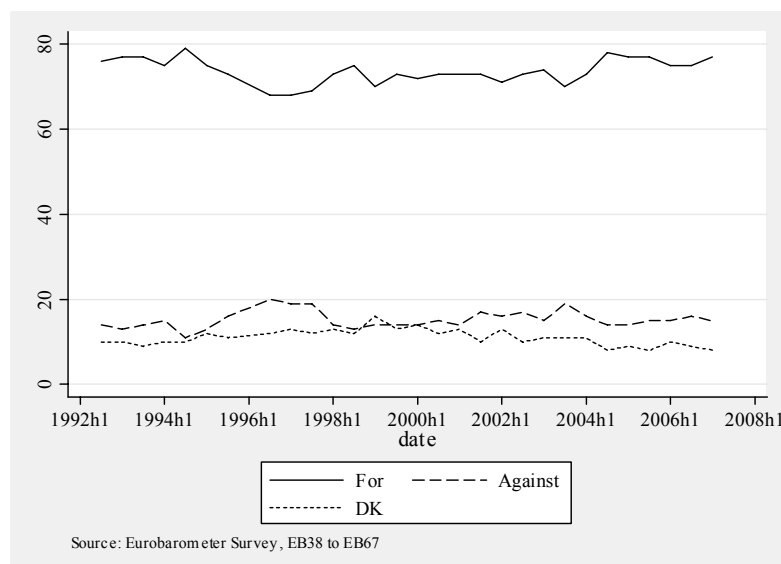
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Introduction

The strong increase in security cooperation between European countries after the Cold war is one of the most important phenomena in contemporary international politics according to the neorealist, Seth Jones (2003: 3). Furthermore, the development of the ESDP (European Security and Defense Policy) was quite rapid and surprised many observers (Ojanen 2006: 57). After long decades of failure, the Maastricht Treaty created a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1991. It's not until 1998 that the military section would develop with the launching of the ESDP that has since progressed rapidly: the creation of politico-military institutions in the EU, EU's civil and military operations, and the creation of the European Defense Agency...

According to Jolyon Howorth (2001) and Hanna Ojanen (2006), public opinion's support and the desire of European public opinion for cooperation in defense is one of the principal catalysts of ESDP development. According to the Eurobarometer surveys, the support for the European security and defense policy is very high. In 2007, more than three-quarters of Europeans (77 %) respond positively to the question: « for each proposition, please tell me if you are for or against: a common security and defense policy for the member States of the European Union », with 8 % of those questioned who do not give their opinion.

Figure 1: Support for a common defense and security policy in Europe (%), 1992-2006.



The second characteristic of the support by Europeans for the ESDP is the high level of constancy since the beginning of the 1990s. It is systematically superior to 70% of those

Europeans questioned, except in 1996-97 when the rate falls to 68-69 %. Thanks particularly to the contribution of the new member states, the rate has been situated above 75 % since 2004.

Wagner (2005) argues that the support of public opinion is one of the three pillars of democratic legitimacy for the ESDP. The approval and the support of public opinion appears decisive in the pursuit of the development of European defense both from the point of view of the legitimacy of the ESDP (Belot 2005) as well as the political, human and financial efforts devoted to it (Esper & al. 2007, Heisbourg 2000). The public opinion support can facilitate the integration in one domain or another, as on the contrary, strong euroscepticism can handicap the deepening of European cooperation. Eichenberg and Dalton (1993) highlight how the preferences of citizens influence the choice of those domains most likely to undergo increased integration at the European level. "The public's view generally defines the acceptable bounds of politics, within which political elites can resolve the remaining controversies" (Dalton 1988: 2). This confirms observations established in the American case "The President, Congress, and the State Department typically make foreign policy within ideological boundaries determined by American values and priorities. In other words, public opinion determines the broad framework within which foreign affairs are debated" (Glynn & al. 1999).

In the case of the ESDP, a gap exists between the extent of support and the rather relative progress of the ESDP since 1998. According to some scholars, the high degree of support by public opinion in Eurobarometer surveys does not result in a real agreement with the ESDP, but more a superficial agreement, a sort of permissive consensus (Wagner 2005, Tournier 2004). Yet, few studies have been dedicated to the logics of ESDP support compared to European integration as a global process or the common currency As Harald Schoen (2008: 5) asserted recently: « in summary, though priori research has produced interesting results, we still do not know much about the sources of public opinion on common European policies in foreign affairs and defense ».

The goal of this paper is to contribute to filling in the gaps on the knowledge of public opinion on the ESDP and on the facets of support of European citizens for the ESDP. The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 displays the main testable hypotheses useful to evaluate the determinants of ESDP support. Section 3 presents both the empirical strategy and

data. Based on a Eurobarometer Survey, we estimate three models in section 4 and discuss results.

2- Logics of ESDP support: testable hypotheses

The explanatory factors of the support for the ESDP stem from earlier works on the logics of support for foreign policy in general, the logics of support for European integration and the specific work on the ESDP. In the most recent article on the subject, Harald Schoen stresses that the systematic absence of earlier works does not allow us to « adopt a tailor-made model of support for common policies in this area » (Schoen 2008: 7). This paper will concentrate on three series of factors in order to explain the support for the ESDP: military variables, linked mainly to the perception of threats; institutional variables, centered on the division of the level of decision-making between the EU, the national governments and NATO in the domain of defense; political and socio-economic variables (partisan identification).

2.1. Military and threat variables.

With regards to the support for European integration in general, we can put forward that the support for the ESDP and the attitudes toward the military dimension of the European construction are strongly influenced by citizens' perceived threats. Paradoxically, this question has not given rise to detailed research. Tatiana Kostadinova (2000) shows however, thanks to a multivariate analysis, that threat perception clearly explains the national variations in support for NATO from Central and Eastern European countries in 1995. Public attitudes toward defense policy are influenced by evaluations concerning goods such as national security (Carrubba and Singh 2004), especially national threats faced by nations (Hutchinson and Gibler 2007). Schoen (2008) proposes a « utilitarian model » of support according to which support for common defense policies should be increased by perceived threats to national security. To test this model, Schoen includes a dummy variable that takes the value 1 if countries have experienced military interference in internal affairs since WW II and 0 otherwise. This measure is limited in the sense that it does not make the link between actual perceptions of threats and the attitudes towards the ESDP, but infers the threat perceptions from a particular historical experience. Moreover, it concerns a singular experience (military interference in internal affairs) that does not concern the main field of action of the ESDP (conflict crisis management, fighting against transnational threats). The data from the

Eurobarometer survey 54.1 allows for a much more precise analysis in making effectively the link between the different threats perceived by EU citizens and their support for the ESDP by working from individual data. Schoen concludes that « external threat considerably increases the support for a common defense policy, coordinated policies in international crises and a rapid military force » and that « external threats make EU citizens more inclined to endorse integration in this domain » (Schoen 2008: 15-23).

The first group of variable brings together military factors that might contribute to the support of a common defense policy by European public opinion. For example, we take into account the following question: « *In the context of a common European security and defense policy, would you prefer one single European army which would replace national armies?* » (Question 57). We expect here a positive sign from this variable as it suggests the following hypothesis :

H1: The more public opinion is favorable to abandoning a national army, the more support for a European security and defense policy increases and acts as a national substitute.

< insert table 1 >

Then, we retained a certain number of variables from the security context such as the nature of the threat and its suitability with the existence and the effectiveness of a common defense policy, and the role of a European army. As pertains to the first explanatory variable, linked to the fear of threats to the security of people, we have codified the responses to question 52: « *Here is a list of things that some people say they are afraid of. For each of these, please tell me if, personally, you are afraid of it, or not?* ».

The responses to this question, brought together in table 2, give a general idea of the hierarchy of threats in 2000.

< insert Table 2 >

Three types of threats stand out distinctly for Europeans: organized crime (for 79% of them), an accident in a nuclear plant (77, 4%) and terrorism (73, 5%). With the exception of the nuclear accident, the transnational dimension of the two other threats reinforces the idea of a common action to reduce, or even to eliminate negative externalities associated with such threats to European populations. It is also surprising to see that amongst the countries that are worried about a nuclear plant accident, Portugal, Greece and to a lesser extent Italy do not

have or have very few (1 nuclear reactor in Italy) nuclear plants. This result seems to indicate a rather anxious nature in these three Mediterranean countries. On the other hand, the fear of terrorist acts is shared both by those countries sensitive to national terrorism (Spain, Ireland, France, and the UK) and those countries classed as neutral

As such we have formulated the following testable hypothesis:

H2: Confronted with the existence of polymorphic threats, the stronger the fear of the threats, the stronger the support for a common and global reaction characterized by the ESDP is.

We expect thus that the sign of each of these variables be positive. In other words, the more the feeling of the threat, whatever it may be, is high, the more support for the ESDP can constitute a military response.

In order to control the perception of the role of the army for those who responded, we have take into account the responses to question 53: « *For each of the following, please tell me if you think it is one of the roles of the army, or not?* ». Respondents advance three main roles for armed forces: - Defending the country/the territory; - Preparing for wars and fighting and - keeping or re-establishing peace in the world.

Expected signs for these three variables remain ambiguous because no theory allows us to settle on an expected and empirically verified relationship in other studies. In fact, territorial defense is a goal that is justified in a national, even state-centered perspective. Yet, here, the absence of a country « Europe » as such militates for the absence of explanatory power for this variable. We can thus deduce the following hypothesis:

H3: The more territorial defense is put forth as a role for the army, the lower the support for the ESDP should be.

In the same perspective, the preparation for war should theoretically be the responsibility of national decision-making. The decision thus remains intergovernmental and reduces the field of action of the ESDP. This is why; we put forth the following hypothesis:

H4: the more the preparation for war is considered a role for the army, the weaker support for the ESDP should be.

On the other hand, it is possible to admit that peacekeeping or peacemaking in the world is an argument in favor of an operational ESDP to support the foreign policy of the EU. Besides, almost 83% of people questioned confirmed such a role for the army. This is why; we can establish a fifth hypothesis:

H5: the more peacekeeping is considered a role for the army, the higher the support for the ESDP should be.

At the same time as the definition of the role of the army, we took into account the trust accorded by European public opinion to the army as an institution. Here we put forth the hypothesis that:

H6: the higher the level of trust in the army, the higher the level of support for a common defense should be.

In order to distinguish the goal of the common defense policy with the level of preference desired for this policy, we have introduced the response to question 31: « *Among a list of actions that the European Union could undertake, please tell me, if in your opinion, 'Maintaining peace and security in Europe' should be a priority, or not? »*. This question presents a methodological advantage. It allows for the measurement of the consistency of opinions according to the famous minimalist consensus. In verifying that public opinion shares the same views on this European priority, we should then be able to control the stability of preferences. We pose the following hypothesis:

H7: the more people admit that the EU has established as a priority preserving the peace and security in Europe, the higher the support for the ESDP should be.

2.2. Institutional variables: decision-making and support for ESDP

The division of decision-making powers in the field of European security and defense policy requires considerable knowledge of European institutions. In the same way that the common currency or the European Economic Space contributes to accelerating the process of European integration, the security and defense policy is liable to participate in this integration momentum. This is why taking into account the level of decision-making desired in defense policy sheds light on the expected role of the EU. The degree of integration in military decision-making still being very limited, we will verify the strength of the intergovernmental model already practiced today. Essentially, this question depends on the Europeanization process expected from the ESDP. Thus, we have taken into account the response to question 30: « *In defense area, do you think that decisions should be made by the government (0), or made jointly within the European Union (1)?* ».

After having coded this response in a discrete manner,³ we formulated a new testable hypothesis:

H8: The more the government is expected to be the principal decider for defense matters compared to the EU, the less support for the common defense policy should be high.

As well, the Eurobarometer survey 54.1 offers the possibility to control the previous hypothesis by exploiting an additional question on the same theme. Question 54 refines the hypothesis H7 by proposing 3 levels of decision: « *In your opinion, should decisions concerning European defense policy be taken by national governments, by NATO or by the European Union?* ». By combining the response to questions 30 and 54, we observe unexpected results (table 4.5) in the sense that only 44.5% of people who responded « national » to question 30 chose national decision-making for the question 54. In other words, there is incoherence and an inconsistency in responses as 37.8% of respondents desire simultaneously a national and a European level. The role of NATO is an alternative that is not given in question 30 which allows those from more “Atlantist” countries to choose it. However the different formulation of both questions leads to maintain ambiguity on this issue.

<insert Table 3 >

We seek to test a second hypothesis on the level of decision in verifying if:

H9: The more decisions should be taken in a non-EU framework (e.g. national level or in NATO), the weaker the support for the ESDP.

Different theories suggest that the phase of enlargement leads to the reduction of the risk of conflicts with countries that used to « threaten » even if certain amongst them are well rooted Atlantists. Based on question Q.39 formulated as follows: « *Thinking about the enlargement of the European Union to include new countries, do you tend to agree (1) or tend to disagree (0) with the statement that the more countries there are in the European Union, the more peace and security will be guaranteed in Europe ?* », this question amounts to testing the following hypothesis in the context; it should be remember, of the pre-membership of 10 member states:

H10: The more the people questioned are in agreement with the idea of the endogenisation of a neighboring threat, the more the ESDP is legitimate.

³ The variable takes the value 1 for decisions that public opinion wants to be take within the EU.

In addition to the question on enlargement, we decided to retain a variable linked to future perceptions of citizenship. Through the question: « *In the near future do you see yourself as: National only, National and European, European and national, European only* », we will be able to articulate the following hypothesis

H11: The stronger the feeling of European identity, the higher the support for the ESDP.

2.3. Socio-economic and political variables

Socio-economic variables are often reduced to the status of control variables. Such a perspective is not truly relevant concerning foreign and defense policies. Actually, the fact that public opinion is socially constructed is a fundamental result to the extent that it constitutes an interrogation of conventional theory (Allmond-Lippman consensus). Holsti recalls : « those who hold that an ill-informed public possesses little more than ‘non-attitudes’ about politics, and especially about world affairs, would expect that the demographic correlates of attitudes to be weak and unstable. If much of the public responds to foreign affairs in an almost random manner and if their reaction to such issues are anchored in little more than the mood of the , moment, then one would not expect to find powerful and enduring correlations between demographic attributes and foreign policy attitudes. » (Holsti 2004: 163). Individual personality traits also participate in the formation of individual preferences on questions of international security and foreign policy (Hermann and Tetlock 1999, Schoen 2007), but this question is not addressed here. The accumulation of works carried out in the last 30 years shows that American attitudes are at least partially rooted in demographic characteristics: gender, especially for defense spending and the use of force, with a reduced effect of the gender cleavage in case of peacekeeping missions, age, education, race in American surveys. « Such characteristics as gender, education, gender, age and race or ethnicity appear to systematically, albeit modestly, anchor the variation in how Americans perceive and respond to security concerns over time » (Herron and Jenkins-Smith 2006 : 108). But, the origin of attitudes on foreign policy can also and even mainly be found in the values and beliefs of individuals (Jenkins-Smith & al. 2004, Ziegler 1987). Holsti, synthesizing numerous works, insists, as such, on the weight of ideology in the formation of the attitudes of American citizens toward international politics. Herron and Smith confirm this for recent periods with regards to the nuclear and terrorist cases (Herron and Jenkins-Smith 2006). It concerns one of the most robust results of studies of American public opinion.

Celine Belot (2005, for her part, stresses that the support for the CFSP and international action of the EU is sociologically determined. One of the most decisive factors of citizens' support for European integration in general and international action of the EU in particular, remains nationality, which is confirmed by general studies on the influence of nationality on support for the EU (Kritzinger 2003). Above all, the support for « a common foreign policy» is higher for independent workers, managers and those with more education. The EU elicits, above all, elite support (Belot 2002, Hooghe 2003). The works on support for a European security and defense policy tend to confirm these results. At the beginning of the 1990s, Manigart and Marlier (1993) underscore that national variations are most significant with regards to social variables (age, gender, level of education, socio-economic status) or values. As the theory of cognitive mobilization developed by Inglehart (1970) suggested, the support for common decisions within the European Community in the domain of defense increases with the level of education, revenues and profession. Men are slightly more favorable than women (53 % versus 50 %) and age does not seem to have an effect. But the most significant division is the national one. In 2003, the survey Eurobarometer 60.1 confirms these results. Professional status, gender, and above all, the level of education and the opinion on the membership of ones' own country in the EU orients upward the results in favor of decisions made in common within the EU. The social structuring of public opinion in 15 member states is very similar when those people are questioned on support for ESDP. 66 % of women speak out in favor of «a common security and defense policy for the members of the EU » versus 73 % of men, the difference is also in the rate of those who did not answer that is higher for women (15 % versus 8 for men). Managers and independent professionals are more favorable to the ESDP than retirees, manual workers and the unemployed (74 % versus 66 %). But, there again the difference results essentially from those who do not answer. The gap is more distinct concerning the level of education. Those individuals that continued to study beyond 20 years of age approved the ESDP at a rate of 77 % versus 64 % and 20 % for those who stopped school before the age of 15. Quite logically, the “Europhiles”, those that feel that membership in the EU is a good thing support massively the ESDP(85 %), two times more than those who consider membership in the EU as a bad (42 % of support and 48 % opposition). In 2007, in a Europe of 27 countries, for a global support of 77 % of public opinion favorable to the ESDP, respondents present a strong socio-demographic homogeneity⁴. The division according to the

⁴ Eurobarometer 66, Sept. 2007.

level of education remains the most significant: 67 % of those persons who ceased their studies before the age of 15 support the ESDP versus 80 % for those who continued their studies up to around 20 years of age⁵. The 55 year-olds and over are also less numerous in their support for the ESDP (71 % against 78 % for the 15-24 year olds), without this translating into an increase in opinions against compared to the average, but by an increase in those who did not answer. But, this is a descriptive analysis, using rough data. To bypass this aggregate analysis, our paper aims at measuring the influence of such independent attributes on the ESDP support. In summary, what is pointed by the aggregate analysis could be shift into the famous ecological fallacy. That is why we have decided to use individual data and then improve the knowledge of (marginal) individual attitudes toward ESDP.

A number of authors have shown that the ideological dimension plays a structuring role in matters of defense. Not only did Holsti (2004) demonstrate that the intervention of American armed forces gathered more support in conservative ranks, Goertzel (1987), Bartels (1994) also verified that people who identify themselves as right-wing more strongly supported the commitment to military spending. Nonetheless, the process of European integration admits a more marked predisposition for those from the center whereas the attachment to national values remains very high for those identified on the right. As such, we express the following hypothesis:⁶

H12: The more a person identifies themselves as right or left of the center on the political spectrum, the less that person is likely to support the ESDP.

The interest of individual data in the Eurobarometer survey is to have at one's disposal elements characteristic of respondents on the social and economic levels. Accordingly, we have used some of this information as control variables in our estimated models. In terms of control, we mean those variables whose introduction is not dependent on a theoretical hypothesis as such but whose absence skews the estimate. Amongst these variables, we have retained the nationality of those polled, the gender, age, the level of education (measured by their age when leaving the education system)⁷, the size of the household, and the level of monthly revenues (measured in quartiles) With regards to this last variable, the

⁵ Here again the deviation is essentially linked to non-responses, the less educated have a rate of non-response (15 %) that is two times higher than the average, and three times higher than those who continued their studies past the age of 20 (4 %)

⁶ We retained the classification of the survey EB 54.1 which harmonizes the voting intentions in the following way : 1 Left-wing ; 2 Centre ; 3 Right-wing , 4 No position.

⁷ The variable is coded in the following way: 1 up to 14 years / 2- 15 ans / 3- 16 years / 4- 17 years/ 5- 18 years / 6- 19 years / 7- 20 years / 8- 21years / 9- 22 ans et + / 10- Still studying.

Eurobarometer survey proposes two distinct measures of revenues of those polled. The first measurement indicates the level of salary according to a national scale. The second one, that we have retained, indicates the distribution of salaries by quartile. This indicator of distribution provides the advantage of facilitating comparisons between the distribution of one country and another because it concerns the relative positioning and not the level. For this reason, we have introduced this measure of the wealth for those polled. .

Before presenting the results, it is possible to have a general idea of the distribution of all of the explanatory variables discussed in this section and their dispersal characteristics (average, standard deviation, maximum, minimum) by looking at Appendix 1.

3. Data and empirical strategy

Our results rely on the exploitation of the Eurobarometer survey 54.1 (defense special). After having presented the general methodology of our statistical approach, we will explain the main trends for each of the variables used in the two surveys, and then we will develop the hypotheses to be tested. Finally we will discuss the results obtained.

3.1. The Eurobarometer survey 54.1⁸

The knowledge of factors that explain the support or lack thereof by Europeans for the defense and security policy remains, at the very least, embryonic for the moment. Amongst those rare works, the study of Kernic et al. (2002) is the pioneer, using the aggregated results of the Eurobarometer survey 54.1. Despite the size of the work produced, the statistical exploitation of the authors is limited nonetheless to a descriptive analysis of aggregated data. In other words, the authors primarily stressed the analysis of descriptive results drawn from the survey without arriving at the identification of heavy trends and thus understanding how European public opinion is structured. From a methodological point of view, this approach is disappointing as the authors had at their disposal new material (the 8 defense items from the survey Eurobarometer 54.1) liable to finely assess the explanatory factors of the emergence of a request for a European security and defense policy. Moreover, the descriptive analysis contributes very few new elements with respect to the usual Eurobarometer surveys and the

⁸ Cf. annex to the report to the Eurobarometer 54.1 survey that can be consulted on the site : http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_146_fr.pdf

reports that accompany their publication in which public opinion is questioned on its support or not for the ESDP. .

From this Eurobarometer survey, for which we had access to the individual responses for each of the 15 countries questioned (approximately 16000 observations)⁹; we carried out a first careful examination of those variables liable to determine the support for the European defense policy.

3.2. *Logit estimation*

Before we go any further in the statistical analysis, it seems useful to briefly define the method used and to specify its contribution. It hinges on the estimate of a functional relationship of a dichotomous nature. In effect, we seek to explain why public opinion answered “for” to the following question: « Are you for or against member states of the EU having a common security and defense policy? ». It’s precisely from this dichotomous choice (for or against) that we construct our dependent variables. Essentially, this means determining the influence of a number of independent variables (X_i, Z_i) on the probability that public opinion responds « for » (dependent variable Y_i). We thus decided to explain the probability of positive responses to this question that only called for a discrete response (for/against). A logit estimation is then performed under the following specification:

$$\Pr(Y_i=1) = \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 Z_i + \dots + \epsilon_i \text{ (for each respondent } i)$$

The goal is hereforth to measure the importance of certain events or sociological, political, economic and military situations in the variation of ESDP support. Amongst these events, some possess a stronger explanatory power than others. In order to deal with this issue, it is necessary to verify that such factors are independent. Consequently, we sought firstly to identify the group of variables that we have considered as independent and explicative of ESDP support. In other words, public opinion’s support of the ESDP refers to a series of explanatory factors of an institutional, sociological or even geopolitical nature. The presence of multinomial variables leads us to conduct multinomial logistical estimations in order to take into account multiple choice answers.

3.3. *Dependant variables*

⁹ The individual data was obtained through the *Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research* (ICPSR), of the University of Michigan.

The first stage of our statistical analysis consists of locating in the Eurobarometer survey the variable that we want to explain. If at first, this approach seems trivial, the choice of this variable is nonetheless fundamental for the progression of our research. Indeed, we have retained two variables that give information on the judgment that public opinion can bear on the establishment of a security and defense policy to fight against the emergence or the intensification of threats discusses. The first of these two variables concerns the support for the ESDP and is formulated in the following manner: « *The member states of the European Union should have one common foreign policy towards countries outside the European Union?* » (Question 29).

The second variable, that we seek to explain, contradicts the previous variable in the sense that it abandons the framework of a policy in the sense of a public policy in order to focus on the means of this policy. Therefore, we have retained the question relating to the rapid reaction force of 60,000 men to which those polled were asked to respond: « *Recently, the European Union has decided to set up a swift intervention force of 60,000 men. Personally, do you think it is: 1- A very good thing, 2- A fairly good thing, 3- A fairly bad thing, 4- A very bad thing?* » (question 58)

Contrary to question 29, the formulation calls for a multiple choice. As a result, the treatment of this question implies conducting multinomial logit estimation by isolating one of the four responses as a reference. For example, we interpret question 58 by comparing items 2, 3 and 4 in relation to item 1¹⁰.

The operationalization of these two variables consists for the first one in recoding responses in a discrete choice and giving the value of 1 to responses “for” and 0 for the responses “against ». In this way, we seek to explain why the dependant variable takes the value of 1 by the intermediary of a logistic estimation that, contrary to OLS estimation (ordinary least square), uses a discrete dependant variable (and not continuous)¹¹. In return, no particular treatment is imagined for the second variable. Table 4 presents for each country the distribution of the two dependent variables. Accordingly, we are able to observe the position of each country in terms of the European average, but also measure the variation around that average.

¹⁰ In order to not weigh down the statistical presentation in this cahpiter, we decided to present prioritarily the results of the model with the explained variable being support for the ESDP. Nontheless, the results with the variable RRF are available by contacting the authors (martial.foucault@umontreal.ca).

¹¹ Cf. Greene (2002).

<insert Table 4 >

A score of 1 signifies a very high level of support for the ESDP. A score of 0.854 signifies that 85.4% of the French support the ESDP.

Two founding countries of the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg arrive at the head of the countries that are the strongest partisans of a European security and defense policy with a rate of support of around 90% of people questioned, 10 points better than the community average (79%). This result is more or less in accordance with the strongly integrationist position in these two countries, including in the domain of defense. Inversely, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the UK diverge by almost 20 percentage points from the European average and fundamentally support only very timidly the idea of such a policy in Europe. This last result necessitates two commentaries. Firstly, we find nations simultaneously faithful to the principle of neutrality (Denmark and Finland) and an « atlantist » nation (the UK) whose position did not really evolve in the ESDP process until after 1999, only a few months before this poll. One last interesting element merits being mentioned. There is a very high variation in the opinions in the four countries the least inclined to support the ESDP. With standard deviations of around 0.45 for an average of 0.5; a very strong dispersion, a very strong heterogeneity even of opinions stands out in these four countries. This result reinforces the idea of stability for the EU, with the exception of the four countries whose heterogeneity of collective preferences does not sully the general trend.

In observing simultaneously the support for the ESDP and the support for the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF), unexpected relationships emerge. For example, those countries that grant a massive support for the ESDP are not necessarily those that express a very favorable opinion for the RRF and vice versa for those countries that show little support for the ESDP. As such, the UK, is the first country to give a very positive credit to the RRF (2.11) while the EU average at 15 is around 1.9. Looking at these differences, we have attempted to establish, in an exploratory manner, if the relationship between support for the ESDP and support for the RRF are correlated. In order to do this, we have conducted a Spearman test in comparing the rank of each response between the two explained variables in the form of pairs. This test concludes to the existence of a negative and significant correlation between the two variables, testifying to the absence of independence. The negative sign of this correlation means that «the higher the support for the ESDP, the less the RRF is considered a good thing. ». This

result does not hold as a general law since this correlation can in turn be affected by other parameters.

<insert Table 5 >

In order to illustrate the distribution of the relationships of support, Table 5 highlights the predominance of the response « fairly a good thing » for the creation of a RRF independent of the opinion with regards to the ESDP. Such a relation of dependence is confirmed by the correlation test (-0.27).

In the end, we extracted from the Eurobarometer survey two dependent variables to help us better understand the perception of Europeans with regards to a general security and defense policy (ESDP) and one of the tangibles means of this policy (RRF)¹². The interest in looking to explain these two items comes from the paradigm of the consistency of opinions on a complex issue whose enunciation during a poll can lead those interviewed to refine their perception on a tangible issue (RRF) as compared to the general framework of use of the RRF (meaning the ESDP) .

3.4. Independent and control variables

Once the dependant variables have been identified, we need to select the explanatory variables for our model. The explicative variables will allow us to test a certain number of hypotheses on the influence of some determinants. For this, independent variables have been gathered into three families (military, institutional, political and socio-economic variables). Before presenting these results, it is possible to have a general idea of the distribution of all the explanatory variables of the model by looking at Appendix 1.

4. Results

We first estimated a “naïve” model that only takes into account threat variables and a few control variables (Table 6). Then, we enriched this model with a number of explanatory variables in order to test hypotheses H1 to H7 (Table 7) then hypotheses H1 to H12 (Table 8).

¹² Only the first dependent variable is statistically analyzed in this paper.

Finally, we will summarize the set of the hypotheses tested in Table 9 in order to verify those that are empirically validated.

< insert Table 6 >

The main result involves the weak explicative power of the different threats. However, we put forth that certain fears (or threats) reinforce the support for the ESDP. Amongst these, the fear of a nuclear conflict, a terrorist act or even the fear of nuclear and biological proliferation significantly raises the European support for the creation of a common security and defense policy. It's important to remember that this survey was taken in 2000, only a few months after the founding act of the ESDP at Saint-Malo in December 1998. On the other hand, the fear of a conventional war significantly reduces support for the ESDP. This result suggests that the risk of war is still linked to the image of an inter-state conflict. In this sense, the perspective of a common defense does not seem to reduce such a risk as it remains associated with a confrontation at the national level. The other factors of fear (world war, ethnic conflicts within the EU or even epidemics) in no way explain support for the ESDP. The result regarding the absence of a relationship between the fear of ethnic conflicts within the EU and support for the ESDP is surprising given the conflict and ethnic exactions committed in the Former Yugoslavia by Serbia. But, no theoretical expectation was formulated with regards to this variable.

The second family of determinants in this simplified model (modelb) is related to the control variables. The level of education does not have a positive and significant effect on the support for the security and defense policy. This result is counter intuitive to the results of Gabel (1998), but in accordance with those of Gabel and Scheve (2007) regarding elite communication support for European integration through the individual opinion formation. If there is no theory that exists that allows for the anticipation of a particular effect of the influence of gender on the support for the ESDP, results reveal that being male does increase support for the ESDP. This result has to be put into perspective with the works of Shapiro and Mahajan (1986) and Verba & al. (1967, 1995) who determine that women, proportionally more liberal than men, are less likely to support conservative values like defense, whether it be military spending or the use of force. Another explanation is linked to the risk adverse nature of women which entails a de facto aversion to high risk military activities.

However, we obtain an unexpected result according to the age of the respondents. In point of fact, the higher the age, the weaker the support for the ESDP. This result is unexpected as one of the principal motivations justifying the ESDP is precisely the reduction of the risk of conflict within the EU as it is drawn today. Here, a first explanation leads us to national identity that predominates in the elderly. A correlation ($\text{corr}=0,13^{**}$) between age and national identity confirms this intuition. A second explanation can be found in the knowledge acquired concerning the field of action of the ESDP.

The economic structure of those polled, measured by the revenues distribution in quartiles, indicates that compared to the first quartile of revenues (top 25 percent of the distribution), only the people belonging to the 4th quartile of the distribution of revenues positively support the ESDP.

We voluntarily omitted a certain number of variables apt to better explain support for the ESDP in order to firstly have at our disposition a naïve model that we can now improve step by step.

< insert Table 7 >

Table 7 shows results of the estimate of ESDP support including first off the military variables and the control variables in order to test hypotheses H1 to H7. The fear of terrorism ($\beta=0,194^*$) and the fear of the development of epidemics ($\beta=0,198^*$) remain two significant facets of support for the ESDP. In the absence of a theoretical framework allowing for the explanation of a positive relationship between the threat of epidemics and the support for the ESDP, we can state that the respondents associate this type of fear with a security threat to the European space. In this sense, according to the theory of the common pool (Ostrom 1990), the transnational externalities of such a calamity suggest a coordination process, even a cooperation, of States in order to fight against its development. Consequently, resorting to a community policy seems to be the response put forth by those polled for a threat with overflowing effects, just like the terrorist threat. Nonetheless, the fear of a conventional war and organized crime remain two threats that significantly reduce the support for the ESDP. If the negative relationship between conventional war and the ESDP had been expected theoretically, the unexpected negative relationship between organized crime and the ESDP brings up an alternative explanation. Rather than considering the cross-border effects justifying a global anti-crime policy, this result tends to demonstrate that opinions perceive

crime as a threat whose eradication is more dependent on an internal security policy than an external security policy.

But, once variables of geographic control have been introduced, the terrorist threat is no longer an explanatory factor. This means that the introduction of variables from each country perturb by “absorbing” all of the model’s information on exclusively national considerations. From a methodological point of view, there is no consensus on the withdrawal of these control variables in the framework of public opinion analysis. As such, we decided to keep them (model 2b and 2c), confronting them with model 2a (without the control variable of nationality). The addition of these variables allows, amongst other things, to verify that countries such as Ireland, the UK, Greece, Sweden or even Austria support the ESDP less strongly than France (model 2b). Inversely, the model 2c measures the attitudes of support for the ESDP comparatively in Denmark and shows that no other country is more opposed to the ESDP than this country which pulled out of the ESDP

The second part of the table highlights the addition of new explanatory variables inherent to the expected role of the ESDP and to the mechanisms of public decision-making in matters of security and defense.

The variables (permanent RRF, RRF, national armies) characterize hypothesis H1 on the role desired for the EU in the framework of the ESDP. In comparing the five possible choices¹³; a very clear configuration appears in favor of a single European army as a determining factor of the support for ESDP. Compared to a single European army, all the other scenario for the shape of the ESDP are liable to reduce in a significant fashion support for the ESDP. In other words, the more the ESDP depends on a strongly integrated structure (a single European army), the higher the level of support. Moreover, a gradation of the other configurations can be observed, relying on a European rapid reaction force complementary to national armies certainly reduces support for the ESDP ($\beta=-0,2305^*$), but in a lesser proportion that the existence of an occasional rapid reaction force ($\beta=-0,843^{***}$) or a solely national army ($\beta = -1,529^{***}$).

< insert Table 8 >

¹³ Cf. details of the responses of the question 57 in Table 1.

Concerning the institutional level of decision-making on questions of European security and defense, the Eurobarometer survey suggests levels of decision-making: national governments, NATIO, the EU and « Others ». It is expected that the EU be a positive factor ($\beta > 0$) in ESDP support. In fact, the variable ESDP_UE is significantly different from 0 and demonstrates a positive relationship (0,870) as expected when we do not take into account the effects of nationality. At the same time, all the other variables characteristic of the different institutional alternatives in decision-making (within NATO or within each national government) are not significant, reinforcing our preceding result. However, we have included another complementary variable to the question of the desired institutional level. This question relates to the level of decision-making desired in the case of the commitment of military troops. In this way we want to verify that membership in the ESDP can signify that national governments are ready to give up national decision-making in regards to the deployment of military troops in the framework of the ESDP. As such, we introduced the variable (Intervention ESDP decision) which gives those surveyed the following two choices: "Only those countries whose governments are ready to send troops" or "All the members of the EU including those who are not ready to send troops." If our normative hypothesis of « complete » European integration is validated, we expect a positive relationship between response 2 and ESDP support: the more people desire that national governments take part in the decision-making on the commitment of military troops, the weaker the support for the ESDP will be. The value of the coefficient ($\beta = 0.2372^{**}$) attached to this variable confirms thus our hypothesis.

The last explicative variable, the support for European Union enlargement clearly explains support for the ESDP ($\beta = 0.3716^{**}$) suggesting that every wave of enlargement contains an expectation in terms of external security. This result is stable regardless of the model estimated.

Amongst the control variables, age and gender are no longer determining and explanatory variables of ESDP support. However, all of the partial models (models 2a, 2b and 2c) validate the hypothesis on gender, indicating that men are more likely than women to support the ESDP. This result is not however confirmed in the complete model of estimation. On the other hand, education becomes significant with an unexpected negative sign. Habitually, the level of education is a decisive factor in support for European Union policies, European integration or membership in the Euro. The estimated coefficient ($\beta = -0.0387^{**}$) indicates that that later one leaves the education system the less one supports the ESDP. Concerning the

wealth structure of those questioned, no revenue bracket is liable to explain systematically any form of support. We observe in the partial model a tendency towards a strong predisposition for ESPD support in the richest categories. But, this result is reversed in the complete estimation model in which the middle classes (2nd quartile) explain the support for the ESDP better than any other revenue category. Finally, the last aspect of our analysis leads us to question the influence of partisan identification. Here we hypothesize that those who are the most centrist are more likely to support the ESDP compared to « conservatives » because of a marked Europhobia (1992 referendum results + European elections) and compared to those on the left due to a more marked aversion to security and defense questions. Our results partially confirm our hypothesis through the existence of a negative and significant relationship between conservatives and ESDP support compared to centrists. On the other hand, there is no relationship between centrists and support for the ESDP. The penchant for conservatives for questions of security and defense does not seem to compensate for the nationalist effect and thus Europhobia.

To conclude, of the totality of the research hypotheses that we formulated 8 amongst them are validated. Hypothesis H4 is empirically refuted and suggest that territorial defense is a military goal not only inherent to nations but also to the EU as a political organization. Three hypotheses (H3, H9 and H11) are not validated without it being possible to say whether they are contrary to the theory. There is simply no explanatory power for ESDP support for the three variables associated with these hypotheses.

< insert Table 9 >

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Table 1: Desired design for a European Defense Policy

	(%)
One single European army which would replace national armies	18.74
A European swift intervention force which would be permanent un addendum to national armies	40.91
A European swift intervention force which would be put together only when needed	23,48
No European army, but only national armies	16.02
Other	0.85

Source: Eurobarometer Survey54.1 (2000). Question 57 : Which of these would you prefer in the context of a common European security and defense policy?

Table 2: Hierarchy of perceived threats

Threats	Afraid	Not afraid	Obs.
Organized crime	78.99	21.01	15,735
An accident in a nuclear power station	77.44	22.56	15,685
Terrorism	73.53	26.47	15,653
Ethnic conflicts in Europe	66.66	33.34	15,346
Spread of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons of mass destruction	63.15	36.85	15,403
Epidemics	57.79	42.21	15,488
The accidental launch of a nuclear missile	56.29	43.71	15,494
A conventional war in Europe	47.7	52.3	15,357
World war	46.77	53.23	15,684
A nuclear conflict in Europe	46.05	53.95	15,599

Source: Eurobarometer Survey 54.1 (2000).

Table 3: Level of Decision-making and defense policy

(Q.30 / Q.54)	National	NATO	EU	Total
National	3,222	1,285	2,741	7,248
Jointly within EU	971	1,224	3,704	5,899
Total	4,193	2,509	6,445	13,147

Among people (7248) thinking that **defense** decisions should be made by the national government, 1285 people argue that decisions concerning **European defense** policy should be taken by the NATO.

Source: Eurobarometer 54.1 (2000). Questions 30 and 54.

Table 4: Support for ESDP in European Countries

Pays	Obs.	Mean	Sd
France	931	0.854	0.35
Belgium	975	0.906	0.29
Netherlands	911	0.858	0.35
Germany	1,849	0.883	0.32
Italy	905	0.892	0.31
Luxembourg	540	0.900	0.30
Denmark	943	0.599	0.49
Ireland	816	0.711	0.45
UK	1051	0.656	0.48
Greece	922	0.898	0.30
Spain	859	0.885	0.32
Portugal	810	0.858	0.35
Finland	886	0.560	0.50
Sweden	924	0.615	0.49
Austria	869	0.740	0.44
EU 15	14,191	0.790	0.41

Source : Eurobarometer Survey 54.1 (2000).

Table 5: Relationships between ESDP and FIR support

		ESDP		
		For	Against	Total
FIR	Very good thing	405	3 281	3 686
	Good thing	1 187	5 781	6 968
	Bad thing	503	593	1 096
	Very bad thing	400	210	610
	Total	2 495	9 865	12 360

Source: Eurobarometer Survey 54.1 (Autumn 2000)

Spearman's correlation: $\rho = -0.2724^{***}$ ($p > 0,99$)

Table 6: Naïve model estimation

	Model 1a	Model 1b
World war	0.0589	0.1374
Nuclear conflict	0.0760	0.1574*
Conventional war	-0.2179***	-0.2410**
Nuclear proliferation	0.2121***	0.2916***
Ethnic conflicts	-0.0335	-0.0514
Terrorism	0.3270***	0.2902***
Epidemics	0.1169*	0.1016
Organized crime	-0.0659	-0.0993
Education		-0.0136
Sex		0.1337**
Age		-0,0031*
Income (Q2)		-0.0170
Income (Q3)		0.1307
Income (Q4)		0.1675**
Const.	.9914***	1.007***
Pseudo R ²	0.0075	0.0126
$\chi^2(14)$	99.0540	107.4597
Log Likelihood	-6528.49	-4219.73
N	12,676	8,148

Note : Logit estimation. * p<.1, ** p<.05, *** p<.01

Table7 : Partial model estimation

	model 2a	model 2b	model 2c
World war	0.1438	0.0787	0.0787
Nuclear conflict	0.1600	0.1560	0.1560
Conventional war	-0.2557**	-0.2582**	-0.2582**
Nuclear proliferation	0.1842*	0.1685*	0.1685*
Ethnic conflicts	0.0508	0.0818	0.0818
Terrorism	0.1413**	-0.0670	-0.0670
Epidemics	0.1863**	0.1999**	0.1999**
Organized crime	-0.2191*	-0.1683	-0.1683
Permanent FFR (H1)	-0.5232***	-0.3681**	-0.3681**
FFR (if necessary)	-1.3298***	-1.0539***	-1.0539***
National army	-2.3646***	-2.0629***	-2.0629***
Other	-1.7682***	-1.2775**	-1.2775**
Territorial defense (H3)	-0.1591	0.0364	0.0364
Make the war	0.1683**	0.0857	0.0857
Peacekeeping	0.2625**	0.2043**	0.2043**
Trust in army (H6)	0.1539*	0.3934***	0.3934***
Priority EU / peace (H7)	1.0918***	1.1905***	1.1905***
Education	-0.0138	0.0397***	0.0397**
Sex	0.1315**	0.1257*	0.1257*
Age	-0.0029	0.0010	0.0010
Income (Q2)	0.0358	0.1250	0.1250
Income (Q3)	0.1336	0.1804*	0.1804*
Income (Q4)	0.1067	0.2042*	0.2042*
Belgium		0.3783	1.3494***
Netherlands		0.1942	1.7277***
Germany		0.3899**	1.5436***
Italy		0.4411*	1.7393***
Luxembourg		0.7321**	1.7905***
Denmark		-1.3494***	2.0815***
Ireland		-0.6988**	0.6506***
UK		-0.9277***	0.4217**
Greece		0.3714*	1.7207***
Spain		0.5775**	1.9269***
Portugal		-0.1709	1.1785***
Finland		-1.3449***	0.0045
Sweden		-1.1011***	0.2483*
Austria		-0.3708	0.9786***
Cst	0.949***	.3824	-0.966**
chi2	877.7203	1.3e+03	1.3e+03

R ²	0.1302	0,1914	0,1914
Log Likelihood	-2931.90	-2725.61	-2725.61
N	6577	6577	6577

Note : Logit estimation. * p<.1, ** p<.05, *** p<.01

Table 8 : Full Model Estimation

	model 3a	model 3b	model 3c
World war	0.1722	0.0860	0.0860
Nuclear conflict	0.1611	0.1730	0.1730
Conventional war	-0.2214*	-0.2585*	-0.2585*
Nuclear proliferation	0.1437	0.1380	0.1380
Ethnic conflicts	0.0099	0.0606	0.0606
Terrorism	0.1957*	0.0310	0.0310
Epidemics	0.1983*	0.1713**	0.1713**
Organized crime	-0.2116*	-0.1556	-0.1556
Permanent FFR (H1)	-0.2305*	-0.1556	-0.1556
FFR (if necessary)	-0.8438***	-0.6457***	-0.6457***
National army	-1.5298***	-1.3426***	-1.3426***
Other	-0.6839	-0.0908	-0.0908
Territorial defense (H3)	0.0413	0.2849	0.2849
Make the war	0.2010*	0.1551	0.1551
Peacekeeping	0.1483	0.0729	0.0729
Trust in the army (H6)	0.2844**	0.4440***	0.4440***
Priority EU / peace (H7)	0.7961***	0.8569***	0.8569***
National decision (H8)	-2.2380***	-2.0618***	-2.0618***
ESDP_government (H9)	0.1664	-0.1064	-0.1064
ESDP_NATO (H9)	0.3032	0.2266	0.2266
ESDP_EU (H9)	0.8707*	0.5801	0.5801
Enlargement (H10)	0.3716***	0.4423***	0.4423***
Ideology / center (H12)	-0.0173	0.0721	0.0721
Ideology / right-wing (H12)	-0.2574**	-0.2423**	-0.2423*
Intervention ESDP decision	0.2372**	0.1878**	0.1878**
EU_only_H11	0.4222	0.2251	0.2251
Education	-0.0387**	0.0119	0.0119
Genre	-0.0423	-0.0527	-0.0527
Age	-0.0020	0.0015	0.0015
Income (Q2)	0.1723	0.2513*	0.2513*
Income (Q3)	0.1285	0.1652	0.1652
Income (Q4)	0.1377	0.2112	0.2112
Belgium		-	1.3441***
Netherlands		0.1738	1.5178***
Germany		-0.1432	1.2009***
Italy		0.2046	1.5487***
Luxembourg		0.1950	1.5391***
Denmark		0.4613	1.8054***
Ireland		-1.3441***	-
UK		-0.5542*	0.7899***
Greece		-0.9689***	0.3752**

Spain		0.4480	1.7921***
Portugal		0.7380**	2.0821***
Finland		0.1169	1.4610***
Sweden		-0.8573***	0.4868**
Austria		-0.8061***	0.5380**
Cst		-0.2562	1.0879***
	1.522**	1.134*	-2097
chi2	1.4e+03	1.6e+03	1.6e+03
R ²	0,269	0,3034	0,3034
Log Likelihood	-1968.24	-1875.73	-1875.73
N	5257	5257	5257

Note : Logit estimation. * p<.1, ** p<.05, *** p<.01

Table 9: Summary of results

Hypotheses	Validation
H1 : The more public opinion is favorable to abandoning a national army, the more support for a European security and defense policy increases and acts as a national substitute.	True
H2 : Confronted with the existence of polymorphic threats, the stronger the fear of the threats, the stronger the support for a common and global reaction characterized by the ESDP is.	True*
H3 : The more territorial defense is put forth as a role for the army, the lower the support for the ESDP should be	∅
H4 : the more the preparation for war is considered a role for the army, the weaker support for the ESDP should be	False
H5 : the more peacekeeping is considered a role for the army, the higher the support for the ESDP should be	True
H6 : the higher the level of trust in the army, the higher the level of support for a common defense should be	True
H7 : the more people admit that the EU has established as a priority preserving the peace and security in Europe, the higher the support for the ESDP should be	True
H8 : The more the government is expected to be the principal decider for defense matters compared to the EU, the less support for the common defense policy should be high	True
H9 : The more decisions should be taken in a non-EU framework (e.g. national level or in NATO), the weaker the support for the ESDP	∅
H10 : The more the people questioned are in agreement with the idea of the endogenisation of a neighboring threat, the more the ESDP is legitimate	True
The stronger the feeling of European identity, the higher the support for the ESDP	∅
H12: The more a person identifies themselves as right or left of the center on the political spectrum, the less that person is likely to support the ESDP.	True / ∅

* Excepted for a classic war's threat

∅ No significant relation