

Showing Their True Colors?

The Effect of the EU Flag Display on Perceptions of Party Elites' European Attachment¹

by

Delia Dumitrescu

Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg

Delia.dumitrescu@gu.se (corresponding author)

and

Sebastian Adrian Popa

Mannheim Centre for European Social Research, Mannheim University

Sebastian.Popa@mzes.uni-mannheim.de

Abstract

In line with previous evidence that incidental national flag exposure activates nationalistic feelings, incidental exposure to the EU flag can affect citizens' own attachments to Europe. However, we know little of what other inferences citizens make based on the EU flag, especially about those how display it, and how they react when seeing it not in the media but in a partisan context. We conduct a large scale experiment embedded in a Swedish survey in which respondents are exposed to communications from one of two main Swedish parties, containing or not the image of the flag. We find that the simple visual display does little to move perceptions. However, *an active belief* that a party displayed the flag makes citizens perceive some party elites as more attached to Europe. We discuss the implications of the results and future research directions.

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Imagined communities, such as states, need their members to develop a sense of common identity to firmly establish their legitimacy (Anderson, 1991). Group identity increases the subjective value of oneself, of the group's members and of the group itself (e.g., Hogg, 2006). Thus, national identities help forge positive bonds both among citizens and to the political system, which in turn foster long-term political stability (e.g. Norris, 1999). National identity is often linked to nonverbal symbols such as the national flag. Exposure to this symbol activates patriotic and other positive group-centric feelings (Butz, Plant, & Doerr, 2007; Kemmelmeier & Winter, 2008; Schatz & Lavine, 2007) and can also influence electoral support (Kalmoe & Gross, 2015).

The emergence of a common identity among European Union (EU) citizens has been difficult, given the EU's temporal recentness and its cultural, historical, and linguistic diversity. Such an identity may, however, be a pre-requisite for citizens' acceptance of the EU's political power (Carey, 2002). EU elites have therefore attempted to encourage its development, by establishing a set of nonverbal symbols of the community. Over the past few decades, symbols like the European flag, the European map and the European anthem have become the most obvious sign of the European physical presence (Manners, 2011, p. 253). Among them, the EU flag has been the most successful in gaining popular recognition and support. Ninety-five percent of the EU citizens recognize it, over seventy percent believe it stands for something good, and over eighty percent believe it to be a good symbol of Europe (Standard Eurobarometer 77, 2012). Research has shown that "adherence to EU symbols such as the flag" is part of the positive affective component of European identity (Boomgaarden, Schuck, Elenbaas, & de Vreese, 2011, p.247). Europeans are likely to often be exposed to the flag in their daily life, as it features on

most if not all European and national official buildings, European-level media communications, car plates across Europe, and the Euro coins and notes.

Previous research has provided diverging evidence as to how citizens react to the EU flag when observing it in public. On the one hand, incidental exposure to the flag in media stories increases citizens' feelings of European identity (Bruter, 2009). This result mirrors the effects observed for national flags (Butz et al., 2007; Kemmelmeier & Winter, 2008; Schatz & Lavine, 2007). Other studies found that the EU flag affects community identity only when associated to some EU-related benefits, and this effect is relatively small (Cram, Patrikios, & Mitchell, 2011). Thus, citizens' reactions to the EU flag may vary with the context in which the flag is embedded, but more research is needed to pin down these context effects.

An important time when citizens are exposed to the EU flag more than usual is during European elections campaigns. In these campaigns many parties across Europe choose to display the image of the flag in their materials, despite not being legally bound to do so. Previous research shows that more pro-European parties are more likely to display the flag, and they are more likely to do so if a larger percentage of the population is favorable to the EU (Popa & Dumitrescu, 2015). The flag is overwhelmingly used in a positive manner: only 4 out of 921 parties since 1979 have used it in a negative way (Popa and Dumitrescu, 2015, page 4, fn. 3). However, there has been limited research on the public opinion effects of this party display. Since the flag is widely recognized as a positive symbol of the European community (Manners, 2011), understanding how EU citizens interpret its display by national parties is important for several reasons. On the one hand, it is by now clear that political parties have an important role in shaping public opinion in general (Zaller, 1992) as well as on European matters (Ray, 2003; Gabel & Scheve, 2007). If national parties display this community symbol, the nonverbal

association to the EU may, in the long run, help establish the legitimacy of the EU community among their voters. At the same time, if parties want to use the flag to cater to pro-European voters, then it is important to determine to what extent this symbol can act as a pro-European position signal in a partisan context.

This study explores therefore how citizen interpret the meaning of the EU flag in election materials. More specifically, we investigate whether the flag display in a party campaign material makes citizens attribute stronger EU attachments to the party's elites. We use a large scale survey experiment in which Swedish citizens are exposed to European Elections party materials from one of the two main Swedish parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Moderates (MP), featuring this visual symbol. Below we discuss our hypotheses and results.

Theoretical background

The European flag and the positive attachment to the European community

European citizens have different reasons to feel attached to Europe. Bruter (2003; 2009) distinguishes between the attachment because of the shared culture and experience with other Europeans (the “cultural” side of the European identity) and the attachment based on shared political values (the “civic” component of identity). European visual symbols, such as the EU flag, are closely linked to the “cultural” side of the European identity. Boomgaarden et al. (2011) identify two distinct clusters of positive (e.g. pride of being European) and negative (e.g. fear of the EU) affective reactions directed at the European community. The European flag is also according to their evidence closely connected to a diffuse, positive affect felt with regard to the EU. These results are in line with national flags research: Schatz & Lavine (2007) also find that the national flag is strongly related to an affective, symbolic attachment to the nation. Thus,

even if people may identify to a community for different reasons, visual symbols associated to a community are most often associated to a positive emotional attachment to it.

As already noted, previous evidence of exposure to national symbols suggests that it activates positive nation-centric feelings (Bruter, 2009; Butz et al., 2007; Kimmelmeier & Winter, 2008; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; Kalmoe & Gross, 2015). Group identities in turn orient perceptions of both oneself and the other members of the group (cf. Hogg, 2006; Stets & Burke, 2000). While previous studies focus on the impact of exposure to these symbols on individuals' *personal* identity and attitudes, in this paper we are concerned with a different effect: namely how exposure to these symbols affects the image of *those who display them*. To clarify this point by analogy, imagine that a New Yorker were to display a pink ribbon in 1991. For them it would be a symbol of group identity as part of those who fight breast cancer. However, apart from the select group of New York City runners who used this symbol in 1991, few people would take it as an identity cue back then. Twenty years later, this symbol has become so ubiquitous that the display of pink ribbons is a widely recognized indication (at the very least) of an individual's support for cancer activism.

Since the EU flag has been forged as a symbol of the European community (Manners, 2011), and since it has been strongly linked to positive affect about the EU (e.g. Boomgaarden et al., 2011), we test in this paper *if party elites can use its display to signal their EU attachment to voters* (H1: "The direct flag effect"). We focus on party elites (rather than other public actors) because of evidence of their influence on individual political attitudes, including European integration (Ray, 2003; Steenbergen et al., 2007; Zaller 1992). At the same time, previous studies also suggest that this symbol may not yet be potent enough to activate positive identity feelings through simple exposure, or at least not in just any context (e.g. Cram et al., 2011). One way to

increase the strength of the signal may be to increase awareness of the display, by asking individuals to formulate an opinion about whether the flag was displayed or not. Thus, we also investigate whether the display of the EU flag *sends a credible signal of their elites' EU attachment* if individuals *believe actively* that the flag was displayed (H2: “The belief-mediated flag effect”).

The context of the communication: the parties' previous positions with respect to the EU

A memorable image of the 2014 European Election campaign was a UKIP poster depicting a EU flag emerging from the still burning ashes of a UK flag; given the UKIP's known anti-EU position, the most reasonable interpretation of this display would be a negative attachment to the EU. While the UKIP is among the 0.4 percent of the parties using the EU flag in a negative way (Popa & Dumitrescu, 2015), the EU position of the party that displays the flag may nonetheless matter. Moreover, the more ambivalent on EU matters a party is, the more room there should be for the display of the European flag to affect voters' perceptions.

Previous research finds that intra-party dissent generates voter uncertainty about their party's stance on European integration (Gabel & Scheve, 2007). Sweden offers a good opportunity to test for the moderating role of the party, as its two main parties have different levels of intra-party dissent on EU matters. The Moderate Party (MP) is historically known as favoring the process of European integration (Sitter, 2001), with a low level of intra party dissent according to the latest Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) (Bakker et al., 2015). Thus in the case of MP, the EU flag display might only marginally increase the perceptions of the MP's elites EU attachments, which already strong to begin with. The Social Democratic Party (SDP), on the other hand, is generally viewed as having an ambivalent position towards the EU due to the fact

that the party is “seriously divided over Europe even since Sweden decided to apply for EC [European Community] membership” (Raunio, 2007, p. 198). This ambivalence is also confirmed by the latest CHES study, which placed it close to the middle on the pro/anti EU position scale and noted the high level of intra-party dissent, in fact the highest among the eight Swedish parties represented in parliament (Bakker et al. 2015). Thus, in the case of the SPD, the positive display of visual symbols of EU identity should act as a cue that will move the balance toward more EU favorable perceptions. In short, *the display of the EU flag on party materials should have a stronger effect on the perception of SDP party elites’ affective attachment to the EU than for the MP elites* (H3: “The party effect”).

The context of the communication: the availability of additional information

Communication research shows that individuals infer significant amounts of information from visuals: flag cues can activate political attitudes and identity feelings (e.g. Butz et al., 2007; Kimmelmeier & Winter, 2008); and people are able to pick winning candidates based on their facial appearance (Hall, Goren, Chaiken, & Todorov, 2009), and, in the absence of face visuals, on their general visual demeanor (Spezio, Loesch, Gosselin, Mattes, & Alvarez, 2012). When citizens have access to both verbal and nonverbal political information some studies found that they often rely more on the verbal channel to make decisions (Krauss, Apple, Morency, Wenzel, & Winton, 1981; Nagel, Maurer, & Reinemann, 2012), and some others found that they often rely more on the visual one (Shah et al., 2015; Shah et al., this volume). Thus, we want to test whether *the presence of additional information about the parties’ EU positions alters the impact of the flag on perceptions of elites’ attachment to the EU* (H4: “The information availability effect”). Given the previous divergent results, we are open about the direction of the effect here.

The null hypothesis is that exposure to policy positions does not affect the strength of the EU flag as a signal. But it is also possible that the effect of the flag gets weaker with the presence of information; or that it is enhanced by the pro-EU information, or diminished by anti-EU information.

The experimental design and measures

The data comes from a survey experiment conducted at the Laboratory of Opinion Research at the University of Gothenburg on a panel of Swedish citizens. The average respondent in the study was about 53 year old. Sixty percent of respondents were men, and seventy-seven percent had completed post-high school education. Technical details about the panel from which this sample was drawn are available in Martinsson, Andreasson, Markstedt, & Riedel (2013). The study was dispatched to N=1824 respondents in November and December 2013.

Design

In order to examine the ability of the European flag to signal party elites' European attachments, we adapted the visual cover of the Swedish MP's and SDP's 2009 European Election manifestos (Euromanifestos), and we based all the information provided to respondents on the parties' 2009 and 2004 European programs. We pooled policy information from both years because we could not identify enough quotations in 2009 alone to express both positive and critical positions to the EU for both parties.

The study manipulated three factors. The first was whether the campaign materials featured or not a picture of the EU flag. Specifically in some experimental conditions, we added an image of the EU flag to the top left of each party-specific Euromanifesto cover. When present, the flag

took only 4% of the cover so as to not overlap with any of the other originally present elements. This visual manipulation is illustrated in the top part of Figure 1. The second factor was the party responsible for the materials: respondents saw campaign materials either the SDP or from the MP. The third factor was the additional information accompanying the manifesto covers, consisting in a short text displayed on the screen. The text factor had four levels: some saw an EU-positive text (highlighting its contribution to solving collective problems); some saw an EU-critical text (about the EU democratic deficit); some saw a balanced text about the EU; and finally, some groups only saw the visual cover and no text. The experiment had a fully factorial 2(Flag: Yes vs. No) x 2(Party: SDP vs. MP) x 4(Text: None vs. EU-Positive vs. EU-Critical vs. EU-Balanced) design. Participants were randomly assigned to the 16 conditions. A screenshot example of the full visual and verbal manipulation is presented in the bottom part of Figure 1. The full text manipulations are in the Online Appendix 1.

[Figure 1 about here]

The belief about the flag display. After the experimental treatment and before the outcomes of interest were measured, all respondents were invited to formulate their opinion about whether any symbols had been present on the campaign materials they had just seen. They were provided with a list containing also the EU flag. The placement of the EU flag on this list was randomized. To avoid uncontrolled repeated exposure to the visuals, we restricted respondents' ability to go back and see the materials again; thus, they had to answer this question based on what they remembered, 88% of the sample answered the question (N=1616) and 70% of these (N=1126) answered it correctly. To be more specific, out of the 848 subject who actually saw the flag, 646 (i.e. 76.1%) reported seeing it and out of the 768 who did not receive the flag treatment, 481 (i.e. 62.6%) correctly reported not seeing the flag. As visuals are processed automatically, the

question was intended to make individuals think deeper about the visuals and have them actively express their belief about the EU flag display.

Dependent variables. All respondents subsequently evaluated their perceptions of the party's "top officials" whose campaign materials they had just seen. We specifically asked them about these individuals (explicitly defined as "the party's leaders and Members of Parliament"), to reduce the difficulty of the question. We believe that asking them to estimate the feelings of an entity as abstract and complex as *the party* would be cognitively burdensome, and invite more measurement error. Moreover, party elites are in charge of the parties' policies, thus their opinions are likely to influence the party direction. In order to measure perceptions of these elites' European attachment, we adapted a question format from the ANES 2010-2012 Evaluations of Government and Society Study (Segura, Jackman, Hutchings, & American National Election Studies, 2012), which was used to measure group perceptions. Respondents rated how well the expressions "Feel attached to Europe" and "Feel proud of being part of the EU" described the [SD/ Moderate] Party's top officials. These items were chosen among those used by Boomgaarden et al (2011) and Bruter (2009), to include affective terms ("feel" and "proud"), so as to elicit an evaluation of elites' affective identification to the EU. Our main dependent variable is a composite measure of the two ratings given to top officials ($\alpha=0.9$).

Controls. In the early stages of the survey, respondents indicated their level of European identity (using a measure used by Bruter (2009)), their support for the EU and attitudes towards EU integration (using the items from European Elections Survey 2004, Schmitt et al., 2009), and their party vote intention the 2014 general elections. We also have information about their age and gender. These variables are described in the Online Appendix 2.

All the variables were rescaled to run from 0 to 1 to facilitate the interpretations of results.

Results

In order to test the effect of the flag on perceptions of party elites' EU attachment, we run a series of mediation models (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Imai, Keele, Tingley, & Yamamoto, 2011) as depicted in Figure 2. These models allow us to test for both a direct effect of the flag visual display (H1) and an indirect path where we expect it to be mediated by individuals' belief about its display (H2). Furthermore, as we expect different effects by party (in line with H3), we run these models separately for the SDP and the MP. We also expect these effects to vary with the presence of additional information (in line with H4), therefore we run them separately for each information condition.

[Figure 2 about here]

We start with a simple descriptive table of the mean perceptions of elites' European attachments in each flag experimental condition, as a function of the belief about the flag display. These simple means, presented in Table 1, give already an indication of the magnitude of the effects. Larger values indicate that elites are perceived to have stronger EU attachments. The table suggests at least two patterns of results: a larger variation in elite perceptions due to the belief about the flag display (than due to simple exposure to it) and a larger effect for the SDP than for the MP.

[Table 1 about here]

To test the four hypotheses, the analysis was carried out in MPlus 6.11 (Muthén, & Muthén, 2011) using a series of path models which control for a series of pre-treatment covariates^{2 3}. We present the results separately for the SDP models (Table 2) and the MP ones (Table 3).

² These covariates are: voting for the SPD, voting for MP, European identity, EU support, gender and age. See the Online Appendix 3 for the full results.

[Table 2 and Table 3 about here]

The results show no statistically significant *direct* effects of the visual flag display on elite perceptions for any of the two parties, irrespective of whether we consider each text condition separately, or we bound them together. Thus, we did not find any evidence that would corroborate H1, that is, the expectation that the simple exposure to the flag visuals would send a credible sign of party elites' European attachments.

We do however find a statistically significant *indirect* effect, or in the language of Imai et al. (2011), a statistically significant average causal mediation effect (ACME) for some of the experimental conditions. This brings support to H2, which assumed that the presence of the flag would have to reach awareness in order to serve as a relevant signal. However, the effects are almost exclusively confined to the SDP conditions. To be more specific, in the case of SDP we find an indirect effect of the exposure to the flag across almost all text groups. The exception is when respondents were shown an EU-positive text, which may be due to the content of the text, which was very positive for a party known for its ambivalence toward the EU. The indirect effect of the flag for the SDP's elites holds even if we analyze all the text sub-groups together. This shows that for those participants who believed the flag had been displayed, exposure to this EU visual symbol had a positive effect on perceptions of SDP elites' European attachments. At the same time, no such effect is observed for the MP elites. There is an indication of a statistically significant indirect effect of the flag treatment when we aggregate all the groups. But given that for a relatively large N we only detect significance at $p < 0.10$ and the fact that this effect is much smaller than in the case of SPD, we can safely say that the indirect impact of the flag on the perceived EU identity of the MP is at best minimal. Thus, consistent with H3, we do find some

³ Running the same model using the R mediation package yielded substantively similar results.

indications that the signal may be more consequential when the party is ambivalent on EU matters, as is the case with the SDP but not the MP.

Furthermore, we expected the effect of the flag to vary with the verbal information provided (H4), and we note that the indirect effect of the flag on the perception of the SDP elites is strongest in the absence of further information about the party's EU positions. However, this result may also have to do with the text content. None of the positions in the text were overly critical of the EU (including in the EU-critical one), and the verbal information has, independently, a positive effect on the perception of the SDP's elites (see Online Appendix 3).

Finally, we also note that the *total* effect of the visual display of the flag never reaches statistical significance, meaning that overall, including such visuals on the cover did not significantly move the perceptions of these party elites' European attachments. This could be due to the limited exposure, or could also be due to the fact that while an indirect effect can be observed, still, the belief about the flag display does not push individuals to rely on this information so strongly as to update their party elite perceptions.

Discussion

The EU flag is a visual embodiment of the European community, and exposure to it has been shown to increase citizens' own affective attachment to Europe (e.g. Bruter, 2009). But there has been limited research on how citizens interpret the meaning of this symbol when they see it displayed by parties. Previous research shows that parties play a prominent role in structuring public opinion in general (Zaller, 1992) and attitudes towards the Europe project and the EU in particular (Ray, 2003; Steenbergen et al., 2007). Thus, given the important role that national political elites may play in the construction of a common European identity, it is important to

understand to what extent voters infer European attachments from the display by parties of the EU flag on their campaign communications. The aim of this paper was to provide a first test of this effect.

Using data from a large N survey experiment in Sweden, we found that displaying the EU flag can influence voters' perceptions of party elites' EU attachment for parties that have an ambivalent EU position, such as the Swedish SDP. However, the display by itself does little to move these perceptions; rather it needs to be accompanied by the belief that the party actually displayed the EU flag. We also find that this indirect effect is strongest in the absence of other information, but more investigations are needed to establish how the tone of the information may also affect it.

While we find only indirect effects of the flag display, these results may be due to the limited flag exposure in the study. Due to the study practical constraints, we could not make the flag larger than about 4% of all the visuals, and we could not expose people repeatedly to it. But these conditions are quite artificial with respect to real campaigns – where symbols are featured more prominently and repeatedly. Thus, in real life the effects of EU flag display on perceptions of party elites should be stronger. Moreover, the national context in which we tested for flag effects make it a conservative test. While the level of EU contestation in Sweden has never reached the highs of other countries that produced anti-EU parties (such as the UKIP in the UK), Sweden's main parties have been split, just as the public opinion, on the benefits of this membership (Raunio, 2007) since joining the EU in 1995. Moreover, in addition to its national identity, the country has also a strong regional identity as part of the Scandinavian Peninsula. Thus, Sweden may be a tougher than usual case to test for the signaling power of the EU flag on

perceptions of the displayer's European attachment. The results may be stronger in the case of one of the founding members of the EU, for example.

The results also provide some guidelines for practitioners involved in the design of European campaigns. They suggest that playing on the EU symbols to signal attachment of a party's leaders to the EU works, but only for parties that do not have a clear pro- or anti-EU position to begin with. Moreover, what matters most is whether voters believe the symbol was displayed, thus, to send an effective signal, campaign managers must ensure that voters pay close attention to the visual aspect of their electoral message.

Far from settling the matter as to what inferences citizens make when exposed to the EU flag, these results point instead to the need for future studies. So far, studies of the impact of European symbols have often focused on how these symbols may influence the public's own sense of European attachment, and what the flag means to the *self* as one relates to the community. This paper suggests that the flag display, under certain conditions, can signal group membership on behalf of those who display it. Future studies should further specify the optimal context for this signal.

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Table 1. Average treatment effects

EU flag present	Belief about the EU flag display	Average DV	
		SDP	MP
No	Not displayed	0.643	0.803
No	Displayed	0.701	0.791
No	Did not answer	0.589	0.806
Yes	Not displayed	0.619	0.763
Yes	Displayed	0.696	0.813
Yes	Did not answer	0.659	0.786

Note: The dependent variable measures respondents' perceptions of the elites' EU attachments on a 0 to 1 scale, as explained in the text. Larger values indicate perceptions of stronger attachments.

Table 2. Path analysis parameters, SDP group

Model (N)	Outcome (R ²)	Determinant	Causal effects		
			Direct (SE)	Indirect (SE)	Total (SE)
SDP, no text (N=216)	Belief about the flag display (R ² = 0.301)	Flag display	1.034*** (0.194)	-	1.034*** (0.194)
	EU attachment (R ² = 0.150)	Flag display	-0.017 (0.036)	0.060** (0.022)	0.043 (0.032)
		Belief about the flag display	0.058*** (0.019)	-	0.058*** (0.019)
SDP, EU- balanced text (N=205)	Belief about the flag display (R ² = 0.205)	Flag display	0.837 *** (0.197)	-	0.837 *** (0.197)
	EU attachment (R ² = 0.188)	Flag display	-0.023 (0.030)	0.030** (0.015)	0.007 (0.028)
		Belief about the flag display	0.036* (0.016)	-	0.036* (0.016)
SDP, EU-critical text (N=195)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.246)	Flag display	1.019*** (0.214)	-	1.019*** (0.214)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.139)	Flag display	-0.026 (0.035)	0.047** (0.022)	0.020 (0.030)
		Belief about the flag display	0.046** (0.019)	-	0.046** (0.019)
SDP, EU-positive text (N=209)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.301)	Flag display	1.330*** (0.205)	-	1.330*** (0.205)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.150)	Flag display	-0.020 (0.032)	0.027 (0.022)	0.006 (0.028)
		Belief about the flag display	0.020 (0.016)	-	0.020 (0.016)
SDP, all text conditions (N=825)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.236)	Flag display	1.023*** (0.097)	-	1.023*** (0.097)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.169)	Flag display	-0.024 (0.017)	0.041*** (0.010)	0.017 (0.014)
		Belief about the flag display	0.040*** (0.009)	-	0.040*** (0.009)

Note: Unstandardized estimates, standard errors in parenthesis, *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.005

Table 3. Path analysis parameters, MP group

Model (N)	Outcome (R ²)	Determinant	Causal effects		
			Direct (SE)	Indirect (SE)	Total (SE)
MP, no text (N=189)	Belief about the flag display (R ² = 0.334)	Flag display	1.216*** (0.261)	-	1.216*** (0.261)
	EU attachment (R ² = 0.104)	Flag display	0.035 (0.032)	-0.003 (0.007)	0.031 (0.028)
		Belief about the flag display	-0.003 (0.014)		-0.003 (0.014)
MP, EU- balanced text (N=190)	Belief about the flag display (R ² = 0.247)	Flag display	1.075*** (0.209)	-	1.075*** (0.209)
	EU attachment (R ² = 0.036)	Flag display	-0.037 (0.035)	0.013 (0.020)	-0.023 (0.029)
		Belief about the flag display	0.013 (0.018)	-	0.013 (0.018)
MP, EU-critical text (N=210)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.212)	Flag display	0.928*** (0.195)	-	0.928*** (0.195)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.050)	Flag display	-0.045 (0.035)	0.021 (0.017)	-0.023 (0.021)
		Belief about the flag display	0.023 (0.017)	-	0.023 (0.017)
MP, EU-positive text (N=196)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.357)	Flag display	1.318*** (0.221)	-	1.318*** (0.221)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.134)	Flag display	-0.015 (0.030)	0.024 (0.018)	0.009 (0.024)
		Belief about the flag display	0.018 (0.013)	-	0.018 (0.013)
MP, all text conditions (N=785)	Belief about the flag display (R ² =0.261)	Flag display	1.090*** (0.103)	-	1.090*** (0.103)
	EU attachment (R ² =0.059)	Flag display	-0.017 (0.017)	0.016* (0.009)	-0.001 (0.014)
		Belief about the flag display	0.015* (0.009)	-	0.015* (0.009)

Note: Unstandardized estimates, standard errors in parenthesis, *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.005



Figure 1. Visual manipulation (top) and screen caption example of the visual and verbal stimulus

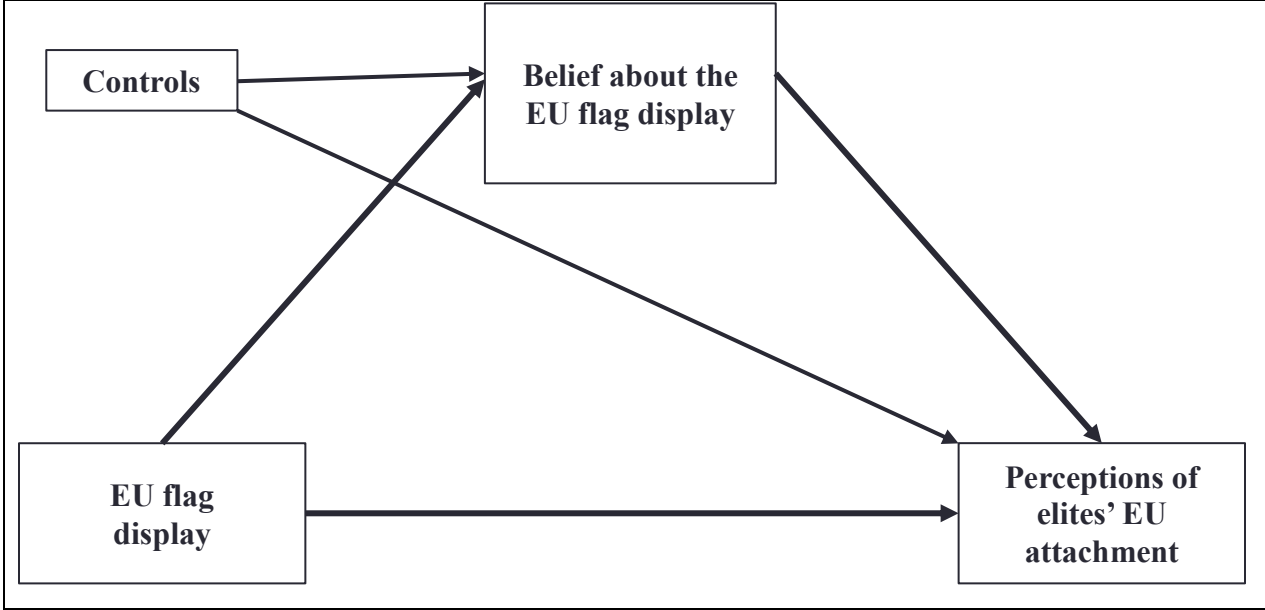


Figure 2. The path analysis model.