

**Improving intergroup relations using positive warmth and competence messages with  
strong or less strong proponents of the European Union**

Rosa Duijvendak

Supervisors: dr. E.G Ufkes., & dr. M. van Bommel

University of Twente, Faculty of Behavioural Management and Social Sciences (BMS)

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### **Abstract**

The Netherlands has always been seen as a tolerant country that is open to freedom and equal rights, but lately has been polarising into anti- and pro-European Union groups. With the recent elections Dutch people are more divided than ever between parties that are opponents and proponents of the European Union. A study has shown that by using positive messages with the warmth and competence dimensions of social cognition intergroup relations between advantaged and disadvantaged groups can be improved. In this study we try to improve the intergroup relations between strong and less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union, where strong proponents are seen as advantaged and less strong as disadvantaged. Participants who are a strong or less strong proponent of the European Union, read an article that disadvantaged less strong proponents of the European Union, read a positive message from someone who is in their outgroup that emphasizes on either the warmth or competence traits of the participants in-group and their attitude towards the outgroup was measured. This did not show that messages that emphasize on the warmth or competence, can improve the attitudes towards other groups with people that are strong or less strong proponents of the European Union. In a follow-up study the content of the article and the messages of the outgroup have to be more specific to possibly improve the intergroup relations.

Improving intergroup relations using positive warmth and competence messages  
with high and low scoring participants on European Union attitudes

The Dutch society is polarised in groups of individuals who are either pro- or anti-European Union. According to the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2017), only 36% of the population trusts the European Union. This percentage of people who trust the European Union is higher amongst higher educated people (50%), than with lower educated people (32%).

The last elections in The Netherlands showed that the political parties that have a concrete position on whether they want to stay in the European Union or not, were able to get more seats in the parliament. Especially when these election results of 2017 are compared with those of 2012 (Kiesraad, 2017; van den Braak, & van den Berg, 2012), it becomes clear that the parties that are on the fence about the European Union (like: PvdA), lost some of their seats to the extreme anti- or pro-European Union parties (like: PVV and D66). This polarisation does not only create problems for the forming of a government but also threatens the existence of the European Union.

To illustrate, other European Union members might follow the example of the United Kingdom. Since political parties in other countries are also demanding referenda about leaving the European Union, parties like the PVV in the Netherlands want a Nexit and Front National in France wants a Frexit. Moreover, with the tension of the stream of refugees fleeing from war and terror towards Europe, the threats of terrorism increase and the popularity of these populist political parties is rapidly growing. Still, there are a lot of people that are supporters of the European Union, as can be seen in the recent Brexit where 48,1% of the people voted to stay. This shows that countries in the European Union, like France and the Netherlands, are struggling with the polarisation between opponents and proponents of the European Union.

The relation between these groups has to be improved to create a feeling of unity once more. To see whether these intergroup relations can be improved, a profile of anti- European Union and pro- European Union groups has to be created. Additionally, the social identity theory, social categorization theory, the warmth and competence dimensions of social cognition and the positive messaging intervention are also to be discussed. This is in order to see if it is possible to improve intergroup relations with positive warmth and competence messages between high and low identifiers on the pro-European Union scale.

### **The profile of pro- and anti-European Union groups**

The Dutch people are always seen as a tolerant people that are open to freedom and equal rights for everyone, including minority groups, like homosexuals and refugees. Furthermore, the Dutch are known for their progressive views on issues like abortion and euthanasia (Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014). However in the current refugee crisis the policies to help the refugees are met with a lot of resistance from communities, and the typically Dutch tolerance towards these minority groups is not shown. Other research shows that the tolerant views on the earlier mentioned topics can be analytical and empirical distinguished from an aversion to ethnic diversity and a predilection for ethnocentrism and authoritarianism (De Koster & van der Waal 2006, 2007; De Koster , van der Waal, Achterberg, Houtman, & Manevska, 2010). This indicates that the Dutch people are not as tolerant on every subject as was originally thought. In fact, an analysis of the Dutch population from Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (2008) shows that for the last three decennia the polarisation around cultural diversity and social order has been growing. Since the European Union includes a lot of minority groups and is very diverse in cultures, the rapport of the Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (2008), can partially explain the growth in European Union opponents.

When analysing the recent British referendum on leaving or staying in the European Union, that resulted in the surprising Brexit, showed that there are some major differences in social groups and their voting preferences. According to Kirk and Dunford (2016) in an article of the Telegraph, younger and higher educated people voted to stay in the European Union, in comparison to older and lower educated people, who voted to leave. In the Netherlands the same situation is found, as in the article about voting preferences in the United Kingdom by Kirk and Dunford (2016), namely that higher educated people in society are more tolerant than lower educated people (Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014). Higher educated people also have less prejudice against minorities, and are more likely to accept them and give them equal rights (Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014). Besides, people with a high education are more likely to have a higher social status than people with a lower education, which makes high educated people a more advantaged group than low educated people (Connor, Dewson, Tyers, Eccles, Regan & Aston, 2001).

### **Social identity- and social categorization theory**

People can identify as pro- or anti-European Union; how people identify with a group can be explained with the Social Identity Theory from Tajfel and Turner (1979). The membership in a group can provide people with a sense of their place in the social world or where they stand in contrast to other is relations. But, it can also be seen as a guide to pass on the norms or the behaviour that is desired in a particular group. Forming their social identity, people have to self-categorize: the focus of the self-categorization theory lies on this process (Condor & Sindic, 2004). When people self-categorize, they will see themselves as similar or interchangeable with other in-group members, the self can then be defined by the group membership instead of unique individual characteristics (Condor & Sindic, 2004).

Applying these theories, it would mean that proponents of the European Union would rather identify with others that are proponents, as well which are mostly higher educated and

younger people (Kirk & Dunford, 2016; Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014). In a similar vein, opponents of the European union will rather identify with other opponents, who mostly are lower educated and older people (Kirk & Dunford, 2016; Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014).

### **Dimensions of social cognition**

For groups and individuals there are two dimensions by which people determine if they like the other person or group; warmth and competence (Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2006). In turn, these dimensions can influence the attitudes towards an outgroup or another individual. To try and improve intergroup relations, these dimensions might be used to create more positive attitudes towards an outgroup.

The first dimension, warmth, is characterized by qualities like trustworthiness, fairness, generosity, honesty, righteousness and being tolerant. The second dimension, competence, is characterized by qualities like being clever, efficient, foresighted, ingenious, intelligent and knowledgeable (Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2006). While the warmth and competence dimensions are both very important, the judgment in warmth comes first to a person. This derives from our evolutionary perspective, since the person's intent for good or ill intention is more important for survival than whether a person can act on these intentions (Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2006).

Despite the fact that warmth and competence are two separate dimensions, they do correlate. When it comes to social groups, warmth and competence often correlate negatively. Thus, a group can be either very high in the warmth dimension and low in the competence dimension or vice versa (Fiske, Cuddy & Glick, 2006). These perceptions of groups can create stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination. Furthermore, groups that are disadvantaged in society, like lower educated people or refugees, are often stereotypically perceived as warm but incompetent, while more advantaged groups in society, for example high educated people,

are often stereotypically perceived as competent but cold and immoral (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002).

### **Positive messaging**

Shnabel, Ullrich, Nadler, Dovidio, and Aydin (2013) mention in their article that the social roles of 'advantaged' and 'disadvantaged' groups, like European Union proponents and opponents, the social roles correspond with those of victims and perpetrators groups. Based on the framework of the Needs-Based Model (Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009), Shnabel et al. (2013) state that the intergroup relations between victimized and perpetrating groups can be improved with positive messages that satisfy the unique motivations of members of both groups.

In their study, participants had to read an article, with a topic relevant to the participants, that indicated that the disadvantaged group had less of an opportunity than the advantaged group (Shnabel et al., 2013). Participants could interpret this as an illegitimate bias against the disadvantaged group or as a justified preference for graduates of a prestigious academic institution based on their group affiliation. After the participants read the story, they read a message from a representative of the outgroup that emphasized their group's competence or warmth, or in the control condition a message that repeats the recent findings. Their results showed that in the disadvantaged group, people held more positive outgroup attitudes to the advantaged group when the outgroup representative reassured the competence dimension of the disadvantaged in-group's identity. While in the advantaged group, people held more positive outgroup attitudes to the disadvantaged group when the outgroup representative reassured the warmth dimension of advantaged in-group's identity (Shnabel et al., 2013).

**This study**

Using positive messaging to improve intergroup relations between two groups, can also be applied to the proponents and opponents of the European Union. Bovens, Dekker and Tiemeijer (2014) showed in their research that low educated people are more likely to be in the anti-European Union group, which can also be seen as the disadvantaged group, and higher educated people are more likely to be the pro-European Union group, which can be seen as the advantaged group (Connor, Dewson, Tyers, Eccles, Regan & Aston, 2001).

Based on the found knowledge about the warmth and competence dimension, the positive messaging study and the profile of anti- and pro- European Union groups, the research question “Can the intergroup relation between strong and less strong proponents of the European Union be improved by using positive warmth and competence messages?” is asked. This study will try to answer this research question, with a questionnaire presenting an article that focusses on less opportunities for the anti-European Union group, messages that emphasise on competence or warmth. Furthermore there is a scale to measure attitudes towards the outgroup, to see if the intergroup-relations can be improved.

In the literature discussed grounds for hypotheses are found. The study of Shnabel et al. (2013) showed that the advantaged group, had more positive outgroup attitudes towards the disadvantaged group when the outgroup representative reassured the warmth dimension of advantaged in-group’s identity, because this was the opposite of what the advantaged group is normally associated with. Thus the first hypothesis will be that “People who are stronger proponents of the European Union, will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises warmth, than people who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union”.

The study of Shnabel et al. (2013) also showed that the outgroup attitudes of the disadvantaged group were more positive when the outgroup representative reassured the

competence of the disadvantaged in-group's identity. Thus, the second hypothesis is: "People who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union, will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises competence, than people who are stronger proponents of the European Union".

## Method

### Participants and design

The participants were people from different backgrounds, ranging from the age of 16 to 71 (mean age = 27,  $SD = 14,59$ ; 58,4% Female; 89,4% high educated). The single criteria that the participants had to meet was that they had to have an opinion about the European Union. Initially 150 participants started the study, but only 113 completed the questionnaire. Six of the 113 were filtered out due to not taking the questionnaire seriously. They scored 3 or less on the five point scale about their seriousness during participation, this means that the total of participants that were used in the analyses was 107. A 98 of the 107 participants scored 4 or higher on the question if they saw themselves as pro or anti-European Union. The higher the score the more they identified with pro-European Union. This meant that nine participants identified as anti-European Union, this question was also used as the independent variable in the analysis.

Participants were either in support or against the European Union<sup>1</sup>, which they could show on a six-point scale (1= I am an opponent of the European Union; 6= I am a proponent of the European Union), apart from that they were randomly divided in one of the two conditions, competence or warmth. Lastly their attitude towards their outgroup was measured in the questionnaire, therefore this study was based on a mixed-method design. The

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<sup>1</sup> Because of the small sample size in the anti-European Union group, the study has taken the identification with proponents of the European Union question that was asked at the start of the study, and used this scale as a continuous scale. And thus taking all 107 participants into the analysis and create two groups out of the participants. The difference this creates, is that instead of two clear different groups like in the research of Shnabel et al. (2013), there is a identifying scale where people can place themselves.

questionnaire was distributed throughout psychology students and the researcher distributed it among friends and acquaintances who shared it in their turn with others.

### **Materials**

The questionnaire was made on the website qualtrics.com. The articles and outgroup-messages, that the participants will see in the questionnaire, are based on a previous study done by Shnabel, et al. (2013). For the outgroup categories there has also been made use of a 5-point Likert scale to measure *Attitude towards Europe*, *Attitude towards the outgroup*, *Resistance to outgroup arguments* and the *Seriousness during participation* (1 = totally agree, 5 = totally disagree; see Appendix C).

In the Qualtrics questionnaire there are some 'Display Logics' added. These will make sure that once the participants have indicated if they are pro or anti- European Union, they will receive the right questions. The participants had to fill out a six-point scale in which they indicated how much they identified with being pro- or anti-European Union. If someone scored three or less they were categorized as anti-European Union, but if they scored four or higher they would be categorized as pro-European Union. These categorization were only used to determine which questions the participants would get in the questionnaire.

The questions they received after they read the article are completely identical, apart from the words 'pro-European Union' and 'anti-European Union' these have been switched. For example, one of the attitude questions for the pro- European Union participants is: "I perceive people that are anti-European Union as warm and kind people" while for the anti-European Union participants this question is: "I perceive people that are pro-European Union as warm and kind people"

The questionnaire measured six different constructs, first they were asked about their *Attitude towards Europe* as a united nation. These questions were based on the questions from a study, done by Cornelis (1970), which measured the attitude towards Europe (e.g. "The

failure of European Unification would mean a disaster”;  $\alpha = ,82$ ). This construct had eleven items.

The second topic measured the *Attitude towards the outgroup*, these questions are based on a study by Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber and Waldzus (2003). These questions were adjusted to the outgroup of the participant, thus when the participant was a strong proponent of the European Union, he or she would get questions like “I think that I generally like opponents of the European Union” ( $\alpha = ,83$ ; but with item 2 deleted  $\alpha = ,85$ ). This construct for the participants that are strong proponents of the European Union had seven items, without the deleted item. But if the participant was a less strong proponents of the European Union he or she would get questions like: “I think that I generally like supporters of the European Union” ( $\alpha = ,88$ ; but with item 6 deleted  $\alpha = ,91$ ). This construct for the participants that are less strong proponents of the European Union had seven items, without the deleted item.

After they finished these questions they would get a few questions about their *Resistance to outgroup arguments* (e.g. “I am open to the opinion of the opponents of the European Union” ( $\alpha = ,36$ ; but with item 3 deleted  $\alpha = ,76$ ). This construct for the participants that are strong proponents of the European Union had three items, without the deleted item. And “I am open to the opinion of the supporters of the European Union” ( $\alpha = ,38$ ; but with item 2 deleted  $\alpha = ,65$ ). This construct for the participants that are less strong proponents of the European Union had three items, without the deleted item.

After all the attitude and openness questions the participants had to answer some demographical questions, and some questions about how serious they filled in the questionnaire and if they understood everything, which measured their *Seriousness during participation* (e.g. “I have truthfully filled in this questionnaire”;  $\alpha = ,80$  but with item 6 deleted  $\alpha = ,92$ ). This construct had four items, without the deleted item. The deleted item, item 6 was the question whether they believed the article to be a real article, only 46

participants scored 4 or 5 on the Likert-scale, with this question. 36 of the other participants did not believe the article to be real, and 23 participants did not know if they thought it was real.

### **Procedure**

Participants saw an article about the opponents of the European Union who are disadvantaged compared to the proponents of the European Union (see Appendix A). After this the questionnaire will give the participant randomly a message from one of the two conditions: (0) Warmth condition: The participant gets to read a message from a outgroup representative who reassures the warmth dimension of their in-group's identity. (1) Competence condition: The participant gets to read a message from a outgroup representative who reassures the competence dimension of their in-group's identity.

The outgroup messages that the participants saw, were the same in content, the only difference is that above the message it was stated that this message belonged from someone who is a proponent or opponent of the European Union. Thus if a participant was a strong proponents of the European Union, it would state that the message they saw was from someone who was an opponent of the European Union. These messages were displayed as comments that had been posted under the article that the participants just read (see Appendix B). After they have read their condition' story, the participant will fill in a questionnaire with questions about the six constructs topics. See table 1 for scale means, standard deviations and inter-scale correlations of these constructs.

Table 1  
Means, standard deviations and inter-scale correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Attitude towards Europe	3,31 (.62)	-,36**	,012	-,12	-,59*	,09
2. Attitude towards the anti- EU outgroup		3,33(.69)		,59**		,06
3. Attitude towards the pro- EU outgroup			3,84 (.79)		,29	,47
4. Resistance to anti- EU outgroup arguments				4,15 (.71)		,20*
5. Resistance to pro-EU outgroup arguments					3,94 ( ,59)	-,04
6. Seriousness during participation						4,67 ( ,43)

Note: N = 107. Since participants either filled in pro or against questions, the correlation between these constructs could not be measured.

\*\*  $p < 0,01$

\*  $p < 0,1$

## Results

By using linear regression analysis with Progress (Hayes, 2013) to test the hypothesis if, people who are stronger proponents of the European Union will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises warmth, than people who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union. And additionally, to test the hypothesis if, people who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union, will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises competence, than people who are stronger proponents of the European Union.

The *Attitude towards the outgroup* was used as dependent variable, and the *How strong proponents of the European Union* and the conditions of *Warmth* and *Competence* as independent variables. The conditions showed  $b = -,11$ ,  $t(107) = -,83$ ,  $p = ,41$  ( $N = 107$ ; see

figure 1, purple line), and the identification scale showed  $b = -.24$ ,  $t(107) = -2.81$ ,  $p = .006$  ( $N = 107$ ; see figure 1, red line).

The regression of the *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale showed a (marginal) significant negative effect. This indicates that there is a negative effect between the *How strong proponents of the European Union* and the *Attitude towards the outgroup*. Which would suggest that the higher the score on the identification scale, and thus the more pro-European Union, the lower the attitude towards the outgroup was. The effect found here could explain the earlier found effects, which would indicate that not the condition created the effect but that the *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale created the effect.

The  $z$ -scores of the *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale were multiplied with the conditions (0: Warmth, 1: Competence), to create an interaction variable, which was also used as an independent variable. The regression with the interaction variable and the *Attitude towards the outgroup* as dependent variable showed  $b = .09$ ,  $t(107) = .63$ ,  $p = .53$  ( $N = 107$ ; see figure 1, black line).

The analysis shows that there is no significant interaction effect between the *Attitude towards the outgroup* and the *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale with the conditions *Warmth* and *Competence*. This means that in the *Warmth* condition stronger proponents of the European Union, had not a more positive attitude towards the outgroup than less stronger proponents. Moreover, in the *Competence* condition the less strong proponents of the European Union a participant was, had not a more positive attitude towards the

outgroup than stronger proponents.

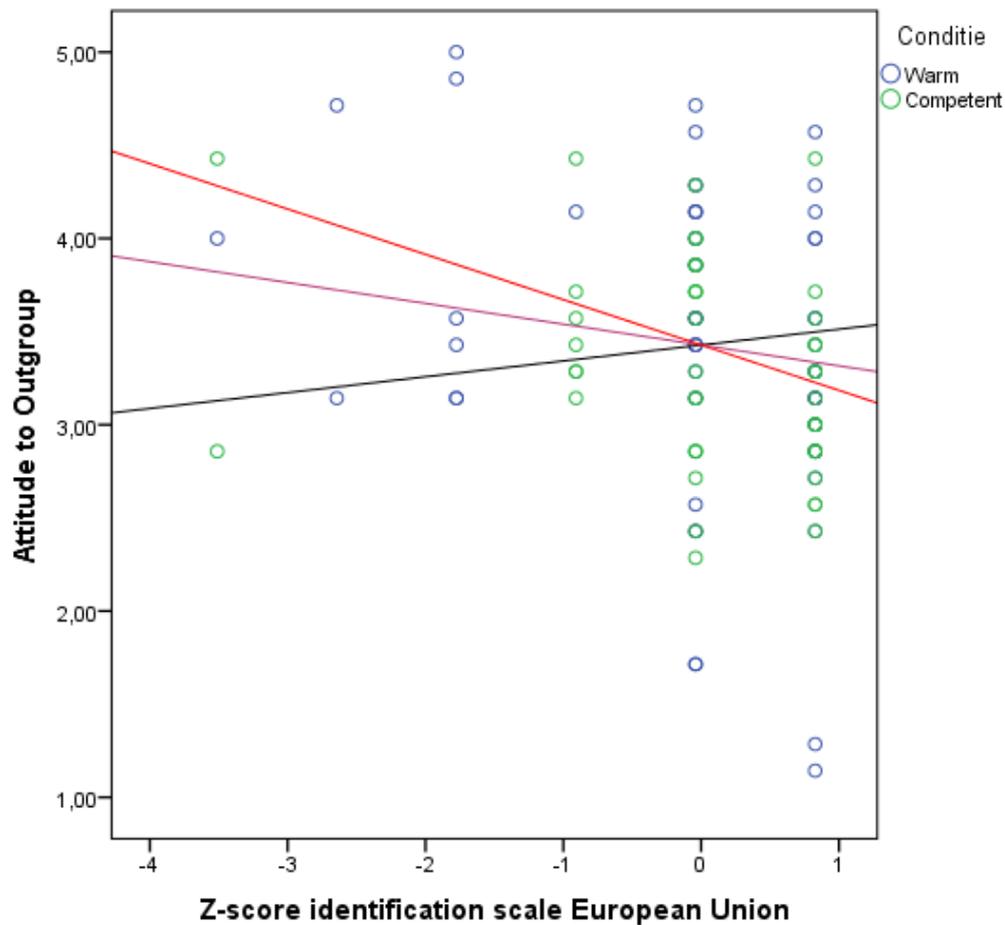


Figure 1. Regression lines and raw scores

### Explorative outcomes

To test if the less *Resistance to outgroup arguments* a participant had, the more positive their attitudes towards the outgroup were, a linear regression analysis was done. Where the *Attitude towards the outgroup* was the dependent variable, and the *Resistance to outgroup arguments* was the independent variable, showed a  $b = ,53$ ,  $t(107) = 6,34$   $p < .001$  ( $N = 107$ ). Which indicated a positive effect between the *Resistance to outgroup arguments* and the *Attitude towards the outgroup*. Which meant that the higher a person scored on the *Resistance to outgroup arguments* scale, which means the more open they are to counterarguments, the more positive the *Attitude towards the outgroup* was.

The interaction variable made by the *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale and the conditions of *Warmth* and *Competence*, as independent variable showed no significant effect with the *Resistance to outgroup arguments* as dependent variable. This meant that the scale of how strong people were proponents of the European Union, had no effect on the willingness of participants to be open in a debate with their outgroup. This also indicated that there was no mediation or moderation effect with the *Identification as anti- or pro-European Union*, *Resistance to outgroup arguments* and the *Attitude towards the outgroup*.

### Discussion

The goal of this study was to improve the intergroup relationships between anti- and pro-European Union groups. This was done by positive messaging, where someone of the outgroup emphasized the warmth or the competence of the participants in-group.

The results of the study showed that there was no significant interaction effect between how strong people were proponents of the European Union, and attitudes towards the outgroup in the warmth condition. This was not what the hypothesis predicted, and thus the first hypothesis that “People who are stronger proponents of the European Union, will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises warmth, than people who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union” has to be rejected.

It also showed that there was no significant interaction effect between how less strong people were proponents of the European Union, and attitudes towards the outgroup in the competence condition. Since this was not what was predicted, the second hypothesis that: “People who are less strong (or not at all) proponents of the European Union, will have a more positive attitude towards their outgroup if they are shown a message that emphasises

competence, than people who are stronger proponents of the European Union.” has to be rejected.

Furthermore the study showed that there was one significant regression with *How strong proponents of the European Union* scale and the attitudes towards the outgroup. This could suggest that the conditions did not have a significant role in the effects that had been found, but that the level of how strong a person is a proponent of the European Union effects the attitudes towards the outgroup. Additionally people who scored higher on their openness to get into a debate with the outgroup, scored also higher on their outgroup attitudes.

The predictions were based on a study of Shnabel et al. (2013). Their article stated that the disadvantaged group, was more positive towards the outgroup when they were shown a competence message, while the advantaged group was more positive towards the outgroup when they were shown a warmth message. However, in this study these results were not found. Shnabel et al. (2013) suggest in their article that the specific content of these positive messages is crucial to its effects, this could mean that the messages used in this study were not specific enough to trigger an effect.

Another interesting thing was that the results were also in contradiction with the study of Bovens, Dekker and Tiemeijer (2014). They stated that higher educated people in society are more tolerant than low educated people, and that higher educated people tend to be stronger proponents of the European Union. Since the results could not confirm that people that are stronger proponent of the European Union have more positive attitudes towards the outgroups, the findings of Bovens, Dekker and Tiemeijer (2014), were not found in this study. This could be because of the low sample size of low educated people, or a too small difference between low and high educated people.

There are some limitations that could have had influence on why the expected results were not found. First of all the distribution of the education levels between the participants

was very uneven. There were more higher educated participants, this was partly due to the fact that the questionnaire could be filled in by psychology bachelor students for credits. There is a possibility that high educated people saw through the manipulation and knew the article was not a real article, and thus were not affected by it. This could be an explanation of why the expected results were not found. The small sample size of low educated people can also explain the low sample size in the anti-European Union group. Since it was predicted that low educated people were more likely to be in the anti-European Union group (Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer, 2014). Because the majority of the participants is high educated and pro-European Union, it might also explain the high means in table 1, which are all above the 3,00 on a 5-point Likert scale. Which is in support of the study from Bovens, Dekker and Tiemeijer (2014) where they saw that high educated people tend to be more tolerant and open to minorities. In a follow-up study there should be a better distribution of education levels, and a bigger sample size of low educated participants.

Furthermore, the participants might have not read the messages carefully, some of them might not have seen it as a message from the outgroup. When the researcher had contact with some of the participants afterwards, and explained further what the study was about, some participants said that they did not interpret the message as an outgroup message. And if it was not seen as an outgroup message, it would not change their attitude towards the outgroup. Also as earlier mentioned the messages might have not been specific enough. In a follow-up study, the messages should be more specific towards the participants, and there should be a question added to the *Seriousness during participation*, about if the participant saw that the message was from the outgroup.

Besides the possibility of not be effected by the messages, it can also be the case that the strong and less strong proponents of the European Union do not perceive themselves as disadvantaged or advantaged, or do not perceive their outgroup as more advantaged or

disadvantaged. And the article that the participants read was for not all of them seen as a believable and real article. As mentioned earlier 38 participants did not believe that the article was real at all. This shows that the manipulation might not have had an effect. In a follow-up study, there should be a control condition, that can be compared with the manipulation to see if they then the article was convincing, or something they did not really identify with. Maybe if the article was written specifically about their field of work, as was done in the study of Shnabel et al. (2013), they could identify with this more. Thus in a follow-up study, this should also be addressed, and the article should be specified towards the group of participants.

For a follow-up study there are some recommendations that have to be take into account, the messages from the outgroup and the article have to be more specific, there has to be a control group, there have to be more lower educated and anti-European Union participants and there has to be a question added about if the participant identified the message as one coming from the outgroup. But the specificity of the messages and the article are crucial for a follow-up study.

However the issue if strong proponents of the European Union and less strong proponents of the European Union do not perceive themselves as disadvantaged or advantaged is still at play. Therefore it is suggested to first create a pilot study to see if the groups have an advantaged or disadvantaged feeling. Or the study could be implemented on a different contemporary societal problem, the issue with refugees. This could address the question if the intergroup relations between Dutch civilians is influenced by migration or refugees.

To conclude the study did not show that messages that emphasize on the warmth or competence, can improve the attitudes towards other groups with people that are strong or less strong proponents of the European Union. These results could be explained by the article

and messages that were not specific enough, and can be seen as recommendations for a follow-up study.

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## Appendix A

## Europa tegenstanders worden benadeeld in de samenleving

*Hoe Europese tegenstanders niet langer voor hun mening kunnen uitkomen over de toekomst van de EU*



Bron: Socialist Worker

20 maart 2017- Amsterdam

**M**inder of meer Europese Unie? Dit is de vraag die bij veel mensen speelt, maar waar vanuit de politiek geen antwoord op komt. Bij afgelopen verkiezingen hadden de Nederlandse lijsttrekkers een ideale kans om zich uit te spreken over waar het heen moet met de EU. Die kans hebben de partijen de kiezer nauwelijks geboden. Op een enkele uitzondering na leek niemand zich te willen branden aan de toekomst van de EU. Waarom kunnen mensen er niet voor uit komen om tegen de Europese Unie te zijn?

Uit een recent onderzoek van het CBS is gebleken dat mensen die tegenstanders zijn van Europa, zich hier vaak niet voor durven uit te spreken. Aangezien zij een storm van kritiek over zich heen krijgen, en vaak worden bestempeld als 'dom'.

Maar dat is niet alles, uit een onderzoek van de Universiteit Twente bleek dat tegenstanders van Europa ook minder kansen krijgen op de arbeidsmarkt, vanwege hun overtuigingen. In het onderzoek lieten ze mensen solliciteren die even competent waren voor de baan. Hieruit kwam dat mensen die regelmatig anti-Europa berichten plaatsten op hun Facebook en Twitter 60% vaker

werden afgewezen, dan mensen die deze berichten niet plaatsten.

*“tegen Europa zijn is een doodvonnis voor je reputatie. Niemand neemt je meer serieus.”*

Dit percentage was het nog hoger binnen het bedrijfsleven, waar 80% van de anti-Europa sollicitanten werd afgewezen. Volgens Arnold de Vries, CEO van BPR, is dit heel kenmerkend voor de branche, “Wij werken veel binnen Europa en internationaal. Dus tegen Europa zijn is een doodvonnis voor je reputatie. Niemand neemt je meer serieus.”

**Appendix B**

	Condition 1: Competence	Condition 2: Warmth
Message:	Ik vind dat jullie erg goed zijn in wat jullie doen! Uit mijn ervaring zijn jullie allemaal erg competent en vaak weten jullie heel goed wat er allemaal speelt in de wereld en wat daaraan kan worden gedaan. Ik vind jullie altijd hele goede werkers!	Ik vind zelf dat jullie erg vriendelijk zijn, ook als ik vertel wat mijn mening over de EU is! Uit mijn ervaring zijn jullie gewoon hele warme en aardige mensen, die mij niet op mijn mening afrekenen. Waar ik gezellig op een zonnige dag een terrasje mee pak!

## Appendix C

### Informed Consent

Welkom!

Dit onderzoek zal gaan over de Europese Unie en uw mening hierover. De vragenlijst zal ongeveer 7 minuten duren. Graag verzoek ik u de tijd te nemen en alles goed te lezen voordat u een vraag beantwoordt. U zult een aantal teksten lezen, waarna een paar vragen over uw mening over voorstanders en tegenstanders van de Europese Unie worden gesteld.

Het gaat hierbij om uw eigen meningen, er zijn daarom geen goede of foute antwoorden. Uw gegevens zullen vertrouwelijk verwerkt worden. Alleen de uitvoerende student en de begeleidende docenten hebben toegang tot de gegevens. In het verslag zullen alle gegevens anoniem te zien zijn. Uw deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig, u mag te allen tijden stoppen met het onderzoek.

Ik heb bovenstaande begrepen en ga hiermee akkoord

Ja

Nee

### Identification as anti- or pro-European Union

Zie u zichzelf als voor- of tegenstanders van de Europese Unie?

Ik zie mijzelf als tegenstander van de Europese Unie

Ik zie mijzelf als voorstander van de Europese Unie

### Article

-> See Appendix A

### Message

-> See Appendix B

### Attitude towards Europe

With a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = totally agree, 5 = totally disagree)

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

Het mislukken van een verenigd Europa zal zeer betreuenswaardig zijn.

Persoonlijk geef ik niet veel om een verenigd Europa.

De nadelen van een verenigd politiek Europa wegen zwaarder dan de voordelen.

Voor een verenigd Europa zal ik mijn kleine beetje, wat dat ook moge zijn, moeten bijdragen.

Als de vereniging van Europa aanzienlijke opofferingen zou vragen, dan wil ik die doen.

De economische vereniging van Europa moet gezien worden als een stap in de richting van haar politieke eenwording.

Iedere nationale politieke partij moet zijn programma in overeenstemming brengen met de politieke eenwording van Europa.

Ik zou bereid zijn mijn eigen nationaliteit op te geven en in plaats daarvan de Europese nationaliteit te accepteren.

Om te geloven in de vereniging van Europa is een kwestie van realisme.

Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat er volledige religieuze vrijheid in Europa zal zijn.

Door het verenigde Europa zullen de gewoontes en tradities van mijn land gunstig beïnvloed worden door contact met mensen uit andere landen.

### **Attitude towards the outgroup**

With a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = totally agree, 5 = totally disagree).

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

Ik waardeer de mentaliteit van voorstanders van de Europese Unie.

Ik vind het belangrijk om contact te hebben met voorstanders van de Europese Unie.

Ik denk dat ik voorstanders van de Europese Unie over het algemeen wel mag.

Ik vind het gemakkelijk om de verschillen tussen ons en de meeste voorstanders van de Europese Unie te accepteren.

Ik sta open voor contact met voorstanders van de Europese Unie.

Ik denk dat voorstanders van de Europese Unie mij als tegenstander van de Europese Unie waarderen.

Ik vind het makkelijk om contact te leggen met voorstanders van de Europese Unie

Ik ga graag om met voorstanders van de Europese Unie

### **Resistance to outgroup arguments**

With a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = totally agree, 5 = totally disagree).

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

Ik sta open voor de mening van voorstanders van de EU

Ik sta open voor een debat met een voorstander van de EU

Ik wil de voorstander van de EU overtuigen van mijn mening

Ik sta open om de mening voorstander van de EU te horen

### **Geslacht**

- Man
- Vrouw
- Anders

### **Leeftijd**

### **Wat is uw hoogst behaalde opleiding?**

- Lagere school/basisschool
- Lager Beroepsonderwijs (bv. VMBO , LBO, huishoudschool, ambachtsschool)
- Middelbaar voortgezet onderwijs (bv. MAVO, (M)ULO)
- Hoger voortgezet onderwijs (HAVO, MMS, HBS, atheneum, gymnasium, VWO)
- Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (bv. ROC, MBO, MTS, MEAO)

- Hoger beroepsonderwijs (HBO)
- Wetenschappelijk onderwijs (WO)

**Seriousness during participation**

With a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = totally agree, 5 = totally disagree).

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

Ik heb deze vragenlijst naar waarheid ingevuld

Ik heb serieus geantwoord op de vragenlijst

Ik heb de vragen uit de vragenlijst begrepen

Ik heb mijn tijd genomen met het lezen van de teksten

Ik heb de teksten in de vragenlijst begrepen

Ik dacht dat het artikel en de reacties van een bestaande nieuws-website kwamen.