

The impact of COVID-19 on public support for the European Union (COVIDEU)

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The project team studies in how far the COVID-19 pandemic as an exogenous shock has influenced EU support by citizens. They develop a theoretical framework that combines insights from political behaviour, social psychology and political communication. The core idea is that people compare national and EU responses and take cues from domestic governments, political parties and the media when forming opinions about the EU. The team studies the impact of the pandemic through six work packages that are clustered into three pillars: 1. How have the policy measures adopted by national governments and EU institutions affected eurosceptic attitudes, European solidarity and the performance of Eurosceptic parties? 2. How have political actors, namely governments, political parties and social movements influenced EU support? 3. How have media framing and fake news influenced public support? To answer these questions, the interdisciplinary team of scholars from political science, sociology and economics relies on an original multi-method approach combining survey, observational and geocoded data with natural, survey and field experiments as well as innovative natural language processing technologies. The team covers expertise from Central, Eastern, Southern and Northern European countries which allows for studying the effect of the pandemic across the EU.

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