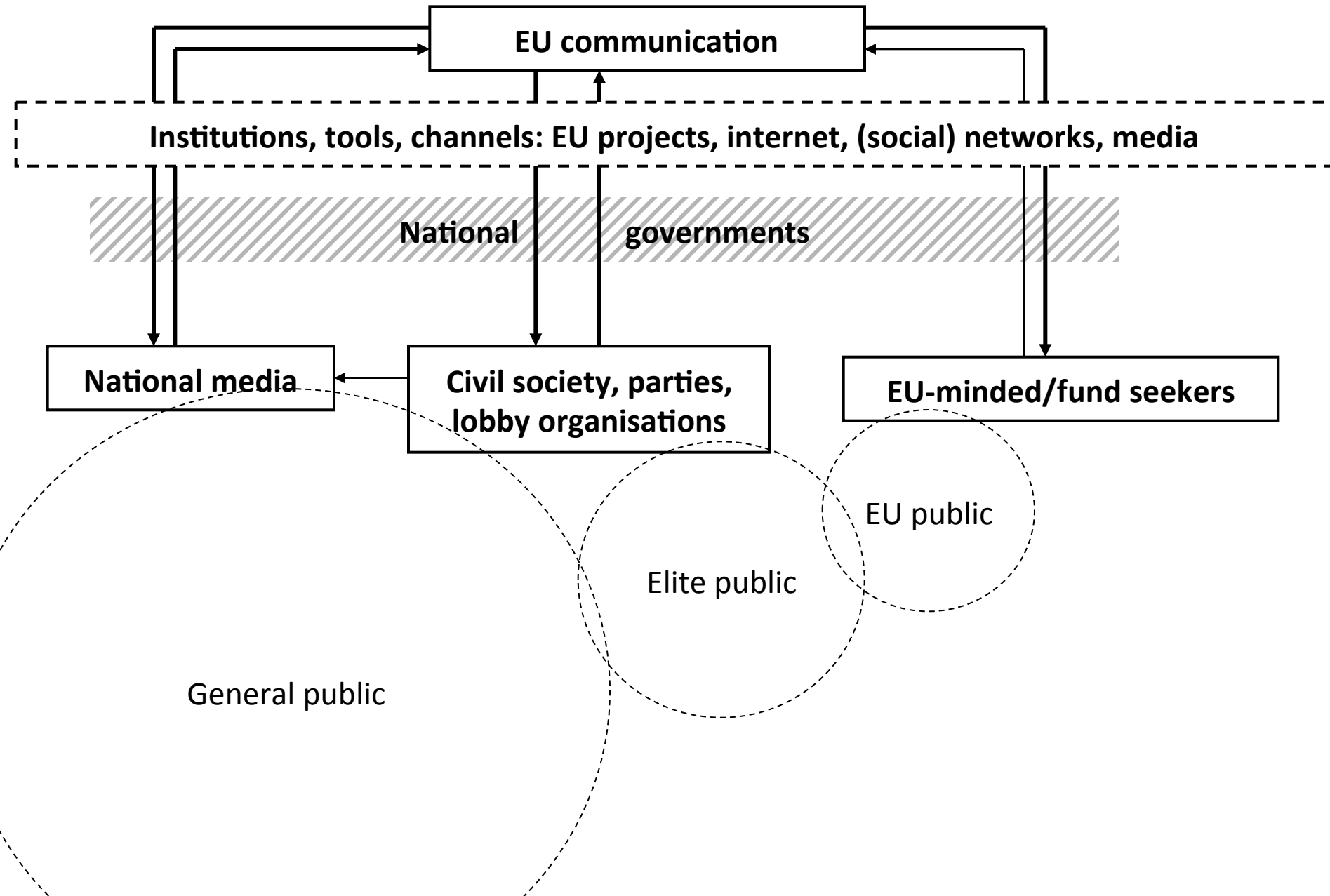# Connecting with citizens: challenges for Cohesion Policy communication

Cohesify launch seminar
Brussels, 17 June 2016

Wolfgang Petzold,
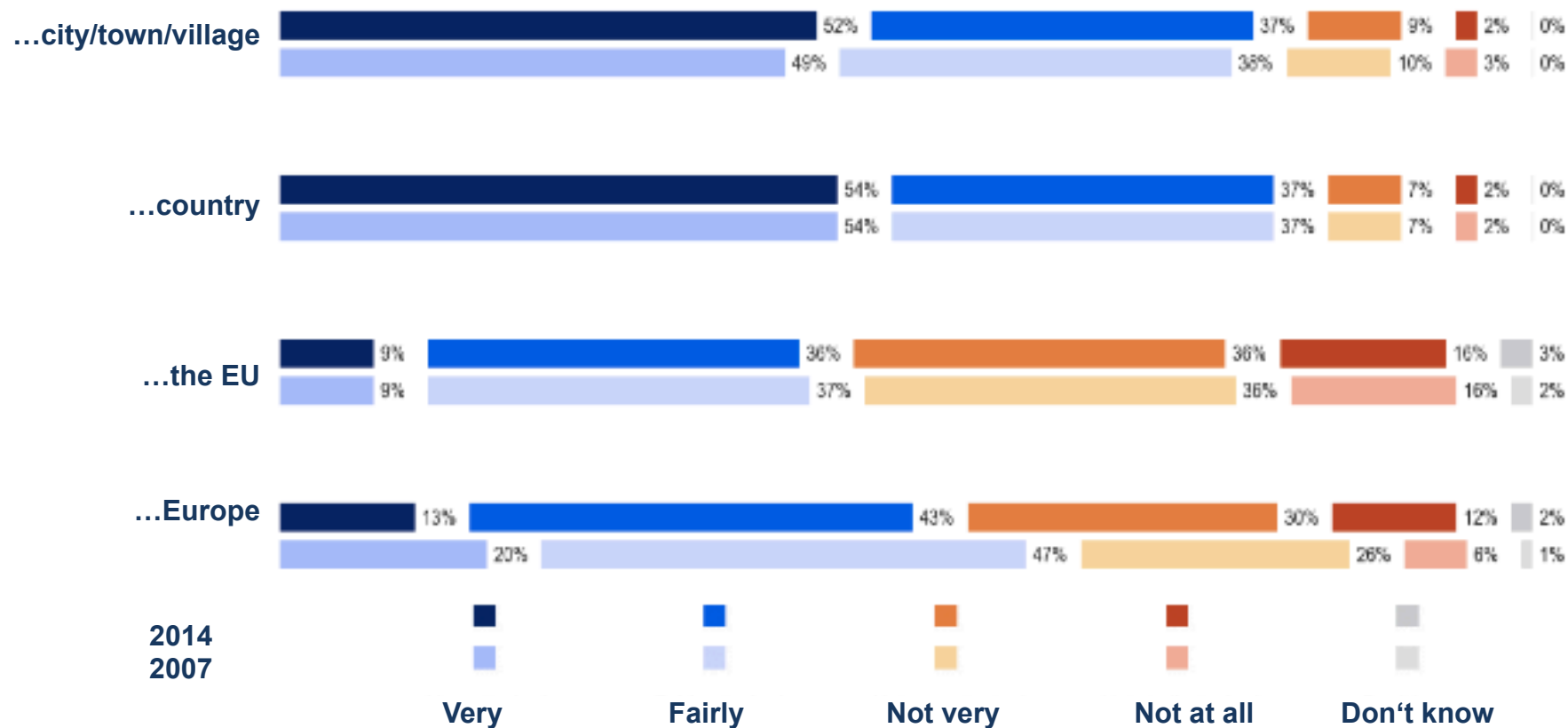European Committee of the Regions

The usual disclaimer applies

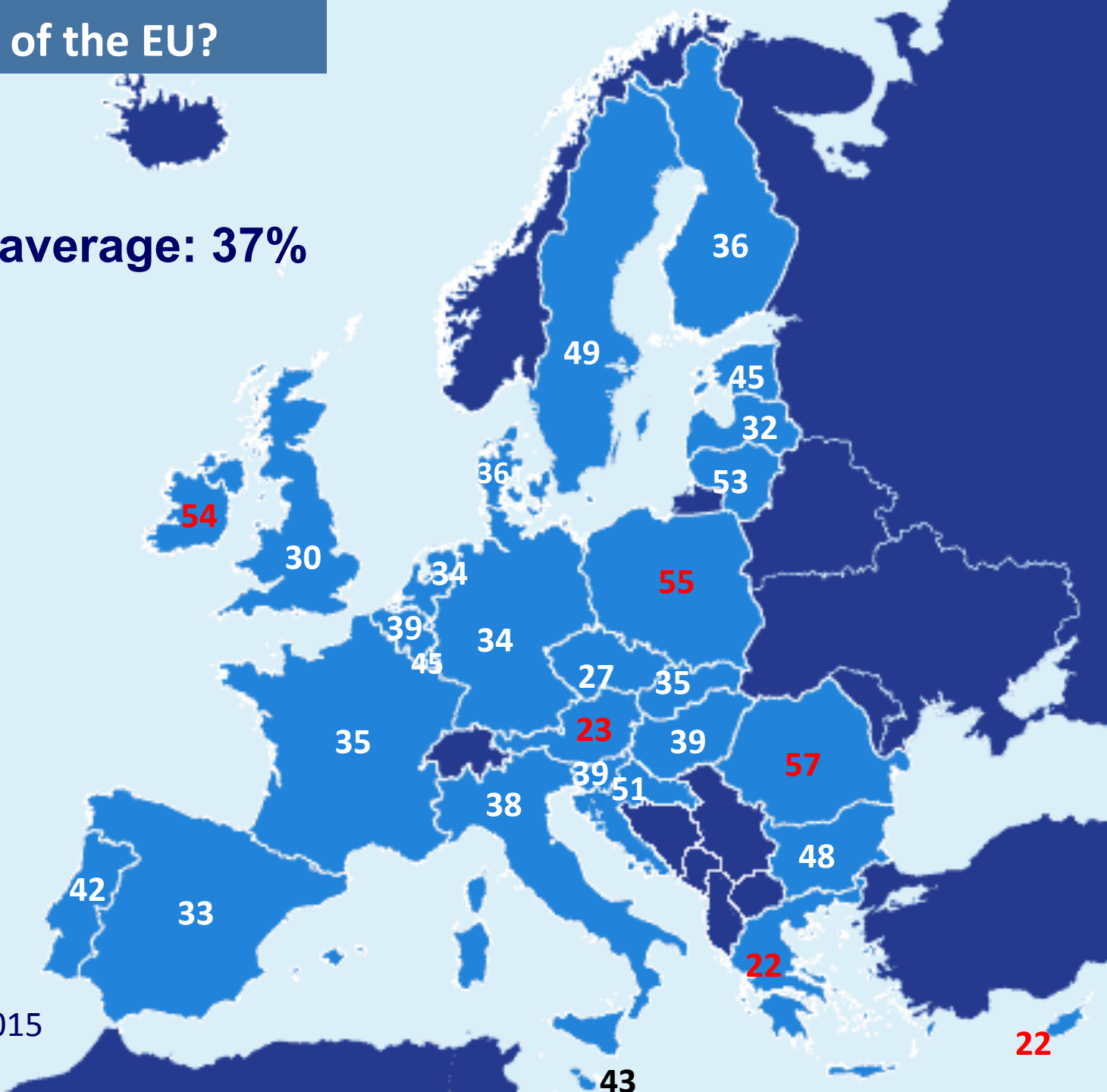# Communication, institutions, identity: conceptual framework

Local vs. national vs. EU/European identity
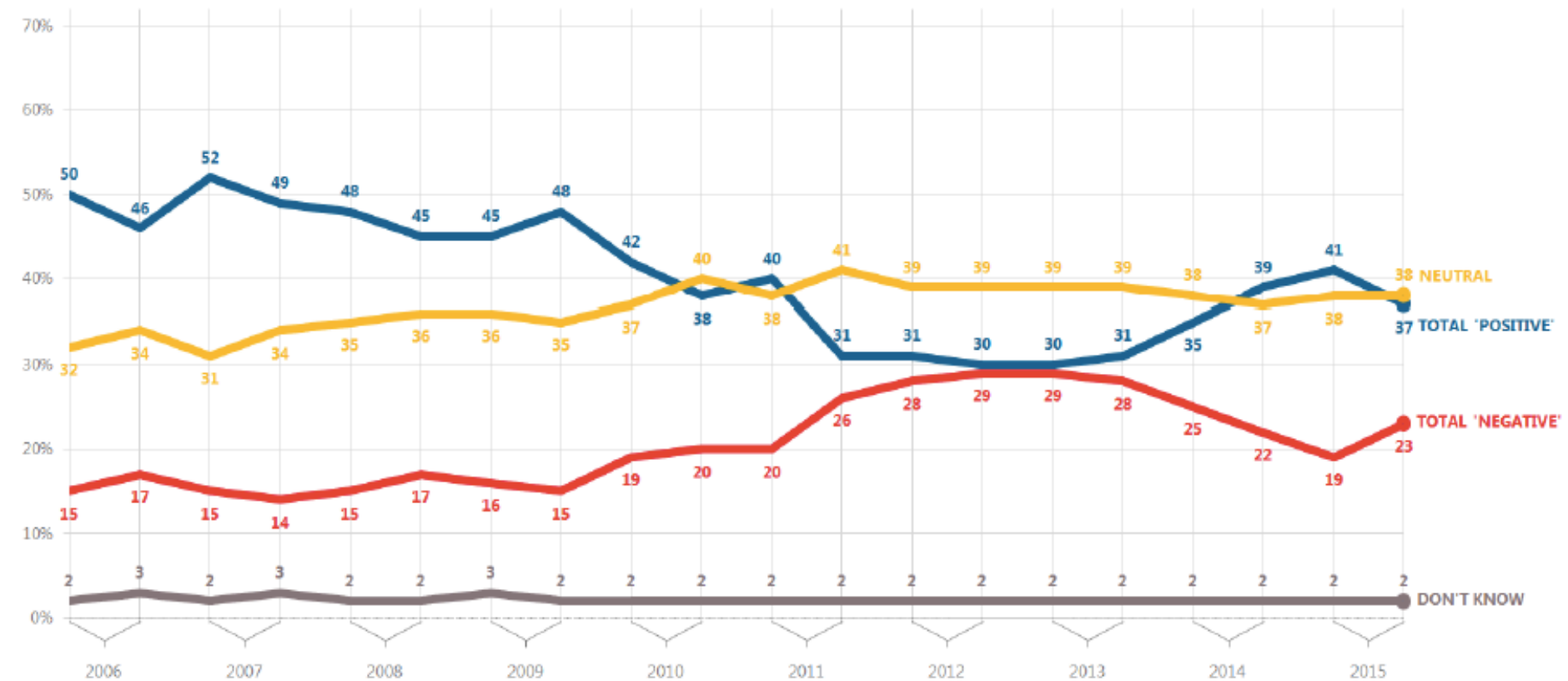
How attached do feel to your…

	Very	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Don't know

…city/town/village 2014: 52% | 37% | 9% | 2% | 0%
2007: 49% | 38% | 10% | 3% | 0%

…country 2014: 54% | 37% | 7% | 2% | 0%
2007: 54% | 37% | 7% | 2% | 0%

…the EU 2014: 9% | 36% | 36% | 16% | 3%
2007: 9% | 37% | 36% | 16% | 2%

…Europe 2014: 13% | 43% | 30% | 12% | 2%
2007: 20% | 47% | 26% | 6% | 1%

2014
2007

Very   Fairly   Not very   Not at all   Don't know

EU28

Eurobarometer 82, autumn 2014
EB 67, spring 2007

A positive image of the EU?

EU average: 37%

Eurobarometer 84/2015

The image of the EU: trend

Eurobarometer 84, 2015

Trust in the EU

October 2015, in %

Legend	
☐	< = 30
☐	30 – 40
☐	40 - 50
☐	50 - 60
☐	> 60

Guadeloupe (FR)

Martinique (FR)

Guyane (FR)

Réunion (FR)

Açores (PT)

Madeira (PT)

Canarias (ES)

Malta
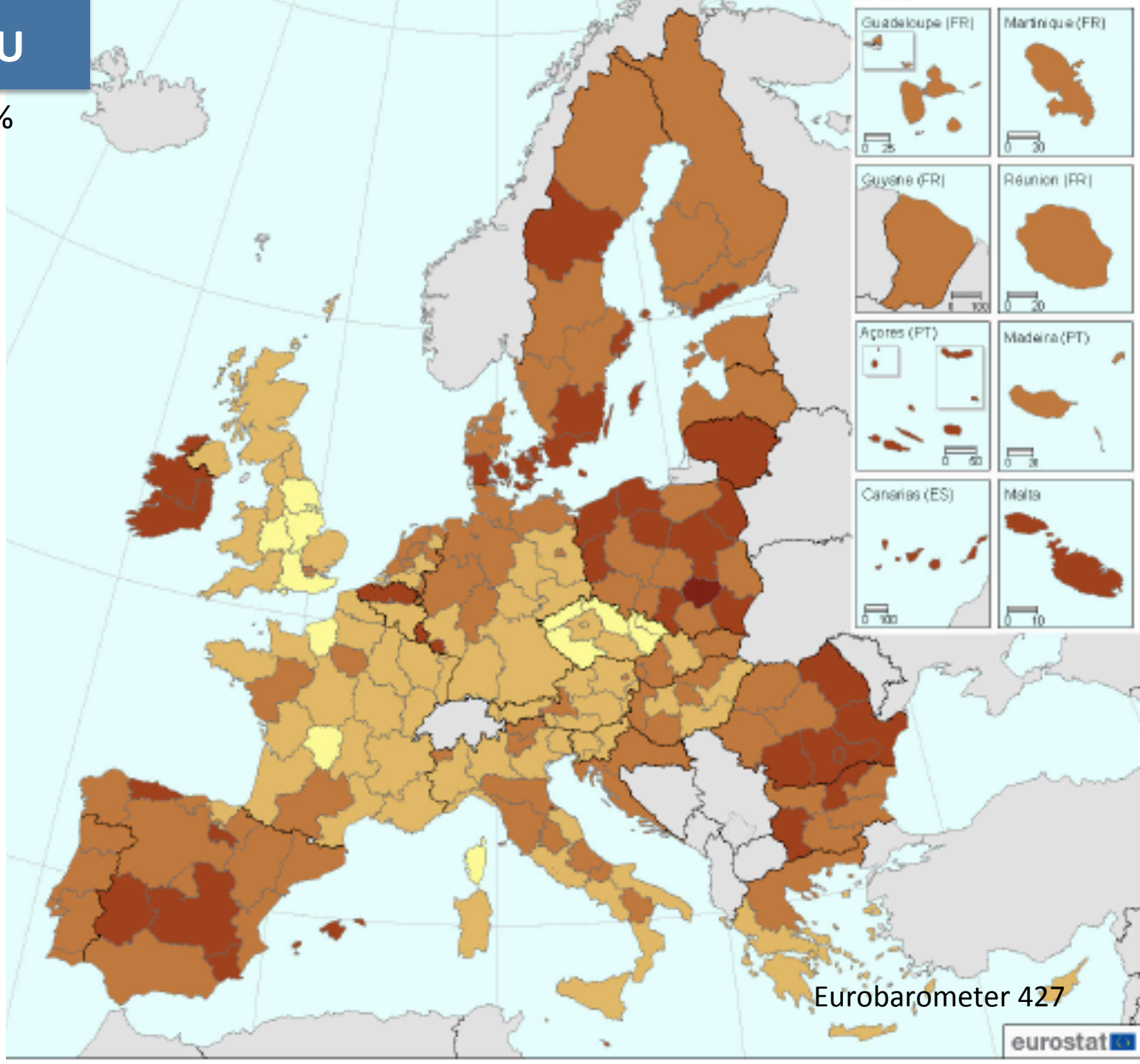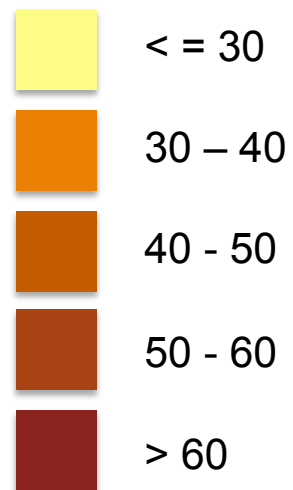
Eurobarometer 427

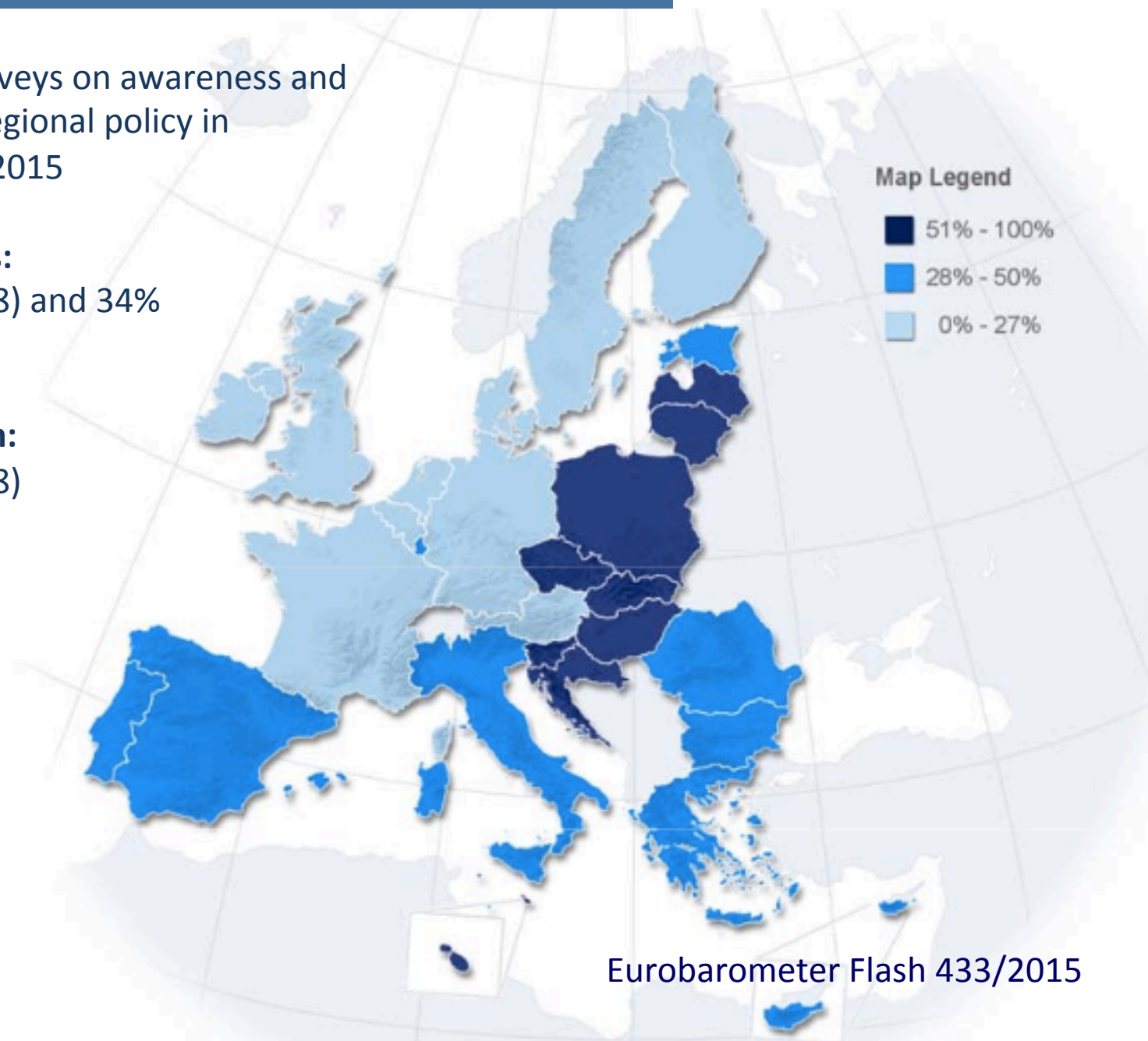eurostat

Awareness and perception of EU-funding

Eurobarometer surveys on awareness and perception of EU regional policy in 2008, 2010, 2013, 2015

Level of awareness:
between 49% (2008) and 34% (2010, 2013, 2015)

Positive perception:
between 70% (2008) and 75% (2015)

Map Legend

- 51% - 100%
- 28% - 50%
- 0% - 27%

Eurobarometer Flash 433/2015

EU communication policy: institutional setting

Council of the EU	Europ. Commission	Europ. Parliament	Interinst. Cooperation
WPI/spokes Member States	DG COMM/spokes	DG COMM	IGI
	Citizens' Dialogues		
	DGs: legal frameworks, CI, campaigns, networks		Club of Venice
			EuroPCom
	37 Representations	35 EPIOs	
	500+ EDICs		

WPI: Working Party on Information
EDIC: European Direct Information Centre
EPIO: European Parliament Information Office
IGI: Inter-institutional Group on Information
Club of Venice: Informal group of EU institutions' and government communication professionals
EuroPCom: European Conference on Public Communication

Development of EU citizenship

1973: European Summit adopts report on European identity

1975: Commission report "Towards a European citizenship" and "Tindeman report" including a chapter on "people's Europe"

1977: EP resolution on "European citizenship"

1979: Commission proposes Directive on "citizens rights of residence"

1985/86: Attempts (Commission, EP) fail to bring "citizenship rights" into the Treaties via the Single European Act

1992: The Maastricht Treaty grants all EU citizens free movement, political rights, common diplomatic protection, and the right to petition Parliament and appeal to the Ombudsman

1997: Treaty of Amsterdam: EU citizenship shall "complement national citizenship"

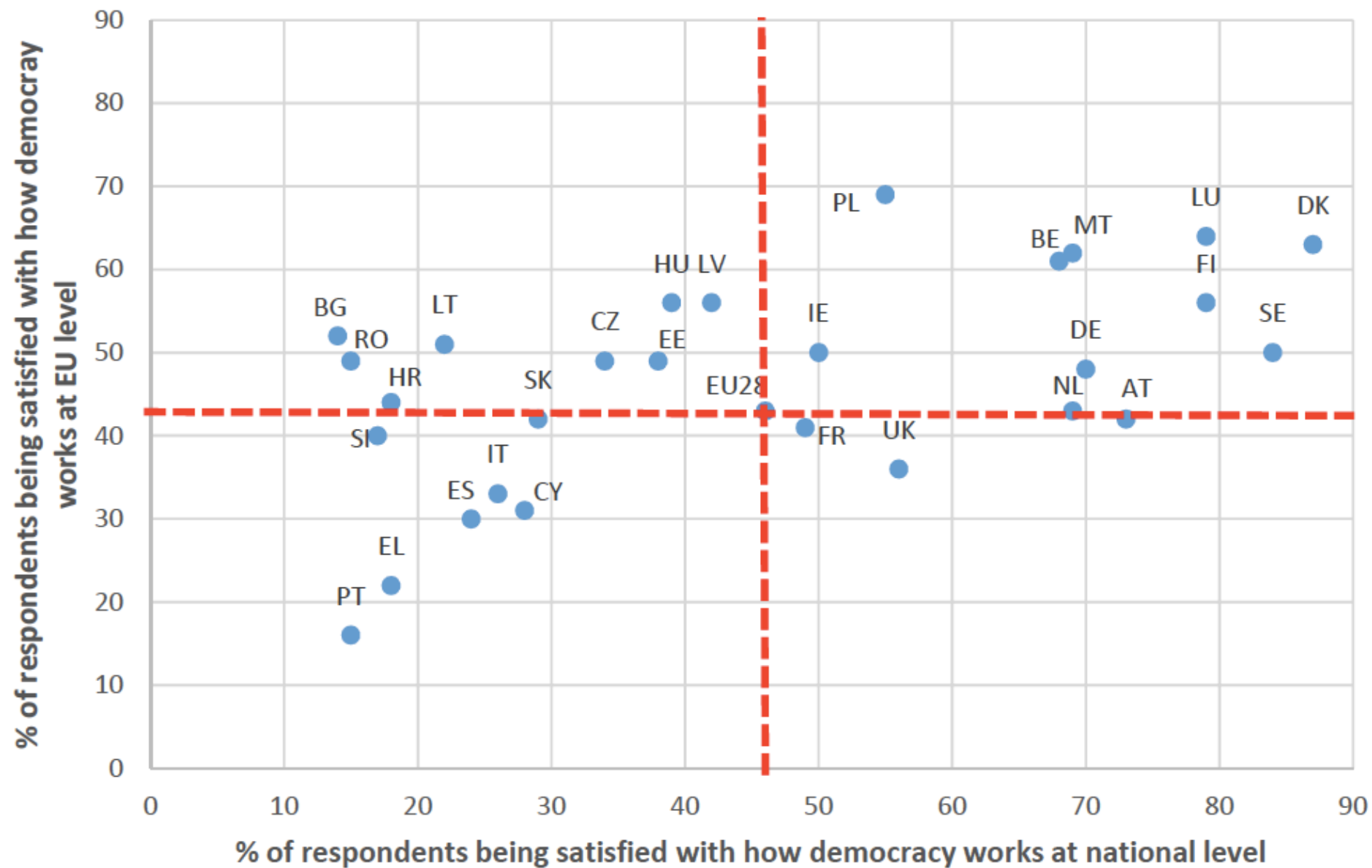**2009:** Lisbon Treaty introduces "European Citizens' Initiative"

2010, 2013: European Commission reports on citizenship
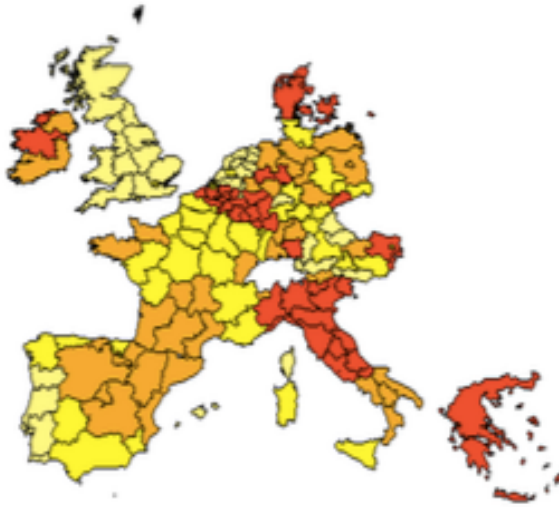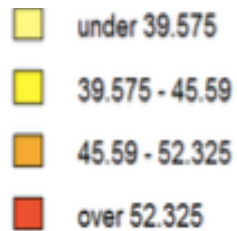
EU citizenship: a problem of information?
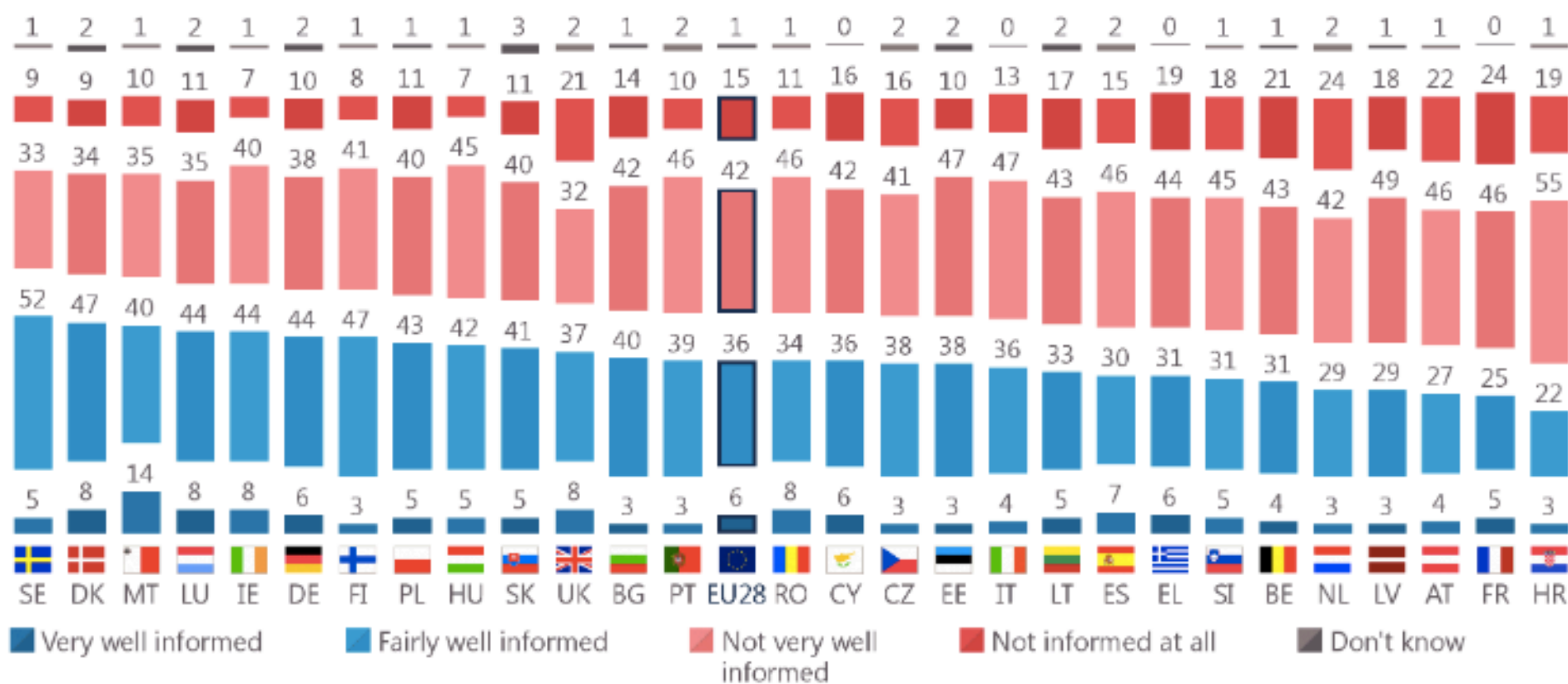
Eurobarometer Flash 430, March 2016

EU vs nation state: satisfied with democracy?
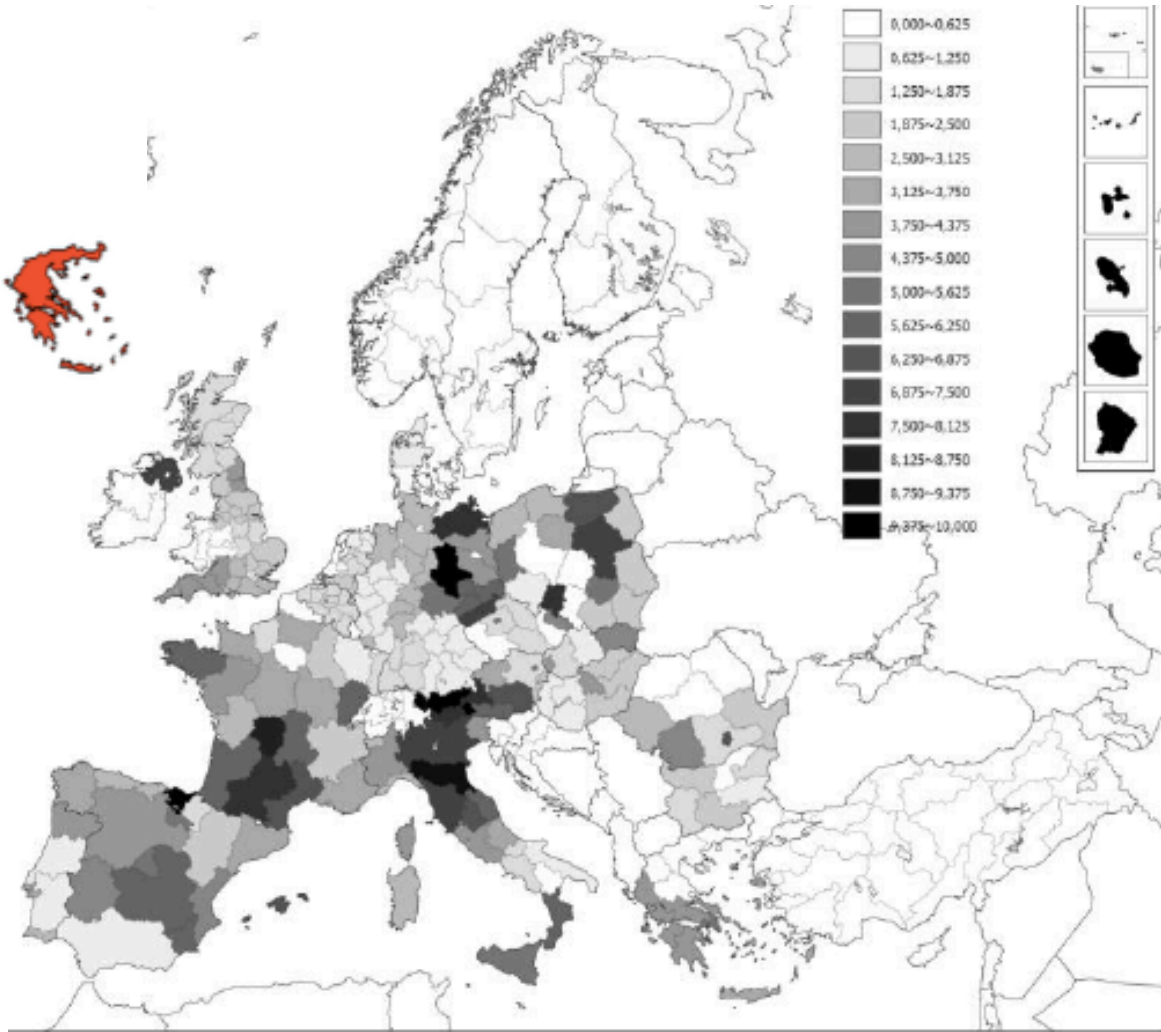

Eurobarometer 80, 2013

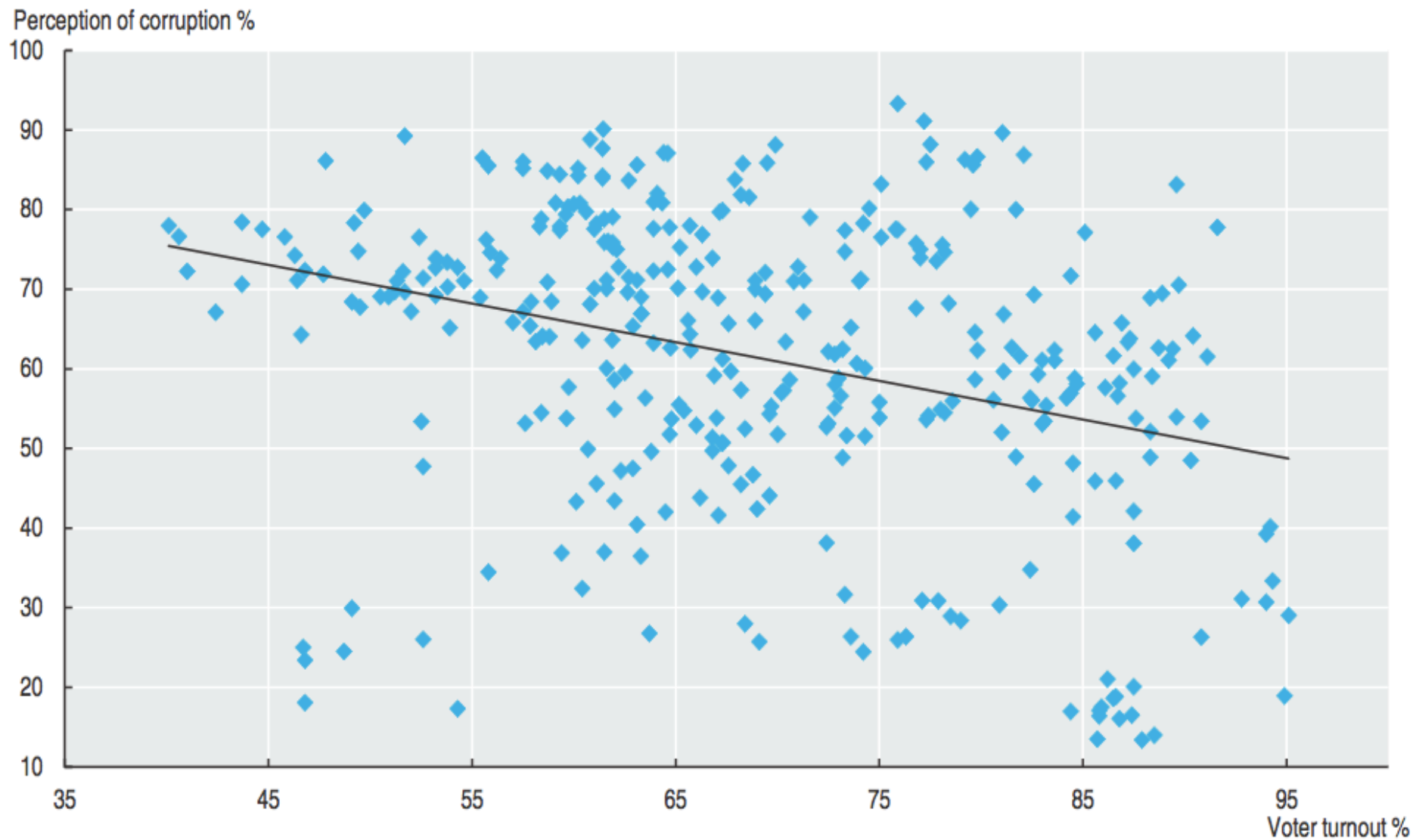# Regional variations in EP and national elections

EP 2014; Fiorino, Pontarollo, Ricciuti (2016)

National elections
Sundström/Stockmeier (2013)

Perception of corruption and regional voter turnout
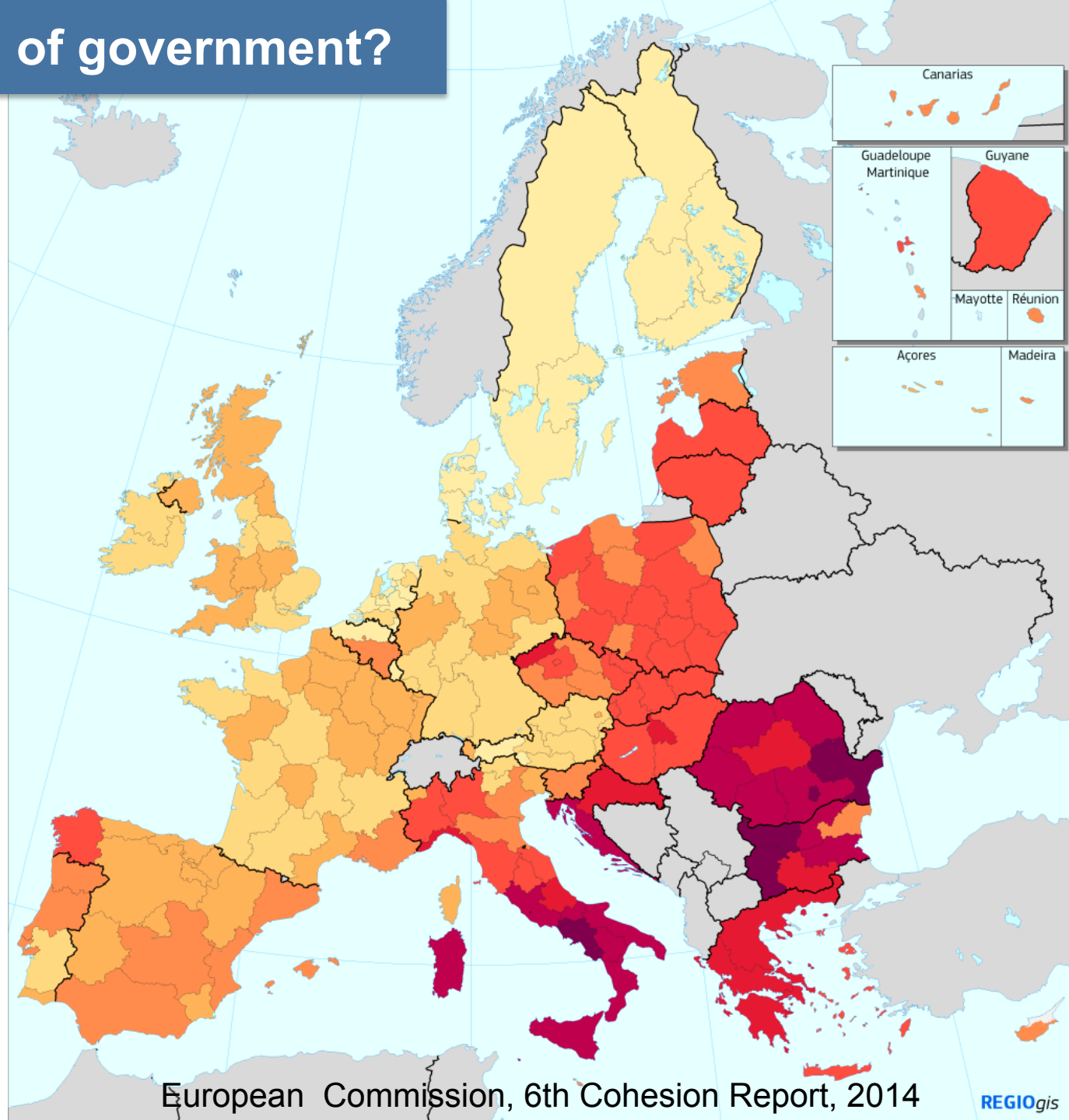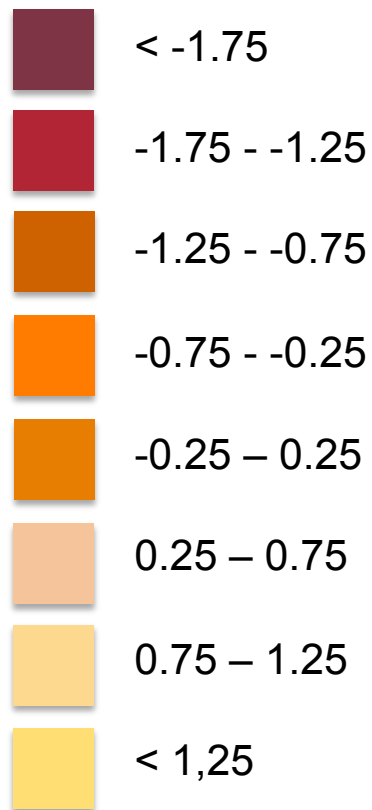

OECD : Regions at a glance (2016)

Competing levels of government?

Quality of government
Standard deviation, 2013

- < -1.75
- -1.75 - -1.25
- -1.25 - -0.75
- -0.75 - -0.25
- -0.25 – 0.25
- 0.25 – 0.75
- 0.75 – 1.25
- < 1,25

Canarias

Guadeloupe
Martinique

Guyane

Mayotte | Réunion

Açores | Madeira

European Commission, 6th Cohesion Report, 2014

REGIO*gis*

An ever closer Union?

■ Some powers should be returned to national govts
■ Division of powers should remain the same
■ National govts should transfer more powers to EU

Country	Some powers returned	Division remains same	Transfer more to EU
Greece	68%	18%	8%
UK	65	25	6
Sweden	47	38	13
Netherlands	44	29	24
Germany	43	25	26
Hungary	40	35	17
Italy	39	26	21
France	39	21	34
Poland	38	39	9
Spain	35	27	30

PEW: Euroscepticsm beyond Brexit (2016)

Conclusions

- **European identity** and the feeling of belonging vary across countries/ regions, class, age and time. Apart from Eurobarometer surveys, a proxy for measuring "Europeaness" could be regional voter turnouts in EP elections (lack of data).

- **EU communication** is rooted in information given by EU institutions to EU-minded and expert communities and embedded in/filtered by national debates.

- **EU citizenship** has developed through Treaty revisions (Maastricht, Amsterdam) and led to the concept of "complementary EU citizenship". The concept is apparently not well understood.

- **EU cohesion policy** has not only a strong narrative ("solidarity") but also means and procedures to create awareness including of the general public. There is a correlation between funding intensity and awareness while perception of the impact of EU funding varies.