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Religious intolerance and Euroscepticism

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Abstract
Research on Euroscepticism focuses increasingly on the role of group identities: national identities and attitudes towards multiculturalism. Yet hardly any attention has been paid to the way in which religious intolerance shapes Euroscepticism. We argue that religious intolerance influences not only diffuse Euroscepticism, but also more specifically opposition to enlargement of the European Union with Turkey. To examine the relationship between religious intolerance and Euroscepticism, this article analyses unique data from two representative surveys conducted in Ireland and the Netherlands. Our findings show that religious intolerance is indeed a powerful determinant of attitudes towards the European Union and that it particularly shapes people's attitudes towards future Turkish enlargement. This study therefore contributes to the literature by demonstrating that social identities are strong determinants of Euroscepticism.

Keywords
EU enlargement, Euroscepticism, prejudices, religion, religious intolerance, Turkey

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Much research on public opinion towards European unification focuses on economic utilitarian considerations (e.g. Anderson 1998; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993; Gabel, 1998a,b; Gabel and Whitten, 1997; Inglehart, 1970). This is not surprising because for many decades the 'European project' had economic objectives, aiming primarily at the integration of the markets of its member states. However, since the Maastricht Treaty, the European Union (EU) has shifted its ambitions increasingly towards political integration. As a consequence, recent research focuses on group identities – feelings of cultural or national attachments – as determinants of attitudes towards European unification. So far, this research has mainly examined feelings of national identity (e.g. Bruter, 2003; Carey, 2002; Christin and Trechsel, 2002) and attitudes towards multiculturalism (e.g. De Vreese et al. 2008; Hooghe and Marks, 2004; Kriesi et al., 2008; McLaren, 2006). Yet, although some scholars have studied the effects of religious denominations and religiosity (see e.g. Nelsen et al., 2001), little attention has been paid to the way in which Euroscepticism is shaped by negative feelings towards adherents of other religions or by secular people's negative feelings towards any organized religion. Our study addresses this question of how intolerance towards other religions influences Euroscepticism.

There are a number of reasons to expect religious intolerance to be an important determinant of Euroscepticism. First of all, cultural differences have become increasingly politicized in Europe and, since 9/11, debates on multiculturalism have become mixed up with debates on the 'threat of Islam' (e.g. Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2008; McLaren, 2003, 2007; Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007; Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009). So, in general, one might expect religious feelings to have become increasingly politically relevant. Secondly, there has been much debate about Turkey's possible accession to the EU, and right-wing populists in particular have objected to enlargement on the basis that Turkey is an Islamic country. The discussion of Turkish accession may therefore have primed citizens to evaluate the EU more in terms of religious diversity and multiculturalism, so that people who are less tolerant towards other religions are likely to be more negatively disposed towards European integration. Given the significance of Islam and Turkish accession in these debates (Boomgaarden et al., 2011; Koenig et al., 2006), our study focuses on the impact of two types of religious intolerance – generic religious intolerance and specific prejudices towards Islam – when explaining both general Euroscepticism and attitudes towards the enlargement of the Union with Turkey.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, we review the literature on the relationship between religion and Euroscepticism, discuss the concept of religious intolerance and present our theoretical expectations. Thereafter, we discuss the measurements of religious intolerance. Our hypotheses are then tested in an analysis of survey data from Ireland and the Netherlands, specifically designed to capture the complex relations between religion and political attitudes. These two cases have been chosen because the Netherlands has many Muslim immigrants and an anti-Islam party that formed explicitly in opposition to Turkey's possible accession to

the EU (Geert Wilders' Freedom Party), while Ireland has few Muslim immigrants and no anti-immigration party. Hence, these countries vary greatly in terms of the politicization of the debate on multiculturalism and religious diversity. The penultimate section presents our findings, which confirm that both religious intolerance and specific prejudices about Islam matter, whereas religiosity and religious denomination surprisingly have no significant effect on levels of Euroscepticism.

Euroscepticism and religious intolerance

Public support for European integration has been studied from a variety of angles, including diffuse EU support, support for the institutions and support for further deepening or widening of the EU. In recent years, in the wake of spells of public dissatisfaction with the EU, the term Euroscepticism has gained popularity in the public and scholarly debate (see Hooghe and Marks, 2007, for an overview). Euroscepticism is defined as scepticism or doubt about or dislike towards Europe, the EU or European integration. We distinguish between (1) lack of general support for the regime and (2) specific opposition to a key policy area touching on the issue of religion, namely the potential membership of Turkey in the EU (Easton, 1975; Kentmen, 2008; Kopecky and Mudde, 2002).

Despite its salience in recent debates on the EU and especially Turkey's candidacy to become an EU member, religion has not been at the heart of previous empirical models of Euroscepticism. Some studies have examined variation in EU support across different religious denominations and have found that Protestants are usually more Eurosceptic than Catholics (Hagevi, 2002; Nelsen et al., 2001; Scheuer and Van der Brug, 2007; but see Boomgaarden and Freire, 2009). Religious denomination, however, is not the only aspect of religion that is expected to influence Euroscepticism: the level of religious commitment (*religiosity*) also matters. Higher levels of religiosity have been found to foster support for European integration (e.g. Nelsen et al., 2001: 194). In our study, we thus control for the effects of religious denomination and church attendance. However, the focus of this article is to examine a largely overlooked determinant of Euroscepticism that follows from religious group identities, namely *religious intolerance*.

Intolerance implies a lack of willingness to 'put up with' those groups and individuals (and their manifestations) – such as other religions, races or cultures – that one opposes or rejects (Stouffer, 1955; Sullivan et al., 1993: 2). The modern concept of intolerance developed out of the religious controversies between Protestants and Catholics in 17th- and 18th-century England. At the time, the doctrine of 'religious toleration' sought to remove religious opinions and dogmas from the political realm. However, most of the empirical literature on intolerance has focused not explicitly on religious intolerance but on the more general notion of 'political intolerance' (Gibson, 2006; Sullivan et al., 1993). One strand of literature on political intolerance has dealt with attitudes towards particular dissenting groups, such as communists and atheists, where intolerance is directed at the group in question (see Stouffer, 1955; Sullivan et al. 1993).

Another strand of literature has studied political intolerance by examining the lack of acceptance of certain abstract norms of democratic procedure (see McClosky and Brill, 1983; Prothro and Grigg, 1960; Sniderman et al., 1989). This line of research has been particularly concerned with public intolerance towards the expression of opposing points of view.

In this article, we adopt the former approach to the study of religious intolerance by focusing on intolerance towards specific religious groups. Since intolerance refers to an unwillingness to put up with things that one rejects, the term presumes opposition or disagreement. That is, intolerance captures prejudices or stereotyped beliefs about a group and a predisposition to act negatively towards the group (Sullivan et al., 1993). We thus define religious intolerance as a negative evaluation of a group of individuals owing to their religious affiliation (or lack thereof) and a predisposition to treat these individuals in a prejudiced manner. Extant research shows that it is important to make explicit the reference point of intolerance since judgements in the abstract are typically much more intolerant than when citizens are asked about specific groups or individuals (McClosky and Brill, 1983).

According to our definition, the concept of intolerance is thus closely connected the notion of prejudice; that is, stereotyped and negative beliefs about a group (Jackman, 1977). Prejudices and stereotypes have been studied from different theoretical perspectives, including social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Turner, 1999), group conflict theory (Blumer, 1958; McLaren, 2006; Quillian, 1995) and integrated threat theory (Stephan and Stephan, 1993, 1996). Common to these approaches is the notion that negative out-group evaluations are related to a strong in-group identity, and thus a positive sense of 'social self'. Such prejudiced evaluations of out-groups may be a function of a number of factors, including 'realistic threats' to in-group interests (competition over material interests between in-groups and out-groups), 'symbolic threats' based on perceived group differences in values, norms and beliefs, 'negative stereotyping' of an out-group (e.g. as being violent, greedy or hostile) and 'intergroup anxiety', which refers to personal experiences of feeling threatened by members of the out-group. All of these factors may shape negative evaluations of religious groups.

Why would one expect that religious intolerance would contribute to Euroscepticism? Research has shown that the strength of positive in-group identifications and negative out-group evaluations can explain a whole range of attitudes and behaviours, including support for European integration. In his study of attitudes towards the EU, Carey (2002) has shown that people with strong national identity and pride are less supportive of European integration (see also Bruter, 2003). Similarly, Hooghe and Marks (2004, 2005) have demonstrated that individuals who conceive of their national identity as exclusive of other territorial identities are likely to be considerably more Eurosceptic than those who have multiple nested identities. McLaren's (2002, 2004, 2006) work on support for the EU has most directly tested the link between intolerance and EU attitudes. She has shown that Euroscepticism is closely related to a general hostility towards other cultures, such as negative attitudes towards minority groups and immigrants

(see also De Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2005). The findings in these studies thus suggest that negative evaluations of out-groups may be a powerful predictor of Euroscepticism, but none of the extant research has focused explicitly on the effect of evaluations of religious groups on attitudes towards European integration.

This is surprising since people's perceptions of other religious groups are likely to be closely tied to their views on the integration project. Given that both the idea and practice of European integration are based on a willingness to 'put up with' religious, cultural and ethnic diversity through closer economic and political cooperation of nations and peoples in Europe, it seems reasonable to assume that people who evaluate other religious groups negatively are also likely to be less favourably disposed towards an enterprise that seeks to promote 'unity in diversity'. Religious heterogeneity is a very visible by-product of European integration: the European Union brings together predominantly Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox – and possibly eventually Muslim – countries and has promoted the removal of boundaries (economic, political and cultural) between nations.

We thus expect that individuals who are less tolerant of other religions and are prone to negative stereotyping are more likely to be sceptical about further European integration. EU policies that explicitly seek to promote religious diversity within the Union are likely to be met with greater hostility by people who are more religiously intolerant. More specifically, we would expect that the proposed enlargement of the Union to include a predominantly Muslim country, Turkey, would be opposed by people who are more intolerant towards other religions in general and Islam in particular. Given the increasing fear of and hostility towards Muslim communities across many countries in Europe in aftermath of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks by Islamist fundamentalist across the world (Davis, 2007; Huddy et al., 2002) and the heated debate about Muslim immigration in countries such as the Netherlands (Vliegenthart and Boomgaarden, 2007), it is particularly important to establish whether enlargement concerns and Euroscepticism are driven only by negative evaluation of Muslims or by religious intolerance more generally (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007; Velasco Gonzalez et al., 2008). Hence, in our empirical analysis we explicitly differentiate between these two forms of religious intolerance.

Based on the above discussion, we test the following expectations concerning the relationship between religious intolerance and Euroscepticism:

> **H1:** The more intolerant people are towards other religions, the more Eurosceptic they are (*religious intolerance hypothesis*).

> **H2:** People who hold negative views about Islam are more likely to be Eurosceptic (*Islam hypothesis*).

Moreover, our theoretical framework also leads us to have an expectation concerning the magnitude of the effects of religious intolerance vis-à-vis diffuse and specific Euroscepticism. We expect that religious intolerance matters for diffuse

Euroscepticism, but in particular for the issue of Turkey, in that we also expect the latter to be driven by anti-Islam sentiments.

> **H3:** Both measures of religious intolerance have a greater impact on attitudes towards Turkish enlargement than on general Euroscepticism.

> **H4:** Negative feelings towards Islam have a greater impact on attitudes towards Turkish enlargement than general religious intolerance.

Case selection

To test our hypotheses, we conducted a survey in Ireland and the Netherlands in November 2008. These countries display important variation on three relevant characteristics. First, in the Netherlands, there are many immigrants from countries where the majority of citizens are Muslims, most notably Turkey and Morocco. In contrast, Ireland has few Muslim immigrants.[1] Secondly, issues of religious fundamentalism, particularly with reference to Islam, have become very salient in recent years in the Netherlands, as they have been politicized by the populist right-wing List Pim Fortuyn and more recently Geert Wilder's Freedom Party, particularly after the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York City in 2001 and the murder of the controversial filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a Muslim radical in November 2004 (see Breeman et al., 2009; Velasco Gonzalez et al., 2008). Geert Wilders used to be a member of parliament for the Liberal Party, the VVD, but he defected because the party would not rule out the possibility of Turkish membership in the EU. Wilders argued that, as a Muslim country, Turkey could never become a member of the EU. So, in the rhetoric of Wilders, anti-immigration, anti-Islam, anti-Turkish and anti-EU sentiments are combined. We therefore expect religious intolerance to have a particularly strong effect on Euroscepticism in the Netherlands. The debate over multiculturalism and Islam has been much more subdued in Ireland, where no anti-immigration or anti-Islam party is represented in parliament. Thirdly, the Netherlands is a religiously heterogeneous country, with relatively many non-religious citizens, but also minorities of fundamentalist Christians. In Ireland, on the other hand, the large majority is Catholic and church attendance is on average much higher than in the Netherlands (e.g. Casanova, 1994).[2] Theoretically, we might expect the effect of religious tolerance to be stronger in those cases where there is greater religious heterogeneity and more variation in the strength of religiosity. When citizens are more similar in terms of their religion, religious tolerance is less likely to become politically relevant.[3]

Hence, when focusing on these three aspects of the contexts related to the independent variables of this study, the two countries represent two 'most different' cases. For finding effects of religious intolerance on Euroscepticism, the Netherlands represents a most likely case: if we do not find such effects there, we are not likely to find them anywhere. Ireland, on the other hand, represents a least

likely case: if we find an effect of religious intolerance on Euroscepticism, we have good reasons to expect that the effects will exist elsewhere too. On the basis of the contextual differences, we expect religious intolerance to have a stronger effect in the Netherlands than in Ireland, but we expect the association between religious intolerance and Euroscepticism to exist in both countries. However, we recognize that the study will have to be replicated in more countries to provide certainty about the robustness of the findings, and also to assess how different constellations of these contextual variables play out.

Model and data

To test these propositions, a survey was designed for the purpose and carried out by international pollster TNS Opinion. In both countries respondents were sampled from the online TNS database, which comprises of more than 200,000 respondents and is representative of the adult population on key socioeconomic demographics. A total of 1040 respondents in the Netherlands and 1457 in Ireland completed the survey (with response rates of 60 percent and 35 percent, respectively) and these samples do not deviate from the census population distribution in terms of gender, age and education.

Our first dependent variable pertains to general Euroscepticism – or opposition to the EU. Based on Easton (1975), we explore both diffuse support for the European Union as a whole and specific support for the policies of the authorities. The items that measure diffuse support refer to a further strengthening of the EU and items that measure specific support refer to perceptions of the utility of the status quo (see Boomgaarden et al., 2011). Our survey contains four items that measure diffuse as well as more specific support, which are merged into a single scale. The four items are:

> 'Some say European unification should be pushed further, others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion?'

> 'Generally speaking, do you think the membership of Ireland/the Netherlands in the European Union is a good thing or a bad thing?'

> 'Taking everything into consideration, would you say that Ireland/the Netherlands has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union?'

> 'Are you for or against the development towards a more integrated political European Union, with more policy areas being coordinated between the member states?'

Repondents could answer all items by means of a five-point scale.[4] In order to test whether these items form a single scale, we used Mokken scaling analysis (the results are presented in the web appendix).[5] The scaling analysis demonstrates that the four items form a strong scale in both countries, but that attitudes are much more clearly

structured in the Netherlands than in Ireland. Since the items form an additive scale, the items' values were summed and divided by four so as to create a scale running from 1 to 5, where 5 indicates the highest level of Euroscepticism.

Our second dependent variable is opposition to Turkish accession to the European Union. This attitude is measured by means of four indicators:

> 'To what degree are you in favor of or against Turkey becoming a member of the European Union?'

> 'Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with the following statements on Turkey: (1) Turkey belongs to Europe due to a shared cultural heritage; (2) Turkey belongs to Europe by its geography; (3) Turkey belongs to Europe by its history.'

These items are all measured on a five-point scale. Again, Mokken scaling analysis shows that they form a strong scale. The summated rating scale runs from 1 to 5, where 5 indicates higher levels of opposition to Turkish accession. The two dependent variables have a correlation of 0.238. The positive correlation shows that the two attitudes are related. However, the relationship is so weak that different determinants may explain the variation in both attitudes to differing degrees.

Our key independent variable is religious intolerance. One reason the extant literature on Euroscepticism has ignored the role of religious intolerance may be that public opinion surveys, such as the Eurobarometer, do not contain questions that adequately capture attitudes towards other religions. Hence, to examine the theoretical propositions concerning the impact of religious intolerance, we designed a survey with items specifically aiming to measure not only religiosity and religious denomination but also attitudes towards other religions.

Our survey contains a series of questions measuring attitudes towards specific religious/non-religious groups (Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews and atheists). These items include the classic 'social distance' measures ('How would you feel if a [religious denomination] were to become your daughter- or son-in-law?') that are frequently used to measure intolerance towards specific groups (Bogardus, 1925; Brinkerhoff and Mackie, 1986; Golebiowska, 2004), as well as specific questions about Islam and Muslims. This allows us to create a measure of general religious intolerance as well as a measure that specifically taps into negative evaluations of Islam. All answers to the religious intolerance questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Figure 1 shows the mean values in Ireland and the Netherlands, where 5 indicates high intolerance and 1 indicates low intolerance. In general, the Dutch respondents are less tolerant than the Irish respondents. These differences are statistically significant, albeit substantially modest. If we compare intolerance across religious groups, we see that the Irish are most tolerant towards practising Catholics whereas the Dutch are most tolerant towards practising Protestants, but both sets of respondents are most intolerant towards Muslims.

When measuring religious intolerance with social distance measures, one runs into the problem that different items have different meanings for those who
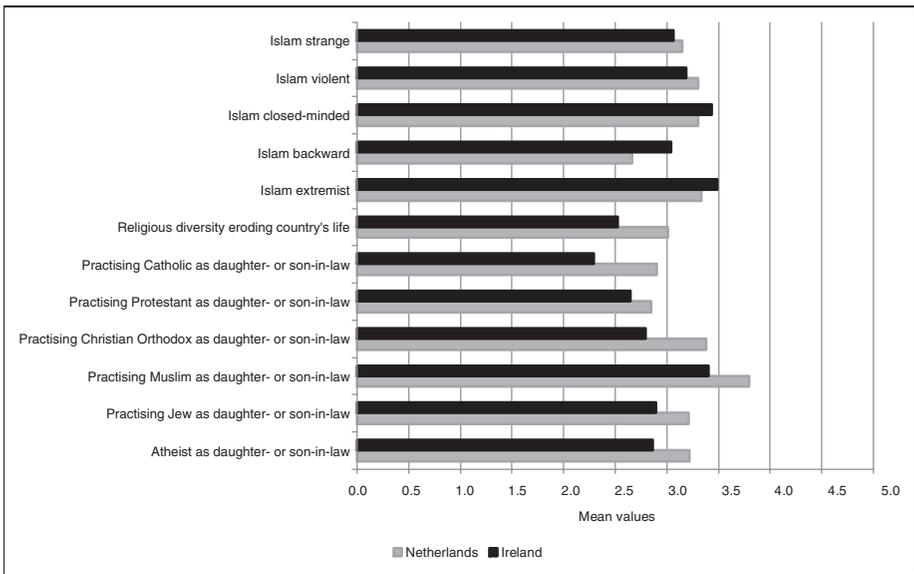
Figure 1. Religious intolerance in Ireland and the Netherlands.

belong to different religious denominations and those who do not belong to any religion. The majority of the Irish respondents are Roman Catholic and most do not object to having a practising Catholic as a son- or daughter-in-law, but we cannot see this as a sign of religious tolerance. Equally, an atheist does not have to be tolerant to accept an atheist as a son-in-law. Yet for a devout Muslim to accept an atheist as a son-in-law would indicate a certain degree of religious tolerance. As Sullivan et al. (1993: 99) note in their discussion of people's choice of 'least-liked' target groups, 'given the importance most individuals attach to their religious affiliations, it is reasonable to expect persons to select different target groups'. Since the items have a different meaning for different religious groups, these items do not form a scale when considering all respondents. We solved this problem by creating different scales for people from different religious backgrounds. For atheists, religious intolerance is a composite score of intolerance towards Jews, Muslims, Protestants and Roman Catholics. For Roman Catholics, religious intolerance is a composite score of intolerance towards atheists, Jews, Muslims and Protestants. The same procedure was followed when creating a scale of religious intolerance among Protestants, Muslims, Jews and members of other Christian and other non-Christian religions. The scale scores are created by summing the scores of the separate items and dividing this total by the total number of items, so that the measure of religious intolerance is bound between 1 and 5. The Mokken scaling analysis that we conducted shows that the items form a strong scale among all subgroups of respondents.[6] Since these items refer to religious intolerance in one's personal life, we refer to the scale as 'egocentric religious intolerance'.

A question about whether religious diversity is in general a good or a bad thing was also included in the model (responses also on a scale running from 1 to 5). The question wording is: 'Turning to the question of religious diversity, which means that there are many different religions in a country, with which of the following views do you agree?' This variable does not form a scale with the other items and we therefore include it separately in the models. We refer to it as 'sociotropic religious intolerance', because it refers to attitudes towards the role of religion in society as a whole. In addition to the two religious intolerance measures, we constructed a separate scale of attitudes towards Islam. The summated rating scale was based on five items about feelings towards Islam, where 5 indicates greater hostility. Hence, we have created three measures of religious intolerance: a scale measuring egocentric religious intolerance, a single measure of sociotropic religious intolerance, and a scale measuring negative attitudes towards Islam.

We include a number of control variables in our models. First, we include indicators for religious denominations (Protestant, other Christian religions, other non-Christian religions and atheist/agnostic, with Roman Catholic as the reference category). Second, we add a measure of religiosity. The most common operationalization of religiosity in the empirical literature is a measure of the frequency of church attendance. We rely on a broader conception of religiosity by including items that refer to behavioural components of religiosity and a more intrinsic measure of believing. The scale includes the following three items (which form one scale with a high level of homogeneity): (1) 'Apart from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services these days?'; (2) 'Apart from attending religious services, about how often do you pray?'; (3) 'Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, how religious would you say you are?'. In order to assess whether Euroscepticism is indeed (partially) determined by feelings of identity in addition to economic utilitarian considerations, we control for two measures of economic perceptions: a retrospective and a prospective evaluation (e.g. Anderson, 1998).[7]

Another important control variable is the respondents' attitudes towards immigration. It seems conceivable that the three measures of religious intolerance and attitudes towards Islam are to some extent part and parcel of more general attitudes towards immigrants. It is necessary therefore that we control for attitudes towards immigrants in our models, so as not to bias our estimated effects. Table A5 in the web appendix presents the results of scaling analyses on a set of items that measure attitudes towards immigrants. In the Netherlands these items form a strong scale and in Ireland a moderately strong scale.[8] We also note that the measures of immigration attitudes do not scale with the religious intolerance measures, which suggests that we are indeed looking at different constructs. Finally, we also include gender, age, education and political ideology as control variables. Ideology is included twice – as a linear measure of left–right positions and by means of a squared term. The former tells us whether Euroscepticism is stronger among those who identify with the political left or with the political right. The latter tells us whether Euroscepticism is stronger at the extremes of the ideological spectrum.[9]

Results

We explore two dependent variables in this study: general Euroscepticism and opposition to Turkey's membership of the EU. To examine the determinants of both attitudes in Ireland and the Netherlands, we estimate three regression models: first, a baseline model that consists of measures of religious denomination, religiosity, attitudes towards immigrants, economic evaluations and socioeconomic demographics, but leaves out any religious intolerance measures; second, a model that adds only our three religous intolerance measures to the sociodemographic controls, economic evaluations and religion variables; and, finally, a full model that includes religious intolerance measures as well as attitudes towards immigrants as predictors.

Table 1 presents the results for the determinants of general Euroscepticism. Model 1 is the baseline model with control variables only. No significant differences exist between the different religions in Ireland and in the Netherlands. Nor do levels of religiosity have a statistically significant effect on Euroscepticism in these two countries when all control variables are included. This is surprising given that other studies have shown that religious denomination and piousness have an impact on EU support (Hagevi, 2002; Nelsen et al., 2001; Scheuer and Van der Brug, 2007), but it is in line with Boomgaarden and Freire (2009), who also find no substantial effects of an individual's religion. Of the various demographic variables, the strongest predictor of Euroscepticism is education. In both countries the better educated are significantly less negative about the EU than are less educated citizens. Older people are less supportive of the EU than the young in both countries (Model 1). Irish women are significantly less supportive of the EU than are men, whereas in the Netherlands no significant difference exists. Right-wing citizens are significantly less Eurosceptic than left-wing citizens in both countries. The squared term for left–right is significant in the Netherlands in Model 1, thus showing that Euroscepticism is significantly higher at both extremes of the left–right spectrum.

Model 1 includes three attitudinal control variables. The first two are evaluations of the state of the economy. Those who have a more positive view of the economic status quo tend to be less Eurosceptic. Prospective expectations of how the economy will develop have a substantially stronger (and significant) effect in both countries than retrospective evaluations. The effect of the latter is significant only in Ireland. Attitudes towards immigrants is the most important predictor of Euroscepticism in both countries. Model 1 explains 19 percent of the variance in EU support in Ireland, and 25 percent in the Netherlands.

Model 2 shows what happens when we add religious intolerance and negative attitudes towards Islam to the base model, while excluding attitudes towards immigrants. As hypothesized (H1), both egocentric and sociotropic religious intolerance have a positive effect on Euroscepticism, albeit that the effect of egocentric religious intolerance is not significant in the Netherlands. In contrast, negative feelings towards Islam have a positive effect (H2) only in the Netherlands. Religious intolerance has the strongest effect in Ireland, but the effect of attitudes

Table 1. The effect of religious intolerance on Euroscepticism

	Ireland						The Netherlands					
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE
Denomination (reference = Roman Catholic)												
Protestant	0.019	0.082	−0.046	0.083	−0.004	0.081	−0.205	0.289	0.010	0.300	−0.074	0.290
Other Christian religion	0.025	0.054	0.036	0.054	0.042	0.053	−0.029	0.080	−0.073	0.083	−0.042	0.080
Non-Christian religion	−0.006	0.060	0.077	0.061	−0.035	0.060	0.030	0.045	0.002	0.056	0.025	0.054
No religion	−0.005	0.089	−0.032	0.090	0.012	0.088	0.142	0.235	0.190	0.242	0.177	0.234
Religiosity	−0.001	0.006	0.001	0.006	0.000	0.006	0.002	0.006	0.007	0.007	0.006	0.007
Left–right self-placement	−0.035	0.011**	−0.024	0.011*	−0.034	0.011**	−0.042	0.011***	−0.012	0.012	−0.040	0.012**
Left–right squared	−0.001	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.008	0.003*	0.006	0.004	0.007	0.003
Education	−0.047	0.010***	−0.054	0.010***	−0.041	0.010***	−0.035	0.011**	−0.055	0.011***	−0.034	0.011**
Age	−0.003	0.001*	−0.002	0.001	−0.002	0.001	−0.005	0.001***	−0.005	0.001**	−0.005	0.001***
Female	0.237	0.036***	0.261	0.037***	0.248	0.036***	0.068	0.044	0.058	0.045	0.070	0.044
Retrospective economic evaluations	−0.068	0.025**	−0.043	0.025	−0.040	0.025	−0.056	0.034	−0.075	0.035*	−0.058	0.034
Prospective economic evaluations	−0.081	0.019***	−0.070	0.019***	−0.073	0.019***	−0.160	0.025***	−0.169	0.026***	−0.145	0.025***
Sociotropic religious intolerance	–	–	0.128	0.018***	0.081	0.018***	–	–	0.185	0.024***	0.110	0.025***
Egocentric religious intolerance	–	–	0.119	0.026***	0.106	0.025***	–	–	0.065	0.040	0.022	0.039
Anti-Muslim sentiments	–	–	0.013	0.018	−0.019	0.018	–	–	0.097	0.026***	0.023	0.026
Negative feelings towards immigrants	0.248	0.022***	–	–	0.195	0.024***	0.441	0.033***	–	–	0.341	0.039***
N	1457		1442		1442		1040		1027		1027	
R^2	.191		.184		.220		.261		.218		.273	
Adjusted R^2	.184		.175		.211		.252		.207		.261	

*** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p > .10$

towards Islam is not significant. In the Netherlands, sociotropic religious intolerance and attitudes towards Islam both exert a strong effect on Euroscepticism.

In Model 3 we add attitudes towards immigrants. In this model, sociotropic religious intolerance still has a positive effect on Euroscepticism in both countries, when controlling for attitudes towards immigrants. In Ireland, egocentric religious intolerance still remains a strong predictor. Negative feelings towards Islam have no significant effect on Euroscepticism in either country, thus not lending initial support for Hypothesis 2. Overall, Table 1 shows that sociotropic religious intolerance has the expected effect in both countries, whereas egocentric religious intolerance has the expected effect only in Ireland. Religious intolerance increases the explained variance of the model from 19 to 22 percent in Ireland, and from 25 to 26 percent in the Netherlands (comparing Model 1 and Model 3).

Our second dependent variable is opposition to Turkish membership of the EU. Table 2 shows the results of regressions explaining these attitudes. Table 2 shows that no significant relationship exists in either country between the members of different religions in their opposition to Turkish membership of the EU.[10] Irish people who are more religious are less opposed to Turkey's accession, whereas this is the other way around in the Netherlands. Older people are more opposed to Turkey's accession than are younger people in both countries. In both countries, there are no significant differences between men and women, and education does not have an effect. Right-wing citizens in Ireland are less sceptical about Turkey's accession than are left-wing people, whereas this is the other way round in the Netherlands.

In Ireland, retrospective evaluations of the economy are an important predictor of opposition to Turkish EU membership, and prosepective evaluations also exert a significant – but weaker – effect. In the Netherlands, prespective and retrospective evaluations of the economy are not significantly related to opposition to Turkey's EU membership. In both countries, negative feelings towards immigrants are the strongest predictors of opposition to Turkey's accession to the EU. However, this effect is much stronger in the Netherlands than in Ireland, which causes the large difference between the two countries in explained variance for Model 1: 9 percent in Ireland versus 20 percent in the Netherlands.

Model 2 shows what happens when we add our measures of religious intolerance and feelings towards Islam to the model, while excluding attitudes towards immigrants. In this case, the explained variance increases substantially in Ireland (from 9 to 14 percent), while it drops a little in the Netherlands (from 20 to 19 percent). So, in the Netherlands negative feelings towards immigrants are the main driving force behind opposition to Turkey's membership of the EU. In Ireland, religious intolerance is the main driver behind these attitudes. In both countries, all effects are in the theoretically predicted direction: religious intolerance (egocentric and sociotropic) and negative feelings towards Islam contribute to opposition to Turkish accession, thus lending supoort for Hypotheses 1 and 2.

In Model 3 we add the control for anti-immigration sentiments, which unsurprisingly remains a strong predictor of attitudes towards Turkish accession. Yet, in

Table 2. The effect of religious intolerance on opposition to Turkish EU accession

| | Ireland | | | | | | The Netherlands | | | | | |
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | |
	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE	Coeff.	SE
Denomination (reference = Roman Catholic)												
Protestant	0.230	0.108	0.171	0.105	0.181	0.105	0.328	0.328	0.446	0.333	0.365	0.324
Other Christian religion	−0.058	0.071	−0.028	0.069	−0.026	0.069	0.179	0.091*	0.119	0.092	0.149	0.089
Non-Christian religion	−0.052	0.079	−0.102	0.078	−0.093	0.078	0.105	0.061	0.070	0.062	0.091	0.061
No religion	−0.078	0.117	−0.065	0.114	−0.055	0.114	−0.043	0.267	0.014	0.269	0.002	0.262
Religiosity	−0.024	0.008**	−0.019	0.007**	−0.020	0.007**	0.013	0.007	0.019	0.008*	0.018	0.007*
Left–right self-placement	−0.030	0.014*	−0.029	0.014*	−0.032	0.014*	0.002	0.013	0.031	0.013*	0.004	0.013
Left–right squared	−0.007	0.004	−0.005	0.003	−0.005	0.003	0.008	0.004*	0.005	0.004	0.006	0.004
Education	0.015	0.013	0.018	0.013	0.021	0.013	0.013	0.013	−0.006	0.012	0.014	0.012
Age	0.005	0.002**	0.006	0.002***	0.007	0.002***	0.004	0.002*	0.004	0.002**	0.004	0.002**
Female	−0.027	0.048	−0.006	0.047	−0.009	0.047	0.018	0.050	0.015	0.050	0.025	0.049
Retrospective economic evaluations	−0.118	0.032***	−0.066	0.032*	−0.065	0.032*	−0.045	0.038	−0.061	0.039	−0.044	0.038
Prospective economic evaluations	−0.069	0.025**	−0.059	0.025*	−0.059	0.025*	−0.013	0.028	−0.019	0.028	0.004	0.028
Sociotropic religious intolerance	–	–	0.126	0.023***	0.115	0.024***	–	–	0.166	0.027***	0.093	0.028***
Egocentric religious intolerance	–	–	0.212	0.033***	0.209	0.033***	–	–	0.155	0.044***	0.114	0.044**
Anti-Muslim sentiments	–	–	0.055	0.023*	0.047	0.023*	–	–	0.199	0.028***	0.126	0.029***
Negative feelings towards immigrants	0.155	0.029***	–	–	0.043	0.031	0.496	0.037***	–	–	0.330	0.044***
N	1457		1442		1442		1040		1027		1027	
R²	.093		.151		.152		.212		.205		.246	
Adjusted R²	.085		.142		.142		.202		.193		.234	

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .10

both countries the measures of religious intolerance remain significant predictors of opposition to Turkish accession, even when including this additional control. In Ireland, including indicators of religious intolerance increases the explained variance from 9 to 14 percent (comparing Model 1 and 3) and in the Netherlands from 20 to 23 percent. This suggest that our measures of religious intolerance are not merely capturing feelings about immigration. Of all the estimated effects of religious intolerance, the strongest effect was found in Table 2 in Ireland for 'egocentric religious intolerance'. The coefficient is .212 and the dependent and independent variable are both measured on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. This means that, all other things equal, a person with the highest level of religious intolerance would on average score .84 points higher on the dependent variable than someone with the lowest level of intolerance. We see this shift of almost one unit on the dependent variable as quite substantial.

In order to test H3, which predicts that religious intolerance will have a greater effect on objection to Turkish accession than on diffuse scepticism, we need to compare Table 1 and Table 2. When adding religious intolerance measures to the base model (i.e. when comparing Models 1 and 3) in Table 1, the explained variance increased by 2.9 percent in Ireland and by 1.2 percent in the Netherlands. In Table 2 these numbers were 5.9 percent in Ireland and 3.4 percent in the Netherlands. So, this supports H3, which is not surprising given that one of the key issues surrounding the accession of Turkey is religious diversity, because Turkey is predominantly Muslim. Interestingly, however, we do not find that negative attitudes towards Turkish enlargement are driven mostly by negative evaluations of Islam (H4). In the Netherlands, general religious intolerance has about the same effect on support for enlargement as do specific concerns about Islam, but in Ireland general religious intolerance matters substantially more.

Conclusion

This article has examined the relationship between religious intolerance and Euroscepticism. Our starting point was the observation that religion has been a largely overlooked factor in the study of both diffuse and specific Euroscepticism (except e.g. Boomgaarden and Freire, 2009; Kentmen, 2008; Nelsen et al., 2001). When considering the role that religion plays in shaping attitudes towards the European project, however, an important question is how people's attitudes towards other religions shape opinion, that is *religious intolerance*. A lack of tolerance towards other religions is likely to shape not only diffuse scepticism but also reservations about specific integration policies, such as enlargement of the Union with Turkey.

To examine the relationship between religious intolerance and attitudes towards European integration, we conducted a survey in Ireland and the Netherlands in 2008 specifically for the purpose of investigating associations between religion and Euroscepticism. We argued that the Netherlands represents a most likely case for finding effects of intolerance, especially regarding Muslims, on Euroscepticism,

whereas Ireland represents a least likely case. We developed measures of religious intolerance to complement previous research that has focused on denomination and religiosity. Our findings demonstrate that religious intolerance is a strong predictor of Euroscepticism. In line with our first hypothesis, we find that people who are more intolerant of other religions are also more Eurosceptic. This finding is more robust for our sociotropic measure of religious intolerance compared with our egocentric measure. We find less support for our second hypothesis. In contrast to our expectation, negative evaluations of Islam do not have an effect on diffuse scepticism when we control for anti-immigration feelings. Our third hypothesis stated that religious intolerance has a greater effect on specific opposition to Turkish enlargement than on diffuse Euroscepticism, and this is supported by our results. Interestingly, however, we do not find support for our fourth and final hypothesis, which predicted that negative attitudes towards Turkish enlargement are driven mostly by negative evaluations of Islam. Rather we find the effect of general religious intolerance is the same (Netherlands) or even greater (Ireland) than the effect of feelings towards Islam on opposition to Turkish accession. In summary, we find a strong relationship between religious intolerance and Euroscepticism (diffuse and specific) not only in the Netherlands, where the religious issue is highly politicized, but also in Ireland where there are few Muslim immigrants and where hostility towards other religions has not been politicized in connection with anti-EU sentiments.

Our findings contribute to a strand of literature focusing on the extent to which group identities affect hostility towards the European project. So far, this research has focused mainly on feelings of national identity (e.g. Bruter 2003; Carey, 2002; Christin and Trechsel, 2002; McLaren, 2006) and attitudes towards multiculturalism (e.g. Hooghe and Marks, 2004, 2005; Kriesi et al., 2008). Our article demonstrates that intolerance towards other religions is an equally powerful sentiment that also contributes to Euroscepticism.

With regard to differences between the two countries, it is interesting to note that utilitarian, economic concerns do not play a substantial role in explaining Euroscepticism in the Netherlands, whereas they matter in the Irish context. We offer two explanations for this finding. First, it appears that a context of a strongly politicized debate about immigration and (Muslim) integration such as in the Netherlands leads to a stronger reliance on identity-based factors to formulate opinions about the EU (De Vreese et al., 2008). Second, the changes in Ireland's economy in the recent past have been more dependent on EU budgets and foreign investments than in the Dutch case, and this may therefore make utilitarian and economic considerations more salient in the Irish context. Future research with a larger n should aim to specify the conditions under which these considerations are most important. This could also well be extended to an analysis of the explanatory power of the different antecedents vis-à-vis the different dimensions of EU attitudes.

Given that both the idea and the practice of European integration are based on a willingness to 'put up with' religious, cultural and ethnic diversity, through closer economic and political cooperation of nations and peoples in Europe, the degree

and scope of religious intolerance can be viewed as a critical factor shaping the future trajectory of European integration. Evidence suggests that public opinion on European integration is becoming increasingly politicized across Europe and plays an important role in shaping the integration process (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). If issues concerning the religious heterogeneity of the integration project, such as Turkey's accession to the Union, become more salient, religious intolerance will also become increasingly important for the EU. Our study thus suggests that more work should be done – both theoretically and empirically – to understand religious intolerance, its antecedents and its consequences for public attitudes towards European integration.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. According to the Irish Central Statistics Office, only 32,000 of the 4 million people living in Ireland are Muslim (0.8 percent). In contrast, there are 1.3 million people of Muslim origin living in the Netherlands out of a total of 16.5 million inhabitants (7.8 percent), according to the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics.
2. Both countries are traditionally Christian, but in Ireland 94 percent refer to themselves as belonging to a denomination compared with 57 percent in the Netherlands. Moreover, Ireland is a religiously very homogeneous society, with 87 percent considering themselves Roman Catholic. The Netherlands, in contrast, is divided between a large Catholic minority (27 percent), a large Protestant minority (17 percent) and a large group of atheists, agnostics or non-believers (43 percent).
3. See also Van der Brug et al. (2009), who demonstrated that the effect of religion on the vote was stronger in countries with more religious diversity.
4. Apart from the item 'Some say European unification should be pushed further; others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion?', which was originally an 11-point scale and was recoded to a 5-point scale for it to be comparable to the other three items.
5. A Mokken scale analysis for polytomous items (performed with MSP5 for Windows) is sensitive to item response distributions and therefore appropriate for scale construction validation (e.g. Sijtsma et al., 1990). For more information please see the web appendix.
6. The results of the Mokken scaling analysis are shown in the web appendix. The scales differ between Ireland and the Netherlands for Protestants and for members of other Christian religions. In the Netherlands, the Christian Orthodox item did not scale with the other items for Protestants and, for members of other Christian religions, the Protestant item did not scale with the other items. We interpret this as a potential language issue in the usage of the term 'Christian Orthodox' in Dutch, which can be interpreted as referring to Orthodox Protestants. It is likely therefore that some respondents were thinking of their 'own group' when thinking of Orthodox, whereas others may have

been thinking about the Orthodox churches in Greece, Russia, etc. In our measurement of religious intolerance, we addressed this problem by including only those items that clearly refer to the other religions. This makes the measurement procedure comparable to the measurement procedures we followed to measure religious tolerance of the other religious groups, so that the validity of the measurement is not endangered.

7. Retrospective economic evaluations were measured by asking 'How is <Country's> economic situation now as compared to a year ago?' Prospective economic evaluations were measured by asking: 'And what about in a year from now, do you think <Country's> economy will be better or worse?' Respondents could answer both questions by means of a 5-point scale: 'much worse' (1), 'worse' (2), 'the same' (3), 'better' (4) and 'much better' (5).

8. All items were originally measured on 5-point scales. To compute scale scores we summed the original score and divided that by 7, so as to obtain scale scores that are bound between 1 and 5.

9. Left–right positions are measured by an 11-point left–right scale of which only the extremes are labelled. This scale was centred around its midpoint, thus running from −5 (left) to +5 (right). When squaring this variable, it runs from 0 (political centre) to 25 (respondents at the extreme left or right).

10. Table 2 presents 24 parameters testing for differences between religious groups (3 models * 2 countries * 4 parameters), and none of these is significant at $p < .05$.

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