

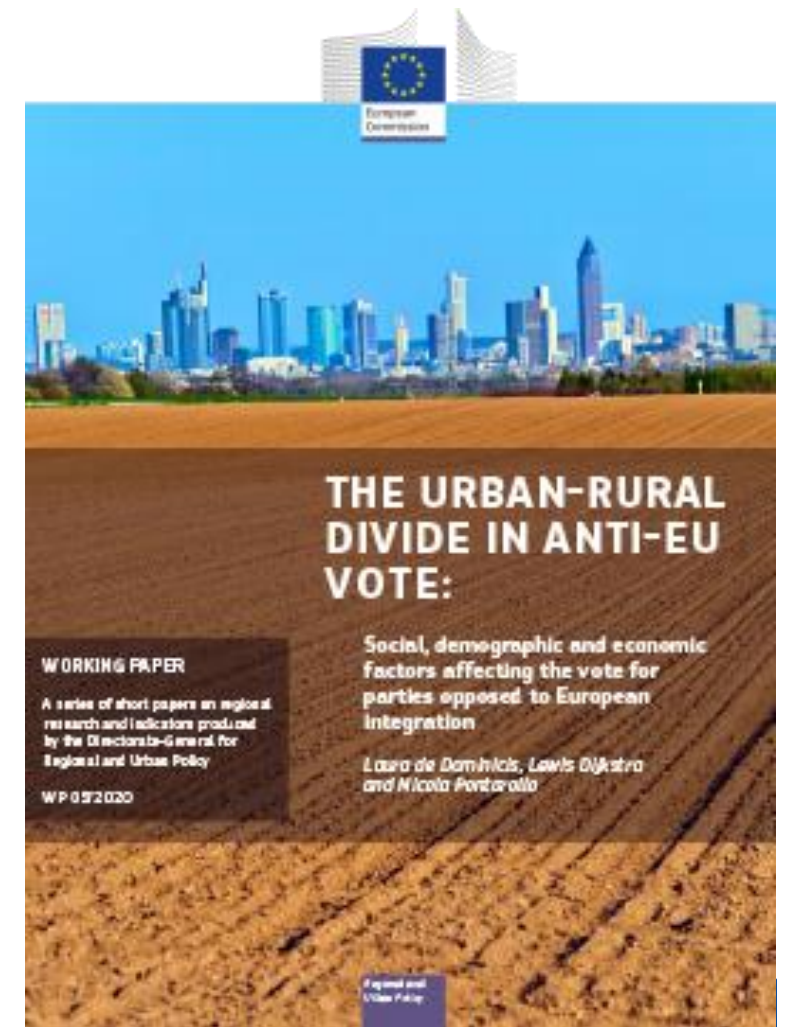
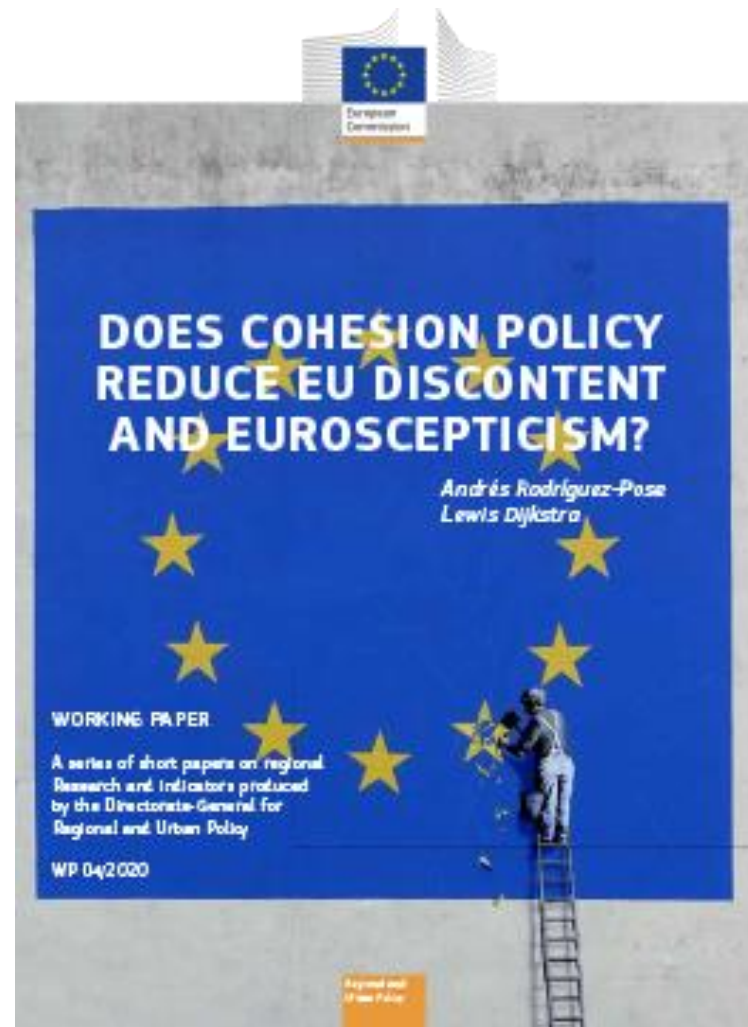
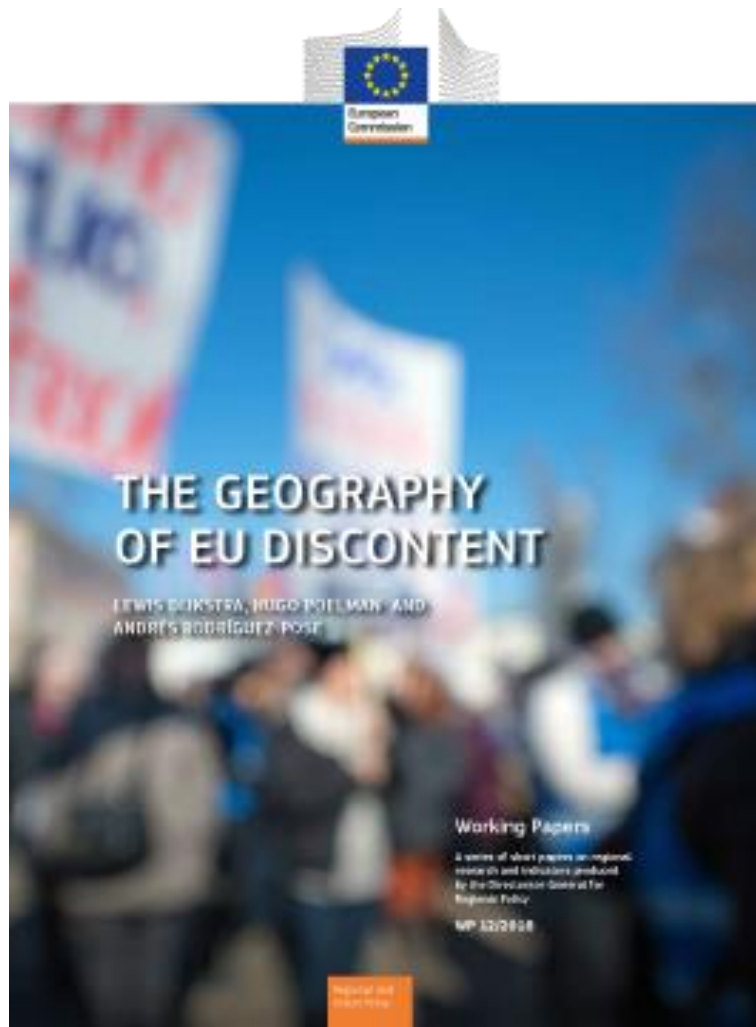


The geography of EU discontent & the regional development trap

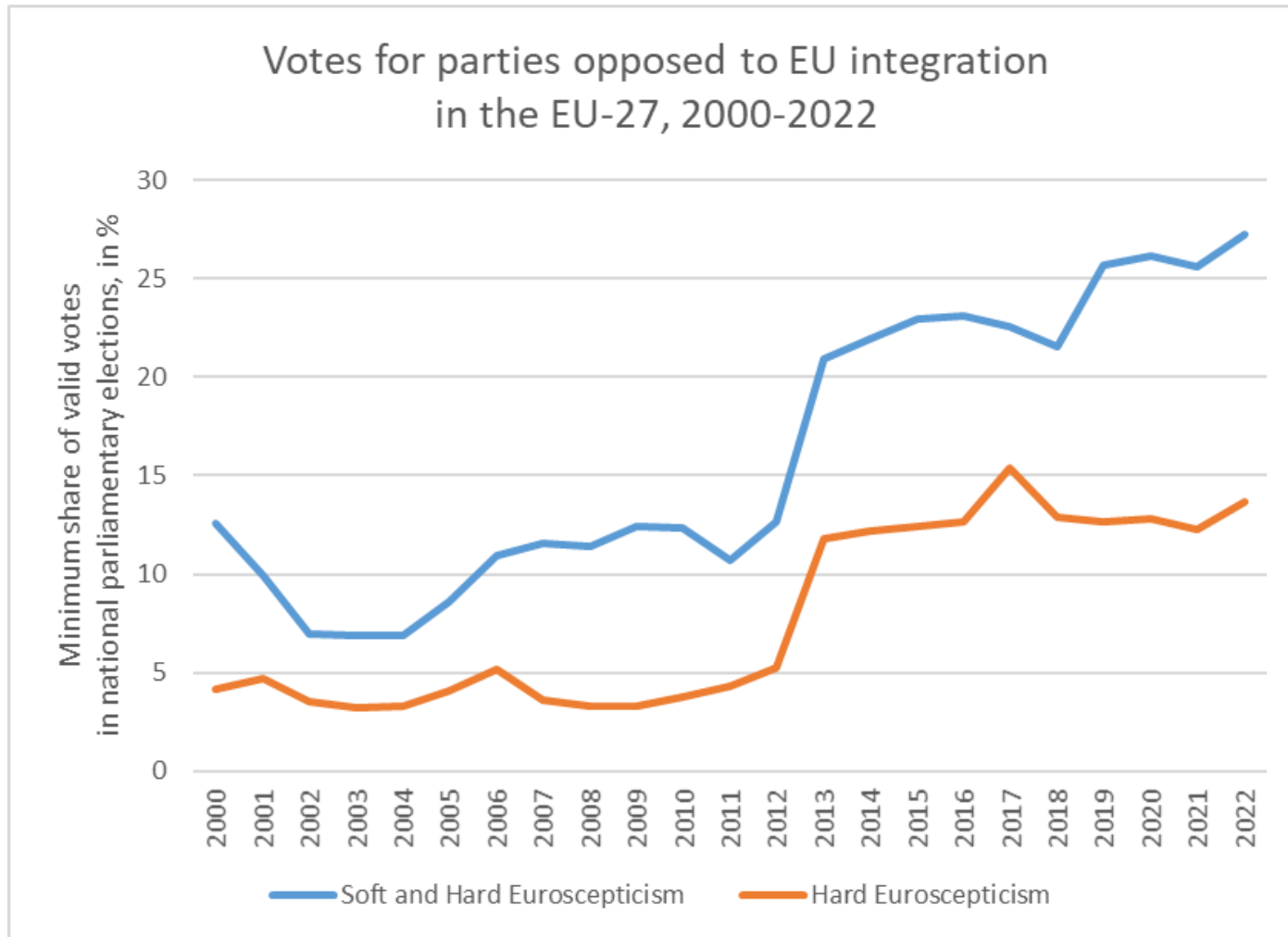
by Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, Lewis Dijkstra and Hugo Poelman

High Level Committee on the Future of Cohesion Policy, 19 June 2023

Three initial REGIO Working Papers



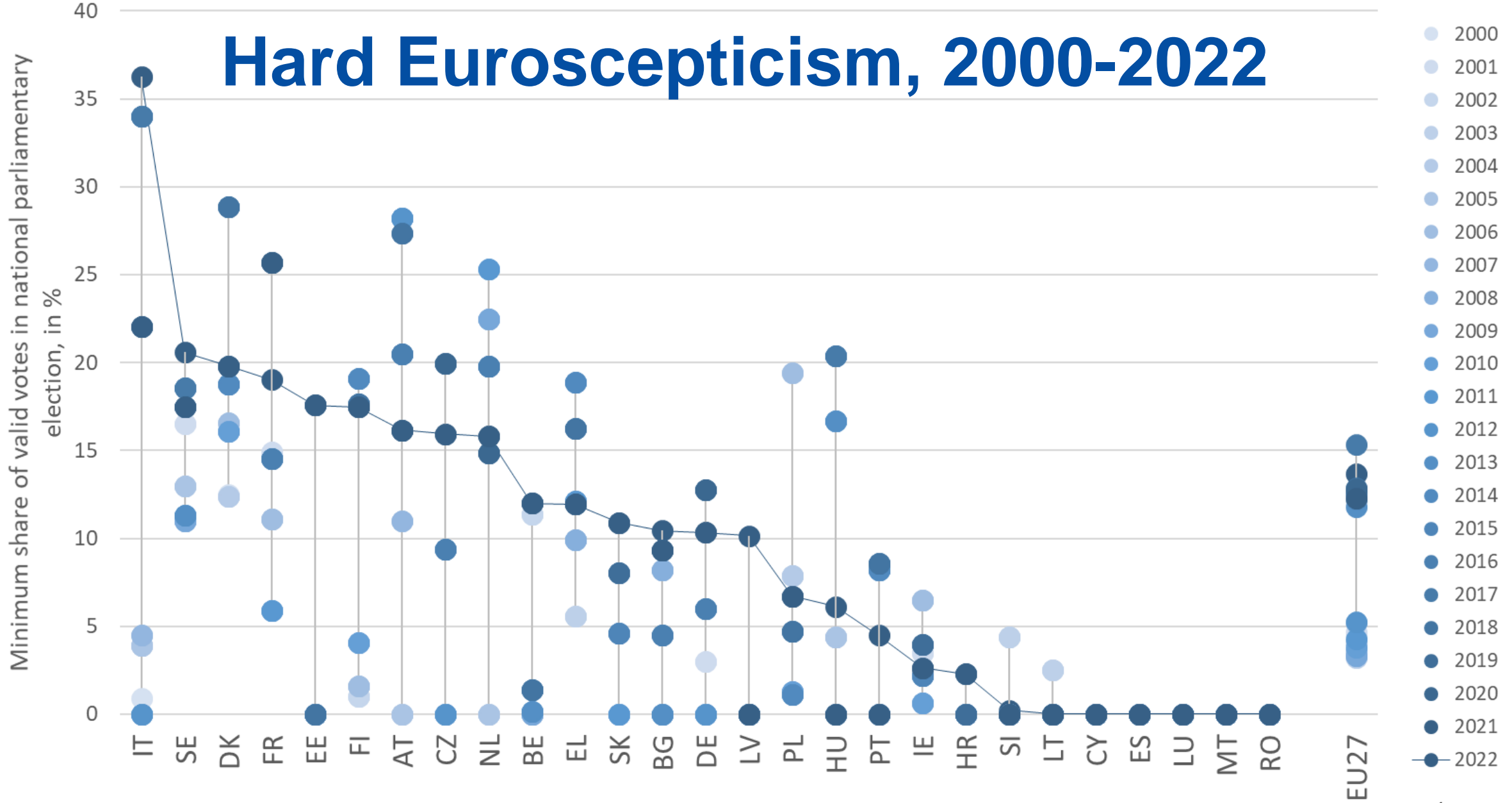
Euroscepticism on the rise



- A big increase following the economic and financial crisis of 2008
- Brexit may have reduced appeal of hard Euroscepticism
- But softer Euroscepticism continues to grow

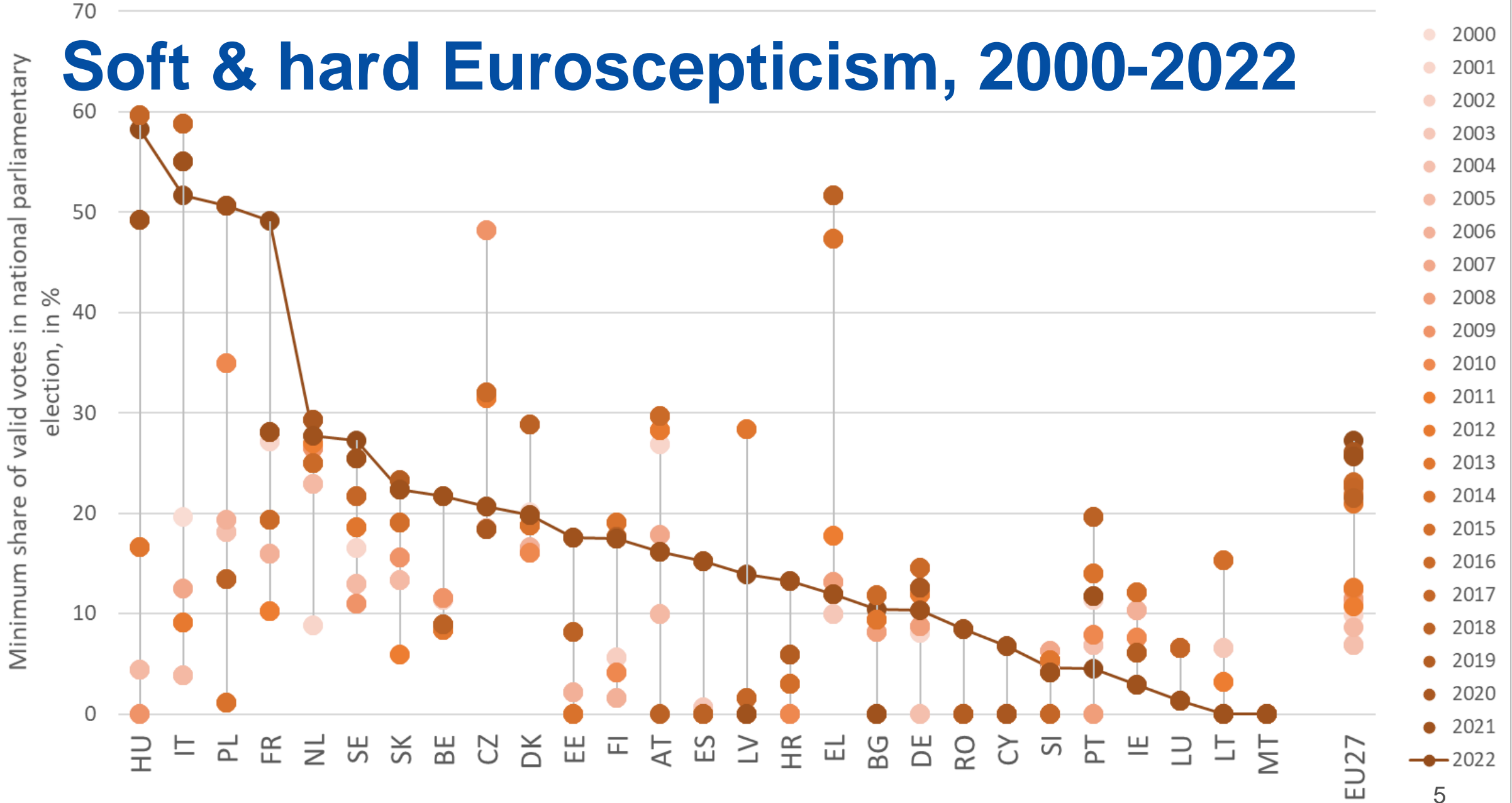
Votes for hard Eurosceptic parties by Member State, 2000-2022

Hard Euroscepticism, 2000-2022

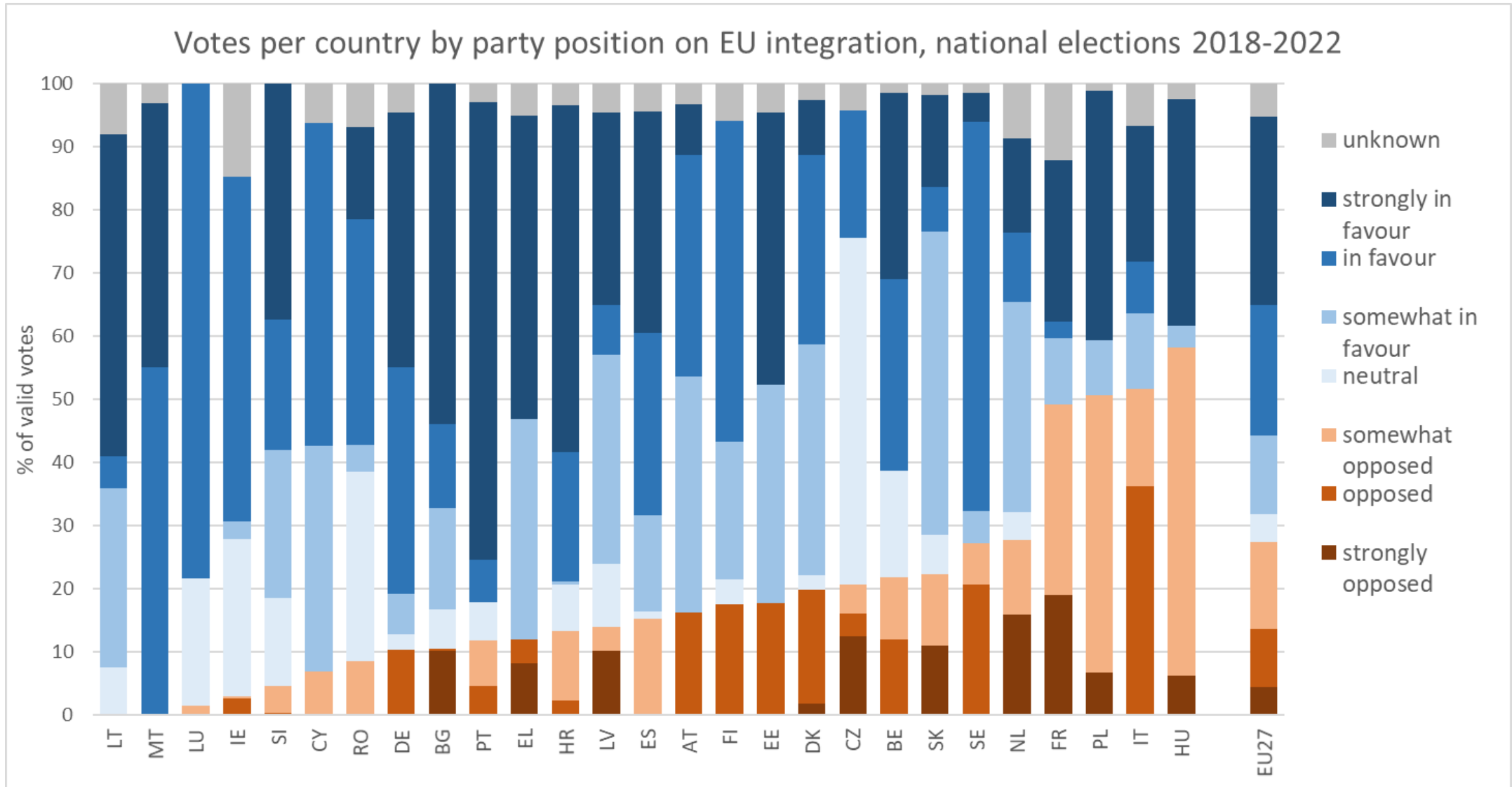


Votes for soft and hard Eurosceptic parties by Member State, 2000-2022

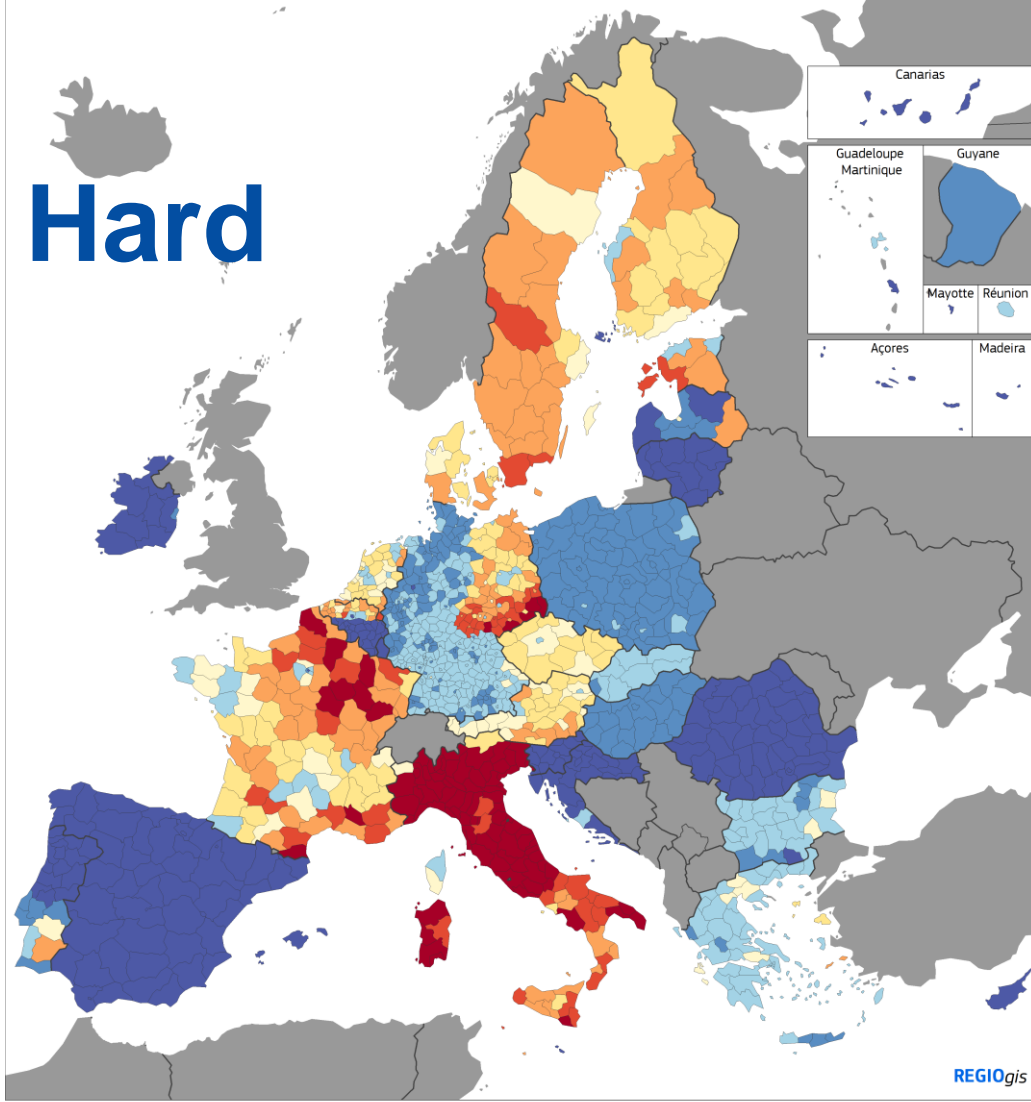
Soft & hard Euroscepticism, 2000-2022



Votes by party position on EU integration

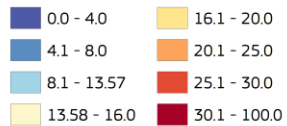


Hard



Minimum share of votes for hard Eurosceptic parties, 2018-2022

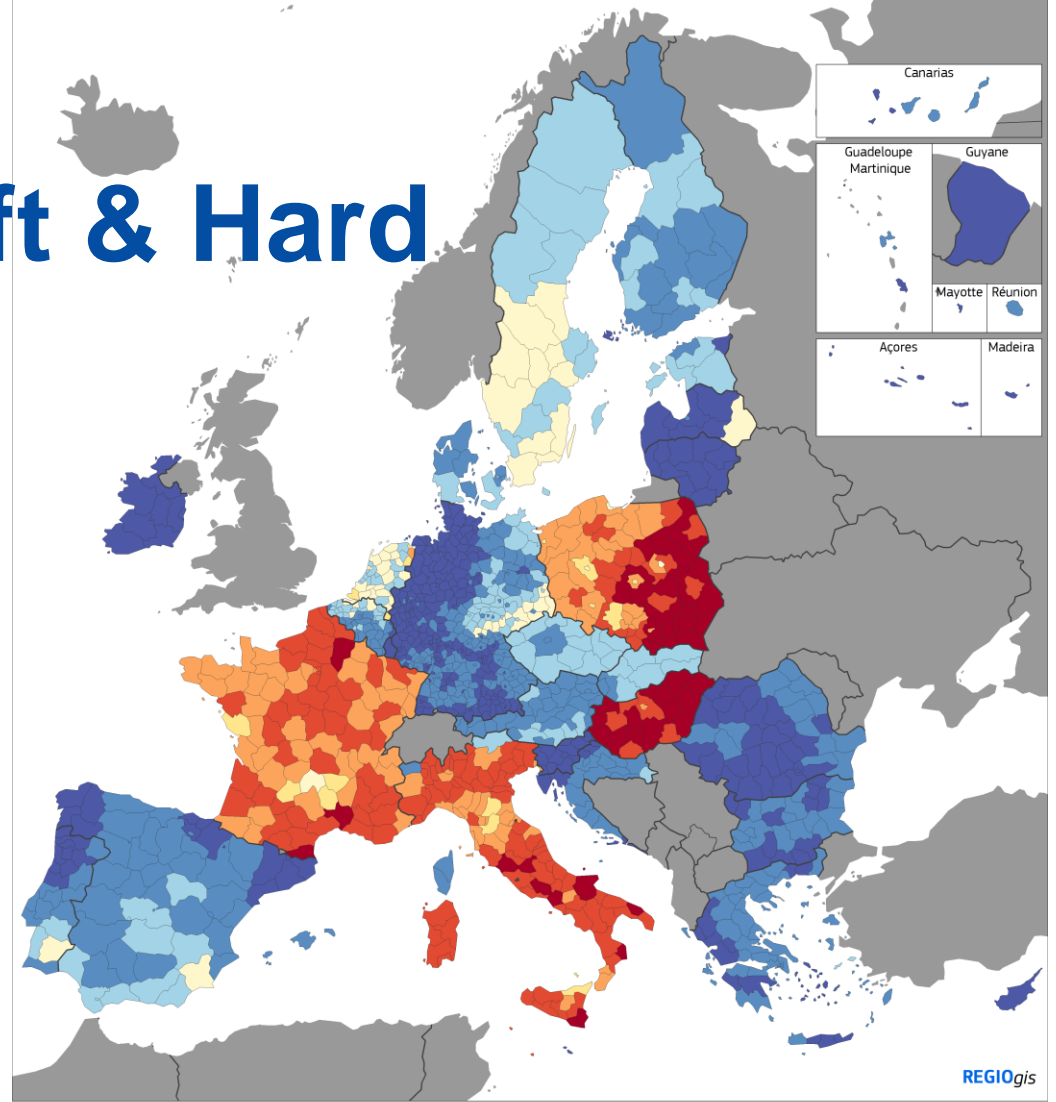
% of valid votes



BG, FR, IT, LV, HU, MT, PT, SI, SE: 2022
CZ, DE, CY, NL: 2021
IE, HR, LT, RO, SK: 2020
BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, AT, PL, FI: 2019
LU: 2018
Source: DG REGIO based on EU-NED database, national administrative sources and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2019

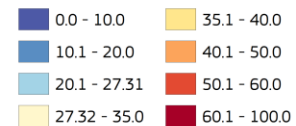
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Soft & Hard



Minimum share of votes for soft and hard Eurosceptic parties, 2018-2022

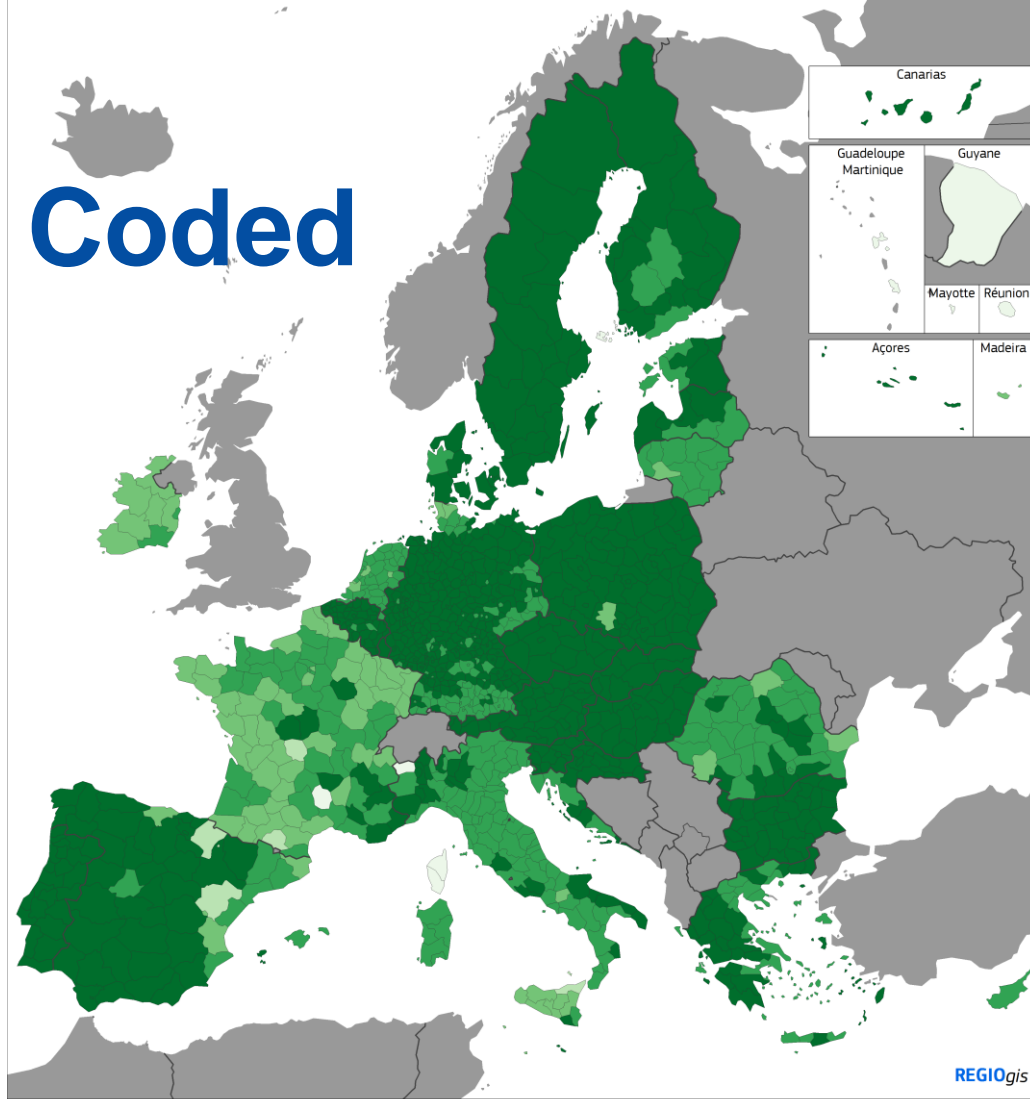
% of valid votes



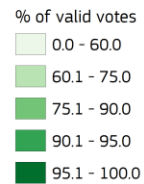
BG, FR, IT, LV, HU, MT, PT, SI, SE: 2022
CZ, DE, CY, NL: 2021
IE, HR, LT, RO, SK: 2020
BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, AT, PL, FI: 2019
LU: 2018
Source: DG REGIO based on EU-NED database, national administrative sources and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2019

0 500 km

Coded



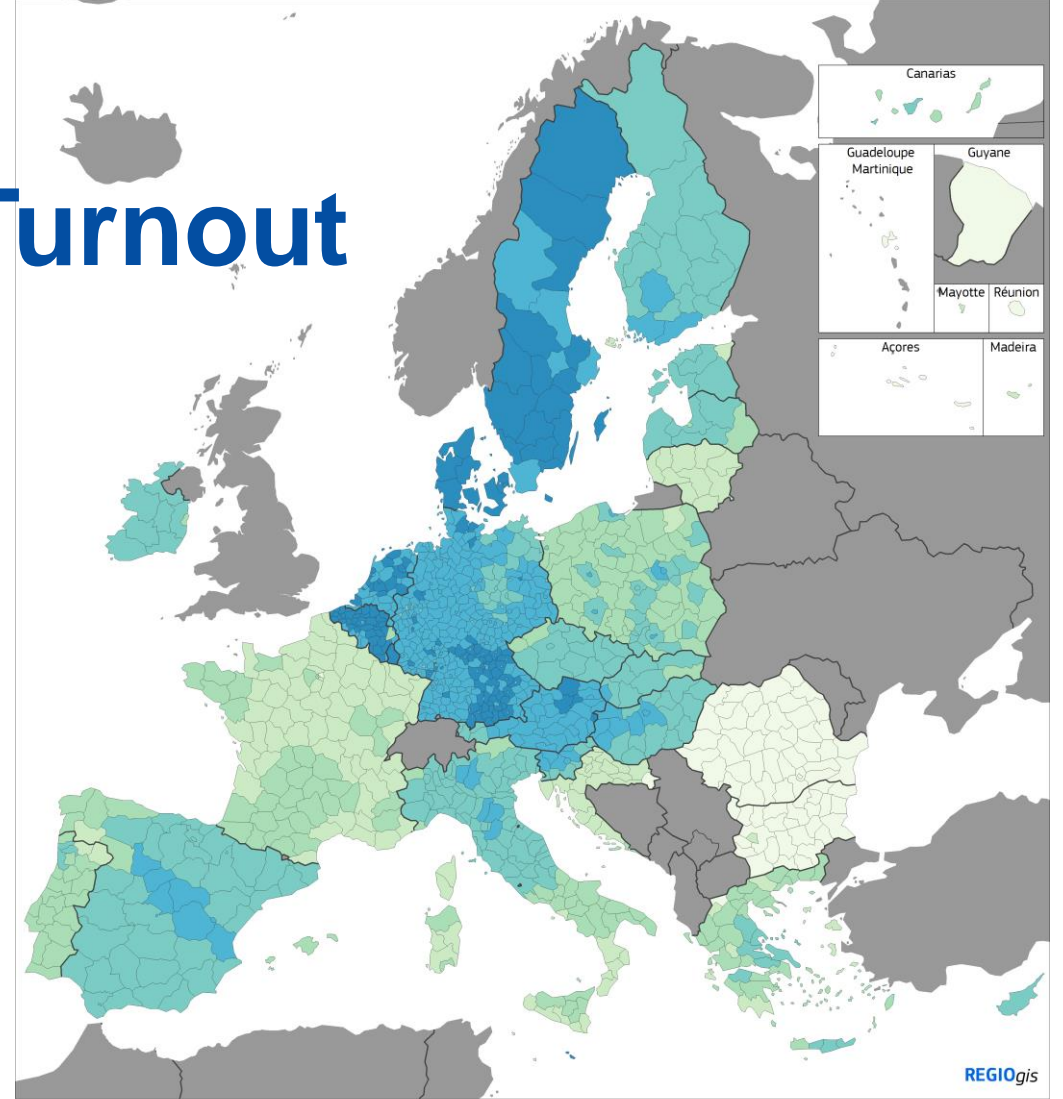
Votes for parties coded by position towards EU integration, 2018-2022



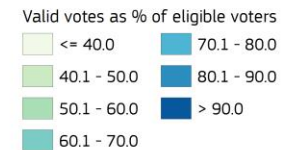
BG, FR, IT, LV, HU, MT, PT, SI, SE: 2022
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BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, AT, PL, FI: 2019
LU: 2018
Source: DG REGIO based on EU-NED database, national administrative sources and Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2019

0 500 km

Turnout



Valid votes turnout of national elections, 2018-2022



BG, FR, IT, LV, HU, MT, PT, SI, SE: 2022
CZ, DE, CY, NL: 2021
IE, HR, LT, RO, SK: 2020
BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, AT, PL, FI: 2019
LU: 2018
Source: DG REGIO based on EU-NED database and national administrative sources.

0 500 km

Classic and new explanations

Classic



Individual factors: Education, ageing, migration



Geography: Location, rurality, density

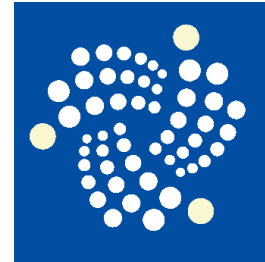


Economy: Employment, industrial decline, lack of opportunities

New: Development trap



Risk of a development trap



Intensity of the trap



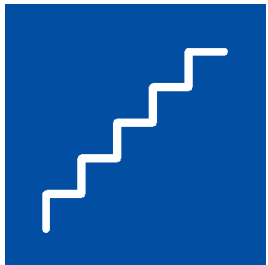
Length of the trap

Defining a development trap

Three measures of economic dynamism



GDP per capita



Productivity



Employment per capita

Measured at three geographical scales



The region itself in the past



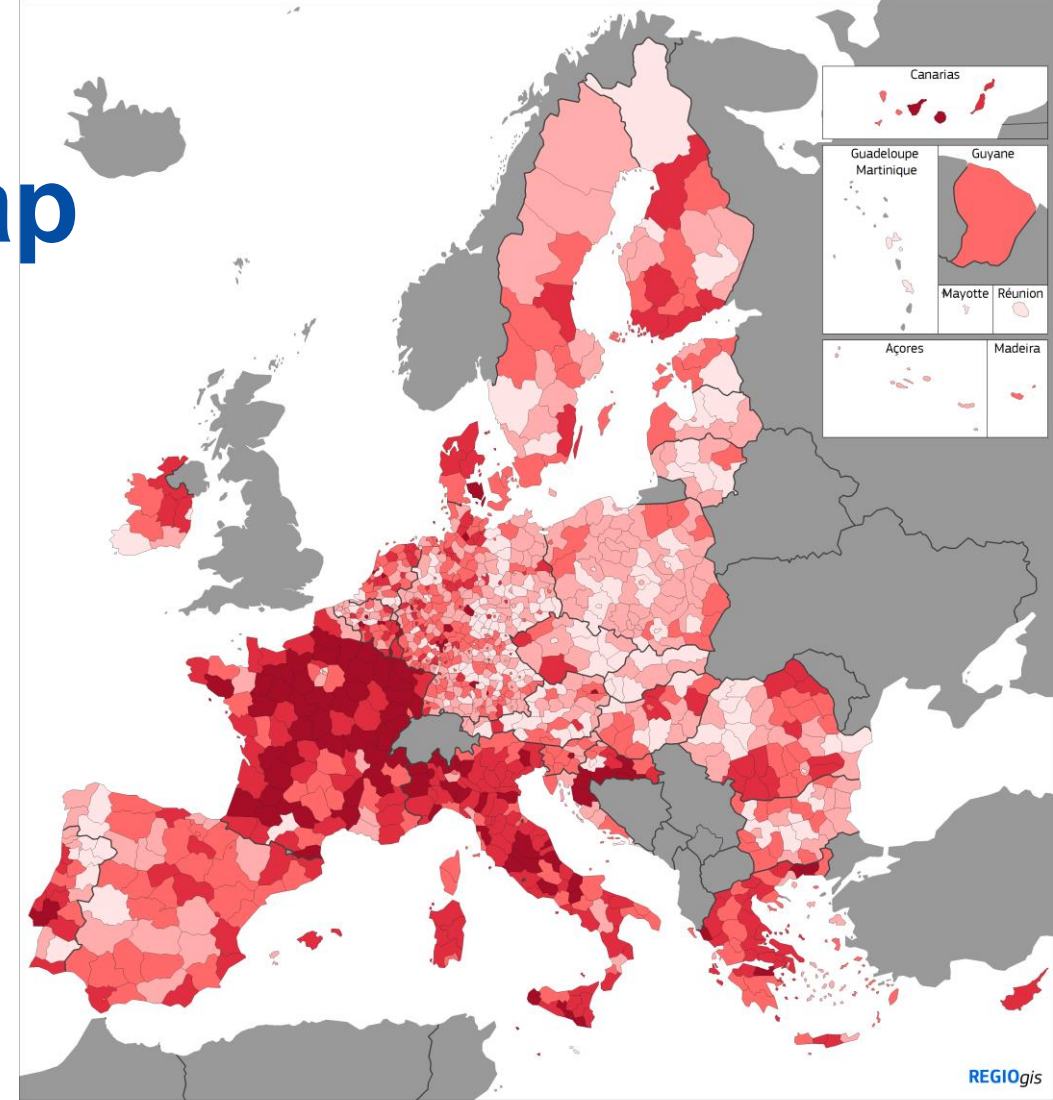
The country it belongs to



The EU

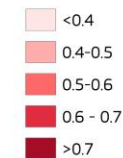
Risk of a development trap

- Counts how many times (out of a possible maximum of 9) a region scores below others in the country or the EU or itself in the past
- Standardised to 0-1
- Average over the number years observed



Development trap index 1 at NUTS-3 level, 2001-2018

Likelihood of being in a development trap

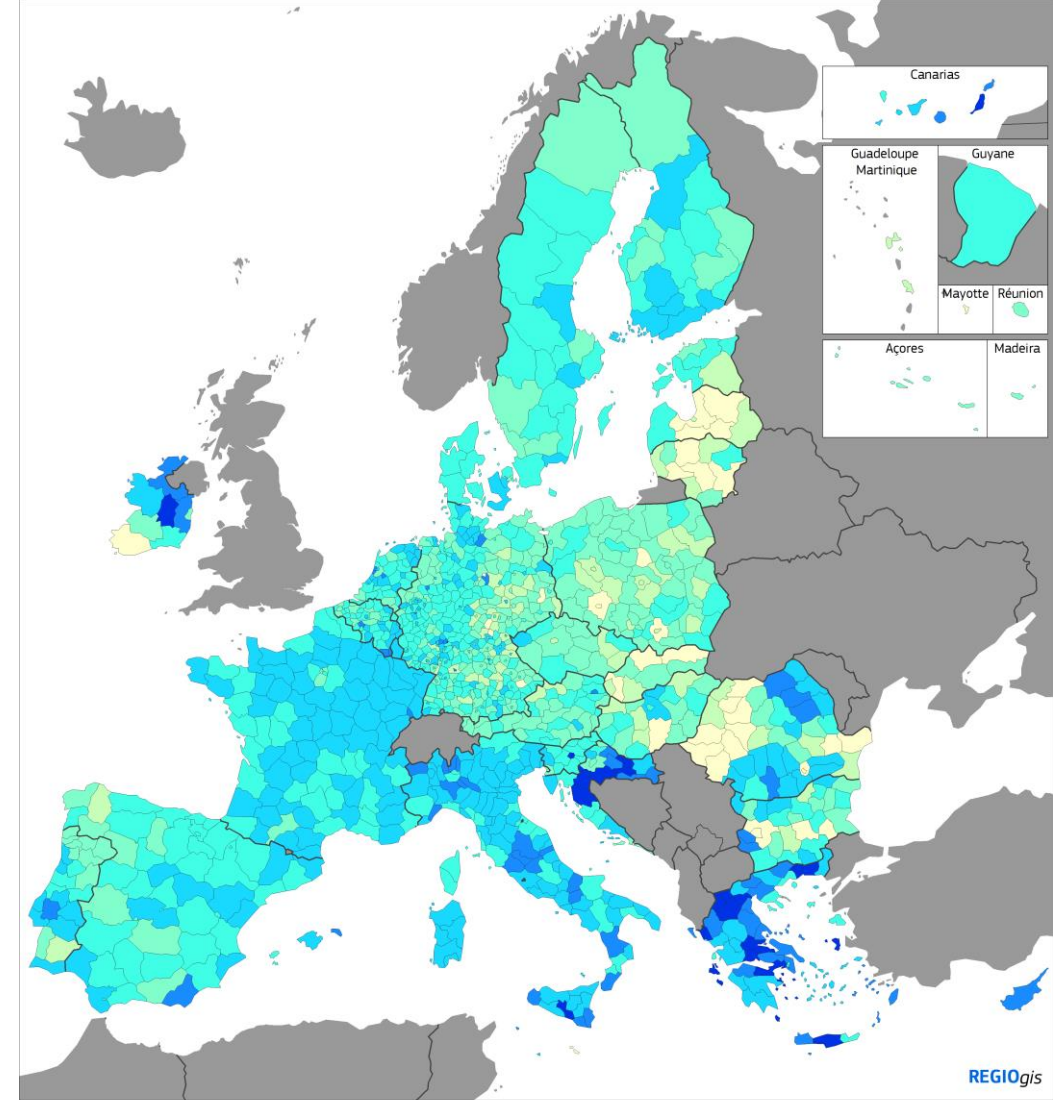


This index measures if a region's growth is lower than that of the EU, of its country or of the same region during the previous 5 years. It considers growth in GDP per head, productivity and employment over a five-year period.
A region scores 1 for each time its growth is lower. This score between 0 and 9 is then rescaled to 0-1.
Source: DG REGIO calculations based on JRC and Eurostat data

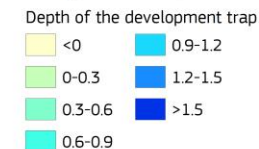
0 500 km

Intensity of the trap

- This measures how much lower growth is in a region compared to the EU, the country it belongs to and its own performance in the past for the three economic indicators (GDP per head, productivity and employment per head)
- Higher figures imply a more intense trap



Development trap index 2 at NUTS-3 level, 2001-2018

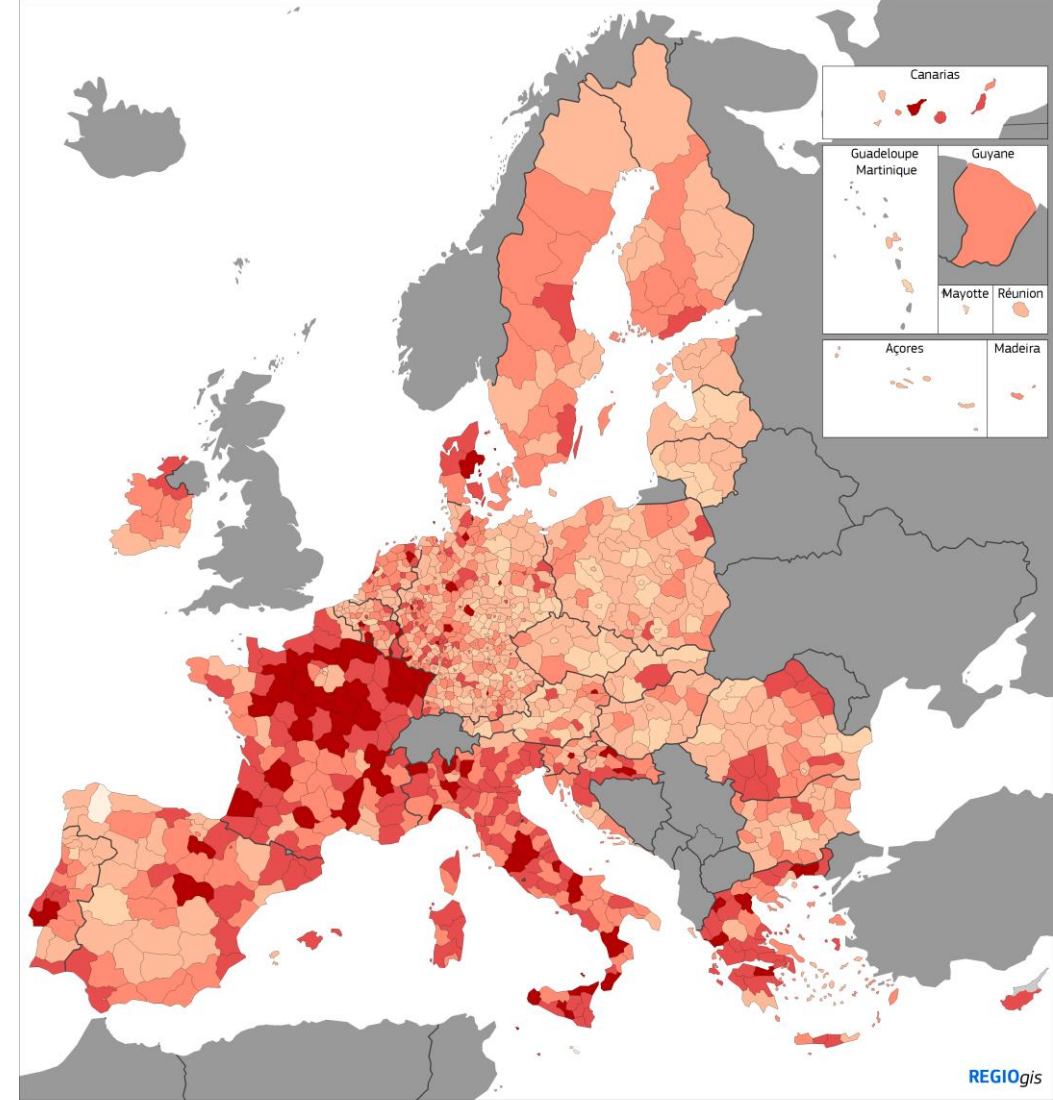


This index measures the extent to which a region's growth is lower than that of the EU, of its country or of the same region during the previous 5 years. It considers growth in GDP per head, productivity and employment over a five-year period. The index is standardised using the mean and the standard deviation of the first period.
Source: DG REGIO calculations based on JRC and Eurostat data

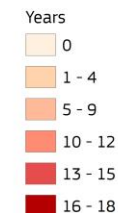
0 500 km

Length of a trap

- Captures the number of years a region is considered development trapped (score of 0.5 or more in DT1)
- Only one region has not registered a single year of entrapment
- Regions in France, Italy, Greece, & Croatia are confronted with persistent entrapment



Number of years in a development trap during 2001-2018

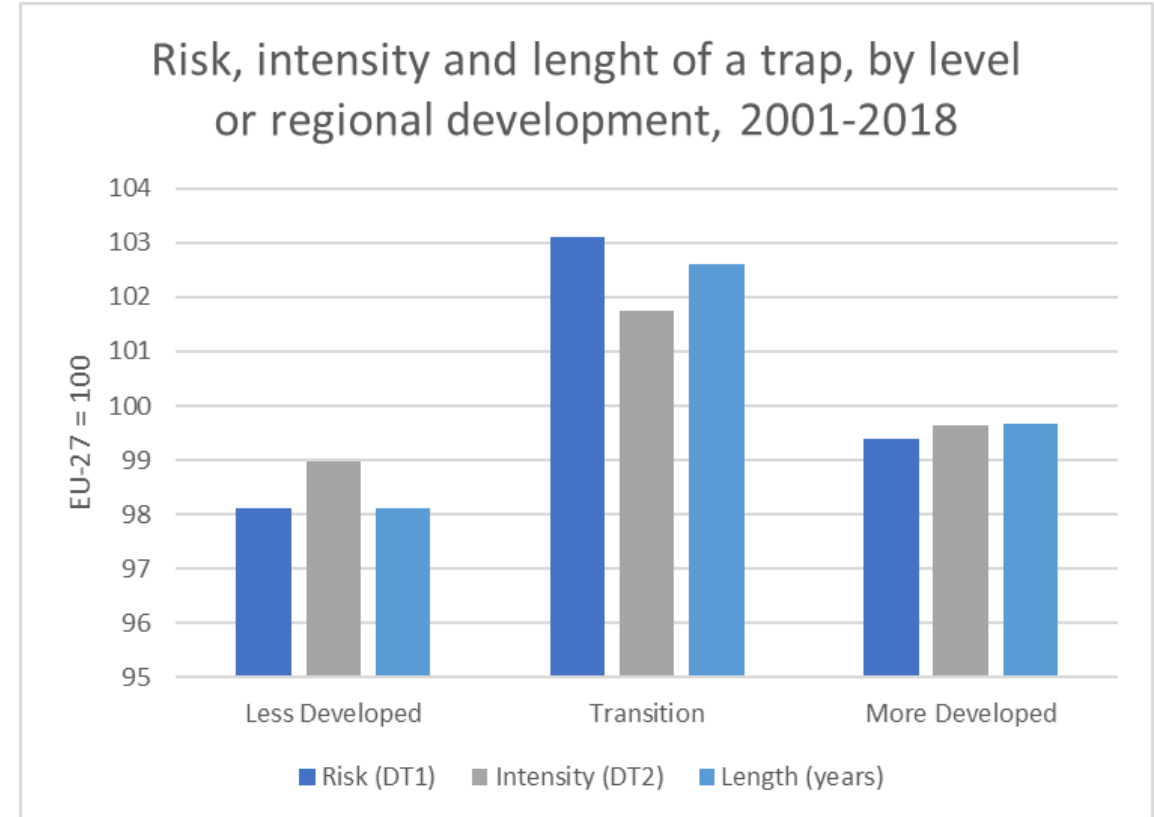


This map shows the number of years that a region scored 0.5 or more on the Development Trap Index 1.
Source: DG REGIO calculations based on JRC and Eurostat data

0 500 km

Development trap by level of development

- All regions can be at risk of a development trap
- But the risk is highest in the transition regions, followed by the more developed regions
- The risk is lowest in the less developed regions, but they are not immune to this risk



Results

Less Eurosceptic voting



Higher population density



Higher employment rates



More people with higher education



More people born in another MS



Higher quality of government



Higher turnout

Results (II)

More Eurosceptic voting



Higher GDP per head



More industrial jobs



Higher net-migration

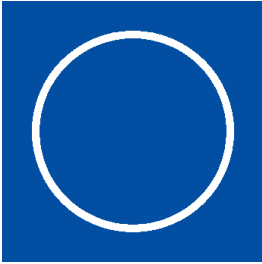


More elderly residents (hard)



More people born outside the EU (hard)

People vote more Eurosceptic if



Their region (1) is at risk of a development trap, (2) is in an intense trap or (3) spent more years in a trap



This applies to both hard and soft plus hard Euroscepticism



For two electoral cycles (2013-2028 and 2018-2022)



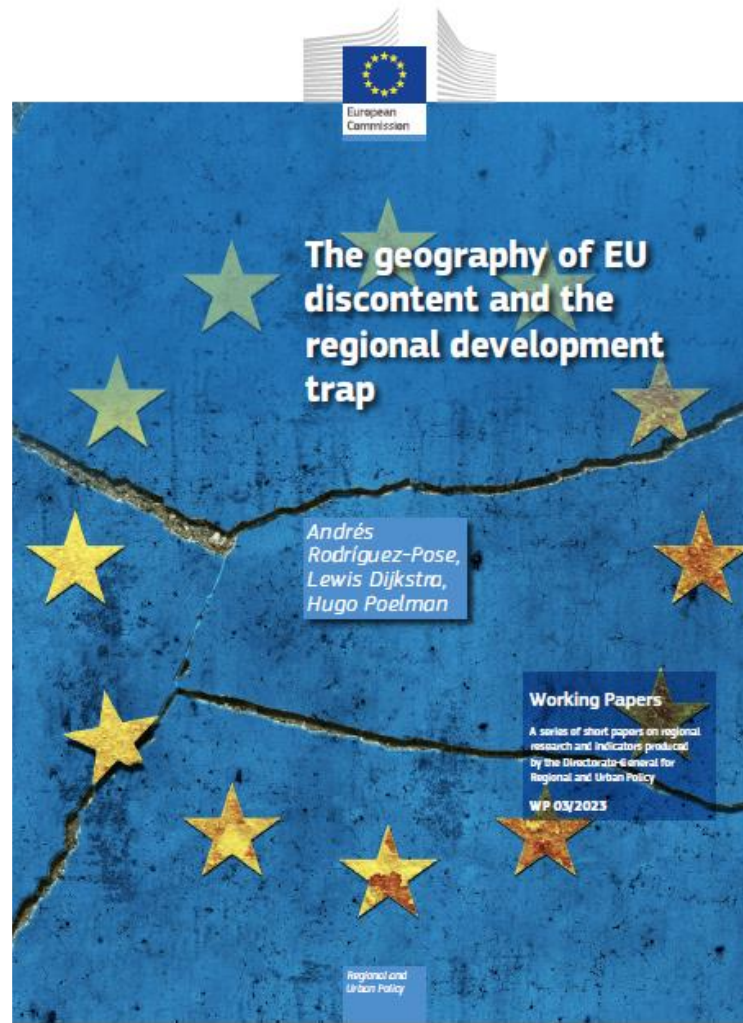
Effect increases with time: **Seven times** bigger if measured over the entire 2001-2018 period than if considering 2018 alone

Conclusions: What do we need?

- A strong, better-targeted policy that can help regions to escape from their development traps;
- A better understanding of the causes of the regional development traps and how they can be overcome;
- To improve the quality of government, increase innovation and boost education and training in trapped areas;
- To engage with residents of smaller cities, towns, and rural areas to grasp their needs and to adapt policies on the basis of their territorial impacts;
- To investigate on whether disinvestments in local public and private service generate feelings of discontent and being left behind

Working paper now available

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/whats-new/newsroom/06-12-2023-geography-of-discontent-regional-development-traps-lead-to-less-support-for-european-integration-and-values_en



More information

- https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/working-papers/2018/the-geography-of-eu-discontent_en
- https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/working-papers/2020/does-cohesion-policy-reduce-eu-discontent-and-euroscepticism_en
- https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/working-papers/2020/the-urban-rural-divide-in-anti-eu-vote-social-demographic-and-economic-factors-affecting-the-vote-for-parties-opposed-to-european-integration_en
- https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/working-papers/2023/the-geography-of-eu-discontent-and-the-regional-development-trap_en

Thank you



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