EUROSPHERE

Diversity and the European Public Sphere
Towards a Citizens' Europe

Linking the European Union with the Citizens

Evaluation of EU Policies Aiming to Create a Democratic European Public Sphere

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Linking the European Union with its Citizens

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The common objective of the different articles in this volume is to assess the pre-conditions for linking European citizens with the EU political institutions through the emerging European public spheres. In the twelve chapters of this volume, this is done by mapping and explaining the extent to which participants of public debates in Europe (including citizens, civil society organizations, political parties, policy research institutions, media, and the EU institutions) are interconnected through transnational networks, collaboration, discourses, media channels, and policymaking structures and processes.

The political history of European states teaches us that states, elites, and individual citizens have created three different channels for public communication and citizen influence: The numeric channel (electoral democracy), the corporate-plural channel (negotiation democracy), and the national public sphere (among others, deliberative democracy). The former two channels were conceptualized and theorized by Stein Rokkan in early 1970s. The notion of public sphere was introduced by Jürgen Habermas in early 1960s.

The numeric channel is about political communication on power relations between political elites and citizens through democratically held elections. In this channel, one talks about elections, electorates, political parties, party systems, and parliaments. The corporate-plural channel concerns political communication and bargaining in policymaking processes whereby interest groups, pressure groups, issue groups, social movements, and other non-governmental organizations try to exert power on governments to generate policy outcomes in favour of their interests. Whereas the numeric channel (elections) is for determining who will have how much power in decision-making (composition of the parliament) based on the degree of popular support (election results), the corporate channel is about bargaining and negotiations on specific policy issues between the governments, parliamentary groups, and citizens’ organizations of different types. In some countries, this bargaining system has been institutionalized in the sense that some citizen interest organizations participate automatically in policymaking (e.g., Austria), but in others it is more on ad hoc basis. The numeric and corporate-plural channels are, then, respectively, about distribution of decision-making power and negotiations on policy-making. Following Eriksen’s typology of public spheres (Eriksen 2005), the numeric and corporate-plural channels can be termed “strong public spheres” because their outputs are collective decisions made through citizens’ voting and bargaining.

The notion of weak public sphere (or the general public sphere), on the other hand, is not primarily about decision-making or policymaking. It emerges first and foremost as a space that aims to empower politics and citizens as opposed to markets and to criticize and hold the power-holder accountable. The outcomes of a general public sphere are, depending on the ontological point of departure, the aggregation of citizens’ interests, formation of public opinion, formation of the general will, or formation of a common citizen identity. In Habermasian approaches, the mass media, including also digital social media, is considered to be what comes closest to the idea of a general public sphere.

The European Union appears partly to be following the route that its member states once followed in order to establish direct links between themselves and their citizens: The EU introduced direct free elections for the European Parliament and the elected MEPs form party groups in the EP (the numeric channel). The EU is also enhancing its public consultation, accreditation, and lobbying systems, whereby different groups can, in theory, negotiate, bargain and influence the EU policymaking (the corporate-plural channel) at the stage of preparation of law proposals. The European Commission has also made participation in its public consultations accessible to everyone who has access to internet. On the public sphere
side, the European Union has launched the (not so successful) Euronews TV-channel as well as developing common objectives for media and communication and diversity and multilingualism policies in its cultural agenda.

In spite of these efforts by the EU, the political system of the European Union is suffering from insufficient communication and missing links between its political institutions and the citizens of Europe, and the existing links between the EU and its citizens are not working efficiently. It is claimed that lacking democratic legitimacy has become the major factor threatening the future of the European Union. Whether this is the case is one of the main questions of this volume.

To assess the prospects for a democratic, inclusive European public sphere, this volume compares the ways in which the European Union, national public sphere participants (media, civil society organizations, political parties, and policy research institutes), and trans-national networks of these are trying to create links between citizens and the political institutions of the European Union. The main focus, however, is on the European Union policies aiming to create a common European public sphere, and how the EU policies on this matter are aligned or misaligned with the priorities of other participants (including individual citizens) in public debates. We identify the (mis)alignments, conflicts, and contestations in the aforementioned channels of voice and participation: the numeric, the corporate-plural, and the general public sphere.

The volume opens with an article authored by Wanda Dressler, mapping the territorial spread and diversity of the European publics that the European Union is currently aiming to link with its political structures. In the spirit of the great Norwegian political scientist Stein Rokkan, this article should be regarded as an exploration into the highly complex territorial basis of the European public and public sphere, and the policies that the EU promotes both to respect and to transcend the internal boundaries that territorial diversity maintains.

Concerning the media channel, the article by Monika Mokre asks how media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for European public spheres. Based on the Eurosphere interviews with media leaders in sixteen countries, Mokre maps the preferences of European actors with regard to the EPS. These preferences are then compared with the actual activities of the European Commission. The chapter finally discusses possible future developments of media policies furthering inclusive European public spheres.

Regarding the corporate-plural channel, the three articles authored by Acar Kutay explore the links between civil society organizations and the European Union decision-making mechanisms with a special focus on the question of how EU policies aiming to create a Europe-wide civil society have performed in legitimizing and democratizing the European Union. The following article by Jan H. van de Beek and Floris Vermeulen assesses the (mis)matches between the European Union’s public consultation mechanisms and the representation needs of the minority organizations. The three following articles by Marybel Perez assess the extent to which national think tanks and their trans-European networks contribute to the articulation of a European public sphere. Perez seeks answers to a range of questions about the ways in which policy research institutes and think tanks create public spaces of communication between the EU and other stakeholders, and how they in turn are constrained by the specific features of the EU policymaking mechanisms. She also considers the conditions under which trans-European think tank networks and the EU have a socializing effect on national think tanks. Finally, based on interviews with people in leadership positions in national and trans-European political parties, think tanks, civil society organizations, and media actors in sixteen countries, the article by Hakan G. Sicakkan maps the diffusion of Europeanist, nationalist and other discourses on the national and trans-European levels, identifies the (mis)matches between the member-state level organizations and trans-European
networks, and discusses the consequences of these for the legitimacy of the EU’s policies aiming to create a Europe-wide corporate-plural channel. Considered together, the articles in this section give an overview of how corporate-plural arrangements of the EU function and the extent to which they fulfil the function of democratizing and legitimizing the EU.

As to the numeric channel, Robert Sata focuses on the question of whether parties contribute or hinder the democratic performance of the European Union and what roles national parties and European party groups play in aggregating political preferences in the European Parliament. Supplementing Sata’s focus on the (mis)alignments between national parties and European party groups, Martina Klicperova-Baker and Jaroslav Košťál explore the European demos with a focus on the similarities and discrepancies between the views of the citizens, party sympathizers, and party elites. This section is closed with an article by Yolanda Zografova and Diana Bakolova, who discuss whether and to what extent citizens’ political involvement and their attitudes to the EU are in line with the key EU policy objectives. Taken together, these three articles by Sata, Klicperova-Baker & Kostal, and Zografova & Bakalova uncover the issues of conflict and contestation in the numeric channel between different segments of society and different levels of the EU political system, from individual citizens and party sympathizers; from national parties and European Parliament party groups to the EU policy outcomes—giving a rather detailed picture of the extent to which the European numeric channel actually gives voice to the citizens and transmits their concerns to the European level, that is, to the European Parliament and EU policymaking.

As the reader may already have noticed, the comparative analyses in this volume reveal national and trans-European actors’ and the EU’s roles in the articulation of a European public sphere based on data that are measured on six levels: (1) individual level (citizens’ perceptions and preferences about diversity, EU policy, and public sphere), (2) elite level (the perceptions, preferences, and networking patterns of leaders of national political parties, think tanks, SMOs/NGOs, and media actors), (3) institutional level (objectives and institutional networking patterns of member-state level political parties, think tanks, and SMOs/NGOs and how they facilitate or hinder trans-European collaborations / networks), (4) media sphere level (representation of the EU and foreign EU actors as legitimate participants in national public debates on the policy areas of Eurosphere), (5) the trans-European level (the perceptions and preferences of the leaders of trans-European political parties, think tanks, and SMOs/NGOs and their transnational networking patterns), and (6) the supranational level (the EU’s policies pertaining to the articulation of a European public sphere. In their own policy specialization areas, the articles in this volume:

- map the alignments and misalignments between the views of citizens, national elites, national media news content, trans-European elites, and European policies.
- identify the areas of contestation and conflict in articulating a common public sphere based on these alignments/misalignments
- evaluate the feasibility (practical concerns) and acceptability (normative concerns) of the respective EU policies
- assess the potential consequences of these for the articulation and structuring of European public spheres

The datamaterial used in the articles of this volume is collected by the seventeen partner universities of “Eurosphere” (http://eurospheres.org), an integrated project funded by the European Commission between February 2007 and July 2012 and coordinated by the University of Bergen. Eurosphere has collected encompassing empirical material on different understandings and assessments of European public sphere(s) including official positions and policies by the EU institutions and European parties, individual opinions of political elites
(representatives of political parties, NGOs, media, and think tanks) as well as of citizens. More importantly, the project has also collected comprehensive material about the national and trans-European networking patterns of the significant and most visible institutional participants of the public debates at national and European levels. In this vein, an empirical study including 16 countries has been carried out consisting of (1) document analyses of the EU institutions, political parties, NGOs, media actors, and think tanks, (2) content analyses of media coverage, (3) elite interviews, (4) secondary evaluation of the European Social Survey and the European Values Study.

References


The Territorial Basis of the European Public Sphere

Wanda Dressler, Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme

This paper analyzes the two ways in which the concept of territorial diversity can be understood and how the European Union deals with this issue. The first understanding relates to the diverse institutional ways by which the territories of nations are transformed to build the European Union as an open common space while preserving European unity within the diversity of cultural territorial traditions, groups, institutions and political systems and integrating the new flux of population coming from European and non-European countries. The second understanding concerns the way European Union polity tries to preserve diversity, understood as the preservation of difference between gender, ethnicity, religion, race and handicap within the different levels of territories, from the national to the local through the diverse European instruments.

We will focus on the policies implemented by the EU to preserve the two dimensions of diversity within its territory. With the globalisation process, since the postwar era, we have seen the emergence of different movements for the deconstructing and rebuilding of European territories on different scales in order to create a Europe without borders and facilitate the flux of goods and men. These movements have been impelled by different institutions producing new norms (national, European and supranational entities, concurrently or in convergence), imposing to the nation-state a new key role to facilitate exchanges to the detriment of their past sovereignty (the states edict institutional reforms, decide EU budget and enlargements).

We will describe the normative and legislative processes and instruments which have contributed to this vast territorial transformation and try to evaluate their efficiency in order to manage the respect of diversity (seen as minority groups) through this new institutional diversity. We can note that the politico-administrative and juridical instruments of the EU during and after the cold war include some remarks about the construction of the territorial process concerning minority and diversity in the ex-communist block, the EU helping its neighbours to democratize by adopting the same tools. The juridical and institutional instruments were focussed on the territory: euroregions, regionalism, European Committee of Regions, Council of Europe policy, Helsinki agreements, CSCE today OSCE, laws on minority protection at international level, laws on national decentralisation all over European Union members (old and new members). They were set up in parallel with linguistic and cultural instruments such as the Charter on Minority languages, the Convention (1)on Cultural Diversity and the Directive Against Racism and Anti-semitism (2004-2005), the Charter and the last Law of European Fundamental rights in 2009 included in the Lisbon Treaty etc…

From West to East, in fact, in the EU and the ex-communist block, the public policies have reorganised the territories taking into account minority groups claims (linguistic, ethnic, territorial and non territorial minority groups of diverse dimensions) giving them more or less power according to their political weight and to state traditions (federal or unitary).

These processes occurred from both side of the iron curtain, with quite different imperatives or logics of rebuilding to reach in 1990 a relative convergence of processes and policy imperatives of territorial reformulation in UE and in post socialist spaces: the main objective, then, being to re-unify the enlarged unified Europe with a more secure and homogeneous neighbourhood to face global challenges in a competitive block formation.

This paper, approached from a multidisciplinary perspective, based on numerous fieldworks on national, transborder regions, micro and macro regional levels and on numerous texts from the EU, will put the emphasis on the norms in use in the global and European space which favour the respect of difference and on the capacity of the EU normative instruments to
impulse this new political logic in the nation states in order to transform them in postnational states integrated in a macro regional unit.

Founded initially on centrality, unity of language, identity etc., the nation states were pushed forwards to a postnational situation to build the EU space as the other multinational and multiethnic states in general (US, Canada, Russia, etc.), even if the status of this new entity is not really a State nor an Empire but a new original bureaucratic entity which has to invent its model of unification and integration in an on-going process, strengthening and tightening more and more firmly altogether the nation-states at each new treaty.

This new historic phase, the post war era, obliges the multicultural states to give new spaces and attention to the minorities, territorial and non territorial, including new migrant minority scattered in national territories. Border and transborder regions have become good observatories of new developments of the transformation of Europe as an aggregate of multicultural and national societies.

The region, as well the new category of practice and analysis of the construction of Europe is expected to reproduce the protection of minorities and the integration of the new migrant minorities in convergence with the new national logic, according to the European law and their own dynamism and political will: the transborder regions are the most exposed to this double challenge of integration of the different minority groups. Institutionnaly speaking, the regional policy reforms of each States which put forward the regions as a new management level to get the EU funding have been generally more or less successfully led within the decades 1970-1990 in the old members States, under the double pressure of the European institutions and the social movements. The latter took a new political turn in the seventies and enforced the new and old elites, both from States and regions, to renew the regionalist discourse inherited from the between two wars period (2). Except in some cases such as Basque country and Corsica, where violence have gone on for decades in the search for independence, the formal frames were not put in question at the institutional level, each countries having given the format they want to the regionalisation process, according to the social demand. In this matter, the EU also reached a consensus for the 2004 enlargement process among the new members, the decentralisation and regionalisation processes being elements of conditionality to enter in the enlargement negociations. The problem of integration of different migrant minorities, European or extraeuropean, arise with greater acuity during the following decades (1990-2010). The formation of the enlarged Europe has caused movements of intraeuropean migrations, mainly around the inside former borders and the building of the new international border, leading to the necessity to impulse an European neighbourhood policy taking into account the constraints of the “new fortress Europe” to regulate the new flux of migrants from the far East and from the South. Re-admission agreements, actions plans, democratic conditionality, minority group protection at the other sides of the EU borders were the keystones of this new policy as well as the euroregion in charge of harmonising the relationships between people and minorities split since years or centuries from their family, their ethnic group, their culture etc. Cross-border cooperation have been in place since 1967 (27 euroregions have been created since 1997) (3). The EU tries to impose with more or less success to its neighbourhood territories the same norms that were used for the enlargement process.

The main idea of this article is to evaluate the structural value of international and European norms and instruments for the reformulation of the long term regulation of territories which have taken centuries to structure on a national or imperial scale, through peace, violence and war. As well as to show the limits of this structural policy from the point of view of the target populations, these regulations are supposed to reach through the so-called cohesion strategy: multilevel governance, including the territorial dimension, seems crucial today to strengthen and improve the process of European integration. The main
question is whether this strategy is strong enough to allow European Union to face the problems which arise from the global context today (ecological and financial crisis, populist rise, revival of nationalism, racism and intolerance) and to maintain the solidarist philosophy at the origin of its formation. The actual demographic European decline and the relative intensity of migratory flux adds complexity and challenges to the old and recurrent issue of regional, territorial and linguistic diversity within all the European members states. The challenge is how to continue in order to evolve smoothly from this context of national states, still so vivid and closed on themselves, to a competitive post-national society open to the diversity of European and non-European cultures.

This paper will start by a brief historic of the global process, go on with a description of the international and European instruments adopted and the necessary theoretical and geopolitical reflection which led to their implementation. It will take examples of different types of territorialities to evaluate the efficiency of EU multilevel governance in dealing with diversity in order to conclude on the process from the point of view of diversity respect and dynamic.

**Brief historic of regional and territorial diversity policy**

The respect for minority rights is an acute preoccupation of the International community since the postwar. The chronology given at the end of this paper lists the numerous texts which put forward the idea of building new international norms and force the nation states to respect them in order to avoid war and conflicts. To build the EU, is was necessary to find a good equilibrium between European, National and local levels. The regional level was the mean to reach the local level and the citizen in order to mobilize him into participating to the building of Europe.

It is not a new idea but it was put forward to promote the democratisation of the society after the national exacerbations of past conflicts. The historical change converted the notion of region that was originally indeterminate and subsequently versatile into one with an unambiguously positive valency, whatever it could have been during the XIXth century or the early XXth. Following the new international conventions, the European Community implemented minority rights parallely to the immigrant states of the New world such as the United States and Canada in the 1960-70s, sustained by the pressure from social movements and movements of rights. This recognition acts as pillar of modernisation and transformation, coming from the new situation of labour market and demands from minority groups for integration and democratization.

Europe invented the nation-state model through centuries, the process being driven unevenly between East and West through imperial breakdowns and recompositions. But it took thirty years to set up the foundations of this mutation towards a post-national bureaucratic entity with was facing the necessity to build viable structures to pacify and reconcile nations between themselves and those nations with their diverse minority groups. To pacify the territories with the most disturbances was a priority. The European idea was to build unity through solidarity between territories and the satisfaction of social needs. Regions were thought to be at the right level to carry out the process of democratization (Perry Anderson, 1994).

So, before the notion of diversity imposed itself on the European stage in 2005, and after the re-emergence of values from the extreme right in Austria (which brought the quick adoption of the Race Directive in 2004) and the concerns about American competition in the field of cultural means in 2005 (which led to the signature of the UNESCO cultural Convention), the European Community had already explored numerous ways to solve the democratisation issue. The first measures of major concern for nation-states since the 1950’s were the territorial and regional institutional reforms to pacify their internal tensions due to
regional disparities and unsatisfied minorities, in the wake of those important years of 70’s which saw the rise of regional and national movements. The reflection was held much earlier, since the XIXeme century through a deep conceptualization of the concept of territories and regions (natural regions) by scholars and politicians. We will quickly review the theories which arose around these topics before entering the analysis of case studies.

Theorizing European territories, regions and borders
Nowadays, all societies are considered to be diverse and many ask to promote “positive discrimination” and to combine the rights for difference and for indifferrence, as a claim that is socially and juridically legitimate. Everyone seems to be easy with their own diversity in the post-modern situation and asks nowadays for the right for indifferrence. That is the product of a deep and quick evolution due to the building of Europe as part of global mutations. The situation is contiusously evolving, and even does so in regressive way. There will be many other minorities in the future and the EU must try to adapt to these evolutions and avoid the temptation of a return to the past, which nowadays is more present than ever. That is the reason why, after having been experimentated with at core EU level, the instruments taken into account in the different treaties, the EU tries to go deeper and adapt the reality to the new enlargments, strengthening slowly but steadily the European construction.

The different laws on minority rights were voted, implemented and deepened in parallel processes with economic one. The general process which explains the signicant rise of the region as a point of political identification across Western Europe lies first in the uneven economic development of post-war capitalism. Well established in the inter-war period, the phenomenon of the “depressed region”, increased by declining industry or uncompetitive agriculture stood out in greater relief. It provokes deeper distortion between the rich and poor or under-developed territories, contrary to what the numerous liberal adepts of market self-regulation predicted. Pressure for measures to redress the handicaps of relative disadvantages built up, giving a new meaning to regions: economic interest supplying collective bonds. Uneven economic development gave one impulse to regional identification, but relayed by too even cultural development it gave rise to regionalists claim to save the cultural differences and develop their economic potential. The emergence of supra-national administration, more distant from immediate experience than any previous authority, put an understandable premium on sub-national administration, as a compensating mechanism. After the end of the war which leads to the Treaty of Rome and to a Common market that ended unconditional sovereignty, the new European institutions –the Commission and the Parliament- try to bypass national authorities, in pursuit of closer union and had interest in promoting regional institutions as power-level partners. The values of nationality were receded to a secondary plane to the claims of liberty. The European Charter of regionalisation in 1988, foreseeing that the regions will participate to the definition of state policies definition inside the EU, was formally enjoining member states to institutionalize regional identities (4). Put forwards mainly by Germany to ensure the Länder role in the future of building European construction, this initiative was rejected (Gerard Marcou, 1999). The regionalization process was not enough mature and homogeneous all over the Western territories to institutionalize the role of region. Nevertheless, the elevation of democracy into a supreme legitimation of the social order, offered a positive opening to regional affirmation and Parliamentary systems based on universal suffrage and civil rights, boosted by the systemic movements in favor of difference in 1968-70, afforded a compelling model of self-government. The pattern of regionalization applied to the different institutional and political structures of member States yield necessarily variable results. The reflection shows that number of areas with a powerfull sense of their own separate character is far smaller than that of the regions into which most of the EU is divided to day. For every “thick” entity like Bavaria, Brittany or Catalonia, there are many
more “thin” units like the administrative region as Rhones-Alpes, or Lower Saxony or Murcia in Spain. The process whereby such distinct kinds of zone have acquired a common political reality is to find in the political history of these territories. The social turbulences of the late sixties and early seventies increase the pressure for liberties beyond the agenda of parliaments and shook the established order. If the pattern of democratic pressure, connecting most of the time, territorial democracy and industrial democracy, two notions with significant common origins in the XIXth century, explains the way that regions emerged onto the political agenda in these countries, the range of state traditions among them was critical in determining the outcome. The hierarchy of effective regionalization corresponds closely to the institutional and ideological bequests of an earlier age. That is why it seems preferable not to speak about regions but of process of regionalization which took different forms, according to each state traditions and the choice by the states of the institutional form to mobilize as partner to EU: it could be other territorial communities than non existing regions, doted with specific traditional power (more or less financial and institutional autonomy) or granted with more competencies to fulfill the EU exigencies for funding. The vote and the evolution of structural funds, FEDER, cohesion funds were the mechanisms adopted in the 1975 by the tenants of social regulation of economic liberal trends to stimulate the regional policy and reduce the disparities linked to uneven development and the economic trends of spatial concentration of more advanced technology and infrastructures of industries and services. The regional policy, constituting 7, 8% of EU budget in 1980, was in rapid progression after the diverse enlargements of Greece, Spain, Portugal and the cohesion policy (Agenda 2000: 213 milliards of euro for 1999-2006, G.Marcoud, p.7, 1999). It can be considered as the most noticeable innovation in territorial administrative system.

The spatial concentration mechanisms challenged the regulation attempts during the first decades of European construction. The theorisation on the regionalisation process and the democratisation of nations after centuries of centralisation and decennies of dictatorship went on in parallel to the implementation of affirmative action following the debates on multiculturalism (We will see in the conclusion that the social solidarity for territory building applied till the end of the century, is newly challenged by the acute needs of competitiveness for Europeans which rise through the globalisation process for the last decade. All these elements will reduce the importance of the regionalization process and oblige to center mainly on its more moderated forms and effects).

The reflection on regions was supported by the Council of European Union and pursued through the Comittee of Regions created in 1993-1994. They and aimed at the efficient transmission, understanding of European polities, norms and distribution of financial aids at all levels, in order to implement the subsidiarity principle and cohesion demands. Facing the impossibility to promote one institutional model of region or to definit it, the EU institutions have given a normative definition of regional entity as “entities situated immediately below the state level, doted with a political representation insured either by an elected council, an association or an organ created at region level by a collectivity of inferior level” (article 3 of status of Assembly of European Regions). So in the Region Committee members, you can find 95 representatives of communes, 41 provinces, departments or other closed, 86 of the regions, in charge of defining the eligibility of regions and zones according to a common nomenclature of statistical territorial units (NUTS) which does not coincide with political and administratives divisions of the states.

From another side, the European Union could not go alone in this process of reframind territorial dynamic. It was necessary to associate the neighbour countries such as the USSR during the cold war, which was interested by macro-regional cooperation and learning from the European model. The Helsinki Agreements and the agenda of the OSCE were supporting the idea to set up international standards on minority rights and implementation of cross-
border cooperation. For the whole European continent, split after the building of the Berlin wall, it was necessary to build a vision of the dynamic of territories.

So the “territory” of different levels at the center of all attention accepts many definitions given generally by the new theoreticians of geography and territorial management interested by spatial factors of endogene development and the potential of territories, (including networks, action capacities, identity mobilization etc). Sociologists, economists and geographers such as Henri Lefevre, Joël Bonnemaison, Michel Foucher, Paul Krugman, in particular, gave their contributions to this reflection. Territory is considered as a social construction, invented or reinvented. Territoriality is a cultural relation free from the links which constitute it. Different territories structure the space according to different levels: local, regional, national and macro-regional. The administrative regional level was one of the keys in the national re-framing, to anchor deeper in the national and European space. The State was expected to follow the subsidiarity principle. The building of new identities should re-actualise the relationship within the groups with their space and make easier the reappropriation of it in a dynamic way.

The recourse to the concept of ethnic group to qualify the groups originating from the fragmentation of empires seems to correspond as well to the process of reinvention of collective normatisation and instrumentalisation. It is a new category of practice and analysis which concurrences others conceptualisation as we can find in some nations states such as France, England, Netherlands. European continent is historically divided in two kinds of juridical tradition which did not converge but are re-actualised with the dissolution of imperial entities. The civic and ethnic conceptualisation of nations and national territories both co-exist in enlarged Europe rather harmoniously since 2004. Surprisingly, each nation is operating within its own tradition in this matter too and converging more or less to the others according to its needs. The concept of ethnicity, almost everywhere, redraws space according to the idea of link or demarcation. In France, we usually use the term of regional language and culture more than ethnic, but the concept of ethnicity was more and more used to describe symbolic bonds and dynamic of identity.

As such, “territoriality” could become the support for European projects. Mobility is not opposed to territoriality. On the contrary, it is more a link than a rupture, linking identity to its place of origin. However migrations create disorder and desorganisation on the territories they are involved with. To counteract these trends, regionalism and transnationalisation are creating new links and new types of relationships and exchange. Territoriality is made with nodes, roots, networks and of a co-existence of identities. The nation states must be apprehended through their diversity of forms to which are attached a discourse directed to the diverse social strata. They must consequently rebuild themselves through the relationship between culture and politics to maintain the feeling of belonging alive.

The way to rebuild territories is to be found between ethnic and civic solutions. Cultural and geographic identities are melted down on the same administrative space and give birth to new territories. In order to do so each society treats space differently and builds specific territories. The construction of identity is cimented by the building of these new territories and the production of a new dynamic and a new identity under different forms.

As for the level of the region, it is considered as the vector of European, linguistic, cultural and historical diversity, since the 1960’s. More recently promoted, a macro-region or inter-regional level, is transcending national borders to create new economic territorial aggregates. It is representing a new step in European integration. Both participate to the process of regionalization. They are no more identified to the creation of political or administrative region but to the necessity to reinforce regional development policy and European integration.

Paradoxically, the construction of the EU conceived as a liberal space with an open market has increased the multiplicity of figures of poly-ethnicity and institutional polymorphism: on
20 regions, 5 of them in Italy have a special status; Spain has recognized 4 languages (out of 8). There are 17 autonomous communities, Switzerland has 26 cantons, Germany 16 länder and Austria 9. Finland has 2 official languages etc. The trend to economic disparity between the rich and dynamic regions and those that are poor and marginalized has increased as well, appealing to the need for a new cohesion and for a fight against this disparity through financial help (structural and cohesion funds). The construction gains in complexity with the adoption of the strategy of macro-regional level to strengthen territorial integration but it is rather impossible to determine if these institutionalized solutions have been more successful in reducing regional disparity than another. They are all categories of practices and spaces built on the injection of new political, economic, financial and cultural practices. They also become analytical categories to evaluate the level of economic progression and social integration. They are spaces intellectually (and administratively) built to be actors of integration in the European economic and socio-political process, either around a natural (geographical) or economic space, or on an historical past, and with the aim to reframe a pragmatic and operational identity. These processes required a symbolic cohesion to strengthen the functional one. Nowadays, they are ongoing, produced by history, geography or sociology, around a block of class which has to ensure its future around specific interests, economic growth, financial and multi-level political interests. The logic which sustains the production of these new territories is increasingly combined with the logic of networking, accelerated by the new technology revolution to ensure cohesion, homogenisation and protection of diversity as well. The composition of these different logics seems necessary to satisfy the needs of economic integration in a context of increasing inequalities (existence of ethnic networks, cluster, transnational networks).

The European enlargement has also increased the reflection on borders. The concept of border appears much more complex and multidimensional than was thought before. Since the integration in a single market, national borders ceased to be the harassing and disruptive tax-gathering points of past history. The task to overcome the scars of the horrific border changes that convulsed Eastern Europe from the Versailles Treaty to the demise of the Soviet Union and the former Yougoslavia was immense. Lack of contact damages society both across the border and internally within each region. The drift toward separation can easily become self-perpetuating and difficult to reverse. Once the negative force of nationalism ceases to push, the experience of borders and divided communities, as in Ireland, has shown peoples away from each other more positive. Pragmatic cultural and economic considerations can begin to operate. The EU pedagogical method was exported to the East (Programs for peace and reconciliation.

Governments are, by virtue of membership of the EU, under obligation to implement EU policies in border areas. This has been more binding under the Lisbon Agenda, pointing to a new and inclusive style of governance and interaction with citizens. The Lisbon strategy informs and engages the citizens in the process through communication and coordination efforts at national to local levels and from national parliaments to local civil society, to provide democratic legitimacy. To strengthen the global competitiveness of all the regions of Europe, there is also a necessity to identify the diverse territorial potentials for sustainable economic growth and job creation in Europe: that means remove or mitigate the constraints mainly on lagging peripheral areas of the EU and borders (Intensification of cross-border and transnational cooperation). The issue of good practice in partnership (as symbolic structure and working process) and collaborative working (intra-sectoral and cross-sectoral as well as organisation capacity) at cross-border regions complementing inter-governmental cooperation is highly topical for key strategic issues. Transferable models or good practices were proposed for the purpose of providing guidance to communities, group organisations and neighbours to achieve tangible results and develop capacity to achieve goals.
Following its fathers, the EU has been built on the ideal of solidarity between European peoples, through slow maturation and specific historical conjectures, and the strong will of men sharing a common vision founded on consensus. The progressive implementation of the regional policy expresses this will to oppose a counterweight to the very liberal vision in fighting against the internal disparities of the European territory and to build a European territory where the spatial organisation inherited from the national logic of territorial management will be reorganised.

The context of the globalization of the economy also imposes a real adaptation of the enterprises’ territorial strategy to answer the global competition. Some regions benefit from the process, others don’t: on the contrary they see their situation worsen with borders opening. The use of the globalisation theme in the regional policy frame hides more often the ideological positions which are fighting around two big concepts: that of territorial cohesion towards a territorial redistributive policy and that of competitiveness oriented towards a territorial cumulative policy (Didelon, C. Richard, Y., Van Hamme, G. 2011).

The European instruments of diversity management: case studies
We have seen these two opposite logics interact in a more acute way during the last decade. The regionalisation of national spaces was started through the regional reform from the 1960’s in Western Europe and Eastern Europe in the 1990’s in order to force unitarian states to transfer responsibilities to the local powers according to the principle of subsidiarity and to accustom European citizens to more responsibility and participation. The big dilemma was to homogenize the logics of decentralisation and democratisation through regional reform, as mentioned earlier, while keeping for every nation the choice to implement this reform according to its historical traditions and not to give the impression that the European bureaucracy was imposing global and European norms through a single rule of application. The main principle was to answer to the social demand, according to the spatial distribution and federal or unitary traditions. The European States could accept this reform only if they have a white card to implement it.

This process occurred during the different phases of the European Union enlargement: Europe of 8 in 1973 and 1986, of 15 in and 27 in 2004 and 2007. Tolerance of diversity and the setting up of regional levels aimed to facilitate the implementation of Euro-regulation and to consolidate cohesion through these two imperatives. The EU built at once general instruments as the European Charter of Regional and minority languages (1992) and the Region Committee, created in 1994 with a consultative role. The Europeans Treaties bind the Commission and the European Council to consult the Region Committee on all proposals having any consequences at local and regional level on all domains, when the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council deem it necessary.

This position to answer to the social demand of regions and nations has led to a very great diversity of management modes. We will present briefly some of them. Everywhere the national/regional minorities (whatever the diversity of denomination is) seems to have more or less accepted the constraints of the legislative and territorial frame, even if many insatisfactions and political activism are still on the agenda.

In Spain, the decentralisation of power since the ratification of the new Constitution en 1978, implemented according to social demand was one of the more important factors of success. The Spanish Constitution is very decentralised. Spain succeeded in linking democratic development and responsibilities. Even if the reform was gradual, according to the regions, these have all today rather the same competencies. European Structural and Cohesion Funds have been the most significant instruments in the economic developments of Spain and of its 17 regions in particular. The financial help from Europe increased the economic level of development, the investment in infrastructures and reduced the high level
of unemployment. The difference is still more significant between the two regional historical regions which have received the right to manage their own fiscal policy. Their economic and employment improvements have, however, deepened the gap with the other regions. The integration of Eastern Europe has reduced in an important way the financial resources allocated to Spanish regions, worsening the polarity, and consequently the solving of the employment question which concerns also the numerous migrant minorities who are living and working in the more advanced regions. The situation is difficult with the financial crisis which ends with the building boom, and reveals many inadequate investments, conceived for a continuous growth and now useless and costly, even in more developed regions.

In France, for the regional language, the problem is rather the same than in the Czech republic. There are two strong identities in the South: Bearn and Basque. There is a strong demand to have the Basque language at school in this region. Therefore a state convention is foreseen with the Atlantic-Pyrenees region but not with Bearn. Other measures have been taken in Brittany, and since 1945 in Alsace/Moselle, where the language is recognized as official language of the general Council by the French State and financed by it. Martinique and Polynesia have also their specific regime.

In the United Kingdom, a more centralized country than France, there is no territorial policy and all is managed from London. Tony Blair has answered social demand where it came from. Scotland has demanded independence and has obtained devolution with a Scottish Parliament with some financial resources but without any linguistic recognition. The Welsh did not want any autonomy but wanted to speak their own language. So there is a Ministry for Wales. The sovereignty rests with the Queen with the people as in France.

In Eastern countries, this regionalisation process has been compelled to be led rapidly and with difficulties, given the authoritarian centralized regime in communist times, the artificial way space was drawn, and the heavy conflict situation after the second world war, to speak about the more recent scars. Ireland and Spain have been considered good models of democratic transition, and have been an inspiration to them.

It has not been easy to implement an adequate degree of coordination between national, regional, linguistic, religious minorities and territorial units as region, municipalities, euroregion, and border region. Europe has known so many border changes, political units and movements of people that the mosaic of minorities it presents is very diverse (JosephYacoub, 1998). This situation makes it impossible to carry out a synthesis, therefore we will only present here some examples of the variety of situations for the regional spaces facing the diversity question.

The border regions present different case studies and minority configurations. Most often, the border regions are the location of diverse minorities and mainly national minorities split from one nation. In Germany, the treatment of the Danish minority from the Schleswig-Holstein, has been brought up as a model strengthened by the 1955 federal law which give extended material rights to this minority (whose have 57 schools and high schools and two representatives to the Diete in Kiel). Beside its Magyar minority, Austria has two border minorities: the Croats from Burgenland and the Slovenes from Corinthia. The Croats have seen their rights recognized by the State Treaty in 1955 when Austria was recognized as a sovereign country. On the same model, the Slovenes obtained an Ethnic Council in 1988 (medias, Slovene high schools, bilingual toponymy). In Lithuania, the 1991 Lithuanian law considers Poles as foreigners like the Russians from Estonia who came after 1945. The Polish demand for an autonomous region was rejected, the fear from former Polish domination being still present. The Lithuanians are trying to rebuild their own history to reshape their identity through it. Meanwhile the 1997 Polish constitution recognized the status of Lithuanians, Bielo-russians and Ukrainian minorities.
Created in the West in the 1950’s, they are set up in Eastern Europe in the 1990’s as the international border of Europe, first of all between Germany and Poland, and nowadays with the USSR former satellites. New state borders appeared between Baltic States, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (1993-1996). Since the 1950-60’s, the first Euroregion (Regio basilenis, Maas-Rhein (1958), Saarlourlux), had one aim: to reach an integrated border system in a supranational frame. A euro-region is an association of municipalities financed by their own budget to develop a permanent cooperation in many diverse domains such as economy, culture, environment, sport.). Initiated through a common agreement with European actors and implemented by national, departmental and/or regional bodies, the euro-regions have a consultative status.

Since 1990, the transborder cooperations have started to function, in countries promised to integration to EU, although with many difficulties, through renewing the old socio-economic networks. The ARFE or Association for European Border Regions financed by Brussels plays an active role through its pilot project LACE (Linkage Assistance and Cooperation for the European Border Region) to overcome historical difficulties. Since 1991, the EU has helped in the making of transborder networks on its territory and Median Europe through the Interreg II Programmes (1995-1998(4). In any case, as well as in the previous national and international borders, it was all about starting again to carry out an inter-community dialogue often interrupted for centuries or decades of territorial conflicts which they have difficulties in overcoming. Most of states have also found it difficult to let the border regions have some autonomy to cooperate, mainly in fiscal matters.

The differences of administrative traditions often slow things down but could also provide a pretext not to develop this cooperation. Dysfunction, distrust, old conflicts difficult to overcome, stereotypes, fear of territorial re-colonisation are a handicap in the relations at Polish-German and Polish-Ukrainian or Lithuanians, or Germano-Czech borders (conflict about the Sudetes and the Benes’ abrogation decree). Fear of economic proletarisation linked to transborder work is another deterrent to active cooperation (Lorraine/Luxembourg). The German minorities expected much from this transborder cooperation to recover confiscated lands during the second world war conflict but these hopes have not materialised, given the borders’ intangibility. Border minorities are not always the main actors in the border cooperation, elites at other levels come to the fore with another logic, sometimes more peaceful and more future-oriented than turned towards the past: it was mainly young elites trained at foreign universities who promoted cooperation through NGO with great dynamism at the Polish/Bielorussian or Ukrainian borders. Church elites helped as well in the case of Ukrainia and Poland. The processes of reconciliation takes time. Border populations also need time to consider economic and other human benefits: it needs a common effort to break the old stereotypes. This cooperation starts most often in a simple way with a common sport or cultural festival, a common radio on minority issue, a common newspaper and develops to more complex economic cooperation. The Interreg programs allow regular exchanges between actors of good will to promote new open relations. Older people do not forgive easily displacements or collective killings by the organisations in power, so many black areas of this kind are still there to overcome.

An important tool has been proposed: the Good Neighbourhood and Friendship Treaty signed between Poland, Germany, Hungaria, Rumania; the Czech Republic, Slovakia etc. after 1990 as a condition of entering the EU and NATO. In June 1991, the German-Polish Good Neighbourhood Treaty gives to the Polish citizens of German origin the right to express freely their identity. In High Silesia, in Opole, the recognition of their regional identity is on the way. Many regionalist movements claim an autonomous status. Medias, school networks, bilingualism with the financial help of Germany allow a pacification of relationships between minority and majority.
The Hungarian minority question remains difficult however in the 7 states where they are scattered (Austria, Ukrainia, Serbia, Rumania, Croatia, Slovenia). In Austria, the minority does not pose any problem but in Rumania, the 1.6 million Magyar speakers are scattered along 3 zones and have experienced a rather good status under communist regime. But the autonomous region’s situation in the Szekler country deteriorated after 1956 (abolition of the Hungarian university of Cluj, replacement of the Hungarian language as official language at all levels, suppression of the autonomous region in 1968) and under the Ceausescu regime (colonisation of Magyar speaking spaces by Rumanians, closing of Hungarian schools, reduction of acces to Hungarian medias, destruction of rural villages). It is only after 1990, that E.A.Iliescu (1989-1996), improves the situation: he creates the 4th democratic party of the country at the end of his mandate, the Democratic Union of Magyars of Rumania, in the optic of a territorial decentralisation of the Rumanian unitary state. The historic reconciliation is celebrated on 16 September 1996 with the signature of Good neighbourhood and Friendship Treaty between the two States, condition for entry of these two countries in NATO and the EU in 2004. The 1201 recommendations of the Council of Europe relating to the protection of persons belonging to the national minority did not satisfy completely the Hungarians because it did not mention collective rights as all over inside the EU. The Hungarians from Czechoslovakia have as well lived difficult moments under communism (deprivation of their nationality and land, closure of schools, exclusion of civil servants, deportation of priests, interdiction of their language, forced exchange of population in 1946, re-slovakisation in 1963). The federalisation of the two countries re-affirmed the collective minority rights. Since the partitioning of the Czech Republic in December 1992, the Hungarian minority from Slovakia present a difficult issue for the new State, as the language law voted in 1995 is considered to be discriminatory, hiding a forced assimilation by the 1992 Constitution which only re-affirms the rights of the Slovak people. In March 1995, a Good Neighbourhood Treaty as in Rumania was signed between the two States in Paris, even if the idea of an autonomous region is still rejected as is in Lithuania. With the 1992 German-Czech Treat, 53 418 German citizens now find themselves protected. In December 1996, the German-Czech declaration ends the question of the Sudete expulsion from Nazi Germany in 1945 with the creation of an investment fund for projects of common interests. In 1980, Hungary liberalized the protection of German minorities from Hungary (220 000 in 1997) who benefited from the German-Hungarian treaty of June 1992 and in 1993, the Hungarian law acknowledged and strengthened minority rights.

The restoration of independence for the three Baltic states posed again the question of Russian minorities present in these countries with a high rate of population (from 9,4% in Lithuania to 54 % in Latvia). The intensity of Russian settlements and the Russian concentration in towns and in the border region of Narva was felt as a threat for Baltic sovereignty. These states have chosen to adopt the status of citizenship acquired before the Russian occupation, so that those Russian citizens who came later have had no choice but to ask for naturalisation and to accept the linguistic constraints imposed by the Baltic states after independance. The EU obliged to compromise in order to solve this issue as a condition of entry in the EU. Today, peaceful co-existence does not mean that all problems are solved, because the two populations ignore each other and sometimes re-open conflicts as in 2008 with the episode of the Russian soldier’s statue in Tallin.

These treaties were not signed with neighbourhood countries but the neighbourhood policy initiated in 2003 use the same instruments as inside the European borders Interreg programmes, Phare and Tacis etc. and from now on these instruments, conceived on the same pattern for all neighbour countries are diversified according to the case by case negociations for tightening links if not for entrance into the EU, such as with Moldova and Ukrainia.
The respect for diversity through the Eurasian space was the basic issue here. We can see the example of Moldova as a future candidate, where the EU tried in 2011 to impose voting on respect for gender diversity and faced the refusal of the orthodox clergy and of the population itself. Kazakhstan, through its “new way for Europe”, has built a model of interethnic and interconfessional concord well disseminated through the country’s different regions, with assistance by EU councillors. Russia itself is adopting the model of interethnic concord pushed forward by the most democratic forces in order to cooperate with the EU in different matters. Russia has so many Russians abroad that it was mobilized in the first line since Helsinki agreement to protect its minorities in the new EU members, such as the Baltic States.

**General instruments to promote diversity**

After 2004, it was necessary to go further to protect this new enlarged Europe from cultural or nationalist slippages. With the emergence of the US as a strong competitor on cultural matters, the Convention for the Promotion of Cultural Diversity was voted by the UNESCO to guarantee the survival of minority cultures as well as of majority cultures. This recognition of the specific nature of activity, goods and cultural services was considered a political act from the international community, demonstrating a new will to oppose an ever growing globalisation. The US have the sovereign right to adopt and implement policy and measures appropriate for the preservation of cultural diversity. Each country should finance cinema, music and the visual arts through public funding and reglementary measures. This Convention was a French and Canadian initiative, carried out under the Chirac presidency. These rights have the same value as the other instruments such as the WTO or bilateral treaties. A country could thus refuse to open its audiovisual and cinematographic market during international commercial negociations. With the convention, the weaker countries have a tool which enables them to resist outside pressure. However, the text does not put constraints in term of means. The Cooperation Fund, set up for under-developed countries, depends from the voluntary contributions of each country, but these are already making a lot of financial contributions. But contrary to the measures decided upon at the WTO, with their strict reglementary constraints, the Convention is laxist. To be implemented, it must be ratified by at least 30 countries. The US are opposed to this process and have tried to block it through bilateral treaties imposed on the most fragile countries.

The final and important text on this issue is the Law on the Fundamental rights of the Human Person which includes social and environmental rights; the minority issue is quoted in 3 articles under categories concerning the young, senior, sexual, ethnic, religious and philosophical. This text sets up a list of diversity criteria which are taken into account according to social demand in each country and shows the emergence of a really new consciousness about sexual diversity.

The idea of devoting a year to a theme to focus on a problem of particular importance in the EU have proved to be quite popular among European citizens, however the concern is that the awareness raising efforts devoted to a particular theme are abandonned the following year when another theme is chosen. This lack of continuity prevents the financing of any initiative needing to be followed up.

We can focus on two examples, one about cultural diversity, the other the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the regional context. They usually concern the same target people: migrants and minorities are usually more concerned by poverty and social exclusion and cultural ghetto-isation. More than 80 millions people live under the poverty threshold in the EU. It is a big issue for European towns and regions because it is the local and regional powers which are responsible for devising, financing and implementing the integration policy of the socially, economically and culturally excluded (ethnic minorities, senior,
unemployed, handicapped etc.). According to the subsidiarity principle, there has been an increase of responsibility at local and regional level in those areas but the problem is that there is no financial follow on from the state or even the EU to help deal with all these responsibilities. The Mayor of Paris recently complained about this and pointed out that more and more people are requiring help at their level and that local finance cannot follow the social demand without additional help from the State. The financial crisis which has shaken the different member states has also increased the disparity of regional and urban territories in this matter. It seems that the Council of localities and regions of Europe, the CCRE, founded in 1951 in Geneva, as well as many associations from these territories, have fought to anchor in the Lisbon Treaty the subsidiarity principle with instruments to implement it concretely (and financially) at national legislative level to maintain or promote territorial cohesion. This aim is nowadays one of the more important objectives of the EU. It is linked to the idea of social and societal cohesion which has not been yet debated inside the EU, a concept which is to put alongside the implementation of the principle of competition. Combining tools for durable growth and resources for territorial cohesion seems a necessity to prevent putting the future in jeopardy, while concentrating on the effects of the economic crisis and the fight against poverty. Consulting the territories as real decision-making partners is also needed as a preliminary to the legislative process to study the territorial impact of all legislative decisions. It implies a better coordination of economic policies at EU level. Nowadays, it is the Regional Committee which stresses the strengthening of the Cohesion policy, in the wake of an increasing regional disparity in economical terms. It is looked upon as a development policy in itself, not as a simple financial tool. And it must be looked upon as being integrated in the normal EU functioning.

The Committee of Regions has recently renewed, under the 2010 Spanish Presidency, the Conference of European Regions with Legislative Power created in 2001 (REGLEG) as a powerful network (43% of EU population are concerned by these regions). REGLEG participated in the implementation of the White Paper on Multilevel Governance written in 1999 as well as in the Cohesion policy to ensure the future of the Lisbon strategy. The processus began in 2007 with the publication of the « Territorial Agenda » and the « Green paper on the Territorial Cohesion” written for the European Commission in 2008. With the White paper on multilevel governance seems to spring a new era of cooperation across national, regional and local borders, between policy areas and different levels of governance. Concrete examples of this cooperation have been taken through the strategy of macro-regions such as the Baltic Sea region, the Danube region and the North Sea-English Channel region, the Alpine region, the Atlantic Arc and so on. These macro-regions experiment a new way of thinking about multilevel governance and subsidiarity, the two key concepts at the heart of the committee of Region’s work. It corresponds to the triple objective of economic, social, territorial cohesion written in the Lisbon Treaty. Cross-border cooperations within macro-regions are considered to have “an enormous potential”, implying better coordination, shared solution etc.

The territorial dimension added to the cohesion policy objectives in the Lisbon Treaty “epitomises the full diversity of Europe” said the new European Commissioner for regional policy. The economic crisis, with its uneven territorial consequences has shown that cohesion policy continues to play a central role in the balanced integration of Europe’s region, by enabling structural adjustments. Implementation of the cohesion policy also implies a strengthening of communication and cohesion between each level. A lot remains to be done in these matters.
The Limits of the European regional and territorial policies
The continuous focus of the EU on the disparity of the economic level of the European territory and the larger gap we can now observe between North and South (the North newly including Poland which has a continuously good growth rate) shows that the liberal vision which relies on market regulation does not work in a satisfactory way in spite of the many efforts towards solidarity carried out through all the European instruments. Paul Krugman (2000) has added many details to the theoretical debates on cohesion: the dynamic of external scale economy and of the decreasing of transport cost have led to a spatial concentration of activities increasing regional disparities. In comparison to the two visions on regional policy presented earlier, by limiting the concentration of industries, the redistribution policy adopted in the last decade is perceived as a hindrance on the global economic efficiency; according to the new perspectives and for equality reasons, regional policy must be deliver territorial cohesion through two strategies: economic development and territorial redistribution. The globalisation process is more profitable for the high metropolitan regions, and represents a continuous issue for the European Cohesion policy. The pressure of increasing competitiveness also adds to the opposition between the two visions. The major trend is to give priority to the regions with the higher potential in order to produce a mobilizing effect on the more vulnerable ones.

Within the Lisbon strategy, a compromise has been found by introducing the competitive principle in regional policy in order to keep a redistributive territorial logic with an imperative for regional competitiveness and employment. This means that the workforce and the enterprises are made more adaptable and focussed on social inclusion (with education and training included) in order to bring about a greater reduction in the inequality of potential than in regional disparities (R. Kahn, 2010). Thus for 2007-2013, the regional policy determined new eligibility criteria for structural funds and no longer deals with all the regions in the same way (268: according to the convergence objective for less developed regions, 2/3 of credits are allocated to competitiveness objectives and employment whereas European territorial cooperation objectives (transborder, transnational and interregional) are only allocated 2.5%. 84 regions are required to reach a competitive level with the convergence funds, 29 need a transitional help, 155 have a high competitiveness level ensuring territorial competitiveness. The results are that the peripheral regions have reached the average EU GNP but precise figures or analyses of causality are very difficult to obtain. The regions’ size are very different from country to country and the impact of regional size is crucial in determining what help is attributed: it reveals a high level of arbitrariness in the fund attribution decision-making process. This pragmatic policy however shows a reduction in the EU efficiency to act with real partners at the same level of responsibility in order to adapt to social demand and the great diversity of existing regional status. The EU has in front the German Länder, the Belgian Provinces, or Berlin, Madrid or Roma. This level is not performing equally everywhere. It is sometimes difficult to evaluate the cause of the better results. In the Europe of 8 and 15, for instance, you had regions with federal legislative competencies. But it is nowadays mainly the Southern countries as a whole which have big economic problem, whatever their regional structures (See the Portugal case). This difficult situation appeals changes for greater efficiency. The difference between the GNP of the poorest and the richest regions remains from 1 to 13 in the 27 members and there has been a general decrease in the average EU revenue with the enlargement of 2004.

The EU takes more into account the micro differences between territories inside a region to favor local recomposition. For instance, in the region Island of France which is considered as one of the richer region in Europe, you find big disparities: the better example is the Department of La Plaine St Denis or Plaine commune which in very deep socio-economic crisis aggravated with the financial crisis: it presents a very high % of unemployment, 27%
without diplomas in spite of two universities, 23% living from social minima, a high level of migrant population (22%), high level of desindustrialation, problematic urban space and needs for a serious help to recover some economic development. European funds meet positive results in this area. In the same time, other projects are financed for their innovative profile even if they are in a more priviledged area.

More conditionality, more controls arise, to promote an integrative approach (urban integrative projects) and to sanction bad results. It compels to negotiate good projects. At the scale of nations such as Greece, Spain and Italy, the reasons of the deficit are different and could not be treated in the same way. For Spain, the cohesion policy have reinforced the third sector and provoked bull immobilière which desappear with the crisis. Greece could not even spend the allocated funds by Europe; lacking to add its own fund participation, reducing the cohesion policy effects to nothing. It poses the question of economic and political governance of the country and the appropriation of the European normative method of territorial pact. Far from being homogeneizing, the European norms are reinterpretated according to each cultural and national traditions: each territorial has a specific complexity which orients a great diversity of gestion (corruption, democratic traditions). The failure to reduce the difference North /South.in Italy reveals more the failure of the political system unable to resolve its internal dualism than the one of European cohesion policy. It profits to federalisation of rich regions which get better integrated in European Union since 1996 (Elodie Manceau, 2011).

The crisis acts as a revelator of the efficiency of the European cohesion policy norms on solidarity and of this greater tension with competition and the necessity for social actors to negociate they needs through local compromise between local and macro economic needs. Conditions of success of the EU cohesion policy on territories does not seem played in advance but according to a set of complex combinaison of factors whose political will and competences play their role as virtuous or non virtuous actors, able to impulse new dynamism to their territory, according to European Directives and principles.

The actual evolution of cohesion policy between solidarity and competititivity and the capacity of the EU to propose new principles and norms, supported by a deeper reflexion on the future of economic activities on its territory seems crucial for the future of Europe in a period where all the states weakened by the financial crisis could no more not invest in local level to reduce disparities and inequality.

Inside the EU, the persistant weight of the Nations States, appear as the main obstacle to the progress of European integration. The citizens identify themselves primarily with this level. All advancement of the EU construction hurts deeply the strong economic coordination required to avoid political tensions between the EU and the States. The persistance of Nations in a European market in globalisation time is a major fact: the 2008 crisis have enhanced the decisive role of the States which keep the main instruments of economic regulation in Europe labor market, fiscal regulation and social redistribution. Their reluctancy to function according to the subsidiary principle and multilevel governance in the most centralist cases reduce effectiveness of cohesion policy based on these principles. The proposal of the creation of an interparliamentary commission for consulting national parliament before to edict new laws in order to produce a better understanding of the logic of the European legislation to the National parliaments was proposed by a French deputee but it is still not discussed and ratified. Proposal to associate better the regions to European Parliament as partners, according to the great diversity of the social demand, is also a wish but nothing concreate have been put forwards. It becomes more and more necessary to associate the National Parliaments and the Regional territorial assemblies to the definition of the European policy to insure a good transmission top down, a better efficiency in the transposition of Eu directives but also, and it is more true than ever, to evaluate the impact of these policies with
the actors concerned which experiment these policies, and help in their redefinition for the next decades.

Outside the EU, while the law is placed at the heart of the process of European integration, the solidarity implies that the neighbours adopt some common rules and harmonize some policies towards its neighbours. In exporting its rules, EU builds a new type of border but the intensity of exigencies and political conditionality and the level of transfert of the politico-juridic European model does not guarantee they will provoke the reforms wished by the EU to stabilize its neighbourhood. A long way in foreign policy has been done through this method of exchange of ideas, of research of common positions and strategies. It supposes a huge common work, a mutual apprenticeship of common methods but the diversity of situations of all the neighbourhood countries and the actual difficulties of members inside the EU to find a common solidarist strategy does not encourage so much optimism in many domains.

Conclusions
EU have certainly favoured the eclosion of regional diversity. This was the first step. The problem of regional diversity structures is still important to resolve as we see. It is the following step linked to the maturity of the decentralisation and democratisation process and the will of actors to harmonize more or less their own structures with the other European ones in order to be more efficient in all respect. For minority rights, the Region committee have kept the possibility to seize the Court of Justice. It has positive expectations from the new charter of fundamental rights. The region have won some more prerogatives: the regional languages have an official status which could be used in the EU meetings but the taxes of translation must be supported by the region not by the EU. Globally, the rights are satisfactory even if not always respected. International right allows to regulate the problems such as Wallon and Flemish in Belgium, the Flemmish being in contradiction with community principles (they ask to be from Flandres, to speak Flemish and live in Flandres to enter administration, what is a discrimination of Nationals from Belgium vis a vis the nationals from EU). The approach proposed by the Council of Europe seems all right. The international agreement on these topics since 1990 is based on two texts, the Charter on Regional language and the Charter on minority rights which is now signed by all countries except France (at the origin of the conception of these texts). France has only ratified the Charter on languages recognized as patrimony of the one and indivisible Republic, after modification of the Constitution but still does not recognize there are national minorities in France. There are only regional cultures with different languages such as Corsican, Alsacian etc. So, cultural diversity seems to exist through all the applications of this legislation on the ground.

However, European people are more reluctant towards cultural diversity concerning extra Europeans or post-imperial countries than European continent minorities. The islamic communities, in particular, polarize the attention because their integration is difficult as well at national as regional level in charge to apply diversity directives on this level. Even in French regions, many efforts are done to integrate minority culture by civil society and local authorities, the social problems are so numerous that the State level is more and more required to apply coherently all national measures and European directives which can help in this way (formation, lodging). It is mainly true for the second and third generations of muslims since September 2001. The regions as well have not always the same approach and attitudes towards the question of migrant minority integration. It depends of many factors: cultural, economic, political etc. The more contrasted examples are Corsica and the Pas de Calais or Lorraine regions in France which are from different historical and economical backgrounds: rural/industrial region and make the comparison delicate. Most of European countries have difficulties to integrate these minorities, as well, even if they are open to asylum like Sweden. In this country, Afgan, Irakians, Kosovars are not integrated. The ideological differences
between the European nations, more or less universalist and ethnocentric open multicultural societies, do not play important role in the level of tolerancy towards cultural mixity. The partisan system mirrors the economic cleavage more than it does the cultural one. Europeans were relatively tolerant towards inequality and foreigners. But recently, a new wave of populism, xenophobia and racism is re-appearing in Europe. The European migration policy is lagging far beyond the expectations of the citizens and the needs in qualified and non-qualified labor forces of the European continent, which is demographically declining. The need for ideological more open discourses on migration by political parties and media is urgent in order to face the new realities of the competitiveness and democratic aspirations as well of the different waves of migrants who require more formation, respect and cultural recognition.

The problems linked to the immigration policy are present on regional territories and the general policy on minorities to welcome and integrate the migrants workers tends to reproduce the national logic in regions as well. The year for intercultural dialogue in 2008 have been very well followed in the regions of France where many migrants and autochtonous minorities coexist. EU should favor on the long term these kinds of incentives with financial help. They are well supported by civil societies. The European years boost the creation of associations in this domain but these one need to be perennized to have a deeper impact on the long run. This impact is fluctuant for dependant from the economic conjonctures. What is less tolerated is the flux onf clandestine migrants the politicians focus on and mainly the more rightists trends.

EU building is an on going process: it does not stop to deepen the policies initiated since the beginning of the 50ies. Principles must be more and more implemented concretely at the different levels of territory: that is the new stake the EU is involved. Some level does not respect enough the subsidiarity principle. The difference of experimentation of the European regulations in territories for diversity concern is also great between Eastern and Western Europe, due to the intensity of stakes to face. The problem of minorities est still great in Central Europe and in Balkans: strong tensions between compact communities are still going on. The communautarian attraction to gather according to the same religion, ethnicity and origin in general, reinforced by the economic and networking trends win the new post communist States whose the State authority is weak. This general trend set up huge transeuropean networks which helps the migrant population to survive at different levels of the society. The case of the Roms population is exemplar in this respect. The existence of elites able to defend their rights from all these countries provide a new stratification which is emerging in the global exchanges and required recognition of their cultural specificity and of their professional skills. The Charter of fundamental right is a positive step forward in this direction. So the States are linked in a tight network of constraints whose the actual shakes will improve the strongness and the effectiveness in order to maintain its existence and to appear still as an experimental model of the future multicultural and democratic societies. The legislativ corpus and bureaucratic structures set up are the big pillars of this building. They can allow to pursue the gestion of this diversity of territorial construction and cultures with the common juridic tools edicted by the Council of Europe and each specific regional territories erected as partners for EU within the traditions of its diverse member states and neighbour states. EU will be facing in the following years many stakes: demographic, climatic, energetic, global trends. Except for energy which concerns all EU, all these stakes will affect the different regions differently. EU has fixed 5 major objectives for 2020 – reach 1 employment of 75% of people from 20 to 64, 2 invest 3% in research and innovation to increase competition, 3 face climatic change wit new energetic policy, 4 increase the scolarity success rate and provide superior diplomes for 40% of the population, fight against 20 millions people threat by poverty and social exclusion. EU have already identified regions
were these stakes will be the more difficult to reach. South and South East regions seems the most vulnerable but inside Germany and new members States, sub regional variations exist as well, between West and East and North and South. The border regions deprived from activities for decades or centuries have a great gap to overcome: educational, stakes, employment, competitivity, social exclusion and intolerance are more concentrated in these areas.

The international law set up by the Council of Europe has power to solve the more conflictual issues. The economic and financiary mechanisms linked to globalisation trends which create a big disparity between Western and Eastern Europe in specific sectors, and oblige to focus on the cohesion strategy. The major role the Comittee of regions is to mobilize citizens for these priorities, to finance the desequilibrium between regions, to increase educational and social stakes. Exchange of good practices, evaluation of performance, creation of networks and the useful instruments to favor the appropriation of ideas and norms and the envy to reform, with a new great focus on youth (average rate of unemployment in UE: 20%) are the usual solution proposed by the EU to reinforce its foundation and insure its extension. Diverse institutions coordonne the contribution of majors actors such as entreprises, syndicats, NGO, citizens and local and regional public power: the Economic and Social Comitee for the first ones and the Comittee of Regions for the last one must fill the objectives such as education, innovation, adaptation to climatic changes and transports.

That is why the role of Region Comittee is focused in the following periods to many important objectives: help to build territorial cohesion (suivi plateform Europe 2020) and so to increase the territorial representations and the participation of local and regional collectivities to insure a better implementation of the objectives 2020 in coherence with cohesion stratgy. Territorial pacts are required to perform theses strategies between local, regional and national actors. These pacts should be financed as well by the European Bank of investment and the European investissement funds.

In December 2010, the President of the Commission declared in a plenary session of the Region Comittee: “I need you to convince the Member States to sign territorial pacts with big towns and regions”. The regional and local elites are more and more considered as “the indispensable links of EU whose role must be extended as equal partners not only executives with a revised budget to succeed to realize the objectives of 2020 strategy”. Two years have passed from then which make these words rather unrealistic in Europe today where more and more citizens and national political parties are disenchanted with the European performance and model.

Notes
1) The Convention method associates national and European Members of Parliament to take decisions through consensus building with an opening to civil society, contributing to the creation of a European public space.
3) Seminar organized by the CERI on Cohesion’s policy and stakes for interregional solidarity, 2012.27/01 2012, Paris, Datar
150 millions of Ecus have been given to Median Europe for transborder cooperation at the limits of the Union and the programme Phare-CBC (Cross-border Cooperation-150 millions of Ecus) for outside Union (25 millions ecus/year for the Czech-German border, Austro-Czech border (6m of ecus/year), Austro-Hungarian (78 m of ecus) between 1996 and 1999 to increase and improve the check points. There are 8 euro-regions only on the Germano-Polish and Germano–Czech borders,

References


Documents of work : *Europe 2020 objectives*, Regions 2020


*White book of the Committee of Regions on Multilevel Governance*, Region Committee, 2009


**Chronology**

1945, Creation of UNESCO

1949, 5 May, Creation of the Council of Europe at London Treaty (47 States), for Defense of Human rights, democracy and state of law, concern all activities, performs norms, charts and conventions in order to make the cooperation between member states easier and built EU to favor social and economic progress. The Council is assisted by two organs: the Committee of Ministers and the Consultative Assembly.

1948, Debate on citizens rights without distinction of race, language, religion and sexe. Creation of international law policy, Recognition of individual rights not collective rights for minorities.


1954, European Cultural Convention

1957, Rome Treaty creation of the CEE European, Economic Communauty after the CECA (6 members)

1957, 1rst Convention of OIT on autochtonous and tribal population respect of cultures and rights in new independent states

1958, June, Convention of the OIT against discrimination in employment and professions

1959, Creation of the European Court of Human Rights to oblige to respect the Convention

1960, December, Convention of UNESCO against discrimination in teaching (special rights and measures for national minoritites), followed in 1966 by a Declaration on principles of international cultural cooperation putting on the same level minority and majority cultures.

1961 Social European Chart

1966 International Pact international for civil polical right at ONU, minority recognition for cultural regional developpement: the individual approach is maintained

1972, November, Convention of UNESCO on the protection of cultural and natural global patrimony of humanity

1973, Declaration on European identity of Eropean Communauty, Copenhagen

1974-75, Inaugural European Union Council, Dublin, 10-11 March, included in 1987 in the Single European Act and with role redefined inside the Maatstricht Treaty

1975 Final Act of Helsinki, secretariat for European cooperation

1978, November, Declaration of UNESCO on race and racial prejudices

1986, Entrance of Portugal and Spain (12 members)

1981, Entrance of Greece (10 Members)

1985, new political agenda for EU Enlargment, creation of the Assembly of European Regions from the gathering of inter regional organisations

1989, 8 June: Countries of Eastern Europe invited to the Parlementary of European Council

1989, November, Inquest Commission of OIT against discrimination of Hungarian in Romania

1990, 10 May, Venezia, European Commision for Democracy through law, to help ex URSS to democratize

1990, Reunification of Germany
1990, Conference of Copenhaguen on Human Dimension 1990, 21 November, Paris Charter for a New Europe to promote the right of minority on the 34 member states of the CSCE.

1992, Maastricht Treaty (European Parliament elected through universal suffrage since 1979 and the Council of Ministers become co-legislator) and Creation of Region Committee with a consultative role and members designated by governments, legitimizing the institutional regional level.

1992, December, Adoption by ONU of rights of persons belonging to national of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities

1992, November: European Chart for minority language, signed by 3 ratified by 16, Convention which links juridically the State: standards proposed to each State for each minority: freedom of thought, of meeting, linguistic expression, right for formation and protection… Bilateral treaties of reconciliation in Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Roumania etc.

Pact of stability, Federation of Swiss Cantons

1993, 1st of January, Creation of the Unique Market to increase convergence between European economies with the creation of cohesion and structural funds to compensate the weakest regions and help them to follow the process of integration.

1993, July, Declaration of Copenhagen on adhesion criteria put on practice the Convention for National minority protection (instrument de conditionalité de l’EU)

1993, 8-9 October, Vienna, First Summit of Council of European Union, decision of protection of minority and their identity, fight against all forms of intolerance, in order to give a new impulsion to the Council. The Council of European Union/or Council of Europe, will unify the international rules integrating the ethno-cultural factor and policy of minority recognition inside international institutions.

1994, Creation of the Congress on local and regional powers, third pillar of the European Council with the Ministry Committee and the Parliamentary Assembly, with two Chambers: the Chamber on Local Powers and Region Chamber

1994, 5-6 Dec, the CSCE becomes OSCE (Organisation for cooperation and security in Europe), international organisation in charge of implementation of dispositions concerning minority protection in 53 member states.

1995, Entrance of Austria, Finland and Sweden in EU (15 members)

1999, Creation of European Money.

2003, July, Proposition of European Treaty rejected in December.

2004, 25 members: Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic

2004, Race Equality Directive

2005, 20 October 2001: Convention for promotion of cultural diversity voted by UNESCO

2007, 27 members: Bulgarie/Roumanie


2009, Chart of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

2009, December, Lisbon Treaty
European Media Policies and the European Public Sphere

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Media play a crucial role for a large majority of studies on the European public sphere (EPS). This research preference is based on the premise, evident in Habermas’ original work, that citizens in mass societies cannot rely solely on face-to-face interaction, but rather participate in political deliberation and gain the vast majority of their political information from the media (Kunelius/Sparks 2001; Peter 2003). Interestingly, however, media structures and their framing conditions are rarely taken into account within these studies (for exceptions from this general assessment see e.g. Schlesinger 1997 and Kantner 2004).

This chapter aims at analysing EC/EU policies out of the perspective of the (lack of a) EPS thereby asking how media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for European public spheres. After a historical overview of EU media policies and an evaluation of their impact on EPS, the chapter presents empirical results of the Eurosphere project on the preferences of European actors with regard to the EPS. These preferences will be compared with the actual activities of the European commission. Concluding, the chapter discusses possible future developments of media policies furthering inclusive European public spheres.

European Media Policies until the end of the 1970s

“Broadcasting in Europe started as a highly regulated industry, where the primary focus of regulation was decidedly national, the objectives and instruments of these national approaches differed wildly, and where in every case the regulation of broadcasting was treated very differently to that of other sections of the communications sector such as telecommunications or newspapers and publishing.” (Levy 1999, quoted after Andjelkovic 2007)

This general trend towards regulation was due to the high costs necessary for starting and operating broadcasting stations. In order to avoid private monopolies on information flows (which would have been very probable due to these economic framing conditions) public monopolies were introduced. While the freedom of the press was to be warranted by free competition between different private suppliers, freedom of opinion in radio and TV should be made possible by public ownership (cf. e.g. Holznagel 1996, 91-96). In this understanding, the state was understood as a neutral mediator of information while, at the same time, the national interest in broadcasting became obvious by the political decision for regulation and played an important role for the further development of public broadcasters.

“Firstly, broadcasting was subordinated to public service goals. (...) Secondly, typical of systems was their national character, designed, as they were, to serve audiences and social institutions within the national territory (...) expected to protect national language and culture and (however) implicitly to represent the national interest.” (Siune/ Truetzschler 1992, 9)

However, already in the early times of broadcasting, international regulations became necessary as frequencies had to be assigned beyond national borders. Thus, in 1925, the “International Broadcasting Union” was founded in Geneva (Siegordner 2002, 4). The successor of this organisation is the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), founded in 1950 by 23 broadcasting stations. Today, EBU has 75 members and 44 associate members (EBU...
EBU sees itself as an interest representation of public broadcasting stations, supporting them technically, and organizing the exchange of contents. Its most renowned production is the Eurovision Song Contest. As will be described later, during the 1980s, EBU played an important role in the attempts to launch a European TV program.

While, thus, the national character of broadcasting has been contested by the need for international agreements since the outset, the idea of objective public broadcasting has increasingly come under critique from the 1970s onwards. Critics of this concept called for a real competition of opinions and ideas and/or of private economic interests. Since then, we have observed a general decline in popular acceptance of the system of public service broadcasting and the transition to dual systems of broadcasting including public and private companies –a transition that took place in most European countries during the 1980s (cf. e.g. Noll 1998, 163-165).

Also, the beginning of EC media policies can be traced back to the early 1970s. Since their outset, these policies have focused exclusively on audiovisual media as

“(…) (i)n the case of print media, the principle of the free flow of information in EU states has been taken for granted for years and required no joint regulation.” (Weidenfeld/ Wessels 1998, 170)

Although the Treaty of Rome did not define an EC competence for audiovisual media, this competence has been developed implicitly as part of the freedom of movement and services, above all by the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Most important for the further development of EU media politics was the ECJ decision in the Sacchi case of 1974, stating that

“(…) in the absence of express provision to the contrary in the Treaty, a television signal must, by reason of its nature, be regarded as provision of services. (…) It follows that the transmission of television signals, including those in the nature of advertisements, comes, as such within the rules of the treaty relating to services.” (European Court of Justice 1974)

This ruling combines two elements – on the one hand, television is defined as a service and not as a good (whereas media storage devices are defined as goods), and, on the other hand, television is, thereby, also defined as a commercial activity. However, the ECJ also recognized non-commercial functions of television and, thus, allowed for certain derogations. In this vein, the complaint of Sacchi against the Italian television monopoly RAI was rejected. In the Coditel case of 1980, the ECJ, furthermore, ruled, that the provisions of the Treaty can only be applied in case of transnational provisions of services, thereby, allowing the Belgian government to award exclusive licences. (European Court of Justice 1980)

Still, the ECJ’s ruling that television is, in principle, a commercial service stood in striking contradiction to the understanding of most EC Member States. Furthermore, the supranational competence assumed by this ECJ-decision was also felt as a threat to the national character of broadcasting.

Thus, the ECJ-decisions led to a debate on the character of television - as an economic service or a cultural achievement. As EU competences have been mainly understood as confined to economic questions, two perspectives have constantly overlapped within this debate – the question for the (cultural or economic) function of television and the question for national or supranational competences. The main arguments for understanding TV as an economic good are that broadcasting is part of the cultural industries and that trade in cultural productions is of economic relevance. As the internal market warrants free movement of
services independently of the content of these services, broadcasting has to be included in the regulations of trade in services.

Those maintaining that TV should not be seen as part of the internal market as it is a cultural good rather have rather stated this quality of TV as a fact than arguing it. The issue is then linked to the question of cultural national identities as well as to the question of subsidiarity. The latter question has played a crucial role for Germany as broadcasting is regulated by the German provinces, the Laender, who were not willing to transfer this competence to the EUropean level (cf. e.g. Wiesner 1990).

Towards European Television?
While, within these debates, European institutions confined themselves to interpretations of EC Law, in 1980, the European Parliament discussed two motions on television – one on “Radio and television broadcasting in the European Community” and one on “The threat to diversity of opinion posed by commercialisation of new media” (European Parliament 1982, 2). For the first time in the history of European integration, a European institution discussed the political impact of media organisation. The first motion led to the funding of a committee and the subsequent adoption of a resolution, dubbed the Hahn Report (European Parliament 1982).

The resolution emphasizes at its very beginning “the need for all citizens of the Member States to receive authentic information on Community policy and thus to be given a share in the political responsibility”, criticizes “reporting of European Community problems in the past (…) (as) inadequate and in many cases negative” and also mentions disappointment of the citizens mirrored in recent opinion polls (European Parliament 1982, 4). Furthermore, the report assumes a strong connection between further integration, European identity and the media:

“European unification will only be achieved if Europeans want it. Europeans will only want it if there is such a thing as a European identity. A European identity will only develop if Europeans are adequately informed. (…) Therefore, if European unification is to be encouraged, Europe must penetrate the media.” (European Parliament 1982, 7)

Thus, the Hahn report proposes the foundation of a European television channel providing “a full range of programmes, covering news, politics, education, culture, entertainment and sport” and being “European in origin, transmission range, target audience and subject matter.” (European Parliament 1982, 4) This channel should be transmitted by existing national television companies and organized via Eurovision, i.e. the European Broadcasting Union (European Parliament 1982, 11-12). The whole program should be available in all languages of the Member States (European Parliament 1982, 14).

Without any doubt, the focus of the EP on audio-visual media at this point in time was, to a high degree, triggered by new technological developments. The report itself emphasizes the impact of new media, above all, satellite and cable transmission which “will break down the boundaries of the national television networks and enforce the creation of wide-ranging transmission areas” (European Parliament 1982, 7). In general, one can assess that the hi-times of EU efforts in the field of audio-visual media

“coincided precisely with the technological revolution that precipitated, especially among the European electronic media, a series of significant developments, such as their liberation from traditional government ownership.” (Paraschos 1998, quoted after Andjekovic 2007, 4)
Still, the interest of the European Parliament in these issues cannot be solely ascribed to technological change. Rather, one can discern a clear political interest of the EP in further developing European integration by fostering a European identity. The first direct elections to the EP in 1979 created considerable political impetus which not only led to far-reaching concepts for audio-visual policies but also – and more prominently – to the first proposal for a European constitution drafted by Altiero Spinelli from 1982-1984 (Pollak 2006, 205).

Eurikon
The proposal of the EP for a European TV program was implemented in an experimental way in the project “Eurikon” which took place during five weeks in 1982. Organized by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the experiment was carried out by 15 European broadcasters and the European Community. Five of the participating broadcasters (from Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, and the U.K.) contributed programs, each of them taking responsibility for one week. Due to copyright issues, the program was not publicly distributed but only shown to “invited guests of the participating broadcasters and to panels recruited for the purpose of audience research” (Collins 1993, quoted after: Theiler 1999). All programs were translated in six languages (English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish), either through multichannel audio or teletext subtitling. (Siebenhaar 2002, 3)

The results of this experiment were unsatisfactory in two regards. First, the financial and technological efforts for the translations were enormous. As a full-fledged European programme would produce additional costs for copyrights and satellite space, the experiment raised serious doubts on the feasibility of such an endeavour due to economic reasons (Siebenhaar 2002, 3). Second,

“audiences reacted unfavourably to Eurikon's output, finding it hard to comprehend and relate to. In addition to cultural barriers there were linguistic ones as Eurikon's dubbing and subtitling provisions were deemed unsatisfactory. Reactions of this type prevailed throughout the duration of the Eurikon experiment, even though each of the five weeks featured different programming and scheduling formulas. To further complicate matters, while viewers from different countries were united in their dislike for Eurikon's programs, the precise reasons for their dislike tended to diverge along national lines.” (Theiler 1999)

Europa TV
Still, the Eurikon operations group understood the experiment as promising enough to strive for a full-fledged European Program. Furthermore, the proposals of the EP for a European TV program

“were taken up by the Commission in an interim report to the European Parliament titled Realities and Tendencies in European Television: Perspectives and Options (Commission of the EC, 1983). (…) (T)he report (…) gave ‘first consideration to the practical possibilities of getting a European television programme onto the screen…’” (Theiler 1999)

The interim report was issued before the final evaluation of Eurikon and took a cautiously optimistic view on the feasibility of a European TV program. It also emphasized the importance of such a program as a “first step towards a more European perception of the prospects and problems of tomorrow”, promised “political and material support” by the Commission for such an endeavour and mentions a recent “public opinion poll conducted by the Commission among the citizens of the ten Community countries (which) has shown that a
majority (57%) of European are interested in a European television channel.” (European Commission 1983, 5-6)

In spite of the fact that the evaluation report on Eurikon was rather negative, the Eurikon Operations Group was able to raise enough enthusiasm among the different parties concerned with a European program to further develop this plan (Collins 1998, 89). Thus, during the next years, plans for a European TV program were further developed and strongly supported by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) – in spite of the fact that none of the major members of EBU actively participated in this endeavour while some members, like above all the BBC, openly opposed it (Collins 1998, 94). In the end, Europa TV was implemented by five EBU members - from Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal. These broadcasting stations as well as the Dutch government and the European Commission also financed the project (Theiler 1999).

Europa TV was launched on October, 5th, 1985. Again, the program offered

“a public service programme mix of a ‘wide range of informational, educational and entertainment programmes of high quality’ (which should) ‘contain programmes of interest and relevance to the widest possible audience in the countries of the participating broadcasters.’” (Collins 1998, 91)

Furthermore, the program aimed at a really European perspective. “Europa TV’s mission included the production and transmission of programs in a non-national format and the reporting of news and current affairs not from a national but from a "European point of view." Its news team, for instance, "was carefully structured to avoid the dominance of any single national group" and a "'non-national perspective was encouraged by all available means'" (Maggiore, 1990, p. 71). This was aimed at by, among other things, making sure that events were covered by a national of a country other than the one in which they took place.” (Theiler 1999). Again, the program could be received over different language channels as well as with subtitles in different languages.

With regard to the evaluation of its success, Europa TV faced a similar dilemma as Eurikon: The response of audiences was modest, to say the least, while the operators were rather enthusiastic about their endeavour (Collins 1998, 113). Still, also this enthusiasm could not prevent the quick end of Europa TV mainly due to financial reasons. Expenditures were much higher than expected and had to be borne by the five original participants as no further broadcasters were interested in joining the consortium. And, not least due to the lack of interest of audiences, revenues from advertising were much lower than hoped for. (Collins 1998, 114)

“Indeed, so low was Europa TV's attractiveness to viewers that even after it had begun to offer commercial slots free of charge in an effort to bring itself to the attention of potential advertisers, few made use of the offer.” (Negrine & Papathanassopoulos, 1990, quoted after Theiler 1999).

After its first year of operations, the channel had already exhausted its initial three-year budget (Zimmer 1989, quoted after Theiler 1999, 6). In the end, even a £720,000 emergency grant by the Commission could not save Europa TV. At the time of its closure, its debts had accumulated to the equivalent of £3.7 million (Negrine & Papathanassopoulos, 1990).” (Theiler 1999) While all these facts point towards dramatic miscalculations by the operators,

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1 The decision for such a broad program was, however, in no way unanimous – over quite some time, a so-called “Project B” was discussed which should mainly be based on live sports events. Much later, “project B” was implemented in the form of “Eurosport”. (Collins 1998, 96).
it should also be mentioned that Europa “operate(d) on (...) a minuscule fraction of the funding that many domestic public service broadcasters use up annually.” (Theiler 1999, 6)

In addition to financial problems, Europa faced many administrative problems which were mainly caused by national interests and mistrust of national partners with regard to the engagement of the European Commission. The dramatic cost overrun, e.g., was to a high degree due to the Portuguese claim for Portuguese translations. While legitimated both by the engagement of the Portuguese broadcaster and the high share of Portuguese audience, still, these additional translation costs went far beyond the original calculations. (Theiler 1999, 6)

Also, the positive interest of the European Commission and its financial support were seen with mistrust by EBU members.

“EBU members believed that an axiom of public service broadcasting, independence of government, was in danger of being compromised by the increasingly close association between the EBU and its pan-European channel, and the Commission of the European Communities and the European Parliament” (Collins 1998, 111)

And, finally, the lack of harmonized legal provisions for television in Europe in combination with the unwillingness of national governments to compromise on their legislation for the sake of Europa TV made the launch of a European program a nearly impossible task.

“The interdependence between pan-European television service and pan-European politics was apparent in the difficulties presented to pan-European television by the contemporary regulatory regime. The absence of a European ‘Television without Frontiers’ – a single market in broadcasting – profoundly disadvantaged Europa.” (Collins 1998, 112)

Thus, Belgium refused to carry Europa TV in its cable network and, thereby, excluded its Dutch community from the use of this program. (Theiler, 1999, 6)

“In general, even the participating broadcasters were seemingly not willing “”to regard Europa as their own offspring.” (European Cultural Foundation & the European Institute for the Media, 1988, 99, quoted after Theiler 1999, 7) Neither did they delegate enough competences to the EBU nor did they take up responsibility for the new program – evident “in their frequent failure to fill the programming slots allocated to them.” (Theiler 1999, 7)

Europa TV was abruptly stopped on November, 26th, 1986 – at 8 p.m., its cessation on the very same day was announced. Up to now, this failure also meant the end for all aspirations for a full-fledged European public service program has.

**Eurosport**

Already during the development of Europa TV a plan B for a monothematic sports channel was launched. After the demise of Europa TV, this plan came again to the fore and was implemented in 1989. The practical reason behind this move can be found in the quasi-
monopoly of the EBU on rights for television transmissions of sports events as no Member State had the financial potential to cover the whole sports sector. Due to the financial problems of Europa TV EBU showed a strong priority for a cooperation with a commercial partner to launch this new program (Collins 1998, 121). Thus, EBU entered a partnership with the Murdoch owned broadcaster “News International” and thereby

“amplified the uncomfortable inconsistency between the EBU’s overt theoretical commitment to a pure vision of public service broadcasting (…) and its actual practice of close links with some commercial broadcasters (…)” eventually even leading the Competition Directorate of the European Commission to suspect ‘European public service broadcasters (…) (as) abusing a dominant position under a rhetorical umbrella of public service.’ (Collins 1998, 121-122)

The cooperation between EBU and News International mainly consisted of the EBU buying transmission rights and “News International” covering the losses of EBU and thereby reducing its taxable profit. As Collins (1998, 122) correctly describes this financial arrangement “enabled the EBU to load a substantial portion of the costs of its sports rights on to the tax payers.” Furthermore, the de-facto-monopsony of EBU on sports rights disenabled competition on this market – a fact critically commented by the DG Competition (Collins 1998, 125). While EBU and the European Commission, thus, acted as partners in the launch of Eurikon and Europa TV, more and more conflicts between these two actors developed during the late 1980s and the early 1990s.

These tensions between EBU and the Commission cannot be solely interpreted as conflicts of interests but are also conflicts of values pointing towards different assessments of the role of the market and public broadcasting respectively. However, apart from this interesting normative question that will be taken up once again towards the end of this paper, Eurosport seems to play a minor role for questions of the EPS as understood in the Eurosphere project. The interest of the audience for Eurosport rather lies in its broad coverage of international sports events than in a specific European quality of this program.

Euronews

Euronews was established in January 1993 by broadcasters from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Finland, Monaco, Cyprus, and Egypt. While the founding members were mostly public broadcasters, in 1995, a commercial station bought 49% of Euronews (Theiler 1999, 8-9).

Similarly to Eurosport, Euronews focuses exclusively on one theme, namely news, and is, thus, a much more modest enterprise than Europa TV. Also, its claim for Europeanization is more limited as national footage is broadcasted and accompanied by multilingual channels. However, at least at the beginning, it was the explicit aim of Euronews to contribute to a European Public Sphere. In order to do so, Euronews positioned itself in competition to national news programmes but also to CNN – Europeanization was understood as a defence against nationalism as well as Americanization (Casero 2001). While this is in itself a very ambitious enterprise, critics of Euronews, furthermore, agree that the way in which the program distributes news is not adequate to the aim of creating a European identity. In order to spare national feelings, Euronews strives for a very neutral tone which leads according to Schlesinger (1996, quoted after Casero 2001) to a “watered-down journalism”. Similarly, Meinhof (2001) describes Euronews as hardly more than a “collage of bits and pieces from national TV-stations with an added ‘Euro-text’, edited for a pan-European audience and accordingly sallow”.

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Thus, the idea of a “European point of view” represented by Europa TV has been given up in favour of the neutral presentation of national news. In this vein, “Euronews is more a plurinational than a non-national or denationalized broadcaster.” (Theiler 1999, 9) Furthermore, Euronews rather caters for the needs and interests of European elites than for the broad mass of citizens. This becomes evident in the self-description of Euronews (Euronews nd):

“Euronews’ upmarket audience, composed of high income earners, decision makers, opinion leaders and businessmen (…).”

Summarizing, Euronews can be understood as a particular EPS in itself but its contribution to a more general European public sphere seems doubtful.

**Regulations on Audio-Visual Services**

*Television without Frontiers*

Parallel to the efforts to establish European television during the 1980s, European institutions developed a regulatory framework for audio-visual activities under the header “Television without Frontiers.”

This title was first used for a Green Paper, issued by the Commission in 1984 (European Commission 1984) as a reaction to the motions of the EP from 1980 as well as to several interim activities by the European Parliament. Within this Green Paper, the Commission takes a bold stance on the question of competence for audio-visual services:

“Contrary to what is widely imagined, the EEC Treaty applies not only to economic activities but, as a rule, also to all activities carried out for remuneration, regardless of whether they take place in the economic, social, cultural (including in particular information, creative or artistic activities and entertainment), sporting or any other sphere.” (European Commission 1984, 6)

Later in the document, a further specification can be found:

“The concept of remuneration does not necessarily also include the notion of profit or any like intention.” (European Commission 1984, 120).

Thus, at least in the understanding of the Commission, the debate of the 1970s on the character of TV found an end by stating that this character is of no impact on the question of supranational competences. The Commission, thereby, also states that public service broadcasting financed by fees or taxes has to adhere to the EC treaties. However, in accordance with the ECJ in the Coditel case of 1980, the Commission sees EC legislation only applicable in cases of trans-frontier services. As most audio-visual programs can be received in other countries than the country of origin, this condition applies in many cases (European Commission 1984, 123).

The report, then, emphasizes the technological possibility and normative desirability of cross-border exchange of information and, explicitly, mentions that

“(…) (a)ll the Community Member States refused to approve the United Nations Resolution of 10 December 1982, which (…) contains (…) the requirement that states must seek the prior agreement of countries in which broadcasts might possibly be received before broadcasting any television programmes direct (…) (as) (…) (r)equirements of this nature clash with the basic principles of the European democracies. Freedom of
information is a prerequisite to the exercise of the right of citizens to elect their parliament.” (European Commission 1984, 41)

In its more concrete parts, the Green Paper focuses on cross-border exchanges of national TV companies and a European market for audio-visual products in order to develop a European identity and to counter-balance US dominance in this field. It calls for the harmonization of national rules for advertising (268-299), and for youth protection (301-307), and it discusses various solutions for copyright problems due to differing national legislations (328-345). These themes were also mentioned in the Hahn report, however, in a much less prominent form.

Plans for a European TV program (which were very intensely debated during the times when the Green Paper was issued) are only mentioned once in the Green Paper. Thus, the Green Paper can be interpreted in two ways: On the one hand, it takes up the need for European regulation which proved a necessary condition for the implementation of European broadcasting. Therefore, it can be seen as a complimentary to the efforts to establish such a program. On the other hand, the Green Paper did not take up the more ambitious and politically motivated concepts for EC audio-visual policies developed by the Parliament and supported in the Interim Report, and can, in this way, also be understood as a retreat towards less ambitious political measures.

In 1989, the Directive “Television without Frontiers” was issued taking up most of the proposals of the Green Paper but including a quota regulation according to which

“broadcasters (should) reserve for European works (…) a majority proportion of their transmission time.” (European Council 1989)

Furthermore,

“(b)roadcasters must also reserve at least 10% of their transmission time or 10% of their programming budget for European works from independent producers.”

These additions to the Green Paper were strongly supported by France but opposed by many other Member States. (Donaldson 1996, 98-99)

The directive was revised in 1997 (European Parliament/ European Council 1997) clarifying questions of jurisdiction, including regulations on teleshopping, tightening measures for youth protection and allowing free broadcasting of events of major importance for society.

A further revision took place in 2007 (European Parliament/ European Council 2007) defining audio-visual media services independently of the method of broadcasting (i.e. including the internet). Apart from this important change, the new directive, above all, loosens some rules of the older versions by a stronger focus on self-regulation.

Summarizing, one can state that the general aims and scope of EU policies summarized in the directive “Television without Frontiers” have not considerably developed since 1989. Similarly, to the aims of Euronews described before, this legislation pursues two defensive goals: the transgression of national borders within the EU and support of European broadcasting against international competition, above all from the US. The latter aim has frequently been criticized as protectionist (see e.g. Semetko et. al. 2000) and, obviously, transcends (or even contradicts) the aim of warranting free competition. However, it can be interpreted as an acknowledgement of the cultural function of TV. The aim of EU-internal

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organisation of television, on the other hand, is, rather, to reduce cultural differences by unified regulation in accordance with the Single Market. However, also this strategy is rather doubted in academic literature as, arguably, TV has become commercialised, more uniform in contents and formats and less informative (see e.g. Burri-Nenova 2009). While these developments are certainly mainly due to the multiplication of commercial broadcasters, some authors maintain that EC/EU deregulation policies have also played a major role.

“(O)ne could suggest that whilst the TVWF has been a ‘victory for commercial forces’, it has done little for the achievement of cultural goals.” (Burri-Nenova 2009, 69)

And obviously, the political impetus of EP activities at the beginning of the 1980s has been abandoned in the debates on Television without Frontiers.

**Public Broadcasting**

The political function of media played, however, a role within debates between Member States and the European Commission on the role and rights of public broadcasting. The decline in public service broadcasting has not only coincided with deepening European integration but has been encouraged by EU politics as public fees for broadcasting were discussed as distortions of private competition (cf. Semetko/ de Vreese/ Peter 2000). In the end, however, the specific political and cultural role of TV led to EC approval of public broadcasting by a protocol to the Treaty of Amsterdam stating that,

“considering that the system of public broadcasting in the Member States is directly related to the democratic, social and cultural needs of each society and to the need to preserve media pluralism (...)”

“(…) (t)he provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Community shall be without prejudice to the competence of Member States to provide for the funding of public service broadcasting insofar as such funding is granted to broadcasting organisations for the fulfilment of the public service remit as conferred, defined and organised by each Member State, and insofar as such funding does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Community to an extent which would be contrary to the common interest, while the realisation of the remit of that public service shall be taken into account.” (Protocol on the system of public broadcasting in the Member States 1997)

These general rules have been operationalized by two Communications of the European Commission (European Commission 2001 and 2009) ruling, above all, that the appropriateness of state aid for public broadcasting has to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

While, thus, recognizing the political impact of TV, legislation and debates on public broadcasting since the Treaty of Amsterdam only deal with questions of market distortion and with national interests; the idea of EU public broadcasting is no longer ventured.

**Financial Support for Media**

The most important instrument to support audio-visual industries in the EU is the MEDIA programme first launched in 1992

“to promote the production and dissemination of audiovisual works throughout the Union and to protect cultural diversity.” (Harrison/ Woods, 2007, 90)
This programme can be understood as a consequence of the Directive “Television without Frontiers” as “some argued that the single European market created by the TWFD would lead to a domination of English-language programming in the Union” (Harrison/Woods 2007, 90) and, therefore, support for cultural diversity in the media was called for. The MEDIA programme has been continued up to now. It provides financial support for quality European films and TV programmes. The aims are to boost output and distribution in Europe and to promote European films, other audiovisual works and new digital technologies. Besides of potential underfunding of the programme, MEDIA is, generally, assessed as a success. For a political EPS, however, MEDIA is probably only of indirect impact.

**The EU and Digital Media**

Through its website “Europa.eu”, the European Commission gives access to an abundance of information as well as to various forms of interacting with EU institutions and representatives (public consultations, specific initiatives, blogs, EU sites in social networks) and audio-visual material. Most prominent in the audio-visual part are europarlTV and EUtube.

Especially, europarlTV is an ambitious project launched in 2008. Nowadays, it features three channels – Parliament News, Young Parliament (consisting of educational material for young people), and Discover Parliament (providing background information). Furthermore, “Parliament near you” shows EU news of relevance to one’s place of living.

While recognizing all these efforts as an important step towards more communication with the citizens critics doubt the attractiveness and effectiveness of concrete measures.

“(…) Increasing media does not necessarily generate a more vibrant European public sphere, and due to a number of factors related to both format and content, many of the EU’s media pages are fairly ineffective in encouraging Europeanized discourse. (…) One of the greatest challenges facing EU new media is its simple lack of popularity, as evidenced by low viewing rates and lack of participation on interactive sites.” (Atherton 2010, 150-154)

Furthermore, the language problem has not been solved by new media and many of the mentioned EU contents are only available in English, other ones in English, French, and German.

**EU Media Policies and the Preferences of European Actors**

The history of European media policies shows (1) a clear focus on the removals of market distortions as a general trait, (2) a politicization of these debates understanding media as a precondition of a European identity, a European public sphere, and, thus, of European democracy in the 1980s, and (3) a considerable loss of ambition since the failure of Europa TV continuing up to now.

Still, the claim that media should further the EPS has remained part and parcel of political and academic debates up to now while, at the same time, the problems of Europa TV, especially with regard to cultural and linguistic differences, have not even been solved on a theoretical level.

This state of the discussion is also mirrored in the interview data collected in the Eurosphere project. Only a minority of our interviewees see an existing or at least emerging EPS while its necessity has been claimed by many. Most frequently, respondents confirm the existence of an elite public sphere while deploring the lack of a mass public sphere (see e.g.

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4 [europarlTV.europa.eu](http://europarlTV.europa.eu), 2012-07-12
Barani/Sciortino 2011, 30; Kutay/Arribas 2011, 28; Selmeczi/Sata 2011, 19). This response can be found among representatives of political parties, NGOs and think tanks and it corresponds with earlier findings (see e.g. Schlesinger 1999, quoted after Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 276). And, as in previous research, many respondents see the cause for this lack of a mass public sphere in the lack of European or Europeanized media.

Still, interviews with journalists showed that, in fact, European media cooperate and exchange contents (Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011; 27) so that the question arises if Europeanization in the form of European transnational exchange has already incrementally developed due to individual initiatives.

“For example, in the Norwegian material, three media actors (…) report that they are engaged in networks of information sharing. Indeed, in reference to one of the above actors, transnational collaborations are reported to be ‘mainly journalistic in the sense of buying and selling news items and other journalistic pieces from newspapers with a bigger organization and greater resources than Klassekampen. Buying content clearly enriches the newspaper and presents differing perspectives.’ Such ‘buying content’ was common amongst media actors across the countries in our selected sample. Other actors, for example the Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ) and the Tageszeitung (taz) in Germany are noted to share content with publications in Europe and the United States. NRC Handelsblad notes that its cooperation with Politiken (Denmark) “started in the run-up to the European Parliament elections of 2009 ‘with the idea that you can exchange articles and explore the [common European] space’.” (Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 27-28, see also 33)

In other cases, exchange of content takes place due to transnational ownership of media. (Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 28). Also, a considerable number of interviewed journalists saw it as their task to inform the audience about European affairs. (Selmeczi/Sata 2011, 18)

Thus, one could argue that, up to some degree, national media take up the task to translate European issues and issues from other Member States for their audiences while these audiences remain nationally organized – in the words of a journalist from “Le Figaro”:

“We never think of the European audience, since it is not a criterion for our dissemination policies. The Italians read the Italian newspapers, whereas the French read the French newspapers. (Selmeczi/Sata 2011, 20)

However, especially with regard to EU issues the success of journalistic efforts to adequately inform the citizens seems to be limited as the Eurosphere project showed in accordance with earlier studies. In this vein, two German journalists

“indicate that present information flows and exchanges on the EU are insufficient, and both claim that informing the public is mainly obstructed because the EU is too complex to explain to a generally disinterested audience.” (Selmeczi/Sata 2011, 20)

Apart from “classical” media, several of our respondents see the internet as a possibility for the development of a EPS (Barani/Sciortino 2011, 32; Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 32, 34). In our material, we can find very optimistic expectations for the “anarchistic qualities” (Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 34) of this bottom-up medium (Barani/Sciortino 2011, 32) and, thus, some respondents claim for freedom in the Internet and abstention from political regulation (Kutay/Arribas 2011, 29). However, other respondents understand the internet rather as a new form of elite public sphere(s) than as a mass medium (Creutz Kämppi et. al. 2011, 34)
The Eurosphere project differs from hitherto research on the European Public Sphere by its focus on diversity as well by the normative hypothesis that diversity could rather advance than hinder the development of a EPS. Our empirically material at least partly supports this thesis, e.g., it is striking that those respondents from political parties who hold the most encompassing understanding of diversity are also most interested in the development of European communicative spaces. (Sata 2011, 43). Furthermore, several respondents emphasize that a EPS would be important for the empowerment of disadvantaged groups (Selmeczi/Sata 2011, 21 and 22). In this vein, it also seems interesting that transnational minorities are most interested in the development of a EPS (Van de beek / Vermeulen / Lagerspetz, p.22).

Conclusions
Hitherto EU media policies have proven successful in reducing national barriers for broadcasting and establishing a single European media market but they did not succeed in providing centralized forms of information distribution and exchange. In the terminology of Scharpf (2003, 219-223), negative integration of the media sector has worked well while positive integration did not take place. Negative integration, however, is seemingly doing little for the development of a EPS.

Reasons for the failure of positive integration, i.e. above all, of European broadcasting programs are mainly seen in cultural differences between the Member States.

“(…) (I)t was Europa TV’s attempt to appeal to an audience as culturally and linguistically fragmented as the West European one which posed a major stumbling block. (…)A good way to illustrate the difficulties inherent to the quest by Eurikon, Europa TV, and their commercial would-be pan-European counterparts to appeal to an audience as culturally and linguistically fragmented as that in Europe is through the often-cited concept of ‘cultural discount.’ (…) The concept of ”cultural discount” is applied most commonly to cross-national situations, that is, to capture the reduced appeal of audiovisual output produced in one national cultural setting and consumed in another (…). Yet, in principle, it is equally apt to capture viewers’ resistance to programs in a non-national format, a format to which Eurikon, Europa TV, and their commercial pan-European counterparts aspired. To the extent that this non-national format is dissonant with the particular cultural habitus of the viewers in question, its overall attractiveness to those viewers is reduced.” (Theiler 1999)

As especially the example of Euronews shows, the problem of cultural discount also applies to the distribution of information. Thus, even Habermas’ concept of “constitutional patriotism” fails when political interest is hampered by cultural differences.

Still, our empirical results have shown a possible way out of this dilemma in transnational exchange of news and attempts of journalists to include a European dimension in media coverage. Maybe, one could speak here of a hidden form of EPS – the audience is addressed as a national audience but shares similar themes and outlooks with other national audiences. In the long run, this could certainly lead to the Europeanization of public spheres. However, for the time being, national sentiments and perspectives still seem to prevail in media audiences.

Thus, the question arises if European institutions could enhance transnational exchanges and European point of views in national media. This is a delicate question as freedom of the media is not only a fundamental democratic principle but also a deeply rooted value in most European societies, thus, interferences by political institutions in the media run the risk of negative reactions. Proposals like the following one are, thus, to be treated with caution:
• “Increase funding for PSB (public service broadcasting – MM) programming with EU-related and European-produced content through a fund established by the EU.
• Implement continuing education programs to educate journalists about the European Union and current affairs in Europe.
• The EBU should raise the portion of broadcasting time reserved for European programs to 20%.
• Require commercial television stations to run EU-wide programs.
• Create media fora for newspaper and other media to meet and participate in debates about EU current affairs. Encourage media to participate in these fora.” (Allen 2010, 146)

Still, educational efforts towards journalists could prove valuable and, according to our results, would possibly be accepted with interest. With regard to financing of EU related coverage, it would be important that this funding is not devoted to show-casing EU successes. Quite on the contrary, it should include critical voices on European integration and, above all, controversial debates on European issues. In order to warrant independence from European institutions, an independent jury would have to decide on the distribution of funding.

Similarly, European integration could also gain more interest by a different use of digital media by the European integration:

“A video that clearly outlines EU issues while also reviewing the shortcomings of the EU’s approach would not weaken the EU’s image. Such omissions would show citizens that the institution is willing to acknowledge others’ views and explain the logic of its own views to others. It would also highlight the diversity of opinion within the EU—likely even including those MEPs who are fundamentally opposed to the EU’s existence—and highlight the political drama of party politics at the supranational level.” (Atherton 2010, 159)

Finally, our empirical results suggest that efforts of European institutions to develop a EPS should not remain limited to national media or the central Europa website. As especially minorities hope for empowerment due to an emerging EPS, their media should be considered as valuable partners for European integration and, thus, be included in funding schemes. This holds especially true for transnational minorities and their partly equally transnational media – “for example the Turkish Hürriyet with its editorial office in Germany, distributed to approximately 20 000 sales points in Germany and 30 000 across Europe.” (Creutz Kämppi et al 2011, 33)

Citizens with multiple or complex ethno-national belongings are, along with migration, a common basis for societal/non-elitist transnational spaces. This phenomenon can strengthen the European Public Sphere and the experience of these citizens can give a wider, more positive perspective on diversity. In this vein, it might be a good move for European media policies to put a special focus on transnational groups and citizens with multiple belongings in order to foster a EPS. After all, the diversity of the European Union is, at the same time, one of its biggest problems and one of its biggest assets. But irrespectively of normative evaluations, “complex diversity” (Kraus 2012) has to be accepted as a basic condition of a EPS.
References


Associative Democracy and Transnational Governance: A Critical Assessment of Normative and Analytical Approaches

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Recently, substantial power has been transferred to supranational institutions and policy networks. Scholars interested in this phenomenon have mainly addressed two fundamental issues regarding the current re-structuring: the lack of the formation of a collective will within these new types of decision- and law-making processes, and that of the mechanisms that one might use to restrain or scrutinize these processes (Eriksen et al, 2005). In this regard, the notions of ‘European civil society’ (ECS) and the ‘European public sphere’ (EPS) have been conceived as essential categories for carrying out the public use of reason and articulating public deliberations within political public spheres. Pessimists have suggested that the European public sphere is non-existent, or even that it cannot exist due to the lack of a common culture or demos (Schlesinger, 1995; Grimm, 1995). Optimists, however, have suggested that a European public sphere could be possible beyond the requisites of shared culture or language. Instead, the bedrock of communication can be defined in universal terms (e.g., in Kantian cosmopolitanism), transcending the confines of national territories and culture.

Some commentators have investigated the prospects of the conceptualization of EPS beyond the notion of a general public and the traditional accounts of representative democracy (Fraser 2007). In this view, the democratization of European governance can theoretically be imagined without the existence of a general public discussion or demos (Cohen and Sabel, 1997; Bohman, 2005). For instance, an issue of common concern should not necessarily be discussed by all individuals, as has been noted in studies on the Europeanization of media structures. Indeed, according to this perspective, democracy may be possible even in the case of a deficit in the general public or in the face of citizens’ apathy towards politics. In fact, as the inter-bellum period in Europe proved, the political mobilization of civil society can even be detrimental to democracy (Kumar 2007). The proponents of this pragmatist-governance approach (Eberlein and Kluwer, 2004; Cohen and Sabel, 1997; Bohman, 2005) suggest that intermediaries could function as conveyors of public concerns, implying that a group of interested, motivated, and skilled individuals could function on behalf of all affected.

In the EU discourse, European civil society has been conceived as an alternative means for creating democratic legitimacy within European governance (Com, 2000). As a general European public sphere has been found to be absent, weak, or still emerging, actors within civil society that have organized at a supranational level (i.e., the networks of European NGOs) have been conceived as medium for channeling the voice of the European citizenry, and as agents for disseminating information on the EU and reducing public apathy towards European integration (Com, 1997, 2000, 2001). Similar to the Commission’s view, some researchers have conceptualized the NGO networks within the scope of a “transmission-belt” analogy, which refers to a link between the European citizenry and EU policy-making processes (Steffek and Nanz, 2008; Steffek and Hahn, 2010; De Schutter, 2002; Magnette 2003):

If organized civil society has the opportunity to participate in international governance, it may act as a “transmission belt” between international organizations and an emerging transnational public sphere. This transmission belt might operate in two directions: First, civil society organizations can give voice to citizens’ concerns and channel them into the deliberative process of international organizations. Second, they can make internal decision-making processes of international organizations more transparent to the wider public and formulate technical issues in accessible terms. (Steffek and Nanz, 2008, p. 8)
Due to the rigidities of implementing parliamentary democracy and party politics at the transnational level, the transmission-belt analogy suggests legitimizing governance structures through intermediary agencies. Some commentators have discussed the engagement of CSOs in European governance within this framework, both from a normative perspective, pointing out their potential for restraining political power and carrying out public deliberations, and from a descriptive-analytical perspective, emphasizing their contribution to the end-results of policy-making. In this paper, I will critique both views. On the one hand, from a broader angle, I will question the very mentality that conceives of the CSOs as an intermediary of “something” (e.g., the European citizenry) or an agent that “acts” or stands for something else. On the other hand, I will critique the analytical approach to participation in terms of its representation of the lived experiences of the people as self-caused social phenomena that have emerged independently from the larger social processes and underlying dynamics.

The transmission-belt argument aimed to transcend Habermas’s views on deliberative democracy, given that his views were not pertinent in transnational settings. In this account, what transmission appears to suggest is that CSOs take on the burden of articulating the discourses of opinion-forming publics (Habermas, 1996) and of anonymous societal conversation (Benhabib, 1996) on behalf of all affected. In the following, I will suggest that this view does not necessarily advance Habermas’s theory due to certain theoretical and factual limitations. In this article, therefore, I argue that the transmission-belt view is not a useful analogy—either normatively or descriptively. First, there is no agreement in political theory about the role of citizens’ associations in democracy. Second, the transmission-belt analogy is conceptually and empirically ambiguous about the process of transmission. This analogy amounts to the relations between the supranational intermediaries of European civil society and EU policy-making processes (the second phase of transmission); however, it overlooks or takes for granted whether or how grassroots European citizenry or European civil society, understood as collectivity (Fossum and Trenz, 2006), would be thought of in terms of the supranational level (the first phase of transmission). Consequently, the transmission-belt analogy presumes that the supranational European civil society organizations (CSOs) or so-called EU NGOs, per se hold a conceptual monopoly on the “performative” actors of the ECS within EU governance (Eder, 2011). Third, transmission is thought of as a process that occurs from the civil society (bottom) to the policy-making processes (up). This conceptualization, in fact, masks the political intervention in civil society. Political intervention, defined by some commentators as “participatory engineering” (Zimmel, 2008), aims to legitimize the involvement of the CSOs in governance mechanisms by making them accountable through performance indicators and managerial practices (Com, 2000; Castiglione and Warren, 2006; Goodin, 2003).

The process has several implications for political and social theory. First, the endeavor of political intervention to legitimize the participation of associations in procedural and organizational aspects of EU governance has prepared the foundation for shaping organizational structure. The criteria for the management of the Commission’s grants, in turn, distort the normative and descriptive-analytical expectations of their engagement. Second, neo-plural interest intermediation has instead reinforced exclusion from civil society by taking on a structure of preferential incorporation with associations that are willing and eligible to engage in EU governance, while ascribing EU institutions the power to select among the inputs provided. Neo-plural interest intermediation, in this case, refers to the competition between partial particular interests to influence policies and decision-making processes (Greenwood, 2007). It also implies the aggregation of particular interests from the local level. In my opinion, in this case Brussels headquarters is considered to “mirror” local constituencies by merely articulating their interests, thus acting as a “neutral broker,” a delegate without any mandate.
Against this factual background, I begin with a theoretical critique, which elaborates upon the different and conflicting views in normative political theory regarding the role of the democratic functions of civil society. The second section discusses the limitations of the transmission-belt analogy and the perils of speaking of European civil societies as if they were a monolithic entity. The third section discusses the implications of the bureaucratization of CSOs and of the attempts to enhance organizational accountability through managerialism through a systemic understanding of these processes. The fourth section elaborates my own position of critical engagement, and the final section offers concluding remarks.

Civil society and governance in political theory
Normative theories of democracy suggest conflicting views regarding the democratic functions of associations and their involvement in decision-making processes (Rossteutscher, 2000; Baccaro, 2006; and Hendriks, 2002). For instance, the communitarian view on participation, which conceives of associations in terms of their micro-impact on individuals, is not directly related to the participation of associations in transnational governance. As a case in point, proponents of participation within community groups have instead focused on the social-physiological effects of participation, such as building trust, teaching civic virtues, and developing solidarity (Barber, 1984; Putnam, 1993; Etzioni, 1993). These effects might also be examined among the participants of the associations organized at the EU level, yet their systemic implications for European democracy would be limited, as they would be confined to Brussels-based NGO networks. Furthermore, there is no intrinsic correlation between associational life and democracy, as it is not always liberal sentiments that flourish within civil society then penetrate to public discussions (Shapiro, 1996). Illiberal sentiments in society, including xenophobia and hatred, can also be fostered through associations (Chambers and Kopstein, 2001, Ruzza, 2009); thus, the voices emanating from the grassroots do not by their nature alone nurture the formation of liberal citizens.

In the extensive literature on civil society, it is therefore necessary to narrow the focus to those views of civil society that particularly reflect upon the involvement of associations in decision-making processes. NGOs’ relationship to policy-making and/or decision-making within normative theory has been advanced somewhat through pragmatic-functional governance and discursive approaches. In the following, I will sketch out the basic notions underlying these frameworks, particularly by reflecting on how they conceive of the political sponsorship of associations.

Functional approach to participation
The functional approach, developed by the associative democracy espoused by, e.g., Cohen and Rogers (1995) and Hirst (1994), suggests the empowerment of associations in terms of decision-making, such that the traditional roles of the state are outsourced and representational asymmetries are diminished. In other words, the state takes on the responsibility of supporting associational activities within civil society if associations do not spontaneously emerge. Associative democracy also suggests supporting or constituting large associations that lay claim over broader representation in civil society (Cohen and Rogers 1995). Associative democracy, therefore, explains the “fact” of the EU’s sponsorship of transnational NGO networks and the structuring of NGO networks in Brussels. It further casts light on the theoretical grounds for the “participation” of transnationally empowered actors in EU governance (read: policy-making processes).

Functional participation, in the traditional sense, has been associated with corporatism, i.e., a bargaining mechanism between capital and labor, which, in a way, complements the liberal understanding of the representation of individuals and the inclusion of all interests in decision-making processes (Streeck, 1992; Schmitter, 1974). Here, organized groups mostly gather
around a particular political, economic, or social issue with the aim of influencing decision-making processes to achieve a political objective. However, the central premise of associative democracy, which has a corporatist-like structure, has not been perfectly applied to EU governance. NGOs—as well as other stakeholders—lack consequential powers, such as the power to bargain in such way as to influence the policy processes (Schmitter and Streeck 1991). The marginal impact of civil society in EU governance is weak due to the pluralist nature of the consultations (Greenwood, 2007). This system is based on the idea of aggregating interests; it is also due to fragmentation among civic actors (Ruzza, 2004). In this framework, the policy-makers hold the power to select some interests while eliminating others.

With regards to representation, functional participation depicts the relationship between the representative (agent) and the principle (represented) in terms of the “descriptive” representation of groups or sectors (Mainsbridge, 2003). Thus, it is not seen as an aggregate of the individual citizens. The functional participation of different sectors beyond the nation-state has aimed to transcend the limitations of the representative, majoritarian nature of the liberal democracy of the Westphalian-state system and of territorial representation (Smismans, 2007). In terms of traditional corporate relations, capital or labor unions advocate for the interests of their members, which in most cases are concrete and identifiable. It is, however, difficult to assess the relationship between civil society participation and representation along these lines. How can the relationship between functional representation through the CSOs and general public deliberations be understood, given that these associations have been prescribed a task of representing the common good? Or how would those who are not actively involved in the process of authorize or delegate the license to “act” or “stand for” them? As we can see, Pitkin’s (1967) standard formalistic criteria of authorization by the principle (represented), which would delegate a mandate to the agent, would not apply in this case. Furthermore, as Castiglioni and Warren (2006, p. 13) noted, “groups are never objects of representation as such, because we should think of them as complexes of shared experiences, moulded into a group form by a shared consciousness of belonging.”

In fact, representation is not a primary issue in this view (Kochler-Koch, 2010). The autonomization of the supranational associations, which act without the authorization of a principle or without connection to a social constituent, does not pose any problems to the extent that the emphasis is on functional participation. For pragmatic-governance, the legitimacy and legitimating feature of the “third sector” is defined in terms of its capability to solve social problems effectively and outsource the traditional responsibilities of the state such as to produce quality policies (Anheier, 2004). Empirically oriented interest politics research (Greenwood, 2007) can be included in this line of thought, as it concentrates on the influence and impact of associations on policy-making processes. Functional participation tends to shy away from normative orientations by concentrating on the analytical aspects of governance (Kochler-Koch, 2010); though, once can argue that it adopts effectiveness and efficiency as the norms of governance.

**Discursive approach to participation: Habermas’s shadow**

CSOs find an important place in discourse theory of Habermas (1996) because they are considered to foster public deliberations and bring the issues of common concern into public debate (see also Fung, 2003). Yet, Habermas (1984) refutes empowerment of civil society organizations by political power, because this makes civil society vulnerable to rationalities of the system of bureaucracy and of the market. On this account, incorporation of social groups to public administration in a neo-pluralist or corporatist vein is not necessarily a desired way of channeling the voice of citizenry. By the same token, political sponsorship for the establishment of CSOs for an instrumental bureaucratic purpose and political intervention into
their ways of organizations and of doing these in such way to bureaucratize them are skeptically conceived.

Habermas’s thoughts on communicative action, which conflate sociological and philosophical insights, elaborate on this point by addressing the relationship between the system (money and power) and the life-world (civil society) (Habermas, 1987, 1975). To Habermas (1987), bureaucratization carries with it the possible danger of threatening the authenticity of civil society and of the promise of regenerating values from within civil society through “communicative power.” Otherwise, to him, the instrumental rationalities of bureaucracy lead to the colonization of the life-world, as the inner systemic of the logic of bureaucracy (and economy) differs from that of civil society because the former is steered by the quantifiable media of money and power. In contrast to an interpretation that conceives of civic interactions in terms of quantification (interest aggregation) and engagement with political power, traditional methods of activism, such as street protests, have been thought to have a stronger impact in terms of raising public awareness (Young, 2001). In this way, social discourse is transformed into “collective” political pressure, in the sense of Arendt’s conception of collective power, and social change is brought about by changing collective perceptions (Castells, 1983) or “common sense.” Consequently, in Habermas’s discourse theory, the transmission of discourses is rendered through elections and the media, but not through associations. Habermas (1996), therefore, emphasizes the “communicative power” of civil society in influencing political processes, and with this emphasis he critiques any direct translation of the majority or the average citizen’s interests into politics, e.g., the opinions that appear in public opinion polls or surveys. The interpretation of citizens’ interests in aggregate or quantitative terms (e.g., the supremacy of votes), to him, may entail an authoritarian element, i.e., one which results in the suppression of minority opinions and justifies illiberal political acts.

Habermas (1996) suggests that what makes a political system democratic is the transmission of the discourses that emerge from within the life-world of society into the decision- and law-making structures through the public sphere(s). The tendency of the normative approach—mostly informed by Habermas’s Kantian cosmopolitanism—in ECS studies has conceived of the CSOs as the nucleus of and the medium for an (emerging) European civil society and the agents of participation beyond national territorial boundaries (De Schutter, 2002; Magnette, 2003; Steffek and Nanz, 2008). As has been mentioned, in this view, supranational intermediaries within ECS—EU NGOs—are conceptualized as functioning like a transmission-belt between the European citizenry and EU governance. Thus, transmission-belt analogists prescribe the Brussels-based EU NGOs the role of medium for linking public deliberations to EU decision-making (Curtin, 1999; Magnette, 2003; De Schutter, 2002) and casting a “critical gaze” on decision-making processes to render governance processes transparent and accountable. For instance, the Convention method, which involved the CSOs in the preparations of the European Constitution, is considered a successful experiment (De Schutter, 2002). Nevertheless, some commentators have raised critiques of this experience because only Europhil social actors could participate (Shore, 2006).

In my opinion, the Kantian cosmopolitanism in Habermas’s discourse ethics suggests a critique of the vertical aggregation of instrumental interests advanced by the neo-plural model of interest aggregation, given that the latter does not allow the transformation of the “particular” into the “universal.” Habermas’s views also differ from the pragmatic-functional approach, with its skepticism towards the bureaucratization of civil society and the domination of economic “logic.” According to Habermas, particular interests advocated by social actors contribute to the articulation of the public interest in public policy-making processes within an all-encompassing systemic understanding of democracy. Unlike in the neo-plural and analytical interpretations of the advancement of particular interests, these interests are
conceived of as intersubjectively constructed and are seen as related to the public use of reason for common purposes in governance settings. For instance, in a Rawlsian interpretation (1997), NGOs ought to attend to a regulative interpretation of “public reason” in their advocacy because they can; this means that a moral capability to refer to commonality would already be inherent in each individual who constitutes social groups. From Habermas’s (1996) and Benhabib’s (1996) viewpoint, on the other hand, associations should represent authentic reasoning that has been generated from public deliberations, which are understood as either “subjectless” or “anonymous” public conversations.

Transnational intermediation of discourses
The application of the transmission-belt proposition to EU governance, as promoted through the White Paper on Governance (Com, 2001) and conceptualized by some commentators on European studies, has several flaws.

First, the research on European civil society has taken for granted that supranational actors are “authentic” extensions of civil society; thus, researchers have avoided problematizing their linkage (however this may be defined) with local level or the grassroots. The presumption that supranational NGOs are the “natural” extension of European civil society or genuine mediators of European-level public deliberation is empirically misleading. Hypothetically, in the documents on European NGOs, the NGO community is highly interconnected among different sectors and different levels, including the national and the European. At first glance, then, this could be considered a well-functioning state–society relationship, wherein the different levels of civil society communicate with each other and the discourses that emerge from these deliberations are linked to political public spheres.

From a liberal perspective, the success of the networks is based upon realizing interest aggregation in the vertical connection of grassroots interests from local NGOs to umbrella national networks and then to European umbrella networks. The research on the networking system of European NGOs, however, has demonstrated that this networking mechanism does not function perfectly; national organizations have only minor impact on the work of the European headquarters (mostly defined as the secretariat) (Sicakkan, 2012, 2011; Imig and Tarrow, 2001). Sicakkan (2012) observes a different direction for collective mobilization, which contradicts the proponents of the two-track model. Although the latter presume consensus among the actors that are mobilizing collective action vertically in Europe, Sicakkan shows instead a contradictory reality rife with contention and contestation between the local and the European level. The national-level social actors remain skeptical about the work of supranational NGOs and instead prefer to influence national political actors and engage in horizontal cross-border interactions. Moreover, in line with Sicakkan’s (2012) research, it has been also found that within the networks, the Southern and Eastern European organizations’ influence is limited when compared to that of the northern organizations and the supranational elite (Quittkat and Finke, 2008). In other words, this networking structure, on the one hand, by and large favors elitism at the Brussels level; and on the other, it replicates the regional socio-economic differences in Europe in the heart of social movements. Furthermore, the great majority of the people (read: the principle in a standard liberal account) does not want to be represented by the NGOs and their supranational extensions (Van Deth, 2008). Consequently, Sicakkan’s findings, combined with the findings from previous research, question the validity of European-level organizations’ self- and external authorization to represent themselves as the “natural representative” of European civil society.

Second, from a discursive point of view, supranational intermediaries’ success hinges upon their achievement in detecting “local” discourses and then transmitting them in policy-making processes. The empirical question here concerns the underlying mechanisms and processes of identifying and distilling the discourses that they would find pertinent to “act” upon or “stand
for.” The major problem in this case stems from the perception of civil society as a monolithic entity embodying a collective self-consciousness, a generic and common rationality different than those of the state and the market. This reading, however, even contradicts the classic Hegelian liberal interpretation, which regards civil society as a polymorphic ideal with necessarily polyphonic interests (Cohen and Arato, 1992). This feature, however, does not necessarily confer a harmonic coexistence of these plural voices, but instead the competitions and contestations that exist within civil society (Keane, 1998; Kaldor, 2005). Therefore, Hegel defines civil society as an amoral sphere, as the state constitutes the domain of morality, the final stage of the march of reason. In the Gramscian school (Cox, 1999; Colas, 2005), civil society is, in fact, conceptualized as a realm of antagonistic, conflicting, and contradictory social relations. Unlike the liberal view, this perspective suggests an “integral state” definition, which ontologically refutes conceptualizing the state, civil society, and the market as autonomous spheres. I will not delve deeply into this debate, which has been addressed largely elsewhere (Jessop, 2007). However, as a final note on this, I should also say that here civil society, European civil society, and global civil society is conceived as inherent to social relations, which are in themselves conceived as part of a constant struggle.

For example, competing alternatives for the future of Europe are advanced by different groups within civil society, including a social democratic option defended, e.g., by the European Social Forum, and a protective one (i.e., fortress Europe) defended by xenophobic groups (Ruzza, 2009). That being said, as participation at the EU level commences with a priori acquiescence to the given mode of integration, the dimension or voices of the grassroots or European citizenry that the EU level organizations will be linked become highly tenuous. Given this limitation, the current form of NGO engagement in EU governance has been structurally confined to those associations that have been willing and able to participate (Swygedouw 2005). European-level civil society networking, then, excludes those groups that are against the (current) mode of integration. The voice of anti-systemic movements or of the groups that challenge the ethos of European integration, such as anti-capitalists, anti-globalization and alternative globalization groups, anarchists, and Euroskeptic groups are, per definition, omitted from the European civil society’s conception of the transmission-belt analogy due to the rationale of governance, which requires at least a minimum level of consent to European integration (Ruzza, 2009).

This conception has the implication of limiting the scope of civil society in terms of its proximity to the political system: Civil society is not envisioned as a realm exogenous to politics at large, but as a constituent, embedded element of the system of governance. Therefore, the social movements that are now engaged in a dialogue with the EU do not necessarily hold a monopoly over the concept of European civil society. Furthermore, the space between the public–private divide is also blurred, with these organizations being engaged in social regulation and social reproduction, which has meant involving public administration and service delivery with political guidance (Morrison, 2000). Consequently, from a relational ontology and constructivist stance, any conception of the relationship between the political authorities and civil society (i.e., the third sector) that is based on an autonomous, monolithic ontology of civil society (e.g., Locke’s, Hegel’s, and Tocqueville’s interpretations) is misleading.

**Discussing the implications through system theory**

In this section, I would like to elaborate on the implications of civil society’s participation in EU governance and political intervention in the structuring of civil society. This discussion will draw upon concepts from a systemic perspective. In the next section, I will complement this diagnostic approach by elaborating a model of critical engagement. In the previous sections, I detailed the recent debates regarding the current form or regime of civil society
participation at the EU level. These debates frame participation in terms of the democratization of the EU, given that CSOs act like the transmission-belt of European citizenry, both pluralizing and restraining decision-making structures. My initial contention was that this “democratization paradigm,” either normative or analytical, relates participation experiences to a process whose final instance is necessarily “democracy.” In other words, this proposition considers NGOs a means to a desired end, that is, “the EU democracy to come.” To the extent that democratization is defined as a slight improvement of the previous condition, or an embryonic phase of a process that necessarily leads to “democracy,” we might run the risk of not understanding the current condition as it is, discarding the possibility that what has been conceived as intrinsic to a process that will lead to a desired outcome (in this case democracy) might actually emerge or lead to “something else.” In contrast to this teleological understanding, which implicitly (or explicitly) manipulates our understanding of a situation by conceiving it as part of a future outcome, a critical systemic analysis examines the trade-off between the “degree of improvement” and its implications. It focuses on the effects of the context and the impact of political power in the constitution of normative expectations and actors within civil society.

Evaluated as a social process from a systemic perspective, the participation of CSOs in managerial terms has several caveats. First, it reinforces the elite/mass split by adding an extra elite structure into the European policy-making network. That is, this policy reinforces decomposition within the system of civil society with the emergence of bureaucratically organized units and then their re-composition into a system of governance (read: policy-making networks) through the mediating subsystem of bureaucracy. Some commentators see NGO activists as counter-elite. Yet, as some other commentators have illustrated, the divide between the elite and counter-elite is not that rigid. For instance, it is not uncommon for NGO “managers” to continue their careers in different nodes of the system, including think tanks, consultancies, and the EU bureaucracy (Stone, 2008).

Second, consultation practices regard participants as reactive, as they are expected to reflect upon or provide information regarding Commission-initiated proposals. The role and identity of the NGOs embody a tension between critical reflection (authentic sub-systemic functioning) and political engagement (systemic functional expectations). CSOs hold limited power within the system of governance, given that their role is confined to providing information and expertise to the Commission. The recent Lisbon treaty has now brought the condition that the Commission must consult stakeholders and CSOs before introducing a policy proposal. The Commission, however, still constitutes the power of strategic selection from among the input provided by lobbyists, including NGOs and other stakeholders. Consultations with extra-political actors (or lobbyists) are now carried out through an online consultation mechanism, which restricts the possibilities for effective deliberation.

Third, the current consultation system is strategically exclusive (so not all affected can participate) in that it necessarily occludes the possibility of the inclusion of counter-discourses, including anti-globalization and Euroskeptics movements—the groups that, in fact, lay claim over the meaning of European civil society—or the groups that are incapable of organizing. This situation may be explained by the homeostatic tendencies of the system, which imply contingent strategic choices to sustain it stability. Organizations included in the system therefore consent to acting “constructively” for morphostasis (systemic maintenance), while still preserving their own institutional interests.

Fourth, the current form of NGO engagement in EU governance brings the “NGOization” of the public sphere, as it is based on loose interactions that mostly take place in cyberspace. Fifth, the current tendency of the EU to access citizens directly, like the European Citizen’s initiative (i.e., bypassing mediating systems—NGOs—in the process of communicative interaction), also poses a challenge to associations’ communicative claims to represent the
citiizens. The process of participation in civil society is then conceived as 
contingent, involving possibilities of dis-functionalization of the subsystem (associational participation) and, thus, of 
sub-systemic entropy (dissolution of the participatory mechanism).

Finally, it should be noted that democratization of Europe has moved from mere attempts 
from the Commission to a search for an encompassing democracy for Europe. From a systemic 
understanding of democracy, then, insistence upon the high expectation that the NGOs will 
democratize EU governance is rather futile. That being said, NGOs should not be thought of as 
inherently unique in bringing public concerns or common good to European governance. They 
have no inherent monopoly over the common good. Although they pluralize interest 
intermediation at the European level, this is not equal to a practice of involving of the 
European citizenry in governance.

In turn, the interest intermediation system of the Commission has several implications. 
First, due to the pluralist nature of the consultations, which are based on the idea of 
aggregating interests, and due to the fragmented nature of “European civil society,” NGOs’ 
participation has only marginal impact. Their influences, then, both on meta-level, on the ethos 
of integration, as well as on micro-level, on public policy-making, are structurally confined. 
This amounts to an imperfect structural coupling between the systems of civil society and of 
governance. Second, the normative expectations from the civil society may be considered too 
high, given the structural constraints of the consultation system, which necessarily 
marginizes the role of civil society in EU governance (Hueller, 2010). With the aim of 
democratizing the “CSOs,” the Commission has introduced norms and procedures with respect 
to their organizational structure, accountability, and inclusiveness (Com, 2000, 2002, 2008). 
These managerial norms presume that democratically administered NGOs would solve both 
the legitimacy of civil society participation and EU governance at the same time by pressuring 
NGOs for substantial organizational change. Notwithstanding these formalist criteria for 
reinforcing organizational change, the question remains regarding the impact these 
organizational changes would have on the democratization of EU governance at large, namely 
the ethical coupling of sub-systemic accountability (NGO governance) and systemic 
legitimization (EU governance).

Critical discursive engagement
Having shown that the current debate surrounding civil society’s participation at the 
transnational level is built on nebulous ground both theoretically and empirically, I will now 
elaborate my own position. This section addresses the fact that the expectations of associations 
are also socially constructed, and yet these are also structurally limited in terms of what they 
can do in a given context. The corporatist and neo-plural forms of participation and of civil 
society fetishism conceive any form of civic action per definition as “good” for democracy 
(Keane, 1988), neglecting critique, which is the cornerstone of the modern mind. "Critique" in 
this case refers to Kant’s interpretation of the term in What is Enlightenment?: to use one’s 
own understanding in order not be guided by others and, in my view, not to reproduce a 
hegemonic discourse without reflection. I suggest a critical engagement with political 
structures that takes into account the bottom-up processes of discourse formation (as I 
described according to a Habermasian perspective), as well as the top-down processes of 
discourse creation through political intervention. As a radical interpretation, critical 
engagement regards the democratizing promise of social groups as contingent upon their 
success in preserving their own reasoning and power-challenging discourses (e.g., social 
justice, human rights, anti-racism, anti-patriarchal, etc.) in governance settings. In this way, 
they do not internalize, but rather transform the dominant discourse—be it efficiency, 
competitiveness, bureaucratic rationalities, or neo-liberalism.
For critical engagement, I incorporate a systemic view on democracy (Parkinson and 
Mainsbridge 2012) and Dryzek and Niemeyer’s statements (2008, p. 484), which warn against 
the domination of a single discourse in governance settings and the deviation of discourses 
from their authentic positions. This is all the more serious when addressing the European NGOs. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2008), like transmission-belt analogists, are too quick to 
conceive NGO involvement in transnational settings as a democratizing practice by taking for 
granted that NGOs, by definition, represent counter-discourses (i.e., counter to state and 
economy). It is argued here that NGOs do not per definition represent counter-discourses or 
authentic reasoning. At the same time, the present system of interest intermediation hinders the 
realization of critical engagement. Since NGOs have been engaged in the EU public policy-
making processes, their accountability, inclusiveness, transparency, and representativeness 
have been under critique. However, the attempts to fix accountability in formalistic and 
managerial terms have implications for civil society (Com, 1992, 1997, 2000). The norms and 
procedures aim to fit NGOs into the scope of problem-solving (functional participation) 
(Sismans, 2007) or the pluralization of interest (neo-liberal interest intermediation), rather 
reinforce managerialism (bureaucratization and elitism) and exclusion within civil society by 
fostering a conception of a legitimate European civil society based on the organizations’ 
engagement in a “constructive” vein in governance.

The debates over the legitimacy of the EU and the participation of civil society concentrate 
on the means of gaining legitimacy, namely transparency, accountability, peer-reviews, and 
performance indicators. However, what is to be legitimated and why it is that that is to be 
legitimated, as well as the larger social implications of political intervention, has not been 
problematicized. Therefore, I suggest that political intervention leads to an “iron cage” of 
bureaucratization and that neo-liberalism should be taken more seriously in civil society and 
participation debates. In such a situation, then, where the discourse of neo-liberal capital 
accumulation dominates governance and decision-making processes and democracies (see 
Streeck 2011; Appeldoorn 2002), legitimating the political system—in this case via the 
involvement of the NGOs—should not aim to justify a given polity “as it is.” In a neo-
republican view that conceives the political ideal of freedom as non-domination (Pettit 1997, 
Skinner 1997), the system of governance should not emerge as a “system of domination” or an 
“arbitrary power,” which means that it should not occlude alternative political projects and 
worldviews.

Political intervention in civil society, however, might take an arbitrary form and reinforce 
domination. For example, managerial practices reinforce bureaucratic-rationalities in the 
Weberian sense by reinforcing formal rationalities and performance-oriented work ethics. 
Critical engagement, however, suggests that the role of the actors is not to justify a non-
arbitrary political power (including the system of governance) or a single discourse that will 
emerge as system as a domination (such as a neo-liberal market economy). That is, the 
democratizing potential of CSOs is hindered when they are subjugated in the dominant 
discourse (see also Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008). In this case, in Habermas’s terms, the values 
of the system (the underlying bureaucracy of the system of governance and economy) 
penetrate into the life-world (civil society). Therefore, the involvement of NGOs in governance 
should not be seen as an intrinsically democratizing practice in governance. Radical critiques 
and the deliberative approach align in this respect: social actors should be able to propose 
alternative projects and not be dominated by the discourse of power.

Dryzek and Niemeyer (2008, p. 481) suggest that “a discourse can be understood as a set of 
categories and concepts embodying specific assumptions, judgments, contentions, dispositions, 
and capabilities.” In this view, issues such as environment, development, or social policies are 
not regarded as discourses themselves, because an issue or group itself does not constitute a 
discourse. Rather, these issues amount to domains of contestation, negation, or agreement on
multiple venture points, and not merely in the sense of variation between competing technical solutions for solving a social problem: Social issues are social relationships. A pragmatic-governance perspective points to the epistemic contribution or expert evidence of the advocacy groups, which derive from their “down-to-earth” experiences (Kohler-Koch 2010; Kohler-Koch and Finke, B. (2007). However, from a critical perspective, neither the lived experiences nor the articulations of the effects of these experiences from a given group are thought external to discursive framings (in post-structuralist terms) or ideology (in Marxist terms). The epistemic contributions of CSOs to governance—however they might be deliberatively accessed—cannot, therefore, be thought of as objective “realities” in their own right, but rather as embedded within the larger social dynamics that caused the emergence of these “problems,” as well as of the actors’ awareness of them as problems. For example, a group’s meta-commitment to “act for” or “stand for” others or a cause is itself not a value-free political act, as this commitment acts as a unifying signifier of a particular belief system, such as reinforcement of a social Europe, gender equality, or anti-racism. Furthermore, the solutions to the issues of social policies, development, environment, and human rights vary significantly depending on the systematic political standpoint, such as market liberalism, third-way, socialism, or conservatism, and each is able to propose different perceptions.

The proponents of an analytical-descriptive governance approach avoid such contestations within the conceptual sets of a given issue (for social policies marker liberalism, Keynesian liberalism, socialism, workfare-to-work, etc.) by suggesting that the groups now engaged in transnational governance are connected to the “down-to-earth” experiences of the people, regardless of any social or political dynamics. This assumption implies that social phenomena, and in this case the lived experiences of people, can be conceived independently from the underlying mechanisms and social processes that caused these experiences. For example, unemployment or precarious working conditions and social inequalities (again, as “down-to-earth” experiences of the people), underdevelopment, global warming, etc., in this view can be explained as self-caused social phenomena that can be understood on their own, without connection to any other social process. By the same token, in its position paper, a network of European NGOs, the Social Platform (2008), suggests:

Participatory democracy creates a healthy anti-silo, anti-institution mentality, both in terms of issues to be addressed and the ability to act on addressing them. Almost none of the serious problems people and communities face conform to the remits of political ideologies: By involving people to intervene, participatory democracy can produce solutions that are effective and legitimate, and go beyond traditional political divides. In that sense, it strengthens the legitimacy of decision makers/services providers since their decisions will be based on the real views of people. Participatory democracy therefore aims to improve trust and accountability. (5)

As the above quote illustrates, according to Žižek (1997), the post-ideological ambition to go beyond political divides to find solutions to the “real” problems of the people is in itself an ideological gesture, as Žižek would call it, since the language of the ideology produces a discourse in which it appears that the “real problems” and the “ideological chimeras” can be taken as entities that are separate from one another. The debate over participation in transnational governance focused on pragmatic-functional and normative authentic contributions of transnational groups (Finke 2007), has, however, appeared to omit political ideologies. Non-majoritarian inquiries on representation have not reflected on this aspect, either (Castiglione and Warren 2006; Dryzek and Nymeyer 2008; Goodin 2003).

In this way, I relate groups’ engagement in governance settings to a “political” aspect of governance. This is unlike the functional approach, which conceives their contribution as pertinent to the rather depoliticized aspects of effective problem-solving and epistemic assistance to the “outputs” of policy-making. Critical engagement, in a systemic understanding
of democratization for Europe, regards social groups’ role in the democratization of European governance as going beyond their tangible links with their principle (represented). In this case, Brussels headquarters might be proactive, guiding, shaping, and implementing interactions with EU institutions. In principle, in this view, they are open to the influence of grassroots groups (or bottom-up and horizontal strategy formation). NGOs, then, (in principle) might reflect anonymous public deliberations (Benhabib, 1996), as well as the claims of their members. This view, however, conceives the flow of information from the local not as a mere instrumentalist strategic interest, but in terms of the discourses (e.g., anti-globalization, alternative globalization, anarcho-cosmopolitanism, social democracy, socialism, liberalism, sustainable development) that may or may not emanate from the grassroots. In the final instance, however what is represented is not necessarily the interest of a particular organization or a group, but the discourse itself. Social action can, therefore, be “relatively autonomous” from the grassroots, thus acting as a catalyst for and vanguard of the institutionalization of contention or resistance at a supranational level. In this way, institutionalized, structured NGO networking could be a strategic choice, but it would not be a normative prerequisite. Consequently, as was underlined at the beginning of this section, social groups should preserve their own reasoning and power-challenging discourses in governance settings so they do not internalize, but instead transform, the dominant discourses.

Concluding remarks
This article has suggested that, by reducing the democratization processes to the interactions between the NGOs and policy-makers at the EU level, the theoretical debate has overlooked the systemic dynamics of democracy, including institutional and ideational structures, the principle of the rule of law, regular elections, and general public discussions. The proponents of the application of the transmission-belt argument to the EU level consider NGO networks as an alternative (or complementary) means of discourse articulation due to the absence or weakness of general public discussion and representative democracy at the EU level. However, this cannot offer a convincing model for the process of transmission. It also discards or minimizes the parliament and the political parties, institutions which hold a central place in real democracies.

This paper has advanced three major objections. First, the transmission-belt is not a useful analogy either normatively or descriptively. Second, the managerilization of civil society, though regarded positively by some theorists as reinforcing the accountability of organizations, actually reinforces the domination of bureaucracy. Third, analytical views that concentrate on the lived experiences of the people as objective social realities discard the larger social dynamics that cause these experiences and their perception as problems.

This paper, then, suggested critical engagement as a radical model of participation that does not initially aim to legitimate a given polity as it is, but rather to transform it through power-challenging discourses. Critical engagement refutes the emergence of governance as a system of domination. It implies a bottom-up Europeanization under the possible guidance of supranational headquarters that does not aggregate instrumental interests, but enables the rendering of critique and the formation of solidarity.

Notes
1 For a discussion, see Fossum and Schlesinger (2007); Eriksen 2005; Van de Steeg 2006; Koopmans and Erbe (2004).
2 This even radically suggests involvement of extremist voices to deliberations.
3 New social movements, particularly after the 1970s, have been trying to open spaces of influence in this political topography; civil society participation at the EU level may be related to these movements (Ruzza 2011).
References


European Union’s Communication Strategy through “Civil Dialogue”: Represented, performed and contested

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This paper inquiries into how the Commission has endeavoured to create communication channels by supporting the CSOs. With this respect, it examines the the EU institutions’ discourse about the organised actors of civil society (known also as NGOs) both as a form and part of political communication. It develops three arguments. First, this strategy can be considered as a form of EU’s political communication. Second, this strategy has intended and unintended effects of Europeanisation: that is the Commission’s discourse on participation helps framing the object of communication as a European common concern. Third, participation discourse, involving civil society to European governance, is an open ended process, thus is apt to transformation due to communicative interactions between strong publics. In turn, the future of Europe is contingent on the reflexive interplays between the strong publics, segmented publics and a listening public.

Eriksen (2005) distinguishes between three forms of European publics: overarching general publics (a common communicative structure open to all), transnational segmented publics (networks established with regards to common interests, problems and solutions) and strong publics (supranational institutionalised decision-making entities). I leave out the debates with regards to the existence of a general common European public (sphere). I rather focus on the EU’s strategy of empowering European level organised social action. I argue that, first, this strategy can be considered as a form of EU’s political communication. Second, this strategy has intended and unintended effects of Europeanisation: that is the Commission’s discourse on participation helps framing the object of communication as a European common concern. Third, participation discourse, involving civil society to European governance, is an open ended process, thus is apt to transformation due to communicative interactions between strong publics.

I am interested in how the Commission has endeavoured to create communication channels by supporting the CSOs. With this respect, I examine the relationship the EU institutions’ discourse about the organised actors of civil society (known also as NGOs) both as a form and part of political communication. Communication in this case concerns both the individual networking (e.g. the relationships between the EU institutions and the NGO community) as well as the EU’s sheer attempts to express itself to a general public, which is affected by consequences of networking interactions. Accordingly, I conceive the NGOs organised at European level as European publics, EU institutional set-up as strong publics and European citizenry as a general public – an audience.

Commission and social actors
The Commission has had an interest on social actors after the 1990s partly related due to its growing competencies of the EU after the Maastricht and partly to presumed communication deficit with the people. The Commission’s focus on organised actors of civil society (such as the networks of European NGOs) relates to conceptualisation of European public sphere in the sense that the Commission considers these organizations as a medium of channelling the voice of the European citizenry and disseminating information about the EU. Current research as well conceptualises the ECS networks as a transmission-belt (Steffek and Nanz 2007; see also De Schutter 2002, Smismans 2006, Magnette 2003), thus examining their promises of linking the public concerns to EU decision-processes. Organized civic actors are thus seen taking the roles of carriers and medium of European public communications, i.e. one of the
constituents of discursive spaces. However, some criticise the practice of involvement of civil society into decision-making processes and empowerment of civil society organisations by political power (see Habermas 1996 and Fung 2003 for a critique). For instance according to Habermas the role of civil society is not to solve the problems but to detect them and raise the awareness of the public.

The Commission developed several procedures and policies which aimed to empower the European NGO networks within the system of European governance and EU decision-making. For instance, it devised an electronic database for online consultations (such as firstly via the CONECCS system and then European Transparency Initiative); in the meanwhile it established (quasi)formal interactions with umbrella NGO networks. The Commission related European NGOs with regards to the motto of “connecting Europe with its citizens”, which has been promoted through several policy initiatives during the 2000s, such as White Paper on Governance (Com 2001) Plan D for Democracy (2005), Debate Europe, Communication Policy (2006), Active Citizenship and Europe for Citizens (2007). As the legitimacy of involving some NGOs to European governance has been questioned, the Commission also devised norms and principles in order to strengthen the accountability and transparency of the “civil society”.

Participation discourse as a form political communication
Four arguments can be developed. First, EU (can) create public spheres. This concerns the deliberate strategies of EU institutions about entrenching communicative spaces with the idea of gaining the public consent, visualising EU to public and mobilise a public discussion. Yet, the rationalities and techniques (in a Foucauldian sense) or the script (Eder 2010) with regards to making of publics is apt to transformation due to communicative interactions between strong publics, thus discourse on participation is an open ended process. This argument does not suggest that emergence of public spheres is merely reduced to an intellectual design of political power. Political power can engage in making of these spaces, whereas they can autonomously emerge.

Second, corporate-plural channel can be thought one of a public sphere form: a) as a political communication form; b) and as a constituent of EPS, with the latter involving multiple forms and ontologies of discursive communication, including strong, weak and segmented. Involving European civil society organisations (CSOs) to EU governance aims to create a communication channel between the EU institutions and collective action (in this case the organised groups of civil society). Some illustrates this with the metaphor of transmission belt (Steffek and Nanz 2007). This communication mechanism creates a communication infrastructure through which given messages are sent, received, translated, circulated and diffused. This mechanism reinforces discursive construction of meaning and social learning (i.e. epistemological effects of communication). It implies concepts are taken a European element while the actors learn to act as Europeans. Being a stage where the European issues discussed, NGOs then foster the understanding of “communality” among the participants.

“Civil dialogue”, the official name for the relationship between the EU institutions and NGOs, has been developed as a form of political communication within the context of “connecting with the citizens” discourse wherein social actors act as an interlocutor of EU. The form in this case denotes a particular mode of communication through which EU manifests itself to a larger audience: that is, EU tries to render itself visible and knowable through the discourse of organised civic action. Moreover, this strategy allows conveying the object of communication as a European substance. Civil dialogue, in fact, has been devised for Europeanisation of social policy via creating European mini-publics which would discuss social policies from a European perspective. These publics would then disseminate the Europeanised meaning structures through networking mechanisms – horizontally and
vertically- within the community of NGOs with an underlying premise of “re-presentation” of European institutions as a legitimate entity. The idea of addressing EU institutions through participation in governance (as a signifier) has an implicit proposition that EU is a legitimate ruling entity (as the signified concept that participation represents).

This also includes an underlying presumption of a listening public as an audience. Though listening should not be thought of a passive action and a condition of stability; rather, inter-subjective communication which takes place within the institutionalised domain is staged in front of a listening public (Trenz and Eder 2004). Therefore, the Commission’s communication strategy is not merely a monologue: it entails both a dialogical and triple contingent instances. It is dialogical as it embodies an endeavour that social actors should also communicate with EU. This form of communication also presumes the existence of a listening and an observing general public as the triple instance to communication in addition to subjective dialogue. Yet, public would not necessarily have immediate intervention on the individualised network communication, but having a dispositional-power of influencing polity formations – just as the copper has an intrinsic power to conduct electricity.5

This act is necessarily constraining in that actors take the public reflection into account, one that can either be in the form of tacit affirmation or contention (e.g. referendums or protests). In turn, political communication is one of the factors of which leads to an open process of institutional renewal, one that is motivated by ever democratisation. For instance, in totalitarian regimes public is a passive category and is not allowed to talk (i.e. absence of freedom of speech).

Third argument is European NGOs can be conceived as European mini-publics. European NGOs are European publics per se; as they talk about European issues and seek to find solutions to social problems at European level. 1) By definition they work on European issues. They have been first and foremost established to influence EU institutions; the addressee of their communication is primarily EU institutions. They tackle the issues as common European concern, including poverty, anti-discrimination, and equality etc. 2) European NGOs take part in European level deliberations, including their involvement in the Convention on the constitution making and in continuous deliberations with other stakeholders which address EU institutions. 3) European NGOs can also take a role as an interlocutor of EU institutions vis-à-vis the civil society (in this case other publics), transmitting the EU’s message.

Fourth, the Commission’s initiatives on strengthening political communication can be seen with respect to in relation to its functionalist legacy. The Monnetist tradition suggests transformation of identities and interests from national to a European level with an implicit proposition of the Commission’s active involvement in this process.6 The Commission currently has taken on the task of “connecting with the citizens” with an expectation that interests and identities might transform through political communication. The commission encouraged and empowered some NGOs with the aim of reinforcing the European dimension of given issues. European NGOs then help giving issues on which they focus a European meaning, such as with regards to social policy, gender, and anti-discrimination. In other words they help making of the object of communication European.

The functionalist instance of this proposal now suggests creating common European interests through Europeanised political discussions which will take place in European publics. This implies a process of social learning through communication in that publics are invented and discursively constructed. The invention in this case denotes a reflexive process:

5 For a definition of dispositional-power see Detel 2005:12.
6 The Commission has been actively engaged in several projects during the European integration, though several of them have been successful such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Single European Act, common currency etc. during the Hallstein and the Delors periods.
that is, the political structure is continuously reconfigured in a dynamic process of communicative interaction between the political and the public as well as within the publics. Therefore, this understanding does not perceive public as a passive ontology, as a passive public would not be receiving and more importantly capable of responding to communication. For instance, among other aspects the change in the EU’s institutional design, notably after 1990s, has been explained with respect to gaining the consent of the public (Fossum and Trenz 2006; Trenz and Eder 2004).

**European civil society and governance**

The role of CSOs in EU governance is defined, first, with their epistemic contribution, particularly to the Commission in its proposal preparation process; second, coordination of policies, such as of Open Method of Coordination; third, implementation of EU policies, such as humanitarian operations financed by the EU (Obradovic 2005). CSOs are established to provide epistemic contribution to EU governance, whereas putting a “critical gaze” on the policy processes (including the processes starting from agenda-setting, decision-making and policy implementation). This entails an elitist understanding of politics (i.e. participation in governance is necessarily restricted to a group of experts and technocrats) as well as mechanisms of functional representation, e.g. social and civil dialogue.

The research has also shown the Commission’s consultation regime with the NGOs, which is also named as “civil dialogue” since 1996, has several shortcomings: such as, the consultations does not go beyond “right to be heard” – since there is no legal ground; NGOs do not receive appropriate feedback; and they are not informed whether and how their opinions had an impact on policy proposals (Obradovic 2005). The communications (in this case the position papers, conferences and consultations) of CSOs can seen as empty signifiers to the extent that they are not taken seriously by the European institutions. The previous research has also shown that CSOs are not well integrated into the implementation and coordination of EU policies, if not totally excluded (see Smismans 2006). Moreover, they have loose network ties with the grassroots.

The question posed by the political authorities is then: Why should the political system take CSOs seriously? What can then explain the growing literature on European civil society and enshrinement of an article on Lisbon treaty about participatory democracy despite the inefficient contribution of NGOs to governance and their lack of accountability? Then, the most important function of “civil dialogue” is considered to legitimise the decision-making processes within the EU institutional set-up (Kochler-Koch and Rittberger 2006), particularly the legitimacy of the Commission’s consultation regime (e.g. Smismans 2007; Cram 2006) as well as help in advancing the Commission’s institutional power. I will argue that this is form of a political communication.

**The Commission and Social Actors**

Kochler-Koch and Finke (2007) categorises the history of Commission’s relationships with social actors in three stages: consultation (1960/70s); partnership (1980/90s); and participation (2000/onwards). The first generation, in EU decision-making processes can be traced back to the establishment of European Coal and Steel Community (Armstrong 2002). The Paris treaty (1952) enshrined the establishment of advisory committee, which would consist of the representatives of producers, workers and consumers. The Treaty of Rome institutionalised the advisory role of functional groups with the establishment of the European Economic and Social Council (EESC). This can be seen pertinent with the Monnetist “neo-functionalist” understanding which characterised the early years of the integration (Walters and Haahr 2005). Yet, EESC has been marginalised in EEC/EU institutional set up.
With respect to second-generation, social actors were involved in EU politics through partnerships during and post Delors Commission era. Underpinned with the motto of European social and economic space, Delors’ vision led institutionalisation of “social dialogue” – between representatives of trade unions and employers- with the Social Protocol attached in Maastricht Treaty (1992). Organisations of citizens (also known as non-profit organisations, NGOs, civil society organisations and organised civil society) appeared in the Commission’s agenda in post-Maastricht era, though not formalised, as in social policy. Kochler-Koch and Finke (Ibid) explains this due to Commission’s perception of fading permissive consensus and the failure of Maastricht referendum in Denmark. Since then the consultation policy of the Commission no longer based on the sheer epistemic quality of the external advises; but also entailed an understanding of achieving public consent. Accordingly, the discourse on political communication became one of the priorities of the EU and with this regard “bringing the EU closer to the people was propagated [by the Commission] at the 1996 Turin Summit”, and as Kochler-Koch and Finke (Ibid, 210) underlines “this became the norm to follow by all EU institutions”. Against this backdrop, ‘Civil Dialogue’, - which will be further elaborated here- was introduced in 1996 in the field of employment and social affairs.

The third generation in the relations between the Commission and social actors, as defined in Kochler-Koch and Finke (Ibid), commenced in the late 1990s and intensified during the 2000s with the launching of the White Paper on Governance (Com 2001). In this era, the Commission connected its ongoing (and prospective) consultations with social actors to a broader project of an administrative reform of the EU institutions. The motto of “bringing back the EU people” has also continued in this period; however, different from the 1990s, the Commission introduced several standards, norms, and procedures with the aim of democratising the contributions of the social actors particularly in Commission’s consultation and interest intermediation regime. These initiatives are also associated with the principles of “good governance” (Kochler-Koch 2006; Kochler-Koch and Finke 2007), which was promoted by the World Bank and United Nations (Weiss 2000).

**Involving social actors as a form of political communication**

In 1999, The Commission had experienced the most damaging incident of its institutional history. The Santer Commission had to resign due to an evidence of corruption in which some of the Commission officers involved. The Prodi Commission (1999-2004) started working under such condition in which instructional prestige of the Commission was significantly damaged. In order to recover its damaged image and maintain its legitimacy, the Commission engaged a decisive institutional reform between 1999 and 2004 (Kassim 2008). The Prodi Commission also launched a new Commissioner post responsible from the public communications of the Communication; Margot Wallstrom appointed for this task. Further, it proposed a new administrative reform for the EU institutions with the White Paper on Governance (Com 2001), a reform which included opening the decision-making processes to civil society.8

At the beginning of the 2000s, the Commission broadened its focus on the social organisations, from the ones which were active in social policies to all groups of organisations. Consequently, it preferred use the NGOs as an umbrella concept to cover all kinds of organised social action. Furthermore, the limited focus on the use of social groups in

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7 There were also critiques to this initiative. Gillingham (2003:259), for instance states that “if central Brussels provides an intimation of it, the zone in question would be filled by lobbyists rather than “solidaristic” workers or virtuous peasants bound “organically” to the soil. The policy networking that took hold at the Commission during the 1980s would serve only special interests; the tax-paying public had no influence over it”.

8 *White Paper* was reflected by academic community critically (see Joerges et al 2001), considering it as a political intervention into EU structure.
legitimising social policies shifted to the general legitimacy of EU governance (Smismans 2006; Kochler-Koch and Finke 2007). The White Paper placed the CSOs within the context of the EU administrative reform and EU governance, in which CSOs were defined as stakeholders, contributing to the efficiency of European governance. In addition to it related the CSOs to the issue of creating a European public sphere.

[The EU] will no longer be judged solely by its ability to remove barriers to trade or to complete an internal market; its legitimacy today depends on involvement and participation. This means that the linear model of dispensing policies from above must be replaced by a virtuous circle, based on feedback, networks and involvement from policy creation to implementation at all levels (Com 2001, 428 final:11).

With the White Paper, the Commission introduced the discourse of involvement and participation to the agenda of the EU as a cure for its democratic legitimacy problem first with regards to network governance perspective with an underlying premise of dialogical interactions. On the other, participation discourse entailed the public as a triple contingent category in that the EU’s communication deficit was linked to “the gap between the people and the EU”.

Yet despite its achievements, many Europeans feel alienated from the Union’s work. This feeling is not confined to the European Institutions. It affects politics and political institutions around the globe. But for the Union, it reflects particular tensions and uncertainty about what the Union is and what it aspires to become, about its geographical boundaries, its political objectives and the ways these powers are shared with the Member States. (Com 2001 428 final:7)

The White Paper identifies two reasons for the “alienation of the citizens from the EU”. The first reason suggests that the citizens cannot build a connection with the EU institutions since they are not “involved in the governance” of their lives. Accordingly, the argument is that if the people can participate in the problem-solving processes, they can become closer to the idea of Europe, and this would strengthen EU democracy. The second reason is the perception that citizens are alienated from the EU because they lack information about the EU and the role of EU policies play in their lives. White Paper on Governance therefore reflected a strong emphasis on the necessity to “connect Europe with its citizens”.

The Commission’s diagnosis was legitimate European governance was not plausible if the people residing in the European territory lack knowledge of who governs, how it governs, why it governs, where it governs and with whom it governs. In line with the Magnette’s (2003) emphasis that the clarity of the political structure can enhance political participation and political interest, the Commission made available funds to support civil society projects and initiatives that would help the “dissemination of the idea of Europe (a Union)” in order to mobilise a public discussion, which was presented as a form of political communication. With this respect, the Commission stressed the significance of NGOs, considering them to be the interlocutor between the political power and society that explained EU governance to its members, linking public demands to the decision-making in the consultations, and reinforcing active European citizenship.

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9 The Commission and Non-governmental Organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership (Com 2000, 11 final) was the second and final paper in which the Commission specifically elaborated upon the societal groups

10 The EC, one year before the publication of the White Paper on European Governance, declared its intention of integrating the NGOs into its governance structure, identifying the NGOs as its “vital partners” for governance due to “the expertise and dedication of NGO staff and their willingness to work under difficult operational conditions”. It set out five aspects of the “rationale for cooperation with non-governmental organisations”: (1) fostering participatory democracy, (2) representing the views of specific groups of citizens to European Institutions, (3) contributing to policy making, (4) contributing to project management, and (5) contributing to European integration.
NGOs could be instrumental in winning public acceptance for the EU, since they are considered to act according to the “general interest” of the people, dealing with concerns and issues related to the people’s well-being rather than pursuing the commercial or professional interests of their members (Com 2000, 11 final). The Commission prioritises the role of European networks of NGOs as the catalysing agents of this process, in that they can mobilise national NGOs and “make an important contribution to the formation of a European public opinion”, which the Commission recognises as the “pre-requisite to the establishment of a true European political entity”.

**Constitutional Treaty and social actors**

Central developments during the 2000s were the failed attempts of a Constitutional Treaty and its replacement with the Lisbon Treaty, and enlargement of the European Union. After Nice Treaty (2001), national leaders agreed to convene another IGC in 2004. To facilitate the debate and help prepare the IGC, the December 2001 European Council meeting issued the *Laeken Declaration on the Future of the European Union* which suggested that soon-to-be enlarged EU needed to become ‘more democratic, more transparent and more efficient’. The Union has also needed to resolve three basic challenges: “how to bring citizens, and primarily the young, closer to the European design and the European institutions”; “how to organise politics and European political area in an enlarged Union”; and “how to develop the Union into a stabilising factor and a model in the new, multipolar world” (European Council, ibid.). *Laeken Declaration* in this sense proposed establishment of a Convention on the Future of Europe.

Against this backdrop, the Convention on the Future on Europe was set in 2001 by the European Council to prepare the *Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe*. CSOs were included in the Convention discussions. One of the vice-presidents of the Convention, Guliano Amato, emphasized the importance of the “support of civil society in legitimising the final outcome of the Convention’s work” (*Economist* 2004). Some scholars considered this as a democratising promise (De Schutter 2002; Magnette 2003).

During the Convention period the Social Platform, the network for European Social NGOs, played a role of mobilising the largest NGO networks working in the fields of human rights, environment and development in order to take part in the European debate. With respect to this, a coalition of NGOs formed the Civil Society Contact Group (CSCG) through the leadership of the Social Platform. CSCG further mobilised the national level NGOs with regards to the Convention’s work via the *Future of Europe* (act4europe) campaign. For example, it published a toolkit for NGOs in order to inform them about the ongoing debate on the *Future of Europe* and encourage them in fostering public debates. The Campaign’s second toolkit about the work of the Convention was distributed at the *Social Policy Forum* in 2002.

The Convention prepared a draft Constitutional Treaty (CT), which could not enter into force until it had been ratified by all the member states. Some countries preferred to hold referendums; the failures in France and Netherlands was perceived as a message and a Council summit was held one week after the referendums. Member states which were planning to hold referendum were cautious after the results of French and Dutch cases, in that it would be more difficult to win the public consent. The summit’s resolution was to freeze the issue until the first half of 2006 for a “period of reflection [which] will be used to enable a broad debate to take place in each of our countries…” (European Council, 2005b; also see Nugent 2010:74). Member states, which planned to hold referendums, could proceed with their plans as projected; though only in Luxembourg a referendum was held, with result of

12 This toolkit was downloaded 5000 times in ten days after it was published (see footnote 3).
ratification of the Treaty. During the “period of reflection” some initiatives were introduced to close “the gap between the citizens and the EU”. Plan D (2005), Active Citizenship (2006), Communication Strategy (2006) and Europe for Citizens (2007) were launched after 2006 in order to “listening to the people” while allowing the EU explain “itself” to people (in EU talk to “its citizens”) via presenting the benefits of the system of EU governance, telling how EU works, and allowing the citizens to take a part in EU politics. After 2006, web consultations were also opened to citizens, with the aim of creating a cyber-space for public reflection (Hueller 2010).

European civil society and European public spheres

As NGOs are by definition segmented (or particularistic) in that they support the claims of a particular group (e.g. youth, gender, age, immigrants etc.), how can then discuss them with respect to their relation to general public discussion (or to a frame of commonality)? This article suggests the idea of involving civil society as a form of political communication involves a presumption of the existence of a public (in this case a general European public as such) as an audience to their communications. Therefore participation discourse has been represented in relation to “connect Europe with its citizens”. It was staged in front of a listening public, assuming communications resonate in other publics (including strong, segmented and general publics).

Despite the participation discourse of the Commission has been linked to the idea of creating a general public sphere, it includes contradictory claims. Participation as a form of political communication suggests an issue of common concern should not “necessarily” be discussed by “all-affected” (i.e. people and or demos) at the same time (i.e. by a general public sphere). Social intermediaries could function as conveyors of particular public interests. This task implies that a group of interested, motivated and skilled groups could act on behalf of “some-affected”, but not all-affected. Social intermediaries can be considered to represent particular discourses of which would be otherwise entirely absent in EU institutional milieu. The representativeness of the European Parliament was not questioned since the MPs were elected, and were thus held to represent the “people” and the general will. The corporate representation was not a problem, since it was clear which companies were represented, even if that meant representing the interests of their shareholders. Nevertheless, the civil society organisations were not elected bodies, and not all the people which the sector claimed to represent could be shown to be members. For instance, an organisation which claimed to stand for the rights of the elderly could not present evidence that all elderly people supported its activities. The latter thus implies investigating the prospects of conceptualisation of the relationship between the organised civic action and a general public beyond a necessity of immediate interaction. European NGOs take a role as an interlocutor of EU vis-à-vis civil society, thus acting like communicative broker. This communicative performance is not dialogical, as it is staged in front public.

The political communication strategy of the EU during the second decade of the 2000s in sum prioritised two main aspects: the generation of a European identity and the mobilisation of the public for EU integration. The Commission’s new strategies for closing the gap with citizens have focused on European NGOs as a target of this policy, while assigning them an intermediary role between EU institutions and the people, so that EU governance can be better “connected to the citizens” (Com 2006). The Commission’s discourse on the involvement of civil society also embodied elements of creating a European identity on the basis of participation. Some scholars suggest that EU governance cannot evolve into a

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13 The reflection was, however in practice, restricted to the exchanges between EU practitioners (Nugent 2010).

14 Having examined the political socialisation roles of the NGOs Warleigh (2001) concludes that they will not be able to achieve these tasks due to their distance from the grassroots.
democratic system, since there is no European *demos* (Cederman 2001; Schore 2006). The proponents of the deliberative school in European studies (Eriksen 2005; see also Weiler 1998; Habermas 2001), on the other hand, argue that strangers can develop a sense of commonness in their common activities with aim to govern their own lives. Regarding European integration inventing Europe on communitarian grounds would not seem plausible, for instance on the basis of a common language and common culture. Rather, in line with the writings of Tocqueville, Putnam, Dewey and Habermas, Europe could be (only) invented through political communication and participation.

Yet, these concepts have been symbolically used by the EU in order to help visualisation of EU. Therefore, the Commission’s strategies are found problematic in two grounds; first, it considers “explaining itself” to be a matter of public relations, i.e. selling a product (Shore 2009), and second, it becomes proactively involved in fostering debates about EU governing, a process which can lead to manipulation of political communication. Further, Trenz and Eder (2004:16) argue that “the Commission has learned that ‘going to public’ can be a very efficient way to maximise its range of competencies and its degree of influence.” The Commission’s attempts with regards to social policy well fits to this assessment.

**Europeisation of political communication: the case of social policy**

Since the early 1970s European Commission has been trying to intervene in social sphere in the form of directives and regulations, including environmental protection, consumer rights, women’s rights, and health and safety at work. Nonetheless, the power of the Commission in executing the directives have been limited, as the Community law stipulate, they are executed by member states, but not the European executives. The competences of the EU in the social sphere has comparatively increased with the Maastricht (1992) and Amsterdam (1997) treaties. Amsterdam Treaty for the first time recognised the employment policy as a common European concern. Consequently, at the Luxembourg Summit (1997), the Heads of States and Governments decided an employment guideline with the aim of creating an “active labour market”, which was reframed in the Lisbon Strategy (2000). The Commission has seemed to advance the resolutions of the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) about social policy, i.e. connection of the employment policy to social policy. However, this has not necessarily translated into transfer of competences to supranational bodies. In turn, member states disagreed on harmonisation, unification and supranational control, but concurred with coordination of social policies via new modes of governance (also known as Open Method of Coordination), which is based on voluntarism, non-sanction and soft law mechanisms. It has been seen unlikely that member states would transfer their sovereignty to supranational bodies. Yet, the Commission has endeavoured to advance supranational intervention in this field, despite the sovereignty of member states has been recognised with the introduction of principles of subsidiarity and the introduction of new modes of governance (e.g. in social policy, environment and tourism). The OMC allows the Commission proposing guidelines and frames and monitor their implementations; though, without any legal binding mechanism, because the unique responsibility of implementation rests in the member state.

As a result, the manoeuvre space of the Commission has been restricted; it has tried other strategies such as action plans (three social actions plans have so far been introduced in 1974, 1989 and 1995). Cram (2006) claims that Commission, particularly the DG Employment and

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15 This entailed the four principles of *employability* of the labour, *entrepreneurship*, i.e. alleviating the conditions for the business (such as reducing the tax and contribution costs on labour, and fostering new jobs in the third-sector); *adaptability* of business and labour to the new technology and so called “changing market conditions”; and creating “equal opportunities” for man and women. The Lisbon Strategy (2000), adopted by the Heads of States and Governments, furthered these goals, by agreeing to make Europe “most competitive and knowledge-driven economy by 2010”
Social Inclusion, uses another strategy, which is mobilising the social actors to form European NGOs and in turn involving them into the Commission’s consultation regime. The main argument of Cram (Ibid) is that the Commission has tried to foster an understanding that social policies are regulated at EU level, and democratically.

Against this backdrop, starting from the early 1990s the Commission has played an active role in the establishment of the European NGOs, mostly in the social field, including the European Women Lobby (EWL), European Youth Forum (EYF), the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the EU (CLONG) European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN), the European Disability Forum (Cram 2006; Tarasenko 2010). These organisations would in turn form the Social Platform, when it was also established in 1995 by the encouragement and financial support of the European Commission (Sánchez-Salgado 2007; Smismans 2003; Greenwood 2007; and Tarasenko 2010).

Following the Maastricht Treaty (1992), the Commission issued a Green Paper on Social Policy (1993), which suggested developing mechanisms for co-operation with the Commission and NGOs. In order to put this claim into practice, the Commission, notably the DG Employment and Social Inclusion (EMPL), decided to launch the European Social Forums, the first of which would be convened in 1996. Cram (1995) states that “in 1995, the Social Platform was created, and funded by the Commission, to act as interlocutor for the social actors with the Commission at the Social Forum”. Starting from the first European Social Policy Forum, the Commission’s interactions with the NGOs have been labelled as “civil dialogue”.

Since its establishment, the Platform has worked largely with the Commission, particularly with the DG Employment and Social Inclusion (EMPL): it has the privilege of co-organising bi-annual meetings, known as the European Social Policy Forums, with the Commission and consulting the Commission on social policy related issues. The DG EMPL recognizes the Platform as a “partner”; yet, the Platform is currently financed through the Community Action Programme to promote active European citizenship with the aim of promoting active citizenship in Europe. The Platform, however, has not merely developed relations with the Commission, notably the DG Employment. It has been taking part in the consultations to the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); recently it has participated in the two AGORA civil society meetings organized by the European Parliament (EP); and it has been also trying to access the European Council meetings, though it has been occasionally and informally invited to those meetings, e.g. the Lisbon Summit 2000.

Cram (Ibid) acknowledges that the strategy of activating social NGOs has been relatively successful. First, the DG EMPL started financing social NGOs in the early 1990s, but via illegal methods until 1999. The UK and Germany questioned the legal competence of the Commission to finance social NGOs, including the Platform. The treaties of the EU ascribe the Commission the role of using the Union’s resources, while giving the auditing responsibility to the Parliament and the Council. Based on the request of the British parliamentarians with the claims that the Commission’s support to social NGOs had no legal basis, in 1998, the Parliament decided to suspend the Commission’s funds. Consequently, social NGOs organised a collective protest; accordingly these funds were released in 1999 with the Council decision. Thus, the Commission’s extra-acquis behaviour was justified after the Council’s decision. The second success of the Commission, according to Cram (Ibid), is the enshrinement of the principle of “participatory democracy” into the draft Constitutional Treaty (2004), and later in Lisbon Treaty (2007). ¹⁶ In other words, the roots for the idea of involving the NGOs to European decision-making stemmed from the Maastricht Treaty, inscribed into the Green Paper on Social Policy and put into practice with the European

¹⁶ It involves not only the involvement of “civil society” in EU decision-making processes, but also allow the citizens submitting any legal proposal, with no less than one million signature.
Social Forums. This project can be considered as part of Delor’s project to create “European social and economic space”; it continued under Santer (1995-1999), Prodi (1999-2004) and Barosso (2004- continuing) Commissions. The Commission has engaged in creating publics via mobilising collective action with the aim to send and circulate a message that EU rules over social policy. From a functionalist view this transforms interests and preferences towards a European vein. Further, social actors help translating the object of communication into a European context (in this case from social policy to European social policy).

Competing forms of political communication in Brussels

Moreover, the Commission’s discourse has been shaped, developed and transformed in terms of the reflections of the EU institutions. The European Parliament preferred to be indifferent—if not hostile—at the beginning, later challenging the Commission’s attempts to mobilise civil society. It could not remain silent with respect to the discourse of “connecting with the citizens”. Instead of adopting the EC and the EESC’s approach, since it posed a threat to its institutional power, it reproduced its own discourse on civil society, based on the premises of representative democracy:

Because it is directly elected, Parliament is the European Union institution best qualified to take up the challenge of keeping open the channels of communication with European Union citizens. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are in regular contact with citizens and are directly accountable to voters…All European Union institutions of course understand the importance of dialogue with citizens as part of the European Union project. Nevertheless, their responses were essentially to do with the debate on Europe’s institutional architecture. Although this issue is vital, it is also important to focus on the day-to-day concerns of ordinary people…The European Parliament therefore now proposes involving citizens in a permanent dialogue on the European Union’s future. 17

The EP developed its challenge to the EC on the civil dialogue and civil society discourse in two aspects. The first one concerns the different approaches of the respective institutions on interest regulation policy. The EP and EC have different approaches on the structured and formalised dialogue with civil society. The EC prefers to regulate relations with civil society on the basis of the principles of openness and transparency, and rejects having an accredited mechanism with the interest groups. 18 Contrary to the EC’s strong rejection of the accreditation of interest intermediation, the EP adopts an accreditation system, which includes the mere access to EP buildings (five or more days per year). Moreover, the EP publishes the names of accredited lobbyists on its website; however, this list only includes the names of badge holders and their institutions. Compared with the Commission’ interest representation system, it too does not include any information about the lobbyists’ interests, or the organisational features the lobbyist represents.

Second, the EP advocates a different ontology of civil society, criticising the neo-pluralist arrangement of the EC. The EP claims that it also favours an open “dialogue”. It challenges the conceptualisation of the sector-based civil society approach: “Furthermore, Parliament aims to transcend the traditional sector-specific structures of civil society (social affairs, the environment, development, education, and so on), so as to enable different points of view to be heard and a broad range of options to emerge.” 19 Instead, the EP launched two AGORAs, as an alternative way of “combining the voices of European citizens with their elected

18 Nonetheless, it should also be noted that the EC’s attempts (e.g. preparing an internet-based registration system and a code of conduct) have been regarded as de facto accreditation (Balme and Chabanet 2008) or a system that lies somewhere on the continuum between structured and open (Conny Reuter 2009, interview)
representatives”, which aimed to present an alternative to the sector-wise civil dialogue implemented by the Commission. The first AGORA was held on the Future of Europe (8-9 November 2007), and the second on climate change (12-13 June 2008), both of them in Brussels with the participation of around 500 NGOs. The AGORAs were designed as meetings of collective deliberation, though one that did not orient decision-making.

The EESC has been successful at influencing the Commission’s discourse. For instance, the EESC has played an active role in inscribing the norms and procedures which would be applied to CSOs, which would include involvement in the Commission-level consultations. It formulated the representative criteria for NGOs, their mode of conduct. Furthermore, the civil society definition of the Commission is borrowed from the EESC’s communication to the Commission. Since both the EESC and the Commission do not derive legitimacy from territorial representation, it can be argued that the two institutions were aligned. Nonetheless, this alignment contradicted the interests of the European Parliament and Committee of the Regions.

In sum, the EESC tried to legitimise the CSOs’ practice of involvement in EU decision-making, which in turn could empower itself as the “bridge between Europe and the citizens”. Nevertheless, the EESC’s ambition of becoming a gateway to the legitimacy of civil society organisations and civil dialogue has not found support from academic circles, EU institutions and European civil society organisations. Smismans (2003) argued that the EESC had the objective of not marginalising the institutional setup, due to the fact that interest groups abandoned the EESC, attempting to instead directly influence the Commission and Parliament. On the other hand, the EP criticised the EESC’s existence; for instance, some MEPs proposed its abolition, claiming that the EESC functions “without a democratic mandate” and “helps to strengthen corporatism at the expense of democracy”. Some NGOs (e.g. human rights organisations) in the Human Rights and Democracy Network, along with environmental organisations in Green 10, decided not to participate in the Liaison Group, which was established by the EESC in 2004 to formalise the civil dialogue (CCCG 2006:9). The NGO networks that participated in the Liaison Group tried to gain “political and symbolic” benefit from the situation of engaging a formal relation with a EU institution (Ibid., 9), especially the NGO families that prioritised the sectoral dialogue.

As a result, first, the institutional power game between the Commission and Parliament was extended to the ECS discourse. Second, challenging the Commission’s Brussels-oriented and sector-based conception, the Parliament brought in an alternative perspective. It can be argued that the institutional power struggle over the “civil society discourse” led to the emergence of different and competing conceptualisations of European civil society. The Commission’s discourse has been to some extent influenced by the marginal institution in the EU setup, the EESC. The EP, however, has built its own way of communication. For instance, the AGORAs introduced a different definition of European civil society, transcending the sector-specific Brussels based pan-European civil society focus. The EP emphasises that representative democracy is the unique source of EU legitimacy, and therefore it presents the AGORAs with respect to representative democracy, in which the elected representatives “listen” to the citizens without necessarily giving them a vote. With the AGORA initiative, the EP proved that it was not indifferent to civil society’s discourse of involvement in EP politics. The question is the extent to which the strengthened role of the EP, in the Lisbon treaty, can impact the ontological evolution of civil society and the discourse of connecting with the citizens.

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Concluding remarks

Following the Maastricht Treaty (1992) the Commission has never lost sight of its appeal to civil society organisations, and it tried to adapt its discourse on civil society to the context of the EU politics of the day (Smismans 2003). The Commission related its communication with organised civic actors to the context of EU integration as well as its institutional interests (Smismans 2003). For instance, in the second half of the 1990s, the Commission tried to increase its regulative role in social policies, such as through the European Employment Strategy (EES) and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Mosher and Trubek 2003). Smismans (2003) argues that the Commission has used the civil society discourse to justify its growing intervention on social policies as a strategy to respond to nation-states’ reaction. Civil society discourse has extended to legitimacy claims of EU at large and to presumed communication deficit of the EU.

The Commission’s strategy first enables a form of “communication channel” through which EU is visualised and represented to public. Second, this strategy has intended and unintended effects of Europeanisation; the Commission’s discourse on participation helps framing the object of communication as a European common concern. Third involving civil society to European governance is an open ended process, thus is apt to transformation due to communicative interactions between strong publics. In turn, European segmented publics (in this case European NGOs) learn to act as Europeans in a process of discursive interaction, while recognising the EU as a legitimate rule. Nonetheless, this learning process is not necessarily due to dialogical contact between the individuals of those who are part of the policy networking milieu in EU institutional set-up. This interaction presupposes the existence of an imagined European public at large; therefore, civil society discourse has been linked to the motto of connecting Europe with its citizens.

With respect to democratisation of Europe, the corporatist interest articulation currently is a current proposal complementary to representative model. This is an endeavour to think of articulation of common concerns beyond general public. Some of the European NGOs – including Social Platform of European NGOs, European Women Lobby and the European Network Against Racism- proved to adapt their roles as inscribed by the Commission (and also emphasized in several scholarly works), i.e. linking public concerns and disseminating information about EU. However, our knowledge is limited the reaction of the general public to the idea of represented by a stand-by citizens who would perform the act of participation on their behalf. Accordingly, the future of Europe is contingent on the reflexive interplays between the strong publics, segmented publics and a listening public.

NOTES

1 For a definition of dispositional-power see Detel 2005:12.
2 The Commission has been actively engaged in several projects during the European integration, though several of them have been successful such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Single European Act, common currency etc. during the Hallstein and the Delors periods.
3 There were also critiques to this initiative. Gillingham (2003:259), for instance states that “if central Brussels provides an intimation of it, the zone in question would be filled by lobbyists rather than “solidaristic” workers or virtuous peasants bound “organically” to the soil. The policy networking that took hold at the Commission during the 1980s would serve only special interests; the tax-paying public had no influence over it”.
4 White Paper was reflected by academic community critically (see Joerges et al 2001), considering it as a political intervention into EU structure.
The Commission and Non-governmental Organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership (Com 2000, 11 final) was the second and final paper in which the Commission specifically elaborated upon the societal groups.

The EC, one year before the publication of the White Paper on European Governance, declared its intention of integrating the NGOs into its governance structure, identifying the NGOs as its “vital partners” for governance due to “the expertise and dedication of NGO staff and their willingness to work under difficult operational conditions”. It set out five aspects of the “rationale for cooperation with non-governmental organisations”: (1) fostering participatory democracy, (2) representing the views of specific groups of citizens to European Institutions, (3) contributing to policy making, (4) contributing to project management, and (5) contributing to European integration.


This toolkit was downloaded 5000 times in ten days after it was published (see footnote 3).

The reflection was, however in practice, restricted to the exchanges between EU practitioners (Nugent 2010).

Having examined the political socialisation roles of the NGOs Warleigh (2001) concludes that they will not be able to achieve these tasks due to their distance from the grassroots.

This entailed the four principles of employability of the labour, entrepreneurship, i.e. alleviating the conditions for the business (such as reducing the tax and contribution costs on labour, and fostering new jobs in the third-sector); adaptability of business and labour to the new technology and so called “changing market conditions”; and creating “equal opportunities” for man and women. The Lisbon Strategy (2000), adopted by the Heads of States and Governments, furthered these goals, by agreeing to make Europe “most competitive and knowledge-driven economy by 2010”.


Nonetheless, it should also be noted that the EC’s attempts (e.g. preparing an internet-based registration system and a code of conduct) have been regarded as de facto accreditation (Balme and Chabanet 2008) or a system that lies somewhere on the continuum between structured and open (Conny Reuter 2009, interview).


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Discursive Representation: European civil society between ideals and facts

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As a European public sphere has been found absent, weak, or still emerging, organised actors of European civil society have been appealing to the Commission as an alternative means for connecting the voice of European citizens. The Commission conceived organised actors of civil society (such as the networks of European NGOs) as a medium of channelling the voice of the European citizenry and disseminating information about the EU (Com 1997). In turn, on the Commission’s view, NGOs would help in reducing the public apathy towards the European integration.

On a similar account to the Commission’s view, some researchers as well have conceptualised the NGO networks as a “transmission-belt” between the European citizenry and the EU policy making processes (Steffek and Nanz 2007; see also De Schutter 2003, Magnette 2003). The transmission-belt argument, informed by Habermas’s two-track model of discourse articulation (Habermas 1996), implies a connection between the discourses emanated from within civil society to political public spheres. Nonetheless, Habermas (1996 and 1992) does not prescribe such a task, transmitting the discourses emanated or regenerated from within civil society to decision-making structures by civil society itself. In his model, this task is realized by elections and the media. That is, transmission argument at EU level aims at transcending Habermas’s thoughts by searching for alternative ways of discourse articulation beyond the general public discussion and representative democracy. However, it is here discussed that this attempt has several limits.

The Commission, as the participation entrepreneur, has been guided by a normative motivation to link the citizens to the system of governance (see Com 1997, 2000, 2001). Yet democratization of the EU by involving external actors to public policy-making processes has been based on an understanding of functional participation (Smismans 2003) and neo-plural model of interest intermediation (Greenwood 2007), which is coupled with a libertarian understanding that gives no obligation or duty for the participants. In a similar vein, by conceiving the supranational NGO networks as the natural extension of European civil society, the previous research has largely overlooked the grounds on which these organizations might ‘represent’ European civil society. Against this background, this article takes the issue with the current system of civil society participation as well as examines the implications of the EU generated civil society discourse on conceptualization of and making of “European civil society”. The argument then is that As NGOs have been engaged in European level public policy making processes, their accountability, inclusiveness, transparency and representativeness have been under critique. The Commission attempts to fix these issues on procedural terms, such as by inscribing codes on good lobbying, norms on transparency and criteria on internal structures about the associations that are willing to engage within the EU interest representation scheme. Those norms and procedures that aimed to fix the accountability of the NGOs, along with the Commission’s criteria on management of the Commission’s grants to the NGOs, have rather prepared a ground to shape the organizational structure of these organizations while distorting the normative expectations from their engagement.

The research has been conducted within the scope of Eurosphere project. The methodology was based on elite interviews and document analyses. Elite interviews
with the staff of the European NGO networks settled in Brussels, comprising of Social Platform of European NGOs, European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and European Women’s Network (EWL). The interviews were conducted in 2009 and 2008. The document analyses cover the EU institutions’ and the EU NGOs’ publications and cover the period of post-1990s. The empirical material will be elaborated in terms of a counterfactual-normative argumentation, reflecting upon the implications of the EU institutions’ attempts to constitute a European civil society against the normative yardstick of inclusion all citizens’ interests to EU governance and a *inventing* European identity based on active participation.

The paper starts with an overview of the development of the civil society discourse within EU institutions and discusses how the normative aim, in fact, has been adapted to the context of European integration and institutional interests. This section also depicts the Commission’s underlying objective of creating and controlling civil society by using the EU’s funding instruments. The implications of funding has attracted the interests of the research, for instance, in terms of whether NGOs use the funding to promote a European dimension (e.g. Salgoda-Sanchez 2007) or whether which sections of civil society receive the funding (Mahoney and Backstrand 2009). This paper, however, suggest the Commission’s attempts, including the form of incorporation and criteria on administration of NGO funding, rather distorts the normative aims that are expected from European civil society to fulfil. For a theoretical critique, the second section elaborates upon the different and conflicting views in normative political theory on the role of democratic functions of civil society. This section discusses that current form of civil society engagement hardly comply with any normative model, though fitting into some premises of associative theory’s functional approach (e.g. Cohen and Rogers 1994) while conflicting with discursive approach Habermas (1992, 1996). The last section discusses the implications of the EU’s attempts and theoretical arguments on the EU NGO networks.

**European civil society discourse: Interest intermediation in a normative frame**

The Commission has been promoting a discourse on “civil society”, with the concomitant notions of “participation” and “participatory democracy, since the 1990s. Smismsans (2003) argues that along its normative ambition to link the citizens to EU governance, within this discourse, the Commission related organised civic actors to the context of EU integration and its institutional interests. For instance, in the late 1990s, the Commission related civic actors to the legitimisation of its regulatory role in social policy (Cram 2006), and in the early 2000s, linked the discourse on European civil society to its proposal about an administrative reform within EU institutions and the EU’s legitimacy crises (Smismans 2003).

Societal organisations first emerged in the agenda of the Commission in 1992, within the interest politics regulation frame (Com 1992). In this context, they were defined as “special interest groups”, together with the economic groups and firms that were lobbying in Brussels. Afterwards, the Commission never lost sight of its appeal to civic organisations, and it tried to adapt its discourse on the civic organisations to the context of the EU politics of the day (Smismans 2003). For instance, in the second half of the 1990s, the Commission tried to increase its regulative role in social policies, such as through the European Employment Strategy (EES) and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Mosher and Trubek 2003). In this respect, in 1997, the Commission published a discussion paper about which voluntary organisations were active in the social sector. Cram (2006) argues that the Commission has used the civil society discourse to justify its growing intervention on social policies as a strategy to
respond to the nation-states’ reaction. Yet the Commission did not only highlight the roles played by the societal organisations in the economy, such as creating jobs, and their increasing responsibility in governance in this document. It also for the first time elaborated the political implications of the societal organisations, such as their role in the creation of European citizenship and the emergence of a European public sphere (Com 1997, 2000 and 2001).

With respect to the latter, the Commission has focused on the role of organised civic actors within the scope of the motto of “bringing the EU back to its citizens” (Kochler-Koch and Finke 2007) and advancing a European identity, known also as active European citizenship – a kind of identity that can be reinforced through “civic participation”. One of the components of “bringing the EU back to its citizens” was civil dialogue—incorporating NGOs into the Commission’s decision-making structures through consultations. Civil Dialogue started in 1996 after the first European Social Policy Forum, convened by the Social Platform, has contained two goals: 1) to ensure that the views and grassroots experience of the voluntary sector can be systematically taken into account by policy makers at European level so that policies can be tailored more to real needs, and; 2) to disseminate information from the European level down to the local level so that citizens are aware of developments, can feel part of the construction of Europe and can see the relevance of it to their own situation, thus increasing transparency and promoting citizenship (Com97, 241 final:7).

In line with these objectives, at the beginning of the 2000s, the Commission broadened its focus on the societal organisations, from the ones which were active in social policies to all groups of organisations (Smismans 2003; see also Com 2000). Consequently, it introduced the NGOs as a new concept (Com 2000). This shift provided a great advantage for the Commission in that the limited focus on the use of social groups in legitimising social policies shifted to the general legitimacy of EU governance (Smismans 2003; Kochler-Koch and Finke 2007). The Commission and Non-governmental Organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership (Com 2000, 11 final) was the second, and the final paper, in which the Commission particularly focused on the NGOs. This paper on the hand contained the contribution of the NGOs to European governance, such as fostering participatory democracy, providing expert input, representing specific groups of citizens and issues, and contributing to European integration and management of EU projects e.g. on “social exclusion and discrimination, protecting the natural environment, and the provision of humanitarian and development aid” (Com 2000, p.5). About the EU NGO networks, the paper stated that: “by encouraging national NGOs to work together to achieve common goals, the European NGO networks are making a vital contribution to the formation of a ‘European public opinion’ usually seen as a pre-requisite to the establishment of a true European political entity” (Com 2000, p.13).

22 Mahoney and Backstrand (2009) observe that between 2003 and 2007 the Commission funded 1146 civil society organizations, including operational and advocacy groups. Their findings depict that majority of the finding was distributed to the groups which work (or potentially work for) on the issues relevant for fostering European identity and integration, such as the youth, cultural groups, and advocacy groups. Among those, the Commission funded 61% of the groups for just a year, while only 37 groups during the five years period that they have covered in their analyses. They have also observed that small NGOs have also achieved funding, mostly from the old members; however, large NGO networks settled in Brussels received larger amount of funding.
The paper, on the other hand, presented a guideline of the selection criteria of the EU grants to NGOs, which has also functioned as the guideline for the representativeness of the NGOs:

- Their structure and membership.
- The transparency of their organisation and the way they work.
- Previous participation in committees and working groups.
- Their track record as regards competence to advise in a specific field.
- Their capacity to work as a catalyst for exchange of information and opinions between the Commission and the citizens. (Com 2000, p.10-11).

The paper further elaborated on the eligibility criteria by outlining that the Commission would consider “the genuine European nature of the activity undertaken; the representativity of the European NGOs applying for such funding [on the conditions as mentioned above], and the long-term financial viability of the NGO or activity (Com 2000, p.13-14).”

With this paper, the Commission also clarified how the grants would be administered and what the Commission’s role would be vis-à-vis benefactors:

Regarding funding, the NGOs must accept, for example, that there will always be a legitimate need for the Commission to impose certain conditions and controls to safeguard community funds. NGOs have a duty to demonstrate that they have the expertise, management systems and internal quality control systems appropriate to the work they are undertaking in behalf of the Commission. (Com 2000, p.7).

The paper re-phrased the conditions of which the NGOs were subject to somewhere else in the document as follows:

As the taxpayer’s money must be spent in a judicious, economic and transparent way, the award and management of EU grants are subject to specific conditions and requirements to be fulfilled by the applicant organisation, notably in terms of its capacity, both operational (technical and managerial) and financial. This means that the Commission must be able to assess the capacities of NGOs in order to ensure that they are capable of carrying out the projects entrusted to them and also of accounting properly for the funds involved. (Com 2000, 16-17.)

The details about the required organizational structures and how auditing of the grants would be carried out was not inscribed into the paper. Yet the paper made it clear that operational capacities of the NGOs would (or should) entail managerial structures. We also know that the Commission has preferred using the Logical Frame Analyses\(^\text{23}\), the guideline of NGO management that was developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the context of development and has also

\(^{23}\) See Roberts, Susan M., John Paul Jones III and Oliver Fröhling (2005) for a discussion about how LFA relates to managerialism. They discuss about the elements of managerialism in terms of accountability, organizational structure and capacity building and spatial discourse. These elements, to Roberts et al (Ibid), foster standardization of NGOs at a global level. For the concern of this paper, we cannot go into further details about LFA – for details see note3 which gives some links providing information how the LFA has been enhanced by the EU. What merits attention is that the Commission has aimed at funding NGOs to cultivate a European civil society, one that embodying “genuine” European elements and to-be-monitored by the EU. And, the Commission used the LFA as a tool for management for the funding; in turn, this tool has deliberately fostered managerialism among the NGOs – as it was the declared by the objectives of NGO funding.
become common-wide among the institutions supporting NGOs in developing countries.24

One of the strategies for the management of funding was reducing the number of the projects and the applications by the small NGOs. However, it was aware of the challenges: Here the challenge is to reduce the number of the projects, contracts and operations, without discouraging applications from small NGOs (often the source of innovative ideas) nor excluding funding for small projects where these correspond to EU priorities (Com 2000, 17).

In this respect to streamline the grants, the Commission suggested, among others: “Encouragement to NGOs to form consortia for the presentation and implementation of projects”, and “encouragement to NGOs to form networks with one constituent representative body which undertakes operations on behalf of the members of the network” (Com 2000, 17). EU NGO networks that examined within the scope our research (the Platform, ENAR, EWL) were already established in the 1990s. Yet, the Commission made it clear that it aimed at furthering the strategy of forming umbrella networks to manage NGO grants.

Just one year later, the societal organisations were mentioned in the White Paper on European Governance (Com 2001), under the category of civil society organisations (CSOs). The White Paper repeated the Commission’s previous position about the roles of societal groups in governance and EU politics. The White Paper, however, placed the CSOs within the context of the EU administrative reform and EU governance, in which CSOs were defined as partners and participants, contributing to the efficiency of European governance, and this ‘functional’ approach to participation has been conceived complying with the market-driven ethos European integration (Smismans 2003).25 In addition, the White Paper related the CSOs to legitimacy of EU governance and reiterated the Commission’s ambition to create a European public sphere through the CSOs.

During the 2000s, the European Commission detailed the political roles of the NGOs under the motto of “bringing the EU back to its citizens” or “closing the gap between the EU and the citizens”. Along with the resolutions of Laeken summit and the White Paper, Communication policy (2006) of the EU and the concomitant policies which were launched with this respect, such as the Plan D for Democracy (2005), Debate Europe, and Europe for Citizens (2007) specifically relates the NGOs to a “communication deficit” between the system of EU governance and the citizens. The constitutional ratification failure that occurred in 2005 was considered as an obvious evidence of this communication deficit. In the meantime, European Parliament (EP), as well as the Committee of the Regions, the two European institutions which were initially indifferent or critical of the civil society discourse (Smismans 2003), embraced the idea of engaging with the NGOs. The EP claimed that it also favours an open “dialogue”; however, it interpreted openness as something other than interest intermediation. It challenged the conceptualisation of the sector-based civil society approach: “Furthermore, Parliament has aimed to transcend the traditional sector-specific structures of civil society (social affairs, the environment, development, education, and so on), so as to enable different points of view to be heard and a broad


25 See also (Gilingham 2003, and Apeldoorn 2002) for a detailed discussion about how a market-driven mode of European integration prevailed after the 1990s.
range of options to emerge.”

Instead, the EP launched two AGORAs, as an alternative way of “combining the voices of European citizens with their elected representatives”, which aimed to present an alternative to the sector-wise civil dialogue implemented by the Commission. The first AGORA was held on the Future of Europe (8-9 November 2007), and the second on climate change (12-13 June 2008), both of them in Brussels with the participation of around 500 NGOs.

Succinctly, to recap, the content and the objectives of the initiative of engaging civil society has transformed due to the context. ‘Civil dialogue’ started within the context of social policy in 1990s; however, it has extended to democratization of EU governance at large during 2000s. Despite of the vicissitudes observed in the ‘language’ of civil society, the Commission however has been coherent in conceiving the contribution of the NGOs to European governance in terms of interest intermediation. Yet, to regulate interest politics, after 2000 the Commission introduced several initiatives. It launched standards and principles about the internal procedures of the NGOs (Com 2002), prepared a code of conduct about the lobbying practices, devised an electronic database for online consultations, namely the CONECCS system and the European Transparency Initiative (Com 2006), which was replaced by the register of interest representatives in 2011, a common database used by the Parliament and the Commission. In the meanwhile, relevant DGs in Commission have continued (quasi)formal interactions with umbrella NGO networks, such as via conferences, seminars, and meetings etc (C. Reuter, personal communication, May 2009).

When operationalised, the initiative of ‘civil dialogue’ has thus brought in a conceptual confusion, as the Commission has started using the notions of participation, consultation and interest articulation interchangeably. Although ‘civil dialogue’ should have supposed to refer to the Commission’s interactions with civil society, the Commission has presented its consultations with all external actors within this conceptual and policy frame. That is, civil society has been used in a broader sense covering all possible non-state actors (including the business groups) (Com 2001). In the meantime, the Parliament’s alternative approach to civil society suggests a different perspective to the concept of civil society than the one that has been so far developed by the Commission. Against this backdrop, civil society has become a versatile concept: it has been difficult to determine what civil society means, and which forms of political communication can be conceived as ‘civil dialogue’, given the competing definitions among the EU institutions.


27 EU NGOs have welcomed the AGORAs, which have in a way recognized their presence. “I find the AGORAs as an excellent tool. Indeed the Lisbon treaty and the new rights and more influence of the EP…And it is also important that parliament has this tool. But, also it is sometimes difficult to convince the EP – which considers itself as being elected by the people. And always upcoming question to us [from the EP] is: what is your degree of representativity? What is your legitimacy? Therefore it is good that two AGORAs were success. Now, we have to continue (Conny Reuter, May, 2009).


29 In the meantime, the Parliament and the Commission merged their register of interest representatives in 2011.

30 The Commission’s web-page on civil society, http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/civil_society/ general_overview_en.htm, depicts an overview of the Commission’s relations with civil society in terms of consultation practices and the Commission’s interest policy. However, when civil dialogue emerged in 1996, it was celebrated as a means of participatory democracy. The article 11 of Lisbon also stipulates that participatory democracy with civil society is carried out via consultations.
Engagement of NGOs in Governance Settings: Trade-off between democratization and bureaucratization
Having depicted an overview how civil society discourse has evolved within the EU and the Commission’s deliberate attempts to shape a civil society with an aim to control and standardize civil society through funding; we can proceed with the normative implications of this process. As the current form, or regime of NGO participation has brought pluralisation of decision-making structures with the involvement of “citizens’ groups”, on a normative account, this practice can be considered as ‘democratization of democracy’, following Pateman’s (2012) re-reflection upon the current “participation” experiences around the world.

What merits attention in ‘democratization of democracy’ argument is that participation experiences are related to a process, a process of whose final instance is necessarily “democracy”. In other words, this proposition considers participation experiences as a means of a desired outcome, that is, ‘democracy to come’. To the extent that democratization is defined as a slight improvement from the previous condition, or an embryonic phase of a process that necessarily yields to ‘democracy’, we might encounter the risk of not understanding the current condition ‘as it is’, while discarding the possibility that what has been conceived intrinsic to a process of a desired outcome (in this case democracy) might lead to “something else” and the repercussions of what already happens. In contrast to this teleological understanding, which implicitly (or explicitly) manipulates our understanding of a situation by conceiving it as part of a future-outcome-to-come, we should critically examine the trade-off between the ‘degree of improvement’ and the repercussions of the current form NGO involvement. Therefore, it is necessary to examine participation practices in terms of a counterfactual-normative argumentation by focusing on the effects of the context and the empirical evidences.

In the following, different normative perspectives about incorporation of NGOs to decision-making processes will be discussed. Following to this section, the aspects of the current regime of civil society engagement which encumbers on the democratizing effects of participation will be depicted.

Different approaches in normative theory about associational involvement in policy-making processes
Normative theories of democracy suggest conflicting views about such practice, as well as the democratic functions of associations (for a detailed review see Rossteutscher 2000, Baccaro 2006, Hendriks 2002). Within the extensive literature on civil society, it is, indeed, necessary to narrow the focus with those perspectives of civil society research which particularly deals with the involvement of associations in decision-making processes. That is, the perspectives on the associations, associated with participatory democracy, which study them in terms of their micro-impact on individuals, are not directly related to the current NGO participation at EU level. To illustrate for instance this account, Barber (1984), Putnam (1993) and Etzioni (1993) have rather focused on the social-physiological effects of participation (such as building trust, teaching civic virtues and bringing solidarity). Surely, those effects might as well be examined within the participants of EU NGOs. Yet the implications of these effects on European democracy are limited as the objective of NGO participation has been defined to contribute to EU governance in a functional way. Therefore, the correlation that is established between the civic skills of the EU NGO participants and democratizing would be tenuous. Associations’ relations to policy-
making or decision-making, within normative theory, can be grouped in two categories, that of functional approach and that of discursive approach.

Functional approach to associations: This approach was advanced by associative democracy, e.g. of Cohen and Rogers (1995) and of Hirsh (1994). It has the promise of explaining the current form of the NGOs’ engagement to EU governance, as it suggests empowerment of associations in terms of decision-making in such way to outsource the traditional roles of the state and diminish the representation asymmetries. It other words, in this view, state can take on the responsibility of supporting associational activities within civil society, if associations do not flourish within society voluntarily. This argument of associative democracy complies with the Commission’s proactive initiatives. Moreover, structuring of NGO networks in Brussels also shows parallels with the associative democracy’s proposal of constitution of large associations and of deliberately with the state’s intervention when these associations are not voluntarily evolved. Yet, this functional approach to participation, does not perfectly apply to EU governance because the contributions of the NGOs are inconsequential or trivial with being confined with advocacy consultations before the policy proposals (Obradovic 2005; Smismans 2006), unlike associative democracy’s proposal of authorization of the associations. On this account, as well as given that the Commission’s normative expectations from the engagement of civil society to policy-making processes have developed in such way akin to neo-pluralist arrangements (Greenwood 2007), involvement of NGOs to EU governance also conflicts with Pateman’s latest re-visit of participatory democracy (2012). Pateman’s examples, e.g. participatory budgeting in Porto Allegro, citizen’s assemblies and juries, are however selected from those experiences where civil society participation is consequential, i.e., having an impact on decision making, and ad hoc unlike the case with the NGO participation in EU public policy-making processes (see Article 11 in Lisbon treaty).

Discursive approach to associations: NGOs find an important place in discourse theory of Habermas (1996) because they are considered to foster public deliberation and bring the issues of common concern into public debate (see also Fung 2003). Yet, Habermas (ibid.) refutes empowerment of civil society organisations by political power, because this makes civil society vulnerable to rationalities of bureaucracy and the market. That is, incorporation of social groups to public administration in a neo-pluralist or corporatist vein is not necessarily a desired way of channelling the voice of citizenry. Habermas (Ibid.) rather emphasizes “communicative power” of civil society in influencing political processes, and with this emphasis he critiques direct translation of majority or average of citizen’s interests to politics, e.g. the opinions appeared in public opinion polls and or surveys. Interpretation of citizens’ interests in aggregate or quantitative terms (e.g. supremacy of votes) might entail an authoritarian element, i.e. resulting in the suppression of minority and justifying illiberal political acts (see below). This can be illustrated by Habermas’s thoughts on communicative action which conflates sociological and philosophical insights on the relationship between the system (money and power) and the life-world (civil society) (see Habermas 1984 and 1975). To Habermas (1984), bureaucratization has the possible perils of threatening the authenticity of civil society and of promise of regenerating values from within civil society through “communication action”. Otherwise, instrumental rationalities of bureaucracy might lead to colonization of the life-world, given that inner systemic of logic and bureaucracy (and economy) is different than that of civil society because the former is steered by the quantifiable media of money and power. On this account, in contrast to an interpretation that conceives civic interactions in terms of quantification
(interest aggregation) and engagement to political power, traditional method of activism, e.g. street protests, has been thought to bring in stronger impact in arising public awareness (cf. Young 2001), thus transforming social discourse into “collective” political pressure and bringing social change by changing the collective perceptions (Castells 1983). Moreover, as in Habermas’s discourse theory the transmission of discourses are rendered through elections and media, but not through the associations, the Commission’s direct support for the establishment of NGOs (Salgado-Sanchez 2007; Greenwood 2007) and involving them in EU governance (Kendall 2005) would be sceptically conceived on this account.

*Bad civil society:* Further, there is not an intrinsic correlation between associational life and democracy. Societal organisations might also foster illiberal sentiments in society, including xenophobia and hatred (Chambers and Kopstein 2001). The voices emanating from the grassroots do not per nature regenerate liberal values; xenophobic and hatred claims can (and have been) also be derived from the interactions taking place in civil society or public deliberations (Ruzza 2009; Chambers and Kopstein 2001; see also Kutay and Arribas 2011; Jan de Beck 2011). Civil society romanticists seem to ignore this “dark side” of civil society. For instance, Habermas was criticized on this account of ignoring this feature of civil society (Chamber and Kopstein 2001), given that in his latest normative ideals he ascribed high hopes in emergence of public spheres from civil society which dissolved to Habermas dissolved with the emergence of mass society (1989).

**European NGOs and participation**

The following depicts several issues with the NGOs’ incorporation to EU governance which might be thought of as impediments to their democratic functions.

*NGOs and links with grassroots:* As has been mentioned, the research on European civil society, developed against the normative yardstick of democratization of European governance, has been informed by Habermas’s ‘two-track model’ within which civil society actors articulate the public deliberations into political public spheres. Having applied this model to European governance, they have however taken for granted that supranational actors are ‘authentic’ extensions of civil society, with the latter implying that they have avoided problematising their linkage (however it may be defined) with local level or the grassroots. The presumption of considering supranational NGOs as the natural extension of European civil society or genuine mediators of European level public deliberations might empirically be misleading.

Hypothetically, on the documents of European NGOs, NGO community is well interconnected, between different sectors, and between different levels - including the national and the European. For an initial observer, this could, then, be considered a well-functioning state/society relationship: wherein the different levels of civil society communicate each other and discourses emerged from within these deliberations link to the political public spheres. Democratic functions of the network system rest on the idea that there is a vertical interconnection from the local NGOs to umbrella national networks and European umbrella networks. Or, supranational intermediaries of civil society achieve to detect the “local” discourses and then transmit them into policy making processes.

The research on the networking system of European NGOs, however, demonstrated that this networking mechanism does not function perfectly well, considering national organizations have minor impact on the work of the European headquarters (mostly
defined as the secretariat) (Sicakkan 2012; 2011; Jan de Beck 2011; Imig and Tarrow 2001). Sicakkan (2012) observes different direction of collective mobilization, contradicting with the proponents of two-track model (e.g. Steffek at al 2007). Although the latter presume consensus among the actors mobilizing collective action vertically in Europe, Sicakkan rather shows a contradictory reality. As his findings show, there is rather contention and contestation between the local and European level, with the national level social actors are being sceptical about the works of supranational NGOs and rather preferring to influence national political actors and engaging in horizontal cross-border interactions. Moreover, in line with Sicakkan’s research (Ibid.), it has been also found out that within the networks Southern and Eastern European organizations’ influence is limited against the northern organizations and the supranational elite (cf. Quittkat et al 2008). In other words, this networking structure, on the one hand, by and large, favours elitism at Brussels level; and on the other, carries the regional socio-economic differences existing in Europe into the heart of social movements. Consequently, Sicakkan’s findings, combined with the findings from the previous research, put the legitimacy of European level organizations’ self-authorization of representing themselves as the natural ‘representative of European civil society into question.

**Legitimate European civil society and exclusion: Linking to which civil society?**

The current form of NGO engagement in EU governance has been structurally confined to those associations which have been ‘willing’ and ‘able’ to participate.\(^{31}\) That is, the voice of anti-systemic movements or the groups which challenge the ethos of European integration, such as anti-capitalists, anti-globalization and alternative globalization groups, anarchists, and Eurosceptic groups are per definition excluded due to the rationale of governance which requires, at least a minimum level of, consent to European integration (Ruzza 2009).\(^{32}\) This has implication of limiting the scope of civil society in terms of its proximity with the political system; thus, civil society is not envisaged as a realm exogenous to political at large, but as a constituent and embedded element of the system of governance.

The relationship between the political authorities and civil society (i.e. third sector), which is considered to be dichotomously entrenched in theoretical discourse of civil society (e.g. Locke’s and Tocqueville’s interpretation), is ipso facto misleading. First, on the one hand the distance between public/private split is blurred, with these organizations being engaged in public administration or service delivery with political guidance instead of voluntarist spirit (Morrison 2000). Second, on the other, civil society is by definition polymorphic and necessarily polyphonic, with the latter not necessarily conferring to the richness or pluralism of voices in a positive sense, but also to the existing tensions and struggles contained within civil society.\(^ {33}\) Conceptualisation of civil society as a monolithic entity in terms of rationality or mode of operandi thus is empirically far-fetched. For instance, competing alternatives for the future of Europe are advanced by different groups within civil society, including a social democratic one defended e.g. by European Social Forum and a protective one (i.e. fortress Europe) defended by xenophobic groups (cf. Kutay and Arribas 2011; van de Beck 2011). Therefore, social movements that are now engaged in a dialogue with

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\(^{31}\) See Kutay (2012) for an illustration of how NGO networks have tried to mobilize civil society at European and local level – horizontally and vertically- in favour of further European integration.

\(^{32}\) See Jan de Beek (2011; and Kutay and Arribas (2011) for an illustration of the negative attitudes and discourses used by populist and xenophobic groups against European integration.

\(^{33}\) This assertion refers to Gramscian and Foucauldian views on civil society.
the EU are to be seen as part of polymorphic and polyphonic social movements (Ruzza 2011), or European civil society civil society, but not holding a monopoly over the definition of European civil society. Accordingly, European level networking structure, then, by definition excludes those groups which are against the (current) mode of integration. In other words, as participation at EU level commences with a priori acquiescence to the given mode of integration, it becomes, therefore, highly tenuous on which dimension or with which voices of the grassroots EU level organizations would be linked.

**Entitlement to deliberation**

In EU governance, entitlement to status is defined as ‘stakeholders’, yet the notion of holder is “necessarily constrained and limited in terms of who can, is, or will be allowed to participate” (Swygedouw 2005:2000). Civil society participation at EU level, by and large, fits into this statement, as CSOs willing to engage in governance necessarily need an expertise staff due to structural pressure for professionalization. Consequently, most of the NGO secretariats have so far, by and large, been filled by employees who are, mostly, polyglot and holding postgraduates degrees on European studies and/or proficiency on PR technologies (Saurugger 2007, Sudbery 2003).

Furthermore, some of the NGOs that have engaged with the EU have shown a tendency of fostering their institutional interests and thus of excluding further entries from civil society to governance settings. For instance, the Social Platform of European NGOs has defended an accreditation system, a formal mechanism which restricts participation to certain organisations in such way to formalise a privileged position for a group of authorized organizations.

**NGOs and European public sphere**

As has been mentioned, the Commission (Com 1997, 2000, 20019 and some scholars (e.g. Steffek and Nanz 2007) alike have had high hopes on the EU NGO networks to substitute the lack of a general European public sphere while reinforcing its development. Nonetheless, to Habermas (1992, 1996), democratic functions of civil society is contingent on existence of a general public sphere, through which the discourses that are emanated from civil society translate into a collective pressure on parliamentary discussions. This concern was shared by the president of the Social Platform: “The lacking is some kind of European public opinion. Unless we don’t have European public opinion, then it is difficult for European networks also to be present with the public debate with the citizens (C. Reuter, personal communication, May 2009).”

By conceiving fostering a “European public sphere” as a “responsibility”, the Coordinator of the Civil Society Contact Group on the other hand gives this responsibility to rather the media and national politics:

For me, the responsibility relies at least in a very large part more in the media, on even in the national politics, or national politicians who are not addressing European level as it should. More than the European networks per se. Sometimes, they have the feeling that the expectation or critiques that are driven towards the European networks the organizations like Social Platform. It is an excuse, trying to undermine the work of European networks by trying to put the work on the shoulders, the huge bulk of responsibility which is much more on the global, on the political site, and on media. (L. Sedou, political communication, May 2009).

The Coordinator of the Contact Group also illustrates the difficulties in finding a place in the media:
How can you get the interests to people if the media are not interested about what you say? It is not really easy to get journalists at the press conference or to get articulated on that conference. There is the problem of balance within the lobbying groups. It would be much easier for big lobby group, such as industrial groups, for which it is easier than the work of the NGO networks. For the small organizations, forget about organizing a press conference. Nobody cares. I am sorry it is like that. Politicians are not either taking seriously the European level, at least on countries I know like Belgium and France. European networks cannot replace that. (L. Sedou, political communication, May 2009)

As the above quotes illustrate, EU NGOs, at least those are interviewed within the scope of Eurosphere project, are aware of their limits in regards to emergence of EPS. In other words, these quotes depict difficulties of entrenching Habermas’s discursive approach at EU level – i.e. fostering public debate in terms a European frame- due lack of European public sphere. The president of the Platform then suggests interpreting the Commission’s Communication initiative that aims at “connecting with the citizens” from a functional approach to participation, thus conceiving the work of the EU NGOs as a way of representation of European citizenry. On the one hand, he supports this initiative as not being a PR strategy of the Commission, in the sense of “selling the product”; and on the other, he emphasizes through EU NGOs citizens are involved in EU policy making, and participatory democracy is rendered possible:

Communicating towards to citizens is not selling the product, the European intuitions to the citizens. It is about giving the citizens the chance to participate in the decision-making processes, in consultative processes...And this is the role of the organizations have to play because we are the link with the citizens. We are composed of membership organizations. We must defend the items of interests for all the member organizations; on the other hand we must just connect to citizens with the European purposes. The most important challenge is to understand this kind of lobby what we are doing is not only for one topic or two. As to involving citizens in the European level, now we are on the quite good way. With all these communications, we have connected the citizens and give them the idea that through us they are involved and that they participate.” (C. Reuter, personal communication, May 2009).

Communication officer of the Platform also states that EU NGOs create “public spaces” with their activities, which is also the reason for their establishment – this was also confirmed by the representative from ENAR:

Different space, like working groups like conferences...We try to organize different ways which different members in member states can meet each other and debate, and that is also why the European networks are funded by the commission because they manage to organize that space. They are sort of European public space and which civil society can get...It means that there is no quite unique way of communicating (A. Hoel, personal communication, may, 2009).

NGOs, independence and EU funding
The most important factor undermining the independence and authenticity of CSOs has been noted as the requirement of EU funding (Fazi and Smith 2006). What merits attention in this regard is to examine the extent of the implications of funding requirements on associations, as to access the EU funding NGOs should fulfil several requirements. For instance, Fazi and Smith (2006) asserts that public funding could
undermine the *raison d’être* of organizations; considering some of the organizations, such as representing the needs of specific parts of population (i.e. excluded and marginalized) could start concentrating on the transversal issues. Further, to them, the organisations could orient working on certain issues which are determined by the funding institution, in this case the Commission (Ibid.). The central question with this respect concerns whether their financial support should come from public authorities, or should the organizations find new sources. Social NGOs discussed about this in a workshop held within the *Civil Dialogue* conference organized by the Social Platform in 2008, yet they could not find any better solution than public funding – including the EU grants- to sustain their work. The first section of this paper depicted the Commission’s criteria on funding. The following quotes illustrate how the EU NGOs perceive the implications of this.

The representative from EWL (personal communication, 2009) complained that the current system weakens the NGOs by leading them to be reactive:

> They give NGOs loads of work to do often, which force NGOs to be more reactive than proactive and when you are reactive it’s often too late to have a political influence, but if you are proactive you might have more political influence… Although we are loads of people working here, each person on a specific policy area, it is impossible to work on everything, you have to set priorities. It’s a challenge to be proactive, not only reactive.

As was outlined in the Commission’s discussion paper of 2000, NGO elites confirmed that they were funded with the aim of giving a Europe perspective to NGO community.

There was a feeling among national organizations that there was a need for European perspective to anti-racism work. That is why ENAR created. I guess for other organizations or other areas there might also be a need (G. Siklossy, personal communication, May 2009).

The coordinator of the Civil Society Contact Group rightly complained about the unfair high ambitions and pressures exerted on the NGO.

> You think that you are not useful. If you think that European networks should do this and this, and they do not do properly this and this…It means that they should do everything. At the same time, they should lobby, at the same time they should be professional at the European level because you do not want to loose time. You want to have one page document which says exactly everything you do not need to study something bigger at the same time they should be close to grass-roots…the issue of representativeness, because they are too much professionalized and too much a bit EU people…all these critiques about you are getting kind a bit of your own words…you should do everything. You should be at the same time be grass-root activist, at the same time speaking high professional speaking as you…it is not possible, you know. We cannot do everything. Otherwise, we do not need major; we do not need politician, because we do everything. It does mean that we cannot receive criticism. We can always improve. Many times, it is bit of demagogic in the end. (personal communication, May 2009).

**Concluding Remarks**

The current policy initiatives that try to democratize EU governance by civil society participation are based on high expectations and standards, if not untenable with the
empirical reality (cf. Hueller 2010). EU NGOs have not been integrated to public policy making processes, as e.g. associative democracy of Cohen and Rogers (1995) and Hirst (1994) suggest. That is, they have limited power within the system of governance, given that their roles are confined with providing information and expertise to the Commission. The recent Lisbon treaty now has brought the condition that the Commission has to consult the stakeholders and CSOs before introducing a policy proposal; yet, the Commission enjoys the power to select among those provided inputs. In other words, NGOs – as well as other stakeholders- lack the power of bargaining in such way to influence the policy processes. Furthermore, consultations with extra political actors (or lobbyists) are now carried through the online consultation mechanism. Due to the pluralist nature of the consultations, which is based on an idea of aggregating interests, as well as due to fragmentation among the civic actors, the marginal impact of civil society is also diminished.

Given the structural confinements of the consultation system, which necessarily marginalizes the role of civil society in EU governance, hence, the normative expectations from civil society can be considered too high an ambition to achieve. With the aim of democratizing CSOs, the Commission has introduced norms and procedures with respect to their organizational structure, accountability and inclusiveness. Yet, these requirements have been rather ambitious (see Hueller 2010; Kochler-Koch 2010); such that they have brought in pressure to NGOs for substantial organizational change in order to fulfil the aforementioned requirements. The current formulation of the Commission presumes that democratically governed NGOs are the necessary prerequisites of democratization of EU governance. These formalist criteria will sure reinforce an organizational change. However, the question remains to be responded still is the impacts of these organizational changes on the democratization of EU governance. The EU introduced criteria of grant management rather fosters shaping of civil society in terms of a managerialist understanding along the politically determined objectives.

Evaluated as a policy, sponsorship to NGOs has several shortfalls. Democratization attempts results in creation of elites integrated into the milieu, adding an extra elite structure dividing the elite/mass split. When practiced, participants are re-active, as they are expected to reflect or provide information on the Commission-initiated proposals due to the nature of the policy-making processes at EU level. Therefore, their influences both on meta-level – having an impact on the ethos of integration- as well as on micro-level – on the public policy-making- are structurally confined. NGOs have become part of the Brussels milieu and incorporated into the public policy-making processes and democratization initiatives of EU governance. Then, their role and identity embody a tension between critical reflection and political engagement. Current consultation system however occludes the possibility for the inclusion of counter-discourses, including anti-globalization and Eurosceptics movements, or the groups which are incapable to organize. Organizations that are included in the system, on the other hand, yield to act ‘constructively’, while defending own institutional interest.

Furthermore, democratization of Europe has moved from the sheer attempts of the Commission, to a search from an encompassing democracy for Europe. From a systemic understanding of democracy, then, a high expectation that is put on the NGOs in democratizing EU governance is rather futile due to absence of a European public sphere or a well-functioning European parliamentary system. The current form of NGO engagement in EU governance rather brings in ‘NGOization’ of the public sphere, with being based on loose interactions mostly taking place at cyberspace.
Moreover, NGOs are not unique in bringing the public concerns or common good to European governance; either they have a monopoly over the possession of the common good. Although, they pluralise interest intermediation at European level, which surely reinforces democratisation; however, this does not equate with involvement of European citizenry. The current tendency of the EU to access to citizens directly, like the European Citizen’s initiative, also poses a challenge to the claims of the NGOs to represent the citizens.

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Protection, Participation and Legitimacy: The EU Public Consultation System and Ethnic and National Minorities

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The focal point of this article is the question how the wish of ethnic organisations to participate in the policy process interferes with the need of the EU to legitimize itself in the face of a persistent ‘democratic deficit’. With ethnic organisations, we mean organisation that identify with ethnic groups in three categories: regional national minorities like the Catalans, national minorities like the Roma who are diffusely spread over member states and immigrants (third country nationals) like the Turks in Germany. We focus on organisations – like political parties social movement organisations (SMO’s) and non-governmental organisations (NGO’s) – which try to influence the policy process on the (inter)national level.

The ongoing development of the European Union has radically changed the possibilities to influence the policy process, both in member states and internationally. The most obvious change is the development of a new supranational level of governance. A significant share of new legislation in Member States is actually made in Brussels. Therefore, political actors like lobby groups, think tanks and political parties have an interest to influence the European policy process. For small, local or national organisations it may be too large a burden to be present in Brussels and they may actually lose influence as an result of European integration. But under some circumstances, similar small organisations that are present in many countries may gain influence by joining forces on the European level in for example an umbrella organisation. That applies particularly to organisations that deal with trans-national issues such as gender, migration or the environment. In short, the changing opportunity structure brings winners and losers (Koopmans 2007).

An even more fundamental change in the opportunity structure is related to the fact that a public sphere is virtually non-existent at the European level. In an ideal-typical picture of representative democracy a demos rules itself by handing over governance to elected representatives. The will of the demos is then formed in a public sphere and communicated to the representatives who translate it into concrete policy programs. In turn, those policy programs are assessed in the public sphere and the feedback this generates is mediated by the media and absorbed by the representatives. In this way, the representatives stay in touch with the will of the demos and maintain their legitimacy (comp. Schlesinger & Fossum 2007). Hence, in any modern democracy a prerequisite for the legitimacy of the government is the existence of an accessible, inclusive and independent public sphere and media landscape.

However, on the European level, such a mature public sphere is lacking. In the first place a shared European identity and culture are at best weakly developed, and there is no such thing as an ‘European demos’. Underlying reason is the vast ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity within the EU. More in particular, (linguistic) diversity and the lack of a truly pan-European language is an impediment for the development of pan-European media, which are virtually non-existent and (like Euronews) only reach a small, elitist audience. For all those reasons, the first generation of researchers investigating the existence of an European public sphere where quick to point out that such a sphere did not – or even could not exist (De Vreese 2007). The last decade or so, there is ample literature moderating this vision, pointing at a process of ‘Europeanisation’ of national public spheres (Esmark 2007).
However, the fact that political decision-making is increasingly done at the European level, while public debates are still mostly confined to the national level, can be seen as the core of the democratic deficit of Europe (Koopmans 2007).

One of the effects of the immature European public sphere, is that it negatively affects those organisations that seek to influence the policy process by attracting media attention with actions or participation in media-covered public debates. This point is well illustrated by the environmental organisations. Environmental issues are by nature international in character, and it seems logical that environmental organisations try to influence EU politics in this field. Moreover, environmental issues were accorded legitimacy by the EU early on and consistently sanctioned and supported by various EU institutions (Marks & Doug 1996). Nevertheless, environmental organisations do not find much of a stage in Brussels:

Environmental organisations depend for their legitimacy and their resources upon their ability to command public support, and in the absence of a genuinely European public opinion, it is primarily public opinion at national level to which they must be responsive. Therefore they tend to invest in strengthening their national organisations rather than providing for substantial resources required for collective action at European level. Moreover, action at the EU level is often made disproportionately expensive by the costs of travel, communication and translation, while its effectiveness may be hard to evaluate, since the implementation of policies is still national (European Parliament 2003).

Hence, for this type of organisation, European integration is not a matter of scale, but forces them to change tactics and strategy in order to be influential.

Another effect of the lack of a fully fledged European public sphere is that it increased the relative importance of lobbying as a way of influencing EU policy making. This in the first place applies to the volume of lobby activities in Brussels. EU lobbying has grown considerably over time and today some 1000 trade associations, the representative bodies of 500 large companies, about 750 NGO’s and around 150 offices representing regions are present in Brussels, together with many specialist consultants and law firms (European Parliament 2003: 5). Most of the approximately 5000 accredited interest groups in Brussels are linked to businesses and networks of professionals, but about one-fifth are non-governmental organisations (Coen 2007; Greenwood 2003). All in all, the 15.000 civil servants of the European Commission and the European Parliament face roughly 20.000 lobbyists on a daily basis (Coen 2007).

Besides, the lack of a nationstate-like public sphere and the democratic deficit also have a more subtle effect on lobbying activities. The undemocratic and opaque EU decision making is often parboiled in hardly visible consultative commissions, workgroups and the like for an extensive period of time. During this period, lobbyists may have the opportunity to steer the weeding out of possible policy options in a direction they prefer. This, in combination with the relative high degree of rational ignorance of EU agenda-setting institutions like the European Commission gives lobbyists a considerable indirect agenda setting power (Varela 2009).

The democratic deficit shapes the character of EU lobbying in yet another way. In general, there is a strong mutual dependency between EU officials and lobbyist, based on the exchange of expert knowledge and information. Often the juridical and technical complexity of laws and regulations is simply to high and it is difficult to
envision an EU regulation on dangerous chemicals without some involvement of the chemical industry. For actors in for example the industry, the financial sector and other corporate branches, the situation is not much different from lobbying on the national level and for them, European integration is mostly a matter of increasing scale. If we differentiate between consultation and codecision as the two principal legislative procedures (Crombez 2002) this kind of lobbying would be predominantly aimed a codecision.

For lobby organisations like NGOs and SMOs that try to further civic interests, the mutual dependency between EU officials and lobbyist has an extra dimension: legitimacy. The democratic deficit creates an incentive for EU institutions to actively search for sources of legitimacy. This works two ways: for a civic organisation – say an NGO – having access to EU institutions adds to its legitimacy with its constituency. Conversely, due to the democratic deficit of the EU and the resulting lack of legitimacy, EU-institutions gain by close cooperation with the NGO because it is a way to gain legitimacy. By consulting NGOs and other civic organisations the EU institutions gain influence and improve their image as responsible political actors (comp. Faist 2004). Since cooperation with NGO’s are an alternative source of legitimacy, EU institutions stimulate the formation of for example umbrella organisations of migrant communities in the Member States (Geddes 2000; comp. Van de Beek et al. 2010). This need of the EU to gain legitimacy has contributed to what is called the EU consultation system. It also has contributed to some specific characteristics of EU lobbying which in comparison to US lobbying, is less aggressive and more geared towards reaching consensus (Woll 2006).

We want to focus the rest of this article of the mutual dependency of EU institutions and organisations that identify with ethnic groups. In this, we make a distinction between national minorities and ethnic minorities, where ‘national minority’ refers to a group that obtained its minority position through the process of (nation)state formation, and ‘ethnic minority’ refers to a group of people that obtained its minority position through immigration in an existing nation state (Compare Kymlicka 1995: 10-11). For sake of simplicity we call the latter group ‘immigrants’.

As said, we are interested in the mutual dependency between those ethnic groups and the EU. First of all, we like to analyse the structure and degree of institutionalisation of the EU consultation system for each of these groups. Furthermore, we want to know what both parties expect to gain by consultation. With regard to the EU we want to look how consultation feeds into the legislative process and to what degree consultation helps to increase the EU’s legitimacy. With regard to the five ethnic groups, we like to know what expectations and preferences they have about the EU. These considerations lead to the following research question:

34 The term ‘national minority’ is a rather vague term. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights speaks of “ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities” without further specification. Also the European Convention on Human Rights uses the term ‘national minority’ without specifying it. More importantly, even the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities does not define the term ‘national minority’; this is left to participating states.
(a) What is the structure of the EU consultation system for each of the five ethnic groups
(b) what do organisations affiliated with these ethnic groups expect from the EU and
(c) to what extent does EU consultation of those groups increase EU legitimacy?

After the methodological paragraph (§2) will first answer sub question (a) by sketching the EU consultation system vis-à-vis each of the five ethnic groups (§3). Then we will look into the preferences and expectations each ethnic group (sub question b) has about the EU (§4). Finally we will analyze how consultation affects EU legitimacy (sub question c) and to extent consultation is congruent with the preferences and expectations of the five groups (§5).

Methodology, data and actor selection
In order to answer the research question, we make use of data from two different types of sources. Firstly, we make use of secondary literature, EU-reports and other sources to sketch the EU consultation system in the next paragraph. For the analysis of the expectations and preferences about the EU of the five ethnic groups, we make use of the Eurosphere project. This project is geared towards understanding the interaction between the development of the European Polity, a European public sphere and ethnic and national diversity. For this research, leading figures of organisations in 16 European countries where interviewed on this subject. These where all organisations that somehow influence the policy process: political parties, Social Movement Organisations and think tanks.35

From the Eurosphere database we selected a total of 29 organisations that are affiliated with one of the five ethnic groups. The classification of the organisations was done with help of the Eurosphere Country Reports36 and in consultation with the Eurosphere partners, who revised our initial judgment when necessary. Besides that, we selected 30 political parties that can be seen as ‘mainstream’. Those Mainstream Political Parties are used as a control group. For each country several (in most cases two) political parties where selected that belong to the political middle of this country. Again, we used a similar procedure of consultation of Eurosphere partners to reach the final selection of mainstream political parties.

We need to make some remarks on our use of the data. In the first place, the number of respondents per ethnic group is rather limited. To be exact, we have for Regional National Minorities 26 respondents representing 5 organisations, for Roma 12 respondents representing 4 organisations, for Jews 8 respondents representing 3 organisations, for Muslim Immigrants 12 respondents representing 7 organisations and for Non-Religious Immigrants 11 respondents representing 3 organisations. Obviously, this severely limits the validity of our sample. We however feel that the data is suited for illustrating the preferences and expectations about the EU of the five ethnic groups and carefully draw some preliminary conclusions. To reach sufficient validity, more research on a larger sample is needed.

Furthermore, some of the questions of the (structured) interviews we used allow for multiple overlapping answer categories. In the two figures below, those answers

35 Note that different entities play a role in our research: the respondents, the organisations they belong to and the ethnic groups these organisations affiliate with. We in fact want to analyze the differences and similarities of each type of organisation, but as a matter of convenience we will often refer to the respondents or the ethnic groups involved.
are aggregated. For each answer category we took the fraction of respondents that
demed that answer category applicable to their situation. Then we added all fractions
in order to form bar charts. Because a fraction may vary between 0 (=0%) and 1
(=100%), the bars may add up to more than 1 (=100%). Therefore, one should be
careful with interpretations, since the length of the bars partly depends on the number
of overlapping answer categories. For example, it makes a big difference whether the
respondent can only choose ‘European Polity’ or has multiple possible answer
categories, one for each institution comprising the European Polity as is the case with
Eurosphere interview question V5.10 (see Figure 1). Also, in those cases where many
overlapping answer categories are aggregated, the bars may be rather long, which
might give the false impression that no answer category was mentioned often.
However, with a high number of answer categories even a score of 1 (=100%) may
cover a relative small part of a bar. Despite those limitations, the date is well suited to
compare the five types of organisations with each other and with the control group of
mainstream political parties.

The EU public consultation of ethnically affiliated organisations

Overview

As said before, EU lobbying has grown considerably over time. However, the number
of lobbyists, lobby organisations and their resources are quite unevenly distributed
over the types of actors that want to influence EU politics. Following EU
categorisation (European Parliament 2003), lobby organisations can be divided in
civic and producer organisations. The producer’s interests can be subdivided into
labour, professions and business which are all well represented by often resourceful
lobby organisations. Likewise, the civic organisations can be further subdivided in
four somewhat heterogeneous categories; those representing consumer, environmental, regional and social & community interests. Though only the latter two
are of direct relevance to us, it’s insightful to look at the first two as well for
comparative purposes.

Consumer lobby organisations are in general well resourced and well organized
and in that sense do not deviate much from the producer lobby organisations. As said
before (§1), environmental organisations operate in Brussels, but despite their
international character and early recognition by EU institutions their influence is
curbed due to the lack of a mature European Public Sphere. Lobbying by regional
organisations is well developed and much institutionalized. This contrasts sharply
with the degree of organisations and resourcefulness of organisations that lobby for
social and community interests:

Organisations of women, human rights activists and other societal interests
tend to be weaker than their counterparts in the sectors of industry, trade and
agriculture and for the most part lag behind in the pace of Europeanization set
by the latter groups. This is even more true of other groups of the population,
for instance welfare recipients and pensioners, who lack transnational ties and
are widely dispersed – not to mention immigrant workers, minority ethnic
groups, and the unemployed (European Parliament 2003).

As we will see shortly, the degree of self-organisation of immigrants and non-regional
national minorities indeed falls behind that of the regional national minorities, though
the first have been catching up a bit during the last decade. We will now sketch the
way EU institutions consult each of the five groups; Regional National Minorities, Roma, Jews, Muslim Immigrants and Non-Religious Immigrants.

Regional National Minorities

The development of the consultation structure regarding regional national minorities is strongly related to a process of regionalization that started in the eighties. The meaning of territory to the dispersion of political and economic power has changed dramatically over the past decades. Some forces like globalisation work deterritorializing in the sense that they tend to disconnect ties between place and culture. Likewise, European integration weakens the importance of the nation state and its hold on territory. At the same time, European integration also makes regionalism a more prominent force in European politics (Keating 1997). Increasingly, cities and industrial regions are lobbying for resources in Brussels (McAleavey & Mitchell 1994). By the end of the 1990’s Brussels counted some 150 organisations representing sub-national governments (European Parliament 2003). Furthermore, those organisations combine forces in two overarching organisations: the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Assembly of European Regions (AER). The AER – founded in 1985 – is made up of delegates of over 200 regional parliaments who claim to represent 80% of the European population (European Parliament 2003).

37 The power of the regional organisations vary greatly with the power of the sub national governments they represent. Some of the more peripheral regions are weak, poor and not well organized, while others like the Belgian region of Flanders, Spanish autonimous communities like Catalonia and the German Lander like Bavaria are powerful and relatively independent political entities within their respective states (Hooghe & Marks 1996). Especially the German Lander felt they were underrepresented in European politics and lobbied for the creation of a chamber representing the regions in the European polity. This ultimately led to the installation of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), first mentioned in the Maastricht Treaty (Christiansen 1996).

The foundation of the CoR is the culminating point in what Hepburn (2007: 233-235) has coined “The Rise and Fall of a ‘Europe of the Regions’” (comp. Elias 2009; comp. Hepburn 2008). In the early eighties, the attitude of regional politics was characterized by “nationalist and left-wing animosity to the European project” and a vision on the nation state as a “giver of autonomy” (Hepburn 2007: 233). Gradually regional parties started to appreciate the decentralization of government in member states and visualized “an alternative form of autonomy … available to (regional) political parties previously seeking independence, which amounted to a special place in a ‘Europe of the Regions’” (Hepburn 2007: 233). For some time regional organisations saw the EU as a third way between nation state centralism and full autonomy. Reversely, the EU reached out by founding the Committee of the Regions in 1994 and embedding the principle of subsidiarity in EU treaties. So, to regional actors, the CoR and the idea of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ seemed a means to “bypass the nation state” (Keating & Hooghe 2001).

However, rather quickly the Committee of the Regions turned out to have little influence on the EU policy process and participating parties grew more and more

37 Numbers from the mid-nineties.

38 Another form of cooperation of regional organisations on the European level is the formation of the European Free Alliance, a faction in the European Parliament that combine represents the interests of many nationally based political parties of regional minorities like the Frisians, Welshmen and Catalans.
frustrated (Christiansen 1996). One of the reasons was that the EU saw the CoR predominantly as a way to solve its persistent legitimacy problem, without sharing real power with the regional level: “For the supranational institutions, the creation of such a committee was attractive because it carried the advantage of added legitimacy to European policymaking, while CoR’s advisory nature carried little potential for obstructing decision processes” (Christiansen 1996). Furthermore, it turned out that “influence in EU decision making derive[d] largely from effective coalition building, both with other like-minded actors but also, inevitably in the case of sub-national authorities, with central governments” which contributed to further “skepticism about the feasibility of a ‘Europe of the Regions’” (Bomberg & Peterson 1998).

From the mid-nineties onward regional parties began to lose their believe in a Europe of the Regions, mainly because of the continuing weakness of the CoR, but also the unwillingness of the EU to embed regional recognition in the European Constitution. Increasingly, they began to see the EU as a threat to regional autonomy and many regional parties reverted back to their original state-centred position, searching for ways to receive protection, recognition and resources not from the EU, but from the state (Hepburn 2007: 234). In short, despite the fact that the consultation structure developed in the eighties and nineties is still in place and has a high degree of organization, it still gives regional organizations a more limited say in European Politics than they actually want.

Roma
In recent years, a EU consultation structure has been build around the Roma minority. One of the key players is the European Roma Information Office (ERIO). ERIO – founded in 2003 – works as an interlocutor for EU institutions and links those institutions with an extensive European network of Roma organizations.

“Moreover, ERIO promotes the participation of Roma communities in decision-making processes at European, national and local levels. ERIO works to sensitise EU institutions to the importance of developing and ensuring the accessibility of equal opportunities for Roma in EU Member States as well as in Candidate Countries”.

In 2008, Roma consultation was further institutionalised when the European Commission received a request of the member states to organise, initially, an exchange of good practice and experience between the Member States in the sphere of inclusion of the Roma, provide analytical support and stimulate cooperation between all parties concerned by Roma issues, including the organisations representing Roma, in the context of an integrated European platform (Council of the European Union 2008: 52).

This resulted in the so-called Roma Platform, in which Roma representatives and representatives of the EU and national governments meet each other on a regular basis.

A driving force behind this recent development is the eastward expansion of the EU. This resulted in two related problems. In the first place, the accession of countries like Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria with a relative large Roma population

brought a large share of Europe’s largest minority (European Commission 2011a) under shared responsibility of the EU. Many Roma in those countries live in deplorable socio-economic circumstances and face systematic discrimination and exclusion on a daily basis (Maryniak 2004).

In the second place, the freedom of movement within the enlarged EU, made it possible for East-European Roma to migrate to the West. Countries like Italy and France saw a relative large influx of Roma seasonal workers and travellers. In many cases, this influx put pressure on local authorities and provoked anti-Roma sentiments among the population. Moreover, the governments of those countries reacted with harsh, and sometimes very discriminatory measures. Notorious examples are the Italian ‘Roma camps’ and the French ‘deportations’ of unwanted Roma immigrants. Some scholars argue that the old EU countries apply double standards, demanding strict application of minority rights in accessing countries, and simultaneously violating those very rights in case of the Roma (Johns 2003; Vermeersch 2002).

All in all, the EU saw itself confronted with a very unwanted and difficult situation. Despite the fact that minority rights are securely anchored in the Lisbon Treaty and in Directives on Racial Equality and Free Movement and Residence (European Commission 2011b), both old and new member states behave discriminatorily against the Roma and anti-Roma feelings seemed deeply entrenched among their populations. This lead to the foundation of the before mentioned Roma Platform and more recently to the development of “An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020” (European Commission 2011a; European Commission 2011b). All in all, in the case of the Roma, the EU has firmly positioned itself as the protector of minority rights, neglected by many member states.

**Jews**

EU institutions do not behave as proactive towards the Jews as in the case of the Roma, though the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights is for example regularly monitoring trends in anti-Semitism (FRA 2011). On the other hand, during the last two decades, Jews in Europe founded several organisations aimed at lobbying the EU. For a considerable part, this lobbying is aimed at influencing the foreign policy of the EU regarding the middle east peace process. In that sense it can be seen as part of the more general phenomenon of Diaspora lobbying (comp. Koinova 2010; Shain 2002). One of the players that tends to side more with Israel is the Centre Européen Juif ‘Information (CEJF), founded in 1991. Another much smaller organisation, founded in 2002, are the European Jews for a Just Peace (EJJP), which lobby the EU for a ‘Just Peace’ in which both Israel and the Palestinians are treated fairly. Both are umbrella organisations representing many nationally based Jewish organizations. An important recent development is the foundation of the European Jewish Parliament. This Brussel-based parliament is representing Jews throughout Europe, both inside en outside the EU. This Parliament could have a large influence on the future development of the EU consultation structure vis-à-vis the Jewish minority in Europe.

The identity of the European Jews is rather complex and has a national dimension (in relation to Israel), a religious dimension (to those Jews who are orthodox) and also an ethnic or minority dimension. Therefore, besides lobbying aimed at EU foreign policy, Jewish organisations in Europe deploy many other activities. For example,

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CEJI is quite active in combating racism in horizontal cooperation with e.g. organisations fighting racism and discrimination and Muslim organisations (Van de Beek et al. 2010). Especially with regard to the religious dimension, Jews increasingly feel threatened by new or proposed laws and regulations that prohibit ritual slaughter or circumcision in some member states.\textsuperscript{43} Hence, it is not unlikely that religious matters may play an important role in future EU consultation of the Jewish community. However, so far the religious representations of the Jews in Europe seems limited with the Conference of European Rabbis as the most important, but hardly visible player (Foret & Schlesinger 2007).

\textit{Muslim immigrants}

This last observation is a direct link with the EU-consultation of \textit{Muslim Immigrants}. Though the EU is “certainly not a nation state” (Schmidt 2004) like centralist France, the federal German ‘Bundesrepublik’ or the US federation, it is nevertheless a state-like structure. In its development, a form of laïcité or separation of ‘state’ and ‘church’ has always been presupposed. Religion is not seen as an EU competence and left to the national level (Foret 2009; Pastorelli 2009). In general, EU legislative measures make little reference to religion (Steven 2009). In fact, EU-institutions are often seen as surprisingly secular (Leustean & Madeley 2009), despite Jacques Delors action to ‘give Europe a soul’ (Foret & Schlesinger 2007) and, more recently, the heated debates on the Christian character of the EU in relation to the European constitution (Menéndez 2005).

However, phenomena like Muslim terrorism and the subsequent “moral panic … about the role of religion in public life” (Leustean & Madeley 2009), a ‘growing islamophobia’ (Van der Brug & Van Spanje 2009) and discontent in many member states about Muslim immigrants have pushed the EU towards active consultation of religious minorities. The Lisbon Treaty has a provision stating that EU shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with churches, religious associations or communities an also non-confessional organisations in the Member States (Houston 2009; Leustean & Madeley 2009). So far religious representations seem to be mainly limited to Christian churches, the Roman Catholic Church in particular. Other denomination are hardly represented in Brussels (Foret & Schlesinger 2007). However, in recent years religious lobbying has increased considerably. This resulted in “the incorporation of religious communities as partners of dialogue in the EU legislation” (Leustean & Madeley 2009) and “political mobilisation in the European Parliament” (Foret 2009). Nevertheless “their lobbying tends to be defensive, aimed at ensuring that established positions at the national level will not be threatened (Foret 2009).

Conversely, EU-institutions actively search for religious dialogue partners (Geddes 2000). Foret (2009) relates this directly to the EU’s ongoing quest to increase legitimacy. “The 2000s have been a period of political decay for the EU” he argues, pointing at the problems with the referenda on the constitution, the Eastward enlargement and the euro, and “that is the reason why the EU has tried – once more – to tackle the legitimisation issue” (Foret 2009). This all being said, one must conclude that Muslim lobbying in the EU is still in an early phase of development and small in comparison to their Christian counterparts, with the Strasbourg-based Muslim Council for Cooperation in Europe as its most prominent organization (Foret & Schlesinger 2007).

\textsuperscript{43} See for example \url{http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4144496,00.html} retrieved 11-11-2011.
Non-Religious Immigrants

With regard to the EU consultation of Non-Religious Immigrants there is a less proactive attitude of EU-institutions. Besides, the European Migration Forum (EMF) seems to be the only, somewhat influential NGO lobbying on behalf of immigrants in general, though there are several other organisations that represent minority and immigrant interest in a more general sense like the Human Rights Contact Group and United a European-wide anti-racism network (European Parliament 2003).

Expectations and preferences of ethnic organisations regarding the EU

The next task at hand is to examine the expectations and preferences of ethnic organisations regarding the EU. First of all, we look at the degree to which each type of organisation is geared towards influencing the EU polity. This is done with help of the answers to a Eurosphere interview question with regard to the actors the organisation want to reach with its actions (see Figure 1). In this figure, we are primarily interested in the relative degree to which the respondents want to reach EU-institutions like the European Parliament (EP), the European Commission, European courts and other institutions that are part the European Polity (blue shades in Figure 1).

Figure 1: Which actors on (inter)national or regional and local level the respondent wants to address with his or her activities.44

(Source: Eurosphere Interview Database, see Van de Beek & Vermeulen 2010, Question V5.10)

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44 Percentage of the respondents per organisation type that mentioned a certain answer category in response to the question Which actors on (inter)national or regional and local level the respondent wants to address with your activities? The fraction of the total number of respondents of a certain organization type that mentioned a particular answer category are aggregated. Because the respondents were allowed to mention more than one answer category, the answer add up to more than 1 (1 being equal to 100%).
This picture shows three striking trends. Firstly, there is a marked difference between immigrants on the one hand and regional national minorities – Roma and especially Jews – on the other hand. The latter turn out to be aiming most at influencing EU-institutions, even more than mainstream political parties. This contrast sharply with the low tendency to influence EU-institutions displayed by the organisations affiliated with immigrants. Secondly, regional national minorities do not show an above average tendency to influence the Committee of the Regions, which confirms the observation in §3 that the CoR has little influence and dwindling meaning for regionalist actors. Finally, among regional national minorities, Jews and Roma, we see relative high scores on influencing EU-institutions like the European Ombudsman and the European Courts of Justice and of Human Rights. This is an indication that those organisation types have interest in the EU as a protector of minority rights, next to additional interests like increasing participation for the regions (Regional National Minorities) or influencing EU foreign policy and securing religious minority rights (Jews).

**Figure 2** To which groups should the EU have power to grant minority rights that cannot be revised by the Member States.\(^{45}\)

![Bar chart showing preferences of different groups.](source: Eurosphere Interview Database, see Van de Beek & Vermeulen 2010, Question V3.5a)

In order to find out which motive – the EU as protector of minority rights versus regional participation or influencing foreign policy – is more important, we look at another Eurosphere interview question regarding preferences of the ethnically

\(^{45}\) Percentage of the respondents per organisation type that mentioned a certain answer category in response to the question V3.5a To which groups should the EU have power to grant minority rights that cannot be revised by the Member States? The fraction of the total number of respondents of a certain organization type that mentioned a particular answer category are aggregated. The answer category The EU should NOT have power to grant any minority rights to any groups is counted as negative. Because the respondents were allowed to mention more than one answer category, the answer add up to more than 1 (1 being equal to 100%).
affiliated organisations with regard to shifting power to grant irrevocable minority rights from the member-states to the EU-level (see Figure 2). This question is of importance to all types of ethnically affiliated organisations. Here we see that especially Roma turn out to be strong proponents of a shift of competences regarding minority rights to the EU level, followed by the regional national minorities and non-religious immigrants. Jews and Muslim immigrants are not much in favour of the idea of shifting competences on minority rights to the EU level, with levels comparable to or lower than mainstream political parties.

It seems that especially Roma have much confidence in the EU as protector of (their) minority rights. This may well be explained by their negative experiences with national governments – both in west and east Europe – in combination with the recent efforts by the European Commission to put Roma inclusion firmly on the political agenda (see §3). Finally, the moderately positive attitude of regional national minorities towards shifting power over minority rights to the EU-level may be explained by pointing at the fact that the EU can grant new rights or enforce existing rights while the costs of such minority rights (bilingual education, conflicts with vested interests) are by and large borne by the member-states. However, despite the failure of a Europe of the Regions, gaining regional influence must still be seen as a very important motive for lobbying the EU. Finally, regional national minorities still are “are consistently pro-EU across time, space, and issue area” (Jolly 2007) and can be shown to be much in favour of a federalized Europe in which power is shifted towards the regions at expense of the member states (Van de Beek & Vermeulen 2011, forthcoming).

Conclusions
Remember that we set out to answer the following research question:

(a) **What is the structure of the EU consultation system for each of the five ethnic groups**
(b) **what do organisations affiliated with these ethnic groups expect from the EU and**
(c) **to what extent does EU consultation of those groups increase EU legitimacy?**

We will now give an integrated answer to these three sub questions. The only type of interest in our sample that comes close to the representational success of business and professions is that of regional organisations and authorities. Moreover, regional interest are (uniquely) entrenched in the EU polity with the installation of the CoR. This has to do with the attempt to create a ‘Europe of the Regions’. From the perspective of the EU, this move should by and large be seen as an attempt to increase the legitimacy of the European Polity as a panacea for the persistent democratic deficit. One could argue that this approach had two dimensions. Firstly, in a more direct way, the introduction of the Committee of the Regions – founded on the principles, proximity to citizens, partnership between all levels of government and subsidiarity of legislation and administration – would bring EU decision-making much closer to the citizens. Secondly and more indirectly, by “bypassing the nation state” (Keating & Hooghe 2001) and diminishing its power, the EU could achieve a more state-like image. However, this scheme did not work out very well and much of its failure may be ascribed to the fact that both the EU and the member states did not really want to share power with the regional level and gave the CoR only an advisory status. As a consequence, the whole idea of the Europe of the Regions did not
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contribute much to EU legitimacy. Despite this, representatives of the organisations of regional national minorities in our sample are still positive about the idea of a federal European Union, which indicates that the idea of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ still lives on in some form.

With the Roma, there is a rather clear cut situation. The Roma are severely discriminated against by ‘old’ and ‘new’ member states alike. This poses the European Union with a pain-full inconsistency because the EU fosters a self-image of being a community based on human rights. For that reason, the EU has taken up the challenge of a swift inclusion the Roma minority. This has led to a moderately institutionalized consultation system for this group, with regular meetings of the so-called Roma Platform. It seems that the preferences and expectations of the Roma organisations in our sample are rather congruent with this agenda; respondents on average expect much from the EU as a protector of (their) minority rights and are also geared towards influencing EU institutions. However, though EU interference in the casus of the Roma may probably increase the EU’s image of being a rights-based community, it certainly does not solve the democratic deficit.

The case of the Jews is somewhat different. Firstly, where in the Roma case the European Commission seems to be the proactive actor, for the Jewish case the initiative seems to be coming predominantly from the Jewish community itself. The recent foundation of the Brussels-based Jewish European Parliament illustrates this point. Furthermore, the Jewish case is more complex, in the sense that it is about minority rights, religion and the EU foreign policy on the Middle East. Where it is not unlikely that EU institutions consult Jewish interest groups that operate on the European level on matters of religion or minority rights, it would be more difficult to imagine consultation of such groups on the EU’s foreign policy towards Israel. So it seems that the balance in this case is less on the side of consultation and more on classic Diaspora lobbying. However, over the past few years, EU institutions are more actively engaged in finding religious interlocutors, and this together with the interference of several EU member states with religious rituals may make for a changing picture and make consultation relatively more important. The preferences and expectations of the Jewish respondents in our sample seems to be partly congruent with this: they show a strong tendency to influence the EU polity which is consistent with their Diaspora lobbying, but on the other hand do not have much confidence in the EU as a protector of minority (and religious) rights. Lastly, it is not easy to perceive any improvement of EU legitimacy vis-à-vis the EU population at large related to lobbying or consultation of Jewish organisations in Brussels.

Muslim immigrants, are organizationally less articulated then national minorities. This may partly be explained by their shorter presence in the EU and lower socio-economic status. However, in recent years, the role of religion – and the Islamic faith in particular – is increasingly seen as problematic and this has put religion on the EU political agenda. Nowadays, a dialogue with religions (and also non-confessional organizations) is entrenched in the Lisbon Treaty. Hence, the EU’s more proactive attitude towards religions and increased religious lobbying may result in a much more institutionalized consultation structure for the Islam and other religions in the near future. Again, it is difficult to see how the EU’s legitimacy could be substantially improved by opening up opportunities for religious lobbying, because it does not solve fundamental problems like the selection and representativity of interlocutors and their precise influence in the murky EU policy process (comp. Foret 2009).

The consultation structure vis-à-vis non-religious immigrants seems to be least organized of the five groups at study here. Only a few organisation represent the
interests of immigrants in general at Brussels. Also, unlike religious communities, immigrants do not have special provisions in EU-treaties that open up lobby opportunities. Lastly, the EU does not seem to act much different from member states when it comes to exclude third country nationals, for example at its Southern borders, and hence it seems unlikely that the EU can gain extra legitimacy by a more proactive and inclusive attitude towards the non-religious immigrants.

With regard to sub question (c), we may conclude that the regional national minorities are best represented in EU consultation and the EU polity, partly because of the influence of some very powerful players like Bavaria. On the other hand, the degree of organization varies immensely between regional players. The structure of participation and consultation build around regions must be seen as a first failed attempt of the EU to gain legitimacy. Today, the EU tries to gain legitimacy by Roma-protection and by an ordered dialogue with (non)religious confessions. Though this may increase the EU’s image as a protector of minority rights, its unlike that it is going to solve the fundamental problems underlying the democratic deficit.

References


Can European networks contribute to the reproduction of common views of the European public sphere among national think tanks?

Marybel Perez, University of Bergen

The engagement of national non-state actors in transnational networks is creating spaces in which common subjects are debated and transnational discourses are created and reproduced (Sicakkan 2012b). The creation and reproduction of transnational discourses can be the result of a strategic logic that policy actors follow in order to pursue their interests (Checkel 2005: 810). However, overtime, by acting according to the premises of the transnational sphere, policy actors can internalise the transnational rules and perspectives to the extent that are adopted as guidelines for the definition of their perceptions and actions (Checkel 2005: 812). In other words, a process of socialisation in the transnational sphere takes place. In this regard, in one of the first systematic studies of think tanks in Europe Stephen Boucher (2004) indicated that these organisations were immersed in a process of transnationalisation. Such process consisted in: i) the expansion of the number of decision-makers targeted (now of EU character), ii) the expansion of the sources of funding to incorporate the European, iii) responding to the national and local demands of political analysis of EU developments, and iv) the enhancement of their comparative advantage with other policy actors unable to develop political analysis and engage in policy networks at EU level (Boucher 2004: 9-10). During this process, some think tanks became members of the two main European networks of think tanks located in Brussels, the European Policy Institutes Network (EPIN) and the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA).

Consequently, the purpose of this article is to identify the conditions that facilitate the socialisation of think-tanks members of EPIN and TEPSA in specific views of the European public sphere (EPS). The underlying hypothesis is that by interacting in EPIN and TEPSA specific transnational discourses are disseminated among the think tanks and common views are created and reproduced. To this end the structural conditions for socialisation as developed by Jeffrey Checkel (2005) are examined. This framework has been useful to identify the conditions that facilitate and constrain socialisation of national representatives to the EU and EU officials (Zürn and Checkel 2005). As a result, this constitutes an extension of the application of this framework by studying socialisation of non-state actors, such as think tanks, and linking it with the scholarship studying the presence and content of Europeanizing spaces among non-state actors (Sicakkan 2012b). By doing this, it is possible to identify the presence of elements of communication and mutual trust that encourage networks to find collective solutions despite the particular interests of network members (Börzel 1998: 266). Also, this is an important subject to study given the EU efforts to integrate non-governmental policy actors, such as think tanks and the networks they participate, with the intention to increase representation and channels of communication with the public (Börzel and Lauréote 2009: 138) and, as a result, the EU is shaping the rules and perspectives of interaction of non-state actors (Kutay 2012).

The following section explains how socialisation helps to study the effects of think tanks' interaction in networks on the creation and reproduction of common views and describe the approach and conditions for socialisation applied. In the third section, a
description of the European think tanks and the organisational analysis of the conditions of socialisation of EPIN and TEPSA are presented. The fourth section explains the data and the methodology. The fifth section presents the models of the public sphere used in the categorisation and analysis of the propositions of the think-tank experts. In the sixth section the network and statistical analyses are presented. The last section consists of a discussion of the implications of the results on the understanding of socialisation of think tanks and the creation and reproduction of common views of the EU polity.

Explaining think tanks’ socialization in networks

It is supposed that socialization takes place when the context encourages arguing and persuasion (Checkel 2005: 812), and networks are a suitable context to study socialization given their non-hierarchical character and the combination of bargaining and deliberation in their interactions which are fostered by the interest in arriving at policy solutions accepted by the collective (Börzel 1998: 262, Torfing 2005: 307). Specifically socialization allows for considering the non-instrumental, cognitive effects and, accordingly, helps to identify the role that common rules and perspectives have in the formation of behaviour and preferences of network actors (Börzel 1998: 264).

Using network approaches, a few studies on the relevance of think tanks in policy-making examined their capacity to engage in networks and disseminate their work and enhance their resonance (Ladi 2005, Stone 1996, 2000 and Ullrich 2004). These studies, being focused on the capacity of think tanks to transfer knowledge, omit the constitutive effect of knowledge and networking on the think tanks and their members. Given the significant transnationalisation of think tanks nowadays (Stone 2004, McGann 2010), this is an important question to explore because it sheds light on the transformation of essential aspects of think tanks attitudes as a result of their exposure to EU polity.

Following the theory of socialization, it is assumed that after joining a network for strategic reasons, experts are introduced to the rules and perspectives of the network, so experts’ perceptions can be transformed by acting according to the premises of the new role acquired rather than according to a mere strategic logic (Checkel 2005: 810). Furthermore, is possible that experts internalise those rules and perspectives to the extent that are adopted as guidelines for the definition of their perceptions and actions (Checkel 2005: 812). This is seen as active and reflective internalisation of rules and it is considered that this level of internalisation takes place when actors ‘switch from a logic of consequences to one of appropriateness’ (Checkel 2005: 812). Checkel indicates that this level of internalisation is more likely to happen when the following conditions are present (2005: 813):

- ‘The target of the socialization attempt is in a novel and uncertain environment and thus cognitively motivated to analyse new information.
- The target has few prior, ingrained beliefs that are inconsistent with the socializing agency’s message
- The socializing agent/individual is an authoritative member of the ingroup to which the target belongs to or wants to belong.
- The socializing agency/individual does not lecture or demand but, instead, acts out principles of serious deliberative argument.
- The agency/target interaction occurs in less politicized and more insulated in-camera settings.’

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These are the conditions evaluated in the organisational analysis in the following section and examined in detail in the network and statistical analyses. Regarding the first condition, while a novel and uncertain environment is a fundamental cognitive motivator for decision-makers introduced in EU policy-making, it is assumed that in the long term the cognitive motivation for non-state actors such as think tanks stems from their public concern, and their purpose to inform policy and contribute to public-opinion formation (Ladi 2005, Stone 2000). Particularly, think tanks are cognitively motivated to analyse and disseminate new information developed in the networks given their interest in creating and circulating innovative policy solutions (Stone 2001: 25). This cognitive motivation is examined by determining relevance of the number of connections of the think tanks with transnational networks regarding the disposition to adopt certain views of the EPS.

In order to assess the extent to which the second condition of socialisation is relevant for the think tanks, it is estimated the degree to which the type of think tank and the ideological orientation determine the types of views think-tanks experts propose. There are three main types of think tanks: academic, contract and advocacy. While the academic think tanks emphasise the academic work standards and the researchers set the agenda, contract think tanks, despite pursuing academic work standards, their research agenda is defined by the contracting agencies, and advocacy think tanks, which apply academic and professional work standards in different degree, emphasise their ideological stand (McGann and Weaver 2000: 10). As a result, the fundamental character of the type of information analysed and the policy solutions proposed might vary from one type to another. Being the advocacy think tanks the only that expose their ideological orientation, the significance of these ideologies for the types of views proposed is evaluated for this type of think tanks. For the examination of the extent to which EPIN and TEPSA constitute an authoritative member –third condition-, aspects related to the institutionalisation of EPIN and TEPSA described in the following section as well as an estimation of these networks’ centrality are considered. For the study of the last two conditions, organisational aspects regarding the type and frequency of meetings as well as the descriptions of objectives of the networks are analysed in the following section.

Finally, the study of perceptions of the EPS is useful because the EPS has value and strategic meaning for think tanks and the EU integration. As a value it has to be considered that conceptions of the EPS became a key discussion among academics, policy actors and EU officials as means to tackle EU democratic deficit. In these discussions the conceptions of an interconnected transnational public sphere –realist model (see Table 2)- have gather attention and support among academics and EU circles (deVreese 2007, i.e. EC 2001, Wällstrom 2005). Accordingly, the EU launched in 2007 the Citizenship Programme which ‘supports a wide range of activities and organisations promoting “active European citizenship”, especially the involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in the process of European integration.’ Some think tanks, including EPIN and TEPSA, have participated in that Programme. On account of that and the inclination of EPIN and TEPSA toward an interconnected transnational public sphere (see following section), it is expected that think tanks socialised in EPIN and TEPSA will tend to propose the realist model more frequently than those who are not members. Conversely, the EPS has strategic

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46 Despite the tensions in their roles as scholars, advisors, entrepreneurs and media specialists (Medvetz 2010) their public concern, and their purpose to contribute to public-opinion formation have been identified as key motivators for think tanks (Ladi 2005: 163, Stone 2000: 249).

meaning given that it constitutes a key tool for think tanks to disseminate their work and extend their networks; therefore, their perceptions can also reflect their preferences result of their experience disseminating their work. In the interviews examined, experts had to explain their value perception. Consequently, socialisation is conceived here as a product (Beyers 2010: 911); that is, instead of studying how the perceptions of actors socialised change over time (i.e. Beyers 2005, Hooghes 2005), it is evaluated whether affiliation to EPIN and TEPSA has an effect on the kind of propositions. Accordingly, it is expected that the members of EPIN and TEPSA propose models of the EPS that are in accordance with their role as members of transnational networks which aim to identify common perspectives.

A brief description of the think tanks and EPIN and TEPSA
This article examines 84 interviews conducted between 2008 and 2009 by myself and other researchers of Eurosphere in 38 think tanks in 16 European countries (see Table 1). The think tanks were selected according to: i) relevance (working on Eurosphere main topics), ii) visibility (salience in policy debates) and, iii) representation of different types of think tanks (advocacy, contract, academic) (Sicakkan 2008, 2012b). As a result, 17 advocacy think tanks, seven contract think tanks and 14 academic think tanks constitute this sample. From the sample 10 think tanks are also member of the transnational think-tank networks EPIN and TEPSA. That constitutes 10 of the 29 members of each think-tank network in 2009 (Figure 1). Given that most of the think-tank members examined here are associated with both EPIN and TEPSA, a comparison of the effects of socialisation between the members of EPIN and TEPSA cannot be pursued.

Regarding the first condition for socialisation –cognitive motivation-, this study lacks the necessary data to assess the specific socialising conditions of each expert. However, from the perspective of the think tanks the presence of a cognitive motivation to analyse new information is assumed on the basis that EPIN and TEPSA have a bottom-up origin –created by initiative of the national think tanks- and the description of their objectives (see below) indicate that they are concerned with the promotion of argumentation and presence of different views for the identification of common topics and perspectives on issues discussed in Europe with the intention to develop a common view.

In second place, given that i) the objectives of EPIN and TEPSA were defined by the members and do not adopt a ideological position for the development of their activities, and ii) both networks are composed of academic and contract-think tanks which have muted ideology and emphasise academic work standards, it is assumed that the effect of prior ingrained beliefs –the second condition for socialisation- is less relevant than for networks composed of advocacy-think tanks in which ideological orientation play a determinant role.

48 These types follow McGann and Weaver classification (2000: 10).
49 In Europe the composition of think-tank communities vary across countries (Day 2000: 104), therefore the sample examined is not even in the three different think-tank types.
50 EPIN and TEPSA are the two of the three transnational networks of think tanks operating in Brussels composed of national think tanks, concerned with the institutional development of the EU. The third is European Ideas Networks which is sponsored by the European Peoples Party. Given the importance to identify a wide variety of perspectives beyond ideological orientation this network is not part of this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Think tank description</th>
<th>EPIN/TEPSA member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>OIIP (Austrian Institute for International Affairs)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>EGMONT</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>BECSA (Bulgarian European Community Studies Association)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>IIR (The Institute of International Relations)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>DIIS (Danish Institute for International Studies)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>FIIFA (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>DIMR (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>MTAVK (Institute for World Economics)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>CESPI (Centro Studi Politica Internazionale)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>CENSIS (Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>PRIO (International Peace Research Institute Oslo)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>WRR (Scientific Council for Government Policy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>TEPAV (The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>TFT (The Federal Trust)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>BIM (Ludwig Botzmann Institute of Human Rights)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>CERI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>IAI (Istituto Affari Internazionali)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>NUPI (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Elcano (Real Instituto Elcano)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>FRIDE (Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>CER (Centre for European Reform)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>CSD (Center for Study of Democracy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>CEP (Center for Economics and Politics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>New Agenda</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>CEPOS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>LICHR (Legal Information Centre for Human Rights)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Demos Helsinki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>EVA (Finnish Business and Policy Forum)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Institut Montaigne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Bertelsmann (Bertelsmann Foundation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>FES (Friedrich Ebert Foundation)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Századvég (Századvég Foundation)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>EKI (Eötvös Károly Institute)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Civita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>CIDOB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>TESEV (The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>ASAM (Eurasia Strategic Research Centre)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Bruges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerning the authoritative character of EPIN and TEPSA – the third condition of socialisation (Checkel 2005: 813) –, it needs to be considered that although EPIN and TEPSA have a bottom-up origin – created by initiative of the national think tanks – their involvement in EU initiatives, such as Framework Programs, Citizenship Programme and the permanent interaction with EU politicians through their different meetings, have over time played an important role in their conformation and reputation in EU circles. Therefore, authority of EPIN and TEPSA seems to stem from these aspects. For instance, TEPSA was founded in 1974 with four members and soon established its position as an organisation that provides insight into the different perspectives coexisting in Europe when in 1975 Leo Tindemans, Belgian Prime Minister, consulted TEPSA’s members for the preparation of his report on the future of the European Union and acknowledged TEPSA’s usefulness given its comprehensive character (TEPSA 2007: 4). EPIN was created in 2002, with a grant of the European Commission, as a temporal network focused on the Convention (EPIN 2011) but, given its success and utility, its members decided to keep it operating.

The descriptions of EPIN and TEPSA’s organisation and objectives as well as the type of activities they organise indicate that the use of reason and reflexion, which are the starting points for deliberation – the fourth principle of socialisation –, are encouraged in the networks’ activities which require discussions where counterarguments and justifications emerge. EPIN’s description estates as their purpose to provide a ‘platform’ for dialogue and collaboration where members exchange their national perspectives and ‘[b]y doing so they strengthen a common European dimension in the national debates on Europe’ (EPIN 2011). Similarly, TEPSA’s description estates that ‘With its decentralized approach, TEPSA combines the strengths of its members and enriches the results of their work’ (TEPSA 2011). Regarding the activities, EPIN principally organises events for its members although in some cases they are open to all publics. The members of EPIN meet in conferences three times a year in comprehensive events organised by the network in cooperation.
with other institutions and in which other non-state actors and national and EU officials participate. The members also co-author EPIN working papers. TEPSA organises a pre-presidency conference each semester in the country newly hosting the presidency of the EU in which all members participate, and some members also meet in a dozen of workshops and seminars organised during the year by the network. TEPSA does not have joint publications such as working papers, although some members have collaborated on research commissioned by the EU Parliament's Committees on Foreign Affairs and Development, and Framework projects such as EU-CONSENT and ACCESS-TR. Finally, like other transnational non-state networks in Europe, EPIN and TEPSA are not decision-making units and their purpose is rather the circulation of information and discussion of policies (Börzel 1998: 262). Therefore, the fifth condition for socialisation –limited politicisation of settings- is present.

Finally, topics related to the EPS have been considered by these networks. For instance, TEPSA has a research area on ‘Institutional Issues and Democracy’ and has analysed the subject in TEPSA-Briefs. Meanwhile, EPIN has considered the subject in several EPIN working papers. EU-CONSENT, for instance, had as one of its aims to ‘look at the ways in which the enlargement affects the viability of the recently developed mechanisms for the participation of civil society in European Multilevel Governance’ and specific issues on the complexities of communication between citizens and EU officials and its effect on legitimacy of the EU were undertaken in some of the project’s outputs. In 2005 EPIN proposed a ‘Citizens Compact’ (Kurpas et al. 2005) with the intention to enhance communication with European citizens. The purpose of the Compact was to strengthen the ‘European dimension in the public debate by improving the ‘vertical’ links between the national (regional, local) level and the European level as well as the ‘horizontal’ links among the different national forums’ (Kurpas et al 2005: 3). Finally, the examination of the interviews conducted by Eurosphere with the coordinators of EPIN and TEPSA revealed a strong tendency to use the realist model (Table 2) (Perez unpublished). Nevertheless, no common statements on this topic are disseminated by either of the networks as a whole.

**The data and the analysis of experts’ propositions**

This study consists, in first place, of an analysis of the models of the EPS proposed by think-tank experts. The experts’ propositions are the main unit of analysis, and it is assumed that their propositions reflect their expertise as members of think tanks. Accordingly, the interviews were studied, fragmented and recombined (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 203) according to the models of the EPS. The examination of the interviews involved the study of the meanings directly expressed by the interviewees (Kvale 1996) –the purpose was to study the main arguments aroused during the interviews.

In each institute an average of three personal interviews were conducted with staff in executive positions, such as executive director or coordinator, and research or analytical staff. Executives were interviewed given their capacity to provide a global view of the institution whereas research and analytical staff provided a more practical view related to their expertise in European subjects. The interviews consisted of a
series of open-ended questions which had the purpose of allowing interviewees to explain at length how they conceived the subject in question. From the questionnaire the following question was examined:

- Do you think there should be more possibilities for trans-European communication and collaboration? (if Yes: How should trans-European communication be organized?)

Also, this study includes a social network analysis developed with Gephi, which is an ‘open source network exploration and manipulation software’ (Bastian, Heyman and Jacomy, 2009). Given the similarities on premises on which social network analysis and socialisation are built, it constitutes a relevant framework for the study of think tanks socialisation. Under the assumption that it is necessary to identify the actors ‘with the most access or most control or are the most active’ in order to establish what are the most prominent actors in a network, the network analysis models measure the ties of one given actor with all the other actors of the network (Wasserman and Faust, 1994: 172). The advantage of this measurement is that allows establishing the degree of centrality of each think tank in the network as well as to compare the centrality of different sub-networks (Knoke and Yang 2008, Wasserman and Faust, 1994). Accordingly, the centrality was calculated as the number of ties with the networks and organisations the think tanks collaborate. The European organisations and networks with which the think tanks collaborate with were identified in Eurosphere’s Institutional Data Collection, which is the result document research of organisational aspects of the think tanks developed during 2008-2009.

Finally, a statistical analysis of the results was developed (see Tables 3 and 4). The purpose was to identify the percentages for the models of the EPS given the different aspects considered –membership, think-tank type and ideology-, and a T-test was applied in order to assess the relevance of the differences between groups (see Table 5 and 6).

The three models of the EPS
Conceptions of the public sphere usually have in common their concern with i) the institutional organisation of the policymaking (see [a] in Table 2), the channels it provides the public to participate in policymaking (see [b] in Table 2), and ii) the conformation of media and the role they should play in the process of public opinion formation (see [c] Table 2). These are the aspects assessed in the perceptions of experts. Although different models of the public sphere can be identified in the literature (deVreese 2007, Sicakkan 2012a) and were used by the 98 experts interviewed by Eurosphere, this article focuses on the three most salient.

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55 The questionnaire was designed by Eurosphere (Mokre, Sicakkan and Bader 2008)
56 The main premises as explained by Knoke and Yang (2008: 7) are: i) the study of the systematic interactions between actors are fundamental for the explanation of actors’ behaviour, ii) such interactions affect perceptions, beliefs and actions through a variety of structural mechanisms that are socially constructed by relations among entities, and iii) the study of such interactions help to explain how actor- and structure-level factors contribute to processes of transformation.
57 Six EPS models were identified after an examination of the interviews. Besides those examined here in detail the other three models identified were: i) the utopian model (de Vreese 2007), based on propositions of a unified supranational sphere, ii) the intergovernmental, associated to the intergovernmental conception of the EU (Moravcsik 2002), and iii) the global model based on propositions of interconnected international publics (Castells 2008).
Table 2. Models of the EPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Market-liberal</th>
<th>Elitist</th>
<th>Realist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[a] Principles for institutional organisation of policymaking</td>
<td>Undefined/open (depends on the direction market-forces take)</td>
<td>Segmented transnational</td>
<td>Interconnected transnational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[b] Actors involved in policymaking</td>
<td>Minimal government market-actors</td>
<td>EU institutions and agencies</td>
<td>European, national and local governmental and non-governmental actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[c] Conformation of the media system</td>
<td>Fragmented for-profit media</td>
<td>International and national mass media perceived as informing about the EU</td>
<td>Mass media and alternative media of all levels adopting transnational perspective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The elitist model

This approach posits that the democratic character of the EU should not only be appraised by its institutional and communicative conformation, but needs to include the effect of the Europeanization of national spaces as another element of the EU setting (Hix and Goetz 2000: 16). The reason is that policymaking not only depends on governmental institutions but also other actors that also have a role in policymaking. In other words, besides European institutions, agencies at other levels that are in charge of implementing EU policies are considered part of the institutional system. Accordingly, this approach considers that policymaking should evolve according to the premise of ‘consensual problem-solving through independent regulatory agencies’ (Hix and Goetz op.cit. 9). Hence, this approach studies the ‘structures of opportunities’ (Hix and Goetz op.cit. Koopmans 2007), that actors at national level use to put forward their demands when the national setting allows them for few opportunities to participate in policymaking. As a result, the EPS is constituted by those actors using the structures of opportunities that the process of Europeanisation offers. Accordingly, this approach regards the public sphere as ‘segmented transnational’ (de Vreese op.cit. 8), that is, it recognises that different public spheres exist at different levels and are organised hierarchically. Also, for this approach communications takes place through prominent international and national mass media with wide diffusion and impact in Europe (de Vreese loc.cit.).

This kind of model seems to be supported by experts that gave arguments such as: ‘I’m very sceptical with the massive thing. I’m a little elitist in this sense...When I say elites I mean all those people who have an upper degree; hence, my definition of elite is very broad and then there are many professions that don’t need a degree and elites are also: sports people, cultural elites, which don’t necessarily need to be university scholars; right? … I think that we shouldn’t push it any further … don’t get me wrong, it would be perfect, but it’s too much of a utopia,’ a member of Elcano explained.

58 The categorization of the propositions followed an inductive approach (Rubin and Rubin 2005), that is, after a first examination of the interviews it was observed that the arguments could be related to different models of the EPS.
**The realist model**

This approach shares with the previous the focus on Europeanisation. However, it conceives the EPS as integrated in other public spheres rather than separated (de Vreese op.cit. 9). Consequently, the EPS exists through national and local public spheres and can be found in spaces where specific European topics are discussed and where any topic is discussed using a transnational perspective (de Vreese loc.cit.). As a result, not only conventional media such as newspapers, radio and television, are considered means for communication but also other alternative media which includes newspapers, radio and television of minor diffusion as well as distribution lists, mobiles and different electronic tools such as social networks.

From this approach a one-size-fits-all formula would fail to enhance the EPS, and suggests that it is necessary to consider the particularities of each national media system to improve communication and public-opinion formation in the EPS (de Vreese op.cit. 13). At the same time, to increase EU’s presence in the public sphere requires political action from EU institutions which should not only include initiatives similar to those already launched by EU institutions, but also the enhancement of its relevance as policy actor (de Vreese op.cit. 14). With regard to the political organisation these scholars criticise the lack of transparency and accountability of the policy process, particularly of the Commission, and consider this is a factor that diminishes the political debate and, consequently, the development of the EPS (Gerhards 2001: 154). From this can be inferred that the institutional organisation of the EU preferred by advocates of this approach is mostly based on the premise of political legitimacy which requires a public decision-making process more transparent rather than the actual process that principally follows the premise of policy legitimacy.  

As part of this model were considered explanations that, for instance, recommended to increase the number of translations, the use of second languages as well as facebook and internet because, ‘Luckily, such instruments as the internet elude their political design. Many things find their own way if the basic infrastructure [internet access] is in place,’ stated an expert from Bertelsmann. The utility of networks was also expressed among respondents that seemed to prefer this model as a respondent of CIDOB said, ‘I think that, in reality, the creation of networks facilitates and promotes one public space. It is a way to create, step by step, a common agora, a space where all people can meet.’

It should be considered that it can be somehow misleading, given its substantial flexibility regarding what is viewed as relevant communication (Risse 2002). Therefore, the realist model tends to make difficult to identify the details in which different advocates for the model disagree, such as the degree of mobilisation, contestation, inclusion of European views and transnationalisation of national public spheres required, necessary to develop accurate sub-classifications of the interviews. However, the differences between the models examined here are clear and that allowed for a precise classification.

**Market-liberal model**

Other approach that appeared in the interviews was what Nancy Fraser labels as the classic-liberal conception of the public sphere (Fraser 1990: 74). In this model, the principle for organisation is laissez-faire capitalism (Ingber 1984), and the public

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59 Political legitimacy means that, the policy process emphasises the validation of the process as a way to arrive to legitimate policies. This is opposed to policy legitimacy which emphasises the validation of the policy as such.
sphere is frequently referred to as ‘the marketplace of ideas,’ particularly in American circles (Peters 2004). This approach posits that the government should be limited and separated from civil society because the latter is ‘privately ordered’ (Fraser 1990: 74). Moreover, it is by means of the marketplace of ideas that governments are kept on check (Curran 1991, Ingber 1984). Therefore, the marketplace of ideas needs to be independent from government institutions and depend on private initiative (Curran 1991: 29).

From these propositions follows that the marketplace of ideas can be described as ‘an anarchic, diverse, creative place with many voices’ (Peters loc.cit. 79) where clash and competition of ideas takes place and, consequently, opinion is formed (Ingber 184: 6). Accordingly, the main actors of this marketplace are all types of media guided by market principles, although other forms of independent association and organisation applying these principles, such as think tanks, are part of it.

Experts’ perceptions classified under this model usually regarded unnecessary to enhance communications because, as an expert of CEPOS said, ‘there are plenty of opportunities … There shouldn’t be anyone stopping it. But I do not think it is the politicians’ responsibility to [promote it].’

The European networks of the think tanks and the common views of the EPS

The table 3 summarises the statistical results of the preferences of the experts of think tanks regarding the models of the EPS. It shows that close to half of the experts prefer the realist model and the second model that gathers most answers is the market-liberal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Market-liberal</th>
<th>Elitist</th>
<th>Realist</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member (total)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>10,52</td>
<td>21,05</td>
<td>5,26</td>
<td>63,15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>33,33</td>
<td>33,33</td>
<td>16,66</td>
<td>16,66</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member (total)</td>
<td>16,94</td>
<td>20,33</td>
<td>20,33</td>
<td>42,37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,66</td>
<td>21,42</td>
<td>16,66</td>
<td>45,23</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison of the perceptions between the think tanks members of EPIN and TEPSA and non-members, shows that the realist model gathers almost one-fifth more support from members than non-members. The answers among non-members are more dispersed across the models than the answers of members which concentrated in higher degree between the realist and market-liberal models (four-fifths). This corresponds with previous research on non-state actors conceptions of the EPS, which showed that Europeanising views are present among national actors with some or no connections with transnational organisations although non-Europeanising views predominate among them (Sicakkan 2012b). Nevertheless, the T-test applied showed that the propositions of the models of the EPS are independent from the membership in EPIN and TEPSA; therefore, it is necessary to examine whether some characteristics of the think tanks, which can define their conditions for socialisation, play a role in the preferences of the EPS.
From the perspective of the think-tank type, Table 4 shows that academic think tanks support the realist model in a higher degree (almost three-fifths) than all the other types of think tanks. The academic think tanks are, together with the common-good-advocacy think tanks, those that show less support for the market-liberal model. Compared with the other types of think tanks, in the case of contract think tanks stands out the considerable support for the elitist model (one quarter of the experts), although the model preferred by most respondents is the realist. In this case also the T-test showed that the propositions of the models of the EPS are independent from the think-tank type. Finally, the patterns of the ideologically-oriented advocacy think tanks seem consistent. The model most supported by market-liberal advocacy think tanks is the market-liberal whereas common-good-advocacy think tanks support for the market-liberal model is minimal, and their support for the realist model is the highest among all think-tank types. The realist model is appealing to common-good-advocacy think tanks given their objective to promote inclusive spaces for debate and policy solutions. In this regard, the T-test (see Table 5) confirmed that the propositions of the models of the EPS are significantly dependent on the ideological orientation of the think tank, which shows that ‘prior ingrained beliefs’ –the second condition-, plays a role in the socialisation of think tanks.

| Table 4. Proportions of models of the EPS, given think tank type |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Academic (total)        | 17.24  | 17.24  | 6.89   | 58.32  | 100    |
| Contract (total)        | 12.5   | 18.75  | 25     | 43.75  | 100    |
| Advocacy (total)        | 17.94  | 25.64  | 20.51  | 35.89  | 100    |
| Market-liberal          | 19.04  | 42.85  | 23.8   | 14.28  | 100    |
| Social                 | 16.66  | 5.55   | 16.66  | 61.11  | 100    |

The network analysis provides some evidence for the first and third conditions for socialisation. Figure 2 represents the connections of the think tanks studied with other networks and organisations at EU level. The network consists of 92 nodes, with 19 communities and 14 weakly connected nodes. Accordingly, the low clustering coefficient (0.017) suggests that the degree of attachment between the nodes is weak,
and the modularity of 0.705 indicates that the connections are more dense inside the sub-networks rather than between the sub-networks. The T-test rejected the hypothesis that the centrality of the members of EPIN and TEPSA is higher than the centrality of non-members –members have more transnational connections than non-members. Also, it was estimated whether the proposition of a realist model depends on the number of ties of the think tanks, but the T-test rejected the hypothesis. These results indicate that the disposition of the think tanks to establish links with transnational networks and organisations does not determine their disposition to create and reproduce common views –the first condition for socialisation. Therefore it is necessary to assess whether the type of transnational connections together with the characteristics of the think tanks have an effect on the models of the EPS proposed.

**Figure 2. European networks of the think tanks** (algorithm: Force Atlas; node size: degree; node colour: think-tank type –violet: academic; green: advocacy common-good; light blue: advocacy market-liberal; blue: contract; members: *)

From the perspective of the whole network, the network shows that there is one main network where 25 out of the 38 think tanks interact with other 37 networks and organisations. As was expected, it shows that the main network is particularly dense around EPIN and TEPSA. An estimation of the centrality of EPIN and TEPSA for the think-tanks members shows that half of the 32 connections that the think-tanks members have with different European transnational organisations and networks are directed to EPIN and TEPSA. This suggests that the third condition for socialisation –the organisation’s authority- can have a particular effect on think-tanks members,
although more network data to measure prioritisation is necessary (Wasserman and Faust 1994).

Table 6. Independent Samples Test of models of the EPS by membership in EPIN, TEPSA and key European organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS-model</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.391</td>
<td>.242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0 other, 1 Realist)</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At individual level, the network shows that, besides EPIN and TEPSA, some EU initiatives might be playing an important role for think-tank networking. For instance the Framework Programmes seem to be an important networking point which principally links academic think tanks. EUROMED and European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) are other examples. There are some other networks and organisations connecting several think tanks, but they don’t provide a long-term, frequent contact with EU politics as EPIN and TEPSA and the EU initiatives do. Some examples are the European Information Network on International Relations and Area Studies (EINIRAS) which works as a repository of information on international relations and area studies, the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR), which is an scholarly association, and EuroMesco which is focused on Euro-Mediterranean subjects. Consequently, given that engagement in EU initiatives, as it happens in EPIN and TEPSA, depends on actors desire to participate in and shape the EU polity –the first condition for socialisation-, it was considered necessary to assess whether this inclination can play a role in the preferences for a realist model of the EPS. In this regard, a T-test showed that the propositions of the realist model are significantly dependent (see Table 6) on membership in EPIN and TEPSA as well as the four EU initiatives identified –ECCHR, EUMC, EU-Framework Programme and EUROMED. This indicates that EU institutions play a role in these processes of socialisation.

**Can European networks contribute to the reproduction of common views of the European public sphere among national think tanks?**

The purpose was to account for the conditions that facilitate socialisation of national non-state actors, such as think tanks, in transnational networks. Particularly the intention was to identify the conditions that facilitate the reproduction of a shared
view of the EPS among members of transnational networks of a specific kind –EPIN and TEPSA. Overall the results show that when prior beliefs are not in tension with the transnational discourses the internalisation of specific transnational discourses among experts of national think tanks participating in transnational networks is possible. Regarding the particular conditions that encourage such internalisation, it was found that despite the fact that the organisational analysis provided some evidence of the presence of all conditions and the fact that the statistical analysis showed that members of EPIN and TEPSA proposed the realist model for the EPS more frequently than non-members the statistical test indicated that the support for the realist model of the EPS is independent of membership.

As was determined in previous socialisation research (Hooghes 2005: 888), the results show that the ideological orientation plays a role in socialisation. However, it was not possible to evaluate the degree to which this aspect influences the views of academic and contract think tanks and, therefore, the views of members of EPIN and TEPSA. Consequently, more research with an organisational approach that accounts for the effects of double affiliation in which tensions in the organisations’ principles emerge (Egeberg 2004: 203) is needed. This is key to determine the extent to which the diversity of interest on the network’s members affect aspects of communication and mutual trust that enable networks to reach at common solutions (Börzel 1998: 262). In other words, this is important to identify the extent to which the conditions for strategic calculation and reflective internalisation, that constrain and enable socialisation, are present in the academic and contract think tanks and the networks they engage.

Moreover, the statistical analysis showed that the disposition to engage in transnational networks and organisations did not determine the cognitive motivation to adopt a realist model of the EPS. Then, if it is not the membership to EPIN and TEPSA, neither the disposition to engage in transnational networks and organisations the elements that determine the adoption of a realist model of the EPS, what elements influence the disposition for the adoption of a realist model in higher degree by some think tanks and specially those members of EPIN and TEPSA? The statistical analysis showed that connections with EU agencies and institutions, which EPIN and TEPSA provide as was shown in the organisational analysis, do play a role. This is consistent with broad research on processes of policy transfer where think tanks participate which shows that Europeanisation is visible in areas where EU structures are actively promoting the dissemination of specific policy solutions (Ladi 2005: 153).

These results show that for the study of the conditions for socialisation among non-state actors, the active role of EU structures constitutes an important factor that needs to be estimated. On account of the fact that the networks in questions are non-decision-making units and the difficulties of networks of non-state actors to access to EU policy-making processes (Börzel 2010), the incentives of these networks to arrive to common views can depend on the possibilities to influence EU policy-makers. The EU efforts to integrate non-governmental policy actors, such as think tanks and the networks they participate, with the intention to increase representation and channels of communication with the public (Börzel and Lauréote 2009: 138) allow for channels of communication with EU institutions that have granted some policy actors the status of insiders (Greenwood and Halpin 2010). This constitutes an important incentive to deliver information in the terms EU institutions need (Broscheid and Coen 2007). On account of this, from the perspective of Europeanising spaces, the results show that the vertical segmentation of the public sphere (Sicakkan 2012b: 122) can take place not only between those with and without transnational interest, but also among those
with a transnational interest given the degree and type of their involvement in transnational networks.

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The transaction costs hidden behind EU think tank fora:
A study of informal interest intermediation in the EU

Marybel Perez, University of Bergen

Using a transaction cost framework for analysis, this article studies first-hand organisational and fora data from six EU think tanks that describe the structural conditions of EU think tank fora – principles of interaction, panellists, audience and dissemination. The purpose is to assess whether think tank fora constitute informal spaces for interest intermediation. It is shown that the participation of both EU representatives and policy actors usually overlooked by the formal structures of consultation is significant. These circumstances allow think tanks to become relevant policy actors by increasing their capacity to collect first-hand information about EU policy-making, as well as the perspectives of different policy actors, and expanding their ability to disseminate timely, comprehensive policy analyses.

Most research on processes of interest intermediation focuses on the structural aspects of a given political system (Chalmers 2011; Greenwood and Halpin 2007). Some of these studies acknowledge the difficulty in tracing the behaviour of certain policy actors (Chalmers 2011), thereby leaving gaps in understanding the extent of their influence on the policy process. Following Helmke and Levitsky (2004), it is argued here that it is also necessary to study how policy is created and reproduced by informal institutions. Looking at the informal intermediation that takes place in, for example, think tank fora such as seminars, workshops and conferences enables a more comprehensive understanding of the processes of interest intermediation and an analysis of the role of policy actors which do not rely on lobbying to participate in policy-making (Chalmers 2011: 476), such as think tanks and academic organisations.

Think tank fora, as occasions of informal interest intermediation, are part of the ‘socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels’ (Helmke and Levitsky 2004: 727). The reasons why these informal structures emerge are varied (Helmke and Levitsky 2004: 730), but it is maintained here that think tank fora complement formal policy-making by enabling policy actors to interact with policy-makers and reproducing rules which characterise EU policy-making. Consequently, given that policy actors are enabled by institutions when they show compliance, it is expected that think tank fora are structured according to the necessities of EU institutions. To examine this proposition, a transaction cost approach is useful because it sheds light on how think tanks structure fora so that they facilitate the gathering and evaluation of information. In the EU, the transaction costs, which are the costs associated with the gathering and evaluation of information for the purpose of advocating particular policy solutions (Coase 1960) and participating in consultations processes in EU policy-making, are considerable (Brosheid and Coen 2007). Therefore, policy actors with network capacity, such as think tanks (Stone 2000b), take the opportunity to create fora, thereby increasing their visibility and relevance in the policy process. In order to be part of the informal structures that complement EU policy-making, fora should aim at facilitating the interaction between EU institutions and policy actors which either have difficulty in engaging in policy-making or need to diversify strategies in order to influence policy-makers. In this regard, research has shown that EU think tanks, i.e. think tanks located in Brussels that are concerned with EU politics, serve as
‘catalysts’ and ‘a forum’ for the discussion of policy issues for different policy actors (Ullrich 2004: 67).

Accordingly, the purpose of the article is to examine the structural conditions of EU think tank fora. This is in accordance with research which proposes that the study of informal institutions needs to identify the actors, coalitions and interests from which informal institutions emerge, as well as the processes of communication involved (Helmke and Levitsky 2004: 733). This constitutes a contribution to EU think tank studies that have faced difficulties in explaining why, despite being a small community with a limited focus on research and advisory work (Boucher 2004; McGann 2010), think tanks are established and visible policy actors. By considering the subject in an EU context, the discussion of transaction costs in policy-making is introduced in a different environment, the transnational, in which the role of voters is limited, the reliance on interest groups is higher and the issues of representation and legitimacy take a different shape to that at national level (Greenwood and Halpin 2007).

The following section briefly explains the implications of transaction costs for interest intermediation and the role of think tanks in policy-making, while the third section describes the think tanks included in this study and the general characteristics of think tank fora. The fourth section describes the data sources and analysis, the fifth section presents the empirical assessment of the first-hand data, and the last section discusses the implications of the results with regards to think tanks’ role as informal for intermediation.

Transaction costs in EU policy-making and the role of think tanks
Overall, it is difficult to trace the role of think tanks in the processes of interest intermediation because lobbying is seldom included in their strategies (Carpentier-Tanguy 2011; Stone 1996: 109). Rather than represent any particular interest, think tanks seek to inform policy and contribute to public opinion formation (Rich 2004; Stone 1996). To this end, think tanks perform three principal functions: i) the development of research and analysis, ii) the organisation of fora, and iii) the dissemination of information to increase politicians’ and the public’s awareness of policy solutions, with research showing that EU think tanks prioritise the second function (Perez unpublished). Think tanks tend to have more opportunity to influence policy-making when they are able to provide key technical information based on data accumulated over time (Rich 2004; Stone 2004). The accumulation of comprehensive information at EU level is difficult because it requires considerable resources to become involved in the policy debates that take place in different countries and among different policy actors. However, by organising fora that ‘allow for the sharing of ideas, broadening of perspectives and exchange of information’ (Ullrich 2004: 67), think tanks accumulate key knowledge that grants them relevance in EU policy-making. Ullrich points out that EU think tanks have the potential to influence policy-making due to their ability to understand the policy process, interpret it for different policy actors and connect those actors with EU institutions (2004). In this way, EU think tanks participate in processes of interest intermediation, which are at the heart of the structures of governance of transaction costs (North 1990).

Transaction costs are incurred when policy problems demand complex solutions, and government structures emerge in order to reduce those costs and formulate effective policy solutions (North 1990; Wittman 1989). In the EU, policy solutions frequently bear high transaction costs, due, among other factors, to the wide number of policy actors with different interests, the indirect institutional system of
representation that entails legitimacy obstacles, and the elaborate process of implementation. Given its duty regarding policy initiation in the EU, the Commission is the main institution in which interest intermediation activity takes place and, as a result, it has developed a system for interest intermediation that tends to favour policy actors configured as umbrella organisations (Hix and Høyland 2011) with a broad geographical representation (Greenwood and Halpin 2007: 198). Focusing on umbrella organisations, the Commission avoids the cost of transacting with numerous policy actors with an individual or small representation (Greenwood and Halpin 2007). Accordingly, think tank fora provide a space for policy actors, either excluded or seeking to diversify their strategies, to gather, express their perspectives and receive timely policy analyses. This means that the fora enable think tanks to collect and process information with the comprehensive character expected by EU policy-makers and to disseminate key EU policy analysis among the networks involved. In this way, think tanks gain visibility and a reputation that grant them a relevant role in policy-making.

At the same time, the participation of policy actors in EU policy-making depends on their interest and capacity to invest in the accumulation and analysis of the technical information that policy-makers need (Broscheid and Coen 2007). According to Chalmers, the process for developing useful information in this regard has two dimensions: i) actions ‘to anticipate and prepare to meet informational needs of EU decision makers’, and ii) the nature and strategies used for dissemination of the policy solutions proposed (2011: 472). Chalmers has assessed the importance of different aspects of each dimension and, with regard to the first dimension of monitoring, found that successful policy actors tend to prioritise informal information sources such as ‘word-of-mouth and face-to-face meetings’ and ‘contacts and networking’ (2011: 480), as well as EU sources, over formal sources such as newspapers and newsletters. The think tank forum is one of the places where such sources can be found. Because of this, study of the think tank fora under a transaction cost framework enables one to understand the role of think tanks in the processes of information exchange that support the institutional structure designed to solve policy problems (North 1990).

Even though a priori the application of transaction cost theory to policy-making seems to rely on a strong assumption of efficiency, the present approach, following North (1990), posits that the tendency to create efficient mechanisms of intermediation in specific areas of policy-making does not entail an efficient outcome for the system as a whole. However, what constitutes an efficient outcome needs to be specified in order to assess the nature of the intermediation structure. The notion of an efficient policy solution is something that can only be detailed by leaving the realm of transaction costs, which mainly provide explanations of micro-processes, and entering the realm of, for instance, deliberation theory, which provides key guidelines for the evaluation of democratic legitimacy in comprehensive systems. Moreover, deliberative democracy has been widely used in the assessment of EU policy-making (Eriksen and Fossum 2000; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2007).

Deliberation theory calls a policy solution efficient when it is the result of thoughtful consideration of the grounded arguments presented by all parties involved. Policy-making with these characteristics should be organised according to three main principles: reciprocity, publicity and accountability (Gutmann and Thomson 1996). In 60

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60 As North explains, ‘different institutional frameworks will result in different costs of political exchange’ (1995: 363), making it necessary to have an institutional model against which to evaluate the efficiency of the transaction costs involved in a specific system.
this article, the assessment of the deliberative character focuses on the structure of the fora and considers their deliberative potential. In this regard, Chambers’ critical areas for the assessment of the deliberative quality of current policy-making are useful: the regulative context, the orator, the audience and the media (2009: 339). These are consistent with the aspects proposed by Helmke and Levitsky (2004: 733) for the study of informal institutions. Similarly, the present study adopts Chambers’ criteria for assessing the structural conditions of the transaction costs involved in think tank fora:

i) The principles of interaction – For each type of forum, including seminars, workshops and conferences, the principles of interaction need to be studied in order to assess whether there is space for all the participants to put forward their arguments (reciprocity). Accordingly, to evaluate the principles for interaction and the objectives of the think tanks, their subject focus and the types and frequency of fora are studied.

ii) Panellists – The types of panellists and the frequency with which they participate in think tank fora are examined in order to identify what type of policy actors are involved and to what extent EU institutions are engaged (accountability).

iii) Audience – In think tank fora it is not only the panellists who have the opportunity to put forward their arguments: in some cases the audience may also be able to question the panellists and expose their views (reciprocity). Consequently, the different types of members of the public participating in such fora are scrutinised.

iv) Network capacity – Dissemination of the discussions in think tank fora provide the opportunity to create the ‘atmospheric impact’ (Stone 2000a: 253) or publicity necessary for public opinion formation, as well as the extension of policy networks’ size and power. This effect is produced at national level through the mass media, which usually helps think tanks increase their reputation and visibility (Rich and Weaver 2000) but does not exist at the EU level. However, dissemination and communication at the supranational level increasingly take place through networks of communication (Castells 2007). Consequently, the network capacity of think tanks at the transnational level (Stone 2000c) becomes a mechanism of communication in itself that is illustrated by a network map of one of the think tanks examined.

EU think tanks and the fora

In Brussels, different types of think tanks coexist, including approximately 10 international, global and pan-European think tanks, a dozen branches of national think tanks, a handful of Belgian think tanks, one EU institute (the European Union Institute for Security Studies), one autonomous EU agency of the Commission (the Bureau of European Policy Advisers) and 21 EU think tanks, all of which share a transnational EU origin, an interest in EU subjects and the intention to contribute to EU policy-making. This article examines six of the 21 EU think tanks (see Table 1), which have been selected because they provide the most complete information about their fora.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>EU think tanks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Centre for European Studies (CES)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>European Ideas Network (EIN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>European Liberal Forum (ELF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Migration Policy Group (MPG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness (TLCEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bruegel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>International Security Information Service (ISIS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Observatoire Social Européen (OSE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Groupe de Recherche et d’Information sur la Paix et la sécurité (GRIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Pour la Solidarité (PLS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>European Corporate Governance Institute (ECGI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Institut Européen de la Recherche sur la Coopération Meditranéenne et Euro-Arabe (MEDEA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>European Institute for Asia Studies (EIAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Security and Defence Agenda (SDA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>European Policy Centre (EPC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Friends of Europe (FOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The Madariaga College of Europe Foundation (MCEF)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding their subject focus, Bruegel, created in 2004, the European Institute for Asia Studies (EIAS), created in 1989, and the Security and Defence Agenda (SDA), created in 2002, are subject-specific think tanks focused respectively on economic and monetary affairs, external relations of the European Union with Asia and foreign and security policy. Conversely, the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), created in 1983, the Friends of Europe (FoE), created in 1999, and the Madariaga-College of Europe Foundation (MCEF), created in 1998, are generalist think tanks that have been concerned with subjects related to EU policy areas such as the environment, economic affairs, justice freedom and security, employment and social affairs, and institutional affairs.

In different ways, the objectives of these think tanks (see Table 2) reveal their concern with informing EU policy and contributing to public-opinion formation: ‘dedicated to promoting original thinking on the role of the European Union’ (MCEF) and to ‘provide information to policymakers in European and other institutions’ (EIAS). These think tanks emphasise their interest in constituting inclusive fora for policy actors concerned with EU polity by explaining their intention, as described by SDA, to ‘bring […] together experts and policymakers from the EU institutions, NATO, national governments, industry, the media, think tanks, academia and NGOs’. Also visible in their objectives is their intention to stimulate thinking for the creation of innovative policy solutions: while CEPS describes itself as ‘a leading forum for debate’, FoE refers to the ‘confrontation of ideas’ and MCEF states its purpose as encouraging ‘creative debate’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think Tank</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruegel</td>
<td>'is independent and non-doctrinal. It seeks to contribute to European and global economic policy-making through open, fact-based and policy-relevant research, analysis and debate.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEPS</td>
<td>'serves as a leading forum for debate on EU affairs, but its most distinguishing feature lies in its strong in-house research capacity, complemented by an extensive network of partner institutes throughout the world.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIAS</td>
<td>'seeks to provide information to policymakers in European and other institutions, by bringing academic expertise to bear on EU decision making with regard to Asia. EIAS also acts as a clearing house for regular exchanges of ideas between those involved in Asian affairs in the EU institutions, European and Asian academic research centres, Embassies and Diplomatic Missions, the business community, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and other civil society actors, as well as the media.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FoE</td>
<td>'aims to stimulate thinking on the future of the EU. For 10 years our contribution has been the confrontation of ideas that is vital to policymaking and to encouraging wider involvement in Europe’s future.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEF</td>
<td>'dedicated to promoting original thinking on the role of the European Union in an era of global change, engaging citizens and international partners in a creative debate on the issues that shape Europe’s future. Through research and action, the Foundation pursues a three-fold mission of challenging the citizen, empowering Europe, and preventing conflict.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>'raises awareness by anticipating the political agenda and focusing attention on European and transatlantic policy challenges related to security and defence. Its activities include round tables, lunch and evening debates, policymakers’ dinners, international conferences and a range of publications. The SDA brings together experts and policymakers from the EU institutions, NATO, national governments, industry, the media, think-tanks, academia and NGOs.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Think tanks’ web-sites

The particularities of the fora of these think tanks are described in Section 5, though it can be said at this stage that the fora organised by think tanks range from speeches and lectures to seminars, workshops and conferences. Speeches and lectures are brief meetings in which no more than one speaker presents a perspective and is seldom provided with time for questions or discussion. Given the think tanks’ intention to provide inclusive fora and stimulate thinking, seminars, workshops and conferences are considered in more detail. Seminars are small fora lasting a few hours, in which topics are introduced or a policy analysis presented by a panellist and, subsequently, a debate with the audience is encouraged. Workshops and round tables are small fora that last from a few hours to several sessions, in which a number of experts meet to discuss specific subjects and consider innovative ways to analyse and tackle them. The audience tends to be small. Conferences are meetings on a larger scale, extending from one to several days, generally attended by a large audience and organised by
session according to different subject-related topics. In each session, panels composed of different types of policy actors have a specified amount of time to present their viewpoints and then some time is put aside for questions addressed to the panellists by the public attendees. In all these different types of fora there are usually discussants from the think tanks who are experts and who present synopses and the unconvincing or inconclusive aspects of the speeches in order to introduce the discussion. Whereas in seminars the audience is expected to participate in the discussion, in workshops and conferences the discussion generally develops principally among the panellists. Due to the significant amount of resources and the expert input that workshops and conferences require and taking into account the usual financial constraints that think tanks face and their interest in involving different perspectives, it is expected that the think tanks studied will be found to organise seminars with a higher frequency than workshops and conferences.

Comparatively, the opportunities for interaction between panellists and audience are different for each type of forum. In workshops, the number of experts is larger and the audience is smaller than at seminars, because the emphasis in workshops is on the experts’ debates rather than the participation of the audience. Deliberation in workshops can be at a higher expert discursive standard than in seminars and conferences, insofar as the discussions primarily involve the panellists. The small scale of seminars and workshops and their emphasis on debate and brainstorming tend to allow for less formal interactions than in conferences, although considerably less time is devoted to looking at the subject from different angles in seminars and workshops than in conferences. The time length of the conferences suggests that there are more opportunities for both panellists and audience to express and discuss a variety of perspectives than in seminars and conferences. In conferences, the media are usually involved and, since the scale and subject scope are greater than in seminars and workshops, it is possible that the conferences’ resonance and effect on public opinion formation are greater too. Conferences provide more opportunity for informal interactions during breaks, which are crucial for building the personal and institutional relations that ultimately lead to policy communities and networks (Stone 2000c).

Data and methods
The data used to examine the think tank fora come from original research conducted between April and May 2012. Because think tanks use their websites as a key tool to explain their objectives and structure and help disseminate their work, the websites of the EU think tanks were the main data source. Activity reports and statutes published by the think tanks provided additional material. The data collected covers 236 fora that took place during 2011, including the 1,138 policy actors who performed as panellists. The think tanks studied tend to give different names to their fora: for example, MCEF uses the title ‘Citizen's Controversy’ for some of its seminars, while FoE uses ‘Policy Summit’ for some of its conferences. However, they usually follow the general styles of each type of forum described above, so the fora reported were catalogued accordingly.

The categorisation of the panellists followed an inductive approach. In the first place, it was considered necessary to determine the participatory significance of the three main EU institutions; however, after the first examination of the data, the significance of the European External Action Service (EEAS) was much more evident than other EU agencies. Hence, it was considered necessary to look at how panellists represented different sectors of society and, accordingly, six different types of
panellists were identified – international organisations, state and local representatives, NGOs, foundations and associations, academic and policy research organisations, and corporations and the media. These categories were subdivided in order to assess the relevance of: i) transnational and national levels, i.e. international NGOs as opposed to national NGOs, ii) different academic and research styles, i.e. academics as opposed to international and national research institutions, and iii) specific actors such as national banks.

The statistical analysis initially consisted of an estimation of the frequencies for the organisation of seminars, workshops and conferences (Table 3), and subsequently an assessment of the proportions for the participation of different types of panellists in the respective fora (tables 4 and 5). An estimation of the CEPS network was constructed based on the information provided by the CEPS Activity Report.

The structure of deliberation in six EU think tanks

*Think tank fora*  
As expected, Table 3 shows that seminars considerably dominate the types of fora, constituting three-thirds of the total. The average number of participating panellists is greatest for conferences, and the average number of panellists participating in workshops is higher than the average for seminars. Only a few events have been identified as falling outside the threefold classification, and the summaries, podcasts and materials presented in these fora are generally available on the Bruegel, EIAS, FoE, MCEF and SDA websites.

Comparing the generalist think tanks (CEPS, FoE and MCEF) with those that are subject-specific (Bruegel, EIAS and SDA), it was found that 80 per cent of the workshops and almost 70 per cent of the conferences were organised by the former, which also assembled more than 70 per cent of the panellists. More specifically, Bruegel principally organises seminars, which constitute four-fifths of all fora. Similarly, the great majority of MCEF and EIAS events consist of seminars, though FoE, which is also the think tank organising the most conferences, primarily organises workshops. Finally, although CEPS is the think tank responsible for the largest number of panellists in total, FoE is the think tank that assembles more than 70 per cent of the panellists. More specifically, Bruegel principally organises seminars, which constitute four-fifths of all fora. Similarly, the great majority of MCEF and EIAS events consist of seminars, though FoE, which is also the think tank organising the most conferences, primarily organises workshops. Finally, although CEPS is the think tank responsible for the largest number of panellists in total, FoE is the think tank that assembles the largest number per forum (with an average of 11.38). CEPS is the think tank that organises the largest number of events – slightly more than one-third of the total – and this is the only think tank in which workshops are organised almost as frequently as seminars. Lastly, SDA is the think tank that organised the least number of fora in 2011, although it is not the one that assembles the least number of panellists in total. Of the six think tanks, SDA is the one that gathers the largest number of panellists in seminars and conferences (an average of 4 and 18.75, respectively).

These results show that by prioritising the organisation of seminars, Bruegel, MCEF and EIAS mainly promote spaces for interaction between panellists and audience. Meanwhile, the prominence of workshops for FoE shows that this think tank mostly prioritises expert debates, although the considerable number of conferences this think tank organises may provide participatory opportunities for the audience. In sum, the diversity of the fora of SDA and CEPS can be seen as an effort to promote different types of interaction, especially in the case of CEPS, which organises the largest number of fora.
The panellists in think tank fora and their deliberative disposition

Overall, Table 4 shows that all four types of panellists – academic, state and local representative, corporate and Commission – participate to a significant degree in all three types of fora, but the frequency of participation varies. It should also be noted that the participation of local representatives was negligible since there were only ever two local representatives identified as panellists at a few events. In seminars and workshops, academics are the most visible panellists, constituting approximately one-fifth of the total, whereas their visibility in conferences is considerably reduced, pushed to fourth place. In addition, the participation of state representatives, who constitute the second most visible panellist group in seminars and conferences and third in workshops, is more prominent in all the types of fora than the Commission. Lastly, the media and NGOs, foundations and associations constitute less than 10 per cent of the total number of panellists, which indicates that the representation of actors from civil society and the resonance they add to the debates taking place in the fora is considerably limited.

In particular, Table 5 shows that the presence of European institutions and agencies is significant, constituting approximately one-fourth of the panellists. Among these institutions and agencies, the European Commission and the European Parliament are the most visible, constituting more than two-thirds of all panellists with an affiliation to an EU institution or agency. Moreover, the presence of panellists affiliated with the EEAS is significant compared with other EU agencies. Regarding non-EU panellists, the participation of academics in conferences is considerably greater than their participation in seminars and workshops, whereas the participation of the corporate sector is significantly greater in conferences than in seminars and workshops.

An examination of the types of panellists participating in each think tank (see Table 5) shows again that academic, state representative, corporate and Commission are the principal types of panellists. The only exception to this is EIAS, for which national policy research institutes constitute the second most visible type of panellist. Regarding the participation of EU institutions and agencies, the visibility of the Parliament is considerably marginal with Bruegel and SDA, and the latter is the only think tank in which the participation of other European agencies and the EEAS is greater than that of the Parliament. In this respect, the sum of the participants from the EEAS and other EU agencies in EIAS, MCEF and SDA events is greater than the total number of panellists from the Commission. Concerning non-EU panellists, it is observed that the participation of state representatives in Bruegel and CEPS fora is considerably limited compared with the other think tanks. Furthermore, the participation of national and international NGOs, foundations and associations is particularly visible in CEPS and FoE events (10.56 per cent% and 9.89 per cent%, respectively), as well as the participation of the national banks in Bruegel events. Finally, academics are little involved in the SDA’s fora.
### Table 5. Proportions of panellists in seminars workshops and conferences by given think tank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think Tank</th>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>European External Action Service</th>
<th>Other EU agencies</th>
<th>Total EU</th>
<th>International organisations</th>
<th>State/local representatives</th>
<th>European/International NGOs, foundations and associations</th>
<th>National NGOs, foundations and associations</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>International policy research institutions</th>
<th>National policy research institutions</th>
<th>Corporate</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>National banks</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruegel</td>
<td>12.57</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.73</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>25.78</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>99.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEPS</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>10.25</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>28.51</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>23.39</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>99.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIAS</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>23.79</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>29.36</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>15.87</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>99.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FoE</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>23.49</td>
<td>9.55</td>
<td>20.13</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>10.92</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>18.43</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>99.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEF</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>29.98</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>99.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>15.62</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>33.03</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>23.43</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>97.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>26.52</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>15.99</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>16.25</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>99.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6. Description of membership types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership categories</th>
<th>Bruegel</th>
<th>CEPS</th>
<th>EIAS</th>
<th>FoE</th>
<th>MCEF</th>
<th>SDA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'private and public organisations as well as individuals'</td>
<td>Corporate Members, Inner Circle members, Non-corporate (diplomatic representations, regional offices, trade associations, NGOs and universities, individuals)</td>
<td>Corporate, institutional and individual</td>
<td>Regular membership: businesses and industries, SMEs, trade associations, chambers of commerce, international organisations and diplomatic missions of G20 and European Economic Area (EEA) countries, diplomatic missions of non-G20/EEA countries, regional offices and foundations, NGOs (humanitarian and environmental)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Full (businesses, industries and international organisations), Special (SMEs, trade associations, chambers of commerce and foundations) and diplomatic (diplomatic missions, permanent representations and embassies, regional offices, NGOs and other think tanks)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7. CEPS network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>12 Framework Programmes</th>
<th>3 CEPS Networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Corporate</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generally speaking, the participation of representatives from the Parliament is greater among the generalist think tanks – CEPS, FoE and MCEF – than in the subject-specific think tanks of Bruegel, EIAS and SDA (almost 9 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively), while the participation of representatives of the EEAS and other EU agencies was the greatest among the subject-specific think tanks (almost 40 per cent of the total of representatives from EU institutions and agencies). The presence of NGOs, foundations and associations is more visible in the generalist think tank events than in those that are subject-specific (9 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively); in the latter, the presence of national banks was most significant because of Bruegel’s focus on economic and financial affairs. In sum, while academics were more prominent than policy research institutions (almost 18 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively) in the generalist think tank fora, their participation in subject-specific think tank events was similar to that of policy research institutions (around 13 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively).

These results indicate that policy debates are considerably dominated by the government sector, whether individuals are transnational, from EU institutions or national/state representatives: together they constitute a total of 42.51 per cent of the panellists. With the exception of CEPS and FoE, it is also observed that the representation of actors from civil society is negligible. Overall, the results also show that in the international, EU and national/local dimensions, the debates of think tank fora are dominated by the EU-national divide, while in the public-private dimensions, the debates are dominated by corporate-academic perspectives.

### The role of the audience

Although the results above indicate that the type of fora mainly organised by the think tanks encourages the participation of the audience, general restrictions intrinsic to the locale of the think tanks – Brussels – and the need to be an educated member of the public interested in the particular subject, as well as specific restrictions for admission related to affiliation and privilege, constitute important barriers to access.

In this regard, attendance at Bruegel’s fora generally requires registration, and is frequently restricted to its members. These include, according to its website, 18 corporate members (for example, Microsoft and Novartis), 19 state agencies from European member countries and six institutional members, such as the European Investment Bank and the Banque de France. The revenue from membership constituted more than three-quarters of Bruegel’s total revenue in 2011 (Bruegel 2012), and an examination of the panellists at Bruegel fora and their list of members showed that nine of the 159 panellists were members. On its websites, CEPS publicity about its events states that attendance at the fora is a benefit of membership, and non-members are admitted on condition they pay a fee. According to its activity report (2012), CEPS has 112 institutional members, such as the Mission of Malaysia to the EU and the European Climate Foundation, and 131 corporate members, such as Hyundai and Nestlé. These memberships constituted 26 per cent of CEPS’s 2012 budget (CEPS 2012), and an examination of CEPS panellists and list of members showed that 14 of the 312 panellists were members. MCEF and EIAS fora are frequently open to members of the public following registration by e-mail and the payment of a fee, with members enjoying priority. EIAS does not provide detailed

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[61] Whether public or private, the higher education sector to which academics belong serves the purpose of contributing to the public good through critical thinking and knowledge development.
information concerning its numbers, origin or financial contributions. Similarly, FoE and SDA do not provide detailed information about their members, who enjoy privileged access and participation in fora, although in some cases registration is open to interested members of the public. As a result, the value of membership can be seen as a sign of interest in partaking and being informed of the think tanks’ work, while simultaneously indicating that members are supporting and getting used to the types of discussion that take place in think tank fora.

Regarding the types and roles of members in the think tanks, it must be added that the think tanks state that their membership is open to all interested parties (Table 6), and in most cases, membership only provides privileged access to think tank fora and publications – though special events are occasionally restricted to members. It is only with Bruegel that membership grants an active leadership role (unusual among European think tanks – Day 2000: 129), involving participation on the Board. According to Bruegel’s statute, members of the Board are elected by the General Assembly, and state members and corporate members must be appointed ‘in equal number’. One of the tasks of the Board is to elect the Scientific Council, which is in charge of ‘advising the Association and its Board on research planning’, and ‘evaluating the quality of research conducted at and published’ (Bruegel Bylaws). Despite this active role, Bruegel’s statute states that ‘Members shall not try to influence the results of research carried out at the Association or obstruct its dissemination’ and provisions for membership termination are established in case of improper behaviour.

**Dissemination**

Regarding the role of the media, the results show scant involvement, which is a factor that affects the resonance necessary to create public opinion. Table 4 shows that the participation of media representatives as panelists in think tank fora is negligible, particularly at EIAS and MCEF events, despite the obvious advantage to think tanks of capturing the attention of the media in order to enhance visibility and impact (Rich and Weaver 2000). This interest in the media is stated, for example, on SDA’s website: ‘Part of the ethos of the SDA as a neutral forum for debate is the full inclusion of the media. The press are welcome at all SDA events, not only to report on the opinions of guest speakers, but to participate themselves as an integral part of the Brussels security and defence community. Media participation is thus a valued component of all SDA activities’ (SDA 2012). Nonetheless, research has found that the dissemination of the work and activities of EU think tanks in the media is limited (Perez unpublished), and the relationship between the media and think tanks generally depends on occasional media demands for information, rather than the capacity of think tanks to provide information and engage media in their activities (Stone 1996: 118).

However, as was pointed out at the beginning, communication in the supranational public sphere is through mass media, which has certain limitations, and networks of communication can achieve great relevance (Castells 2008). In this regard, EU think tanks may be effective in disseminating information, given their network capacity. A network analysis of CEPS, based on the institutional links reported in its activity report (2012), shows that the organisation is connected to 475 other entities, which have their own networks and activities for dissemination that are not included (see Table 7). CEPS contacts are predominantly of an institutional, academic or corporate character. A quarter of CEPS contacts are of institutional origin and the remaining contacts are almost equally divided between the corporate sector and university and
On the structural conditions of EU think tank fora

Think tank fora are usually seen as spaces that ‘allow for the sharing of ideas, broadening of perspectives and exchange of information’ (Ullrich, 2004: 67). This concept has been taken further here by the argument that think tank fora are mechanisms which attract policy actors and EU institutions in order to gain a relevant position in policy-making. The results reveal that policy actors who are usually overlooked by the formal structures of consultation – individual national representatives, academics and corporate representatives – have the opportunity to interact in think tank fora, and the significant participation of EU institutions indicates their interest in interacting with these policy actors. By gathering EU policy-makers and state, academic and corporate representatives, think tanks can: i) increase their capacity to collect first-hand information on EU policy-making and the perspectives of different policy actors, and ii) disseminate timely, comprehensive policy analysis. Although this study suffered from limitations of space and a lack of comprehensive data from all of the 21 EU think tanks, these results provide significant evidence in relation to the most relevant organisations. In the following, the features of the constitutive dimensions of think tank fora revealed here are briefly discussed.

Taking into account particularly the Commission’s intention to tackle questions of legitimacy of governance by committing to increasing its contact with non-state policy actors (EC 2001), the considerable presence of EU institutions in think tank fora is not surprising (Finke 2007). What should be highlighted from these results is that, even in informal spaces for intermediation such as think tank fora, EU institutions prefer to interact with policy actor organisations which have umbrella characteristics or provide comprehensive perspectives on policy.

One more aspect needs to be considered in relation to the panellists at fora, as think tanks seek to attract individuals who will help build their desired reputation and visibility. Think tanks emphasise their academic orientation to different degrees (Stone 2007), but are still generally seen as bridges between academics and politicians seeking to make academic knowledge ‘policy-relevant’ (Stone 2000c: 154). Moreover, European think tanks frequently engage in partnerships with academic institutions through programmes such as the CEPS network, and the significant presence of academics in think tank fora reflects this relationship. This is in contrast to the situation vis-à-vis NGOs, foundations and associations. As Stone describes, given think tanks’ concern for their reputation, independence and high analytical standards, it is difficult for them to develop ‘long-term relationships with organisations that are deemed to be of lower social status, groups that are perceived to be radical or disrupt their demands, or bodies that are in competition with think tanks for media, political and foundation attention’, while at the same time, civil society organisations can consider their role as being affected when they engage with organisations that are seen as elitist (2000c: 169). The scant presence of these organisations in think tank fora may be the result of this situation, reinforced by the fact that interaction between the EU and European NGOs generally takes place through specific platforms (Kutay 2012).
Concerning the audience, the precedence of members is not surprising. Think tanks depend on membership for various reasons: i) resources, ii) identification of interested members of the public, and iii) ‘quality control’ to establish/maintain the reputation of the think tank (Stone 2000c: 164). These elements are particularly critical at the transnational level, where public opinion formation is dispersed and participation in policy-making is resource-intensive (Stone 2008: 32).

Finally, regarding dissemination through mass media, the results show that the resonance of think tank fora suffers from the same problem as that of think tanks at national level – a dependence on media demands (Stone 1996: 18) – although somewhat aggravated by the lack of transnational mass media. However, when the role of networked communication is incorporated (Castells 2008), the results reveal that think tanks have significant potential to enhance the resonance of their fora through the various types of networks they develop (Stone 2000b), which may be crucial for increasing their visibility and reputation and attracting new policy actors, members and policy-makers.

By examining the think tank phenomenon under a transaction cost framework it is possible to understand how think tanks, despite their location at the margins of the formal processes of intermediation, are relevant actors within the policy-making process. This perspective needs to be complemented by comparative analyses of think tanks’ performance in different EU policy areas involving disparate volumes of transaction costs, or with other think tank communities, such as those associated with the UN or US polities.

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Perez, Marybel. Unpublished. Does the EU policy-making allow for skilful networkers but limited knowledge brokers? A think tanks’ tale.


Does EU policy-making allow for skilful networkers but limited knowledge brokers? The think tanks’ tale.

Marybel Perez, University of Bergen

Studies on governance define EU policy-making as a complex process in which a wide variety of actors participate in problem-solving (Hix and Høyland 2011). This approach has inspired research on how non-state actors at transnational level, such as non-governmental organizations (Greenwood 2007, Kutay 2011), social movements (della Porta 2009, Finke 2007), and interest groups (Coen 2007, Eising 2008), adapt to the opportunities and constraints of EU policy-making. Despite think tanks’ constant interaction with diverse non-state actors, frequent contact with EU officials and participation in EU initiatives, such as the Citizenship Programme and Framework Programmes, research on how think tanks have adapted to EU policy-making is scarce.

The purpose of this article is to identify the aspects of EU policy-making which shape the role of EU think tanks as knowledge brokers. To this end, this article examines organisational and output strategies which EU think tanks use to fulfil their function as knowledge brokers, that is, as: i) generators of knowledge which is the product of comprehensive research and analysis; ii) facilitators of debates and spaces to connect with policy actors; and iii) articulating and disseminating policy solutions to increase politicians’ and public awareness. In this regard, this study provides an assessment of the extent to which knowledge brokerage in EU policy-making is encouraged. The main argument is that the first function is weakened by the fact that the EU is not interested in EU think tanks as informants, and the second is also weakened by the barriers present in transnational spaces for communication and, as a result, EU think tanks emphasise their network function given the considerable interest of different types of policy actors in gathering at their events.

The second section briefly explains the implications of the knowledge-brokerage function of think tanks and, reviewing previous studies, describes the five aspects of agenda setting and policy initiation and formulation of EU policy-making. The third section describes the sample and data sources. The fourth section provides a synopsis of the assessment of the three main functions of EU think tanks. The fifth section presents the empirical assessment of the first-hand data which illustrate the EU think tanks’ adaptation to EU policy-making. The last section discusses the implications of the results with regards to EU policy-making and think tanks’ role as knowledge brokers.

Think tanks’ role as knowledge brokers and EU policy-making

Think tanks are organisations which seek to inform the policy process either directly, by providing analysis to policy-makers, or indirectly, by participating in public debates (Stone 1996). These objectives require the creation and transfer of ‘brokered knowledge’, i.e. ‘knowledge that “serves locally” at a given time; knowledge that has been de- and re-assembled’ (Meyer 2010: 123). Knowledge brokerage takes place in particular spaces where intermediation is encouraged for the efficient exchange of information between different sectors (Meyer 2010: 119), such as academia and

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62For a more detailed classification of think tanks’ functions, see e.g. McGann and Sabatini 2011 and Ullrich 2004.
policy-making. Accordingly, in theory think tanks are incentivised to invest more resources to create brokered knowledge and disseminate it provided that the demand of information is considerable and competition is manageable (Rich 2004), otherwise think tanks will tend to adapt to the specific demands of their partners, members and sponsors. As a result, think tanks’ capacity to create and disseminate brokered knowledge depends on the possibilities for intermediation which a political setting provides.

Earlier research has identified the following elements as aspects in EU policy-making which affect EU think tanks: i) the functional distribution of powers among the institutions; however, this research has not considered ii) the particular opportunity structures provided by each institution to non-state and this article shows that this is a key aspect to understand the role of EU think tanks in policy-making. Other equally important aspects are: iii) the effect of political cultures (consensus or majority orientation) on the scope of the information provided; iv) the effect of the policy area on the nature of the information and types of informants required; and v) the capacity of the system of communication and public-opinion formation.

Institutions targeted in accordance with their powers for policy-making
Non-state policy actors intend to influence policies in a way which favours the views they represent (Hix and Høyland 2011): they principally target those institutions which can block, initiate or transform a given policy. Therefore, in the EU system the Commission, given its exclusivity on policy initiation, is the most-targeted institution by transnational policy actors, although the Parliament has gained some attention during the last decade after the increase in its responsibilities for the approval and amendment of the policies proposed (Wallace 2005, Hix and Høyland 2011). At the same time, the fact that national perspectives in the Council determine policy positions makes it less attractive to transnational policy actors (Wallace 2005). The Committee of the Regions is usually the target of regional and local actors, and less of the kind of transnational actors examined here. Additionally, the actors concerned with socio-economic issues have found ways of direct access to policy-making which have made the Economic and Social Committee a minor target (Wallace 2005, Hix and Høyland 2011).

In this regard, earlier research has found that the specific role of EU institutions in policy-making has an effect on the performance of EU think tanks. Philippa Sherrington pointed out, for instance, that given the Commission has the duty to initiate policy, it can be one of the main targets of EU think tanks since their greatest chance to impact on policy-making is at the stages of policy formulation and agenda setting (2001). Given that Sherrington’s was an exploratory work, and a decade has passed since it was published, it can be considered necessary to reassess this trend given the increased powers of the Parliament. To this end, this article examines the institutions most targeted by EU think tanks according to the functional distribution of powers (see Table 1).

The opportunity structures available for non-state actors
In the Parliament, experts are consulted at hearings and workshops organised by the Committees. In the Commission, consultation of non-state policy actors occurs before preparing a draft of a policy (EU 2011). In order to draft a policy, the Commission

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63 This is because think tanks become more dependent on the financial support of these groups (Womack 2002: 136).
elaborates Impact Assessments and to this end the Commission opens a process of public consultation to which stakeholders are invited. To participate in these consultations, the Commission and the Parliament invite (on a voluntary basis) policy actors to register on the Transparency Register. Despite its voluntary character and the fact that some organisations’ transparency is deficient (Alter-EU 2011), the register had 2092 associations, organisations, entities and consultants registered by April 2011, of which 92 were think tanks (TR 2011), and some studies indicate that registration results in de facto accreditation (Greenwood and Halpin 2010).

This article studies the extent to which and how EU think tanks use these opportunity structures.

The scope of knowledge and organisational outreach demanded by EU institutions
Although the years since the 1990s has seen the EU enter a period of ‘post-consensus’ (Hix and Hoyland 2011), the fact that the Commission has the duty to represent the EU as a unit and the Parliament represents it citizens means that there is still a tendency among these institutions to seek informants who provide EU-wide views (Kröger 2008) – that is, views which are the product of a transnational approach and concerned with the common good. Accordingly, in order to create EU-wide views, policy actors have been encouraged to develop organisational outreach by engaging in different types of policy networks (Richardson 2006) and, as a result, new transnational policy actors tend to be configured as umbrella organisations (Hix and Hoyland 2011).

Regarding this, James McGann (2010) observed that the importance of consensus in EU policy formulation reduces originality in policy debates. The implication is that systems based on majority will seek innovative knowledge to compete for the attention of publics and policy actors, whereas systems based on consensus seek to synthesise the perspectives presented in policy debates. In order to specify how the consensual character of some spaces of EU policy-making affects EU think tanks’ strategies and discourses, this article estimates the scope of knowledge and capacity to network of EU think tanks.

Relevant informants according to the nature of the topic
The processes of consultation seek stakeholders’ perspectives on and technical expertise in specific aspects of policies (Richardson 2006). In order to receive the specific information sought, the Commission tends to grant access to those policy actors who systematically render information according to the institution’s needs (Broscheid and Coen 2007: 350). Accordingly, policy actors usually invest in the development of technical knowledge when they know they can receive policy benefits (Broscheid and Coen 2007).

Accordingly, research has found that corporate interest groups – those representing private interests (Finke 2007) – tend to concentrate on policy areas where the EU has exclusive competences and highly technical knowledge is necessary because these are the areas in which they can better contribute and have more impact (Coen 2007), whereas public interest groups – those representing the public interest – , given that they usually rely on limited resources to accumulate and create substantial knowledge which define policies (Finke 2007), tend to concentrate on areas which are more politicised and less technical (Kröger 2008).

Think tanks tend to have more opportunities to influence the policy process on topics which are highly politicised and where public-opinion formation is required (Rich 2004 and Stone 1996). Also, given that think tanks are public spirited and seek
to inform policy and contribute to public-opinion formation (Stone 1996), it can be expected that their performance is similar to public interest groups. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the policy areas EU think tanks are concerned with and assess the extent to which they create knowledge with the _technical or analytical nature_ which the policy areas require.
### Table 1. Aspects of EU policy-making conditioning the role of non-state actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Matter</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most-targeted EU institutions, given their duties of agenda setting, policy initiation and formulation</td>
<td>The opportunity structures available for non-state actors</td>
<td>The scope of knowledge and organisational outreach demanded by EU institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commission: Open consultation of stakeholders for Impact Assessments</th>
<th>Parliament: hearings and workshops</th>
<th>EU-wide views</th>
<th>Networks</th>
<th>Highly politicised topic: public interest groups</th>
<th>Highly technical topic: corporate interest groups</th>
<th>Regular and alternative media</th>
<th>EU Citizenship Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>1st place</td>
<td>2nd place</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
<td>Great capacity to create and engage in networks through concerned publics, partners, members and sponsors</td>
<td>Although working on politicised topics, not participating</td>
<td>Regular media (10) Websites (21) Newsletters (17) Social networks (14) Blogs (7) Youtube/video (4) (number of think tanks)</td>
<td>Significant among 7 think tanks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reaction of EU think tanks to the aspects conditioning their role as knowledge brokers in EU policy-making**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st place</th>
<th>2nd place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
<td>Not participating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organisation**
- Commission: 1st place, Parliament: 2nd place

**Matter**
- Commission: Open consultation of stakeholders for Impact Assessments
- Parliament: hearings and workshops

**Visibility**
- EU-wide views
- Networks
- Highly politicised topic: public interest groups
- Highly technical topic: corporate interest groups
- Regular and alternative media
- EU Citizenship Programme
Mechanisms available to communicate with the public

In the 1990s, in view of the EU legitimacy crisis (Hix and Høyland 2011), and given that its duty to inform the citizens about EU policies (Christiansen 2006), the Commission started to implement programmes to improve its transparency and increase civil society participation (Finke 2007). For this, it has relied on a wide variety of policy actors, such as NGOs, local authorities, trade unions, and think tanks, given their alleged capacity to communicate with wide publics. This connection with the public determines a relevant position as a policy actor. Nevertheless, policy actors are challenged by the complexities of the European communication system (de Vreese 2007) in which the costs to produce and disseminate information are high and make it difficult to determine the extent to which the public is informed. As a result, given the lack of outreach tools for communications, policy actors such as think tanks tend to use alternative communication strategies (e.g. mailing lists, social networks, alternative electronic newspapers) which are cheaper (O’Donnell 2001) and directly attract specifically concerned audiences instead of seeking ‘atmospheric impact’ (Stone 2000: 253), as happens in national public spheres, where media have wide impact.

Although think tanks usually rely on limited resources to disseminate their work, their strategies to reach the public tend to be varied (Boucher 2000). However, the lack of mechanisms in the EU to connect with large publics, constitute a great challenge (Boucher 2000: 104). This article seeks to assess this aspect by examining think tanks’ use of mechanisms available for communication.

The five aspects already outlined can be grouped in three dimensions related to organisation, matter and visibility:

The sample and data sources

In Brussels, different types of think tanks coexist (see Annexe): around ten international, global and pan-European think tanks, a dozen branches of national think tanks, a handful of Belgian think tanks, one EU institute (European Union Institute for Security Studies), one EU-autonomous agency of the Commission (Bureau of European Policy Advisers) and 21 EU think tanks. This article examines all 21 EU think tanks (see Table 2) which share their EU-transnational origin, their interest in EU subjects and the intention to contribute to EU policy-making. In order to present the results succinctly, in the following sections the think tanks are classified into three groups which emerged in the analysis of their primary and secondary objectives: 64 a) advocacy think tanks (those with a principled view which advocate for a vision of Europe), b) platform think tanks (those which facilitate connections between policy actors and report on EU policy-making), and c) academic think tanks (those developing thorough reflection in line with academic standards).

The data used to examine the attributes of think tanks come from original research conducted between September 2010 and April 2011. Given that think tanks use their websites as a key tool to explain their objectives and structure, and to disseminate their work, the websites of the EU think tanks were the main source of data. In these websites were found organisational aspects such as objectives, structure, staff, membership and sponsorship. Data related to knowledge produced, such as policy briefs, reports and summaries, as well as strategies for dissemination such as video, newspapers, seminars and conferences, were also obtained from the think tanks’

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64Following other studies (Struyk, 2002), the main and secondary objectives of these think tanks as presented in their mission statements were studied in order to develop this categorisation.
websites. Activity reports usually constitute a valuable source of organisation and output data; however, only a few EU think tanks annually publish comprehensive reports. Most of the data collected relates to 2009 and 2010, although in some categories, given the lack of more recent key data such as that concerning budgets, older information was examined, usually from 2008. Some think tanks were excluded from the collation of some categories owing to lack of information. Information provided by EU institutions on their websites, such as the Transparency Register and the Citizenship Programme, also constituted valuable supplementary sources.

Table 2. EU think tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advocacy think tanks</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Centre for European Studies (CES)</td>
<td>2 European Ideas Network (EIN)</td>
<td>3 Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)</td>
<td>4 European Liberal Forum (ELF)</td>
<td>5 European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Migration Policy Group (MPG)</td>
<td>7 The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness (TLCEC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic think tanks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Bruegel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)</td>
<td>10 International Security Information Service (ISIS)</td>
<td>11 Observatoire Social Européen (OSE)</td>
<td>12 Groupe de Recherche et d’Information sur la Paix et la sécurité (GRIP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform think tanks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Pour la Solidarité (PLS)</td>
<td>14 European Corporate Governance Institute (ECGI)</td>
<td>15 Institut Européen de la Recherche sur la Coopération Méditerranéenne et Euro-Arabe (MEDEA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 European Institute for Asia Studies (EIAS)</td>
<td>17 Security and Defence Agenda (SDA)</td>
<td>18 The Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA)</td>
<td>19 European Policy Centre (EPC)</td>
<td>20 Friends of Europe (FOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Madariaga-College of Europe Foundation (MCEF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EU think tanks’ performance as knowledge brokers**

To study the three main functions of think tanks mentioned in the introduction, organisational and output indicators were systematically evaluated. The organisational indicators studied included objectives, focus, staff, funds, and associated policy actors. The output indicators included dissemination strategies (advice, newsletters, social networking, video, seminars, conferences, etc.) and publications (reports, policy briefs, books, etc.). These indicators were used to assess EU think tanks’ functions in light of the aspects of EU policy-making (following section).

The results reveal that EU think tanks concentrate most of their resources on the second function (facilitators of debates and spaces to connect with policy actors) by frequently organising seminars in which members, partners and sponsors participate (see Table 4). This is a key function for think tanks in general (McGann and Sabatini 2011, Stone 1996). However, compared with other think tank communities such as the British or the American (Boucher 2004, Stone 1996), the singularity of EU think tanks consists in their limitations regarding the other two functions. Regarding the function of knowledge generation, EU think tanks are principally concerned with
policy analysis. The function of dissemination is affected by the fact that EU think tanks devote more resources to targeting current and potential members and sponsors than participating in consultation of the EU institutions or disseminating their outputs to the wider public (see Figure 3). Some of these patterns vary in accordance with the think-tank type. Academic think tanks, for instance, develop the most research among the think tanks studied.

Finally, the classification of EU think tanks which emerged here can already be seen as an indication of their prioritisation of the platform function. Compared with western European countries (Day 2000), the share of advocacy and academic think tanks appearing in this study is smaller, which suggests that engagement in research is lower and principled views are less prominent. Additionally, whereas at the national level the three most prominent types of think tanks are usually advocacy, academic and contract, at EU level contract think tanks, which are mainly focused on carrying out research on a contract basis, are replaced by platform think tanks, which are the most numerous among all the think-tank types at EU level.

Adaptation of EU think tanks knowledge-broker function to EU policy-making
My assessment of EU think tanks’ strategies in relation to EU policy-making suggests that the aspects constraining EU think tanks’ capacity to improve their role as knowledge brokers are (as per Table 1) i) the aim of the opportunity structures to consult stakeholders; and ii) the difficulties of increasing visibility and contributing to public-opinion formation due to the barriers of the mechanisms of communication. Conversely, the two main strengths of EU think tanks are their ability to engage in and create networks and their potential to strategically use alternative mechanisms for communication.

The EU institutions targeted by EU think tanks
The indicators studied here suggest that, as pointed out by Sherrington (2001) and as is the case with other non-state actors, EU think tanks are moderately interested in targeting the Parliament and significantly interested in the Commission.

One way to examine the interest of EU think tanks in EU institutions is by determining the frequency with which EU officials are invited to be speakers at activities organised by the think tanks (see Table 5). Think tanks seek to invite relevant officials who attract the attention of policy actors and publics which use think tanks’ services. At the same time, officials accept these invitations because it enables them to meet different policy actors concerned with the subjects under discussion. Therefore, the frequency of participation of officials from different EU institutions can help to deduce which specific institutions EU think tanks are interested in, as well as the EU institutions’ interest in EU think tanks.

To examine this, 121 conferences, workshops and seminars organised by 11 think tanks which provided detailed information were scrutinised (see Table 3). This assessment confirmed that the Commission was the most visibly represented institution among participating officials, whereas officials from other institutions and agencies participated in few activities. Nevertheless, CES and ISIS tended to invite more members of the Parliament than officials from the Commission, probably because of their close association with the former.

65Data for Bruegel, CEPS, CES and LCEC correspond to 2009, as presented in their activity reports, and data for ECPE, ECGI, EIAS, FOE, ISIS, MCEF and SDA correspond to 2010, as publicised on their websites.
66CES is a party think tank and ISIS (2010) seeks to ‘stimulate parliamentary engagement’
Table 3. Proportion of presence of EU officials as speakers in 121 events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>Council, the European Central Bank, the European Economic and Social Committee, and Europol</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55.93</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>18.39</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, EU think tanks seek the support of EU institutions, the Commission particularly, and visibly the Parliament. The support from the Commission extended to three-quarters of the cases studied (see Table 5). This support usually constituted grants from Framework Programmes. The support received from the Parliament covered more than one-third of the cases, most of which were advocacy and research think tanks. To appraise the degree to which these grants and support constituted a primary source it was necessary to identify the distribution of the incomes received by think tanks. Unfortunately, the majority of think tanks do not publish financial statements, but a sample of think tanks for which information was found serves as an illustration (see Table 4).

Table 4. Proportion of funding from EU institutions for six think tanks (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of source</th>
<th>Think tank</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU Institutions</td>
<td>MCEF</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOE</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>CEPS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRIP</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TEPSA</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>FEPS</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The opportunity structures used by EU think tanks

Examination of access to the Parliament and the Commission suggests that EU think tanks dispense with the opportunity structures provided for non-state actors and, consequently, they lack spaces to communicate with officials in institutional settings. This reduces their possibilities for influencing policy-making and perceiving incentives which usually stimulate policy actors to create and accumulate brokered knowledge.

Any examination of EU think tanks’ contact with the Commission and the Parliament through the Transparency Register is futile, since the EU think-tank community has resisted enlistment, arguing that they are not interest groups (Euractiv 2009). In fact, a search on the Register for the Parliament in March 2011 did not find any think tanks, and among the 117 think tanks registered in the Commission's database only EPC, FEPS, PLS and TLCEC were listed. However, this is evidently not a situation unique to think tanks given that, by March 2010, 60 percent of the companies consulted were not in the register (Alter-EU 2010). The consequence of this is that, for instance, some Parliamentary groups have encouraged EU officials to decline meeting with consultants who are not registered (EP 2010).
With regard to the elaboration of policy recommendations, it was observed that three out of the six think tanks whose mission statements include advisory objectives do not concern themselves with policy recommendations (EIAS, OSE, PLS). In contrast, MPG, TLCEC, and TEPSA all elaborated few policy recommendations, although this is not in their mission statements. TEPSA, for instance, has done research commissioned by the Parliament’s Committees on Foreign Affairs and Development, and ISIS organises the ‘European Security Contact Group’ meetings for the Parliament. The limited production of policy recommendations is unusual given that, although most of the direct contact between think tanks and politicians generally happens ad hoc (Stone 1996), policy recommendations are usually a visible output of think tanks generally.

EU think tanks’ scope for knowledge and organisational outreach

The high frequency of events in which a wide number of government and non-state actors gather suggests that EU think tanks have a significant capacity to network, become platforms, and develop cooperative work which might lead to EU-wide views. Moreover, the significant presence of EU officials indicates that most of the contact between EU officials and EU think tanks takes place in these non-institutional settings, where the officials benefit from the opportunity to communicate with different policy actors. Therefore, EU think tanks seem to constitute a platform for communication for EU officials.

EU think tanks seem to have the capacity to create EU-wide views. The study of EU think tanks’ production of research and analysis (see the following sub-section) shows that all the EU think tanks develop research and analysis under different cooperation schemes (see Figure 2), and in the examination of their mission statements and objectives (Section 4) it was noticeable that EU think tanks claim to seek comprehensive views through inclusive dialogue with multiple policy actors.

The network capacity of the think tanks was studied by assessing: a) the activities they organise and the nature of the speakers invited, and b) the types of partners, members and sponsors they serve. These are both aspects which help to assess the network capacity of EU think tanks because they reflect the extent to which government and non-state policy actors are interested in participating and sharing their viewpoints in EU think tanks’ events and also provide evidence of the diversity of policy actors interested in supporting the EU think tanks’ work.

It is considered that partners, members and sponsors are a particularly clear indicator of the network capacity of think tanks because it was noted that the financial support generally concedes membership or partnership status which allows for active involvement. This implies that policy actors financially support think tanks because their work is somehow useful to them. A considerable number of think tanks received support from foundations, associations and NGOs (see Table 5). These included transnational organisations, such as the European Climate Foundation (in TLCEC), but national organisations, such as Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation (in ISIS), appeared more frequently. National and local agencies provided financial support in more than half of the cases, such as the Taiwan Representative Office (in

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67For membership, a fee is usually paid which gives access to attend and participate in activities. Partnerships are forged to carry out events, projects and plans in association with organisations which have relevant expertise. Partnerships do not necessarily entail financial support, because expertise is considered the contribution.

68To study the partners, members and sponsors of EU think tanks, the policy actors involved in their financial support were identified. No information was found for GRIP, MEDEA and TLCEC.
EIAS) or the Belgian General Directorate for Development Cooperation (in GRIP). Regarding the diversity of the clientele, in the broadest cases think tanks served seven types of actors, and in more than two-thirds of the cases at least four types of actors were partners, members or sponsors.

Examination of the wide variety of policy actors participating in events suggests that EU think tanks constitute network platforms; however, their impact tends to be limited to the participating audiences since most of the events are seminars and workshops. Seminars were organised by four-fifths of the think tanks and workshops and conferences of any considerable scale were organised by two-fifths.69 An estimation of the overall frequency of seminars, workshops and conferences showed that two-thirds of the think tanks organise more than a dozen events a year and Bruegel, EPC, FOE and MCEF organise more than 30. Attendance at seminars and conferences was frequently open to all kinds of concerned publics.70 In those events, academics, national and local agencies and EU officials were the most visible speakers (see Table 5). Most think tanks tended to invite between six and nine different types of speakers; only in the cases of ECIP, MEDEA, OSE and PLS was the number lower and this was on account of their particular approach. For instance, PLS is mostly concerned with social policy and seeks to reach actors across Europe, because of which their main speakers were national and local agencies, foundations, associations and NGOs.

A comparison between policy actors as speakers and policy actors as partners, members and sponsors revealed a considerable disparity in the prominence of academia, which was a minor sponsor but the most visible speaker together with national and local agencies. This indicates that, by bringing together EU officials, academics and national and local agencies, EU think tanks are providing a space where multiple key perspectives on EU polity are disseminated.

| Table 5. Proportion of the participation of institutions and organisations in EU think tanks as speakers and as partners, members and sponsors |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                                                 | Speakers                      | Partners, members and sponsors |
| Commission                                                    | 13.08                         | 16.47                          |
| Parliament                                                    | 10.28                         | 10.58                          |
| Other EU agencies                                             | 7.43                          | 5.88                           |
| International institutions                                    | 13.08                         | 10.58                          |
| National and local agencies                                   | 14.01                         | 12.94                          |
| Higher education                                              | 14.01                         | 5.88                           |
| Corporations                                                 | 8.41                          | 9.41                           |
| Foundations, associations and NGOs                            | 10.28                         | 18.82                          |
| Journalists                                                   | 8.41                          | 0                              |
| Think tanks                                                   | 0                             | 9.41                           |
| Total %                                                       | 100                           | 100                            |

The policy areas think tanks are concerned with and the corresponding nature of the knowledge developed

A considerable number of the policy areas EU think tanks are concerned with are not the exclusive domain of the EU and are politicised to different degrees (see Figure 1)

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69 No information was found for GRIP and MPG and ELF.
70For instance EPC organised the activities for members, EU officials and media, and opened for other publics only on special occasions.
and, accordingly, the data suggest that think tanks are more concerned with development of analysis than engagement in research (see Figure 2). Therefore, they seem to perform similarly to public interest groups in this matter and, consequently, these groups – who are regarded by EU institutions as stakeholders’ representatives – become the main competitors for EU think tanks. However, by rejecting the function of interest representatives, EU think tanks retreat from competition in the opportunity structures. Instead, their research and analysis is aimed at informing partners, members, sponsors and specific concerned audiences.

The subject foci of EU think tanks, as defined in their mission statements, were examined to identify the policy areas they are concerned with. A categorisation according to EU policy areas revealed that 13 of the think tanks studied are concerned with specific subjects such as i) economic and monetary affairs (Bruegel and ECIPE), ii) enterprise (ECGI), iii) external relations (EIAS and MEDEA), iv) foreign and security policing (GRIP, ISIS and SDA), v) justice, freedom and security (MPG), vi) employment and social affairs (OSE, PLS and TLCEC) and vii) institutional affairs (FEPS). Meanwhile, the remaining nine think tanks are generalist (concerned with several topics) and principally concerned with institutional affairs, economic and monetary affairs and external relations.

![Figure 1: Frequency with which policy areas are mentioned in mission statements](image)

Although think tanks conduct research and analysis through cooperation and significantly rely on networks which assure the potential to produce EU-wide views, the assessment of their publications (Figure 2) shows that they are significantly concerned with the production of policy analysis which does not provide a high degree of innovative or technical insight. In addition, the production of knowledge relying on prominent numbers of research staff is scarce. The relevance of research...
produced through the cooperation schemes of Framework Programmes suggests that think tanks are to a certain extent reactive to policy demands rather than proactive and thinking ahead (McGann and Sabatini 2011) to anticipate the EU’s policy needs. It has even been argued that Framework Programmes, besides building knowledge, have been employed as a mechanism for the Commission to contact stakeholders (Christiansen 2006: 107).

Although research and analytical staff are essential for think tanks, they are expensive and so think tanks tend to rely on moderately sized operations in this sphere (Stone, 1996). This is particularly visible among EU think tanks, whose staff-numbers are small in most of the cases. All academic think tanks except for ISIS hire in-house staff, and two platform think tanks associated with academics also have in-house staff (ECGI and TEPSA). While CEPS employs 53 researchers, and ECIPE, Bruegel and ECP have around a dozen in-house researchers or analysts, the remaining nine think tanks comprise only a handful. Some think tanks rely on research independently developed by associated academics. TEPSA, for instance, disseminate a significant amount of academic work carried out by some of their members. Besides the think tanks with research staff, whether in-house or associate, another three think tanks (EPC, ISIS and MPG) also conduct research. Conversely, the survey of think tanks' analytical outputs revealed that all think tanks apart from MEDEA carried out analyses and studies. It was also identified that in more than half the cases those analyses and studies are carried out in cooperation with other organisations (see Figure 2).

Mechanisms for communication used by EU think tanks

The Commission seeks to include in its communication programmes policy actors who have the capacity to integrate citizens in EU debates. However, according to the data, EU think tanks’ use of regular and alternative media is limited and this reduces their capacity to create atmospheric impact and enhance their reputation, which are

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71Amongst those engaged in cooperative research activities, all but ECIPE are also partners in Framework Programmes.

72Only 12 think tanks provided detailed information.

73 Outputs providing key knowledge using scientific standards were considered as research, while outputs providing practical insights with language and standards accessible to all kinds of educated publics were considered as analysis.
essential factors in becoming relevant policy actors (Stone 2000). Nevertheless, the participation of some EU think tanks in the Citizenship Programme is relatively visible. This suggests that there is a contradiction by which EU think tanks, which generally do not connect with citizens, reject being treated as interest representatives and have a limited role in policy-making, nonetheless engage in activities which promote citizens’ participation in policy-making.

Conversely, regarding EU think tanks use of regular and alternative media, the examination of their a) websites, b) newsletters, c) social networks, and d) media coverage revealed that, whereas websites and newsletters play an important part in the diffusion of information, and social networks are gaining some visibility, the use of mainstream media is scarce. All EU think tanks’ websites provide up-to-date information and free access to most of their publications. Newsletters and policy briefs are also seen as tools for dissemination, and 17 think tanks provide easy access and subscription to these, while among those to which access is restricted, newsletters are frequently offered as a special service to members. With regard to alternative mechanisms, 15 think tanks use social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr, most of which are advocacy think tanks, which also harness the widest variety of mechanisms of dissemination, and seven have blogs and four use videos and YouTube. Finally, English is the major language of communication and publication.

Regarding media coverage, ten think tanks publish their media appearances (Figure 3). In all cases, the news coverage is published in a specific section of the website as a bid for visibility. Interestingly, among the twelve think tanks whose objectives mention an interest in increasing awareness among the wider public, only five rely on media and just ECIPE and TLCEC do so visibly. With the exception of SDA, which only appeared in specialised international defence media, the coverage in international media among the think tanks, while not outstanding, was noticeable (one-third or more of their total coverage) and mostly concentrated on the Financial Times and Bloomberg and, after these, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, The Times and Newsweek. The salience of the first two is important given that these are seen as essential media sources for informing Brussels circles.

![Figure 3](image_url)

**Figure 3**

Media coverage reported by ten think tanks: by number of news items

- CEPS: 600 (approx.)
- EPC: 104
- ECIPE: 103
- MPG: 13
- MCEF: 6
- FEPS: 2
- TLCEC: 39
- SDA: 23
- FOE: 100 (approx.)
- CEPS: 600 (approx.)
- Bruegel: 1000 (approx.)
An examination of the number of grants awarded by the Citizenship Programme shows that participation by EU think tanks has been minimal. However, in terms of the resources allocated by the programme, their participation has been considerable. The seven EU think tanks participating in the programme (CEPS, EPC, FOE, MCEF, PLS, TEPSA and TLCEC) constitute around half of the think tanks to which grants were awarded, according to an examination of the programme's funding allocations from 2007 to 2009. These think tanks received between 61 percent (in 2007) and 41 percent (in 2009) of the budget allocated to think tanks.

Does EU policy-making allow for skilful networkers but limited knowledge brokers?

The results of this article suggest that EU think tanks’ role as knowledge brokers is weakened by the fact that EU institutions seek information coming from interest representatives and that EU think tanks, rejecting such a role, retreat from direct participation in policy-making. They also do not seek to contribute to public opinion formation, which is another key function of think tanks (Rich 1994, Stone 1996 and 2000). Consequently, EU think tanks have focused on attending to the demands of other policy actors by considerably developing their network capacity. The following paragraphs discuss the results in relation to the three main functions of think tanks as knowledge brokers.

First, regarding think tanks’ function of knowledge generation, the complexities and costs to accumulate knowledge, together with the disinterest of the EU to use EU think tanks as informants, reduce the incentives for think tanks to invest in the creation of brokered knowledge. Think tanks tend to have more opportunities to influence the policy process when they have the occasion to provide key technical information which is built on research accumulated over time (Rich 2004, Stone 2004). This has to do with the ‘expandable and self-generating’ character of information which might allow those actors accumulating knowledge ‘to achieve large economies of scale in producing new information’ (Womack 2002: 131). Accordingly, the fairly recent development of EU think tanks has only allowed for a modest accumulation of information, and this can play against EU think tanks’ production and transformation of knowledge. Additionally, given that implementation of policies happens at local and national levels, it is difficult for EU think tanks to study the repercussions of policy implementation and play a role as policy evaluators – another function think tanks can fulfil (McGann and Weaver 2000). This also seems to explain the need for EU think tanks’ to turn to EU-sponsored research under Framework Programmes. Sponsored research, in theory, has the advantage of being policy relevant (McGann and Sabatini 2011: 21), and think tanks in general need to balance their research agendas with sponsored research.

Second, regarding EU think tanks’ function as facilitators of debates, the development of networks constitutes their main strength, but also reflects their dependence on the demands of members, partners and sponsors. EU think tanks have the possibility to influence policy-making given their capacity to understand the

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74 This programme aims to include citizens in ‘transnational exchanges and cooperation activities, contributing to developing a sense of belonging to common European ideals and encouraging the process of European integration’ (EC 2010).


76 This seems to support the premise that brokered knowledge is a key aspect for brokers’ success (Meyer 2010).
policy process and interpret it for different policy actors and connect them with EU institutions (Ullrich 2004). This suggests that EU think tanks are affected by a global tendency according to which policy actors are increasingly interested in transnational politics and use think tanks as a vehicle to enable themselves to be informed and to participate (Stone 2004). Moreover, in a complex space such as Europe, practical analysis and understanding of the EU policy process becomes essential (McGann 2007: 71), and EU think tanks seem to have been able to meet these needs. In this regard, two aspects suggest that knowledge brokerage in networks where EU think tanks participate consists in the transnationalisation of national discourses: i) the fact that the knowledge brokered by EU think tanks is considerably shaped by EU institutions’ preferences, and ii) the fact that members and sponsors of EU think tanks tend to be of national origin while speakers tend to be of transnational character.

Third, with regard to think tanks’ function articulating and disseminating policy solutions to increase politicians’ awareness, this article shows that EU processes of consultation are a major constraint for EU think tanks. Research suggests that think tanks have better opportunities to influence the policy process at the agenda-setting stage (Rich 2004, Stone 1996). Therefore, it is understandable that EU think tanks have an interest in contacting the Commission’s officials. Nevertheless, the scant contact between them during policy elaboration can be the result not only of aspects related to the policy areas think tanks are concerned with or the nature of information they produce, but also of EU institutions’ intention to consult stakeholders. Think tanks are not stakeholders but knowledge brokers, between academia and politicians and do not represent any particular interest (Rich 2004, Stone 1996). Think tanks seek to educate the public rather than represent citizens; their purpose is to inform policy and contribute to public-opinion formation (Stone 1996). Therefore, their participation in EU, such as the Citizenship Programme, can be somewhat problematic. This suggests that the EU, in its quest to increase its legitimacy, might be having difficulties in assessing the potential roles which different types of policy actors can fulfil, and whether they should be included in such programmes. At the same time, by participating in these programmes, the role of some policy actors in need of contact with EU institutions and financial support becomes confused with those of other actors, which thus affects their reputation and capacity to succeed in essential aspects of their work. In theory, the knowledge-broker role of EU think tanks in the EU is justified by the fact that stakeholders might be tempted to filter information so that their insider-position is guaranteed (Hix and Høyland 2011: 173), necessitating the EU to expand its sources of contrasting information.

With regard to think tanks’ function articulating and disseminating policy solutions to increase public awareness, EU think tanks’ opportunities to set the agenda can be constrained when the system of communication has difficulties in reaching large publics. It has previously been mentioned that think tanks tend to have more opportunities to influence the policy process on highly politicised topics and where public-opinion formation is required (Rich 2004). Although a considerable part of EU think tanks’ subject foci are politicised, the short-range impact on the public and scant requirement of public-opinion formation unavoidably affect the possibilities and strategies available to EU think tanks to increase their atmospheric impact. However, new tools for communication have the potential to help think tanks increase their visibility. Think tanks are nowadays increasingly using new strategies for dissemination, such as videos and social networks, because they are less dependent on

77On the implications of EU-shaping communication and interaction, see Kutay (2011).
media demands, cheap and effectively reach key concerned audiences (McGann 2007). Consequently, EU think tanks might be able to counterbalance the effects which the lack of a EU-comprehensive media has on their visibility by using these mechanisms more strategically.

In conclusion, although EU think tanks seem to lack both access to EU policy-making and incentives to improve their capacity to create brokered knowledge, they appear to play a relevant role as brokers of basic EU knowledge between EU institutions and national policy actors and thus potentially contribute to the transnationalisation of national discourses. Further research might adopt a policy-subject approach to explore in depth the discursive patterns of networks in which EU think tanks participate in order to enhance our understanding of the relative weight of EU think tanks as knowledge brokers of transnational discourses amid national policy actors.

References


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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annexe 1. Other think tanks in Brussels</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>International and global think tanks</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 European Council on Foreign Relations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Open Society Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 EastWest Institute</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4 The International and European Research Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 International Peace Information Service</td>
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<td>6 The Conference Board</td>
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<td>7 Club des Organismes de Recherche Associés, CLORA</td>
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<td>8 Transatlantic Policy Network</td>
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<td>9 Global Governance Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Branches of national think tanks</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Rand Europe</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Carnegie Europe</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The German Marshall Fund of the United States</td>
<td>USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 IFRI</td>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 FONDAPOL</td>
<td>France</td>
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<td>6 Fondation Robert Schuman</td>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>8 Bertelsmann Stiftung</td>
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<td>9 Hanns Seidel Foundation</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>10 Heinrich Böll Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 Konrad-Adenauer Foundation</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 European Institute of Public Administration</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 The Club of Madrid</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td><strong>Belgian national think tanks</strong></td>
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<td>1 Egmont</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 L’Institut Européen des Relations Internationales</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Centre Européen de Recherches Internationales et Stratégiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Centre d’Etudes de Sécurité et de Défense (CSDS)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EU policy agencies, institutes and autonomous services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>26 Policy Agencies of the European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)</td>
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<td>Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA)</td>
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Trans-Europeanizing Public Spaces in Europe

Hakan G. Sicakkan, University of Bergen

Are there any trans-border interactions and networking patterns, any common systems of competing political discourses, and/or any common channels, platforms, or arenas of communication or action that can be regarded as the beginnings of a European public sphere? If so, how is this embryonic European public sphere being structured? Based on a comparative analysis of discursive configurations and networking patterns of more than 240 civil society organizations in sixteen European countries and eight European civil society networks, this article finds discursive gaps between the views of member state–level and European-level civil society organizations on diversity, the future of the EU polity, and who they see as their legitimate addressees. Networking patterns indicate this gap is not only in discourses but also in interactions. Considering the current segmentation along national lines, this may imply the beginnings of a development toward the emergence of a horizontally and vertically segmented European public sphere. The aim of this paper is to assess the extent to which the participants of public debates in Europe are interconnected through transnational networks, collaboration, and discourses.

Trans-Europeanizing Public Spaces in Europe

The reason for labeling the new public space a “trans-Europeanizing public space” is two-fold: First, by using this term, I emphasize that trans-Europeanization is an ongoing process. Second, the term can also be understood as a function of certain common arenas, networks, and interaction patterns although the objectives associated with them may not be Europeanization. An example is the nationalist, intergovernmentalist, and anti-EU organizations’ cooperation throughout Europe. Although these organizations are against any change that would reduce the sovereignty of the member states, the organizations’ trans-border interactions contribute to forming a trans-Europeanizing political space. In operational terms, a trans-Europeanizing political space is defined as a system of multiple competing discourses advocated and voiced by different types of collective actors at national and European levels and/or a set of trans-border networks/structured interactions between collective actors located in different countries. That is, when either the criterion of transnationally shared discourses, or the criterion of transnational interactions, or both, is satisfied, one can start talking about trans-Europeanizing political spaces.

Table 1 gives a schematic overview of the categories that constitute trans-Europeanizing political spaces. In this framework, a nationalizing discourse, for instance, can be observed in trans-European and national arenas, and similarly a Europeanizing discourse can be observed in national and trans-European arenas. An organization may be disseminating Europeanizing discourses and simultaneously getting involved in trans-European networks (model I). An organization may also be engaging in trans-European networks while disseminating primarily nationalizing discourses (model II). Further, an organization may be disseminating Europeanizing discourses in its own member-state context without participating in trans-European networks (model III). Finally, an organization may be deploying nationalizing discourses only in a member state without engaging in trans-European networks (model IV). The organizations that fall under models I, II, and III, their trans-European affiliations (networks), and their views (discourses) on selected policy issues altogether constitute the trans-Europeanizing public spaces.
Table 1: A Conceptual Framework for Trans-Europeanizing Political Spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the Organization Have Trans-European Ties/Networks?</th>
<th>Is the Discourse Europeanizing?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Trans-European organizations (e.g., Social Platform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II Non-Europeanizing organizations in trans-European arenas (e.g., UEN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>III Europeanizing organizations in non-trans-European arenas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV Non-trans-European organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model IV in Table 1, however, refers to the public spaces that are not trans-European as these organizations operate with typically non-Europeanizing discourses only in national or local arenas. The different elements of this conceptual framework are further elaborated in the following sections and used as a heuristic tool to depict the current structuring of trans-European political spaces.

**Discourses.** For this research, I measure and assess the discourses focusing on organizations’ statements about (1) which groups to include in the organizations’ vision of a diverse society and whether an ethno-nationally diverse society is acceptable / desirable / inescapable in their mindset, (2) the role they envision for the EU central political institutions and member states in the EU, and (3) which institutions / organizations / networks the groups want to receive their political messages. These three themes lie at the core of the tension between the gatekeepers and trespassers of borders and boundaries of many kinds in Europe as well as different levels of government within the EU political system. I simply distinguish between Europeanizing and non-Europeanizing discourses.

Europeanizing discourses tend to contain inclusive attitudes favoring (1) diversity of all kinds and (2) central EU institutions’ participation in policymaking at different levels along with the existing national and local political authorities, and (3) defining different European intergovernmental and supranational institutions as receivers of the political messages – along with the existing national authorities.

Non-Europeanizing discourses, on the other hand, are characterized by disfavoring and excluding attitudes toward (1) diversity caused by non-native groups of people and (2) intergovernmental and supranational authorities’ involvement in policy matters, as well as (3) regarding non-national (intergovernmental and supranational) political institutions as irrelevant addressees for the political messages.

**Networks.** Analytically, the network dimension of trans-Europeanizing public spaces can be approached in two ways. The first approach focuses on “horizontal” (Koopmans and Erbe 2004) networks where social and political actors seek and get involved in transnational collaboration and communication without attempting to build a higher hierarchical level that structures their interactions. The second approach emphasizes “vertical” (Koopmans and Erbe 2004) networks that seek to articulate more structured, and often institutionalized, channels of collaboration and communication, at the European level. The second approach can be further elaborated in terms of bottom-up and top-down networks. Bottom-up networks emerge
through social and political actors’ own initiatives to build trans-European networks seeking to structure and/or institutionalize their collaboration at the European level. Top-down networks emerge through elite-led European-level initiatives that attempt to bring different social and political actors together under their umbrella.

Each process and mechanism for forming a trans-European network implies a specific preference for a particular model of a EPS. Different preferences concerning involvement in horizontal and vertical trans-European structures, on the one hand, and in bottom-up and top-down structures, on the other hand, imply different approaches to diversity, as well as different attributions of ontological priority to the individual, the collectivity (of different types), the sub-national, the national, and the European. In other words, I expect some actors to deliberately rule out participating in vertical structures because the actors do not want to contribute to a hierarchical EPS structure. Therefore, in trans-European constellations of national-level organizations, I expect to find not only pro-European orientations but also diverging ideas and strategies concerning how the EPS should be structured (or not be structured at all) – e.g., a strictly segmented EPS along the lines of a Europe of nations, or an EPS as an arena that facilitates only limited trans-national collaboration on certain issues that cannot be dealt with only at the national level, or an EPS of overlapping European publics that follows the multi-level governance structure of the EU, or an ideally integrated single EPS, etc.

In this article, the network dimension of trans-European political spaces is measured through the following indicators: (1) the operative level of the networks (regional, national, trans-European interactions), (2) the scope of collaborative interaction (collaborative projects/actions, joint projects/actions, attempts to formulate common objectives, efforts to formulate common actions to address common concerns, synchronizing existing projects/action plans, mutual information sharing), and (3) membership status in networks (active membership, passive membership, observer status).

Research Design, Sample and Data
The data about the collective actors is measured at two levels: institutional level data about organizations, gathered from organizations’ printed and online official documents, and individual level data, obtained from in-depth interviews with persons that are in leading positions in the organizations (elite interviews).

Organizations and the institutional data sample. The research design focuses specifically on those organizations and elites that have high visibility in public debates – representing the most visible mainstream and alternative discourses and networks. In each of the 16 European countries, I focus on three political parties (the party leading the government, the main opposition party, and the most visible Maverick party in each context), three non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or social movement organizations (SMOs) – civil society organizations that are the most visible in their contexts and represent the mainstream or alternative discourses, three think tanks (a policy research organization, an academic think tank, and an advocacy think tank in each context), three print media actors (two main-player newspapers and one smaller newspaper that exhibits anti-establishment views in each context), and two broadcast media actors (one public and one commercial TV-channel that are main players in each context).

The research design includes collective actors operating at different levels of governance. Therefore, I also planned to include three European political party federations (The Party of European Socialists “PES”, European People’s Party “EPP”, and Union for Europe of Nations “UEN”), three trans-European networks of NGOs/SMOs (Social Platform of European NGOs “Social Platform”, European Network against Racism “ENAR”, and European Women’s Lobby “EWL”), and two trans-European networks of think tanks (European Policy Institutes Network “EPIN” and Trans European Policy Studies Association
However, there are no Europe-wide media actors that are followed by a large European population: Euronews, which comes closest to what may be called a trans-European media channel, is not amongst the significant news sources utilized by European citizens although it broadcasts in several languages. Facing this fact, the research design had to omit the “trans-European media”.

Due to concern for representing the actors that are the most visible in the public debates, the final sample includes a larger number of organizations: 242 organizations at member-state level (56 political parties, 67 social movement organizations, 46 think tanks, 44 newspapers, and 29 TV-channels, which are spread throughout sixteen European countries) and 8 European umbrella organizations that are the trans-European counterparts of these. In terms of both discourse and networking, these exhibit varying degrees of affiliation with or dissociation from trans-Europeanizing political spaces. Some are contained in national arenas in terms of both discourse and networks; some operate with Europeanizing discourses in trans-European arenas.

Elites and the interview data sample. From each organization, a number of persons in leading positions have been interviewed. Understanding the internal diversity within the organizations that are active in public debates is very important with respect to the theoretical points of departure of Eurosphere. One of the project’s aims is to identify the organizations and the persons in organizations that are pushing for more trans-Europeanization or nationalization. Thus, in each organization, either the leader, or the vice leader, or someone in the steering board known to be endorsing the leader’s views, was selected. In addition, for each organization, a person known to be the opinion leader but not holding an official leadership position was selected. In cases where the official leader and the opinion leader were identified as the same person, an interview with an additional opinion leader was not conducted. Further, at least one leading person who had official responsibility for, or was known to be interested in the policy areas that Eurosphere is researching on, was included in the sample. Further, for those organizations with internal groups like women’s groups, minority groups, youth groups etc, we included those persons who led the group that was the most visible in public debates.

Thus, the size of the qualitative sample in each country is determined by four factors: (1) the number of the organization types (which is four – political party, NGO/SMO, think tank, print media), (2) the number of the organizations’ positions in the public debates (which is three – mainstream, main opposition, Maverick / alternative / anti-anti-establishment), (3) the number of the elite types (which is four - formal leader, opinion leader, internal opposition leader, sub-group leader), and (4) the saturation point for representing internal diversity in each organization.

The research design stipulates that including 48 elites from each country (representing 4 organization types, 4 elite types, and 3 positions: 4x4x3=48) will provide the optimum coverage of important collective actors that participate in public debates. This makes a total of 768 interviews required to conduct the project in 16 countries. However, 54 interviews were planned for each country in order to avoid ending up with too few interviews, making a total of 864 interviews with organizations at the member state level: seven persons from each political party, four from each NGO/SMO, three from each think tank, and three from each print media. The number of interviewees from political parties is larger because they accommodate almost all types of elites and internal groups.

In addition, 24 interviews were planned with the leaders of eight trans-European networks. These are the central operative units of eight European networks, the majority of which are

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For detailed information about rules and procedures for selecting organizations and interviewees, see Eurosphere Research Notes no.9 and 13 at http://eurospheres.org/publications/research-notes/.
located in Brussels. By operative units, I refer to leaders, boards, and secretariats of European umbrella organizations that bring together national level organizations under their transnational networks.

The final interview data set contains 764 interviews because, in some organizations, the saturation point was reached below the maximum number of planned interviews – indicating a low level of internal diversity in the respective organizations. That is, interviewing more persons would not result in new information about the respective organization. The second factor is inaccessibility of print media elites in the UK.

Methods of Analysis
I use organizations, networks of organizations, and people who are in leading positions in these organizations (elites) as units of observations in different analysis stages. Discourses about diversity, the European polity, and the European public sphere are mapped through interviews with elites. The information about networking and collaboration patterns comes from institutional-level data collected from the organizations’ official printed documents and other online publications as well as secondary literature on these organizations.

Each of the three dimensions – views on diversity, European polity, and the European public sphere – and the networking and collaboration patterns are mapped by using multiple variables. In order to create concise indicators, the number of the variables is reduced with principal components analysis (PCA). To create the new scores, I use regression factor scores since they consider the importance (loadings) of the variables constituting the respective dimensions. All the PCA-results tables in this paper report rotated component matrixes based on Varimax-rotation with Keiser normalization.

For the question of whether a system of competing Europe-wide discourses and trans-European interaction patterns exists, I adopt an exploratory approach. By using a series of discriminant analyses (DA), I identify the member state–level organizations that display discourse and networking patterns similar to those of trans-European networks, and vice versa. The grouping variable in each DA is simply a dummy variable indicating whether an organization is a national-level organization of a trans-European network. The final classifications of the cases are cross-validated.

Elite Discourse Patterns in the European Public Sphere
Interviews with leaders of national and trans-European-level organizations show there are clear differences in the organizations’ approaches to diversity, EU polity, and the public sphere. Although the whole spectrum of views is represented at both levels, the set of views that dominate at each level differs.

Differences between national and trans-European elites’ views on diversity. The interviewees were asked to mention persons and groups that they see as relevant to their own idea of a diverse society. After the interviewees talked about their own preferences, they were asked to consider whether they would like to include other categories. The answers were then registered in a common database. Table 2 presents results from a PCA of the categories mentioned by the respondents.

The first dimension indicates global and transnational understanding in the sample. All the variables loading on this dimension concern categories that are unrelated to the notion of a homogenous nation state – but other phenomena, other groups, and belongings that contest it. I labeled this dimension “Global and Transnational Orientation to Diversity.” It measures the respondents’ tendency to include all types of diversity, not only group-based diversity but also individual diversity. This includes diversity generated by internal mobility within the EU.

The second dimension measures the extent to which a respondent is willing to include gender, disability and sexuality groups, different generations, and social classes in his or her definition of a diverse society. I labeled this dimension “Bodily and Individualist Orientation
to Diversity.” These variables are associated with social class as the majority of the respondents were concerned that such belonging might affect people’s social class/status.

Table 2: Principal Components Analysis of Groups Seen as Relevant for Definition of the Diverse Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V1.1: Which groups are relevant today for defining a diverse society? (Valid N= 741)</th>
<th>Component</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transnational belonging (groups that are identifying with more than one country)</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting belongings (people whose belongings are under a process of change)</td>
<td>.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European belonging (groups identifying with the EU)</td>
<td>.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global belonging groups (identification with humanity)</td>
<td>.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple/mixed belongings (people identifying with more than one group)</td>
<td>.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-style groups (people identifying with different sorts of life-styles)</td>
<td>.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial belonging (groups identifying with a specific region in a country)</td>
<td>.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological groups (people identifying with a specific ideology)</td>
<td>.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant groups (people coming from non-European countries)</td>
<td>.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender groups (men/women)</td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability groups (people with physical and mental disadvantages)</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality groups (e.g., gays, lesbians, transsexuals, homosexuals, etc)</td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation (e.g., youth/elderly)</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Class (e.g., workers, employers, farmers, rich, poor, etc)</td>
<td>.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic groups (people identifying with a specific ethnic group)</td>
<td>.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious groups (people identifying with a specific religion)</td>
<td>.268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National belonging (people identifying with a specific nation)</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to explained variance (%)</td>
<td>.4990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third dimension clusters the indicators measuring whether the respondents include national, religious, and ethnic groups in their definitions of a diverse society. I labeled this dimension “Traditional Orientation to Diversity.” In this dimension, we measure how inclusive respondents are to group-based diversity created by the nation-state itself.

DA of the three scales with the grouping variable “national vs. trans-European organization” gave the results shown in Table 3: 21.8% of the interviewees from national organizations and 52.9% from trans-European organizations agree on a globally / transnationally-oriented definition of a diverse society. Inversely, 78.2% of national and 47.0% of trans-European elites agree on a national orientation to a diverse society. These results show nationalizing and Europeanizing discourses are disseminated at national-level and trans-European-level organizations, but the national orientation is stronger at the national level whereas the transnational/global orientation is stronger at the trans-European level.

Table 3: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of Groups Relevant for the Definition of Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V6 National or Transnational Organization?</th>
<th>Predicted Group Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-validated Count</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Cross-validated National</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Trans-European</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My second indicator concerning diversity views relates to the normative, ontological, or instrumental status each interviewee gives to ethno-national diversity. The respondents were
asked what they thought about ethno-nationally diverse societies. The responses were classified according to whether the respondents regard ethno-national diversity as a normatively desirable goal in itself, or an inescapable fact, or a matter that defines the meaningful existence of persons, or a means to achieve other goals. Respondents’ answers were coded into multiple categories when the answers fit more than one category.

Table 4: Principal Components Analysis of the Status Given to Ethno-national Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V2.1 What do you think about ethno-nationally diverse societies? (Valid N=720)</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The respondent sees an ethno-nationally diverse society as a desirable goal to achieve</td>
<td>.869</td>
<td>-.301</td>
<td>-.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respondent does not attribute any normative or ontological status but sees ethno-national diversity as an inescapable fact of a social life</td>
<td>-.835</td>
<td>-.376</td>
<td>-.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respondent sees an ethno-nationally diverse society as an ontological matter without which society’s and/or an individual’s existence would not be possible</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.969</td>
<td>-.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respondent sees an ethno-national diversity as means for achieving some other goals and not as a goal in itself</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to explained variance (%)</td>
<td>36.54</td>
<td>29.65</td>
<td>26.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from a PCA of these four categories are presented in Table 4. The first dimension is labeled “Normative vs. Realist Approach,” and it measures respondents’ tendency to view an ethno-nationally diverse society as a goal in itself or as an inescapable fact. Large positive values indicate perception of ethno-national diversity as a goal in itself. Negative scores with larger absolute values indicate perceptions of ethno-national diversity as an inescapable fact whether or not one sees it as desirable or not.

The second dimension is labeled “Ontological-Existential Approach.” The higher scores with positive values on this scale indicate the respective respondents do not necessarily favor or not favor ethno-national diversity, but they accept it since they regard ethnicity and nationality as the foundation of people’s social existence. Higher scores with negative values mean that the respective respondents do not perceive ethno-national diversity as an existential matter, but acceptable for other reasons.

The third dimension is labeled “Instrumental Approach.” Specific statements – e.g., ethno-national diversity “is enriching our culture,” “stimulates economic development and innovation,” “is a god way of fighting an aging society,” “should be tolerated if we want to share our wealth with poor people,” “is acceptable since it leads to a more just society/world,” “is a necessary tool for protecting human rights,” “needed if we want to have a more colorful society etc – are coded into this category. Higher positive values on this scale thus indicate instrumentalist approaches to ethno-national diversity.

Table 5: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of Views on Ethno-national Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V6 National or Transnational Organization?</th>
<th>Predicted Group Membership</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Trans-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-validated Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distribution of these views between levels is given in Table 5: 39.4 % of the interviewees from national-level organizations and 66.7% from trans-European organizations share a normative view of diversity as a goal to achieve. However, 60.6% of the national and 33.3% of the trans-European interviewees share an instrumentalist and realist approach to diversity. That is, among the national-level elites, ethno-national diversity is acceptable because it is unavoidable, a necessity for meaningful social existence, and needed to achieve other goals. Views that do not see ethno-national diversity as a goal in itself dominate among the national-level elites. Inversely, views that regard ethno-national diversity as a goal in itself dominate among elites who work in trans-European organizations.

**Differences between national and trans-European elites’ views on EU polity.**

Application of PCA on the five items listed in Table 6 resulted in three dimensions. The first dimension measures the extent to which the respondents want a development where policymaking/decision competences between the member-state and EU levels are differentiated and divided between levels according to different policy areas. Based on an inspection of the answers about different policy areas in qualitative interviews, I have interpreted this dimension as measuring the preference for a system of multi-level governance (MLG). In addition, an inspection of the respondents’ preferences concerning decision levels in different policy areas in the quantitative data set supports this interpretation. Large positive values mean a preference for multi-level governance whereas large negative views mean the absence of this preference.

The second dimension can be interpreted as measuring the preference for a multi-level federal polity (MLP) versus more autonomy for member states in all areas. “Autonomy for member states” and “federalization at large” load on the same dimension with opposite signs, making this dimension meaningfully bipolar. Large positive values imply a pro-federalization attitude, and large negative values imply pro-member state autonomy attitudes.

**Table 6: Principle Components Analysis of the Views on EU Polity Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Valid N=663)</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More centralization, but in certain policy fields</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More autonomy for member states, but in certain policy fields</td>
<td>.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More federalization at large</td>
<td>-.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More autonomy for member states</td>
<td>-.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More centralization</td>
<td>-.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to explained variance (%)</td>
<td>29.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third dimension measures the extent to which a respondent is for more EU centralization regardless of policy areas – that is, a preference for building a centralized EU polity (EUP). Large positive values indicate pro-centralization attitudes, and large negative preferences mean the absence of this preference. Cases with very low values on all three dimensions display a general anti-EU preference, and even a preference for dissolving the EU.

As indicated in Table 7, 22.7% of the interviewees from national organizations and 47.1% of the interviewees from trans-European organizations agree on establishing a MLG or (to less extent) a MLP. However, 77.3% of national-level interviewees and 52.9% of trans-European interviewees agree on more decentralization and more autonomy for member states.
Table 7: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of the Views on EU Polity Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V6 National or Transnational Organization?</th>
<th>Predicted Group Membership</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-validated Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences in elites’ preferred addressees in the European public sphere. This section is based on a set of variables measuring the extent to which, and whom, actors want to target as the addressees of their messages or claims in their communications and interactions.

The first column in Table 8 lists the different authorities and organizations the respondents mentioned as their addressees. A PCA resulted in two dimensions. The first dimension encompasses the different European and EU political and judicial authorities – that is, the addressee is an institution at the European level, and the communication is upward. The second dimension measures the extent to which an actor’s targeted addressees are other organizations, networks, groups, etc., including the European Commission, the European Parliament, and European parties/party families. Unlike the first dimension, communication and collaboration here do not necessarily imply a vertical or hierarchical but rather a horizontal structure of communication.

Table 8: Principal Components Analysis of the Actors’ Addressees in the Public Sphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V5.10 Which actors on all levels (international, supranational, national, sub-national, i.e., regional and/or local) do you want to address with your activities? (Valid N=544)</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Court of Auditors</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Ombudsman</td>
<td>.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Economic and Social Committee</td>
<td>.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidency of the Council</td>
<td>.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Committee of the Regions. Agencies</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of the European Union</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Council</td>
<td>.677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Court of Human Rights</td>
<td>.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Court of Justice</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Commission</td>
<td>.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender organizations/networks</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority organizations/networks</td>
<td>.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious organizations/networks</td>
<td>.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties and/or party families</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbies</td>
<td>.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens in general</td>
<td>.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Parliament</td>
<td>.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to explained variance (%)</td>
<td>41.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 shows 2.3% of the interviewees from national-level actors and 31.3% of the interviewees from trans-national actors want to be involved in vertical communication structures. However, 97.7% of the national actor interviewees and 68.8% of the transnational actor interviewees want to be primarily involved in horizontal communication structures.
Elites at the national and trans-European levels clearly prefer horizontal trans-European interactions. This trend is much more pronounced within the national-level organizations. A closer examination of the in-depth interviews also shows many of those who favor involvement in horizontal networks and who simultaneously want to involve EU political institutions as little as possible in their trans-European affairs do so because they are sceptical about the EU’s democratic qualities, and they do not want to be part of the legitimization mechanisms the EU has devised. Some political elites stated they already had good communication and collaboration channels with their sister parties in other countries, through party federations and one-to-one contacts between the party elites. Further, the national-level SMO/NGO leaders who prefer horizontal Europeanization say this process started before the European Union existed and should continue especially now in the new political context of Europe, which is characterized by pooling of sovereignties so that the new concentrated power can be effectively criticized and controlled by citizens. The interviewees also think for issues on which some national governments are not responsive enough (e.g., women’s rights, minority rights, environmental protection), European-level institutions can be a good tool for making national governments change their courses of action. Since the interviewees’ own aim is to make sure that the interests they voice be protected, horizontal Europeanization uninfluenced by EU premises is, for them, a better alternative. If necessary, European political institutions can be addressed for this purpose, but the European level should not, in their eyes, be taken for granted as a legitimate authority in all matters. This trend is clear concerning organizations operating at the national level.

In addition to those who favor horizontal trans-Europeanization, we find national-level elites who seek to address only national governments and authorities in their activities. Here, the concern is the survival of the nation state rather than the democratic legitimacy of EU political institutions.

Trans-European elites, on the other hand, perceive their role as mediators between European Union institutions and the national-level organizations. Trans-European elites are aware they cannot claim to be representing anybody, but what they do is important and needed, because the new power structures in Europe require trans-European organizations that can articulate the common interests of European civil societies. However, trans-European organizations strive on both fronts. Access to EU decision-making mechanisms is difficult although some of the organizations have been defined by the European Commission as official consultation partners in the matters they specialize in. They think it is also difficult to gain the full trust of national-level member organizations because they are sometimes regarded as too close to the EU.

This view was confirmed by interviews with national-level political party and SMO/NGO elites. In addition to the perception that trans-European elites may be ideologically closer to the EU than to the grassroots, national-level elites are also concerned about the EU terminology adopted by trans-European elites. In the eyes of national-level elites, the difficulty of this terminology makes communication between national and trans-European-level elites at times ineffective, and this challenge also makes it difficult for national-level elites to actively participate in trans-European-level activities. However, trans-European elites
tend to see EU terminology as a practical necessity that makes it possible to communicate with and disseminate contention toward EU policymakers. The majority of the trans-European elites state that it is important that the national-level civil society and political organizations understand the necessity of acting together on issues that require European-level solutions, but it is not always easy to persuade their member organizations to be more active.

Further, the elite interviews and our institutional data document that trans-European organizations usually operate with a very small number of full-time staff members, which makes it difficult to prioritize integration activities for national-level organizations. The most ambitious trans-European organization in creating a high level of integration, by creating a common understanding of common problems, is the EWL. This organization uses considerable staff resources and voluntary resources to integrate women’s organizations from Central and Eastern European countries. In addition, ENAR appears to be concerned about linking with member state–level anti-racist organizations.

On the other side of the coin, 2.3% of the national-level and 33.3% of the trans-European-level elites say they want to address the intergovernmental and supranational bodies in Europe with their activities. The trend within the trans-European organizations is not negligible. Among the trans-European organizations, the Social Platform appears to be the most oriented toward using the European Union institutions, and specifically the European Commission, as one of the primary addressees of their activities.

**Discursive misalignments between national and trans-European-level elites?** These findings point to misalignments between the values of national and trans-European elites. If trans-European organizations are supposed to represent / aggregate the interests of European civil society regarding the EU, this can be perceived as a legitimacy problem on the part of the trans-European organizations. Even when we assume a somewhat less ambitious mission for them, such as articulating interests, it is not possible to ignore this mismatch. Certainly, diversity of views and political polarization in the public sphere are necessary and desirable from a democracy point of view. However, what we observe here is not only a horizontal polarization but also a vertical, hierarchical polarization between the member-state and trans-European-level organizational elites.

Some of the trans-European elites interviewed work in organizations officially involved in EU-level policy processes as regular consultation partners – this is especially true for the Social Platform, ENAR, and the EWL. Although an overwhelming majority of the interviewed trans-European NGO/SMO elites are aware they cannot claim to represent the European civil society, they claim to represent social and political norms for the good of all – thus investing in output legitimacy rather than input legitimacy.

The three party federations we interviewed are supposed to represent their member parties, and they have representatives in the European Parliament. Low electoral turnout, combined with mismatches between national-level and trans-European-level elite views, also points to a hierarchical structuring of the trans-European political spaces.

Although the think tank networks – EPIN and TEPSA – and their member organizations we interviewed are not expected to represent anybody other than themselves and their expertise, they provide policy assessments, evaluations, and advice to the European Union.

The European Commission and other EU political institutions take these trans-European organizations as the most relevant conversation partners in certain policy issues, and have privileged them and institutionalized their participation in consultation processes in different ways. However, the views these institutions disseminate about diversity, ethno-national diversity, and legitimate addressees in the European public sphere are fundamentally different from the views expressed by elites working in national-level organizations.

In addition, the European Union’s consultation system provides opportunities for other organizations and individual citizens to express their views on policy issues.
Organizations’ Networking Patterns in the European Public Sphere

In the following set of PCAs and DAs, the unit of observation and analysis is organizations. Data about the organizations networking and interactive patterns were gathered from their printed and online documents (annual reports, activity reports, leaflets, brochures, descriptions of ongoing projects and project partners, and secondary literature where available). The following principal components and discriminant analyses of organizations’ networking patterns include sub-national, national, and trans-European interactions.

**Organizations’ collaboration patterns.** Table 10 shows the results from a PCA of the operative levels of networks the interviewed organizations are actually involved in. The 46 media actors in the data set are excluded from this analysis as the networking they do is not comparable with the networking of the three other types of organizations.

The first component measures the extent to which an organization is involved in sub-European (regional and national) networks, and the second measures an organization’s involvement in trans-European networks and national networks. The variable “national organizations/networks” loads on both dimensions. This indicates the majority of the organizations in our data material have national networks. However, those with large positive scores in the first dimension are also involved in sub-national networks, and those with large positive scores in the second dimension, in addition to their national networks, are involved in trans-European networks. This implies the presence of and a distinction between national multi-level and European multi-level networking structures in Europe, strengthening my expectation that national boundaries and European multi-level governance structures would lead to this type of networking structure.

**Table 10: Principal Components Analysis of the Organizations’ Networks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations/networks the organization collaborates with</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional organizations/networks</td>
<td>.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National organizations/networks</td>
<td>.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-European organizations/networks</td>
<td>-.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to explained variance (%)</td>
<td>49.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 presents the distribution of these two networking patterns between trans-European and national-level organizations. We observe that 98% of member state–level organizations collaborate primarily with organizations’ national and sub-national networks. However, 71.4% of the trans-European organizations also primarily collaborate with national and sub-national-level organizations, whereas 28.6% of trans-European organizations cooperate with national organizations and other trans-European networks.

**Table 11: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of the Organizations’ Networks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National or transnational?</th>
<th>Predicted Group Membership</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-validated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the percentage of national-level organizations collaborating with other national organizations and simultaneously with trans-European networks is low (2.1%), and the
percentage of transnational organizations that collaborate with national-level organizations is high (71.4%), trans-European organizations collaborate with only a small selection of national-level organizations. This is certainly true in the case of the trans-European think tank networks, which prefer to include only one think tank from each EU member country. The same argument goes for party federations, which collaborate with a limited number (preferably only one) political party in each member country. As to the SMOs and NGOs, ENAR and the EWL also have limited the number of organizations from each country, often to only one, in their membership lists. However, the Social Platform is a network of networks, and individual organizations cannot be members in the Social Platform.

Even without considering the results presented in Table 11, the membership structure of trans-European organizations demonstrates the number of national-level organizations involved in trans-European networks is quite low. The results I obtained from the analysis of the interviews (Table 9) are almost identical with the results from this analysis of the institutional data. Combining these results, I conclude organizational elites are quite consistent in their intentions and actions: To a large degree, they do not want to have intergovernmental and supranational authorities as addressees of their activities; in practice, they do not collaborate with trans-European organizations that have these authorities as the main addressees of their activities.

**Scope of organizations’ collaboration with networks and other organizations.** A PCA of six variables indicating how organizations collaborate in their national, sub-national, and trans-European networks resulted in one component (Table 12). The variables in the first column measure different types of collaboration forms. The variables “attempts at mutual information sharing,” “efforts to synchronize separate projects/action plans,” “collaborative projects/actions,” “attempts to formulate common objectives to address common concerns,” and “attempts to formulate common objectives” represent ordinal-ranked categories of the variable collaboration scope. However, the PCA did not distinguish between variables measuring project-/action-based collaboration and more strategic collaboration to achieve long-term objectives; I will stick to interpreting this scale as an indicator of the organizations’ collaboration scope.

Thus, the extracted single component can be interpreted as a measure of the size of the collaboration repertoire of organizations. The higher an organization’s score, the more collaborative activity types in which the organization participates. Smaller scores indicate less collaboration activity with networks and other organizations. However, the largest scores with a positive sign are also forms of collaboration aiming to achieve longer-term common objectives. Whereas the indicators I constructed in the previous section measure the extent to which organizations network with organizations operating at different levels, this indicator tells us what they do when they collaborate.

**Table 12: Principal Components Analysis of the Organizations’ Actions in Trans-European Networks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N=158</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efforts to synchronize separate projects/action-plans</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts at mutual information-sharing</td>
<td>763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to formulate common objectives</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint projects/actions</td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative projects/actions</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efforts to formulate common objectives to address common concerns</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to the explained variance (%)</td>
<td>51.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 shows 60% of trans-European-level organizations have a larger collaboration scope or repertoire, and 76.5% of the national-level organizations have smaller collaboration
repertoires. This is certainly not surprising since the survival of trans-European networks largely relies on collaboration with member organizations and other networks.

| Table 13: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of the Organizations’ Actions in Networks |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Cross-validated Count | National | Transnational | Total |
| National | 117 | 36 | 153 |
| Transnational | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| % | National | 76.5 | 23.5 | 100.0 |
| Transnational | 40.0 | 60.0 | 100.0 |

What do these numbers tell us about national and trans-European-level organizations? First, a much smaller percentage of national-level organizations than trans-European organizations get involved in collaboration that requires agreement on common objectives. Second, a considerable portion (40%) of the trans-European organizations has this collaboration repertoire. Still, 23.5% of national-level organizations and 60% of trans-European-level organizations do get involved in collaboration that either may lead to or has led to formulation of common objectives. Indeed, this is a lot and implies individual organizations are coming together to stand on the different poles of whatever kind of political spaces they are operating in. The results cover collaboration at all levels (local, national, or European).

**Organizations’ membership status in networks.** Our institutional data also covers information about the organizations’ membership status in trans-European networks. The PCA presented in Table 14 is based on three variables indicating whether organizations have active or passive membership status or observer status in their networks. The analysis gave two components that distinguish between organizations that are members and organizations that have only observer status in their networks.

| Table 14: Principal Components Analysis of the Organizations’ Membership Status in Networks |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Status of the organization in selected networks | N=160 | Component |
| Passive membership status (only voting rights) | .820 | -.147 |
| Active membership status (with voting and representation rights) | .688 | .267 |
| Observer status | .039 | .961 |
| Contribution to explained variance (%) | 40.03 | 32.1 |

The first component measures whether an organization has active membership status in the network with voting and representation rights (large positive values). The higher scores indicate membership with voting and representation rights, and the smaller values indicate only passive membership status without representation rights. The second component measures whether a non-member organization has observer status in an organizational network. Larger values indicate observer status, and smaller values indicate the absence of observer status. Organizations that score low on both dimensions are those that do not have membership or observer status in any organizational networks; however, this does not mean the organizations do not collaborate with networks.

Table 15 shows 6.5% of national-level organizations and 20% of trans-European organizations have strong membership statuses in organizational networks. The one trans-national organization with strong membership status in a network is ENAR – which is a member of the Social Platform.
Table 15: Classification Results from Discriminant Analysis of Membership Status in Networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National or transnational?</th>
<th>Predicted Group Membership</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-validated Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Structuring of Trans-Europeanizing Political Spaces

The conceptual framework of this paper defines “the articulation of trans-Europeanizing political spaces” in terms of two features: (1) generating trans-European discourses and (2) creating trans-European networks. Fulfilling either of these criteria means contributing to creating trans-Europeanizing political spaces.

Although Europeanizing and non-Europeanizing discourses exist in national and trans-European-level organizations, non-Europeanizing discourses dominate in national-level organizations, and Europeanizing discourses dominate in trans-European organizations. Concerning discourses on diversity and the future development of an EU polity, the gaps between the views of national- and trans-European-level elites are more or less similar across the different topics analyzed here. The largest gap between trans-European-level and national-level elites’ views is between their acceptance of the EU political institutions as legitimate addressees in the public sphere.

Organizations’ networking patterns at the institutional level also indicates that, while the majority of member state-level organizations and all of the trans-European-level organizations are involved in horizontal trans-European relations with organizations in other European countries, very few national-level organizations are involved both horizontally and vertically in trans-European relations. This finding is consistent with the findings in the analysis of their discourses concerning legitimate addresses in the European public sphere.

These findings show the most active and influential social and political actors at the member-state level prefer and are working to achieve a horizontal trans-Europeanization in Europe – by leaving out from their communication paths and collaborative work EU political institutions and trans-European networks that draw on EU institutions as their addressees.

These results point to the existence of trans-Europeanizing political spaces, with Europeanizing discourses and/or trans-European ties between organizations at the national and European levels. Earlier research – on especially the media public sphere – convincingly shows the current European public sphere is horizontally segmented along national lines in Europe. While this study shows the same tendency exists in the discourses and networking patterns of the central organizations participating in public debates, it also finds that there is a notable discursive rapprochement between member-state and trans-European-level elites.

More importantly, trans-Europeanizing political spaces, i.e., the component of the European public sphere, which is expected to contribute to the weakening of the national boundaries, may also potentially divide the European public sphere vertically. There are some discursive gaps between the views of national and European-level elites. Further, networking patterns also show this gap is not only in discourses but also in interactions. This implies a significant lack of interconnectedness between national and trans-European publics. In the future, this currently weak vertical division may contribute to the emergence of a horizontally and vertically segmented European public sphere. However, if Stein Rokkan’s conclusions (Rokkan 1975, Rokkan et al 1987) pertaining to European national state-building processes hold true for the building of the European Polity, such vertical segmentation may also create common transnational reactions from the grassroots, resulting in integration of the European peripheries against the multiple political centers of the EU.
References


Party and EP Party Group Alignments on European Integration and Voting Behavior in the EP

Robert Sata, Central European University

In the ideal case, political parties provide citizens a real choice among competing visions of government, offering meaningful insight to a number of issues in relation to another. Parties simplify the choices available to voters to enable them to participate in complex democratic processes. Last but not least, parties offer accountability to the voters as parties can be held responsible for government performance at elections time. Yet, parties often fail to perform their roles: they can limit political competition to specific issues only, grab the benefits of the political system and prevent others (new parties) from entering the political market. The complexity of the European Union only adds to the importance of understanding what contribution do political parties have in this super-structure. This paper investigates whether parties contribute or hinder the democratic performance of the European Union and what roles national parties and European party groups play in aggregating political preferences in the European Parliament (EP).

Ever since the Treaty on European Union (1992), political parties have been recognized as important factors for European integration. National parties have formed European party groups to compete in the European arena, and access to European Parliament, Council, or other institutions of the Union is mainly through the channels of party politics. These developments call for a need to understand the nature of European Union Parties and multinational party groups, as well as the Europeanization of national political parties. A rich literature studies European-level politics in order to examine whether politics of the Union resemble that of the national political system based on party politics. Skeptics argue that European party groups are not genuine parties but are dominated by national party delegations and European level politics are often dominated by other actors than political parties given the Union’s multi-level governance system. Accordingly, the EU is a “split-level democracy”, where legitimizing mechanisms are split among the different levels of government (Schmidt 2009; 2006), resulting in a “split-level” party system (Lord 2004).

Skeptics also point out that European Union parties are expected to structure electoral choice across Europe, however transnational cooperation often stops at the level of agreeing on manifestos for European elections, which are then fought by national parties on largely uncoordinated electoral campaigns. Furthermore, as some studies note, manifestos are often little more than statements of attitude and play very little in the election campaigns of the national parties subscribing to them (Smith 1996). Coordination among the European Union parties is more observable when it comes to allocating offices in the EP and shaping policy outcome on the European level, yet the exact nature of the relationship between intergovernmental bargaining and party politics remains elusive. Notwithstanding this, there is a close fit between left-right orientation of candidates and voters in European elections, and political parties do show a tendency to follow changes in their voters’ preferences toward integration (Schmitt and Thomassen 2000).

The EP, the single directly elected EU institution, has developed a stable European party system: Christian Democrats and Conservatives, Socialists and Social Democrats, Liberals, Greens, the Far Left and the Euroskeptic parties all managed to organize themselves into multi-national EP party groups, only the Far Right was less successful. Three party groups are at the core of the EP, holding the majority of the seats: the European People’s Party (EPP), the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the European Liberal, Democrat, and Reform Party (ELDR) (Smith 1989). National parties tend to affiliate with EP Party Groups based on policy congruence (McElroy and Benoit 2010) or ideological congruence (Gschwend et al. 2012). Others have claimed that CEE parties’ group affiliation was determined by political rather
than ideological reasons and inter-party competition (Delsoldato 2002). No single study has yielded convincing results and the exact workings of group membership are still disputed by the literature.

Following Kreppel (2002), we perceive European party groups as coordinators and mediators of the heterogeneous policy interests of their member parties (see similarly Finke and Thiem 2010). These political groups in the EP fulfill many of the same functions as their national-level counterparts. As the EP increased its size and power, its party groups also increased in importance (Chopin and Lepinay 2010). Nevertheless, party groups are not unitary parties but sometimes have very different members within their ranks (McElroy and Benoit 2007). Party group membership is also unstable, parties occasionally switch groups and new members also join as was the case with Eastern enlargement that greatly increased the heterogeneity of the party groups (Hix et al. 2009). New members usually have to officially accept group policy but maintaining cohesion is a constant fight for party groups since the success of their members depends on very diverse domestic political arenas, which might result in very different positions on policy among parties within the same group.

The standard way to evaluate the EP is to examine the relationship between party and voter preferences and inquire the level of policy congruence between the two (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Thomassen and Schmitt 1997). Studies rely either on national or EU-level parties (e.g. Mattila and Raunio 2006) but focusing only on the national level disregards interdependence of national parties within party groups, while emphasis on EU-level dynamics cannot account for national differences in European elections (Katsanidou and Lefkofridi 2011, McElroy and Benoit 2008). No incongruence between national party and party group preferences could be expected if the positions of the national parties and the party groups were identical, but this is seldom the case. (Thorlakson 2005). In reality, party groups are often heterogeneous, and in most cases there is lack of a neat correspondence between EP party group positions and member parties’ positions on the left-right dimension (McElroy and Benoit 2012), although the four largest EP party groups and their left–right positions correspond to the central tendencies of their constituent parties (Chopin and Lepinay 2010; McElroy and Benoit 2012).

When it comes to explaining voting patterns in the EP, most of the literature uses a principal-agent perspective and argues the MEPs have two principals: their national party (and its voters) and the European party groups. EP legislators are elected as members of their national parties, and the typical voter has no knowledge of his/her MEP’s behavior or the European party labels he/she belongs to (McElroy and Benoit 2012). Most MEPs maintain regular links with their domestic party (Scully 1999, Scully 1999) and try to balance the achievement of three principal goals – like any other elected politicians: policy, office and re-election (Hix et al. 1999). While the sanctioning power of the EP party groups remains disputed in the literature (Finke and Thiem 2010; Hug 2011), most scholars claim that EP party groups enforce party discipline over MEPs by controlling the assignment of attractive parliamentary positions like rapporteurships or committee leaderships (Faas 2003; Hix 2002; McElroy 2001). Others claim EP party groups have few sticks and carrots available to discipline MEPs (Thiem 2006) and if there is a policy conflict between MEPs’ two party principals – the MEPs are more likely to vote with their national party and against their EP group, if their national party has the ability to punish its MEPs (Hix 2001). Furthermore, with the increase of the powers of the EP, MEPS are increasingly more important for national parties for their potential to advance the party’s policy goals (Scully 2001).

The dual agent problem of maintaining discipline and cohesion for the EP party groups is well-studied in the literature (e.g. McElroy and Benoit 2012; Hug 2011). Despite the transnational character of the EP party groups, studies found high levels of party cohesion already for the first parliaments (Attina 1990; Hix et al. 2005; Raunio 1999). This is a key result the given the limited ability of the EP party groups to sanction and reward behavior of
MEPs (Bjorn 2006) that we noted earlier. Furthermore, more recent studies note that voting cohesion have been rising across parliamentary sessions, especially for the three largest political groups (Hix 2002; Hix et al. 2007; Meserve et al. 2009). The Party of European Socialists (PES), the European People’s Party (EPP), and the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) are more cohesive than the party groups that do not possess external party organizations (Hix et al. 2002b). It is important to note that this increase of cohesion is continuous notwithstanding the increase of the member states and the EP in its size (Hix et al. 2007). As such, the increased powers given to the European Parliament by the Maastricht, Amsterdam, or the Lisbon Treaty have each contributed to the increased cohesion of the party groups (Hix et al. 2002b) that withheld the addition of new member states and the influx of new parties that some expected will challenge the nature of EP politics. Yet, while enlargement shifted the political balance in some significant respects, new members being more to the right and less enthusiastic about European integration, most of these effects were absorbed without leaving a lasting impact on the EP (Hagemann 2009; Hix et al. 2011; Hokovsky 2012).

Studies of the relationship between European parties and national parties usually rely on survey data (e.g. EPRG 2000, 2006; Raunio 2002) and voting data developed by Hix and collaborators (e.g. Hix et al. 2005b; 2007) relying on EP roll call votes. Hix et al. find a strong indication for the importance of left-right voting in their study of EP roll call votes (RCV) that suggests the EP acts as a national political system. Yet, most votes in the European Parliament are either by a show of hands or by ‘electronic vote’ and secret ballot, where how each individual MEP votes is not recorded (Settembri 2006). Only about a third of all EP votes are recorded (Hix et al. 2002b, Corbett et al. 2000), and decisions to record the vote are political and strategic acts, thus EP voting data can easily be challenged (Carrubba and Gabel 1999).

Carrubba et al. (2004) demonstrates that the RCVs are neither a random sample nor do they represent the legislatively most important votes, which can be assumed to be the most divisive votes, but rather stand for signaling political positions (Thiem 2006). Most RCVs in the EP are taken on resolutions, where the EP's opinions are merely symbolic (Bjorn 2006). Moreover, RCV are called on an unrepresentative sample of all votes, and disproportionately called more frequently by some of the smaller party groups (Carrubba et al. 2006). For the 2004-2009 EP, any party group or a group of at least 37 MEPs were able to initiate a RCV (EP Rules of Procedure, Rule 160). As such, the strategic use of RCVs to enhance cohesion (by monitoring) or to signal a position relative to other party groups might result in RCV data being biased towards greater cohesion (Clerck-Sachsse and Kaczynski 2009). Furthermore, the nature of the competences of the EU might also affect the nature of the voting in the EP as vital issues such as taxation, pensions, education, or security are not genuine focus of EU policies but rather issues such as consumer protection or healthcare are prominent that enable party groups to follow the logic of compromise in the EP without approving results that are difficult to sell to domestic audiences (Chopin and Lepinay 2010).

Traditionally the EP is characterized by a cooperation of party groups and is often viewed through the lenses of consociational theory (e.g. Steiner 2002), featuring grand coalitions, proportionality and segmented autonomy with mutual veto rights (Settembri 2006). The high majority requirements laid down in the European treaties and the proportionality of both European elections and the distribution of internal offices among the EP party groups support well this approach. Yet the adoption of the Single European Act and the increased legislative powers of the EP have led to intensified party competition (Kreppel 2002; Hix et al. 2003). A recent study found 87% of RCVs has been cast in line with the left-right dynamic (Hagemann 2009). This was confirmed by others who examined voting on the most controversial issues, such as the Services Directive, and found that ideology was the main predictor of voting behavior, left-right splits becoming more common than the grand coalition between the two
largest EP party groups (Hix and Noury 2009). A more refined argument is given by Kreppel, who observes that real competition can happen at the amendment stage, while adoption of final text is more frequent through ‘grand coalitions’ (Kreppel 2000). Thus, any decision of the EP can in fact be the result of a complex interplay between competition and consensus at the different stages (Lord 2006).

One should also take into account the high occurrence of near-unanimity votes in the European Parliament, when studying voting cohesion (Hix 2001). While in domestic politics, votes are usually divided between government and opposition parties, in the case of the EP, votes stand for the opinion of Parliament as a whole relative to propositions of the Commission or the Council. Coalitions in the Parliament are formed on an issue-by-issue basis, rather than according to pre-arranged coalition agreements between either the political groups or national delegations. MEPs therefore have an incentive to join forces in an attempt to increase the influence of the EP by the sheer strength of numbers (Hix et al. 2002b). Furthermore, this is the reason why the EP often occupies positions that are more integrationist than those of national governments or parliaments (Scully 1999). This trend towards the EP presenting itself as a unitary actor vis-à-vis the other EU institutions (Lord 2006) can counterbalance the emerging left-right spectrum of EP voting dynamics we have noted earlier (Clerck-Sachsse and Kaczynski 2009). The dilemma for the EP is thus whether to deliver political outcomes acting consensually or be politically inefficient, but loyal to its ideological fragmentation (Settembri 2006).

**Positioning on European integration**

In this paper, we seek to make two contributions. First we will introduce new data measuring the enthusiasm for European integration of political parties across the continent relying on a survey conducted within the Eurosphere project. Second, we draw on other data sources in order to answer how well the positions of surveyed politicians correspond to party positions identified in alternative surveys. We also situate our new data temporarily, checking it against both previously recorded data as well as data that were gathered at a later time. This will enable us to see the surveyed national parties along a time-line and witness eventual changes in policy preferences over time. Relying on multiple data sources we can also examine and account for possible differences and generate mean positions for the national parties as well as the EP party groups that can serve us in later analysis. Our final goal is to examine what is the effect of the distant positioning between national parties and their corresponding EP party group when it comes to voting within the EP, whether this results in national MEPs rebelling against their party group to vote along their national preferences or cohesion is maintained despite the noted differences. We shall evaluate the 2004-2009 EP, focusing our analysis on the parties that figure in the Eurosphere as well as the alternative surveys.

We have conducted a new survey of the higher ranks of political parties in 14 countries of the European Union as well as Turkey and Norway. Three to five parties were selected for each country and for each party 3-7 officials were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The respondents were presented different batteries of questions that inquired about their position towards European integration and the future direction of the EU and other EU policies. Our survey is by far not the first such attempt, several earlier studies have attempted to measure party positions on European integration, some relying on expert evaluations, others surveying elected MEPs, or yet others studying party programs and election manifestos. Our data stands out from previous studies on European integration because it surveys directly national politicians and not European politicians in order to obtain insight into the preferences of the political parties instead of relying on experts’ party evaluations or policy document analysis, providing a rich dataset of party preferences on a wide range of EU level policy issues. No questions were asked to measure the left-right orientations of the parties, a feature that is available in all other surveys.
We evaluate the results of the Eurosphere survey against well-studies surveys on political party preferences towards European integration, namely the Chapel Hill data from 2006 and 2010, the 2009 Euromanifesto data, and the dataset of EU Profiler, an online tool developed to aid citizen voting in the 2009 EP elections. Each of these surveys attempts to measure the positions of political parties toward European integration, though each uses a different methodology and a different understanding of what European integration consists in. Since this is neither the time nor the space to reflect on these issues, we shall not introduce the methods employed by other studies since these are easily available for those interested (please see the relevant background papers). For each of these surveys we use their overall measures of party positions on the left-right and anti-pro European integration dimensions, where these are not available we calculate means positions for each of our parties selected in the Eurosphere survey.

In the case of the Eurosphere, we compile the European integration position for each of our respondents based on two sets of questions. The first question is V3.1 “In which direction should the EU Polity develop in the future?” of the questionnaire. Respondents could chose among multiple answers between more centralization of the EU and the dissolution of the EU, these are recoded into a 10 point scale variable of anti-pro European integration, the score ranging from -5 to 5. The second battery of questions inquired about a set of policies and whether these should be decided nationally, supra-nationally, or on a sub-national level (regional, local), questions V4.10a-k of the questionnaire. Respondents had a chance to indicate preferences for policies on free mobility, political rights, living in other EU countries, gender equality, rights of national minorities, laws on citizenship and immigration for both EU and non-EU immigrants. Responses were coded on the same 10 point grade and averaged in means scores in order to obtain a single cumulative position for each respondent. These were then calculated for each of the parties by averaging its individual respondents’ scores.

Our choice of alternative surveys of party positions is guided primarily by the proximity of these surveys: the Eurosphere survey was conducted in late 2008-early 2009, and our secondary data sources offer insight from 2006 to 2010, respectively. Each of these datasets contains different sets of political parties, some studying exclusively EU member state parties, others concentrating on a wider selection but each of these datasets contains a much larger number of parties as they try to be representative for each of the countries surveyed, which was not the goal of the Eurosphere survey. Yet, notwithstanding the different parties they cover, the different data sources can be combined, and we have compiled a new dataset rescaling each of the different sources to the 10 point scale that we have employed in measuring the Eurosphere data, where the two dimensions are scaled so that -5 stands for most left, reflectively most anti-European integration attitudes, while 5 corresponds the most right and most pro-European integration positions. Table 1. lists those parties that are present in at least two of the surveys and their respective scores for each of the surveys that we transformed onto a common scale.

The most immediate result of comparing the different surveys is that each dataset seems to provide very different measures for the parties that we have selected. Moreover, the results of the different surveys do not fit each-other smoothly but rather each survey provides a different understanding of both the left-right dimension, as well as the pro-anti European integration dimension. Interestingly, this holds true even in the case of the two Chapel Hill surveys that are almost identical in their methodological approaches since even these two data sources situate the same parties very differently within the same two-dimensional space. Given that both surveys have been checked for validity and reliability, these differences among the results could be attributed to our selection of the parties, which is by no means representative, and is much more limited than the samples employed by all other surveys.
Table 1. Surveyed parties and position scores on the 2006 Chapel Hill, Eurosphere, Euromanifesto, EU profiler, and 2010 Chapel Hill data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>party</th>
<th>party name</th>
<th>EPgroup</th>
<th>Left-right CH 2006</th>
<th>Pro-EU CH 2006</th>
<th>Pro-EU Eurosphere</th>
<th>Left-right Manifesto</th>
<th>Pro-EU Manifesto</th>
<th>Left-right EU Profiler</th>
<th>Pro-EU EU Profiler</th>
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WP8.1 Evaluation of EU Policies Aiming to Create a General European Public Sphere
### WP8.1 Evaluation of EU Policies Aiming to Create a General European Public Sphere

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Another, more immediate explanation for the observed difference seems to be that the different party positions are the products of the changing preferences of the political parties, which seem to produce significant change in adopted policy positions even in such a brief period of four years time. The remaining surveys try to capture party positions within these four years, the earliest being the Eurosphere survey, yet it is very close in time to both the EU Profiler and the Euromanifesto datasets that are collected for 2009. Although there is a two-three years difference among the first survey and the others, one would expect parties to more-or-less maintain their policy preferences for such a brief periods of time. Yet, as Table 1. outlines, the results remain very different for each of these surveys. Unfortunately, we can only speculate whether these differences might be due to the different sources of data the surveys employ: party members in case of Eurosphere, party documents and campaign manifestos for the manifesto data, and a combination of survey evaluations, document reviews, and direct party input for the EU Profiler dataset; or some substantial reason, such as the latest round of enlargement, or the ongoing debate of the Lisbon treaty at the time.

While one might argue that the differences among the different datasets are natural given the different structure of these or the variety of methods used by the studies, it is still troubling that no consistency can be found among our five surveys. This is especially surprising because each of these surveys attempt to measure the same thing, namely party positions on the left-right continuum (with the exception of Eurosphere) and the anti-pro European axis. Furthermore, the validity of expert survey data on party positioning has been explored in comparison with data from party manifestos, public opinion and surveys of MPs and MEPs (Bakker et al. 2012), thus it is more than justified to expect correlation among our surveys. The literature proves that evaluations by different actors – experts and politicians – are highly correlated, independent expert studies are convergent and more consistent with voter or politician evaluations than manifesto data (Bakker et al. 2012).

Our expectation was that at least the Eurosphere, party manifesto, and EU profiler data will match, as these have been collected at about the same time, while the 2006 Chapel Hill data is most distant and the 2010 Chapel Hill data already concerns the 2009-2014 EP. Nevertheless, this is not the case, as reflected by the correlation scores we have calculated for the five surveys. This divergence remains a puzzle, since one would expect that while differences will be noticeable, certain trends prove to be valid across the surveys and across time, even given the different nature of these surveys or the different timing of data collection. Pattern within data should hold valid especially for the measures of party placement on the left-right axis, which is much less disputed in the literature than the European dimension. Yet, this is not the case, as no significant correlation can be found among any of the datasets for any of the dimensions, as displayed in Table 2. Thus, there is no systematic relationship between the two Chapel Hill surveys, and the manifesto data, EU Profiler data, or the Eurosphere data also stand alone for our sample of parties, which is more than unexpected as earlier studies have embarked successfully in testing the reliability of these studies – admittedly on the entire sample of the given dataset, and not a very small sub-sample, which is our case (for a good summary of the relevant literature see Bakker et al. 2012).

Table 2. Survey dataset correlations

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<th>left Euprofiler</th>
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While there seems to be no consistency in the individual scores parties receive in each of our surveys, the overall comparison of the surveys provides more promising insights. Thus if we compare how parties situate among the two dimensions we can actually disregard some of the differences that are present among the different authors in conceptualizing the two dimensions. This will allow us to see if parties are more on the left or the right side of the political spectrum and whether they are against or in favor of European integration. Figures 1 to 4 display the individual party positions in scatter graphs on the two dimensions on the four secondary surveys. Since the Eurosphere survey did not inquire about left-right placement, Figure 5 that displays the Eurosphere results uses an averaged left-right dimension from the other surveys to display the party position on European integration within the same two-dimensional space that all other surveys employ.

As the figures show, there are still important differences among the different positions of the political parties, which seem to support the claim that the authors of each of the surveys have a different understanding of how the left-right or the European integration dimension is conceptualized. Yet these differences are more limited if we concentrate only on differentiating among parties based on whether their position is in favor of or against European integration. We have to note that in this respect the Euromanifesto data stands out, as most of our parties end up on the anti-European side of the scale in this survey, which is not the case with the other surveys. While this is neither the time nor the space to discuss this issue, this unusual result for party positioning could be attributed to the nature of the data used by the Euromanifesto project. More specifically, the project uses party campaigning
documents to measure party positions on a number of European issues, and relatively low scores might be due to the fact that many parties still campaign on domestic issues rather than European ones (e.g. Mair 2007). Thus they might display little or no European issues in their campaigning material that would mean they get a lower mean score on the European integration support scale than otherwise would be warranted.

Figure 1: Party positions based on the 2006 Chapel Hill survey

Figure 2: Party positions based on the Euromanifesto survey
Figure 3: Party positions based on the EU Profiler survey

Figure 4: Party positions based on the 2010 Chapel Hill survey

Figure 5: Party positions based on the Eurosphere survey (means left-right dimension)
For all other surveys, most of the selected parties are in support of European integration, which is in line with the tenets of the relevant literature, though there are important variations in the number of parties that are seen as opposed to integration. Thus, looking at the individual scores of the parties in our sample, the 2006 Chapel Hill survey lists 9 parties, the 2009 EU Profiler considers only 6 parties, the 2010 Chapel Hill data enlists 11 parties, and our Eurosphere survey finds 12 parties opposed to integration. Most importantly, the only party that falls on the anti-European integration dimension in all surveys is NOA, while FPO is identified by three surveys, KSCM, SP, UMP, and ER being identified each two times as being anti-European integration. Averaging the scores for party positions across the five different surveys for both dimensions (Figure 6.), we find the following parties with an anti-European means position: on the left - ER, Cons, KSCM, and SP, on the right - LN, FPO, DF, and NOA.

Figure 6: Party positions based on all surveys averaged

Repeating the exercise for EP party groups’ positions – calculated as the means scores of their member parties – instead of individual party positions our findings across the different surveys are very similar. As Figures 7-12. display, it is once again the Euromanifesto data that positions each of the EP party groups as being more or less anti-European, while most of the other surveys position the same party groups clearly in favor of European integration.
Figure 7: EP party group positions based on the 2006 Chapel Hill survey

Figure 8: EP party group positions based on the Euromanifesto survey

Figure 9: EP party group positions based on the EU Profiler survey

Figure 10: EP party group positions based on the 2010 Chapel Hill survey
The only exception seems to be the 2006 Chapel Hill data that portrays GUE-NGL on the left and UEN and NI on the right as anti-European, while the Greens, PSE, ADLE, and PPE-DE are in favor of integration. Interestingly, in the 2010 Chapel Hill data, all party groups are positioned on the positive side of European integration support, and it is PSE and ADLE that is portrayed as having the weakest support for integration. This contrasting result could easily be explained by the fact that this survey already examines the parties of a different EP than all of the other survey, the 2009-2014 EP, which is significantly different from its predecessor and thus differences might be due to changing party preferences over time. The EU Profiler data only sees the non-aligned parties as being against integration, yet PSE is displayed as having one of the highest supports for integration together with UEN. In the Eurosphere survey UEN is the only party group together with the non-aligned parties that is displayed as being anti-European, while the Greens are showing the highest levels of support for Europe.

Figure 12. displays the means scores across the different surveys for the EP party groups, and as expected only non-aligned parties are displayed as being against European integration, while UEN and GUE-NGL display moderate support for integration, and the Greens, PSE, PPE-DE, and ADLE are being most in favor of Europe.

While the means positions of the political parties display results that match nicely with the relevant literature, we have seen that there are important inconsistencies of the individual positions for some of the EP party groups when we compare the individual surveys. This might be due to the lack of unity within the EP party group that given that each survey uses a different understanding of conceptualizing and measuring the dimensions might explain why the same EP party group will score higher or lower, based on which aspect(s) of its policy preference are emphasized in the given survey. In order to check for this possibility, we evaluate our surveys examining the composition of the various EP party groups and the unity within the group, across the member parties. Table 3. lists the means positions and standard deviation scores for each of the EP party groups for each of the individual surveys, calculated on the individual scores of the member parties.
### Table 3. EP Party groups position scores and standard deviation on all surveys

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<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens-EFA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-2.43</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUE-NGL</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-3.53</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>-2.37</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE-DE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSE</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-1.34</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEN</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>-1.43</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We should note that since our sample is very limited, some of the EP party groups cannot be meaningfully evaluated as they have too few individual members to assess their internal unity. As such, there are only two non-attached parties, and only three parties for both GUE-NGL and UEN respectively, and only five parties for the Greens-EFA. On the other hand, ALDE, PPE, and PSE have each around ten member parties, PSE being the most numerous with 14 members. While we are not able to comment on the smaller groups, the three large EP party groups fair very similarly with respect to internal cohesion on the means scores, showing comparable standard deviation scores. Although Greens-EFA has only half the members of the larger EP party groups and thus it is impossible to compare to the larger groups, it also scores along the same lines, and thus also seems to be a relatively cohesive group, like its larger counterparts. This means that internal cohesion of the EP party groups should not influence much their placement along the different surveys. Unfortunately, when taken individually, each of the surveys scores rather low with regards to EP party group cohesion, which again underlines that it is rather the nature and the characteristic of the given survey that is responsible for the increased variation of EP party group placement rather than the composition or internal unity of the party group.

We also aggregated the political parties for each country instead of the EP party groups to see how individual countries would be positioned along the left-right dimension and pro-European integration axis. As there is a selection bias in the Eurosphere survey that includes both governmental and opposition parties – which then serves as the selection tool for the other surveys, we expect that most countries will be placed in the middle of the left-right continuum as ideological differences between the selected parties should cancel out when we aggregate parties for the given country. This means that the left-right continuum should be skewed, though major differences on how leftist or rightist a country is should be noticeable, i.e. not all center positions for individual countries will be at the same position on the left-right continuum to reflect the nature of domestic preferences that vary across the countries. At the same time, our aggregated country scores on the anti-pro European scale should give a much better prediction of the general attitude towards European integration for every country, as most of the Eurosphere parties are mainstream parties, thus they stand for a large part of the electorate and thus display the most important views on Europeanization within each of the countries surveyed. Our case selection included also Turkey and Norway as non-member countries, thus where data is available, we include these countries in our analysis in order to see how the two non-member countries fare vis-à-vis the member states.

We also assess the consistency of the different surveys for assessing the different countries but looking for any correlation among the results on the different surveys, we must note that our country means scores fare similarly weak as individual party scores or EP party groups’ scores, and there is no significant correlation between the different surveys measuring policy preferences for our selected countries (Table 4.). The only exception is the correlation of country means scores on the Chapel Hill 2006 and 2010 surveys, but even this result should be taken with reservation, as it could be only by chance, given our very small sample size.

More importantly, averaging scores for parties along national lines reproduces the same differences among the surveys we have observed previously, each survey displaying different placement for the selected countries. This is partly to be expected from our previous analysis, as country scores average the same party scores we studied earlier, but at the same time we would expect less variance on the left-right dimension than is actually displayed in Figures 13-18, given our expectation for a skewed dimension. In other respects, national positions are in line with our previous results. Once again, the Euromanifesto data places most of the countries as being anti-European integration, while the other surveys display most countries as favoring integration. Moreover, the means scores across all survey position each country on the positive side of the anti-pro European integration scale, meaning no country can be singled out as Euroskeptic (even the UK scoring on the positive side of the scale).
### Table 4. Survey correlation scores for countries

#### Left-Right Dimension correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>left CH 2006</th>
<th>left Manifesto</th>
<th>left EU Profiler</th>
<th>Left CH 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>left CH 2006</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.998</td>
<td>-.205</td>
<td>-.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .738</td>
<td>.482</td>
<td>.429</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left Manifesto</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .668</td>
<td>.830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left EU Profiler</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .654</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left CH 2010</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Anti-pro European integration dimension correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Pro-EU CH 2006</th>
<th>Pro-EU Eurosphere</th>
<th>Pro-EU Manifesto</th>
<th>Pro-EU EUprofiler</th>
<th>Pro-EU CH 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-EU CH 2006</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td>-.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .183</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-EU Eurosphere</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>-.163</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>-.098</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .547</td>
<td>.638</td>
<td>.719</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-EU Manifesto</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: -.163</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>-.096</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .547</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>.723</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-EU EUprofiler</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>-.246</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .359</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-EU CH 2010</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2006 Chapel Hill survey places only the Czech Republic on the anti-European dimension, all other countries scoring much higher on support for European integration, topped by Hungary (another Eastern EU member) and Belgium (Wallonia). It is interesting to note that there is a fair distribution of the old EU member states within the pro-European integration scale, with about half the countries being in the lower end, while the other half is on the higher end of our scale. Bulgaria and Estonia – the remaining new member states – position themselves around the middle of the pro-European scale. In the Euromanifesto data, to our surprise, Estonia proves to be the most anti-European country, while the UK is in the middle of the surveyed group. Denmark is the only country that actually scores on the positive side, but Bulgaria and Hungary are once again among those countries that obtain the highest scores (though this time still on the negative side of our scale). It is interesting to note that Turkey and Norway fare together, and they occupy positions well in the center of surveyed group of countries.

The EU Profiler dataset displays only Austria and France as being Euroskeptic, while once again Hungary and Belgium (Wallonia) are the most supportive of integration. Interestingly, Turkey is also on the top of the pro-European scale, while Norway, the other non-member country is occupying again a more central position. Furthermore, while the Czech Republic and Bulgaria score positive on integration, they are the countries with the lowest scores on the positive side of the graph, and Estonia is relatively close to them, making Hungary the only new member state that stands out from the group. The 2010 Chapel Hill data displays yet another combination of country placements, this time Finland and Belgium (Wallonia).
proving to be the only countries that score negative on integration. Moreover the Czech Republic is portrayed as one of the top supporters of integration together with Spain, while all other Eastern members – Estonia, Hungary, and Bulgaria have the lowest scorers on the positive side of our scale.

**Figure 13: Country positions based on the 2006 Chapel Hill survey**

![Diagram](image1)

**Figure 14: Country positions based on the Euromanifesto survey**

![Diagram](image2)

**Figure 15: Country positions based on the EU Profiler survey**

![Diagram](image3)
In the Eurosphere survey, the UK scores by far the lowest score on the European integration scale, being a clear outlier at the bottom of the anti-European dimension. Interestingly, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria score similarly and position themselves just about in the middle.
of the anti-pro European scale, corresponding to a neutral stance, together with Norway and Turkey – our non-member countries. Hungary once again proves to be one of the most supportive countries of European integration, while Estonia is about half as enthusiastic about integration as Hungary is. All old members except for the UK score on the positive side of that anti-pro European scale.

When we combine all surveys, our overall placement scores show each of the countries scoring positive on the European integration scale. According to the means scores, the UK proves to be the weakest supporter of European integration, while Spain proves to be most enthusiastic. Our results are in line with the literature as the Euroskepticism of the UK is also noted by many other studies (e.g Fligstein et al. 2011). All of the old member-states score in about the center of our scale, occupying relatively close positions. On the other hand, new member-states are divided: Hungary is on the top, being only second in support for European integration to Spain, while Estonia, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic score on the lower end of our group of countries. Similarly, there is a marked difference between the two non-member countries: Turkey is a strong supporter of European integration, while Norway is positioned together with most of the new-members at the lower end of the pro-integration scale, portrayed as being less enthusiastic about integration.

Voting behavior in the EP

Let us now turn our attention to how individual parties and their respective EP party groups, as well as the national delegation vote in the EP. We have noted some of the difficulties of using RCV data to evaluate party behavior within the EP, yet RCV data remains the only reliable and easily available source for detailed voting behavior. For the purposes of this paper, we shall examine RCV records for the 2004-2009 EP, made available online at http://www.votewatch.eu. There are a total of 6,149 votes recorded in this dataset. We should note that Bulgarian parties in our sample gain membership and voting rights only in 2007, thus their numbers only refer to two years. Since our primary interest is to examine how pro-European integration attitudes might affect voting behavior in the EP, we shall concentrate our attention mostly on constitutional and inter-institutional affairs votes, a total of 412 votes, and votes on the internal regulations of the EP, total of 17 votes, as these areas of the EP’s legislative action are most directly related to the support of European integration we tried to measure earlier with the help of different surveys. We shall examine voting pattern in the following section that will enable us to see whether the parties, EP party groups, or the individual countries we have identified as having less support for European integration vote according to their policy preferences or not.

Based upon our review of party positioning along the different surveys, we expect that when it comes to voting in the EP, non-attached political parties are to be the most Euroskeptic and thus oppose most often further integration. Since these parties do not form any group, one cannot claim in the proper sense of the word that they vote cohesively or not, though one can compare how often all non-attached party members vote together – which will be our measure that we employ in their case to compare vote cohesiveness across the EP groups. At the same time, we have identified the Greens, EPP, PSE, and ALDE group members to be most supportive of European integration. The same groups look the most unified within our sample as well, thus we can expect not only support for integration, but a high rate of vote cohesion for these groups in the EP.

When it comes to the individual parties, we have previously identified ER, Cons, KSCM, SP, LN, FPO, DF, and NOA as those parties that have an anti-European means position and as such are more likely to vote down proposals on European integration. Based on the individual surveys, the strongest anti-European position should be occupied by NOA, followed closely by FPO, and KSCM, SP, and ER as third in the ranking. This means that we expect these parties to vote against most European constitutional and inter-institutional
propositions and internal regulations of the EP that would target further integration at the EU level. Based upon our earlier results, we expect that the UK parties will be most likely to vote against European integration, while Spanish and Hungarian parties should be the most consistent supporters of the EU. Notwithstanding this, we see the other East European countries to be less enthusiastic about Europe than most of the old member-states and this should be reflected in their voting behavior as well.

Table 5. EP party group vote cohesion rates in 2004-2009 EP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>PPE-DE</th>
<th>PSE</th>
<th>ALDE/ADLE</th>
<th>UEN</th>
<th>Greens/EFA</th>
<th>GUE-NGL</th>
<th>IND/DEM</th>
<th>NI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall cohesion rates</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgetary control</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil liberties, justice &amp; home affairs</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional and inter- institutional affairs</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture &amp; education</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic &amp; monetary affairs</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment &amp; social affairs</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment &amp; public health</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign &amp; security policy</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry, research &amp; energy</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal market &amp; consumer protection</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal regulations of the EP</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juridical affairs</td>
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<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petitions</td>
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<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional development</td>
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<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; tourism</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our first expectation of EP voting behavior is confirmed when we look at EP party group cohesion rates in the 2004-2009 EP, as the Greens and PSE (both at 0.91) score highest in
voting cohesion calculated for all the votes on all policy areas of the EP, followed closely by ALDE (0.89) and PPE-DE (0.88), as displayed in Table 5. This fits well with the observed means survey positions of the EP party groups that showed these groups as most supportive of the EU and European integration. While the same means positions would predict a higher rate of voting cohesion for UEN than for GUE-NGL, in fact in overall EP voting, UEN only scores 0.76 on cohesion, while GUE-NGL is much closer to the primary supporters of integration with its score of 0.85. Non-attached members of the EP vote together seldom, as we expected, their overall cohesion score being 0.44.

Restricting our attention to constitutional affairs, the trend remains similar only with a minor drop in cohesion rate for the leading groups: the Greens, PSE, and PPE-DE each scoring at 0.87. Yet, the first place is occupied by ALDE, its cohesion increasing in fact slightly to 0.91. What is more significant is the significant drop in cohesion for GUE-NGL to 0.77 and a further decrease for UEN to 0.68, which in fact much better confirms the prediction of the spatial model of means positions that predicted these two EP party groups as showing a lower – or secondary level support for Europeanization.

The policy area of internal regulations of the EP seems to be one of the most decisive areas of the EP legislative action, as most of the EP party groups display the lowest cohesion rates among all other EP votes in votes related to these types of regulations. Although there is a considerable drop in party group vote cohesion for all of the EP party groups, the ordering of the groups remains as predicted by the spatial positioning model, with only minor changes among the forerunners: PSE at 0.71, Greens at 0.68, PPE-DE at 0.66 and ALDE at 0.65. Clear differentiation between the prime supporters of European integration and those of secondary importance is also well maintained in this policy area as UEN scores 0.51 on cohesion, while GUE-NGL stands at 0.40. Non-attached members score only 0.34 on cohesion with other non-attached members. Once again, these findings fit well with our spatial model of means positions of the EP party groups that also differentiated exactly between these two groups of supporters of European integration.

Turning our attention to the individual political parties, we examine how loyal the individual parties are to their respective EP party groups in EP voting rounds, i.e. how close they follow the voting line of their EP party group. We have noted that only non-aligned parties were positioned as being anti-European integration, and less inclined to vote together with other parties – including non-aligned parties, therefore we expect a lower voting cohesion rate for individual parties in this group. We also expect lower EP party group loyalty rates for individual parties that positioned themselves on the anti-European integration dimension since this means a substantial difference between individual and party group preferences, as the latter have all scored on the pro-European integration scale.

Nevertheless, we have to note a difficulty as for some of our parties we are unable to calculate party loyalty rates for EP party group voting as they have too few MEPs for meaningful calculations. Most importantly, this is the case for some of the parties that we have noted earlier as having low preference for integration and thus would be primary candidates for low EP party group loyalty rates: FPO (Austria), NOA (Bulgaria), and SP (Netherlands) all having only 2 MEPs, and DF (Denmark), and ER (Estonia) having one member each in the EP. Furthermore FPO and NOA are non-aligned parties, thus it is impossible even to approximate loyalty rates, while we can check the individual MEPs voting behavior for the other parties: SP, DF, and ER vis-à-vis their corresponding EP group. Table 6. displays national parties’ loyalty to their respective EP party group for overall EP voting, for voting on constitutional and inter-institutional matters, as well as voting on internal regulations of the EP. For SP, DF, and ER we are estimating loyalty scores by looking at the individual MEPs score, except for SP where the two MEPs’ score is averaged. In these cases we only estimate only overall vote loyalty rates, since there are too few cases on the other dimensions to make meaningful estimations based on one or two individual MEP behavior.
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<th>country</th>
<th>party</th>
<th>party name</th>
<th>EP group</th>
<th>overall votes (%)</th>
<th>constitutional inter-inst. (%)</th>
<th>EP internal regulations (%)</th>
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Due to these difficulties, we are unable to assess the EP party group loyalty rate of the two non-aligned parties – FPO and NOA – that were noted earlier for low support of European integration. However, as we already noted the non-aligned parties have the lowest overall cohesion rates, which is in line with the predictions of our spatial positioning model of the EP party groups, including the group of non-aligned parties. Looking at the overall EP party group loyalty rates, we have to note that not all of our remaining expectations for low loyalty within the EP party group vote are confirmed. Thus, the single MEP from DF does have the lowest loyalty score among all respondents, yet this is only a very rough estimate that does not allow for generalizing. Only the UK Conservatives show the expected low loyalty rate consistently across all votes. Nevertheless, ODS (Czech Republic) scores very similarly to Cons, which is a surprise as no spatial model has projected it earlier as being a candidate for low EP party group loyalty, the party scoring within the pro-integration scale. LN (Italy) also displays a consistently low loyalty rate and the two members of SP (Netherlands) fair similarly on our estimate for overall loyalty to EP party group on overall EP votes. The rest of our candidates for outlier positions, KSCM (Czech Republic) and ER (Estonia) do not confirm our expectations as their overall loyalty rate is just about the average score observed for all parties in our sample.

Focusing our attention on EP voting on constitution and inter-institutional affairs, our expectations fail even further, as only the Conservative display low EP group loyalty rates. While LN also scores below the average as expected, there are three other parties that have lower loyalty rates in these votes than LN, and our last candidate KSCM scores again very close to the average loyalty rate for all parties. The same can be said about EP party group loyalty rates on internal regulations of the EP, with the exception that KSCM displays here the lowest loyalty together with Cons, confirming expectations; while the LN has a perfect cohesion rate, contrary to our expectation. Given these results, it is impossible to make definite conclusions on how party support for European integration affects the national parties’ loyalty to their respective EP party groups.

Another way to examine whether parties’ vote in the EP is guided by their preferences on the anti-pro European integration scale rather than their EP party group membership is to look at how parties furthest away from the means positions of their EP party group behave in the EP. Parties at the greatest distance from the position of their respective EP party group will have the most different preferences from the EP party group average and thus will most often have to chose between their own positions and those of the EP party group. Accordingly, we expect that those parties that are furthest away from the EP party groups’ mean position will be most likely to rebel against their EP party group, which will affect negatively the voting cohesion rates we observe for the given group. In order to test this hypothesis we have calculated how many standard deviations far away each party’s mean score is from its respective EP party group mean score.

Accordingly, most distant positions on the anti-pro European integration scale from the means positions of the respective EP party groups are occupied by ER, Lab, Cons, Plaid, BSP, and UMP on the one side, and PP and PD on the other, therefore we can expect these parties to be the ones that have lower loyalty rates in EP votes. Nevertheless, our data confirms strongly this expectation only for the Conservatives, while Labor, UMP, and PD (Italy) do have lower overall loyalty rates than the average party, yet these rates are very close to the average thus differences are not significant. Furthermore, our expectations for low EP party group loyalty are not confirmed for Plaid, ER, PP, and BSP that each score higher than the average loyalty rate in all the EP votes.

We do not obtain better results even when we focus our analysis on constitutional and inter-institutional affairs votes only, our expectation for low EP party group loyalty is confirmed only for Cons, Lab, and Plaid. Similarly, we find a surprisingly high loyalty rate for the parties when it comes to voting on internal regulations of the EP, only the UK Labor
and Conservatives showing low loyalty to their EP party groups on this dimension. The high loyalty rates observed here in fact can be explained by the overall low cohesion rates of the EP party groups in this domain, meaning that it is only in a few cases that the EP party groups do vote together united, and as such the chances of individual parties of voting together with the party group increase since the calculus only takes into account observations when the EP party group has voted in a unified matter, ignoring all other votes.

We also examine an alternative approach that argues that ideological distance of individual parties on the left-right dimension from their respective EP party groups means position affects their loyalty to the EP party groups during EP votes. Accordingly, parties that should vote most often against their EP party groups are CSU, BSP, DS, GERB, PD, Grüne, and SPO as these display the largest individual differences from their respective EP groups’ left-right ideology. Nevertheless, only PD has a lower loyalty rate in overall EP voting than the average, and even the PD score is very close to the average position, which is contrary to the hypothesis of ideological distance. Furthermore, for both constitutional votes and votes about EP internal regulations our parties vote together with their EP party group more often than the average, which seems to support that ideological differences on the left-right issue within the EP party groups do not influence EP party group loyalty on issues of European integration, contrary to our expectations.

We have noted that country scores that average national party preferences also position the European countries within the two-dimensional space of left-right divisions and anti-pro European integration preferences. This enables us to identify those countries that occupy the outlier positions within this space and accordingly which countries are most likely to vote down EP propositions. We shall evaluate the voting behavior of national delegations by examining how often individual parties from the same country form national coalitions during EP voting, when all the MEPs from the member state vote on a national line rather than on an ideological line, and at least one of the national parties votes against its EP party group. According to this hypothesis, building on our earlier findings, UK parties will be most likely to vote against European integration, while Spanish and Hungarian parties should be the most consistent supporters of the EU and have the lowest number of occurrences for national coalitions. If we look at the different survey individually, we should expect the Czech, UK, and Italian (Chapel Hill 2006); the UK, Czech, and Bulgarian (Eurosphere); Estonian, Dutch, and Austrian (manifesto data); the French, Austrian, Czech, and Bulgarian (EU Profiler); and Finish, Belgian (Wallonia) (Chapel Hill 2010) parties as most likely to vote on national lines.

The occurrences of national coalitions in the EP are listed in Table 7. Unfortunately, we cannot compute national alignments for all of our cases as some countries do not have at least two national party groups, each of at least 5 MEPs strong that would enable meaningful averaging of the voting records and calculating for coalitions (e.g. Denmark, Finland and Estonia).

As the data shows, the EP overall voting scores do not confirm our main expectations based on how outlier the positioning of the countries is. While we expect the UK parties to be most likely to form national coalitions against EP votes, in fact only Germany has fewer national coalitions (given that the number for Bulgaria is only for the period 2007-2009) than the UK, contrary to our hypothesis. Moreover, Hungarian and Spanish parties are also more likely to form national coalitions than their UK counterparts, while we expect them to form the lowest number of national coalitions. Most national coalitions are formed by Czech parties, twice as more as the second placed Italian parties, which is in line with the expectations based on the 2006 Chapel Hill, Eurosphere, and EU Profiler surveys but contrary to the rest of the surveys and our means positions that average the individual surveys.
Table 7. Occurrences of national coalition in 6,149 votes of 2004-1009 EP

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria*</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Bulgaria and Romania only join the EU on 1 Jan 2007.

Our expectations are partly fulfilled only when we look into voting on constitutional and inter-institutional affairs, Hungarian and Spanish parties forming only two and respectively one national coalitions in votes on this domain. This seems to confirm that the more specific the EP vote, the better the explanatory power of our hypothesis underlining the importance of the relevant position of the country. Yet again, Czech parties are forming the highest number of national coalitions on this domain as well, totaling 91, while UK parties are voting together only 8 times, contrary to what we have prescribed. There are only a total of 17 votes cast on internal EP regulations, thus the formation of national coalitions is very unlikely in this domain and therefore it is impossible to interpret the results meaningfully. Yet, it is important to note that Bulgarian parties score relatively high on this domain, as we find Bulgarian parties voting together, forming a national coalition two times on this domain. This makes Bulgaria rather skeptic of EU internal regulations as the number of Bulgarian national coalitions is especially high if we keep in mind that their membership is only a total of 2 years vis-à-vis all other parties’ five years term.

Another way to test our hypothesis for member state voting behavior that differentiates among countries according to their support for European integration is to examine the cohesion of national delegations in the EP – the extent to which MEPs from the member states vote as a block, irrespective of the EP party group they belong to. Accordingly, the lowest the national support for European integration is, the lowest cohesion of the national delegation in EP votes we expect as parties will be most divided over European issues. Table 8. contains the relevant scores for our selected countries.
Table 8. Cohesion of national delegations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>cohesion of national delegation</th>
<th>PSE</th>
<th>PPE_DE</th>
<th>ALDE</th>
<th>GUE-NGL</th>
<th>Greens-EFA</th>
<th>UEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>55.63</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>74.24</td>
<td>97.14</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZECH</td>
<td>59.66</td>
<td></td>
<td>77.55</td>
<td>94.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>66.02</td>
<td>92.07</td>
<td>97.98</td>
<td>92.65</td>
<td>96.02</td>
<td>99.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>69.58</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>94.08</td>
<td>96.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE-WALL</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>95.79</td>
<td>98.56</td>
<td>98.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUL</td>
<td>73.44</td>
<td>98.41</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>94.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>63.39</td>
<td>94.88</td>
<td>96.07</td>
<td>90.04</td>
<td>99.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>65.61</td>
<td>95.15</td>
<td>97.77</td>
<td>92.82</td>
<td>96.78</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>66.02</td>
<td>97.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>96.38</td>
<td>95.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>74.72</td>
<td>97.13</td>
<td>96.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EST</td>
<td>78.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUNG</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>97.58</td>
<td>95.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the data shows, our expectations for low cohesion for parties with weak European integration support are confirmed. The UK parties score by far the lowest on the cohesion of the national delegation, meaning they seldom can agree on European issues. At the same time, Hungary has the highest, while Spain the third highest score – well in line with the prediction of our spatial model of country means positions that displayed both countries having the highest support of European integration. The more surprising result is that Czech parties score second lowest, yet this is not against our model as Czech, French, and Bulgarian parties are positioned at the lower end of the support for European integration scale. It is only the magnitude of the Czech cohesion score that is unexpectedly low but its voting behavior is in line with our hypothesis. We would also expect Germany and Italy to score relatively higher, based on their higher placement in our spatial model of European integration, but the only country that does not show scores in line with its placement on the European integration axis is Bulgaria, and this is probably due to the fact that its voting scores are calculated only for two instead of five years like all other parties.

These results are also confirmed by the national parties’ loyalty to their respective EP party group. The UK not only has the lowest cohesion score for its national delegation, but it also displays the lowest loyalty for both PES and EPP among all other countries in our sample. The Greens enjoy a higher loyalty rate from the British parties, yet still under the average, while ALDE enjoys the highest loyalty rate from British parties among the parties of the member states we have selected. On the other hand, Hungary and Spain both display not only very cohesive national delegations but also very high loyalty rates to the same PES and EPP, well above the average loyalty rate showed by our selection of countries.

Discussion and conclusions

Our first goal in this paper was to present new data on European integration preferences of the political parties across Europe based on the EurospHERE research project and situate this data in the existing literature. We examined comparatively our data against four different surveys in order to identify possible differences and identify consistent patterns in the data we have gathered. Our systematic comparison yielded different results than we expected, in fact we have shown that each of the five surveys presents a very different interpretation of what political parties across Europe think of European integrations, as well as where they position...
themselves on the left-right dimension. We have found no systematic parallel among the results of any of the surveys, each standing out independent in its findings from all other surveys. While part of the results could be attributed to changing party preferences over time as there is a four year span between the earliest and the latest survey, we conclude that time alone cannot explain all the differences we have identified. Given that we are unable to show any correlation even for the three surveys that were done approximately at the same time in 2009, we argue that studies of party alignments and attitudes seem to be impaired by varying interpretations of concepts and different measurements employed by the various scholars.

At the same time, we have found only the Euromanifesto data to portray the political parties as being mostly Euroskeptic, all other surveys showing most of our selected parties as largely in support of European integration, irrespective of the methods or the conceptualization they employed. Even in the case of the Euromanifesto data, our results can be explained by the low salience of European issues in party programs and campaigns, which the survey takes into account. Notwithstanding some of the differences among the surveys, we have found different parties listed as opposed to integration each time we considered a different survey, thus we found it impossible to single out which individual European parties are Euroskeptic, although we expected the surveys to yield similar results. Instead of arbitrarily arguing in favor of any one survey, we have aggregated the different scores into a single database and calculated a unique positioning for each of our parties. Accordingly, the most Euroskeptic parties of the 2004-2009 EP are NOA (Bulgaria), DF (Denmark), KSCM (Czech Republic), SP (Netherlands), FPO (Austria), Cons (UK), and ER (Estonia). Averaging individual parties across national lines, we find no country placed as anti-European integration, yet the UK is the most Euroskeptic country in our sample while Hungary and Spain turn out the most enthusiastic about integration.

Our most important finding is that political parties in the EP vote according to how supportive towards European integration their country is. Domestic preferences predetermine party choice in the EP as we have seen that parties of the most Euroskeptic countries display the lowest cohesion of the national delegation and they display corresponding low loyalty to the EP party groups; while countries supportive of the EU show the highest levels of agreement and high loyalty to EP party groups. This means that if domestic preferences are Euroskeptic, MEPs will often disagree about votes in the EP, while if domestic public opinion is supportive of the EU, national parties will often vote together in the EP, irrespective of their EP party groups or ideological differences. At the same time, we have seen that the level of domestic support for European integration does not determine the likelihood of the formation of national alignments within the EP. Although one would expect parties of the more Euroskeptic countries to be ready to oppose EP votes by joining forces into a national coalition, our data suggests that this is not the case. As such, it seems that national coalition formation is more issue-specific rather than driven by general attitudes towards the European Union and its policies.

Our second finding is that the level of support for European integration of the EP party groups also affects the vote cohesion of the EP party group, meaning the more supportive of European integration the member parties of the EP party groups are, the more likely they will vote together in the EP. Our analysis has shown that this holds true for overall EP votes, but it is especially true for votes related most directly to integration: EP votes on constitutional and inter-institutional affairs and the votes on the internal regulations of the EP, where we have found that vote cohesion levels are directly related to the level of support for European integration shown by the different EP party groups. Thus, forerunners of integration support will show consistently higher vote cohesion rates than those EP party groups that only have moderate support for integration.

We also see that the more unified the EP party group is, the more likely it will have higher cohesion rates. While this is a natural finding, it is important to mention because at the same
time we find that differences among the member parties of a given EP party group do not affect the loyalty of these parties the group. More specifically we have investigated whether parties furthest away from their EP party group’s position on the European integration dimension show lower loyalty rates than other parties but the results are inconclusive. The same applies for parties furthest away from EP party group’s ideological position on the left-right dimension, which means that ideological differences within the party group do not result in lower loyalty rates in EP voting. This suggests that EP party groups do have an important effect on the voting behavior of their member parties, even most distant member parties voting most often in line with the rest of the EP party group. Nevertheless, we are unable to determine from the quantitative evidence alone how far the cohesion of the party groups can be attributed to the groups themselves.

Another conclusion that we can draw is that although the 2004-2009 EP saw an unprecedented increase in the number of parties whose views needed to be accommodated within the different EP party groups, the enlargement of the EU had no effect on voting patterns within the EP. We see that Euroskeptic parties have been the most divided within the EP. For all other political parties of the EP we find that they largely vote together with their EP party group, though there are cases of national rebellions (see similar results in Hagemann 2009). This is well illustrated by the higher vote cohesion figures we find for the transnational EP party groups than for any of the member-state group of parties (Hix and Noury 2009). We also found evidence that different issues will bring different party competition into the EP vote, and cohesion figures increase in the case of specific policies related directly to furthering European integration – such as constitutional and inter-institutional affairs or EP internal regulations.

As such, we claim that national parties play a role in aggregating preferences on European integration, which in turn play a role in determining voting behavior in the EP. We have seen that the EP party groups are aggregating preferences in the parliamentary arena, and they are very cohesive when it comes to voting. Nevertheless, one should be cautious about the role of the national delegations vis-à-vis the role EP party groups play in determining voting behavior as most national delegations are too small to have any chance influencing the group’s structure and parties themselves depend on their participation within the EP party group (Lord 2006). This might suggest that EP party groups are adequate substitutes for national parties for representing the European electorate but we argue they are not because the party politics of the EU does not provide much link between European elections and the voting in the EP. The legislative outcomes of the EP can be well aligned with the preferences of the EP party group, but given the great variety of parties EP party groups must accommodate as members, it is very plausible these outcomes will be far away from the preferences of the national parties.

References


Data Sources:


European Demos in the Horizontal and Vertical Perspective: Value Orientations of Citizens, Party Sympathizers and Elites

Martina Klicperová-Baker and Jaroslav Košťál, Czech Academy of Sciences

There is an intensive academic debate to what degree the citizenry of Europe deserves a label of European demos. The maximalists require real Europeans to manifest both a common identity and a robust European public sphere. However, are not social psychological prerequisites for democracy and civic mindedness more essential for modern Europeans than appreciation of unique distinct characteristics of an exclusive, European identity? Additionally, the literature on European Demos almost exclusively treats it as if it were a binary, “yes” or “no” attribute of the European people; as if demos either was or was not there. We want to demonstrate the existence of various qualitative mentalities within the continent, some of which may be particularly close or disposing to democratic European demos, others may be far or contentious to it.

Since elites play a crucial role, we are particularly interested what kind of mentalities are represented (or overrepresented) in citizens with an outstanding social status, e.g., in CEOs and politicians. Do the elites represent vanguards on the path to the strengthened European demos?

European demos and its criteria

A rich discourse develops concerning whether the citizens of Europe qualify at all as Europeans—Cederman paraphrases words of Masimo d’Azeglio: “We have made Europe, now we have to make Europeans” (2000, p. 3); and whether citizens of Europe possibly constitute a European Demos—“a political community that facilitates democratic governance” (Gabel & Anderson, 2001, p. 3).

Some lament an obvious democratic deficit in Europe, e.g., Scharpf (1999, p. 187) points out the triple deficit manifested by the lack of pre-existing collective identity, of the Europe-wide political discourses and of the Europe-wide institutional infrastructure. Others hold a less alarmed view, e.g., Risse (2010, p. 15) argues that “the much-talked-about ‘democratic deficit’ of the EU does not refer to the lack of a sense of community among Europeans” but rather to the shortcomings of the disconnected European Union policymakers. In Risse’s words:

“... the complaints about the lack of a European demos are largely exaggerated. A European polity that the European peoples consider legitimate does not require a strong sense of collective identification. Multiple identities suffice, as long as the European project respects the heterogeneity and diversity of local as well as national communities.” (Risse, p. 8)

We concur with Risse, that it is the respect of heterogeneity which is key for European democratic coexistence and for the ability to live within a supranational structure. Our search for European demos then will focus on civility and values.

79 Let us leave aside the point whether “demos” is a flattering epithet in the first place. After all, Aristotle himself is known to look down on the rule of demos (and democracy as a direct rule of the mob and the needy) and instead, was in favor of aristocracy (the rule of the best) or a rule by an enlightened monarch. Let us assume—and verify here—that the modern demos is heterogeneous, that it contains a sufficient share of pro-democratic citizens and rules mostly via its representatives, elites, who generally possess qualities of humanistic democrats.
European demos as a civic rather than ethnic characteristic
Is the palpable sense of collective identification important for Europeans? This is not to doubt that feeling of a common identity, a conscious Europeanism, is significant. To the contrary, it may be so natural, that Europeans do not even reflect on it, as Václav Havel (2000) attested? Are not modern Europeans constituted by their open-minded civic spirit and respect rather than by an exclusive “strong sense of collective identification” which may be imbedded in them unconsciously? Non-dogmatic and non-fundamentalist, tolerant mentality is crucial for democratic citizenship since democracy is built on conflict, negotiation and perpetual compromise (Klicperová-Baker et al., 2007). Hence, civility (respect and tolerance) constitutes the necessary buffer which softens the inevitable democratic disagreements.

Mutual tolerance and respect are essential particularly for coexistence of peoples, many of which have waged wars with each other just recently. (Let us leave aside at this point how tolerance and sense for equality plays into coexistence with immigrants from non-European countries and cultures.)

Civic citizenship, civic nationalism, constitutional nationalism (Sternberger 1979, Habermas 1992, Muller 2006) are essential for the citizens of the EU in a similar way as they are for other constitutional cultures such as the U.S.A., Switzerland or for West Germany in the past.

European demos as democratic citizenship
Most of the relevant literature comes from political scientists. Our intent is to complement it with a stronger accent on political psychology and democratic citizenship with a focus on attitudes and values. The democratic character is best illustrated by social psychological characteristics which represent predispositions to democracy (Klicperová-Baker, 1999, 2007). They include: civility—the ethos of democratic society which is a necessary precondition for a peaceful coexistence; civic political culture (political attitudes as specified in the theory of Almond and Verba), and above mentioned civic, constitutional nationalism. We tend to call this trinity of necessary social psychological preconditions of democracy the Feierabend triad, in recognition of the Czech-American political scientist who pioneered the field (Klicperová-Baker, 1999, p.10).

Hence, we address the European demos from the social psychological perspective of democratic citizenship. Our objective is to analyze the constellations of values and attitudes expressed in the most recent data of the European Values Survey and to determine to what degree European citizens and their elites qualify as democrats and deserve the European demos epithet.

Our research is performed both horizontally (in the international perspective) and vertically (comparing the citizenry, parties and elites).

80 When I ask myself: "To what extent do I feel European, and what links me with Europe?" , my first thought is a mild astonishment at the fact that it is only now, under the pressure of certain political issues, or tasks of the day, that I begin to ponder this question. Why didn't I think of it long ago, in those times when I began to discover the world; to dwell upon it; and, to dwell upon myself? Was it because I regarded my belonging to Europe as a merely surface matter of little significance that was not worth troubling over, or even thinking about? Or did I see my European linkage simply as taken for granted, and therefore meriting no query, examination, or even articulation? More likely, the latter was true: My entire background was probably so self-evidently European that it never occurred to me to think of it that way, nor did I deem it important to call it European, or to probe into whether my thoughts are to be associated with the name of a continent. And, not only that - I have a feeling that I would have looked, to myself in my youth, somewhat ridiculous if I had written or declared that I was European, felt European, and thought so; or, in fact, if I had professed a European orientation in any explicit fashion. Such manifestations would have appeared to me then to be very pathetic and pompous, and I would have regarded them merely as a different, still haughtier version of the kind of patriotism that I have always disliked from national patriots.
Clusters and mentalities
So far, most of the research and secondary analyses of the European Values Study (EVS) data\(^{81}\) focused on comparison of populations (or their subsets) or on comparisons between countries. But here, we want to focus on coherent and representative constellations of opinions and values of citizens, on identification of various types of political and moral schemata which reflect group mentalities or group characters within the samples; the samples being either citizens or main European political parties.

This mentality approach was described e.g., by Havelka (2002) and Černý (2002). The latter used the mentality approach while studying attitudes to various marital lifestyles; he employed cluster analysis across nations, generations and education groups and compared various national and group mentalities. We used a similar method (Q-factor analysis) to identify various types of civic political culture and civility in the past (Klicperová-Baker et al. 1999, 2003, 2007).

Interestingly, in the process of the Study B focused on mentalities of party sympathizers we found as a byproduct a striking correlation: The clustered party mentalities correlate almost absolutely (\(r=0.97\)) with respondents’ countries of origin, hence with the countries’ political systems.

Method
Our aim was to extract and identify prevalent constellations of attitudes and values which are relevant for democracy and to consider their compatibility with the democratic citizenship—the European demos. Analyses included European Values Study data (EVS 2011b) from 44 European countries [\(N=63,281\)] gathered during wave 4 in the period of 2008-2010. Multiple statistical methods were used including multivariate and bivariate methods: cluster and factor analyses, ANOVA, post-hoc tests, bivariate tests for contingency tables. Our analysis called for an insight into the relationships between a wide array of value orientations and in the second study also for their relationship with political inclinations and political party preferences. In the effort to employ a single explanatory framework for a maximum of value orientations and opinions of European respondents, we applied cluster analysis as the most suitable method of classification which manages to simultaneously process variables with different formats if standardized.\(^{82}\) Our inquiry consisted of two studies:

**Study A** Clustered respondents according to their opinions and attitudes by using the k-means SPSS Quick Cluster procedure. SPSS is capable of dealing with large samples and with missing values in a pairwise manner; that allowed to treat the complete data set without any reductions so that the whole sample of N=63,281 was included.

**Study B** Clustered respondents according to their opinions and attitudes with respect to their party preferences and employed the SPSS Hierarchical Cluster Analysis.\(^{83}\) We aggregated the whole sample into 302 categories according to the presence/absence of sympathies for major political parties in each country (including categories of Other party, No party and DK/NA\(^{84}\)). These 302 party categories were assigned mean values for each of the 73 opinions and attitudes and this data set was cluster analyzed. The cluster analysis results were then projected back into the main sample which was somewhat reduced to N=58,606 respondents from 42 countries, i.e., 93% of the original after omitting incomplete data (Iceland) and outliers.

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\(^{81}\) EVS (2011a) related publications can be found at http://evs.place.pukurin.uvt.nl/

\(^{82}\) “There are a number of ways in which data can be standardized but the most easily understood is to convert to a Z score” (Field 2000, p.8).

\(^{83}\) We changed the distance measures repeatedly from default squared Euclidean to Minkowski, Euclidean and correlation and others in order to find the most suitable solution.

\(^{84}\) Do not know / no answer
Based on available EVS data and our objective, we chose the main following variables to enter the k-means and hierarchical cluster analyses, data were normalized in order to control for various ranges of used scales (Field 2000):

**Tolerance**, especially attitudes to minorities (Roma, gays), religious tolerance, acceptance of alternative lifestyle and modern/postmodern choices, e.g., tolerance of divorce, prostitution, abortion, gay rights, drug addicts, attitudes to immigrants (with respect to the immigration policy, employment of immigrants etc.).

**Civility** (ethos of civil society) was represented mainly by items relevant to benevolence (concern for human kind and the less fortunate), trust in others, identification with other people, membership in associations, volunteering;

**Religious feelings** included items focused on religiosity, fundamentalism, separation of church and state;

**Political activity**—propensity to vote, interest in and recognition of politics, political activism (petitions, boycotts, demonstrations, strikes, occupation);

**Democratic spirit**—appreciation of democracy, view of the non-democratic alternatives of military rule and a strong leader, confidence in educational system, political parties and officials;

**Paternalism and private enterprise**—e.g., ratio of private or government responsibility, views on interference of state and government in private enterprise;

**Employment** status and views on rights of the unemployed and people on welfare;

**Subjective wellbeing**—happiness, life and job satisfaction, health status;

**Gender related attitudes**, particularly opinions on gender equality (e.g., women’s reproductive rights and right to work). In total we used 73 such variables.

**Additional variables** were used ex post for correlation and variance analysis with resulting clusters. They included basic socio-demographic variables including age, family income, residence (larger or smaller towns) and gender; as well as experts’ categorization of political parties according to their type (e.g., social democratic, extreme right, new left), rule (government or opposition) and left-right orientation (position on the 10-point left-right scale) and for the Study A also the occupation of respondents (based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations) including elites’ positions such as politicians, top managers and higher professionals.

From this comprehensive selection we only omitted items which were out of the range of our interest, such as a lengthy battery concerned with family and marriage stability or detailed descriptions of the household members’ characteristics. Other than that, we utilized practically all data obtained from the EVS 4 questionnaire.

**European mentalities: Classification of European citizens according to their value orientations (K-means clustering)**

Overall, 63,281 respondents were clustered with respect to their 73 opinions and attitudes. Five steady clusters were obtained. Based on cluster analysis results and associations with demographics—see Table 1—we characterized the clusters as follows:

1) **Secular Democrats**: most tolerant and affluent, prevalently not believing in God (62%), interested in politics and also politically active (voters, activists), tolerant towards diverse neighbors, not rejecting divorce, gays, prostitution etc., these

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85 Several extensive batteries of the EVS questionnaire were reduced into 2-3 most saturating variables based on factor analysis—e.g., the social distance scale, confidence in diverse public systems and institutions, justifiable misdemeanor acts, concerns with various circles of people, and attitudes towards immigrants.

86 Stability 1 (reordered) = .913 and stability 2 (split-half) = .902 for selected five cluster solution. (We also found stable solutions for three and four clusters but those had a weaker differentiating power.) Clusters were then subjected to ANOVA and post-hoc testing.
respondents have generally good relationship towards others, they are universalistic and able to identify themselves with larger communities, including humankind. They are educated, very affluent, mostly employed (73%), healthy, generally satisfied with life. Politically they have stronger than usual preferences for social democrats, the new left, and other small or new emerging parties (as rated by experts). More than 50% of respondents from Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Denmark each were in this category.

2) **Religious Democrats**: believers, almost all with religious denomination (93%), a high trust in God (96%) and with the most frequent trust in life after death (74%). They draw an upper middle income and they are often socially organized (59%, i.e., second after the group 1), manifesting a high democratic spirit and appreciating political system governing their country, yet not particularly politically active. They are rather tolerant and trusting to others, they are the group which is the most satisfied with life, claiming also the best health. Politically they significantly lean to the right center, established liberals or conservatives (expert rating) and to DK/NA. This group can be found relatively more frequently among respondents from Ireland, Malta, and Switzerland, but relatively high proportion is also present in many other countries (except Scandinavia where group 1 is most numerous); they are less represented (in single percent digits) in Turkey, Poland, ex-communist Balkan countries, Moldova, and Ukraine.

3) **Non-democratic Skeptics**: ambivalent about religion (46% with religious denomination, 56% believing in God), this group is of average economic means and relatively tolerant, particularly of gays and such phenomena as divorce, abortion and prostitution (although less tolerant of Roma). Most striking is their skeptical attitude to democracy: they manifest little interest in politics, very little confidence in political parties and educational system, and the least interest in voting in elections (besides the highest skepticism regarding life after death). They express very little concern about people in their neighborhood, sick & disabled, humanity in general as well as about environment. They do not organize much in civil society and they are unlikely to participate in political action. While expressing distinct preference for state paternalism, they do not seem to hesitate to admit the strongest tendencies to cheat on taxes. Their political preferences lean statistically more often toward the center and radical left (expert rating) or toward new, small or “none” parties. Manifested mostly in the post-communist region, i.e., in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Latvia where they represent over 50% of citizens.

4) **Intolerant Economically Deprived Traditionalists**: the most religious (99% of believers), poorest, politically and socially passive (extremely low activism, low participation in election, and civic associations), mostly not employed (70%), traditionalist with prejudice against abortion, prostitution, divorce, gays. They are suspicious towards others, with little appreciation for democracy (preference for a strong leader or an army rule instead of democratic system, also the strongest voice for religious leaders). Politically they manifest higher than statistically expected preferences for radical (left or right) political parties (rated by experts) or for “none” party. Most respondents from Turkey, Romania, Northern Cyprus, and Moldova were in this category.

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87 Expert ratings of parties from country reports at the EVS website
5) **Anti-democratic Religious Rebels**: mostly religious (96%), politically active (frequently taking part in or ready to strike, occupy buildings), they are dissatisfied with the way democracy develops in their country and are distinctly anti-democratic (with preference for army rule and a strong leader instead of a democratic political system). They are economically underprivileged, prejudiced (mainly against divorce, prostitution, gays) but to a lesser degree than the poorest group of Intolerant Traditionalists. Their political preferences mostly include the right center, radical right, and regional minorities (expert rating). This value orientation represents minor segments (between 10% and 30% of respondents) of many countries such as Northern Cyprus, Italy, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Turkey, Kosovo, Ukraine and (with over 48% respondents) of Macedonia.

Two of the five European clusters/mentality which we identified in Study A were distinctly democratic (Secular and Religious Democrats), the rest corresponded to schemata of non-democrats or antidemocrats. Hence a majority, almost two thirds (64.3%) of the European general public, seem to lean to non-democratic rather than democratic mentalities. This proportion varies across various countries as we shall confer in the Discussion section.
Table 1. Cluster analysis results of Study A: Clusters of citizens and significant variables of the European Values Study with statistical significance of their relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Values Study questionnaire items with the original item codes in italics</th>
<th>Secular Democrats</th>
<th>Religious Democrats</th>
<th>Non-democratic Skeptics</th>
<th>Intolerant Economically Deprived Traditionalists</th>
<th>Anti-democratic Religious Rebels</th>
<th>Average value</th>
<th>Eta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age in years (age^*)</td>
<td>42,78 d**</td>
<td>48,09 b</td>
<td>44,79 c</td>
<td>52,16 a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational level respondent: ISCED ((Q110) \text{redext}^* \dag)</td>
<td>6,50 a</td>
<td>5,58 b</td>
<td>5,40 c</td>
<td>4,21 d</td>
<td>5,52 b</td>
<td>5,31</td>
<td>.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly household income ([1 \leq \varepsilon150…12 \geq \varepsilon10000]) (\text{hinc}^*)</td>
<td>7,21 a</td>
<td>5,83 b</td>
<td>4,24 c</td>
<td>3,07 e</td>
<td>3,69 d</td>
<td>4,66</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important in life: Religion(a006)</td>
<td>1,77 d</td>
<td>3,02 b</td>
<td>1,86 c</td>
<td>3,35 a</td>
<td>3,03 b</td>
<td>2,65</td>
<td>.637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only one true religion or no religion offers any truths (f062_03)</td>
<td>1,78 e</td>
<td>2,72 c</td>
<td>1,98 d</td>
<td>3,32 a</td>
<td>2,88 b</td>
<td>2,59</td>
<td>.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe in: God (f050)</td>
<td>.38 d</td>
<td>.96 b</td>
<td>.56 c</td>
<td>.99 a</td>
<td>.96 b</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political action: joining unofficial strikes (e028)</td>
<td>1,65 b</td>
<td>1,12 c</td>
<td>1,13 c</td>
<td>1,03 d</td>
<td>1,95 a</td>
<td>1,29</td>
<td>.596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political action: joining in boycotts (e026)</td>
<td>2,07 a</td>
<td>1,47 c</td>
<td>1,28 d</td>
<td>1,15 e</td>
<td>2,14 b</td>
<td>1,53</td>
<td>.585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political action: signing a petition (e025)</td>
<td>2,73 a</td>
<td>2,26 c</td>
<td>1,76 d</td>
<td>1,46 e</td>
<td>2,45 b</td>
<td>2,04</td>
<td>.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political action: attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations (e027)</td>
<td>2,35 a</td>
<td>1,74 c</td>
<td>1,46 d</td>
<td>1,30 e</td>
<td>2,31 b</td>
<td>1,73</td>
<td>.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians who don’t believe in God are unfit for public office (f102)</td>
<td>1,44 e</td>
<td>2,45 c</td>
<td>2,10 d</td>
<td>3,42 a</td>
<td>3,08 b</td>
<td>2,54</td>
<td>.545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political action: occupying buildings or factories (e029)</td>
<td>1,35 b</td>
<td>1,04 c</td>
<td>1,05 c</td>
<td>1,01 d</td>
<td>1,68 a</td>
<td>1,16</td>
<td>.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to religious denomination (f024)</td>
<td>.49 c</td>
<td>.93 a</td>
<td>.46 d</td>
<td>.94 a</td>
<td>.89 b</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>8,01 a</td>
<td>5,18 c</td>
<td>6,07 b</td>
<td>3,55 e</td>
<td>4,72 d</td>
<td>5,35</td>
<td>4,89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justifiable: divorce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion when woman not married</td>
<td>.87 a</td>
<td>.35 d</td>
<td>.67 b</td>
<td>.25 e</td>
<td>.51 c</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion if not wanting more children</td>
<td>.83 a</td>
<td>.31 d</td>
<td>.71 b</td>
<td>.27 e</td>
<td>.49 c</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors: Gays not OK [ %]</td>
<td>1.05 e</td>
<td>1.17 d</td>
<td>1.36 c</td>
<td>1.63 a</td>
<td>1.51 b</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe in: life after death</td>
<td>.30 d</td>
<td>.74 a</td>
<td>.23 e</td>
<td>.71 b</td>
<td>.66 c</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member: Belong in total</td>
<td>.70 a</td>
<td>.59 b</td>
<td>.24 d</td>
<td>.17 e</td>
<td>.35 c</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justifiable: prostitution</td>
<td>4.56 a</td>
<td>2.37 c</td>
<td>2.83 b</td>
<td>1.48 e</td>
<td>2.22 d</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty towards society to have children</td>
<td>4.05 b</td>
<td>3.27 c</td>
<td>3.36 b</td>
<td>2.48 e</td>
<td>2.84 d</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people can be trusted</td>
<td>.63 a</td>
<td>.46 b</td>
<td>.18 c</td>
<td>.14 d</td>
<td>.18 c</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual couples – not adopt children [1-5]</td>
<td>2.54 e</td>
<td>3.71 d</td>
<td>3.76 c</td>
<td>4.10 a</td>
<td>3.84 b</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people try to be fair [1-10]</td>
<td>6.80 a</td>
<td>6.59 b</td>
<td>5.02 c</td>
<td>4.53 e</td>
<td>4.68 d</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system: Having the army rule [1-4] e116</td>
<td>1.15 e</td>
<td>1.35 d</td>
<td>1.49 c</td>
<td>1.89 b</td>
<td>1.94 a</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>.376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system: Having a strong leader e114</td>
<td>1.56 d</td>
<td>1.91 c</td>
<td>2.25 b</td>
<td>2.56 a</td>
<td>2.52 a</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with your life</td>
<td>7.83 b</td>
<td>8.22 a</td>
<td>6.52 c</td>
<td>6.37 d</td>
<td>6.55 c</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in politics e023</td>
<td>2.76 a</td>
<td>2.57 c</td>
<td>1.96 e</td>
<td>2.09 d</td>
<td>2.62 b</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of health (subjective) a009</td>
<td>4.13 a</td>
<td>4.04 b</td>
<td>3.57 d</td>
<td>3.29 e</td>
<td>3.72 c</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of happiness a008</td>
<td>3.28 b</td>
<td>3.36 a</td>
<td>2.88 d</td>
<td>2.81 e</td>
<td>2.96 c</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with the way democracy develops e110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Materialist index 4-item y002</td>
<td>2.19 a</td>
<td>1.84 b</td>
<td>1.70 d</td>
<td>1.58 e</td>
<td>1.79 c</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people try to be helpful [1-10] a168_01</td>
<td>5.49 b</td>
<td>5.72 a</td>
<td>4.09 c</td>
<td>3.84 d</td>
<td>4.06 c</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>.324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important in life: Politics [1-4] a004</td>
<td>2.53 a</td>
<td>2.42 c</td>
<td>1.77 e</td>
<td>2.07 d</td>
<td>2.48 b</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs scarce: Employers should give priority to (nation) people than immigrants c002</td>
<td>2.21 d</td>
<td>2.52 c</td>
<td>2.73 b</td>
<td>2.77 a</td>
<td>2.71 ab***</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary work: Unpaid work in total</td>
<td>.37 a</td>
<td>.38 a</td>
<td>.11 c</td>
<td>.08 d</td>
<td>.20 b</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system governing country good [1-10] e111</td>
<td>5.22 b</td>
<td>5.84 a</td>
<td>3.90 e</td>
<td>4.52 c</td>
<td>4.24 d</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work should come first even if it means less spare time e041</td>
<td>2.68 e</td>
<td>3.32 c</td>
<td>3.16 d</td>
<td>3.80 a</td>
<td>3.46 b</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system: Having a democratic political system is good [1-4] e117</td>
<td>3.62 a</td>
<td>3.48 b</td>
<td>3.00 e</td>
<td>3.17 d</td>
<td>3.21 c</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed e029</td>
<td>.72 a</td>
<td>.55bc</td>
<td>.57 b</td>
<td>.30 d</td>
<td>.54 c</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humiliating to receive money without having to work for it e037</td>
<td>3.07 a</td>
<td>2.49 c</td>
<td>2.61 b</td>
<td>2.08 e</td>
<td>2.23 d</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence: The Political Parties e069_12</td>
<td>2.05 b</td>
<td>2.20 a</td>
<td>1.58 d</td>
<td>1.91 c</td>
<td>1.94 c</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned with people in the neighborhood [1-5] e154</td>
<td>3.00 d</td>
<td>3.16 c</td>
<td>2.68 e</td>
<td>3.45 a</td>
<td>3.29 b</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned with human kind e158</td>
<td>3.08 a</td>
<td>2.92 b</td>
<td>2.27 d</td>
<td>2.87 c</td>
<td>2.88 c</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would give part of my income for the environment b001</td>
<td>2.78 c</td>
<td>2.74 d</td>
<td>2.33 e</td>
<td>2.83 b</td>
<td>2.97 a</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors: People of a different race vr47</td>
<td>1.04 e</td>
<td>1.07 d</td>
<td>1.15 c</td>
<td>1.26 a</td>
<td>1.20 b</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned with sick and disabled people e162</td>
<td>3.66 d</td>
<td>3.78 c</td>
<td>3.36 e</td>
<td>4.01 a</td>
<td>3.83 b</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much freedom of choice and control a173</td>
<td>7.37 b</td>
<td>7.52 a</td>
<td>6.40 bc</td>
<td>6.34 d</td>
<td>6.43 c</td>
<td>6.79</td>
<td>.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence: Education System e069_03</td>
<td>2.76 b</td>
<td>2.96 a</td>
<td>2.53 d</td>
<td>2.95 a</td>
<td>2.67 c</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political system: Having experts make decisions e115</td>
<td>2.39 d</td>
<td>2.44 c</td>
<td>2.79 b</td>
<td>2.77 b</td>
<td>2.93 a</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence: NATO e069_19</td>
<td>2.40 b</td>
<td>2.63 a</td>
<td>2.06 e</td>
<td>2.26 d</td>
<td>2.30 c</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs scarce: Men should have more right to a job than women e001</td>
<td>2.00 e</td>
<td>2.02 d</td>
<td>2.09 c</td>
<td>2.30 a</td>
<td>2.16 b</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you vote at a general election tomorrow-recoded e178r</td>
<td>2.78 a</td>
<td>2.75 c</td>
<td>2.41 e</td>
<td>2.61 d</td>
<td>2.61 b</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman as a single parent approve [1-3] d023</td>
<td>2.59 a</td>
<td>2.21 c</td>
<td>2.40 b</td>
<td>2.18 d</td>
<td>2.41 b</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private vs. state ownership of business e036</td>
<td>4.77 d</td>
<td>4.38 e</td>
<td>5.40 b</td>
<td>5.78 a</td>
<td>5.27 c</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors: Roma</td>
<td>1.23 e</td>
<td>1.29 d</td>
<td>1.43 b</td>
<td>1.49 a</td>
<td>1.36 c</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders should not influence government</td>
<td>4.17 a</td>
<td>3.53 e</td>
<td>3.84 b</td>
<td>3.58 d</td>
<td>3.64 c</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country f105</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party's governing country rule</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of party type</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party-total preferences prefparty</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
* Variables marked with an asterisk were not clustered, they are used to help to characterize the clusters
** Letters a, b, c, d, e mark statistical difference or similarity among values in the same row (values marked with a same letter are statistically similar; values marked by different letters are statistically different).
*** Two letters near a value signify that value is statistically similar to other values which themselves differ from each other
† Average net monthly household income (in EUR) differentiated poor, less rich and rich countries, this division is also supported by economical statistics - Eurostat on line, PPS and GDP per capita statistics.
Elites

Elites were defined in correspondence with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) used in the EVS. Results in Table 2 attest that the democratic spirit (manifested by above described mentalities 1 and 5) significantly and reliably prevails among the elites.

Table 2. Elite and non-elite clusters of value orientations with indications of statistical significance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Secular Democrats</th>
<th>Religious Democrats</th>
<th>Non-democratic Skeptics</th>
<th>Intolerant economically deprived Traditionalists</th>
<th>Anti-emocratic Religious Rebels</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politicians (ISCO 1000-1143)</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers &amp; directors of large enterprises (ISCO 200-1210)</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other managers and higher professionals (ISCO 1220-2460)</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elites in total</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (ISCO 3000-9333)</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>40210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>52113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Chi square was significant at the level <.000. Shaded cells denote higher than expected frequency counts based on a sign test (p≤.01)

Study B. Classification of European political party sympathizers according to their value orientations (hierarchical cluster analysis)

For independent results by a different approach we concentrated on 302 main political parties via their sympathizers and non-sympathizers. We do not publish dendrogram or icicle chart because of the size but we shall gladly provide it in the Excel format to anybody who might be interested. Hierarchical cluster analysis provided a three-cluster solution with a high differentiating power and cluster stability – see table 3 for most important interactions.

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88 The hierarchical cluster analysis provided two solutions for 95-96% of the clustered sample: there was a two-cluster solution and a three-cluster solution with a higher differentiating power and cluster stability (as high as 100% even with complete random re-ordering of cases or change of distance method), the rest of observations classified into smaller sub-clusters or single outliers (small subclusters consisting of all Kosovo parties, German PDS, Maltesian extremists, and local nationalist parties such as Bosnian party in Serbia - SDA.)
Table 3. Cluster analysis results of Study B: Clusters of party sympathizers and significant variables of the European Values Study with statistical significance of their relationships.

<p>| European Values Study questionnaire items with the original item codes in italics | Active Democracies (affluent, civil) | Moderate Democracies (mid-rich, frustrating) | Passive Democracies (poor, religious) | Average value | Eta |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Monthly household income [1≤ €150… 12 ≥ €10000] hinc * † | 7,15 a** | 3,62 b | 2,59 c | 4,67 | .679 |
| Neighbors: intolerance to gays vr57 | 1,11 c | 1,46 b | 1,68 a | 1,37 | .416 |
| Political action: signing a petition e025 | 2,46 a | 1,83 b | 1,60 c | 2,02 | .403 |
| Politicians who don’t believe in God are unfit for public office f102 | 1,94 c | 2,66 b | 3,41 a | 2,50 | .377 |
| Only one true religion or no religion offers any truths f062_03 | 2,21 c | 2,68 b | 3,26 a | 2,59 | .345 |
| Duty towards society to have children d026_03 | 3,74 a | 2,93 b | 2,61 c | 3,17 | .341 |
| Justifiable: prostitution f119 | 3,67 a | 2,17 b | 1,61 c | 2,61 | .328 |
| Homosexual couples - adopt children d026_01 | 3,10 c | 4,00 a | 3,81 b | 3,66 | .319 |
| Member: Belong in total a080 | .60 a | .29 b | .23 c | .39 | .318 |
| Political system: Having the army rule e116 | 1,28 c | 1,63 b | 2,01 a | 1,55 | .304 |
| Important in life: Religion a006 | 2,27 c | 2,69 b | 3,26 a | 2,62 | .301 |
| Justifiable: divorce f121 | 6,50 a | 5,15 b | 3,83 c | 5,45 | .294 |
| Political system: Having a strong leader e114 | 1,84 c | 2,26 b | 2,78 a | 2,18 | .290 |
| Do you think most people try to take advantage of you (10 point scale) a168a | 6,40 a | 5,15 b | 4,37 c | 5,49 | .284 |
| Most people can be trusted a165 | .47 a | .24 c | .12 c | .31 | .276 |
| Jobs scarce: Employers should give priority to (nation) people than immigrants c002 | 2,39 c | 2,74 a | 2,62 b | 2,61 | .265 |
| Most of the time people try to be helpful (not looking out for themselves) a168_01 | 5,43 a | 4,21 b | 3,66 c | 4,56 | .264 |
| Feeling of happiness a008 | 3,28 a | 2,92 b | 2,83 c | 3,03 | .259 |
| Believe in: God f050 | .66 c | .83 b | .98 a | .79 | .258 |
| European Union enlargement g051 | 4,63 c | 5,66 b | 6,76 a | 5,42 | .236 |</p>
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<td>Humiliating to receive money without</td>
<td>2.83 a</td>
<td>2.35 b</td>
<td>2.04 c</td>
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<td>Satisfaction with the way democracy</td>
<td>2.60 a</td>
<td>2.22 c</td>
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<td>Neighbors: People of a different race</td>
<td>.07 c</td>
<td>.15 b</td>
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<td>Rate political system for governing</td>
<td>5.32 a</td>
<td>4.29 c</td>
<td>4.51 b</td>
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<td>Political system: Having experts make</td>
<td>2.41 c</td>
<td>2.77 b</td>
<td>2.92 a</td>
<td>2.66</td>
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<td>decisions</td>
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<td>State of health (subjective)</td>
<td>3.97 a</td>
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<td>Satisfaction with your life</td>
<td>7.69 a</td>
<td>6.75 b</td>
<td>6.54 c</td>
<td>7.05</td>
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<td>Political action: attending lawful/peace</td>
<td>.92 a</td>
<td>.64 b</td>
<td>.49 c</td>
<td>1.72</td>
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<td>ful demonstrations</td>
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<td>Political action: joining in boycotts</td>
<td>.68 a</td>
<td>.43 b</td>
<td>.36 c</td>
<td>1.51</td>
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<td>Voluntary work: Unpaid work in total</td>
<td>.33 a</td>
<td>.16 c</td>
<td>.15 c</td>
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<td>Work should come first even if it means</td>
<td>3.10 c</td>
<td>3.34 b</td>
<td>3.82 a</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>.187</td>
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<td>less spare time</td>
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<td>Post-Materialist index 4-item y002</td>
<td>1.95 a</td>
<td>1.71 b</td>
<td>1.68 c</td>
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<td>Concerned with people in the neighborhood</td>
<td>3.02 c</td>
<td>3.05 b</td>
<td>3.63 a</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.184</td>
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Notes * Variables marked with an asterisk were not clustered, they are used to help to characterize the clusters

** Letters a, b, c, d, e mark statistical difference or similarity among values in the same row (values marked with a same letter are statistically similar; values marked by different letters are statistically different).

† Average net monthly household income (in EUR) differentiated poor, less rich and rich countries, this division is also supported by economical statistics - Eurostat on line, PPS and GDP per capita statistics.
This three-cluster solution provided an almost absolute match with respondents’ countries (Cramer’s V=0.987), hence practically equaled a classification by countries with only few logical exceptions (sympathizers of four parties—two parties from the Czech Republic, one each from Slovakia and Macedonia were classified to another region).

This country classification resembles the result obtained by Makarovič, Ivančič, and Podmenik (2007) and Makarovič (2008) although their method and analytical units were different: Matej Makarovič and his colleagues used hierarchical cluster analysis of ten variables of socio-political participation in European Union countries of an earlier EVS wave while we clustered as many as 73 variables of social values, attitudes and opinions of 302 political parties in 42 countries. Still, we both arrived to a similar three cluster classification.

Makarovič et al. labeled their socio-political clusters as follows: 1. active democracies (Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden); 2. passive democracies (Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania) and 3. countries of a moderate pattern 3a. moderate classical pattern (Austria, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Finland, Malta) and 3b. moderate skeptical pattern (Czech Republic, Italy, U.K., Ireland, France, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Greece).

Since there is an obvious conceptual convergence between our and Makarovič’s results, we borrowed his terminology (of active, passive and moderate democracies) for the main labels of our clusters. Based on our cluster analysis (see Table 3), we labeled our clusters as follows:

1) **Active Democracies** characterized by affluence, civility and democratic spirit.\(^{89}\) This cluster contains all party sympathizers from most Western European countries, i.e., from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Northern Ireland, along with 19% of respondents from the Czech Republic (Czech Civic Democratic Party and Greens sympathizers), and 5% from Slovakia (those with inclination towards Slovak Christian Democratic party). These countries or their parts are economically developed—affluent and secular (with a stress on separation of religion from government). Their citizens are active, they manifest a robust democratic spirit and are involved in a broad network of civil participative associations; their activism includes such actions as demonstrations, boycotts, and petitions. The population manifests more benevolence, trust and mutual tolerance than the other two clusters; citizens also feel overall much happier and healthier. Party preferences include a wide palette from social democrats, conservatives, liberal parties to the new left.

2) **Moderate Democracies** aspiring to the level of active democracies but leaving a lot to be desired in the transition process from (mostly Communist) authoritarian or traditionalist regime.\(^{90}\) This cluster contains all party sympathizers from Bulgaria, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Ukraine, and additionally, 95% of respondents from Slovakia, 90% from Macedonia and 81% from the Czech Republic belong here. Generally, these countries stand in between the first and the third cluster in wealth, religiosity, citizen attitudes to phenomena of modern life (especially in prejudice and tolerance), in civic activism, and other attributes. This cluster of countries stands out by the frustration with which citizens refer to their political system and by the highest level of their discontent with democracy. Politically, this cluster significantly leans to radical Left and “other” (smaller) parties.

\(^{89}\) In analysis by Makarovič team, focusing on countries of the EU, only Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden qualified as Active Democracies. Most Western European countries qualified as Active Democracies in our wider, “all European” perspective.

\(^{90}\) In our analysis this is a single cluster of mostly post-communist countries, Makarovič, focusing on the EU, was able to differentiate two subtypes (classical and skeptical) within it.
3) **Passive Democracies**, poor and culturally traditionalistic. This cluster contains all party sympathizers from Albania, Northern Cyprus, Moldova, Turkey, Romania along with 10% from Macedonia (sympathizers of the minority Albanian party DUI). Countries in this cluster are characterized by high religiosity (98% respondents believe in God, 92% claim religious membership) and by economic underdevelopment with the highest score in materialism on the post-materialistic scale. Their population is exceptional by traditional attitudes towards phenomena of modern life (divorce, gay rights, prostitution, abortion) and by a low level of trust in fellow citizens. These societies do not foster broader frames of self-identification, conversely, they encourage self-centeredness due to a lack of participative network of civic associations. Inhabitants tend to be apolitical, rarely engaged in political activities beyond voting, with a low democratic spirit and an appeal for strong leaders or army rule, they tend to desire enlargement of the EU. Party preferences include conservative parties, regional minorities and “DK/NA” categories.

**Discussion**

To study the constellations of European values and attitudes we employed two different cluster analysis approaches, focusing primarily on the variety of mentalities and occurrence of democratic European demos. In both cases, post hoc analyses showed that the social economic level correlates with obtained clusters so significantly that we used it to characterize the clusters.

In Study A, the k-means cluster analysis of citizens’ attitudes and values produced five clusters/mentalities which can be viewed as democratic, non-democratic or antidemocratic:

a) Two were distinctly tolerant and democratic, in harmony with the spirit of the European demos. These tolerant democratic clusters: (Tolerant Affluent) Secular Democrats and (Tolerant) Religious Democrats represented 17% and 23% Europeans respectively.

b) Two other non-democratic clusters, Intolerant Economically Deprived Traditionalists and Non-democratic Skeptics were associated with rather inert and uninvolved mentality. These two clusters represented almost a half of the European population (each about 24%).

c) A particular challenge for democracy seems to be associated with the last group, the Antidemocratic Rebels. Although least numerous (comprising only 12% of respondents) this mentality signals activism and preparedness to get involved even in very confrontational actions.

Although a different approach was used for Study B (hierarchical cluster analysis of values of political party sympathizers), results were comparable: The Active Democracies accounted for almost 40%, Moderate Democracies for about half of the population and Passive Democracies for about 10% of the sample.

Obtained clusters of Study A and B were very significantly related. This relationship is attested by a very significant chi-square test ($p<0.000$) and by a high Cramer’s $V (V=.419)$ confirming a very high intensity of the relationships between clusters of both studies. This relationship is also illustrated in Table 4 where shaded cells denote higher than expected frequency counts (sign test with $p=.01$). Respondents from democratic clusters 1 and 2 from Study A constitute the core (over 70%) of the Active Democracies cluster in Study B; Skeptics and Traditionalists from Study A represent almost two thirds (62%) of the Moderate Democracies cluster from Study B; while Traditionalists with Rebels composed over three quarters (78%) of the Passive Democracies cluster.

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91 In Makarovič’s context of the EU this cluster involved mostly post-communist countries, our wider European perspective encompasses in it even a further South and East of Europe
It may appear rather disappointing to find that on average, the democratic demos (democratic mentalities) accounted for only a minority of citizens: In Study A there were Secular and Religious Democrats and in Study B there were parties/countries of Active Democracy. In each study active democrats accounted for less than half of European respondents (40% and 37% respectively). Still, Europe is a prevalently free, democratic continent and one may wonder what the necessary critical mass of actively involved democrats is, how much of population can be free loading and how many rebels democracy can absorb to function well. The answers lie in a closer horizontal (across the states) and vertical (general population versus the elites) analysis.

**Horizontal variance in democratic character: International perspective**

A detailed international analysis deserves its own study (Klicperová-Baker & Koštál in preparation), here we can at least briefly summarize: The Study A revealed a great horizontal variance in the ratio of mentalities which can be depicted as: “democrats vs. passives vs. rebels.” We detected a majority (over 50% within each country) of democrats in Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In Denmark and Norway democratic mentalities comprised as many as 90% or even more. These above mentioned countries may be considered the democratic core in which the European demos—in the sense of robust democratic character—cannot be disputed. The European northwest is generally found to be the bastion of democracy, compare also findings by Makarovič and his coworkers who point out Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden as “active democracies.”

Study B, was not based on clustering of individual citizens but on clustering parties (i.e., clustering of values of party sympathizers). Study B yielded similar results as Study A, although, understandably, the collective party perspective somewhat dulled the extreme views. The pro-democratic values were best expressed in the cluster of Active Democracies. This democratic creed was a generally shared, uniting mentality of partisans from the Western Europe, from countries to a great degree overlapping with the list of countries in the previous paragraph.

There were interesting exceptions, i.e., three countries in Study B were not represented in a single cluster but were represented in two clusters: the Czech Republic and Slovakia split their partisan characters between the Active and Moderate Democracies: while most Czech...
and Slovak party sympathizers were clustered under the Moderate Democracy, part of their partisans were clustered into the Active Democracies group, these were 19% of partisans from the Czech Republic (those who sympathize with Civic Democratic Party and with the Green Party) and 5% from Slovakia (those with inclination to Christian Democrats). Similarly, Macedonia party members were split between Moderate Democrats (90%) and Passive Democrats (10%). As if these Central European countries personified cultural divides and illustrated also ideological divides in the geography of the public, party sphere.

**Vertical variance in democratic character: Study of the elites**

Additionally, Study A also allowed for an analysis of incidence of democratic character across social strata with a focus on the elites. Study A informs us that the majority (55%) of managers and higher professionals manifested democratic character. Those in the highest professional rank (the politicians), demonstrated their democratic mindedness even more frequently (63%).

Our attention to elites surpasses the scope of this study. In an adjacent analysis, we compared EVS elites’ views on diversity (tolerance to diverse neighbors and social distance from diverse neighbors) with Eurosphere data examining elites’ opinion on relevance of diverse groups in the current society. The results suggest that while elites generally manifest more embracing and tolerant attitudes to diversity than the general public, at the same time, they express a heightened awareness of relevant social problems (see also Klicperová-Baker, Koštál, in press).

**Conclusion**

Our objective was to verify to what degree the citizenry of Europe deserves the label of European demos. Our concept of European demos stresses its pro-democratic character, particularly respect and tolerance which are inevitable for perpetual negotiations in a democratic system. (Benevolence and civic mindedness are particularly necessary in Europe, a continent of diverse cultures and violent history.) Despite the global convergence and the EU unification pressures, inhabitants of Europe embody a heterogeneous populace with diverse values and political attitudes. Our analysis reveals a possible classification of European citizenry based on their various shared values.

In contrast to a notion that nations differ by their distinct national characters, we counter that a) there are more than one (typically several) representative mentalities in each nation and b) some mentalities span internationally, nations share them, and they may be unifying. (This may be said of cosmopolitan democratic character as well as of intolerant xenophobic traditionalism.)

Cluster analysis proved to be a useful method sensitive both to the diversity and international similarities in European thought. Both the Study A and Study B revealed widely spread mentalities compatible with the European demos (democratic character) as well as mentalities neutral or ill-suited for democracy. The core of European demos which appears in the mentalities of Secular or Religious democrats (Study A) and in Active Democracy (Study B) accounted for 40.1% and 37.3% respectively across the European nations. Active democratic characters and widespread civility prevailed in 15 from 44 analyzed countries. In some regions, particularly in the European Northwest, democratic mentality was absolutely prevalent; in Denmark and in Norway democratic mentalities constituted over 90% of population. In the horizontal perspective, the European demos, pro democratic and embracing, cannot be disputed particularly in the above mentioned regions.

Yet, as democratic demos is represented in various countries differently, it appeared almost absent in some regions. Almost two thirds (64.3%) of the European general public seemed to lean to skeptically non-democratic or anti-democratic mentalities. Still, the vertical
perspective (social status paradigm) reassures us that the democratic spirit seems to significantly and reliably prevail (or at least hold plurality) among the European elites and hence may have a stronger influence than sheer numbers would suggest.

The democratic citizens and elites reliably demonstrated their democratic "habits of the heart," democratic activism, a high level of participation in civil society (membership in societies) and hence readiness to be engaged in the public sphere. This public sphere potential was also specifically scrutinized by the cluster analysis of ideology of partisans.

Both Studies A and B proved that no country is isolated and their mentalities and ideologies are intertwined. The consistent spread of robust democratic culture across a substantial region suggests that if there is not a functional public sphere already, there is a viable potential for it. Perhaps, if the reader can kindly tolerate a crude parallel: the public sphere is not unlike a system of public facilities: one may not use them constantly but the civic community knows about them and will use them whenever need be.

We believe that now the rhetorical challenge is not nearly in Cederman’ paraphrase “We have made Europe, now we have to make Europeans” (2000, p. 3), Václav Havel poignantly showed that Europeanness may be within us without its open revelation. Instead, one may need to paraphrase the words which the first Czechoslovak president, Thomas Masaryk, said about democracy: Likewise as “Democracy is accomplished by democrats and better democracy by better democrats,” “Europe is constituted by Europeans and better Europe by better Europeans.” The core of “better” appears to be in cultivation of active civil and prosperous citizenship.

References


EU citizens – A Key Resource for Articulation of European Public sphere

Yolanda Zografova and Diana Bakalova, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The field of studies occupied with the EU citizenship and of citizens’ involvement in EU processes is dominated by a range of topics related concerning citizens’ rights, acquisition of citizenship in a situation of increased mobility and migration, the issues of poverty, Roma people, social exclusion, etc. Moreover, not a few publications are dedicated to the role and activity of citizens’ organizations. At the same time, it is namely the individual level shifted to a more global level that lacks or remains in the background – i.e. citizens and their participation in political processes, in EU activities and initiatives. In general, there is a lack of systematic research on issues of citizens’ involvement within the EU.

Our objective in this article is to find an answer of the following research question: What are the attitudes of EU citizens towards the EU and its policies and to what extent their reported viewpoints outline a trend toward such participation in the European public sphere, as it was articulated at individual level in more than a half of the EU member countries and in Turkey. To achieve this objective we study the influence of nationality, political affiliation and various forms of participation in political processes on citizens’ views of benefits/disadvantages from EU membership, representation and image of the EU, its enlargement and policies in various spheres, etc. An aspect of our analysis is also whether and to what extent these citizens’ attitudes comply with some official EC documents concerning citizens’ political involvement.

In our analysis we consistently study the predictive power of a number factors such as citizens’ social and political participation at individual level (discussions with friends and relatives, membership in various organizations, citizen associations, citizens’ readiness to take part in diverse political actions such as voting, demonstrations, strikes, signing petitions, contacting politicians, etc.) on their attitudes towards EU policies. Furthermore, we study the predictive power and influence of factors such as knowledge about and willingness to use the European Citizens’ Initiative, vision of one’s own identity within European-national dimensions, combined influence of nationality and political affiliation within the left-right continuum on their perception of the EU and on their attitudes towards the role of the EU in policy-making in various social and political fields and what its future role should be.

Citizens’ involvement in EU processes on individual and mass scale

Issues of citizenship and citizens’ activity emerge on the research agenda in the field of European development, public sphere, European identity. Such studies carried out until 2009 have even analysed in a negative light the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, for it is interpreted as an indicator of impossible consolidation within the EU; even after ratification of the Treaty scepticism that EU identity can not be formed still occupies many researchers’ conceptions. It seems that in spite of the increased possibilities of mobility, career at different place within the EU, more voting rights, more rights for participation in social and political life, even in a country different from native’s one, people are still committed and directly identifying themselves with their country of origin. Frequently, researchers and analysers relate the formation of collective European identity to a certain territory, boundaries of the EU - a standpoint originating from the traditional vision of nationality and state. Some researchers stress the need of common political values and behaviours as a requirement for developing collectivity and identity /Klingemann, 2002/. Hence, when we talk about EU citizenship policy and about activity and attitudes of the latter toward the EU, the theme of identity – national, collective, European – constantly comes to the fore. We should not forget, however, that identities themselves are complex formations, as for
example national identity contains a large number of other sub-identities /Smith/. Some other researchers emphasize that approval and enforcement of common rules and regulations instead of common European value system and identity is sufficient /Kantner, 2006/. According to Jopke, a contemporary theory of citizenship is needed to combine development of one dimension with developments of other citizenship’s dimensions. In his theory, Jopke presents the perspective of today’s citizenship through interrelations of the three dimensions – status, rights, identity, as he considers that changes in some of these dimensions lead to changes of the rest. Such subsidiarity is relevant, as long as we talk about the same, although numerous, pluralistic and multilingual subject – EU citizenship. Some other authors emphasize that a common identity “can develop only on the basis of commonality among the members of a definable community”, which puts on the agenda the issue of possible development of a quite broad communality concerning EU citizens /Klingemann, 2002, p.20/. He mentions that common political values and behaviours are enough, i.e. it is not necessary to intervene in pluralism and diversity of national cultures /ibid./.

Meanwhile, solutions for shortening the distance between the EU and its citizens have been sought for years and as Grisprud notes “White Paper clearly shows that it does feel a need for a more lively conversation with its citizens across the continent”. Now, after the EU enlargement, issues about finding ways to enhance citizens’ commitment to EU policies, inevitably brings forward the issues of possibilities for broadening the public sphere, which should provide sufficiently open access for citizens’ participation. Still, after such large scale changes such as the accession of Eastern European countries, it is questionable whether Habermas’ axiomatic definition of public sphere is really applicable, since according to him: “Access is guaranteed to all citizens”. A problem quite well known that the EU is faced with is the so-called democratic deficit. One of the measures against democratic deficit, which the EC introduces in the Lisbon Treaty’s clauses is European Citizens’ initiative that is aimed at enhanced public participation of citizens in EU processes, a direction that the Commission has been working on for years. /Council Decision of 26.01.2004; Decision of th EP of 12.12.2006/. This initiative provides opportunities for various events, for changes in different spheres, prepared by approximately one million of citizens from at least 7 EU member countries. Not much analyses have been carried out that focus on the Lisbon Treaty. In fact, character, activities, feasibility of EU citizens’ participation, and also features of separate subgroups, organizations or simply individuals are not onto focus of attention of social knowledge, at least not to the extent to which these issues actually become increasingly topical together with enlargement and development of the EU.

In research of citizens’ participation /which in fact has been developed lately/ empirical approach dominates in the European public sphere. Difficulties regarding communication with citizens and their involvement in the ongoing EU integration process bring to the fore a pragmatic aspect of social knowledge. One of the priorities in the work of the EC and of the other European institutions is to involve citizens from all member countries into implementation of EU policies and of consolidation at a transnational level. Numerous official documents of the EC, of Council of the EU, etc. are concerned with methods, systems and approaches that should be developed with the purpose of more immediate involvement of EU citizens /Resolution of the Coincil(2005); EC Report(2010),etc./. Some studies show that different measures, extent and guidelines for citizens’ relation to EU policies are available in different EU countries, which at a definite stage “may preclude the emergence of a European Public Sphere.” /Immerfall et al., p.7/.

Scientific analyses carried out in the past few years have mainly sought to ascertain the level of engagement of citizens, the extent to which the latter is influenced by the underlying social structure and by both the individual motives behind and the many impediments to civic engagement” /ibid., p.8/.
In some of these studies a subject of analysis are comparisons among countries with regard to differences in citizens’ participation. Of course, they provide interesting results, still increasing number of EU member countries, globalization of issues and unification of lifestyles to a certain extent make such a comparison increasingly relative. Besides, such an analysis should encompass social, political, economic, cultural factors, operating in each country, as such a comprehensive and adequate single and complete study is hardly feasible, unless it is long-term one. In this article we rather emphasize the profoundness of interrelations between citizens’ involvement and citizens’ attitudes towards the EU, its polity and policies. We think that our focused interest and analyses would contribute to research of these issues, of the general interrelations and of the predictive power of various factors with regard to level and direction of citizens’ involvement, common for the European countries included in the study. And hence, we study citizens’ participation in EU processes and certain citizens’ attitudes towards EU politics at both individual citizen and transnational level. If some contemporary authors assume that a major obstacle for development of a common EPS is the lack of a common European identification /Eriksen, 2005/, some other researchers view citizenship in the perspective of “post-national cosmopolitism” /Hansen and Hager, 2010, p.24/.

In our study we analysed interrelations not only between separate questions (variables), but also between complex variables, as we grouped some questions-indicators and multiple choice options of several questions in complex variables. A characteristic of our analyses is that it was based on data of one of the latest rounds of EB 2010/73.4, i.e. the analysed data were collected after the latest EU enlargement. Not a few meta-analyses of European social survey data are available in the literature, but most of them were carried out at least several years ago.

Our approach was to search for communalities in citizens’ political involvement and intentions for participation, in order to outline a tendency, which unified the articulation of EPS. In fact, we could expect that dynamic co-development of the countries /in spite of the existing differences and misalignments/ would result into a similar level of awareness and articulation of EPS. Of course it can find expression in relation to different matters of the citizens' attitudes and perceptions, i.e. in some countries citizens’ social and political involvement is higher, while in some other countries citizens’ trust in institutions is higher /Zografova, 2011/.

In either case facts show that much more work is necessary to realize dozens of the EC's initiatives, reflected in official documents and concerning all EU citizens, not depending on geographical or other position of the countries. See quoted documents.

It is not necessary to go back too much in time. It is indicative that in 2004, in 2006 as well as in 2011 problems of the transparency of decisions taken in Brussels and particularly of informing citizens about politics and difference initiatives being undertaken, persist and still are on the agenda.

According to the social-constructivist ideas it can be estimated that within the social processes and situations of citizens’ activeness knowledge, representations and attitudes toward the EU and its politics appear and develop. Keeping in mind that in the context of interactive social actions and interdependances, the cognitive processes develop correspondingly to the actual social-historical context.

Unfolding the “classical” formulation by Verba and Nie and retaining two elements of their definition, namely “participation refers to actions rather than mental dispositions, and it involves an intent to influence “ and add a third one stating that “...our aims at actions purporting to influence collective outcomes”, Westholm, Montero and Deth consider their approach is distinguished from the classical definition for the difference made between a small and a big number of individuals, affected by the results of the involvement and by the unrestrictedness within activities oriented toward the state (Westholm, Montero and
Deth, 2007 p. 7-8). They tend to focus in their research mainly on organized forms of citizens’ participation through different association, distinguishing involvement in “small-scale and large-scale democracy”. Their research reveals significant effects of this associational involvement upon the social trust in the investigated countries.

We regard the results achieved in this field a base to unfold a concretization in direction the particularities of civic participation on an individual and mass level, characteristic for many European countries (see Newton & Montero, 2007 for cross-national comparison of social and political involvement and its dependence on specific factors in the different European countries.)

In contemporary research most often weighs the linkage between citizens’ involvement and active forms of participation in political processes, often related to the initiatives of diverse associations and more. “These organisational structures are seen as the underlying infrastructure for civic engagement. Although formal membership in an organisation says very little about what people actually do, it is often considered evidence of civic engagement.” /Immerfall et al. p. 9/. In fact in our research an analysis of the influence of membership in different organizations will be presented but our main goal is to bring to forth the civic activeness expressed in attitudes, as well as actions on an individual and national level, in regard to as well as independently from organizations membership. Actually the activities usually discussed could remain passive, “inactive” for years in a citizen’s lifespan; or be a an indication of a serious social or political change, an event etc., the usual condition of the individual being even too distanced from Brussels’ political decisions and processes (quoted document). All this requires on the one hand the development of a conceptuality at a new stage, a multilevel approach that besides different disciplinary aspects, to contain a normative perspective concerning the civic position expressed through the very support of a way of life, and the other hand, continuation of the line of empirical research or monitoring by which the dynamics of the development of different components of the European citizenship. Our research has not been hindered by an expendable optimism but we must take into consideration the social realities of what is often called “new Europe”. It is about the big, significant dislocation of masses of people changing their place of living, citizenship and other types of affiliation; all this, almost imperceptibly modifies the appearance and the ethnic structure and content of the social and political activities in the EU. All this should modify the contemporary research method regarding the phenomena. Inevitably it faces the delicate question of European identity and whether it is possible or not. It faces also the shared common values and norms - whether the European community shall spread similar norms and rules among the citizens or shall it aim at attaining a joint identity grounded on values called terminal, such as freedom, justice, dignity and more, but now with a meaning and purpose, linked with the others - the co-Europeans? In order to participate in an activity, usually exceeding personal and concerning collective interests, when it is a matter of involvement in the European political processes, this also covers the question what identity does one accept, what values and norms shares with big social groups, communities, nationalities.

To achieve our objective, we employ data from Eurobarometer 73.4 (May 2010)*92 round, since it includes all data necessary for studying both citizens’ participation and citizens’ attitudes/knowledge. Besides, it provides all important control variables, such as nationality, political left - right orientation etc.

*92 The first intention of the study was to compare data from different European social surveys but in the process of consideration of their methods, we discovered that the questions, even though similar in the broad sense, are not identical in the different questionnaires and even through the rounds related to the field we are interested in. For this reason the decision was to conduct an in depth analysis of a single round of Eurobarometer aiming at a clearer and more complete coverage of the scientific problem.
Citizens’ participation is measured as independent variable with regard to different types of political actions such as initiatives, discussions, protests, petitions, demonstrations, badge-wearing, membership in national/European/international organizations, etc. Citizens’ participation is also studied in relation to citizens’ attitudes and knowledge as dependent multiple variables, which include: trust and attitudes towards EU institutions, vision and attitudes toward the EU project and polity, evaluation of benefits from EU membership, knowledge and understanding of the EU project, polity and institutions, opinion on role of the EU in policy making, and evaluation of EU citizenship and identity.

The questions included as measures of citizens’ attitudes are analysed as complex multiple variables, as they encompass either cognitive and evaluative aspects of attitudes towards the EU project, polity, policies, institutions, identity.

In our study we employ various statistical methods: ANOVA, regression analysis, etc. We analyse various interrelations of variables, such as representations of the EU, attitudes towards the EU project and towards definite EU policies, citizens’ willingness to participate in the political public sphere. On one hand, our analyses focus on measurement and interpretation of the interrelation between different components /cognitive, behavioral/ of the citizens’ attitudes towards the EU polity, policies and institutions. On the other hand, при анализ на данните ще съпоставим факти от гражданската активност с някои официални документи на ЕК насочени към по-високата включеност на гражданите ..... the EC, Council of the EU, the EP, and also their effect on citizens’ involvement in the EU processes. For example, it is of interest to analyse the public response to the introduced European Citizens’ initiative using EB data for the variables concerning citizens’ attitudes towards the initiative and how they would make use of it /QE9 QE10/.

We expect that awareness and positive representations about the EU, and also trust in EU institutions are closely interrelated with higher levels of interest and participation of citizens and are also in relative compliance with the articulated priorities, objectives and activities (initiatives) provided by the EU documents. Higher citizens’ political and social involvement enhances more positive attitudes towards the EU, its polity, policies and institutions. We would also expect that a higher trust in institutions (national and/or European), a positive estimation of the EU project and polity and deeper knowledge and understanding of the EU (institutions, polity, citizenship) are more likely to be linked to more intensive political activities (respectively national and/or European). Besides, it is likely that ascribing a bigger role of the EU in several political spheres depends on a higher civic involvement and participation.

Influence of Citizens’ Social and Political Participation on Attitudes Towards The EU

Involvement in political discussions as a predictor of citizens’ attitudes toward the EU

Regression analysis results showed that one of the variables included in EB 73.4 (May 2010) round, recognized as an indicators of citizens’ participation in political discussions and as a behavioural dimension of citizens’ attitudes towards politics at a local, national and European level - QA2 (“When you get together with friends or relatives, would you say you discuss frequently, occasionally or never about: National political matters, European political matters, Local political matters”) was a significant predictor of citizens’ evaluation of their country’s benefits and disadvantages from EU membership (See Table 1). In other words, such a behavioural component of citizens’ attitudes as involvement in discussions turned to be a predictor although not powerful one/ of the evaluative dimension of attitudes. An in depth analysis showed that higher citizens’ involvement in political discussions about

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93 The statistical processing of the Eurobarometer data was made by the assistant Borian Andreev - a researcher in our Institute for Population and Human Studies and we are thankful for the important ideas he suggested and realized through the analysis of a big number of variables and a huge database
European, national and local political matters significantly predicted both more positive and more negative evaluation of countries’ benefits from EU membership.

Furthermore, by including a variable measuring the personal meaning of the EU for citizens, it became evident that citizens’ involvement in political discussions was a significant predictor of both positive personal meaning of the EU (peace, economic prosperity, democracy, social protection, freedom to travel, cultural diversity) and negative personal meaning of the EU (unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of our cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external borders). Critical attitudes, incl. realistic assessment of benefits from EU membership have been developed by higher involvement in discussions. Particular efforts were taken for raising EU citizens’ awareness on behalf of other member countries with regard to citizens’ rights to vote in their country of residence. Numerous EC initiatives enhanced citizens’ participation, for example, in EP election campaigns, as citizens’ knowledge about them was improved between 2007 and 2009, thanks to a number of measures aimed at raising EU citizens’ awareness /Report on 2009 Elections/, i.e. although hardly, those programmes and measures still enhance voting.

Citizens’ participation in political discussions also appeared to be a significant predictor of citizens’ trust in different EU bodies, of their attitude toward common EU policies, of emphasizing particular issues by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future, and of citizens’ opinion on the EU role in policy making. Obviously, higher citizens’ involvement in political discussions with friends and relatives slightly predicted higher trust in EU institutions, more positive evaluation of common EU policies, incl. economic and monetary union, and further EU enlargement, more issues that should be prioritized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future and more important role of the EU in comparison with the national government in policy making in different areas (See Table 1).

In summary, citizens who usually discuss political matters with significant others (incl. friends and relatives) also manifest attitudes towards the EU, its common policies and institutions, towards EU role in policy making, towards their countries’ EU membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complex response variables (recoded)</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Adj. $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA10a (evaluation of whether citizens’ country benefited from EU membership)</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA11a (evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership)</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA12a (evaluation of country’s disadvantages of EU membership)</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16 (positive personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16a (negative personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA18 (trust in EU institutions)</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA20 (evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement)</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA21 (issues that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future)</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA22 (areas, in which decisions should be made by the national government or jointly with the EU)</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The predictive power of most explanatory factors (predictors) included in our analyses proved to be relatively weak, as it was expected because of the peculiarities of the EB questionnaire itself, on one side, and the inhomogeneity of different countries’ samples, on the other side.
Citizens’ willingness for participation in social and political matters as a predictor of attitudes toward the EU

Another variable used in our analyses as an indirect indicator of citizens’ political involvement was QE8. The question included implicit conditioning of citizens’ actions to avoid social desirability of responses (Which two of the following do you think are the best ways of ensuring one’s voice is heard by decision-makers? Voting in elections; Joining a political party; Joining a demonstration; Signing a petition; Going on strike; Joining a trade union; Being a member of a consumer association; Being a member or supporter of an NGO (non-governmental organisation); Participate in debates using the Internet). Besides the general variable, a factor analysis outlined two clearly defined factors: 1. citizens’ influence by going on strike and joining a demonstration; 2. citizens’ influence by signing a petition and being a member and supporter of an NGO. Meanwhile, triennial EC reports reveal that EU citizens increasingly often and immediate find their way to EU institutions to submit their petitions and complaints – thousands of petitions and complaints were lodged by individuals within 2004 – 2007 as per the EC Report./Report from the Commission(2004-2007)/.

Regression analysis general results showed that QE8 as explanatory variable was a significant weak-to-medium predictor of citizens’ evaluation of the country’s benefits (incl. disadvantages) from EU membership (See Table 2). The outlined factors showed that considering strike and demonstration as best ways of ensuring that citizens’ voice would be heard by decision-makers predicted less positive citizens’ evaluation of countries’ benefits from EU membership and also more negative evaluation of disadvantages from EU membership, while considering petitions and NGO membership as best ways for citizens’ political influence could serve as an explanation of both more positive evaluation of benefits and more negative evaluation of disadvantages from EU membership. This results sound rather logical having in mind that strikes and demonstrations are usually regarded as punitive citizens’ actions and are usually related to citizens’ discontent with certain policies - local, national or international, while signing petitions and NGO membership can be measures either for or against certain policies.

Table 2. Citizens’ opinion about the best ways of ensuring one’s voice is heard by decision-makers (QE8) as a predictor of citizens’ attitudes toward the EU (regression model summary and Beta coefficients)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complex response variables (recoded)</th>
<th>QE8: General Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>QE8: strike &amp; demonstration Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>QE8: petition &amp; support to NGO Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Adj. R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA10a (evaluation of whether citizens’ country benefited from EU membership)</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.975</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA11a (evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership)</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA12a (evaluation of country’s disadvantages of EU membership)</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16 (positive personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.183</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.091</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16a (negative personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA18 (trust in EU institutions)</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.170</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.100</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA20 (evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement)</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.059</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.031</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA21 (issues that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future)</td>
<td>.305</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With regard to either positive or negative personal meaning of the EU, citizens’ readiness to join strikes/demonstrations and to sign petitions/support NGOs seemed to be a significant, still a relatively weak predictor. The results showed that citizens who preferred both strikes, demonstrations and signing petitions/supporting NGOs, were more likely to assign negative than positive meaning of the EU, i.e. to identify it more often with problems such as: unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of our cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external borders. Besides, such an attitude is related to less trust in EU institutions, more negative evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement and a larger list of issues that should be prioritized by the EU institutions (See Table 2).

**Citizens’ membership in voluntary associations and attitudes towards the EU**

One of the frequently studied indicators of citizens’ involvement is participation and membership in various organizations – political, trade, NGO, ecological, sport, etc. However, research results show that citizens’ involvement has been getting lower – particularly in political parties, and also in voting at national and European elections /Immerfall, Priller and Delhey, 2010/ In our analyses this indicator was included through QE11: Do you currently participate actively in or do voluntary work for one or more of the following organisations? Statistical data analysis of responses to an important selection of response options show that citizens’ participation in political parties/organizations, in international organisations such as development aid or human rights organisations or in other interest groups for specific causes such as women, people with specific sexual orientation, local issues, etc., did not turn to be significant predictor of citizens’ evaluation of whether their country benefited/would benefit from EU membership and also of the EU membership benefits. Simultaneously, citizens’ social/political participation still predicted, although weakly, citizens’ evaluation of disadvantages regarding EU membership of their country (See Table 3). Probably, citizens involved themselves more actively in various political settings, if they were not content with their current situation and were motivated to search for solutions of problems in their community, party, workplace and this was easily conveyed into their broader attitudes towards benefits of their country’s EU membership. Still, having in mind both social and cultural specificities of organizations in each country, such inferences may be tested in future analyses through comparisons among countries. Citizens’ involvement in such organizations is developed to a different extent in different countries. Contemporary research results reveal that in Eastern Europe such involvement is rather lower in comparison with Western Europe and old EU member countries /ibid./. In some analyses citizens’ associations, incl. NGOs, are evaluated as detached both from politics and citizens /Kohler-Koch, 2010/.

Nevertheless, establishment of common citizens’ associations, NGOs, etc. (or at least transnational ones) seems to be more relevant to EC objectives and strategic priorities 2020 than searching for differences among nations and citizens’ associations. This would ensure higher citizens’ involvement in formation and articulation of the EPS.

Furthermore, both positive and negative personal meaning of the EU was hardly predicted by citizens’ social and political participation. Still, citizens’ belonging to political parties/organizations, international organisations (such as development aid or human rights organizations) or in other interest groups for specific causes, appeared to explain better positive than negative meaning of the EU for citizens. Generally, higher citizens’ involvement in various organizations (when all response options of the question were analysed) predicted both positive and negative attitudes towards to EU, probably in relation to the type of organization (as the question included sport, religious, etc. organizations). And when the analysis included only political, human right and specific cause organizations, citizens’ involvement in such types of organizations proved to significantly predict only positive attitudes towards the EU. These results came to support the EC initiatives and
programmes of many years aimed at promotion of citizens’ participation and involvement /Council decision, 26.01.2004/. V Community Action Programme has been aimed at more immediate involvement of citizens in the work of institutions and in discussions on strengthening of the Community /ibid./.

And hence, it stands to reason that citizens’ trust in EU institutions and their opinion on the EU role in policy making and on the issues that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future were predicted by the citizens’ participation in social and political organizations. Still, citizens’ evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement could not be predicted by this factor. That is how, the relation among attitudinal components /particularly the cognitive component/ has been ascertained, taking into account that citizens’ participation in social and political organizations (a direct measure of the behavioural attitudinal component) was a predictor of evaluation of the EU, its institutions, polity and of EU membership (various direct and indirect measures of the cognitive and affective attitudinal components) (See Table 3).

Table 3. Citizens’ current social and political participation (QE11) as a predictor of citizens’ attitudes toward the EU (regression model summary and Beta coefficients)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complex response variables (recoded)</th>
<th>QE11: General soc. &amp; political participation</th>
<th>QE11: political (incl. human rights) participation</th>
<th>Adj. R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA10a (evaluation of whether citizens’ country benefited from EU membership)</td>
<td>.043 .000</td>
<td>.009 .246</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA11a (evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership)</td>
<td>.122 .000</td>
<td>.008 .444</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA12a (evaluation of country’s disadvantages of EU membership)</td>
<td>.117 .000</td>
<td>.024 .038</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16 (positive personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.069 .000</td>
<td>.023 .001</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16a (negative personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.050 .000</td>
<td>.004 .527</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA18 (trust in EU institutions)</td>
<td>.114 .000</td>
<td>.003 .735</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA20 (evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement)</td>
<td>.013 .109</td>
<td>-.005 .540</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA21 (issues that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future)</td>
<td>.181 .000</td>
<td>-.027 .000</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA22 (areas, in which decisions should be made by the national government or jointly with the EU)</td>
<td>-.043 .000</td>
<td>-.001 .948</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intention to make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative as a predictor of citizens’ attitudes towards the EU**

A strong expression of the willingness to involve an increasing number of citizens in the EU political processes was the fact that by signing the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 the European Citizens’ Initiative was launched. It is important to note that questions concerning this initiative were included in the EB 73.4 round and that we used them in our study as key indicators of citizens’ participation. And hence, our analyses provided the opportunity to see namely the behaviour of subjects addressed by this initiative, i.e. the EU citizens.

Indicators, which are particularly and immediately related to citizens’ participation and involvement in the EU integration processes, are questions QE9 and QA10. They address the European Citizens’ Initiative, introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, which enables one million European Union citizens to call on the European Commission to bring forward an initiative of interest to them in an area of EU competence. Those two questions regard respectively the likeliness of citizens to make use of the Initiative and the fields in which they would make use of it. Regression analysis results showed that the likeliness to make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative was a significant predictor of citizens’ evaluation of
whether and to what extent and in what spheres their country benefited/not benefited from EU membership (See Table 4). At the same time, the variety of fields for use of the Initiative turned to be a better predictor of EU membership benefits. Obviously, higher likeliness to make use of the European citizens’ initiative predicts both positive and negative evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership. Still, higher variety of fields for use of the Initiative indicated by citizens predicted mostly positive evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership. In other words, the higher citizens’ readiness to be politically involved was related to and predicted higher involvement and ambivalence with regard to EU membership issues. Interestingly so, the results obtained for the variety of fields for use of the European citizens’ initiative as a predictor of evaluation of EU membership benefits suggested that the opportunity for participation in deciding certain policy fields is likely to considerably reduce negative citizens’ attitudes towards the EU membership of their country.

With regard to the personal meaning of the EU for citizens we also obtained quite consistent results revealing that citizens’ likeliness to make use of the European citizens’ initiative predicted mainly more positive meaning of the EU. In other words, citizens who were more likely to make use of the Initiative were also more likely to view the EU in positive terms of peace, economic prosperity, democracy, social protection, freedom to travel, cultural diversity, than in negative terms of unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of our cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external borders. Yet, quite unexpectedly so, citizens who were likely to make use of the Initiative in more varied policy fields were also more likely to attribute both more positive and more negative meaning of the EU. It is explicable upon citizens’ involvement aimed at changes, as in this case citizens’ critical attitudes are also more prominent and namely in the fields, where citizens would undertake an initiative. And hence, this is a manifestation of the provision that EU policies should cover an increasing number of spheres of life, democracy, economics, culture, etc. in member countries.

Table 4. Citizens’ likeliness to make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative (QE9) and fields in which they would make use of it (QE10) as predictors of citizens’ attitudes toward the EU (regression model summaries and Beta coefficients)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complex response variables (recoded)</th>
<th>QE9: Likelihood to make use of the EU Citizens’ Initiative</th>
<th>QE10: Prospective fields of making use of the EU Citizens’ Initiative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QA10a (evaluation of whether citizens’ country benefited from EU membership)</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA11a (evaluation of country’s benefits from EU membership)</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA12a (evaluation of country’s disadvantages of EU membership)</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16 (<em>positive</em> personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA16a (<em>negative</em> personal meaning of the EU)</td>
<td>-.121</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA18 (trust in EU institutions)</td>
<td>.259</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA21 (evaluation of a common EU polity and future EU enlargement)</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA21 (issues that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future)</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QA22 (areas, in which decisions should be made by the national government or jointly with the EU)</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As long as trust in EU institutions, attitudes towards a common EU polity and further EU enlargement, and issues that should be prioritized by EU institutions were concerned, the results showed that higher likeliness to make use of the EU citizens’ initiative (incl. in more varied policy fields) significantly predicted higher trust in EU institutions, more issues that should be emphasized by them in order to strengthen the EU in the future, more positive evaluation of a common economic, monetary and foreign EU policies related to future EU enlargement. As mentioned in the EFC Contribution it is necessary to bind the initiative with other methods and means of communication of the EC with citizens, in order to strengthen its positive effects. In the published regulation of the EP and Council of the EU the terms and conditions of launching the initiative have been described in details /16.02.2011/. However, as far as it has been brought forward to the European public, it becomes a crucial and continuously standing issue of the EC communication with citizens.

One of the important results is that higher likeliness to make use of the EU citizens’ initiative (incl. in more varied policy fields) predicted a larger number of areas, in which decisions should be made by jointly with the EU, i.e. more important policy-making role of the EU than of the national government (See Table 4).

**Comparative regression analysis of participation complex variables in their capacity of predictors of attitudes towards the EU’s policies**

In order to determine which was the strongest/weakest predictor of citizens’ attitudes towards the EU, its polity, policies, institutions, etc. we decided to compare the predictive force of the most important variables indicative of citizens’ social and political participation, which were encompassed by our analyses, i.e. QE8 (opinion on the best ways of ensuring one’s voice is heard by decision-makers), QE9 (likeliness to make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative), QE10 (spheres, in which citizens would make use of the Initiative), and QE11 (current citizens’ participation in social and political organizations). Multiple regression results revealed that with regard to most response variables, which were indicative of citizens’ attitudes, such as: evaluation of citizen’s country benefits from EU membership; image that the EU conjured up for citizens; positive and negative personal meaning of the EU for citizens; citizens’ trust in EU institutions; knowledge of EU polity, and evaluation of a common EU polity and future enlargement - QE9 (i.e. likeliness of citizens to make use of the EU Citizens’ Initiative) was the strongest predictor and QE11 (i.e. citizens’ current participation in social and political organizations) was the weakest predictor, as the other two predictors were most often found in the middle. There were only few exceptions: 1. The number of spheres, in which citizens would make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative was a slightly better predictor (in comparison with the likeliness to make use of the Initiative) of citizens’ evaluation of their country’s benefits from EU membership, of the number of issues (spheres) that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future and also of the number of areas, mentioned by citizens, where decisions should be made by the national government or jointly with the EU. Of course, it should be stressed that as mentioned in the detailed presentation of results above, none of these 4 predictors was quite strong, as their predictive power with regard to citizens’ attitudes could be described as “weak-to-medium”.

The regression analysis showed citizens’ social/political participation, i.e. current citizens’ participation in social and political organizations turned to be the weakest predictors of citizens’ knowledge and attitudes towards the EU, its polity, policies, institutions, etc.; in comparison with the other three variables, included in the analysis /See Tables 2, 3 and 4/. Obviously, EU citizens’ involvement practices at this stage of social and economic crisis, relocation of large masses of people because of either financial recession or increased mobility across towns, villages and countries, bring about inefficiency of both participation in political events and membership in different organizations, incl. parties. It is
necessary to enhance the discourse between the EC and the European civil society as political sensitivity to individuals, Europeans should be increased. This is a real challenge and also suggests that a way should be sought toward innovative rationalization of citizens’ associations and NGOs, toward new and explicit articulation of citizens’ participation in public spheres and spaces, particularly in the EPS. An expression of a more immediate communication and interactions with citizens is, for example, strengthening the EP role, since an amendment in the Lisbon Treaty has provided that the EP should include “representatives of the Union’s citizens” instead of “representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community” /Report from the Commission, p. 3/.

It is worth noting a component which concerns the statistical expression of the results but it is also significant for their interpretation - the relatively low coefficients in the regressive analyses can be interpreted as a reflection of the serious lack of homogeneity of the sample for 15 European countries and Turkey, as well as the role of the data collected on an individual level. However, interpreted in the perspective of their representative character in regard to the EU countries and despite the difference in the social-economical and cultural context of the studied variables, the complex variables and the determined significant interrelations between activeness, behaviour and attitudes toward the EU politics for such a wide contingent prove the real existence of social-psyche community among the citizens of Europe. In other words, they actually share common values, goals and interests regardless the whole variety of ethnic groups, nations and more. These results support Sicakkan’s idea, that diverse “ references of identification coexist in persons’ minds and lives without creating contradictions or dilemmas for the individual.” /Sicakkan, 2008, p.10/

**National and European Identity Vision as a Determinant of Citizens’ Attitudes Towards the EU**

Univariate analysis of variance results showed that the variable QE1, i.e. how respondents would identify themselves in the near future and whether their national or European identity would prevail, had a significant influence on citizens’ evaluation of whether their country benefited or not from EU membership (F=630.15; \( p=.00 \)). Post hoc test results revealed that significant differences were observed among almost all levels of identity (national only, national and European, European and national, European only, and none/refusal/DK) with regard to evaluation of whether countries benefited or not benefited from EU membership. Obviously, citizens, who considered themselves more Europeans than nationals were most likely to consider the benefits of EU membership, followed by those, who considered themselves more nationals than Europeans, then by those with only European identity. Citizens envisaging themselves as having only national identity in the near future and those who were confused about their future identity or did not like to answer this question were least likely to evaluate as beneficial the EU membership of their country.

Similar differences were ascertained with regard to the influence of citizens’ vision of their own identity on citizens’ evaluation of EU membership benefits to their country (F=115.30; \( p=.00 \)). Here, significant differences were found among groups of citizens at all levels of identification, but those at European/national and national/European level appeared to assign comparatively more benefits to EU membership in comparison with the other citizen groups. Interestingly so, those who did not like to identify themselves with any of these options or who did not want to answer the question followed those with vision of predominant European or national identity with regard to evaluation of EU membership benefits. Least benefits from EU membership were assigned by those who were envisaging themselves as only Europeans and only nationals as last. It seems that one-dimensional identification, even as “only Europeans”, is related to a narrower representation of the possible benefits from EU integration. And if we are to speculate, this representation is likely to replace the other “narrow”, i.e. “only national” identification. In other words, such
individuals are not likely to exceed the national limits, as they represent a simple replacement of a one-dimensional identification with another one. A similar phenomenon was registered in the first years after the EU accession of East European countries as their citizens accessed the right of free movement within the EU identifying themselves only by their personal identity cards, before their awareness of the need of EU citizenship has even been raised.

The fact that citizens with predominant national identity considered more negative than positive changes enhanced by the EU came to support that they were likely to identify themselves as partially Europeans by necessity, but not by belief. On the contrary, people, who perceived themselves as Europeans, rather than nationals, assigned fewer disadvantages to EU integration. The same applied to и при конкретно самоопределени се в една посока или хората от другата крайност, maybe people who considered themselves transnationals or citizens who chose neither European nor national identity. They were not characterized by inner ambivalence and tension upon identification and those respondents who refused to answer this question seemed likely to undergo a process of adaptation to the changes in the EU, incl. personal mobility opportunities. It is also possible that ethnic or other identity types have dominated or replaced the abovementioned identity types under particular living conditions, which, of course, can not be ascertained in this article.

With regard to either positive or negative personal meaning of the EU for citizens significant differences were also found among almost all groups according their European-to-national level of identification (respectively F=306.80; p=.00; F=347.00; p=.00). Citizens who saw themselves as Europeans/nationals and those who were not aware of their future identity or were not interested in this question were most likely to attribute positive meaning to the EU in terms of peace, economic prosperity, democracy, social protection, freedom to travel, cultural diversity. They were followed by those citizens who saw themselves as Europeans only or as nationals/Europeans and last came those envisaging their identity as national only, since they were least likely to attribute positive meaning to the EU. Those who saw their identity as national in the near future were most likely to represent EU in negative terms such as unemployment, bureaucracy, waste of money, loss of our cultural identity, more crime, not enough control at external borders. Next came those citizens who identified themselves as Europeans, then those with multiple identities – national/European and European/national and last with regard to attribution of negative meaning to the EU came those who were not aware of their future identity or were not interested in this question.

In summary, the results above suggested that citizens who identified themselves as nationals only were most likely to attribute negative meaning to the EU, followed by “Europeans only”. Those who were not aware of their future identity, who had another identity vision or who were not interested in this question were most likely to assign positive meaning to the EU. And citizens with mixed EU/national identity vision were more likely to assign positive meaning to the EU in comparison with citizens with mixed national/EU identity vision, still they attribute similar negative meaning. In addition to the previous results concerning EU membership benefits, single identity vision (either national or European) is related to more negative meaning and evaluation of the EU, while mixed or other/unknown identity vision is related to more tolerant and positive attitudes toward the EU.

With concern to trust in EU institutions (F=518.28; p=.00) significant differences among almost all groups of future identity vision were found as well. In support of the results above, those citizens who envisaged themselves by either mixed EU/national or national/EU identity were most likely to trust EU institutions, followed by those with European identity only. And those who saw their identity as only national in the near future were least likely to trust EU institutions.
Significant differences regarding the evaluation of a common EU polity (F=505.26; \( p=.00 \)) were also observed among all groups. Those with multiple EU/national identity vision were most positive about common EU economic and foreign policies and about further EU enlargement, followed by those with national/European or only European identity. Again, those who saw their future identity as only national were least likely to evaluate positively the common EU policies. An indepth data analysis revealed relevance of all important clauses in the Lisbon Treaty concerning citizenship and its grounds, still certain and strengthened practical measures are necessary in order to involve more citizens as per Article 9 of the Treaty:

**In all its activities, the Union shall observe the principle of the equality of its citizens, who shall receive equal attention from its institutions, bodies, offices and agencies. Every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship.**

In fact, implementation of various programs and projects, joining the efforts of numerous representatives from different European countries to a great extent contribute to a more immediate identification with others, co-Europeans. Of course, increased mobility also plays a crucial role in this respect, as it is related to certain joint activities, meetings of representatives from different nationalities and ethnoses.

**Influence of Citizens’ Nationality and Political Affiliation on Attitudes towards the EU**

General univariate analysis of variance results showed that citizens’ country (nationality) significantly influenced their attitudes towards the EU, its institutions, polity, policies, etc. Our comparative analyses encompassed 15 countries, as follows: Belgium, Denmark, Germany West, Germany East, Spain, Finland, Italy, France, Netherlands, Austria, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey.\(^{95}\) Significant differences among some of these countries were ascertained with regard to all dependent variables, measuring these attitudes, as follows: evaluation of whether and how much a citizen’s country benefited or not benefited from EU membership (respectively with F=35.46; \( p=.00 \) and F=37.36; \( p=.00 \)), image that the EU conjured up for citizens (F=88.73; \( p=.00 \)), positive and negative personal meaning of the EU for citizens (respectively F=81.02; \( p=.00 \) and F=236.88; \( p=.00 \)), citizens’ trust in EU institutions (F=60.54; \( p=.00 \)), evaluation of a common economic, monetary and foreign EU policies, and of a future EU enlargement (F=142.71; \( p=.00 \)), number of issues (spheres) that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming years in order to strengthen the EU in the future (F=415.64; \( p=.00 \)), likeliness of citizens to make use of the European Citizens’ Initiative and the fields in which they would make use of it (F=60.36; \( p=.00 \)). As long as the differences among the 15 countries were very interesting, still quite numerous, the results of the post hoc tests will be described in details and summarized in another article.

Furthermore, we analyzed the influence of citizens’ political affiliation on their attitudes towards the EU, its institutions, polity, policies, etc. Below we summarize only post hoc test results for citizens’ political affiliation (the original 10-point scale, recoded as left-center-right). With regard to trust in EU institutions significant differences were found between those with centric political orientation and the other two groups (left and right wing affiliations) (F=4.15; \( p=.00 \)). Citizens with left and right wing affiliations had similar trust in EU institutions and their trust was slightly lower in comparison with citizens with centric political placement. Furthermore, citizens’ political affiliation seemed to influence the number of issues (spheres) that should be emphasized by the EU institutions in the coming
years in order to strengthen the EU in the future (F=4.22; p=.00). Citizens with left wing orientation indicated slightly more spheres, which should be prioritized by the EU institutions in the near future in order to strengthen the EU, followed by those with centric political affiliation. And smallest number of priority issues was pointed out by citizens with right wing affiliations, i.e. they were either less interested in the future strengthening of the EU or thought that less spheres should be addressed in order to strengthen the EU.

Interestingly so, political affiliation appeared not to be a significant determinant of the rest studied variables. Furthermore, we explored which was the stronger determinant of citizens' attitudes - nationality or political orientation (left-center-right) and whether the influence of any of the two factors was independent or dependent on the influence of the other factor. Taking into consideration the results above and carrying out additional analyses for each dependent variable studied, generally, nationality turned to be a much stronger determinant of attitudes towards the EU than political affiliation. Besides, we found that in most cases these two factors were interrelated and their influence was not independent from one another, i.e. the influence of any of them could not be entirely isolated from the influence of the other one and was dependent on the their interrelation, which although not quite strong, was still significant.

And hence, citizens’ nationality and political affiliation in terms of left-center-right are interrelated factors and exercise significant and more often combined influence on citizens’ attitudes towards the EU, its institutions, polity, policies, etc., as citizens’ nationality proved to considerably dominate political affiliation with regard to its determinant capacity. These results have implications for diverse and crucial effects and for actual consequences concerning EU citizens’ attitudes.

**Conclusion**

Our research scrutinizes the mass level of the influence that civic engagement and the participation in different actions and initiatives exerts on the attitudes and their more or less positive dimension in 15 European countries and Turkey. Another subject of study is the attitudes toward the EU and its policies. The most spread perceptions of EU were presented, containing an evaluation and a disposition toward their meaning for the citizen. We analyzed the attitudes in their cognitive and behavioural aspects (the affective side of the problem is much more rarely mentioned because the data of the variables focused on are not sufficient for this attitude aspect). Through activeness, the willingness to participate in different initiatives shape an important presupposition for the formation of a European public sphere, with no regard of the specific form, obviously still disputable. (See the idea of diversity perspective of EPS, Sicakkan, 2008).

It has been proved that the identity citizens claim has a decisive significance for the characteristics of the attitudes toward the EU politics but it is not one-dimensional or unidirectional which often lies in the considerations of a good number of authors - namely that if there is no collective identity and since the national one is still clear and strong, a formation of an EPS is not to be expected. In this case the data show that in this brand new study (2010) a wide variety of identities are formed and present in a combination of national and European, certain individuals reflecting significantly more the European identity, while other demonstrate a symbiosis of national and European identity; a third category shows no dominant traits and no clear and concrete identity could be outlined but this does not affect their possibility to develop positive attitudes toward the EU politics.

An important finding of the analysis is that the willingness to involve and utilize the EU civic initiative in certain fields and to optimize the integration processes in the Union is a clear indicator that the communicative channels between citizenship and the Commission function regardless the difficulties and the delays. It is also indicative for the EPS in a process of constitution and the relations between citizens and public sphere.
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The Contested European Public Sphere

Hakan G. Sicakkan

This volume is a large-scale systematic empirical comparative study that takes issue with the question of under which conditions a public sphere is possible in contexts of deep diversities and transnational politics—with a simultaneous focus on the “Europeanization of national media”, “the significant institutional actors (of different types) participating in public debates”, “citizens”, and “the EU”. The most recent books that address similar themes are:


The first work in the list above, edited by Gripsrud et al, is a useful four-volume collection of the 99 pieces of modern-classical and contemporary work on public sphere. Our project is different from Gripsrud et al’s four volumes because our comparative focus is based on self-collected, original data from sixteen systematically selected European countries.

On the other hand, the book edited by Koopmans & Statham contains original comparative empirical work, like ours, that contains media content and claims analysis from seven EU-member countries and action repertoires of four different actor types (“state actors, “political parties”, “interest groups”, and “SMOs”). However, our data and approach differs from Koopmans & Statham’s work. Our selection of institutional actors is systematically based on a theory of public sphere – which means that we used the criterion of “visibility in the public sphere” when selecting the organizations to be interviewed and the media channels to be content and discourse-analyzed. We also intentionally did not use the criterion of “resonance” – which requires selecting only the participants of public debate who receive a response from other debate participants. Therefore, we have the most visible participants in public debates, including also those whose opinions and statements are systematically marginalized in the public sphere. Therefore, in contrast to the above-listed works, we are also able to document inclusion and exclusion in the European public sphere.

The book authored by Risse gives a comprehensive account of the role of transnational identities and transnational communication in the emergence of European public spheres. Risse uses the terms “Europeanization” and “transnationalization” interchangeably at times (e.g. “European identity” and “transnational identity”; “Europeanization of media” and “transnational communication” – mean occasionally the same things). While this is a legitimate stance in general, our approach distinguishes between these notions, with the consequence that we include also “the non-Europeanized” in our conception of “the transnational”. This allows us for example to include in our analysis both pro-EU and anti-EU actors and both civil society and uncivil society (e.g., racist and religious fundamentalist organizations) as long as they are visible actors in public debates.

The last book in the above-list, authored by Splichal, provides an innovative perspective on the public sphere – offering a revised conceptualization of “public sphere” in the light of the new socio-political, economic and technological changes, also taking account of results from the most recent empirical work. While providing a transnationalism perspective as Splichal does, we take this perspective further in order to see what it adds to the notion of diversity in
the public sphere. While the recent work on public sphere conceptualizes the phenomenon in terms of transnational political processes and at the same time searches for some sort of commonality, we try to understand the European public sphere in terms of transnational politics, diversity, and the political system of the EU.

A focus on transnational public sphere and the interconnectedness between its sub-spaces and participants is important for several reasons:

Normatively, from a democracy point of view, a transnational public sphere with a transnational public, which is conscious of its role of overseeing the actions of the supranational policymakers, is desirable in Europe due to the increasing powers of the European Union (EU). Theorists of democracy on the neo-functionalist and cosmopolitan flanks call for a transnational European public which can assume the task of holding the supranational power-holders accountable (cf. Erik森 2005). On the other hand, the intergovernmentalist and communitarian wings do not entirely recognize the need for a transnational public sphere in Europe as their proponents view supranational policymaking as primarily a result of collective decision-making by democratically elected, legitimate representatives of the citizens of the EU-member states.

Theoretically, identity (Risse 2010), universal values like democracy and human rights, economic interdependency and common market, common interests in international politics, and common law and political institutions, among other things, have been highlighted as factors that can energize the growth of a transnational public and a European public sphere in Europe. In this debate, the intergovernmentalist and neo-functionalist camps have focused on, respectively, what divides and what brings Europeans together.

Empirically, in the current decade, research has gone beyond the question of whether a European public sphere exists. Empirical focus has been on Europeanization of national media due to the assumption that, with its public outreach, accessibility, and openness, the media sphere is the best empirical equivalent of the concept of public sphere (Habermas 1974). Media research that offers a structural approach has used (1) media's attention to “European themes” (e.g., Gerhards 2000, Trenz 2003), (2) the degree of reporting the same events at the same time (e.g., Eder and Kantner 2000), (3) whether news are reported with a “European framing” or “similar framing” (Peters et al 2005), (4) visibility and resonance beyond national borders (Eder and Kantner 2000, Eder and Trenz 2003, Koopmans 2004, Olesen 2005), (5) legitimacy of foreign speakers in national public spheres (Risse and Van de Steeg 2003). This line of research has documented that media’s attention to Europe-related themes is gradually increasing. Media research that deploys “common/similar discourses” or “common/similar meaning frames” as an indicator of the European public sphere reports either a “halting” process of Europeanization (Peters et al 2005) or contradictory findings because the degree of transnational similarity in discourses and meaning frames varies with respect to the “policy fields one studies” (Koopmans and Erbe 2004, 114).

Every step forward in the conceptualization of the EPS increased our knowledge of the commonalities and differences among the national media in Europe. However, considering the media is not a channel that only mirrors reality, but also forms it in different ways, there is no guarantee that the commonalities found in media research is the artwork of a European public. Except few outstanding examples (e.g., Koopmans 2004, 2007, Splichal 2012), the media research on the EPS has not given us a solid idea about whether a European public exists and how it is structured and interconnected. This is because we have hitherto tried to understand the public sphere by looking at it “directly” through its appearance mirrored by the media and, at the same time ignored its preordained component: the public.

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96 According to Olesen (2005), "Visibility refers to the degree to which frames are heard and seen in the public sphere", and "Resonance refers to the degree to which frames elicit a response from interested parties; for example likeminded activists and social movements, media, politicians and the targets of claims (for example states and institutions)."
Eurosphere attempted to close this gap by focusing simultaneously on the media (weak) public sphere, strong public spheres (the numeric and corporate-plural channels), and the key actors participating in them. Beyond the results of the articles included in this volume, this concluding article reflects also the broader focus adopted by the Eurosphere project.

Conceptually, the EPS and the European public have been imagined in various ways by scholars. On the one hand, those who sought to find in Europe the classical Habermasian model of a public sphere (in spite of Habermas’ repeated warnings against doing so), as a single space shared by a unified, critical European public, were quick to realize that they were looking in vain. On the other hand, those who viewed the EPS and the European public as overlapping public spheres and multiple publics (cf. Schlesinger 1999) are still working to map out the areas of overlap.

A European public is difficult to imagine in isolation from national publics just as national public spheres cannot be imagined without the subaltern and sub-national public spaces that constitute them (Sicakkan 2006). Nor can the EPS be imagined in isolation from the polycentric and multi-level European power structures—some researchers have observed that the EPS might be following the multi-level governance (MLG) system of the EU (cf. Bernhard et al 2005; Koopmans and Erbe 2004). Indeed, our empirical material clearly supports the thesis that the EPS should be conceptualized as a sphere that consists of several different types of public spaces that co-exist at different levels, where the transnational European (trans-European) public sphere is only one of the constituent public spaces. The same holds true also for the conceptualization of a European public: a trans-European public is only one of the multiple types of public that constitute the European public. Note that I am not deploying “European”, “transnational”, and “trans-European” interchangeably. The condition for imagining this complex set of public spaces and publics as components of the EPS is that they constitute a cleavage system of discourses and alliances that compete with each other. The sixteen chapters of this book assessed the roles of different kinds of actors in this common European system of discourse cleavages and actor alliances—across borders and governance levels.

Thus, the EPS has come into being with the emergence of a trans-Europeanizing public space and a trans-European public that stretches over different levels of the EU political and social systems and co-exists, interacts and contests with the other current public space types. The key empirical question at this juncture is “how do the multiple public spaces and publics form the EPS in interaction with each other?”

**European Publics and Public Spaces in Conflict and Contestation**

Historically, different types of communicative public spaces have emerged in Europe. Throughout processes of state formation and nation building, the notion of public sphere evolved from being the legitimizing aspect of states’ sovereignty and political organization to serving as a tool of collective identity promotion, which led to a conception of public sphere as both a reference and a space of belonging. To the already existing ethnic and religious essentializing spaces, these processes added the national spaces of interaction. National spaces of interaction comprise mass political parties, political and economic interest organizations, nation-wide media, and elites. However, the national spaces have not necessarily expressed the existing diversities within societies, something which resulted in the survival of the essentializing spaces as well as provoking the emergences of new sub-national public spaces.

These essentializing public spaces created their own modes of meaning, interaction, and participation both within and beyond the frames of the nation states. Essentializing spaces are those spaces that accommodate singular forms of ethnic, religious or diasporic belongings; they are organized in ethnic and religious political parties, organizations, and ethnically and religiously oriented media as well as elite and expert forums.
Thus, in order of their appearance in European history, the major types of public spaces that currently co-exist are (1) essentializing ethnic, religious, or national spaces, (2) nationalizing public spaces of the modern nation states, (3) trans-Europeanizing public spaces, and (4) globalizing / transnationalizing public spaces, which correspond, respectively to, ethnic and religious publics, national publics, trans-European publics, and transnational / global publics (cf. Sicakkan 2006). Through European integration, each of these public space types has found its expression and representation at different levels.

The forms of belonging reaching beyond the boundaries of nation states and beyond essentializing spaces led to emergence of new public spaces—transnationalizing spaces. Transnational spaces accommodate cross-border political belongings based on common values that challenge the boundaries of national and essentializing spaces. They represent cross-border social political organizations that exclude singular ethnic, religious, national, and diasporic modes of belonging. The transnational space is, thus, different from various versions of “transnational politics” where national references of meaning persist and constitute the basis for political action. Transnational spaces are also different from diasporic spaces that relate to physically de-territorialized singular belongings. They are about people—and their actions and interactions—which are also psychically de-territorialized. The transnational space comprises transnational organizations and associations with non-spatial expressions and de-essentializing symbolisms. This symbolism relates to misalignments between transnational spaces and other types of spaces, including also national and European public spheres. Transnational spaces of interaction accommodate people who relate themselves to multiple references of identification. The transnational spaces find their concrete expressions in trans-border organizations and networks as well as corporative organizations that function as channels of communication with national elites and governments as well as with the EU-institutions.

Conceptualized as a gradually growing process of merging of markets and politics within and beyond the boundaries of nation states, globalization has further affected national states’ normative, instrumental, and symbolic influences on public sphere formation. The concept of glocalization has in our terminology come to mean the processes of mirroring, protrusion, and appearance of the new ethics, symbols, loyalties, and references of meaning created in globalization, beyond the nation state’s frames, and in concrete ‘places’ located within nation state territories. The glocal space is thus the facade of globalization in our concrete localities. The proliferation of alternative references of identification through globalization has added new, alternative belonging modes and citizenship practices to persons’ lives. These stretch beyond nationality, ethnicity, religion, nation, minorities, majorities, and territorial belongings. The distinguishing characteristic of the new forms of belonging and new practices of citizenship is the mobility of subjects’ minds and bodies between different references of identification. Coupled with the conventional politics’ insufficient capacity to respond to citizens’ and residents’ interests emanating from these new modes of belonging, the consequence of this proliferation to politics is the emergence of glocal spaces. Glocal spaces accommodate essentializing belongings, national modes of belonging, transnational modes of belonging, and belongings inspired and informed by the idea of a diverse society. Glocal spaces entail a variety of local incipient forms of all-inclusive organizations.

To these, we can add the trans-European spaces which are in formation as a consequence of the processes of European integration. Trans-European spaces are quite similar to glocal spaces in terms of facilitating diversity and equality of belongings. As we found in our previous EU-funded project (Glocalmig), people with glocal and European belongings see the European Union as a better political entity than the nation state “because it gradually eradicates the existing national boundaries in Europe”. However, whereas people with European belongings stop reasoning at this point, persons with glocal belongings continue: “The European Union is another political entity that divides humanity with new boundaries.
like nation states did. Yet the European Union is better because now the borders are broader than before”. This adds a new distinction to our analytical categories, namely the distinction between “the global subject” and “the euro-subject” accommodated in, respectively, “glocal spaces” and “trans-European spaces”.

In order of chronological appearance in political history, the first type of public space is that of essentializing spaces. Essentializing spaces are at present observed in some of European states’ religious and ethnic minorities which view their own other identities as unalterable and fixed for all times. In Europe, they have formed their own spaces of interaction, meaning, and channels of participation in politics and in the society at large. The second type comprises the nationalizing spaces, which were created by the nation states. The national space entails state building peoples and minorities that have been assimilated into the national mode of belonging. Also national public spaces may appear with an essentializing belonging-content, and historically this has happened in states with a high degree of ethnic homogeneity. The third type is the transnationalizing spaces, which exclude essentializing and territorialized forms of belonging. The interactions in transnational spaces are cross-border, organized in transnational organizations, and aimed at bypassing the existing political and territorial boundaries between humans. The fourth type of public space is glocal spaces, where all the above-mentioned modes of belonging and participation forms coexist. The fifth type is the emerging trans-European spaces, which comprise belongings situated in local contexts that are characterized by a high degree of identification with Europe either instead of or in addition to the aforementioned references of identification. Glocal spaces and trans-European spaces constitute an alternative to the traditional notions of communicative public space, and they may be seen as prototypes of the diverse societies of the future. They both are inclusive of essentializing, national, transnational, glocal and European modes of belonging. Glocal spaces are localized in local incipient organizations throughout Europe (Sicakkan 2004b) whereas trans-European spaces are manifested in Europe-oriented political parties, organizations, social movements, and incipient organizations.

The reality is that these public spaces co-exist, and emerging public spaces do not necessarily replace the currently existing ones. When operationalized in terms of their social order discourses and networks, as the articles in this volume show, both the publics and public spaces in Europe reach beyond their own boundaries in different ways to constitute a cleavage system of discourses and alliances in Europe, in competition with each other so as to dominate the general public sphere of Europe. It is the identification of such a cleavage system of competing discourses and actor alliances at the European level that allows us to assert that, with the emergence of a trans-European public sphere of elites and citizens, and its encounters of conflict and contestation with other public spaces and publics, a European public sphere has emerged.

The European public sphere is radically different from the national public sphere: In contrast to the national public sphere, it is level-wise and territorially more clearly polycentric; it is not as expansive; it does not aim to dominate all publics of Europe; its participants—the trans-European publics—largely conceive themselves as of equal value in relation to other publics; but it has serious problems with inclusiveness. This book, taken as a whole, explored the role of the EU policies in the puzzle that Europe’s latest public space component—the trans-European space—has brought about.
Summarizing the Common Analysis Frame behind the Chapters

As illustrated in the above figure (Frame for Analysis of Emerging European Public Spheres), the European public is inhabited by:

- a set of historically-developed and already existing communicative public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- a set of trans-European networks of organizations (party federations, networks of nongovernmental and social movement organizations, networks of think tanks)
- a set of national and sub-national level social and political actors (political parties, SMOs/NGOs, think tanks, media actors) that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations
- individual citizens that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations

For purposes of empirical research, the European public sphere can be conceptualized in four different ways:
(1) as a set of already existing communicative / discursive public spaces that are increasingly more interconnected and overlapping with each other (horizontal and vertical interconnectedness between sub-national, national and transnational communicative public spaces)

(2) as a separate, emerging trans-European communicative / discursive space that comes in addition to, and that complements and/or competes with, the historically developed existing communicative public spaces

(3) as a set of collective social and political actors (organizations) that are increasingly more interlinked and that collaborate with each other beyond the existing national boundaries

(4) as a separate set of social and political actors that create European-level networks that come in addition to, and that compete with, the already existing trans-European networks

In the current chaotic picture of citizens, organizations, communicative public spaces, and political institutions that interact, interconnect, and interlink with each other, social and political actors are facilitating or inhibiting the emergence of an inclusive European Public Sphere in different ways. In Eurosphere, citizens and organizations’ roles in and contributions to the formation of a European public sphere are understood in terms of:

- the inter-linkages, inter-connectedness, and overlaps that they create or deter between the existing Europeanized and non-Europeanized communicative/discursive public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, trans-Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- the new trans-European communicative / discursive spaces that they create or participate in or work against
- the vertical and horizontal trans-European networks of organizations that they create or participate in or work against
- the discourses about the European polity, diversity (including exclusion and inclusion, citizenship, minorities, mobility, migration, asylum, gender, etc), and the European public sphere that they bring into these networks and interconnected spaces

Indeed, the articles in this volume show that all the above processes of inter-connections, inter-linkages, and overlaps between communicative spaces and networks of organizations as well as a variety of discourses about Europe, the EU polity, and diversity are in place in today’s Europe. In other words, interconnectedness of existing communicative public spaces and inter-linkages between organizations (collective actors) beyond a variety of borders and boundaries constitute each other. It is the social and political actors’ transcendence and transgressing of boundaries that create interconnectedness between Europe’s communicative public spaces. On the other hand, it is the different degrees of openness/closure of the existing communicative public spaces that facilitate or obstruct such transcendence and transgression. Hence, to understand the European Public Sphere, interconnectedness of spaces and networks of organizations were analyzed in one common research frame.

In this connection, one research challenge is to assess whether these can be viewed as parts and parcels of a European public sphere in the making. If so, how are these processes structuring the European Public Sphere? Which types of inclusions and exclusions a resultant public sphere form and the dominant discourses in it may result in? Most important of all, which notions of European public sphere are more democratic and inclusive than others?
The Role of EU Policies in Creating a European Public Sphere

As stated in the beginning of this conclusive chapter, following the historical trajectory of its member states, the EU has been attempting to create the three channels of their European public sphere by creating the numeric, corporate-plural and media channels of voice, participation, critique, and influence. In order to do so, the EU has also been attempting to create the key components of a European public sphere: (1) a central political power through supranationalization in increasingly more policy areas, (2) direct election of the members of the European Parliament and the formation of the trans-European party groups in the European Parliament, (3) a trans-European network of civil society that is supposed to link the European citizenry with the European Commission, European parliament, and with other bodies of the EU, and (4) through standardization of the European national media systems and establishment of trans-European print and broadcast media. Before discussing our findings concerning the latter three dimensions, it is important to underline that the European Union is historically unique in its eagerness to willingly subject itself to citizen critique, control, and opposition by developing the institutions and channels for this on its own initiative, and not as a result of overwhelming pressure from below.

The European Media, EU policies, and the General European Public Sphere

Earlier research conducted within Eurosphere (cf. Zografova and Bakolova 2011) suggest that the variation in media discourses and media’s interest in reporting different themes are largely explained by national borders and national media regimes. In her contribution to this volume, Monika Mokre asks how the EU’s media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for European public spheres. After giving a brief history of the development of the EU media and communication policy, Mokre concludes that “Hitherto EU media policies have proven successful in reducing national barriers for broadcasting and establishing a single European media market but they did not succeed in providing centralized forms of information distribution and exchange”. Indeed, what happened is that the European media channels that were created as a result of EU initiatives ended up reporting national news in neutral ways: “Euronews can be understood as a particular EPS in itself but its contribution to a more general European public sphere seems doubtful”.

With a point of departure in Eurosphere interviews with national media elites, Mokre points to the fact that this is very much noticed by not only media elites themselves, but also by political and social elites within political parties and civil society organizations. She highlights that especially the elites with more pro-diversity and pro-EU attitudes recognize the necessity of having common European media channels available to all European citizens. Her proposal to bypass this is:

Still, our empirical results have shown a possible way out of this dilemma in transnational exchange of news and attempts of journalists to include a European dimension in media coverage. Maybe, one could speak here of a hidden form of EPS – the audience is addressed as a national audience but shares similar themes and outlooks with other national audiences. In the long run, this could certainly lead to the Europeanization of public spheres. However, for the time being, national sentiments and perspectives still seem to prevail in media audiences (Mokre, in this volume).

In brief, the European Union has not yet been able to create what we may call the basic instrument of a general European public sphere. On the other hand, our other media analyses show that there is a visible degree of Europeanization of national media that is going on on certain themes.
The European Civil Society and its Corporate-Plural Channel of Influence

In spite of using different conceptual, theoretical, and methodological approaches, the articles by Kutay, Perez, de Beek & Vermeulen, and Sicakkan in this volume have similar findings concerning the participation of NGOs, minority organizations, and think tanks in the corporate-plural channel of the EU. Taken together, these articles constitute an evaluation of the EU policies aiming to create a European civil society as the foundation of a common European public sphere.

One important finding throughout the above-mentioned chapters is that trans-European networks of civil society have a socializing impact, especially when EU-institutions actively participate in their activities (cf. Kutay’s and Perez’ chapters in this volume). This puts their representation capacity, legitimizing function, and democratizing role into question in the eyes of the national and sub-national level organizations, whose interests they are supposed to “transmit” upwards in the EU policy-making processes. One result is that trans-European networks adapt the values of the EU and often transmit them downwards to their constituencies instead of (and in addition to) carrying the voices from below to the EU-level policymaking processes. As De Beek & Vermulen write in this volume, in the case of the trans-European networks of ethnic and religious minority organizations, the goals of the EU and minority organizations—i.e., protection and development of the rights of minorities—largely coincide. However, as the other articles show, concerning other types of national organizations, there are significant gaps between the goal sets. Choosing to conceive the sponsored trans-European networks of civil society and think tanks as capable representatives of the European civil society, the EU-policy lacks a clear focus on the social and political actors that do not participate in the vertical structures of communication created by the trans-European networks. Thus, another important consequence of EU policies attempting to create a European civil society, is that those civil society organizations that refuse to partake in the vertical trans-European networks (because they view them as not promoting democracy) continue to develop an alternative, critical horizontal trans-European space which is distant from both the EU and the trans-European networks that the EU sponsors.

At the same time, this strategy of the EU seems to have resulted in the creation of a new trans-European public space, with peculiar discourses and vertical alliance patterns, which contests the historically existing essentializing, nationalizing, and trans-nationalizing public spaces. Moreover, as Sicakkan’s article in this volume shows, the same strategy seems also to have partly transformed the historically existing transnational public spaces into critical horizontal trans-European public spaces by putting them in a situation of conflict and contestation with the EU-created vertical trans-European public spaces. This picture tells us that the EU’s goals of legitimacy and democracy cannot be achieved without effectively including the non-sponsored publics in the corporate-plural channel of voice and participation in the EU.

The European Citizenry and its Numeric Channel of Influence

Taken together, the three articles by Sata, Klicperova-Baker & Kostal, and Zografova & Bakolova assess how the EU policies aiming to create a common numeric channel and a European electorate have performed.

In his article in this volume, Sata finds “… that national parties play a role in aggregating preferences on European integration, which in turn play a role in determining voting behavior in the EP. We have seen that the EP party groups are aggregating preferences in the parliamentary arena, and they are very cohesive when it comes to voting. Nevertheless, one should be cautious about the role of the national delegations vis-à-vis the role EP party groups play in determining voting behavior as most national delegations are too small to have any chance influencing the group’s structure and parties themselves depend on their participation within the EP party group (Lord 2006). This might suggest that EP party groups are adequate
substitutes for national parties for representing the European electorate but we argue they are not because the party politics of the EU does not provide much link between European elections and the voting in the EP. The legislative outcomes of the EP can be well aligned with the preferences of the EP party group, but given the great variety of parties EP party groups must accommodate as members, it is very plausible these outcomes will be far away from the preferences of the national parties”.

On the other hand, an earlier study conducted by Klicperova-Baker and Kostal in the framework of Eurosphere suggests that while elites generally manifest more embracing and tolerant attitudes to diversity than the general public, at the same time, they express a heightened awareness of relevant social problems. In their contribution to this volume, they further investigate traces of a European demos and argue that their analysis in this volume “reveals a possible classification of European citizenry based on their various shared values”. Surprisingly, or rather shockingly, they find here that “Almost two thirds (64.3%) of the European general public seem to lean to skeptically non-democratic or anti-democratic mentalities”. Moreover, Klicperova & Kostal also document that this startling general pattern is also mirrored amongst the party sympathizers at national levels. That is, the views of citizens in general are observed in the views of party sympathizers, which, in the Eurosphere research, constitute the link between national parties and citizens. Finding that the democratic values and views required to constitute a national or European demos, are prevalent amongst elites, they conclude that “still, the vertical perspective (social status paradigm) reassures us that the democratic spirit seems to significantly and reliably prevail (or at least hold plurality) among the European elites and hence may have a stronger influence than sheer numbers would suggest”.

Finally, in the last article of this volume, Zografova & Bakalova examine the influence that civic engagement and participation in different EU actions and initiatives has on citizen attitudes. They find that “the willingness to be involved in and utilize the EU civic initiative in certain fields and to optimize the integration processes in the Union is a clear indicator that the communicative channels between citizenship and the Commission function regardless of the difficulties and the delays. It is also indicative for the EPS in a process of constitution and the relations between citizens and public sphere”.

Each of these three articles traces the links between citizens and EU policies within the numeric channel, and each finds clear effects of interacting with the EU within the structures of communication that are provided by the EU.

Conclusion
Our search for the possible links between the citizens and the outcomes of the EU level policymaking showed both weak and strong links. We find the weak links in the relationship between citizens’ interests and EU policies. On their ways from individual citizens, through national and trans-European elites, in both the numeric and corporate-plural channels, the perspectives, views, and preferences are transformed from particularistic, exclusionary, non-democratic, and anti-EU feelings into universalistic, inclusive, and democratic ones.

The strong link is found between the EU policies aiming to transform different kinds of national and sub-national publics into trans-European publics. The citizens and organizations that interact with the EU institutions within the EU-initiated frames of “representation” within both the numeric and corporate-plural channels, increasingly find themselves in a situation where they have to act as messengers of the EU downwards to their constituencies.

These two links—the weak link and the strong link—function in combination with each other as a gatekeeper against the surfacing of particularistic, exclusionary, and non-democratic perspectives in the EU political system. In this sense, although non-democratic as such in its workings and exclusion of non-democratic and anti-peace perspectives, these two links may be conceived as promoting democracy in Europe—a political rule not by the
people, but for the people and against the people. Certainly, from a substantive democracy perspective, what is happening here is also conceived by many as a serious weakening of democracy since many EU-level decisions are made far-away instances from the citizens. In this chapter, I will not explore this enormous normative question.

Taken altogether, the articles in this volume clearly demonstrate that the EU policies have managed to create a vertical trans-European public space linking national constituencies with the EU—a new public space which is in conflict and contestation with the already existing essentializing, nationalizing, and transnationalizing public spaces. The dominant discourse in the trans-European public space is that of democratization, pro-diversity, inclusion, and Europeanization. However, this trans-European public space is constituted by trans-European networks of political parties, civil society organizations, and think tanks and policy research institutes—networks which are themselves quite closed towards other discourses. The reactions against the elitist, hierarchical, and exclusionary nature of this trans-European public space have been a factor in transforming the other types of historical publics and public spaces within Europe into horizontal trans-European publics and public spaces. These horizontal trans-European spaces are not linked with the EU political institutions, and their discourses vary from being more democratic and more pro-diversity than the EU’s workings to anti-democratic, authoritarian, racist, and exclusionary discourse.

In the beginning of this article, I stated that we can start talking about a European public sphere only when the different already existing public spaces come into a relationship of conflict and contestation with the vertical trans-European public sphere and the EU’s political institutions. Currently, our interview data and analyses of citizen surveys document that this necessary condition is more than just fulfilled.

References


