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Euroskeptizismus in Politik und Medien

Eine international vergleichende Analyse der Parteienkommunikation und Medienberichterstattung im Vorfeld der Europawahl 2014

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die vorliegende Dissertation beschäftigt sich mit euroskeptischen Äußerungen in der Parteienkommunikation und der Medienberichterstattung im Vorfeld der Europawahl 2014. Die Arbeit verwendet ein akteurszentriertes Forschungsdesign, welches eine differenzierte Betrachtung der öffentlichen Debatte europäischer Themen erlaubt. Die Analyse deckt auf, welche nationalen Parteien euroskeptische Positionen vertreten und inwiefern diese Einzug in die mediale Berichterstattung finden. Auch die Positionierung der Medien selbst wird durch die Untersuchung meinungsbezogener Artikel berücksichtigt. Die den Studien zu Grunde liegende Konzeptualisierung des Euroskeptizismus-Begriff umfasst neben globalen und konkreten negativen Bewertungen der EU auch die Zuschreibung von Problemverantwortung als weitere Spielart euroskeptischer Äußerungen. Die Arbeit nimmt weiterhin eine international vergleichende Perspektive ein, um den Einfluss nationaler Kontextfaktoren auf die Verbreitung euroskeptischer Positionen aufzuzeigen.

Die Ergebnisse der Analyse decken zunächst auf, dass das Vorhandensein erstarkender euroskeptischer Oppositionsparteien nicht zwangsläufig zu einer Politisierung der europäischen Debatte führt, da sich die europhilen Mainstream-Parteien verschiedener Strategien zur Vermeidung einer solchen Kontroversen bedienen. Die Analysen ergeben weiterhin, dass europhile Regierungsparteien zwar mehrheitlich vor konkreten negativen Bewertungen der EU zurückschrecken, diese aber in Bezug auf die europäische Finanzkrise vorwiegend als Verursacher von Problemlagen skizzieren. Letztlich verdeutlichen die Ergebnisse, dass die mediale Berichterstattung zu Themen mit EU-Bezug eine starke Synchronizität zwischen Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil aufzeigt. Dies gilt sowohl in Bezug auf die geäußerten Bewertungen zur Europäischen Union als auch hinsichtlich der Darstellung von Verantwortlichkeit.

1 EINLEITUNG

Die Europäische Union befindet sich in der Krise: Auf die Probe gestellt von der europäischen Finanz- und Migrationskrise, werden zunehmend kritische Stimmen zum Projekt der europäischen Vergemeinschaftung laut. Euroskeptische Positionen sind auf dem ganzen Kontinent im Vormarsch und haben im Brexit-Votum ihren bislang deutlichsten Ausdruck gefunden (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2018)¹.

Die zunehmend kritische Auseinandersetzung mit Brüssel wurde angeheizt durch die europäischen Interventionen während der europäischen Finanzkrise, die bis heute deutliche Spuren auf dem Kontinent hinterlassen haben (Wallaschek, 2019). Fünf Mitgliedsstaaten der EU konnten nur durch bail-out Verfahren vor der staatlichen Zahlungsunfähigkeit gerettet werden. Diese Nehmerländer mussten im Gegenzug strikte Auflagen aus Austeritätsprogrammen erfüllen, deren Einhaltung die Troika aus Europäischer Zentralbank, Europäischer Kommission und Internationalem Währungsfonds überwachte (Ioannou, Leblond & Niemann, 2015). Die Kürzung der öffentlichen Ausgaben im Rahmen der auferlegten Sparpolitik in den von hoher Arbeitslosigkeit geplagten Ländern, entfachte gesellschaftlichen und politischen Widerstand (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2014). Die Geberländer, die nicht direkt von der europäischen Finanzkrise betroffen waren, sicherten die europäischen Rettungsschirme und Stabilitätsmechanismen mit nationalen Steuergeldern ab. Auch diese Transferzahlungen sorgten unter den Bürgern für Skepsis gegenüber der EU. Zusammenfassend lässt sich konstatieren, dass die Europäische Union durch die zunehmende Mitwirkung europäischer Institutionen in der nationalen Wirtschaftspolitik als politischer Akteur für die Bürger Europas sichtbarer und die

¹ Die Literaturangaben zu den Kapiteln der Synopse (Kapitel 1 bis 3 sowie Kapitel 8) befinden sich im Literaturverzeichnis (siehe Kapitel 9). Die Literaturangaben der in dieser Dissertation enthaltenen Zeitschriftenmanuskripte (siehe Kapitel 4 bis 7) befinden sich jeweils am Ende des entsprechenden Manuskripts und folgen den Zitierregeln der verschiedenen Fachzeitschriften.

europäische Integration zum kontrovers diskutierten Thema wurde (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016; Statham & Trenz, 2015).

Der bislang herrschende permissive Konsens (siehe etwa Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2013) – das passive Einverständnis der europäischen Bürgerschaft gegenüber der Europäischen Union – brach auf und euroskeptische Positionen befanden sich europaweit im Aufschwung (Spoon & Williams, 2017). Vorrangig Oppositionsparteien am rechten oder linken Ende des Parteienspektrums (zur Verteilung euroskeptischer Positionen im Parteienspektrum siehe Hooghe, Marks & Wilson, 2002; Ray, 2007) nutzten das Momentum der europäischen Finanzkrise, um mit eurokritischen Positionen die Gunst der Wähler zu gewinnen (in Bezug auf links-extreme Parteien siehe Beaudonnet & Gomez, 2016; in Bezug auf linke und rechte euroskeptische Parteien siehe Hobolt & de Vries, 2016). Dies schlug sich auch in den Ergebnissen der Europawahl 2014 nieder, bei der euroskeptische Parteien 113 der 751 Sitze gewinnen konnten. Euroskeptizismus wurde daher auch mit einem Virus verglichen, der sich über den gesamten Kontinent ausbreitet (Torreblanca & Leonard, 2013).

Vorliegende Studien zum Thema Euroskeptizismus widmen sich dem Phänomen vorrangig als Einstellung der europäischen Bürger (Hobolt & Wratil, 2015; Krouwel & Abts, 2007; Lubbers & Scheepers, 2005; Weßels, 2007) oder als Distinktionsmerkmal politischer Parteien (Hooghe et al., 2002; Kopecký & Mudde, 2002; Meijers, 2015; Spoon & Williams, 2017). Die Analyse euroskeptischer Äußerungen im öffentlichen Diskurs – etwa durch Politiker oder in der medialen Berichterstattung – findet vergleichsweise wenig wissenschaftliche Beachtung (siehe de Wilde & Trenz, 2012; Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2018). Dabei zeigt sich die öffentliche Kommunikation zu europäischen Themen als wichtiger Nährboden für euroskeptische Einstellungen: „Eurosepticism results from efforts by political actors to relate European integration to latent public feelings of cultural threat and

economic loss. To understand variation in public opinions on Europe, one must endeavour to explain how Europe is *constructed* in political debate” (Hooghe & Marks, 2007, S. 125, Hervorhebungen im Original). Auch Taggart und Szczerbiak (2008) stellen heraus, dass es nicht ausreicht, lediglich die Position einer Partei gegenüber der Europäischen Union zu ermitteln, sondern dass es ebenso relevant ist zu untersuchen, wie Parteien mit ihren Positionen im politischen Wettstreit umgehen (siehe hierzu auch Helbling, Hoeglinger & Wüest, 2010). Schließlich können nur öffentlich wahrnehmbare Parteienpositionen ihre Wirkung in der gesellschaftlichen Debatte entfalten. Im europäischen Kontext stellt sich etwa die Frage, inwiefern nationale Parteien europäische Themen überhaupt auf die nationale Agenda setzen. Weiterhin ist entscheidend inwiefern sie ihre euroskeptische Sichtweise zu diesen Themen öffentlich äußern. Dies gilt in besonderem Maße, wenn Medien Themen und Positionen aufgreifen und im Rahmen ihrer Veröffentlichung einem breiten Publikum zugänglich machen (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Marcinkowski, 1993).

An diesem Punkt möchte die vorliegende Dissertation ansetzen. Sie beschäftigt sich mit der forschungsleitenden Fragestellung, *wie sich euroskeptische Positionen in der strategischen Parteienkommunikation und der medialen Berichterstattung in verschiedenen europäischen Mitgliedsländern in Zeiten einer transnationalen Krise verbreiten*. Im Rahmen eines innovativen Forschungsdesigns fokussieren sich die in dieser publikationsbasierten Dissertation enthaltenen Manuskripte auf die Äußerungen verschiedener Sprecher² in nationalen Debatten zu europäischen Themen. Die politische Debatte wird dabei nicht auf deren mediale Darstellung verkürzt. Auch die Parteienkommunikation als relevante Arena öffentlicher Meinungsbildung und zentrale Quelle medialer Berichterstattung wird untersucht. Hypothesen zum strategischen Parteienverhalten, die aus einer Verknüpfung theoretischer Ansätze aus der Kommunikations- und Politikwissenschaft abgeleitet wurden,

² Zur Operationalisierung und Identifizierung aktiver Sprecher im Rahmen der Inhaltsanalyse zur Parteienkommunikation und Medienberichterstattung siehe Appendix I.

können so sinnvoll überprüft werden. Auch der aktiven Rolle der Medien wird durch das akteurszentrierte Forschungsdesign Rechnung getragen. Journalisten werden als aktive Sprecher gesehen, die ihre Positionen im Rahmen meinungsbetonter Artikel präsentieren. Die Forschungsarbeiten nehmen eine komparative Perspektive ein, um die begünstigenden Faktoren zur Verbreitung euroskeptischer Äußerungen zu analysieren. Den Studien liegt eine Konzeptualisierung des Euroskeptizismus-Begriffs zu Grunde, die eine Operationalisierung aller Aspekte eines euroskeptischen Framings erlaubt.

Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wird zunächst der grundlegende Begriff des Euroskeptizismus geklärt (siehe Kapitel 2). Nach einer Synopse prominenter bestehender Konzeptualisierungen, wird ein Modell zur Einordnung verschiedener Kategorien euroskeptischer Äußerungen präsentiert (siehe Kapitel 3). Diese Kategorien stellen relevante Bestandteile des Framings europäischer Debatten dar, welches in Kapitel 3.1 beschrieben wird. Kapitel 3.2 setzt ein Schlaglicht auf das Frame-Element der Verantwortungsattribution, da dieses in politischen Mehrebenensystemen wie der Europäischen Union von besonderer Relevanz ist. Im darauffolgenden Abschnitt (siehe Kapitel 3.3) werden die in der Dissertation enthaltenen Studien kurz vorgestellt und deren Beitrag zur Beantwortung der forschungsleitenden Fragestellung aufgezeigt. Die Manuskripte zu diesen Studien werden in den Kapiteln 4 bis 7 präsentiert. Im Rahmen des Fazits (siehe Kapitel 8) werden die Forschungsergebnisse kurz zusammengefasst (siehe Kapitel 8.1). Darüber hinaus wird der Beitrag dieser Dissertation für die Forschung im Fachgebiet der politischen Kommunikation dargestellt (siehe Kapitel 8.2.1), übergeordnete Limitationen transparent gemacht und aufgezeigt welche Impulse für zukünftige Forschungsarbeiten von den hier präsentierten Erkenntnissen ausgehen (siehe Kapitel 8.2.2). Das abschließende Kapitel 8.3 weist auf mögliche Implikationen der Forschungsergebnisse für die Praxis hin.

2 EUROSKEPTIZISMUS

Euroskeptizismus ist ein Sammelbegriff für jede Art von Zweifel oder Kritik an der Europäischen Union oder der Idee der europäischen Integration. (Hooghe & Marks, 2007). In diesem Sinn definiert Taggart (1998, S. 366): „Eurocepticism expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration.“ In dieser Begriffsbestimmung wird deutlich, dass es verschiedene Abstufungen euroskeptischer Haltungen gibt. Taggart und Szczerbiak (2004) differenzieren zwischen hartem und weichem Euroskeptizismus. „‘Hard’ Eurocepticism implies outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration, and opposition to one’s country joining or remaining a member of the EU.“ (S. 3) Softer Euroskeptizismus ist demgegenüber weniger inklusiv und weniger absolut. Softer Euroskeptizismus “may take the form of ‘policy’ Eurocepticism or ‘national-interest’ Eurocepticism, although these often overlap.“ (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2004, S. 4). Er beinhaltet die Kritik an konkreten Maßnahmen, die darauf abzielen die Kompetenzen der supranationalen Ebene zu erweitern sowie die Ablehnung konkreter EU-Vorhaben (Gesetze, Regulierungen, etc.) oder bestimmter europäischer Akteure (etwa konkreter europäischer Kommissare). Diese immer noch grundlegende Definition von Taggart und Szczerbiak (2004) wurde vorrangig wegen der weiten Fassung des Begriffs des weichen Euroskeptizismus kritisiert. In der Folge wurden weitere feinere Kategoriensysteme zur Einordnung euroskeptischer Parteien und zur möglichst präzisen Beschreibung euroskeptischer Einstellungen entwickelt. Relevante Novellierungen sollen im Weiteren kurz skizziert werden, um anschließend eine Konzeptualisierung zur Erfassung euroskeptischer Äußerungen zu entwickeln.

Kopecký und Mudde (2002) konzeptualisieren eine 4-Felder-Tafel zur Einteilung politischer Parteien. Auf der X-Achse unterscheiden sie *Europhile* und *Europhobe* als

Kategorien einer *diffusen* Unterstützung „for the general ideas of European integration, that underlie the EU.“ (Kopecký & Mudde, 2002, S. 300) Auf der Y-Achse wird die *spezifische* Unterstützung der EU abgetragen, welche als „support for the general practice of European integration; that is the EU as it is and as it is developing.“ (Kopecký & Mudde, 2002, S. 300) definiert wird. Hier unterscheiden die Autoren zwischen EU-Optimisten und EU-Pessimisten. Die Unterscheidung zwischen diffusem und spezifischem Support ist der Definition des harten und weichen Euroskeptizismus ähnlich. Die Hinzunahme der positiven Ausprägungen ermöglicht aber eine Merkmalskombination aus Parteien, die die Idee der europäischen Integration an sich ablehnen, aber aus utilitaristischen, pragmatischen Gründen die EU unterstützen. Diese Möglichkeit lässt sich mit der Definition von Taggart und Szczerbiak nicht erfassen. Rovny (2004) wiederum erweitert die Konzeption von Taggart und Szczerbiak um eine motivationale Dimension und unterscheidet zwischen ideologisch und strategisch motiviertem Euroskeptizismus politischer Parteien.

Im Hinblick auf die Einteilung euroskeptischer Einstellungen entwickelten Krouwel und Abts (2007) ein zweidimensionales Framework, das zwischen drei verschiedenen Zielgruppen von Lob bzw. Kritik (europäische Akteure, europäische Institutionen sowie die europäische Gemeinschaft) und fünf verschiedenen Formen politischer (Un-)Zufriedenheit (Vertrauen, Skeptizismus, Misstrauen, Zynismus und Entfremdung) differenziert. Die Kombination dieser Dimensionen ermöglicht eine sehr feingliedrige Einteilung euroskeptischer Einstellungen. Die Autoren selbst wenden die Skala jedoch nicht empirisch an, so dass nicht transparent ist, ob alle möglichen Merkmalskombinationen empirisch vorhanden sind, oder ob es sich um eine überkomplexe Modellierung handelt. Lubbers und Scheepers (2005) unterscheiden nicht zwischen weichem und hartem Euroskeptizismus, sondern zwischen politischem und instrumentellem Euroskeptizismus, wobei ersterer beschreibt, inwiefern Bürger der EU mehr oder weniger politische Regulierungsbefugnisse

in verschiedenen Politikfeldern zuordnen würden und letzterer auf die globale Kosten-Nutzen-Bewertung der EU-Mitgliedschaft abzielt. Diese Unterscheidung gibt wichtige Anhaltspunkte, in welchen Politikfeldern die Bürger einer zunehmenden europäischen Integration kritisch gegenüberstehen. Sie ermöglicht aber keine Beantwortung der Frage, warum sie diese ablehnen. Weßels (2007) fügt der Beschreibung bürgerlicher Einstellungen gegenüber der EU die europäische Identität als Variable hinzu, welche als Puffer gegen Kritik und Unzufriedenheit wirken kann. Dies trifft auch in Bezug auf harten Euroskeptizismus zu, lässt sich aber hinsichtlich einer konkreten Kritik an EU-Akteuren nicht nachweisen.

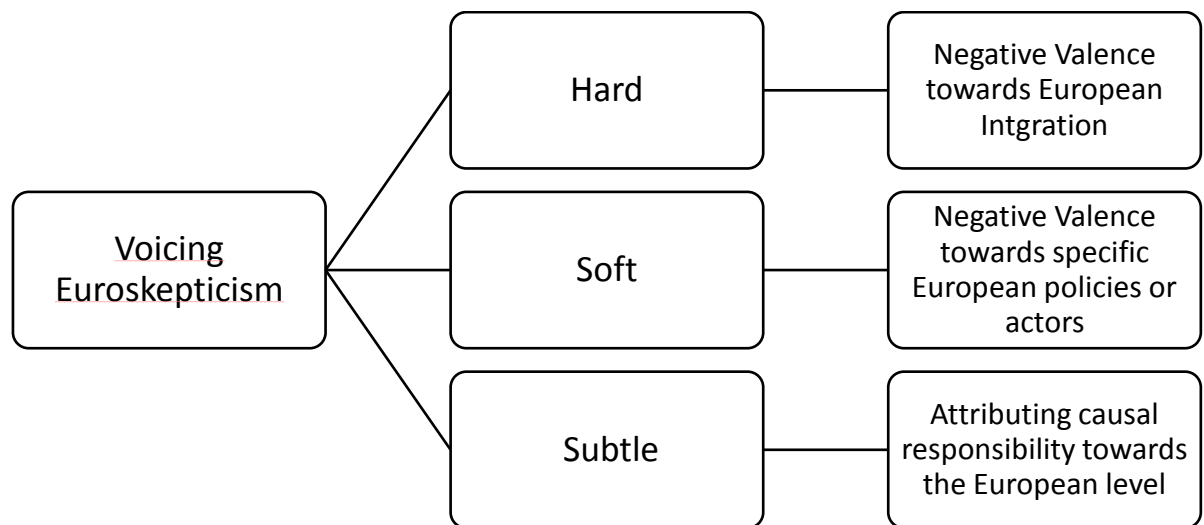
3 EUROSKEPTISCHE ÄUßERUNGEN

Nach der Aufarbeitung relevanter Konzeptionen zur Beschreibung des Begriffs Euroskeptizismus, erweist sich das Modell von Taggart und Szczerbiak als Ausgangsbasis für eine Kategorisierung euroskeptischer Äußerungen am geeignetsten. Schließlich ermöglicht es diese Modellierung, eine Einordnung euroskeptischer Aussagen in konkrete negative Bewertungen europäischer Politiken und Akteure (*softer Euroskeptizismus*) einerseits und in eine Ablehnung respektive negative Bewertung der gesamten Idee der europäischen Integration (*harder Euroskeptizismus*) andererseits vorzunehmen (s. Abbildung 1).³ Aber wie es auch bezüglich der Einteilung bürgerlicher Einstellungen und politischer Parteien Verfeinerungen des ursprünglichen Modells gibt, erscheint es auch hinsichtlich der Klassifizierung euroskeptischer Aussagen sinnvoll, dem bisherigen Modell eine weitere Kategorie hinzuzufügen. Neben den beiden oben genannten Kategorien sollten auch subtile euroskeptische Äußerungen nicht außer Acht gelassen werden (s. Abbildung 1). Dieser

³ Zur Operationalisierung softer und euroskeptischer Äußerungen siehe den entsprechenden Auszug des Codebuchs im Anhang I.

subtile Euroskeptizismus zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass negative Valenzen gegenüber der EU nicht konkret geäußert werden, aber eine eurokritische Sichtweise (*Framing*) politischer Sachverhalte durch strategische Verantwortungszuschreibungen vorangetrieben wird. Dies wäre der Fall, wenn die europäische Ebene in der öffentlichen Debatte EU-bezogener Issues systematisch als Verursacher von Problemen dargestellt wird (*EU-Blaming*).⁴

Abbildung 3-1⁵. Formen euroskeptischer Äußerungen



Quelle: eigene Darstellung

3.1 Euroskeptisches Framing

Das Framing einer Äußerung beschreibt in welcher Art und Weise ein Thema dargestellt wird. So können in Bezug auf die europäische Finanzkrise etwa positive Momente der europäischen Vergemeinschaftung betont werden, oder die EU kann als erbarmungsloser Wächter über zwangsweise auferlegte Sparmaßnahmen beschrieben werden.

⁴ Zur Operationalisierung kausaler Verantwortungszuschreibungen siehe den entsprechenden Auszug des Codebuchs im Anhang II.

⁵ Bei der Nummerierungen der Abbildungen und Tabellen wird die Kapitelnummer vorangestellt, damit im Rahmen der veröffentlichten oder eingereichten Manuskripte die originäre Nummerierung erhalten bleibt.

Deutungsmuster – *Frames* – spielen folglich eine zentrale Rolle im öffentlichen Diskurs politischer Sachverhalte. Schließlich geht es nicht nur darum, *ob* (*agenda setting*), sondern auch *wie* über ein Thema in der Öffentlichkeit gesprochen wird (*agenda* oder *frame building*) (Hänggli, 2012; López-Escobar, Llamas & McCombs, 1998; Scheufele, 1999; Schultz, Kleinnijenhuis, Oegema, Utz & van Atteveldt, 2012). Gemäß der grundlegenden Definition von Entman (1993, S. 52) bedeutet Framing „to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described“. Entman differenziert folglich zwischen vier Elementen eines Frames: (1) einer Problemdefinition, also die Selektion eines gewissen Sachverhalts, (2) einer Ursachenidentifikation, welche darstellt, wer oder was das Problem verursacht hat, (3) einer moralischen Bewertung und (4) einer Lösungsempfehlung, welche beschreibt wer und / oder in welcher Form das Problem gelöst werden sollte. Framing meint folglich eine spezifische Interpretation eines Ereignisses. Hierbei werden bestimmte Aspekte eines Sachverhalts betont und andere vernachlässigt („emphasis framing“, Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016, S. 10), was zu einer Komplexitätsreduktion führt. Außerdem werden Schlüsselattribute, wie die Darstellung von Verantwortlichkeiten und Lösungsoptionen, definiert (Entman, 2007; Hallahan, 1999; Iyengar, 1996). Frames stellen spezifische Realitätskonstruktionen (Matthes, 2012) dar, welche „introduce or raise the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel and decide in a particular way“ (Entman, 2007, S. 164).

Viele Studien haben gezeigt, dass Frames in der medialen Berichterstattung einen Einfluss darauf haben, wie ein Thema und die beteiligten Akteure von den Bürgern wahrgenommen werden (zur Wirkung widersprüchlicher Frames, siehe Chong & Druckman, 2007; für einen Überblick verschiedener Mediatoren und Moderatoren, siehe de

Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko, 2010; einen allgemeinen Überblick bieten Entman, Matthes & Pellicano, 2009; Matthes, 2007). De Vreese und Boomgaarden (2003, S. 362) stellen in diesem Zusammenhang heraus, dass „Frames are not merely different ways of telling a story. Frames may cause changes in public opinion by inviting certain definitions and interpretations of political issues“. Aus diesem Grund versuchen politische Akteure die Deutungshoheit über Themen zu erlangen und ihre Sicht der Dinge im öffentlichen Diskurs durchzusetzen (Fröhlich & Rüdiger, 2006; Hallahan, 2011; Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Im Rahmen ihrer strategischen öffentlichen Kommunikation betonen sie gewisse Aspekte eines Sachverhalts, äußern Bewertungen und attribuieren gezielt die Verantwortung für die Problemursache respektive -lösung (strategischer Wettkampf der Frames, siehe Entman, 2007; Geiß, 2013; Matthes, 2007). Die verschiedenen politischen Parteien stellen Themen und Ereignisse abhängig von ihrer Position im politischen System und ihrem politischen Lager unterschiedlich dar (Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi, 2007; Steenbergen & Scott, 2004). Sie betreiben strategisches frame building, um die öffentliche Sichtweise auf bestimmte Ereignisse oder Themen in ihrem Sinne zu beeinflussen (Hänggli & Kriesi, 2012).

Frames dienen als „devices embedded in political discourse, invented and employed by political elites, often with an eye toward advancing their own interests or ideologies intended to make favorable interpretations“ (Kinder & Sanders, 1990, S. 74). Nationale Parteien bilden als Frame-Sponsoren eine relevante Quelle spezifischer Deutungsmuster im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs. Dies gilt natürlich auch in Bezug auf die Darstellung europäischer Themen in der öffentlichen Debatte (siehe etwa Helbling et al., 2010). Nationale Parteien sind ein zentraler Katalysator, wenn es um den Transfer europäischer Issues in nationale Debatten geht. Sie verleihen europäischen Themen Sichtbarkeit auf nationaler Ebene (zur agenda building-Funktion politischer Parteien, siehe Brandenburg, 2002; Dearing & Rogers, 1996) und beleuchten sie in einem spezifischen Blickwinkel (zur

frame building Funktion politischer Parteien, siehe bspw. Hänggli, 2012; Hänggli & Kriesi, 2012; Kinder & Sanders, 1990).

Wie schon oben dargelegt, ist es zunächst entscheidend, ob Parteien überhaupt einen Bezug zur EU bei der Darstellung eines Issues wählen, oder ob sie das Thema als ausschließlich nationale Angelegenheit framen (Salienz-Strategie). Setzen Parteien europäische Themen auf die Agenda, können sie diese Themen unterschiedlich framen.

Eine relevante Dimension ist hierbei die evaluative Positionierung gegenüber der EU. So können euroskeptische Parteien ihr Profil in der Öffentlichkeit schärfen, indem sie EU-Politiken oder Akteure negativ bewerten (*soft Euroskepticism*) oder eine negative Valenz gegenüber der (fortschreitenden) europäischen Integration (*hard Euroskepticism*) herausstellen. Etablierte Mainstream-Parteien können auf diese Herausforderung reagieren, indem sie ihre europhile Position kommunikativ verteidigen, keine Positionierung gegenüber der EU äußern oder die euroskeptische Position der Herausforderer annehmen. Neben der Salienz-Strategie nationaler Parteien wird in Manuskript 1 (siehe Kapitel 4) auch analysiert, wie sich unterschiedliche Parteientypen hinsichtlich dieser Positionsdimension verhalten. Der Artikel beschäftigt sich mit der Forschungsfrage, *wie europhile Mainstream-Parteien im Rahmen ihrer strategischen Kommunikation auf die erstarkenden euroskeptischen Herausforderer reagieren.*

Das Zusammenspiel aus Salienz- und Positionierungsdimension ist schließlich relevant für die Politisierung europäischer Themen: Nach De Wilde (2011, S. 566f) bedeutet Politisierung “an increase in polarization of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards policy formulation within the EU.” Kommt es zu einer solchen kontroversen Diskussion europäischer Themen in den nationalen Öffentlichkeiten, wirkt sich dies positiv auf die demokratische Legitimität der Europäischen Union aus. Schließlich haben nur informierte Bürger (siehe Dahl, 1989) die Möglichkeit

etwa direkt durch Petitionen oder Proteste oder im Rahmen der Wahl sinnvoll am politischen Prozess zu partizipieren (zur Relevanz einer hinreichenden Informationsmöglichkeit für die Legitimation demokratischer Wahlen, siehe etwa Gerhards, 2002; zum positiven Zusammenhang von Nachrichtenrezeption und verschiedenen Formen der politischen Partizipation, siehe etwa Ksiazek, Malthouse & Webster, 2010; zum positiven Einfluss eines politisierten Kontexts auf die korrekte Zuschreibung von Verantwortung im EU-Kontext, siehe Wilson & Hobolt, 2015). In diesem Sinne zieht Manuskript 1 (siehe Kapitel 4) durch das analysierte Parteienverhalten Rückschlüsse auf den Grad der Politisierung der EU-bezogenen Debatte in sieben europäischen Mitgliedsstaaten.

Die massenmediale Vermittlung politischer Debatten verschafft ihnen Zugang zu einem breiten Publikum, was die Legitimität der supranationalen Ebene weiterhin positiv beeinflusst (Gerhards, 2002). Insofern ist natürlich von großem Interesse, welche EU-Evaluationen, seitens welcher Akteure Einzug in die mediale Berichterstattung finden. Manuskript 3 (siehe Kapitel 6) untersucht folglich in einem internationalen Vergleich, die Repräsentation softer und harter euroskeptischer Äußerungen in der nationalen Qualitätspresse. Die Studie berücksichtigt in besonderem Maße, dass Medien eine duale Rolle bei der Vermittlung politischer Sachverhalte innehaben: Zum einen sollen sie eine möglichst große Breite an Themen und Positionen abbilden, zum anderen werden sie selbst im politischen Diskurs aktiv, indem sie im Meinungsteil ihre Ansichten zum Ausdruck bringen (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Koopmans & Pfetsch, 2003). Der Artikel untersucht die forschungsleitende Fragestellung, *inwiefern es einen Zusammenhang zwischen den geäußerten EU-Bewertungen seitens zitierter Akteure im Nachrichtenteil und den veröffentlichten EU-bezogenen Evaluationen der Journalisten selbst im Meinungsteil gibt*. Im Rahmen eines internationalen Vergleichs zwischen sieben europäischen Mitgliedsstaaten erklärt der Artikel weiterhin, *unter welchen Bedingungen solche Synchronisierungseffekte*

aufzutreten, und welche Rolle supranationale Akteure als mögliche Quellen für Positionen außerhalb des nationalstaatlichen Meinungsklimas spielen.

Neben der Bewertung der europäischen Integration bzw. konkreter EU-Akteure oder Politiken, spielt auch die Zuschreibung von Verantwortung eine zentrale Rolle in der öffentlichen Darstellungsweise (framing) europäischer Issues. Parteien und Medien können die Zuschreibung von kausaler Verantwortung wie auch die Attribution von Problemlösungskompetenz in Bezug auf europäische Themen unterschiedlich interpretieren und öffentlich herausstellen.

3.2 Framing von Verantwortung in politischen Mehrebenensystemen

„Komm, wir spielen Blame Game“ – so titelt Spiegel Online am 8. März 2019. Gemeint ist der Versuch der englischen Premierministerin Theresa May, Brüssel für den gescheiterten Brexit-Deal zwischen Großbritannien und der EU verantwortlich zu machen, wohingegen EU-Akteure den Briten den Schwarzen Peter zuschieben. Dieser Artikel verdeutlicht die Aktualität und die Relevanz der wissenschaftlichen Auseinandersetzung mit öffentlichen Verantwortungszuschreibungen im Mehrebenensystem der EU. Kommt es zu einer systematischen Verschiebung kausaler Verantwortungsattributionen auf die europäische Ebene, stellt dies als *subtiler Euroskeptizismus* eine weitere Facette euroskeptischer Äußerungen dar.

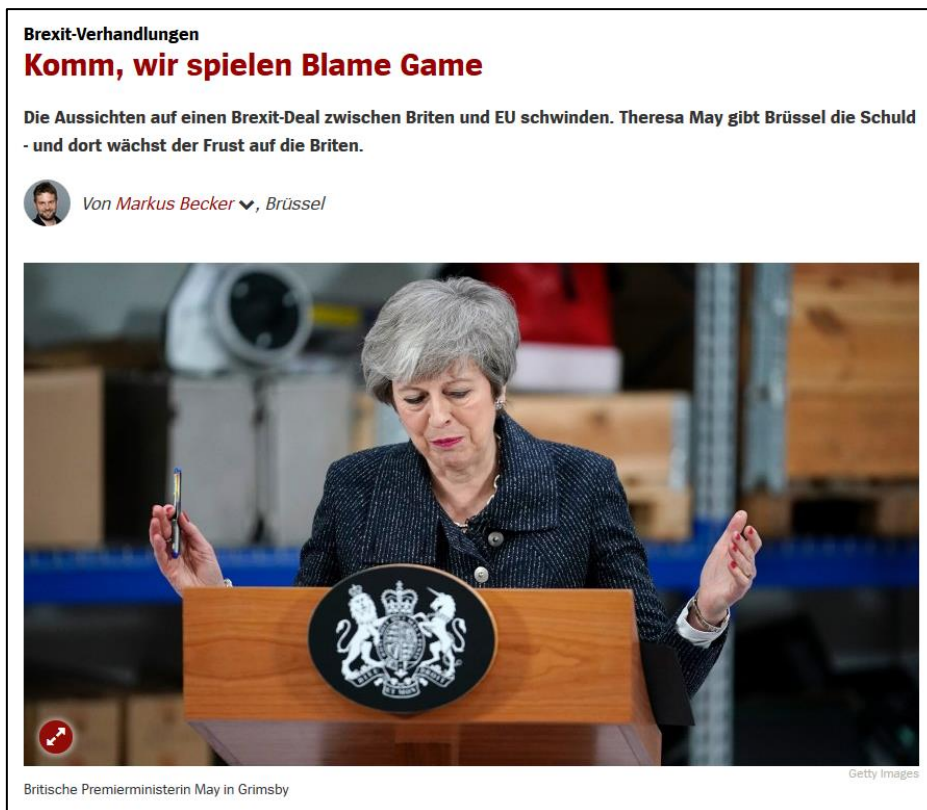


Abbildung 3-2. Spiegel-Online Artikel vom 08.03.2019 zur Krise um den Brexit-Deal

Quelle: Spiegel Online (Becker, 2019)

Zunächst ist zu betonen, dass jedes Problem die Suche nach einem Verantwortlichen provoziert. Schließlich wollen Menschen verstehen, *warum* etwas passiert ist, um Unsicherheit zu reduzieren (Fiske & Taylor, 2013; Shaver, 1985). Darüber hinaus illustriert diese Überschrift, dass verschiedene politische Akteure um die Deutungshoheit in der Schuld-Frage ringen.

Verantwortung ist eine zentrale Größe in der politischen Debatte. Sie stellt das Bindeglied zwischen gesellschaftlichen Problemlagen respektive Lösungsansätzen und den als ursächlich wahrgenommenen politischen Akteuren dar. Sie beeinflusst nicht nur die Bewertungen politischer Akteure (Arceneaux, 2006; Arceneaux & Stein, 2006; mit Bezug auf EU-Blaming siehe Hameleers, Bos & de Vreese, 2016; Rudolph, 2003, 2016), Verantwortungszuschreibungen haben auch einen Einfluss auf die Wahlentscheidung

(Marsh & Tilley, 2009). So reicht es beispielsweise nicht aus, dass die Wähler wissen, ob die Wirtschaft prosperiert oder schrumpft, es ist entscheidend, wen sie dafür verantwortlich machen. Studien konnten wiederholt zeigen, dass die Zuschreibung von Verantwortung einen relevanten Moderator darstellt, wenn es um den Einfluss der ökonomischen Situation auf die Wahlentscheidung geht (siehe Anderson, 2007; Cutler, 2004; für einen kurzen Überblick, Wilson & Hobolt, 2015, S. 103). Hier setzt die strategische Parteienkommunikation an.

Im Rahmen ihrer Öffentlichkeitsarbeit versuchen Parteien, die Deutung von Verantwortlichkeit in ihrem Sinne zu beeinflussen. Durch strategisches Framing (Hänggli & Kriesi, 2012; Schmid-Petri, 2012; van der Pas, 2013) versuchen sie, andere politische Akteure für Problemursachen verantwortlich zu machen („causal responsibility“, Iyengar, 1996, S. 60) und der eigenen Partei die Lösungskompetenz zuzuschreiben („treatment responsibility“, Iyengar, 1996, S. 60). “For politicians, society’s penchant to ascribe responsibility for events to specific individuals or organizations provides opportunities for taking credit for accomplishments or for blaming others” (Hallahan, 2011, S. 192). Die EU als politisches Mehrebenensystem bietet einen besonderen Spielraum in der Auslegung der Verantwortungsfrage, da sie als Akteur außerhalb des nationalstaatlichen Machtgefüges für strategische Verantwortungsattributionen genutzt werden kann.

Des Weiteren ist es für die Bürger des komplexen politischen Gefüges der EU oft unklar, welche politische Ebene für welche politischen Ergebnisse zuständig ist (Hobolt, Tilley & Wittrock, 2013). In diesem Sinne leidet die EU an einer geringen „clarity of responsibility“ (Powell & Whitten, 1993, S. 398), wobei es sich entgegen den ursprünglichen Überlegungen von Powell und Whitten nicht um unklare Verantwortungsverhältnisse zwischen nationalen Parteien handelt (gefördert etwa durch Koalitionsregierungen, Zweikammer-Systeme, etc.), sondern um eine unklare vertikale Verteilung der Zuständigkeit

zwischen politischen Ebenen (Hobolt, Tilley & Banducci, 2013, S. 169; Wilson & Hobolt, 2015). Diese unklaren Verantwortungsverhältnisse erhöhen das Potential seitens der politischen Parteien, die Verantwortungsattributionen der Bürger durch strategisches Framing zu beeinflussen.

„The event itself could be as privately experienced as a lovers' quarrel or as public as technological failure at a nuclear power generating plant; it could have been produced carelessly or after careful premeditation; its consequences could be ephemeral as momentary chagrin or as terrible as widespread destruction and loss of life. Whatever other features, negative events demand explanation, a demand frequently satisfied by finding someone who is *answerable* for the occurrence.” (Shaver, 1985, S. 1, Hervorhebung im Original)

Krisen katalysieren die öffentliche Suche nach Verantwortlichen und damit einhergehend auch die strategischen Verantwortungszuschreibungen im politischen Diskurs. Gerade in Bezug auf krisenhafte Themen gilt es, kausale Verantwortungsattributionen gegenüber der eigenen Partei zu vermeiden („Blame Avoidance“-Strategie, siehe Weaver, 1986). Aus Perspektive nationaler politischer Eliten ist die europäische Ebene „part of a consciously chosen strategy whereby vulnerable political leaders externalize their political costs and seek to evade both accountability and responsibility” (Mair, 2007, S. 163). In diesem Sinne kann die EU in der Krise als Sündenbock für problemhafte Issues instrumentalisiert werden, um die eigene Partei vor negativen Attributionen zu bewahren. Gerade in Zeiten ökonomischen Abschwungs verspricht dies eine attraktive Strategie für Regierungsparteien zu sein, die gemäß des „economic voting paradigm“ (Fiorina, 1981; Key, 1966) für die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung im Nationalstaat verantwortlich gemacht und in der Wahl entsprechend des Zustands der nationalen Wirtschaft bestraft oder belohnt werden (siehe beispielsweise Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000). Durch ein öffentliches *blame shifting* von der nationalen auf die supranationale Ebene propagieren Parteien ein euroskeptisches Framing (*subtiler Euroskeptizismus*), da die EU systematisch als Problemverursacher beschrieben wird. Neben eines spezifischen Framings kausaler Verantwortung, können Parteien auch die Frage nach

der Problemlösungskompetenz⁶ in ihrem Sinne öffentlich beantworten (Hobolt & Tilley, 2014; Weaver, 1986). Hier ist es natürlich vorteilhaft, die eigene Partei als kompetenten Krisenmanager zu positionieren. Für Oppositionsparteien könnte auch eine Verschiebung der Lösungskompetenz von der nationalen auf die europäische Ebene eine gewinnbringende Strategie zur Diskreditierung der nationalen Regierung sein. Manuskript 2 (siehe Kapitel 5) analysiert strategische Verantwortungsattributionen in der Parteienkommunikation zur europäischen Finanzkrise, um die Forschungsfrage zu beantworten, *wie unterschiedliche Parteientypen (europhile Regierungsparteien, euroskeptische und europhile Oppositionsparteien) Verantwortung in europäischen Geber- und Nehmerländern im Krisenkontext darstellen.*

Die Medien spielen auch im Hinblick auf die Verbreitung spezifischer Deutungsmuster eine zentrale Rolle. Als selektive Vermittler publizieren sie spezifische Äußerungen politischer Akteure zur Verteilung von Verantwortung in der Krise und bringen sie damit in die gesamtgesellschaftliche Debatte ein, wohingegen sie andere Sichtweisen gegebenenfalls außer Acht lassen. Manuskript 4 (siehe Kapitel 7) untersucht die Forschungsfrage, *welche politischen Akteure in der Zeitungsberichterstattung zur europäischen Finanzkrise welche Verantwortungsattributionen äußern.* Wie Manuskript 3 (siehe Kapitel 6), berücksichtigt auch diese Studie, dass Medien nicht nur selektive Vermittler von Positionen Dritter sind, sondern auch selbst Verantwortungsattributionen gegenüber nationalen und europäischen Akteuren im Meinungsteil äußern. Entsprechend wird im Rahmen von Manuskript 4 (siehe Kapitel 7) weiterhin der Frage nachgegangen, *ob auch hinsichtlich der Äußerung subtiler euroskeptischer Positionen Synchronisierungseffekte in der Berichterstattung zu beobachten sind.* Dies ist der Fall, falls ein Zusammenhang zwischen den selektierten Verantwortungsattributionen in den

⁶ Zur Operationalisierung der Zuschreibung von Problemlösungskompetenz siehe den entsprechenden Auszug des Codebuchs im Anhang II.

Statements politischer Akteure im Nachrichtenteil und den geäußerten Verantwortungszuschreibungen im Meinungsteil existiert. Des Weiteren rekurriert Manuskript 4 nicht nur auf die Äußerungen nationaler Akteure, sondern bezieht auch europäische Akteure in die Analyse mit ein.

3.3 Zwischenfazit und Einordnung der Manuskripte

Die in dieser Dissertation enthaltenen Manuskripte untersuchen die Verbreitung euroskeptischer Äußerungen im politischen und medialen Diskurs (siehe Abbildung 3-3). Zunächst ist es wichtig die strategische Parteienkommunikation als relevante Arena politischer Meinungsäußerung und als wichtige Quelle journalistischer Berichterstattung zu betrachten. Hier werden Salienz- und Framingstrategien verschiedener Parteientypen (Regierungs- und Oppositionsparteien; euroskeptische und europhile Parteien) beleuchtet, um den strategischen Umgang nationaler Parteien mit europäischen Themen und der Äußerung von hartem und softem (Manuskript 1, siehe Abbildung 3) sowie subtilem Euroskeptizismus (Manuskript 2, siehe Abbildung 3) zu analysieren. Neben parteibezogenen Merkmalen werden auch Kontextvariablen auf Ebene des Nationalstaats zur Erklärung des Parteienverhaltens miteinbezogen. Im Rahmen ihrer strategischen Kommunikation versuchen Parteien die öffentliche Aufmerksamkeit auf spezifische Themen zu lenken und ihre Positionen und Deutungsmuster zu diesen Themen im öffentlichen Diskurs zu etablieren.

An dieser Stelle kommen die Medien als relevante Vermittler des politischen Inputs ins Spiel. Sie stellen (immer noch) die zentrale Schnittstelle zwischen den Bürgern und der politischen Elite dar (Jones, 2015). Sie selektieren, welche Themen sie veröffentlichen, und welchen politischen Stimmen sie – zumindest potentiell – öffentliches Gehör verschaffen.

Die politischen Akteure sind relevante Quellen für Themen und Positionen, doch die Medien bilden deren Stimmen nicht in ihrer Vollständigkeit ab, sondern wählen diese nach systemeigenen Kriterien aus. Oder wie es Strömbäck und Nord (2016, S. 161) formulieren: „On the dance floor, the political actors are doing what they can to invite the journalists to dance, but ultimately, it is the journalists who choose who they are going to dance with.” Die Manuskripte 3 und 4 (s. Abbildung 3-3) analysieren, welche euroskeptischen Positionen (hart, soft oder subtil) von welchen politischen Akteuren in der medialen Berichterstattung repräsentiert werden. Neben nationalen politischen Akteuren werden in diesen Analysen auch europäische Akteure inkludiert. Auch die Medien selbst können zu aktiven Sprechern werden und im Rahmen meinungsbezogener Artikel euroskeptische Ansichten vertreten. Deswegen berücksichtigen beide Manuskripte auch Journalisten als aktive Akteure und interessieren sich für Synchronisierungseffekte zwischen Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil hinsichtlich der Bewertung der Europäischen Union sowie bezüglich der Attribution von kausaler Verantwortung in der Berichterstattung zu Themen mit EU-Bezug.

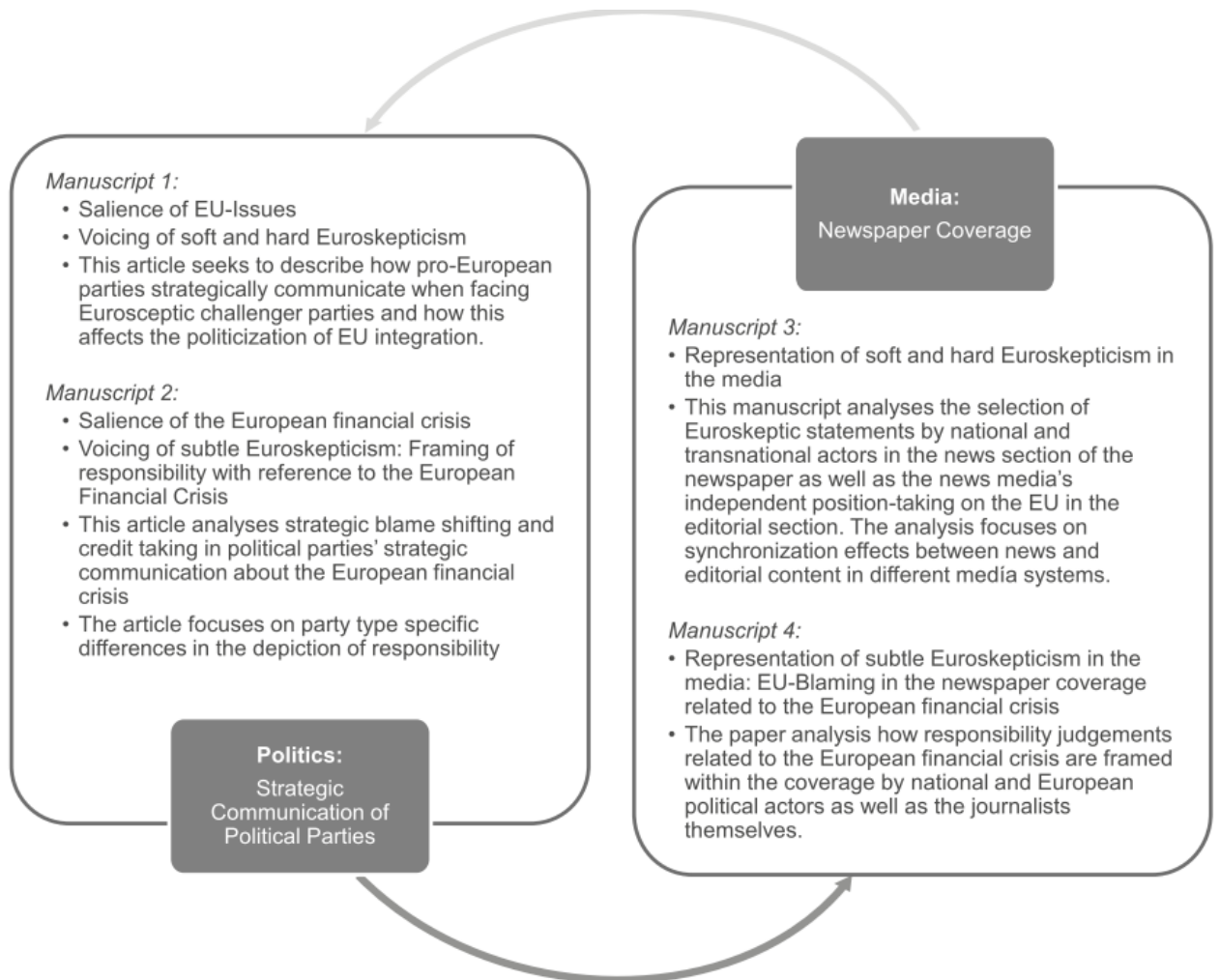


Abbildung 3-3. Einordnung der Manuskripte in den Untersuchungsaufbau

Quelle: eigene Darstellung in Anlehnung an Matthes (2012, S. 255)

4 MANUSKRIFT 1: STRATEGIES OF PRO-EUROPEAN PARTIES IN THE FACE OF A EUROSCEPTIC CHALLENGE

Adam, S., Antl-Wittenberg, E. M., Eugster, B., Leidecker-Sandmann, M., Maier, M., & Schmidt, F. (2016; all authors contributed equally). Strategies of pro-European parties in the face of a Eurosceptic challenge. *European Union Politics*, 18(2), 1-23. doi:10.1177/1465116516661248

We ask how pro-European parties communicate in the face of a Eurosceptic challenge and how this affects the politicization of European Union integration within a country. We draw on a quantitative content analysis of parties' press releases issued in the run-up to the 2014 European Parliament elections in seven countries. Our results show that pro-European parties as such put Europe on the agenda, debate issues similar to those voiced by Eurosceptics and defend their pro-European positions: yet, they do so to varying degrees and with major exceptions. It is pro-European catch-all parties with strong internal dissent that silence Europe and choose blurring or adoption strategies. Consequently, the politicization of European integration varies among countries, thereby high topic visibility is accompanied by low levels of party conflict.

Keywords: Content analysis, European Parliament elections, party communication, party strategy, politicization

Introduction

During the last decade, almost all countries within the EU have experienced the emergence of Eurosceptic parties. These parties have won 113 out of 751 seats in the 2014 European Parliament elections. Their unprecedented success was fuelled by the ongoing crisis of the EU regarding bailout, the threat of a Eurozone breakdown, growing state debts, the instability of the banking system and disputed austerity measures. Thus, Eurosceptic parties have become a challenge for those parties that have integrated Europe for decades.

This article seeks to describe how pro-European parties strategically communicate when facing this Eurosceptic challenge and how this affects the politicization of EU integration in each of the examined countries. Our description of pro-European parties' strategic behaviour grants special attention to pro-European catch-all parties, especially to those struggling with internal dissent regarding EU integration, as it is these large, vote-winning parties that strongly shape societal debates.

Our study contributes to research in a three-fold manner. First, we focus on the strategic interactions of parties (for this research desiderate, e.g. Kriesi, 2008) by analysing how pro-EU parties communicate when facing a Eurosceptic challenge. In this analysis, we depart from research focusing predominantly on Eurosceptics. Instead, Eurosceptic parties in our study serve as a comparative baseline to identify the strategies of pro-EU parties. Second, drawing on Meguid (2005) and Bale et al. (2010), we further elaborate on the strategic repertoire that parties have at hand. Third, we link strategic party behaviour to EU politicization in a country. We thereby show that parties' communication strategies regarding topics, issues and positions directly affect the core components of politicization. Politicization within a country occurs if (a) salience is attached to the topic of EU integration; (b) parties enter a common debate about the same aspects of EU integration and (c) polarized opinions are voiced.

Our focus on party elites' strategic behaviour and the resulting elite politicization towards EU integration seems justified as research has shown that it is elites who (partially) shape public opinions about EU integration (Gabel and Scheve, 2007), who impact the extent to which voters rely on EU considerations in European Parliament elections (Hobolt and Spoon, 2012), and who strongly influence mass media coverage about the integration project (Adam, 2007).

To answer our research question on the communication of pro-European parties when facing a Eurosceptic challenge, we first describe the strategic repertoire that pro-European parties have at hand and develop hypotheses on how this repertoire is used by pro-European parties in general and by pro-European catch-all parties facing strong internal dissent. Second, we illustrate how party strategies can be analysed by means of quantitative content analysis of press releases in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections in seven countries (Austria, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom) and operationalize relevant party classifications based on secondary data. In a third step, we present the results concerning parties' strategic behaviour in the run-up to the 2014 elections. We then show how these strategic decisions influence a country's politicization.

Party strategies in the face of a Eurosceptic challenge

The general assumption backed by empirical support is that Eurosceptic parties challenge pro-European parties by putting new issues and new positions regarding the EU (namely negative evaluations) on the agenda to 'upset the dominant party alignment' (Carmines and Stimson, 1993: 154; for empirical evidence, e.g. Hooghe and Marks, 2008; Parsons and Weber, 2011). However, as research has shown that no party has monopolistic agenda control (e.g. Adam and Maier, 2016; Steenbergen and Scott, 2004), pro-European parties have to make strategic decisions regarding how to respond.

Pro-EU parties' strategic repertoire

Two dimensions of parties' strategic decisions are distinguished in the literature (Green-Pedersen, 2007). First, parties have to decide which issues to emphasize, e.g. whether to stress immigration or the welfare state (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Petrocik, 1996). Second, they have to decide which positions to make salient (Downs, 1957), meaning that they side, for example, with a state that promotes public welfare to a lesser or greater degree. However, whenever we deal with multidimensional topics – one of the most prominent examples being EU integration (Green-Pedersen, 2011; Hurrelmann et al., 2013) – it is not sufficient to distinguish two dimensions of party strategies as proposed in the literature. The topic of EU integration consists of a multitude of different issues: immigration, the economy, foreign affairs, and constitutional questions (to name just a few) can all be discussed with reference to EU integration. As a consequence, we propose to differentiate the emphasis dimension of strategic party communication. First, a party strategically decides whether it makes reference at all to the broader topic of EU integration. Second, a party then selects specific aspects within the broader topic of EU integration. We label these aspects issues. They indicate whether a party gets involved in debates about, for example, immigration, austerity measures, or foreign affairs in relation to EU integration. A party thereby strategically decides not only about the issue discussed but also whether to mention that it is related to the EU. We regard this distinction as crucial as it allows us to understand not only to which degree parties put Europe on the agenda, but also whether by doing so they enter a common debate or talk past each other as every party selectively emphasizes issues that are advantageous to itself (e.g. Petrocik, 1996). Based on these considerations, we conceive a three-dimensional strategy repertoire of parties consisting of a topic, an issue, and a position dimension.

For each dimension, pro-EU parties have to decide on the specific strategies they wish to employ. For the topic dimension, parties have to decide whether they want to emphasize the

broader topic of EU integration at all or strategically decide to refer to the nation state. We call the former strategy an ‘agenda-building strategy’, whereas the latter is labelled a ‘silencing strategy’. If pro-EU parties employ agenda-building strategies, they must then make decisions about the issue as well as the position.

Concerning the issue dimension, pro-EU parties have two options: they may either try to shift the debate towards those issues of EU integration from which they can profit and thus raise EU issues distinct from those raised by Eurosceptic parties (‘strategy of distinct issue emphasis’), or they emphasize issues similar to those raised by the Eurosceptics in order to prevent Eurosceptics from monopolizing sensitive issues (‘strategy of similar issue emphasis’).

Finally, for the position dimension, pro-EU parties have three strategic options: they may defend their pro-EU position consistent with the traditional party line (‘hold strategy’); leave their position and adopt EU-critical stances of Eurosceptic parties (‘adoption strategy’), or blur their position towards the EU by either avoiding to formulate positions at all or by formulating ambivalent statements (‘blurring strategy’)¹.

Figure 1 visualizes pro-EU parties’ strategic repertoire based on the aforementioned three dimensions (topic, issue, and position) containing seven strategic choices. The figure makes clear that as soon as an agenda-building strategy has been chosen for the topic dimension, different strategic choices can be combined.

This three-dimensional strategic party repertoire partly mirrors the strategic options which have been ascribed to pro-European parties to meet the Eurosceptic challenge (Bale et al., 2010; Meguid, 2005): pro-European parties may either opt for silencing strategies shifting attention to national topics or they may turn into topic followers. As such, they may mimic the Eurosceptics’

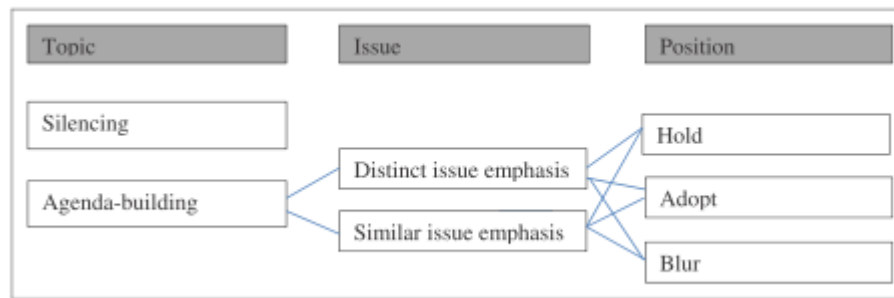


Figure 4-1. Pro-EU parties' strategic repertoire.

position resulting in adoption strategies or they may defend their own pro-EU positions. These four strategies identified in the literature deal with both the topic and positional level of our strategic party repertoire. We have extended this strategic repertoire in a two-fold manner: first, by bringing in the idea of position blurring, we have added an important positional strategy which allows parties 'to misrepresent the distance between the party and its potential voters' (Rovny, 2012: 273). Second, adding the issue level opens up two additional strategic options for parties, i.e. the distinct or similar issue emphasis. This new dimension allows us to show whether parties talk past each other or not.

Hypotheses and research question regarding pro-EU parties' strategic repertoire

We first turn to the topic dimension of parties' strategic choices. Pro-EU parties have been shown to often apply silencing strategies, whereas Eurosceptics act as agenda-setters (e.g. Hooghe and Marks, 2008; Parsons and Weber, 2011) for at least three reasons: (1) pro-EU parties often struggle with internal party disagreement on EU integration (Ferrara and Weishaupt, 2004); (2) they fear losing voters who are normally mobilized on a left-right dimension (van der Eijk and Franklin, 2004); (3) they are afraid of losing control over their campaign agenda due to the multidimensionality of EU integration (Green-Pedersen, 2011). Consequently, we expect:

H1a: Pro-European parties rely more strongly on silencing strategies regarding the topic of EU integration compared to Eurosceptic parties.

However, this divide between Eurosceptics and pro-European parties in setting Europe on the agenda has recently been shown to depend on the degree of dissent about Europe within pro-European governing parties (van de Wardt et al., 2014): if pro-European governing parties are internally united on the topic of EU integration, Eurosceptic opposition parties refrain from bringing it up and the governing parties turn into agenda-builders. It is only if dissent prevails within pro-European government parties that these parties de-mobilize and Eurosceptics use the issue to exploit the cracks. The article extends this argument to catch-all parties in general since all of them (as well as those in opposition) are not only likely to take over government responsibility but, due to their heterogeneous party base, are also more likely to face internal dissent compared to smaller pro-European parties (for the relevance of party size, see Williams and Spoon, 2015). Beyond, such parties are crucial for shaping the overall societal debate. Consequently, it is catch-all parties (in government and opposition) whose cracks are potentially exploited by Eurosceptic parties and whose own communication is guided by their internal dissent. We expect:

H1b: Pro-EU catch-all parties with strong internal dissent rely more strongly on Silencing strategies regarding the topic of EU integration compared to internally united catch-all parties.

Less is known about the question whether pro-EU parties emphasize their own selective issues regarding EU integration or whether they campaign on the same issues as Eurosceptic parties. In earlier years, researchers have claimed that parties in all elections talk past each other – each of them emphasizing the issues on which they are judged competent (Petrocik, 1996). However, more and more research questions the general validity of the selective emphasis thesis (e.g. Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010; Sigelman and Buell, 2004). Rather, it seems that parties observe their issue environments and react accordingly. Discussing the same issues as other

parties is very important for the following reasons: parties are expected to have a position on all issues. Furthermore, ignorance of an issue implies that they pass on shaping the positional struggle (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen, 2010), and that they run the risk of being accused of inactivity (Van Noije et al., 2008). As research has produced evidence that parties emphasize their own as well as shared issues in election campaigns in general and, to our knowledge, there is no such study that has analysed this question in the course of EP elections, we refrain from formulating hypotheses but instead pose the following research question: Do pro-European parties employ a strategy of emphasizing distinct or similar issues in reaction to Eurosceptic parties?

Finally, hardly any research has been conducted regarding pro-EU parties' decisions to hold or shift their position when dealing with the Eurosceptic challenge. Some first evidence, however, points towards the predominance of hold strategies. Looking at campaign material in EP elections, Adam et al. (2013) found that pro-EU parties advance their positions most forcefully in those countries in which Eurosceptics voice strong criticism. Bale et al. (2010) stress the difficulty and danger of adoption strategies towards the populist right. The relevance of hold strategies is also underlined by De Sio and Weber (2014) who claim that position change ('adoption strategy') is a costly strategy for parties likely to result in alienating voters. As a consequence, we expect:

H2a: Pro-European parties choose hold strategies over adoption strategies and thus voice positions that are distinct from those of Eurosceptic parties.

However, forcefully defending their pro-European positions might be especially challenging for those pro-European parties that face strong internal dissent on matters of EU integration as this elite dissent is likely to be reflected in the electorate of a party. In this case, clear-cut pro-European positions might alienate part of the electorate. As a consequence, parties may adhere to two positional strategies: first, they may avoid making dissent visible at all, which results in

blurring strategies, i.e. the avoidance of EU evaluations or the formulation of ambivalent statements. Second, it is also such internally divided parties for which the likelihood of adoption strategies increases (compared to internally united parties). Adoption strategies occur if a party judged pro-European by experts publicly communicates only 'lukewarm' support or anti-EU positions.

Adoption strategies thus do not necessarily require a black-white divide of a party's position and its communication. A position-wise clear-cut pro-European party can instead take up parts of the Eurosceptic rhetoric and combine it with traditional pro-European stances on other issue fields in other parts of its public communication. By doing this, it already applies adoption strategies as it departs from its attributed pro-European party line (as judged by experts) communicating only 'lukewarm' support. We thus expect:

H2b: Pro-European catch-all parties with strong internal dissent are more likely to choose adoption and blurring strategies compared to internally united catch-all parties.

Parties' strategies as shapers of a country's EU politicization

Pro-European parties' strategic behaviour affects the degree and form of the EU's elite politicization in each country. Generally speaking, politicization is a process that results in public debate about a political issue. In the last decade, an abundant literature has focused on politicization processes and their outcomes, in particular related to the European Union (e.g. Hutter and Grande, 2014; Koopmans and Statham, 2010; Kriesi et al., 2008). Our starting point is De Wilde's (2011: 566f.) definition of politicization as 'an increase in polarization of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards policy formulation within the EU'. From this perspective, EU politicization has three characteristics: the large range of opinions voiced, their visibility, and their relevance for policy formulation. Policies are normally formulated as answers to specific issues, i.e. societal conflicts about

specific policy questions. We thus conclude that to make (contrasting) opinions relevant for policy formulation, they should be voiced in the same issue area. It is only if parties share a common issue focus that the various opinions voiced can be meaningfully connected to each other. EU politicization thus means that (a) a large range of opinions is voiced regarding EU integration; (b) that these opinions are meaningfully related because they focus on the same issues and (c) that they become visible (also see Hutter and Grande, 2014).

The main contribution to the politicization literature is that we link EU politicization to its strategic and behavioural origins. In this vein, topic visibility, issue focus, and range of opinions are not only the crucial components of elite politicization but also the crucial dimensions of party strategies. Full politicization, therefore, requires that actors (a) avoid silencing strategies, (b) are willing to emphasize similar issues (strategy of similar issue emphasis), and (c) that pro-EU parties choose hold strategies voicing opinions that contradict those of the Eurosceptics. Politicization in this respect becomes the aggregate outcome of actors' strategic decisions regarding topics, issues, and positions.

Data, operationalizations, and methods

To study parties' strategies and the resulting politicization, we focus on parties' campaign communication in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections in seven countries, namely Austria, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. We have chosen these countries because they are all confronted by the Eurosceptic challenge as indicated by expert judgments of party stances on EU integration in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) collected for the year 2014 (Bakker et al., 2015). All parties that score below three on a scale from one to seven were rated as Eurosceptic (see the online appendix⁷), while pro-European parties are all rated above five on the EU integration scale. These countries also vary in the

⁷ Der Online-Appendix zu dieser Publikation ist im Appendix IV dieser Dissertation integriert.

degree of dissent among pro-European catch-all parties, which are defined as all parties that won more than 20 percent in the last national election and have a clear-cut pro-EU stance. However, two of these large parties – the British Conservatives and Syriza in Greece (see the online appendix) – must be regarded as border-line cases since they are neither clear-cut pro- nor anti-European. To study the degree of dissent on EU integration, we rely on CHES data where each party was classified by experts regarding their degree of internal dissent.

For the analysis of parties' strategic communication, we rely on press releases. We chose press releases over other traditional means of party communication (e.g. parliamentary questioning, manifestos) for three reasons: first, they are quite independent from fixed schedules (e.g. parliamentary questionings) and other external events and thus allow the direct observation of a party's strategic behaviour; and second, they are instruments geared towards the media and thus allow the observation of a party's public instead of internal (e.g. manifestos) communication. Finally, we opted for press releases instead of any forms of online campaign communication because parties still vary considerably regarding their online activity (Stetka et al., 2014).

We considered all press releases issued by parties that participated in the 2014 EP elections and won at least three percent of the votes in the 2009 EP or the respective last national election. We analysed all press releases 12 weeks preceding the 2014 EP elections. As we are interested in party strategies towards Europe and the resulting EU politicization, we sampled press releases based on an electronic search string² that made reference to European policies, European institutions, European politicians, and/or the EP elections at least twice. This search resulted in a total of 936 press releases for Austria, 180 for France, 301 for Germany, 518 for Greece, 178 for the Netherlands, 322 for Portugal, and 223 for the United Kingdom.

To systematically analyse the content of the press releases, we rely on a quantitative content analysis based on a detailed codebook (Maier et al., 2014). All eight coders mutually participated in a comprehensive 11-day-long training program followed by a (researcher-coder)

reliability test of 25 press releases each to ensure the reliability of coding. We tested for reliability of coding using the Holsti formula as well as Krippendorff's Alpha coefficient whenever possible or useful. With average results for formal categories (e.g. date of publishing, source, country, etc.) of 0.98–1.00 according to the Holsti formula and 0.97–1.00 according to Krippendorff's Alpha, and reliabilities for content characteristics (e.g. main issue, evaluation of the EU etc.) of 0.77–0.88 (Holsti formula) and 0.62–0.83 (Krippendorff's Alpha) across the countries, reliability tests delivered satisfactory results.³

This content analysis allows us to operationalize topic, issue and positional strategies, and the resulting dimensions of politicization. To analyse topic strategies and the resulting visibility of EU integration, we measure the salience that parties attach to EU integration by looking at the amount of EU-related press releases in proportion to all published press releases. To operationalize the issue strategy and the resulting distinct or shared issue focus, we look at the main issue covered in a press release. Altogether, we distinguish 17 issue categories (Maier et al., 2014). Based on the relative frequencies of these issue categories per party, we calculate the Duncan index of dissimilarity for each pair of parties (Duncan and Duncan, 1955). This index takes a value between 0 and 1, which can be conveniently interpreted as the percentage of a party X's communication that has to be shifted to other issues in order to have an identical issue emphasis as party Y.⁴ To facilitate the interpretation of the results, we subtract the original Duncan dissimilarity index score from 1. The resulting issue similarity score ranges between 0 (= different emphasis) and 1 (=same emphasis) and thus can be interpreted as a distance measure between parties based on their issue emphasis.

For the operationalization of the positional strategy and the resulting range of opinions voiced, we analyse how each party evaluates the general idea of European integration (INTEGEVAL) and how it evaluates the more specific functioning of the EU today, including its institutions, politicians, and policies (EUEVAL). Both indicators differentiate between four categories: positive, negative, balanced (as many positive as negative evaluations), and no

evaluation. Based on these variables, we derive information on the frequency of EU evaluations and of balanced statements (blurring strategy) and on the evaluation as such (hold or adoption strategies). For the former, we analyse the share of EU-related press releases that contain no clear-cut position on the general idea and/or the more specific functioning of the EU (position not available at all or balanced statement); for the latter, we build one EU evaluation index per party based on those press releases that contain a clear-cut evaluation. This index ranges from - 1 (strong Euroscepticism) to + 1 (strong EU support).⁵ It should be noted that this index gives more weight to evaluations referring to the idea of European integration in general than to evaluations of specific policies or institutions. To finally identify adoption or hold strategies we compare a party's communication index with its general position on EU integration as judged by experts in the CHES survey (Bakker et al., 2015). We speak of adoption, if a party judged pro-European (neutral towards Europe) applies only 'lukewarm' support or even anti-EU rhetoric in its communication.

We conduct analyses for each country separately, which allows us to describe the strategic choices disaggregated to even single parties. We thereby depart from a classical regression logic which would analyse all parties of all countries together searching for the general effect of party or country characteristics on strategic party behaviour. We have opted for this detailed description as we aim to show possible heterogeneity within countries and party types. However, this very detailed description of party strategies per country is accompanied by an eschewal of controlling for explanations that go beyond the factors focused on here (namely party position and internal party dissent). Such alternative explanations might either be found on the party level (e.g. electoral success or government participation) or on the country level (e.g. electoral cycle or general issue agenda). We opted for this descriptive approach due to the scope of this article and the small case numbers which are a result of our country-specific strategy of analyses.

We apply network methods (e.g. Borgatti et al., 2013) to these country-specific analyses. We do so as network analysis was developed to deal with the interrelations between observations instead of regarding them as independent from each other. This is crucial because the core assumption of our article is that parties' strategies within a country are closely intertwined. Thus, we claim that pro-European parties are indeed affected by the Eurosceptic challenge. To apply network analysis, we convert our core variables (position of party towards EU integration; communication regarding topic, issue and EU evaluation) into a dyadic variable (e.g. Borgatti et al., 2013). A dyadic variable does not describe the attribute of a party as such, but rather the difference between each pair of parties. Looking, for example, at the positions of two parties towards EU integration ($A = 1.5$; $B = 6$), from a dyadic perspective, we would ask whether the difference between party A and B ($\Delta = 4.5$) could explain differences in topic focus. We thus test whether differences of parties regarding their position towards EU integration are related to general differences in (1) parties' topic emphasis, (2) their issue focus, and (3) their EU evaluations. To do so, we rely on quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) correlations using the Program UCINET. QAP is designed to correlate dyadic variables calculating statistical associations such as Pearson's r . It thereby calculates significance by permutation tests in which it compares the observed correlation with those resulting from thousands of randomly created matrices (e.g. Borgatti et al., 2013) – a method that does not require independent observations.

Results

Topic dimension: Agenda-building or silencing strategies of pro-EU parties?

To test whether pro-EU parties as such attach less salience to the topic of EU integration (silencing strategies) compared to Eurosceptics (H1), we look at the share of press releases which contain a reference to Europe in relation to all press releases published per party and

convert this information into a dyadic relation to test whether differences in parties' EU positions are associated with differences in the salience parties attach to the topic of EU integration.

The QAP correlations shown in Table 1 lead us to reject the idea that pro-European parties as such adhere more strongly to silencing strategies compared to Eurosceptics (H1a). This is indicated by the non-significant results in Table 1. It is only in Germany that pro- and anti-EU parties differ on the topic dimension, with pro-European parties relying more strongly on silencing strategies compared to Eurosceptics (see the online appendix). In Germany it is the newly founded AfD, a Eurosceptic right-wing party, which devotes around 43 percent of their press releases to Europe compared to the other parties that only devote between 20 and 24 percent to the EU.

The analysis so far merely indicates that there is not a general divide between pro- and anti-EU parties on the topic dimension in six out of seven countries. However, this general finding does not preclude the possibility that specific pro-EU parties adhere to silencing strategies. H1b assumes that pro-EU catch-all parties with strong internal dissent are more likely to employ silencing strategies compared to united pro-EU catch-all parties. Indeed, a close-up view of our data lends support to this idea. It is not catch-all parties as such, but those that are internally divided that are most likely to employ silencing strategies. Silencing is applied heavily by the divided French catch-all parties (UMP, 9 percent; dissent: 5.8; PS, 15 percent, dissent 6.8), by British parties (Labour: 7 percent, dissent: 3.6, Conservatives [although this party is balanced rather than pro EU], 18 percent, dissent: 7.3), and to a lesser degree by Dutch catch-all parties (VVD, 19 percent, dissent: 4.3; PvdA, 23 percent, dissent: 5.0), the Greek party Syriza (23 percent, dissent: 7.1) and by German parties (CDU/CSU and SPD, both 23 percent, dissent 3.2 and 2.8). With the exception of German parties, all of these catch-all parties experience quite substantial amounts of internal dissent about EU integration.

Table 4-1. Distinct topic strategies of pro-European parties?

	Pearson r	Significance
Austria	-0.13	n.s. (0.27)
France	-0.03	n.s. (0.46)
Germany	0.64	* (0.04)
Greece	0.05	n.s. (0.28)
Netherlands	-0.14	n.s. (0.21)
Portugal	0.10	n.s. (0.30)
UK	-0.25	n.s. (0.10)

Note: QAP correlations (Δ salience [0;1 = large difference]; Δ EU position [0;6 = large difference]).

Basis: EU positions (Bakker et al., 2015), salience: share of EU related press releases / all press releases (own study).

Significance level: n.s. = not significant; †p < .1; *p < .05; **p < .01.

Pro-EU catch-all parties that do not use silencing strategies were only found in three of the analysed countries, namely Austria, Greece, and Portugal. Interestingly, the mobilizing parties (with the exception of the Portuguese Partido Socialista) are strongly united on the question of EU integration. In Austria, the two leading catch-all parties mention Europe in 41 percent (ÖVP, dissent: 1.9; SPÖ, dissent: 2.8) of their press releases, and together with the Eurosceptic BZÖ they are the leading EU mobilizers. Interestingly, the large Eurosceptic FPÖ mentions Europe in only 28 percent of their press releases. In Portugal, the large parties are among the strongest mobilizers on EU-related topics (Alianca Portugal: 61 percent, dissent: 2.7, Partido Socialista: 42 percent, dissent: 3.7). Finally, in Greece, it is the Conservative Nea Dimokratia (ND, dissent: 2.6) that belongs to the strongest EU agenda-setters (41 percent), whereas the internally divided Syriza, the second catch-all party in Greece, which experts rated as balanced in reference to EU integration, only has a share of 23 percent.

Issue dimension: Distinct or similar issue emphasis of pro-EU parties?

To study whether pro-European parties emphasize their own EU-related issues or share common issues with Eurosceptics, we rely on the Duncan index of similarity. High values on this index indicate that two parties debate similar issues, whereas low values show distinct issue

foci. To test whether pro- and anti-EU parties as such differ in their issue emphasis, we rely on QAP correlations and ask if differences in party positions (indicated by high values) are associated with differences in issue emphasis (indicated by low values). Negative correlations thus show that pro- and anti-EU parties talk past each other.

Table 2 indicates country differences. In five countries (AT, F, GR, UK, PT), party positions are not related to issue emphasis, which means that pro- and anti-EU parties are not systematically separated by their focus on different issues.

Table 4-2. Distinct issue foci of pro-European parties?

	Pearson's r	Significance
Austria	0.14	n.s. (0.34)
France	0.08	n.s. (0.41)
Germany	-0.52	†(0.05)
Greece	-0.09	n.s. (0.29)
Netherlands	-0.29	†(0.07)
Portugal	-0.43	n.s. (0.17)
UK	0.04	n.s. (0.47)

Note: QAP correlations (Duncan index [0;1 = proximity]; Δ EU position [0;6 = difference]); Basis: EU positions (Bakker et al., 2015), Duncan index (issue distribution own study)

Significance level: n.s. = not significant; † $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

In Germany and the Netherlands, pro- and anti-EU parties put different issues on their agendas and thus talk past each other, as indicated by the negative significant correlations.

As the results so far only indicate that in most countries there is no general divide between pro- and anti-EU parties issue-wise, they do not show which parties put the same and which parties put distinct issues on the agenda. To obtain this information, we use the Duncan index as a distance measure between parties, visualizing it with a network algorithm that draws the parties close to each other that emphasize similar issues and separates those parties that have distinct issue foci (force atlas II, Gephi). Figure 2 reveals three groups of countries. In the first group composed of Germany and the Netherlands, pro-EU parties as such (as also shown by QAP correlations) emphasize different issues compared to Eurosceptics. A second group consists of

Austria, Greece, and Portugal. In these countries, we find common issue emphasis in all parties (with the exception of the nationalists in Greece [XA]). Finally, the United Kingdom and France constitute a third group. In these countries, pro-EU catch-all parties emphasize issues similar to those emphasized by Eurosceptics, whereas smaller pro-EU parties are pushed to the margins. For the UK, this results in a constellation in which the Conservatives and the Labour party campaign on issues similar to those adopted by UKIP and BNP, whereas the Greens and the Liberal Democrats put different issues on the agenda. Summing up, we see that most pro-European catch-all parties (those with strong and weak internal dissent) hardly avoid the topics of the Eurosceptics. Pro-European catch-all parties keep their distinct issue foci in only two countries.

Position dimension: Hold, adoption or blurring strategies of pro-EU parties?

To test whether pro-EU parties actually choose hold over adoption strategies, in other words if EU support outweighs EU critique in their public communication (H2a), we use the EU evaluation index. This index is based on our content analysis data and ranges from - 1 (strong Euroscepticism) to + 1 (strong EU support). We expect that those parties which are rated as having similar EU positions by experts (CHES data) also express similar EU evaluations in their public EU communication, i.e. that pro- (anti-) EU parties communicate in support of (in opposition to) the EU. This relationship is indicated by positive QAP correlations.

The results shown in Table 3 support the idea that pro- and anti-EU parties differ in their EU communication, i.e. that similarity of party positions as judged by experts is accompanied by similarity in voiced EU positions in our content analysis data. This is indicated by positive, statistically significant QAP results in six out of seven countries. A closer look at the data supports our expectation that Eurosceptics express more criticism than pro-EU parties which, in sum, is a strong indicator for the prevalence of hold strategies (H2a). But there is one disturbing result: a negative moderate correlation in Portugal, which indicates that similarity in

positions judged by experts is not reflected in similarity in public communication. Portugal appears to be a particular case as all parties here strongly support

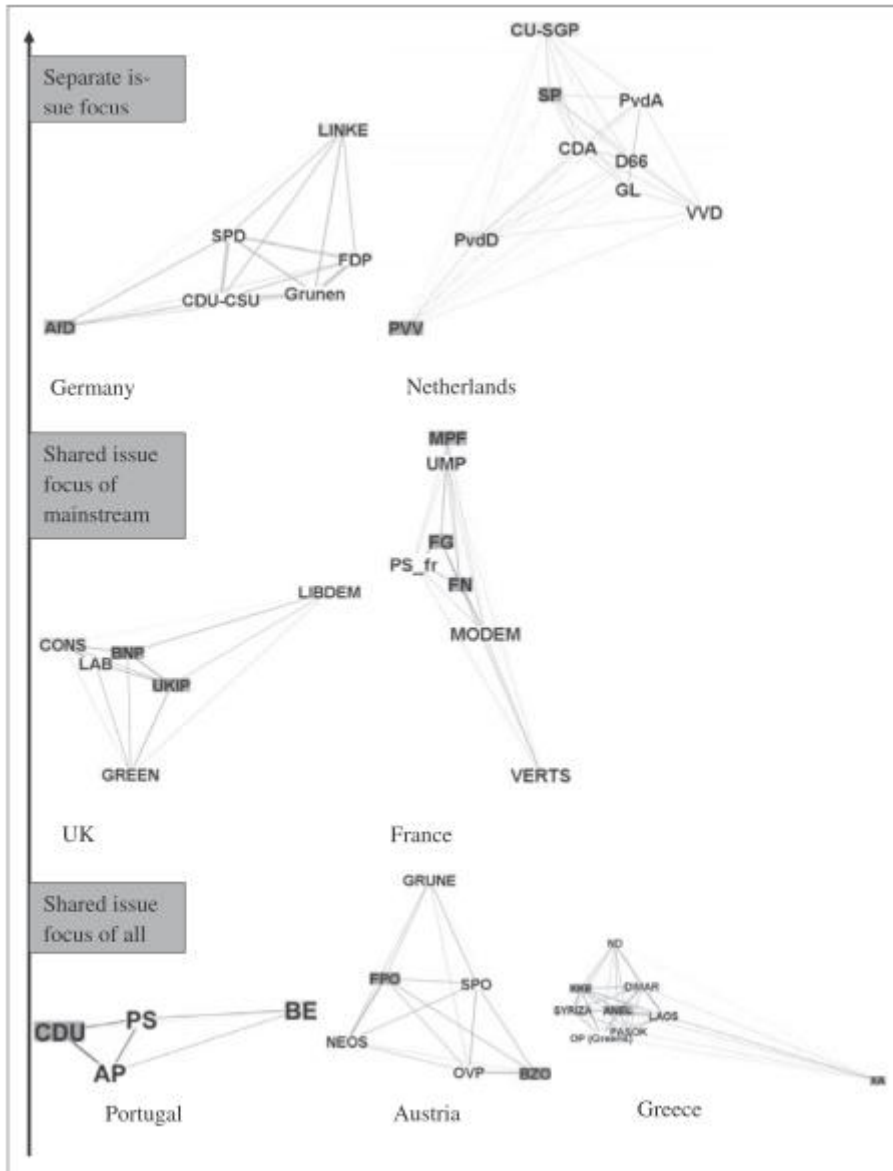


Figure 4-2. The relation between pro-EU and anti-EU parties regarding their issue focus.

Note: Network visualization based on Force Atlas II, Gephi (Scaling: 1.00000; Edge Weight: 7); Colours: dark grey = Eurosceptics (EU position < 3), light grey (EU position ≥ 3 and ≤ 5); white = pro-European
Basis: EU positions (Bakker et al., 2015), Duncan index (issue distribution from the author's own study)

Table 4-3. Distinct position strategies of pro-European parties?

	Pearson's r	Significance
Austria	0.71	*(0.04)
France	0.79	*(0.03)
Germany	0.72	*(0.04)
Greece	0.61	***(0.00)
Netherlands	0.79	***(0.00)
Portugal	-0.40	***(0.00)
UK	0.74	*(0.01)

Note: QAP correlations (Δ EU evaluation in press releases [0;2 = difference]; Δ EU position [0;6 = difference]); Basis: EU positions (CHES, Bakker et al., 2015), evaluations in press releases (own study) Significance level: n.s. = not significant; † p < .1]; *p < .05; ***p < .01.

the EU in their public communication – even though the CDU was rated as EU-critical by experts in the CHES survey (Bakker et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, three objections must be examined in more detail. First, so far we only know that pro- and anti-EU parties differ in their public EU evaluations, but we do not know to what extent (i.e. do all of them criticize (support) EU integration more or less strongly?). Figure 3 shows the range of positions voiced in the seven countries included in the study. This figure demonstrates that clear-cut pro-European positions are voiced by at least one party in five of our seven countries (AT, F, GER, PT, UK), whereas in two countries, Greece and the Netherlands, pro-European positions only receive lukewarm support and Eurosceptic positions are forcefully put forward. We thus see tendencies for adoption in Greece and the Netherlands.

Second, although we can show that similarity in party positions judged by experts coincides with similarity in public communication, this association is far from perfect (e.g. in Greece), which leaves room for single parties' adoption strategies. A closer look at pro-European catch-all parties shows that some of them adhere to adoption strategies. These parties either openly criticize EU integration even though they are judged balanced by experts (Syriza, GR: - 0.28) or they show only 'lukewarm' support even though they are classified as clearly pro-European by experts (VVD, NL: 0.05; Labour, UK: 0.06).

Third, pro-European parties have another strategic option, blurring, which does not show up in the evaluation index. Blurring is defined here as the avoidance of EU evaluations or as the formulation of balanced statements from which no clear-cut EU evaluation can be derived (for the results, see the online appendix). Among our pro-European catch-all parties, we can identify four that strongly adhere to blurring strategies: the French UMP which avoids any EU evaluation at all; the Conservatives in the UK which evaluate the EU in only 33 percent of their EU-related press releases and the two Greek mainstream parties which avoid

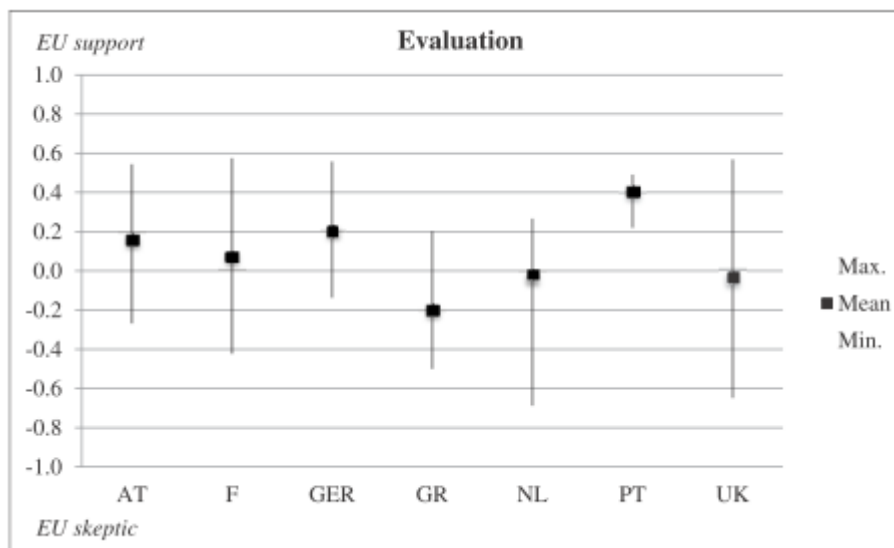


Figure 4-3. Range of opinions towards EU integration in parties' press releases.

Basis: press releases with an EU evaluation; N (AT) = 530; N (F) = 120; N (GER) = 175; N (GR) = 201; N (NL) = 120; N (PT) = 231; N (UK) = 142.

evaluations in 80 percent (ND) and close to 70 percent (Syriza) of their EU-related press releases.

Our results thus confirm that catch-all parties with strong internal dissent are prone to choose adoption or blurring strategies (H2b). The data show that both strategies are employed. Adoption strategies thereby do not refer to a black-white divide between expert judgements and party communication, but rather to a gradual deviation. Among the strongly divided pro-

European catch-all parties, there are only two (PS, France; PvdA, NL) that neither use blurring nor adoption strategies. However, as shown before, these parties also tend towards silencing on the topic dimension. In contrast, among united catch-all parties, adoption and blurring strategies are rare – with the Greek ND being the only exception.

Variations in countries' politicization as a result of parties' strategies

How do parties' strategies regarding topics, issues, and positions affect a country's politicization? Figure 4 summarizes our results on the country level. Regarding the first politicization dimension, topic salience, the figure shows that in all of the examined countries, parties communicate about Europe. The average EU salience on the country level ⁶ varies between 25 percent (UK) and 56 percent (PT). Not surprisingly, in those countries where silencing strategies of (some) pro-EU catch-all parties (grey shading) are most pronounced, we find the lowest average salience (GER, GR, F, UK). In the Netherlands, it seems that moderate silencing

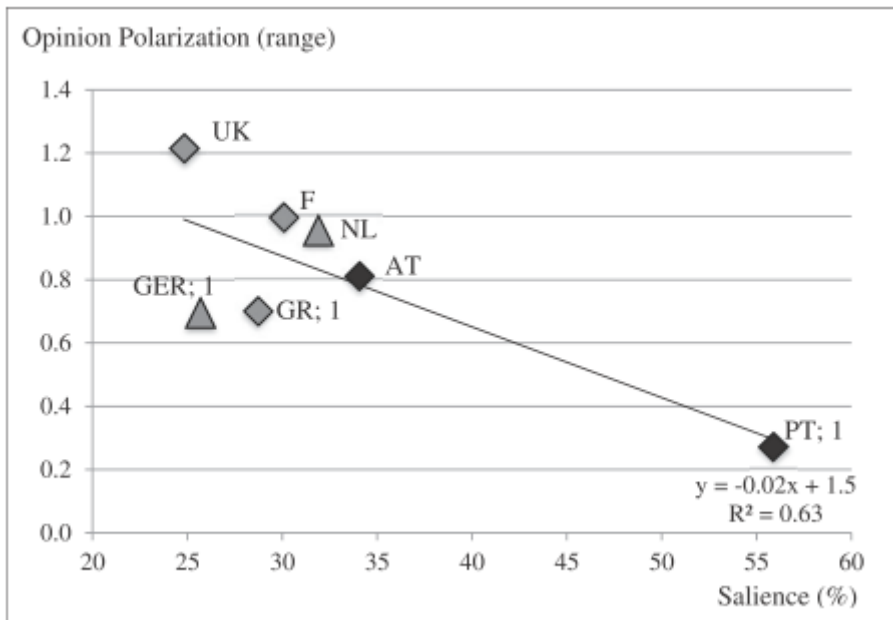


Figure 4-4. Degree of politicization.

Note: Topic (1) x-axis (average share of EU-related press releases); (2) grey shading ¼ silencing strategies of (some) pro-EU catch-all parties; black ¼ no silencing strategies of pro-EU catch-all parties; Issue: diamond ¼ common debate; triangle ¼ divided debate; Position: (1) y-axis (range of opinions within a country); 1 - one-

sided debate with either pro or contra positions dominating; Regression model: Relationship between opinion polarization and salience explains 63 percent of the variance.

tendencies of catch-all parties are partially compensated by the other parties. Finally, countries where pro-EU catch-all parties do not follow silencing strategies tend to have higher salience values (PT, AT, black shading) – with Portugal standing out in particular.

Regarding the issue focus, our results reveal that in two of our countries (GER, NL) pro- and anti-European parties talk past each other (triangle, Figure 4), whereas in the other countries similar issue foci are employed (diamond, Figure 4). This similar issue focus leads to a common debate among all parties in Portugal, Austria, and Greece, whereas in the UK and France, it is catch-all parties that – despite their silencing strategies – employ issue emphasis similar to the Eurosceptics in their sparse communication, whereas smaller pro-EU parties emphasize their own EU-related issues.

Looking at these two aspects, we judge Portugal as the most politicized country regarding EU integration. However, our third politicization dimension, which deals with the range of positions formulated, reveals another picture (y-axis). We find the broadest range in the United Kingdom (range 1.2 out of a maximum of 2) and France (range 1.0) and the lowest in Portugal (0.27), followed by Germany (0.69), Greece (0.7), Austria (.81), and the Netherlands (0.95). However, the range alone does not tell us whether we can observe clear-cut positions supporting or contradicting the EU or whether parties offer only more or less EU-friendly (EU-critical) information. In most of the countries in our sample, contrasting positions are voiced (see Figure 3) – especially in the United Kingdom and France where we find clear-cut pro- and anti-EU positions. There is also a second group of countries where we find dissimilar evaluations; however, in these countries either the supportive or critical side avoids extreme positions (NL: - 0.69 to 0.27; AT: - 0.27 to 0.54). The remaining three countries tend to have a one-sided debate (PT, GR, GER, indicated by the ‘1’ in Figure 4). This becomes most visible in Portugal where all parties more or less support EU integration. To a lesser degree,

this is also the case in Germany where only the newly founded right-wing AfD and the Linke formulate moderate EU opposition (- 0.13; - 0.14). In Greece, in contrast, we find a one-sided debate that extends into the Eurosceptic side (GR: - 0.5 to 0.2).

Looking at all three politicization dimensions at the same time uncovers a noticeable relationship. It is not only that we fail to find high salience, common debates between pro- and anti-EU parties and strong opinion polarization in any of the examined countries, but it seems that at least two of these politicization dimensions contradict each other in the light of parties' strategies: high salience is accompanied by low opinion polarization, whereas low salience is found in systems with party conflict. The strength of this relation is shown by the regression line in Figure 4 which explains 63 percent of the variance that we observe between countries. Taking this finding into account, we regard Austria as the most politicized country in our sample, although it does not lead on all dimensions. It shows the second highest average salience, no silencing strategies of pro-EU parties, a common debate among pro- and anti-EU parties and a moderate level of opinion polarization. All other countries miss out on at least one of the politicization dimensions: catch-all parties in the United Kingdom and France fail to make the topic of Europe visible and partly adhere to adoption or blurring strategies; parties in Portugal do not voice diverging positions; those in Greece tend to produce a low-salience, one-sided debate and those in the Netherlands talk past each other issuewise. It is only in Germany that no indicator points towards politicization: low salience is combined with a divided issue focus and a one-sided debate.

Conclusion

Pro-European parties' communication in the face of a Eurosceptic challenge has four characteristics. First, with the exception of Germany, we find that pro-European parties as such do not differ (anymore) from Eurosceptics in their willingness to attach salience to the topic of

EU integration, which leads us to reject H1a. However, it is specific pro-European parties – namely catch-all parties facing internal dissent – that have opted for silencing strategies (see the UK, France and, to a lesser degree, the Netherlands and Greece), which supports H1b. In these countries, mobilization on EU-related topics occurs, although catch-all parties do not or hardly get involved.

Second, pro-European parties in general do not shy away from discussing issues similar to those discussed by Eurosceptics, with the exception of Germany and the Netherlands where we find distinct issue foci between pro- and anti-EU parties. This similarity of issue focus is most pronounced in Austria, Greece, and Portugal, where all parties campaign on the same issues. In the UK and France, it is pro-European mainstream parties (if they speak up at all) and Eurosceptics that converge issue- wise, while smaller pro-European parties diverge. Third, pro-European parties largely choose hold over adoption strategies (support for H2a). However, it is once again catch-all parties with strong internal dissent that are prone to choose adoption and blurring strategies, which supports H2b. Fourth, our results show that silencing and adoption/blurring strategies go hand in hand – most strongly affecting catch-all parties facing internal dissent: if parties choose silencing strategies, they are more likely to also apply adoption or blurring strategies in their sparse communication, one of the most vivid examples being the Conservatives in France (UMP).

Our research has shown that party strategies shape politicization within each country. Our findings thus point to a noticeable relationship: the higher the salience of Europe within a country, the less conflictual is party communication. In countries where clear-cut EU evaluations are formulated, the topic of Europe is pushed to the margins. Taking this relationship into account, it is not that surprising that no country completely fulfils all dimensions of politicization. There is only one country that scores high on all dimensions: Austria. Germany occupies the opposite position as we do not find indications for politicization on any dimension for Germany.

Has the Eurosceptic challenge been taken up by pro-European parties or have the challengers themselves already won the struggle? Our evaluation is mixed. On the one hand, we see that internally divided pro-European catch-all parties in major EU countries (namely UMP, PS in France; Syriza in Greece; PvdA and VVD in the Netherlands and Conservatives and Labour in the UK) do not only avoid talking about Europe but also mostly obscure their EU positions or adopt part of the Eurosceptic rhetoric. This is problematic as it hampers a full-fledged debate on EU integration with pro and contra positions being voiced.

On the other hand, our results also show that not all pro-European parties shy away from the Eurosceptic challenge. In the midst of the EU's financial and debt crisis, major pro-EU parties have vigorously defended their pro-EU stances (ÖVP and SPÖ in Austria, PS and PSD-CDS in Portugal and, to a lesser degree as salience is low, CDU/CSU and SPD in Germany and PvdA in the Netherlands).

Three caveats regarding our research need to be mentioned. First, the degree of politicization as we have conceptualized it is always a relative concept as we compare against the other countries in the sample. Such a conceptualization, however, does not answer the question regarding how much salience, topic similarity, or opinion polarization is needed in order to speak of full politicization. Second, it would be helpful to extend our country sample by including, for example, Eastern European countries which might possibly follow other dynamics. Third, our approach rests on a detailed description of party strategies and the resulting politicization and, as such, cannot control for alternative explanations – be they on the party or country level.

Our study opens up at least two paths for future research. First, as our research has shown that there is not a uniform response to the Eurosceptic challenge on the side of pro-European parties, future research needs to increase our understanding of pro-European parties' strategic choices. We have thereby focussed on the (vote-wise) most important parties in each country, i.e. the catch-all parties. However, research needs to also take into account the smaller

pro-European parties. Furthermore, more explanatory factors need to be systematically tested in order to understand variation in the strategic responses of pro-European parties. A better understanding of parties' strategic choices will increase our knowledge concerning the differences and similarities among countries regarding their politicization. Why, for example, do we find such a strong similarity between the ever-Eurosceptic United Kingdom and the classic engine of EU integration, France?

Second, we need to analyse whether and under which conditions mass media actually take up this input of parties and how they convert it into a societal debate. Our research has shown that mass media are either confronted with high salience combined with low conflict or with high conflict and low salience. This input contradicts the logic of mass media because conflict is a crucial driver for salience in such media (e.g. Schuck et al., 2011). Understanding the conditions of mass media's responses to parties' input is all the more important, as mass media are those who either show the elite's struggle to the average citizens or hide it from them.

Authors' contributions

All authors contributed equally to this article.

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Notes

1. Research on position blurring (e.g. Rovny, 2012) focuses on obscuring one's position on specific policy issues. We have taken up this idea but search for blurring regarding the topic dimension, i.e. the evaluation of EU integration as such.

2. The search string contains the following key words: ‘Europ*, europ*, EU, EP, EZB, EIB, ESM, EFSF, EFSM, EuGH, EAD, EWSA, EIF, EDSB, EWU, Troika, Frontex, FRONTEX, constitutional treaty’.

3. A detailed overview of the reliability scores is available from the authors upon request.

4. The Duncan index of dissimilarity is equivalent to the more widely used Pedersen index on electoral volatility (Pedersen, 1979). The formula is as follows

$$\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{p_{i1}}{P_1} - \frac{p_{i2}}{P_2} \right|$$

where n is the number of issues, pi1 and pi2 the number of EU-related press releases devoted to issue i by party 1 and party 2, and P1 and P2 the total number of EU-related press releases published by party 1 and party 2.

5. The index was built as follows: 1 ‘Voicing of specific and general EU support (both indicators positive)’; 0.75 ‘Voicing of general EU support (EUEVAL: n.a. or balanced)’; 0.5 ‘Voicing of general EU support and specific Euroscepticism’; 0.25 ‘Voicing of specific EU support (INTEGEVAL: n.a. or balanced)’; 0.25 ‘Voicing of specific Euroscepticism (INTEGEVAL: n.a. or balanced)’; 0.5 ‘Voicing of general Euroscepticism and specific EU support’; 0.75 ‘Voicing of general Euroscepticism (EUEVAL: n.a. or balanced)’; 1 ‘Voicing of specific and general Euroscepticism (both negative)’.

6. Country-level salience is measured as the share of EU-related press releases of each party within a country divided by the number of parties within a country. We have not weighted this salience measure by vote share as we specifically focus on the large catch-all parties in our detailed description.

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5 MANUSKRIFT 2: POLITICAL PARTIES' STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS. AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF RESPONSIBILITY ATTRIBUTIONS IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

Antl-Wittenberg, E. Political Parties' Strategic Communication in Multi-Level Governance Systems. An International Comparison of Responsibility Attributions in Times of Crisis.

Accepted for review from *Comparative European Politics*

The European financial crisis is not only an issue of enormous social, political and economic relevance, it also raises the question who is responsible. This paper concentrates on the question whether and how political parties strategically framed responsibility within their public communication about the crisis. In systems with multiple levels of government, citizens have to cope with the task of properly assigning credit and blame to the right political level. Political parties can benefit from this lack of clarity of responsibility by strategically investing in blame shifting and credit claiming as an attempt to influence the responsibility judgements of citizens. We conducted a quantitative content analysis of press releases of political parties in Germany, Austria and Portugal prior to the European Parliament election 2014. Our results show clear patterns of strategic party behaviour, which diverge between different types of parties and between receiving and donor countries.

Keywords: European Union, Attribution of Responsibility, Multi-level Governance, Political Parties, European financial crisis, Accountability

Introduction

At the time of the 2014 EP elections, Europe was in crisis. The European Union – representing the world's largest single market – was still dealing with the consequences of the European financial crisis¹ (Preunkert and Vobruba, 2011). The elections have unveiled raising Euroscepticism among European citizens with high vote shares for Eurosceptic parties at both ends of the political spectrum. In the context of bailout agreements, austerity measurements and stabilization funds, citizens became more aware and increasingly critical of European policies. The years of the “permissive consensus” seem to be over (e.g. Hooghe and Marks, 2009; Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2013), and the project of the European Integration might turn out to be the scapegoat of the financial crisis.

Especially in crisis-related situations the search for those responsible is of high relevance in the political discourse. Responsibility attributions play a central role in people's attitudes towards political actors and are a necessary basis for the vote choice (Iyengar, 1989; Maestas *et al*, 2008; Marsh and Tilley, 2009). Voters need to assign responsibility for policy outcomes in order to support or sanction a party in the election. Especially in systems with multiple levels of governments – such as the European Union – “citizens need to be aware of which responsibilities pertain to different levels of government in order to sanction politicians for their performance.” (Hobolt *et al*, 2013b: 154). This lack of “clarity of responsibility” could be of strategic use for the different political parties as they might strategically invest in blame shifting and credit claiming as an attempt to influence the responsibility judgements of citizens. While other studies on economics and responsibility attributions in federal settings focus on institutional contexts (Hobolt *et al*, 2013a) or on the voter (Marsh and Tilley, 2009; Tilley and Hobolt, 2011), this article focuses on the role of the national political parties within this context. They play a central role in transferring EU issues into the national sphere and in communicating this issues to the citizens. We are interested in the question, whether and how political parties

frame responsibility in their strategic communication about the European financial crisis (RQ). In order to make assumptions concerning the strategic communication of parties about the crisis in the run up to the 2014 EP election, we combine political theories of party behaviour and the framing approach from communication studies. As we know from literature, *the position of parties in the political system* (government versus opposition role) as well as their *ideological orientation* (Euroskeptic versus Europhile) have an influence on the issues they focus on (Adam et al., 2016), and how those issues are framed in their EU-related strategic communication (Gerhards et al, 2009; Helbling et al, 2010). Further, country-specific context factors as the domestic *economic situation* (Key, 1966; Vavreck, 2009) and the *public opinion* (Adam and Maier, 2016; Downs, 1957) might shape the public communication of parties. Combining this knowledge about relevant predictor variables with the literature on strategic responsibility framing (Gerhards et al, 2009; Iyengar 1996; Maestas et al, 2008; Weaver, 1986), allows us to derive hypothesis concerning the *salience* of the financial crisis and the crisis-related *attribution of responsibility* on the party as well as on the country level.

With our study, we enhance research in a threefold manner: We contribute to the understanding of parties' strategic behaviour in multi-level governance systems by drawing a precise picture of how parties communicate in times of crisis. By combining different theoretical strands we propose a model of parties' strategic agenda setting as well as their responsibility framing in the European context, which includes party type specific as well as context factors. We test this model using an international comparative research design, which allows us to explain who set a crisis-related issue on the agenda and who is blaming whom for crisis-related problems. Furthermore, we study the communication of parties by analysing their press releases as data source instead of using media coverage as a proxy (see e.g. Gerhards et al, 2009; Helbling et al, 2010). This allows a more precise as well as a finer grained analysis of the strategic framing of responsibility from political actors.

Strategic Communication of Parties about the European financial Crisis

Analysing the political debate about the financial crisis means not only analysing *who* is setting the crisis on the agenda, but also *who* is talking *in which way* about the crisis. “Both the selection of objects for attention and the selection of attributes for describing these objects are powerful agenda-setting roles” (López-Escobar *et al.*, 1998: 337). In line with Entman’s popular definition, framing means to shape the public perception of an issue by suggesting what the problem is about, who causes it, in which way it should be solved and by delivering possible moral evaluations (Entman, 1993). The attribution of responsibility is thus a key aspect regarding the framing of an issue as it defines which actor is responsible for the cause of a problem and “who or what has the power either to alleviate or to forestall alleviation of the problem” (Iyengar, 1989: 897). We define those two aspects of responsibility attributions according to Iyengar (1989; 1990) as causal responsibility and treatment responsibility.

In every crisis-related situation, the question about who is responsible plays a central role in the public debate. As we know from social psychology, people search for explanations for the cause of problems to reduce uncertainty (Fiske and Taylor, 2013; Hallahan, 1999: 219-21). “For politicians, society’s penchant to ascribe responsibility for events to specific individuals or organizations provides opportunities for taking credit for accomplishments or for blaming others” (Hallahan, 2011: 192). As people are barely able to get first-hand information about the distribution of responsibility concerning the European financial crisis, they depend on information about the crisis in the national media coverage, which in turn is based on the statements of political actors as key protagonists of the public debate. An important part of politics is the struggle over the way problems are defined (Kinder and Sanders, 1990: 74). Parties do not only compete by taking different positions or selectively emphasizing different issues, but also by “promoting their way of understanding the issues, that is, frames” (van der Pas, 2013: 14). Bearing in mind that the attribution of responsibility

is relevant for citizens' attitudes towards political actors, political actors invest in shaping the public framing of responsibility via their strategic communication. Maestas *et al* (2008) could show in their study concerning hurricane Katrina that political actors make use of strategic blame shifting in a federal political setting. In the realm of the EU, national political parties play a central role by transferring European issues into national public spheres (Helbling *et al*, 2010; Koopmans, 2007). They make them a) *salient* in a certain national context (agenda building function of political parties, see e.g. Brandenburg, 2002; Dearing and Rogers, 1996) and b) *enrich them with a specific framing*. As national parties are also the ones, which have to be elected on the national as well as on the supranational level, they have high incentives to try to dominate the interpretation of responsibility judgements via their public communication about the European financial crisis. Before looking at the framing of responsibility, we elaborate on parties' strategic silencing respectively their highlighting of the European financial crisis in their public communication.

Addressing the Financial Crisis

Following the economic voting paradigm, citizens reward or punish the government for the outcomes of its economic policy (Fiorina, 1981; Key, 1966). "The citizens vote for the government if the economy is doing all right; otherwise the vote is against" (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000: 183). Many studies have shown that the economic condition in a country effects the electoral outcome at least to some degree (for an overview, see e.g. Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000; Vavreck, 2009; Talving, 2018). "But the electorate decision is only half of the story and, it might be argued, the second half at that" (Hellwig, 2011: 92). Political actors also play a central role. They are not just passive extras, but adjust their campaign to shape the economic information in the run-up to an election. As a basic attempt, they try to manage the salience of the economy as an electoral issue. In times of economic hardship, the opposition

parties are the ones who should stress economic topics in their electoral campaigns to publicly denounce the government for political shortcomings whereas the incumbents should silence the economy as far as possible (Vavreck, 2009: 31-2). In his seminal work on parties' strategies of blame avoidance, Weaver (1986: 384) describes the strategic silencing of issues as "the best way for policymakers to keep a blame-generating issue from hurting them politically." Applied to the case of the European Parliament Elections in 2014, we assume that opposition parties push the topic of the financial crisis in their strategic communication whereas government parties avoid stressing this issue (H1a).

H1a: Government parties will silence the issue of the financial crisis whereas opposition parties will try to set the issue on the agenda.

Different studies have shown that a party's ideological position towards the project of the European integration influences its strategic communication about European issues and that especially Euroskeptic opposition parties raise European issues in the national realm (De Vries and Hobolt, 2012; van de Wardt *et al*, 2014). Especially in times of a European crisis, Euroskeptic opposition parties might profit from setting the financial crisis on their agenda as this topic is well suited to invest in a negative campaigning strategy towards the EU.

H1b: Euroskeptic opposition parties talk more about the European financial crisis than Europhile opposition parties.

Besides party-type specific differences, we are also interested in context factors, which might play a role. Hernández and Kriesi (2016) stress the difference between countries where the economy recovered during the European financial crisis and those countries that are still recession-plagued, among other things, due to austerity measures. Their analysis shows that in Western Europe voters' punishment of the incumbent has been especially severe in hard-hit countries which were part of an IMF programme. We assume that a country's affectedness from

the crisis also influences strategic party behaviour. Especially parties in receiving countries, which are directly affected by the crisis and where citizens suffer, for example, under high unemployment rates (see table 1), might strategically push or silence the issue of the European financial crisis. Whereas the difference between government parties, Europhile and Euroskeptic opposition parties will be smaller in the donor countries, which are only indirectly affected as credit grantors.

H2: The difference between party types regarding the salience of the financial crisis will be more distinct in receiving than in donor countries.

Parties' Framing of Responsibility in Times of Crisis

Besides managing the salience of an issue, parties can strategically frame an issue in their public statements. As Fröhlich and Rüdiger (2006: 18) formulate: "The main goal of political public relations is the use of media outlets to communicate specific political *interpretations* of issues in the hope of garnering public support for political policies." In times of an economic crisis, the framing of responsibility seems to be of high relevance. Many studies have shown that the attribution of responsibility for economic performance has an impact on the evaluation of political actors (Arceneaux, 2006; Rudolph, 2003; 2016). Marsh and Tilley (2009) could demonstrate in a panel survey in Britain and Ireland that evaluations of the economy only affect the voting decision when they are combined with responsibility attributions. "It is not enough to think that performance has been poor on an issue; sensibly the voter has to think that the government is responsible for the undesired outcome" (Marsh and Tilley, 2009: 133). Investigating responsibility attributions of political actors in the European setting is of particular interest, as the EU suffers from a lack of "clarity of responsibility" (Powell and Whitten, 1993: 398). Clarity of responsibility moderates the influence of the economic performance on voting behaviour in the sense that the effect of economic performance on vote choice is greater in

political systems where citizens can clearly assign responsibility than in countries where responsibility is blurred between different political actors (Anderson, 2007; Fernández-Albertos, 2006; Nadeau *et al*, 2002; Powell and Whitten, 1993; Whitten and Palmer, 1999). In the EU, “complex institutional and governmental structures blur lines of responsibility and make it more difficult for voters to assign responsibility” (Hobolt *et al*, 2013a: 164-5). European citizens are confronted with a low vertical “institutional clarity” (Hobolt *et al*, 2013a: 169) as power is divided between national and supranational institutions, which makes it difficult for citizens to assign credit and blame to the right political level. Lobo and Lewis-Beck (2012) could show that the national economic voting effect diminishes to the extent the electorate sees the EU as responsible for the economy in four southern European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece). In the context of the European financial crisis – as a genuine supranational crisis of high complexity – citizens are even more challenged to assign responsibility for causes and for the management of the crisis from their own knowledge. In this sense, Clarke and Whitten (2013: 448) interpreted the minor effect of economic voting in the 2009 German elections based on a lack of clarity of responsibility, which offers the possibility to shift the blame to actors other than the government.

Against the background of this multi-dimensional lack of clarity of responsibility, it is straightforward to assume that political parties strategically frame responsibility in their public communication about the European financial crisis. We assume that different types of parties vary in attributing causal and treatment responsibility. We expect that a party's *position in the party system* (government versus opposition role) influences the strategic assigning of blame and credit. Especially in a supranational context, we expect to observe strategic causal responsibility attributions as “politicians' incentives to shift blame to forces beyond their control should increase under more open economies” (Hellwig and Samuels, 2007: 288; see also Fernández-Albertos, 2006). The findings of Gerhards *et al* (2009: 542) point also in that direction. They could demonstrate that national governments in Germany and Britain invest in

blame shifting towards the EU and other European member states. Two thirds of their attributions towards the EU and even three quarters of their attributions towards other European governments are negative in the sense that they hold these actors accountable for failings. In line with these findings, we assume that *governing parties* try to prevent their own party from being sanctioned by the electorate for crisis-related problems (Marsh and Tilley, 2009) by 'using' the EU as a scapegoat (H3a).

H3a: Government parties invest in shifting the responsibility for causes or negative aspects of the financial crisis from the national to the European level.

Looking at the opposition parties, we assume that a party's *ideological position towards the European Integration* might influence the framing of the crisis. Research has shown that the ideological position towards the EU shapes the EU-related communication of political parties also regarding the evaluation of the EU (Author a, Adam and Maier, 2011). Furthermore, the European integration dimension gained weight regarding the prediction of party behaviour during the European financial crisis (for party behaviour in Greece see Katsanidou and Otjes, 2016; regarding parties in the European Parliament see Otjes and Veer, 2016). Following Downs' Economic theory of political behaviour, each party in a multiparty system is motivated "to differentiate itself as completely as possible from its neighbours" (1957: 143) and behaves according to a distinct ideology to serve certain segments of voters. Also Vavreck (2009: 27) underlines the importance of differentiation for a successful campaign: "The most efficient path to victory is going to be different for different candidates – as each possesses a unique set of policy positions and characteristics." Following this logic, Euroskeptic opposition parties might blame the EU for causes and negative evolutions of the crisis to stress their anti-EU position (H3b). However, Europhile opposition parties will use the chance to defame the national government (H3c).

H3b: Euroskeptic opposition parties use more blaming of supranational political actors than Europhile opposition parties.

H3c: Europhile opposition parties use more blaming of the national government than Euroskeptic opposition parties.

Besides party-type based variances, we expect also differences in the way political parties attribute causal responsibility in their public communication about the European financial crisis arising from the *economic situation of a country*. This might be an important factor as “market pressure, in addition to political, economic and social pressures, gave rise to deep cleavages between creditors and debtors, the strong and the vulnerable.” (Laffan, 2016: 915) We assume that the fact whether a country is hit hard by the crisis and receive financial aid from the European Union or whether a state is only indirectly affected by the crisis as credit grantor influences the strategic blame shifting of parties. Parties in the donor countries have to explain the use of tax payers' money for crisis-related rescue measurements. As the own country is only indirectly affected by the crisis, it is convenient for governing parties in the donor countries to blame the European system or other European member states for causing crisis-related problems. In contradiction to that, the blaming of the European level is less straightforward for governing parties in receiving countries, where the domestic economy is recession-plagued.

H4: Governing parties in donor countries use more blaming of the EU-level than governing parties in receiving countries.

Aside from the question of who is responsible for causing crisis-related problems, we are interested in the question of who is depicted as problem solver in parties' strategic communication. Presuming political actors behave strategically, we assume that especially governing parties present themselves as competent problem solvers. We suppose that – as for the attribution of causal responsibility – the economic situation of a country has an impact on

governing parties' attribution of responsibility. Kayser and Peress (2012) demonstrate the necessity for international comparison when analysing multinational economic evolutions as voters do not perceive the domestic economy as autarkic. According to the good economic situation in the donor countries despite the Europe-wide crisis, the governing parties in those countries might especially use the chance to depict themselves as successful managers of the economic crisis.

H5: Government parties in donor countries depict themselves more often as responsible for the solution of the crisis than government parties in receiving countries.

Data and Method

To study parties' strategic communication about the financial crisis in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections, we used press releases as a data source. Press releases have several benefits regarding our research interest: They are visible in public and an extremely relevant source for journalists (Netjes and Binnema, 2007). They also deliver more content than spots or posters and are, in this sense, more appropriate to analyse complex content characteristics like responsibility judgements.

We conducted a quantitative content analysis of all press releases with at least two references to *European policies*, *European institutions*, *European politicians* and/or the *EP elections* 12 weeks prior to the EP elections in 2014. We compiled an electronic search string² to identify these EU-related press releases. This search resulted in a total of 1574 press releases in three countries. Regarding the framing of responsibility, we are only interested in parties' strategic communication about the financial crisis. We therefore identified all press releases which referred to the European financial crisis through manual coding. Our analysis covers 221 crisis-related press releases³, which represents 14 % of all press releases published in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections. To ensure the reliability of coding, all coders took part in a thorough

training and a (researcher coder) reliability test of 25 press releases each. We achieved satisfactory reliability results (Krippendorff, 2004): 0.97–1.00 (KALPHA) regarding formal categories and 0.62–0.75 (KALPHA) for content characteristics⁴.

The salience of the European financial crisis in parties' press releases prior to the EP election 2014 as well as the attribution of causal and treatment responsibility within these press releases serve as dependent variables in this study. As mentioned above, we measured the salience of the financial crisis by identifying all EU-related press releases which referred to the financial crisis. We therefore distinguished between press releases without reference to economic problems, those with reference to general economic problems and those with specific reference to the European financial crisis. As part of this content analysis, we operationalised the framing of responsibility within two categories. We operationalised 'causal responsibility' by identifying which actor is attributed as responsible for causing or worsening a crisis-related problem within a press release. The aspect of 'treatment responsibility' is coded if an actor is depicted as the one who should solve or manage a crisis-related problem out of competence or power within a press release. Whereas the former 'blaming' category is negatively connoted, the latter 'credit' making or taking category has a positive or neutral connotation. For both categories, we used an extremely fine-grained actor list (Maier et al., 2014).

Regarding the predictor variables, we have to differentiate between variables on the *party level* and the *country level*. Regarding the first aspect, the position within the national party system (government versus opposition role) as well as the ideological position towards the European integration are relevant independent variables. We classified the parties as Euroskeptic or Europhile in accordance with the ratings of the Chapell Hill Expert Survey (Bakker *et al*, 2015) (see table 1).⁵ On the country level, a country's affectedness from the financial crisis and the national public opinion towards the European integration served as predictor variables (see table 1).

Setting of the Study

According to our hypotheses, we chose three countries with multiparty systems, which consist of Europhile governing parties and Europhile as well as Euroskeptic opposition parties (see table 1). Furthermore, our sample represents countries that have been affected by the crisis to different degrees (see table 1). We chose Germany and Austria to represent donor countries that are less affected by the crisis. Whereas the German population is quite Europhile, Austrian citizens share more Euroskeptic attitudes (see table 1). Portugal is directly affected by the European financial crisis and suffers from severe cuts in state expenditures and high unemployment rates (Bellucci *et al.* 2012). Regarding the percentage of Euroskeptic attitudes among its citizens, Portugal can be categorized as more Euroskeptic (see table 1).

Table 5-1. Key indicators for selected countries.

	Euro-skepticism among citizens (%) ^a	Unemployment rate 2014 (%) ^b	Budget balance within the EU budget 2013 (BN EUR (% of GDP) ^c	Europhile Governing Parties ^d	Europhile Opposition Parties ^d	Euroskeptic Opposition Parties ^d
Germany	22	6.7	-13.82 (-0.49)	CDU/CSU, SPD	GREENS, FDP	LINKE, AfD
Austria	33	5.0	-1.25 (-0.40)	SPÖ, ÖVP	GREENS, NEOS	FPÖ, BZÖ
Portugal	35	18.9	+4.42 (+2.72)	PSD/ CDS-PP	PS	CDU, BE

^a Eurobarometer 81.2 (March, 2014) ^b *Germany*: Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2015; *Austria, Greece, Portugal*: IMF, 2015.

^c Europäische Kommission, 2014. ^d Bakker et al. (2015)

Our analysis covers all national parties and their corresponding fractions that have gained at least 3 % vote share in the last national or European election. In sum, our study covers six German, six Austrian and five Portuguese parties⁶.

Results

Who is talking about the Crisis?

First we are interested in the salience of the European financial crisis in the strategic communication of parties across different party types as well as across countries. We expected that opposition parties might highlight the topic of the financial crisis in their press releases to show economic shortcomings of the incumbent parties, who may silence the issue. Other than expected, there is no significant difference between governing and opposition parties as such. Both groups refer to the European financial crisis on the same level (13 % versus 15 %, see table 2), which leads us to reject hypothesis 1a.

Table 5-2. Press releases with reference to the financial crisis (in %)

	Governing parties (%)	Opposition parties (%)
No reference to financial crisis	87	85
Reference to financial crisis	13	15
N	787	787

N=1574.

$\chi^2 = 1.9$, $df = 1$, $p = .17$

To test hypothesis 1b, we distinguish between Europhile and Euroskeptic opposition parties. An ANOVA revealed a significant difference between governing and Europhile opposition parties on the one hand, and Euroskeptic opposition parties on the other hand, $F(2, 1574) =$

11,18; $p = .000$; partial $\eta^2 = .014$ (see table 3). Whereas Europhile opposition parties as well as government parties avoid talking about the financial crisis and only refer to the crisis in 9 % respectively 13 % of their press releases. Euroskeptic opposition parties address the crisis in 20 % of their publications to possibly campaign against Europe. This results corroborate hypothesis 1b.

Table 5-3. Press releases with reference to the financial crisis (in %)

	Governing parties (%)	Europhile Opposition Party (%)	Euroskeptic Opposition Party (%)
No reference to financial crisis	87.2	91.3	80
Reference to financial crisis	12.8	8.7	20
N	787	332	455

N=1574.

$F(2, 1574) = 11.17$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .014$

Results according to Tamhane-T2 post-hoc testing: Governing versus Euroskeptic Opposition parties: $p \leq .01$; Europhile versus Euroskeptic Opposition parties: $p \leq .001$

Adding the countries as a second factor in the ANOVA, we can detect clear differences between national states. As expected, the Portuguese case shows the most distinct pattern regarding salience strategies of different party types ($F(2,337) = 10.639$; $p = .000$; partial $\eta^2 = .06$): Euroskeptic opposition parties as the Bloco de Esquerada (BE) and the Coligação Democrática Unitária (CDU) refer to the crisis in over a third of their publications whereas the governing and Europhile opposition parties only cover the crisis in 15 % respectively 16 % of their press releases (see figure 1). In the donor countries, we can find a minor effect of the party type regarding the salience of the financial crisis ($F(2,936) = 5.520$; $p = .004$; partial $\eta^2 = .01$). According to the expectation expressed in hypothesis 2 parties' strategic behaviour is more distinct in receiving countries where the issue is more acute. Again, we cannot refer to

governing and opposition parties as different groups, but have to differentiate between government parties, Europhile and Eurosceptic opposition parties.

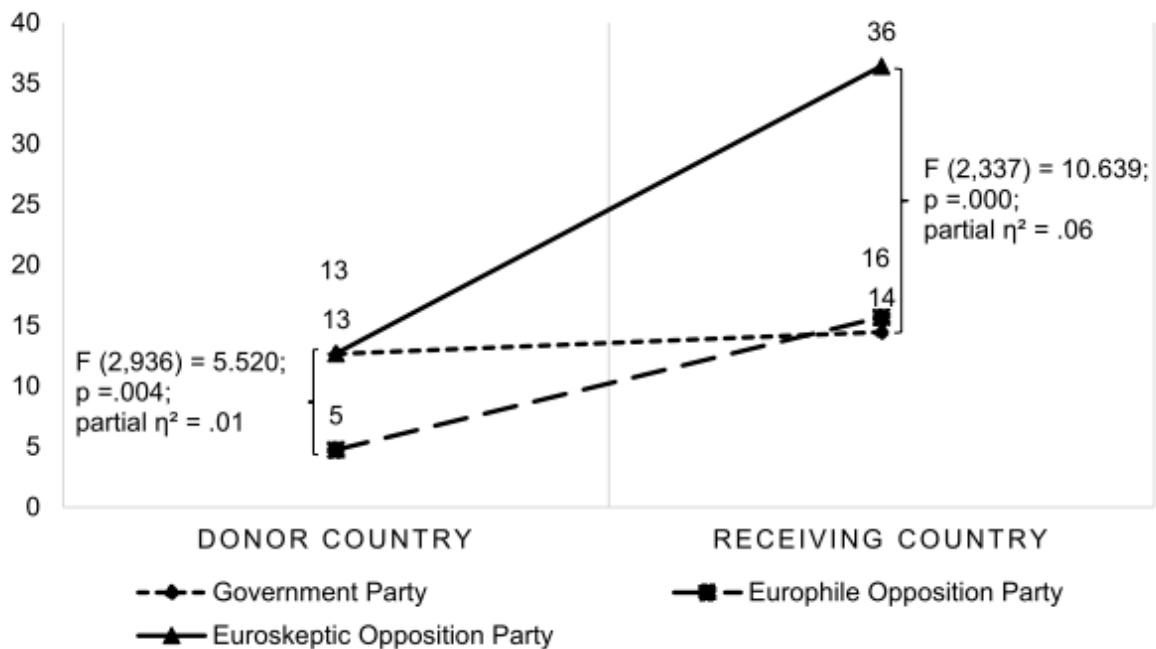


Figure 5-1. Press releases with reference to the financial crisis (in %)

N=1574

Main Effect Party Type: $F(2, 1574) = 17.138$; $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .021$

Main Effect Economic Status of the Country: $F(2, 1574) = 30.495$; $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .019$

Interaction: $F(4, 1574) = 8.673$; $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .011$

We can also find an interaction between the factors party type and country ($F(4, 1574) = 8.673$; $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .011$). In the donor countries, Germany and Austria, Eurosceptic opposition parties *and* the governing parties talk most about the financial crisis, whereas Europhile opposition parties almost completely ignore the financial crisis in their strategic communication (see figure 1). Unlike Portugal where the governing parties try to silence the issue that is related to acute problems such as high unemployment rates in the domestic country, governing parties in the donor countries, which suffer only indirectly from the crisis, address the topic to possibly shift the blame to the EU.

Who is blaming whom?

In our further analysis, we focus on the framing of responsibility in the strategic communication about the European financial crisis by governing, Europhile and Euroskeptic opposition parties. If we are looking at the distribution of causal responsibility attributions between the different party types (see table 4), we can see interesting differences. Whereas government parties shift the blame to the supranational level in 66 % of their crisis-related press releases, Europhile opposition parties accuse *only* the national governments. As expected, Euroskeptic parties blame mostly the EU (51 %), but also attack the national governments (49 %).

Table 5-4. Attribution of causal responsibility in crisis-related press releases (in %)

Target	Sender		
	Governing parties (%)	Europhile Opposition Parties (%)	Euroskeptical Opposition Parties (%)
Government	13	100	49
Opposition	18	-	1
National Economic Actor	3	-	-
Other National Actor	-	-	-
EU Political Actor	35	-	31
EZB	-	-	3
Troika	3	-	14
Other EU Actor	20	-	-
Other EU Member State	8	-	3
International Actor	3	-	-
<i>N</i>	40	18	74

N = 132

Basis: Press releases with reference to the financial crisis containing causal responsibility attributions
Columns add up to 100 %.

If we are looking solely at causal responsibility attributions regarding the supranational level, an ANOVA reveals a strong effect of the party type on the blaming of European actors in parties' strategic communication about the financial crisis, $F(2, 132) = 6.417$; $p = .000$; partial $\eta^2 = .09$. As displayed in figure 2, we can detect party-type specific patterns of blame shifting towards the EU level. But as those patterns significantly diverge between donor and receiving countries, we include this factor in our analysis⁷. Analogue to hypothesis 3a, the government parties in the donor countries, Germany and Austria, invest in blame shifting at the European

level (see figure 2). Surprising is the fact that those Europhile parties blame the EU to such an extent. Our analysis shows that governing parties in the donor countries attribute causal responsibility towards the European level to a greater extent than the Euroskeptical opposition parties in those countries (68 % vs. 58 %). In contradiction to hypothesis 3a, which therefore can only be approved partly, governing parties in the receiving country Portugal do not invest in a blame shifting strategy towards Europe (0 %, see figure 2). Taking a closer look at the opposition parties, leads us to confirm hypothesis 3b. Across countries, Euroskeptical opposition parties blame supranational actors significantly more often than Europhile opposition parties. We can also approve hypothesis 3c: Europhile opposition parties do not only accuse significantly more but also solely the national governments (see table 4).

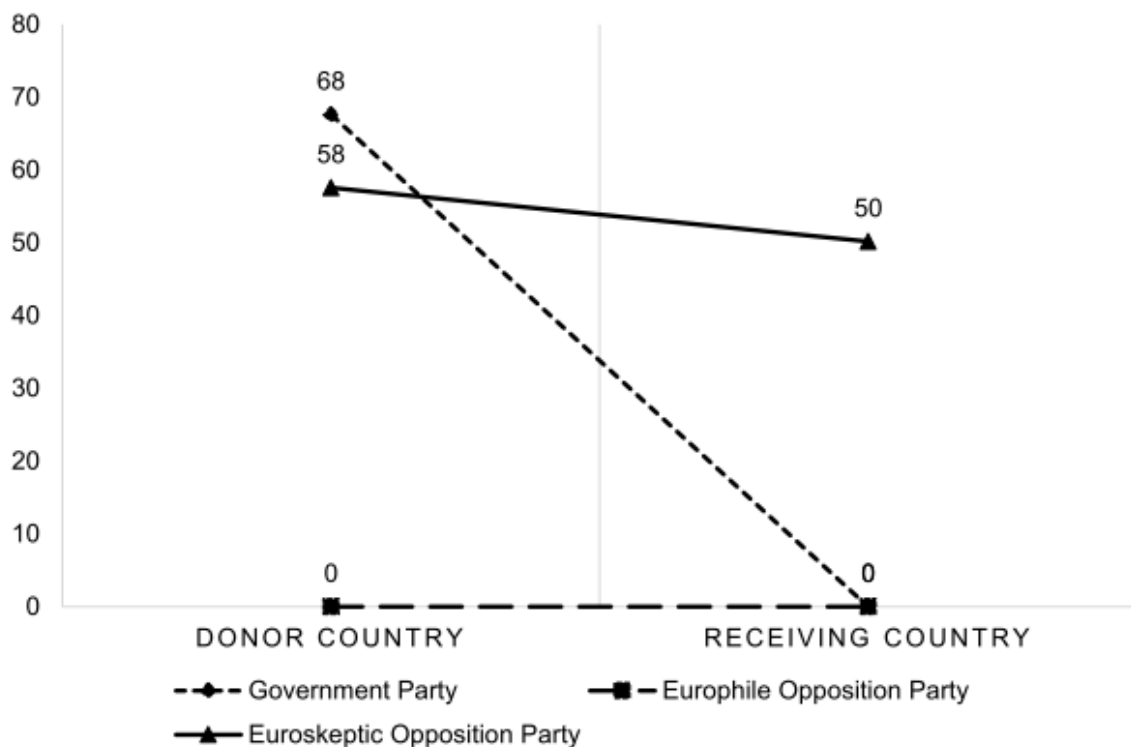


Figure 5-2. Blaming of the European level in crisis-related press releases

N=132

Basis: Press releases with reference to the financial crisis containing causal responsibility attributions

Main Effect Party Type: $F(2, 132) = 6.417$; $p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .092$

Main Effect Economic Status of the Country: $F(2, 132) = 6.478$; $p = .012$, partial $\eta^2 = .049$

Interaction: $F(4, 132) = 2.984$; $p = .054$, partial $\eta^2 = .045$

As mentioned above, the ANOVA also reveals a highly significant effect of the economic status of a country regarding the intensity of blame-shifting towards the European level ($F(2, 132) = 6.478$; $p = .012$, partial $\eta^2 = .049$). Whereas governing parties in the donor countries invest in blaming the EU for causing crisis-related problems in 68 % of their causal responsibility attributions, governing parties in the receiving countries do not point the finger at the EU and blame Brussels for causing crisis-related problems (see figure 2). If blame is voiced in press releases with reference to the financial crisis, Portuguese governing parties' blame-shifting only takes place at the national level. The Europhile opposition party *PS (Partido Socialista)* only blames the government; whereas, the government parties (*CDS-PP and PPD-PSD*) only blame the *PS* (55 %), which previously held office, for causing crisis-related problems. These results lead us to approve hypothesis 4, as governing parties in the donor countries significantly more often scapegoat the European level to explain crisis-related problems. We thereby have to mention that only in Portugal the incumbent parties change completely within the time of the European financial crisis, which might be an additional explanatory factor⁸. If the governing coalition in a country recently changed, the manoeuvring room for governing parties regarding blame attributions expands. In this case, governing parties can not only shift the blame to the European level to prevent the own party from electoral damage, but may also accuse the former government for causing problems related to the financial crisis. Governing parties in Germany and Austria cannot accuse the former government without compromising themselves and might therefore focus more on shifting the blame towards the EU (regarding the importance of a party's current or former government participation for its strategic behaviour, see Hobolt and Tilley, 2016: 974-5).

Who is responsible for solving crisis-related Problems?

Regarding the distribution of treatment responsibility, we expected an influence on the economic situation of the country on the auto-attribution of treatment responsibility from governing parties. As the economy prospers in the donor countries, government parties there could use this circumstance to depict themselves as successful managers of the crisis. As we can see in table 5, the economic context influences the strategic auto-attribution of treatment responsibility by the governing parties, but in a different way than expected.

Table 5-5. Governing parties' treatment responsibility attributions in crisis-related press releases (in %)

		Recipient Country (%)	Donor Country (%)
Attribution of Treatment Responsibility	Government	73	34
	Other Actor	27	66
<i>N</i>		11	90

N=101

Basis: Press releases from governing parties with reference to the European financial crisis

Columns add up to 100 %.

$\chi^2: = 6.1, df = 1, p = .014, Cramer-V = 0.5$

The Portuguese governing parties clearly use more auto-attributions of treatment responsibility in press releases with reference to the European financial crisis than the German or Austrian governing parties. Whereas the governing parties in the donor countries declare themselves as responsible for solving crisis-related problems in about a third of their publications, the Portuguese government depict solely their own party as responsible for the management of the crisis (see table 5). In contradiction to the Portuguese case, the governing parties in Austria and Germany also attribute treatment responsibility towards the EU. According to these results, we have to reject hypothesis 5. We can indeed state that the extent to which a country is affected

by the crisis has an impact on governing parties' attribution of treatment responsibility but in the opposite direction than expected. These findings might express the need to demonstrate nationhood and the incumbent's power in the receiving country, which has to conform to the requirements of the bailout fund.

Conclusion

In this paper, we examined how political parties attribute responsibility in their public communication related to the European financial crisis across European countries. We were interested in the question whether and how different types of parties strategically framed responsibility in their strategic communication about the European financial crisis in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections. Furthermore, we examined which country-specific context factors might influence strategic party behaviour. We based our assumptions on the framing approach from communication science as well as on political theories of strategic party behaviour. We tested our hypothesis in an internationally comparative research design by analysing responsibility attributions in political parties' press releases published 12 weeks prior to the 2014 EP elections in three European member states (Austria, Germany and Portugal).

Our results show clear patterns of strategic party behaviour, which diverge between different types of parties and between receiving and donor countries. Governing parties as well as Europhile opposition parties silence the crisis in their strategic communication, whereas Euroskeptic opposition parties push this issue in their publications. Parties' strategic management of the *salience* of the financial crisis is mostly visible in the receiving country Portugal, where the issue is more acute. Regarding the attribution of responsibility, our analysis reveals that Europhile government parties in the donor countries shift blame to the supranational level to avoid negative causal responsibility attributions towards their own party. Euroskeptic opposition parties across all countries use the financial crisis to invest in a negative campaigning

strategy towards the EU, whereas Europhile opposition parties use the crisis to accuse the national governments. In the receiving country, parties' strategic framing of causal as well as of treatment responsibility remains within the national borders. The governing parties accuse the former incumbent for causing crisis related-problems and describe their own parties as able to solve those problems. This might express a need to demonstrate nationhood in times of austerity measures in the sense of *we face our* problems. In contrast to this, governing parties in the donor countries invest in a strategic outsourcing of responsibility attributions and shift the blame towards the European level. Even governing parties in Germany, which is the most Europhile country in our sample, use this hidden EU critique to avoid blame towards their own party.

Our study contributes to the understanding of parties' framing of responsibility in the context of a multi-level governance system. We could clearly demonstrate that parties strategically shape responsibility attributions in their strategic communication. We identified party-type as well as country-specific patterns regarding blame shifting in systems with multiple layers of government as well as regarding the attribution of treatment responsibility. As we analysed press releases of parties, we could draw a more fine-grained picture of the political framing of responsibility in comparison to studies using the media coverage as a proxy for political statements.

For future research, it would be interesting to gain insights about the processual character of political framing by integrating data from the communication of political actors on the one side, and the media coverage on the other side. This would shed light on the active role of the media in this process and would answer the question which political actors get the chance to raise a topic in the media and to voice their responsibility attributions in public. This study has shown the different relevance of context factors regarding the strategic communication of parties. This opens the path for future research to invest in international comparative designs to get more insights about the role of different country-specific context factors for strategic party

behaviour. The European context seems especially suitable for those country comparisons since several countries within the European Union face the same political issues.

Finally, our study is not without limitations. We based our analysis on only three countries with only one being a recipient country. It would be interesting to look at other receiving countries, such as Greece or Spain, to get more insights about the generalisability of our results. Plus, we conducted our study during the management phase of the European financial crisis (Preunkert and Vobruba, 2011). Results could have been different at the climax of the crisis in 2011 or at its beginning in 2009.

Notes

¹ In the following, we will use the terms 'Euro crisis', 'European financial crisis', or 'financial crisis' synonymously.

² The search string contains the following key words: 'Europ*', 'europ*', 'EU', 'EP', 'EZB', 'EIB', 'ESM', 'EFSF', 'EFSM', 'EuGH', 'EAD', 'EWSA', 'EIF', 'EDSB', 'EWU', 'Troika', 'Frontex', 'FRONTEX', 'constitutional treaty'.

³ The analysis covers 100 press releases from Austrian parties, 40 from German and 81 press releases from Portuguese parties.

⁴ Detailed reliability scores for the single variables are available on request.

⁵ Party positions towards the European integration were measured on a seven-point scale ranging from one (strongly oppose) to seven (strongly in favour) rating the "overall orientation of the party leadership towards European integration". As four was the neutral point on the scale, we regarded all parties with ratings lower as four as Euroskeptic parties and all parties with ratings greater than 4 as Europhile parties.

⁶ In the case of Germany these parties are CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union), SPD (Social Democratic Party), FDP (Free Democratic Party), die Grünen (the Greens), the Linke (the Left), and the AfD (Alternative for Germany). The Austrian parties are ÖVP (Austrian People's Party), SPÖ (Social Democratic Party), die Grünen (the Greens), NEOS (the New Austria), FPÖ (Austrian Freedom Party), and BZÖ (Alliance for the Future of Austria). In case of Portugal we analysed the strategic communication of PPD-PSD (Partido Social Democrata) and CDS-PP (Partido Popular), who participated as an electoral alliance of parties (Aliança Portugal) in the 2014 EP election (therefore, we included this alliance in our study), PS (Partido Socialista), CDU (Coligação Democrática Unitária, a coalition of the PCP (Partido Comunista Português) and the Greens), and BE (Bloco de Esquerda).

⁷ We do not report the results per country as – in contradiction to the difference between donor countries at the one side and receiving countries at the other side – the country as such does not have a significant influence on the attribution of causal responsibility towards the European level ($F(2,132) = 2,166, p = .119$).

⁸ In Austria a coalition between SPÖ and ÖVP has been governing since 2007. In Germany, the coalition of the governing parties changed in 2013 from a coalition between CDU/CSU and the FDP to a coalition between CDU/CSU and SPD, but there was no complete exchange of the cabinet as the CDU/CSU was still the controlling party.

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6 MANUSKRIFT 3: NEWS MEDIA'S POSITION-TAKING REGARDING THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE SYNCHRONIZATION OF MASS MEDIA'S REPORTING AND COMMENTATING IN THE 2014 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS.

Adam, S., Eugster, B., Antl-Wittenberg, E., Azrout, R., Möller, J., de Vreese, C, Maier, M., Kritzing, S. (2019). News media's position-taking regarding the European Union: the synchronization of mass media's reporting and commentating in the 2014 European Parliament elections. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(1), 44-62.

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We analyse whether a newspaper's editorial position regarding the European Union is related to its selection decisions in the news section. We ask whether such a synchronization between news and editorials exists, whether it is conditioned by the type of media system and under which conditions it also affects the selection of transnational voices. Our study is based on a quantitative content analysis of the quality press in seven European countries (Austria, France, Germany, Greece, The Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom) in the run-up to the 2014 European Parliament elections. Our results support a synchronization between editorials and news, specifically with regard to the selection of national speakers. With regard to transnational speakers, they are selectively chosen by a medium if its editorial position is not supported at the national level. Furthermore, they are used to put forward a portrayal of a political community in accordance with the editorial line.

Keywords: Commentaries; editorial line; EU positions; mass media; news; synchronization

Introduction

The European Union (EU) is currently facing intense debates about its future. Crises such as the economic and financial crisis as well as the migration crisis have stirred up debates about the future of the European integration process. Simultaneously, we observe an increasing proportion of European citizens negatively assessing the process of European integration, its institutions and its policies. This becomes most visible in the recent British decision to leave the EU, but also in the last European Parliament (EP) election. Euroscepticism is thus compared to a virus that 'has now spread across the continent' (Torreblanca et al. 2013: 1). This spread is remarkable, given the fact that for long a permissive consensus has characterized the citizens' relationship with the EU. The question is how the virus of Euroscepticism could have been fuelled to such a large extent?

While recent research has examined extensively not only parties' behaviours and citizens' attitudes on the EU but also how mass media attach salience to Europe and how they reflect party positions on Europe, little research has been conducted on news media's independent position-taking on the EU. This research deficit is even more surprising as news media are important owing to their excellent 'access' to the citizens.

News media can play an independent role in formulating positions towards the EU, turning into political actors themselves (Page 1996). They do so legitimately in the editorial sections. In the reporting sections, in contrast, newspapers are expected to turn into conveyors of information independently of their editorial lines. Yet, research has shown that position-taking in editorials might also impact news selection by, for example, privileging those voices that support the editorial lines (e.g., Hagen 1993; Kahn and Kenney 2002). Consequently, we ask: *Is a newspaper's editorial position regarding the EU related to its selection decisions in the news?*

So far this 'synchronization' (Schönbach 1977) of editorials and news has primarily been studied in the realm of national politics. Here, it is left-leaning newspapers that primarily refer to left-leaning sources, whereas the contrary applies to right-leaning newspapers (e.g., Hagen 1993). With the European integration process, however, issues are no longer decided at the national level, which also makes national mass media grant a voice (to different degrees and under specific circumstances [e.g., Adam 2016]) to speakers of other member states or the EU. We thus ask: Is the editorial position of a newspaper regarding the EU related only to the selection of national voices or does it also impact the selection of transnational ones in the news section? We explore these questions by using a unique dataset on news media reporting and commentating about EU matters in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections which builds on the content of the right- and left-leaning quality press in seven EU member states 12 weeks preceding these elections.

Our contribution to research is threefold. First, we focus on media's position-taking regarding the EU (for this research deficit, see Bijsmans [2015] and Vasilopoulou [2013]) and thereby offer a detailed picture of how 14 media outlets in seven European countries position themselves towards the EU. Second, we contribute to research on synchronization between editorials and news by distinguishing different approaches on how it can be measured, by empirically adding information on position-taking of political actors, and by showing how such studies can extend beyond the nation state. Third, by doing so, we also add to research on the Europeanization of national public spheres, as we study the role of editorial policies on the development of Europeanization processes.

Media's position-taking regarding the European Union in commentaries and news

In general, we can distinguish two ways in which news media can make clear-cut positions on EU integration visible. The most obvious option for a medium is to publish a commentary

put forward by its own journalists. A more hidden way of making specific positions prominent is associated with news media's gatekeeper role, which shapes the reporting section. In their role as gate-keepers, media must decide not only which issues to raise on the agenda but also how to present them. They often do so by selecting speakers from the political or societal arena that put forward specific frames and evaluations.

For most issues discussed in society, it might be sufficient to study whether news media support or oppose a specific policy and the associated authorities in their editorial and news sections. However, in cases in which policy issues become connected to the more abstract level of polity contestation (which is the case for EU contestation), we need to develop a more fine-grained understanding of position-taking. In such cases concrete questions of the pros and cons regarding specific policy issues (e.g., more or less welfare state measures) are connected to larger questions referring to the institutional set-up (e.g., is it appropriate to decide these questions on the national/EU level?) Finally, in the case of EU integration, a third object of evaluation comes into play (Easton 1975): the political community. Political communities have an institutional base, but just as importantly need to be constructed in citizens' minds (Andersen 1991). Consequently, position-taking on the EU is a threefold concept (Easton 1975) referring to (1) support and opposition formulated towards concrete policy issues and the associated authorities; (2) evaluations of the regime or the polity of the EU (of which negative evaluations are termed Euroscepticism and conceived as 'genuine opposition to European integration' [Harmsen 2010: 336; emphasis in original]); and (3) portrayals of a political community which might support or oppose a community stretching beyond the nationstate.

Research on media's position-taking regarding the EU has thus far focused primarily on news sections conceiving them as a forum in which evaluative claims of various speakers become visible (e.g. Kriesi et al. (2006); Statham et al. (2010)). These studies then conclude

that specific types of speakers, such as the radical left and right, put forward more anti-EU positions or that some (Eurosceptic) parties get significantly more coverage in the news media compared to their electoral status (Gatterman and Vasilopoulou 2015). Other studies analyse the reporting section to identify the media's general tone towards Europe. These studies show that before Maastricht, EU coverage was low but, on the evaluative side, balanced or slightly pro-European (Lloyd and Marconi 2014). Since then, the visibility of the EU, its institutions and European policies has increased (Koopmans et al. 2010; Wessler et al. 2008), with the tone becoming more negative (Schuck et al. 2011). Hereby, the negative portrayal of the EU seems to outnumber positive references (Norris 2000).

The absence of more detailed research on media position-taking regarding Europe is puzzling, considering that media are often blamed to be at the root of the current Eurosceptic public opinion. Research, is hampered at least in a threefold manner. First, media's position-taking regarding the EU often applies general measures on the tone towards Europe and thereby hardly distinguish which aspects of the EU are criticized or supported. Second, research has focused on news section when studying positions towards Europe while surprisingly neglecting to separately analyse editorials (for an exception, see Pfetsch et al. [2010]). Third, research is lacking on whether the editorial stances also colour media's selection routines in the news section. This possible interrelation between editorials and news is dealt with in the following.

The synchronization of position-taking in commentaries and news

Normative ideas of professional journalism call for the strict separation of facts and opinions. This means that media's positions are legitimately voiced in the editorial section, whereas media should demonstrate a neutral, unbiased way of reporting in their news sections (Bennett 1988) and thus serve here as faith-ful chroniclers (Neidhardt 1994). Kahn and

Kenney (2002: 381) speak of a 'wall of separation' between editorials and news that characterizes a professional and impartial press.

However, empirical research shows that these two distinct roles of mass media are often intertwined: there is evidence that newspapers' editorial lines also influence the selection decisions within the news section by granting a more prominent role to actors who put forward similar positions, arguments or frames (e.g., Bachl and Vögele 2013; Berkel 2006; Hagen 1993). For example, Hagen (1993: 334) finds in his analysis of the German census debate that 'the direction of the arguments published in the newspapers were heavily influenced by editorial stance'. Brettschneider and Wagner (2008) show for the British Sun that explicit voting endorsements are reflected in the reporting section. Kahn and Kenney (2002) show that even in the United States (US), which is often regarded as having one of the most impartial and liberal media systems (Hallin and Mancini 2004), newspaper coverage during Senatorial campaigns is slanted in favour of the candidate the newspaper endorses in its editorial section. A similar effect was observed by Peake (2007) for presidential elections in the US.

This breaking-up of the 'wall of separation' (Kahn and Kenney 2002) between editorials and news is captured by the notion of 'synchronization' (Eilders 1999; Schönbach 1977), which will be used in this article, as well as by 'political parallelism' (Berkel 2006), 'editorial slant' (Kahn and Kenney 2002), 'opportune witnesses' (Hagen 1993) or 'instrumental actualization' (Kepplinger et al. 1991). All of these concepts claim that (a) there is a close correspondence between news and editorials, and that (b) this correspondence is driven by the editorial agenda of the newspaper.

Prerequisite for interpreting a correspondence between news and editorials as synchronization is that such correspondence is not merely a reflection of a dominant and consonant opinion climate within a country, but is driven by editorial positions. To avoid

interpreting media being in line with a consonant opinion climate as editorial-driven synchronization, three approaches can be distinguished. First, no consonant opinion climate exists if national media outlets present conflicting ideas in their editorial sections which – if synchronization occurs – are reflected in their news sections. This is the most common approach to study synchronization (e.g., Hagen 1993; Tresch 2012). Second, the lack of a consonant opinion climate can also be seen on the national political level. In cases where the political elites put forward diverging positions and the media prefer one side of these positions while neglecting the opposing views, we may also interpret a correspondence between editorials and news as synchronization. Following this approach, it is possible to study synchronization looking at one media outlet only. Additionally, however, we need to show that conflict prevails among the national political elite (what is mostly done in national election contexts, e.g., Brettschneider and Wagner [2008]). Third, the lack of a consonant opinion climate is indicated by a divide between national media outlets and national political elites. In such settings in which national media raise their voices against national political elites, synchronization can hardly be tested on the national level. Yet, in transnational settings like the EU context, synchronization may still occur as media select transnational speakers to support their editorial positions. To our knowledge this approach has not yet been applied in synchronization studies. For the described three settings in which synchronization might be observed, we expect:

H1a: The more pro-/anti-EU a newspaper's editorial position, the more pro-/anti-EU voices we find in its news section.

The strength of synchronization between editorials and news is likely to depend on the media system. Hallin and Mancini (2004) have identified three types of Western media systems: the polarized pluralist; the democratic corporatist; and the liberal system; which are distinguished – among others – according to the strength of political parallelism and of

journalistic professionalism. Systems with high political parallelism are characterized by strong connections between the media and political actors, with the media willing to become involved in political advocacy. Political parallelism might thus be expected to foster media's position-taking. However, whether this position-taking leads to synchronization between editorials and news depends on the degree of journalistic professionalism. In media systems in which journalistic professionalism is high, objectivity and political neutrality are valued, which hinders strong synchronization. As polarized pluralist media systems are characterized by high political parallelism and weak journalistic professionalism, whereas liberal models adhere to low political parallelism and strong professionalism, with the democratic corporatist systems in-between (political parallelism but strong professionalism), we expect:

H1b: The synchronization of editorials and news is most pronounced in countries with high levels of political parallelism and low levels of journalistic professionalization – that is, in polarized pluralist systems.

Thus far, however, synchronization between editorials and news has been studied in the course of national debates or elections (for an exception, see Berkel [2006] and Tresch [2012]). Here, left-leaning media primarily refer to left-leaning national sources and ideas, whereas the contrary applies to right-leaning media. In the course of transnationalization processes, the most important being EU integration, the monopoly of national actors in being able to raise their voices in news media's reporting sections is challenged. Transnational political integration goes along with an abundance of transnational speakers (from the supranational level or from other involved [member] states) that might be selected by national media and thus be included in national debates. Research on the Europeanization of public spheres clearly shows that national mass media – to different degrees and under

specific circumstances – do grant actors from outside the nation state a voice (e.g. Adam 2016).

Specifically, in the EU context there is very little research on synchronization. One exception is Berkel (2006), who investigated the media response in other EU member states to the election of right-wing populist Haider in Austria. She finds strong evidence of synchronization, as newspapers also support their editorial lines through the selection of congruent sources in the reporting section. However, contrary to this finding, Tresch (2012), in an analysis of a referendum on EU issues in Switzerland, does not find support for the synchronization of editorials and news regarding the selected sources, but does find evidence that the use of specifically selected frames supports the editorial stances.

However, none of these studies focuses on the specifics of EU contestation – that is, the potential inclusion of transnational speakers in the media's reporting. Consequently, it remains unclear whether and to what degree synchronization between editorials and news stretches beyond national speakers, under which conditions and which new types of synchronization might result from the inclusion of transnational actors.

Two arguments are relevant why synchronization might differ depending on whether the media selects national or transnational speakers. First, synchronization is closely associated with long-lasting traditional bonds between national politics and national news media and thus might be stronger when national voices are selected. Second, research has shown that the transnational speakers who are given a voice in national media are usually powerful elite, most likely governmental actors (Koopmans 2007). It is thus the power and status, and less so the position, that seems to drive the selection processes for transnational speakers. We therefore expect:

H2a: The synchronization of editorials and news is stronger if national voices are selected compared to transnational ones.

However, the synchronization of editorials and transnational voices in the news might also be conditional. In cases where all ideological positions are voiced by important and prominent national political speakers, media have few incentives to select transnational actors to support their editorial line. In this case, they are likely to select transnational actors based on their power and status. However, in cases where the editorial line of a newspaper is only weakly supported within the national boundaries, transnational voices may open up new possibilities for synchronization of evaluations. We thus expect:

H2b: The less a newspaper's EU position is supported by national political speakers, the more the newspaper uses transnational speakers to make the own position heard.

Whereas H2b asks whether newspapers grant voice to transnational actors that position-wise support their editorial line, the following hypothesis is intended to capture synchronization by looking at the quantity of transnational speakers in the news section (independent of their positions). This latter synchronization approach thus looks for a correspondence between editorial positions and the portrayed relevant political community in the news section. If transnational speakers strongly turn visible, a newspaper portrays a political community in which national and transnational spheres are intertwined. If, however, transnational speakers are hardly included in debates, newspapers depict a self-sufficing national community in which the transnational level is irrelevant. We thus expect:

H2c: The more (less) pro-EU a newspaper's editorial position, the more (less) the newspaper is open to grant attention to transnational speakers.

Consequently, for Eurosceptic newspapers in a pro-European environment, our hypotheses suggest that position-wise newspapers use transnational actors as substitute for the lack of national input, whereas quantitatively they allow only few transnational actors to raise their voices as they seek to put forward a national confined political community.

Case selection, data and methods

To study media's position-taking regarding EU integration and the possible interrelation between position-taking in commentaries and news, we focus on quality newspapers' communication in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections in seven countries, namely Austria (AUS), France (F), Germany (GER), Greece (GR), The Netherlands (NL), Portugal (POR) and the United Kingdom (UK). We have chosen these countries as they differ regarding their level of political parallelism and journalistic professionalization (H1b) and regarding the political input on the side of political elites (H2b). High parallelism is combined with low professionalization in the polarized pluralist countries (GR, POR, F). This is contrasted by the democratic corporatist countries (AUS, GER, NL) and the liberal country (UK), which are characterized by higher levels of journalistic professionalization and partly also by lower levels of political parallelism (Hallin and Mancini 2004). Political input is measured based on a content analysis of parties' press releases spanning the same time period as the media analysis (see Adam et al. 2016). Figure 1 shows variation of elite input among the selected countries concerning party's evaluation of the EU (see the Online Appendix⁸ for details of the evaluation index).

For our study, we analyse two quality newspapers per country, one left- and one right-leaning (see the Online Appendix) 12 weeks preceding the 2014 EP elections. We rely on the national quality press because it contains

⁸ Der Appendix dieser Publikation besteht aus einem Excel-File und kann nicht im Rahmen des Anhangs dieser Dissertation integriert werden. Er ist aber online unter https://figshare.com/articles/News_media_s_position-taking_regarding_the_European_Union_the_synchronization_of_mass_media_s_reporting_and_commentating_in_the_2014_European_Parliament_elections/7239950 abrufbar.

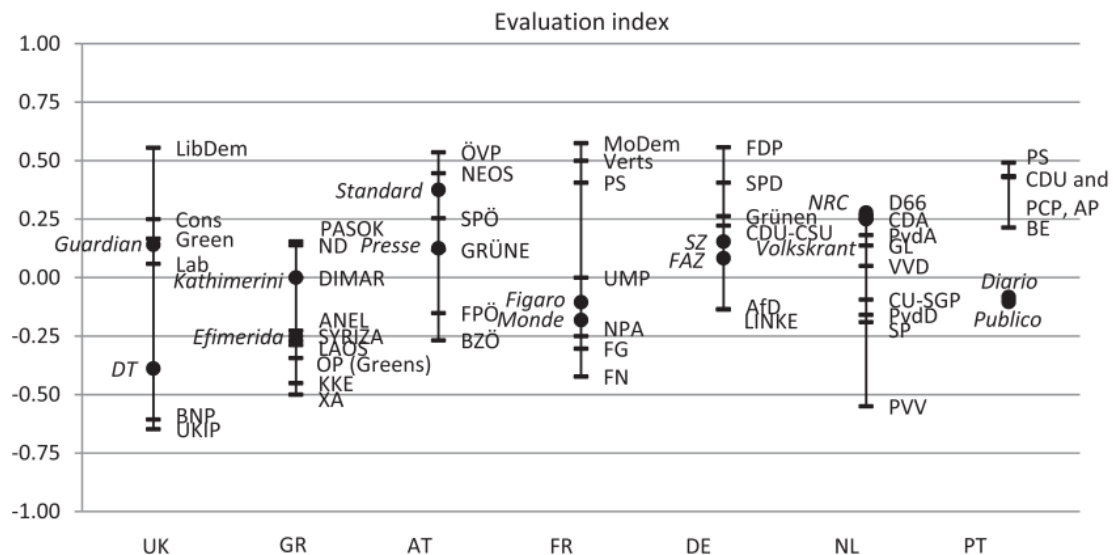


Figure 6-1. National parties' supply of EU positions and newspapers' editorial EU positions.

Notes: EU-related press release/editorials containing an EU evaluation: UK (N = 143/25); GR (N = 209/50); AUS (N = 546/20); F (N = 120/30); GER (N = 181/25); NL (N = 127/23); POR (N = 240/33).

most coverage of EU integration, which makes these papers important agenda-setters on EU issues. We collected all articles from the political and editorial sections that referred to European policies, European institutions, European politicians and/or the EP elections at least twice (for the search string, see the Online Appendix). To limit the workload, we rotated the left- and right-leaning papers on a daily basis. Our search resulted in 3,733 articles. Based on a quantitative content analysis (for the detailed codebook, see Maier et al. [2014]), we identified active speakers who put forward their political statements. Up to three such speakers were coded per article, whereas the journalist is coded as the single speaker in the editorial section. The basis of the following analysis entails 3,010 articles with at least one speaker, resulting in 4,978 speakers. To test H2a – c, we differentiate these active speakers into national and transnational ones. National speakers include political and non-political actors from a country's own nation state, as well as all journalists of its own newspaper (independent of whether they are located at the national editorial office or abroad), whereas transnational speakers come from other (EU) countries or from the transnational/EU level.

Based on these speakers, we measure position taking towards EU integration as follows. First, we analyse whether a (national and transnational) speaker supports or criticizes concrete EU policies and authorities (i.e., politicians or institutions, EUconcrete). Second, support or opposition can be directed towards the general and fundamental idea of EU integration and the regime as such (EUfund). Both indicators differentiate between four categories: positive; negative; balanced (as many positive as negative evaluations); and no evaluation. Based on the first three categories, we calculate an EU evaluation index (for the formula, see the Online Appendix) per medium that ranges from -1 (strong EU opposition) to $+1$ (strong EU support). The index is based on all statements that contain evaluations ($n = 206$ in editorials and $n = 1,021$ in the news section), and it gives added weight to the more fundamental evaluations on EU integration as such compared to evaluations referring to concrete policies or actors. This serves as the central measure for synchronization in our paper. Third, to analyse whether media support or oppose a specific depiction of a political community in line with their editorial stances (H2c), we study the share of transnational speakers that are granted a voice in the news section (speakers: $N = 4,476$).

To ensure the quality of coding, all 21 coders participated in a comprehensive training programme followed by (researcher – coder) reliability tests of at least 25 speakers each. We tested the coding reliability using the Holsti formula and Krippendorff's Alpha coefficient whenever possible or useful. With average Krippendorff Alpha scores of 0.73 for the identification of speakers and with average Holsti scores of 0.83 for the EU evaluations, the reliability tests delivered satisfactory results.¹

We use correlations between editorials and news to analyse synchronization despite their limitations: they cannot capture causality and struggle with limited case numbers ($N = 14$ newspapers). Therefore, we have conducted robustness checks where possible. Hereby, we have recalculated the correlations omitting the most extreme cases (outlier analysis) and

have conducted a Jackknife and bootstrap sensitivity analysis. All types of analyses point to the robustness of our results (see Online Appendix), but also to large 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Finally, we have to critically evaluate whether a possible fit between editorials and news can be interpreted as a sign of synchronization or whether it might be a mere reflection of a dominant opinion climate. Figure 1 summarizes the editorial and political elite positions on EU integration in the seven countries under study. The index varies between -1 (strong EU opposition) and $+1$ (strong EU support) and is based on media editorials as well as parties' press releases (also issued 12 weeks preceding the EP elections). A first inspection of Figure 1 shows clearly that a dominant opinion climate prevails in none of our countries. A more detailed look allows us to distinguish three groups. First, in the UK and to a lesser degree also in Greece, conflict is reflected in the editorial agendas of the selected newspapers. In addition, conflict also runs among political actors. For these countries, classical synchronization studies are possible. Second, in Austria, France and Germany, conflict on EU integration is carried by political elites: strong EU supporters (e.g., Österreichische Volkspartei, Mouvement démocrate, Freie Demokratische Partei) are challenged by EU opponents (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, Bündnis Zukunft Österreich, Front National, Linke, Alternative für Deutschland), with media favouring the pro-side in Austria and Germany and the con-side in France. Finally, conflict in Portugal and the Netherlands runs primarily between national political elites and the newspapers. In such settings, synchronization might occur by selecting transnational speakers.

Results

Synchronization between commentaries and news on EU integration

Before analysing whether a newspaper's editorial position regarding the EU is related to its selection decisions in the news section, we show whether, how often and in which way the analysed mass media evaluate the EU in their editorials and news sections (see Figure A1 and A2 in the Online Appendix). The results show first that evaluations are important but not dominating reporting and commentating about the EU. On average it is 41.0 per cent of the commentaries and 22.8 per cent of the speakers raising their voices in the news section that clearly evaluate the EU. Second, evaluations thereby are primarily directed towards concrete EU policy issues and authorities. Probably as expected in the current crisis, these concrete evaluations are negative in editorials and news across all newspapers except for the editorial positions voiced in the Standard in Austria and Handelsblad in The Netherlands. Third, if evaluations are geared towards the EU as such, newspapers in their editorials, as well as in their news sections, defend the idea of EU integration with positive regime evaluations outnumbering the negative ones. The only exception here is The Telegraph (UK), which opposes EU integration as such in its editorial as well as its news section.

To test whether a newspaper's position-taking in editorials and news is related (H1a), we compare the overall EU evaluation (evaluation index) put forward in a newspaper's editorial and news section. Figure 2 summarizes the results and confirms our first hypothesis (H1a), showing that the more pro-(contra-) EU a newspaper's editorial position, the more pro-(contra-) EU voices we find in its news section. The correlation between newspapers' editorial positions on EU integration and their selection of voices in the news sections is strong and significant ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$).

Following H1b, we expect that synchronization is most pronounced in countries with high levels of political parallelism and low levels of journalistic professionalization – that is, in the polarized pluralist countries (GR, POR, F). Our data lead us to reject this hypothesis. Contrary to our expectations, synchronization occurs primarily in democratic corporatist countries (AUS, GER, NL) and the liberal country (UK), which can be seen in Figure A3 in the Online Appendix. We have abstained from using correlations here owing to the small case numbers.

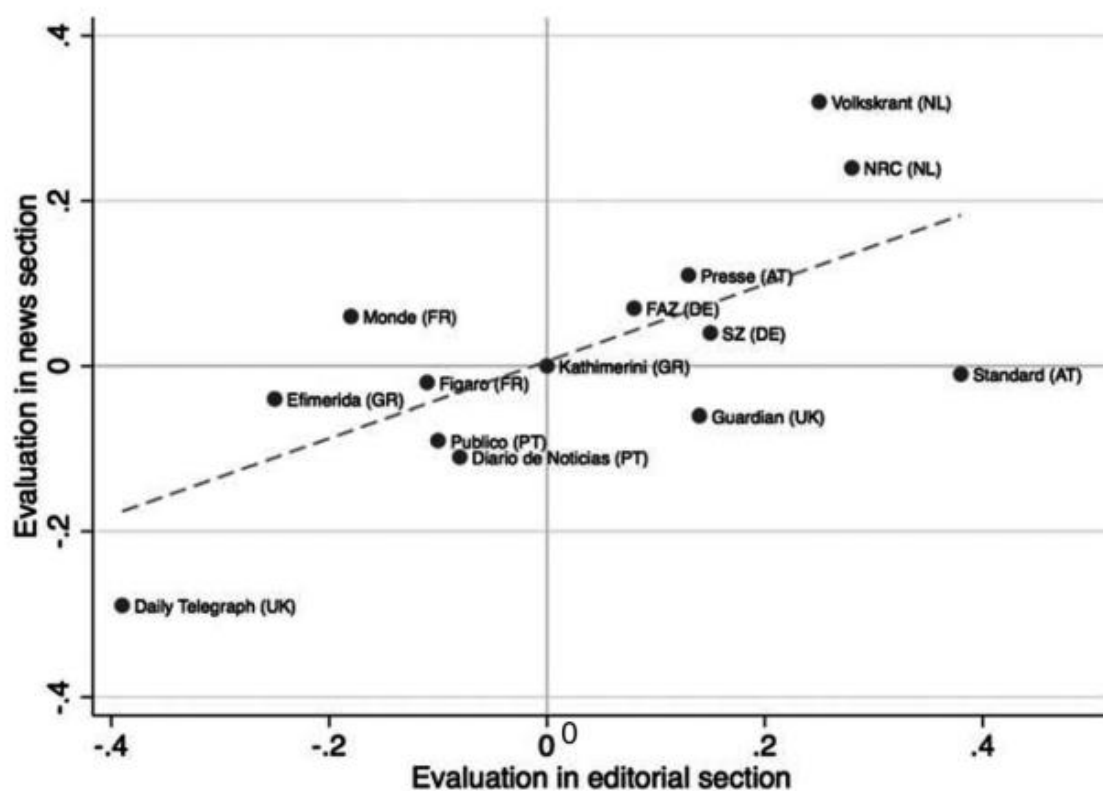


Figure 6-2. Synchronization of newspapers' positions in editorials and news.

Notes: All evaluated statements coded; N = 206 editorials; N = 1,021 speakers in the news section.

The role of transnational speakers in the synchronization between editorials and news on EU integration

To analyse whether a newspaper's editorial position is more strongly associated with the selection of national voices or transnational voices (H2a), we compare the strength of Pearson correlations between the editorial positions on EU integration and the positions voiced (a) by national and (b) by transnational speakers (e.g., government actors from another country, EU Commission or EU parliamentarians) in the respective news sections. An analysis of synchronization between position-taking in editorials and of national voices in news sections shows a strong Pearson correlation of 0.62 ($p < 0.05$), whereas this correlation is lower and not significant for transnational voices ($r = 0.39$, $p = n.s.$). These findings suggest that newspapers actively select speakers from the national realm that support their editorial lines, whereas the congruence of transnational speakers' positions to the newspaper's own editorial line is of less importance, which causes us to confirm H2a. A visual display of these results is also shown in the Online Appendix (Figures A4 and A5a).

Although we can reject a general synchronization between editorials and the positions of transnational speakers selected in the news sections, we seek to unravel the conditional nature of such transnational synchronizations. We expect synchronization regarding transnational speakers to be especially strong in those cases in which a newspaper's EU position is not supported by national political speakers (H2b), which is the case in Portugal and to a lesser degree in The Netherlands (see Figure 1). In Portugal, all parties strongly support EU integration, whereas *Diario de Noticias* and *Publico* tend towards EU-critical positions. The contrary case applies to The Netherlands: here, it is the pro-EU positions of both newspapers that are contrasted by party positions that tend towards the EU-critical side.

In all cases our data support the idea of synchronization: it is the Portuguese papers which tend slightly towards the EU-critical side in their editorials (evaluation index: – 0.08 for *Diario de Noticias*; – 0.10 for *Publico*) and also give voice to EU-critical actors although the national parties' campaigns are clearly pro-European (*Diario de Noticias*: – -0.11 for national and – 0.14 for transnational speakers; *Publico*: – 0.08 for national and – 0.14 for transnational speakers). In the Dutch case, we can observe the opposite: despite the prevalence of EU-critical positions on the side of national parties, newspapers not only voice EU-support in their editorials but also select EU-supportive voices in their news sections (*NRC Handelsblad*: 0.28 for editorials; 0.15 for national; and 0.30 for transnational speakers; *de Volkskrant*: 0.25 for editorials; 0.38 for national; and 0.14 for transnational speakers). Regarding our substitute thesis, two observations are noteworthy. First, even when supportive input from national parties is lacking, newspapers find voices on the national level that support their editorial lines. From this perspective, transnational speakers do not need to compensate for a complete lack of national input. Second, however, in three of our four cases (the exception being *de Volkskrant*), transnational speakers are used to fill the gap on the national level: transnational voices cited in the news sections do put forward more extreme EU positions than national speakers – all of them pointing in the direction of the respective editorial lines.

Finally, we compare the strength of synchronization regarding transnational voices of those newspapers whose editorial lines are weakly supported on the national level (in POR and NL) to those newspapers whose editorial lines are fully supported (in AUS, F, GER, GR and the UK)? A visual inspection clearly supports our idea (Figure A5b in the Online Appendix): newspapers exploit the transnational environment by selectively granting a voice to those transnational speakers that support their own editorial lines in situations where a newspaper puts forward a position against its own national political context.

Figure 3 finally shows whether the editorial agenda also impacts a newspaper's openness to grant attention to transnational speakers (reflecting a country's portrayal of the relevant political community H2c). It shows that the share of transnational speakers in the news related to EU integration varies greatly. Transnational speakers have a share of around 30 per cent in *Diário de Noticias*, *Publico* and *The Daily Telegraph*, whereas their share amounts to more

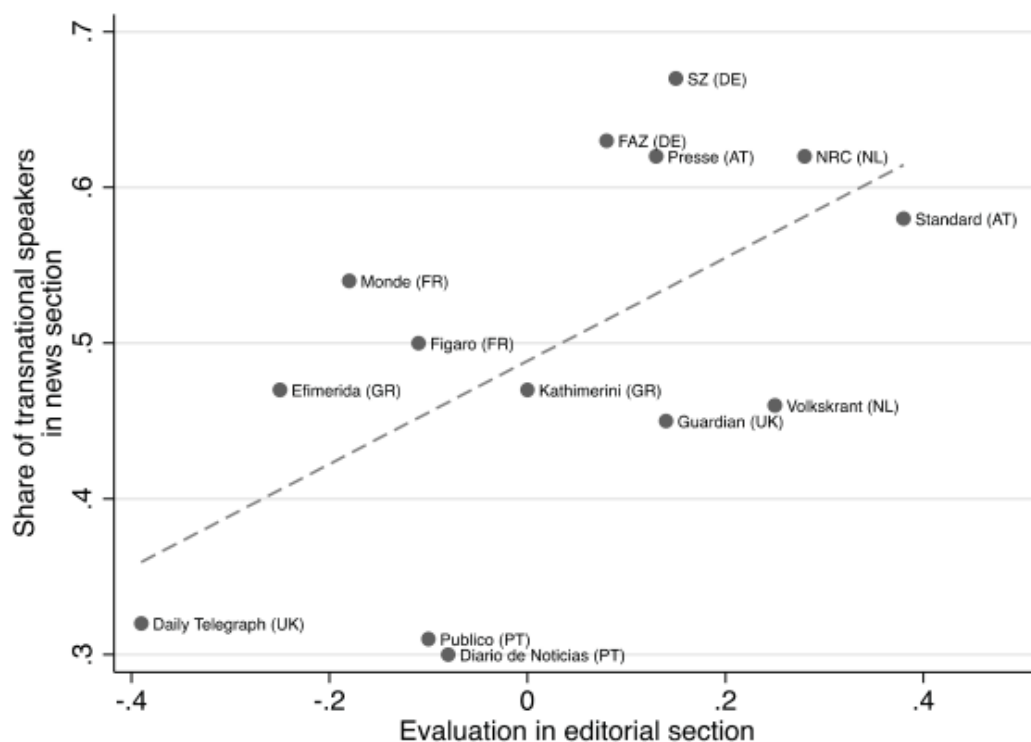


Figure 6-3. Synchronization of newspapers' positions in editorials and their openness towards transnational speakers.

Notes: N = 206 editorials (evaluated), N = 4,476 speakers in the news section (with and without position), of which 2,202 are transnational speakers.

than 60 per cent in the two German newspapers, in the *Presse* and *NRC*. This variation in openness towards transnational speakers is closely related to the editorial position of a newspaper. Those newspapers which oppose EU integration tend towards national closure,

whereas those with a pro-European position more strongly grant transnational speakers a voice. The relation is moderately strong and highly significant ($r = 0.59, p < 0.05$) and grants support to H2c.

Conclusion

News media's position-taking regarding the EU has four characteristics. First, media across Europe voice mostly negative evaluations on concrete EU policies and authorities (except for the Austrian Standard and the Dutch NRC Handelsblad), whereas they defend the idea of EU integration (except for the British Telegraph). Second, position-taking is not limited to the editorial pages. Instead, our results point towards synchronization between newspapers' editorials and their selection decisions within the news sections. However, contrary to our expectations, the strength of such synchronization cannot be explained by the type of media system: polarized – pluralist systems do not show more but rather fewer synchronization tendencies. Third, synchronization regarding the evaluation of EU authorities and the

EU regime is limited to the selection of national voices. However, under the condition that news media put forward an editorial line hardly supported by such national political elites, media actively exploit the transnational environment by selecting transnational voices in line with their editorial positions. Finally, news media's synchronized position-taking regarding EU integration is also reflected in the portrayal of a political community. Media that oppose EU integration in their editorials also strongly privilege national voices on a quantitative level in their news sections, and thus portray a self-sufficing national community.

It would be misleading to claim that all media are equally synchronized. Instead, what our results clearly show is that synchronization varies in strength and in form (i.e., being observed in policy/polity position congruence or in congruence towards the political

community portrayed). Strong synchronization requires clear-cut editorial positions which are then strongly reflected in the news sections. From a normative perspective, these are the cases where media do not live up to the ideal of a clear-cut 'wall of separation' (Kahn and Kenney 2002) between editorials and news. In our empirical data, The Daily Telegraph (UK) and the NRC (NL) are the most strongly synchronized newspapers: they not only put forward clear-cut EU positions in their editorials, but also take these up in their policy/polity evaluations in the news sections and their community portrayals. The other three cases which are characterized by strong editorial positions (Volkskrant, NL; Standard, AUS; Efimerida, GR) differ in the form of synchronization as they either reflect these positions in their policy/polity evaluations or in their community portrayals and as such show a more moderate form of synchronization. Most of the other newspapers show weak forms of synchronization: their slightly one-sided editorial positions on Europe are reflected in slightly biased positions put forward in the news sections and in the respective community portrayals. However, our study also reveals media that on first sight are not in line with synchronization expectations, the clearest example being The Guardian (UK): despite its EU-friendly editorial line, it is neither open to non-national speakers nor does it tend towards EU-supportive positions in its news section. This clearly indicates that synchronization is only one factor among others (e.g., the general opinion climate) that shapes media's position taking.

Our study speaks to four areas of research. First, we show that the concept of synchronization also applies to EU politics, is valid (in different strength and forms) for many countries and also stretches to the selection of transnational actors. These transnational actors are used position-wise as substitutes for the lack of national input, and they are used attention-wise to put forward a portrayal of the political community that goes along with the editorial position on EU integration. However, contrary to our expectations, variations in the degree of synchronization across countries could hardly be explained by a reliance on Hallin

and Mancini's (2004) media system typology. Structural media system factors as identified by Hallin and Mancini thus do not travel easily to the cultural level of concrete media behaviour, what once more 'calls into question the assumption of a close correspondence between structure and culture' (Esser 2008: 425), a challenge for future comparative research.

Second, we identify newspapers' editorial positions as drivers or break blocks for the Europeanization of public spheres. Such Europeanization requires that national arenas open up for the inclusion of speakers from the EU or other member countries (Koopmans and Erbe 2004) or that national arenas discuss similar issues at the same time with the same reference frame (Eder and Kantner 2000). Both indicators of Europeanization processes are affected by newspapers' editorial positions: it is pro-European papers that grant transnational speakers a voice, and it is newspapers in line with national political elites that do not select transnational speakers to strengthen their own position. Instead, these papers follow a selection logic driven by the news value of power and prestige, which makes it likely that news media across countries focus on similar transnational speakers.

Third, our results speak to the role of media in spreading Euroscepticism across the continent. Euroscepticism, defined as principled opposition to the regime of EU integration, is rare in Europe's quality media – with The Telegraph from the UK being the only medium in our sample in which such fundamental opposition is put forward. However, critique towards concrete EU policies and authorities/institutions is the daily routine in Europe's news media (as it is towards national authorities and institutions). Therefore, such concrete criticism is much more frequent than any discussion of the principles of EU integration. Although such critique should not be conflated with Euroscepticism, it is an open question as to how such frequent critique on concrete matters of EU integration impacts citizens' perceptions of the Union.

Finally, by connecting the political input to the media output, we have clearly shown that media are – under specific circumstances – more than a direct reflection of elite communication. In two out of our seven countries (POR and NL) news media take positions that are not in line with the national parties' stances on EU integration. This finding might seem surprising, given the prominence of concepts such as indexing (Bennett 1990), which stress the elite dependency of the media. The time thus seems ripe to further our understanding on the conditions that lead the media to counter-stand national mainstream elites and thereby strategically use transnational environments.

In the end, a critique of our study might claim that an analysis of traditional newspapers is outdated, given the fact that information presentation and consumption is moving online. However, such critique overlooks that traditional media are still important in times of online news consumption. It is primarily mass media content that is used for political information purposes online and that has shown to be quite similar to its offline counterpart (Oschatz et al. 2014). Further, our study on traditional media contributes to one of the most widely discussed issues in political communication in the online world – the phenomenon of one-sided news that allows for selective news consumption. This one-sidedness of news which has been primarily associated in recent times with so-called 'filter bubbles' or 'echo chambers' in the online world (e.g., Sunstein 2009) can at least partly also be observed in traditional news media: it is the readers of some of Europe's most prestigious news outlets that are exposed to one-sided coverage about Europe not only in the editorials but in the news sections as well.

Note

1. A detailed overview of the reliability scores is available from the authors upon request.

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7 MANUSKRIFT 4: BLAMING BEYOND BORDERS. RESPONSIBILITY FRAMING IN MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Antl-Wittenberg, E. & Maier, M. Blaming beyond Borders. Responsibility Framing in Multi-Level Governance Systems in Times of Crisis. Accepted for Review from *Political Communication*. Revised Version Submitted for Publication to *Journal of European Integration*.

Responsibility attributions influence people's attitudes towards political actors as well as their vote choice. EU citizens are confronted with blurred lines of accountability and depend on information about responsibilities from the media. To enrich the knowledge about responsibility framing in multi-level governance systems in times of crisis, this paper analyses blaming and credit taking within the newspaper coverage related to the European financial crisis in Austria, Germany, and Portugal prior to the 2014 EP elections. The findings indicate that the EU is being scapegoated for problems related to the crisis in countries, which are only indirectly affected by the crisis. National actors as well as the media itself predominantly blame the European level, which speaks for a synchronised blame framing within national coverage. In contrast, speakers in the coverage of the receiving country Portugal mostly accuse domestic elites. The analysis further revealed country-specific patterns regarding the attribution of treatment responsibility.

Keywords: attribution of responsibility, EP elections, framing, media coverage, content analysis

Introduction

Europe is still occupied with the consequences of the European financial crisis¹, which confronted the political union since 2009 (Preunkert and Vobruba 2011, 317, Wallaschek 2019). Several Eurozone members such as Greece or Portugal were only able to avoid sovereign default through various financial rescue measures of the Union, which in turn were accompanied by tough austerity plans. Due to these interventions, the EU became more visible and more controversial among its citizens. The years of the so-called ‘permissive consensus’ (e.g. Hooghe and Marks 2009, Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013) seem to be over, and it looks as if the supranational level is being scapegoated for the problems related to the European financial crisis as Euroskeptic positions are on the rise.

Regarding this development, it seems interesting to shed light on the question of who is actually blamed for crisis-related problems in the media discourse about the European financial crisis. As we know from research, responsibility attributions play a central role in people’s attitudes towards political actors and are a necessary basis for vote choice (Iyengar 1989, Maestas et al. 2008, Marsh and Tilley 2009). Voters can only punish or reward the political actor whom they hold responsible for the problem or in which they trust as trouble-shooter. In systems with multiple levels of governments – such as the European Union – citizens have to cope with the task of properly assigning credit and blame to actors on the right political level (Hobolt, Tilley, and Wittrock 2013). As people are barely able to get first-hand information about the distribution of responsibility for the European financial crisis, they depend on information from the national media (Hänggli and Kriesi 2010). In this connection, we are interested in the question: How did political actors as well as journalists actively frame responsibility in the media coverage about the European financial crisis in Austria, Germany, and Portugal prior to the EP elections in 2014?

The EU as a complex political system with multiple levels of governance suffers from a lack of clarity of responsibility (Hobolt, Tilley, and Banducci 2013), which opens the opportunity for the strategic framing of responsibility on the side of political actors (Gerhards, Offerhaus, and Roose 2007, Hobolt and Tilley 2014, Maestas et al. 2008). In this sense, we assume that *national political actors* engage in active blame shifting and try to scapegoat the EU for crisis-related problems (see Antl-Wittenberg, 2019). These EU-blaming strategy might also be represented in quotes of national actors in the national media coverage. Further, we assume that *national as well as European actors* pursue a strategy of credit taking and depict themselves as predominantly responsible for the management of the crisis in order to present themselves as competent problem solvers. Also these auto-attributions of treatment responsibility might occur in crisis-related media coverage and thereby shape public responsibility perceptions. We expect differences regarding the public framing of responsibility related to the financial crisis between different countries. A country's affectedness from the crisis (recipient countries versus donor countries) might influence the selection of responsibility judgements within the national media.

To test our assumptions, we conducted a quantitative content analysis of the political section of the quality press 12 weeks prior to the EP elections 2014 in Austria, Germany, and Portugal. As we are interested in the representation of active blame shifting and credit claiming by different actors, our analysis covers statements of active speakers in the reporting section of the media as well as comments in the editorial section, where journalists express their own opinions.

This article wants to contribute to a better understanding of public responsibility framing in a multi-level government system in times of crisis. We want to enrich the existing research in a threefold manner: We combine theories of communication and political science to derive hypothesis for the public representation of political framing in context of a

transnational economic crisis. As media's portrayal of political voices is the most important interface between economics, politics and the people (Jones 2015). Further, we applied an actor-focused research design, which allows a fine-grained analysis of responsibility attributions in the public discourse. This help us to understand who actually blames the supranational level. Lately, the international comparison allows us to test the influence of external explanatory factors on public blame shifting and credit taking in times of transnational crisis.

Framing Responsibility in the Media Discourse about the European financial crisis

The way an issue is portrayed in the media is defined as the *framing* of this issue. 'A media frame is an interpretative presentation that a speaker [...] uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience' (Hobolt and Tilley 2014, 75). In line with Entman's fundamental definition, framing means to shape the public perception of an issue by suggesting what the problem is about, who causes it, in which way it should be solved and by delivering possible moral evaluations (Entman 1993). Responsibility attributions are relevant elements, when analysing the 'emphasis framing' (Cacciatore, Scheufele, & Iyengar, 2016) of an issue. They define which actor is responsible for the cause of a problem ('causal responsibility' [Iyengar 1989, 1990]) and who should manage it ('treatment responsibility' [Iyengar 1989, 1990]).

Crisis trigger the discourse about who is responsible, because people wants to know who is answerable for the occurrence of problems to reduce uncertainty (Fiske and Taylor 2013, Shaver 1985). Especially in a transnational crisis – as the European financial crisis – people receive information through domestic media. The national media coverage makes the issue salient in the national context (Schuck et al. 2011) and enriches it with a specific framing including the depiction of responsibility judgements (An and Gower 2009, Semetko

and Valkenburg 2000). Salgado and Nienstedt (2016, 462-3) emphasize the role of newspapers in times of crisis as ‘they provide context, explanations and interpretation for events and issues, contributing therefore to framing those moments, as well as to building particular climates of opinion around political decisions and complex economic issues.’ Furthermore, citizens’ attitudes towards political actors depend on which actor they hold responsible for evoking as well as solving crisis-related problems (Hobolt and Tilley 2014). Many studies have shown that the attribution of responsibility influences citizens’ evaluations of political actors (Arceneaux 2006, Rudolph 2003, 2016, Shields and Goidel 1998) as well as their vote choice (Marsh and Tilley 2009, Bellucci 2014). Hameleers, Bos, and de Vreese (2016) could recently demonstrate that causal responsibility attributions towards the national government or the EU, which are presented in the media, powerfully influence the perception of who is to blame on the side of the audience.

In times of economic hardship, the strategic framing of responsibility seems of particularly high relevance for national political actors, as their political survival depend on electoral outcome (see e.g. Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). Especially national actors should pursue blame avoidance strategies (Weaver 1986) to defend themselves against electoral damage. One powerful strategy to prevent the own party from being scapegoated for a problem is to publicly point the finger at another potential causal agent. As power in the EU is divided between national and supranational institutions, citizens are confronted with blurred lines of responsibility between different political levels (low vertical ‘institutional clarity’, see e.g. Hobolt, Tilley, and Banducci [2013, 169], Shields and Goidel [1998]). Political actors can use this lack of ‘clarity of responsibility’ (Hobolt, Tilley, and Wittrock 2013, Powell and Whitten 1993, Whitten and Palmer 1999) by trying to shift the blame to another political level. Especially governing parties, which are normally held responsible for the economic situation and accordingly rewarded or sanctioned by the electorate, might profit from

attributing causal responsibility to the European level (Gerhards, Offerhaus, and Roose 2009, Maestas et al. 2008). In this context, a study of Antl-Wittenberg (2019) could reveal that Europhile governing parties in Austria and Germany invest in a blame shifting strategy towards the EU within press releases concerning the European financial crisis. We further assume that especially governing parties' strategic responsibility framing occurs via quotes in the media coverage of the different nation states. According to their high level of prominence, representatives of the government are most prominently cited in the media coverage. The elite status is a relevant news factor (for an overview see e.g. Maier et al. 2018), which has repeatedly been demonstrated as an important predictor for media attention (Eilders 2006, Gans 2004, Brown et al. 1987, Tresch 2009, Hänggli, 2012) Journalists are 'generally biased toward high-ranking state actors and resource-rich business organizations, who get preferential access to the media in all countries.' (Tresch 2009, 68). We therefore assume, that the responsibility attributions voiced by representatives of the domestic governments are predominantly selected in the media coverage and therefore dominate the framing of responsibility by national actors in articles referring to the financial crisis.

H1: National actors cited in crisis-related media coverage predominantly blame the European level.

We assume that the intensity of blame shifting from the national to the supranational level is not equal across countries, but might be influenced by a country's affectedness by the crisis. Especially parties in the donor countries, which are only indirectly affected by the crisis as credit grantors, have to explain the use of tax payers' money for crisis-related rescue measures outside the own nation state. As the domestic country is only indirectly affected by the crisis, it is convenient for parties in donor countries to blame the European system or other European member states for causing crisis-related problems. This assumption is consistent with previous findings regarding strategic party communication (Antl-Wittenberg 2019). Whereas governing parties in Austria and Germany predominantly blame European actors for causing

problems related to the financial crisis, governing parties' in the receiving country Portugal do not mostly invest in blame shifting strategies beyond the nation state. Following these reflections we assume that the economic status of a country influences the intensity of EU-blaming by national actors.

H2: National actors cited in the media coverage of the receiving country Portugal less often blame the supranational level than national actors cited in the media coverage of the donor countries.

Apart from shedding light on the strategic framing of responsibility by national political actors, we are further interested in the framing of responsibility by the journalists themselves, who raise their voices in the editorial section of the news (see e.g. Pfetsch, Adam, and Eschner 2010). From a normative perspective, it would be desirable that the framing of facts and opinions are independent from each other (Kahn and Kenney 2002) and that the reporting section reflect a wide range of different point of views regarding the European financial crisis (McQuail 1992, Neidhardt 1994, 14).

Nonetheless, there is empirical evidence, that editorial and reporting section are related to each other, in the way that the media predominantly selects statements of actors providing similar positions as voiced in the commentary section (Bachl and Vögele 2013, Berkel 2008, 2006). Regarding the coverage of European issues, a study of Adam et al. (2019) could demonstrate that this favoring of 'opportune witnesses' (Hagen 1993) could also be observed with regard to the evaluation of the European Union. They found a strong correlation between the predominantly voiced positions regarding the European Union in the reporting as well as the editorial section across 14 newspapers in seven European countries. Against the background of these findings, we are interested in the question if such synchronization effects (Eilders 1999, Schönbach 1977, 48ff) exist also regarding more subtle categories as the framing of responsibility. In line with the existing strand of research, we expect that:

H3: The blame framing within the reporting section is related to the blame framing in the editorial section of newspapers.

In addition to the question of who is responsible for causing crisis-related problems, the question of who should manage the crisis is another aspect of the framing of responsibility in the public discourse (Iyengar 1996). Supposing political actors behave strategically, it is only consistent to assume that they present themselves as competent problem solvers in connection with the European financial crisis (Gerhards, Offerhaus, and Roose 2009). National actors depict the national political level as responsible for solving the problems since it holds the reins, whereas EU-actors might reinforce their political power by presenting themselves as the ones in charge of the economic questions concerning Europe. In line with these considerations, we expect that:

H4a: National actors cited in crisis-related media coverage predominantly describe the national level as responsible for solving the problems related to the European financial crisis.

H4b: European actors cited in crisis-related media coverage predominantly describe the European level as responsible for solving the problems related to the European financial crisis.

Data and Method

To study publicly voiced responsibility attributions concerning the European financial crisis in the run-up to the 2014 EP elections, we conducted a quantitative content analysis of articles with at least two references to European policies, European actors, and/or the EP elections in the political or editorial section. We analysed the coverage of two quality newspapers per country, one left and one right-leaning outlet rotating on a daily basis, 12 weeks prior to the 2014 EP elections. We developed an electronic search string² to identify EU-related articles. This search resulted in a total of 3554 articles in the three countries under investigation. As we were only interested in the media coverage of the financial crisis, we identified all articles

referring to the European financial crisis by manual coding. In this process, we differentiated between articles which mention economic problems in general and which specifically refer to the European financial crisis. Our analysis covers 411 articles with reference to the financial crisis. As we are interested in the actively voiced responsibility attributions by different actors in the media, we analyse up to three claims of active speakers within one article related to the financial crisis. This approach allows us to answer the question who frames responsibility in which way (Helbling, Hoeglinger, and Wüest 2010). Active actors can be all actors, who are quoted or whose political statement is described within the reporting section of a newspaper as well as journalists who raise their voices in the editorial section. Our analysis covers 659 statements of actors in crisis-related articles. To ensure the reliability of coding, all coders took part in intensive training and were required to pass up to four (researcher-coder) reliability tests to achieve satisfactory reliability results (Krippendorff 2004): 0.97 - 1.00 (KALPHA) for formal categories and 0.62 (KALPHA) for the identification of speakers. We achieved reliability scores of 0.75 (KALPHA) in reference to the attribution of causal and 0.69 (KALPHA) in reference to the attribution of treatment responsibility³.

The attributions of causal and treatment responsibility by speakers cited in the coverage about the European financial crisis serve as dependent variables in this study. This framing of responsibility was coded in two categories. We operationalised causal responsibility by identifying which actor is attributed as responsible for causing or worsening a crisis-related problem within a speaker's statement in the reporting section or within an article in the editorial section. The aspect of treatment responsibility is coded if an actor is depicted as the one who should solve or manage a crisis-related problem due to competence or power within a speaker's statement in the reporting section or within an article in the editorial section. For both categories we used an extremely fine-grained actor list based on the PIREDEU actor coding scheme (Schuck et al. 2010).

Setting of the Study

In order to test our hypotheses, we selected countries that have been hit by the crisis to a different degree (see Table 1). We chose Germany and Austria to represent countries which are only indirectly affected by the crisis as credit grantors. Both are so-called donor countries, but whereas the German population is quite Europhile, Austrian citizens share more Eurosceptic attitudes (see Table 1). Portugal is a net-recipient country, which was hit hard by the financial crisis and suffers from high unemployment rates and cuts in government expenditures due to austerity measures. Regarding the degree of Euroscepticism among its citizens, Portugal is at the same level as Austria and can therefore be classified as more Eurosceptic (see Table 1).

Table 7-1. Key indicators for country selection.

	Euroscepticism among citizens (%)^a	Unemployment rate 2014 (%)^b	Budget balance within the EU-budget 2013 (BN EUR (% of GDP))^c
Germany	22	6.7	- 13.82 (- 0.49)
Austria	33	5.0	- 1.25 (-0.40)
Portugal	35	18.9	+ 4.42 (+ 2.72)

^a European Commission (2015)

^b *Germany*: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2015); *Austria*: IMF (2015a); *Portugal*: IMF (2015b)

^c Europäische Kommission (2014)

Results

First of all, we want to have a look at the salience of the financial crisis in the media coverage prior to the 2014 EP election. The occurrence of the crisis as an issue in the media varied extremely between the countries under examination ($F(2, 3551) = 579.83, p = .000$, partial η^2

= .25, see Table 2). We see a huge difference regarding the role of the financial crisis in the media between the two donor countries Austria and Germany on the one hand and the recipient country Portugal on the other hand. In Austria only eight percent and in Germany only six percent of EU-related articles published 12 weeks prior to the election refer to the financial crisis making it a subordinate issue in the election (see Table 2). In contrast, the financial crisis dominates the EU-related coverage within the election phase in Portuguese newspapers as 50 percent of all EU-related articles have a reference to the financial crisis. These findings reflect the public relevance of the crisis in the different countries⁴.

Before turning to the distribution of responsibility attributions, we are also interested in the question of which actors get the chance at all to raise their voice in the public discourse about the financial crisis by being cited in the media. Regarding the distribution of actors involved in the public discourse about the crisis, we can detect significantly different patterns for donor and recipient countries ($\chi^2 = 167.74$, $df = 7$, $p = 0.000$, Cramer-V = 0.51) (see Table 2).

Table 7-2. Active speakers in the media coverage about the European financial crisis (in %)

	Donor Countries		Recipient Country
	Austria	Germany	Portugal
Government	13	11	46
Opposition	9	5	26
Other National Actor	9	17	4
Media	22	17	9
EU Political Actor	13	12	5
Other EU Actor	10	2	3
Other EU Member State	21	31	3
International Actor	3	5	4
<i>N</i>	77	82	500
Percentage of crisis-related media coverage on all EU-related coverage (in %)	8	6	50
<i>N</i>	1083	1436	1035

N (Statements with reference to the financial crisis) = 659

χ^2 between single countries = 184.9, df = 14, p = 0.000, Cramer-V = 0.38

χ^2 between donor and recipient countries = 167.74, df = 7, p = 0.000, Cramer-V = 0.505

N (EU-related articles) = 3554

F (2, 3551) = 579.83, p = .000, partial η^2 = .25

Whereas EU-actors and speakers from other European member states receive a share of voice of 44 percent in Austria and 45 percent in Germany, national speakers clearly dominate the debate in the recipient country Portugal (76 percent). The presence of European actors seems to be moderated by the national relevance of this issue. In the donor countries, where only 11 percent of the citizens in Germany and 26 percent in Austria perceive the economic condition as the most important problem their country is facing (European Commission 2015), national actors appear to yield the stage to European actors. In Portugal, where the public is highly concerned about the economy (35 percent of the citizens perceive the economy as most important problem), national actors seem to step in the debate and thereby reduce the share of

voice of EU-actors.

Who is blaming whom?

Regarding the blaming of the EU, we are especially interested in the statements of national actors. To answer hypothesis 1, we analyse if national actors predominantly blame the European level for causing problems related to the Euro crisis. Since national actors' strategic blame shifting varies significantly between countries, we report the results per country. As shown in Table 3, we can clearly support hypothesis 1 with regard to the donor countries Germany and Austria. If national actors in these countries express causal responsibility attributions in the context of the European financial crisis, they mostly blame the EU or other European member states. In the Austrian media coverage, 21 percent of national actors' responsibility attributions point at the EU-level. In Germany, national actors nearly exclusively scapegoat the EU or other European member states. A third of their statements referring to the financial crisis blame the European level. Therefore, we can approve hypothesis 1 for Germany and Austria.

Table 7-3. Causal responsibility attributions by national political actors in crisis-related media coverage (in %)

	Austria	Germany	Portugal
National Level	8	4	34
European Level	21	33	13
International Level	4	-	1
No Attribution of Causal Responsibility	67	63	52
N	24	27	382

N = 433

Basis: Statements from national actors within articles with reference to the financial crisis.

χ^2 excluding International level between countries(4, 430) = 20.15, p = .000, Cramer-V = .15

χ^2 including only the European level between donor countries (M=27.5, SE=4.9) and receiving country Portugal (M=12.8, SE=1.8) (1,433) = 10.411, p = 0.001, Phi = .184

The previous results also support the assumption that a country's affectedness by the crisis influences the intensity of strategic blame shifting to the European level on the side of national actors. We found a significant correlation on the country-level between the economic status of a country and the intensity of EU-blaming ($\chi^2(1,433) = 10.411, p = 0.001, \Phi = .184$, see Table 3). In contrast to the findings for the donor countries, national actors cited in the Portuguese media coverage do not shift the blame towards the EU (see Table 3). National Portuguese actors only scapegoat the EU in 14 percent of their statements, whereas a third of their statements attribute causal responsibility to the national level. This finding contradicts a blame shifting from the national to the supranational level. National actors in recipient countries do not point their finger at the EU to shift the blame to the European level in order to stand in a more favourable light. Accordingly, we can approve hypothesis 2. National political actors in the donor countries, which are only indirectly affected by the crisis but contribute money to the EU household, use more blaming of the European level when talking about the Euro crisis than national political actors in the recipient country Portugal.

Besides differences on the country-level, we are also interested in intra-country variation of causal responsibility attributions by different speakers occurring in the media coverage of the European financial crisis. If we look at the distribution of causal responsibility attributions in more depth, we can detect different patterns of blaming (see Table 4).

Table 7-4. Causal responsibility attributions by active actors in crisis-related media coverage (in %)

Target of Responsibility Attribution	Active Speakers											
	Austria				Germany				Portugal			
	National Actor	Media	EU-Actor	Other	National Actor	Media	EU-Actor	Other	National Actor	Media	EU-Actor	Other
Government	/	/	/	/	/	7	5	/	23	64	7	16
Opposition	4	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11	/	2	/
Other National Actor	4	6	/	/	4	7	/	/	/	/	4	/
EU-Actor	13	18	15	50	30	14	8	50	12	11	7	11
Other EU-member state	8	12	3	/	4	21	14	25	1	/	2	/
International Actor	4	/	/	/	/	7	/	/	1	2	/	5
No Blame	67	65	82	50	63	43	73	25	52	22	78	68
<i>N</i>	24	17	34	2	27	14	37	4	382	45	54	19

N= 659

In the donor countries, not only the national political actors, but also the media in their commentary section as well as cited actors from the European level hold the EU or other European member states responsible for causing problems in connection with the crisis. In Austria, the media blames the EU in 30 percent of their commentaries with regard to the financial crisis; in Germany, over a third of journalistic comments point the finger at the EU or other European member states. The selected statements of EU-actors contain causal responsibility attributions to the European level in 18 (Austria) respectively 22 percent (Germany) of the cases. In contrast, we find a homogeneous blame framing towards national elites in the media coverage of the recipient country Portugal. We do not find significant differences between different speakers in the media coverage of the donor as well as the recipient countries under examination. Whereas the country significantly influences the intensity of EU-blaming ($F(2,634) = 7.82, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .024$), the type of speaker does not have a significant influence ($F(2,634) = 1.59, p = .21$) (see Appendix 1⁹). To test hypothesis 3, we further conducted a correlation between the share of EU-blaming in the reporting and the editorial section in the six newspaper under investigation. We found a very strong correlation ($r(6)=0.895, p=.016$)⁵, which indicates that the selection of political voices, who attribute causal responsibility towards the EU, in the editorial section is accompanied by the blaming of the supranational level in the editorial section (see Figure 1).

⁹ Der Anhang dieser Publikation wird im Anhang der Dissertation unter Appendix V integriert.

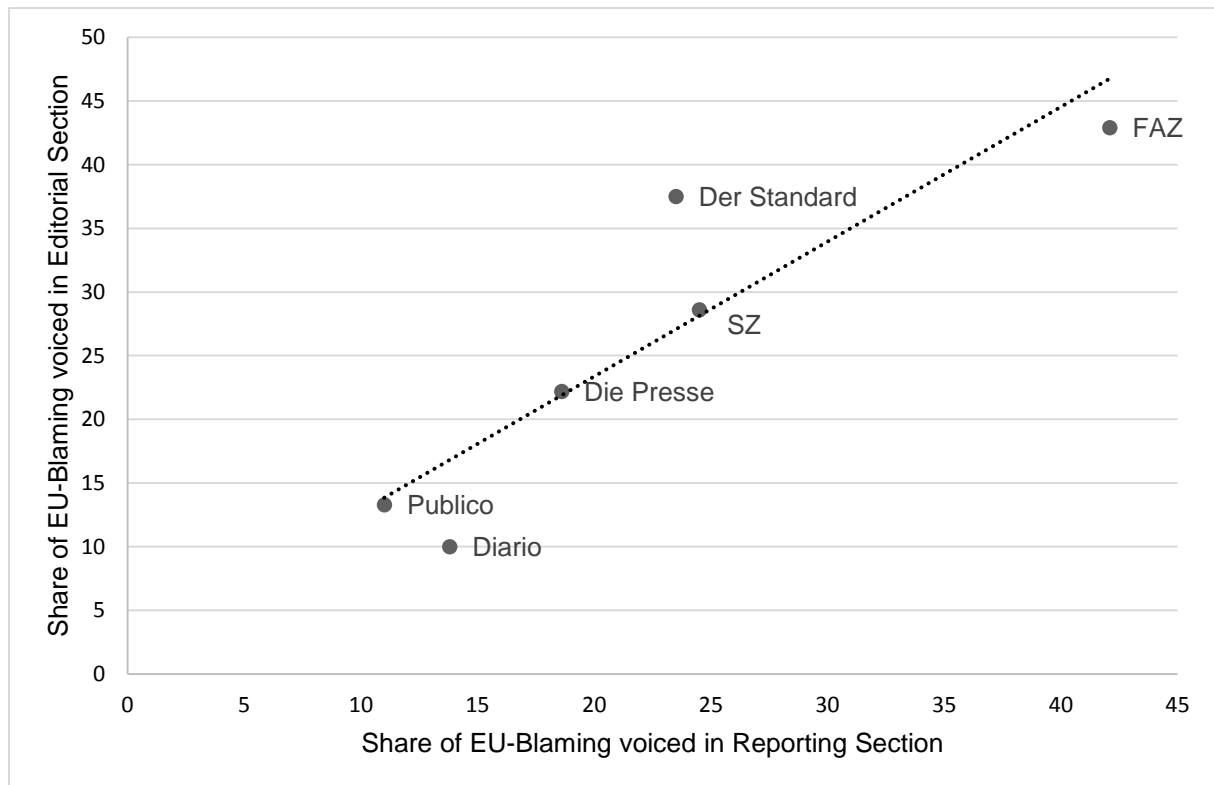


Figure 7-1. Mean Share of EU-Blaming in Editorial and Reporting Section (in %)

$r(6)=0.895, p=.016^5$

N = 6

Who should manage the crisis?

In the last part of our analysis, we are interested in the question of who is depicted as the problem solver by different speakers. To test hypothesis 4a, we are only interested in attributions of treatment responsibility by national political actors. As there are significant differences between countries, we report the results per country. In Portugal and Germany national actors depict the national elite predominantly as problem solvers – as expected in the hypothesis. Table 5 shows that we can find the highest level of self-attribution by national actors in the Portuguese media coverage (39 percent), which might result from the need to demonstrate national competences in times of austerity measures. In contradiction to our assumption, the national actors cited in the Austrian media coverage describe the European

level more often as in charge of the management of the crisis (29 percent, see Table 5) than the national level (eight percent). Austrian actors engage in a strategic externalisation of responsibility for the financial crisis regarding causes as well as solutions of the crisis. Thus, we can accept hypothesis 4a only for Germany and Portugal.

Table 7-5. Attribution of treatment responsibility by national and European speakers (in %)

	Austria		Germany		Portugal	
	National Actor	EU-Actor	National Actor	EU-Actor	National Actor	EU-Actor
National level	8	6	27	5	39	17
European level	29	26	19	32	8	21
No Attribution of Treatment Responsibility	63	68	54	62	54	62
<i>N</i>	24	34	26	37	369	52

N = 542

Austria: χ^2 between actors (2, 58) = .217, p = .897

Germany: χ^2 between actors (2, 63) = 6.115, p = .047, Cramer-V = .312

Portugal: χ^2 between actors (2, 421) = 15.233, p = .000, Cramer-V = .19

χ^2 between countries (2, 542) = 41.165, p = .000, Cramer-V = .276

To test hypothesis 4b, we are interested in the distribution of treatment responsibility towards the European level voiced in the media coverage by European actors. As depicted in Table 5, European actors engage in a strategy of self-attribution of treatment responsibility across all countries, which lead us to confirm hypothesis 4b. In Germany and Portugal, we therefore find significant differences regarding the allocation of treatment responsibility between national and European actors cited in the media coverage (Germany: χ^2 (2, 63) = 6.115, p = .047, Cramer-V = .312; Portugal: χ^2 (2, 421) = 15.233, p = .000, Cramer-V = .19). In Austria differences between actors are not significant, as also national actors hold the European level accountable for managing problems in connection with the financial crisis.

Conclusion

This paper analysed responsibility attributions in the media coverage related to the European financial crisis across three European countries prior to the 2014 EP elections. We were

interested in analysing public blame shifting and credit taking in a multi-level governance system in times of crisis. We tested our hypotheses by analysing responsibility attributions in the media coverage of the quality press published 12 weeks prior to the 2014 EP elections in three European member states (Austria, Germany, and Portugal). We examined in which way the country-specific affectedness from the crisis influence the strategic framing of responsibility. We based our assumptions on the literature of strategic responsibility framing by political actors (Iyengar 1996, 1989, Gerhards, Offerhaus, and Roose 2009, Maestas et al. 2008) in the special case of political systems with a lack of clarity of responsibility (Anderson 2007, Nadeau, Niemi, and Yoshinaka 2002, Whitten and Palmer 1999, Powell and Whitten 1993, Hobolt, Tilley, and Banducci 2013).

Our analysis revealed different patterns of causal responsibility attributions in the media coverage of the donor and of the recipient countries under examination. National actors in the donor countries engage more in blame shifting to the supranational level to avoid negative responsibility attributions towards themselves, whereas national speakers in the Portuguese coverage mostly accuse the domestic government and do not use the EU as a scapegoat for crisis-related problems. Political actors' strategic EU-blaming seems to be influenced by the fact how much a country donates to or how much it receives from the EU household. National politicians in the donor countries might publicly blame European actors to explain the use of taxpayers' money as guarantees for crisis-related programmes as the ESM. Furthermore, it is more convenient for national actors to blame the EU-level for a transnational crisis, when the own country is not directly affected. Our analysis further showed that national actors in countries with a more Euroskeptic citizenship do not more frequently shift the blame to the European level than national actors in more Europhile countries. Especially national actors in Germany, which is the most Europhile country in our sample, seize the opportunity to scapegoat the EU to prevent a loss of votes, which in turn

might be explained by the fact that Germany invested most strongly in European rescue measures. Looking at EU-blaming across different speakers in the media coverage, our study revealed a synchronisation (see Hagen 1993, Bachl and Vögele 2013, Schönbach 1977, 48ff) of the framing of causal responsibility between different cited speakers as well as between the reporting and the editorial section in the media coverage of the donor countries and the recipient country. Especially the striking differences in the framing of causal responsibility attributions between the cited EU-speakers in recipient and donor countries lead to this assumption. These results corroborate the findings of Author (2017), who found a strong correlation between newspapers' editorial positions on EU integration and the selected statements in the reporting section across seven European countries.

In summary, our findings demonstrate that the media coverage in the donor countries provides citizens with information about the financial crisis, in which the EU is predominantly depicted as the scapegoat of the crisis. Against the background of declining approval ratings for the European Union even in the traditionally very Europhile Germany⁶, these results must be critically evaluated. This is even more relevant because – on the basis of the findings of this study - we can assume that national actors of indirectly affected countries in a crisis might also pursue this strategy of blame externalisation in reference to other European crises – as, for example, the European refugee crisis.

Besides the question about who is to blame for urgent crisis-related problems, we analysed the attribution of treatment responsibility. In line with our hypothesis, national actors predominantly depict the national level as the problem solver, whereas European actors attribute responsibility for the management of the crisis to European actors. An exception is Austria, where national actors not only blame the EU, they make the European level also responsible for the management of the crisis. National actors in the Austrian media coverage

use a strategy of complete externalisation of responsibility with regard to the issue of the European financial crisis.

Our study contributes to the understanding of the strategic framing of responsibility by different groups of speakers in the context of a multi-level governance system. We identified country-specific patterns of attributing causal as well as treatment responsibility to the national as well as the European level. As we analysed responsibility attributions by active speakers in the media coverage, we could draw a more fine-grained picture of the political framing of responsibility by differentiating between speakers and the media itself.

Finally, our study is not without limitations. We based our analysis on only three countries, which limits the explanatory power of the study. It would be interesting to include more countries in further studies of responsibility framing in the EU to reassess if differences between donor and receiving countries are stable, or if Portugal is an exceptional case. Also, we conducted our study during the management phase of the European financial crisis (Preunkert and Vobruba 2011). It would be interesting to study the evolution of responsibility framing in a European crisis over time to learn more about the dynamic of crisis communication. There might be a delay of strategic blame shifting as actors have to be aware of the situation and their options. Further, results could be more extreme at the climax of the crisis, where the issue is highly salient among the public.

Notes

1 In the following, we will use the terms ‘Euro crisis’, ‘European financial crisis’, or ‘financial crisis’ synonymously.

2 The search string contains the following key words: ‘Europ*, europ*, EU, EP, EZB, EIB, ESM, EFSF, EFSM, EuGH, EAD, EWSA, EIF, EDSB, EWU, Troika, Frontex, FRONTEX, constitutional treaty’.

3 Detailed reliability scores for the single variables are available on request.

4 In Portugal 35.5 % of the citizens mention the economic situation as the most important problem their country is facing in March 2014. In Austria 26.1% and in Germany only 11.7 % perceive the economy as the most important problem at this time (European Commission 2015).

5 According to a post hoc power analysis using the program G*Power 3 (see Faul et al. 2007) given the sample size (N=6), $\alpha = .1$ and a coefficient of determination = .5, the test achieved a power of $(1-\beta) = .697$.

6 The share of German citizens, who assessed the image of the EU as positive or fairly positive declined from 34.9 percent in January 2014 (European Commission 2015) to 26.9 percent in May 2016 (European Commission 2016).

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8 FAZIT

Die in dieser Dissertation enthaltenen Manuskripte beleuchten und erklären die Verbreitung euroskeptischer Äußerungen im öffentlichen Diskurs. Die Arbeit überzeugt durch die vielschichtige Analyse der öffentlichen Darstellung EU-bezogener Themen. Sie untersucht sowohl die Äußerungen politischer Akteure im Rahmen der strategischen Parteienkommunikation, als auch die Repräsentanz politischer Sprecher und journalistischer Meinungsäußerung in der Medienberichterstattung. Im Rahmen des Fazits werden die Ergebnisse aller Manuskripte zusammengefasst und im Rahmen einer Zusammenschau die zentralen Forschungsbefunde der Dissertation herausgestellt (siehe Kapitel 8.1). Die anschließende kritische Diskussion (siehe Kapitel 8.2) beleuchtet den Beitrag der Arbeit zum Forschungsfeld und zeigt Anknüpfungspunkte für weitere Forschungsarbeiten auf. Auch bestehende Limitationen werden transparent gemacht und mögliche Implikationen für die Praxis abgeleitet.

8.1 Zusammenfassung der Studienergebnisse

Manuskript 1 (siehe Kapitel 4) befasst sich mit der Verwendung softer und harter euroskeptischer Äußerungen in der strategischen Kommunikation nationaler Parteien. Gemäß den Annahmen äußern euroskeptische Oppositionsparteien auf Länderebene mehr Kritik gegenüber der EU als die europhilen Mainstream-Parteien¹⁰.

Studiensteckbrief Manuskript 1

Untersuchungszeitraum: 12 Wochen vor der EP- Wahl 2014

Länderauswahl: Deutschland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Niederlande, Österreich, Portugal, UK

Untersuchungsmaterial: Pressemitteilungen nationaler Parteien mit EU-Bezug

¹⁰ Die einzige Ausnahme stellt Portugal dar, denn hier äußert auch die als euroskeptisch eingestufte CDU keine negativen Valenzen in Bezug auf die EU.

Dies spricht dafür, dass europhile Mainstream-Parteien ihre pro-europäische Position öffentlich verteidigen („Hold-Strategie“). Auf Parteebene zeigen sich allerdings signifikante Unterschiede hinsichtlich der Positionierungsstrategien der etablierten europhilen Kräfte. Europhile Mainstream-Parteien mit internem Dissens in Bezug auf die EU tendieren demnach eher zu Adaptions-Strategien. Sie übernehmen die euroskeptische Positionierung der euroskeptischen Herausforderer (Syriza, Griechenland), äußern keine eindeutig positive Evaluation (VVD, Niederlande; Labour, UK) oder vermeiden eine Positionierung („Blurring-Strategie“, siehe Conservatives, UK; ND und Syriza, Griechenland; UMP, Frankreich). In den letzten Fällen evoziert dies eine einseitig euroskeptisch gefärbte Debatte.

Manuskript 1 untersucht auch die Salienzstrategien der verschiedenen Parteientypen, um Rückschlüsse auf eine zunehmende Politisierung der europäischen Debatte ziehen zu können. Hinsichtlich der Salienzdimension gibt es auf Länderebene nur in Deutschland einen signifikanten Zusammenhang zwischen der EU-Position einer Partei (europhil versus euroskeptisch) und der Kommunikation europäischer Themen. In Deutschland weichen die europhilen Mainstream-Parteien auf nationale Themen aus („Silencing-Strategie“). In den anderen Ländern sind es lediglich die europhilen Mainstream-Parteien mit starkem internem Dissens, die auf eine Vermeidung europäischer Themen setzen. Hier sind beispielsweise die französischen Parteien, die britischen Mainstream-Parteien und in gewisser Weise auch die entsprechenden niederländischen Parteien zu nennen. Die erste Studie dieser Dissertation geht bei der Analyse der Salienz europäischer Themen noch einen Schritt weiter und analysiert inwiefern die verschiedenen Parteien auch gleiche Issues mit EU-Bezug thematisieren, oder ob europhile Mainstream Parteien versuchen eine eigene, parallele Debatte zu initiieren, indem sie andere Issues als die euroskeptischen Oppositionsparteien auf die Agenda setzen. Eine solche Strategie konnte für die Parteienkommunikation in

Deutschland und in den Niederlanden aufgezeigt werden. In den anderen fünf Ländern sprechen europhile Mainstream-Parteien und euroskeptische Challenger-Parteien über dieselben europäischen Themen.

Fassen wir die Ergebnisse in Hinblick auf die Politisierung der öffentlichen Debatte europäischer Issues zusammen, zeigt sich ein eher ernüchterndes Bild. Offenbar stehen die strategischen Erwägungen der Parteien einer Politisierung im Wege: In Ländern mit hoher Salienz europäischer Themen gibt es eine geringe Polarisierung der Debatte (Portugal und Griechenland), wohingegen unterschiedliche Positionen vorrangig in Ländern mit geringer Visibilität europäischer Themen auf der Parteienagenda geäußert werden (Frankreich und UK). Auch wenn euroskeptische und europhile Parteien unterschiedliche europäische Issues auf die Agenda setzen, verhindern sie eine Politisierung der Debatte (Deutschland und Niederlande). Im Rahmen der Untersuchung zeigt allein Österreich alle Dimensionen, die für eine Politisierung europäischer Issues relevant sind: europäische Themen sind salient, die unterschiedlichen Parteien sprechen über dieselben EU-bezogenen Issues und äußern diesbezüglich divergierende Meinungen.

Manuskript 2 (siehe Kapitel 5) fokussiert sich auf die Verbreitung eines subtilen Euroskeptizismus in der Parteienkommunikation in Zeiten einer transnationalen Krise. Hier zeigen sich andere Muster im Verhalten der europhilen Mainstream-Parteien als hinsichtlich der Verbreitung softer und harter euroskeptischer Äußerungen.

Studiensteckbrief Manuskript 2

Untersuchungszeitraum: 12 Wochen vor der EP- Wahl 2014

Länderauswahl: Deutschland, Österreich, Portugal

Untersuchungsmaterial: Pressemitteilungen nationaler Parteien mit EU-Bezug und Bezug zur europäischen Finanzkrise

In den Geberländern Deutschland und Österreich investieren vorrangig die europhilen Regierungsparteien, welche vor der Äußerung konkreter negativer Bewertungen

gegenüber der EU zurückschrecken (siehe Manuskript 1, Kapitel 4), in ein strategisches blame shifting von der nationalen auf die europäische Ebene. In Pressemitteilungen mit Bezug zur europäischen Finanzkrise, stellen sie vorrangig europäische Akteure als Verursacher von Krisenaspekten dar. Dies entspricht der Hypothese, dass nationale Regierungsparteien im politischen Mehrebenensystem kausale Verantwortung auf supranationale Akteure attribuieren, um die eigene Partei vor solchen negativen Zuschreibungen zu schützen. Gemäß den Annahmen setzen auch euroskeptische Oppositionsparteien, die die Finanzkrise häufig in ihren Pressemitteilungen adressieren, in allen drei Ländern auf ein EU-blaming. Im Gegensatz dazu stellen europhile Oppositionsparteien, welche das Thema ohnehin meiden, ausschließlich die jeweiligen Regierungsparteien als Verursacher von Krisenaspekten dar und unterstreichen somit ihr pro-europäisches Profil. Auch die europhilen Regierungsparteien im Nehmerland Portugal bleiben in ihrer blaming-Strategie innerhalb der nationalen Grenzen. Entgegen der Annahme, dass gerade Regierungsparteien von einem blame shifting auf die supranationale Ebene profitieren, schreiben sie der Opposition kausale Verantwortung in ihrer strategischen Kommunikation zur europäischen Finanzkrise zu. Die Ergebnisse sprechen für die Annahme, dass eine blame shifting-Strategie jenseits des Nationalstaats besonders opportun für Regierungsparteien ist, deren Länder nur indirekt von einer transnationalen Krise betroffen sind.

Neben der Verbreitung dieses subtilen Euroskeptizismus in der Parteienkommunikation zur Finanzkrise, betrachtet die Studie auch die Zuschreibung von Problemlösungskompetenz. Hier zeigt sich, dass die Regierungsparteien in Portugal ausschließlich die eigene Partei als kompetenten Problemlöser beschreiben, wobei Regierungsparteien in Deutschland und Österreich auch europäischen Akteuren Verantwortung für die Lösung von Problemen in Zusammenhang mit der Finanzkrise

zuschreiben. Gerade im Nehmerland Portugal scheint es in Zeiten von Austeritätsmaßnahmen relevant zu sein, nationale Handlungsfähigkeit zu demonstrieren.

Politisches Framing vollzieht sich nicht nur auf Ebene der Kommunikation politischer Akteure. Für die gesellschaftliche Sichtbarkeit spezifischer Deutungsmuster ist deren massenmediale Verbreitung von großer Relevanz. Die zwei weiteren Manuskripte konzentrieren sich folglich auf die mediale Repräsentanz euroskeptischer Äußerungen und untersuchen die Berichterstattung in nationalen Qualitätszeitungen zwölf Wochen im Vorfeld der EP Wahl 2014,

Manuskript 3 (siehe Kapitel 6) analysiert, welche Bewertungen gegenüber der Europäischen Union durch aktive Sprecher in Artikeln mit EU-Bezug im Nachrichtenteil sowie durch die Medien selbst im Meinungsteil verbreitet werden.

Studiensteckbrief Manuskript 3

Untersuchungszeitraum: 12 Wochen vor der EP- Wahl 2014

Länderauswahl: Deutschland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Niederlande, Österreich, Portugal, UK

Untersuchungsmaterial: Äußerungen aktiver Sprecher in Artikeln mit EU-Bezug im Politikteil; Artikel mit EU-Bezug im Meinungsteil

Zunächst zeigt sich, dass 23 Prozent der zitierten Äußerungen im Nachrichtenteil und 41 Prozent der Meinungsartikel konkrete EU-Evaluationen enthalten. Weiterhin dominieren negative Bewertungen zu konkreten EU-Politiken oder Akteuren die wiedergegebenen Meinungen, was für eine starke Verbreitung eines soften Euroskeptizismus in Krisenzeiten spricht. Ausnahmen bilden hier lediglich die Editoriale des *Standards* in Österreich und des *Handelsblad* in den Niederlanden. Im Gegensatz dazu, überwiegen bezüglich der gesamten Idee der europäischen Integration positive Bewertungen in Nachrichten- und Meinungsteilen. Nur im britischen *The Telegraph* bestimmen harte euroskeptische Äußerungen das Meinungsklima.

Die Analyse deckt auf, dass es einen starken, signifikanten Zusammenhang zwischen den geäußerten EU-Bewertungen im Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil der analysierten Qualitätszeitungen gibt. Dies spricht für eine Synchronisierung der veröffentlichten medialen und politischen Positionierung gegenüber der EU. Entgegen der Annahme zeigen sich diese Synchronisierungseffekte nicht vorrangig in Ländern mit hohem politischen Parallelismus und einer geringeren journalistischen Professionalität (*polarized pluralist countries*; im Sample vertreten durch Griechenland, Portugal und Frankreich), sondern treten besonders stark in Österreich, Deutschland, den Niederlanden (*democratic corporatist countries*) und UK (*liberal country*) auf. Die Analyse zeigt weiterhin, dass diese Synchronizität zwischen Nachrichtenteil und Editorial vorrangig durch die Selektion opportuner nationaler Stimmen entsteht. Die Medien weichen aber auf transnationale Sprecher aus, wenn das Meinungsklima des nationalen politischen Inputs (ermittelt durch die Analyse in Manuskript 1, siehe Kapitel 4) nicht der geäußerten Meinung der Medien entspricht, was in den Niederlanden und Portugal der Fall ist. Hier zeigt sich, dass die Medien nicht in jedem Fall dem Input der politischen Elite des jeweiligen Landes folgen, sondern auch eine unabhängige Positionierung vorantreiben können.

Manuskript 4 (siehe Kapitel 7) untersucht die Vermittlung subtiler euroskeptischer Äußerungen durch veröffentlichte Verantwortungszuschreibungen in der Berichterstattung zur europäischen Finanzkrise.

Studiensteckbrief Manuskript 4

Untersuchungszeitraum: 12 Wochen vor der EP- Wahl 2014

Länderauswahl: Deutschland, Österreich, Portugal

Untersuchungsmaterial: Äußerungen aktiver Sprecher in Artikeln mit EU-Bezug und Bezug zur europäischen Finanzkrise im Politikteil; Artikel mit EU-Bezug und Bezug zur europäischen Finanzkrise im Meinungsteil

Das Manuskript zeigt auf, dass die blame shifting-Strategien der Regierungsparteien in Deutschland, Österreich und Portugal (siehe Manuskript 1, Kapitel 4) auch das Verantwortungsframing in Zitaten nationaler Akteure in der Berichterstattung zur Finanzkrise dominieren. So ist in der Berichterstattung der Geberländer ein starkes vertikales blame-shifting von der nationalen auf die supranationale Ebene zu finden, wohingegen nationale Sprecher in der portugiesischen Berichterstattung nicht auf die EU als Sündenbock ausweichen. Wie auch hinsichtlich der Evaluationen zur EU (siehe Manuskript 3, Kapitel 6), zeigen sich auch bezüglich der Zuschreibung von kausaler Verantwortung starke Synchronisierungseffekte zwischen Politik- und Meinungsteil der analysierten Zeitungen. In Deutschland und Österreich machen sowohl die Medien selbst im Rahmen meinungsbezogener Artikel als auch die selektierten Äußerungen nationaler und transnationaler Stimmen vorrangig die EU für Probleme im Zusammenhang mit der Finanzkrise verantwortlich. Dem entgegengesetzt schreiben Journalisten im Kommentarteil portugiesischer Zeitungen nationalen Akteuren kausale Verantwortung zu, was sich auch in den veröffentlichten Äußerungen nationaler und europäischer Akteure widerspiegelt. Gemäß den Annahmen zeigt sich letztlich, dass die publizierten Äußerungen von nationalen Akteuren der nationalen Ebene Problemlösungskompetenz zuschreiben, wohingegen zitierte EU-Sprecher diese Verantwortung auf supranationaler Ebene verorten.

In der Synopse der vier Manuskripte lassen sich folgende zentrale Befunde herausstellen:

- Das Vorhandensein euroskeptischer Kräfte in der Parteienlandschaft führt nicht zwangsläufig zu einer Politisierung der Debatte zu europäischen Issues, da europhile Mainstream-Parteien mit starkem internen Dissens europäische Themen wenig adressieren, andere europäische Issues auf die Agenda setzen als die euroskeptischen

Herausforderer, eine klare Positionierung zu EU-Themen meiden oder keinen eindeutig pro-europäischen Standpunkt einnehmen.

- Europhile Regierungsparteien in den Geberländern Deutschland und Österreich meiden zwar konkrete negative Bewertungen der EU in der öffentlichen Debatte, investieren aber in ein strategisches blame shifting hin zur supranationalen Ebene. Dieser empirische Befund verdeutlicht, wie relevant die Hinzunahme der Kategorie des *subtilen Euroskeptizismus* zur Analyse euroskeptischer Äußerungen ist.
- Europhile Regierungsparteien im Nehmerland Portugal attribuieren die Problemlösungskompetenz in Bezug auf die Finanzkrise auf die nationale Ebene, was ein Hinweis auf die Demonstration nationaler Souveränität in Zeiten von Austeritätsprogrammen sein könnte.
- Europäische Bürger sind mit einer *mehrdimensionalen Synchronisierung* hinsichtlich des Framings europäischer Themen in der öffentlichen Debatte konfrontiert:
 - Die mediale Berichterstattung zu Themen mit EU-Bezug zeigt eine starke Synchronizität zwischen Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil, was die geäußerten *Bewertungen* zur Europäischen Union angeht.
 - Auch die zitierten *Verantwortungsattributionen* in politischen Meldungen zur europäischen Finanzkrise stehen im Einklang mit dem Verantwortungsframing der Artikel im Kommentarteil.
 - Weiterhin offenbart sich eine weit verbreitete Synchronisierung zwischen den verwendeten Evaluationen und Verantwortungszuschreibungen der *politischen Elite* (Regierungs- bzw. Mainstreamparteien) *und den repräsentierten Äußerungen in der medialen Berichterstattung*.

8.2 Diskussion und Ausblick

Im Rahmen der in den Kapiteln 4 bis 7 präsentierten Manuskripte werden sowohl theoretisch als auch methodisch innovative Ansätze verfolgt, um bestehende Forschungsdefizite zur Untersuchung von Euroskeptizismus in Politik und Medien zu reduzieren (siehe Kapitel 8.2.1). Gleichzeitig bieten die gewonnenen Erkenntnisse Anregungen für weitere Forschungsarbeiten (siehe Kapitel 8.2.2) und eröffnen neue Blickwinkel auf die öffentliche Debatte europäischer Themen (siehe Kapitel 8.3)

8.2.1 *Beitrag zum Forschungsfeld*

Ein wesentlicher Aspekt hinsichtlich der Adressierung identifizierter Forschungsdefizite ist die Verwendung von Pressemitteilung als Untersuchungsmaterial für die Analyse der strategischen Parteienkommunikation. Studien, die sich mit Verantwortungsattributionen politischer Akteure auseinandersetzen, verwendeten bisher die Medienberichterstattung als Proxy für das strategische Parteienverhalten (für diese Vorgehensweise siehe etwa Gerhards, Offerhaus & Roose, 2009; Helbling et al., 2010; Maestas, Atkeson, Croom & Bryant, 2008; Statham & Koopmans, 2009). Diese Methodik basiert auf der Annahme, dass die Medien als Spiegel der politischen Realität verwendet werden können. Die vorliegende Dissertation hat auf diesen Proxy bewusst verzichtet und Pressemitteilungen politischer Parteien als Untersuchungsmaterial herangezogen. Dies erweist sich als erkenntnissteigernde Innovation, da die hier präsentierten Forschungsergebnisse erneut deutlich machen, dass die mediale Berichterstattung wenig geeignet ist um Rückschlüsse auf die strategische Parteienkommunikation zu ziehen. Es zeigt sich, dass etwa die Positionierungen von Oppositions- und Randparteien in der Berichterstattung nur eine geringe Rolle spielen, wohingegen das Verhalten dieser Akteure in der politischen Arena von hoher Relevanz ist.

Oppositions- und Randparteien stoßen Debatten etwa überhaupt erst an oder bewegen etablierte Parteien zu einer Positionierung (siehe hierzu Manuskript 2, Kapitel 5).

Eine weitere Stärke der hier präsentierten Studien zur Parteienkommunikation ist die Analyse aller nationalen Parteien anstatt einer Fokussierung auf Regierungs- oder Elitenakteure (diesen Ansatz verfolgen etwa Hobolt & Tilley, 2014). Es erweist sich darüber hinaus als fruchtbar, keine statische Analyse des Parteienspektrums in europhile und euroskeptische Parteien (siehe etwa Hooghe et al., 2002; Kopecký & Mudde, 2002; Spoon & Williams, 2017) vorzunehmen, sondern die öffentliche Positionierung der Parteien in Debatten zu EU-Themen zu untersuchen (Hooghe & Marks, 2007; Statham & Koopmans, 2009; Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2008). Nur so zeigt sich, dass sich europhile Parteien nicht zwangsweise auch europhil positionieren (siehe Manuskript 1, Kapitel 4). Weiterhin erlaubt diese Methodik wertvolle Rückschlüsse auf die Politisierung der europäischen Debatte durch erstarkende euroskeptische Stimmen in den nationalen politischen Arenen. Hier wird deutlich, dass das Vorhandensein euroskeptischer Kräfte in der Parteienlandschaft nicht unbedingt eine stärkere Politisierung der Debatte zur europäischen Integration evoziert.

Hinsichtlich einer theoretischen Modellierung euroskeptischer Äußerungen und der darauf basierenden empirischen Operationalisierung, erweist sich die Erweiterung des Euroskeptizismus-Konzepts von Taggart und Szczerbiak (2008) um die Kategorie des subtilen Euroskeptizismus als sinnvoll. Die im Rahmen dieser Dissertation präsentierten Ergebnisse zeigen auf, dass sich das Parteienverhalten bezüglich der Verwendung softer und subtiler euroskeptischer Äußerungen unterscheidet. So bleiben europhile Regierungsparteien ihrem pro-europäischen Profil hinsichtlich evaluativer Äußerungen weitgehend treu (siehe Manuskript 1, Kapitel 4), nutzen die EU aber als Adressat kausaler Verantwortungszuschreibungen im Rahmen ihrer strategischen Kommunikation (siehe Manuskript 5, Kapitel 2). Diese vertikalen blame shifting-Prozesse seitens genuin europhiler

Regierungsparteien tragen zu einer Verbreitung eurokritischer Sichtweisen bei. Dies gilt insbesondere, wenn Medien dieses EU-blaming aufgreifen und es weiterhin durch eine synchrone Verantwortungsattribution im Rahmen der Editorale ergänzt wird (zur Wirkung von medialen Verantwortungsattributionen siehe Hameleers et al., 2016). Die Untersuchung von Synchronisierungseffekten bezüglich des Framings von Verantwortung, welches eine Schlüsselrolle in der Darstellung von Krisen spielt, stellt eine wichtige Ergänzung bisheriger Studien in diesem Themenbereich dar, die sich vorrangig auf eine Übereinstimmung evaluativer Tendenzen zwischen Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil konzentrieren (für einen Überblick siehe Bachl & Vögele, 2013).

Den in dieser Dissertation präsentierten Studien zur Medienberichterstattung liegt eine akteurszentrierte Codierung und Analyse zu Grunde (zu dieser Vorgehensweise siehe etwa Statham & Koopmans, 2009; Wessler & Brüggemann, 2012), anstatt auf den gesamten Artikel als Analyseeinheit zu rekurrieren (wie in vielen vorhergehenden Studien zur Europa-Berichterstattung siehe beispielhaft Hepp, Brüggemann, Kleinen-von Königslöw, Lingenberg & Möller, 2012; Schuck, Xezonakis, Elenbaas, Banducci & de Vreese, 2011; Trenz, 2005). Diese Methode bietet einen Erkenntnisgewinn, da sie den Vergleich zwischen Äußerungen verschiedener Akteure in der Medienberichterstattung erlaubt. Auch Matthes und Kohring (2008) fordern eine akteurszentrierte Codierung des medialen Framings, um dem Umstand Rechnung zu tragen, dass verschiedene Deutungsmuster unterschiedlicher Frame-Sponsoren in einem Artikel repräsentiert werden können. Durch diese Vorgehensweise können auch akteursspezifische Aussagen hinsichtlich Synchronisierungseffekten zwischen Meinungs- und Nachrichtenteil getroffen werden. So wurden in beiden Studien zur Medienberichterstattung nach dem besten Wissen der Autorin erstmals auch transnationale Akteure in die Analyse miteinbezogen, die etwa als opportune Zeugen abseits des vorherrschenden nationalen Meinungsspektrums dienen können.

Außerdem bietet der akteurszentrierte Ansatz eine wertvolle Schnittstelle für den Vergleich der Medienberichterstattung mit der Parteienkommunikation. Hinsichtlich der Salienzdimension nutzen die Analysen von Maier, Bacherle, Adam und Leidecker-Sandmann (2017) sowie Jansen, Eugster, Maier und Adam (2018) aus dem gleichen Forschungsprojekt diese Möglichkeit und können somit kausale Beziehungen zwischen dem Parteien- und Medienverhalten untersuchen.

Letztlich erweist sich die Verknüpfung des kommunikationswissenschaftlichen Framing-Ansatzes mit politikwissenschaftlichen Ansätzen, wie etwa dem Economic Voting-Paradigma sowie darauf bezogenen Überlegungen zum Einfluss der „clarity of responsibility“ politischer Mehrebenensysteme, als geeignete theoretische Grundlage, um Annahmen zur strategischen Parteienkommunikation in Bezug auf europäische Issues abzuleiten.

8.2.2 *Limitationen der Dissertation und Anknüpfungspunkte für weitere Forschung*

Wie im vorhergehenden Abschnitt ausgeführt, zeigt eine Gesamtschau der Manuskripte deutlich, dass es in dieser Dissertation gelungen ist relevante Forschungslücken zu minimieren. Neben den bereits in den einzelnen Manuskripten diskutierten Limitationen, ergeben sich aber auch aus ihrer Synopse übergeordnete Begrenzungen, die wiederum Anreize für weitere Forschungsarbeiten in diesem Gebiet setzen.

Die präsentierten Forschungsergebnisse sprechen für eine mehrfache Synchronisierung der öffentlichen Debatte zu europäischen Issues. Ein Vergleich der Verbreitung softer und subtiler euroskeptischer Äußerungen in der Parteien- und Medienkommunikation legt den Schluss nahe, dass Meinungen der politischen Elite in der Berichterstattung dominieren. Diese Interpretation der hier vorgestellten Befunde sollte im Rahmen einer eigenen empirischen Überprüfung, in der die Wechselwirkung zwischen

Parteienkommunikation und der Medienberichterstattung auch hinsichtlich des Framings europäischer Themen analysiert wird, erhärtet werden. Dies entspräche auch der Forderung von de Vreese (2012) und Matthes (2012) das Framing politischer Sachverhalte als Prozess zu begreifen, in welchem die Ebenen der Parteien- und Medienkommunikation sowie die Ebene der Rezipienten nicht getrennt voneinander zu betrachten sind. So wäre es von großem Interesse die reziproken Einflüsse von Politik und Medien in Bezug auf das Framing EU-bezogener Issues zu analysieren (siehe hierzu die Studien von Jansen et al., 2018 und Maier et al., 2017 aus dem gleichen Forschungsprojekt). Auch Vliegenthart und van Zoonen (2011) weisen daraufhin, dass solche Studien auf agenda building-Prozesse fokussiert sind.

Darüber hinaus regt diese Sichtweise auch dazu an, die Wirkungsebene in den Blick zu nehmen, die hier außer Acht gelassen wurde. Anhand der gewonnenen Erkenntnisse zu euroskeptischen Äußerungen in der politischen und medialen Arena, ließen sich realistische Stimuli ableiten, um die Wirkung verschiedener Formen euroskeptischer Äußerungen (hart, soft oder subtil) seitens verschiedener Akteure (nationale oder europäische Akteure, Mainstream, Oppositions- oder Randparteien, politische Akteure oder Medien) auf die Einstellungen verschiedener Rezipientengruppen (Parteianhänger, Euroskeptiker, Europhile, etc.) zu untersuchen.

Weiterhin lassen die im Rahmen von Manuskript 3 und 4 (siehe Kapitel 6 und 7) enthaltenen korrelativen Analysen zur Synchronisierung zwischen Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil in der Berichterstattung europäischer Issues keine kausalen Aussagen über die Entstehung der beobachteten Effekte zu. Wie auch schon Eilders (1999) anmerkt, gibt es zwei Möglichkeiten diese Synchronisierungseffekte zu interpretieren. Journalisten können entweder im Nachrichtenteil Stimmen selektieren, die die geäußerten Meinungen im Kommentarteil unterstützen, oder sie können die Meinungen im Editorial den dominanten Stimmen im Nachrichtenteil anpassen. Aufschluss über solche Fragen bezüglich des

journalistischen Verhaltens sollten in weiteren Studien zur journalistischen Selektion und Nachrichtenerstellung geklärt werden.

Letztlich ergeben sich noch einige Limitationen aus dem Design der Studien. Hinsichtlich der Analyse der Verantwortungsattributionen in der öffentlichen Kommunikation zur europäischen Finanzkrise schränkt die geringe Länderauswahl (Deutschland, Österreich und Portugal) die Erklärungskraft der Ergebnisse ein. Hier wäre es interessant die gewonnenen Erkenntnisse hinsichtlich der Unterschiede zwischen Geber- und Nehmerländern im Rahmen einer breiter angelegten, komparativen Analyse zu erhärten. Hierbei sollten auch weitere unabhängige Variablen wie aktuelle Regierungswechsel, Stärke der Opposition, Koalitionsregierung, etc. in die Untersuchung miteinfließen. Außerdem wäre zur weiteren Generalisierbarkeit der Ergebnisse eine Studie im Kontext einer anderen transnationalen Krise denkbar. So ließe sich etwa testen, ob sich die hier beobachteten Differenzen zwischen Geber- und Nehmerländern in ähnlicher Form auch bezüglich der europäischen Flüchtlingskrise zeigen. Schließlich lassen sich auch in dieser Krise unmittelbar betroffene Länder wie etwa die Mittelmeerränder von mittelbar betroffenen EU-Mitgliedsstaaten unterscheiden.

8.3 Bedeutung der Ergebnisse für die öffentliche Debatte europäischer Themen

Die Arbeit widmet sich der Analyse des Euroskeptizismus in Politik und Medien in Zeiten einer transnationalen Krise. Die Ergebnisse zeigen deutlich, dass euroskeptische Positionen Relevanz in der öffentlichen Debatte EU-bezogener Themen entfalten. Die damit verbundene Hoffnung, dass erstarkende euroskeptische Kräfte durch Evozierung polarisierter Debatten zu einer stärkeren Politisierung der EU und damit einer Steigerung ihrer demokratischen Legitimität führen, bleibt aber weitestgehend unerfüllt. So ist der permissive Konsens gegenüber der EU zwar aufgebrochen, aber nicht in einer lebhaften

Diskussion europäischer Streitfragen in den nationalen Öffentlichkeiten gemündet. Hierzu wäre es notwendig, und aus Sicht der demokratischen Legitimität der EU auch wünschenswert, dass europhile Mainstream-Parteien auch in Zeiten transnationaler Krisen europäische Themen auf die Agenda setzen und ihre Positionen zu europäischen Issues öffentlich klar herausstellen. Hinsichtlich der medialen Repräsentation der politischen Debatte zu EU-Themen, lässt sich die mehrdimensionale Synchronisierung hinsichtlich EU-Bewertungen und Verantwortungsattributionen durchaus kritisch bewerten. Journalistische Selektion scheint ein relativ homogenes Meinungsbild in der Darstellung europäischer Themen im Nachrichten- und Meinungsteil zu evozieren. Dies entspricht nicht der journalistischen Aufgabe, den Bürger im Rahmen der Berichterstattung umfassend über politische Prozesse zu informieren (Meinungsvielfalt) und diese im Kommentarteil autonom zu bewerten (Neutralität bzw. Trennung von Nachricht und Meinung) (zur Qualität im Journalismus siehe überblickshaft Arnold, 2008). Die hier präsentierten Ergebnisse legen nahe, dass eine Sensibilisierung hinsichtlich der Auswahl von Quellen im Rahmen der journalistischen Ausbildung von hoher Relevanz ist.

Im Hinblick auf die politische PR im europäischen Kontext zeigt sich, dass auch subtile Kategorien wie das Framing von Verantwortung Wiederhall in der Medienberichterstattung finden. Strategische Verantwortungszuschreibungen sind gerade in Krisenzeiten für die Regierungsparteien von großer Wichtigkeit, da normalerweise gerade sie für negative Entwicklungen im Rahmen der Wahl zur Verantwortung gezogen werden. Ist dies eine erfreuliche Nachricht für PR-Strategen, so sollte es dennoch Anlass zur kritischen Reflektion bei bieten. Ein systematisches EU-blaming seitens der nationalen Regierungsparteien kann sich schließlich negativ auf die Zustimmung der Bürger zum Projekt der europäischen Vergemeinschaftung auswirken (Hameleers et al., 2016). Auch wenn es kurzfristig opportun erscheint die EU als Sündenbock zu verwenden, sollten die genuin europhilen

Regierungsparteien diese langfristigen Konsequenzen bei der Konzeption politischer Kommunikationsstrategien nicht außer Acht lassen.

Abschließend lässt sich festhalten, dass die differenzierte und mehrdimensionale Analyse euroskeptischer Äußerungen im Rahmen dieser Dissertation relevante wissenschaftliche Einsichten geliefert hat, die einerseits Perspektiven für weitere Forschungsvorhaben eröffnen und andererseits neue Anhaltspunkte für die kritische Diskussion der strategischen Kommunikation politischer Akteure und der journalistischen Darstellung politischer Themen und Akteure in Bezug auf die EU liefert.

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10 APPENDIX

I Auszug aus dem Codebuch zur Identifizierung aktiver Akteure

EU ELECTION STUDY: CORE VARIABLES

14

ACTORS

The identification of (active) actors works differently for the coding of newspapers compared to the coding of press releases and spots.

Newspapers only

V14 How many (max 6) actors are mentioned in the story? Please indicate how many actors you have identified in line with the rules below.

Variables V15a-V15f Actors

Which actors are mentioned (up to 6)?

→ Please code according to the list of actors [see Appendix]

Up to SIX different persons, groups, institutions or organizations that are

- mentioned verbally at least twice. He/she, him/her, who(m)/which also count. Synonyms or personal pronouns also count (e.g. if Gordon Brown is referred to as "the PM" or "the Incredible Hulk" if that is indeed clearly discernable from the text. An actor should be mentioned verbally at least twice *in two separate sentences*. Thus, a reference to "Jose Manuel Barroso, the commission's president" or a single sentence like "Barroso yesterday announced that he wants a second term as Commission president" only counts as *one* mentioning of Barroso, as both his name, his function, and "he" are mentioned within in a single sentence.

or

- verbally mentioned once **and** quoted (Brown said: "Britain...") / or quoted without quotation marks (i.e. reported speech: Brown said that...)

or

- mentioned verbally at least once **and** depicted at least once.

Exception: If an article in a newspaper only consists of a headline/ bullet/ picture, **one** mentioning or depiction of politicians, political groups, institutions or organizations is sufficient! However, cartoon/drawing does not count as a reference to an actor! Also, coding of actors shown on photography or film is limited to *persons* (depictions of logos, buildings of institutions do not count a reference to non-personal actors).

Note: If an article in a newspaper is a commentary the journalist who wrote the commentary is coded as an (active) actor! This is also the case for an opinion piece, column, and letter to the editor.

1. Actors are **not necessarily persons**. A government, an institution, an organization, even a country as a whole can be an actor if the story depicts so.
2. Actors can be **subjects** (active actors) as well as **objects** (passive actors). So an actor does **not necessarily have to act**. Actors can also be **objects** or **targets** of actions - they can be attacked or criticized, for instance.

But keep in mind that actors can only be persons, groups, institutions or organizations. Also a reference to "Gordon Brown's policy proposals" or "the government's goals" or "Tony Blair's Notting Hill residence" counts as a mentioning of Brown, the government, or Tony Blair as actors. Similarly, a reference to "European Commission proposal" or "EU allies" counts as a mentioning of European Commission or EU, respectively.

Countries or cities as such are **not** coded as actors (e.g., "Germany is facing a sharp economic downturn" or "the G20 met in the UK today" does NOT count as actor reference). ONLY code a country as an actor when the country name (or mentioning of the capital of a country) is used as a synonym for the national government (e.g., "the UK yesterday announced to exit the EU" or "Germany has opposed the US proposal to increase the number of troops in Afghanistan"). In these latter cases the country name clearly indicates the national government which is listed with a respective code in the actor appendix.

3. An *unspecified group* (i.e., a mix of different) of actors referred to in plural form as "they" or "these four companies" etc. (e.g., "The Times, the Sun, and the Guardian all reported today that *they* expect ad revenues to be lower") does **not** count as an actor mentioning. However, a story referring to "SPD party members" as "they" does count because it refers to a specified actor (=SPD party members), for example.
4. **Journalists** are actors *only* if they are **interviewed, reported about, used as sources**.
5. An actor can only be coded once – although she/he/it/they may appear at several places and with different functions in the story. Then, choose the category depicting the most important role of that actor in the story. If more than one code applies to one actor, choose the most specific one (e.g., a farmer is not to be coded as ordinary citizen, but as member of a professional group). There may be cases in which the same code has to be assigned to different actors, e.g. when two members of the same party are quarrelling with each other. The reference point for deciding how to code an actor is always the story. If, for example, a minister is a *candidate* running for the EP, use the relevant EP Candidate Actor List code. If the story is about the person as member of the government, use the relevant minister code.

6. **Generic groups of actors such as Europeans, voters, citizens, public, MPs, MEPs, politicians, etc.** have to be mentioned twice with the same descriptive term (e.g., 2x "voters" or 2x "Dutch MEPs") and are coded according to the codes in the actor appendix.

"I" or "We" (e.g. "I think" or "we are"), e.g. in a column or commentary does **not** establish the author as an actor and thus does not count as a mentioning of an actor! This rule is not applicable regarding *interviewees* referring to themselves as "I" or "we", since interviewees can only refer to themselves as "I" or "we" in **quotes**. One or more direct quotes always establish the interviewee as an actor (provided of course he or she is among the first 6 actors of a story).

7. Actors are only coded as actors if they act or are acted upon, but **not** if they are mentioned as a **location**. For instance, the European Parliament can be an actor (e.g., the EP demands certain policies), but can also be a location (e.g., MEPs were debating an issue in the EP). Do **not** count a reference of such an actor when actually the location is meant.

8. Criteria for selecting actors

If there is more than one actor:

Actor 1 = the main actor, the most important actor of the story.

Indicators of importance are:

- duration, space of information about the actor
- frequency of being mentioned
- visibility (film, photographs etc.)
- quotes, statements of the actor.

NOTE I: If two actors are equally prominent in the article with regard to the above criteria, then count the number of references to each actor and choose the one who is most often referred to. However, this rule only applies if two actors are really exactly evenly prominent with regard to the above criteria.

NOTE II: Actors do **not** become important in a story because of their professional position, their rank or prestige!

If there are two or more actors that are sufficiently present (see above) in the story:

Code the other actors (except the main actor) **in the order of their appearance in the story**.

NOTE III: In order to determine the order of appearance in newspaper articles and in order to determine which actor is mentioned *first* it is important to determine what part of the story is the '**coding starting point**'.

Newspaper articles: Starting point is always (1) the headline, followed by (2) the photo and the caption directly following the photograph (if present), followed by (3) the first (intro) paragraph of the article, then (4) the second etc.

FILTER:

Media: All subsequent variables are only coded if V9 = 2

Variable ACTACTIVITY

Is the actor active?

To qualify as active, an actor has to fulfil two criteria:

1. An *active* actor **agitates** inside the article – that means, he *formulates statements or performs an action* (e.g. demonstrates, passes a law and so on)! An active actor is someone who says or does something, who talks, who is quoted (= subject). An *active* actor is an actor, who is not only mentioned in the article.

and

2. This agitation makes a **political opinion** of an actor visible. These political opinions are related either to a policy (content), to politics (process, strategies, nomination of candidates) or to polity (the system as such, its functioning, etc.). A political opinion is expressed if the actor evaluates policy, politics or polity, if he prefers or refuses certain situations, if he speaks in favour or against something, if he says something is good/bad, mishandled if he supports a specific position, etc.

Identification of active actors in *newspaper articles*: You may code up to *three* active actors per article.

PLEASE NOTE: For editorials, columns / commentaries and letters to the editor only *one* active actor is coded, i.e. the person who wrote the editorial, column / commentary or the letter to the editor!

'activity of the actor'

- 1 = active actor (*agitates, formulates statements and/or performs an action AND voices a political opinion*)
- 2 = other actor (*no agitation; OR: agitation with no voicing of political opinions*)

Main example for newspaper article:

Berlin. July 19, 2011. (dpa report): Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel **pleaded** in favour of Eurobonds. "Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts." But it is highly regrettable that the European Commission has not made useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds so far, Steinbrück said.

→ Code: Peer Steinbrück = 1; Sigmar Gabriel = 1

NOTE I: If an article in a newspaper is an *editorial (or leading article)*, the journalist who wrote the commentary is coded as the active actor! All other actors within a commentary are by definition passive actors (see above). The same applies for *guest commentaries (commentary)* as well as *letters to the editor*: here the guest commentator is coded as active actor.

NOTE II: If an active actor (= person/institution "X") talks about someone (person/institution "Y") who has said or done something (or is planning to do something), **ONLY** person/institution "X" is coded as active actor (*he/she/it talks*) – person/institution "Y" is coded as passive actor (*he/she/it is talked about*)

NOTE III: We only code *explicit* actions. Don't interpret too much or become too subtle, too creative or too subjective (no guessing!).

NOTE IV: Even if an actor is several times only mentioned (= passive) inside the article **BUT ONCE** formulates a statement or performs an action and thereby expresses an opinion, please code him/her as an active actor!

NOTE V: Even answers are active agitations where an opinion may be voiced.

NOTE VI: Per definition press releases and spots are coded as active (=1)

*Further examples for **active** actors:*

- "Chancellor Angela Merkel warns that claims of American spy operations in Germany, including the bugging of her mobile phone, strain relations with Washington."
→ Code: *Chancellor Angela Merkel = 1 (voicing an opinion)*
- The CDU has passed a law for stricter immigration policies.
→ Code: *CDU = 1 (voices an opinion by passing a law on stricter immigration policies).*

*Further Examples for **other** actors (if they are mentioned twice or cited):*

- *Both criteria missing (no agitation, no political opinion):*
Rebecca Harms was appointed top candidate of the Greens.
→ Code: *Rebecca Harms = 2 (is just mentioned)*
- *Second criterion missing (political opinion):*
Reinhard Bütikofer (EP candidate, German Greens) declares: "Rebecca Harms was appointed as top candidate."
→ Code: *Reinhard Bütikofer = 2 (he does not voice a political opinion)*

Angela Merkel flies to Africa
→ Code: *Angela Merkel = 2 (she does not voice a political opinion)*

Reinhard Bütikofer (EP candidate, German Greens) declares: "The delegates passed a manifesto."
→ Code: *Reinhard Bütikofer = 2 (he does not voice a political opinion); the delegates = 2 (they are only talked about)*

"Following the report, the British ambassador in Berlin was called in to the German foreign ministry."

→ Code: British ambassador = 2 (not acting, only talked about); German foreign ministry = 2 (does not act or state an opinion)

Steinbrück criticises Merkel

→ Code: Steinbrück = 2 (a personal critique/attack of another person is not a political opinion)

However, "Cameron said, Merkel's data protection regulation is **scandalous**."

→ Code: Cameron = 1 (he criticises a policy, polity or politics, here Merkel's policy)

Proceeding how to identify the active actors

1. Starting point are the actors coded by the variables V15a-V15f (Amsterdamer variables)
2. Check if some actors are coded separately (through V15a-V15f), but in the article are used as synonyms (e.g. Chancellor, Merkel, German government, Berlin and Germany)

→ In this case, aggregate all the references (e.g. Merkel, Berlin, Germany) in the text to **one actor** only, who you code as individuals, i.e. the lowest possible level (here: Merkel instead of German government). This also applies to parties as a whole (e.g. Merkel and CDU, then code Merkel)

Special rule I: If two individuals and a government are active actors, code both individual actors separately, even if they have the same political opinion. However, they have to be mentioned in separate sentence.

Note I: Statements of "spokes persons" of actors are attributed to the actor they are speaking for (e.g. Steffen Seibert, the spoke person of the German government is coded as the German government)

Note II: internal sources of the government have to be treated as separate active actor.

Example 1: Merkel, Schäuble, and the German government are active actors

Aggregate the references of the German government to the actor where it fits best.

Often reference of the German government fits best with Merkel.

→ In this case, two active actors: actor #1 = Merkel (incl. German government) and actor #2 = Schäuble

Example 2: Labour politicians and Ed Miliband are active actors

→ Code: actor #1 = Ed Miliband (incl. Labour politicians)

3. Check if the actor is active by using both criteria: (1) agitation and (2) political opinion (see below)
4. If you have 3 active actors (based on V15a-V15f) stop. Otherwise, read the article again and check whether other potentially active actors are mentioned in the article:
 - They have to be mentioned verbally at least twice. He/she, him/her, who(m)/which also count.¹ An actor should be mentioned verbally at least twice *in two separate sentences*.² OR verbally mentioned once **and** quoted (Brown said: "Britain...") / or

¹ Synonyms or personal pronouns also count (e.g. if Gordon Brown is referred to as "the PM" or "the Incredible Hulk" if that is indeed clearly discernable from the text.

² Thus, a reference to "Jose Manuel Barroso, the commission's president" or a single sentence like "Barroso

quoted without quotation marks (i.e. reported speech: Brown said that...) OR mentioned verbally at least once **and** depicted at least once.

- Check if the actor is active by using both criteria: (1) agitation and (2) political opinion (see below)

yesterday announced that he wants a second term as Commission president" only counts as *one* mentioning of Barroso, as both his name, his function, and "he" are mentioned within in a single sentence

FILTER:

Media: All subsequent variables are only coded if ACTACTIVITY=1

Variable ActAct

Who is the main active actor (up to 3)?

→ **Please code according to the list of actors** [see Appendix E: Actor List]

Up to three active actors are coded per news story.

Variable AA_num

Number of active actor (up to 3)

'number of active actor'

- 1 = first active actor
- 2 = second active actor
- 3 = third active actor

NOTE: This variable is only available for the "active actor level" dataset" (i.e. active actor = case). For the "article level" article, the actors and variables are denoted with a suffix (e.g. ActAct1, MainIss2 etc.)

Press releases and spots only

Variable <i>Mainact</i>

<i>Who is the main active actor responsible for publishing the press release / spot?</i>
--

→ **Please code according to the list of actors** [see Appendix E: Actor List]

Explanation: As main actor within a spot we code the person (or a party) who puts forward the campaign message most prominently (if this may not be answered clearly, it is the party or politician who is mentioned first (if not mentioned: who published the spot)).

Within press releases, the main actor is the person who publishes the press release and thereby is most prominent. Press releases often consist of one long quotation of a party member. This party member is the main actor of the press release.

Main example for press release:
--

<p>Berlin. July 19, 2011. Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel declare at the news conference: "We plead in favour of Eurobonds. Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts. But it is highly regrettable that the European Commission has not made useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds so far."</p>
--

→ Code: <i>Peer Steinbrück = main actor</i>

*If there is more than **one** active actor:*

the main actor is the most important actor **of the press release / the spot.**

Indicators of importance are:

- duration / length the active actor "speaks up"
- visibility (film, photographs etc.)

All being equal, actors who are mentioned first are coded as the main actor.

NOTE I: Only code max. one main actor for press releases and spots.

NOTE II: We code individual speakers of parties if possible. If not, please code the party.

NOTE III: If a press release consists of a quotation of a person/institution, **ONLY** the quoted person/institution may be coded as active actor – all other actors that are mentioned inside this quotation are passive actors, because they are third parties/objects (and only talked about)!

NOTE IV: Only party members can be coded as active actors!

II Auszug aus dem Codebuch zur Codierung von EU-Bewertungen

EU ELECTION STUDY: CORE VARIABLES

39

Variable **INTEGEVAL** (evaluated by the active actor)

How is the **general idea of European integration** evaluated by the active actor?

By European integration we mean a strong cooperation of European states within the framework of the European Union regarding economy, politics, legal and international affairs. The European Union is built on the member countries' will to closely work together in these areas. Here we code how this **general idea of European integration** is **explicitly** evaluated by the active actor.

'Overall evaluation of today's European integration'

- 1 = positive
- 2 = negative
- 3 = balanced – as many positive as negative aspects are mentioned
- 9 = not applicable (no explicit evaluation of European integration)

Main example:

Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel plead in favour of Eurobonds. Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts. **Otherwise the EU will fall apart.** But it is highly regrettable that the European Commission has not made useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds so far.

→ Code: INTEGEVAL = 1

NOTE I: This variable **does NOT** ask how the daily politics of the European Union or EU institutions or EU politicians are evaluated (this is the aim of the following variable!).

NOTE II: The evaluation must be **explicitly mentioned!** That means the evaluation has to be made in an unambiguous manner, straightforward. We do NOT code implicit or vague evaluations.

NOTE III: Prerequisite to find an evaluation is **a mentioning** / a reference to European integration (incl. references to EU integration, European unification, monetary union etc.).

NOTE IV: If the active actor compares the state of European Integration at two time points (e.g. some years ago and today), please code the current perspective (=today).

A positive evaluation is coded, if European integration is attributed positive attributes (e.g. praise, appreciation) OR denied negative attributes (e.g. rejection of criticism or accusations).

Examples are: to be successful, effective, fruitful, to solve a problem, if someone appreciates, supports EU integration...

A negative evaluation is coded, if European integration is attributed negative attributes (e.g. criticism, accusations) OR denied positive attributes (e.g. rejection of praise or appreciation).

Examples are: to be unsuccessful, to fail, to lack something, to be ineffective, not to be able to solve a problem, if someone rejects, disdains EU integration...

Please only code *balanced*, if the actor makes as many positive as well as negative references towards European integration. If there is a tendency towards positive or negative evaluations prevailing, please code this tendency.

Examples for positive evaluations (→ Code: INTEGEVAL = 1):

- "We support/favour/recommend European integration."
- "It's worth remembering how far Poland has come as a result of European integration."
- "European integration contributes to minority protection in south eastern Europe."
- A MEP revealed his discontent with the European Union, referring to free trade negotiations with the US, but *defended the freedoms appreciated by Europeans*.
- Hollande wants "*more Europe*".
- SPD says "We are *pro-European*".
- But Mr. Zapatero said that all European Union countries should stay together to *defend "European values"*.
- An MEP states that he supports a future "political union".
- "We must proceed towards a federation of nation states."

Examples for negative evaluations (→ Code: INTEGEVAL = 2):

- "The European integration project is a failure."
- "European integration does not have a lasting effect on growth rates."
- "Some companies said the integration of the European market had a negative effect on their business in the EU."
- "We refuse European integration projects."

Examples for no evaluations (→ Code: INTEGEVAL = 9):

- An EU commissioner says "In the EU, there has never been a stronger political will to support the Turkish people in opting for *European values* and living standards."

Variable EUEVAL (evaluated by the active actor)

*How is the **actual functioning** of the EU today, its institutions /politicians and policies evaluated by the active actor?*

This variable asks how **TODAY's functioning of the European Union/ EU** (as an economic and political union of 28 member states) or **EU institutions** (like the European Commission, the European Council, the European Central Bank etc.) or **European politicians** (EP candidates/members) are evaluated by the active actor. This variable – in contrast to the previous one – searches for evaluations of **concrete EU policies** (regulations, laws, etc. = “**actions**”) or **EU politics** (the process of how these policies are made) or **concrete polities** (institutional settings). In general, it is possible to support the idea of EU integration (INTEGEVAL) while criticizing the actual functioning of the European Union.

‘Overall evaluation of today's functioning of the EU’

- 1 positive
- 2 negative
- 3 balanced – as many positive as negative evaluations
- 9 not applicable (no evaluation of the functioning of the EU/ an EU Institution/ an EU politician)

Main example:

Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel plead in favour of Eurobonds. Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts. Otherwise the EU will fall apart. But it is **highly regrettable** that the **European Commission has not made useful** proposals how to introduce Eurobonds **so far**.

→ Code: EUEVAL = 2

NOTE I: Prerequisite to find an evaluation is a **mentioning** / a reference to EU / the European Union. Yet, not each reference goes along with an evaluation.

NOTE II: The evaluation must be **explicitly mentioned!** That means the evaluation has to be made in an unambiguous manner, straightforward. We do NOT code implicit or vague evaluations.

NOTE III: Please only code the **evaluation** of the EU/ EU institution/ EU politician **as of today** and not future plans of the parties (they'll all be positive!).

A **positive evaluation** is coded, if the EU and its policies/ an EU institution/ an EU politician is attributed positive attributes (e.g. praise, appreciation) OR denied negative attributes (e.g. rejection of criticism or accusations).

Examples are: to be successful, effective, fruitful, to solve a problem, if someone appreciates, supports EU/ an EU institution/ an EU politician...

A *negative evaluation* is coded, if the EU and its policies/ an EU institution/ an EU politician is attributed negative attributes (e.g. criticism, accusations) OR denied positive attributes (e.g. rejection of praise or appreciation).

Examples are: to be unsuccessful, to fail, to lack something, to be ineffective, not to be able to solve a problem, if someone rejects, disdains EU/ an EU institution/ an EU politician...

Please only code *balanced*, if the actor makes as many positive as well as negative references towards the EU and its policies/ an EU institution/ an EU politician. If there is a tendency towards positive or negative evaluations prevailing, please code this tendency.

Examples for positive evaluations (→ Code: EUEVAL = 1):

- "The EU succeeded to deal with regional unemployment."
- "EU is forerunner concerning climate protection."
- "EU did a great job concerning climate protection." / "The European Council did a great job." / "The EP candidate xy did a great job."
- "We support/favour/recommend the decision of the European Commission."
- Hollande has *welcomed* the EU directive proposed by the European commission.

Examples for negative evaluations (→ Code: EUEVAL = 2):

- "This EU regulation is absurd." Or "This is an over-regulation by the EU."
- "The EU lacks the adequate instruments to master the crisis."
- "We refuse the action of the European Commission."
- "The EU has failed to deal with regional unemployment." / or "The European Commission/ EP candidate xy failed to implement her/ his decision."
- A MEP revealed *his discontent with the European Union, referring to free trade negotiations with the US*, but defended the freedoms appreciated by Europeans.
- The prime minister will tell the European leaders that the *Lisbon treaty will have to be changed to prevent a "caucus" of Eurozone members imposing financial services legislation on Britain*.
- The commissioner will today *acknowledge* that the free movement of people across the EU has put "*unintended strains*" on public services and is open to abuse.

III Auszug aus dem Codebuch zur Codierung von Verantwortungszuschreibungen

The following variables are designed for the PhD-Project of Eva Antl-Wittenberg (University of Landau).

These variables need to be coded for the following cases:

Material: **Newspaper articles and press releases**

Countries: **Germany, Austria, Portugal** (only 2014)

Period: **2008-2013 and sampling period 2014** as follows

12 th May - 7 th June 2008
11 th May - 6 th June 2009
25 th April - 21 st May 2011
2 nd December - 28 th December 2013
3 rd March – 24 th May 2014

For this project, all articles from media coverage are relevant, if they deal with the EU as well as the financial crisis. **Newspaper articles in Germany and Austria 2014: daily basis!**

→ Filter Variables: **V9 = 2** and **EconProbl = 2**

Variable **RespProb**

According to the active actor, who is blamed responsible for the cause of a problem?

→ **Please code according to the list of actors** [see Appendix E]

The variable identifies the actor, who is blamed responsible for causing a problem in the context of the financial crisis by the active actor. The variable asks who is the person or institution, which is described as the one, who **MAINLY** causes or worsens the described problem.

NOTE I: The variable is only coded, if the active actor **EXPLICITLY** mentions an actor, who causes a problem.

NOTE II: **MAINLY** means in terms of the length/ space the active actor devotes to the actor, who is causing the problem. If two actors are blamed responsible and both are given the same space, code the one mentioned first.

NOTE III: Even if the text has a positive connotation in sum, the actor can still refer to problems.

Main example:

Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel plead in favour of Eurobonds. Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts. But it is highly regrettable that the **European Commission** has not made useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds so far and in doing so **contribute to the economic downturn in Greece.**

→ Code: RespProb = 100 (European Commission)

Further Examples I: Supranational level

- "The austerity programs of the EU increase the economic downturn in Spain."
(→ Code: 200 = 'EU')
- "The European Commission provokes a crash of the Euro by softening the excessive deficit procedure." (→ Code: 100 = 'European Commission')
- "Interest policy of the ECB harmed German savers." (→ Code: 300 = 'ECB')

Further Examples II: National level

- "Greece's fake of national debts pushes the whole EU in a crisis." (→ Code: 20 = 'Greece')
- "The German Government pushes the EU to add fuel to the fire of the financial crisis by harsh austerity programs." (→ Code: 200000 = 'German Government')
- "Merkel poisoned the European idea of a solidary union by establishing the austerity programs." (→ Code: 190001 = 'Angela Merkel')

Variable RespSol

Who is credited with the responsibility for the solution of a problem by the active actor?

→ **Please code according to the list of actors** [see Appendix E]

The variable identifies the actor, who should **MAINLY** take care of the solution of the described aspect of the financial crisis in the eyes of the active actor. There can be two aspects of the attribution of responsibility, which are **BOTH** coded within this variable. The actor, who is held responsible, can be described as the one

1) with the skills/ expertise/ competence to solve the problem.

or

2) with the power to solve the problem.

NOTE I: The variable is only coded, if the active actor **EXPLICITLY** mentions an actor, who is held responsible for the solution of a problem.

NOTE II: **MAINLY** means in terms of the length/ space the active actor devotes to the actor, who is capable to solve the problem. If two actors are held responsible and both are given the same space, code the one mentioned first.

NOTE III: Even if the text has a positive connotation in sum, the actor can still refer to problems.

NOTE IV: The actor who is held responsible for solving the problem can be someone else than the actor who caused the problem. The active actor can mention **EITHER** someone who is responsible for the cause of a problem **OR** someone who is responsible for the solution of a problem **OR** can make **BOTH** attributions of responsibility.

Main example:

Peer Steinbrück and Sigmar Gabriel plead in favour of Eurobonds. Eurobonds foster economic growth in the EU and help Greece to repay its debts. But it is highly regrettable that the European Commission has not made useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds so far and in doing so contribute to the economic downturn in Greece. Now, **it is on Germany** to push the EU to establish Eurobonds.

→ Code: RespSol = 190000 (German Government/ country as a whole)

Further Examples I: Supranational level

- "Eurobonds contribute to European integration and help Greece to repay its debts. The European Commission should make useful proposals how to introduce Eurobonds." (→ Code: 100 = 'European Commission')
- "Only common actions of the EU like the euro zone fund can face the actual crisis by making loans to struggling euro zone nations or buying up bonds in debt markets." (→ Code: 200 = 'EU')

Further Examples II: National level

- "The German government knows how to solve the upcoming recession by establishing a car-scrap bonus." (→ Code: 190000 = 'German Government')
- "Merkel is the one, who can navigate the EU through the crisis." (→ Code: 190001 = 'Angela Merkel')
- "Greece has to establish structural reforms to get out of the crisis." (→ Code: 200000 = 'Greece')

Further Examples III: International level

- "The power to control the use of the aid programs lies in the hands of the IMF to avoid misuse of the help." (→ Code: 404 = 'IMF')

IV Appendix zu Manuskript 4

Table A1. Saliency.

		Total EU- related PRs	Total PRs	Saliency	Saliency (mean)
Austria	ÖVP	218	535	0.407	0.340
	SPÖ	362	891	0.406	
	GRÜNEN	107	379	0.282	
	FPÖ	136	491	0.277	
	BZÖ	93	182	0.511	
	NEOS	20	126	0.159	
France	UMP	7	80	0.088	0.301
	PS	16	109	0.147	
	MoDem	11	13	0.846	
	Verts	8	43	0.186	
	FG	69	193	0.358	
	FN	68	201	0.338	
	MPF	1	7	0.143	
Germany	CDU-CSU	53	226	0.235	0.257
	SPD	78	332	0.235	
	FDP	28	118	0.237	
	Die Grünen	56	279	0.201	
	LINKE	60	290	0.207	
	AfD	26	61	0.426	
Greece	ND	45	110	0.409	0.287
	PASOK	64	191	0.335	
	KKE	85	182	0.467	
	SYRIZA	144	635	0.227	
	LAOS	37	89	0.416	
	OP (Greens)	33	111	0.297	
	DIMAR	36	194	0.186	
	ANEL	61	356	0.171	
XA	13	166	0.078		
Netherlands	CDA	23	75	0.307	0.319
	PvdA	20	86	0.233	
	VVD	8	42	0.190	
	GL	26	57	0.456	
	SP	32	81	0.395	
	CU-SGP	22	64	0.344	
	D66	21	73	0.288	
	PVV	6	25	0.240	
PvdD	20	48	0.417		
Portugal	PS	121	290	0.417	0.559
	BE	60	175	0.343	
	CDU	65	75	0.867	
	AP	76	125	0.608	
United Kingdom	Cons	6	34	0.176	0.248
	Lab	28	390	0.072	
	LibDem	53	164	0.323	
	UKIP	41	98	0.418	
	GREEN	30	82	0.366	
	BNP	65	488	0.133	

Table A2-1. Issues for Austria

Austria	ÖVP	SPÖ	GRÜNEN	FPÖ	BZÖ	NEOS	Total
Economy	43	47	19	16	17	3	145
Social and labor market	12	48	7	6	5	0	78
Education and research	5	2	2	0	1	1	11
Law and order	3	25	7	6	4	1	46
Immigration	4	10	6	9	3	0	32
International affairs	8	17	8	19	3	2	57
Culture and other	10	6	4	5	0	0	25
Environment and energy	5	15	24	13	1	2	60
Infrastructure	7	12	4	1	1	1	26
Agriculture and food	17	11	2	7	2	1	40
Consumer protection	6	16	2	4	0	1	29
Citizens' rights	6	39	9	1	3	1	59
Constitutional questions	11	5	1	6	5	1	29
Territorial questions	6	2	1	6	5	0	20
Administration and bureaucracy	0	7	1	6	3	0	17
Elections	72	91	10	27	40	4	244
Other Topic	3	9	0	4	0	2	18
Total	218	362	107	136	93	20	936

Table A2-2. Issues for France

France	UMP	PS	MoDem	Verts	FG	FN	MPF	Total
Economy	5	4	4	1	32	26	1	73
Social and labor market	0	2	0	0	6	3	0	11
Education and research	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Law and order	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	7
Immigration	0	0	0	0	2	5	0	7
International affairs	0	2	1	1	5	2	0	11
Culture and other	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Environment and energy	1	0	0	3	4	0	0	8
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Agriculture and food	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	3
Consumer protection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Citizens' rights	1	1	0	0	4	1	0	7
Constitutional questions	0	1	5	2	0	11	0	19
Territorial questions	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Administration and bureaucracy	0	0	1	0	2	3	0	6
Elections	0	3	0	0	12	5	0	20
Other Topic	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Total	7	16	11	8	69	68	1	180

Table A2-3. Issues for Germany.

Germany	CDU-CSU	SPD	FDP	Die Grünen	LINKE	AfD	Total
Economy	9	16	6	13	14	5	63
Social and labor market	3	1	1	2	2	3	12
Education and research	1	2	0	2	0	0	5
Law and order	4	5	5	9	2	0	25
Immigration	4	1	1	3	7	1	17
International affairs	4	11	4	6	23	2	50
Culture and other	1	2	0	0	1	1	5
Environment and energy	2	3	3	6	2	1	17
Infrastructure	2	4	0	0	0	0	6
Agriculture and food	3	2	0	4	1	0	10
Consumer protection	4	0	0	2	2	1	9
Citizens' rights	6	9	2	4	5	0	26
Constitutional questions	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
Territorial questions	0	1	1	2	1	2	7
Administration and bureaucracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elections	8	14	1	2	0	9	34
Other Topic	0	6	2	1	0	1	10
Total	53	78	28	56	60	26	301

Table A2-4. Issues for Greece

Greece	ND	PASOK	KKE	SYRIZA	LAOS	OP	DIMAR	ANEL	XA	Total
Economy	10	19	22	52	8	11	7	22	0	151
Social and labor market	2	2	15	25	1	1	3	2	0	51
Education and research	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Law and order	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Immigration	0	0	3	4	0	1	0	0	0	8
International affairs	5	2	7	4	2	0	0	0	1	21
Culture and other	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10
Environment and energy	0	3	2	8	1	1	0	1	0	16
Infrastructure	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Agriculture and food	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	6
Consumer protection	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Citizens' rights	0	0	7	4	1	6	2	1	0	21
Constitutional questions	4	1	3	4	4	0	1	1	0	18
Territorial questions	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	6
Administration and bureaucracy	1	0	1	5	0	0	0	1	4	12
Elections	7	22	17	27	18	11	14	22	8	146
Other Topic	9	4	6	6	1	1	7	7	0	41
Total	45	64	85	144	37	33	36	61	13	518

Table A2-5. Issues for the Netherlands.

Netherlands	CDA	PvdA	VVD	GL	SP	CU-SGP	D66	PVV	PvdD	Total
Economy	5	2	3	6	7	2	5	0	1	31
Social and labor market	2	5	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	13
Education and research	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Law and order	0	1	1	4	1	0	4	0	0	11
Immigration	1	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	7
International affairs	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	1	12
Culture and other	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Environment and energy	1	0	0	9	0	0	2	0	1	13
Infrastructure	2	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	8
Agriculture and food	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	9	16
Consumer protection	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
Citizens' rights	2	4	0	0	0	9	2	0	0	17
Constitutional questions	1	0	0	1	7	3	0	0	0	12
Territorial questions	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Administration and bureaucracy	0	1	0	0	5	1	1	0	0	8
Elections	3	3	2	2	0	0	3	3	6	22
Other Topic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	23	20	8	26	32	22	21	6	20	178

Table A2-6. Issues for Portugal.

Portugal	PS	BE	CDU-CSU	AP	Total
Economy	36	36	13	20	105
Social and labor market	18	6	11	10	45
Education and research	2	1	0	0	3
Law and order	3	0	0	0	3
Immigration	1	0	1	0	2
International affairs	0	0	0	1	1
Culture and other	0	0	2	0	2
Environment and energy	3	2	0	2	7
Infrastructure	3	1	0	1	5
Agriculture and food	3	1	3	6	13
Consumer protection	0	0	0	0	0
Citizens' rights	0	0	0	0	0
Constitutional questions	1	1	1	0	3
Territorial questions	0	0	0	0	0
Administration and bureaucracy	2	0	1	0	3
Elections	49	12	33	36	130
Other Topic	0	0	0	0	0
Total	121	60	65	76	322

Table A2-6. Issues for the United Kingdom.

United Kingdom	Cons	Lab	LibDem	UKIP	GREEN	BNP	Total
Economy	2	5	2	5	5	3	22
Social and labor market	0	5	0	1	2	5	13
Education and research	0	0	2	0	0	1	3
Law and order	0	0	2	0	0	5	7
Immigration	1	4	0	5	2	12	24
International affairs	1	5	2	2	0	13	23
Culture and other	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Environment and energy	0	1	3	0	8	0	12
Infrastructure	0	0	2	0	2	1	5
Agriculture and food	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Consumer protection	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Citizens' rights	1	1	2	0	1	2	7
Constitutional questions	0	1	1	7	1	2	12
Territorial questions	1	5	31	10	2	9	58
Administration and bureaucracy	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Elections	0	1	5	5	5	9	25
Other Topic	0	0	0	2	1	2	5
Total	6	28	53	41	30	65	223

Table A3. Positions

		Evaluation index	Blurred (% "balanced" OR "no" Eval EU-PRs/ all EU-PRs)	Total EU-related PRs (with EU evaluation)	Evaluation index (mean)
Austria	ÖVP	0.544	0.40	130	0.160
	SPÖ	0.267	0.48	188	
	GRÜNEN	0.125	0.50	54	
	FPÖ	-0.153	0.35	88	
	BZÖ	-0.268	0.40	56	
	NEOS	0.446	0.30	14	
France	UMP	0.000	1.00	0	0.072
	PS	0.406	0.50	8	
	MoDem	0.575	0.09	10	
	Verts	0.500	0.50	4	
	FG	-0.304	0.39	42	
	FN	-0.423	0.19	55	
	MPF	-0.250	0.00	1	
Germany	CDU-CSU	0.231	0.51	26	0.205
	SPD	0.433	0.42	45	
	FDP	0.558	0.54	13	
	Die Grünen	0.278	0.36	36	
	LINKE	-0.137	0.30	42	
	AfD	-0.135	0.50	13	
Greece	ND	0.139	0.80	9	-0.200
	PASOK	0.203	0.75	16	
	KKE	-0.451	0.16	71	
	SYRIZA	-0.276	0.67	48	
	LAOS	-0.341	0.70	11	
	OP (Greens)	-0.344	0.76	8	
	DIMAR	0.000	0.58	15	
	ANEL	-0.226	0.66	21	
	XA	-0.500	0.85	2	
Netherlands	CDA	0.250	0.17	19	-0.028
	PvdA	0.182	0.45	11	
	VVD	0.050	0.38	5	
	GL	0.162	0.35	17	
	SP	-0.190	0.22	25	
	CU-SGP	-0.107	0.36	14	
	D66	0.267	0.29	15	
	PVV	-0.688	0.33	4	
	PvdD	-0.175	0.50	10	
Portugal	PS	0.491	0.27	88	0.405
	BE	0.220	0.32	41	
	CDU	0.480	0.25	49	
	AP	0.429	0.30	53	
United Kingdom	Cons	0.250	0.67	2	-0.035
	Lab	0.059	0.39	17	
	LibDem	0.568	0.17	44	
	UKIP	-0.648	0.34	27	
	GREEN	0.167	0.60	12	
	BNP	-0.606	0.38	40	

Parties included in the study

The parties included are for:

Austria: Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ), Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (BZÖ), Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ), Das Neue Österreich und Liberales Forum (NEOS), Die Grünen, Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP);

France: Front National (FN), Mouvement pour la France (MPF), Front de Gauche and Parti Communiste (FG), Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP), Parti Socialiste (PS), Europe Ecologie - Les Verts (Verts), Mouvement Démocrate (MoDem);

Germany: Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), Die Linke, Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU-CSU), Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP), Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD);

Greece: Golden Dawn (XA), Communist Party of Greece (KKE), Independent Greeks (ANEL), Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), Syriza, Oikologoi Prasinoi (OP, Greens), Democratic Left (DIMAR), Nea Dimokratia (ND), Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK);

Netherlands: Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV), Socialistische Partij (SP), ChristenUnie - Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (CU-SPG), Partij voor de Dieren (PvdD), Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD), Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA), Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA), GroenLinks, Democraten 66 (D66);

Portugal: Coligação Democrática Unitária (CDU), Bloco de Esquerda (BE), Partido Socialista (PS), Aliança Portugal (AP) including Partido Popular and Partido Social Democrata;

UK: UK Independence Party (UKIP), British National Party (BNP), Conservatives (Cons), Greens, Labour (Lab), Liberal Democrats (LibDem).

Note that the parties are ordered according to their orientation towards European integration (CHES, Bakker et al., 2015).

Parties rated as Euroskeptic:

Austria: FPÖ and BZÖ, France: FN, MPF, and FG, Germany: AfD, Greece: XA, KKE, and ANEL, Netherlands: PVV, SP, and Portugal: CDU and the UK: UKIP and BNP. CHES data (Bakker et al., 2015) are not available for Partido Comunista Português (Portugal) and Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste (France). These parties have been omitted in the analysis.

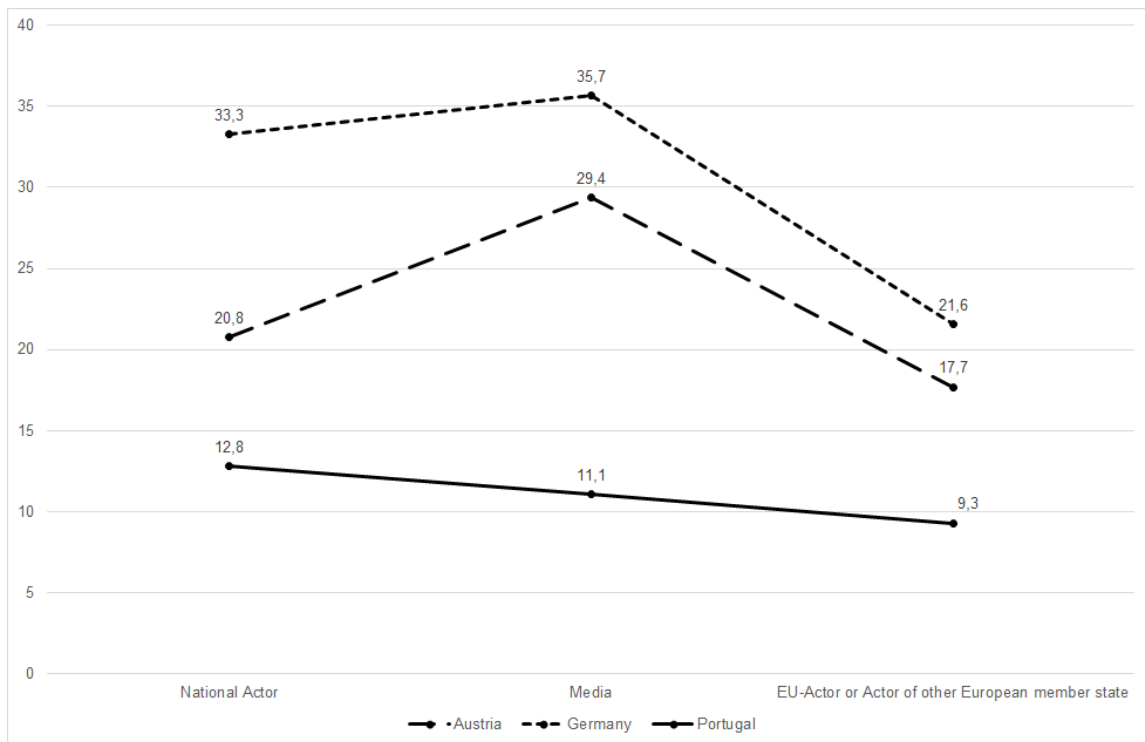
Pro-European catch-all parties (won more than 20 percent in the last national election and have a pro-EU stance):

Austria: SPÖ and ÖVP, France: PS and UMP, Germany: SPD and CDU-CSU, Greece: ND and (Syriza), Netherlands: PvdA and VVD; Portugal: AP and PS; UK: (Conservative) and Labour.

Note: Parties in parentheses refer to catch-all parties which are neither rated clear-cut pro-European nor anti-European by experts.

Appendix V: Anhang zu Manuskript 7

EU-Blaming by different actors in different countries (in %)



11 LEBENSLAUF

Zur Person

Geboren am 20. Januar 1983, in Illingen/ Saar
Familienstand | verheiratet, 2 Kinder

Ausbildung

03 2008	Magistra Atrium (Note: 1,1)
10 2002 bis 03 2008	Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster Magisterstudium der Kommunikationswissenschaft, Psychologie und Politikwissenschaft Thema der Magisterarbeit: „Europa in der deutschen Presse“ (Note 1,0)
1993 bis 2002	Otto Hahn-Gymnasium Landau Pfalz (Abiturnote: 1,4)

Berufliche Erfahrung

06 2013 bis heute	Universität Koblenz-Landau Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin bei Prof. Dr. Michaela Maier am Institut für Kommunikationspsychologie und Medienpädagogik Dozentin für Lehrveranstaltungen im Themenbereich „Externe Organisationskommunikation“ und „Europapolitik“ im Masterstudiengang Sozial- und Kommunikationswissenschaften Dozentin für Lehrveranstaltung im Bachelor Psychologie im Bereich „Organisationskommunikation“ Mitarbeit im internationalen Forschungsprojekt „Die Rolle nationaler Parteien für die Politisierung der Europäischen Integration“ (gefördert von der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft und dem Schweizerischen Nationalfonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung) Mitglied im interdisziplinären Forschungsschwerpunkt „Kommunikation, Medien und Politik“ der Universität Koblenz-Landau Fachvorträge auf nationalen und internationalen Konferenzen im Bereich Politik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft
07 2017 bis 07 2018	Elternzeit
03 2012 bis 05 2013	Weber Shandwick Senior Account Managerin Projektleitung: Telekom Twitter-Reporter

	Erfolgreiche Implementation und Steuerung einer Social Media-Kampagne Budgetverwaltung, Teamleitung
06 2011 bis 02 2012	Elternzeit
10 2010 bis 06 2011	Weber Shandwick (Köln) Account Managerin Entwicklung, Präsentation, Umsetzung und Dokumentation von PR-Konzepten und Maßnahmen in den Bereichen Consumer und Corporate Communications
05 2011	Deutscher Onlinekommunikationspreis 2011 in der Kategorie Microblogging für das Projekt „Telekom Twitter-Reporter“
07 2009 bis 09 2010	Weber Shandwick (Köln) Junior Account Managerin
04 2008 bis 07 2009	Weber Shandwick (Köln) PR-Volontariat
04 2006 bis 03 2007	Institut für Kommunikationswissenschaft an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster Studentische Hilfskraft (Tutorin) Gestaltung und Leitung von Tutorien für Erst- und Zweitsemester
05 2006 bis 08 2006	Institut für Kommunikationswissenschaft Studentische Hilfskraft Statistische Auswertung (SPSS) für ein Projekt der Tageszeitung taz
10 2004 bis 09 2005	Institut für Kommunikationswissenschaft Studentische Hilfskraft (Tutorin)
Praktika	
10 2005 bis 12 2005	Weber Shandwick (Hamburg) Praktikantin
09 2005	SWR (Mainz) Redaktion „Infomarkt“ Praktikantin
03 2004 bis 04 2004	Bild-Zeitung (Lokalredaktion Rhein-Neckar in Mannheim) Praktikantin
06 2002 bis 08 2002	Die Rheinpfalz (Lokalredaktion Landau) Praktikantin

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12 EIDESSTATTLICHE ERKLÄRUNG

Hiermit erkläre ich eidesstattlich, dass ich, Eva Antl-Wittenberg,

- die Dissertation selbst angefertigt habe und alle Hilfsmittel in der Dissertation angegeben habe
- dass die Dissertation noch nicht als Prüfungsarbeit für eine staatliche oder andere wissenschaftliche Prüfung eingereicht wurde und
- die gleiche oder eine andere Abhandlung nicht bei einer anderen Hochschule als Dissertation eingereicht habe.

Bei gemeinsam verfassten Publikationen habe ich folgende Beiträge erbracht:

Antl-Wittenberg, E. & Maier, M. (under review) Blaming beyond Borders. Responsibility Framing in Multi-Level Governance Systems in Times of Crisis.

- Erhebung und Auswertung der Daten
- Verfassen des kompletten Manuskripts (lediglich Kommentierung durch Co-Autorin)

Adam, S., Antl-Wittenberg, E.-M., Eugster, B., Leidecker-Sandmann, M., Maier, M., & Schmidt, F. (2016). Strategies of pro-European parties in the face of a Eurosceptic challenge. *European Union Politics*, 18(2), 260-282. doi:10.1177/1465116516661248

- Maßgebliche Beteiligung am gesamten Datenerhebungs- und Publikationsprozess (Mitarbeit an der Konzeption des Erhebungsinstruments, der Erstellung und Auswertung der Reliabilitätstests, der Verfassung des Theorieteils sowie an der Auswertung)

Adam, S., Eugster, B., Antl-Wittenberg, E., Azrout, R., Möller, J., de Vreese, C., . Maier, M., and . Kritzinger, S. (2019). News media's position-taking regarding the European Union: the synchronization of mass media's reporting and commentating in the 2014 European Parliament elections. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(1), 44-62. doi:10.1080/13501763.2017.1375546

- Literaturrecherche und Mitarbeit am Theorieteil
- Verfassen des Kapitels „Case selection, data and methods“

Eva Antl-Wittenberg, Landau, den 07.05.2019