

Chapter 8

Campaigning on or Downplaying EU Integration?

Explaining the Salience Parties Attach to EU Matters in European Parliamentary Election Campaigns

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Introduction

European elections are intended to foster an open and engaged campaign in which parties debate matters of EU integration. A campaign that boosts the salience of EU issues helps make parties' positions transparent for citizens. However, for a long time this hoped-for consequence of European Parliament (EP) elections remained an illusion. EP elections have been described as second-order national contests, in which citizens cast a vote on their national government and parties and, together with media, communicate predominantly on national matters (Reif & Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005). Political parties, meanwhile, spend only a fraction of the money on EP campaigns that is spent on national ones.

However, in the last two decades, the nature of EU integration has changed. This change has become visible in recent rejections of EU treaties in referenda in France, Ireland, and the Netherlands as well as in scholarly debates about the politicization of EU integration (e.g., Börzel & Risse 2009; Hooghe & Marks 2008; Kriesi 2008). Researchers show that the previous 'permissive consensus' (Lindberg & Scheingold 1970) has started to dissolve (Eichenberg & Dalton 2007; Hooghe & Marks 2005). Instead, citizens have formed stable and well-structured opinions regarding EU integration (Eijk & Franklin 2004) that differ sharply from the attitudes of elites. The potential of this body of citizen opinion has been described as a 'sleeping giant' (Eijk & Franklin 2004, p. 32). Allied to this development, researchers have found a steady, although undramatic, increase in the salience that mass media attach to European affairs (Boomgaarden et al. 2010; Koopmans, Erbe & Meyer 2010; Wessler et al. 2008) as well as changes in national parties' communications about the EU (Kriesi et al. 2006). Do these changes related to EU integration lead to EP campaigns that are focused on EU matters? Regarding this first research question, we empirically investigate the salience that parties attach to issues with a European dimension. Such an analysis helps us to judge whether or not party campaigns contribute to transparency concerns in EP elections.

Going a step further in the search for intended and unintended consequences of EP elections, we ask about the inclusiveness of such campaigns. Inclusiveness means that ‘representatives should have the time and space to present their contrasting positions fully and accurately’ (Ferree et al. 2002, p.207). Following this logic, campaigns yield intended consequences if all parties use them to communicate about Europe. If parties only at the extremes of the ideological spectrum were to boost EU issues while mainstream parties maintained silence, we would speak of an unintended consequence. Consequently, our second research question asks which parties campaign on Europe and which factors help us understand whether they do so. This explicative part of our paper is crucial to judge whether party campaigns contribute to the intended inclusiveness of campaigns or to the unintended exclusiveness that offers solely eurosceptics a public arena.

In our study of party communication, we tackle two research deficits. So far research on party communication about Europe has not studied communication that is directly geared towards the public. Instead, research has relied on the analysis of manifestos (which are primarily written for and read by party members), expert surveys (which indicate how parties are evaluated), and mass media data (which show how parties’ activities are covered). Our study taps into this research deficit by looking at parties’ actual campaign communications during the 2009 EP election. To accomplish this goal, we analyse their televised messages. Although this data source, as recent as it is, allows us to study parties’ public communication, it does not allow longitudinal comparisons.

Secondly, in contrast to most work that focuses on a few limited factors that explain parties’ EU communication, we seek to take a more encompassing approach; we test the most prominent assumptions about parties’ EU communication against each other thereby bringing the selective emphasis thesis and the co-orientation thesis together. We follow the suggestion of Hooghe and Marks (2008), who claim that in order to understand the EU’s politicization,

we need to study both parties' strategic and selective (de-)mobilization as well as their strategic interactions.

In order to answer our two research questions, we proceed in four steps. Firstly, we review the literature on parties' (de-)mobilization on EU integration and derive expectations for the descriptive and explicative part of the paper. Secondly, we set out the methodology and techniques we have employed to examine parties' public EU communication and the explicative factors. Thirdly, we present our empirical results from eleven EU countries; seven of these are Western countries (AT, DE, NL, POR, ES, SW, UK) and four are Eastern European countries (BUL, CZ, HUN, POL). Finally, we sum up our findings and discuss the implications for evaluating EP campaigns' intended and unintended consequences.

National parties' campaigning on EU integration

Whether EP campaigns make party positions on EU matters transparent—a truly intended consequence of every election—has been in the focus of two strands of research (for a more detailed discussion Adam & Maier 2011). If EP elections were still second-order national contests (Reif & Schmitt 1980; Schmitt 2005), we would expect not only the mass media to pay scant attention to these elections and to focus on national rather than European matters, but we would also expect the producers of campaign messages (i.e., the national parties) to run only low-budget and low-salience campaigns focusing on national issues, actors, and conflicts (Cayrol 1991; Holtz-Bacha 2005). The second-order national contests model, therefore, regards domestic parties as de-politicizers of EU integration and claims that EP elections yield an unintended consequence by shielding party positions on EU matters.

Researchers, however, that see EU integration becoming more political in nature (e.g., Börzel & Risse 2009; De Vreese, Adam & Berganza 2013; Hooghe & Marks 2008; Kriesi 2008; Parsons & Weber 2011) expect parties to contribute to the EU's politicization. Politicization means that European matters become salient and that different opinions are

voiced (De Wilde 2007). The reason why such politicization might occur lies with the citizens; public opinion is regarded as not only more critical but also well-structured, with the potential to affect voting behaviour (De Vries 2007; Hooghe & Marks 2008). Parties, in accordance with their ideological profiles and strategic considerations, should therefore exploit this new conflict potential, attaching salience to EU matters and voicing their positions. Parties' politicization of EU integration is therefore conditional. It may also remain modest, yet is unlikely to 'be stuffed back in the bag again' (Hooghe & Marks 2008, p. 22). From this perspective, by making party positions on EU integration transparent to voters, EP elections are having more and more intended consequences.

In the following pages, we turn to the assumptions in the literature that seek to explain why parties campaign on or downplay EU integration in their public communication. By doing so, we will be able to judge whether party campaigns contribute to the intended inclusiveness of campaigns or whether they lead to unintended exclusiveness, providing a public arena to eurosceptics only. In the literature, two general ideas are put forward. The first idea focuses on single parties and stresses that each party strategically emphasizes different issues (Budge & Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996; Riker 1986). As a consequence, '(p)arty competition is only secondarily a direct confrontation of opposing policies. Most frequently it produces selective emphases on the strong points of one's own case. Rather than promoting an educational dialogue, parties talk past each other' (Budge & Farlie 1983, p. 24). However, recent research has questioned the general validity of the selective emphasis thesis (for a summary of the literature, see Baumann, Haber & Wältermann 2011; Green-Pedersen & Mortensen 2010). Sigelman and Buell (2004), for example, show that attention profiles of parties have been converging during US elections since 1960 and that intra-party continuity is smaller than inter-party issue convergence. This is in line with Sides (2006), who shows that issue agendas are quite similar between parties in the United States. As a consequence, a second argument has recently gained attention; parties tend to co-orient themselves towards

each other (e.g., Green-Pedersen & Mortensen 2010). This second strand of research does not focus on single parties as such but takes into account the strategic interaction between parties within a country.

Based on these two ideas, we will proceed to summarize the state of research regarding national parties' campaigning on EU integration and derive hypotheses for our study. The first three hypotheses adhere to the idea of selective emphasis: different parties are expected to either campaign on or downplay EU integration. Our final hypothesis takes up the idea of parties' co-orientation. Combining both perspectives, we will be able to test these arguments against each other.

The selective emphasis thesis

Parties' selective emphasis on EU matters could be explained by their structural position within the national political realm. Researchers claim that vaguely pro-European mainstream parties remain silent, whereas mobilization on EU integration stems from eurosceptic issue entrepreneurs (Hobolt & de Vries 2011; Hooghe & Marks 2008; Parsons & Weber 2011; Weber 2007). Mainstream parties can be described as having three different characteristics (Ray 2007): ideologically, they are located around the centre of the left/right scale; electorally, they belong to the successful parties; and position-wise, they are at least potential members of the governing cabinet (for similar ideas, Hobolt & de Vries 2011). Such mainstream parties campaign on the issues they 'own' (Petrocik 1996). For example, Social Democrats will campaign on welfare state issues, whereas Conservatives campaign on crime prevention. Established parties do not want to upset their traditional electorates. Instead, these parties want to focus debate on those issues that have, for decades, garnered them most support (Hobolt & de Vries 2011). In contrast, non-mainstream parties are potential issue entrepreneurs as they might profit from putting new issues and positions on the agenda (Carmines & Stimson 1986; Hobolt & de Vries 2011; Riker 1986). Regarding EU integration,

eurosceptic parties are most likely to challenge the silent, mainstream pro-EU 'cartel' (Weber 2007). By putting new issues and new positions on the agenda, entrepreneurs seek to 'upset the dominant party alignment' (Carmines & Stimson 1993). These considerations lead us to hypothesise that mainstream parties downplay EU integration, whereas issue entrepreneurs attach salience to EU matters (Hypothesis 1).

Parties' selective emphasis on EU matters might also be the result of voters' attitudes towards EU integration. Those parties whose positions are supported by citizens are likely to place greater emphasis on specific issues. Classical proximity models (Downs 1968) claim that parties gear their communication towards the mean voter. However, it is questionable whether the mean voter is as relevant to issues on which citizens are clearly divided (as is the case for EU integration; Eijk & Franklin 2004). In such situations, Rabinowitz's (Rabinowitz & MacDonald 1989; Rabinowitz, MacDonald & Listhaug 1991) model on party-voter relations seems the better fit. This model's core idea is that voters can differentiate and decide which side of the political spectrum they favor only on the basis of particular issues and how strongly they feel about them. This dichotomy of voters' preferences and issues affects parties, and positional convergence is only likely if all substantial segments of voters agree on an issue. Otherwise, parties strategically put forward different positions. They actively voice these positions if an open issue space has not been taken up by another party. Regarding EU integration, eurosceptic citizens create such an open issue space. Researchers agree that with the ratification of the Maastricht treaty, the previous 'permissive consensus' of EU citizens (Lindberg & Scheingold 1970) has started to dissolve (Eichenberg & Dalton 2007; Hooghe & Marks 2005). Today, EU attitudes seem to be more contested compared to traditional left/right attitudes (Eijk & Franklin 2004), and the size and form of the resulting conflict potential varies between countries (Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004). Out of these considerations, we formulate our second hypothesis; the larger and more pronounced citizens' euroscepticism

in a country, the more likely it is that a eurosceptic party will put EU issues on the agenda to win votes by taking the open issue space (H2).

Finally, parties' selective emphasis on EU matters might also be affected by party internal factors. Thus, two factors have been highlighted. The first is party cohesion. Putting an issue on the agenda is difficult if a party is internally divided. The relevance of this factor has been shown in parties that avoid putting Europe on the agenda if they are struggling with internal division (Edwards 2009; Ferrara & Weishaupt 2004; Hobolt & de Vries 2011; Steenbergen & Scott 2004). Hypothesis 3a therefore claims that parties downplay EU integration if they are internally divided on this matter.

Parson and Weber (2011) have identified a second, closely related factor—the strength of leadership within a national party. Leadership is defined as strong and uncontested if a party wins in national elections. If it fails, leadership may become contested, and the party itself is weakened at the national level. Parson and Weber claim that national party leadership strength and party cohesion play off each other. If party leadership is strong, party dissent is silenced and crosscutting issues like EU integration are not put on the agenda. In contrast, in cases where party leadership is weak and contested, dissent is likely to become visible during the campaign. This 'muffling' mechanism is influenced by the national election cycle (for the relevance of the election cycle, see Reif & Schmitt 1980); strong party leaders exhibit their power by uniting their parties more forcefully shortly before national elections. Hypothesis 3b therefore claims that strong leaders succeed in downplaying internal dissensus, but if leadership on the national level is contested, mobilization on divided issues becomes more likely. This hypothesis is accentuated if EP elections immediately precede national elections.

The co-orientation thesis

As no party has monopolistic agenda control (Steenbergen & Scott 2004), and research has shown that campaigns are characterized not only by each party's selective emphasis on

specific issues but also by issue convergence between these parties (for summaries of the literature, see Baumann et al., 2011; Green-Pedersen & Mortensen, 2010), we finally turn to our last hypothesis. This hypothesis is based on the idea that parties mutually observe each other and react to each other. Empirical research provides evidence that party agendas formed by political competitors influence how parties set their priorities (Adam & Maier 2011; Baumann et al. 2011; Green-Pedersen & Mortensen 2010; Vliegenthart, Walgrave & Meppelink 2011). Thus, current research seeks to disentangle whether government or opposition parties react more strongly to the various parties' agendas and under which conditions they do so. Vliegenthart and colleagues (2011), for example, show that parties determine each others' agendas, in particular, if they are active in the same language region, part of a coalition, ideologically close, or occupy a successful niche. Yet, these strategic interactions of parties have only recently gained attention, prompting Kriesi (2008) and Hooghe and Marks (2008) to call for more research specifically in this realm in order to understand which issues are emphasized and which are downplayed. We need to test for the role of parties' mutual observation. The resulting co-orientation Hypothesis 4 claims that parties co-orient themselves towards each other 'salience-wise.' If this hypothesis holds true, we should find less differences salience-wise between single parties as would be expected in accordance with the selective emphasis approach. Instead, co-orientation between parties should lead to salience convergence regarding EU matters within a country.

Method

In order to approach our two research questions—whether parties put Europe on the agenda and, if so, which ones—we first describe how we assess our dependent variable (i.e., EU issue salience in party campaigns). Our dependent variable answers the question whether party campaigns yield an intended consequence of EP elections—that is, whether they make party positions about EU issues transparent. We then turn to the operationalization of the

independent variables (i.e., party characteristics and party co-orientation). This comparative aspect helps us detect the inclusiveness of party campaigns. If only eurosceptic fringe parties put Europe on their agendas, EP elections would lead to an unintended consequence, namely, the publicizing of anti-EU ideas. At the end of this chapter, we consider the meaning of the statistical analyses.

Content analysis of parties' campaign communication

To study the campaign communication of parties, we conduct a content analysis of parties' televised campaign spots in the run-up to the 2009 EP elections in the eleven countries included in the project. Different approaches are at hand to study the communication behaviour of parties, including analyses of party manifestos and media coverage, and expert and citizen surveys. All of these methods have strengths, but they also have shortcomings (Netjes & Binnema 2007) because they only partly measure parties' public campaign communication. The core messages of parties' campaigns are epitomized in their campaign instruments—the most important being their televised campaign spots (Esser, Holtz-Bacha & Lessinger 2005), on which we base our analysis.

For each country, we include all televised campaign spots of those parties winning more than 3 percent of the votes in the 2009 EP election. For Austria, where televised spots are not common, we include newspaper advertisements as a functional equivalent. In total, the campaigns of sixty-one parties were included in the study (see Appendix A). All materials were collected and content analysed by cooperation partners in the eleven countries. To secure the quality of the content analysis, common coder training took place in Berlin, which was followed by coding exercises and a reliability test that produced satisfactory results (0.70) across all seven countries (North et al. 1963).

To assess the salience of EU issues, which serves as a dependent variable in all following hypotheses, we analyse whether the issues referred to in the spots are discussed

from a purely national, a purely European, or from both a national and European perspective.² For each spot, up to eleven issues could be coded, and the mean issue scope was calculated first for each single topic per party. This variable takes values between 0 (indicating that the issue was presented from a solely national perspective) to 1 (indicating a complete European focus). In a second step, the mean issue scope score was calculated across all issues and all broadcast spots for each party, and this score also ranges from 0 (solely national) to 1 (completely European).

Independent variables and statistical analyses

The data used to assess the independent variables stem from several sources, most importantly the ParlGov database (Döring & Manow 2012), the Chapel Hill expert surveys (CHES) 2006 (Hooghe et al. 2010) and 2010 (Bakker et al. 2012), the Comparative Political Data Set III 1990-2010 (Armingeon et al. 2012) as well as public archives (see Appendix B).

To test Hypothesis 1 (i.e., whether the structural position of the party determines its EU campaign communication), we use three variables to distinguish between mainstream parties and issue entrepreneurs (see also Hobolt & de Vries 2011; Parsons & Weber 2011; Ray 2007): cabinet, vote, and ideology. Cabinet is normally regarded as a structural factor distinguishing parties with and without government involvement on the national level in the last fifteen years (source: ParlGov and public archives). The variable cabinet is dichotomized, a value of 0 meaning that the party was not involved in the national government during the fifteen years preceding the 2009 EP elections, and a value of 1 meaning that the party was involved in the government. To complement this structural factor, we have added a short-term cabinet variable (role) that shows whether a party was part of the national government on the EP election day in 2009 (0 = not part of government, 1 = part of government; source: ParlGov

² Example: A spot dealing with national taxes would be coded as a national scope; a spot dealing with Brussels bureaucracy would be coded EU; a spot dealing with disputes among EU states (e.g., regarding nuclear power stations in border regions or the weighting of votes in the Council) is also coded as an EU scope. Finally, a spot referring to national and EU taxes had a “mixed” scope (EU and national).

and public archives). The second variable assesses electoral success, based on the vote share in the last national elections before the 2009 EPE (source: ParlGov and public archives). It is standardized to a range from 0 to 1. The third variable (ideology) distinguishes between mainstream parties and extremist parties on the left/right continuum. For each party, the ideological position is calculated as the mean value from the 2006 and the 2010 CHES-data, and the variable is then transferred to a range from -1 (extreme left) to 1 (extreme right). To distinguish between mainstream and extremist parties, the squared value of the variable is used in the analyses (values towards 0 indicating mainstream parties and values towards 1 indicating extremist parties).

Hypothesis 2 involves citizens' euroscepticism and the parties' stance towards European integration as independent variables. Citizens' euroscepticism is measured as the percentage of citizens in a country who agreed that 'EU membership is a bad thing' in the last Eurobarometer survey preceding the 2009 EPE (EB 70, October-November 2008; for a similar approach, see (Taggart, 1998). The variable is standardized to the range from 0 (no citizens agree) to 1 (all citizens agree). Party euroscepticism is measured by the mean value of the party's position on EU integration in the 2006 and the 2010 CHES-data. The information on the party's stance is available as a metric variable ranging from 0 (strongly oppose EU integration) to 1 (strongly in favour of EU integration). In addition, parties scoring below 0.4 on this scale are coded as eurosceptic on a dichotomous variable (value = 1), while parties scoring 0.4 and higher are coded as pro-European (value = 0) (see Appendix A).

For the analysis of Hypothesis 3a, inner-party dissent on the EU is the relevant independent variable. Again the mean value of the party's dissent variable in the 2006 and the 2010 CHES-data is calculated, and the variable is transferred to a range from 0 (completely united) to 1 (extremely divided). For Hypothesis 3b, the strength of the political leader is measured as the difference between the vote share the party obtained in the last national election preceding

the 2009 EP election and the national election before (Parsons & Weber 2011). This variable is standardized to a range from -1 (party lost many votes between the last two elections = weak leader) to 1 (party gained many votes = strong leader). In addition, the closeness of the 2009 EP election to the next national elections is measured in days and standardized to the range from 0 (national elections on the same day) to 1 (maximum distance to next national elections, which was actually 883 days in Spain; source: ParlGov and public archives). To test the hypothesis, the strength of leader variable and the closeness to election variable were combined to form an interaction term. Finally, for Hypothesis 4, co-orientation between party campaigns is measured as the mean EU issue salience score of all parties in a member state excluding the party under consideration (see Adam & Maier 2011; Steenbergen & Scott 2004).

In the following, we will first describe the degree of Europeanization of the campaigns in the different countries and then test our expectations by drawing on comparisons between different party types and among parties within a country. T-tests and bivariate correlations allow us to judge whether or not the relation we find is statistically significant. Finally, in order to determine the relative importance of the independent measures for the explanation of EU issue salience, we will run an OLS-regression.

Results

Across all parties, the average degree of Europeanization (based on eleven issues that could be coded per spot) of the 2009 EP party campaigns is 0.3 on an index running from 0 to 1. As described in the methods section, a value of 1 indicates that only European issues are discussed, a value of 0.5 shows that references are made to Europe as well as to the nation state, whereas a value of 0 indicates that the campaign was not Europeanized at all. This means that for the 2009 EP election campaign, we find more national than European references attached to issues in general. However, a close-up view on single issues reveals

significant differentiations; territorial questions (e.g., enlargement, border disputes) and immigration matters are when parties most strongly refer to Europe (across all parties, $M_{territorial} = 0.63$; $M_{immigration} = 0.58$), whereas those issues that receive the highest attention (i.e., economic, social, and welfare issues) are more strongly related to the national level (across all parties, $M_{economy} = 0.29$; $M_{welfare} = 0.20$).

On the descriptive level, Table 1 shows clear-cut differences between countries. In four of eleven countries, we find medium levels of Europeanization. In these countries (Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Austria), parties on average attach both a European and a national dimension to the issues that they put on the campaign agenda. We would conclude that, in these countries, parties do not treat EP elections as mere second-order national contests and that they contribute salience-wise to the EU's politicization. The most contrasting cases are Hungary and Bulgaria. Here, parties discuss issues in a purely national manner, fully adhering to the idea of a second-order model. The other countries fall in between, with national dimensions still dominating but some European aspects at least being mentioned. Table 1 indicates a difference between the seven Western European and the four Eastern European countries included in the study; parties in the Western European countries in 2009 show significantly stronger mobilization on EU integration.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1 not only indicates strong national differences in parties' references to EU issues during their campaigns, but the standard deviations also point to differences within each national party system. We will now test the factors that might explain parties' downplaying or campaigning on EU integration, starting with the three hypotheses on parties' selective emphasis.

Hypothesis 1 claims that mainstream parties downplay EU integration, whereas issue entrepreneurs campaign on European issues. As described above, mainstream parties and potential issue entrepreneurs are differentiated by (1) government involvement on the national level during the previous fifteen years, (2) governmental responsibility on the national level on the 2009 EP election day, (3) success in terms of a high vote share in the last national elections, and (4) the party's ideological position (Hobolt & de Vries, 2011; Ray, 2007). We will analyse the salience of EU issues in the campaigns of mainstream and challenger parties, differentiated by these four measures.

First, the comparison of the mean EU issue salience between parties that have been involved in the national governments throughout the last fifteen years and parties that have not had government responsibility does not yield any significant differences ($M_{prev} = 0.31$, $SD_{prev} = 0.26$; $M_{nonprev} = 0.28$, $SD_{nonprev} = 0.25$; $t(59) = -0.45$, $p = 0.65$). However, the comparison of parties that had governmental responsibility at the national level on the 2009 EP election day with parties that did not shows that parties in government address European issues significantly more often in their campaigns ($M_{gov} = 0.38$, $SD_{gov} = 0.28$; $M_{nongov} = 0.25$, $SD_{nongov} = 0.23$; $t(59) = -2.0$, $p = 0.05$). The next two measures used to distinguish between mainstream and challenger parties show no significant interactions with EU issue visibility in the campaigns either; the correlation between electoral success in the last national elections and EU salience ($r = 0.11$; $p = 0.41$; $N = 61$), and the correlation between the ideological position and EU salience in the campaigns ($r = -0.13$; $p = 0.34$; $N = 60$) are not statistically significant. In sum, our results do not satisfy our expectations that a party's structural position is associated with its willingness to openly discuss EU matters. Similarly, we do not find empirical support for the widely used distinction between silent mainstream and mobilizing entrepreneur parties. However, it seems that in the 2009 EP elections, governing parties were addressing European issues significantly more often than opposition parties.

Two explanations seem reasonable. During the financial crisis, parties in charge of government might not have been able to avoid talking about Europe. Our data provides evidence for this explanation. A fine-grained analysis of the degree of Europeanization of single issues reveals that government and nongovernment parties' communication differs significantly regarding some issues—in particular, 'economy' and 'welfare state' issues. Government parties discuss these issues with a stronger EU reference than opposition parties (for the economy: $M_{gov} = 0.42$, $SD_{gov} = 0.33$; $M_{nongov} = 0.19$, $SD_{nongov} = 0.27$; $t(45) = -2.7$, $p = 0.01$; for welfare: $M_{gov} = 0.37$, $SD_{gov} = 0.38$; $M_{nongov} = 0.11$, $SD_{nongov} = 0.18$; $t(31) = -2.26$, $p = 0.04$). In the midst of the financial crisis, government parties make reference to Europe when discussing the economy and the welfare state, whereas opposition parties maintain a national focus. However, it also seems possible that we are observing a fundamental change in party behaviour and public communication. Mobilization on Europe might have started from the issue entrepreneurs, yet today mainstream parties might not be able to avoid the topic any longer as they do not want to leave the floor to the eurosceptic parties. Thus, we might already observe processes of co-orientation (see Hypothesis 4).

Hypothesis 2 refers to the relevance of public opinion towards Europe and to the interaction between public opinion and parties' euroscepticism. Before starting the analysis, it should be mentioned that public opinion towards European integration and parties' euroscepticism are modestly related, close to the 0.1 confidence-level; the higher the share of citizens agreeing that EU membership is a bad thing for their country (according to Eurobarometer data), the stronger the parties' opposition to EU integration (as rated in the Chapel Hill expert survey ($r = -0.21$; $p = 0.11$; $N = 59$)). However, the campaign data at hand do not comply with the hypothesis that public euroscepticism is associated with EU issue salience in the election campaigns as the correlation does not show a significant relationship ($r = -0.10$; $p = 0.42$; $N = 61$). The assumption that EU sceptical parties are mobilizing on EU matters also has to be abandoned as the comparison of mean values of issue-salience between

eurosceptic and EU-friendly parties also shows no significant differences ($M_{skep} = 0.31$, $SD_{skep} = 0.28$; $M_{pros} = 0.29$, $SD_{pros} = 0.26$; $t(57) = -0.26$, $p = 0.80$). However, Hypothesis 2 claims an interaction effect between public euroscepticism and party euroscepticism. Following this result, only in EU hostile environments would EU sceptical parties raise EU issues in their campaigns. Nevertheless, this assumption is also not in line with our data, hence the correlation between the public \times party euroscepticism-interaction term and EU issue salience does not yield statistical significance ($r = 0.02$; $p = 0.88$; $N = 59$). Overall, it can be stated that there is no empirical evidence in our study that eurosceptic sentiments are associated with more EU mobilization.

Hypotheses 3a and 3b both refer to the internal dynamics of party behaviour and communication. Hypothesis 3a claims that parties downplay EU integration if they are internally divided on the issue. Again, this hypothesis is not supported by a correlation analysis of our data ($r = -0.11$; $p = 0.40$; $N = 59$). Hypothesis 3b suggests interaction effects between the strength of the party leadership and internal dissent, as well as with the timing of the EP election in the national election cycle. The correlation analysis between strength of party leadership and issue visibility shows the theoretically assumed negative relationship (Parsons & Weber 2011) on the 0.10 confidence level ($r = -0.22$; $p = 0.10$; $N = 61$). This result suggests that a leader who has a strong position within his party in national politics does not push European matters in the campaign, whereas a weak leader, who is losing votes on the national level, aims at campaigning on EU issues.

The claim made in Hypothesis 3b combines leader strength with internal party dissent—the so-called muffling phenomenon (Parsons & Weber 2011). It is expected that a weak leader will not be able to suppress internal dissent on Europe but that EU issue visibility will increase in such scenarios, as compared to a strong leader who will be in control of the issue agenda and not put European matters on the agenda. The correlation between the leadership \times internal dissent-interaction term and EU issue visibility shows the expected

connection ($r = -0.23$; $p = 0.08$; $N = 61$). However, the explanatory power of the interaction term is only slightly higher than the bivariate correlation between leadership strength and EU issue visibility. Leadership strength, therefore, seems to be more important than internal dissent. Finally, the timing of the EP elections within the national election cycle is included in the model. The correlation of the election cycle and issue visibility does not show the relationship we would expect based on the classic second order-thesis (Reif & Schmitt 1980) ($r = 0.15$; $p = 0.24$; $N = 61$). However, if leadership strength and closeness to the next national election are operationalized as an interaction term as suggested in Hypothesis 3b, the assumed relationship becomes visible ($r = -0.26$; $p = 0.04$; $N = 61$). This result means that parties with leaders in weak positions put more emphasis on European topics the closer the campaign gets to the next national election. Parties and leaders in strong positions are more likely to focus on the national agenda. As we have seen in the analyses regarding Hypothesis 1, however, typical challenger parties do not campaign on Europe—instead, parties in government do so. The interpretation of the results thus far is that governing parties that are losing votes on the national level tend to put EU issues on the agenda. This effect is even stronger the closer in time the next national elections are. In sum, there is quite some evidence for the relevance of party leadership strength and the election cycle as suggested in hypotheses 3a and 3b.

Nonetheless, as stated above, parties and party leaders do not have full control over their campaign agenda (e.g., Steenbergen & Scott 2004). Hypothesis 4, therefore, also takes into account processes of party co-orientation. It claims that parties will downplay EU integration the less salience other parties attach to the issue within a country and that they will increase the visibility of the topic if it is more salient nationwide. The empirical support for this claim emphasizing the strategic communication behaviour of parties is once more very strong ($r = 0.48$; $p = 0.000$; $N = 61$).

In order to finally be able to assess the relative impact of the independent variables that we have identified as being relevant for parties' strategic campaign communication on the

bivariate level, we include those explicative factors—that is, the role of the party on the national level (current government or not), the interaction term between party leadership strength and the closeness to the next national elections, and parties' co-orientation—in an OLS-regression model (see Table 2). Co-orientation between national parties turns out to be the best predictor for EU issue salience ($b = 0.591$, $SE = 0.162$; $min. R^2 = 0.15$). The role of the party on the national level ranks second ($b = 0.127$, $SE = 0.059$; $min. R^2 = 0.05$), and the interaction term between leader strength and closeness to the next national election, third ($b = -1.147$, $SE = 0.706$; $min. R^2 = 0.02$). These findings suggest that future research needs to combine parties' selective emphases, and even more importantly, their co-orientation to understand mobilization on EU integration. However, as we have analysed only one election, research needs to confirm whether these three factors remain relevant in future elections or whether different situations also lead to additional, new factors.

- [Table 2 about here]-

Conclusion

Our analysis shows that parties in their 2009 EP election campaigns discussed issues with some form of EU-relatedness while still maintaining a strong national reference. We would therefore label such campaigns neither as fully fledged second-order national campaigns nor as campaigns that are advancing the EU towards political maturity. Mobilization on EU issues is conditional upon country, issue field, and party. Country-wise, we observe large differences between, for example, Germany, where European references outnumber national ones, and Bulgaria and Hungary, where we hardly find any focus on European issues. The same applies to issue fields; if parties campaign on territorial or immigration issues, Europeanization prevails, whereas social security matters, for example, are framed primarily nationally.

Finally, differences between single parties also stand out. The German Social Democrats, for example, ran a fully fledged EU issue campaign, whereas the Hungarian Jobbik party referred solely to the national level.

Research on party and media attention on Europe is most strongly triggered by the normative concern regarding the quality of democracy. All strands of democratic theory confer that political positions should be made visible and transparent to the citizens to allow for informed voting (for a summary, see Ferree et al. 2002). Visibility and transparency are not only normatively desired but also intended; they are hoped-for consequences of EP elections (see also Chapter 2). Judging our data against this minimum normative standard of input legitimacy (Scharpf 1999) leads to a mixed evaluation. Even during their election campaigns, when parties have limited space and are forced to keep their core messages short and to the point, we find EU references. Thus, the strength of Europeanization depends upon issue fields, countries, and single parties. Transparency, however, is not fully achieved; in the midst of the financial crisis, economic matters, for example, are still primarily discussed within the national realm. Beyond this, we observe large national differences, which mean that EP elections do not foster a common Europeanized ground for discussion among EU member states. Instead, some countries continue to maintain purely nationally focused party campaigns—in our sample, mostly in Eastern Europe. Consequently, transparency, as one of the core intended consequences of EP elections, is only partially achieved.

Transparency of EU matters, which positively affects input legitimacy, might have detrimental effects on output legitimacy (i.e., the ability to govern efficiently) (Scharpf 1999). If parties make their positions transparent, rather than seeking compromises behind closed doors, the main mechanism of EU government might become problematic since leaders fear public defeats. Departing from these unintended—and in research, often neglected—consequences of publicly discussing Europe, our conjecture is flipped around; neglecting to discuss European economic matters during the EP election campaigns might actually help

political elites find compromises on the EU level to handle the common financial crisis. The lack of transparency might therefore boost unintended consequences; it might help governing.

Turning to the explicative part of our paper, our results can be summarized in a twofold manner. Firstly, the concept of co-orientation seems more helpful than the selective emphasis approach. Co-orientation itself is by far the strongest predictor for parties' mobilization on EU integration. Secondly, we must admit that many of our expectations were not met. Surprisingly, we found no evidence that issue entrepreneurs differ from mainstream parties, that the degree of citizens' euroscepticism determines the salience of EU issues, or that internal divisions within parties play a decisive role. Instead, what we find is that current mainstream parties in government whose leaders are on the losing track at the national level and with national elections approaching are the most likely to put Europe on the agenda. Putting Europe on the agenda might be regarded as a strategy of evasion.

Whether this evasion maneuver and the strong co-orientation of parties towards each other can be replicated in future studies needs to be shown. The year 2009 was possibly an exceptional year because of the financial crisis, and perhaps politics will revert to their usual patterns and ways in the next elections. Yet, the snapshot of 2009 may have spotlighted a sustainable change in EU politics. If so, we would need to rethink our theoretical concepts on parties' EU communication. These concepts should be able to deal with the processes of EU mobilization and demobilization as the EU comes of political age. Our findings therefore suggest that we should shift the focus away from solely analyzing the strategic communication of single parties but should focus equally on the interplay between parties (see also Hooghe & Marks 2008; Kriesi 2008) and other relevant issue environments (i.e., the mass media). To do so requires longitudinal studies, which help us detect cause and effect. It might be that issue entrepreneurs set EU issues on the agenda in earlier years, which made issue mainstreamers react, and our analysis of the 2009 EP campaign picked up that reaction. New research might bring us closer to understanding not only single parties' mobilization on

EU matters but also whether (and why) co-orientation results in the EU's politicization or its silencing within a country.

From a normative point of view, our findings on the explicative level might be good news. Liberal democratic theory requires that public debates are inclusive. Inclusiveness means that the 'representatives should have the time and space to present their contrasting positions fully and accurately' (Ferree et al. 2002, p. 207). As long as mainstream parties were silent on Europe, either no discussion on Europe took place at all or the floor was left open to eurosceptic entrepreneur parties—a truly unintended consequence of common European elections. As there was no difference salience-wise between mainstream parties and issue entrepreneurs in their 2009 European Parliament election campaigns (only one between governing and opposition parties at the time of election), we can expect that both positions regarding EU integration, critical as well as supportive, will make their way to the electorate. If so, EP elections come closer to their ascribed role of generating a two-sided debate about European integration. However, along with more debate comes a truly unintended consequence; parties mobilize on Europe in order to distract from their national weaknesses.

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Table 1

Mean degree of Europeanization of party campaigns across countries

	M	SD	n parties
Germany	.58	.31	5
Netherlands	.46	.24	9
Sweden	.44	.36	5 ^a
Austria	.40	.18	6
Czech	.34	.24	5
Poland	.29	.20	4
Spain	.23	.09	4
Portugal	.19	.15	5
UK	.36	.30	6
Hungary	.06	.13	4
Bulgaria	.02	.06	8

^anot all parties have campaign spots

Table 2

Predictors of EU Issue Visibility in the 2009 EP Campaigns

Intercept	.09		
	<i>b</i> ^a	<i>SE</i>	min. <i>R</i> ²
Co-orientation between national parties	.591**	.162	.15
National governmental responsibility on election day	.127*	.059	.05
Strength of leadership x closeness to national elections	-1.147 [†]	.706	.02
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	.27		
<i>F</i>	8.402		
<i>N</i>	61		

^a: Cell entries are unstandardized *b*-coefficients, standard-errors and minimum *R*²s from an OLS-regression

[†]< *p* = .11, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

APPENDIX A

List of parties included in the study

Country	Party
Austria	SPÖ : Socialist Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs)
Austria	ÖVP : People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei)
Austria	GRÜNE : Green Alternative (Die Grünen - Die Grüne Alternative)
Austria	FPÖ : Freedom Party (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs)
Austria	BZÖ: Alliance for the Future of Austria (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich)
Austria	Martin : List Dr Martin - For Democracy, Control and Justice (Liste "Dr. Martin - für Demokratie, Kontrolle, Gerechtigkeit" / für echte Kontrolle in Brüssel)
Bulgaria	RZS: Order, Law and Justice Party (Red, Zakonnost I Spravedlivost)
Bulgaria	GERB: Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (Grazhdani za Evropeisko Razvitie na Bulgaria)
Bulgaria	DPS: Movement for Rights and Freedoms (Dvizhenie za Prava I Svobodi)
Bulgaria	ATAK : National Union Attack/ Party Ataka (Nacionalno Obedinenie Ataka)
Bulgaria	Coalition for Bulgaria (Koalitsiya za Bulgaria, KB) (BSP, KzB)
Bulgaria	NDSV: National Movement for Stability and Progress (Nacionalno dvizhenie za stabilnost i vazhod, NDSV) [Until 2007: National Movement Simeon II (Nacionalno Dvisenie Simeon Tvorii)]
Bulgaria	SDS-DSB: Blue Coalition (Sinyata Koalitzii, SK), first appearance EP 2009
Bulgaria	Lider (since 2007)
Czech Republic	KSCM: Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Komunistická strana Cech a Moravy)
Czech Republic	CSSD: Czechoslovak Party of Social Democracy (Ceska strana socialne demokraticka)
Czech Republic	ODS: Civic Democratic Party (Obcanska demokraticka strana)
Czech Republic	KDU-CSL: Christian Democratic Union - Czechoslovak People's Party (Krest'ansko -demokraticka unie-Ceskoslovenska strana lidova)
Czech Republic	Suverenita: Sovereignty/Jana Bobošíková Bloc (Suverenita/blok Jany Bobošíková)
Germany	CDU / CSU: Christian Democratic Union / Christian Social Union (Christlich Demokratische Union / Christlich Soziale Union)
Germany	SPD: Social Democrats (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands)
Germany	FDP: Free Democrats (Freie demokratische Partei)
Germany	Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen: Greens/Alliance 90
Germany	Die Linke: The Left
Hungary	MSzP: Hungarian Socialist Party (Magyar Szocialista Párt)
Hungary	FIDESZ
Hungary	MDF: Hungarian Democratic Forum (Magyar Demokrata Fórum)
Hungary	JOBBIK: For the Right Hungary (Jobbik Magyarorszáért Mozgalom)
Netherlands	SP: Socialist Party (Socialistische Partij)
Netherlands	GL: Green Left (Groen Links)
Netherlands	PvdA: Labour Party (Partij von de Arbeid)
Netherlands	CDA: Christian Democratic Appeal (Christen-Democratisch Appèl)
Netherlands	VVD: People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (Volkspartij voor

	Vrijheid en Democratie)
Netherlands	D66: Democrats'66 (Democraten 66)
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>CU: Christian Union (ChristenUnie)</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>PVV : Freedom Party/Group Wilders (Partij voor de Vrijheid)</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>PvdD: Party for the Animals (Partij voor de Dieren)</i>
Poland	SLD-UP : Alliance of the Democratic Left + Labour Union (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej - Unia Pracy)
Poland	PO: Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska)
Poland	PSL : Polish Peasant Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)
<i>Poland</i>	<i>PiS : Law and Justice (Prawo I Sprawiedliwość)</i>
Portugal	PS : Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Português)
Portugal	PSD: Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrático)
Portugal	CDS-PP : Centre Social Democrats, Popular Party (Partido do Centro Democrático Social - Partido Popular)
<i>Portugal</i>	<i>BE : Block of the Left (Bloco de Esquerda)</i>
<i>Portugal</i>	<i>CDU (PCP-PEV): Communist Party/Greens, Democratic Unity Coalition (Partido Comunista Português - Partido Ecologista 'Os Verdes')</i>
Spain	PSOE : Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español)
Spain	PP : Popular Party (Partido Popular)
Spain	IU-ICV-EUIA-BA (Izquierda Unida-Iniciativa per Catalunya Verdes- Esquerra Unida i Alternativa-bloque por Asturias: la Izquierda)
Spain	CpE : Coalition for Europe (Coalición por Europa (Partido Nacionalista Vasco, Convergència i Unió, Coalición Canaria, Bloque nacionalista, Valenciano, Partido Andalucista, Unio Mallorquina)
Sweden	M: Moderate Unity Party (Moderata samlingspartiet)
Sweden	KD: Christian Democratic (Kristdemokraterna)
Sweden	C: Center Party (Centerpartiet)
Sweden	FP: People's Party / The Liberals (Folkpartiet liberalerna)
<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Junilistan: June List</i>
United Kingdom	The Green Party / Greens
United Kingdom	Labour Party
<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Conservative Party</i>
United Kingdom	LD: Liberal Democrats
<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>UKIP: UK Independence Party</i>
<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>BNP: British National Party</i>

Note: parties in italics are classified as eurosceptic

For Sweden only those parties are included that broadcasted televised spots in their EP elections

APPENDIX B
Sources for the independent variables

Variable	Source
<i>Hypothesis 1</i>	
cabinet_dich (government participation in the past 15 years)	http://www.parlgov.org/stable/data.html http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/countries.html
Vote / Leader (PRE and PREPRE)	Klaus Armingeon, Romana Careja, David Weisstanner, Sarah Engler, Panajotis Potolidis, Marlène Gerber. Comparative Political Data Set III 1990-2010, Institute of Political Science, University of Berne 2012. http://www.parlgov.org/stable/index.html http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/ http://www.electionguide.org/
Ideology_06	Hooghe, L., Bakker, R., Brigevich, A., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Marks, G., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M. (2010). Reliability and Validity of Measuring Party Positions: The Chapel Hill Expert Surveys of 2002 and 2006. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 4, 684-703. CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php
Ideology_10	Bakker, R., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., Steenbergen, M., Vachudova, M. (2012). Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999-2010. <i>Party Politics</i> published online 29 November 2012. DOI: 10.1177/1354068812462931. CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php

<i>Hypothesis 2</i>	
POP_EU (Public Opinion EU % EU bad thing)	<p>http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb70/eb70_full_en.pdf</p> <p>Standard Eurobarometer 70 - Public Opinion in the European Union, Fieldwork : October-November 2008</p> <p>Publication: June 2008, European Commission</p>
Party_EU_06 (position?)	<p>Hooghe, L., Bakker, R., Brigevich, A., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Marks, G., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M. (2010). Reliability and Validity of Measuring Party Positions: The Chapel Hill Expert Surveys of 2002 and 2006. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i>, 4, 684-703.</p> <p>CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php</p>
Party_EU_10	<p>Bakker, R., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., Steenbergen, M., Vachudova, M. (2012). Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999-2010. <i>Party Politics</i> published online 29 November 2012. DOI: 10.1177/1354068812462931.</p> <p>CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php</p>
<i>Hypothesis 3</i>	
dissent_06	<p>Hooghe, L., Bakker, R., Brigevich, A., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Marks, G., Rovny, J., Steenbergen, M. (2010). Reliability and Validity of Measuring Party Positions: The Chapel Hill Expert Surveys of 2002 and 2006. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i>, 4, 684-703.</p> <p>CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php</p>
dissent_10	<p>Bakker, R., De Vries, C., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G.,</p>

	<p>Steenbergen, M., Vachudova, M. (2012). Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999-2010. <i>Party Politics</i> published online 29 November 2012. DOI: 10.1177/1354068812462931.</p> <p>CHES: http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php</p>
Leader (Strength of ~)	See „Vote“ (hypothesis 1)
Election Cycle (own calculation based on the dates of election)	<p>Klaus Armingeon, Romana Careja, David Weisstanner, Sarah Engler, Panajotis Potosidis, Marlène Gerber. Comparative Political Data Set III 1990-2010, Institute of Political Science, University of Berne 2012.</p> <p>http://www.parlgov.org/</p>

Selection of relevant parties

EP_Ergebnis_menan	<p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/de/00082fcd21/Wahlergebnisse-nach-Mitgliedstaaten-(2009).html</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2004/ep-election/sites/de/results1306/graphical.html</p> <p>http://www.parlgov.org/stable/data/hun/election-ep/2009-06-07.html</p> <p>European Election Database: http://eed.nsd.uib.no/webview/index.jsp?stubs=Region&study=http%3A%2F%2F129.177.90.166%3A80%2Fobj%2FStudy%2FESEP2009_Display&virtualllice=Percent_value&measuretype=4&headers=Party&Reg</p>
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5%3BBA%2CPP+-
+UPyD%2CVotes&v=2&Partyslice=PP&cube=http%3A%2F%2F129.1
77.90.166%3A80%2Fobj%2FfCube%2FESEP2009_Display_C1&Regi
onslice=ES11&virtalsubset=Percent_value&layers=virtual&measure=
common&top=yes