Battles fought in the EP arena: developments in national parties' Euromanifestos

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Aufgrund der fortschreitenden europäischen Integration seit den 1990er Jahren wird die nationale Politik unvermeidlich immer öfters mit dem Thema „Europa" konfrontiert. Der Forschungsbereich „Europäisierung" konzentriert sich daher darauf, die Effekte von europäischer Integration auf nationale politische System, ihre Institutionen und Akteure zu untersuchen. Innerhalb dieses Forschungszweiges interessiert uns nun das Verhalten der nationalen Parteien im Zuge von Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament (EP). Anhand von nationalem Parteienwettbewerb bei EP-Wahlen untersuchen wir empirisch, ob Parteien einem Re-Politisierungs-Prozess unterliegen, indem sie die EP-Arena dazu nutzen, um über Europa und europäische Politikfelder zu diskutieren. Folgende Forschungsfragen leiten dabei unser Interesse: Welche Art von Wahlkämpfen können wir in der EP-Arena beobachten? Finden die Wahldebatten in einem europäischen oder nationalen Kontext statt? Außerdem: Was sind die Inhalte dieses Wettbewerbs in der EP-Arena? Welche Themen dominieren die EP-Wahldebatten in den verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten der EU und welche Positionen vertreten die Parteien dabei? Wir untersuchen nationale Parteien in unterschiedlichen EU-Mitgliedstaaten über Zeit, um deren Salienz sowie ihre Positionen gegenüber europäischen policy- und polity-Bereichen zu erfassen. Wir verwenden als Daten die Europawahlprogramme der österreichischen, britischen, niederländischen, griechischen, spanischen und schwedischen Parteien zu den EP-Wahlen 1994/1996, 1999 und 2004. Unsere Untersuchungen ergeben, dass eine Europäisierung von Parteien nur teilweise stattgefunden hat.

Keywords: political parties, Europeanization, Euromanifestos, politicization
*   politische Parteien, Europäisierung, Euromanifestos, Politisierung*

1.   Introduction[1]

Through their elected members in the European Parliament (MEPs), half a billion Europeans "can be involved in marking out their political vision for Europe" (European Parliament 2008). Yet, studies of European Parliament (EP) elections sketch a gloomier picture regarding the role, function and importance of these elections. Most importantly, despite gradual empowerment of the EP through successive treaties (Maastricht 1992; Amsterdam 1997; Nice 2001), voters' turnout in EP elections has been steadily declining, and political parties seem to rank the European arena very low in their priorities.

Inquiries about the EP contest make part of a larger body of literature, which investigates voters' attitudes and behavior, in the US and Europe. This literature distinguishes between different[2] types of elections. To illustrate, scholars who conceive elections as high/low stimulant in the US context (Campbell 1960) and as first/second order in the European context (e.g. Reif/ Schmitt 1980; Marsh 1998),[3] explore voters' behavior across electoral arenas. As Hix et al. ex-

plain, the main argument of EP electoral research is that they "have been essentially 'second order contests'[4]: fought by national parties (and covered by the national media) largely on national issues rather than on European integration" (2003, 194). Explicitly or implicitly, party behavior and competition in the European arena are therefore held responsible for aspects of the second order phenomenon; however, most research in the field focuses on voters rather than parties. So, in this paper we aim for an understanding of party behavior in EP elections to supplement findings regarding voters' behavior.

We are interested in how national parties treat the European arena and what kind of battles they fight there. More explicitly, we inquire, firstly, whether political parties have become aware of the purpose of the new arena. If so, secondly, we examine whether and how parties compete in this new electoral arena.

We take Mair's thesis on the waning of competition "through Europe, by Europe" (2000; 2004; 2006; 2007) as our point of departure and explore the context and the grounds of national parties' competition in EP elections. Hence, the present paper sketches party competition in the EP elections as comprising two elements: the context (European vs. national) in which the electoral debate takes place and the content of this debate. Such a study inevitably locates itself in the Europeanization literature, which researches the effects of European integration on national political systems, as well as the actors and institutions in these systems. So far, scholarly work has mainly focused on national parties' organizational aspects when dealing with effects of European integration (e.g. Poguntke et al. 2007; Raunio 2002) widely neglecting substantive analysis on parties' European policy positions. We intend to fill this gap in the literature through an analysis of national parties' positions on the general pro/anti EU dimension but also on different EU polity and policy domains. For the purposes of our analysis, we rely on Euromanifesto-data for six EU member states to examine on which grounds national parties compete in EP elections. This data reports the themes addressed by parties in EP elections and thus allows retracing processes of party competition.

The paper is structured as follows: firstly, we define party Europeanization and outline theory-driven expectations regarding the impact of European integration on national political parties' competition. Thereby, we focus on salience of Europe in EP elections, which we link to relevant assumptions of the second order theory. Furthermore, we review Mair's arguments (2000; 2004; 2006; 2007) with regard to the attenuation of policy competition as well as of opposition within the EU polity. Secondly, we elaborate on our measurement instruments and the data used to explore empirically the context of EP elections and processes of politicization in Austria, Great Britain, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. Thirdly, we discuss our results and conclude by summarizing our findings and their relevance to ongoing scholarly debates.

2.   Party Competition and European Integration

Political parties define their interests and pursue their goals according to a given setting. Stated policy positions of actors, for example, are located in "a practical political and institutional context" (Laver 2001, 69). European integration provides parties with a new institutional environment and a new policy arena (Hix/Goetz 2000). Developments in the polity dimension (e.g. the introduction of qualified majority voting or increased powers of the EP) as well as in the policy dimension of European integration (e.g. EU-wide harmonization of a policy, new EU competences in a policy sector) constitute the "European context" of politics in the member

states. Since the 1990s, the pace of integration has increased to an extent "that the impact of European level decisions on the choices available in national political systems is too evident to ignore" (Hix/Goetz 2000, 2). Equally important, the Union attempted to draft a Constitution and experienced the greatest enlargement in its history: ten more members acceded, while others are on the waiting list. Thus, the more integration moves on, it has the potential to alter the 'structure of political opportunities' (Schlesinger 1985) for national parties in the member states. Yet, students of European integration have paid little attention to its effects on political cleavages, elections, voters, political parties, party competition, party systems and patterns of democratic legitimation (Hix/Goetz 2000, 15). For this reason, the growing literature on the Europeanization of national politics (e.g. Ladrech 2002; Pennings 2006; Kriesi 2006) explores such effects – along with responses to developments at the EU level.

"Broadly" speaking, "Europeanization" refers to domestic change triggered by European integration (Vink 2003) be it related to policy, polity or politics (Börzel/Risse 2003). Mair understands Europeanization as a factor that is "external to the national experience or as occurring when 'something in national political systems is affected by something European'" (2006, 3f.). Meanwhile, Ladrech regards party Europeanization as a response to a challenge, "whether of marginal degree such as developing or building relationships with recently introduced actors and institutions, or more significantly to the relevance of an existing organization and its ability to attain certain indispensable goals" (2002, 393). Following Lefkofridi (2008), we understand party Europeanization as a by-product of a dynamic relationship between European integration and domestic politics, which manifests itself in different degrees across time and parties. Party Europeanization may range from party awareness of the European context (Europeanization I) to specific action induced by this context (Europeanization II) (Lefkofridi 2008). Firstly, we assess party awareness of the European context by looking at how present/absent this context is from the EP electoral debate.[5] Secondly, we understand party competition on European policy- and polity-related issue areas as a form of "party action", which is induced by the European context. This two-level measurement will indicate if and how political parties compete in the European context, and, as a result, which kind of Europeanization can we detect amongst different parties. In what follows, we refine these ideas and link them to the second order as well as to the politicization theses.

2.1. Europe in European elections: towards the forefront or still in the shadows?

Following Ferrara and Weishaupt (2004), we reckon that our analysis of parties in EP elections should address claims of the second order theory; although this theory intends to explain the behavior of voters, it makes important assumptions about the behavior of parties in EP elections. At the aftermath of the first direct elections to the European Parliament, Reif and Schmitt (1980) conceptualized EP elections as "second order" national elections, namely elections that are dominated by another, more important political arena. This latter arena is termed "first order" because there is more at stake. More specifically, the second order concept implies that EP elections are inconsequential "beauty contests" for national parties (van der Brug et al. 2007), while national elections in EU member states are first order events, since they can bring about alternation in executive power. In this view, EP elections serve as markers for the standing of parties and their programs (Franklin 2005). In agreement with this line of thinking, therefore, the national context should haunt European elections, which would be fought as a "re-run" of (Hix

1997) or a "prova generale" for national elections. It follows that parties' arguments would be located mainly in a domestic rather than in a European context.

Therefore, we ask: how do parties structure the electoral debate in European elections? Do they place their political arguments increasingly in a European context as the process of European integration moves on? Or does the EP debate prove impervious to developments at the European level?

We approach these questions by looking at the salience structure of party arguments. In general, salience matters in political competition, assuming that "people take more notice of positions on issues they feel are more salient" (Laver 2001, 66). Furthermore, the strategic maneuverability of parties, the scarcity of resources, the time and communication channels as well as the limited attention span of voters (Sjöblom 1983) determine parties' choices regarding the priority of some issues over others. In this paper, we use the term "salience" in a slightly different way, as we do not measure whether and to which extent single European positions have been put forward by parties. Instead, "salience" – as it is used here – measures the extent to which parties embed their arguments in a European context. In this manner, salience implies the degree of emphasis placed on the European context in general. Consequently, if Europe appears to be "salient" in EP elections, parties are aware of its growing importance; in other words, parties take Europe more seriously (Kritzinger/Michalowitz 2005) and tap the EP electoral arena for debating it. On the contrary, if EP elections are not about Europe despite the increase of EU policy scope and of EU institutions' powers, parties fail to become conscious of the European context as well as of their role in this context.

2.2. Party Action: De-politicization at the national level, re-politicization at the European level?

Salience of Europe can only tell us a part of the story about party behavior in elections to the European Parliament. Besides the context, we are also interested in party competition, in terms of analyzing the EP electoral debate's content. So far, research interested in national party competition and European integration has investigated the relationship between parties' positions on the Left/Right and pro/anti-European integration axes (e.g. Marks/Wilson 1999; Hooghe et al. 2002; Marks et al. 2006). Their findings suggest that, in general, parties have incentives to underestimate European issues and structure competition "along the more familiar and safer socio-economic cleavage" (Mattila/Raunio 2006, 428).

Taking into account these findings, we are further interested in the actual content of parties' issue contestation in the EP. The substance of the EP contest is all the more important in respect of Mair's (2000; 2004; 2006; 2007) argument that EU level decision-making contributes to the hollowing out of competition between parties at the national level. Firstly, he points out that Europe has limited the policy space available for parties to compete against each other through the EU *acquis* and the harmonization of policies. In addition, despite variation in the way different countries interpret the demands for convergence, he highlights that within country variation – "at least across the mainstream" – is absent (Mair 2007). Secondly, through the delegation of decision-making authority to non-majoritarian institutions (e.g. European Central Bank) and regulatory agencies (e.g. Europol), Europe reduces the policy instruments and the policy repertoire at the disposal of national parties. And while it is hard to seek votes by opposing agencies or experts, Europe also "forbids" standard policy practices of the past which disrupt the function

of the single market. This set of limits results in the shrinking of political competition between national parties (Mair 2000).[6] Mair (2007) also claims that due to the EU's design, it is almost impossible to organize opposition within the EU polity in the "classical sense" (Kirchheimer, 1957), referring to opposition as articulated by non-incumbent parties directed at the policies pursued by governing parties. What is more, the system's failure to allow for such opposition is likely to lead to the elimination of opposition within the EU polity. Moreover, he argues that this systemic failure could also lead to the mobilization of an opposition of principle directed against the EU polity.

Hence, European integration brings about the de-politicization of the policy-making process at the domestic level, while "it fails to compensate for this reduction by any commensurate re-politicization at the European level" (Mair 2007, 15). Mair (2004; 2007) depicts two dimensions of political contestation, namely the "Europeanization dimension" and the "functional dimension". The former refers to the form and scope of the increasingly institutionalized European Union political system; parties would effectively contest this dimension in the national arena, because this arena has the authority over constitutional and institutional issues. The latter concerns the policy areas, which have been already transferred to the EU level but raise disagreements about approach and priorities; although a debate on the functional dimension could take place in the national elections, it would be particularly meaningful in EP elections, as there is where the main competences of the EP lie (Mair 2007). Mair (2000; 2007) explains that part of the de-politicization problem is the fact that parties contest the wrong issues in the wrong arena.

In light of these arguments, which, admittedly, have paramount normative repercussions for the effectiveness of elections as channels of representation in our democracies, an exploration of the content of party competition in EP elections becomes essential. From this point forward, we are interested in the following questions: If competition is hollowed-out at the national level, do parties make an effort towards re-politicization at the European level? So, what kinds of battles are actually fought in the European arena? Do parties debate European policy or polity issues? Is this competition reinforcing politicization or rather the opposite?

3. Data and Measurement

For an empirical analysis of the above arguments, we rely on parties' electoral manifestos. Party manifestos are key central statements of party positions and thus constitute genuine documents to measure salience and positions of parties on specific issues within and across countries (e.g. Ray 2007; 2003; Kritzinger et al. 2004; Binder/Wüst 2004; Pennings 2002; Hooghe/Marks 1999). What is more, parties publish their manifestos before each election, which allows for a study of salience of Europe over time. Besides, a party manifesto is the final version of a document composed through a series of formal processes (as specified by party rules). Manifestos constitute authoritative statements of policy, whose character is collective, i.e. they represent the whole party (Volkens 2001). No other data source represents views of the party as an organization (Budge 2001).

As our research focuses exclusively on European elections, we measure salience of Europe based on the Euromanifesto-dataset by the Mannheim Research Group. Unlike the data from the "Comparative Manifesto Group" which handle national manifesto data (e.g. Pennings 2002), this dataset contains manifestos of national parties that have been created especially for the EP-elections.[7] Thus, we can use them to analyze whether the political competition of national parties

takes place in a national or a European context, as well as what exactly is contested and what are parties' positions.

It should be underlined that if EP elections are not about Europe, then parties are not yet aware of the role, function and importance of this electoral arena. Such lack of awareness may have been "normal" when the EP was mostly a consultative body with no real powers. However, the Maastricht treaty led to a substantive change of EP's legislative powers by involving it largely in policy-making of many important issues of European integration. Also, the introduction of new decision-making procedures (e.g. codecision) boosted the systemic role played by the EP in the EU polity. As Maurer (1999) illustrates, the proportion of policy areas where the EP was not at all involved in policy-making declined from 72% (in the original EEC) to 40% in the post-Maastricht EC. Accordingly, we focus on manifestos produced for EP elections in the post-Maastricht period to gauge whether and to what extent parties attended European stimuli. Thus, our main hypothesis is that parties' EP debate in the post-Maastricht era is likely to be located in a European context. To examine this hypothesis, and consequently, party awareness of the European context (Europeanization I) we measure the salience parties assign to the national and the European levels. The Euromanifesto-dataset contains codes, which include salience measures for each political level.

To analyze politicization as party action (Europeanization II) we explore the content of EP contestation and proceed in two steps: firstly, we use parties' general EU-position on a pro/anti-Europe dimension for each electoral year based on the respective coding provided by the dataset to figure out whether, in general, parties use the European political space for political competition. Secondly, based on the former analysis, we dig into the substance of political competition in the EP arena by looking at parties' EU-positions in different issue domains. Thereby we are interested in: (1) EU policy issue areas and (2) EU polity issue areas (i.e. the institutional architecture) of the EU. The inclusion of both groups allows examining simultaneously whether (and which) policy issues are politicized and to what extent (irrelevant) polity issues are debated.

Within the first group, we can distinguish between the policy domains that have been transferred to the European level such as the Single Market, EMU, Agriculture, and general economic issues (EU-Economy) and those for which the national level is still competent (Migration, Militarism, Welfare, Education). This distinction is important, as according to Mair, little attention has been made to control for the effects of European integration "by distinguishing between those issue areas in which Europe has become the principal authoritative voice and those in which national politics – and hence national political competition – continues to play a decisive role" (2006, 13). Within the second group, we include issue domains that focus on the institutional set-up of the European integration process (Constitutionalism, Balance between the national and the European level, Competences of EU-institutions, Satisfaction with EU-democracy).[8] Following Mair (2000; 2007), parties are likely to emphasize polity issues and de-emphasize policy issues.

In conformity with our definition of Europeanization, low salience of Europe in the post-Maastricht Euro-manifestos will be indicative of generally low party awareness of European developments (Europeanization I), while low emphasis on European policies will illustrate lack of action induced by the European context (Europeanization II).

We explore six member states in order to get a picture of national parties' debate in EP elections: Austria, Great Britain, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. The selection of these countries is justified on various grounds. As electoral systems are major determinants of party competition, we firstly consider the potential effects they could have on the parties under

study. Like in all EU member states, EP elections in the selected countries are held under the electoral system of proportional representation (PR)[9], albeit with slight variations.[10] Yet, the electoral systems used in national elections across the EU vary. Parties face different incentives (and rewards) in majoritarian systems with two-party competition than in consensus systems with multi-party competition: political outcomes (e.g. office benefits, materialization of policy promises) are straightforward in the former systems and less certain in the latter systems. In this respect, there exist similarities and differences in terms of national elections' outcomes among the countries under investigation. For example, single parties form cabinets in Great Britain, Greece and (mainly also in) Spain; coalitions of parties govern in Austria, the Netherlands, and Sweden (Lijphart 1999). As a result, for British, Greek (and probably also Spanish) parties, there is a significant difference between national and EP elections in terms of outcomes and importance. This also is why a refined version of the second-order theory (van der Eijk et al. 1996) postulates that EP elections are "more second order" in countries with two-party competition than in those with multi-party competition. To control for possible effects the different systems might have on party behavior in EP competition, we put forward a corollary hypothesis: parties in majoritarian systems are less likely to conduct the EP debate in a European context than are parties in consensus democracies; therefore, our case selection includes countries using different electoral systems in national elections.[11]

Secondly, according to Goetz's (2006) thesis on "clustered Europeanization", differences in Europeanization can be explained through the "relative time of accession", which refers to the phase of integration and/or the country's internal political and economic development at the time of accession. The countries we explore joined the EU at distinct phases of European integration. Austria and Sweden acceded in 1995, namely in the post-Maastricht period, when EU legislation was much more visible in citizens' daily life than in the past. On the contrary, all other countries joined the EU when the *acquis* was still in an infant phase compared to 1995. While the Netherlands makes part of the founding countries (1952), Great Britain, Greece and Spain acceded in 1973, 1981 and 1986 respectively. Back then, there were not so many European policies to debate. To explore whether timing of accession plays a role regarding the extent to which parties locate their EP debate in a European context and re-politicize depoliticized policies, we additionally hypothesize that the later a country joined the EU, the more likely that Europe is present in the European elections' debates.

Furthermore, we consider the countries' domestic development at the time of accession. As Goetz points out, countries joining the EU with a consolidated set of institutions are "well-placed to take on the role of policy-shapers" (2006, 7). On the one hand, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Austria and Sweden joined the EU as mature liberal democracies with a developed market economy, whereas Greek and Spanish accessions coincided with processes of democratization. On the other hand, emerging from a dictatorship, Greece and Spain also lacked a powerful civil society leading to the expectation that substantial discussions about Europe might be missing. Finally, we hypothesize that countries with high levels of internal political and economic development are more likely to debate about "Europe" in European elections.

## 4. Political Competition in the European Contest: the Results

In this section, we present our findings on party Europeanization regarding *awareness* and *action*, gathered from Euromanifesto-data, for six countries. We first look at the context used by politi-

cal parties in the different election years, before going deeper into the content of competition in terms of de-politicization/re-politicization.

4.1. The Context of the EP Battles

Looking at how much salience parties attributed to the national and European contexts, two different pictures emerge from the countries under investigation. In the first set of countries (Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden and Spain) political parties situate their electoral debate very strongly in the European setting, whereas Euromanifestos of the second set of countries (Greece and Great Britain) exhibit that the national milieu plays a dominant role (see Figures 1 and 2). Regarding the former, with the exception of a few parties, parties' arguments are clearly located in the European context and only a minority of their statements refers to the national setting.[12] Thus, parties' electoral debates indicate awareness of the European context. Moreover, this trend increases as European integration moves on, which indicates that party debates might be influenced by ongoing developments at the European level.

Figure 1: The European Context of the Parties' Battles
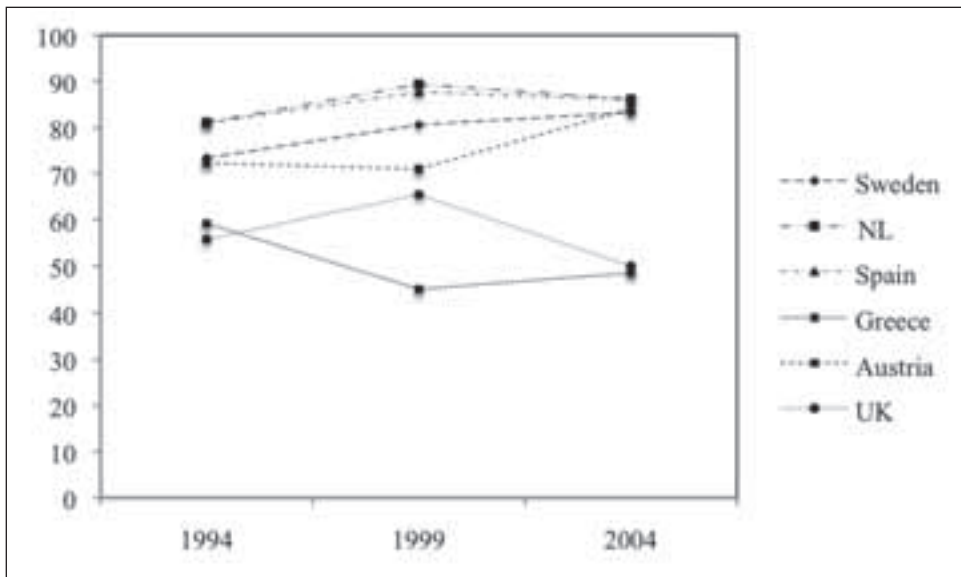
Regarding the second set of countries, we observe that the context of the electoral debate is mainly national. Unlike in the first set, here the national setting is quite central in EP elections.

Figure 2: The National Context of the Parties' Battles
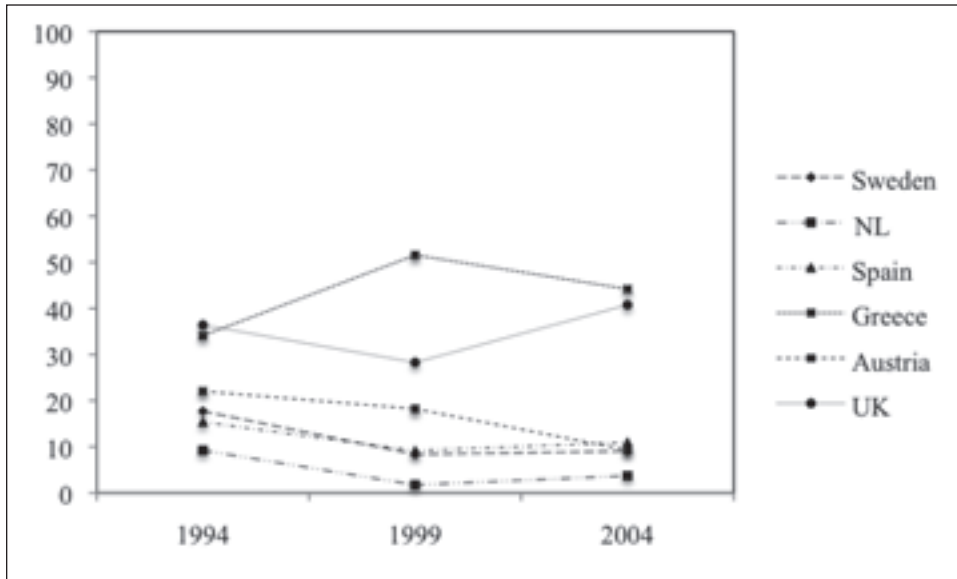
Hence, we draw a differential picture for these two cases. Firstly, the way parties frame their arguments is not systematic throughout time. Rather, we observe fluctuation regarding the relative presence of the national and European contexts from one election to the other. Secondly, Greek and British parties' electoral debate seems to be unreceptive to developments at the European level since the national context dominates their EP debates. These findings are consistent with the second order literature, which posits EP elections as subjugated by the national contest. In other words, the dominance of the national frame indicates that European elections in Greece and Great Britain are fought as a "prova generale" for or a "re-run"[13] of national elections.

The different treatment of EP elections in the studied countries thus supports the refined version of second order theory, which states that it makes more sense to talk about European elections as second order elections in majoritarian systems (see Greece and Great Britain) – rather than in multiparty systems (van der Eijk et al. 1996). However, the present data refutes our hypotheses relating to temporality: neither the time of accession nor the internal political and economic developments seem to be of importance.

To sum up, we generally observe party competition in a European setting: parties seem to be aware of the post-Maastricht European context. Consequently, we can state that Europeanization in terms of *awareness* is existent amongst the examined national political parties. Yet, in some countries, salience of Europe is low leading to less Europeanized party competition.

4.2. The Content of the EP Battles on the Pro/Anti Dimension

To explore the content of political competition in European elections we adopt a twofold approach. Firstly, we analyze competition on a pro/anti-European integration dimension to under-

stand whether and how parties generally use the European political space. Secondly, we proceed to an analysis of positions in different policy and polity issue domains. This second step allows scrutinizing whether EP competition on each of the issue domains under study becomes de-politicized or re-politicized, and, accordingly, whether Europeanization in terms of action takes place.

Firstly, what do results on the pro/anti European dimension show for each of the six countries? The Austrian Euromanifestos reveal that, throughout time, the two major parties SPÖ and ÖVP advocate generally pro-European positions, with the ÖVP being especially Euro-enthusiastic. In the interim, the two smaller parties FPÖ and the Greens display different positions and major variations over time: on the one hand, the FPÖ has a general anti-European position, which it weakened for the 2004 election. On the other hand, the Greens, an anti-European party in 1996, later converted into a pro-European party, and even outnumbered the SPÖ in their pro-European stances.

Figure 3: Pro/Anti-European Positions in Austria
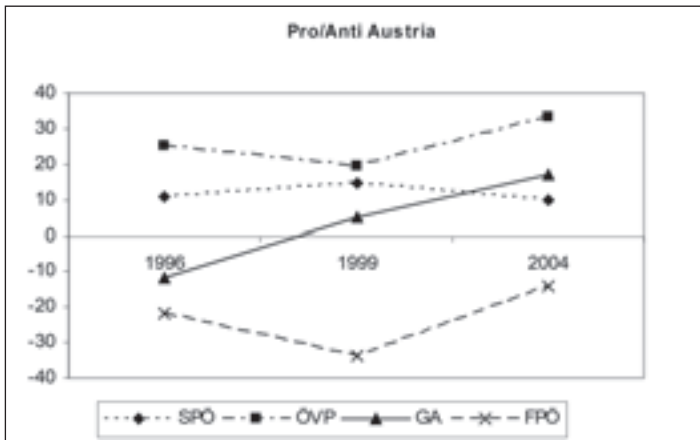
The Greek situation is more or less similar to the Austrian one. The two large parties alternating in government, namely ND and PASOK, consistently express positive stances toward the EU. The two smaller parties SYN and KKE are less supportive of European integration than the mainstream parties are; in particular, KKE conveys repeatedly very strong anti-European positions.

Figure 4: Pro/Anti-European Positions in Greece
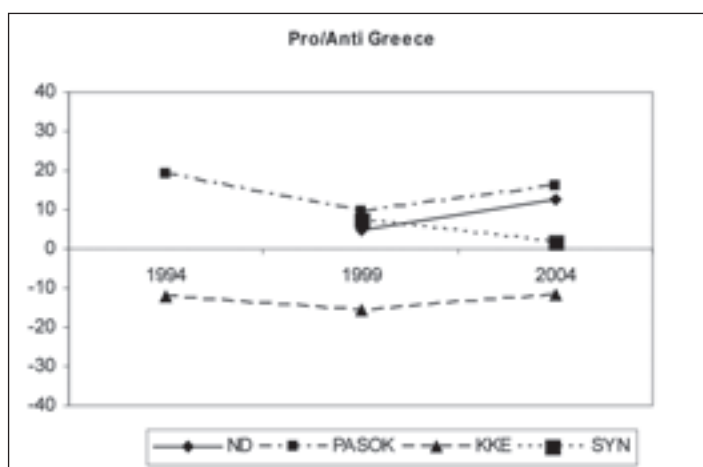
Likewise, almost all Swedish parties (including the two major ones, MSP and SAP) feature positive stances towards Europe. Yet, the Swedish Social Democrats are more reserved than other social democratic parties are. In addition, the MSP watered down its pro-EU stances in 2004. Meanwhile, the Greens and the VP generally communicate negative positions on Europe.

Figure 5: Pro/Anti-European Positions in Sweden
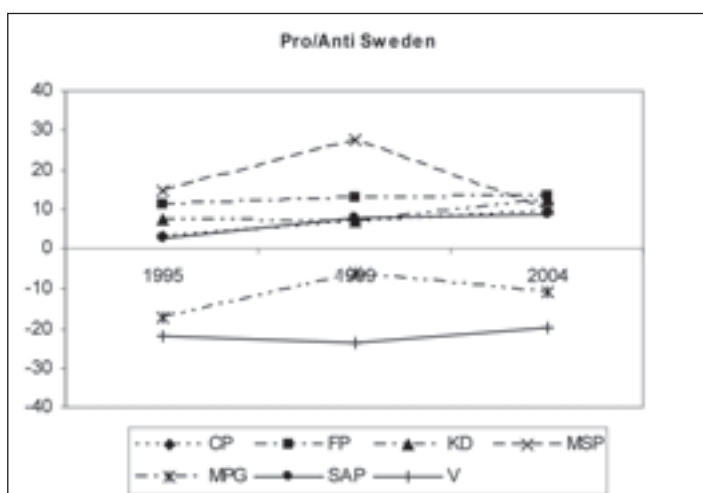
In the Netherlands, the two major parties (CDA and PvdA) also display positive positions towards Europe. Other Dutch parties, however, share this characteristic: in 2004, all parties possessed positive European positions. In the past, the Socialists (SP) and the Christian Union/Radical Reformed Party (CU/SGP) used to have (pronounced) negative EU-stances. The Netherlands constitutes another case, where some parties switched from anti- to pro-European positions over time.

Figure 6: Pro/Anti-European Positions in the Netherlands
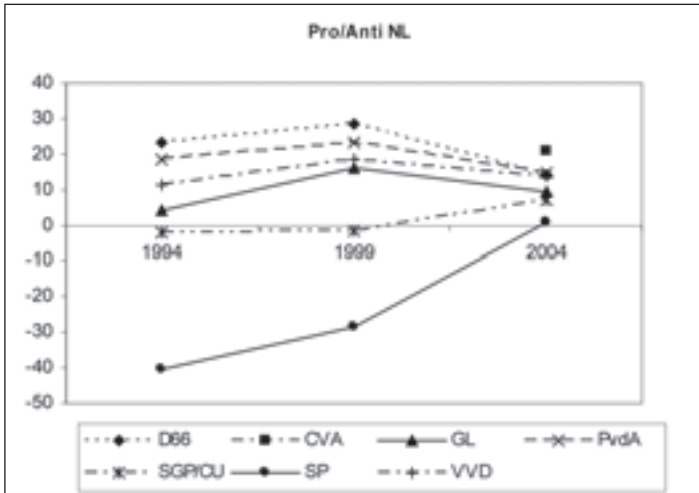
Spanish parties are almost identical to the Dutch: we can observe only positive EU-attitudes – with the two main parties (PSOE and PP) being particularly Euro-enthusiastic. Thus, the overall picture from Spanish EP debates is that parties do not present Europe negatively to their voters.

Figure 7: Pro/Anti-European Positions in Spain
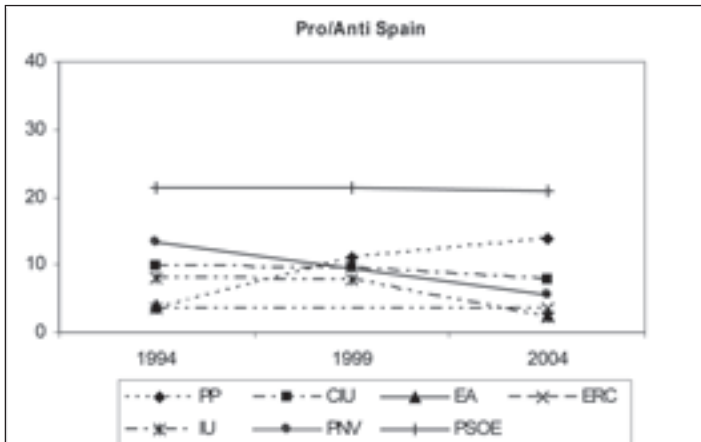
Finally, British parties compose the most fluctuating picture. Among them, the LDP is the only party with stable positive positions and the Greens the only with firm negative positions. In the meantime, the other parties' positions on the pro/anti-EU dimension move quite substantially: Labour becomes much more Euro-enthusiastic over time, while the Conservatives change from a pro-European position to a strong anti-European one. Also, the Scottish National Party, which started out in 1994 as a Euro-enthusiast, became more moderate in the course of the years.[14]

Figure 8: Pro/Anti-European Positions in Great Britain
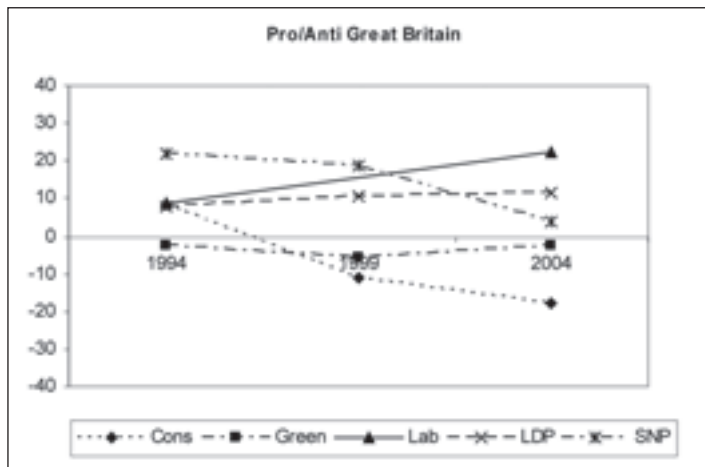
The conclusions we can draw from this analysis are twofold. Firstly, mainstream parties' positions on the issue of European integration move towards convergence.[15] Nonetheless, there is variation among the pro-Europeanists, both within countries and within party families. Variations within countries are a first indication that parties use the European political space to adopt different positions in the pro-anti Europe dimension of political competition in EP elections. Regarding variations within party families, we observe obvious distances in parties' positions vis-à-vis European integration among both conservative and social democratic parties. In general, conservative parties seem to possess stronger pro-European positions, while social democrats are more frugal in their pro-European statements (with the exceptions of PSOE in Spain and Labour in Great Britain).

Secondly, the positions of non-mainstream parties' Euromanifestos on the pro/anti spectrum show greater diversity. On the one hand, data on Austrian Greens, Dutch Socialists and the CU/SGP demonstrates a boost of pro-EU positions over time. On the other hand, the Greek SYN, the British Conservatives and the Scottish National Party manifest themselves as less pro-European/more anti-European. Lastly, parties on the extreme poles (e.g. FPÖ, KKE, VP, UKIP) adopt negative positions on the pro/anti-dimension of European integration.

As indicated by the analysis so far, parties seem to use the political space for competition at the European level, by adopting different positions towards the European integration process, which, moreover, vary across time. We could preliminarily conclude that Europeanization in terms of *action* occurs. Nevertheless, to get a more robust picture of the content of competition in the European arena, we need to look more thoroughly into single policy and polity areas.

4.3. The Content of the Battles in issue domains: Hide and seek across electoral arenas

In a next step, we analyze the detailed domain positions[16] of parties, according to the codes referred to in the data and measurement section. We analyze these positions by calculating means and standard deviations (see Schmitt/Thomassen 1999) for each party across time, in order to

grasp how political competition is structured in the EP battle. Tables 2 to 7 in the Appendix[17] report our findings.

What do results on means and standard deviations tell us? Firstly, parties in the countries under study possess different stances on various European policy and polity issue domains (see Table 1), and secondly, their attitudes mostly vary over time. Parties do not possess fixed positions; rather, they seem to be in search of positions in the European political space – probably due to the ongoing developments at the European level. However, it is interesting to observe that the major parties (SPÖ-ÖVP; PASOK-ND; PP-PSOE; CVA-PvdA; SAP-MSP; Labour) possess almost solely positive stances in all categories.[18] These findings are in accordance with Mair's (2007) argument about the "mainstream consensus". What is more, we notice that, in the case of non-mainstream parties, positive stances also prevail in all categories. Additionally, parties emphasize the same issue domains in the EP competition. These results indicate that, if we take a closer look at EP elections and go beyond the general pro/anti-EU dimension, parties do not use the European space to compete against their opponents: not only do positive positions dominate in all categories but also the same emphasis is reported.[19]

In this respect, exceptions are the Austrian Greens, the British Greens and some regional Spanish parties (e.g. EA, IU). On the one hand, they utter negative stances in some policy areas; on the other hand, they generally adopt positive positions with regard to the institutional architecture of European integration. This indicates a more reflective approach towards the European polity and policies: despite being pro-polity, they are critical on policies. The reverse is true for the British Conservatives, who possess positive stances in policy fields but negative attitudes towards polity-related issue areas.

Finally, parties at the extreme poles feature negative positions in both polity and policy issue categories. Parties such as the Austrian FPÖ, the Swedish VP and MPG, the Greek KKE, the British UKIP and the Dutch SP possess predominantly negative stances in the various domains. Eventually, we need to point out parties do not mention certain categories at all. In other words, parties are very selective with regard to the issue domains discussed in EP elections, which results in the complete exclusion of some policies from the debate.

Table 1: Typology EP-Party Positions

		European Policy	
		Positive	*Negative*
European Polity	*Positive*	SPÖ, ÖVP, PASOK, ND, PP PSOE, CVA, PvdA, SAP, MSP, Labour, etc.	Austrian Greens, British Greens, EU, IU
	Negative	British Conservatives	FPÖ, VP, MPG, KKE, UKIP, SP

Hence, by analyzing our findings, we argue that most (especially large) parties adopt positions, which reflect movements towards the "EU *accord*". Nonetheless, small parties are more reflective vis-à-vis European policies (Austrian Greens, Spanish EA and IU) or even anti-systemic (FPÖ, VP, KKE, MPG, UKIP, SP).[20]

Equally important, our results confirm the hypothesis (Mair 2000; 2004; 2006; 2007) that parties focus on polity rather than policy issue domains. In general, parties in the six countries devote quite some time debating the division of competences between the national and the Eu-

ropean level and democracy in the EU despite the inappropriateness of this electoral arena. We can interpret this trend as a sign of de-politicization.

Looking at those policy domains that have already been transferred to the European level, we observe differences between countries. In Austria, Greece and Spain EU-policy domains are hardly discussed. That said, Spanish regional parties, along with British, Dutch and Swedish parties use EU-economy issues extensively in their political competition. Strikingly, agriculture is not mentioned at all. Re-politicization is occurring partially and within tight limits.

Surprisingly, we observe that some parties locate specific policy areas in the European context, despite the fact that the competences for these policies still lie at the national level. For instance, there is a discussion on policies such as education, welfare (childcare, pension, social housing, etc.), and most importantly, migration, where the EU has no competence yet. This finding is particularly interesting if compared to Pennings' (2006, 263) cross-national investigation of national manifestos, which reveals that references to Europe occur much less in cases of education and social security. The re-distribution of economic welfare, Pennings (2006, 265) argues, "in the form of public goods and services [...] is a national affair, and not much interference from the EU is accepted". Apparently, if we shift the focus to individual parties, we notice that some parties debate exactly these „primarily national" issues in EP elections, and indeed not in a national but in a European context. In more detail, Austrian SPÖ, Swedish SAP, Greek SYN and the Spanish CIU, IU and PNV introduce welfare issues in the EU political competition. All Swedish parties, the Dutch D66 and GL, the British LDP and Greens contest migration, while education is of importance to the Spanish CIU and EA. Interestingly, we observe an effort towards politicization of key national policy domains in the European arena, which occurs in parallel to the de-politicization of policy domains already transferred to the EU level.

How can we interpret these findings vis-à-vis Europeanization as politicization? On the one hand, EP-elections of the post-Maastricht era are "less second order" in the sense that national issue domains are not as dominant in EP elections as implied by the second order theory. On the other hand, parties for the most part debate irrelevant (polity) issues in EP elections. Although this use of the European electoral arena is a factor depoliticizing competition, some parties make baby steps towards politicization of national policy-making processes in the European arena.

Evidently, party competition in EP elections is far from momentous and politicization takes place only in a small number of policy areas. All in all, parties play hide-and-seek with issue domains (and voters) across arenas: although their discussions are located in the European context, they actually debate national policy and EU polity issues, while neglecting vital EU policy issues. This, obviously, has repercussions on the quality of competition, in the sense that competition can be regarded as artificial. According to our analyses of EP elections, Mair's thesis on the hollowing out of competition seems reasonable. Moreover, if this is how parties communicate their political visions for Europe, voters' indifference towards EP elections should come as no surprise. The observed Europeanization of parties in terms of action (Europeanization II) is only rudimentary.

Finally, the data at our disposal do not provide support for Goetz's thesis on "clustered Europeanization": the time of accession does not seem to play a role neither in terms of the phase of European integration, nor in terms of the internal political and economic development of the member state.

5.   Conclusions: Suggestions for party researchers and politicians

We looked at party competition in six EU member states analyzing it along the Europeanization literature. Our analysis of national party Europeanization focused on EP elections to examine, firstly, party awareness of the European context (Europeanization I) and secondly, party action induced by this context, in terms of positioning in several European policy areas (Europeanization II).

Can we confidently observe Europeanization in the cases we examined? Our findings suggest that awareness (Europeanization I) can be observed in various degrees amongst political parties: most parties examined have become increasingly aware of the European context in which they operate. Still, (most) political parties are not (yet) Europeanized concerning the way they structure their competition in the political space (Europeanization II). The present empirical analysis makes evident that pro-integrationist positions dominate the debate in EP elections and parties focus primarily on institutional issues, though, as Mair (2000; 2004; 2006; 2007) rightly points out, this is not the proper arena to discuss the polity dimension of European integration. Moreover, parties fight battles in the EP arena on grounds different from national electoral contests. Crucially, the data at our disposal portrays EP elections more as an informative forum on the state of democracy and legitimacy of the EU rather than a political battle over conflicting views.

Why does this happen? A possible explanation is that debating EU policies and expressing concrete positions on them constitutes a big challenge for national parties. Firstly, national parties hands are increasingly tied (Mair 2000), through the transfer of policy competences to the supranational level. Secondly, national parties competing in EP elections are also members of EP party groups. EP party groups have to come up with a common manifesto for the EP elections, despite the fact that there may be significant divergence within them; such intra-EP party group conflict may have as a consequence that EP party group manifestos avoid "sensitive" or "ambivalent issues" (Gabel/Hix 2002, 954). National parties, when drafting their individual Euromanifestos, may replicate this tendency to shun uncertain issue areas, while focusing on less challengeable issue domains. Yet, what the EP party groups, and especially the two largest among them (PES, EPP) mostly share is a long-term preference for increasing the powers of the EP and the EU's legitimacy (Kreppel/Hix 2003).

Drawing on Mair (2007) and the second-order theory, if national parties do discuss about Europe in EP elections but concentrate on polity (rather than policy) issue areas, they debate issues of the first-order arena in the second-order arena (as EU constitutional issues are mainly dealt with at IGCs negotiating treaty reforms rather than at the EP). While this choice has implications regarding the representation channels available to citizens, it has serious consequences on the substance of party competition. Why, then, organize something as costly as elections if we are to debate just issues of common consent? To take the argument further, a strong emphasis on those issues on which parties essentially agree, reveals that national parties have turned EP elections not just into second order but into façade elections.

An analysis of this sort complements findings of voters' behavior in the EP elections as voters make their choices based on party proposals. If the voters cannot see any real difference between competing party positions, they can well abstain. Thus, scientific knowledge about EP elections can profit by combining findings on the supply side (parties), such as ours, with findings on the demand side (voters) of European elections[21]; what is more, future research should focus not only on support/opposition to European integration in general but also on positions on spe-

cific European policy and polity issue domains. The bridges linking these scholarly debates are viable ways to understand (de)politicization processes in Europe along with the function and role of EP elections in European democracies and the entire EU polity.

At the time of writing, the seventh set of elections to the EP, the institution that nowadays is called to represent the impressive number of 492 million citizens (from twenty-seven countries), is almost a year ahead. These elections will take place in an updated European context. Given the Irish rejection of the Lisbon-EU Treaty, it is high time for parties to lead a substantial and honest debate about „real" conflicts over Europe and European policies. Pro-integrationists are under pressure to come up with convincing arguments for policy-making at the EU level.

APPENDIX

Table 2: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties Austria 1996–2004

Issue Categories	SPÖ		ÖVP		Greens		FPÖ	
EU-Economy	1.84	(2.09)	2.22	(1.92)	-.12	(.44)	-.54	(.55)
Single Market	1.42	(1.80)	2.97	(2.32)	-2.09	(2.80)	-1.91	(1.82)
Environment	6.04	(3.65)	5.23	(4.30)	17.89	(8.53)	6.98	(7.83)
Agriculture EU	.14	(.23)	1.59	(.37)	-.82	(1.65)	.57	(2.40)
Militarism	-.20	(.35)	-.08	(.14)	-.45	(.40)	-.17	(.30)
Migration	1.29	(1.15)	.61	(1.60)	2.68	(1.13)	-.43	(.75)
Welfare	4.53	(2.05)	.41	(.62)	.76	(.62)	-.46	(1.03)
Education	2.04	(1.97)	1.47	(.81)	.18	(.16)	0	0
EU-Democracy	5.52	(.99)	2.11	(1.12)	4.37	(2.06)	.69	(1.19)
Constitutionalism	1.37	(.78)	2.50	(3.15)	3.49	(1.97)	-.26	(.45)
EU Competences	3.85	(1.82)	6.63	(3.04)	1.84	(2.07)	-6.30	(6.11)
Balance EU-Nat.	.65	(2.03)	.71	(1.66)	1.47	(2.99)	2.65	(7.81)
Multiculturalism	1.18	(1.05)	1.77	(.94)	1.64	(.81)	.46	(1.03)

Notes: Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

Table 3: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties Greece 1994–2004

Issue Categories	ND		Pasok		KKE		SYN	
EU-Economy	.69	(.97)	1.11	(1.10)	-4.68	(7.50)	.93	(.30)
Single Market	.11	(.16)	1.76	(.68)	-.77	(.43)	-.31	(.10)
Environment	.11	(.16)	1.44	(1.90)	.47	(.81)	3.13	(2.28)
Agriculture EU	.14	(.20)	.34	(.59)	.23	(.41)	.71	(1.01)
Militarism	-.06	(.08)	0	0	-.14	(.24)	-.19	(.27)
Migration	.23	(.24)	1.13	(.23)	.83	(.91)	2.50	(.31)
Welfare	.03	(.04)	.95	(.72)	.32	(.30)	2.09	(2.96)
Education	.46	(.49)	1.05	(1.49)	.04	(.06)	.12	(.17)
EU-Democracy	1.17	(1.65)	2.77	(2.52)	-4.09	(3.26)	3.29	(.88)
Constitutionalism	.51	(.72)	1.35	(1.65)	-3.01	(1.62)	-3.19	(.32)
EU Competences	1.80	(2.54)	3.05	(2.37)	-1.95	(1.99)	.01	(.52)
Balance EU-Nat.	4.43	(2.29)	7.66	(5.36)	5.57	(2.46)	16.53	(7.79)
Multiculturalism	.06	(.08)	.91	(.87)	.12	(.20)	1.92	(1.04)

Notes*:* Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

Table 4: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties Sweden 1995–2004

Issue Categories	CP	FP	KD	MSP	MPG	SAP	V
EU-Economy	5.36	5.95	8.10	6.39	3.35	2.20	3.25
	(1.61)	(1.07)	(.53)	(.95)	(4.89)	(1.50)	(2.17)
Single Market	.39	4.31	1.39	6.45	-3.76	-.18	-4.30
	(1.43)	(.84)	(1.52)	(2.50)	(5.60)	(1.24)	(1.44)
Environment	16.28	7.80	10.90	6.21	15.82	8.97	2.84
	(.94)	(1.55)	(.64)	(2.60)	(4.21)	(3.92)	(3.02)
Agriculture EU	.70	-1.67	-.04	-.71	-.35	-1.07	-1.12
	(1.39)	(.39)	(1.23)	(.64)	(.32)	(.94)	(3.66)
Militarism	0	0	0	.41	-.14	0	0
				(.70)	(.24)		
Migration	2.55	4.40	3.69	3.64	2.03	2.01	1.61
	(1.97)	(1.70)	(1.00)	(1.79)	(2.19)	(.55)	(1.96)
Welfare	1.94	1.22	1.74	0	0	3.13	.48
	(1.55)	(.60)	(.80)			(1.07)	(.51)

Education	.54	.05	.07	.99	0	1.65	0
	(.50)	(.08)	(.12)	(1.71)		(1.72)	
EU-Democracy	6.34	8.84	6.60	3.78	2.73	3.39	3.30
	(1.28)	(.74)	(1.17)	(1.09)	(.86)	(3.06)	(1.95)
Constitutionalism	.96	1.06	1.72	.47	-.41	0	-1.98
	(.16)	(.75)	(2.05)	(.46)	(1.10)		(3.41)
EU Competences	1.46	2.27	2.81	8.06	-.77	2.65	-3.29
	(.14)	(.60)	(.49)	(4.95)	(1.37)	(2.18)	(2.60)
Balance EU-Nat.	-6.68	-5.36	-6.09	-3.09	-4.82	2.58	-6.09
	(1.93)	(.82)	(4.58)	(3.33)	(2.39)	(1.51)	(4.28)
Multiculturalism	1.13	.98	.51	.71	-.17	0	0
	(1.34)	(.68)	(.45)	(.64)	(.89)		

Notes: Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

Table 5: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties Netherlands 1994–2004

Issue Categories	**D66**	**CVA**	**GL**	**PvdA**	**SGP**	**SP**	**VVD**
EU-Economy	5.06	6.89	1.75	1.90	6.72	3.57	5.48
	(3.32)	(1.98)	(2.54)	(.88)	(1.16)	(3.87)	(1.81)
Single Market	3.16	4.52	.24	2.23	.55	-10.23	3.93
	(1.82)	(1.81)	(1.01)	(1.41)	(1.22)	(8.08)	(.91)
Environment	9.05	4.52	11.00	9.24	7.80	4.55	8.39
	(1.23)	(1.56)	(4.11)	(2.52)	(3.46)	(3.67)	(1.86)
Agriculture EU	-1.73	.70	.26	.20	1.64	-.37	-.43
	(1.27)	(1.22)	(1.37)	(1.20)	(1.60)	(.47)	(.38)
Militarism	0	0	-.16	.06	0	-.05	0
			(.27)	(.11)		(.09)	
Migration	4.32	-.25	4.65	1.42	.54	.65	2.95
	(2.14)	(2.13)	(3.67)	(1.74)	(.28)	(1.13)	(3.07)
Welfare	1.26	.35	.13	.67	.28	1.00	.87
	(.90)	(.61)	(.34)	(.59)	(.24)	(.63)	(.83)
Education	1.08	1.56	.29	.58	.03	.12	.74
	(1.15)	(1.87)	(.10)	(.29)	(.04)	(.10)	(.76)
EU-Democracy	6.98	3.06	2.25	5.08	1.51	-5.02	5.31
	(2.96)	(2.84)	(1.90)	(2.96)	(.80)	(8.79)	(2.82)
Constitutionalism	1.77	1.20	1.00	1.23	.48	-.15	1.74
	(1.00)	(1.38)	(1.04)	(1.20)	(.54)	(.26)	(1.52)
EU Competences	10.59	3.02	5.35	6.78	-2.32	-4.08	5.72
	(4.97)	(2.61)	(4.91)	(4.09)	(4.49)	(5.71)	(3.59)

Balance EU-Nat.	-1.64	4.15	1.65	-1.08	-9.70	-4.97	-2.59
	(1.03)	(11.36)	(2.11)	(2.37)	(4.78)	(7.55)	(3.70)
Multiculturalism	2.32	1.51	1.05	4.03	-.68	.35	.90
	(2.83)	(1.89)	(.77)	(2.20)	(1.08)	(.61)	(1.36)

Notes: Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

Table 6: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties Spain 1994–2004

Issue Categories	PP	CIU	EA	ERC	IU	PNV	PSOE
EU-Economy	2.87	7.61	-1.66	1.19	-.98	8.06	-1.43
	(3.77)	(.75)	(1.36)	(1.53)	(1.53)	(.10)	(1.22)
Single Market	3.67	1.77	0	.19	-.14	1.48	2.17
	(6.10)	(.62)		(.17)	(.38)	(.16)	(2.57)
Environment	1.82	6.98	17.47	11.33	10.27	5.46	4.68
	(1.91)	(2.03)	(.19)	(4.31)	(1.04)	(.74)	(1.61)
Agriculture EU	1.32	1.16	6.23	1.67	.89	2.07	1.69
	(1.38)	(.70)	(3.91)	(.93)	(.33)	(.53)	(1.16)
Militarism	.07	0	-.19	-.08	0	0	0
	(.17)		(.26)	(.13)			
Migration	.07	1.75	-1.41	.75	2.57	1.22	1.39
	(.90)	(.75)	(2.24)	(.66)	(.79)	(.94)	(.83)
Welfare	1.06	4.72	1.21	2.00	2.86	4.11	.65
	(1.26)	(1.79)	(1.71)	(.45)	(.80)	(.76)	(1.05)
Education	.72	2.35	2.57	1.95	1.80	2.99	1.39
	(1.36)	(.67)	(1.51)	(1.90)	(1.66)	(1.74)	(1.41)
EU-Democracy	3.01	1.42	2.38	.01	1.52	1.10	2.17
	(4.15)	(1.12)	(4.59)	(.87)	(.38)	(.09)	(2.33)
Constitutionalism	-.24	.43	.17	.07	-.21	.13	1.04
	(1.17)	(.28)	(.25)	(1.90)	(1.51)	(.18)	(1.80)
EU Competences	-.46	2.83	2.58	1.94	1.99	1.87	2.93
	(4.79)	(.44)	(2.18)	(.22)	(.88)	(.99)	(2.07)
Balance EU-Nat.	.25	-5.99	-9.25	-12.89	-.1.30	-6.19	-.91
	(.88)	(1.44)	(4.08)	(4.01)	(.46)	(.85)	(.74)
Multiculturalism	1.58	8.77	4.76	11.73	1.72	6.43	3.60
	(1.73)	(2.18)	(3.56)	(1.60)	(.41)	(1.28)	(3.58)

Notes: Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

Table 7: Positions on Policy and Polity issues – Political Parties UK 1994–2004

Issue Categories	Cons	Green	Labour	LDP	SNP	UKIP
EU-Economy	10.31	.96	4.92	2.64	1.64	2.89
	(2.47)	(1.83)	(1.65)	(2.50)	(1.74)	(2.60)
Single Market	.63	-3.41	2.91	3.46	2.87	-5.32
	(2.09)	(.98)	(2.34)	(2.03)	(1.35)	(5.46)
Environment	1.98	19.06	5.00	6.45	3.82	0
	(.60)	(1.82)	(.31)	(2.43)	(1.28)	
Agriculture EU	-.83	-3.12	-.51	-.84	-.39	-1.92
	(1.05)	(3.18)	(1.64)	(1.74)	(2.78)	(3.32)
Militarism	.48	-.39	0	.17	-.20	.24
	(.72)	(.67)		(.19)	(.34)	(.42)
Migration	-.28	3.13	.29	2.66	1.03	0
	(.53)	(.51)	(1.95)	(3.66)	(.92)	
Welfare	.05	.84	1.46	.46	.88	0
	(.09)	(1.10)	(2.07)	(.40)	(.53)	
Education	.20	.05	.10	.23	.78	0
	(.22)	(.08)	(.15)	(.20)	(.83)	
EU-Democracy	1.66	.16	1.78	1.69	2.28	-.61
	(1.37)	(.43)	(1.91)	(1.13)	(1.48)	(1.05)
Constitutionalism	-1.27	.12	.76	1.02	.31	-3.08
	(2.61)	(.20)	(.77)	(.76)	(.30)	(3.86)
EU Competences	-4.41	.01	1.04	1.34	2.05	-17.82
	(7.53)	(1.56)	(1.78)	(1.75)	(4.34)	(10.19)
Balance EU-Nat.	-10.43	-5.03	-1.38	-4.10	-2.20	-6.68
	(2.80)	(4.83)	(.11)	(2.98)	(3.08)	(5.84)
Multiculturalism	-.01	.40	0	.36	1.73	0
	(1.20)	(.43)		(.51)	(.26)	

Notes: Numbers in brackets are standard deviations

NOTES

1   We are very grateful to Andreas Wüst, who gave us access to the Euromanifesto data. We would also like to thank the two anounymous reviewers, the participants at the seminar series of the University of Konstanz (May 7, 2008) and Juan Casado Asensio for their helpful comments and suggestions.

2   Difference may be understood in terms of timing (precedence, coincidence, sequence), of level (federal, national, regional, local), as well as in terms of importance (i.e. what is at stake).

3   The sources of explanation for outcomes (e.g. turnout, incumbent parties' losses) in low stimulus (congressional mid-term) and second-order (EP) elections are located in the "high stimulus" (presidential) and "first order" (national) elections respectively (Marsh 2007). Despite the fact that these electoral arenas are serving different purposes, electoral researchers perceive them as interconnected (for an extensive discussion of these theories, see: Marsh 2000; 2007).

4   Until the last EP elections in 2004, the *second order* phenomena persisted in that citizens' participation is low, while the winning party of the first order election loses support in a cyclical manner, and small parties do better than they would do if a first order election was held (Schmitt 2005).

5   EP elections provide an opportunity in this respect, as through these elections, parties are supposed to provide for the link between European citizens and the EU system.

6   Dorussen and Nanou (2006) empirically examine this argument using national manifesto data. Their main finding is that European integration indeed reduces the range of party policy positions in national elections and leads to convergence of national party programs.

7   The coding scheme is similar to the one of the Comparative Manifesto Group: sixty-nine categories at political levels in seven policy domains (Wüst/Volkens 2003).

8   Our measures include only issue domains referring to the EU level.

9   In Great Britain, PR is used for EP elections since 1999.

10   Each country forms one large constituency, except for the UK that is divided in 83 constituencies (Hix/Lord 1997). The Netherlands, the UK and Spain use no threshold in European elections, whereas Austria and Sweden set the threshold for participation in the EP at 4% and Greece at 3% (Muntean 2000). Last but not least, voters can choose among candidates on the party list only in the Netherlands and in Sweden.

11   Great Britain uses "simple majority vote" (FTPT: first-past-the post) and Greece uses a distorted version of PR ("reinforced PR"), which produces single-party cabinets. Austria uses "PR with preferential vote" whereas the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden use "PR with closed lists" (Lijphart 1999).

12   Due to limited space, in this paper we present data for each political system and not for each political party. Data on single parties is available upon request.

13   This depends on the timing (precedence/sequence) of EP elections with respect to national elections.

14   We did not report the findings for the UKIP as with pro/anti-Europe positions between -50 and -70 our figure became distorted.

15   Hence, our data supports findings by Hooghe and Marks (1999) and Hooghe et al. (2002) stating that mainstream parties are characterized by a positive consensus regarding further European integration.

16   The different domains are scales of various single policy and polity positions. The relevant methodological information (i.e. how these domains have been scaled) can be requested from the authors.

17   For purposes of clarity, we only report our results verbally. For a detailed analysis, we attach the respective tables for each country in the Appendix.

18   Excluding: the category "Military" in Austria and Greece, agricultural issues in Sweden as well as some institutional issues in Spain, the Netherlands and Sweden.

19   For example, in Great Britain we notice that parties possess positive stances in the same categories; more importantly, they also express negative stances in the same categories.

20   Findings for the latter parties also support the argument brought forward by Hooghe and Marks (1999) that European integration has opened up a new dimension in the policy space, where parties at both extreme poles of the left-right spectrum hold negative positions towards the European integration process.

21   For instance, the European Election Study contains variables that allow analyzing a sample of voters, who voted for the parties we investigated. Meaningful cross-country comparisons could thus be drawn regarding voting *and* party behavior in EP elections.

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