The European public sphere, the media, and support for European integration

Stöckel, Florian

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Arbeitspapier / working paper

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:

SSG Sozialwissenschaften, USB Köln

Berliner Studien zur Soziologie Europas

Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Soziologie, Garystraße 55, D-14195 Berlin

---

The European Public Sphere, the Media, and Support for European Integration

Florian Stöckel

Arbeitspapier Nr. 20

November 2009

Die „Berliner Studien zur Soziologie Europas" des Lehrstuhls für Makrosoziologie der Freien Universität Berlin verstehen sich als ein Ort zur Vorpublikation von Beiträgen, die später in Fachzeitschriften und Sammelbänden veröffentlicht werden sollen. Die Beiträge sollen helfen, eine Soziologie Europas zu profilieren; sie stehen auch im Kontext eines im Aufbau befindlichen soziologischen Master-Studiengangs zum Thema „Europäische Gesellschaft/en".

Gegenstand der Reihe sind Beiträge zur Analyse der Herausbildung einer europäischen Gesellschaftsstruktur und -kultur, vergleichende Analysen, die die Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen verschiedenen europäischen Gesellschaften thematisieren, sowie theoretische Versuche einer Soziologie Europas.

Ziel der Reihe ist es, durch die frühe Verbreitung dieser Arbeiten den wissenschaftlichen Gedankenaustausch zu fördern. Die Beiträge sind nur über das Internet als pdf-Datei zu beziehen.

Zitationsweise: BSSE-Arbeitspapier Nr. 20. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin.

Abstract

The goal of this study is to find out whether the emergence of a European public sphere (EPS) contributes to EU support in its affective and evaluative dimensions. The EPS is conceptualized as an entity resting on Europeanized national public spheres. The media is seen as the most important place where Europeanization manifests itself. As an example of Europeanized public spheres, data on the coverage of the 2004 European Parliament election is used. The data set involves measures on EU salience in the media and tone of the messages, and is analyzed together with individual level data on EU support from the 2004 European Election Study. In contrast to earlier approaches to similar data of the 1999 EP elections, multilevel analysis is used to account for the hierarchical structure of the data. In particular, this study analyzes whether the media exerts an independent effect on evaluative and affective support. Additionally, it focuses on whether the impact of cognitive mobilization and egocentric utilitarianism as individual level predictors for EU support varies depending on the Europeanization of national public spheres. A positive, significant effect was found between the tone of the media context and evaluative support. Cross-level interaction effects revealed that EU salience significantly increases the importance of class affiliation when it comes to affective and evaluative support. Utilitarian considerations are found to differentiate people in their EU support only in the presence of negative EU coverage, but not when coverage is positive. This study comes to the conclusion that an emerging EPS can have a positive effect on support for the EU, resulting in a more critical, but also more alerted public.

1. Introduction[1]

Between 1991 and 2004, the number of people who support the EU membership of their country decreased from 71 to 48 percent.[2] The rejection of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for the EU by polls in France and the Netherlands in 2005 indicated that people disagree with the way of how politicians across Europe want to unify the continent. Even though a number of factors unrelated to the Treaty are held responsible for the failed referendum on the revised version in Ireland in 2008, this event still disclosed the negative sentiments confronting the EU. Are people too uninformed or too uninterested to be "adequately happy" with the result of years of political negotiation and cooperation?

With Brussels increasingly influencing policies in the Community's member states, people may be skeptical about the growing power of an entity that is hardly directly accountable to them. Despite efforts to create an institutional setting adequate to the increasing decision making powers of Brussels, scholars have mentioned a democratic deficit in journal articles starting from around the 1980s (for overviews see: Weiler et al. 1995 or Siedentop 2001). The democratic deficit is only one branch of criticism. Closely linked to this debate is the argument that a European Public Sphere (EPS) is missing, without which no democratic entity is truly viable. A public sphere, whether on the national or EU level, provides the crucial link between those who govern and those who are governed. It is where authorities need to explain their actions and campaign for support. In the absence of a public sphere, people and politics may grow apart, with rising discontent being only one of the likely consequences. Therefore, it would be rather surprising if the EU worked in spite of the lack of an EPS.

In this paper, the public sphere deficit is considered part of a larger democratic deficit of the EU and is seen as a potential reason for the low support of people living in the EU for their developing supranational community. The goal of this study is to comment on the hypothesis that an emerging EPS is 'good' for the EU in the sense that it contributes to support for European integration as proposed by Brussels.

A public sphere requires actors who disclose their opinions or forward those of others. Neidhardt (2001: 502) identifies it as a place of where speakers act as sources for information, where a large number of people serve as the audience, and where a mediator or mediating body establishes the flow of information between the former and the latter. A modern public sphere becomes manifested primarily in the mass media. This is in particular true for the EPS, since events at the EU level are hardly directly observable (Gerhards 2000, Schlesinger and Kevin 2000). Unsurprisingly,

---

[1] This paper is based on the *Diplom* thesis "The European Public Sphere, the Media, and Support for European Integration," which the author submitted at the Freie Universitaet Berlin. The author is grateful to his supervisors, Thomas Risse and Bernhard Weßels, as well as to Silke Hans, for their kind advice, comments, and suggestions.

[2] Eurobarometer data from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion; figure is based on 15 EU member states and on people who said that EU membership of their country is a "good thing".

people consistently consider the mass media their key source of political information (Peter and de Vreese 2003).

Different authors conceptualize Europeanization "as a multidimensional and gradual process that in one way or another extends public discourse beyond national spaces" (Sifft et al. 2007: 130; in a similar way: De Vreese 2007). Trenz (2004: 292) elaborates on the same aspect: "the visibility of communication is the necessary precondition of the *public sphere*: it denotes that European media and the public observe communication with reference to European politics." He adds another aspect without which the EU appearing in the media would not constitute an EPS: "the connectivity of communication with reference to European politics is the minimal requirement of the *European* public sphere: it denotes that European media and the public observe communication with reference to the same political issues" (ibid.; accentuation by original author). This conceptualization introduces the important point that the appearance of European topics in the evening news of one country is not enough for an EPS that rests on the Europeanization of national public spheres: there needs to be a certain amount of synchrony across Europe.

This paper follows the conceptualization of an EPS resting on Europeanized national public spheres. This notion of a public sphere is in line with Neidhardt's approach: European actors (speakers) reach national recipients (audience) through national mass media (the mediating body). For its quantitative approach, Europeanization is for the given purpose understood first and foremost in a quantitative sense: as visibility of European issues in the media and their connectedness, involving primarily synchrony.

Past research analyzed in which way media coverage about the EU influences attitudes towards the community. The presence of news about the EU in the media has been found to affect attitudes: in case of a consistent positive bias of the coverage, support levels for European integration increase (e.g. De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006). Directly relating media coverage with public opinion data, Norris (2000) finds a positive correlation between tone of coverage (about the EMU) and attitudes (towards the EMU) at the aggregate level. A similar relationship has been found at the individual level (e.g. Dalton and Duval 1986 for the UK). Peter (2004) conducted an in-depth analysis at the individual level and found a positive relationship between tone of media coverage and support for European integration in a consonant media environment. A major shortcoming of these studies working with context level data on the one hand (media content) and individual level data on the other hand, is that they do not particularly model the hierarchical structure of the data. I will address this shortcoming with the present paper.

In a first part, those theoretical considerations will briefly be introduced on which hypotheses are based. Then, the conceptual and methodological approach of the paper will be outlined. In the final parts, the results will be presented and discussed.

2. Media effects on support for European integration

Almond and Verba (1963) propose three types of orientations towards a political system. Out of these, the affective and evaluational dimensions appear again in Easton's (1965) typology of support modes. In their analysis of support types toward the European Community, Lindberg and Scheingold (1970) pick up Easton's approach by differentiating between utilitarian and affective support. Following these authors and in contrast to earlier analyses on the EU, support towards European integration will be considered as a phenomenon of two distinct attitudinal dimensions: an output-directed, evaluative and rational one on the one hand, and an emotional one, directed at what the EU is rather than what it does, on the other hand. To allude to the former, the term evaluative support will be used, whereas I refer to the latter as affective support.

Among the many influences known to drive support for European integration, the media is of particular interest in this paper. Three of the most prominent and maybe most well-researched media effects on attitudes are agenda-setting, priming, and framing (see Kinder 2003 for an overview). The standard interpretation for all three effects can be described this way (Kinder 2003: 378): "communications highlight some aspects of politics at the expense of others; when citizens notice such communications, relevant parts of their memory are automatically activated; those bits and pieces of activated memory are thereby rendered accessible; and accessible constructs and information exercise disproportionate influence over the opinions and evaluations that citizens express". The more often a particular topic is picked out as a central theme by the media, for example, an expensive bureaucracy in Brussels, the more frequently people encounter it. Subsequently, a node „EU" in someone's mind becomes connected to a node "expensive bureaucracy" and this association becomes strengthened each time this topic pops up in the media environment of an individual. The EU could then be connected to many concepts or ideas, but one of the most easily accessible nodes will most likely be a negative one about costs – which can eventually lead to someone thinking of the costs as a central problem. Agenda setting refers to the close connection of topics covered by the media and those problems citizens consider the most important ones. When evaluating politicians, people can use a number of actions and traits they can base their opinion on. Priming refers to a process that describes that people tend to use information about someone that is most accessible, i.e. that has been primed (covered) most often. Instead of a provision of new information, framing refers to how a political issue is portrayed, i.e. which aspects are linked together and which are left out. In this way, it is a particular perspective that is made accessible.

These mechanisms rest first and foremost on processes operating outside of conscious awareness. Alternatives to automatic processing dwell on much more thoughtful, conscious mechanisms. Kinder (2003: 378) exemplifies this with framing: "the argument is that by singling out certain features of an issue or event, frames

imply which considerations to take into account, but the final arbiter is the citizen, who *chooses* which of the available considerations are relevant and who *decides* how important each consideration should be". However, since people can only consider accessible information, accessibility remains a key process even from this point of view. In the following part, hypotheses will be derived on the basis of these processes.

Main Hypotheses

In this paper, the influence emanating from the media is differentiated into the salience (quantity) of EU issues in the media and as an effect of the overall tone (quality) of the coverage. Inglehart (1970a) suggested that Europe is an entity with which people hardly have any direct contact. Unfamiliarity with this entity can therefore easily be connected to people feeling threatened by it. A high EU salience in the media is expected to increase the number of EU related information in people's minds – and, most importantly, the accessibility of these considerations. In detail, salience can be understood as the frequency with which someone takes up cues reminding him of the supra-national community he or she is part of. Subsequently, more communication providing an awareness of this group can be hypothesized to be linked to higher affective support. Additionally, if it is really a *feeling* of distrust that explains low support in the case of unfamiliarity, it is most likely that emotional support dimensions are affected most by higher familiarity, and thus higher salience.

A positive relationship between salience and evaluative support is expected because encountering more EU related information means that one can more easily learn about the EU: this can involve learning about advantages going along with EU membership. At the same time, EU related coverage can help minimize prejudices on which people might base their negative stance on this issue. Expecting that a higher Europeanization of national public spheres increases evaluative support – irrespective of media tone – involves the assumption that the media provides for the most part information about the EU that help people regard the EU as something beneficial for them. Without this assumption, reversing this hypothesis would make sense.

> H 1:   *A higher salience goes along with higher affective and evaluative support levels.*

Tone, as qualitative dimension of media messages, can be seen in two ways. One way is to view tone as a negative, positive, or neutral *trait* of a media message. If information, which is inextricably connected to evaluations, is broadcasted, it is only this positive (negative) information that enters someone's knowledge store and eventually becomes the basis on which an individual constructs attitudes and opinions. Precisely speaking, the underlying mechanism is that a positive (negative) news environment strengthens only the associations between positive (negative) considerations in regard to a certain concept, such as the EU. Consequently, this bias

exerts an influence when constructing evaluations. Another explanation is to regard tone as a particular framing of information. The emphasis of media messages on one frame rather than another, such as European integration having primarily negative instead of positive consequences, makes negative information rather than positive more accessible in connection with this concept. In an extreme case, there might not even be negative or respectively positive considerations. Either way, the mechanisms suggest a positive relationship between the tone of the media environment and support: one can expect support levels of both dimensions to be higher in media environments characterized by a positive tone, and lower where tone is negative.

> H 2: *Greater negativity of news results in lower affective and evaluative support levels.*

Individual-Level Variables and Interaction Effects

After more than two decades of research on support for European integration, quite a lot of factors have been found to be influential. One needs to control at least for government support (e.g. Franklin et al. 1995), value orientation (Inglehart 1970b, Inglehart and Reif 1991), left-right orientation (Inglehart et al. 1987), cognitive mobilization (Inglehart 1970a), and utilitarianism (Gabel 1998, McLaren 2006). In the given context, one also needs to take newspaper and television consumption into account, in order to ensure that effects really stem from the media context differences and not variation in media consumption. For cognitive mobilization and egocentric utilitarianism an interaction with the media seems particularly likely. More than the effect of other variables, their impact is assumed to depend on how much and what kind of information people receive about European issues.

Inglehart (1970a) was the first to analyze the relationship between what he calls cognitive mobilization (i.e. political awareness and skills in political communication) and a citizen's ability to identify with a supranational political community. His hypothesis states that the higher both of these factors are, the more likely is one to support the community. Because messages on EU related topics were, in his study, predominantly positive, Inglehart expected "that the more educated groups among the public would not only be more likely to *have* an opinion concerning European integration; they would also be more likely to have a *favourable* orientation toward it" (Inglehart 1970a: 48). Later, Inglehart, Rabier and Reif (1987) assumed *all* information about integration regardless of tone promotes support – because *all* information about an unknown entity can increase familiarity. The resulting hypothesis then is that with increasing cognitive mobilization, familiarity with European integration rises, a feeling of being threatened by it decreases and eventually, support levels grow. This relationship found consistent empirical support (Inglehart 1970a, Ingelhart, Rabier, Reif 1987, Janssen 1991).

Irrespective of the individual level of attention to politics, higher EU salience was linked to higher EU support levels. While unfamiliarity with the EU was connected to a feeling of being threatened, both cognitive mobilization and salience supposedly affect individuals in a similar way: they decrease the threat of an unknown entity,

while providing more information about it – which is considered to lead to higher support levels. For the two working in the same direction, a positive interaction is therefore expected: the higher the salience, the more positively is cognitive mobilization expected to influence all types of support.

> H 3: *A higher salience goes along with a stronger impact of*
> *cognitive mobilization on evaluative and affective support.*

With regard to the impact of tone on the relationship between cognitive mobilization and support, a negative interaction effect is expected. This means that the link "higher cognitive mobilization is connected to higher support levels" is amplified by a context of negative media cues, while it is attenuated in the case of positive media messages. One reason for this expectation is that people who pay less attention to politics have been found to be more affected by different framing effects. If one looks at tone as a particular way of framing information about the EU, it makes sense to assume that support levels among people with low political attention (low cognitive mobilization) are even lower in the instance of a negative news environment, whereas the "support-gap" is smaller in the case of an environment with much more positive cues in regard to the EU.

> H 4: *A more negative tone goes along with a stronger impact of*
> *cognitive mobilization on evaluative and affective support.*

Studies using a utilitarian approach look at the costs and benefits of EU membership for an individual and how this affects the person's attitudes towards integration. In particular, there are two versions of utilitarianism in the literature: an egocentric and a sociotropic one. The latter hypothesizes that „in countries where the net benefits are negative, levels of support are expected to be lower than in countries where such benefits are positive" (McLaren 2006: 44).[3] For this being a context level predictor for EU support, it is focused on egocentric utilitarianism as individual level predictor. The notion that those who benefit or are likely to benefit from European integration should be stronger supporters of the process, whereas those who lose (or are likely to do so) should be more opposed to it was uttered early (e.g. Inglehart, Rabier and Reif 1987) and analyzed successively (e.g. Gabel and Palmer 1995). The theory assumes that economic policies of the EU entail different costs and benefits for different people in the EU and that they are both realizing this fact and determining their position towards integration accordingly. The liberalization of EU labor markets and provisions for the free movement of capital are expected to have an effect on people depending on their occupation and human capital. People with lower level job skills are more easily replaceable by companies moving elsewhere or hiring "foreign" (non national) workers (McLaren 2006: 32). On the other hand, people with more

---

[3] These country-level costs and benefits are usually conceptualized as net-contributions the EU budget or gains from intra-EU trade (e.g. Eichenberg and Dalton 1993 or McLaren 2006).

developed job skills and specific knowledge can be expected to find better-paid jobs more easily across Europe. Both McLaren (2006) and Gabel (1998) find considerable empirical support for this theory.

Depending on economic and professional backgrounds, people are assumed to have different considerations in their minds when deciding to what extent the EU is beneficial for them. If the EU is more salient in a media environment, it could deliver more information about opportunities to some, while others receive more cues about risks. Salience could therefore strengthen the differences in EU support between people from different economic and professional backgrounds. As a result, salience and egocentric utilitarianism are expected to be related positively.

> *H 5: A higher salience goes along with a stronger impact of*
> *egocentric utilitarianism on evaluative and affective support.*

Finally, a negative relationship between tone and egocentric utilitarianism is expected. More positive media coverage of EU issues is assumed to decrease the difference in support for European integration between people from different economic and professional backgrounds. In higher classes, EU support tends to be higher. In a context of negative cues on the EU, those in higher classes might be able to appreciate benefits of the EU regardless of what a particular coverage says, while those in lower classes might find their skeptic position on the EU confirmed by the media. Also, people in the latter group can be more susceptible to arguments in the news. However, in a context of positive cues on the EU, those in higher classes can be assumed to keep their high level of EU support, while support in lower classes increases. If people are more susceptible to news media arguments, they might more easily pick up a positive position in the media. Also, those with an actually skeptical position on the EU might find it much harder to keep that if there is a constant flow of relatively positive cues on the EU.

> *H 6: A more negative tone goes along with a stronger impact of*
> *egocentric utilitarianism on evaluative and affective support.*

3. Data, Conceptualization, and Method

Although several data sets provide information about the dependent variable, the European Election Study (EES) seems to be particularly well suited. That is because its fieldwork started as early as one day after the elections. The number of respondents is 500 for Cyprus and Greece and approximately 1000 for all other countries. Due to missing data, the analysis is based on only 22 out of the 25 EU member states in 2004.

Evaluative support as one dimension of the dependent variable is thought to rest on rational judgment, taking into account costs and benefits going along with EU membership. According to the common conceptualization of regime support in the literature (e.g. Weßels 2007: 291), the following question is considered to capture this aspect: "Generally speaking, do you think that [country] membership in the EU is a

good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?" The EES provides a second question that is regarded to be driven by a cost-benefit analysis of the EU. It asks people about their confidence that decisions by the EU are in their interest.[4] The two items are merged into an additive index ranging from one to six.[5]

Affective support is directed at the EU as a community of people, making it "a sense or feeling of community among its members" (1965: 176). Weßels (2007: 290) suggests that it contains an element of self-ascription, membership, and identification. He subsequently uses questions about the extent to which someone feels attached to and a citizen of the EU as tapping this support dimension. The EES 2004 provides a question close to that: "Do you ever think of yourself not only as a [county] citizen, but also as a citizen of the EU?" The emotional component of affective support is additionally measured by a question asking to what extent respondents are proud to be a citizen of the EU. Both items are combined into an additive index.[6]

Turning to the independent variables, a media content analysis (de Vreese et al. 2006) covered the period of the final two weeks before the 2004 European Parliament elections in almost all EU member states. The data which is publicly available involves the share of EU related stories in relation to all news stories for newspapers and television. Regarding the measurement of tone, an overall value for each EU member state is available. In election campaigns, candidates and parties have an exceptionally high interest to communicate to the electorate (Weßels 2005). The former seek the support of the latter, making the candidates the "speakers" in the conceptualization of Neidhardt. In order to make an informed decision, the electorate is asked to listen to what candidates and parties offer; the electorate becomes the audience. The crucial link is the mass media. Even though it might be domestic actors speaking to a national audience, EP campaigns contribute to a Europeanization of national public spheres: the reason for speakers and audience to communicate is a European one. By definition, media coverage prior to EP elections makes an EU-level issue visible, while at the same time the synchrony of the coverage is ensured in itself.

Cognitive mobilization captures political awareness and skills in political communication, i.e. it denotes that people both receive and understand political information. Here, cognitive mobilization is constructed as an index variable consisting of education and interest in politics.[7]

According to the concept of egocentric utilitarianism, the EU entails different costs and benefits for different groups of people. Since these different chances are related

---

[4] The complete question wording can be found in the Appendix.

[5] The two items show a Pearson's r correlation of 0.402, significant at p<.001.

[6] Pearson's r correlation of 'identification' and 'proudness' is 0.56, significant at p<.001. Affective and evaluative support are correlated by 0.551, significant at p<.001.

[7] The two items show a Pearson's r correlation of 0.193, significant at p < .01.

to people's professions, occupational status is a common conceptualization of this concept. The EES only probes whether respondents are employed/unemployed, retired, students etc., which provides insufficient information for this study. An alternative method for charting the characteristics that differentiate people in their perception of how much the EU goes along with costs and benefits for them due to their occupation is the concept of social classes.[8] In Weber's perspective, resources, which can be utilized either on the product or the labor market, are the criterion according to which classes need to be differentiated.[9] Weber (1968: 928) is very specific on this point: "Class situation is, in this sense, ultimately market situation." The previous conceptualization of egocentric utilitarianism as an occupation-based variable shows how closely this concept was already connected to people's opportunities on the (labor) market. According to Weber, the concept of social classes captures these differences in a similar fashion; it is therefore an ideal alternative for the given analysis.[10]

The crucial methodological problem results from merging context level with individual level data. In contrast to individual level variables such as cognitive mobilization or social class, there are only 25 different countries in the EU – and thus only 25 different values for the context variables. The data analysis needs to take into consideration that people in the same country share the same media context: i.e. that there are not as many different media contexts as individual level cases, since the latter are nested within the former. One way to cope with this problem is using the standard OLS regression, while calculating robust standard errors as suggested by Huber (1967) and White (1980). However, such a model assumes that individual level predictors have the same effect across the whole sample. Yet, this analysis particularly expects individual level predictors for support – cognitive mobilization and social class – to vary depending on the Europeanization on national public spheres. Furthermore, an OLS regression based on pooled data neglects that the mean of a dependent variable in some contexts is higher than in others.[11]

---

[8] See Appendix for question wording.

[9] It should be noted that Weber differentiates four classes, whereas the EES 2004 social class variable set involves a five point scale. Weber (1968: 927) defines classes in the following way: "(1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labor markets".

[10] Jones (1975) examines the relevance of occupation for Weber's class concept more thoroughly.

[11] Apart form that, the sandwich-method has been applied for example in Peter's (2004) analysis of media effects on support for European integration. He additionally post hoc probed his two-way and three-way interactions for significant difference of the simple slopes from zero (2004: 155). Peter (2003, 2004) argues that multilevel analysis is not applicable in the given case. This rests primarily on the fact that multilevel analysis requires a certain minimum number of context level cases, usually at least 20 to 25 (Peter 2003: 707). For the time period analyzed by Peter (2004), the campaign before the 1999-EP elections, this condition was certainly not met (level two cases = 15).

An alternative approach to analyze data from an individual and a context level are hierarchical or multilevel models. They do not only cope with problems connected to the multilevel structure of such data sets, but can specifically model the hierarchical structure – and such things as different effect strengths of individual level variables depending on context. Firstly, random-intercept-random-slope models will by used to test hypotheses one and two. Secondly, slopes-as-outcome models will be employed to test the remaining hypotheses.[12] Random intercept models can account for a dependent variable having different means in different contexts; random slopes additionally model different effect strengths of individual level independent variables in different contexts. Employing slopes-as-outcome models allows testing for how much of these effect strength differences of individual level variables can be explained by context level predictors (cf. e.g. Luke 2004, Langer 2004, Hans 2006, and Snijders and Bosker 1999.

4. Descriptive Findings
The following section will give a brief overview of the most important descriptive findings. Looking at affective support and more particularly at the share of respondents who often consider themselves citizens of the EU, shows an EU-wide difference of almost 40 percent: While in Greece 43 percent of the respondents gave this answer, only 5 percent did so in Hungary. The European-wide average of respondents saying that they often consider themselves to be citizens of the EU is 19.7 percent. The average amount of respondents who are very proud of their EU citizenship is slightly lower with 12.3 percent.[13]
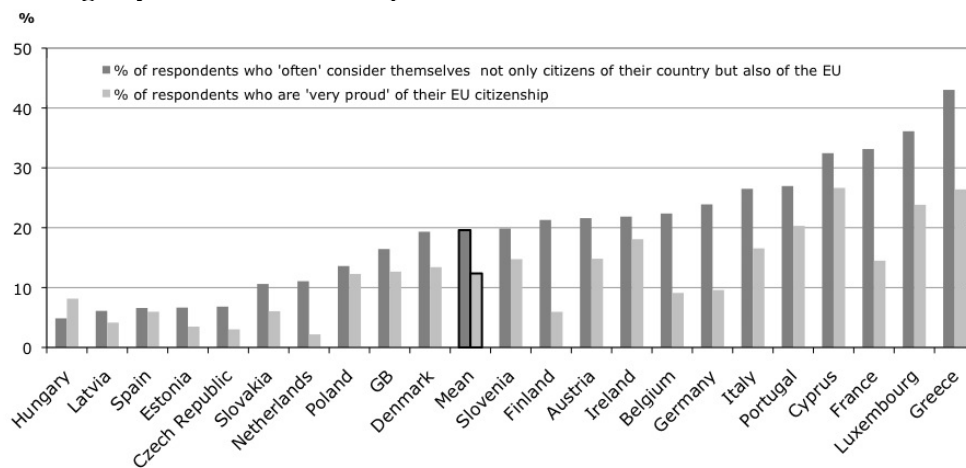
Figure 1: Affective Support for European integration[14]

The given analysis however, deals with 25 EU member states, making multilevel analysis very well possible from this point of view.

[12] All equations can be found in the Appendix.

[13] More information on descriptive statistics for all variables used in this study can be found in Appendix A.

[14] If no other source is indicated, the figures are the author's own work.

The share of people saying EU membership is a 'good thing' is lowest in the Czech Republic with 38 percent and goes up to 89 percent in Luxembourg. The European average is 59 percent. The European-wide mean for people who are confident that decisions made in Brussels are in their interest is 39 percent. The minimum value for this measure can be found in Latvia (24 percent) and the maximum in Hungary (72 percent).
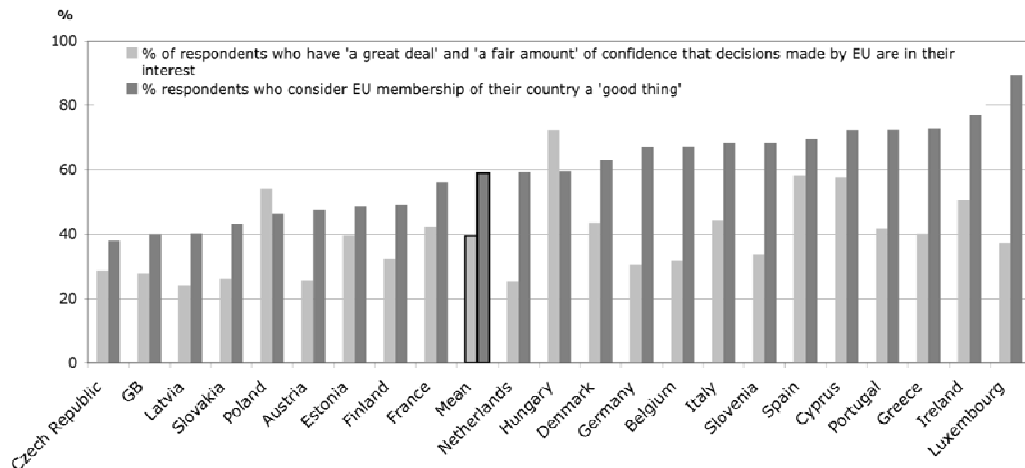

Figure 2: Evaluative Support for European integration

A look at the distribution of these contextual variables indicates European wide differences, which is a precondition for trying to explain the support patterns with media influence. The average salience is 8.5 percent. Belgium is characterized by the minimum value of 3.3 percent. In Greece, the EU seems to be most salient with a value of 15.3 percent.
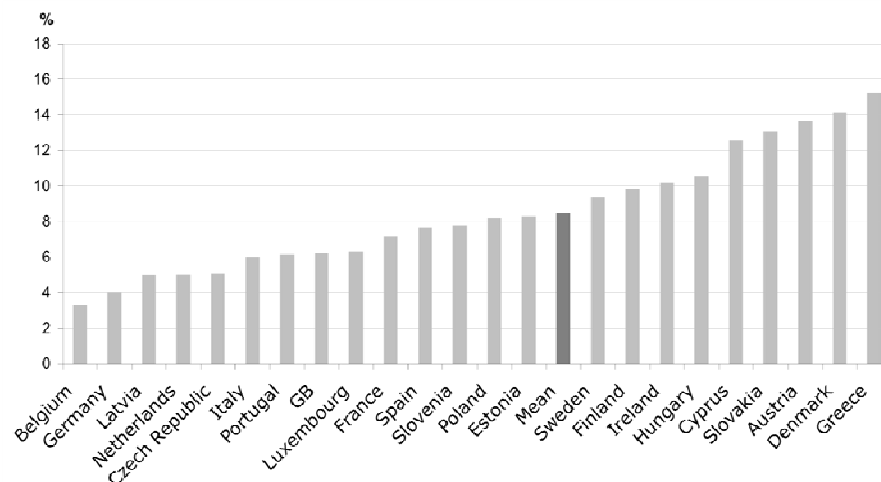

Figure 3: Salience in newspapers and on television (total salience)

The tone of media coverage of EU-related issues – i.e. the evaluations that media messages carry – shows differences across Europe as well. Yet, de Vreese et al. (2006), who collected the data, allude to that quite a share of the news that mentioned the

EU did so in a neutral way (ibid.: 493). The messages that did contain evaluations were rated ranging from -1 (consistently negative evaluations) to +1 (consistently positive). Next the average tone of the information available to citizens in each country was calculated. Figure 6 reports these results, which take into account both television and newspapers. The European-wide mean of -0.07 already indicates the negative bias of media coverage. And indeed, one finds that in almost all countries the tone is negative, except for Slovenia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Cyprus.
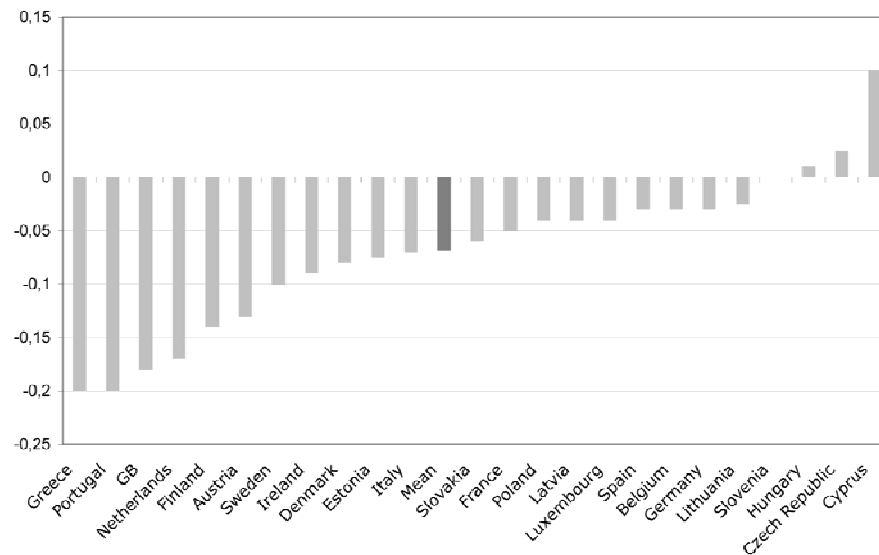

Figure 4: Tone of EU news on television and in newspapers

5. Explanation of EU support

An analysis of variance reveals that there is significant variance at the context level: country level differences account for 9 percent of the variation of evaluative support and 13 percent when it comes to affective support. In a first step one can explore if the country level variation in support levels across the EU is only due to individual level factors or if there is specific variation that can be attributed only to country (i.e. context-) level differences.

The first two models in table 1 test for an effect of tone and salience on affective and evaluative EU support, in addition to a set of individual-level variables. The results show an acceptable model fit. McFadden-Pseudo-R^2 is 0.21 for both affective and evaluative support.[15] The overall pattern of the individual-level variables confirms the suggestions from the literature. This is especially true for government approval (Franklin 1994a, Gabel 1998), cognitive mobilization (Inglehart 1970a), and social class as conceptualization of egocentric utilitarianism (Inglehart, Rabier, and

---

[15] McFadden (1979: 307): "Those unfamiliar with the ρ^2 index [McFadden's notation] should be forewarned that its values tend to be considerably lower than those of the R^2 index and should not be judged by the standards for a 'good fit' in ordinary regression analysis. For example, values of 0.2 to 0.4 for ρ^2 represent an excellent fit."

Reif 1987, Gabel and Palmer 1995). The political left-right orientation is no significant predictor in either of the models.

With regard to the context level variables, salience has no significant effect on affective support and evaluative support. Both coefficients fail to reach conventional levels of significance. Tone, on the other hand, exerts a positive and significant effect on evaluative EU support. Yet, the context level predictors only explain a very small amount of the context-level variation: three percent in case of affective support and eight percent when it comes to evaluative support. On the other hand, the individual level variables included in the models explain almost 12 percent for affective support and 16 percent for evaluative support.

Table 1: Random-Intercept-Random-Slope Models

	Affective	Evaluative
Intercept	3.079***	3.953***
Tone	0.832	1.484*
Salience	0.036	-0.008
Social Class	0.133***	0.119***
Cognitive Mobilization	0.244***	0.186***
NP consumption	0.012*	0.009[+]
TV consumption	0.007	-0.004
L/R Orient.	0.007	0.015
Governm.approval	0.176***	0.259***
Variance Components		
Intercept	0.275***	0.147***
Social Class	0.003**	0.003***
Cognitive Mobilization	0.001	0.004***
NP consumption	0.000	0.000
TV consumption	0.000	0.000
L/R Orient.	0.004***	0.004***
Governm. approval	0.017***	0.014***
Residual Variance	1.66590	1.20178
Level 2 cases	22	22
Level 1 cases	17467	17600
Bryk/Raudenbush L2-R²	0,0282	0,077
Bryk/Raudenbush L1-R²	0,1176	0,1605
McFadden-Pseudo-R²	0,213	0,2141

*Figures show unstandardized regression coefficients and robust standard errors; [+]p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001; individual level variables grand mean centered; McFadden-Pseudo-R² based on models with fixed slopes.*

Against this background, one can comment on hypothesis one that suggested a positive relationship between salience and EU support. While the coefficient suggests that a higher EU salience in the media goes along with higher affective support, this relationship is not significant. The effect of salience on evaluative support is negligible and not significant. Subsequently, one cannot confirm hypothesis one.

Hypothesis two expects a negative tone of media coverage on the EU to result in lower EU support. And indeed this relationship was found. The corresponding coefficient is significant for evaluative support, but not for affective support. Hypothesis two is confirmed in regard to evaluative support. This can be seen as support for the supposed mechanism that a flow of negative cues increases the accessibility of disadvantageous evaluations on the EU and vice versa for positive cues. When rating the EU in terms of costs and benefits, negative considerations seem to exert a particular influence and lead to lower evaluative support. The figures are almost twice the size for evaluative support than for affective support: All else being equal, a more negative tone (switch from neutral to negative, i.e. tone = -0.1) decreases evaluative support by 0.15 units, but only 0.08 units when it comes to affective support.

The next hypotheses focus on the extent to which the effect of cognitive mobilization and social class on EU support depends on particular media contexts. The models are similar to the aforementioned ones; they differ only in that they include the necessary interaction terms. Results are reported in table 2.

The Europeanization of national public spheres seems not to change how cognitive mobilization leads to a particular strength of both affective and evaluative EU support. A look at the results table shows only a minimal and not significant coefficient for the interaction term between salience and cognitive mobilization. Hypothesis three must be rejected. The interaction effect between cognitive mobilization and tone is not significant either. Hypothesis four must be rejected just as well. According to past research, people differ in their support for European integration depending on their income and occupation – i.e. class situation. The result of this analysis reveals that the effect of a Europeanized national public sphere on support for European integration is not the same for all people, rather, it depends on social class.

Table 2: Slopes-As-Outcome Models

	Affective	Evaluative
Intercept	3.533***	3.937***
Tone	0.447	1.148
Salience	-0.021	-0.009
Social Class	-0.004	0.034
*Social Class*Tone*	0.023	-0.333+
*Social Class*Sal*	0.017***	0.007+
Cognitive Mobilization	0.224***	0.224***
*Cogmob*Tone*	0.092	0.222
*Cogmob*Sal*	0.003	-0.003
NP consumption	0.012*	0.009*
TV consumption	0.006	-0.004
L/R Orient.	0.007	0.015
Governm.approval	0.176***	0.259
Variance Components		
Intercept	0.275***	0.150***
Social Class	0.003***	0.002**
Cognitive Mobilization	0.004***	0.004***
NP consumption	0.000	0.000
TV consumption	0.000	0.000
L/R Orient.	0.004***	0.004***
Governm. approval	0.014***	0.014***
Residual Variance	1.66553	1.20159
Level 2 cases	22	22
Level 1 cases	17467	17600
Bryk/Raudenbush L2-R²	-0.034	0.060
Bryk/Raudenbush L1-R²	0.1178	0.1606
McFadden-Pseudo-R²	0,2135	0,2142

*Figures show unstandardized regression coefficients and robust standard errors; +p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001; individual level variables grand mean centered; McFadden-Pseudo-R² based on models with fixed slopes;*

A significant[16] interaction term of social class and salience both for affective and evaluative support indicates that people are reinforced in their different stances on the EU: The skeptic opinion someone has in a particular class is strengthened by an

---

[16] Cf. Steenbergen and Jones (2002) for the application of a p < 0.1 significance threshold when analyzing EU support with a comparable multi-level model.

increase in communications about the EU, as is the positive one by someone in a higher class. A likely reason is that a higher salience of EU cues makes them more accessible and people more aware of their attitudes. As salience increases, their positions and thus the differences become more pronounced. In contrast to tone, salience only captures the frequency of how often someone is "hit" by information about the EU, not what kind of information that is; it therefore makes sense that this aspect has an impact on affective rather than evaluative support. Hypothesis five stated that a higher salience should go along with a stronger impact of egocentric utilitarianism on evaluative and affective support. This can be confirmed. In a context of minimum EU salience, a low social class goes along with an evaluative support value of 3.8; a high social class with a value of 4.05. In a context of maximum EU salience, the value for someone in a high social class changes to 4.16, while it decreases for someone in a low social class to 3.8. These differences become even more apparent when it comes to affective support. All other variables held constant at their means and a neutral tone, in a context of minimum EU salience, someone in a low social class has an affective support value of 3.4, while someone in the highest social class has a value of 3.6. Against a background of maximum EU salience in the media, the value for a person in the lowest social class decreases to 2.8, while it increases for a person in the highest social class to 3.9. According to this data, the increase from minimum EU salience to the maximum empirically existing value amplifies the gap in affective EU support between people in different social classes by roughly five times.
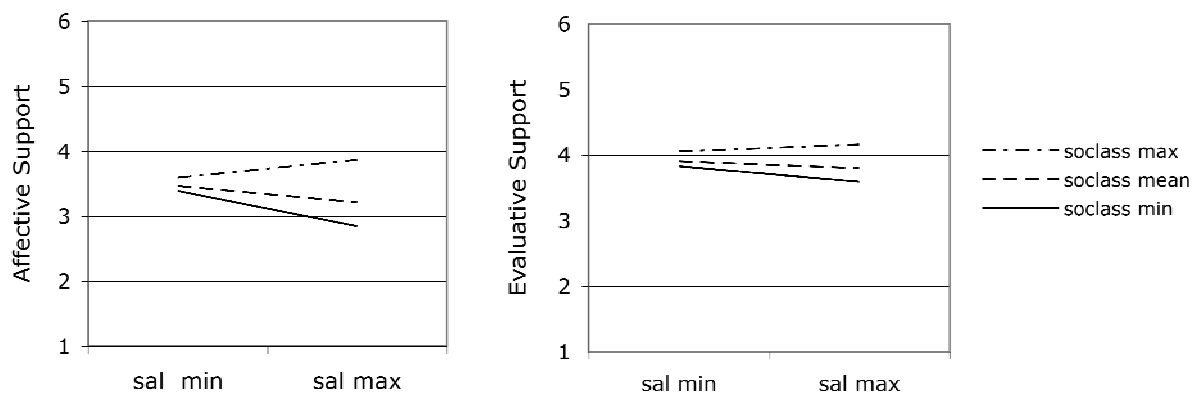

Figure 5: Effect of salience and social class on EU support

Regarding social class and tone, one finds a positive, but insignificant interaction term for affective support and a relatively strong negative and significant one for evaluative support. In a context of negative media cues on the EU, there are differences in people's EU support according to their class, which do, however, become less as cues tend to be more positive. A positive media coverage of the EU can for example entail a lot of arguments for European integration and its benefits, which then gives people in all classes good reasons for a more positive stance on this

issue – and which might make it harder to keep a skeptical position. Since only evaluative support is based so much on benefits and ratings, it makes sense that this effect can be seen in regard to evaluative rather than for affective support. Hypothesis six is confirmed when it comes to evaluative support. In a positive media context, the evaluative support value for people in all considered classes is roughly 4 (evaluative support values for minimum/mean/maximum social class: 3.9/4.0/4.1). In a context of negative EU cues, the same evaluative support value for someone in the lowest class is 3.4, while it is 4.0 for someone in the highest class. Depending on class situation, a negative tone can decrease evaluative support by almost ten percent of the scale.
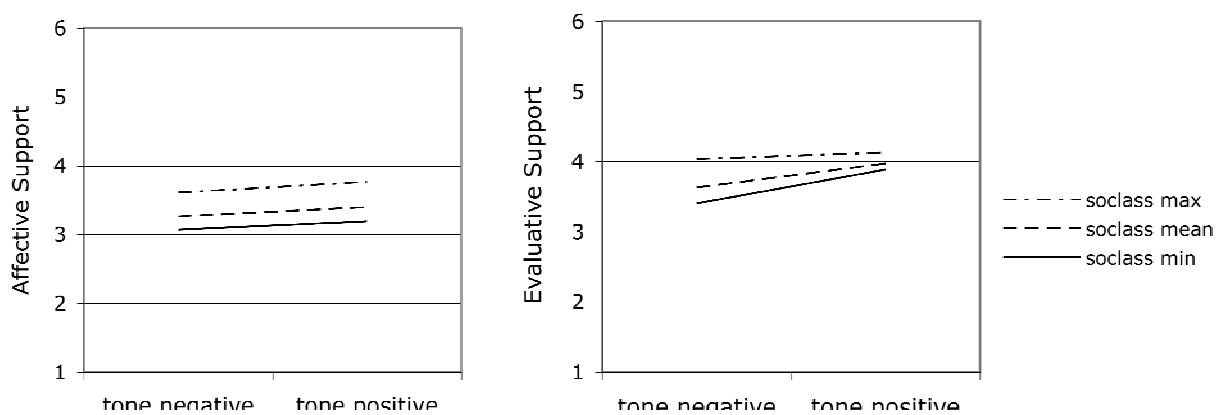

Figure 6: Effect of tone and social class on EU support

The share of explained context level variation dropped both for affective and evaluative support. The share of individual level that can be explained remains almost the same. However, calculating the share of cross context variation in the effect of social class on EU support explained by the media context reveals an impressive figure of 45.6 percent for affective support and 25.3 percent for evaluative support.[17]

While it is particularly the salience of the EU in national public spheres that seems to be influential for affective support, tone of coverage seems more crucial for evaluative support. Therefore, a simple answer on whether an emerging EPS is "good" for EU support is impossible. Given the interpretation of affective support as diffuse, long-term and more stable support for a political system, its increase against a background of a higher salience of the EU in the media can be interpreted as a positive sign for European integration. Yet, not only the mere quantity of 'Europe in

---

[17] The corresponding L2-R_{BR}^2 is 0.46 for affective support and L2-R_{BR}^2 = 0.25 for evaluative support. For cognitive mobilization, the context has virtually no relevance: L2-R_{BR}^2 is nil for affective support and L2-R_{BR}^2 = 0.04 for evaluative support. The figures are based on a comparison of variance components of the random-intercept-random-slope models and the slopes-as-outcome models.

the media' is crucial, but also what is covered and how it is covered. This becomes most apparent when comparing people in different class situations. Coverage including negative evaluations on the EU turned out to have a quite detrimental impact on EU support for those that consider themselves to belong to middle or low social classes, whereas those seeing themselves in higher classes seem to be rather untouched by (negative) evaluations on the EU in the media.

6. Discussion

As a part of a larger democratic deficit, this study considered the underdeveloped EPS a potential reason for the low support of the EU citizens for their supranational community. This study rejected the notion of a single pan-EPS and followed the suggestion to consider it an entity resting on Europeanized national public spheres. The goal of this study was to find out whether the emergence of an EPS can lead to an increase in support for the EU.

While the mere increase of communications about the EU was not found to have an independent effect on EU support, the analysis showed that the tone of news is positively connected to higher evaluative EU support. Furthermore, it was found that where the tone of news is positive, people in different social classes are much more similar in their EU support than where the news environment is more negative. The data also suggests that a Europeanization of national public spheres seems to go along with an amplification of the role of class affiliation in regard to both evaluative and affective EU support. For example, where the EU is more salient in the news media, people in higher and lower social classes differ much more in their EU support.

What do the results imply for the EU, for EU support and for the emergence of an EPS? The findings *cannot* be interpreted as a policy recommendation for the EU 'to come across more positively'. Although this might be a remedy, it would also be naive, given a free press. If such attempts of the EU Commission to score with easily digestible positive information like introducing an EU-wide cap on roaming costs for cell phone users are sufficient, remains questionable. A strategy towards higher EU support should rather approach the core of the problem: Only a specific fraction of EU citizens thinks that the EU entails advantages for them. This study did not concentrate on whether this is the result of EU policies being focused on only a share of the people or if it is 'only' a problem of how the EU is perceived. The study does demonstrate, however, that this is a crucial problem explaining low support for the EU in all its dimensions. The evidence found suggests that an emerging EPS could increase the problem of low support by making people more aware that the EU entails (material) benefits only for some. It was found that where a national public sphere was more Europeanized, the class gap in evaluative EU support was much more pronounced.

At first glance, the results seem to be bad news for the grand hypothesis this paper investigates: that an emerging EPS would be 'good' for the EU – in the sense

that it contributes to support for European integration as proposed by Brussels. The differentiation between affective and evaluative support allows a more nuanced view. In fact, the empirical evidence could cautiously be interpreted as if an emerging EPS contributed to increasing affective support, while evaluative support decreases due to primarily negative news. Furthermore, the data show that the more people know about the community, the more likely they are to take a position towards the EU in accordance with their individual interests. If that is what is happening, the process taking place right now would be one bringing us further away from the permissive consensus (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970) towards a more critical public – one that is knowing, following, and restricting what is decided in Brussels. Against this background, policy changes allowing those that do not yet perceive the EU as being in their interest to do so in the future could then provide an important key to rising evaluative support levels for European integration. Seen from this perspective, one can comment on the hypothesis mentioned above and say that an emerging EPS *can* be good for the EU in the sense of it contributing to EU support.

Literature

Almond, Gabriel A. and Sidney Verba. 1963. The Civic Culture. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Banducci, Susan A. and Holli A. Semetko. 2003. "Media and Mobilization in the 1999 European Parlaiment Election." In: Europe, Parliament, and the Media, Martyn Bond (ed.). London: Federal Trust.

Banducci, Susan A. and Holli A. Semetko. 2003a. Media, Mobilization and European Elections. Work in Progress. http://www.ucd.ie/dempart/workingpapers/media.pdf, downloaded: 10.4.2008.

Blumler, Jay G. 1983. Communicating to Voters: Television in the First European Parliament Elections. London: Sage Publications.

Dalton, Russel J. 2004. Partisan Mobilization, Cognitive Mobilization and the Changing American Electorate. Paper posted at the eScholarship Repository, University of California. http://respositories.cdlib.org/csd/04-11, downloaded 10.3.2008.

Dalton, Russell J. and Robert Duval. 1986. "The Political Environment and Foreign Policy Opinions: British Attitudes Toward European Integration, 1972-1979." British Journal of Political Science 16: 113-134.

De Vreese, Claes H. and Hajo Boomgaarden. 2006. "News, Political Knowledge and Participation: The Differential Effects of New Media Exposure on Political Knowledge and Participation." Acta Politica 41: 317-341.

De Vreese, Claes H., Susan A. Banducci, Holli A. Semetko, and Hajo Boomgarden. 2006. "The News Coverage of the 2004 European Parliamentary Election Campaign in 25 Countries." European Union Politics 7: 477-504.

De Vresse, Claes H. 2007. "The EU as a public sphere." Living Reviews in European Governance 2. http://www.livingreviews.org/lreg-2007-3, downloaded 10.1.2008.

Easton, David. 1965. A Systems Analysis of Political Life. New York: John Wiley.

Eichenberg, Richard C. and Russel J. Dalton. 1993. "Europeans and the European Community: The Dynamics of Public Support for European Integration." International Organization 47: 507-534.

European Election Study 2004. Hermann Schmitt and Matthew Loveless (principle investigators). Mannheim: Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung.

Franklin, Mark N., Cees Van der Eijk, and Michael Marsh. 1995. "Referendum Outcomes and Trust in Government: Public Support for Europe in the Wake of Maastricht." Western European Politics 18: 101-107.

Gabel, Matthew and Harvey Palmer. 1995. "Understanding Variation in Public Support for European Integration." European Journal of Political Research 27: 3-19.

Gabel, Matthew J. 1998. "Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories." Journal of Politics 60: 333-354.

Gerhards, Jürgen. 2000. „Europäisierung von Ökonomie und Politik und die Trägheit der Entstehung einer europäischen Öffentlichkeit." In: Die Europäisierung nationaler Gesellschaften, (Ed.) Bach, Maurizio, vol. 40 of Sonderheft der Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, pp. 277-305. Westdeutscher Verlag: Wiesbaden.

Huber, Peter J. 1967. "The Behavior of Maximum Likelihood Estimates under Nonstandard Concitions." In: Proceedings of the Fifth Berkeley Symposium on Mathematical Statistics and Probability, 221-233.

Inglehart, Ronald, Jacques-Rene Rabier, and Karlheinz Reif. 1987. "The Evolution of Public Attitudes towards Eurpean Integration: 1970-86." Journal of European Integration 10: 135-156.

Inglehart, Ronald. 1970a. "Cognitive Mobilization and European Identity." Comparative Politics 3: 45-70.

Janssen, Joseph H. 1991. "Postmaterialism, Cognitive Mobilization, and Support for European Integration." British Journal of Political Science 21: 443-468.

Jones, Bryn. 1975. "Max Weber and the Concept of Social Class." The Sociological Review 23: 729-757.

Kinder, Donald R. 2003. "Communication and Politics in the Age of Information." In: Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology, David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (eds.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Lindberg, Leon N. and Stuart A. Scheingold. 1970. Europe's Would-Be Polity: Patterns of Change in the European Community. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

McFadden, Daniel. 1979. "Quantitative methods for Analyzing Travel Behaviour of Individuals: Some Recent Developments." In: Behavioural Travel Modelling, David A. Hensher and Peter R. Stopher (eds.). London: Croom Helm, 279-318.

McLaren, Lauren. 2006. Identity, Interests and Attitudes To European Integration. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Neidhardt, Friedhelm. 2001. „Öffentlichkeit". In: Handwörterbuch zur Gesellschaft Deutschlands, Bernhard Schäfers and Worlfgang Zapf (edts.). Wiesbaden: Leske und Budrich.

Norris, Pippa. 2000. A Virtuous Circle. Political Communications in Postindustrial Societies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peter, Jochen and Claes H. de Vreese. 2004. "In Search of Europe - A Cross-national Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News." In: Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics 9: 3-24.

Peter, Jochen. 2003. "Country Characteristics as Contingent Conditions of Agenda-Setting: The Moderating Influence of Polarized Elite Opinion." Communication Research 30: 683-712.

Peter, Jochen. 2004. "Our Long 'Return to the Concept of Powerful Mass Media' - A Cross-National Comparative Investigation of the Effects of Consonant Media Coverage." International Journal of Public Opinion Research 16: 144-168.

Schlesinger, Philip and Deirdre Kevin (2000): "Can the European Union become a sphere of publics?" In: Democracy in the European Union: Integration through deliberation? Erik Oddvar Eriksen and John Erik Fossum (eds.). London/ New York: Routledge: 206-229.

Siedentop, Larry. 2001. Democrary in Europe. London: Penguin Books.

Sifft, Stefanie, Katharina Kleinen von Königslöw, Michael Brüggemann, Bernhard Peters, and Andreas Wimmel. 2007. "Segmented Europeanization: Exploring the legitimicay of the European Union from a public discourse perspective." In: Journal of Common Market Studies 45: 127-155.

Steenbergen, Marco R. and Bradford S. Jones. 2002. "Modeling Multilevel Data Structures." In: American Journal of Political Science 46: 218-237.

Trenz, Hans-Jörg. 2004. "Media Coverage and European Governance. Exploring the European Public Sphere in National Quality Newspapers." In: European Journal of Communication 19: 291-319.

Weber, Max. 1968. Economy and Society (Vol. 2), Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (eds.). New York: Bedminster Press.

Weiler, Joseph H.H., Ulrich Haltern and Franz Mayer. 1995. „European Democracy and its Critique." West European Politics 18: 4-39.

Weßels, Bernhard. 2005. „Europawahlen, Wählermobilisierung und europäische Integration." In: Wahl-Kampf um Europa: Analysen aus Anlass der Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament 2004, Tenscher, Jens (ed.). Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Weßels, Bernhard. 2007. "Discontent and European Identity: Three Types of Euroskepticism." Acta Politica 42: 287-306.

White, Halbert. 1980. "A Heteroskedasticity-Consistent Covariance Matrix Estimator and Direct Test of Heteroskedasticity." Econometrica 48: 817-838.

APPENDIX: List of Variables

Dependent Variables

Name	Min.	Max.	Mean[a]	SD	Description
Affective Support	1	6	3.28	1.48	Additive index based on someone's identification with the EU and proudness to be a citizen of the EU. *Identification: Question item 171* "Do you ever think of yourself not only as a [country] citizen, but also as a citizen of the European Union? (1=never; 2= sometimes; 3=often)" *Proudness: Question item 172* "Are you personally proud or not to be a citizen of the European Union?" (1=not at all; 4=very much)
Evaluative Support	1	6	3.76	1.25	Additive index based on respondent's EU membership assessment and confidence that decisions taken by the EU are in his or her interest. *Membership Support: Question item 155* "Generally speaking, do you think that [country] membership in the EU is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?" (1=a bad thing; 2=neither/nor; 3=a good thing) *EU in respondents interest: Question item 213* "And how much confidence do you have that decisions made by the European Union will be in the interest of people like you?" (1=no confidence; 4=a lot of confidence)

Context Level Independent Variables

Name	Min.	Max.	Mean[a]	SD	Description
Salience	3.29	15.26	8.47	3.36	The media content analysis by Banducci and colleagues includes data of two television news programs and three newspapers from each of the 25 member states of the EU. For both outlets, the unit of coding and analysis is the individual news story. Intra- and inter-coder reliability tests showed agreement rates of 80 percent and above. The measures that were coded include the visibility of the EP elections in a story – i.e. its topic – as well as the story's tone. The differentiation between whether a story was domestic or European in nature was based on the actors that appeared in it. Actors such as persons (e.g. domestic politicians vs. EP candidates or EU Commission members), groups of persons (e.g. parties), institutions (e.g.

Name	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Description
					the EP or national parliaments) or everything that neither falls into the categories of "European" or "domestic" (e.g. the Red Cross) were coded. Salience [b] = (EU salience in newspaper + salience on television) / 2
Tone	-0.2	0.1	-0.07	0.07	It was coded whether stories included positive, predominantly positive, predominantly negative or negative evaluations or if coverage was neutral in that no evaluation was present; refers to newspapers & TV.

Individual Level Independent Variables

Name	Min.	Max.	Mean[a]	SD	Description
Cognitive Mobilization	1	6	3.69	1.24	Additive index consisting of education and interest in politics. *Education: Question item 216* "How old were you when you stopped full-time education?" Answers were merged into three categories: 1 (age 0-15), 2 (age 16-19), 3 (age 20 and above) *Interest in Politics: Question item 154* "To what extent would you say you are interested in politics?" (1=not at all; 4=very much).
Social Class	1	5	2.44	1.04	*Question Item 224* "If you were asked to chose one of these five names for your social class, which would you say you belong to - the working class (coded 1), the lower middle class (2), the middle class (3), the upper middle class (4) or the upper class (5) ?"
Newspaper Consumption	0	7	3.9	2.75	*Question item 069:* "And how many days of the week do you read a newspaper?" (0=not at all; 7=every day)
Television Consumption	0	7	5.5	2.05	*Question item 034:* "Normally, how many days of the week do you watch the news on television?"
Left/Right-Orientation	1	10	5.39	2.38	*Question item 134:* "In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right". What is your position? Please indicate your views using any number on a 10-point-scale. On this scale, where 1 means "left" and 10 means "right," which number best describes your position?"
Government Approval	1	3	1.86	0.94	*Question item 210:* "Let us now come back to [country]. Do you approve or disapprove the government's record to date?" (1=disapprove; 2=neither/ nor; 3=approve) [c]

a) grand mean; b) in countries for which the media data set did not provide values for EU salience on TV, the salience in newspapers-value was used instead to calculate the "total salience" variable; c) in countries where there is no "neither/nor" category, the "don't know" and "no answers" were put in the "neither/nor category" (refers only to government approval); Question item numbers based on EES 2004; all variables recoded: higher values indicate higher support

On Missing Cases:

The maximum number of level two cases available for involvement is 24 countries, while only 22 countries are included in the analysis in regard to evaluative and affective support. These differences occur, because while the media data set includes values for all 25 countries, the EES 2004 generally does not include individual level data for Malta reducing the maximum number of countries one can analyze to n=24. The number of countries is further reduced for evaluative and affective support, because there is no individual level data for Lithuania and Sweden (n=22). The exclusion of these countries also explains a considerable share of the difference between the cases available in the EES 2004 (28861), and the individual level cases on which the results are based (around 17500). Further reasons for the reduction of cases are the exclusion of Northern Ireland and the omission of subjects giving no answer or saying "don't know" to any of the question items included in the analysis. It is common not to exclude this type of missing data by giving these cases, for example, the middle value of a question item. However, although such a procedure might increase the cases available for a regression analysis, it could distort the results. Since the total number of cases is still large enough when exlcuding missing cases, it was opted for this procedure.

Appendix: Equations

Referring to table 1

$$\text{Affective Support}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{social class}) + \beta_2 (\text{cognitive mobilization}) + \\ \beta_3 (\text{np consumption}) + \beta_4 (\text{tv consumption}) + \\ \beta_5 (\text{government approval}) + \beta_6 (\text{left right orientation}) + R_{ij}$$

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} (\text{SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{02} (\text{TONE}) + U_{0j}$$
$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + U_{1j}$$
$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20} + U_{2j}$$
$$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + U_{3j}$$
$$\beta_4 = \gamma_{40} + U_{4j}$$
$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50} + U_{5j}$$
$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60} + U_{6j}$$

$$\text{Evaluative Support}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{social class}) + \beta_2 (\text{cognitive mobilization}) + \\ \beta_3 (\text{np consumption}) + \beta_4 (\text{tv consumption}) + \\ \beta_5 (\text{government approval}) + \beta_6 (\text{left right orientation}) + R_{ij}$$

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} (\text{SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{02} (\text{TONE}) + U_{0j}$$
$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + U_{1j}$$
$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20} + U_{2j}$$
$$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + U_{3j}$$
$$\beta_4 = \gamma_{40} + U_{4j}$$
$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50} + U_{5j}$$
$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60} + U_{6j}$$

Referring to table 2

$$\text{Affective Support}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{social class}) + \beta_2 (\text{cognitive mobilization}) + \\ \beta_3 (\text{np consumption}) + \beta_4 (\text{tv consumption}) + \\ \beta_5 (\text{government approval}) + \beta_6 (\text{left right orientation}) + R_{ij}$$

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{02} (\text{TONE}) + U_{0j}$$
$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{12} (\text{TONE}) + U_{1j}$$
$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{22} (\text{TONE}) + U_{2j}$$
$$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + U_{3j}$$
$$\beta_4 = \gamma_{40} + U_{4j}$$
$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50} + U_{5j}$$
$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60} + U_{6j}$$

$$\text{Evaluative Support}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{social class}) + \beta_2 (\text{cognitive mobilization}) + \\ \beta_3 (\text{np consumption}) + \beta_4 (\text{tv consumption}) + \\ \beta_5 (\text{government approval}) + \beta_6 (\text{left right orientation}) + R_{ij}$$

$$\beta_0 = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{02} (\text{TONE}) + U_{0j}$$
$$\beta_1 = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{12} (\text{TONE}) + U_{1j}$$
$$\beta_2 = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21} (\text{TOTAL SALIENCE}) + \gamma_{22} (\text{TONE}) + U_{2j}$$
$$\beta_3 = \gamma_{30} + U_{3j}$$
$$\beta_4 = \gamma_{40} + U_{4j}$$
$$\beta_5 = \gamma_{50} + U_{5j}$$
$$\beta_6 = \gamma_{60} + U_{6j}$$