**National parties as promoters of ideas about Europe? An empirical analysis of parties'
campaign strategies in six countries during the 2009 European Parliament Election.**
- First Draft -

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1. EU Integration between De-Politicization and Politicization

European integration has long been regarded as an elite project in which the citizens could be ignored. In his early work Haas described the reasoning for this ignorance:

> "The emphasis on elites in the study of integration derives its justification from the bureaucratized nature of European organizations (…), in which basic decisions are made by the leadership, sometimes over the opposition and usually over the indifference of the general membership" (Haas, 1958: 17).

This conception of a de-politicized integration process is reflected in the major theories of integration, neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism (Hooghe & Marks, 2008). Both of these theories agree that it is elite actors and their economic preferences that shape the integration process. These elites bargain behind closed doors. In this vein, the European Union is seen as a compromise finding machine. This machine produces "policies without politics" (Schmidt, 2006).

The politics dimension, which is characterized by political struggles, takes place at the national level. Here it is the domestic parties (and civil society organizations) that place competing ideas on the agenda. However, most of these ideas refer to the national level. For the main domestic parties it is a strategic decision to keep Europe off the agenda (Mair, 2005; Thomassen, Noury, & Voeten, 2004) as with regards to the question of European integration they struggle with internal inconsistencies (Edwards, 2009) and thus fear loosing traditional voters when clearly articulating their position (Hix, 2005). Beyond, mainstream parties have all agreed on a moderate pro-European position throughout Europe (Eijk & Franklin, 2004; Hix, 1999; Hooghe & Marks, 2002; Kriesi, 2007) and therefore EU integration is a topic where it is hard to differentiate oneself from the others. The political supply side of EU integration at the domestic level is therefore described as a silent "cartel" (Weber, 2007: 519), in which national political parties are regarded as non-promoters of ideas about Europe. What is the result? The silencing of Europe by domestic elites makes it unlikely that mass media as the most important source for information transmission regarding the EU (EU-Commission, 2003) pick up the issue of EU integration prominently. Mass media depend on the input from domestic political actors to give Europe a face and explain the relevance for the citizens (Adam, 2007a, 2007b). As a consequence, mass media are often seen as neglecting issues of EU integration (see for this claim the public sphere deficit literature e.g. Gerhards, 2000). This de-politicized style of EU integration, however, has not caused any concern for quiet a long time. As long as citizens' attitudes in Europe could be summarized as supporting or not

caring – the famous citizens' "permissive consensus" (Lindberg & Scheingold, 1970) – neither the political realm, nor the scientific one were concerned with this de-politicized form of EU integration.

Since the early 90ies, however, with the ratification-process of the Maastricht treaty, this 'permissive consensus' on the side of citizens has started to evaporate (e.g. Carey, 2001; Eichenberg & Dalton, 2007; Hooghe & Marks, 2005). Citizens have formed stable and structured opinions regarding EU integration (Van der Eijk & Franklin, 2004) that are connected to the basic dimensions that structure contestation (Hooghe & Marks, 2008). These attitudes constitute "something of a 'sleeping giant' that has the potential, if awakened, to impel voters to political behaviour that (…) undercuts the bases for contemporary party mobilization in many, if not most, European polities" (Van der Eijk & Franklin, 2004: 32f.). Yet, this sleeping giant has begun to wake up (Franklin & Van der Eijk, 2006). The clearest signs can be seen in the rejection of recent referenda on EU treaties in France, the Netherlands or Ireland. Moreover, researchers now show that attitudes on EU integration influence under specific conditions even national voting (e.g. De Vries, 2007). The 'permissive consensus' has been replaced by a "reluctant acceptance" (Mittag & Wessels, 2003: 417) or even a "constraining dissensus" (Hooghe & Marks, 2005: 426). This means that citizens cannot be ignored anymore in the process of EU integration as on the side of the public there is a mobilization potential that might and sometimes even is exploited. Such exploitation changes the conflict potential into a societal conflict.

How does this work? Prerequisite to change a conflict potential into a real conflict is its politicization. De Wilde's (2007) concept of politicization involves two parts (for important earlier works in this field see e.g. Bartolini & Mair, 1990; Follesdal & Hix, 2005; Schmitter, 1969): (a) the public articulation and (b) the public contestation indicated by the polarization of opinions, interests and values. Politicizing Europe is something likely to happen – if at all – at the national level. In general, there are two agents to foster such politicization. It is *domestic mass media* that might set the issue of EU integration on the agenda with their reporting and commenting. They are an important agent as mass media are those who directly link the EU to citizens. Their selection and framing impacts attitude formation (criticizing the lack of such media impact research regarding the EU De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; Maier & Rittberger, 2008). However, as research has shown mass media need the translation of EU issues by domestic political actors in order to facilitate their selection and framing process

(Adam, 2007a, 2007b). It is these national political actors who attach important news values (see for the concept Eilders, 2006; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Kepplinger, 2008a, 2008b) like closeness, relevance or personalization to far-distant Europe. Consequently, if we need to understand the conditions for politicization of Europe in the domestic realm, we need to look at the public communication of domestic political actors. Thereby, it is *domestic parties* who are studied as the most important agent of politicization of Europe (Hooghe & Marks, 2008; Kriesi, 2008): Their strategic interactions help us to understand how and under which conditions issues are politicized. This is exactly where our research comes in. We ask whether national parties publicly articulate matters of EU integration and foster contestation about Europe in the context of the 2009 European Parliament Election. It is this event where citizens have their only direct vote on issues of EU integration. We assume that if signs of such politicization on the side of national parties are to be found, they should be found here.

To answer our research question on the politicization on the side of national parties we proceed in four steps: First, we derive expectations about the role of such domestic parties in politicizing Europe from the literature. Second, we present a source of data that has so far not been analyzed systematically enough when studying parties' role in politicizing Europe: parties' campaign communication. We have content analyzed all televised spots that were broadcasted in the course of the 2009 European Parliament campaigns by those parties that won more than 3 percent of the votes in this election. So far the data are available for six member countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, UK).[3] Third, we present our empirical results regarding parties' campaign articulation and their degree of contestation about EU integration. And finally, we will close with a section on how such an analysis contributes to our understanding of politicization of EU integration in domestic realms. We thereby show why we think it is so crucial to understand how these processes of politicization look like and which missings have remained in our analysis.

2. The Role of National Parties in Politicising Europe

Two strands of research have taken into account the role of national parties in politicising or non-politicising Europe. Researchers that focus on the specific event of European Parliament elections describe domestic parties as non-promoters of EU ideas. This is challenged by those who study how domestic conflict structures, parties' location within them and public opinion change in the course of de-nationalization from a more general perspective (e.g. Hooghe &

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[3] For five other countries, we are in the process of data cleaning: Austria, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Sweden.

Marks, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2006). Based on these two perspectives, expectations regarding the role of national parties in politicising Europe are formulated.

Most research that focuses on the European Parliament election agrees that these elections are "second-order national contests" (Reif & Schmitt, 1980). This has two implications. First, EP elections are regarded as *national contests and not EU contests*. This means that EP elections are determined by the situation in the first-order arena, i.e. the national arena (Schmitt, 2005). Second, such elections are second-order as they are less important than the main national contests. This distinction makes clear that the standard model of EP elections refers to the content (national versus European) and the salience or importance of different electoral arenas. In its original form the "second-order national contest" model primarily looked at the voters: salience-wise their turnout is lower than in the national arena and content-wise their decisions are guided by national considerations. Voters cast a protest vote against incumbent governments and vote for smaller parties in the EP elections. This national and low-salience focus of EP elections is attributed to the lack of a clear-cut government-opposition antagonism in the context of the European Parliament (institutional factor) but also to the lack of publicly visible clear-cut party positions regarding the EU – more general the lack of EU policy considerations in EP campaigns (Schmitt, 2005).

The latter point extends the 'second-order national contest model' to the campaign communication. Here, it is mass media, the main campaign transmitters, whose attention for EP elections is regarded as low and whose focus is on national concerns and not on European ones (De Vreese et al., 2006; Maier & Maier, 2008). Finally, it is those, who produce the campaign messages, the domestic parties, who are said to not only run low-budget and low-salience campaigns, but also focus in their campaigns on national issues, actors and conflicts (Cayrol, 1991; Gerstlé et al., 2002; Holtz-Bacha, 2005; Tenscher, 2005). The 'second-order national contest' model regards domestic parties as de-politicizers of EU integration as these parties do not only spend less money and energy on the campaign, but at least as importantly campaign on national issues, actors and concerns.

This assumption is challenged by a second strand of research that seeks to understand how processes of de-nationalization impact upon domestic conflict structures, parties' location within them and citizens' public opinion formation (e.g. Hooghe & Marks, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2006). Researchers in this field have so far not concentrated on European Parliament elec-

tions, but call for a test of their hypotheses on different occasions – one of them being the EP elections (Kriesi, 2008). Starting point of these researchers is the conflict potential on the side of the public that results from processes of de-nationalization (Kriesi et al., 2006) or more specific EU integration (Hooghe & Marks, 2008). This conflict potential does not remain unnoticed by domestic parties. Consequently, strategic party competition allows to understand the circumstances for EU's politicization (see also for the following Hooghe & Marks, 2008; Kriesi, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2006).

Traditionally, parties compete on two types of cleavages: a socio-economic one, who divides those who call for more market regulation from the free-market advocates, and a cultural one, where those in favour of green /alternative / liberal (GAL) ideas compete with those of traditional / authoritarian / nationalist (TAN) ideas. Both of these cleavages can be interpreted in light of the question integration versus demarcation (Kriesi et al., 2006). For the cultural cleavage it is easy to connect the poles of the cleavage with the question of integration versus demarcation: TAN supporters prefer demarcation as they fear the loss of identity and national sovereignty, while GAL supporters call for further EU integration on this cultural dimension. For the economic dimension this connection is more complicated. In general, one would assume that free-market advocates are in favour of EU integration as integration so far strongly equals building up a common market. Yet, with the idea of also working on a political and more social Europe, those calling for stronger market regulations might start seeing integration as one means to achieving their ends. So, linking the traditional economic cleavage and the new integration versus demarcation conflict displays two different evaluations of the European Union which reveal the interdependence with the national political system as well as the national economic situation: e.g. in the Scandinavian welfare states, the European Union is more likely to be evaluated as fostering a liberal market, while e.g. British left parties might sense the chance for more social security compared with the situation in their nation state. However, mainstream parties of the West in general have positioned themselves on both of these newly interpreted cleavages on the pro-integration side (van der Eijk & Franklin, 2004; Hix, 1999; Hooghe & Marks, 2002; Kriesi, 2007; Kriesi et al., 2006). Yet, often such pro-integration positions are hardly heard in public (Risse, 2010). One of the reasons might be that the left struggles with the market-liberal character of integration whereas the challenge for the right lies in the cultural dimension of integration (Edwards, 2009; Kriesi et al., 2006). Consequently, in countries where mainstream parties do not clearly re-position themselves, smaller parties at the fringes of the left-right spectrum are the driving forces of publicly ar-

ticulating positions for those preferring demarcation (De Vries & Edwards, 2009; Van der Eijk & Franklin, 2004; Hooghe & Marks, 2002; Kriesi et al., 2006). Right parties mobilize against cultural aspects of integration and left parties do so regarding economic aspects. This has been labelled as bipolare euroscepticism in Western Europe (Marks et al., 2006). For the East, Marks et al. (2006) claim to have found a special dynamic: their 2002 expert survey reveals that it is the former communists in Eastern Europe who can mobilize against Europe based on economic as well as cultural matters – the only exception being the EU-critical, but conservative ODS in the Czech Republic. However, in the daily reality of actual membership this issue bundling is likely to decrease as the left will also start supporting actions towards a more social Europe (Marks et al., 2006). If this happens, similar types of mobilization as in the West could be expected.

Summing up, researchers who focus on domestic conflict structures and parties' or citizens' positioning within these do see signs of a politicization of EU integration. Domestic parties in this perspective might according to their ideological profile and their strategic considerations turn into politicizers of Europe. Politicization in this perspective is *conditional* and therefore likely to vary between countries and party types; it might also be *modest* for the time being, yet still "challenging, interesting and noticeable" (De Wilde, 2007); finally it is unlikely to "be stuffed back in the bag again" (Hooghe & Marks, 2008: 22). In contrary, some researchers even claim that we are at a "critical juncture" (Kriesi, 2008: 222) where integration beyond the nation state hits home into domestic conflict structures. Yet, at the same time this strong claim is so far based on lots of speculations (Kriesi, 2008).

It is exactly at this critical juncture where we analyze in the context of the 2009 European Parliament elections how national parties publicly articulate matters of EU integration and foster contestation about Europe. What we do not challenge is the fact that EP elections (including their campaigns) are still less important (second-order) than national elections for national parties' campaigns strategists, for the mass media as well as for the voters. However, what we are interested in is whether it is still correct to describe European Parliament campaigns as solely driven by national actors, issues and conflict interpretations or whether we find signs of domestic mobilization on EU integration. The 'second-order national contest' model and the 'strategic party mobilization' model which have both introduced propose competing expectations.

Regarding the first indicator for politicization, the public *articulation* of EU issues and actors, the 'second-order national contest' model leads us to expect that campaigns remain nationally confined. In contrast, the 'strategic party mobilization' model leads us to expect that EU issues and actors are part of the campaign. This European focus should be stronger in those countries, where we have EU mobilizers challenging the pro-European consensus. EU mobilizers are supposed to be parties at the rims of the party spectrum – or eurosceptic mainstream forces (ODS in the Czech Republic and the Conservatives in the UK). These parties are more likely to mobilize on EU matters. However, if they do so, other parties might react and therefore the overall salience of Europe within a country is supposed to increase (Netjes & Binnema, 2007; Steenbergen & Scott, 2004). In the countries analyzed in our study, it is the UK, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands for which our project cooperation partners in the respective countries (see Footnote 2) identified at least half of the parties as eurosceptic whereas in Germany, Spain and Bulgaria eurosceptic parties are the exception (see Table 1).

Table 1: Eurosceptic parties in the six countries included in the study

	Number of EU-sceptic parties	Share of EU-sceptic parties / all parties
Germany	1	0,20
Netherlands	4	0,50
UK	3	0,50
CZ	3	0,67
Spain	1	0,25
Bulgaria	2	0,28

Basis: 37 parties in six countries, expert judgements.

Turning to the second indicator for politicization, the *public contestation* about Europe, the 'second-order national contest' model leads us to expect that national contestation is driving the campaign. This is challenged by the 'strategic party mobilization' model. From the latter model we can derive three expectations. First, cleavages are in part discussed with a reference to Europe and the question of integration versus demarcation. Second, mainstream parties' pro-European cartel is challenged by eurosceptic voices. If these eurosceptic voices come from the left, they are likely to criticize the market-liberal character of EU integration whereas if they come from the right they refer to identity or community questions. Third, the mobilization of right-wing parties with identity concerns is the driving force of politicization of Europe (De Vreese & Tobiasen, 2007; Eichenberg & Dalton, 2007; Hooghe & Marks, 2008; Kriesi, 2008; Kriesi et al., 2006).

3. Data and Method

To study domestic parties' politicization of EU integration, several data sources have been used so far (Netjes & Binnema, 2007): Party manifestos, expert surveys and public opinion data. All of these data sources have their shortcomings. Party manifesto data cannot reveal the public behaviour of parties as manifestos are the result of internal party disputes, yet hardly read by the average citizen. Expert judgements rely on a mixture of what parties internally discuss and what parties actually do. Consequently, also expert data do not clearly reveal domestic parties' public articulation of and contestation about EU integration. Finally, public opinion data rely on perceptions of, not on the actual communication of the parties. These perceptions, however, a more likely to be shaped through mass media's selection and framing than through direct party cues (for a critique on directly linking party cues to citizens see Adam, 2009). As a result, Netjes and Binnema (2007) call for harder measures to determine parties' actual articulation: they suggest to rely on content analysis data of print media coverage of national and European Parliament elections. This approach has been chosen e.g. by Kriesi et al. (2006). While we agree that this is a publicly visible source and therefore better suited for studying parties' public communication than other sources, we ask why one needs to derive parties' strategies from mass media's selection and framing. We claim that if we study campaigns there is a more direct way for measuring domestic parties' public articulation of and contestation about EU integration: their own campaign communication. The core messages of domestic parties' campaigns are epitomized in parties' own campaign instruments, i.e. their televised spots and their posters. With these instruments parties directly reach out to the citizens without having to pass the selection filter of the mass media.

Within the project "Between Integration and Demarcation. Strategies and Effects of Party Campaigns in the Context of the 2009 European Parliament Election"[4] we have content analyzed domestic parties' campaign communication in 11 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK) – more precisely their televised ads and their posters that were placed on the streets. In this paper, we concentrate on parties' televised ads in six countries[5] for two reasons. First, in televised spots parties have enough space to develop a more detailed argument compared with posters. This

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[5] Data cleaning is finished for six countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, UK) at this point. The other countries will be added to the analysis after coding and data cleaning is finished.

information is necessary to link our results not only to parties' public articulation, but also to the pattern of contestation. Second, televised spots have turned out to be the most important campaign instrument in EP elections in most European countries (Esser, Holtz-Bacha, & Lessinger, 2005) since most citizens say that they have been exposed to them. All spots of those parties that won more than 3 percent of the votes in the 2009 European Parliament election have been subject to a quantitative content analysis (for the instrument Adam & Maier, 2009). To secure the reliability of coding, a common coder training took place in Berlin. Before coding of the original material started, we conducted a reliability test across all countries. In this reliability test, English, German and Portuguese campaign material from the 2004 and 2009 EP campaigns was used. The reliability test revealed satisfactory results.[6]

To understand parties' public articulation or non-articulation of EU integration we study whether parties' campaigns remain nationally confined or not based on two indicators. First, we analyze the scope of the main *political* actor of the spot. The main political actor is the most *important* (regarding duration of visual presentation) actor who is *putting forward* the campaign message.[7] His / her scope is determined by the actor's function. As EU-actor we code all top-candidates running for the European Parliament in a country as well as those politicians who explicitly speak up as an actor in his / her EU function (e.g. the German SPD-politician Verheugen speaking up as Vice President of the EU Commission). A national scope is attached to politicians who speak up in their function as national representatives. Second, we study whether issues referred to in the spots are discussed in a national, a European or a national and European manner.[8] The overall issue scope of a televised spot equals the average of the different (up to eleven different issues with their scopes could be coded per spot) issue references made visible.

To understand parties' public contestation about EU integration we analyze whether parties link their campaign to cleavages. Hereby, two *types of cleavages* have been of interest to us: the classical socio-economic cleavage and a cultural one that raises identity concerns (e.g. defines a community image). These different types of cleavages might turn relevant in most of

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[6] In the Czech Republic the two coders reached a 90 respectively 91 percent agreement according to Holsti's formula; in Germany seven coders ranged between 82 and 91 percent, in the Netherlands one coder reached 86 percent, in Spain one coder reached 89 percent, and finally in Great Britain one coder reached 79 percent.

[7] If two actors equally put forward the campaign message, the one with an EU scope was coded.

[8] A spot dealing with national taxes would be coded with a national scope; a spot dealing with the Brussels' bureaucracy would be coded EU; a spot dealing with disputes among EU states (e.g. regarding nuclear power stations in border regions, or the weighting of votes in the Council) is also coded with an EU scope. Finally, a spot referring to national and EU taxes has a mixed scope.

the issue fields. One could for example frame the issue of immigration as an economic question or as a cultural one referring to the community image. Both of these cleavages might be interpreted in a purely national, a European or a national and European manner (*scope*). Cleavages with a national scope refer to state regulations in national economies or to the definition of who should belong to the national community. Cleavages with an EU scope discuss the regulation of the economy within the EU and the question of who belongs to the European (not national) community. Finally, there are cleavage interpretations that explicitly link national and EU levels. This scope variable is crucial to understand whether campaign contestation moves beyond the nation state. In addition, we are interested in the *positions* advocated by parties on these cleavages. On the economic dimension we distinguish between classical left positions - favouring state interventions into the economy, social rights and protectionism - from right positions that support free market ideas. On the cultural dimension, we have liberal community concepts which call for multi-cultural societies, inclusive national identities (Hooghe & Marks, 2005) and cultural diversity. This is what Risse (2010) describes as the modern and secular image of a (European) community and Checkel and Katzenstein (2008) refer to as a cosmopolitan concept. On the other side we have non-liberal concepts which emphasize nationality, sovereignty, exclusive national identities and cultural homogeneity. A concept which resembles what Risse (2010) calls the nationalist, closed and white Christian community image and Checkel and Katzenstein (2008) refer to as the populist conception of community. Finally, in order to determine whether the mainstream parties' pro-European cartel is challenged by eurosceptic voices we need to include an *EU evaluation* variable. This variable captures the role of the EU in its present form for implementing the position advocated on the cleavage: Is the EU regarded as a risk / problem or is it an opportunity / problem-solving device (Schuck & De Vreese, 2006)?[9]

After we have introduced our concepts of how we operationalize domestic parties' articulation of and contestation about EU integration, we need to add a final note on the logic of data analysis. First, to get unbiased country results, we analyzed the data in such a way that each party contributes the same to the overall country result. This means that a party which broadcasted several different spots does not contribute more to the average country value than a party that only produced one spot for its campaign. Second, for the total numbers in the following analyses which indicate the average across all countries, it is not only made sure that

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[9] A coding example would be: „Stop the European Union in pursuing enlargement towards Turkey. A threat to our national culture." (Type of cleavage: cultural; Cleavage scope: national; Cleavage position: non-liberal; Role of EU on cleavage: problem)

each party contributes the same within a country, but also that countries with many parties do not contribute more to the overall picture than countries with fewer parties. Consequently, on this overall level, it is the number of spots per party and the number of parties per country that are controlled for.

4. Empirical Results: Parties' Articulation of and Contestation about EU Integration

4.1 Analyzing Parties' Articulation of EU Integration

From the state of the literature we have derived two indicators for politicization, i.e. the *public articulation* of EU issues and actors and the *public contestation* about Europe. Regarding the first factor, the *public articulation*, the assumptions of the 'second-order national contest' model lead us to expect that the national campaigns in the up-run to the 2009 European elections should have remained nationally confined. In contrast, the 'strategic party mobilization' model leads us to assume that EU issues and actors were part of the campaign. Table 2 and 3 display the relevance of national versus European actors and issues in the televised ads launched by the national parties.[10]

Looking at the question whether the main actors represented the national or the European level, it becomes quite obvious already at the first glance that the 2009 EP campaigns clearly were not dominated by national actors (Table 2). On the contrary, in 59 percent of the parties' campaigns, European politicians spoke out for their ideas. This share of EU politicians was especially high in the Czech Republic (90%) and in the Netherlands (78%) and lowest in Bulgaria (23%), Great Britain (50%) and Spain (both 54%). But even in the countries where the portion of EU actors was below average, the EU campaigns could not be characterized as national in general because the portion of ads including national actors only reached 43 (Bulgaria), respectively 42 percent (Great Britain). This result would lead us to reject our hypothesis that the EP campaigns were national contests at least with regards to the main actors. From this perspective they resemble more closely an EU contest.

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[10] This analysis includes 93 televised ads from six countries. In each country the spots from all parties' which won more than three percent of the votes in the 2009 EP election were included. For the analysis, on the level of the individual countries, each party's spot(s) was given the same weight, and each country was given the same weight when calculating the numbers for the total of the six countries (see also section 3).

Table 2: Main actors in the spots: National versus EU politicians (in percent)

	N (party campaigns)	national	EU	other scope / no main actor
Germany	5	20,0	60,0	20,0
Netherlands	9	-	77,8	22,2
UK	6	41,7	50,0	8,3
CZ	5	10,0	90,0	-
Spain	4	15,7	53,5	30,8
Bulgaria	8	42,7	22,9	34,4
total (6 countries)	37	21,7	59,0	19,3

Basis: 93 spots: Germany: 7, Netherlands: 9, UK: 13, Czech Republic: 7, Spain: 25, Bulgaria: 32.

With regards to the issues which were addressed in the spots, the findings are somewhat different (Table 3). Already the country average shows a considerable portion of campaigns focusing solely (21%)[11] or at least mainly (52%) on national issues. This first impression is at least partly supported by the findings on the country level. Here again it is Bulgaria (M=0.05), Great Britain (M=0.36) and Spain (M=0.47) which score lowest on the scale of Europeanization, and where all of the parties' campaigns either concentrated solely on national topics or where national topics at least clearly dominated the campaign. In Germany (M=1.17), the Netherlands (M=0.93) and also to a certain degree in the Czech Republic (M=0.68) Europeanization is higher. Here the campaigns can be described as mixed-contests issue-wise, in which national and EU topics were given a pretty similar amount of attention. In sum, our hypothesis expecting mainly national contests issue-wise seems to hold for three out of six countries (Great Britain, Bulgaria and Spain) but has to be rejected especially for Germany and the Netherlands where we find a quite balanced mixture between national and EU issues discussed.

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[11] In order not to overestimate Europeanization of the campaigns, spots with an unclear issue scope were also counted in this category.

Table 3: Issues in the spots: National versus EU interpretations (in percent)

	N (party campaigns)	only national	mainly national	national and EU	mainly EU	only EU	MEAN*
Germany	5	-	20,0	40,0	20,0	20,0	1,17
Netherlands	9	11,1	22,2	33,3	33,3	-	0,93
UK	6	16,7	83,3	-	-	-	0,36
CZ	5	20,0	60,0	-	20,0	-	0,68
Spain	4	-	100,0	-	-	-	0,47
Bulgaria	8	75,0	25,0	-	-	-	0,05
total (6 countries)	37	20,5	51,8	12,2	12,2	3,3	0,61

Basis: all spots with an issue reference; 84 spots: Germany: 6, Netherlands: 9; UK: 13; CZ: 7; Spain: 24; Bulgaria: 25.
*Mean [0-2]: 0 = only national, 1 = EU and national, 2 = only EU.

With regards to the representation of national versus EU politicians as well as with regards to the issue scope, our first analyses have revealed clear differences between the countries. In order to be able to explain such variation, we had - based on the literature - formulated the expectation that the European focus in general should be stronger in those countries, where parties at the rims of the party spectrum or eurosceptic mainstream forces try to mobilize their electorate on the question of European integration. Doing so, they could make the pro-European mainstream parties to also put EU integration on the campaign agenda. In Table 1 we had summarized the results of our expert survey and identified the Netherlands, Great Britain and the Czech Republic as countries in our sample where a relatively high number of EU-sceptic parties has the potential to boost articulation of EU integration, while in Germany, Spain and Bulgaria articulation on European matters should be lower.

That eurosceptic parties have the capability to cause such spill-over effects is confirmed in our multiple classification analysis (ANOVA). For this analysis, we use the articulation of EU issues and actors as dependent variable[12] and asked whether such articulation differs according to (a) the ideological profile of a party (left-right), (b) a party's stance on European integration or (c) the country a party belongs to. Table 4 summarizes the results and shows that EU articulation does not significantly differ between the parties of different ideologies or stances on EU integration, but that it varies significantly between countries (model fit R^2 =.36). So, it is not the eurosceptics that differ from the euro-supporters, but it is country differences that matter.

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[12] This dependent variable has been calculated from the average issue scope variable [0,2] and the average actor scope variable [0,2].

Table 4: Determinants of EU articulation

Dependent Var. (Mean)	Independent Variable			Strength of model
	Country (Beta)	Type of party (left-right) (Beta)	Type of party (position on EU) (Beta)	R-square
Articulation of EU issues and actors	.53***	.26	.09	.36***

Basis: 82 spots – excluded are those spots that do not contain an actor or issue reference (n=6) and those of three small parties which have not been classified by our country experts so far

Levels of significance: ***<0.01; **<0.05; *<0.1.

These country differences at least partially reflect our expectations. In Spain and Bulgaria, where only few parties mobilize against Europe, articulation of European matters was actually lower than in other countries. This is especially true considering the high share of national topic scopes. However, the results for the Czech Republic and especially the Netherlands are an even stronger support for our assumption: The high portion of EU actors but also a reasonably high share of EU issue scopes point in the direction that the high number of parties mobilizing against Europe leads to more articulation in a country in general. The outliers in the analysis so far seem to be Germany and Great Britain: In Germany the pro-European attitude of most of the parties does not match with the relatively high share of European actors and a well-balanced mix of national and EU issues. On the contrary, in the UK a much stronger articulation of European issues could have been expected looking at the high number of eurosceptic parties.

It seems thus that the number and strength of EU sceptical parties within a country only partially explain the degree of EU articulation. What we need to include in our model are situational factors which might serve as intervening variables. For the UK, one hypothesis is that the internal corruption scandal of the Labour party might have led to a nationally confined contest. For Germany in contrast, it might have been the constellation of a large coalition government which made it hard for the two largest parties in Germany to struggle on domestic issues. A closer look at our data confirm this latter idea: It is the German Conservatives (CDU / CSU) and the Labour Party (SPD), both bound into a coalition government, who put issues and actors with an EU scope on the agenda.

4.2 Analyzing Parties' Contestation about Europe

With regards to the second indicator for politicization, the *public contestation* about Europe, the 'second-order national contest' model suggests that contestation remains nationally focused. This is challenged by the 'strategic party mobilization' model, from which we drew three hypotheses: First, cleavages are at least in part discussed with a reference to Europe and

the question of integration versus demarcation. Second, political consensus on Europe is challenged by left-wing eurosceptic voices regarding the market-liberal feature of EU integration and regarding questions of EU community and identity by right-wing parties. And third, mobilization of right-wing parties on the identity cleavage at this moment is the strongest source for the EU politicization.

To test these hypotheses we first determined which cleavages were referred to in the spots and under which scope they were discussed. In sum, in 69 spots broadcasted by 29 parties, the economic cleavage, i.e. the classical divide between left (pro-state, protectionism) and right (free-market), was mentioned (Table 5a). In most of our countries (Germany, the UK, Spain and Bulgaria) nearly all parties made reference to this economic cleavage. This is not surprising given the fact that we are in times of a financial and economic crisis. It is only the Netherlands and the Czech Republic where a substantial number of parties campaigned solely without a reference to that cleavage. It is also these countries – and the UK, so in total the countries with many eurosceptic parties – where a substantial number of parties were concerned with questions and values of group-membership respectively the community definition: Who is one of us (Table 5b)? In contrast, in Germany, Spain and Bulgaria – our countries without many eurosceptic parties – identity questions have not or hardly captured the campaign agendas. As a consequence, the total number of spots referring to identity questions in our six country sample is 16.[13]

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[13] This relatively low number partly results from the fact that it is those countries with very high number of televised ads (Bulgaria and Spain) where the identity question is not salient on the campaign agenda.

Table 5a: Scope of the economic cleavage in party campaigns (in percent)

	N (party campaigns with economic reference)	only national	mainly national	national and EU	mainly EU	only EU	MEAN*
Germany	5	--	--	60	--	40	1,40
Netherlands	4	--	--	75	--	25	1,25
UK	6	66,7	33,3	--	--	--	0,14
CZ	3	66,7	--	33,3	--	--	0,33
Spain	4	--	75,0	25,0	--	--	0,62
Bulgaria	7	85,7	14,3	--	--	--	0,04
total (6 countries)	29	36,5	20,4	32,2	0,0	10,8	0,63

Basis: 69 spots with a reference to the economic cleavage (Germany: 6, NL: 4, UK: 12, CZ: 3, Spain: 22, Bulgaria: 22)
*Mean [0-2]: 0 = only national, 1 = EU and national, 2 = only EU.

Table 5b: Scope of the identity cleavage in party campaigns (in percent)

	N (party campaigns with identity reference)	only national	mainly national	national and EU	mainly EU	only EU	MEAN*
Germany	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Netherlands	3	33,7	--	66,7	--	--	0,67
UK	3	33,3	33,3	--	--	33,3	0,89
CZ	4	--	--	75,0	--	25,0	1,25
Spain	1	--	--	--	--	100,0	2,00
Bulgaria	1	--	--	100,0	--	--	1,00
total (5 countries)	12	13,4	6,7	48,3		31,6	1,16

Basis: 16 spots with a reference to the identity cleavage (Germany: 0, NL: 3, UK: 5, CZ: 5, Spain: 1, Bulgaria: 2)
*Mean [0-2]: 0 = only national, 1 = EU and national, 2 = only EU.

Looking at the scopes under which both cleavages were referred to (Table 5a, 5b), we find a pattern for the economic cleavage which seems quite familiar: on average in our six countries under study, more than 50% of all party campaigns featured primarily questions of the national economy.[14] This tendency is especially strong in the UK and Bulgaria. However, Germany and the Netherlands serve as contrasting cases. Here all party campaigns dealing with the economic cleavage made reference at least partly to European markets and economies. When looking at the question of identity and community, party campaigns referred seldom to the national community alone. More than 80% of all party campaigns in our six countries featured questions of group-membership with a reference to a European community. It is only the UK where identity questions are still primarily framed in terms of the own nation state. Summing up, both cleavages show some form of EU interpretation and therefore contestation does not remain completely nationally confined. However, country differences are large. Beyond, it is interesting to see that the identity cleavage in most countries is more often inter-

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[14] In order not to overestimate Europeanization of the campaigns, spots with an unclear cleavage scope were also counted in this category.

preted with reference to the EU than the economic one. It actually seems that the question of identity is more Europenized than the question of market-regulation.

In order to analyze the second assumption of the strategic party mobilization model regarding the contestation about Europe, i.e. the question whether the mainstream parties' pro-European cartel is challenged by eurosceptic voices, the role of the EU in the presentation of the two cleavages was determined: Was the EU presented as a risk or a problem regarding the economy or community, or was it perceived as an opportunity or potential problem-solver? Table 6 presents the mean evaluations of the EU's role regarding the economy or the community. A value of 1 indicates a positive, a value of -1 a negative EU evaluation. The results displayed in Table 6 show that with regards to the economic cleavage the pro-European cartel seems quite intact. On average in our six countries parties' campaigns contain a positive evaluation of the EU regarding the economy (M=0.32). The most positive results are found in Germany (M=0.6) and the Netherlands (M=0.75). Yet also all the other countries – with the exception of the UK – are characterized by campaigns with positive or no clear-cut evaluations of the EU regarding the economy. The relatively small standard deviations show that there are few outliers to this result. The only true outlier outside the UK that puts a negative evaluation of the EU's role in the economy on its campaign agenda is 'La Izquierda' a small leftist party in Spain. In the other countries, however, no clear-cut leftist mobilization against the EU can be observed. It seems that on the economic dimension pro-European mainstream parties with their positive or in the worst case ambivalent evaluation of the EU are so far hardly challenged. The only exception once again is the UK. In the UK party campaigns that refer to the economic cleavage portrayed the European Union as a problem (M=-0.42). This negative evaluation stems from the usual suspects, UKIP and BNP, but as well from the Green party.

Table 6: EU as risk or opportunity

	Economic cleavage			Identity cleavage		
	N	Mean Evaluation EU*	Standard devation	N	Mean Evaluation EU*	Standard devation
Germany	5	0,60	0,54	--		
Netherlands	4	0,75	0,50	3	-1,00	0,0
UK	6	-0,42	0,66	3	-0,33*	1,15
CZ	3	0,33	0,58	4	0,25	0,96
Spain	4	0,28	0,48	1	0,00	--
Bulgaria	7	0,36	0,48	1	0,00	--
total (6 countries)	29	0,32	0,40	12	-0,22	0,48

Basis: 69 spots with a reference to the economic cleavage; 16 spots with reference to the identity cleavage
*Mean [-1,1]: -1 = EU as a problem; 1 = EU as a problem-solver

This picture, however, differs if one analyzes the evaluation of the EU with regards to the identity question (Table 6). Here the EU is seen as a risk in the majority of the party campaigns with a mean evaluation of -.22. This risk evaluation is especially prominent in the Netherlands where all parties that campaign on the identity question feature the EU as a threat. In our six country sample the Netherlands was the only country where a classical mainstream party, the 'VVD' has taken over EU critical stances on identity issues. In the UK it is the Liberals who feature the EU in a positive way whereas 'UKIP' and the 'BNP' characterize the EU as a threat regarding identity questions. Interestingly, the eurosceptic mainstream party in the Czech Republic ('ODS') does not publicly criticize the EU regarding identity questions. Here it is 'Suverenita' a small eurosceptic party who challenges the role of the EU. In sum, it is on the identity question where the pro-European cartel is actually challenged.

This challenge becomes also apparent if we analyze the identity concepts that are advocated in these campaigns (Table 7). In all countries – except for Spain – it is the non-liberal community image that is prominently placed on the campaign agendas (61,7%). This community concept calls for strong nation states, national sovereignty, exclusive national identities and cultural homogeneity and therefore challenges the liberal community concept that has so far been the basis for EU integration. This non-liberal concept dominates the campaign agenda of those countries where the identity question is taken up by several parties. This is the case in the Netherlands, the UK and the Czech Republic. Beyond, it is the Bulgarian 'Attack' party, a right-wing eurosceptic party, that places the non-liberal concept of community on the campaign agenda.

Table 7: Identity concept of party campaigns (in percent)

	N (party campaigns)	liberal	Non-liberal	Ambivalent / not clear
Germany	--	--	--	--
Netherlands	3	--	66,7	33,3
UK	3	--	66,7	33,3
CZ	4	25,0	75,0	--
Spain	1	100,0	--	--
Bulgaria	1	--	100,0	--
total (5 countries)	12	25,0	61,7	13,3

Basis: 16 spots with a reference to the identity cleavage (Germany: 0, NL: 3, UK: 5, CZ: 5, Spain: 1, Bulgaria: 2)

Finally, all of our analyses regarding the two basic cleavages, the socio-economic one and the cultural one, can be used to evaluate the third claim of the strategic party mobilization model. This claims states that identity concerns are the driving force for the politicization of Europe. In purely quantitative terms this claim can be easily rejected as references to economic conflicts are more present than to identity questions. However, a closer look challenges this first impression. It is identity questions that are discussed with more references to Europe. It is also identity questions where the pro-European mainstream parties are challenged by EU-critical positions and by non-liberal, populist conceptions of communities.

5. Conclusion

In this section we will summarize what we have learned about the role of parties as politicizers or de-politicizers of EU integration, where we think future research needs to head and finally why we should care about all this.

Parties' role in European Parliament elections can be described by two competing models: the "second-order national contest" and the "strategic party mobilization" model. With our empirical analyses we have tried to clarify which of these models better describes national parties' public articulation of and contestation about EU integration today. In sum, our results challenge the "second-order national contest" model regarding the *articulation*. We show that the majority of national parties in six European countries feature EU actors as their main campaign message transmitter – and not national ones. For the issues mentioned in the spots, this result is less clear-cut. Yet, what we find is that at least for some countries (i.e. Germany and the Netherlands) we find a mixture of EU and national issue scopes. Also the country differences regarding EU articulation support the strategic party mobilization model. It is countries with a considerable portion of eurosceptical voices where we find a stronger articu-

lation of EU issues and actors. In these countries, it is not only the eurosceptics, but as well mainstream parties that more strongly hook up on EU issues and actors compared to countries where such mobilization agents are missing in the party system. However, we need to add a grain of salt to our results. It is the UK and Germany which turned out to be two exceptions to the general pattern. In the UK, being the eurosceptic country par excellence in the EU, we found a nationally focused campaign whereas in Germany, a country with hardly any eurosceptic voices, a relatively strong EU articulation took place. What does this mean? The strength of eurosceptic EU-mobilizers as a general country variable explains only to a certain degree whether Europe is articulated. What we had to add to our model were situational factors which allow us to understand that EU issues and actors might capture the agenda in a country at time x but not at time point y. For the UK it has already been shown that some campaigns have been truly Europeanized, yet the 2009 European Parliament election campaign turned out to be nationally confined again. Such situational factors might refer to internal political events such as scandals (like this year in the UK), or to party constellations (e.g. in 2009 the grand coalition in Germany) which makes it difficult for the mainstream parties to fight on classical national issues. However, what the already mentioned situational factors make clear: parties strategically decide when to put Europe on the agenda depending on the party constellation in a country, but also depending on other situational factors.

Beyond, the strategic party mobilization model also seems to be more appropriate to describe the *contestation* dimension. Both cleavages, the economic as well as the cultural one (community / identity), show some form of EU interpretation – yet with strong variation between countries. The EU focus is especially prominent regarding the cultural cleavage. Further, also the country differences confirm the expectations derived form the party mobilization model. It is those countries with strong eurosceptic parties, namely the UK, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, where identity questions prominently feature the campaign agenda. It is – as expected – in these countries where mostly right-wing parties from the fringes campaign on identity questions featuring the EU as a risk and challenging the EU's self-concept of a liberal community with their nationalist, non-liberal community concept. The only mainstream party that has joined so far into this group is the VVD in the Netherlands whereas the British Conservatives and the ODS in the Czech Republic have refrained from this populist framing. It seems thus that as expected by the strategic party mobilization model it is identity questions which are the driving force for politicization. With the exception of La Izquierda in Spain and the overall sceptics in the UK, none of the parties prominently campaigned against Europe on

economic grounds. Consequently, if the pro-European cartel of the mainstream parties is challenged, it is challenged by non-liberal community conceptions which feature the EU as a threat to national sovereignty and identity. However, this challenge so far is limited: in the midst of the economic crisis, references to economic conflicts are still more prominent than to identity conflicts.

Where should we head from here? So far we have solely concentrated on the content of domestic parties' campaigns. Yet, the second-order national contest model links these nationally focused campaigns to national concerns relevant for voters (and also for the mass media) (Schmitt, 2005). If it is true that domestic parties Europeanize their campaigns under specific conditions in the context of EP elections we might expect changes in voting behaviour as well as in mass media coverage. Consequently, there is a lot to do for empirical research. What are the consequences of campaigns that focus (at least partly) on EU issues, actors and conflicts? We have started to work on this question in our experimental study in which we ask how differences in the campaign regarding the strength of EU articulation and the pattern of EU contestation shape citizens' knowledge and attitudes on EU integration (Maier & Adam, 2009). Yet, to fully approach these questions, we need to go beyond analyzing the content (national versus EU) of these elections and also study their salience (the second-order character). Moreover, whether our observations actually are part of a critical juncture (Kriesi, 2008) can only be judged in a long-term perspective. And finally, to understand under which conditions party place EU issues, actors and conflicts on the agenda, we need to test more variables that might impact parties' strategies. Some of these variables might add to our understanding of general country differences. Here it is the magnitude and the strength of the mobilization potential on the side of the citizens which need to be added to our variable 'strength of eurosceptic parties'. Situational variables need to be taken into account to understand irregularities of a specific country and variations between different events within this country. We already made some suggestion (internal political events like scandals; coalition structures) which might be a starting point for further analyses.

Why should we care about the politicization of EU integration? Politicization of EU integration is often regarded as the cornerstone to *democratize* the European Union (Follesdal & Hix, 2005). From this perspective, the EU's democratic deficit could be reduced if contestation for leadership and over EU policy considerations would take place. In these contestations, citizens might form opinions on Europe – a prerequisite for EU politics to become linked to citi-

zens' preferences and interests. Politicization could also challenge the silent cartel of pro-European mainstream *parties*. If these parties remain silent they leave public opinion to the eurosceptic mobilizers (Risse, 2010). If these parties publicly articulate positions on EU integration, they struggle with their internal inconsistencies on the question of EU integration (for a detailed analysis of intra-party dissent on EU integration see Edwards, 2009). In the most extreme cases this might – as the example of France has already shown – make domestic parties break apart on the question of EU integration. Finally, politicization also challenges traditional *policy-making in the EU*. If we find domestic articulation of and contestation about EU integration, it is very unlikely that EU policy-making can return to business as usual, i.e. to decision-making behind closed doors based on elites' rituals and routines of compromise finding. Research on the conditions that trigger politicization of EU integration touches fundamental questions of EU integration: it is a key to our understanding of whether and how the European Union might be democratized, how EU integration might change domestic party structures and how domestic politics hits back into EU policy-making.

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