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This e-book is based on selected contributions presented at the EUDO Conference on Elections in Europe in Times of Crisis. The conference was held at the European University Institute on 28-29 November 2013. The Conference brought together some of the best experts to assess democracy in Europe and the current world crisis’ impact on the elections of 2013 and 2014. The rationale of the Conference departs from considerations of how decisions made at the European level to respond to the crisis are increasingly generating tensions between member states that are differently equipped to face it and that have different approaches to the solution of the problems it is creating. These tensions have profound implications for EU democracy and governance that are likely to be reflected in electoral dynamics at national and European level. The Conference offered participants an opportunity to analyse the results of the national elections that were held in Europe in 2013 and to provide prospective insights on the 2014 European elections, by focusing on links between actors, strategies, and themes that characterise the elections at both levels.

National elections are analysed with a particular attention to the impact of the Euro Crisis on national context and with a view to verifying hypotheses that, as a possible consequence of the crisis, European level actors will try to influence national electoral outcomes. The 2014 European Elections will be particularly important for at least three reasons. First, these elections will be the first after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which assigns more prerogatives and powers to the EP. Second, the stronger Parliament that will emerge from the elections may be called to elect the President of the EU Commission from amongst the candidates proposed and supported by the largest Europarties. In the last years several institutional reforms, mostly concerning the electoral law and Europarty status and financing, were proposed in order to bridge the gap between
European citizens and European institutions. However, they fell short of their intended aims or were not implemented at all. Political actors, in particular the strongest among the Europarties, are thus trying to overcome the EU’s institutional limits by changing their electoral strategies to maximise their influence within the existing institutional framework. Third, the 2014 elections will represent the first Europe-wide test of hypotheses linked to the new forms of Euroscepticism generated by the crisis. All these elements will contribute to make European themes crucial both at the national and at the European level.

The contributions that are included in this e-book address five different sets of questions.

1. Factors Driving Electoral Outcomes: Partisan Cueing and Candidates

The first article in this section Do parties still orient voters in times of crisis? Experimental evidence of partisan cueing effects by Lorenzo De Sio, Aldo Paparo, Joshua A. Tucker, and Ted Brader, adopts survey experimental approaches to assess the extent to which parties not only aggregate preferences, but are also able to shape them - a research question which becomes crucial as the economic crisis is weakening trust in parties and the party system in many European countries. The paper reports findings from a survey experiment on high-saliency issues, which was included in the 4th wave of the CISE (Italian Center for Electoral Studies) Electoral Panel. Results show effects of party cueing that are large and significant although this effect depends on the complexity of the issues at stake. The paper also investigates variation in party identification, with findings that confirm mainstream theories: party identifiers show stronger cueing effects than non-identifiers, although different levels of party closeness do not always correspond to cueing effects that are significantly different. The paper also explores whether alternative forms of identification (e.g., ideology) might discriminate better than party identification among groups with different party cueing effects, but finds no empirical confirmation for this claim.

The second paper in this section, The Evolution of the Candidate Selection Procedures in the Italian Political Parties by Enrico Calossi and Eugenio Pizzimenti, investigates the degree of territorial centralization of the most relevant Italian parties, with regard to the procedures of Candidate Selection. In organizational theory, centralization relates to the distribution of control and effective decision-making authority among the party units. As Candidate Selection is one of the core functions carried out by political parties, the ways in which parties, belonging to different ideological families and characterized by different organizational traditions, regulate these procedures, reflect the organizational arrangements deemed more effective in a specific political context. In particular, by comparing the degree of centralisation in the Candidate Selection procedures to other relevant organizational variables, the paper aims to define to what extent this crucial activity had significantly followed patterns of decentralisation or, on the contrary, whether it still represents a prerogative of the national party organs. The conclusions underline that Italian political parties have been only partially influenced, at least in their formal organizational profiles, by changes occurred at the institutional level: only parties belonging to the communist tradition (Democratici di Sinistra – DS and Rifondazione Comunista – PRC) have proved more inclined to adapt their organizations to the process of denationalization of party politics. With the exception of the Lega Nord (coherently with its declared federal profile), all other parties, have adopted organizational strategies in line with their predecessors (AN and PPI) or, in any case, oriented to top-down institutionaliza-
2. Economic Crisis, Economic Voting, and National Elections

*Economic voting in Western Balkan countries* by Trajche Panov examines economic voting in the former Yugoslav countries of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo. Through an analysis of aggregate level data from the period of the fall of communism and breakup of Yugoslavia until the most recent elections, the paper tests the basic postulates of economic voting theory with a view to assessing whether there are differences between these countries and which factors might eventually explain them. While Slovenia has shown a significant economic progress which has resulted in EU membership and inclusion in the European Monetary Union, other countries like Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing very high unemployment rates and very low GNP growth levels. The paper examines whether different economic circumstances cause different electoral outcomes in these countries. While economic voting has important influence on the electoral process, the consequences of the breakdown of Yugoslavia has also very strong explanatory power for voters’ decisions. Additional explanations suggested in the paper are the instable and volatile party systems, high level of corruption and risky interethnic relations.

Finally in this section, *Conventional and unconventional political participation in times of political and financial crisis in the Netherlands* by Rik Linssen, Hans Schmeets, Manfred te Grotenhuis, and Peer Scheepers investigates the extent to which the economic and financial crisis affected political participation in the Netherlands by deriving competing and complementary theoretical propositions concerning the effect of economic downturn on political participation. Economic decline could mobilize people to voice their concerns in the political arena, especially through unconventional modes of political participation such as demonstrations. Conversely, against a background of growing concerns on declining social cohesion and community involvement in the Netherlands, it is also argued that economic adversity might induce apathy, make people less likely to connect with their communities and less likely to participate politically. The authors use the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies data collected both before and during the economic crisis in 2006, 2010 and 2012. By distinguishing between conventional (electoral) and unconventional (non-electoral) modes of political participation they assess the extent to which these contrasting and complementary theoretical propositions affect different modes of political participation.

3. EU Elections

*European representative democracy beyond 2014: Can elections to the European Parliament be made more consequential?* by Wilhelm Lehm-ann addresses the issue of the ever lower voter participation in European elections and of its importance in electoral studies and on the theory of political legitimacy. The sociological and political reasons why European elections are a second-order contest have been intensively researched and thus provide some guidance for corrective measures. A much smaller literature focuses on the relations between policy-making powers, the design of electoral institutions and electoral salience. Under the premise that electoral periods are an appropriate moment to take stock of the quality of a polity’s input legitimacy the paper scrutinises EU efforts made over the past few years to counterbalance the populist debate around its crisis management. For an operational definition of input
legitimacy the paper focuses on the strengthening of European party politics through reform of its legal basis, notably the new party statute currently under negotiation, and on attempts to revitalize European elections in a context where media attention and citizens’ perceptions of European governance are dominated by bargaining between member states. The paper evaluates current political and administrative proposals for the preparation of the 2014 elections, such as the appointment by political parties at European level of their candidates to presidency of the Commission or new procedures for the development of party positions and the design of campaigns. The paper also assesses steps being made towards making the EU more of a political community beyond 2014, notably the Europeanisation of electoral campaigning and the strengthening of the statute and impact of European political parties.

The core argument of the paper *The economic representation crisis in Europe?*, by Simon Otjes is that European voters and politicians have radically different views about economic issues. It is not just that politicians and voters disagree about economic matters, they think differently about these issues. Where party politicians think in terms of a one-dimensional economic left/right dimension, which integrates questions of redistribution and government intervention, the economic views of citizens cannot be integrated into a left/right dimension. A large segment of the electorate desires economic equality but does not support the measures that from the perspective of politicians would be necessary to achieve this equality. These voters are in the terms of Derks (2006) and Kitschelt (2007) ‘economic populists’. They may find it difficult to find representation in the party system, the supply side of politics, because no party offers a mix of policies that fits their preferences. The paper then examines to what extent this lack of representation leads to distrust in political institutions and electoral volatility.

4. The Impact of the Economic Crisis and Europe on the Party Systems

In *Exporting Europolitics in the Eastern Neighbourhood: Elections in the Post-Soviet Area and the Regional Activity of Europarties*, by Angelos Chryssogelos a new avenue in the research of the impact of Europe on national party politics is proposed. In particular the authors focuses on how transnational party federations (more commonly referred to as ‘Europarties’) affect national party politics, especially in the EU’s periphery, under conditions of as yet unformed party systems, semi-authoritarian power structures and rampant economic and political corruption. These theoretical suggestions are assessed with reference to developments in three post-Soviet states: Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The basic argument of this contribution is that Europarties can play an important role in the legitimation and consolidation of party politics. In all three cases, democratic revolutions have made democratization/authoritarianism the overarching dimension of political competition and increased proximity to Europe has allowed democratizers to present democracy and ‘Europe’ as mutually reinforcing choices. In all three cases and to a varying degree, the democratization/authoritarianism axis has also served to structure better than before the expression (if not genuine representation and mobilization) of social divisions (linguistic, ethnic, religious) as well as having formed a powerful normative framework with which personal-oligarchic agendas are compelled to engage. In this context, the opportunities for transnational political cooperation offered by Europarty affiliation are important legitimating mechanisms for anti-authoritarian strategies.

*Revisiting and Extending Peter Mair: The Impact of Europe on National Parties and Party Systems in the Times of Economic Crisis*, by Ilke Toygur aims to revisit and extend Peter Mair’s article on
the limited impact of Europe on national party systems in the light of the current economic and political situation by examining the direct impact of Europe on the format and mechanics of European party systems with recent data. Chapel Hill Expert Survey Data (2010) is used to define party positioning on pro-vs. anti-European integration dimension. The study covers 27 Member States and analyzes the vote distribution of anti/pro-European parties in the most recent national elections in every member state with a special focus on euroscepticism. The paper further discusses the spillover mechanism from the European arena to the national arenas. The roles of arenas have been changing, the distinction between the national arena and the European arena is blurring, as Europe has been producing more and more important policy decisions with an impact on daily lives of citizens.

In his Radical Right and the Welfare State: The Electoral Relevance of Welfare Politics Elie Michel aims at providing a conceptual framework to assess the relation between welfare politics and the radical right by bridging the literature on the radical right vote with the political sociology of the welfare state. To do so, the author relies on a normative theory, based on the moral economy of the welfare state; and on a risk-based theory. First, he develops the risk-based theory, and explains how economic insecurity can account for the radical right vote. Then, he proposes a normative theory that links welfare attitudes resulting from norm violation to this voting behaviour. In this paper two hypotheses that contribute to the explanation of the radical right vote are developed. First, the “losers of globalization” are expected to face economic insecurity; confronted to economic risk and expressing a negative perception of globalization, they seek protection by voting for radical right parties. Second, individuals that feel the core norms of the moral economy of the welfare are being violated, and thus express extreme welfare attitudes that target a specific group, are expected to support radical parties that reflect these group boundaries.

5. Nationalisation of European Elections vs. Europeanisation of National Elections

In Elections in Multi-Level Political Systems: Implications for Representative Democracy, by Simona Piattoni the author looks at elections in multi-level political systems from a very particular angle: that of the division of labor – in the issuance of voice, expression of will, and exertion of control – between representative assemblies at different governmental levels.

These functions are called voice, will and surveillance. The author first illustrates these three democratic functions. Then, she argues that in the EU multi-level political system these functions have been separated and allocated to different parliamentary levels. Finally she concludes by showing how this affects both institutions and the kind of representation that they can offer to European citizens and how this might affect electoral behavior in the 2014 European parliamentary elections. The paper identifies a “reversal of roles” between European and the national parliaments and a consequent misallocation of the democratic activities of judgment and will on the part of EU citizens. They both affect national campaigns and European and national elections. National political parties are beginning to campaign on constitutional issues – whether to leave the Union and/or which functions to retain at national level and which to decide at EU level – rather than over policy issues over which they no longer have full control. Thus, national campaigns may be on their way to becoming a more veritable forum for open discussion on the right kinds of questions. However, paradoxically, this new awareness might have the effect of weakening the European Union by electing a large number of Euro-skeptic representatives to the European Parliament.
SECTION I: FACTORS DRIVING THE ELECTION OUTCOMES: PARTISAN CUEING AND CANDIDATES
1.

**DO PARTIES STILL ORIENT VOTERS IN TIMES OF CRISIS? EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE OF PARTISAN CUEING EFFECTS IN 2013 ITALY**

LORENZO De SIO, ALDO PAPARO, JOSHUA A. TUCKER and TED BRADER

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1. Introduction

The recent financial crisis has accelerated developments that have characterized electoral competition and political representation in the last decades in Europe and beyond. Processes of individualization of vote choices weaken long-standing group loyalties, while economic globalization is changing the economic landscape and influences political alignments. The democratic system of electorally accountable, representative government increasingly appears as the most vulnerable link in a complex system of multi-level governance. Furthermore, the development of the Internet and of online social networks rapidly changes the dynamics of public opinion.

In such a challenging environment, it is not surprising that, after the enforcement of severe austerity measures in many countries, unprecedented electoral outcomes have emerged in recent national elections. Several European countries have witnessed a resurgence of protest movements and anti-establishment parties: against financial austerity, national elites, and – not least – against the EU. These phenomena may lead to deep changes in the configurations of party systems. An example of such development is clearly the case of the recent Italian general elections held in February 2013, where a new, anti-establishment party, the Movimento 5 Stelle (5-Star Movement, M5S) reached 25.6% of valid votes – ranking first among parties – in what clearly emerged as a tripolar party structure, leading to radical changes in the format and mechanics of the Italian party system. These developments point to important questions for scholars working on electoral behaviour and public opinion, as they represent important challenges for existing theories of voting behaviour and party competition.

In particular, our aim is to highlight how recent developments in the Italian party system appear particularly stimulating as for the interplay of at least two of the main frameworks in voting behaviour research: spatial models of voting behaviour and party competition (Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1984; Adams, Merrill, and Grofman 2005) and party identification theory (Campbell et al. 1960; for a recent assessment see Bartle and Bellucci 2009). We argue that their interplay appears particularly meaningful in light of recent theories about the effect (and actual measurement) of partisan cueing effects, i.e. the ability for parties to shape public opinion by cueing voters to adopt the party’s policy positions on some issues (Campbell et al. 1960; Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Goren 2005; Carsey and Layman 2006; Brader and Tucker 2012b; Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012; Brader, Tucker, and Ryan 2013). While not providing yet a rigorous theoretical argument, we suggest that interest in these effects could be motivated by the ability of partisan cueing to avoid the typical disequilibria and decision cycles implied by intense multidimensionality in the issue space (Arrow 1951). Previous research on Western Europe has highlighted how parties, despite a limited ability to shape voters’ opinions on issues related to the left-right dimensions, are more successful in doing so on other dimensions (Ray 2003; Steenbergen, Edwards, and De Vries 2007; Adams, Ezrow, and Somer-Topcu 2011; Milazzo, Adams, and Green 2012). If confirmed, such finding would highlight a dynamic that might be crucial in terms of economic crisis and discontent towards political elites: even clearly multidimensional challenges to the party system (such as the one provided by M5S) might be limited in their potential disequilibrria effects, due to an enduring party cueing ability on dimensions beyond left-right. As a result, decision equilibria on the left-right dimensions would still appear as legitimate in terms of their implication on other dimensions, due to partisan cueing effects. At the same time, the bases for such partisan loyalties have to be carefully assessed in times of plummeting trust in parties, with potential for party realignment.
towards new parties. Evidence of citizens switching from blind faith into a party to blind faith into another party (rather than through an assessment of policies and/or group identities) might hardly be considered as leading to a well-functioning and responsive democracy.

This paper aims to contribute to a reflection on this topic, by trying to assess the presence of partisan cueing effects among Italian voters in the aftermath of the 2013 general elections. We argue that the theoretical relevance outlined above might be even augmented in a context where party identification could be guessed to be extremely weak. Italy is a clearly multi-party system; recent polls have been showing all-time lows in overall levels of trust in political parties; recent elections have shown both an increase in fragmentation, with electoral ENP reaching 5.3 (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2013), and an important success of new parties (Maggini 2013). As a result, conditions appear the least favourable for strong partisan cueing effects on policy issues. With a large number of relevant parties (thus leading to a predominance of ideology over party identification – see Van der Eijk, Schmitt, and Binder 2005), and several of them of very recent emergence (thus unlikely to have developed a large base of strong identifiers), we might expect partisan cueing effects to be difficult to find. Evidence for their presence should then suggest that the basic dynamics of party identification could be at play even in a clear multi-party system, with very young parties, and in times of low trust in political parties.

Our measurement strategy builds on recent literature that has successfully used experimental methodology to assess the presence and strength of partisan cueing effects. In such studies, survey respondents are typically administered items that measure individual preferences on policy issues. The experimental setup implies administering such items with or without a mention of the party endorsing each of the proposed policy positions, and then assessing – among respondents whose party preference has been measured elsewhere in the questionnaire – how much the policy position congruence between respondents and their preferred party varies when parties are explicitly mentioned in the response item (Brader and Tucker 2012b). We then conducted similar survey experiments on the fourth, post-electoral wave of the CISE Electoral Panel 2012-2013. Our data also represent a significant improvement compared to previous researches, as we employed issues with a high level of saliency in the current campaign, while most previous research has been employing low-saliency or even artificial issues.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 briefly introduces the literature, and derives specific hypotheses to be tested on our dataset. Section 3 presents the dataset and our specific measurement choices. Section 4 then presents empirical findings about the presence and strength of partisan cueing effects, and tests the heterogeneity of treatment effects across issues and parties. Sections 5 specifically tests hypotheses derived from party identification theory, by testing effect heterogeneity across respondents with different levels of partisanship. Section 6 moves then on to specific hypotheses about partisan cueing dynamics in times of crisis, by testing effect heterogeneity across respondents with different exposure to the economic crisis, as well as across respondents with different levels of trust in mainstream political parties. Conclusions follow.

2. Party identification and partisan cueing effects

It can be safely said that few concepts have had such an importance in the study of voting behaviour and political attitudes as the concept of party identification (Campbell et al. 1960). The very idea that individuals develop a socio-psycholog-
ical attachment towards a political party, either through the family environment or through key experiences during the political socialization process, quickly established itself as one of the key categories for interpreting political attitudes and voting behaviour in the United States. So central was its role, that even challenges to the mainstream sociological paradigm for the interpretation of voting behaviour precisely targeted that concept, by reframing it in more dynamic, individual-level, choice-oriented terms (Fiorina 1981). Still, despite the emergence of structural changes in the patterns of partisanship (Dalton 1984), party identification still retains an absolutely central role in the study of voting behaviour and political attitudes in the U.S (Bartels 2000, 2002; Lewis-Beck Michael et al. 2008).

Given the success and usefulness of the concept, it is no wonder then that, shortly after its introduction in the United States, attempts were made by social scientists to adopt the same conceptual apparatus to study multi-party systems, especially in Western Europe. However, it could be said, with much less success. Looking from today’s perspective, the usefulness of the concept of party identification is still widely contested with reference to multi-party systems (Bartle and Bellucci 2009). The application of the concept of party identification to multi-party systems led first to measurement problems; secondly, first empirical findings on genuine multi-party systems ended up openly rejecting some of the cornerstones of the theory, such as the prediction that party identification ought to be more stable than actual vote choice (Thomassen 1976).

As a result, European scholars have always been careful in systematically adopting the party identification framework (Inglehart and Klingemann 1976; Bartle and Bellucci 2009), and they have much more consistently and systematically referred to the left-right dimension as the fundamental political orientation device for citizens in multi-party systems in Western Europe (Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Knutsen 1990, 1995; Budge et al. 2001; Gunther and Montero 2001). And the left-right ideological self-placement has even been suggested as a possible functional equivalent for party identification in Western Europe (Inglehart and Klingemann 1976; Percheron and Jennings 1981; Lewis-Beck 1983; Lancaster and Beck-Lewis 1986), especially after Van der Eijk and Niemöller (1983) effectively demonstrated that, in the Netherlands, left-right self-placement was much more stable than party identification, and that in general, such dimension is a stable driving force of vote choice in Europe (Van der Eijk, Schmitt, and Binder 2005), suggesting the very presence of some form of ideological identification. We argue, however, that an effective and useful conceptualization of long-term forces that shape voting behaviour in multi-party systems cannot be derived from ideological identification alone. There are aspects of the original Party ID theory that can hardly be reformulated in terms of ideological identification; especially those aspects that involve an active role by political actors. Among these there are clearly partisan cueing effects. Especially in presence of citizens with limited levels of information and interest in political affairs, it is easy to imagine that, if there is a party that the voter identifies with, it might be able to form the voter’s opinion, especially on relatively minor and perhaps complex issues (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; Zaller 1992; Miller and Shanks 1996). It should be clear how it would be more complex to imagine that such function can be performed by a general ideology, especially when dealing with issues that were not present at the time of the original ideological elaboration. In

1. And also when low ideological sophistication does not allow the development of an abstract system of beliefs which could help the autonomous formation of opinions on new issues (Converse 1964).

2. This has clearly been the case of environmental poli-
our case, the presence of partisan cueing effects in a very unfavourable environment might demonstrate how some of the dynamics predicted by the party identification theory are present even in a complex multi-party system.

Coming to a measurement strategy, in recent years scholars have tried to overcome the problem of measuring party identification effects in different contexts by adopting experimental designs containing party cues. The experiments consist in a manipulation of the presence of party cues in policy questions. Respondents are typically administered items that measure their preferences on policy issues. While respondents in the control group receive plain policy preference items, respondents in the treatment group also receive a mention of the party endorsing each of the proposed policy positions. Given that individual party preference is measured elsewhere in the questionnaire (or even in a previous panel wave, as in the present study), it becomes possible to assess how much the policy position congruence between respondents and their preferred party varies when parties are explicitly mentioned in the response item (Brader and Tucker 2012b; Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012; Samuels and Zucco 2013; Merolla, Stephenson, and Zechmeister 2005; Merolla, Stephenson, and Zechmeister 2008; Coan et al. 2008). And, apart from demonstrating the presence of partisan cueing effects, such experiments made possible for scholars the comparison of party identification effects on policy preference among countries with different characteristics in terms of age and stability of the political system (Brader and Tucker 2012b; Merolla, Stephenson, and Zechmeister 2005) or among different kind of parties (Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012) and different types of individuals (Brader, Tucker, and Ryan 2013; Kam 2005).

However, one key limitation in most of these studies lies in the very frequent adoption of low-salience, often artificial policy issues. This choice is understandable in many regards. Real-world, salient issues are prone to potentially low, underestimated cueing effects, for at least two different reasons. On the one hand, policy congruence rates in the treatment group might be lower (and thus close to the control group) on very well known and debated policies, as voters might have developed a stronger and more stable opinion, with less room for party cueing. On the other hand, congruence rates in the control group might be higher (and thus closer to the treatment group) if the party’s position has been widely publicized, so that party supporters would be able to conform with their party’s position even without an explicit party mention. Other reasons for using artificial issues include experimental design requirements, often requiring the possibility for all parties to plausibly support a certain proposal, or requiring clearly distinct party positions on the same issue.

It is clear how such choices raise concerns of external validity. To what extent it is possible to generalize the presence of significant partisan cueing effects, when they have been demonstrated under very unnatural conditions? For these reasons, we decided to carry on our experiment on three issues, varying in complexity, but all extremely salient during the electoral campaign for the last Italian general elections. To some extent, this test represents the first systematic application of the aforementioned experimental design to high-salience, real-world policy issues.

3. See the discussion in Samuels and Zucco (2013). Also see Brader and Tucker (2012a). Other concerns are also raised by the relationship between a specific issue and a particular party in terms of the strategic importance of the issue (De Sio and Franklin 2012).

4. Lacking data sources on issue saliency, we selected them based on our qualitative assessment of their high saliency in the public debate.
It is important to stress that, from many viewpoints, our specific dataset represents a worst-case scenario for the presence of strong, significant partisan cueing effects. There are several reasons for this. 1) As mentioned, high-salience, real-world issues lend themselves by definition to lower cueing effects, as confirmed by a previous research (Samuels and Zucco 2013); 2) given that our survey experiments were administered (see below) few weeks after the general elections, the aforementioned problem would be extraordinarily relevant, with voters already clearly aware of both their and their parties’ positions (these latter, even without party mentions). 3) Italy is a clear multi-party system, where much of long-term socio-psychological attachments could be anchored to ideologies, rather than specific political parties; 4) given the radical transformations of the party system from 1992 on, and especially in more recent years (D’Alimonte, De Sio, and Grofman 2012), Italian parties can be expected to lack a large base of strong party identifiers; this is even more relevant for 2013, as new parties have obtained more than 30% of votes, with the newly-formed Movimento 5 Stelle becoming Italy’s largest party. Given the aforementioned considerations, there are then several research questions of interest.

I. Is there any party cueing effect?
As mentioned previously, the conditions of the experiments are particularly demanding. As such, demonstrating the sheer presence of partisan cueing effects would already constitute a relevant empirical finding.

II. Does the effect vary across parties and issues?
The previous theoretical considerations would suggest lower partisan cueing effects for younger parties, and also lower effects for more salient issues. However, it is clear that, given the very low number of higher-level contexts (four parties, three issues), we can only derive tentative indications, as no explanatory hypothesis on this question can be assessed in a statistically rigorous fashion.

III. Does the effect vary across voters?
On this last question, our theoretical interest is mostly driven by party identification theory, as well as by considerations connected to exposure to the economic crisis. As a result, we have two main interests. The first is in determining whether party identifiers are more affected by party cueing, compared to non-identifiers; and if there are differences based on the declared closeness to the party. Secondly, we want to assess treatment effect heterogeneity in relationship to exposure to the economic crisis, and to levels of trust in parties. These interests translate into four specific subordinate research questions:

a. Compared to non-identifiers, are identifiers cued more by their party?
b. Is there a different effect for voters accordingly to the self-reported degree of identification?
c. Is there a different effect for voters differently affected by the economic crisis?
d. Is there a different effect for voters with different levels of trust in parties?

In terms of operational expectations, our general criterion of assessment and comparison is based

5. There are multiple potential mechanisms leading to effect heterogeneity across parties and issues, whose theoretical identification will lead to specific research designs in the future. Apart from party age potentially increasing the strength of partisan cueing effects, we can already easily identify multiple potential factors: at the issue level, policy domain, issue complexity, and overall saliency; at the party-issue level, party-issue saliency, clarity, internal cohesion of the party on the issue; at the voter level, voter-issue saliency.

6. This last effect could be conceptualized as the direct explanatory mechanism for the indirect effect of the former (exposure to crisis). However, in this exploratory stage we prefer to test the two separately.
on the estimation of average treatment effects (ATEs). When defining the congruence rate as the proportion of respondents that select the policy option supported by their preferred party, in general we observe an ATE when such congruence rate is different between the treatment and control group, i.e. the group receiving party mentions along with policy positions, and the group only receiving policy positions. Given this definition, we can translate the above research questions into specific hypotheses:

**H1: We expect a significant, positive ATE in the overall sample**

The congruence rate should be significantly higher in the treatment group compared to the control group. This finding would be theoretically even more relevant, given the above considerations leading to the expectations of small, perhaps non-significant effects. As a result, this hypothesis is perhaps the key test of this paper: its confirmation would, in our opinion, alone justify the analysis; its rejection would strongly restrict the relevance of subsequent hypotheses.

As a result, the hypotheses that follow all concern the presence of effect heterogeneity: whether (and to what extent) ATEs vary across issues, different groups of voters and finally parties.

First, we expect different effects for different issues (see note 5): in particular we believe that parties should be able to drive the voters’ choice on complex issues or on issues that strictly involve institutions (such as e.g. electoral reform). Conversely, it should be less likely for parties to move people’s opinions on moral issues, on which is easier for voters to develop autonomous judgements, without recurring to the partisan shortcut:

**H2: ATEs should vary across issues.**

Secondly, we examine differences across parties. Previous literature has highlighted different effects across old, established and new democracies, as well as across old, established vs. new parties (Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012). The contemporary Italian context provides an interesting setting for testing the presence of such differences (new parties such SC and M5S vs. older parties such as PD and PdL).

**H3: ATEs should be higher for older, established parties, and lower for new parties.**

Finally, we examine differences of ATEs across individual-level characteristics. Our first test concerns the effect of partisanship. As suggested by the literature, party cues should have a stronger effect on voters that also identify with their preferred party, than on those who don’t. (Campbell et al. 1960; Brader and Tucker 2012b):

**H4: Partisan voters should present higher ATEs than non-partisan voters.**

The literature also suggests that proper subgroups can be distinguished among identified, in terms of the strength of their identification:

**H4b: Voters that are more strongly partisans should present higher ATEs.**

Then we investigate the impact of the economic crisis on party-voters relationship. In particular we hypothesize that:

**H5: Voters more affected by the economic crisis should present lower ATEs.**

Our last test concerns the trust in the party system. We hypothesize that

**H6: Voters with lower trust in parties should present lower ATEs.**

3. Data, design and measurement

The experimental questions were included in the fourth wave of the CISE Electoral Panel, which was conducted few weeks after the elections, in March

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7. Obviously starting from the seminal contribution by Duverger (1950).
2013. As a fourth, post-electoral wave of a panel, it is inherently affected by self-selection. This can create a bias, so that only those more interested in politics are overrepresented. However, we think that this would be one more reason to consider our design as a least-likely case study. It is reasonable to hypothesize that it would be more difficult for parties to drive individual preference among the most involved fractions of their electorates. Those voters are indeed more likely to hold an autonomous position on salient issues and to be aware of their party’s position, regardless of the mention of the party name.

On a total of 1,490 respondents in our experiment, 753 were randomly assigned to the control group, 737 were assigned to the treatment group. Each respondent was assigned to either treatment or control for all the three questions. We selected three issues, in order to maximize variance on issue complexity and policy domain: rights for gay couples, house property tax and electoral reform. For each of these issues, respondents in the control group were asked to choose among four different policy options without party labels. Respondents in the treatment group received the same options, but each labeled with the specific endorsing party.

We performed balance tests through a multivariate logistic regression of treatment assignment based on a large set of typical predictors of voting behaviour, as well as actual vote choice. The results (see Table 12 in the Appendix), show that the sample is well balanced: none of the included classical electoral variables discriminates the two groups in a statistically significant way. Also, it has to be noted that this logistic regression test is much more demanding than traditional bivariate tests, as our test shows that none of the aforementioned variables predicts treatment net of all other variables. As a result, the pseudo-R-squared of the model is virtually zero. This confirms that the random assignment was performed correctly, so it is possible to not include control variables when comparing treatment and control groups: simple bivariate tests and means comparisons are appropriate.

Coming to measurement considerations, party identification is operationalized through the traditional questions used in studies of multiparty systems in Western Europe: respondents are first asked if there is a party they feel closer to. If the answer is positive, they are then asked what party it is and if they consider themselves as simple sympathizers, quite close or very close to the party. Exposure to the economic crisis was measured through an item asking whether the respondent (or someone in her family) had actively and unsuccessfully sought a job in the last six months. Trust in parties (given the lack of specific items in our data) was measured as the difference between the PTV (propensity-to-vote) measure for the highest party (Van der Eijk and Franklin 1996), and the corresponding measure for abstention, available in our dataset.

Concerning the dependent variable, in general we assess treatment effects on the party-respondent congruence rate on a given policy position. In practice, for each policy issue we offered four alternatives corresponding to the actual policy position of the four largest parties: the leftist Partito Democratico (PD), the rightist Popolo delle Libertà (PdL), the anti-establishment movement Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S) and finally the new party founded by the incumbent prime minister Mario Monti, called Scelta Civica (SC). These four parties obtained respectively 25.4, 21.6, 25.6 and 8.3 percent of votes in the February 2013 election. For each of the three issues tested (see the Appendix) we calculated a dichotomous “congruence” indicator, coding whether the respondent...
chose the policy option endorsed by his preferred party, measured in a previous pre-electoral wave. Congruence rates in a given group (e.g. treatment vs. control) were calculated based on this dichotomous congruence indicator. We also calculated an overall party-respondent congruence index across all issues, by averaging over valid values of the congruence indicators for all issues.

4. Partisan cueing effects

The first test we provide is the ATE of the entire experiment, across all issues. As we have said, each respondent was assigned to either treatment or control for all the three questions together. We selected those cases that support one of the four parties included in our experiment. For each of them, we employed the aforementioned overall average congruence index as our dependent variable. By focusing on this index, we thus estimated the overall ATE across items. Findings are reported in Table 1.

This first test already shows, in our opinion, impressive results. On average (over three issues, and only among supporters of the four major parties), 52.2% of respondents in the treatment group (where voters are informed of the party endorsing each position) pick the option held by their party, compared to only 33.9% in the control group (where parties were not mentioned). In other words, we have a strong ATE, reaching 18.3 percentage points. Such effect is positive to a statistically significant extent, with $p < 0.001$. From this result we conclude that H1 is definitely confirmed: in our sample and with our choice of policy issues, party cues have a not only significant, but definitely very strong effect in driving respondents towards the policy positions endorsed by their party on all three issues. This is a huge finding supporting the ability of parties to shape voters preferences, despite – as discussed previously – all the conservative biases included in our design, which features real-world, highly debated issues, in the immediate aftermath of a general election.

Finally, it is worth briefly commenting on the policy congruence rate in the control group, expressed by the constant. Such value is above 25% to a statistically significant extent, meaning that respondents in general tend to be closer to their party’s position than according to a random prediction (given that four alternatives were offered, a random choice in the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>18.306***</th>
<th>[14.622, 21.990]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>33.918***</td>
<td>[31.306, 36.531]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% confidence intervals in brackets

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

10. This required us to exclude supporters of other parties, which overall received 19.3 percent of Italian votes. Identification of the preferred party is performed according to the same algorithm adopted in previous analyses using this experimental setup (Brader and Tucker 2012a), with the difference that, in this analysis, we employed all items in the previous, pre-electoral panel wave, to try to limit post-hoc rationalization effects. The party identification item is used first (if present, the party towards which R feels close is coded as the preferred party); if no party closeness is present, vote intention is then used; for respondents still without a preferred party, we finally code – as preferred party – the party that receives the maximum PTV (propensity-to-vote) score. Through this algorithm we were able to link 1,147 respondents out of the total 1,490 with one of the four major parties. All analyses are performed on this subsample, while we had to remove 343 respondents not preferring any of the major parties.
would yield a constant of 25 points). However, such difference is small: respondents appear to have little ability to discern their party’s policies, when a party label is not provided. In general, we have no previous analyses to rigorously compare with and to provide theoretical expectations. We will mostly comment on such findings in comparing between subgroups of our sample.

We now separately analyse and compare ATEs for each of the three issues of our experiment, in order to test H2, where we stated our expectation of ATE variance across different issues. Each of them can be considered as a distinct experiment. As clear from Table 2, each of the three ATEs is statistically significant with $p < 0.001$. The strongest effect is on electoral reform: on that issue we have the lowest congruence rate in the control group: 26% (expressed by the constant). This is probably part of the reason why we find the strongest effect on this issue, with an ATE almost reaching 27 points.

Finally on gay couples’ rights the ATE is 13 points, increasing the congruence rate from 36 to 49%. The effect is still strong. However, now even in the treatment group (with explicit party mentions) the respondent-party congruence rate is below 50%. Essentially, more than half of treated respondents do not pick up their party’s (clearly stated) policy option. It is not surprising that we find the lowest effect on gay rights: it is a moral issue on which it is very likely for voters to have their own positions, regardless which one their party support. However, it could be argued that an effect higher than 10 points on such a sensitive issue is still an important partisan cueing effect.

Overall, we then observe that H2 is essentially confirmed. ATEs clearly differ among issues. In particular the electoral reform issue shows an ATE that is statistically different from those observed events (letters promising the abolition of the tax and the reimbursement of the tax amount paid in the previous year were sent to millions of households of potential voters). Other parties too were committed to come up with some reform proposal, due the vast popular discontent towards such tax. It was definitely the most covered issue on all media. It is then indeed notable that even on such a debated issue, where we would expect voters to have clearly formed opinions and a clear awareness of their party’s opinion, the explicit mentions of party labels still have a 15-point effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Treatment ATE</th>
<th>Gay marriages ATE</th>
<th>Electoral reform ATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House tax (IMU)</td>
<td>15.468***</td>
<td>12.733***</td>
<td>26.717***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[9.749,21.186]</td>
<td>[7.047,18.419]</td>
<td>[21.257,32.177]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>39.298***</td>
<td>36.140***</td>
<td>26.316***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[35.242,43.354]</td>
<td>[32.108,40.173]</td>
<td>[22.443,30.188]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td>1,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% confidence intervals in brackets

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
on the other two. A tentative explanation we suggested for the variance among issues is issue complexity. The extremely high effect we observe on the electoral reform issue can indeed be explained by the many technicalities involved in such matter. This is even confirmed by the very low value of the constant, which is not significantly different from 25. Given that there were four alternatives, this shows that – when not offered explicit party cues – respondent are not able to autonomously identify their party’s position, as a random choice in the control group would yield a value of 25. Another factor that might potentially play a role, as we suggested, is policy domain: the more an issue is close to voter’s personal beliefs or everyday life, the less likely it is for party cues to produce large effects; However, such small number of issues makes impossible to disentangle the effects of issue complexity and policy domain: more research on more issues is needed for a rigorous test of the impact of such differences. In any case, H2 seems to be confirmed: different issues clearly show different ATEs\(^{11}\).

\(^{11}\) However, it is worth spending a few words on our analysis setup. We originally hypothesized that the presence of specific ATEs would be an appropriate measure of party cueing effects; however, we anticipated that congruence levels in the control group might reflect the tendency of some voters to already recognize the policy position of their party, without the need of a specific mention. What is to some extent a bit puzzling is the interplay of these two aspects. In terms of differences across issues, we would expect sensitive personal issues to not only have lower ATEs, but also lower congruence in the control group, so as to result in an overall lower level of policy congruence, which would be theoretically appropriate. We observe instead that party labels have a “levelling” effect: while baseline congruence in the control group differs significantly across issues, and while party cueing effects differ significantly across issues, the final outcome (overall congruence level when party labels are mentioned) does not vary significantly across issues. Such finding suggests that voters tend to conform to their preferred party in a uniform way across very different issues. Perhaps this might suggest social desirability effects, to be further investigated. One possible explanation could be question ordering: our survey experi-

We then move on to assessing heterogeneity in terms of party characteristics. Here too, the limited number of parties does not really allow for a rigorous test of any explanatory hypothesis on effect heterogeneity at the party level. However, a first qualitative assessment might be useful, especially if clearly highlighting counterintuitive patterns.

The experiment includes the four largest parties. Two of them are extremely new: both M5S and SC are competing for their first national elections. More than that, the latter was formed only few months before the elections. The other two, PD and PdL, are still in part new if compared to other advanced democracies: they appeared in late 2007 and early 2008. But each of the two was formed by the federation of previous parties: they represent the two poles of Italian bipolar party system that has characterized the last 20 years.

Among the new parties, SC was clearly an incumbent party: it was founded by the prime minister of the technocrat cabinet. On the other hand, M5S was the fiercest opponent of such government.

To some extent, the same thing can be true for the group of old parties. It is true that they both supported Monti’s government, but during the electoral campaign Berlusconi managed to successfully separate his image from the government’s one. Bersani, the leader of PD, campaigned on the possibility of a post-electoral alliance with Monti’s coalition.

Table 3 reports the regression table of the interaction between preferred party and treatment exposure. We were expecting differences due to the party age of the parties, with oldest parties having higher effects. On the contrary, we find no significant differences among parties.

This finding is best understood when looking at the marginal effects presented in Table 4, which synthetically reports the confidence intervals of
the ATEs for supporters of the different parties, allowing us to easily see their overall size and assess the statistical significance of the observed differences. First of all we notice that none of the four effects statistically differs from any of the others: this is a first very negative finding for H3. On average on the three issues, PdL shows the strongest effect: above 24 percentage points. Again contrary to what H3 would suggest, we find a lower ATE on PD’s supporters (17 points) than on M5S’s one (21). So party age clearly does not seem to have a decisive impact on variance among parties, even if SC, the newest one, shows the lowest effect (13 points) and the only one not significant at the 99,9% level. We also have to consider the large differences in congruence (across different parties) in the control group. For PD supporters the “baseline” congruence in the control group reaches 42%, while for PdL’ supporters it is less than 18%, even below random choice. SC has around a one-third congruence rate in the treatment group, and M5S has 28%. From this perspective the party mention in the treatment group seems to be working as a leveller for the overall congruence for the different parties. Electorates whose congruence rates would be significantly different (in terms of their ability to adopt the position of their party

Table 3. Effects of treatment inclusion, preferred party and their interaction on party-respondent congruence rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pd (Bersani)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.000,0.000]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pdl (Berlusconi)</td>
<td>-25.221***</td>
<td>[-31.988,-18.454]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M5S (Grillo)</td>
<td>-14.955***</td>
<td>[-21.576,-8.334]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sc (Monti)</td>
<td>-7.006</td>
<td>[-15.715,1.703]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>* Pd</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.000,0.000]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Pdl</td>
<td>9.388*</td>
<td>[-0.377,19.152]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* M5S</td>
<td>6.132</td>
<td>[-3.134,15.398]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Sc</td>
<td>2.088</td>
<td>[-9.757,13.933]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td>42.638***</td>
<td>[39.047,46.230]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% confidence intervals in brackets
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 4. Confidence intervals of the different ATEs for supporters of the different parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>ATE</th>
<th>Std. Err.</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>P&gt;z</th>
<th>[95% Conf. Interval]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>14.8616</td>
<td>2.5958</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>9.77393 19.9493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PdL</td>
<td>24.2493</td>
<td>4.24589</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>15.9275 32.571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5S</td>
<td>20.9936</td>
<td>3.9451</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>13.2614 28.7259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>16.95</td>
<td>5.45056</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>6.26708 27.6329</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
without an explicit mention) become very similar once they receive a party mention.

These findings leave us no option but to reject H3: we were expecting PD and PdL to have similar effects, and statistically higher than those of the two new parties, but that is not what the data show. On the contrary we have no statistical differences and the highest difference in the effects is among the two old parties. In any case these findings lead us to some considerations about what we are actually observing. The fact the newborn M5S can deploy similar effects to the PD, the last heir of Italian mass parties, definitely points out to the fact that for Italian voters partisan cueing effects do not stream from a deep enduring psychological attachment.

It is however clear that party-specific differences might call into question the relationship between each party and each particular issue. This is confirmed by Table 5, which reports ATEs on different issues for supporters of the four parties. We can see a certain issue-specific variance in the effects from the different parties. First of all, we notice that on the electoral reform the four big parties show similar huge effect (ranging from 25 to 30 percentage points). On the other two issues, they widely differentiate in the ability to shape their own supporters preferences. The party with the overall weakest effect (SC) manages to have the strongest effect on voters’ policy preferences on the gay rights issue; on the same issue PD has the weakest effect, a non-statistically significant one.

On the house tax issue PdL has the strongest effect and SC a not significant effect. We can see then how party effects rankings are not stable across the three issues.

Going back to H3, from Table 5 we receive more evidence to reject it. It is true that one of the two old parties (PdL) has the strongest overall ATE but the other one (PD) has all three effects lower than M5S and on gay rights presents the lowest effect, which is not significant. And on that issue, it is the other new party (SC) that shows the strongest effect, almost 22 points.

5. The role of party identification

So far we have only confronted ATEs on congruence rates on different issues and in general terms. We now want to test the presence of heterogeneous treatment effects across different categories of respondents, beginning from the key distinction between partisans and non-partisans. In other words, we want to test H4: whether there is an impact of party identification on the way party cues affect the answers of the respondents.

We divided our group of supporters of the four selected parties in two subgroups according to the answers to party identification questions: partisans (those close to the preferred party); non-partisans (those not close to the preferred party). Heterogeneous effects within these two groups are observable in Table 6. H4 is fully confirmed:
as expected, partisans show a stronger effect: 25 points, from 36 to 61% of party-respondent congruence rate, averaged over the three issues. This effect is statistically significant with \( p < 0.001 \).

The effect among non-partisans decreases to 12 points: party cues increase the congruence rate from 32 to 43% (still \( p < 0.001 \)).

Finally, we present findings of the empirical test of H4b: whether the level of closeness to the preferred party is actually able to discriminate among groups that respond in different ways to the party cues. As we can observe in Table 7, effects grow with the level of closeness with the party, in a pretty orderly way: about 7 additional points from each category to the next. In any case we can immediately observe that the effects on non-partisans and simple sympathizers are not significantly different.

But in order to properly test H4b we have to look at the conditional marginal effect, reported in Figure 1. This shows differences that are a bit blurred. As you can see, the three categories of identifiers do not show statistically different ATEs. Furthermore, only the two categories of strongest identifiers, “quite close” and “very close” have ATEs statistically different from non-identifiers, while “mere sympathizers” are not different from any of the other three groups. In conclusion H3b has to be rejected as we cannot observe any statistically significant difference among voters with different degrees of party closeness.

### 6. The impact of an economic and political crisis

Finally we investigate if the economic recession has decreased the ability of parties to influence individual policy preferences. In particular we want to verify if those voters particularly afflicted by the crisis are less receptive to the stimulus of party labels because they no longer trust political parties tout court, not even their preferred one.

We selected those respondents who reported themselves or a family member as unsuccessful job seekers during 2012 (374 respondents out of our 1,147 party supporters). Table 8 shows on the left side the regression of the interaction of treatment exposure and this unemployment measure. As you can see, there is a statistically lower congruence for job seekers in the control group, but this does not
Table 7. Effects of treatment inclusion, party identification level and their interactions on party-respondent congruence rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party ID level</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Non-partisans</th>
<th>Simple sympathizers</th>
<th>Quite close</th>
<th>Very close</th>
<th>Non-partisans * treatment</th>
<th>Sympathizers * treatment</th>
<th>Quite close * treatment</th>
<th>Very close * treatment</th>
<th>Constant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.513***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>3.893</td>
<td>5.858*</td>
<td>1.654</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>7.301</td>
<td>15.157**</td>
<td>22.405***</td>
<td>31.679***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,147</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% confidence intervals in brackets

* $p < 0.1$, † $p < 0.05$, ‡ $p < 0.01$, ‡‡ $p < 0.001$

Figure 1. ATEs on party-respondent congruence rate, for groups with different levels of party identification (95% c.i.)
We have also provided a similar test including a three-way interaction with the party preference variable together with exposures to the economic crisis and treatment. We did that in order to test if for voters of any specific party we could observe a significant effect of the economic crisis. In particular, we hypothesized that M5S supporters would react to the crisis differently from supporters of the parties holding the technocratic cabinet up. The assumption was that M5S supporters could be influenced regardless of the economic crisis by their party cues because they have found in it a possible political alternative solution to the crisis, while mainstream parties supporters are left with the only choice of maintaining austerity measures. If that was the case we might find no interaction effect of the crisis in the whole sample because it was washed away by the different mechanism applicable to M5S supporters. We do not present the findings here, but for none of the four parties we could observe a significantly different treatment effect between those affected and those not affected by the crisis.

95% confidence intervals in brackets

Party*Treatment interaction does not add significant changes.

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 9. Effects of treatment inclusion, propensity to abstain and their interactions on party-respondent congruence rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Propensity to abstain</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>[7.280,18.889]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>treatment</td>
<td>13.085***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Ptv – Abstention Ptv</td>
<td>0.620'</td>
<td>[0.027,1.213]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment * maxptv-abstptv</td>
<td>0.949'</td>
<td>[0.118,1.781]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>30.529***</td>
<td>[26.428,34.630]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% confidence intervals in brackets

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001
difference in the treatment effect between those respondents with maximum propensity to abstain and minimum propensity to vote the preferred party and those with opposite propensities.

We have reported in Figure 2 the margin plot graph of this interaction. It visually shows that treatment effects are positive and significant only among respondents that have a higher level of trust in parties, a finding supporting H6.

We have also adopted another strategy to assess the impact of trust in parties on the partisan cueing effect, using the set of questions dealing with the most important problem facing Italy at the moment. Respondents are first asked what they consider to be the most important problem, and then they are asked which government could solve it. One of the possible answers is “none could solve it”. We selected those 342 major parties supporters who gave such answers and compared them with the rest of the sample. Table 10 reports the outcome of the regression of the interaction between treatment inclusion and perceived inability to solve Italian most important problem.

Looking at all the 1,147 respondents, we find a significant lower congruence in the control group, but the interaction term in not significant. We have then excluded supporters of M5S, focusing on supporters of the parties who parliamentary supported Monti’s cabinet. We did so considering that the fact that neither a left, a center nor a right government could solve Italian most important
problem should be particularly relevant for voters supporting those parties that would lead such governments. A separate test on this subsample is presented in model 2 of Table 10: we can observe a huge negative and significant interaction term. This fits with H6.

Table 11, reporting the confidence interval of the effects on mainstream parties supporters divided by their perception of the ability of parties to solve Italian most important problem, confirms that these two groups are statistically differently affected by the partisan cues. More than that, for those who support one of the three parties supporting Monti’s government and who believe the current political system will not be able to solve what they consider Italian most important problem, the treatment effect is not statistically significant.

From this evidence we can confirm H6: trust in parties has a positive effect on partisan cueing effect, in particular for supporters of mainstream parties.

7. Conclusions

We started this paper with the aim of investigating the ability of parties to shape voters’ preferences on relevant policy issues. The answer appears definitely positive. Our findings show that even when issues are real-world and salient, party cues have a strong and significant effect on voters’ preferences. The share of respondents choosing the policy option endorsed by the preferred party sensibly increases when party labels are explicitly added to the different options. This is in line with party identification theory, which is also confirmed by differences due to partisanship and to decrease of trust in parties, as a result of the economic crisis.
A second interesting finding is heterogeneity of effects across issues and parties: cueing effects tend to vary across different issues (although the very low number of issues did not allow us to more systematically test potential explanatory factors at the issue level: this constitutes a particularly stimulating question for further research) as they do across parties. It is however on this last question that we observed unexpected findings: cueing effects appear as strong in new parties as they are in older, more established parties.

It is interesting to look at these empirical findings in light of the recent economic (and political crisis). In this regard, findings suggest two partially conflicting dynamics. The first is related to differences across groups of voters that had different exposure to the crisis. Those more exposed show weaker party cueing effects. This would suggest a potentially rational response to crisis, with voters becoming less looking at parties for advice, as they become less trustful in them. But, in a partially contrary direction, there is the surprising finding of the lack of differences in cueing ability across different parties. The newly formed M5S appears to have partisan cueing ability as strong as the two older and more established Pd and PdL. This appears even more surprising as the M5S has presented an intrinsically contradictory, inconsistent policy programme. This might be considered understandable for a populist, anti-establishment party. But we might have expected its voters, while attracted by its anti-establishment stance, to still be more sceptical in terms of (at least some of the) actual issues, so as to present overall lower cueing effects. On the contrary, such effects are pretty high. This suggests how voters that might have selected the M5S for protest voting, non-policy reasons, appear prone to have their policy preferences shaped by this new party.

To some extent this pattern is not new in Italian politics. It was actually the very first pattern of democratic legitimation at the beginning of the Italian democracy: in a situation of strong ideological conflict after WWII, voters with extremely low levels of education and sophistication were socialized into mass parties, to which they essentially delegated the task of negotiating policy. After several decades, in a time of crisis, once again there are some signs that part of the electorate might be simply switching from one uncritical party affiliation to another, without any policy evaluation taking place as an intermediate process, and once again under the influence of a charismatic leader. This does not sound exactly optimistic for the political future of Italy.

Obviously, the proper framing of such findings can only take place in comparative perspective. To what extent are our expectations of effect heterogeneity across parties justified? Isn’t there the possibility of the above paradox to be replicated also in other European countries, perhaps even in those with a longer democratic tradition? And what about those with a younger democratic background? All in all, we think this paper demonstrates the potential of an experimental research strategy on partisan cueing effects, when applied to salient, real-world issues. This obviously calls for a comparative extension, which might be particularly enlightening especially in times of potential party system change due to the economic crisis.

References


Adams, James, Samuel Merrill, and Bernard Grofman. 2005. A Unified Theory of Party Competi-


Appendix

Table 12. Balance table: regression of typical electoral control variables on the dichotomy treatment/control for supporters of the four major parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>s.e.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
<td>(0.122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (classes)</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>(0.049)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>(0.054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political interest</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>(0.087)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-R self</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>(0.080)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>(0.039)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Vote choice (center-left)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>(.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center-right</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>(0.222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>(0.228)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5S</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>(0.182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.270</td>
<td>(0.377)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK/NA/Not valid vote</td>
<td>0.453</td>
<td>(0.232)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.049</td>
<td>(0.419)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations 1,142
Pseudo R² 0.005
AIC 1598.475
BIC 1658.961

Standard errors in parentheses

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

13. The question wording reported in this appendix is a translation of the original questions in Italian.
### Experimental questions for the treatment group:

1. One of the topics at the centre of the debate is electoral reform. Several proposals have been advanced in order the change the current law. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] The French run-off system, as proposed by the PD
   - [2] A proportional system with a threshold, similar to the German model, as proposed by SC
   - [3] The current law, with the introduction of a majority bonus at the national level also for the Senate, as proposed by the PdL
   - [4] The current system, but with preference voting, as proposed by the M5S

   [88] doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer

2. Another controversial issue concerns the IMU, i.e. the house property tax. Several proposals have been advanced in order the change the current law. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] Abolishing the tax for the first house, as proposed by the M5S
   - [2] Abolishing the tax for the first house and refunding the amount paid in 2012, as proposed by the PdL
   - [3] Exemption for the first house for low income families, as proposed by the PD
   - [4] Gradual remodeling of the tax through time, as proposed by SC

   [88] Doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer

3. Another relevant theme is rights for homosexual couples. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] The introduction of a law that recognizes civil unions, as proposed by the PD
   - [2] The protection of individual rights for cohabitants, as proposed by SC
   - [3] Keeping the current law, as proposed by the PdL
   - [4] Opening a debate towards a new law, as proposed by the M5S

   [88] Doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer

### Experimental questions for the control group:

4. One of the topics at the center of the debate is the electoral reform. Several proposals have been advanced in order the change the current law. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] The French run-off system
   - [2] A proportional system with a threshold, similar to the German model
   - [3] The current law, with the introduction of a majority bonus at the national level also for the Senate
   - [4] The current system, but with preference voting

   [88] Doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer

5. Another controversial issue concerns the IMU, i.e. the house property tax. Several proposals have been advanced in order the change the current law. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] Abolishing the tax for the first house
   - [2] Abolishing the tax for the first house and refunding the amount paid in 2012
   - [3] Exemption for the first house for low income families
   - [4] Gradual remodeling of the tax through time

   [88] Doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer

6. Another relevant theme is rights for homosexual couples. Which of the following proposals is your favorite?

   - [1] The introduction of a law that recognizes civil unions
   - [2] The protection of individual rights for cohabitants
   - [3] Keeping the current law
   - [4] Opening a debate towards a new law

   [88] Doesn’t know
   [99] Doesn’t answer
HIERARCHY, STRATARCHY AND PARTY POLITICS DENATIONALIZATION. PROCEDURES OF CANDIDATE SELECTION IN THE ITALIAN PARTIES (1991-2012)

ENRICO CALOSSI and EUGENIO PIZZIMENTI

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Introduction

In recent years, a bulk of literature on party organizational change has focused on the relationships between party national structures and party sub-national units. The theme has been addressed through different lenses. On the one hand, modifications in the allocation of powers, competences and resources at different party layers have been interpreted as the resultant of the institutional reforms adopted by European countries, towards more decentralized governmental settings. On the other hand, the strengthening and progressive autonomization of sub-national party bodies have been considered as the by-products of the shift from a hierarchical to a stratarchical organizational template in contemporary parties.

What is at stake, then, in contemporary party politics, is the intra-party distribution of power among relevant party units in managing critical aspects of party internal life and the electoral com-
petition. In what follows we will focus on methods and procedures of Candidate Selection (CS).

The methods of Candidate Selection are at the heart of the democratic system and political representation. Ranney defines the process of CS as the one «by which a political party decides which of the persons legally eligible to hold an elective office will be designated on the ballot» (Ranney 1981, p. 75). The relevance of CS methods has been stressed overtime by many scholars. Sartori maintains that CS is the core activity by which political parties differ from other political organizations (Sartori 1976). More recently, Hazan and Rahat have noted that «Whatever the electoral formula used in elections, candidate selection is one of the first things that political parties must do before they take place» (Hazan, Rahat 2006, p. 109), and Cross even got to the conclusion that «under certain circumstances, party candidate selection process may be equally or more determinative of who ends up in the legislature than are general elections» (Cross 2008, p. 615).

In general, CS methods reflect and affect the power struggle within parties: consequently an in-depth study of these procedures – compared to other relevant organizational variables – could raise interesting indications about party’s organizational attitudes as well as party’s electoral strategies. By drawing on a new-institutionalist approach to organization theory, the aim of this contribution is to investigate to what extent Italian state-wide parties have followed patterns of organizational change towards more decentralized party models and/or have experienced significant shifts of intra-organizational power in terms of reciprocal autonomy between the central (national) and the sub-national (regional) level.

At the EU level, the Italian case presents a number of peculiarities. In fact, at the beginning of the Nineties, a rapid and multifaceted process of institutional reform ran parallel to the radical renewal of domestic party politics, after the collapse of the s.c. First Republic. By focusing on 10 organizational variables, we analyse diachronically continuity and change in 8 Italian party organizations, through an in-depth analysis of the statutes adopted from the beginning of the 90s to present days. We expect to find significant modifications in the involvement of regional party delegates/officers at the national level as well as in the degree of autonomy accorded to the regional party.

1. Studying party change through the lenses of organization theory

Literature on organizational change has been neglected for a long time in the mainstream analysis of political parties (Panebianco 1982; Katz, Mair 1992; Bardi 2006), which has focused on different aspects of party behavior, role and functions in contemporary liberal-democracies. This subordination contributed to foster the existing fragmentation within the literature on organizational change, thus hindering the evolution of an integrated and coherent analytical framework or, at least, of a general scheme based on shared theoretical, conceptual and methodological premises. Furthermore, these studies have paid little attention to different theories and approaches interested in the analysis of the relations between organizations and their environment. In this respect, organization theory (Harmel 2002; Scott 1991; 1995; 2012) – and, more specifically, the new-institutional approach to the study of organizations – may represent a useful landmark to analyse the dynamics of party change. The reconstruction of the theoretical development of the new-institutionalist approach(es) to organization studies goes well beyond the scope of this contribution14. Rather, we are interested in employing those

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conceptual instruments, drawn by new-institutionalism, which could be helpful to define interpretative frameworks of organizational change based on multiple levels of analysis: in particular, focused on the relations between the environment where political parties move and single organizations. Moreover, it is crucial to define precisely what we mean when referring to “organizational change”; in what circumstances and under which conditions it is more likely to expect organizational change to take place; which parts of the organization are primarily affected; the depth of the observed modifications.

In traditional organizational analysis, the peculiarities of the environment where organizations interact were not central (Powell, Di Maggio 2000). It was after the development of the “open system” approach and its further evolution that scholars have been devoting significant attention to the relations between organizations and their environment. In particular, the new-institutionalist approach focused on the functional (or organizational) fields of organizations and on institutional regimes and technical environments organizations have to confront with (Scott, Meyer 1983; Scott 1994). While institutional regimes condense the set of values, norms, procedures and requisites to which organizations are expected to conform, technical environments are those arenas where organizations carry out their specific functions, in return for rewards which certify (qualitatively and quantitatively) the success/failure of their performances.

Powell and Di Maggio (1983) argue that organizations move within a number of functional fields and interconnected institutional regimes and technical environments, each of them exerting (to different extent) pressures on them. The combined mix of these exogenous pressures represent the set of rational myths that confer legitimacy to those organizations that conform to these (socially approved) prescriptions. This tendency favors organizational isomorphism among actors operating in a specific functional field: this process may be explained as a response based on both instrumental/rational and symbolic/expressive basis (Meyer, Rowan 1977; Scott, Meyer 1991; Lanzalaco 1995). Indeed, organizations are embedded within a complex and multifaceted environment which influences their organizational profile (Powell 1998). In our perspective, the “organizational profile” of an organization consists in the prevailing representation of internal power and authority; the degrees of freedom accorded to its structural articulations; the internal chain of delegation and accountability; the role assigned to members and the mechanisms set to guarantee their rights and dues; the source and entity of human/financial resources and the directions of their partition.

2. Organizations and organizational change

As stated above, functional fields are formed by institutional regimes and technical environments: on the one hand, these components help stabilising the functioning of the field (providing the legitimating rational myths); on the other, they enhance the levels of complexity of the requisites that organizations need to comply with. The success of an organization depends on its ability to conform to multiple exogenous pressures, which is the conditio sine qua non to access the resources provided by the context and to ascribe a meaning to the organizational action itself.

By focusing on isomorphism, new-institutionalism has privileged the observation of homogeneities rather than variance in organizational templates: this imprinting lead authors to analyse organizational persistence, i.e. the tendency to reproduce and reinforce the prevailing organizational models within a given environment (Greenwood, Hinings 1996). In this sense, even if new-institutionalism is not considered a theoreti-
cal approach mainly oriented to explain organizational change, in our opinion it can also provide scholars with concepts and ideas suitable to develop an interpretative model of organizational change based on both environmental and intra-organizational dynamics. Intra-organizational dynamics are crucial, in this perspective, as organizations operating within the same functional field may react differently to identical exogenous pressures. Thus, while pressures coming from the functional field are decisive, organizations may be considered *per se* as vectors of change (Scott 1994).

By considering organizational change as a dependent variable we assume that it will be the resultant of a mix of exogenous and endogenous factors (the independent variables), more specifically: 1) the degree of organizational institutionalization of the actors; 2) the degree of the incorporation of the actors within the functional field; 3) the degree of structuring of the functional field.

We define *organizational institutionalization* as the process by which organization-building strategies undertaken at a t₀ moment (the genetic moment) lead to a tₙ moment when organizational structures, values and repertories of action become permanent and are reproduced, in time. Organizational institutionalization thus corresponds to the crystallization of different dimensions, which become distinctive properties of the organization. The degree of *incorporation* represents the filter between intra-organizational and environmental dynamics, as it reveals the extent to which organizations fit with the institutional regimes and technical environments: the more the organization fits, the more it will cover a central position (in terms of strength, visibility, relative power) within the functional field. Finally, the degree of *structuring* of the functional field registers the stability of the broader environment, in time. A highly structured field reduces uncertainty and promotes isomorphism; *vice versa*, changes in institutional regimes and the instability of technical environments determine the modification of the rational myths, and consequently impose adaptive dilemmas to organizations.

### 3. Party organizations and their functional field

An institutional analysis of the process of party change should focus on the interactions between parties and their “natural” functional field: the political system. The institutional regimes political parties have to confront with may be distinguished between *formal* and *informal*: the formers are constituted by the set of norms and procedures regulating State institutional architecture (the balance of powers between the executive and parliament; the level of territorial decentralization etc.), party activities (the existence of party laws) and the political competition (the electoral law, public funding schemes, access to media etc.); *informal regimes* relate to those prevailing values, beliefs, ideas which provide external legitimacy to conforming organizations. The *technical environments* of political parties are the *electoral arena* and the *representative arena*. In the *electoral arena* parties compete to obtain democratic consensus on their programs and candidates and to enter representative institutions: if their efforts are successful, parties may legitimately aspire to place their elected personnel in key governmental/parliamentary roles (*representative arena*).

At the same time, not every single party organization undertakes institutionalization processes (Panebianco 1982). Institutionalization is completed once each different organizational dimensions become crystallized (Lanzalaco 1995; March, Olsen 1998). Party organizational institutionalization implies stability, in time, of:

1. party organizational boundaries;
2. party values/ideology;
3. party formal profile (stability of party articulations and functioning);
4. party resources (human/financial/material)

The original imprinting will influence further evolutions of the institutionalization process (Pierson 2004), which will be conditioned also by the degree of stability/instability of the functional field. As far as the cognitive, formal and material profile of the organization crystallize, the organization assumes a specific identity, diverse from those of the other organizations operating within the same functional field. (Scott 1998). In general, the higher the organizational institutionalization, the higher the capacity to resist to external pressures and to control the environment (Panebianco 1982): however, if the organizational boundaries become excessively impermeable to systemic inputs, the risk of over-institutionalization (Lanzalaco 1995) may compromise the future survival of the organization.

4. Purpose and method

The definition of a complete and integrated analytical framework to study party change through the lenses of new-institutionalism goes well beyond the purposes of this paper, which is part of a broader and more comprehensive research project on party organizations at regional level, launched in 2007 (Ignazi, Bardi, Massari 2013). Here we limit the focus of our analysis on changes in the formal profile of Italian parties, with specific attention to the distribution of power between the national and the regional levels of party organizations. We are interested in verifying to what extent Italian State-wide parties have followed patterns of organizational change towards more stratarchical/decentralized party models and have experienced significant shift of intra-organizational power in terms of reciprocal autonomy between the central (national) and the sub-national (regional) level. Albeit stratarchical tendencies in party organizational change have been observed in most Western democracies (Katz, Mair 1993; 1995; Carty 2004; Bolleyer 2011), we argue that this widespread paradigmatic shift has been reinforced, in Italy, by the institutional reforms cycle begun at the beginning of the 90s, which has brought to a massive decentralization of competences from the State to the regions.

At the EU level, the Italian case presents a number of peculiarities (Bardi 2013). In fact, at the beginning of the Nineties, a rapid and multifaceted process of institutional reforms ran parallel to the radical renewal of domestic party politics, after the collapse of the s.c. First Republic. In particular, the impact of the new electoral formula introduced for the election of the executive posts at the sub-national level brought to an observable autonomization of local politics and to party organizational decentralization (Massari 2013). We consider the progressive denationalization of Italian party politics conducive to observe party organizational arrangements based on power dispersion among different layers and stratarchical tendencies (Allern, Saglie 2012). By focusing on 10 organizational variables – and, in particular, on candidate selection procedures – we analyze diachronically continuity and change in 8 Italian party organizations, through an in-depth analysis of the statutes adopted from the beginning of the 90s to present days. We are interested in observing similarities and variance in the involvement of regional party officers/delegates at the national level as well as in the degree of autonomy accorded to the regional party, among parties belonging to different political cultures and characterized by different organizational imprinting. Put differently, we are interested in analyzing how different (party) organizations respond to systemic pressures (changes in institutional regimes) coming from their functional field (the political system).
As the allocation of power between national and regional levels of party organization is the core of our research we aim at analyzing to what extent regional and national levels determine political functions performed by parties. A coding scheme by which measuring the respective influences between national and regional levels needs to be drawn. Some attempts to code party organizations already exist, but few provide analytical categories useful for our purpose. Richard Katz and Peter Mair’s *Data Handbook* (1992) is a huge collection of data on party organisation but does not provide dedicated indicators to measure level of centralisation/decentralisation of parties. Kenneth Janda’s *International Comparative Parties Project* (1980) provides categories, including several variables linked to the “centralization” of power. This comprehensive analysis cannot be simply updated because its categories include also sub-regional actors, which are out of our study, and consider only processes at the national levels, without analyzing those performed at regional ones: our interest is on the respective powers of central and regional levels towards each other. Thorlakson (2009), who tries to compare parties in seven different federations, assigns only one value to each party without differentiating amongst functions. Probably, of the existing coding schemes, Eloise Fabre (2010) has produced the methodology which is the most useful for our purposes. First of all, she designs her analytical framework only with respect to regional and national levels, as the “other levels are only important in so far as they impinge on or strengthen the power of the central or regional level” (Fabre 2010, 346). Therefore, she concentrates her focus on two dimensions of multi-level organizations: the level of involvement of regional units in national party organs and, vice versa, the level of autonomy of regional units from the national levels. The first relates to the degree to which regional units are represented in central organs and involved in decision-making processes. The latter refers to the extent to which regional units are able to perform processes at the regional level independently from the national party. According to her scheme, each dimension is represented by a cluster of 5 variables, which represent correspondent party processes at the national and at regional levels. Each party receives a value between 0 and 4 for each variable. Despite the prominent advances offered by Fabre’s analytical scheme for our analysis we see fit to make some changes to both the variables and the indicators. These changes are due to the specific peculiarities of the Italian case but also to provide a more defined comparison between the two levels. In fact, for what concerns variables, while Fabre analyzes different functions performed by political parties at the national and regional levels, we analyze for both levels the same five functions, which are:

1. Selecting the party leader;
2. Selecting the party candidates for elections;
3. Composition of the party executive;
4. Amending the party statute;
5. Deciding the party electoral campaign strategy.

Also for what concerns the operationalization of the variables drawn from the aforementioned functions, we follow an identical rationale. In particular, we do not only consider the mere numerical presence of regional or national party officers in the party organs, but also the “rights/powers” they are entitled of. So, for all the ten variables – i.e. the five functions at the national and at the regional level – the following values are assigned:

1. A decision is taken from a party organ, exclusively composed by officers/delegates of the regional level.
2. A decision is taken by a party organ, formed partly by regional officers/delegates with voting rights.
3. A decision is taken by a party organ, formed partly by regional officers/delegates without voting rights
4. A decision is taken by a party organ, where regional officers/delegates are only invited or consulted
5. A decision is taken from a party organ, exclusively composed by officers/delegates of the national level.

Evidently, while value 1 represents situations of the maximum level of concentration of power at the regional level, and value 5 represents the maximum level of power for the national organs, intermediate values represent situations of prerogatives shared between the two levels. A complete view of all the variables and values is offered in the following tables (Tabs. 1 and 2).

Thus, parties which receive for the variables of the Involvement dimension a higher number of values close to 5 are those which do not guarantee any roles for the regional levels to influence the functions of the national bodies. On the contrary, parties which receive lowest values are those which grant the highest prerogatives for the regional levels to influence the functions performed at the national level. A similar assumption can be addressed for the variables of the Autonomy dimension. Parties that receive an average value close to 5 are those that foresee a top-down criteria inside their organization with more powers assigned to the national level in influencing the regional level. On the contrary average values close to 1 depict parties which grant high levels of autonomy to their regional levels. In Section 6 we proceed to a diachronic analysis variable by variable. We consider the first and the last statute adopted in the period (Tot = 16) by the 8 parties analyzed: Rifondazione Comunista (PRC); Partito Democratico della Sinistra-Democratici di Sinistra (PDS-DS); Partito Popolare Italiano-Democrazia è Libertà (PPI-DL); Partito Democratico (PD); Forza Italia (FI); Alleanza Nazionale (AN); Lega Nord (LN); Popolo della Libertà (PDL).

5. Regionalization and stratarchy: the Italian case

Institutional reforms are one of the main causes of the “denationalization” of party politics and party organizational change (Hopkin 2003). While in unitary States parties are expected to present well identifiable, centralized/hierarchical organizational profiles (Allern, Saglie 2012), in federal and regional States the search for the core locus of the party may prove to be more difficult (Deschouwer 2003). In fact the relevance of sub-national politics may vary greatly, by conditioning parties’ organizational strategies. In particular, depending on the level of interconnectedness of the different institutional layers; the degree of asymmetry among regions and the degree of autonomy accorded to regions (Ibidem), state-wide parties may consider more fruitful to diversify their organizational structures and electoral strategies in highly differentiated (also in terms of cultural/societal homogeneity) territorial units, while integration and uniformity in party articulation, governance and political alliances may result more effective in less heterogeneous polities (Van Biezen, Hopkin 2006).

At EU level, since the beginning of the Nineties – as a consequence of the isomorphic tendencies (Di Maggio, Powell 1983) to conform to the general guidelines set for the formulation and implementation of the cohesion policies – an increasing number of States have promoted the introduction/empowerment of sub-national levels of government (Keating 1997; Hooghe, Marks 2001). This process enhanced the salience of intermediate institutions as political arenas and forced State-wide parties to re-think and adapt their electoral strategies and organizational profiles to tackle the new challenges of decentralization (Hopkin 2003;
Van Biezen, Hopkin 2006). In fact, State institutional architecture is expected to influence, to different extents, party organizational arrangements (Deschouwer 2003).

At the same time, the strengthening and progressive autonomization of sub-national party bodies have been interpreted as the by-products of the shift from a hierarchical to a stratarchical organizational template in contemporary parties. By building on S. Eldersveld’s (1964) pioneering work, scholars have focused on different aspects of intraparty relationships along territorial-functional axis. While cartel party theorists suggest that parties have become more stratarchical as a consequence of the cartelization process (Katz, Mair 1995), other consider stratarchy as a continuum of structures whose configurations rest on intra-organizational arrangements (Webb 2000; Carty 2004; Bardi, Ignazi and Massari 2007); or as a specific model of party organization (Bolleyer 2011).

In what follows we try to combine both the above mentioned perspectives to analyze the Italian

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### Dimension 1: Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Scores and operational definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selecting National Leader (SNL)</td>
<td>1. By a national party organ, formed exclusively by sub-national delegates/officers;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selecting National Candidates (SNC)</td>
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<td>Composition of the National Executive Organ (NEO)</td>
<td>1. The NEO is formed exclusively by sub-national leaders/officers;</td>
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<td>2. The NEO is formed partly by sub-national party delegates/officers with voting right;</td>
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<td>3. The NEO is formed partly by sub-national party delegates/officers without voting right;</td>
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<td>4. Sub-national delegates/officers may only be invited to the meetings of the NEO;</td>
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<td>5. Sub-national delegates/officers are not present in the NEO;</td>
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<td>National Campaign Strategies (NCS)</td>
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case. Shifts from hierarchical to stratarchical party organizations may be observed in those political contexts, like Italy, where parties maintained a highly centralized/top-down profile until the beginning of the Nineties, notwithstanding the existence of formal party structures at the regional level (Massari 2013). In a recent volume on centre-periphery relations in the Italian parties edited by Ignazi, Bardi and Massari (2013), the authors argue that the progressive autonomization of local politics intertwined with high intra-organizational differentiation and a deep modification in the links between the three “faces” (Katz, Mair 1993) of political parties. By drawing on Carty’s franchise party model (2004) – which relies on the idea that stratarchy and hierarchy coexist in every party organization with different configurations, thus implying a certain degree of autonomy for party peripheral structures – Bardi (2013, p. 14, our translation) maintains that “this approach proves extremely helpful to analyze the process of formation and institutionalization of parties in multi-level systems, with particular regards to the regional dimension”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 2: Autonomy</th>
<th>Scores and operational definitions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selecting Regional Leader (SRL)</strong></td>
<td>5. By a regional party organ, formed exclusively by national delegates/officers; 4. By a regional party organ, formed partly by national party delegates/officers with voting right; 3. By a regional party organ, formed partly by national party delegates/officers without voting right; 2. By a regional party organ, after consulting national party delegates/officers; 1. By regional party organ, where national party delegates/officers are not present;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Selecting Regional Candidates (SRC)</strong></td>
<td>5. By a regional party organ, formed exclusively by national delegates/officers; 4. By a regional party organ, formed partly by national party delegates/officers with voting right; 3. By a regional party organ, formed partly by national party delegates/officers without voting right; 2. By a regional party organ, after consulting national party delegates/officers; 1. By regional party organ, where national party delegates/officers are not present;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Executive Organ (REO)</strong></td>
<td>5. The REO is formed exclusively by national delegates/officers; 4. The REO is formed partly by national party delegates/officers with voting right; 3. The REO is formed partly by national party delegates/officers without voting right; 2. National delegates/officers may only be invited to the meetings of the NEO; 1. National delegates/officers are not present in the NEO;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Amending Regional Statute (ARS)</strong></td>
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The regional level of administration and government, which was formally included in the 1948 Constitution, was not implemented until 1970 because of the strong reluctance of Italy’s political class. In particular, the Christian Democrats (DC), the predominant party until the Nineties, opposed to regionalization as it could hinder country’s post-war reconstruction (at that time coordinated from the centre); moreover, regionalization could favour the Communist Party (PCI), given the existence of a strong concentration of electoral support in the regions situated in the center of the country (the so-called “red belt”) - cfr. Bardi, Pizzimenti forthcoming. Beginning with the 1980s, the worsening of the North-South socio-economic divide and the increasing discontent towards the central State were elements in the success of the independence movement of Northern League (LN), which ultimately had a role in the collapse of the DC and, consequently, of the First Republic. Political parties born after the 1992-1993 political earthquake had different positions on regionalization, whose importance dramatically increased after the LN had become a relevant actor at national level by imposing the “Northern question” (Diamanti 2003) in the political debate. In addition, the electoral reform cycle begun in 1993 had positive effects on the devolution process (Pasquino 2007). The introduction of the direct election of mayors and presidents of provinces (1993) and presidents of regions (1999), and the contextual provision of increased powers over their executives and the legislative assemblies enhanced the relevance of sub-national politics. Furthermore, the strengthening of sub-national governments was confirmed by important administrative reforms, carried out by the Center-Left. The so-called Bassanini acts, (1997 and 1998) expanded regional competences, successively increased through the already mentioned 2001 reform of Title V of the Constitution (L. Cost. 3/2001), which introduced a form of cooperative federalism between the State and the regions, by assigning to the latter more legislative powers.

As a consequence of the denationalization of politics, the prevailing pyramidal and top-down party model (Bardi, Morlino 1994) started decomposing, by favoring new isomorphic tendencies. More specifically, by trying to validate the hypotheses formulated by Katz and Mair (1994), the results of an empirical analysis coordinated by Bardi, Ignazi and Massari on Italian parties, from 1991 to 2006, showed that (2010, p. 214):

"[...] the general trend in the organizational evolution of political parties is largely confirmed [...]. The dominant quota of state financing in spite of members’ revenues, the centralization of power in the hands of the executives and leaderships, the parliamentarisation and increase of staff and resources in the hands of parliamentary groups, and the persisting irrelevance of the membership role are all common features of contemporary Italian parties."

The empirical evidence confirmed the profound transformation undergone by Italian political parties since the beginning of the Nineties. Although alternative explanations of this phenomenon have been raised by specialized literature, in our opinion the decentralization of politics (resulting from a mix of institutional, electoral and administrative reforms) has played a major role in determining party organizational isomorphism. As Massari (2013, p. 315, our translation) puts in “[...] as far as personal parties and federalism stand out, the distinction between centre and periphery blows up. [...] The territory is the new hegemonic centre” of Italian politics.
### Tab 3: Selecting the National Leader

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### Tab 4: National Executive Organ

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### Tab 5: Selecting National Candidates

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### Tab 7: National Campaigning Strategies

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### Tab 8: Selecting the Regional Leader

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### Tab 8: Regional Executive Organ

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### Tab 9: Selecting Regional Candidates

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6. Involvement

Selecting the National Leader (SNL)

The Selection of the National Leader of the party (SNL) is a key variable to analyze the level of involvement of regional party delegates/officers at the national level, as it represents one of the core factors to frame the functioning of the intra-party chain of delegation and accountability. The observed parties show different values if we consider the left-right axis, while inter-party variety is lower within the left-wing and right-wing blocs. On the left side of the spectrum (see Tab. 3), both the PRC and the PDS-DS, the heirs of the communist organizational tradition, present tendencies to a decrease in the *ex officio* involvement of regional representatives within the organ in charge of the selection. While the 1996 statute of the PRC contemplated the *ex officio* presence of the Regional Secretaries within the Political Committee (score 2), the last by-law of the party does not provide any specific provision (score 5). The case of the PDS-DS is more controversial. An *ex officio* presence within the National Council of the PDS was granted, without voting rights, to all Regional Secretaries who were not already (elected) members of that organ (score 3). Successively, the DS introduced primary elections opened to party members for the SNL: the party thus abdicated the principle of intra-party delegatory democracy in favour of a direct appeal to the membership, which is a clear indicator of a tendency to stratarchy as it is widely recognized by literature (score 5). The same applies for the PD, whose foundation myth relies on primary elections opened also to voters (score 5); this plebiscitary mechanism weakens the intra-party chain of delegation from below.

The post Christian-Democratic parties, the PPI and DL, show an identical score of 2, which stands for a selection made by a national party organ formed partly by regional delegates/officers, empowered with voting right. In both cases, the National Congress – an organ mostly composed by sub-national party delegates – was entitled to the selection of the National Leader.

Parties of the right do not show neither inter- nor intra-party variance, in time, as all of them receive a score of 2. However, for all these parties a clear identification of the leader with single, charismatic personalities emerge during the whole period. This is particularly true if we consider Silvio Berlusconi and his undisputed leadership as Party President of both FI and the PDL (the party born in 2009 after the merger between FI and AN); but this *de facto* plebiscitary tendency characterized also Umberto Bossi’s leadership over the LN, at last until the 2012 statute; and, to a lesser extent, the presidency of Gianfranco Fini in AN.
**Composition of the National Executive Organ (NEO)**

The number of regional delegates and officers who are granted an *ex officio* presence within the National Executive Organ and who are provided with voting rights is a reliable indicator of the relevance of the regional layer of the party (see Tab. 4). The composition of the National Direction of the PRC was not integrated with regional representatives (score 5). Also the DS, in 2005, did not assign to regional delegates/officers reserved seats in the NEO: Regional Secretaries were present in the National Direction of the PDS, without voting right (score 3). This type of organizational setting was set by the 2006 statute of the DL, while Regional Secretaries were empowered with the voting right in both the PPI and the PD (score 2).

Among the right-wing parties, only AN did not grant the voting right to the Regional Coordinators, who were *ex officio* members of the organ. In the other cases regional secretaries (LN, FI, PDL) as well as regional delegates (LN) and elected personnel (FI) were all provided with the voting right (score 2).

**Selecting the National Candidates (SNC)**

The analysis of the process of selection of candidates to national elections gives us a rather diversified snapshot of the organizational arrangements deemed more effective by the selected parties. While intra-party variance is limited, differences among parties are significant (see Tab. 5). Both the PDS-DS and the PPI-DL have modified, in time, their organizational profile toward a more hierarchical/top-down approach in carrying out this crucial function. While the PDS assigned to the National Direction the power to approve the lists proposed by the Regional Directions, in the 2005 statute of the DS a specific National Electoral Commission, nominated by the National Direction, was responsible for the selection (score 5). Regional Coordinators participated with full rights to the National Direction of the PPI, the organ in charge of SNC: in the statute of DL, each party level was responsible for the selection of candidates. The PD – the party founded after the merge between the DS and the DL – receives a score of 4 as the *Coordinamento Nazionale* approves the lists proposed by the regional level. The same applies also to the PRC, as the National Direction analyzes the lists formulated by the provincial federations on the basis of the proposals advanced by the National Committee and the Regional Committees.

Parties of the right do not show significant intra-party variance in the SNC. The PDL shows the most hierarchical profile (score 5), as the National President is entitled to choose candidates, after consulting the Presidency Bureau: in the 2009 statute the lists were ratified by the National Coordinators, while in the following by the National Secretary. Also in FI the National Presidency was the organ provided with the competence of SNC, after having consulted the Regional Coordinators (score 4). On the contrary, the involvement of the Regional Secretaries and regional representatives is massive for what concerns the LN (score 2), as the Federal Council is mostly composed by regional officers and delegates. In AN the National Direction was the selecting organ, thus it is scored 3 (see above).

**Amending National Statutes (ANS)**

In all the analyzed parties the organ in charge of modifying the national statute is, in general, a national deliberative organ (the National Congress for PRC, DS, PPI, FI, PDL; the Federal Congress for the LN; the Federal Assembly for the DL), thus an organ elected by the sub-national layers of the party and largely composed by sub-national delegates (Tab. 6). Only the PDS and AN made exception: in both cases, an *ex officio* presence within the competent organs was accorded to...
Regional Secretaries who were not already elected members, without voting right (Score 3).

National Campaigning Strategies (NCS)

The definition of the political strategies is a core function for all parties: the composition of the organ (at least formally) in charge of setting the “line” of the organization is a predictor of its hierarchical/stratarchical tendencies. As the analysis of the statutes shows, the National Executive Organ is the organ which defines the NCS: thus the scores are the same as those assigned for the variable NEO (Tab. 7). The only exception is represented by the PDL, that shows intra-party variance (from 2 to 5): the first statute of the party empowered the National Direction with the task of defining the political strategies, while successively a monocratic organ (the National Secretary) was assigned.

7. Autonomy

Selecting Regional Leader

The 1996 statute of the PRC foresees that the Regional Political Committees (i.e. the largest body of the party at the regional level) choose the Segretario Regionale. None parliamentarian neither any member of the national bodies of the party are ex officio members of the Regional Committees, thus the score assigned to this function is 1, which reflects the maximum level of autonomy of the regional level. This function in completely unchanged in the 2011 statute, thus still scored 1 (Tab. 8).

According to the 1991 statute of the PDS the Segretario Regionale is directly elected by Regional Committees, but also the National Direction can propose candidatures. Since the National Direction does not have any decisive role in the final decision, its role can be interpreted as a consultative one. Thus, this function is scored 2. In 2005 the statute gives complete autonomy to the Regional Unions of the DS in choosing their own statutes and thus their own methods in performing such a function. This means that any choice in this field – i.e. giving or not giving some roles to the national level – is an exclusive prerogative of the regional party.

The 1995 statute of the PPI states that the Segretario Regionale is elected by the Regional Congress. Moreover it is also foreseen that members of the National Council of the party are ex officio members of the Regional Congress, without voting rights. Thus this function is clearly scored 3. The 2006 statute of the party heir of PPI, the DL, indicates that in every region the party must adopt a specific statute. However, the national party produces a model statute for the regional entities. According to this model the Coordinatore Regionale is elected by the Regional Congress of which however national and European parliamentarians, elected in the region, are ex officio members of the Congress (score 4).

In the statute of 2008, the election of the Segretario Regionale of PD is regulated by regional bylaws, as it is stated by the national statute, but the direct election through open primaries is a binding principle. Thus the regional bodies do not play any role in electing their regional leaders and the regulation in, in practice, decided by the national statute. The value – as explicated above – is 5. The same procedures are applied according to the statute of 2010 and thus the value still is 5.

The 1998 and 2012 statutes of LN assign to the National Congress the prerogative to elect the Segretario Nationale. Parliamentarians and the Federal Leader of the Party are ex officio member of the Congress, and thus the variable receives the score 4. The 1998 and 2004 statutes of FI and the 1995, indicates that the Regional Leaders are directly nominated by the National Leaders. Thus,
none role is foreseen for the regional levels and the variable scores 5. In 2006 the new statute of AN introduces the election of the Coordinatore Regionale by the Regional Assembly. Of this many officers of the national level party are ex officio members (score 4). The new party of the right, the PDL, seems to adopt the FI’s organizational scheme, rather than the AN’s one, and assigns to the party President the power to choose the Regional Coordinator, thus assuming value 5.

**Composition of the Regional Executive Organ**

In *Rifondazione Comunista* the executive body of the regional level is the Segreteria Regionale. This is elected by the Regional Political Committee and does not have any ex officio members of the national level (value 1). Thus the value is 1 both for the 1996 and the 2011 statute (Tab. 8). Also the PDS and the DS follow the same organizational principle and their Direzione Regionale does not include ex officio national officers (value 1).

This is not the same for the PPI and the DL, where national parliamentarians, whereas elected in the region, are members, without voting rights, of the regional executives (score 3). The party originated by the merger between DS and DL, the PD, is more similar to the DL structure. Indeed, also in the PD the parliamentarians are ex officio members of the regional directions, but, in this case, with full voting rights (score 4). Thus, it can be noted that, with respect to this variable, the PD seems to have adopted a more centralized approach than those of its “founding fathers”. An opposite process seems to have characterized the parties of the right. In fact, the PDL foresees the presence of parliamentarians within its regional executive organ, as also FI and AN were doing. But differently to its predecessors, the PDL does not guarantee any voting rights to MPs, thus it scores 3 and AN and FI 4. The LN appears to be consistent with its demands for autonomy and does not grant any role to the national bodies in defining the composition of the regional executive (value 1).

**Selecting Regional Candidates**

The heir parties of the Italian Communist Party (PRC and PDS-DS) share the same method in choosing their candidates for the regional elections, which has been unmodified for the whole s.c. Second Republic (Tab. 9). The national level does not play any role on this function, and the regional levels, through their regional committees have the monopoly in performing this function (score 1).

For the post-Christian Democrats parties, the PPI assigns to the Regional Committees, which are also composed by members of the National Council, the role of selecting the candidates. In 2006 the DL statute, foresees the establishment by the Regional Committee of an ad-hoc Regional Commission with the only purpose of determining the candidates. In the first case the score is 3, in the second 1.

According to the 2008 and 2010 statutes of PD, the candidates to representative assemblies (as the regional ones are) are chosen through open primaries. This method is foreseen by the national statute of the party and no role is assigned to the regional levels. Thus, comparing the power assigned to the national and to the regional level, it is clear as it is concentrated only in the national bodies of the party, justifying the assignment of value 5 for this function.

The parties of the right present a high diachronic and synchronic variance, once again showing that they do not share the same genetic origins. In 1998 in the LN the regional leaders play only a consultative role, while the right to select the candidates belongs to the Federal Council (value 4). This completely changes in 2012 when the new statute assigns to the Consigli Nazionali - as already said above, the regional assemblies of the
LN - the power of selecting candidates for the regional elections (score 1).

According to the 1995 and 2006 statutes of AN, the Regional Coordinators can propose some names, but the final lists of names are accepted by the Direzione Nazionale, which is composed ex officio representative of the regional levels, without voting rights (score 3).

In Forza Italia the statutes of 1998 and 2004 indicate that the regional candidates are proposed by the Regional Coordinators and finally approved by the Conference of Regional Coordinators, which is a national party body and chaired by the President of the Party (value 4).

In the PDL the procedure of selecting regional candidates is differentiated between the majority and the proportional portion of the lists. For what concerns the most important part of the lists, i.e. the majoritarian portion, the decision is taken by the Office of Presidency, which is a national organ, after a consultation with regional coordinators (score 4).

Amending Regional Statutes

Few Italian political parties foresee the presence of regional statutes. In practice, they are the Partito Democratico and its founding parties (Tab. 10). In the PDS-DS the every Unione Regionale performs an autonomous role in defining its regional statute, but in in the PDS it was foreseen a consultative role for the National Direction. In the PPI the responsibility of approving the carta regionale is to the Regional Committees, to which also members of the national council of the party participate without voting rights (value 3). In the DL this prerogatives has been shifted from the Regional Committees to the Federal Assembly, which is clearly a national organ of the party. Thus DL scores 5 on this variable. In the new centre-left party, the Partito Democratico, the Regional Assemblies (which are composed of regional officers) have the power to determine the regional statutes (value 1).

None of the statutes of all the other political parties specifies the presence of regional statutes. Even if such a provision is out of our coding scheme we can interpret this organizational choice as a manifestation of centralization. Thus, in this variable, PRC, LN, AN, FI and PDL score 5.

Regional Campaigning Strategies (RCS)

The definition of the political strategies is a core function for all the levels of political parties. For all the analyzed political parties this crucial power is assigned (at least formally) to the regional executive organs. Thus, the composition of the organ (at least formally) in charge of setting the “line” of the organization is a predictor of its hierarchical/stratarchical tendencies. As the analysis of the statutes shows, the Regional Executive Organs are the organs which define the RCS: thus the scores are the same as those assigned for the variable REO (Tab. 11). This is also a variable without any relevant diachronic variance, since none party changes its REO’s composition in the analyzed time-span.

Conclusions

The aim of this contribution was to analyze to what extent Italian State-wide parties have followed patterns of organizational change towards more decentralized party models and/or have experienced significant shifts of intra-organizational power in terms of reciprocal autonomy between the central (national) and the sub-national (regional) level. As Italy – like most European countries – has experienced institutional reforms oriented to the regionalization of relevant functions and policies, the “denationalization” of party politics has become a crucial research field. The Italian case is particularly interesting as the process of institutional regionalization ran parallel to other relevant changes in institutional regimes and the entrance of brand new political parties in the political arena, after the collapse of the s.c. First Republic. By drawing on a new-institutionalist
approach, we tried to verify if and to what extent a weakly institutionalized political system has oriented, through isomorphic pressures towards the denationalization of party politics, changes in the organizational profile of the new parties. Our purpose was to verify empirically – through the coding of party statutes – whether the most relevant Italian parties have modified their formal organizational architecture toward less hierarchical/centralized settings.

By aggregating the values assigned to the different parties analyzed, it is possible to notice which variables present the highest level of involvement/autonomy of the regional level (values closer to 1) and those with the lowest level of involvement/autonomy (values closer to 5). The ideal-typical stratarchical party should be scored 5 for the variables on the involvement dimension and 1 for the variables on the autonomy dimension.

The analysis of the results for both dimensions gives us a snapshot of the formal organizational profile of the Italian parties that does not fit with the hypothesis of stratarchy.

For what concerns the Involvement of regional delegates/officers at the national level, the mean value of the variables is 2.86. Table 12 shows that the selection of candidates for national elections (SNC) is the only variable which presents a value in line with the stratarchical model. On the contrary, amending the national statutes is the procedure which registers the highest level of involvement of regional level. The other three variables assume half-way values.

Tab. 12: Involvement - Mean Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>MV</th>
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<tr>
<td>SNL</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNC</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEO</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCS</td>
<td>2.81</td>
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Also the analysis of the variables along the dimension autonomy seems to not confirm the hypothesis of stratarchy. Three variables out of five present values that indicate a strong control of the national level on the regional level (Tab. 13).

Tab. 13: Autonomy – Mean Values

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>MV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SRL</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REO</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRC</td>
<td>2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>2.63</td>
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However, by analyzing the organizational evolution of each party considered, some differences emerge (Tabs. 14 and 15). In fact, the left-wing parties (PRC and PDS-DS) have shown, in time, a tendency to stratarchy – by increasing the mutual autonomy of the national and the regional levels. This tendency is shared also by some right-wing and centrist parties (e.g. LN, AN and PPI-DL) but the actual values are still far from the expected ones. It is also interesting to analyze the similarities/differences between the organizational profiles of the PD and the PDL – the parties born after the merger of DS and DL and FI and AN respectively – and those of their founders. The PDL presents an organizational profile in line with those of its predecessors, as FI and AN had similar formal rules. The organization of the PD is closer to that of the DL, even if the new party “inherited” from the DS the mechanism of primary elections to elect the national leader.

The variance amongst the organizational profiles of Italian political parties is well exemplified by the Fig. 1. Parties which have values closer to 5 on the Involvement dimension and 1 on the Autonomy are those closer to adopt a stratarchical organizational distribution of power. As it is showed by the figure, these are the heirs of the Communist party (PDS-DS and PRC). Parties which have lower values for both the dimensions (i.e. only the
Lega Nord) are those which assign more powers to the regional levels and thus are the most decentralized parties. On the contrary, parties which have values higher than 3 in both the dimensions – only PDL 2011 – are those which do not assign a relevant weight to regional parties and thus are the most centralized ones. The vast majority of the Italian parties (the centre-left PD and PPI-DL and the right-wing FI and AN) grant low degrees of autonomy to their regional branches but foresee high degrees of involvement of regional officers/delegates in the national organs or in performing the national functions. This fourth type of parties is the one which consents higher levels of cooperation between the national and the regional levels and can be thus interpreted as most integrated party.

In conclusion, Italian political parties have been only partially influenced, at least in their formal organizational profiles, by changes occurred at the institutional level: only the heirs of the communist tradition have proved more incline to adapt their organizations to the process of denationalization of party politics. With the exception of

<table>
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<th>Tab 14: Left parties - Mean Values</th>
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<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
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<table>
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<th>Tab 15: Right parties - Mean Values</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
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the LN (coherently with its declared federal profile), the other parties, albeit recently founded and institutionally weak, have adopted organizational strategies in line with their predecessors (AN and PPI) or, in any case, oriented to top-down institutionalization strategies (FI, PDL, DL, PD).

References


SECTION II:
ECONOMIC VOTING,
ECONOMIC CRISIS AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Does bad or worse make a difference? Economic voting in Western Balkan countries. The role of macroeconomics in the incumbents’ vote share 1990-2013

Trajche Panov

Trajche Panov is a PhD researcher at European University Institute in his fourth year and also holds a Master of Research from EUI. In his thesis he looks in the reasons why voters stop voting and how party ideology shifts influence on demobilization of voters. Prior to coming to EUI, he has done his Master’s degree in Political Science at the Central European University. He also held a Visiting Scholar position at the Wilf Family Department of Politics, New York University in 2013. He has been teaching courses on Comparative Electoral Behavior, EU Enlargement and Introduction to Quantitative Methods at the HHU Dusseldorf, Monash University -Prato Centre and Centre for Research and Policy Making - Skopje respectively. His research interests include voting behavior, political parties, political economy and post-communist countries.
Introduction

Strong in US and western Europe, research on the role of macroeconomic parameters as determinants of vote choice and the success of incumbents post-communist countries remains inconclusive and contradictory. Particularly, economic voting in the nations of the Western Balkans has been the subject of very few academic studies, with almost no comparative research on the effects of macroeconomics on vote choice. Therefore, in this paper, I examine economic voting in the former Yugoslav countries of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo. Through an analysis of aggregate level data from the period of the fall of communism and breakup of Yugoslavia until the most recent elections, I will test the basic postulates of the economic voting theory for a new set of countries, investigating the role of the macroeconomic parameters in explaining the incumbents vote share.

Despite similar historical developments, the countries of the former Yugoslavia have experienced different trends of economic development and transition processes. While Slovenia has shown significant economic progress, which resulted in EU integration and engagement in the European Monetary Union (Crnigoj 2007), other countries, such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, have very high unemployment and low GNP growth. Consequently, this paper examines how economy shapes electoral behavior of citizens of these seven countries of former Yugoslavia. Macroeconomic parameters ostensibly influence electoral processes in these countries as with other post-communist countries of Eastern Europe, however the specific severe consequences of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the bloodshed in the early phase and cooperation with ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) as a consequence of the war in the later stage might also have exerted a very strong explanatory effect on voter decisions. The numerous inter-ethnic conflicts and inter-related complex and still on-going process of state formation in this region continues to strongly shape domestic political scenes and the influence of the economy as a determinant of vote choice.

The economy, as I will show below as considered by scholars, has been a determinant of vote choice in post-communist countries. However, the findings differ and are often controversial, so therefore the effect of the economy on the electoral success of incumbents is not as clear when compared with the findings for established democracies. As a result and in line with similar post-communist backgrounds, the role of the economy should be limited to explaining voting behavior in Western Balkan countries. Moreover, the rise of nationalism leading to a civil war and ethnic conflicts and the strong transnational pressure through different forms and tools have also strongly influenced voter preferences and have thus shaped party behavior. Hence, constructing a general model that predicts voting behavior in these seven countries is a demanding and adventurous task because it is a dynamic period of more than twenty years including the breakup of the federation, ethnic conflicts, the rise of new states, disputes among neighbors and strong transnational influence.

The paper is organized into six sections. The following section offers a theoretical explanation of the main postulates of economic voting and empirical evidence of the role of macroeconomic parameters on the vote share of incumbents in post-communist countries. Additionally, this section presents specific characteristics of the Western Balkan countries and their role as explanatory variables of vote share. In the fourth section, I will present my research question and hypotheses, then discuss the dataset and statistical model that I am testing and its variables in section five. The
main findings of my analysis and interpretation of the results are presented in section six. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks on the results and a discussion of methodological issues.

Theoretical background

Economic Voting in post-communist countries

Numerous research has shown that voters consider governments accountable when deciding to reward or punish the parties in power at elections. Electoral accountability is typically equated with retrospective economic voting. Voters punish incumbents when the economy is doing poorly and reward them when the economy is doing well. Although not the only measure of government performance in office, the economy is highly salient to most voters (Roberts 2008). Retrospective voting and economic accountability have been understudied for countries of the Western Balkans. There is a lack of comparative research on the influence of macroeconomics on the vote share of incumbents, and, furthermore, only sporadic research includes economic determinants correlated with vote choice at certain elections in a Western Balkan country. Therefore, the theoretical expectations for this paper are derived from research conducted on economic voting in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

However, findings contradict strong expectations, with Harper (2000) concluding that economic factors had at best a modest effect on party choice in some post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Analyzing early elections in three post-communist countries, including Bulgaria, Lithuania and Hungary, Harper (2000) claims that the return to parliamentary power of ex-communist parties in these societies was not simply a function of economic voting. Vote shares for governments do not respond in the expected ways to standard economic indicators. A number of studies have shown that poor economic performance does not hurt the fortunes of incumbent governments (Lewis-Beck, 1988; Paldam, 1991; Przeworski and Cheibub, 1999; Wilkin et al., 1997). Using both micro- and macro-level data from eleven newly established democracies in East Central Europe, Tverdova (2007) also finds that national economic perceptions are disconnected from the objective economic reality, instead mostly driven by personal economic evaluations and political attitudes or “retrospective and prospective” economic voting.

In another study examining 34 elections in ten Central and Eastern European countries, Roberts (2008) identifies a phenomenon that he refers to as hyperaccountability. Accordingly, voters hold incumbents accountable for economic performance, particularly for unemployment, although distinguishing between large and small losses rather than vote losses and gains. This result is significant in several respects considering other studies. Governments that preside over high unemployment rates lose votes, all else equal, and the effect is substantively large. The result may partly placate the fears of many observers that these new democracies are of “low quality”. Voters seemingly are quite capable of holding politicians accountable for economic performance early in the transition (Roberts 2008). However, the hyperaccountability effect might negatively influence government performance and efforts to be accountable because no matter what, it will be punished by the voters. This might be one of the explanations for the high level of corruption in the region (Krastev 2004, Grzymala-Busse 2003).

Contrary to the hyperaccountability hypothesis, the reward-punishment hypothesis contends that voters evaluate government performance on major economic indicators, such as inflation or unemployment, and reward or punish the incumbent based on the ability to maintain these mac-
roeconomic indicators at desirable levels (Sanders, 2000). In other words, the government is accountable for economic policymaking. However, this reward and punishment is not symmetrical. One exception to the above mentioned hypothesis comes from what is know in the literature of economic voting as “grievance asymmetry”, a psychological mechanism whereby people appreciate an improvement in the economy less than they dislike the corresponding deterioration (Nezi 2012). Pioneering findings on the “grievance asymmetry” hypothesis show that unemployment growth is one of these asymmetric determinants of economic voting (Mueller 1970).

Another problem with the reward – punishment hypothesis, especially characteristic for post-communist countries of the Western Balkans with party pluralism and electoral volatility, is that it is much more difficult for voters to assign responsibility to the government in some systems than in others, with Anderson (2000) writing that “the Responsibility Hypothesis is “perfectly” suited to explain economic voting in two party-systems where the government is the one with the majority, but once there are minority governments with shifting coalitions, responsibility is illusive.” Although Anderson (2000) explores several closely related theories using vote intention data from thirteen Western European democracies, the limitation of the reward-punishment hypothesis is very clear for Western Balkan countries too.

Economic parameters do not equally affect parties from different ideological families. Party affiliation has an important role in economic voting, and consequently parties with different ideological positions face different consequences. This is a result of the different preferences of voters and the strength of their party identification. In post-communist countries, the nature of political parties, their ideological positions and relationship with the communist regime are factors considered by scholars as influencing vote choice. In one such study using an original data set of regional level economic, demographic, and electoral variables across twenty national presidential and parliamentary elections from Russia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, Tucker (2006) demonstrates that there is substantially stronger empirical evidence for the Transition Model that predicts that New Regime parties will perform better in areas of the country where the economy is stronger and Old Regime parties will perform better where the economy is weaker. Moreover, Tucker (2006) shows that the effect of the economy on Incumbent parties is largely conditional on their status as New Regime parties, Old Regime parties, or neither type of party.

Previous research on economic determinants of vote share in Western Balkan countries show that determinants other than the economy drive voting behavior. Drawing upon survey data from the 2007 elections, Henjak (2007) argues that economic issues, notably the division between transitional winners and losers, do not play an important role in determining support for the two main political parties in Croatia. Henjak (2007) also shows that voter opinions on economic issues are more salient in recent elections and political party affiliations most structure voter evaluations of economic conditions. However, economic issues are less relevant in structuring voting behavior in Croatia than issues related to culture and history, and unless a major realignment takes place, party statements will largely condition supporter evaluations of economic issues (Henjak 2007).

Examining the basis of political divisions in Macedonia, Panov and Taleski (2013) similarly find that economic perceptions and socio-economic status do not shape the political divisions among voters in the Republic of Macedonia. Perception of the communist past and consequently the perception of the economy during communism is the
strongest explanatory factor of the determinants of political divisions in Macedonia. Voters that perceive the communist past positively and believe that there was higher economic performance during that period are more likely to support the left, while voters with strong opposite views of the communist past and economy tend to support the right. The economy tested through different socio-economic statuses and economic preferences has a very limited effect on political divisions in Macedonia.

The “Balkan powder keg” and the influence of wars on vote choice

Analyzing determinants of electoral behavior in countries of former Yugoslavia should take into account the specific circumstances caused by the breakup of Yugoslavia and the biggest and most tragic bloodshed in Europe since the Second World War. In this sense, determinants influencing vote choice in the Balkan “powder keg” might significantly differ when compared with the influence of the economic parameters in post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. “The Yugoslav loose federation, built with the predominate concern to promote -brotherhood and unity- of the post-war Yugoslavia (Cviic, 1995: 823) failed to resolve economic problems and political antagonisms polarized around national issues. The crisis came to a head after the Cold War when Yugoslavia lost much of its geopolitical importance to the United States. In a process of dissolution, the independent states of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia were created” (Delevic 1998). Hence, the breakup of Yugoslavia, the wars and consequences of these wars should seriously be considered when analyzing voter and party behavior. Hibbs Jr (2000) claims that the best predictor of electoral outcomes in the US is a model that incorporates basic economic parameters combined with cumulative numbers of American military personnel killed-in-action. Hibbs’ “bread and peace” basically combines the effect of the economy and wars on vote share, which effectively corresponds with the situation in Western Balkan countries and the consequences of the civil war and ethnic conflicts. “Previous studies of domestic aspects of the American military involvement in Korea and Vietnam deliver two conclusions that guided Hibbs’ investigation of war effects on presidential voting outcomes: (i) Declining political support for the wars per se, as well as war-induced deterioration of presidential approval ratings in the polls, are best explained by cumulative growth of American casualties, particularly cumulative numbers of American military personnel killed-in-action, and (ii) The political costs were born primarily by the party initiating American participation (the “war party”; in both cases the Democrats)”(Hibbs 2000). The findings of the analysis of Hibbs are consistent with these conclusions. The vote losses associated with conflicts in Korea and Vietnam are best tracked by the cumulative numbers of American military personnel killed-in-action (CUM KIA) during each four-year term preceding the elections of 1952, 1964, 1968 and 1976 (Hibbs Jr. 2000).

Nevertheless, the military situation for all cases of war in Western Balkan countries significantly differ from the case of the US and consequently it is unclear whether the “Bread and Piece” model would have the same influence and predictive power for Western Balkan countries. Moreover, it is expected that the war and its consequences will significantly influence the vote share and that the economy is pretty much limited as a determinant of the electoral success of incumbents. Additionally, the economy during such a time period is at the service of the war needs. The case of the Western Balkan countries confirms this to a great extent and it is particularly clear in the case of Serbia in the early nineties for the economy.
Political context and International pressure as determinants of vote choice in Western Balkan countries

With the escalation of the conflict in the early 1990s as a result of rising nationalism, the role of international actors has significantly increased. While seeking to encourage stabilization, integration and peace building, the intervention of international organizations had different outcomes and thus different consequences on vote choice. Also tools utilized by international actors during the constant presence and influence on domestic political processes in the last twenty years have differed across countries and time.

Given the significant percentage of the Serbian population in Croatia and Bosnia (12% and 33% respectively) as well as Milosevic’s rise to power based on Serbian nationalism, the outbreak of the war was seemingly unavoidable. Nationalism proved to be winning card in the newly independent states as well. In such a setting, sanctions were a tool for stopping the war by containing the pan-Serbian policy of Milosevic (Delevic 1998).

However, Delevic (1998) contends that while the sanctions, aided to a great extent by pre-existing economic difficulties and macroeconomic mismanagement, had a devastating effect on the Yugoslav economy, thus helping make Serbian President Milosevic more cooperative, they were of no decisive importance for stopping the war in Bosnia. From data initially available, Yugoslavia experienced hyperinflation, with its peak of 313,000,000% in January 1994 (Hanke and Krus 2012). Because the BH dinar and the RS dinar were both initially pegged to the Yugoslav dinar, and based on the available annual inflation data, scholars know that the Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced hyperinflation with its highest peak of 322% in June 1992 (Brown et al., 1996). Croatia also experienced high rates of inflation, but did not reach the level of hyperinflation of Yugoslavia (CNB, 2012). “Moreover, poverty, which increased as a result of the sanctions, made people more receptive to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, making democratization ever more difficult to achieve” (Delevic 1998).

Hence, the presence of the international factor as a condition of the pre-existence of dangerous nationalism and media control have been used as a tool by parties in power to increase support and justify policies for the protection of their own people. The notion of “us against them” and the presentation of the foreign factor as an actor supporting the others and trying “to take a part of us” is present from the beginning until the most recent developments. Even after the end of the war, the international factor has played a crucial role regarding the cooperation of the countries involved in the war in Bosnia with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY). This issue, as a consequence of the war, has shaped or still shapes political behavior in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has been one of the main sources of the resurrection or continuation of nationalism. The European Union, in this sense, using conditionality, has played the most important role as an international factor influencing domestic political processes and consequently vote choice.

Even in countries that did not participate in the bloodshed in Bosnia and have transitioned through a peaceful transformation in the early nineties, such as Macedonia, international factors have still played an important role in resolving subsequent disputes between neighboring countries and inter-ethnic conflict in 2001. For example, the dispute between Greece and Macedonia concerning the official name of the latter during membership talks for NATO in 2008 led to a rise in nationalist sentiments and blame shift-
ing problems, including the economic situation, to the other country.

The mechanism of influence of the international factor and presence of international pressure, thus, is complex and interdependent on the character of the parties in power and the outcome of the pressure. Whether parties share nationalistic political views and the outcome of the pressure includes the acceptance of international positions and compromising influences whether the effect of international pressure is positive or negative on the vote share for incumbent parties or coalitions.

Research question and Hypotheses

The main aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between retrospective economic voting and the incumbent vote share in post-communist countries of the Western Balkans. As I have mentioned above, there is lack of empirical evidence regarding the influence of the economy on vote choice in Western Balkan countries, although the experience of other post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe have shown mixed findings. While Anderson et al. (2003) and Duch (2001) find evidence of economic voting in Hungary in 1994 and 1998, Duch (1995) concludes that economic difficulties reduce support for governments in four countries and Przeworski (1996) shows that government popularity varies with the unemployment rate in Poland, Harper (2000) contends that there is only a modest effect of the economy on voting and Henjak (2007) did not find an influence of economic determinants on vote choice in Croatia. Hence, the first hypothesis to be tested in this paper is:

**H1 The economy has a limited influence on incumbent vote share**

Previous research on established democracies or the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe also shows that there is a variation of the influence of different macroeconomic parameters on vote choice. GDP annual growth percentage, inflation rates and employment rate changes are the most frequently considered determinants of economic voting. The influence of unemployment change has been widely identified in various environments as a strong explanatory factor of voting (Przeworski 1995, Roberts 2008) and I expect that unemployment growth will also negatively influence incumbent vote share in the countries of the Western Balkans. While my expectations about the influence of inflation rates is very modest, the percentage of foreign investments should be considered as a possible explanatory factor of vote choice in Western Balkan countries. Foreign investment, according to Henjak (2007), is one of the most important economic strategies of almost every government in these countries therefore necessitates inclusion in testing.

**H2 The higher the percentage of unemployment growth, the lower the vote share of incumbent parties**

Taking into account specific circumstances in Western Balkan countries, I also consider the consequences of the war and subsequent international pressure as determinants of vote choice. Following the Hibbs (2000) approach, I will also test whether the number of civil war causalities influences the vote share of incumbents. Taking into account that most of the victims in the wars emanate from Bosnia, it is expected that this variable has specific importance for voting behavior in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As previously mentioned, the direction of the effect of the transnational pressure is more difficult to identify.
H3 The number of human causalities during the wars negatively influences incumbent vote share

Building on the arguments of Tucker (2006) in post-communist countries that the main conditional economic voting effects distinguish between old and new regime parties, or parties connected with the former communist regime versus those associated with the opposition to communism similarly to Roberts (2008), I will also test the influence of party origin on vote share. According to Tucker (2006), new regime parties should do better when circumstances are positive and less well when they are negative, since voters may associate these parties and hold them responsible for the changes during the transition. “If these changes are successful, the parties are rewarded; if not, they are punished. Standard retrospective voting thus applies to these parties, though unusually without regard to incumbency. Old regime parties should be treated in the reverse way” (Roberts 2008).

H4: Improved economic conditions will increase the vote share for new regime incumbent parties and decrease the vote share for old regime parties

Finally, taking into account the influence of the economic and financial crisis on the economies throughout the world, I will test whether the crisis has caused voters to use retrospective economic voting when voting in Western Balkan countries. This idea is in line with the claims of Duch (2001) that voters become aware of economic conditions only later in the transition, and by that time, economic parameters become stronger predictors of vote share. In the case of Western Balkan countries, these expectations should be even stronger taking into account the specific history, including the breakup of Yugoslavia and bloodshed in the nineties. It is expected that the economy more influences vote share in the later phase of the transition than in the dynamic and turbulent early phase of the nineties. Roberts (2008) has also finds similar results on the ground in ten post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, so testing the same hypothesis in Western Balkan countries could shed additional light on the claim that time is an important indicator of economic voting. While the analysis of Roberts (2008) included electoral cycles until 2006, this research goes further by taking into account the effect of the most recent global crisis on economic voting.

H5 The influence of economic parameters will be stronger during than before the most recent global economic and financial crisis

Data and methodology

Even after more than twenty years of democratic elections in countries of the Western Balkans, data remains a serious obstacle in conducting research on economic voting. While there is already a sufficient number of electoral cycles in the seven countries, the reliability of the economic data remains a serious problem. Accordingly, data is missing for the early stage of democracy in the nineties, so therefore the first elections in each country after the fall of communism are not included in the dataset. Furthermore, the incumbent communist party received nearly 100% of the vote in previous elections held in uncontested circumstances, so only pluralistic and democratic and free elections are included in the analysis. While, electoral fraud and irregularities have hampered democratic legitimacy, the elections included in the sample satisfy the minimum criteria for free and fair elections.

Different sources have been utilized to construct the dataset. Electoral data is from the Parties and Elections Project, a comprehensive database on parliamentary elections in European countries and autonomous subdivisions since 1945, including Western Balkan countries since 1990, and additional information on the political parties,
political leaders, composition of governments and electoral laws. For a robustness check, the results are compared and upgraded with official electoral results from state electoral commissions.

World Bank data and early stage data from domestic official sources constitute the economic data for this analysis. As I have previously mentioned, despite the additional effort to collect information for inflation rates or unemployment data from the early nineties, there are few elections for which this data is not provided in the dataset. The data about war victims has been collected via the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) and International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) Conflict Dataset and World Bank information about victims in the wars.

The dataset consists of vote shares at each pair of elections for the incumbent parties represented in parliament in these countries. The analysis is focused on parliamentary elections because all of these countries are parliamentary democracies. While direct presidential elections are held in most of the countries expect Kosovo, parliamentary governments have executive branch power. Already discussed, party pluralism and electoral volatility characterize the communist countries of the Western Balkan, with a majority of the governments in the all countries during these twenty years of democratic elections having been coalition governments. Therefore, it is more difficult to assign responsibility to the government in some systems than in others because “The Responsibility Hypothesis is “perfectly” suited to explain economic voting in two party-systems where the government is the one with the majority, and once there are minority governments with shifting coalitions, responsibility is illusive” (Anderson 2000), thus also complicating the data collection process. For the purposes of this paper, incumbent vote share is calculated as a cumulative vote share of all parties included in the government. The ideological position of the government or its connection with the old regime has been identified on the basis of the position of the biggest political party on the political spectrum which holds the post of the Prime Minister in most cases although with some exceptions. The effective number of parties has been calculated using the formula offered by Laakso and Taagapera (1979).

Cognizant that voters are myopic and capable of focusing only on the most recent economic developments (Bartels 2008), I am using the economic information only for the last year of the electoral term. The variables that include change are operationalized by subtracting the rates of the specific economic parameters for all years of current and previous electoral cycle. International Pressure is coded as a dummy variable providing information on whether there was or was not international pressure. Various actions, such as sanctions, EU conditionality, ICTY cooperation pressure or vetoes of NATO membership have been considered as form of international pressure.

The dependent variable is the vote share of incumbent parties, and, bearing in mind that it is a continuous variable, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) will be used to test theoretical claims I explained before. In order to test all offered hypotheses, different models will be examined for different data subsets.

Empirical findings and discussion of results

The main economic parameters, such as GDP growth, inflation and change of unemployment rates, have been most frequently taken as determinants of economic voting, while I additionally include the percentage of foreign investments and Consumers Price Index (CPI). I consider these two economic variables important for Western Balkan countries because (i) attracting foreign invest-
ments is one of the most important economic strategies of almost every government in these countries and (ii) CPI defined as “a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services” sufficiently captures the economic capacities of ordinary citizens. Since, to the best of my knowledge, there is a lack of comparable quarterly data for all of the countries, which would have allowed me to examine the months immediately preceding each election, only annual data is available, so for each country, I use values from the year of the election if the election was held in the second half of the year and values from the previous year if the election was held in the first half of the year. Model 1 in Table 1 includes only these economic variables plus the vote share from the previous elections for incumbent parties. Results show that the model with only economic variables fits well in explaining almost half of the variation of the incumbent vote share. While taking into account the reasonably small number of observations, statistical significance should not be interpreted with special attention, still Unemployment change and Consumers Price Index are the only variables which are statistically significant. This is not surprising, since a change of unemployment rates has been identified by numerous previous research as one of the strongest indicators of economic voting in post-communist countries and in general (Przeworski (1995), Roberts 2008, Lewis –Beck & Nadeau 2012). Even further, the strongest evidence in favor of the grievance asymmetry hypothesis has been based on unemployment growth (Mueller 1970). Therefore, its effect on electoral outcome has been confirmed even on the ground in countries from former Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, comparing with the finding of Roberts (2008) for post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the effect of unemployment is not even closely as strong as in the Western Balkans. Moreover, we do not observe

| Table 1 Economic Voting in Western Balkan Countries |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| **Model 1**                     | **Model 2**                     | **Model 3**                     |
| **Previous Vote**               | 0.21(0.16)                      | 0.02(0.17)                      | -0.05(0.18) |
| **GDP Growth**                  | 0.34(0.63)                      | 0.11(0.50)                      | -0.17(0.51) |
| **Unemployment**                | -0.50**(0.24)                   | -0.86**(0.30)                   | -0.90**(0.32) |
| **Inflation**                   | -0.05(0.07)                     | 0.02(0.35)                      | 0.04(0.35) |
| **Consumer Price Index**        | 0.14**(0.06)                    | 0.12**(0.05)                    | 0.11*(0.06) |
| **Foreign Investments**         | -0.17(0.23)                     | 0.24(0.32)                      | 0.24(0.31) |
| **International Pressure**      | -0.50(3.9)                      | 1.47(4.3)                       |             |
| **Government’s ideology**       | -1.9(1.9)                       | -5.4(4.5)                       |             |
| **Government’s Stability**      | -3.9(4.8)                       | -2.47(1.9)                      |             |
| **Effective Number of Parties** | 3.2**(1.5)                      | 3.0*(1.5)                       |             |
| **Civil War Losses**            |                                  |                                 | -0.16*(0.08) |
| **Constant**                    | 19.03**                         | 17.9*                           | 26.2**       |
| **N**                           | 27                              | 27                              | 27           |
| **Adjusted R²**                 | 0.47                            | 0.72                            | 0.75         |

*** p< 0.001, **p<0.05, *p<0.1 (Robust St. Errors)
the hyperaccountability effect in Western Balkan countries. The change of unemployment rates influences voters to hold governments accountable for their economic performance, but do not even closely negatively affect governments as in the case with CEE countries (Roberts 2008). The other statistically significant variable is Consumer Price Index. Taking into account the changes that citizens in these countries have faced during the last more than twenty years, it is not surprising that this variable together with unemployment rates influence the vote choice of citizens. CPI as
a measurement expresses the economic capacity of the citizens more closely than inflation, for instance, and these findings show that personal economic interests and capacities influence voters when making the decision to hold the government accountable for the economic situation in their country. As I mentioned, inflation effects on vote share are statistically insignificant and absolutely minor. Having taken into consideration the special circumstances of the countries and not only hyperinflation in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in the early nineties and high inflation in Croatia because of the war, voters did not punish governments for their bad performance in this aspect. Lately, inflation rates are more stable, but also do not drive voter behavior. Surprisingly, the level of foreign investments does not play any role in influencing incumbent vote share. This goes against the strong emphasis of governments on this economic parameter. However, on the other side, voters do not directly feel the effect of foreign investments on their own pocket and this most probably therefore diminishes the effect on voting decisions. The same logic applies when explaining the lack of effect of GDP growth on vote choice.

Political variables are also included in Model 2 in addition to economic ones. The effective number of parties, stability and ideological position of governments, and the presence of international pressure importantly contribute to the explanatory power of the model. The model explains 72% of the variance of the incumbent vote share. We observe, once again, the same trends with the economic determinants. Moreover, the coefficient for employment change is bigger than in the previous model. The effective number of political parties seems to play an important role in explaining incumbent vote share, or is statistically significant and the coefficient is strong. Although statistically insignificant, government stability and ideological position are substantially important. Results show strong evidence that the instability of governmental coalitions is one of the reasons for citizens to punish parties. Regarding ideology, results show that voters are more eager to punish left-wing than right-wing governments, something easily explained as related to the rise of nationalism more closely associated with right-wing governments in these countries. International pressure is apparently not a factor influencing vote share, but this can be, to a great extent, the result of the poor operationalization of the variable.

Finally, Model 3 includes the number of victims during civil wars and conflicts to test H3 dealing with the influence of armed conflicts on vote share in Western Balkan countries. Results show clear patterns, as voters punish governments for every causality during the wars and conflicts. This is an important finding considering that each of the seven countries in the Western Balkans in one way or another has been involved in armed conflicts and bloodshed with casualties.

Building on the argument of Tucker (2006) that the effect of the economy on Incumbent parties is largely conditional on their status as New Regime or Old Regime parties, empirically confirmed with a regional dataset on five post-communist countries and additionally by Roberts (2008) for 34 elections in ten post-communist countries, Table 2 shows the results of models 4 and 5 testing this hypothesis for the seven post-communist ex-Yugoslav countries. I have limited the number of independent variables only to the main economic parameters and the most important political variables.

While I am very careful to substantially interpret these results because of the very small sub-samples especially problematic in the case of the old regime party governments, we can still identify some interesting and controversial findings. It seems that citizens indeed hold old regime parties
more accountable, findings in line with Tucker (2006) and Roberts (2008). Surprisingly, all economic parameters are statistically significant and influence the vote share for old regime parties, while both political parameters are statistically insignificant. Nevertheless, comparing with the results for new regime parties, the coefficient for change of unemployment rates in the subsample with new regime party governments is substantially higher and statistically significant. This indicates that while other factors shape the vote of the incumbents for old regime party governments, the strongest indicator of economic voting for the entire sample has almost a four times higher coefficient for new regime party governments.

At the end, the financial and economic crisis has shook the entire world, with most of the countries around the globe affected by the devastating consequences. Parties in power face serious consequences in neighboring countries strongly hit by the crisis, such as Greece and Italy, (Nezi 2012). Additionally, building on claims by Duch (2001) that “voters become aware of the economic conditions only later in the transition and that by time economic parameters become stronger predictors of vote share”, Table 3 shows the results of the tests on H5 concerning the effects and timing of the crisis on incumbent vote share.

The results, which once again should be interpreted with reservations because of the small subsamples, do not show strong evidence in favor of the hypothesis about the effect of the economic crisis on voting. While, indeed the explanatory power of Model 7 concerning elections in times of crisis is stronger, only the CPI is statistically significant, with the change of unemployment rates having a smaller coefficient and being insignificant. Actually, no other variable except CPI is statistically significant. The results for elections before the crisis are also not encouraging since only the unemployment rate and effective number of parties are strong indicators of vote choice during this period. There are several explanations as to why there is no evidence of support for the claims of the effect of time and crisis on economic voting. Most of the countries in the sample, with exception of Slovenia and to some extent Croatia, faced serious economic problems concerning levels of macroeconomic parameters even before the crisis. The unemployment rates have been consistently high and above 30% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia and lower, but still considerably high in Serbia and Montenegro. Serbia faces constant higher rates of inflation of their currency and foreign debt has been increasing in all countries during last twenty years of the transition (Delevic 2009). Therefore, the economic and financial crisis did not directly cause such devastating consequences because the economies of these countries were already in a poorer state. Secondly, domestic problems leading to the rise of populism and nationalistic feelings, such as current developments with the independence of Kosovo, the separation of Montenegro from Serbia, the veto by Greece of Macedonia membership to NATO because of the name dispute, and constant ethnic tensions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, could also strongly influence vote choice. Thirdly, the high level of corruption could also be a possible explanation for electoral outcomes. In general, the findings from Models 6 and 7, although not expected, are not surprising.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to investigate the role of macroeconomics on incumbent vote share in post-communist countries of former Yugoslavia. While previous research shows that the economy has a very strong explanatory power of electoral outcomes, research on the countries of the Western Balkans offer new cases to investigate these postulates. Countries of former Yugoslavia have passed through specific and significantly different transi-
tions compared with other post-communist countries. Even with communist rule in Yugoslavia considered as more liberal, having had a significantly better economic situation and with the concept of brotherhood and unity as the main paradigm of the socialist ideology (Cvijic 1995), the breakup of Yugoslavia resulted in the most tragic bloodshed in Europe since WWII. These circumstances have influenced political transformation and shaped the political behavior of individuals.

Even with these aggravating circumstances, several results stand out from this paper. Economic voting takes place in the countries of Western Balkan, although to a limited extent. In line with previous research on other post-communist countries, unemployment change has the strongest explanatory power among economic parameters. Results also show that the Consumers Price Index influences vote support for incumbent parties. This is an important finding considering that the CPI captures the consumer capacity of ordinary citizens. Results show that voters indeed consider their well-being when deciding to punish or reward the government. Nevertheless, results do not show evidence of hyperaccountability identified by Roberts (2008) in ten post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The effects of the economy are more limited in shaping electoral outcomes in Western Balkan countries, likely the result of the specific consequences of the transformation and political context.

This paper shows that wars influence electoral outcomes, as voters hold governments accountable for casualties. The results also show that the stability and ideological positions of governments influence electoral outcomes. Voters more severely punish unstable governments with left-wing ideologies, in line with the findings that old regime party governments are held more accountable than new regime party governments. Unexpectedly but also not surprising, there is no strong evidence that the economic crisis and timing have caused voters to focus more on economic determinants when deciding to punish or reward the parties in power.

The voting behavior picture of countries of former Yugoslavia is not only explained by the economy, since nationalism is a significant factor. Empirical analysis is not necessary to question how Milosevic, besides electoral fraud, won elections during times of astronomic hyperinflation and the demise of the economy. Perceptions of the past still shape the political behavior of the countries of Western Europe. Political parties and voters are captured in the shadow of communist past. Perceptions of the communist past have been identified as strong indicator of voting in most of the countries (Siber 2005, Henjak 2007, Panov & Taleski 2013). However, this paper also shows that, besides specific circumstances, general theories of voting established and tested in western democracies, although very modest, apply for the countries of former Yugoslavia as well.

Testing electoral behavior in Western Balkan countries still faces the serious problem of the lack of sufficient data. While there are already considerably enough electoral cycles even after eliminating the first plural elections and the ones that did not meet the minimum democratic criteria of fair and free elections, a problem remains regarding coherent economic data for early elections in some of the countries, which reduces the sample. Further research in this area should focus on this problem as well as improving the operationalization and explanation of the mechanisms of the influence of nationalism in the political processes. Even with these limitations, this paper certainly still contributes to research on the state of voting behavior in Western Balkan countries.
Appendix

Table 1 List of Elections included in the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Election Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>2002, 2006, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>2009, 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References

Anderson, C.J., Hecht, J.D., 2012. Voting when the economy goes bad, everyone is in charge, and no one is to blame: the case of the 2009 German election. Electoral Studies 31 (1), 5–19.


Panov, T, Taleski, D., 2013 What drives political divisions in the Republic of Macedonia? Social structures, attitudes or perceptions of communist past as basis for political divisions


CONVENTIONAL AND UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN TIMES OF POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL CRISIS IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Introduction & research question

After financial and economic crises hit Europe in 2008, various protest movements took the stage in the media, the political, and societal realm. Europe (and beyond) witnessed the uprising of a wide variety of protest movements, for instance protests against austerity measures in Greece, the ‘15M- movement’ in Spain and the global ‘occupy movement’. These protests are indications that hard economic times might induce people to participate in (protest) politics (Muñoz et al. 2013; Ponticelli and Voth 2011).

In cross-national comparative studies that focus on the relationship between economic adversity and political participation, it is often argued that deprivation due to economic adversity fuels discontent and increases political participation, such as protests. This (political) discontent might go as far as to destabilize regimes (Haggard and Kaufman 1995) or even increase the likelihood of civil war (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). However, this is in sharp contrast with studies at the individual-level that aim to explain who is more likely to participate in politics. When studying the socio-economic situation and attitudes that motivate people to engage in political actions, many scholars argue that discontent (Norris et al. 2006), grievances, and relative deprivation (Dalton 2008) do not motivate citizens to participate in the political domain. Rather, individuals with higher socio-economic resources are persistently more likely to politically participate whereas people with less socio-economic resources continue to refrain from participation (Brady et al. 1995). This provides an interesting theoretical and empirical puzzle. At the macro-level, it is argued that economic downturn fuels grievances which mobilize people to participate politically whereas at the micro- or individual-level, it is usually found that the relatively well to do, rather than the relatively deprived, participate politically.

Beyond the quintessential literature on economic voting, that dealt with the question whether economic conditions influence party-choice and turnout (Anderson 2007; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000; Radcliff 1992), surprisingly little attention has been paid to the link between macro-economic conditions and other modes of political involvement such as demonstrating and petitioning.

The Netherlands, a country with traditionally high levels of political and community participation (Gesthuizen et al. 2013; Linssen and Schmeets 2010) makes an interesting case in this respect. The once stable Dutch pillarized political landscape saw no less than 5 general elections between 2002 and 2012. The three most recent Dutch Parliamentary Elections were held in 2006, 2010, and 2012 and coincided with the rise of the global financial and economic crisis. In 2006, the election came shortly before the global financial crisis. In 2010, the parliamentary elections coincided with the onset of the Eurocrisis and the global economic crisis. Finally, in 2012 after prolonged periods of recession in the Netherlands, the administration lead by Mark Rutte collapsed while negotiating on harsh austerity measures. The timing of these elections and thereby the timing of the election studies, provides a unique ‘natural experiment’ to explore the effect of economic downturn on levels of political participation, both for privileged and deprived strata in society.

We attempt to explore the link between macro-economic conditions in recent years in the Netherlands and levels of political participation. Did the financial and economic crises induce political participation or do citizens refrain from participating in politics during economic hardship? We set out to assess competing and complementary theoretical propositions concerning the effect of economic conditions on political participation in the Netherlands. Using the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies, we aim to assess to what extent
economic conditions affected individual level political participation in the 2006-2012 period among the general population as well as among subpopulations with higher and lower resources. Therefore, our research question reads:

To what extent are levels of political participation affected during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands between 2006-2012 in general, and in particular societal groups of privileged respectively deprived people more specifically?

Theory and hypotheses

Political participation

Political participation is broadly defined as those activities aimed at influencing the political decision making process. To take into account a wide range of political actions, we distinguished conventional from unconventional modes of political participation. Conventional political participation refers to all modes of participation directly embedded in legal institutional frameworks, or directly referring to the electoral process and representational system, such as voting, contacting politicians or attending hearings (Barnes and Kaase 1979). Unconventional political participation includes all modes of political participation not directly linked to the electoral process such as petitioning, demonstrating, and boycotting products (Barnes and Kaase 1979).

Competing perspectives: resources versus incentives.

Various studies have empirically demonstrated that political participation, both conventional and unconventional modes, is more prevalent among higher educated and higher-class individuals (Dalton 2008; Desposato and Norrander 2009; Norris et al. 2005). Higher status and higher educated people possess more skills needed for participation (Brady et al. 1995), have greater confidence that they understand politics and that their efforts to participate in the political arena will bear fruit and facilitate political action (Klandermans et al. 2008; Lassen and Serritzlew 2011; Morrell 2003). Moreover, the higher educated and those in higher social classes are also more likely to be involved in civic associations that act as ‘schools of democracy’ (Van der Meer 2009) which might reinforce the associations between skills, resources, and political participation.

Grievance theories, on the other hand, argue that those with (relatively) few resources are more likely to participate politically. Following the grievance argument, poor people are more likely to feel that they have been wronged (Seybolt and Shafiq 2012), experience a gap between their expectations and reality and thus suffer from invidious comparisons (Gurr 1970; Gurr and Moore 1997; Opp 2009; Pattie et al. 2004). These feelings of deprivation might spill over into the political arena and spur political action, especially since the deprived have little to lose and more to gain by challenging the existing political status quo. The poor would therefore be more likely to engage specifically in unconventional political participation (Macedo 2005).

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are less skill-intensive compared to conventional activities such as lodging a complaint or attending a hearing. Unconventional political actions are therefore considered a ‘weapon of the weak’.

These two theoretical perspectives, allow us to derive two rivaling hypotheses at the individual level. Given the resource-based perspective we expect that the resource rich are more likely to participate in both conventional and unconventional modes (hypothesis 1) compared to poor people. Based on the notion of grievance we expect resource-poor people to participate politically more compared to resource-rich people, however, especially in unconventional political actions (hypothesis 2).

**Macro economic conditions**

From the economic voting literature, we derive propositions that we transpose to other conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. The effect of macro-economic conditions on political participation may take several directions. First, economic adversity might fuel political participation. During economic hardship, governments are forced to resort to retrenchments that cause a gap between what electorates expect and what governments are able to offer (Thomassen 1990). Governments are blamed for economic duress and this blame spurs political action. This argument is very close to the relative deprivation argument presented above and can be traced back to Marx’ concept of ‘Verelendung’, who argued that in deteriorating economic conditions citizens will resort to protest to voice their political concerns. In the same vein, Davies’ (1962) J-curve hypothesis argued that economic conditions mobilizes political participation and might even overthrow regimes if a period of economic prosperity is followed by a (short) period of sharp economic decline. This sharp economic decline would lead to dissatisfaction that induces political action. Hence, during times of economic decline, citizens would be more likely to participate in both conventional and unconventional modes (hypothesis 3).

Following grievance theory, discontent among the lower educated and lower social classes would fuel political participation, especially in unconventional, modes of political action. Since we expect that those in low social classes and the lower educated are most affected by the economic downturn, these relatively deprived are even more incentivized to participate since the gap between expectations and reality increased, especially in comparison with the resource rich. Hence, we hypothesize that the resource poor will participate more in comparison with the resource rich in times of economic hardship (hypothesis 4).

The competing perspective argues that economic adversity does not provide an incentive to participate but instead depresses political participation. Citizens are more preoccupied with their personal situation in a sour economy and less able and willing to connect to the remote concerns of politics (Rosenstone 1982). Thus, in times of economic adversities, the prime assumption behind these theories is that electorates actually blame governments for economic hardship. Although these theoretical propositions heavily rely on this assumption, this link is far from clear, as shown by the divergent findings in the economic voting literature (Anderson, 2007). However, Radcliffe (1992) as well as Thomassen (1990) suggests that in states such as the Netherlands, it is more likely for electorates to blame their governments, since they interfere more directly in their electorates’ lives through their comprehensive welfare systems.

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16. The prime assumption behind these theories is that electorates actually blame governments for economic hardship. Although these theoretical propositions heavily rely on this assumption, this link is far from clear, as shown by the divergent findings in the economic voting literature (Anderson, 2007). However, Radcliffe (1992) as well as Thomassen (1990) suggest that in states such as the Netherlands, it is more likely for electorates to blame their governments, since they interfere more directly in their electorates’ lives through their comprehensive welfare systems.

17. A third perspective argues that there is no effect from the economy on political participation by applying Olson’s (1965) logic of collective action. Macro-level economic downturn would be inadequate as a motivating factor to participate politically. A desire for change in the provision of public goods brought about by macro-economic change is not a satisfactory motivation to participate in politics, unless selective benefits will be offered to those who participate. Since all citizens are under economic duress, regardless of their participation, the individual-
economic hardship, political participation will decline (hypothesis 5). Again, we expect that economic adversity will disproportionately affect the resource poor. Following the resource based theory, we argue that lower class and lower educated citizens do not have the resources to participate in politics, to begin with. Therefore, we hypothesize that the resource poor will participate even less in comparison with the resource rich in times of economic hardship (hypothesis 6).

**Control variables**

We controlled for the following socio-demographic characteristics in our analyses: country of origin, gender, and age. People of non-Dutch origin participate less in modes of conventional and unconventional political participation (Fennema and Tillie 1999). Younger people are less likely to participate in politics (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1978), therefore we include age as a control variable in our analyses. The direction of the effects of gender on political participation is also still up for debate as the effect of gender varies with the inclusion of other control characteristics, especially for the Dutch case (Van Egmond et al. 1998). We use this variable as control variable in our analyses without making prior assumptions on the direction of this effect.

**Data & measurements**

To test these hypotheses we used the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES 2006; 2010; 2012) carried out during each general election in the Netherlands. The DPES’ aim is to collect high-quality data on the backgrounds of voting behaviour of the Dutch electorate. The sampling frame of the DPES covers the Dutch electorate eligible to vote in parliamentary elections (Dutch citizens aged 18 or older). In 2006 and 2010, respondents were interviewed in a pre-election survey within six weeks before, and shortly after Election Day. We will only use the post-election waves of the DPES as these contained the items on political participation. In 2012, due to budgetary constraints, only a post-election survey was carried out within a six-week time frame after Election Day. The post-election waves for the DPES were primarily collected by Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Additionally, in 2006 and 2010 non-contacts and refusals were re-approached with a shortened questionnaire by telephone or mail. This resulted in response rates of 64.3 % and 57.0 % in the second wave (compared to the initial sample) in 2006 and 2010, respectively (Schmeets 2011). In 2012 no refusal conversion techniques were applied and all interviews were carried out using CAPI. This resulted in a response rate of 61.9%.

**Dependent variables: conventional and unconventional political participation.**

We distinguished between unconventional and conventional political participation (Barnes and Kaase 1979). Our measure for unconventional political participation referred to participation in political discussions on the internet, participating in action groups and participation in demonstrations or protest meetings. We used involving political parties or organisations, attending hearings, and contacting politicians or civil servants as indicators of conventional political participation. See Table 1 for the exact question wording in the DPES.

**Scale construction: conventional and unconventional political participation**

We constructed separate scales for conventional and unconventional political participation that represent the average score on the relevant dichotomous indicators18. We assessed the scalability of

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18. We left voting out of our analyses since this is a different kind of political activity compared to the conventional and unconventional activities studied here. Voting is done once every few years while most of the
these items using probabilistic scale analysis techniques (Mokken 1971; van Schuur 2003). Mokken scale analysis is the probabilistic version of the deterministic Guttman scale. Mokken scale analysis uses a set of dichotomous indicators (e.g., involving a political party yes/no), and evaluates whether some items (e.g., political discussion on the internet) may be easier, more popular, activities compared to others (e.g., attending a demonstration). The decisive notion is that those who engage in more difficult, i.e. less popular, activities (e.g. attending demonstrations) will probably (not necessarily, like in the deterministic Guttman scale) also engage in easier or more popular activities (e.g. political discussion in the internet). In conventional and unconventional political activities studied here, such as attending a demonstration or writing to government officials, requires more prolonged time commitments.

19. Mokken scale analysis has numerous advantages over more mainstream scaling methods, such as factor analyses and measurement models specified in structural equation modeling. These methods are based on the decomposition of covariances and assume that frequency distributions of the items can be regarded as ‘parallel’ and the items have more or less the same mean and standard deviation. Thus, all items need to be equally ‘popular’ to be adequately used for scaling (van Schuur, 2003). Distribution of the items for political participation clearly demonstrate that this is not the case, e.g. the proportion of people who engage in political discussion on the internet, is considerably larger compared to the proportion of people who attended a demonstration.

In terms of comparability of measurements, or equivalence, we analyse the extent to which the ordering in terms of difficulty of the items are similar over time and between the resource rich and the resource poor. If the ordering in modes of political participation is similar over time and across groups, measurements are equivalent and the scale-scores can be compared.

The cumulative nature of the response on the items for political participation also has important theoretical implications that are neglected when analysing these items separately. It is considered in the context of Item Response Theory, this means that the probability of a positive response to an item (specific acts of political participation) increases in concordance with the value of a subject’s latent trait (conventional or unconventional political participation). Applied to political participation this means we test whether individuals that engage in a more difficult (less popular) activity (e.g. attending a demonstration), thereby having a higher score on the ‘latent trait’ political participation, also engage in easier (more popular) activities (e.g. engaging in political discussion via the internet).

### Table 1: Question Wording Political Participation Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2006-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Answer categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are several ways to influence politicians, civil servants or the government. Please list which one you used during the previous five years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unconventional political participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in a political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in an action group.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in a demonstration or protest meeting.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventional political participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted a politician or government official.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to involve political party or organisation.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For each act of political participation the proportion of people that engaged in these acts the past five years is shown for conventional and unconventional modes. In the context of Mokken scale analyses, these proportions represent the 'item difficulties'. We find that for unconventional modes of political participation the item ordering, from most popular – or easiest- activity to least popular activity is political discussion on the internet, participation in an action group, and demonstrating respectively. For conventional modes of political participation, Table 2 shows that contacting a politician or government official is the most popular activity, followed by attending a hearing. Involve-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Participated in political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.</th>
<th>Participated in an action group.</th>
<th>Participated in demonstration or protest meeting.</th>
<th>Loevinger’s H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>0.21</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td><strong>0.32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Contacted a politician or government official.</th>
<th>Participate in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government.</th>
<th>Tried to involve political party or organisation.</th>
<th>Loevinger’s H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td><strong>0.45</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td><strong>0.44</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

The results of the Mokken scale analysis are presented in Table 2.
dents do engage in more difficult acts (for instance demonstrating), but do not engage in easier more popular acts (for instance joining a political discussion on the internet). The Loevinger's H coefficients are above the cut-off value of 0.3 (Sijtsma and Molenaar 2002). Based on the results of these Mokken-scale analyses, we construct a scale that consists of the average score on the items pertaining to conventional and unconventional political participation that ranges between 0 and 1.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics

<table>
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<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conventional political participation</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconventional political participation</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>10.92</td>
<td>5.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>47.55</td>
<td>17.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest education completed</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower vocational</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>759</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>377</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level vocational /Higher level secondary</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>1,907</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher level vocational/University</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>1,216</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Social class

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>854</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper working class</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>588</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>2,239</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper middle class</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>782</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper class</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>2,296</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>2,312</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Origin

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch origin</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>2,321</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Dutch</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>2,238</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,559</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 2 we find that the item ordering pattern similar across time and thus longitudinally equivalent. This is represented in the Loevinger's H coefficients. These represent the scalability of the Mokken scale based on the number of violations of the item-ordering pattern. A violation of the item ordering pattern would occur if respon-

dents do engage in more difficult acts (for instance demonstrating), but do not engage in easier more popular acts (for instance joining a political discussion on the internet). The Loevinger's H coefficients are above the cut-off value of 0.3 (Sijtsma and Molenaar 2002). Based on the results of these Mokken-scale analyses, we construct a scale that consists of the average score on the items pertaining to conventional and unconventional political participation that ranges between 0 and 1.
Resourses and grievances

We operationalized resources in three different ways. First, we used education as a proxy for someone’s civic skills and resources. Education is measured in 5 categories: elementary education, lower vocational education, secondary education, middle level vocational education or higher level secondary education, and, finally higher level vocational education or university. We will include education as dummy variables in our analyses. Second, we used social class as a proxy for resources and relative deprivation. Respondents’ were asked which social class they perceived themselves to be a member of: “One sometimes speaks of the existence of various social classes and groups. If you were to assign yourself to a particular social class, which one would that be?” Respondents could choose between upper class, upper middle class, middle class, upper working class, and working class. Social class is included as having a linear relationship with our dependent variables in our analyses.20

Control variables

The DPES data was enriched with registry-based information on income drawn from the Dutch tax office. We used the standardized disposable annual income. The disposable income is composed of wages, profits (for self-employed persons) and other allowances minus social contributions and taxes, standardized for household size and composition. To arrive at a longitudinally comparative measure of income the standardized household income was classified in vigintiles according to the Dutch population. For reference, the lowest vigintile in 2006 represents spendable incomes lower than € 9,530 per annum whereas the highest category represents spendable incomes of € 41,243 and higher. To take into account non-linear associations between income and political participation we included a quadratic term for income.

As mentioned before, we controlled for age, gender, and country of origin. Age was defined as age at Election Day. In the Netherlands, the age threshold for participating in elections is 18 years. To control for possible non-linear effects of age we included a quadratic term for age as well. For origin we distinguished between Dutch origin and non-Dutch origin. Respondents who were born in the Netherlands and have parents that were born in the Netherlands were classified as of Dutch origin. Those who were born outside the Netherlands themselves or their parents were classified as non-Dutch. The descriptive statistics for all relevant variables are presented in Table 3.

Analyses

In our analyses we distinguish between conventional and unconventional modes of political participation in using a similar estimation strategy for both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. The results for conventional political participation are displayed in Table 4. In Table 5, we present the results of the analyses for unconventional modes of participation. In the first model, we include dummy variables for the years 2006, 2010, and 2012 to assess whether there is significant longitudinal variation in political participation in the Netherlands in times of economic crises. Model 2 includes the main independent variables referring to resources and grievances (education and social class) as well as the control variables. In model 3 and model 4 we assess whether the effects of social class and education on political participation systematically

---

20. We assessed whether social class can be modelled as a pseudo-interval variable by testing to what extent the association between social class and conventional and unconventional political participation can be modelled with linear terms only. We ran models including social class as a set of dummy variables and compared these with models using social class as a linear effect. The difference in fit between the two models was hardly detectable (r-square change = .001, with p = .459).
Results

Let us first look at conventional political participation in Table 4. In model 1 we find that there is no significant difference in levels of political participation between 2006 and 2010 whereas a significant (albeit small) decline is observed in 2012 compared to 2006 (and also in comparison with 2010 if the reference category is changed). This suggests that levels of conventional political participation are in decline in times of prolonged economic hardship. Moreover, this effect also holds after including all predictor variables.

We formulated contrasting expectations the effect of resources and grievances on political participation in hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2. Following the resource based model, we hypothesized a positive effect of resources on political participation. Contrastingly, in the vein of grievance based political participation, we hypothesized a negative effect. For conventional modes of political participation, we find that those with higher levels of education and those who consider themselves belonging to higher social classes consistently participate more in conventional modes of political participation. This lends support to the well-known resource based models (hypothesis 1) of political participation and refutes the alternative grievance based explanation (hypothesis 2).

As already mentioned, conventional political participation is slightly in decline, at least in 2012, as shown in Table 4. This suggests that in times of economic duress, people participate less in conventional modes of politics and is in line with hypothesis 3 and rejects hypothesis 5. Additionally, combining the theoretical propositions from hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 and the supposed effect of the economic crisis on political participation, we argued that the economic crisis would disproportionately affect the resource poor compared to the resource rich. The interaction terms in model 3 demonstrate that the economic crisis does not influence the strength of the effect of education on conventional political participation. This rejects both hypothesis 4 and hypothesis 6.

However, for social class we find that the positive effect of social class on conventional political participation is smaller in times of economic crisis as demonstrated by the negative interaction term in model 4. This suggests that the levels of conventional political participation for higher and lower social classes converge.

For unconventional political participation we also find support for the resource-based theory in favour of grievance-based explanations as shown.

21. Given the ordinal and very skewed nature (most people do not participate politically) one might argue that we should employ ordered logit regression analyses. We compared the estimates presented here with the estimates from ordered logit models; the results did not substantially differ from OLS results which are presented in this paper for ease of interpretation.

22. These analyses presented here were performed on the unweighted sample. Analysis with the sample weighted according to age, gender, marital status, urbanization, region, origin, turnout (i.e. voted in most recent parliamentary elections yes/no), and voting behaviour did not differ from the results presented here for both conventional and unconventional political participation.

23. There is no substantial difference between the models including all missing values on each variable as separate categories and the estimates presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

24. Additionally, we included the interaction terms for education and year as pseudo-interval variable to gain statistical power in these models that include a substantial number of interaction terms. There is no difference in model fit (r-square change = 0.000, with p = .528) when comparing the model with pseudo-interval and dummy variables. Hence, the results do not substantially differ from the findings presented here.
Table 4 Linear regression analysis: Conventional political participation (n = 4, 559)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intercept</strong></td>
<td>0.080 ***</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>-0.134 ***</td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 ref.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-0.014 **</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>-0.017 ***</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elementary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower vocational</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>(0.013)</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>* (0.022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>* (0.015)</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level vocation/higher level secondary</td>
<td>0.027 ** (0.013)</td>
<td>0.039 ** (0.020)</td>
<td>0.035 ** (0.021)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher level vocational/university</td>
<td>0.099 *** (0.014)</td>
<td>0.106 *** (0.022)</td>
<td>0.098 *** (0.023)</td>
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**Social class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social class</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.012 ***</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>0.012 ***</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
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**Income**

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<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>-0.003 *</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
<td>-0.003 *</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income2</strong></td>
<td>0.000 **</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>0.000 **</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
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**Female**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.030 ***</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>0.030 ***</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
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**Dutch origin**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
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<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dutch origin</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Dutch origin</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>0.005 ***</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>0.005 ***</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age2</strong></td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
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**Interaction terms**

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<th>Model 2</th>
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<th>Model 4</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower vocational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-0.037</td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level vocation/higher level secondary</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-0.011</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher level vocational/university</td>
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<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
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<td>-0.004</td>
<td>(0.032)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social class</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>** (0.008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² 0.002 0.076 0.077 0.078

*p < 0.1 **p < 0.05 *** p < 0.01 (two tailed)
Table 5 Linear regression analysis: Conventional political participation (n = 4, 559)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>s.e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.092 ***</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>0.049 **</td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 ref.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 -0.002 (0.007)</td>
<td>-0.004 (0.006)</td>
<td>0.013 (0.026)</td>
<td>0.014 (0.029)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 0.018 *** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.018 *** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.006 (0.025)</td>
<td>0.030 (0.029)</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>ref.</td>
<td>ref.</td>
<td>ref.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower vocational</td>
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<td>-0.007 (0.021)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.018 (0.019)</td>
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<tr>
<td>vocation/higher</td>
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<tr>
<td>level secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher level</td>
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<td>0.090 *** (0.021)</td>
<td>0.083 *** (0.022)</td>
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<td>university</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social class</td>
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<td>0.013 *** (0.003)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-0.015 (0.030)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012 0.003 (0.030)</td>
<td>0.005 (0.030)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>0.025 (0.034)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012 0.038 (0.034)</td>
<td>0.046 * (0.034)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-0.022 (0.028)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocation/higher</td>
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<td>0.026 (0.028)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher level</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational/</td>
<td>2012 0.004 (0.028)</td>
<td>0.022 (0.030)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social class</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012 -0.013 ** (0.007)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
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<td>0.078</td>
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</table>

* p < 0.1 ** p < 0.05 *** p < 0.01 (two tailed)
by the positive terms for both social class and education in Table 5. This corroborates hypothesis 1 and rejects hypothesis 2 for unconventional political participation. Concerning the effect of the economic crisis on political participation we find that unconventional political participation is slightly on the rise. This rejects hypothesis 3 in favour of hypothesis 5 and is in contrast with conventional modes of political participation, which are slightly in decline in 2012. Moreover, we do not find that the association between education and unconventional political participation is affected by the economic crisis, as shown in Table 5 in model 3. In model 4, we do find a significant negative interaction term for the effect of social class. This suggests that for higher and lower social classes, levels of unconventional political participation converge in times of economic crisis in the Netherlands.

Concerning our control variables we find that income does not affect conventional modes of political participation but does affect unconventional modes of participation. Moreover we demonstrate that men are more likely to participate in conventional modes but there is no difference between men and women in their level of unconventional political participation (c.f. Table 4 and Table 5). Surprisingly, and in contrast with Fennema and Tillie (1999) we find that people from non-Dutch origin are no more or less likely to engage in political participation compared to the Dutch population in both conventional and unconventional modes. Finally, for conventional and unconventional modes of political participation, we find curvilinear effects for age.

Conclusion and discussion

In this contribution, we attempted to explore the effects of the economic crisis on levels of political participation in the Netherlands between 2006 and 2012. We used the classic distinction between conventional and unconventional modes of political participation as proposed by Barnes & Kaase (1979). Conventional modes are political activities embedded within the legal institutional framework and unconventional political participation refers to all extra-institutional modes of voicing political concerns. The Dutch Parliamentary Elections Studies in recent years provide an interesting test to assess the effects of the economic crises as these coincided with periods of relative economic prosperity (2006), the start of the economic crisis (in 2010), and prolonged periods of economic recession (in 2012). Against the background of the recent economic crises, we argued that economic downturn would either incentivize citizens to voice their concerns in the political domain (Thomassen 1990), especially in unconventional modes (Muñoz et al. 2013; Ponticelli and Voth 2011) or that economic downturn induces political apathy (Rosenstone 1982). We combined this with the expectations following from grievance theory with the expectations from the resource model. Grievance theory argues that the relatively deprived are more prone to participate politically (Gurr, 1970; Gurr & Moore, 1997: Opp, 2009; Patie et al., 2004) while the resource-model argues that the relatively well-to-do are more likely to participate (Brady et al. 1995).

Using probabilistic scale modeling techniques (Mokken 1971; Sijtsma and Molenaar 2002; van Schuur 2003) we demonstrated that both conventional and unconventional political participation is cumulative. Hence people that engage in more difficult political acts, such as demonstrating also engage in easier or more mainstream acts of political participation such as joining political discussion on the internet. Moreover, we demonstrated that the pattern in modes of both conventional and unconventional political activities does not change over time.

Our results indicate that, first and foremost, being politically active is somewhat rare in the Nether-
lands, as most people do not engage in any conventional and unconventional mode of political participation studied here. We find that in recent times of economic downturn in the Netherlands, conventional political participation decreases while unconventional political participation increases. However, we do acknowledge that these differences over time are, though significant, rather small.

One might argue that an increase in unconventional political participation combined with a decrease in conventional modes would be emblematic of a more structural trend of switching political repertoires (Dalton 2008; Norris 2011) from conventional modes to unconventional modes. Citizens would increasingly voice their concerns through unconventional modes of political participation at the expense of conventional modes (Dalton 2008). However, Linssen et al. (2014), demonstrate that levels both conventional and unconventional political participation are rather stable in, among others, the Netherlands in the period 2002-2008. Moreover, the decline in conventional political participation and the increase in unconventional modes only occurs in 2012 in a time when the Netherlands suffered form economic adversity. We speculate that this shift in political participation is due to the difference in required skills for modes of conventional and unconventional political participation. It takes more civic skills to involve a political party compared to joining in a political discussion on the internet and during times of economic downturn the resource poor might voice their concerns through more accessible means of political participation. The underlying mechanisms governing this effect need to be taken into account in more detail in further research to assess the validity of this assumption.

We find no support for the grievance-argument (Gurr, 1970; Gurr & Moore, 1997: Opp, 2009; Pat-tie et al., 2004) as we consistently find that those with more skills and resources (higher educated) and people in higher social classes participate more in both conventional and unconventional modes of participation which is consistent with the resource based explanation of political participation (Brady et al. 1995).

In times of economic crisis we find that lower and higher social classes convergence in their level of political participation. This result adds to the findings of Marien et al. (2010) who demonstrate that inequalities in patterns of unconventional political participation are comparable to the traditional patterns of inequality found in conventional modes in terms of, among others, social class. We demonstrate that during economically disadvantaged times these patterns of inequality are not strengthened in the Netherlands.

Yet, in the interpretation of the results it needs to be acknowledged that the time-span studied here is rather short and that comparing levels of conventional and unconventional political participation between 2006, 2010, and 2012 is a crude attempt at grasping a comprehensive measure of economic downturn. However, note that within this timeframe, the Netherlands experienced the most severe economic crisis since the 1930s and should there be an effect of macro-economic conditions on political participation, this would especially be observable within the time frame studied here. However, incorporating a wider time span using more detailed measures of economic downturn would be a potentially fruitful alley for further research.

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Van Egmond, M., N.D. De Graaf and C. Eijjk. 1998. Electoral participation in the netherlands:


SECTION III: EU ELECTIONS
of the European Parliament in 1994. Most of his professional activities focus on constitutional affairs such as treaty revision and electoral procedure. He published on a variety of issues, from European constitutionalism to the impact of interest representation at the EU level. He teaches a Master2 class at the Law Faculty of the University of Grenoble. Wilhelm is a former RSCAS Fellow (2010/11).

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The problem of European Democracy

The idea of European democracy is of course closely related to plans for creating a European government. Although former Commission President Prodi’s sporadic hints at transforming the Commission into a European government were no well received in politics and academia, it remains true that if democracy is the preferable mode of choosing and controlling governments, then any political system, at whatever level, should respect its basic tenets and rules. However, European representative democracy finds itself in a singularly fragile state. First, many scholars and practitioners today consider electoral politics as inefficient for modern public policy-making. They recommend placing market regulation and other public policies under the responsibility of non-majoritarian institutions such as the European Central Bank or regulatory agencies. Second, participatory democracy involving citizens more directly, for instance through referendums, has become a powerful proposition inspiring not only NGOs and other activists but also many political leaders and parties, notably the Greens and some sections of centre-right and centre-left parties.

True, both critiques of representative democracy and party rule are directed as much at the national as at the European level (Mair 2008). But European democracy faces a number of specific obstacles we don’t find in nation states. Also, the normative terminology necessary to develop an understanding of whether European democracy is satisfactory or inadequate, workable or impractical, desirable or dangerous, are mostly derived from national liberal democracies of the 20th century. This creates a Catch 22 situation: while most would agree that a simple transfer of the principal trappings of national democratic systems to the next higher level is insufficient or perhaps even plainly wrong, the old conceptual tool box is unavoidable when we attempt to describe and design a democratic system in a non-state context (Schimmelfennig 2010). Despite these limitations, this paper will discuss the competitive character of parallel accountability structures and the existence of fused channels of political representation as unique – and problematic – features of European democracy. More practically, it examines present activities at the European Parliament’s shop-floor, dealing with the role of European political parties and the enduring issue of electoral reform. It will conclude with a short outlook on the innovations being introduced at this moment for this year’s European elections, such as the selection of candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission.

New governance and European democracy

An influential suggestion to bridge the divide between traditional concepts of democracy, such as separation of powers, representation and accountability, and the very particular institutional and political scenery of the European Union was the “new governance” agenda. In parallel with the extension of the EU’s regulatory and (weak) distributive powers, the rise in profile of regional governments and assemblies, and the enlargement of the EU, accompanied by a multitude of support programmes to prepare accession, scholars tried to make sense of these developments by devising new descriptive and analytical tools for what is by now known as, variably, European governance, new governance, or multi-level governance, to name just the three most widely used terms (Bartolini 2011).

In a nutshell, the governance discourse is the multi-faceted endeavour to construct a programme of legitimation for a political system discernibly lacking in traditional transmission belts for creating popular acceptance. Arguing that politicians who depend on electoral accountabil-
ity are usually not in a position to achieve Pareto-efficient or other desirable policies adherents of new governance strategies favour non-majoritarian institutions insulated from electoral accountability. In institutional terms, the non-partisan stature of the European Commission, as guardian of the treaties and defender of the European common weal, is in some ways the classic incarnation of new governance ideas. The European Central Bank and the Court of Justice of the European Union are the other important non-majoritarian EU bodies although it should not be forgotten that internal decision-making in all these bodies is not free of majority-based votes. However, the European Commission is a case apart because it is generally considered to be also a political institution, providing the Parliament and the Council with legislative input. Whence the crucial question if it is a necessary step towards European democracy to politicize the Commission’s composition and policy-making, to which we will return.

New governance raises two principal questions: the first element is whether new governance tools such as interest representation, consultation, public-private partnerships or multi-level and multi-forum cooperation and networking are efficient. After an optimistic start encompassing notably the Open Method of Coordination, the Lisbon Strategy to create the world’s foremost knowledge-based economy and other benchmarking exercises in economic and social policy coordination many expectations were not fulfilled (Stephenson 2013). The public debt crisis starting in 2008 and culminating in 2010/11 was only the most drastic illustration that rule-making built on voluntary acceptance is insufficient in case of a serious policy challenge.

The second element, more important in the context of European democracy, is to examine how new governance strategies deal with the requirement of equitable access of all citizens to public policy-making. Although there is not much exchange between the two vast bodies of research on democracy and governance, respectively, recent work on new governance has developed important arguments questioning its credentials in terms of popular democracy. It would seem, according to some of these scholars, that new modes of governance “have emerged not only because of their alleged superiority in terms of effectiveness and credibility but also as an effect of the weakness of traditional forms of democratic legitimacy at the EU Level”25. Moreover, skewed bargaining powers and privileged means of access risk to impose economic and other externalities on the rest of the political community. Designer jurisdictions for large corporations and investors (Alces 2013) and a quasi-commercialization of sovereignty are empirically identified outcomes of multi-level governance at the international level (Picciotto 2008). If current democratic theory assumes that voters are acting as contingent rule compliers under bounded rationality new modes of governance can only work under the condition that they are nested in traditional structures of democratic accountability, e.g. electoral control and binding laws (Bellamy et al. 2011).

**Participatory democracy, a promise for European democracy?**

The second critique of European representative democracy is today an important part of political discourse within the traditional components of party democracy. A vast body of research has taken note of the fact that since the entry into force of the Maastricht treaty referendums have become a frequent appearance at constitutional moments of the EU’s development (Hooghe/Marks 2009). Only a handful of member states has so far resisted the pressure to go for referendums. One paradox of referendums is that they are often initiated by the political or party leadership for reasons hav-

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25. Bellamy et al. 2011, p. 136
ing little to do with the question at hand, such as governmental power consolidation or resolution of party-internal divisions. Their results are of course open and sometimes constrain or even defy political leadership for a long period of time (Hobolt 2006).

Referendums are on simple dichotomous Yes/No decisions, risk to raise strong emotions and determine the political climate for years to come. While voters at elections have a choice of different ideologies and platforms, in referendums they are held to take their pick for one of two simple alternatives. Referendums are also known to attract voters who express disagreement more easily than those who support a given policy. Furthermore, negative votes are more likely than positive ones to be caused by a variety of different, sometimes opposite reasons. A last problem with referendums is that some voters may in general be pro-European yet still distance themselves from certain aspects of the multi-faceted integration project and therefore vote No on an all-encompassing proposition such as the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe.

This analysis would not be complete without mentioning the sociology of European citizenship. According to UN statistics there about 2-3% of the world population migrating to other countries at any given time. This corresponds exactly to the number of citizens living in another EU member state beyond short stays for private or professional reasons. That internal EU mobility is scarcely higher than global migration movements reflects in some way Europeans’ cultural, linguistic and professional immobility. Not surprisingly, less than 15% of the EU population identify themselves exclusively or primarily as Europeans, whereas around 40% have an exclusive national identity. European identity is primarily an attribute of the highly educated and well-to-do (Magnette/Papadopoulos 2008, Schmitter 2009). And this situation has not improved since the onset of the public debt crisis: in a traditionally europhile country such as Italy, to name but one example, the net percentage of citizens trusting the EU fell from +30% to -22% between 2007 and 2012.26

In conclusion, both currently discussed alternatives to party and electoral democracy fail to provide conclusive arguments in favour of replacing or restricting the traditional avenues of democratic legitimation. As far as new governance is concerned there may be an attractive methodological feature: its preparedness to experiment and to develop steps for incremental change and its flexibility to react to yet unknown demands. If we consider European integration as an “experiment in identity formation in the absence of the chief force that has shaped [national] identity in the past”27 such flexibility might indeed be an important improvement compared to the established conflict lines characterising nation-states’ sovereignty issues. However, the willingness to turn to such experimentation would need to emerge among a critical mass of decision-makers. Otherwise it would seem highly unlikely that political leaders ignore the existing accountability structures determining their professional environment.

The re-emergence of identity as a legal and political category

Continuing the experiment of European democracy will certainly need the capacity to look for new legal and political instruments. The example of the nation-state is deeply engrained in our historical memories and still determines to a large extent current geopolitical strategies. Building a European democracy hence faces strong headwinds, not only from voters and national political elites but also from academia and constitutional courts. Against this it is useful to remember that

26. Torreblanca et al. 2013
27. Hooghe/Marks 2009, p. 23
democracy is about the exercise of public power—and it is beyond doubt that the Union exercises public power (Weiler 2012). Furthermore, it has been shown that the political and legal developments since Maastricht have inched the former “constitution of the market closer to a constitutionalism grounded in comprehensive principles of political legitimacy, however incomplete this process may still be” (Isiksel 2012).

One of the most enduring arguments against European democracy, rehearsed in many different ways over the last 30 years of European Union scholarship and case-law, is the lack of European identity and a European public space. The rather optimistic perspective of neo-functionalism that transnational functional interests would create an unstoppable dynamic of increasing interdependence, which would then make necessary supranational problem-solving of ever growing scope and intensity, accompanied the heady days of the Delors Commission and several treaties extending the European Parliament’s powers. However, in parallel at least two other strands of legal and academic commentary painted a less sanguine picture of the future of Europe. Liberal intergovernmentalism insisted that supranational strategies remained under the firm control of member states and were an expression of the economic interests of national elites. On the legal front, a small number of national constitutional courts, under the guidance of the German Bundesverfassungsgericht (BvG), questioned the primacy of European law over national constitutional provisions and repeatedly issued reservations defining a core of national sovereignty untouchable by EU legal acts. A considerable amount of legal doctrine, popularized in widely read newspapers, followed in their wake and maintained that European democracy was an oxymoron: no demos, no democracy (recently Grimm 2013).

This line of reasoning remained relatively innocuous for a long time. But the confluence of the public debt crisis in some member states and the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty (a watered-down but nevertheless substantially similar version of the doomed Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe) drove the BvG’s arguments into the new territory of “constitutional identity”. Democracy as the effective possibility to influence policy decisions and electoral equality had long been central tenets of BvG doctrine with respect to European integration. However, in its Lisbon decision29 and in a subsequent case on the minimum electoral threshold for the European elections the BvG went further than that and maintained that the German constitution required a core of legislative and political powers which was enumerated in the decision. If these powers were emasculated below a (yet unspecified) level German citizens would lose their constitutionally guaranteed effective influence on national policy decisions. Combined with the so-called eternity clause of the Basic Law this led the Court to the conclusion that the Basic Law could only be changed in this respect by the German people directly.30

The court goes to great lengths to expound on the fact that the Staatenverbund is an association of sovereign national states and to detail the conditions for a state to remain sovereign. Particular interest has been provoked by the mentioned list of inalienable state rights which can never be transferred to European law-making if the constitutional identity and sovereignty of member states is to be respected. This list is a list of “pure political expediency” – with the Court naming almost

28. See Lehmann 2010 for a review of scholarly responses to the judgment.
30. The Court leaves some room for interpretation whether this could only happen via a revolutionary constitutional moment or some less radical option such as a constitutional convention of the Herrenchiemsee type.
all policies where member state control is still exclusive or at least predominant – and not one of principled constitutional interpretation. Other authors agree that the list is a simple compilation and protection of remaining national powers.

There are also long tracts of the judgment speaking about the importance of democracy as a constitutive element for the sovereignty of a member state, notably Germany. It is in these paragraphs that the BvG considers the European Parliament to be structurally unable ever to become a source of direct democratic legitimacy. The main reason for this, according to the court, is the very strong discrepancy between the electoral impacts of citizens from different member states. This is presented as an unacceptable violation of the principle of electoral equality, which is also jeopardized by the attribution of EP seats according to national quota. Finally, the court felt obliged, contrary to the Maastricht decision, to elaborate in great detail that the Basic Law prohibits the accession of the Federal Republic of Germany to an eventual European federal state. Only the constituent power itself - the people - could make such a decision.

The BvG recognised that the Lisbon Treaty changes the Parliament’s character so that it will no longer consist of “representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community” but of “representatives of the Union’s citizens”. Yet, it does not give this any importance for its reasoning on democratic legitimacy at European level. In fact, neither the right to stand in European elections nor the right to vote in any given state is based on possession of the nationality of that state. According to Article 22 (2) TFEU, every citizen of the Union residing in any member state “shall have the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament in the member state in which he resides under the same conditions as nationals of that state.” It is one of the key features of European citizenship that one qualifies for participation in European and local elections irrespective of nationality, the right depending instead on residence only. For this reason alone, each Member of the European Parliament not only represents the nationals of a given state but all citizens of the Union, not least foreign residents of the member state where (s)he stands for election.

Instead of taking these incremental steps towards transnational democracy seriously the court constructs a constitutional dead end: it describes an idea of egalitarian and majoritarian parliamentary democracy which can only apply in full to centralized states; it is already inappropriate to account for federal States, including Germany, and cannot be made to fit the constitutional system of the European Union. This type of legal reasoning may be a general problem of constitutional law, which seems to think in terms of rights and equality whereas politics involves, at its core, the organization of power. According to an American constitutionalist it may be preferable to leave behind “[u]nderstandings of rights or equality worked out in other domains of constitutional law” because they were simply a bad fit for the regulation of politics (Pildes 2004).

Coming back to the European situation, the BvG ostensibly ignores the European Parliament’s efforts to create a European political landscape. Its remarkable silence on the extra-institutional conditions for meaningful democracy at national and European level may insofar hint at substantive indecision within the court. As Wonka has argued, the European Parliament provides an institutional venue which could fulfil the function of creating public awareness of EU decisions, and has done so increasingly. The exaggerated weight given by the BvG to the principle of electoral equal-

31. Schönberger 2009, p. 1209
32. Wonka 2010, p. 58
ity leaves aside the importance to select the appropriate political personnel obtaining the mandate to govern and legislate at a particular level. There is a weak link indeed between EU citizens’ formal weight of vote and the resulting political mandate and success of the parliamentarians that represent them in the House.

Finally, the European Citizens’ Initiative introduced by the Lisbon Treaty will significantly enhance citizens’ influence on the political agenda of the EU legislator. MEPs consider this new instrument of citizen participation to be of paramount importance for the further evolution of European democracy. It may turn out to become a constructive version of participatory democracy.

We can conclude that exploring the prospects and limits of representative European democracy has acquired a new meaning over the past few years. Originally an idealistic political project to prepare “ever closer union” of the citizens of the EU, the construction of an autonomous and legitimate democratic system at the European level now appears to become a necessary rectification of the logic of coupling democracy with the nation state. The European Parliament, in agreement with a prolific body of scholarship, has upheld that the legitimacy of the EU is fed by two streams, one flowing from the democratically elected member state governments, the other from EU citizens enjoying the right to vote for the European Parliament as an important part of European citizenship. If one of these streams is deliberately cut off by national constitutional case law, the question of non-nationally derived legitimacy is back on the table with new urgency. Failing to reinvigorate it may make further democratization of the EU impossible, as well as create a major impediment to effective policy-making, e.g. in creating a credible defence against the public debt crisis.

European representation: obstacles and possible responses

The competitive character of inter-related accountability structures

In reaction to the failed effort of drawing up a Constitution for Europe and the subsequent case law new theories of integration such as post-functionalism have been put forward. An important element of these theories is the endogenization of national identity and the role of political parties and entrepreneurs (Hooghe/Marks 2009). Post-functionalists believe that identity is particularly influential for the general public, much more so than for functional interest groups. When regional integration extends to the political as well as the economic political parties seeking votes and trying to minimize internal conflict determine whether an issue is politicized or not. Since the inception of the public debt crisis this seems to create “downward pressure on the level and scope of integration”. Post-functionalists also include geopolitical factors in their models. For instance, inter-state rivalries are factored in as impacts on elite decision making that are more powerful than economic interdependence.

Taking the reflection on political parties one step further Philippe Schmitter displays elegantly the ambivalent nature of our current situation. While “this is not the time to found a political party or to expect that any party – whatever the level of aggregation – will be able to perform the functions attributed to it in the past”, he is on the other hand convinced that the best - in any case the most logical - response to the current “elite–mass gap in expectations and for re-fashioning multiple collective identities according to different levels of political aggregation, the place to go would be the

33. Hooghe/Marks 2009, p. 21
eventual formation of a supra-national European party system.”

Ever since Schattschneider’s 1942 statement that “modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties” research has attributed a central role of political representation to political parties. Scholars such as Peter Mair, Bernard Manin and many others have analysed the way parties have changed their appearance and functioning since World War II. The representative functions of parties became particularly vital at a time when distinctions based on property ceased to be necessary qualifications for the right to vote (Schlozman et al. 2012, Mair 2008). Obviously much of this research has dealt with national parties. However, the nascent European political parties have to face a very similar environment of public opinion. To some extent European parties epitomize evolutions that have been observed in national democracies: a high concentration of power at the top, a lack of party membership and a certain withdrawal from voters’ concerns and aspirations. In consequence, they face a double challenge: convincing voters of the utility of representative democracy at the European level and persuading national party leaders that the emergence of a European political landscape might also be in their own interest.

National political parties are deeply entrenched in territorial rule. They faithfully reflect all sorts of administrative, linguistic and cultural boundaries (Lehmann 2011b), which makes it difficult to motivate their leadership politically to go beyond the existing set-up of nation-states. However, there are no strong theoretical or empirical arguments for the belief that the nation state is the final geographical and political destination of democratic legitimacy. And there are no reasons to hope that an EU demos or polis is “quietly gathering strength and substance, ready to emerge fully-formed at an indeterminate date in the near future.” Therefore, since 2004, with the support of the Commission, the European Parliament has promoted and adopted EU regulations to further the development of European political parties and European political foundations.

In 2003 Parliament and Council (under qualified majority) decided to adopt Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 on political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding. It stipulates that a political party at European level shall satisfy the following conditions:

a. it must have legal personality in the member state in which its seat is located;

b. it must be represented, in at least one quarter of member states, by Members of the European Parliament or in the national Parliaments or regional Parliaments or in the regional assemblies, or it must have received, in at least one quarter of the member states, at least 3% of the votes cast in each of those member states at the most recent European Parliament elections;

c. it must observe, in particular in its programme and in its activities, the principles on which the European Union is founded, namely the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law;

d. it must have participated in elections to the European Parliament, or have expressed the intention to do so.

The Regulation states furthermore that a political party at European level shall publish its revenue and expenditure and a statement of its assets and liabilities annually and declare its sources of fund-

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34. Schmitter 2009, p. 212

35. Donnelly/Jopp 2009, p. 34

36. OJ L 297 of 15 November 2003, p. 1–4
“outsiders” (who, in any case, are dependent upon these national leaders for the further advancement of their career), as is displayed by the cautious wording in the regulation on the cross-financing of national parties. Parliament’s Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) hence continues to explore further steps to make the Euro-parties more important players in EU politics.

In a resolution adopted in 2011, on the practical experiences gained with the regime for party and foundation finance established in 2004/2007 the Parliament draws some conclusions with a view to the next initiatives to take. The resolution recalls that the Treaty of Lisbon stresses the role of political parties and their foundations to create a European polis, a political space at EU level, and a European democracy. However, European political parties, as they stand, “are not in a position to play this role to the full” because they are merely umbrella organisations for national parties and have no roots in the electorate in the member states. Political parties should therefore have rights, obligations and responsibilities as legal entities and should follow converging general organisational patterns. An authentic legal status for European political parties and a legal personality of their own, based directly on the law of the European Union, would enable the parties and their political foundations to act as representative agents of the European public interest. In their information campaigns the Euro-parties should interact and compete on matters relating to common European challenges.

The proposals of the subsequent AFCO report adopted in April 2013 may appear quite technical at first sight but enhance the European parties’ status vis-à-vis their national counterparts: the envisaged regulation defines and implements a legal base

37. P7_TA(2011)0143

Contributions from political parties which are members of a political party at European level shall be admissible but may not exceed 40 % of that party’s annual budget. Funding charged to the general budget of the European Union shall not exceed 75 % of the budget of a political party at European level. The burden of proof shall rest with the party. Funds from the general budget of the European Union or from any other source may not be used for the direct or indirect funding of other political parties, and in particular national political parties. It is prohibited to intervene, financially or otherwise, in national referendums.

The last two provisions incarnate the concerns of national political leadership about undue influence from the EU level. The restriction to campaign in referendums is an evident bulwark against the diffusion of Europe-wide political platforms at strategic moments. Parties’ influence on the selection of candidates remains for the moment almost negligible (European Parliament 2009). Their financial means for electoral campaigns are feeble and continue to be under the Damocles sword of national regulation. National party leadership is quite nervous about possible minimal influence on the internal decision procedures coming from the European
for the establishment of a European party in EU law from 2017. Euro-parties are, for the moment, obliged to register their head offices in one of the member states (normally Belgium) under national rules. With respect to the ban to contribute to the financing of referendum campaigns, Parliament has long called for a right of Europarties to participate in referendum campaigns as long as the subject of the referendum has a direct link with issues concerning the European Union.

The 2013 Parliament resolution led to trialogue negotiations with Council and Commission in view of a first reading agreement. The main results, adopted in April 2014, are as follows:39

- European political parties and foundations acquire European legal personality by conversion of the national legal personality into a successor European legal personality.

- Registration conditions verify the respect of values on which the EU is founded, including observance of EU values by national member parties.

- An independent authority is created for the purpose of registration/verification/de-registration of parties and foundations. It is advised by a Committee of independent eminent persons.

- The consequences of manifest and serious violations of EU values or failure to fulfil other obligations are defined; the Court of Justice of the European Union may review the legality of the decisions of the Authority.

- Flexibility elements for the funding of foundations are introduced, concerning multi-annual programming and carry-over provisions.

39. See European Parliament legislative resolution of 16 April 2014 (T7-0421/2014)

- Europarties obtain the formal right to fund EP election activities. However, they may not nominate EP candidates or finance campaigns in the context of referendums (including those on European issues).

Some member states will need to adopt complementary national laws to ensure an effective application of the Regulation and obtain a sufficient transitional period to that end. The regulation is to enter into force on 1st January 2017; a review will be carried out before the end of 2019.

More internal democracy of European political parties: a leftover for reform

Bardi et al. 2010 have outlined political considerations having an impact on the future structure of Euro-parties. Although they are in general quite reserved about the chances for a satisfactorily operational European party system they nevertheless suggest some ideas on how to homogenize ideological platforms, improve inter-party cooperation and streamline internal democratic processes. Such ideas concern issues which have not yet caught the attention of most active MEPs. They also indicate some problems but also some future avenues for reform, some of which have also been presented by the former Secretary General of the Parliament (Priestley 2010). He notably challenges Euro-parties to accept the possibility for individuals to become direct members of such a party. Recruiting individual members and activists who are more visible for public opinion would democratize internal party procedures (e.g., through a system of qualified majority votes on posts and platforms, more influence for party delegates sent to congresses, designation by secret ballot of a candidate for the Commission presidency, possibly in open primaries).

Until recently, the statutes of only one European political party, the EUDemocrats - Alliance for a Europe of Democracies (EUD), allowed for full
individual membership of any citizen who might be interested to join. One year ago, the Liberal party (ALDE) created associate membership for individuals who may not be members of a national party. Associate members are able to participate and be a candidate in online elections that will select the delegate(s) representing associate members at the yearly ALDE Party Congress. Membership of the other parties is restricted to national parties or MEPs. But attitudes seem to change in some Euro-parties. At a workshop organised in January 2011, the vice-chairperson of the European Green Party announced that the Greens would soon envisage a change of their statutes in this direction. However, the latest Rule Book of the European Green Party of May 2013 does not provide for this possibility.

The Parliament had long emphasised the need for all European political parties to conform to the highest standards of internal party democracy (democratic election of party bodies, democratic decision-making processes, including for the selection of candidates). However, strong hesitations to open Euro-parties for individual membership remain. In spite of much talk at the top of new means of participatory democracy parties themselves remain very hierarchical organisations, with strict chains of command at and between the various levels of aggregation. It follows that these command chains are closely watched by party leadership. Any proposal for change is examined for its likely effects on the present party leadership. Most incumbents hesitate to introduce changes which could jeopardize their chances for re-nomination or their control powers of the internal party workings. Under such conditions problems such as starkly varying membership from different countries will certainly be very difficult to resolve. Some system of quotas, vote weights such as super-qualified majorities or other balancing acts will be necessary. One important practical expression of party democracy was the selection of candidates for the Commission presidency before the 2014 elections.

**Pitfalls of asymmetric electoral representation**

Both channels of democratic legitimation of the EU are predominantly determined by the same principal, national party leadership. This is no new insight. In 1987, Reif and Niedermayer noted that there was a “marked discrepancy” between the function nominally attributed to the European Parliament and its real function, notably a mismatch between high constitutional expectations and the practical design of the vote. Indeed, the 1976 European Electoral Act revised in 2002 only stipulates the general principles of the proportional vote, incompatibility with a national parliamentary mandate and a maximum threshold of 5%. All other necessary provisions on campaign rules, design of the ballot, apportionment of seats and many others remain under the control of national legislation. One result of this is that on campaign posters and in other media the Europarties only exceptionally appear with their own logos and platforms. In addition, national party leadership selects the candidates for the European elections. This reduces the Europarties’ influence and visibility to a very low level (EP 2009).

A few scholars have developed ideas to improve this situation. Some of them appear almost utopian, others may be partially realized over the medium-term. Simms (2012) reflects on chances for a "new pan-European party" which would aim to gain a majority in the European Parliament in European elections or, if this turned out to be difficult, to win majorities in the respective national legislatures (or both). This should then lead to the emergence of a pan-European party landscape.

In a more realistic vein, Schleicher identified conflicts between the goal of making the EP a direct popular check of the Commission and the Council.
The most relevant tool voters have for overcoming their ignorance of politics is the heuristic provided by a political party (cf. also Manin 1997) the repeated practices of voters would contribute to growing an understanding of European politics. Two problems with Schleicher’s ideas may occur: (1) On what political issues should EP voters form their “running tallies” if few salient policies are decided at the EU level, and if due to the institutional compromises prevalent in European decision-making no clear impact of separate parties can be singled out? (2) There have already been warnings from MEPs and academic commentators that turnout may fall even further due to new and foreign-sounding party names. This development can of course not be ruled out and may possibly constitute a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The last argument brings us to the European Parliament’s proposals for electoral reform because similar objections have been raised against the introduction of a single EU-wide constituency for a small number of additional MEPs (Duff 2010). MEPs have argued, for instance, that such a constituency would create a two-class system of MEPs, that it would intensify the personalization and mediatization of electoral campaigns, and that the presentation of foreign-sounding candidates would alienate voters even more than is the case now. The rapporteur’s rejoinder was that “the addition of a transnational list elected from a pan-EU constituency would enhance the popular legitimacy of the European Parliament by widening voter choice. The voter would be able to articulate politically his or her plural citizenship, one national, the other European: two votes are better than one.”

A less problematic proposal, taken up by other authors (Oelbermann et al. 2011), concerns the design of the ballots used in European elections, which should not carry the acronyms of national parties but those of their European partners. There may be linguistic details to be sorted out but from a rational-choice perspective such a seemingly small change would enable voters to exercise their accountability function in direct relation to the European parties. This would of course take time over several electoral cycles but, as Schleicher puts it, it would allow electors to establish “running tallies” of the political decisions made by European parties, thus clarifying the purpose of the vote. Finally, since in most modern elections the most relevant tool voters have for overcoming their ignorance of politics is the heuristic provided by a political party (cf. also Manin 1997) the repeated practices of voters would contribute to growing an understanding of European politics. Two problems with Schleicher’s ideas may occur: (1) On what political issues should EP voters form their “running tallies” if few salient policies are decided at the EU level, and if due to the institutional compromises prevalent in European decision-making no clear impact of separate parties can be singled out? (2) There have already been warnings from MEPs and academic commentators that turnout may fall even further due to new and foreign-sounding party names. This development can of course not be ruled out and may possibly constitute a self-fulfilling prophecy.

41. p. 60
The proposal for electoral reform was sent back to committee in May 2011 and will only be taken up again during the next term. One reason for this is that some elements of the proposal would require treaty revision. Other proposals in AFCO’s report, such as the introduction of semi-open party lists or improving the franchise for citizens living in other member states, will hopefully be part of the renewed reform effort. Perhaps the most radical effect of these changes of the electoral procedure would be to confront the European political parties with an important political challenge: to select the candidates for the EU-wide constituency and to stage an effective campaign for them. This would in all likelihood transform the posture of Europarties over the years and enable them to acquire a more independent role with respect to national party structures. It would open a host of necessities and possibilities for inter-party communication and cooperation, Europe-wide head-hunting for suitable candidates and new energies for the implementation of interesting proposals to Europeanize the European elections: use Euro-party acronyms on ballot papers, require Euro-parties to obtain a certain percentage of votes in more than one member state and other instruments to make regular public appearances of non-national politicians the rule rather than the exception.

One day this might even radiate to the selection of other MEP candidates. It has of course been argued that to elect only 25 MEPs on the new transnational quota is insufficient to interest the Europarties to spend significant resources on the campaign. However, this claim probably underestimates the novelty effect and the media impact of a cross-border campaign. The disproportionate press coverage received by Marine Le Pen and Geert Wilders on their project of uniting several Eurosceptic parties in order to obtain group status in the EP is a case in point. Moreover, the selection duty would have to be combined with clearer party programmes and a more proactive behaviour with respect to the election of the Commission President. There is a certain amount of research showing that parties which display a clear position on European issues do better in the EP elections than others (Lord 2010).

In summary, the EU-wide constituency would bring about most of the advantages of multi-state thresholds without some of their drawbacks. Plural thresholds might well be a further step of reform once an EU-wide constituency is well established. These proposals are certainly not sufficient to create the necessary conditions for a lively political debate at the European level but would need the restructuring of European political parties outlined above (Bardi et al. 2010).

Towards a parliamentary system? The presentation of candidates for Commission President

One of the key measures in bringing about the ‘Europeanisation’ of the parliamentary elections, more lively intra-party democracy, and higher voter participation is the nomination of candidates for President of the European Commission. In this regard, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 4 July 2013 on improving practical arrangements for the 2014 parliamentary elections calling on the European political parties to nominate candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission, who should present their political programmes in all member states. This initiative has finally been accepted by national leaders despite some resistance. The five Europarty candidates participated in several television debates, campaigned in most member

42. T7-0323/2013
states and were covered extensively in the press. However, the impact of this on voter turn-out has been regrettably weak.

There are of course advocates of a non-partisan profile of the Commission and authors warning to go down the way towards a parliamentary system. Indeed, the current institutional structure of the EU resembles more a presidential or separated-powers system (Kreppel 2011). Any move towards a more parliamentary system with its dynamics of “government” and opposition parties may bring surprises with respect to the acceptance of the Commission’s proposals in Parliament or, vice versa, the reaction of the Commission to parliamentary legislative initiatives. A further institutional aspect are the absolute majorities required for many legislative decision (e.g., at third reading), which make it necessary that the major groups cooperate. Even if the President of the Commission were elected by a clear-cut majority in both EU “chambers” - the governments gathered in the Council being considered as a kind of European Bundesrat - he would have to compromise, notably to confront the problem of forging majorities in the EP and of adapting to shifting balances in the Council (Magnette/Papadopoulos 2008).

However, the political dynamics developing in all parties are a true innovation. The quality media’s reactions have been very positive and the means at the disposal of the top candidates appeared sufficient. European parties were allowed to support their candidates. In addition, there seems to be strong cohesion on this point among newly elected MEPs and EP groups. The European Council seems likely to accept that the future Commission President will be chosen among the party candidates.

Conclusion

In Renaud Dehousse’s words, the EU suffers not primarily from a democratic but from a political deficit. Major decisions concerning the EU are taken in an ambiance of “There is no alternative”, with little contestation between right and left. Many MEPs are painfully aware of this when they start to campaign. Being obliged to start out stereotypically by acknowledging that all mainstream parties are pro-European neuters electoral campaigns for the European Parliament and inhibits MEPs to spell out their convictions. One way out of this might be that the mass pro-integration parties in Europe regain lost ground in the battle over European integration by living up to the facts of politicization. The way to do this, at least for some observers, would be to politicize Europe along the left/right cleavage. As a result, European issues ought to be framed in terms of the direction of European policies rather than with regard to European integration (Börzel/Risse 2009). The political refusal, by left and right, to focus on economic distribution and the management of the economy for production and distribution may need to be abandoned for arriving at such a politicization (Mair 2008).

The sometimes technical improvements discussed by some researchers and by the Parliament should be seen as incremental steps to prepare full-fledged electoral campaigning at the European level. This strategy is not without risks as it may provide a platform for jingoist political entrepreneurs along the tan dimension found by Hooghe and Marks (2009). The optimistic bet would be that feelings of territorial and social identity are the result of acquiring legal, cultural and political habits and of sustained interaction between citizens and their political institutions at various levels. On the other hand, the power of incumbents in political office and of existing legal and political accountability structures can hardly be overestimated. Resistance to change can certainly be explained in a framework of rational choice theories, postulating that those who benefit from institutions already in place have strong incentives to use their
institutional powers to veto proposals for change (Rose/Bernhagen 2010).

On the other hand, the need to make EU public policy more transparent (Elmar Brok: Who does what, and why?) persists. Citizens expect such transparency against the background of what they are accustomed to at the national level. Although any simple duplication of national institutional structures would ignore the specifics of the European political system, declaring the idea of a robust European parliamentarianism as utopian could also be a sign of intellectual apathy or constitutional fatigue. The case against representative democracy in Europe may not be as strong as it seems and the costs of making do without it may indeed be high (see Kumm 2008). A European parliamentary, but partially separate powers system will certainly be different from any national model (see Bellamy 2010) but in view of growing popular discontent about the EU it still seems to be one of the most promising and logical avenues, one crucial part of which, against all odds, is arguably a further development of a European party system.

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THE ECONOMIC REPRESENTATION DEFICIT. RECONSIDERING ECONOMIC POLICY CONGRUENCE BETWEEN VOTERS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

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1. Introduction

Since 2008, Europe has seen an ongoing banking, economic and budgetary crisis. Politicians have offered different solutions for this crisis. On the right, politicians, like German chancellor Angela Merkel, have argued for austerity policies. Left-wing politicians, like French president François Hollande, have campaigned on the promise of higher taxes for the wealthy and increased government spending. This left-right conflict in Europe fits the traditional model of political science: evidence has shown that the economic left-right dimension is persistent at the level of the political elite (Benoit and Laver 2006; Budge and Robertson 1987; Hix and Noury 2009). There is increasing evidence, however, that voters do not understand economic issues in those terms (Achterberg, Houtman, and Derks 2011; Derks 2004, 2006; Goerres and Prinzen 2011). Voters’ views are far more diverse:

A single common left-right dimension is an important precondition for policy congruence between the views of citizens and the political elite (Costello et al. 2012; Downs 1957; Thomasassen 1999). If the structures that underlie the policy preferences of politicians and voters differ, there can be no congruence between the policy preferences of the electorate and their representatives: because there are no party politicians catering to the preferences of citizens that do not fit in the structure underlying the opinions of politicians. If all parties offer either policy bundles that consist out of higher taxes and investments in public services or bundles that consist out of lower taxes and austerity, voters that prefer lower taxes and investments in public services cannot be represented adequately. This article tests whether the structure underlying the views of European voters and party politicians on economic matters is identical. If the policy positions of politicians on economic matters can be modelled in terms of a single dimension and the ideal points of voters on economic matters cannot, this undermines the quality of democratic representation.

This looks specifically at the policy preferences of candidates for the European Parliament and the policy preference of those citizens who voted for their party in the European Parliament elections. The focus is on economic matters. This is particularly relevant, because, as Costello et al. (2012) argue, the bulk of the work of the European Parliament is economic nature and because of the ongoing economic crisis, economic questions have become even more central to the European political agenda.

The core argument of this stands in contrast to a recent article by Costello et al. (2012). Their study used the same data and one of the methods employed here, but answered a different question; they asked whether a three-dimensional European political space (with an economic, cultural and European dimension) fit the answers of citizens and whether politicians and citizens stood close to each other on these dimensions. They determined that voters and politicians stood closest to each other on the economic dimension. On European integration and cultural issues, they found that citizens and their political representatives stood further apart. Their model included a control for acquiescence bias, the tendency of respondents to answer questions affirmatively. This will show that acquiescence bias is not the reason for the lack of coherence. This will spend special attention on the theory and method of the article of Costello et al. (2012).

This will have the following structure: first, the theory section will show the importance of the notion that voters’ views and politicians’ views

43. The author wants to thank Rory Costello for sharing his replication data and code and Matthijs Rooduijn for his assistance with confirmatory factor analysis in Stata.
have the same structure for the theory of representation. Next, the method section will discuss techniques assessing the dimensional structure underlying the view of respondents. In order to ensure that the findings presented here are not the result of some methodological fluke, different techniques will be employed. Then, the results sections will show how the structure of the views of voters and politicians differs. The result section will also address acquiescence bias and then it will show what these results mean for the quality of democratic representation. The conclusion sketches an agenda for further research.

2. Left, Right and Representation

A key model in the literature of representative democracy is the Responsible Party Model (APSA 1950; Thomassen 1999). In this model, elections function as instruments to link citizens’ policy preferences to the policy positions of their representatives (Costello et al. 2012; Thomassen 1999; Mair 2013). For this model to function three conditions must be met: first, on the supply side of politics, politicians or parties differentiate themselves by offering different bundles of policies; second, on the demand side of politics, voters must choose between party politicians on basis of their preferences for these policies (Thomassen 1999). Third, party politicians’ and voters’ positions must be structured by a single common policy dimension: i.e. the positions of parties in programs, the actions of members of parliaments and the policy preferences of voters should be constrained by the same dimension (Costello et al. 2012; Downs 1957; Thomassen 1999). The reason for this is that parties offer bundles of policies. In order to assure that the bundle of policies does not contain policies that the voter opposes, there must be a common policy dimension that structures the positions of party politicians and voters. One party may favour liberalizing markets and lowering taxes in order to create a better climate for enterprises to thrive; another party may favour nationalising the healthcare sector and increasing taxes in order to ensure that citizens have free access to this service. By voting for one party, voters get the whole bundle (Costello et al. 2012; Thomassen 1999). Voters that want lower taxes but citizens to have free access to healthcare cannot be serviced by parties that either offer lower taxes or free healthcare.

2.1 Economic Left and Right

The question which dimensions structure the voter and the party space is a key in political science. Scholars disagree over the extent to which a single left-right dimension, rooted in economic issues suffices to understand voting and political decision-making. Some argue that the left-right economic dimension is ‘a super issue’ which includes all these issues or pushes other issues off the political agenda (Inglehart and Klingemann 1976). Other authors have argued that alternative dimensions are necessary. These include dimensions concerning religious morality, the environment, immigration, European integration and law and order (Costello et al. 2012; Gabel and Anderson 2002; Inglehart 1984; Kitschelt 1994; Kriesi et al. 2008; Lipset 1960).

The question is not only which dimensions structure the political space, but also whether the dimensions that structure the voter and the party space are identical. Kriesi et al. (2008) and Costello et al. (2012) found that all over Europe voters and party politicians could be placed in a common space. Three dimensions that respectively concern economic, cultural and European issues structure this space. In contrast, Van der Brug and Van Spanje (2009; Van der Brug 2008) problematise the notion of a common space in which voters and party politicians position themselves: they find that a one-dimensional solution suffices for the party space, while a multidimensional solution
is necessary for the voters’ positions: the left-right dimension structures positions of party politicians, while among citizens positions on cultural and economic issues are independent from each other.

This article moves away from the ambition to build a comprehensive model of voter and party spaces and focuses on the dimensionality of one, important, issue: the economy. The economic dimension is key for understanding of politics: most political decision-making concerns economic questions. One famous definition of politics itself sees it as the way society answers the question ‘who gets what, when and how?’ (Laswell 1936). In the classical model of democracy of Downs (1957) economic decision-making, and specifically the role of the government in the economy, is seen as the overarching political question.

In the literature there is broad agreement that the economic dimension concerns two different elements (Bobbio 1996; Costello et al. 2012; Downs 1957; Knutsen and Kumlin 2005; Kriesi et al. 2008; Lipset et al. 1954): the extent to which one prefers government intervention in the economy to the free market principle of laissez-faire (economic interventionism); and the extent to which one prefers redistribution of income in the interest of the less well of (economic egalitarianism). In general, leftwing voters, parties and politicians favour a government that intervenes in the economy, redistributes income, runs nationalized public services, levies high taxes and ensures generous welfare state benefits. Rightwing voters, parties and politicians favour a small government that abstains from interfering in the economy, levies low taxes, lets enterprises supply services, does not intervene in the income distribution and limits welfare state benefits.

2.2 Voters and Representatives

On basis of the existing literature one may expect politicians to have coherent views about economic matters. Existing evidence shows that certainly on economic questions the left-right dimension is strong and persistent: in terms of the views of parties expressed in party manifestos (Budge and Robertson 1987), their ideal positions according to expert surveys (Benoit and Laver 2006) and positions of politicians expressed in the European Parliament (Hix and Noury 2009).

Why is this the case? One reason may be that party politicians balance responsibility and representation when taking positions (Mair 2009). Representation comes from the ‘responsible’ party model (APSA 1950): in order to win elections, the positions of parties and politicians must match those of potential voters. Party politicians also bear responsibility for the economic policies of the government: Mair (2009) defines a responsible policy as prudent and consistent. According to Mair (2009) prudence and consistency limits the range of positions party politicians can take: parties cannot immediately nationalize all public services or abolish all taxes. This argues that responsibility limits combinations of positions party politicians can take: only by raising taxes can the government afford to nationalize public services, or tax cuts must be accompanied by spending cuts. This is because economic issues come with their own logical constraints (Milyo 2000). Preferences about economic policies are not primitive or independent but they cohere in an economic logic (Milyo 2000): for instance, the level of government spending (one element of the economic left-right dimension) has implications for taxation levels, price levels and income levels (other elements of the economic left-right dimension). Because responsible politicians will not

44. The word ‘responsible’ in this model is quite confusing as in the literature this element can rather be described as ‘responsive’
favour inconsistent policies, the policy positions of politicians will tend to cohere.

For voters, the economy may be a particularly ‘hard’ issue (Carmines and Stimson 1980): many economic measures are technical. The relationship between policy ends, such as income equality, and policy means, such as government intervention, may not be apparent. In general, the views of citizens may be less constrained: Converse (1964) already observed that in the United States many voters simply did not have meaningful beliefs, not even on questions that dominated the political debate for years. His findings have been found in other countries and more recent time periods (Butler and Stokes 1974; Zaller 1992). Although some argue that these findings come from measurement error and that using multi-item scales the views of voters are more consistent (Achen 1975; Ansolabehere et al. 2008; ). Recent literature on public opinion, using multi-item scales, has shown that a large share of citizens has views on economic matters that are inconsistent from the perspective of a single left-right dimension (Achterberg et al. 2011; Derks 2004, 2006; Goerres and Prinzen 2011). This pattern has been shown in different countries, different studies, for general economic issues and specific questions about the welfare state and using different methods of measuring scale quality. This leads to the following hypothesis, which will be tested in the remainder of this:

The economic views of politicians fit better into a single-dimensional economic left-right model than the views of citizens about the same subject.

Earlier studies have treated the lack of coherence in the views of citizens as a measurement problem (Costello et al. 2012; Wagner and Kritzinger 2012; Walczak, Van der Brug, and de Vries, 2012) or a country-specific anomaly (Sperber 2010). Costello et al. (2012), for instance attribute the lack of coherence in the views of citizens to acquiescence bias. They control for the fact that citizens with weak opinions tend to answer questions affirmatively independent of the questions. This tendency of citizens to acquiesce is already a sign that the views of citizens on these issues are underdeveloped. From the perspective of democratic representation, the difference in the coherence between citizens and politicians is a theoretical problem. On issues where the structure that underlies the positions of party politicians and voter positions differs ‘elections are doomed to fail as an instrument of linkage with regards to those issues’ (Costello et al. 2012).

3. Methods

Spatial models are built on the assumption that respondents do not choose their positions at random. Their answers reflect a latent low-dimensional structure. Methods of data reduction model this latent structure on basis of observed items. Applying methods of data reduction in itself is a process of creation. Researchers choose particular observations and specific measurement models (Coombs 1964). Each method comes with its own advantages, drawbacks, assumptions, options and diagnostics. Therefore, it may be that studies with different methods, especially when they seek to answer dissimilar questions, come to different conclusions about the dimensionality of the political space. This also means that there is no “true” map of voter or party positions (Benoit and Laver 2006). Data also does not have a correct dimensionality, what one can assess whether a one-dimensional model fits the views of politicians better than the views of voters (cf. Otjes 2011). In order to ensure that the results presented here are not an artefact of some specific method, the results will be crossvalidated using three methods.
3.1 Methods of data reduction

Methods of data reduction come in two families: item response theory and classical test theory. The methods of classical test theory, such as Cronbach’s a, confirmatory factor analysis, essentially, build further on correlation. Cronbach’s a measures the reliability (‘internal consistency’) of a scale (Cronbach 1951). This is operationalised as the correlation between the items in the scale and the latent dimension. Reliability is a pre-condition for unidimensionality, but not a sufficient condition (Cortina 1993). Factor analysis can be applied in an exploratory and a confirmatory way (Brown 2006). This will employ confirmatory factor analysis, as the goal is to test whether the positions of voters on a range of economic issues can be understood in terms of one dimension. Data must meet the assumptions of regression for use in these classical test theory methods; these assumptions include a normal distribution and a linear relation between the items. If the data does not conform to these assumptions, classical test theory methods tend to overestimate the number of dimensions (Van Schuur and Kiers 1994). One drawback of structural equation modelling is that models sometimes do not converge (Brown 2006): this is a sign of poor specification. The number of cases may be too low, making the result sensitive to outliers. The data may not fit the assumptions. The model may also be too complex for the data. While the models can be slightly adjusted in order to converge, this will not be pursued here, because then the models can no longer be compared between for instance elite and mass level responses.

Mokken scaling is a method from the item response theory family (Mokken 1971; Van Schuur 2003). This method has fewer assumptions about the distribution of the data. The method was developed for educational tests. The Mokken scaling algorithm builds a structure that ranges from items that most respondents correctly answer (‘easy items’) to items which least respondents give the correct answer (‘difficult items’). In this case it will model items from left to right. A scale is consistent if a one-dimensional structure underlies these answers. The extent to which answers follow a one-dimensional structure is expressed in terms of the number of errors that are made: respondents that answer easy questions wrong and difficult answers correctly. While Mokken scaling was originally developed for dichotomous items, polytomous Mokken scaling was developed for ordinal items such as the ones employed here (Van der Ark 2007).

These methods come with their own diagnostic statistics of model quality. The main question of this is whether party politicians have significantly more consistent opinions than voters. Therefore this will assess whether the responses of voters have a worse fit in a one-dimensional model than the responses of politicians. Confirmatory factor analysis has a number of goodness or badness of fit measures: here the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) will be used. This is preferred over other standard measures such as the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation and the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual, which tend to overestimate errors in small sample sizes (West et al. 2012). Therefore, they cannot be used to compare fit between the larger samples of voters and the smaller samples of politicians. The CFI is acceptable if it is larger than 0.9 (Brown 2006). In assessing the model fit of the CFA models it is important to also examine the direction of the factor loadings: these are important, because confirmatory factor analysis does not test the assumption that relationships are in a particular direction, while the Mokken scale analysis and Cronbach’s do. So results can show a good fit in confirmatory factor analysis, even when the relationships go in against the expected direction. The H-value of Mokken scaling and the eponymous Cronbach’s are the single diag-
Table 2: Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Direction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Public services and industries should be in state ownership.</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Leftwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Private enterprise is best to solve [country's] economic problems.</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Rightwing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventionism</td>
<td>Politics should abstain from intervening in the economy</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Rightwing*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>Income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary people.</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Leftwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>Women should be free to decide on matters of abortion.</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Leftwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>Immigration to (country) should be decreased significantly</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Rightwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>People who break the law should get much harsher sentences than now</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Rightwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage should be prohibited by law</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Rightwing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referendum</td>
<td>EU treaty changes should be decided by referendum</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Anti-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>The European Parliament takes into consideration the concerns of European citizens</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Pro-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>You trust the institutions of the European Union</td>
<td>A: 5</td>
<td>Pro-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the EU?</td>
<td>P: 4</td>
<td>Pro-European</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A: Agreement;  
P: Position on a scale; number of answer categories.  
* indicates that the items was recoded in the Mokken and Cronbach’s a analyses.
3.2 Data Sources

This analyses whether the positions of citizens and voters on economic questions can be understood in terms of a single dimensional model. The 2009 European Elections Survey (EES) and the 2009 European Elections Candidate Survey (EECS) will be employed here (Weßels and WZB 2010; Van Egmond et al. 2010). Voters and candidates were asked to answer the same questions. This allows one to compare the extent to which their views cohere. The EES was held in all 27 EU member states after the 2009 European Parliament election. A thousand voters were sampled in each country. For the EECS all candidate MEPs were asked to answer a questionnaire. 25% of candidate MEPs responded. The total respondents per country differed strongly, as can be seen in Table 1. Candidates and citizens will be analysed separately. Only models with 40 or more respondents will be presented given how especially Confirmatory Factor Analysis is sensitive to the number of respondents (Brown 2006). This means that candidate surveys from 17 member states will be excluded. Because so many countries were excluded a model for the candidates from all member states is also included.

The EES and EECS were selected, because they are the only survey that includes both politicians and voters from such a high number of countries. The only drawback of the study is that it includes only four economic items (listed in Table 2). This may be too little basis to assess the coherence of the economic left-right dimension. However, given the strength that the scholarly literature ascribes to the left-right dimension, one would expect that these items that concern closely related issues, especially in the domain of government intervention, cohere. Respondents with missing items were deleted list-wise per analysis. All items have been recalculated so that they are in a left to right conceptual direction.

3.3 Acquiescence Bias

This research is similar to that of Costello et al. (2012). Using confirmatory factor analysis, they find that a three-dimensional structure fits a combined candidate and voter data set. This structure includes a three-item economic dimension. Their model only shows sufficient fit when they control for acquiescence bias, the tendency of respondents to answer affirmatively to survey questions, independent of what the questions concerns substantively (Billiet and McClendon 2001). This section will discuss some methodological issues with the solution of Costello et al. (2012) and how these will be addressed in this.

They follow Billiet and McClendon’s (2001) solution for acquiescence bias: the idea is to construct a model for two sets of items that are balanced. This means that they have an equal number of items with ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ wording. And then one can estimate three factors: two substantial factors related to one of the two sets of items and then a third factor which has a fixed loading of one for all items. This would be called a ‘response style factor’.

Costello et al. (2012) estimate three substantive dimensions: an economic one, a cultural one and EU one. They use three economic items (two with a left-wing orientation and one with a right-wing orientation), while there are four economic items in the EES (two left-wing and two right-wing). They exclude the item on interventionism.46 This is problematic for two reasons: first, the economic set of items is not balanced; and second, interventionism is core part of the notion of the economic left-right dimension (Downs 1957). None of their sets of items are balanced. They use four cultural items (three with ‘conservative’ wording and one with ‘progressive’ wording) and four European items (two with pro-European wording, one with

46. They do not explain why the interventionism item has been excluded but Costello et al. (2012, footnote 3) do lament the lack of balance in their items.
Table 3: Voter-Level Indicators of Scale Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polity</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>Confirmatory Factor Analysis</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Egalitarianism</th>
<th>Enterprise</th>
<th>Interventionism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>(0.34, 0.55)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>-0.45, -0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>(0.30, 0.75)</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>-0.30, -0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>(0.61, 0.99)</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>(0.08, 0.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>(0.20, 0.47)</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.13, 0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.03, 0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>Non-convergence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>(0.54, 0.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>(0.04, 0.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.34, -0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-0.41</td>
<td>-0.51, -0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>Non-convergence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>(0.14, 0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.50</td>
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<td>0.18</td>
<td>(0.07, 0.36)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>(0.22, 0.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>(0.17, 0.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>(0.05, 0.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>Non-convergence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>(0.13, 0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>(-0.58, -0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>(-0.07, 0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>(-0.07, 0.35)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Non-convergence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.60</td>
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<td>0.42</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.04, 0.23</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0.16</td>
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<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.01, 0.09</td>
</tr>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>(0.04, 0.24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagnostic statistics for Mokken, Cronbach’s and CFA and CFA factor loadings with 95% confidence intervals.
Table 4: Candidate-Level Indicators of Scale Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>0.49</th>
<th>0.77</th>
<th>0.99</th>
<th>0.62</th>
<th>0.74</th>
<th>-0.77</th>
<th>-0.56</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.58, 0.66)</td>
<td>(0.70, 0.78)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU27</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.63, 0.91)</td>
<td>(0.73, 0.96)</td>
<td>(1.00, -0.84)</td>
<td>(-0.93, -0.68)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>0.75</td>
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<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(0.44, 0.85)</td>
<td>(-0.89, -0.5)</td>
<td>(-0.92, -0.55)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
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<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.31</td>
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<td>-0.72</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.09, 0.71)</td>
<td>(0.29, 0.97)</td>
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<td>(-0.82, -0.17)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
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<td>(0.94, 0.75)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.77</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
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<td>(-0.48, 0.06)</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
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Diagnostic statistics for Mokken, Cronbach’s and CFA and CFA factor loadings with 95% confidence intervals.
anti-European wording and one freely loading item). Including a freely loading item.

This will test two models with a response style factor to see to what extent controlling for acquiescence bias truly solves their problem: model specification A, visualised in Figure 1 follows Billiet and McClendon (2001) as precisely as possible. Three factors are estimated on two sets of items: an economic left-right dimension with all four economic items and a three-item European dimension (one pro-European, one anti-European and one freely loading item). The second model, specification B visualised in Figure 2, follows the specification of Costello et al. (2012)’s specification as closely as possible. The only difference is that all four economic items were included. The basic model without a response style factor is a base line for the analysis: models including a response style factor must perform better than these baseline models. One can only compare the direction and strength of the factor loadings for the four economic items included in both models. One cannot compare the model fit measures, because these depend on the strength of other relationships as well (in this case the cultural factor, the European factor and the response style factor).
4. Scaling Results

This section looks at the results of the different scaling methods. Table 3 and 4 present the $H$-values of Mokken scaling, the Cronbach’s $a$-values, CFI for voters and politicians respectively. Moreover, the factor loadings for the state, egalitarianism, enterprise and interventionism variables are presented.

According to the $H$-levels in Table 3 in none of the 27 EU member states, the four economic items fit in an ordinal scale: in no country the threshold level of 0.3 is met. The best results are in Germany and Austria. The $H$-values for the elite-level, in Table 4, provide more justification for a single-dimensional interpretation. In the 10 countries, where enough MEPs are included in the survey, the views of these MEPs meet the 0.3-threshold. The same is true for the analysis with the candidate MEPs from all 27 member states of the EU. This means that the views of politicians from all included countries can be modelled in terms of one dimension. When comparing the $H$-levels of the mass and elite-level one can see that the former are always lower than the latter. The average difference in the $H$-values between elite and voters is 0.37, which reflects the fact that among voters the $H$-values are all insufficient, while at the elite-level they are sufficient. These results are in line with the expectation that voters have less consistent views than party politicians.

The $a$-values reflect a similar discrepancy between voters and politicians. For voters the Cronbach’s $a$-values are insufficient in all but one country (Austria). At the elite-level the values are sufficient in all included countries and in the pan-European data set. This means that among voters the economic left-right dimension cannot be reliably measured by means of these four items, while it can be reliably measured at the level of the candidate. The average difference between the two values is 0.50, which again reflects the fact that among voters the $a$-values are all insufficient, while at the elite-level they tend to be sufficient. Again, these results sustain the hypothesis.

Table 3 shows the results of twenty-seven confirmatory factor analyses at the voter-level. Six of them failed to converge under this specification. In only two countries, Austria and Sweden, the CFI is above the threshold level. In all but three countries (Austria, Germany and France) at least one of the factor loadings is either statistically indistinguishable from zero (i.e. there is no relationship) or goes in against the left-right dimension. For the state-item the factor loadings in two countries are indistinguishable from zero. The factor loadings for egalitarianism in three countries are indistinguishable from zero. When it comes to the enterprise variable, the problems become more pressing: for three countries the factor loadings are significantly in the wrong direction. This means that in these countries those who favour free enterprise more often than not also favour nationalisation of economic sectors. In another seven countries, the enterprise factor loading is indistinguishable from zero. This means that for just over half of the countries, the factor loading for enterprise is significant and in the expected direction. For the interventionism item, however, the problems are even larger: in six countries the factor loading is indistinguishable from zero. In another eleven countries the factor loading is significant but in the incorrect direction: those who favour an equal distribution of incomes more often than not want less government intervention. This leaves only three countries (the aforementioned Austria, Germany and France), where the factor loading is significant and in the correct direction. All in all, the confirmatory factor analyses indicate that only in a single country, Austria, the four-item economic model fits a one-dimensional model.

At the candidate-level, all ten national models that were ran and the pan-European model. Many indi-
those countries, these factor loadings already conformed to this pattern in the model without the response style factor. In the thirteen other models, at least one of the factor loadings is not significantly different from zero or in the incorrect direction. That means that including a response style factor leads to a model where moving to the left on an issue like egalitarianism makes it more likely for voters to be right-wing on interventionism. Therefore the results would not lead to a significantly different interpretation than the model without a response style factor, namely that substantively the items do not fit an economic left-right interpretation.

The main conclusion would be that the lack of coherence in the views of citizens on economic matters clearly cannot be scaled into a single dimensional interpretation. The CFI and Cronbach’s α for voters are lower than these values for politicians and the CFI-values are higher for voters than for politicians. In all but one country the views of citizens on economic matters cannot be scaled into a single dimensional interpretation. The CFI and Cronbach’s α indicate that the views of voters in Austria can be modelled in terms of a single dimension, although the Mokken scaling results. At the same time, the views of candidates for public office from all over the European Union meet most of these requirements. This provides ample evidence for the hypothesis that voter views are less single-dimensional than views of politicians.

5. Acquiescence Bias

Above two model specifications that controlled for acquiescence bias were introduced. Model specification A (see Figure 1) followed the prescription of Billiet and McClendon (2001) as closely as possible and estimate three factors (two substantive and one response style factor). This includes a four-item economic dimension. These results are shown in Table 5. With this specification only fifteen models converged. The lack of convergence may be an indicator that the model is too complex for the data. The key result is that the enterprise and interventionism factor loading are both in the correct direction and significantly different from zero, in two countries: Germany and France. In
## Table 5: Voter-Level Indicators of Scale Quality for Model Specification A

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
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Diagnostic statistics for CFA and CFA factor loadings with 95% confidence intervals.
Table 6: Voter-Level Indicators of Scale Quality for Model Specification B

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</table>

Diagnostic statistics for CFA and CFA factor loadings with 95% confidence intervals.
stantively the question is whether one supports or opposes government intervention in the economy. With two different specifications, the inclusion of the response style factor only leads to a substantially different interpretation for the interventionism item in a single case. Therefore the poor results are more likely to be substantive in nature than that they are the cause of a methodological singularity.

Figure 3: Distances between parties and voters in one and four-dimensional models

6. Policy Representation

One may wonder: ‘so what, why does it matter? Is this more than a matter of academic importance?’ The dimensionality of the political space has a strong effect on the quality of representation, as Thomassen (1999) has argued. The results indicate that a large segment of voters has views that are ‘inconsistent’ from the perspective of traditional left-right dimension: for instance they favour income equality but oppose government intervention in the economy. Politicians’ views however come in two flavours: more income equality and more government or less government and less income equality. This means that when one collapses the political space into a one-dimensional left-right dimension, one would place voters with strongly inconsistent views (like those who strongly favour redistribution but also strongly oppose government intervention) in the centre of the political space. In the two-dimensional representation, however, these voters are actually as far from the centre as voters who strongly favour redistribution and government intervention. If party politicians are concentrated along an economic left-right dimension and voters are spread out in the space more evenly, there will be a large discrepancy between voters and party politicians, especially those voters with ‘inconsistent’ views.

Costello et al. (2012) offer a way to express the quality of representation by examining the distance between party politicians and voters: they propose calculating the distance between the average position of the voters for a party and the average position of the candidates of that party. In order to illustrate the effect of a one- and a multi-dimensional model, the Euclidian distance between party politicians and voters is calculated in a one-dimensional model, which distorts voter positions, and between party politicians and voters in a four-dimensional model, where each economic item represents a separate dimension. The distances are divided by the maximum distance in the space. Following Costello et al. (2012), these differences are only calculated for parties that have 40 or more citizens voting for them in the European Parliament elections and 5 or more candidates running for office. Figure 3 illustrates the distances between party candidates and their voters per party. The x-axis shows the distance between parties and voters on a one-dimensional scale. On average, this distance is 0.12 (maximum is 1). If one unpacks the political space and represents the true diversity in the positions of voters, however, the average distance is 0.18: 47% greater. These values are shown in the y-axis of Figure 2.

47. The maximum is four for the one-dimensional model and eight for the four dimensional mode.
As one can see the policy distances are consistently larger in the four-dimensional space than in the one-dimensional space. This shows that a one-dimensional model of economic issues underestimates the representation problem.

7. Conclusion

The results presented in this show that voters have less consistent views about economic matters than party politicians. On economic issues voters’ views are not constrained and structured, while on the same issues, the views of politicians are. The views of politicians from all over Europe meet all requirements for a single-dimensional model: politicians that favour a more equal distribution of income also support the government intervention necessary to realise it. The views of politicians tend to cohere logically: for them the relationship between policy means and policy ends is clear. For citizens, however, economic issues are far more complex. They do not see the economic logic between means and ends. Therefore their answers do not fit easily into a single-dimensional model. This has implications for the quality of democratic representation in Europe.

Elections are an instrument to translate the preferences of voters to the political level (Costello et al., 2012). A key condition for policy representation is that that voters’ views and the policy positions of candidates are constrained by the same ideological dimension. If one distorts the positions of voters and force them into a one-dimensional scale, they are closer to party positions than in a four-dimensional representation. Voters with extreme but inconsistent views cannot be represented well by the established parties: they may want less government intervention in the economy and a more equal distribution of resources; and all that they can choose is more government and more equality or less government and less equality. This means that on economic issues, the representation deficit does not just concern differences in positions (e.g. voters are more left-wing than candidates) but it concerns the way in which voters and politicians use to understand economic questions.

From the results presented in this, one can derive an agenda for further research. The first and most pressing issue is whether the patterns presented here are the result of an anomaly of one particular set of questions, or whether this phenomenon can be seen consistently in different European states. The findings presented here may also be the result of the context of the questionnaire, which was executed during the 2009 European Parliament election. It may be that the ongoing euro-crisis has diminished the strength of the economic left-right dimension at the voter-level, as traditional leftwing and rightwing answers no longer fit the economic complexity. Therefore, it may be valuable to reanalyse existing voter and candidates’ surveys from different countries and from different periods. Doing this may help one to understand when, where and under what conditions voter positions on economic issues do cohere.

The second issue is whether the discrepancy that was found here actually matters for political behaviour. One example: a large segment of citizens with ‘inconsistent’ views may find it difficult to find representation in a party system that is highly structured. This may have consequences for their volatility: these voters may be more volatile in their vote choice, because the framing of the elections matters. Previously, Van der Brug and Van Spanje (2009) argued that because a large segment of voters has left-wing and authoritarian views but parties only offer rightwing-authoritarian or leftwing-libertarian bundles, they may switch parties dependent on how the elections are framed, in terms of a choice over cultural issues or over economic issues: they may opt for the ‘left’ when elections concern economic issues and opt for the ‘right’ when elections concern immigration.
and integration. It may be that this phenomenon is also visible for the economic dimension itself: if economic issues are framed as to concern redistribution, the left may be stronger, if economic issues are framed concern government intervention, the right may profit.

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SECTION IV: THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND EUROPE ON THE PARTY SYSTEMS
EXPORTING EUROPOLITICS IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD: ELECTIONS IN THE POST-SOVIET AREA AND THE REGIONAL ACTIVITY OF EUROPARTIES

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Introduction

This paper will propose a new avenue in the research of the impact of Europe on national party politics. More specifically, it will develop some theoretical suggestions about the ways transnational party federations (most commonly referred to as ‘Europarties’) affect national party politics, especially in the EU’s periphery under conditions of as yet unformed party systems, semi-authoritarian power structures and rampant economic and political corruption. These theoretical suggestions will then be assessed with reference to developments in three post-Soviet states: Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. These states all share one characteristic that has made their political systems reasonably multifaceted and unpredictable: The staging of democratic revolutions that, even if culminating in little more than alteration between factions of oligarchic elites, have made genuine competitive politics a normative reference point (as well as a discursive resource) of party competition. The party politics of Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet area have been studied extensively through the lens of literature on transition, democratisation and the variants of competitive-electoral authoritarian regimes. This paper suggests that the increasing closeness of these countries to Europe may contribute, among other things, to the establishment of more stable and patterned party politics.

The basic argument of this paper is that Europarties can plan an important role in the legitimation and consolidation of party politics. In all three cases, democratic revolutions have made democratization/authoritarianism the overarching dimension of political competition and increased proximity to Europe (through the Eastern enlargement of 2004-2007 and the creation of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) in 2008-2009) has allowed democratizers to present democracy and ‘Europe’ as mutually reinforcing choices. In all three cases and to a varying degree, the democratization/authoritarianism axis has also served to structure better than before the expression (if not genuine representation and mobilization) of social divisions (linguistic, ethnic, religious), and it forms a powerful normative framework with which personal-oligarchic agendas are compelled to engage. In this context, the opportunities for transnational political cooperation offered by Europarty affiliation are important legitimating mechanisms for anti-authoritarian strategies, they exacerbate the polarisation and the ideological character of what would normally be intra-elite competitions, and they serve as resources for organizational evolution and ideological streamlining of what remain essentially elite-driven, weakly institutionalized parties.

The Impact of Europarties on National Party Politics

For long Europarties were considered secondary actors, completely dominated by their member-parties. Such research that exists on the transnational dimensions of party politics on a European level has focused on the role of European Parliament groupings (Van Hecke 2010, 395-396). When it comes to Europarties though, interest has been much smaller48. Perhaps this is understandable, given that the exact place of Europarties in the EU political system is unclear, and that the interactions between them do not follow a discernible pattern akin to proper party system dynamics (unlike European Parliament groups, that are seen as contesting socioeconomic issues of European governance reasonably predictably according to their relative ideological positions along the Right-Left axis, Hix et al 2007).

Having said that, it might be the right time to start considering the role of Europarties in EU politics more seriously – and, going beyond that,

even start pondering the independent effect of Europarties on national party politics. To do the latter one has to start from the former. Perhaps the most important function of Europarties in the EU political system is that of providing an alternative forum for coordination, communication and exchange between likeminded political actors. Europarties have built up expertise in staging summits for their member-party leaders and specialized meetings for party experts and/or likeminded ministers ahead of the plenary meetings of EU organs. This makes Europarties an arena for the exchange of viewpoints, as well as important actors in their own right, to the extent that Europarties also maintain an independent capacity to put items in the agenda of these meetings. In other words, Europarties are trying to carve out a niche in the EU polity, mediating between the supranational and the governmental-national level and exploiting opportunities in a framework still firmly dominated by member-parties.\(^{49}\)

If we think about Peter Mair’s famous argument about the ‘limited impact of Europe on national party systems’ (Mair 2000), the effect of Europarties on national party politics (as a subset of the overall European impact) should be from marginal to non-existent. To the extent that Europarties remain creatures of their constituent units, national member-parties, any effect of Europe on national party politics would probably best be attributed to the adaptation activities of national parties in national arenas. If anything, Europarties seem incapable to escape the patronage of their most prominent members, if these members wish to use the arenas provided by transnational partisan cooperation to push their positions on smaller likeminded partners (as evidenced by the pressure of CDU in EPP forums towards centre-right parties from the European South). And yet, the proliferation of this type of cooperation contributes to changes on the national level, even if this goes unacknowledged in relevant research. The analysis of Poguntke, Aylott, Ladrech and Luther of the effect of Europe on national party organization for example correctly identifies the empowerment of EU specialists within these organizations (Poguntke et al 2007). However their analysis neglects another interesting organizational development, namely the establishment and constant empowerment of the position of ‘international secretaries’ of parties, whose role in liaising with counterparts in other national parties has received a boost by the organizational expansion of Europarties themselves.

However, one need not only focus on existing EU member-states. Interestingly, Europarties are probably the only actor, arena or institutional setting of the EU polity where non-EU policymakers have ready and relatively easy access. All three major Europarties have partners in non-EU states, and it has been shown that their activity as complements of the EU’s conditionality ahead of enlargement is very significant: Europarties have not only pushed for organizational changes in affiliated or wannabe-affiliated parties in states close to accession, but they have even influenced these parties’ programmatic and ideological profile (most importantly, by pushing these parties to adopt unequivocally pro-EU programmatic positions).\(^{50}\)

Europarties offer to non-EU national party actors and to party politicians in EU member-states the same palette of benefits: Opportunities for positive exposure in international and national media, campaign assistance, a forum for the promotion of a party’s (or a government’s) positions, new pol-

\(^{49}\) It is in this sense that Van Hecke (2010) insists on the use of the term ‘transnational’ to describe the functions of Europarties. For an example of their coordinating function, see his analysis of their role in the Convention to draft the EU Constitution (Van Hecke 2008).

\(^{50}\) See the interesting empirical work of Klápačová (2013). On the effect of Europe on the programmatic profile of parties before and after EU accession in Central and Eastern Europe see Vachudova (2008).
icy ideas, elite coordination, and a powerful signal of corporate and ideological identity. Yet what is usually welcome but secondary dividends for parties from EU member-states can be an important difference-maker for politicians and parties in states expecting or hoping to accede to the EU. Acquiring ‘European credentials’ by establishing affiliation with a Europarty is a visible example of what these parties want to achieve as their key policy, i.e. European membership. With little opportunities to meet European leaders in EU summits, Europarty gatherings become first-class opportunities for self-promotion. The same logic applies to party cadres on lower levels of party leadership as well (Klápačová 2013, 29). Counter-intuitively, while Europarties’ position in the EU polity makes them a still modest actor, this very same position and function is very important in the eyes of politicians from prospective members.

This paper takes this logic a step further and submits that Europarties have an equally substantial independent effect on the national party politics of states beyond the EU’s ‘enlargement zone’, and more particularly of states comprising the Eastern Partnership. I would even go a bit further in saying that an independent Europarty effect can be discerned not only in the programmatic and organizational outlook of specific parties, but even in the systemic parameters of party competition (format and mechanics) that Mair had seen as being relatively impervious to European influence in the EU51. While Europarties gain in importance for their member-parties in EU member-states, they also are part of ‘business as usual’, an ever-important actor in an otherwise familiar political scene (and one suffering a severe legitimation crisis across Europe at the moment). In prospective EU members on the other hand, accession processes of new member-parties to Europarties mirror the accession processes of countries to the EU, with the eventual choice of partners by the Europarties crucially affecting the position of strength of national politicians relative to their competitors. Moving further away from the EU, this function is amplified in states lying halfway between Europe and their Soviet past, riven by ethnic, linguistic and religious cleavages and with unstable national identities and institutions. Achieving association with a Europarty is a choice as monumental for national parties in these countries as it is for these countries themselves to move closer to Europe.

It is assumed here that Europarties can influence both a party system’s format and mechanics in in a context of weakly institutionalized party politics. First, Europarties can influence the format of the party system by forcing for consolidation of like-minded parties or by favouring one party that slowly eclipses competitors for the same constituencies. Sometimes, this process may actually be double-tracked: Europarties care about associating themselves with strong partners in a given electoral arena, and a party’s strength puts it in a favourable position to enjoy a Europarty’s association. In conditions of weakly institutionalized parties, inability of parties to express major social cleavages and dominance of parties by different (and usually shadowy) members of economic oligarchies, a party’s association with a Europarty gives credence to its claims to ideological consistency and seriousness. As competitors slowly fade away or merge with Europarty-associated parties, one can assume that Europarty nods decisively influence the format of these party systems.

Europarty nods can also influence the mechanics of a party system – if not the actual direction of competition, then perhaps the degree of its polar-

51. Here I follow the identification of different areas of Europe’s impact on national political parties as identified by Ladrech (2002), and particularly on the third area, ‘patterns of party competition’, as the phenomenon to be explained. The mechanism of Europeanization I focus on (transnational party cooperation) corresponds to Ladrech’s fifth area of research, ‘relations beyond the national party system’.
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democracy and authoritarianism: semi-authoritarian (Kuzio 2005), competitive authoritarian (Bunce and Wolchik 2010; Levitsky and Way 2002), electoral authoritarian (Schedler 2006), patronal presidential (Hale 2006) etc. In post-Soviet states, political-economic oligarchic elites competed for control of the state’s resources, pursuing more or less personal agendas and manipulating ethnic and other allegiances as they saw fit (Bunce and Wolchik 2010, 61; Way 2005). In this context, those states that did not turn into outright autocracies like Belarus or Azerbaijan developed systems exhibiting the outside characteristics of competitive democracy (chiefly the regular staging of elections) but essentially controlled by these entrenched and corrupt elites.

Despite the existence of deep and meaningful societal divisions (if not fully developed cleavages as in Western Europe53), party politics in EaP states reflect mostly the infighting of these elites, sometimes recruiting support ‘from above’ (Hale 2006: 309). In this context, even if they started off as more or less open and competitive, polities in Eastern Europe invariably developed into semi-autocracies by the early 2000s, with political power serving as the arbiter between rival oligarchic economic interests and the electoral process progressively closing off against genuine competitors arising from the fringes of these elites (Way 2005) (even though even crude autocracies like Belarus and Azerbaijan never shed the façade of electoral competition). Under these circumstances, party competition remained inherently unstable and weakly institutionalized. Political parties lacked such characteristics as rooting in social cleavages, internal democracy or programmatic identity. Interactions between them did not follow any particular pattern (party ‘non-systems’ instead of systems). Deeply ideological parties also tended to

Party Politics in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova: Democratic Revolutions as a Turning Point?

I would not dare to claim expertise of post-Soviet politics and Eastern Europe more generally. Based on a cursory literature review, it suffices to say that most of the regimes in the region have been identified as falling within one of the categories denoting some degree of hybridity between competitive democracy and authoritarianism: semi-authoritarian (Kuzio 2005), competitive authoritarian (Bunce and Wolchik 2010; Levitsky and Way 2002), electoral authoritarian (Schedler 2006), patronal presidential (Hale 2006) etc. In post-Soviet states, political-economic oligarchic elites competed for control of the state’s resources, pursuing more or less personal agendas and manipulating ethnic and other allegiances as they saw fit (Bunce and Wolchik 2010, 61; Way 2005). In this context, those states that did not turn into outright autocracies like Belarus or Azerbaijan developed systems exhibiting the outside characteristics of competitive democracy (chiefly the regular staging of elections) but essentially controlled by these entrenched and corrupt elites.

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52. Europarty association has served as a powerful legitimating device for suspect political entrepreneurs in Western Europe as well. Most typical example is the association of Silvio Berlusconi with the EPP (Ladrech 2002, 399).

be the least successful. Instead, party politics was dominated by regime-initiated or oligarchy-lead (‘spoiler’ or ‘façade’) parties, with almost non-existent political programs or ideological references, that tended to disappear when their patrons lose access to government power. Generally, in authoritarian contexts the main structural characteristic is the dominance of one (government-close) party over small, weak and fragmented opposition parties. Depending on intra-oligarchy competition, party creation and destruction is frequent and electoral volatility high.

The three states studied here however all experienced democratic revolutions that halted the process of authoritarianization of their polities. Much like before the revolutions, the only clear dimension of competition structuring party interactions remained the one dividing pro and anti-regime forces. However, this dimension was infused with the normative question of democratization and political reform as a stake of competition. The revolutions allowed challengers of semi-autocracies (all of whom had been part of political elites and/or the economic oligarchy during the times of semi-autocracies) to claim for themselves the mantle of ‘democratizers’. The reflective contestation of regime shape under the normative weight of ‘democracy’ (and not just opposition to the ruler of the day) as the key stake has allowed party competition to become a bit more multidimensional and mobilize social groups along more stable patterns through parties. Post-revolutionary party systems exhibit less volatility than before, while in all three states I am examining the stability of party politics was served by constitutional changes that gave more power to parliaments and weakened the powers of the presidents.

In Ukraine after the Orange Revolution of 2004 and in Moldova after the Twitter Revolution of 2009, the mechanics of party competition pit the presumed heirs of the revolutions that challenged the increasingly authoritarian regimes of Leonid Kuchma and Vladimir Voronin against the heirs of these regimes under conditions of more or less competitive electoral contests. In Georgia on the other hand, the cycle has repeated itself, with the leader of the Rose Revolution of 2003, Mikhail Saakashvili, developing authoritarian tendencies of his own as president, eventually losing out to another oligarch-challenger, billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, claiming to be a genuine democrat and also backed by mass mobilization. In all three cases, the legacy of revolutions functions as argumentation and resource in competition between parties that still remains overwhelmingly controlled by exponents of political-economic oligarchy.

This democratization/authoritarianism axis of competition probably would not have been enough to cement stable party systems were it not for the contemporaneous closing of the distance between these states and Europe. After 2004, the EU East-
ern enlargement and the Eastern Partnership exacerbated the already uncertain position of these states between West and East. In terms of the main dimension of competition, rapprochement with Europe and the West became a readily exploited discursive resource in the challengers’ efforts to claim democratic legitimacy. Support for EU (and/or NATO) accession (or other forms of association) has become a very powerful proxy of post-revolutionaries’ declared belief in democratic values. In this way, the main dimension of competition also becomes a contrast of projects of geopolitical orientation. This in turn serves to more firmly link party competition with important social, religious or regional divisions in consistent patterns (and not just on account of ad hoc elite-oligarchical efforts of mobilization).

For example, the dissolution of Shevardnadze’s authoritarian regime in Georgia gave rise to a purposive policy of antagonizing Russia (that sponsors breakaway provinces on Georgian soil) and orienting the country towards NATO membership. The Orange Revolution and subsequent electoral contests cemented the stark religious and ethnic contrasts between West and East Ukraine. And the fall of Voronin’s Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) and competition between it and parties of a pro-European alliance reflects the divides running through Moldovan society between ethnic Moldovans and pro-Russian minorities, and between Moldovans adhering to the maintenance of an independent state (and clamouring for the return of the Russian-sponsored Transnistrian breakaway province) and Moldovans propagating a Romanian identity (Mungiu-Pippidi and Munteanu 2009, 140-141; Way 2005, 253-254). In all these cases, even if intra-oligarchy competition drives the creation and strategies of weakly institutionalized parties, their competition has acquired a certain ideologi-cal gravitas and more or less patterned dynamics.

### Europarties in Eastern Europe

Europarties formally have a rigorous approach to identifying and associating themselves with partners in non-EU members. Vetting of candidate parties is particularly demanding, including demands for far-reaching organizational and programmatic adaptations. While Europarties understandably seek to expand their presence beyond EU borders as a way to increase their own relevance as meaningful arenas of deliberation, coordination and information-sharing in the EU polity, they are also careful before associating themselves with partners. Europarties also want to have strong partners, even though a party’s strength should only go so far to make it an attractive partner for Europarties on its own. Parties that receive a Europarty nod have important advantage over rivals of the same political orientation in the eyes of the electorate, thus potentially leading to consolidation of a part of the party system around that privileged party (Klápačová 2013). But Europarty influence can be at work even before the nod is given. For example, the EPP’s conscious strategy is to encourage merges and cooperation between likeminded parties, often as an important step to eventual accession to the party (reflecting also the fact that the EPP itself contains varying ideological traditions).

59. Of course the East-West divide structured party politics in Ukraine before the Orange Revolution as well (Bader 2010, 82). In the post-revolutionary contest however one may surmise that this regional competition reflects deeper divides about Ukraine’s future (Way 2005, 257)

60. It is important to note that party competition does not revolve inescapably around a Europe/Russia divide (Way 2005, 239). Voronin in Moldova and Yanukovich in Ukraine have tried to play Europe and Russia off each other in the past. Saakashvili’s successor has distanced himself from his predecessor’s fiery anti-Russian rhetoric but has also expressed willingness to keep Georgia on a European path. It would also be mistaken to characterize pro-Western democratizers in the region as inescapably anti-Russian (apart from Saakashvili).
Either way, the process of vetting can have important effects on the shape of party competition in the affected countries. On the other hand, the degree of wannabe-associated parties’ integration in Europarties depends on each Europarty’s structure. The EPP and PES have three degrees of membership: Full members are parties from within the EU. Associated members are parties from the European Economic Area/EFTA (Norway, Switzerland, Iceland etc.) and from accession-candidate countries (Western Balkans, Turkey etc.). Parties from EaP and beyond can only hope to acquire observer status. This status excludes them from decision-making organs, programmatic debates etc., but gives them opportunity to participate in various meetings, including sometimes Europarty summits and other high-level occasions. ALDE is an exception in that it counts all affiliated national parties as ‘full members’ regardless of whether they come from EU members or not, which makes it probable that this Europarty will be much more willing to involve itself in national arenas supporting its member-parties, but also that it will seek associations primarily with well-vetted ideological partners (perhaps to the detriment of long-term electoral strength as a criterion of membership). In this section I will investigate how Europarty involvement has contributed to changes in the format and mechanics of party competition in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova after democratic revolutions.

**a) Format**

Europarties had an effect on the number and relative strength of parties in EaP states, through their active involvement but mostly through their ability to serve as arenas of political activity and legitimating mechanisms in intra-elite competition, particularly involving like-minded parties from the camp of post-revolutionary democratizers. In all three countries, all three major Europarties were united in their support of anti-authoritarian forces, however to the extent that they were also looking for associates in these arenas, their involvement also played a role in processes of consolidation (whereby some pro-democratic parties disappeared to the benefit of Europarty-associated ones) or of intra-coalition squabbles that determined the relative strength of pro-European parties.

In Ukraine the EPP became actively involved in the feud between the two main components of the Orange Coalition, Our Ukraine of Viktor Yushchenko and Fatherland led by Yulia Tymoshenko. Both Yushchenko and Tymoshenko had roots in the power structures of Ukraine and ties to the Kuchma regime – Yushchenko had been Prime Minister while Tymoshenko was a successful businesswoman. Their parties were created following familiar patterns of Ukrainian politics, reflecting regional political-economic power structures and having ties to oligarchic interests. After the Orange Revolution in 2004 however both parties were seen in Europe as bearers of demands for Ukraine's democratization and pro-European orientation. Consequently, both Yushchenko (by now elected President of Ukraine) and Tymoshenko sought actively links with Europarties. Forming the biggest party family, expressing an unequivocal Atlanticism and being home to all major conservative parties with roots in dissident anti-Soviet movements in Central-Eastern Europe, the EPP was a natural ideological ‘home’ for post-revolutionary democratizing parties, as well as an attractive destination, offering access to most major politicians and policymakers of the EU. The race to join the EPP became really competitive after Yushchenko and Tymoshenko fell out over

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61. In Ukraine electoral coalitions or ‘blocs’ were formed prior to parliamentary elections around prominent politicians and their parties. Both Our Ukraine and Fatherland served as backbones of such wider blocs (e.g. the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc) for the elections of 2002, 2006 and 2007. Since the 2012 elections, blocs are banned from running in parliamentary elections and results refer to the individual parties.
Tymoshenko’s tactical alliance with Viktor Yanukovich’s Party of the Regions that brought about the fall of a pro-Yushchenko government in 2006 and the increasing disagreements between the two Orange leaders. Elected Prime Minister in 2007, Tymoshenko increasingly sought to marginalize Yushchenko as the heir of the Orange tradition and as the exponent internationally of Ukraine’s pro-Western forces (assisted in this by the constitutionally mandated parliamentarization of the Ukrainian political system). Our Ukraine and Fatherland joined the EPP as observers in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

The EPP’s expressed policy was to promote accord and cooperation between the two parties, especially in light of the post-Kuchma forces’ reorganization (EPP-ED Group 2007). It is also a fact though that of the two, Tymoshenko exploited much more forcefully the opportunities provided by association with the EPP. Even though Yushchenko was President of Ukraine, and therefore should have benefited from opportunities to network and collaborate with likeminded leaders across Europe, it was Tymoshenko the one who had a much more active and charismatic presence in EPP activities (also thanks to her capacity as Prime Minister of Ukraine) (Fedyashin 2009). Even though the EPP lamented the inability of the two parties to cooperate, thus losing the 2010 Presidential election to Yanukovich, that result accelerated the annihilation of Our Ukraine from the political field and the imposition of Tymoshenko’s party as the sole legitimate bearer of the post-revolutionary heritage, as well as EPP’s sole legitimate representative in the Ukrainian party system. Tymoshenko’s rise and Yushchenko’s demise had more to do with conditions specific to Ukrainian politics of course, but EPP involvement may have accelerated this process to the extent that, while stressing the need for the pro-European camp to be represented by one party and leader, it amplified the difference in charisma and opportunities for self-promotion between the two rivals, it clearly favoured Tymoshenko’s version of events in her feud with Yushchenko, and indirectly lay the blame for Orange’s failures on the President’s leadership (Martens 2009, 215-216). Following the 2012 parliamentary elections that witnessed the complete disappearance of Our Ukraine, the party was suspended from EPP in late 2013, its place taken over by ex-wrestler Vitali Klitschko’s pro-European UDAR party.

### Table 1: Evolution of relative strength of post-revolutionary forces in Ukraine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yushchenko-near blocs/parties</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tymoshenko-near blocs/parties</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDAR (Klitschko)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Moldova Europarty involvement has served to consolidate the forces that sprang out of the anti-Voronin Twitter Revolution around three parties with direct links to the three major party families. The examples of the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) and the Democratic Party (PDM) are characteristic of the consolidating-stabilizing, but also disturbing, effects of Europarty involvement. The PDM existed as a label since the 1990s, when it formed part of a pro-European government in 1998-2001. Yet with the election of PCRM into power in 2001, the PDM, as is typical for parties falling into opposition in post-Soviet semi-authoritarian settings, virtually disappeared, and remained irrelevant in the April 2009 elections that spawned the revolution. Subsequently it was taken over by PCRM defector Marian Lupu, who led it to a very strong result in the elections of late 2009. Under Lupu, PDM was supposed to become a consistent pro-European social-demo-
The PDM also spawned the major party of the pro-European post-revolutionary coalition, the PLDM. That party was created by businessman Vlad Filat in 2007, after he quit the PDM, attracting mostly the support of members of the Christian Democratic People’s Party, an old EPP-associated party that however lost support when it allied with the Communists. The PLDM was the second-strongest party in the disputed 2009 elections, but its rise was meteoric in the next two elections of June 2009 and November 2010, becoming the backbone of pro-European governing coalitions, with Filat as Prime Minister. Filat sought EPP association already in 2009, and the PLDM was granted observer status in 2011, after Filat had become Prime Minister. Much like the PDM, the PLDM’s claims to consistent centre-right ideology were pretty shallow (Filat himself has a past in pro-Romanian nationalistic student politics, but he entered politics through business and by working from within the supposedly ‘social-democratic’ PDM).

Perhaps the most consistent Europarty-national party nexus in Moldova is the liberal one. ALDE had been associated with the pro-democratic liberal party Our Moldova before the Liberal Party (PL) under Mihai Ghimpu arose as the main partisan expression of the anti-Voronin mobilization in April 2009. An ideologue and veteran of pro-Romanian anti-Soviet pro-democracy mobilization in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Ghimpu’s pro-Romanian nationalism fell out of fashion in Moldova during the 1990s, however his own fortunes changed in the context of democratic revolution in 2009. The protracted crisis and three consecutive elections of 2009-2010 saw PL establish itself as the chief force of liberal politics in Moldova, eclipsing Our Moldova that eventually merged into the PLDM in 2011. PL became part of the pro-European governments leading Moldova since 2009, however electoral dynamics since 2009 point to its receding role, passing from leading to third force of the pro-European coalition. This may be due to a combination of its ideological character (Wilson 2013) (traditionally a strong predictor of electoral weakness in the post-Soviet region) and the other two parties’, PLDM and PDM, access to political-economic power structures, but it is also a tendency that should increase given the difference in resources association with the EPP and the PES (as opposed to ALDE) provides.

In sum, Europarty involvement in Moldova has probably accelerated existing tendencies towards consolidation in the party system. With major Europarty coverage combined to their rooting in major oligarchic interests, the long-term prospects of PLDM and PDM as labels (if not genuine forces of mobilization) of Moldovan party politics seem healthy. The opportunities for interaction with important European political figures that EPP and PES association provide can indeed be important resources for the ruling forces of these parties. The same cannot be said of the PL, a more ideological party that only rose to prominence during the heady days of anti-Voronin and anti-Russia mobilization, slowly lost power relative to the other two members of the pro-European coalition and whose membership of a smaller Europarty offers less support than what the PLDM and the PDM can enjoy. Europarty involvement has conflicting effects in terms of the health of party politics in Moldova, allowing for organizational consolidation and some ideological legitimation of parties there while also serving as resource in the efforts of oligarchic interests to legitimize and perpetuate their presence in the electoral arena.

Table 2: Evolution of relative strength of pro-European parties in Moldova
In Georgia, for almost ten years after Shevardnadze’s fall the Georgian Parliament was dominated by the United National Movement (UNM) of President Mikhail Saakashvili, a defector of the Shevardnadze regime and leader of the Rose Revolution. Saakashvili’s uncompromising attitude towards Russia endeared him to the Atlanticist EPP, home to many anti-Russian conservative parties from Central-Eastern Europe. Saakashvili was supported in his reelection campaign in 2008 by right-wing leaders from CEE, and his posturing during the war with Russia in summer 2008 further contributed to his rapprochement with the EPP. While in the beginning the UNM had approached the Liberals, in the end it joined the EPP as observer in 2008. Thereafter, as Saakashvili himself was becoming target of accusations of authoritarianism, the EPP provided a valuable channel for the UNM to express its positions in the European setting. Much like in Ukraine and Moldova, the EPP’s propensity to choose a ‘big’ partner won out, despite evident problems with this choice.

PES and ALDE were involved in the Georgian political scene through small ideological actors. The Georgian political scene has traditionally been full of small and weak parties with indistinguishable ideological profiles revolving around the strong governing party of the day. But the stakes increased incrementally when reclusive billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili entered the fray as challenger to Saakashvili in late 2011. His Georgian Dream coalition (centred around his Georgian Dream party) presented a viable alternative to Saakashvili, uniting everyone from democrats disenchanted with the authoritarian turn of the government to hard-core nationalists to Shevardnadze elements. Georgian Dream won the parliamentary elections in October 2012 and the Presidential elections of early 2013, completing the first peaceful transfer of power in the post-Soviet world. That victory was celebrated by PES and ALDE (Party of European Socialists 2012; Watson 2012b). The latter was particularly supportive of Ivanishvili in Brussels, it relished Saakashvili’s defeat in the parliamentary elections of October 2012, and raised the pressure on him to orderly step down after his certain defeat in the presidential elections of early 2013, reflecting the strong investment its member parties (the Republicans and new member Free Democrats) had made in opposing Saakashvili.

Much like in Moldova, ALDE was associated in Georgia with more-or-less principled partners. The PES on the other hand saw in Saakashvili’s demise an opportunity not only to embarrass the EPP, but also to capture the new big prize of the Georgian party system: The Georgian Dream party. Portraying a good understanding of the role of transnational political affiliations, Ivanishvili has pursued association with PES and the PES itself is receptive to the idea (Euractiv 2012). This association though has been impeded by evidence of Ivanishvili building an authoritarian system around him anew, prosecuting key members of the Saakashvili regime for corruption. While it is too early to tell, the UNM stands a better chance of surviving in opposition than previous governing parties, not only because organized persecution by Ivanishvili’s government can galvanize its members, but also because EPP membership promises access to resources of political and moral support that the party will only reap if it maintains some semblance of organizational continuity (European People’s Party 2013c). Georgian Dream on the other hand can afford to forego

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009 (April)</th>
<th>2009 (July)</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PL (ALDE)</td>
<td>13.13%</td>
<td>14.68%</td>
<td>9.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLDM (EPP)</td>
<td>12.43%</td>
<td>16.57%</td>
<td>29.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMN (ALDE)</td>
<td>9.77%</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>2.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM (PES)</td>
<td>2.97%</td>
<td>12.54%</td>
<td>12.72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vote % in parliamentary elections, with actual or eventual Europarty affiliation. Italics indicate failure to enter in parliament)
formal links with PES for as long as it is in government, but both it and PES have common interests in association. The next political cycle until elections in 2016 should determine whether the format of the Georgian party system has acquired some stability. The survival of UNM in opposition is probably the most crucial indicator of this, as well as of Europarty effect on the party system.

Table 3: Evolution of electoral and parliamentary balance between government and opposition in Georgia (parliamentary elections)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winning Party (Vote percentage and number of seats)</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNM</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135/235</td>
<td></td>
<td>119/150</td>
<td>85/150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Opposition (Vote percentage and numbers of seats)</td>
<td>UNM</td>
<td>Rightists</td>
<td>United Opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/235</td>
<td>17/150</td>
<td>65/150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Mechanics

It would be a tall order to prove that Europarties (and Europe more generally) have had a decisive effect on the fluid, weakly institutionalized party systems of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Europe however has had an indirect effect to the extent that it is now an important proxy in the competition between post-revolutionaries and heirs of authoritarian regimes. The democratization/authoritarianism dimension of competition is qualitatively different from the ad hoc regime/anti-regime competition that had characterized these countries in the past, since it concerns the establishment of democracy as such. It is a matter of historical circumstance that this competition takes place much closer to Europe. If it helps the democratization/authoritarianism axis acquire an even more fundamental character as a contestation of states’ long-term strategic orientation, Europe also links intra-elite competition with different societal preferences cued by major social divisions in a consistent way. For these reasons, one can assume that Europe (and Europarty involvement as a sub-set of Europe’s impact) has an effect in increasing polarization of the democratization/authoritarianism axis, and that it serves as a tool in a purposive strategy of polarization on behalf of post-revolutionary elites in need of legitimacy.

In Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko found in the EPP a loyal supporter in her quest to maintain the sense of urgency of her competition with President Yanukovich after his victory in the 2010 Presidential elections. Even as Yanukovich presented himself initially as open to Ukraine's European orientation, Tymoshenko pursued a principled opposition against the re-authoritizing tendencies of his government. Yanukovich’s case was not helped by the handling of Tymoshenko as she was being charged for corruption. The conduct of the trial and Tymoshenko’s incarceration gave credence to her own claim that Yanukovich is re-establishing authoritarian government in Ukraine. The EU has thoroughly condemned Tymoshenko’s treatment, but it is the EPP that has been the most uncompromising voice. Tymoshenko’s daughter has been invited to EPP events and in the party’s congress in Marseille in November 2011, there was an empty chair with Tymoshenko’s name reserved in order to symbolize the EPP’s empathy with her politically motivated persecution. In 2012, EPP President Martens took the initiative to call on the EPP heads and deputy heads of govern-

62. The perceived return to authoritarian practices on behalf of Yanukovich also halted a potentially interesting development: In October 2010, as Yanukovich was stressing his desire to bring Ukraine closer to the EU, the Socialist group in the European Parliament (S&D) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (covering training and communication) with the Party of the Regions (see Severin 2010). It will be interesting to monitor whether the Party of Regions will survive Yanukovich’s ouster from power after the Euromaidan protests in February 2014 and follow its relations with other Europarties if it decides to reform itself.
November 2010 elections played a role as signals of these parties’ commitment to bring Moldova closer to Europe in practice.

Europarty involvement in Moldova then came on the heels of a pervasive rhetoric about a democratic, pro-European camp opposing an authoritarian, pro-Russian Communist party. With the possible exception of PL though, the parties of that camp were (also) vehicles for elite interests mobilizing ‘from above’ parts of the electorate. While all three major Europarties supported the pro-European coalition in its effort to remove Voronin from power in 2009-2010, their involvement since then both reflects and reinforces tendencies of fragmentation of the pro-European alliance. Throughout 2013, a governmental crisis has been brewing, reflecting the rival personal agendas of Filat on the one hand and Lupu and oligarch Vlad Plahotniuc (for many the real force behind PDM) on the other, as well as the competition between PLDM and PDM in controlling different parts of the bureaucracy and judiciary (Calus 2013). Filat was removed as Prime Minister in May 2013 after a series of convoluted moves, some of which included both PLDM and PDM requesting the parliamentary support of the Communists. The victim of these moves ended up being the most genuine and ideological member of the coalition, the PL, that split and left the government (Wilson 2013). These developments have been a source of embarrassment for the EPP and the PES, forced to balance between inclusive calls for pro-European forces to cooperate and their obligation to support their associates (European People’s Party 2013a). The PL seems to have gotten the short end of the bargain, as it exited the government but is also urged by ALDE to continue supporting the overall pro-European direction of the government (ALDE Party 2013). These developments have been a source of embarrassment for the EPP and the PES, forced to balance between inclusive calls for pro-European forces to cooperate and their obligation to support their associates (European People’s Party 2013a).

In Moldova Europarty involvement has underlined and increased the polarization between post-revolutionary democratizers and post-authoritarian Communists, but after 2010 it has also contributed to processes of fragmentation of the pro-European alliance. After the Twitter Revolution and the contested elections of April 2009, politicians opposing Voronin’s policies rode the wave of the revolution and claimed an anti-authoritarian political identity that helped to cement first a discernible mechanics of party competition, and then distinct ideological identities within the pro-European alliance. Between April 2009 and November 2010, a protracted political crisis (revolving around the inability of the parliament to elect a President of the Republic) and three electoral contests consolidated three main parties as components of the pro-European alliance, while the polarization of the party system around a democracy/authoritarianism dimension of competition has also brought about a more consistent linkage between parties major divisions permeating Moldovan society (Mungiu-Pippidi and Munteanu 2009, 141-142). Throughout the 2009-2010 crisis, the rhetoric of all three Europarties was consistently about galvanizing the unity of the coalition in light of the common struggle. Our Moldova and PL’s association with ALDE, PLDM’s application to EPP in 2009 and PDM accession to PES shortly before the
post-revolutionary democratic coalitions also receive a boost by their leaders’ increasing confidence after they gain the nod of a major party family.

Georgia has been the first non-EU country where the European party system has exported not just its ideological components but also some of its dynamics of competition. Indeed, because in Georgia the authoritarianism-democratization cycle has repeated itself, with the democratizer of 2003 being charged of authoritarian tendencies by 2012, Europarties have found themselves in the opposing side of the main partisan divide. While in Ukraine and Moldova Europarty involvement can be said to have contributed to the polarisation of party competition on behalf of post-revolutionary democratisers, in Georgia it is this polarisation that has engulfed Europarties, leading to a quite untypical war of words between representatives of different party families in Brussels over a state where in theory they share the common goal of democratization (Euractiv 2012; Watson 2012a).

Saakashvili built his regime on the legitimacy of the democratic demands of the Rose Revolution and his own guarantees that Georgian democracy would shed its authoritarian characteristics. However, under conditions of absolute dominance of his party, Saakashvili was free of any control and checks to built mechanisms of semi-authoritarian rule himself. Especially after the failed war with Russia in the summer of 2008, Saakashvili was seen retreating from his previous promises and succumbing to paranoid fears about his opponents’ motives (ALDE Group 2012). His self-proclaimed support for true democracy in Georgia and purging of the old regime eventually came to be seen as an effort to build a new autocracy itself (Hale 2006, 312). In an ironic twist of events, Saakashvili’s autocratic tendencies fed the creation of an opposition pole around Bidzina Ivanishvili, who settled back into Georgia after years in Russia and

Europe and put together the coalition Georgian Dream. Ten years after a democratic revolution, the dynamics of party competition in Georgia still revolved around the question of democratization, only the heirs of the original revolution were now being framed as autocrats themselves.

With Georgian Dream controlling both parliament and the post of President, it was the turn of UNM and the EPP to cry foul because the new government started prosecuting a number of Saakashvili loyalists on corruption charges that felt politically motivated (Euractiv 2012)63. The new government’s practices have cooled down the enthusiasm of ALDE and PES about outmanoeuvring EPP in Georgia, even though both Europarties also want to maintain open the prospect of maintaining links with strong partners in Georgia. Unlike Ukraine and Moldova, in Georgia Europarties backed different sides of the divide as the authoritarianism/democratization nexus repeated itself. Georgia may become the first post-Soviet republic with a party system enjoying links to the European party system reproducing (at least nominally) patterns of competition discernible in the European Parliament and most European states. In this way, a combination of elite strategies and Europarty involvement may lead to the authoritarianism/democratization axis turning into a (nominally at least) proper ideological one. Much though will depend on the extent to which Ivanishvili will follow the examples of Shevardnadze and Saakashvili down authoritarian lines. If he does, the cycle of the authoritarianism/democratization axis of competition (with major Europarties again united on the side of democratization) will most probably repeat itself.

63. The EPP also adopted a declaration in March 2013 in its Summit (where Saakashvili also participated) on the state of democracy in Georgia. Ivanishvili retorted by writing on open letter to EPP leaders and members.
Conclusion

This paper has proposed a new avenue in studying the effect of Europe on national party politics and has applied it in a region that has rarely featured in comparative analyses of European party politics. The starting assumption of this argument was that, while Europarties are relatively weak in relation to their constituent members within the EU, they actually possess significant power towards parties seeking to accede to them from countries outside of the EU. If in accession-candidate states the process of party reform and association with a Europarty mirrors (and shadows) the national effort of adaptation to conditionality criteria, in states beyond the EU’s enlargement zone association processes between parties and Europarties reflect the outspoken decisions of parts of the political spectrum in favour of Europe, in a context of geopolitical uncertainty and fragmented state and social identities. The paper therefore theorized that ‘the limited impact of Europe’ per Mair can actually be far reaching in as yet unformed party systems due to the strategies of political-economic elites seeking to consolidate their partisan ‘labels’ as legitimately European and ideologically consistent.

Prima facie evidence of a very preliminary empirical research points to important effects of Europarty involvement in three party arenas in terms of consolidation of partisan corporate identities and of increase of polarization by underpinning a democratization/authoritarianism dimension of competition with more substantial contestation of states’ geopolitical orientation. It was shown for example that EPP membership amplified processes of consolidation of the post-revolutionary Orange camp around Yulia Tymoshenko’s party to the detriment of Viktor Yushchenko’s party, that Europarty involvement in Moldova has stabilized the organization of post-revolutionary forces around three parties with equivalent links to the big three Europarties, and that the involvement of Europarties in Georgia may assist in the consolidation of partisan identities after the first electoral peaceful transfer of power in the post-Soviet world. The contrast between Ukraine and Moldova on the one hand and Georgia on the other show that, for as long as the democratization/authoritarian dimension of competition is dominant, Europarties will find themselves on the side of post-revolutionaries against post-authoritarians, and their main effect will concern the consolidation of the pro-European ‘democratic’ camp. But if the post-revolutionary dimension of competition recedes (because democratizers turned out to be less committed to democracy as initially hoped, and their opponents – even if post-authoritarian – become more adept in playing the democratizing blame game), Europarties are perfectly capable of exporting the dynamics of their competitive interaction to the EU’s periphery. In any case, at least in Moldova and Georgia, one would have to wait at least for one more electoral cycle to see whether parties that have appeared consolidated in government survive their time in opposition.

At the same time though Europarties may also serve to consolidate less-than-ideal tendencies. In Moldova for example, both EPP and PES pursued a combination of interest and values, supporting the creation of a mature party system by taking in their fold parties that had already grown strong under less-than-ideological leaderships. In the case of PLDM, it seems that it cleared the EPP’s otherwise strict vetting procedure once it had established itself as the major political force of the pro-European camp. The PDM on the other hand went from being an almost non-entity to a significant political force under ex-Communist heavyweight Lupu, with the party’s shallow ideological credentials being deemed enough for PES to welcome it in 2010. Instead, ALDE has shown to be associated with more ideological and consistent partners, perhaps reflecting its own mem-
bership structure (where all associated parties are full members) as well as its more relaxed attitude towards power. In terms of mechanics, Europarty involvement assists post-revolutionaries to employ Europe as a deliberate polarizing strategy in their competition with post-authoritarians. It is also probable though that Europe (and Europarty discourse in Brussels and EaP states) increases the polarized nature of what remains intra-elite competition and struggle between parties with persistently weak rooting in their societies.

This paper has only offered a primary elaboration of this argument. Much more thorough research is required to establish whether and how Europarties matter in party politics of EaP states. More specifically, the institutional avenues through which Europarties affect national partisan strategies, as well as associated parties promote their interests and agendas to Brussels and from there back into national arenas, must be explored. One such institutional avenue can be the meetings of European and EaP parliamentarians in inter-parliamentary forums, such as the EP-EaP EuroNest Assembly, where EaP politicians become socialized in the workings of transnational political families. This paper has not sought to offer specific mechanism-like links between Europarty involvement and outcomes in national party systems. At most it was shown that Europarties amplify pre-existing tendencies in national party systems. The temporal congruence between Europarty involvement and some outcomes (in terms of format and mechanics) in national party systems though is tempting enough at this stage to invite more serious and detailed research.

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REVISITING AND EXTENDING PETER MAIR: THE IMPACT OF EUROPE ON NATIONAL PARTIES AND PARTY SYSTEMS IN THE TIMES OF ECONOMIC CRISIS

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Introduction

Europe has been going through drastic changes for many decades. As of 1950, starting as the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Union (EU) has become a sui-generis international organization that nobody could ever dream of. Becoming more and more crowded over years, the supranational body started to affect and shape its members in different dimensions. It has been studied deeply over years by many scholars, first as the European integration literature with many theories behind ((Haas, 1961), (Moravcsik, 1993), among many others) followed by policy-making analysis in this new entity. Conditional-ity for candidate states and Europeanization literature ((Borz, 2006), (Featherstone & Radaelli, 2003)), is full of attempts to measure the effect of Europeanization on different countries, on different dimensions (Olsen, 2002).

There are many dimensions to measure, without any doubts. Following Peter Mair (2000), this paper focuses on the effect of Europeanization on national party systems. We claim that today Europe has more impact on national party systems, not only because of the economic crisis, but also because of further integration in the EU. Before moving further, it is beneficial to explain what this paper means with Europeanization, or the impact of Europe.

When we take the examples of Council of Europe (1949) or the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) (1950), we can say that Europeanization predates the EU (Majone, 2005). In political science literature Europeanization concept is used for the effects of European integration on domestic polity, politics and policy (Radaelli & Pasquier, 2007). This also means that it is not only policy implications or law but also “unofficial” effects in Member States’ policies. Muller claimed that there is Europeanization when the EU becomes the reference point, référentiel ((Muller, 1995), (Muller, 2000)); while various scholars asserted that Europeanization is a discourse ((Schimmelfennig, 2001), (Hay & Rosamond, 2002)). For the aim of this paper, we define Europeanization as a combination of top to down implications coming from the EU and also the unofficial effects.

If Peter Mair was still alive, he may have re-written his article on the impact of Europe on national party systems (Mair, 2000) with the current situation in Europe, after six painful years of economic crisis. He gave the signals of this intention in his EUI Working Paper in 2011 stating that the national level no longer has the adequate resources to deal with the financial crises, using the Irish example (Mair, 2011). Before moving further, it is beneficial to sum up what he has been claiming in his 2000 paper, which gave inspiration to this work.

Mair claimed that Europeanization has a very limited direct impact on national party systems. He looked through the format and mechanics of the party systems of 15 Member States using the party positioning data of Leonard Ray (Ray, 1999). He also provided country specific information about parties and their vote distribution in the latest national election. In addition, Mair discussed the limits of spillover mechanism, the absence of a European party system and the competences of different arenas, the European and national arena. In short, Mair has been commenting on various issues, which may have gone through changes regarding to the very dynamic character of European political space.

With all respect to his memory, this paper will revisit and extend his work after fourteen years, 13 new Member States, and years of economic, financial and social crisis. The paper will follow the same structure; check the format and mechanics of national party systems. Before doing so, this
work will be providing some general information on the indicators of party systems, as an additional section different from Mair’s.

Furthermore, this paper will provide information on newly established parties in Europe, their position on pro/anti European integration dimension and the votes they received in the latest national elections. This is done also for methodological reasons, for being able to provide positioning for the ones that are not coded in the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) (Bakker et al., 2012).

For a complete analysis in the EU, this paper also includes Eastern Europe. However, comparison with Mair’s work is not possible for these countries.

The “intensity” of the impact of Europeanization is also related to the internal dynamics of Member States. It is observed that today with the economic crisis most European governments want to share the responsibility of increasing taxes or cutting government spending etc., they even want to put blame on somewhere else. Even if they keep on claiming that economic integration decreases the power of the governments (Menendez, 2012), they still use the Europe card very often. Mainly the South European governments that are fighting with the economic crisis try to put the blame on the EU for the unpopular measures. The Spanish Socialist leader Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero can be given as a good example of this intention, especially at the end of his term, even if this was not enough for saving his party from punishment in 2011 elections. Weaver claims that politicians primarily have a desire to avoid blame for unpopular actions (Weaver, 1986). What is going on in Europe today, with austerity measures and bailout packages, is definitely a situation to try to avoid the blame, looking from the perspective of incumbents.

In this regard, it is acceptable to say that the roles of arenas have been changing, the distinction between the national arena and the European arena is blurring, keeping in mind that Europe has been giving many important decisions related to daily lives of citizens. European Commission evaluating national budgets after parliamentary approval or all the measures demanded from the rescued countries can be given as examples here. For sure, Troika65 deserves a special attention in Eurozone crisis, when we talk about international pressure.

Since an ordinary citizen is not able to discriminate between the political actors in the EU, all the messages or implications coming from either the EU itself or the Troika is perceived as “Europe”. In addition, for these citizens electoral access to European decision-making and the proportion of consultation with the mass public is questionable. Even if the EU has been going through Treaty changes, using new instruments and increasing the role of the European Parliament (EP), the issue of who is representing European citizens is still debatable.

In addition to all we have discussed before, Mair claimed that the effect of Europe is quite limited also because of the non-existence of an elected European executive office. This issue has been on the table for a really long time, also in Brussels. This work will also comment on the topic, after certain developments on Martin Schulz being the Socialist candidate and Jean Claude Junker the Conservative one for the President of the European Commission, succeeding Jose Manuel Barroso.

All in all, this work will try to define the effect of Europeanization on national party systems, following Peter Mair, in the light of economic crisis and further integration Europe has been going through. There are many elements that define

65. The word Troika, coming from Russian, is used to define European Commission, European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) together, in the Eurozone crisis.
party systems. For this reason, this paper will continue with a short assessment of these elements with related indices. In addition to these indices, volatility data since 2000 will also be provided. Afterwards, it will follow Mair’s scheme, with new data, providing comments on the change in format and mechanics of the party systems. Before the conclusions, this paper will also provide comments on the spillover mechanism and the changing dimensions in national and European arenas.

Main Elements of the Party Systems

There is a huge literature on the description of main elements and types of the party systems. Duverger (Duverger, 1954) identified two-party and multiparty systems as the major types, while Blondel (Blondel, 1968) introduced new categories. Following that, Rokkan (Rokkan, 1970) has shifted the party system classification from vote share to seat share, focusing analysis on relative strengths of parties, instead of absolute strengths. According to the well-known definition of Sartori (Sartori, 1976), a party system is a “system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition”. Following various descriptions, Laakso and Taagepera (Laakso & Taagepera, 1979) offered the effective number of parties calculations and Pedersen (Pedersen, 1980) proposed various indicators (the Gini-coefficient, the index of fractionalization, the fragmentation index etc.). Including Mair himself (Bardi & Mair, 2008), there has been a certain effort to define the parameters of party systems. Here we will make a comparison of party system indicators of Gallagher (Gallagher, 2013) before and after (better said during) the economic crisis. Electoral volatility data will also be provided for getting deeper in this analysis.

Before reproducing the analyses of Mair, it is quite useful to provide brief information on election indices in the literature. For this reason, we use the book of Gallagher and Mitchell (Gallagher & Mitchell, 2008) and the dataset of Gallagher (Gallagher, 2013). The author has collected the related data of the EU Member States, since the original dataset is way broader66. Table 2 below shows the election indices for all Member States before and after (during) the crisis.

It is hard to comment on changes on party system indicators without knowing each country’s electoral law. Depending on how permissive the system is, or how easy to access, there are certain differences in the format and the mechanics of party systems. We can use the comparison before and after the crisis to see how the number of parties changed through years. This will open the floor to our new discussions on how many new parties have been established and how Europe has been affecting this process.

When we look at the party system indicators of countries that have specific bailout agreements and/or austerity measures implemented by the Troika, we can observe a certain increase in the number of political parties in the electoral system. The ENEP index of Greece rises to 7.08 in 2012, while it was 3.09 before the crisis. This means that the number of parties in the electoral arena has been increasing. Ireland shows one point increase, from 3.77 to 4.77. Portugal and Spain demonstrates slight increases from 3.48 to 3.66 and from 2.79 to 3.34 respectively. The same case is also correct for Italy, ENEP raises to 5.33 in 2013, while it was 4.76 before the crisis. As we can see from the data, new parties emerged in all the countries mentioned with economic troubles inside.

66. The indices can be explained as:
- The least squares index (LSq): Measures disproportionality between the distributions of votes and of seats
- The effective number of parties at the electoral level (Eff Nv, also termed ENEP)
- The effective number of parties at the parliamentary or legislative level (Eff Ns also termed ENPP)
While N of seats refers to the number given in the sources used and is the number on which the calculations were based.
Table 2: Comparative Election Indices (Pre/Post-Economic Crisis in Europe)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>LSq</th>
<th>Eff Nv (ENEP)</th>
<th>Eff Ns (ENPP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>Post-Crisis</td>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Austria</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Belgium</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bulgaria</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Croatia</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>12.31</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Cyprus</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Czech Republic</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Denmark</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Estonia</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Finland</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 France</td>
<td>13.58</td>
<td>17.66</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Germany</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Greece</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Hungary</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Ireland</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Italy</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>17.34</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Latvia</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Lithuania</td>
<td>11.14</td>
<td>9.08</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Luxembourg</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Malta</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Netherlands</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Poland</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Portugal</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Romania</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Slovakia</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>6.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Slovenia</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Spain</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sweden</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 United Kingdom</td>
<td>16.73</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Self Evaluation from Gallagher (2013)


Note: Even if there is a discussion on the starting time of the crisis, mainly the elections before 2008 are taken as pre-crisis, while the ones afterwards are taken as post-crisis, even if the crisis is not finished yet. When there are two elections, the arithmetic average has been taken.
Another very important concept when we try to define the party systems is volatility. If there is a change, or in case of collapse of party systems, there will be high volatility. For this reason it is crucial to calculate volatility rates in Europe in the times of crisis. Traditionally, Pedersen Index (Pedersen, 1979) has been used in volatility calculations while studying Western democracies (Bartolini & Mair, 1990), (Elf, 2007) etc and also Eastern Europe (Lewis, 2000), (Rose & Munro, 2003), (Tavits, 2005), (Powell & Tucker, 2014) etc.

Pedersen Index is:

\[
\text{volatility} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} |P_{it} - P_{i(t+1)}|}{2}
\]

where \( n \) is the number of parties in the system and \( P_i \) is the electoral support in percentage for a party \( i \) at time \( t \) and \((t+1)\).

Appendix Table 2 provides the volatility rates for the EU Member States since 2000\(^{67} \). With this data, in addition to all the party system indicators we have been using, we can see if there is an intriguing trend in electoral volatility in particular. It is true that electoral volatility may have different reasons. When we look at Graph 2, Eastern European case is quite different than Western European one. Electoral volatility has been declining in Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia after the

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\(^{67}\) There is no up-to-date source for volatility in Western Europe. The author has created her own data set. In this process she is very grateful to Dr. Pedro Riera, Dr. Raul Gomez and Dr. Svante Ersson (Ersson, 2012) for sharing all the information they have.
EU membership. When we look at economically troubled countries of Southern Europe, we see a different trend. In Portugal there was an increasing drift, even if the volatility has been very low for all these years. Italy’s index first increased, and then decreased in the last elections.

When we look at the case of Greece, the most interesting of all, we can see a certain increase in volatility for the last elections. Spain, on the other hand, being a low volatility country in general, also showed an escalation. The causal relationship between electoral volatility and party system change should be established way more carefully, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

After providing the necessary background information on party system indicators, the paper will continue with format and mechanics analysis. It will follow the same sequence with Mair, it will first replicate his analysis on format and mechanics, and then will comment on various issues related to Europe, following his footsteps.

Europe and National Political Party Systems in the Times of Economic Crisis: Format and Mechanics

Even if we do not exactly know the long run economic implications of the crisis, the political implications have started to get visible in the short run. Since public debt increased very quickly in some MSs, their national economy became unsustainable and they required specific bailout mechanisms and austerity measures. These countries even became a threat to entire Monetary Union and the common currency Euro itself. For this reason, the EU as a whole in general, European Commission (EC), European Central Bank (ECB) in cooperation with International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the Troika in particular, started to get involved more and more on the policy making of national governments and the political parties that make up those governments. This brought up the idea of a certain direct impact of Europe.

Before going further, we can review MSs that got deeply affected from the economic crisis. To start with, the situation in Greece deserves specific attention. We can confidently say that the bailout agreement and its conditions had been the most important issue in the agenda for the May and June 2012 election. Moreover, it also affected the structure of party competition, which has a certain impact on the party system. Apart from the extreme case of Greece; Portugal, Ireland, and also Spain, can be given as examples. The case of Italy is even more striking; the EU “forced” a change of government by placing excessive pressure on Berlusconi government, which finally led to the election of a technocrat, Mario Monti, as the Prime Minister of the country from 2011 to 2013.

We can cautiously conclude that, the roles of arenas, European and national arenas have been changing drastically due to the economic and financial crisis. The European arena is making more and more decisions about the lives of European citizens. This has always been the case after the establishment of the EU for some issues; however, became even more visible first with the common currency Euro and then with the austerity measures and rescue packages of the economic crisis. The Troika has been controlling tax raises and government spending cuts for years now. At this point, it is too hard to avoid the effect of the European Union. National political parties looking for office are aware that when they govern, they need to sustain the status-quo of austerity measures. Especially big, mainstream parties are almost obliged to stay in line with EU regulations at the moment. This makes us question again the increasing impact of Europe in the times of crisis.
be wrong to claim that format and mechanics are still key elements of the party systems since Sartori (Sartori, 1976).

Format

Following Mair’s argument, we claim that Europeanization might have an effect on the format of the party systems, which is the number of political parties in national arena. For the purpose of our study, this means that as a direct consequence of Europeanization, new political parties might have been established. These parties can be pro-EU integration, which is mainly the case for the mainstream parties governing the Member States, since the cost of exiting the EU is quite high. While there are also some extreme left and right parties strictly anti-EU integration. Still the main issue is how many political parties have been established with the specific agenda related to European integration, or in a more contemporary way pro/anti bailout or austerity measures dimension.

Table 3 shows all the newly established parties, their groups of pro/anti-EU integration dimen-
Elections in Europe in Times of Crisis

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...can be taken as an indication of the effect of Europeanization.

Before moving to the analysis related to positioning of the political parties, it is quite beneficial to skim through the national parliamentary elections in Europe. Appendix Table 2 also shows national parliamentary elections in every MS since 2000. Every country had at least three national parliamentary elections in the meantime. These elections can be named as pre-crisis and post-crisis according to the year they have been held. We claim that this analysis will provide us the opportunity to observe the degree of inclusion of the EU as a dimension in the newly established parties. For this purpose, some recent data has been derived from the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). The dataset provides expert data on positioning of 237 political parties on European integration in all EU Member States except Luxembourg, Cyprus and Malta. The survey also includes political parties in Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. For the purpose of this study, we have only taken the data of MSs.

Table 4 replicates the Mair table about the mechanics of the party systems with new data. However, in this analysis there is a certain problem of time mismatch. The “newest” complete comparative expert survey that we can use is still the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey. However, for a better analysis of the effects of the economic crisis, latest national elections should be used. This means that our expert survey does not contain certain information on political parties that are recently established. For this reason, personal judgment is included in newly established parties, which are mentioned in Table 3.

Mechanics

The second way Europeanization might have affected the party systems in MSs is the mechanics of the party system, which is, basically, the interaction between the relevant political parties. For this section, we will be analyzing if political parties in national arena locate themselves in anti/pro-European integration dimension and compete over it. This will provide us the opportunity to observe the possible existence of new clustering. If any new clustering can be observed, this

68. The positioning of the political parties in the pro/anti EU integration scale is done by personal judgement, which is open to discussion. However, there are no recent expert surveys that position the newly established parties. The analysis will be repeated with the new data in 2015.

69. Using Chapel Hill expert survey criteria all the political parties in Table 3 have been coded. With the latest developments, some existing parties also changed their positions in the scale. However, they are left as they are in the expert survey.
These newly established parties deserve special attention. To start with, in the case of Austria, the newly established Eurosceptic party, Team Frank Stronach (FRANK) got 5.7 percentages of the votes and won 11 seats in the Parliament. On the contrary of the rising Euroscepticism in Europe, in the case of Czech Republic, the Eurosceptic party Civic Democratic Party (ODS) lost 12.5 percent of the votes and 37 seats in the Parliament, in between 2010 and 2013. However, these votes have been taken by ANO 2011, newly established center-right party, which has taken 18.7 percent of the votes and won 47 seats in the Parliament, fol-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name of the Newly Established Political Party</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Anti/Pro Scale EU Integration</th>
<th>% of the Votes in the last National Elections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Team Frank Stronach (FRANK)</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The New Austria and Liberal Forum</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>Croatian Labourists - Labour Party</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>ANO 2011</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dawn of Direct Democracy</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Alternative for Germany</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Independent Greeks</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic Left</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Democratic Centre</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brothers of Italy</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five Star Movement</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civic Choice</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Way of Courage</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Your Movement</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Ordinary People and Independent Personalities</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Positive Slovenia</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civic List</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Amaiur</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compromise Coalition</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asturian Forum</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes to the Future</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s self evaluation for completing the Chapel Hill Expert Survey
Note: There are some political parties that are not newly established, however still haven’t been coded by the Chapel Hill Expert Survey. These parties are Left Front (France, Group 1), Radical Party of the Left (France, Group 3), Radical Party (France, Group 3), Golden Dawn (Greece, Group 1), People Before Profit (Ireland, Group 1), Latvian Way (Latvia, Group 2), 50 Plus (Netherlands, Group 2), Initiative for Catalanion Greens (Spain, Group 2), Sinn Fein (UK, Group 1), Democratic Unionist Party (UK, Group 1)
Table 4. Support in the most recent national elections, by position on European integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Strongly Pro-European Integration Parties (N of Parties)</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Strongly Anti-European Integration Parties (N of Parties)</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Parties Neither Strongly Pro nor Strongly Anti-European Integration (N of Parties)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>68.2 (4)</td>
<td>29.7 (3)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>83.9 (10)</td>
<td>8.2 (3)</td>
<td>2.3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>72.7 (7)</td>
<td>7.3 (1)</td>
<td>1.7 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>76.4 (6)</td>
<td>5.6 (1)</td>
<td>13.1 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>46.2 (5)</td>
<td>33.6 (2)</td>
<td>7.7 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>71 (5)</td>
<td>19.8 (3)</td>
<td>9.2 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>93.3 (5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2.1 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>66.8 (5)</td>
<td>19 (1)</td>
<td>12.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>68.9 (8)</td>
<td>20.5 (4)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>73 (3)</td>
<td>4.7 (1)</td>
<td>16 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>48.3 (4)</td>
<td>45.8 (5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>75 (5)</td>
<td>16.7 (1)</td>
<td>7.2 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>72.9 (3)</td>
<td>12.1 (3)</td>
<td>1.8 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>35.8 (10)</td>
<td>29.7 (2)</td>
<td>29.4 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>39.6 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>56.9 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>73.7 (9)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
<td>15.3 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>43.5 (4)</td>
<td>19.7 (2)</td>
<td>35.5 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>65.8 (6)</td>
<td>29.9 (2)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>78.5 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>13.1 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>80.2 (5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>57.4 (6)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
<td>27.9 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>75.9 (6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>26.5 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>84.2 (8)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>10.8 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>80.1 (5)</td>
<td>11.3 (3)</td>
<td>7.3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>24.7 (2)</td>
<td>37.3 (5)</td>
<td>30.5 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s self-evaluation from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey and the database of http://parties-and-elections.eu

Note: For a better comparison the parties are grouped the same way as Mair did, 6 and 7 being strongly-pro European integration; 1 and 2 being strongly anti-European integration and 3, 4, 5 being neither strongly pro nor strongly anti European integration. Since the parties without any seats in the national parliaments are left out, the vote percentages don’t sum up to 100%.

Following the winning Social Democrats. This party is opposing the adaptation of euro, and does not want any deeper integration or any more bureaucracy from Brussels.

Here we should also comment on right wing extreme movements. In France Front National (FN) increased its votes from 4.3 to 13.6 percent in the last elections. Because of the electoral system in France, they only have 2 chairs in the Parliament. When the right wing extreme is mentioned, Greece should be underlined with its strongly anti-European party Golden Dawn. It was established in 1993; however, in 2012 they took 6.9 percent of the votes and won 18 seats in the Parliament. In addition to Golden Dawn, ANEL, the newly established...
newly established parties in Eastern Europe also deserves special attention. Since they joined the EU 10 years ago after Communism, it takes a while to get their party systems stable. Deeper analysis on the topic deserves further background information, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

Table 5 demonstrates the comparative results of political parties and their vote shares with Mair paper. When we look at the results, there are some points that deserve special attention. There are countries with a certain increase of votes of anti-European integration. This means that not only the number of parties is increasing, but also the vote shares they take are on the rise.

The case of Greece has already been repeated various times in this paper. In addition, there is a certain increase in anti-EU integration votes in Austria, Belgium and Denmark. As we will elaborate further on the forthcoming sections, this work underlines the necessity of a new dimension/issue definition that may create better competition for national political parties. The pro/anti EU integration dimension is not fully representing the current agenda. There can be various political parties that are not against the EU integration as a whole, but certainly against the austerity measures coming from outside. This work claims that if we position political parties on a dimension that is more competitive today, the effect of Europeanization will be even more visible.

Graph 3 provides a visual display for the changes. Looking at the graph, the rise in the UK and the Netherlands deserves to be underlined. In the UK, three anti-EU integration parties took 36.1 percent of the votes. However, they are not represented in the Parliament because of the 5 percent threshold. Still, this is an important party in Germany because of the political history of the country. In general, the main political parties in Germany are pro-European, as a certain heritage from the past. The case of Germany also deserves to be underlined. German citizens feel like they are paying for the mistakes of Southern Europe. Therefore, they also feel like “Europeanization losers” in the times of crisis.

Italy has a very sui generis case. There are four new parties established and participated in 2013 national elections. Their votes are summing up to 36.4 percent of the votes. The success of Movimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement – MCS) needs to be emphasized. With 25.6 percent of the votes, they have 109 seats in the Parliament. This party, the main leftist Eurosceptic party, and an anti-establishment movement founded by the former comedian Beppe Grillo, advocates a referendum to withdraw Italy from the Eurozone. In the right politics, the main Eurosceptic party is the older Lega Nord; which is regionalist and right-wing populist. Scelta Civica, for its part, is a new party strongly pro-European and founded by the former Prime Minister Mario Monti.

Case of Slovenia is also important since its winner is a newly established party, Pozitivna Slovenija (Positive Slovenia – PS) that has taken 28.4 percent of the votes and won 28 seats in the Parliament as a pro-European party. The discussion on...
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1. Introduction

Elections in the European Parliament (EP) have been low, also with a downward trend. Many scholars are still trying to explain the reasons behind this phenomenon (Franklin, 2001), (Flickinger & Studlar, 2007), (van der Eijk & van Egmond, 2007), among many others)\(^72\). This phenomenon is very alarming, opening the floor to the discussion of democratic deficit in the EU. There have been seven elections and the participation rate has been showing a downward trend since then. For also this reason, it is important to link national political parties and Europe.

While discussing the limited impact of Europeanization to the national arena, Mair underlined two main assumptions. The first one was claiming that national political parties are “gatekeepers”. He claimed that they “rehearse” once again national politics within the European electoral arena. Even EP elections have been low, also with a downward trend. Many scholars are still trying to explain the reasons behind this phenomenon (Franklin, 2001), (Flickinger & Studlar, 2007), (van der Eijk & van Egmond, 2007), among many others)\(^72\). This phenomenon is very alarming, opening the floor to the discussion of democratic deficit in the EU. There have been seven elections and the participation rate has been showing a downward trend since then. For also this reason, it is important to link national political parties and Europe.

The Limits of Spillover and the Absence of a European Party System

To start, it is beneficial to highlight that direct elections to the European Parliament, starting from 1979, is an important cornerstone of democratic representation in the EU. It opened a whole new arena for electoral representation and created another incentive for political parties. However, there has always been a problem, which even got deeper throughout years. The turnout in the EP elections has been low, also with a downward trend. Many scholars are still trying to explain the reasons behind this phenomenon (Franklin, 2001), (Flickinger & Studlar, 2007), (van der Eijk & van Egmond, 2007), among many others)\(^72\). This phenomenon is very alarming, opening the floor to the discussion of democratic deficit in the EU. There have been seven elections and the participation rate has been showing a downward trend since then. For also this reason, it is important to link national political parties and Europe.

72. The turnout rates of all EP elections can be found in the Appendix.

Table 5: Support for Parties in the Most Recent National Elections, By Position on European Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Strongly Pro-European Integration Parties (N of Parties)</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Strongly Anti-European Integration Parties (N of Parties)</th>
<th>Percentage Votes for Parties Neither Strongly Pro nor Strongly Anti European Integration (N of Parties)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2000 (Mair)</td>
<td>2014 (Toygur)</td>
<td>2000 (Mair)</td>
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<td>71.9 (3)</td>
<td>65.7 (3)</td>
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<td>75.6 (6)</td>
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Note: Only Member States that are common in both of the papers are displayed here.
the profiles of the candidates for being a member of the European Parliament are still supporting this claim. National political parties are choosing people that have been serving in the national arena and remain connected to their parties. They even think the EP as a retirement place for their long-serving members.

Without any doubt, “gatekeeper” claim opens the floor to the discussion of the second-order character of EP elections. As mentioned by Reif and Schmitt (Reif & Schmitt, 1980), and also restated by Schmitt later (Schmitt, 2005) the EP elections tend to be second-order national elections, since people vote with national concerns. In addition, Hix and Marsh measured what they call “European effects” in 25 EU States and conclude that the position a party takes on Europe is largely irrelevant to its performance (Hix & Marsh, 2007).

This paper claims that EP elections should become less second-order when we look at the new juncture of Europe in the times of crisis and with further integration. However, for proving the argument, we need further analysis and also the results of the forthcoming elections in 2014. Also, there is an alternative way of thinking. Even if national elections are still second-order, which means that parties are competing in national dimensions and also voters are voting in line with that, national arena is including more “Europe” today. As an example, if the Greek parties are competing in pro/anti bailout dimension already in national elections, they will also campaign this way for the EP elections. With this logic, it will already include more Europe. However we need certain issue salience analysis, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

The second argument of Mair, the situation on the absence of a European party system hasn’t changed so much since 2000. However, there are some signs of competition for an unofficial executive office. There is a certain consensus on the
Today, Europe itself is way more visible in national arena because of the blame-avoiding attitude of national governments. Especially the Southern European governments have been using the EU for avoiding the responsibility in unpopular measures, like spending cuts or tax rises. In other words, Europe is not taken out from the national arena and depoliticized anymore, as Mair claimed in his paper. Today, Europe has a say that is also acknowledged by political leadership in domestic politics.

As a final remark, it is also very important to note that in some countries various political parties are adopting anti-European stance, as we also mentioned before, they take over a significant part of the electoral market. They even got one step further, bringing the exit from the Monetary Union, or even the EU itself, to the table. This means that, if the bad economic conditions continue to prevail, there will be further competition among national political parties on EU related dimensions.

Conclusion

This paper revisits the analyses of Peter Mair (2000) on the limited effect of Europe on national political parties and party systems. The same sequence of logic has been used for comparison. The paper revisited the format and mechanics of party systems using The Chapel Hill Expert Survey. There is a replication of Mair’s analysis on locating political parties in the pro/anti European integration dimension. However, there was a certain time mismatch between the latest expert survey and national elections that we can observe the possible effects of Europeanization in the times of crisis. For this reason, all the newly established political parties are coded and situated into the existing groups, following the logic of the expert survey and the grouping done by Mair. Methodology behind the collection of all the new information has been provided in the paper.
The paper claims that Europe has way more impact on national politics, government agendas and political parties in general. This is not only because of the economic crisis and also thanks to further integration. There are certain countries that are affected more from the EU decisions. Southern Europe has been going through months of direct interaction with the EU (and IMF) officials and with their austerity measures. Changes that their political parties and party systems are going through deserve special attention.

Also the link between the national arena and the European arena deserves more focus. The forthcoming European Parliament elections, which will be the first elections held under the Lisbon Treaty, will play an important role. With the mentioned Treaty, the legislative power of the EP was increased significantly. Today, Europe has certain effects on daily lives of its citizens. For this reason, the positions of the political groups in the EP, their votes and decisions have more importance. As the only elected institution of the EU, if the EP, political groups and MEPs don’t play their roles, and represent the citizens of Europe, there is a certain representation mismatch. With the possibility of electing the president of the European Commission, the will of European citizens can be reflected to the decision making, if they vote in the elections.

There is another question coming to mind while commenting on the changes political parties are going through. The pro/anti EU dimension is not opening the floor to accurate competition among political parties anymore. There is a necessity of a new definition of the issue that is focusing on pro/anti bailout packages or austerity measures that parties can compete over. The case of Greece in May and June 2012 elections is a great example. The bailout agreement of Greece, which was signed by the leftist party PASOK, was the main item on the agenda of competition. In short, this paper claims that if there is a new issue definition related to the economic policies of the EU, there will be a better measurement of party/voter proximity.

Last but not least, the relationship between the electoral de-alignment and disengagement of citizens and increasing impact of Europe on national arena in the times of further integration also deserves further attention. The attitudes towards the EU and trust on its institutions (especially on the European Parliament) have been dramatically changing with the economic crisis. For this reason, the inclusion of public opinion data may enrich the study.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Dr. Alexander Trechsel and Oliver Westerwinter from the European University Institute (EUI); Dr. Ignacio Molina, Irene Sanchez and Javier Lorente from Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM); Dr. Pedro Riera from University of Strathclyde for their constructive ideas.

Bibliography


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CONTENTS


**APPENDIX**

**Appendix Table 1: The Enlargement Waves of the European Union (1957 - 2014)**

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*Source: Author’s self evaluation from the European Commission’s Website*

**Appendix Graph 1: European Parliament Elections’ Turnout**

*Source: Author’s Self Evaluation from the European Parliament Database*
### Appendix Table 2: Volatility in European Elections (2000 - 2014)

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*Source: Author's self elaboration of Pederson Index using various resources.*
RADICAL RIGHT AND THE WELFARE STATE: THE ELECTORAL RELEVANCE OF WELFARE POLITICS

ELIE MICHEL

Elie Michel is a doctoral student at the department of Social and Political Science at the EUI. He graduated from Sciences Po in electoral studies. He is interested in political sociology, political behavior and elections. His thesis bridges the sociology of the welfare state to voting behavior, looking more specifically at the welfare related attitudes of the radical right voters. He is also currently participating in a project assessing party pledges fulfillment in Europe; and he is Team leader for France in the euandi project.
1. Introduction

Research on West-European radical right parties has produced an extensive literature. Rarely has an electorate been so intensely analysed (to name a few: Betz 1994, Kitschelt 1995, Mudde 2007, Rydgren 2012). However, scientific explanations of radical right voting behavior are not settled; this debate is lively.

Two major sets of explanations are generally offered to account for the radical right vote (Oesch 2008, Rydgren 2012). On the one hand, the cultural explanation show that the radical right vote is greatly determined by diversity and immigration issues (Rydgren 2008). Globalization is expected to intensify these cultural conflicts and fuel the radical right’s electoral successes (Mudde 2007, Kriesi et al. 2012). On the other hand, economic factors are brought up to account for the radical right vote. First, a sociological profile of the radical right voter can be established across Europe: the working class constitutes the core electorate of the radical right in Western Europe (Oesch 2008, Rydgren 2012). On the supply side of electoral politics, radical right parties have adapted to the interests of their (potential) electorate: not only do they offer economic agendas, but they also adapt these agendas to the expected preferences of their voters (Rydgren 2007). Their stances on the welfare state are usually different from that of traditional right-wing parties, and they are believed to adopt the working class’ support for redistribution (De Koster et al. 2012). However, when studying the radical right vote, cultural and economic issues prove to be intensely interconnected, to the point that the two dimensions are blurred (Häusermann and Kriesi, 2011). The economic and cultural dimensions of the radical right vote are somewhat entangled. Cultural determinants of the radical right vote are important, and have been largely analysed. However, recent research has focused on the electoral relevance of welfare attitudes for the radical right, investigating the degree to which welfare politics is relevant for radical right support.

Indeed, welfare attitudes prove to be a significant characteristic and determinant of the radical right vote (Derks 2006, De Koster et al., 2012). In a seminal contribution, De Koster et al. have established the relation between welfare attitudes and radical right voting. They find that welfare attitudes such as welfare populism or welfare chauvinism are not only high among the radical right electorates, they also underlie support for these parties (De Koster et al. 2012). Yet, this empirical evidence is limited to the Dutch case. Furthermore, most of the literature on the radical right electorate, and their relation to welfare issues, focuses on the working class (Mau & Mewes 2012, Rydgren 2012). The relation between voting and welfare attitudes among other social groups certainly exists; notably for the self-employed, another overrepresented group in the radical right electorate. On the aggregated level, the direct linkage between economic globalization and support for the new right is mediated by the welfare state – its type and scope (Swank & Betz 2003, Arzheimer 2009). Thus, the role of welfare politics in the radical right support is puzzling.

In a nutshell, the existing analyses linking welfare politics to radical right vote are too restrictive (in terms of selected countries, time period and social groups studied). They also often lack a comprehensive theoretical framework of how welfare politics determine the radical right vote. Providing a comprehensive framework to assess the relation between welfare politics and the radical right vote is the goal of this paper. By bridging the literature on the radical right vote to the political sociology of the welfare state, I address the question of how can welfare politics influence the radical right vote? What are the sociological mechanisms of this relation? This paper aims at providing a
assumption of a risk-based welfare state approach (Hall & Soskice 2001; Rehm 2007). The relationship between the individual and the welfare state is rather instrumental: welfare state institutions originate in the benefits individuals obtain from it (Mau & Veghte 2007). In terms of welfare attitudes, the economistic perspective assumes that individuals express their preference for welfare arrangements (taxes, level of redistribution, insurance) in terms of the maximization of their economic utility (Alesina & Giuliano 2009).

When individuals rationally maximize their welfare, they do not only favour policies that directly benefit them, but also those that reduce their economic risks. Individuals calculate the benefits of complying with welfare institutions in terms of its costs (Iversen & Soskice 2001; Blekesaune & Quadagno 2003). Welfare preferences are defined by the exposure to risks. The welfare state can be seen as an institution that collectivises the risks of individuals. Individuals support the welfare state because it is intended to prevent from and deal with risks. They maximize their utility by sharing those risks. Therefore, the major perceived economic risks match the different benefits provided by welfare institutions: age, disability, sickness, and unemployment. Welfare state institutions provide safety nets that guarantee resources in these cases where income is interrupted: pensions, healthcare, unemployment benefits. However, this relation is rather complex, individuals do not just favour welfare policies because they directly gain from it, they have to assess their risks, their position in the society and compare themselves to others.

Globalisation and economic insecurity

Economic risks are not simply the result of the individuals’ rational assessment of their economic situation. Structural transformations of the economy directly impact individuals’ evaluation of risk. Globalization gives rise to new conflicts (eco-
nomic and cultural) that produce oppositions and new forms of competitions among individuals.

In their landmark study on the effects of structural changes on political conflicts, Kriesi et al. argue that globalization gave rise to a revived economic competition. This process has constituted groups of “winners” and “losers” (Kriesi et al. 2012). Considering the realm of the welfare state, this new competition has led to increasing economic risks, chiefly income instability, unemployment, and labour-market instability. These new risks directly influence the individuals’ economic security; they feel personally threatened. Moreover, these new risks are predominant among certain categories of the population. The industrial working class is the most exposed to international competition. However, the new risks do not only affect blue-collar workers only, more generally low-skilled individuals are confronted to increasing competition that increases their insecurity. Overall, the globalization of the economy has increased workers’ economic insecurity. Yet, establishing this relation, Scheve and Slaughter leave open the question of what consequences this growing economic insecurity has on welfare attitudes (Scheve and Slaughter 2004).

Following the “economic logic” of globalization, individuals evaluate its consequences. They especially emphasize its negative consequences in terms of competition (Kriesi et al. 2008). The losers of globalization feel entitled to a form of reparation from their economic precariousness and insecurity (Kriesi et al. 2012). Based on the self-interest theory of welfare demands, such increasing economic insecurity should trigger higher demand for welfare insurance. Such a demand for more securing welfare policies addresses the economic consequences of globalization. However, individuals can also addresses the causes of increasing economic insecurity, and therefore express frustration and oppositions to economic openness and changes. In other words, the losers of globalization may not only express preferences for more protecting social policies, they may also directly reject the causes of globalization. The next section deals with the question of the influence of growing economic insecurity on radical right voting behaviour.

**The two sides of economic insecurity**

Losers of globalization face increasing economic insecurity; theoretically, according to a self-interest driven model of welfare preferences, they should express preferences for more securing welfare policies. Moreover, they should express important opposition to the process of economic globalization. This is in line with the factor endowment model developed in economic theories. The more skilled have more to gain from globalization than the lower skilled. Losers of globalization, and mainly blue-collar workers become less important in the economic arena as trade with countries that have abundant low-skilled workers increases. The opposition to globalization has to be understood in terms of economic self-interest: economic globalization increases the “losers’” economic insecurity, and contributes to low incomes and weak labour-market positions.

I argue that when evaluating economic globalization, individuals – especially the losers of this process – feel more economically insecure. While addressing the causes (rejection of the globalization) and the consequences (increasing demand for welfare protection), they can be expected to vote for the radical right. Therefore, I use the concept of economic insecurity as both increased individuals’ economic risk and negative perception of economic globalization. (A similar, though not identical distinction is found in Scheve and Slaughter (2004), they consider that economic insecurity shapes perception of globalization, and
Radical right parties in Western Europe have targeted the two aspects of economic insecurity that are likely perceived by the “losers of globalization”: reject of economic globalization and increased risks that prompt demand for more welfare state intervention. They aim at defending those who were “left on the side of modernization”, those who lost more than they gained in economic and social changes.

The general expectation is that economic insecurity triggers a need for risk protection (Figure 1). The causal mechanism linking individual economic insecurity to voting for the radical right is “demand for protection”.

Aggregate unemployment, trade openness, capital mobility, foreign immigration are contextual variables that influence positively the radical right vote (Swank & Betz 2003; Arzheimer & Carter 2006). The macro-level relation between globalization and the radical right vote is an incentive to understand the individual level link between economic insecurity and the radical right. The next sections deal with these specific mechanisms. The mechanism, which drives the relation between economic insecurity and the radical right, is one of protection. I argue that radical right parties have successfully attracted “losers of globalization” because they are openly opposing globaliza-
tion and denationalization. Individuals that face increased economic risk may support the radical right, because it appears as a “status quo” party (Geering 2013). A protective vote for a status quo party is one that refuses the changes that brought economic insecurity. The notion of a status quo party gathers the two dimensions of economic insecurity: rejection of the causes of change, protection against its consequences. Not only have radical right parties opposed structural changes in society (economic and cultural), but they are also even expected to turn to a “interventionist-nationalist” position. This stance combines the rejection of denationalizing processes, and economic interventionist stances that address the question of economic insecurity. Many losers of globalization express this combination of ideas, and radical right parties are expected to focus on such electorate (Kriesi et al. 2012).

The cause of economic insecurity: rejection of globalization and the radical right

Individuals can assess the causes of their increasing economic insecurity. Globalization is perceived as the responsible process for increasing economic risks. If radical right parties have for some time advocated Kitschelt’s winning formula, they have always criticized international openness and mondialisme (Swank & Betz 2003). Indeed, the belief that the internationalization of the economy is significant in increasing economic risks is wide-ranging. This is particularly true for the less-skilled individuals, which are “much more likely to oppose freer trade and immigration than their more skilled counterparts” (Scheve & Slaughter 2001). This idea is consistent with the factor endowment model, the workers and low-skilled, since they are the most threatened by economic globalization, are likely to support it the less. In a nutshell, the losers of globalization are expected to support the radical right because those parties remain nationalistic (not necessarily nationalist, but as opposed to the globalization process), and the radical right confronts the causes of their increasing economic insecurity.

The consequences of globalization: economic risks and the radical right

Individuals that face increased economic risks, those in danger of becoming precarious are expected to support the radical right. Globalization has increased the economic risks of the losers of globalization (blue-collars worker but also the tertiary sector “précariat”). These risks are multiple, and of various nature. Since some social categories are more likely than others to be economically threatened, risk pertain firstly to employment. The distinction between insiders and outsiders in the labour market mirrors that of winners and losers of globalization. Being at risk in terms of employment strongly influences both welfare preferences and electoral behavior (Schwander 2012). Individuals do not only perceive economic risks in possible loss of income or labour-market position, their assessment in intertwined in concerns relative to the welfare state. For instance measuring economic insecurity has to include healthcare expenses on top of mere income (see for instance the Economic Security Index, Hacker et al. 2013). Economic risks can even be measured in a broader way than with strictly economic indicators. Economic insecurity can lead to social exclusion. The notion of précarité embodies this broad conception: being poor is not only having limited resources, it also means growing away from the rest of society and the feeling of being left out. The insecurity index EPICES (“Evaluation de la précarité et des inégalités de santé pour les Centres d’Examen de Santé”) integrates items on lifestyle, social and familial risks. It is positively associated to the radical right vote (Mayer 2012). Increased competition on the labor market, higher unemployment, difficult access to
healthcare are all motives for the losers of globalization to support parties of the “status quo”. The radical right parties are such parties, those who refuse structural changes and strongly oppose it. These parties frame economic globalization in terms of “labour and social security” more than any other party family except for the radical left (Höglinger et al. 2012). Few other parties than the radical right can capture the economic insecurity of the losers of globalization. Increased economic risks trigger a demand for protection and state intervention that can be matched by the radical right. By defending the status quo, these parties tend to support economically interventionist policies and favour a widely protecting welfare state.

To sum up, two logics structure the relation between economic insecurity and support for the radical right: economic risk and negative perception of globalization. Certainly, these two mechanisms interact. Strong individual risk and negative perception of globalization are characteristics associated to the losers of globalization. They express preferences on the demand side that exactly match the radical right parties who are shifting to the “interventionist-nationalist” side of political conflict (Kriesi et al. 2012).

3. Welfare Normative Beliefs and The Radical Right

*Why a normative theory of the welfare state?*

A normative theory of the welfare state challenges a conception of welfare attitudes that is solely based on self-interest. Normative and cultural factors explaining these attitudes are at least as important (Mau 2003; Van Oorschot 2008; Svallfors 2007, 2012). “The electorates of advanced industrial societies do not seem to be voting with their pocketbooks, but instead primarily motivated by ‘sociotropic’ concern” (Inglehart 1990). The same argument can be made about welfare attitudes. The concept of moral economy enables to widen the mechanisms of attitude formation, by adding a normative side to the narrow self-interest factor. It has been extensively referred to in recent literature on welfare attitudes (Mau 2004; Svallfors 1996, 2012). The moral economy is composed of the rights and obligations of citizens regarding welfare politics.

*The three norms of the moral economy of the welfare state*

To understand which norms constitute the moral economy of the welfare state, it is necessary to go back to the foundations of the Welfare state. The foundations of the welfare state do not refer to the history of the welfare institutions, but rather to the justifications of the welfare state, its legitimacy. Academic consensus has been reached on what these justifications are (Goodin et al. 1999, Barr 2012, Greve 2013). I argue that the moral economy of the welfare state is constituted of three overarching norms: social justice, reciprocity, and self-reliance. These norms encompass the six common moral justifications of the welfare state found in the ‘foundations of welfare’ literature (Goodin et al. 1999).

The norm of *social justice* encloses three moral justifications of the welfare state: reducing poverty, promoting social equality, and promoting stability. Reducing poverty was always a primary concern of society, welfare institutions originated in “Poor Laws” (Goodin & Mitchell 2000). To define poverty, one needs to take distance with a minimalist approach (fulfilling basic needs necessary for physical existence) but consider relative deprivation. The welfare state is justified by trying to minimize the relative deprivation. The promotion of social equality has evolved guarantying an equality of status (equality under the law, equality of vote) to equality of opportunity. This equality of opportunity is very pertinent when considering
the welfare state. For instance, egalitarians tend to promote the better distribution of social goods, such as jobs. “Full employment policies” become therefore crucial aspects of the promotion of social equality (Goodin et al. 1999). The last dimension of social justice is to promote social stability. Not only do societies need to be stable to remain integrated, but individuals also want stability in their personal lives. This is the aim of “social security”: ensuring resources to individual when their regular sources are interrupted. Empirical evidence supports the idea that social justice is a central norm defining the moral economy of the welfare state. Not only do those elements form a coherent scale of what the government responsibilities should be in the eyes of the citizens (Svallfors 2012); but individuals also judge positively the effects of the welfare state, such as the prevention of poverty, of social unrest, and enhancing population well-being (Van Oorschot 2012). Merging these different — though very close — aspects, I consider social justice to be one of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state.

The norm of reciprocity is the second central norm of the moral economy of the welfare state. It is closely linked to what theorists of welfare state foundations label the promotion of social inclusion. The idea of distributive justice presupposes a political community that divides, exchanges and shares social goods. This cooperation is both the cause and the consequence of integrated communities, and it builds on social capital (Putnam 1993). One of the founding dimensions of the welfare state is therefore to promote inclusion, through the action of welfare institutions. Reciprocity is the main prerequisite for individuals to cooperate. This is extremely relevant for the groups that are expected to contribute the most. The idea of belonging to a community is a forceful justification for the welfare state, under the condition that relations among individuals are perceived to be reciprocal. ‘Contingent consent’ to an institution — here the welfare state — can be explained through reciprocity, as a norm requiring that individuals cooperate with government demands but only as long as others also do (Levi 1997). The definition of the population of those expected to contribute is of central importance: those who contribute are deserving of social benefits, those who don’t are not. Practically, the ‘deservingness’ debate demonstrates the central importance of the norm of reciprocity in the moral economy of the welfare state. When individuals evaluate who is entitled to welfare benefits, past and future contributions are of major importance. For instance, the elderly are always ranked as the most deserving, because they have contributed during their whole life. (Van Oorschot, 2008).

The last norm of the moral economy of the welfare state is self-reliance. It has always been the norm (meaning the convention) when individuals consider welfare (Goodin & Mitchell 2000). Self-reliance is at the centre of the welfare state narratives. Individuals who are perceived to be self-reliant, sufficient without state intervention, are positively viewed (Halvorsen 1998). Regarding the foundations of the welfare state literature, self-reliance is tightly linked to the dimensions of efficiency. In that sense, not only are individuals responsible for their own welfare; but poverty, need of assistance are viewed as a personal failure (Hasenfeld & Rafferty 1989). Self-reliance is also very important at the macro-level, since dependence is envisaged as violating the rule of ‘Pareto efficiency’ (when no one can be better off, without some others being worse off). Too great dependency bears greater cost on the general welfare of society (Goodin et al. 1999). For these reasons, self-reliance is the third central norm driving the moral economy of the welfare state.
**Norms and Institutions**

The three central norms of the moral economy of the welfare state are not fixed, and certainly not equivalent over time, countries, classes and individuals. Norms are not the result of the simple aggregation of preferences; individual as well as more systemic factors contribute to shaping the moral economy of the welfare state. Much of the literature that considers the normative dimensions of welfare attitudes stands on an institutionalist point of view. Esping-Andersen’s seminal contribution on welfare regime types insists on the idea that those regimes have to be considered in terms of social relations. Each of these regimes is grounded on “shared moral assumptions” (Esping-Andersen 1990). Institutions, as the formal rules, procedures and practices that structure the relationship between individuals and the state, shape both norms and interests, and their effect is considered as “paramount” (Svallfors 2007, Larsen 2008). The impact of institutions on welfare attitudes has been specifically observed: “in simplified form, the mental figure looks like this: institutions give rise to certain interests and norms, which in turn either reinforce or undermine the original institutions” (Rothstein, 1998). Welfare regimes are rooted in distinct normative values, but regimes themselves tend to “mold” the welfare attitudes (Svallfors 1997, Mau 2004). This reciprocal relation exists whether looking at institutional arrangements or tangible public policies (Mettler & Soss 2004). This section defined the constitutive norms of the moral economy of the welfare state, grounded in moral justifications for the foundations of the welfare state, and influenced by existing institutions. The next section will develop how those norms can shape attitudes, and political behaviour.

**Norm violation**

Social justice, reciprocity and self-reliance are the driving norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. To understand the relation they can have on voting behaviour, one needs to consider how norms define attitudes, and how these influence the vote. First I will argue on a theoretical point that norms, and especially their violations, can shape welfare attitudes. Then, I will develop the causal mechanism that links the perception of the violation of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state to the radical right vote.

Norms are considered to be the “cement” of society (Parsons 1968). Moreover, normative beliefs correlate positively with individual behavior (Fishbein 1967). The norms of the moral economy of the welfare state do not only shape the different welfare states, they influence attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

Much of the literature on norms has focused on the question of norm compliance, and most importantly on norm deviance. Since norm conformity is the most common, it is thus less interesting behaviour (Merton 1986). Focusing on an individual’s deviance, and its consequence for this individual only is problematic (Bicchieri & Muldoon 2011; Brennan et al. 2013). In terms welfare preferences, I argue that the most important influence of norms is the perceptions of other individuals’ compliance to the norms or their violation. Normative beliefs have to coincide both with what an individual thinks, but also to what he believes the others think, and should do (Bicchieri & Muldoon 2011). The normative approach to welfare attitudes implies that social representations are shaped by normative beliefs, that is followed by either consent or dissent within and among social groups (Staerklé et al. 2011). Normative beliefs should not be considered “external” or “exogenous”, individuals evaluate those norms in relation to the representation and perceptions that they have of society, and that is mainly other individuals’ behaviour.
The framework I want to propose for the assessment of the impact of norms on welfare attitudes and consequently on voting behaviour is an interactive one. It is an individual’s assessment of the compliance of others to the norms of the welfare state that mainly shape his welfare attitudes. More precisely, welfare attitudes and following electoral preferences are sharply influenced by the perception that others violate one (or more) of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. Differentiation is the mechanism that leads the perceptions of the violation of norms of the moral economy of the welfare state to polarized welfare attitudes. These extreme welfare attitudes underlie support for the radical right. Normative beliefs produce different representations for different social groups. Boundaries are set between those groups, and as a result, some are positively connoted (in-groups), others are negatively connoted (out-groups) (Tajfel 1978). The antagonisms produced between groups are the central feature of normative beliefs (Staerklé et al. 2012). As a result, the norm-violating individuals are differentiated, they are considered an out-group, and thus considered as negative elements of society (Kreindler 2005). For the moral economy of the welfare state, this implies that some individuals are perceived as violating the norm of social justice, reciprocity, or self-reliance. Each of these norms can be translated in more explicit and concrete welfare attitudes. The perception of a violation of one, or more, of the core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state results in extreme positions in terms of those welfare attitudes. As a result of this extreme attitude that is driven by group differentiation, blame is put on the out-group. My general hypothesis is that this blame (extreme welfare attitude) can translate into a vote for the radical right.

This section presents the welfare attitudes associated to each of the three core norms of the moral economy of the welfare state. I argue that individuals who perceive that a welfare norm is violated will hold extreme position on the associated welfare attitude. This extreme attitude is the result of a differentiation process: a norm-violating out-group is defined, and its deviant behaviour antagonizes some individuals. The radical right parties are likely to capture this welfare antagonism because they are ideologically prone to such differentiation processes (Figure 2).

**Normative welfare attitudes and radical right voting**

Nationalism is central to the ideology of radical right parties. These parties define bounded communities, those of the natives (Mudde 2007). Furthermore, exclusion is a characteristic of radical right parties, considering different groups than the mere national community (Sniderman et al. 2000). They are essentially movements of exclusion (Rydgren 2005). Another part of the literature on radical right parties focuses on the populist ideology. Even if populism is a “thin ideology”, it has a “chameleonic character” (Betz 1994; Mény & Surel 2002; Mudde 2004); it displays an exclusionary trademark. Populism relies on an antagonism between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Populism is founded on a vertical and a horizontal opposition. Whether directed at the ‘corrupted elite’ (vertical) or another out-group (horizontal), the mechanism is one of differentiation between a heartland, an
idealized community and a negatively perceived group (Taggart 2002). Because of these exclusionary features, radical right parties are expected to capture the antagonisms produced by the perceptions of norms violation. In other words, citizens who display extreme welfare attitudes because they feel some individuals are violating a core norm of the moral economy of the welfare state are more likely to vote for radical right parties. The next section details the attitudinal mechanisms that would influence such behaviour.

Welfare populism is the attitude derived from the norm of reciprocity. It emerges when individuals feel an out-group is not contributing its share of the welfare social contract. Parallel to the two-dimensional opposition of populism, welfare populism can differentiate a vertical and a horizontal out-group. On the one hand, the ‘welfare scroungers’ designate those that abuse the welfare system, the ‘welfare dependents’ that violate the norm of reciprocity. On the other hand, the ‘corrupted elite’ is an encompassing notion that gathers economic elites, but also the constitutive elements of the welfare system. In that sense, public servants can become the target of such welfare populism, as they are the elites of the welfare system, and can be deemed usurpers of its benefits. Thus, the welfare populist opposes the ‘hard working citizens’, the ‘little guys’ to citizens and elites who do not contribute their share to the welfare system while greatly benefiting from it. This distinction echoes the one expressed by Saint-Simon, which opposed a productive class to the ‘social parasites’73. The parasites are those who do not participate in the industrious production. Those parasites are the out-group targeted by citizens, and they believe the radical right parties also oppose such individuals. Welfare chauvinism is an attitude that supports a “system of social protection only for those who belong to the ethnically defined community and who have contributed to it” (Kitschelt 1995). It has been presented as a central feature of populist right vote in Europe in recent years (De Koster et al. 2012). Welfare chauvinism fits very well with the idea of ‘violated reciprocity’ (Van Oorschot 2008, Van der Waal et al. 2010). Immigrants are considered an out-group less entitled to welfare, because they have contributed less (by nature they arrive in the welfare system later; in addition they are perceived as a structurally dependent group). They are viewed as a threat to the welfare state that is based on the norm of equal reciprocity. Parallel to welfare populist attitudes, immigrants also constitute an out-group at which welfare chauvinism is directed. Thus welfare chauvinism is conceptualized as a specification of welfare populism, as it relies on the same principle of violated reciprocity74. Some individuals believe the norm of reciprocity is violated, and they express extreme welfare populist or welfare chauvinist attitudes. They believe that undeserving groups – whether they are an elite or an out-group such as immigrants – unfairly monopolize welfare benefits. These welfare populist or welfare chauvinist are more likely to vote for radical right parties.

Welfare retrenchment is the welfare attitude associated to the norm of self-reliance. The norm of self-reliance insists that individuals should not rely on the welfare state to fulfil their needs. Those who are autonomous are positively viewed. On the other hand, individuals who are deemed “welfare dependent” are negatively viewed. The relation between the norm of self-reliance and the attitude of welfare retrenchment is complicated, because it plays both on the micro and the macro level.

73. “Sur la querelle des abeilles et des frelons ou Sur la consommation respective des producteurs et des consommateurs non producteurs” published in 1819.

74. Parallel to this sociocultural approach of welfare chauvinism is a socioeconomic one. “Realistic conflict theory”, assumes that some groups are in competition for scarce or valued social resources. However, this approach has been empirically proven wrong (Mau & Mewes, 2012)
Much of the libertarian economic tradition, most prominently Hayek and Friedman, argues that the welfare state is not the ideal arrangement to maximize the well-being of a society. They argue the welfare state should be reduced to its minimal form, because its institutions foster dependency, corrupt citizens from a righteous conduct; and therefore does not allow for the maximization of welfare. It is very unlikely that individuals think about the norm of self-reliance on a macro-level economic scale. However, citizens can perceive that some individuals violate the norm of self-reliance by becoming voluntarily welfare dependent. Then, individuals can assess that the welfare state institutions foster such behaviors, and thus feel they should be retrenched. According to Kitschelt’s famous “winning formula”, radical right parties hold (or held) preferences for the reduction of the welfare state’s scope and range (Kitschelt 1995). Therefore, because some individuals believe the welfare state foster of form of dependency that benefits an out-group that violates the norm of self-reliance, they are more likely to prefer the reduction of the welfare state policies.

Egalitarianism is the welfare attitude associated to the norm of social justice. This welfare attitude often has been equated to support for the welfare state (Svallfors 1999). However, egalitarianism is not just support for welfare institutions. Expressing egalitarian views can even go along critical views pertaining the welfare state (Achterberg et al. 2011). Here, egalitarianism is considered as the attitude expressed when individuals feel the norm of social justice has been violated. In terms of differentiation, citizen perceive this violation because they can identify out-groups that are clearly in precarious conditions. Contrary to the out-groups defined when assessing the violations of reciprocity and self-reliance norms, the out-groups here are not necessarily judged negatively. In fact, referring to the framework of populism, individuals can feel that those less well-off citizens are part of the imagined “us”. This idea is particularly relevant for some categories of the population. For instance, the working class usually displays high levels of egalitarianism. Workers and the less well-off tend to express egalitarianism the most dramatically (Svallfors 2012). At the same time, the working class is considered as the core electorate of the radical right (Oesch 2008; Mau & Mewes 2012, Rydgren 2013). Therefore we can hypothesize that some individuals who feel they are part of a group that is suffers from the violations of social justice and thus are strongly egalitarian, are likely to vote for the radical right.

I have shown how the perceived violations of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state can lead to group differentiation and welfare attitudes that can translate into radical right vote (table 1). Yet, this moral economy is a complex system of norms, which most likely interact together. It is very possible that the interactions of welfare attitudes resulting from the perceived violation of welfare norms may increase their influence on voting for the radical right. For instance, when both norms of reciprocity and social justice feel violated, individuals can feel the “us” in-group is not entitled to enough social benefits, whereas some are not contributing their share (welfare scroungers or immigrants). Alternatively, the critics of the welfare state under the violations of

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**Table 1 - Mechanisms linking welfare normative beliefs to radical right voting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violated Norm</th>
<th>Targeted out-group</th>
<th>Resulting Welfare Attitude</th>
<th>Vote for the Radical Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Welfare scroungers/Immigrants</td>
<td>Welfare populism/Chauvinism</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reliance</td>
<td>Welfare dependents/lazy</td>
<td>Welfare Retrenchment</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice</td>
<td>Poor/&quot;us&quot;</td>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the norms of reciprocity and self-reliance can be combined. The retrenchment of the welfare state can be associated to the expression that welfare redistribution benefits an undeserving ‘welfare elite’, or that its beneficiaries should be limited to the most deserving (excluding unemployed and immigrants for instance).75

Conclusion

This paper considers two hypotheses that contribute to the explanation of the radical right vote. First, the “losers of globalization” are expected to face economic insecurity; confronted to economic risk and expressing a negative perception of globalization, they seek protection by voting for radical right parties. Second, individuals that feel the core norms of the moral economy of the welfare are being violated, and thus express extreme welfare attitudes that target a specific group, are expected to support radical parties that reflect these group boundaries. The previous sections have assessed these mechanisms. Both hypotheses rely on different assumptions about the welfare state, and the way individuals interact with it. However, the hypotheses are considered more complementary than competing.

The two theories of the welfare state underline the capital role of institutions. On the one hand, economic risks are mediated through welfare institutions. Different welfare policies determine the scope of economic risks. Very generous regimes, in terms of welfare insurance of resource redistribution, will reduce the economic risks of individuals. Conversely, individuals face higher economic risks and are more subject to macro-level economic changes in minimal welfare states. On the other hand, institutions are a decisive influence on the shaping of common norms of the welfare state. As noted before, welfare institutions transpose the significant norms of the moral economy of the welfare state (and their relative prevalence), but these institutions “mold” the welfare norms as well. Macro-level characteristics such as welfare institutions are a determining factor in the relation between welfare politics and the radical right vote (Figure 3).76

75. Drawing from the first hypothesis, another interaction is conceptually possible. However, it is very unlikely that a significant share of individuals, or specific social groups combine egalitarianism and welfare retrenchment attitudes.

76. For the purpose of clarity, the influence of welfare norms on welfare institutions was not represented. The object of this framework however is to
This paper relies on existing empirical research to formulate comprehensive theories of how welfare politics influences the radical right vote. However, such theories require empirical testing. Only a comparative study of Western European radical right electorates can verify it. A second point of discussion is to understand the impact of the great recession on both theories. Most certainly, it has abruptly increased economic insecurity. The dramatic recession may also have affected the prevalence of the norms of the moral economy of the welfare state, the extent to which they are violated, but also the definitions of the “us” or of the different out-groups.

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explain how institutions impact welfare attitudes and consequently electoral behavior, not how such norms influence the institutional design of the welfare state.


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SECTION V:
NATIONALISATION OF EUROPEAN ELECTIONS VS EUROPEANISATION OF NATIONAL ELECTIONS
ELECTIONS IN MULTI-LEVEL POLITICAL SYSTEMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

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Introduction

This paper will look at elections in multi-level political systems from a very particular angle: that of the division of labor – in the issuance of voice, expression of will, and exertion of control – between representative assemblies at different governmental levels. My expertise, in truth, does not lie in elections, but rather in the two processes that take place before and after casting the vote: the ways in which societal preferences are formed and ordered, and the decision-making processes through which they are enacted and transformed. I have never really studied elections per se, but rather as effects or premises of other political phenomena. My considerations on elections in multi-level political systems, then, will be mostly theoretical and address the problems that the interactions among levels create to the meaning and practice of representation. My analysis will therefore be institutional and normative rather than behavioral and empirical, but I hope to show that the institutional setting in which European and national elections take place is likely to affect the behavior of voters. What I wish to develop is a reflection on how the coexistence and interaction between two parliamentary levels is affecting representation at each level.

I will argue that elections in the EU multi-level political system are causing a reallocation of the traditional parliamentary functions among the different levels and are also inducing the transformation of some of these traditional functions. In fact, elections are losing some of their traditional functions also within national democracies, in part because of the multi-level dynamics at play in Europe and in part because of independent developments. In making these statements, which are commonsensical from a governance point of view but that could be shocking for election specialists, I am comforted by the words of Peter Mair and Jacques Thomassen (2010) who had come to the conclusion that “what we see here, then, and exceptionally in European political traditions, is the separation between representation on the one hand, and government on the other” (23). Better said, the functions that each type of parliament, whether national or European, is normally expected to perform are being allocated in new ways among the different parliamentary levels, and this has important consequences on both institutional levels.

This is a consequence of the competences of the European and the national parliaments in the EU system, but also more generally of the increased awareness of European citizens that, particularly in times of crisis, parliaments (whether European or national) are no longer sovereign. These considerations are not new, and they have been in fact the object of a large and growing literature (e.g., Raunio 2009). What I wish to add are some implications drawn from political theory and some insights drawn from the study of a different multi-level dynamic, that between state and sub-state levels.

In representative parliamentary democracies, parliaments are supposed to perform three fundamental functions: allow the expression and facilitate the transformation of political preferences thus giving voice to the people; forge the popular will to be then enacted by the executive; and exert control over the enactment of the latter. I will call these, with Urbinati (2006), voice, will and surveillance. The co-existence of two parliamentary levels in the EU multi-level political system has caused a separation of these tasks and an unconventional allocation of each to different parliamentary levels (or to none at all). Citizens’ reaction so far has been (mostly) to keep “voting as usual”, as if national parliaments were still fully in control of all three functions and as if the European Parliament were in control of none. The crisis may put an end to this collective delusion.
and induce a new awareness as to the real powers of these two parliamentary levels. The outcome of national elections that have taken place since the onset of the crisis seems to reveal this new awareness and the upcoming 2014 elections of the European parliament will most probably reveal it even more clearly.

In this paper, I will first illustrate the three democratic functions of representative assemblies. I will then argue that in the EU multi-level political system these functions have been separated and allocated to different parliamentary levels, and I will conclude by showing how this affects both institutions and the kind of representation that they can offer European citizens. I will finally suggest how this might affect electoral behavior in the 2014 European parliamentary elections.

The role of elections in representative democracies

In representative democracies elections are the system through which representatives are chosen and parliaments – the embodiments of the sovereign people – are formed. Representation is the distinctive trait of contemporary democracies: not a second best to direct democracy but arguably a superior form or, in any event, an apt form of democracy in times of full democratization (Urbinati 2006). Through elections, citizens do not only appoint legislators or express policy preferences, they also express their sovereignty as a people. But while elections are the necessary condition for representative democracy, they are not a sufficient condition. Representation is not exhausted by elections. Far from being antithetical or inimical to it, as some elitists would claim, representation does not rule out direct participation, which is rather a necessary complement to elections in any truly democratic representative democracy. Moreover, representation does not only occur in parliamentary assemblies, but also in other decision-making and even informal forums which involve actors at levels other than the national and the supranational, i.e. also sub-national and societal actors.

In reconstructing the genealogy of representative democracy in its slow and difficult normative emancipation from the ideal of direct democracy, Urbinati draws attention to the enduring influence of the democratic ideal of the autonomous (literally, self-legislating) people as opposed to the supposedly inferior reality of a people that selects (representative) legislators. Regrettably, representative democracy was therefore theorized as a necessary expedient which delivered an inferior type of democracy. For the early modern republican tradition, then, sovereignty still coincides with the expression of will. By identifying the threads of an alternative theorization, Urbinati rather reminds us that sovereignty is as much about the expression of judgment (voice and surveillance) as it is about the activation of will. Judgment in turn requires “presence through ideas and speech” (Urbinati 2006: 3), an activity which cannot be delegated once and for all to elected representatives. Hence, elections do not exhaust the democratic essence of our contemporary democracies. Nevertheless, they are a fundamental component of democracy for, through the act of voting and selecting representatives, citizens set in motion a process of democratic representation that, unfolds well beyond elections and entails also surveillance and potentially revocation powers. “Focus on the presence through ideas and speech reveals participation and representation not as alternative forms of democracy but as related forms constituting a continuum of political judgment and action in modern democracy” (ibid.).

The essence of democracy is “political equality with public control” (Weale 1999). Political equality entails the equal right of all citizens to participate in the expression of judgment (isegoria) and in the formation of will (isonomia). Judgment in
turn has two aspects: an active, ex-ante (Urbinati calls it “positive”) “doing” as *proposing* and activating and a more passive, ex-post (Urbinati calls it “negative”) “doing” as *receiving* and *surveilling* (which is the precondition for public control). So judgment is not merely an ex-post evaluation of someone else’s activity or inactivity, as if the only reactions could be “consent or rebuff” (Urbinati 2006: 5), but also an ex-ante activity of proposing and activating. Contrary to the current tendency to consider the right to decide on one’s own destiny all that matters in democracy, both judgment and will are essential elements of democratic representation. In fact Urbinati underscores the importance of the former vis-à-vis the latter. In other words, while the contemporary emphasis on the will has almost obliterated our appreciation for judgment, the new turn to representation (Kröger and Friedrich 2012) signals a renewed attention to judgment.

In electoral studies, the emphasis on the expression of will has driven an almost exclusive attention to the role of political parties in the formation of governmental majorities: the emphasis has been on _“democratic government”_ rather than on _“democratic representation”_ (Mair and Thomas- sen 2010: 22). “The very notion that we can have representation as such, or representation without an intimate connection to government, is quite alien to a European tradition of political representation in which representation and government are combined through the aegis of party” (ibid. 23). More generally, in EU studies, the distinction is often made between the institutional “power” to decide and mere “influence” on decision-making, perhaps because the former is more easily observed and formalized than the latter. I have argued elsewhere (Piattoni 2013) that exclusive attention to the expression of will leads to an understanding of representation as a mere act of delegation, and ultimately to a notion of representation as authorization, which is an impoverished or partial notion of representation (Pitkin 1967). It also leads to a general downgrading of the articulation of voice as channeled by purely consultative EU bodies, such as the Committee of the Regions, or to the expression of will performed by governance arrangements which take place at the implementation stage of policy-making (Piattoni 2012).

“Representation highlights the idealizing and judgmental nature of politics, an art by which individuals transcend the immediacy of their biographical experience and social and cultural belongings and interests, and educate and enlarge their political judgment on their own and other’s opinions” (Urbinati 2006: 5). Urbinati wants to bring about a fuller appreciation of representation as advocacy, that is, as the formation and expression of judgment in both its active and passive aspects. In this respect, representative democracy is superior to direct democracy in that it forces citizens to elevate themselves from their specific conditions, while obviously departing from their biographical details when expressing their views and interests. “Political representation … entails a complex political process that activates the ‘sovereign people’ well beyond the formal act of electoral authorization. Representative politics has the power of unifying and connecting … the ‘fluctuating units’ of civil society by projecting citizens into a future-oriented perspective” (Urbinati 2006: 5). Through democratic representation, then, the subject – the constituency or the demos – is created: disparate individuals, entrapped in their own particularities, discover to have common values and interests and become a collective subject.

In this respect, Nadia Urbinati’s theorization has some points of contact with Michael Saward’s understanding of representation as “claim-making”: “A maker of representation (M) puts forward a subject (S) which stands for an object (O) which is related to a referent (R) and is offered to an audience (A)” (Saward 2006: 302). Representa-
tive claims work if the audience accepts the claim. “A representative claim is a double claim: about an aptitude or capacity of a would-be representative, and also about relevant characteristics of a would-be audience (nee constituency)” (ibid. 303). Representation as judgment accomplishes what representation as will cannot: while the expression of will presupposes the existence of an object (a demos, a constituency, a forum), representation as judgment is capable of creating one.

Makers of representative claims attempt to evoke an audience that will receive the claim, and (hopefully, from the maker’s point of view) receive it in a certain, desired way. Makers of representative claims suggest to the potential audience: (1) you are part of this audience, (2) you should accept this view, this construction — this representation — of yourself, and (3) you should accept me as speaking and acting for you. The aim of the maker of the claim in such cases can be said to be to avoid disputatious ‘reading back’, or contestation of their claims, by would-be audience members. (Saward 2006: 5).

Clearly, representation as claim-making implies that there must be a dialogue between the object (often coinciding also with the audience) and the claim-maker. The object is often constituted through the claim-making activity of the representative. Obviously, the claim will be all the more successful the more it resonates with “ready mades, existing terms and understandings which the would-be audience will recognize” (ibid.). While this may appear as a fleeting and ethereal notion of representation, it describes particularly well a situation – like that which obtains at EU level – in which the represented are somehow still undefined or are still in the process of being constituted into a constituency or even a demos. This vision of representation as an ongoing dialogue between a claim-maker and an audience rhymes well with Urbinati’s view of representation as advocacy, as a process through which what is common among disparate individuals becomes apparent as it gets extracted and distilled in the very process of representation. It should be added, though, that such an ongoing dialogue does not take place only in representative assemblies, but even more frequently during actual mobilization inside and outside institutional (decision-making) settings and even in everyday societal activities and in the streets.

‘Representation is a comprehensive filtering, refining and mediating process of political will formation and expression. It models the object, style and procedures of political competition and action. It helps to depersonalize the claims and opinions, which in turn allows citizens to mingle and associate without erasing the partisan spirit essential to free political competition or obscuring the majority/minority divide. … Representation can never be truly descriptive and mimetic of social segmentation and identities because of its unavoidable inclination to transcend the “here” and “now” and to project instead a “would-be” or “ought-to-be” perspective that translates almost naturally into advocacy’ (Urbinati 2006: 6).

In this sense much representation takes place also in governance settings. Through representation interests are upgraded and expressed as particular instances of more encompassing, categorical interests or as embodiments of fundamental values. This is also why the discursive, deliberative aspect of politics is so crucial: because democracy as mere selection of representatives might become an elected form of oligarchy and because democracy as mere expression of will might become an act of enlightened despotism.
First, EP elections are “second order national elections” (Reif and Schmitt 1980), meaning that they are fought on national issues and not on issues of direct pertinence of the European Parliament. As a consequence, national electoral cycles will affect the outcome of EP elections, giving an advantage to governmental parties if EP elections are held close to national elections or to opposition parties if they happen to take place in the middle of the electoral cycle (Hix and Lord 1997). Generally speaking, turnout at EP elections will be lower than at national elections and small and opposition parties will tend to do better at EP than at national elections, as voters will take this chance to express their dissent vis-à-vis their current governments. The European Parliament will therefore be composed of a rather disparate set of representatives selected for the “wrong” reasons, that is, without any sort of “mandate”77 to form judgment and express will on EU issues but rather with a potentially overwhelming mandate to oppose and criticize the Union. Compounding factors are the absence of true pan-European electoral campaigns, the absence of a pan-European public sphere, and the lack of a pre-existing European demos.

Second, as a consequence of this state of affairs, the obvious roles of the European and the national parliaments, particularly in the expression of judgment function, are inverted (Mair 2000: 28):

> “[I]t is argued that the national electoral arena is best suited to the contestation of key European issues, whereas the European arena is best suited to debate about more everyday policy questions. More often than not, however, the debates are actually pursued the other way around, with the result that elec-

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77. Mandate is here understood in a weak, common-language sense rather than in the strong sense (as binding or imperative mandate) normally attributed to it by political philosophers.
Elections in Europe in Times of Crisis

Even though later Mair acknowledged that Euro-parties in fact behave pretty much as most national parties and that the political space in the European Parliament does not differ substantially from that of most national parliaments, stretching along a left-right dimension (Mair and Thomassen 2010), the disconnect between the types of issues debated in national parliaments and in the European parliament, and therefore the different motivations with which national and EU representatives are elected, are still argued to have an impact on the type of representation being offered in each of them.

Third, despite the momentous institutionalization of the European Parliament and the “normalization” of EP political dynamics, other authors have argued that, rather than a conventional left-right political space, the European Parliament presents a green, alternative, libertarian (GAL) versus traditional, authoritarian, nationalistic (TAN) political dichotomy (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002). They start by observing that extremist left and right parties oppose European integration, while centrist (social democratic, Christian democratic, liberal, conservative) parties favor it. They argue that this phenomenon can be explained by sheer political opportunism: “Parties that are successful in the existing structure of contestation have little incentive to rock the boat, while unsuccessful parties, that is, parties with weak electoral support or those that are locked out of government, have an interest in restructuring contestation. The same strategic logic that leads mainstream parties to assimilate the issues raised by European integration into the Left/Right dimension of party competition leads peripheral parties to exploit European integration in an effort to shake up the party system” (ibid. 968-9).

This explanation can be contrasted with an alternative explanation according to which extremist parties oppose European integration because “European integration is primarily a market-liberal project mitigated by some measure of regulated capitalism. The Euro-skepticism of extreme parties arises, therefore, not only from their opposition to the EU’s policies but also because they reject the ideology of the EU’s construction” (ibid. 969). In a later article, Hooghe and Marks (2008) argue that also the European Parliament is characterized by this type of dichotomy, which could be of great significance for an interpretation of the type of representation offered respectively by national and European parliaments. In the TAN end of the spectrum we could find those parties of the extreme left that still subscribe to an ideology according to which national industries must be defended at all costs, while in the GAL end we could find neo-liberal parties willing to bet on green technologies to develop the global industries of the future. To the extent that this line-up is not simply reproducing a left-right dynamic but reflects in changes that may be taking place at both ends of the more conventional dichotomy, this different interpretation of the political space would allow for a new type of realignment between politics at national and EU level. Yet, official rhetoric is apparently still unable to capture and articulate these new developments.

The fourth fundamental element that affects the type of representation expressed by both types of representative assemblies is their different collocation in the democratic chain of delegation and their different institutional powers (Strom et al 2003). National parliaments, while politically relatively disempowered by the process of European integration, are nevertheless still the central formal institutional juncture in the chain of repre-
older community policies (such as agriculture) or newer intergovernmental policies (such as EMU). Even in federal systems (to which the EU system is sometimes assimilated), it is the federal chamber that may be excluded from some decisions, never the house of representatives! Moreover, the fact that most of the EP’s decisions “must” be politically supported by super-majorities clearly shows that this chamber lacks a conventional majority-opposition dynamic, which is the hallmark of a working parliament. This too tends to muzzle electoral competition and to encourage the vote for extremist, anti-systemic parties rather than for centrist ones, given the impossibility of perceiving with any accuracy the political difference that casting the vote for one or the other centrist party would really make. In their turn, national parliaments, while institutionally stronger than the EP, are not doing so great either.

The fact that the European Parliament has acquired greater co-decision powers and increased control functions does not compensate for the fact that a European “government” does not germinate from within the EP and does not respond directly to it. Various attempts at linking at least the selection of the President of the Commission to the political orientation of the European Parliament and its increased powers to approve or reject the candidate President and the college of Commissioners do not compensate for the fact that the EU executive does not correspond to a EU-wide parliamentary majority – and this confirms the distinctiveness of the EP vis-à-vis national parliaments. Likewise, the protracted tug-of-war between Council and Parliament over the control powers of the latter vis-à-vis comitology committees (Pollack 2003) demonstrates how also the surveillance function of the European Parliament has been hampered by its peculiar institutional position. Contrary to national parliaments, then, the European Parliament is not yet institutionally central to any chains of delegation and accountability.

A fifth, more political aspect of the distinctiveness of the European Parliament is the fact that, unlike all other parliaments, it is partially excluded from a number of highly relevant policy areas, be they
Euro crisis has distorted this field in favor of some national parliaments – such as the Bundestag and the Assemblée Nationale – at the expenses of others – such as the parliaments of the southern, debt-burdened states – and has therefore injected a new type of “democratic deficit” into the Union (Benz 2013).

The provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon and in particular the EWM, while formally giving substance to the surveillance powers of national parliaments, has so far had a minimal impact (and will probably continue to do so). However, the EWM contains a certain potential for the upgrading of the common interests of several national constituencies which should not be underestimated. In this respect the experience of an even weaker EU body, like the Committee of the Regions, is instructive. It is precisely because it cannot count on any constitutionally enshrined decision-making powers, that the CoR has learnt how to upgrade the territorial interests of its members and to make its voice heard by seeking to influence more subtly the community’s decision-making process (Piattoni 2012).

Fragmented democratic representation

Under these circumstances, which aspects of representation are offered, respectively, by national and European parliaments? From Urbinati (2006) we know that the three functions of representation are the articulation of voice, the production of will, and the exercise of surveillance. Does the mutual co-existence of national and European parliaments stifle the fulfillment of their democratic roles?

Let us look first at the European Parliament. Does the EP allow for the articulation and expression of voice? Does it exercise surveillance on the executive(s)? And does it contribute to the formation of will? Finally, are voters induced to vote at EP elections in order to select those representatives that will best fulfill these functions? Since the Single European Act (1988), the European Parliament has managed to raise the volume of its voice and strengthen the expression of its will. With the help of the European Court of Justice (Pollack 2003), it has gained co-decision powers in an increasing number of policy areas. However, if we want to analyze separately the expression of voice and the exercise of will, we need to focus on the activating and proposing powers of the EP separately from its decision-making powers. With regard to policy initiation, we notice that the Commission still enjoys, at least formally and in most policy areas, the exclusive right of legislative proposal. While not strictly within its institutional powers, however, the EP can find ways of proposing legislative initiatives and of activating the Commission to produce legislative initiatives of EP interest. Through own-initiative opinions and by supporting influential policy networks, the EP can work behind the scenes to set into motion a process that initiates legislation on issues that are of interest to the EU populace. By the way, this is precisely how the Committee of the Regions operates (Piattoni and Schönlaub forthcoming).

Alliances between members of the European Parliament, Commission functionaries and civil society activists have been observed to have led to important chapters of EU legislation: gender equality legislation has been stimulated precisely by a “velvet triangle” (Woodward 2004) formed by women’s lobbies, pro-gender equality MEPs and feminist bureaucrats (or “femocrats”). Simi- larly, environment-friendly MEPs have succeeded in stimulating environment-conscious Commissioners who have then promoted environmental legislation which responded to diffuse citizens’ concerns (Lenschow 2005). To the extent that

78. The implicit reference is obviously to Theodore Lowi’s “iron triangles” (Lowi 1979).
EP elections have returned a significant number of environment-friendly MEPs, we may say that citizens can indeed exert (the positive aspect of) judgment through the European Parliament. However, one cannot fail to notice how circuitous this activity necessarily is. How many MEPs have been actually elected because of their EU-level green agenda? How many of them have campaigned on a green agenda that explicitly mentioned the EU as an important level at which to act? Has the green vote rewarded EP candidates for what they promised to do at EU level or for their past, present and future activities at national level? Have not in fact transnational NGOs been much more effective in proposing and activating the Commission than environment-friendly MEPs? The literature confirms that the green, alternative, libertarian (GAL) wing of the EP occupies an entire extreme of the EP political space, but the extent to which it has been elected to the European Parliament to that end is still unclear (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002).

How about the passive side of judgment, that is, receiving and surveiling? As we know, the European Parliament cannot dismiss the Commission President or his commissioners unless they are accused of misconduct or wrongdoing – and even then the solution may be a political resignation rather than a vote of censure (cf. the Santer affair). However, surveillance is also a menial and day-to-day activity, and concerns the extent to which the “government” of the EU (at least the Commission, comitology committees, and other agencies) are kept on their toes as regards the translation of legislative decisions into outputs and the implementation (or supervision of implementation) of those decisions. This is particularly important to the extent that these agencies and committees are often called to complete the legislative process by translating general principles into actionable criteria and standards. The EP has fought tooth and nail to protect its right/duty to be kept informed on committees’ activity and to control agencies’ and comitology committees’ decisions (Pollack 2003, Curtin 2007), but its relative success has not depended on the pressure of the electorate. In other words, when trying to defend its prerogatives and strengthen its institutional position, the EP is not so much responsive to its electorate as it is driven by an inter-institutional jockeying for power. We must conclude with Schimmelfennig (2010) that the democratization of the EU is driven not so much by societal pressures as by inter-institutional dynamics.

As is known, the EP has made its greatest strides in the exercise of will, which is the second fundamental component of democratic representation and that to which most EU scholars have directed their attention. As is known, the EP now has co-decision powers in most areas of EU competence. While studies suggest that the enhanced codecision powers have in fact made the Commission’s position and role more central, not necessarily the Parliament’s, still the EP now co-decides in almost all chapters of legislation. Does this guarantee political equality to all EU citizens? The resounding answer has been “no” and, according to some scholars (Kröger and Friedrich 2013), this is a fundamental problem. Strict proportionality and an “essentialist” notion of demos (Weiler, Haltern and Mayer 1995) induce these scholars (and the German Constitutional Court) to conclude that only a European Parliament that represents proportionally the several peoples of the Union can be entitled to democratically express the will of the Union (ibid.).

The idea of an EU demos should be obtained by arithmetical aggregation of the several peoples of Europe appears questionable in itself (Lord and Pollak 2013). However, to the extent that national political systems are organized mainly along a left-right spectrum, their aggregation may in fact give rise to a surprisingly coherent political space (Mair and Thomassen 2010). In no political sys-
system, however, does the electoral system secure equal amount of representation to each individual voter. All sorts of disproportionalities are caused by natural thresholds and demographic changes. Special provisions are often expressly introduced to secure proportionally greater representation to citizens inhabiting more sparsely populated areas, who have a harder time exercising those other forms of participation that contribute, together with voting, to the expression of voice and will.79

Moreover, nowhere in Europe (with the only possible exception of Germany, in fact) has the existence of the national demos been the pre-condition for state- and democracy-building. Rather, the construction of the national demos has been the (often incomplete and contested) outcome of those processes (Bartolini 2005). Strict proportionality, therefore, does not seem the solution to granting “political equality” to the citizens of the Union (Lord and Pollak 2013).

If Mair’s (2000) “reversal of roles” thesis is still valid – something that Mair himself has later questioned (Mair and Thomassen 2010) – then MEPs’ legislative activity is not what drives the European vote, and this is a much more damning circumstance than the absence of strict proportionality. In order to make the vote for the EP politically consequential, proposals are being tabled attempting to link the vote for the European Parliament to the selection of the President of the Commission. Right now, MEPs are elected on the basis of how much or how little they claim the EU should legislate, not on how they actually (co)-legislate, that is, on whether they promote a coherent political agenda. High doses of potentially lethal de-institutionalizing pathogens are thus inoculated into the parliamentary body. The expression of will is consequently diverted onto a different agenda, one that has to do with the scope and reach of the EU as a whole – in a word, with its constitutional complexion.

National parliaments find themselves in the opposite situation. They are the seat of detailed bargaining over policy decisions whose contours (if not detailed content) have often been decided elsewhere (at EU level). Parliamentary fights often concern the short-term implementation of framework decisions taken elsewhere, rather than long-term strategies. The crisis has only accentuated this situation. Many authors have denounced the apparent “suspension of democracy” in those Euro-area members states subjected to special surveillance because of their shaky national accounts (Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain – the GIIPS). Extraordinary elections or new governmental majorities have been necessary in some of these countries to face the emergency caused by the risk of default on national debts, but nowhere has democracy been actually suspended. Oversized majorities or grand coalition governments, in fact, are becoming more common also in Euro-area member states that for the moment do not appear to suffer from the crisis, such as Germany. Generally speaking, times of crisis suggest the expansion of majorities to include also normal-times opposition parties. This is, for example, what has happened in Italy, where grosso modo the “emergency” grand coalition that sustained the Monti government supported also the following two governments. Is this general decline in majoritarian politics a consequence of the crisis, the effect of the reversal of roles between European

79 In Italy, citizens registered to vote in populous electoral district (like, for example, that including Rome) “buy” 11% less representation that the citizens registered in less populous electoral districts (such as, for example, Sardinia). In Norway, a Bondeparagrafen was explicitly introduced in 1859 to grant inhabitants of the rural districts greater representation than those of the city districts. The paragraph was eliminated in 1959 and, admittedly, the OSCE-ODHIR task-force signaled among the areas for improvement in the 2013 Norwegian elections “the unequal weight of the vote among constituencies” (OSCE-ODHIR 2013: 1). However, absolute electoral equality, understood as an absolutely equal weight of all votes, cannot be reasonably pursued.
and national parliaments or just a trend common to all democracies (UK included)?

Let us now turn to national parliaments. At national level, there is still ample space for activating and proposing measures that complement EU legislation. The better organized national parliaments manage to direct their governmental representatives’ activity in the Council and the European Council even before decisions are made (Raunio 2011). Much of this activity is premised on national parliaments receiving EU legislative proposals early on from the Commission and assessing them in terms of the national interest. It also consists in adapting EU legislation to the national context without distorting or otherwise deflecting it. Unfortunately, this important expression of voice and will is often obliterated by emptier, although noisier, activities such as complaining against decisions already made in Brussels by national representatives (at least in some EU member states). Raunio (2011) convincingly argues that such a muffled expression of judgment is due to the actual lack of interest on the part of the main governmental and opposition parties to debate publicly the issues that really matter in plenary sessions (accessible to the wider public). They share an interest in carrying out these discussions in closed (or less publicized) parliamentary committee debates, in which the distance between their factual support to EU policies and their public disavowal of the same would become apparent. While this behavior serves the immediate purposes of “mainstream” parties and the cause of “integration by stealth”, it does undermine the role of national parliaments as forums for the articulation and expression of judgment on EU issues.

National parliaments have always had the possibility – in fact the right and duty – to oversee the activity of European institutions, but with the Treaty of Lisbon they have also acquired the formal capacity to defend the principle of subsidiarity (receiving and surveilling). One-third of the votes allocated to national parliaments (two each, for a total of 56 votes) can issue a reasoned opinion requesting the Commission to revise a legislative proposal which is deemed to breach the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, to which the Commission can react by maintaining, amending or withdrawing the proposal (yellow card). If reasoned opinions are submitted by at least a simple majority of the votes allocated to the national parliaments, the proposal must be reviewed. After such review, it is now the Commission that may decide to maintain, amend or withdraw it. If the Commission decides to maintain the proposal, a majority in the European Parliament or 55% of the member states in the Council, may oppose it, but this is very unlikely. Some commentators (e.g., De Wilde 2012) think that this alone is sufficient to conclude that the Treaty of Lisbon has not contributed to filling the democratic gap of the Union. Raunio (2011) concurs but argues that national parliaments have increasingly become the “gatekeepers” of integration since it is their receiving and surveilling functions that have been increasingly strengthened rather than the expression of will or the articulation of voice.

I too believe that it is the misallocation of judgment and will at the national versus the European level that is responsible for much of the democratic deficit we experience today in Europe. To the extent that they express judgment and exercise will in the wrong assembly on the wrong issues at the wrong time, national candidates and voters prevent themselves from engaging in that meaningful dialogical exchange which makes for democratic representation. Unless the multi-level institutional context in which representation takes place is fully factored in and voters and representatives behave accordingly, the distance between European candidates and voters cannot be shortened.
Possible behavioral effects on EU voters

The “reversal of roles” between European and the national parliaments and the consequent misallocation of the democratic activities of judgment and will on the part of EU citizens affects national campaigns and European and national elections. The crisis has had the effect of further exposing this misallocation of roles and of making abundantly clear what in fact gets decided at national level and how and when judgment can be expressed in order to influence the exercise of will at EU level. National political parties are beginning to campaign on constitutional issues – whether to leave the Union and/or which functions to retain at national level and which to decide at EU level – rather than over policy issues over which they no longer have full control. Thus, national campaigns may be on their way to becoming a more veritable forum for open discussion on the right kinds of questions. However, paradoxically, this new awareness might have the effect of weakening the European Union by electing a large number of Euro-skeptic representatives to the European Parliament. It will not be until the two parliamentary levels will find a common political axis along which to organize the expression of judgment that the misallocation of tasks will be corrected. At the same time other institutional and non-institutional actors – such the Committee of the Regions and civil society organizations – can also help in providing oversight and surveillance.

What can this multi-level interaction import from a similar type of interaction, that between the sub-national and the national and supranational levels? What can a marginal body like the Committee of the Regions (CoR) teach the much more powerful parliaments of Europe? I have argued elsewhere (Piattoni 2011, 2012) that subnational representatives in the Committee of the Regions have managed to find their common denominator by accepting to act as if they no longer were representatives of general purpose governments, such as regions, provinces and municipalities, but as if they were representatives of a particular point of view, the view from the grass-roots. By acting as if they were functional interests – that is by aggregating distinct territorial interests into categorical interests – they are managing to express judgment – they activate, propose, receive and surveil other EU institutional bodies – much more effectively then they would if they tried to express their will, that is, to gain decision-making and veto powers (Piattoni 2013). In this latter case, CoR members would inevitably be forced to promote the institutional interests of their particular constituencies; thus creating even more complex “joint decision traps” (Scharpf 2010) and forgoing the possibility to create new types of constituencies: those of EU citizens who have similar first-hand experience of EU policies and can therefore give important insights into their effectiveness “on the ground”. By sticking to the apparently more menial representational task of articulating voice and exerting surveillance, the CoR might even claim to express judgment on EU policies better than most national parliaments.

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