

**Where Skeptics go to Party –
EU-Positions of Factions in the European Parliament**

by

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Abstract

Eurosceptic tendencies have gained more traction than ever before: The successful Brexit-campaign came as a surprise both to supporters and to opponents. An openly anti-EU-faction is the third largest in the European Parliament. It seems that eurocritical niche-parties are gaining in popularity all over Europe, while mainstream parties appear to be paralyzed from shock about it.

Previous research suggests that mainstream-parties react to shifts in public opinion, while niche-parties' positions are influenced by their supporters. My study adapts this theory, along with ideas of responsible parties versus responsive parties, and applies both to factions in the European Parliament. To do so I consider two kinds of representation. My research finds that neither mainstream-factions nor niche-factions are very responsive to the public or supporters on the issue of European integration. However, Euroskepticism has increased among European electorates in recent years, thereby widening the representation gap for mainstream parties and lessening it for niche parties. It remains unclear the extent to which Euroskeptic parties have played a key role in mobilizing anti-EU sentiments.

Keywords: Euroscepticism; Party-behavior; European Parliament; Representation; EU-Integration

Zum Geburtstag meiner Mutter

Claudia Haft-Beyer.

Europäerin bis ins Mark

seit nunmehr sechzig Jahren.

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Introduction: The Eurosceptic Surge

It has become somewhat of an empty semantic shell, yet it has never rang more true than today: Europe is at a crossroads. Euroscepticism has long been on the rise across EU member-states and now Great Britain looks set to leave the European Union following the recent “Brexit” referendum. Before the vote on the “Brexit”, Europe had never before been openly rejected on this scale. The Norwegians have refused to join the Union and voters in France, Ireland and the Netherlands initially rejected specific treaties, but the “Brexit” result is the first time a countrywide referendum has flat out rejected the European Project. Consequences will become clear over the following months and years, but the vote against the freedom of movement for people as well as goods and services impressively shows the mobilization-potential of the issue arena “EU-integration.” Indeed, voter turnout of 72.2 % for the Brexit referendum exceeded that of Great Britain’s 2015 general election of 66.4 %. The unleashed will of the electorate seemed to surprise both UKIP, the party that pushed for the referendum, and even voters themselves. The Brexiteers almost seemed if they did not seriously consider what a win of the “leave”-campaign meant – subsequently expressed in the twitter-handle #REGREXIT.

In the wake of Leave’s successful campaign Eurosceptic parties across EU member-states are rejoicing, many calling for similar referendums in their own countries. Parties like the FPÖ in Austria, Dansk Folkeparti in Denmark, Front National in France, AfD in Germany, and Syriza in Greece had already seen a surge in electoral support in recent years and especially in the 2014 European Parliament elections. The EU-critical faction of *European Conservatives and Reformers* (ECR) is now the third largest faction in the European Parliament.

In the face of this, the established political actors and mainstream-parties seem tone deaf, repeatedly offering the same answer to growing expression of EU-disgruntlement: Increases in anti-EU-sentiments must be met with an increase in integration. The president of the European Council, Martin Schulz, called for turning the EU-commission into a “real EU government” after the Brexit-vote (Schulz 2016, July 11).

This suggests nothing short of a disconnect between the public and mainstream political actors. Mechanisms of representation are either faulty or not at work.

The different performance of Pro-EU and Anti-EU actors raises a question: Do different kinds of parties show different degrees of responsiveness to public preferences? Previous research suggests that Mainstream-parties react to mean voter positions, while Non-Mainstream-parties (or Niche-parties) respond more to their supporters' positions. Does this hold true for the central representative body of the European Union on the issue of European integration specifically? And, what does this tell us about the quality of representation more generally? These are the questions I examine in this study. For this purpose, I test two theoretical models of representation: measures of congruency between publics and parties, and dynamic models of stance-adjustment of parties vis-a-vis changing public position.

The first considers the congruency of issue stances between parties and voters (Achen, 1978; Dalton, 1985; Huber & Powell, 1997; Schumacher, de Vries, and Vis, 2013). Political positions need to be quantified on similar scales for both principals and agents. A smaller gap between both equals 'better' representation than a wider gap. Perfect representation occurs, if both positions match at the same point in time.

A second way to examine representation is to consider the adjustment of stances or policy-outputs in view of changing public attitudes, or what is also called dynamic representation (Stimson, Mackuen, & Erickson, 1995). This approach asks the question if agents keep track of their constituents by matching their changing preferences with changing their own stances or actions. In this view, the positions of agents lag behind the constituents' positions, ideal representation is a lasting tracking and adjustment. For parties, this sums up to two ways of conduct: they can be 'responsible' and maintain a policy-position regardless of public attitudes to offer a constant stance to voters; or parties can act 'responsive' and follow public sentiment as far as possible and catch voters through flexibility (Bardi, Bartolini, & Trechsel, 2014). Representation is dynamic in the sense that the rate of change follows the change of public sentiments.

Previous research suggests that parties are overall representative and responsive to public preferences on most issue areas (Stimson, Mackuen, & Erickson,

1995; Wlezien, 1995). European integration, however, appears to be an exception: For a long time, parties acting on EU-issues were doing so in a vacuum of public regard, grounded in a "permissive consensus". Over time, the elite-driven increases in integration brought mutual, national responsibilities that sieved through to the public, leading to a situation of "constraining dissensus" (Hooghe, & Marks, 2009). In the meantime, scientific discourse has acknowledged the growing underlying potential for Euroskeptic political entrepreneurs in national elections, with mainstream-parties remaining unconditionally pro-EU (de Vries, 2007, "Sleeping Giant"). The presented theoretical foundations of representation, together with the situation leading up to a "Brexit"-referendum raise the question: How have parties behaved in these processes? Do niche parties act differently than mainstream parties?

In examining these questions, I focus on how different kinds of parties in the EP have reacted to different parts of the electorate. My research indicates that for both mainstream and niche parties there seems to be a disconnect between agents and principals on matters of European Integration.

Making Democracy Representative: responsiveness vs. responsibility

The most profound property of modern, representative democracies is a link between the preferences of citizens and the actions of policymakers. Government must be able to respond and adapt to changing citizen interests to ensure that they represent the will of the people. How do they do this—that is, how does representative democracy work?. Huber and Powell (1994) argue that there are two possible mechanisms to ensure government responsiveness in contemporary democracies: Majority Control and Proportionate Influence.

For the *Majority Control* version, elections are supposed to create a strong, easily identifiable government that is directly accountable to the public. For this mechanism to work effectively, elections must present clear alternatives to voters, and once in office,

governing parties must have unconstrained policy-capabilities with limited checks and balances. This is the case in polities modeled after the Westminster-System. Power is concentrated in the chief executive, usually a prime minister, and backed by a majority in parliament. Moreover, often these systems have just two major political parties, and in the Downsian tradition this is thought to further ensure that parties represent and respond to the electorate, in particular the median voter. Parties respond to the median voter to maximize their vote-share and ensure that they gain office.

For the *Proportional Influence* mechanism, citizens' political influence is rooted in determining the composition of the parliament. Multiple parties on the election stage offer manifold alternatives from across the ideological spectrum. At the time of casting ballots, proportionate election laws translate the choices of voters into a heterogeneous legislative body. A variety of stances, positions, and influence are introduced to the policy-output stage through bargaining and compromising. The proportionally composed legislative body finds policy-maxims through negotiations, and the size of the involved factions determines their influence. This is commonly found in polities with a tradition of coalition-ruling, like in most European countries. Executive power relies on possessing a majority in a proportionally comprised parliament. A multiparty-makeup of the political landscape requires governments to either seek coalition-arrangements or bargain over policies to ensure parliamentary majorities. This means that responsiveness is facilitated through a systemic component. The positions of different elected parties are proportionally turned into influence by assigning them different levels of clout in the composition of legislatures.

Elements from both models of responsiveness are at play in multiparty systems, which introduce a focus on party responsiveness instead of government responsiveness. McDonald, Mendes, and Budge argued that if representatives are organized in firm ideological camps, it is the median mandate in parliament that determines the success of a coalition (2004) – *majority control* through the biggest share of *proportional influence*. The median mandate is the decisive seat that secures a parliamentary majority – that is, the median party can form a coalition with either side of the ideological spectrum, and thus, it has the power to determine the other parties that form the government. This also indicates that the median party has an outsized influence on public policy outcomes.

In support of this, McDonald, Mendes and Budge (2004) find in their cross-national study of representation that government policy closely tracks the left-right ideological position of the median legislator or political party.

With this, proportional representation systems with multiple political parties have a kind of built-in mechanism that facilitates majoritarian representation: for cases in which two distinct coalitions are competing for government responsibility, gaining the median mandate means success for one over the other. As such, Downs's spatial theory of voting could apply, since it seems sensible for all parties to minimize the distance between their stances and the median voter. The decisive median mandate governs the empowerment of coalition governments. In multiparty-systems, responsiveness of the system overall relies on the behavior of the involved parties. Party responsiveness and behavior are the elements crucial to representation in polities where several parties are competing. The study of these frameworks has led to the description of two styles of conduct that parties maneuver between: Act 'responsible' or be 'responsive' (Bardi, Bartolini, & Trechsel, 2014).

Responsibility entails wide reaching considerations. It postulates that representatives are under obligation to heed the long-term needs of people and countries, which may or may not be openly formulated. These interests may underlie but may also go far beyond short-term-demands of the same citizens (e. g. intergenerational justice, sustainability of economies or resources etc.). This style of representation is connected to a trustee-type relationship (Eulau et al., 1959). The principals select agents who act on their behalf based on a general sense of their shared principles. Voters elect whomever they think makes the most profound overall judgement and acts accordingly. The type of support that agents receive is diffused and centered around medium to long term output. Ideas about the quality of representation are linked to the government-model of proportional influence, where a collective body composed of different influences is central. Representing is not just on one party. Instead, it is a systemic task, where the overall aggregate of all parties mirrors the average position of the public.

Responsiveness assumes a tendency (as well as the normative claim) that parties sympathetically respond to electorates and public opinion. On their hunt for a

mandate, parties seek to place themselves as close to decisive voter-positions as possible. This behavior involves a high risk for credibility if the party constantly readjusts its position. The style of representation (Eulau et al., 1959) is connected to the delegate-model of representation. The electorate mandates a representative agent to act according to the voters' specific positions. If these positions change, the delegated agent is expected to change its behavior accordingly, even in between elections. As such, responsive parties should closely follow the positions of their supporters. Responsive behavior is especially useful for parties in systems of majority control, where the elected party gains the full mandate.

In this study and following previous research (Ezrow et al. 2011), I use the distinction between mainstream and niche parties as a proxy for responsive versus responsible representation approaches. The authors' study is motivated by a basic question about political representation: Who do parties respond to? Ezrow et al. examine the responsiveness of parties to voters across 15 European democracies on a left/right-dimension. They find distinct differences between the behavior of mainstream and the behavior of niche-parties. The first tend to adjust their left/right-placements according to changes in the mean voter position. The latter, identified with a measure from the Comparative Manifesto Project, show a penchant to react to the left/right-positions of their partisan constituencies. The broad left/right-conception to assess political positioning works since the dimension has been shown to be of value for both parties and voters. In Ezrow and his colleagues' findings niche-parties make a good fit for the responsive category. They respond to changing preferences of their supporters. Mainstream-parties, with their tendencies to follow mean-voters, do not appear to be perfectly congruent with the responsible type scheme. Aggregate analysis suggests that these parties systematically adjust their left-right-stances to slight degrees and follow public opinion (Adams, et al., 2006).

The most basic challenge for the assessment of EP-representation is finding the relevant issue-dimension. Casting a vote for a representative in the EP is not just a vote for a party; it is also a vote on the *European Project*. When voting on the European level, electorates face multi-dimensional spaces in which voters need to assess available alternatives. *EU-integration* is a dimension equivalent to the classic political left/right-

dimension. Both dimensions are, however, independent from each other. A party's position along the latter cleavage is a poor indicator of its position toward the EU and European integration; parties on any position of the ideological spectrum have expressed euroskeptical attitudes. This makes EP-cavassing a special case of *multi-party* competition where two spectra are substantial. Classic Models of multi-party competition assume that a voter matches their own position with the electable parties and casts a vote according to matching of these positions and their subjective importance. *Responsive* parties strive to clearly and actively delineate their own stances from as many other parties as possible. *Responsible* parties maintain a previously chosen stance, as parties in mainstream-factions of the EP do. How well both kinds fare with their respective behavior is contingent on the *salience* of the issue arena.

Issue Salience, Vote Choice, and Responsiveness

When considering the behavior of political parties, salience takes a central role. It determines the availability of feedback that agents get from the public to which they may be responsive. Members of the electorate have to take a stance on an issue, and an aggregate of positions has to arrive in the realm of representativeness. Salience works in two ways to increase quality of representation: For models of responsible representation, an 'unclaimed' position of increasing salience offers potential for political entrepreneurs to populate it. The entrepreneur can succeed in establishing a new stance in an issue-arena if salience of the topic is increasing. Alternatively, a long existing niche-position may receive an upswing in support if the issue it is boasting becomes more important. Both can happen either through exogenous stimuli (a crisis on hand with high levels of public attention) or through successful agenda setting of the political entrepreneurs. No claim of a principal-agent-causation is made here, both directions are possible: a niche-party can amalgamate based on a swing in public mood.

Or, if the same party holds public attention, it can successfully use this forum to boost salience of the very issue it is positioned on. Overall, the claim is that a stance with increased levels of support in an established political landscape adjusts the systemic balance to better represent public will.

For models of responsive representation, on the other hand, high salience works to increase degrees of representativeness in facilitating stance-adjustments by parties. It is easier for agents to match the development of attitudes in electorates if these stances are crystallized. Transfer from electorates or parts thereof to agents should happen more swiftly when an issue is high in perceived importance.

These considerations lead to a first hypothesis on the role of EU-salience:

H 1: Higher degrees of EU-salience correlate with higher degrees of representativeness of electorates' EU-stances in the European Parliament.

If the salience of an issue-arena is low, that is, the public is unaware or indifferent, then representation and responsiveness are also likely to be low. This has long been the case for European integration. Previous research has found EP-elections to be of limited concern for the public (Marsh, 1998; Tillman, 2004; Whitefield & Rohrschneider, 2015). The EP as a supranational legislative body does not intrinsically carry relevance for national electorates. The link between electorates and representatives in the EP-Parliament is beset by this limitation. Thus, a considerable catalogue of research has examined the salience of Europe, asking how much it matters to voters and what its role is vis-à-vis national issues.

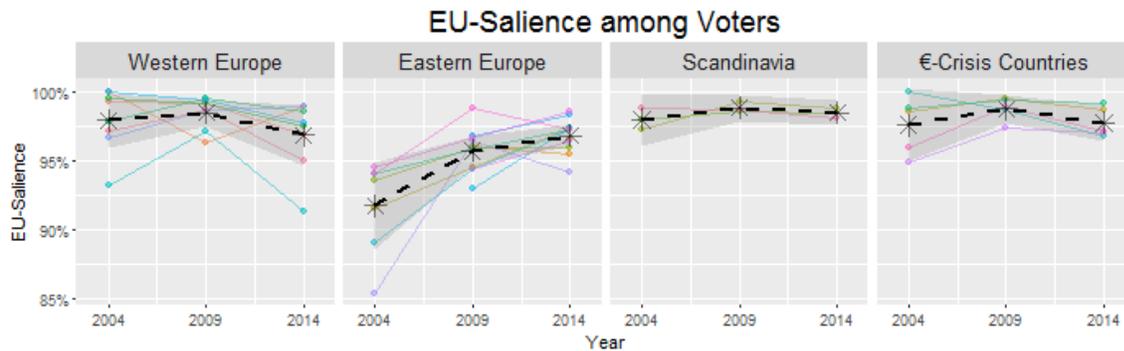
Mair (2000) assessed the limited structural impact of Europe on national party systems and found that no spillover occurs to transform national party-composition. The EU-arena does not seep into national party-systems to transform electioneering. At the same time, the European issue is subject to intentional depoliticization, where political actors mindfully avoid contestation and conflict around the cleavage. Parties keep a consensus of pro-EU positioning, which suffices as long as there are no exogenous shocks compromising this stability. Tillman (2004) evaluates the dynamic processes linking parties and voters during and after accession to the EU. He finds that between 1994 and 1996 EU-integration affected national election results in three new member-states. Parties appear to anticipate shifts in mass-opinion on the matter and voters respond to the parties' behavior by switching their votes accordingly. Netjes and Binnema (2007) compare three data-sources for salience of the EU-cleavage in 1999. They find that there is no common explanation for EU-salience in national party-

spheres as a whole. Single parties do not seem to be able to influence the level of salience overall, but EU-integration matters for every party if it is high in the system anyway. Klüver and Spoon (2015) compare the responsiveness of political parties to electorates in national and EP-elections. They find that parties seem to be less responsive to voters in EP-elections between 1986 and 2011. Developments of EU-salience are in accordance with different phases of EU-integration.

For European Politics and the EP there is no immediate relation between principals and agents. The general interest of electorates, the knowledge of individuals about the EU, and the importance they accredit to the EP is not an automatic given. Much of it remained (and remains) abstract over the course of the EP's tenure, hovering above national political spheres with very little substance within countries (de Vries, 2007; Hooghe & Marks, 2009). A conscious tangibility for electorates only really emerged when the Financial Crisis of 2007 and 2008 ignored national borders and made a full European response necessary. The border-crossing state of economic emergency forced a supranational approach and national economies in Europe have gone through a boost in political integration (Schimmelfennig, 2012).

This process increased the salience of the EU-cleavage, voters became increasingly conscious of it. The visual representation supports this theory (Figure 1): In three out of the four country groups salience is the highest around the election of 2009. Overall, the trend in countries of Western Europe drops between 2004 and 2014, while it is more or less stable in Scandinavia as well as the Eurocrisis-countries Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Cyprus and Greece. These five were under EU-troika fiscal authority.

Figure 1: Average salience of EU-dimension with 95%-Confidence Intervals



Source: *European Election Study – Voter Survey*. Shown values for salience are the percentage of respondents who did not respond with “Don’t Know” when asked about if their country’s membership in the EU was “a good thing”, “a bad thing, or “neither”..

With the overall trend of salience being increased in 2009 party-spheres in the same election should mirror the dynamics for public perception of cleavages: If the politicization of an issue arena increases, the electorate starts to care about an issue-dimension. This should make parties position themselves on the range of this new dimension. How swiftly and easily they do, differs from party to party. Both considerations of responsible and responsive behavior are at play, as well as the fact that certain issues are 'owned' by some parties, enabling them with a home-turf advantage – delineation of their position is aided by a clear issue-attribution through the eyes of the public (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik, Benoit, & Hansen, 2004). Both elements, *salience* and *issue-ownership*, underwent different phases for EP-elections, as implied by the idea of “second-order elections”. These phases afflicts the potential for delineation of parties according to their Euroskeptic stance, but this implication is circumnavigated by my focus on factions and their behaviour in the secondary elections to the EP.

Scholars have long viewed European Parliament elections as “second-order elections” (“SOE”. Reif & Schmitt, 1980). Unlike ‘first order’ elections (usually national elections), second order elections are less important to voters. As a result, turnout tends to be lower and the national political context tends to permeate the electoral campaign and strongly influence vote choice. Even in spite of the seminal Maastricht-Accord of 1992, which attributed a more salient role and influence to the EP, turnout for the EP-

elections of 1994 still decreased from 1989 and campaigning revolved around national considerations (Guyomarch, 1995). The central element of SOE is that voters cast their ballots mainly based on considerations derived from national contexts. The salience of EU-integration in this era was low; voters did not care about the issue. Parties could rely on a “permissive consensus”, especially before 1991, with elites reaching agreements without requiring the public to be in the loop (Hooghe & Marks, 2009).

In this phase, party representativeness on the supranational EU-dimension did not matter because the electorates did not care. Thus, analyses of party-behavior shifted over time. One of the first comparative pieces of work on the topic found a link between parties and voters: van der Eijk and Franklin (1991) assessed the congruence of parties and their electorates on the EU-dimension right after the EP-elections in 1989. Comparing voters' positions and voters' perception of the parties they voted for, the authors showed that most parties were close to their electorates in integration-matters. Only a small number of parties were out of line, but still electorally successful, thus closeness on this dimension did not matter for casting ballots. The authors made note of future problems for the non-congruent parties, once the issue becomes salient.

Other work distinguished between policy-congruence and a broader, general EU-dimension. Thomassen and Schmitt (1997) compared issue-specific congruence of parties and candidates in the EP-elections of 1994 and concluded that for opinions on unemployment, single currency, and abolition of borders there was hardly any congruence at all. Candidates and their electorate were “living in different European worlds” (p. 181). When the same authors considered the more general, issue-unspecific stance of voters and party elites on the “grand direction of integration”, their results were more positive (2000). A comparison between voters' positions and parties' elites on both EU-specific issues and the preference towards integration revealed for the integrative spectrum about as much congruence as for the left/right-spectrum both in 1979 and in 1994. Voters were more skeptical about concrete EU-policies, but about as positive as elites on a vaster EU-arena.

Thomassen and Schmitt's findings suggest that elites are more responsive to voter-positions than vice versa. However, the analysis excludes any measurement of

saliency and, with comparing EP-elections of 1979 and 1994, spans over two different levels of saliency. Franklin and Wlezien (1997) evaluated the same time span, but assessed the other direction of responsiveness: Does public opinion react to EU-policies? In line with a 'thermostatic' model of responsiveness, voters should moderate their EU-desire according to increased EU-implementation in policy-programs. Their model holds, meaning that publics react to EU-specific policy output, but only with assuming and incorporating a quasi-natural increase of EU-saliency over time. This led them to assume great relevance of saliency for policy-opinion-congruence on EU-integration.

For the EP-election of 1999 van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) found a clear gap between parties' positions and electorates' opinions: the diversity of voters on anti-/pro-integration was not mirrored by the parties. They compared self-placement and party-assessment by voters and found the range of individual opinion to be broader than the available party-options. Overall, these findings regarding representativeness of EPs feature low consistency. What is there to make of differing accounts for differing time-points?

One possible answer is implied by *SOE*: The model only makes sense as long as saliency of European issues remains low for voters. With the power and authority of the EP steadily increasing over time, deepening and widening of European integration have solicited domestic politics into conflicts about the way and makeup of the European Project. Some authors began to find signs for this development, setting in somewhat before the EP-election of 1999. Tillmann (2004), for example, finds signs of EU-issue voting in national elections for Austria, Sweden, and Finland shortly after each country's accession to the EU in 1995 – at a time-point when the saliency of the EU-dimension is naturally high in the respective countries.

An increase in saliency can evolve into two contexts from the low-saliency/low responsiveness stem. Within the two models of aggregated representation, higher saliency of the EU-integration cleavage means a growing potential for new agents to be electorally successful on formerly vacant positions. This adjusts the overall system by adding new positions, responsible agents lose influence while remaining true to their

stances. Turnover and introduction of new parties ensures representation to adapt to the changing will and priorities of the electorate. Alternatively, parties can meet increasing salience through adjusting their positions and following changes in voter stance. The development of salience along with an increase of polarization of the EU-arena means that parties maintaining their EU-supportive position lose voters to the less EU-enthusiastic alternatives.

De Vries (2007) evaluates salience and EU issue voting for national elections between 1992 and 2002. She finds signs of both low salience and high salience of EU-issues: Denmark and the UK show higher rates of EU-issue voting due to the contestation of the arena, while the Netherlands and Germany show lower degrees. Nevertheless, apart from the UK, voters failed to show a clear tendency of increase in interest for the EU-dimension. This suggests differences between countries for levels of issue-salience (see also Netjes and Binnema, 2007).

Theoretically, it makes sense for salience to increase along with politicization and reach of the EU-dimension. This is the tenet for Hobolt, Spoon, and Tilley (2009). The authors examined voter defection for the EP-elections of 1999 and 2004. They find differing stances on EU-integration and incumbent-evaluation to be significant for vote-change of a partisan individual. In closing they “expect the gap between the positions of governing parties and voters on European integration to become smaller over time, as parties adopt positions closer to voters to avoid electoral punishment” (p. 112). This is the ideal course of a high salience/high responsiveness-situation.

This, however, is not what happened. My basis for this claim is rooted in the different behaviors of different parties. On the one hand, mainstream parties are invested firmly in the European project. The elites' decade-long enacting on expansion of the EU confines them to an overall Pro-EU-stance. They act ‘responsible’ towards the EU by not adjusting their positions in response to changing public attitudes. They are ‘too’ responsible for what the European Union is today to change their stance. Doing so would risk their political pedigree, and defection from this unconditionally pro-EU course would considerably undermine their credibility. These party-elites remain in the permissive consensus of early political integration, therefore continuously pursuing the

EU-project. This is a tenet of the shared principles of mainstream EU-electioneering today. Pro-EU politics are without alternatives.

Niche-parties, on the other hand, do not risk credibility by being responsive. They are expected to align their stance with voters, since their unique value proposition is their flexibility on matters of European Integration. They do not have to deflect on their overall ideological stance to adjust their EU-positioning, since both are independent cleavages. I will test this following my second Hypothesis, which regards mainstream parties:

H2: Mainstream-parties are not systematically responsive to public will. Their positions regarding the EU stays fixed.

This is in line with findings by Hobolt, Spoon and Tilley (2009), who show responsiveness of niche-parties towards their supporters.

Mattila and Raunio (2012) tested the other end of this paradigm for the EU-cleavage. They find that different parties react differently to the electorates' positions on European integration. Relying on data from the 2004 and 2009 European Election study, far-left parties seemed to be more responsive to voter-stances on the EU dimension than non-extreme parties. For right-wing parties, the coefficient was not statistically significant. This weak evidence could be due to characteristics identified by Ezrow et al (2011): different parties react to different parts of the electorate on the EU-dimension. This differentiation can, again, be drawn along the delineation between the responsible mainstream-parties, and responsive niche-parties. Based on this, I expect that:

H3: The positions of non-mainstream-parties are dependent on the positions of their supporters, while this tendency is not present for mainstream-parties.

Based on considerations of salience and politicization, I differentiate between phases in EU-unification: The EP-election of 2004 was characterized by a lower importance of the issue for voters than 2009 – the financial crisis and resulting EU-action increased political conflict for the latter. It even increased for 2014. Politicization is “a process whereby the controversy of a joint decision making process goes up. This in turn is likely to lead to a widening of the audience or clientele interested and active in

integration” (Schmitter, 1969, p.166). A major amount of work and empirical studies have developed around several dimensions of this process for European issues: Referenda, party competition, and media engage increasingly in contestation over supranational issues in Europe (de Vries, 2007; Hobolt, 2009; Adam & Maier, 2011; Helbling, Hoeglinger & Wüst, 2010)

Politicization works for the electorate by facilitating a clear delineation of party-positions on issues. The voter gets a better sense of who stands for what. Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that decision-making processes in Europe have become dispersed across multiple levels, which essentially has led from a “permissive consensus” to “constraining dissensus”: Domestic and European politics became more interwoven, but at the same time politicization of the issue-arena should make governments more responsive to public pressures on integration. This leads to Hypothesis 4a:

H4a: Over the considered time span of 2004 to 2014, niche-parties show a higher tendency of responsiveness on the EU-unification-dimension than mainstream-parties.

A similar trait should exist when comparing regional groups of countries: The four countries making up the Eurozone-crisis flash spots saw an increase in EU-influence in domestic matters after austerity-politics were imposed. Domestic struggles, EU-opposition, and the organization of protest-groups were the results. Theory assumes that contestation of an issue should lead to an increase in politicization, which in turn should lead to an increase in salience, should lead to an increase in responsiveness. This leads to the second, politicization-based hypothesis:

H4b: Parties in the Eurozone-Crisis countries Greece, Spain, Ireland, Cyprus, and Portugal are more responsive to public attitudes towards EU-unification than parties in other countries.

In the following part, I will present the methods of analysis, which I use to test the four given hypotheses.

Data, Method, and Models

To test the congruency of positions in model 1, my dependent variable is the distance (measured as the absolute value of the difference) between parties' positions and the mean voter position. Combining these two into one measure allows for a condensed statistical analysis, while still maintaining a differentiation between voters and supporters. If influences by both groups on party-stances are exactly the same, the resulting regression-coefficient would be 1. If the factor is below 1, the supporters' positions are more closely correlated to party-stances. If the coefficient for distance between public and supporters exceeds 1, correlation would exist primarily between public attitude and party-position.

This measure of representative proximity has been utilized a number of times. Achen (1978) discusses it in his seminal study on measuring representation as one of three possibilities to quantify relationships between constituency and representative. Proximity encapsulates two key characteristics of public opinions. For one, it depends on opinion consensus among electorates. The closer the policy preference of voters, the clearer their aggregate position, which allows for high degrees of elite-citizen correspondence. The representative has a good sense of what position is to favor. Secondly, a party taking a stance close to its average voter minimizes absolute distance to all supporters. This results in the smallest possible proximity-score.

Dalton (1985) also uses this measure to compare party-representativeness for different policy areas in nine European democracies in 1979. He finds overall satisfactory agreement between party-elites and publics in realms of economy, security, and "new politics" (environment and freedom of expression). Party elites were more liberal on overall left/right stances and foreign aid. The previously discussed study by Huber and Powell (1997) use a measure of distance between governments and average voters to assess representativeness of different visions of democracy. Their findings suggest that systems of proportional influence keep the distance between both the closest. Based on these intellectual foundations I chose distance between parties and voters as my dependent variable in my first model.

My chosen measure for party positions are assessments by a panel of experts. Overall, the idea of regularly conducted surveys of this kind is appealing: The selected specialists are able to absorb a large quantity of diverse information to synthesize their assessments. They combine meaningful sense for positions with knowledge about emerging issues and their importance, which enables the researchers to quantify weights rather than guess arbitrarily. These surveys however, do carry the deficiency of potential unreliability over time: issues might be changing faster than experts' assessments, and the estimation of weight might be out of line with the electorate's attitudes. On a pragmatic note, expert surveys are costly to conduct and it is difficult to crosscheck their reliability. Surveys of this kind have been utilized frequently to estimate political positions of parties on a wide range of issues. Surveys for EP-elections are conducted through the University of North Carolina. Country-specific experts have assessed most parties participating in EP-elections since 1999 and rated them on a number of scales. A trend-file is available and allows for longitudinal analysis (Adams, Ezrow, & Leiter, 2012; Bakker, Jolly, & Polk, 2012; Bakker et al. 2015).

Previous work on the responsiveness of parties to public preference has utilized expert surveys to measure the elite-end: Huber and Powell (1994) pioneered the use to assess parties' left-right positioning in the United States. Their focus was on ideological congruence, which was highest when a citizen and a party were exactly on the same point of a scale. For the purpose of my investigation, the assessment of experts is suitable since I focus on the general integration-score for each party, not on the importance of specific topics or the like. The timeframes between surveys are over four years, which allows the experts to update their assessments appropriately. The questionnaire includes the party-portion of the dependent variable is in the item POSITION. Its scale was adjusted to a 0 to 10 span for my analysis:

POSITION:

Overall orientation of the party-leadership towards European integration

1 = Strongly opposed

2 = Opposed

3 = Somewhat opposed

4 = Neutral

5 = Somewhat in favor

6 = In favor

7 = Strongly in favor

The timing of the surveys evokes a causal arrow for my analysis, which points from public opinions to party positions. The party assessment was in all three cases done for a period following the EP-elections. No simultaneously collected data is available. Based on this succession my focus lies on testing if there is a correlation between public attitudes preceding the parties' stances. While doing so I do not focus on testing for causation.

Central element of the independent variable of my study is the electorates' positions on EU-integration. I extract this from the European Election Study, more specifically from its micro-level voter component. At its core stands a post-election survey, which is conducted in all member-states of the EU, as well as a number of non-members (e.g. Switzerland and Norway). Due to my focus of interest, I will concentrate on the three EP-elections of 2004, 2009, and 2014. Data is available for the 28 EU-member countries from their year of accession, and I use a scale constructed from answers to the following question:

"Some say European unification should be pushed further. Others say it already has gone too far. What is your opinion? Please indicate your views using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means unification 'has already gone too far' and 10 means it 'should be pushed further'. What number on this scale best describes your position?"¹

Seeking relations between items from differing questions is a delicate challenge and requires compromises regarding rigor of analysis. While the wording of both questions is different, they are utilized as proxies to approach the same cleavage. In both sources, this is the only question that directly aims at establishing the EU-integration stance of party or respondent. As such, they have to suffice for the purpose of my analysis.

My main interest is in the differences in responsiveness by party factions and I aim to identify the difference between mainstream and niche-party factions in responsiveness to public attitudes. I do so via post-election dummy-variables, depending on which EP-faction parties join after making it to parliament. I categorize the four main-factions Christian-democratic/Conservatives, Social Democratic, Liberal, and

¹ The scale offered in 2004 spanned from 1 (...has gone too far) to 10 (...should be pushed further). It was adjusted to a 0 to 10-scale for analysis.

Ecologists/Greens as mainstream. MPs that are not members of any faction, along with left and right Euroskeptics are treated as niche. Following Ezrow et al. (2011), who consider responsiveness to different groups of electorates, I consider two varieties of public opinion: One is *Public Opinion*, which straightforwardly entails the attitudes of the whole population of a country and is component of my dependent variable in models of congruency. The other is *Party Supporter Position* and it considers the positions of all voters who have cast their ballot for the party, for which the position is to be explained.

A second key independent variable is EU-saliency. I expect either measure of representativeness to be higher when the public cares more about an issue. This measure is constructed using the share of respondents that holds an opinion on if their country's EU-membership is "a good thing, a bad thing, or neither." Saliency is at its maximum if no respondent in the sample chooses to answer this prompt with "Don't know". Graph 1 illustrates that, in accordance with a theory of politicization, this measure was highest in 2009 at the height of the financial Euro-Crisis.

My models that estimate congruency between publics and parties include three control-variables: firstly, a dummy for participation in government. There are competing and contradictory expectations about how government participation might affect representation. On the one hand, governing parties may be closer to voters and more likely to respond to shifts in public opinion. Following the assumption of proximity voting models, the very fact that a party is in government may be an indication that it is responsive to the public will. In this case, the factor would be negative, meaning that parties are closer to the mean voter position. On the other, previous research suggests that opposition parties may have greater leeway to adjust their position in response to public opinion. Moreover, a party that has gained a mandate might be less inclined to change a programmatic stance that helped get it elected. In short, we have competing expectations.

The second control is a dummy for countries that experienced the most severe economic collapse during the global financial crisis and were pressured by the European Commission and International Monetary Fund to enact strict austerity measures. I expect politicization and saliency of the EU-dimension to be especially high in these five

countries: Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain. Thus, parties in these countries should show higher tendencies to be responsive to changing opinions of voters.

The third dummy is a party's logged vote share in the preceding national election. For similar reasons as in the case of the government-mandate, its effects could be either diminishing or increasing the distance between parties and public. A party that performs well at the ballots could continue to do so while not adjusting a position on an issue for which salience is low. Or the party could be doing well, since its position is congruent with the public on an important issue. I use the natural logarithm of vote share to account for the fact that effects should be greater at lower vote shares. That is, a 1% point change in vote share should matter much more going from 4 to 5% than it does going from 44 to 45%.

The following two models will include these variables and be used to evaluate party-voter-congruency:

Model 1:

$$|P_{Party} - P_{Pub}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (|P_{Pub} - P_{Sup}|) + \beta_2 Sal + \beta_3 V_{Log} + \beta_4 G_{Part} + \beta_5 H_{\epsilon}$$

Model 2:

$$|P_{Party} - P_{Pub}| = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (|P_{Pub} - P_{Sup}|) + \beta_2 Sal + \beta_3 V_{Log} + \beta_4 G_{Part} + \beta_5 H_{\epsilon} + \beta_6 NMs + \beta_7 (|P_{Pub} - P_{Sup}|) * NMs$$

Dependent Variable:

$|P_{Party} - P_{Pub}|$: Absolute value of distance between Party-stance and public position on European Integration²

Explanatory Variables:

β_0 : Constant Error-Term

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_7$: Effects of explanatory variables

P_{Pub} : Electorates' mean position on European Integration

P_{Sup} : Mean position of party supporters on European Integration

Sal : Salience of European Cleavage in electorate

V_{Log} : Logged vote share of party in last national election

G_{Part} : Dummy for Government Participation in Year

² In the given models this dependent variable has a range of 0.004 to 6.373, a mean of 3.026, and a standard deviation of 1.346.

$H\epsilon$: Country under Troika-Authority

NMs : Dummy for Non-mainstream-Party

$NMs * (P_{Pub} - P_{Sup})$:

Interaction to account for differences between Mainstream/Non-mainstream Parties

The models differ mainly in the depth of differentiation: The first one tests plainly if there is an overarching relationship between party positions and the difference between public and supporters. The other models go into more depth and seek to elucidate the differences between mainstream- and niche-parties. Model 2 seeks to identify a comprehensive logic across all Niche-parties, both on the left and right and including independent MPs. These two models span across all three elections.

To consider the second way of evaluating quality of representation my next models test dynamics over time: Do changes in party-positions show similar trends as opinions of publics and supporters? This relates to my hypotheses on differences in responsiveness over time (H1 & H4a) and the role of politicization (H4b). These regressions do not include the absolute values at time t as variables, but the change between $t-1$ and t . This model includes two dummies regarding the parties' role in government. One tests, if a government-mandate held at both time points has an influence on party-behavior. As before, the existing research leads to different expectations about whether government participation increases or decreases responsiveness.

The second dummy groups parties according to a change in their mandate. A possible mechanism suggests that a party, which achieved government-responsibility, was successful in doing so since it was responsive on significant issues. If EU-integration were a significant issue, the factor for this dummy would be positive. A party that dropped out of government should experience a gain in responsiveness and try to appeal to voters to get back into office. If the data features a sufficient number of cases where this is the case, the factor for this control would be negative. Thus, this factor can feature either algebraic sign.

The model for the regressions testing dynamic processes of representation are as follows:

Model 3:

$\Delta P_{Party} =$

$$\beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta P_{Pub} + \beta_2 \Delta P_{Sup} + \beta_3 \Delta Vote + \beta_4 G_{Part} + \beta_5 G_{in} + \beta_6 G_{out} + \beta_7 H_{\epsilon} + \beta_8 NMs * P_{Pub} + \beta_9 NMs * P_{Sup} + \beta_{10} H_{\epsilon} * P_{Pub} + \beta_{11} H_{\epsilon} * P_{Sup}$$

Dependent Variable:

ΔP_{Party} : Change of party-stance on European Integration³

Explanatory Variables:

β_0 : Constant Error-Term

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_{11}$: Effects of explanatory variables

ΔP_{Pub} : Change of public's mean position on European Integration

ΔP_{Sup} : Change of mean position for respective party supporters on European Integration

$\Delta Vote$: Change in vote share

G_{Part} : Participation in government at both t-1 and t

G_{in} : Party got participation in government between t-1 and t

G_{out} : Party lost participation in government between t-1 and t

H_{ϵ} : Country under Troika-Authority

NMs : Dummy for Non-mainstream-Party

$NMs * \Delta P_{Pub} / \Delta P_{Sup}$:

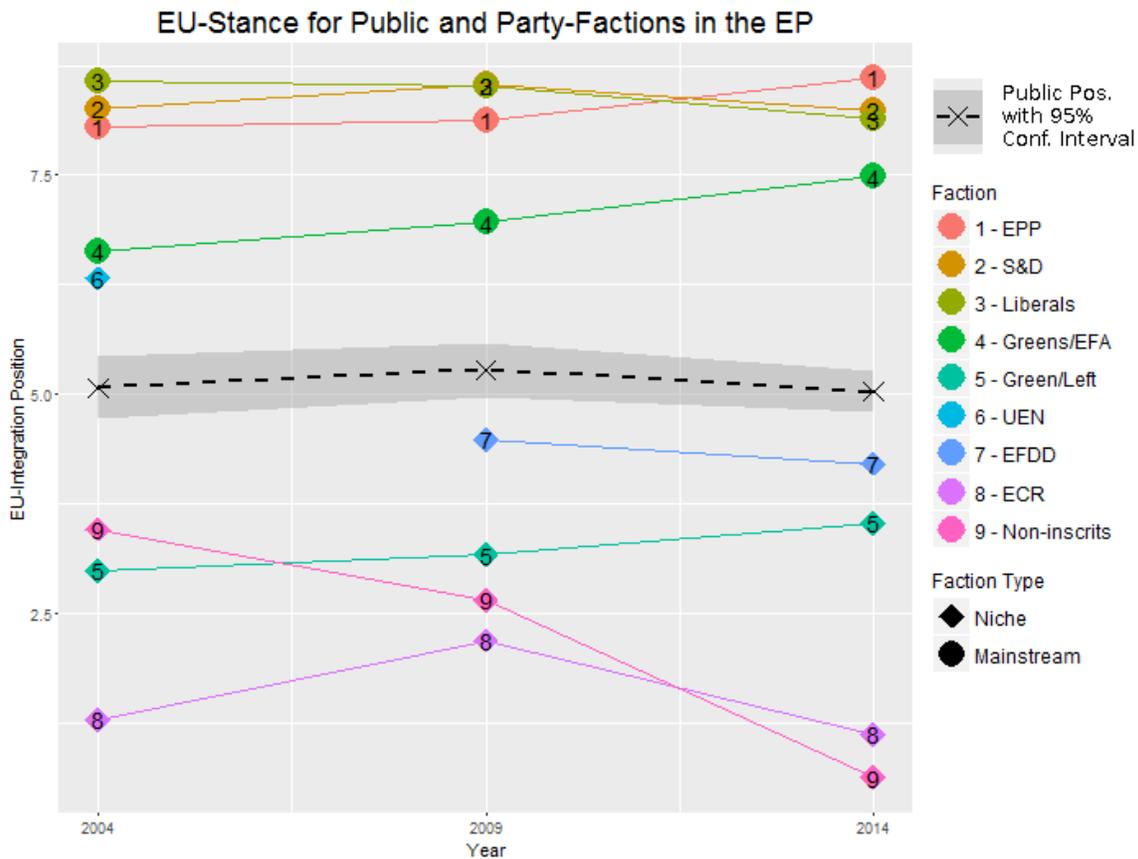
Interaction to account for differences between Mainstream/Non-mainstream Parties

³ In the given models this dependent variable has a range of -4.398 to 2.952, a mean of 0.129, and a standard deviation of 0.982

Analysis, Regressions and Results

Plotting average public stance over party faction positions suggests no obvious correlation between both (Figure 2): The development of public opinion on EU-integration mirrors EU-salience in the member-countries. Highest level is around the EP-election of 2009, while a similar average held for 2004 and 2014. The most recent time point shows lesser degrees of variance. The averages of EU-positions for all four mainstream-factions are continuously above the public-stance, in line with party-behavior rooted in responsibility towards the European Project. Of the responsible factions, only the Greens/European Free Alliance (4) shows any clear adjustment in stance, an almost linear increase over the ten-year span. The Social Democrats (2) mirror somewhat the course of public stance, with a peak in 2009, but all mainstream-factions hold their aggregate stances of clear pro-EU positioning.

Figure 2: EU-Stances of Publics and Factions



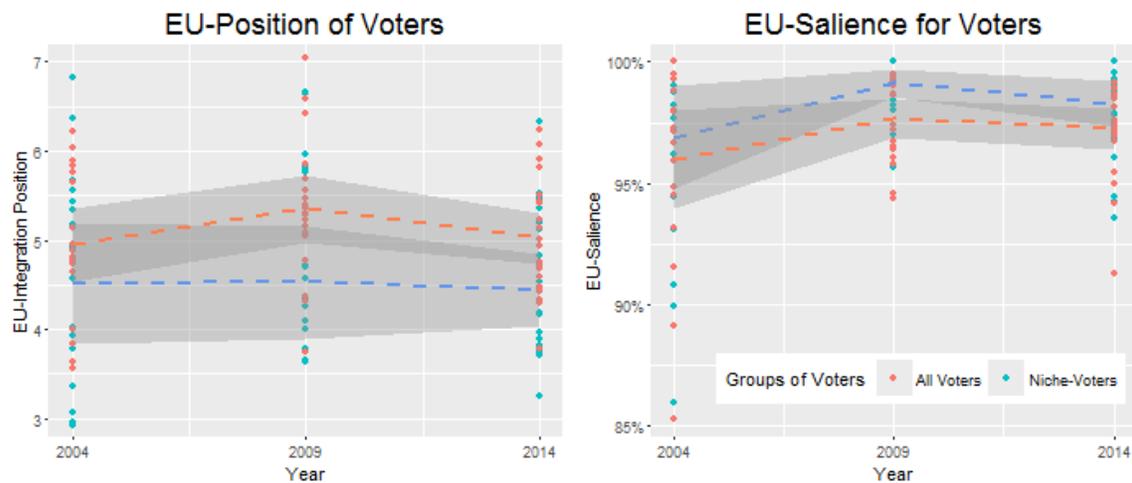
Source: Chapel Hill Expert Surveys and European Election Study – Voter Survey. Party faction is determined by the party's affiliation. EU integration position set through the average evaluation of experts.

The closest factions, overall, to the public position are from the niche camp: The United Europe of Nations (6) with an overall Pro-EU-course in 2004 and the European Conservatives and Reformists (7) in 2009 and 2014. The aggregate stance of parties in the ECR-faction appears to move in line with public stance between both elections. This would be against suggests a systematic adjustment of stance vis-à-vis public position.

Among the remaining niche-factions, the soft Euroskeptics of the Nordic Green/Left (5) show an increase in positioning and close in on the overall public stance. Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (8) maintains a stance well below the public aggregate, but shows a larger bump in 2009. Overall, this visual representation suggests differing trends between mainstream and niche factions. Pro-EU factions organized by parties for which theory suggests responsibility maintain a clear EU-affirmation. The EU-

critical factions that I assume to hold a mandate-type relationship to their voters are expected to feature much higher mobility on the EU-scale. Plotting these relationships by country, however, delivers no identifiable tendencies between countries (cf. appendix 1). A look at overall integration-positions and EU-salience for two voter-groups confirms this (Figure 3). The EU-opinion of niche-voters is consistently lower than the stance of the electorates as a whole. At the same time, it is slightly but steadily declining between 2004 and 2014. Salience, on the other hand, is on average higher among niche-voters.

Figure 3: Comparing two Groups of Voters



Source: European Election Study – Voter Survey

These three plots illustrate different trajectories for EU-critical party-factions and their voters. Looking at all three together suggests a higher degree of correlation between EU-critical parties and their voters. The following section tests to see if this difference between factions and the influence of electorates is mirrored in the regression-analysis.

Table 1: Regression Results 1 - Party-Focus

	Dependent Variable			
	Distance between Party Position and Public Position			
	MS-Factions	Niche-Factions	All Factions	Full Model
(Standard Errors in Parentheses)	Model 1 (n=295)	Model 2 (n=104)	Model 3 (n=399)	Model 4 (n=399)
Distance Public-Supporters	0.516*** (0.141)	0.862*** (0.180)	0.670*** (0.110)	0.524*** (0.143)
EU-Salience	0.394 (0.286)	-0.545 (0.465)	0.165 (0.243)	0.157 (0.242)
Logged vote share for last national election	0.167** (0.076)	0.005 (0.163)	0.152** (0.069)	0.146** (0.069)
Government-Participation Dummy	0.295* (0.153)	-0.403 (0.416)	0.234 (0.145)	0.232 (0.145)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country	0.018 (0.234)	0.343 (0.338)	0.137 (0.192)	0.134 (0.191)
Non-Mainstream Dummy			-0.528*** (0.154)	-0.819*** (0.237)
Interaction between Distance Public-Supporters * Non-Mainstream Dummy				0.340 (0.212)
Constant	2.000*** (0.284)	2.210*** (0.534)	2.104*** (0.254)	2.225*** (0.265)
R ²	0.082	0.211	0.123	0.128
Adjusted R ²	0.066	0.170	0.109	0.113
<i>Note:</i>		* p<0.1	** p<0.05	*** p<0.01

Multiple linear regression.

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Surveys and European Election Study – Voter Survey.

Comparison of mainstream and niche-factions in the regression table 1 (column 1 and 2) supports H2 and H3, the hypotheses on different influences by public and supporters: The coefficient for the distance between public and supporters is 0.346 higher for niche-factions and both are statistically significant. In these two separate models, the correlation between supporter-position and party-stance is stronger for niche-factions, suggesting they move in closer step. Lack of statistical significance for the interaction term in the combined model, however, prevents interpretation.

The only control that matters statistically is if mainstream-parties hold a government-mandate, which increases the gap between their stance and the public. This could suggest that there is a correlation between government-responsibility and either constraints in or stasis of party-behavior, causing restriction in movement or resulting in an unwillingness of repositioning. The same holds for the correlation of vote share in both overall models (columns 3 and 4). Their factors are statistically significant as well. My measure of salience does not have a statistically significance influence on distance between public stance and party positions. Thus, there is little evidence to support H1.

For both of these models, the coefficients for the niche-dummy are negative and significant. As discernible from the plotted representation, all but one of the niche-factions is below the public average. The factor expresses this, and deeper analysis confirms these tendencies for most countries. Model 2 includes an interaction-term of niche-factions with the distance of public and supporters. This solidifies the analysis above of differences between party-types. While both included factors can be interpreted standalone, the effects of interaction-terms cannot be taken separately, but must be seen in conjunction with the involved factors. In this model, however, the interaction fails to meet standards of significance. A possible reason for this lies in the different behavior of hard (right-leaning) Eurosceptic factions and the soft (left-leaning) party-group.

I investigate this possibility further by applying Model 2 with the addition of a differentiation by left and right Euroskeptics (cf. appendix 2). Of the resulting coefficients, only two controls show statistical significance: vote share and the loss of government mandates. As such, this further test did not yield any results of statistical significance that elucidate differences between niche-faction more closely. Overall, for models on congruency of positions, the only two results that allow a claim about correlations are the differences in public and supporter closeness, as well as the relationship between vote share and party-public distance.

A detailed analysis of dynamic adjustment of party-stances and how they correlate with the public stance makes the difference between different time frames apparent (regression table 2): In the overall model, which has both changes from 2004 to 2009 as well as from 2009 to 2014 as its base, only three factors, apart from the

constant, show statistical significance. The niche-faction dummy expresses a general, downwards stance-adjustment of members of these party groups over time. The slight positive correlation of performance in national elections and change in EU-positions is unexpected, since it means that a gain in vote share goes along with an increase in EU-stance. It is the only control showing statistical significance in all three models.

A closer look at the data reveals that a number of cases features negative values for both position as well as vote share parallels the positive correlation in the regression. Of the 31 cases in the lower quartile, six are members of niche-factions. This quantity is about half of what would be expected if non-mainstream-members were distributed randomly across the vote share scale. As such, this result can be brought in line with theory by assuming that the weak positive correlation of vote share and change in party position is rooted in the behavior of losing parties in mainstream-factions. They adjust their EU-stance downwards after heavy electoral losses in national elections. This finding suggests that formerly EU-affirming parties take losses of voter-support as inducement to align their EU-positions downwards. In this view parties include the EU-cleavage in realignment of their profile.

The third dummy of relevance is the dummy for parties losing their government-status. It is statistically significant in the overall model and for the timespan between 2009 and 2014. The negative value suggests that a loss of a party's government-mandate coincides with a downward-adjustment of EU-stance during the respective period between EP-elections. The fact that the factor is larger and has a p-value of lower than 0.05 between 2009 and 2014 faintly confirm expectations of increasing salience for the EU-dimension. Parties only adjust their stances on issues they consider (partly) responsible for an electoral loss. This could be the case for the relevant measure between 2009 and 2014, and not during the previous period.

Table 2: Regression Results 2 - Change

	Dependent Variable		
	Change in Party-Position		
	Overall	2004-2009	2009-2014
(Standard Errors in Parentheses)	Model 1 (n=200)	Model 2 (n=96)	Model 3 (n=104)
Non-Mainstream Dummy	-0.422** (0.176)	-0.117 (0.270)	-0.365 (0.320)
Change in Public Position	0.025 (0.172)	-0.159 (0.235)	0.151 (0.303)
Change in Supporter Position	-0.027 (0.110)	0.089 (0.129)	-0.309 (0.211)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country	-0.047 (0.209)	-0.291 (0.296)	0.338 (0.396)
Change in vote share between national elections	0.040*** (0.011)	0.029* (0.015)	0.034** (0.017)
Got-In-Government Dummy	-0.183 (0.195)	-0.159 (0.265)	-0.401 (0.301)
Dropped-out Government Dummy	-0.443** (0.206)	-0.278 (0.290)	-0.800** (0.305)
Government Participation Dummy	-0.235 (0.194)	-0.317 (0.284)	-0.237 (0.273)
Non-Mainstream Dummy * Change Public	0.407 (0.321)	-0.012 (0.439)	0.759 (0.654)
Non-Mainstream Dummy * Change Supporters	0.004 (0.175)	0.064 (0.253)	0.256 (0.321)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country * Change Public	0.533 (0.533)	1.952** (0.750)	-1.244 (1.090)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country * Change Supporters	-0.322 (0.531)	-1.073** (0.320)	0.564 (0.536)
Constant	0.413*** (0.130)	0.465** (0.189)	0.423** (0.198)
R ²	0.150	0.187	0.239
Adjusted R ²	0.095	0.069	0.139
Note:	* p<0.1	** p<0.05	*** p<0.01

Multiple linear regression.

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Surveys and European Election Study – Voter Survey.

The four interaction-terms at the bottom of regression table 2 can be used for testing if Eurocrisis-countries feature different party-behavior. Indeed, there are two statistically relevant factors for the period between 2004 and 2009. The first would suggest that member-parties of niche-factions overcompensated changing public position in their stances, while the second makes it seem as if supporter-position was counter moving to non-mainstream party conduct. It is crucial to note again, however, that the non-interacted regression coefficients fail to meet standards of statistical significance, and thus deliver no base to interpret the interaction-terms. This makes the overall-yield of these models marginal. Testing if dynamic adjustment of party-stances show similar tendencies as the publics' or voters' behaviors brings mostly results of poor quality.

Given these analyses, the two different ways to assess quality of representation do yield findings that show the EU-cleavage in the EP to be different from left/right considerations. The most significant result from the analysis of EU-congruency is the different matching between party-positions to public and supporters. Parties in niche-factions correlate on the EU-arena in a similar way as niche-parties do in their left/right-positioning: The position of supporters is statistically significant. This is in line with analyses of left/right stances for mainstream and niche-parties. Most of the other measures of relevance on an ideological spectrum, however, do not meet statistical standards for EU-integration: My chosen measure of salience does not allow for interpretation due to the size of its p-values. So does the analysis of dynamic position adjustment over time.

There is no clear relationship discernible for the variation of party-stances in light of changing public opinions. A link has been shown between publics and parties on the ideological spectrum (Adams, et al., 2004), as well as between niche-parties and their supporters (Ezrow, et al., 2011). This leaves me with the conclusion that the two cleavages left/right and EU-integration feature different mechanisms of public-to-party-feedback. What do these marginal findings indicate for representation in the EP?

Summarizing European Party Etiquette: What parties do, what parties should do

This study aimed to discern if there are differing logics of representation for EU-party-positioning in the EP. European integration is different from other scales of political conduct in that it is not traditionally bound to any kind of political ideologies. In light of the surge of Eurosceptic parties in the EP, I hypothesized that the EU-cleavage increases in salience, and that there is a difference in how parties respond to this growth of importance: Mainstream-parties behave responsibly, maintain their previously chosen stance, while parties in niche-factions react to changing public opinion and act responsively. Statistical analysis of data on party-stances and public positions failed to provide conclusive evidence for this, even though parties in niche-factions appear to move more closely in line with the positions of their supporters.

My data did not suggest any systematical adjustment for mainstream-parties and their stance on EU-issues. It seems tempting to label this stance stagnation as a result of “responsibility” towards the European Project. A deeper theoretical consideration of the purpose that parties in a legislative assembly serve brings in the consideration of a trustee-role of mainstream parties. Electorates bestow responsibility and influence on parties based on the overall ideals and intuitions that guide their conduct. Since my measure of salience did not significantly show a growing importance of the EU-cleavage, it makes it possible to conclude that overall European matters do not outshine other cleavages in the minds of electorates in EP-elections. Otherwise, the range from hard to soft eurosceptic parties would reap in higher vote shares, independently of the parties’ ideological shade. Instead, it is the set of shared ideals other than EU-integration that voters consider when electing mainstream-parties as their trustees.

Nonetheless, parties in niche-factions might position themselves deliberately on the EU-spectrum. As mandate-representatives, voters entrust niche-parties to focus on the EU-cleavage and seek an alternative to the mainstream-consensus (Figure 3). Salience is much higher among voters of non-mainstream parties, while the EU-integration position of this population is generally lower with a clear downward trend.

As such, the Euroskeptical parties occupy political vacuums and serve as democratic devices to express political will. In practice, this is far from ideal when Euroscepticism is used as vehicle to propel nationalist and radical ideas into democratically accountable legislative bodies. In theory and considered in isolation, however, the ascent of EU-critical stances into EP-politics is a normatively desirable process. It is the adjustment of the EP's representative claim according to the constituents. Growing salience of the cleavage among electorates increases politicization and leads to an increased importance of reflecting a variety of stances. The positions of factions on the pro-EU end are less and less mirroring these tendencies, which conduces voting in EU-critical stances into the EP.

Overall, there are three implications to take from this study that can serve to guide future research. The first one touches on theoretical considerations: Despite previous research being concerned with a delineation of parties along 'mainstream' and 'niche', there is hardly any way to apply comprehensively this scheme across all polities for all cleavages. While it is applicable to the reduced left/right-schemata, it reaches limits if multiple dimensions are relevant. The Anti-EU-integration spectrum, for instance, encompasses both niche and mainstream-parties, which is why my study made use of the EP-factions as a grouping-element. For future research, which deals with more than one issue arena it, is more fruitful to consider parties along a difference in expected mandates being awarded: do voters expect a responsible, trustee-type relationship, or do electorates anticipate more flexible, responsive, trustee-behavior of parties. To mind these two styles of representation means building on vast theoretical and normative considerations – an asset that can guide empirical inquiry.

The second and third implications affect the study of representation in the EP: Doing so appropriately requires one to not consider EU-integration as single issue in isolation. Firstly, to really define a party's character on the EU-level involves both EU-positions and taking left/right positioning into consideration to account for the nationalistic tinge of many EU-critical stances. The limited levels of correlation between voters' and parties' EU-positions in my analysis might be partly due to the reduced scope of this study. Secondly, a future study that is concerned with the proportional aspects of representation of the EP has to take the composition and potential of

influence into consideration. To assess the EP's overall position means to consider the number of seats for each party and country within each faction and to weight respective stances accordingly. With this added layer of information, it becomes possible to estimate the aggregate position of the EP accurately. This assesses representation from a different perspective, where the whole Parliament is at the focus instead of parties as standalone components. This revised measure could help to bring the empirical findings in line with the anecdotal evidence of the upswing in Euroscepticism. It also would allow us to gauge disruptiveness of anti-polity tendencies in the EP and a way beyond national landscapes.

The results of the Brexit-vote have shown that a single-platform campaign denouncing the values of the European Union can be exploited successfully. The national political landscape in Britain was transformed lastingly due to mobilization based around Europe. The established pro-EU actors, led by Labour, failed to organize a weighty Remain-camp. This result is symptomatic of the party losing its trustee-role both in national as well as in EP-elections. In the last general election, Labour failed to win all but one seat in Scotland, once a heartland, and lost support in former strongholds in northern England to the populist UKIP-party. The unconditional, but unpassionate EU-endorsement seems to increasingly fail in mobilizing electorates – a trait that is not exclusive to Great Britain.

Pro-EU Center and Center-left parties all over Europe are losing influence. These established parties embody an understanding of politics as responsibility. But this trustee-style of principal-agent-relationship is becoming less ideal for increasingly manifold electorates. The heterogeneity of interests calls voters towards the election of delegates in their name. Claiming an output-oriented mandate with clear, issue-specific directives appears to be a promising style for parties, at least regarding the EU-cleavage. In turbulent times, however, major parties give stability to political systems. In the concrete case of the Brexit, the vote has already led to David Cameron handing over the helm for his successor to steer the ship into the new times. The most prolific Brexit-caller Nigel Farage utilized a similar logic. He put down his mandate as well, after he

accomplished his project, which he claimed was representative.⁴ Ultimately, the unsuccessful answer to the Brexit-campaigners could lead to a break-up of the Labour-Party. The party should have spearheaded the remain-camp, but their campaign turned out to be toothless and anemic. The vote to leave will breathe new life into the Scottish Independence project and likely lead to a new referendum. The turbulence around Europe were hardly ever as big as today. At the same time, it has never been as urgent to study the mobilization-potential of Euroskeptic boasting. The logic behind of anti-EU rhetoric is clear, however, its effects surprise even its loudest 'representative claimers'.

⁴ Saward (2006) provides an unique understanding of political actors as agents who provide *representative claims*: "The world of political representation is a world of claim-making rather than fact-adding." (p. 302). By this conception, representing becomes an act of performance in which the end is to establish a link between political actors and their constituents, rather than specific policy outputs.

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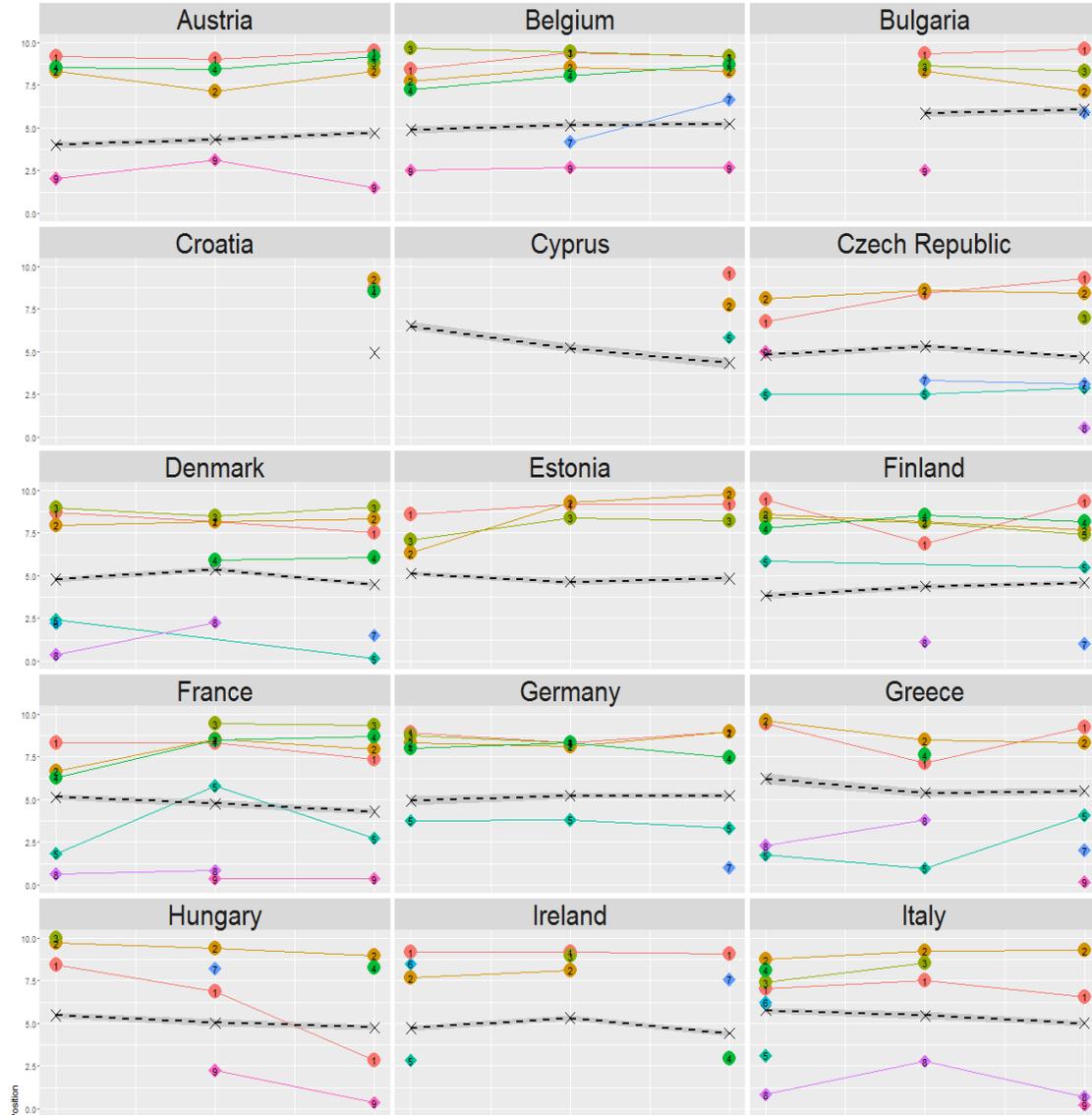
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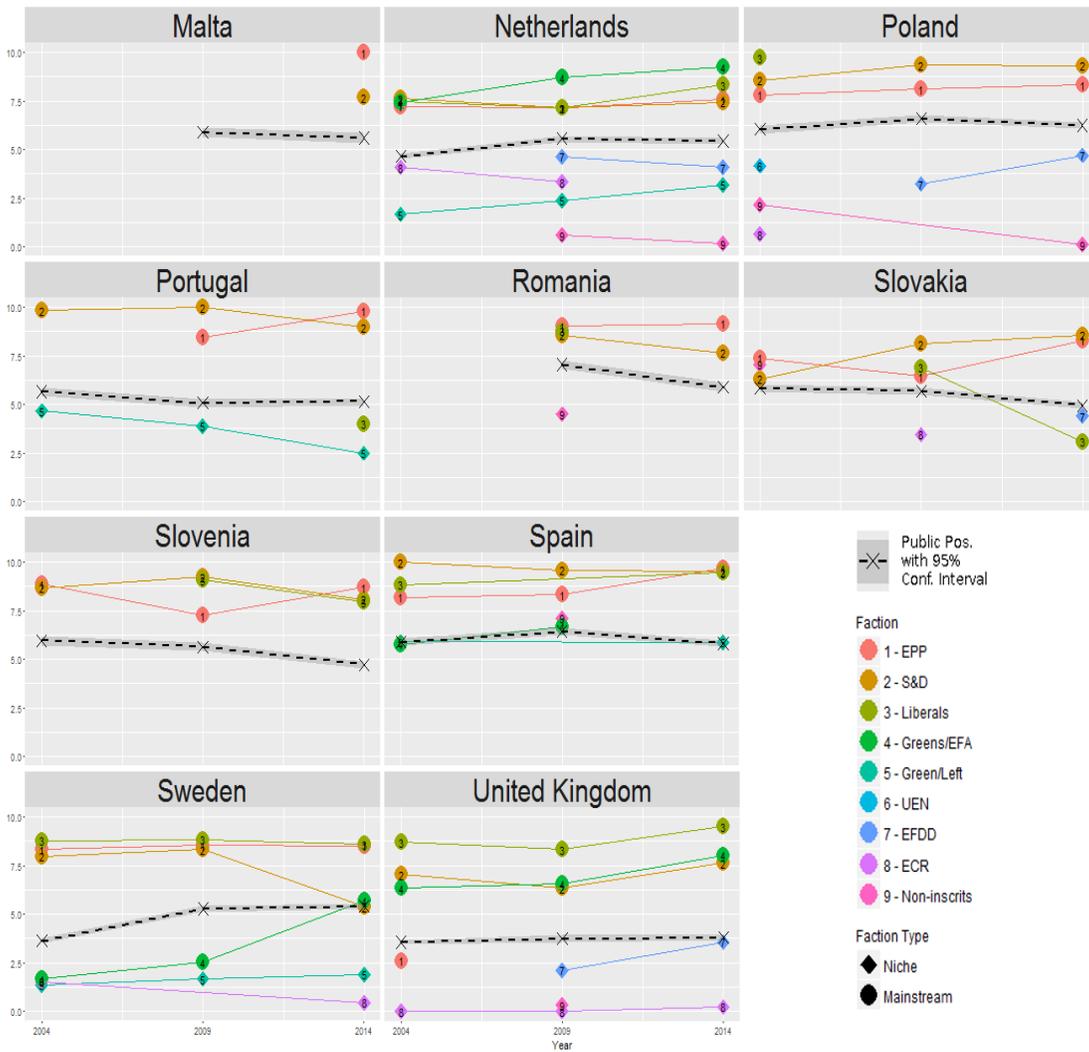
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Appendix A. Detailed EU-Stances by Country

EU-Stances of Publics and Factions by Countries

EU-stance for Public and Parties





Appendix B. Regression Details by Faction-Type

(Standard Errors in Parentheses)	Dependent Variable Change in Party-Position (n=200)
Non-Mainstream Dummy left	-0.421 (0.265)
Non-Mainstream Dummy right	0.030 (0.242)
Non-Mainstream Dummy Non-Inscrits	-0.219 (0.374)
Change in Public Position	0.064 (0.177)
Change in Supporter Position	-0.034 (0.110)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country	-0.020 (0.219)
Change in vote share between national elections	0.040*** (0.011)
Got-In-Government Dummy	-0.155 (0.202)
Dropped-out Government Dummy	-0.467** (0.217)
Government Participation Dummy	-0.197 (0.199)
Non-Mainstream Dummy left * Change Public	0.326 (0.438)
Non-Mainstream Dummy right * Change Public	0.204 (0.499)
Non-Mainstream Dummy Non-Inscrits * Change Public	-0.402 (0.997)
Non-Mainstream Dummy left * Change Supporters	0.174 (0.303)
Non-Mainstream Dummy right * Change Supporters	0.100 (0.265)
Non-Mainstream Dummy Non-Inscrits * Change Supporters	-0.250 (0.302)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country * Change Public	0.566 (0.570)
Euro-Heteronomy-Country * Change Supporters	-0.251 (0.338)
Constant	0.350*** (0.132)
R ²	0.142
Adjusted R ²	0.057
Note:	* p<0.1 ** p<0.05 *** p<0.01