DISSERTATION

Titel der Dissertation

"EU supporters at a disadvantage?
Party politicization of European integration in Austria"

Verfasserin

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1. Introduction

European integration has become a contentious issue in mass politics in recent years, and political actors seeking to advance the establishing of an ever closer union are increasingly challenged by Euroskeptic parties that openly turn against the EU project (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009; Szczerbiak/Taggart 2008). The latter find themselves in an advantageous position, since public support for European integration is in decline (Hooghe/Marks 2009). This also applies to the case of Austria, where Euroskpeticism is strongly represented both in the public sphere and in the party system (cf. Fallend 2008). Under conditions like that, pro-European parties are clearly at a disadvantage in the politicization of European integration and the latter can be expected to be strongly biased towards anti-EU sentiments. To what extent this assessment holds true will be explored in this dissertation, which aims at studying party politicization over the issue of Europe in Austrian domestic party contestation.

Scholarly reflection about the politicization of European integration constitutes a recent phenomenon. For several decades, Europe was viewed a non-issue, depoliticized by political parties and thus of no electoral relevance (cf. Mair 2000; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004). The process of further European integration did not arrest attention by the general public and the issue of Europe was considered irrelevant for domestic contestation between political parties. Scholars spoke of a permissive consensus characterized by a generally positive or indifferent evaluation of European integration among European citizens (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009). As a consequence, national governments were not monitored by the general public and thus not constrained in their EU related political decisions. However, the last two decades have witnessed a growing importance of public debate and party conflict about European integration all over Europe, and scholars refer to the post-Maastricht era as a period of constraining dissent, meaning that political authorities increasingly have to consider citizens' preferences in EU policy-making (Hooghe/Marks 2009). To put it differently, European integration has finally become politicized and thus relevant for domestic contestation between political parties all over Europe (ibid.).

Politicization fulfills an important function in democratic politics. Given the fact that decision-making within the complex, multi-level EU polity strongly differs from citizens' experience of

democracy at the member state level, the politicization of European integration may give rise to doubts about the accountability, responsiveness, and legitimacy of EU policy-making. By broadening the audience towards the public, it informs about the different political preferences and policy alternatives available in the party system. To the extent that voters react by considering the issue in their party choice in elections, politicization can lead to new party–voter alignments or reconfigurations in alliances for cooperation between political parties. Politicization thus is important for structuring political conflict (cf. de Wilde 2011; Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989). Against this background, a better understanding of the politicization of European integration based on a systematic and empirically grounded in-depth analysis is an important endeavor. This is the starting point of the present dissertation project, which seeks to provide a detailed and systematic analysis of party politicization of European integration for the Austrian case.

Despite increasing scholarly reference to politicization in the context of European integration research in recent years, the concept is rarely defined analytically, and systematic empirical evidence so far remains scarce (de Wilde 2011). The concept of politicization as applied in this study is understood as the extent to which the issue of Europe becomes part of competitive interaction between political parties expressed in public (cf. de Wilde 2011). The main objective of the dissertation is thus to investigate *why* and *how*—in terms of content—European integration becomes politicized in Austrian party contestation. Austria has been selected for the in-depth study of party politicization of European integration based on a purposive sampling approach, where the case selection is based on theoretical grounds in accordance with the nature of the research question (Silverman 2010: 141-46): The research purpose of this dissertation is to learn more about the mechanisms behind and the manifestation of the politicization of Europe, which presupposes politicization to actually appear. Not least due to the comparatively high level of public Euroskepticism, the strength of a Euroskeptic party firmly established in the party system, and strong anti-EU coverage in the yellow press, Austria is to be expected a suitable case for the study of party politicization of European integration. As indicated in the title of the dissertation, the specific conditions in the Austrian political environment also account for adverse conditions for parties supportive of European integration in the process of politicization. Due to these conditions, the politicization of Europe can be expected to manifest itself in a distinct way in

Austria, namely strongly driven by Euroskeptic parties' concerns about European integration. Given the fact that party Euroskepticism has become a monopoly of the radical right in Austria (Pelinka 2004), we can further expect that the debate will be biased towards questions of national sovereignty, self-ruling, and identity, which constitute key issues in radical right parties' policy program that perfectly fit with their anti-EU position (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Edwards 2009; Kriesi 2007).

The project at hand starts from a number of key assumptions that have strongly informed the analytical framework and research design:[1]

(1) The dissertation starts from the premise that the politicization of European integration should be studied at the domestic level, which still constitutes the decisive sphere of mass politics (cf. Kriesi et al. 2008; Hooghe/Marks 2009). The empirical core of the project therefore focuses on the role of the EU issue in national election campaigns, which represent a particularly suitable setting for studying issue-politicization in domestic party contestation (cf. Netjes/Binnema 2007; Kriesi 2007). The analysis of the electoral arena will be complemented by a smaller study of the European integration issue in decision-making arenas at the end of the dissertation.

(2) It is argued that for the study of issue-politicization, a distinction has to be made between the *potential* for conflict between political parties on the one hand and the actual and publicly visible *expression* of such conflict on the other hand, since party conflict over an issue can also remain latent, meaning that the issue does not become politicized (cf. de Wilde 2011). This distinction demands a careful selection of data capable of capturing the public expression of conflict over the issue (cf. Mair 2006c). The in-depth analysis of EU politicization in general election campaigns builds on a rich data corpus including election manifestos, TV debates between rival candidates broadcasted during the election, and election posters. For the additional study devoted to decision-making arenas, the empirical analysis builds on coalition agreements as well as on voting behavior and speeches on EU treaty ratification in parliament.

(3) Though the issue of Europe certainly differs from many other political issues due to its multi-faceted nature, its politicization is to be understood as an aspect of domestic

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[1] A more detailed discussion is provided in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the dissertation.

competition similar to contestation about any other issue. Therefore the empirical study is analytically embedded in comparative party research, in particular: the cleavage theory of party positioning towards European integration (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009) and the salience theory of party competition (cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006).

(4) Finally, the study of issue-politicization requires considering both components intrinsic to the concept of politicization, namely content and emphasis (cf. Laver 2001). The former refers to the substantive character of the debate about Europe and will be explored by means of a qualitative text analysis that not only distinguishes between evaluations of and claims-making towards European integration, but also considers different facets of European integration instead of using a general European integration category. Emphasis refers to the extent to which parties engage in the process of politicization and will be investigated by a combination of quantitative measures and qualitative indicators that also acknowledge interactive dynamics in party politicization of Europe.

The empirical findings based on the analysis of the Austrian case demonstrate that despite a disadvantageous starting position, pro-European parties engaged more actively in the politicization of Europe during the 1990s and also strongly shaped the content of the debate during that time, which is at odds with theoretical expectations derived from the literature. However, the temporal trend clearly indicates an increase in anti-EU, radical right party politicization of European integration that in recent years has clearly put its stamp on the debate about Europe in the Austrian electoral arena. This results in a bias of the debate towards questions of national sovereignty and identity, whereas the focus on particular policies and conflict about different policy alternatives clearly diminishes. The analysis of coalition agreements and EU treaty ratification parliament, however, shows that the impact of increasingly anti-EU politicization on decision-making remains limited so far. Still, we find strong indications for more politicization and polarization of conflict between parties about European integration, which is in line with the findings from the analysis of election campaigns.

Beside these results on the Austrian case, the dissertation also makes an important contribution to the broader study of party politicization of European integration: (a) It demonstrates the empirical relevance of an analytical distinction between the potential for conflict and the actual expression

of the latter. (b) By considering both the content and emphasis as constitutive to the concept of politicization, the dissertation provides an integrated approach to the study of politicization that points to the necessity of combining different strands of theories in order to provide for a better understanding of the manifestation of politicization as an empirical phenomenon. (c) The project at hand applies an innovative research design that considers a variety of different data and methods. This research strategy proves itself valuable, as indicated by the comparison of the empirical findings against other available data. (d) Though the analysis of election campaigns represents the empirical core of the study, the dissertation also makes an attempt to consider arenas of domestic decision-making. This is important insofar as it reveals that party response towards the EU issue can vary from one arena towards the other.

Structure of the dissertation:

Following the introduction, the next chapter will embed the topic of this dissertation within the broader field of EU studies and the role of political parties and party politics therein. It points to the initial neglect of parties in EU research (and the EU in party research), arguing that this was due to the observation that neither parties were particular important for understanding European integration, nor was European integration considered relevant for understanding domestic party politics. This scholarly view became increasingly challenged since the 1990s—and the main reason for this, as will be argued, is politicization. The chapter thus continues with a clarification of the concept of politicization. The concluding section puts forward the argument that the politicization of the EU issue should be studied at the domestic level.

Chapter 3 develops the analytical framework guiding the empirical study of this dissertation. Based on the state of the art about party politicization of European integration, the chapter clarifies how politicization will be addressed analytically in this dissertation. It distinguishes between two 'levels' for the empirical application of party politicization, namely the individual party level and the party system level; and it differentiates between content and emphasis as two constitutive elements to the concept of politicization. The chapter argues that content and emphasis need to be embedded in different theoretical perspectives, namely the cleavage approach and party competition theory. Building on this literature, the chapter develops the explanatory framework guiding the empirical analysis. It concludes with a note on case selection based on selection criteria derived from the literature.

The following chapter provides information on data and methods used in this dissertation (Chapter 4). It discusses different data used by scholars for the study of issue-salience and politicization and points to the limitation of different data types, before presenting the data selected and methods applied for the present study.

Chapter 5 introduces the Austrian case. It starts with a brief introduction of the Austrian political and party system and the country's way towards EU membership. This chapter provides information about the role of the EU issue in Austrian party and public discourse beyond the campaign arena. This is important for contextualizing the empirical findings within the broader political and public environment. The last section of this chapter takes up the explanatory factors for party politicization identified in Chapter 3 and collects information on their shape in the Austrian case.

Focusing on the EU issue in the Austrian electoral arena, Chapter 6 represents the main empirical part of this dissertation, exploring in detail how and why Austrian political parties politicize European integration in general election campaigns between 1995 und 2008. The chapter is organized in three sub-chapters, each focusing on a specific aspect of party politicization in the electoral arena and each developing a discrete argument. Each of the sub-chapters can therefore be read separately. Chapter 6.1 focuses on individual parties and analyzes how Austrian parties refer to European integration in their election manifestos, i.e. whether they consider it a threat or opportunity, strive for more or less integration, and employ a nationalist or European perspective in their claims for reform. It will be argued that parties' reference to European integration is to be understood in relation to a party's ideological profile. Party ideology is also the main reason why the EU issue constitutes a challenge to the policy program of some parties, but not to others. Chapters 6.2 and 6.3 more explicitly address party politicization of Europe during the campaigns by focusing on confrontations between rival candidates broadcasted on TV. Chapter 6.2 explores parties' emphasis on the EU issue during election campaigns. Building on the salience theory of party competition, it will be argued that party politicization of European integration is dependent on the particular opportunity structure the EU issue provides for individual parties' vote-seeking attempts. Chapter 6.3 concentrates on the substantive character of the debate in the politicization of the EU issue. It argues that the debate will be biased towards the concerns of those parties actively engaging in EU politicization. These concerns, in turn, can be connected to the broader ideological profile of a party. This chapter is theoretically embedded in the cleavage theory of

party positioning and explicitly considers the distinct sources of conflict intrinsic to the multi-faceted nature of the European integration issue.

Chapter 7 broadens the empirical scope of the dissertation towards the governmental and parliamentary arena. It explores how the issue of Europe appears (a) in coalition agreements between parties that diverge in their positioning towards European integration and (b) in parliamentary contestation about EU treaty ratification. The chapter argues that despite a tendency towards stronger politicization and polarization in the debate about Europe in these two arenas, the impact on decision-making so far remains limited.

The concluding chapter finally summarizes key points of the present study, highlights the most important empirical findings, and discusses the contribution of the dissertation to the broader study of party politicization of European integration.

2. European integration, national political parties, and politicization

2.1 Introduction

European integration is a complex, multi-faceted political phenomenon referring both to a process and a status (cf. Kohler-Koch et al. 2004; Bieling/Lerch 2005). The process-like aspect concerns the establishing of an ever closer union, as stated in the preamble of the EU treaty. As such, European integration is related to the development and transformation of the EU polity, its institutions and competences as well as its territorial boundaries. As a process, hence, European integration contains both a backwards and a prospective component, as it has yet no finality and is constantly developing. At the same time, European integration represents a status—though a currently transforming one: Through the process of integration, a system of governance has meanwhile developed at the EU level, featured with competences in a growing number of policy fields formerly regulated independently by member states at the domestic level. Together with the member states, this supranational political system produces policy output affecting European citizens to a growing extent and in an increasing number of policy areas, hence going beyond the removal of tariff barriers and the establishing of a single market as was the main focus in the early days of the European integration project. EU studies focus on different of these facets: European integration theories seek to explain the process of integration (cf. Haas 1958; Schmitter 1969; Lindberg/Scheingold 1970; Moravcsik 1993, 1995; Hooghe/Marks 2009); the Europeanization literature deals with the impact of European integration on the domestic level (cf. Olsen 2002; Radaelli 2000); and comparative party research is interested in the structure of conflict over the issue of Europe (cf. Marks/Steenbergen 2002, 2004).

The aim of this chapter is to embed the topic of the dissertation within the broader field of EU studies, respectively the role of political parties and party politics therein. It starts with a brief summary of why political parties have had a difficult start in EU research, more specifically in the theorizing of European integration and its impact on the domestic level. The next section provides a brief outline of important contributions from the last decade on European integration and national political parties. The following section deals with the concept of party politicization. It summarizes different domains for politicization, relates them to the EU issue, and outlines the conceptual understanding of party politicization guiding this dissertation. The section thus aims at

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delimiting the theoretical and empirical scope of the concept as employed in this study. The concluding section, finally, puts forward two core arguments that have guided this dissertation's analytical framework and research strategy. First, it argues that the study of politicization of the European integration issue should empirically be located at the domestic level. As will be outlined, this is because of the EU's character as a polity sui generis and its absence of a European sphere of mass politics. Second, it will discuss whether European integration is also to be considered a sui generis *issue* when it comes to party politicization, and argues that the answer is composed of both a Yes and a No.

2.2 The absence of parties in early EU research

Research on national political parties has had a difficult start in EU studies. In the theorizing of European integration and its impact on the domestic level, political parties were largely neglected, or, as John Gaffney put it in 1996, "very little of the literature on [European] integration is on political parties, and very little of the literature on political parties is on [European] integration" (Gaffney 1996: 1). First, national political parties were not considered relevant actors for understanding the process of European integration; second, they were not viewed to be directly affected by the establishing of a European system of governance; and third, the issue of Europe was not considered a source for domestic party contestation. Each of these three observations shall briefly be outlined in the following.

European integration theories focus on the *process* of European integration, i.e. the creating and establishing of the EU polity as a transfer of sovereignty from the level of autonomous and independent states towards a new political center, the EU (cf. Hass 1958). The theoretical debate about European integration has been largely dominated by two theories of European integration competing for supremacy in EU studies: neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. Without going into any detail on these two strands of theories[2], one thing shall be highlighted here, and that is the role ascribed to parties for shaping the process of integration: While scholars

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[2] For a summary of the former cf. Wolf (2005); see also Hass (1958); Schmitter (1969); Lindberg/Scheingold (1970); for a summary of the latter see Bieling (2005); see also Moravcsik (1993, 1995).

from both camps fundamentally differ in their understanding of regional integration[3], they share the perspective that partisan conflict is considered of no particular relevance for understanding why regional integration takes place. As highlighted by Hooghe and Marks (2009: 4), this is because both neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism view preferences as economic and focus on distributional bargaining between interest groups, leaving little room for party politics.

Different from integration theories, scholars interested in Europeanization do not seek to explain the process of integration, but ask about changes induced by the establishing of an EU system of governance. The literature offers a number of competing definitions (cf. Olsen 2002; Radaelli 2000) and scholars highlight that "[t]here is no single grand theory of 'Europeanization'" (Olsen 2002: 944). Still, the concept of Europeanization serves as an analytical framework connecting an ever-expanding field of research that is concerned with processes of change resulting from the establishing of the EU system of governance. Originally developed in the study of policy or institutional change, such change is viewed to be triggered by a misfit between policies or the functioning of institutions at the domestic level on the one hand, and EU rules or norms on the other (cf. Börzel 2005). This misfit then causes some sort of adjustment. Similar to European integration theories, national political parties have long been neglected in Europeanization research—and for good reasons. As summarized by Robert Ladrech in a review article from 2009, "unlike domestic policies and institutions, Europe does not 'hit' parties in a direct manner", meaning that national parties are not obliged to adjust to any legal pressures imposed by the EU (Ladrech 2009: 8). Hence despite the establishing of a European system of governance, political parties continue to operate within the domestic arena of contestation. For a long time, the latter was viewed as largely unaffected by European integration (cf. Mair 2000). As will be shown in the next section, however, this diagnosis fundamentally changed during the last decade.

Finally, European integration could also be relevant for national parties as a contested *issue* in national party system. However, also in this domain there was long seen no connection between European integration and parties, because Europe was considered a non-issue for domestic

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[3] Simplifying the argument, neofunctionalists view regional integration as the result of functional pressures and see transnational organizations and the establishing supranational institutions as the drivers of the integration process that, once started, leads to spill-over in other policy domains; intergovernmentalists, on the other hand, understand regional integration as the outcome of bargaining between national governments, understood as carriers of geopolitical or economic interests (see Hooghe/Marks 2009 for a brief summary).

contestation. In the literature, this diagnosis was related to three interrelated circumstances accounting for the low importance of European integration in domestic mass politics: First, scholars argued that the EU issue did not attract public attention because of the nature of the EU's policy competences, which would be low-salience and non-redistributive policies (Moravcsik 2002). The notion of the EU as a regulatory state, introduced by Majone (1994), aptly summarizes this perspective.[4] Second, scholars argued that the process of European integration was based on a permissive consensus amongst European citizens (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970), characterized by a generally positive or indifferent evaluation of integration and low issue-salience. To put it differently, citizens did not care much about the EU issue and thus passively supported governments' action in promoting further integration. Third, political parties depoliticized the European integration issue in order not to threaten the established structure of contestation. By taking moderate positive positions towards integration, mainstream parties did not offer policy alternatives and thus hollowed out contestation about Europe (cf. Marks 2004). Writing in 2000, Peter Mair states that "Europe fails to impact on national party systems because it is held at one remove by the competing political leaderships" and "it is not something that requires the active engagement of, or consultation with, the electorate at large" (Mair 2000: 48). However, this view became increasingly challenged in in recent years. As Hooghe and Marks (2004: 6) put it, "European integration has disrupted established patterns of democratic competition in the member states".

In conclusion, early EU research did not pay much attention to the role of national political parties. The last decade, however, witnessed a clear shift in the scholarly assessment of the mutual importance of European integration and national political parties. This will be discussed in the next section that briefly summarizes the state of the art on national political parties and European integration.

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[4] Though this view has been heavily disputed in the academic debate about whether or not the EU suffers from a democratic deficit (see Follesdal/Hix 2006 for a summary), it has been an important point of reference in the literature.

2.3 Climbing the research agenda: political parties and European integration

Following the same structure that organized the previous section, this section summarizes important contributions in (1) European integration theory, (2) Europeanization studies, and (3) research on domestic party contestation that pay explicit attention to national political parties in studying European integration or to European integration for studying domestic party politics.

In European integration theory, the most important contribution with a view to the role of parties comes from Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2009). In their postfunctionalist theory of European integration, they argue that for understanding the course of European integration, scholars need to take into account the question of politicization and the "*substantive character* of the debate over regional integration" (ibid. 2). They start their argument by summarizing the basic ideas of the two most influential theories of regional integration competing for supremacy in EU studies—neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism—and by pointing to two commonalities of these two different strands of theoretical thinking: Both nefunctionalists and intergovernmentalists understood preferences as economic and focused on distributional bargaining among interest groups (ibid. 4), leaving little room for partisan conflict and other than economic foundations for preferences. However, if looking at the period since 1990, Hooghe and Marks argue "that one must probe beyond the economic preferences of interest groups to understand the course of European integration" (ibid. 5). Similar to neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist thinking, their postfunctionalist theory identifies "a mismatch between efficiency and the existing structure of authority" (ibid. 2) as the decisive source for regional integration. However, "we make no presumption that the outcome will reflect functional pressures [...]. Political conflict makes all the difference, and that conflict, we argue, engages communal identities" (ibid.). Their core argument is that understanding the process of European integration since the 1990s requires an examination of the mobilization of identity. The authors continue by developing a model describing the process of domestic politicization (ibid. 8-9): The process starts with a reform impetus, leading to issue creation, i.e. political parties responding to pressure from public opinion or interest groups. The issue can then be dealt with in the mass arena or in the interest group arena. Arena choice is shaped both by parties and arena rules, i.e. for instance whether referenda on EU questions are mandatory or constitutionally prohibited. Finally, the arena in which the issue finally is negotiated is decisive for the conflict structure.

Hooghe and Marks argue that in the interest group arena, conflict will follow a distributional logic; once the issue enters the mass arena, however, conflict may arise both on questions of distribution and identity. Unlike earlier theories, thus, the post-functionalist theory of European integration takes into account party preferences and public opinion towards the issue of Europe, which is understood as being increasingly politicized.

Although rather late, the Europeanization framework has also been applied to research on national political parties (cf. Ladrech 2009 for an overview). In this field, scholars usually refer to the definition offered by Robert Ladrech (2002), who states that "Europeanization has something to do with the penetration of the European dimension into national arenas of politics and policymaking" (ibid. 391). European integration itself is considered an independent variable that "influences the operating arenas, or environments, of national political parties, and the Europeanization of parties is consequently a dependent variable" (ibid. 395). Analytically, the concept of Europeanization is seen as "an opportunity to systematically analyze political parties as organizations responding to the effects of European integration upon their primary operating arena, the national political system" (ibid. 390). The focus is therefore on adaptation or change at the national level, for which European integration serves as the key explanation. Ladrech (ibid.) presents five areas worth investigating for evidence on party Europeanization, namely policy or programmatic change, organizational change, patterns of competition, party-government relations, and relations beyond the national party system. In all of these areas, a vivid field of scholarly research has emerged in the last decade.[5] In all of these domains, however, European integration won't serve as a sufficient explanation for party adaptation and programmatic change, which seems to be more influenced (or strongly mediated) by domestic factors related to party competition (cf. Ladrech 2009).[6] Scholars have recently considered the explanatory limits of the Europeanization concept for understanding party behavioral change in the domestic context and started to include additional explanatory factors coming from classical comparative party

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[5] E.g. Ladrech (2007) and the contributions in Poguntke et al. (2007) on party organizational change; Cole 2001, Aylott 2002, Binnema 2002, Bomberg 2002, Kritzinger/Michalowitz 2005, Baun et al. 2006 on programmatic change; Ladrech (2007) and Mair (2000, 2006c) on indirect impact affecting the power relations within parties, the room for maneuver for national governments, and the devaluation of electoral competition. The list provided here of course only represents a selection.

[6] As criticized by Ladrech (2009), this is also the reason why a large number of studies embedding their research question within the Europeanization framework actually provide little information on how *European integration* functioned as a driver of party change, but rather explore party behavior *related to* European integration (e.g. party positioning).

research (e.g. party goals and leadership strategies; cf. Ladrech 2009; Lefkofridi 2008; Bomberg 2002). These efforts are certainly useful, since they acknowledge the political environment within which national parties operate, which, as has been argued previously, is still largely defined and determined domestically (cf. Ladrech 2002, 2009). However, the necessity to shift attention to domestic factors as drivers for party change—as opposed to European integration as the main source for change—leaves room for doubting the *additional explanatory value* provided by the Europeanization framework in the case of party research. This brings us back to the initial diagnosis that "the EU's direct impact is upon the domestic political environment in which parties operate, not on parties *per se*" (Ladrech 2009: 8). Whether or not parties respond to such potential changes in their environment, however, is largely dependent on factors endogenous to parties (e.g. leadership change or parties' specific organizational structure) or related to party competition dynamics.

This also applies to the subject of this dissertation, i.e. party politicization of European integration, which is certainly related to the process of integration—after all, without European integration, there would be nothing to politicize. However, as will be argued in this dissertation, understanding why parties politicize the issue of Europe requires looking at dynamics of domestic competition between parties and not searching for any direct EU impact. Ladrech (2009: 12) makes a similar point when highlighting that "the tendency for parties to downplay or even suppress the EU as an issue is again a decision that rests with party leaders". Though over time this suppression could lead to latent pressure resulting in adaptation of party behavior, this will be a reaction towards changes in public opinion or other parties' behavior, and not a response to any direct EU impact (ibid. 8). This nicely illustrates why the present study is not embedded theoretically in the Europeanization framework, but in comparative party research (see Chapter 3). The latter is also the point of departure in the third scholarly domain focusing on European integration and national political parties, to which we will attend to next.

The third strand of research focuses predominantly on the question of whether conflict over the European issue is related to the domestic structure of political contestation, i.e. the left-right dimension. The established structure of conflict emanated from the social cleavages in society (i.e. the class cleavage, the religious cleavage, the center-periphery cleavage) that found their expression in European party systems (cf. Lipset/Rokkan 1967). Scholars argue that these

cleavages are important for understanding how parties respond to new issues (cf. Sartori 1969; Bartolini/Mair 1990; Kitschelt 1997). Following the cleavage perspective, political parties can thus be expected "to interpret new issues in light of existing cleavages such as the Left/Right ideological dimension" (Marks/Steenbergen 2002: 881), because anything else would be costly because of path dependencies (ibid.). Hence party ideology will constrain how parties respond to new issues such as European integration, which have not been constitutive to the establishing of the left-right structure in the developing of European party systems. To put it differently, one would expect party location on the left-right dimension to structure party positioning towards European integration (Marks/Steenbergen 2002, 2004). However, the issue of Europe might not perfectly fit in with the left-right dimension, which is why different scholars suggested different variants for the relation between the European dimension (representing party positioning towards European integration) and the left-right dimension—some rejecting any connection of the two, others providing distinct versions of a relationship. According to Marks and Steenbergen (2002, 2004), four different approaches—or, in their terminology, models—characterizing the relationship of the European integration and the left-right dimension can be distinguished: The *international relations model* argues that contestation over European integration is structured by a single pro- vs. anti-integration dimension, with no relevance of and relation to the left-right dimension.[7] Accordingly, conflict over European integration is viewed to fundamentally differ from domestic contestation. The *Hix-Lord model* (Hix/Lord, 1997; Hix 1999a, b) identifies two relevant, but unrelated dimensions, structuring conflict over European integration, i.e. left-right and national sovereignty. Both are important and represent different aspects: The left-right dimension reflects conflict over the distribution between different functional groups, whereas the national sovereignty dimensions is about distribution between territorial groups. According to this view, several combinations of positioning towards European integration are possible on these two dimensions, resulting in an orthogonal coexistence of the two dimensions. The *Tsebelis-Garret* or *regulation model* (Tsebelis/Garrett 2000), on the other hand, states that these two dimensions—i.e. the functional or left-right and the territorial dimension—are fused into a single

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[7] Marks and Steenbergen (2002) summarize this model based on intergovernmentalist and neofunctionalist integration theories (cf. Moravcsik 1998; Haas 1958). Scholars from the realist tradition highlight the importance of governments and national interest for political contestation over European integration; liberal intergovernmentalists focus on governments and national producer groups as well as costs and benefits for trade; neofunctionalists point to functional pressure in a dynamic process of problem-solving, spillover and learning, mediated through national coalitions and supranational entrepreneurs (Marks/Steenbergen 2002: 833-4).

dimension. This means that contestation over European integration is completely absorbed by or incorporated into the left-right dimensions. Finally, the *Hooghe-Marks model* (Hooghe/Marks 1999, 2001) assumes a relationship between the two dimensions, though not their fusion. The argument here is that some aspects of European integration are absorbed into the left-right dimension, while others are not. From the latter cases, a distinct dimension of contestation emerges that is structured along nationalism vs. supranationalism, where conflict is about regulated capitalism versus market liberalism. Recently, however, Hooghe and Marks have modified their approach and now argue that questions of identity have to be taken into account (Hooghe/Marks 2009, see above).

How do these four approaches fit with empirical findings about party positioning towards European integration? A large number of comparative empirical studies show that there is indeed a relation between parties' left-right location and EU positioning, thus challenging the international relations model that suggests the European integration issue to differ fundamentally from parties' left-right concerns. This relation, however, is not a linear one, which means that party positioning towards European integration is not identical with left-right location (thus challenging the regulation model described above). Rather, it takes the form of an "inverted U curve" (Hooghe et al. 2002): Parties on the margins of the left-right dimension (i.e. holding extreme positions on either side of scale) tend to be against European integration, while parties in the ideological mainstream are consistently supportive.[8] The inverted U curve clearly depicts that positioning towards Europe is not chaotic or mainly a question of national peculiarities, but reflects a similar pattern in various EU member states. This pattern can be explained both with reference to cleavage theory and rational choice theory, and both arguments can be found in the literature (Hooghe et al. 2002).

While this strand of research has definitely contributed significantly to our understanding of party conflict over European integration, it has two weaknesses. First, the European integration issue is often conceptualized as a single—and very general—pro- and anti-integration category (but see Hooghe et al. 2002). While suitable for cross-national generalization, it gives no insight on the substantive meaning of this category or dimension, i.e. the way parties refer to Europe when picking up the issue. Second, scholars hardly differentiate between positioning and contestation,

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[8] Indeed, the picture slightly changes when unfolding positions along different policy fields and considering developments of European integration towards regulation (cf. Hooghe et al. 2002). However, the inverted U curve is still viewed as an appropriate general description of parties and their EU-stances.

operationalizing the latter as the *potential* for conflict resulting from inter-party differences in positioning. While reasonable with respect to data availability and parsimony, this approach cannot provide information on whether the issue of Europe becomes actually part of contestation among parties within the national political discourse. Hence, as Peter Mair (2006d: 162) put it, scholars need to pay more attention to "how Europe actually plays in national political discourse, as well as [to] the way in which it is conceived: is Europe usually cited as a constraint by parties at the national level (...), or is it seen as an opportunity, or do these parties scarcely cite it at all". This is at the core of this dissertation's research interest directing our focus to the politicization of the European integration issue.

2.4 The politicization of European integration: clarifying the concept

Considering the initial neglect of parties in EU studies and the neglect of Europe in party research, why is it that the last decade suddenly brought forth studies on political parties and European integration in an ever growing number? This is due to changes in the importance of European integration for mass politics. European integration seems to affect domestic contestation to a growing extent and has become a source for party choice among voters in national elections (cf. Tillman 2004; de Vries 2007b; Schoen 2010). Scholars argue that the growing relevance of European integration for mass politics is related to the fact political entrepreneurs started to pick up the issue of Europe for mobilizing voters, i.e. they began to politicize what had previously been considered a non-issue for domestic competition (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Wilde 2011).

Though we find increasing scholarly reference to politicization in the context of European integration research (cf. de Wilde 2011 for an overview), Pieter de Wilde (2011: 560) rightly criticizes that "the concept is rarely defined resulting in ambiguity as to its exact meaning, its relevance to our understanding of European integration, and regarding possible ways in which we may extend our knowledge of this process and its product". Since politicization is at the core of this dissertation's research interest, clarification of the concept is essential and a precondition for empirical exploration of the phenomenon.

Scholars define politicization differently—if they provide a conceptual definition at all: Some refer to it as a synonym for the emerging of politics or contestation in partisan terms, others use it

as an equivalent for the public saliency of an issue, and still others understand politicization as the process whereby an issue becomes subject to governmental deliberation when it previously has not been (cf. Hix 2006; Green-Pedersen 2011; Hay 2007; Papadopoulos/Magnette 2010). In the context of European integration research, Pieter de Wilde (2011) provides a very useful systematization of different conceptual understandings of the term as used in the literature by distinguishing between the politicization of *institutions*, *decision-making processes*, and *issues*. First, the politicization of institutions refers to the increasing importance of political parties and partisan conflict within institutions. It is thus the triumph of ideological dimensions of conflict over territorial or sectoral dimensions for structuring political institutions. Scholars find evidence for an increase in the politicization of several EU institutions—including the European Commission, which was long considered a strongly bureaucratized institution largely decoupled from party politics.[9] Second, the politicization of decision-making processes describes a development away from technocratic decision-making. It thus refers to the predominance of politicians rather than bureaucrats or non-elected experts in the decision-making process (ibid. 562). Finally, the politicization of issues refers to their contentiousness, which might also result in an increase of their electoral importance. De Wilde (2011: 562) argues that "whether an issue is politicized or not and deemed important by the electorate can indirectly be assessed by studying the extent to which it is publicly debated". While the politicization of an issue can be short-lived and linked to specific events, it can also be more durable.

De Wilde states that these different manifestations of politicization are part of "an encompassing process which concerns the input of political demands into the EU political system" (ibid. 563). He therefore finally defines the politicization of European integration "as an increase in polarization of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU" (ibid. 566-7).[10] According to de Wilde (ibid.), thus, politicization implies three interrelated components. First, opinions among an issue must be polarized, including not only latent differences in opinions but some sort of conflict. Second, these diverse opinions or conflicts must be voiced publicly, resulting in an intensified debate. Finally, the public must respond to the dispute on the issue in one or the other way. This starts with the public following the debate and may finally lead to an emotional attachment.

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[9] For a brief summary of this literature see de Wilde (2011: 561-2).
[10] For similar though less comprehensive and systematic definitions cf. Schmitter (1969); Hooghe/Marks (2009); Green-Pedersen (2011).

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Though I agree with de Wilde's (2011) argument that the manifestation of politicization at different loci or in different arenas—i.e. institutions, decision-making process, and issues—are related and thus part of a larger process of EU politicization, the empirical scope of this dissertation is explicitly limited to the third form of politicization, i.e. the politicization of the European integration *issue*. As de Wilde rightfully points out, issue-politicization can involve different societal actors (ibid. 568). In this study, however, the focus is on one specific actor group, namely national political parties. The latter are decisive actors for putting a new issue on the political agenda, framing the public debate, and shaping people's preferences about the issue.

2.5 European integration: a sui generis *issue* for the study of party politicization?

An important point of departure guiding the analytical framework and research strategy of this dissertation is the conviction that the politicization of the European integration issue should be studied at the domestic level and, in particular, in general election campaigns. Talking about European integration, this may cause amazement, since a focus on European Parliamentary election campaigns or other more explicitly European events would certainly be more obvious. I argue, however, that there are a number of convincing reasons for why the domestic sphere of political contestation, and national election campaigns in particular, deserve our attention when it comes to the politicization of European integration (for similar claims cf. Kriesi 2007; Netjes/Binnema 2007).

This is related to the structure and functioning of the EU polity, which is described in the literature as *sui generis*: It is characterized by a complicated system of governance, with no clearly identifiable government and no executive electoral arena (cf. Follesdal/Hix 2006). The EU further lacks intermediary structures such as a European public sphere, civil society, and party system (cf. de Vreese 2007; Finke 2007; Lord 2010). Hence despite an enormous and growing interdependence between the EU and its member states constraining the latter's room of maneuver in policy-making, mass politics, political contestation, and the communication of politics are still largely concentrated at the national level, thus reflecting the spatial or territorial boundaries of EU member states.

Election campaigns can be described as periods of intensified public debate about and concentrated public attention towards politics (cf. Lengauer/Vorhofer 2010), which renders them important focal points for issue-politicization. Due to the lack of an EU executive electoral arena and thus the downgrading of European Parliament elections to *second-order national elections*, (Reif/Schmitt 1980) general elections at the member state level continue to be the *first-order elections* all over Europe (cf. Marsh/Mikhaylov 2010). Equally important, national elections are decisive for the creation of national governments, which not only hold office at the domestic level, but are also involved in EU decision-making: Represented in the Council of the EU and the European Council, national governments are decisive actors for shaping EU policies and, in particular, the course of European integration, which makes national general elections an important channel for representation within the EU polity (cf. Mair 2005). European Parliament elections constitute the second channel for democratic representation within the EU polity. However, since EP elections by definition address the EU level, attention towards the issue of Europe by political parties during EP election campaigns would tell us little about the politicization of the issue beyond this specific setting, since parties are expected precisely to discuss Europe (even if this is not always their focus). This is different for general election campaigns: Whether or not the issue of Europe becomes politicized during these events provides a good indication for the importance of the issue in public and domestic party politics.

Taken together, general election campaigns serve as a particularly suitable setting for studying the politicization of the European integration issue: First, they represent episodes of intensified public attention towards politics; second, they take place at the national level, which still delimits mass politics and communication; third, together with EP elections, they function as a channel for representation within the EU.

This section started with a short reference to the multi-faceted nature of European integration as a political phenomenon. This characteristic could also make the issue of Europe distinct from other issue domains when it comes to its politicization. Is European integration perhaps to be considered an *issue* sui generis for party politicization—just as the EU is considered a polity sui generis? The argument put forward in this dissertation is that in part it is—and in part it is definitely not.

Three characteristic features make the issue of Europe different from many other political issues. First, it is no classic domestic issue, but no foreign policy issue either. This means that conflict is about things that are clearly out of exclusive domestic reach, but need to be approached at the European supranational or intergovernmental level, which renders alternative positions between parties less weighty in practical terms. For parties in power this also means that they may have to justify decisions taken at the EU level that could actually be far away from their own ideal policy position. Second, the multi-faceted nature of European integration contains quite distinct sources for political disagreement, which can be related to political integration, economic integration, or EU policy output in the growing number of policy domains where the EU has acquired policy competence over the course of time. As mentioned previously, the EU issue thus challenges the established left-right dimension, which means that a party's response to European integration is likely to vary for the different facets of integration. Finally, the issue of Europe not only cuts across the left-right axis, but also cuts across the boundary of policy fields, since it does not represent a policy field in the first place. This makes the issue of Europe much more complex compared to other policy domains—and therefore also more difficult to communicate.

Thus assuming that the complexity of European integration will be reflected in the politicization of the issue, we can therefore expect the latter to manifest on different dimensions of conflict; and we would expect parties to hold different positions on some or each of these different dimensions.

Despite these characteristics of the European integration issue, however, party politicization is still a question of domestic party competition. Hence the argument put forward in this dissertation is that though European integration (i.e. the process) is not predominantly determined domestically, its politicization largely is. In particular, it is to be seen as the product of competitive strategic interaction between parties seeking to address voters. In order to understand the dynamics in the politicization of European integration hence one need to look at the different opportunity structures the issue of Europe offers to individual parties. This is related to their overall policy program or party ideology a party, the behavior of its competitors, public opinion towards the issue of Europe etc. Therefore, the analytical framework of this dissertation is embedded in the literature on cleavages and party competition, as will be described in more detail in the following.

3. Party politicization of European integration: towards an analytical framework

3.1 Introduction

Having clarified the conceptual understanding of politicization in the previous chapter, the aim of this chapter is to develop the analytical framework guiding the empirical study. The chapter starts with providing a brief state of the art on the study of EU politicization. The next section focuses on party politicization as explanandum by outlining the different components intrinsic to the concept of issue-politicization, namely content and emphasis. It will be argued that these two components need to be distinguished analytically as well as empirically: The content of politicization strongly relates to party positioning and should therefore be embedded theoretically in the cleavage perspective. Emphasis, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which the issue is politicized by different parties; it thus strongly related to the concept of salience and should therefore be viewed from the perspective of party competition. This section also makes a distinction between two levels for the empirical application of party politicization, namely the individual party level and the party system level. The following section then introduces the theories of cleavages and party competition and relates them to the study of party politicization of European integration. Building on these literatures, the next section summarizes the explanatory framework within which the empirical analysis is embedded. The last section summarizes facilitating conditions for the rising of EU politicization that served as criteria in the selection of the Austrian case.

3. 2 Party politicization of European integration: state of the art

When scholars observed that European integration became more and more prominent as a political issue in public discourse, public opinion, and party conflict, this caused vivid scholarly debate and empirical research addressing the politicization of Europe. While there is large consensus in the literature that the times of the permissive consensus (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970) are past behind us, there is considerable dissent on whether the politicization of European integration is either to be seen positively as contributing to strengthening the electoral linkage between citizens and political elites or as a serious threat to the integration project (see Papado-

poulos/Magnette 2010 for a summary). Most prominently within the former camp, Simon Hix (2006) argues that politicization would translate EU politics into a left-right structure similar to the one decisive for politics at the national level and absorbing the pro-anti European integration dimension, thus also alleviating Euroskepticism. In contrast, Bartolini argues that the EU polity would not be capable of such politicization, which could turn out to be "a medicine worse than the disease" (2006: 47). According to him, this is because politicization can be expected to spill over from so called isomorphic issues (e.g. welfare, education or immigration policy) to constitutive issues about the EU polity as such (i.e. its competences, boundaries etc.), which are not transformable into left-right conflicts and challenge the territorial and constitutional base of the EU polity. Though Hix and Bartolini primarily address the politicization of EU *institutions*, i.e. the increasing importance of party politics within institutions of EU decision-making, this cannot be seen in isolation from the politicization of the *issue* of European integration (cf. de Wilde 2011), which takes place, as argued in the previous chapter, at the national level that still represents the decisive sphere of mass politics and communication.

The passion of the debate about the virtues and downsides of politicizing European integration can be explained with the importance of these processes for the future prospects and further development of the EU project. When political entrepreneurs start politicizing EU issues, this cannot only result in more effective democratic representation within the EU polity, but could also lead to shifting public support for European integration, since parties also serve as cues to voters' policy preferences.[11] In turn, the more salient the European integration issue becomes for voters' party choice, the more governmental actors "must look over their shoulders when negotiating European issues" (Hooghe/Marks 2009: 5). Hence, the politicization of European integration could ultimately even alter the course of integration. Whether viewed as the "right or wrong sort of medicine", to borrow from the title of the Hix–Bartolini debate (cf. Hix 2006; Bartolini 2006), the politicization of Europe at least seems to be a process that once started cannot easily be reversed.

Evidently, the normative debate about the virtues and downsides of EU politicization has an important empirical component: Hix and Bartolini's diverging conclusions are to a large extent based on different expectations about how the politicization will manifest itself in substantive

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[11] To be precise, the elite-mass linkage seems to be reciprocal in its nature, i.e. parties both respond to and shape voters' preferences (cf. Steenbergen et al. 2007, Ray 2003).

terms. Will it translate into left-right conflict about different policy alternatives, as claimed by Hix (2006)? Or will it challenge the territorial and constitutional base of the EU polity, as argued by Bartolini (2006)? These are empirical questions that need to be explored empirically. This requires a clear research program, including the formulating of theoretically driven hypotheses. In recent years, important scholarly contributions have been brought forth in this respect. These will be briefly summarized in the following.

While the *process* of European integration so far has been largely shaped by mainstream governing parties, who tend to support integration, the *politicization* of European integration has not: Several authors state that the politicization of integration is driven by those parties that reject the EU and integration (cf. van der Eijk/Franklin 2004; Kriesi 2007; de Vries/Edwards 2009; Hooghe/Marks 2009). As Erik Tillman (2004: 605) puts it, it seems "that there are more votes to be won in opposition to European integration than in support". Hence, a guiding assumption in much scholarly work is that Euroskeptic parties generally have an advantage in politicizing the issue of Europe. Summarizing the literature cited above, we arrive at three core arguments for this presumed advantage: First, the orthogonality of the EU issue to the left-right dimension makes it difficult for mainstream parties to emphasize the issue because of unpredictable reactions of the electorate. Second, Euroskeptic parties mostly are parties located at the fringes of domestic party systems[12] and are thus more often to be found in opposition than in government. Different from governing parties, these parties do not have to take responsibility for EU policy outcomes and the course of integration[13], leaving them with more room to criticize previous and current developments related to European integration.[14] Finally, under conditions of increasing public Euroskepticism, it is clear that Euroskeptic parties have an advantage over pro-European (mainstream), since the former are in line with the increasingly Euroskeptic majority view.

Though party Euroskepticism is found both among the radical left and the radical or new populist right, scholars hypothesize that it will in particular be the latter that politicize Europe (Kriesi

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[12] Recall the figure of the inverted U curve (Hooghe et al. 2002).

[13] Governing parties are further constrained by the fact that they have only limited capacity to realize their own EU policy agenda because of the complex decision-making system at the EU level, leaving enough room for their domestic competitors to criticize the outcome of EU summits, treaty negotiations and the like.

[14] Some scholars further argue that opposition parties have a general structural advantage in shaping the party system agenda by putting new issues on it (cf. Green-Pedersen/Mortensen 2010). Government parties, on the other hand, have to respond to all sorts of issues that are salient on the party system agenda, since they are required to offer policy solutions to any societal problem identified by relevant political and societal actors. This leaves them with less room to actively and continuously promote issues they wish to politicize.

2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009). This is related to a broader argument about the emerging of a new, non-economic conflict dimension in the last decades that structures political competition in Western European countries to a growing extent (cf. Kriesi 2010). This new politics dimension highlights the importance of different values and thus significantly differs from the classic left-right dimension associated with economic interest. It is labeled differently in the literature, and also conceptualized differently (Hooghe et al 2002: 976). With a view to the EU issue, this conflict dimension gives rise to concerns about *political* integration rather than economic integration or the outcome of EU policies. Hooghe et al. (2002) show that there is a powerful connection between parties' location on this new politics dimension and party positioning towards European integration, much stronger than on the economic left-right dimension. Conceptualizing the new dimension along the poles *gal* (green/alternative/libertarian) and *tan* (traditional/authoritarian/nationalist), they find a particularly strong connection with Euroskepticism for the tan-side of this dimension, where radical, nationalist, and new populist right parties are to be found (ibid.). These parties "reject European integration because they believe it weakens national sovereignty, diffuses self-rule and introduces foreign ideas", thus opposing European integration for "it undermines national community" (Hooghe/Marks 2009: 17). Given the importance of the new politics dimension—and the tan-side in particular—for structuring party response towards European integration, Hooghe and Marks (2009) claim that the issue of Europe reinforces the non-economic dimension of conflict. However, it does so in the sense of pre- rather than post-material values, i.e. it raises concerns about group membership and identity (ibid. 18). This would be even more the case the more European integration will involve non-economic issues or policy domains. The politicization of European integration, they continue, is therefore expected to be most pronounced in countries with strong parties on the tan-side of the political spectrum, i.e. radical, nationalist, or new populist right parties (ibid.).

Hanspeter Kriesi and colleagues go one step further and argue that the new conflict dimension in fact constitutes a new *cleavage* (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). A cleavage is distinct from the notion of division or conflict as indicated in the term of conflict dimensions; it combines three characteristics: social structure, an awareness of group membership, and the organizational expression of both (cf. Mair 2006a; Kriesi 2010). Kriesi (2007) suggests understanding the mobilization of the European issue as part of a broader structural conflict transforming the party systems in Western Europe, namely conflict between the winners and losers of globalization. He

conceptualizes this new cleavage as expressing "conflict between 'integration' (into the European or global community) and 'demarcation' (of the national community)" (Kriesi 2007: 85; see also Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). This conflict contains both an economic *and* a cultural dimension. While both are also important with a view to the EU issue, Kriesi (2007: 86) highlights the particular importance of the cultural dimension in this respect. Thus similar to Hooghe and Marks (2009), who talk about tan-parties, Kriesi claims that the politicization of European integration will be driven by parties on the demarcation side of the new cleavage, in his terms liberal conservative, national conservative, and new populist right parties, "which make the most explicit appeals to the fears of the losers from denationalization" (Kriesi 2007: 88).[15]

As indicated by this summary, scholars state that the politicization of European integration is primarily driven by radical, nationalist or new populist right parties that mobilize against political integration on a cultural conflict dimension. The latter reflects these parties concerns about national sovereignty and identity, which link the issue of Europe to the broader policy program of these parties, e.g. the issue of immigration. If politicization were driven by radical left parties, however, this would reinforce the economic dimension of conflict, which fits in with radical left parties' rejection of market liberalization and the primacy of market interest. Hence the substance of conflict in the politicization of European integration will be dependent on Euroskeptics' party family. As summarized by Hooghe and Marks (2009), "[w]here the challenge comes from tan populist and national conservatives, the debate is conducted in terms of identity. Where the challenge comes from the radical left, the debate is about distribution" (ibid. 25).

As this summary outlines, much of the literature suggests that one needs to look at the more extreme and Euroskeptic parties in order to understand the politicization of the European integration issue. In contrast, Christoffer Green-Pedersen (2011) argues that the politicization of European integration should be explored by focusing on the incentives the issue offers to mainstream parties. Building on the agenda setting literature, Green-Pedersen approaches issue competition between parties as a process of agenda setting, where all parties try to put 'their' issues on the agenda (ibid. 3). This in turn raises the question which factors affect the hierarchy of issues on this party system agenda (see also Green-Pedersen/Mortensen 2010). According to

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[15] To be precise, Kriesi does not explicitly refer to politicization, but speaks of mobilization. However, the way he uses the term is very similar to the concept of politicization as used here and in the cited literature.

Green-Pedersen (2011), mainstream parties are decisive in this respect. In other words, if mainstream parties refuse to respond to Euroskeptic fringe parties, the issue will remain low on the party system agenda (see also Meguid 2005, 2008). He further claims that there are two decisive sources for mainstream parties' incentive to politicize the issue of Europe, namely the electoral and the coalition factor. The latter in particular would constitute a constraint to the politicization of European integration by mainstream parties, which cannot simply engage in Euroskeptic politicization as this would threaten their chance for building a coalition with parties supportive of European integration. Building on the Danish case, Green-Pedersen (2011) concludes that this is the main reason for the lack of politicization in a country where other scholars might have expected its occurrence because of Euroskeptic parties' representation in the Danish party system.

The scholarly controversy about whether it is Euroskeptic fringe or mainstream parties that are decisive in the politicization of the EU issue is to large extent the result of applying the concept of politicization at different 'levels': Whereas Hooghe/Marks (2009) and Kriesi (2007) first and foremost point to individual parties' attempts to politicize Europe and thus conclude that Euroskeptic parties are the drivers of politicization, Green-Pedersen (2011) focuses on the degree of politicization at the party system level (in his terms: the party system agenda). For individual parties, however, his analysis actually supports the claim raised by other scholars about Euroskeptic parties as the drivers of politicization (ibid. 10).

As indicated by this summary, the study of party politicization of European integration has made significant progress. However, it is still largely at a speculative stage, meaning that the focus is on the development of theoretically driven hypotheses, while empirical analyses remain scarce. Preparing for the empirical analysis of this dissertation, the next section will explore in more detail how politicization will be approached in this study both analytically and empirically.

3.3 Party politicization as explanandum: two levels, two components, two theories

Building on de Wilde (2011), the previous chapter already provided a definition for the concept of politicization. To recall, the politicization of European integration can be understood as the extent to which the issue of Europe becomes part of the political game expressed in public—

indicated by an increase in the polarization of opinions towards the issue and the extent to which this polarization is publicly advanced (ibid. 566-7). From this perspective, issue-politicization is a product of party interaction towards the issue, thus focusing on the 'aggregate level' of all parties competing in the domestic sphere of contestation.[16] However, individual parties might differ in their engagement in the process of politicization, i.e. some parties may be more active in that respect than others. The previous section clearly outlined that some scholarly dispute about which parties to consider as decisive for the politicization of the EU issue (i.e. Euroskeptic fringe parties or mainstream parties) stems from employing the politicization concept at these two different 'levels'. For avoiding such confusion, this dissertation makes an explicit distinction between the two levels, which will be referred to as the party and the party system level of politicization:

- <u>Politicization at the party level:</u> Shifting the focus to individual party behavior, de Wilde's (2011) definition requires further specification. Party politicization of European integration at the level of individual parties will therefore be defined here as *an individual party's attempts to publicly emphasize the issue of Europe*. Similar to de Wilde's definition addressing the party system level, this definition emphasizes *public expression* as constitutive of the politicization concept. Unlike the party system level, however, the focus on the party level allows us to explore individual parties' engagement in the politicization of Europe irrespective of other parties' response or lack of it.

- <u>Politicization at the party system level:</u> Following de Wilde (2011), the degree of politicization at the party system level refers to the *polarization of opinions and the extent to which this polarization is publicly advanced*. This definition implies that party conflict over the issue of Europe has to *find its expression publicly* and is thus to be distinguished from the *potential for conflict* resulting from the existence of diverging party positions in parties' policy programs. At the party system level, thus, the engagement of different parties and party interaction are quite an important point: If only a single party politicizes the issue of Europe, but no other party responds, the degree of politicization at the party system will still remain low. However, when all parties are involved in the politicization of the issue, polarization is likely to be higher, as will be the degree of politicization at the party system.

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[16] Green-Pedersen (2011) refers to this as the party system agenda.

The focus on public expression in party politicization of European integration at both levels is a crucial point, and not only analytically. It is also important with a view to research strategy, since it requires a carefully considered selection of data and operationalization that are capable of capturing public expression—a point to which we will return in more detail in Chapter 4.

The above presented definitions first and foremost refer to politicization in terms of quantity. However, politicization can also take different facets in terms of content: When politicizing European integration, actors will have different thematic priorities and will frame the issue according to their policy position towards the issue. As outlined in the previous section, different parties will embed the issue of Europe according to their overall policy program. Hence some parties will politicize European integration on the cultural dimension, whereas others will focus on the economic dimension (cf. Kriesi 2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009). Hence the debate about Europe might look fundamentally different in terms of its substantive character depending on which actors engage in the politicization. Therefore, further precision is demanded for conceptualizing politicization analytically. This can be achieved by distinguishing the two components intrinsic to the concept of politicization, namely content and emphasis:[17]

- Content: The first component of issue-politicization is content. It refers to the substantive character of a party's issue-politicization and thus strongly overlaps with parties' policy position. However, it is different from the latter insofar, as it only considers positions that actually become politicized rather than parties' complete policy program towards an issue. At the party system level, this can be labeled the content of the debate, which could be biased towards the policy concerns of particular parties (most likely those that actively engage in the politicization of the issue) or could be more diverse and reflect the policy concerns of several political actors.

- Emphasis: The second component of issue-politicization is more quantitative in its nature, as it refers to the emphasis put on the respective issue that is being politicized. The notion of emphasis is strongly related to the concept of salience. In fact, both are mostly used as

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[17] A similar approach can be found in the literature about parties' issue-positioning and the distinction between positioning in terms of direction (e.g. whether supportive or adverse to the respective issue) and the importance or salience of an issue to a party (cf. Laver 2001).

synonyms in the literature (cf. Klingemann et al. 2006). However, in line with the definition of politicization outlined above, emphasis as understood here is limited to publicly expressed issue-focus. Emphasis thus describes whether and to what extent parties address the issue of Europe publicly. At the party system level, emphasis equally reflects the intensity or degree of politicization in quantitative terms, resulting from the aggregation of individual parties' issue-emphasis.

The distinction between content and emphasis is of utmost analytical importance. As argued in this dissertation, both components connect to different strands of theory, namely cleavage theory on the one hand, and party competition theory on the other hand: The content of politicization strongly overlaps with parties' policy positioning. It is therefore connected to the broader programmatic and ideological profile of a party that constrains how parties can respond to new issues. This perspective is aptly summarized by Gary Marks and Carole Wilson (2000: 434), who state that "parties are not empty vessels into which issue positions are poured in response to electoral or constituency pressure; rather, they are organizations with historically rooted orientations that guide their response to new issues". Hence for understanding the content of politicization, we need to go back to the decisive factors for party positioning towards European integration. Cleavage theory, it is argued here, provides us with the theoretical framework for understanding why parties respond to the issue of Europe in the way they do. Whether a party will actually emphasize the issue of Europe, however, will rather be dependent on strategic considerations related to party competition: If a party considers the issue of Europe to be beneficial in electoral terms, it will politicize (here: emphasize) it. Contrariwise, it will refrain from doing so, if the issue could damage its electoral success. The salience theory of party competition provides the theoretical framework for this argument.

The next section will briefly introduce these two strands of theory as a theoretical basis for developing the explanatory framework within which the empirical analysis of this dissertation is embedded.

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3.4 Theorizing the content and emphasis of issue-politicization

3.4.1 Cleavage theory and the content of EU politicization

Seeking to understand how parties respond to new issues—European integration among them—scholars go back to the cleavage theory developed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). Lipset and Rokkan linked the establishing of party systems in Europe in the 19th century to social and cultural divisions in society that emanated from historical upheavals, in particular the national revolution, the Protestant reformation, and—most important—the industrial revolution. In Lipset and Rokkan's own words, their focus is on "*conflicts and their translation into party systems*" (ibid. 5, emphasis in original). The cleavages that have found their expression in European party systems—though in various forms—are the class cleavage, the church-state cleavage, and the center-periphery cleavage. As argued by many scholars, these cleavages were not only constitutive to the evolution of European party systems more than a century ago, but are still decisive in shaping parties' response to new issues appearing on the political agenda, since they reflect parties' historically rooted ideological orientations (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009). This idea is put forward in the cleavage theory of party positioning.

In an attempt to explain parties' response to the European integration issue, Gary Marks and Carole Wilson (2000) developed a cleavage theory of party positioning towards European integration. They argue "that European integration is assimilated into pre-existing ideologies of party leaders, activists and constituencies that reflect long-standing commitments on fundamental domestic issues" (ibid. 433). The core argument thus is that parties are ideologically constrained in their response to the issue of Europe. A party's response will also vary for different facets of integration, which is related to the "dual character of European integration" (ibid. 437), namely economic and political integration. The former refers to the removal of tariff barriers, the creation of a single market, the establishing of a Monetary union etc. The latter concerns the establishing of an EU system of governance and the transfer of competences towards this supranational level. Both dimensions are intrinsic to the EU project, though there weight varies for different periods of integration. While economic integration clearly dominated the foundation phase of the European communities, political integration at first lagged behind. Over the last three decades, however, political integration has made substantial progress through a number of treaty reforms

that further deepened political integration in the EU. Though a party may favor integration on one of these two dimensions, it can reject in on the other dimension. The cleavage theory of party positioning suggests that this will be dependent on the cleavages within which parties are embedded.

The tensions emanating from the dual character of EU integration for parties that compete on the *class cleavage* are quite obvious (Marks/Wilson 2000): Parties on the left side of the class cleavage have difficulties with economic integration, since it undermines welfare state achievements at the national level and increases international economic competition; political integration, on the other hand, provides new opportunities for re-regulation at the supranational level and may thus compensate for the loss of regulation capacity and effectiveness at the national level. Parties on the right side face similar problems, though in reverse: They strongly support economic integration for it constrains state intervention on economies. Political integration, on the other hand, is more problematic for these parties, since the establishing of a supranational government facilitates regulation at the European level (ibid.).[18]

Despite the class cleavage's dominance in European party systems, certain parties though compete on the *church-state* or the *center-periphery cleavage*. However, the dual character of European integration seems less of a challenge in these cases, where the economic dimension is subordinated to other tensions (ibid.). Catholic parties employ a supportive position to both economic and political integration, which is related to "the supranational aspirations of the Catholic Church and the anti-national bias of Catholic parties that arose from their historic battles with national state-builders" (ibid. 438). This is different for Protestant parties, who will be more skeptical towards supranationalism because of the national feature of Protestant churches and their rejection of central authority (ibid., see also Edwards 2009). On the center-periphery cleavage, Marks and Wilson make a distinction between parties that represent territorially concentrated and those representing territorially dispersed minorities (2000: 438). For the former, European integration constitutes an opportunity, since it weakens state authority and allows for a strengthening of their region. The latter, on the other hand will most likely view European integration as a threat "because it shifts decision making even further away from their control and is yet more alien to their cultural milieu" (ibid. 438).[19]

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[18] For earlier efforts to link parties' EU positioning to the class cleavage see Hix (1999a).

[19] Following this broader outline of party positioning towards European integration for parties embedded in the class, the church-state, and the center-periphery cleavage, Marks and Wilson (2000) then compare parties' EU positioning

Applying the cleavage theory of party positioning to the study of intra-party cohesion on the EU issue, Erica Edwards (2009) expands Marks and Wilson's (2000) theoretical argument towards the younger party families competing on the so called *new politics dimension/cleavage*, namely radical right and green parties.[20] Rejection of European integration perfectly fits in with radical right parties' ideological profile advocating nationalism and traditionalism, and strongly rejecting immigration. Though in some cases this program is complemented by economic neoliberalism (and thus compatible with economic integration), the clear privileging of the cultural or value based dimension over the economic dimension by these parties largely eclipses potential tensions as to whether or not to support economic integration (Edwards 2009). Radical and new populist right parties thus share a clear anti-EU profile that is in line with their programmatic focus to protect national sovereignty and identity. Green parties face similar tensions as social democrats with assimilating the issue of Europe to their overall policy program. While being far from pleased with EU market liberalism and the focus on economic growth (which contradict green values like social justice and sustainability), the establishing of a supranational system of governance provides opportunities for addressing core 'green' policy concerns, which require coordination and regulation beyond the level of member states (e.g. environmental and climate protection). The EU's constitutional architecture and decision-making procedures, on the other hand, are clearly at odds with green parties' claim for direct democracy, decentralization, and local influence—values strongly related to these parties' roots in the new social movements of the late 1960s and later (ibid.).

Deriving party response towards new issues—European integration as one specific case—from the cleavage theory of party systems emphasizes that parties are not simply vote-maximizing machines. As Marks and Wilson (2000: 345) put it, "although political parties exist in a competitive electoral environment, their policy position cannot […] be predicted as an efficient

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from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s (based on expert survey data). They find that differences within party families are much lower than within countries (ibid. 441), thus supporting the expectation that parties' response to the issue of Europe is mediated by the cleavages within which they are embedded. They further argue that the cleavage perspective can even explain variation within party families (resulting from variation in the manifestation of the cleavages in European party systems) (ibid. 442). To support this argument, they provide a detailed analysis for Europe's largest party families, namely the social democrats, the liberals, the Christian democrats, and the conservatives.

[20] Edwards (2009) adds a third new family, namely radical left parties "of the new left variety" (ibid. 11). However, given the heterogeneity of this group and the fact that Edwards comes to quite similar conclusions as for green parties, they will be blanked out here.

response to electoral incentives". Rather, party response is mediated by the cleavages from which parties emanated, making party family the core explanatory factor for parties' response towards the European integration issue. The cleavage argument can easily be applied to the study of politicization, since party positioning can reasonably be expected to be reflected in the content-aspect of issue-politicization. This will be outlined in more detail in section 3.5.1.

3.4.2 The salience theory of party competition and EU politicization

From the numerous issues competing for public attention, only a few are taken up by political actors and thus actually arrive on the party political agenda, i.e. become politicized (cf. Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989). Whether or not a party will publicly emphasize and thus politicize an issue can be expected to be dependent on strategic considerations related to party competition. A party will only politicize an issue if it does not risk electoral damage from doing so. The salience theory of party competition provides the theoretical framework for this argument (cf. Budge/Farlie 1983; Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006).

The salience theory of party competition argues that parties compete by strategically manipulating the salience of issues, i.e. by emphasizing certain issues while downplaying others. According to salience theory, competition between political parties is not merely competition about different positions towards the same issue, but is a contest about the different issues each party expects to electorally benefit from and thus emphasizes. This theory of party competition has been developed as an explicit critique of the classic Downsian model of competition (Downs 1957), which holds that parties compete by shifting their locations in the policy space, i.e. they simply change their policy positions according to strategic consideration (Ray 2007: 16). Salience theory thus acknowledges that parties might not be able to easily shift their position towards an issue in order to maximize votes. After all, "parties are not empty vessels into which issue positions are poured in response to electoral or constituency pressures" (Marks/Wilson 2000: 343). However, being rational actors that act strategically, parties will only publicly emphasize issues they expect to benefit from while trying to downplay others.

Salience theory suggests that parties 'own' different issues (cf. Klingemann et al. 2006), i.e. different parties are associated with different issues on which they enjoy reputation and credibility because of their previous activities towards or repeated emphasis on these issues (e.g.

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in their parliamentary work, in government policy, in campaigning). Green parties, for instance, can be seen as the issue owners of the environmental issue, radical right parties are considered the owners of the immigration issue. Competing for voters, parties will therefore try to emphasize 'their own' issues. To put it differently, party competition reflects a battle for control over the agenda (cf. Green-Pedersen 2011; Green-Pedersen/Mortensen 2010). Important to note, however, issues do not naturally 'belong' to any party. Issue ownership rather evolves over time if a party prioritizes a certain issue, constantly emphasizes it, and thus becomes associated with the issue (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004). However, even without holding ownership over an issue, political parties can emphasize specific issues that they expect to increase their electoral success. While this could lead to issue ownership in the long run, it can also be employed as a short-term strategy in response to changes in the political environment (ibid.).

Applying the salience theory of party competition to the study of EU politicization requires relaxing the importance of the issue ownership argument. This is because the point of departure is the politicization of a relatively new issue, i.e. an issue that has not played prominently on the public and party agenda previously and is thus not yet 'occupied' by a particular party competitor. Hence for studying party politicization of European integration, the core question is which parties start emphasizing the issue in order to obtain ownership in the long run—and why they do so. Beyond the issue ownership argument, the salience theory of party competition suggests that issue-emphasis will be dependent on an electoral calculus. Scholars applying salience theory to the issue of Europe have developed a number of potential explanatory factors for the salience or emphasis parties devote to the European integration issue (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/van de Wardt 2011): Most basically, a party will refrain from emphasizing issues that threaten intra-party cohesion, as this could damage the party profile with regard to clarity and credibility. Intra-party unity thus represents a precondition for issue-politicization (Steenbergen/Scott 2004).[21] Moreover, parties have to consider their overall programmatic commitment. If, for some reasons, the party position on a particular issue contradicts the party's overall ideological orientations, it could be counterproductive to emphasize the issue (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009). Hence the ideological fit of

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[21] However, in case a party is deeply divided over an issue, this could finally increase issue salience, because the issue cannot be suppressed any longer (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004; de Vries/van de Wardt 2011).

the issue with a party's policy profile constitutes another requirement for parties' ability to politicize an issue. As parties attempt to win votes, they will also pay attention to their (potential) voters' preferences towards an issue. This means the closer the party position to the position of voters, the more likely the issue will be beneficial in electoral terms (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004). Additional factors concern parties' location in the policy space and their government-opposition status: Distinguishing between parties located at the margins of the dominant left-right dimensions and those located in the mainstream, the former can be expected to emphasize a new issue that does not fit into the left-right dimension (like European integration), while the latter will mostly likely downplay the issue (cf. Netjes/Binnema 2007). This is because more extreme parties at the periphery of the party system are generally to a much lesser extent successful in competing on left-right issues than mainstream parties and will therefore try to accentuate new issues in order to gain more votes. A similar argument can be made for opposition parties, who might have an interest in restructuring contestation (ibid.). Opposition parties can also be expected to be more successful in putting new issues on the public agenda. Unlike governing parties, they do not have to offer policy solutions to all issues raised by their competitors and can therefore focus more effectively on the issues they want to emphasize (Green-Pedersen/Mortensen 2010). Finally, a political party is also constrained in emphasizing or downplaying an issue dependent on how salient the issue *already is* on the policy agenda of other parties. In the context of the EU issue, scholars refer to this as systemic salience (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004, Netjes/Binnema 2007). Based on the assumption that a party cannot ignore other parties' behavior, issue salience is expected to increase for any political party, the more the other parties emphasize the issue (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 169). A similar claim is raised by Green-Pedersen and Mortinsen (2010). Building on agenda setting theories of political communication research, they introduce the concept of a party system agenda in their model of issue competition. The party system agenda reflects a "hierarchy of issues, to which the relevant actors must pay attention even as they compete about the future content of this hierarchy" (ibid. 260).

3.5 Explanatory framework for party politicization of European integration

This section develops the explanatory framework for the empirical analysis of party politicization of European integration. Building on the cleavage theory of party positioning and the salience

theory of party competition and drawing on the literature applying these theories to the issue of Europe, it summarizes the most convincing explanatory factors for party politicization, distinguishing between content and emphasis of EU issue-politicization, and considering both the party and the party system level.

3.5.1 Explanatory factors for the content of EU issue-politicization

European integration could be politicized in various forms as regards content, because the issue contains various sources for conflict. This is inevitably related to the multi-faceted nature of integration that includes economic and political integration as well as EU policy output in an increasing number of policy fields. Applying the cleavage theory of party positioning to the study of EU issue-politicization, political parties can be expected to politicize Europe in accordance with their ideological profile (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009). For the content of issue-politicization, this results in a variety of possible options for the content of the debate, depending on which facets of integration parties choose to emphasize and whether they focus on evaluating the status quo or claiming for change. We can draw a—clearly simplified—picture for EU issue-politicization for individual parties based on the cleavage approach:[22]

- Social democratic parties: Given the tension that economic and political integration causes for these parties but considering their support to the 'overall EU package', they will combine demands for further integration with strong claims for different policy priorities (e.g. employment rather than monetary stability) and the establishing of a social Union.
- Christian democratic parties: For the catholic camp within this party family, the dual character of integration is not much of a challenge. The supranational character of the Catholic Church and the center-right location of these parties on the class cleavages make them strong advocates of both political and economic integration, allowing them in principle to politicize both facets.
- Liberal parties: If not belonging to the conservative camp but the social or radical liberals within this party family, liberal parties can be expected to support European integration in

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[22] This outlook only considers party families represented in the Austrian party system (see Chapter 5).

a similar vein as Christian democrats. They favor market liberalism and oppose nationalism and can thus politicize European integration from both perspectives.

- Radical right parties: Since the rejection of European integration perfectly fits in with these parties' ideological profile (nationalism, traditionalism, anti-immigration), they will assimilate the issue of Europe on the cultural dimension by raising concerns about sovereignty, identity, and self-ruling. Economic integration will be less important even if the party program is complemented by economic neoliberalism, because these parties clearly privilege the cultural dimension over the economic in party competition.

- Green parties: Since the dual character of EU integration causes tension for green parties—because they reject market liberalism and criticize the EU constitutional architecture, but at the same time focus on issues that clearly require policy solutions beyond the national level—they can be expected to politicize European integration on a functional dimension about policy alternatives rather than a cultural dimension about group membership. I.e. they will focus more explicitly on the direction of policies adopted at the EU level and claim for changes according to the parties' policy program. Claims for EU polity reform will most likely strive for a democratization of the EU.

At the party system level, the content of the debate about Europe is likely to vary depending on which parties actively politicize the issue and thus put forward their particular concerns. As argued previously, a number of scholars expect this to be the Euroskeptic parties, which have an interest in challenging their (mainstream) competitors. As indicated by the inverted U-curve (and consistent with the cleavage approach), Euroskeptic parties are found at the fringes of the left-right or new-politics dimension. Assuming that they are the drivers of EU politicization, the overall debate about Europe might be biased towards these parties concerns (Hooghe/Marks 2009):

- Euroskeptic EU politicization by the radical right: In this scenario, EU politicization will focus on political integration and will evoke conflict on the cultural dimension, emphasizing questions of national sovereignty and self-ruling, thus expressing conflict about group membership and identity.

- Euroskeptic EU politicization by the radical left: If EU politicization is driven by radical left parties, the focus will be on questions of distribution, thus reactivating the economic

dimension with conflict about distribution between functional rather than territorial or cultural groups.

Clearly, the content of the debate about Europe in the politicization at the party system level not only depends on the challengers or drivers of politicization, but on other parties' response. Hence parties can shift the focus of the debate towards different facets of integration. To what extent they are able to do so, remains an empirical question that will be explored in Chapter 6.3 of this dissertation.

3.5.2 Explanatory factors for the emphasis of EU issue-politicization

What factors can be expected to account for the extent of EU issue-politicization at the party and the party system level? Starting with the party level, the question is when would we expect an individual party to pick up the issue of Europe for domestic contestation? As argued previously, EU issue-politicization at the party level equals a party's emphasis or salience on the issue of Europe. Following salience theory, parties act strategically in this respect, meaning that a party will emphasize an issue when it supposes to gain electoral advantage through it. Based on this theoretical approach, recent studies on the salience of European integration for parties have developed a number of explanations for variation in EU salience across parties (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/van de Wardt 2011). The following explanatory factors derived from this literature will be taken into account when exploring the politicization of the EU issue in Austrian general election campaigns:

- *Party position vis-à-vis voter position:* As parties attempt to win votes, a party will depoliticize issues on which its supporters hold different positions compared to the party's (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004).
- *Internal dissent:* Parties will deemphasize European integration if the issue challenges internal party cohesion, as internal dissent could damage the party profile with regard to clarity and credibility (cf. Netjes/Binnema 2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009).
- *Location in policy space:* Distinguishing between parties located at the margins of the dominant left-right dimensions and those located in the mainstream, the former can be

expected to emphasize a new issue that does not fit into the left-right dimension—like European integration—, while the latter will most likely downplay the issue (cf. Netjes/Binnema 2007). This is because more extreme parties at the periphery of the party system are less successful in competing on left-right issues than mainstream parties and will therefore try to accentuate new issues in order to gain more votes.

- *Government/opposition status:* Following a similar logic as location in the policy space, opposition parties might have an interest in restructuring contestation and are therefore more likely to politicize European integration (ibid.). In addition, they do not have to take responsibility for EU policy outcomes and the course of integration, leaving them more room for promoting their ideas and criticizing the course of integration compared to government parties.

- *Party family:* Based on cleavage theory, the party family factor is based on the idea that the European integration issue is more challenging to some parties compared to others, depending on each party's ideological profile. This is due to the dual character of European integration (Marks/Wilson 2000: 434), namely economic and political integration. Following this argument, it is again mainstream left and right parties which can be expected to downplay the issue, as either economic (in the case of center-left parties) or political integration (in the case of center-right parties) contradicts the party's overall policy program, making in counterproductive for these parties to politicize the issue of Europe.

- *Systemic salience*: Based on the assumption that a party cannot ignore other parties' behavior, issue salience is expected to increase for any political party, the more the other parties emphasize the issue—even if a party actually has no incentive in politicizing the issue (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 169).

Variation in the politicization of European integration may not only occur between different parties, but also between different campaigns, labeled here as variation at the party system level in distinction from the party level. Such different degrees in the overall politicization of the issue at the party system level—i.e. the *systemic salience* in Steenbergen and Scott's (2004) terms—will mostly result from the dynamic interaction of the factors described above. Still, certain conditions related to specific events or party competition dynamics may boost or decrease the

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salience of the issue of Europe collaterally, resulting in different degrees of politicization at different points in time within a given country. The following factors can be considered in that respect:

- *Date of EU accession:* The more recently a country joined the EU, the higher will be the degree of politicization. This expectation is based on the assumption that EU issues are higher in public focus shortly after accession, when membership is new, the country must adopt the *aquis communautaire*, and the public attentively monitors whether membership has brought the befits promised by the government previously to accession (cf. Tillmann 2004).

- *Party repositioning:* If a party alters its EU position, this can be expected to increase the politicization of the issue, since those parties formerly 'on the same side' will criticize the positional shift whereas the other parties will question the party's credibility on the issue in order to defend them against the new competitor, thus boosting the importance of the issue (cf. Meguid 2005, 2008).

- *Government participation of Euroskeptic parties:* Government participation of Euroskeptic or anti-EU parties will most likely constrain these parties in their ability to emphasize and criticize European integration. Given that Euroskeptic parties are seen as the driving forces for the politicization of Europe in much of the literature (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009; Kriesi 2007; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004), their government participation can plausibly be expected to decrease the overall politicization of the issue. However, in case there is more than one Euroskeptic party—and at least one is not in power—we would expect the contrary, i.e. an increase in the politicization of the issue, since the opposition party is likely to actively challenge its Euroskeptic counterpart.

3.6 National context and EU politicization: case selection and country hypothesis

An in-depth analysis of party politicization on European integration demands that the issue of Europe actually becomes politicized. Otherwise, there would not much to be learned from such a study. Representing a rather new issue that, moreover, challenges the domestic structure of

political conflict, why should European integration become politicized in terms of domestic party contestation in the first place? While the decisive actors in this respect naturally are individual parties—whose behavior towards the issue of Europe represents this study's object of investigation—, the relevant literature also refers to conditions *external* to individual parties. This is reasonable, since parties operate within a political environment that can be favorable or unfavorable to the politicization of a particular issue. Consulting the literature on issue-evolution, -politicization and -voting, we can identify a number of favorable conditions for European integration to enter mass politics (cf. Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989; de Vries 2007a; de Vries 2009; de Wilde 2011). Applying a purposive sampling approach, where a case is selected on theoretical grounds in accordance with the nature of the research question (Silverman 2010: 141-46), Austria has been identified as a country with favorable conditions for the politicization of European integration based on the following criteria derived from the above-cited literature:

- *There is visible conflict between parties over the issue of European integration.* If all parties agree on an issue or party differences are not visible, there is no incentive to politicize it in terms of party contestation, as it would not benefit any of the competitors (cf. de Vries 2007a).

  ►► This condition is met in Austria, as different measures of party positioning as well as several scholarly contributions reveal (cf. Pelinka 2004; Fallend 2008; Hooghe et al. 2010; Kriesi 2007; Klingemann et al. 2006).

- *The issue of Europe is related to the dominant structure of conflict.* Whether the left-right dimension or new politics dimension, the assumption behind that is that existing dimensions of conflict serve as cues or shortcuts for people in a political landscape with a virtually unlimited number of issues. However, if the issue of Europe perfectly fits into one of these dimensions, it would add nothing new, making it less attractive for political challengers (cf. de Vries 2007a).

  ►► In Austria, there is evidence that European integration is related to the gal-tan or demarcation-integration dimension (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Kriesi 2007; Kritzinger/Michalowitz 2005; see also Pelinka 2004).

- *European integration is perceived as important by voters, i.e. the issue is salient to them.* This is based on the assumption that parties not only drive but also respond to

voter preferences. If an issue is important to voters, parties can be expected to pick it up (cf. Steenbergen et al. 2007; de Vries 2007a; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004; Ray 2003).

►► The increasing salience of the issue in media coverage (cf. Kriesi 2007) and clear indications for EU issue-voting suggest that European integration is important to Austrians (cf. Schoen 2010; Kriesi 2007; Sora 2006; Tillman 2004).

- *There is a high level of public Euroskepticism and there exists a strong Euroskeptic party.* This criterion is based on the argument of an asymmetry in the importance of support for and opposition to European integration among voters for party contestation, suggesting that public opinion is more relevant when expressing opposition to rather than support for European integration (cf. Tillman 2004).

  ►► As Eurobarometer data show, the level of Euroskepticism among Austrians is comparatively high and with the radical right Freedom Party, a strong anti-EU party is represented in the Austrian party system (see Chapter 5 for details).

- *Existence of EU referenda:* Referenda related to EU questions can be expected to spur politicization, as they typically lead to intensified public debate and bring to light latent dissent within parties (cf. de Vries 2009).

  ►► Except for the accession referendum in 1994, there have been no referenda on EU related questions in Austria. Different from the literature, however, I would argue that in combination with public and party Euroskepticism, it may actually be the *absence* of referenda that spurs the politicization of European integration at the party system level in the long run. This is because parties cannot shift the issue away from the party system agenda to the general public. Furthermore, if referenda are not prohibited constitutionally, this provides Euroskeptic parties with further opportunities for criticism. In Austria, claims for referenda play an important role in electoral and parliamentary contestation between parties, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 6 and 7 of this dissertation.

Given the particular shape of these contextual factors, we cannot only expect politicization of European integration to appear, but can also hypothesize on its specific manifestation in Austrian party contestation. Considering the hypotheses for emphasis and content presented in the

previous section, politicization is expected to be driven first and foremost by Euroskeptic parties. Since party Euroskepticism in Austria has become a radical right phenomenon, we can thus expect EU politicization to take the following shape:

- The politicization of European integration in Austria will be driven by the radical right parties. As a consequence, the content of the debate will strongly be biased towards question of national sovereignty and identity and will thus raise conflict on the cultural dimension of conflict.

4. Data and methods

This chapter provides information on the data and methods used in this dissertation. It discusses strengths and weaknesses of different data types and methods typically used in research on party response to the European integration issue before presented the data selected for and methods applied in the present study. In doing so, the chapter outlines why the study departs from the 'standard' data and methods used in the study of party politicization, or more broadly party positioning and issue-emphasis. Before going into detail about data in 4.2 and methods in 4.3, the chapter starts with a brief summary of the broader research design, including information about the time frame delimiting the empirical study, arenas of contestation explored, and parties considered in the analysis.

4.1 Summary of research design

For studying party politicization of European integration in Austria, the project considers the time frame from 1995 to 2008. This is period starts with Austria's EU membership and ends with the most recent general election in Austria. The focus of the dissertation is on party politicization of European integration in domestic party contestation. The empirical study distinguishes between two types of arenas for domestic party contestation, the electoral arena and decision-making arenas (cf. Bardi/Mair 2008). Important to note, the empirical core of this dissertation focuses on the former and will explore party politicization of Europe in Austrian national election campaigns. The analytical framework presented in Chapter 3 has therefore been developed first and foremost with a view to party contestation in the electoral arena. The aim is to explore and explain which parties drive the politicization of Europe and to learn about the content of the debate during national election campaigns. The detailed discussion about strengths and weaknesses of data provided in the next section is also focused on the core purpose of the dissertation, namely to study party politicization in *electoral* contestation.

This main empirical part will be complemented by a smaller study on the role of the EU issue in arenas of domestic decision-making, for which coalition agreements as well as speeches and voting behavior in the Austrian parliament will be analyzed. The aim of this complementary study is to explore whether parties behave contradictory on the issue of Europe in decision-

making arenas as opposed to the electoral arena, which will provide an indication for whether party politicization in electoral contestation eventually impacts on EU-related decision-making. This study focuses on the politicization of Europe promoted by a specific type of actors, namely national political parties. Parties will be considered in the analysis if they are relevant for contestation, i.e. if they have coalition potential and/or blackmail potential (Sartori 1976; see also Katz/Crotty 2006). In the period of interest (1995-2008), the Austrian *Nationalrat* consisted of four to five parties. Four parties have permanently been represented in parliament in the time frame of the present study. These are the *Social Democratic Party* (SPÖ), the *People's Party* (ÖVP), the *Freedom Party* (FPÖ), the *Greens*. Additionally, the Liberals have been represented in parliament until the 1999 (to be precise: from their foundation in 1993 until the 1999 election) and the *Alliance for the Future of Austria* (BZÖ) since 2005. All them are to be considered relevant for contestation and are therefore included in the empirical analysis—the latter two of course only for the periods of their existence (BZÖ) or relevance in terms of domestic contestation (Liberals). More information on these parties will be provided in Chapter 5 of the dissertation, which introduces the Austrian case.

4.2 Data

This section first discusses strengths and weakness of different types of data typically used in the study of party positioning and issue-salience. It then present the data selected for this study and provides information on data collection.

4.2.1 Strengths and weaknesses of different data types

For studying parties' issue-positions and issue-salience, scholars refer to different sorts of data. Following Ray (2007), these can be grouped in four types, namely reputational, textual, behavioral, and self-reported data. Research focusing more explicitly on the politicization of the European integration issue most commonly uses reputational or textual data, in particular expert

surveys, election manifestos, and, most recently, media data.[23] Each of these data has strengths and weaknesses, which shall briefly be outlined (drawing on Mair 2001; Ray 2007; Marks et al. 2007; Statham 2008). *Expert surveys* represent a reputational source and are based on subjective judgments of experts. The latter can base their judgment of various sources (like parties' media appearance, policy initiatives, or voting behavior in parliament). Though this can also be considered an advantage compared to other data, the problem is that we generally do not know on what sources experts base their evaluation, making it more difficult to come to a conclusion about the accuracy of their judgments. The quality of data from expert surveys will strongly depend on the selection of experts and the framing of the questionnaire. *Manifesto data* belong to the group of textual sources (Ray 2007). They represent official documents produced by individual parties according to their internal procedure and provide information on parties stated policy preferences. They typically provide a—more or less comprehensive—overview of a party's policy program, which makes them a useful source for studying party positioning. The drawback, however, is that manifestos will most likely not include issues that are controversial either within the party or in public discourse, since parties will refrain from including issues that may threaten intra-party cohesion or cause electoral damage. *Media data* constitute another textual source for exploring party positioning and issue-emphasis or -salience. The value of this type of data is that it provides information on the positioning and emphasis as reflected in the public sphere. Given the importance of media as a source for political information in contemporary mass democracy, media coverage will to a large extent determine how voters perceive parties' issue-positioning and -emphasis. The drawback, however, is that it is the media ultimately deciding about which political actors to include in the coverage about a particular issue, which can result in a bias based on the 'newsworthiness' of parties' issue-positions (e.g. privileging more extreme positions or more powerful actors).

Data from expert surveys, manifestos, or media coverage are the most commonly used sources for studying party positioning and issue-emphasis related to the European integration issue. The following three large-scale comparative data sets are the most widely used in this field of research: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) on party positioning towards European integration (Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007), the Comparative Manifesto Project

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[23] Green-Pedersen (2011) deviates from these approaches by using parliamentary data instead. Following the logic of this dissertation, however, these data tell us more about the role of issues in decision-making arenas and not necessarily about their politicization.

(CMP) analyzing parties' election manifestos (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006), and media data conducted as part of the project on National Political Change in a Globalizing World (NPCGW, Kriesi et al. 2008). Each of these data provides information on party positioning and issue-emphasis towards European integration. However, scholars attempting to cross-validate the measures derived from each of these (or similar) sources come to mixed conclusions. Regarding parties' EU positioning, scholars find that the different data by and large yield to the same findings (cf. Helbling/Tresch 2011). With a view to issue-emphasis or -salience, however, this is different. Netjes and Binnema (2007: 48), who provided the first cross-validation of EU salience measures derived from different sources, come to the conclusion that the validity of measures across different data sources is weak. Likewise, Helbling and Tresch (2011: 180) find that salience measures from manifesto data and expert surveys cannot be used interchangeably with those from media data, "as they seem to measure different constructs".

Considering the research purpose of this dissertation, namely to study party politicization of European integration, and the definition of the latter as *an individual party's attempt to publicly emphasize the issue of Europe in domestic party contestation*, the focus on issue-emphasis/salience is of particular importance. With this definition in mind, each of the above mentioned data reflect certain weaknesses: Expert surveys do not provide information regarding parties' emphasis on the issue of Europe as part of domestic contestation: The CHES questionnaire asks its experts to assess how important the EU has been to a party in its public stance over the course of a particular year (Hooghe et al. 2010). Though this certainly implies some sort of public visibility of the party on the issue, this is not exactly the same as asking about parties' emphasis on the issue in public, which is important for the study of party politicization according to the above-mentioned definition. Furthermore, regarding the CHES salience measures, the authors of the survey confess that more abstract concepts like salience seem more difficult for experts to evaluate (ibid.). Manifesto data are even more problematic for studying issue-politicization. Though they are often used for studying parties' issue-salience towards a variety of issues (cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006), manifestos actually do not provide any information as to whether an issue included in a manifesto is also publicly emphasized by parties in a campaign. Given the fact that manifestos typically include a variety of issue hardly ever mentioned during a campaign and thus not appearing on the public agenda, they serve as a weak indication for party politicization (cf. Kleinnijenhuis/Pennings 2001; Pennings

2006; Dolezal 2008b). Media data perform better in this respect. However, they suffer from the intervention of the media in the selection of issues and actors included in the coverage (Helbling/Tresch 2011) and hence do not directly reflect a party's attempts to politicize the issue of Europe (or any other issue).

With a view to the Austrian case, a comparison of salience measures derived from the three data sets referred to above yields to contradictory findings for Austrian parties' emphasis on the issue of Europe.[24] While this may not be surprising considering the different characteristics of these data, it is indeed problematic, since scholars using any of these data claim to make a contribution to the salience or politicization of the EU issue in domestic party contestation (cf. de Vries/van de Wardt 2011; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Ray 1999; Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Kriesi 2007). Insofar we would expect them to come to similar conclusions about different parties' emphasis on European integration. The comparison of the different data sources for the Austrian case, however, reveals an inconsistent picture and therefore leaves us with uncertainty about party politicization of European integration in Austria.

A second problem occurs with a view to the content of politicization. With the exception of the CHES data, the data only provide information about European integration in two very general categories, one including positive mentions of integration, the other negative mentions (Klingeman et al. 2006: 154-155; Dolezal 2008b: 58-60). As argued previously, however, European integration is a multi-faceted phenomenon and political controversy is likely to occur related to different aspects of integration. If we want to explore how EU politicization manifests itself substantively, different data—or at least different measures—have to be considered in the empirical analysis.

4.2.2 Data selection

Considering the limitations of the most typically used data for the study of party politicization of European integration, this dissertation departs from the common approaches and creates its own data corpus for an in-depth analysis of the Austrian case providing information on (a) the substantive manifestation of politicization with a view to different facets of European integration

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[24] See Chapter 6.2 for a more detailed discussion of the findings.

and (b) parties' active involvement in the politicization of Europe. Since the empirical core of the study focuses on politicization in the electoral arena, the material constituting the data base for the study on EU politicization is 'produced' in the context of election campaigns. This is different for the complementary and smaller study of the EU issue in decision-making arenas. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the material included in the analysis. I will first discuss the data selected for studying the electoral arena and will then present the data for the study of decision-making arenas, in both cases including information on data collection.

Table 4.1: Data selected for empirical analysis

Arena	Data
Electoral	- Manifestos (24)
	- Two-party TV debates (46)
	- Final TV debate of a campaign with all competitors (5)
	- Placards (8)
Decision-making	- Coalition agreements (3)
	- Voting results of EU treaty ratification in parliament
	- Speeches by MPs on EU treaty ratification in parliament (20)

Note: Number of documents included in analysis in parentheses.

Electoral arena:

For studying party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena, I will consider election manifestos, TV debates between candidates, and election posters.

Election manifestos: As outlined in the previous section, manifestos do not provide information as to whether the issue of Europe is actually politicized by a party, since manifestos include a variety of issues hardly ever mentioned during a campaign. Still, they provide a good overview of parties' overall policy program and will therefore be used to explore parties' positional response to different facets of European integration in the first part of the empirical study (Chapter 6.1), upon which the following parts focusing more explicitly on politicization will build (Chapters 6.2 and 6.3). By now, Austrian parties' manifestos mostly include a chapter dedicated to European integration, Europe, or EU politics. Information on parties' EU preferences can also be found in the other parts of manifestos, which are typically structured along policy fields or broader issue-categories (e.g. economy, environmental protection, immigration, education). As mentioned above, the most widely used source for manifesto data is the CMP (Budge et al. 2001;

Klingemann et al. 2006). However, the CMP data only include two categories referring favorable or hostile mentions of "European integration in general" (Klingemann et al. 2006: 154). Considering this limitation, the present study builds on the original textual sources of manifestos instead of relying on the CMP measures for party positioning towards European integration. Part of the original manifesto documents have been derived from the CMP collection, the rest has been collected by me (for details see Appendix).

TV debates between party candidates: For exploring party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena, TV debates between party candidates constitute the most important source of the present study. Since this source represents a type of data not often used in party research, a more detailed discussion is required at this point. I start with basic information about the setting of the debates and their increasing significance in Austrian election campaigns, before outlining why they constitute a very suitable data source for studying party politicization in the electoral arena.

Already in 1970, the Austrian public broadcast station ORF (*Österreichischer Rundfunk*) started to broadcast debates between the candidates for chancellorship of the two largest parties. In 1994, the format of these debates or "*confrontainments*" (Plasser/Ulram 2004: 413, emphasis in original) was expanded and since then includes two-party debates between candidates of all parties represented in parliament prior to the election and one final debate with all the frontrunners together. The two-party debates typically take approximately one hour; the final debate is longer (see Appendix for a detailed list). Despite considerable variation, these debates reach a broad audience, sometimes more than a million viewers (Posselt/Rieglhofer 2000; Plasser/Lengauer 2010b), which is due to the ORF's predominant position on the Austrian television market (see Chapter 5). Today, these debates often represent the highlight of a campaign, attracting not only attention among voters but also among other media, which report extensively about the debates (cf. Plasser/Lengauer 2010b). Hence, the debates serve as a good representation of the overall campaign dynamics.

Surveys indicate great importance to TV debates as an informational source for voters during election campaigns (Plasser/Ulram 2004). In 1999, for instance, 86 per cent of survey respondents stated to have watched (some of) the ORF-debates (ibid. 411). Though scholars are cautious not to overestimate their impact on vote choice, survey data suggest that a considerable

proportion of viewers reports that watching the debates did have some effect on the personal vote choice (1995: 32 per cent, 1999: 43 per cent; ibid. 417) or even a strong effect (1999: 16 per cent, 2002: 25 per cent; ibid. 418). These figures indicate that the TV debates play an important role in Austrian election campaigns.

For studying issue-politicization, TV debates have several advantages. First, despite a clear trend towards more intervention by the anchorperson moderating the debates[25], the format still provides party representatives with a number of opportunities to actively address the issues they like to see emphasized. Second, interaction between candidates constitutes the core element of such debates, making them the perfect ground not only to study which parties are proactive in addressing an issue, but also whether and how other parties respond. These two characteristics make TV debates eminently suitable for the research purpose of this study—also in comparison with print media data or television news reports. A certain weakness of the data relates to the fact that some parties send different speakers to represent the party on TV in one and the same election campaign. One could therefore argue that differences in the emphasis devoted to the EU issue and the specific content referred to for one party in different debates of the same campaign are due to personal viewpoints of the different speakers. Though we cannot rule out this possibility, it is reasonable to consider the speakers strategic actors that first and foremost represent the policy views and priorities of the party they belong to—after all they are all highly ranked party officials like party leaders, frontrunners in the campaign, and/or members of the governing team.

For analyzing TV debates, literal transcriptions have been used. For 2006 and 2008, transcriptions were retrieved from the Apa-DeFacto database. For the other debates, no such transcriptions have been available. Therefore, transcriptions were prepared by the author. Due to the large number and the length of the debates, it was not possible to produce full transcriptions for all the debates. Full transcriptions, hence, were only prepared for the 1995 debates.[26] For the 1999 and 2002 debates, notes were taken in order to record the overall characteristics and issues of each debate, and literal transcription was only implemented for passages of the debate with

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[25] This assessment is a by-product of the detailed analysis of TV debates conducted as part of this study.

[26] This was a deliberate decision based on two reasons—one practical and one substantive: First, video copies of the 1995 debates are in my possession, thus allowing to convert the format into digital audio format, which facilitated transcription. The 1999 and 2002 debates, however, could only be accessed in video format locally at the *Österreichische Mediathek*, which made the transcription process extremely costly in terms of time. Second, the length of the TV debates reflects much larger variation for the 1995 debates compared to the 1999 and the 2002 debates. Using averaged numbers as an indication for the length of the debates is thus less problematic for the latter two.

reference to European integration aspects. Important to note, at this stage a very inclusive conceptualization of European integration has been applied in order to include all aspects potentially related to European integration.[27]

Election posters: Though only including short messages, election posters represent a useful source for exploring whether a party actively politicizes as issue. Though placards are denied to affect voters' party choice or voting intention, they serve as a good indicator for the overall direction of a party's campaign and the issues the party prioritizes (cf. Lederer 2007; 2010). Compared to other countries, posters still play an important role in Austrian election campaigns (ibid.). In both design and content, they often equal advertisements in newspapers, on which Austrian parties spend most of their campaign budget (Lederer 2007). Whether or not posters contain mentions of European integration suggests if a party actively mobilizes on the EU issue, thus serving as strong evidence for issue-politicization. I collected the posters from parties' websites, available archives, and by contacting parties.

In addition to the original data collected for examining the politicization of European integration in Austria, further data are required for operationalizing the explanatory framework outlined in Chapter 3. For that purpose, this study draws on existing data sources and scholarly literature summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Operationalization of explanatory framework for politicization

Level of politicization	Explanatory factor	Data source
Party level	Party vis-à-vis voter position	European Election Study
	Internal dissent	Chapel Hill Expert Survey
	Location in policy space	Chapel Hill Expert Survey
	Government/opposition status	Literature
	Party family	Literature
	Systemic salience	My data
Party system level	Date of EU accession	Literature
	Party repositioning	My data
	Government participation of Euroskeptic parties	Literature

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[27] Therefore, some of the transcribed passages have been excluded from the analysis at a later point because of their loose or absent connection to European integration.

Decision-making arenas:

For studying the EU issue in decision-making arenas, I will focus on the government policy towards European integration as outlined in coalition agreements and on parliamentary contestation about EU treaty ratification (voting behavior and speeches).

Coalition agreements: These documents present the final outcome of coalition negotiations and typically outline the government program for the upcoming legislative period. They provide information on the government's political priorities related to a variety of political issues, often including European integration. In particular, the latter will most likely be included in case the two coalition partners diverge in their general position towards European integration in order to determine the joint position as agreed upon for the time of cooperation in government. Coalition agreements have been collected via online search.

Voting behavior and speeches in EU treaty ratification in parliament: For studying party behavior towards European integration in the national parliament, we need to focus on EU matters on which the parliament has a say. EU treaty amendments constitute such matters. The present study will consider voting behavior and speeches held by MPs as part of the parliamentary discussion about the ratification of EU treaties. Information about the debates, including voting behavior and literal transcriptions of speeches, has been derived from the website of the Austrian parliament (for details see Appendix).

4.3 Methods

This section summarizes the methods used to explore party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena. It will first focus on the content of EU politicization and will then turn to issue-emphasis as the second component of politicization. The slightly different procedures applied in the smaller study of decision-making arenas will be discussed separately in the final empirical chapter explicitly devoted to these arenas (see Chapter 7).

4.3.1 Measuring party positioning and the content of EU politicization

In research on issue-positioning and party contestation towards European integration based on textual sources like manifestos or media data, scholars mostly use these texts to translate party statements into numerical criteria and aggregate them on a single pro-anti European integration scale for statistical testing (cf. Helbling/Tresch 2011; Pennings 2006; Gabel/Hix 2004; Kleinnijenhuis/Pennings 2001; Ray 2007; Marks et al. 2007). Most often, a clear-cut conceptualization of European integration, on which the identification of relevant text passages builds, is lacking. However, most of the studies seem to focus on general references towards European integration and mentions of general support for or opposition to further integration that are found in the texts. This is problematic insofar, as we lose a lot of information on the complexity of the European integration issue and how parties actually refer to the issue. This complexity, however, is required if we want to empirically answer questions related to parties' issue-positioning and the content of EU politicization in domestic contestation.[28] As argued in Chapter 3, some parties will express their general support to the project of European integration, but may be concerned about the EU's policy priorities. Furthermore, they may refrain from negative evaluations in their general mentions of European integration, but express critique more implicitly in their claims for EU reform. These nuances can only be captured empirically by applying a more fine-grained analysis of textual data.

The present study opts for a qualitative analysis of the selected textual data (cf. Mayring 2008; Kuckartz 2007) that (a) considers different types of references in parties' mentions of European integration and (b) distinguishes between different facets of European integration referred to in these mentions. The analysis is therefore employed in two stages that together provide a more nuanced picture towards parties' EU positioning and politicization compared to previous research. The methodical procedure for analyzing the texts is summarized in Table 4.3 and will be described in more detail in the following.

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[28] More recently, scholars have also started to apply frame analysis to the study of parties' EU positioning and politicization. The framing approach seeks to go beyond the classification of actors as either supportive or adverse to a particular question or issue by providing a more comprehensive description of the specific interpretations that actors apply to give meaning to a particular phenomenon, which is labeled a 'frame' (cf. Entman 1993; Donati 2001; Benford/Snow 2000; Snow/Benford 1998). However, the framing approach is very ambiguous and in the context EU party research, scholars mostly arrive at rather abstract frames or explicitly important aspects constitutive of the concept of frames from their analysis (cf. Van Os 2008; Helbling et al. 2010).

Table 4.3: Procedure for analyzing textual data

Reference to EI	Category	Description
Type of reference	Evaluations	Mentions of EI describing its value or downside
	Claims for change/reform	Mentions of EI demanding change or reform
Content of reference	General EI	General mentions of EI without further specification
	Constitutive EI	Mentions of EI concerning the 'nature' and polity of the EU and process of EI; geographical/functional boundaries; competences and decision-making rules; widening and deepening
	Policy direction EI	Mentions of EI concerning policy alternatives, i.e. EU policy priorities, policy direction of EU policies

Note: EI means European integration.

Identifying text passages related to European integration, the present analysis considers different types of references, namely evaluative statements and claims for change or reform. The former allow for assessing to what extent political parties value European integration, i.e. whether they conceive of it as an opportunity or threat. The latter captures whether parties strive for change or reform, which can be in support or opposition to further integration or related to the policy direction (see below). Considering both evaluative statements and claims for reform is of utmost importance. First, it allows for including all sorts of references related to European integration, even if they are embedded in a paragraph or statement that first and foremost deals with a different policy issue, as illustrated in the following example. If a party discusses its political concepts related to climate protection and in this context claims for a kerosene tax implemented at the European level, this statement entails a different understanding of European integration compared to a statement about immigration policy that expresses demands for full sovereignty on questions of immigration control. In the former example, a party implicitly expresses support for further integration, whereas in the latter example the opposite is the case. Second, the distinction between evaluative statements and claims-making is important for capturing critique towards or dissatisfaction with European integration that is not expressed explicitly by parties but masked as claims for reform. This can be expected to be of particular relevance for parties supportive to European integration that may be reluctant to explicitly expressing critique in order not to undermine the EU's already weak legitimacy. To the extent that these parties are unsatisfied with

the current state of integration, they will instead make use of claims-making to outline their political priorities for Europe. Therefore, including parties' EU related claims is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of parties' views towards European integration.

In a second step, the analysis will consider different facets of European integration. Instead of using one all-encompassing European integration category, I distinguish between three substantive categories: *general statements* about European integration (e.g. 'we've always been supportive of the EU project'); *constitutive statements* referring to the EU's institutional architecture, its functional and geographical boundaries, competences and decision-making rules; and *statements related to the direction of policy*, including e.g. different views towards EU agricultural policy or different policy priorities for economic development. These categories build on Bartolini's (2005, 2006) distinction between general, constitutive, and isomorphic issues. Different from Bartolini, however, I apply this distinction to parties' EU related *statements* and not to the topics or issues they mention in a statement. This means that I do not predetermine whether an issue is of general, constitutive, or isomorphic 'nature', because I would argue that issues can be discussed from different angles (even if one or the other issue may be more familiar to either of the categories). To provide an example, a claim for reform of EU agricultural policy is neither constitutive nor isomorphic per se; whether it falls under former or latter category depends on the exact claim rather than the issue category (agricultural policy): If a party claims for democratization of EU agricultural policy (e.g. to grant a say to the European Parliament in this policy field), the claim is of constitutive nature, since it concerns the allocation of competences and decision-making rules; however, if the party argues for reform with a view to different funding priorities (e.g. to subsidize organic farmers and small businesses instead of large companies), this concerns the direction of policy (and is thus of isomorphic character in Bartolini's terms). Hence the latter category concerns what we typically call policy alternatives, and these need not necessarily imply any preference regarding the composition of the EU polity and its competences but rather refer to EU policy priorities. I will therefore assess for each statement whether it falls under the general, constitutive, or the category of policy direction. This approach will provide us with a much more detailed picture of parties' concerns related to European integration that allows for disentangling party positioning towards different aspects of the multi-faceted EU issue.

4.3.2 Measuring issue-emphasis and parties' active EU politicization

For measuring parties' emphasis on the EU issue and their active engagement in the politicization of Europe in the electoral arena, this study uses a combination of different measures—both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative measures for EU issue-emphasis will be derived from the analysis of TV debates. It is operationalized as the number of words devoted to European integration questions relative to the total number of words for each party in each debate. This includes all sorts of topics related to European integration and is thus a very inclusive approach. Important to highlight, it also includes all side-references mentioned within the context of an issue identified as European. While this could be seen as overestimating the salience of European integration, it is reasonable insofar, as this best reflects the proportion of time that each debate centers on Europe, even if this includes the seesaw between parties and excludes an analysis of other domestic issues, as this would not be possible to code for a single person. The number of words is derived from the literal transcriptions of the debates. Given the lack of full transcriptions for the 1999 and 2002 debates, party averages have been calculated from the total number of words of the 1995, 2006, and 2008 debates in order to receive comparable figures for 1999 and 2002 despite the lack of the exact total number of words for these debates.

In addition to these quantitative measures, the analysis also includes three qualitative indicators providing information about whether or not parties' consider European integration a top-priority issue and actively politicize it:

Agenda setting dynamic in TV debates: Making use of the interactive element of TV debates, I will explore the agenda setting dynamics related to the EU issue, i.e. I will analyze whether a party behaves proactively by putting the issue on the agenda of a debate or only responds to questions or critique raised by the anchorperson or its direct competitor in a debate. This serves as a very good indication for parties' attempts to politicize European integration.

Most-important-issue question in final TV debate: Unlike the previous indicator and the quantitative measures for parties' EU issue-emphasis, this indicator does not use the two-party TV debates but the final TV debate between the leading representatives of all parties that is broadcasted at the end of each election campaign (referred to as *Elefantenrunde*). This final debate often starts with an introductory round: The anchorperson asks each party speaker to briefly outline its policy priorities in response to the so called most-important-issue question. If a party mentions European integration in response to this question, this is a clear indication that the

party considers it a top-priority issue in its campaigning. Though the question is only available for three of the five final debates, it will be included in the analysis.[29]

Election posters: The final indicator used to assess parties' active engagement in the politicization of Europe is whether or not a party refers to European integration on its election posters. Given the public visibility of posters and the fact that parties refer to their top-priority issues on placards, whether or not posters contain mentions of European integration suggests if a party actively mobilizes on the EU issue, thus serving as strong evidence for issue-politicization.

The combination of quantitative measures and qualitative indicators for identifying EU issue-emphasis is a very innovative approach in the study of party politicization. As will be demonstrated in the empirical analysis, this approach provides us with more convincing results compared to other available data for Austrian parties' EU emphasis in domestic party contestation (see Chapter 6.2).

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[29] The question was not asked in the final debates of the 1995 and the 2002 election campaigns.

5. Austria and European integration: introducing the case

This chapter will introduce the Austrian case. It starts with a very brief introduction into Austria's political and party system, including information on the parties identified as relevant for this study. The next section summarizes Austria's way towards EU membership, the political and public debate prior to accession, and key information about the accession referendum. The following section then focuses on the post-accession period, providing preliminary insight into the role of the European integration issue in public discourse since the country's membership in the EU. It includes information on public and published opinion as well as popular initiatives addressing European integration questions. The section is intended to contextualize the empirical study and to sketch opportunities and constraints for parties to politicize the issue of Europe. The last section briefly summarizes the state of the art on Austrian parties and European integration, before turning to the expectations for politicization and its manifestation in the Austrian case.

5.1 The Austrian political and party system: a brief introduction

5.1.1 The Austrian political system

The Austrian political system reflects a parliamentary system with presidential elements: The government is dependent on a majority in the *Nationalrat*, composed according to the outcome of the general elections, and is formed upon the formal order of the Federal president after the general elections. The president is directly elected by the people and enjoys comparatively wide-ranging competences—at least according to the formal constitution. The constitutional reality, however, clearly gives primacy to the parliamentary element, making the Federal Chancellor—and not the President—the leading figure in Austrian politics (cf. Pelinka 2009; Pelinka/Rosenberger 2007). Austria is a federal state, though a centralized one. This is reflected in the comparatively wide-ranging competences located at the federal level and also expressed in the quasi legislative monopoly of the parliament's lower chamber (*Nationalrat*), whereas the federal assembly (*Bundesrat*), composed according to the results of elections at the regional level in the nine *Bundesländer*, lacks significant political power. Until 2008 elections to the *Nationalrat* took place every four years, since then every five years. The 183 MPs are directly

elected by the electorate via party lists and according to proportional representation (cf. Müller 2006b).

Since the 1980s, the Austrian political system has undergone substantial transformations. Previously it was labeled "hyper-stable"[30] (Pelinka 2009: 638), characterized by a number of specificities that distinguished the country from other Western European liberal democracies—in particular, a highly concentrated party system with strong political loyalties and great importance of political parties not only for recruiting the political personal but for structuring social life in many respects (cf. Pelinka 2005). Another characteristic was the dominant role of corporatist interests groups, represented in the Austrian system of social partnership (*Sozialpartnerschaft*), with strong ties to political parties, a large degree of organizational density, and privileged access to as well as considerable influence in political decision-making processes (cf. Tálos 1993; Karlhofer/Tálos 2005). The political culture, moreover, was characterized by a strong consensus-orientation (cf. Pelinka 1994b; Pelinka et al. 2000; Pelinka/Rosenberger 2007; Gehler 2006). However, the predominance of both political parties as well as corporatist interest groups gradually and significantly decreased since the 1980s (cf. Pelinka 2005; Tálos 2005). This is also to be viewed in connection with the shortening of the state sector, through which parties formerly executed great influence on the structure of the economy and society more generally: The privatizations starting in the 1980s and the successive reduction of the welfare state in the 1990s limited parties' societal influence and the perpetuation of partisan attachments (cf. Pelinka/Rosenberger 2007). This development is also to be viewed in connection with attempts since the late 1980s to join the EU as a full member (cf. Pelinka 1994b).

Another important factor specific to the Austrian political culture was the rarity of 'minimum winning coalitions': For several decades, Austria was governed by single-party governments or 'grad coalitions' between the two largest parties—both highly untypical configurations under an electoral system of proportional representation (cf. Pelinka 1994b; Müller 2006b). This specificity is to be seen in connection with the consensus-orientation of the Austrian political culture since the end of World War II, which was a historical product of the experience of the First Republic, when societal disruption had politically been expressed towards conflict, ultimately leading into civil war in 1934 (cf. Gerlich/Campbell 2000; Pelinka/Rosenberger 2007). However, due to the steady decrease of the two mainstream parties' vote share since the mid-

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[30] Translation by SM.

1980s, single-party governments have become virtually impossible; and also the building of 'grand coalitions' does not constitute an unwritten rule anymore, will be outlined in more detail in 5.1.2.

To sum up, the previously extremely stable Austrian political system has undergone significant transformations since the 1980s and became more similar to other Western European liberal democracies. Scholars describe this development and as a process of de-austrification (*Entaustrifizierung*) and westernization (cf. Pelinka 1994b, 2009; Rosenberger 2000). The political consequences are less predictability of political majorities in the party system and intensified political competition, thus departing from former hyper-stability and strong consensus-orientation (cf. Müller 2006b; Pelinka 2005; Müller/Fallend 2004; Plasser/Ulram 2006; Plasser/Seeber 2007; Dolezal 2008a).

Austrian peculiarities and delays also concern the media landscape. In particular, two characteristics are worth mentioning with a view to the subject of this study. First, an extremely high level of concentration on the print sector and, second, a delay in the dualization of the radio and TV market (cf. Plasser/Lengauer 2010a):

- *Print sector:* The Austrian press is characterized by extremely high concentration. This concerns both daily newspapers as well as weekly magazines. The two largest daily papers together reach a distribution rate beyond 50 per cent (ibid.). Another characteristic is the "tabloidization" (*Boulevardisierung*, ibid. 40f) of the Austrian print sector, which significantly increased since the 1960s (Uris/Lucht 2009, cited in Plasser/Lengauer 2010a: 40f) and is much higher than in other European countries: The proportion of tabloid papers against the total print run of quality, mixed and tabloid press increased from 16 per cent in 1960 to 66 per cent in 2006. In comparison, it reflects 36 per cent in Germany and 41 in Switzerland (ibid.). Important to notice, Austria's biggest tabloid, the *Neue Kronen Zeitung* (hereafter: *Krone*), stands out worldwide with a distribution range above 40 per cent (!),[31] making the paper an extremely important actor for published opinion and politics, more generally: Survey data indicate that a vast majority of both Austrian journalists and politicians ascribe strong influence on politics to the *Krone* (Plasser/Seeber

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[31] In comparison, the market leaders in Germany and the UK reach 18 per cent (*Bild*-Zeitung) and 20 per cent (*The Sun*), respectively (Plasser/Lengauer 2010a: 38).

2010).[32]

- *Television market:* Among all European countries, Austria was the last to open the radio and television market for private providers (radio since 1993; television since 2001) (Plasser/Lengauer 2010a: 48). This is the reason for the predominance of the Austrian public broadcast station (*Österreichischer Rundfunk*, ORF) on the television market: Despite significant decrease since the 1990s, it still arrives at a distribution rate of 42 per cent, which is relatively high in international comparison (ibid.). Regarding political information and news, the ORF still represents the most important "content producer" in Austria and has a "quasi-informational monopoly"[33] (ibid. 30), whereas the newscasts provided by private stations so far do not exceed the 2 per cent threshold.

In a nutshell, the Austrian media landscape is strongly dominated by two media—the *Krone* in the print sector and the ORF on the television market. Plasser and Lengauer (2010a: 45) even label the two Austria's "journalistic power and opinion centers"[34].

5.1.2 Political parties and party system

Despite proportional representation in the electoral system, the Austrian party system was long referred to as a two or two-and-a-half party system, characterized by high stability and concentration and dominated by the two largest parties, the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the People's Party (ÖVP) (cf. Müller 2006a, 2000b; Pelinka 2005; Pelinka/Plasser 1989). The SPÖ and the ÖVP are rooted in the historical party camps dating back to the late 19th century—the Socialists and Christian democrats, respectively (cf. Ucakar 2006; Müller 2006a). These two parties have historically dominated the Austrian political system and society for several decades, also reflected in a high concentration of votes: From 1945 until 1986, the share of votes for these two parties together ranged between 83 and 94 per cent of all valid votes—and still between 75 and 88 per cent of all eligible voters (Table 5, Müller 2006b: 290). In terms of seats, the concentration was even higher, ranging between 86 and 98 per cent due to the electoral system

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[32] 96 per cent of the surveyed journalists and 87 per cent of politicians think that the *Krone* has strong or very strong influence on politics (Table 1 in Plasser/Seeber 2010: 280).
[33] Translation by SM.
[34] Translation by SM.

(ibid.). The SPÖ and ÖVP also dominated federal government until the end of the 1990s—either in a 'grand coalition' or in single party governments.[35] However, strong dealignment tendencies among the electorate steadily decreased the SPÖ and ÖVP's predominance in the Austrian party system since the 1980s (cf. Plasser/Seeber 2007), accompanied by electoral gains for the third traditional party represented in the Austrian party system—the Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ)—and the establishing of new parties—the Greens (*Die Grünen*) and the Liberals (*Liberales Forum*):

The FPÖ originates from the much smaller third traditional camp represented in Austria since the late 19th century, the so called German-nationalists (cf. Pelinka 2002; Luther 2006). Founded in 1956 as the succession party of the VdU (*Verband der Unabhängigen*), the FPÖ's party elite consisted of former members of the NSDAP and until the late 1990s the party rejected the conception of an Austrian nation, while proclaiming that Austria were a German state and the Austrians part of the German people (cf. Frölich-Steffen 2004). For a short period during the 1980s, then-party leader Norbert Steger redirected the FPÖ towards a more liberal profile and away from German-nationalism. This is also the period when the FPÖ was in a government coalition with the SPÖ (1983-1986). However, when Jörg Haider took over party leadership in 1986, the FPÖ recollected its ideological origins, resulting in a termination of the coalition on the part of the SPÖ. In the 1990s, Haider repositioned the FPÖ as a radical right and populist right party and from then onwards proclaimed an Austrian patriotism instead (ibid.). Consistent with the party's founding personals' ideological rooting in the NSDAP, Haider as well as other members of the FPÖ repeatedly stood out with statements relativizing National Socialism and contacts with the extreme right milieu (cf. Wodak/Pelinka 2002). Compared to the SPÖ and the ÖVP, however, the ideological fundament of the FPÖ is much less coherent and recurring attempts to move the party into a different direction (either more liberal or more nationalist) resulted in several split-offs (see below). Under the lead of Haider, the FPÖ could record considerable electoral success and became the most successful party internationally compared to either other radical right or populist right parties (cf. Picker et al. 2004; Pelinka 2002). The 1999 election so far marked the peak of the continuous electoral success: With a vote share of 26.9 per

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[35] 'Grand coalitions' from 1947-1965 (ÖVP-SPÖ) and 1987-1999 (SPÖ-ÖVP), single party governments from 1966-1970 (ÖVP) and 1970-1983 (SPÖ); this pattern was only interrupted from 1983-1986 by an SPÖ-FPÖ coalition (cf. Müller 2006b).

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cent the FPÖ for the first time became second strongest party (415 votes ahead of the ÖVP) (cf. Müller 2000a).

The Greens, elected to the parliament in 1986 for the first time, were the first successful party not rooted in one of the three traditional camps mentioned above. The party is the product of the merging of two parties formerly only successful at the regional level, one focusing on environmental questions and the other striving for a broader alternative conception of the functioning of society (cf. Dachs 2006). These groups emanated from protest movements occurring as an expression of the emerging of post-material values and far-reaching societal transformations. The Greens' party profile combines a strong environmental commitment with left-wing social and economic policies. The party, however, is characterized by large heterogeneity, which has repeatedly led to intra-party conflict about the programmatic orientation (ibid.). Still, considered as a party at the margins—in programmatic terms—in the beginning, the Greens have meanwhile established themselves as a potential coalition partner and participate in government coalitions at the regional and local level.

The Liberals were founded by former MPs of the FPÖ in 1993, who formed a separate parliamentary group. This step was caused by the FPÖ's repositioning under party leader Mr. Haider towards a populist right and anti-immigrant party, which discomfited the liberal wing within the FPÖ (cf. Ligl 2006). The final triggers of the formerly latent conflicts were the FPÖ's public initiative (*Volksbegehren*) "Austria first" (which was seen as a xenophobic campaign against immigrants by the liberal FPÖ representatives) and the FPÖ's rejection of Austria's accession to the EU (ibid.). While the Liberals succeeded in achieving the minimal threshold to be represented in parliament in the 1994 and 1995 elections, they failed in 1999 and later elections. Though still existing as a party, the Liberals today represent a negligible actor in Austrian politics.

Table 5.1: Election results Austrian general elections 1983-2008

Party	1983	1986	1990	1994	1995[i]	1999	2002	2006	2008
SPÖ	47,6	43,1	42,8	34,9	38,1	33,2	36,5	35,3	29,3
	(90)	(80)	(80)	(65)	(71)	(65)	(69)	(68)	(57)
ÖVP	43,2	41,3	32,1	27,7	28,3	26,9	42,3	34,3	25,9
	(81)	(77)	(60)	(52)	(52)	(52)	(79)	(66)	(51)
FPÖ	5,0	9,7	16,6	22,5	22,0	26,9	10,0	11,0	17,4
	(12)	(18)	(33)	(42)	(41)	(52)	(18)	(21)	(34)
Greens	-	4,8	4,8	7,3	4,8	7,4	9,5	11,0	10,4
		(8)	(10)	(13)	(9)	(14)	(17)	(21)	(20)
Liberals	-	-	-	6,0	5,5	3,7	0,9	-	2,1
				(11)	(10)				
BZÖ	-	-	-	-	-			4,1	10,7
								(7)	(21)

Notes: [i] including results of election rerun in several districts in October 1996; number of seats in parentheses.

Source: Official records of the Interior Ministry, see
http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/nationalrat/NRW_History.aspx, accessed 19/9/2011.

Not least to the establishing, respectively growth of these parties (FPÖ, Greens, and Liberals), the Austrian party system has undergone substantial transformation from a two-party system to moderate pluralism, to use Sartori's (1976) well-known typology. Applying the more fine-grained classification for party system change developed by Mair (1997), the transformation of the Austrian party system becomes even more apparent. Mair distinguishes between the openness and closeness in the structure of competition for control of the executive (Mair 1997, 2006b). Whether a party system is to be considered as open or closed is, according to Mair, depending on three factors (ibid.): patterns of government alternation (i.e. whether a government is fully or partly replaced by opposition parties), the degree of innovation (i.e. whether the party constellation of a government is innovative or known from before), and individual parties' access to government (i.e. whether access to office in principle is open to all parties or whether some are excluded). According to these criteria, the Austrian party system has undergone significant changes (Müller 2006b):[36] After the consolidation of the party system after the end of World War II, the party system was highly cartelized—hence: closed—with one 'grand coalition' between ÖVP and SPÖ following the other without alternation, innovation or access for another party. This changed in 1966 with the alternating single-party governments of the ÖVP and then SPÖ, and the formation of the SPÖ-FPÖ coalition government (1983-1987). In this period, the

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[36] For a summary of the government constellations see Table A1 in the Appendix.

Austrian party system can be described as highly competitive, with both government alternation and innovation and all three parties represented in parliament at that time having access to government. This changed again in 1987 with the return of a series of 'grand coalitions' between the SPÖ and the ÖVP until 1999. Important to note, the FPÖ's exclusion from government was not only the logical by-product of the SPÖ-ÖVP coalitions: At least on behalf of the SPÖ, a coalition with the FPÖ was ruled out prior to each election because of the FPÖ's radicalization under party leader Jörg Haider; though an explicit exclusionary strategy was absent on the ÖVP's part (except for the 1994 elections under party leader Erhard Busek), the party did not make use of its arithmetical majority with the FPÖ before 1999.[37] The Greens and the Liberals lacked the size to be considered a majority provider, making them de facto excluded from office. The 1999 election then marked a watershed in Austrian politics in several aspects: Due to the building of a minimum-winning coalition between the ÖVP and the FPÖ under ÖVP-Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, the FPÖ's formal exclusion from government office came to an end and a new government constellation was established. The FPÖ's entry into federal government reflected the breaking of a taboo: Though the FPÖ shared with other successful populist right parties its anti-immigrant and anti-establishment rhetoric, it significantly differed—and still differs—from other successful radical right and populist right parties due to its problematic positioning towards and the relativization of National Socialism (cf. Pelinka 2002; Wodak/Pelinka 2002). Hence despite the party's mainstream character when it comes to its size, the FPÖ is to be considered as an extreme party outside the European democratic consensus and therefore not able to govern (Pelinka 2002). Not least due to these circumstances, the formation of the ÖVP-FPÖ government in 2000 led to widespread public protest both within and outside the country. In Austria, the inauguration (4 February 2000) was accompanied by huge protests that lasted for several months. Internationally, it led to the measures from the other 14 EU member states lasting from February until September 2000 (cf. Merlingen *et al.* 2001; Karlhofer/Sickinger 2001; see also 5.3.2 in this chapter). The FPÖ's inability to govern became obvious in 2002. The coalition collapsed after serious protest within the FPÖ against the government policy—stimulated by Jörg Haider (who was not part of the FPÖ's governing team) and his confidants. The snap elections resulted in a disaster for the FPÖ (see Table 5.1). Though the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition was finally rebuilt after the

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[37] For an illuminating summary of the absent (in case of the ÖVP) or incomplete (in case of the SPÖ) efforts to politically exclude the FPÖ cf. Art (2007).

2002 election, at a certain point in time another innovative coalition seemed possible: For the first time in their party history, the Greens took part in coalition negotiations (with the ÖVP). Though the negotiations finally failed, they are to be seen as another indicator for the opening of the Austrian party system. During the revived ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, the FPÖ's inability to govern became evident again: In April 2005, all FPÖ-members of government left the party and founded the BZÖ in order to escape increasing intra-party conflict and objection against the government policy. Jörg Haider was again the leading figure in this conflict. However, while he was in the oppositional camp within the party organizing protest against the governing team in 2002, the opposite was the case in 2005: Under the lead of Haider, the FPÖ governing elite founded a new party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (*Bündnis Zukunft Österreich*, BZÖ). The BZÖ was founded explicitly to the purpose of staying in government and proceeding with the government policy. Different from the first temporarily successful split-off of the FPÖ—the Liberals—, the BZÖ's policy program hardly differed from the FPÖ's, in particular with regard to the issues of immigration and European integration (cf. Luther 2006). The BZÖ was successful in exceeding the 4 per cent threshold to be represented in the *Nationalrat* in the 2006 and 2008 elections. With the death of founding father and party leader Jörg Haider in a car crash in October 2008 (i.e. after the elections) and the return of the biggest regional party to the FPÖ in June 2010, the political survival of the BZÖ remains insecure, whereas the FPÖ seems to live up to its earlier success in the late 1990s—at least according to polls.[38]

These developments indicate that from 1999 onwards, the Austrian party system again and even more reflected a highly competitive system. This assessment holds despite the return of the 'grand coalition' after the 2006 and the 2008 elections. The 'grand coalition' meanwhile lacks its defining feature, i.e. size: The SPÖ and ÖVP's added vote share has reached a low in 2008 with 55.2 per cent and the return of the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition after the 2006 and the 2008 elections was due to the lack of alternatives: Neither of the two parties had a majority with either the FPÖ, the Greens or the BZÖ, and cooperation between either of these parties was virtually impossible due to political reason: While the Greens and the FPÖ, respectively the BZÖ are political foes due to their completely different worldviews, cooperation between the FPÖ and the BZÖ was unthinkable at that time because of personal hostility among the former party fellows.

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[38] See e.g. http://derstandard.at/1313024449318/IMAS-Umfrage-SPOe-OeVP-und-FPOe-in-Sonntagsfrage-nahezu-gleichauf, accessed 30/11/2011.

5.2 Austria's way towards Europe: the pre-accession period

5.2.1 Applying for EC membership—finally

Among the prosperous liberal democracies in Europe, Austria was one of the latecomers to joining the EC/EU. When the ECSC was founded in 1951, Austria had not yet regained full independence after World War II, thus precluding membership in the ECSC from the outset. After the regaining of full independence with the State Treaty in 1955, the country's neutrality status was the main reason for reluctance towards membership in the European Communities, though membership would have been beneficial in economic terms. In that sense, the Austrian situation resembled the one of the other neutral countries, like Switzerland, Ireland, Finland and Sweden. Only the gradual reinterpretation of neutrality over the course of time eventually smoothed the way towards EU membership (cf. Pelinka et al. 1994). Together with Finland and Sweden, Austria joined the EU in 1995.

However, attempts towards stronger ties with the EC started much earlier, even though until the late 1980s the ultimate objective was not full membership. This was due to the country's specific geopolitical position during the Cold War and its neutrality status, both constraining efforts to fully participate in the supranational EC (cf. Luif 2007). As a consequence, thus, Austria opted for the "'soft' versions of Western European integration" (Pelinka 2004: 211) by co-founding the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960 and seeking closer association with the EC.[39] However, the growing economic importance of the EC, the joining of the EC by two founding members of the EFTA in 1973 (the UK and Denmark), and increasing political attempts to strengthen the country's economic competitiveness led to more explicit efforts for becoming a full member of the EC in the late 1980s (cf. Luif 2007). This was accompanied by a gradual reinterpretation of neutrality: While previously there had been consensus among the political elite of the two major parties, the center-left SPÖ and the center-right ÖVP, that neutrality and EC membership were incompatible, this view gradually changed over time, and finally, the two parties agreed upon applying for full EC membership and in 1989 handed over the application to the Council for accession to the European Community. Accession negotiations were completed in March 1994, and the referendum on accession—obligatory according to the Austrian

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[39] For a detailed summary of these efforts cf. Schaller (1994a) and Luif (1995, 2007).

constitution—was held in June 1994. Due to its positive outcome, Austria became a full member of the European Union on 1 January 1995.

The driving forces seeking full membership in the EC were the Austrian business organizations (cf. Schaller 1994a, b; Luif 1995, 2007). Representing large parts of the ÖVP clientele, the ÖVP then was also the party most consequently pushing for membership since early 1988, thus continuing its previous support for stronger cooperation or association with the EC in order to fully benefit from European market integration. After initial reluctance, in April 1989 the SPÖ (and also the trade unions) finally proclaimed support for membership under the condition that Austria would keep its permanent neutrality, high social welfare standards, and strict environmental protection laws. The FPÖ, which had actually been the first party to speak out for EC membership already in the 1960s, supported the government's efforts seeking membership. However, the party underwent a policy-shift over the course of time and later become one of the most fundamental critics against EU accession and European integration (see 5.2.2 and 5.4.1).[40] The Greens, represented in the *Nationalrat* only since 1986, opposed EC and later EU membership (cf. Heschl 2002).

5.2.2 The pre-accession debate

The Austrian referendum on EU accession was held in June 1994. The public debate, however, started much earlier and was very intense (cf. Schaller 1994a, b). There was a broad consensus among political and societal elites in support for accession. Still, there were also powerful voices against EU membership and important actors changed sides between the application for accession in 1989 and the completion of the accession negotiations in March 1994 (cf. Schaller 1994a, b; Heschl 2002). Among the camp of supporters were the two largest and governing parties (the SPÖ and the ÖVP), Federal Presidents Mr. Waldheim and, later, Mr. Klestil, the Conference of Governors (*Landeshauptleutekonferenz*), and, quite important, the corporatist interest organizations. After their split-off from the FPÖ in 1993, the Liberals supported the pro-accession camp—as the only opposition party. A majority of media also supported accession, though with important exceptions: Two large tabloids—the daily newspaper *täglich alles* and the

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[40] For a summary of intra-party dissent on the question of EU accession cf. Luif (1995) and Heschl (2002).

weekly paper *Ganze Woche*—opposed accession and heavily campaigned against the EU and Austria's accession. Quite importantly, Austria's biggest daily tabloid, the *Krone*, changed sides in early 1994. Though the paper had kept a low profile on the question of accession before, commentaries repeatedly had reflected an oppositional stance (Heschl 2002). However, from January 1994 onwards, the *Krone* actively campaigned for Austria's EU accession. This started with an editorial article by *Krone* editor Hans Dichand, whose position was then followed even by those commentators who had formerly argued quite explicitly against EU membership (ibid.). The *Krone's* support for accession was interpreted by scholars as an important factor in the surprisingly large majority in support for accession at the referendum (ibid.). The *Krone*, however, was not the only actor changing sides: The FPÖ, which had actually been the first party to raise claims for EC membership and consequently had supported Austria's application for accession in 1989, gradually repositioned itself in the early 1990s and finally became one of the most critical actors in their campaigning against accession, revitalizing its well-tried slogan "Austria first" and claiming to be the sustainer of Austrian interests and identity (Schaller 1994b: 80f). The Greens also opposed EU accession, but tried to distinguish themselves from the FPÖ campaign. After heated conflict among several representatives about the 'scope' of the party's No, the Greens argued to support European unification in principle, but to reject its implementation in the shape of the Maastricht-EU (ibid.). Among representatives of both the FPÖ and the Greens, however, there were also supporters of EU membership, resulting in continuous intra-party conflict that weakened the no-accession camp (Schaller 1994b; Heschl 2002).

Following Schaller (1994b: 51), the main arguments put forward by EU supporters can be clustered in four groups: economic benefits, security aspects, participation in EU decision-making as a factual increase in sovereignty, and an increase in problem-solving capacity. Similar, though with reversed sign, these aspects were also quite important in the argumentation of the contra-accession camp. In addition, critique was raised with a view to ecological concerns (including the question of transit traffic and EURATOM), democratic deficit claims, and more general opposition to the Maastricht-EU.[41]

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[41] Heschl (2002) provides a different systematization of the pre-accession debate by summarizing different myths established by both camps in the run-up to the referendum, five in support of and three in opposition to EU accession (ibid. 193-266): Among the former are (1) the myth of accession as seminal and a chance for the youth and the hard-working, (2) accession as a question of being part or being excluded, (3) accession for lack of alternatives, (4) the Europe myth reflecting a spirit of optimism, and (5) the nemesis myth outlining nightmare scenarios if the country would not join the EU; the contra-accession myths are (1) the converse nemesis myth emphasizing negative

5.2.3 The referendum on EU accession

The Austrian referendum about EU accession, held on 12 June 1994, resulted in a two-third majority in support for membership: 66.6 per cent of the voters opted in favor of accession at a turnout rate of 82.4 per cent (cf. Pelinka 1994a). Despite a clear majority in favor of accession among almost all societal groups, survey data indicate differences in particular according to gender, education, socio-economic status, party affiliation, and media consumption (Plasser/Ulram 1994: 96ff): Whereas 70 per cent of the male voters voted in favor of accession, support was lower among women (62 per cent); support for accession was higher among the better educated and wealthier as well as those with an optimistic evaluation of the general economic situation—and considerably lower among voters aged 30 years or younger and those who distrust the government and members of the parliament. Significant differences also occur when considering voter's party affiliation (ibid): Not surprisingly, voters of the SPÖ, the ÖVP, and the Liberals by large majority supported accession, whereas FPÖ- and Green-voters by majority opposed accession. Distinguishing between readers of different newspapers, the voting behavior by trend followed the tone of coverage towards EU accession in the run-up to the referendum: With 75 per cent, support for accession was disproportionately high among readers of the quality papers *Die Presse* and *Der Standard*, as well as the *Kurier* that is to be qualified a mixture of quality paper and tabloid; it reflected the referendum outcome among readers of the *Krone* (65 per cent), and was significantly lower among consumers of *täglich alles* (45 per cent), the paper that had heavily campaigned against accession (see above).

When focusing on voters' motives for supporting or opposing accession, a striking difference emerges between the primarily economy- and prosperity-focused motives in the supporters' camp on the one hand, and the highly diffuse and strongly emotionalized fears of opponents on the other hand, including concerns about disadvantages for agriculture, a worsening in the quality of products and the environmental situation, an increase in unemployment, and a loss of sovereignty and neutrality (Plasser/Ulram 1994: 109f). Besides economic motives, another reason for support of accession was to hinder Austria's isolation not only economically but also politically (ibid.).

As scholars argue, the high level of support thus was rather attributed to expectations about the

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consequences from accession, (2) the annexation myth (accession as abandoning sovereignty and autonomy), and (3) the prosperity myth suggesting that there was no demand for EU accession.

country's economic improvement and the strong pro-accession consensus among a variety of important political and societal actors than to a generally notable Europhile Austrian public (Fallend 2008). This may be one reason why support for EU membership among Austrians significantly declined after accession and remains to be comparatively low in Austria, as demonstrated in the following section.

5.3 Europe in Austrian public discourse: the post-accession period

5.3.1 Public and published opinion towards European integration

Despite the comparatively high level of support for EU membership expressed in the accession referendum, public Euroskepticism since then is relatively high and stable in Austria. As Eurobarometer data show, support for membership is constantly below the EU average (see Figure 5.1), with the Austrians even undercutting the notoriously Euroskeptic British in several years.

Figure 5.1: Support for EU membership in Austria and the EU
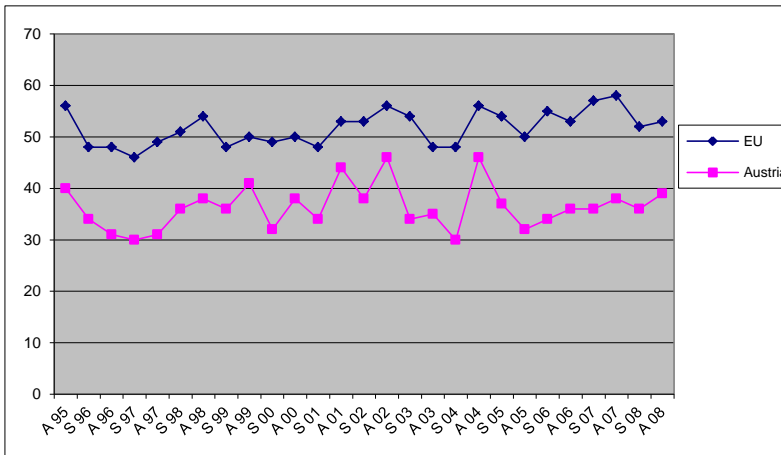
Source: Eurobarometer 70 (National Report Austria, p. 24)

Opposition among the public to certain steps of integration, especially enlargement, is also comparatively high in Austrian. Between 2000 and 2003, i.e. prior to the 2004 enlargement round, the majority of EU-15 member states showed higher support than opposition rates to enlargement, reflected in a majority in favor of enlargement on average throughout the whole

period. This is different in Austria, where the number of opponents outperforms the one of supporters at several points in time (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Support and opposition to enlargement in Austria and the EU

| | *Support* | | *Opposition* | |
	Austria	*EU-15*	*Austria*	*EU-15*
EB54	32	**44**	**50**	35
EB55	33	**43**	**49**	35
EB56	**46**	**51**	38	30
EB57	**45**	**50**	36	30
EB58	**51**	**52**	31	30
EB59	43	**46**	**44**	35
EB60	41	**47**	**42**	36

Notes: Questionnaire slightly changes; bold numbers indicate majority.

Source: Eurobarometer 54-60

A number of scholars argue that conflict over European integration reflects a divide between winners and losers of modernization, internationalization and globalization, whereof European integration is an important component (cf. Kriesi 2007; Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). Simplifying the argument, those belonging to or perceiving themselves as losers of these processes will be less supportive to European integration than those feeling that these provide them with opportunities. Typically, this distinction is associated with people's educational background and socio-economic status. In Austria, there is strong evidence for such a pattern in public opinion towards European integration (cf. Pelinka 2004). This is reflected in EES survey data: Respondents from the upper (middle) classes (self-perception) reflect considerably higher levels of support for further integration, whereas the lower (middle) classes support the view that European integration has already gone too far—a polarization that seems to have increased over time.[42] Hence different from the pre-accession period, the pro-European political elites seem to fail in mobilizing support for the European integration project among all groups of society. An important factor to be considered in this respect is the media debate about European integration and EU politics, which will briefly be discussed in the remainder of this section.

Though Austrian media show considerable variation in their reflection of European integration,

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[42] For more details on these survey results see Figures A1-A3 in the Appendix.

one actor clearly stands out with explicit anti-EU coverage, namely the politically influential *Krone*. This may be striking at first glance, given that the paper actively supported EU membership in the run-up to the Austrian accession referendum, as outlined previously. Still, the paper changed sides (again) and turned to continuous anti-EU campaigning.[43] As argued by Cécil Leconte (2010: 201-206), Euroskeptic tabloids play a significant role in fostering public Euroskepticism due to their creation of negative "'Euro-myths'" (ibid. 204) that often dominant much of the public debate about Europe beyond the respective paper.[44] Hence, they seem to function effectively as agenda setters on European integration issues. This is clearly the case for the Austrian *Krone*. The paper is well-known for repeatedly making use of 'campaign journalism' (cf. Boenisch 2007, cited in Plasser/Seeber 2010), meaning that the paper has an agenda towards which the coverage is oriented. The *Krone* takes up a clear-anti EU position and is quite active in campaigning against the EU and further integration.[45] Due to its market-dominating position on the Austrian print media sector and its unique distribution range of more than 40 per cent, the anti-EU position of the *Krone* accounts for a strong intensity of Euroskeptic news coverage in the Austrian public sphere. The following example related to the *Krone*'s coverage of the Lisbon treaty shall illustrate how the strategy of campaign journalism makes the paper a powerful agenda setter and "the *informal* center of gravity of Austrian domestic politics"[46] (Plasser/Seeber 2010: 274): After continuous and intense campaigning in the *Krone* against the Lisbon treaty (cf. Arendt 2008), the SPÖ repositioned itself on the question of national referenda on EU treaties that it had previously rejected: On 28 June 2008, then-SPÖ-Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and recently elected party leader Werner Faymann wrote a letter to the editor of the *Krone* announcing to hold national referenda on future EU treaties:

> "(...) we hold the opinion that future treaty amendments, which concern Austrian interests, shall be decided about by a referendum in Austria. If a modified reform treaty has to be

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[43] *Täglich alles*, the daily tabloid heavily campaigning against accession previously to the referendum, only existed until August 2000.

[44] An interesting empirical approach in that context can be found in Saurwein (2006). Comparing the news coverage about the 2004 EU enlargement in different media, Saurwein and his colleagues examine different 'rationality levels' in arguments about enlargement. They find that articles in the *Krone* reveal much lower levels of rationality compared to coverage in the quality paper *Der Standard* (ibid. 165ff).

[45] Evidence for the *Krone*'s anti-EU campaigning is documented in a number of studies: Saurwein (2006) and his colleagues show that the *Krone* refers to EU enlargement more negatively compared to *Der Standard*; Lengauer and Vorhofer (2010: 160, Table 2) find that EU politics is among the top-ten topics in the *Krone* while significantly less salient in other media during the 2008 general election campaign; in her master's thesis about Euroskepticism in the Austrian media, Carmen Valero Gomez (2010) shows that the *Krone* significantly stands out in the Austrian media landscape with its negative mentions of European integration.

[46] Translation by SM.

ratified by Austria again, thus, we want to persuade our coalition partner of this approach. This also applies in the case of a potential accession of Turkey that, in our opinion, would overburden the EU's current structure"[47] (Letter to the editor 2008).

The SPÖ's repositioning earned lots of criticism, not least due to the fact that the party announced it via a letter to the editor of Austria's most Euroskeptic newspaper. It also had far-reaching political consequences: Not much more than a week later, ÖVP-Vice-Chancellor and party leader Wilhelm Molterer announced to end the coalition with the SPÖ, arguing that "the SPÖ has left the joint basis, including the basis of the government program, and the red-white-red [i.e. Austrian; SM] common ground in the European perspective for our country"[48] (Announcement of new elections 2008). It is an open secret that the repositioning of the SPÖ on the question of EU referenda was part of a deal with *Krone*-editor Hans Dichand, providing SPÖ party leader Werner Faymann with complaisant coverage in the influential paper. This is substantiated by a content analysis of the *Krone* coverage during the 2008 election campaign (cf. Lengauer/Vorhofer 2010): Mr. Faymann was the only candidate portrayed positively, while direct competitor and ÖVP candidate Mr. Molterer was portrayed most negatively. This applied to news-based articles, commentaries, and—of large quantitative importance in the *Krone*—letters to the editor (*Leserbriefe*). Lengauer and Vorhofer (2010: 182) thus speak of a "Faymann-*Bias*" in the *Krone*'s campaign coverage. This bias was not only reflected in evaluations of the candidates, but also in political topics the paper reported about: The two most emphasized topics were Mr. Faymann's '5-point-program against price increase' and EU-issues, including the question of national referenda, summing up to 42 per cent of all articles focusing on policy issues (ibid. 183).

Empirical studies also reveal that reading the *Krone* has a significant effect on people's attitudes towards issues the paper heavily campaigns on (cf. Arendt 2008, 2009) as well as on their voting behavior (cf. Plasser/Seeber 2010). Therefore, it does not come as a large surprise that opposition to European integration is much higher among readers of the *Krone* compared to other people (see Figures A4-A6 in the Appendix).

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[47] Translation by SM.
[48] Translation by SM.

5.3.2 A period of irritation: the EU-14 measures against the Austrian ÖVP-FPÖ government

The year 2000 marked a cut in Austria's relations to the EU. After the FPÖ's entry into a coalition government with the ÖVP in February 2000, the other 14 EU member states' governments decided to take bilateral measures against Austria, broadly referred to as the 'EU sanctions against Austria' both in public and scholarly debate (cf. Merlingen et al. 2001; Karlhofer et al. 2001; Hummer/Pelinka 2002; Busek/Schauer 2003). Formally, however, the measures were bilateral in nature and were not based on decisions agreed upon within the EU institutions (Merlingen et al. 2001). Still, they were announced by the Portuguese Council Presidency at the end of January in response to the negotiations between the ÖVP and the FPÖ, and both the European Commission and the European Parliament expressed support to this action. Substantively, the measures consisted of three points: (1) there would be no bilateral official contacts at the political level with the new government, (2) Austrian ambassadors would only be received on a technical level in the other 14 member states, and (3) Austrian candidates for positions in international organizations would not be supported (ibid.).

The measures turned out to put the EU-14 in a difficult position, and over the course of time critique against the initiation of the measures became louder. In June 2000 Portuguese EU President Antonio Guterres announced the mandating of a 'wise men' report to evaluate the state of affairs in Austria since the establishing the ÖVP-FPÖ government and the political nature of the FPÖ. The three 'wise men' (Maarti Ahtisaari, Jochen Frowein, and Marcelino Oreja) were singled out by the President of the European Court of Human Rights, Luzius Wildhaber, on behalf of the EU-14 (ibid.). After a series of talks with Austrian representatives in July and August (including Federal President Mr. Klestil, members of the government, party leaders, and representatives from other political institutions and civil society organizations), the 'wise men' handed their report over to the French EU Council President Jacque Chirac in early September, recommending the termination of the measures against Austria. Following the report's recommendation, Mr. Chirac declared the end of the measures on 12 September 2000.

Much scholarly work has focused on the EU-14 measures against Austria, discussing both the reasons for and the effectiveness of a step that is referred to in the literature an "unprecedented move in the history of European integration" (Merlingen et al. 2001: 60). In Austrian public discourse, however, the measures were largely viewed as illegitimate EU sanctions and resulted

in a huge debate on principle about the relationship to the EU. The government called for a national closing of ranks and supporters of the measures, in particular the SPÖ, were accused of unpatriotic behavior (Karlhofer/Sickinger 2001). This was also registered by the 'wise men', who stated in their report that the "measures have already stirred up nationalist feelings in the country, as they have in some cases been wrongly understood as sanctions directed against Austrian citizens" ('Wise men' report 2000: 33).

5.3.3 Popular initiatives

A repeatedly used instrument in Austria to attract public and political attention to a particular issue is the *Volksbegehren* or popular initiative. It is one of the few direct democratic instruments available in Austria (cf. Pelinka/Rosenberger 2007). In the Second Republic, a total of 35 such initiatives have been conducted so far.[49] A *Volksbegehren* can either be citizen-initiated or supported by a minimum number of MPs. Once proposed, voters can support the initiative during a one-week period by subscribing at a municipal office. The *Nationalrat* is forced to discuss the proposal in case it has been supported by a minimum of 100,000 voters. The parliament, however, is only obliged to discuss the matter of an initiative, but not to implement or actually decide upon any of its claims. Hence the primary goal of an initiative is to start a public debate and to pressurize political actors on a certain issue.

Eight popular initiatives have been related to European integration issues. This is equivalent to more than a fifth (22.9 per cent) of the total number of initiatives in the Second Republic and 38.1 per cent when considering only the period since 1990. Three of them were disposed by the FPÖ, who claimed for referenda on the question of accessing the EMU (1997) and on the EU constitution and Turkey's accession to the EU (2006) and for a veto against the Czech Republic's accession to the EU (2002). Though traditionally used by opposition parties, the FPÖ's 2002 initiative is an indicator for the party's ambivalent strategy on EU questions during its government participation (see Chapter 6.3 for more details). The Greens initiated a *Volksbegehren* in 1991 (i.e. before Austria's EU accession) demanding a referendum about joining the EEA (European Economic Area). Parties also supported citizen-initiated

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[49] The full list is available on http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/volksbegehren/Alle_Volksbegehren.aspx, accessed 20/12/2011.

Volksbegehren related to EU questions: The 1996 initiative on keeping Austria's neutrality was supported by the Greens; the 2003 initiative on nuclear phase-out within the EU was supported by the SPÖ, the Greens, and the FPÖ; and most recently, the 2011 initiative for an Austrian referendum to withdraw from the EURATOM treaty was supported by the Greens and several parties at the regional level.

Table 5.3: Support rates for EU related public initiatives (*Volksbegehren*) in Austria

Year	German short title	Purpose	Supporters	Rank
1991	Volksabstimmung zu EWR-Beitritt	Referendum accession EEA	126.834	29
1996	Neutralitäts-Volksbegehren	Keeping perpetual neutrality	358.156	16
1997	Schilling-Volksabstimmung	Referendum EMU	253.949	20
2000	Neue EU-Abstimmung	Referendum EU membership	193.901	25
2002	Veto gegen Temelín	Veto against EU accession of the Czech Republic	914.973	6
2003	Atomfreies Europa	EU-wide nuclear phase-out	131.772	30
2006	Österreich bleib frei	Keeping neutrality; against Turkey's EU accession & the EU Constitution	258.281	22
2011	Raus aus EURATOM	Referendum about withdrawal from EURATOM	98.678	34

Notes: The total number of public initiatives since 1945 is 35.

Source: Official records, cf. http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/volksbegehren/Alle_Volksbegehren.aspx, accessed 20/12/2011.

Though the EU related initiatives are not among the most successful ones with regard to the number of supporters (see Table 5.3), only the most recent one failed to achieve the required threshold for a debate in the *Nationalrat*. Furthermore, the large number of initiatives clearly indicates that questions about European integration and the EU—both its constitution and policies—are subject to public and political controversy in Austria.

5.4 Austrian political parties and the issue of Europe

5.4.1 State of the art

Even though a multitude of studies deal with the changes and challenges Austria has faced due to European integration (e.g. Gerlich/Neisser 1994; Falkner/Müller 1998; Neisser/Puntscher-Riekmann 2002; Höll et al. 2003), research on Austrian political parties and the issue of Europe

for the post-accession period is more infrequent and less systematic. Furthermore, it is mostly focused on the question of party positioning and rarely offers systematic insight to the question of the politicization of the European issue.[50] An exception is Kriesi (2007), who focuses on party positioning and issue salience of European integration in six countries using media data prior to national elections.[51] Kriesi (2007: 88f) underscores the importance of country-specific conditions for mobilization against European integration, therefore presenting the UK and Switzerland as exemplary cases with high potential for such mobilization. What is striking, however, is that Austria is not among the cases where he expects mobilization on the issue of Europe. While Kriesi finds support for his hypotheses, however, he points out that Austria shares some similarities with these two cases: It does not only show increasing public Euroskepticism, but similar to the UK and Switzerland, the issue of Europe is articulated in cultural terms, which is not the case in the other countries considered in the study (France, the Netherlands, and Germany[52]). Regarding the saliency of the issue, however, Kriesi finds that Austria is not in line with the UK and Switzerland, which reflect much higher levels of issue salience. Kriesi's study, however, does not include the latest two general election campaigns, the 2006 and 2008 campaign, and the first one after Austria's accession, the 1995 campaign.

Another cross-national comparison can be found in the study of Europeanization of national parties in Austria, Finland, and Sweden by Kritzinger/Michalowitz (2005). The authors focus on European Parliament elections and find that compared to the other two countries, EU-issues reveal high salience and parties do differ significantly in their positioning towards them as well as modify their EU-stances over the years (especially the FPÖ and the Greens). Kritzinger an Michalowitz (ibid.) further show that party positioning on the EU-dimension follows parties' location on the new politics dimension rather than the left-right (see again the FPÖ and the Greens). The results, however, provide limited information on politicization, since the fact that an issue is included in a manifesto does not mean that parties actively mobilize on it during the campaign, as argued in this dissertation. Furthermore, the study focuses on EP elections—where

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[50] There are also studies focusing on the organizational adaption as a response to European integration by Austrian political parties (see Luther 2007) and party change more generally (Mokre/Pollak 2002).

[51] Kriesi's study is based on the data of a larger project on *National political change in a globalizing world* (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008).

[52] To be precise, the issue is also related to the cultural dimension in Germany, but on different grounds than in the Euroskeptic countries (Kriesi 2007).

emphasis on European question is not necessarily and indication for politicization in non-explicitly European events—and is limited to two time points (1996 and 1999).

The literature focusing exclusively on Austrian political parties and European integration is easily manageable, because there is few. Anton Pelinka (2004) and Franz Fallend (2008) concentrate on party Euroskepticism in Austria. Pelinka (2004) highlights the shifts in the dynamic of opposition to European integration: Up to the 1980s, Austrian parties' stances towards European integration (more precisely, towards Austrian accession) followed a clear left-right pattern, with opposition coming from the left (SPÖ). In contrast, the FPÖ (at least initially) supported EEC membership. This picture changed on the eve of accession, when opposition was structured along the differentiation between moderate and more extreme parties, with the latter (FPÖ, Greens) opposing European integration. Thus, opposition to European integration came from both the right and the left of the ideological spectrum. After accession (and with the Greens moving towards a more supportive stance), another shift occurred: Eurskepticism became a phenomenon of the extreme right, "with the FPÖ acquiring a monopoly" (Pelinka 2004: 215). Fallend (2008) also provides an overview of Austrian parties' EU-positions and presents an in-depth analysis of two salient issues within the domestic discourse over European integration: Common Foreign and Security Policy (strongly related to the question of neutrality) and EU enlargement towards the Central Eastern European countries. He argues that public opinion plays a significant role in Austrian parties' positioning towards European integration issues. Fallend's findings for the FPÖ are of particular interest. First, he outlines that on the issue of neutrality, the party "has not acted in accordance with the will of the majority" (ibid. 219) when claiming for participation in the NATO. Second, Fallend refrains from classifying the FPÖ as a party of 'hard Euroskepticism' by pointing to the fact that it "does not demand a withdrawal from the EU" (ibid. 213).[53] Considering also the period since the FPÖ is back in opposition, the present study will provide a different picture both on the question of neutrality and with a view to the FPÖ's general Euroskepticism.

Finally, Johannes Pollak and Peter Slominski (2002) present an overview of Austrian party positions to European integration based on an analysis of manifestos, interviews, official statements and a fistful of selected newspaper articles. They start with parties' stances towards

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[53] The Introduction to the edited volume (cf. Szczerbiak/Taggart 2008) in which Fallend's chapter on Austria is included puts the FPÖ in the category of 'soft Euroskepticism' (Taggart/Szczerbiak 2008: 11, Table 1.1).

Austria's accession to the EU and then analyze positioning during the post-Nizza process, including the beginning of the discussion about a future EU constitution. The authors conclude that Austria's party landscape has faced changes through EU accession (programmatic as well as organizational), but, picking up a statement from one of their interviewees, diagnose that Europe is still a "'Ghettothema'" within Austrian politics (Pollak/Slominski 2002: 194). By focusing on general election campaigns, the empirical chapters of this dissertation will systematically explore whether this conclusion (still) holds.

5.4.2 Expectations for the party politicization of Europe in Austria

This section takes up the theoretical expectations for the content and emphasis of party politicization of European integration derived from the relevant literature (see Chapter 3). It starts with a focus on content before turning to emphasis, in both cases summarizing expectations for each Austrian party and for the party system level.

5.4.2.1 The content of EU issue-politicization: expectations for Austrian political parties

Building on the cleavage theory of party positioning, party family has been identified as the decisive explanatory factor for the way parties will politicize the issue of Europe in substantive terms, with some parties focusing on economic integration and others on political integration (see 3.5.1). This can both take the form of evaluative statements—supportive or adverse—or claims-making related to either of the two aspects of integration. As outlined in 5.1.2, Austrian political parties can—despite certain inconsistencies over the course of time—broadly be associated to the following party families: The SPÖ belongs to the family of social democrats (cf. Ucakar 2006), the ÖVP to the Christian democrats (cf. Müller 2006a), the FPÖ and the BZÖ are radical right parties (cf. Luther 2006), the Greens belong to the green party family (cf. Dachs 2006), and the Liberals to the liberal family in its more radical (as opposed to conservative) variant (cf. Liegl 2006).[54] Considering the party family factor, the following pattern can thus be expected for Austrian parties' EU issue-politicization as regards content:

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[54] This classification is also in line with the one applied in the CHES Codebook (cf. CHES 2008).

- The SPÖ can be expected to express strong demands for the deepening of integration in order to establish a social Union that may facilitate efforts for stronger economic regulation at the supranational level; at the same time (and related to the previous point), the party will most likely claim for different policy priorities to correct for the EU's policy bias towards monetary stability and market liberalism.

- The ÖVP will be supportive to both further economic and political integration. However, claims for the deepening of integration will focus less on questions of employment and social security, but on economic competitiveness. The ÖVP can be expected to be most enthusiastic in its evaluations of European integration, for it combines economic liberalism with a supranational political order.

- The FPÖ and the BZÖ are expected to put strong emphasis on political integration as a threat to national sovereignty and identity, since this very well fits the overall policy program of both parties. To the extent that they depart from favoring market liberalism towards expressing concerns about the negative impact of globalization, they may also increasingly criticize the EU's policy direction from a distributive perspective. The main focus, however, will be on sovereignty and identity, thus expressing concerns along the cultural rather than the economic dimension structuring political conflict.

- The Greens can be expected to emphasize claims-making for policy alternatives (in particular regarding environmental issues and questions of social security) and the democratization of the EU polity. To the extent that they become more supportive to European integration, they will also more explicitly point to benefits from integration in evaluative statements.

- The Liberals can be expected to express their support to both economic and political integration—the former as a means for market liberalization, the latter as a project against nationalism.

Scholars expect EU politicization to be driven by Euroskeptic parties (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Kriesi 2007). Given the lack of a radical left party in the Austrian party system and the fact that party Euroskepticism in the post-accession period comes exclusively from the radical right of the party spectrum, the content of the debate at the party system level can be expected to be largely

biased towards questions of sovereignty and identity, therefore evoking conflict on the cultural rather than the economic dimension (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Bartolini 2006).

5.4.2.2 Issue-emphasis in EU politicization: expectations for Austrian political parties

Applying the salience theory of party competition to party politicization, a number of explanatory factors accounting for parties' emphasis in the politicization of the EU issue have been derived from the literature (see 3.5.2). Each of these factors shall now be illuminated with specific focus on Austrian political parties. Combining these factors then demonstrates that the politicization of Europe provides an advantageous opportunity to some parties, but not to others.

Party position vis-à-vis voter position:

Since Austria joined the EU in 1995, party Euroskepticism has become a radical right phenomenon in Austrian politics, whereas all other parties are very supportive to European integration and the EU (cf. Pelinka 2004). This even holds true for the Greens despite their initial rejection of EU accession. Figure 5.2 summarizes Austrian parties' general EU stance since the late 1990s according to expert judgments derived from the CHES: Except for the FPÖ (and since 2006 the BZÖ), all parties are clearly located on the upper range of the seven point scale; significant changes can be observed for the Greens (moving towards a more supportive stance) and the FPÖ (moving even closer to the lower limit of the scale).

Figure 5.2: Austrian parties EU position according to expert judgments (1999-2006)
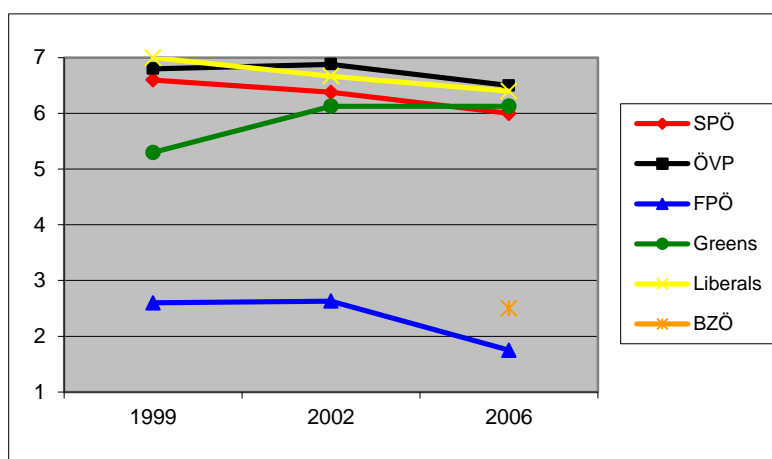
Source: CHES 1999-2006 (cf. Hooghe et al. 2010, Steenbergen/Marks 2007)

How do these party positions correspond with the preferences of Austrian voters? Public opinion data derived from the European Election Study (EES) reveal that since the late 1990s a majority of voters from all parties except the Greens think that European integration—or European unification, as it is also labeled in the questionnaire—has already gone too far.[55] However, while FPÖ and also BZÖ voters generally tend to agree in their rejection of further integration, this is different for the SPÖ and the ÖVP: Among their voters, there are also a number of supporters for further integration (ranging between one quarter and more than a third at the different points in time). Green voters are the only ones with a majority in favor of European integration.[56] However, considering the proportion of Green voters thinking integration has already gone too far—which reflects at least a quarter and often much more—, the issue seems to divide Green voters not much less than those of the SPÖ and the ÖVP. Combining party and voter position towards European integration, it is evident that nothing is to be gained from actively politicizing the issue of Europe for the SPÖ, the ÖVP, and also—though to a lesser extent—for the Greens, while party and voter position match quite well for the FPÖ and the BZÖ.

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[55] For a more detailed presentation of the results derived from EES data see Figures A1-A9 in the Appendix. Austria was not included in previous EES rounds. The Liberals have been excluded here for reasons of data availability.

[56] Except for the EES 2004 data. It is also important to note that the number of observations for Green voters is very low for some of the surveys (e.g. EES 1999).

Internal dissent:

Quite important for parties' efforts to politicize or deemphasize the issue of Europe is whether parties are internally united or divided on the issue. The CHES provides information on intra-party dissent from 1999 onwards, summarized in Table 5.4. Important to note when comparing the values over time, these are based on different scales used in the questionnaire for the different years. According to experts, the ÖVP is strongly united on the issue—and constantly so over time. By and large, this also holds true for the Liberals. The SPÖ and the Greens are less united, but both parties are still on the united-side of the scale. Most variation over time can be found for the FPÖ: Being moderately united on the issue of Europe in the late 1990s, Europe constitutes a highly conflictive issue internally during the FPÖ's government participation; back in opposition, party unity leaps in 2006, making the FPÖ the party strongest united on its EU position for that year. The BZÖ is also largely united according to experts. In a nutshell, the politicization of European integration is least threatening for the ÖVP, the Liberals, and the FPÖ—for the latter except during its government participation.

Table 5.4: Internal dissent on Europe according to expert judgments (1999-2006)

Party	1999	2002	2006
SPO	2.00	4.25	4.00
OVP	1.40	1.88	1.86
FPO	2.00	7.75	1.29
GA	2.40	3.88	4.00
LF	1.40	3.00	1.67
BZO			2.57

Note: Varying scales (1999: 1=complete unity, 5= leadership position opposed; 2002: 1=completely united, 10=extremely divided; 2006: 0=completely united, 10=extremely divided).

Source: CHES 1999-2006 (cf. Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007).

Location in the policy space:

As outlined previously, the politicization of European integration by individual parties can be expected to be influenced by parties' location in the policy space: Parties at the ideological margins of the space will tend to benefit more from emphasizing the issue, as it cuts across the dimensions structuring that space. Relying again on CHES data, Table 5.5 summarizes Austrian parties' location in the policy space along three dimensions: the general left-right dimension (i.e. without further specification of the meaning of left and right), the economic left-right dimension, and the new politics dimension (in the gal-tan version developed by Hooghe et al. 2002).

Considering party location at the margins versus in the center on all these three dimensions, we would expect the following behavior for party politicization of European integration: The SPÖ and the ÖVP can be expected to depoliticize the issue, as they are, relative to the other parties, located closest to the center on each of the dimensions (despite certain shifts over time and variation on the three dimensions[57]). Looking only at the general left-right dimension, the Liberals would have to be considered a party in the center. However, considering the more substantive economic left-right and the gal-tan dimension, the liberals are clearly located closer to the margins—to the right on the economic and to the left on the non-material dimension, which makes them more likely to politicize European integration. The Greens are closest to the left on each of the three dimensions compared to the other parties.[58] Hence according to the party's location in the policy space, they could be expected to politicize European integration. The FPÖ is clearly located on the right side of the general left-right and the gal-tan dimension—and increasingly so over time: With 9.67 in 2006, it is only slightly away from the maximum 10 indicating an extreme right/tan position. On the economic left-right, the temporal trends are inconsistent, indicating movement towards the right from 1999 to 2002, but a strong shift to the left in 2006. Still, the party's radical right status is not challenged by this movement, which even seems to make a politicization of the European integration issue more likely. Though the BZÖ's general positioning is less coherent due to its recency and the problem of distinguishing itself from the FPÖ (cf. Luther 2006), it is also located at the right margins and therefore in a position likely to politicize European integration.

Table 5.5: Party location in the policy space according to expert judgments (1999-2006)

Party	1999			2002			2006		
	lrgen	lrecon	galtan	lrgen	lrecon	galtan	lrgen	lrecon	galtan
SPÖ	4.00	4.20	4.00	3.75	3.44	3.38	3.38	2.83	3.50
ÖVP	6.20	6.20	6.50	7.00	7.56	8.25	7.00	6.83	7.76
FPÖ	7.90	6.40	7.10	8.63	7.31	9.00	9.67	4.83	9.67
Greens	2.90	3.00	2.00	2.83	2.83	1.38	2.17	2.60	0.83
Liberals	4.60	7.60	1.80	4.60	7.0	2.40	4.40	7.50	1.40
BZÖ	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.83	6.00	8.83

Notes: lrgen=general left-right dimension; lrecon=economic left-right dimension; galtan=non-material gal-tan dimension; each scale ranging from 0 (extreme left/gal) to 10 (extreme right/tan).

Source: CHES 1999-2006 (cf. Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007).

[57] The SPÖ overall moved towards the left, whereas the ÖVP shifted rightwards.
[58] Except for the Liberals in 1999 on the gal-tan dimension, when experts place the Liberals 0.2 points closer to the left than the Greens.

Government/opposition status:

Considering whether a party holds office or not, expectations vary for the different election campaigns depending on the constellation of parties in power. The ÖVP is in power for the whole period, meaning that it would be expected to depoliticize the issue of Europe according to this explanatory factor. The Greens, on the other hand, have permanently been in opposition, making them more likely to politicizing Europe. This also applies to the Liberals for the time they were still represented in the *Nationalrat*. The SPÖ can be expected to deemphasize the issue in the 1995, 1999, and 2008 campaigns, and the FPÖ in 2002. The BZÖ can be expected to downplay the issue in the 2006 campaign due to its government participation prior to the election.

However, whether parties are really as flexible in shifting their issue focus as expected according to the literature (Netjes/Binnema 2007) is to be doubted (cf. de Vries/van de Wardt 2011). This can be illustrated by reference to the SPÖ: The party is one of the two traditional governing parties in Austria, permanently in power from 1970 until 2000. As a governing party and together with the ÖVP it led Austria into the EU and supported all major steps towards further integration. It is not very convincing to expect that there is no 'path dependency' with a view to the party's governing past. This explanatory factor thus has to be considered with caution.

Table 5.6: Government/opposition status prior to election

Year	Governing parties	Opposition parties
1995	SPÖ, ÖVP	FPÖ, Greens, Liberals
1999	SPÖ, ÖVP	FPÖ, Greens, Liberals
2002	ÖVP, FPÖ	SPÖ, Greens
2006	ÖVP, BZÖ	SPÖ, FPÖ, Greens
2008	SPÖ, ÖVP	FPÖ, Greens, BZÖ

Notes: Reflects the situation during the respective election campaign.

Party family:

Party family not only plays a role for the content of EU issue-politicization, but also for parties' emphasis on the issue. The argument behind this hypothesis is that the issue of Europe better fits in with the programmatic profile of some parties compared to others (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009). As outlined in 5.3.1, European integration is most compatible to the program of

the ÖVP, the Liberals, and the FPÖ/BZÖ, whereas constituting more of a challenge to the SPÖ and the Greens.

Taking all these factors together and also considering widespread public and media Euroskepticism in Austria, the politicization of European integration can be expected to be most beneficial for the Euroskeptic FPÖ and BZÖ. These two parties share an advantageous starting position for the politicization of European integration compared to the other parties: They share their Euroskepticism with their voters, are strongly united on their EU position, and are located on the fringes of the left-right and, in particular, the new politics dimension. The EU issue furthermore very well fits with these parties' overall policy program and clearly distinguishes them from the mainstream left and right parties. Thus the only constraint for these parties' efforts to politicize European integration is government participation, which might cause intra-party conflict because of the necessity to come to terms with the coalition partner's EU position. Contrariwise, the politicization of European integration provides less or no advantage in electoral terms to the SPÖ, the ÖVP, the Greens, and the Liberals. For the latter, there is few to win, given that the Liberals are in line with the mainstream parties in their supportive stance towards European integration. For the other three parties, there is not only few to win, but also much to lose, since their voters are divided over the issue, with considerable parts of their constituency holding a different position towards the EU issue compared to the party's, thus making the politicization of European integration a bold venture on the part of the pro-European parties in Austria.

6. European integration in Austrian general election campaigns

Chapter 6 focuses on the EU issue in the Austrian electoral arena and represents the main empirical part of the dissertation. It explores in detail how and why Austrian political parties politicize European integration in general election campaigns between 1995 und 2008. The chapter is organized in three sub-chapters. Each of these sub-chapters concentrates on a specific aspect of party politicization and develops a discrete argument that will then be explored empirically. Chapters 6.1 to 6.3 are thus organized as coherent sub-chapters, each including a theoretical argument, information on research strategy, and an individual conclusion and can therefore be read separately. Chapter 6.1 focuses on individual parties and analyzes how Austrian parties refer to European integration in their election manifestos. The core objective is to disentangle the general pro-anti European integration category by considering different facets of integration. It will be argued that the European integration issue is more challenging to the some parties compared to others, which is due to its multi-faceted nature. This will be dependent on a party' ideological profile and reflected in its positioning towards different facets of EU integration. Chapters 6.2 and 6.3 more explicitly address party politicization of Europe during the campaigns by focusing on confrontations between rival candidates broadcasted on TV. Chapter 6.2 explores parties' emphasis on the EU issue during election campaigns. Building on the salience theory of party competition, it will be argued that party politicization of European integration is dependent on the particular opportunity structure the EU issue provides for individual parties' vote-seeking attempts. Chapter 6.3 concentrates on the substantive character of the debate in the politicization of the EU issue. It argues that the debate will be biased towards the concerns of those parties actively engaging in EU politicization. These concerns, in turn, can be connected to the broader ideological profile of a party. This chapter is theoretically embedded in the cleavage theory of party positioning and explicitly considers the distinct sources of conflict intrinsic to the multi-faceted nature of the European integration issue.

6.1 Party positioning in response to European integration: a cleavage perspective

6.1.1 Introduction

Previous research has shown that party positioning towards European integration is related to party location in the policy space: Parties at the fringes overall tend to reject European integration, whereas parties in the center take a supportive stance. Depicting parties' EU position vis-à-vis their left-right position as a two-dimensional space, we thus arrive at the well-established figure of the inverted U-curve (Hooghe et al. 2002). Though very illuminating, the inverted U-curve only displays parties' EU position on a general pro-anti European integration dimension, meaning that parties can either be more or less supportive towards European integration in total.[59] However, given the multi-faceted nature of integration—including political and economic integration as well as EU policy output in an increasing number of policy domains—, parties are likely to differ in their evaluation regarding these different facets. Hence they may support certain aspects of integration while being reluctant towards others. As argued in Chapter 3, this will be dependent on parties' overall ideological profile that serves as a 'prism' through which parties respond to the issue of Europe (Marks et al. 2002: 586). Employing a cleavage perspective thus allows for a more detailed understanding of party positioning towards European integration. In two respects, this is of particular relevance with a view to the study of politicization. First, it elucidates why—and in what way—the issue of Europe constitutes a challenge to some parties but less so to other. This is an important component in parties' strategic considerations as to whether politicizing the issue in the first place (see Chapter 6.2). Second, party positioning can reasonably be expected to be reflected in the content of politicization (see Chapter 6.3). Hence a detailed analysis of parties' response towards different facets of integration will give a first indication of what aspects parties are concerned with and will therefore most likely address when engaging in the politicization of the issue. This chapter therefore explores how Austrian political parties position themselves towards European integration. The focus is on individual parties and the core objective is to disentangle the general pro-anti European integration category by considering different facets of integration. The empirical findings are based on a detailed analysis of parties' election manifestos. The latter constitute a suitable source

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[59] Different from many other studies on EU party positioning, Hooghe et al. (2002) make an explicit attempt to consider different aspects of EU integration.

for studying parties' views towards different facets of European integration, since manifestos typically provide a—more or less comprehensive—overview of a party's policy program on a variety of different issues, including European integration. The analysis not only distinguishes between different facets of integration, but also between evaluative statements and claims-making in parties' reference towards the issue of Europe. The empirical findings largely confirm expectations based on the cleavage theory of party positioning: Parties emphasize different facets of integration and party family serves as the decisive explanatory factor in this respect.

The chapter proceeds as follows. Building on the cleavage theory of party positioning, the next section will briefly summarize expectations for how Austrian political parties will respond to the issue of Europe. This is followed by a section on data and methods, providing information on how the analysis of manifestos has been conducted. The next section presents the empirical findings, focusing on each party separately and linking the findings to the hypotheses derived from the cleavage theory of party positioning. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and discusses their relevance for the study of party politicization of European integration.

6.1.2 Party response towards Europe from a cleavage perspective

Building on Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) seminal work on party system development in Europe as a manifestation of social and cultural cleavages, scholars have applied the cleavage perspective to parties' response towards the issue of European integration (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Marks et al. 2002; Edwards 2009; Hix/Lord 1997). The core argument put forward in this strand of research is that party positioning towards European integration will be determined by the broader ideological and programmatic profile of a party, which constrains a party in its response to the issue. While some parties will be able to easily incorporate European integration into their overall policy program, this will be more difficult for other parties. This is due to the multi-faceted nature of European integration that cuts across the cleavages constitutive to parties' historic origins. European economic integration and market liberalism, for instance, are at odds with the program of parties located on the left side of the class cleavage; European political integration challenges the nationalist orientation of radical right parties; and the EU's architecture and decision-making procedures are highly incompatible with green parties' ambitious understanding of democracy resulting from their roots in the new social movements (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009;

Hix/Lord 1997). Cleavage theory thus provides us with the theoretical framework for understanding why parties respond to the issue of Europe in the way they do, making party family the decisive factor for party positioning towards European integration. For Austrian political parties, we would therefore expect the following pattern in their positioning towards different facets of European integration:

- SPÖ: Together with the ÖVP, the SPÖ shaped Austria's way into the EU, acting as the leading governing party in that period. With this step the party thus expressed its general support to European integration. However, given the EC/EU's free market bias, which is at odds with the ideological profile of socialist and social democratic parties, the SPÖ can be expected to claim for different policy priorities that focus on employment and social balance to correct for the EU's policy bias towards monetary stability and market liberalism. At the same time, and related to the previous point, the party will most likely express strong demands for the deepening of integration with the aim of establishing a social Union that may facilitate efforts for stronger economic regulation at the supranational level.

- ÖVP: As part of the Christian democratic party family, the ÖVP is expected to be most enthusiastic in its evaluation of European integration, for it combines economic liberalism with a supranational political order. Hence the ÖVP will be supportive to both further economic and political integration. Different from the SPÖ, however, claims for the deepening of integration will focus less on questions of employment and social security but on economic competitiveness.

- FPÖ/BZÖ: Despite the FPÖ's support to European integration in earlier periods of the party's history, both the FPÖ and the BZÖ are the strongest opponents to the EU and integration in the Austrian party system. As radical right parties, they are expected to emphasize their rejection of political integration, which is viewed by them as a threat to national sovereignty and identity. To the extent that they depart from favoring market liberalism towards expressing concerns about the negative impact of globalization[60], they may also increasingly criticize the EU's policy direction from a distributive perspective. The main focus, however, will be on sovereignty and identity, thus expressing concerns

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[60] Recall the FPÖ's shift towards the left on the economic left-right dimension in 2006 presented in Table 5.5 in 5.4.2.

along the cultural rather than the economic dimension structuring political conflict, which very well fits radical right parties' policy program.

- Greens: The Greens initially opposed Austria's accession to the EU, viewing the latter as a technocratic and centralist project with a democratic deficit and criticizing its focus on economic growth at the expanse of ecological sustainability and social compatibility (Schaller 1996). Though they changed opinions after the referendum outcome, the initial points of criticism can still be assumed to be reflected in the party's reference to integration. The Greens can thus be expected to raise strong claims for a democratization of the EU and to emphasize policy alternatives—in particular regarding environmental issues and social justice. To the extent that they become more supportive to European integration, they will also more explicitly point to benefits from integration in evaluative statements.

- Liberals: Having supported EU accession (as the only opposition party) and considering the fact that European integration is well compatible with their overall policy program, the Liberals can be anticipated to express support to both economic and political integration—the former as a means for market liberalization, the latter as a project against nationalism.

6.1.3 Data and methods

For analyzing Austrian parties' response to the European integration issue, this chapter will draw on parties' election manifestos. Manifestos are official documents, produced by parties themselves and outlining their stated policy preferences. Though manifestos give not direct information on whether a party actually mobilizes on an issue during the campaign (see Chapter 4), they provide a good overview of parties' policy program on a variety of issues, including European integration. By now, Austrian parties' manifestos mostly include a chapter dedicated to European integration, Europe, or EU politics. Information on parties' preferences for or against further integration and EU policy priorities can also be found in the other parts of manifestos, which are typically structured along policy fields or broader issue-categories (e.g. economy, environmental protection, immigration, education).

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In research on EU party positioning, scholars often use manifestos or other political texts to translate party statements into numerical data, often along a single dimension ranging from pro- to anti-European integration (cf. Pennings 2006; Gabel/Hix 2004; Kleinnijenhuis/Pennings 2001; Ray 2007; Marks et al. 2007).[61] Though suitable for statistical testing, the drawback is that a lot of information gets lost through this procedure. Given the complexity of the European integration issue, however, this information is needed for assessing how parties respond to the different facets of European integration outlined previously. This limitation also applies to the most widely used source of manifesto data, the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP, see Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006). The CMP coding schema collects information on parties' EU position in two categories, one covering positive reference towards European integration, the other negative ones. These two categories, however, only consider European integration at a very general level. Hence they not only leave much scope for subjective interpretation to coders (Marks et al. 2007: 30f), but also subsume different facets of integration within a single category.[62] Interestingly, the positive category only refers to expanding the EU, increasing its competences, and the value of membership, while the negative category, in addition, includes mentions of "opposition to European policies which are preferred by European authorities" (Klingemann et al. 2006: 155). This is problematic insofar, as it mixes parties' stances towards the process of integration with policies that might be rejected on the grounds of their policy direction. In any case, these two categories do not provide us with precise information on how party positioning might differ for the various facets of European integration.[63]

Considering these limitations, this chapter builds on the original textual sources instead of relying on the CMP measures for parties' EU positioning. Manifestos will be analyzed following a more nuanced approach that enables us to take into account the different facets of European integration, on which positioning may vary not only between but also within parties: As

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[61] For a summary of other data types used in the study of EU party positioning see Chapter 4.

[62] The description of the categories in the coding instructions reads as follows: "[Code] per108: Favourable mention of European integration in general; desirability of expanding the European Union and/or of increasing its competence; desirability of the manifesto country joining (or remaining a member)", respectively "[Code] per110: Hostile mention of the European Union; opposition to specific European policies which are preferred by European authorities; otherwise as 108, but negative" (Klingemann et al. 2006: 154-155, emphasis added).

[63] Marks et al. (2007) also raise strong concerns about data validity regarding the European integration categories as employed in the CMP data. In an attempt to shed light on some problematic cases they identified when cross-validating different measures for parties' EU positioning, they go back to the original texts of selected manifestos and demonstrate that some of the values in the CMP data set are hardly trustworthy (ibid. 31-33). This leads them to conclude "that it may be difficult to code electoral manifestos on a single category that encompasses a large and diverse issue such as European integration" (ibid. 33).

described in more detail in Chapter 4, the qualitative analysis of manifestos is employed in two stages. First, I will distinguish between *evaluative statements* and *claims* for change or reform. Taking both into account is of utmost importance. Evaluative statements provide information about whether parties consider European integration as an opportunity or threat. However, parties supportive to European integration may be reluctant to explicitly expressing critique in order not to undermine the EU's already weak legitimacy. Still, to the extent they are dissatisfied with certain facets of integration, they will make use of claims-making in order to outline their political priorities for Europe. Including parties' EU related claims therefore is necessary for learning about parties views towards different facets of European integration.

Second, instead of using one general dimension for capturing all EU related references, I distinguish between three substantive categories (building on Bartolini 2005, 2006): *general statements* about European integration (e.g. 'we've always been supportive of the EU project'); *constitutive statements* referring to the EU's institutional architecture, its functional and geographical boundaries, competences and decision-making rules; and *statements related to the direction of policy*, including e.g. different views towards EU agricultural policy or different policy priorities for economic development. This approach will provide us with a much more detailed picture of parties' concerns related to European integration that allows for disentangling party positioning towards different aspects of the multi-faceted EU issue.

6.1.4 Empirical findings

This section presents the findings for Austrian parties' response to the European integration issue based on the analysis of election manifestos. Structured along parties, the following sub-sections will provide a summary for each party's response to the issue of Europe, based on the analysis of parties' 1995-2008 election manifestos. Each summary considers the distinction between evaluative statements and claims-making on the one hand, and between general, constitutive, or statements related to the direction of policy on the other hand. It will also point to changes in parties' views towards certain facets of EU integration over the course of time that may have appeared in the comparison of different manifestos. The results will finally be linked to the hypothesis developed for the respective party, assessing whether parties respond to the issue of Europe accordingly.

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6.1.4.1 SPÖ: EU polity and policy reform as a means to establish a social Union

In all manifestos between 1995 and 2008, the SPÖ evaluates European integration mainly positively, whereas clearly negative evaluations are rarely present or mentioned only indirectly either by pointing to the necessity of reform or by bringing into play citizens' concerns about the EU and integration—without the party explicitly supporting (or denying) the substance of such critique. Hence a recurring pattern in the SPÖ's manifestos is the combination of positive reference to European integration with strong claims for reform. Such claims first and foremost concern the EU's policy direction, though there are also a number of claims addressing constitutive aspects. The latter, however, mostly appear in connection with claims for different political priorities, in particular claims related to the establishing of a social union.

Evaluating European integration: Evaluative statements about European integration and the EU predominantly are of supportive character. In the 1990s' manifestos, the SPÖ primarily highlights benefits for Austria resulting from EU membership, like a positive economic development, price stability, safeness of jobs etc. From 2002 onwards, the EU is first and foremost referred to as a project of peace and unification in Europe. Critique is expressed very carefully and rather framed as claims for change or reform than as explicit critique. Through this framing strategy, however, the party still makes very clear that further efforts are necessary, in particular in order to establish a social Union, which the SPÖ strongly advances. However, neither implicit critique nor claims for reform ever challenge the project of European integration and most often concern the direction of EU policy rather than the EU as a political project. Still, over the course of time we can observe a tendency towards more explicit mentions of deficits in EU policy-making. This in particular applies to the 2008 manifesto, in which the SPÖ repeatedly expresses worries about the EU's current development that would not go into the desired direction. The party also states that the EU would have departed from its citizens and demands to take warning signals seriously in order not to threaten the project of integration. This is how the SPÖ substantiates and justifies its—sudden—support for national referenda on future treaty amendments: The consequential involvement of citizens and more direct democratic participation in EU policy-making are, according to the SPÖ, required for regaining citizens' confidence.

A careful reframing over time can also be observed for EU enlargement: While mostly referred to in a positive vein from 1995 to 2002 (i.e. before the 2004 enlargement round came into effect)[64], this is slightly different afterwards. Though the SPÖ still expresses its support for prior enlargement, it strongly questions the EU's future expandability and accuses supporters of a rapid enlargement of striving for a weak union in terms of a free trade area. In the 2008 manifesto, the SPÖ is very concrete regarding future EU accession of particular countries: While explicitly valuing an accession of Croatia and also other—not specified—countries from the Western Balkans as an important contribution to prosperity and stability in Austria's next-door neighborhood, the party declares that an accession of Turkey would challenge the EU's economic, social and political capacities as well as its structure. In case of Turkey's accession, the SPÖ promises a referendum on that question in in Austria.

Claims for reform: The SPÖ expresses strong claims for EU polity reform and, in particular, a realignment of policy at the European level. The former are always connected to the party's policy priorities and first and foremost concern economic and social policy. I.e. claims for the deepening of integration and EU democratization are accompanied by claims for policy change. The SPÖ calls for additional objectives equal to the goals of economic integration and monetary stability, like economic growth, employment, social security, and the protection of public services. The party wants the EU to be *the* instrument for "humanization and domestication of the globalized economy"[65] and argues for coordinated tax policies in order to prevent for tax and wage dumping, the implementation of a financial transaction tax at the European level, and rights of co-determination in a European social partnership. Hence among the variety of claims mentioned in the manifestos, demands for a strong Europe and the establishing of a social union in response to negative consequences of globalization clearly stand out. This is a recurring pattern over time, and particularly so since 1999.

Another priority in the SPÖ's claims-making relates to the establishing/strengthening of the CFSP, for which the party expresses strong support, while at the same time emphasizing that Austria's neutrality and European solidarity would not contradict each other, which would allow the country to actively and equally participate in the European security architecture as a neutral

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[64] Though the party also mentions potential problems like pressure for the labor market and an increase in truck transit, this is always put into perspective by reference to transitory provisions and the like.
[65] 2002 manifesto, translation by SM.

state. Though this partly reflects a claim in constitutive terms (thus related to the transfer of competences towards the EU level and/or communitarization and democratization), the SPÖ also clearly outlines its political priorities regarding the CFSP, which are conflict prevention and crisis management, and the party makes clear not to want the EU to evolve into a military pact.

Other domains where the SPÖ repeatedly raises claims for EU policy change concern European-wide nuclear phase-out and a reform of the EURATOM treaty (from a "funding treaty" towards a "security [meaning: nuclear safety, SM] treaty"[66]), a reform of agricultural policy (to make sure that funding would not be distributed irrespective of ecological and other criteria anymore), and—prior to the 2004 enlargement round—claims related to the implementation of enlargement (e.g. transitory provisions for access to the Austrian labor market and candidate countries' compliance to high safety standards for nuclear power plants).

In different variants over the course of time, the SPÖ's manifestos also repeatedly address Austria's EU contributions, e.g. demanding more efficiency and transparency in their usage. From 2006 onwards, the SPÖ suggests a financial transaction tax as a means to strengthen the EU's proprietorial financing, while at the same time reducing member states' EU contributions.

As indicated by this summary, the SPÖ expresses a strong commitment towards European integration in all its manifestos, while at the same time strongly claiming for reform and for different EU policy priorities in order to establish a social union. This is in line with our expectation on the basis of cleavage theory, suggesting that social democratic parties will seek to correct for the EU's bias towards market integration by urging further political integration and policy reorientation. The strong focus on CFSP and repeated mentions of other issues (like nuclear power policy/EURATOM, agricultural policy, EU contributions) are most likely due to their particular relevance in Austrian public and political discourse about European integration (cf. Fallend 2008). As we will see below, these issues also frequently appear in other parties' manifestos, indicating their significance in Austria. Despite careful reframing over time (concerning enlargement but also mentions of EU deficits), the SPÖ's manifestos reflect a recurring pattern in valuing European integration and claiming for reform to further develop the EU.

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[66] 1999 manifesto, translation by SM.

6.1.4.2 ÖVP: European integration as a guarantor of economic prosperity and security

Compared to other parties' manifestos, the ÖVP's manifestos include the most enthusiastic evaluations of European integration, first and foremost pointing to economic benefits for Austria. There is also a stronger focus on evaluative statements compared to the SPÖ and the Greens (for the latter see below). However, also the ÖVP raises claims, though these are predominantly of constitutive character. Only regarding security policy, on which ÖVP-manifestos put much emphasis in connection with European integration, claims additionally outline the policy direction for which the ÖVP strives in this domain.

Evaluating European integration: The ÖVP expresses strong support for European integration and the EU project in its manifestos. The party points to the EU's genesis as a project of peace *and* an economic union and emphasizes that economic cooperation has proven to be the most effective motor for intensified integration and thus peacekeeping that left European citizens with prosperity and must therefore be pursued. The EU is described as a community of values *and* interests, and Europe as "a common destiny of which Austria is part"[67]. In the view of the ÖVP, Austria's EU membership is an economic and political advantage for the country beyond question. Repeatedly, the party points to economic benefits resulting from EU membership, like creating economic growth, prosperity, and jobs; it would therefore serve the interest of both consumers and businesses. Different from the SPÖ and the Greens, which strongly claim for the EU *to become* a firewall against negative consequences of globalization, the ÖVP depicts the EU as an expression against "unleashed turbo-globalization" and states that "anyone questioning our membership in the European Union endangers the wealth of the country"[68]. The ÖVP repeatedly portrays itself as *the* 'Europapartei' in Austria, engaging actively in European affairs, most credible in representing Austrian interests in Europe, and having supported the idea of Europe and the way towards deeper integration from the outset. In the ÖVP's view, the ÖVP is the only party standing for a pragmatic and positive Europe and a guarantor for taking responsibility for both Europe and Austria. Beyond these general appreciations of European integration, evaluative statements also more specifically point to EU enlargement and the CFSP (though not with equal weight in each manifesto):

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[67] 2002 manifesto, translation by SM.
[68] 2008 manifesto, translation by SM.

EU enlargement: Prior to the 2004 enlargement (i.e. in the 1999 and the 2002 manifestos), the ÖVP highlights the importance of enlargement as a historical step to overcome the divide of the continent and emphasizes that enlargement would strongly benefit the Austrian economy and businesses, both having been the main beneficiaries from the opening of the East so far. The costs of enlargement would thus be an investment in the country's future. From 2006 onwards, however, the ÖVP's support for enlargement becomes more selective: Similar to the SPÖ, the ÖVP expresses support for a clear prospect of accession for the Balkan (and support to Croatia's EU accession in particular), while at the same time demanding that the EU's capacity for enlargement must become a criterion in the future. Like the SPÖ, the ÖVP promises a referendum in Austria on Turkey's accession in case the latter would ever be at sight.

CFSP: From 1999 onwards, the CFSP is a core issue in the ÖVP's EU-related manifesto statements. It is viewed as a crucial component of a Europe of peace in which Austria should fully participate, since the way towards a united Union could not be achieved solely by economic and legal integration but must include concrete steps towards a common European structure for conflict resolution, ultimately resulting in a European defense system. In the 1999 manifesto, the ÖVP devotes much space to outlining its understanding of different phases of Austria's neutrality status that, according to the ÖVP, has changed over time and would thus not contradict the principle of solidarity within a European defense structure.

Claims for reform: Claims for reform predominantly address the EU's competences and architecture rather than the direction of policy. Only in the field of security policy, the ÖVP repeatedly raises a number of claims directed also at desired policy outcome in different manifestos. Starting, however, with constitutive claims, the focus is on further integration and/or communitarization in various policy fields, the allocation of competences between the EU and member states, and the balance of power between large and small member states. Further integration is demanded in the CFSP, including the claim for a "Europeanization of national defense"[69]. Further claims concern the representation of each member state in every EU institution, clear and transparent task sharing between the EU and member states based on the principle of subsidiarity, and the removal of obstructive EU regulations. The ÖVP expresses strong demands for further integration in security policy. On this point, claims for stronger

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[69] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.

cooperation are substantiated by concrete measures aiming at strengthening security and stability in the EU (emphasized in particular in the 1999 and the 2002 manifestos). These include e.g. the creation of a European visa-identification system, standardized scanners for biometrical data, initiatives for transport safety, the tightening of EU border protection against illegal immigration and organized people smugglers, and common EU standards for immigration policy (based on the Austrian system of quota).

As we expected on the grounds of cleavage theory, the ÖVP is very supportive towards the EU project and emphasizes economic benefits resulting from European integration. The party highlights that being part of the EU has made the country a winner of processes of internationalization and globalization and points to the EU as a shield against turbo-globalization without restraint. Thus the ÖVP is much less concerned with EU policy reform regarding economic and social policy compared to both the SPÖ and the Greens; the focus is rather on security policy, where the ÖVP expresses strong demands for the deepening of integration. The ÖVP also attempts to gain ownership over the EU issue by repeatedly presenting itself as *the* Austrian 'Europapartei'.

6.1.4.3 FPÖ: shifting towards 'hard' Euroskepticim[70]

Without one single exception, the FPÖ's manifestos contain no general commitment to European integration. Rather, the EU and integration are referred to in a negative vein as the cause of a number of problems, though this tendency is not reflected in all manifestos with the same clarity. Critique or opposition towards European integration is also often framed as claims against something to take place, while in 2006 and 2008 explicit negative evaluations clearly become predominant. Over time we can also observe a much stronger focus on constitutive statements related to the EU architecture, the allocation of competences, and the EU's functional and geographical boundaries as distinct from a focus on EU policy direction.

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[70] The term is based on Szczerbiak and Taggart (2008), who distinguish between 'soft' and 'hard' Euroskepticims. As mentioned in 5.4.1, the FPÖ is considered a party reflecting soft Euroskepticism by them (ibid. 11) building on the contribution by Fallend (2008) about the Austrian case.

Evaluating European integration: In the 1990's manifestos, the FPÖ primarily points to negative effects of European integration for economy and employment in Austria. In 1995 critique is first and foremost directed at the Austrian government (for reneging on its promises before the country's EU accession) rather than focusing on EU deficits or the integration process as such. In 1999 negative consequences are primarily mentioned in connection with EU enlargement (see below). From 2006 onwards, however, the focus clearly shifts towards European integration as a threat to Austria's sovereignty. The FPÖ states that "freedom and independence of our homeland Austria is increasingly limited" while evermore "rights are delegated towards an anonymous bureaucratic apparatus in Brussels, whereas citizens' democratic rights are limited step by step"[71]. The FPÖ regards the EU as striving for a central state trampling on the principles of subsidiarity and democracy. According to the party, a discussion about leaving the EU must not be a taboo, because in its current state, the EU would reveal anti-democratic tendencies, regulating frenzy, too much bureaucracy, and would set the wrong political priorities. In opposition to this development, the FPÖ argues for an "Europa der Vaterländer" and a "core Europe" of net contributors with re-weighed votes in the Council according to the principle "who pays the piper calls the tune"[72].

A problem-focuses perspective is taken also on questions of EU enlargement. In the 1999 and the 2002 manifestos (i.e. before the 2004 enlargement round came into effect), the party strongly emphasizes (alleged) drawbacks for Austria resulting from enlargement. The 1999 manifesto states that "presently, Eastern enlargement is out of question"[73] because it would lead to migration and commuter flows, pressure to the labor market and therefore increasing unemployment among Austrian employees, stock removals in production and investments, drain of purchasing power etc. In 2002, evaluative statements towards enlargement are more ambivalent—which is to be viewed in connection with the FPÖ's government participation at that time: Though valued as a change to overcome an almost 60 year period of a divided Europe, enlargement is also labeled the greatest challenge for the EU and its members since the foundation of the union, and the FPÖ highlights not to support an enlargement with no strings attached. Similar to the ÖVP, the FPÖ underscores that no other country will be as affected by EU enlargement as Austria will. Unlike the ÖVP, however, the FPÖ does not perceive this an

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[71] 2008 manifesto, translation by SM.
[72] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.
[73] 1999 manifesto, translation by SM.

advantage by all means. The FPÖ therefore sets a number of conditions to EU enlargement. Next to conditions concerning economic development, two other conditions are mentioned as requirements for candidate countries' EU accession, namely a binding promise for nuclear phase-out and the disposal of the Beneš and Avnoy decrees. In 2006 and 2008, mentions of enlargement are strongly related to the Turkey case: The FPÖ states to "refuse steadfastly an EU membership of Turkey"[74] because, according to the FPÖ, Turkey is not a European country in geographical, religious, and ethnic terms and EU accession of Turkey must lead to a referendum in Austria about leaving the EU. In 2008 the party generally calls for an end of further EU enlargement, with the exception of the Balkan states.

Against the overall tendency of reluctance towards further integration, the 2002 manifesto includes a strong appreciation of a European security and defense system, explicitly demanding the development towards a defense union and Austria's participation therein. However, this is clearly at odds with the later manifestos, in which the FPÖ opposes the establishing of a European army, stating that the Austrian army must remain exclusively in Austria's sovereignty.

Claims for reform: Different especially from the SPÖ and the Greens, which are very constant in their claims-making over the course of time, FPÖ-claims-making in the different manifestos is much more fragmented. In 1999 and 2002 most claims are related to enlargement and concern accession criteria for candidate countries (like nuclear phase-out and the disposal of the Beneš decrees), EU reform (like a reform of EU competences and of the Common Agricultural Policy) or transitory provisions for Austria (in particular for access to the labor market) as preconditions for enlargement. Again different from the other parties, the FPÖ does not claim for further integration but for renationalization in certain policy fields (e.g. agricultural policy), with the sole exception of security (and in 2002 also defense) policy, where the FPÖ expresses demands for further integration. In addition a number of rather narrow claims for the implementation of certain measures can be found (e.g. related to subsidies for SMEs, environmental and animal protection standards).

Despite certain inconsistencies, the comparison of the FPÖ's manifestos clearly reveals two patterns: First, European integration is generally referred to as a threat; second, whereas

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[74] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.

described as a threat for economy and employment in the 1990s, the framing later shifts towards question of sovereignty and identity, which the FPÖ views as strongly threatened by the "anonymous bureaucratic apparatus in Brussels"[75] that would hollow out Austrians' democratic rights. This shift in the framing of the 'EU threat' is very well in line with expectations from cleavage theory stating that radical right parties are strongly adverse towards political integration and express concerns about a loss of identity as part of the cultural dimension of conflict. The latter is also indicated in the FPÖ's strong rejection of Turkey's EU accession.

The temporal trend also clearly indicates a shift towards hard—as distinct from soft—Euroskepticism, to apply the typology developed by Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak (2008). Hard Euroskepticism consists of "*principled opposition to the EU and European integration*" and is found in parties seeking the withdrawal from membership and/or parties "*whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived*" (ibid. 7, emphasis in original). However, the FPÖ instead is considered by the authors a party reflecting soft Euroskepticism[76] (ibid. 11), building on the country contribution by Fallend (2008) in their edited volume (cf. Szczerbiak/Taggart 2008). However, considering the 2006 and 2008 manifestos, the present analysis clearly reveals that the FPÖ's Euroskepticism has further radicalized and that the party fits much better in the category of hard Euroskepticism since then: Though the FPÖ does not explicitly claim for withdrawal from the EU in its manifestos, it argues that this must not be a taboo and demands a variant of the EU that is clearly at odds with the current state of integration.

6.1.4.4 Greens: further integration and democratization to fix EU polity and policy deficits

The Greens point to both positive and negative implications of European integration in their 1995-2008 manifestos and provide a quite precise conception of the party's desired EU development, the issues it wants to be dealt with at the European level, and the measures to be taken accordingly. This concerns both EU polity and policy reform. Manifestos reflect a predominance of claims-making, though more explicit and general evaluations of European

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[75] 2008 manifesto, translation by SM.

[76] Soft Euroskepticism is defined as "not *a principled opposition to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of* [sic.] *policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that 'national interest' is currently at odds with the EU's trajectory*" (Taggart/Szczerbiak 2008: 8, emphasis in original).

integration are to be found in the 2006 and the 2008 manifestos (but still always in connection with concrete claims for reform).

Evaluating European integration: In the 1990s' manifestos, the Greens depict European integration more negatively—though critique mostly addresses government failure rather than the EU or the process of integration per se. In 1995 this concerns (alleged) negative consequences of EU accession for Austria, like unemployment, cuts in social welfare, and an increase in transit traffic. In 1999 negative evaluations concern the (alleged) hollowing out of neutrality, EU militarization, the failure of EU agricultural policy, and EU policy on genetic engineering. Still, European integration at the same time is viewed to offer opportunities for solving certain policy problems, which is why the party claims for more EU initiative. From 2002 onwards, the Greens consequently refer to the EU's importance as a project of peace and its relevance for achieving certain policy goals. In the 2006 and the 2008 manifestos, however, the green party speaks of an EU developmental crisis and a crisis of confidence caused by a lack of political concepts and the government's strategy to make the EU a scapegoat for its own political failure. Despite harsh critique on the EU's current state, this is not translated into reluctance towards European integration on the part of the Greens, but understood to give rise to EU polity and policy reform. Thus the Greens announce to "give the EU a second go" and strongly emphasize that nationalism, provincialism, and economic liberalism are the wrong response to the challenges the EU faces because "Europe—that is not the others, but ourselves. We must change the European Union ourselves"[77]. Hence the Greens' formula is more Europe instead of less and stronger regulation at the European level. In line with this, they argue for a more democratic, social, and ecological union (see below).

Quite striking is the consistently positive appraisal of EU enlargement prior to the 2004 enlargement round (whereas enlargement is a non-issue in later manifestos): The Greens express strong support for enlargement, which is valued as an important condition for peace and security in Europe and a step forward to vanquish the separation of Europe. Green arguments in support of enlargement both point to the EU's joint responsibility vis-à-vis candidate countries and to benefits enlargement would bring for Austria. The 2006 and 2008 manifestos do not contain any reference to either the previous or further enlargement.

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[77] 2008 manifesto, translation by SM.

Over the course of time, a slight reframing can be observed with regard to the Greens' view towards the establishing/strengthening of the CFSP: In the 1990s, the Greens are much more concerned about Austria's neutrality status and the military components of the CFSP, arguing that neutral states would be the guarantors that the EU won't become an "armed single market"[78]. This reads differently later: Though still mentioning a number of conditions, fears of losing neutrality and joining a military pact do not appear in the same intensity as in the 1990s, if present at all in the recent past. Moreover, support by the Greens to the CFSP is much more enthusiastic and encompasses support to the buildup of a European security union.

Claims for reform: In the whole period of investigation, green party manifestos strongly emphasize claims for EU polity reform and policy change. These basically concern four domains: EU democracy, social policy, environmental policy, and foreign and security policy:

EU democratization: Starting from the diagnosis of an EU democratic deficit, the Greens repeatedly demand a democratization of the EU—though in slightly different facets in the different manifestos. In 1995, claims for a democratization of the EU (including a European constitution) are combined with rejection of a centralistic federal state. Over the course of time, suggestions for the strengthening of EU democracy as represented in manifestos become more concrete and comprehensive: An EU constitution should constrain national governments' influence and strengthen the role of the European parliament (i.e. full codetermination for the latter), include legally binding basic rights, foster transparency of legislation in the Council, and strengthen participatory rights for citizens and civil society. In response to the failure of the EU Constitutional and the Lisbon treaties, the 2008 manifesto demands the implementation of a "European Act for Democracy" that only includes those parts of the Constitutional treaty that strengthen citizens' rights, enhance democracy, and describe the EU's values and objectives.

Social union: The Greens express strong claims for the establishing of a social union in response to unemployment and the threats of globalization; the EU should become a common space of justice, social security and solidarity, which is seen as the only way to defend the European social model against the overly powerful and globally acting financial and economic interests. According to the Greens, economic and social policy must be devoted to the fight against unemployment and poverty and the EU growth and stability pact should be adjusted and

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[78] 1999 manifesto, translation by SM.

expanded towards quantifiable objectives for employment (meaning full employment should become a general EU objective). A number of claims refer to social policy that should be the most important duty of the EU (establishing a social safety net and homogeneous minimum standards in labor and social legislation against wage dumping). Claims in this domain thus also concern constitutive aspects of integration, like further integration towards or the deepening of integration in employment and social policy, and harmonization of tax policies.

Environmental union: As with full employment, the Greens want environmental criteria and sustainability to become part of the EU growth and stability pact. The goal of changing the EU into an 'Eco-union' is substantiated by a number of very concrete claims, like the establishing of high environmental standards, changes in agricultural policies, animal protection, EU-wide nuclear phase-out (including a reform/cancellation of the EURATOM treaty and the stop of subsidies for the nuclear power industry) and instead the fostering of alternative energies, the redirection of traffic from roads to rails, a moratorium for the release of genetically modified organisms etc. According to the Greens, the fight against climate change must be a community task and should include a harmonization of energy taxes and a European wide tax on kerosene, and the protection of genetically unmodified regions in agriculture. In order to strive towards an environmental union and to realize a substantial European strategy for sustainability, the Greens want the EU to "get free from the paralyzing influence of lobbies and big companies"[79].

Common Foreign and Security Policy: Claims related to the establishing or strengthening of the CFSP appear in almost all manifestos, though the Greens' evaluation of the CFSP slightly changes over time (see above). Consistency, however, can be observed on the claim of a clear priority in the configuration of the CFSP towards peace, stability, and a civil (as opposed to military) focus.

Confirming expectations derived from the cleavage theory of party positioning, the Greens express strong claims for both EU polity and policy reform aiming at achieving social justice, sustainability, peace, and democracy. The analysis of manifestos further shows that initial reference to negative effects of European integration over time is replaced by emphasis on the EU as a project of peace and a means to solve policy problems. Though harsh critique on the EU's

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[79] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.

current state lasts, the Greens' conclusion is to claim for further integration and stronger regulation at the EU level.

6.1.4.5 Liberals: valuing European integration

The following summary for the Liberals is narrowed to the 1995 and the 1999 election manifestos. Though the Liberals also contested later elections, their failure to remain a seat in parliament from the 1999 election onwards make them a party not to be considered as relevant for competition in later elections (cf. Sartori 1976), which justifies the neglecting of their later manifestos. As expected, the Liberals refer to European integration very positively, though with varying intensity in their 1995 and 1999 election manifestos.

Evaluating European integration: In 1995, we can find implicit positive evaluations in reference to the European economic and monetary union and mentions valuing Austria's way towards Europe (both in the context of claiming for consolidating the Austrian budget). The 1999 manifesto emphasizes the Liberals perspective of a united Europe as key to a peaceful future and contains strong claims for the establishing of a European foreign, security, and peace policy as an alternative to neutrality and NATO membership (see below). Indirect positive reference towards European integration can also be found in the context of EU-induced liberalizations in Austria, which are viewed to benefit consumers.

Claims for reform: The 1995 manifesto, which does not put much emphasis on European integration, includes one claim for further integration, which both reflects a constitutive statement and at the same time concerns policy direction: The Liberals argue for a common European asylum law that should strengthen legal rights and the protection of asylum seekers. In 1999 the focus on reform explicitly concerns foreign and security policy. From the perspective of the Liberals, Austria should convert its neutrality into European solidarity, and the party claims for the establishing of a European foreign, security, and peace policy. They state to be "committed to this option and willing to effectuate it" and argue that "in the final analysis this also includes a

European defense"[80], i.e. a European army with a separate chain of command. According to the party, the legal base for this conception has to be a new European constitution.

In a nutshell, the Liberals' positive evaluation of both economic and political integration is confirmed by the analysis of election manifestos from 1995 and 1999, though there is less focus on economic benefits than expected.

6.1.4.6 BZÖ: European integration as a threat

Given the fact that the BZÖ was founded only in 2005, only two manifestos produced by the party for general election campaigns can be considered in the analysis, namely the 2006 and the 2008 manifestos. In 2006 the focus is more on constitutive questions to European integration and the EU, whereas in 2008 there is slightly more focus on EU policy direction.

Evaluating European integration: In the two manifestos, European integration or the EU are first and foremost referred to with a problem-focused perspective, focusing on specific facets of integration rather than any general evaluations—with the exception of a single positive reference to the EU as project of peace in the 2006 manifesto. Evaluations often appear indirectly, for instance when referring to the misuse and waste of EU funds, to enlargement as having increased feelings of insecurity among citizens, or to the "unjustified […] and ineffable EU sanctions"[81] against Austria in 2000. Still, there is one area where the BZÖ explicitly values integration as a necessity, namely security policy. In security questions, the party states, pursuing national interests would have no future, since "Europe's and therefore Austria's security in the long run depend on threats from Europe's periphery, from establishing the common European security and defense policy as well as from the capacity to further development and integration"[82]. This view is substantiated by a number of concrete claims (see below). In 2008, evaluations mostly concern EU policy direction, in particular critique on the Basel II Directive (that would hinder investments and destroy economy) and agricultural funds (that would betray small farmers and, as a consequence, put Austrian peasantry at risk).

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[80] 1999 manifesto, translation by SM.
[81] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.
[82] 2006 manifesto, translation by SM.

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Claims for reform: The BZÖ claims for a clear definition of the EU's spatial and cultural boundaries and of its financial possibilities; at the same time, member states' sovereignty must be safeguarded according to the principle of subsidiarity. The party demands more participation of citizens in the EU through direct democratic instruments, a strengthening of the principle of subsidiarity, fight against the misuse of EU funds, and the introduction of an exit clause for leaving the EU. In terms of EU finality, the BZÖ states to strive for a European federation (*Staatenbund*) with Austria as a confident and sovereign member and with European solidarity and cooperation. In 2006, a number of claims refer to the use of EU funds and financial control (like efficient control measures, reduction of funding in case of misuse, and an upgrading of controls by the European Court of Auditors) and to security issues (e.g. more cooperation in fighting crime and people smuggling). In the 2008 manifesto, the BZÖ demands a reintroduction of border control at Austrian borders (because Schengen failed) and wants the BASEL II Directive to immediately be repealed (to give investment incentives to medium-sized businesses). If further argues for more activities against genetically modified organisms and for nuclear phase-out. In both manifestos, the BZÖ claims for a referendum of the question of Turkey's accession to the EU. However, while speaking of European (!) citizens' participation in the 2006 manifesto, in 2008 the BZÖ demands a compulsory referendum on that question in Austria. This is clearly to be viewed in connection with the BZÖ's government participation in 2006 that constrained the party in its claims-making for national referenda.

In conclusion, the BZÖ primarily focuses on European integration as a threat. Still, the focus on concerns about sovereignty and identity is less consistent in manifestos than we would have expected based on the cleavage theory of party positioning. However, looking for a clear-cut empirical pattern might be expecting too much given the limitation to two manifestos, the change from being a party in power in 2006 to being in opposition in 2008, and the youngness of the party.

6.1.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to study party positioning towards European integration in Austria. In particular, the chapter sought to consider parties' distinct response to different facets immanent to the issue of Europe. Building on the cleavage theory of party positioning towards European integration (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009; Hix/Lord 1997), it argued that a party's response to the EU issue will be related to the ideological profile of the party. Accordingly, a party's perspective towards European integration may vary for different facets of integration, depending on how well the latter fit with the party's overall policy program.

The empirical analysis focused on parties' manifestos prepared for general election campaigns between 1995 and 2008. The in-depth qualitative text analysis of these documents proved to be illuminating in two respects. First, the distinction between evaluations and claims-making regarding European integration allowed for identifying parties' concerns about integration even if a party might refrain from explicit criticism given its general commitment to the project of EU integration. Second, the substantive distinction between general statements, constitutive statements, and those related to the direction of policy shed light on the different facets of integration that parties emphasize in their positioning towards European integration, which clearly varies for different parties.

The empirical findings demonstrate that Austrian political parties very much confirm to expectations based on cleavage theory in their response to the European integration issue: The SPÖ and the Greens express their demands for EU polity and policy change in a strong emphasis on claims-making. Both claim for further integration aimed at the establishing of a social union and accordingly emphasize their wish for change in the EU's policy priorities. The Greens in addition focus strongly on EU democratization and the establishing of an "Eco-union". The ÖVP is most enthusiastic in its evaluation of European integration and primarily highlights economic benefits for the country. Claims-making is less pronounced compared to the SPÖ and Greens' manifestos, except for security policy, on which the ÖVP puts much emphasis (both focusing on external and internal security). Similar to the ÖVP, the Liberals strongly value European integration and also put much emphasis on the CFSP. A clear focus on economic integration does not appear in their manifestos, which is at odds with theoretical expectations. The FPÖ and the BZÖ refer to European integration from a problem-driven perspective. The FPÖ interprets integration as a threat for the country's economy and employment in the 1990s, while clearly

focusing on question of sovereignty and identity later on. The temporal trend for the BZÖ is reverse. However, the findings for the BZÖ have to be read with caution, given the party's recent foundation and alternation from a party in power to a party in opposition.

Though there is some evidence for careful reframing on evaluations of European integration and varying emphasis on different facets of integration over time, the overall temporal pattern suggests that party positioning is rather stable. This is in line with a cleavage perspective on party positioning that understands party response to the issue of Europe as a product of parties' ideological commitments.

Beyond variation in party positioning towards European integration according to party family, the analysis of manifestos also reveals that some issues repeatedly appear in manifestos of all Austrian parties, like EU enlargement, CFSP, nuclear safety and EURATOM, agricultural policy etc. This can be traced back to their importance in Austrian public and political discourse resulting from their (alleged) stronger impact on Austria compared to other countries (e.g. enlargement) or their contradiction to the (minimum) policy consensus reached in Austria (e.g. anti-nuclear power policy and neutrality).

How does the analysis of party positioning presented in this chapter relate to the study of party politicization of European integration? First, the cleavage perspective elucidates that the issue of Europe constitutes a challenge to some parties but not to others, which is due to their different ideological profile. This is important for the study of politicization, since parties will most likely refrain from politicizing issues that threaten core principles of their overall policy program. Second, to the extent that a party politicizes European integration, it can be expected to do so according to its issue-positioning. The detailed analysis of parties' response to different facets of integration thus provides a foundation for expectations regarding the content of the debate in the politicization of European integration. The party family factor, which points to the ideological or programmatic embedding of political parties, will thus reappear in the following two chapters.

6.2 Who drives EU politicization in Austrian general election campaigns?

6.2.1 Introduction

European integration for a long time was considered a non-issue for domestic party competition: Political parties depoliticized the issue, and citizens did not care much about it (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Mair 2000; Lindberg/Scheingold 1970). In the post-Maastricht era, however, this view became increasingly challenged: Public support for European integration declined and the issue of Europe appeared on the agenda of radical parties opposing European integration and seeking to mobilize Euroskeptic votes (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009). This development caused the interest of EU and party scholars, who started to pay attention to party politicization of European integration.

Building on theories of party competition, in particular salience theory (cf. Budge/Farlie 1983; Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006), scholars argue that parties will politicize the issue of Europe—like any other issue—when they expect to gain electoral advantage from doing so (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Netjes/Binnema 2007). Much of this scholarly work arrives at the conclusion that the politicization of European integration will therefore be driven by Euroskeptic parties, which seem to share a structural advantage on the issue compared to their competitors (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004; but see Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Green-Pedersen 2011). However, when looking at available data for Austrian political parties derived from comparative data sets, we would not arrive at that conclusion: Depending on the data source, it is the pro-European mainstream parties, the increasingly pro-European Greens, or alternately the pro-European ÖVP and the anti-EU FPÖ putting most emphasis on the issue of Europe.[83] On the one hand, these divergent results may not come as a surprise, since the findings are based on different sources, namely expert judgments, parties' election manifestos, and media coverage. On the other hand, scholars using any of these sources for exploring parties' issue-emphasis on European integration all claim to make a contribution to the salience or politicization of the EU issue in domestic party contestation (cf. de Vries/van de Wardt 2011; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Ray 1999; Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Kriesi 2007). Insofar we

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[83] These findings are based (in this order) on the Chapel Hill Expert survey estimating party positioning on European integration (CHES, cf. Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007), the Comparative Manifesto Project analyzing parties' election manifestos (CMP, cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006), and the data derived from the media analysis conducted as part of the project National Political Change in a Globalizing World (NPCGW, cf. Kriesi et al. 2008). For more details see 6.2.3.

would expect them to come to similar conclusions about different parties' emphasis on European integration. However, the comparison of different data sources for the Austrian case reveals an inconsistent picture and therefore leaves us with uncertainty about party politicization of European integration in Austria.

Starting from these puzzling findings, this chapter provides an in-depth analysis of party politicization of European integration in Austrian general election campaigns. It seeks to (1) identify which parties drive the politicization of Europe in Austrian domestic contestation and (2) explain differences in the politicization of the issue between individual parties as well as different election campaigns. A core argument put forward in this chapter is that the selection of data should be carefully considered in the study of issue-politicization. Otherwise we might end up with contradictory findings leading to different conclusions, as revealed by the comparison of different data mentioned above. This claim is taken seriously in the present study, which complements quantitative measures for party politicization derived from TV debates between rival candidates with qualitative indicators. The empirical findings reveal that this is indispensable for arriving at definite and convincing conclusions: Different from previous findings for Austrian parties derived from available sources, the in-depth analysis largely confirms expectations derived from theory suggesting that Euroskeptic parties will more actively engage in the politicization of European integration: The anti-EU FPÖ actively politicizes the issue of Europe, and increasingly so over the course of time. However, the findings for the pro-European mainstream-right ÖVP partly contradict expectations from salience theory, since the party actively politicizes the issue despite the lack of a clear electoral incentive for doing so. Comparing different election campaigns, the results suggest that certain events (such as EU enlargement) can boost the politicization of Europe. Above all, however, the politicization at the party system level seems to be driven by party competition dynamics.

The findings of this chapter make an important contribution to the study of party politicization of European integration. With a view to research strategy, the findings point to the added value of complementing quantitative data with qualitative indicators. In terms of empirical conclusions, the results reveal that despite a structural disadvantage, pro-European mainstream parties may actively politicize the issue of Europe if they consider it a key issue of their party profile.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The next section embeds party politicization in the salience theory of party competition and summarizes expectations for the Austrian case based on the hypotheses derived from salience theory. This is followed by a brief review and comparison of available data on Austrian parties' EU issue-emphasis from large-scale cross-national research projects, before describing the data and methods selected for the present study. The empirical findings will be presented in two steps. Section 6.2.6 first summarizes the findings according to the quantitative measures and then introduces the qualitative indicators, discussing each campaign separately; 6.2.7 then discusses the findings against the hypothesis derived from salience theory. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and arguments put forward in this chapter.

6.2.2 Party politicization and salience theory

From the numerous issues competing for public attention, only few are taken up by political actors and thus actually arrive on the public agenda for domestic contestation (Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989), i.e. become politicized by parties. This section will outline the conditions for party politicization of European integration. Building on salience theory, it first develops hypotheses for the politicization of Europe focusing on individual parties (party level). Second, it refers to additional conditions that may boost or decrease the overall politicization of Europe in specific campaigns (party system level). For both levels, each section also summarizes the expectations for the Austrian case according to the hypotheses.

6.2.2.1 Politicization at the party level

The politicization of an issue—defined here as *a party's attempt to publicly emphasize the issue in domestic contestation* (cf. de Wilde 2011)—is strongly related to the concept of salience. The latter's main notion is that political actors (and citizens likewise) not only differ in their positions towards an issue, but also in how important, i.e. salient, they feel the respective issue is (cf. Laver 2001). For political parties, 'importance' in this context is strongly related to vote-seeking as a crucial goal of any party. Parties' issue-salience can thus be defined "as the extent to which the party leadership considers an issue as vital for its electoral appeal" (Netjes/Binnema 2007: 40).

This definition emanates from salience theory, which argues that political parties compete by manipulating the salience of issues in order to win votes (cf. Budge/Farlie 1983, Budge et al. 2001, Klingemann et al. 2006). This means that parties will emphasize an issue when they expect to gain electoral advantage through it. That could be issues a party already is strongly associated with in the perception of the public—i.e. issues 'owned' by the party—or issues for which the party seeks ownership in order to strengthen its electoral position vis-à-vis its competitors. According to salience theory, competition between political parties thus is not merely competition about different positions towards the same issue, but is a contest about the different issues each party expects to electorally benefit from and thus emphasizes. This theory of party competition has been developed as an explicit critique of the Downsian model of competition, which holds that parties compete by shifting their locations in the policy space (Downs 1957), i.e. they simply change their policy positions according to strategic consideration (Ray 2007: 16). Contrariwise, salience theory acknowledges that parties might not be able to easily shift their position towards an issue in order to maximize votes. After all, "parties are not empty vessels into which issue positions are poured in response to electoral or constituency pressures" (Marks/Wilson 2000: 343). However, being rational actors that act strategically, parties will only publicly emphasize issues they expect to benefit from while trying to downplay others.

When would a party assess the issue of European integration as being beneficial in electoral terms and thus emphasize it in domestic competition? Following salience theory—but not attributing ownership over the EU issue to any party a priori—scholars have developed a number of hypotheses for explaining variation in party politicization or salience ascribed to the European integration issue (cf. Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/van de Wardt 2011). From this literature, the following explanatory factors can be derived:

- *Party position vis-à-vis voter position:* As parties attempt to win votes, a party will depoliticize issues on which its supporters hold different positions compared to the party's.
- *Internal dissent:* Parties will deemphasize European integration if the issue challenges internal party cohesion, as internal dissent could damage the party profile with regard to clarity and credibility.
- *Location in policy space:* Distinguishing between parties located at the margins of the dominant left-right dimensions and those located in the mainstream, the former can be

expected to emphasize a new issue that does not fit into the left-right dimension—like European integration—, whereas the latter will most likely downplay the issue. This is because more extreme parties at the periphery of the party system are less successful in competing on left-right issues than mainstream parties and will therefore try to accentuate new issues in order to gain more votes.[84]

- *Government/opposition status:* Following a similar logic as location in the policy space, opposition parties might have an interest in restructuring contestation and are therefore more likely to politicize European integration. In addition, they do not have to take responsibility for EU policy outcomes and the course of integration, leaving them more room for promoting their ideas and criticizing the course of integration compared to government parties.

- *Systemic salience*: Based on the assumption that a party cannot ignore other parties' behavior, issue salience is expected to increase for any political party, the more the other parties emphasize the issue—even if a party actually has no incentive in politicizing the issue (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 169).

Expectations for Austrian political parties:

Considering the above-mentioned explanatory factors for parties' attempts to politicize the European integration issue, what pattern would we expect for the Austrian political parties? The following summary is based on the detailed exploration of explanatory factors presented in Chapter 5 (see in particular Tables 5.2-5.6 and Figures A1-A9). The left and right mainstream parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP, respectively, can be expected to be reluctant to actively politicizing Europe because the issue cuts across the left-right axis on which both of them compete. Though the party leadership of the SPÖ and the ÖVP, respectively, is largely united in its supportive stance towards integration, the party electorate is not. Furthermore, both parties are not in line with the majority opinion towards European integration amongst Austrians, which is by tendency rather Euroskeptical. While the SPÖ and the ÖVP jointly and successfully mobilized

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[84] An additional factor would be party family, according to which the issue of Europe is more challenging to some parties compared to others, depending on each party's ideological profile (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000). However, as this perspective leads to similar conclusions—namely that mainstream parties will deemphasize the issue whereas parties at the fringes may be inclined to politicize it—it can be subsumed under this factor despite the different underlying theoretical arguments.

their supporters in the accession referendum in 1994, disenchantment about EU membership emerged shortly afterwards and since the late 1990s a majority of Austrians think that European integration has already gone too far. This also accounts for SPÖ- and ÖVP-voters, meaning that both parties failed in maintaining support for European integration among their constituents. Thus the SPÖ and the ÖVP face the obstacle not to be in line with its voters on the question of Europe, making the active politicization of the issue a highly risky task for these two parties and thus quite unlikely.

Different from the two traditional mainstream parties, Austria's other parties are closer located to the margins of the policy space—the FPÖ and the BZÖ (since its foundation in 2005) to the right, the Greens to the left, and the Liberals (represented in parliament only between 1993 and 1999) clearly to left on the non-material or new politics dimension, while closer to the right on the economic left-right dimension. According to salience theory, these parties might have an interest in emphasizing the issue of Europe in order to challenge mainstream parties. Whether an electoral advantage can be expected from such a strategy, however, varies for each of the four parties depending not only on the position the party and its voters take on the issue of Europe, but also on whether or not it participated in federal government. For the Liberals, who have permanently been in opposition, there is not much to lose by politicizing the issue, since the party is united in its EU support and has to care less about the Euroskeptic majority opinion compared to the mainstream parties. However, there is neither much to win, given that the Liberals share their pro-European stance with the mainstream SPÖ and ÖVP, making the EU issue unfit for challenging the mainstream parties on the part of the Liberals.

The Greens are the party that has undergone the most fundamental shift in its positioning towards European integration since Austria joined the EU: They initially opposed and mobilized against EU accession but shifted towards a more supportive stance and over the course of time have become strong advocates of both the deepening of European integration and enlargement of the EU (see Chapters 6.1 and 7). Different from the pre-accession period, Green voters meanwhile have become the most supportive to further integration among all voters. Hence while the issue was suitable to challenge the mainstream governing parties prior to Austria's EU accession, when the Greens still held a skeptical position towards the EU, it is less so since the party joined the camp of the supporters to further European integration in line with the two mainstream parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP. This applies despite the fact that the Greens have been in opposition ever

since their foundation in the mid-1980s.

Finally, Austria's strong radical right parties, the FPÖ and its split-off, the BZÖ, can be expected to actively politicize European integration: They share a clear anti-EU profile distinguishing themselves from the mainstream parties and have an electorate strongly united in its opposition to the EU and to further integration. Considering that public Euroskepticism in Austria goes well beyond the supporters of the FPÖ/BZÖ as well as the fact that the country's biggest and highly influential tabloid, the *Krone*, actively campaigns against the EU and European integration, the issue of Europe can thus be expected to be particularly suitable for politicization by the radical right parties—with one limitation, and that is government participation. If a radical right, anti-EU party enters government in a coalition with a pro-European mainstream party—as was the case for the FPÖ (2000-2002, 2002-2005) and the BZÖ (2005-2006)—it will most likely be constrained in its attempts to publicly emphasize its rejection of the EU and integration (cf. Green-Peedersen 2011). Otherwise the party would risk conflict within the coalition, which could ultimately even lead to the termination of the coalition government. Furthermore, once in government anti-EU parties are suddenly confronted with the difficulties of limited room of maneuver within the complex processes of EU decision-making requiring the willingness to compromise from all actors involved in order to come to workable solutions. This makes it harder to credibly and effectively mobilize Euroskeptic sentiments. In summary, one can therefore expect the radical right FPÖ and BZÖ to actively politicize European integration, but to do less so when in power.

To sum up, according to salience theory the following pattern can be expected for Austrian political parties as regards the politicization of European integration: The pro-European SPÖ, ÖVP, and Liberals will refrain from politicizing the issue—either because they would risk losing votes (SPÖ, ÖVP) or because there is nothing to win for them (Liberals). For the very same reasons, the Greens can be expected to equally deemphasize the issue the more they move towards an explicitly supportive position towards integration over the course of time. Finally, the radical right FPÖ and BZÖ will most likely politicize European integration actively, though less so when in power. This expectable pattern reflects the advantageous opportunity structure for EU politicization that Euroskeptic parties face in Austria, which might be less the case in countries with higher levels of public support for integration, fewer anti-EU campaigning in the media, or stronger overlap of pro-European parties' position with the EU position of the party electorate.

6.2.2.2 Politicization at the party system level

Variation in the politicization of European integration may not only occur between different parties, but also between different campaigns, labeled here as variation at the party system in distinction from the party level. Such different degrees in the overall politicization of the issue at the party system level—i.e. systemic salience in Steenbergen and Scott's (2004) terms—will mostly result from the dynamics of the factors described previously. Still, certain conditions related to specific events or party competition dynamics may further boost or decrease the salience of the issue of Europe at certain points in time. The following factors can be considered in that respect:

- *Date of EU accession:* The more recently a country joined the EU, the higher will be the degree of politicization, because the EU issue is higher in public focus shortly after accession, when the country must adopt the *aquis communautaire* and the public attentively monitors whether membership has brought the benefits forecasted previously to accession (cf. Tillmann 2004).

- *Party repositioning:* If a party alters its EU position, this can be expected to increase the politicization of the issue, since those parties formerly 'on the same side' will criticize the positional shift whereas the other parties will question the party's credibility on the issue, thus boosting the politicization of Europe at the party system level (cf. Meguid 2005).

- *Government participation of Euroskeptic parties:* As outlined previously, government participation of Euroskeptic or anti-EU parties will most likely constrain these parties' in their ability to emphasize and criticize European integration. Given that Euroskeptic parties are seen as the driving forces for the politicization of Europe in much of the literature (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vries/Edwards 2009; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004), their government participation is likely to decrease the overall politicization of the issue. However, in case there are two Euroskeptic parties—one in power and one in opposition—we would expect the contrary, i.e. an increase in the politicization of the issue, since the opposition party is likely to actively challenge its Euroskeptic counterpart.

Expectations for the party system level:

The empirical analysis focuses on the five general election campaigns after Austria joined the EU as a member on 1 January 1995. The 1995 election was held early due to conflict about the budget between the then coalition partners, the SPÖ and the ÖVP (Müller 1996).[85] After the election, the coalition was rebuilt and lasted for the whole four-year legislative period. The following election in 1999 has been called "momentous" (Müller 2000a: 191): For the first time in Austria's history, the radical right FPÖ became second strongest party behind the SPÖ. More importantly, however, the ÖVP and the FPÖ built a coalition after a series of 'grand coalitions' between the SPÖ and the ÖVP. The building of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition government raised enormous criticism internationally and among the other EU member states because of the FPÖ's specific nature as a radical right party (cf. Pelinka 2002). The EU-14 agreed on bilateral measures against the new Austrian government that lasted until September 2000 (cf. Merlingen *et al.* 2001; Karlhofer/Sickinger 2001). Increasing intra-party conflict within the FPÖ led to the resignation of FPÖ-party leader and Vice Chancellor Susanne Riess-Passer and several FPÖ members of government in 2002, resulting in snap elections. After the election, the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition was rebuilt, though with enormous change regarding the strength of the two partners: While the FPÖ lost almost 17 percentage points, the ÖVP won more than 15 points and became the strongest party (cf. Müller 2004). However, intra-party dissent within the FPÖ again was not long in coming and the FPÖ-governing team decided to found a new party to maintain the coalition with the ÖVP: the BZÖ. The re-named coalition finished the term until 2006. After the 2006 elections, the SPÖ and the ÖVP built a coalition, lasting for less than two years: After SPÖ-Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and newly elected party leader Werner Faymann repositioned the party on the question of national referenda on EU treaties, the ÖVP called for reelection. After the 2008 election, the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition was rebuilt and continues to be in power to date (December 2011). Against this background, the following pattern can be expected regarding the politicization of European integration: A higher degree of politicization can be expected for the 1995 election campaign (which is the first campaign after EU accession), the 2006 campaign (when the Euroskeptic FPÖ was back in opposition and the similarly Euroskeptic BZÖ in power previously to the campaign), and in 2008 (when the snap election was caused by party

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[85] For a more extensive summary of election results and government formation see Chapter 5.

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repositioning on the part of the SPÖ). Finally, a lower degree of politicization can be expected in 2002, when the only challenger to European integration at that time was in power and thus constrained on the issue.

### 6.2.3 Puzzling findings: Comparing available measures for Austrian parties' EU issue-salience

Scholars interested in the politicization of issues can make use of a variety of data sources for identifying the emphasis political parties put on particular issues in the domestic sphere of contestation. As regards the European integration issue, three large-scale data sets providing relevant information for Austrian political parties can be consulted. These are the *Chapel Hill expert survey* (CHES, Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007), the *Comparative Manifesto Project* (CMP, Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006), and the media data from the research project *National Political Change in a Globalizing World* (NPCGW, Kriesi et al. 2006). They all include a variable for parties' issue-salience towards European integration applicable for the study of party politicization. Though covering slightly different time periods and applying different measuring techniques, they all share at least two data points and can thus be used for comparing the order of parties as well as overall trends of increase or decrease in the politicization of European integration over the course of time. Such a comparison is quite illuminating for the case under study, as it demonstrates that different research strategies regarding data selection indeed lead to different empirical findings and, consequently, contradictory conclusions (see Figures 6.1-6.3).

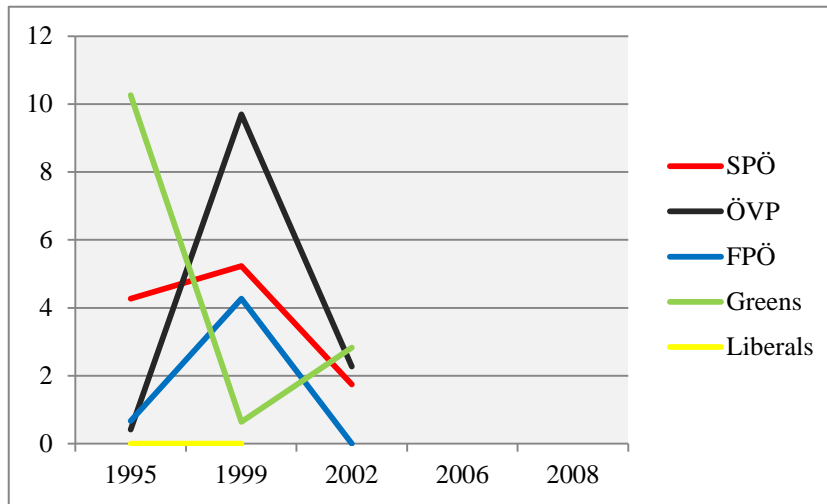Figure 6.1: EU issue-salience for Austrian parties according to CHES data
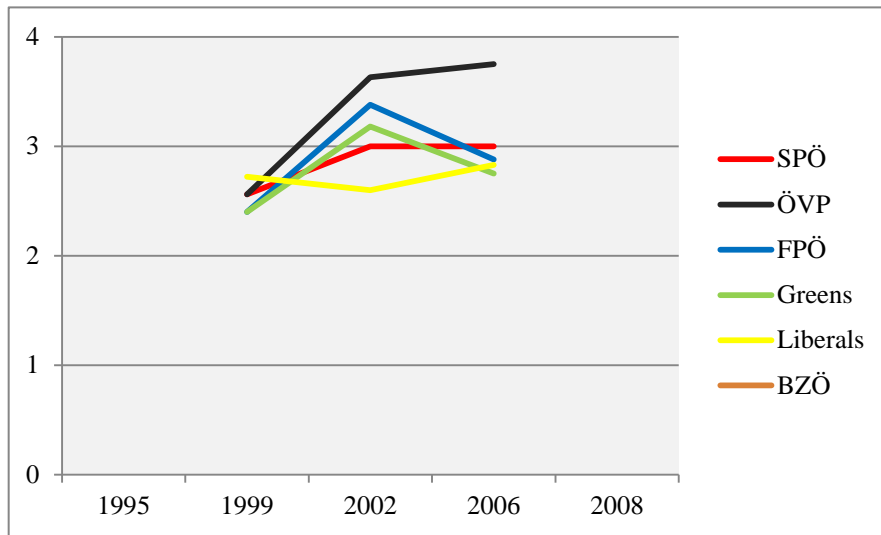
Source: CHES 1999-2006 (cf. Hooghe et al. 2010; Steenbergen/Marks 2007).

Figure 6.2: EU issue-salience for Austrian parties according to NPCGW data
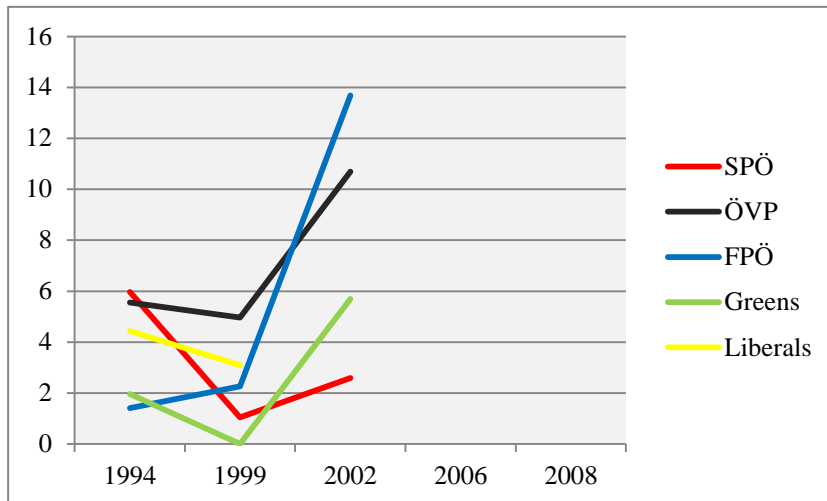
Source: NPCGW data (cf. Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008).

Figure 6.3: EU issue-salience for Austrian parties according to CMP data

Source: CMP (cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann 2006).

Differences can be identified both for temporal trends as well as the order of parties, as shall be illustrated on the salience measures for 2002—a point of time included in all three data sets: Whereas the CMP data indicate a decrease in the salience of Europe for all except one party (the Greens) compared to 1999, the CHES and NPCGW data both reflect a clear increase for all parties. The measures also differ with a view to the order of parties: The CMP data rank the Greens on top, the CHES data the ÖVP, and the NPCGW data the FPÖ. The findings moreover seem to contradict expectations derived from salience theory: The CMP data suggest that European integration is most salient for the Greens at two of the three data points; the CHES data indicate more issue salience for the pro-European mainstream parties compared to the anti-EU radical right at two out of three data points; the NPCGW data, finally, suggest that European integration is most salient for the ÖVP and the FPÖ.

Salience measures derived from established data sources thus provide a rather fuzzy and inconsistent picture of Austrian parties' emphasis on the issue of Europe, making it difficult to come to any conclusion about who actually drives the politicization of European integration in Austria.

6.2.4 Data and methods

The previous section showed that salience measures derived from available data sources yield to different findings for Austrian political parties' emphasis on the issue of Europe. This substantiates the need for carefully considered data selection, making sure that the data used and the information derived from them can accurately capture the concept empirically, i.e. measure what they are supposed to measure (Bollen 1989: 184, cited in Ray 2007: 12). To recall, party politicization of European integration has been defined in this dissertation as *parties' attempts to publicly emphasize the issue of Europe*. This will be explored by focusing on general election campaigns, which serve as an eminently suitable setting for party politicization (cf. Kriesi 2007; Netjes/Binnema 2007). In order to capture parties' attempts for publicly emphasizing European integration, this study first and foremost focuses on TV debates between rival candidates broadcasted during the campaigns. These data have several advantages for the study of parties' issue-politicization compared to other sources. They reach a broad audience and today often represent the highlight of a campaign (Plasser/Lengauer 2010b). Given that such debates also attract print media attention, they serve as a good representation of the overall campaign dynamics. Candidates can direct attention to issues they want to highlight, and their interactive element makes them eminently suitable to study politicization as part of domestic contestation between political parties. From 1994 onwards, the Austrian public broadcast station ORF has regularly broadcasted debates between party candidates during the campaign. The debates include separate two-party debates between candidates of all parties represented in the Austrian parliament as well as a joint final debate between figureheads of all these parties.

Parties' issue-emphasis on European integration will be measured as the proportion of words devoted to references related to European integration relative to the total number of words for each speaker in each debate. The relevant text passages were previously identified as part of the qualitative text analysis of TV debates (see Chapter 6.3). A party's EU issue-emphasis or salience for a given campaign is then calculated using the values appraised on the basis of all two-party debates each party participated in[86], thus reflecting an average value. Unfortunately, literal transcripts are not available for all the debates. Full transcripts are lacking for the 1999 and the

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[86] The final TV debate of each campaign—where leading representatives of all parties meet for a final debate shortly before election day—will not be considered for parties' salience measures, because it follows a different dynamic compared to the two-party debates.

2002 debates, for which literal transcriptions compiled by the author only include statements related to European integration but not the whole debate. Party averages for these two years are therefore calculated on the average total number of words received from the other debates, for which full transcripts are available (2006, 2008) or have been compiled by the author (1995).[87]

The interactive component of TV debates not only constitutes strength of these data, but at the same time weakness: The salience value for a given party does not necessarily reflect this party's own attempt to politicize the issue of Europe, but is the product of interaction between the two competitors plus the anchorperson represented in a particular debate. Each party's emphasis on the issue of Europe is therefore also dependent on whether the party is forced to respond to another party's claims or critique and questions raised by the anchorperson during the debate, even if the party may have preferred to neglect the issue. This certainly affects the average salience measure for a given party in a particular campaign. In order to overcome this weakness, the quantitative salience measures derived from TV debates will be complemented with additional qualitative indicators providing information on how active parties are in politicizing the EU issue during a campaign:

- Agenda setting dynamic in TV debates: Considering the interactive element of TV debates, attention to agenda setting dynamics concerning the issue of Europe helps identifying which parties behave proactively by putting the issue on the agenda of a debate and who only responds to questions or critique raised by the anchorperson or their direct competitor in the debate. This serves as a very illuminating indication of parties' EU issue-politicization.

- Most-important-issue question in final TV debate: The final TV debate between the leading representatives of all parties contesting the election often starts with an introductory round: The anchorperson asks each party speaker to briefly outline its policy priorities in response to the so called most-important-issue question. Though only available for three of the five election campaigns (because not asked in the other campaigns), this indicator reveals whether European integration is seen as a top-priority issue by parties when competing for votes.

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[87] For more information see the detailed description in Chapter 4.

- <u>Election posters:</u> Though placards are denied to have any impact on voters' party choice or voting intention, they serve as a good indicator for the overall direction of a party's campaign and the issues the party prioritizes (cf. Lederer 2007; 2010). Compared to other countries, posters still play an important role in Austrian election campaigns (ibid.). In both design and content, they often equal advertisements in newspapers, on which Austrian parties spend most of their campaign budget (Lederer 2007). Whether or not parties' posters contain mentions of European integration suggests if a party actively mobilizes on the EU issue, thus serving as strong evidence for issue-politicization.

The detailed analysis of election campaigns, considering both quantitative salience measures and qualitative indicators for active issue-politicization, will provide more valid information for party politicization of Europe compared to large-scale comparative data sources that have been used in previous studies (cf. Netjes/Binnema 2007; Kriesi 2007; Steenbergen/Scott 2004).

6.2.5 Empirical findings

Do Austrian parties pick up the European integration issue when competing for votes in general election campaigns? Is there any variation in parties' emphasis on the issue over time? And, finally, who drives the politicization of European integration in Austria? This section presents the empirical findings from the analysis of general election campaigns between 1995 and 2008. It is structured in two sub-sections: 6.2.5.1 summarizes the quantitative findings derived from TV debates; 6.2.5.2 discusses each election campaign separately by including qualitative indicators for issue-politicization.

6.2.5.1 Issue-emphasis according to quantitative salience measures

Looking at the quantitative salience measures derived from the analysis of TV debates between rival candidates, one can observe differences between parties and campaigns. Table 6.1 and Figure 6.4 summarize EU issue-emphasis for each party in each campaign.

Table 6.1: EU issue-emphasis in TV debates (1995-2008)

Party	1995	1999	2002	2006	2008	95-08
SPÖ	10.32	9.93	9.25	4.24	10.47	8.84
ÖVP	4.75	12.98	27.36	8.30	10.48	12.77
FPÖ	5.51	10.05	15.66	14.07	10.13	11.08
Greens	10.90	17.07	15.87	6.30	9.73	11.98
Liberals	0.09	6.87	-	-	-	3.48
BZÖ	-	-	-	1.17	6.75	3.96
Average	6.31	11.38	17.04	6.82	9.51	10.21

Figure 6.4: EU issue-emphasis in TV debates (1995-2008)
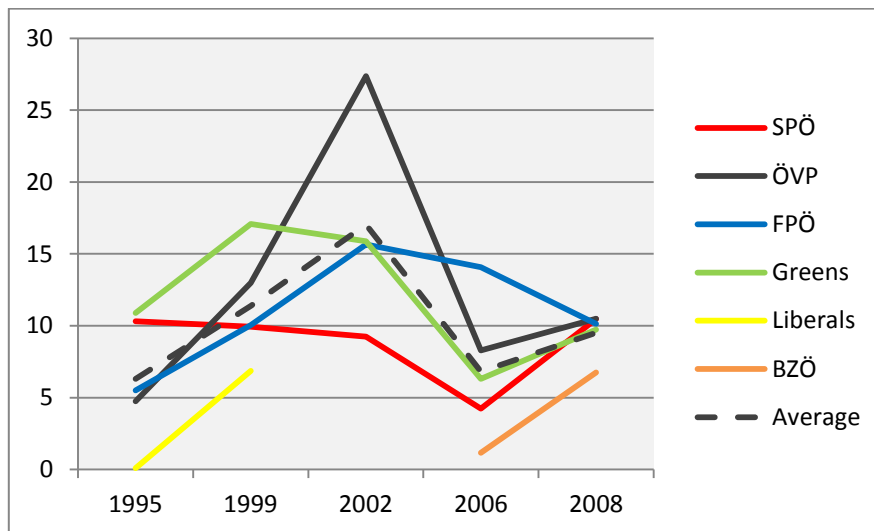
Summarizing the time-frame from 1995 until 2008 along parties (see final column Table 6.1), the ÖVP devoted most space to EU related questions, closely followed by the FPÖ and the Greens. However, this is due to the ÖVP's extremely high salience value in the 2002 debates, which clearly represents an outlier. As revealed in Table 6.1 and Figure 6.4, the ÖVP is not the party devoting most attention to European integration issues in the other campaigns: In 1995, the Greens reveal the highest salience measures, closely followed by the SPÖ. In 1999, it is again the Greens, with the other parties by far behind them. As just mentioned, the ÖVP's salience measures climb upwards in 2002, boosting the party's average for the whole period. The picture changes again in 2006, when the FPÖ by far reflects the highest salience on EU issues. Finally, in 2008 parties are much closer with only the BZÖ lagging behind.

Drawing an interim conclusion from this overview, the ÖVP and the Greens are the parties reflecting the highest EU issue-salience over time and also with a view to individual campaigns (with both parties being on top in two of the five campaigns). This is certainly not what one might expect from salience theory, where it should above all be the radical right and anti-EU FPÖ (and later also the BZÖ) that actively politicize Europe. Should we thus abandon salience theory as an explanatory framework for the politicization of European integration? Before leaping to that conclusion, the next section takes a closer look at each election campaign, first by focusing on the composition of party averages derived from TV debates and second by considering the qualitative indicators for issue-politicization introduced in the previous section. This will provide us with additional information on how active parties are in politicizing European integration, thus helping to contextualize and interpret the salience measures presented in Table 6.1 and Figures 6.4-6.9.

### 6.2.5.2 Adding qualitative indicators: Parties' issue-emphasis in individual campaigns

This section discusses each election campaign separately, including a more detailed analysis of TV debates and the introduction of the qualitative indicators for party politicization of European integration. For TV debates, first, party averages will be disentangled in order to examine whether European integration appears in several debates and party constellations or is limited to the encounter of particular parties (see Figures 6.5-6.9). Second, we will explore whether parties' actively refer to European integration (or only respond) during TV debates by examining the agenda setting dynamic regarding the issue of Europe. Furthermore, we will consider whether European integration represents a top-priority issue for a party in the campaign, indicated by, first, its mentioning in response to the 'most-important-issue' question asked in the final TV debate of a campaign (*Elefantenrunde*) and, second, its representation on parties' election placards.

The 1995 election campaign: This is the first general election campaign after Austria's EU accession. The election took place in December, merely a year after Austria joined the EU on 1 January 1995. Figure 6.5 presents parties' emphasis on the European integration issue in TV debates. The vertical category axis distinguishes the debates; the horizontal value axis reflects parties' relative emphasis on European integration during a debate, with parties distinguished by

the different colors. To give an example, the green bars reflect the emphasis the Greens put on the issue of Europe in the individual debates with a different competitor: The Greens devote about 37 per cent of their speaking time/words in their debate with the SPÖ to questions of European integration, seven per cent in their debate with the ÖVP, approximately two in their debate with the FPÖ, and less than one per cent in the debate with the Liberals, resulting in an average of about 11 per cent for the Greens.[88]

Figure 6.5: Parties EU emphasis in TV debates 1995
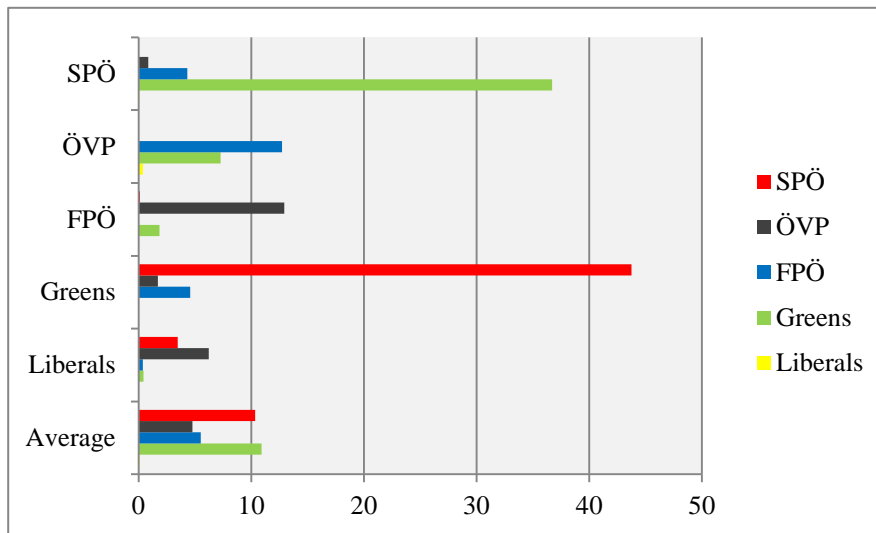
Looking at the party averages, the Greens and the SPÖ put most emphasis to the issue of Europe. These averages, however, are largely boost by the debate between the two, which clearly represents an outlier. Considerable, though much less, emphasis on European integration is also present in the debate between the ÖVP and the FPÖ, with around 13 per cent for each of them. In all other debates, parties' EU salience values do not exceed the ten per cent threshold—mostly even remaining below five per cent. However, while each party puts some emphasis on the issue in one or the other debate, this is different for the Liberals, for whom European integration seems to be a non-issue in the 1995 TV debates.

The overall picture partly changes once considering which parties actually bring up the matter of Europe during the debates (agenda setting). In 1995 it is the FPÖ and the Greens who put Europe

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[88] The same logic applies to Figures 6.6-6.9.

on the agenda in debates with other parties—though they do not do so in all debates they participate in. However, this at least puts into perspective the SPÖ's salience measures compared to the Greens': While the two parties reach almost equal salience values on average, the SPÖ primarily reacts, whereas the Greens actively raise the issue. Given the latter's more critical stance towards European integration in 1995 compared to later years (see Chapters 6.1 and 6.3), the focus on parties' agenda setting on TV also leads to the—cautious—conclusion that in 1995 it is the Euroskeptic parties—the Greens and the FPÖ—who raise the issue of Europe actively in the 1995 campaign. The Greens also refer to European integration on one of their election posters, claiming "for an ecological and social alliance in Europe", "against the Europe of technocrats", and for neutrality instead of NATO accession.[89] Finally, and just for completing the indicators, the most-important-issue question is not available for this campaign.

The 1999 election campaign: The salience of European integration in TV debates increases in 1999—and notably so—for all parties except the SPÖ. The Liberals put least emphasis on the EU issue (about seven per cent), while all other parties devote at least about a tenth to it, and the Greens more than 17 per cent (see Figure 6.6). The Greens' significantly higher EU emphasis is also reflected in the fact that the other parties also put more emphasis on the issue in their debates with the Greens. This is clearly the case for the SPÖ and the Liberals, each devoting more than a quarter of their speaking time to European questions in their debate with a rival candidate from the Greens. Similar to 1995, the ÖVP and the FPÖ emphasize the issue most in the debate with one another (each close to a quarter of their speaking time in this debate).

There is no systematic pattern with a view to parties' agenda setting regarding the issue of Europe on TV: Each party raises the issue in one or the other debate and EU related topics are also introduced by the anchorperson in two of the ten debates. This reflects very well the fact that the issue of Europe has become more important in a larger number of debates and thus various party constellations. Still, the Greens' notable higher issue emphasis stands out in the 1999 campaign and though not explicitly naming European integration on election posters, the party also refers to EU-related topics in its placard slogans (mentioning transit traffic, genetically

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[89] Translation by SM. The original slogan reads as follows: "Unsere Brüsseler Spitze. Für eine ökologische und soziale Allianz in Europa. Gegen das Europa der Technokraten. Für die Neutralität. Gegen NATO-Beitritt."

modified organisms, agricultural factories, and neutrality[90]). The ÖVP in turn is the only party mentioning European integration in response to the most-important-issue question raised by the anchorperson in the very final TV debate.

Figure 6.6: Parties EU emphasis in TV debates 1999
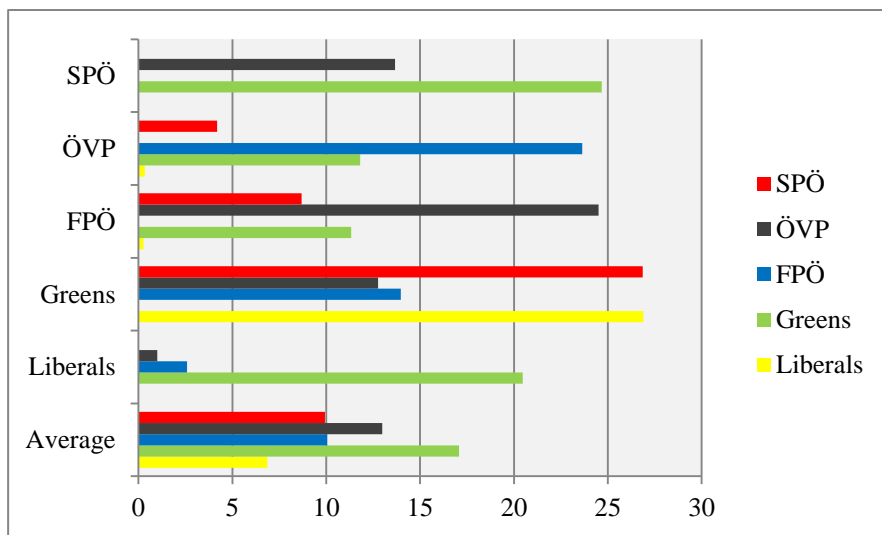
The 2002 election campaign: In several aspects, this campaign represents a special case. First of all, it is the only campaign in our period of examination in which only four parties participated in the TV debates.[91] Second, the 2002 snap election was the first election to follow the FPÖ's controversial government participation (in a coalition with the ÖVP) and was caused by huge intra-party conflict about government policy in the FPÖ that finally resulted in the resignation of several highly ranked FPÖ-officials. Finally, the campaign took place in October/November (election date: 24 November), only a few weeks prior to the finalization of the accession negotiations for the EU's to date largest enlargement round.

Though the coalition agreement between the ÖVP and the FPÖ included an unmistakable

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[90] The original slogans read as follows: "Raus aus Gentechnik und Agrarfabriken. Gesundes Essen sichern"; "Raus aus der Verkehrshölle. Transit Lawine stoppen"; "Raus aus dem NATO-Wahn. Neutralität garantieren".

[91] This is because the Liberals failed to reach the minimum threshold (four per cent) to be represented in the *Nationalrat* in the 1999 election. This made the party sink into obscurity in Austrian politics. It also ruled out participation in the two-party TV debates, which is a privilege of parties represented in the *Nationalrat* prior to the respective election.

acknowledgement towards European integration and EU enlargement (see Chapter 7), the FPÖ repeatedly questioned enlargement while still in government and heavily campaigned for a public initiative that claimed for a veto against EU accession of the Czech Republic (because of the nuclear power plant Temelín) (Fallend 2008). This context explains the extremely high EU salience value for the ÖVP in the debate with its former coalition partner, the FPÖ (see Figure 6.7). This debate, where the ÖVP spends almost half of its speaking time to EU questions, is also the reason for the ÖVP's overall high salience value in 2002 that—with 27 per cent—clearly represents an outlier: Though even when excluding the ÖVP-FPÖ debate, the ÖVP would be the party with the highest salience on the EU issue in 2002, it would be much closer to the other parties—first and foremost the Greens and the FPÖ (each about 16 per cent). Not reaching the ten per cent mark, the SPÖ puts least emphasis on European integration questions.

Different from 1999, when parties put most emphasis on EU issues in their debate with the Greens, they now do so in the debates with the ÖVP: For all three other parties, salience measures are highest in their debate with the ÖVP. The ÖVP is also the party most actively mentioning the issue in debates: In all debates the party participated in, it is always the ÖVP raising the issue, while the other parties do so only sporadically (Greens, FPÖ) or not at all (SPÖ). In 2002, therefore, the ÖVP seems to be the driving force in politicizing European integration during TV confrontations. Still, the issue of Europe is also present in other debates and emphasized by other parties. The FPÖ even refers to it on one of its election posters, saying those who are critical to the EU should vote for the FPÖ.[92] As in 1995, the most-important-issue question is not available for this campaign.

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[92] The slogan reads as follows: "Wer EU-kritisch ist, wählt blau".

Figure 6.7: Parties EU emphasis in TV debates 2002
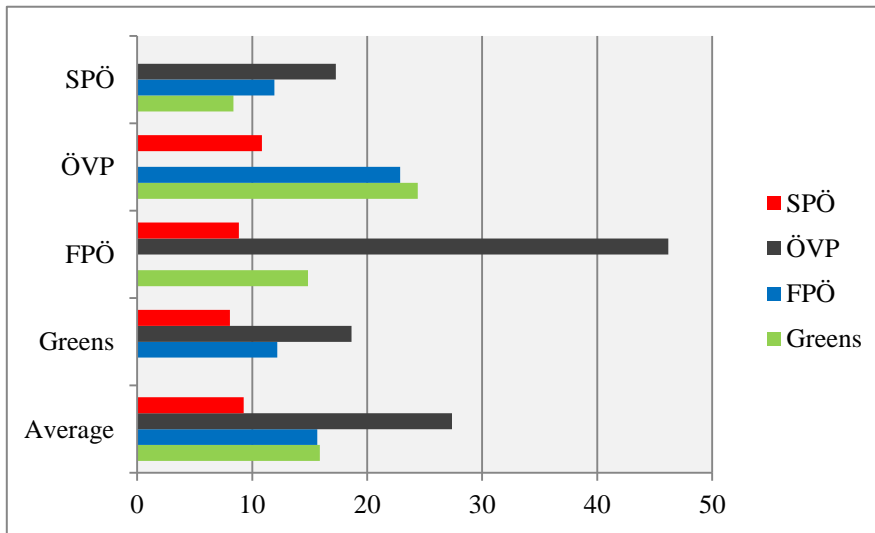
The 2006 election campaign: This is the first general election campaign in which the BZÖ participated in, resulting again in a five-party competition at the ballot box and on TV. After the split-off from the FPÖ in 2005, the BZÖ maintained the coalition government with the ÖVP until the 2006 regular election and announced its readiness to govern for the period afterwards. Compared to the previous campaigns, the 2006 TV salience measures reflect a particularly interesting empirical pattern. Looking at the overall decline of EU emphasis to 6.82 per cent (recall Table 6.1) and the fact that no party except for the anti-EU FPÖ actively emphasizes the issue, the campaign is a perfect representation of the *sleeping giant diagnosis* (van der Eijk/Franklin 2004): While the mainstream (SPÖ, ÖVP), pro-EU (SPÖ, ÖVP, Greens), and governing parties (ÖVP, BZÖ) downplay the issue of Europe, the radical right, oppositional FPÖ actively tries to mobilize anti-EU sentiments. The other parties' depoliticization strategy becomes evident when looking at individual debates (see Figure 6.8): In 2006 EU issues are predominantly present in debates including the FPÖ, while hardly ever mentioned in debates between candidates from other parties. Excluding each party's debate with the FPÖ, the average proportion of EU issues relative to a party's total word score in each party's remaining three two-party debates is close to zero (1.04 for both the SPÖ and the Greens, 0.33 for the ÖVP, and zero for the BZÖ). This is a big difference to the previous campaigns, where issue-emphasis is much more spread

among different parties, even if one party outperforms the others with a higher salience level (as the Greens do in 1999 and the ÖVP in 2002). Hence, despite the FPÖ's attempts to politicize Europe, the issue remains highly insignificant for the other parties, which make no efforts in competing over this particular issue—a matter that also finds its expression in the content of the debate, as will be shown in Chapter 6.3. The FPÖ not only actively and repeatedly challenges the other parties on the issue of Europe during TV debates; it also mentions European integration in response to the most-important-issue question in the final TV debate with leading representatives from all parties and refers to it on election placards (referring to Brussels as antipode to homeland and claiming against EU accession of Turkey[93]).

The other parties' non-emphasis on the issue of Europe, which accounts for the overall decrease in the 2006 TV salience measure, is particularly interesting against the background that Austria hold the Chair of the rotating EU Presidency in the very same year and until only a few weeks before the election campaign started. While this could have been expected to increase the salience of EU issues, in fact the opposite happened and the FPÖ remained the only party politicizing the issue.

Figure 6.8: Parties EU emphasis in TV debates 2006

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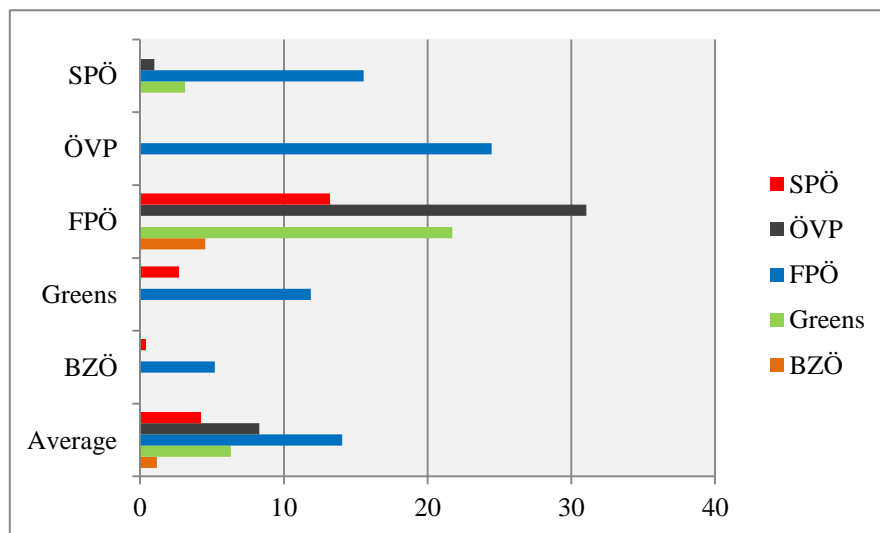
[93] The slogans read as follows: "Heimat statt Schüssel und Brüssel. Wir für Österreich"; "Duell um Österreich. ÖVP-Schüssel & SPÖ-Gusenbauer: […] Türkei zur EU. FPÖ-HC Strache: […] EU-Beitritt verhindern. Sie haben die Wahl".

The 2008 election campaign: The 2008 snap election was due to the collapse of the government coalition between the SPÖ and the ÖVP. The collapse was not least caused by a repositioning of the SPÖ on the controversial question of national referenda on EU treaties: In a letter to the editor of Austria's biggest and anti-EU tabloid, the *Krone*, SPÖ-Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and newly elected party leader Werner Faymann had announced the SPÖ's support for national referenda on future EU treaties, which clearly reflected a repositioning on that question. Against this background, it does not come as a surprise that the issue of Europe ranks more prominently in TV debates compared to the previous campaign: Parties again seem to put notable and—except for the BZÖ—equal weight to EU questions. Consistently, we find an increase in the total EU salience average (TV) in 2008 compared to 2006, though still below the levels of 1999 and 2002 (recall Table 6.1). Looking at individual debates (see Figure 6.9), we find that emphasis on EU issues is more equally distributed among different parties and debates. Hence the 2008 campaign reveals similar patterns to the 1999 and (to a lesser extent) the 2002 campaign, whilst the issue was much more concentrated on the FPÖ in 2006. However, considering parties agenda setting efforts, the pattern is similar to 2006 (and different from the other campaigns): Again the FPÖ is most active and perseverant in discussing European integration issues, while the other parties only occasionally do so and mostly without insisting on a substantive debate. What is different, however, is that the anchorperson puts much more emphasis on the issue of Europe. While this was the exception before[94], the issue is introduced by the anchorperson in five of the ten two-party debates in 2008. The increase in the importance of the EU issue on the media agenda can be explained by the repositioning of the SPÖ on the question of national referenda on EU treaties, which was decisive for the snap elections.[95] The anchorperson's stronger emphasis on EU questions then also affects all parties' salience measures or, to be precise, boosts them, since parties are expected to respond to questions raised by the anchorperson. The SPÖ itself indeed illustrates the reasons for its positional shift when asked on TV, but is not proactive in mentioning European integration. However, other parties and the anchorperson confront the SPÖ with this shift, resulting in more issue emphasis on European integration for all parties and issue-emphasis spread across more debates. In conclusion, the FPÖ is again most active in politicizing Europe, refers to integration when asked about the most important issues, and includes the issue

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[94] It happened twice in 1999 and in one debate in 2006.
[95] Since the 2006 and the 2008 TV debates were moderated by the very same person, we can rule out that the stronger emphasis on the part of the media is due to a different anchorperson.

in its placard campaign (stating to be "representatives of the people instead of EU-traitors"[96]). However, different from 2006, European integration also plays more prominently on TV in debates excluding the FPÖ.

Figure 6.9: Parties EU emphasis in TV debates 2008
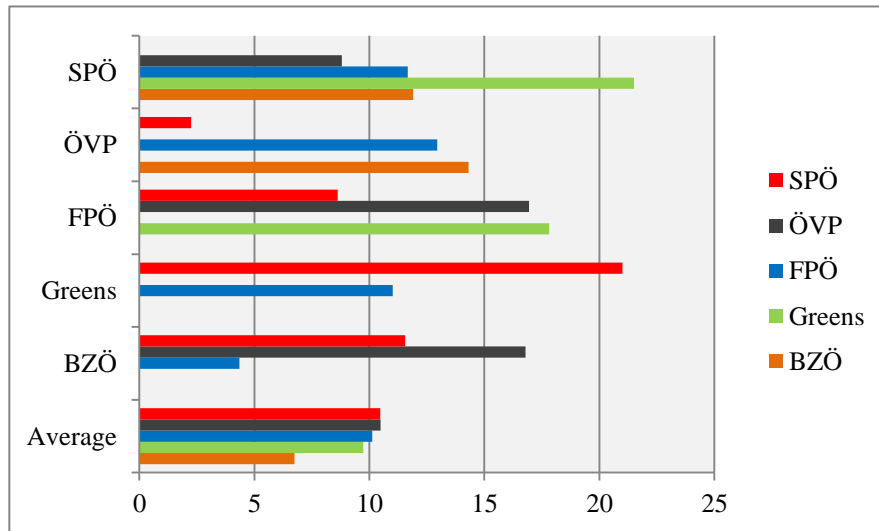
The detailed analysis of campaigns with a focus on individual TV debates and complementary qualitative indicators is clearly worth the effort, since it puts into perspective some of the results coming from the quantitative salience measures. Table 6.2 visualizes how active parties are in their EU politicization during election campaigns based on the qualitative indicators, namely EU agenda setting in two-party TV debates, mentions of European integration in response to the most-important-issue question in the final TV debate, and reference to European integration on election posters.

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[96] Translation by SM. The slogan reads "Volksvertreter statt EU-Verräter". Following German rules of grammar, it would actually mean cheating the EU. In line with the FPÖ campaign and considering the attempt to rhyme, however, it is to be interpreted as betraying the people to the EU.

Table 6.2: Active EU politicization during election campaigns (1995-2008)

Party	1995	1999	2002	2006	2008
SPÖ		+			
ÖVP		++	++	+	
FPÖ	+	+	++	+++	+++
Greens	++	++	+		
Liberals			/	/	/
BZÖ	/	/			

Note: Summary of qualitative indicators for active EU politicization;
more + indicate more active, systematic politicization efforts.

The analysis of the 1995 campaign on the one hand substantiates that the Greens put most emphasis on the issue of Europe; however, they clearly put into perspective the high salience measures for the SPÖ, while indicating more active politicization on the part of the FPÖ. For 1999, the findings clearly show that parties politicize European integration more actively; though the Greens and ÖVP stand out with more active politicization, the issue is more emphasized by all parties. The 2002 analysis shows that it is first and foremost the ÖVP putting the issue on the agenda on TV. However, controlling for the outlier debate between the ÖVP and the FPÖ, the ÖVP is much closer to the FPÖ and the Greens. This is consistent with the fact that the Greens also actively raise the issue repeatedly, and the FPÖ even includes it in its placard campaign. The 2006 and 2008 campaigns are probably the best evidence in support for a more comprehensive analysis of EU party politicization as conducted in this chapter: The findings for 2006 clearly demonstrate that Europe is only politicized by the FPÖ—and extensively so.[97] Though the FPÖ also scores highest on the TV salience measures, the detailed analysis shows that other parties' low, but existing emphasis according to the party averages is exclusively due to the FPÖ's EU agenda setting. This is further strengthened by the other indicators, showing that European integration represents a top-priority issue for the FPÖ in 2006. In 2008, finally, TV salience measures suggest an increase for all parties except the FPÖ. However, the in-depth analysis shows that this is largely due to more emphasis on European integration by the anchorperson in TV debates, and that the FPÖ is again most active in politicizing the issue of Europe (both on TV and in its poster campaign). In a nutshell, the findings for individual campaigns demonstrated that a detailed analysis is indispensable for coming to any definite conclusions about party politicization of European integration.

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[97] The ÖVP only actively mentions Europe in response to the most-important-issue question during the final TV debate.

6.2.6 Discussing empirical findings against hypotheses

To what extent does the variation in the degree of politicization over European integration support our expectations derived from the literature? This section discusses the findings against the hypotheses presented in 6.2.2, at first focusing on individual parties and thereafter comparing the different campaigns.

6.2.6.1 Party level

This chapter started from the premise that a party's attempt to politicize the issue of Europe will be dependent on strategic considerations for vote-maximizing (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Steenbergen/Scott 2004). These considerations are influenced by the specific opportunity structure each party is faced with regarding the issue of Europe. Whether the politicization of European integration constitutes an opportunity or is likely to bring about damage will be dependent on whether a party concurs with its voters' EU position, is united on the issue, is located in the center or at the margins of the policy space, and whether it is a governing or opposition party. In the following, the findings will be discussed for each party separately.

SPÖ (social democrats): The SPÖ is one of Austria's traditional mainstream governing parties. Since the party in the 1980s finally opted to strive for Austria's EU membership (Schaller 1994a), it has supported all major steps of European integration and continuously claims for more integration and the establishing of a real political and social union (see Chapter 6.1). According to expert judgments, the party is largely united in its supportive position towards European integration (see Table 5.4). Despite certain critique after the party leadership in 2008 announced to support national referenda on EU treaties, intra-party dissent held off—at least in public—and the new position on the question of referenda did not lead to a fundamental repositioning towards European integration. In its support for integration, however, the SPÖ differs from a majority of its voters, who thinks that integration has already gone too far (see Figures A7-A9, see Appendix). Considering all these factors, the SPÖ can be expected to be reluctant to actively politicizing European integration, since the party cannot expect to reap electoral advantage from

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doing so. This expectation is supported by the findings for TV debates and the qualitative indicators presented above: Overall, and except for the two youngest parties (the Liberals and the BZÖ), the SPÖ reflects the lowest salience values and is not active in politicizing the issue of Europe. Decomposing the TV party averages of individual campaigns further substantiates this result: In the two campaigns where the SPÖ exceeds the ten per cent mark (1995 and 2008), the salience is increased by the party responding to other parties rather than the SPÖ's active politicization. This even holds true for 2008, when one could have expected more emphasis on European integration by the SPÖ given its repositioning on the referenda question shortly before the election campaign. The other qualitative indicators do not point to any active attempts to politicize the EU issue either: Neither does the SPÖ make any reference to it on its election placards nor in response to the most-important-issue question available for the 1999, the 2006, and the 2008 campaign. That the SPÖ had been in opposition between 2000 and 2007—for the first time since the 1970s—neither affected its attempts to politicize the EU issue.

ÖVP (Christian democrats): The ÖVP to some extent behaves contradictory to expectations derived from salience theory. It is Austria's second traditional mainstream governing party and had been the driving force for Austria's way towards the EU (Schaller 1994a). The party constantly presents itself as *the* Austrian 'Europapartei' and publicly argues in support for European integration throughout the period of examination. It does so despite the fact that its voters are not as supportive towards integration anymore as the party is. In fact, according to European Election Study data (available from 1999 onwards), ÖVP voters do not differ fundamentally from SPÖ voters in their rejection of further integration (see Figures X-X).[98] Still, the ÖVP reflects the highest average salience level compared to all other parties. Though the TV salience value is largely affected by the outlier of the 2002 campaign (when the ÖVP spent almost half of its speaking time in the debate with its former coalition partner FPÖ to European integration questions), the qualitative indicators also point to some activeness in politicizing the issue: The party is proactive on the issue in the 1999 and the 2002 TV debates and also mentions European integration in response to the most-important-issue question in two of the three

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[98] It should be noted, though, that using the EES data I operationalized "party voters" as those stating to have voted for the party in the last election. The picture will most likely be different once applying a more narrow definition of party supporters. However, given that parties, and large mainstream parties in particular, not only seek for the votes of their traditionally loyal supporters, but address a broader electorate, it is reasonable to apply a less narrow definition.

campaigns for which this measure is available (in 1999 and in 2006). Thus despite salience theory suggesting a depoliticization strategy towards the EU issue by the ÖVP because of an absent electoral incentive, this is not supported by the empirical findings of this study. For those observing Austrian party politics, however, this will not come as a complete surprise and is related to the ÖVP's history and self-portrayal as Austria's 'Europapartei' (cf. Schaller 1994a). This could be seen as indications for issue ownership (at least self-perceived) on the EU issue, thus making the politicization of the issue more likely also from the perspective of salience theory.

FPÖ (radical right party): The FPÖ is not only Europe's most successful radical right party, but also one of its most successful anti-EU parties. Though certainly not a fringe or niche party anymore regarding its size, it is clearly located at the fringes of the policy space and has further radicalized in the last years (recall Table 5.5). The party opposed Austria's EU accession and is very hostile towards the EU and integration, which is understood by the party as a threat to Austria's sovereignty and identity (see Chapter 6.1). The party shares its hostility towards European integration with its voters, who by large majority evaluate the integration process as having already gone too far (see Figures A7-A9, see Appendix). Except for the period of its government participation (2000-2002 and 2002-2005), the party is to be seen as strongly united in its rejection of EU integration. The FPÖ thus represents a party par excellence for awakening the "sleeping giant" (Van der Eijk/Franklin 2004) by politicizing the issue of Europe in order to mobilize Euroskeptic voters. This expectation is supported by the empirical findings presented earlier. The party is most active in putting the issue on the agenda during TV debates throughout the whole period of examination—and in particular so since 2006. Moreover, once taking into account the other qualitative indicators for issue-politicization, the FPÖ represents the party most systematically mobilizing on European issues over time: It is the only party that, from 2002 onwards, included EU related slogans into their nationwide placard campaigns in general election campaigns; and it mentioned the EU in response to the anchorperson's most-important-issue question in the final TV debates in 2006 and 2008.

The 2002 and the 2006 campaign are particularly interesting for the case of the FPÖ because of the party's participation in government previously. While being in government, the FPÖ had to share responsibility for EU related decisions but at the same time tried to stick to its anti-EU

rhetoric in order not to disappoint Euroskeptic voters, often resulting in some confusion about the official party position and leading to conflict with the FPÖ's coalition partner, the ÖVP. In 2002, one source for conflict was EU enlargement, in particular veto threats on the part of the FPÖ (cf. Fallend 2008). This also turned out on the agenda in the TV debate between the FPÖ and the ÖVP during the 2002 election campaign and explains the comparatively high salience of the EU issue in this debate.

Though the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition was rebuilt after the 2002 election, the situation was quite different for the FPÖ in the 2006 campaign. Whereas intra-party conflict over government policy within the FPÖ resulted in the collapse of the government in 2002 (after FPÖ-members of government had resigned), the FPÖ-governing team opted for a different strategy in 2005 and founded a new party in order to maintain the coalition: Under the lead of former FPÖ-party leader Jörg Haider, the BZÖ was founded in April 2005. Since almost all MPs and the whole governing team went with the BZÖ, the FPÖ was left without office and only two MPs in parliament. Though the split-off certainly marginalized the FPÖ and complicated its recovering in the first place, it also facilitated the party's return to its radical right and populist roots and allowed the FPÖ to shift responsibility for unpopular government policy to the BZÖ. This turned out to be a particularly rewarding strategy with a view to the European integration issue: Opposition to the EU and integration became a unique feature distinguishing the FPÖ from all other parties in the 2006 campaign: While the SPÖ, the ÖVP, and the Greens held a supportive position towards integration anyway, the BZÖ did not seem to have a clear stance and, furthermore, had to take responsibility for EU related decisions as a governing party.[99] Furthermore, the confusing situation after the foundation of the BZÖ in April 2005—when party membership of individual MPs formerly associated with the FPÖ was largely unclear— eventually turned out to be a window of opportunity for the FPÖ: A few weeks after the BZÖ had been founded, the parliament voted for the ratification of the EU Constitutional treaty. Ratification was supported by all MPs except one, Barbara Rosenkranz (one of the view MPs that had stayed with the FPÖ, see Chapter 7). This became an important point of reference in the FPÖ's anti-EU campaigning that started in early 2006. Simultaneously to the beginning of Austria's chairmanship of the rotating EU Presidency, the FPÖ launched a public initiative called

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[99] Moreover, new FPÖ-party leader Heinz-Christian Strache had already criticized Jörg Haider's EU position when both were still members of the FPÖ, which certainly strengthened the FPÖ's credibility of the EU issue vis-à-vis the BZÖ.

"Austria stay free!" (*Österreich bleib frei!*). The initiative expressed rejection of the EU Constitutional treaty and Turkey's EU membership and claimed for a referendum in Austria on both questions. The FPÖ continued its anti-EU mobilization during the 2006 election campaign, when the FPÖ positioned itself as the only true Euroskeptic party in Austria protecting the country from the 'Brussels' dictate'. To sum up, the FPÖ behaves pretty much as expected according to salience theory: It actively politicizes European integration and has stepped up efforts since back in opposition in 2005/2006.

The Greens: The Greens are the Austrian party that has undergone the most fundamental change in its positioning towards European integration in the period examined in this study. While rejecting EU membership prior to the Austrian accession referendum, the party has become clearly supportive to European integration despite sharp critique of the current state. Similar shifts can be observed for the Green electorate: Having opposed EU accession by majority (cf. Plasser/Ulram 1994), Green voters have meanwhile become the most EU supportive voters (recall Figures A6-A9). Against this background, we would expect the Greens to politicize Europe more actively when still being more skeptical and less so once the party is in line with the center-left and -right mainstream parties in its EU support. Looking at the TV salience values, we indeed find that the Greens actively politicize European integration much more compared to the other parties in the 1990s—and that this politicization was expressed as EU critique (see Chapter 6.3)—, while issue-emphasis notably decreased afterwards. This holds true despite the increase in 2008, because much of the controversy in the debate with the SPÖ was more about the strategy the SPÖ had chosen to announce its new position—i.e. whether it was right or wrong to do so in a letter to the editor of Austria's most Euroskeptic tabloid—rather than European integration as such. The findings for the Greens thus seem to support the assumption present in the literature "that there are more votes to be won in opposition to European integration than in support" (Tillmann 2004: 605)—or at least that parties share this assessment.

The Liberals: The Liberals were only represented in the *Nationalrat* between 1993 and 1999. Dissent about the EU positioning of the FPÖ was part of the reason for the foundation of the Liberals by former FPÖ members (cf. Heschl 2002; Liegl 2006): Unlike the FPÖ, the Liberals supported Austria's EU accession and the further deepening of European integration. At the time

of accession, the liberal party was the only opposition party supportive to EU membership. This might explain why the party did not politicize the issue of Europe in the 1995 campaign, whereas the other opposition parties (the FPÖ and the Greens) did, since the Liberals on that particular question were in line with the governing parties. While largely neglecting the issue in the 1995 campaign, the Liberals put more emphasis on the issue in the 1999 campaign, in particular in their debate with the Greens. This is reasonable insofar as the two parties largely competed for the same group of voters and the Liberals could distinguish themselves from the Greens by referring to their continuous support for integration, while accusing the Greens of having been more reluctant on this question in the past. Altogether, the findings support expectations derived from salience theory, namely that there is neither much to be won nor much to lose from politicizing European integration on the part of the Liberals. This is reflected in the fact that Europe was no top-priority issue for the party in either of the campaigns and that the Liberals behaved differently in the two campaigns.

BZÖ (radical right party): The BZÖ shares its rejection of European integration with its former party fellows from the FPÖ. However, it lacks the FPÖ's credibility on that question, particular in the 2006 election campaign: The BZÖ was in power between 2005 and 2006, which was the time when the EU Constitutional treaty was ratified in the *Nationalrat*—with the support of the BZÖ. Hence it is not very surprising that the BZÖ refrained from actively politicizing Europe in the 2006 campaign. Back in opposition, however, the BZÖ increased its Euroskeptic politicization, reflected in an increase of issue-emphasis on Europe in the 2008 campaign. These findings very well fit with hypotheses from salience theory: As an anti-EU party with a Euroskeptic voter base, the BZÖ can be expected to actively politicize European integration—if not in government, however.

6.2.6.2 Party system level:

For identifying the degree of EU politicization in each campaign, the previous analysis provides us with two indicators: Firstly, the average emphasis on Europe in all TV debates of a particular campaign and, second, the emphasis put on the issue of Europe by the media (in the case of this

study: the anchorperson of TV debates), which can be seen as an indication for the issue being more salient and politicized. For explaining variation in the degree of EU politicization at the party system level, we have hypothesized (1) that the politicization of the issue will be higher the closer a campaign is to Austria's EU accession, (2) that party repositioning on the issue of Europe will increase the overall salience of the issue, and (3) that the government participation of Euroskeptic parties will decrease the politicization of European integration in case there is no other Euroskeptic competitor, and increase it in case there is. Whether this is supported by the findings presented in this chapter will be discussed in the following for each of these hypotheses.

Date of EU accession: Different from our assumption, the degree of politicization is not higher for the first election campaign to follow EU accession according to the above-mentioned indicators—quite the contrary: TV salience measures even suggest that the issue is least politicized in the 1995 campaign. This is also supported when looking at EU agenda setting on the part of the anchorperson in TV debates, which is completely absent for the 1995 campaign, whereas occurring occasionally in other campaigns, and most extensively so in the most recent campaign in 2008. These temporal trends hence do not support the assumption that due to more active monitoring of the EU issue on the part of the public the degree of politicization is higher the closer to EU accession a campaign is (cf. Tillmann 2004). This could be related to the fact that EU accession was supported by a large majority of Austrians in the accession referendum, which could have made the issue less attractive for party politicization on the part of the oppositional EU critics. Another explanation might be that the 1995 election was held early after the coalition government between the SPÖ and the ÖVP had collapsed only a year after the previous election in 1994. The collapse was due to large conflict between the two parties about the budget for 1996 (cf. Müller 1996). Issues related to the consolidation of the budget as well as speculation about the ÖVP's intention to build a government involving the FPÖ then dominated much of the campaign—leaving less room for other issues (ibid.).

Party repositioning on Europe: For assessing whether party repositioning increases the overall politicization of Europe in a campaign, we need to identify party repositioning in the first place. Despite emphasis on different topics and different facets of integration for several parties over the course of time, only two parties clearly changed their views: the Greens and the SPÖ. However,

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these two cases are quite different given the scope of change. Whereas party repositioning in the case of the Greens was more fundamental, as it concerned the general EU position, and emerged gradually over the course of time (see Chapters 6.1 and 7), the policy shift on the part of the SPÖ in 2008 regarding the question of national referenda on EU treaties was more narrow (thus not affecting the party's general EU support) and more abrupt. It then also caused more reactions by other parties (and the media) compared to the gradual repositioning on the part of the Greens: The qualitative text analysis clearly shows that the other parties as well as the anchorperson in TV debates relate their issue-emphasis on European integration to the SPÖ's alleged positional movement, resulting in higher salience levels for all parties (except for the FPÖ) compared to the previous campaign in 2006. However, much of the controversy that increased EU issue salience was not about the SPÖ's repositioning per se, but caused by the strategy the SPÖ had chosen for its announcement in support of referenda, namely to publish a letter to the editor in Austria's biggest and anti-EU tabloid (see Chapter 6.3). Altogether, we can cautiously conclude that abrupt repositioning, as in the SPÖ's case, indeed increases the politicization of European integration.

Government participation of Euroskeptic party: As discussed previously, the assumption that Euroskeptic government participation decreases the salience of the issue is based on the idea that a government coalition with a Euroskeptic party constrains this party's room of maneuver on the issue of Europe. For the Austrian case, this would mean that the salience of the issue decreases in the 2002 campaign following the first ÖVP-FPÖ government. However, quite the contrary is actually the case, since this campaign reflects the highest salience level of all campaigns, which is to a large extent due to the highly controversial debate between the former coalition partners ÖVP and FPÖ. This is also to be seen in relation to the FPÖ's mobilization against EU enlargement while the party was still in power. The party's support for certain steps towards further integration, including EU enlargement, on the part of the FPÖ's governing team hence did not seem to constrain the party in politicizing the issue of Europe during the election campaign. This interpretation is substantiated by an FPÖ slogan distributed via election posters during the 2002 campaign, which states that those critical to the EU should vote for the FPÖ. The 2006 case is much more complicated: After the split-off from the FPÖ in 2005, the former FPÖ-members of government—now members of the newly founded BZÖ—maintained the coalition with the ÖVP, leaving the FPÖ without office and only a few MPs in the *Nationalrat*. Though both the FPÖ and

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the BZÖ are to be classified as extremely Euroskeptic parties, the fact that the FPÖ was back in opposition more than a year before the election campaign started makes the 2006 campaign a somewhat curious case compared to the other campaign: With one Euroskeptical party in power (the BZÖ) and one back in opposition (FPÖ), one might expect the issue of Europe to be much more politicized in the 2006 campaign. As described above, however, all parties except for the FPÖ actually tried to depoliticize the issue. Overall it therefore seems that government participation of Euroskeptic parties does not serve as a good explanation for issue-salience—and certainly not in the direction assumed above, as the 2002 campaign demonstrates, when it was actually conflict between the former coalition partners, the ÖVP and FPÖ, as well as between the Greens and the ÖVP/FPÖ about a renewal of the coalition despite the FPÖ's EU position that increases the politicization of European integration in the campaign.

An alternative explanation for temporal trends in the overall degree of politicization would be that the politicization of Europe is somehow related to the course of integration. As described in more detail in Chapter 3, scholars argue that politicization is likely to increase the more the EU becomes a political union (see also the distinction between a pre- and a post-Maastricht era) and the more it is provided with competence in policy areas more directly and noticeably affecting citizens, since political actors have to consider public concerns about the pathway of integration and EU policies (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009). Though we cannot observe a continuous increase in the politicization of European integration over time according to TV salience measures, certain events related to the furthering of European integration indeed seem to stimulate politicization (e.g. EU enlargement, the deepening of the CFSP, the EU Constitutional treaty), indicated by the findings of the qualitative text analysis of TV debates presented in the next chapter. However, the politicization of European integration seems to be related above all to dynamics of party competition—even if they do not always manifest in a straightforward way. Such dynamics include competitive interaction between EU supporters and opponents, competition within the two camps, party repositioning, and questions about the formation of coalition governments— each boosting the politicization of European integration in one or the other way during the different campaigns analyzed previously.

6.2.7 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to examine Austrian parties' emphasis on European integration in general election campaign, i.e. the party politicization of European integration. In particular, it addressed the following questions: Which parties drive the politicization of European integration in Austria and how can we explain variation in the emphasis of Europe between parties as well as election campaigns? The chapter started from the premise that party politicization of European integration will be dependent on parties' strategic considerations for vote-seeking (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Netjes/Binnema 2007; Steenbergen/Scott 2004). This is based on an understanding of party competition as a contest about the different issues parties focus on rather than competition about divergent positions on the same issues (cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006; see also Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Ray 2007). Hence parties compete by emphasizing issues they consider to be beneficial in electoral terms while downplaying others—this is the core idea of salience theory.

Puzzled by the findings for Austrian parties derived from available comparative data sets—which not only reflect contradictory patterns, but also are at odds with expectations from salience theory—, this chapter provided an in-depth analysis of EU party politicization in Austrian election campaigns. The analysis is based on a combination of quantitative salience measures and qualitative indicators for parties' issue-politicization. The empirical analysis was carried out in several steps. First, quantitative salience measures were derived from the analysis of TV debates, providing an overview for trends in party politicization of Europe in Austrian general election campaigns. Second, each election campaign was analyzed separately, focusing on the dynamics in TV debates and considering the qualitative indicators. Finally, the empirical findings were assessed against the hypotheses derived for both individual parties and the party system level. The empirical conclusions presented in this chapter are thus based on a thorough examination. Starting with individual parties and then turning to the party system level, the findings can briefly be summarized as follows: From the four parties competing all elections from 1995 to 2008, the SPÖ puts least emphasis on the issue of Europe. This even holds true for the last campaign in 2008, which was due to the ÖVP's claim for reelections after the SPÖ had repositioned itself on the question of EU referenda. This is in line with the hypothesis derived from salience theory, suggesting no incentives for the SPÖ to actively politicize Europe. The anti-EU FPÖ politicized Europe most actively, and extensively so since back in opposition in 2005, which is also in line

with salience theory. The Greens actively politicized the issue in the 1990s, but less so afterwards, which also supports our expectations about a decrease in politicization the more supportive to European integration the party becomes. For the Liberals and the BZÖ, who only competed two of the five elections, long-term trends cannot be explored. Both parties put no emphasis on Europe in the first of the two campaigns they competed and engaged in the politicization of Europe more actively in the second campaign. Finally, the results for the ÖVP to some extent contradict our expectations from salience theory. Though a clear electoral advantage cannot be assessed for the ÖVP politicizing Europe, the party actively emphasizes the issue during election campaigns. However, given the ÖVP's history as the driving force for Austria's path towards the EU (cf. Schaller 1994a) and the party's self-portrayal as Austria's only 'Europapartei', this finding does not come as a complete surprise and could also be seen as an indication of perceived issue-ownership on the part of the ÖVP: For the period of investigation, the ÖVP views European integration a key issue for its party profile, which is also expressed in the party's attempts to politicize the issue—and to do so in a positive vein. Finally, comparing the overall degree of EU politicization in different election campaigns, the results suggest that certain events (such as EU enlargement) can indeed boost the politicization of Europe. Above all, however, the politicization at the party system level seems to be driven by party competition dynamics.

A core argument put forward in this chapter is that the empirical analysis of party politicization requires a carefully considered research strategy with a view to data selection. The findings presented in this chapter substantiate this claim: Combining different data and introducing qualitative indicators for issue-politicization, the findings presented in this chapter are much more convincing compared to other available measures and support expectations from salience theory. This confirms the need for more detailed examination of issue-emphasis/salience as a constitutive element of issue-politicization taking into account the extent to which parties *actively* mobilize on the issue of Europe when competing for votes.[100] This could be especially worthwhile for relatively new and crosscutting issues such as European integration that only recently found their way into mass politics.

In conclusion, this chapter adds significantly to the study of issue-politicization, and EU party politicization, in particular. This contribution concerns both research strategy and empirical

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[100] For a similar claim see Netjes and Binnema (2007: 48) and Kriesi (2007: 92).

findings. Regarding the former, the chapter demonstrated the added value of complementing quantitative salience measures with qualitative indicators. Most importantly, however, the findings for the ÖVP show that despite a disadvantageous opportunity structure, a pro-European mainstream party may actively politicize the issue of Europe if it considers it a key issue for its party profile. In the case of the ÖVP, this is strongly related to the historical positioning of the party during Austria's long way towards EU membership.

6.3 The content of the debate about Europe in Austrian general election campaigns

6.3.1 Introduction

When party contestation over the European integration issue finally appeared on the research agenda of EU and party scholars, the main interest was to explore whether and how parties' positioning towards Europe relates to the dimensions of conflict structuring party systems at the domestic level, first and foremost the left-right dimension. The most important lesson to be drawn from research in this field is that party positioning and conflict over Europe are not random, but related to the left-right dimension in a non-linear fashion that takes the shape of an inverted U-curve (Hooghe et al. 2002): Mainstream parties, i.e. parties located in the center of the left-right dimension tend to support European integration, whereas parties at the margins, i.e. holding a more extreme position on either the left or the right side of the dimension, tend to oppose European integration.

A serious drawback of this research, however, is that it largely failed to explore whether party conflict over Europe is actually expressed publicly in parties' competitive interaction at the domestic level, i.e. the extent to which the issue of Europe becomes politicized. Only recently scholars started to focus more explicitly on this question, seeking, first, to understand when to expect the issue to emerge on the agenda for domestic competition, and, second, to learn about the substantive manifestation of conflict in the politicization of Europe (i.e. the content of the debate). The first of these two aspects has been explored in Chapter 6.2 of this dissertation; this chapter deals with the second aspect. The aim of this chapter thus is to explore the content and structure of the debate about Europe in Austrian general election campaigns.

Based on the analysis of TV debates, the empirical analysis focuses on (a) the thematic priorities in the debate about Europe, (b) the party constellations (i.e. between whom conflict over Europe emerges), and (c) whether EU supporters or opponents are under pressure to justify their position towards European integration. Hence different from Chapter 6.1, the focus here is not on individual parties, but on the overall dynamics in the debate about Europe in different election campaigns, which will allow for identifying changes in the politicization of European integration in Austrian party contestation. The chapter will demonstrate that over the course of time (a) concerns about sovereignty/identity strongly gain in importance, (b) conflict shifts from within the left and the right block, respectively, towards conflict between EU supporters and opponents,

and (c) a reversal occurs regarding parties' pressure to justify their overall EU position, with pressure shifting from Euroskeptic parties towards EU supporters.

The chapter proceeds as follows. Based on the literature on party conflict and the politicization of Europe, the next section will summarize different sources for conflict intrinsic to the European integration issue, presenting two dimensions on which conflict about Europe might occur. Based on this theoretical approach, the section then derives expectations for Austria regarding the content of the debate about Europe. This is followed by a section on data and methods, before turning to the empirical analysis. The findings will be presented for each election campaign separately, followed by a summary for patterns over time. The conclusion, finally, contrasts the empirical results to the assumptions derived from the literature and points to the chapter's contribution for developing further the study of the politicization of European integration.

6.3.2 Theorizing patterns of conflict in the politicization of European integration

European integration is a complex, multi-faceted political phenomenon referring both to a process and a status. The process-like aspect concerns the establishing of an ever closer union, as stated in the preamble of the EU treaty. As such, European integration is related to the development and transformation of the EU polity, its institutions and competences as well as its scope regarding members. As a process, hence, European integration contains both a backwards and a prospective component, as it has no finality and is constantly developing. At the same time, European integration represents a status—though a currently transforming one: Through the process of integration, a system of governance meanwhile developed at the EU level, featured with competences in a growing number of policy fields formerly regulated independently by member states at the domestic level. This supranational political system—together with its member states—produces policy output affecting European citizens to a growing extent and in an increasing number of policy areas.

The different facets of European integration constitute sources for political disagreement, with conflict arising not only about different policy alternatives, but also about any further transfer of competences and sovereignty, and about the very nature of the EU polity, its constitution and

functional and geographical boundaries. Accordingly, conflict over European integration manifests itself on two different dimensions that can be traced back to historical cleavages as introduced by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). Labeled slightly different in the literature, the first dimension reflects conflict about integration vis-à-vis sovereignty, i.e. about the shape and reach of the more and more institutionalized EU polity. It expresses disagreement about the creation and furthering of a European system of governance and potential policy constraints at the national level due to the penetration of EU norms, rules and practices into domestic policy-making at the member state level. Thus, the central question here is about political integration and the EU as a polity, with all its implications for policy-making at the member state level. Hix and Lord (1997) refer to it as the integration-sovereignty dimension, Hooghe and Marks (1999) similarly speak of a national sovereignty dimension ranging from nationalism to supranationalsim, and Mair (2005) calls it the Europeanization dimension. Whatever the exact labeling, this dimension can be linked to the territorial cleavage developed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), where conflict reflects concerns about self-ruling and group membership along the lines of territory, nationality, and collective identity (cf. Mair 2005; Bartolini 2005; Hooghe/Marks 2009). The second dimension concerns policy areas already in the competence of the EU, but under contestation in terms of different approaches and priorities. Here, the question is not necessarily about Europe per se, but about EU policy priorities and the allocation of resources between functional—not territorial—groups. Sometimes also labeled the functional dimension (Mair 2005), this dimension resembles the economic left-right dimension emanating first and foremost from the class cleavages (cf. Hix/Lord 1997; Mair 2005; Bartolini 2005).

Whether European integration is politicized along the integration-sovereignty or the functional left-right dimension—or both—will be dependent on the parties driving the politicization of European integration. As discussed in more detail previously in this dissertation, scholars argue that this will most likely be Euroskeptic parties, who are considered to have advantage over EU supporters in the politicization of Europe (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; de Vriesb 2007; de Vries/Edwards 2009; van der Eijk/Franklin 2004; Tillman 2004).

As previous research has shown, party Euroskepticism is concentrated at the fringes of the policy space, i.e. radical left and radical or populist right parties, and is related to these parties' general policy program and ideological background: Radical left parties oppose European integration

because they reject market liberalism; radical or populist right parties oppose integration because they view it as threat to national sovereignty, self-rule, and identity (Hooghe/Marks 2009: 17). Hooghe and Marks (2009) advance theories of issue-politicization on European integration by bringing into focus the content of the debate. They combine Euroskeptic parties' stronger incentives for politicizing the issue with characteristics of their EU-positioning, which, as outlined above, are dependent on party family. Following this idea, they hypothesize that to the extent that radical right Eurokeptics drive the politicization of European integration, "the debate is conducted in terms of identity" (ibid. 25). Contrariwise, if radical left parties dominate EU politicization, "the debate is about distribution" (ibid.). This is because of the former's concerns about integration threatening sovereignty and identity, and the latter's opposition of market liberalism and the primacy of market interests. As argued and demonstrated in Chapter 6.1, this is related to the cleavages from which parties historically emanated. Evidently, the politicization of Europe can thus evoke either of the two dimensions along which conflict over European integration is structured, i.e. the integration-sovereignty or the functional left-right dimension.

What pattern can be expected for Austria regarding the content of the debate about Europe? As argued above, this will most likely be determined by (a) the opportunity structure Euroskeptic parties face, and (b) by the party family Euroskeptic parties belong to:

(a) As outlined in more detail in Chapter 5, Euroskeptic parties indeed face an advantageous opportunity structure in Austria, since public Euroskepticism is relatively high and goes beyond the electorate of Euroskeptic parties, which is reflected in comparatively low support for EU membership among Austrians and the widespread perception that European integration has already gone too far. Public Euroskepticism is further strengthened by the anti-EU campaigning of Austria's largest tabloid, the politically influential *Krone*.

(b) Shortly after joining the EU as a member, party Euroskepticism in Austria has become a monopoly of the radical right (cf. Pelinka 2004), first and foremost the FPÖ, which has later been joined in its anti-EU attitude by its former party fellows from the BZÖ. Both parties are to be considered as both radical and populist right parties and share a clear anti-EU profile that very well fits these parties' guiding principle, namely 'Austria comes first' (cf. Luther 2006). All other parties express strong support for European integration. This holds true for the mainstream left and right parties, the SPÖ and ÖVP, respectively, as well as for the Liberals and the Greens,

representing fringe parties in the Austrian party system both due to their size and their location in the policy space. For the latter, however, EU support is a more recent phenomenon: Different from the SPÖ, the ÖVP, and the Liberals, who were also in favor of Austria's EU accession, the Greens initially opposed accession and only altered their position after the positive outcome of the Austrian accession referendum. Meanwhile, however, they have become strong advocates of further integration and a strong EU.

Due to the advantageous environment for Euroskeptic parties and the fact that the latter are represented by a strong radical right party firmly established in the Austrian party system, the debate about Europe in Austria can thus be expected to be biased towards questions of sovereignty/identity rather than left-right conflict about distribution.

6.3.3 Data and methods

Like Chapter 6.2, this sub-chapter will explicitly focus on TV debates while disregarding manifestos. This is a conscious decision that considers the different character of these two distinct types of data concerning their public visibility and reflection of party conflict. It shall briefly be justified, starting with the first criterion, i.e. public visibility: Manifestos typically provide a—more or less comprehensive—overview of a party's policy program including a variety of different issues; many of these issues, however, fail to appear on the public agenda (i.e. in the media) during a campaign, meaning that they go unnoticed by the vast majority of voters that scarcely ever consult manifestos. Conversely, issues not mentioned in parties' manifestos might still appear on the public agenda during an election campaign (cf. Kleinnijenhuis/Pennings 2001; Pennings 2006; Dolezal 2008b). This can be illustrated with the following example: Though controversy over European integration during the 2006 election campaign was strongly shaped by the FPÖ's repetitive focus and critique on the EU constitutional treaty, the party's election manifesto did not contain a single reference to this topic (cf. Meyer/Rosenberger 2008). Thus election manifestos obviously constitute an unsuitable source for studying the politicization of European integration or any other issue.

TV debates between candidates, on the other hand, typically reach a large audience and also receive media attention. Since they take place every few days during the weeks prior to Election Day, the serve as a good representation of the campaign dynamics and the issues contested.

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Turning now to the second criterion for data selection, i.e. the reflection of party conflict in different data sources, manifesto data again perform poorly, since they merely reflect the *potential* for conflict between parties (derived from parties' diverging issue-positions mentioned in the manifestos). Conflictive positions, however, do not necessarily find their *expression* in publicly decided controversies of a campaign (e.g. if the matter in question is not salient to voters or if none of the political actors has an interest to call voters' attention to it). This is certainly different for TV debates. Their interactive element together with their public visibility allow for studying the actual expression of conflict between parties during a campaign, making them an eminently suitable source for exploring not only the content, but the dynamics in parties' issue-politicization.

Table 6.3 provides an overview of the individual speakers each party send for their representation in TV debates. Mostly, these are the party leaders or leaders of the parliamentary group. Governing parties, however, also tend to select members of government.

As this chapter's focus is on the content and dynamics of the debate in the politicization of European integration, the empirical analysis will consider thematic priorities related to European integration, constellations of party conflict, and parties' pressure to justify their EU position. The analysis is conducted in two steps, which is necessary given the interactive element of TV debates. First, TV debates have been analyzed following the same procedure used for the analysis of manifestos described in Chapter 6.1 in order to identify the different facets of integration referred to by party speakers during the debates (namely general, constitutive, and policy alternatives). For identifying patters in the content of the overall debate of Europe, these findings, second, need to be 'aggregated', which will be done in the following way. For identifying the thematic priorities related to the EU issue in each campaign, topics related to European integration are considered if they appear in several debates and/or dominate large parts of a single debate. In addition, the analysis captures whether parties associate these topics to the integration-sovereignty dimension (i.e. the nature and functioning of the EU/integration) or the functional left-right dimension (i.e. the direction of policies). The different constellations in which conflict over the issue of Europe appears will be examined by taking into account the party affiliation of individual speakers acting as representatives of their parties in TV debates.

Table 6.3: Party representatives in TV debates

Party	1995	1999	2002	2006	2008
SPÖ	Brigitte Ederer Caspar Einem Viktor Klima Franz Vranitzky	Barbara Prammer Rudolf Edlinger Viktor Klima Wolfgang Ruttenstorfer	Alfred Gusenbauer	Alfred Gusenbauer	Werner Faymann
ÖVP	Wolfgang Schüssel	Elisbath Gehrer Wilhelm Molterer Wolfgang Schüssel	Wolfgang Schüssel	Karl-Heinz Grasser Martin Bartenstein Josef Pröll Wolfgang Schüssel	Wilhelm Molterer
FPÖ	Jörg Haider	Thomas Prinzhorn Jörg Haider	Herbert Haupt	Heinz-Christian Strache	Heinz-Christian Strache
Greens	Madeleine Petrovic	Alexander. V.d.Bellen Madeleine Petrovic	Alexander V.d.Bellen	Alexander V.d. Bellen	Alexander V.d. Bellen
Liberals	Heide Schmidt Voler Kier	Heide Schmidt Hans Peter Haselsteiner Christian Köck	-	-	-
BZÖ	-	-	-	Peter Westenthaler	Jörg Haider

Finally, this chapter seeks to investigate whether EU supporters or opponents are under pressure to justify their overall stance towards European integration. This will be done by exploring in detail which parties explicitly challenge their competitors regarding the latters' overall EU position and, equally important, the reactions of those parties having been attacked, i.e. whether they respond defensively, thus putting their own position into perspective, or adversarial by hitting back on the initial attacker in turn. Exploring party interactions in this way is quite illuminating, since it sheds light on whether or not parties assess their own EU position to sustain politicization.

6.3.4 The content of the debate in Austrian parties' EU politicization

This section summarizes the empirical findings based on the analysis of Austrian general election campaigns between 1995 and 2008. Each campaign will first be discussed separately before summarizing changes and patterns resulting from a comparison over time and concluding about the substantive manifestation of the politicization of European integration as specific to the Austrian case.

6.3.4.1 Facets of European integration in individual campaigns

The 1995 election campaign: In this campaign—taking place merely a year after Austria joined the EU—reference to European integration first and foremost concerns consequences for the country resulting from EU accession. Whether these are viewed positively or negatively clearly depends on the party having the floor: The FPÖ and the Greens emphasize undesirable developments, accusing the governing parties (i.e. the SPÖ and the ÖVP) for false promises beforehand and/or failure in preparing the country for accession, which would have led to the loss of jobs and purchasing power, the movement of businesses, more truck traffic to the account of rail traffic, and, finally, higher costs for accession than announced previously. The Greens, in addition, raise concerns about the Austrian consensus against nuclear power and about the country's neutrality[101]. Both the FPÖ and the Greens point to adverse effects of EU accession for

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[101] Worries about Austria's perpetual neutrality are not always explicitly associated to European integration, but also to some parties' support for membership in the NATO.

employees and economically disadvantaged groups, who would have to carry the costs for accession despite the fact that they were the ones benefitting least from EU membership. Not surprisingly, the governing parties defend EU accession as the right decision and point to benefits it would have brought along, like the larger market advancing exportation, more competition resulting in lower prices, economic growth, and the creation and safeguarding of jobs. Though both parties also confess that some sectors faced difficulties (e.g. farmers or food industry), they point to affirmative actions implemented by the government. The SPÖ also underscores political reasons in support for EU membership, arguing that certain problems could not be dealt with in isolation anymore, and pointing to the country's wider influence as an EU member, which would allow for achieving goals by joint activities. The ÖVP predominantly refers to the EU as an economic Union and a large market.

Conflict over European integration thus reflects a clear government-opposition pattern, with the governing parties emphasizing benefits and opposition parties pointing to adverse effects of EU accession. The sole exception to this clear-cut pattern is the liberal party, at that time Austria's third opposition party. Being in line with the governing parties in their support for EU accession and European integration, they do not engage in the debate about Europe as part of their TV appearance. In terms of party constellations, controversy primarily occurs between the SPÖ and the Greens as well as between the ÖVP and the FPÖ, whereas the EU issue is of low importance in other party constellations. Interestingly, this also accounts for the debate between the former party fellows, the FPÖ and the Liberals, despite the fact that conflict over the FPÖ's position towards EU accession had been one of the reasons for the splitt-off and the foundation of the Liberals in early 1993 (cf. Heschl 2002; Liegl 2006).

Another interesting pattern occurs once looking at parties' attacks towards each other: Though the EU-critics quite actively point to adverse effects of EU membership, it is the pro-European governing parties who explicitly attack the former on their general EU position.

An important characteristic distinguishing the 1995 campaign from the following campaigns is its evaluative focus, whereas claims-making is virtually absent in the debate about Europe. Evaluations mostly concern effects of EU accession—beneficial or adverse, depending on speakers' party affiliation—for employment and the domestic industry, whereas questions of sovereignty or identity do not appear at all, not even on the part of EU critics. Critique, moreover,

exclusively addresses the governing parties, whereas the EU or Brussels are never approached, and neither are EU policies.

In a nutshell, the debate about Europe in the 1995 election campaign is above all a debate about Austria's EU accession and fall-outs on the country—basically concerning jobs and employment, the domestic industry, and economic growth—and not about different understandings of European integration, the EU's constitution or the direction of EU policies. Applying Hooghe and Marks' (2009) terminology, the debate in 1995 is thus about distribution rather than identity. Conflict is clearly structured along a government-opposition divide between parties located on the same side of the political spectrum, i.e. between left-wing governing and opposition parties (SPÖ, Greens) as well as between right-wing governing and opposition parties (ÖVP, FPÖ).

The 1999 election campaign: Compared to the previous campaign, mentions of European integration in the 1999 campaign are much more diverse and include different aspects of integration, though EU accession again appears on the agenda. The governing parties (the SPÖ and the ÖVP) refer to it as a core achievement for the country, which would also account for participation in the monetary union. While this is doubted by the FPÖ, who sees its previous objections against accession confirmed, the Greens refrain from any fundamental objection, but harshly criticize the direction of particular EU policies or reform plans. Beyond backwards evaluations of the country's EU accession, the debate about Europe centers on EU enlargement, the CFSP, nuclear power policy, and a number of environmental issues—each of them are briefly summarized below.

EU enlargement is an issue above all in the debates between the SPÖ and the Greens as well as between the FPÖ and the Greens. The discussion about enlargement, however, differs fundamentally in the two debates. In the SPÖ-Greens debate, the focus is predominantly on nuclear power policy, in particular how to achieve the closing down of candidate countries' nuclear power plants, whether to support nuclear phase-out financially, and the vision of a nonnuclear EU. The debate between the FPÖ and the Greens instead reflects a debate on principles regarding enlargement, with the Greens expressing their support based on economic, social, environmental and safety grounds. They put forward their understanding of enlargement as an act of solidarity and a historical necessity. The FPÖ, contrariwise, imposes a number of conditions that make candidate countries' EU accession any time soon quite unrealistic. This

concerns wage levels approximating the standards in Austria—otherwise, the FPÖ argues, enlargement would be "inhuman" towards Austrian employees and enterprises because of wage pressure—and mandatory nuclear phase-out of candidate countries.

The CFSP is an issue between the SPÖ and the ÖVP and, in particular, between the Greens and the Liberals. The SPÖ-ÖVP debate mostly centers on the question of whether or not the ÖVP supports membership in the NATO—a question ÖVP-speaker Schüssel avoids by talking instead of the establishing of a European peace and security system, in which Austria should fully participate. The debate between the Greens and the Liberals focuses on the two parties' different interpretations of the desired direction of the CFSP (which the Greens rename "Common Foreign and Military Policy" in order to highlight their criticism towards an alledged bias towards a military component) and disagreement about keeping neutrality (Greens) versus full integration into a European defense system (Liberals).

As mentioned above, nuclear power policy is explicitly related to the question of EU enlargement and accession negotiations with specific candidate countries. Thus diverging positions between parties do not primarily reflect different views about nuclear power policy—all Austrian parties in principle state to support nuclear phase-out—but rather towards enlargement. This can be illustrated in the comparison of the argumentation put forward by the FPÖ vis-à-vis the Greens: The former makes nuclear phase-out a precondition for EU accession, whereas the latter reject to impose such a condition and argue instead for financial support to facilitate nuclear phase-out in candidate countries. Other environmental questions appear in the debates with the Greens (ÖVP-Greens, SPÖ-Greens, and—though only marginally—FPÖ-Greens), who criticize the government for its failure to foster a development towards higher standards at the EU level.

Different from 1995, questions of sovereignty and different meanings ascribed to the EU project also appear in the debate. The FPÖ raises concerns about a loss of sovereignty and FPÖ-speaker Mr. Prinzhorn refers to himself as "a real Austrian", who—different from other parties— would still believe in Austria's independence. He moreover refers to the EU as a Europe of bureaucrats, whereas the FPÖ would strive for a Europe of the regions. The ÖVP and the Liberals on their part refer to the EU as *the* project of peace for Europe.

Another novelty is that parties now discover the EU or, as it is often labeled, "the European level" as an addressee for criticism or specific claims for policy reform, which was not the case in

1995, when the focus was exclusively on the governing parties' responsibility for achievements or failure in preparing the country for accession.

Conflict not only emerges concerning the direction of policies and ways of seeing the EU, but also about constraints and the room of maneuver for domestic policy-making as a consequence of the embedding in a European polity and market. Controversy on this question is most explicitly expressed in the debate between the ÖVP and the Greens: On a number of questions related to environmental protection, the ÖVP refers to initiatives at the EU level and denies an option to go it alone domestically, as this would cause a competitive disadvantage; the Greens, in response, criticize the governing parties for shirking off a number of problems towards Brussels, whereas existing domestic leeway would remain unexploited. In other debates, parties also refer to budgetary constraints resulting from the Maastricht criteria and the necessity for liberalization in certain sectors according to EU law.

Different from 1995, conflict between parties does not reflect a government-opposition pattern, since conflict about alternative views towards European integration also occurs between the opposition parties—about EU enlargement in the case of the FPÖ and the Greens (and marginally between the FPÖ and the Liberals), and about the CFSP in the case of the Greens and the Liberals. What is similar, though not identically, is that by and large there is most discussion about Europe between the parties on the left (i.e. the SPÖ, the Greens, and the Liberals[102]) and between the parties on the right side of the political spectrum (i.e. the ÖVP and the FPÖ), rather than between the two camps. Since the Greens refrain from fundamental criticism towards EU integration (as they still did regarding accession in the 1995 campaign) and the Liberals more actively participate in the debate about Europe, this means that there is not only conflict between supporters and opponents of European integration, but also among EU supporters about different policy preferences and the course of integration.

To sum up, European integration is discussed from several viewpoints in the 1999 election campaigns, offering different policy alternatives to voters and also discussing constraints for and the scope of domestic policy-making in an increasingly Europeanized political environment. Certain issues are discussed quite detailed between parties, allowing for a better understanding not only of what parties stand for regarding European integration questions, but also about the

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[102] Despite market liberalism, the Liberals are to be considered a social-liberal party (Liegl 2006: 408) and is classified center-left on a general left-right scale, and closer to the left margin on the non-economic gal-tan scale (see Table 5.5 in Chapter 5).

general conditions for policy-making in the context of being part of the European market and polity. Despite harsh criticism towards the EU (on the part of the FPÖ) and EU policies (on the part of the Greens), it is again the EU supporters who put the critics under pressure to justify their rejection of integration or EU membership previously to Austria's accession. The latter respond by stating to have always been supportive to the EU, but rejected the outcome of negotiations (FPÖ) or by emphasizing that the party had meanwhile changed opinions (Greens).

The 2002 election campaign: The predominant topic related to European integration in this campaign is the upcoming EU enlargement. Though with varying intensity, it is put on the agenda in nearly all TV debates (the exception is the SPÖ-Greens debate). Conflict about enlargement primarily occurs between the FPÖ and all other parties. This is not surprising, given the FPÖ's skepticism towards enlargement, whereas the other three parties (ÖVP, SPÖ, and Greens) are united in their positive stance towards and strong support for enlargement.

Enlargement represents a highly salient issue in the debate between the two governing parties, the ÖVP and the FPÖ, dominating to a large extent the TV debate between the two. Besides mentioning the government's alleged achievements in defending Austrian interests in accession negotiations with the candidate countries[103], there is strong disagreement on the questions of the Beneš decrees and the nuclear power plant Temelín, both related to EU accession of the Czech Republic. In this respect, the FPÖ's position remains rather unclear over the course of the debate. FPÖ representative Mr. Haupt first states not to support enlargement on the basis of the present negotiation outcome. After ÖVP-Chancellor Mr. Schüssel's respond that this would amount to a veto and would definitely rule out any option for a renewal of the coalition government after the election, Mr. Haupt puts his prior statement into perspective.

In the SPÖ-FPÖ debate, the SPÖ values enlargement as an extremely important project for both Austria and Europe, whereas the FPÖ criticizes the SPÖ's "hurray-EU policy" (*Hurra-Europapolitik*) that would leave Austria "bled to death" as a net contributor.

Between the FPÖ and the Greens, conflict arises over the FPÖ's public initiative against Temelín[104] as well as transit traffic. On the latter, the FPÖ wants a solution as a precondition for

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[103] E.g. the 7-year transitional period for the Austrian labor market.
[104] The public initiative (*Volksbegehren*) claimed for a veto against EU accession of the Czech Republic in case the nuclear power plant Temelín would not be closed down.

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EU enlargement, whereas the Greens reject this, arguing that the transit problem exists irrespective of candidate countries' formal accession.

Enlargement is also an issue between the Greens and the ÖVP—though in a different quality compared to the other debates: Here the dispute is not about enlargement per se or conditions for it, but about whether a coalition with a party refusing to support enlargement unconditionally (referring to the FPÖ) can be a serious option. In this respect, the Greens criticize the ÖVP for not ruling out a renewal of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition after the elections, while ÖVP-Chancellor Mr. Schüssel asserts that support to enlargement was and would remain to be a condition for any cooperation with the FPÖ.

Due to the strong emphasis on enlargement, other issues related to European integration are pushed into the background in 2002 or are discussed in association with enlargement. This is the case with nuclear phase-out and transit traffic, which mostly are associated with the upcoming EU enlargement (see above). However, nuclear power policy is also debated without reference to enlargement, namely when discussing the Commission's plans to increase the subsidies for EURATOM. This is put on the agenda by the Greens, who heavily criticize these plans in their debates with the SPÖ and the FPÖ, respectively.

Other issues put forward in individual debates are Austria's EU contributions (FPÖ), the establishing of a European defense system (Greens), and the fostering of a European economic program (ÖVP). Controversy on these issues, however, does not shape the overall debate about Europe in 2002.

A remarkable feature in this campaign is that the ÖVP attacks all its competitors on their EU position, either referring to a party's opposition against EU accession (FPÖ, Greens) or, in the case of the SPÖ, to the party leader's rejection of EU membership in the early years of his political career.[105]

In summary, the 2002 election campaign reflects a thematic narrowing in the politicization of European integration towards the predominant issue of EU enlargement, whereas other issues remain marginal. The campaign as well reflects an exceptional case with a view to party constellations, since conflict is largest between the two governing parties, represented in 2002 by the ÖVP and the FPÖ, rather than between government and opposition (as in 1995) or within both the left and the right party blocks (as in 1995 and 1999).

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[105] Only once, the challenge comes from the Euroskeptic FPÖ, when accusing the SPÖ of a "hurry-EU policy".

The 2006 election campaign: Controversy over European integration issues evolves into a fundamental debate about the virtues and downsides of the EU in 2006. As described in Chapter 6.2, European integration is almost exclusively put on the agenda by the anti-EU FPÖ. Consequently, the FPÖ's issue-focus is also reflected in the content of the overall debate about Europe, which is dominated by two issues: the EU Constitutional treaty and the question of Turkey's EU accession. The FPÖ introduces these two issues in each of its four debates with its competitors, often in an almost identical phrasing, and often resulting in a battle of words about parties' general EU positioning. The FPÖ constantly refers to the EU Constitutional treaty as "centralist EU constitution" and a "dictate from Brussels" designed to fully replace the Austrian constitution and therefore a threat to the country's sovereignty. FPÖ-speaker Mr. Strache heavily criticizes all other parties for hampering a referendum on the treaty in Austria and for their support for a European referendum instead. According to the FPÖ, the latter idea would be grotesque, because it would mean to "let the Germans or Poles decide and vote about whether we want to keep our constitution". As regards content, the FPÖ rejects the Constitutional treaty for it would lay Austria's neutrality to rest, force the country to participate in preventive military missions, and strengthen the EU's nuclear power lobby. The pro-European ÖVP, SPÖ, and Greens respond by emphasizing that the Constitutional treaty would bring about improvements compared to the status quo (e.g. more rights for citizens and parliaments), and would make the EU more democratic and efficient in decision-making.

The FPÖ also sets the agenda regarding the 'Turkey issue', reproaching the other parties for acting against the will of more than 80 per cent of the Austrian population in their support to Turkey's EU accession or accession negotiations. According to the FPÖ, accession negotiations with Turkey should never have been supported in the first place, since Turkey is no European country in the FPÖ's view. The other parties differ in their reactions to this question. The SPÖ argues that neither the EU nor Turkey would be ripe for each other. The ÖVP highlights its own achievements for making sure that the EU's capacity to expand would be an important criterion in the final decision about Turkey's accession and promises that "there will never ever be EU accession of Turkey without a referendum in this country [Austria]". In the debate between the FPÖ and the BZÖ, the Turkey issue escalates towards a battle of words about which of the two parties were the "real" EU-critics: When FPÖ- party leader Mr. Strache criticizes the BZÖ's

electoral mobilization against Turkey's accession despite BZÖ-party leader Mr. Haider's repeated support to accession and the BZÖ's voting in favor of accession negotiations, BZÖ-speaker Mr. Westenthaler rejects the claim for a priviledged partnership with Turkey as represented in the FPÖ's manifesto by stating that the BZÖ would not even want that. The Greens significantly differ from the other parties in their reaction towards this question: Though party leader Mr. Van der Bellen relativizes his former optimism, Turkey's accession is referred to as real option and chance for both Europe and Austria and accession negotiations are justified as the right decision. Enlargement is also an issue beyond the question of Turkey: The FPÖ criticizes the prior enlargement towards Romania and Bulgaria as the wrong decision and speaks of alleged plans within the EU for EU accession of Marokko, Algeria, and Israel, "and then we would be right in the middle of the Middle East conflict, which we [FPÖ] want to avert".

Besides the FPÖ's repetitiveness regarding the EU Constitutional treaty and the question of Turkey's EU accession, the party also tries to challenge individual parties' credibility on issues strongly associated with other parties' core programmatic objective. This is clearly visible in the debate with the Greens and the BZÖ. In the former case, the FPÖ frames the Greens' support to the Constitutional treaty as a withdrawal from the party's policy against nuclear power; in the latter case, the focus on the BZÖ's unclear position towards the Turkey question can be interpreted as an attempt to damage the BZÖ's self-portrayal as a party defending Austrians against 'foreigners'. In the debates with the SPÖ and the ÖVP, respectively, the FPÖ emphasizes these parties' failure to protect the Austrian employers and small businesses from the "EU globalization-mania" and the EU's policy to pay court to big concerns.

In conclusion, the 2006 debate about European integration very strongly reflects the FPÖ's concerns about the EU as a "dictate from Brussels" and a threat to Austria's sovereignty. Though the pro-European parties respond by accusing the FPÖ of irresponsible behavior and of seeking Austria's withdrawal from the EU, the absence of an active politicization on the part of EU supporters results in a bias of the overall debate towards the FPÖ's topics and framing. The latter is dominated by negative catch phrases like "Brussels' dictate", "centralist EU Constitution/union", and "EU globalization-mania", which FPÖ party leader Mr. Strache repeatedly uses when referring to European integration. In Hooghe and Marks' (2009) terminology thus the 2006 campaign clearly centers on questions of sovereignty/identity. Conflict

occurs between the FPÖ and all other parties. The latter display a clearly reactive behavior, while the FPÖ acts as the driver of the debate about Europe.

The 2008 election campaign: Similar to 2006, controversy over European integration very much reflects a fundamental debate about parties' position towards the EU. The structure of conflict, however, differs. While it was the FPÖ against the rest in 2006, parties' EU positioning now is the cause of a dispute in several party constellations. This is related to the SPÖ's announcement—previously to the campaign—to support national referenda on future EU treaties. Related to this, the EU Constitutional treaty and the Lisbon treaty, respectively, again represent a highly salient issue—though not primarily in a substantive way: Though the FPÖ and the Greens substantiate their rejection, respectively support for the treaty on substantive grounds, the overall debate is highly decoupled from pros and cons of the treaty or European integration more generally. It is rather dominated by the SPÖ's policy shift on the question of national referenda. The EU-critics (the FPÖ and the BZÖ) question the SPÖ's credibility, given that it previously hindered all attempts and initiatives that tried to enforce a referendum on the Constitutional and Lisbon treaties; the EU supporters, the ÖVP and the Greens, heavily criticize the SPÖ's shift as an act of populism and capitulation to Austria's anti-EU yellow press, which would not be acceptable for someone seeking political leadership in the country. The latter point refers to the fact that the SPÖ made its announcement in a letter to the editor of Austria's biggest and clearly anti-EU tabloid, the *Krone*.

Beyond the question of EU treaties and referenda, other issues also repeatedly appear in the debate, thus broadening the substantive scope of the debate in comparison with 2006. Among these issues are EU foreign policy, the EU directive related to Basel II, transit traffic, and Schengen and border control. On all of these issues, EU rules and action are mostly evaluated as undermining Austrian interests. A claim raised in a number of debates is that the government needed to engage more actively in negotiations at the EU level for fighting for Austrian interests. This claim is not only raised by the anti-EU and oppositional FPÖ and BZÖ, but also by the governing SPÖ that repeatedly refers to undesirable developments at the EU level, which would lead to a withdrawal of the EU from serving the interest of the people.

The BZÖ, now out of government, is much more active in criticizing the EU compared to the 2006 campaign and party leader Haider states to be disappointed by how the EU has developed.

Due to the BZÖ's more active engagement in the debate about Europe, there are now two anti-EU parties shaping the debate about Europe. Though the SPÖ seeks to distance itself from the EU-critics and underscores its support for European integration, it also repeatedly points out that the EU were on the wrong track regarding social and ecological policy and had departed from citizens. The ÖVP and the Greens, on their part, explicitly highlight the EU's major importance and underscore their support for European integration. Hence in 2008, two camps can clearly be distinguished—the BZÖ and FPÖ on the one side, the ÖVP and the Greens on the other, and the SPÖ somewhere in between. Dispute about Europe consequently appears in several constellation—between (former) allies on the EU question (ÖVP/Greens versus SPÖ), between EU supporters and opponents (ÖVP/Greens versus FPÖ), and between alleged new allies within the camp of EU-critics (FPÖ, BZÖ, SPÖ). Different parties attack one another on their overall EU position; different from the other campaigns, however, there is no clear-cut pattern as to whether EU supporters or opponents give ground by putting their position into perspective, which can be seen as an indication for a stronger polarization in parties' positions towards the European integration issue. Despite a broadening of the debate towards questions related to distribution, the overall debate is again largely biased towards the integration-sovereignty dimension, with concerns about national influence, identity, and the Austrian interests playing a significant role.

6.3.4.2 Dynamics in the debate about Europe over time

Is there a common pattern in the content of the debate about European integration in Austrian general election campaigns or can we identify significant differences between individual campaigns related to thematic priorities, conflict constellation, and pressure to justify one's EU position? The comparison of individual campaign reveals that the debate about Europe indeed has changed over the course of time, as outlined in the following.

Thematic priorities: The 1995 campaign reflects opposing views about the impact of EU membership on jobs, employment, and the country's economic situation, while concerns about sovereignty do not appear on the agenda. Claims and critique exclusively address the government, while the EU is never referred to as an addressee, which clearly distinguishes the 1995 campaign from all campaigns following. In 1999 a variety of different issues related to

European integration appear on the agenda, like enlargement, CFSP, nuclear power policy, and environmental issues. This campaign reflects the most diverse and comprehensive debate about European integration. Parties suggest different policy alternatives, express their understanding of or visions for the EU as a political project, and discuss the scope and constraints for domestic policy-making in an increasingly Europeanized economic and political environment. The 2002 campaign first and foremost focuses on the upcoming EU enlargement and nuclear power policy. In this context, the question of the Beneš decrees and the nuclear power plant Temelín (both related to EU accession of the Czech Republic) appear as highly salient issues, whereas worries about unemployment and wage dumping are clearly of less concern in parties' controversy about enlargement. In 2006 the debate about Europe is clearly dominated by two specific issues, namely the EU Constitutional treaty and Turkey's potential future EU accession. Conflict on these issues evolves into a fundamental debate about the virtues and downsides of the EU project. Though concerns about Austria's sovereignty already now and then appeared in the 1999 and the 2002 campaign, they are now on top of the agenda, put forward by the anti-EU FPÖ: The treaty is referred to as being "centralist" and a "dictate from Brussels" threatening Austria's sovereignty and identity. The two issues are still highly salient in the 2008 campaign. However, the debate about the Constitutional respectively the Lisbon treaty is less about the treaties as such than about the question of referenda (whereas it was about both in 2006). This is also related to the SPÖ's announcement to support national referenda on future EU treaties previously to the election campaign. The debate about Europe is clearly biased towards mentions of the EU's undesirable development for serving the interest of the people.

Party constellation: The comparative perspective reveals considerable variation regarding party conflict in the different campaigns. This is the result of party change in four domains, namely individual parties' activeness in mentioning Europe, policy shifts of individual parties, changes in the composition of coalition governments, and the emergence and drop out of new parties. In 1995, conflict over European integration clearly follows a government-opposition divide, with the oppositional FPÖ and Greens on the one side, and the governing SPÖ and ÖVP on the other. Conflict first and foremost appears between the parties of the left (the SPÖ and the Greens) and between parties of the right (the ÖVP and the FPÖ). However, the third opposition party, the Liberals, somewhat constitute an exception to this pattern, since they do not engage in the debate

about Europe at all. This is likely to be related to the fact that, different from the other parties in opposition, the Liberals had been on the same side with the governing parties in their support for Austria's EU accession.

The situation looks slightly different in 1999. Though conflict again is expressed mainly between parties on the left (SPÖ, Greens, Liberals) as well as between parties on the right side of the political spectrum (ÖVP, FPÖ), the government-opposition pattern disappears. Disagreement thus not only occurs between supporters and opponents of European integration, but also within the camp of EU supporters striving for different EU policy alternatives. This is due to the Liberals' more active participation in the debate about Europe and due to the Greens' joining the camp of EU supporters.

Different from all other campaigns, the 2002 election campaign is a contest between four parties only, given that the Liberals failed to reach the minimum threshold in the 1999 election. After a series of 'grand coalitions' between the SPÖ and the ÖVP, it is also the first campaign to follow the highly controversial coalition government between the ÖVP and the FPÖ after it collapsed. Conflict over European integration then also reflects a rather untypical pattern: It is actually the two governing parties between whom European integration is most controversial, i.e. the ÖVP and the FPÖ.

In the 2006 campaign conflict emerges between the FPÖ and all other parties, but not appearing in any constellation excluding the FPÖ. Though the latter had been in government from 2002 until 2005, it was back in opposition from 2005 onwards. This is due to the party split resulting from the foundation of the BZÖ in April 2005, changing the former ÖVP-FPÖ coalition into an ÖVP-BZÖ coalition—though with the very same governing team. Different from 2002, conflict over Europe did not appear between the coalition partners ÖVP and, now, BZÖ in the 2006 election campaign.

In 2008 parties' EU positioning is the cause of dispute in several party constellations. The BZÖ, now in opposition, joins its former party fellows of the FPÖ in its EU critique, meaning that opposition to European integration is now issued by two radical right parties. Most importantly, however, the SPÖ's policy shift in support of national referenda on EU treaties leads to conflict with its former allies on EU questions (the ÖVP and the Greens). Hence in the 2008 campaign, two opposing camps structuring conflict over the EU issue can clearly be distinguished: the FPÖ

and the BZÖ on the one side, the ÖVP and the Greens on the other side—and the SPÖ somewhere in between.

Pressure to justify EU position: A very interesting shift in the debate about Europe appears once focusing on whether it is EU supporters or opponents who are under pressure to justify their overall EU position. From 1995 until 2002, it is clearly the EU supporters who challenge their competitors regarding their attitude towards European integration—though with distinct reactions. In 1995, both governing parties blame the oppositional FPÖ and Greens for not having supported EU accession, while paying tribute to the Liberals for their support.[106] A similar, though not identical picture emerges in 1999: Again the challenge comes from the EU supporters. Both governing parties (the SPÖ and the ÖVP) highlight that had the FPÖ been awarded a mandate to govern, Austria would not have achieved EU membership. In addition (and different from 1995), the Liberals point to the Greens' rejection of the EU prior to accession, while underscoring that the Liberals have supported European integration from the outset.[107] In 2002, it is the ÖVP blaming all of its competitors either for their rejection of or hesitance in support of European integration—referring either to the party's opposition against EU accession (FPÖ, Greens) or, in the case of the SPÖ, to the personal viewpoints of the party leader in the early years of his political career.[108] A complete reversal is observable in 2006: Now it is the FPÖ repeatedly challenging all other parties on their supportive position towards EU integration, and the EU Constitutional treaty in particular. In 2008 there is more variation, as EU supporters and opponents alternately challenge each other on their EU position. Different from the other campaigns, the anchorperson also repeatedly points to differences in parties' EU attitude, asking parties to comment on their competitors' position.

A changing pattern can also be observed on parties' reaction to such pressure. Whereas no noteworthy reactions are to be reported for the 1995 campaign[109], parties by tendency emphasize to be supportive to the EU in the 1999 and 2002 campaign, respectively. This is the case for the Greens, who distance themselves from their former opposition by pointing to their policy shift

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[106] Explicit pressure from EU-critics only appears once, when the FPÖ accuses the Greens of having waived their objections on the EU question.

[107] Only once the pattern is reverse—namely when the FPÖ accuses its competitors of giving up on Austria.

[108] Again, the challenge comes from the Euroskeptic FPÖ once, when accusing the SPÖ of a "hurray-EU policy".

[109] This is related to the fact that there is no general debate about the EU or EU integration in the 1995 campaign, when EU critics only address the government and point to alleged negative effects of accession for economy and employment in Austria.

and to the strong advocates of EU integration in their ranks. It also accounts for the FPÖ, despite the fact that the party at the same time substantiates its harsh EU critique. However, accused of being hostile to the EU, FPÖ representatives value EU membership explicitly and state that the FPÖ has always been supportive to the EU—though a different EU—and had already been so when others were still reluctant (referring to the SPÖ).

In 2006 it is predominantly the EU supporters under pressure to justify their EU position. They respond briefly by substantiating their support for the EU and integration, whereas the BZÖ tries to compete with the FPÖ about who is the true Euroskeptic party. The situation is not as clear-cut in the 2008 campaign. This can be illustrated for the case of the SPÖ: Though distancing itself from the FPÖ's anti-EU position, the SPÖ at the same time repeatedly refers to undesired developments in the EU and the need to stand up against that in Brussels. In line with the 2006 campaign (and different from previous campaigns), the FPÖ does not hold its fire in expressing its rejection of the EU and integration. When accused by other parties of actually striving for Austria's withdrawal from the EU, the FPÖ states that their must not be any taboos when the EU's development is completely misdirected. The ÖVP and the Greens, on their part, substantiate their support to European integration and a strong EU. The hardened fronts between EU supporters and opponents in 2008 can be illustrated by an argument between the ÖVP and the FPÖ: When ÖVP-party leader Mr. Molterer states to hold Europe near and dear, FPÖ leader Mr. Strache retorts sharply that to him Austria would be near and dear.

6.3.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore the structure and dynamics in the debate about Europe in Austrian general election campaigns: What patterns can we observe in the politicization of European integration, and do they fit with hypotheses about the content of the debate derived from the literature? This concluding section will briefly summarize the empirical findings of the chapter and discuss them against the background of theories on party conflict and party politicization of European integration.

The study of Austrian parties' competitive interaction on TV during general election campaigns leads to three empirical conclusions for the content of the debate in the politicization of European integration in Austria: (a) One can observe significant changes in the thematic priorities between

individual campaigns: Over the course of time, concerns about Austria's sovereignty become much more important, while the focus on particular policies and conflict about different policy alternatives largely diminishes. (b) Disputes between parties shift from conflict within the left and the right block, respectively, towards conflict between EU supporters and opponents, i.e. between the radical right and parties from both the left and the mainstream right of the political spectrum. (c) Whereas it is EU supporters challenging other parties' on their EU position in the 1990s and early 2000s, they eventually become pressured themselves and increasingly need to justify their supportive stance towards European integration against attacks by anti-EU radical right parties.

How do these patterns reflect expectations derived from theories on party conflict and politicization? To recall, scholars have argued that party conflict over European integration can manifest on two distinct dimensions: the integration-sovereignty dimension and the functional left-right dimension about different policy alternatives (cf. Hix/Lord 1997; Hooghe/Marks 1999; Marks/Steenbergen 2002, 2004; Mair 2005; Hooghe/Marks 2009). The former reflects concerns about the nature of the EU, its architecture and competences vis-à-vis member states, rules for decision-making and spatial boundaries. The functional dimension, on the other hand, combines different views towards the policies of the EU, i.e. the policy direction of measures passed at the EU level. Relating these two dimensions of conflict to patterns of party Euroskepticism, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that the politicization of European integration will be biased towards conflict about distribution (i.e. the functional dimension), if the challenge comes from radical-left parties, whereas biased towards questions of identity/sovereignty (i.e. the integration-sovereignty dimension) whenever the challenge comes from radical right parties. For the Austrian case one would therefore expect European integration to be politicized as a question of sovereignty/identity rather than distribution. This is due to the fact that—given the Greens' shift towards support for integration after EU accession—party Euroskepticism in Austria turns out to be a monopoly of the radical right (cf. Pelinka 2004; see also Chapter 6.1).

The empirical findings of this study display a stronger focus on the functional dimension previously to the 2006 campaign—though not necessarily on questions about distribution in a narrow sense—and a clear bias towards sovereignty and identity from 2006 onwards. This pattern suggests mixed support from the Austrian case for the hypothesis put forward by Hooghe and Marks (2009). Though the importance of concerns about sovereignty/identity clearly increase

over time, the debate about Europe is not exclusively shaped by the fact that Austrian party Euroskepticism comes from the radical right. This is because disputes about Europe not only appear between Euroskeptics and EU supporters, but also among the latter group—in particular within the left block, which—in the Austrian case—biased the debates towards the functional dimension in election campaigns of the 1990s.

The findings presented in this chapter add significantly to the study of the politicization of European integration in domestic party politics. In particular, they demonstrate (1) that the content of the debate about Europe is not only shaped by Euroskpetic parties and their left-right location, but also by pro-European parties and their disputes about alternative views towards particular EU policies or the course of integration. This is an important finding that qualifies the hypothesis derived from the literature that it is first and foremost Euroskeptic parties' left-right location in the policy space, which is decisive for the politicization of European integration in terms of content. Once EU supporters take a back-seat in the debate about Europe, however, the Austrian case shows (2) that the emerging pattern indeed very well reflects the picture outlined by Hooghe and Marks (2009): If Euroskepticism is a radical right phenomenon, as is the case in Austria, the debate becomes increasingly biased towards questions of sovereignty/identity. Finally, this chapter has argued for more rigor in the operationalization of party conflict over European integration: For studying the dynamics in and the structure of the politicization of European integration, scholars need to distinguish between the *potential* for conflict and its *expression* in public—a distinction that is strongly related to questions of data selection and operationalization. In this respect, (3) the focus on parties' competitive interaction in TV debates proved to be a good choice, as it not only allows to identify the issues actually appearing on the public agenda during a campaign, but also to explore the different party constellations in which conflict about Europe actually appears. This chapter thus concludes with a claim for careful data selection in the study of issue-politicization based on the demands of the research focus rather than easy accessibility of data.

7. Beyond election campaigns: European integration in decision-making arenas

7.1 Introduction

The main research objective of this dissertation is to study party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena. Therefore the core empirical part of the thesis has focused on the role of the EU issue in Austrian general election campaigns (Chapter 6). The findings demonstrate an increase in anti-EU, radical right party politicization of Europe that in recent years has clearly put its stamp on the debate about European integration in the Austrian electoral arena. These results raise the question whether Euroskpetic parties have been equally successful on the EU issue in other arenas decisive for domestic party contestation, namely the governmental and the parliamentary arenas. Though a comprehensive analysis of these two arenas is clearly beyond the empirical scope of this dissertation, the aim of this chapter is to complement the study of party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena with a short analysis of EU government policy and decision-making in parliament. More specifically, the chapter will explore how the issue of Europe appears (a) in coalition agreements between parties that diverge in their positioning towards European integration and (b) in parliamentary contestation about EU treaty ratification.[110]

Important to note, this chapter cannot and does *not intend to explain* the role of the EU issue for coalition building or parliamentary decision-making, since this is clearly beyond the analytical and empirical scope of this dissertation. It rather aims at exploring to what extent and, in particular, in which way European integration manifests itself in the policy program of coalition governments and in parliamentary discussion and decision-making about EU treaty amendments. Despite this narrow focus, however, the chapter significantly adds to the study of party politicization of European integration, shedding light on whether the politicization of the EU issue in the end also impacts on decision-making about Europe at the domestic level. This also allows for an assessment about whether government participation of Euroskeptic or anti-EU parties makes them more moderate in their assessment of European integration—a question that due to these parties' continuous growth all over Europe is of particular relevance.

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[110] The findings for EU treaty ratification in parliament presented in this chapter build on a previous analysis published in Meyer (2011).

The empirical findings demonstrate that—different from the electoral arena—EU government policy and parliamentary decision-making is largely biased towards pro-European parties' supportive stance towards European integration, which holds true even in case of coalition configurations including a Euroskeptic or anti-EU party. However, similar to temporal trends in the electoral arena, the analysis of parliamentary debates on EU treaty ratification shows that the debate about European integration has become more polarized and, on the part of Euroskeptics, much more radicalized in recent years.

This chapter proceeds as follows. The next section provides a theoretical foundation for studying party behavior on the issue of Europe in different arenas of contestation. It will describe the functional logic characteristic to these arenas and point to constraints for parties' room of maneuver resulting from this logic. This is followed by an overview on data used and methods applied in this chapter, before presenting the empirical findings. The latter are structured in two sub-sections. The first one focuses on the governmental arena, more specifically coalition building between parties strongly diverging in their EU position, and analyzes governments' stated EU policy position as reflected in coalition agreements. The second sub-section is devoted to the parliamentary arena. Focusing on EU treaty ratification in parliament, it analyzes voting behavior and speeches held by MPs and explores whether ratification has taken place in a stronger or lesser politicized setting. The conclusion will summarize the main findings and link them back to the broader question about impact of EU politicization for decision-making and the role of anti-EU parties therein.

7.2 Functional logics in different arenas of domestic party contestation

Competitive interaction between political parties takes place in different arenas of contestation. Three functional arenas can be distinguished in party systems: the electoral arena, the parliamentary arena, and the governmental arena (cf. Bardi/Mari 2008). Within each of these arenas there are different rules for interaction, given the different functions each of them fulfills. As discussed at length in the previous parts of this dissertation, party interaction in the electoral arena is determined by parties' attempts to win votes. Party behavior will thus be oriented towards vote-maximizing and each party will first and foremost care about its own political

survival. This means that the electoral arena is strongly characterized by competition and conflict between different parties, each of them seeking to increase its vote share (ibid.). In the parliamentary and governmental arena, however, parties have to cooperate in order to achieve their goals—whether these are office-seeking or policy-seeking (cf. Strøm/Müller 1999). This in particular applies to systems of proportional representation, where parties typically depend on finding a coalition partner that provides them with a majority in parliament, which is decisive for getting office and thus the political power to shape policy. Hence in the parliamentary and the governmental arenas, parties have to come to terms with the policy goals of their competitors (cf. Bardi/Mari 2008). Talking about parliamentary systems (as different from presidential ones), the governmental arena can mostly be viewed as subsumed in the parliamentary arena, since both are determined by the same functional logic, namely to obtain and maintain a governing majority through coalition formation that provides parties with office and enables them to achieve their policy goals (ibid. 159). An important difference between the two arenas, however, regards the distinction between governing and opposition parties. Whereas the latter have no say in the governmental arena, both shape party interaction within the parliamentary arena that is typically characterized by competition between governing and opposition parties, cooperation between different governing parties, and sometimes cooperation between opposition parties (though not necessarily and in any case to a much lesser extent). This means that the parliamentary arena is characterized by a different functional logic for governing parties on the one hand and opposition parties on the other hand (Bardi/Mair 2008: 159). The former will be much more constrained in their room of maneuver compared to the latter, and particularly so in case of coalition governments: Whereas opposition parties can prioritize their own strategic goals quite similar to the electoral arena, governing parties are bound to the agreement reached between the different coalition parties that builds the foundation of their cooperation.

The different logics characterizing party interaction in different arenas of contestation can—and often will—be at odds with one another, as illustrated in the following example: For a Euroskeptic party with a Euroskeptic voter base, anti-EU politicization will be beneficial in the electoral arena. However, if the party aims at coalition formation with a moderate mainstream party supportive of European integration, this strategy can be risky, since it may impede the reaching of an agreement in negotiations with a potential coalition partner (cf. Green-Pedersen

2011). If one of the two parties wins out over the other in negotiations or a compromise is being reached, this means that one or both parties have to accept policy sacrifice, even if this may affect them adversely in the electoral arena. On the other hand, if a party is not willing to make any policy concessions, the building of a coalition is virtually impossible, leaving the party not only without office, but with much fewer influence on policy. Opposition parties also have to balance different party goals—namely votes, office, and policy (cf. Müller/Strøm 1999)—against one another in the different arenas. Though opposition parties are relatively independent in both the electoral and the parliamentary arena (and *per definitionem* excluded from the governmental arena), to the extent that they are policy-oriented, they may also have to accept compromise in order to get a say in policy decisions taken in the parliamentary arena.

Hence party behavior towards any political issue may be different in the electoral, the parliamentary, and the governmental arena, as will be demonstrated for the case of the EU issue in the empirical section of this chapter. Linking this brief discussion about different logics and constraints present in the different arenas of domestic contestation to the study of party politicization of European integration, one aspect shall be highlighted: Under conditions of low issue-politicization in the electoral arena, parties will find it easier to make compromise and accept policy sacrifices in government and/or parliament, since on a non-politicized issue, parties are not constrained by their positioning towards the issue in the electoral arena because the issue does not appear there in the first place. The more politicized the issue is, however, the more difficult it will be for parties to depart from their stated preferences in governmental and parliamentary decision-making, as this would mean risking the loss of votes in the electoral arena (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009).

7.3 Data and methods

For analyzing the role of the European integration in arenas of domestic decision-making, we need to broaden the empirical base of this study beyond material explicitly produced for or created as a product of party competition in election campaigns. After all, party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena does not mean that parties will act accordingly in the other arenas that are both less in public focus and more important for actual policy-making. The empirical analysis conducted in this chapter is therefore based on a combination of different data

external the electoral arena. It includes coalition agreements as well as voting behavior and speeches in parliament.

Coalition agreements: For analyzing coalition building under conditions of disagreement on EU policy between potential coalition partners, this chapter will consider coalition agreements. These documents present the final outcome of coalition negotiations and typically outline the government program for the upcoming legislative period. The empirical focus will be narrowed to those coalition constellations where European integration could be expected to be a conflictive issue due to parties' contrary EU positions. This will be assessed building on the empirical analysis of Chapters 6.1 and 6.3 that explored party positioning and party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena, thus allowing identifying party conflict and its expression on the EU issue. The analysis of coalition agreements will explore whether the EU policy agreed upon between the coalition partners is biased towards either of the two partners' EU position or rather reflects compromise on both parts. The comparison with parties' EU policy priorities as outlined in 6.1 and 6.3 allows for such an assessment.

Voting behavior and speeches in parliament: Party behavior towards European integration in the national parliament will be studied by looking at critical junctures of integration. EU treaty amendments qualify as such junctures: They set or modify the 'rules of the game' for EU policy-making and deepen integration by expanding the EU's competences towards policy domains formerly under the full sovereignty of member states and/or by communitarization of areas previously determined by intergovernmental cooperation. Though treaty negotiations are closed much earlier (namely when the heads of governments have reached an agreement), ratification in national parliaments often represents the peak of contestation between parties about the respective treaty—and often European integration more generally—at the domestic level: In the final debate prior to voting in parliament, governing and opposition parties are typically opposing each other, the former justifying its political decisions, the latter seeking to challenge the former on exactly these decisions.[111] Therefore, this part of the dissertation will focus on the ratification process of EU treaty reforms in the Austrian *Nationalrat*, more specifically the final debates and voting. Since Austria joined the EU, the parliament ratified four treaties: the Treaty of

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[111] This simplified outline of course describes the situation in parliamentary systems.

Amsterdam, the Treaty of Nice, the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, and the Treaty of Lisbon.[112] Though differing both in scope and intention, each of these treaties introduced changes to the EU polity and, consequentially, the sovereignty of member states. As will be demonstrated in the following, parties do use these debates for general evaluations of European integration, sometimes irrespective of the actual change induced by treaty amendments.

The empirical analysis focuses on three aspects. First, I will examine voting behavior for or against the ratification of treaties; second, I will analyze speeches held by MPs; third, I will consider contextual characteristics of the debate. Voting behavior sheds light on patterns in support for/opposition to European integration; speeches reflect parties' strategies for justifying their voting behavior and provide information about their view towards the respective treaty and European integration more general; finally, contextual characteristics help assessing whether ratification took place in a stronger or lesser politicized setting. Information on voting behavior and contextual characteristics are derived from the website of the Austrian parliament; speeches are based on the literal transcriptions of all debates, also derived from the parliament's website. Since the debates vary in intensity and duration, two speeches are selected for each party in each treaty debate. As a general rule, speeches by the first two speakers of each party—including members of government—are selected. This provides for a common and systematic approach and also allows for intra-party variation in arguments and justifications presented, which, as will be shown, does indeed appear for some parties. The analysis of speeches will be conducted by focusing on three aspects related to European integration:

- *EU finality*: This category includes parties' visions of the EU as a political project, like a federal union, a Europe of nations, a solidarity union etc.[113]

- *Evaluating the status quo*: How parties evaluate the current state of the EU most likely is associated to what kind of EU they strive for (finality). It is thus part of the broader perspective a party undertakes when it comes to its preference of how the EU should look like or what kind of a political building it should become.

- *Treaty consequences*: This category allows for including parties' evaluations related more specifically to the treaty being subject to ratification. Depending on whether parties

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[112] For reasons of readability, I will subsequently refer to the treaties as the Amsterdam, Nice, Constitutional and Lisbon treaty.
[113] For an interesting analysis of different conceptions and understandings of EU finality cf. Jachtenfuchs (2002).

support or reject a treaty, they will either point to benefits and improvements (e.g. more influence for Austria or strengthening EU democracy) or to disadvantages and worsening (e.g. loss of national sovereignty or endangering neutrality).

Since the parliamentary debates selected for analysis of this study are explicitly devoted to the European integration issue, namely treaty reform, party politicization cannot be assessed by exploring individual parties' emphasis on the EU issue vis-à-vis other issues or by focusing on how actively parties engage in the debate, as this is also dependent on the speaking time scheduled for different party groups as agreed upon between party group leaders and the president of the parliament prior to a parliamentary session. However, a number of qualitative indicators can be used to assess the intensity of politicization in the parliamentary arena during treaty ratification, i.e. whether a treaty debate took place in a less or more politicized setting. As indications for the politicization of the setting, I will consider the total number of speakers in each debate, the party rank of speakers (i.e. whether highly ranked party officials, parties' EU experts, or 'backbenchers' act as speakers), the 'publicness' of debates indicated by television broadcast, and whether a roll-call vote has been demanded.

7.4 Empirical findings

This section presents the results from the analysis of the EU issue in arenas of decision-making. It starts with the analysis of coalition agreements and then turns to EU treaty ratification in parliament.

7.4.1 European integration as conflictive issue in coalition building?

The empirical focus of this section is on the stated EU policy of coalition governments as agreed upon in coalition agreements. The analysis is limited to those governing constellations where conflict about the EU issue can be anticipated due to the divergent EU positions of the coalition parties. As already mentioned in the introductory section of this chapter, the aim of the analysis is not to explain coalition building under conditions of conflict, since this is beyond the analytical and empirical scope of the present study. Rather, the analysis is focused on the joint government

position finally agreed upon by the coalition partners towards the potentially conflictive EU issue.

Based on the analysis of parties' EU positioning in manifestos (Chapter 6.1) and conflict between parties about European integration during election campaigns (Chapters 6.2 and 6.3), the *potential* for conflict over the issue of Europe is highest for the building of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalitions after the 1999 and the 2002 elections, and for the renewal of the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition after the 2008 election. In each of these cases, there was considerable conflict between the later coalition partners during the previous election campaign. With the ÖVP and the FPÖ, two parties with largely contrary EU positions agreed on a coalition twice (2000 and 2002): The ÖVP always understood itself as Austria's one and only *Europapartei*, whereas the FPÖ has become Austria's most Euroskeptical party. EU enlargement, on which both parties held fundamentally different positions during the 2000 and the 2002 election campaigns, can be expected to become the trigger for conflict between the two. The conflict potential of the EU issue for the building of a coalition government between the SPÖ and the ÖVP is of different character, since both parties share a very pro-European stance. However, the SPÖ's overnight announcement in 2008 to support national referenda on future EU treaties eventually led to the collapse of the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition and thus to snap elections. Consequently, this made the question of referenda on EU treaties a salient issue and crucial point for a renewal of the coalition after the 2008 election. The remainder of this section summarizes the EU position agreed upon in the coalition agreements between the ÖVP and FPÖ (in 2000 and 2002) and between the SPÖ and the ÖVP (in 2008) and illustrates which of the two party competitors' EU position prevails in coalition agreements.

Starting with the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition agreement in 2000, an important note has to be made for contextualizing the formation of this coalition government. This coalition was the first at the federal level to include the FPÖ since Jörg Haider had taken FPÖ-party leadership in the mid-1980s and had far reaching political consequences: When agreement in the negotiations between the ÖVP and the FPÖ looped, the other 14 EU member states' governments announced to take bilateral measures against the Austrian government (referred to as 'EU sanctions against Austria' in public and scholarly debate), this way expressing their concern about the FPÖ's political nature, both related to the party's dealing with National Socialism and also its anti-EU position (cf. Merlingen et al. 2001; Karlhofer et al. 2001; Hummer/Pelinka 2002; Busek/Schauer 2003). In

an attempt to calm the waves, Federal President Thomas Klestil—who strongly opposed the building of an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition—demanded the signing of a preamble to the coalition agreement from the two coalition partners prior to the nomination of the government. This preamble included a commitment by the government to human rights, tolerance, and European integration[114].

The coalition agreement—entitled *Österreich neu regieren*—carries forward this commitment. The first section of the document is devoted to foreign and European policy and states that

> "[i]n the government's view, the deepening of integration lays the foundation for coping with the challenges of this millennium in various areas. Therefore there exists no reasonable alternative to the EU integration. (…) The government commits itself to the rapid establishing of a European peace, security, and defense community"[115] (Koalitionsvertrag 2000: 2).

Besides this general commitment to a united Europe, the second sub-section deals with EU enlargement, which is understood "to expand the peace and stability zone on the European continent" and would therefore be in the interest of Austria "that has already benefitted economically from the developing and opening of new market economies in [Austria's] neighborhood" (Koalitionsvertrag 2000: 2). The ÖVP-FPÖ coalition thus states to "advocate the enlargement process" taking into account Austrian over-all and competitive interests (ibid. 2). Though a number of points are mentioned as part of the preparation process for enlargement, these are rarely formulated as indispensable conditions, but as priorities and goals for accession negotiations. This is also the case for the two issues emphasized by the FPÖ in the 1999 election campaign, namely nuclear phase-out and the closing down of nuclear power plants in candidate countries on the one hand, and the abolition of the Beneš decrees on the other. Considering the variety of conditions for enlargement set by the FPÖ in its 1999 manifesto and during the campaign, the commitment to enlargement and the softened framing related to accession requirements as reflected in the coalition agreement is clearly biased towards the ÖVP's strongly

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[114] "The Federal Government is committed to the European peace project. Cooperation between the coalition parties is based on a commitment to Austria's membership in the European Union. The Federal Government is bound by those principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, which under Article 6 of the Treaty of the European Union are common to all member states of the European Union. Austria's future, too, lies in the deepening of integration and the enlargement of the Union. (…) The European Union as a community of values corresponds to a definite concept for the future development of European integration. (…)" See http://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/oesterreich/?em_cnt=356734&em_cnt_page=2, accessed 30/11/2011.

[115] Translation of this and all following citations from coalition agreements by SM.

supportive stance towards European integration in general and enlargement in particular. Without speculating on negotiating skills, this outcome must also be viewed in connection to the EU critique against the building of the ÖVP-FPÖ government signalized prior to the termination of the negotiations.

In the 2002 election campaign, the FPÖ presented a rather inconsistent position towards European integration, and enlargement in particular. This was most clearly visible in FPÖ-frontrunner Herbert Haupt's unclear utterances during the TV debates between rival parties, where it was difficult to grasp whether—and under what conditions—the FPÖ would say Yes to the imminent decision at the EU level about the 2004 enlargement round (see Chapter 6.3). Already when the coalition was still intact, the FPÖ mobilized against enlargement, in particular against EU accession of the Czech Republic, on which the party even started a public initiative (see Chapter 5). During the election campaign, the FPÖ substantiated its rejection of enlargement by stating to make support for enlargement conditional on reaching a binding promise by the Czechs for the closing down of the nuclear power plant Temelín and for the abolition of the Beneš decrees. Notwithstanding, the coalition agreement drafted by the ÖVP and the FPÖ after the 2002 election again included a commitment towards enlargement—and a very clear one reading as follows:

> "Commitment to the enlargement of the European Union, obligation to sign and ratify the EU Treaty of Accession *on schedule* (adoption in the Council and parliamentary discussion and decision-making)" (Koalitionsvertrag 2003: 3f, emphasis added).

Regarding the Beneš decrees, the document says that the government "seeks (…), in accordance with the decisions of the European Parliament, a solution until the ratification of the EU Treaty for Accession" (ibid. 4). The 'Temelín question' is not mentioned in connection with EU enlargement at all but referred to in the document's section on sustainability, environment, and agriculture, stating to continue talks with the Czech Republic about the zero option, i.e. the closing down of the nuclear power plant Temelín (ibid. 27f). Hence once again the anti-EU FPÖ agreed to support EU enlargement without demanding the conditions set in the run-up to the 2002 election, thus following the position of its coalition partner ÖVP, which had explicitly made support for enlargement a *conditio sine qua non* for a potential renewal of the coalition during the campaign (see Chapter 6.3).

The SPÖ and the ÖVP in principle share a very supportive position towards European integration. However, the SPÖ's announcement regarding national referenda on future EU treaties ultimately led to the collapse of the coalition built between the two after the 2006 election and to snap elections in 2008. It was this question then—rather than the general EU position— that also led to some controversy during the negotiations of a renewal of the coalition after the 2008 election. The question also appears in the final coalition agreement as part of the section on foreign and European policy. It states that the government would wish for the EU to become more democratic, transparent, and in touch with the people; the government would "therefore in principle speak up for European-wide referenda" (Koalitionsvertrag 2008: 242). Regarding the question of national referenda, the document includes a proviso, saying that

> "both coalition parties commit themselves not to initiate or support parliamentary proposals […] demanding a referendum against the will of the coalition party. In case one party votes down the other party […], the coalition partners pledge to jointly propose for new elections" (ibid.).

The coalition agreement could be read as limiting the SPÖ's room of maneuver on this question, since it would risk the termination of government cooperation with the ÖVP if supporting a proposal for a referendum. Notwithstanding, the compromise primarily led to intra-party conflict within the ÖVP: Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik announced her resignation because of dissatisfaction with the compromise that would, in her opinion, lead to unpredictability and threaten the reliability of the country's EU policy.[116]

7.4.2 European integration in parliamentary contestation: EU treaty ratification

This section focuses on EU treaty ratification in the Austrian *Nationalrat*. It starts with an analysis of parties' voting behavior in parliament and highlights changes therein over the course of time. Such change could be caused by party repositioning or can simply be the product of constraints resulting from government participation. In order to come to a conclusion about the mechanism behind changes in parties' voting behavior, I will then analyze speeches by MPs prior

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[116] See http://diepresse.com/home/politik/innenpolitik/432388/Finale-Koalitionsverhandlungen-Plassnik-tritt-zurueck and http://www.news.at/articles/0847/11/226695_s1/plassnik-eu-linie-gehoert-regierung, both accessed 30/11/2011.

to the final voting. Comparing how parties explain and justify their voting behavior on different EU treaties allows for a better understanding of the causes behind changing patterns in voting behavior and thus varying degrees of party conflict over the different treaties. Finally, I will provide a brief summary of characteristics in the setting of the parliamentary discussions on the different treaties, arguing that these indicate an increase of salience of European integration for party contestation within the parliamentary arena.

7.4.2.1 Voting behavior as a government–opposition pattern?

Looking at voting patterns in EU treaty ratification, we find evidence for varying levels of party conflict about EU treaty ratification: Periods of conflict alternate with periods of consensus, with two out of the four treaties—the Nice treaty and the Constitutional treaty—being ratified (almost) unanimously.[117] Voting behavior on EU treaties in parliament is summarized in Table 7.1, which presents the voting results for each party on each treaty. In order to highlight patterns in the positioning, parties have been structured along their left-right position in the political space.

Looking at voting behavior in the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty, we see a perfect representation of the inverted U-curve (Hooghe et al. 2002) described earlier in this dissertation: Parties on both the left and the right margins vote against the treaty, whereas mainstream parties—plus the Liberals—ratify it. The picture changes four years later, when the Nice treaty is been ratified: All parties now vote in favor of treaty ratification. The situation is similar with the Constitutional treaty—except for a single MP opposing ratification. The vote on the Lisbon treaty entails yet another shift, with ratification opposed by the two radical right parties (FPÖ, BZÖ).

Table 7.1: Voting behavior in parliament on treaty ratification

Treaty	Greens	SPÖ	Liberals	ÖVP	BZÖ	FPÖ
Amsterdam	-	+	+	+	/	-
Nice	+	+	/	+	/	+
Constitution	+	+	/	+	+	(+/-)
Lisbon	+	+	/	+	-	-

Note: Grey shadings indicate government participation. The results in parentheses for the FPÖ votes on the Constitutional treaty point to the exceptional situation for the party after the party split only weeks before ratification.

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[117] A single MP, however, voted against the Constitutional treaty (see below for details).

This changing pattern in support for EU treaty ratification is due to changes in the voting of individual parties: The Greens voted against the Amsterdam treaty but supported all later treaties; the BZÖ voted in favor of the Constitutional treaty but rejected the Lisbon treaty; and the FPÖ voted against the Amsterdam and the Lisbon treaty, supported the Nice treaty, and was divided on the Constitutional treaty.

Having argued elsewhere in this dissertation that parties cannot easily shift their policy positions (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000), how can we explain these changes? The most obvious explanation would be changes in parties' government–opposition status, since participation in coalition governments clearly constrains parties' room for maneuver in voting behavior according to the coalition agreement to which the governing parties have committed themselves. Looking at the grey shadings in Table 7.1, which indicate government participation, it seems that becoming a governing party indeed corresponds with most of the shifts in parties' voting behavior: The FPÖ and the BZÖ only voted in favor of EU treaties during their government participation, while rejected EU treaties when being part of the parliamentary opposition. The unclear signs for the FPÖ for the ratification of the Constitutional treaty (see final column, Table 7.1) are due to the exceptional circumstances under which the parliamentary discussion was carried out from the perspective of the FPÖ: Only a month before ratification in parliament, the FPÖ-members of government left the party and founded the BZÖ. The BZÖ also took over the parliamentary party group, since most of the former FPÖ MPs followed the governing team. However, at the time of ratification there was still some confusion about several MPs' loyalty to either the FPÖ or the BZÖ, which was reflected in these MPs voting behavior. While those MPs that had followed the governing team into the newly founded BZÖ voted in favor of the Constitutional treaty without exception, there was disagreement among the two remaining MPs that had expressed their loyalty to the FPÖ. One of them (Eugen Bösch) followed the BZÖ and voted Yes, whereas the other one (Barbara Rosenkranz) was the only MP rejecting the Constitutional treaty in the final vote in parliament. Government participation, however, cannot explain the Greens' shift in voting behavior: The Greens opposed the Amsterdam treaty but supported all treaty amendments since Nice, being in opposition throughout the whole time span.

Looking at EU treaty ratification as a proxy for support and opposition to European integration, voting behavior thus only tells part of the story. In order to get a clearer picture of parties'

positioning towards EU treaties, the next section will focus on speeches held by MPs during the final debate directly before the vote.

7.4.2.2 Do yes-votes indicate support for European integration? Evidence from MPs' speeches

This section explores whether change in parties' voting behavior on different EU treaties is accompanied by change in parties' views towards and evaluations of European integration and the EU. The empirical analysis focuses on speeches in parliament held by MPs prior to the final voting. I will first provide a very brief summary about the thematic priorities in the treaty debates. I will then focus explicitly on those parties reflecting an inconsistent voting pattern on the different treaties in order to views about Europe and justifications of their voting behavior. These are the Greens, the FPÖ, and the BZÖ.[118]

Thematic priorities in EU treaty debates:

Comparing the treaty debates, we can see that the discussion centers on different topics, which are not always clearly related to the substance of the respective treaty. The Amsterdam debate very much centered around diverging interpretations of Austria's neutrality and foreign and security policy more generally, including whether or not Austria should or would take part in international or European military alliances (NATO, WEU). The treaty was supported by the governmental parties (SPÖ and ÖVP) and the Liberals, whereas the FPÖ and the Greens voted against it. During the Nice debate, the focus was basically on two thematic blocks. The first one was about the EU's European and international responsibilities and activities (which is to be viewed and has also been explicitly referred to in connection with the 9/11 terror attacks). The second focused on EU enlargement, including controversy about (alleged) challenges for Austria resulting from enlargement and about the FPÖ's strategy to utter veto threats against ratification of enlargement. The treaty was ratified unanimously. In the debate about the Constitutional treaty, parties primarily focused on the historical significance of the EU's development for Europe, on the limitations of a constitution regarding substantive scope and, to some extent, the question of a referendum for ratifying the treaty. Different from the former debates, most of the speakers also referred to public criticism of the EU and/or its development. Not surprisingly,

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[118] A complete analysis for all parties represented in the *Nationalrat* can be found in Meyer (2011), on which the findings summarized in 7.4.2.1 and 7.4.2.2 build.

however, speakers from different parties offered quite diverging explanations for public Euroskepticism. The treaty was supported almost unanimously, with one MP of the FPÖ voting against it. Finally, the debate on the Lisbon treaty was primarily about the impact of the treaty, discussing positive and negative, expected and unintended consequences. It also very much reflected a fundamental debate about the virtues and downsides of European integration. The question of whether or not to conduct a national referendum for ratifying the treaty also figured prominently in the debate. Compared to the other debates, the discussion was much more emotionalized, with nightmare scenarios presented by the radical right FPÖ (see below). The treaty was supported by the governing parties (SPÖ and ÖVP) and the Greens, while the radical right FPÖ and BZÖ voted against it.

The Greens: a clear shift towards unconditional support to further European integration

Consistent with their voting behavior, we can identify two phases in the Greens' evaluation of European integration from the analysis of treaty debates. The debate of the Nice treaty constitutes a breach with the views formerly expressed by green MPs and introduces a different understanding and framing of the relationship between the national and European level as frame of reference for policy-making. Though criticism during the Amsterdam debate was first and foremost leveled against the government (for its re-definition of solidarity towards a military understanding in the context of neutrality and EU foreign and security policy), the Greens also expressed their dissatisfaction with the EU: With regard to the dominance of a military understanding of security neglecting environmental and social policy, the Greens wondered whether this were really the Europe the young would wish for, "armed to the teeth, at the frontiers a new Iron Curtain of sorts, data systems where citizens can be registered without measures for legal protection. Is this the free, ecological and social Europe you wanted to stand up for in 1994? Is this our great dream, our future utopia?" (Petrovic, A[119]). Moreover, the Greens refer to absent EU activities in support of Austrian interests since accession, as indicated by the following quote: "Where has European solidarity with Austria been [with regard to

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[119] The references for citations from speeches follow the same structure: They mention the name of the speaker and point to the debate as part of which the speech was held (with capital letters indicating the respective treaty, i.e. A for the Amsterdam treaty, N for the Nice treaty, C for the Constitutional treaty, and L for the Lisbon treaty). For a detailed list including the names of the speakers see Appendix. Translations for all citations from speeches by SM.

Austria's endeavor against the nuclear power plant Mochovce]? What happened as to genetic engineering? (...) The EU has consistently turned against Austria" (Petrovic, A).

Though Austrian neutrality (Nice debate) and foreign and security policy (Lisbon debate) keep playing an important role in the party's critique of EU treaties, the Greens' understanding of European integration seems to have changed with Nice, as the party now focuses on improvements coming with treaty amendments (e.g. enlargement in the Nice debate, democratization and the Charta of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution and Lisbon debates). Enlargement, in particular, is referred to as a key concern of the party and the reason for "why, in spite of all objections and difficulties resulting from the absent institutional reform, we support this treaty [Nice, SM] today" (Lunacek, N). Different from all other parties, the Greens also oppose the seven-year transitional period denying access to the Austrian labor market for new member states, as this is seen as "a negative signal towards accession countries that we cannot support" (Lunacek, N). Compared to all other parties, the Greens are most clear when expounding a European perspective for policy-making within the EU. They criticize national governments for understanding treaty negotiations as a "bazaar for national interests", and the Austrian government in particular for piquing themselves on protecting Austrian interests, which the Greens judge as "a mistaken prospect of European politics", where EU interests should be represented (Lunacek, N). They further highlight that certain challenges (environmental protection, global competition) could only be faced in the European context. Though other parties as well support European—as opposed to national—referenda on EU treaty amendments, the Greens are most explicit in judging national referenda not only as inefficient, but as illegitimate, arguing that "it [the Constitutional treaty, SM] concerns the European people, and only a joint decision over its future is legitimate. Thus, it is completely illegitimate if a small group imposes its dictatorship over the others" (Glawischnig, L). Though the Greens continue to criticize certain aspects of European integration (e.g. environmental and energy policy, social policy, security policy etc.), they support and claim for further integration based on the improvements they see from the debate on the Nice treaty onwards—and different from their positioning in the ratification debate about the Amsterdam treaty. The Greens' policy shift is aptly illustrated in the following statement by deputy party leader Eva Glawischnig: When referring to the Greens' skepticism towards the EU before accession, she states that back then

> "we had a vision to realize an alternative Europe together with the EFTA countries comprising all that was still reprehensible in the European Union—at that time: EC.

This vision did not come about. (…) We now see our duty in working at all levels for an advancement of the European Union: to become more ecologic, more sustainable, more social, to become a power for peace in the world—who else should do so worldwide—and for that we work" (Glawischnig, C).

The FPÖ: temporarily suppressed party Euroskepticism

The FPÖ is least coherent both in its voting behavior and its evaluation of European integration as expressed in speeches by MPs. This is to be viewed in connection with, first, the party's government participation from 2000 until 2005 and, second, the party split-off due to the foundation of the BZÖ in 2005, which put the party back in opposition before the end of the term. Most consistency when comparing the different treaty debates can be observed in the party's concerns about Austria's sovereignty—though framed differently depending on whether the party holds office or is in opposition: In the former case, support to treaty ratification is justified on the grounds of the perpetuation of unanimity and thus veto power in important policy areas (Nice debate); in the latter cases, EU treaties are described as a threat to Austria's sovereignty. Another consistent criticism points to the EU as an undemocratic, centralist bureaucracy and the FPÖ's unwillingness to accept the primacy of EU law over Austrian law. Generally, the focus is exclusively on Austrian interests, for which the EU is most of the time seen as a danger. Evidence for party repositioning can be identified concerning the question of neutrality. In the Amsterdam and the Lisbon debates, the FPÖ sees Austria's neutrality in danger and therefore argues that a referendum is needed. However, while supporting a referendum as a means to *abolish* neutrality in the debate about the Amsterdam treaty, the FPÖ demands a referendum in order to *protect* neutrality during the Lisbon debate. At both points in time, the party was in opposition.

The debate on the Constitutional treaty has to be qualified an outliner, since it was carried out under exceptional circumstances from the perspective of the FPÖ (see above). The two remaining MPs that were still associated with the FPÖ at that time did not demonstrate any coherence. While MP Eugen Bösch argued in favor of the treaty, the other MP, Barbara Rosenkranz, was the only MP who declared to vote against the treaty, arguing that this issue would require a referendum. However, she did not refer to the treaty in substantive terms. Back in opposition and recovering from the damages of electoral losses and party split, the FPÖ intensified its EU criticism in the Lisbon debate. The Lisbon treaty is labeled "a European constitutional dictate",

"a gagging and disenfranchisement treaty" and an attack on Austrian democracy and its constitution, putting Austrian citizens under tutelage (Strache, L). The focus on sovereignty is now complemented by a pronounced anti-globalization critique, describing the EU as a motor of globalization and lobby of industry and great groups aiming at destroying identity and diversity that would lead to a cutback of social rights and welfare. Moreover, it would allow for reintroducing the death penalty in Europe. Party leader Mr. Strache closes his speech in the Lisbon debate with the words "God save Austria"—a quotation of Kurt Schuschnigg (Austrian Chancellor between 1934 and 1938 during the period of the Austrofacist State) from 1938 on the eve of Austria's *Anschluss* to Nazi-Germany.

To sum up, the FPÖ does not perform unambiguous during the whole period of investigation. Still, we can observe several patterns: First, the loss of sovereignty constitutes a recurrent issue in the speeches about EU treaties—indeed modified with a view to its framing, but still far from changing during the period of government participation. Second, the party strongly intensified its EU critique in the most recent, i.e. the Lisbon treaty debate.

The BZÖ: struggling for a party position towards European integration

Since the BZÖ was only founded in 2005, as a party it only took part in the ratification of the Constitutional and the Lisbon treaties—though several MPs had previously been represented in parliament as party members of the FPÖ. The BZÖ had been in power from its foundation in April 2005 (which is shortly before the ratification of the Constitutional treaty) until the end of the term in 2006. It was thus in opposition during the ratification of the Lisbon treaty. The BZÖ's evaluation of European integration then also strongly varies between the two debates—as well as between different speakers in the most recent debate (Lisbon).

In the debate on the Constitutional treaty, Vice-Chancellor Mr. Gorbarch underscores improvements regarding EU democracy, the EU's capacity to act, the strengthening of values (like freedom, equality, minority and social rights), and the principle of subsidiarity. Mr. Scheibner, former minister of defense in the first ÖVP-FPÖ coalition (2000-2003), substantiates support to the treaty by reference to security aspects and EU responsibilities (like emergency management, suppression of terrorism, peace-keeping). Points of criticism are EURATOM, the

loss of one representative for each member state in the Commission, and the implementation of a European prosecution.

In the Lisbon debate, the two BZÖ speakers diverge quite apparently from each other in their evaluation of the EU and the Lisbon treaty. Whereas Mr. Westenthaler, head of the parliamentary group, heavily criticizes the EU's status quo and points to undesired consequences of the Lisbon treaty, Mr. Scheibner argues very much in favor of the treaty, highlights positive aspects and criticizes false information spread by treaty critics. Scheibner presents the EU as a security community and justifies the obligation of military assistance coming with the Lisbon treaty as important for a small-sized state like Austria. He describes the treaty as a "compromise of compromises", but an improvement compared to the status quo (Scheibner, L). Despite this positive assessment, Scheiber opposes the ratification of the treaty, which he justifies by reference to the need of a national referendum on that question. Mr. Westenthaler, on the other hand, associates the EU with interdiction, prohibition, and corruption. According to him, the Lisbon treaty would decrease Austria's sovereignty due to an increase in majority decision-making in immigration, asylum, environmental, and health care policy.

In conclusion, the BZÖ's evaluation of European integration seems to depend heavily on government participation (both of the party and of individual speakers). Thus, it is not surprising that we find considerable differences in positioning both between the two treaties as well as between speakers.

Linking the findings from the analysis of MPs' speeches to patterns in voting behavior, two conclusions can be drawn. First, though government participation clearly constrains Euroskeptic parties' room for maneuver in parliament, the arguments put forward in speeches by MPs of both the FPÖ and the BZÖ clearly indicate that these parties' Euroskepticism has at most be suppressed, but did not make them supporters to either the respective treaties or European integration more generally—with the exception of (former) members of the governing team. Second, party repositioning beyond voting is not a short-term task. This is reflected in the behavior of all three parties that changed their voting behavior at one or the other point: On the part of the FPÖ and the BZÖ, party Euroskpeticism resurfaced and even seems to have reinforced

once these parties are back in opposition.[120] The case of the Greens, one the other hand, demonstrates that substantive party repositioning takes its time. Though the party already distanced itself from its former skepticism towards the EU after the positive outcome of the Austrian accession referendum, it still prioritized EU deficits and undesirable developments in its evaluation of European integration during the ratification process of the Amsterdam treaty—four years after Austria had joined the EU. Though still expressing critique during the later debates, the Greens clearly shifted their focus towards improvements and over the course of time have become strong advocates of further integration and a European perspective on policy-making.

7.4.2.3 The setting of treaty ratification in parliament: a trend towards stronger politicization

As demonstrated in Chapter 6 and in the previous sections of this chapter, European integration indeed is a contested issue among Austrian political parties in the electoral arena, for coalition building, and in the parliamentary arena. In this section I will explore whether there is evidence for stronger politicization of European integration reflected in EU treaty ratification. Different from the electoral arena, politicization in this case cannot be assessed by exploring parties emphasis on European integration—after all, the whole parliamentary discussion is on the subject of European integration. However, differences in the settings within which the ratification of different treaties took place in parliament can be used as an indication for variation in the salience of the treaty ratification for domestic party contestation. This is quite revealing for inference about the politicization of European integration in the parliamentary arena, which seems to have increased over the course of time. This conclusion builds on evidence derived from four indicators regarding the setting of the parliamentary discussion and voting: (1) the public visibility of ratification, indicated by TV broadcasting, (2) whether or not a roll call vote has been demanded by a party group or several MPs, (3) the intensity of the debate, indicated by the number of speeches, and (4) the intra-party status of speakers, i.e. whether it is party leaders and their deputies or parties' EU experts and 'backbenchers' participating in the debate about European integration. Table 7.2 summarizes the four indicators and each of them shall briefly be discussed in the following.

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[120] The fact that the Lisbon treaty is based on the Constitutional treaty also rules out the possibility that different positions towards the two treaties resulted from their different scope and content.

Table 7.2: Indicators for the politicization of EU treaty ratification

Indicators	Amsterdam	Nice	Constitution	Lisbon
Broadcast	No	No	Yes	Yes
Roll call vote	No	No	No	Yes
No. of speakers*	19	14	32	56
Speakers**	S;G	S;Ö	S;Ö;G;B	S;Ö;F;G;B

Note: * refers to the total number of speakers participating in the debate; ** indicates whether highly ranked party representatives acted as speakers in the debate (capitals refer to parties where party leader, leader of the parliamentary group, and/or members of government acted as speakers in the debate: S=SPÖ, Ö=ÖVP, F=FPÖ, G=Greens, B=BZÖ).

(1) Public visibility/TV broadcast: Certain parts of plenary sessions are usually broadcasted by the public TV broadcast station (ORF). The timetable of the agenda for plenary sessions is decided upon in the *Präsidiale*, where the president of the parliament and the leaders of the party groups meet and schedule the program for the meetings. Whether EU treaty debates are scheduled for the time of TV broadcasting can thus be considered an indicator for the salience parties ascribe to the issue of Europe for domestic contestation. As displayed in Table 7.2, the parliamentary debates on EU treaty ratification have only been broadcasted in recent years: The debates about the Constitutional and the Lisbon treaties have been broadcasted, while those about the Amsterdam and the Nice treaties have not.

(2) Roll call vote: If parties fear intra-party dissent in voting behavior or want to pressure MPs from other parties to show their colours, they can request a roll call vote.[121] In both cases, this signalizes a certain importance of the subject. As indicated in Table 7.2, a roll call vote was only conducted in the most recent ratification, namely the ratification of the Lisbon treaty in 2008.

(3) Intensity of debates/number of speeches: Another indicator for the politicization of an issue is the intensity of the debate. The previous section has pointed to intensity in terms of polarization, showing that the debate about EU treaties has become more polarized over the course of time. With regard to quantity, the intensity of debates can be assessed by considering the number of speeches held during the parliamentary discussion.[122] Except for the 2001 outlier, we can observe a continuous increase in the number of speeches. The comparatively low number in the debate about the Nice treaty is easily explained: First, it is the only point in time where only four parties

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[121] A roll call vote has to be conducted if a certain number of MPs requests so.

[122] The length of the debate would be another telling indicator. However, the overall length of the plenary sessions, the total speaking time for each party group, and the number and scope of issues on the agenda vary for different plenary sessions. Since parties can flexibly distribute their speaking time and are not limited to a maximum number of speakers or speeches, the number of speeches is a much better indicator for comparison.

are represented in parliament; second, the Nice treaty is the only treaty that was ratified unanimously. By trend, thus, the parliamentary debates about EU treaty ratification seem to have intensified over the course of time.

(4) Speakers: It is reasonable to expect that on issues considered salient by parties for domestic contestation, i.e. issues that are also politicized, party leaders and other highly ranked representatives within parties will participate in the parliamentary discussion about them. Over the course of time, the number of party leaders participating in the debate constantly increases. In the debate about the Amsterdam treaty, only the Greens' party leader as well as the leader of their party group participated in the debate; due to the absence of SPÖ-Chancellor Viktor Klima, another SPÖ-member of government represented the SPÖ and the government. In the debate about the Nice treaty, ÖVP-Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel and SPÖ-party leader Alfred Gusenbauer acted as speakers, while the other parties either let their EU experts (Greens) or ordinary MPs (FPÖ) comment on the treaty. In the parliamentary discussion about the Constitutional treaty and the Lisbon treaty, respectively, highly ranked officials from all parties engaged in the debate, including party leaders, leaders of party groups, the chancellor, and the vice-chancellor.[123]

To some up, the temporal trend altogether indicates that Austrian political parties consider the issue of Europe more and more important for domestic contestation in parliament. EU treaty ratification has thus become highly politicized over the course of time. This is also consistent with the findings for the electoral arena, where strong evidence can be found for an increase in the politicization of EU treaties since the 2006 general election campaign (see Chapter 6.3).

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[123] That the FPÖ is not mentioned in the respective cell for the Constitutional treaty in Table 7.2 is due to the fact that the party group was already taken over by the BZÖ and that the FPÖ's newly elected party leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, was not yet member of the parliament at that time.

7.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to finally broaden the empirical cope of this dissertation beyond the electoral arena in order to assess to what extent the politicization of the EU issue impacts on decision-making about European integration at the domestic level. The chapter started with a brief discussion about the different functional logic that shape party interaction in the electoral, the governmental, and the parliamentary arena, pointing to constraints for party behavior in each of these arenas. Against this background, the empirical analysis focused on coalition agreements between parties that diverge in their positioning towards European integration and on parliamentary contestation about EU treaty ratification.

The analysis of coalition agreements showed that even in coalitions with one Euroskeptic partner, the government's stated policy program includes a strong commitment towards European integration in general and also on imminent decisions that further the widening and deepening of integration. In that sense, the government's EU policy as outlined in coalition agreements is strongly biased towards the EU position of the coalition partner supportive to European integration, namely the ÖVP. However, the coalition agreement between the pro-European SPÖ and ÖVP currently in power (December 2011) indicates that conflictive questions are being postponed, thus avoiding a loss of face for both parties under conditions of strong EU issue-politicization.

The empirical findings for EU treaty ratification in the *Nationalrat* demonstrate that changing patterns in voting behavior towards treaty ratification are mainly due to government participation. The Euroskeptic FPÖ and BZÖ change their voting behavior in support of treaties when they are in governmental responsibility, but revert back to and even sharpen their rejection of European integration once they are back in opposition. The case is different for the Greens, who have constantly been in opposition. Their change in voting behavior towards support of EU treaty ratification is clearly accompanied by substantial repositioning on the issue of Europe, as indicated by the analysis of parliamentary speeches by Green MPs. Finally, the empirical results point to an increase in the politicization and a stronger polarization of EU treaty ratification in parliament, which is in line with the temporal trends identified in the electoral arena (see Chapters 6.2 and 6.3).

From this analysis we can conclude that despite an increase in the politicization of Europe on the part of Euroskeptic parties in the electoral arena, these parties' impact on EU decision-making at the domestic level so far has remained limited. This even holds true for periods of government participation of Euroskeptic parties, which seems to suppress their Euroskepticism temporarily. This is indicated by both the EU policy program of coalition governments and EU treaty ratification in parliament. However, government participation does not make these parties more supportive to European integration. This is suggested by the analysis of speeches held by MPs during government participation and substantiated by these parties further radicalization on the issue of Europe once back in opposition.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this dissertation was to study the politicization of European integration in Austrian domestic party contestation. The project first and foremost focused on the electoral arena by studying the role of the EU issue in general election campaigns. However, the study also looked at decision-making arenas, investigating coalition governments' EU policy program outlined in coalition agreements and EU treaty ratification in parliament. Together this makes for a comprehensive and detailed analysis of party politicization of European integration in Austria. This concluding chapter will summarize the main findings of the dissertation and will link them to the broader study of party politicization beyond the Austrian case. The chapter starts with a short note towards the relevance of the research question. It will then point to key assumptions that have guided the analytical framework and research strategy of the dissertation, before summarizing basic points in the research design of the empirical part of the project. This is followed by a condensed presentation of the main empirical findings for party politicization of European integration in Austria. After revealing limitations regarding the empirical scope of this analysis, the chapter concludes by outlining the contribution of the dissertation to the broader study of party politicization of European integration.

Relevance of the topic & research gaps:

Politicization fulfills an important function in democratic politics. By broadening the audience towards the public, politicization makes visible conflict about an issue between political actors. It thus informs about the different political preferences and policy alternatives available in the party system. Party politicization increases the public salience of an issue: When political parties include an issue in their policy repertoire for domestic competition, they signal importance of the issue to voters, who may in turn consider the issue in their party choice in elections. Hence politicization is important for structuring political conflict and could ultimately even lead to new party–voter alignments and/or reconfigurations in alliances for cooperation between different parties (cf. Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989; de Wilde 2011).

With a view to European integration, politicization can also have serious political consequences. It can give rise to questions of accountability, responsiveness, and legitimacy of EU policy-making, since decision-making within the multi-level EU polity is strongly determined by

political elites (some of them appointed rather than elected), whereas the scope for electorally mandated politics is limited and differs from citizens' experience of democracy at the member state level (cf. Follesdal/Hix 2006; Mair 2005). Politicization could thus on the one hand contribute to strengthening the electoral linkage between citizens and political elites, since governmental actors "must look over their shoulders when negotiating European issues" (Hooghe/Marks 2009: 5). Under conditions of widespread public skepticism against the alien EU polity, however, politicization may also endanger the further developing of the European integration project. Against this background, scholars take up different positions as to whether politicization of European integration is of value or danger. Most prominently within the former camp, Simon Hix (2006) argues that politicization would translate EU politics into a left-right structure similar to the one decisive for politics at the national level and absorbing the pro-anti European integration dimension, thus also alleviating Euroskepticism. In sharp contrast, Stefano Bartolini (2006) argues that the EU polity would not be capable of such politicization, which could turn out to be "a medicine worse than the disease" (2006: 47). This is because politicization can be expected to spill over from what Bartolini calls isomorphic issues (e.g. welfare, education or immigration policy) to constitutive issues about the EU polity as such (i.e. its competences, boundaries etc.), which are not transformable into left-right conflicts and challenge the territorial and constitutional base of the polity. Whether the politicization of Europe is viewed as the right or wrong sort of medicine, to borrow from the title of the Hix–Bartolini debate, on any account it can be expected to be a process that once started cannot easily be reversed.

What the Hix–Bartolini debate clearly reveals is that the normative dispute about whether or not the politicization of European integration is to be desired or to be feared has an important empirical component: Hix and Bartolini's diverging conclusions are to a large extent based on different expectations about the substantive character of the debate about Europe. Will it translate into left-right conflict about different policy alternatives, or will it challenge the territorial and constitutional base of the EU polity? To put it differently, politicization of European integration can be about distribution (in a broad understanding of the term) or sovereignty and identity. As argued by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2009), whether Europe is politicized in terms of distributional or identity conflicts will be dependent on which political parties pick up the issue for domestic competition. This argument points to the two components intrinsic to the concept of politicization, namely content and emphasis. Content refers to the specific concerns about

European integration and the framing employed by parties in the politicization of the EU issue. Emphasis refers to the degree of politicization in quantitative terms, i.e. the salience ascribed to the issue by different political actors according to which they will emphasize the issue. Though we can find much scholarly work focusing on either of the two aspects, they are rarely studied in an integrated approach: A number of studies focus on party positioning towards European integration (cf. Pennings 2006; Gabel/Hix 2004; Hooghe et al. 2002) and in recent years research on issue-salience has also made much progress (cf. Steenbergen/Scott; Netjes/Binnema 2007; de Vries/van de Wardt 2011). Still, we have only limited empirically-based knowledge about the politicization of European integration, about the driving actors behind it and the content of the debate as part of the process of politicizing European integration. Given the potential political consequences for the EU project, studying the politicization of European integration is an important endeavor since it can provide a better understanding of the phenomenon based on systematic and empirically grounded exploration.

Guiding assumptions & research design:

Party politicization of European integration can be studied from different analytical angles and with different empirical foci (cf. de Wilde 2011). This dissertation started from the following key assumptions or arguments that have strongly informed the analytical framework and research design of the present study: First, it argues that the politicization of European integration should be studied at the domestic level and, more specifically, in the context of domestic party contestation, for which national election campaigns serve as a particularly suitable setting. The assumption behind this argument is that the national level still constitutes the decisive sphere for delimiting mass politics and political communication (cf. Kriesi et al. 2008). Second, the dissertation claims that it is important to distinguish between the *potential* for party conflict and the actual *expression* of the latter. While much of the research stating to explore party contestation over European integration actually investigates the potential for such conflict (resulting from differences between parties in their positioning towards the issue), this study explicitly considers to what extent conflict becomes publicly visible and thus part of parties' competitive interaction. This distinction is crucial, since not every issue towards which parties hold different positions becomes politicized, as conflict can remain latent or only expressed in

non-public party interaction (e.g. in parliamentary committees or as part of unofficial negotiations between parties' EU specialists).

Though the *issue* of European integration may be considered *sui generis* compared to other political issues (due to its multi-facet character and the fact that it is neither a foreign policy nor a prototypical domestic issue), the dissertation starts from the premise that, thirdly, the *politicization* of European integration must be understood as a matter of domestic competition, thus following the same rules as competition on any other issue. With a view to the analytical framework of the dissertation, this means that the study is analytically embedded in comparative party research rather than theories of European integration or Europeanization. Finally, the concept of politicization as applied in this dissertation contains two components, namely content and emphasis. It is argued that these have to be distinguished empirically and analytically, because they connect to different strands of theory, namely the cleavage theory of party positioning for understanding the content of politicization (cf. Marks/Wilson 2000; Edwards 2009) and the salience theory of party competition explaining parties' emphasis and engagement in the process of politicization (cf. Klingemann et al. 2006; Netjes/Binnema 2007).

The above-mentioned assumptions and arguments have strongly informed the research design of this dissertation. The core empirical part of the study focused on general election campaigns. It is based on rich and carefully selected data corpus specifically collected for the purpose of this study. It thus refrains from using available data for party positioning and issue-salience of European integration from comparative projects due to these data's limitation in capturing politicization appropriately. The data used instead are manifestos, TV debates between rival candidates as part of the election campaign, and parties' election posters. The study also departs from comparable research in its methodology. The vast majority of research in the broader field of party contestation over European integration applies a cross-national comparative perspective and is quantitative in its nature. Differently, the present study conducts an in-depth analysis of the Austrian case. The content of politicization is explored by means of a detailed qualitative text analysis that considers both parties' evaluations and claims for reform of European integration. Issue-emphasis is investigated by combining quantitative measures with additional qualitative indicators for parties' active engagement in the politicization of Europe. This approach can be qualified as quite innovative not least because it allows for considering the dynamics in

politicization resulting from party interaction during the campaigns. The main empirical part of the dissertation about politicization in the electoral arena is finally complemented by a smaller study of the European integration issue in decision-making arenas. It focused, first, on coalition agreements between parties reflecting a high potential for conflict on the EU issue due to their contrary positioning towards European integration. Second, it investigated EU treaty ratification in parliament, looking both at voting behavior and parliamentary speeches. Altogether, the research strategy employed in this dissertation makes for a comprehensive and detailed picture of party politicization of European integration in Austria.

EU politicization in Austria: opportunity structure & main empirical findings:
The Austrian case has been selected for its high likeliness of EU politicization to appear in party contestation. The case selection followed a purposive sampling approach, meaning that it has been guided by demands of the research question: The research purpose of this project is to learn more about the mechanisms behind and the manifestation of the politicization of Europe, which presupposes politicization to actually appear. Not least due to the comparatively high level of public Euroskepticism, the strength of a Euroskeptic party firmly established in the party system, and strong anti-EU coverage in the yellow press, Austria was to be expected a suitable case for the study of party politicization of European integration. These specific conditions in the Austrian political environment also account for the disadvantageous conditions that parties supportive to EU integration face. Adverse conditions for EU supporters remain when considering the narrower party-specific opportunity structure: The pro-European parties in Austria are all confronted with a divided electorate on the question of Europe and/or the problem of ideological misfit of the issue to parties' overall policy program. Austria's anti-EU parties, on the other hand, act under favorable conditions for Euroskeptic EU politicization—both with a view to the broader political environment and the party-specific opportunity structure. To recall, the former is characterized by low public support to European integration, considerable anti-EU media coverage, and a mainstream-party consensus in support of European integration against public and published opinion. The advantageous party-specific opportunity structure for Euroskeptics is reflected in the overlap of party and voter position, the latter's unity in rejecting the EU, and the fact that the EU issue very well fits Austrian radical right parties' program of protecting perceived in-groups

from out-groups or 'the others'—whether the latter are colluding political elites, immigrants, or the alien EU polity that is viewed to entail heteronomy.

The empirical findings for party politicization of European integration in the electoral arena reflect these asymmetric conditions for EU supporters and opponents in the Austrian party system—though with certain disruptions. The analysis of election manifestos showed that the European integration issue is most challenging to the programs of the SPÖ and the Greens, which is reflected in their framing of the issue: Despite a clear commitment to European integration, these two parties express strong claims for reform. Such claims concern both the EU architecture and its policy priorities. However, the former always appear in connection with claims for different policy alternatives or the functioning of EU democracy, rather than concerns about national sovereignty. For Austria's other pro-European parties, the ÖVP and the Liberals, the issue of Europe fits better into their policy program, reflected in more enthusiastic evaluations of European integration in election manifestos and less emphasis on claims for reform. The EU issue also corresponds well with the party profile of Austria's Euroskeptic parties, which are to be found on the right fringes of the party political landscape. Accordingly, the FPÖ and the BZÖ first and foremost refer to European integration as a threat in their election manifestos—whether to the country's economy and employment or to Austrian sovereignty and identity.

The analysis of election posters and, in particular, TV debates between rival candidates more specifically explored the politicization of European integration during election campaigns. The findings demonstrate that it is indeed the anti-EU FPÖ that actively politicizes the issue and, considering the temporal trend, increasingly so. That EU politicization is driven by Euroskeptics—as suggested by the literature—is also indicated in the findings for the Greens: They politicize Europe more actively in the 1990s, when first and foremost pointing to negative consequences of European integration, and less so later on, when expressing a stronger and less conditional commitment to EU integration. However, the results for the ÖVP demonstrate that a pro-European party can and does actively engage in the politicization of European integration if it considers the issue key for its party profile: Despite the lack of a clear electoral incentive, the ÖVP repeatedly refers to Europe as a top-priority issue and constantly portrays itself as *the* Austrian 'Europapartei' during election campaigns.

What patterns can be observed for the Austrian case regarding the content of the debate in the politicization of European integration? Scholars have hypothesized that the politicization of Europe will look differently depending on whether Euroskeptic parties are located at the left or at the right fringes of the political spectrum, i.e. distributional conflict in the former case and sovereignty/identity conflict in the latter case (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009). For Austria we would thus expect a strong bias towards question of sovereignty and identity in the politicization of Europe, since party Euroskepticism has become a radical right phenomenon (cf. Pelinka 2004). The empirical findings demonstrate that over the course of time, concerns about national sovereignty and identity indeed become much more important, whereas the focus on particular policies and conflict about different policy alternatives diminishes. This is strongly related to changes in conflict configurations: Disputes between parties shift from conflict within the left and the right block, respectively, towards conflict between EU supporters and opponents: In the 1990s, conflict not only appeared between Eurskeptics and EU supporters, but also among the latter group—in particular within the left block (SPÖ, Greens, Liberals[124]). This biased the debate towards questions of distribution and/or different policy priorities; from 2006 onwards, however, conflict about European integration first and foremost occurs between the radical right Eurokpetic parties and EU supporters and the debate clearly shifts towards concerns about sovereignty/identity.

A very interesting pattern could be observed regarding parties' pressure to justify their support or opposition to European integration: Whereas it is EU supporters challenging other parties on their EU position in the 1990s and 2002, they eventually become pressured themselves and increasingly need to justify their supportive stance towards European integration against attacks by anti-EU radical right parties.

The results for Austrian general election campaigns thus show that despite a disadvantageous opportunity structure, EU supporters significantly informed the debate about Europe in Austria in the 1990s. Once they take a backseat in EU politicization, however, the content of the debate becomes clearly biased towards Euroskeptic radidal right parties' thematic priorities. This is not least reflected in the SPÖ's repositioning on the question of national referenda on EU treaties that reinforces the depiction of European integration as a matter of protecting national sovereignty and identity. The findings also indicate a stronger polarization over the course of time in the

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[124] See Chapter 5 for a detailed explanation why the Liberals are considered as a left party at this point.

debate about Europe, which very much reflects a fundamental debate about virtues and downsides of the EU, with pro-European parties being pressured to justify their support for European integration against attacks by the radical right Euroskeptics. The temporal trend thus clearly indicates an increase in anti-EU, radical right party politicization of Europe that in recent years has clearly put its stamp on the debate about European integration in the Austrian electoral arena.

The situation is different in decision-making arenas. Though the analysis of parliamentary debates over the course of time indicates stronger politicization and a polarization of conflict about European integration between parties—which is in line with the findings for the electoral arena—, the impact on decision-making has remained limited so far. The analysis of coalition agreements showed that even in coalitions with one Euroskeptic partner, the government's stated policy program includes a strong commitment towards European integration in general and also on imminent decisions that further the widening and deepening of integration. This was the case for both ÖVP-FPÖ/BZÖ coalitions between 2000 and 2006 and was also reflected in the FPÖ's (later: BZÖ's) votes in support for the Nice and Constitutional treaties in parliament. This indicates that despite these parties' Euroskeptic politicization in the electoral arena, government participation constrains their room for maneuver in the governmental and parliamentary arenas. However, the stronger politicization and polarization of the debate about European integration as observed in recent years may in turn result in stronger constraints resulting from parties' commitments on EU policy as expressed in the electoral arena. This is indicated by the most recent coalition negotiations between the SPÖ and the ÖVP. The SPÖ's promise for national referenda on EU treaties and the ÖVP's strict denial of the same indeed impeded an agreement towards a joint EU position supported by both coalition partners. For Austria's current SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government, an agreement could only be reached due to a compromise to jointly call for reelections in case one of the partners supports a proposal for a national referendum against the will of its coalition partner. This clearly shows that the issue of European integration has become quite important in the Austrian party system.

Limitations and contributions of the dissertation:
Despite the attempt to conduct a detailed and comprehensive analysis of party politicization of European integration in Austria, the present study has certain limitations regarding its empirical

scope, whereof I would like to explicitly mention the following three. First, despite the importance of both the supply side (political parties) and the demand side (voters) for the process of politicization, the empirical focus of this dissertation has been narrowed to an analysis of the supply side of politicization. This decision is based on a top-down perspective towards politicization that considers political actors and elites as decisive for politicization (cf. Hooghe/Marks 2009; Carmines/Stimson 1986, 1989). Though this might be different for other political issues (for which politicization may clearly be a response to mobilization efforts on the part of civil society and grassroots movements), I would argue that the top-down perspective is particularly reasonable with a view to the elite-driven EU issue. Therefore the demand side has only been considered superficially in the present study by pointing to voter preferences towards European integration as part of the party-specific opportunity structure. Second, the focus of this study is clearly on the electoral arena, whereas the impact of EU politicization on decision-making has been addressed only briefly in the last chapter. Though this is reasonable if considering the importance of the electoral arena for competition between parties, a more explicit and systematic focus on interactions between the different arenas of domestic contestation will be of great value in future research. Finally, the study of party politicization of European integration conducted in this dissertation is limited to the Austrian case. As is always the case with single-country studies, the generalizability of the empirical findings thus remains weak. On the other hand, the narrow focus on a single country allowed for a detailed analysis including a rich and diverse data corpus that distinguishes this study from much research within the field.

Despite the weaknesses resulting from limitations in the empirical scope of this dissertation, the latter makes an important contribution to the study of party politicization of European integration both analytically and with a view to research strategy. First, it points to the necessity of distinguishing the potential for conflict from the expression of such conflict in domestic contestation between political parties. This proves to be important, since the empirical findings for the 1990s and to some extent also for 2008 show that conflict does not only occur between supporters and opponents of European integration, but also among the former, which also affects the content of the debate about Europe.

Second, the dissertation provides an integrated approach to the study of party politicization that considers both content and emphasis as constitutive of the concept of politicization, whereas most research in the field only focuses on either of them. As argued in this dissertation, distinguishing

between the two—while at the same time considering both—is of utmost analytical importance, since both connect to different strands of theory. The content of politicization is strongly linked to parties' issue-positioning that, in turn, is connected to the broader programmatic and ideological profile of a party that constrains parties' response to the issue of Europe. Content is therefore best understood by employing a cleavage perspective. Emphasis, on the other hand, largely overlaps with the concept of issue-salience and is dependent on strategic considerations related to party competition. The salience theory of party competition thus provides the theoretical foundation for exploring parties' emphasis on European integration in the politicization of the issue. Considering both aspects in an integrated approach allows for viewing parties as rational actors without neglecting that their ideological roots to a certain degree constrain them in their strategic attempts to maximize votes and power. This study thus acknowledges that parties are characterized by what Gary Marks and Carole Wilson (2000: 343) have called each party's own "'bounded rationality'".

Third, the dissertation is innovative in its empirical design that considers a variety of data sources and combines different methods for analyzing politicization. Exploring the content of politicization, the qualitative text analysis distinguishes different facets of European integration instead of using one general pro- and anti-integration category. As argued here, this is very important, since EU politicization can take very different forms as regards content. This argument is supported by the empirical findings. Considering the temporal trend, we see that the content of the debate about Europe has changed: Whereas questions of national sovereignty and identity appear only marginally in the 1990s' election campaigns, this fundamentally changes in 2006, when the debate becomes strongly biased towards these questions. Furthermore, the text analysis considers both evaluative statements and parties' claims-making. This proves to be important for parties that actually strive for a different EU despite committing themselves to European integration. Being reluctant to explicitly criticizing the current state of European integration, these parties rather frame their critique as claims for reform. The empirical analysis demonstrates that in Austria this applies in particular to the SPÖ and the Greens. Turning to parties' emphasis on the EU issue, this study combined different data and complemented quantitative measures with qualitative indicators. This procedure provides for a more detailed and convincing picture about parties' active involvement in the politicization of Europe compared to the findings derived from available comparative data sets (cf. Hooghe et al. 2010; Klingemann et al. 2006; Kriesi et

al. 2008). Given the contradictory results of these other data sources regarding Austrian parties' EU issue-emphasis or -salience, the present study not only constitutes an important empirical contribution but also underscores the necessity for careful data selection and operationalizion of concepts in the study of party politicization and party research more generally.

Finally, the dissertation thoroughly considers the relevance of the broader political environment (e.g. public and published opinion) as well as party-specific opportunity structures (e.g. ideological (mis)fit, overlap of party and voter position, constraints due to government participation) for party politicization of European integration. This not only sheds light on individual parties' expectable (dis)advantage for engaging in the politicization of Europe, but also helps understanding why EU politicization in Austria manifests itself—in terms of content—the way it does: The empirical findings demonstrate that the politicization of European integration in the Austrian electoral arena is increasingly shaped by Euroskeptic radical right parties, which have called the tune in the debate about Europe in recent years. As argued previously, this is not least related to the strength of the Austrian radical right parties and furthered by the anti-EU campaigning of a politically influential media actor, the *Krone*. Despite limited impact on decision-making so far, the findings suggest that the politicization of Europe may also affect EU policy-making in the Austrian governmental and parliamentary arenas more seriously in the near future. Recent political developments like the establishing of the European Stability Mechanism and plans for yet another EU treaty amendment clearly entail potential for conflict in the party system. In Austria they have been accompanied by heated debates between supporters and opponents of an ever closer union—not least about the necessity of national referenda.[125] We can therefore expect rather more than less politicization of European integration in the near future— and probably not under conditions favorable to parties supportive of European integration. If the latter continue to strive for further European integration, they will thus need to find a way to actively engage (again) in the politicization of European integration in order to convince Euroskeptic voters. Otherwise they yield the floor to anti-EU radical right entrepreneurs, who already proclaim the failure of the EU project.

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[125] See http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/PR/JAHR_2011/PK0860/index.shtml, accessed 20/12/2011.

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Appendix

A1. Additional tables and figures

Table A1: Governments in the Second Republic

Governing period	Government	Governing parties
27/4/1945-20/12/1945	Renner	SPÖ-ÖVP-KPÖ[i]
20/12/1945-8/11/1949	Figl I	ÖVP-SPÖ-KPÖ
8/11/1949-28/10/1952	Figl II	ÖVP-SPÖ
28/10/1952-2/4/1953	Figl III	ÖVP-SPÖ
2/4/1953-29/6/1956	Raab I	ÖVP-SPÖ
29/6/1956-16/7/1959	Raab II	ÖVP-SPÖ
16/7/1959-3/11/1960	Raab III	ÖVP-SPÖ
3/11/1960-11/4/1961	Raab IV	ÖVP-SPÖ
11/4/1961-27/3/1963	Gorbach I	ÖVP-SPÖ
27/3/1963-2/4/1964	Gorbach II	ÖVP-SPÖ
2/4/1964-19/4/1966	Klaus I	ÖVP
19/4/1966-21/4/1970	Klaus II	ÖVP
21/4/1970-4/11/1971	Kreisky I	SPÖ
4//11/1971-28/10/1975	Kreisky II	SPÖ
28/10/1975-5/6/1979	Kreisky III	SPÖ
5/6/1979-24/5/1983	Kreisky IV	SPÖ
24/5/1983-16/6/1986	Sinowatz	SPÖ-FPÖ
16/6/1986-21/1/1987	Vranitzky I	SPÖ-FPÖ
21/1/1987-17/12/1990	Vranitzky II	SPÖ-ÖVP
17/12/1990-29/11/1994	Vranitzky III	SPÖ-ÖVP
29/11/1994-12/3/1996	Vranitzky IV	SPÖ-ÖVP
12/3/1996-28/1/1997	Vranitzly V	SPÖ-ÖVP
28/1/1997-4/2/2000	Klima	SPÖ-ÖVP
4/2/2000-28/2/2003	Schüssel I	ÖVP-FPÖ
28/2/2003-11/1/2007	Schüssel II	ÖVP-FPÖ/BZÖ[ii]
11/1/2007-2/12/2008	Gusenbauer	SPÖ-ÖVP
2/12/2008-present	Faymann	SPÖ-ÖVP

Notes: [i] Provisional government with members of SPÖ, ÖVP, and KPÖ in equal parts;
[ii] Coalition between ÖVP and FPÖ and, after the party split on 17 April 2005, ÖVP and BZÖ.

Source: Official records, http://www.bundeskanzleramt.at/site/3355/default.aspx (accessed 19/9/2011).

Figure A1: Attitudes towards European integration along social class (1999)
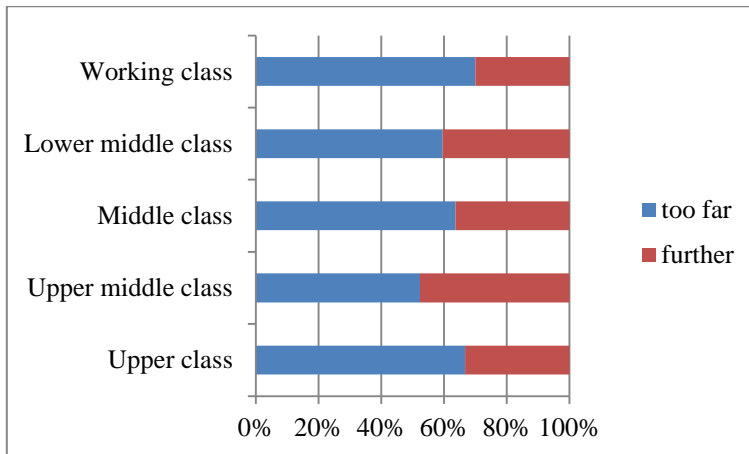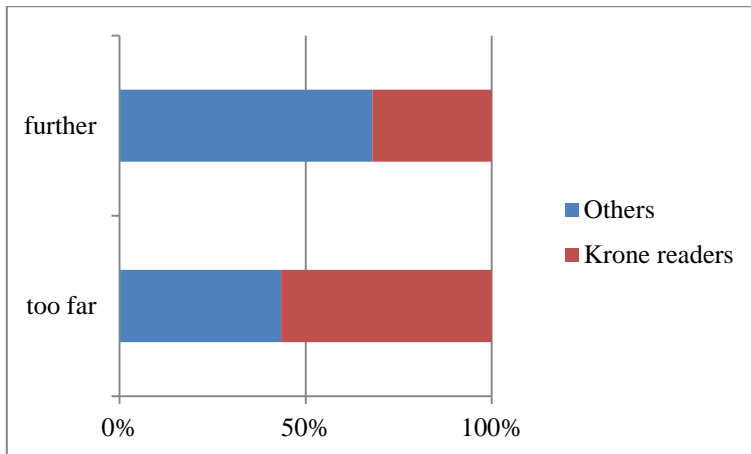

Notes: N=479 (numbers for upper class low, N=6); 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories; classification of social class according to respondents' self-perception.

Source: EES 1999 (cf. Franklin et al. 2002).

Figure A2: Attitudes towards European integration along social class (2004)
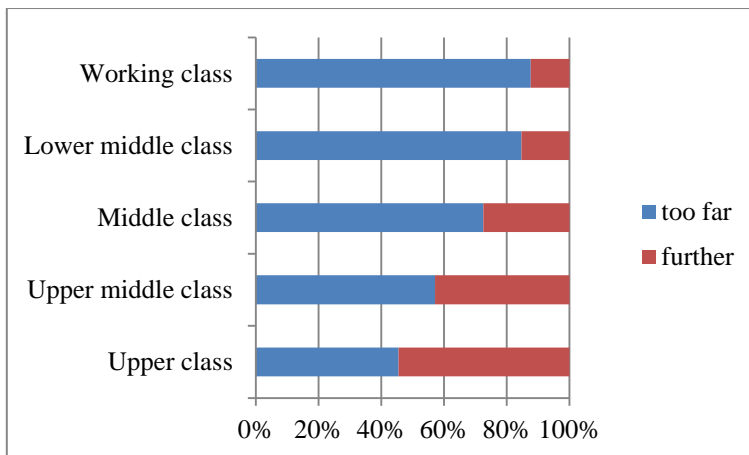
Notes: N=967 (numbers for upper class low, N=11); 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories; classification of social class according to respondents' self-perception.

Source: EES 2004 (cf. Schmitt/Loveless 2004).

Figure A3: Attitudes towards European integration along social class (2009)
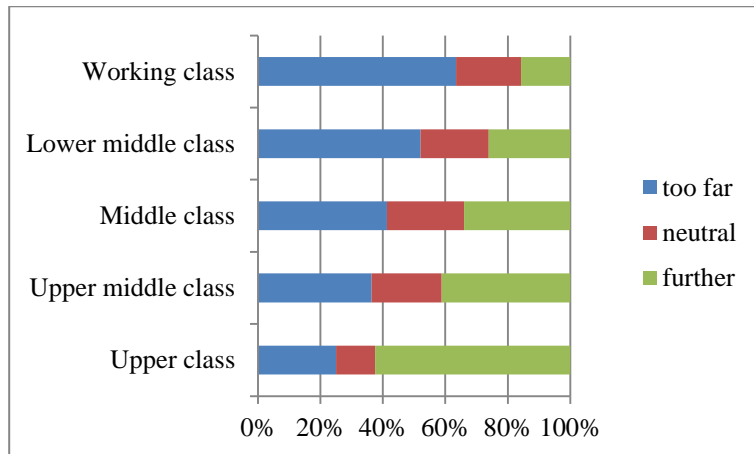
Notes: N=962 (numbers for upper class low, N=16); 11-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into three categories; classification of social class according to respondents' self-perception.

Source: EES 2009 (cf. Egmond et al. 2010).

Figure A4: Attitudes towards European integration among (non-)readers of the Krone (1999)
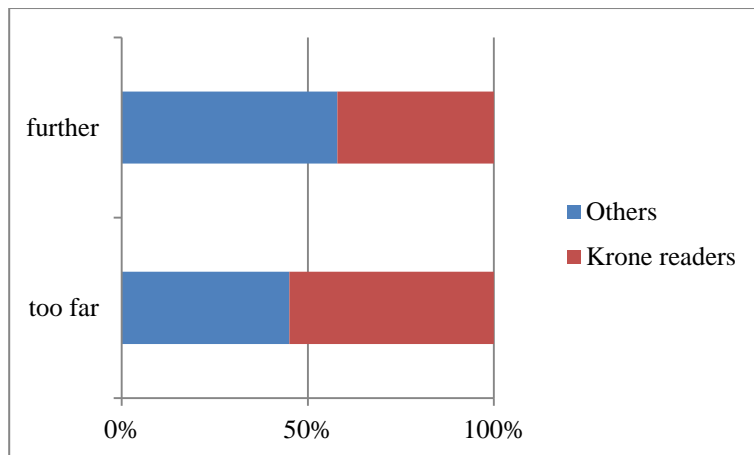
Notes: N=426; 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories.

Source: EES 1999 (cf. Franklin et al. 2002).

Figure A5: Attitudes towards European integration among (non-)readers of the Krone (2004)

Notes: N=907; 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories.

Source: EES 2004 (cf. Schmitt/Loveless 2004).

Figure A6: Attitudes towards European integration among (non-)readers of the Krone (2009)
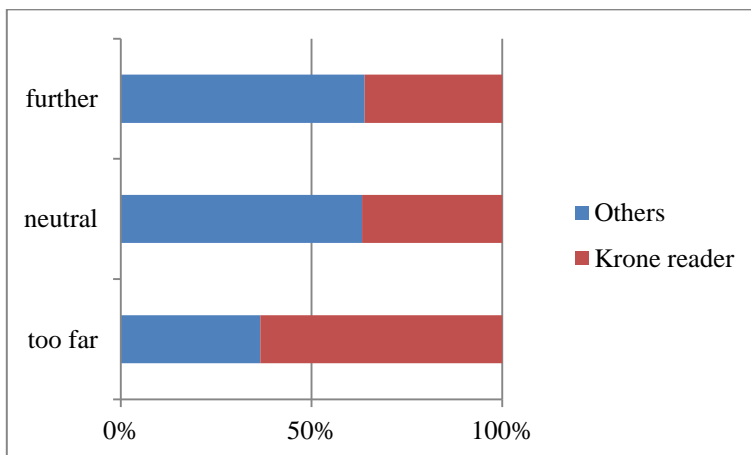
Notes: N=966; 11-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into three categories; readers of Krone if reading the paper at least three times a week.

Source: EES 2009 (cf. Egmond et al. 2010).

Figure A7: Attitudes towards European integration according to voting behavior (1999)
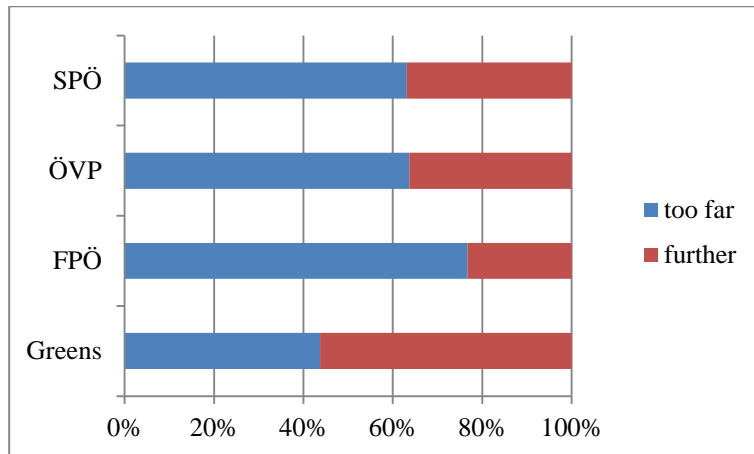
Notes: N=356; 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories; respondents stating to have voted for party x in previous national election.

Source: EES 1999 (cf. Franklin et al. 2002).

Figure A8: Attitudes towards European integration according to voting behavior (2004)
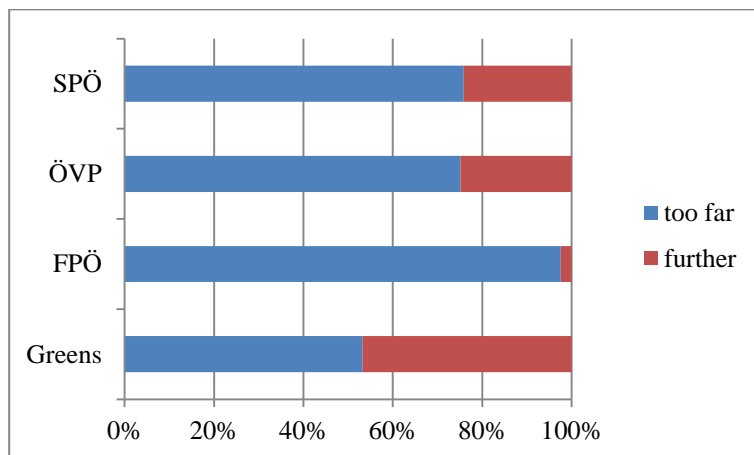
Notes: N=803; 10-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into two categories; respondents stating to have voted for party x in previous national election.

Source: EES 2004 (cf. Schmitt/Loveless 2004).

Figure A9: Attitudes towards European integration according to voting behavior (2009)

Notes: N=733; 11-point-scale ranging from 'European integration has already gone too far' to 'should go further' recoded into three categories; respondents stating to have voted for party x in previous national election.

Source: EES 2009 (cf. Egmond et al. 2010).

A2. List of tables and figures

List of Tables:

List of Figures:

A1: Attitudes towards European integration along social class (1999)

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A4: Attitudes towards European integration among (non-)readers of the Krone (1999)

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A3. Documentation of data sources and data collection

List of election manifestos:

SPÖ 1995 manifesto (accessed via CMP, cf. Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006)

SPÖ 1999 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

SPÖ 2002 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

SPÖ 2006 manifesto (collected by SM)

SPÖ 2008 manifesto (collected by SM)

ÖVP 1995 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

ÖVP 1999 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

ÖVP 2002 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

ÖVP 2006 manifesto (collected by SM)

ÖVP 2008 manifesto (collected by SM)

FPÖ 1995 manifesto (collected by SM)

FPÖ 1999 manifesto (collected by SM)

FPÖ 2002 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

FPÖ 2006 manifesto (collected by SM)

FPÖ 2008 manifesto (collected by SM)

Greens 1995 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

Greens 1999 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

Greens 2002 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

Greens 2006 manifesto (collected by SM)

Greens 2008 manifesto (collected by SM)

Liberals 1995 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

Liberals 1999 manifesto (accessed via CMP)

BZÖ 2006 manifesto (collected by SM)

BZÖ 2008 manifesto (collected by SM)

List of TV debates:

1995 campaign:

08.11.1995:   Brigitte Ederer (SPÖ) – Madeleine Petrovic (Greens)

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11.11.1995:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Heide Schmidt (Liberals)
15.11.1995:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Jörg Haider (FPÖ)
17.11.1995:   Caspar Einem (SPÖ) – Volker Kier (Liberals)
20.11.1995:   Madeleine Petrovic (Greens) – Heide Schmidt (Liberals)
22.11.1995:   Jörg Haider (FPÖ) – Madeleine Petrovic (Greens)
24.11.1995:   Jörg Haider (FPÖ) – Heide Schmidt (Liberals)
27.11.1995:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Madeleine Petrovic (Greens)
01.12.1995:   Viktor Klima (SPÖ) – Jörg Haider (FPÖ)
05.12.1995:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Franz Vranitzky (SPÖ)
06.12.1995:   Franz Vranitzky, Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP), Jörg Haider (FPÖ), Madeleine
              Petrovic (Greens), Heide Schmidt (Liberals)

Debates collected and fully transcribed by SM.

1999 campaign:

01.09.1999:   Barbara Prammer (SPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
03.09.1999:   Elisabeth Gehrer (ÖVP) – Heide Schmidt (Liberals)
08.09.1999:   Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP) – Madeleine Petrovic (Greens)
10.09.1999:   Wolfgang Ruttenstorfer (SPÖ) – Hans Peter Haselsteiner (Liberals)
14.09.1999:   Alexander Van der Bellen (Liberals) – Heide Schmidt (Liberals)
16.09.1999:   Thomas Prinzhorn (FPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
17.09.1999:   Thomas Prinzhorn (FPÖ) – Christian Köck (Liberals)
21.09.1999:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Thomas Prinzhorn (FPÖ)
22.09.1999:   Rudolf Edlinger (SPÖ) – Jörg Haider (FPÖ)
28.09.1999:   Viktor Klima (SPÖ) – Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP)
30.09.1999:   Viktor Klima (SPÖ), Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP), Jörg Haider (FPÖ), Alexander
              Van der Bellen (Greens), Heide Schmidt (Liberals)

Debates accessed via *Österreichische Mediathek*; transcribed by SM (full transcription of EU related text passages only).

2002 campaign:

29.10.2002:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
31.10.2002:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Herbert Haupt (FPÖ)
05.11.2002:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Herbert Haupt (FPÖ)
07.11.2002:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
12.11.2002:   Herbert Haupt (FPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
14.11.2002:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP)
21.11.2002:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ),Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP), Herbert Haupt (FPÖ),
              Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)

Debates accessed via *Österreichische Mediathek*; transcribed by SM (full transcription of EU related text passages only).

2006 campaign:

05.09.2006:   Karl-Heinz Grasser (ÖVP) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
06.09.2006:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ)
07.09.2006:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Peter Westenthaler (BZÖ)
12.09.2006:   Martin Bartenstein (ÖVP) – Peter Westenthaler (BZÖ)
13.09.2006:   Josef Pröll (ÖVP) – Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ)
14.09.2006:   Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
15.09.2006:   Heinz-Christain Strache (FPÖ) – Peter Westenthaler (BZÖ)
19.09.2006:   Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
20.09.2006:   Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens) – Peter Westenthaler (BZÖ)
21.09.2006:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) – Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ)
28.09.2006:   Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP), Alfred Gusenbauer (SPÖ), Heinz-Christian Strache
              (FPÖ), Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens), Peter Westenthaler (BZÖ)

Complete transcripts retrieved from *Apa De-Facto* data base.

2008 campaign:

22.08.2008:   Heinz-Christain Strache (FPÖ) – Jörg Haider (BZÖ)
26.08.2008:   Werner Faymann (SPÖ) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
28.08.2010:   Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP) – Jörg Haider (BZÖ)
02.09.2008:   Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP) – Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ)
04.09.2008:   Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens) – Jörg Haider (BZÖ)
09.09.2008:   Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens) – Heinz-Christain Strache (FPÖ)
11.09.2008:   Werner Faymann (SPÖ) – Jörg Haider (BZÖ)
16.09.2008:   Werner Faymann (SPÖ) – Heinz-Christain Strache (FPÖ)
18.09.2008:   Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP) – Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens)
23.09.2008:   Werner Faymann (SPÖ) – Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP)
25.09.2008:   Werner Faymann (SPÖ), Wilhelm Molterer (ÖVP), Heinz-Christian Strache
              (FPÖ), Alexander Van der Bellen (Greens), Jörg Haider (BZÖ)

Complete transcripts retrieved from *Apa De-Facto* data base.

List of election posters:

Greens 1995: 'Unsere Brüsseler Spitze. Für eine ökologische und soziale Allianz in Europa.
              Gegen das Europa der Technokraten. Für die Neutralität. Gegen den NATO-
              Beitritt'

Greens 1999: 'Raus aus Gentechnik und Agrarfabriken. Gesundes Essen sichern'
Greens 1999: 'Raus aus der Verkehrshölle. Transit Lawine stoppen'
Greens 1999: 'Raus aus dem NATO-Wahn. Neutralität garantieren'

FPÖ 2002:   'Wer EU-kritisch ist, wählt blau'

FPÖ 2006:   'Heimat statt Schüssel und Brüssel. Wir für Österreich'

FPÖ 2006:   'Duell um Österreich. ÖVP-Schüssel & SPÖ-Gusenbauer: […] Türkei zur EU. FPÖ-HC Strache: […] EU-Beitritt verhindern. Sie haben die Wahl'

FPÖ 2008:   'Volksvertreter statt EU-Verräter. Wir für Euch'

Poster collected by SM.

List of coalition agreements:

Coalition agreement ÖVP-FPÖ 2000, see Koalitionsvertrag (2000) in the bibliography

Coalition agreement ÖVP-FPÖ 2003, see Koalitionsvertrag (2003) in the bibliography

Coalition agreement SPÖ-ÖVP 2008, see Koalitionsvertrag (2008) in the bibliography

Documents collected by SM.

List of parliamentary debates on EU treaty ratification in the *Nationalrat*:

Treaty of Amsterdam: final debate 18 June 1998
Information on voting behavior and literal transcripts of speeches retrieved from
http://www.parlament.gv.at/PG/DE/XX/NRSITZ/NRSITZ_00130/fname_114249.pdf
(accessed 30/8/2010). Speeches included in analysis:
  - FPÖ: MP Ewald Stadler, MP Herbert Scheibner
  - Greens: MP Madeleine Petrovic, Doris Kammerlander (Greens)

Treaty of Nice: final debate 21 November 2001
Information on voting behavior and literal transcripts of speeches retrieved from
http://www.parlament.gv.at/PG/DE/XXI/NRSITZ/NRSITZ_00083/fname_114521.pdf
(accessed 30/8/2010). Speeches included in analysis:
  - FPÖ: MP Wolfgang Jung, MP Anna Elisabeth Achatz
  - Greens: MP Ulrike Lunacek, MP Eva Lichtenberger

Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe: final debate 11 May 2005
Information on voting behavior and literal transcripts of speeches retrieved from
http://www.parlament.gv.at/PG/DE/XXII/NRSITZ/NRSITZ_00109/fname_046454.pdf
(accessed 30/8/2010). Speeches included in analysis:
  - FPÖ: MP Eugen Bösch, MP Barbata Rosenkranz
  - BZÖ: Vice-Chancellor Hubert Gorbar, MP Herbert Scheibner
  - Greens: MP Alexander Van der Bellen, MP Eva Glawischnig

Treaty of Lisbon: final debate 9 April 2008
Information on voting behavior and literal transcripts of speeches retrieved from
http://www.parlament.gv.at/PG/DE/XXIII/NRSITZ/NRSITZ_00055/fname_113800.pdf
(accessed 30/8/2010). Speeches included in analysis:
  - FPÖ: MP Heinz-Christian Strache, MP Barbara Rosenkranz

- BZÖ: MP Peter Westenthaler, MP Herbert Scheibner
- Greens: MP Alexander Van der Bellen, MP Eva Glswischnig

Abstract

English:

The aim of the dissertation is to study the party politicization of European integration in Austria. In particular, the dissertation seeks to explore *conditions* for the politicization of European integration as well as its *manifestation in substantive terms*. It argues that the former will be dependent on parties' strategic considerations for maximizing votes, whereas the latter is also dependent on the broader historical and ideological framework within which political parties are embedded. Accordingly, the theoretical framework of the study is built both on theories of party competition (in particular: salience theory) and cleavage theory. The research design is characterized by a comparison of different arenas of competition (electoral and decision-making arenas), a combination of different data sources, and a careful qualitative analysis of the selected data. The empirical findings demonstrate that though the conditions for the politicization of European integration in Austria clearly benefit Euroskeptic parties, EU supporters still actively engage in the debate about Europe in the electoral arena—at least in the first years following Austria's EU accession. In recent years, however, they have clearly taken a back-seat in the politicization of European integration. This pattern is also reflected in the content of the debate, i.e. the substantive manifestation of politicization, which increasingly becomes biased towards Euroskeptic parties' concerns about European integration. However, this has not affected the ratification of EU treaties or enlargement so far, as revealed in the analysis of decision-making arenas—even if Euroskeptic parties had been in power. So far, thus, the political significance of increasingly Euroskeptic party politicization of European integration is confined to the electoral arena.

Deutsch:

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht die Politisierung des Europathemas (d.h. der europäischen Integration) durch politische Parteien in Österreich. Im Mittelpunkt des Forschungsinteresses stehen dabei einerseits Bedingungen für die Politisierung sowie andererseits die inhaltlich-thematische Ausprägung der Debatte. Die Arbeit argumentiert, dass für ersteres strategische Überlegungen hinsichtlich Stimmenmaximierung entscheidend sind, während für letzteres auch die ideologische Verankerung der Parteien ausschlaggebend ist. Es wird daher sowohl auf Theorien zum Parteienwettbewerb (insbesondere die Salienztheorie) zurückgegriffen als auch auf die Cleavage-Theorie. Das Forschungsdesgin berücksichtigt verschiedene Wettbewerbsarenen (Wahlkampf- und Entscheidungsarenen) und einen umfassenden Datenkorpus, der mittels qualitativer Analyse eingehend untersucht wird. Die empirischen Ergebnisse der Analyse zeigen, dass sich pro-europäische Parteien trotz nachteiliger Ausgangsbedingungen aktiv in die Wahlkampfdebatte um Europa einbringen – zumindest in den ersten Jahren nach Österreichs EU-Beitritt. In den letzten Jahren sind sie gegenüber EU-skeptischen bzw. -feindlichen Parteien jedoch deutlich ins Hintertreffen geraten. Diese Tendenz bestätigt sich auch für den inhaltlichen Fokus der Debatte, der im Zeitverlauf zunehmend Themen und Perspektive der EU-Gegner widerspiegelt. Nichtsdestotrotz hat dies bislang die Ratifikation von EU-Verträgen und Erweiterungsschritten nicht behindert, wie die Analyse der parlamentarischen Arena zeigt – selbst dann nicht, wenn EU-skeptische/-feindliche Parteien in Regierungsverantwortung waren. Die politische Bedeutung der zunehmend EU-feindlichen Politisierung der europäischen Integration beschränkt sich demnach – vorerst – auf die Wahlkampfarena.

Curriculum vitae

Education:

Oct. 2007-Jan. 2012	University of Vienna, Doctorate in Political Science; doctoral thesis on Party Politicization of European integration in Austria
Oct. 2007-Sept. 2010	Post-graduate program on European integration at the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Vienna
April 2007	Graduate, Political Science, University of Vienna (Master Thesis "European Public Sphere: a Precondition for the EU's 'social legitimacy'?", in German) (passed with distinction) (German title: "Europäische Öffentlichkeit als Bedingung für die 'soziale Legitimität' der EU?"
Oct. 2001-April 2007	Graduate student, Political Science, University of Vienna; master's thesis on European Public Sphere an EU Legitimacy
June 2001	High School Exam, RG/ORG 23, Vienna

Professional Experience:

Since May 2010	University Assistant (pre-doc) at the Department of Political Science, University of Vienna
Since Oct. 2009	Project researcher in the FP7 project SOM (Support and Opposition to Migration)
Since March 2009	Teaching at the Department of Political Science, University of Vienna (under-graduate teaching)
Jan.-July 2009	EU-Profiler, Part of the Austrian Country Team, see www.euprofiler.eu
Since 2008	Member of the research group INEX (Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion) at the Department of Political Science, University of Vienna
May-Aug. 2007	Project researcher in the NODE project 'Post-Democracy', Department of Sociology, University of Innsbruck
March 2006-Feb. 2008	Under-graduate student assistant, Department of Political Science, University of Vienna

Publications:

'Experts Mistaken? The Salience of European Integration in Austrian National Election Campaigns in 2006 and 2008', in: Kai Oppermann and Henrike Viehrig (eds)*, Issue Salience in International Politics*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2011: 156-172.

'Continuity or Change? Ideas of Europe in Austrian Parliamentary Discourse', in: Cláudia T. Ramos (ed.), *Ideas of Europe in national party discourse*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2011: 199-228.

'Austria', co-authored with Theresa Kuhn, Fabio Wolkenstein, and Flooh Perlot, in: Wojciech Gagatek (ed.), *The 2009 Elections to the European Parliament. Country Reports*, European University Institute, 2010: 41-46.

'Europeanization through National Elections: Europe in the Austrian National Election Campaign 2006', co-authored with Sieglinde Rosenberger, in: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, 2008/3, 2008 (German title "Europäisierung durch nationale Wahlen: Europa im österreichischen Nationalratswahlkampf 2006").

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