How Politicisation Affects European Integration

Contesting the EU Budget
in the Media and Parliaments of the
Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland

Pieter de Wilde

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Preface

The idea for this project was born in the summer of 2005, as I was finishing my Masters thesis at the University of Amsterdam. On June 1, a clear majority of Dutch voters had just voted 'no' to the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe. Directly after the referendum, Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende declared in the media that the Dutch had voted no because they were contributing too much money to the EU budget. This rather strange and simplistic explanation had to be seen in light of the then upcoming June 15 European Council summit where the Luxembourg EU Presidency made a forceful effort to reach unanimous agreement on the next EU budget. The effort proved to be futile as British Prime Minister Blair and French President Chirac did not manage to solve their differences and the Netherlands among others did not agree to the final compromise. Drafting a project on the politicisation of European integration with specific interest in the EU budget seemed like a very logical and interesting project at the time, but the danger existed that it was too topical, not interesting enough, or that the project's focus might be outdated by the time results could be presented.

Yet, the topic has continued to capture my interest throughout the PhD research and, as new budget negotiations are about to start in earnest, remains highly relevant in my opinion. Politicisation of European integration as research theme keeps popping up in different contexts in the European integration literature and in many conversations with colleagues. I continue to be fascinated by the European Union and the controversy that tends to surround it. In no small measure, this continued interest is sustained by the people around me that have supported my research in various ways.

Many thanks go to ARENA, Centre for European Studies at the University of Oslo and to my two supervisors: Hans-Jörg Trenz and Christopher Lord. Hiring me as a PhD Fellow contained a risk on the side of ARENA, as I was a complete unknown to everyone at the institute, Oslo and Norway. It is easy to think of various ways in which my project could have been derailed. Yet, ARENA has welcomed me with open arms to a very challenging and stimulating

research environment. I have greatly benefitted from ARENA's many discussions and seminars, the fact that the doors to my colleagues' offices are always open, the support in taking courses and attending conferences and the friendly work environment.

In particular, I would like to thank my two supervisors. At the beginning, it was unclear how and to what extent my project fitted into ARENA's research agenda and who would be my supervisor. In a round of stimulating talks, Hans-Jörg has encouraged me to further develop and refine the project. He was always willing to read and comment upon drafts. Though it has remained my project and he has left important decisions to me, I now recognise much of his expertise and feedback in the final result. Chris joined in later as a co-supervisor. At vital points when I felt the results were good enough, he has pushed me just that extra mile which, in retrospect, appears key to some of the project's successes. I guess each relationship between supervisor and student is unique and people have different styles and needs. To me, this particular arrangement has proven to be ideal supervision. There are a number of other people I would like to mention that have played an important role through discussing ideas and engaging me at ARENA. In alphabetic order: Jonathan Aus, Morten Egeberg, Erik Oddvar Eriksen, John Erik Fossum, Daniel Gaus, Christer Gulbrandsen, Asimina Michailidou, Johan Olsen, Kolja Raube, Marianne Riddervold, Guri Rosén and Ulf Sverdrup. Finally, through ARENA, I have been able to meet several of my heroes in the field, which have been generous with their time and knowledge: Liesbet Hooghe, Hanspeter Kriesi, Peter Mair, Gary Marks, Tapio Raunio, Philippe Schmitter and Paul Taggart.

Several others have contributed to various phases of the project drafting, empirical research and analysis. I would like to thank Jos de Beus and Otto Holman for comments on the project proposal, Ulrike Liebert for introducing me to Atlas.ti facilitated content analysis and Knut-Andreas Christophersen for helping me get all the data in good order in SPSS. Morten Kelstrup has been generous in facilitating a short research stay at the Centre for European Politics, University of Copenhagen. Herbert Degens and Bente Pedersen have helped me through the physical archives of the Dutch Tweede Kamer and Danish Folketing respectively. Also, I would like to thank the

committee for reviewing the entire manuscript meticulously: Ben Crum, Oddbjørn Knutsen and Hanspeter Kriesi.

Finally, a special thanks goes to those closest to me who have made this endeavour so much more enjoyable. It might have been very cold, dark and lonely at times without the love and laughs, support and critical challenges of Eliane and all my parents: Han, Jan Willem, Jos, Mans, Michiel and Titia. My Norwegian experience would not have been the same without Even, Kolja, Lotte and Øivind or the continued long distance friendship with Anne, Christoph, Claartje, Merijn, Pauline, Peter and Rob.

Pieter de Wilde
Oslo, October 2010

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Introduction

This first chapter functions both as an introduction, summary and conclusion. That is, it will introduce the main topic, research questions and theoretical framework. It will also provide a summary of the methodology used and the five individual articles. Finally, it will present the main findings of the overall project and their relevance to studies of European integration, the European Union (EU) budget, and the role of national parliaments in the EU. According to the logic of an article-based Ph.D. project, the results are presented in five stand-alone articles. The present introduction functions as an overarching structure to these articles and is composed of seven parts. First, topic and research question are briefly introduced. Second, the theoretical background and relevance of the project will be outlined. Third, the analytical model through which politicisation is studied is presented to further clarify the research focus. Fourth, the operationalisation of the research questions through a comparative case study and the methodology and data will be discussed. Fifth, each of the five articles are summarised, including the main arguments and their relevance to the overall project. Sixth,

based on the discussion of the articles, the general research question will be revisited and conclusions from the project will be drawn. Finally, although this dissertation aims at basic research, some tentative policy recommendations will be discussed concerning possible reform of the EU budget and the role of national parliaments in the EU.

Topic

European integration and the EU polity have become increasingly controversial since the beginning of the 1990s (Eichenberg and Dalton 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Niedermayer 1995). That is, mass publics have come to pay more attention to political decision-making within EU framework and at the same time seem more critical of the results. What is more, the action repertoire of political elites in Europe appears restricted in light of this increased contentiousness, which may potentially alter the dynamics structuring the process of European integration and the functioning of the EU polity (Aspinwall 2002; Hooghe and Marks 2005b; Mattila and Raunio 2009; Pahre 1997; Schmitter 1969; 2004). This increasing contentiousness has been called the 'politicisation of European integration' (Hooghe and Marks 2005b; 2006; 2009; Ray 1998; Schmitter 1969).

Although the outcome with regards to public opinion and relationship between political elites and mass publics is described in general terms, there remains a challenge of theory development with regards to the mechanism of politicisation and its implications for European integration (Börzel and Risse 2009; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Kriesi 2009; Schmitter 2009). This challenge concerns in particular an investigation of the *process* of politicisation, as opposed to its *product*. This dissertation therefore addresses how politicisation affects European integration. The aim is thus to contribute to theory development through specification of the mechanism of politicisation as a dynamic process, rather than its causes or scope conditions. In other words, the research question is *how* politicisation affects European integration, rather than *when* or *why*. To follow a strategy of grounded theory development, an in-depth empirical case study is conducted (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The initial question to facilitate empirical research is how politicisation as concept may be defined and analysed as dynamic process (Article 1). This draws attention to the relationship between contentiousness on EU issues as expressed in the public sphere and patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU. Two channels of electoral representation connect citizens in relationships of delegation and accountability to the various national and supranational institutions of the multilevel EU polity (Mair and Thomassen 2010; Norris 1997). Through the national channel, citizens are linked to EU decision-making via national parliaments and national governments. Through the European channel, citizens are linked to EU decision-making via the European Parliament. Delegation and accountability is important to European integration, since it not only highlights the EU's guiding principle of representative democracy (Mair and Thomassen 2010), but also reflects on power relations between and within different national and supranational institutions of the multilevel EU polity (Egeberg 2006a; Fouilleux et al. 2005; Majone 2002). Alterations in delegation and accountability may thus reflect on the dynamics structuring European integration. Based on this conceptual exercise, the research question is clarified and operationalised as follows: how does contentiousness in debates on EU issues unfolding in the public sphere affect patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU?

Since there is so far little evidence of a genuine European public sphere (Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Wessler et al. 2008), a strategy of comparison of debates in national public spheres is chosen, with a consequent empirical focus on delegation and accountability through the national channel of representation. The case of EU budget negotiations is explored as a relatively under-researched package deal that captures multiple aspects of European politics, facilitates longitudinal comparative research and carries intrinsic value for the broader process of European integration (Laffan 1997; Lindner 2006; Lindner and Rittberger 2003). The focus of the four empirical articles is on the impact of media coverage on executive-legislative relations (Article 2), on how politicisation functions to alter national partisan discourse about European integration (Article 3), on how scrutiny mechanisms affect the quality of parliamentary plenary debates (Article 4) and on how media coverage affects citizens' identity

perceptions (Article 5). Together, these four empirical articles provide a rich perspective on the impact of the contentiousness of EU issues on delegation and accountability in the national channel of representation in the EU, including both internal dynamics as well as the broader relevance of the national channel within the EU polity. Based on these empirical findings, theoretical generalisation is conducted to theorise the broader implications of how politicisation affects European integration.

Relevance

Since the end of the Second World War, European nation-states have entered into a process of pooling sovereignty generally referred to as 'European integration' (Urwin 1997). Although a multitude of organisations exist institutionalising this pooling of sovereignty, the process of European integration has become increasingly synonymous with the creation and development of the EU. Originating from the European Coal and Steel Community of 1951, The Rome Treaty (1957), Single European Act (1986), Maastricht Treaty (1992), Amsterdam Treaty (1997), Nice Treaty (2000) and Lisbon Treaty (2007) codified the EU's development from an 'objet politique non identifié' to 'some kind of polity' or 'political system' (Hix 2005). Not only have the powers of supranational institutions – most notably the European Commission, European Parliament and European Court of Justice – grown steadily in this period, the number of Member States has increased from six to 27, and the number of policy fields that fall under some form of EU jurisdiction have increased in pace (Börzel 2005).

Initially, scientific inquiries into European integration focused on explaining the voluntary pooling of sovereignty by European nation-states (Rosamond 2000; Wiener and Diez 2004). In a debate essentially dominated by two schools of thought, neofunctionalists argued that the process of integration was carried by functional spill-over (Haas 2004; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; 1971; Schmitter 1969; 1970; 2004). That is to say, once nation states agreed to pool sovereignty in one policy field, incentives were created to also collaborate in other policy fields as decisions made in certain areas would affect decisions made in others. Furthermore, supranational institutions acted as

policy-entrepreneurs to facilitate this spill-over and to push the process of integration forwards. Essentially, European nation-states – now Member States of an emerging polity – lost control over the process of European integration. The second school of thought known as intergovernmentalism argues, in contrast, that nation-states have remained in control of the process of integration (Gourevitch 1978; Milward 2000; Moravcsik 1993; Moravcsik 1998). Each consecutive step in integration can be explained as a rational step furthering the interests of the major Member States, according to intergovernmentalist theorists. Although fundamentally different, both theories of European integration share a focus on political elites, their actions and their interests. Also, they have been more focused with explaining change in the process of integration historically, than with analysing the functioning of the EU as an existing polity comparable to other polities, both in empirical and in normative terms.

More recently, scholars of European integration have taken up these two omissions of neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. Rather than explaining the process of integration, focus has shifted towards analysing the functioning of the EU using available tools for analysing political systems more generally (Hix 1994; 2005; Jachtenfuchs 2001). Thus, EU studies have turned from explaining the process of European integration towards empirically explaining and normatively assessing EU governance (Bellamy and Warleigh 1998; Chryssochoou 1994; Eriksen 2009; Eriksen and Fossum 2002; Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Hix 2005; Hix and Bartolini 2006; Jachtenfuchs 2001; Lord 1998; Lord and Beetham 2001; Mair 2007; Marks et al. 1996; Olsen 2007; Wincott 1998). Secondly, EU scholars have adopted a more 'societal view' towards studying how the EU works. Attention has shifted from the study of behaviour and interests of Member State governments and supranational policy entrepreneurs to include the involvement of societal actors, like mass publics (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Fligstein 2008; Hooghe and Marks 2005b; 2006; Inglehart et al. 1987; Niedermayer and Sinnott 1995; Reif and Inglehart 1991; Van der Eijk and Franklin 2004), political parties (Gaffney 1996; Hix 1999a; Hix and Lord 1997; Hooghe et al. 2004; Kriesi et al. 2006; Ladrech 1997; Marks et al. 2002; Ray 1998; 1999), mass media (Bond 2003; De Vreese 2001; Koopmans 2007;

Koopmans and Erbe 2004; Kriesi et al. 2007; Morgan 2003; Peter et al. 2003; Semetko et al. 2001; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000; Trenz 2004), and social movements and interest groups (Beyers and Kerremans 2004; Imig 2004; Imig and Tarrow 2001a; Marks and McAdam 1999; Wessels 2004). This dual development in EU studies has greatly increased our knowledge of the complex functioning of the EU polity. Yet, the challenge remains to reconnect this knowledge to theories of European integration. It is here that the present dissertation aims to make a contribution. To do this, a longitudinal perspective is required in which the focus is on the process of how society, broadly defined, is involved in the functioning of the EU over time and how this relates back to the process of integration.

In a seminal article, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that mass publics are increasingly interested in the process of European integration and the nature of the EU polity. The actions of political elites and the legitimacy of the EU are widely questioned. As a result, the political climate of the EU can now more aptly be described as a 'constraining dissensus' – where disagreement among mass publics limits the options of political elites – than as the 'permissive consensus' so characteristic for the period of integration between 1951 and the early 1990s (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). This permissive consensus was assumed implicitly or explicitly in both neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist theories (cf. Börzel and Risse 2009). The key mechanism, according to Hooghe and Marks (2009), that changed the permissive consensus into a constraining dissensus is 'politicisation'.

Analytical Framework

In order to better understand the mechanism of politicisation and its relevance for European integration, the concept needs to be fleshed out both conceptually and analytically. First, the mechanism of politicisation is investigated *conceptually*, resulting in a definition providing measurable indicators to facilitate empirical inquiry. It will be argued that politicisation can be defined as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publically advanced towards the process of policy-formulation within the EU. Secondly, an *analytical framework* for

studying politicisation is developed. This directs attention to debates in the public sphere affecting patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU.

Defining Politicisation

The words 'politicisation' and 'politicised' are used in a wide variety of ways in European integration literature. Although often used, and regularly given prominent importance in the presented analysis, the concept itself is rarely defined. This, however, does not mean there are no existing definitions or indications of its meaning. Originally introduced in European integration literature by Schmitter, politicisation was hypothesised as follows:

> Politicization thus refers initially to a process whereby the *controversiality* of joint decision-making goes up. This in turn is likely to lead to a *widening of the audience or clientele* interested and active in [European] integration. Somewhere along the line a *manifest redefinition of mutual objectives* will likely occur.
>
> (Schmitter 1969: 166)

As such, this hypothesis is considerably different from the use of the concept outside EU studies. Easton (1957: 397f) for instance, argues politicisation equals the political socialisation of citizens. Thus, citizens who exercise their right to vote or nominate themselves for elected office are more 'politicised' than citizens disconnected from politics. Instead, Schmitter defines politicisation as related to processes of decision-making, rather than to products in the form of citizens' engagement. The focus on process rather than product is both important with respect to the historical process of European integration and with respect to creating conceptual clarity. Clarity is important, since: 'Most words ending in 'tion' are ambiguous between process and product, between the way one gets there, and the result.' (Hacking 1999: 36). Following Schmitter's initial hypothesis, scholars of European integration have predominantly understood politicisation as a process that relates to decision-making, though in different ways. Politicisation has been used by authors located in three different subfields of political science in the study of European integration. Each subfield has created its own

understanding fostering the impression that there is no overarching commonality to build upon analytically. However, as I will demonstrate below and do so more elaborately in Article 1, we are in fact faced with an encompassing process.

Within political theory, politicisation is understood as contentiousness of specific political issues and the more general polity by proxy. That is, political theorists seek an answer to the question: to what extent is and/or should the EU polity be subject to political conflict. Politicisation is seen both as a threat to the stability and as a remedy to the alleged democratic deficit of the EU (Hix and Bartolini 2006). On the one hand, those who perceive the EU as a consociational polity with a highly heterogeneous population divided by nationality, see politicisation as a threat (Chryssochoou 1994; 1998; Gabel 1998). In the infamous Weimar Republic scenario, politicisation could become so volatile as to present a centrifugal force (Andeweg 2000: 511) stressing differences between population groups unrestricted by cross-cutting cleavages, ultimately risking the stability of the polity. On the other hand, those who argue in favour of competitive elitism as a model for EU democracy, argue that politicians must 'politicise' issues in order to present citizens with meaningful choices during elections (Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999b). Both strands of theory understand politicisation in relation to political issues. Thus, issues – and entire polities by proxy – become more 'politicised' when they become subject to more open controversy and contestation by opposing political groups. The relevant question for political theorists is how much contestation is desirable for what kind of polity.

Scholars in the subfield of comparative politics have taken up the task of mapping and explaining different constellations of political actors – particularly political parties – and groupings of issues to identify dimensions of conflict and opposing factions within the EU at both the supranational level (Hix 1999a; Hix et al. 2003; Hix and Lord 1997; Hix et al. 2006) and the national level (Hooghe et al. 2004; Marks et al. 2006; Marks and Wilson 2000; Marks et al. 2002). These scholars, however, rarely use the term 'politicisation' and more often speak of political conflict (e.g. Marks and Steenbergen 2004). Partially, this reflects the focus on aggregate contestation – i.e. the *product* of

politicisation – rather than on the development and dissipation of 'episodes of contestation' (Tilly and Tarrow 2007) – i.e. the *process* of politicisation – where issues become the focal point of contestation only to disappear again from the political agenda in a historically bounded period. Comparative Politics thus points our attention to politicisation as successful political agenda-setting (Kingdon 1984) by actors like political parties, social movements, or mass media. Through the process of politicisation, certain cleavage lines are emphasised and institutionalised, which demarcates opposing political factions, at the cost of other potential cleavage lines. Thus, politicisation is not something that 'just happens', it is rather a particular result of political actors actively striving to advance – or 'politicise' – certain issues, while trying to 'depoliticise' other issues (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010).

Scholars in the subfield of public administration, finally, understand politicisation as a characteristic of political institutions – particularly bureaucracies – and decision-making processes. For instance, 'politicisation of the European Commission' is understood to mean a stronger presence of party politicians within this bureaucracy or more influence of the European Parliament over the Commission. This results in more 'political' and less 'technocratic' dynamics within the bureaucracy (Beyers and Kerremans 2004; Egeberg 2006b). Furthermore, decision-making processes are deemed more 'politicised' as elected politicians gain influence at the expense of civil servants and experts (Christiansen 1997; Fouilleux et al. 2005).

It seems logical to assume that when political issues become more contested publicly, elected politicians will try to increase their grip over bureaucrats involved in policy-formulation on these issues. This is because elected politicians in representative democracies are constitutionally accountable to citizens for the actions of bureaucrats under their supervision. In this way, politicisation as conceptualised and studied within political theory, comparative politics and public administration become different parts of the same process. In a figure of speech, we are thus faced with 'blind men' in each of these three subfields of political science studying the 'elephant' of politicisation of European integration.

The story of the blind men and the elephant is universally known. Several blind men approached an elephant and each touched the animal in an effort to discover what the beast looked like. Each blind man, however, touched a different part of the large animal, and each concluded that the elephant had the appearance of the part he had touched. Hence, the blind man who felt the animal's trunk concluded that an elephant must be tall and slender, while his fellow who touched the beast's ear concluded that an elephant must be oblong and flat. The total result was that no man arrived at a very accurate description of the elephant. Yet, each man had gained enough evidence from his own experience to disbelieve his fellows and to maintain a lively debate about the nature of the beast.

(Puchala 1972: 267)

Based on a review of the existing literature, politicisation of European integration is composed of three empirically measurable phenomena: increasing polarisation of opinion, intensity of debate and public resonance (cf. Article 1). This process in which political issues come to the fore performs several *functions* as already hypothesised by Schmitter. First, it may shape more or less stable issue coalitions and dimensions of conflict, as studied by scholars in Comparative Politics. Particularly, politicisation seems to increase the relevance of both a pro-anti integration and a left-right dimension of politics. Whether these are orthogonal or related and, if so, in which way, remains a question of debate in the literature (Börzel and Risse 2009; Hix and Lord 1997; Hooghe et al. 2004; Kriesi 2009; Kriesi et al. 2006; Marks et al. 2006; Marks and Wilson 2000; Marks et al. 2002). Second, politicisation may alter the course of integration through shaping public opinion and changing dynamics of key institutions – e.g. the European Commission – and decision-making processes within the EU. As political elites – especially elected officials – are increasingly forced to take into account public opinion while they decide on policies in EU framework because of politicisation, they in turn increase their control over bureaucrats and experts (Aspinwall 2002; Christiansen 1997; Egeberg 2006b; Fouilleux et al. 2005; Majone 2002). If politicisation strengthens the national channel of representation over the European one, the EU may develop more towards an international organisation or 'Europe of the nation states' by

empowering national politicians. Otherwise, empowerment of politicians through the European channel of representation could result in a more federal 'United States of Europe'. Finally, politicisation raises the question of the legitimacy of the EU and the stability of the polity. Not only is the question raised whether the EU polity can withstand political conflict brought about by politicisation, the process of politicisation also focuses attention on the perceived gap between political elites and citizens and the extent to which elites act in accordance with the will of the majority (Fossum and Trenz 2006; Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Lord 1998; Lord 2002; Mair 2005; 2007; Thomassen and Schmitt 1999b; White 2010a).

Analysing Politicisation

Having made a brief overview of the use of the concept 'politicisation' in the literature on European integration, based on which a definition has been formulated and three distinct functions identified, the next step is to develop an analytical framework to facilitate the empirical study of politicisation. What is needed here is an understanding of the EU that directs the focus of empirical enquiries. I will argue in this section, first, that the definition of politicisation and its ascribed function of shaping dimensions of conflict points to the study of political debates in the public sphere. We need to know who debates issues related to European integration, where, to what extent, and in what way. An analytical framework that allows for the answering of these questions will facilitate the 'measuring' of politicisation in terms of its extent (how much politicisation?), its locus (where does politicisation take place?), and its form (what is debated? In what terms? And who are the main protagonists?). Secondly, the second and third function of politicisation – increasing the extent to which politicians take into account public opinion and exercise control over bureaucrats and experts, thereby affecting the legitimacy, effectiveness and stability of the EU polity – directs attention to dynamics of delegation and accountability in the EU. For this, we need to study the 'web of delegation and accountability' (Bergman 2000; Strøm et al. 2003) that makes up citizen – elite relationships in the EU which includes how tasks are delegated from citizens to politicians to bureaucrats, experts

and lawyers as well as how representatives are held to account for policy-making in turn.

Locating Politicisation: The Public Sphere

Building on the notion that political contestation about European integration needs to be public in order to speak of politicisation, scientific attention is directed to forums where public contestation takes place. European integration could be highly controversial – as in fact it has always been (Moravcsik 1998) – but as long as issues related to European integration are not contested in public, we would not speak of politicisation. Our attention is therefore directed to the study of politicisation in the public sphere (Eder 2007; Eder and Trenz 2003; Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Koopmans 2007; Koopmans and Erbe 2004; Trenz and Eder 2004; Wessler et al. 2008), here understood in empirical rather than normative terms. That is, we need to study the constellation of arenas in Europe where political debates take place which are widely accessible to the general public. In today's 'mediatised' democracies, the primary forum to measure politicisation is therefore first and foremost mass media (Altheide 2004; Bond 2003; De Vreese 2001; 2007b; Esser and Pfetsch 2004; Gamson 2004; Hallin and Mancini 2004). Other forums which are publically accessible include debates in both the national parliaments (Auel and Benz 2005; Kiiver 2006; Maurer and Wessels 2001; Norton 1996b; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007c; Smith 1996; Tans et al. 2007) and European Parliament (Eriksen and Fossum 2002; Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2007; Lord and Beetham 2001; Schmitter 2000) as well as 'the streets' where protests might take place organised by interest groups such as farmers or different kinds of social movements (Imig and Tarrow 2001a; Marks and McAdam 1999).

Delegation and Accountability

The EU, just like its component Member States, is built on the principles of representative democracy (Crum and Fossum 2009; Lord 2007; Mair and Thomassen 2010; Manin 1997; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999b; Strøm et al. 2003). Ultimately, although sometimes hardly recognisable or enforceable in practice, all EU institutions and its officials are answerable to the citizens of the EU through an

intricate 'web' of relationships composed of delegation and accountability. Generally, two channels of electoral representation in this web of relationships are recognised: a national channel and a European channel (Mair and Thomassen 2010; Norris 1997). In the national channel, citizens delegate the task of governing to politicians in national parliaments holding them accountable through periodic elections. National parliaments in their turn delegate governing to national governments. National governments then run national bureaucracies individually, and – in EU framework – also collectively through the Council of Ministers and its Working Groups. Furthermore, national governments delegate the task of drafting legislative proposals to the European Commission, the task of judicial control to the European Court of Justice, the task of financial control to the European Court of Auditors and the task of monetary policy to the European Central Bank. In the European channel, citizens directly elect the European Parliament acting as a co-legislator with the Council of Ministers in delegating executive functions to the European Commission and holding it accountable. Finally, it can be argued that both national and European bureaucracies delegate to agencies (Egeberg 2006c) thus extending delegation and accountability even further. This formal web of delegation and accountability as constitutionalised in the EU Treaties is modelled in Figure 1.
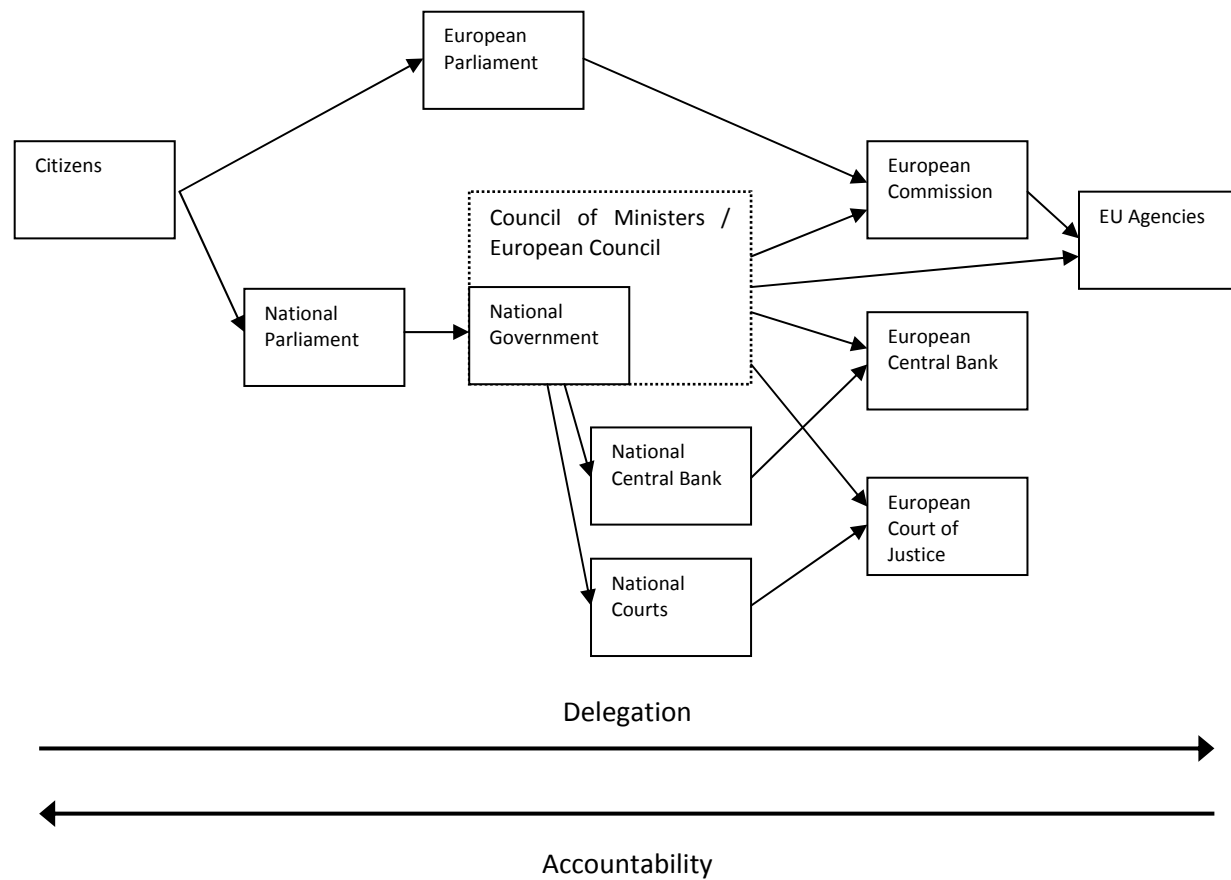
Figure 1: Model of delegation and accountability in the EU

Understanding the relationships between different EU institutions and citizens as a web of delegation and accountability is generally connected to a perspective on representative democracy in terms of a principal-agent model (Bergman 2000; Dehousse 2008; Kassim and Menon 2003; Pollack 1997). The principal-agent model assumes that principals delegate tasks to agents to increase efficiency in governance. In order to make sure the agent acts in the best interest of the principal, certain 'control mechanisms' are created – e.g. periodic elections – making sure the agent is held accountable to its principal(s) and pursuing the principal's interests rather than its own (Lupia 2003; McCubbins et al. 1987; Saalfeld 2000; Thatcher and Stone Sweet 2002). The principal-agent model has merits as it directs our attention to relationships of delegation and accountability that connect citizens to various national and supranational EU institutions. These relationships and their operating mechanisms are formally anchored in national constitutions and the EU treaties. Yet, this understanding of representative democracy in the EU is contested.

The principal-agent model has received a fair share of criticism, among others from institutionalists and democratic theorists. A first problem with the principal-agent model is that it does not reflect history adequately. Thus, it is historically inaccurate that citizens created parliaments, and parliaments created governments etc., when polities and political issues became too complex to handle themselves directly (Pollak et al. 2009). Secondly, the actual act of delegation does not always take place. Agents, once created, start to develop dynamics on their own. They will search for tasks to perform in order to safeguard their own existence instead of passively waiting for principals to delegate. Finally, the principal-agent model is considered too rational in its design. It presumes that principals, in the knowledge of their own interests, create and disband agents at will designing an optimal institutional setting for governance. In contrast, new institutions are often created without a clear mandate after which they take it upon themselves to shape out a position in their institutional surroundings (Cohen et al. 1972; March and Olsen 1984; Olsen 2004). It may therefore be more accurate to perceive of the EU as an ecosystem of 'living institutions', each in symbiosis and competition with the others evolving in accordance with both internal

and external pressures without any clear rational design or rationale behind it. Reality, Olsen (2007) argues, lies somewhere between the image of purposeful rational actors designing the ideal political system through constitutional moments, and the image of historical drift through which institutions evolve without anyone effectively steering their interrelationships.

The Importance of Discourse

Although the historical and rational assumptions on which the principal-agent model is based are found wanting, understanding the EU as a web of delegation and accountability is arguably still valuable as the main *mental map* structuring the understanding both citizens and the various institutional actors in the multilevel EU polity have of how political authority is organised. That is, the principal-agent model is not valid because it is an accurate description of political authority directly, but rather because it reflects the *idea* behind representative democracy. Citizens think of elected politicians as their agents even if they have not actually created them as such. Furthermore, institutional actors perceive of themselves as agents with a duty to account to their principals, be they citizens directly, or other institutional actors. To the extent that they follow a 'logic of appropriateness' (March and Olsen 1984), citizens and officials take into account expectations about whose interests they are supposed to pursue and whom they should hold to account in their own or delegated interests.

To understand the principal-agent model of the EU as modelled in Figure 1 as a mental map, rather than an actual reflection of reality, points to the importance of discourse as a guiding force that constantly recreates and alters relationships of delegation and accountability within the EU. The force of discourse is best exemplified by one of the key developments reported to fundamentally change the traditional model of parliamentary democracy in Western European countries, referred to as 'presidentialisation' of politics (Burns 1999; Poguntke and Webb 2005). As Burns (1999) argues, the increasing dominance of mass media in political communication has strengthened a direct relationship between government – especially Prime Ministers or

Heads of State – and citizens, thus bypassing the intermediary principal/agent of the national parliament. Rather than claiming to represent the majority of parliament, national government officials are increasingly claiming to represent citizens directly and citizens show more trust in national governments as their representatives than in national parliaments. These claims collectively constitute discourse. Thus, discourse features contests between national parliaments and national governments where both claim to represent 'the will of the people'. Yet, while both claiming to represent the will of the people, parliament and government can disagree on desirable substance and strategy of policy. This phenomenon can not be explained with a traditional static principal-agent model of representative democracy, where delegation and accountability are considered stable, structured by formal constitutions. Relationships of delegation and accountability are not fixed, but rather in flux and open to the interpretation and manipulation of both citizens and their representatives. Saward (2006: 298) therefore argues that: 'We need to move away from the idea that representation is first and foremost a given, factual product of elections, rather than a precarious and curious sort of claim about a dynamic relationship.' The concept of politicisation adds a notion of competition to this dynamic understanding of representation. Political actors compete with each other through representative claims-making concerning who represents which issues, constituencies or values. Politicisation can be understood as alteration in the intensity, form and/or location of this competitive representative claims-making. Competitive representative claims-making has the power to alter the mental map of delegation and accountability, although limited by previously existing discourse, which includes the public acceptance of formal constitutions and EU Treaties. It is thus in the discourse of the public sphere, that the dominant patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU can be analysed (Pollak et al. 2009; Saward 2006; Trenz 2009; Trenz and De Wilde 2009; Trenz and Eder 2004). To sum up, the analytical study of how politicisation affects European integration equals the study of how competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere affects, alters and recreates the EU's web of delegation and accountability.

Two questions remain. First, there is the question of what latitude political actors enjoy to reconstruct patterns of delegation and accountability. Second, the question is which factors determine the resonance or receptiveness of competing representative claims. Answering these questions is part of developing a coherent theory of politicisation, and thus goes beyond the more modest task of establishing an analytical framework. As stated earlier, the focus in this dissertation project is on *how* politicisation affects European integration, rather than on *when* or *why* it does so. Yet, some relevant factors that structure how contentiousness of EU issues affects delegation and accountability in the national channel of representation in the EU are discussed in the four empirical articles. To give only a short overview, important structuring factors include media logic (Articles 2 and 4), institutional arrangements organising the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation (Article 4), historical national narratives about European integration (Article 3), and citizens' identity perceptions (Article 5). Articles 2, 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate empirically how politicisation is structured by these factors but can also alter the characteristics and importance thereof.

Research Design and Case Selection

Major academic efforts to date measuring the politicisation of European integration have either taken a broad quantitative approach under-specifying causal mechanisms or focused on very particular events whose representativeness for the entire EU polity is questionable. In the quantitative tradition, grand scale efforts to measure political party positions on European integration have been undertaken at both European (Hix 1999a; Hix et al. 2003; Hix et al. 2005; 2006) and domestic level (Klingemann et al. 2006; Ray 1998; 1999; Taggart 1998). Thanks to the structured measurements conducted by Eurobarometer surveys, we also have extensive analyses of public opinion structure and development over time (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2005a; Niedermayer and Sinnott 1995; Reif and Inglehart 1991). Finally, we have knowledge of media attention for EU issues (Bond 2003; De Vreese 2001; 2007b; Koopmans 2007; Kriesi et al. 2007; Morgan 2003; Peter et al. 2003; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000; Trenz 2004). These

studies provide an overview of changing attitudes and practices, but they are less able to link measurement of politicisation to the three functions of this mechanism set out above: shaping dimensions of conflict, altering the course of integration and raising the question of legitimacy. Secondly, they do not account for specific 'episodes of contention' (Tilly and Tarrow 2007) located in time and space in which a process of politicisation unfolds. For this, we need more qualitative process-tracing exercises (Checkel 2006).

Such qualitative process-tracing exercises also exist on for instance the EU sanctions on Austria following the rise of Haider's FPÖ party to the Austrian government (Van de Steeg 2006), the Services Directive (Miklin 2009), immigration policy (Buonfino 2004), and the Laeken process and subsequent ratification failure of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (Fossum and Trenz 2006; Vetters et al. 2009). The problem, however, with these qualitative studies is that they generally focus on unique, highly contentious, episodes, which do not give us generalisable data about politicisation of European integration.

What is needed therefore is an empirical study that is: 1) comparative in focus taking into account multiple public spheres, 2) quantitative enough to provide us with precise measurements of politicisation, 3) longitudinal to capture developments both over a longer period of time and within specific policy-formulation processes, 4) inclusive enough to capture the widest possible range of forms of politicisation, and 5) qualitative enough to trace causal mechanisms and link variation in degrees and forms of politicisation to the extent it performs theorised functions. The present study aims to approach these requirements by studying politicisation as taking place during policy-formulation processes on the three most recent multiannual EU budgets (1992, 1997-9 and 2004-5) as debated in the national newspapers and parliaments of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland. This allows for the study of a highly complex combination of political issues, a comparison across time, countries and forums, and internal process tracing in each individual policy-formulation process.

The EU Budget

Although the budget is not entirely representative for all policy activity in the EU as some policies are purely regulatory, it presents attractive empirical material for five reasons. First, it covers a substantial range of different policy fields including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Structural Funds and – increasingly – Research and Development, Energy and Transport, Foreign Policy, and Justice and Home Affairs. Added to questions concerning these expenditure policies are revenue issues, including the total size of the budget, the British rebate and the question of 'own resources' including the possibility of an EU tax competency. Observers may intuitively associate EU budget negotiations with *juste retour* demands, swinging hand bags, and Member State leaders' statements that 'I want my money back'. Yet, the budget in fact incorporates issues with potential conflicts of rich vs. poor Member States, farmers vs. consumers, centre vs. periphery, left vs. right, and pro-Europeans vs. Eurosceptics. From a theoretical point of view, a study of the budget maximises possible forms of politicisation – in terms of polarisation of opinion – to be found. The observation that national interests play a dominant role in EU budget politics (Dür and Mateo 2008; Laffan 2000; Rant and Mrak 2010) should be seen as a possible outcome to be explained and questioned, rather than as a given fact beforehand.

Secondly, the budget involves the most important institutions in policy-formulation modelled in Figure 1. Since 1988, the EU's finances are structured by multiannual budgets known as 'financial perspectives'. Four such budgets have structured EU finances up to date: 'Delors I' (1988-1992), 'Delors II' (1993-1999), 'Agenda 2000' (2000-2006) and 'Financial Perspectives 2007-2013' (2007-2013). Financial Perspectives are negotiated in a combination of unanimity voting and ordinary legislative procedures. The Commission presents a proposal which is negotiated in different Councils of Ministers leading to a package deal with unanimity voting in the European Council (Galloway 1999; Laffan 2000). This decision is then renegotiated between Council, Parliament and Commission leading to an Inter Institutional Agreement structuring the budget for seven years (Laffan 1997; Lindner 2006). Since the Council decisions are

based on unanimity, national parliaments have a possibility to hold their respective governments accountable.

Thirdly, the budget provides a very attractive comparative framework due to its repeated negotiation every seven years. The issues at hand remain largely similar as only incremental changes are made in each consecutive budget (Daugbjerg 2009; Wildavsky and Caiden 2001). As negotiations take place every seven years over a period of up to twenty-four months, there is ample opportunity for comparison over time, both between individual budgets and within single negotiations.

Fourthly, budgets are traditionally an important element of polities as they have been instrumental both in fleshing out the competencies of modern welfare states and in democratising polities (Kahn 1997) epitomised by the claim of 'no taxation without representation' (Lindner 2006: 1). After Treaty changes and Enlargement, the budget is therefore arguably the third most important package deal structuring both the course of further European integration and the legitimacy of the Union.

Finally, the budget is a relatively under-researched component of the EU (Lindner and Rittberger 2003). Existing research has predominantly focused on economic rationale underlying the budget and possibilities for reform (Asdrubali and Kim 2008; Begg 2005; 2007; Dullien and Schwarzer 2009; Heinemann et al. 2010; Mayhew 2004; Schild 2008). Few studies on the political dynamics of the EU budget exist to date, and those that do focus predominantly on the high profile intergovernmental phase of European Council negotiation (Dür and Mateo 2008; Galloway 1999; Laffan 2000; Lindner 2006; Rant and Mrak 2010).

For reasons of data availability, the three most recent budgets are studied here, from the beginning of the month in which the Commission presented its proposal to the end of the month in which the European Council reached a decision. This reflects the following policy-formulation periods: February 1992 – December 1992 (Delors II), July 1997 – March 1999 (Agenda 2000) and February 2004 – December 2005 (Financial Perspectives 2007-2013).

Media and National Parliaments

Having located politicisation in the public sphere, there remain numerous forums available to study. In line with Fraser's (1992: 134) argument, we may distinguish between weak publics and strong publics in the EU (Eriksen and Fossum 2002). The first would be the public sphere accessible to all without direct influence on decision-making. In today's mediatised democracies, this is the public sphere structured by mass media. Strong publics on the other hand are also accessible to the wider audience, but combine discussion and will-formation with active involvement in decision-making. The most important strong publics in the EU are the national and European parliaments. On the one hand, the general public sphere reflected in mass media is interesting to study because it stands closest to EU citizens and because it is the most important communicative link between citizens and their various representatives. On the other hand, including strong publics in the study is interesting as it directly links politicisation as increased intensity of debates, polarisation of opinion and public resonance to the function of altering the relations between different institutions in the EU's web of delegation and accountability. The empirical focus therefore includes both mass media debates and parliamentary activity.

Although we may identify some characteristics that point toward the integration of public spheres in the EU, the general consensus among academics is that it we cannot speak of a genuine European public sphere yet (Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Koopmans and Erbe 2004; Trenz 2004; Trenz and Eder 2004; Wessler et al. 2008). It is therefore more accurate to speak of the Europeanisation of national public spheres (Olsen 2002; Schlesinger 2007; Schlesinger and Kevin 2000; Trenz 2008) than the creation or existence of a single European public sphere. That is, mass media remain organised at the national level, rather than the European, communicating in the national language on issues with a national dimension (Morgan 2003; Rössler 2004). To the extent that EU issues increasingly have ramifications for the individual member states, they increasingly find their way into media coverage (Basnée 2003; De Vreese 2001; 2007b; Rössler 2004; Semetko et al. 2001; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). The lack of significant EU-wide mass media means the study of general public spheres must be

a comparative one of national public spheres within the EU. This thus provides a practical argument for a focus on the national channel of representation in which contentiousness of EU issues in the weak public sphere of mass media is linked to contentiousness in the strong publics of national parliaments, since these are more directly interconnected than national media and the European Parliament.

The explicit longitudinal dimension in comparison necessary to capture politicisation, suggests the study of newspapers, rather than television, radio or the internet for the simple reason that historical archives of newspapers are better organised and more easily accessible. Although television is arguably more important for citizens' exposure to political news than the printed press (De Vreese 2001; Pierron 2003), there is a clearer substantial division between quality and sensational news outlets, than between television and newspapers (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). Thus, by including both quality and sensational newspapers in the analysis, we may still gain a representative measurement of national media.

In the study of national parliaments, it makes sense to study plenary debates, rather than committee meetings. Studies of national parliaments in the EU have focused primarily on specialised committees involved in EU policy-formulation and implementation known as European Affairs Committees (EACs) (Auel and Benz 2005; Barrett 2008; Maurer and Wessels 2001; Norton 1996b; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007c; Smith 1996; Tans et al. 2007). Attention to plenaries has been minimal as these were not judged to have significant impact on the control of national executives by parliaments (Auel 2007; Bergman et al. 2003: 175; Raunio 2009). However, with a primary interest in politicisation and its functions in a historical perspective, the study of plenary debates is more logical. First, plenary debates are publically accessible whereas EACs rarely contribute to public resonance, a key component of politicisation. Second, mass media are reported to have more influence on plenaries than on committee meetings, as plenaries are both more accessible to the wider public and more prone to articulating conflict than committee meetings (Marschall 2009). For the study of the interaction between weak and strong publics, plenary debates are thus better suited. Finally, historical archives for plenary debates are of higher quality than

those for committee meetings. If records are kept of committee meetings and accessible to the public (rarely the case), they are of a minimal nature mentioning topics discussed and decisions taken. Since they do not record accurately who says what, to whom and why, these records are unsuitable for measuring politicisation. Plenary debates, in contrast, are transcribed literally and publically accessible either through the physical archives of parliaments or, increasingly, through digitalised archives on the internet.

The Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland

To facilitate longitudinal research from the early 1990s onwards, at the time when the 'permissive consensus' began to give way to a new 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009), country cases are picked from the EU-12[1]. Considerations that structure the case selection further are: size of the Member States, general characteristics of the political system, net contribution to the EU budget and institutional arrangements structuring parliamentary involvement in EU affairs. The research is designed in such a way to allow minimum variation in the first two selection criteria and maximum variation in the latter two criteria which leads to a case selection of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland to facilitate multiple lines of comparison (Lijphart 1971; Ragin 1987).

In the national discussions on European integration (Diez Medrano 2003; Diez 1999) as well as in European integration research, size of the member states is deemed important as an indicator of their respective influence in shaping integration. The 'big three' – Germany, France and the United Kingdom – are generally considered to be most influential in the project of European integration in general (Moravcsik 1998) and the structure of the EU budget in particular (Laffan 1997; Lindner 2006). The study of these three countries is further facilitated by language competencies of most EU studies researchers. Unfortunately, this has led to a relative neglect of small member states, making it interesting to study politicisation there. More compelling reasons for picking small member states arise from the other selection criteria, where the big member states do not meet

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[1] The EU-12 includes: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

the requirements of similarity in some criteria combined with difference in others.

In terms of centre-periphery balance, electoral system, parliamentary powers and party system, the big Member States show a variety of differences. Unlike Germany (federal), France (semi-presidential) and the UK (two party system), most EU-12 countries are unitary states, feature more or less proportional electoral systems, have relatively strong parliaments vis-à-vis executives and include multiple effective political parties based on cleavage lines such as left-right, centre-periphery, confessional-secular and sectoral cleavages (Bartolini 2005; Lijphart 1999; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Mair 1987; Poguntke et al. 2007; Strøm et al. 2003). Although Ireland has a different cleavage system, strongly influenced by the struggle for independence from the UK, the political parties in the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland are relatively easy to recognise and locate in the framework of European party families. All three countries are unitary parliamentary democracies, feature (some modified form of) proportional representation, have multiple political parties and carry traditions of coalition governments.

Large member states also do not meet the requirements of variation in terms of financial transfers to the EU budget as none of them is a large net-recipient of EU funds. Of the EU-12, three groups of countries in terms of financial transfers to the EU budget can be discerned: net-contributors (Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK), countries that pay more or less as much as they receive (Belgium, Denmark, France and Italy), and net-recipient countries (Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain) (Heinemann et al. 2010; Laffan 1997). The choice for the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland thus means one country from each of these three groups.

Finally, the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland vary in terms of parliamentary system, especially in relation to EU policy-formulation. Parliaments have been categorised into 'working' and 'talking' parliaments. That is, some parliaments emphasise committee work behind closed doors where Members of Parliament (MPs) are actively involved in policy-making, whereas other parliaments feature a much stronger role for the plenary and for discussing government policies

in public. The Danish *Folketinget* can be characterised as a working parliament (Damgaard 2003), the Irish *Dáil Éireann* as a talking parliament (Mitchell 2003) and the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* as a combination of the two. This is also reflected in their choice for EU scrutiny mechanisms. Denmark has a very strong EAC with mandating powers to structure government negotiations in Brussels (Arter 1996; Laursen 2001; Møller Sousa 2008). The Netherlands has a weaker EAC combined with institutionalised plenary debates following European Council meetings (Hoetjes 2001; Holzhacker 2008; Van Schendelen 1996). Ireland has only had an EAC since 2003, when its scrutiny mechanisms were significantly strengthened to include a stronger committee orientation (Barrett 2008; Conlan 2007; O'Halpin 1996). Since the Dutch and Irish senates – *Eerste Kamer* and *Seanad Éireann* – do not play a very significant role when it comes to EU policy-formulation, a single strong public in each country is relevant for this research in the form of the lower chambers of parliament.

Controlling for contextual factors like country size and political system while varying a limited number of independent variables – EU budget position and parliamentary organisation – thus resembles a 'most different systems' design (De Meur and Berg-Schlosser 1994; Lijphart 1971; Ragin 1987) allowing for the possible analysis of key mechanisms through a carefully constructed comparative framework. However, reality features the well-known problem of 'too few cases, too many variables'. That is, lacking ideal laboratory environments, we have to make do with real existing cases which are imperfect in terms of comparison. Furthermore, practical limitations such as language skills on the side of the researcher and other resources limit the available options. Generalisation from these three cases therefore needs to be careful. Further investigation of conclusions is called for, particularly involving other policy issues, other countries, and broader time frames.

Research Design: A 3x3x2 Comparative Case Study

The comparative research design resulting from the case selection may thus be characterised as an embedded 3x3x2 comparative case study (Yin 2003: 39ff). That is, three budget negotiations (Delors II,

Agenda 2000 and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013), times three countries (the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland), times two forums (media and parliament) result in eighteen separate cases in which to study politicisation. These eighteen cases are, however, not independent from each other as reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: Research design as a 3x3x2 embedded comparative case-study

	Delors II	Agenda 2000	Financial Perspectives 2007-2013
The Netherlands	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament
Denmark	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament
Ireland	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament	Media / Parliament

The cases are 'embedded' first within the structure of the different budgets. Thus, contentiousness of Delors II in the Netherlands is not considered independent from the contentiousness of Delors II in Denmark or Ireland, since all three take place in the context of the same Commission proposal and responses by other Member States and the European Parliament. Secondly, contentiousness of each consecutive budget can not be seen as independent from contentiousness of the previous budget. Not only will the budget proposal largely reflect the previous budget and known preferences concerning it, but existing discourse from previous debates will also structure political actors' participation in debating the new budget proposal. 'Galton's problem' (Burnham et al. 2004: Ch. 3) of interdependent cases is therefore explicitly recognised in the research design and used as an advantage to facilitate multiple comparisons (over time, across countries and across forums). In each line of comparison, the other two dimensions function as additional controls which resembles replication of the comparison.

Method and Data
The combination of a longitudinal dimension of comparison over a fourteen year period (1992-2005) and the action-oriented focus on contributions of different political actors to debates about the budget,

direct our attention to written material as a data source. Major advantages of written data sources – in this case newspaper articles and transcribed plenary debates – are threefold. First, they do not change over time in contrast to, for example, memories collected through interviews with involved actors (Lilleker 2003; Richards 1996). Once created and archived, written documents stand the test of time and can be consulted at any moment. Surveys conducted at different points in time would have the same advantage, but these require long-term projects to facilitate multiple measuring moments in time. A second advantage of written documents is that they most accurately reflect the actions of political actors. Politicisation as defined briefly above and more elaborately in Article 1, is defined largely in terms of agency. Thus 'intensity of debate' is a measurement of the amount of participants in the debate and the time or amount of their contributions. 'Polarisation of opinion' depends on positions actors defend, the distance between them and the extent to which actors engage in coalition formation. Rather than measuring the interpretation of politicisation by interviewing participants, measuring politicisation directly through measuring agency as reported in newspaper articles and transcribed parliamentary debates reduces measurement errors. Furthermore, the emphasis on agency includes primary interest in 'observable' actions of political actors in the public sphere, rather than the motives underlying such actions. This, again, points to the advantages of literally transcribed plenary parliamentary debates and newspaper articles as data sources over interviews, which would reflect a more indirect interpretation of transpired actions in the public sphere. Thirdly, written documents have the advantage of facilitating repeated measurements. That is, unlike human beings, they can be consulted multiple times without getting grumpy or changing answers. This is another major advantage in a study with an exploratory, theory development focus, such as the present one, where it stands to reason to go back and forth between theory and data multiple times throughout the period of research (George and Bennett 2005).

Qualitative Content Analysis

In the study of text, a researcher faces three basic options (Krippendorff 2004). The first option is to approach text

quantitatively. Here, software programmes like WordScore or WordFish allow for the count of words and limited word combinations and the consequent comparison of frequencies. Major advantages of this method are the large amount of data one can process, a lesser dependency on intricate language knowledge on the side of the researcher, and the avoidance of random error due to the elimination of the human factor otherwise involved in coding. A major disadvantage is the difficulty to measure more complicated aspects of political discourse. Thus, it might be relatively easy to measure 'who' is contributing to discourse, it will already be more difficult to measure 'what' in terms of content the contribution is and it will be a daunting task indeed to measure 'why' the contribution is made. If the data sources are substantial in size – e.g. party manifestoes – and the research interests are well established – e.g. placement of parties on a left-right dimension – more complicated quantitative methods are possible (Laver et al. 2003). This is not an option here as the text itself is not the object of research, rather the agency of political actors reflected in it. Also, actors often do not provide enough statements within a single document to position them. Furthermore, the aim of theory development requires an exploratory approach, lacking predetermined, well established, theoretical constructs. Finally, from the perspective of a comparative study of politicisation, it is particularly interesting to be able to link actors (who) to the content of their position (what) and the justification or contextual explanation provided (why). Such linkages would facilitate comparisons in the form of crosstabulations across time, countries and forums. However, these linkages would be particularly problematic to make in quantitative content analysis.

The second option would be to conduct discourse analysis, broadly defined (Chilton and Schäffner 1997; Widdowson 2007). This requires close reading (qualitative analysis) of the textual material by the researcher. The main advantage of discourse analysis is that it is particularly suitable for establishing meaning given to particular political issues within the context of specific debates. In other words, discourse analysis allows for the measurement – or rather understanding (cf. Marsh and Furlong 2002) – of the terms on which particular issues are discussed in the public sphere and the historical and cultural reference points used to make sense of the questions,

options, benefits and costs involved. A major disadvantage however, is that discourse analysis takes a holistic approach. That is, 'discourse' is considered a single unit of analysis, without distinction between the single contributions individual political actors make. Accurately measuring intensity of debate or polarisation in a way that facilitates comparison across time, space and forums is hardly possible with discourse analysis. Secondly, discourse analysis is necessarily highly interpretative in nature. Not only are two different researchers likely to reach two different conclusions based on the same data, the interpretation of individual researchers is likely highly 'contaminated' by their own cultural and temporal backgrounds. A genuine comparative cross-national, longitudinal study would be difficult as different cases are all too easily 'filtered' through the eyes of the researcher's own time and space.

The third option is qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2000). As implied in the name, this method requires an active role on the part of the researcher in 'coding' the data. To that extent, it is similar to discourse analysis, rather than quantitative analysis. The difference with discourse analysis lies in two vital points. First, qualitative content analysis is focused on particular aspects reflected in text, rather than on holistic discourse. Thus, units of analysis tend to be individual texts or smaller units, such as speech acts, sentences, paragraphs or claims. Secondly, qualitative content analysis is different from discourse analysis in that data analysis takes place guided by a code book instructing the researcher – or 'coder' – how to code units of analysis, variables and values. This method is particularly suitable for the study of politicisation, because it allows for the focus on actor behaviour in a comparative setting (unlike discourse analysis) while supporting accurate measurement of complicated discourse elements and preserving the component integrity of contributions to discourse (unlike quantitative analysis). There remain methodological choices to be made within the confinement of qualitative content analysis, however.

Claims-making Analysis
This study uses claims-making analysis (Koopmans 2002; Koopmans and Statham 1999) as a specific form of qualitative content analysis.

Claims-making analysis is very suitable for measuring politicisation in different contexts as it takes a very small unit – a 'claim' – as unit of analysis and measures relevant variables at that level. This allows for both aggregation towards the level of individual political actors as well as the comparative cases of budget, country and forum. Aside from the uses for various forms of aggregation, taking claims as a unit of analysis comes with the major advantage of maximising 'construct equivalence' (Hantrais 1999: 104; Wirth and Kolb 2004) since political claims are basic building blocks of political debates, recognisable across time, space and forum. A claim is defined as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere:

> [...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field
>
> (Statham 2005: 12)

The archetypical claim would be a verbal speech act concerning some political good that could be loosely translated as: 'I (do not) want …'. However, the definition above is far more inclusive, encompassing claims such as meetings of the European Council, protests by farmers, resolutions tabled by parliamentarians and critical comments by journalists. In textual terms, a claim can be as short as a few words, or as elaborate as several paragraphs, as long as it is made by the same claimant(s), making a single argument on a single topic related to the EU budget.

Coding was structured by a detailed codebook (see Annex I) and involved twenty variables: 1) Country, 2) Budget, 3) Origin of Claimant (nationality), 4) Year, 5) Month, 6) Claimant (office held by actor or societal position), 7) Claimant Affiliation (party family if applicable), 8) Support Claimant (ally or source mentioned in the claim), 9) Support Claimant Affiliation, 10) Action (form in which the claim was made, such as speech act, protest, parliamentary question etc.), 11) Addressee (who is the claim directed at, if applicable), 12) Addressee Affiliation, 13) Issue (what is the claim about), 14) Position (regarding the issue), 15) Style (how forceful is the claim made), 16)

Object of the Claim (for/against whose interests is the claim made?), 17) Object Affiliation, 18) Primary Frame (justification or contextualisation given in the claim), 19) Secondary Frame, 20) Source (media or parliament). In short, it is measured WHERE, WHEN, WHO, with WHOSE support, HOW, directed at WHOM, claims WHAT, for/against WHOSE interests and WHY[2].

Through these variables all six components of politicisation as developed in Article 1 can be measured. Intensity of debate is measured through the amount of claims made and the constellation of claimants, polarisation of opinion is measured through locating the positions claimant defend on specific issues relating to the budget on dimensions of conflict. This allows for the mapping of the political landscape and coalition formation. Coalition formation is further measurable through studying the relationship between claimants, support claimants and addressees. Finally, public resonance can be measured through the involvement of citizens and social movements in the debates as well as the location and frequency of claims made. Furthermore, the functions of politicisation can be investigated by mapping dimensions of conflict, relating claims made in the media to claims in parliament and the balance there between parliament and government, coalition parties and opposition. Finally, views on the legitimacy of the EU can be measured through the framing variables and the contents of claims with direct repercussions for the extent of pooling of sovereignty in the EU.

Sampling
Newspaper articles and transcribed plenary debates were sampled from digitalised archives using the search string: 'European budget' OR 'EU/EC budget' OR 'Delors II/Agenda 2000/Financial Perspectives'. Newspapers included in the sampling were selected to reflect a politically left or liberal quality newspaper, a politically right

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[2] The twenty variables shortly described above and more elaborately in Annex I, were given at the beginning of coding largely based on the claims-making codebook developed by Koopmans (2002) for the Europub.com project. Through test coding, sets of values for each of the variables were further developed inductively. In the subsequent analysis, variables were aggregated to facilitate analysis and remove minute or false differences. Annex II provides the formal PASW/SPSS syntax for variable aggregation.

or conservative quality newspaper and a tabloid for each country with archives available for the entire research period (February 1992 – December 2005). This resulted in sampling drawn from: *Trouw, NRC Handelsblad*, and *Algemeen Dagblad* (the Netherlands); *Politikken, Berlingske Tidene*, and *B.T.* (Denmark); and *Irish Independent* and *Irish Times* (Ireland). LexisNexis was used for Dutch and Danish newspapers, while Irish newspapers were collected from www.irishindependent.ie, www.irishnewsarchive.com and www.irishtimes.ie. Dutch plenary debates were sampled from the physical archives of the *Tweede Kamer* for 1992 and from www.parlando.nl for 1997-2005, Danish plenary debates were sampled from the physical archives of *Folketinget* for 1992 and from www.ft.dk for 1997-2005, Irish plenary debates were sampled from www.oireachtas.ie.

Of the total sample, every fourth newspaper in chronological order and every plenary (transcribed oral) document were selected for qualitative coding in the cases of the Netherlands and Denmark. The selection for Ireland was twice as restrictive – every eighth newspaper article and every second plenary document – to deal with a larger amount of data. This thus represents longitudinally structured single shot sampling. In total, 459 newspaper articles and 134 plenary debates were coded, resulting in 4435 claims (*n* = 4435).

A Hierarchical Mixed Methodology

The *coding* and the *analysis* of claims present two distinctly different methodologies in research. This mixing of methods can provide clear advantages for the accuracy of measurement through triangulation (Hantrais 1999; 2005; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004), but requires a clear and well described methodological stance in order to clarify the generation of conclusions (Brannen 2005; Bryman 2006). It would otherwise be unclear how conflicting findings from different methods are dealt with.

First, the coding of the data in chronological order provides a qualitative process-tracing exercise. This provides an opportunity for the analysis of causal mechanisms underlying different forms and degrees of politicisation (Checkel 2006; Hedström and Swedberg

2007). All documents were entered into ATLAS.ti software where coding proceeded per country per budget. As the debate of each consecutive budget 'unfolds before the eyes of the coder', qualitative findings are generated concerning the development of the debate, interactions between different political actors and between media and parliament. In other words, the process of politicisation (and depoliticisation) is captured through the chronological qualitative coding. Secondly, the subsequent coding results were exported to SPSS to facilitate quantitative analysis. The great advantage of this procedure is that claims as units of analysis are kept in tact, which allows for the cross-tabulation of different variables and the subsequent comparison of differences in politicisation across time, space and forums. Methodologically then, a potential problem arises when the qualitative findings from the coding process do not correspond with the quantitative findings from the subsequent analysis. Recognising such problems, methodologists express scepticism to studies claiming 'triangulation' through mixing methods without specification of how this triangulation is conducted (Brannen 2005; Bryman 2006). In practice, the findings from one method are often prioritised over others based on the researcher's ontological and epistemological preferences.

This study has therefore opted for a 'hierarchical mixed methodology' (Read and Marsh 2002). Qualitative findings were used to inform the quantitative analysis, which formed the dominant source for drawing conclusions. Subsequently, qualitative findings were used to illustrate, contextualise and explain the quantitative findings.

Contributions of the Individual Articles

Inherent in the structure of an article-based dissertation, the individual articles do not simply add up to a coherent linear line of inquiry. Rather, each article targets a very specific element of politicisation of European integration and the effects of contentiousness of EU issues on delegation and accountability in the national channel of representation in the EU. After the discussion on the theoretical and methodological basis, this section proceeds to summarise shortly each article as they have been produced in

chronological order and discuss the individual contributions to the research question. Article 1 can be considered the conceptual – and to a limited extent theoretical – groundwork of the project. Articles 2 and 4 explore the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation in light of media coverage. Articles 3 and 5 delve deeper into partisan discourse and citizens' identity that form the context of the national channel of representation in the EU's web of delegation and accountability.

Article 1: No Polity for Old Politics? A Framework for Analysing Politicisation of European Integration

In the academic literature on European integration, politicisation as concept is often attributed major importance, yet at the same time rarely defined. This article shows how the literature variously discusses the politicisation of EU institutions, the politicisation of EU decision-making processes or the politicisation of issues related to European integration. Similarly, the literature attributes three different functions to politicisation: it functions to crystallise opposing advocacy coalitions concerning controversial political issues, it functions to raise the question of legitimacy of the EU and it functions to alter the course of European integration. Despite the widely varying use of the concept of politicisation in EU studies, this article argues we are in fact dealing with a single process. To further our understanding of politicisation of European integration and its effects on the EU polity, this article defines the process of politicisation as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU and directs further scholarly attention to competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere.

In relation to the general project, this article thus provides a literature review that places the research against the background of existing knowledge. It furthermore provides the conceptual building blocks and basic analytical focus that have structured the following empirical inquiry.

Article 2: No Effect, Weapon of the Weak or Reinforcing Executive Dominance? How Media Coverage Affects National Parliaments' Involvement in EU Policy Formulation

This article empirically investigates how media coverage of EU policy-formulation affects the involvement of national parliaments in these processes. The literature has variously argued that the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation is unrelated to media coverage; that media strengthen the hand of backbenchers and opposition; or that media reinforce executive dominance. Using a mixed methodology research design for a longitudinal case study of debates on the EU budget in the Netherlands between 1992 and 2005, this article presents evidence for all three hypotheses, but with clear variations over time. Although institutional arrangements clearly structure parliamentary involvement limiting media effects, its explanatory power decreases as the intensity of debate increases. Limited media coverage reinforces executive dominance whereas extensive media coverage provides a weapon of the weak and strengthens the involvement of parliaments in general, and opposition parties in particular.

This article investigates how contentiousness of EU issues as reflected in media coverage affects executive-legislative relations in the national channel of representation. It clarifies how mass media work to facilitate certain types of politicisation over others by providing a platform for executive rather than legislative actors. Yet, it also shows how increased politicisation can mitigate such effects.

Article 3: Reasserting the Nation State: The Trajectory of Euroscepticism in the Netherlands 1992 – 2005

Scholarly debate on party-based Euroscepticism centres on the questions of how to define, measure and explain Euroscepticism. As a starting point, this article observes that studies on Euroscepticism either focus on the positions of individual parties on issues of European integration or on the character of public discourse in different Member States. Studies on party positions excel in emphasising the agency political parties provide for Euroscepticism and the extent of domestic contestation, whereas studies of public

discourse are better at uncovering the meaning of Euroscepticism and its dynamics as parties interact in the public sphere. Both strands are predominantly focused on European integration in general or constitutional issues specifically. The present study incorporates the qualities of both strands, using the method of claims-making analysis. It furthermore aims to enrich our understanding of party-based Euroscepticism by studying a non-constitutional issue: debates on the EU budget in the Netherlands between 1992 and 2005. A mixed methodology research design provides both quantitative and qualitative data in a longitudinal comparative case study, showing how the permissive consensus in the Netherlands changed towards Euroscepticism through a process of politicisation in which the issue was internalised, followed by calls for renationalisation of the EU.

The contribution of this article to the wider project is threefold. First, it empirically documents a change in partisan discourse about European integration in the Netherlands. As such, it shows how the importance of the nation state as building block – and thus the importance of the national channel of representation – has increased in one of the EU's founding fathers, known for its generally pro-European attitudes. Secondly, it presents further arguments on the benefits of claims-making analysis as a method to establish political party positions on relatively precise policy issues, like the EU budget, as opposed to mapping party positions on more abstract constructs such as a left-right dimension of politics. Thirdly, this article demonstrates how party discourse on European integration is structured by national historical narratives, while at the same time, the process of politicisation functions to change such narratives.

Article 4: Ex Ante vs. Ex Post: The Trade-off between Partisan Conflict and Visibility in Debating EU Policy-formulation in National Parliaments

This article asks how ex ante and ex post control mechanisms structuring the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation affect the scope of conflict and visibility of parliamentary debates. Based on democratic theory, partisan and visible debates are normatively preferable. The effects of control mechanisms are assessed in a comparative case study of plenary debates in the Danish

Folketing and Dutch *Tweede Kamer* on the EU budgets of Delors II, Agenda 2000 and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013. This study shows that control mechanisms have direct and indirect effects on the scope of conflict and visibility of debates by linking up to different phases of policy-formulation and media coverage cycles. Danish ex ante mechanisms trigger more partisan, but less visible debates, whereas Dutch ex post mechanisms stimulate highly visible, but intergovernmental debates. The findings thus present a trade-off between partisan conflict on the one hand, and visibility on the other hand.

Through the investigation of the possible effects of parliamentary EU scrutiny mechanisms on types and forms of politicisation, this article directs our attention to another structural factor that affects the national channel of representation. Empirically, these findings are important for the wider debate on the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation and serve to inform policy recommendations, discussed below.

Article 5: 'Show Me the Money!' Political Conflict in EU Redistributive Politics and the Constraining Dissensus

The current Eurosceptic political climate in the EU, known as the 'constraining dissensus', may place negotiations on the multiannual EU budget centre-stage. If media portray political conflict about the budget as international polarisation pitting Member States against each other or against EU institutions, it may increase Euroscepticism as such polarisation resonates with exclusive national identity perceptions. If the budget is polarised transnationally, emphasising conflict within Member States, it may alleviate the constraining dissensus as it negates exclusive national identity while strengthening cross-cutting cleavages. This study tests hypotheses about patterns and trends in politicisation of the EU budget in three budgets (Delors II, Agenda 2000, Financial Perspectives 2007-2013), three countries (the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland) and two forums (media and national parliaments) using claims-making analysis and controlled multivariate comparisons. It finds predominant international polarisation with no clear trend over time and no clear difference between countries. It therefore seems likely

that politicisation of the EU budget reinforces the constraining dissensus, rather than loosening it. However, the more politicised budget debates become, the less likely they will stimulate Euroscepticism as the dominance of international polarisation decreases.

This article investigates the relationship between politicisation of the EU budget and citizens' identity, which is considered a major structuring factor of the importance of the national channel of representation in the EU polity. It demonstrates the importance of budget negotiations to the process of European integration as it can potentially be a key factor in a downwards spiral of Euroscepticism and disintegration. Yet, it also shows how increased politicisation tends to provide a more plural representative space which could limit the downwards spiral. Again, politicisation is demonstrated to be constrained by structural factors yet capable of altering those in the long run.

General Conclusions

What do these articles collectively tell us about how contentiousness in debates on EU issues unfolding in the public sphere affects patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU? The conclusions here concern in particular delegation and accountability in the national channel of representation, which has been the focus in the empirical case studies. To address the broader theoretical implications concerning how politicisation affects European integration, tentative theoretical generalisations beyond the national channel will be discussed. Through theoretical generalisation of the empirical findings, this section draws three conclusions. First, increasing contentiousness of EU issues in terms of polarisation of opinion, intensity of debate and public resonance strengthens accountability and thus the role of parliaments vis-à-vis executives in EU policy-formulation. Extrapolating these empirical findings in the national channel of representation to the broader EU web of delegation and accountability implies the substantiation of popular democracy in the EU as opposed to technocratic rule. Secondly, the empirical analysis shows in particular a strengthening of accountability through the national channel of representation.

Although a direct comparison with the European channel in the form of analysis of European Parliament debates is lacking, this finding is corroborated by the increasing emphasis of the nation state as guiding principle for European integration in partisan discourse and the predominance of intergovernmental conflict framing in the media. This suggests politicisation is a mechanism altering the EU polity towards a more intergovernmental polity as opposed to a supranational federation. Thirdly, as the contentiousness of EU issues increases, debate and conflict becomes more plural. Thus, the predominance of intergovernmental conflict framing decreases as contentiousness increases. This third conclusion potentially counter-balances the second conclusion as a more plural debate may function to mitigate the intergovermental nature initially strengthened by politicisation. Under what conditions or to what extent the second effect is mitigated by the third remains a question for future research. All three conclusions raise normative questions concerning the democratic legitimacy of the EU. Though it is not the aim of this dissertation to address these questions, they will be briefly touched upon to stimulate further debate.

Articles 2 and 4 focus on dynamics of delegation and accountability in the relationship between national parliaments and national governments. Although contextual factors and institutional design matter (Article 4), increased politicisation of the EU budget in mass media correlates with increased involvement of national parliaments. This stimulates national governments to engage more in accounting for their actions publically (Article 2). The more EU issues and the EU polity become politicised, the more representatives of citizens and their delegates engage in explaining themselves publically, relating their actions to the discourse developing in the public sphere. These actions contribute to altering discourse thus shaping public opinion but are at the same time structured by existing discourse. To be very precise: it is not that citizens 'strengthen their control' over their representatives. This would be overestimating the empirical reality of the principal-agent model and the agency of citizens. Rather, by taking the detour through the public sphere, different representatives engage more with developing public opinion and each other, recreating the EU's web of delegation and accountability. Their arguments and actions become more closely linked to public opinion

as reflected in discourse, the more EU issues are politicised. If these findings are found to travel beyond the national channel of representation to the EU polity entirely, politicisation poses a mechanism bringing the EU closer to a popular democracy (Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Mair 2005) where public opinion – particularly the will of the majority as portrayed in media discourse – is a force to be reckoned with. This stands in contrast to a regulatory regime (Majone 2002; Moravcsik 2006) where principles of popular democracy are less applicable and governance is dominated by technical expertise. This raises the normative question of how to assess a trade-off between popular rule on the one hand and expertise driven governance on the other hand. Particularly so, because politicisation problematises an understanding of issues as either intrinsically technical or intrinsically political (cf. Fouilleux et al. 2005; Majone 2002). Rather, any issue can shift from being 'technical' to being 'political' or vice versa through processes of politicisation and depoliticisation respectively.

If popular rule is strengthened by politicisation, the question remains which channel of representation in the EU becomes empowered. If politicisation tends to strengthen the European channel of representation over the national one, we may conclude that politicisation is a force for increased integration towards a more federal EU. If, on the other hand, politicisation tends to strengthen the national channel of representation over the European one, the EU will develop more towards a 'Europe of the nation states' or international organisation. The force of the public spotlight in the latter case will demand more action and decision power of national parliaments and national governments and the Council of Ministers/European Council, rather than the European Parliament or the European Commission.

The empirical findings of this project have highlighted three factors supporting the notion that politicisation strengthens the national channel of representation, rather than the European one. First, politicisation is a mechanism facilitating the reassertion of the nation state as guiding discursive principle in the EU polity (Article 3). It also facilitates the portrayal of EU policy-formulation as intergovernmental conflict (Article 5). This strengthens the

importance of national representatives in citizens' perceptions. Secondly, Articles 2 and 4 show how coverage of national mass media is biased towards emphasising national interests and domestic dimensions of EU policies and how mass media portray the EU predominantly as an intergovernmental organisation characterised by intergovernmental conflict. Finally, Article 5 discusses the importance of exclusive national identity as a factor shaping public opinion on European integration and how contentiousness is more likely to reinforce such exclusive national identity than to compromise it. The contentiousness of EU issues thus appears to strengthen the national channel of representation more so than the European channel. Thus, politicisation is a mechanism reinforcing the intergovernmental dimension of the EU vis-à-vis the federal one. The normative question this raises is whether the EU can be legitimate as a polity built on its component Member States, as opposed to a supranational federation.

Still, the structural factors pointing towards a positive relationship between politicisation and a strengthening of the national channel of representation have also been shown to be less forceful as the contentiousness of EU issues increases. The data presented in the empirical articles consistently show that as contentiousness of the EU budget increases, the debate become more plural. That is, the predominant conflict image of competing Member States then becomes partially mitigated by conflict between government and opposition and between farmers and consumers most notably. Rather than one dominant line of conflict crowding out potential others, this study has documented the exact opposite trend. Thus, politicisation facilitates an increasing variety of actors that contribute to the debate and claim to represent different interests and constituencies, an increasing variety of opinions publically defended and an increasing variety of justifications and contextualisations provided in contributions to discourse. If these findings are found to hold beyond EU budget debates, politicisation could turn the EU into a more plural polity where the national channel of representation shapes EU politics together with the European channel as well as non-electoral forms of representation. The normative question raised by politicisation is thus how desirable pluralist contentious politics is in the EU and whether the EU can be legitimated as polity which is

neither federal, nor intergovernmental in scope (cf. Eriksen and Fossum 2007).

The extent to which the empirical findings regarding EU budget debates, media coverage and involvement of national parliaments presented here also apply to other countries (e.g. large, southern or new Member States), other EU issues without redistributive character (e.g. regulatory legislation and different legislative processes within the EU), other parts of the EU's web of delegation and accountability (e.g. the relationship between the European Parliament and the European Commission) and even to other polities than the EU should be considered with caution. The conceptual definition of politicisation developed in Article 1 enjoys wide empirical generalisability. That is, based on the presented definition and analytical framework, the extent to which any issue, any decision-making process or any institution becomes politicised could be empirically descriptively analysed in any polity. The limits of the concept's applicability may not travel to cases where public debate is severely restricted by violence or repression, such as in case of revolutions, civil war or authoritarian regimes. However, in order to be able to conduct empirical generalisation of the attributed effects of politicisation as hypothesised above, more knowledge is needed concerning the causes and scope conditions of politicisation. In other words, reliable empirical generalisation requires a *theory* of politicisation which at this stage is underdeveloped. Exploring the extent to which the conclusions presented here hold in other cases would allow for the more systematic identification of causes and scope conditions of politicisation. Such further tests may involve an investigation of the explanatory power of several factors identified here, including media logic (Articles 2 and 4), institutional arrangements structuring the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation (Article 4), historical national narratives about European integration (Article 3), and citizens' identity perceptions (Article 5). Further study should also target the possible counter-balancing between how politicisation strengthens the national channel of representation in the EU polity (second conclusion) and how politicisation functions to pluralise representation (third conclusion). The conceptual richness and in-depth, detailed comparative case study of this dissertation have, however, facilitated

both the theoretical development and the empirical foundation of the presented conclusions.

Finally, a word on the empirical accomplishments of this project in terms of data construction. The ATLAS.ti and SPSS files resulting from the empirical analysis could facilitate many more lines of inquiry beyond the ones presented here. The available dataset could for instance be used to investigate such topics as the meaning of solidarity in the EU, or the role of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in national public spheres, to name but a few. Furthermore, based on the detailed sampling strategy discussed in this introduction and the codebook attached in Annex I, the existing dataset could easily be expanded. Particularly interesting would be to include budget debates having taken place in the European Parliament, Southern and/or New Member States as well as budget debates that will take place during the next EU budget negotiations in 2011-2012. Finally, the methodological adaptation of claims-making analysis could be used as a basis for future empirical projects interested in comparing political contestation, patterns of representation and/or discourse formation in different forums and political contexts.

Policy Recommendations

The findings of this dissertation are deemed to be of general interest to students of European integration, comparative politics, comparative political communication and comparative methods. Although the main research aim represents basic research, rather than applied research, tentative policy recommendations can be formulated to be considered by practitioners in the field. Particularly, recommendations may be of relevance to those involved in policy-formulation on the EU budget and those involved in shaping the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation.

Concerning the EU budget, the findings confirm to a large extent the importance of national interests and the de facto prominence of the European Council in shaping the EU budget (cf. Dür and Mateo 2008; Rant and Mrak 2010). However, the dynamics of politicisation point to the importance of broader societal interests in contrast to narrow

sectoral interests and to the relevance of cross-cutting cleavages. Thus, the future of the CAP may depend to a large extent on how successfully it is shaped and presented as a public good appealing to a majority of EU citizens. Funds presented as narrow subsidies for farmers may have more difficulty surviving a process of politicisation than those stimulating 'public goods' such as environmentally friendly agriculture, preservation of landscape, and food safety while not endangering sustainable development of developing countries. The extent to which CAP funding is connected to requirements concerning such public goods may well influence the extent to which it withstands the added public scrutiny as a result of politicisation. Secondly, the extent to which political conflict surrounding budget negotiations stimulates cross-cutting cleavages, orthogonal to Member State boundaries, will affect public support for the budget and European integration more generally by resonating with exclusive national identity perceptions (cf. Article 5). In other words, the budget is more likely to find support and be conducive to further integration if it has both beneficiaries and contributors in all Member States so that conflict is not restrained to intergovernmental cleavages alone. This presents, for instance, an argument in favour of diversifying the budget, strengthening its so far junior components such as research and development funds. It also forms an argument against the renationalisation of structural funds, i.e. cutting support for poor regions in rich Member States. Finally, cumbersome and complicated policies that result from intergovernmental bargaining which are hard to explain to the wider public – such as partial rebates on rebates – will increasingly present problems while justifying the EU budget in the face of politicisation.

Concerning the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation, this dissertation presents a general plea for a more 'public' involvement as opposed to strengthening parliamentary involvement behind closed doors (cf. Article 4). Most attention from academics and parliamentarians alike has so far been directed towards controlling national governments. The public function of parliaments has remained relatively neglected. Public debates are important to provide citizens with meaningful choice during elections on issues where national governments – and thus national parliaments – have a key say in EU politics, such as on the

multiannual EU budget. The creation and strengthening of specialised European Affairs Committees may have strengthened control behind closed doors, but at the cost of such public debates. There are, however, unlikely to be universal solutions to this problem applicable in all Member States. National political culture and existing institutional arrangements will have to be taken into account in trying to strengthen the public debating function of national parliaments concerning EU issues.

Article 1

No Polity for Old Politics?
A Framework for Analysing Politicisation of
European Integration[1]

Abstract

In the academic literature on European integration, politicisation as concept is often attributed major importance. This article shows how the literature variously discusses the politicisation of European Union (EU) institutions, the politicisation of EU decision-making processes or the politicisation of issues related to European integration. Similarly, the literature attributes three different functions to politicisation: it functions to crystallise opposing advocacy coalitions, to raise the question of legitimacy and to alter the course of European integration. Despite the varying use of politicisation in EU studies, this article argues we are in fact dealing with an encompassing process. To further our understanding of politicisation of European integration, this article defines the process as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which

opinions are publicly advanced towards policy formulation within the EU. Furthermore, it directs attention for further study to competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere.

Introduction

In their 'postfunctionalist theory of integration', Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that the key mechanism that has changed the political climate in the EU from a 'permissive consensus' to a 'constraining dissensus' is politicisation. Beyers and Kerremans (2004) ask 'how European policy making is politicised' in their study of the relationship between bureaucrats, politicians and societal interests in Brussels. Christiansen (1997) investigates politicised bureaucracy in the European Commission, while Buonfino (2004) studies the politicisation and securitisation of the discourse of immigration in Europe. Furthermore, Hix and Bartolini (2006) have entered into a normative debate about whether the European Union (EU) 'should be politicised'. These are just a few examples of many contributions to the European integration literature employing the word 'politicisation'. Although it is often used, 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. What is more, it appears to be used in such divergent ways that the concept stands in danger of losing its usefulness to the study of European integration.

This article asks whether, despite the apparent ambiguity surrounding politicisation, we are in fact dealing with an encompassing process observable in different manifestations. After answering this question positively, the article continues to present an analytical framework for further empirical studies into politicisation in order to advance our knowledge regarding its relevance to European integration. To do this, this article focuses first on the manifestations of politicisation. Based on a literature review, politicisation is argued to manifest itself in three different forms: politicisation of EU institutions, politicisation of EU decision-making processes and politicisation of issues related to European integration. Secondly, this article discusses alleged functions of politicisation and distinguishes between crystallising opposing advocacy coalitions targeting EU policy-formulation, raising the question of legitimacy of

the EU polity, and altering the course of European integration. After reviewing the use of politicisation in the literature, this article continues to present a working definition and an analytical framework. Politicisation of European integration is defined as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU. To encourage further empirical study of politicisation, this article proceeds to present an analytical framework directing attention to competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere.

The politicisation of what?

A first step in exploring the meaning of politicisation is to investigate different manifestations discussed in the literature. In other words, when the concept is used in EU studies, where is this process claimed to occur and what is affected by politicisation? This article shows manifestations of politicisation can reasonably be categorised in three distinct groups: institutions, decision-making processes and issues. The first group of manifestations refers to the supranational, intergovernmental and national political institutions of the multi-level EU-polity, including most notably the European Commission, European Parliament (EP), Council of Ministers, member state governments and national parliaments. These may become 'politicised' when party politicians gain a tighter grip on their operations and they thus become increasingly affected by party political conflict. The second category includes the procedures, rules and practices that make up the day-to-day functioning of these political institutions. Politicisation in this sense refers to increasing influence of elected or appointed politicians in decision-making processes at the expense of professionals, like bureaucrats, experts and lawyers. Finally, politicisation of issues refers to an increase in salience and diversity of opinions on specific societal topics. If issues become more contested and there is an increasing public demand on public policy, these issues are then considered to be 'politicised'. It can thus be argued that these three manifestations concern the 'input' into political systems in the form of demands becoming issues and the direct impact thereof on the political system (Easton 1957).

Political conflict and cleavage lines in institutions

Egeberg speaks of '[a] growing party politicisation of the College of Commissioners' (2006b: 5). Commissioners develop tighter links to the party federations in the EP. Together with the notion that the EP has increasing control over the Commission in other ways, this stresses the increasing importance of party politics and ideological cleavage lines in European politics (Majone 2002). Politicisation thus resembles increased party political conflict within the EP, leading to a stronger representation and relevance of political parties in the European Commission. Whereas several Commissioners in the early days of European integration where professional bureaucrats, rather than politicians (Haas 2004), the Commission is nowadays made up purely of career politicians and efforts are made to safeguard a reasonable balance of representation among party families. Ideological party political conflicts also become more prominent in other institutions, for instance in the negotiations in the Council of Ministers (Aspinwall 2002). Here, national political parties increase their influence over their government's behaviour in Brussels through national parliaments, allowing them less leeway to deviate from party preferences (Raunio and Hix 2001). Besides traditionally existing territorial and sectoral dimensions of conflict, party politics and ideological dimensions of conflict increasingly structure EU politics, at both European and national levels. The politicisation of political institutions in the EU polity thus functions to increase influence of political parties and partisan conflict – whether national or European – over these institutions.

Dominance of politicians in decision-making processes

Politicisation is also used to describe a change in decision-making processes, representing a development away from technocratic decision-making. In this manifestation, decision-making is increasingly subjected to pressure by different advocacy coalitions (Beyers and Kerremans 2004; Christiansen 1997: 79). With a shift in importance to political negotiation, decisions are taken at a higher – political – level within institutions. In light of its institutional surrounding, characterised by continuous political negotiation with the member states and the European Parliament: 'the [European] Commission is a 'politicised bureaucracy', faced with a dilemma between its duty to develop and apply common rules and continuous political pressure for deviation.' (Christiansen 1997: 77 [emphasis in

original]). At first, the reader may be inclined to perceive this as a manifestation belonging in the first group: politicisation of the Commission. However, it is in fact referring to a change in the way decisions are made, which affects the institution as a whole. In other words, decisions made within institutions like the Commission become more contested and subject to pressure from opposing interests, articulated and polarised by political parties. This is further substantiated by Fouilleux et al (2005), who see politicisation and depoliticisation as the grey zone between the ideal types of political and technocratic decision-making. They argue that there is no clear division between technical and political decisions taken within the Council of Ministers. Instead, bureaucrats try to reach as much agreement as possible. Only if agreement can not be reached by bureaucrats, is the decision passed on towards the political level. In this sense, politicisation of decision-making procedures occurs due to an increase in the contentiousness of issues, reflected in a stronger role for politicians in decision-making. The politicisation of decision-making thus directs our attention to the politicisation of issues.

The contentiousness of issues

Politicisation of issues manifests itself as an increase in electoral importance (Franklin and Wlezien 1997). This salience results from societal actors like political parties, interest groups, social movements and mass media paying more attention to European issues and increasing their public claims for or against common policy, thus emphasising at the same time the importance and the contentiousness of issues.

Recently, studies of politicisation of issues related to European integration tend to be directed at specific policy fields, focussing for instance on immigration policy (Buonfino 2004), agricultural policy (Epstein 2006), or the Services Directive (Miklin 2009). Alternatively, they take a comparative analysis of several issues (Koopmans 2007). These studies describe increased and changing profiling of politicians on European issues. Secondly, they report increased debate over European issues in national media. Taken together, these two developments reflect an increase in contentiousness. Finally, in its most encompassing and basic form, we may consider the 'politicisation of European integration' as one single composite issue. This resembles a combination of issues such as membership of the EU

or the Eurozone, the extent of sovereignty pooling, and the geographical borders of the EU (Morgan 2005; Trenz and De Wilde 2009).

To conclude this section on manifestations, politicisation is a popular descriptive tool to describe phenomena in very different empirical studies within EU studies. At first instance, there does not seem any overarching aspect to the use of politicisation as descriptive tool. In contrast, this section argued that politicisation of institutions, decision-making processes and issues are in fact manifestations of an encompassing process which concerns the input of political demands into the EU political system. 'Politicised' issues will likely be dealt with in 'politicised' decision-making processes as the final decision is made by politicians, rather than bureaucrats or lawyers. Institutions often involved in decision-making on politicised issues are increasingly pressured by interested actors, particularly political parties, and thus become 'politicised' themselves. In turn, 'politicised' institutions are more likely to be involved in 'politicising' issues than depoliticised institutions.

Politicisation and European political order

Besides different manifestations, the literature also attributes different functions to politicisation. This section outlines these functions to provide us with an understanding of the potentially profound impact on European integration, thus emphasising the importance of investigating this concept in more detail. At the most elementary level, politicisation is often simply understood as 'more political conflict'. The question is then: more political conflict between whom, where and about what? The focus of this particular literature is on how politicisation structures political conflict over issues related to European integration in a pluralist setting. As political contestation becomes more structured, dimensions of conflict are formed. In other words, politicisation contributes to more recognisable patterns of opposing factions along ideological, territorial, sectoral or other cleavage lines (Bartolini 2005; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Secondly, as increased political conflict sensitises people to fundamental changes in European societies due to European integration, the question of legitimacy is raised. Political claims voiced on EU issues often signify both an expression of dissatisfaction with the status quo and an attempt to correct this perceived injustice. Thirdly, as some conflicts

are emphasised over others, the balance within and between European institutions may be altered, but also the relations between Member States and supranational institutions. Thus, politicisation may affect the course of future integration. Finally, raising the question of legitimacy of the EU polity through politicisation leads to the question how the EU should be constructed in order to accommodate dominant claims. These questions may again influence dimensions of conflict and the institutional set-up of the EU-polity. The three functions of politicisation are thus related to one another.

Structuring political conflict

As political conflict over European policies increases, it becomes clear who the proponents and opponents of specific policies are. Both proponents and opponents then group into advocacy coalitions to maximise their influence on policy formulation. In the EU, political parties at both national and European level increasingly perform the role of articulating an initial plurality of opinions within society on issues related to the EU, into a more focused and coherent set of claims on policy (Hix 1999b; Hix et al. 2005; 2006; Marks et al. 2006; Marks and Steenbergen 2004; Marks et al. 2002; Ray 1999). Besides sectoral politics involving stakeholders and experts and territorial politics dominated by national governments, European political conflict increasingly involves mass politics dominated by political parties. Thus, politicisation functions to crystallise and change dimensions of conflict as well as to reinvigorate political parties as central players in the structuring of political conflict within the multilevel EU polity.

After studying political party behaviour in Europe, Hix and Lord (1997: 49-53) conclude that European politics can be characterised by two independent dimensions: a left-right economic dimension and a pro-contra integration dimension. Left-right represents the main cleavage line within domestic politics in the member states that has been transposed to the European level. The second dimension refers to whether parties are in favor of further integration or not. Marks and Wilson (2000) find that the two dimensions introduced by Hix and Lord are in fact not independent. In the early days of integration, right wing parties were more in favor of European integration than left wing parties. To them, European integration was a defence against communism and an advance of liberal markets. However,

social democratic parties have warmed up to European integration following the clear failure of traditional national Keynesian economics and the launch of a European social policy in the early 1980s (Marks and Wilson 2000). In light of the EU's increasing diversity through enlargement, the two dimensions of conflict may be related differently, depending on the national context (Marks et al. 2006). Finally, cultural differences may structure political conflict over European integration. Globalisation and European integration may divide Western-European populations into winners and losers (Fligstein 2008; Kriesi et al. 2006). This may result in Green, Alternative and Libertarian (GAL) parties opposing Traditional, Authoritarian and Nationalist (TAN) parties (Hooghe et al. 2004).

Raising the question of legitimacy

Through increased contentiousness and salience of issues related to European integration, politicisation functions to highlight the importance of EU policies for the daily lives of EU citizens and the relative lack of influence they have on decision-making concerning these issues (Føllesdal and Hix 2006; White 2010a; 2010b). Unlike in most democratic polities, citizens do not have the opportunity to 'throw the rascals out' in elections as particularly Commission officials are appointed, rather than elected. As a result, discontent with EU policies may be directed at the EU polity itself, rather than its ruling elites (Mair 2005; 2007). On the one hand, politicisation demonstrates that citizens question the legitimacy of the EU, because they mobilise and voice their discontent with existing policies enacted by the EU. On the other hand, it may be a remedy to the democratic deficit, because citizens' preferences become clearer and better voiced, making it possible – and hard to avoid – for elites to accommodate those preferences (Trenz and Eder 2004). Because political parties predominantly perform the role of aggregating and polarising the plurality of opinions on European issues, a strengthening of both national and European channels of representative democracy in the EU is possible (Ladrech 2007; Mair 2005). By incorporating an increase in debate on European issues, politicisation functions as a move towards more deliberation and participation, strengthening the legitimacy of the EU following an 'ethics of participation' (Bellamy and Warleigh 1998).

Whether more 'politics' is the right medicine for the EU remains debatable (see Fossum and Trenz 2006; Hix and Bartolini 2006; Moravcsik 2006). Consociationalists who stress that the EU does not have a single demos, argue that the stability of the EU depends on cooperative elites that are allowed to negotiate and reach compromises outside the spotlight of public scrutiny (e.g. Chryssochoou 1994; Gabel 1998). Because there are no significant cross-cutting cleavages, there is not enough solidarity and understanding to hold the polity together in face of publicly adversarial political conflict. Politicisation would work as a centrifugal mechanism, stressing unbridgeable differences between the interests, norms and values of the peoples of Europe, ultimately jeopardising the stability of the EU polity.

Altering the course of integration

Although interrupted by periods of stagnation, supranational institutions have increased their influence over intergovernmental institutions in the EU and gained competencies in new policy areas. This is referred to as a gradual increase in the level and scope of integration (Börzel 2005; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970). As a result of this increase in level and scope of integration, political parties and interest groups shift their attention to the EU-polity, creating 'political spill-over'. By organising at the supranational level and transferring their policy demands from the national level to supranational institutions, an EU-polity not unlike the pluralist polity of the USA comes into existence (Haas 2004: 313). Also, the continued existence and success of supranational institutions would, according to neofunctionalist theory, stimulate Eurosceptic societal groups to accept the EU. In other words, besides political spill-over, there would also be 'attitudinal spill-over'. This expectation is laid down in one of the key hypotheses of neofunctionalist integration theory:

> Politicization thus refers initially to a process whereby the controversiality of joint decisionmaking goes up. This in turn is likely to lead to a widening of the audience or clientele interested and active in [European] integration. Somewhere along the line a manifest redefinition of mutual objectives will likely occur.
>
> (Schmitter 1969: 166 [italics in original])

Politicisation would thus function as a final phase of European integration including political and attitudinal spill-over which forms a prelude to the EU's finality of a federal United States of Europe.

The expectation that European citizens and their organisations would redirect political claims to the supranational level and become more positive towards integration now seems questionable (Hooghe and Marks 2005b). In contrast, political expectations remain focussed on national political elites and public opinion has become distinctly more negative about European integration. To some extent than, political spill-over took place as societal groups started voicing demands concerning European integration, but attitudinal spill-over did not occur. The 'permissive consensus' has turned into a 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Rather than leading to a federal Europe, politicisation hinders further integration and is more likely to bring about re-nationalisation.

The challenge is thus to facilitate thorough empirical study of politicisation that is capable of measuring the contentiousness of issues related to European integration in relation to the involvement of different political actors in EU decision-making processes and various political institutions at both national and supranational level. We thus need to know how controversial EU issues are, what this contentiousness is substantially about, who is involved in the contentiousness, and how this contentiousness is translated towards individual decision-making processes in the short run and the constellation and development of the EU polity and its component institutions in the long run. To facilitate this line of inquiry, this article now proceeds to present a working definition and an analytical framework of politicisation.

Towards a working definition

This section provides a working definition of politicisation of European integration based on two overarching features in the literature discussed above. Consequently, it will be argued that the process of politicisation of European integration can be deconstructed into a set of three interrelated components. The first overarching feature is general consensus on a societal understanding of politics. In order for us to understand politicisation of European integration, we need to study more than just the actions of member state

governments and European institutions. Rather, the concept of politicisation is used to describe the involvement in EU politics of societal actors, like political parties, mass media, interest groups, social movements and individual citizens through public opinion. Second, in a dynamic and societal understanding of politics, politicisation is a characteristic of the 'input' side of the political process. In other words, a characteristic of policy demands being voiced and their effects on policy-formulation processes and institutions involved in these processes.

I argue that politicisation of European integration can be defined as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which opinions are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU. This definition can be deconstructed into three interrelated processes that can form the starting point for operationalisation. These processes are polarisation of opinion, intensifying debate and public resonance. Each will be briefly introduced in turn.

Polarisation of opinion

An issue can only become politicised, when there are at least two different opinions on the subject (see also Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 180). These opinions have to be articulated by representatives like interest groups or political parties who perceive of themselves or their constituency as having an interest in the topic at hand. Politicisation thus requires purposive engagement by societal actors. Initially then, polarisation of opinion consists of an increase in the diversity of opinion. A crystallisation of advocacy coalitions will likely occur in light of the need to advance a common position towards collectively binding decision-making. As this crystallisation takes shape, the debate likely includes more and more claims on other parties, besides arguments on the content of the issue at hand. Structural polarisation of opinion in which more or less the same advocacy coalitions disagree on multiple issues will result in dimensions of conflict (Hix and Lord 1997; Hooghe et al. 2004). Societal actors might differ more or less of opinion. In case of relative agreement, they may agree on the goals to be attained, but not on the way to achieve these goals or the sacrifices they are willing to make. Alternatively, opinions of interested parties might be fundamentally irreconcilable. The more opinions of involved parties diverge and crystallise into opposing

groups, the stronger polarisation of opinion contributing to increasing politicisation.

Intensifying debate

Interested parties may have very different opinions, but if they do not voice them, politicisation remains inhibited. The more an issue is discussed, the more politicised it becomes. Thus, when Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004) argued that the issue of European integration was a 'sleeping giant', they meant that there was a strong polarisation of opinion on European integration, but not an intense debate. The relevant question for Van der Eijk and Franklin was if and when political parties would pick up this polarisation of (public) opinion and start profiling themselves – increasing the intensity of debate – on the issue of European integration. It follows that intensity of debate consists of two aspects. First, it refers to how much, long and often a specific issue is discussed by the interested parties or their representatives. Secondly, it refers to the number of different parties involved in the debate. As more parties become involved and more resources are spent, debates intensify and this contributes to politicisation.

It would seem logical to expect polarisation of opinion and intensified debate to mutually support each other. The stronger a difference of opinion on a specific topic, the more time will likely be spent to convince other parties or work out a compromise in order to be able to achieve collectively binding decisions. However, as indicated by the 'sleeping giant' metaphor, this is not always the case. We should therefore include polarisation of opinion and intensifying debate as two analytically independent but interrelated components of politicisation.

Public resonance

The final component of politicisation is public resonance of polarised and intense debate. This differentiates politicised issues and decision-making processes from those characterised by intergovernmental bargaining, lobbying and technocratic regulation. In order for a debate to gain 'public' resonance, there needs to be an audience present and/or able to follow the proceedings of the debate. Potential access to (an interpretation of) the proceedings of the debate by all citizens will further strengthen this resonance. Thus, transparency of

the debate contributes to public resonance. Secondly, public resonance consists of participation of the public in the debate (Trenz and Eder 2004: 9). This might be direct (e.g. through voting in elections or referenda) or indirect participation (e.g. through opinion polls, published letters sent in by readers of newspapers, or online forum discussions). Public resonance thus involves more and more people in politics, resembling a socialisation of conflict (Schattschneider 1960: 40).

The best way to illustrate the relevance of this component is by elaborating situations in which a polarisation of opinion and intensified debate occur, but which remain relatively depoliticised: intergovernmental bargaining and technocratic debates. The first case is a classic diplomatic intergovernmental debate or decision-making process. In this case, the issue at hand is discussed in secret behind closed doors. Thus, there is no audience present or able to follow the proceedings of the debate. Even though opinions of different Member States represented in this setting might diverge largely (polarisation of opinion) and much time and effort is spent to reach a compromise (intense debate), it would not be called politicised unless its proceedings find resonance in mass-media or plenary parliamentary debates that involve the public. A similar situation takes place when technocratic issues are dealt with by bureaucrats. Technocratic decision-making may be contested by stakeholders, but it remains relatively depoliticised as long as it does not become part of more general societal political conflict through more elaborate public resonance, at which point such decision-making processes would stop being strictly 'technocratic'.

To conclude, based on the broad societal and dynamic understanding of politics displayed in the literature using the concept of politicisation, a working definition has been presented. It characterises the process as in principle deprived of content. In other words, politicisation can be about any topic related to European integration, affect any political institution in the EU polity and/or its decision-making processes and involve any societal actor. Therefore, it can describe an episode of increased contestation along any dimension of conflict. However, a significant number of authors use the concept to describe the increasing involvement of political parties in European politics since the 1990s and subsequently increasing prominence of ideological dimensions of conflict within the EU.

Politicisation always concerns the 'input' side of politics and consists of three interrelated components: polarisation of opinion, intensifying debate and public resonance. This definition provides us with building blocks for operationalisation, which may facilitate further empirical research. It will help us identify episodes of politicisation as actors draw public attention to the contentiousness of issues and opposing advocacy coalitions become apparent. Similarly, an episode of depoliticisation would likely see a compromise being reached, apparent consensus on the issue in question, and a decrease in the extent to which it is publically debated. Yet, in order to be able to link such measurements of politicisation to possible effects it may have on the EU polity, we need to further develop our understanding of how politicisation relates to citizen-elite relationships in the EU. Fleshing out this understanding will be attempted in the next section.

Analysing Politicisation

Having made a brief overview of the use of the concept 'politicisation' in the literature on European integration, based on which a definition has been formulated, the next step is to develop an analytical framework facilitating the empirical study of politicisation. What is needed here is an understanding of the dynamics of the EU, thus directing the focus of empirical enquiries. The second and third function of politicisation – increasing the extent to which politicians take into account public opinion and exercise control over bureaucrats and experts, thereby affecting the legitimacy, effectiveness and stability of the EU polity – direct our attention to dynamics of delegation and accountability in the EU. For this, we need to study the 'web of delegation and accountability' (Bergman 2000; Strøm et al. 2003) that makes up citizen-elite relationships in the EU. In other words, we need to study channels of representation including how tasks are delegated from citizens to politicians to bureaucrats, experts and lawyers as well as how these representatives are held to account for policy-making in turn.

Locating Politicisation: The Public Sphere

The fact that political contestation about European integration needs to be public in order to speak of politicisation, directs scientific attention to forums where public contestation takes place. Our attention is therefore directed to studying politicisation in the public sphere (Fossum and Schlesinger 2007; Koopmans 2007; Koopmans

and Erbe 2004; Kriesi et al. 2007), here understood in empirical rather than normative terms. That is, we need to study the constellation of arenas in Europe where political debates take place which are widely accessible to the general public. In today's 'mediatised' democracies, the primary forum for measuring politicisation is therefore first and foremost mass media (Altheide 2004; De Vreese 2001; 2007b; Trenz 2004). Other forums which are publically accessible include debates in both the national parliaments and European Parliament (Eriksen and Fossum 2002; Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2007) as well as 'the streets' where protests might take place organised by interest groups or social movements (Imig and Tarrow 2001a; Marks and McAdam 1999).

Delegation and Accountability

The EU, just like its component Member States, is built on the principles of representative democracy (Crum and Fossum 2009; Lord 2007; Manin 1997; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999b; Strøm et al. 2003). Ultimately, although sometimes hardly recognisable or enforceable in practice, all EU institutions and its officials are answerable to the citizens of the EU through an intricate 'web' of relationships composed of delegation and accountability. Generally, two channels in this web of relationships are recognised: a national channel and a European channel. In the national channel, citizens delegate the task of governing to politicians in national parliaments holding them accountable through periodic elections. National parliaments in their turn delegate governing to national governments. National governments then run national bureaucracies individually, and – in EU framework – also collectively through the Council of Ministers and its Working Groups. Furthermore, national governments delegate the task of drafting legislative proposals to the European Commission, the task of judicial control to the European Court of Justice, the task of financial control to the European Court of Auditors and the task of monetary policy to the European Central Bank. In the European channel, citizens directly elect the European Parliament acting as a co-legislator with the Council of Ministers in delegating executive functions to the European Commission and holding it accountable. A 'formal' model as reflected in EU Treaties is modelled in Figure 2.
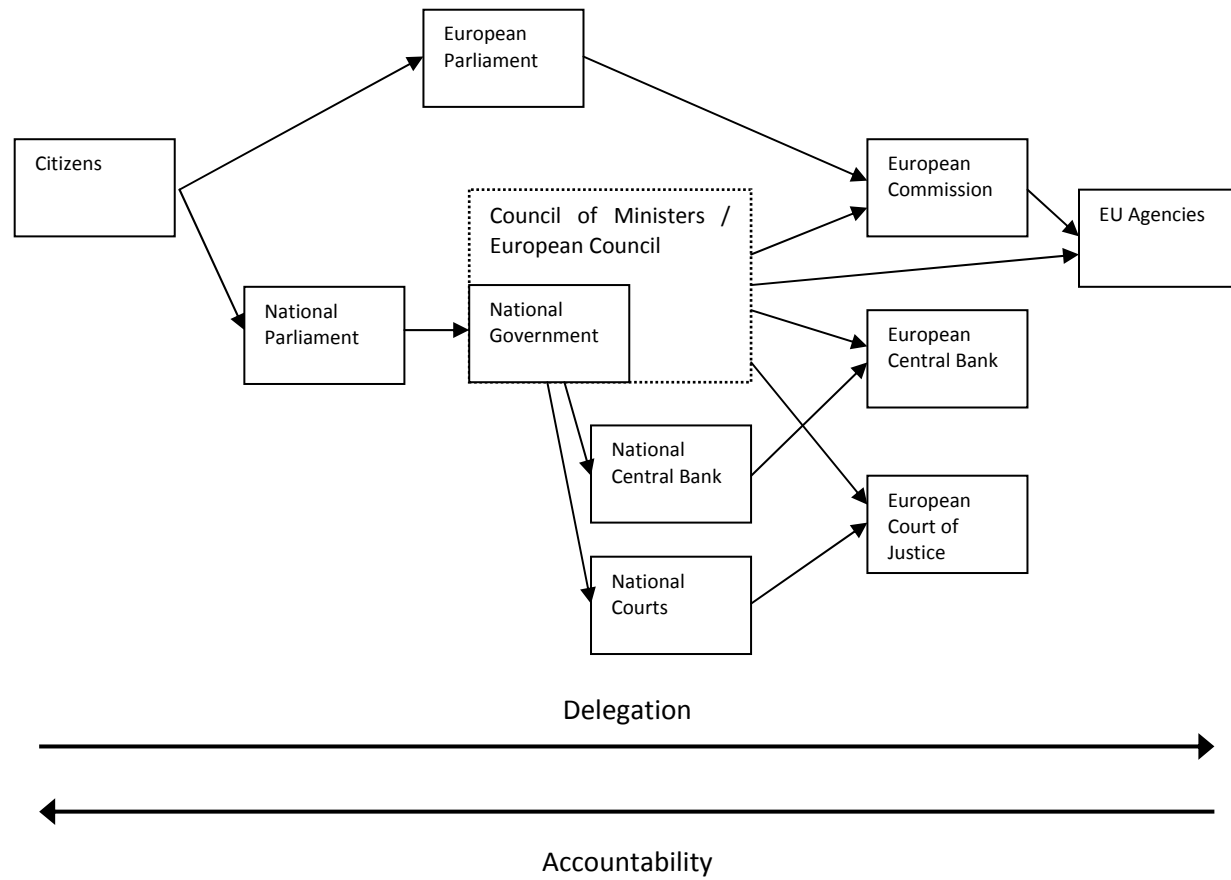
Figure 2: Model of delegation and accountability in the EU

The Importance of Public Discourse

From the perspective of politicisation, it is not the formal constitutional model of delegation and accountability that is interesting. Rather, it is the mental map citizens and their representatives have in mind when considering the workings of representative democracy in the EU. In other words, what is relevant for the study of politicisation, is how the various connections between citizens, their representatives and the institutions in the multilevel EU polity are affected, shaped and recreated through public discourse.

The relevance of public discourse structuring the mental map of delegation and accountability is best exemplified by one of the key developments reported to fundamentally change the traditional model of parliamentary democracy in Western European countries, referred to as 'presidentialisation' of politics (Burns 1999; Poguntke and Webb 2005). As Burns (1999) argues, the increasing dominance of mass media in political communication has strengthened a direct relationship between government – especially Prime Ministers or Heads of State – and citizens, thus bypassing the intermediary link of the national parliament. Rather than claiming to represent the majority of parliament, national government officials are increasingly claiming to represent citizens directly and citizens show more trust in national governments as their representatives than in national parliaments. These claims collectively constitute discourse. Thus, politicisation not only features contests of opinion, but also contests on who is best suited to advance these opinions. For instance, national parliaments and national governments may both claim to represent the will of the people. Yet, while both claiming to represent 'the will of the people', parliament and government can disagree both on desirable substance and strategy of policy. Relationships of representation, delegation and accountability are not fixed, but rather in flux and open to the interpretation and manipulation of both citizens and their representatives. While debating political issues, actors engage in competitive representation in the public sphere by 'claiming' to represent particular policy preferences, constituencies, interests or values (Saward 2006; 2009). This process of competitive representative claims-making has the power to alter the mental map of delegation and accountability, although limited by previously existing discourse, including the public acceptance of formal

constitutions and EU Treaties. It is thus in the discourse of the public sphere – potentially altered by politicisation – that the dominant patterns of delegation and accountability in the EU – and the effects of politicisation on citizen-elite relations – can be analysed (Pollak et al. 2009; Saward 2006; Trenz 2009; Trenz and De Wilde 2009; Trenz and Eder 2004). In other words, understanding politicisation as competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere allows us to connect polarisation of opinion, intensifying debate and public resonance to the web of delegation and accountability in the EU polity and possible changes therein. To sum up, the analytical study of politicisation of European integration equals the study of how, when and why competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere affects, alters and recreates the EU's web of delegation and accountability thereby possibly changing the legitimacy of the EU polity and the course of European integration.

Conclusion

'Politicisation' has been a buzz word in European integration research lately. Hooghe and Marks (2009) claim that politicisation has been the central process that has changed public opinion concerning European integration from a permissive consensus to a constraining dissensus. The 'old politics' of integration by stealth may have come to an end due to politicisation as the actions of Europe's political elites in Brussels are now closely monitored and criticised by political parties, media and other societal actors. Yet, despite being attributed major importance to the process of European integration, the concept of politicisation has remained relatively unclear. Confusion is further added by a plurality of uses of 'politicisation' in the literature.

This article has started with a conceptual analysis of politicisation of European integration. It has shown that the literature variously discusses the politicisation of EU institutions, the politicisation of EU decision-making or the politicisation of issues related to European integration. In addition, the process of politicisation is ascribed three different functions: crystallising dimensions of conflict in the EU polity, raising the question of legitimacy of the EU polity, and altering the course of European integration. Overarching these different manifestations and functions is a common societal understanding of politics – i.e. a focus on the involvement of societal actors such as political parties, media, citizens and social movements

in EU politics – and a focus on the input side of the political system, where policy demands are articulated and transmitted towards policy-formulation.

Based on these overarching features, this article argues that politicisation is in fact an encompassing process with multiple manifestations and functions. To facilitate further empirical study, politicisation is defined as an increase in polarisation of opinions, interests or values and the extent to which opinions are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU. This article furthermore presents an analytical framework directing attention to competitive representative claims-making in the public sphere. What is needed now are empirical studies carefully measuring the extent to which issues related to European integration become politicised and depoliticised in the public sphere and linking these processes to the recreation or altering of relationships in the EU's web of delegation and accountability.

Article 2

No Effect, Weapon of the Weak, or Reinforcing Executive Dominance? How Media Coverage Affects National Parliaments' Involvement in EU Policy-formulation[1]

Abstract

This paper empirically investigates how media coverage of European Union (EU) policy-formulation affects the involvement of national parliaments in these processes. The literature has variously argued that the involvement of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation is unrelated to media coverage, that media strengthen the hand of backbenchers and opposition, or that media reinforce executive dominance. Using a mixed methodology research design for a longitudinal case study of debates on the EU budget in the Netherlands between 1992 and 2005, this paper presents evidence for all three hypotheses, but with clear variations over time. Although institutional arrangements clearly structure parliamentary

involvement limiting media effects, its explanatory power decreases as the intensity of debate increases. Limited media coverage reinforces executive dominance whereas extensive media coverage provides a weapon of the weak and strengthens the involvement of parliaments in general, and opposition parties in particular.

Introduction

Parliaments are key political institutions in the representative democracies of European Union (EU) Member States. Their active involvement in policy-formulation is important to hold government accountable in the chain of delegation that characterises representative parliamentary democracy (Strøm 2000; Strøm et al. 2003). Furthermore, they are a central arena for political debate; vital for collective will-formation and for providing citizens with meaningful choices during elections (Eriksen and Fossum 2002; Lord and Beetham 2001). National parliaments are 'cornerstones' on which to build the democratic legitimacy of the multi-level EU polity (Kiiver 2006; MacCarthaigh 2007; Smith 1996). The consensus on their importance has been codified in the EU Treaties (European Union 2008: Art. 12 TEU and Protocol 1).

However, most commentators agree that national parliaments in Western Europe have been in decline since the 1950s in relation to national governments (Burns 1999; Maurer and Wessels 2001; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007b; Raunio and Hix 2001). Put differently, national governments have increased their maneuvering freedom at the cost of parliamentary control. Although some counter trends have been observed since the beginning of the 1990s, the importance of national parliaments has become undermined by several developments. Firstly, experts have become increasingly influential in legislating as societal problems have become more complicated (Burns 1999). Secondly, the connection between political parties and voters has weakened (Katz and Mair 1995), reducing the legitimacy of representatives in parliament and opening up possibilities for bypassing national parliaments in a direct relationship between voters and government (Strøm 2000). Thirdly, the progressing border-crossing nature of societal problems has left national institutions – including national parliaments – unable to solve these problems alone. Parliaments have lost out in particular on issues where the EU has strong competencies, as both the constitutional

powers of national parliaments and their political options in these issue areas are limited (Raunio and Hix 2001).

Whereas the influence of parliaments is arguably in decline, media have become increasingly prominent in the EU. The increasing distance between voters and their representatives has left citizens increasingly dependent on mass media for political communication. Technological progress and liberalisation of the media market have further contributed to what can be called the 'mediatisation' of western European democracies and of the EU, where media increasingly affect the political agenda in EU member states, especially on EU issues (Altheide 2004; Van Noije et al. 2008). Media perform a role as agenda-setters by signalling which issues are politically important (Walgrave et al. 2008), but they also influence how citizens – and politicians – might think of EU issues by 'framing' them (De Vreese and Kandyla 2009; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). Framing is here understood as organising '[...] an apparently diverse array of symbols, images and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is at stake on the issue' (Gamson 2004: 245).

In light of the declining influence of national parliaments and rise of media importance, this study empirically investigates how media coverage of EU policy-formulation affects the involvement of national parliaments in these processes. The causal relationship between media coverage and parliamentary involvement is generally considered to be bidirectional. Thus, media influences parliament, and vice versa. Without denying that national parliaments also influence media, this study focuses exclusively on how and to what extent media affect parliaments. The existing literature provides conflicting insights, with some implying there is no link between media coverage and parliamentary involvement, some arguing media coverage facilitates parliamentary involvement and some arguing media inhibit parliamentary involvement. This paper outlines these three competing theoretical perspectives and assesses the validity of their propositions with a longitudinal case study of debates in newspapers and the national parliament in the Netherlands on the EU multi-annual budgets between 1992 and 2005.

Three Competing Hypotheses

The relationship between national parliaments and governments in EU policy-formulation can be described as a principal – agent relationship (Bergman 2000; Strøm 2000). Unlike presidential systems, the parliamentary democracies of Western Europe elect government from their midst. This creates a single chain of delegation from citizens to parliament, to government, and finally, to bureaucracy. Like any principal, parliament more or less explicitly mandates government to conduct negotiations on its behalf within the EU. It then faces the problem of giving government the leeway in negotiations to accomplish its goals on the one hand, and holding government accountable to make sure it represents parliament's interests adequately on the other hand (Pollack 1997). This principal – agent relationship between parliament and government is further complicated by the party political nature of parliaments (King 1976). Government is dependent on the support of the majority of parliament, represented by the governing party or coalition and challenged by opposition. Safeguarding accountability requires procedures, in which the principal makes a regular effort to control government. In the principal – agent literature, these procedures are known as 'police-patrol mechanisms' (McCubbins et al. 1987; Pollack 1997). They stand in contrast to 'fire-alarm mechanisms', where external actors warn the principal of any possible misbehaviour of the agent, on an irregular basis. To what extent and how media may provide such a fire-alarm mechanism stands at the centre of theoretical debate on the effects of media coverage on parliamentary involvement in EU policy-formulation.

With some noticeable exceptions (e.g. Auel and Benz 2005), most studies on the involvement of national parliaments in European integration focus on institutional adaptations made by parliaments to deal with the increasing relevance of EU decision-making (Maurer and Wessels 2001; Norton 1996b; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007c; Tans et al. 2007). During the early years of integration, national parliaments were hardly interested in European integration (Norton 1996a; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007b). Following the first enlargement, many national parliaments created European Affairs Committees (EACs) to deal with EU legislative proposals. Since the Treaty of Maastricht, national parliaments are explicitly recognised as important institutions in the EU polity. Particularly, there have been

improvements in making information timely available to facilitate scrutiny. Largely, these institutional adaptations are a direct response to the increasing importance and impact of European integration. However, there are strong national variations in both institutional arrangements and formal powers of parliaments. Parliaments in Member States with a strong tradition of parliamentary dominance are generally strong in European matters as well, and the inverse relationship also applies. In addition, a sceptic public opinion towards European integration is seen as strengthening national parliaments (Auel and Benz 2005; Bergman 1997; Raunio 2005; Saalfeld 2005). Thus, to the extent that societal factors affect parliamentary involvement, they do so through the intermediary step of institutional adaptation. In other words, media coverage is not attributed a direct role in explaining parliamentary involvement in particular policy-formulation processes. Our first hypothesis is thus:

HYPOTHESIS 1: Parliamentary involvement is structured by internal institutional arrangements, resulting in negligible influence of media coverage.

Studying the Austrian parliament, Pollak and Slominski (2003) criticised this institutional proposition for neglecting party political dynamics. Although, from a formal institutional point of view, the Austrian parliament should be at least as influential as the Danish one, it is much weaker in practice. This is largely because Austria – unlike Denmark – has majority governments. Members of Parliament (MPs) of coalition parties are unwilling to bind their ministers to strict negotiation mandates which might embarrass them should they fail to achieve them. As these MPs control a majority in parliament and the EAC, they block the adoption of strict mandates, in effect reducing the credibility of these police-patrol mechanisms. Aside from a majority in parliament providing a restraining factor, parliamentary involvement is further limited by information asymmetry (Holzhacker 2002; Raunio 2007a: 79). MPs have less expertise, resources and knowledge of what is happening at the EU level than government. Often, MPs would receive information from government too late, or it would be too technical and too much to deal with effectively. In addition, MPs have to spread their limited resources on many different issues, and the EU is often not deemed salient enough to warrant much attention (Møller Sousa 2008: 440-441).

To the extent that media empower parliament, it can be argued to function as a 'weapon of the weak'. Firstly, media coverage increases the political salience of issues related to European integration, giving parties an incentive to profile themselves on these issues and signal their positions to voters. Secondly, media coverage and wider public debate may provide opposition and backbenchers with allies necessary to influence government: 'It is the weak who want to socialize conflict, i.e., to involve more and more people in the conflict until the balance of forces is changed.' (Schattschneider 1960: 40). Opposition parties can reach out to constituencies and actors outside the parliamentary arena by presenting their positions in the media. Thirdly, media provide MPs with feedback from the policy-formulation process, indicating what aspects are controversial, who the stakeholders are and what their positions are. This feedback can then be used to challenge government in parliament, in effect providing a fire-alarm mechanism. Thus, our next hypothesis is as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 2: Media coverage increases the involvement of opposition and backbenchers in debates on EU-policy formulation as it provides them with an incentive, a platform and a resource to profile themselves on EU issues.

In order for this to function, the media would not only have to provide feedback on EU decision-making processes but also provide a platform for MPs to profile themselves in ways of their own choosing. This is problematic, according to the third theoretical proposition. Media follow standards of *news value* to determine what to report on and to what extent (Galtung and Ruge 1965; Pierron 2003: 170). One of the most important criteria determining news value is conflict, especially personalised conflict. Secondly, media pay more attention to actors who have a stronger say in policy-formulation. They are quite successful at picking out the most powerful actors within EU policy-formulation (Koopmans and Erbe 2004: 109). Combining these two factors, it is no surprise to find that media pay disproportional attention to European Council meetings when reporting on EU matters. These meetings are often characterised by (personal) conflict between Member States. In addition, media heavily rely on press releases by national governments for information on EU decision-making (Meyer 1999:

630). The result is that media frame the EU as an arena of intergovernmental conflict in which national governments are the primary actors and natural defenders of mutually exclusive national interests. To paraphrase Schattschneider (1960: 35): the fire alarm provided by the media rings with a strong intergovernmental tone. This may reduce the incentives of MPs to challenge government, as they do not want to be portrayed as hurting the national interest (O'Brennan and Raunio 2007a: 280). Our third and final hypothesis is thus as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 3: Media provide a platform for national governments to profile themselves and frame EU policy-formulation as a conflict between Member State governments defending national interests, inhibiting the involvement of national parliaments by discouraging domestic contestation.

In light of the second and third theoretical propositions, which focus on the behaviour of individual MPs and political parties, rather than formal institutions, it is surprising to find a lack of empirical case studies of policy-formulation processes. This study aims to contribute by providing a longitudinal case study with an actor-centred approach. In order to investigate the validity of the three hypotheses introduced above, a detailed in-depth study will be carried out to explore the characteristics of media coverage on EU policy-formulation and the extent to which it affects MP's behaviour individually, and national parliament's involvement collectively.

The Case of the EU Budget and the Netherlands

The EU budget provides a particularly rewarding case when studying the linkage between media and parliament for three reasons. Firstly, budgets are of intrinsic importance to the formation of political systems. Not only have budgets been one of the major tools of forging centralised nation states in the past, they have also been the topic of fierce contestation between kings and parliaments linking the raising of taxes to the principle of representation (Lindner 2006: 1). Secondly, the EU budget provides a particularly rich case in terms of the possibilities for comparison across time, issues and space. The same set of issues representing a broad reflection of EU competencies is discussed in all Member States simultaneously, every seven years in negotiations on multiannual package deals called

'financial perspectives' (FPs). These FPs are proposed by the European Commission, negotiated among Member States until unanimous adoption in the European Council and then renegotiated between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament resulting in an 'Inter Institutional Agreement' (Laffan 1997). Thus, the budget involves all important actors in EU legislative processes in a combination of intergovernmental and community method decision-making. National parliaments have a chance to influence their government's behaviour since Council has to reach agreement unanimously. Due to practical limitations, this study focuses on the negotiations of the last three FPs. The periods under consideration start with the month in which the Commission formally proposes the new budget and end with the month in which it was adopted by the European Council. Thus, the three periods under study are February 1992 – December 1992 on the FP called 'Delors II', July 1997 – March 1999 on 'Agenda 2000' and February 2004 – December 2005 on 'Financial Perspectives 2007-2013' (FP 07-13).

The Netherlands may be seen as a good case to compare differences in media effects on opposition and backbenchers, because backbenchers in the Netherlands enjoy relative autonomy in relation to government (Holzhacker 2002). As a result, plenary debates are not just between government and opposition, but rather between government, backbenchers and opposition. Furthermore, the comparatively consensual style of politics in the Netherlands provides a hard case for comparing media effects on government and on opposition as differences are inherently less pronounced than in more adversarial political cultures. The Dutch parliament is officially a two chamber parliament. However, its lower chamber – the *Tweede Kamer* – is politically much more important than the senate, also in relation to scrutiny of EU legislation. Formally, the Dutch parliament is not as influential as the Danish, Austrian, Swedish or Finnish parliaments, but stronger than the Belgian, Irish and Mediterranean parliaments in EU matters. Together with the UK, German and French parliaments, it ranks average in power (Kiiver 2006: 62; Raunio 2005). Its rules of procedure for dealing with EU legislation remained largely stable in the period of research (Hoetjes 2001). The relevant committees discuss Commission proposals and the Dutch position based on information provided by the government. After each European Council meeting, there is a plenary debate discussing the outcomes. Thus, if formal procedures structure parliamentary

involvement, we would expect no significant change of parliamentary involvement over time. The choice for a single-country case study limits the possibility for generalisation as nation-state specific factors are generally considered to have significant impact. The present study therefore functions as an exploration of the three hypotheses mentioned, rather than as an authoritative test.

Data and Method

As stated in the introduction, the dependent variable of this study is parliamentary involvement, rather than parliamentary influence or control over government, which is the primary theoretical interest in the literature. It is assumed that parliamentary involvement may influence government both directly and indirectly. Direct influence could take the form of binding resolutions resulting from plenary debates. Indirect influence may be exerted by shaping national discourse, constructing salience of issues, and signaling policy outcomes that can count on a majority in parliament to government. Irrespective of actual influence, parliamentary involvement may largely be seen as an attempt to influence or control government. Involvement will be operationalised as the amount of claims made by MPs in plenary. The more claims made by an MP or party, the stronger his/her/its involvement in EU policy-formulation. The more claims made by MPs (not in government) collectively, the stronger parliament's involvement as a whole.

This study conducts structured qualitative content analysis of newspaper articles and parliamentary debates to locate and qualify claims in the media and in parliament. Although television news is often regarded to have greater impact as it reaches more citizens (De Vreese 2001; Peter et al. 2003), differences between sensationalist and serious news are more pronounced than between newspapers and television news (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). It is therefore important to include both sensationalist and serious news outlets in the sampling. Since historical newspaper archives are easily accessible and allow for sophisticated sampling, this study samples newspaper articles rather than television news. Newspapers included are NRC Handelsblad, Trouw and Algemeen Dagblad. The first two are serious newspapers with a more political right and left signature respectively, whereas Algemeen Dagblad is more sensationalist.

This study builds on the method of claims-making analysis (Koopmans 2002; Koopmans and Statham 1999). 'Claims' consist of WHERE and WHEN, WHO makes a claim, on WHAT, HOW, addressing WHOM, for/against WHOSE interests and WHY2. A claim is defined as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere: '[...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field' (Statham 2005: 12). The archetypical claim would be a verbal speech act concerning some political good that could be loosely translated as: 'I (do not) want …'. However, the definition above is far more inclusive, including claims such as meetings of the European Council, protests by farmers, resolutions tabled by parliaments and critical comments by journalists. In textual terms, a claim can be as short as a few words, or as elaborate as several paragraphs, as long as it is made by the same claimant(s), making a single argument on a single topic related to the EU budget. The main advantage of claims-making analysis is that it analyses units of analysis as a combination of values on a given set of variables, rather than providing a word search in which the relationship between words is lost in counting, or a discourse approach in which the findings cannot be quantitatively expressed. The price to pay for this advantage is that the study must be limited in scope, since the method is highly labour intensive.

The staged data collection and analysis in this study provide a mixed methodology research design. Newspaper articles and plenary debates were sampled using a search string in digitalised archives3. Every fourth newspaper article in chronological order was picked; this also reflected a representative sample of the three newspapers. From the parliamentary documents, all transcripts of plenary debates and oral questions were selected4. Although most national

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2 The codebook used in the empirical analysis as well as the coding results can be obtained from the author upon request.

3 The search string for both media and parliamentary documents consisted of three search terms: 'EU budget' ('EC budget' in 1992) OR 'European budget' OR 'Delors II' / 'Agenda 2000' / 'Financial Perspectives'. As each search term consists of a word combination, false hits were negligible.

4 The total sample for qualitative coding included 158 newspaper articles and 20 transcripts of plenary debates. A total of 1580 claims was subtracted. The heuristic

parliaments in the EU have adopted EACs to deal with EU policy-formulation and these institutions are generally the most important institutional setting for parliamentary involvement, studying plenary debates has several advantages. Plenary documents have the advantage of being literally transcribed debates. This stands in contrast to the documentation of committee meetings which is irregular, sometimes not publicly accessible, and only provides a summary of the discussion. Therefore, EAC archives do not allow for the linkage of claims – and references to the media – to individual MPs in a historical study, as envisioned here. Also, plenary sessions may be seen as the proverbial 'tip of the iceberg' in parliamentary involvement for two reasons, because only controversial issues make it to the floor after committees have first tried to resolve them. Finally, they are more visible to the public as they are more often covered in the news. As Holzhacker (2005: 430) argues:

> Often the committee structure of a parliament is important to integrate the opposition into the life of the parliament without unduly burdening the general plenum with every objection from every single member of the opposition. But in the media age, when debate in plenum is often the only opportunity for the opposition to reach out to the broader public, the voice of opposition must also be heard at times in plenary sessions [...]

The same may be said for backbenchers and parliament as a whole. Because of this, plenary debates arguably combine the twin functions of parliaments – controlling government and providing an arena for public debate – better than committee meetings do and at the same time provide better quality data for claims-making analysis. Claims in plenary debates not only include speeches and questions, but also tabled resolutions and votes.

This study uses Atlas.ti software to code the articles and debates. Coding was done qualitatively in chronological order, thus providing a process-tracing exercise. Variables were operationalised as closed categorical variables allowing for later quantitative analysis, after exporting the results to statistical software tools. The following analysis thus builds on both qualitative findings from the process-

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files containing original documents and coding, the database and the codebook are available from the author upon request.

tracing exercise and quantitative analysis of the coding results. These methods are combined in a hierarchical way, where qualitative findings are used to inform and illustrate quantitative findings (Read and Marsh 2002).

No Effect, Weapon of the Weak or Reinforcing Executive Dominance?

As indicated in Figure 3, there are remarkably strong differences in the intensity of the debates on the three FPs, even when taking into account that the debate on Delors II lasted only 11 months as opposed to 21 months for Agenda 2000 and 23 months for FP 07-13.
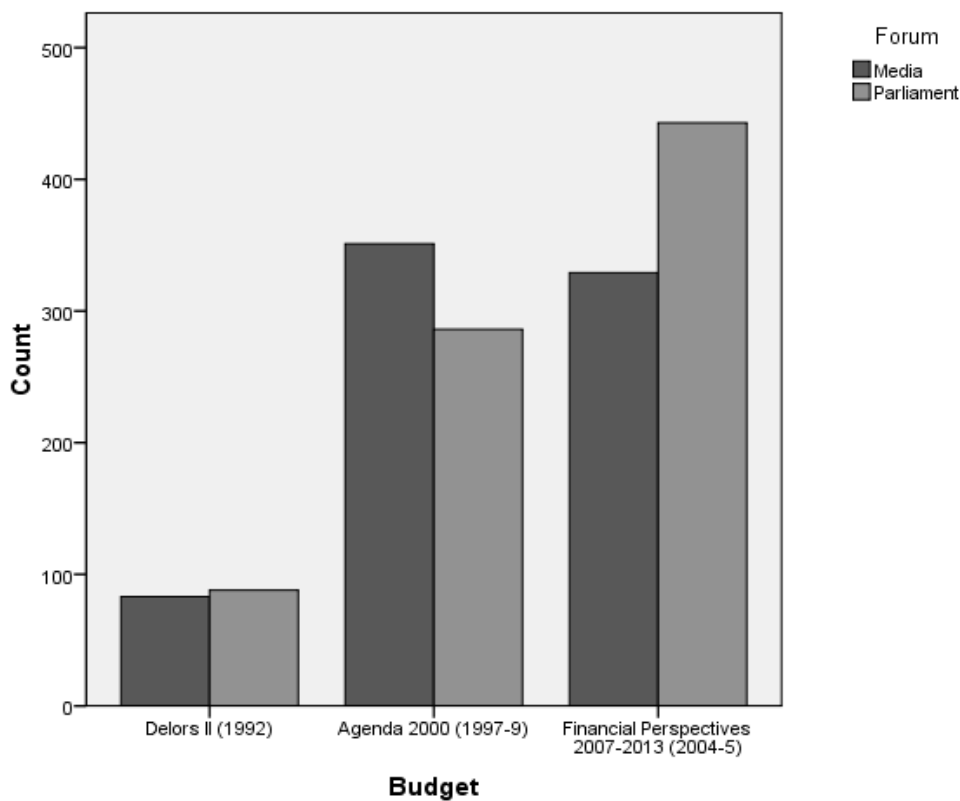
Figure 3: Claims in the media and parliament per budget (N = 1580)

Table 2: Claims by Dutch party claimants in media and parliament per budget (N = 1007)

		Delors II (1992)		Agenda 2000 (1997-9)		Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	
		Media	Parliament	Media	Parliament	Media	Parliament
Claimant	National Government	21.4%		19.2%	1.4%	31.0%	
	Prime Minister	7.1%	19.8%	9.2%	12.1%	19.0%	19.7%
	Foreign Minister			7.5%	1.8%	2.4%	1.8%
	Finance Minister	35.7%		23.3%	6.4%	26.2%	1.1%
	Agricultural Minister	7.1%		5.8%	3.5%	7.1%	.2%
	Europe Minister	14.3%	8.1%	10.0%	1.4%	2.4%	3.2%
	Other Minister	14.3%		1.7%	.7%		
	Subtotal	100.0%	27.9%	76.7%	27.3%	88.1%	26.1%
	Parliamentary Leader			.8%	5.7%		13.3%
	Member of Parliament		72.1%	20.0%	64.9%	7.1%	59.7%
	Political Party			2.5%	2.1%	4.8%	.9%
	Subtotal		72.1%	23.3%	72.7%	11.9%	73.9%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Claimant Affiliation	Radical Left				4.3%		11.1%
	Green		2.3%	.8%	12.1%		10.5%
	Social Democrat	50.0%[5]	32.6%	19.8%	22.7%	3.2%	12.6%
	Christian Democrat	28.6%	50.0%	4.0%	16.3%	33.9%	29.1%
	Progresive Liberal		3.5%	16.7%	13.8%		8.0%
	Liberal		5.8%	39.7%	18.1%	25.8%	11.2%
	Orthodox Protestant		5.8%	.8%	11.0%		9.2%
	Radical Right						8.2%
	Other				.4%	3.2%	
	Coalition	21.4%		18.3%	1.4%	33.9%	
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Government	Coalition	100.0%	82.6%	94.4%	56.0%	93.5%	48.3%
	Opposition		17.4%	5.6%	44.0%	6.5%	51.7%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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[5] Underlined percentages represent parties in goverment

The steep rise in number of claims poses a challenge to hypothesis 1. After all, one would predict stability of parliamentary involvement in periods without institutional change based on this hypothesis, whereas Figure 3 shows a remarkable increase in involvement despite only marginal institutional adaptations. The apparent correlation between claims in the media and in parliament might be a spurious one. Two obvious candidates present themselves which may cause such a spurious relationship. First, both media and parliament may respond to a change in national interest, particularly the change the Netherlands went through from being a net-receiver of EU funds to being its largest pro-capita contributor. Secondly, the contentiousness of the process at EU level may be an explanation for the larger debate. Time needed to reach agreement in the European Council is here seen as an indication of the contentiousness at EU level. Thus, although Figure 3 presents a challenge to the first hypothesis, it is far from conclusive evidence for hypothesis 2 or 3. We will therefore turn our attention to the propositions underlying the three hypotheses in more detail.

Institutional dynamics

Parliamentary proceedings are in general highly institutionalised. There are particular forums – like committee meetings and plenary sessions – that convene at preordained times and in predetermined settings. The proceedings within these forums are highly regulated as well, ranging from a set speaking order and speaking time for each participant to rules for directing and phrasing interventions. Illustrating this, during the debate following the Edinburgh Council on 16 December 1992, Van Traa MP (PvdA; social-democrats) only got a few minutes to ask the government questions, as his colleague – Lonink MP – had already spoken for 11 minutes before, and each party was only allowed to speak for 10 minutes in total (Tweede Kamer 1992: 2829). Also, Vos MP (GroenLinks; greens) was denied the floor entirely on 11 February 1999 as she had not been present at the preceding committee meeting, thus forgoing her right to speak in the plenary (Tweede Kamer 1999). Finally, Wilders MP (radical right) was corrected by Parliament's president for violating proper courtesy norms, when he referred to foreign Minister Bot simply as 'that man' on 21 June 2005 (Tweede Kamer 2005b: 5595)6.

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[6] All translations from Dutch to English by the author.

All three debates are clearly affected by institutional rules. The fact that the majority of plenary claims are made in ex post debates following European Council meetings is the strongest evidence for this. It is also clear that MPs let their claims be structured largely by documents provided by the government, particularly Council conclusions. This becomes apparent in the adherence to the same ranking order of topics and even in the literal reference by MPs to these conclusions. However, a minority of claims during Agenda 2000 and FP 07-13 were made outside this institutional arrangement. As the debate heated up, MPs increasingly made claims in various other outlets, like weekly question hours, annual discussions of the state of the EU and annual national budget negotiations. For instance, on 11 February 1999, as the negotiations on Agenda 2000 approached conclusion, Atsma MP (CDA; Christian-democrats) in opposition, demanded a special plenary session to demand of government that it would safeguard the income of Dutch farmers, even though the same topic had been discussed in a committee meeting that morning (Tweede Kamer 1999). The overall explanatory power of institutional dynamics for parliamentary involvement decreases as media coverage increases. The latter two budget debates saw parliamentary involvement increasingly going beyond the preordained post European Council debates.

Weapon of the weak

To assess the extent to which media coverage provided a weapon for the weak by socialising conflict, we will look at references to the media by MPs in their claims. A claim is 'supported' by media when an MP directly refers to media in his or her claim. An example is provided by Timmermans MP (PvdA), who started a claim with: 'In his by now much discussed interview in de Volkskrant last Saturday, Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries Minister Veerman made several remarks on [European] agricultur[al policy].' (Tweede Kamer 2005c: 1847). As Table 3 shows, claims in parliament are only rarely supported.

Table 3: Supported claims by Dutch coalition and opposition in parliament per budget (N = 805)

		Delors II (1992)		Agenda 2000 (1997-9)		Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	
		Coalition	Opposition	Coalition	Opposition	Coalition	Opposition
Support Claimant	National Government				.8%	.5%	
	National Parliament			.6%	.8%	5.7%	1.3%
	Prime Minister						.9%
	Foreign Minister						.4%
	Finance Minister			1.3%		1.4%	.4%
	Agricultural Minister	2.8%				1.4%	1.8%
	Parliamentary Leader			.6%		.5%	.9%
	Member of Parliament	1.4%	6.7%		2.4%	1.9%	2.2%
	Political Party				.8%	.9%	1.3%
	Subtotal	*4.2%*	*6.7%*	*2.5%*	*4.8%*	*12.3%*	*9.3%*
	EU (general)						.4%
	EU Institutions (general)						.4%
	European Commission				1.6%	.9%	1.3%
	European Council				.8%		
	European Parliament				2.4%		.4%
	Other Member State Government(s)			.6%		1.9%	3.5%
	International Organisation					.5%	.4%
	NGO / Social Movement						.4%
	Media / Journalist			4.4%	6.5%	1.9%	4.0%
	Famous People						.4%
	Academics / Specialists			.6%	2.4%		.4%
	Subtotal			*5.7%*	*13.7%*	*5.2%*	*11.9%*
	None	95.8%	93.3%	91.8%	81.5%	82.5%	78.8%
	Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

However, claims became more often supported as the debate intensified from Delors II to Agenda 2000 and FP 07-13. On two of the main topics that dominated the Dutch debate on FP 07-13 – the Dutch net contribution and the spending on Agricultural policy – the media

documented conflicting statements by the government. Regarding net contributions, foreign Minister Bot (CDA) gave away the official governmental negotiating position. Among others, Wilders MP challenged him on 21 June 2005 as follows: 'In a newspaper this morning, Minister Bot said: 'We are willing to remain the largest net-contributor.' Has Mr. Bot completely lost his mind?!' (Tweede Kamer 2005b: 5578). Concerning spending on Agricultural policy, the official Dutch position was that spending should be reduced. However, the main governing party – CDA (Christian-democrats) – remained ambiguous, having traditionally defended the interests of farmers. Agricultural Minister Veerman (CDA) threatened in the media to resign should the current ceiling on spending be lowered (NRC Handelsblad 2005). The government was heavily challenged over this proclamation by several parties in parliament, including the two liberal parties (VVD and D66) that were in the governing coalition together with CDA. With their help, parliament adopted a 'follow Tony' resolution – in reference to British Prime Minister Blair – forcing government to work with the British EU presidency in trying to find possibilities for reducing spending on agriculture in return for reducing the British rebate.

Opposition members are more likely to make supported claims than coalition members, particularly when they can embarrass government with it. What is particularly interesting is the difference in the location of the support, as shown in Table 3. Whereas claims by the coalition are most often supported from within parliament or government, claims of the opposition find support largely outside the national political arena. This is most pronounced during the debate on FP 07-13, where 9,3 per cent of claims by opposition members were supported from within the national political arena whereas 11.9 per cent were supported outside the national political arena. For coalition members, the percentages are 12,3 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively, showing a clear reversed relationship. Among sources for support outside the national political arena, media are the most prominent. These percentages provide clear evidence for the 'weapon of the weak' hypothesis. Moreover, it is likely that some of the outside support from other sources than the media is actually channelled through the media. For instance, media provide opposition members with information on the position of other Member States' governments, thus allowing them to present these

governments as supporters of their claims, like in the 'follow Tony' resolution.

The actual number of claims in parliament triggered by media coverage is larger than the percentages in Table 3 suggest. Firstly, claims by MPs who base support for their claims in the media trigger responses from other politicians without explicit reference to the media. Secondly, government action as reported in the media triggered responses in parliament. MPs often addressed government's negotiation behaviour in Brussels in their claims. Finally, media's emphasis on government behaviour in intergovernmental behaviour and the national interest triggered counter-actions by some MPs. Notably, Karimi MP (GroenLinks) in opposition with passive support from D66 in government charged government with 'narrow-minded nationalism', argued the common European interest was more important than net-contributions, and tabled a resolution asking government to work towards an EU-wide tax to avoid tough intergovernmental bargaining in future (Tweede Kamer 2005b: 5605). This stands in clear contrast to her predecessor in 1992 – Brouwer MP – who thought parliament should not be so preoccupied with 'the EC's internal affairs'
(Tweede Kamer 1992: 2823).

All in all, increased media attention for the EU budget during Agenda 2000 and FP 07-13 in relation to the coverage of Delors II coincided with a much stronger involvement of opposition MPs in the latter two periods. Their share of claims increased from 17,4 per cent during Delors II to 44,0 per cent of the claims made during Agenda 2000 and 51,7 per cent of claims during FP 07-13, as shown in Table 2.

Reinforcing Executive Dominance
In this section, we discuss the extent to which news value criteria structured the debate in the media and whether this resulted in an over representation of executive powers and a stress on intergovernmental conflict in the media and parliament.

As shown in Table 2, the relationship between executive and legislative actors in parliamentary debates is remarkably stable across the different negotiations. Government is responsible for between

27,9 per cent and 26,1 per cent of the claims by national politicians. However, in the media, executive actors are much more dominant, ranging from 100 per cent percent of the claims during Delors II, 76,7 per cent during Agenda 2000 to 88,1 per cent during FP 07-13. Reporting by newspapers on the negotiations in Brussels and government's comments on this process are prime examples of this bias. On 15 September 1997, *NRC Handelsblad* reported on the opening phase of negotiations on Agenda 2000:

> Let's pound on it' is not usual diplomatic language you can expect from Dutch Ministers concerning the European Union. But finance Minister Zalm expressed himself in these words during the monthly meeting of European finance Ministers [...] regarding the height of Dutch contributions to the European Union'
>
> (NRC Handelsblad 1997)

This example eloquently illustrates the media's bias towards both executive actors and intergovernmental conflict. Although there is clear evidence of the expected effects of news value criteria, this bias diminishes as the debate intensifies as illustrated by the lower percentage of claims made by government in the media during the two more intensely debated budgets.

There is additional support for the hypothesis that media reinforce executive dominance when looking at framing, displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Framing in the media and parliament per budget (N = 1580)

Frame Type		Delors II (1992)		Agenda 2000 (1997-9)		Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	
		Media	Parliament	Media	Parliament	Media	Parliament
Frame Type	Intergovernmental conflict	22.9%	15.9%	31.1%	20.6%	34.0%	26.2%
	Supranational conflict	6.0%	4.5%	5.1%	1.7%	3.6%	2.3%
	Domestic conflict	1.2%	8.0%	3.4%	7.7%	3.0%	10.4%
	Other conflict	3.6%	3.4%	4.3%	1.7%	3.0%	.9%
	Subtotal	*33.7%*	*31.8%*	*43.9%*	*31.8%*	*43.8%*	*39.7%*
	Cooperation	36.1%	56.8%	37.6%	50.0%	45.6%	47.6%
	No frame	30.1%	11.4%	18.5%	18.2%	10.6%	12.6%
	Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Claimants in the media *frame* the policy-formulation process more often as a case of intergovernmental conflict than claimants in parliament. In the opening phase of the Delors II debate, *Trouw* reported that:

> A tough battle between the richer EC Member States is about to ensue. Germany, for instance, thinks it's not unfair that the British have to start paying more to the EC ... Germany declines paying an unreasonable sum of money for the economic development of poorer Member States [...]
>
> (Koele 1992)

Thus, media create the picture that the policy-formulation process on the EU budget is a question of intergovernmental bargaining, in which each Member State defends its national interest. The outcome is a compromise which is only reached after an intense and prolonged struggle. On 23 June 1998, Van den Akker MP (CDA) complained about this. In his words:

> What is more important to the citizen than peace, security, a well functioning economy, ... and a job? However, these topics do not dominate the news on Europe. No, what the European citizen reads in the newspaper and sees on television is the twisting and scheming [...] [a]nd that the use of financial contributions is questioned
>
> (Tweede Kamer 1998a: 6045)

The epitome claim of intergovernmental conflict concerning the EU budget; Thatcher's famous 'I want my money back', was regularly invoked throughout the period of research, even though that claim was made back in 1984, by a non-Dutch claimant. Moreover, as the intergovernmental frame became more dominant in the media and media coverage increases, so did it become more dominant in parliament. During Delors II, 22,9 per cent of claims in the media and 15,9 per cent of claims in parliament framed the EU budget as a case of intergovernmental conflict. These percentages increased to 31,1 per cent and 20,6 per cent during Agenda 2000 and 34,0 per cent and 26,2 per cent during FP 07-13 respectively. Illustrating this type of framing, Belgian Prime Minister Dehaene's summary of the Vienna Council was quoted by Timmermans MP (PvdA) on 17 December 1998: 'No one wants to pay more, some want to pay less, no one wants to receive less and we all have to pay more for the enlargement. Go figure!' (Tweede Kamer 1998b: 2808). This lends support to the second aspect of hypothesis 2: that framing in the media biases towards intergovernmental conflict and that media coverage inhibits the scope of domestic conflict by affecting framing in parliament.

Thus, this study provides support for the hypothesis that media reinforce executive dominance. This is evident as the media disproportionally provide a platform for executive actors to profile themselves. Interestingly though, the overrepresentation of executive actors diminishes as media coverage intensifies. During the two most intense debates, the media provided a platform for parliament as a whole, and members of opposition parties in particular, next to executive actors. However, media remained continuously biased towards framing the policy-formulation process as a conflict between Member States in which the domestic government is the most important defender of the national interest. As media coverage increased, this framing also gained ground in parliamentary debates.

Conclusion

The present study provides for a limited theory test only. It has looked at a limited number of EU-related issues, in a time frame covering 14 years only, in one single member state. Therefore, the conclusion is restricted to theoretical, rather than empirical generalisation. In other words, the results from this case study will be

used to refine the hypotheses about the relationship between media coverage and parliamentary involvement in EU policy-formulation, rather than to reach empirical conclusions. These hypotheses should be tested in further empirical research, including more cases across time, space and/or issues. Furthermore, this detailed in-depth case study of parliamentary behaviour has pointed our attention to two factors that may create a spurious relationship between media coverage and parliamentary involvement. First, the extent to which national interests are at stake may affect both factors. Increase in media coverage and parliamentary involvement coincided with the Netherlands becoming the biggest net-contributor. Secondly, the contentiousness of the policy-formulation process at the EU level may have this effect. There were strong differences in the length of the negotiations required to reach a compromise, with the longer periods being characterised by more intense debate in both media and parliament. Further studies should try to control for these factors.

That being said, this study finds evidence of strong variation of Dutch parliamentary involvement in policy-formulation on multiannual EU-budgets, which cannot be attributed to institutional dynamics alone. There is clear evidence that media provide a weapon of the weak in that it empowers opposition in parliament. However, news value logics reinforce executive dominance. Only when media coverage reaches certain levels of intensity is this mechanism losing explanatory force. We then find that legislative actors – especially members of opposition parties – gain a stronger voice in parliament, and to some extent in the media. We therefore hypothesise that institutional arrangements structure parliamentary involvement, but cannot fully explain its intensity or the composition of its participants. To explain parliamentary involvement more fully, we need to look at media effects. Limited media coverage of EU policy-formulation processes reinforces executive dominance whereas more intensive media coverage starts providing a weapon of the weak and increases the involvement of national parliaments as a whole, and opposition parties in particular.

Article 3

Reasserting the Nation State: The Trajectory of Euroscepticism in the Netherlands 1992-2005[1]

Abstract

Scholarly debate on party-based Euroscepticism centres on the questions of how to define, measure and explain Euroscepticism. As a starting point, this paper observes that studies on Euroscepticism either focus on the positions of individual parties on issues of European integration or on the character of public discourse in different member states. Studies on party positions excel in emphasising the agency political parties provide for Euroscepticism and the extent of domestic contestation, whereas studies of public discourse are more apt to uncover the meaning of Euroscepticism and its dynamics as parties interact in the public sphere. Both strands are predominantly focused on European integration in general or constitutional issues specifically. The present study incorporates the qualities of both strands, using the method of claims-making analysis. It furthermore aims to enrich our understanding of party-based Euroscepticism by studying a non-constitutional issue: debates on the

European Union (EU) budget in the Netherlands between 1992 and 2005. A mixed methodology research design provides both quantitative and qualitative data in a longitudinal comparative case study, leading to a conceptualisation of how the permissive consensus in the Netherlands changed towards Euroscepticism through a process of politicisation in which the issue was internalised, followed by calls for renationalisation. Substantially, this study shows how the budget and its costs featured prominently in Dutch party politics and how the importance of this issue fed and featured Euroscepticism.

Introduction

Euroscepticism as expressed by political parties in the various European Union (EU) Member States has attracted considerable scientific research in recent years (Marks et al. 2006; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008b; 2008c; Taggart 1998). The scientific attention for this topic seems warranted, given the increased resistance European integration is encountering in public opinion, mass media and party politics (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Futhermore, Euroscepticism may affect the form and legitimacy of the EU polity (Eriksen and Fossum 2007), as it may restrict the possibilities of continued European integration. Despite extensive investigation, there remain controversies surrounding the definition, measurement, and causal explanations of party-based Euroscepticism (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008d). The present study aims to address two gaps in scientific research on party-based Euroscepticism. First and foremost, it argues that there are two different strands of research, which hardly interact with one another. One strand focuses on different political party positions related to European integration, whereas the second strand focuses on the way Euroscepticism is expressed in public discourse by political parties among others. To include the qualities of both strands, and avoid their pitfalls, this study employs claims-making analysis to study Euroscepticism. As a secondary aim, this paper draws attention to the preoccupation in studies of Euroscepticism with constitutional EU issues and argues that a full understanding of Euroscepticism requires a study of political contestation on non-constitutional issues, to complement existing knowledge. Non-constitutional issues may both feature as well as feed into Euroscepticism.

Studies with a focus on party positions understand Euroscepticism as a range of negative attitudes towards European integration as a *principle*, aspects of the policy formulation *process* within the EU, or the continuous *project* of integration as advanced by the EU (Morgan 2005: Ch. 3). In other words, parties may be opposed to any cooperation between nation states in Europe, they may oppose the way EU policies come into existence, or they accept the status quo, but oppose any further political or economic integration. Opposition to the project may further target the increasing influence of supranational institutions in existing EU competencies or *level* of integration, competencies in new policy fields or *scope* of integration, or the *inclusiveness* of integration, i.e. enlarging the group (of countries) affected by European integration (Börzel 2005). Studies on party positions clearly demonstrate the extent to which EU issues are contested domestically, since they excel in exposing party differences on EU matters (Hix and Lord 1997; Kopecký and Mudde 2002; Marks and Wilson 2000; Marks et al. 2002; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008a). Clear differences between parties then allow for comparative research to uncover the causal mechanisms underlying these differences. However, by allocating static positions to individual parties, the interaction between parties through political contestation is lost. As a result, these studies fail to grasp the dynamics of interaction through which Euroscepticism is advanced or inhibited. Also, by limiting themselves to allocating each party a single position, these studies often overlook which specific parts of the principle, process or project of integration parties are opposed to.

Studies of public discourse on European integration, on the other hand, understand party-based Euroscepticism as a characteristic of political communication on European integration, to be located in the public sphere where party contestation takes place (De Vreese 2001; Diez Medrano 2003; Larsen 1999; Trenz 2004). Here, Euroscepticism is often reflected in how political parties (and other actors) *frame* European integration. In other words, how they organise '[...] an apparently diverse array of symbols, images and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is at stake on the issue' (Gamson 2004: 245). These studies excel in clarifying meanings attributed to European integration by parties as well as how Euroscepticism develops through the interaction of political parties, thus emphasising historical development of Euroscepticism. However, they often limit themselves to what they

perceive to be the dominant narrative in each Member State, understanding a national public discourse as a single unit of analysis. Although we may thus understand the meaning and targets of Euroscepticism, this holistic approach underemphasises the extent to which different interpretations of European integration are contested domestically. In other words, studies of public debates focus our attention on whether political debates in certain member states feature Euroscepticism, but they rarely clarify which parties advance and which constrain Euroscepticism, let alone quantify or map the extent of this contestation. Furthermore, by primarily focusing on changing narratives, the extent to which Euroscepticism requires political parties as its agents becomes blurred.

Despite the apparent lack of interaction between these two strands of research, they do not necessarily exclude one another. As a start towards bridging the gap, party-based Euroscepticism may be defined as a constellation of claims advanced by political parties in the public sphere negatively characterising European integration in principle, aspects of the EU policy formulation process, or the level, scope or inclusiveness of the integration project.

Both strands of Euroscepticism studies share a preoccupation with constitutional issues, which makes sense since Euroscepticism can be understood as some degree of polity opposition. This focus may also be the pragmatic result of studying Euroscepticism in party manifesto's or through expert surveys, where general positions on European integration predominate (Klingemann et al. 2006; Ray 1999), or of studying Euroscepticism in general elections or EU-referendum campaigns, which – if EU issues feature at all – predominantly feature constitutional issues (Johansson and Raunio 2001; Raunio 2007b; Vetters et al. 2006). As a result, we know little of party-based Euroscepticism as expressed in non-constitutional issues, despite the fact that policy-formulation processes on non-constitutional issues may not only feature more general polity opposition, but also feed it by creating grievances. Examples of such non-constitutional issues are the Service Directive, the Foot and Mouth Disease scandal, or Jörg Haider's assent to the Austrian government (e.g. Miles 2002; Van de Steeg 2006).

As stated above, this paper aims to address these two lacunae in the study of party-based Euroscepticism. It does this by using claims-

making analysis: a method capable of measuring party positions, interaction and narratives, arguably including the best of both strands of research. The use and value of this method will be demonstrated studying debates in the Netherlands on the three multiannual EU budgets adopted between 1992 and 2005. The Netherlands provides an interesting case as many parties have moved from a pro-European position in the early 1990s towards open Euroscepticism more recently. Before turning to more elaborate investigation of the three budget debates, I will briefly introduce the case first and the method second. Finally, the conclusion will discuss the added value of using claims-making analysis for studying Euroscepticism and address some of the particular findings related to the EU budget, as opposed to constitutional issues.

The Netherlands, the EU Budget and claims-making

Euroscepticism in the Netherlands has received much scholarly attention in both Dutch (Aarts and van der Kolk 2005; Vollaard and Boer 2005) and English (Aarts and van der Kolk 2006; Harmsen 2008; Vollaard 2006) following the negative result of the June 2005 referendum on the Constitutional Treaty. Despite the shock of the Dutch 'no' to both politicians and scholars, a steady increase in party-based Euroscepticism can be traced throughout the 1990s (Voerman 2005). In fact, party politics in the Netherlands provide one of the most obvious cases of a change from 'permissive consensus' to 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009), as the general tone of the debate turned from rather pro-European to rather Eurosceptical. The same duality in scientific research that characterises the general study of party-based Euroscepticism can be found in studies of the Netherlands. Position studies, like those of Pellikaan and Brandsma (2005), map Dutch political parties on a dimension of pro – anti European, where the mainstream parties CDA (Christian-democrats), PvdA (social-democrats), VVD (conservative liberals) and D66 (progressive liberals) as well as GroenLinks (greens) rank among the pro-Europeans, whereas the Eurosceptical group consists of SP (socialists), PVV/Wilders, LPF (radical right), ChristenUnie/GPV/RPF and SGP (orthodox protestants) (Pellikaan and Brandsma 2005: 102). While studying the public debate, Harmsen (2008) argues that Dutch political parties have increasingly been struggling with defining the 'limits' of

European integration. Neither one of these studies manages to include both the sense of agency and contentiousness in party-based Euroscepticism of position studies, as well as the meaning, interaction and dynamics of discourse approaches. Furthermore, due to the prominence of the June 2005 referendum in the Dutch political debate on European integration, Dutch scholarly efforts have so far been especially preoccupied with constitutional issues (e.g. Crum 2007).

One of the few non-constitutional EU issues that has been deemed to have had a strong influence on Dutch Euroscepticism, is the EU budget and the exceptional position of the Netherlands as large net pro-capita contributor to the EU (Harmsen 2008: 326; Petter and Griffiths 2005). This paper will investigate this further, by studying Dutch political debates on the multiannual EU budgets, during the negotiation of these so-called 'Financial Perspectives' in the European Council between February 1992 and December 1992 (Delors II), July 1997 – March 1999 (Agenda 2000) and February 2004 – December 2005 (Financial Perspectives 2007-2013). Aside from being particularly important for understanding Dutch Euroscepticism, the EU budget provides a rich topic for comparative research across issues and time, since a broad range of issues – including the Common Agricultural Policy, Structural Funds, total size of the budget, British rebate, EU tax competency, the EU's external dimension and Research and Development funds –are all included in the Financial Perspectives and return in more or less the same form every seven years.

To study Dutch political debates on these three EU budgets, this study employs claims-making analysis (Koopmans 2002; 2007; Koopmans and Statham 1999). This method is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between studies on party positions and studies on public debates on European integration. It captures the agency and contestation of party positions, as well as the interaction and dynamics taking place in public debates, as it maps how parties frame the EU budget and how claimants and their claims develop within the policy-formulation process and interact with one another. A claim is defined as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere: '[...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or

integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field' (Statham 2005: 12; Vetters et al. 2006: 8). The archetypical claim would be a verbal speech act concerning some political good that could be loosely translated as 'I (do not) want …'. However, the above definition is far more inclusive, incorporating claims such as meetings of the European Council, protests by farmers, resolutions tabled by parliaments and critical comments by journalists. In textual terms, a claim can be as short as a few words, or as elaborate as several paragraphs, as long as it is made by the same claimant(s), making a single argument on a single topic related to the EU budget. Claims consist of WHERE and WHEN, WHO makes a claim, on WHAT, HOW, addressing WHOM, for/against WHOSE interests and WHY.

This study employs a hierarchical mixed methodology design (Read and Marsh 2002). It takes an inductive approach. Although the method of claims-making analysis and its variables are fixed, the values within the variables are inductively constructed. Qualitative findings during the coding process are corroborated with quantitative coding results. These results are provided in tables 1 and 2 below and consecutively further explored and illustrated with particularly characteristic or influential individual claims in a historical narrative of the three budget debates. The historical narrative allows for the identification of key claims that represented a turning point in the debates as well as a qualitative assessment of the extent to which claims featured Eurosceptic justifications and fed into more general Eurosceptic narratives surpassing the EU budget as such. Furthermore, it allows for the separate reconstruction of the three distinct debates and a subsequent comparison.

Quantitative Findings

Claims-making analysis has already been used to study party-based Euroscepticism by Statham (2005; 2008), who operationalises it as party positions towards European integration on a scale from +1 (Pro-European) to -1 (Anti-European). Each claim made by parties is attributed a value of +1, 0, -1 or neutral on this scale and then average positions for each party are calculated. Applying a similar method in this study results in averages as displayed in Table 5. The topics of claims are divided into four groups: evaluation of the current or previous budgets, revenues in the budget under negotiation,

expenditures in the budget under negotiation and the process of policy-formulation. Only claims in the second group load onto Euroscepticism. Thus, all claims that, if honored, would decrease the revenues of the EU in the next budget period or make the budget more dependent on national contributions rather than 'own resources' are interpreted as Eurosceptical (negatively loading onto the pro-anti scale), as they would reduce the level, scope and/or inclusiveness of integration by curbing influence of supranational institutions in relation to Member States, limiting policy options of the EU, and reducing beneficiaries of EU funds. Likewise, claims supporting a bigger budget or more maneuvering capabilities for supranational institutions load positively on this scale. Thus, a plea for a reduction of the size of the EU budget or a smaller national contribution would get value -1, whereas a plea for less spending on agriculture would not load onto this scale as this addresses expenditures, rather than revenues.

Table 5: Average position of Dutch political parties on European integration and percentage of claims made[2]

	Delors II (1992)		Agenda 2000 (1997-9)		Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	
	Average	%	Average	%	Average	%
SP (Radical Left)	.	0	-0,29	3	-0,17	10
GroenLinks (Green)	.	2	0,40	9	0,44	9
PvdA (Social Democrats)	0,07	36	-0,01	23	-0,12	12
D66 (Progressive Liberals)	.	3	-0,17	16	0,02	7
CDA (Christian Democrats)	0,03	48	-0,11	13	-0,12	31
VVD (Conservative Liberals)	.	5	-0,24	27	-0,15	14
GPV/RPF/ChristenUnie, SGP (Orthodox Protestants)	.	5	0,00	8	-0,04	8
CD, LPF, GroepWilders (Radical Right)	.	0	.	0	-0,82	8
Total	0,04	99%	-0,13	99%	-0,14	99%
N	97		380		487	

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[2] Claims that were made by a member of the political party, in any office, or supported by one are included in the calculation. Claims in newspapers and plenary debates are weighed equally.

Several key aspects of the changing Dutch party landscape with respect to European integration become apparent immediately. First, only mainstream parties had a publicly advocated position on the EU budget during the Delors II debate, and it is was rather neutral. More parties became involved in the debate on Agenda 2000, coinciding with a turn towards Euroscepticism as the average position of all claims declined from neutral (+0,04) to slightly Eurosceptic (-0,13). Finally, the debate on FP 07-13 shows strong politicisation of the EU budget as radical right parties join the debate and positions range from +0,44 (GroenLinks) to -0,82 (LPF and GroepWilders). However, this article argues that this table does not provide a full picture, as it restricts itself to positions, excluding the narratives and interaction of parties in the public debates. First, it will become apparent that many claims, particularly in the latter two periods, do not concern the content of the budget at all and can therefore not be attributed a value on the pro – anti EU scale. Instead, they purely concern the interaction and behaviour of actors, thus addressing the policy-formulation process, rather than its content. For instance, they might evaluate the behaviour of the national government or the European Council without stating policy preferences. Furthermore, by adding the 'public discourse' aspects of claims-making analysis, including changes in meaning attributed to the EU budget as well as attributed constituencies, a richer picture of party-based Euroscepticism emerges. Table 6 provides an overview of the extent to which pro-European and Eurosceptic parties participated, how parties in government and opposition interacted, and the most frequent values on WHAT (topics), for WHOSE interests (constituency) and WHY (framing) featuring in the claims.

Table 6: Patterns of claims-making analysis per budget period[3]

		Delors II (1992)	Agenda 2000 (1997-9)	Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)
WHO (Claimant)	**Pro-European**	93%	88%	74%
	Eurosceptic	7%	12%	26%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
at WHOM (Addressee)	**Gov → Gov**	91%	33%	23%
	Opp → Gov	4%	46%	51%
	Gov → Opp	4%	16%	17%
	Opp → Opp	0%	5%	9%
	Total	99%	100%	99%
WHAT (Topic)		Agricultural Policy	Government Behaviour	Government Behaviour
WHOSE interests (Constituency)		Other Member States	Own Nation	Own Nation
WHY (Frame)		European integration	National Interest	National Interest
Total N		97	380	487

The next three sections will explore the three debates in chronological order, in more depth. These qualitative discussions will discuss, illustrate and contextualise Tables 5 and 6 above.

Delors II

The debate in the Netherlands on Delors II can be briefly summarised as late, little, mild and restricted to the two coalition parties, CDA and PvdA. It was late because parliament discussed the budget extensively in public only after the Edinburgh Council had reached final agreement. It was little and mild since the debate was not very intensive or aggressive. This is also reflected in the neutral positions taken by the only two political parties making ten or more claims as shown in Table 5. Finally, it is remarkable to find a near complete

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[3] The table incorporates all claims made by Dutch party officials in any office, in both newspaper articles and plenary debates. The claimants are categorised as follows: pro-European parties are all parties that advocated a 'yes' during the 2005 referendum (CDA, PvdA, VVD, D66 and GroenLinks), whereas Eurosceptical parties are all parties that advocated a 'no' (SP, Wilders, ChristenUnie and SGP) as well as their predecessors and party-family relatives (CD, LPF, GPV and RPF). GroenLinks is counted as Eurosceptic in 1992 and pro-European afterwards. Addressees exclude claims without addressees, organised along whether the claimant's party and the addressee's party were in government or opposition at the time.

absence of opposition parties in the debate. Only coalition parties disclosed comprehensive views on the EU budget and challenged government over its conduct during the negotiations. Domestic political contestation, as far as it existed, can thus be characterised by intra-party politics and limited contestation between the two coalition parties. Thus, there is little trace of traditional coalition versus opposition dynamics.

It may come as no surprise that the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the most addressed issue concerning the EU budget (Table 6), as this is the biggest expenditure post of the EU budget. Although the Dutch government – with clear consent by VVD and D66 in opposition – supported the MacSharry reforms – which changed production support to income support – and wanted to block increases in total expenditures on CAP, the position of the CDA remained ambiguous. It was caught between agreed government policy on the one hand and the interest of Dutch farmers – a main electoral base of the CDA – on the other hand. Agricultural Minister Piet Bukman (CDA) was accused by PvdA Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) of deliberately hindering reforms (Koele 1992). The main public proponent of substantial reductions of the CAP was Finance Minister Wim Kok (PvdA) (Algemeen Dagblad 1992). Largely, because he feared the Netherlands would become a large net-contributor to the EU if the CAP remained in current form. Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers (CDA) tried to dampen the potential conflict within his government and favored a pragmatic approach, as illustrated by his vague call for an 'intelligent discussion' (Tweede Kamer 1992: 2834).

Despite this potential – and even open – conflict within government, opposition parties did not jump on the opportunity to embarrass government. This lack of issue saliency is further illustrated by the predominant constituencies of the claims. As Table 6 illustrates, the most frequent constituency of the EU budget were other Member States. In other words, opposition parties either did not acknowledge the potential impact of Delors II on the Netherlands and Dutch citizens, or they choose to look at the policy-formulation process from a European perspective, rather than a national one. Exemplifying this, Ina Brouwer MP (GroenLinks) argued politicians should not be so preoccupied with 'the EC's internal affairs', but rather focus on the break-up of Yugoslavia instead of the EU budget (Tweede Kamer

1992: 2823). The lack of domestic contestation is further substantiated by the predominant framing of Delors II. It was portrayed as a necessary step to safeguard the future of the project of European integration in general – and the Maastricht Treaty in particular. Thus, Dutch parties followed the European Commission's lead, which had justified Delors II as 'the bill of Maastricht'. By accepting the Commission's rationale, Dutch political parties implicitly accepted the major features of Delors II as well, without much scrutiny.

To conclude, the permissive consensus of the early 1990s is clearly reflected in the Dutch debate on Delors II. Most parties in parliament allowed government to act as it pleased, with only the governing parties CDA and PvdA calling government to account. Even so, they did not defend very critical positions (Table 5) or positions that diverged from each other or government. Finally, Delors II was seen to affect mainly 'other Member States', as evident in the predominant constituency in party claims and the Commission's justification of needing a large budget and Cohesion funds to safeguard 'European integration' as agreed in the Maastricht Treaty was taken over by Dutch political parties. There is little to no trace of Euroscepticism in all this.

Agenda 2000

The Dutch debate on Agenda 2000 is remarkably different from the debate on Delors II and can be characterised as intense, diversified and internalised. Firstly, Agenda 2000 was much more intensely debated than Delors II. As Table 5 shows, a total of 380 claims were made by Dutch political parties on Agenda 2000 compared to merely 97 on Delors II. This near quadrupling of claims cannot simply be explained by the longer policy-formulation process, which lasted only twice as long. Secondly, the debate became much more diversified. As more political parties participated, different narratives were brought in. The debate on Delors II had been dominated by the two mainstream government parties CDA and PvdA. In contrast, the debate on Agenda 2000 still saw a majority of claims made by government parties PvdA, VVD and D66, but also featured significant contributions by a range of opposition parties. Finally, and most notably, the debate became nationally internalised. That is to say, political parties now focused on the implications of the budget

for the Netherlands and Dutch citizens, rather than other Member States.

From 1995 onwards, the Netherlands had become a net-contributor to the EU budget. The change from net-receiver to net-contributor had happened so drastically, that by 1997, the Netherlands were the highest per capita net-contributor to the EU budget. The VVD argued this was the most salient political aspect of the EU budget. In 1995 – directly after the Netherlands had become a net-contributor – the VVD party by means of Hans Hoogervorst MP tabled a resolution urging government to address this problem, which was accepted unanimously by parliament (Hoogervorst 1997). The strongest advocate for a drastic reduction of Dutch net-contributions, however, would become Finance Minister Gerrit Zalm (VVD). The VVD argued Dutch money was used to subsidise an inefficient and corrupt agricultural sector in France and Italy, thus linking a reduction of net-contributions to reform of the CAP. The VVD had traditionally been the party in favor of reducing national taxes and government spending at the domestic level. Transferring this argument for limited government to the EU level thus fitted party ideology as well as Zalm's position as Finance Minister. As a result, the VVD was most vocal in the debate (Table 5). The VVD's argument was supported by Prime Minister Wim Kok (PvdA), whom we remember as the main actor warning about the Dutch contribution to the EU back in 1992, when he was Finance Minister. The smaller coalition party D66 and its strongly pro-European Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo supported the tough stance against net-contributions. A call for reductions of net-contributions fitted well with its liberal credentials and the position taken by its two larger coalition parties. This accounts for the relatively Eurosceptic position taken by the otherwise pro-European D66 party during the Agenda 2000 debate, as shown in Table 5. Thus, the VVD party was able to rally its coalition partners behind the call for a significant reduction of net-contributions. Following general elections in 1998 after which the 'purple' coalition continued, explicit figures for a reduction in net-contributions were included in the governing agreement of the three coalition members (Kok et al. 1998).

There was some objection from the pro-European CDA and GroenLinks parties who argued the primary policy concern in question was realising EU enlargement, and that enlargement would

inevitably cost money (Tweede Kamer 1997). The strongest challenge, however, came from the European Parliament, in the person of Piet Dankert MEP of the PvdA (Dankert 1997). The former Europe Minister remained one of the strongest pro-European voices within the PvdA. He argued the net-contributions were an insignificant burden on the Dutch economy, disqualifying the tough language of the Dutch government. He further argued the figures used by the Dutch Finance Ministry to calculate net-contributions were highly dubious, unlike those of the Commission, which significantly differed. Several opposition parties in parliament jumped on the opportunity to embarrass the biggest governing party PvdA with this apparent internal conflict between Prime Minister Kok and Dankert MEP, giving headaches to party leader Ad Melkert (PvdA) who had to defend PvdA policy as clear and united in parliament (De Vries 1998).

With some exceptions, Dutch political parties generally agreed that net-contributions should be reduced, the CAP should be reformed and enlargement should be facilitated by the budget. Thus, there was limited substantial distance in party position. Rather, the discussion quickly focused on *how* the Dutch government should achieve these goals and, especially, whether the Dutch government should be willing to use its veto power if Dutch contributions were not reduced, even if this meant risking enlargement. We find this reflected in Table 6, where 'government behaviour' is the most frequently addressed issue concerning the EU budget on Agenda 2000.

To conclude then, we find a clear *politicisation* of the EU budget in the Netherlands during the debate on Agenda 2000, as opposed to the debate on Delors II. This politicisation consists of several components[4]. Firstly, there was a more intense debate as more parties participated in the debate, and more claims were made. Secondly, the debate became more polarised as parties took more diverging positions (Table 5), tried to present a coherent internal position on the budget, and challenged each other – particularly government parties – when this was not the case. Coalition members agreed on a common position before taking the issue to parliament. This stands in

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[4] De Wilde (2007: 19ff) provides a more elaborate discussion of the concept of politicisation and its components: intensity of debate, polarisation of opinion and public resonance.

marked contrast to Delors II, where MPs of coalition parties were the main challengers of government. Thus, the EU budget became part of 'normal politics' with a clear government vs. opposition dynamic. Thirdly, the debate became internalised as parties now claimed the EU budget affected domestic constituencies ('own nation'). No longer was the EU budget viewed as hardly relevant, with repercussions only for other countries. Rather, there were clearly attributed domestic implications of Agenda 2000. Finally, the process was framed more as intergovernmental conflict. This together with the domestic interests at stake legitimised a strong defence of 'national interests'.

Financial Perspectives 2007-2013

Despite Zalm's efforts during the policy-formulation process on Agenda 2000, the Netherlands remained the largest per capita net-contributor and the initial proposal of the Commission for FP 07-13 did not change that. Between 1999 and 2004, the Euro had been introduced. Many Dutch citizens complained that prices had risen as a result of the Euro. Add to this the extensively discussed impending enlargement with poor countries, and it becomes evident that there was ample sensitivity in the Netherlands to the economic costs of EU membership. This is reflected in the continued prominence of net-contributions as the central issue in the Dutch debate, although, as Table 6 shows, 'government behaviour' was again the most frequent topic.

Largely, the Dutch debate on FP 07-13 was more of the same in relation to Agenda 2000. Again, it was a much more intense debate than the debate on Delors II, featured more traditional patterns of party contestation and was dominated by the same portrayed constituency (own nation) and framing (national interest) as the debate on Agenda 2000. If anything, politicisation was even more pronounced as the intensity of the debate increased to a total of 487 claims compared to 380 on Agenda 2000 (see Table 6). There are however two remarkable differences of a quantitative and qualitative nature respectively, when comparing FP 07-13 to Agenda 2000. The first major change is that FP 07-13 features a stronger voice of Eurosceptic parties, particularly the radical right. During the Agenda 2000 debate, the critical voice arguing for a 'gloves off' defence of national interest was made by one of the mainstream parties (VVD)

in government. Now, the toughest challenges to the EU budget were voiced by the radical right parties (LPF and GroepWilders) in opposition, who saw no need of the Netherlands being a net-contributor whatsoever. Together with the SP, ChristenUnie and SGP, these Eurosceptic parties account for 26 per cent of the claims during FP 07-13, compared to 12 per cent during Agenda 2000 and 7 per cent during Delors II (see Table 6). Secondly, the Eurosceptic parties 'trespassed' into the previously dominant narratives of pro-European parties, combating them not only with different frames, but attempting to change the meaning of the frames formerly dominated by pro-European parties (Sides 2006). Thus, FP 07-13 showed clear calls for renationalisation in the debate, rather than simply more intense politicisation.

During Delors II and Agenda 2000, pro-Europeans in favor of a larger EU budget had defended their position using two justifications. On the one hand, they argued a large budget was needed to safeguard the project of 'European integration'. It was required to accomplish the goals the Member States had set for themselves and failure to increase the budget would risk everything that had been accomplished so far. Thus the budget was needed to prepare for monetary union (Delors II), EU enlargement (Agenda 2000) and making the EU the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world (FP 07-13). On the other hand, they would argue a large budget was legitimate because it embodied 'EU solidarity', codified as one of the most important values of the EU in the Treaties. During the debate on FP 07-13, these two ways of framing were also used for a Eurosceptic argument. EU solidarity, as framed by the Dutch government and Eurosceptic parties in parliament, ought to mean that every Member State paid according to its position in the ranking of GDP per capita. Thus, the Netherlands was willing to be a net-contributor on an equal level with other rich Member States with roughly equal levels of income per capita, like France and Germany. In response to being called 'egoistic' and 'nationalist' by German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and French President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Balkenende responded: 'I told Chirac that I can't explain to people in the Netherlands why the average Dutch person pays so much more [to the EU] than the average French person.' (Tweede Kamer 2005b: 5597). In other words, the Dutch government responded to calls from other countries for solidarity with the exact same reply. The citation above also emphasises the centrality of

nationality in the use of the solidarity framing. The centrality of the nation state as the main frame of reference in EU solidarity further becomes apparent in the discussion on Structural Funds. Many Dutch political parties argued that the Structural Funds should be restricted to poor Member States and should no longer be used to pay for projects in poor regions of rich Member States. Thus, EU solidarity was increasingly framed as solidarity *between Member States*, rather than between rich and poor EU citizens or winners and losers of the internal market. Calls for renationalisation thus reflect a reassertion of the centrality of nation states in the EU at the expense of both supranational and sub-national levels of government.

Perhaps even more striking is the change in qualitative meaning to the 'European integration' frame. Taking the negative result of the June 2005 referendum on the Constitutional Treaty as support for his claims, Mr. Rouvoet MP (ChristenUnie) argued: '[…] according to us, the money [to reduce the Dutch net-contribution] should be taken from the Structural Funds and from the renationalisation of certain competencies and expenditures.' (Tweede Kamer 2005b: 5607). A mere reduction of the net contributions was no longer the main aim, but part of a general rolling back of European integration in accordance with the will of the people as expressed in the referendum on the Constitutional Treaty. According to the Eurosceptic parties, the project of European integration did not need safeguarding anymore, it needed to be reversed.

To conclude, the specter of a corrupt, inefficient, money consuming EU that exploited the Netherlands unfairly continued to dominate the Dutch debate on FP 07-13 after having been created by the VVD from 1995 onwards. Having released the beast, the VVD lost ownership of the issue, particularly to the new radical right parties who took the claims for a reduction of net-contributions to a new level. The *politicisation* during the debate on Agenda 2000 continued during the debate on FP 07-13 and was complemented by a stronger role of Eurosceptic parties and a call for *renationalisation*. Eurosceptical parties contested the framing of the EU budget by pro-Europeans as a case of ensuring further European integration and defending European solidarity, thus legitimising a bigger EU budget and more competencies for supranational institutions. These two ways of framing were now also used by the Eurosceptics to argue the exact opposite: a smaller EU budget, to reverse European integration and

reinstall EU solidarity between Member States. Eurosceptical parties thus combined negative claims about European integration, with positive claims for an intergovernmental Europe. Euroscepticism in this final debate thus coincides with a reassertion of nation states as the prime building blocks and frame of reference within the EU.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated Dutch political debates on the multiannual EU budgets between 1992 and 2005 to study how party-based Euroscepticism develops and to contribute to the scientific debate on the measurement and conceptualisation of Euroscepticism. The results confirm previous findings that political parties in the Netherlands have collectively become much more Eurosceptic in the time frame under study (e.g. Harmsen 2008; Voerman 2005). Domestic politicisation of net-contributions to the EU budget both featured and fed Euroscepticism. This paper argues that – as far as the EU budget is concerned – this development can be categorised into three distinct phases. First, the debate on Delors II demonstrated continuation of the permissive consensus in the Netherlands with little debate and interest from political parties for EU policy-making. The debate on Agenda 2000 illustrated a clear *domestic politicisation* of European integration. The debate became more intense, parties profiled themselves more in traditional inter-party politics and the consequences – particularly the costs – of European integration for the Netherlands were more strongly articulated, as well as the perceived need to defend national interests. Finally, the debate on Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 continued the trend of politicisation, but added to this a clearer presence of Eurosceptic parties and a call for *renationalisation*. The framing of European integration previously employed by pro-Europeans now became contested by Eurosceptic parties arguing for a reversal or limiting of European integration. These claims challenging the value of European integration as such, combined with concrete calls for a reduction in the size of the EU budget clearly meet the definition of Euroscepticism as given in the introduction, as they address the principle and project of integration respectively. The three phases and their dimensions are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Modeled trajectory of Euroscepticism in the Netherlands in six dimensions

	Permissive Consensus	Politicisation	Renationalisation
Intensity of debate	Low	High	High
Polarisation of opinion	None	Low	High
Eurosceptic party presence	Low	Medium	High
Party contestation	Intra-party	Inter-party	Inter-party
Policy constituency	Foreign	Domestic	Domestic
Framing integration	Positive	Positive	Negative

At the conceptual level, the main finding of this study is that Euroscepticism in formerly pro-European Member States like the Netherlands can grow through a process of politicisation. As this study presents a limited case study only, the substantive findings will be presented as a hypothesis to be further tested: all other things equal, Euroscepticism may develop in an EU member state, when national political parties successfully manage to centrally position concerns with costs of European integration into domestic discourse, and these concerns remain neither successfully refuted by pro-European parties, nor substantially addressed by the EU. These 'costs' need not necessarily be economic in nature, although in the case of the Netherlands, they were.

While investigating the process in which party-based Euroscepticism develops, this paper bases its empirical analysis on the method of claims-making analysis. Arguably, this structured form of content analysis is uniquely positioned to contribute to the collective effort of accumulating knowledge on party-based Euroscepticism and domestic contestation over European integration, because it combines valuable qualities of both studies of party positions and of public discourse on European integration. On the one hand, this method goes beyond party position studies, which often restrict themselves to the content of the positions parties take on European issues. This restriction inhibits our full understanding of Euroscepticism and domestic contestation, because it neglects interaction between parties, the meaning of Euroscepticism and large parts of party contestation

which concern the process of policy-formulation, rather than its content. On the other hand, claims-making analysis goes beyond studies of public discourse, clearly distinguishing different individual party positions, their importance as agents of Euroscepticism and mapping the patterns and degree of political contestation. Combining the assets of both strands of studies was needed to fully capture the intermediary process of politicisation which provides a dynamic missing link between the permissive consensus of the early 1990s and the Euroscepticism of the early 2000s, as well as the qualitative meaning of renationalisation characterising the final debate. Claims-making analysis is therefore ideally suited to conceptualise and measure politicisation and party-based Euroscepticism. These advantages of claims-making analysis, however, come at a price. It is a highly labour intensive method requiring the qualitative coding of a relatively large amount of data. This clearly restricts the scope of research, as reflected in the limited case study provided in the present study.

Although highly labour intensive, the detail and complexity of claims-making analysis, combined with its small units of analysis, allow for a thorough investigation of contestation on individual policy-formulation processes, like those on the EU budget, rather than restricting the analysis to the undifferentiated issue of 'European integration' or constitutional issues as contested in referenda and general elections. Aside from illustrating specific contestations over meaning, like the value of European integration and the extent of European solidarity, this study also shows difference in the positions of individual Dutch political parties as opposed to their positions on constitutional issues as expressed in 2004-2005, when the EU budget debate unfolded parallel to the referendum campaign on the Constitutional Treaty (cf. Pellikaan and Brandsma 2005). The liberal parties VVD and D66 are markedly more Eurosceptic, while the protestant parties ChristenUnie and SGP are more pro-European than on constitutional issues. This might be a result of sampling or measurement error, but I would rather uphold that individual parties' positions diverge quite strongly on European integration, depending on the specific issue and context in question. Although a strong defender of the internal market, the VVD combined its argument against high taxes in general and holding the office of Finance Minister with active calls for the reduction of Dutch contributions to the EU budget. Likewise, ChristenUnie and SGP may

be rather hostile towards the EU in general, but farmers are a key constituency for them, leading them to defend the Common Agricultural Policy against those who would reduce it to limit the Dutch net contribution. Rather than being dismissed as measurement errors, these differences across issues should reinforce our understanding of European party politics as multi-dimensional and issue specific. It should encourage research into Euroscepticism within the context of multi-level political contestation on constitutional as well as non-constitutional issues in EU policy-formulation processes.

Article 4

Ex Ante vs. Ex Post: The Trade-off Between Partisan Conflict and Visibility in Debating EU Policy-formulation in National Parliaments[1]

Abstract

This article asks how ex ante and ex post control mechanisms structuring the involvement of national parliaments in European Union (EU) policy-formulation affect the scope of conflict and visibility of parliamentary debates. Based on democratic theory, partisan conflict and high visibility are normatively preferable. The effects of control mechanisms on these two criteria are assessed in a comparative case study of plenary debates in the Danish Folketing and Dutch Tweede Kamer on multiannual EU budgets. This study shows that control mechanisms have direct and indirect effects on the scope of conflict and visibility of debates by linking up to different

phases of policy-formulation and media coverage cycles. Danish ex ante mechanisms trigger more partisan, but less visible debates, whereas Dutch ex post mechanisms stimulate highly visible, but intergovernmental debates. The findings thus present a trade-off between partisan conflict on the one hand, and visibility on the other hand.

Introduction

National parliaments in European Union (EU) Member States struggle to hold their governments accountable for policy-formulation in the EU (Auel and Benz 2005; Barrett 2008; Maurer and Wessels 2001; Norton 1996b; O'Brennan and Raunio 2007c; Tans et al. 2007). In their efforts to safeguard or regain control over government activity, national parliaments face a question of institutional design. Some of them – like the Danish Folketing – have created control mechanisms to strengthen *ex ante* accountability in the form of strong European Affairs Committees (EACs) issuing negotiation mandates (Møller Sousa 2008). Others – like the Dutch Tweede Kamer – have created less powerful EACs but added *ex post* mechanisms, including regular plenary debates following European Council summits. This choice between different control mechanisms may result in unintended consequences, of which we so far have little knowledge. Of particular interest from a democratic perspective are consequences for the extent and nature of parliamentary plenary debates as these function as ideal forums for public deliberation and will formation (Auel 2007).

Building on the Responsible Party Model (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999a; Thomassen and Schmitt 1999a), this article argues that partisan scope of conflict and high visibility are two relevant criteria for assessing the democratic quality of plenary parliamentary debates on EU issues. This is because, for the model to work, domestic political parties need to offer voters a choice and thus defend different positions of the substance of important policy issues. These different positions are reflected if there is clear conflict between parties in plenary debates. Second, these differences need to be communicated to voters, so they may inform citizens' votes in future elections, thus requiring high visibility of party positions (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999a: 115-116).

The main question of this article is how ex ante and ex post control mechanisms affect the scope of conflict and visibility of plenary parliamentary debates in EU policy-formulation. This article shows how different control mechanisms result in different plenary debates. A major difference between ex ante and ex post control mechanisms lies in the timing when control is exercised. Hypotheses concerning the effects of control mechanisms are therefore developed taking into account the possible interaction effects of timing with EU policy-formulation processes and mass media agenda-setting in the EU. The article then continues to analyse the credibility of these hypotheses through a comparative case study of debates on the EU budget in Denmark and the Netherlands. Although, from the perspective of alleviating the democratic deficit, debates featuring partisan conflict and high visibility are normatively preferable, this study presents evidence that there is a trade-off in reality which can at least partially be attributed to the design of ex ante and ex post control mechanisms. Ex ante control mechanisms stimulate partisan but less visible debates, whereas ex post mechanisms stimulate less partisan but highly visible debates.

National Parliaments and European Integration
The academic study of the role of national parliaments in the EU, and the attention of national parliaments themselves, has focused largely on the extent to which parliaments manage to keep their national governments accountable in EU policy-formulation. The main concern is whether or not national parliaments can be seen as 'losers' of European integration in relation to executives and bureaucrats (Maurer and Wessels 2001; Raunio and Hix 2001). Clearly, European integration channels political decision-making away from national parliaments but a counter-trend is also visible as national parliaments have adapted their institutional arrangements in various ways, most notably by creating EACs. While the role and power of EACs varies strongly among Member States, the importance of the plenary for scrutiny of European affairs is considered to be low (Bergman et al. 2003: 175).

An observed problem with this first line of research was the more or less exclusive focus on describing formal institutions. According to Raunio (2009: 318), 'There is a demand for more theory-driven analyses of actual behaviour that extends beyond describing formal

procedures and organisational choices'. Academic focus has thus shifted to the actual behaviour of Members of Parliament (MPs) and the incentive structures guiding this behaviour (Auel 2005; Auel and Benz 2005; Holzhacker 2002; Pollak and Slominski 2003; Saalfeld 2005). This literature convincingly argues that the role of national parliaments in European integration has to be understood in terms of party politics. Parties in government have an incentive to support their government, whereas opposition parties have incentives to challenge government and present alternative policy options. The incentive structures facing MPs also account for the allegedly low prominence of plenary debates. Mainstream political parties are often internally divided on EU issues and generally more pro-European than their constituencies, thus creating disincentives to profile themselves publically on these issues (Raunio 2009: 320). However, specialists on EU issues within parties may have a different incentive than their parties in general. In order to profile themselves within their constituency or party, they need to be visible and active and they may have the capability to demand plenary debates or ask oral questions in public. Also, some parties on the fringes of the political spectrum have an incentive to challenge mainstream parties on EU issues. Once fringe parties start debating Europe in public, mainstream parties have an incentive to respond in order not to be seen as aloof or unclear in the eyes of the electorate (Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010). Finally, this logic assumes MPs are purely rational actors seeking to increase their power and maximise votes in the next election. However, MPs may also follow a 'logic of appropriateness' (March and Olsen 1984) and consider it 'the right thing to do' to hold government to account publically or consider participation in plenary debates habitually as part of the routine, irrespective of consequences.

Considering the importance of national parliaments for the democratic legitimacy of the EU, academic efforts have recently taken a stronger interest in the contribution national parliaments can make to democracy in the EU in general (Kiiver 2006) and to lively plenary debates in particular (Auel 2007). Although there are different categorisations of functions of parliaments in the literature, these generally fall into two groups: controlling government and providing an arena for public debate (Müller et al. 2003: 20). On the one hand, parliaments hold government accountable for its actions and make sure that government acts in correspondence with the will of the

majority in parliament. On the other hand, parliaments are a central institutional arena for public deliberation and will-formation. Debates on EU issues should function to signal party positions on EU issues to voters, thus allowing voters to recognise which party best represents their interests and thereby inform their votes in the next election (Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Mair 2007). The present article can be located in this third strand of research. It first asks what normative democratic criteria are suitable for assessing the quality of plenary debates and hypothesises how control mechanisms might affect these criteria. Secondly, it investigates the credibility of these hypotheses through a thorough comparative case study of plenary debates in the Netherlands and Denmark on the three most recent multiannual EU budgets.

The Need for Partisan and Visible Debates

Although the democratic quality of the EU polity hinges on many factors, the importance of multiple political parties and competitive elections is arguably still the single most important requirement (Føllesdal and Hix 2006; Thomassen and Schmitt 1999a). As Schmitt and Thomassen (1999a: 115-116) argue, the 'Responsible Party Model' of democracy consists among other criteria of: a) multiple parties offering different policy preferences to voters, and b) these different preferences need to be known by voters and are therefore required to be well communicated by parties.

Political differences on EU matters are generally considered to be structured along two dimensions: a pro-anti integration and a left-right dimension (Hix and Lord 1997; Marks and Wilson 2000; Marks et al. 2002). Substantial differences among party positions should thus be located along one or both of these dimensions. Yet, the literature on political party positions regarding EU issues generally overlooks the possibility of national parties collectively formulating and defending a 'national interest' vis-à-vis the outside world. Taking this alternative possibility into account, this article theorises two different ideal types of plenary debates in national parliaments on EU issues, as modeled in Table 8.

Table 8: Conceptualisation of the scope of conflict in parliamentary debates

	Partisan Debate	**Intergovernmental Debate**
Political Landscape	Large	Small
Issues	Content	Procedures or behaviour
Conflict Framing	Domestic party politics	Intergovernmental or supranational

Debates with a *partisan* scope of conflict are characterised by domestic political parties taking up different positions on the pro-anti integration and/or left-right dimensions. The represented political landscape by parties collectively will thus be 'large' as the distance between policy preferences voiced is substantial. In contrast, debates with an *intergovernmental* scope of conflict feature substantive agreement among domestic political parties on a particular 'national interest' and debate focuses on the best means to achieve it. Partisan debates are thus dominated by substantial issues, whereas intergovernmental debates are dominated by procedural or strategic issues. Finally, we need to understand how parliamentary actors 'frame' conflict on the issue at hand. In other words, how they organise '[...] an apparently diverse array of symbols, images and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is at stake on the issue' (Gamson 2004: 245). Parties distance themselves through framing from other domestic political parties in the case of partisan debates and from other Member States or supranational institutions in the case of intergovernmental debate. Only through studying these three indicators of scope of conflict collectively can a complete picture of plenary debates be formed.

From the perspective of the Responsible Party Model, partisan debates are preferable as they emphasise differences between domestic political parties which compete with each other in national elections. Intergovernmental debates, in contrast, do not offer voters a meaningful choice as voters can not vote for different Member States' governments or the European Commission. Besides a partisan scope of conflict, parliamentary debates also need to be sufficiently visible in order for voters to be able to pick up the differences between political parties.

How Control Mechanisms Affect Scope of Conflict and Visibility

In the case of ex ante mechanisms in EU-policy formulation, parliament has an opportunity to influence government's behaviour in Brussels before decisions are made. Like in the proto-typical Danish case, the government presents a negotiating strategy to the EAC, which – if it doesn't face an opposing majority – will structure government's behaviour for the rest of the policy-formulation process (Laursen 2001). On the other hand, ex post mechanisms focus on holding government accountable after decisions have been made. Government will than have to explain its behaviour after the Council has reached a decision, as for instance in the Netherlands (Hoetjes 2001). The idea behind both control mechanisms is the same: they ensure that government acts in accordance with the will of the parliamentary majority while negotiating in EU context. They differ mainly in the *timing* of control. This is important in light of connections in time between plenary debates, different stages of policy-formulation and media coverage cycles.

In order for ex ante mechanisms to provide 'contracts' in the form of negotiation instructions or even mandates, they take place early in policy-formulation phases before intergovernmental negotiations within European Council framework start in earnest. Secrecy in contracting may be a necessary component to allow government some flexibility in intergovernmental negotiations, while at the same time restricting their options. Ex post mechanisms, on the other hand, rely on government already having made a decision in the Council. Publicity is a key component of this control mechanism which MPs can use to criticise government in case of disappointing negotiation results (Saalfeld 2000). The first hypothesis is therefore simply as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 1: Ex ante control mechanisms stimulate less visible debates than ex post mechanisms.

Although parliamentary debates may be structured by control mechanisms, they remain a direct response to initiatives by the European Commission, the national government and other societal actors. During the course of the policy-formulation process, the reactions and positions of other Member State governments and the

European Parliament (EP) may also affect national debates. EU policy-formulation processes generally start with detailed 'technical' discussions on the Commission's proposal in Council Working Groups and specialised EP committees. More sensitive 'political' issues are discussed later on in the Council itself and in negotiations between the Council and EP (Christiansen 1997; Fouilleux et al. 2005). Thus, topics discussed in Brussels to which national parliaments may respond tend to become more political over time. They will also tend to become more contested at EU level, with the toughest political battles among Member States and between Council, Commission and Parliament being fought at the very end of policy-formulation. This may stimulate parliamentary debates to become more intergovernmental in terms of scope of conflict, the closer they are in time to the end of policy-formulation.

To fully account for the effects of control mechanisms on parliamentary debates, we need to understand how these mechanisms interact with media coverage. As a result of the 'mediatisation' of democracy (Altheide 2004), politicians in national parliaments are sensitive to mass media, both in informing their actions and as vehicles for reaching out to voters. It is generally acknowledged that media coverage is able to influence the political agenda (McCombs and Shaw 1972), particularly the nature of plenary debates (Marschall 2009). If media coverage and parliamentary activity do not coincide in time, MPs lack an incentive to voice their positions. Concerning EU issues, Danish MPs complain there is little media attention until late in policy-formulation, thus not providing them with enough incentives and platforms to present their opinions to voters when establishing negotiating mandates (Møller Sousa 2008: 440-441). We also know that in covering EU issues, media are generally focused on the proceedings at EU level – particularly the European Council (Koopmans and Erbe 2004: 109). The bulk of media coverage thus takes place late in policy-formulation processes and emphasises intergovernmental conflict. As media coverage affects parliamentary debates, the scope of conflict in plenary debates is expected to become more intergovernmental as they coincide more with media coverage cycles in the later phases of policy-formulation. In light of the interaction with the different phases of policy-formulation and cycles of media coverage, the second hypothesis is therefore as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 2: Ex ante control mechanisms stimulate partisan debates, while ex post control mechanisms stimulate intergovernmental debates.

Finally, as the bulk of media coverage takes place late in policy-formulation processes, 'late' plenary debates can be expected to be more visible than early ones as MPs then have more incentives to present their positions publically. Thus, the effects of media coverage provide additional grounds for hypothesis 1.

Data and Method

Having conceptualised plenary debates in terms of scope of conflict and visibility in light of the Responsible Party Model guiding this inquiry, this study needs a detailed method of content analysis of plenary debates to identify political parties' contributions to the debates, the topics they discuss, party positions on these topics and the way the debate is framed. A method specifically designed to measure these variables is claims-making analysis (Koopmans 2002; 2007; Koopmans and Statham 1999). Claims-making analysis is very suitable for measuring the scope of conflict and visibility of debates in a comparative setting as it measures relevant variables at the level of a very small unit of analysis: a claim. By breaking debates down to a series of claims, aggregation towards both parliamentary actors and whole debates becomes possible. Furthermore, political claims are arguably the basic building blocks of any political debate, recognisable across time and space thus maximising construct equivalence in a comparative setting.

A claim is defined as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere:

> [...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field
>
> (Statham 2005: 12)

Coded variables of claims include WHERE and WHEN, WHO makes a claim, on WHAT, HOW, addressing WHOM, for/against WHOSE

interests and WHY. For the purposes of this study, a codebook was developed including the above named variables. Whereas the variables were given, values were inductively constructed during the coding process to fully capture nuances in the debates. These were then later aggregated for more abstract analyses. Thus, the label 'intergovernmental conflict' in the frame variable consists of such frames as 'defending national interests', 'conflict between other Member States', or 'conflict involving EU institutions' among others. A sample of parliamentary debates was coded using ATLAS.ti software, and consequently exported to SPSS for quantitative analysis[2]. Although the advantages of claims-making analysis warrant its use, the major drawback is high labour intensity and strong language and political context competency requirements for coding. Thus, the richness in data generated comes at the price of having to restrict this study to a limited case-study in light of available resources. These costs are here minimised through the use of a carefully designed paired comparison, as outlined below.

The EU budget provides a rich case for studying variations in parliamentary debates as it consists of package deals on a range of different topics that recur in more or less the same form every seven years. Large expenditure posts include the Common Agricultural Policy and the Structural Funds, but EU money is also spent on research and development, EU's foreign policy, nature preservation and administrative costs. Issues on the revenue side include the total size of the budget, the British rebate, and a possible EU tax competency. The European Commission has right of initiative and its proposals enter a long period of negotiation between Member States. These negotiations start with informative technical debates in a range of Council working groups and end in highly salient political conflicts in the European Council (Laffan 1997; Lindner 2006). Consecutive multiannual budget package deals – 'financial perspectives' – have structured the EU's redistributive politics since 1988; 'Delors I' (1988-1992), 'Delors II' (1993-1999), 'Agenda 2000' (2000-2006) and 'Financial Perspectives 2007-2013' (FP07-13) (2007-2013). The budget thus provides rich potential conflict on both pro-anti European and left-right dimensions as well as for both partisan and intergovernmental debates.

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[2] The codebook, the heuristic ATLAS.ti files and the SPSS database can be obtained from the author upon request.

This study follows a most similar systems paired comparison research design. Denmark and the Netherlands differ strongly in the control mechanisms their respective parliaments have adopted, but are otherwise relatively similar. By studying two cases rather than one or multiple, the added value of comparison is introduced while maintaining indepth discussion (Tarrow 2010). Conducting this comparison in three different budget negotiations provides an additional control of possible contextual factors. Denmark is generally viewed as the prototypical case of ex ante control. Its EAC has strong mandating powers, which were exercised behind closed doors in the period of research (Møller Sousa 2008). The Netherlands, on the other hand, has a rather weak EAC but has added ex post plenary debates, following European Council meetings (Hoetjes 2001). Otherwise, both countries are small and rich Member States with limited influence on the policy-formulation process and comparatively few benefits from the budget. They also have similar party systems and cleavages. Both have a tradition of coalition governments. Denmark works with a relatively unique minority government, whereas the Netherlands has majority coalitions with relative strong autonomy for coalition parties in parliament (Holzhacker 2008). Thus, through different systems, both countries have relatively strong parliamentary agenda-setting autonomy (Bergman et al. 2003). Although they traditionally differ in terms of their attitude towards European integration, these differences largely concern other targets. That is, Danish 'Euroscepticism' has principally targeted issues with little relevance to the EU budget (Lauring Knudsen 2008). Also, the traditionally pro-European Dutch have markedly become more sceptical, whereas Danish Euroscepticism has 'softened' (Raunio 2007b; Vollaard and Boer 2005).

The periods under research range from the month in which the Commission formally launched its budget proposal to the month in which the European Council reached agreement: 1 February 1992 – 31 December 1992 (Delors II), 1 July 1997 – 31 March 1999 (Agenda 2000) and 1 February 2004 – 31 December 2005 (Financial Perspectives 2007-2013). Plenary debates were sampled from digitalised archives using the search string: 'European budget' OR 'EC / EU budget' OR 'Delors II / Agenda 2000 / financial perspectives', with the exception of plenary debates from 1992, which were manually selected from the physical archives of the *Tweede Kamer* and *Folketinget*. In total, this

sampling resulted in the coding of 48 parliamentary debates and 1293 claims (*n*=1293).

This method provides us with particularly rich data on the six cases including the total amount of claims made, positions taken by parties, and framing of the issue. Scope of conflict is operationalised through the aggregated position of claimants on a range of issues related to the budget and what kind of issues (content or procedure) and conflict 'frames' (partisan or intergovernmental) dominate the debate. The pro-anti dimension is operationalised as claims in favour of an increase of the size of the budget or total revenues (pro-European) vs. decrease in size of the budget (anti-European) (De Wilde 2009b: 4-5). Left–right is operationalised as claims in favor of more redistribution from winners to losers in the internal market (left), to claims in favor of more investment in competitiveness and growth (right) (Dullien and Schwarzer 2009). Since a claim has to be made in public according to the definition above, visibility is simply operationalised as the amount of claims made.

Findings

The plenary parliamentary debates in the Netherlands and Denmark clearly differed in terms of timing (Figure 4) and visibility (Figure 5) in all three budget negotiations. As Figure 4 shows, the majority of claims made in the plenary of the Danish Folketing on the EU budget were made in the first few months of policy-formulation in each of the budgets. In contrast, debates in the Dutch Tweede Kamer are dominated by ex post plenary sessions. All major peaks in claims-making are the result of the budget negotiations being discussed in regular plenary debates following important European Council summits. In June 2005, the Luxembourg Presidency made a serious, but ultimately futile, effort to reach agreement on FP 07-13. Whether the failure, and the Dutch government's role therein, served Dutch interests was the major topic of debate, focusing particularly on the reduction of the Dutch 'net contribution' (Tweede Kamer 2005b). Figure 5 clearly shows that Dutch debates were more visible in terms of claims made, than Danish debates, thus providing support for hypothesis 1.
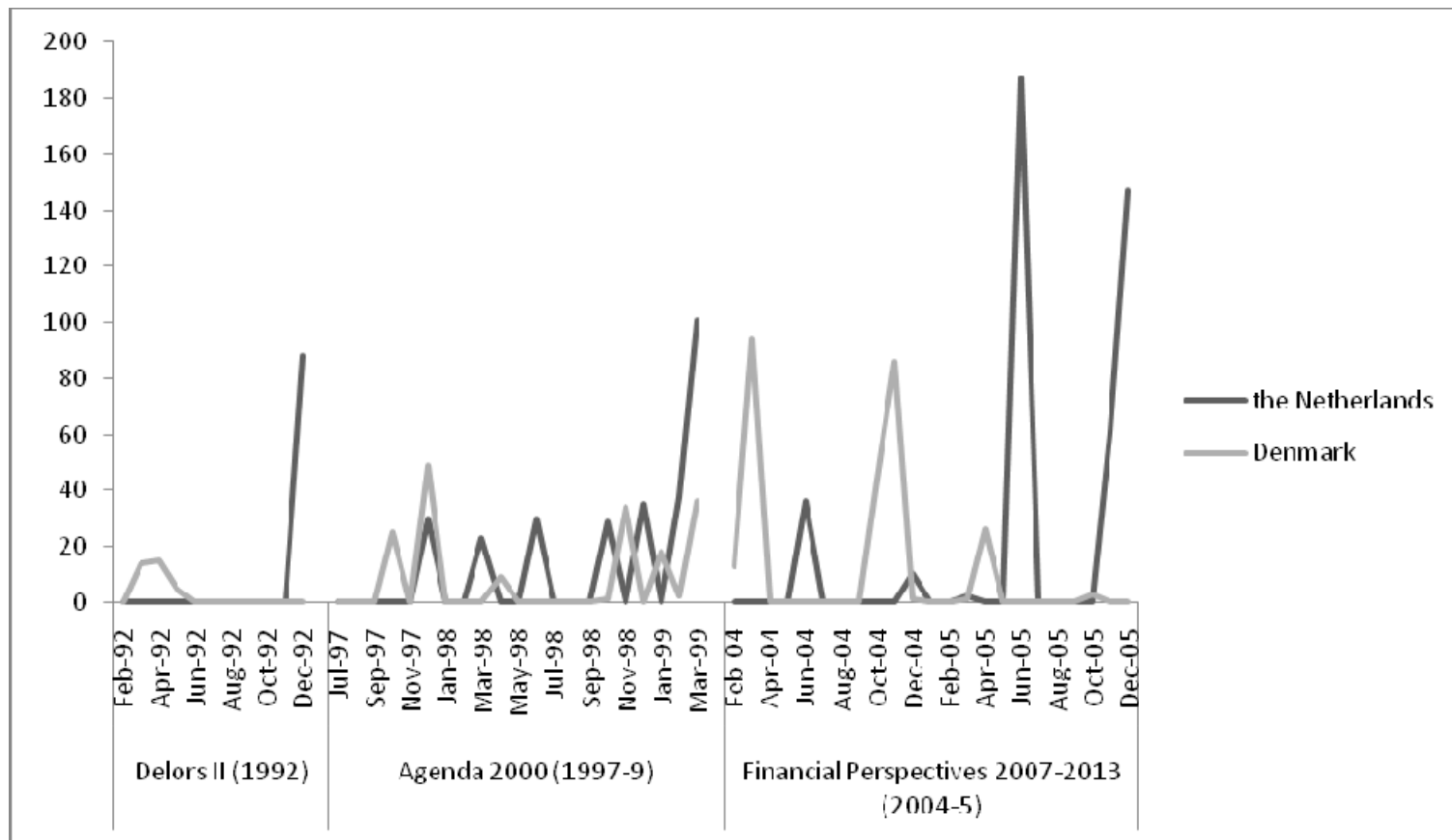
Figure 4: Spread of parliamentary claims made in Denmark and the Netherlands per month
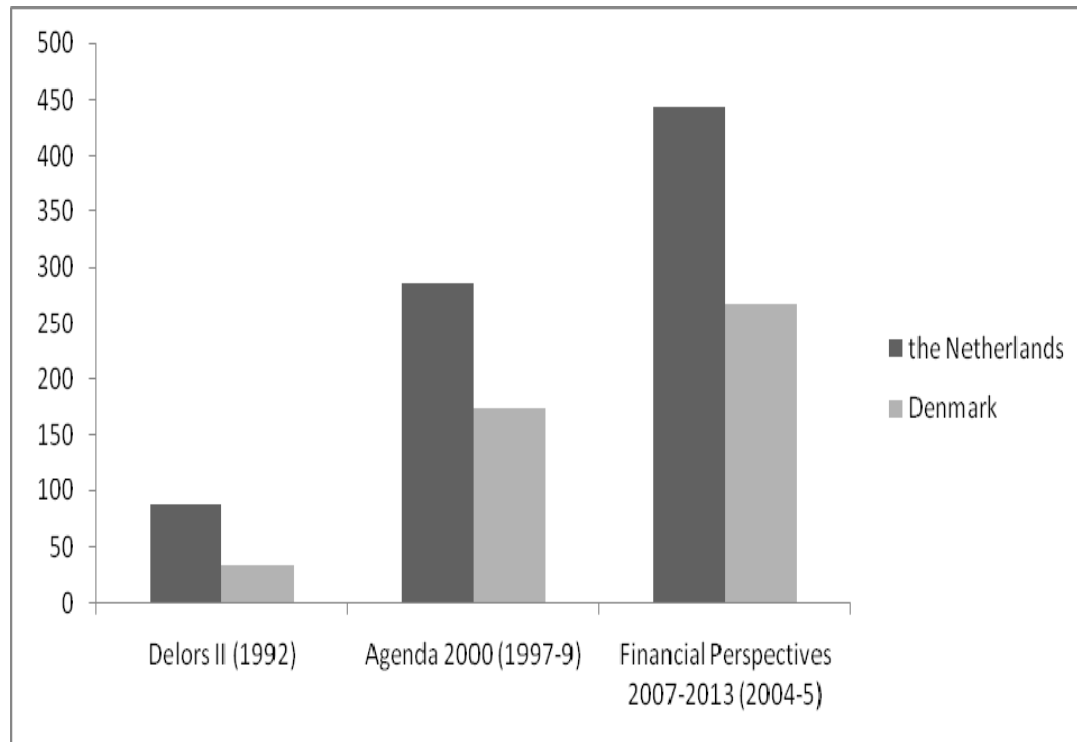
Figure 5: Visibility of parliamentary debates (total amount of claims made)

Although debates in both countries increase in visibility when comparing the three consecutive budgets, Dutch debates remain more visible than Danish ones. To some extent, the increased duration of policy-formulation provided more opportunities for debate, but the amount of claims made in individual budget debates also increased, as shown in Figure 4. This increase in visibility of the budget could be understood as a trend of politicisation of European integration (De Wilde 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2009) or as part of the 'Europeanisation' of domestic political parties (Poguntke et al. 2007; Raunio 2009). Finally, this trend can be seen in light of the rise of populist parties. Establishing this causality is, however, not the purpose of the present article. The data presented in Figures 4 and 5 clearly show the difference in timing of debates and provide support for hypotheses 1: ex ante mechanisms in the Danish Folketing stimulate less visible plenary debates, whereas the ex post mechanisms of the Dutch Tweede Kamer stimulate more visible debates.

In qualitative terms, Danish debates were more focused on substantial policy choices while Dutch debates were more focused on negotiation strategy and tactics. Danish debate on Delors II took place in March through May 1992 exclusively, in context of the more

general discussions on ratifying the Maastricht Treaty. It focused on the European Social Fund, Common Agricultural Policy and EU development aid to Eastern Europe (Folketinget 1992). Discussions on Agenda 2000 in Denmark focused on its enabling function for the EU's upcoming Eastern Enlargement, while discussion on FP 07-13 focused on the implications for Danish agriculture in general (Folketinget 2004b) and the Danish veal sector in particular (Folketinget 2004a). Debate was thus dominated by substantive discussion of which policy goals were preferable, rather than strategy to pursue these aims. This is also shown in Table 9, where substantial issues featured in between 71,6 per cent (FP 07-13) and 93,9 per cent (Delors II) of the claims made in the Danish debates.
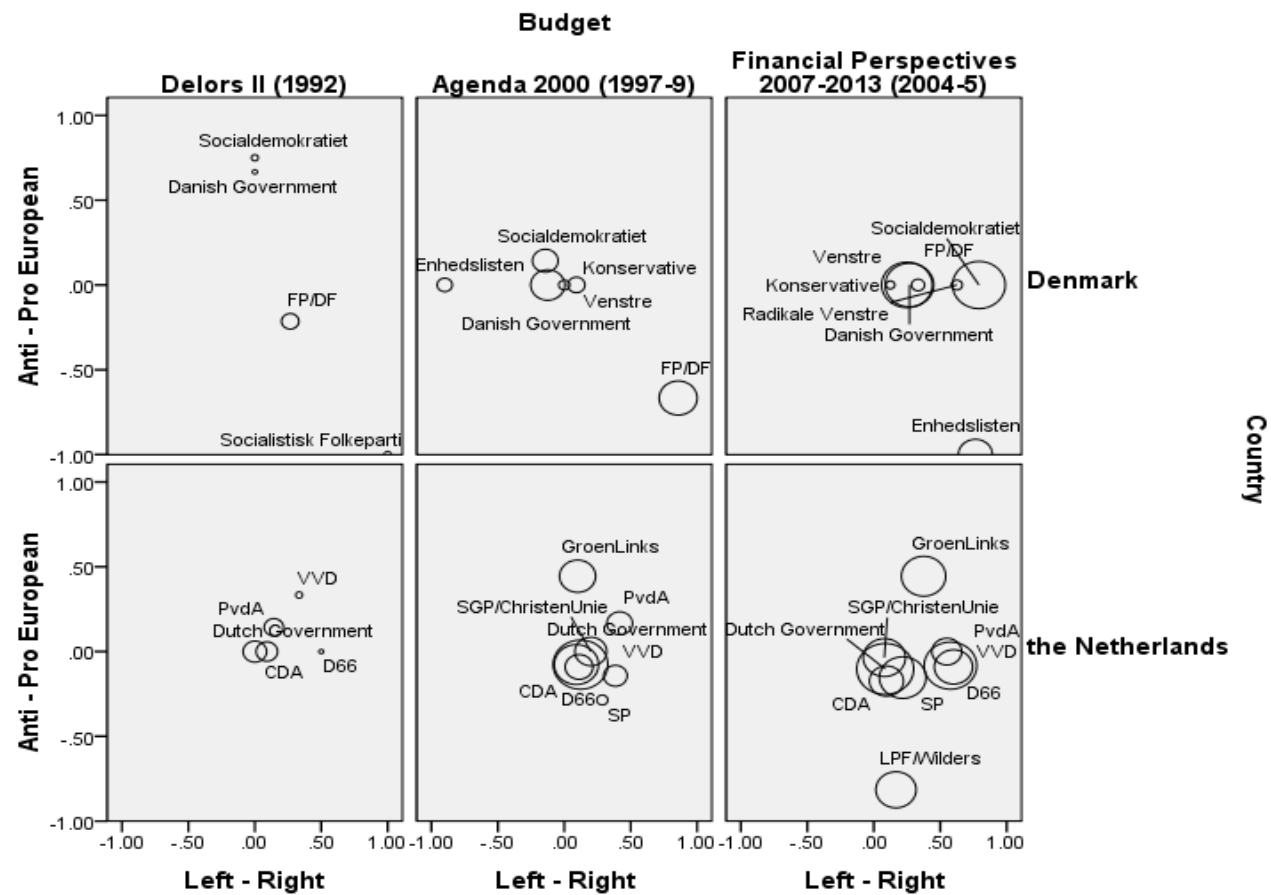
Figure 6: Mapped positions of main political actors[3]

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[3] Positions reflect averages with size of the dots reflecting the amount of claims made.

Table 9: Indicators of scope of conflict in all six parliamentary debates

| | | Delors II | | Agenda 2000 | | Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 | |
		NL	DK	NL	DK	NL	DK
Political landscape	Pro-Anti European	0.17	0.88	0.37	0.41	0.63	0.50
	Left-Right	0.25	0.50	0.17	0.88	0.26	0.34
Issues	Content issues	65,9%	93,9%	50,0%	78,0%	59,2%	71,6%
	Procedural issues	34,1%	6,1%	50,0%	22,0%	40,8%	28,4%
Conflict Framing	Partisan	28,0%	42,9%	25,6%	52,5%	26,7%	78,1%
	Intergovernmental	72,0%	57,1%	74,4%	47,5%	73,3%	21,9%

With the partial exception of the debate on FP 07-13, Danish debates clearly feature more partisan conflict than Dutch debates. Figure 6 and Table 9 show the data in terms of the three indicators of scope of conflict developed conceptually in Table 8 above. As shown graphically in Figure 6 and numerically in Table 9, Danish debates featured a larger political landscape than Dutch debates in terms of the pro-anti integration and left-right dimensions. Figure 6 displays graphically the average position of the Dutch and Danish governments and all political parties, excluding those not addressing issues on both dimensions. Clearly, Figure 6 shows that the Dutch political landscape on both relevant dimensions of conflict was smaller during Delors II and Agenda 2000 than in Denmark. During the debates on FP 07-13, however, the Dutch landscape appears more diverse. These impressions are confirmed when looking at the indexes of political landscape, as displayed in the top two rows of Table 9. These indexes have been calculated to range from 0.00 when all political actors take up exactly the same average position to 1.00 in case both extremes on the dimension in question are represented[4]. Only in the case of FP 07-13 is the diversity of policy preferences represented more or less equally in the Netherlands and Denmark. Here, we see in both countries (Figure 6) that extreme positions are presented by challenging parties in opposition on both the left

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[4] Since both political dimensions range from -1 to 1, distance indexes (x) ranging

$$x = \frac{P_{max} - P_{min}}{2}$$

from 0 to 1 have been calculated as follows: , with Pmax representing the parliamentary actor with the highest average position and Pmin representing the parliamentary actor with the lowest position.

(Socialistisk Folkeparti and Enhedslisten in Denmark; GroenLinks in the Netherlands) and right (FP/DF in Denmark; LPF/Wilders in the Netherlands), whereas mainstream parties in both countries represent positions relatively close to each other. For example, during the debates on FP 07-13 the Dutch government argued that Dutch net contributions to the EU budget were too large compared to other rich Member States. According to the government, the Netherlands was willing to remain a net contributor, just not disproportionally so. Mainstream parties in the coalition (CDA, VVD and D66) as well as in opposition (PvdA) agreed on this policy, but contested whether the Dutch government was conducting an optimal negotiation strategy. In contrast, GroenLinks argued in favour of net contributions in light of the benefits of European integration to the EU as a whole, whereas the LPF and Wilders argued the Netherlands should not be a net contributor whatsoever (Tweede Kamer 2005a; 2005b).

Although the political landscape in the Netherlands and Denmark during discussions on FP 07-13 did not differ much, the scope of conflict in Denmark is substantially more partisan than that in the Netherlands when we look at the other two indicators: issues and conflict framing. In both countries, a majority of claims was made on content rather than procedure although this majority is larger in Denmark (71,6 per cent) than in the Netherlands (59,2 per cent). The extent to which political actors in the debate framed the EU budget in terms of partisan or intergovernmental conflict shows an even stronger difference. 78,1 per cent of claims in Denmark, included partisan framing. The corresponding figure for the Netherlands is only 26,7 per cent. In the Netherlands, the conflict was more often framed to be between the Netherlands on the one hand, and the European Commission or other Member States on the other hand. Although the percentages of claims made in terms of issues and framing differ strongly across countries and budgets, the finding that Denmark discusses relatively more content than the Netherlands while framing conflict as partisan is robust. The data presented in Figure 6 and Table 9, illustrated with qualitative findings, thus provide strong support for hypotheses 2 that debates in the Danish Folketing – structured by ex ante control mechanisms – are more partisan in terms of scope of conflict than the debates in the Dutch Tweede Kamer – structured by ex post control mechanisms. This finding is expressed by all three indicators in all three budgets, except the political landscape indicator during FP 07-13. In terms of the

Responsible Party Model, Danish political parties present more choice in policy preferences – with a clearer focus on party differences through framing – than their Dutch counterparts. However, the existing differences are less visible in Denmark than they are in the Netherlands (Figure 5), where parties make more effort – in terms of total claims made – to communicate their positions.

Discussion

At the centre of debate on the role of national parliaments in the EU has been a concern for compensating their relative decline by strengthening their control function. So far, the effects of different institutional design choices of control mechanisms on that other important function of national parliaments – providing a platform for public political debate – have received little attention. This study has shown through a detailed comparative case study of parliamentary debates on the EU budget, that ex ante control mechanisms stimulate more conflict between domestic political parties but result in less visible debates than ex post control mechanisms. From the normative democratic point of view of the Responsible Party Model (Schmitt and Thomassen 1999b), these findings thus present a trade-off between partisan debate in which domestic political parties defend substantially different positions on the one hand, and the extent to which they communicate these differences to voters through highly visible debates on the other hand.

This study focused on plenary parliamentary debates on the policy-formulation process of three EU multiannual budgets – Delors II (1992), Agenda 2000 (1997-1999) and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-2005) – in the Netherlands and Denmark. These cases provide interesting insights into the effects of ex ante and ex post control mechanisms of national parliaments on debates, as the budget provides possibilities for both partisan and intergovernmental conflict as it includes issues loading onto both pro-anti integration and left-right dimension of politics and includes both supranational institutions, member state governments and national parliaments in policy-formulation. The rich and detailed method of claims-making analysis has shown through multiple indicators how the nature of the plenary debates in the Netherlands and Denmark differs. The research design of a most similar systems paired comparison

conducted over three different budget periods further corroborates these findings. At the same time, this restricted case study has limitations. First, further case studies of other countries and issues are needed to test the generalisability of the results. Second, additional process-tracing excersises are needed to further test the causal claims presented here. Finally, the importance of institutional choice for control mechanisms should not be over-estimated. This study has presented evidence, for instance, in support of a more general politicisation of European integration thesis (Hooghe and Marks 2009), observable in more intergovernmental and more visible parliamentary debates in both countries despite stable and different control mechanisms. This trend can also be understood in terms of the wider Europeanisation of political parties and the rise of challenging fringe parties.

The findings of this case study support Auel (2007) in her call for more scientific attention for the public deliberation function of national parliaments in the EU polity. The ranking of 'strong' Danish control mechanisms and 'weaker' Dutch control mechanisms (Bergman et al. 2003; Raunio 2005) should be reconsidered, as both ex ante and ex post control mechanisms have advantages and disadvantages when taking into account their effects on plenary debates. The normative assessment of control mechanisms thus requires taking into account their effects on both functions of parliament: holding government accountable *and* providing an arena for public debate.

Article 5

'Show Me the Money!' Political Conflict in EU Redistributive Politics and the Constraining Dissensus[1]

Abstract

The current Eurosceptic political climate in the European Union (EU), known as the 'constraining dissensus', may place negotiations on the multiannual EU budget centre-stage. If media portray political conflict about the budget as international polarisation pitting Member States against each other or against EU institutions, it may increase Euroscepticism as such polarisation resonates with exclusive national identity perceptions. If the budget is polarised transnationally, emphasising conflict within Member States, it may alleviate the constraining dissensus as it negates exclusive national identity while strengthening cross-cutting cleavages. This study tests hypotheses about patterns and trends in politicisation of the EU budget in three budgets (Delors II, Agenda 2000, Financial Perspectives 2007-2013), three countries (the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland) and two forums (media and national parliaments) using claims-making

analysis and controlled multivariate comparisons. It finds predominant international polarisation with no clear trend over time and no clear difference between countries. It therefore seems likely that politicisation of the EU budget reinforces the constraining dissensus, rather than loosening it. However, the more politicised budget debates become, the less likely they will stimulate Euroscepticism as the dominance of international polarisation decreases.

Introduction

Imagine, having finally managed to ratify the Treaty of Lisbon after the long and difficult Laeken process and the fiasco of the Constitutional Treaty, European Union (EU) Member States decide not to engage in formal Treaty revision for the foreseeable future. Imagine further that, given clear hostility among many EU citizens, there will be no major enlargements in the foreseeable future either. Relatively uncontroversial countries like Croatia and Iceland may join, but significant enlargements – with Turkey or the Ukraine for example – are put off until further notice. In such a scenario, the main high profile political event in European integration in the next twenty five years or so may be the negotiations over the EU's multiannual budget. 'Budget, budget, budget' – to paraphrase Aaron Wildavsky (2001: xxxiii) – 'may be all the EU can do unless and until we Europeans once again agree on what kind of society and which sort of government we want'. Even in periods when the EU does engage in Treaty revision and enlargement – like the past twenty five years – the European Council meetings in which decisions are made on the EU budget are high profile political events, with strong resonance in mass media (Galloway 1999; Laffan 2000; Lindner 2006). As such, negotiations on the EU budget have had, and may continue to have, profound impact on public opinion on European integration. EU politics in the public's eye may take the form of simple demands to 'show me the money!'[2].

This study asks the question of how politicisation of the EU budget – i.e. intensity of debate, polarisation of opinion and public resonance (De Wilde 2007) – may affect Euroscepticism among EU citizens and thus influence the 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009)

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[2] This slogan is derived from a scene in the 1996 TriStar Picture Motion Picture 'Jerry Maguire'.

that currently arguably characterises the political climate of the EU. In other words, how does the way and extent to which the EU budget is contested in public affect citizens' attitudes towards European integration and, thereby, the freedom political elites enjoy to decide on further steps in European integration? This study theorises a relationship between politicisation of the EU budget and Euroscepticism based on how the budget is *framed* in the public sphere and empirically tests three hypotheses about patterns and trends in this politicisation.

Firstly, this paper conceptualises two different forms polarisation of the EU budget – part of more general politicisation – may take, each with a different impact on Euroscepticism. On the one hand, polarisation could be *international* when Member States are portrayed as pitted against each other or against supranational institutions, notably the European Commission and the European Parliament. On the other hand, polarisation could feature *transnational* conflict in which political parties or other domestic groups are pitted against each other based on ideological cleavages, government vs. opposition dynamics, sectoral interests or regional cleavages. Whereas international polarisation is likely to stimulate Euroscepticism as it resonates with exclusive national identity perceptions, transnational polarisation is likely to alleviate Euroscepticism as it strengthens cross-cutting cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan 1967), creating a more complex image of politics in the EU and exposing national publics to a wider variety of arguments.

Secondly, this study tests three hypotheses about patterns and trends in polarisation of the most recent three EU budgets – Delors II, Agenda 2000 and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 – in newspapers and national parliamentary debates in the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland. With a controlled comparison over time, this article tests whether polarisation has become more international over time, which one might expect given increasing diversity between Member States as a result of enlargement. A controlled comparison across countries functions to test whether polarisation in net-contributor countries and net-recipient countries is more international than in countries paying as much as they receive. Finally, a comparison of media coverage with parliamentary debates highlights possible media effects in transmitting budget negotiations to the public, where we test if the

framing of international polarisation is stronger in media than in parliamentary debates.

Politicisation of the EU Budget and the Constraining Dissensus

How does politicisation of the EU budget affect Euroscepticism and, thereby, the constraining dissensus? Underlying this question is the assumption that the EU is currently in a 'constraining dissensus', meaning that rising importance of Euroscepticism has created public 'dissensus' about the merits of European integration resulting in a 'constraint' on political elites to take further steps in the integration process (Hooghe and Marks 2009: 8-9). This section sets out first to define and conceptualise politicisation in the context of the EU budget, arguing that the budget potentially has a wide range of conflicts that could be portrayed in public debates. With increasing intensity of debate, polarisation of opinion and public resonance, such dormant conflicts become *politicised*. Politicisation of the EU budget may take different forms of polarisation of opinion: one emphasising international dimensions of conflict, and another emphasising transnational conflict. These two different forms of polarisation are causally linked to Euroscepticism with opposite effects, due to their different interaction with dynamics of the public sphere and national identity perceptions.

The multiannual EU budget potentially holds a large variety of political conflicts. It is a large package deal combining all revenues and expenditures of the EU and the negotiations on this package deal includes many political actors within the EU polity. Firstly, since financial contributions are largely based on Member State GDP and revenues may also be counted at country level, there is potential conflict between net-contributors – countries which pay more to the EU than they receive – and net-recipients. Secondly, there may be conflict between those advocating a larger redistributive role for the EU for the sake of safeguarding solidarity and those advocating a free market polity only. Thirdly, since a large part of the budget is still spent on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), conflict may erupt between farmers and consumers, between countries with large agricultural sectors and more industrialised countries, or between different agricultural subsectors. Fourthly, the potential revenues and costs of the Structural Funds could pit poorer subnational regions

against richer ones. There is thus a possibility for a variety of intergovernmental conflicts, partisan conflicts, sectoral conflicts and centre-periphery conflicts. Whether these potential conflicts become salient and the extent to which they interact with Euroscepticism, depends on whether they are actively politicised by political actors in the media.

Hooghe and Marks (2009) argue that 'politicisation' is the key mechanism turning the political climate of the EU from a permissive consensus to a constraining dissensus. If politicisation has been the key mechanism in creating the constraining dissensus on which the opening scenario of this paper builds, then politicisation – or *de*politicisation – of the EU budget may also function to solidify, exacerbate, or loosen the constraining dissensus. It is therefore important to theorise how politicisation of the EU budget may interact with Euroscepticism.

The concept of 'politicisation' has been used in EU studies in different contexts. Like any word ending in –tion, it refers to both a process and a product. It is here defined as 'an increase in polarization of opinion, interests or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the European Union' (cf. De Wilde 2007: 20). Defining politicisation as an issue-related process points to the necessity of locating changes in political contestation in time and space. In other words, the *process* of politicisation may lead to different *products* of politicised debates located in time and space, depending on different constellations of shaping factors and contingencies. Rather than speaking of the general politicisation of the EU, we are therefore interested in developments of politicisation and depoliticisation in 'episodes of contention' (Imig and Tarrow 2001b; Tilly and Tarrow 2007) surrounding specific issues in specific times and places with a bearing on the more general process of European integration and the nature of the EU polity.

Defined in such a way, the concept of politicisation provides us with the analytical tools to study contestation surrounding policy-formulation processes on the multiannual EU budget as taking the form of either international or transnational polarisation. On the one hand, politicisation of the EU budget may be characterised by international conflict, when polarisation of opinion takes place

between Member States or pits supranational institutions – i.e. European Commission and the European Parliament – against Member States. On the other hand, when polarisation of opinion takes the shape of partisan, sectoral, or regional coalitions, politicisation of the EU budget takes the form of transnational conflict – or conflict *within* Member States – as opposing groups cross-cut national boundaries. These two analytically distinct forms of polarisation are relevant to the constraining dissensus, as they interact with Euroscepticism in different ways.

International polarisation resonates positively with Euroscepticism, because it triggers and amplifies the relevance of one of Euroscepticism's main causal factors: exclusive national identity perceptions. In today's mediatised democracies, mass media may not determine what people think, but they do structure which issues people think about and in what terms – or frames – people think about these issues (De Vreese 2007a; De Vreese and Kandyla 2009; Gamson 2004; McCombs and Shaw 1972; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). Through framing the conflict in different ways, media may present citizens with different 'in-groups' (to which they belong) and 'out-groups' (to which they do not belong), thus stimulating self-identification by contrasting the opinions, values or interests of the in-group to those of the out-group (Bruter 2009; Siapera 2004; Smith 1992; Tajfel 1974; Tajfel and Turner 2004). If the in-group is framed to be the nation and other nations are framed as out-groups, national identity perceptions are evoked and reproduced in an exclusive way. In other words, national identity is presented as the foundation of a common national interest and it is contrasted to the interests of other nationalities in a zero-sum game where the final policy outcome will be either good for 'us', or for 'them'. Thanks to extensive previous research, we know that citizens who characterise themselves as belonging to their nation only and contrast this to feeling 'European' – e.g. with an exclusive national identity – are more inclined to oppose European integration (Carey 2002; Haesly 2001; Hooghe and Marks 2005a; 2007; McLaren 2007). If, on the other hand, the in-group is framed to be within the nation with possible allies in other nations and the out-group is also composed of people in multiple nations, exclusive national identity perceptions may be dampened or negated.

The public sphere(s) in the EU – dominated by mass media – are highly fragmented based on nationality. That is to say, citizens of any

particular Member State predominantly rely on national mass media in their own Member State for political communication. Language is a strong factor here, but mass media are also organised on a national basis with very few European wide media (Semetko et al. 2001). Since media cater to national publics, reporting is of a strongly national character. That is to say, editors publish stories with a national dimension of interest and arguments made by national political actors receive much more coverage than arguments made by foreigners (Galtung and Ruge 1965; Koopmans 2007; Koopmans and Erbe 2004). As a result of national public spheres, international polarisation exposes citizens to one side of the story only. National actors will defend a 'common national interest' together, which is presented as diametrically opposed to the opinions, interests or values of other Member States or supranational institutions. Those foreign interests will receive little coverage and sympathy, since they do not have national actors defending them. Assumedly, one-sided media coverage in the case of international polarisation will strengthen Euroscepticism among citizens as those who already have an exclusive national identity perception will be reinforced in their convictions that such an exclusive identity is both appropriate and relevant to actual EU policy-formulation and those without exclusive national identity perceptions may be inclined to shift their perspective. On the other hand, transnational politicisation will result in a more plural debate in the media as national political actors defend opposing policy preferences in potential coalition with actors in other Member States. Citizens are exposed to both (or multiple) sides of the story, thus negating both the relevance of national identity as a guiding principle for EU policy-formulation and the exclusiveness of interests attached to national identity. In effect, transnational polarisation results in cross-cutting cleavages as citizens identify with other citizens in their own Member State based on national identity and with citizens in other Member States based on the relevant opinions, interests or values articulated through politicisation (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Transnational polarisation may therefore be expected to dampen, or even reduce, Euroscepticism.

A Comparative Research Design

In order to analyse different forms of politicisation of the EU budget, this study takes a comparative approach. This section will develop three hypotheses about patterns and trends in polarisation of the EU budget based on existing literature. A comparison across time, space and forums allows for testing these respective hypotheses, controlling for developments in the EU and its budget, national particularities, and institutional incentives. To facilitate this comparison, this study uses claims-making analysis, which is specifically aimed at capturing dimensions and dynamics of political conflict in different contexts by means of rigorous qualitative content analysis of both media and parliamentary documents.

Since 1988, the EU adopts multiannual budgets – known as 'Financial Perspectives' – covering first five, and later seven, year periods. Consecutively, the four Financial Perspectives to date are known as 'Delors I' (1988-1992), 'Delors II' (1993-1999), 'Agenda 2000' (2000-2006) and 'Financial Perspectives 2007-2013' (FP07-13) (2007-2013). In the current system, the European Commission has sole right of initiative to present an encompassing package deal incorporating all revenues and expenditures of the EU. After negotiations on sections of the proposal in different settings of the Council of Ministers, EU Heads of State and Government adopt a unanimous position in the European Council, based on the principle that 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed'. Following this intergovernmental procedure, the budget is then renegotiated between the Council, Parliament and Commission leading to an 'Inter Institutional Agreement' (IIA). This IIA holds detailed expenditure ceilings and commitments for the multi-year period allowing only for marginal adaptations in annual budget reviews. If the EU should fail to adopt new Financial Perspectives in time, the old budget deal is extrapolated until the new budget is agreed upon. As a result of the many veto-players and the old budget as fall-back position, it is not surprising to find that consecutive Financial Perspectives feature only incremental changes (Daugbjerg 2009; Laffan 1997). Still, in the long run, clear changes can be recognised. Most notably, the Common Agricultural Policy has been reduced from taking over 70 per cent of EU expenditure in the early 1970s to little over 40 per cent in FP07-13 (Begg 2005: 33).

Thus, it is important to compare politicisation of the EU budget over time. Particularly, income disparities between Member States have increased as a result of enlargement, facilitating international polarisation. On the other hand, the budget itself has become more diverse as new expenditure posts have been added to already existing ones. Next to expenditure posts on agriculture and regional policy, there are now EU funds for research and development, transport and energy, environment and nature, culture, and the EU's 'external dimension'. As this creates new and plural subnational recipients of EU funds, we would expect more transnational polarisation. However, since enlargement arguably presents the most fundamental change in the EU with respect to the budget, and new expenditure posts are still limited in size, we hypothesise the effects of diversification of the EU as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 1: Budget negotiations are increasingly framed as international conflict over time since enlargement has created greater wealth diversity among Member States between 1992 and 2005.

To test this hypothesis, this study incorporates the last three negotiated Financial Perspectives – Delors II, Agenda 2000 and FP07-13 – in a comparison over time. It studies public debates surrounding the negotiations from the beginning of the month in which the Commission presented its proposal to the end of the month in which the European Council adopted a common position. It thus studies the following periods: 1 February 1992 – 31 December 1992, 1 July 1997 – 31 March 1999 and 1 February 2004 – 31 December 2005.

Past research has focused on intergovernmental conflict between net-contributors and net-recipients. Particularly in focus have been the United Kingdom's battle for the British Rebate, with Margaret Thatcher's well known proclamation of 'I want my money back' in 1984 (Laffan 1997). A less forceful but similar argument for a reduction in net-contributions was made by German governments in the 1990s (Laffan 2000; Lindner 2006). On the other hand, net-recipient countries led by Spain have argued forcefully for increased Structural Funds and against reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (Begg 2005; Laffan 2000). In the twelve countries that were Member States in the entire research period of 1992 – 2005, three groups may be discerned: net-contributors (Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom), net-recipients (Ireland,

Greece, Portugal and Spain) and countries paying more or less as much as they receive (Belgium, Denmark, France and Italy). Based on existing literature, one may assume that transnational politicisation arises when different national constituencies have different interests in the EU budget. Thus, in countries where some receive substantial amounts of money from the EU, and others pay, the potential for transnational polarisation is largest. Alternatively, in countries where most constituencies either pay or receive, one would expect more international polarisation as the collective national interest is clearer. This leads to hypothesis 2:

HYPOTHESIS 2: Polarisation of the EU budget in net-contributor and net-recipient Member States is predominantly international, whereas polarisation of the EU budget in countries which pay as much as they receive is predominantly transnational.

This study therefore focuses on three Member States – the Netherlands, Ireland and Denmark – to cover each of the three groups. In taking three small Member States, comparability is maximised as neither one of these countries could dictate the negotiations in a way bigger Member States could, and all three countries represent relatively homogenous, unitary states with multiparty systems and parliamentary democracy (Lijphart 1999).

Finally, this study takes account of different institutional structures that may affect the politicisation of the EU budget in different public spheres. In particular, it studies differences between politicisation in newspapers and in plenary debates in national parliaments. As already briefly mentioned, the logic of news value stimulates mass media to report on political news favoring a national dimension (Galtung and Ruge 1965). Furthermore, to the extent that media cover EU affairs, they are particularly geared towards European Council meetings and the intergovernmental conflict taking place there (Koopmans and Erbe 2004). To isolate these effects, politicisation of the budget in this institutional setting is compared to plenary debates taking place in national parliaments of the Netherlands (Tweede Kamer), Ireland (Dáil Éireann) and Denmark (Folketinget). Parliaments are arguably ideal settings for transnational polarisation, as they are the primary arena for political conflict between domestic political parties (King 1976). Additionally, countries with some form of regional representation through electoral districts, like Ireland and

to a lesser extent Denmark, may stimulate regional conflicts within Parliament. We thus hypothesise a bias in media towards international polarisation and a bias in parliaments towards transnational polarisation.

HYPOTHESIS 3: As a result of institutional incentives, polarisation in mass media is predominantly international, whereas polarisation in national parliaments is predominantly transnational.

To summarise then, this study presents a 3 (budgets) x 3 (countries) x 2 (forums) comparative research design (Yin 2003) in order to establish both patterns and trends in a series of controlled comparisons.

Data and Method

Such a comparison across time, space and forums to test the three mentioned hypotheses requires a structured methodology capable of measuring different forms of politicisation in different contexts while upholding methodological rigor and comparability. To ensure this, this study uses claims-making analysis (Koopmans 2002; Koopmans and Statham 1999) as a specific form of qualitative content analysis. Claims-making analysis is highly suitable for measuring politicisation in diverging contexts as it takes a very small unit – a 'claim' – as unit of analysis and measures relevant variables at that level, allowing for aggregation towards the level of budget, country and forum. A claim is defined as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere:

> [...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field
>
> (Statham 2005: 12)

The archetypical claim would be a verbal speech act concerning some political good that could be loosely translated as: 'I (do not) want …'. However, the definition above is far more inclusive, including claims such as meetings of the European Council, protests by farmers, resolutions tabled by parliaments and critical comments by

journalists. In textual terms, a claim can be as short as a few words, or as elaborate as several paragraphs, as long as it is made by the same claimant(s), making a single argument on a single topic related to the EU budget.

A sample of newspaper articles and parliamentary debates was coded using ATLAS.ti software, which were consequently exported to SPSS for quantitative analysis. The newspapers included in the sampling are *NRC Handelsblad*, *Trouw* and *Algemeen Dagblad* for the Netherlands, *Berlingske Tidene*, *Politiken* and *B.T.* for Denmark, and *Irish Times* and *Irish Independent* for Ireland. This study thus incorporates both quality and sensation-oriented newspapers of different political signature in all three countries. As differences between quality and sensation outlets are larger than between different media – e.g. TV and newspapers – this sample arguably forms a representative sample of national media (Semetko et al. 2001). Newspaper articles and plenary debates were sampled from digitalised archives using the search string: 'European budget' OR 'EC / EU budget' OR 'Delors II / Agenda 2000 / financial perspectives', with the exception of plenary debates from 1992 in the Netherlands and Denmark, which were manually selected from the physical archives of the *Tweede Kamer* and *Folketinget*. For the Netherlands and Denmark, every fourth newspaper article in chronological order and all plenary debates were selected for coding thus providing a very encompassing sample. Sampling for Ireland was twice as restrictive to cope with a larger amount of data. In total, 462 newspaper articles and 133 parliamentary debates were coded, resulting in 4435 claims.[3]

Coded variables of claims include WHERE and WHEN, WHO makes a claim, on WHAT, HOW, addressing WHOM, for/against WHOSE interests and WHY. The 'why' variable here refers to how the EU budget is 'framed'. In other words, how claimants organise '[...] an apparently diverse array of symbols, images and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is at stake on the issue' (Gamson 2004: 245). It is particularly through such

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[3] The codebook, the heuristic ATLAS.ti files and the SPSS database can be obtained from the author upon request.

framing that politicisation may affect the constraining dissensus, as claims framing the policy-formulation process on the EU budget cue citizens in different ways on how to think of this particular process, and the EU polity and integration project by proxy (De Vreese 2007a; De Vreese and Kandyla 2009). During the coding process, possible ways of framing the EU budget negotiations were inductively construed, resulting in multiple forms of both international and transnational polarisations of opinion as well as other forms of framing. For the purpose of the analysis, international and transnational polarisations of opinion are aggregated into two groups, while other or missing frames are ignored.

The aim of this study is comparative, rather than explanatory. Thus, instead of understanding countries, budgets and forums as proxies for 'independent variables' explaining polarisation of the EU budget, this study restrains itself to mapping patterns and trends. The findings will therefore be presented in three controlled comparisons reporting chi-square measures of association, rather than in a single binary logistic regression analysis. There will thus be first a comparison across time, followed by comparisons across countries and forums respectively. Each of the comparisons will be conducted as a multivariate, controlled association analysis in the form of a crosstabulation of unweighted claims. These quantitative findings will be further illustrated with qualitative findings from the process-tracing coding exercise, thus providing triangulation in the form of a 'hierarchical' mixed-method research design (Read and Marsh 2002).

A Comparison across Budgets

Recall that we expect diverging trends over time, due to the diversification of the EU itself and the EU budget. On the one hand, increasing wealth differences between Member States will create both more net-contributors and more net-recipients with increasing distance between them, thus stimulating international polarisation. On the other hand, the diversification of the EU budget may increase the potential for transnational polarisation as there will likely be interested constituencies in all Member States. However, we hypothesise increasing international polarisation over time, as the impact of enlargement is deemed more substantial than that of budget diversification. Table 10 provides a crosstabulation of budgets and polarisation controlling for countries, and Table 11 provides a

crosstabulation of budgets and polarisation controlling for forum. The cell numbers represent unweighted amounts of claims.

The results displayed in Table 10 are very mixed. In the Netherlands, there is no significant association between the budget and polarisation (χ^2(2, N = 621) = .151, p < .927). In Denmark, there is a significant association as the budget has become relatively more transnational over time (χ^2(2, N = 488) = 20.127, p < .000). Ireland shows the exact opposite trend, with polarisation becoming relatively more international over time (χ^2(2, N = 752) = 32.201, p < .000).

Table 10: Crosstabulation of budget and polarisation, controlling for countries

Country			Delors II (1992)	Agenda 2000 (1997-9)	Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	Total
The Netherlands	Polarisation	International	42	187	247	476
		Transnational	14	58	73	145
		Total	56	245	320	621
Denmark	Polarisation	International	39	159	137	335
		Transnational	6	53	94	153
		Total	45	212	231	488
Ireland	Polarisation	International	92	229	147	468
		Transnational	56	189	39	284
		Total	148	418	186	752

There is clearly no overall trend. As a result, there is no evidence to support hypothesis 1. Rather, the data may be an indication that the two different ways of diversification act to counter each other's effect. In general, we can conclude that all budget debates – in all three countries on all three budgets – display a plurality of international polarisation over transnational polarisation. The ratio between international and transnational polarisation ranges from 1.5:1 in Denmark on FP 07-13, to 6.5:1 in Denmark on Delors II.

Table 11: Crosstabulation of budget and polarisation, controlling for forum

Forum			Budget			
			Delors II (1992)	Agenda 2000 (1997-9)	Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	Total
Media	Polarisation	International	93	377	364	834
		Transnational	5	114	75	194
		Total	98	491	439	1028
Parliament	Polarisation	International	80	198	167	445
		Transnational	71	186	131	388
		Total	151	384	298	833

When analysing the association between budget and polarisation controlling for forum, we find a significant association in the media. Although all three budgets are framed predominantly as international polarisation, this dominance is significantly less in Agenda 2000 compared to FP07-13 and even more so compared to Delors II ($\chi^2(2, N = 1028) = 19.110, p < .000$). Interestingly, Agenda 2000 was also clearly the most intensely debated budget with a total of 491 claims including either international or transnational framing in the media, compared to 439 claims during FP 07-13 and only 98 in Delors II. Thus, as far as debates in the media are concerned, increasing politicisation in general correlates with a more equal balance between international and transnational polarisation. On the other hand, parliamentary debates appear to feature a more stable balance between international and transnational polarisation, with no significant association between the consecutive budgets and polarisation ($\chi^2(2, N = 833) = 1.366, p < .505$).

A Comparison across Countries

Recalling hypothesis 2, we would expect more international polarisation in the Netherlands and Ireland than in Denmark, since the first two countries have a clearer economic collective national interest concerning the EU budget.

Table 12: Crosstabulation of country and polarisation, controlling for budget

Budget			The Netherlands	Denmark	Ireland	Total
			Country			
Delors II (1992)	Polarisation	International	42	39	92	173
		Transnational	14	6	56	76
		Total	56	45	148	249
Agenda 2000 (1997-9)	Polarisation	International	187	159	229	575
		Transnational	58	53	189	300
		Total	245	212	418	875
Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	Polarisation	International	247	137	147	531
		Transnational	73	94	39	206
		Total	320	231	186	737

During all three budget negotiations, there is a significant association between the countries the debate took place in, and the polarisation of the debate: Delors II ($\chi^2(2, N = 249) = 10.810, p < .004$); Agenda 2000 ($\chi^2(2, N = 875) = 42.522, p < .000$); FP 07-13 ($\chi^2(2, N = 737) = 27.322, p < .000$). However, this pattern does not provide evidence to support hypothesis 2. If anything, it provides mixed evidence contradicting hypothesis 2. The debate in Denmark on Delors II – where there was clearly the lowest intensity of debate and low national economic interest in terms of net-contribution – the framing was most skewed towards international polarisation with a ratio of 6.5:1. On the other hand, high intensity debates with strong national economic interests featured more equal balance between the two forms of polarisation, such as in Ireland on Delors II and Agenda 2000 and in the Netherlands on Agenda 2000 and FP07-13. Still, international polarisation remains more prominent than transnational polarisation throughout all debates. Rather than providing evidence for hypothesis 2, the findings presented here suggest that the balance between international and transnational polarisation may correlate with the intensity of debate. The higher the intensity of debate, the more equal the balance between international and transnational polarisation.

Table 13: Crosstabulation of country and polarisation, controlling for forum

Forum			The Netherlands	Denmark	Ireland	Total
Media	Polarisation	International	271	296	267	834
		Transnational	55	52	87	194
		Total	326	348	354	1028
Parliament	Polarisation	International	205	39	201	445
		Transnational	90	101	197	388
		Total	295	140	398	833

Country differences in polarisation become clearer when we control for the forum in which the debate takes place, i.e. media or parliament. The association between country and polarisation in the media is significant (χ^2(2, N = 1028) = 11.886, p < .003), with the Irish media framing the budget less in terms of international polarisation than the Dutch and Danish media. This is largely the result of a relatively well organised Irish agricultural sector and the vocal defence of its interests by the IFA (Irish Farmers Association) in public (e.g. MacConnell 1998). However, taking a look at Table 13, the ratio of international polarisation to transnational polarisation does not show a clear difference across the countries. Looking at the parliamentary debates, however, provides a strikingly different picture. Whereas the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* features more than twice as many claims framing the budget as international conflict than claims framing the budget as transnational conflict, the Danish *Folketinget* features a rare – and strong – plurality of transnational polarisation, while the Irish *Dáil Éireann* features a balance between the two ways of framing. Association between country and polarisation in parliament is clearly significant (χ^2(2, N = 833) = 68.749, p < .000).

Thus, increasing politicisation in terms of intensity of debate tends to coincide with a plurality of dimensions of conflict. Substantially, this means that debates about the EU budget that are relatively depoliticised, tend to frame the budget negotiations as a conflict between *other* Member States, with one's own Member State hardly affected. The debate in Denmark and the Netherlands during the negotiations on Delors II focused on conflict between the UK and Germany on the one hand, and Mediterranean Member States and the European Commission on the other hand, with minor attention

for the preferences of the Danish and Dutch governments (e.g. Brummelman 1992; Nielsen 1992; Tweede Kamer 1992). Once domestic interests are more prominently advanced publicly by political actors, and politicisation therefore increases, these interests tend to be both contrasted to other domestic interests and to foreign interests independent of whether the country in which the debate takes place is a net-contributor, net-recipient or pays as much as it receives. Rather than reinforcing dominant patterns of polarisation, increasing politicisation balances dominant international polarisation with increasing transnational polarisation, creating a more plural image of political contestation and interests at stake.

Hypothesis 2 is, however, supported by the data in parliamentary debates. The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* features more international polarisation, reflecting its position as a net-contributor. Reversely, the Danish *Folketinget* features more transnational debate, reflecting its balanced position in terms of contributions. The fact that the Irish debate in *Dáil Éireann* features a balance between international and transnational polarisation may on the one hand be explained by Ireland's status as a large net-recipient, giving it the clear 'national interest' to keep receiving as much money as possible. On the other hand, its large agricultural sector provides incentives for transnational polarisation between farmers and consumers and between agriculture-dependent regions and more industrialised regions within Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish electoral system creates incentives for Members of Parliament to represent their local constituency – fostering subnational regional conflict – as opposed to the single district proportional representation of the Netherlands. The strategy by the Fianna Fail dominated government to get as much money from Brussels as possible was highly criticised by the Fine Gael party in opposition as a despicable 'begging bowl' policy where other Member States would see Ireland merely as a beggar holding out her hand for more funds (Dáil Éireann 1992a; 1992b; 1998). The discussion on the begging bowl policy between Fianna Fail and Fine Gael is a very good example of how international and transnational polarisation may reinforce each other, rather than crowd each other out, in a process of politicisation. The debate was as much about defending 'the national interest' vis-à-vis other Member States and the European Commission, as it was about domestic party politics on what kind of policy and strategy to follow and who could represent the Irish interests best.

A Comparison across Forums

Tables 14 and 15 provide crosstabulations to test the third and final hypothesis. Recall that we hypothesised debates in the media to feature more international polarisation due to its nation-based organisation and news value criteria. Parliaments, on the other hand, are the primary arena for domestic party contestation and are therefore expected to feature transnational polarisation predominantly. The crosstabulation in Table 14 shows a clear association between the forum and the polarisation advanced in framing, irrespective of the budget in question: Delors II ($\chi^2(2, N = 249) = 49.243, p < .000$); Agenda 2000 ($\chi^2(2, N = 875) = 60.829, p < .000$); FP 07-13 ($\chi^2(2, N = 737) = 63.665, p < .000$).

Table 14: Crosstabulation of forum and polarisation, controlling for budget

Budget			Forum		
			Media	Parliament	Total
Delors II (1992)	Polarisation	International	93	80	173
		Transnational	5	71	76
		Total	98	151	249
Agenda 2000 (1997-9)	Polarisation	International	377	198	575
		Transnational	114	186	300
		Total	491	384	875
Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-5)	Polarisation	International	364	167	531
		Transnational	75	131	206
		Total	439	298	737

Supporting hypothesis 3, polarisation framing in the media is much more international than transnational in all three budget debates. This is further confirmed when we control for countries, as displayed in Table 15. Again, the media in all three countries show a significant bias towards international polarisation in comparison to parliamentary debates: the Netherlands ($\chi^2(2, N = 621) = 16.092, p < .000$); Denmark ($\chi^2(2, N = 488) = 1.518E2, p < .000$); Ireland ($\chi^2(2, N = 752) = 49.508, p < .000$).

Table 15: Crosstabulation of forum and polarisation, controlling for country

Country			Forum		
			Media	Parliament	Total
The Netherlands	Polarisation	International	271	205	476
		Transnational	55	90	145
		Total	326	295	621
Denmark	Polarisation	International	296	39	335
		Transnational	52	101	153
		Total	348	140	488
Ireland	Polarisation	International	267	201	468
		Transnational	87	197	284
		Total	354	398	752

Thus, media across Member States do not vary much in their ways of framing EU budget debates. Parliaments, on the other hand, differ strongly from each other. A difference in scrutiny mechanisms may account for the observed relationship. As shown by De Wilde (2009a), it matters which phase of the policy-formulation process and media coverage cycle parliamentary scrutiny mechanisms are linked into. Whereas the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* has ex post debates following European Council meetings – and is thus linked into a strongly intergovernmental phase in the policy-formulation process when media attention is high – the Danish *Folketing* has ex ante control mechanisms, with debate taking place in the early, more exploratory, phases of policy-formulation when there is low media coverage. Irish plenary discussions took place throughout the policy-formulation process. Parliamentary debates coinciding with high profile European Council meetings and accompanying media coverage with international framing, have more international polarisation in their debates than parliaments holding debates decoupled from both European Council meetings and media coverage.

We thus conclude that there is support for hypothesis 3 in terms of stable media patterns across budgets and countries with a bias towards international polarisation. To the extent that citizens are relying on mass media for political communication, rather than following national parliamentary debates directly, this indicates that politicisation of the EU budget is likely to reinforce Euroscepticism. Perhaps more surprising, hypothesis 3 is not confirmed as far as parliamentary debates are concerned. Despite institutional

arrangements strongly favoring competition between domestic political parties with expected transnational polarisation, we only find this expected pattern in the Danish *Folketing*. The Irish *Dáil Éireann* shows a balance between the two forms of polarisation and the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* even shows strong predominance of international polarisation. As argued above, this remarkable finding can largely be explained due to a difference in EU scrutiny mechanisms. However, we also need to consider the power of national identity as a factor structuring conflict, even in a relatively hostile institutional environment. Whereas international polarisation reinforces Euroscepticism through strengthening exclusive national identity perceptions, such perceptions in turn influence patterns and trends in politicisation of the EU budget. The power of national identity to affect framing in national parliaments may be amplified by the agenda-setting power of media coverage on parliamentary debates, when debates and coverage coincide in time (De Wilde 2009a).

Conclusion

As a result of increasing political relevance of Euroscepticism restricting the actions of Europe's political elite, the political climate in the EU can now arguably be described as a 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Since this will make Treaty changes and Enlargement difficult, the EU's public image in the near future may well be shaped by its third largest high profile package deals: the multiannual EU budget, or Financial Perspectives. The way many potential political conflicts inherent in the budget are amplified or ignored in public debates has the potential to strongly affect the future of European integration. In other words, whether the constraining dissensus persists, becomes even stronger or dissipates, may be affected by the politicisation of the EU budget. The main findings of this comparative empirical study are that international framing of the budget is more dominant than transnational framing, making it more likely that public contestation over the EU budget reinforces Euroscepticism. On the other hand, this dominance of international polarisation dissipates as politicisation increases. In other words, the more politicised the EU budget becomes, the less likely it is to reinforce Euroscepticism.

To study politicisation of the EU budget, this study employs a comparative research design to establish patterns and trends. To allow comparisons across budgets, countries and forums, political debates on the Financial Perspectives of Delors II (negotiated in 1992), Agenda 2000 (1997-1999) and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (2004-2005) in the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland in national newspapers and plenary parliamentary debates are incorporated. Using claims-making analysis, this study presents original data to analyse the ways in which the EU budget negotiation is framed by actors in these different public spheres, using controlled multivariate analysis.

When comparing over time, we find no clear trend in the balance between the two forms of polarisation. Rather, increasing diversity in wealth of Member States may be offset by the increasing diversity in expenditure posts of the budget, creating winning and losing constituencies in nearly all Member States. Furthermore, the two forms of polarisation seem to reinforce each other, rather than form alternatives. That is, more intensely debated budgets – particularly Agenda 2000 – also feature a more equal balance between international and transnational polarisation, compared to less controversial budgets, such as Delors II. We can therefore not conclude that budget debates stimulate Euroscepticism more now – in an enlarged EU – than they did in the early 1990s.

When comparing across countries, we find that net-contributor and net-recipient countries do not feature more international polarisation, compared to countries receiving an equal amount of funds from the budget as they contribute. Quite the opposite, strong 'national interests' in the form of large net-contributions or received funds seem to stimulate both international and transnational conflict as contestation focuses on what exactly the national interest is and who could represent this interest best. More politicised debates are characterised by a more equal balance between international and transnational polarisation and are therefore less likely to reinforce Euroscepticism than depoliticised debates.

Finally, when comparing debates in newspapers to those in parliaments, we find predominantly international polarisation in newspapers, and highly varying polarisation in parliaments. The media clearly frame the budget negotiations predominantly as

international conflict in all three countries and budgets under study. However, parliamentary debates greatly differ as a result of different scrutiny mechanisms. Despite clear national differences between parliaments, we still find a remarkably strong presence of international polarisation in a setting that should favor domestic party politics, and therefore transnational polarisation. Thus, national identity perceptions are not just reinforced by international polarisation, they in turn stimulate political actors to frame EU budget negotiations in international conflict dimensions, creating a self-reinforcing mechanism. The power of national identity to structure debates even in 'hostile' institutional settings is amplified by the agenda-setting power of media, when media coverage and parliamentary debates coincide in time.

It seems likely that negotiations on the multiannual EU budget in the near future will reinforce, or even increase, the current constraining dissensus characterising the political climate of the EU, because international polarisation may strengthen Euroscepticism by resonating with exclusive national identity perceptions. The EU may thus be facing a self-reinforcing mechanism, where Euroscepticism increases the importance of the EU budget in the public perception of European integration and the EU budget reinforces Euroscepticism.

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Annex I: Codebook

This is the codebook used in the analysis of debates on the EU budget in both media and parliament in the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland. It builds on the method of *claims-making analysis* (Koopmans 2002; Koopmans and Statham 1999). This study uses written text in the form of newspaper articles or transcripts of parliamentary procedings as primary data. Although claims-making analysis is not methodologically restricted to written material, claims can be expressed as pieces of text in this study. Claims are pieces of these texts in which the claimant – or central actor – takes up a single position on one topic related to the EU budget. Thus, a claim has at least three characteristics: a claimant, an issue and a position. Furthermore, a change in any of these three core characteristics would demarkate one claim from the next one. In addition to these variables, there may be several other characteristics to a claim. All in all, claims may consist of WHERE and WHEN, WHO makes a claim, on WHAT, HOW, addressing WHOM, for/against WHOSE interests and WHY. We define a claim as a unit of strategic or communicative action in the public sphere: '[...] which articulate[s] political demands, decisions, implementations, calls to action, proposals, criticisms, or physical attacks, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors in a policy field' (Statham 2005: 12; Vetters et al. 2006: 8).

A claim can thus be as short as a few words or as long as several paragraphs of text, depending on how elaborate the claim is. Claims can also overlap. The three key variables constituting a claim are the claimant, an issue relating to the EU budget and a position defended by the claimant concerning this issue. The location variables of 'country', 'budget' and 'forum' are derived from the context of the claim, and the remaining 14 variables are optional. That is, they contain the value 'none' in case it is lacking in the claim. A claim consists of a single value on each of the three core variables of claimant, issue and position. If one or more of these three variables changes in value, it demarkates the beginning of a new claim. When any of these three key variables is missing, text is not coded as a claim. However, as there is a value of 'neutral' on the position variable, there is in practice always a claim as soon as there is a claimant symantically linked to an issue. The only exception to this rule is when the claimant is the journalist who authored the text. If a

journalist writes about a topic related to the EU budget without taking up a clear position on the issue, it is regarded as factual description rather than claims-making and therefore not coded.

This codebook and the Europub.com project

This project takes as a basis for the empirical analysis the codebook used in the Europub.com project (Koopmans 2002). The basic unit of analysis and coded variables are the same, although there are several minor adaptations, which will be briefly discussed below.

First, claims-making analysis as conducted in the Europub.com project is developed in particular for studying the involvement in European policy-formulation of social movements and civil society. Therefore, it is primarily interested in the *actions* undertaken by different actors to influence EU policy-formulation. This study, in contrast, is more interested in actors' *opinions* and the frequency with which they are stated. This results in different coding of a parliamentary speech, for instance. According to Koopmans and Statham, a claim is a strategic purposive action in the public sphere. Thus, a speech by a Member of Parliament (MP) in plenary would be a single claim, even if several issues and opinions are communicated (Koopmans 2002: 7). As indicated above, this project would code multiple different claims if the same MP addressed different issues or took up different positions concerning these issues in a single speech.

Secondly, according to Koopmans, there has to be a specific form of action present for a claim to be coded as such. Thus, a claim could look like this: 'The British government says it wants to keep the British rebate'. If, on the other hand, media would report: 'The British government wants to keep the British rebate', it would not be coded as a claim since there is no specific action (Koopmans 2002: 5). This emphasis on action is understandable when the focus is on social movements and protest, but problematic for several reasons in relation to the current project. First, in a study more interested in opinions or policy positions, a lot of relevant information would be lost with such strict coding rules. Second, it does not take into account the art of journalistic writing, in which journalists alternate their writing style to provide attractive reading. Most importantly though, it ignores the often secretive nature of EU decision-making. A large part of claims-making within EU institutions is made outside

of direct media spotlights, for instance behind the closed doors of European Council meetings. Journalists hear about these claims indirectly through press meetings or because they are informally leaked. Such practices may encourage passive writing styles as journalists try to accomodate the indirect nature of claims or the anonymity of their informants. This study perceives written text as a reflection of reality, not as reality itself. Thus, during the qualitative coding, the *meaning* of the text, rather than its literal words was coded. Whether a newspaper reports that the British government 'says' it wants to keep the British rebate or merely reports that it 'wants' to keep it would not make a difference for coding. In both cases, the text would be coded as a claim.

Finally, the Europub.com codebook was slightly adapted for this project to facilitate qualitative coding in the Atlas.ti software package and later quantitative analysis in SPSS following exportation of the coding results. This means that each variable is operationalised as a closed categorical variable with a given number of values. In Atlas.ti, each label represented either a value, a group of values or a variable. The latter two served only to make the coding scheme easily accessible to the coder and could not be linked to claims. In other words, they were never applied to text. This operationalisation resulted in 18 variables which will each be discussed briefly in this codebook. As each variable was 'closed', a single value for each variable was linked to every claim in the coding process. Therefore, every claim has exactly 18 values attached to it, one for each variable. In the codebook below, codes which are underscored represent group labels, these codes were not actively used, but rather served to structure the codebook in an easily accessible way for the coder. These underlined group labels are followed by an indent to visualise which codes fall under it. Codes which are both underscored and in bold represent variable names. They include the number of the variable (V) and the total number of values falling under it. Finally, codes that are neither underscored nor in bold represent values.

For each budget period per country, a seperate heuristic file was created within Atlas.ti. So, there are a total of 9 Atlas.ti files: 3 budget periods (1992, 1997-9 and 2004-5) times 3 countries (the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland). As they were constants during coding, the variables 'country' and 'budget' were not coded in Atlas.ti. They were later added in SPSS, each with three self explanatory values.

Including these, there are 20 variables with a total of 402 values in the final SPSS file. The SPSS file furthermore contains each value as a dichotomous variable and several recomputed variables based on the 20 basic variables used in the coding process. Annex II includes the syntax for computing reaggregated and secondary variables based on the SPSS output of Atlas.ti.

Origin and Time (3 variables)

This group of three variables locates the claim in time and space. The country of origin of the claimant is coded rather than the location in which the claim is made. The only exception to this is if the claimant is employed by the European Union. Thus, if the German Chancellor would make a claim in Brussels during a European Council meeting, the origin of the claim would be 'Germany', rather than 'Belgium'. But, if Commission President Delors made a claim while in office, the origin would be 'EU Institution' rather than 'France'. Claims by Members of the European Parliament are also coded as 'EU Institution', but the Presidency of the Council is coded by respective country, not 'EU institution'.

Unless specified in the text or the claim itself, the time in which the claim was made was a function of the document. Thus, any claims appearing in a newspaper article dated 17 September 1992, would be coded '1992' and 'September' unless there was another time explicitly mentioned in the claim.

A. ORIGIN AND TIME
A.1. Origin: (V1: 34 Values)
A.1.01. EU (general)
A.1.02. EU Institution
A.1.03. Austria
A.1.04. Belgium
A.1.05. Bulgaria
A.1.06. Cyprus
A.1.07. Czech Republic
A.1.08. Denmark
A.1.09. Estonia
A.1.10. Finland
A.1.11. France
A.1.12. Germany

A.1.13. Greece
A.1.14. Hungary
A.1.15. Ireland
A.1.16. Italy
A.1.17. Latvia
A.1.18. Lithuania
A.1.19. Luxembourg
A.1.20. Malta
A.1.21. Netherlands
A.1.22. Poland
A.1.23. Portugal
A.1.24. Romania
A.1.25. Slovakia
A.1.26. Spain
A.1.27. Sweden
A.1.28. United Kingdom
A.1.29. Norway
A.1.30. Switzerland
A.1.31. Turkey
A.1.32. Other Country
A.1.33. International Organisation
A.1.34. Unknown

A.2. Time

A.2.1. Year: (V2: 11 Values)

A.2.1.01. Before 1992
A.2.1.02. 1992
A.2.1.03. 1993-1996
A.2.1.04. 1997
A.2.1.05. 1998
A.2.1.06. 1999
A.2.1.07. 2000-2003
A.2.1.08. 2004
A.2.1.09. 2005
A.2.1.10. After 2005
A.2.1.11. Unknown

A.2.2. Month: (V3: 13 Values)

A.2.2.01. January
A.2.2.02. February
A.2.2.03. March
A.2.2.04. April
A.2.2.05. May

A.2.2.06. June
A.2.2.07. July
A.2.2.08. August
A.2.2.09. September
A.2.2.10. October
A.2.2.11. November
A.2.2.12. December
A.2.2.13. Unknown

Claimant (2 variables)

This variable was a central requirement for a claim, so the value 'none' was never used. This value was, however, included to maintain comparability with the other 'actor' variables of supporters, addressees and objects. Each of these four variables have exactly the same values. This variable is dependent on the country whose debate is coded. Thus, while coding the debate in the Netherlands, all values under 'National Political Arena' refer to Dutch actors only. This means that national politicians from other countries than the one whose debate was under study and who were not in government at the time would be coded as 'Other'.

A broad range of party families is used, roughly ordered from the political 'left' to the political 'right'. In general, a party's membership of an EU party federation would determine its family. Thus, national parties affiliated to the Party of European Socialists would be coded as social-democratic. There is a distinction made within the European People's Party between Christian-democratic parties and conservative parties. For the Dutch debate, there were separate codes created for the RPF, GPV, SGP and ChristenUnie parties (orthodox protestant) and for D66 (progressive liberal) as they substansially differ from the other Christian-democratic (CDA) and liberal (VVD) parties respectively. The value 'coalition' referres to the governing coalition only, not to a coalition including government and opposition parties or just opposition parties.

B. CLAIMANT
B.1. Type of Claimant: (V4: 37 Values)
B.1.01. National Political Arena
B.1.01.01. National Politicians (general)
B.1.01.02. National Government

B.1.01.03. National Parliament
B.1.01.04. Prime Minister
B.1.01.05. Foreign Minister
B.1.01.06. Finance Minister
B.1.01.07. Agricultural Minister
B.1.01.08. Europe Minister
B.1.01.09. Other Minister
B.1.01.10. Parliamentary Leader
B.1.01.11. Member of Parliament
B.1.01.12. Political Party

B.1.02. EU
B.1.02.1. EU (general)
B.1.02.2. EU member states (general)
B.1.02.3. EU institutions (general)
B.1.02.4. European Commission
B.1.02.5. European Council
B.1.02.6. EU Presidency
B.1.02.7. Council of Ministers
B.1.02.7.1. Relex
B.1.02.7.2. Ecofin
B.1.02.7.3. Agriculture
B.1.02.7.4. Other
B.1.02.8. European Parliament
B.1.03. Other Member State Government(s)
B.1.04. Country(ies) outside the EU
B.1.05. International Organisation
B.1.06. NGO / Social Movement
B.1.07. Organised Business
B.1.08. Media / Journalist
B.1.09. Famous people (artists, former politicians)
B.1.10. Farmers
B.1.11. Consumers / Tax Payers
B.1.12. Academics / Specialists / Experts
B.1.13. Citizens / The Public
B.1.14. Church / Religious actor
B.1.15. Other
B.1.16. None

B.2. Political Affiliation (Party Family): (V5: 13 Values)
B.2.01. Radical Left
B.2.02. Green
B.2.03. Social Democrat

        B.2.04. Progressive Liberal
        B.2.05. Liberal
        B.2.06. Christian Democrat
        B.2.07. Centre / Agrarian
        B.2.08. Conservatives
        B.2.09. Radical Right / New Populist Right
        B.2.10. Orthodox Protestant
        B.2.11. Other
        B.2.12. Coalition
        B.2.13. None

Support Claimant (2 variables)

This variable features the exact same values as the previous 'Claimant' variable and the other two actor variables ('Addressee' and 'Object of Claim'). A support actor was coded when either of two criteria were fulfilled. First, when there was more than one actor making the claim. In this case, the first one mentioned would be coded as claimant and the second one as support actor. For example, if a Dutch newspaper reads: "Germany and France want to keep spending on agriculture at current levels", the French government would be coded as support actor with the 'Other Member State Government' value. Alternatively, a support actor would be coded if the claimant actively mentions another actor as the source or defence of his claim. Thus, if an MP mentions a newspaper article or an expert's report as a source – or excuse – to make a claim, the value 'Media/Journalist' or 'Academics/Specialists/Experts' would be coded as support claimant.

The same party families are used to classify the political affiliation of the support actor. Of course, if there is no support actor, the affiliation is also 'none'.

C. SUPPORT CLAIMANT
    C.1. Type of Claimant: (V6: 37 Values)
        C.1.01. National Political Arena
            C.1.01.01. National Politicians (general)
            C.1.01.02. National Government
            C.1.01.03. National Parliament
            C.1.01.04. Prime Minister
            C.1.01.05. Foreign Minister

C.1.01.06. Finance Minister
C.1.01.07. Agricultural Minister
C.1.01.08. Europe Minister
C.1.01.09. Other Minister
C.1.01.10. Parliamentary Leader
C.1.01.11. Member of Parliament
C.1.01.12. Political Party

<u>C.1.02. EU</u>

C.1.02.1. EU (general)
C.1.02.2. EU member states (general)
C.1.02.3. EU institutions (general)
C.1.02.4. European Commission
C.1.02.5. European Council
C.1.02.6. EU Presidency

<u>C.1.02.7. Council of Ministers</u>

C.1.02.7.1. Relex
C.1.02.7.2. Ecofin
C.1.02.7.3. Agriculture
C.1.02.7.4. Other

C.1.02.8. European Parliament

C.1.03. Other Member State Government(s)
C.1.04. Country(ies) outside the EU
C.1.05. International Organisation
C.1.06. NGO / Social Movement
C.1.07. Organised Business
C.1.08. Media / Journalist
C.1.09. Famous people (artists, former politicians)
C.1.10. Farmers
C.1.11. Consumers / Tax Payers
C.1.12. Academics / Specialists / Experts
C.1.13. Citizens / The Public
C.1.14. Church / Religious actor
C.1.15. Other
C.1.16. None

C.2. Political Affiliation (Party Family): (V7: 13 Values)

C.2.01. Radical Left
C.2.02. Green
C.2.03. Social Democrat
C.2.04. Progressive Liberal
C.2.05. Liberal
C.2.06. Christian Democrat

     C.2.07. Centre / Agrarian
     C.2.08. Conservatives
     C.2.09. Radical Right / New Populist Right
     C.2.10. Orthodox Protestant
     C.2.11. Other
     C.2.12. Coalition
     C.2.13. None

Form of Action (1 variable)

This variable concerns the form – or type – of the claim. Most of the claims are either spoken or written. In case of claims made in parliament, a more precise classification of the claim was made. Although most claims in parliament are made during speeches, there are exceptions. For instance, the 'Parliamentary Reaction' value was used when MPs or members of government would intervene during the speech of someone else. Such claims were always coded as having an addressee (see Addressee below), namely, the person holding the speech at the time. The value 'Parliamentary Question' is reserved from formal oral questions. Otherwise, it would be hard to make a distinction between speech and question, because parliamentary rules may require MPs to phrase all claims as questions. Otherwise, the chaiman of parliament might rule that their contributions do not require any response. 'Parliamentary letter' was only used when a claimant explicitely linked his claim to an official parliamentary document.

Outside of the parliamentary arena, there might be claims that are coded more specifically than verbal or written claims, like decrees ('Executive Action'), judicial verdicts ('Judicial Action'), referenda or elections ('Direct Democratic Action'), peaceful demonstrations ('Conventional Action') or even violence in one form or another ('Confrontational Action'). Most of these values were included in the codebook to maintain comparability to the Europub.com project, even though claims on the EU budget were hardly ever made in one of these forms in practice.

D. FORM OF ACTION: (V8: 15 Values)

D.1. Political Initiatives

     D.1.1. Legislative proposal
     D.1.2. Resolution

        D.1.3. Parliamentary Speech
        D.1.4. Parliamentary Question
        D.1.5. Parliamentary Reaction
        D.1.6. Parliamentary Letter
        D.1.7. Vote
    D.2. Executive Action
    D.3. Judicial Action
    D.4. Verbal Statement (other)
    D.5. Written Statement / Report / Letter
    D.6. Meeting
    D.7. Direct Democratic Action
    D.8. Conventional Action (other)
    D.9. Confrontational Action

Addressee (2 variables)

This combination of two variables refers again to some type of actors and therefore has the exact same values as the variables 'Claimant', 'Support Claimant' and 'Object of Claim'. An addressee was coded whenever the main claimant wanted someone else to do something for him or her. The verb 'do' should be interpreted liberally here. For instance, an addressee was called when a claimant called upon another to change his or her position on a certain topic, even when this was done in form of criticism, without an explicit call for change of position. An example: a green MP says that the position of the Christian-democrats stating that the national contribution should be reduced does not fit well with the party's previous claim that the EU budget should increase in order to facilitate EU enlargement. Here, the Christian-democrats as a party would be coded as addressees, since the green MP implicitely calls upon the Christian-democrats to reverse their position on the national contribution.

The same party families are used to classify the political affiliation of the addressee. Of course, if there is no addressee, the affiliation is also 'none'.

E. ADDRESSEE
    E.1. Type of Addressee: (V9: 37 Values)
        E.1.01. National Political Arena
            E.1.01.01. National Politicians (general)
            E.1.01.02. National Government

        E.1.01.03. National Parliament
        E.1.01.04. Prime Minister
        E.1.01.05. Foreign Minister
        E.1.01.06. Finance Minister
        E.1.01.07. Agricultural Minister
        E.1.01.08. Europe Minister
        E.1.01.09. Other Minister
        E.1.01.10. Parliamentary Leader
        E.1.01.11. Member of Parliament
        E.1.01.12. Political Party
    <u>E.1.02. EU</u>
        E.1.02.1. EU (general)
        E.1.02.2. EU member states (general)
        E.1.02.3. EU institutions (general)
        E.1.02.4. European Commission
        E.1.02.5. European Council
        E.1.02.6. EU Presidency
        <u>E.1.02.7. Council of Ministers</u>
            E.1.02.7.1. Relex
            E.1.02.7.2. Ecofin
            E.1.02.7.3. Agriculture
            E.1.02.7.4. Other
        E.1.02.8. European Parliament
    E.1.03. Other Member State Government(s)
    E.1.04. Country(ies) outside the EU
    E.1.05. International Organisation
    E.1.06. NGO / Social Movement
    E.1.07. Organised Business
    E.1.08. Media / Journalist
    E.1.09. Famous people (artists, former politicians)
    E.1.10. Farmers
    E.1.11. Consumers / Tax Payers
    E.1.12. Academics / Specialists / Experts
    E.1.13. Citizens / The Public
    E.1.14. Church / Religious actor
    E.1.15. Other
    E.1.16. None

E.2. Political Affiliation (Party Family): (V10: 13 Values)

    E.2.01. Radical Left
    E.2.02. Green
    E.2.03. Social Democrat

E.2.04. Progressive Liberal
E.2.05. Liberal
E.2.06. Christian Democrat
E.2.07. Centre / Agrarian
E.2.08. Conservatives
E.2.09. Radical Right / New Populist Right
E.2.10. Orthodox Protestant
E.2.11. Other
E.2.12. Coalition
E.2.13. None

Issue (1 variable)

This variable is one of three core variables of a claim, together with 'claimant' and 'position'. Thus, there has to be an issue in the claim in order for it to be coded as such, and there can be only one issue per claim. For the sake of convenience, the range of different issues has been divided into four groups. The first group consists of evaluations of previous (or current) budgets. The second and third group make up the range of content of the new budget proposal under discussion. These include the resources and expenditures respectively. The fourth and final group addresses the process of policy-formulation. These are used for claims that do not concern the content of the budget, but rather the behaviour of an actor in the policy-formulation process or the process in general. An issue from the second and fourth group was given precedence over the first and fourth group. Thus, in dubious cases, a value from the second or third group of issues was chosen. In these cases, any reference to the process by the claimant was usually coded in one of the framing variables (see below).

F. ISSUE: (V11: 35 Values)

F.1. Evaluation of Past Policies funded by the previous Budget

F.1.1. Common Agricultural Policy
F.1.2. Regional Policy
F.1.3. Employment Policy
F.1.4. Nature Preservation
F.1.5. Foreign Policy / Development Aid
F.1.6. Security / Asylum / Immigration
F.1.7. Budget (general)

F.2. Content in New Budget
    F.2.1. Resources
        F.2.1.1. Total Size of the Budget
        F.2.1.2. General Correction Mechanism
        F.2.1.3. EU Tax Competency
        F.2.1.4. National Contribution
        F.2.1.5. British Rebate
    F.2.2. Expenditure
        F.2.2.01. Agriculture (general)
        F.2.2.02. Agriculture (specific sectors)
        F.2.2.03. Agriculture (environmentally friendly)
        F.2.2.04. Agriculture (production support)
        F.2.2.05. Agriculture (income support)
        F.2.2.06. Regions (general)
        F.2.2.07. Regions (poor member states)
        F.2.2.08. Development Aid
        F.2.2.09. Nature Preservation
        F.2.2.10. Research & Development
        F.2.2.11. Unemployed / Victims of Globalisation
        F.2.2.12. Energy and Transport
        F.2.2.13. Own Member State
        F.2.2.14. Rules of Expenditure
        F.2.2.15. Culture
        F.2.2.16. Administration
        F.2.2.17. Justice and Home Affairs
F.3. Process
    F.3.1. National Government behaviour
    F.3.2. European Parliament behaviour
    F.3.3. European Commission behaviour
    F.3.4. European Council behaviour
    F.3.5. Council of Ministers behaviour
    F.3.6. The policy formulation process in general

Position and Style (2 variables)

These two variables address the position the claimant takes on the central issue of the claim and the style by which he or she does so. 'Position' is the third core variable of a claim, meaning that a change of position on an issue by a claimant demarkates one claim from another. The values increase, status quo and decrease have obvious

meaning for issues in the second and third group – resources and expenditures – respectively, in which case they refer to amounts of money. Thus, in these cases it means more money, same amount of money or less money. For the first and fourth group, the distinction between increase and status quo makes less sense. An evaluation is either positive, neutral or negative and both increase/supportive and status quo would be seen as positive evaluations. Likewise, in the fourth group of issues – concerning process – it is in practice hard to descern a difference between a call for more action or less action (increase or decrease). Rather, the main difference is between support for current action or a call for a change of action. Thus, the distinction into four values of position only applies to issues of the second and third group. For issues of the first group and fourth group, the value 'increase' was not used. Values 'status quo' and 'decrease' were used instead for the first and fourth group respectively.

The variable style captures the intensity with which the claim is made, either coding it as 'neutral' or 'polemic'. The value 'neutral' can be seen as the default value, where any claim that can't be reasonably labeled as polemic is neutral. The difference between these two values always remains to some extent a judgement of the coder, even though some guidelines were used. Claims where the claimant uses some form of power term or unusually blunt informal language would be coded as polemic. Examples of polemic claims are claims including the words 'unacceptable' or 'ridiculous', as well as well-known undiplomatic phrases like 'I want my money back' and 'there is no alternative'. Additionally, claims with serious repercussions for the policy-formulation process could be coded as polemic. The most notable example of this is the threat or actual use of a veto in the European Council or Council of Ministers while operating under unanimity voting.

G. POSITION
G.1. Position: (V12: 4 Values)
G.1.1. Increase / In favour / Supportive
G.1.2. Status Quo
G.1.3. Decrease / Against / Critical
G.1.4. Neutral / Unknown / Question
G.2. Style: (V13: 2 Values)
G.2.1. Neutral

G.2.2. Polemic

Object of Claim (2 variables)

This combination of variables concerns the object of a claim or its central constituency. It answeres the question: for whom or in relation to whose interest does the claimant make the claim? An object of claim was only coded when the claimant explicitely mentioned another actor as intended beneficiary of the claim, other than him- or herself. Thus, if the claim is: "we have to maintain spending on the Common Agricultural Policy to safeguard current standards of living for European farmers", 'farmers' would be coded as object of claim unless the claimant himself was coded as 'farmer'. Note also that an object of claim is understood as refering to persons. This excludes causes such as 'the environment' or 'human rights'. References to such causes were understood as arguments, coded under the 'frame' variables described below.

'Object of claim' is the fourth and last set of the actor variables. They have the same values as the other sets of actor variables (claimant, support claimant and addressee), with one exception. The value 'national government' is extended to include 'nation'. First, this was done because objects of claims were regularly a particular country as a whole. If this was another country than the country whose debate was under study, it was coded as 'other member state government'. If it was the Member State under study, it was coded as 'nation/national government'. Thus, in the case of the Irish media and parliamentary debates, any explicit claim for the sake of the Ireland as a whole (even by a non-Irish claimant), would be coded as 'nation/national government'.

H. OBJECT OF CLAIM
H.1. Type of Object: (V14: 37 Values)
H.1.01. National Political Arena
H.1.01.01. National Politicians (general)
H.1.01.02. Nation / National Government
H.1.01.03. National Parliament
H.1.01.04. Prime Minister
H.1.01.05. Foreign Minister
H.1.01.06. Finance Minister
H.1.01.07. Agricultural Minister

H.1.01.08. Europe Minister
H.1.01.09. Other Minister
H.1.01.10. Parliamentary Leader
H.1.01.11. Member of Parliament
H.1.01.12. Political Party

H.1.02. EU
H.1.02.1. EU (general)
H.1.02.2. EU member states (general)
H.1.02.3. EU institutions (general)
H.1.02.4. European Commission
H.1.02.5. European Council
H.1.02.6. EU Presidency
H.1.02.7. Council of Ministers
H.1.02.7.1. Relex
H.1.02.7.2. Ecofin
H.1.02.7.3. Agriculture
H.1.02.7.4. Other
H.1.02.8. European Parliament
H.1.03. Other Member State Government(s)
H.1.04. Country(ies) outside the EU
H.1.05. International Organisation
H.1.06. NGO / Social Movement
H.1.07. Organised Business
H.1.08. Media / Journalist
H.1.09. Famous people (artists, former politicians)
H.1.10. Farmers
H.1.11. Consumers / Tax Payers
H.1.12. Academics / Specialists / Experts
H.1.13. Citizens / The Public
H.1.14. Church / Religious actor
H.1.15. Other
H.1.16. None

H.2. Political Affiliation (Party Family): (V15: 13 Values)
H.2.01. Radical Left
H.2.02. Green
H.2.03. Social Democrat
H.2.04. Progressive Liberal
H.2.05. Liberal
H.2.06. Christian Democrat
H.2.07. Centre / Agrarian
H.2.08. Conservatives

H.2.09. Radical Right / New Populist Right
H.2.10. Orthodox Protestant
H.2.11. Other
H.2.12. Coalition
H.2.13. None

Primary and Secondary Frame (2 variables)

This study includes frame analysis. Frame analysis as understood by this study understands framing as an act by the claimant or reporting journalist to make sense of a claim. Basically, it provides an answer to the question: which organising idea underlies the claim and/or the wider policy-formulation process it relates to? In other words, how claimants or reporters of claims organise '[...] *an apparently diverse array of symbols, images and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is at stake on the issue'* (Gamson 2004: 245). Framing may be either cognitive or normative (Surel 2000). Cognitive framing gives the audience of the claim an indication of how to understand the claim in general and the issue addressed in specific, whereas normative framing provides the audience with a specific reason or justification why the claim is legitimate in the judgement of the claimant. Framing may be explicitly linked by the claimant to the claim. For instance, if a claimant makes an argument like "I want X, because of Y", Y would be the explicit framing. However, framing can take more subtle forms when it is either implicit or external. The latter occurs when someone else than the claimant frames the claim. This often happens in newspaper articles, where claims are framed by the journalist reporting on them. There are thus a total of six types of framing as indicated in Table 16.

Table 1: Types of Framing included in the analysis

	Normative	Cognitive
Explicit	Type 1	Type 2
Implicit	Type 3	Type 4
External	Type 5	Type 6

While conducting the frame analysis, preference was given to frames in the order of types as indicated. Thus, preference would be given to a frame of type 1 while a type 6 frame would only be coded as primary frame if no other type of frame was present. Once having established whether there was a primary frame, the analysis was

repeated for any possible secondary frame. Thus, there could only be a secondary frame if there was also a primary frame. In other words, value 'none' for primary frame perfectly corresponds with value 'none' for secondary frame, whereas the reverse is not true.

I. FRAME: (V16: 31 Values)
I.1. Conflictual Frames
I.1.1. Intergovernmental Bargaining
I.1.1.1. Defending National Interest
I.1.1.2. Northern vs Southern Member States
I.1.1.3. Southern vs New Member States
I.1.1.4. Rich vs Poor Member States
I.1.1.5. Old vs New Member States
I.1.1.6. Big vs Small Member States
I.1.1.7. Conflicting Individual Member State Positions
I.1.1.8. Other
I.1.2. EU institutions vs member states
I.1.3. Domestic Party Politics
I.1.3.1. Opposition vs Coalition
I.1.3.2. Other Inter Party Conflict
I.1.3.3. Intra-Party Conflict
I.1.4. European Party Politics
I.1.5. Sectoral Interests
I.1.6. Multi-Level Conflict (involving regional actors)
I.2. Cooperative Frames
I.2.01. National Solidarity
I.2.02. EU Solidarity
I.2.03. EU in the World
I.2.04. Sustainable Development
I.2.05. Competitiveness / Liberalisation
I.2.06. Past Promises / Obligations
I.2.07. Process of European Integration
I.2.08. Common EU interest
I.2.09. Effectiveness / Efficiency
I.2.10. EU - Citizen Gap
I.2.11. Corruption
I.2.12. Modernisation
I.2.13. Content Before Price
I.2.14. Security
I.3. Other

I.4. None

J. SECONDARY FRAME: (V17: 31 Values)

J.1. Conflictual Frames

J.1.1. Intergovernmental Bargaining

J.1.1.1. Defending National Interest

J.1.1.2. Northern vs Southern Member States

J.1.1.3. Southern vs New Member States

J.1.1.4. Rich vs Poor Member States

J.1.1.5. Old vs New Member States

J.1.1.6. Big vs Small Member States

J.1.1.7. Conflicting Individual Member State Positions

J.1.1.8. Other

J.1.2. EU institutions vs member states

J.1.3. Domestic Party Politics

J.1.3.1. Opposition vs Coalition

J.1.3.2. Other Inter Party Conflict

J.1.3.3. Intra-Party Conflict

J.1.4. European Party Politics

J.1.5. Sectoral Interests

J.1.6. Multi-Level Conflict (involving regional actors)

J.2. Cooperative Frames

J.2.01. National Solidarity

J.2.02. EU Solidarity

J.2.03. EU in the World

J.2.04. Sustainable Development

J.2.05. Competitiveness / Liberalisation

J.2.06. Past Promises / Obligations

J.2.07. Process of European Integration

J.2.08. Common EU interest

J.2.09. Effectiveness / Efficiency

J.2.10. EU - Citizen Gap

J.2.11. Corruption

J.2.12. Modernisation

J.2.13. Content Before Price

J.2.14. Security

J.3. Other

J.4. None

Source (1 variable)

This variable applies to the document as a whole where the claim was taken from (all claims in that document). A basic distinction between parliamentary documents and newspaper articles is supplemented by either the type of parliamentary document or the section of the newspaper where the article comes from. Thus, the value 'Opinion/Editorial/Guest Commentary' does not refer to any article written in this style or by someone outside the editorial board of the newspaper, but rather to any article published in the Op-Ed section of the newspaper. If no section was indicated, page numbers were used where page 1 was coded as 'Front Page' and and any other page number as 'Unknown'.

K. SOURCE: (V18: 11 Values)

K.1. Parliamentary Document

K.1.1. Parliamentary Debate

K.1.2. Written Question / Answer

K.1.3. Annexes to Parliamentary Debate

K.2. Newspaper

K.2.1. Front Page

K.2.2. Domestic Political News

K.2.3. Foreign Political News

K.2.4. Economic News

K.2.5. Background Article

K.2.6. European News

K.2.7. Opinion / Editorial / Guest Commentary

K.2.8. Unknown

Annex II: Syntax

The following syntax was used in SPSS to reconstitute the twenty main variables from the dichotomous output provided by Atlas.ti software when exporting to SPSS. Secondly, it provides the computations of derived secondary variables based on the twenty primary variables. For instance, whether a claim loads onto the left-right dimension of politics or the pro-anti European dimension, and whether it loads positively or negatively, is a function of the issue addressed in the claim and the position defended concerning that issue. The present syntax thus allows both the recreation of the SPSS database from the Atlas.ti files and facilitates replicability of the analyses presented in the different articles.

COMPUTE Origin=K3 + 2 * K4 + 3 * K5 + 4 * K6 + 5 * K7 + 6 * K8 + 7 * K9 + 8 * K10 + 9 * K11 + 10 * K12 + 11 * K13 + 12 * K14 + 13 * K15 + 14 *

K16 + 15 * K17 + 16 * K18 + 17 * K19 + 18 * K20 + 19 * K21 + 20 * K22 + 21 * K23 + 22 * K24 + 23 * K25 + 24 * K26 + 25 * K27 + 26 * K28 + 27 *

K29 + 28 * K30 + 29 * K31 + 30 * K32 + 31 * K33 + 32 * K34 + 33 * K35 + 34 * K36.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Year=K39 + 2 * K40 + 3 * K41 + 4 * K42 + 5 * K43 + 6 * K44 + 7 * K45 + 8 * K46 + 9 * K47 + 10 * K48 + 11 * K49.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Month=K51 + 2 * K52 + 3 * K53 + 4 * K54 + 5 * K55 + 6 * K56 + 7 * K57 + 8 * K58 + 9 * K59 + 10 * K60 + 11 * K61 + 12 * K62 + 13 * K63.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Claimant=K67 + 2 * K68 + 3 * K69 + 4 * K70 + 5 * K71 + 6 * K72 + 7 * K73 + 8 * K74 + 9 * K75 + 10 * K76 + 11 * K77 + 12 * K78 + 13 * K80 +

14 * K81 + 15 * K82 + 16 * K83 + 17 * K84 + 18 * K85 + 19 * K87 + 20 * K88 + 21 * K89 + 22 * K90 + 23 * K91 + 24 * K92 + 25 * K93 + 26 * K94 + 27 *

K95 + 28 * K96 + 29 * K97 + 30 * K98 + 31 * K99 + 32 * K100 + 33 * K101 + 34 * K102 + 35 * K103 + 36 * K104 + 37 * K105.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE ClaiAff=K107 + 2 * K108 + 3 * K109 + 4 * K110 + 5 * K111
    + 6 * K112 + 7 * K113 + 8 * K114 + 9 * K115 + 10 * K116 + 11 *
    K117 + 12 * K118 + 13 * K119.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE SupClaimant=K123 + 2 * K124 + 3 * K125 + 4 * K126 + 5 *
    K127 + 6 * K128 + 7 * K129 + 8 * K130 + 9 * K131 + 10 * K132 +
    11 * K133 + 12 *
K134 + 13 * K136 + 14 * K137 + 15 * K138 + 16 * K139 + 17 * K140 + 18
    * K141 + 19 * K143 + 20 * K144 + 21 * K145 + 22 * K146 + 23 *
    K147 + 24 *
K148 + 25 * K149 + 26 * K150 + 27 * K151 + 28 * K152 + 29 * K153 + 30
    * K154 + 31 * K155 + 32 * K156 + 33 * K157 + 34 * K158 + 35 *
    K159 + 36 * K160 + 37 * K161.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE SupClaiAff=K163 + 2 * K164 + 3 * K165 + 4 * K166 + 5 *
    K167 + 6 * K168 + 7 * K169 + 8 * K170 + 9 * K171 + 10 * K172 +
    11 * K173 + 12 *
K174 + 13 * K175.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE Action=K178 + 2 * K179 + 3 * K180 + 4 * K181 + 5 * K182 +
    6 * K183 + 7 * K184 + 8 * K185 + 9 * K186 + 10 * K187 + 11 * K188
    + 12 * K189 +
13 * K190 + 14 * K191 + 15 * K192.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE Addressee=K196 + 2 * K197 + 3 * K198 + 4 * K199 + 5 *
    K200 + 6 * K201 + 7 * K202 + 8 * K203 + 9 * K204 + 10 * K205 +
    11 * K206 + 12 *
K207 + 13 * K209 + 14 * K210 + 15 * K211 + 16 * K212 + 17 * K213 + 18
    * K214 + 19 * K216 + 20 * K217 + 21 * K218 + 22 * K219 + 23 *
    K220 + 24 * K221 +
25 * K222 + 26 * K223 + 27 * K224 + 28 * K225 + 29 * K226 + 30 * K227
    + 31 * K228 + 32 * K229 + 33 * K230 + 34 * K231 + 35 * K232 + 36
    * K233 + 37 * K234.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE AddAff=K236 + 2 * K237 + 3 * K238 + 4 * K239 + 5 * K240
    + 6 * K241 + 7 * K242 + 8 * K243 + 9 * K244 + 10 * K245 + 11 *
    K246 + 12 * K247 + 13 * K248.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE Issue=K251 + 2 * K252 + 3 * K253 + 4 * K254 + 5 * K255 + 6
    * K256 + 7 * K257 + 8 * K260 + 9 * K261 + 10 * K262 + 11 * K263 +
    12 * K264 +

13 * K266 + 14 * K267 + 15 * K268 + 16 * K269 + 17 * K270 + 18 * K271 + 19 * K272 + 20 * K273 + 21 * K274 + 22 * K275 + 23 * K276 + 24 * K277 + 25 *

K278 + 26 * K279 + 27 * K280 + 28 * K281 + 29 * K282 + 30 * K284 + 31 * K285 + 32 * K286 + 33 * K287 + 34 * K288 + 35 * K289.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Position=K292 + 2 * K293 + 3 * K294 + 4 * K295.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Style=K297 + 2 * K298.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE ObjClaim=K302 + 2 * K303 + 3 * K304 + 4 * K305 + 5 * K306 + 6 * K307 + 7 * K308 + 8 * K309 + 9 * K310 + 10 * K311 + 11 * K312 + 12 * K313 +

13 * K315 + 14 * K316 + 15 * K317 + 16 * K318 + 17 * K319 + 18 * K320 + 19 * K322 + 20 * K323 + 21 * K324 + 22 * K325 + 23 * K326 + 24 * K327 + 25 *

K328 + 26 * K329 + 27 * K330 + 28 * K331 + 29 * K332 + 30 * K333 + 31 * K334 + 32 * K335 + 33 * K336 + 34 * K337 + 35 * K338 + 36 * K339 + 37 * K340.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE ObjClaimAff=K342 + 2 * K343 + 3 * K344 + 4 * K345 + 5 * K346 + 6 * K347 + 7 * K348 + 8 * K349 + 9 * K350 + 10 * K351 + 11 * K352 + 12 *

K353 + 13 * K354.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Frame1=K358 + 2 * K359 + 3 * K360 + 4 * K361 + 5 * K362 + 6 * K363 + 7 * K364 + 8 * K365 + 9 * K366 + 10 * K368 + 11 * K369 + 12 * K370 +

13 * K371 + 14 * K372 + 15 * K373 + 16 * K375 + 17 * K376 + 18 * K377 + 19 * K378 + 20 * K379 + 21 * K380 + 22 * K381 + 23 * K382 + 24 * K383 + 25 *

K384 + 26 * K385 + 27 * K386 + 28 * K387 + 29 * K388 + 30 * K389 + 31 * K390.

EXECUTE.

COMPUTE Frame2=K394 + 2 * K395 + 3 * K396 + 4 * K397 + 5 * K398 + 6 * K399 + 7 * K400 + 8 * K401 + 9 * K402 + 10 * K404 + 11 * K405 + 12 * K406 +

13 * K407 + 14 * K408 + 15 * K409 + 16 * K411 + 17 * K412 + 18 * K413 + 19 * K414 + 20 * K415 + 21 * K416 + 22 * K417 + 23 * K418 + 24 * K419 + 25 *

K420 + 26 * K421 + 27 * K422 + 28 * K423 + 29 * K424 + 30 * K425 + 31
    * K426.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE Source=K429 + 2 * K430 + 3 * K431 + 4 * K433 + 5 * K434 +
    6 * K435 + 7 * K436 + 8 * K437 + 9 * K438 + 10 * K439 + 11 *
    K440.
EXECUTE.

RECODE Year (1=SYSMIS) (2=1992) (3=SYSMIS) (4=1997) (5=1998)
    (6=1999) (7=SYSMIS) (8=2004) (9=2005) (10=SYSMIS) INTO
    Year#.
VARIABLE LABELS Year# 'Year#'.
EXECUTE.
RECODE Month (13=SYSMIS) (Lowest thru 12=Copy) INTO Month#.
VARIABLE LABELS Month# 'Month#'.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE MonthYear#=DATE.DMY(1, Month#, Year#).
VARIABLE LABEL MonthYear# "MonthYear#".
VARIABLE LEVEL MonthYear# (SCALE).
FORMATS MonthYear# (MOYR8).
VARIABLE WIDTH MonthYear#(8).
EXECUTE.

RECODE Frame1 (9=2) (13=2) (31=6) (Lowest thru 8=1) (10 thru 12=3)
    (14 thru 15=4) (16 thru 30=5) INTO FraTyp1#.
VARIABLE LABELS FraTyp1# 'Frame Type'.
EXECUTE.
RECODE Frame2 (9=2) (13=2) (31=6) (Lowest thru 8=1) (10 thru 12=3)
    (14 thru 15=4) (16 thru 30=5) INTO FraTyp2#.
VARIABLE LABELS FraTyp2# 'Secondary Frame Type'.
EXECUTE.
RECODE Source (Lowest thru 3=2) (4 thru Highest=1) INTO Forum#.
VARIABLE LABELS Forum# 'Forum'.
EXECUTE.

IF   (K23 = 1 & K119 = 0) DutchGov#=(Budget = 1 & K109 = 1) +
    (Budget = 1 & K112 = 1) + (Budget = 2 & K109 = 1) + (Budget =
    2 & K110 = 1) +
(Budget = 2 & K111 = 1) + (Budget = 3 & K111 = 1) + (Budget = 3 &
    K112 = 1) + (Budget = 3 & K110 = 1) + K118.
EXECUTE.

IF   (K10 = 1 & K119 = 0) DanishGov#=(Budget = 1 & K114 = 1) +
       (Budget = 1 & K111 = 1) + (Budget = 2 & K109 = 1) + (Budget =
       2 & K110 = 1) +
(Budget = 3 & K111 = 1) + (Budget = 3 & K114 = 1) + K118.
EXECUTE.
IF   (K17 = 1 & K119 = 0) IrishGov#=(Budget = 1 & K114 = 1) +
       (Budget = 1 & K109 = 1) + (Budget = 2 & K114 = 1) + (Budget =
       2 & K111 = 1) +
(Budget = 3 & K114 = 1) + (Budget = 3 & K111 = 1) + K118.
EXECUTE.
RECODE DutchGov# (0=1) (1=2) (SYSMIS=0).
EXECUTE.
RECODE DanishGov# (0=1) (1=2) (SYSMIS=0).
EXECUTE.
RECODE IrishGov# (0=1) (1=2) (SYSMIS=0).
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE Government=DutchGov# + DanishGov# + IrishGov#.
EXECUTE.
RECODE Government (0=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=1).
EXECUTE.

RECODE Position (1=Copy) (2=0) (3=-1) (4=SYSMIS) INTO Position#.
VARIABLE LABELS Position# 'Position#'.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE PA_Issue=K260 + K261 + K262 + K263 - K264.
EXECUTE.
RECODE PA_Issue (0=SYSMIS) (1=1) (-1=-1).
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE ProAnti=Position# * PA_Issue.
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE LR_Issue= - K266 - K267 - K269 - K270 - K268 - K271 -
       K272 - K273 - K274 + K275 - K276 + K277 - K281 + K282.
EXECUTE.
RECODE LR_Issue (0=SYSMIS) (1=1) (-1=-1).
EXECUTE.
COMPUTE LeftRight=Position# * LR_Issue.
EXECUTE.

COMPUTE PolAct=K83 + 2 * K13 * K92 + 3 * K14 * K92 + 4 * K30 *
       K92 + 5 * K23 * (K68 + K70 + K71 + K73 + K74 + K75) +

6 * K10 * (K68 + K70 + K71 + K73 + K74 + K75) + 7 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K107 + 8 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K108 +
9 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K109 + 10 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K110 + 11 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K111 + 12 * K23 *
(K76 + K77 + K78) * K112 + 13 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K115 + 14 * K23 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K116 + 15 * K10 *
(K76 + K77 + K78) * K107 + 16 * K10 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K108 + 17 * K10 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K109 + 18 * K10 *
(K76 + K77 + K78) * K110 + 19 * K10 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K111 + 20 * K10 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K112 + 21 * K10 * (K76 + K77 + K78) * K114 + 22 * K10 *
(K76 + K77 + K78) * K115.
EXECUTE.
RECODE PolAct (0=SYSMIS).
EXECUTE.

RECODE FraTyp1# (1=1) (2=1) (3=2) (ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO EAEPfra.
VARIABLE LABELS EAEPfra 'Framing'.
EXECUTE.
RECODE Issue (8 thru 29=1) (30 thru 35=2) (ELSE=SYSMIS) INTO EAEPtop.
VARIABLE LABELS EAEPtop 'Topic'.
EXECUTE.

Summary

This article-based dissertation investigates increasing contentiousness of the European Union (EU) as polity and the process of European integration. This may be referred to as 'politicisation of European integration' and has been regularly reported in the scholarly literature on European integration. Yet, it remains unclear what exactly is meant with politicisation or how it might affect European integration. The dissertation aims to contribute by conceptualising the process of politicisation and by theorising how such a process affects relationships of delegation and accountability in the EU.

Empirically, an embedded comparative case study is conducted of EU budget debates in the media and parliaments of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland. Newspaper articles and plenary parliamentary debates are sampled during the negotiations on the three most recent multiannual EU budgets of Delors II (negotiated in 1992), Agenda 2000 (negotiated in 1997 - 1999) and Financial Perspectives 2007-2013 (negotiated in 2004 - 2005). Sampled documents are content analysed using the method of claims-making analysis.

Article 1 conceptualises and defines 'politicisation' in the context of European integration. It presents a working definition and identifies that politicisation may function to cristallyse dimensions of conflict in the EU, raise the question of legitimacy and alter the course of integration.

Article 2 and 4 investigate the role of national parliaments in EU policy-formulation in light of media coverage of such processes. Article 2 finds that media tend to reinforce executive dominance in parliament, yet as the intensity of debates increases, media coverage starts providing support for backbenchers and opposition parties. Article 4 investigates plenary parliamentary debates in light of different scrutiny mechanisms. It finds that ex ante scrutiny mechanisms – such as in Denmark – stimulate partisan debates, while ex post plenary debates – as in the Netherlands – stimulate more intense debates. As, from a democratic point of view, both partisan and intense debates are normatively preferable, this presents evidence of a trade-off in practice.

Article 3 and 5 investigate how politicisation of the EU budget may affect Euroscepticism in national discourses on integration and the EU's political climate. Article 3 finds that politicisation can alter the substance of debates on EU issues may change, and notes a renationalisation and rising Euroscepticism in the Netherlands. Article 5 concludes that framing of EU budget politics in the media tends to emphasise conflict among Member States and between Member States and EU institutions. It may thereby reinforce the current 'constraining dissensus' in EU politics as such framing resonates with exclusive national identity perceptions which are an important cause of Euroscepticism.

The general conclusions of the project, building on the articles, are threefold. First, this dissertation presents evidence that accountability is strengthened through politicisation. The evidence at least supports this finding in relationship to executive-legislative relationships. Secondly, politicisation of European integration tends to strengthen the national channel of representation over the European one as media tend to amplify national actors more so than supranational ones and portray EU budget negotiations as intergovernmental conflict. Thirdly, as the intensity of debates increases, a more plural image of representation in the EU is created as more and more different actors besides national politicians, including EU institutions and interest groups, join the debates. There is a tension between the second and third conclusion with respects to effects on the EU and European integration. The second conclusion supports an understanding of politicisation as bringing the EU closer to the image of an intergovernmental or international organisation. In contrast, the third conclusion implies that politicisation functions as a development away from this image of the EU, towards a more pluralist or potentially even federalist polity. Further research on the causes and scope conditions of politicisation is called for in light of this tension.