



Department
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Politics: History, Theory, Science (XXXIV Cycle)

Debating Europe and Discursive (Euro-)Nationalism

Comparative Representative Claims Analysis of European Debates
Prior to and During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Dutch, German, Italian,
and Polish Newspapers

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Abstract

My project aims to contribute to the scholarly debate on the process of Europeanisation (or lack thereof) of public debate. In essence, I challenge the prevailing view among public sphere scholars that public spheres in Europe are converging on common European frames of reference. Europeanisation is widely conceived of as an inevitable and linear process that would lead to peoples' loyalties shifting from the national to the transnational level. It is expected that the increasing news coverage of EU affairs in national public spheres would foster a greater sense of European belonging. The continuing growth of the Internet is expected to accelerate the process of transnational community-building. Indeed, McLuhan's (1964) cliché of the 'global village' and the 'Europeanisation of public spheres' concept remain two popular academic watchwords of public sphere scholars. Nevertheless, these optimistic expectations do not square with the increasing prominence of national populist and Eurosceptic parties and the entrenchment of national identity. How can this incongruence between theory and reality be understood? The insights from media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) and Billig's theory of banal nationalism (1995) might offer a partial explanation to this puzzle. Billig devised this concept to highlight the routine and pervasive nature of national identity in public discourse. However – despite the compelling arguments put forward by Billig – his theory has not been tested empirically in the context of European debates, and it remains to be seen how salient national identity is when debating European politics. I, thus, explore the following questions: Whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates concerning European politics? Which actors are the most visible in public debates concerning European politics? And are public debates concerning European politics characterised by discursive nationalism, intergovernmentalism, or supranationalism? I expect discursive nationalism and national self-referentiality to be the most prevalent frames of reference. Moreover, I expect media coverage of EU affairs to strengthen both the national and intergovernmental channels of representation. My hypotheses are supported by media logic theory which argues that national identity and nationalist frames are more commensurate to news values and newsworthiness criteria (i.e., identity, conflict, proximity/relevance). I build, furthermore, on the political opportunity structures perspective (à la Tarrow, 1994) to support my hypotheses. I argue that, although, on the one hand, political actors are increasingly incentivized to target political demands at the European level as a result of advancing European integration, on the other hand, political and electoral systems remain nationally embedded. I adopted a mixed-method approach of Representative Claims Analysis, and Social Network Analysis on quality and tabloid newspapers in Italy, Poland, Netherlands, and Germany prior to and during to Covid-19 pandemic. The results of my analysis lend weight to the 'domestication' of European public spheres' thesis. Although EU actors were found to be visible in public debates, domestic actors, issues and national frames of reference were found to predominate. Furthermore, the primacy of national identity was confirmed in the results, and the communicative linkages between actors were predominantly domestic in scope. The main premise of my thesis is that European debates

about EU politics seem to be enabling conditions for antipodal manifestations of *discursive (Euro-)nationalism* although nationalism appears overwhelmingly to have the upper hand. The politicisation of EU politics – further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic – appears to be a mixed blessing for the development of European identity and solidarity. On the one hand, discursive appeals to solidarity were more discernible, on the other hand, discursive nationalism was more prevalent during the pandemic.

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Introduction

Topic and context

My research addresses several intertwined topics, namely, the *Europeanisation of (national) public sphere(s)*, *European identity*, *deliberative democracy*, the *mediatization* of politics, and the *politicisation* of European politics, which are not mutually exclusive but overlapping concepts. Although I have deep misgivings¹ about the European public sphere (hereafter referred to as EPS), I begin my thesis with an overview of the literature on this concept (Chapter One) as it touches upon several concepts mentioned above². As I explain in the literature review, the EPS is a popular umbrella term which touches upon several closely related concepts such as identity, deliberative democracy and politicisation, which are not orthogonal to the public sphere but tend to move in tandem with its development. For instance, it is widely accepted that politicisation is both a cause and consequence of a well-functioning public sphere. The public sphere is perceived as crucial to the congealment of a clearly reified ‘imagined community’ and the development of a well-functioning democracy, and vice versa. The media are crucial for transmitting *information* to people, which is the lifeblood of the public sphere, as a public sphere without information permeating freely and unimpeded ceases to be public. The media have a central role in supplying information about Europe to citizens. In this sense, political realities are constantly constructed and reproduced by the media. For this reason, many scholars refer to the mediatization of politics. Several political developments in recent years, notably Brexit, have prompted scholars to turn their attention to the discursive conditions of the public sphere.

Although it is impossible to quantify the effects of the long-running Eurosceptic British press on the referendum result, most scholars agree that the media’s role was decisive (Hinde, 2017; Zappettini, 2020). In fact, according to research carried out by Loughborough University, 80% of newspaper coverage was in favour of Brexit (Loughborough, 2016). However, this enmity directed at the EU on the part of the British press is nothing new. For several decades before the vote, the British press – particularly the ‘red-top’ newspapers – had been rousing Eurosceptic and jingoistic sentiments. However, the problem runs deeper than mere criticism or intransigence toward the EU. According to

¹ Not surprisingly, the academic community, vying for EU research funding, tend to hold pro-EU sentiments. It is reasonable to claim that European studies, in particular, is prone to reaching conclusions based on wishful thinking rather than conclusions supported by empirical evidence. Scholarship pertaining to the EPS is a case in point. As the name suggests, the adjective ‘European’ combined with the suffix ‘-ization’ implies a unidirectional, teleological, inevitable process toward ‘more’ Europe. The concept insinuates that the public sphere is a zero-sum game of encroaching Europeanisation at the expense of the nation-state. However, as numerous scholars argue, the public sphere is a multi-faceted concept encompassing several dimensions. It is logically conceivable that the public sphere may be Europeanised in some respects but more nation-oriented in other respects. Furthermore, the concept implies that there is only one figurative space for debating Europe. That said, the concept seems like a sensible point of departure for delving into the literature as it is a popular catch-all watchword in academia.

² As I expound in the literature review, research on the public sphere nourishes our understanding of several important concepts such as democracy, identity, politicisation, and the mediatization of politics. The intertwined public sphere and European identity topics are important because questions of identity are intimately connected to issues about legitimacy, democracy and solidarity.

Dennison *et al.*, (2020), the vote to leave the European Union was attributed to Britain's longstanding *thin* European identity. This view is shared by researchers from UCL and Stockholm University who found that certain cultural values and strong national identity feelings were strong predictors for voting to leave the EU (Chen et al., 2020). Moreover, research by the British Elections Study found that feelings of Europeanness were much stronger among 'remain' than 'leave' voters (Fieldhouse et al. 2016). These findings reinforce the importance of focusing our analytical lens on the *public sphere* which is understood as the *locus* where cultural norms and identities are (re-)produced. In sum, Brexit touches upon several themes, particularly questions pertaining to identity, Euroscepticism, mediatization, and the conditions of the public sphere. The outcome of the vote inspired me to delve into the concept of collective identity and explore Europe's variegated media landscape which I believe helps explain why countries – even neighbouring ones – hold markedly different attitudes and sentiments toward the EU.

The ongoing migrant crisis, moreover, highlights the crucial role of the media in shaping public opinion and influencing real-world events. The media played a decisive role in framing the public debate on the refugee crisis. As Vollmer *et al.*, (2018) demonstrate, the debate shifted dramatically from an initial outpouring of tolerance and solidarity for migrants to concerns about security, and the general stigmatization of migrants. These findings were also found in other countries as research by Georgiou et al. (2017) shows. Interestingly, as Vollmer (2018) points out, policymaking seemed to reflect changing narratives as evidenced by Merkel's adoption of a more hard-line stance on migration which coincided with the Bataclan terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015³. These events elucidate the importance of media framing and public discourse in shaping political realities. More recently, some observers partially attribute the Poland-Belarus migrant crisis (November 2021- present) to the role of social media platforms. Indeed, research by *Semantic Visions* revealed that social media was used extensively to entice migrants to the border (found in Higgins et al., 2021). This is but one example of social media communication catalysing real-world events⁴. The migrant crisis also reminded us of another important issue, namely the lack of willingness on the part of European countries particularly those in Eastern Europe to engage in burden-sharing. During the height of the crisis, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic refused to accept refugee quotas. Europe had emphatically failed the test of solidarity. However, it seems there was little appetite for European citizens, in general, to engage in burden sharing as well. Indeed, according to research by the *Pew Research Center*, over 50% of respondents from the 10 European countries surveyed considered the increasing influx of migrants as a

³ In the authors' words, "the discourse shifted from a philanthropic tone of the deserving migrant to the re-demonizing process of refugees and their labelling as undeserving migrants or economic migrant" (Vollmer and Karakayali, 2018:133). Interestingly, as de Wilde (2019) points out, this U-turn in framing coincided with Merkel's policy shift from the initially welcoming position to the more hard-line stance during the ensuing crisis. De Wilde (2019) surmises that the German mass media probably had a decisive influence on Merkel's policy U-turn.

⁴ Worse still is the problem of disinformation which has been shown to trigger real-world events. This highlights the dangers of social media which tend to contain unsourced and un-invigilated information. A paradigmatic case of real-world events caused by disinformation was the 'Pizzagate' scandal in the United States. In 2016, a shooting incident occurred at a pizza restaurant which was falsely alleged to be the base of a pedophile sex ring involving Democratic presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton (Marubeni Research Institute, n.d.).

societal burden on their respective countries (Pew Research, 2016)⁵. Moreover, majorities in Poland, Greece, Hungary and Italy, perceived refugees as a ‘major threat’ to their countries (*Ibid.*). Interestingly, countries which tended to receive more migrants such as Germany and Sweden were found to hold more favourable views toward refugees.

Similarly, the 2012 sovereign debt crisis laid bare the lack of willingness on the part of Europeans to resolve problems collectively. European policymakers implemented half-baked measures⁶ and dithered for several years before decisive action was finally taken by the ECB to nip the crisis in the bud. The crisis revealed that European member states had little appetite to engage in burden sharing, with Northern European member states reluctant to sign up to a common European treasury or accept a more interventionist ECB. In a nutshell, member states were reticent to agree to fiscal transfers, and relations between member states particularly Greece and Germany deteriorated. The crisis was a double-edged sword for, dare I say, the development of an EPS. On the one hand, the crisis brought the spotlight on the EU and Europe. On the other hand, as Risse (2014) points out, the crisis brought chauvinistic national stereotypes to the fore, pitting ‘feckless Greeks’ against ‘German Nazis’ who were accused of coldheartedly imposing austerity policies on the rest of Europe. During the euro crisis, anti-Greek rhetoric was rife. For example, in April 2010, *Bild*’s headline read: “Sell your islands, you bankrupt Greeks! And sell the Acropolis too” and Greeks had “deceived Europe” with their profligacy (*Bild*, 2010)⁷. These pejorative country labels were reciprocated by one Greek minister who accused the Germans of stealing: “They took away the gold that was in the Bank of Greece, they took away Greek money, and they never gave it back” (found in Rantanen, 2012:148). As Hans Bickes *et al.*, argue⁸, the mass media played a crucial role in fuelling negative public opinion during the crisis (2014). Indeed, their research shows that *Bild* framed Greeks as ‘lazy’ and ‘corrupt’ compared to hard-working Germans. In a similar vein, Greek newspapers indulged in negative national caricaturing, with Stavropoulos, a renowned Greek cartoonist, famously depicting Angela Merkel in Nazi uniform and portraying Horst Reichenbach, the former German head of the EU task force, as an officer of the Wehrmacht⁹. This is but one example of nationalistic media framing during the euro crisis, which raises doubts about the applicability of the EPS concept.

Although some lessons were learned from the sovereign debt crisis, with swift(er) and unprecedented measures put in place, several familiar issues came to the fore once again. Europe’s lack of solidarity particularly at the beginning of the pandemic hampered the EU’s Covid-19 response¹⁰. Member states

⁵ Discernible cross-country differences in attitudes to refugees were also observed.

⁶ As Skouras points out, the ESM and EFSF were woefully underfunded, and the crisis called for quick, decisive action in the form of a common European treasury and the ECB lending to banks (Skouras, 2013).

⁷ In a similar vein, anti-Icelandic sentiments were widespread during the 2007-8 global financial crisis (Rantanen, 2012). On October 5, 2008, the Guardian headline read: “the party is over for Iceland, the island that tried to buy the world” (McVeigh, 2008, found in Rantanen, 2012:147).

⁸ See Bickes *et al.*, (2014)

⁹ See Heyer *et al.*, (2012)

¹⁰ The Covid-19 pandemic provides the perfect litmus test to gauge the extent of Europe’s solidaristic-identitarian credentials.

were initially reluctant to share sanitary equipment, and for several months, Northern European member states, particularly the Netherlands, fought tooth and nail against the EU recovery plan. In the end, member states agreed to a €750 billion post-pandemic recovery fund in the form of grants and loans to member states wherein the EU would borrow this money from international markets. It was effectively a form of debt union which was an unprecedented move for the bloc. However, this solidaristic gesture was a result of protracted negotiations drawn-out over several months. As Draghi remarked, “the solidarity that should have been a spontaneous act, was the result of negotiations”¹¹. The crisis exposed Europe’s fragmented, ethnocentric public spaces. The anecdotal evidence indicates that the European publics were far from united. Politicians typically portrayed the pandemic as a national crisis threatening national security¹² (see Berrocal, 2021). For example, at the beginning of the pandemic, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security proclaimed that “the potential for widespread transmission of the virus by infected individuals seeking to enter the United States threatens the security of *our* transportation system and infrastructure and the *national* security”¹³ (Werfelman, 2020; italics added for emphasis). The then British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, proclaimed that Covid-19 was “a moment of national emergency [and] the most vicious threat *this country* has faced in my lifetime”¹⁴ (Johnson, 2020a; found in Jarvis, 2022: 30-31, italics added for emphasis). On 22nd September 2020, the then British Minister, Boris Johnson, heralded the nation’s response to this ‘national emergency’ when he proclaimed that “when the sickness took hold in *this country* in March, we pulled together in a spirit of national sacrifice and community” (Johnson, 2020b, italics added for emphasis). When the German Interior Minister remarked that “the coronavirus is no longer merely a health crisis, but a question of *national security*...it is up to the government to ensure, not only the security of our borders and food supply, but also our medical products and our medicines” (Seehofer, 2020). When Macron addressed the nation on March 16 2020, he claimed that France was ‘at war’ with the virus¹⁵. You would be forgiven for thinking that Covid-19 was a national crisis alone. And sadly, pejorative national clichés and negative-other portrayals were all too familiar. In 2020, a Wall Street Journal headline read: “China is the Real Sick Man of Asia” (Mead, 2020). And the Austrian government referred to the ‘Croatian virus’ in reference to the Austrians who had spent their holidays there (Wodak, 2022). Moreover, as we saw during the sovereign debt crisis, member states began to point fingers at each other as the crisis ensued. Regrettably, crude, xenophobic rhetoric reared its ugly head during the pandemic. An extreme example was when the French television channel, *Canal+* released a satirical video insinuating that

¹¹ See Draghi (2020)

¹² That said, there were also several discursive constructions of a transnational ‘community of fate’ when faced with the common external enemy of the virus. On March 13, the Spanish Prime Minister, Sánchez proclaimed that, “the fight against the virus must be led by all countries in the world and, especially, our continent, Europe”. Similarly, on March 11, Merkel proclaimed that ‘the virus has arrived in Europe. It is here. We need to understand that’. (found in Berrocal, 2022:4-5).

¹³ Trump employed labels such as the “China virus” (found in Woods et al., 2020:813). As Nossem argues, labelling the virus after a place is one of the “many strategies of apportioning the blame for the (spread of the) virus to a specific place/country and to construct the disease as a foreign-grown threat to the nation” (Nossem 2020:5; found in Woods et al., 2020:816).

¹⁴ E.g. “If we let up now the virus will only take full advantage. It will spread faster and it will kill more. If we refuse to give into it, if we keep up this incredible team effort, we will beat this virus, and we will come through this *national test*. Our plan is working. Please stick with it, and we’ll get through this crisis together” (Raab 2020, found in Jarvis, 2022, italics added for emphasis).

¹⁵ See Bloomberg (2020).

pizza was contaminated with Covid-19. As we witnessed during the sovereign debt crisis, national flag-waving and country bashing were prevalent. Indeed, in Europe, Italy was made the scapegoat, particularly at the outset of the pandemic. Italians were labelled as ‘lazy’, and ‘feckless’ rule-breakers which was reminiscent of when Greeks were chastised similarly during the sovereign debt crisis¹⁶. During the pandemic, national leaders, notably Boris Johnson, indulged in national-exceptionalist rhetoric: “The British public have proved again and again, not that it was ever in doubt it, that they can be trusted to do the right thing and to do it with common sense. There is no doubt we are beating back this virus and, with your continued cooperation and good judgment we will beat it once and for all”¹⁷ (Johnson 2020; found in Jarvis, 2022). And more recently, it appears that few lessons have been learned from the pandemic. For example, in light of the ensuing Russo-Ukrainian war, the Hungarian government has recently decided to ban gas exports (Euractiv, 2022). In sum, these crises exacerbated inter-state conflicts and appear to have raised the salience of ‘the nation’. As Matthijs and McNamara (2015) point out, the British press portrayed Brexit as a conflict between the UK and the EU27, the euro crisis as a conflict between Northern versus Southern European member states, and the refugee crisis, as a conflict between those in favour of burden sharing migrant quotas (e.g. Germany) and those against (e.g. Poland).

The common thread in all these crises is Europe’s palpable lack of solidarity, which is indicative of a more profound problem, namely a lack of shared belonging to Europe (see Kuhn et al., 2019). In the words of Kuhn, “questions of solidarity are intrinsically related to collective identity” (Kuhn et al., 2019:182). Indeed, research carried out by Kuhn shows that individuals with stronger European attachments are more prepared to show more solidarity with people from other European countries¹⁸. This begs the question of whether the lack of discursive solidarity is indicative of a more endemic, profound collective identity problem. The aforementioned crises exacerbated conflicts between national identities and revealed politicians’ continuing predilection for privileging national interests at the expense of aggregate European interests. Arguably, Brexit was several decades in the making. British public discourse both re-produced and reflected a strong nationalist impulse and an ensuant lack of European identification, which sowed the seeds for this epochal event in European history. In essence,

¹⁶ There are several examples of nationalist rhetoric during the Covid-19 pandemic. E.g. “This might be a little bit racist to say this, [and] you’ll have to make apologies, but do you not think it’s a bit of an excuse? The Italians, any old excuse to, you know, shut down everything and stop work for a bit and have a long siesta” (Jessen, 2020; found in Viola, 2022:9). E.g. “Italians have brought this trouble upon themselves. Haven’t they always adopted a laid-back attitude to rules?” (Odone, 2020; found in Viola, 2022:10). “les Français découvrent que les Italiens peuvent respecter les règles” (The French discover that the Italians are able to follow rules, Segond, 2020; found in Viola, 2022:10). “Italianen houden zich minder goed aan de hygiënemaatregelen” (Italians are hardly renowned for sticking to the rules, Nu.nl, 2020; found in Viola, 2022:10).

¹⁷ Sweden was also not immune from national exceptionalist rhetoric: “The only way to deal with this crisis is to face it as a society where everyone takes responsibility for themselves, for each other, and for our country. [...] No person is alone in facing this crisis, but every person has a heavy responsibility. Everyone. [...] You are many who live up to your responsibility towards your fellow human beings. I am certain that every person in Sweden will take upon themselves their individual responsibility. [...] For your fellow human beings, for our society, and for Sweden” (Expressen, 2020; found in Simonsen, 2022:9).

¹⁸ Those who identify exclusively with their nationality were found to be less likely to support European integration (Marks & Hooghe, 2003). It is not national identity *per se* but exclusive kinds which are potentially damaging to the EU (Kermer et al., 2020).

Brexit was an inexorable result of Britain's longstanding lack of identification with Europe¹⁹. The ongoing migrant crisis is a constant source of friction between member states and the EU. The issues may be again traced to Europe's lack of solidarity in confronting this global problem. It is no coincidence that member states led by nationalist-oriented governments – notably Poland and Hungary – have been the most uncooperative and intransigent member states regarding migrant quotas. Likewise, the sovereign debt crisis exposed Europe's lack of discursive appeals to transnational solidarity with anti-Greek and anti-German sentiments rampant. Although policy responses during the Covid-19 pandemic have shown some lessons were learned from the sovereign debt crisis, familiar problems came to the fore once more. Relations deteriorated between member states and Italy in particular was made the scapegoat for the crisis. Solidarity was found wanting with member states, notably, the 'frugal four' (particularly Austria and the Netherlands) reluctant to engage in economic burden sharing. These crises raise serious questions about the suitability of the EPS concept which was arguably a product of the lofty optimism and hubris which encapsulated academia and politics in the '90s. The concept needs to be critically evaluated in light of fresh empirical data – does this concept find support in the data, or, conversely, should we be thinking about the concept in a more nuanced way? My biggest reservation about the EPS (and the derivative Europeanisation of national public sphere(s) concept) is that it implies an inexorable, unidirectional process toward a converging attribute of 'Europeanness'²⁰.

The widely documented issue of information disorder, 'fake news', and post-truth politics afflicting modern society renders public sphere research even more pressing. These phenomena point to a public sphere which falls short of the Habermasian, ideal-type public sphere of rationalised discourse. In reality, public discourse is cathected with emotion and tainted by hysteria at the expense of objective facts (Fridlund, 2020). Journalists habitually indulge in a sensationalistic and hyperbolic style of reporting in a desperate attempt to the audience's attention at the expense of reporting facts. Worse still, a lot of content on social media, in particular, contains false information – often intentionally so. In short, the academic spotlight is on the quality of information and journalism which inexorably implicates the public sphere. The debate several months before the Brexit referendum highlighted serious deficiencies in the quality of information available to the British public. Mistruths and exaggerated claims were promulgated by both sides of the debate, notably the claim that EU membership would cost £350 million per week, that Turkey would join the EU imminently and that leaving the EU would trigger economic Armageddon and World War Three. Moreover, mistruths allegedly mired recent US presidential elections: the so-called 'pizza gate scandal' and Donald Trump's outlandish claim that President Obama 'founded ISIS' are two noteworthy examples that come to mind. And, regrettably, pro-Kremlin disinformation campaigns continue to wreak havoc in Europe to fuel

¹⁹ Examining patterns of discourse in the public sphere reveal tell-tale signs about current sentiments among *strong* institutionalised actors and *weak* publics.

²⁰ ...similar to the concepts of *globalisation* and *integration* which imply convergence toward a more 'global', 'integrated' society.

Russian propaganda²¹. Against this backdrop, now, more than ever, it is important to focus our attention on the public sphere in general and the role of the media in particular.

Another factor which prompted me to explore the EPS topic is the ostensible incongruence between several different theories and empirical reality. Crudely put, the EPS scholarship's expectations have hitherto not borne fruit. During the lofty optimism of the 90s, Europeanisation was widely understood as an inevitable and linear process that would lead to peoples' loyalties (identities and values etc.) shifting from the national to the transnational level²². More specifically it was expected that the increasing news coverage of EU affairs in national public spheres would foster a greater sense of European belonging in – and solidarity with – Europe. The advent of digitalization was expected to accelerate the process of transnational community-building and de-nationalization. Nevertheless, these expectations do not square with the current political climate of identity politics, the enduring salience of national identity, and the relative success of 'Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist' (TAN) parties. Regarding the latter, the ascent in popularity of nationalist-populist parties in Europe may be traced to the onset of the 2008 financial crisis. Indeed, in recent years, several European countries have flirted with the populist far-right. In Greece and Spain, *Vox* and *Golden Dawn* burst onto the scene, in Germany, *Alternative für Deutschland* has made inroads in the last decade (despite dwindling support in the last couple of years), and in the Netherlands, *Partij voor de Vrijheid* and *Forum voor Democratie* continue to ride high in the polls. In the 2018 Italian elections, *Lega* emerged as the main political force. And with *Fratelli d'Italia* forecast to be the largest party in *La Camera dei deputati* and *Il Senato* in the looming 2022 Italian elections, 'i sovranisti' show few signs of waning as a political force²³. Indeed, nationalist parties continue to hold firm in vast swathes of Europe. In Hungary and Poland, *Fidesz* and *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* still govern their respective countries. Le Pen's *Rassemblement National* Party's recent and unprecedented success in the parliamentary elections is a case in point. Nationalist parties continue to score high in the polls, and, anecdotally speaking, appeals to national identity continue to pervade public discourse. In short, there is a mismatch between theory and reality which prompts us to delve deeper into the discursive conditions of the public sphere.

Moreover, scholars disagree on whether politicisation – a concept intimately connected to the public sphere – will foster integration. Scholars can be broadly divided into two camps: those that see politicisation as a positive development, not only for the crystallisation of a Europeanised communicative space but for the development of a collective European identity and ultimately to advance European integration (e.g. Risse, 2010). The argument goes that politicisation galvanises transnational debates which are regarded as antecedent conditions for the development of a collective European identity (Kermer et al., 2020). In the opposing camp are the likes of Kriesi et al. and de Wilde

²¹ See EDMO (2020).

²² McLuhan's (1964) cliché of the 'global village' and the concept of 'Europeanisation of public spheres' remain two popular buzzwords among political science scholars.

²³ See TG La7 (2022)

who regard politicisation as pernicious for the advancement of EU integration (i.e. post-functionalism). By definition, politicisation increases the salience of EU politics, empowers a wide range of actors, and heightens polarisation. In essence, postfunctionalists argue that politicisation plays into the hands of Eurosceptics who mobilise disaffected citizens on national identity. As Hooghe *et al.*, point out, the migration crisis provided a golden opportunity for TAN parties to mobilise voters on national identity²⁴. In their words, the migration crisis, “touched a nerve of national identity because it asked Europe’s populations to harbor culturally dissimilar people” (Hooghe and Marks 2019:1122). In a similar vein, the sovereign debt crisis enabled TAN parties to frame the crisis as a conflict between nation-states and Brussels (Hooghe *et al.*, 2021). Although my research cannot settle this debate, examining the current state of the public sphere, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, may shed some light on whether politicisation is a positive development for European identity and the EU integration process²⁵. In short, the EPS scholarship paints a much rosier picture for the EU than post-functionalist theories. The former underlines the public spheres’ collective European identity and democracy-enhancing credentials whereas the latter expects politicisation to empower Eurosceptics and increase the salience of national identity. The EPS scholarship, furthermore, does not sit well with the insights from media logic theory (Galtung *et al.*, 1965) and the political opportunity structures perspective (à la Tarrow, 1994). The former implies the enduring ethnocentricity of international news flows, and the latter reminds us that, although—on the one hand—political actors are increasingly incentivised to target political demands at the European level as a result of advancing European integration—on the other hand— political and electoral systems remain heavily embedded in national structures. In short, the output of political communication is governed by a media and political logic that functions to domesticate foreign news and reify national identity in public discourse.

In the decade before the turn of the millennium, it was expected by scholars and policymakers alike that loyalties and affections would shift to the supranational level. In 1990, Eric Hobsbawm hastily prophesied the “withering away of the nation” and the end of nationalism. In his words, “nation-states and nations will be seen as retreating before, resisting, adapting to, being absorbed or dislocated by, the new supranational restructuring of the globe” (Hobsbawm, 2012:191). Hobsbawm was not alone in holding these sentiments. Indeed, several scholars prognosticated that the nation would fade into obscurity with the rise of economic globalisation in the late 20th century (e.g. Soysal, 1994; Bhabha, 2013; McNeill, 1986). However, the enduring salience of the national identity and ascent of nationalist parties in the 21st century suggests that these expectations were misplaced (Croucher, 2018:97). In reality, social dimensions of European integration lag far behind political and economic integration. Citizens’ support for the EU and identification with Europe has remained modest but stable over time

²⁴ Kriesi and Grande (2006) argue that ‘traditional-authoritarian-nationalist’ parties are best placed to benefit from the new ‘demarcation’ vs. ‘integration’ cleavage. This theory may partially explain why the electoral fortunes of nationalist-populist parties have improved in recent years.

²⁵ EU politics became highly politicised during the Covid-19 pandemic. In my analysis, the proxy variable for *politicisation* is the Covid-19 dataset.

(Fig. 0.1). Most citizens' are neither vehemently opposed nor supportive of EU integration. Numerous surveys show that national identity is and continues to be the most salient source of belonging. Identity and solidarity resonate strongest at the local and national level whereas European identity is a mere afterthought —what can be labelled as a 'nation-*first*-European-*second*' configuration. As Figure 0.1 clearly shows, national identity clearly holds primacy despite a sizeable portion of European citizens identifying as both nationals of their respective nations and Europeans, and these trends are remarkably stable over time²⁶. As Croucher argues, the 'perpetual imagining' of the nation should prompt us to reconsider post-nationalist theories (Ibid., 96). Another interesting finding is the marked variation in identity feelings across countries (see Fig 0.2 below). Needless to say that scholars cannot generalise about Europeans *in toto* given that levels of EU support and identification differ markedly both *across* and *within* member states. For example, as Fig 0.2 shows, 71% of Portuguese citizens identify as Portuguese and European, whereas in Bulgaria, only 41% of Bulgarians identify as both Bulgarian and European. At the individual level, several studies show that European identification is a function of socio-economic status, gender, and level of education, among other things. According to Theresa Kuhn, variance at the individual level may be explained by 'transnational interactions' that are highly stratified along socio-economic lines as wealthier, highly educated individuals are more inclined to engage in transnational interactions than socio-economically deprived individuals (e.g. Kuhn, 2015). However, according to the *KOF Globalisation Index*, most countries in Europe are transnationalised to a similar degree²⁷. This begs the question: what accounts for variance at the *aggregate* country level? Thus transnationalism alone would not appear to explain why the majority of Bulgarians feel Bulgarian and the majority of Portuguese citizens feel European. Europe's variegated, polymorphous and fragmented public sphere(s) – as the *loci* of identity-making – may help shed light on the variance at the *aggregate* level.

²⁶ In fact, circa 40% of respondents identify exclusively with their nation and under 5% identify exclusively as European. And almost one in two respondents identify foremost with their nation followed by Europe, whereas under 10% of respondents primarily identify with Europe followed by their nation.

²⁷ Although I acknowledge that *globalisation* and *transnationalism* concepts are not synonymous, there is a significant amount of overlap between them.

Figure 0.1: National and European identities over time (source: Eurobarometer)²⁸

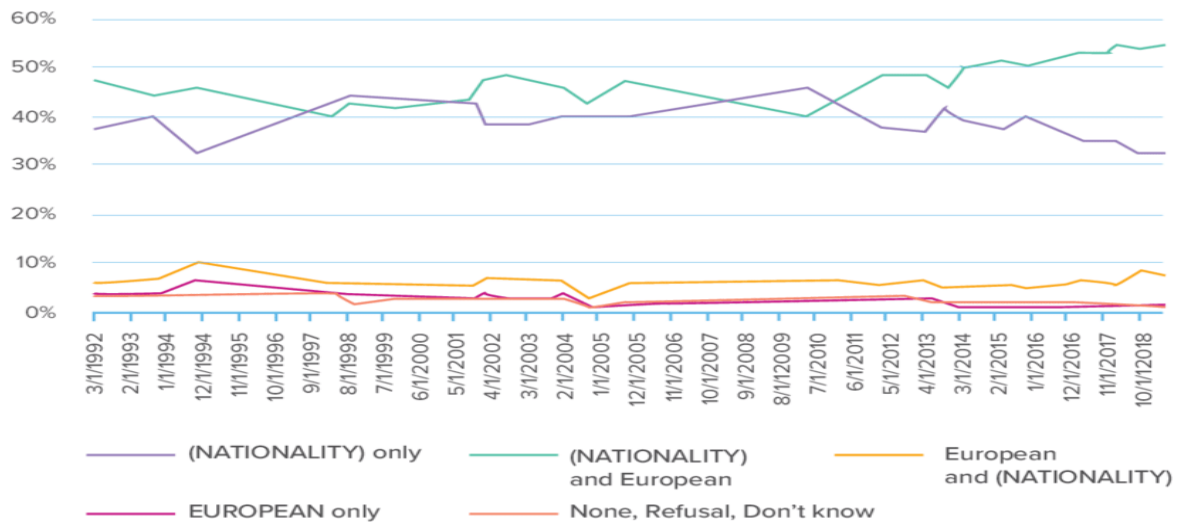
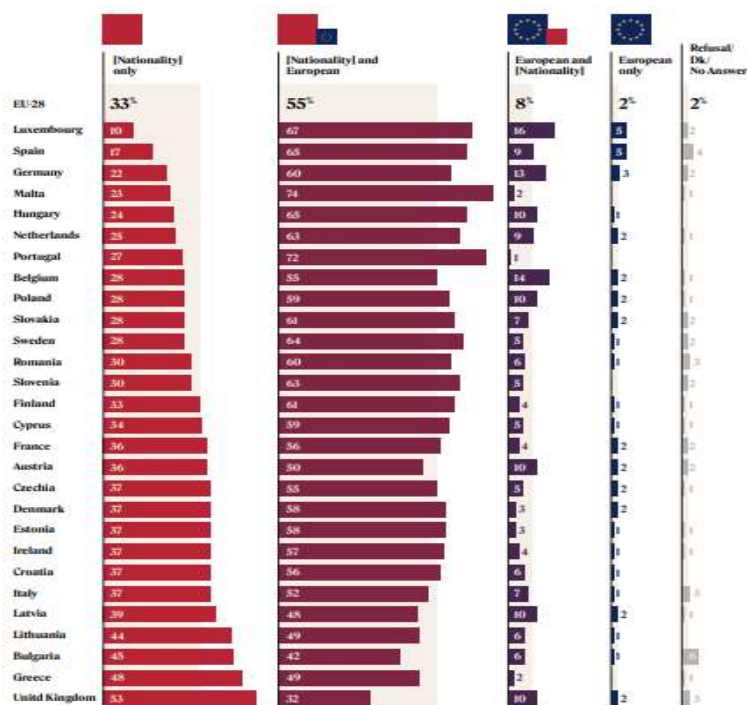


Figure 0.2: EU-27 territorial attachment across-country comparison (source: Eurobarometer)²⁹



²⁸ Found in Nestoras et al., (2021:249)

²⁹ Found in Kirkegaard (2021:5)

“The question of collective identity is presently the heart-beat of the public sphere of representative democracies. How could it not be central to our research agenda?”. (Schlesinger, 2019:10)

So why should the EU be worried about Europe’s issues of solidarity and identity, and Europe’s deeply fragmented public spaces of communication? If anything, the 2012 sovereign debt crisis and the economic crisis engendered by the pandemic show that political integration may run apace regardless of these issues³⁰. However, as recent polls and the above-cited crises exemplify, advancing political European integration appears to be a ‘hard sell’ for the general public. As post-functionalists warn, there is a real risk of a popular backlash to further EU integration, particularly in the policy domains at the heart of national sovereignty such as welfare policy. It is reasonable to expect that integration in ‘high politics’ (Hoffmann 1966: 908) will be more prone to resistance. Indeed, during the Covid-19 economic fallout, Northern European member states fought tooth and nail against the proposal to pool public debt which would have rendered Northern European taxpayers liable for other member states’ public debt. Rising Euroscepticism which culminated in Brexit is a brutal reminder for the EU that European integration cannot be taken for granted.

Moreover, several scholars, notably Kuhn, rightly remind us of the importance of identity to solidarity. In Kuhn’s words, “a degree of collective identity is often perceived to be a requirement for integration of core state powers, and even more so when redistributive measures are at stake” (Kuhn, 2020:76). Similarly, as Brambrilla *et al.* rightly point out, highlighting group belongingness helps to motivate individuals to engage in prosocial behaviour (Brambrilla *et al.*, 2022:1). In a similar vein, postfunctionalists underline the importance of collective identity to the integration process. The public sphere takes centre stage in postfunctionalist theory. Generally speaking, postfunctionalists see the increased politicised nature of European politics – that is, the increasing salience of EU politics, the broadening of actors involved, and the polarization of attitudes and opinions in the public sphere – as an impediment to integration because it empowers Eurosceptic parties and mobilises Eurosceptic citizens around national identities (Schimmelfennig, 2017:5). Moreover, the widely documented ‘democratic deficit’ is considered by some scholars as due to the lack of a European *demos* and an under-developed EPS. The 2012 sovereign debt crisis revealed a glaring lack of willingness on the part of Europeans to engage in burden-sharing. The recent rise of nationalist, right-wing parties in Europe is widely attributed to the entrenchment of national identity. In sum, the EU’s recent travails may be traced to an undeveloped EPS and the lack of a collective European identity. These sentiments are shared by Michael Bruter who opines that “without identity, it seems that there can be no true, durable,

³⁰ Extensive literature alludes to the self-augmenting dynamic of crises on integration processes due to path-dependence (Pierson, 1996) and institutionalization processes (Sandholtz, 1997, found in Schimmelfennig, 2017). The argument goes that EU integration has set in motion a self-perpetuating process of integration as a result of high sunk and exit costs which have increased the interdependence between member states and augmented the autonomy of supranational actors (Schimmelfennig, 2017:5).

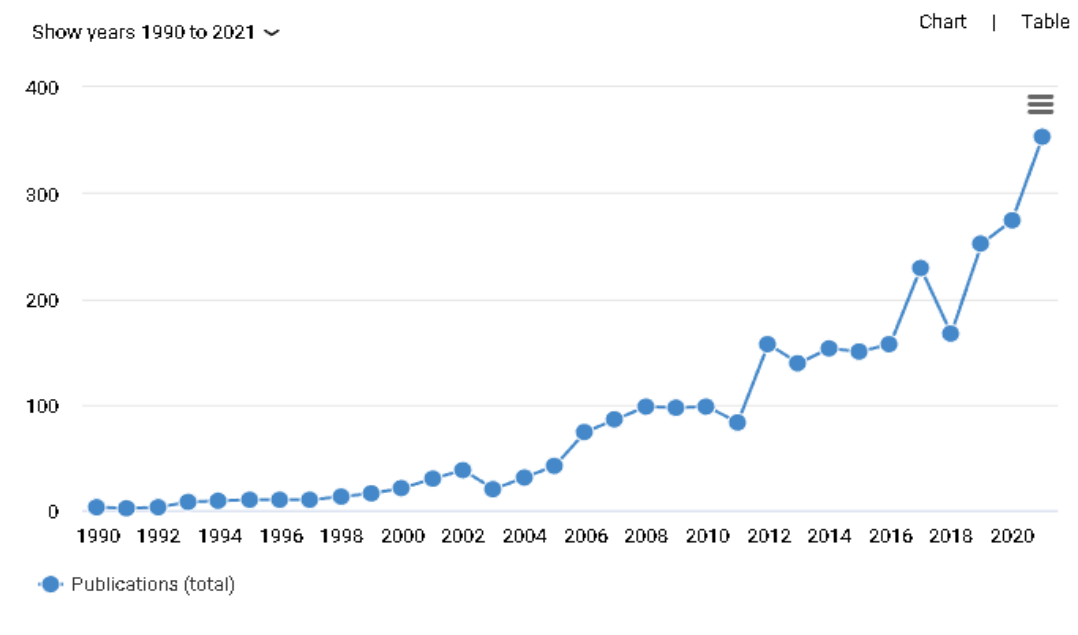
legitimacy attached to a political entity, no conscious acceptance of the power of the State and of its monopolistic right to use legitimate coercion.” (Bruter, 2005:2).

The EPS topic is timely and important, furthermore, because our information about Europe stems from the media. As a consequence, the media may reasonably be expected to shape citizens’ attitudes, opinions and sentiments of Europe. The European continent’s fragmented, variegated national public sphere(s) offers the most plausible explanation for these varying attitudes that can be detected among Europeans. Now, more than ever, citizens may acquire information from a myriad of media platforms both on the Internet and from traditional media sources. It is reasonable, thus, to expect that citizens within and across different countries will hold varying attitudes about the EU. With EU politics increasingly politicised, it is important to understand how the public sphere is developing. It is widely understood that the media possess a decisive role in shaping voter behaviour and even influencing political outcomes. As touched upon earlier, several scholars attribute Brexit to the powerful influence of the British right-wing press, and some observers even claim that the election of President Donald Trump in 2016 was a result of disinformation campaigns successfully defaming Hilary Clinton’s campaign.

It is also important to note that interest in European public sphere research has markedly increased in recent years, particularly, since Brexit. It is fascinating to note that increasing interest in public sphere research appears to coincide with the sovereign debt crisis, the latter of which was a moment of reckoning for the EU that drew a lot of media (and public) attention. We can roughly trace the politicisation of EU integration to this period of turmoil, although one could argue that the Maastricht treaty and referenda on the proposed Constitutional Treaty had ushered in an era of politicisation of EU politics (see Fig.0.3 below³¹). In sum, recent political events such as Brexit, the spectre of disinformation, and the endurance of national identity call upon scholars to re-examine the current state of the public sphere and question the plausibility of the EPS concept. Europeanization is perhaps more unpredictable and less certain than scholars and policymakers would wish to admit. Although the phenomenon is desirable from a normative standpoint, empirical evidence does not appear to support it.

³¹ Dimensions (n.d.)

Figure 0.3: Popularity of the EPS topic over time



The visualization shows the number of publications published in each year.

Relevance and importance

The catalyst

The inspiration for my thesis started from noting marked divergences in identity-feeling among neighbouring member states over time which led me to speculate on why some member states feel more European vis-a-vis others. For example, why does Denmark – which is geographically proximate and socio-culturally similar to the UK – feel a stronger sense of belonging to the EU compared to the UK? My initial probing question was to better understand the determinants of collective identity on a country level. The *social contact* (a la Allport, 1953) and *social communication* theories (a la Bauer, 2000; Deutsch, 1966) were popularly cited explanations. Bauer (1881-1938) was arguably one of the first scholars to establish the link between social communication and national identity. Bauer argued that the nation was a “community of fate” (*eine Schicksalsgemeinschaft*) engaged in general reciprocal interaction” (Bauer, 2000:100; cited in Kermer et al., 2020:30). The social contact theory may be traced to the research of Gordon Allport (1954) who argued that increasing intergroup contact can mitigate prejudices and foster community-feeling. In a similar vein, Deutsch posited that national consciousness emerged through strongly bounded patterns of social interaction: “People are held together ‘from within’ by this communicative efficiency, the complementarity of the communicative facilities acquired by their members” (Deutsch, 1966:98). Several scholars, namely Neil Fligstein, and more recently, Theresa Kuhn, build on Deutsch’s theory by investigating whether transnational European experiences

foster a stronger sense of belonging to Europe. The scholar, Theresa Kuhn – building on the seminal work of Karl Deutsch – examines whether individual-level interaction(s) positively affect support for the EU and European community feeling (Kuhn, 2015). In short, increased social, political, and economic transnational interactions were expected to congeal a European sense of belonging. However, these studies (Fligstein, 2008; Kuhn, 2015) focussed on the individual level of analysis, and do not explain cross-country variations in identity on the aggregate level. Thus, I reverted my attention to the country level to understand what accounts for marked national differences in EU public opinion. I had in mind to devise an index consisting of several indicators to measure the level of social, political, and economic ‘transnational interactions’ over time. Thereafter, I would conduct a multivariate analysis to examine whether a correlation holds between transnational interactions at the aggregate level and the dependent variable, European identity (taken from the Eurobarometer survey). In the end, I aborted this idea as the *KOF Globalisation Index (2022)* more or less encapsulated what I wished to do. This index, moreover, indicates that most countries in Europe are transnationalised to a similar degree³². In other words, little variance can be found observed in the data, which indicates that we should be looking elsewhere for an explanation. In sum, the *social contact* hypothesis is not a plausible explanation for variations in identity-feeling across EU member states. From reviewing the extensive EPS literature, the public sphere seems to be the most powerful *explanans* for variations in European identity across countries. As I discuss in the literature review (Chapter One), the public sphere is the crucial *locus* for the congealment of identity. It is common knowledge that public spheres vary significantly within and across countries. For example, the UK mass media have an idiosyncratic style of news reporting that differs markedly from the Italian mass media. There are, however, also remarkable differences in news presentation across different media formats and mediums. It is common knowledge that tabloids, broadsheets, and private and public broadcasting tend to select and emphasise different stories. In short, I believe that Europe’s variegated and fragmented communicative landscape holds the key to understanding divergences in public opinion and identity-feeling among member states.

Motivations

My interest in the public sphere topic – in the context of European politics – stems from my abiding interest in questions about European identity which fascinated me from a young age. I am a living embodiment of Europeanisation having been born to parents from mixed European nationalities. My mother is British and my father has mixed Dutch-Danish heritage. I was born and raised in Surrey, England, but never quite felt quintessentially British nor Dutch. Arguably the most conspicuous label of self-identity is one’s name. My name is quintessentially European. My forename, ‘Jan’ is particularly

³² Although I acknowledge that *globalisation* and *transnationalism* concepts are not synonymous, there is a significant amount of overlap between them.

prevalent in the Czech-Republic, Poland, the Netherlands, and Sweden. A perusal of the Google search engine suggests that my surname, ‘Kermer’, is particularly widespread in Saxony, Germany. I am, what Favel (2011) would call, a ‘Eurostar’, that is, a frequent flyer to different countries across Europe (at least before the Covid-19 pandemic!). I have friends scattered across the European continent and have been fortunate enough to live in several European countries. At the micro-level, I add – albeit negligible – support to the theory that transnational interactions may foster post-national identities, identifying as British, Dutch, Italian and European, in that order³³. I am living proof that multiple identities are possible and feeling both a sense of belonging to two (or more) countries or EU(-rope) is perfectly conceivable. Brexit has provoked questions about my identity. Who am I? To whom do I belong? The recourse to an overarching European identity is a handy means to reconcile my confused ontology.

Beyond personal motivations, the intertwined *public sphere* and *European identity* topics are important because questions related to identity are connected to issues about legitimacy, democracy, and solidarity. A richer understanding of identity in the context of the public sphere thus nourishes our understanding of several fields of research. A common identity is widely accepted as the essential ingredient of a durable polity. The widely documented ‘democratic deficit’ is partly attributed to the lack of a European *demos* and under-developed Europeanised public sphere. The Eurozone Debt Crisis revealed a palpable lack of willingness on the part of Europeans to engage in burden-sharing. The recent rise of nationalist, right-wing parties in Europe is ascribed to the entrenchment of national identity. In sum, the EU’s recent travails can be traced to an undeveloped European public sphere and the lack of a collective European identity. These sentiments are shared by the scholar, Michael Bruter, who states that “without identity, it seems that there can be no true, durable, legitimacy attached to a political entity, no conscious acceptance of the power of the State and of its monopolistic right to use legitimate coercion.” (Bruter, 2005:2)

My research, furthermore, endeavours to address problems, inconsistencies and contradictions pertaining to the ‘Europeanisation’ concept. Europeanization in general and the EPS concept, in particular, has traditionally been conceived as an inevitable, linear, unidirectional process. However, Brexit is a stark reminder that integration and Europeanisation cannot and should not be taken for granted. Crucially, the EPS should not be understood as a zero-sum game concept. That is to say that the antipodal forces of Europeanism and nationalism can conceivably permeate discourses simultaneously depending on which dimensions of the concept one focuses on³⁴. For instance, Europeanisation may occur in terms of transborder interactions but be negligible in terms of norms, perspectives and identity constructions. In other words, Europeanism and nationalism are not

³³ I was born and bred in the UK and spent over twenty years of my life there.

³⁴ Goertz (2006) argues that scholars should not lose sight of a concept’s *negation* (e.g. disintegration and nationalization). Goertz encourages scholars to analyse both positive and negative poles of concepts to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the concept in question (Goertz, 2006). As the old adage goes, ‘stars cannot shine without darkness’. Eppler et al. (2016) embrace this Goertzian perspective in order to carry out an extensive conceptual analysis of the concept of integration. In this paper, these scholars underline the bidirectionality of integration, rightly pointing out that integration may occur in some respects but regress in other respects.

dichotomous, either-or, mutually exclusive concepts. It is logically conceivable to have both dense trans-border connections (*structural*) that are nevertheless qualitatively anchored to national meaning structures (*normative*)³⁵. In short, public discourse may be Europeanised in some respects but more national-oriented in other respects.

Koopmans hypothesised that “actors who have limited access to Europeanized public debates will be more critical of European integration and institutions, whereas the actors whose voices are most prominent in debates on European issues will be more favourably inclined toward the European project” (Koopmans, 2010:99). However, this hypothesis does not square with recent empirical studies which show that European integration has become more politicized. This hypothesis also seems counter-intuitive. Surely, actors who are more critical of – or opposed to – something would be more inclined to engage in debate. As we know, Eurosceptic voices have big incentives to debate Europe. For example, UKIP’s political survival and *raison d’être* essentially rested on debating Europe. Indeed, Eurosceptic actors seem to receive a disproportionately high amount of media coverage, particularly in the UK. Moreover, Koopmans expectations are not congruent with empirical research carried out by Boomgarden who found that political elites with an anti-EU leaning tend to increase the visibility of Europe in national news during European election campaigns (Boomgarden, 2013). In the same study, the results reveal that Europe was more visible in the national media when disputes were more acute among elites and national parties on European issues (Boomgarden, 2013). As Boomgarden *et al.* states: “...increases in EU news visibility were strongest in a situation in which there was both increasing negativity about the EU in a country’s party system and increasing party disagreement about the EU” (Boomgarden, 2013:621). The same authors conclude that “...ironically, euro-scepticism, in the form of elite polarisation, is one of the best chances for improving EU democracy by sparking news coverage of EU affairs” (Boomgarden, 2013: 625). This implies that polarization regarding European integration may foster the ‘Europeanization of national public spheres. De Wilde shrewdly reminds us that “politicisation is driven primarily by those critical of the integration process rather than by those who are supportive” (de Wilde, 2016:6). Similarly, Grande and Kriesi caution that opponents of integration are best placed to exploit the new discursive possibilities engendered by the politicisation of European politics (Checkel, 2015:238; Grande, et al., 2015). Although politicisation may be an enabling condition of a Europeanised public sphere, it also empowers new domestic actors who are inimical to the European integration project (Checkel, 2015:243-4). Moreover, the public sphere scholarship does not sit comfortably with research on EU party competition. For example, Kriesi and Grande (cf. Hooghe & Marks, 2018) claim that ‘traditional-authoritarian-nationalist’ (TAN) parties are best placed to benefit from an emerging ‘integration–demarcation’ cleavage (Kriesi et al., 2006). However, several public sphere scholars are adamant that Europeanisation is in the driving seat and European public spaces are converging in respect of European norms, meaning structures, and frames of interpretation. Perhaps it

³⁵ I expand on this point in Chapter Two.

is simply the case that ‘TAN’ parties are benefiting electorally but not in terms of increasing media coverage due to media organisations’ entrenched ideological biases. However, these theoretical and empirical inconsistencies warrant further enquiry using fresh empirical data.

My research aims to provide a distinctive theoretical, methodological and empirical contribution to the public sphere literature. I acknowledge that the EPS is a useful catch-all concept for several other intertwined concepts such as identity and democracy, and encapsulates the fragmented, pluralistic, nation-oriented nature of public spheres. However, the EPS concept is highly abstract rendering it difficult to operationalise in a scientifically rigorous, consistent, and replicable manner. Moreover, as I touched upon earlier, the concept implies that public spheres are inexorably converging toward an ‘ever closer EUUnion’. Frankly, however, empirical evidence does not – and cannot – support this claim. Most if not all empirical studies adopt a snapshot-in-time approach, or at best, several snapshots spread over time. We are, thus, in no position to claim that a process of converging public discourses are manifesting within the national public spheres of the European continent. Although we can rely on a rich body of empirical research, it does not provide conclusive evidence of Europeanisation. At best, it can be reasonably claimed that European actors, issues, topics and themes are more visible in news coverage over time. In this sense, a thin veneer of Europeanisation may be observed in the quantitative sense. However, these trends may merely be signs of a more general pattern of increasingly globalised news coverage rather than a phenomenon that is specific and unique to Europe. Furthermore, unpacking the multifaceted EPS concept is no easy feat. I, thus, opt for a conceptual approach that specifies different dimensions of discourse to avoid making baseless, over-generalised claims. In particular, in Chapter Two, I develop the concept of ‘*discursive (Euro-)nationalism*’ which is divided into structural and normative dimensions³⁶. As my analysis shows (Chapter Five), patterns of discourse are more nuanced and non-linear than the EPS concept implies. Discourse may be Europeanised in terms of communicative linkages but nationalised in respect of frames of interpretation and meaning structures. That is to say, that discourse may simultaneously exhibit features of convergence and divergence across different public spaces.

My research, furthermore, endeavours to make a distinctive contribution in terms of methodology by applying a mixed method approach, namely *Representative Claims Analysis* (RCA) complemented with *Social Network Analysis* (SNA). More specifically, in a step beyond my predecessors, I transpose the manually coded political claims data onto network graphs. The advantages of SNA are twofold: firstly, SNA is a powerful visualisation tool which enables me to gain a ‘Birdseye’ perspective of the discourse network and gain quick and meaningful insights on patterns of discourse in the public sphere. Secondly, SNA possesses a gamut of abstract concepts and tools to enable us to extract the main features of the discourse network. My analysis, moreover, collects data *before* and *during* the Covid-19 pandemic, thus

³⁶ Furthermore, by removing the prefix from the word’s stem, this concept is stripped of its linear, teleological insinuations.

providing new insights into the changes in patterns of discourse engendered by the pandemic. Furthermore, EPS research methodologies have hitherto been analysed mainly in terms of the density of communicative linkages (i.e. structural aspects of political communication). In particular, the method of political claims analysis (PCA) has been used to gauge the extent of interconnectedness between national mediated spheres. However, the more normatively demanding features of discourse have largely been overlooked (Kermer et al., 2020). I, thus, aim to redress this imbalance by focusing on the more qualitative aspects of public discourse such as the *object* and *frame* of representative claims. My research also aims to address methodological gaps in the EPS scholarship. On review of the literature, it is apparent that there is a clear bias in the selection of newspapers with tabloid newspapers largely overlooked. This is problematic because previous studies may overstate the level of Europeanisation. Previous research shows that tabloid newspapers tend to be less transnational in outlook compared to quality newspapers. Whereas most studies focus on the biggest member states, I instead opted for a mix of small and large member states. Moreover, the Netherlands and Poland in particular receive little attention in public sphere research. Moreover, most studies adopted quantitative content analysis approaches, and surprisingly, social network analysis has been neglected. I instead opted for a quali-quantitative mixed method approach, namely RCA and SNA. In essence, the former treats political claims as a relational network of *actors* – sub-divided into subjects, addressees, and objects – *issues* and *frames*. These elements of political claims can easily be transposed onto network graphs enabling me to gain further insights into the current state of the public sphere. Lastly, most studies focus on a particular snapshot or ‘event’ in time, the latter of which may overstate the level of Europeanisation in public discourse as Europe tends to be more visible during extraordinary periods. With this in mind, I opted for a timeframe which traverses both regular and exceptional periods (e.g. Covid-19).

My research, moreover, contributes to enriching our empirical understanding of public sphere(s) in the context of European politics. To summarise, the findings of my analysis reveal the EU and Europe to be passive actors and themes rather than proactive dynamic participants in public debate – which is ultimately an issue of deliberative democracy in general and responsiveness in particular. The EU is framed as both (ir-)responsible and (un-)accountable – as elucidated by the preponderance of political claims as addressees³⁷ – but not responsive – as exemplified by their lack of representation as claim-makers. In this sense, as far as political claims in newspapers are concerned, the EU suffers from a communicative democratic deficit as their ‘voice’ is significantly under-represented compared to domestic-level actors. COVID-19 proved to be a double-edged sword for the development of European identity and solidarity. Although solidaristic claims were more prevalent, so too were nationalistic claims. Remarkably, the increase in national self-referentiality came from a range of actor types, in particular, journalists and government actors. Interestingly, the increase in nationalistic claims and the decrease in bottom-up vertical claims in the COVID-19 dataset came from actors without an identifiable

³⁷ *Addressees* of claims-making are proxies for whom is attributed responsibility (or blame) in regards to a political demand.

political affiliation. This lends support to the notion that nationalism is a discursive strategy employed by a variety of actors which is not unique to right-wing conservative politics. The analysis of frames reveals that Europe is typically portrayed in terms of what the EU or Europe is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ for (i.e. utilitarian). As expected, the democracy, rule of law, sovereignty and instrumental justifications were typically framed in the context of national identity and national interests, and the solidarity and EU integration justifications were often framed in the context of a European and global coalition of interests. Moreover, supranational constituencies were more prevalent in the more transnationally-oriented issue fields such as data protection, science and technology and EU integration. However, remarkably, national objects prevailed in the environmental, monetary policy and human rights issue fields. The findings lend tentative support to Koopmans *et al.*, (2010: 64-7) expectation that public debates will be more Europeanised in the so-called ‘communitised’ policy domains. The results of my analysis also indicate that Euroscepticism is overstated in the literature and Eurocriticism may be the more apposite term. In fact, positive EU evaluations outnumbered negative EU evaluations, and net addressee evaluations were more negative than net EU-addressee evaluations. Not surprisingly, representative claims which contained an EU-level object mainly contained positive EU evaluations, and interestingly, when national interests and identities were invoked in representative claims-making, negative evaluations of the EU exceeded positive evaluations. Moreover, claimants who invoked constituencies of other EU member states generally held negative evaluations of the EU. It appears that when national identities are invoked – either *nationally* or *horizontal-solidaristically* – the EU is portrayed negatively. I expect this is an implicit ‘othering’ discursive strategy that political actors typically employ to demarcate national in-groups from EU/European out-groups. Moreover, in three out of the four countries analysed, debates were structurally Europeanised but nationalistic in the normative sense. Lastly, and arguably, the most important finding, is the results of the bivariate analysis which reveal a strong positive statistically significant linear relationship between *structural* and *normative* dimensions of (Euro-)nationalism. In particular, correlations were found between the territorial scope of the *claimant-object* and the *addressee-object* but not the *claimant-addressee* covariates. In a nutshell, the results of my analysis show that actors speak *about* but *not on behalf* of Europe which is symptomatic of a more profound issue related to Europe’s ostensible lack of collective identity and solidarity.

Focus and scope

To collect a representative sample of the public spheres comprising Europe, my analysis examines patterns of discourse in three different regions of Europe: two North-western European countries, namely, Germany and the Netherlands, one Eastern European country, Poland, and one Southern

European country, Italy³⁸. I opted for countries that vary considerably according to, *inter alia* – population size, geographical location, public opinion, duration of EU membership, levels of media freedom, and the type of political system. Moreover, these cases represent a heterogeneous mix in terms of the levels of EU support. Germany has consistently supported EU integration while Italy has become one of the most Eurosceptic EU member states, according to recent Eurobarometer surveys. The inclusion of Poland, moreover, allows me to compare discourse in older and newer member states and euro with non-euro member states. My analysis covers a period of two years, one year *before* and one year *during* the Covid-19 pandemic. This allows me to compare patterns of public discourse during relatively ordinary and extraordinary periods. Although not a year seems to go by without a crisis of some sort, the year before the Covid-19 pandemic was relatively uneventful compared to preceding periods. The scars of the euro crisis had healed and the dust had mainly settled concerning Brexit. Indeed, support for the EU was relatively high compared to preceding periods. By contrast, the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 represented an extraordinary epochal event. Comparing ordinary and extraordinary periods is interesting from a theoretical standpoint because European political communication is understood to be more visible and salient in the latter. Indeed, some scholars claim erroneously that exceptional periods invigorate Europeanised communication (e.g. Peter and de Vreese, 2004). As Peter *et al.* imaginatively put it, “the EU is somewhat like the moon: though of major influence on the ebb and flow of Europe, it is only cyclically fully visible” (2004:16). However, empirical evidence suggests that crises may inhibit Europeanised communication in the sense that national public spheres’ tend to be more nationally self-referential³⁹. In my opinion, it is important to distinguish between an exceptional *event* (e.g. an EU summit or EU election) and a *crisis* (e.g. Sovereign debt crisis and Covid-19). We should also be mindful not to generalise about the latter: for example, the sovereign debt crisis was a textbook example of an asymmetric shock, whereas Covid-19 was a stochastic shock, that is, an unanticipated event which affected different countries more or less the same⁴⁰. Although the empirical evidence clearly shows that EU actors and European themes become more visible and salient during exceptional periods, it is an over-extrapolation to claim that this is evidence of a more profound process of Europeanisation. Crucially, the increasing attention to EU actors and issues – a purely quantitative metric – does not equate with becoming *more* European in perspectives.

³⁸ See the beginning of Chapter Four for more information on my case selection.

³⁹ Survey data lend further support to the notion that crises may be detrimental to supranational levels of territorial attachment. As the paper by Polyakova et al. (2016) demonstrates, those holding exclusive national identities increased by 5% from 2005 to 2010, and those holding dual national-EU identities fell by a similar margin. The surge in exclusive nationalism was found in the majority of EU member states. Interestingly, these authors found that exclusive national identity increased the most in the countries most affected by the 2007-8 financial crisis.

⁴⁰ Although this is beyond the scope of my current research project, in the future, it would be interesting to explore patterns of discourse during different periods of turmoil or upheaval. Three variegated cases which come to mind are: the *sovereign debt crisis*, an endogenous asymmetrical shock which adversely affected Southern Eurozone member states in particular, *Brexit* – an endogenous symmetrical shock albeit with asymmetrical consequences, with some countries tied more economically, politically and culturally to Great Britain than others – and *Covid-19* – an exogenous, stochastic shock. Although the sovereign debt crisis and Brexit were endogenous crises, the stakes were arguably much higher in the former and Southern Europe arguably bore the brunt of economic turmoil. By contrast, in the case of Brexit, the consequences applied roughly equally to all member states.

Table 0.1: The newspapers comprising my analysis⁴¹

	Format	Popularity	Target audience	Scope	Political orientation	EU stance
<i>Fakt</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Unknown	Neutral
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	Quality	2 nd	Niche	Domestic and international	Left-wing; Liberal	Supportive
<i>La Nazione</i>	Regional / Tabloid	11 th	General	Mainly local/domestic	Moderate-conservative	Neutral
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	Quality	1 st	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-right; Conservative	Supportive
<i>Bild</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Right-wing; Conservative	Critical
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	Quality	2 nd	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-left	Supportive
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Right-wing	Critical
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	Quality	4 th	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-left; Liberal	Supportive

The main themes

My thesis touches upon several themes laid out below. The crux of my argument is that the increasing visibility and salience of EU politics in national public spheres – what most scholars refer to as the ‘Europeanisation of national public spheres’ – is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the growing ubiquity of EU and European politics in the mediated public sphere provides access to information and news about EU politics and helps to galvanise debates which are crucial components of a democratic society. Visibility in the public sphere also provides a legitimacy function; the increasing visibility and resonance of EU actors’ in the mass media is a tacit acceptance by both *journalists* – who select and report the story – and *readers* alike – who choose to read it – that their public interventions and political demands are legitimate. On the other hand, European politics shines a spotlight on domestic actors, national *topoi* and national narratives, and continues to be framed – via deictic expressions defined primarily in national terms – as consequential for ‘the nation’ rather than Europe. In short, there is a

⁴¹ Statista. (2022b)

trade-off between the publicity of EU politics and discursive nationalism. European politics presents opportunities for discursive ‘othering’ by pitting national against European identities. This leads me to my next point about the need to understand Europeanisation as a more nuanced, non-linear, bidirectional process. As numerous scholars argue, the public sphere is a multi-faceted concept encompassing several dimensions. It is logically conceivable that the public sphere may converge on Europe in some respects but revert to national structures in other respects. My main misgiving about the EPS concept is its normative bias; the term *European* implies a unidirectional, teleological process toward more Europe. The concept implies that the public sphere is a zero-sum game of ascending Europeanism and ebbing nationalism. However, empirical evidence does not support these expectations, and contrariwise, we are witnessing a renaissance of nationalism. Furthermore, the concept implies that there is only *one* figurative space for debating Europe.

My research examines the juxtaposition of multiple identities and interests which manifest in public discourse about European politics. My analysis aims to uncover which identities obtain primacy in the context of European politics. Does European identity complement national identity (*inclusive*) or are they pitted against one another (*exclusive*)? Moreover, although – as the name suggests – representative claims reveal patterns of representation in the public sphere, they also elucidate the identity orientation of the ‘speaker’ and, to a lesser degree, the journalist citing the claim in the newspaper. How so? Concerning the former, the speaker invariably signposts via deictic markers which ‘imagined community’ they belong to – or, at the very least, claims to represent. However, the configuration of domestic vis-a-vis transnational representative claims also reveals something about the identity orientation of the journalist. The visibility and resonance of an actor in the mass media is a tacit acceptance of their legitimate participation in public debate. Moreover, the configuration of domestic actors as ‘speakers’ and transnational actors as ‘targets’ (i.e. passive actors) insinuates, not only who is perceived as more legitimate in public debate, but who speaks on ‘our’ (i.e. the media’s) behalf.⁴² Moreover, via representative claims analysis, we can gauge to what extent the public sphere is democratic in terms of participation. Representative claims analysis reveals several aspects of public discourse including, *inter-alia*, who *represents*, who is regarded as a *representative* (i.e. legitimate), who is perceived as (un-)responsible or (un-)accountable and whose identities or interests are *represented* in public debate.

⁴² In other words, whose public interventions (or claims) are congruent with the journalist’s worldview, or which enable the journalist to push a certain narrative without the need to ‘speak’ directly?

The state of the field

The public sphere is widely regarded as Europeanised as long as themes, issues, topics and actors pertaining to Europe are sufficiently visible in public debates and the *same issues* are discussed at the *same time*. These preconditions are understood to provide a fertile ground for transborder communication, however, crucially, they do not guarantee it. Indeed, as several scholars argue, there must also be evidence of transborder connections across different spherical levels. Most scholars argue that a thin veneer of Europeanisation can be detected in public discourse. It is widely accepted that EU affairs have become more visible in media coverage over time. Extant research consistently shows that similar issues are being discussed concurrently across different public spheres. However, there is less agreement on whether public spheres exhibit sufficient transnationality in terms of transborder communicative linkages. Moreover, European issues should be discussed using *similar frames of reference* or shared European perspectives, or at the very least, a common understanding of the main problems and issues at stake (Kandyla & De Vreese, 2011; Risse, 2014). Some scholars even insist on the manifestation of a collective European identity in public discourse.

The general consensus is that there is no Pan-European public sphere. Linguistic barriers, cultural and political idiosyncrasies, and distinct media cultures militate against the development of a transnational communicative infrastructure to debate European issues as Europeans. If there is a European public sphere, it is confined to a narrow milieu of elites and attentive publics (Schlesinger, 2019:4). Instead, most scholars subscribe to the lower common denominator of ‘Europeanisation of national public spheres’, that is, an understanding that EU actors and European issues are becoming more visible and salient in national public spheres but national specificities remain. In reality, the public spheres of Europe are elitist and top-down in terms of participation with national executives dominating debates, national parliaments playing a peripheral role, and general publics mere bystanders. Public spheres are described as *‘pillarized’* – in the sense that public attention is directed mainly at the EU and not fellow European member states – *‘fragmented’*, and *‘segmented’* because of variegated editorial and media cultures, and idiosyncratic socio-economic, political and linguistic contexts. Public spheres are understood as polymorphous, boundless, pluralistic spaces of communication. Lastly, scholars generally agree that public spheres remain nationally embedded due to the mass media’s predilection for re-contextualising news in ways that are appealing to domestic audiences.

As an independent variable, it is widely accepted that the development of an EPS is crucial to strengthening EU democracy. Indeed, several scholars attribute the EU’s widely documented democratic deficit to a communication deficit. The development of an EPS is generally understood to foster support for the EU. The mass media supply citizens with information about the EU and political knowledge is understood to positively affect political support. More contentious is the claim that the EPS – in its current form – can congeal a European identity. Although there is no shortage of proponents

of this theory, empirical evidence is inconclusive. In my view, politicisation may be more of a curse than a blessing for the development of an EPS. The crucial scope condition is what is being contested: the *policy* or *polity*. The former is emblematic of a healthy democracy where actors articulate their views on a case-by-case basis whereas the latter implies systemic opposition to the EU. Furthermore, the prevalence of disinformation and the polarisation of debates particularly on the Internet threaten the public spheres' transnational community-building credentials (Kermer et al., 2020).

As a dependent variable, several scholars argue that the advancing institutionalisation of the EU would strengthen the EPS. Europeanisation is understood to be a function of political integration. Indeed, previous research shows that the EU is more visible in the public sphere in the issue fields where it commands more *de jure* political authority. Furthermore, previous research shows that older and 'opt-in' EU member states are more 'Europeanised' than newer 'opt-out' member states⁴³. Moreover, quality newspapers appear to exhibit more transnationality than tabloid newspapers. It is, moreover, widely understood that Europeanised communication is particularly discernible during extraordinary or exceptional periods. Communitarian scholars insist on the *sine qua non* of an antecedent collective identity for Europeanised communication to emerge. Moreover, politicisation is widely understood to foster Europeanised communication. Other scholars such as Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) argue that political and editorial cultures determine a public spheres' propensity to transnationalise. In other words, patterns of discourse are a function of specific national circumstances. It is also widely accepted that a given nation's past shapes how citizens of their respective nations perceive themselves in relation to Europe.

Summary of the puzzle⁴⁴

It is widely accepted that European actors and issues have gradually become more visible and salient in the national public spheres that constitute Europe (Kermer et al., 2020). Most studies, moreover, suggest that public spheres in Europe are fairly synchronised and interconnected with one another. However, the jury is still out whether Europe's public spheres are converging in terms of frames of reference and meaning structures. Nonetheless, the prevailing consensus is that the conditions are ripe for the emergence of a *thick* European sense of belonging (Risse, 2010). Indeed, most scholars subscribe to the zero-sum view that the increasing volume of EU news coverage stands to benefit European actors and issues in terms of publicity, and may even promote common frames of reference and ipso facto the deep social stuff of European identity. However, it is, in my view, an overextrapolation to assume that European identity would emerge in the context of increasing EU salience and transborder connections

⁴³ 'Opt-in' member states refers to member states who are fully integrated in the EU (i.e. members of the Schengen Zone, Euro Area etc.).

⁴⁴ The puzzle sub-section of my thesis may also be found at the end of Chapter One. For the sake of clarity, I also deem it fit to set out the summary of the puzzle herein.

alone. On the contrary, the increasing visibility of the EU may serve to strengthen national identity through, *inter alia*, discourses of ‘othering’ and ‘conflict framing’ (de Wilde et al., 2014; de Wilde, 2019). That is to say that the crucial scope condition for Europeanised communication is how the EU is framed in public debates. The increasing conspicuousness of the EU in public debates may either be a blessing or a curse for European identity. National discourses may frame the EU either as a friendly in-group or an inimical outgroup⁴⁵. For example, when a political party complains that the EU is encroaching on national sovereignty, the EU is visible but nonetheless framed as a pernicious other. As Oleart aptly points out, the EU’s increased visibility may conceivably lead to heightened confrontations between member states. Indeed the likes of Mudde (2016) and Hooghe and Marks (2009) perceive the politicisation of EU politics as a strategic tool for right-wing Eurosceptic parties to mobilise national identity and foment anti-EU sentiments (Oleart, 2021:41). The latter scholar argues that politicisation may provoke conflicts between national ingroups and EU/member state outgroups (Ibid.). In sum, the increasing ubiquity of EU affairs in national politics may instead raise the salience of national identity. With that in mind, we should focus on how national identity in public discourse is juxtaposed with other territorial levels of belonging such as European identity. Scholars have hitherto overlooked the question of how the increasing volume of EU-related news affects the nature and dynamic of debates within national public spheres. Are national actors, issues and identities usurped by the increasing presence of European counterparts, or, conversely, are the national channels of representation and the salience of national identity invigorated?⁴⁶ Preliminary research indicates that the national constituency is the most prominent object of claims-making which begs the question: how would an EPS and collective European identity emerge in this discursive context? Until now, a systematic enquiry exploring the communicative links between representatives (i.e. claimants) and the represented (i.e. objects) of political claims has been found wanting. In sum, I question the prevailing view that a European ‘community of communication’ can “emerge through social and discursive practices” (Risse et al., 2003:15). In essence, I empirically test the latter by examining whether national interests prevail during European debates (de Wilde, 2019). If a national coalition of interests and identities prevails, it is highly questionable whether an EPS and thick European identity would emerge in this context.

In my view, there are cogent reasons to doubt the EPSs transnational community-building credentials in the public sphere. As Trenz (2008) and de Wilde (2019) point out, the mass media are strongly embedded in national structures. The insights from media logic theory provide a compelling theoretical argument against the notion that public spheres are amenable to European community-building. By way of a quick summary, Schulz (1982) proposed four criteria which determine ‘newsworthiness’: *valence* (i.e., controversy, aggression, success, values); *identification* (i.e., ethnocentrism, emotions,

⁴⁵ A very recent case in point is Matteo Salvini’s sharp retort to Von der Leyen after she claimed that the EU has tools in place should things get difficult after the Italian elections. The Lega leader reprimanded Von der Leyen for her “unacceptable tone”, adding that “she cannot be allowed to threaten and influence Italian voters who are free” (Salvini, 2022; my translation, italics added for emphasis).

⁴⁶ Similar questions were initially posed by de Wilde (2019).

personalisation); *relevance* (i.e., concern, consequence, proximity); and *status* (i.e., elites, leaders, de Wilde, 2019:1196; Kermer et al., 2020:33). The argument goes that as the mass media mainly cater to national audiences, they may be expected to evoke national identity as it is the target audiences most salient identity (Ibid.,). The mass media may be expected to report more on national executives – given their notoriety in the public domain and prominent *de jure* political authority – and domestic actors and issues that the reader can relate to. Eurosceptic actors may also be expected to receive high levels of media attention because they tend to fuel controversy (Ibid.,). In sum, the media are hardwired to evoke national identity and frame stories in ways that appeal to national audiences. De Wilde (2019) argues that these criteria should also apply to politicians given that the resonance of their political cues hinges largely on the mass media (Kermer et al., 2020:33). Mobilising on national identity and populist rhetoric, in general, should instead be understood as a logical and successful media strategy as political claims that lack an identitarian component contain less news value (Ibid.,). Invoking the general national interest and evoking the national consciousness should be interpreted as an effective political mobilising strategy. This ethnocentricity of the media has led scholars, particularly, de Wilde (2019) to speculate that the increasing media coverage of EU affairs might reinforce the national interest and saliency of national identity (Kermer et al., 2020:33). I share de Wilde's expectation that national identity will be more salient as a result of ethnocentric news values (2019). Building on de Wilde's theoretical framework, I expect the mass media to militate against the congealment of an EPS and *ergo* European identity (de Wilde, 2019:1206). Furthermore, political opportunity structures – in their current form – do not incentivise political actors to speak in the name of 'Europeans' or on behalf of the general 'European interest'. As de Wilde (2013) argues, representative channels connect nationally elected representatives to their respective local constituents. There is no genuine European election akin to the national electoral process because each country elects national politicians to represent national constituencies in Brussels. National executives during EU Council summit meetings represent the national interest, first and foremost. National politicians – convening in national parliaments and vying for attention from national news outlets – frankly have few political incentives to speak on behalf of EU citizens. By contrast, the institutional location and role expectations of supranational actors compel them to speak in the name of 'Europeans' (Medrano, 2010).

Another paradox which prompts me to delve deeper into the discursive setting of the public sphere is that the expectation of a European 'community of communication' does not square with recent electoral realities, namely the sustained support for right-wing nationalist parties. *Fratelli d'Italia's* success in the 2022 Italian elections is a recent case in point. Indeed, several scholars predicted that traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (TAN) parties would be best placed to benefit from the increasing salience of European integration (Kriesi, 2006; Marks et al., 2018; Hooghe & Marks, 2018). However, the transnational cleavage theory does not fit neatly with the public sphere scholarship which expects mainstream political parties and supranational actors to benefit in terms of publicity from the

politicisation of EU politics. Indeed, public sphere research shows that national executives and supranational actors are the big winners of Europeanization and legislative actors are the biggest losers in terms of visibility. In sum, there is an incongruence between transnational cleavage theory and political realities on the one hand, and public sphere research on the other hand. Perhaps it is simply the case that TAN parties have performed better in the recent past for reasons unrelated to the transformations manifesting in the public sphere. For several decades, moreover, countless Eurobarometer surveys show that national identity is the strongest source of territorial attachment with no discernible trend toward increasing European identity. Can the entrenchment of national identity be partially explained by how European politics is framed in the mass media? Previous research of political and representative claims indicates that national claimants are the most active participants in EU-related debates and national constituencies are the most frequently invoked objects (Pfetsch, 2004; de Wilde, 2011; Monza, 2017). However, the main shortcoming of these analyses is that they tend to overestimate the extent of Europeanisation. Political claims analysis (PCA) tends to focus on the more quantitative aspects of communication, namely the density and distribution of claim-makers (i.e. sender) and addressees (i.e. receiver).

Moreover, in the political and representative claims analyses that examine the objects of claims-making, there are shortcomings with the horizontal and vertical Europeanisation typology (Koopmans, 2010). Crucially, these analyses do not distinguish between ‘discursive national’ claims, for example, the leader of Lega, Matteo Salvini, making a claim in the interest of ‘il Popolo Italiano’, and the Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, iterating a statement claiming to represent both the national and European interest. Based on the Koopmans heuristic tool, both claims would be categorised as ‘Europeanised’ purely based on the fact that the claim maker and the object are different from the nationality of the newspaper where the political claim is published. However, there is a crucial distinction between the former and the latter: the former is a paradigmatic case of – what I label as – ‘discursive nationalism’ (i.e. defending the ‘national interest’) while the latter is a more ideal type of Europeanised claims as European constituencies are invoked. In sum, Europeanisation should be understood as ‘Janus faced’ (see Kuhn, 2011). On the one hand, the increasing attention to EU affairs may provide a platform for the political cues of European and supranational entrepreneurs to resonate with multiple international audiences (de Wilde, 2019). On the other hand, Europeanisation provides opportunities for national actors including the mass media to domesticate issues of European origin and frame EU-origin issues in the context of the national interest. As I, as several scholars, argue, mobilising on national identity is an effective political communication strategy because it conforms, in particular, to the newsworthiness criteria of identity and relevance (Chapter Two).

Since the Covid-19 pandemic is an issue that has significantly impacted relationships between the EU member states, it would, moreover, be interesting to investigate patterns of news coverage before and

during the pandemic. Does the inexorable politicisation of EU politics induced by the Covid-19 pandemic act as a centripetal force to bind the variegated and fragmented national public spheres together, or, conversely, do national actors rally behind a national coalition of interests? On an intuitive level, I would expect the latter state of affairs as people and nations tend to revert inwards when threats are anticipated. We witnessed how national governments initially confronted the Covid-19 crisis, with national leaders portraying the crisis as though it were a national emergency alone. Empirically speaking, previous studies lend support to my expectations. Firstly, previous research shows that patterns of public discourse are fluid and may evolve remarkably quickly, particularly during a crisis (Vollmer and Karakayali, 2018). For example, the study by Koopmans (2014) compares the relatively serene period of 2000 to 2002 to the more politically unstable period from 2010 to 2012 to investigate to what extent politicisation alters the discursive balance of power. The findings reveal that patterns of discourse were markedly different during the euro crisis compared to regular periods. More specifically, the same scholar found that legislative actors became more assertive in public debates and public debates were more domesticated during the euro crisis. Similarly, Kriesi et al. (2014) found that, contrary to expectations, the euro crisis did not present a discursive opportunity for political parties and civil society. Instead, debates were dominated by state and economic actors save for Germany where legislative actors were almost as visible as national governments (cf. Koopmans, 2014). This suggests that politicisation induced by crises can turn a European issue into a predominantly domestic debate. It would be interesting to see if these results were confirmed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Likewise, the paper by Brantner et al. (2005) shows that a large scandal may alter the dynamics of discourses. Indeed, their work perfectly encapsulates the double-edged sword nature of event-driven Europeanisation. On the one hand, the 'Haider Affair' (2000) provoked a spike in the levels of vertical Europeanisation (i.e. increasing communicative linkages between Austria and the EU level). On the other hand, national self-referentiality reached its zenith. Similarly, Kleinen-von Koningslow (2010) detected changes in patterns of discourse at the beginning of the 2007-8 financial crisis. She found that European 'we' references declined in 2008 which might, as the same scholar surmises, be a result of the global financial crisis. This suggests that crises might affect patterns of political communication, however, the effects of crises on the public sphere have hitherto not been examined systematically by scholars. With that in mind, I wish to examine whether national self-referentiality increased during the ensuing Covid-19 pandemic. Do debates become more domesticated during the pandemic, that is, do issues of a transnational origin become conflicts between domestic actors? Does the defence of the 'national interest', and, in turn, a discursive national logic become more discernible during the pandemic?

Summary of Research questions and hypotheses⁴⁷

With the above musings in mind, the overarching question of my thesis is to ascertain whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics. More specifically, can discernible trends be found according to, inter alia, country, newspaper format, actor type, actor nationality, and party family? And does identity mobilisation change substantially before and during the Covid-19 pandemic? As I argue in Chapter Two, as a result of nationally entrenched political and media logics, I expect national interests and identities to be the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics. Although the topic of Europe has become more relevant, consequential, and thus newsworthy as a result of the advancing EU integration, the modus operandi of politics and news output has not changed fundamentally. Political actors must mobilise national voters which implies mobilising the most salient (sub-)national interests and sources of belonging. In a similar vein, to attract audiences, journalists must present news deemed relevant and that ‘feels’ proximate. As a result of idiosyncratic national contexts, I expect to find marked cross-country differences in patterns of claims-making. In particular, I expect public discourse in the Dutch and German samples to evoke supranational interests and identities the most. This is because these countries have a comparatively low prevalence of far-right political denominations in their respective national parliaments. Both countries also have more open economies that are highly dependent on international trade. By contrast, I expect representative claims in the Polish and Italian mediated public spheres to be more emblematic of nationalised discourse. In contrast to the Netherlands and Germany, right-wing political parties are more prevalent in the Polish and Italian parliaments. As several studies already show, tabloid newspapers are typically more parochial in scope and invoke nationalistic frames more compared to quality-format newspapers. The explanation is fairly self-evident. The catchment area of newspapers varies from paper to paper with tabloid newspapers generally tailored to audiences with a lower socioeconomic status. Although quality-format newspapers predominantly target nationally based readers, they tend to be more transnational in outlook, and thus, not surprisingly, attract more international readers. I expect, moreover, wide variation in patterns of claims-making according to actor type. This is because each actor fulfils a specific role expectation and occupies a unique institutional location. In addition, every actor possesses a unique repertoire of personal (or party) identities and ideologies. I, moreover, expect patterns of discourse to vary markedly according to political partisanship. In particular, I expect TAN actors to evoke national interests and identities considerably more than GAL and centrist political actors. This is because of the actor-driven logic alluded to above (Medrano 2010). Most actors do not act in isolation are embedded into larger organisations which represent a specific ideology, and thus, invoking national identity should be understood as part of the job description of sovereigntist parties.

⁴⁷ The research questions of my thesis may be found at the end of Chapter Two. For the sake of clarity, I also deem it fit to summarise my research questions herein.

Building on the scholarship of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and insights from social psychology, I expect nationalistic frames to increase during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next research question is to ascertain which actors are the most visible in public debates concerning European politics. Can discernible trends be ascertained according to, inter alia, country, newspaper format, actor type, actor nationality, and party family? And do patterns of actor visibility evolve substantially before and during the Covid-19 pandemic? For reasons already laid out above, I, furthermore, expect domestic actors to dominate claims-making. The logic of the media inclines journalists to choose new items which embroil domestic actors whom audiences are generally more familiar with. In particular, I expect domestic actors to dominate claims-making as claimants. In other words, the media will afford domestic actors more publicity, and ipso facto be perceived as more legitimate. By contrast, I expect EU actors to be more prevalent as ‘targets’ of claims-making (i.e. addressees). These expectations are based on the insights from POS. Advancing EU integration provides a golden opportunity for national governments to shift the blame for unpopular policy decisions (see Chap. 2 for more). I, furthermore, expect the newest and least integrated member state of the sample, namely, Poland, to be the most domesticated in terms of actor visibility as it is widely understood that older, ‘opt-in’ member states report more on Europe than newer ones. Moreover, in line with previous findings, I, moreover, expect larger, neighbouring countries or historical/strategic allies to receive more publicity in their respective public spheres. For reasons laid out above, I expect the claims found in tabloid-format newspapers to contain more domestic actors than transnational actors. Regarding actor type, in congruence with previous studies, I expect national executives to dominate claims-making due to their elevated status (i.e. elite persons/status) and notoriety (i.e. identification/familiarity). In a similar vein, I expect supranational actors to receive moderate levels of publicity, particularly as addressees. For the same reasons, I expect civil society actors to receive negligible levels of publicity in public debate. I, moreover, expect political parties to receive levels of publicity which reflect their levels of de jure political representation. In particular, I expect political parties in government and large opposition parties to receive more coverage than fringe parties. Lastly, as a result of the inexorable politicisation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, I expect debates to become more domesticated in congruence with previous research (Koopmans, 2014; Kriesi et al., 2016).

Lastly, I wish to ascertain which bi-variables of claims-making are the most Europeanised. In essence, I expect communicative linkages between actors and addressees to be the more transnationalised (i.e. structural) vis-à-vis discursive relations between actor and object (i.e. normative) as the former is a higher benchmark of Europeanised discourse. Speaking about or at Europe is a lower normative threshold than speaking on behalf of Europe. Thereupon, I examine whether a correlation holds between the structural and normative bivariate of claims-making. A relationship between these two variables would imply that increasing visibility of EU actors in the public sphere may lead to a stronger collective European identity over time. Although a correlation between structural and normative

dimensions of discourse seems intuitively appealing, there are also good reasons to doubt it. For example, Eurosceptic political actors habitually address – or more aptly lambast – the EU as targets for scapegoating. And Eurosceptics typically defend national interests and evoke national identity.

Overview of the structure

To achieve these aims, in Chapter One, I provide an extensive review of the literature which is immensely useful for identifying gaps, inconsistencies, and paradoxes in the scholarship. I begin with a summary of the ideal-type definition of the EPS followed by an empirical-descriptive overview of the EPS as conceived by public sphere scholars. Thereupon, I summarise the main methodologies and research designs employed by public sphere scholars. Afterwards, I summarise the main theories pertaining to the EPS – both as an *explanans* and *explanandum* – that have been developed by scholars. Subsequently, I present the main empirical findings and conclude with a summary of the puzzle. In Chapter Two, I lay out the case to challenge the prevailing view that public debates on European politics are conducive to fostering a European sense of belonging. In essence, I argue that Europeanisation is a double-edged sword to the extent that the increasing volume of news coverage may actually serve to reinforce the national and intergovernmental channels of representation and reify national identity. I build on the insights of media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) and the political opportunity structures perspective (à la Tarrow, 1994) to support my hypotheses. In this chapter, I also present the conceptual framework of my research, including a definitional overview of *discursive (Euro-)nationalism*, which aims to address some conceptual shortcomings of previous research. I conclude Chapter Two with a formulation of my research questions and hypotheses. In Chapter Three, I provide an overview of the methods used for my empirical analysis, namely, a mixed method quali-quantitative approach of *Representative Claims Analysis* (RCA) and *Social Network Analysis* (SNA). The former is the main method employed for my analysis and the latter is a complementary visualisation tool to accompany RCA, however, the conceptual and theoretical insights, and heuristic tools of SNA were also used. In Chapter Four, I lay out my research design, specifying the variables of my analysis and their operationalisation. In particular, I begin by summarising my research questions and specifying my analysis's case selection. Thereupon, I stipulate the variables of my analysis including their operationalisation by way of a codebook which was the template used during the manual coding phase of my analysis. The chapter ends with a summary of the size of the raw dataset of newspaper articles collected from *LexisNexis*. In Chapter Five, I present the main results of my analysis. I begin the chapter with a snap verdict analysis of the unipartite and bipartite networks which enabled me to gain a Birdseye perspective of each network at the country level. Thereupon, I presented the results of the RCA according to *country*, *newspaper*, *newspaper type*, *object type*, *actor type*, and *partisanship* and compared results across *time*. Afterwards, I summarise the main results of the bivariate correlation

analysis to examine whether structural dimensions are correlated with normative dimensions of *discursive (Euro-)nationalism*. The chapter ends with a summary of the main findings. In Chapter Six, I summarise the research problem which was the catalyst of analysis followed by a bullet point summary of my main findings. My interpretation of the results comprises the main body of Chapter Six. Afterwards, I reflect on some of the shortcomings of my project and provide some suggestions for future research. I complete my thesis with some further reflections and begin to consider the possible consequences of these findings for the EU in the long run.

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Chapter 1 – Literature Review¹

Loose definition of the European public sphere

In order to shake hands with the public spheres literature in the context of European integration, a natural point of departure is to look at how scholars broadly define the concept of the European public sphere (hereafter referred to as EPS). In its broadest sense, most scholars have understood the EPS as a “process that enlarges the scope of public discourse beyond the territorial nation state” (Trenz, 2008b:278). Trenz argues that the EPS is a space “in which particular information is distributed, issues and policies made transparent, positions and claims are staked, and old and new divisions are demarcated” (Trenz, 2010:28). He defines the EPS “the communicative infrastructure that is used for debating the legitimacy of the project of the European integration” (Trenz 2008a:1). He adds that the “the public sphere is conceived as an open field of communicative exchange. It is made up of communication flows and discourses which allow for the diffusion of intersubjective meaning and understanding” (Trenz, 2008a:2). According to Brantner, the EPS “is a space for communication between political actors and citizens for discussions on matters of common interest” (Brantner, 2005:6). For Delanty et al., the EPS is defined as “European-wide forms of communicative competence, discourses, themes and cultural models and repertoires of evaluation within different national contexts” (Delanty & Rumford, 2005:103). Koopmans & Erbe set the normative bar lower, with the visibility of EU/European actors and issues sufficient to qualify as an EPS: “We think that the possibility of an increased presence of European actors and themes in national media would be an important form of Europeanisation of public spheres” (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003:4). Similarly, for Pfetsch et al., (2010), the EPS is the “opening up of national public debates for issues and actors from the EU and other member states...by means of communicative interactions” (Pfetsch et al., 2010:152). The EPS consists of a constellation of political actors representing different territorial units bound together through reciprocal acts of political communication (i.e. discussing, deliberation, debating and contesting issues of common concern). Risse conceptualises the EPS as “the degree to which European institutions and EU policies have an impact on and affect domestic policies and institutions of the member states and beyond...Europeanization refers to the transformation of domestic as well as transnational discourse arenas, institutions, and policies in such a way that the EU as a multilevel governance system becomes an integral part of the ‘domestic’ as well as the ‘transnational’ realms” (Risse, 2014:10). Wessler identifies the lowest common denominator of the EPS as taking discussions on EU governance

¹ Parts of this chapter were taken from my recently published article: Kermer, *et al.*, (2020). Identity and European Public Spheres in the Context of Social Media and Information Disorder. *Cogitatio: Media and Communication*, 8(4), 28-39. DOI: 10.17645/mac.v8i4.3167

(Wessler, 2014). For de Vreese, the “European public sphere may best be described as a shared European space that is largely dependent on the output of national media, in which politics, media and citizens respond to and deliberate about the impact of European integration” (Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017:570). There is a common thread to all these definitions: there is a spatial-metaphorical dimension which helps scholars to understand the EPS as a highly complex, multi-layered network containing cross-border features. There is an ‘opening up’ of communication flows beyond the national container but limited to the fuzzy geographical unit that we call ‘Europe’. There is a temporal dimension; the EPS is understood as a gradual but perpetual ‘process’ towards more, or less, Europeanisation. Scholars tend to overstate the former at the expense of the latter insofar as the concept has been reduced to an inevitable, linear process toward the latter. However, frankly, it is not clear what the finalité of this process will be. Furthermore, for national public spheres’ to overlap, they need to synchronise in terms of ‘similar attention cycles’ coalescing on issues of common concern. There is a substantive dimension to the EPS concept which is overtly political. Although the public sphere sprung to life in the ‘in the world of letters’ (*literarische Öffentlichkeit*), it is the realm of politics where scholars’ pin their hopes of a public sphere emerging. In sum, Europeanisation is a multidimensional concept containing spatial, temporal, and substantive dimensions. Most public sphere scholars compile a checklist of necessary and sufficient conditions which can be placed along a continuum from minimum empirical (e.g. transparency and mutual observance) to ideal-type requirements (e.g. collective identity). The above provides a cursory overview of the concept but tells us little about the concept’s intension and denotation. The following section, thus, outlines the main normative criteria which scholars deem to be constitutive of an EPS.

Normative ideal-type definition

It is widely accepted that all public spheres historically fall short of their lofty normative standards. When judged against the normative benchmark of inclusivity, we can safely assert that the 18th century *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit* never existed. For example, women and working groups were largely disenfranchised from participating in public debates². Europeanisation is understood as a bidirectional process which implies a continuum from minimum conditions (e.g. visibility) to ideal-type requirements (e.g. similar meaning structures, collective identity, Kermer et al., 2020:29). Fossum and Schlesinger (2007) developed three models of the public sphere: the nation state model, the regulatory model, and the federal model. The nation state model describes a public sphere according to which the nation state is the focal reference point for discussion and ‘general publics’ pertain to the national level only. The

² The ‘public’ sphere that existed in the 18th century was confined to a narrow milieu of elites. Although the public sphere became more public over time, eventually opening up to the bourgeoisie, even today, there are limits to the public spheres’ inclusivity.

regulatory model describes a public sphere which is dominated by communicative flows within the boundaries of the nation state combined with transitory cross-border communicative flows caused by certain issue(s). The regulatory model depicts an EPS which is nationally segmented and transnational communication tends to be limited to particular topics (i.e. issue specific). This implies that there is no general EU-wide public but a nationally bounded one (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007). By contrast, the federal model envisages a public sphere with strong vertical communicative channels linking nation states to the supranational level. The federal model entails the prevalence of 'strong publics' at both the national and supranational level which help foster stronger communicative linkages within the system of multi-level governance. The federal model considers the prospect of a Pan-European public sphere more likely but this outcome hinges on both institutional (e.g. the increased parliamentarization of the EU political system) and non-institutional factors (i.e. external pressure from 'general publics', see Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007, for details). The federal model is considered the most advanced form of EPS (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007).

Statham (2010) identifies four types of Europeanised public politics which are distinguished according to the level of visibility and contestation of EU politics, and extent of inclusion of European publics'. In order of the least to most Europeanised, Statham identified the following four categories: executive bargaining, corporatist interest group politics, elite-dominated public politics, and inclusive public politics (Statham, 2010: 278). The former depicts a public sphere that is dominated by state, executive and party elites, with little media attention to EU-level policies, issues, and actors. According to the same, the 'permissive consensus' period best fits the executive bargaining category as integration proceeded according to an elitist, top-down, rather closed, and functional logic (2010:279). The corporatist interest group politics model depicts a public sphere in which civil society actors are prominent (i.e. interest groups / lobbyists) in EU policy-making but receive scant media attention. According to the same scholar, this type of European politics is deficient from a democratic perspective because civil society actors depend crucially on media publicity to shape policy change (Statham, 2010: 282). The elite-dominated public politics model depicts a scenario wherein EU politics receives plenty of media attention, however, publicity is dominated by elite actors (e.g. executive, technocrats, political party leaders) at the expense of civil society actors. According to the Statham, the EPS, in its current form, can be placed in this category (2010: 283). Lastly, the inclusive public politics model represents the ideal-type public sphere. This model envisages a public sphere in which civil society actors are sufficiently represented in public debates on European politics (2010: 278).

According to Brüggemann et al. (2006), there are four dimensions of Europeanisation; the first two dimensions, namely, 'monitoring governance' (i.e. visibility of EU politics and EU institutions) and 'mutual observation' (i.e. attention to other European countries) are empirical, necessary conditions of an EPS 'lite' to quote Statham (2010:183). The other two dimensions, namely, 'discursive exchange'

(i.e. communicative inputs by foreign actors in national spheres) and ‘collective identification’ represent the most normatively demanding requirements of Europeanised communication (Brüggemann et al., 2006:8). Other scholars such as Trenz (2007) and Koopmans (2010) examine actor constellations to evaluate the extent of Europeanisation. The prevalence of domestic actor constellations when discussing EU matters is indicative of weak forms of Europeanisation and the prevalence of both national, European, and supranational-EU actors, and European actors is indicative of higher forms of Europeanisation. To explore the concept of the EPS in more detail, a natural starting point is to lay out the concept’s ideal-type criteria which “serve the investigator as a measuring rod to ascertain similarities as well as deviations in concrete cases” (Cosser, 1977:223). In this way, we can assess to what extent the phenomenon in question exists.

Visibility

At a bare minimum, European/EU actors, issues and topics should be clearly visible within national public spheres (Statham, 2010; Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010; Risse, 2010; 2014; de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016). To quote Brantner et al., “increasing European political integration should be accompanied by an increase of media attention for European politics” (Brantner, Dietrich, & Saurwein, 2005:7). The scholar, Nitoiu hit’s the proverbial nail on the head: “the minimal requirement for the presence of Europeanisation is that the public already is or becomes aware of the European dimension of the discourses created and circulated within national public spheres” (Koopmans & Statham (Nitoiu, 2013:33). ‘Awareness’ of an issue or actor naturally depends on publicity which is typically supplied by the output generated in the mass media. The visibility criterion includes both actors (see Koopmans) and issues (Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014). However, for these scholars, visibility at the EU level (i.e. vertical Europeanisation / mutual observance) is not sufficient in its own. European political communication should also consist of direct (or indirect) references to the national affairs in other European countries (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation, see Koopmans & Statham, 2010:37-38). According to Boomgarden, analysing the visibility of political actors is an instructive proxy for measuring the degree of Europeanness of the news (Boomgarden et al., 2013; see also Pfetsch, Adam & Eschner, 2010). For Grill, the visibility of EU actors and policy fields in national debates is indicative of an EPS (Grill et al., 2017:571). Similarly, according to Schuck and de Vreese, the prominence of EU actors and issues in news coverage, among other things, is indicative of Europeanisation (Boomgarden et al. 2013: 611). The formulation of the EPS can be achieved through the “increased presence of European issues and actors in the national news media” (Kandyla & De Vreese, 2011:54). As the name suggests, the EPS fulfils a publicity function; in the words of Trenz, the mass media should “focus public attention and generate visibility through the vast availability of information (quantitative) and

quality of information” (Trenz & Michailidou, 2014:481). The intensification in reporting European affairs within national public spheres is indicative of Europeanisation (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006). According to de Vreese, “an (increased) proportion of coverage of European themes and actors” is indicative of an EPS (de Vreese, 2007a:10, see also Gerhards, 2000:293). Koopmans and Statham also concur that an “increased presence of European actors and themes in national media would be an important criterion for the Europeanization of public spheres” (Koopmans et al., 2010:36). The visibility criterion fulfils a democratic function, enabling “wider public scrutiny and deliberation, thereby conferring accountability, responsiveness, and legitimacy on the political process” (Statham, 2007:111). Other scholars opt for terms to describe different kinds of visibility namely: ‘monitoring governance’ and ‘mutual observation’ (Brüggemann, Sifft, et al., 2006). The former refers to the “growing attention of public discourse to European institutions and policies” and the latter covers “the extent to which the scope of public discourse enlarges ‘horizontally’ into a wider (European) public space. It depicts to what degree public debates observe and pay attention to political developments in other European countries” (Brüggemann, Sifft, et al., 2006:5). For Kleinen-von Königslöw, one of the EPS’s main functions is “to create transparency for its members about all political matters of relevance to them” (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010:47). ‘Transparency’ depends on EU actors, themes and issues being visible in the public sphere. Scherer and Vesper (2004) argue that ‘mutual observation’ is decisive to the EPS; national public spheres should, “allow for the observation of other national public spheres, and by doing so, communicate which questions are being discussed in other countries of the European Union” (Scherer & Vesper, 2004:199, cited in Bärenreuter et al., 2009:18). Statham and Koopmans rightly remind us that the visibility of EU decision-making processes hinges largely on the output of mass-mediated communication (Statham, 2010; Statham & Koopmans, 2013). In regard to operationalisation of this dimension, most scholars record the frequency of references to EU institutions, actors, topics or policies (e.g. Peters, Sifft, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Königslöw) relative to the number of national/extra-European news. Concerning operationalisation, most scholars adopt quantitative content analysis methods such as actor-issue word frequencies within news content (see Bärenreuter, Brüll, Mokre, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019, for a useful summary). Scholars tend to opt for longitudinal research designs in order to examine the degree of European actor visibility and issue salience over time. For convenience purposes, most scholars extract data from newspaper articles as data is easily obtainable and word frequencies are easier to measure in newspaper articles compared to audio-visual content.

The "Eder-Kantner" criteria

At the turn of the millennium, two noteworthy public sphere scholars named Eder and Kantner raised the normative benchmark for what constitutes an EPS. European actors and content should not only be visible but should be temporally and thematically synchronous within national public spheres. According to the same, "there is a European debate when the same issues are discussed at the same time using the same criteria of relevance" (cited in Steeg et al., 2010:7). In a similar vein, Van de Steeg argues that some kind of common pattern or similarity in debating European issues is indicative of an EPS (Van de Steeg, 2006:612). Put another way, "a European public sphere in such a transnational sense emerges to the extent to which debates in the EU member states become interdiscursive" (Conrad, 2010:221). Neidhardt argues that the synchronicity of issues would provide the right context for Europeans to debate with one another beyond national boundaries (2006:52). Similarly, Risse's approach (2010) "focuses on the spatial, temporal, and semantic simultaneity of political debates" (Bourne, 2017, para.13³). De Swaan conceives of the public sphere as a network wherein the same issues are discussed at the same time with converging frames and themes of reference (De Swaan, 2007). Kriesi and Grande subscribe to the "parallelization of national public debates" view, that is, different national publics debating the same issues, at the same time, and in largely similar ways (Kriesi & Grande, 2014b). The first of the Eder-Kantner criteria, namely, thematic and temporal synchronicity, is universally accepted as the baseline requirement for the emergence of the EPS. Most scholars adopt a mixed diachronic and quantitative content analysis approach to trace the intensity of European issues over time. However, there is less agreement on how to approach the third criterion, namely 'same criteria of relevance' (Bee & Bozzini, 2010). To compound matters, scholars opt for a panoply of terms such as 'similar meaning structures' (Van de Steeg & Risse, 2003); 'similar/common frames of reference' (Lindner, Korthagen, & Aichholzer, 2018; Risse, 2014); 'shared European perspective' (found in Schlesinger, 2007:81; cf. van de Steeg 2002) and 'similar aspects of relevance' (Eriksen, 2007:43). In regard to operationalisation of the third requirement, most scholars adopt qualitative methodologies such as framing and qualitative content analysis.

Same issues

Most scholars agree that thematic convergence issues' (what Medrano, 2003, refers to as 'thematische Synchronizität') is a sine qua non for Europeanisation. Most scholars insist that the EPS should contain the 'same, that is, national public spheres' should invoke similar topics when European matters are

³ I was not able to trace the page number online. I, thus, identified the paragraph number in the Chapter titled "Social Movements and the Transnational Transformation of Public Spheres" (Bourne, 2018).

discussed. Similarly, Kantner argues that the ‘same themes’ should be elicited when debating Europe (Kantner, 2002). The logic behind this criterion is that invoking similar topics should provide a propitious environment for transnational debates to flourish.

This rule of thumb is based on the consideration that where two strangers become engaged in a conversation, they end up talking about the same topics and covering the same arguments. If this situation is extrapolated to a media debate, it can be inferred that when similar topics and arguments are being put forward in several forums (i.e., newspapers), there is likely to be a shared debate (Van de Steeg, 2006:611).

Similarly, Segestan et al. argues that “topic convergence across national media underpins the development of a public space for shared political discussion” (Segestan et al., 2019:1053). Machill states that “protagonists in different EU states should participate in debates on the same topics” (Machill, Beiler & Fischer, 2006:63). In the words of Nitoiu, “the convergence of national media discourse on various European topics seems to have become sufficient evidence for the need to theorise and develop the EPS” (Nitoiu, 2013:28). The same issues is probably an overambitious yardstick for Europeanisation as national public spheres cannot be expected to choose exactly the same topics when discussing European matters. For example, even within national public spheres, local publics are unlikely to invoke the same topics when discussing nationwide matters. Instead, Van de Steeg is right to argue that ‘similarity of content’ is a sine qua non but not sufficient condition for the EPS (Van de Steeg, 2006). Hafez argues that ‘thematische Synchronizität’ is also emblematic of increasingly globalised communication networks: He adds that “the notion of a world linked globally through the media assumes that different media systems increasingly deal with the same topics” (Hafez, 2012:188). Concerning its operationalisation, scholars typically adopt a deductive approach, developing a list of possible issues and coding newspaper content thereafter.

Same time

However, European actor-issue visibility and similarity of issues are necessary but not sufficient conditions. For public spheres to converge, they must display signs of temporal synchronicity. As Van Cauwenberge et al. argues, similar issues should be discussed at the ‘same time’ to qualify as an EPS (Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009). For Knorr, observing ‘attention cycles’ in the national mass media on European issues is indicative of an EPS (Knorr, 2007). The ‘temporal synchronisation’ of national debates particular events or conflicts provides “evidence that national public spheres are somewhat open towards each other” (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:446). Implicit to Grundmann’s conception of the EPS is that there is a palpable ‘synchronisation of public attention’ across EU member

states. According to the same, the synchronisation of national cycles of attention is a precondition for their homogenisation (2000). In a similar vein, Seifert argues that an EPS must exhibit ‘synchronous temporal coverage’ on EU issues in national public spheres (Seifert, 2006; cited in Kantner & Renfordt, 2007:14). In regard to operationalisation, scholars typically use line charts to trace the peaks and troughs of European issue cycles over time to evaluate the extent of ‘temporal synchronicity’ (e.g. Risse, 2010).

Similarity in framing

The third requirement, the ‘same criteria of relevance’ (Bee & Bozzini, 2010) appears to provoke more disagreement among scholars. The term can be regarded as both ambiguous and vague as the meaning-to-word relation is tenuous and the terms connotation is imprecise (Sartori, 1970). If the connotation of a term should ‘seize the object’, that is, refer to a phenomenon in the world, the term, ‘same criteria of relevance’ fails emphatically in this regard as it could apply to a myriad of situations and contexts unrelated to political communication or public spheres. As a result, the term’s meaning-to-referent relation is deficient as it lacks a clear referent⁴ (Sartori, 1970). Furthermore, public sphere scholars can justifiably be accused of contravening the ‘anti-waste rule’ (Sartori, 1970). Numerous scholars have employed a myriad of terms to encapsulate the same thing more or less. Some scholars opt for ‘similar meaning structures’ (Medrano, 2003; Duchesne & von Ingelgom, 2008; Eder et al., 2000, Risse, 2002; de Vreese, 2003); others prefer ‘common frames of reference’ (van de Steeg, 2002; Lindner, Korthagen, & Aichholzer, 2018; Risse, 2014); ‘shared European perspective’ (found in Schlesinger, 2007:81; cf. van de Steeg 2002); ‘converging interpretations’ (Knorr, 2007; or ‘similar aspects of relevance’ (Kantner, 2014; Eriksen, 2007). As Sartori rightly points out, the similarity of meaning is not reducible to sameness of meaning and ‘different things should have different names’ (Ibid.).

‘Thematic convergence’ (see above) should not be conflated with ‘similarity of framing’. The former is a lower threshold of Europeanised communication whereas framing convergence is a more normatively demanding kind. In the words of Nitoiu, “stronger forms of Europeanisation would imply that patterns of interpretation and structures of meaning are employed across national public debates” (Nitoiu, 2014:117). Topic synchronicity is necessary but not sufficient to foster debate and is likely to yield a situation in which people speak across rather than to each other. For example, the ‘meta-topic’ of EU integration can be discussed from a myriad of perspectives. Many scholars have, therefore, insisted on convergence in terms of framing. In the words of Nitoiu, “the spread of the same European issues and through different national public spheres has been considered to be evidence of the existence of such a European public sphere” (Nitoiu, 2013:33). So too do Kandyla and de Vreese insist on “the

⁴ Sartori defines the referent as “whatever is out there before or beyond mental and linguistic apprehension” (1984:24).

evaluation of [European news] from a European rather than national perspective” (Kandyla & De Vreese, 2011:54). Similarly, Kleinen-von Königslöw insists on the “evaluation of [EU] subjects, actors and issues from a broader perspective, one that exceeds the national borders and interests” (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:459). According to Segesten et al., issues should be discussed in a similar fashion across national public spheres (2019). That is to say that Europeanisation concerns both content and context, that is, national public spheres should invoke similar topics when discussing European matters, and topics should be discussed from a ‘similar perspective’. For Machill et al., “protagonists in different EU states [should]...agree with regard to the delineation of the problem” (Machill et al., 2006: 63). In other words, there should be congruence in regard to the framing of an issue. Convergence on how EU topics are framed in the mass media is emblematic of European political communication. By the same token, the predominance of national meaning structures is emblematic of a nationalised public sphere (Latzer & Saurwein 2006:16). According to Trenz, ‘mutual observance/awareness’ of fellow Europeans is an important but not sufficient condition for an EPS, for shared meaning structures of European issues are also needed to qualify as Europeanisation. For Van Cauwenberge et al., 2009, similar framing to a common issue is indicative of an EPS. Risse argues that Europeanisation entails not only topic convergence but the condition that European issues are discussed in a ‘similar manner’ across national contexts, providing enabling conditions for cross-border dialogue (Risse, 2014). Bourne (2017) does a stellar job of summarising Risse’s position, adding that:

...Speakers in different states [should] employ the same criteria of relevance, that is, whether similar frames of reference, meaning structures, or patterns of interpretation are used across national public spheres and the media. It does not necessarily involve a shared European perspective, but an awareness of the different frames under which it is possible to discuss a political issue, or common interpretations of a problem that include controversial opinions on a particular question” (Bourne, 2017: para.13⁵, Risse, 2010:119)

In short, debate is only possible if speakers adopt common frames of interpretation. Otherwise, as Risse warns, communication is impossible. Put another way, mutual observation (a la Luhmann, 1971) alone, is not sufficient to constitute an EPS as it simply demands that public spheres’ “take notice of each other” (Risse, 2010:117). Instead, national public spheres’ must demonstrate evidence of mutual understanding (a la Habermas; Lauristin, 2007) which presupposes shared norms, values, objectives, expectations and assumptions (Karimi, 2018:36). In the words of Nitoiu, “communicative processes entail...the creation of social, political and cultural meaning structures. Transnational communication gives way to the production of discourses and meanings which evade the constraints imposed by centres of power located within nation states” (2014:121). For Machill et al., an EPS entails “protagonists

⁵ I was not able to trace the page number online. I, thus, identified the paragraph number in the Chapter titled “Social Movements and the Transnational Transformation of Public Spheres” (Bourne, 2018). This quote can be found on the Google Books search engine.

debat[ing] uniform aims and the same means from the perspective of the entire EU area” (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006:64). Several scholars focused their attention on similarities or dissimilarities in terms of frames of reference (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000; Trenz, 2004). Similarly, Conrad posits that European issues should be framed as a ‘shared concern’, that is, a given issue should be framed as more than merely a national concern (2006). Likewise, Bossetta et al. insist that topics should be of a ‘European scope’ (Bossetta et al., 2019). For Downey and Koenig, ‘similar structures of meaning’ demands that public spheres’ adopt ‘European frames’ when debating European issues. Pfetsch et al. employ the term, ‘similar political interpretations’ which refers to the extent to which transnational conflict lines have emerged (Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010:153; Voltmer, 1998). For Peters et al. (2005), the ‘Europeanisation of contents’ entails not only what is discussed, and to what extent, but the manner in which it is discussed. The guiding watchword for these scholars is the ‘discursive convergence’ of public debates which refers to “the growing similarity of discourse constellations in different countries, [namely] the ways in which issues are framed by the various parties that are involved in public debates, as well as the constellation of parties or the patterns of cleavages over certain issues” (Peters, Sifft et al., 2005:143-144). For Bennett et al. (2014), ‘common European frames’ must be discernible in public debates (see also Gerhards, 2000). Gerhards (1993b), one of the forebearers of the EPS concept, insisted on the requirement that discussions on EU governance should be evaluated from a European perspective (Walter, 2016:86). In the words of Gerhards, “only when there are reports about Europe and only when these reports are written from a perspective which transcends national perspectives, could a Europe of citizens emerge” (Gerhards, 1993:99, translation by Risse, 2010:112). More recently, Gerhards reaffirms the stance that debates must be evaluated from a European rather than national perspective (Gerhards & Hans, 2014). Peters et al. (2005) elaborate on what a ‘European perspective’ should entail:

A ‘European perspective’ in public discourse should not be confused with a positive attitude towards the EU as an institutional framework or a political project’. Nor does it necessarily mean an orientation to a European ‘common good’ or common interest. The existence of a European orientation only means that the EU is taken as the relevant frame of reference, that political controversies are seen as controversies within the membership of the EU, where legitimate demands of other EU members have to be taken into account. (Peters, Sifft, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Konigslow, 2005:148)

However, several scholars criticise the ‘Gerhardian’ criterion for being overly restrictive (Koopmans & Statham, 2010; Eder, Kantner & Trenz, 2000). Koopmans et al. rightly points out that insisting on an orientation towards a ‘European common good’ logically implies that we should exclude the existence of a ‘national public sphere’ as the latter consists of heterogenous interests and competing ideologies. The ‘national interest’ is arguably as much of an empty signifier as the ‘European common good’.

According to Eder et al. (2000) the yardstick is elusively high due to the complex nature of multi-level politics in which many competences are still not Europeanised legally speaking. Risse provides the most comprehensive definition of the ‘similar criteria of relevance’ criterion:

...similar criteria of relevance’ do not mean that we agree on an issue. But we have to agree on what the problem actually is: we need to ‘know’ what we are talking about. We can disagree on whether the attack on Iraq is consistent with international law or not. But ‘same criteria of relevance’ requires that we do agree that compliance with international law is significant in debating questions of war and peace. If we do not agree about international law as a frame of reference to discuss the war against Iraq, we cannot meaningfully communicate the issue (Risse 2003:6-7, cited in Bärenreuter et al., 2009:15)

Transnational communication

As several scholars aptly point out (notably Trenz, 2004, and Koopmans, 2010), the Eder-Kantner criteria is not sufficient on its own. For example, a policy of European origin (e.g. the European Stability Mechanism) can be discussed in relation to similar topics (e.g. the debate about national budgetary contributions) at the same time, employing similar frames of reference (e.g. economic frames: the fiscally austere (i.e. ‘ordoliberal’) stance vis-à-vis ‘Keynesian’ fiscal stimulus position). However, it would be an overstatement to regard this as indicative of transnational communication. Several scholars, myself included, question whether the ‘parallelisation of national public debates’ is emblematic of genuinely Europeanised communication as debating the same issues at the same time across multiple public spheres’ can still manifest without communicative flows ever transcending, national boundaries (Kermer et al., 2020). As several scholars argue, ‘parallelisation’ can still pertain without the public spheres’ ‘overlapping’ or ‘interacting’ with one another (Wessler et al., 2008; Nitoiu, 2013). Koopmans et al., and Pfetsch aptly point out that the ‘Eder-Kantner’ criteria lack the dimension of transborder communicative flows linking speakers across different spherical levels (Pfetsch, 2004; Koopmans & Statham, 2010). D’Haenens makes a similar point, arguing that the increasing synchronisation of national debates on particular events does not necessarily imply the increasing ‘mutual observation’ and ‘discursive exchange’ among European nations (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:446). It merely suggests that public spheres are ‘somewhat open towards each other’ (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:446) which might facilitate ‘mutual understanding’ (Trenz, 2004). As the latter pithily puts it, the Eder-Kantner criteria measures the ‘connectability’ of public spheres rather than their actual ‘connectivity’ (Trenz, 2004:292, cited in Brüggemann et al., 2006:6). Similarly, Conrad regards the Eder-Kantner criteria as normatively unsatisfactory as it countenances Europeanisation

despite no transborder flows of communication taking place (Conrad, 2006)⁶. The synchronisation of debates sets the transnational wheels in motion, creating a propitious environment for transnational debate to flourish, however, crucially, it does not guarantee it. This has led several scholars to insist on the requirement of ‘discursive interchange’ (Adam, 2012) or “increasing ‘mutual interconnections’ between national public spheres” (cited in Brantner, Dietrich & Saurwein, 2005:8; Kermer et al., 2020).

With these shortcomings in mind, several scholars argue that an EPS must contain ‘transnational communicative exchanges’ (Koopmans, 2004; 2010). Koopmans insists on the ‘overlapping’ of public spheres rather than mere ‘parallelisation’. Mutual observance (i.e. the visibility of actors/issues beyond national boundaries) does not necessarily countenance mutual interaction. More specifically, Koopmans and Erbe (2003) focus on the ‘density’ and ‘intensity’ of communicative exchange(s) between the national and European level. The latter includes both ‘vertical Europeanisation’, that is, communicative linkages between national and EU actors, and ‘horizontal Europeanisation’, namely, “communicative linkages between different member states” (Koopmans/Erbe 2003:7). The rationale behind horizontal Europeanisation is that “in an intergovernmental polity, the other member states can no longer be treated as foreign countries whose internal politics are not really relevant for one’s own country” (Koopmans & Erbe, 2004:101). Koopmans et al. develop a model of intra- and inter-sphere communication to analyse the communicative linkages between different levels (Koopmans and Statham, 2010). Although visibility (see above) overlaps with the criterion of ‘transnational communication’, the former does not necessarily imply that transnational communication has taken place. For Koopmans et al., the national and European level must be intertwined via communicative exchanges. The extent of Europeanisation – what Koopmans calls the ‘spatial reach’ and ‘boundaries of public communication’ – “can be determined by investigating patterns of communicative flows and assessing the relative density of public communication within and between different political spaces”⁷ (Koopmans & Pfetsch, 2003:13). According to Koopmans, “the degree to which public spheres can be deemed ‘national’, ‘transnational’, or ‘European’ depends on the density of communicative linkages within and between these spaces” (Koopmans & Pfetsch, 2003:11-12). Nitoiu (2014) understands the EPS in a similar vein:

The concept of Europeanisation captures the extent to which European discourse has extended from the supranational arena to the national public spheres in member states and beyond them.

To be clearer, it traces and assesses the way in which European issues are discussed within

⁶ For example, it would be an overstatement to suggest that the American and British media share the same communicative space purely based on the fact that they are concurrently debating among themselves about the threat of an invasion by Russia into Ukraine. The crucial missing ingredient is the *trans*-border element to communication. However the fact that British and American newspapers are debating the same issues around the same time increases the prospect that British and American journalists debate with one another or invite columnists from each other’s respective countries.

⁷ As Koopmans et al. (2010) openly admits, his understanding of Europeanisation takes inspiration from the Karl Deutsch’s seminal work on nationalism and social communication (Deutsch, 1966). Deutsch developed the theory that national consciousness (and general feelings of belonging to a community) emerges through tightly bounded patterns of social interaction: “Peoples are held together ‘from within’ by this communicative efficiency, the complementarity of the communicative facilities acquired by their members” (Deutsch, 1966:98). To put it differently, Deutsch underlines the importance of reciprocity and density of communicative flows to a ‘community of communication’.

national public spheres, and through transnational communication flows come to travel from one domestic public debate to another". (Nitoiu, 2014:117)

For Koopmans, political claims directed across national borders (e.g., the Greek trade unions protesting Chancellor Merkel's austerity policies) are demonstrative evidence of a EPS. Similarly, more recently, Hänska and Bauchowitz (2019) conceive of the EPS as a transnational communicative network consisting of 'dense' communicative links across borders. Trenz also underlines the transnational character of communication as the extent which there is 'connectivity of communication' or 'degree of reciprocal resonance' in the public sphere (Trenz, 2004:294-5). Unsurprisingly, Pfetsch, who co-authored an important publication with Koopmans, underlines the importance of 'communicative linkages across and beyond national public spheres' to the EPS (Pfetsch, 2004:4). Similarly, Machill et al. insist on communicative linkages beyond national borders in addition to the 'Eder-Kantner' criteria outlined above. Likewise, according to Risse, "a European public sphere emerges out of the interconnectedness of and mutual exchanges between various national public spheres" (Risse, 2003:1). For Tobler, to qualify as Europeanisation, 'communicative exchange(s)' between different national spheres ('Geltungsräume') should be detected. According to the same, the "same news input into different media arenas by speakers", 'same news input into different media arenas via news agencies', and 'inter-media cooperation'" are emblematic of transnational communicative exchanges (Koopmans & Erbe 2003:5-8, cited in Barenreuter et al., 2009:18). Brüggemann et al. employ two terms to underline the importance of transnationality for understanding the EPS, namely: (1) discursive interchanges, and (2) discursive transnationalization. The former denotes arguments and opinions from other European countries that are incorporated into domestic debates (Brüggemann et al., 2006:6) and is a less normatively demanding form of Europeanisation, merely requiring the inclusion of direct or indirect quotations from foreign actors in domestic discourse. The latter, instead, refers to genuine transnational debates between actors from different countries. Both these terms aim to measure "to what degree public spheres are open and permeable for opinions, ideas, and contributions from other spheres. At its core is the 'osmotic diffusion' of ideas and opinions across national borders" (cited in Brüggemann, 2006:10). For Wimmel (2004), the normative bar is set even higher as only 'transnational discursive references' may be deemed as an example of transnational communication. In other words, transnational communication must exhibit evidence of genuine deliberation and reciprocity between actors' beyond national borders. Or to paraphrase Wimmel, a political claim by a domestic/transnational actor must be responded to by a domestic/transnational actors in an "approving, rejecting or assessing way" (Wimmel 2004:49). Other scholars (particularly Sifft et al., 2007; Peters et al., 2005) distinguish between 'monitoring governance' (i.e. visibility) and 'discursive integration'. The former can be understood as a weak form of Europeanisation which depends solely on the visibility of EU actors and issues in national public

debates. By contrast, the latter is a ‘thicker’ kind of Europeanisation “characterised by intensified discursive interaction among EU Member States” (Sifft et al., 2007:130).

The scholar, Conrad, introduces another indicator which implicitly touches upon the dimension of transnational communication, namely: the permeability of national public spheres’ boundaries for foreign speakers. ‘Permeability’ refers to the extent to “which non-nationals are given – and make use of – the opportunity to get involved in an ongoing debate in a particular country” (Conrad, 2006:5). This indicator overlaps with Risse’s emphasis on the importance of “speakers and listeners recogniz[ing] each other as legitimate participants in a common discourse...”⁸ (Risse & Van de Steeg, 2003:21). Likewise, Van de Steeg (2006) argues that public communication should not only be synchronous but involve actual transnational communication exchanges across borders. Similarly, Peters et al. (2005) insist on cross-border communication exchanges, however, the benchmark is higher as only opinions and ideas (i.e. diskurs) are regarded as cross-border communication, and mere news and information does not qualify⁹. Similarly, Brantner et al. (2005) argue that media attention (i.e. visibility) must be accompanied by ‘increasing mutual interconnections between national public spheres. Concerning operationalisation, most scholars employ the method of Political Claims Analysis or Social Network Analysis (see below).

Contestation

Europeans will surely not agree themselves on the choices they make. This is, after all, the essence of democracy. But they need to become more aware of those issues and the choices they imply. They need a European public space in which to debate what they want to do together and how (Tsoukalis, 2003:222, cited in Statham, 2010:4).

As Tsoukalis emphasises, the visibility of issues implies certain choices, but Europeanisation does not mean that choices have to converge on some kind of ‘European common good’. Most scholars understand contestation as both a cause (e.g., Koopmans/Statham 2010) and indication (Statham and Trenz 2012; 2015) of a well-functioning public sphere (see also Wendler 2012; de Wilde & Zürn 2012). In other words, the increasingly polemical nature of European integration, what Hooghe (2009) labels as the ‘constraining dissensus’, should not be interpreted as a breakdown of the public sphere, but rather an indication of the increasingly Europeanised nature of politics. Thus, some scholars perceive the

⁸ As Conrad rightly argues, the “recognition of such speakers as legitimate participants in a discourse as a matter of principle is one thing; another thing is the actual empirical observation of contributions by non-national speakers” (Conrad, 2006:5-6).

⁹ Peters et al. (2005) adopts a public discourse approach. The latter is a particular subset of public communication: “*Discourse*...occurs if opinion statements are supported by some kind argumentative backing, or by some presentation of evidence” (Peters et al., 2005:140-141). Therefore, mere news and information does not qualify as an act of public discourse in the EPS.

increasingly politicised nature of EU integration to be a positive development as it shows there is desire to publicly address problems and issues on a European level (Risse, 2014; de Wilde & Zürn 2012). However, as Risse (2014) rightly adds, Europeanisation and politicisation are orthogonal to one another, that is, statistically independent, and one can exist without the other, and vice versa. Crucially, there are other variables at play which may foster, or not, the process of Europeanisation. For scholars such as Risse (2014), Hutter, and Grande (2012), framing, that is, how EU politics is represented in public debates, is the crucial scope condition which determines whether politicisation enables, or not, a European ‘community of communication’.

The public sphere is overtly political despite its cultural, literary origins, and politics is inherently polemical and conflict-ridden (Schattschneider, 1960; Sartori, 1987; Lupia, McCubbins, & Popkin, 2000). As several scholars (e.g. Sartori, 1987) argue, conflict is integral to democratic decision-making: “Conflict, competition, organization, leadership and responsibility are the ingredients of a working definition of democracy” (Schattschneider, 1960:135). Although Lindberg (1971) did not explicitly mention the public sphere in his work, he understood that European discourse should be characterised by critique and debate rather than consensus (de la Porte, 2016). According to Kantner, “‘similar criteria of relevance’ do[es] not mean that we have to agree on an issue” (found in Risse & Van de Steeg, 2003:17). As the same author pithily puts it, the EPS, “is not to be mistaken for a ‘harmonious gospel choir’. On the contrary! It depends on and is marked by conflict, dissent, and verbal battles – as in any pluralistic public sphere” (Kantner, 2014:107). Indeed, Follesdal (2014) argues that contestation is desirable from a normative democratic standpoint as it can invigorate debate and political participation (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006:420), thereby fulfilling an accountability (Follesdal, 2014) and legitimacy function (what Scharpf, 2003, refers to as ‘input legitimacy’). Statham is particularly vociferous in insisting on contestation over Europe, which he sees as a by-product of the increasing visibility of European matters in national public spheres, which in turn fosters demands for citizens’ inclusion in public debates (Statham, 2010). This triadic dynamic – namely, visibility, inclusion, and contestation – is understood by many scholars to galvanise the EPS. The increasing visibility of European actors and issues and inclusion of nonstate/non-executive voices is likely to be met by increasing contestation, which fulfils the democratization function of increasing accountability (i.e. processes of justification and deliberation over decision-making). According to de la Porte, cross-national debate and criticism about European policy issues is indicative of a flourishing EPS (de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016). Sicakkan (2013) conceptualises the EPS as a “conflictive space where the vertical, pro-European, elite dominated trans-European public sphere come[s] into a relationship of conflict and contestation with existing national and regional public spaces” (Sicakkan 2013:2, cited in Lindner et al., 2016:36-37). Risse (2003) maintains the view that we should not expect European public opinion to coalesce around a common European standpoint:

There is no reason why we should expect agreement or consensus on an issue in a common

public sphere. Agreement about European policies across boundaries, ideological, and other cleavages cannot serve as an indicator for the existence or non-existence of a European public sphere (Risse et al., 2003:5).

As Trenz argues, public opinion is not static but is in a constant state of flux: “New arguments are brought in all the time and actors might shift between different justificatory logics and change their opinions on an existing situation or a political issue” (Trenz & Michailidou, 2014:482). Several scholars observed conflict/cleavage dynamics in public debates as proxies for gaging the extent to which contestation is transnationalised (Riekmann & Wydra, 2013; Kriesi & Grande, 2012). For instance, Riekmann et al. (2013) examine whether pan-European conflict lines can be discerned. Similarly, Bennett et al. (2014) look for evidence of transnational political conflicts on European issues. However, scholars such as Berkel (2006) are right to qualify this dimension of Europeanisation; crucially, not all political conflicts should be understood as compatible with the EPS. Instead, conflicts should be ‘constructive’, that is, opposing positions should lead to what he calls ‘validation’. The latter requires adopting “the perspective of the political adversary and to understand the respective other position” (Barenreuter et al., 2009:19). Although the latter is rather vague, the author is right to underline that fact that political conflicts may be deleterious to the congealment of the EPS. In the words of Barenreuter et al., “the destructive effects of conflicts are their potential to harden boundaries, thereby excluding the opinions, interests and goals of the excluded group” (Barenreuter et al., 2009:19-20). Put another way, conflict raises the possibility that speakers and listeners do not recognise each other as legitimate participants (or ‘equal partners’) in public debate (see Risse, 2003:7). Gerhards (1993) criticises the lack of institutional features to further public debate on a European level, in particular, a clear-cut confrontation between governing and oppositional political camps (Peters et al. 2005:153). Similarly, for the likes of Habermas, the lack of institutional pan-European fora with which to debate European politics is regarded as inimical to the development of an EPS (Habermas, 2015). In regard to operationalisation, most scholars gage contestation by measuring the level of polarisation on a given European issue.

European identity

As with contestation, European identity is also understood to be both a cause and consequence of Europeanised debates. However, some scholars take a more nuanced position, as it is not always clear whether identity is antecedent to, or follows from, discourse. Indeed, scholars such as Wodak (2009), Zappettini (2017) and Risse (2014) understand identity as performative, that is, identities are enacted in and through discursive acts. In other words, identities ‘come alive’, and are constantly re-produced and

re-negotiated via public discourse. For these scholars, identity is not constative, that is, it does not contain any essential features, and nor it is fixed. Identity does not determine the kind of discourses that emerge, but rather, it is discourse that constructs and reifies one's identity (Eder, 2009; Conrad, 2010). By contrast, communitarian scholars maintain that a pre-existing 'culturally thick' European identity is necessary for the emergence of a genuine EPS. Thus, a European public sphere cannot exist without a pre-existing European sense of belonging.

There is a rich body of scholarship that underlines the mutually constitutive nature of national identity and the public sphere. Similar to contestation, scholars treat European identity as either an independent or dependent variable. More specifically, one can identify three main positions on the relationship between European identity and the public sphere: (1) the communitarian stance – understands European identity to be a necessary pre-requisite to the development of an EPS (i.e. identity as the independent variable); (2) the constructivist stance – understands identity as an inevitable by-product (dependant variable) of Europeanised discourse¹⁰ (à la Habermas); (3) and the performative stance – understands identity as neither a cause nor consequence of the public sphere, but performative, that is, emerging through the act of discourse itself (à la Risse and Derrida). Scholars such as Derrida emphasise the enacting quality of discourse (Derrida, 1988). Delanty posits that identity in general and European identity in particular is sustained by 'dialogic identity' (Delanty, 2005, cited in Kermer & Nijmeijer, 2020). More specifically, the same scholar argues that the notion of Europe is a "socio-cognitive form...consisting of repertoires of evaluation, discursive practices...characterized in terms of dialogic rationality" (Delanty & Rumford, 2005:50). By contrast, communitarian scholars (the first category) argue that evidence of a 'thick' European identity¹¹ must be discerned in public discourse to qualify as an EPS. Risse can be placed somewhere between the first and third category. He argues, on the one hand, that communities of communication "emerge through social and discursive practices" and "European identity emerges in the course of the debate itself" (Risse et al., 2003:8-20). On the other hand, he claims that an EPS "implies a community of communication and some degree of collective identification of the speakers with each other" (Risse et al., 2003:21). Regarding the latter, Risse argues that foreign speakers should be acknowledged as legitimate participants in the same public sphere:

Accepting other fellow Europeans as legitimate speakers in a common public sphere implies that the "we" in whose name actors speak and to whom they relate, extends beyond national boundaries. Thus, a certain degree of collective identification with Europe is necessary to treat

¹⁰ The prevailing view is that European identity emerges via Europeanised communication (Hennen *et al.*, 2020; van Os, 2005; Wodak, 2007). Eder (2009) argues that European identity emerges through the sharing of European narratives. Even Haas, as far back as 1958, envisaged the "shifting of loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre" (*viz.* European identity) through socialisation processes wherein economic and political interests would converge (Haas, 1958: 16). Other scholars underline the importance of 'mediatized discourse' for the congealment of European identity (Olausson, 2010; Scalise, 2013; Triga & Vadratsikas, 2018; Valentini, 2006). For the record, this footnote is an excerpt from a co-authored paper by me and my colleague, Rolf Nijmeijer (Kermer & Nijmeijer, 2020:30). I, however, exclusively wrote this section of the paper.

¹¹ In contrast to 'identity light' which means "some minimum sense of belonging to the same community" (Risse *et al.*, 2003:19), the term, 'thick' denotes a stronger sense of belonging.

fellow Europeans from other countries as legitimate voices in one's own national public sphere. (Risse et al., 2003:19)

In short, a 'community of communication' implies some degree of identification, what Risse would label as an 'identity light', with other Europeans (Risse et al., 2003; found in Conrad, 2014:63). For Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010), one of the main functions of the EPS is "to form a cohesive political community with a sense of collective identity" (2010:47). Similar to Risse, Kleinen-von Königslöw claims that "this 'community of communication' can also be directly expressed and reinforced in public discourse as a sense of collective European identity, an expression of a shared sense of belonging to the European community, for example through European we-references" (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010:47). Similarly, Peters et al. (2015) treat European identification as a criterion that indicates a transnational European public sphere (cited in Meyer, Jan-Henrik, 2012). In their words, "a milestone for the transnationalization of public debates would be the extension of the imagined collective 'We' beyond national borders" (Peters et al., 2005:148). These scholars shed light on two fundamental questions: Who is the community among which public discourse is taking place? And are political statements addressed to national or European publics? In a similar vein, the likes of Brüggemann et al. (2007) "demands not only a Europeanisation of news coverage but also a Europeanisation of collective identities" (cited in Walter, 2014:14). Concerning operationalisation, scholars typically employ quantitative content analysis methods. More specifically, typically measure the volume of 'we-references' found in texts.

Inclusion

[Inclusion] refers to the accessibility of European policy decision-making to publics, either through interest representation or by collective action mobilized from civil society. Here it is the democratic performance of the political system that matters and the degree to which the public is able to gain formal access to, and be included within, public debates about European decision-making processes (Statham & Koopmans, 2013:142).

The inclusivity criterion can be attributed to the normative-ideal type definition of the public sphere¹². As I touched upon earlier, the EPS exists along a continuum from less- to more- Europeanisation. Several scholars, notably, Statham (2010) argue that the more inclusive the public sphere, the more Europeanised it is. For Statham (2010), inclusiveness is inextricably tied to the visibility of non-state/non-executive actors in the mass media. He thus argues that politicisation can have a

¹² *Inclusivity* is generally treated as a normatively desirable rather than necessary condition of Europeanisation.

democratising function as the expansion of conflict extends to ‘general publics’ (Eder, 2000). Likewise, for Fossum and Schlesinger, Europeanisation is a function of the inclusivity of EU civil society in European public debates. These scholars developed the regulatory and federal public sphere models. The former, in essence, refers to restricted – in terms of institutional inclusion and territorial reach – “issue-specific communicative spaces largely dominated by political and economic elites” (cited in de Vreese, 2007a:9). The latter denotes inclusive – in terms of territorial reach and institutional inclusion – communicative spaces involving multiple issues which are widely accessible to ‘general publics’. Crudely put, the regulatory model is a weak kind of EPS because it lacks the normative quality of inclusion of general publics, and the federal model is a stronger kind of EPS as it is more inclusive. Bärenreuter et al. (2009) emphasise the quality of inclusivity in their normative conception of the EPS. For these scholars, the EPS should accommodate a myriad of actors, opinions, and values, and be accepting of individual and group differences, what they call the ‘pluralistic public sphere’ (Bärenreuter, Brüll, Mokre, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009). These scholars conceptualize the EPS as a means to inclusion and accommodating diversity. Eriksen (2010) and Statham et al. (2013) develop a typology of different public(s) which can be distinguished according to, *inter-alia*, the level of inclusion of civil society. In order of inclusiveness, ‘general/weak publics’ are “communicative spaces of civil society in which all may participate on a free and equal basis” (found in Schlesinger, 2007:85). In the ‘general publics’ model, participation is open and inclusive. In the words of Eriksen (2007), “general publics are inclusive and open communicative spaces rooted in civil society in the periphery of the political system” (Eriksen, 2004, abstract). The same scholar adds that the EPS should be inclusive of general publics. By contrast, ‘attentive/segmented’ publics “evolve around policy networks constituted by a selection of actors with a common interest in certain issues, problems and solutions” (Eriksen, 2007:32). Participation in these networks of this kind are more restrictive due to certain barriers of entry as attentive publics require a certain amount of expertise to participate. The least inclusive category is that of ‘strong publics’ (policy and opinion lite) which are “legally institutionalized and regulated discourses specialized on collective will-formation at the polity centre” (Eriksen, 2007:32). ‘Strong publics’ hold the highest barriers of entry as participation is limited to specialised and institutional networks. As a general rule, discursive influence is negatively correlated with the size of the cohort. General publics have the least amount of discursive influence, and strong publics, as the name suggests, have the strongest discursive influence. In Eriksen’s view, a public sphere restricted to strong and specialised issue-public networks, is a minimalistic form of Europeanisation. In a similar vein, Schlesinger (1999) distinguishes between elite and mass publics. In the author’s view, the strength and scope of the EPS depends on, amongst other things, the type of public arena and its accessibility to mass publics.

Koopmans et al. (2010:329) distinguishes between four different types of Europeanised public politics which can be distinguished according to the level of visibility and inclusivity. In order of the most visible and inclusive type of Europeanised public politics are: inclusive public politics which refer to

public spheres' with vast amounts of mass media coverage and which is highly inclusive of 'general publics'; the corporatist interest group politics model denotes public spheres' containing little media coverage but strong access from a wide range of civil society actors; the elite-dominated public politics model is, as the name implies, limited in terms of access from civil society but media coverage is high; lastly, the executive bargaining model refers to public spheres' deprived of both media coverage and sufficient access from civil society. As Risse and Gerhards argue, moreover, the public sphere is composed of different public fora which vary according to inclusivity: in theory, cyberspace is the most inclusive arena of communication as it enables two-way communication, the barriers of entry are low, and the propensity for participation is high (Gerhards & Schäfer (2010)). At the opposite end are the 'quality' newspapers which cater to issue-specific publics and whose content involves highly technical aspects of political and economic affairs. Representing the middle ground are tabloid newspapers with low barriers of entry in terms of access, but elusively high barriers of entry in terms of participation (i.e. as speakers)¹³. By contrast, face-to-face communication (i.e. 'encounter publics') is, at the same time, inclusive, presenting opportunities abound to participate in dialogue, but highly exclusive as 'gallery publics' are restricted to those participating in the conversation (see Risse, 2014:7). As the same author argues, inclusivity can contribute to both the re-vitalisation and politicisation of the public sphere. Indeed, the inclusion of an extensive repertoire of political actors in public debate is axiomatic to politicisation.

Most scholars agree that the strength and scope of Europeanisation in the public sphere is largely determined by how inclusive it is of general publics. However, scholars agree less on how much inclusion of European civil society is sufficient to be regarded as Europeanised? The normative yardstick depends on which democratic theory or public sphere model one subscribes to. As Walters (2014) explicates, the four public sphere models, namely participatory, deliberative/discursive, elitist, and liberal, demand different levels of inclusion. The first two models require that public spheres are inclusive of civil society in toto, and in the last two models, inclusivity is immaterial as decision-making is delegated to elected representatives (Lindner, 2007:80). Crudely put, in the first two models, democracy is ensured through the efficiency (i.e. output legitimacy), visibility/transparency (i.e. throughout legitimacy) and accountability (i.e. input legitimacy through delegated representatives) of decision-making. By contrast, in the last two models, democracy is secured through an inclusivity wherein 'general publics' can directly participate in decision-making through voting, deliberation, and other participatory means. In regard to operationalisation, scholars habitually adopt quantitative content analysis methods to gauge actor visibility in the mass media. The theoretical rationale is visibility in the public sphere is interpreted as a form of political inclusion.

¹³ For example, one only needs to buy the newspaper to have access to it, and news is presented in a readily understandable and simplified format. Participation is high on impossible in newspapers save for the occasional mouthpiece afforded to 'vox pops'.

Empirical – descriptive definition**An elitist sphere...**

Most scholars argue that the EPS is elitist and lacks inclusivity. Previous research consistently shows that governing elites dominate public debate and civil society is marginalised (e.g. Koopmans, 2010). This is the case both online and offline. Zimmermann sums up the internet's predicament:

In a space constructed by search engines, the way in which attention is directed in online communication is almost as hierarchically structured as it is for newspapers: Civil societal actors are systematically discriminated against as compared to governmental actors...online communication is not more democratic than traditional mass media (Zimmermann, 2006, cited in Gerhards et al., 2010:155).

Previous research repeatedly shows that national executives receive the most media attention, with the finding particularly pronounced during European council summits (De Vreese 2001; de Wilde, 2019). In the words of Schattschneider, "the heavenly chorus of EU media coverage sings with a strong intergovernmental accent" (Schattschneider, 1960: 35, cited in de Wilde, 2019). That is to say that media coverage is dominated by national executives. Several scholars describe the EPS in slightly different ways – as 'restricted semi-public spheres' (Lahusen, 2004); 'multifarious niche European publics' (de Swaan, 2007); 'specialised publics' (Eder and Trenz, 2004); 'segmented publics' (Eriksen, 2007); 'elite public spheres' (Schlesinger, 1999); 'specific publics' (Schlesinger, 2019); 'issue-specific publics' (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007); 'attentive publics' (Eder, 2013) – but the common denominator of all terms is the connotation that all transnational public spheres are restricted in terms of accessibility and inclusivity. The European public sphere is commonly described as 'elite-driven' and dominated by 'specialised publics' (Trenz, 2001; Kantner 2004, 144-145). Numerous scholars allude to the narrow and elitist nature of transnational communicative spaces (e.g. Neidhardt et al. 2000:265). European debate is widely considered to be of interest only to narrow milieu of 'Europeanized elites' (Habermas, 2001). Civil society is weakly represented in the public sphere; in the words of one scholar, "claims are overwhelmingly made by elites who communicate to largely passive audiences" (Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014:108).

Schlesinger (1999) regards the EPS as an 'elite public sphere'. In other words, a genuine Pan-European civil society of 'general publics' is still found wanting. Although a niche European civil society has developed, it is restricted to 'epistemic communities' of business and political elites. The elitist nature of the EPS is reflected in the prevalence of transnational media outlets (e.g. *The Economist*) which cater predominantly to elite audiences. There are "transnational media outlets, but they cater to minority,

typically highly-educated ‘elite’ audiences” (Eriksen, 2007: 33). There are, hitherto, no pan-European newspapers that generate mass readership akin to national ‘red-top’ newspapers. As Bärenreuter et al., argue, “the few supranational media that do exist primarily target political and business elites, or focus on niche interests such as sports and music” (Bärenreuter et al., 2009:12). As Schlesinger argues, Pan-European media do exist such as *The Economist* or *Financial Times*, however, they are unable to attract large audiences because they target predominantly elite audiences (Schlesinger, 1999:272). The same scholar concludes that “the transnational communicative space is class-inflected and predominantly the domain of political and economic elites, not yet that of a general European public” (Schlesinger, 2007:81). In a recent paper, Scheslinger (2019) reaffirms these sentiments:

If there was a European public sphere, it was restricted to the decision-making elites that ran the Euro-polity, those conducting single market business, and those that enjoyed privileged mobility across borders – including people like us, academics, and students. These were specific rather than general publics (Schlesinger, 2019:4).

In sum, the chorus of ‘voices’ are institutionalised ‘strong publics’, that is, political elites and other actors at the centre of decision-making, ‘attentive publics’, namely, the ‘epistemic communities’ of scientists and academics, and international media organisations who cater to them. As Barenreuter et al., summarise, in Europe, “we are observing a restricted articulation of “voice”, not a mobilisation of support in a diffuse public” (Barenreuter et al., 2009:11). Other scholars opt for the term, ‘issue/segmented publics’, which rejects the notion that EPSs’ are inherently elitist and restricted, as non-elites can, in principle, engage in transnational social movements of collective action on a particular issue (e.g. environmental concerns). To paraphrase Eriksen, there are, transnational public spheres emerging within the ‘segmented publics’, and legally institutionalised discourses “evolving around policy networks constituted by the common interest in certain issues, problems, and solutions” (Eriksen, 2005:abstract). De Swaan claims that these European policy networks are composed of a minority of specialist actors engaging in multiple interactions at the expert level (de Swaan, 2007: 136-138).

The notion of networks coalescing around specific issues explains why some scholars opt for the term, ‘issue publics’ (Eder & Kantner, 2000; Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014), ‘issue-specific publics’, or ‘sectoral publics’ (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007). Bennett et al. (2014) interpret ‘issue publics’ as, “constituted by a communication and networking process in which various actors come together to define an issue and establish a configuration of actors connected to that issue” (Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014: 112). These scholars describe European communication as a ‘deliberative polyarchy’ (Cohen and Sabel, 1997), that is, a decentralised and sporadic network of ‘strong publics’ (i.e. national governments, specialist agencies, lobbyists) discussing certain issues because their interests, competences, and expertise compel them to engage with counterparts on the transnational level. I employ the term ‘sporadic’ because these ‘issue-publics’ can grow or shrink over time (Eriksen, 2007).

Eder (2013), however, opts for the term, ‘attentive publics’ but the basic notion is the same: European communication consists mainly of publics mobilising on particular transnational issues that grab their attention (*italics added for emphasis*). Trenz encapsulates the EPS’s predicament although I would add that the ‘sermon’ to which he refers is mainly conducted by domestic actors:

The new intensified communication about Europe resembles a sermon from the high pulpit rather than a debate in the public sphere. It is heard only by the small community of the faithful that gathers together for that purpose but is still based on weak knowledge and information on the part of the public (Trenz, 2007:107).

A fragmented sphere(s)...

Public sphere scholars have used a panoply of adjectives to describe the European public sphere – words such as ‘heterogenous’ (Ivic, 2016:130), ‘agonistic’ (Mouffe, 2002:63), ‘polymorphous’, ‘polyphonic’ ‘fragmented’, ‘anarchic’, ‘differentiated’ (Eriksen, 2007:26), ‘pluralistic’ (Sicakkan, 2012) and so on (Kermer & Nijmeijer, 2020:29). These superlatives point to one thing in common: the public sphere is not one but many, and it would be perhaps more accurate to describe it as ‘spheres of publics’. It is widely understood that transnational communicative inputs emanate from a myriad of sources and fora dispersed across multiple territorial levels. There is, in other words, little uniformity or homogeneity to European communication; Eriksen describes the EPS as ‘anarchic’ and ‘polyphonic’, and as suffering from ‘kommunikativer Lärm’ (communicative noise). In his words, the public sphere “can no longer be seen as one uniform national public sphere, but as polymorph, polyphonic and even anarchistic” (Eriksen, 2004:6). For Spark et al., there is not one but many public spheres’ (Sparks & Kunelius, 2001). The public sphere consists of a series of fragmented, ‘segmented’ national public spheres (Van de Steeg, 2002). According to Habermas, despite the public sphere being associated with rational discourse, the public sphere is an ‘einen wilden Komplex’ susceptible to perversion and disorder (found in Fossum et al., 2007:26). Fossum and Schlesinger (2007) encourage us to move away from the notion that the public sphere is a uniform, homogenous communicative space, tightly sealed in the ‘national container’. On the contrary, in their view, the public sphere consists of a ‘cacophonous symphony’ (Eriksen, 2007) of pluralistic, and, at times, irreconcilable ‘voices’. Eriksen (2010) claims that these pluralistic voices are desirable from an inclusivity standpoint, however, the trade-off of inclusivity is public spheres are prone to communication disturbances and fragmentation (Eriksen, 2007: 29). De Swaan (2007) understands the EPS as a ‘sphere of publics’, to capture its pluralistic nature. The same remarks that “like the public sphere in national societies, it will be fragmented, with the fragments hanging more or less together”. (De Swaan, 2007:145). Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) also touches upon the fragmented nature of public spheres. As the same lucidly demonstrates, several media outlets of the ‘same’ nation

can represent and frame politics in markedly different ways. The results of Königslöw's study demonstrably show that negative evaluations of the EU and exclusive-national 'We' references are comparatively more perceptible in tabloid format newspapers (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). By contrast, as Trenz demonstrates, quality format newspapers are more likely to express supportive sentiments towards the EU and adopt European frames of reference (Trenz, 2008a; see also Kermer et al., 2020:33).

It has been well documented particularly by the likes of Eriksen (2005) that public spheres' across various territorial levels – ranging from the local and national to European level – are highly “fragmented, differentiated and in flux” (2005:352). We have good reason to expect that the public spheres' pertaining to Europe are even more fragmented than national public spheres due to the concurrence of 27 different national 'narrative networks' (Eder, 2012; Kermer et al., 2020:33). Europe is a vast, sprawling continent composed of 44 different countries. Each nation has its own unique historical, cultural, socio-economic, and political imprint. Every nation contains nationally bounded communication infrastructures due to nation-specific vernaculars and cultural 'stocks of knowledge'¹⁴ deeply embedded in the nation. The EU consists of 27 nation states containing their own specific nationally established, culturally embedded media organisations, communicating in different vernaculars. As a result, Europe is discursively reproduced differently across countries. Even within a given national public sphere, fragmented discourses permeate. For example, The study by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk et al., (2012) observed striking differences in the portrayal of Europe in the Polish press. However, national public spheres benefit from the legitimising glue of a strong national identity and pre-existing cultural, political, and media institutions to bind these fragmented narratives together (Kermer et al., 2020:33). It is thus, reasonable to claim that the meta narratives of Europe are likely to be much more fragmented than national meta narratives (Kermer et al., 2020).

An (il-)liberal public sphere...

The ideal-type bourgeois public sphere envisaged by Habermas was “founded on open rational debate which is devoid of any incursion from the nation-state and where individuals express their ideas in a free and open manner, exercising their civil and political liberties” (Nitoiu, 2016:28; Habermas, 2015). In reality, most scholars agree that public spheres fall far short of this ideal type definition. In reality, public spheres, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, have become increasingly vulnerable to state coercion from *endogenous* (e.g. FIDESZ in Hungary and PiS in Poland) and *exogenous* influences (e.g. Pro-Kremlin Disinformation Campaigns). Regarding the former, a rich body of scholarship attests to

¹⁴ 'Stocks of knowledge' are defined by Schutz as “the cultural information that is available to any group. They include language, dialects, roles, norms, beliefs, and so on. They are 'what everybody knows' and thus aid in the taken-for-grantedness of cultural reality” (cited in Allan, 2005:415).

the increasing encroachment of the Polish and Hungarian governments in their respective public spheres' in order to both subvert civil society and promote uncivil society. For example, several studies attest to the ruling Polish Governments hostility to anti-gender (Gallo, 2020), LGBTQI (Yermakova, 2021) and anti-refugee movements (Krzyżanowski, 2018; Narkowicz, 2018). In the words of Narkowicz, the Polish Government has “started dismantling [...] support services for ethnic and religious minorities, [and] simultaneously started empowering the far-right civil society, thereby legitimating their presence in the public sphere” (2018:366). As Kinowska-Mazaraki points out (Kinowska-Mazaraki, 2021:10), the PiS Government withdrew support for NGOs engaged in the protection of ethnic and minority groups and dissolved the only government body (namely, The Council against Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia) that was committed to tackling racial discrimination and xenophobia. Around the same time, the PiS Government decided to increase funding for Conservative and Christian organisations (e.g. Centre of Defence for Christian Rights). This is but one example of the PiS Government's strategy of harnessing civil society organizations (CSOs) to advance their policy goals and conservative values. As Marczewski argues, the PiS Government has reduced public funds for organisations that are contrary to their policy goals or affiliated with the PiS's political rivals (Marczewski, 2018:52). Moreover, the increasing government control of – another core pillar of civil society, namely the *media* – is widely documented (Grzebalska, 2018). It is no secret that both FIDESZ (Bánkuti et al., 2012) and PiS have enacted regressive reforms to limit the freedom of the media (Bustikova et al., 2017). Moreover, national governments notably Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Moldova have exploited the Covid-19 pandemic to tighten control over information and the mass media (International Press Institute, 2020). The close relationship between PiS and the Polish Catholic Church raises another issue about the public sphere's ostensible secularism, or lack thereof (Narkowicz, 2018; Hutter et al., 2019; Żuk, 2019). Pro-Kremlin Disinformation Campaigns, moreover, represent a threat to the functioning of public spheres from the *outside*. As is no secret that pro-Kremlin disinformation campaigns have tried to disrupt public debates and influence public opinion particularly in the neighbouring Visegrad countries following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 (Metodieva, 2018), during the Polish-Belarus border crisis at the end of 2021 (Filipec, 2022) and most recently during the Russo-Ukrainian War in 2022. The end goal is to bolster pro-Russian sentiments (Whitefield, 2016) and exacerbate pre-existing interstate tensions (e.g. Polish-Ukrainian relations, Olchowski, 2022). These circumstances demonstrate that – in reality – public spheres are subject to state coercion from both inside and outside.

The public sphere – in its current form – also falls short of the ideal type in other respects, particularly the criterion open rational debate and the demand that civil society is allowed to express its ideas in a free and open manner. The overwhelming consensus is that the public spheres do not foster free and open debate. In addition to a state censorship problem – which has become more pronounced during the pandemic – tech censorship in general and Big tech's policy of 'de-platforming' controversial

figures in particular (e.g. Trump on Twitter) have the effect of undermining free and open debate (Bryanov, Vasina et al., 2022:417). Moreover, the commonly accepted view is that the public sphere in general and EPS in particular – much like its bourgeois predecessor – is exclusionary, inaccessible, and undemocratic in terms of participation. The EPS is widely regarded as top-down, elitist and, at best, restricted to a narrow milieu of ‘attentive publics’ (Sicakkan, 2016:221). Although the Internet implies lower barriers of entry for participation, virtual spaces remain inaccessible to those – typically older generations – without social media accounts (Harlow, 2017:145). Studies on the Internet, moreover, show that cyberspace is nationally embedded (Barisione & Michailidou, 2017; Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2003) and hyperlinks and search engines undermine cross-national linkages (Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2007). The openness of the public sphere is jeopardised, moreover, by echo chambers (Cinus et al., 2022), filter bubbles (Nechushtai, 2019) and narrowcasting (Carrigan, 2019:96) – which online recommendation algorithms help facilitate (Coeckelbergh, 2022) and – which contribute to the polarisation of debate. As a corollary to this last point, public spheres are predominantly characterised by *irrational* debate which both enables and reflects polarisation. The deliberative setting of social media platforms¹⁵ – with their character limits, and emphasis on emojis and photos – help foster simplified narratives and emotive language. The format of social media platforms is generally favourable to the use of short and quick messages, photos, and emojis, which are more susceptible to emotionally charged content than traditional media platforms (Yarchi et al., 2021; Schirch, 2021; Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). Previous research shows that negative information travels further and faster which is congruent with the cynical framing strategies (e.g. anti-immigrant rhetoric) employed by nationalist, Eurosceptic parties (Balahur et al., 2019; Rooduijn et al., 2017; Kermer et al., 2020:34). Furthermore, Information disorder poses a threat to both the functioning of democracy in general and the public sphere in particular¹⁶. Information disorder has the potential to unravel the social fabric and weaken the social capital of the public sphere by casting doubt on the existence of truth and accountability (Kermer et al., 2020:34). Although the peddling of false narratives in traditional media outlets cannot be excluded, journalistic ethics and standards and editorial responsibilities, at least, ensure a veneer of accountability that is largely absent on social media (*Ibid.*). Social media logic (Klinger and Svensson, 2014) gives precedence to virality over factuality. As a result of the increasing use of social media and alternative news sources for news consumption, information disorder should be regarded as constitutive of the public sphere (Kermer *et al.*, 2020:33-34). To compound matters, the institutional and organisational complexity of the EU, and its economic and technocratic *modus operandi* do not translate into newsworthy media content and renders EU politics prone to misinformation (Kermer et al., 2020:34). In sum, the public sphere falls far short of the lofty ideals

¹⁵ Social media’s resonance, reach, and influence – in terms of agenda-setting and gatekeeping – may not be as significant as traditional media outlets, but its influence is growing fast (Kermer et al., 2020:34).

¹⁶ Information disorder is an umbrella term for *disinformation*, i.e., the deliberate intent to spread false information, *misinformation*, i.e., the accidental spreading of false information, and *malinformation* i.e., true information spread with the intent to cause harm (see Corcoran et al., 2019 and Kermer et al., 2020:33, for more).

envisaged by Habermas, namely, the public sphere as a *locus* of open rational debate devoid of state coercion. In reality, many national governments, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe, continue to subvert civil society, and sponsor (un-)civil society organisations that are ideologically congruent, which is a flagrant incursion of the nation-state in the public sphere. Moreover, the deliberative setting of social media and the pre-eminent threat of Information disorder help foster debates which are anything but rational.

A pluralistic sphere...

Schlesinger et al., deem it more appropriate to conceive of the EU “as constituted by a multiplicity of communicative spaces than to think of it as having one overarching public sphere” (2007:285). But as Schlesinger rightly argues, public spheres are also fragmented at the sub-state level. It would be erroneous to conceive of nations’ as monocultural and ‘people’ as a monolithic and homogenous category (Schlesinger, 2007:73). The UK’s public sphere perfectly encapsulates the pluralistic nature of the public sphere. Scotland contains a media landscape sustaining both British and Scottish discourses and narratives – what Schlesinger calls a ‘dualistic public sphere’ (Schlesinger, 2019). The ‘multiplicity of public spheres’ to which Eder refers (2013) can ‘temporally cluster’ at certain times (e.g. critical junctures). However, as Eder (2013) points out, the pluralistic nature of public spheres is nothing new as nation states have always been ‘segmented’ to varying degrees. Public spheres have always contained counter narratives and contested discourses deriving from what Fraser calls ‘subaltern counter publics’ (Fraser, 1990). The public sphere may contain a stable and dominant ‘meta-narrative’, cultural hegemony, and dominant set of values, giving the semblance of an essential and homogenous ‘people’, when in actual fact, public spheres’ consist of variegated narratives, value repertoires, and different groups of people (Eder, 2013). The public sphere does not contain one monolithic people, but multiple heterogeneous groups (Eriksen, 1999). The findings of Scalise reinforce the notion that there is no meta-narrative pertaining to Europe. The same found that, even within the same local community, narratives were markedly different, with a ‘functional and localistic European identity’ juxtaposed with a ‘cosmopolitan European identity’ (Scalise, 2013).

Similarly, Lindner et al. (2018) understand the public sphere as consisting of multiple “segmented publics that evolve around policy networks dealing with particular issues and problems to which particular communities relate” (Lindner, Jennen, & Aichholzer, 2016:35). These scholars add that the EU contains the contemporaneous existence of multi-layered public spheres. In other words, the European ‘communication network’ consists of multiple, concurrent and overlapping national public spheres coalescing around European issues (Nitoiu, 2013). These national public spheres are arranged in the formation of concentric circles, overlapping, more or less, depending on how relevant ‘the issue’ is deemed to be for national politics. According to Eder (2013), the national public sphere does not

consist of one, homogenous ‘concrete group’ alone. There are multiple groups, constituencies and ‘demoi’ populating the public sphere (Eder, 2013). With that in mind, Eder (2013) conceives of the EPS as a ‘network’ wherein nodes across different territorial levels connect over time. Civil society should not be conceived of as one entity such as a village, city or nation, but rather a ‘social form’ manifested in performative action (Eder, 2012).

A malleable sphere...

Lower communication transaction costs engendered by technology have enabled networks of “shifting, issue-dependent public spheres crosscutting national issue publics” (Eder, 2013). Eder (2013) encourages us to adopt of ‘multilevel conception’ of the public sphere with ‘shifting boundaries’. This scholar aptly reminds us the public sphere is an evolving and fluid network of heterogeneous social relations (Eder, 2013). The public sphere is not a ‘sealed’ container but complex network of actors and issues circulating within and beyond national boundaries¹⁷. European-issue networks involve a temporary constellation of actors that vary across space and time (Eder, 2013). These issue publics are located across different territorial levels (i.e. local, regional, transnational), and the territorial reach of these publics depends on the transnational resonance of a given issue. Public spheres’ are fluid spaces of communication which can either amalgamate disparate units together or fragment and splinter (Eriksen, 2007). Hänska et al. (2019) describe the EPS as ephemeral and largely sustained by events or crisis (see also De Swaan, 2007). Similarly, Hutter et al. claim that “common political events induce the different publics in federalist nation-states to debate the same issues in parallel ways” (2016:243). Eriksen refers to the ‘Europeanisation of events’ which manifest during the Haider debacle and Joschka Fischer’s famous speech (2007: 33-4). Similarly, Lauristin (2007) argues that Europeanisation becomes particularly discernible in public discourse when European issues involve scandal or touch upon national interests. But during regular and ‘ordinary’ periods, the European public sphere lies dormant (Lauristin, 2007). As Peter and de Vreese pithily put it, “the EU is somewhat like the moon: though of major influence on the ebb and flow of Europe, it is only cyclically fully visible” (2004:16). The latter’s research demonstrates that the EU was particularly visible during EU Council summits. Research by Vollmer et al. (2018) enriches our understanding about the dynamic, fluid, and mutable nature of patterns of discourse. In a space of a few months, the same scholars found a discernible shift in how the 2016 migrant crisis was framed in the German media – from an initially hard-line security-power frame to a benevolent, humanitarian one.

¹⁷ Most scholars accept that Europe’s segmented spaces of communication are more interconnected in the 21st century than any century preceding it.

An ethnocentric sphere...

As de Wilde (2019) and Trenz (2008) before him argue, the mass media are heavily embedded in national structures. Trenz refers to the media's 'inherent nationalism'¹⁸ (2008b:297), and the 'Emediate' project alludes to the intrinsic ethnocentricity of journalism in spite of the increased media attention afforded to transnational actors and issues (Emediate, 2004). More specifically, Trenz claims that news frames, reporting styles, and newsworthiness criteria of EU events are embedded in national public spheres (Trenz and Michailidou, 2014). Eilder and Voltmer (2004) refer to the 'domestication of Europe in national public spheres', that is, the proclivity of national journalists to 'domesticate' European affairs by linking them to the views and actions of domestic actors (see also: Wilke and Reinemann, 2007; Pfetsch et al., 2008). Along the continuum of Europeanisation, the 'domestication of Europe' represents a weak form of Europeanisation as EU affairs are evinced, albeit from a national perspective and embroiling mainly domestic actors. For Nitoiu (2013), journalists' tend to present issues from a 'national perspective'. Eder refers to the lack of a 'narrative commonness' among Europeans due to the persistence of national interpretations of transnational issues (Eder, 2013:42). The same scholar uses the Greek debt crisis as an example to show how the crisis was reduced to a conflict between one nation, namely Germany, using the EU to suppress another nation, namely Greece. Medrano (2011) claims that the media "give privileged access to national political actors keen on reproducing national identities over European actors" (Diez Medrano 2011: 44). These claims are consistently supported by several studies which show that national actors dominate discourses on European matters. Sparks and Kunelius (2001:10) claim "there are deep-rooted nationalistic structural features of the existing media system". Schlesinger makes a similar observation about the ethnocentricity of the public sphere. According to same, the mass media are divided along national lines because they serve, and have a vested interest in, the domestic market, possess different journalistic standards, and perform a different *modus operandi* (Schlesinger, 2007). As the media prioritise the domestic market, they naturally prioritise domestic news items and topics over 'foreign' equivalents (Grundmann, 2000). In the words of Grundmann, "a special type of information is selected [by journalists] from within the European power centre which then structures topics and evaluations within the public spheres of the member states" (Grundmann, 2000:137). As Scheslinger puts it, the mass media represent EU-related politics through a 'national filter' which is modified for the domestic audience (Scheslinger, 2000). Indeed, the 'Emediate' project (2004) demonstrates that journalistic cultures are ethnocentric in their representations of Europe. Likewise, the study by Kleinen-von Königslöw shows that Europeanisation is a function of what she calls, 'national editorial discourse cultures', in other words, national differences in how Europe is

¹⁸ Trenz, in essence, argues that the media remain wedded to the nation state (Trenz, 2008a).

represented are palpable (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). Medrano's study (2003), moreover, reveals the dominance of national frames (see also Bijmans & Altides, 2007; Lichtenstein and Eilders, 2019). Even on the Internet, studies consistently show that Cyberspace is also nationally embedded (Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2003; Barisione & Michailidou, 2017). In sum, both online and offline spaces tend to tell European stories through a national filter. These empirical findings have led some scholars to describe the EPS as nationally 'segmented' (Wessler et al., 2008; cited in Kermer et al., 2020)¹⁹.

A 'pillarized' sphere...

The EPS is almost universally understood as 'vertically segmented'. In the words of Medrano, public spheres are 'versäult' (i.e. pillarized). Medrano (2003) employed this term to describe how actors tend to refer much more to the EU than fellow member states. Put another way, member states appear to pay scant attention to their fellow European counterparts and much more attention to Brussels institutions. Wessler (2008) opts for the term, 'segmented Europeanisation' to capture the verticalized nature of European political communication (see also Grundmann, 2000). In the words of Grundmann, 'every member state looks at Brussels ('at the EU') but no one sees her neighbouring country' (2000:137). To paraphrase Simmel, there is no 'crossing of [national] circles' (Grundmann, 2000:137).

The Europeanisation of national public spheres...

The missing European public sphere should not be imagined as the domestic sphere writ large. It can arise only insofar as the circuits of communication within the national arenas open themselves up to one another while themselves remaining intact. (Habermas, 2006:102)

Due to the absence of a pervasive Pan-European media system akin to what we find at the national level, and the fact that the mass media remain heavily wedded to 'the nation', most scholars settle on the next common denominator of the 'Europeanisation of national public spheres' (Eriksen, 2004; Statham, 2007; Machill, et al., 2006; Lindner, Korthagen, & Aichholzer, 2018). This concept presupposes that Europeanisation, if it is to be found, will only emerge within national public spheres. The rationale behind this is that the national media is understood as the main gateway to political information about the EU (Schlesinger, 1999; Statham, 2007). For Conrad, "the national media can also serve as a functional equivalent of a transnational European public sphere" (Conrad, 2010:221).

¹⁹ The insights from media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) provide one compelling explanation for the mass media's 'inherent media nationalism' (Trenz, 2008:2; Koopmans, 2010; de Wilde 2019).

Several scholars reject the Pan-European sphere concept²⁰ because Europe is characterised by deep heterogeneity or more specifically because of: Europe's socio-cultural and linguistic diversity (Barenreuter, 2009); the lack of a [homogenous] cultural and political opportunity structure (De Swaan, 2007:137); the entrenched ethnocentricity of journalism (Lingenberg, 2009); variegated 'editorial and national discourse cultures' (a la Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012); the absence of a pervasive Pan-European media system (Schlesinger, 1999); and the absence of European 'general publics' (Eriksen, 2007; Brüggemann & Schulz-Forberg, 2009) and so on. As Schlesinger puts it:

The mediated public sphere in the EU remains first, overwhelmingly national; second, where it is not national it is transnational and anglophone but elitist in class terms; third, where it is ostensibly transnational, but not anglophone, it still decants principally into national modes of address". (Schlesinger, 2003:18)

The 'Europeanisation of national public spheres' concept effectively captures the pluralistic nature of the public sphere. As numerous scholars underline, public spheres are not unitary spaces. The emphasis on 'national' underlines the ethnocentric nature of public spheres understood as continuing to report European matters through a national prism. The term 'Europeanisation' implies a unidirectional process towards the converging attribute of 'Europeanness'. The current state of the empirical field would support the claim that we are witnessing a Europeanisation in terms of the increasing coverage of EU affairs within public spheres. Nevertheless, it is unclear from the empirical evidence whether we are witnessing a qualitative shift towards Europeanisation in terms of meaning structures and converging perspectives.

To recap, at a bare minimum, European themes, topics, and actors must be sufficiently visible in these figurative communicative spaces. The topic of Europe is the enabling condition for transborder communication. Crucially, however, the same issues should also be discussed. For example, if Dutch journalists focus on the EU's macroeconomic policy measures, and Italian journalists debate the EU's migration policy measures, transborder debates between Dutch and Italian citizens are unlikely to manifest in these circumstances. However, these 'shared' issues must also be discussed at the same time. Using the same example as before, if Dutch journalists discuss the EU's migrant policy several days later, this is unlikely to foster transnational debate between Italian and Dutch citizens as news cycles are extremely short-lived. A 'hot topic' one day can become 'yesterday's news' on the next. These preconditions provide a fertile ground for transborder communications to flourish. However, crucially, they do not guarantee it. There must also be evidence of transborder connections across

²⁰ The prevailing view in the EPS scholarship is that there is no Pan-European public sphere. Linguistic barriers, cultural and political idiosyncrasies, and distinct 'media cultures' prevent Europe from possessing an overarching transnational discursive infrastructure to debate European issues as 'Europeans'. And, if there is a European Public Sphere, it is confined to politicians, scientists and academics (i.e. the elite minority). Instead, most scholars argue that we are witnessing a 'Europeanisation of national public spheres', that is, EU actors and European issues are becoming increasingly visible and salient within national public spheres, but they continue to be seen through a national lens.

different territorial levels. Most scholars argue that a thin veneer or ‘Europeanisation light’ of sorts exists. It is widely accepted that EU affairs have become more visible in media coverage over time. Extant research consistently shows that similar issues are being discussed concurrently across different public spheres. However, there is less agreement as to whether public spheres’ exhibit enough transnationality in terms of ‘communicative linkages’.

As I outlined above, Europeanisation, as with many concepts, exists along a continuum from minimum empirical to normative, ideal-type conditions. Several scholars maintain that the public sphere in general and EPS in particular should be inclusive and agonistic. The EPS should be accessible to a myriad of actors, and afford them opportunities to participate. Regarding the latter, most scholars interpret the politicisation of EU integration as a positive development for the EPS because politicisation increases the salience of EU issues, and galvanises debate among a wide array of actors²¹. European issues, moreover, should be discussed using similar frames of reference, which loosely refers to ‘shared European perspectives’ (Kandyla & De Vreese, 2011) or a common understanding of the main problems and issues at stake (Risse, 2014). Related to this last point is the insistence by some scholars that a collective European identity is perceptible in discourse. Indeed, ‘signposting’ one’s identity orientation discursively can be regarded as a type of frame. In reality, previous research suggests that political communication falls far short of these normative requirements. The public spheres’ of Europe are elitist and top-down in terms of participation, with national executives dominating debates and civil society mere bystanders. Public spheres have been described as ‘pillarized’ insofar as attention is mainly directed at the EU and not fellow European member states. Public spheres have been described as ‘fragmented’ and ‘segmented’ due to variegated editorial and media cultures, and different socio-economic, political, and linguistic contexts. Public spheres are understood as polymorphous, fluid, and pluralistic spaces of communication. Rather than a public sphere, it would be more apt to call them ‘spheres of publics’. Lastly, scholars generally agree that public spheres remain nationally embedded due to the mass media’s predilection for recontextualising news in a way that is attractive to the domestic audience.

Methodological toolbox

Four methods have been particularly prevalent in analysing the supply side of political communication, namely: (1) framing (e.g. Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), (2) content analysis, (3) political claims analysis (e.g. Koopmans & Erbe, 2003), (3) network analysis (e.g. Adam, 2008), and (4) interviews (Bee & Bozzini, 2010). As the name implies, framing analysis is typically used by scholars who wish

²¹ However, in my view, it is an open question whether contesting on Europe will lead to genuinely Europeanised communication when political actors and the mass media continue to see politics through the prism of national interests and identities.

to explore whether public spheres' exhibit 'similar frames of reference' when discussing European matters. Content analysis is habitually used by scholars who wish to measure the visibility of European actors and issues and gage the temporal synchronicity of EU-news in the public sphere. Content analysis is also used by scholars who are interesting in measuring European identity, by tallying up the number of national- or European-'We' references within newspaper articles. Political claims analysis is arguably a more sophisticated subset of content analysis which is able to capture the relationality, relativity, and territorial scope of political communication. The latter is habitually employed by scholars wishing to encapsulate the cross-border propensity of the EPS (i.e. transnationality of political communication). Scholars have underutilised the theoretical and analytical value of network analysis but it is, arguably, the method most effectively able to capture the EPS concept's multidimensionality. In addition, scholars often conduct interviews on journalists or civil society in order to better understand differences in journalistic cultures or news consumption habits. Loosely speaking, content analysis, framing analysis, and political claims analysis are typically employed to better understand the supply side of political communication, that is, the inputs and throughputs of political communication, whereas interviews and experiments are used to better understand the demand side, namely communicative outputs (i.e. the effects of political communication on public opinion, public perceptions, and political behaviour).

Framing

Below I outline the aforementioned methods in more detail. Framing has been used extensively by public sphere scholars (e.g. Risse, 2010). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) have been particularly influential in the field of European political communication. Framing analysis is, arguably, more onerous from a coding perspective than quantitative content analysis. As a result, generally speaking, the former tends to be accompanied by a synchronic research design (i.e. a 'snapshot' in time approach), whereas the latter is accompanied by a longitudinal, diachronic research design. There are three common denominator properties central to the concept of framing: (1) selectivity (à la Entman, 1993), (2) valence (à la Neuman, 1992:1997) and (3) effectivity. Arguably, Entman's definition is the most widely cited definition of framing. His definition, in particular, emphasises the notion of selectivity; he wrote that framing is about selecting and accentuating "some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993:52). Similarly, Gitlin argues that frames are about the "persistent selection, emphasis, and exclusion" of actors and/or issues (Gitlin, 1980:7). Van de Steeg et al., building on the definition developed by Snow and Benford (1992), defines a frame as, "an interpretative scheme employed to make sense of the 'world out there'" (cited in Risse et al., 2003:5). Medrano and Gray define frames as "images of reality [that]

bear only a loose relationship to the reality to which they refer, but it is they, and not reality itself, which ultimately shape behaviour” (2010:196). To quote Reese, frames are “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (Reese, 2001:11). However, it is debatable how ‘persistent over time’ frames are. As the Vollmer et al. research shows, frames can change rather dramatically in the space of a few months. Framing sets the parameters “in which citizens discuss public events” (Tuchman, 1978:4, Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Frames have the effect of “narrow[ing] available political alternatives” (Tuchman, 1978: 156). Framing delineates the salient aspects of an issue through the process of selection. Through the process of news selection implicitly governed by ‘newsworthiness’ criteria, journalists construct the context of an issue via the ‘classification of information’ (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). Frames, moreover, often invoke either explicit or implicit valence of an actor/issue. As de Vreese et al. (2003) explicates, frames typically contain valence, tending to evaluate situations either positively or negatively. Valence frames “are indicative of ‘good and bad’ and (implicitly) carry positive and/or negative elements” (de Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2003:363). Similarly, as Entman states (1993), “frames have inherent valence by nature as they contain a ‘moral evaluation’ as one of their defining characteristics” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). Similarly, as Schuck et al. (2006) adds, framing refers to “the observation that media can portray one and the same topic in very different ways, emphasizing certain evaluations or only parts of an issue at the expense of others” (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:5). In a similar vein, Neuman defines, what he calls, ‘news frames’ as “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (Neuman et al., 1992:60). Gamson and Modigliani (1987:143) define media frames as “coherent packages of information containing a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). According to Schuck et al. (2006), “a news frame is more than just an isolated argument or position on a topic – it represents a coherent construction of an issue” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). Lastly, frames are widely understood to affect audiences’ interpretations and evaluations of the social world around them. As Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) remarks, “to grasp structure and organise large and complex streams of information, journalists use media frames to highlight certain aspects by excluding others, encouraging citizens to understand events and issues in a particular way” (Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009:43). Frames are to help audiences, “locate, perceive, identify, and label the flow of information around them” (Goffman, 1974: 21). Framing has the effect of “construct[ing] and defin[ing] a social or political issue for its audience” (Nelson et al., 1997: 221). Frames “provide an evaluative framework for individuals that influences their thoughts” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). According to Pawley, framing enables scholars to identify cleavages and understand of how actors position themselves on issues pertaining to Europe (2017).

We can distinguish between three different types of frames: generic, valence and issue-specific. The former aims to “capture the main themes around which media discourses are structures” (Triga &

Vadratsikas, 2016:11). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) identified five prevalent generic frames in news content, namely: (1) the attribution of responsibility, (2) conflict, (3) human interest, (4) morality, and (5) economic consequences²². Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) adds two more frames to the above typology, namely: the power and nationalisation frames²³. Similarly, Grande and Hutter (2016)²⁴ identified three generic frames to gauge patterns of European political conflict on EU issues, namely: (1) cultural (2) economic, and (3) utilitarian frames. The former can be further divided into nationalist and multicultural-universalist frames. ‘Nationalist’ frames can be distinguished between ethnic-nationalist and institutional-civic nationalist frames; the former underlines the cultural homogeneity and exclusivity of national identity, and the latter emphasises the exceptionality of the national political community (Hoeglinger, 2016). By contrast, multicultural-universalist frames, to paraphrase Hutter, invoke arguments about cultural openness and the peaceful coexistence of diverse groups in society (Hutter et al., 2016:185). Hoeglinger divides the economic frame into two subcategories of labour/social security- and economic prosperity frames; the former contains arguments concerning welfare systems, wage levels and employment prospects. The latter elicits arguments about wealth, economic growth, and competitiveness (Hoeglinger, 2016). Lastly, the utilitarian frame category contains arguments related to political and bureaucratic efficiency, channels of power, effective governance, issues related to security and ecological, environmental protections, peace, and stability, amongst other things²⁵. Trenz (2004), by contrast, analyses whether European issues are presented in terms of European values, interests, or identities. A rich body of scholarship has assessed the impact of valence frames on citizens’ evaluations of the EU and the EU integration process in general²⁶. The main assumption undergirding EU framing research is that positive evaluations of the EU in the mass media are expected to foster support for the EU and may even promote a ‘community of Europeans’ (Vliegenthart et al., 2008). Below I identify some of the main protagonists of valence framing²⁷. Several scholars adopt binary frames such as ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’ (Vliegenthart et al., 2008); ‘advantages’ and ‘disadvantages’ (De Vreese et al., 2006) or ‘opportunities’ and ‘risks’ (Schuck et al. 2006; Kandyla & de Vreese, 2011; see Triga et al., 2016, for a succinct overview).

Despite its popularity, frame analysis has some drawbacks, particularly its inability to capture the transnational interconnectivity of public spheres. As Pfetsch (2014) remarks, “with the analysis of

²² To paraphrase Semetko *et al.* (2000): the *responsibility* frame presents an issue in a manner that ascribes responsibility for its cause or solution to an actor(s); the *conflict* frame highlights conflict between actors; the *human interest* frame “brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem”; the *morality* frame depicts an issue in the context of moral prescriptions or religious tenets; and the economic consequences frame portrays an issue “in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country” (2000:95-96).

²³ The *power* frame emphasizes relations between actors (i.e., persons/parties/states) and the division of power between them, and the *nationalisation* frame presents news from a domestic angle (i.e., a transnational event/issue/problem being internalised and framed as a domestic/national concern, see Van Cauwenberge *et al.*, 2009:44).

²⁴ Although the author is principally interested in the phenomenon of politicisation, *how* an issue is framed axiomatic to the congealment of an EPS.

²⁵ Pawley (2017:10) adopts a similar heuristic framing typology.

²⁶ I invite readers to have a look at the ‘Cohesify’ research paper which I found to be very helpful in summarising the most notable works related to framing and EU support/identity (Triga *et al.*, 2016).

²⁷ See Triga & Vadratsikas (2016) for a comprehensive summary.

framing over time alone, we are unable to determine the actual interconnectedness. The similarity of communication in different arenas, for example, could be a simple result of similar news values leading journalistic selection processes” (Pfetsch, 2014:38). Trenz shares similar sentiments, adding that “the simultaneity of communication about the same issues does not by itself define the criteria of a European public sphere...it is still possible that communication takes place in different arenas which ignore each other” (Trenz, 2004:308). Frame analysis, furthermore, is unable to capture the relational and dynamic aspect of communication, and thus, we are unable to assess whether public spheres’ are becoming more Europeanised over time (Pfetsch, 2014).

Political Claims Analysis

With frame analysis unable to capture the cross-border element of transnational communication, some scholars opt for the method of Political Claims Analysis (Statham & Gray, 2005; Koopmans & Erbe, 2003) and its derivatives (see de Wilde, 2011 on the method of Representative Claims Analysis²⁸). Below I summarise and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of PCA. Koopmans and Erbe (2003) were, to my knowledge, the first scholars to utilise claims analysis in European public sphere research. Koopmans (2014) defines 'claim making' (hereafter referred to as PCA) as “purposeful communicative action in the public sphere consisting of a public-speech act that articulates political demands, calls to action, proposals, or criticisms, which – actually or potentially – affect the interests or integrity of the claim makers and/or other collective actors” (Koopmans, 2014:56)²⁹. Almost identically, Statham defines PCA as, “a strategic action in the public sphere. It consists of intentional public speech acts which articulate political demands, calls to action, proposals and criticisms, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of claimants and/or other collective actors in a political issue field” (Statham, 2007:113). The main hallmark of PCA vis-à-vis content analysis is the unit of analysis is the act of claims making and not the newspaper article (Rucht et al.,1998, Statham, 2007). This method takes newspaper articles as the main source of claims-making by political actors. As Statham adds, “claims-making analysis sees reported news as a record of public events and retrieves information on this aspect” (2007:113). Claims analysis is tailor-made for assessing the extent of transnational communication. As Pfetsch states, claims analysis “serves to measure the density, direction, and scope, as well as the content of communication, and to determine the degree to which these elements remain

²⁸ De Wilde (2011) examines representativeness from a public sphere perspective (he examines the visibility of elected and non-elected representatives on both a national and European level through political claims. The author develops an innovative method called Representative Claims Analysis, which is a derivative of PCA, however, the *claimant* and *constituency* variables are particularly important. For de Wilde, the normative threshold for what constitutes a political claim is higher as “only representative claims, including an explicitly stated constituency potentially affected by the claim, are included in the analysis” (De Wilde, 2011:10).

national or become European” (Pfetsch, 2014:37). An act of claims-making links various actors together through communication. The benefit of PCA is that we can gauge and compare the visibility of a myriad of actors’ in the public sphere ranging from social movement organisations and NGOs to banks, courts, political parties and governments (Statham, 2007:113). In crude terms, claims analysis is interested in who addressed whom, on what issue, spoke for, or against, whom, for what reason, how, when, and where (Koopmans, 2002). In basic terms, a claim typically consists of three elements: actors (e.g. subject, addressee, object), content (i.e. the issue and the frame) and a context (location and form of the claim). More specifically, as Statham (2005:100) clearly lays out, claims can be broken down into seven variables:

1. Location of the claim in time and space (i.e. where and when is the claim made);
2. Subject making a demand, proposal, appeal, or criticism (i.e. who makes the claim?);
3. Form of the claim i.e. how is the manifest in the public sphere? (e.g. newspaper or TV?);
4. Addressee who is the target of criticism or support or is held responsible for implementing the claim (i.e. at whom is the claim directed);
5. Substantive issue of the claim, stating what the claim is about;
6. Object (or constituency) whose interests are or would be positively (beneficiary) or negatively affected by the claim (i.e. who would be affected by the claim if it were realised)?
7. Justification for the claim, (i.e. why should the action demanded in the claim be carried out?)

In plain terms, to paraphrase Statham, at (1) a specific time and place (2) an actor iterates a claim (3) which is made public – usually via the mass media – which (4) addresses another actor about (4) a certain issue in (5) the interests of a particular constituency, and (7) invoking arguments to justify it (2007:113). As Statham and Gray (2005) argue, PCA can shed light on how actors frame an issue, event, or problem. To paraphrase Statham and Gray, when political actors’ make claims about EU integration, they give meaning to their respective nation’s relationship to Europe by emphasising certain aspects of that relationship and overlooking others (2005:74). As Rucht puts it, actors’ frame in order “to make their definition into a public definition of the problem, to convince as many groups and people as possible by their framing of the situation, to create support for their cause, and to motivate others to participate” (Gerhards/Rucht, 1992:572).

Koopmans develops a typology of four different types of claims-making: (1) national claims-making over Europe – which refers to domestic actors addressing other domestic actors over European issues; (2) horizontal claims-making – which refers to national actors addressing other EU member states (and vice-versa); (3) vertical claims-making – which refers to national actors addressing EU institutions (and vice-versa); and supranational claims-making – which refers to interactions among European-level institutions and EU level actors. The first type of claim is indicative of an ‘internalised’ (Statham, 2007)

or ‘domesticated’ national debate, as there is less direct engagement with member states (horizontal) or supranational institutions (vertical) with interaction confined to exchanges between domestic actors. Instead, horizontal claims-making is deemed to foster Europeanisation, by forging ‘communicative linkages’ between member states, and “depicting a Europe of interacting nation states whose politics are being more closely interwoven with one another by conflict over, or collaboration in, European integration” (Statham, 2007:116). Vertical Europeanisation indicates that the different spherical levels comprising Europe are highly embedded, mutually relevant, and interdependent on one another.

As Koopmans et al. (2003) underlines, claims analysis is preferable to frame analysis and general content analysis because it is able to capture the dynamic and relational character of political communication. Content analysis does not tell us anything about the role of actors’ in public debates, relations between them nor the positions they take on a given issue (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003; Monza, 2017). Claims analysis is a useful method for gaging the density of communicative linkages between actors within and between national and transnational spaces. In the words of Pfetsch, “it is an elaborate approach to investigate the spatial reach, interconnectedness and relative density of public communication within and between different political spaces” (Pfetsch, 2014: 37). By utilising this method, scholars can trace communicative exchanges across different political levels (e.g. from the national to the supranational level). Claims analysis is also advantageous because it is able to be applied to different levels of communication (e.g. sub-national, national, European, global networks). One can compare the actor-object-issue structures of communication across different spherical levels. As several scholars highlight, particularly Pfetsch and Koopmans, Europeanisation should be measured in relative terms as its strength is determined by how structures of communication develop at a (sub-)national, European, and global level. Thus, gaging levels of Europeanisation implies adopting a standard of comparison. PCA is appropriate for this yardstick approach (Koopmans, 2014). Furthermore, as Statham points out, another advantage of claims-making is one can compare the degree of Europeanisation over time. As Statham argues, “[claims-making] retrieves a party’s actual intervention in the public domain, drawn from the medium by which parties communicate with citizens as an ongoing process, and in a way that is continuous over time. It is not based on their one-off strategic attempts to woo citizens at election times, or expert or public perceptions” (2007:127). In other words, we can trace the dynamic nature of discourse over long periods of time, ranging from ordinary to exceptional periods.

Social Network Analysis

Social Network Analysis (hereafter referred to as SNA) is desirable from both a theoretical and empirical perspective. For instance, one can map actor-issue relationships and gage the embeddedness

of actors in a given network. The advantage of SNA is that data can be easily collected from internet sources such as hyperlinks (Bennett, Lang, and Segerberg, 2014) or social media pages such as Twitter and Facebook via web scraping. Moreover, PCA data from newspaper articles can easily be transposed as a network object as it already contains a network structure comprised of subject-actor-object relationships (Pfetsch, 2014:39). Furthermore, SNA can help us to establish, firstly, whether transnational coalitions have formed, and secondly, whether coalitions coalesce around countries or issues? (Adam 2008: 192–5; Pfetsch, 2014:39). Despite these strengths, SNA has been surprisingly underutilised by European public sphere scholars.

Research designs

Time

As Risse (2014) and Meyer (2010) point out, researchers typically opt for one of three designs for case selection: either scholars analyse (1) day-to-day coverage of political affairs (also called “routine” or “regular” periods of political communication) based on a representative sample of “constructed/artificial weeks” covering a limited time period, enabling researchers to capture and compare the structure and intensity of news coverage; alternatively, some scholars opt for (2) exceptional/extraordinary periods (e.g. EU Council summits or periods of upheaval viz. crisis); alternatively, some scholars opt for (3) longer periods of time consisting of both regular periods and critical junctures (e.g. Risse, 2014). Until now, most scholars have opted for synchronic case studies during ‘exceptional’ periods (e.g. Emediate, 2004).

Routine periods

Starting with routine periods, Statham et al. (2005) collected a sample of specific days at regular time intervals (1990, 1995, 2001 and 2002) which allowed them to place their findings in a longer time perspective (see also Statham, 2007 and Statham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010: 248; Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). The strength of this approach compared to sampling around key events is that they are more representative of the population of interest (Statham, 2007). By contrast, analysing communication around key events may overstate levels of Europeanisation as coverage of EU affairs tends to peak around the time of key events. Kleinen-von Königslöw et al. (2010; 2012) collected a sample every seven years from 1982 to 2008 in order to construct two ‘artificial weeks’ (see also Peters, Sifft, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Königslöw, 2005). The studies by Brüggemann et al.

(2006), Brantner et al. (2005) and Vliegenthart et al. (2008) collected data over an extensive period of time, from 1990 to 2006, 1995 to 2004, and 1982 to 2003, respectively. Pawley (2017) carried out a text analysis of party manifestos from 2010 until 2017. De la Porte et al. (2016) examined articles on Europe's socio-economic strategy (EUSES) over 10 years, between 2000 and 2010. Concerning synchronic case designs, Bossetta and Segesten (2019) retrieved newspaper articles during the whole of 2014 and Koopmans et al. (2003) conducted PCA for the year 2000. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk et al. (2012) carried out a content analysis of Polish television and newspapers in two waves, namely, 2007 and 2009. Medrano et al. (2010) conducted a frame analysis of newspapers in the year of 2003. Pfetsch et al. (2010) carried out a political claims analysis in the three year period between 2000 and 2002. Slavtcheva-Petkova (2014) carried out a content analysis of public TV broadcasting in seven days spread over four months³⁰ (November 2009 – February 2010). Morley et al. (2012) carried out a corpus linguistics analysis of Italian and British newspapers between February and April in 2007 and 2009. Both Gerhards et al. (2009) and Koopmans & Zimmermann (2010) examined political communication on the internet within a period of two years (see also Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014).

‘Krisenkommunikation’

The most popular choice is to analyse political communication during particular events or crises, the rationale being that patterns of Europeanisation (or lack thereof) are more discernible during exceptional periods. For example, Schuck et al. (2006) examined news framing during the hotly contested debates concerning EU enlargement in 2004 (data collected from 1 November 2002 and 31 October 2003). Monza (2017) examined political communication during the period of the global financial crisis and euro crisis (2008 – 2014)³¹. Conrad (2006; 2010) analysed debates on the EU constitutional treaty in Sweden (June 2003 – April 2005). De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2006) carried out a content analysis during the Copenhagen European Council meeting in 2002 (25 November and 16 December 2002). Van de Steeg (2006) carried out a content analysis at the height of the Haider debacle (October 1999 to September 2000)³². Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) analysed news coverage seven months prior to the ratification of the Lisbon treaty (2007)³³. Countless other examples can be drawn such as: Turkey's failed bid to become an EU member in 2004 (Negrine et al., 2008); the 1997 Amsterdam European Council meeting (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000); the 2002 launch of the euro currency (de Vreese, Semetko et al. 2001; Triandafyllidou, 2003); Berlusconi's controversial address to the European Parliament in 2003 when he compared the MEP Martin Schulz to a concentration camp

³⁰ As the same scholar adds, the aim was to capture a 'snapshot' of typical news coverage during a 'normal' period.

³¹ See also Lichtenstein et al., (2019) and Thornborrow et al., (2012) both of whom examine news coverage during the euro crisis.

³² See also Berkel, 2006 and Van de Steeg & Risse, 2003.

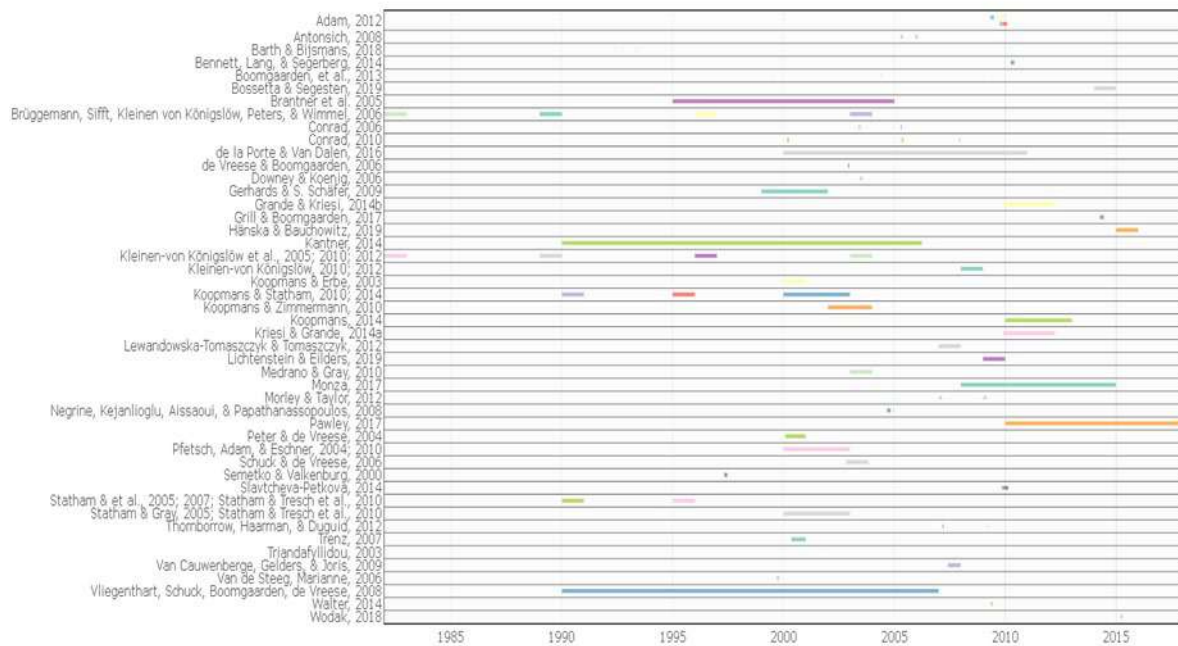
³³ See also Adam, (2012) and Conrad, (2010).

guard (Downey & Koenig, 2006); the 1999, 2004 and 2009 European parliamentary elections (Boomgaarden, et al., 2013; for an analysis of the 2009 elections, see Adam, 2012); coverage of Joschka Fischer's famous speech, and the Nice summit (Trenz, 2007); the EU Climate Change summit, 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome in 2007, and the G20 summit in 2009 (Thornborrow et al., 2012); the appointment of Herman Van Rompuy as President of the EU Council; the Copenhagen climate summit (Adam, 2012); the 2015-16 refugee crisis (Wodak, 2018); Greece's bailout negotiations in 2015 (Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019); European security policy (Kantner et al., 2007); agricultural policy and institutional reform (Berkel, 2006); economic policy (Meyer, 2005); the BSE scandal in 1996 (Grundmann, 2000); and the 'Prodi affair' (Trenz, 2002).

Hybrid approaches

The most interesting but hitherto underutilised case selection approach is a combination of routine and exceptional periods. In light of the ensuing Covid-19 pandemic, it would be interesting to seriously consider a hybrid approach. Several scholars have already adopted this approach. The study by Grill et al. (2017) compares three periods of news coverage, namely, 'routine' periods several months prior to the 2014 European election, the days either side of European election day, and several weeks following the European election (Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017). Similarly, the study by Peter and de Vreese (2004) examines media coverage spanning both regular and EU summit periods (Peter & de Vreese, 2004). The regular period consists of a seven natural weeks (i.e. 49 days in total) sampled in months which did not overlap with an EU summit. For the four summits that took place in 2000, Peter et al. sample included three days preceding, two days during, and two days following the summits (i.e. 28 days in total; Peter & de Vreese, 2004:9). Similarly, Barth et al. (2018) selected news coverage three days before, during, and after EU summits (e.g. Maastricht on 9 and 10 December 1991) and EU referenda (e.g. the Danish referendum on 2 June 1992) between 1990 and 1994. In order to capture European-related news cycles, Kantner (2014) carried out a corpus-linguistic frequency analysis of over 16 years of newspaper coverage (i.e. 195 months in total). Koopmans (2014) supplements his longitudinal analysis of unexceptional periods (Koopmans et al. 2010) with a content analysis of German media coverage during the euro crisis from 2010 to 2012. Kriesi and Grande collected newspaper data covering the fairly sanguine period from 2004 to 2006, and debates concerning the euro crisis, from its earliest beginnings in December 2009 until March 2012 (2014a; 2014b).

Figure 1.1: Overview of time periods chosen for case design



Cases examined

As we can see from Fig.1.2 below, many researchers have analysed news coverage in the largest European countries, particularly, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Almost half of all studies that I reviewed contained the UK (36), France (33), and Germany (32), followed by Italy (21), Netherlands (15), Austria (14), and Spain (11). Compared to Western European countries, central and Eastern ones have been under-researched. The United Kingdom is widely regarded as an outlier which might explains why scholars have afforded a disproportionate amount of attention to it. The most studied non-EU country, other than the United Kingdom, was Switzerland (10) followed by the United States (5). The mean number of countries examined is four cases. The caveat of my literature review is that it contains a sample of empirical studies. Thus any findings are merely indicative.

Figure 1.2: Countries chosen for analysis

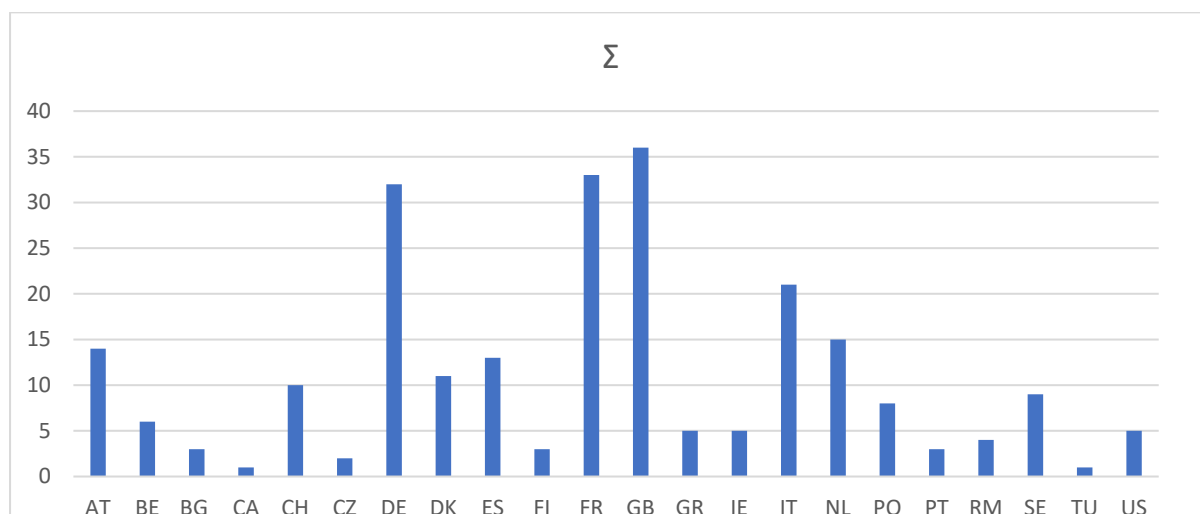
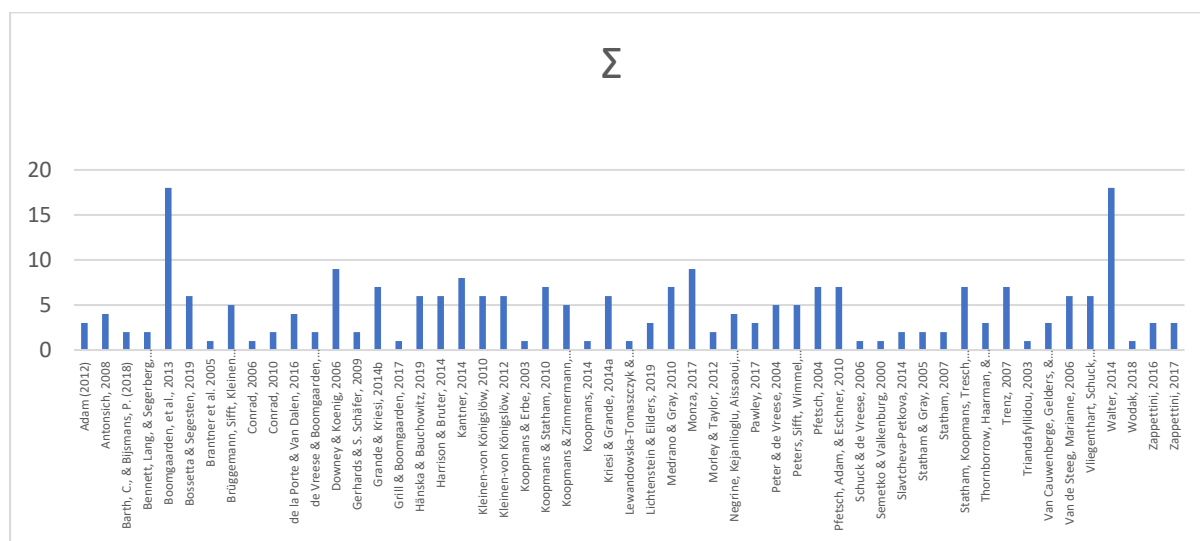


Figure 1.3: Total no. of countries chosen for analysis



Most scholars implicitly opted for a ‘methods of difference’ research design approach³⁴ (Mill, 1843). Van de Steeg (2006), for example, chose a combination of smaller EU member states in terms of population size (i.e. Austria and Belgium), and larger ones³⁵ (i.e. Germany and France). Harrison and Bruter (2014) selected countries which varied markedly according to wealth, geographic size, and public attitudes to the EU. The study by Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) chose countries that were particularly embroiled in the debate on the EU constitutional treaty, and which varied in terms of public

³⁴ Notably, Peters *et al.*, (2005); Statham *et al.*, (2010); Pfetsch, (2004); Medrano & Gray, (2010); and de la Porte & Van Dalen (2016).

³⁵ See also Vliegthart *et al.* (2008), for a similar approach.

opinion to the EU. Kleinen-von Königsłow (2012) chose countries' which varied according to international influence and the length of EU membership. Downey et al. (2006) selected EU member states, non-EU European states, as well as two North American countries (i.e. Canada and United States) as a benchmark for comparison. Peter et al. (2004) opted for EU-sceptic countries, namely, Denmark and the UK, and three countries that have traditionally been more supportive of EU integration (i.e. France, the Netherlands, Germany). Bossetta et al. (2019) examined six countries chosen according to their purported heterogeneity in terms of the type of media system, prominence of national Eurosceptic parties in national parliaments, relationship to the EU budget, and population size. The study by Antonsich (2008) chose four regions which varied according to their socio-economic (poor/rich), geographical (North/South) and political (pro-European/Eurosceptical) profile. Monza (2017) examined nine countries representing heterogeneous economic and political contexts such as pro-EU and Eurosceptic member states, EU and member states and third countries, opt-out and non-euro countries, founding members and newer members, and Eastern and Western Europeans (Monza, 2017:9). Pfetsch et al. (2010) selected founding members of the EU, 'opt-out' EU members, and non-EU countries, in order to test, the 'depth-of-integration' hypothesis (Pfetsch et al., 2010:154). In a similar vein, Koopmans et al. (2010) chose countries which varied according to size, and date of entry as a member of the EU. Switzerland was also included in order to examine to what extent patterns of discourse are tied to EU membership (Koopmans et al., 2010:48). In order to examine debates on military interventions, Kantner (2014) picked an assortment of EU countries representing a diverse range of positions on foreign, security and defence policy. More specifically, she chose both small and large countries in terms of geopolitical clout, and countries with post-neutral and Atlanticist foreign-policy traditions. In order to examine debates on the euro crisis, Kriesi and Grande (2014) selected eurozone member states (i.e. Austria, France, Germany), 'non-eurozone-but-EU' members (i.e. Sweden), and non-EU states (i.e. Switzerland). By contrast, the 'most similar' systems design (a la Mill, 1843) is seldom employed by scholars. That said, Lichtenstein et al. (2019) selected three 'similar' countries in terms of their economic importance and geopolitical clout, namely, France, Germany, and the UK. The study by de Vreese et al (2006) chose Denmark and the Netherlands because they held a similar macroeconomic profile, and held similar levels of support for the EU and satisfaction levels with EU democracy at the time of data collection (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006).

Table 1.1: Overview of the studies including the type of medium and country of origin³⁶

Studies	AT	BE	BG	CA	CH	CZ	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GB	GR	IE	IT	NL	PO	PT	RM	SE	TU	US	Σ	Medium type	
Adam (2012)																								3 Print	
Antonsson, 2008																								4 Focus group	
Baifli, C., & Bjesmans, P. (2018)																								2 Print	
Bennett, Lang, & Segeberg, 2014																								2 Social media	
Boongaerden, et al., 2013																								18 Print	
Bossatta & Sigustein, 2019																								6 Print	
Brammer et al. (2017)																								4 Print & TV	
Burton, Siff, Kleinen von Königslow, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006																								5 Print	
Conrad, 2006																								2 Print	
Conrad, 2010																								4 Print	
de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016																								2 Print & TV	
de Vreese & Boongaerden, 2006																								9 Print	
Downey & Koenig, 2006																								2 Social media	
Gerhards & S. Schaller, 2009																								7 Print	
Grande & Kriesi, 2014b																								1 Print, TV & Web sites	
Grill & Boongaerden, 2017																								6 Social media	
Hänska & Baucowitz, 2019																								6 Print	
Harrison & Butler, 2014																								6 Print	
Kaniner, 2014																								6 Print	
Klein-von Königslow, 2010																								6 Print	
Klein-von Königslow, 2012																								6 Print	
Koopmans & Erbe, 2003																								1 Print	
Koopmans & Saltham, 2010																								7 Print	
Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010																								5 Print & Web sites	
Koopmans, 2014																								1 Print	
Kriesi & Grande, 2014a																								6 Print	
Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012																								1 Print & TV	
Lichtenstein & Elders, 2019																								3 Print	
Mediano & Gray, 2010																								7 Print	
Monza, 2017																								9 Print	
Morley & Taylor, 2012																								2 Print	
Negrini, Kaganigiri, Assouli, & Papathanassiopoulos, 2008																								4 Print	
Rowley & Vreese, 2004																								8 Print & manifestos	
Peters, 2004																								5 TV	
Peters, Siff, Wimmel, Boliggenmann, & Königslow, 2005																								7 Print	
Plösch, 2004																								7 Print	
Plösch, Adam, & Eschmer, 2010																								7 Print	
Schuck & de Vreese, 2006																								1 Print	
Semke & Valkenburg, 2000																								1 Print & TV	
Siarchova-Petkova, 2014																								2 TV	
Saltham & Gray, 2005																								2 Print	
Saltham, 2007																								2 Print	
Saltham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010																								7 Print	
Thomson, Koopmans, Haarman, & Duguid, 2012																								3 TV	
Trenz, 2007																								7 Print	
Trenz, 2009																								3 Print & TV	
Van der Stoep, 2003																								3 Print	
Van der Stoep, Goiders, & Joris, 2009																								6 Print	
Van de Straet, Marinne, 2006																								6 Print	
Viegenthart, Schuck, Boongaerden, de Vreese, 2008																								6 Print	
Waller, 2014																								18 Print & TV	
Wodak, 2018																								1 Print	
Zappettini, 2016																								3 Focus group	
Zappettini, 2017																								3 Focus group	
Σ		14	6	3	1	10	32	11	13	3	33	36	5	5	5	21	15	8	3	4	9	1	5	4,5	

³⁶ The table uses the same format as that used by Machill et al., (2006.68).

Comparative approach

Several researchers treat time as a unit of analysis. Noteworthy examples include the study by Koopman's (2014) who carried out a longitudinal analysis (1990, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2010-2012) and compared patterns of discourse before and during the height of the global financial crisis (see also Koopmans, 2010; and Statham & Gray, 2005). In a similar vein, Brüggemann et al. (2005) carried out a content analysis from 1982 until 2003, every seven years (1982, 1989, 1996, 2003). The studies by Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010;2012) extend the timeframe of analysis to 2008 in order to examine how patterns of discourse evolve during the financial crisis. Monza (2017) conducted PCA from the outset to the tail-end of the euro crisis (2008-2014). In order to detect issue saliency trends in the news, Kantner (2014) conducted an extensive longitudinal content analysis from 1990 to 2006 (see also Vliegenthart et al., 2008). However, most studies adopt for a 'snapshot-in-time' approach revolving around key events or scandals (e.g. the EU enlargement debates, Schuck & de Vreese, 2006).

As well as comparisons at the country level of analysis (see above), several scholars have analysed at the meso-level in order to examine differences in political communication according to: party family/political partisanship (e.g. left wing, right wing parties, see Statham & Gray, 2005; Statham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010; and Pawley, 2017; the latter of whom compares representations of the EU within party manifestos); actor type (e.g. government/executive actors, legislative actors, interest groups etc., see Koopmans et al., 2010 for more); issue field (e.g. monetary, foreign/defence and education policy, see Koopmans et al. 2010); medium type (e.g. TV, newspapers, or social media) and outlet type (e.g. tabloids/quality newspapers, private/public TV broadcasting). The latter two are often compared by scholars in light of the expectation that different mediums (i.e. social media, print media, television media) and outlets (i.e. quality press, tabloid/regional press, private/public service broadcasting) conform to different journalistic standards, cater to different audiences, and are underpinned by different media logics. In regard to cross-medium comparative analyses, notable examples include: the study by Gerhards and Schäfer (2009) which compares social media and print media in order to ascertain which medium is more amenable to transnational communication (see also: Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010); the study by Triandafyllidou (2003) compares Italian television and print media in their coverage of Italy's imminent Eurozone membership; Boomgaarden et al. (2013) compares tabloids to quality newspapers in their coverage of the European parliamentary elections; Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) compares commercial and public television broadcasting, and quality and tabloid newspaper news coverage of the EU Amsterdam Summit (1997). The study by Grill and Boomgaarden (2017) included six national daily newspapers, public service broadcasting, and online media outlets, however, no systematic comparison across mediums was carried out. Instead, a wide range of different mediums were employed to provide a representative sample of media representations of Europe.

Moreover, numerous scholars compare across outlet type in order to examine to what extent national public spheres are ‘multi-segmented’, the latter of which describes public spheres which are not only segmented across different nations – due to nationally specific cultural patterns of political communication – but within nations themselves, due to variegated institutional, editorial, and ideological contexts (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010; 2012). Noteworthy contributions include: Kleinen-von Königslöw’s 2010 and 2012 studies which carried out a systematic comparative analysis across quality and tabloid newspapers (see also Boomgaarden, et al., 2013 and Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000); the comprehensive ‘Europub’ research project (Koopmans et al., 2010) which compares patterns of political claims-making across broadsheet, tabloid and regional newspapers (see also Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner on an analysis of editorials tabloid, regional, or quality newspapers); Triandafyllidou’s (2003) study compared media coverage across different outlets (from ideologically left-wing newspapers to more conservative outlets) to show how representations of Europe vary markedly across different outlets; Peter and de Vreese (2004) compared public service broadcasting to commercial television in their coverage of the EU summit in the year 2000, based on the expectation that the outlet of public service broadcasting would be more Europeanised than private broadcasting outlets. Van de Steeg (2006) compared centre-left and centre-right newspapers in their coverage of the EU sanctions against Austria.

Furthermore, a minority of scholars compared across different spherical levels, that is, comparisons between political communication within national public spheres at the local/domestic level and supranational level. This ‘yardstick’ approach has been championed by Koopmans (2010) and supported by Checkel (2014). The study by Koopmans (2010) compares the distribution of political claims by national actors according to actor type with no European references and claims by actors containing European references. This research design is replicated in Koopman’s 2014 study which compares national and European structures of political communication. The same scholar concludes from this study that media debates on European issues can be regarded as ‘Europeanised’ when measured against the yardstick of national debates in Germany. The scholar, Zürn, supports this approach, arguing that we should assess Europeanisation in relative terms, that is, “the extent of cross-border transactions relative to transactions taking place within national borders” (Zürn, 2000,187; cited in Brüggemann, et al., 2006:8).

Data sources

As the tree map below shows (Fig.1.4), the print press are the most commonly employed medium for data collection. This is not surprising given that newspapers are readily accessible – via databases such as LexisNexis, Infomedia, and Retriever – and text is easier to analyse than audio or visual data. From

my literature review, remarkably, almost 90% of all studies adopted print media for data collection, and 80% of them (41 out of 48) selected quality newspapers for data collection. Although this data is merely indicative, other scholars reach similar conclusions (see, for example, Bärenreuter, Brüll, Mokre, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009: 10-11). Even with the inclusion of regional newspapers, only half of all studies chose non-quality newspapers. There is thus a palpable selectivity bias in the literature with tabloid newspapers neglected. By contrast, 20% of all studies chose to analyse television broadcasting. Surprisingly, only 10% of studies collected data from the Internet. De la Porte et al. (2016:7-8) opts for the quality press over tabloid newspapers because the former are regarded as instrumental to inter-elite debate, gatekeeping, and agenda-setting. For Trenz, the quality press are considered to be at the forefront of Europeanization of the public sphere as 'opinion leaders' (Trenz, 2004), and possess a leading role in opinion formation (Trenz, 2007). However, these scholars acknowledge that quality newspapers dedicate more space to European issues which is problematic as they are likely to overstate the levels of Europeanisation (De Vreese et al., 2006). Notwithstanding this, Downey & Koenig (2006) justifies the preference for quality newspapers by arguing that Europeanised discourses are more likely to be present in the quality press. Thus, if we do not detect Europeanisation in quality newspapers, we are unlikely to find it elsewhere (see also: Brüggemann, Siffert et al., 2006, for similar reasoning).

Figure 1.4: Tree map showing the most popular data sources

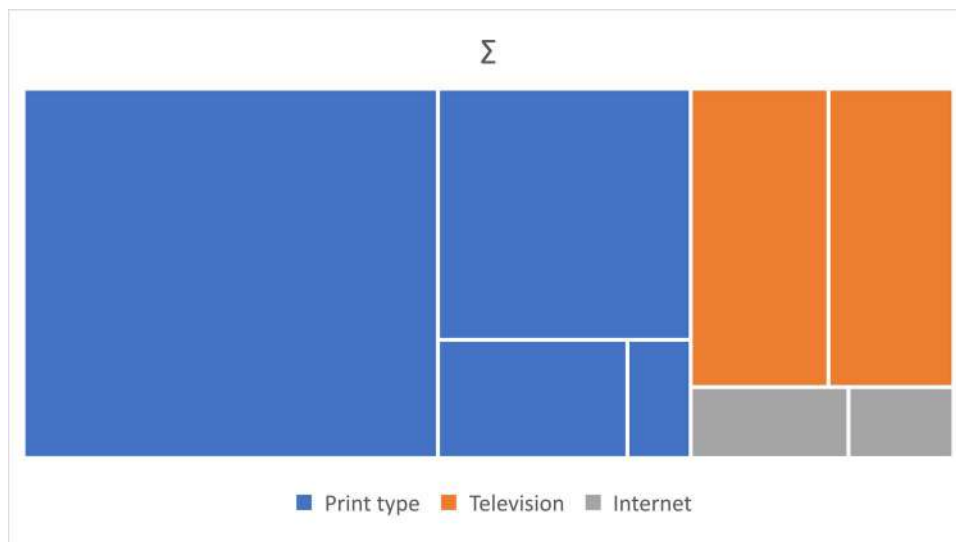
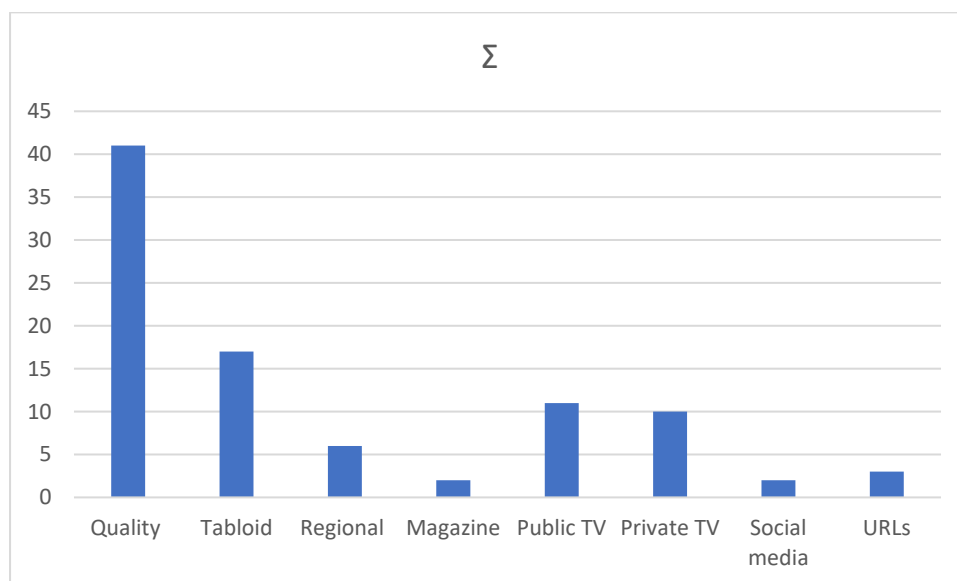


Figure 1.5: Bar chart showing the most popular data sources



The choice of media outlet is typically based on several contextual variables³⁷ such as: ideological alignment (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003)³⁸; rate of circulation/size of readership³⁹ (see Trenez, 2007; Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009: 45; Bossetta & Segesten, 2019); newspaper reputation (Trenz, 2007; Gerhards & S. Schäfer, 2010), levels of influence in agenda setting and ‘opinion leading’ (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006); and the geographical scope and target audience of the newspaper⁴⁰. From a theoretical perspective, the analysis of both regional and national newspapers is interesting due to the multi-level governance structure of the EU. Most scholars adopt a ‘methods of difference’ approach (a la Mill) in regard to the choice of outlet in order to ensure a more representative sample. For example, Brantner et al. (2005) examines differences in media coverage between private and public television broadcasting, internet news platforms, and between tabloids and quality newspapers⁴¹ (see also: Boomgaarden, et al., 2013; Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017).

³⁷ As Trenez (2004) points out, newspapers vary markedly according to editorial/journalistic standards, the size of readership, the format and presentation of news, and space allocated for news stories (see Trenez, 2004, found in Downey & Koenig, 2006).

³⁸ Several studies, namely, Schuck & de Vreese, 2006; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012; and Statham et al., 2005; 2007 chose both left- and right-oriented newspapers to control for selectivity bias. Similarly, Conrad, 2010, chose one conservative and one liberal newspaper by the same logic.

³⁹ De Vreese and Boomgaarden’s (2006) case sample consisted of TV news programmes and newspapers which garnered the largest audiences.

⁴⁰ For example, ‘The Economist’ or ‘Financial Times’ are regarded as transnational-oriented outlets (Schlesinger, 1999).

⁴¹ Peter & de Vreese, 2004 and de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006 also analysed public and private evening news programs.

The unit of analysis

Most scholars opt for articles as the unit of analysis (e.g. Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). Some scholars limit the selection of articles to editorials and commentaries⁴² (e.g. Trenz, 2007). For example, Pfetsch et al. (2010) were interested in examining media evaluations of Europe which is why they limited their analysis to editorials. Likewise, Peters et al. (2005) reduced their sample to ‘recognisable opinion components’ in the political sections of newspapers as they are interested in substantive debates. To this end, they chose to omit what they call ‘mere news’. Brüggemann, Sift et al., (2006) adopted a similar approach, opting for news articles which contained ‘opinions backed by justifications’. Similarly, Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) limited her content analysis of quality newspapers to ‘discursive articles’. However, as Koopmans (2010:58) rightly points out, the emphasis on substantive debates and neglect of ‘mere news’ seems unnecessarily restrictive, arbitrary, and elite-biased, and which overlooks the importance of all political claims which are visible and material, nonetheless. All news, deliberative or not, is important, and arguably the most pervasive kind of media content. Moreover, news content from the tabloid press is widely understood to lack the deliberative component of public discourse⁴³. In my view, it is erroneous to discount the influence that news has on the output of political communication. Furthermore, Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) controversially lowered the threshold for tabloid newspapers, accepting all news content. This arguably raises the problem of "comparing apples and oranges", or in plain terms, raises reliability issues on the purported comparability between quality and tabloid newspapers (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). Interestingly, Boomgaarden, et al., (2013) only coded for the front pages of newspaper articles. As I mentioned beforehand, in PCA, the unit of analysis is political statements found in newspaper articles rather than the whole article itself (e.g. Koopmans & Erbe, 2003; Monza, 2017). Generally speaking, content analyses of the article level are favoured by researchers interested in how politics is discussed or represented in the media, whereas analyses of political statements are favoured by those interested in the position taken by different types of actors (de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016). For analyses of television coverage, almost all scholars opt for traditional content analysis methods, I suspect for pragmatic reasons (e.g. Brantner, 2005). Arguably, PCA is a more sophisticated and intricate form of content analysis which would be particularly difficult to execute for analysing audio or visual coverage. For television analyses, usually the entire news bulletin is coded (Boomgaarden, et al., 2013). For analyses of the Internet, most scholars choose to examine ‘tweets’ (Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019) or URL links (Gerhards & S. Schäfer, 2010; Koopmans and Zimmermann, 2010; Lang, & Segerberg, 2014).

⁴² Several other scholars have adopted this approach, namely, Conrad, 2010; Barth & Bijmans, 2018; Brüggemann, Sift, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006; Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012; Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010; Peters et al. 2005: 142; Adam, 2012; Brüggemann, Sift et al., 2006; and Conrad, 2006.

⁴³ Peters *et al.*, 2005 define ‘diskurs’ narrowly.

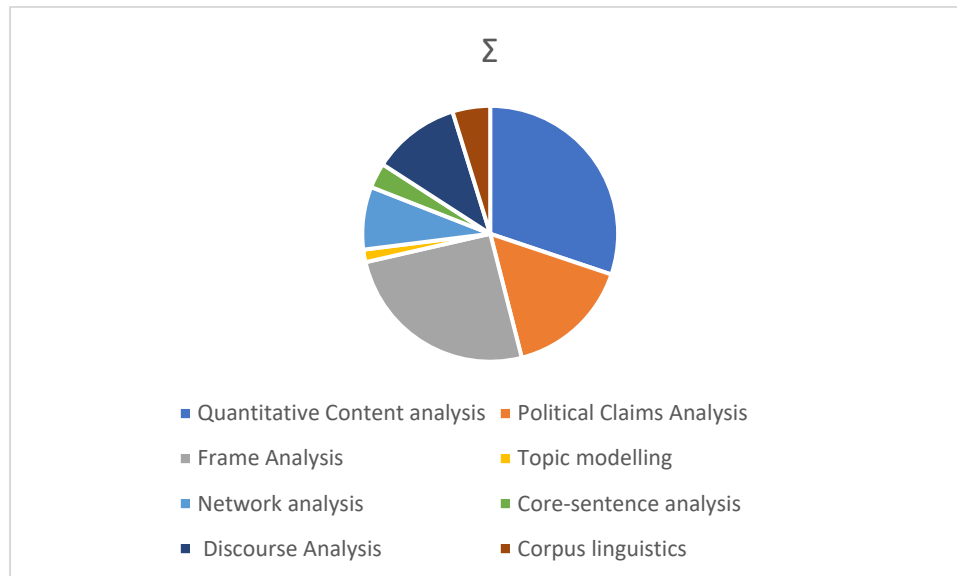
Table 1.2: Overview of the studies including the medium type and format⁴⁴

	Print type				Television		Internet		Σ
	Quality	Tabloid	Regional	Magazine	Public	Private	Social media	URLs	
Adam (2012)	■								1
Barth, C., & Bijsmans, P. (2018)	■								1
Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014								■	1
Boomgaarden, et al., 2013	■	■			■	■			4
Bossetta & Segesten, 2019	■	■							2
Brantner et al. 2005	■	■			■	■			4
Brüggemann, Siff, et al., 2006	■								1
Conrad, 2006	■								1
Conrad, 2010	■								1
de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016	■								1
de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006	■	■			■	■			4
Downey & Koenig, 2006	■								1
Gerhards & S. Schäfer, 2009							■		1
Grande & Kriesi, 2014b	■	■							2
Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017	■	■			■			■	4
Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019							■		1
Kantner, 2014	■								1
Kleinen-von Königlöw, 2010	■	■							2
Kleinen-von Königlöw, 2012	■	■							2
Koopmans & Erbe, 2003	■	■	■						3
Koopmans & Statham, 2010	■	■	■						3
Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010								■	1
Koopmans, 2014	■	■	■						3
Kriesi & Grande, 2014a	■								1
Tomaszczyk et al., 2012	■				■	■			3
Lichtenstein & Eilders, 2019	■			■					2
Medrano & Gray, 2010	■	■							2
Monza, 2017	■	■							2
Morley & Taylor, 2012	■								1
Negrine, et al., 2008	■	■							2
Peter & de Vreese, 2004					■	■			2
Peters, Siff, et al., 2005	■								1
Pfetsch, 2004	■								1
Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010	■	■	■						3
Schuck & de Vreese, 2006	■		■						2
Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000	■	■			■	■			4
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014					■	■			2
Statham & Gray, 2005	■								1
Statham, 2007	■								1
Statham, Tresch, et al., 2010	■								1
Thornborrow et al., 2012					■	■			2
Trenz, 2007	■								1
Triandafyllidou, 2003	■								1
Van Cauwenberge et al., 2009	■								1
Van de Steeg, 2006	■								1
Vliegthart, et al., 2008	■								1
Walter, 2014	■	■			■	■			4
Wodak, 2018	■								1
Σ	41	17	5	1	10	9	2	3	M = 1.8

⁴⁴ The table uses the same format as that used by Machill et al., (2006.68).

Methods

Figure 1.6: Pie chart showing the most popular methods in EPS research



By way of summary, almost two-third of studies (64%, i.e. 34 out of 53 studies) adopted some kind of conventional content analysis, 19 of which carried out quantitative content analyses and 15 some form of qualitative content analysis⁴⁵ (e.g. frame analysis). Under 20% of studies adopted PCA, and approximately half a dozen studies employed some form of discourse analysis, and 5 studies adopted some form of social network analysis. Only two studies adopted core-sentence analysis (both by the same scholar), and only one study adopted Latent Dirichlet Allocation (i.e. topic modelling).

⁴⁵ The qualitative-quantitative dichotomy in content analyses is disputed by Neuman (1997) who claims that all analyses of text, even counting word frequencies, entail some qualitative aspects. Although I agree with Neuman (1997) that the distinction is not clear-cut, one can confidently assert that computer-assisted text mining tools (e.g. *Latent Dirichlet allocation*) are purely quantitative. For example, '*Latent Dirichlet allocation*' essentially generates 'topics' based on word frequencies from a set of documents. The 'bag-of-words' method is also clearly an example of quantitative methods. Often, scholars employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse text. The study by Medrano and Gray (2010) illustrates this mixed approach. Herein, they devised a framing schema, and then measured the proportion of claims containing a particular frame (Medrano & Gray, 2010). In a nutshell, devising frames and categorising concepts, themes and words in text is qualitative (i.e. interpreting text), and counting the occurrence of words, frames, themes, or concepts in a text is quantitative (see Streefkerk, 2021, for a succinct overview).

Quantitative content analysis

Starting with the most popular research method, namely, quantitative content analysis, Kantner (2014) employed a corpus-linguistic frequency analysis. In particular, the same scholar measures the volume of EU-related news related to military interventions over time in order to examine the phenomenon of transnational issue cycles. The study by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk (2012) adopt the method of ‘cognitive corpus linguistic analysis’. In basic terms, this method entails the analysis of word frequencies, word ‘keyness’, word collocations and word clusters. In addition, this method examines the context of relevant words, or in technical terms, their ‘axiology’ and ‘semantic prosodies’ (figurative meanings) to uncover speakers’ attitudes and opinions (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012). From the same book, Morley & Taylor (2012) carry out a corpus linguistics analysis of Italian and British quality newspapers and their coverage of immigration debates. This study identified the most salient expressions in the corpora of the UK and Italian press. In particular, these scholars developed ‘collocational profiles’ by observing which words occurred most frequently with their collocates in the corpora. They, moreover, analysed how the pronoun, ‘us’, is framed by identifying the main collocates of the word stem, ‘nostr’ in Italian, and ‘our’ in English (Morley & Taylor, 2012).

De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2006) measured the visibility of EU integration in television and national newspapers over time (over three weeks). Walter (2014) carried out a quantitative content analysis to assess which types of actors’ were the most visible in news coverage of the 2009 elections to the European Parliament. Brantner et al. (2005) carried out content analysis of print and TV news outlets. In particular, they coded ‘thematic and geographical focus’ of news stories. The study by Brüggemann, Sift et al. (2006) measured: the number of EU-related articles vis-à-vis national, or foreign politics (i.e. extra-EU affairs); the level of observation of other European countries (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation); the origin of ‘discursive references’ (i.e. national or European?); and the number of collective ‘We’ European deictic vis-à-vis national references (Brüggemann et al., 2006). The study by Boomgaarden et al. (2013:615) calculates the percentage of EU-related news articles as a proportion of all articles in a given outlet. The same scholars also coded who were the main actors⁴⁶, and coded whether a given actor is an EU or non-EU actor. Slavtcheva-Petkova (2014) employed a quantitative content analysis to gauge the salience of the EU/Europe in TV news, that is, the frequency of European news stories in comparison to other topics on the media agenda. Additionally, these scholars coded the main topics, actors, and symbols in European news stories. Lastly, they measured the frequency of deictic European references. The study by Peter and de Vreese (2004) coded articles according to their political character, the number of EU references, prominence of actor types, and topic discussed, among other things. Conrad’s study of Swedish newspapers examined the number of direct contributions by speakers from

⁴⁶ Ascertained according to the salience of the actor in the article (e.g. number of mentions or quotes in an article).

other countries in newspaper articles as well as indirect references to speakers from other countries. Peters, Siffert et al. (2005) measured the share of articles (%) concerned with other European countries (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation); the share of articles on EU institutions by newspaper (i.e. vertical Europeanisation); the number of European 'We'-references by newspaper (in %); and the origin of 'discursive references' according to newspaper. Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010; 2012) measured the visibility of EU actors and issues in newspapers ('monitoring governance'), the attention paid to other member states (i.e. horizontal 'discursive exchanges'), and lastly, the number of 'We-European' references in newspaper articles.

Frame analysis

Most scholars adopt a deductive schema of frames based on past studies which identified certain frames found to be pervasive in most political news content (e.g. Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Analysing news coverage of military interventions, Kantner examined whether the EU was framed as a 'collective identity', 'interest', or 'universal principles/human rights norms' frame. In addition, she explored whether the EU was framed as a 'military' or 'civil power', and whether nations advocated a unilateral or multilateral approach to EU military interventions. By contrast, Barth and Bijmams (2018) adopted an inductive framing approach. These scholars identified five main frames during coding, namely: (1) sovereignty; (2) economic consequences; (3) security and peace; (4) efficiency and 5) democratic quality frames. The study by de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2006) examines the tonality of news stories related to EU enlargement. More specifically, for each news article, they recorded whether EU enlargement was depicted favourably (i.e. 'opportunities') neutrally, or unfavourably (i.e. 'risks'). Medrano and Gray (2010) examined the proportion of news articles containing the following four types of frames: (1) identity, (2) instrumental and (3) historical frames; and (4) frames internal to the EU integration process (Medrano & Gray, 2010:200). They then disaggregated these generic frames into 16 sub-frames. For example, the democracy and rights frame was disaggregated into 5 specific sub-frames: democracy, rule of law, pluralism, human rights, and 'resisting dictatorship or totalitarianism'. These scholars also coded the most frequently invoked frames according to actor type (i.e. media, nonmedia actors, state, interest groups, civil society actors etc.) and actor country of origin. They also coded for positive/negative valence. The paper by Downey and Koenig examined debates concerning the controversy when Berlusconi referred to the then German Social Democrat MEP, Martin Schulz, as an auxiliary concentration camp guard (2006:168). Herein these scholars identified 13 frames which they aggregated into five general frames, namely: 3 'conflict' frames, 1 'economic consequences' frames, and 1 'human interest' frame. The 'conflict' frame contains 3 different kinds of political conflict, namely, left- vs. right-wing conflicts, sovereignists vs. EU federalists, however, the most

prevalent conflict frame was found to be the ‘ethno-nationalist’ frame embroiling Germany and Italy (Downey and Koenig, 2006:175-176). The paper by Lichtenstein and Eilders (2019: 609-610) devised three ‘EU identity’ frames, namely ‘what kind of community?’, ‘expressions of EU belonging’ and ‘togetherness with other European countries’⁴⁷. These frames were coded in relation to whether the frame was supported or rejected. These scholars also coded frames related to ‘political integration’ (that is, do articles frame the EU as a federation or loose confederation?); ‘market regulation’ (do articles frame the EU as an ‘authority for regulations’ or ‘free market?’); ‘finance policy’ (that is, do articles frame the EU in terms of ‘economic growth’ or ‘financial stability?’); lastly, did articles frame the EU in terms of ‘political values’, ‘currency union’ or other frames? In sum, these scholars coded the frequency of frames pertaining to ‘EU belonging’ and ‘EU togetherness’ in Germany, France and the UK.

The paper by Negrine et al. (2008) examined articles regarding Turkish accession to the EU in order to understand how Turkey is represented by the mass media in the UK, France, Germany and Greece. In particular, these scholars coded the main reasons invoked in support or opposition to Turkey’s bid to become an EU member (e.g. Turkish membership would bring peace with Greece and resolve the Cyprus issue, or Turkey is different culturally). They also examined how Turkey is portrayed in the French, British and Greek press (e.g. similar/ dissimilar to European values, or a ‘bullying’ state?). They then coded the number of news items that used favourable, unfavourable, or neutral frames in relation to Turkish EU accession. Conrad (2010) employed frame analysis to uncover whether EU constitutional debates were framed along national lines or according to the ideological profile of the newspaper. The paper by Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) adopts a typology of five generic news frames, namely: ‘human interest’, ‘conflict’, ‘economic consequences’, ‘power’ and ‘nationalistic’ frames. More specifically, they devised a content analysis questionnaire consisting of twenty-seven questions which gaged the visibility, tone, article characteristics, and framing of a given article (see Van Cauwenberge et al (2009: 46). Instead, Semetko and Valkenburg adopt the following framing typology: ‘attribution of responsibility’, ‘conflict’, ‘human interest’, ‘economic consequences’, and ‘morality’ frames. More specifically, each frame was composed of a set of binary ‘Yes/No’ questions. For example, for the attribution of responsibility frame, one of the questions was: ‘Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?’ (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000:100). These scholars, moreover, compared the prevalence of these 5 frames across different topics (e.g. crime news, political news, or European news); mediums (e.g. press or TV) and outlets (e.g. NRC or De Telegraaf). They also calculated the mean scores of the visibility of these frames in the Dutch media (Ibid., 102-105). In order understand how EU enlargement debates were portrayed in EU member states, Schuck and de Vreese (2006) employed the valence framing typology of ‘risk’ and ‘opportunity’. In other

⁴⁷ The second frame is similar to the concept of *vertical European identity*, and the third frame is similar to *horizontal European identity* that I developed in a recent paper (Kermer *et al.*, 2020).

words, was EU enlargement framed as an ‘opportunity’ or ‘risk’ in the news? The study by Pawley (2017) conducted an inductive text analysis of party manifesto data. First, Pawley coded European-related statements according to policy domain; second, he coded these statements under three categories, namely: ‘cultural-identitarian’, ‘economic’, and ‘utilitarian’ frames. These broad frames were disaggregated into several subcategories, namely: (1.1) ethnic-nationalist (1.2) institutional-civic nationalist; (1.3) multi-cultural universalist; (2.1) labour/social security; (2.2) wealth/prosperity; (3.1) political efficiency/efficacy and (3.2) security and ecology frames (Pawley, 2017:10). The paper by Trezn (2017) examined how actors (including media ones) conceptualise the EU, namely, did they conceive of the EU as akin to a regulatory polity (i.e. an intergovernmental union / confederacy of nation states) or federal union? Second, was the EU conceived of as a general expression of common values, or identities?

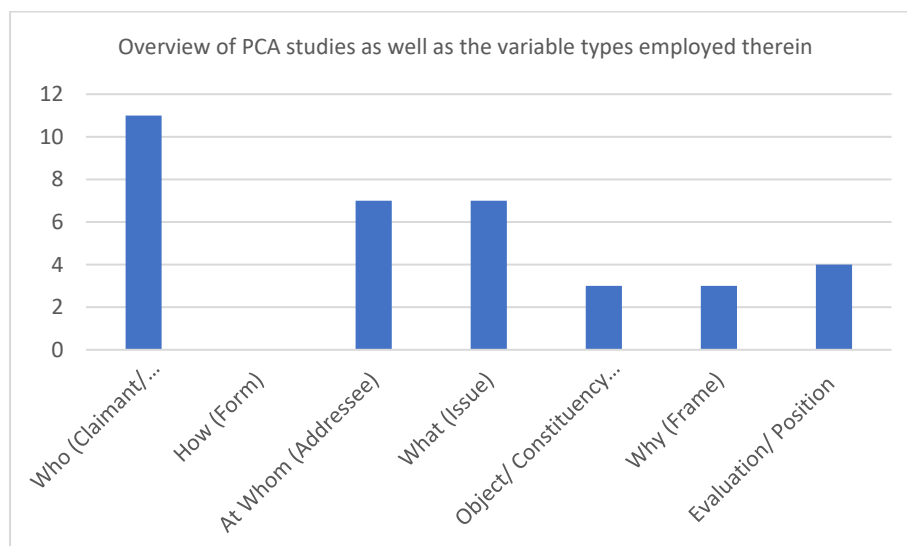
Van de Steeg’s (2006) study adopts a mixed inductive and deductive coding scheme consisting of the most dominant frames in EU-related news. Only opinions and expressed judgments were coded herein. Factual statements – such as ‘the European Council discusses the sanctions against Austria at their next meeting’ – were excluded from the analysis (Van de Steeg, 2006). The list of frames identified in the sample consists of 3 groups. First, frames related to Austria, Haider and the FPÖ were coded (Van de Steeg, 2006: 65). Secondly, frames related to Europe – such as ‘Europe is based on legal standards’, ‘Europe as a moral community based on certain values’, or ‘xenophobia is on the rise in Europe’ – were coded. Thirdly, miscellaneous frames – such as ‘the FPÖ democratically won the elections and entered into government’ and ‘the status of national sovereignty within the EU’ – were coded (Van de Steeg, 2006: 615). These scholars, thereafter, measured the distribution of these frames in newspaper articles (Van de Steeg, 2006, 615-620). The paper by Triandafyllidou (2003) examined Italian media coverage during the launch of the Euro currency. The same scholar employed a qualitative content analysis for newspapers and a social semiotic approach for television analysis to identify the most prevalent meanings of Europe produced in the Italian media. Lastly, Vliegthart, Schuck et al. (2008) adopted the framing schema of ‘benefits’, ‘disadvantages’, and ‘conflict’ framing. The presence of the ‘benefit/disadvantage’ frame was determined by asking two questions: (a) Does the actor mentioned in the article argue that one’s country has benefited (or been disadvantaged) from EU membership? And (b) does the article present numbers, figures, statistics that indicate that one’s country has benefited (or been disadvantaged) from EU membership?⁴⁸ (Vliegthart et al., 2008:423). In sum, these scholars calculate the visibility of EU politics, and prominence of benefit, disadvantage and conflict framing in seven EU member states over time (Vliegthart, Schuck et al., 2008:426).

⁴⁸ For more on how the conflict frame was operationalised, I invite you to refer to Vliegthart, Schuck *et al.*, 2008:423-424, for details.

Political claims analysis

Less than 20% of reviewed empirical studies adopted the method of PCA. As we can see from the bar chart below (Fig.1.7), every study that adopted PCA coded the claimant variable and over 60% of studies coded the addressee and issue variables, in addition. One-third of studies coded for the evaluation/position of the EU. The frame and object variables were examined in only two studies, and, with all due respect, rather superficially. A systematic analysis of the object variable (that is, whose interests are affected by the claim, i.e. the constituency being invoked in the claim) have been found wanting.

Figure 1.7: Bar chart showing the most examined variables of PCA



Below I summarise some of the main works that employed the method of PCA. Pfetsch (2004) was one of the first public sphere scholars to carry out PCA of newspaper editorials. Pfetsch adopts a typology of five territorial actor scopes, namely, ‘own country’, ‘EU-horizontal’, ‘EU-vertical’, ‘Supranational’, and ‘Other/rest of world’ to assess the extent to which media actors are Europeanised (Pfetsch, 2004: 24). More specifically, the same scholar codes the territorial scope of the claimant, addressee, object, and evaluation of by media actors’ political claims in seven European countries. Although this is an interesting approach, limiting the analysis to editorials only seems overly restrictive and belies the other ways in which media actors can frame Europe, via news selection and news treatment, for example. In regard to the former, the selection of certain news items, or selection of political claims (or their omission) by non-media actors represents one form of gatekeeping and agenda setting. In cases such as these, although the media do not articulate their own point of view, the ‘sluicing’ process of selecting

one political claim over another, represents a form of framing. In light of these observations, I would encourage scholars to analyse political claims more generally to see how the media represent EU affairs. Furthermore, as Pfetsch openly acknowledges, quality newspaper columnists are likely to be more ‘transnational’ in outlook and be more supportive of EU integration than sensationalist-oriented news outlets or the wider public. Furthermore, the target audience of these papers is skewed towards professional classes that tend to be more interested in transnational affairs and more pro-European. Thus, the findings are unlikely to be very representative of the wider ‘European public’.

A similar approach was undertaken by Pfetsch et al. (2010) who employed PCA to measure the degree to which the press attributes responsibility (i.e. addressee) and concern (i.e. object) to actors beyond their own nation (2010:159). These scholars, moreover, measured the issue salience of European integration relative to other issue domains (e.g. education). In particular, they examine the degree of openness to European actors (either as claimants, addressees and/or objects) according to country and issue field. In addition, they adopted an inductive framing typology to examine whether ‘similar meaning structures’ were employed by the press of different countries. The claimants’ evaluative positions regarding these frames were also coded. Lastly, these scholars complemented PCA with multiple classification analysis (MCA) to calculate the degree of Europeanisation by media type and country (Pfetsch et al., 2010:161). MCA was carried out in order to ascertain whether the type of media or country-level factors have more explanatory power⁴⁹. The study by Koopmans, Erbe et al. (2010) adopts PCA to code the spatial origins of claim makers by country and according to issue field over time (1990-2002). In addition, PCA is used to code political actors’ evaluations of EU integration and EU institutions in order to gauge the prevalence of the prevalence of Europhile, Eurosceptic and ‘Eurocritical’ positions. To ascertain the spatial origin of claim makers, these scholars measure the number of claims by actors from foreign European countries reported in the national press (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). In sum, in this study, the claimant, addressee and position of the claim were coded. Instead, Koopmans (2010) uses PCA to understand who ‘benefits’ from Europeanised debates in terms of visibility. In order to measure ‘benefit’, the scholar examines purely national debates to compare patterns of discourse in EU/European debates. In sum, the same scholar codes claims made by claimants according to actor type and issue field. The same scholar, in addition, conducts a multivariate logistic regression in order to determine which independent variables are most predictive of ‘Europeanised’ political claims. The predictor variables in this analysis were (1) actor type; (2) claimant nationality; (3) newspaper type; (4) newspaper origin; (5) issue field, and (6) time⁵⁰ (Koopmans, 2010:109). More recently, the study by Koopmans (2014) also adopts the ‘yardstick approach’, that is,

⁴⁹ According to these scholars (Pfetsch et al, 2010), Europeanisation exists along a continuum. These scholars examine actor constellations to determine the degree of Europeanisation within editorials. There are four different types of Europeanisation: (1) ‘fully nationalised’ claims refer to domestic/national actors only; (2) non-European claims that refer to non-European and/or domestic actors; (3) ‘partially Europeanised’ claims referring to European actors alongside national actors or actors from countries outside Europe; and (4) ‘fully Europeanised’ claims which mention actors from other EU member states (horizontal) or the EU (vertical).

⁵⁰ See also Koopmans & Erbe, 2003, for a similar research design.

mapping the territorial scope of actor constellations by issue field within purely national debates and comparing results with those found in EU/European debates. Herein Koopmans (2014) limits his analysis to the sender (i.e. claimant) and receiver (i.e. addressee) of the political claim.

Tresch et al. (2010) used PCA to code the claimant and evaluation of EU integration⁵¹. In particular, they calculate the share of 'Eurocritical' claims according to organisation, party type (e.g. left- or right-wing?), actor type (e.g. government, legislative or civil society actor?), and country, over time. Furthermore, they carried out a multivariate regression to identify the independent variables that were most predictive of 'Eurocritical' claims making (Statham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010). Statham and Gray (2005), by contrast, limit their PCA analysis to three variables, namely, the claimant, frame, and position. This is because they are primarily interested in understanding how different political parties frame Europe. This research highlights the advantages of PCA over general content analysis as it can examine both media and political actors' representations of European politics. Content analysis can only examine content at the article level, discourse according to party type cannot be compared, and nor can the relations between actors, issues, evaluations and frames be analysed (Statham & Gray, 2005; Statham, 2007). More recently, the study by Monza (2017) adopts PCA in order to examine the extent to which different types of actors were represented in the public sphere during the European sovereign debt crisis. In particular, Monza codes the actor making the claim (i.e. claimant), the target of the claim (i.e. addressee), the issue of the claim, and the object whose interests are 'materially affected' by the claim if actualised (Monza, 2017). However, in my opinion, this scholar misses the opportunity of comparing claims prior to and during the crisis. This would be interesting to explore further particularly because the effects of crises on patterns of discourse have been hitherto underexplored.

Discourse analysis

Not surprisingly, several communication scholars (e.g. Thornborrow, Haarman, & Duguid, 2012) have utilised some form of discourse analysis. Thornborrow et al. (2012) adopted a qualitative discourse analytic approach to framing to examine how the concepts of 'Europe' and being 'European' are represented in the mass media. The scholars, Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk et al. (2012), used a combination of quantitative methods (such as word frequencies, word keyness, word combinations in collocations and clusters) and discourse analysis⁵² to better understand the context of these relevant words, and their 'semantic prosodies' and metaphors (Sinclair, 1996). Using these methods, these

⁵¹ These scholars only coded for 'evaluative claims', namely, claims in which a clear stance was taken. Therefore, ambivalent positions were not coded.

⁵² What they label as 'interactional cognitive corpus linguistic analysis'.

scholars are able to uncover speakers' attitudes and opinions (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012). Zappettini (2017) and the 'Emediate' research project (2004) employed the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)⁵³. In essence, CDA understands concepts and ideas as fluid constructs that are constantly negotiated, redefined, and recontextualized in public discourses, both diachronically and synchronically (Emediate, 2004). Thus, for example, Europe may conjure up different things to different people at different times. During the apogee of the Cold War, Europe may have denoted a geographical intermediary space between the communist East and the American West. More recently, however, 'Europe' is understood as synonymous with the European Union, a socio-economic bloc, or a continent that shares broadly similar democratic values. The paper by Zappettini (2017) gives a detailed overview of CDA. In essence, CDA treats society and discourse as mutually constitutive. Language is more than merely the neutral transmission of information; it is through discourse that social meanings are constructed (Zappettini, 2017). To quote Fairclough, "discourses not only describe the world; they constitute 'situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people'" (Fairclough et al. 1997: 358). In other words, social identities are enacted through discourse (Zappettini, 2017). CDA is thus a useful methodological tool to map speakers' social identities and better understand their ideological stances and worldviews. However, the main drawback of this purely qualitative method is that it is difficult to make systematic comparisons across cases. Analysing the public discourse in depth is labour intensive and is particularly susceptible to subjectivity bias. In short, 'small-N' studies are useful for examining discourse in detail, however, the generalizability⁵⁴ of findings is limited to the cases examined. Thus, comparative research questions which would probably benefit from using other methods over qualitative discourse analysis approaches.

Social network analyses

A network is defined as, "a structure composed of a set of actors, some of whose members are connected by a set of one or more relationships" (Knoke & Yang, 2010:8). Social network analysis (hereafter referred to as SNA) has hitherto been underutilised by public sphere scholars. This is surprising given that several scholars describe the EPS as a 'narrative network' (Eder, 2012), 'highly complex network' (Eriksen, 2007) or 'multi-discursive and multimodal series of networks' (Castells, 2007, found in Downing, 2012). Pfetsch (2004) and Koopmans et al. (2003) describe the EPS as a network of dense communicative linkages within and across different geographical spaces. Moreover, scholars are at

⁵³ As other scholars (notably Wodak, 2011; Zappettini, 2017) give a thorough exposition of CDA, I have refrained from doing the same. See also the method of *Discourse-Historical Approach* (DHA) pioneered by Wodak (2009).

⁵⁴ 'Generalizability' denotes the degree to which results can be applied to a larger population.

pains to emphasise the relational, dynamic, and intensive character of public communication. With that in mind, SNA seems tailor-made for examining the EPS (or lack thereof) from both a theoretical and methodological point of view. As Heft and Pfetsch (2014) state, network analysis is, “both a statistical method for analysing the connections between different agents and the theoretical perspective that underlines the relevance of actors embeddedness in network structures” (Heft & Pfetsch, 2014:38-39). In short, SNA helps scholars map relations between different variables such as actors, objects, issues, and frames, across space and time. At the time of writing, few studies have employed the method of SNA. With the exception of analyses of the Internet, offline media analyses have typically opted with traditional content analysis methods, and to a lesser extent, PCA. Concerning the latter, as Pfetsch et al. (2014) points out, claims analysis data can be transposed to network graphs as they contain the ‘subject-action-object’ relationships (Ibid.). That said, SNA has been used sparingly by public sphere scholars examining online communication. Below I review some noteworthy contributions. Koopmans and Zimmermann (2010) gathered data from hyperlinks in seven countries to examine links across different websites. In particular, they traced the ‘senders’ and ‘receivers’ of hyperlinks, measured the hyperlinks’ density and calculated the share of claim makers by geographical scope (e.g. domestic, horizontal, or supranational European?). Grill et al. (2017) employed Semantic Network Analysis, a method which explores the semantic relations between concepts. However, the main drawback of this method is that the relations between actors are overlooked. Hänska et al. (2019) used the Krackhardt E/I Ratio SNA measure in order to measure the degree of cross-border interactions on the ‘Twittersphere’. The study by Bennett et al. (2014) adopted SNA, however, the analysis is limited to online issue publics, which are arguably not representative of the wider population. The study by Veltri (2012) aimed to identify the central media actors in the network. Veltri (2012) measured the most cited newspapers by other foreign newspapers. In particular, he calculated the in-, out-degree, information- and determination centrality of vertices (i.e. newspaper) in the network over time. Although this is a timely contribution in showing how horizontally integrated are the media systems’ in Europe, this analysis does not tell us much about how EU politics is represented in the media. The study by Walter (2016) employs SNA “to establish how and what extent EU member states reports about each other” (2016:3). In other words, which EU member states were central to the European network during the European parliamentary elections? More specifically, this scholar measured the in- and out-degree centrality of several EU member states. Although this analysis is useful for ascertaining which EU member states’ are the most embedded in the European network, it does not tell us about relations between political actors, issues, and frames.

Other methods

Other noteworthy methods used by EPS scholars are ‘topic modelling’ (also called Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) and ‘core-sentence analysis’ (CSA). To my knowledge, topic modelling has been used only once by Bossetta et al. (2019) in the EPS scholarship. In a nutshell, topic modelling is an unsupervised machine learning text-mining tool used to extract the latent and abstract ‘topics’ contained in a corpora. Grande & Kriesi (2014) instead opt for the method of ‘core-sentence analysis’ (CSA). In technical terms, CSA is a method wherein “each grammatical sentence of an article is reduced to its most basic core sentence(s) that contains only the subject (the actor), the object (another object or a political issue), and the direction of the relationship between the two” (Kriesi, Hutter et al., 2019:57). The advantage of this method is it enables researchers to measure the prominence of actors in debates, the positions they take on an issue, as well as the salience they attribute to it (Grande & Kriesi, 2014: 192). This method is particularly useful for understanding the dynamics of political conflicts and gauge the levels of polarisation within debates.

Table 1.3: Overview of studies and the method employed

Studies	Overview of the studies as well as the method employed therein							
	Method	Quantitative Content analysis	Political Claims Analysis	Frame Analysis	Topic modelling	Network analysis	Core-sentence analysis	Discourse Analysis
Adam (2012)								
Barth, C., & Bijmans, P. (2018)				■				
Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014					■			
Boomgaarden, et al., 2013	■							
Bossetta & Segesten, 2019				■				
Brantner et al. 2005	■							
Brüggemann, Sift, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006	■							
Conrad, 2006	■							
Conrad, 2010				■				
de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016	■			■				
de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006	■			■				
Downey & Koenig, 2006				■				
EMEDIATE, 2004								
Gerhards & S. Schäfer, 2009						■		
Grande & Kriesi, 2014b						■		
Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017						■		
Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019						■		
Kantner, 2014	■			■				
Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010	■							■
Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012	■							
Koopmans & Erbe, 2003			■					
Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010			■					
Koopmans, 2010: 97-121			■					
Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010						■		
Koopmans, 2014								
Kriesi & Grande, 2014a						■		
Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012*	■							
Lichtenstein & Eilders, 2019				■				■
Medrano & Gray, 2010	■			■				
Monza, 2017			■					
Morley & Taylor, 2012	■							■
Negrine, Kejanlioglu, Aissaoui, & Papatthanassopoulos, 2008*				■				
Pawley, 2017	■			■				
Peter & de Vreese, 2004	■							
Peters, Sift, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Konigslow, 2005	■							
Pfetsch, 2004			■					
Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010			■					
Schuck & de Vreese, 2006	■							
Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000				■				
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	■							
Statham & Gray, 2005			■					
Statham, 2007			■					
Statham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010			■					
Thornborrow, Haaman, & Duguid, 2012								■
Trenz, 2007	■			■				
Triandafyllidou, 2003*				■				
Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009				■				
Van de Steeg, Marianne, 2006				■				
Vliegthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden, de Vreese, 2008				■				
Walter, 2014	■							
Wodak, 2018								■
Zappettini, 2016								■
Zappettini, 2017								■
Σ	19	10	16	1	5	2	7	3

General theoretical framework

The logical next step – having summarised how scholars’ have defined the EPS concept – is to explore how the EPS is embedded in a more general theoretical framework. In the words of Jensen, “the theoretical framework [aims to] lend meaning and relevance to – and make sense of – a configuration of empirical findings” (2020:333). In basic terms, the aim of the theoretical framework is to understand how the EPS affects, or is affected by, other variables. Developing a general theoretical framework helps us to understand a concept’s deeper theoretical and applied significance. For instance, it is almost universally accepted that the public sphere has a crucial identity-making function, and most public sphere scholars regard the development of Europeanised communication as a function of EU support. Although an analysis of identity may seem like a fruitless intellectual exercise, identity has real-world consequences for politics. Indeed, many scholars, particularly post-functionalists, attribute the rise in Euroscepticism and increasing resistance to further EU integration as a result of entrenched national identities and the corresponding lack of European sense of belonging. There is, thus, in my view, a fine line between theoretical and applied research. The aim of this section is to examine the relationship between the EPS and other variables, both as an independent and dependent variable. I begin with an analysis of the former. A rich body of scholarship attests to the public spheres’ identity-, support- and democracy-enhancing functions. Below I provide an overview of the literature on these theories.

EPS as the independent variable

EU support

The public sphere is widely understood to be the locus of public opinion formation⁵⁵. The latter is important, particularly in liberal democracies, because public opinion – at least in a functioning democracy – shapes policy decisions. In the words of Schuck et al., “the potential impact of news frames on public opinion becomes crucial when we assume public opinion to be influential in affecting real policy decisions” (Schuck et al., 2006:8). In endeavouring to understand what drives EU support or Euroscepticism, more scholars have turned their attention to the public sphere, among other things, while acknowledging that multiple determinants undergird EU support, such as domestic political considerations, cognitive mobilisation, political knowledge (Kinder and Sanders, 1990), anti-

⁵⁵ “Public opinion formation...can be understood as the spectrum of opinions expressed and the justifications delivered in the media are the horizon for interpreting politics and thus become decisive for public opinion formation and for perceptions of political legitimacy” (Trenz & Michailidou, 2014: 481-2).

immigration sentiment, economic evaluations, and so on. As Schuck et al. (2006) aptly points out, news-framing effects are not necessarily omnipresent, and opinions can be shaped by a multitude of factors unrelated to news-framing. Several scholars posit the view that national public spheres can be crucial for support of a political party, government, or polity. In the context of the EU, scholars increasingly attribute the EU's lacklustre levels of support to public spheres which remain heavily embedded in national communicative structures (see de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006). Scholars typically opt to examine mass media framing to better understand what drives public support for the EU⁵⁶. To paraphrase Semetko et al., frames shape the publics' perceptions of institutions and issues (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000:94). In plain terms, framing is mainly concerned about the how rather than the what of an issue. The notion that news coverage can affect public opinion can be traced back to Inglehart's (1977) 'cognitive mobilisation' theory whose main premise is people who are well informed about an issue are more likely to support it (Scharkow et al., 2009:78). Various scholars have examined this theory from the vantage point of the mass media. The latter are widely considered to be crucial transmitters of information due to their mass audience reach. De Vreese et al. (2006) argues that the mass media not only contribute to public knowledge (i.e. cognitive mobilisation) but shape public opinion (Lubbers & Scheepers 2010; Elenbaas et al. 2012). De Vreese et al. were particularly influential in developing the link between the mass media and public opinion (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006:420). For these scholars, media framing can influence EU support both at the individual and aggregate level. Gerhards (2001) attributes waning EU support to the lack of a genuine EPS (found in Scharkow & Vogelgesang, 2009). Similarly, Scharkow et al. presuppose that a certain level of Europeanisation in the mass media is likely foster increasing levels of perceived responsiveness and legitimacy (2010). As Schuck et al., (2006:6) argue, news frames are understood to affect interpretations (see Rhee, 1997), the 'evaluative direction of thoughts' (e.g. Valkenburg et al., 1999) and perceptions of an issue⁵⁷ (e.g. Nelson and Kinder, 1996). For Valkenburg et al. (1999), how institutions, political actors and issues are portrayed can have a decisive impact on public evaluations. However, not all scholars agree that media coverage can foster learning and increase voter mobilization (i.e. cognitive mobilisation). For example, Cappella et al. (1997) argue that the prevalence of negativity in news leads to increasing cynicism and political disengagement (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). Other scholars argue that media news coverage can either (dis-)augment knowledge, and (de-)mobilise (de Vreese and Semetko, 2002). Regarding the latter, the crucial scope condition is what is reported, and how it is represented (see de Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2005, for more). In terms of empirical evidence, McLaren's (2007) study shows that framing the EU in terms of disadvantages can adversely affect EU support. The study by Page et al. (1987) demonstrates that news commentators can have a significant impact on public opinion. Studies in marketing, health communication and psychology found

⁵⁷ The paper by Schuck *et al.*, (2006:6) has done a valiant job of summarising the main scholarly contributions related to framing. I invite scholars who are interested in *framing* to read this paper for a comprehensive review of the literature on the same.

considerable effects of valence frames on peoples' evaluations (Kinder and Sanders, 1990; found in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). For example, Levin and Gaeth (1988) demonstrate how 'negative attribute framing' can foster negative product evaluations (found in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:8-9). The study by McLaren (2002) shows that 'perceived cultural threat' is an important factor in explaining opposition toward the EU (found in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:10-11). In a similar vein, Gabel et al. (1995) shows how 'perceived expectations of personal benefits' is an important factor in explaining support for the EU. How the EU is portrayed in the media can play a decisive role in how news consumers' reflect on European topics (Valkenburg et al. 1999; de Vreese et al. 2001).

Other scholars opt for the concept of media priming to emphasise the crucial role of the media in shaping political behaviour (Krosnick and Brannon, 1993; Miller and Krosnick, 2000; found in Claes & Boomgaarden, 2006: 421). The latter argue that "the news media can alter the ingredients by which citizens evaluate political leaders" (Claes & Boomgaarden, 2006: 421). De Vreese (2004) expects conflict laden news to adversely affect support for European governance (found in Vliegthart et al., 2008:420). This position is an intuitive one as disagreements and conflicts convey the image of a malfunctioning and inefficient polity (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006:42). Other scholars, notably, Grande and Kriesi, speculate about the negative consequences of politicisation for European integration. Politicisation implicitly touches upon the concept of the public sphere which is, after all, the locus where political conflicts play out. The mass media is widely understood to be influential in fuelling politicisation, due to its audience reach, resonance capabilities, and an implicit media logic which thrives on controversy.

European identity⁵⁸

A critical condition for a genuine Europeanization of public debates would be the extent to which the imagined collective 'we' is enlarged beyond national borders (for example, on 'Europe' or 'the Western community') and corresponding dissociations (of 'East' or 'South', or possibly of 'America') become more important. (Peters 2004:31)

⁵⁸ European identity can be broadly defined as 'feeling' a sense of belonging to Europe, the latter of which is understood as a *cultural*, *geographical*, and/or *political* entity (Kermer et al., 2020:29). Bruter's (2003) distinction between *civic* and *cultural* forms of identity is an instructive starting point. The former is understood as "the degree to which they see themselves as citizens of a European political system, whose rules, laws, and rights have an influence on their daily life" (Thomassen, 2009:188). The latter "may be defined as an individual citizen's identification with a particular social group" (MacMillan, 2013: 59). Cultural identity can be constructed *inclusively* in terms of universal, cosmopolitan frames or *exclusively via* ethnic, essentialist, nationalistic frames. Cultural identity is generally more susceptible to exclusive framing as culture tends to be understood as an autochthonous set of norms, behaviours, and practices. By contrast, civic identity is generally more amenable to the membership of former 'out-groups' as the latter can adopt the laws and institutions of the host identity. Moreover, citizenship can, in theory, be legally amended to accommodate non-members and culturally heterogeneous groups. The notion of EU citizenship is a paradigmatic example of civic identity (Kermer et al., 2020). Importantly, I argue that we should distinguish between vertical and horizontal European identity: the former consists in identifying with the EU as a political entity whereas the latter consists in identifying with other European countries or the European continent as a cultural, geographical entity (see Kermer et al., 2020:29). Please note that this footnote is an excerpt from a previously published paper of mine (Kermer et al., 2020, for details).

As I touched upon earlier, most scholars agree that public spheres affect identities in some shape or form. Social constructivism is the dominant paradigm in understanding identity (Heller & Rényi, 2007; Eriksen, 2007; MacMillan, 2013). Communication scholars underline different facets of communication as crucial to the congealment of identity, such as: deliberation (Dewey, 1927; Risse, 2014); discourse (Ricoeur 1992; Bauman 1996; Fearon & Laitin, 2000; Heller & Rényi, 2007; Wodak, 2007); and narratives (Loseke, 2007; Eder, 2012; Scalise, 2013) According to Wodak (2018), all social and political order is (re-)constructed through communication. Similarly, Derrida emphasises the performativity of identity and enacting quality of discourse (Derrida, 1988). In basic terms, performativity creates what it names (Gay et al., 2000:13). Thus, the discursive act: “I am European” (re-)produces ‘Europeanness’ which is not an essential quality but a label which ascribes meaning to a particular person. In sum, on this view, identity is enacted through discourse (Ibid.). In a similar vein, for Ivic (2017), identity is performative, that is, it is created through acts of uttering. As Morgan opines, “we come to understand who we are through the re-iteration or performance of identity. In this sense, identity is not about fixed attributes possessed by individuals, but is instead constructed in a variety of ways at a variety of levels” (Morgan 2000: 217). As Eriksen (2000) pithily remarks, “collective identity has to be made rather than merely discovered” (2007:30).

With social constructivism firmly in the driving seat, scholars have increasingly focused their attention on the public sphere, widely regarded as the loci of identity formation (Eriksen, 2007; Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010; Sicakkan, 2012; de Wilde & Trenz, 2012). Eriksen points to the community-building function of the public sphere: “the public debate is held to lead to opinion-formation, the forging of a common identity on the basis of which collective decision-making can take place, viz. an identity-shaping process strong enough to enable the solving of the collective action problem” (Eriksen, 2004: 2)⁵⁹. For Kleger (1998), public debate has, in his words, ‘catalytic effects’ on identity (found in Fossum et al., 2007:30). Kleinen-von Königslöw argues that one of the core functions of the public sphere is to “form a cohesive political community with a sense of collective identity” (2010:47). Eder (2009) conceives of collective identity as, what he calls, a ‘narrative construction’, and European identity as a ‘narrative network’ (see also Habermas 1994). In his view, identities are constituted by multiple, shared, and fluid narratives which can evolve over time. According to Triga et al. (2018), communication is decisive to the congealment of a European identity. In his words, “the most significant determinant for the construction of a European identity is associated with the Europeanization of public discourses and the representation of EU-related issues in European rather than national terms” (Triga & Vadratsikas, 2018:13). Scalise (2013) builds on Eder’s concept of ‘narrative identity’ which argues that “the

⁵⁹ However, it is not clear whether Eriksen argues from a deliberative or communitarian stance. In an earlier paper, Eriksen (2005) dwells on the lack of a European identity (due to heterogenous national interests, values, languages, cultures etc. which make European will and opinion formation an elusive goal) which he sees as the main impediment to the development of the EPS. He argues that European issues are almost always examined through the prism of domestic interests. However, in his 2007 paper, he clarifies his position, insisting that identity follows from discourse and not vice-versa (Eriksen, 2007: 31).

construction of European identity can happen by means of sharing the narratives in Europe that emerge, grow and circulate within the space of European communication” (Scalise, 2013:53). Similarly, according to Risse, “national public spheres create the space where identities and community feeling are enacted, and where individuals come into contact with discourse regarding Europe” (Risse, 2010:107). For Van Os (2005), the EPS is the crucial site where the fate of identities are fought. In his view, the congealment of a European identity depends on how European issues are framed. Zappettini maintains that European identity is discursively constructed in the public sphere⁶⁰. He argues, in essence, that the EPS is the main locus where identities emerge, are negotiated, and contested (Zappettini, 2016).

Several scholars underline the co-constitutiveness of the public sphere and identity. Bauer (1881–1938) was, to my knowledge, one of the first scholars to establish a link between communication and national identity, arguing that the nation is an ‘eine Schicksalsgemeinschaft’ (‘community of fate’) engaged in ‘general reciprocal interaction’ (Bauer, 2000, cited in Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007:70; Kermer et al., 2020:30). In a similar vein, Karl Deutsch developed the theory that national identity emerges through strongly bounded patterns of social interaction. In his words, “People are held together ‘from within’ by this communicative efficiency, the complementarity of the communicative facilities acquired by their members” (Deutsch, 1966:98). Several decades later, Benedict Anderson’s exegesis of nationalism implicitly highlights the integral role of the public sphere in the congealment of a nationally ‘imagined community’. In particular, Anderson argues that the invention of the printing press and the development of national media organisations were integral to the congealment of a national consciousness. To quote Anderson, print capitalism created “unified fields of exchange”, “a new fixity to language” and “languages of power” (Anderson, 1983:42-45). In other words, the development of the printing press enabled people to imagine a community beyond ‘encounter publics’ in the local community (Kermer et al., 2020:31). Anderson adds that the newspaper “provide[s] the technical means for re-presenting the kind of imagined community that is the nation” (Anderson, 1983:24; see also Gellner, 2006; Cohen, 1994). For Habermas, the *Öffentlichkeit* was originally conceived as a metaphorical space contiguous with national borders (Habermas, 1991). The public sphere worked hand in glove with the nascent nation state, helping to foster a national consciousness (Kermer et al., 2020:31). According to Billig (1995), nationhood is flagged on a daily basis – by political actors whose public interventions are diffused via the mass media – through the (re-)production of national symbols and deixis in public discourse which “continually point to the national homeland as the home of the readers” (Billig, 1995:11)⁶¹.

⁶⁰ However, this paper does not tell us more than we already know about identities: people from civil society organisations, epistemic communities tend to feel more European and are more transnational (post-national) in outlook. Also, interviews were in English. People who speak English as non-native speakers tend to feel more European. European ‘we-feeling’ is stratified (see Kuhn, 2011).

⁶¹ For the record, this was partially taken from a recently co-authored paper by me and Rolf Nijmeijer (Kermer et al., 2020:30). I, however, exclusively wrote this section of the paper.

Most constructivists agree that identity is (re-)produced via mediated communication. The media do not merely transmit information, but select what is reported, and how it is presented (fulfilling an ‘agenda setting’ and ‘gatekeeping’ role)⁶². Happenings ‘out there’ in the external world are recontextualised by the mass media (Trenz, 2008) as a product deemed desirable for domestic audiences. Journalists can portray the news in a myriad of different ways by employing different frames (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006; Van Cauwenberghe, Gelders, & Joris, 2009; de Vreese & Kandyla, 2009). The mass media ultimately determine which narratives and, ergo, identity constructions reign supreme (Eder, 2012) and which symbols and deictic pronouns dominate (Billig, 1995). The mass media, “is a key site for community-building through recurring narratives in news discourse” (Bayley et al., 2010:87). Moreover, as Schlesinger (2007) states, “the media are seen as sustaining that political community, providing it with its deep codes for distinguishing between self and other”⁶³ (found in Schlesinger, 2007:70). The mass media possess an integration function by providing opportunities for identification with a political community (De Vreese, 2007b, cited in Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). Kellner (1995) also underscores the pivotal role of the media in delineating who we are (‘us’) and who we are not (‘them’)⁶⁴.

Numerous scholars posit that the same logic of social communication and identity formation should also apply to larger territorial units such as Europe or the EU. Indeed, a myriad of scholars – past and present – have subscribed to this view (e.g. Os, 2005; Wodak, 2007; Hennen et al., 2020). For example, Peters et al. (2005) argues that collective identification is likely to emerge as a result of ‘discursive exchanges’ among Europeans (see also Sifft et al. 2007). Eilders et al. (2010) claims that the increasingly transnational setting of public spheres’ and corresponding politicisation of European integration will help consolidate a European sense of belonging. The Neofunctionalist theory espoused by Ernst Haas (1958) implicitly touches upon on the importance of socialisation processes involving decision-makers in institutionalised fora – for the congealment of European identity. Haas (1958) anticipated the “shifting of loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre” (i.e., European identity) through socialisation processes in which economic and political interests would converge (Haas, 1958, p. 16). More recently, several scholars emphasise the importance of ‘mediatised discourse’ for the crystallisation of a collective European identity (Valentini, 2006; Olausson, 2010; Scalise, 2013; Vadratsikas, 2018). For Eder (2019), the prospect of a European identity hinges on the reification of shared European meta narratives in the public sphere. According to the same, collective identities can be reduced to ‘narrative constructions’ and European identity is to be conceived as “a narrative network embedded in an emerging network of social relations among the people living in

⁶² Through editorials and opinion pieces, journalists are, not unlike politicians, political entrepreneurs (Votmer & Eilders, 2003). The role of the media is even more decisive in European politics as information about Europe can only be obtained through mediated channels. As Risse pithily states, “the [European] public sphere is what the media make of it” (Risse, 2010: 115; Kermer et al., 2020).

⁶⁴ This paragraph is partially taken from a recently published paper (Kermer et al., 2020).

Europe” (Eder, 2009:427). Exponents of Postfunctionalism⁶⁵ (e.g. de Wilde, 2019) argue that the fate of European integration hinges on European identity mobilisation among mass publics which can only be secured via the mass media (de Wilde, 2019). The argument goes that without collective identities converging among general publics, European integration will likely encounter resistance. For the likes of de Wilde (2019), the mass media are and will continue to be crucial players in the European integration process⁶⁶ (see also Kermer et al., 2020). For example, Eilders et al. (2010) claims that the increasingly transnational setting of public spheres’ and corresponding politicisation can help foster European identity. Eder (2009) maintains that European identity emerges through the sharing of European narratives. Peters et al. (2005) argue, rather optimistically, that collective identification is likely to emerge as a result of ‘discursive exchanges’ and ‘discursive integration’ among Europeans (see also Sifft et al. 2007). Harrison and Bruter (2005) paint a particularly rosy picture of the European identity-enabling function of the mass media, remarking that, “...the mass media, by disseminating good or bad news on Europe and European integration, has a strong identity-building power over the citizens of the European Union” (Bruter, 2005: 124). Building on Billig’s (1995) seminal work on ‘banal nationalism’, Cram (2009) claims – without empirical evidence I hasten to add – that news coverage of the EU can help crystallise a sense of belonging to the EU via deixis and symbols (i.e. discursive acts). Likewise, Nitoiu (2013) argues that the overarching assumption in the public sphere literature is that open and equal access to Europeanised public debates could foster a European sense of belonging. Risse is probably one of the most noteworthy supporters behind the notion of the EPSs’ identity-making function. In his view, “national public spheres create the space where identities and community feeling are enacted, and where individuals come into contact with discourse regarding Europe” (Risse, 2010:107). Several years later, the same scholar reaffirms the view that the public sphere is the figurative space where ‘communities of communication’ are forged:

The more Europeanized public spheres are interconnected and form transnational arenas of communication in which issues of common concern to Europeans are discussed, the more these European public spheres constitute communities of communication and therefore are conducive to collective European identities (Risse, 2014:20).

According to Risse, moreover, the politicisation of EU affairs is both an ‘enabling condition’ the EPS and a European sense of belonging: “Debating European issues as European questions...is likely to increase political identification levels with the EU...contestation and polarization are necessary for the

⁶⁵ In basic terms, the theory of *Post-functionalism* posits that further EU integration will depend more and more on general publics’ affections shifting to the European level. However, post-functionalists ignore an elephant in the room—the mass media (de Wilde, 2019). The latter is, after all, the key bridge that political actors to civil society.

⁶⁶ For the record, this is an excerpt from a co-authored paper by me and my colleague, Rolf Nijmeijer (Kermer & Nijmeijer, 2020:30). I, however, exclusively wrote this section of the paper.

emergence of a common European perspective” (Risse, 2014:156). However, as Checkel (2014) rightly points out, this claim lacks theoretical grounding and empirical evidence. On the one hand, Risse argues that debate and contestation are positively correlated with the development of a European identity. On the other hand, Risse countenances the possibility that contestation could lead to, what he calls, “the de-Europeanisation of public spheres and their re-nationalisation” (2014:156). In Risse’s defence, he caveats these claims by setting out two scope conditions: (1) EU news must be good news, and (2) EU news must be framed in similar ways within national public spheres. As Risse puts it, politicisation must be accompanied by the Europeanisation of public spheres. However, this expectation is, in my view, an over-extrapolation. Politicisation is, a priori, conflictual, and previous research shows that negative news tends to outweigh positive news particularly when EU affairs are reported in the national mass media (see Norris, 2000). As communication scholars underline, this is not surprising as the media are effectively hardwired to report controversy and accentuate conflict as a result of implicit news values. The second scope condition, namely converging frames, is, frankly, wishful thinking as previous research consistently shows that EU issues are seen through a national lens (see Medrano, 2003).

Many scholars, myself included, do not share Risse’s optimism (Bartolini, 2006; Kriesi & Grande, 2014a). Implicit to the ‘Euro-optimistic’ standpoint (e.g., Bruter, Risse) is the assumption that transnational political conflict would replicate the left–right contestation manifest in domestic politics⁶⁷. However, these assumptions do not sit comfortably with the ‘Transnational’ (Hooghe & Marks, 2017) / ‘Integration-Demarcation’ (Kriesi & Grande, 2006; 2008) cleavage theses. To put it crudely, these scholars expect EU-related issues to be contested on cultural-identitarian grounds rather than economic-utilitarian ones. Recent empirical evidence would lend support to these expectations (Kriesi and Grande, 2012). A corollary to the preceding point is to consider what is being contested. Bartolini and Hix (2006) distinguish between two types of contestation: isomorphic and constitutive. The former relates to European issues which closely mirror national issues (e.g., tax reform, welfare policy). Contestation of this kind is typically structured along the left–right dimension which is regarded as normatively desirable because of its potential to foster left–right coalitions of ‘collective action’ beyond the nation state (Habermas, 2012). By contrast, constitutive contestation inevitably poses questions that strike at the heart of a polity’s *raison d’être* (e.g., questions relating to membership, treaty change, geographical boundaries of the Union etc.). In short, isomorphic contestation challenges policy, and constitutive contestation challenges polity. It is difficult to imagine the emergence of a ‘thick’ European identity in the context of constitutive contestation. The latter tends to provoke questions about group membership (e.g. ‘Brexit’, or membership of Turkey in the European Union). Constitutive contestation tends to evoke highly emotive questions related to group membership. By contrast, isomorphic contestation is less prone to polarisation as each policy is considered on its merits, and one can be considered ‘left-wing’ on one issue but ‘right-wing’ on another one. By contrast, constitutive contestation and systemic

⁶⁷ This paragraph is partially taken from a recently published paper (Kermer *et al.*, 2020).

support/opposition are more amenable to binary ‘pigeonholing’ into ‘pro’ and ‘anti’ camps. Interestingly, the study by Marks and Hooghe (2003) found that the prevalence of constitutive contestation indicates low levels of support for a polity, whereas ideological left-right contestation tends to dominate when the boundaries of a polity are accepted (Marks & Hooghe, 2003). Interestingly, previous studies indicate that Eurosceptic parties tend to focus on constitutive issues related to membership which is not surprising given that the jurisdictional boundaries of the EU are still uncertain (Christensen, 1996; Taggart, 1998)⁶⁸. Furthermore, Kriesi et al. (2015) argues that politicisation is prone to empower new domestic actors many of whom are hostile to the EU; moreover, it is likely to congeal an integration-demarcation cleavage which pits Eurosceptics against supporters of the EU. The same scholars also speculate that politicisation has empowered Eurosceptic actors and ‘traditional-authoritarian-nationalist’ parties have been more effective at mobilising citizens along this cleavage⁶⁹ (Kermer et al., 2020:31-32).

Other scholars are more reticent on the question of whether the EPS combined with politicisation can foster feelings of attachment to Europe (Follesdal, 2014; Checkel, 2014). Follesdal argues that any emergent European identity resulting from politicisation is contingent on the extent to which political parties are able to mobilise along the Pan-European/transnational political cleavage. The author is prudent, in my view, to sit on the fence; it is, frankly, too premature to know whether the politicisation of EU affairs will be beneficial or detrimental to the EU project. And as Lahusen warns, “even if grievances and political contentions have a pan-European dimension, they will resonate quite differently within the various member states of Europe, depending on each country’s specific problems and cleavages, political institutions and traditions, structures of social cohesion, as well as cultural belief systems and discourses” (Lahusen, 2012:16). In short, the expectation that European political conflicts will transcend left-right political cleavages at the national level is an idealistic one. Similarly, Checkel argues that there are multiple determinants of identity-change and the public sphere is but ‘one site’ where identities can change. In the words of Checkel, “the public sphere is one place where identities can change, but it is not the only place”, and public spheres cannot “carry all the causal weight in shaping identities” (Checkel, 2014:233). He rightly encourages scholars to approach questions of identity systematically; to consider to explanatory force of not only social communication but social contact (e.g. the ‘contact hypothesis’ a la Allport, 1954; see also Deutsch, 1966). As Checkel further adds, numerous studies underline the multicausality of identity; identities can be shaped by, inter-alia: violence and intimidation (Vigil, 2003), national military participation (Winslow 1999), structural economic flows (Favell, 2009), and churches and schools (Dawson & Prewitt, 1969, found in Checkel, 2014:241). As Heller et al. put it, “identities are strongly influenced by collective cultural, historical,

⁶⁸ Nonetheless, scholars are right to point out that contestation *per se* is not equivalent to Euroscepticism. Indeed, Statham et al., (2010) develop the concept of ‘Eurocriticism’ which denotes a more subdued form of criticism against an EU policy or set of policies rather than a systemic opposition to the EU (i.e. Euroscepticism).

⁶⁹ This paragraph is an excerpt from my previously published paper (Kermer *et al.*, 2020).

religious, and social traditions and also by individual cognitive and emotional elements, driven by personal experience, family memories, habits and local traditions” (Heller & Rényi, 2007:170). In short, unpacking the concept of identity is a daunting task.

Democracy

Most scholars agree that the EU suffers from a ‘democratic deficit’ of some kind.⁷⁰ Scholars agree less, however, on the diagnosis of the problem. Some scholars point to the lack of a European demos or ‘thick’ European identity (the so-called ‘no-demos’ thesis) as the main source of the EU’s democratic woes; others underline the institutional deficiencies (Conrad, 2010) which impede the flourishing of democracy; and, not surprisingly, most public sphere scholars reduce the ‘democratic deficit’ to a ‘communication deficit’. For instance, although analytically distinct, the identity, institutional, and communication ‘deficits’ are intimately connected. As scholars argue, identity and social communication are mutually reinforcing (e.g. Deutsch, 1966). Institutional reforms, moreover, are widely understood to remedy deficits in social communication, and enable collective action, and ergo ‘communities of communication’. This section is dedicated to reviewing the scholarship which attests to the public spheres’ democratic- enhancing credentials.

A rich body of scholarship attests, either explicitly or indirectly, to the public spheres democracy-enhancing function. This is unsurprising as Habermas conceived of the development of the public sphere as crucial for accelerating the transition from autocratic rule and feudalistic society to a democratic and capitalistic society⁷¹. Habermas argues that the European public sphere was axiomatic to the legitimacy, accountability, and responsiveness of EU governance. Habermas wrote:

The democratic deficit can only be redressed by the simultaneous emergence of a European political public sphere in which the democratic process is embedded. In complex societies, democratic legitimacy results from the interplay of institutionalised consultation and decision making processes, on the one hand, and informal public processes of communication in which opinions are formed via the mass media, on the other (Habermas, 2006:102; found in Statham, 2010: 283-4)

⁷⁰ However, for intergovernmentalist scholars such as Majone (1993) and Moravcsik (1998), the purported European democratic and communication deficit does not exist, as national democratic structures and channels of representation, such as the national media, national parliaments, national executives which legitimise EU decision making. Proponents of the *elitist* or *liberal* democratic theory models might also contest the view that a EPS is necessary for enhancing democracy. For them, democracy is guaranteed through elections.

⁷¹ As Trenz and Eder (2004:7) remark, “[T]he basic function of a public sphere is to democratize political institutions”.

According to Habermas, the mass media play an integral role in democracy because they have the potential to make politics visible and transparent (Habermas, 2006). Numerous communication scholars attribute the EU's democratic shortcomings to the advancement of political and economic integration which has proceeded apace and left social integration in its wake⁷². Simply put, integration has been skewed in favour of institutional integration to the detriment of social integration⁷³. For several scholars, there is an 'incongruency' (Schmidt, 2006) / 'mismatch' (Conrad, 2010) / 'imbalance' (Brüggemann et al., 2006) and / 'discrepancy' (Gerhards & Hans, 2014) between the arena where decisions are made and the arena where debates on those decisions are held, and ipso facto incongruency between input and output legitimacy⁷⁴. As Neidhardt et al. (2000:265) argues, the larger this gap, the more 'compensation Europeanisation' becomes democratically necessary⁷⁵. In the words of Meyer (2005:124), "compensatory Europeanization is the expectation of an increase in media coverage on European affairs in line with the increased influence of Europe on public policy development". In the words of Conrad, "communicative power needs to be exercised at the same level as that where political decisions are made" (2010:216). However, there is, currently, a mismatch between administrative power and communicative power⁷⁶ (Ibid.). Similarly, Fossum et al. argues that "democracy cannot work if the major decisions are taken at a higher, European level, without intellectual exchange and political debate taking place on a corresponding European scale" (2007:151). As de Wilde and Zurn (2012) argue, the incongruence between where decisions are enacted and where politics manifests has contributed to the politicisation of European integration – a process which is expected to begin to redress this imbalance (Schmidt, 2006). Public sphere scholars can be divided into two mainstream positions: (1) those who interpret the public sphere deficit as part of a larger democratic deficit (Gerhards, 1993; Steeg et al., 2010:5) and (2) those who deny it (e.g. the intergovernmentalist stance). Gerhards (1993; 2000; 2001) was, to my knowledge, one of the first scholars to interpret the EU's democratic deficit as a problem of communication. He adds that:

...A public deficit, that is to be distinguished from a democracy deficit, would exist when political decisions were taken increasingly frequently not by the nation-states but by the institutions of the EU while the reporting to the public remained bound to the nation-state and only considered to a small extent the European decisions and discussions of the decision makers there: the consequence would be that the citizens would not be sufficiently informed

⁷² Social integration in general and social communication in particular.

⁷³ Several scholars allude to the 'juridification' of EU integration (Fossum *et al.*, 2007:8-9; Bohman, 2004: 321) which refers to the increasingly prominent role of the ECJ and expansion of EU law in daily social and political life. The EU continues to integrate particularly in the economic, political and legal domains.

⁷⁴ As Trenz et al. argues, legitimacy is not solely based on policy outcomes (i.e., output-legitimacy) but is sustained "through principles of democratic representation and inclusive mechanisms of citizens' empowerment and participation" (i.e., input-legitimacy, see Trenz & Michailidou, 2014: 473, for details).

⁷⁵ That is, public debate, which provides a legitimizing function, must 'compensate' for the ceding of sovereignty to supranational institutions.

⁷⁶ The same scholars claims that EUropean matters lack resonance beyond the EU policy sphere (i.e. specialised publics) to a wider public sphere (i.e. general publics), thereby contributing to the EU's democratic deficit (de Beus, 2010:29).

about the decisions and discussions which nevertheless directly affect them⁷⁷ (Gerhards, 2002:141).

In other words, the EU's decision-making output has increased (i.e. increasing competences at the supranational level) but citizen input via participation in the public sphere has not followed suit⁷⁸. Similarly, according to Tarrow, the bottom-up mobilisation of social movements in the public sphere is crucial to redressing this imbalance: "Democracy, if it evolves at the European level will grow out of the capacity of social movements, public interest groups, and other non-state actors to make alliances with combinations of national government actors, supranational institutions, and with each other in Europe's increasingly composite polity" (cited in Statham, 2010:284). Likewise, Statham et al. (2005) interpret the involvement of civil society and other intermediary actors (i.e. political parties) in the public sphere as crucial to resolving the EU's democratic deficit. Eriksen refers, instead, more broadly to the lack of deliberative inputs from 'general publics' (Eriksen, 2007:40). The same scholar emphasises the normative value, democratically speaking, of pluralistic publics which help "foster democracy as these enhance the possibilities for popular participation and fewer voices are excluded and more questions are asked" (Eriksen, 2007:42).

Downey and Koenig (2006:166) lay particular emphasis on the importance of media institutions to bridge the gap between political integration and social integration (Eder, 2000). For Scharpf et al., (1999) the lack of a flourishing EPS means that the chains of accountability between the rulers and ruled are severed; citizens can neither participate in European public debates nor assign political responsibility to supranational actors for their decisions (see also: Scharpf 1999, Grimm 1995). Kantner, similarly, highlights the importance of the EPS for developing EU democracy:

The public deficit of the European Union is considered to lie at the heart of the European democracy deficit. Answering the question about the conditions for the constitution of a European public sphere is therefore essential for answering the question about the democratizability of European governance (Kantner, 2003: 213, found in Machill et al., 2006:60).

As Brüggemann et al. adds, "a constitutive feature of democracy [is] the possibility to inform...reason about, scrutinize, criticize, and eventually influence policy-making" (Brüggemann et al., 2006:1). The public sphere is the means by which free and equal citizens, unfettered by state interference, can

⁷⁷ "Ein vom Demokratiedefizit zu unterscheidendes Öffentlichkeitsdefizit der EU bestünde dann, wenn politische Entscheidungen immer häufiger nicht von den Nationalstaaten, sondern von den Institutionen der EU gefällt würden, die Berichterstattung der Öffentlichkeit aber nationalstaatlich verhaftet bliebe und nur im geringen Maße von den europäischen Entscheidungen und Diskussionen der dortigen Entscheidungsträger berichtete; die Folge wäre, dass die Bürger nicht ausreichend von den Entscheidungen und Diskussionen informiert würden, die sie aber unmittelbar betreffen. Ein „enlightened understanding“ im Sinne Dahls wäre damit nur mangelhaft möglich" (Gerhards, 2002:141).

⁷⁸ On the concept of *input legitimacy*, see Majone, 1998 and Beetham and Lord, 1998.

exercise their ‘voice’ and influence decision-making” (2006:1). Likewise, in the words of de Swaan, “[the lack of] a common, synchronous debate about key matters – is at the heart of the EU’s democratic deficit” (2007:72). The public spheres’ role “is to inform citizens, monitor and critically evaluate” power holders (Nitoiu, 2013:28). In the words of Habermas, the public sphere is akin to a ‘warning system’ with sensors; if citizens do not approve of a decision, they can signal their opposition in the public sphere⁷⁹ (Habermas 1996:359).

For Eriksen (2002a; 2007), the public sphere possesses ‘epistemic value’ as deliberation compels decision makers to justify their decisions to their constituents. In short, legitimacy stems from deliberation. Decision makers derive their legitimacy – to rule over and make decisions on behalf of its citizens – from the public sphere by entering “the public arena in order to justify and gain support” for their decisions (Eriksen & Fossum, 2002a:403). To paraphrase Eriksen (2007), the public sphere is the locus where decisions are legitimised; the integral role of the media and public scrutiny require politicians to (re-)define their mandate on a periodic basis, and mobilise support in the general public sphere (Eriksen, 2007:40-41). The same scholar adds that the existence of multiple publics is desirable from a legitimacy standpoint as “they contribute to criticising and deconstructing hegemonic ‘truths’ and prevailing consensuses and force the decision makers to provide more general and universalistic justifications for their positions” (Eriksen, 2007:42). Similarly, Conrad claims that a decision must be approved by public opinion in the public sphere to be deemed legitimate (Conrad, 2010). Monza makes the similar point that “when narratives become accepted and normalized in society, they function as a means for justifying policymaking” (2017:5). Kleinen-von Königslöw argues that “the public sphere validates opinions expressed by different societal actors through debate” (2012:459).

Peters et al. (2005) argues that legitimacy is ensured on the proviso that European institutions, actors, and issues are sufficiently visible in national public spheres. Sufficient access to public information is, after all, an essential ingredient of democracy (Ibid:139)⁸⁰. Greater visibility of European matters is related to increasing political participation and increasing knowledge (de Vreese & Boomgarden 2006). The democratic deficit is, in part, due to the lack of visibility of EU actors and issues in national news coverage. News about European politics supplies citizens’ with the information needed to help them form opinions (Boomgarden et al., 2013:611). As Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012:459) rightly points out, the public sphere fulfils a transparency and participatory function, by providing a space for

⁷⁹ It is in the public sphere that citizens are able to influence decision-making.

⁸⁰ A regime can be considered *democratic* if it contains the following: “a) universal male and female suffrage; b) free, competitive, periodic and fair elections; c) more than one political party; d) different and alternative sources of information” (Morlino, 2020:16). All of these criteria, particularly the fourth, implicitly touch upon the concept of the public sphere. The public sphere – through the mass media or internet social media platforms – provides a stage for the free and open participation of different actors such as citizens and political parties. Leonardo Morlino builds on the Robert Dahl’s definition by developing operational indicators. Herein, the public sphere is implicitly invoked as integral to accountability. For Morlino, *accountability* consists of, plural and independent information and freedom of the press, amongst other things. With this in mind, I disagree with Eriksen and Fossum’s claim (2000:17) that “public debate is the single most important clue for the assessment of democratic quality”. The bottom line is that democracy is a multidimensional concept and the public sphere is one source of many which can enhance democracy.

citizens' to gain visibility and express their views. According to Fossum et al. (2007), a well-functioning public sphere is a *sine qua non* of democracy. Pfetsch (2004) underlines the importance of the public sphere to both participatory democracy and European integration: "...European integration from above must be accompanied by a Europeanisation of public communication in order to overcome the EU's lack of legitimacy and popular involvement" (2004:3). Trenz et al. (2014) claims that what he refers to as the 'mediatization' of EU politics is a good thing for democracy. This is because the mass media encourage participation in public debates, contribute to opinion making, and improve peoples' understanding of EU politics. The mass media are understood to enhance political knowledge that can help people to engage in debates and form opinions thus satisfying an important democratic requirement. Other communication scholars emphasise the key agency of journalism and the mass media in galvanising the public sphere and ergo democracy. Journalists' inform and educate the public through transmission and diffusion of public information, however, they also have the power to shape opinions and mobilise political activism (Michailidou, 2007). Journalists' contribute to the EU's 'throughput legitimacy' (see Schmidt, 2019 on this concept) by improving the transparency of decision making. As McQuail points out, the virtue of 'investigative journalism' is that it can reveal aspects of politics concealed by incumbents (1994:145). The mass media assume a 'watchdog' role by investigating politicians' and public officials' performances (i.e. accountability, see McQuail, 1997:145 for more). Recently, de Wilde hypothesised that increasing media coverage of EU affairs can enable a 'democratic spillover' through the strengthening of transparency and accountability (2019:1198). Instead, Gerhards flips the argument on its head. In his view, the deficit in EU democracy generates the deficit in the public/ness (Gerhards, 2000:292, found in Splichal & Slavko, 2006).

The public sphere is a forum where opinions are formed which contributes to collective will formation (Statham and Trenz, 2015; Gerhards and Neidhardt, 1991: 39-41; Risse, 2014). Habermas (1996) develops a highly instructive heuristic model which he calls the 'official circulation of power'. Herein, it becomes clear how opinion and will formation can provide a legitimising function. In the words of Habermas, "binding decisions, to be legitimate, must be steered by communication flows that start at the periphery and pass through the sluices of democratic and constitutional procedures situated at the entrance to the parliamentary complex or the courts" (Habermas, 1996:356, cited in Fossum et al., 2007:5). In Habermas's model, communication flows on the periphery of the political system (i.e. the public sphere) contribute to opinion formation. The latter, thereafter, shapes will formation (and vice-versa), thus culminating in the formation of political parties and interest groups. This model presupposes that opinion- and will formation will shape decision making in the institutional arena of 'strong publics' (what Habermas calls the 'politico-administrative complex'⁸¹). Legitimacy, therefore, is provided by communicative inputs from the wide participation of citizens, political parties/social movements, governments, and so on, in the public sphere. More specifically, 'soft/general publics' (i.e. citizens)

⁸¹ See Fossum *et al.*, 2007:5-6, for details.

exchange communication flows in the public sphere; ‘strong publics’ (e.g. political parties) receive these ‘signals’ (i.e. public opinion) and intervene in the public sphere to drum up support for their policy manifesto; thereafter, governments, operating at the centre of the politico-administrative complex, implement decisions and engage in deliberation in order to justify their decisions. In sum, a public sphere without EU-wide ‘general public’ opinion is at the heart of the EU’s democratic deficit (Van de Steeg, 2006). Similar conclusions are reached by the scholar, Conrad, who argues that a European communicative network – consisting of public opinion and a collective will at the European level – is missing⁸² (Conrad, 2010:210).

Closely related to the public sphere is the claim that politicisation can foster the EU’s democratization. Follesdal, in particular subscribes to this view (2014). For him, contestation is part and parcel of politics and is desirable from a normative democratic standpoint (see also Risse, 2010). Similarly, Follesdal and Hix (2006) claim that a more politicised European Parliament would help to mitigate the democratic deficit (see also Mair 2007; Statham and Trenz 2015). Statham and Trenz (2012; 2015) underline the transparency-inducing and participatory-enhancing function of politicisation, which, by definition, expands public discourse to include more actors⁸³ (i.e. civil society and political parties), makes issues more salient (visible), and “provides for critical feedback to decision makers” (Hennen et al., 2019:56). This position, however, presupposes that contestation is isomorphic rather than constitutive⁸⁴ (Kermer et al., 2020). The prevalence of the latter is, in my view, undesirable from a democratic standpoint as it can underline the whole legitimacy of a polity. Scharpf (2009) also speculates about the pernicious effects of politicisation on democracy. According to this scholar, politicisation (and the extension of conflict to new actors which it engenders i.e. ‘input legitimacy’) could be detrimental to the EU’s ‘output legitimacy’ (i.e. the pareto-efficiency of the EU polity).

Some scholars, paradoxically, interpret the ‘democratic deficit’ as both a source and sign of the EU’s democratisation (Statham, 2013:141; Trenz & Eder, 2004:7, Risse, 2014). Questioning the EU’s lack of democracy may set in motion a ‘learning process’ (Eder et al., 2004, found in Fossum et al., 2007: 282) which induces greater democratisation (Trenz and Eder, 2004:7). In the words of Trenz and Statham, “an emerging public sphere has a ‘self-constituting dynamic’ that couples the unfolding of transnational spaces of political communication with the democratization of EU institutions” (Trenz & Statham, 2013:5, found in Fossum et al., 2007:79). In other words, somewhat ironically, criticizing the

⁸² Conrad insists that public opinion formation should occur at the level at which decisions are made (2010:219). Currently, the EU consists of several (sub-)national public opinion(s) that cannot be easily reconciled into a coherent collective European will.

⁸⁴ I doubt Risse’s optimistic assumption that “the coming fights over Europe will no longer be whether or not one supports European integration, but *which type* of EU one prefers, including which policy alternatives” (Risse, 2010:244). This stance presupposes that contestation will not be about constitutive matters but rather isomorphic ones. Put another way, the scholar assumes that contestation on *policy* will prevail over *polity* (i.e. further EU integration).

EU from a democratic perspective may in turn elicit intense public communication and ipso facto contribute to its democratisation⁸⁵.

The EPS as a dependant variable

Institutional factors

Several scholars notably Fossum and Schlesinger (2007) and Habermas (2014) claim that both institutional (i.e. the ‘system world’ of strong publics) and non-institutional factors (i.e. the ‘lifeworld’ of weak publics) would determine the trajectory of the EPS⁸⁶. Habermas was a strong advocate for strengthening the European Parliament as it was expected that political debates would foster transnational coalitions and political conflicts would transcend national borders paving the way for will formation on a Pan-European level (Habermas, 2014:94, see also Offe, 2013: 606). Likewise, Fossum and Schlesinger (2007) attribute the EPS’s current malaise to the fact that weak- and strong publics are nationally embedded. In regard to the latter, in an ideal scenario, strong publics would deliberate on political issues in national and European parliaments before decisions are implemented. However, as numerous scholars argue, national parliaments continue to play a peripheral role in deliberation processes and decision-making of European issues. As Fossum et al., argue, the crucial link between deliberation and decision-making has been severed (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007⁸⁷). Peters (1993) endorses Habermas’s ‘circulation of power’ model which understands political power as based on ‘centre-periphery scheme’ wherein political signals are communicated by weak publics from the periphery to strong publics at the centre (Eriksen, 2007:27, for details). Generally speaking, EU integration has advanced in the legal (the so-called ‘juridification’⁸⁸ of EU integration) and economic domain at the expense of politics (i.e. deliberation) and social integration (the EPS of ‘general publics’). The executive and legislative function of the political centre has proceeded apace leaving the deliberative function in its wake (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007). To put it crudely, policies have prioritised politics. In sum, Fossum et al. argue that the deliberative fora of both weak- and strong publics are underdeveloped at the European level. And when there is deliberation among transnational strong publics, it is not publicly visible enough⁸⁹. In sum, several scholars argue that institutional

⁸⁵ Trezn and Eder label this process a ‘self-help therapy’ (2004:19).

⁸⁶ ‘Strong publics’ are institutionalized deliberations “close to the centre of the political system that is legally regulated, viz. sites in which there is a requirement to provide justification and there is a stronger regulation of discourses” (Eriksen, 2007: 28).

⁸⁷ The same scholars reject the communitarian stance that public spheres depend on a pre-existing ‘we-feeling’ of shared values and norms (a la Sandel, 1998). They argue instead from the constructivist paradigm that identities follow collective action induced by the development of politico-administrative institutions (see also the book by Eugen Weber, ‘Peasants into Frenchmen’ (1976) which shows how the French nation was conceived from ‘nation-building’ policy measures deriving from political institutions in the political centre, namely Paris).

⁸⁸ Juridification “denotes the tendency toward the increasing expansion of law and law-like methods of formal rules and adjudication to new domains of social life” (Bohman, 2004: 321, cited in Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007:8-9).

⁸⁹ The comitology process and interest group lobbying practices come to mind.

reforms on the national and European level – which correspondingly strengthen the publicity of weak and strong publics – are expected to strengthen the EPS.

Integration theory

Building on the theoretical framework of Karl Deutsch's theory of transactionalism and Ernst Haas's theory of neofunctionalism, several scholars (e.g. Zografova et al. 2012; Walter, 2016) expect older member states (e.g. France) to report on EU issues more frequently and more positively than newer member states (e.g. Poland). Likewise, Koopmans et al. (2010) expect political claims to be more Europeanised in EU member states (e.g. Spain) than non-EU ones⁹⁰ (e.g. Switzerland). The latter scholars, furthermore, expect Europeanisation to be negatively correlated with the increase in a country's number of EU opt-outs (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). In sum, Europeanisation is understood by scholars to be a function of political integration.

Contextual variables

Hypotheses concerning country-level contextual variables have been advanced by public sphere scholars. For instance, Bossetta et al. (2019) expect newspapers' from net budget receiving countries to contain more Europeanised discourses' compared to net contributors (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). Moreover, Walter (2016) expects EU member states which are more dependent on EU trade to report more on fellow member states (i.e. 'horizontal Europeanisation', see also Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). The same scholars also expect neighbouring countries and countries where the same language is spoken, to report more about each other (Walter, 2016). In other words, geography matters to patterns of Europeanised discourse. Moreover, older and smaller member states are more likely to report on the affairs of fellow EU states. According to Koopmans et al. (2010), discursive Europeanisation is inversely correlated with a country's 'power' and 'autonomy' in the international system (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010; Medrano & Gray, 2010:198). The scholar, Pawley (2017) argues that the prominence of right-wing parties in electoral systems are inversely correlated with Europeanised frames, as they tend to deploy cultural-identitarian and nationalist frames. Furthermore, Peter et al. expect EU news coverage to be negatively correlated with levels of domestic democracy (2004:7). In sum, both factors exogenous to EU governance and factors related to EU integration may determine patterns of Europeanised political communication.

⁹⁰ See also Van de Steeg (2006) who expects that same with regard to member states and the United States.

The type of medium

The advent of the Internet was expected to foster the Europeanisation of political communication and cultivate transnational identities. It was expected that the Internet would herald an era of global governance, cosmopolitanism and the congealment of post-national identities. McLuhan's (1989) 'global village' concept became the academic watchword particularly during the late 1990s. The notion is intuitively appealing. In theory, cyberspace is a de-territorialised, unbounded communicative infrastructure. The Internet has dramatically reduced the transaction costs of transborder communication⁹¹. Indeed, extant research on social movements shows the capacity of the Internet to foster transnational identities (Della Porta et al. 2006). Nonetheless, scholars have become increasingly divided on this question. In fact, a plethora of studies demonstrate that the Internet can rouse nationalism and reinforce, or reflect, ethno-cultural identities (Derman & Ross, 2003; Barisione & Michailidou, 2017). Several studies found that nationalism (Miller & Slater, 2001; Caiani et al., 2009; Gidişoğlu et al., 2011) thrives on social media (Barisione et al., 2017). As Diamandaki puts it, "the Internet—a placeless medium—allows for the (re)creation of place...[Cyberspace is] another archive, mirror, and laboratory for the negotiation of national and ethnic identity" (Diamandaki, 2003:3–4). Similarly, the study by Koopmans and Zimmermann (2003) shows that online spaces tend to present European stories through a national filter (2003). The verdict of Koopmans et al. (2010) is that online spaces do not fulfil the requirements of Europeanised communication better than offline spaces. By contrast, Gerhards and Schäfer (2010) expect online communication to be more amenable to transnational communication compared with offline spaces because of reduced transaction costs and lower barriers of entry (Hänška & Bauchowitz, 2019). Furthermore, this 'global village' thesis does not square with the current electoral climate, namely the sustained popularity of national populist and Eurosceptic parties and entrenchment of national identities. The Internet, moreover, is likely to foster politicisation for two reasons; firstly, a myriad of actors can use social media platforms and the myriad of alternative media outlets on the Internet to gain publicity and participate in debates⁹²; secondly, the Internet is largely unmediated, thereby creating a fertile environment for the permeation of polarised narratives. The Internet has empowered new voices, many of whom are inimical to the EU project. Indeed, according to one study, 'Eurosceptics do better on Twitter' (TNS Global, as cited in Euractiv, 2015)⁹³. Notwithstanding this, I acknowledge that it would be probably too hasty to jump to the conclusion that the Internet serves to embolden national allegiances of an exclusive kind (Gidişoğlu et al., 2011). Firstly, participation in cyberspace still represents a fraction of civil society and thus questions can be raised about the generalisability of these findings beyond Cyberspace. Secondly, we cannot demonstratively claim that a collective identity would emerge or whether they merely reflect pre-existing identities emanating from

⁹¹ Indeed, extant research on social movements shows the capacity of the Internet to foster transnational identities (Della Porta et al. 2006).

⁹² Bearing in mind that politicisation, by definition, opens up conflict to new actors (de Wilde & Leupold, 2015, see Kermer et al., 2020).

⁹³ This paragraph is partially taken from my recently published paper (Kermer et al., 2020).

a negligible minority. Thirdly, assuming that online communities foster offline identities, we cannot assume these identities would be of an exclusive kind as interpersonal interactions offline may override them. In the end, only time will tell whether increasing internet usage will foster post-national identities, or, conversely, dismantle the ‘global village’ (Kermer et al., 2020:32). In sum, the two-pronged threat of increasing politicisation of EU integration combined with disinformation on the Internet should make scholars wary of assuming that the relationship between the public sphere and European identity is a linear one (Kermer et al., 2020:31-32)⁹⁴.

The type of outlet

It is almost universally recognised that the type of outlet can represent political reality in markedly different ways⁹⁵ (e.g. Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Indeed, several scholars subscribe to this view. For example, Pfetsch et al. (2010) expect tabloid and regional newspapers to be more parochial and Eurosceptic than the quality newspapers. Similarly, Koopmans expects, “...significant differences across media in different countries, as well as across media of different types (left versus right, tabloids versus quality, and national versus regional newspapers” (2010: 108). Likewise, Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect EU news to be more visible in quality newspapers and public television broadcasting channels (see also Peter & de Vreese, 2004: 6-7). In regard to framing of EU news, Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) expect ‘nationalisation’, ‘conflict’, and ‘human interest’ frames to be more prominent in tabloid dailies (Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009). These expectations stem from the insight that different media outlets cater to target different audience segments (Pfetsch et al., 2010). Media outlets vary according to, inter alia, editorial standards, ideological orientation, and the socio-economic background of its ‘target’ audience (Van de Steeg, Marianne, 2006). As Pfetsch et al. (2010) explain, regional and tabloid newspapers cater to local/national audiences who are more interested in domestic politics and tend to have lower levels of education, which, as previous studies show, is negatively correlated with EU support. As a consequence, these outlets are going to seize upon Eurosceptic sentiments of their audience (Hix 2005: 163– 164, found in Pfetsch et al., 2010). By contrast, quality newspapers cater to political elites and professional classes who tend to be more supportive of EU integration. Scholars such as Pfetsch thus expect the EU to be more visible and positively evaluated in the quality press (Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010). The findings of research carried out by Conrad (2010) lend support to the notion that newspaper type can affect how EU issues are framed. The results indicate that conservative-oriented newspapers tend to emphasise the implications of the EU Constitutional Treaty on national sovereignty, whereas liberal

⁹⁴ This paragraph is an excerpt from an earlier paper which is publicly accessible (Kermer *et al.*, 2020).

⁹⁵ i.e. quality vis-à-vis tabloid newspapers, private vis-à-vis public television broadcasting etc.

newspapers tended to frame the Treaty as an opportunity to strengthen EU democracy and EU citizenship rights (Conrad, 2010:226).

The ‘Europeanisation of events’

The scholars, Hänska et al. (2019) describe the EPS as ‘ephemeral’ and largely driven by events or crisis (see also De Swaan, 2007). Kriesi and Grande (2015:70) claim that, “common political events induce the different publics in federalist nation-states to debate the same issues in parallel ways”. Similarly, in the words of de Swaan, “there are moments in a given society when everyone’s attention is drawn by one and the same topic...events have a more lasting impact on the attention economy of the nation, and they usually have to do with disaster, rebellion, crisis and war” (2007:145). Eriksen (2009:132) argues that two events, namely the Haider debacle, and Joschka Fischer’s defining speech on the future of Europe at Humboldt University, culminated in what he calls, the ‘Europeanisation of events’ (see also Trenz, 2005). Kriesi and Grande (2015:68) hypothesise that the euro crisis led to the “parallelisation of national public spheres whereby the different national publics are debating the same issues, at the same time, and in largely similar ways” (i.e. the Eder-Kantner criteria). However, the same scholars countenance the prospect of a ‘renaissance of nationalism’ in which national actors’ and nationalist cultural-identitarian frames dominate public discourse (Kriesi et al., 2014; Kriesi, 2010; Kriesi & Grande, 2016). Lauristin (2007) argues that Europeanisation becomes particularly noticeable in public discourse when European issues involve scandal or touch upon some national interest. By contrast, during regular and uneventful periods, the European public sphere lies dormant (Lauristin, 2007). As Peter and de Vreese (2004:16) imaginatively put it, “The EU is somewhat like the moon: though of major influence on the ebb and flow of Europe, it is only cyclically fully visible”. The same scholars expect the EU to be more visible during EU Council summits than regular periods. Underpinned by a similar logic, Walter (2014) expects the visibility of EU actors to be more prominent during EU election periods. Indeed, previous studies show that major events such as the introduction of the EU, major EU summits, and EU enlargement debates, are met with peaks in EU news coverage (De Vreese 2001; Boomgaarden et al. 2013). Similarly, Eriksen (2007: 34) claims that scandals and campaigns (e.g. criticism of Schengen, the BSE scandal, the Santer Commission scandal) are vehicles of transnational resonance in the public sphere.

Nevertheless, some scholars are less certain about the potential of political communication to ‘Europeanise’ during crises. The disagreement stems from how scholars conceive of Europeanised political communication. Generally speaking, those who focus on the quantitative dimension of Europeanisation (i.e. issue cycles) are more inclined to conclude that the EPS flourishes during crises insofar as the salience and visibility of EU actors/issues increase. However, those who demand that

public spheres' display 'similar meaning structures' (i.e. converging frames) would argue that crises can militate against the emergence of an EPS as national actors' tend to focus more on the 'national interest' during critical junctures. Indeed, this is the view of Hennen et al. who claim that "crises bring new actors to the fore that are not supportive of European integration and offer views that focus on national interests and thus help to strengthen national identities" (2020:83). Similar sentiments are shared by Katzenstein et al. who claim that "Europe often reveals itself to be a community of strangers' during crises" (2009: 214).

European identity

As I touched upon earlier, an antecedent European sense of belonging is generally understood to be more amenable to Europeanised communication. Communitarian scholars such as Sandel (1998) insist on the sine qua non of a pre-existing collective identity. According to the same, "political integration does require a deeper sense of belonging and commonality" (found in Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007:6). In Etzioni's words, "members of a community listen to the same moral voice. The citizens need to regard each other as neighbours or fellow countrymen, or brothers and sisters" (Fossum et al., 2007:6). Communitarians argue that the EU must develop "pre-political' elements such as a collective identity, common values and common interests" (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007:6; Etzioni, 1997). By contrast, deliberative scholars such as John Dewey or Eder argue that deliberation contributes to building a sense of belonging (see also Conrad, 2010). Similarly, Eriksen (2007) argues that public spheres are the loci where identities are (re-)constructed. Public spheres do not exist as manifestations of pre-political identities. The public sphere is a constantly evolving space where people come to together and deliberate to decide "who they are or would like to be, and then form a collective will of the nation or the class" (Eriksen, 2007: 29). He adds that, "collective identity, thus, has to be made rather than merely discovered" (Eriksen, 2007: 30-31). In other words, identities follow from discourse, but not the other way round. Notwithstanding this view, Eriksen (2007) acknowledges that a minimum level of common unity and solidarity is necessary for the development of a European public sphere⁹⁶. In my view, a pre-existing sense of belonging to Europe certainly goes a long way, however, it would probably be an overstatement to claim it is essential to begin with.

⁹⁶ What Thomas Risse would call a 'thin' European identity (see Risse, 2010).

Politicisation

One of the first definitions of politicisation was provided by Schattschneider (1960:16) who defined it as "...about political conflict and the intensification of political debates in the public spheres" (cited in Risse, 2014: 13). More recently, De Wilde (2011:566-7) defines 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". Risse (2014) – building on de Wilde's definition – provide the most comprehensive definition of politicisation as:

...an increase in polarization of opinions, interests, or values and the extent to which they are publicly advanced towards the process of policy formulation within the EU. In other words, European issues are politicized if and when the following statements are true: there is an increase in issue salience of EU-related questions in various public spheres; there also is growing controversy and polarization with regard to EU issues (Risse, 2014:13).

As de Wilde et al. lays out, politicisation can be measured by tracing (a) the salience of EU/European affairs, (b) the polarisation of opinion(s), and (c) the expansion of actors engaged EU/European politics (2015:4). Grande et al. argue that the EU salience is a necessary condition but one of the latter two conditions, namely, polarisation, and the expansion of conflict, can be substituted for one another (Grande & Hutter, 2016). EU salience is typically operationalised by measuring the number of articles that report on European governance (de Wilde et al., 2015:6). Polarisation is usually measured by examining the level of polarisation in a country's party system (Kriesi et al. 2008:364, cited in de Wilde et al., 2015:7). Lastly, the expansion of conflict is habitually measured by examining the distribution of actor visibility in the mass media (de Wilde et al., 2015:7; Hutter and Grande, 2014).

As I touched upon earlier, politicisation is understood by numerous scholars to foster Europeanised communication (e.g. Risse, 2014). Risse (2014) considers politicisation is, on balance, an enabling condition of an EPS. The central premise of Risse's book, 'European Public Spheres: Politics is Back' (2014) is that the increasingly politicised nature of European integration has crystallised the EPS. However, as Risse rightly underlines, politicisation is orthogonal to the public sphere (2014). In other words, politicisation and the EPS are not mutually exclusive, that is, they can exist simultaneously but also on their own. Most scholars (Checkel, 2014; Follesdal, 2014) claim that these concepts are causally interdependent, but the direction of causation is unclear⁹⁷. Boomgaarden et al., 2013 expect negative elite opinion to the EU, and strong difference in parties' positions to the EU (i.e. party conflict/polarisation) to be positively correlated with the visibility of EU actors and issues. This is

⁹⁷ The public sphere is the conduit through which actors can debate issues (De Wilde, Leupold, & Schmidtke, 2016). Politicisation – and the expansion of conflict to non-executive actors which it engenders – re-vitalises the EPS (Statham and Trenz 2015).

because negativity and conflict increase the newsworthiness of a potential news item (Boomgaarden et al., 2013). The same also expect the visibility of EU news to be highest when elites both disagree (i.e. polarisation) and become increasingly negative (i.e. positioning) towards the EU. However, they also expect national actors' to dominate news coverage in situations of increasing party conflict and negative evaluations towards the EU. By the same token, the same scholars expect the visibility of EU actors in the news to be negatively correlated with party conflict about Europe (Boomgaarden et al., 2013:614). The results show that, "...increases in EU news visibility were strongest in a situation in which there was both increasing negativity about the EU in a country's party system and increasing party disagreement about the EU" (Boomgaarden et al. 2013: 621). They conclude that "...ironically, euro-scepticism, in the form of elite polarisation, is one of the best chances for improving EU democracy by sparking news coverage of EU affairs" (Boomgaarden et al. 2013:625)⁹⁸. The findings of the study by Peter et al. (2004) cast doubt upon the expectations of the latter as polarised elite opinion was actually found not to affect the visibility of EU news. Peter and de Vreese (2004) expect party conflicts and disagreements to increase the volume of EU news coverage (2004:7-8), but paradoxically, this might diminish the visibility of EU actors (2004: 8). In other words, they expect EU affairs to be more visible but debates to be dominated by non-EU actors. Conversely, positive elite opinion and party consensus on EU issues is expected to increase the visibility of EU actors (Ibid.,). Likewise, Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect there to be more EU news coverage in countries where there is a strong positive consensus about the EU in national party systems (2013:614). Similarly, Gattermann (2013) expects EU news coverage to be more intense in countries with a more positive attitude towards the EU (see also Walter, 2016). Koopmans et al. (2010) allude also to the co-constitutiveness of politicisation and the public sphere. The same scholars expect the increasing salience of the EU to be met with more criticism. More specifically, they expect criticism to be most prevalent in the issue fields where EU-level decision-making powers are the most extensive (e.g. agricultural policy, monetary policy). However, other scholars, notably, Checkel (2014), and Grande & Kriesi (2014), are more sceptical about the prospect of politicisation to lead to Europeanisation. The latter argue that politicisation risks empowering Eurosceptic political actors'. Indeed, Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect increasingly negative elite opinions and party conflicts to be accompanied by the preponderance of domestic and right-wing actors at the expense of EU actors (see also Peter and de Vreese, 2004: 8). Furthermore, as Pawley (2017) demonstrates, the increasing salience of the EU can be accompanied by cultural-identitarian frames which are understood to militate against the development of Europeanised public politics.

⁹⁸ This study encapsulates the 'double-edged sword' nature of Europeanisation: on the one hand, the politicisation of EU integration empowers Eurosceptics and creates a more contentious political environment; on the other hand, EU affairs receive more news coverage and spark debates among the wider EU citizenry.

Political discourse cultures

Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) argues that a country's 'political discourse culture' – defined as “a specific thickening of cultural patterns (systems of classification, discursive formations) of political communication that people of a definable group refer to in order to make sense of political actions” – determines a public spheres' amenability to Europeanisation (Hepp and Wessler, 2009:186; translation by Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:447). In other words, an antecedent socio-cultural substratum conditions political communication in general and Europeanised communication in particular⁹⁹. The same scholar distinguishes between national political- and editorial discourse cultures. Put simply, the former implies that patterns of communication are a function of specific national circumstances, whereas the latter implies that patterns of communication are a function of institutional factors deriving from media organisations. In regard to the former, a nation's history can shape its political discourse culture. For example, it can be reasonably argued that Germany perceived the EU as an opportunity to overcome its ignominious past¹⁰⁰. Great Britain was quick to declare herself the 'victor' of two world wars, and this exceptionalist mentality has undoubtedly shaped the nation's rather frosty relationship with Europe. The length of EU membership is also understood to shape national political discourse cultures (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:447). This same expects long-standing EU members to report more frequently about the EU. Political discourse cultures are also determined by the size and power of a country. Some European countries regard themselves as global powers or the EU as a 'necessary evil'¹⁰¹ (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). There are 'smaller' nations that are heavily trade-dependent on the EU, or which depend on the EU for political leverage. With that in mind, the same scholar expects smaller countries to report more frequently on the affairs of other European nations and the EU (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012: 448). Moreover, according to Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012), the media possess different 'editorial political discourse cultures'. Newspapers vary according to, inter alia, political leaning, editorial beliefs, rules or habits, organisational and ownership structures, and the socio-economic and professional background of the target audience (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:447). As a result, the same scholar expects the quality press to report EU affairs more regularly vis-à-vis tabloid counterparts (2012:448). However, national political discourse cultures are expected to have a greater impact on horizontal and vertical Europeanisation than editorial discourse cultures (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012: 449).

⁹⁹ Kleinen-von Königslöw adds that some countries' political discourse cultures are comparatively more receptive to change, and correspondingly, some public spheres' react quicker to changes in the political system (e.g. the changes brought about by EU integration) than others (2012:447).

¹⁰⁰ I hasten to add that there is no country, in my view, which does not have a dishonourable past.

¹⁰¹ The emphasis is on '*regard*' because many countries' are still afflicted by delusions of grandeur. In the famous words of the former Finance Minister of Denmark, Kristian Jensen, “there are two kinds of European nations. There are small nations and there are countries that have not yet realized they are small nations” (Jensen, 2017, found in Murphy, 2017).

Political opportunity structures

Other scholars, notably, Koopmans et al. (2010) build on the ‘political opportunity structures’ (referred to as POS hereafter) perspective to explain why some public spheres’ are more amenable to Europeanised communication than others. Tarrow defines POS as “consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent or national – dimensions of the political environment which either encourage or discourage people from using collective action” (Tarrow, 1994:18). The argument goes that the European integration process has transformed the political system and ergo POS’s of every member state. Since the Treaty of Rome (1957) until now, the EU has obtained more policy competences incrementally over time¹⁰². Many scholars thus expect European discursive influence to increase correspondingly over time¹⁰³ (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003; de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016). As decision-making shifts from the nation state to the European governance, previous research consistently shows that these changes have disproportionately ‘favoured’ – in terms of media publicity – some actors, particularly national governments, compared to other actors such as political parties. Kriesi et al. (2010) posit that as a result of the ‘juridification’¹⁰⁴ of EU integration, they expect state actors and interest groups to be more active at the EU level – in terms of what they call ‘insider lobbying’ and public-oriented strategies – than political parties and social movement organisations (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010).

Moreover, as the distribution of power varies according to issue field, many scholars expect discursive influence to correspondingly vary (see also Eder, 2000; Peter & de Vreese, 2004; Koopmans & Erbe, 2004; de Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2006; Kriesi & Jochum, 2010: 226). More specifically, the same scholar expect EU actors’ to be more visible in issue fields where the EU possesses extensive competences, such as monetary and agricultural policy (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010, see also Pfetsch, 2004). By the same token, they expect the discursive influence of other European countries’ to be stronger in issue domains with a stronger intergovernmental logic (e.g. troop deployment and immigration policy; see Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010 for more). The latter expect countries’ which are overrepresented in Europeanised debates – relative to their share of the European population – would evaluate the EU more positively than underrepresented ones (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010; see also Statham, 2010). Likewise, Pfetsch et al. (2010) assume that levels of EU integration – ranging from non-EU (e.g. the United States) and ‘opt-out’ member states (e.g. Denmark) to fully integrated EU members (e.g. France) – are positively correlated with increasing media coverage of EU affairs (Pfetsch,

¹⁰² As Pfetsch states, Europeanization enables ‘opportunity structures’ (Pfetsch, 2014), that is, exogenous factors (e.g. the *type* of domestic media culture or certain macroeconomic conditions) which hinder or empower certain actors. Similarly, Hix and Goetz remind us that Europeanization provides “a new structure of opportunities for domestic actors” (Hix & Goetz, 2000:12). Koopmans gets to the heart of the matter: “European integration shifts the distribution of discursive opportunities and resources to influence public debates, improving the relative influence of some actors and weakening that of others” (Koopmans, 2007:205). The same author empirically demonstrate which actors’ have benefited in terms of media visibility from these changing opportunity structures. (Koopmans, 2007, 2012).

¹⁰³ Brantner, Dietrich, and Saurwein (2005) label this ‘compensatory Europeanisation’ thesis. In a similar vein, Koopmans et al. (2010) expect discursive influence to reflect *de jure* power in policy making (what Kriesi and Jochum, 2010 refer to as the ‘persistence hypothesis’).

¹⁰⁴ Denoting a process which has strengthened administrative institutions at the expense of parliamentary bodies.

Adam, & Eschner, 2010). This expectation rests on the assumption that supranational institutions and collective decision-making structures stimulate the Europeanization of public communication¹⁰⁵ (Habermas, 2015).

Ladrech (2002) also employs a political opportunities perspective to begin to make sense of positioning on the meta-issue of EU integration. The same scholar expects political parties to display more negative evaluations towards EU integration because Europeanisation disadvantages them – due to a lack of financial, infrastructural and informational resources – compared to executive actors (2002:395). In other words, from a political opportunities perspective, EU integration discourages legislative actors from evaluating the EU positively because they ‘lose out’ in terms of de jure political power. De Beus (2010) adds the important point that POS can vary according to the issue field, time, and country (see also Koopmans & Statham, 2010:46). These insights remind us that many contextual variables should be considered when endeavouring to understand patterns of political communication¹⁰⁶. Furthermore, as Ladrech adds (2002), every country possesses a unique repertoire of socio-economic and political circumstances which in turn condition the responses of political parties¹⁰⁷. Similarly, Koopmans expects media attention to be positively correlated with the extent to which EU integration is a ‘controversial issue’ in domestic politics (2010:45). This is because, as Koopmans (2010) opines, controversy increases the ‘newsworthiness’ of a potential news item. Moreover, Koopmans (2010) expects actors who have less access to European public debates to be more critical towards the EU, whereas those who are prominently represented in debates are expected to hold more positive evaluations towards the EU (Koopmans, 2007:206). This is based on the POS logic that “...closed political institutions tend to provoke confrontational challenges, whereas open opportunity structures invite more consensual and cooperative strategies from collective actors” (Koopmans, 2010: 99). In the same vein, Statham et al. (2010) expect local, regional and national parties in opposition to be more critical towards the EU than national executive actors because (sub-)national party representatives have ‘less access’ to EU policy making than national executives (Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010: 258). Building on the POS perspective, Kriesi and Grande (2014) expect euro crisis debates to be more salient in eurozone countries than their non-eurozone counterparts (Kriesi & Grande, 2014a).

To recap, as an independent variable, the EPS has been understood by some scholars to foster support for the EU. The mass media supply citizens with information about the EU, and political knowledge is understood to positively affect EU support. The mass media can also shape public opinion via valence framing. Needless to say that negative evaluations of the EU are likely to prime the views of the audience. More contentious, in my view, is the claim that the EPS, in its current form, can congeal a

¹⁰⁵ See Fraser’s work (1992) which underlines the importance of ‘strong publics’ in the development of the public sphere.

¹⁰⁶ In a similar vein, De Wilde et al. (2015) argue that levels of politicization may vary according to several contextual variables such as country-specific economic and cultural conditions, and unique politico-institutional settings.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. two-party/multiparty systems, referenda traditions, the level of economic development, the prevalence of ‘Eurosceptic’ public opinion, and so forth.

European identity¹⁰⁸. Although there is no shortage of proponents for this theory, empirical evidence is thin on the ground. In my view, politicisation may be more of a curse than a blessing for the development of an EPS. The crucial scope condition is what is being contested: the policy or polity?¹⁰⁹. The former is emblematic of a healthy democracy where actors articulate their views on a case by case basis. However, systemic opposition towards the EU is unlikely to foster a European identity. Furthermore, the spectre of disinformation and polarised discourses particularly on cyberspace pose more uncertainty about the public spheres' transnational community building credentials. Less contentious is the claim that democracy is a function of the public sphere. Indeed, several scholars reduce the EU's widely documented democratic deficit as a 'communication deficit'.

As a dependant variable, several scholars argue that the institutionalisation of the EU would strengthen the EPS. Closely related to the last point is the widely held claim that Europeanisation is a function of political integration. Indeed, previous studies support this thesis as the EU appears to be more visible in issue fields where it possesses more power. Furthermore, previous research shows that older, 'opt-in' EU member states are more Europeanised than 'newer' member states. Moreover, it is widely accepted that quality newspapers are more transnational in outlook than tabloid newspapers. It is widely understood that Europeanised communication is ephemeral, and is particularly visible during 'exceptional' periods or period of crisis. However, I think this view needs qualifying. Periods of crisis are a mixed blessing for Europeanisation. In the few studies that have been carried out, the EU was found to be more visible, however, national self-referentiality appears to be more pronounced. Communitarian scholars insist on the sine qua non of a pre-existing collective identity for Europeanised communication to thrive. Moreover, politicisation is understood by numerous scholars to foster Europeanised communication (e.g. Risse, 2014). Other scholars such as Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) argue that political and editorial cultures determine a public spheres' propensity to transnationalize. In other words, patterns of communication are understood to be a function of specific national circumstances. For example, a nation's history is understood to shape how a nation perceives themselves in relation to Europe.

¹⁰⁸ European identity is treated by scholars in one of three ways: as *constitutive* of the EPS; as a *cause* of the EPS (independent variable); or as a *consequence* (dependant variable).

¹⁰⁹ As I argued beforehand, isomorphic contestation is more favourable to cleavage cross-cutting, and moderated discourse, whereas contestation of the constitutive kind is more favourable to polarised discourse (see also Kermer et al., 2020).

Main findings

Visibility

As Risse (2010) aptly reminds us, the minimum requirement of an EPS is visibility—people cannot debate an issue which is not salient in the public domain. The visibility criterion overlaps with the normative standard of inclusion. A public sphere that includes a repertoire of different actors (e.g. government elites, political parties, and civil society) is at the same time an inclusive public sphere. By the same token, a public sphere that is dominated by power holders is an exclusive and elitist public sphere. Where can the EPS, if it exists, be placed along this continuum? Can the EU and European affairs be regarded as sufficiently visible within Europe's national public spheres? Below I summarise the public sphere scholarship's main empirical findings. Gerhards (2000) was one of the first scholars to measure the salience of European news coverage. Using time series data between 1951 and 1995 in Germany, the results show a slight increase in the coverage of European actors and negligible changes in the number of European themes. Coverage of EU issues represented only 7% of all issues in German newspapers and 2% of all actors and institutions (Gerhards, 2000, found in Pfetsch, 2004).¹¹⁰ Bärenreuter et al. (2009), in their comprehensive literature review, conclude that news coverage of European affairs is increasing, albeit modestly (Bärenreuter, Brüll, Mokre, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009:14). The paper by Kantner (2014) shows that references to 'Europe' and the 'EU' in articles on military interventions were prevalent despite foreign policy and defence being largely the prerogative of the nation state¹¹¹. In all member states examined, 'Europe' was mentioned at an average of 35% and the 'EU' was referred to in 25% of articles on average. The United Kingdom and United States referred to 'Europe' and the 'EU' the least (Kantner, 2014). In sum, the 'EU' and 'Europe' is more visible in EU vis-à-vis non-EU member states.

The findings the 'Europub' project (2004) show that the EU has become more visible in newspaper reporting over the last twenty-five years (Koopmans, 2004; Koopmans and Erbe, 2004). These scholars analysed news coverage in twenty-eight newspapers in the UK, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Netherlands, and Switzerland across seven policy domains (e.g. immigration, troop deployment, agriculture) during the years 1990, 1995, and 2000-2002 (cited in Risse, 2010:129). The main finding is that EU coverage was more prevalent in issue domains of exclusive or shared EU competences. EU actors and actors from member states were particularly visible in the issue domain of EU integration (59% of all claims, see Koopmans, 2004: 33), agriculture policy and monetary policy. French, Swiss,

¹¹⁰ Koopmans (2003) is right to question whether the data used in this study accurately captures the actor and thematic dimensions as Gerhards used secondary data which was originally gathered for other purposes.

¹¹¹ The paper by Kantner (2014) examines articles on humanitarian military interventions in six EU member states and the United States employing the method of corpus-linguistic analysis.

and Spanish newspapers covered European and EU actors the most (circa 40% of all claims) followed by Italian, Dutch, and German newspapers (approx. one-third of all claims) and lastly, the British media (approx. 15% of all claims see Koopmans, 2004:34). In regard to longitudinal trends, data from the ‘Europub’ project shows that reporting of EU actors (i.e. vertical Europeanisation) increased from 24 to 34% from 1990 to 2002 in matters related to EU integration, and 10 to 31% from 1990 to 2002 in the policy domain of monetary policy (Koopmans, 2004: 39). No temporal trends were discerned, however, in the field of agricultural policy. Research by Sift et al. (2007) detects similar trends of quantitative Europeanisation over time¹¹². The results show that articles mentioning the EU rose sharply from 8 to 30% from 1982 to 2003 (cf: Wessler et al., 2008:41). However, as Risse (2010) argues, the weakness of this study is that the data points are seven years apart (namely, 1982, 1989, 1996, 2003). Another shortcoming is that the scholars only coded for ‘discursive articles’, that is, articles such as editorials, longer reports or interviews. The study by Kantner, Kutter, and Renfordt (2008) collected a rich dataset of over 450,000 newspaper articles – in seven EU member states¹¹³ and the United States – pertaining to ‘military interventions’ in the period from 1990 to 2005. They carried out a corpus-linguistic analysis which revealed that the EU was visible in approximately 10 to 20% of net articles; a share which should not be trivialised given that defence and foreign policy largely remains the prerogative of nation states (Kantner, Kutter, and Renfordt, 2008).

The paper by Bossetta et al. (2019) adopted the method of LDA topic modelling to examine how media debates on Euroscepticism were discussed. In line with previous findings, the UK is the most prominent node in the network of debates on Euroscepticism. This lends support to the notion that bigger member states tend to attract more media attention than smaller member states. By the same token, eastern European member states were virtually absent during the debate with the exception of Hungary and Poland. Kandyla and De Vreese (2011) examined news coverage of the EU’s common foreign, security and defence policy (CFSP) in the quality press of eight European countries. The results demonstrate that the EU actors were more visible in foreign policy debates than nation state actors. Vliegthart et al. (2008) carried out a content analysis of EU news in seven EU member states from 1990 to 2006. The findings reveal that EU news became more visible during the examined time period with the mean number of articles increasing from circa 1000 in the year 1990 to 1500 in 2006 (2008:429). Spain received the most media coverage with Italy scoring the least. Representing the middle ground were Germany and Denmark, while the Netherlands and the UK registered levels below the mean. Trezn (2007) carried out a content analysis of newspaper articles from Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Austria, Spain, and the United States (n = 128 articles) in the period from May 2000 (Fischer’s famous speech) to December of the same year (Nice Summit). The results reveal that all newspaper covered the constitutional debate regularly except for the control sample of the New York Times (Trenz, 2007).

¹¹² These scholars analysed five newspapers across five countries.

¹¹³ Namely, France, Germany, Poland, Austria, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

National executive actors were the most visible (over 30%), followed by the German and French heads of state, namely Fischer (23%) and Chirac (19%). EU institutions and national nonstate actors were largely excluded from public debate.

Research conducted by Humboldt University on eleven newspapers in six EU member states during the year 2000 found that one third of all news contained references to European issues (Kantner, 2006; Trezn 2004, found in Risse, 2010:130). Of the articles that contained a European issue, 90% of them mentioned the EU, which shows that the terms, 'Europe' and the 'EU' have become quasi-interchangeable. The same project also gaged the intensity of European communication by classifying content in terms of whether European content was covered as a 'primary' or 'secondary issue'. This research group found that circa 50% of European content was covered as a 'primary' issue, 20 % as a 'secondary' one, and one-third of coded articles made some reference to the EU (found in Risse, 2010:129). Spanish, Austrian, and German newspapers reported European issues as the 'primary' issue in roughly 50% of articles, and French, British, and Italian newspapers scoring approximately 40%. That said, notable, albeit modest, cross-country differences were found: Germans newspapers covered the EU as the primary issue most frequently (25%) and British newspapers least so (10%). Some variation was also observable within countries with Italy's *La Stampa* found to cover the EU as the primary issue significantly more than *La Repubblica*. And in France, *Le monde* was found to report EU affairs more frequently vis-à-vis *Libération*. These researchers also used a widely read American newspaper outlet, namely the *New York Times*, as the yardstick of comparison. Regarding the latter, not surprisingly, they found that the visibility and intensity of EU reporting was substantially less vis-à-vis the newspapers' of EU member states. Risse (2010:129) concludes that the differences between the American newspaper and European newspapers were greater than differences between European countries and newspapers within one country. We can, thus, conclude that the EU is sufficiently visible if one compares the visibility of the EU between American and European newspapers¹¹⁴. However, the study by Peter, De Vreese, and Semetko (2003) arrives at a different conclusion. The visibility of the EU in television coverage was found to be meagre compared to Humboldt University's findings. In their analysis of television coverage in five countries (Germany, UK, Denmark, Netherlands and France), Peter et al. found that stories concerning the EU accounted for only 5% on average and only increased slightly to 10% during the period of the European parliamentary elections¹¹⁵. This led these scholars to conclude that "television, it seems, has not left the nation state" (Peter and De Vreese 2004: 18, cited in Risse, 2010:133).

¹¹⁴ One shortcoming of this project is that it only examined the year 2000; longitudinal studies are necessary to determine to what extent Europe has become increasingly visible. It is also debatable whether the US yardstick approach is a fair benchmark for deciding upon what counts as Europeanised communication.

¹¹⁵ These scholars analysed television coverage for 11 months in the year 2000 and in the weeks preceding the 1999 and 2004 elections. This is desirable, methodologically speaking, because data is collected from both regular and exceptional periods. The downside to collecting data around key events only is that the extent of Europeanisation tends to be exaggerated as European affairs are naturally more visible during these periods. Therefore, the *t* case design adopted by these scholars is a desirable one.

Previous research lends support to the notion that variance in regard to the visibility of the EU can be partially explained by newspaper type. The findings of Pfetsch et al. (2008) show that tabloids in the Netherlands, Spain and Germany mentioned the EU less than quality newspapers. The only exception was the United Kingdom where the opposite was found (Pfetsch, Adam & Eschner 2008: 474, found in Risse, 2010:133). Pfetsch (2004)¹¹⁶ found that, as far as editorials are concerned, variance in EU visibility, is largely determined by issue field and country of origin. Instead, the same argues that newspaper type and time had a negligible effect on levels of Europeanisation. In regard to EU salience, the same scholar found that the number of editorials related to European matters was highest in Germany and the United Kingdom – the latter of which shows that even traditionally ‘Euro-sceptic’ countries can report substantially on European matters. Remarkably, the United Kingdom commented more on EU affairs than both Spain and the Netherlands. European integration was found to be the most salient issue in five of the seven countries under study. The same also found that media opinions about EU/European affairs were found in one-third of net editorials with marked across-country differences found (2004:16). The United Kingdom was found to have the fewest references containing ‘vertical Europeanisation’, which is indicative of a domesticated deliberative climate (internalised debates). In regard to visibility according to actor type, Pfetsch (2004) found that the overwhelming majority of addressees (i.e. targets) of political claims were government/national executive actors and economic actors’ such as interest groups. The prominence of the latter is probably due to the fact that data were collected from 2000 to 2002 which was around the time of the launch of the Euro currency. In regard to the territorial scope of addressees, the results show that around 57% were national actors and 30% were of a European dimension. The objects of claims were found to invoke predominantly national actors and interests. The most significant coefficient on Europeanised claims-making was the type of issue. In line with previous findings, most claims of a European dimension were found in the issue fields of monetary policy and European integration, whereas the policy domains pertaining to pensions and retirement, and education policy were confined mostly to the national level (Pfetsch, 2004:17). For example, Pfetsch found that 82% of claims in the field of monetary policy were EU-verticalized, whereas in the issue field of pensions and retirement, the figure was approximately 50%. In sum, the distribution of actors according to territorial scope reflects the de jure distribution of power between the EU and member states. Statham (2010) gives a succinct explanation for this finding: “The EU is publicly visible in fields where it is influential...The general rule is that the more a policy field is supranationalized, the more it has a public policy debate that includes and makes the EU-level visible to citizens”¹¹⁷ (2010:285-6). In sum, the author concludes that the variance in Europeanised communication can be explained both by the type of issue being discussed, and the country under examination. By contrast, the year and newspaper type has a negligible effect on the scope of claims.

¹¹⁶ This scholar analysed the salience of the EU and the territorial scope of claims-making to gauge the visibility of the EU within newspaper editorials.

¹¹⁷ Or as Statham *et al.*, puts it, “Europe has become visible in national news where European decision-making has become consequential” (2013: 143).

Regarding actor visibility, the most visible actors as targets of claims are government/executive actors followed by supranational economic actors. Lastly, the objects of claims were found to be predominantly national which indicates that commentaries tend to domesticate European issues.

Kriesi and Grande (2014) found that the debate on the euro crisis was dominated by executive actors, particularly the German executive and supranational actors which reveals that debates manifested with a strong intergovernmental accent (2014:85). By the same token, political parties and civil society were heavily underrepresented which is emblematic of an elitist public sphere (non-inclusive). Germany was the only country where a comprehensive national debate took place, with political parties comparatively better represented. The euro crisis appeared to boost both horizontal and vertical dimensions of Europeanisation in all countries to a varying degree. Debates on the euro crisis were found to be particularly salient in all countries and the visibility of European actors increased in the ensuing crisis. The analysis revealed the dominant role of the German executive in all countries¹¹⁸. Interestingly, the crisis does not appear to have been seized upon by Eurosceptics who were largely absent in the cases under examination¹¹⁹.

Koopmans et al. (2010)¹²⁰ carried out a comprehensive analysis of newspapers via PCA. These scholars found that domestic actors are the most dominant actors in terms of subject, object, and addressee, ranging from 34% of net claims in the issue field of European integration to 90% in education (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010:65). There are few claims by actors from other European countries (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation), with 6% in the issue domain of education, 7 % in pensions, and interestingly, 20% in agriculture and 21 % in monetary politics. This shows that supranationalization of decision-making not only strengthens vertical but horizontal dimensions of Europeanisation (2010:67). In line with the findings of Pfetsch (2004), the distribution of claims was found to reflect the realpolitical balance of power, with the UK, France and Germany receiving more media coverage than smaller European countries. The results also show that Europeanisation increased over time, at least, as far as visibility is concerned. The same scholars found that the share of EU/supranational actors (i.e. vertical Europeanisation) rose from 9 to 15% from 1990 to 2002. However, horizontal Europeanisation decreased slightly over the same period from 19 to 18%. In line with the 'persistence hypothesis', the increase in the share of supranational-level actors was particularly pronounced in the issue field of monetary politics, increasing exponentially from 9 to 29% from 1990 to 2002. This is not surprising as the end of the period examined coincided with the launch of the Euro currency. In sum, the results paint

¹¹⁸ Which implies horizontal Europeanisation of an asymmetrical kind, with a handful of countries, typically the 'bigger ones', pervading debates.

¹¹⁹ I suspect this is because the euro crisis was an economic issue and Eurosceptic parties have traditionally been vocal on the subject of immigration. I suspect that if this study were replicated during the migration crisis in 2015, the representation of Eurosceptic actors in public debates would have been considerably higher. Another caveat of this study is that only quality newspapers were examined; it remains to be seen whether similar results would have been found in tabloid newspapers.

¹²⁰ This author interprets Europeanised communication from the POS perspective, that is, EU integration has presented new opportunities and challenges for political actors – some actors will 'win' in terms of discursive influence from the reshuffling of *de jure* political power, but on the other hand, some actors will lose out in terms of both discursive and decision-making power.

the picture of a discursive European network which has become more vertically embedded but horizontal flows of communication remain weak. The same study also detected palpable differences across countries in regard to the territorial scope of claims. The United Kingdom contained the fewest claims by European-level actors (7%) and actors from other European countries (12%), and highest rate of claims by domestic actors (68 %), which is consistent with previous findings (Pfetsch, 2004). Interestingly, the non-EU nation state, namely, Switzerland, recorded high levels of horizontal (29%) and vertical Europeanisation (13%) and the smallest share of claims from domestic actors (41%). This suggests that EU membership is not a necessary pre-condition for Europeanisation despite the scholars' expectations¹²¹. Furthermore, Germany and France, contrary to expectations¹²², showed moderate levels of Europeanisation (Koopmans et al., 2010). These scholars attribute the low levels of Europeanisation in Italy and the United Kingdom to the former's dependence on intra-EU trade and the latter's opt-outs (e.g. Schengen) from EU governance. By the same token, Switzerland's high volume of Europeanised claims-making was attributed to its strong economic ties with other EU member states. However, the Netherlands deviates from this hypothesis as they displayed comparatively low levels of Europeanisation despite being highly dependent on intra-EU trade (2010:74). Interestingly, the results show that EU-level actors were more prominent both as claimants and addressees, and the share of domestic addressees' declined from 16 to 10% from 1990 to 2002. However, this increase was accompanied with a decrease in claims directed at EU member states. In other words, vertical Europeanisation increased and horizontal Europeanisation decreased. Moreover, contrary to the scholars' expectations, Europeanised claims-making does not appear to be positively associated with EU membership, as Switzerland exhibited relatively high levels of Europeanised claims-making. The United Kingdom stands out from the other cases as claims are predominantly of the 'vertical bottom-up' variant – this is not surprising due to the contentious nature of EU integration in British politics (2010:83).

According to Koopmans (2010)¹²³, actor visibility is determined by several factors such as news selection processes and political opportunity structures, among other things. In short, both media and political logics are understood to patterns of Europeanisation¹²⁴. The findings of Koopmans (2010) show that executive actors (e.g. heads of government and cabinet ministers) dominate European debates, to the detriment of political parties while civil society representation in the public sphere was found to be negligible¹²⁵. This was the case for horizontal, vertical and supranational communicative

¹²¹ Needless to say that these results are merely indicative and cannot be considered statistically significant.

¹²² Koopmans *et al.* (2010) hypothesises that the volume of Europeanised claims would vary inversely according to a country's autonomy and power in the international system.

¹²³ Koopmans develops a 'yardstick' approach by comparing the representation of actors in completely national debates vis-à-vis European debates. He appreciates the fact that Europeanisation should be treated as relative to a national or trans-European benchmark. The main premise of Koopmans (2010) is that European integration changes hard power configurations which simultaneously opens up discursive opportunities, improving the voice and visibility of some actors to the detriment of other actors.

¹²⁴ The EU integration process presents opportunities and challenges for actors to flex their decision-making and discursive power.

¹²⁵ Indeed, Ladrech (2002) hypothesises that political parties are comparatively disadvantaged actors concerning Europeanization due to lack of financial and infrastructural resources (p395, for more). The author assumes that parties will respond differently to the changes wrought by EU integration on domestic politics. As she concludes, there are nation-specific factors which condition party responses: e.g. "referenda

linkages. Breaking down the results, legislative actors represented 15% of net Europeanised claims, which is 5% lower than national claims¹²⁶. The results show that civil society actors lost out dramatically in terms of visibility: their share of claims fell from 35% in national claims to a meagre 13% for Europeanised ones. Media actors were the only actors to profit from Europeanisation in terms of visibility from 6% for national claims vis-à-vis 10% for Europeanised ones. Furthermore, the multivariate analysis suggests that visibility is caught in a vicious cycle as local, regional, legislative and party actors were far less likely to invoke Europeanised claims than national executive actors (Koopmans, 2010). In a nutshell, executive actors such as central banks, cabinet ministers, media actors, and heads of state are the biggest beneficiaries of Europeanisation in terms of visibility, and legislative actors and civil society are the biggest ‘losers’. As Koopmans warns, this could have detrimental consequences for the European Union’s accountability and legitimacy. Koopmans adopts a similar research design several years later, when he compared the visibility of different types of actors within purely national debates compared to European debates (Koopmans, 2014). National actors were found to dominate public debates in all countries particularly in the domain of monetary politics (97%), and pensions and retirement (93%), followed by immigration (80%), agriculture (78%), and education (75%, see Koopmans, 2014:58-59, for details). Interestingly, the same scholar also found that coverage of actors from other regions clearly outweighed coverage of actors from the same region of the newspaper. A similar dynamic of dense horizontal communicative exchanges was not found in the European communicative arena where only 18% of all European scope claims were actors from other European countries (Koopmans, 2014:60). Moreover, levels of vertical Europeanisation were minimal, with only 10% of all claims in UK newspapers linked to the European centre compared to 30% in the Spanish press. Instead, the lion-share of claims were made by actors from the newspaper’s own country, with shares ranging from 78% in the United Kingdom to 52% in Spain. Furthermore, the scholar found that European-level actors were more visible as addressees (i.e. targets) than claimants (i.e. speakers). Koopmans warns that these actor role configurations could undermine the legitimacy of the European Union as it suggests that these actors appear as objects of criticism, and depicts them as passive, distant and unresponsive. The same scholar compares the relatively sanguine period of 2000 to 2002 to the more unstable period of 2010 to 2012 to investigate to what extent politicisation alters the discursive balance of power. Not surprisingly, the former period was dominated by European-level actors at the expense of German political parties, coinciding with the launch of the Euro currency. However, during the latter period, actor visibility was equally distributed between European-level and domestic actors. The same scholar, moreover, argues that changes wrought by politicisation are desirable from a normative democratic standpoint as national parliaments were found to have gained discursive influence in

traditions, two-party or multiparty systems, the presence of Eurosceptic public opinion, the level of economic development of the member state, coalition dynamics and so on” (Ladrech, 2002:401). In short, contextual factors are expected shape how parties’ positions themselves in regard to European integration.

¹²⁶ As Koopmans underlines, this difference may not seem substantial but executive actors outnumber legislative actors by four-to-one of Europeanised claims and only two-to-one in national claims.

European debates. In short, the author concludes that politicisation triggered by the 2010-12 financial crisis created a more assertive legislature and a more domesticated and intergovernmental Europe. In sum, the European communicative forum is still heavily dominated by domestic actors. Notwithstanding this, the author argues that an EPS has emerged, when measured against the benchmark of national debates in Germany. Similar findings were observed on the Internet (Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010). This study revealed that national state actors from the home country were the most prominent in online debates. However, Koopmans et al. (2010) found that civil society is slightly better represented in internet search engine results than newspapers. Moreover, supranational actors were found to be more visible in hyperlinks than in newspapers (i.e. stronger vertical links). However, the Internet was found to be much less connected to other European countries (i.e. weaker horizontal links). This led Koopmans et al. (2010) to describe the EPS as ‘nationally segmented’ with moderately strong vertical flows of communication but weak cross-national ties. In short, both online and offline mediated public spheres’ are characterised by strong elite bias, and the Internet does not appear to redress the imbalance of the dominance of executive actors and marginalisation of civil society and legislative actors (Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010:193-194).

Many contextual variables are understood to determine how salient the issue of Europe is within national debates. For example, Kriesi, Tresch and Jochum (2010) expect that when a country chairs the European Council summit or holds the Presidency of the Union, EU news coverage will increase in its public sphere (found in Koopmans, 2010). The level of public support for the EU is also a predictor of the increasing visibility of EU institutions (Koopmans, 2010). Koopmans (2010) alludes to varying media and political opportunity structures as a compelling explanation for the correlation between public perceptions and EU visibility¹²⁷. In regard to temporal trends, this study found that the visibility of EU actors grew from 9 to 15% from 1990 to 2002. Moreover, Koopmans, Erbe and Meyer (found in Koopmans, 2010:67) empirically show that the most economically powerful countries, namely, Germany, France and the United Kingdom receive the most coverage, comprising over half of net claims about the EU/European affairs despite having less than one-third of the European Union’s population (Koopmans et al., 2010:67). Studying European news coverage between the year 2001 and 2004, the study by Koopmans (2010) demonstrates that political elites’ dominate European discourses at the expense of civil society. Koopmans (2010) arrives at the conclusion that an EPS can be discerned albeit with a heavily elitist accent.

Grill and Boomgaarden (2017) carried out a semantic network analysis (SNA) of online, television and print EU news prior to and following the 2014 European Parliament elections in Austria. The results reveal that the most dominant actors were the EU and Austria, and the election and the political system were the most dominant issue fields¹²⁸ (Grill and Boomgaarden, 2017:575). The finding that the 2014

¹²⁷ Furthermore, the EU is particularly visible in policy domains which are the exclusive competence of the EU such as monetary policy.

¹²⁸ Put another way, Austrian news items connect the EU, Austria, the political system, and the election with one another.

European election was highly salient is not surprising given the period under examination. Other dominant fields in the national debate were issue fields mainly handled by Brussels such as finance/central banks, the economy, and industry. In regard to vertical Europeanisation, the results show that there were strong linkages between the nation state, EU Parliament, and the European Commission (Ibid.,577). In line with previous findings, cross-national networks were less visible in this Austro-European network, and larger EU member states, namely, the UK, Germany, France, elicited the most news coverage. Newer member states such as Poland were marginally represented, and countries neighbouring Austria received ample news coverage. Furthermore, these scholars found negligible differences in the levels of horizontal and vertical Europeanisation over time. In line with previous findings (Pfetsch, 2004; Koopmans, 2010), the results of this study reveal that the salience of an issue reflects the EU's distribution of competences. In a nutshell, the results show that EU news is covered from a rather national perspective and the most salient EU issue fields were those with which the EU possesses significant power. In line with previous studies, vertical communicative linkages outweigh horizontal ties which reinforces the notion that national public spheres' are 'pillarized' (Medrano, 2003).

The study by Bennett, Lang and Segerberg (2014) reveals that civil society is underdeveloped at the European level. Their study found that European-level issue publics were weak compared to national issue publics. The findings reveal a structural problem in the development of civil society at the European level. It appears that non-governmental organisations specialised in EU lobbying fail to engage European-level publics (Bennett, Lang and Segerberg, 2014). Trenz's 2007 study of the constitutional referendum debate paints a familiar picture of an elitist public sphere in which national governments and heads of state were visible, particularly, Fischer and Chirac, and EU institutions were virtually non-existent. However, the constitutional debate was the subject of regular commentary in the newspapers under examination, with the exception of the New York Times. The same scholar concludes from this study that we can detect a thin veneer of Europeanisation in the sense of converging issue cycles.

Statham (2007) compared French with British public discourse on European debates. The levels of vertical Europeanisation were found to be meagre in both countries, with claims predominantly of the bottom-up kind. In fact, the same found that bottom-up vertical Europeanised claims were ten times more prevalent than the top-down vertical claims in France, and three times more prevalent in the United Kingdom. This means that the EU is habitually invoked in news coverage as a target of claims-making rather than a proactive political entrepreneur. This is problematic for the EU because they will be portrayed as passive, distant and non-responsive actors (2007:120). In line with previous findings, the level of cross-national communicative linkages (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation) was modest in both countries. The same also found that claims of a national scope were three times more prevalent in the United Kingdom (35%) vis-à-vis France (13%). British actors were twice as likely to address other

British (35%) over EU actors (15.5%)¹²⁹. In France, in stark contrast, the reverse was found, at 13 and 27% respectively. This suggests that British actors tend to interpret EU affairs as an issue within national politics. The results reveal that 26% of net claims were of a supranational scope in France compared to only 14% in the United Kingdom (2007:121). Concerning the distribution of claims according to actor type, state actors made circa three times more claims than civil society actors in both countries (Ibid., 116). In France, state actors comprised 75% of net claims compared to civil society at 25%. In the United Kingdom, state actors made up 72% claims vis-à-vis civil society at 28%. These findings reinforces the notion that European public debates are exclusive, elite-dominated and heavily institutionalised. As Statham summarises, “those collective actors who are already powerful within national politics are the ones who benefit most and are even more able to voice their demands within Europeanised communication” (2007:124). In sum, this study reveals that two neighbouring countries frame European politics in markedly different ways: the British public debate was more self-referential, internalised and ensnared in national politics, whereas the French public debate contained more vertical linkages to the EU institutions, albeit claims were dominated by national claims directed towards Brussels. In both countries, claims deriving from EU actors to member states were minimal.

The study by Monza (2017) on media debates during the euro crisis (2008-2014) paints a familiar picture: state actors and supranational actors dominated the debate. This was the case over the whole period and in every country under examination. The same concludes that, despite expectations, the crisis did not represent a discursive opportunity for political parties or civil society to shape the debate. Unsurprisingly, the debate was dominated by economic matters at the expense of other political or social issues. In short, the discernibility of the EU in the mass media satisfies the visibility requirement of the public sphere, but not the inclusion requirement (Monza, 2017). Kantner (2014) arrives at the similar conclusion that the national press pay significant attention to Europe. Using US papers as a control sample, she found palpable differences in terms of EU visibility between US and European newspapers, with a significant number of Europeanised articles in the latter (with the familiar exception of the United Kingdom) and decidedly fewer in the former. The results, however, did not indicate an upward trend in the volume of Europeanised claims over time. Four peaks in quantitative levels of EU visibility can be discerned, namely: (1) 1990/91 (Iraq/Kuwait conflicts); (2) 1992-1996 (Balkan crises and African wars); (3) 1999-2000 (Kosovo); and (4) 2001-2003 (Iraq and Afghanistan wars). These findings demonstrate that the visibility of Europe in the media can be driven by exogenous events/crises. In short, this scholar concludes that the high frequency of references to the EU within Europe’s national public spheres’, compared to the US, are indicative of a Europeanised sphere of communication.

The results of De la Porte and Van Dalen’s (2016) study on coverage of the European Social Economic Summit (EUSES) found no linear increase in media attention over time. Coverage of the Summit was

¹²⁹ See Statham, 2007: 111, for details.

low, with changes discernible when major changes in the strategy were announced. EU-level actors were the most visible during the debate but there was little evidence of communicative linkages connecting EUSES to the national political arena. These findings are similar to those of Statham (2007) who found that supranational claims clearly outweighed top-down vertical claims, which means that the EU seldom reverted to the national level. These findings reinforce the notion of a Union that is self-contained and detached from national politics. To paraphrase Walter, the disconnect between the EU- and national level may explain why the EU is perceived to be distant and disconnected from its citizens (Walter, 2014:27). Walter's research (2015) indicates a stable trend of Europeanisation as far as visibility is concerned. As in previous studies, government/executive actors were the most visible type of actor, followed by political parties and lastly civil society. Similar to the findings of Koopman's (2010), the visibility of political party actors were circa three times lower than government/executive actors. Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) observes, what she calls, a 'transnational gulf' between the quality and tabloid press (2012:446) in their representations of the EU. She hypothesises that newspapers' different 'editorial discourse cultures' can significantly shape the output of political communication. This hypothesis is strongly supported by a logistic regression analysis which shows that quality newspapers recorded much higher levels of horizontal and particularly vertical Europeanisation. In contrast, tabloid newspapers reported markedly less on EU-level politics and institutions. These findings reinforce the notion that public spheres are 'multi-segmented', that is, segmented across the national and media landscape (Hepp et al., 2009:47, found in Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012).

Risse succinctly summarises the main findings in his book, 'European Public Spheres: Politics is Back' (2014). The empirical evidence therein indicates that news coverage of the EU increased over time. However, he concedes that the euro crisis also brought to the fore nationalistic responses to the crisis as well as national caricatures and stereotypes. The euro crisis increased the salience, visibility, and contestation of the EU (i.e. politicisation), but in some cases, the euro crisis provoked, in the words of Kriesi and Grande (2014), a 'renaissance of nationalism'. For Risse, politicisation can induce Europeanised political communication, but the crucial scope condition is that national public spheres' adopt similar frames of reference when debating European issues (Risse, 2014). De Wilde's 2011 paper is consistent with previous findings regarding the representative distribution of political claims on European issues, namely, the predominance of government executives in European political debates. However, interestingly, the most prominent representatives in the mediated sphere were government executives representing other member states (30%). This is remarkable when compared with previous results. This suggests that national public spheres are more cross-nationally embedded (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation) than previous findings would indicate. However, these results are not particularly surprising as the author collected data during EU budget negotiations which often turn into an intergovernmental tussle between member states rather than EU officials (De Wilde, 2011). In line with

previous findings, the largest member states, namely, France, Germany, and the UK, were the most prominent. Trailing government executives of other member states were EU actors (e.g. European Council, European Parliament, European Commission, rotating Presidency) comprising 19% cent of claims as claimants, followed by the national governments (18%). Finally, journalists' represented 9% of representative claimants followed by farmers' associations (5%). The distribution of representative claims in parliamentary debates follows a similar logic: in short, size matters. It is not only larger member states that receive more column inches, but the same logic applies to party families. The largest political parties (e.g. Social Democrats and Christian Democrats) made the highest number of claims (de Wilde, 2011:15). In fact, these parties comprised almost three-quarter of net claims iterated in parliament. This depicts an EPS that is elitist and which reflects de jure political authority. A similar finding was observed in respect of the object of representative claims (what de Wilde refers to as 'constituencies'). In order from largest to smallest objects: almost one third of representative claims in newspapers (30%) invoked other member states as the main constituency (Ibid., 17), followed by the nation (18%) and the EU (16%). Interestingly, the results reveal a territorial cross-cutting of interests as national elected representatives frequently claimed to represent EU interests, and EU officials regularly claimed to represent national interests (Ibid., 18). Unsurprisingly, the national interest was more frequently invoked in parliamentary debates (24%). However, farmers' interests were prominently represented in debates (20%) and so too were the interests of non-EU countries (17%), and citizens and taxpayers (11%). In stark contrast, in the media, the interests of other member states were only represented in 9% of net claims (Ibid., 27). These findings suggests that the mediated sphere is more Europeanised than parliamentary debates as EU and member state interests were more salient in claims found in newspapers. Interestingly, differences in claims-making could be discerned across different party families, with right-wing oriented parties invoking the national interest more frequently than other party denominations. For example, conservative party denominations invoked the 'national interest' twice as much as centre-ground parties¹³⁰.

Brantner, Dietrich and Saurwein (2005) analysed EU news coverage on the Austrian television news channel, ORF-ZIB. In line with previous findings, only 8% of total news coverage concerned European affairs. The results, however, show an increase in news coverage over time (1995-2004) which can mainly be attributed to an increase in vertical Europeanisation. As in previous studies, levels of horizontal Europeanisation largely remained stable over time (1995-2004) and higher media attention was found in policy domains where the EU has significant power. For example, the highest volume of references to the EU were found in the 'communitised' policy fields namely those pertaining to

¹³⁰ For example, in Denmark, the Conservative People's Party invoked national objects in 9% of claims compared to the Christian Democrats, at 4%.

economic, infrastructure and energy, environment and agricultural policy¹³¹. This paper is helpful in showing how crises can alter patterns of discourse. Indeed, the Haider Affair (2000), somewhat paradoxically, provoked an increase in vertical Europeanisation, but national self-referentiality reached its zenith (57%)¹³². This reaffirms the view that Europeanisation should be conceived of as a 'double-edged sword', particularly when national public spheres' enter crisis mode: on the one hand, we can expect the visibility of the EU to increase, on the other hand, national self-referentiality can be expected to take hold. As the same scholar argues, the results show that Europeanization is mainly driven by crisis and conflict¹³³.

Boomgaarden et al. (2013) carried out a comprehensive analysis of news coverage during the European parliamentary elections. The main goal of their research was to understand what explains variation in the visibility of EU news over time (Ibid., 610). These scholars hypothesised that polarisation within parties regarding EU integration would be positively correlated with the increasing EU-news coverage. Increasing negative elite opinion/party positions and party polarisation towards the EU was expected to increase the visibility of the EU. Paradoxically, both strong intra-party conflicts and an overall positive consensus about the EU in national party systems were expected to increase visibility (Ibid., 614). However, the former was expected to increase the visibility of national politicians, while the latter was expected to increase the visibility of EU actors. These scholars also expected EU news to be more prominent in public broadcasting than tabloid newspapers. In the main, the results corroborate with their expectations. By way of a summary, public broadcasting and quality newspapers featured more EU news compared to tabloid newspapers. Political party disagreements and increasingly positive (and vice-versa) elite sentiments towards the EU were decisive in increasing the volume of EU news. The main finding was that increasing party disagreement and increasing negativity combined had the biggest positive effect on increasing news coverage. The caveat of this finding was that both parties' which became more positive overall about the EU and party disagreement did not have much impact on the amount of EU news. Moreover, the amount of intra-EU trade and the length of EU membership did not affect visibility. In short, medium type, party disagreement, and increasingly negative elite sentiments had the most decisive impact on the visibility of EU coverage. These scholars conclude that EU news is steadily increasing over time. The results also reveal that EU actors' are more visible in the news when parties are more positive towards the EU (Ibid.). By the same token, there is less of a European focus in the news when there is increasing elite conflict in national party systems. This is an important finding which reminds us that the increasing visibility of the EU can work both ways: it can foster Europeanisation, on the one hand, by giving EU actors a platform to inform and justify their decision-making, or it can galvanise national debates, on the other hand, as the meta-issue of EU integration

¹³¹ By the same logic, few references to the EU were found in policy fields which are mainly national prerogatives such as issues pertaining to art, culture, social affairs, and education.

¹³² The proxy in this paper for 'self-referentiality' is the amount of news about Austria in coverage of EU news.

¹³³ However, this falls short of Europeanization in the qualitative sense, as the identity/interest component was not analysed.

provides a fertile ground for domestic party conflict viz. politicisation. The words of Boomgaarden et al. encapsulate the ‘Janus-Faced’ nature of Europeanisation in general and increasing visibility of the EU in mediated spheres in particular: “Elite conflict and even negativity may be good for visibility, but they are both negatively related to the Europeanness of the coverage. At the end of the day, there might be more news, which is arguably good, but the news is more nationally focused than Europe-focused” (Boomgaarden et al., 2013:625)¹³⁴.

Pawley (2017) examines the salience of Europe within party manifestoes in Britain, France, and Germany. The same expected to find a general trend of increasing salience in Europe, and substantial differences across countries due to variegated electoral settings. In regard to the former, only in Britain was a steady increase in the salience of Europe discerned over time. The same found marked across-country differences in the levels of EU salience. Peter and de Vreese (2004), similar to Boomgaarden et al. (2013), carried out a detailed content analysis of EU politics in German, French, Dutch, Danish, and British television news in order to explore which factors shape EU news coverage. As expected, the findings reveal that EU stories were more prominent during EU summits than in ‘routine’ periods, and EU officials were generally less visible in the former than the latter¹³⁵. Contrary to expectations, the level of EU coverage is positively correlated with higher levels of satisfaction with domestic democracy. Contrary to expectations, the amount of EU coverage was neither affected by levels of EU support, nor the nature of elite opinion (e.g. positive or negative valence?). That said, EU stories and EU officials were more visible in public broadcasters compared to private ones. In line with previous findings (Gerhards, 2000), EU-related news represented only one-tenth of all political news during summit periods. During regular periods, the share of EU coverage was even lower. In short, EU coverage is modest, but tends to peak during summit periods. In sum, there were two decisive factors that account for variance in the volume of EU coverage, namely, the levels of satisfaction with domestic democracy within a particular country, and whether coverage was examined during summit periods (Peter & de Vreese, 2004:16). In line with other studies, EU officials were largely overlooked during news coverage. As Peter pithily puts it, “EU coverage resembles a play that does without its inherent protagonists” (2003:82). Peter and de Vreese (2004) conclude bluntly that, as far as television content is concerned, there is no EPS. Although Peters et al. (2005) found increasing attention to the EU policy making, interestingly, this did not exceed attention to foreign policy (non-EU) issues. Concerning

¹³⁴ This is a useful paper for addressing *what* and *why* research questions on the EPS, that is, what explains cross-country variance and why are some national public spheres more Europeanised than others? The author outlines a number of contextual factors that affect EU news coverage. However, regarding the descriptive component of their paper, namely, visibility, the content analysis only focuses on the ‘main actor’ in the article, not other actors. This is the biggest shortcoming of the study. This paper also gives some insight on how party positioning on an issue and the activities of elites can affect the visibility of EU news. In sum, party divisions and increasing negativity are positively correlated with more EU news. EU actor visibility falls when there is increasing conflict and negativity in EU news.

¹³⁵ To quote Peter and de Vreese, “the routine periods consisted of a natural week sampled in the months without a summit resulting in 49 days of coverage (i.e., seven days in each of the seven months). The weeks are rotated month-wise (i.e., first complete week in April, second complete week in May, etc.)” (2004:9). This sampling approach could be a blueprint for my research design which covers a similar length of time.

horizontal Europeanisation, the findings reveal a familiar picture: national public spheres' in the EU seem to pay scant attention to one another, and remarkably, they seem to give more attention to the US than other EU member states. National publics pay increasing attention to EU policies and institutions, but not necessarily to each other (i.e. vertical, segmented Europeanisation). These findings suggest that national publics' tend to look at EU affairs from their own vantage point, with little interest in the affairs of other countries.

The paper by Negrine et al. (2008) shows how different countries can report the same issue to varying extent. This paper examines how the print media in Greece, Turkey, France, and Britain, covered Turkey's bid to become a member of the EU from October to December 2004 (Negrine, Kejanlioglu, Aissaoui, & Papathanassopoulos, 2008). The results revealed that British newspapers report this issue the least with French newspapers reporting it the most (2008:53). The same argue that the issue lacked media coverage in Britain because it had not become a particularly politicised issue and there was limited interest in European affairs. In sum, to paraphrase Negrine et al., national politics, domestic news values, and variable historical and cultural contexts affect the extent of EU coverage (2008:54). There were also significant within-country differences found. To borrow the terminology of Hallin and Mancini (2004), the results are indicative of a 'segmented media system'¹³⁶. The latter is also supported by the findings of Pfetsch et al. (2010). Their research was driven by two important questions, namely: to what extent is the media ecosystem segmented, and to what extent the press contribute, or not, to Europeanisation? (Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010:154). The results show that both media type and a country's depth of integration determine the degree of EU coverage, with the latter particularly influential. More specifically, the results show that the 'opt-in' member states, namely, Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, France, and Germany, attributed higher salience to the EU than newer ones. They were also more likely to attribute responsibility to the EU actors than national counterparts (2010:168). The findings support the assumption that the EPS is segmented within- and across countries due to a fragmented media ecosystem. These scholars conclude that EU issues were widely covered on the editorial agenda, and the press contribute, to a varying degree, to the Europeanisation of national public spheres'¹³⁷(Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010).

The paper by Kantner, Kutter, and Renfordt (2008) carried out a corpus-linguistic analysis of over 100,000 articles from six EU member states, namely, the United Kingdom, Poland, Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, and France, which focused on military interventions during the period from 1990 to 2005. They found that the EU was visible in 10 to 20% of articles on average. This share should not be trivialised bearing in mind that military competences were still mainly national prerogatives during the

¹³⁶ These findings add support to thesis that national public spheres are not just segmented according to different national political cultures, but also different media and journalistic news values and cultures (Statham, 2010).

¹³⁷ This paper is helpful in showing scholars how they might be able to operationalise the 'attribution of responsibility' concept and 'identity/interests' through political claims analysis. These scholars measured the prominence of European actor constellations (2010: 159) with a particular focus on the *addressee* (i.e. the actor deemed responsible for the success or failure of an issue) and the *affected actor* (i.e. whose interests are claimed or disputed) of the claim.

1990s¹³⁸. Grande and Kriesi (2014) employed the method of multidimensional scaling (MDS) on the print press in Britain and Germany during the euro crisis. The results show that the issue of EU integration became increasingly salient in public debates during the crisis. In congruence with previous works, the findings reveal discernible cross-national variations. Interestingly, the salience of European issues were lowest in Germany (4% of core sentences) and highest in the United Kingdom (9% of core sentences). Contrary to assumptions, the euro crisis did not spill over into mass politics, as national and supranational executives dominated public debates. In line with De Wilde's (2011) findings, national executives from other member states (39%) intervened most frequently in the debate vis-à-vis 11% of domestic executives. Political parties were moderately represented (8%) in public debates with over half composed of foreign party actors. These findings imply that both the euro crisis (Grande and Kriesi, 2014) and EU budget negotiations (De Wilde, 2011) strengthened the hitherto weak levels of horizontal European communication. In spite of the general trend of increasing horizontal and vertical Europeanisation but dominated by executive elites, the German case exhibits a more inclusive, but at the same time, politicised national debate, with legislative actors representing 17% of core sentences which is only 2% fewer than that of executive actors (19%). However, in the German public sphere, national actors' dominated public debate. This suggests that politicisation can turn a European issue into a nationally oriented debate. Germany also dominated the debate in other countries which is congruent with previous findings that larger countries tend to receive more news coverage.

Meyer (2008) analysed news coverage of five EU summits between 1969 and 1991 in British, French and German quality newspapers. Meyer did not detect any discernible upward trend in EU salience during the period covered. Instead, the analysis revealed that coverage fluctuated at low levels and peaked during EC/EU summits. However, the most recent summit analysed, namely, the Maastricht treaty summit (1991), received the most media attention from all newspapers (Meyer, 2008, found in Risse, 2010:128). This paper supports the thesis that Europeanisation is largely events-driven¹³⁹. Brüggemann et al. (2006) carried out a quantitative content analysis of over 3000 quality newspaper editorials/opinion pieces (Politiken, Die Presse, The Times, Le Monde, FAZ) in Great Britain, Germany, France, Denmark, and Austria, over a period of 20 years¹⁴⁰. The rationale behind the choice of only quality newspapers is that transnationalisation is considered more likely to take place therein;

¹³⁸ The same scholars did not detect a trend of increasing visibility during the early to mid-1990s. However, from the end of the 1990s onwards, visibility patterns seemed to converge.

¹³⁹ Numerous studies have shown that Europeanisation appears to be driven by certain events. The meta-analysis of Machill et al. (2006) concludes that EU media reporting increases in conjunction with certain events (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006). As Branter et al. (2005) empirically show, the increasingly vertical nature of Europeanisation and growing salience of the EU within the national debates coincided with the ensuing Haider affair. Peter and de Vreese (2004) found that EU coverage increased during EU summit periods. Kantner's (2014) findings show that EU news coverage cycles peak in conjunction with global events (e.g. 1990-91, Iraq/Kuwait War). Other studies show that increasing EU-news coincides with European elections (Post and Vollbracht, 2013), economic crises (Kriesi & Grande, 2014a), changes in the Eurozone's monetary policy (Koopmans et al., 2010, found in Hänska et al., 2019:2) or the European Parliament's plenary calendar (Gatterman, 2013, found in Hänska et al., 2019:2).

¹⁴⁰ These scholars adopted the method of 'constructed weeks' which, to paraphrase Brüggemann *et al.*, means that sample dates are stratified according to the day of the week. So for every year, two Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, etc., were randomly selected (Brüggemann et al., 2006:9).

they thus assume that if it absent in quality newspapers, it would be likely absent in regional/tabloid outlets. Their main findings are consistent with previous research: Europeanisation is ‘segmented’, that is, there was more talk about EU policies and supranational institutions than European states (i.e. vertical Europeanisation¹⁴¹). There was little evidence of fellow Europeans talking more with each other (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation¹⁴²). National public spheres’ commonly targeted EU institutions and ‘translated’ EU policies into domestic issues. The results depict an EPS which is dominated by unidirectional vertical communication flows of a ‘bottom-up’ kind¹⁴³ (Brüggemann et al., 2006).

The paper by Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) builds on the analysis by Brüggemann et al. (2006) to include tabloid newspapers and Poland. The results show that quality and tabloid newspapers to a lesser extent display a growing interest in EU policies and institutions (i.e. vertical Europeanisation, Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010:49, for details). However, interestingly, this pattern ends in 2008 coinciding with the onset of the financial crisis. This suggests that crises might affect patterns of political communication, although crisis dynamics have not been hitherto explored in detail¹⁴⁴. The results reveal marked cross-country differences. For example, in 2008, the interest in EU institutions stagnated in Germany and Poland, while in Austria, Great Britain, Denmark, and France, it decreased. In line with expectations, these scholars, moreover, found differences according to newspaper type. In 2008, in tabloid newspapers, articles referring to EU institutions accounted for circa 5% cent of net articles, whereas in the quality press, the share was much higher. As expected, the focus on EU politics is lower in tabloids (peaking at 2% in 1996) than the quality press (5%). However, as these scholars remind us, the figure of 2% should not be dismissed as tabloids tend to report less on political news. Indeed, 31% of articles in the quality press were found to focus on national politics vis-à-vis 15% in the tabloid press. However, relatively speaking, tabloids were found to be more parochial, coverings four times more domestic vis-à-vis international news stories, and almost eight times more domestic vis-a-vis European news stories. In contrast, quality newspapers reported two times as many national vis-à-vis international news stories, and almost six times more national over European news stories¹⁴⁵ (2010:49-50). In congruence with previous research, there was no discernible increase in ‘mutual observation’ between

¹⁴¹ The authors instead opt for the label ‘monitoring governance’, which captures the normative essence of vertical Europeanisation which enhances the EU’s accountability as the media/citizens can publicly scrutinise policies emanating from Brussels and citizens can keep tabs on the goings-on in Brussels/Strasbourg).

¹⁴² What these scholars choose to call ‘mutual observation’ and ‘discursive exchange’.

¹⁴³ This paper reminds me that it would be useful to highlight some of the Eurobarometer surveys of public opinion, particularly, identity, trust, legitimacy, and EU support. I disagree with the narrow interpretation of ‘public discourse’ which seems to be restrictive and excludes tabloid newspapers. Basing one’s definition of discourse on the “continuous discussion of political questions based on justification and arguments” seems too narrow (Brüggemann *et al.*, 2006:3). Notwithstanding this, the paper by (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010) redresses this restrictive definition. In this paper (2010), Kleinen-von Königslöw added tabloid articles to the sample even if they contained no argumentation (2010:48). The study also only analyses quality newspapers to assess the level of Europeanisation. This paper reminds me that if I ever wanted to do a longitudinal analysis to gauge whether public spheres were becoming more or less Europeanised, I would have to have at least 10 years of data and I would need a yardstick of comparison as Europeanisation is relative. The authors also prudently remind us that Europeanisation could be influenced by factors unrelated to the EU, such as broader developments of globalisation and the growing influence of global news networks (Brüggemann, et al., 2006:20).

¹⁴⁴ The crisis dynamic might be an interesting element to explore further given that we are living in the midst of an unprecedented crisis.

¹⁴⁵ These calculations are based on the figures provided in the paper. The results revealed that articles in quality newspapers primarily focused on national politics (31 %), followed by foreign policy (9 %) and lastly EU politics (5 % on average). In the tabloid press, articles mainly focused on national politics (15 %), followed by foreign policy and EU politics to a similar extent (roughly 2 % of total articles).

1982 and 2008 (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation). Modest differences were found in the level of horizontal Europeanisation – with 18% of net articles of this kind found in quality newspapers compared to just 15% in tabloid newspapers¹⁴⁶. Furthermore, in line with previous findings, the biggest member states received the most coverage: in six out of the ten newspapers, Germany was the most referenced country, followed by the UK (the most referenced in five newspapers) and France (the most referenced in one newspaper)¹⁴⁷. In regard to horizontal Europeanisation, British newspapers report least on European countries, in contrast to Austrian newspapers which report regularly on the affairs of their European neighbours (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010).

The findings of Statham et al. (2010) reveal that executive actors dominated European discourses at the expense of legislative and civil society actors (Statham, 2010:293). In the words of Statham, “Europeanization has led to an empowerment of the already powerful executive actors and an elite-dominated public politics” (2010:295). However, as a result of the increasingly politicised nature of EU integration, the EPS has evolved from, what he calls, ‘executive bargaining’ to ‘elite-dominated public politics’. In other words, European politics has become more visible and politicised despite the sustained prevalence of elites in public debates. Contrary to the EU ‘communication deficit’ thesis, Statham maintains that the EU is sufficiently visible in the policy domains in which it commands shared or exclusive *de jure* authority (2010:285). Again, we find a familiar picture of European communication which is predominantly vertical, and this is confirmed by the longitudinal data both offline and online (Statham, 2010: 286). There is, moreover, little evidence of mutual cross-national observation (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation, see Statham, 2010:286, for details). The UK is a notable outlier; although EU issues received a lot of news coverage, they were largely reported as a domestic concern (2010:286). The same scholar argues that the exceptional UK case is probably due to its relatively low dependency on EU trade, lukewarm elite commitment to the integration project, and numerous opt outs from EU institutions.

Similarly, the study by Statham and Gray (2005) uses the method of claims analysis on quality newspapers in France and the UK. The findings are congruent with previous research: Europeanisation is vertical and segmented. Few claims were made by supranational EU actors to national political actors (i.e. top-down) – with only 5% in France and 9% in the UK. By contrast, for claims made by national actors making demands on EU actors (i.e. bottom-up), a threefold increase was found in the UK (30%) and a tenfold increase in France (56%). This indicates that the EU is predominantly positioned as a target of claims-making (i.e. passive actors) which renders them susceptible to blame attribution without sufficient means with which to respond. In basic terms, national actors are positioned as active and responsive claimants whereas supranational actors are positioned as passive and non-responsive

¹⁴⁶ However, we should caveat this finding bearing in mind that most of the topics in tabloid newspapers referred to non-political topics (i.e. soft news).

¹⁴⁷ See Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010:52, for details.

addressees of claims. In line with previous findings, the same scholars observe modest levels of cross-border political communication between EU member states (7% in the UK vis-à-vis 12% in France). Concerning the distribution of claims according to actor type, political party and state actors account for 73% of net claims¹⁴⁸. As expected, civil society actors played a bit-part role in public debates, and their representation was largely composed of technocratic/institutionalised actors such as economists, scientific experts and trade unions. In congruence with previous findings, the authors observed strong national differences. For example, national claims-making over Europe accounts for only a quarter of net claims in France (27%) compared to over half (54%) of British claims-making. In addition, bottom-up vertical claims-making is much stronger in France (over 50%) compared to the UK¹⁴⁹ (circa 30%, see Statham & Gray, 2005:70, for details).

Machill et al. (2006) carried out a meta-analysis of the EPS scholarship. In regard to vertical Europeanisation, several studies show that domestic protagonists receive much more coverage than supranational actors. By and large, the Netherlands, UK, and Danish media (de Vreese, 2003) report EU protagonists more frequently than other member states. This suggests that negative public opinion (i.e. Euroscepticism) does not seem to have a negative bearing on the volume of coverage about EU politics (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006). In regard to horizontal Europeanisation, studies shows that highly populated member states such as Germany, the UK, and France are the most frequently cited subjects of European news (2006:72). Not surprisingly, smaller member states report much more on other member states than larger ones. Furthermore, EU news was consistently found to account for a small portion of total reporting. The meta-analysis by Machill et al. (2006) neatly summarises the different patterns of Europeanisation across different member states (2006:72). Their findings reveal that the German media report ‘a great deal’ on EU-related topics and EU protagonists, and other EU states to a lesser extent (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006:74). Compared to other countries, the French and Austrian media report on EU topics and EU states with moderate frequency, and the Italian and Irish media report to a comparatively lesser degree. The Spanish and Danish media report on EU-related topics to a large extent, but EU protagonists to a comparatively modest degree. The Dutch media frequently report on EU protagonists and moderately often to other EU states. Surprisingly, the Belgian media report on EU topics rarely compared to other EU member states. There are few analyses carried out on the Finnish media, however, Machill et al. tentatively conclude that they report on EU topics a ‘considerable amount’. According to the same, the Swedish media report ‘very frequently’ on other member states (Machill et al., 2006:74). Lastly, the British media report ‘comparatively little’ on EU topics and other EU member states (Machill et al., 2006:79). The general rule is that member states receive more news coverage, the bigger they are. Generally speaking, Germany, France, and the UK receive an abundance of news coverage in other member states; Italy and Spain receive moderate

¹⁴⁸ To put this figure in perspective, previous research adopting the same method (PCA) demonstrated that political and state actors accounted for 46% of public debates on racism and discrimination, and 40% on unemployment in the United Kingdom (Statham & Gray, 2005:71).

¹⁴⁹ This indicates that debate between domestic actors characterises the British political communication on Europe.

amounts; and the Scandinavian, Benelux, and Irish member states receive the least. The main exception to this rule is Belgium which is not surprising given that many of the EU's institutions' are based there (Machill et al., 2006:74).

Transnational communication

To what extent are Europe's public spheres characterised by 'permeability' (Conrad, 2006), 'discursive references' (Brüggemann, 2006), and 'communicative linkages' (a la Koopmans, 2010)? The general finding of segmented Europeanisation (see above) already implies that European cross-border communicative exchanges are weak. While some scholars treat the salience of European institutions and politics and transnational communication as one and the same, other scholars prefer to treat transnationality as a dimension in its own right. This is because EU salience which is not accompanied by a cross-border element cannot be regarded as a form of Europeanised communication. To illustrate, the study by Van de Steeg (2006) found that the New York Times contained moderate amounts of coverage of the Haider debate (an EU issue), however, there were few references to American political actors. This suggests that the New York Times reported the Haider debate as an extraneous event (i.e. foreign/global) rather than a matter considered relevant to domestic politics. Therefore, I, as with other scholars (e.g. Conrad, 2006), would be reluctant to claim that this was an example of Europeanised political communication as it lacks the quality of 'discursive exchanges' (a la Brüggemann, 2006). Below I summarise the main findings pertaining to the dimension of transnational communication¹⁵⁰.

The study by Conrad (2006) aims to examine the extent to which national public spheres' are 'permeable' to one another¹⁵¹. To this end, Conrad measures the number of newspaper article contributions from non-national speakers. The findings reveal, unsurprisingly, that national speakers dominate the debate, and non-nationals are barely represented in articles on the constitutional treaty. A caveat of this study was the case selection: the constitutional treaty, by its nature, touches on issues of national sovereignty, thereby making susceptible to 'national self-inspection' (Conrad, 2006:14). Furthermore, very few articles were examined (roughly 80) and the benchmark for transnational communication was set elusively high. Naturally, non-nationals are less likely to write articles or be cited in other countries' newspapers due to linguistic barriers, amongst other things. By contrast, Koopmans (2010) adopts a lower and more realistic threshold on what constitutes transnational communication¹⁵². In my view, press contributions from non-national speakers represent an unrealistic threshold for cross-border communication. Koopman's (2010) more nuanced approach endeavours to

¹⁵⁰ I hasten to add that the visibility section also touches upon this dimension, but it is treated interchangeably with visibility and EU salience.

¹⁵¹ Conrad (2006) examines news coverage on the constitutional treaty in two Swedish quality newspapers.

¹⁵² For the same, mere links and references to European member states and the European supranational level are proxies of 'transnational communication'.

capture both direct and indirect references including both mentions en passant and substantive contributions from non-national speakers. As alluded to earlier, Koopman's (2010) found that ties and references to other European member states (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation) did not increase over time. However, communicative ties between the national and supranational level did so (i.e. vertical Europeanisation, see Statham & Koopmans, 2013: 144, for details). The findings of Statham et al. (2013) contradict the common claim that the EU remains invisible and unmediated¹⁵³ (Statham & Koopmans, 2013: 144). The study by Peters et al. (2005) distinguishes between two kinds of transnational communication: (1) discursive contributions from non-national speakers akin to Conrad's (2006) substantive public diskurs approach and (2) discursive references akin to Koopman's approach¹⁵⁴ (2010). In line with Conrad's (2006) findings, few 'discursive contributions' from non-national speakers were detected in newspaper articles, however, discursive references were more numerous. However, there was no discernible increase in discursive references from foreign sources or contributions by European speakers¹⁵⁵ (Peters, Sifft, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Konigslow, 2005). The same conclude that that cross-border flows of communication within Europe are weak (2005:152).

The study by Kleinen-von Königlöw (2010) observed a decrease in 'discursive exchanges'¹⁵⁶ between 1982 and 2008 (see also Brüggemann et al., 2006). Similarly, Meyer (2010) concludes that the number of opinions from non-national speakers' remained stable over time. The study by Hänska & Bauchowitz (2019) reveals that social media may enable transnational communication. The main finding was that, during the euro crisis bailout negotiations, Twitter users' were found to interact more frequently with users' in other European countries than with domestic ones (Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019:1). However, as the authors' openly acknowledge, the results are rather predictable as only English language tweets were scraped. This is problematic from a selectivity bias point of view as people who speak a second language tend to be more transnational in outlook. Lastly, the heuristic tool of horizontal and vertical Europeanisation may well be sufficient to capture transnational ties, however, this rather low benchmark neglects framing. That is to say that an increase in the flow of "tweets" that exhibit vertical and horizontal ties does not tell us about the "tweets" substance which could plausibly be antagonistic towards other member states (e.g. nationalistic frames). Medrano (2003 frame analysis of the quality press in Spain, Germany, and the UK reaches similar conclusions to the works cited above. His analysis

¹⁵³ It is, thus, questionable whether Hix's remark that we are still waiting for "the media to cover the Brussels soap opera for the first time" still rings true today (2008:185).

¹⁵⁴ That is, communicative linkages through direct and indirect European references.

¹⁵⁵ Peters et al. (2005) makes the valid point that EPS's should contain 'communicative interchanges': parallel public debates in different countries (separate but equal, as it were) do not really constitute a common public space. If two groups of people deliberate in separate rooms on the same questions, they do not constitute a common public sphere (2005: 153). Therefore, they argue that the density of cross-border communication is decisive to EPS. Furthermore, there is much conceptual debate as well as some empirical research on the development of a European collective identity. But this research is primarily based on survey research and does not tell us much about the collective identifications that play a role in public discourse (2005: 148). Another interesting finding from the study was the prominence of American voices in debates which suggests that European political communication is heavily Americanised (2005: 151).

¹⁵⁶ Defined by Kleinen-von Königlöw as "the share of foreign speakers from other Western European countries" (2010:52).

of newspaper commentaries between 1946 and 1997 detected only modest horizontal connections between the German, Spanish and British national public spheres¹⁵⁷.

Contestation

What do we know about the tonality of European coverage in the public sphere? Several studies attest to the tendency of the mass media to portray the EU in a negative rather than positive light (Norris, 2000; De Vreese, 2002). Galpin and Trenz (2017) conclude that “a systematic negativity bias applies to political news-making...and journalists often prefer polemicism, excessiveness and general negativity, leading to a spiral of cynicism” (Galpin & Trenz, 2017:51-52; see also Patterson, 2000; Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). They argue that this ‘spiral of cynicism’, as they call it, has contributed to the rise of Eurosceptic parties. By contrast, Schuck and de Vreese (2006) found that press coverage of EU enlargement was ‘balanced’, that is, there was not a clear bias in a positive or negative direction in the tonality of coverage (2006:17). The caveat was that only quality newspapers were analysed. It is widely understood that tabloid newspapers are more negative in tone than the quality press (Schuck & de Vreese, 2006). These findings were confirmed in a study by Van Cauwenberge, Gelders and Joris (2009) who found that 84% of articles (n = 286) were neutrally framed. De la Porte and Van Dalen (2016) found that news coverage of the EUSES was characterised by an overwhelmingly critical tone and criticism was directed at EU institutions in general rather than specific European countries in particular. In short, critical news coverage prevailed during news coverage of the EUSES, and the EU was the main object of criticism. The paper by Medrano and Gray (2010) expects that media actors would portray the EU more negatively than nonmedia counterparts due to the media’s monitoring and accountability (i.e. watchdog) function. The results lend tentative support to this hypothesis. The paper by Pfetsch (2004, see above) found that the quality press made the most positive evaluations of the EU (25%) compared to only 6% in the tabloid press. However, interestingly, criticism was more prevalent in the quality press (Pfetsch, 2004).

As outlined earlier, contestation can galvanise the public sphere¹⁵⁸. Indeed, as previous scholars show (Bossetta et al., 2019), Euroscepticism should not be considered as necessarily incompatible with the emergence of an EPS. As Risse (2014) underlines, the EPS should not be conceived of as necessarily consensual; on the contrary, political conflicts on European issues can galvanise the public sphere by

¹⁵⁷ De Swaan succinctly sums up what the EPS currently looks like: “The absence of debate across borders and the limited participation in national debate on the EU point to a public sphere that is fragmented or ‘pillarized’ (‘versäult’) into separate but congruent national spheres...The recent debate on the European Constitution proceeded as a series of parallel national discussions, albeit in the awareness that the neighbours were talking about the same things at the same time” (de Swaan, 2007:145).

¹⁵⁸ However, crucially, the lines of conflict should transcend national boundaries. Political conflicts and cleavages are compatible with the EPS if they can help foster transnational coalitions and networks.

widening actor participation and bringing European matters to the forefront of debate (i.e. salience/visibility). This is why many scholars examine the concept of politicisation in conjunction with the EPS. However, as Risse (2014) rightly emphasises, politicisation is ‘orthogonal’ to the EPS, that is, both concepts are statistically independent. Indeed, several scholars regard the so-called ‘permissive consensus’ period (1960-1980s) as characterised by Europeanised political communication albeit limited to ‘executive bargaining’ between ‘strong publics’ without a thriving debate involving mass publics (i.e. non-polemical).

In regard to pro/anti-EU cleavage dynamics, the study by Statham and Gray (2005) reveals that claims made by supranational actors towards the national level (i.e. top-down vertical Europeanisation) were more pro-European than claims made by national actors (i.e. bottom-up vertical Europeanisation) towards the EU level. Marked cross-national differences were observed, with French public discourses found to be more pro-European than their British counterparts (Ibid., 70). In Britain, government actors and civil society were found to hold the most balanced positions toward the EU, while political and legislative actors were the most negative in evaluations toward the EU (Ibid., 72). As Statham et al. (2005) underline, these findings demonstrate that cleavages on EU integration ‘cross-cut’ civil society and institutional actors. Furthermore, the authors’ found compelling evidence of a left/right cleavage between the two main political parties, namely, the Conservative and Labour Party: the former comprised the lion’s share of Eurosceptic claims and the latter comprised more ‘pro-EU’ claims (Ibid., 72). Moreover, these two parties dominated the number of overall claims¹⁵⁹. In France, the distribution of actor positions was different with state and legislative actors holding largely pro-EU positions with the evaluations of civil society more ‘eurocritical’. This suggests that, in France, there is a divide between political elites and civil society on EU integration. Notwithstanding this, the French public sphere was found to be overwhelmingly positive (Statham and Gray, 2005).

Similar findings were observed in the subsequent study by Statham (2007) using the same method and case studies. Not surprisingly, nationally internalised claims were significantly more euro-critical (+0.12 in Britain and +0.39 in France) than claims overall (Statham, 2007: 120). In other words, domesticated debates tend to be more ‘eurocritical’. These results also confirm that the French public discourses were much more pro-European than British ones. In accordance with previous findings (Statham & Gray, 2005), British state (-0.02) and civil society actors (+0.06) held similar positions which may be regarded as ‘eurocritical’. By contrast, in France, civil society (+0.13) was found to be more critical of Europe than state actors (+0.47) highlighting a clear positional divide between the state and civil society. Political parties were the most Euro-sceptical (-0.16) and government actors were slightly less Euro-sceptical (+0.06). By contrast, in France, government actors were overwhelmingly supportive of EU integration (+0.54), followed by political party actors (+0.37)¹⁶⁰. In Britain, both

¹⁵⁹ The Labour Party at 49% and the Conservative Party at 47%.

¹⁶⁰ The findings of Statham and Gray (2005) regarding positions according to actor type are confirmed herein.

parties on the left and right compete over Europe, whereas in France, there is a clear pro-European consensus (Statham, 2007). These findings show that Britain does not conform to the ‘inverted-U curve’ thesis, that is, a pro-European centre and Eurosceptical periphery, whereas in France, it does¹⁶¹ (Statham, 2007:127). The paper by Koopmans (2010) observed a link between the discursive influence of actors in Europeanised communicative fora and patterns of support for EU integration (and vice-versa). On the whole, actors who are more influential in public debates (i.e. national executives) tend also to be more supportive of EU integration than peripheral actors (i.e. subnational actors/civil society). This is also supported by a multivariate analysis (Koopmans, 2010:121). The paper by Pawley (2017) examines the framing strategies of centre-right parties using manifesto data from three elections in the UK, Germany, and France, using an inductive textual analysis approach. As expected, (see Hoegliger, 2016), the main finding was that ‘cultural-identitarian’ frames were often complemented with critical evaluations of Europe (Pawley, 2017:23). These findings hold across all three countries under examination¹⁶². Interestingly, cultural frames were most prevalent in the 2015 Conservative Party Manifesto which was arguably when the party’s Euroscepticism reached its zenith (Pawley, 2017:23).

Koopmans et al. (2010) hypothesise that criticism of the EU would be more pronounced in issue domains where EU-level decision-making powers are the most far-reaching¹⁶³ (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). By the same logic, the increasing transfer of competences to the EU is expected to be accompanied by increasing criticism of the EU over time. These hypotheses were largely confirmed in the results. Furthermore, evaluations of the EU are expected to be more positive in countries that are more dependent on intra-EU trade (Ibid.). The scholars’, therefore, expect intra-EU trade dependent countries such as the Netherlands and Germany to hold more positive sentiments towards EU integration vis-à-vis the United Kingdom and Italy which are less dependent on intra-EU trade. The results lend support to this hypothesis as Britain demonstrated to be the most Eurosceptic country. Furthermore, evaluations of the EU are expected to be more positive in countries that hold a current account surplus with the EU (e.g. Spain). However, this hypothesis was not supported in the data as Spain recorded the second-lowest level of support for EU integration. Moreover, evaluations of the EU are expected to be more positive in countries which are overrepresented in Europeanised debates relative to their share of the EU population. This ‘discursive influence’ hypothesis finds support in the empirics, with France found to be a staunch supporter of EU integration. The results show that most countries were broadly supportive of the EU. Although there is significant criticism towards the actions and policy positions of EU actors’ detected in the claims-making, the EU was evaluated less negatively than national institutions overall (Ibid.). The results also reveal marked cross country differences in support for EU integration. The media debate in France exhibited the strongest support for EU

¹⁶¹ However, the scholar caveats that this finding could be a product of different political systems.

¹⁶² The limitation of this study were the focus was only one centre-right parties. It would have been interesting to explore party positions across the board.

¹⁶³ In other words, negative attitudes would be more pronounced in, for example, the field of monetary policy, and less so, in the field of education policy.

integration (an average evaluation of +0.33), followed by the Netherlands and Germany (+0.28), Italy (+0.19), Spain (+0.12) and Great Britain (+0.10). Not surprisingly, the UK evaluated the EU most negatively (-0.29), followed by the Netherlands (-0.21), Germany (-0.17), Italy (-0.16), Spain (-0.12) and France which is the only country where evaluations of EU institutions were positive overall (+0.02). Nonetheless, European institutions were still evaluated less negatively compared to evaluations of national institutional actors. This was the case in all countries save for the United Kingdom and the Netherlands where the reverse was found (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010: 90).

In regard to the positioning of political parties, the study by Grande and Kriesi (2014) reinforces the ‘inverted-U curve’ hypothesis¹⁶⁴ (a la Hooghe et al., 2002: 968). This study found that radical parties on both the left and right of the political spectrum were mainly opposed to EU integration compared to traditionally centrist parties such as the Social Democrats and Liberals were broadly supportive (Grande & Kriesi, 2014a). Centre-right parties such as the Christian Democrats and the Conservative Party occupied moderately negative positions, whereas national executives and EU institutional actors held more favourable positions toward EU integration. In public debates concerning economic liberalism, European integration and immigration, interest groups’ held net neutral positions, however, this finding conceals the strong variations that were found across different issues. The most prominent ‘cleavage coalition’ was the so-called ‘interventionist-nationalist’ model¹⁶⁵. In other words, moderate nationalist coalitions predominated but radical-right parties (i.e. the neoliberal-nationalist model) were peripheral during public debates. How did the euro crisis alter these findings? The results reveal a similar picture: the executive elite consensus endures, with national governments taking broadly positive positions on the EU’s measures of crisis management. The exception to this finding was the UK and Greece which is not surprising given the UK’s ideological opposition towards fiscal deepening measures, and the fact that Greece was arguably the most negatively affected by the crisis. Political parties occupied more critical positions during the euro crisis. The debate reinforced and exacerbated horizontal tensions between member states and vertical tensions between national government and supranational actors. Particular attention was paid to German and French actors within public debates. Moreover, in line with previous findings, significant domestic political tensions characterised the German public debate. This suggests that the euro crisis contributed to the politicisation of EU politics, particularly in Germany (Kriesi & Grande, 2014a: 220-221). The authors conclude that there is significant evidence of an emerging ‘demarcation-integration’ cleavage and positioning on European integration follows an ‘inverted-U’ curve. During the euro crisis, the new conflicts of supranational solidarity and national sovereignty were fought between traditionally centrist parties on the one side, and radical-left, centre-right and radical-right parties on the other (2014: 222). The results suggest that critics of the EU

¹⁶⁴ Patterns of support for EU integration follow the shape of an ‘inverted-U’ curve. Thus ‘fringe’ political parties are generally understood to be less supportive of EU integration than parties occupying the centre ground.

¹⁶⁵ This model refers to parties which can be classed as left-wing on the economic dimension of political conflict and right-wing on the cultural dimension.

integration process seem to be gaining the upper hand in terms of discursive influence and visibility in public debates (Ibid.). In light of these findings, these scholars are sceptical about the current EPS's potential to foster a European 'community of communication' (Kriesi & Grande, 2014a: 223)¹⁶⁶.

The study by Statham, Tresch et al. (2010) reveals that the distribution of 'Eurocriticisms' varies considerably across countries. Eurocriticism was the most widespread in the United Kingdom (53%) followed by the Netherlands (41%) and Germany (31%). Most claims were found to be pro-European particularly from those in government. Eurocriticism made up a minority of evaluative claims at 37% (Statham et al., 2010:257). In light of these findings, as the same points out, we should be careful not to use the term 'Euroscepticism' too loosely. As Pawley (2017:23) aptly remarks, "[it would be] more appropriate to talk of a (slight) 'erosion of Europhilia' rather than a 'rise of Euroscepticism'". In congruence with previous research (see above), the uneven distribution of Eurocriticism across different party families conforms largely with the 'inverted-U' curve hypothesis. For example, the radical left (70%) and radical right (88%) parties scored significantly higher levels of Eurocriticism than centrist parties (see Statham et al., 2010: 256, for details). And conservatives display higher levels of Eurocriticism than social democrats and liberals. The caveat is that the Schweizerische Volkspartei and the Conservative Party largely account for these differences. When these two parties are omitted, other parties occupying the middle ground of the political spectrum display similarly low levels of eurocriticism. As the same scholars point out, a possible explanation for the low levels of 'Eurocriticism' among mainstream parties could be because they tend to be parties in government. The latter have more privileged access to European policymaking, and are more likely to hold positive evaluations towards EU integration. The multivariate analysis reinforces these expectations: parties are more pro-European when they are in government. In support of the 'persistence hypothesis', these scholars found that subnational party representatives adopt more Eurocritical positions. They attribute this finding to evolving political opportunities structures (POS) as a result of EU integration: subnational, regional, civil society and opposition parties are largely excluded from EU governance, and as a result, they tend to be more critical of the EU¹⁶⁷ (Statham, Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010). Statham (2010) found that criticism of the EU was more widespread in policy domains where the EU possessed significant competences of decision-making, adding support to the 'compensation Europeanisation' hypothesis¹⁶⁸. Generally speaking, political claimants were broadly supportive of EU

¹⁶⁷ This paper is useful in summarising the literature and competing schools of thought related to party mobilisation on the issue of EU integration, i.e., the scholars elucidate what can shape and determine party positioning on the issue of EU integration: are Eurocritical positions motivated by strategic/tactical or ideological considerations? The authors convincingly argue in support of the latter. This paper is also useful in sharpening Kriesi's 'demarcation-integration' cleavage thesis which reduces Euroscepticism to cultural nationalism and overlooks the civic-nationalist dimension. In fact, the empirical evidence suggests that most Eurosceptic nationalism manifests as civic-nationalist claims (Statham et al., 2010:273). The paper is, furthermore, instructive in emphasising the importance of mass media (and newspapers) as a data source for understanding party contestation and political mobilisation. These scholars aptly remind us that Eurocriticism is not coterminous to Euroscepticism and increasing criticism might be part of the normalisation and Europeanisation within national politics¹⁶⁷ (Statham et al., 2010: 273).

¹⁶⁸ Namely, as the EU gains more competences, policy issues are expected to become more salient in public debates. The 'compensation Europeanisation' hypothesis may also explain why criticism of the EU has increased over time. As the EU gains more competences, political

integration and this was the case across all policy fields. Their findings support the POS perspective: those who have limited access to EU governance tend also to be more critical of EU integration. By the same token, government actors, with privileged access to EU policy making are mainly positive of the EU. The ‘inverted-U’ curve hypothesis finds support in the book’s main findings: both radical left and right parties opposed EU integration and mainstream parties were broadly supportive. The left challenged the EU mainly because of its ostensible neoliberal agenda. Contrary to the Kriesi’s cultural cleavages thesis, right wing party families largely opposed EU integration on civic-nationalist grounds.

The study by Pfetsch (2004) shows that media actors’ are generally quite supportive of EU integration with the exception of the UK press. The media were found to support EU integration in 55% of all claims (Pfetsch, 2004:31). The findings reveal that quality newspapers are generally more positive compared to regional and tabloid newspapers: 60% of claims in the quality press were evaluated positively and 5% negatively so, compared to 47% positive and 16% negative, in the regional and tabloid press. However, the strongest effect on media evaluations was the country under examination. In regard to the subjective position of commentators according to member state, unsurprisingly, only 49% of claims from the UK press held positive attitudes towards the EU, in stark contrast to the French and Spanish press, with 78 and 80% of claims in favour of EU integration respectively (2004:32). The results also reveal that criticism was largely targeted towards domestic political actors. Interestingly, the same also found that, in five out of seven countries, the media evaluated domestic actors more negatively than supranational ones, however, in the Dutch and British press, the inverse was found (Pfetsch, 2004:36).

The same issues...at the same time...?

Many scholars regard thematic and temporal synchronicity of public debates as essential hallmarks of an EPS. The salience of European politics requirement (i.e. visibility, see above) strongly overlaps with thematic convergence but there are important differences between the two: the salience of European affairs is a lower benchmark than thematic convergence. European salience can encompass a panoply of issues. For instance, two public spheres’ could conceivably be talking about two separate European issues (e.g. EU immigration reform in Italy, and EU fiscal reform in Germany) yet this would satisfy the salience condition, nevertheless. In a situation of this kind, there would be no opportunity for the national public spheres’ to debate with one another. National public spheres would be merely giving more attention to EU ‘happenings’ rather than debating with each other as collective Europeans on common issues. This is why the ‘Eder-Kantner’ criteria are necessary conditions for the flourishing

parties become more critical of EU-policy making in order to hold power-holders in Brussels to account. The public sphere provides a legitimacy and accountability function after all.

of genuine Europeanised political communication. With that in mind, I turn to the main findings pertaining to the ‘Eder-Kantner’ criteria. Broadly speaking, most studies detected thematic and temporal convergence within public debates. As Meyer (2010) points out, “it is very much to be expected that the coverage of European politics will be similar and synchronous across EU countries that are affected by EU decisions” (Meyer, 2010: 37). Van Cauwenberghe et al. (2009) observed topical convergence in EU news coverage across national public spheres. However, the study arguably suffers from a selectivity bias problem as tabloid-format newspapers were omitted from the sample (Kermer et al., 2020). The paper by Grundmann (2000) examined whether the BSE and Euro debate in the UK, France, and Germany displayed signs of synchronicity in the form and degree of public attention. The synchronisation of public attention was discerned in all three countries. However, palpable cross-national variations were found: the United Kingdom paid particular attention to debates on the euro, and France was especially interested in the BSE crisis, which the scholar suspects was because of the country’s high dependence on British beef. The paper by Semetko et al. (2000) shows that different topics were discussed in different outlets and mediums. These scholars carried out a content analysis of Dutch newspaper articles and television news programs around the period of the 1997 Amsterdam Summit. They deductively identified several topics: Crime, Politics, Economy, Social Welfare/Education, Non-political news, Politics, Europe, and Foreign news. The analysis, which covered three television outlets and four newspapers, shows that sensationalist newspapers covered crime stories and non-political news much more frequently than quality newspapers. For example, 27% of stories in *De Telegraaf* covered crime news compared to only 11% in *NRC Handelsblad* (Semetko et al., 2000:103). By contrast, quality newspapers paid comparatively more attention to political and economic news, news about Europe, and foreign news.

The paper by Kantner et al. (2008) reveals that attention cycles began to converge from the end of the 1990s onwards. The first peak in the volume of articles on military interventions that mentioned the EU was in 1999 which coincided both with the Kosovo War and debates concerning the establishment of the ESDP. The second peak in the EU salience was the 2001-2003 period, which coincided with the 9/11 terrorists attacks and the Afghanistan and Iraq War. The levels of EU salience then subsided to levels found in the mid-1990s. The results show that attention cycles followed similar patterns across all countries under examination. Moreover, interestingly, the EU was mentioned frequently in the US press, especially during the 1990s (Kantner, Kutter, and Renfordt 2008, found in Risse, 2010:131). The subsequent paper by Kantner (2014) confirms these findings. In terms of diachronic issue cycles, four peaks in quantitative levels can be discerned: (1) 1990/91 (Iraq/Kuwait conflicts); (2) 1992-1996 (Balkan crises and African wars); (3) 1999-2000 (Kosovo); and (4) 2001-2003 (Iraq and Afghanistan wars). Again, the peaks and troughs in EU salience across all countries were found to correlate strongly with one another. In the words of Kantner (2014), “this is a strong indicator for synchronous, thematically intertwined debates about the normative justification (or lack thereof) of the use of military

force for humanitarian purposes” (Kantner, 2014:95). Using the US papers as a control sample, the findings show that there were palpable differences between US and European newspapers. Kantner concludes that the “interconnectedness of issue-cycles decidedly more pronounced among EU countries” (Kantner, 2014:97). In short, Kantner concludes that the temporal synchronicity of Europe’s national public spheres’, when compared to the US, is indicative of a Europeanised sphere of communication. However, the meta-analysis of Machill et al. (2006) arrives at different conclusions¹⁶⁹. Empirical evidence suggests marked differences in topical convergence across member states. As of 2006, when this paper was published, five influential studies conclude that the British press report little on EU topics (Machill, Beiler & Fischer, 2006:71). Other member states focus on national interests and national protagonists to a lesser but nonetheless significant degree¹⁷⁰. The synchronicity of issue cycles finds further support in the book by Risse (2010). The issue cycle line graphs produced by Risse (2010) convincingly illustrate how the mass media of EU states is temporally synchronised. This is not surprising as the media are eager to report events in real-time. The findings of Trezn’s 2007 research indicate converging issue cycles when compared to the control sample of the US press (see also the ‘Haider debate’ analysis by van de Steeg, 2004). There was widespread coverage of Fischer’s speech (May 2000) in all European newspapers vis-à-vis US press coverage. Issue cycles then converged in September 2000 coinciding with the conclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Concurrent increases in news coverage were subsequently observed in October 2000 coinciding with the Biarritz summit, and December 2000, which was around the period of the Nice Intergovernmental Conference (Trenz, 2007:93). To wrap up, the scholarship is broadly in agreement that similar issues are discussed roughly at the same time. There are naturally differences within and across countries, but differences appear to more stark between third countries (namely, the US) and European countries than between European countries.

Shared meaning structures

Trenz (2007) conceives of four types of actor constellations in order to ascertain whether ‘shared meaning structures’ can be found, namely: (a) ‘partnership’ (b) ‘conflict’ and (c) ‘friend-enemy’ constellation (see Trenz, 2007:94, for details). The former was found to be the most prominent constellation in the countries under examination¹⁷¹. The empirics also reveal frequent and positive evaluations of the Franco-German alliance. The ‘euro-critical’ coalition of Scandinavian member states and the UK also featured prominently in debates, which the author interprets as indicative of a political

¹⁶⁹ The author highlights the strengths of meta-analyses (2006: 64-65).

¹⁷⁰ They conclude “that the publics of the EU states continue to exhibit a strong national orientation” (Machill, *et al.*, 2006:78).

¹⁷¹ In the words of Trenz, ‘the partnership constellation speaks to a supranational entity in the making that is based on a collective will and a shared understanding of how to proceed with European integration’ (Trenz, 2007: 95).

space acting in the spirit of partnership. The ‘friend-enemy constellation’ is only visible to a modest extent (2007:94). Trezn concludes from these findings that there is a strong consensus in newspaper commentaries on how the EU is framed. To paraphrase Trezn, journalists perceive Europe through a pair of European glasses (2007). Not surprisingly, cross-country differences in actors constellation patterns were found. The ‘conflict constellation’ was particularly noticeable in the British press which is indicative of portraying Europe as a mainly domestic issue split by internal partisan conflicts. By contrast, the ‘partnership constellation’ was prevalent in France and Germany which is emblematic of a more consensual and positive political climate (2007:106). However, Trezn caveats these findings by aptly pointing out that the opinions expressed by journalists are not necessarily congruent with those of the wider European public. As Trezn put it, “the constitutional debate does not automatically transform the permissive consensus expressed in the media into the permissive consensus of the people of Europe” (Trezn, 2007:107). It is also important to point out that Trezn’s analysis is restricted to quality newspapers which tend to be more supportive of EU integration. The study by Pfetsch, Adam, and Eschner (2010) identifies strong national differences in how European politics is framed. They found that the deepening of integration was widely discussed in continental Europe, whereas in the United Kingdom, debates about national sovereignty and Eurozone membership were prevalent.

The work of Medrano (2003; 2010) has been particularly influential in enriching our understanding of how the EU is framed in national public spheres’. Medrano’s longitudinal study (1946-97) examines press commentaries in the British, German, and Spanish quality press. According to the same, the results demonstrate sufficient ‘thematische synchronizität’ (Medrano, 2003) and a ‘shared cognitive framing of the integration process’ among EU member states (Trezn, 2007:92). Common positive themes were evident in all countries such as the vision of the EU as an enabler of economic competitiveness, and guarantor of peace and stability. However, recurring negative themes were also evident such as concerns about EU bureaucracy and lack of democratic accountability. The findings reveal country-level differences in how the EU is framed. British frames diverged from Spain and Germany over time. EU integration was linked positively to overcoming isolation and fostering modernisation in Spain; questions about national sovereignty were posed frequently by the UK press; and concerns about the labour market were recurring themes in the German press (Medrano, 2003). In sum, the newspaper editorials reveal thematic convergence in debates on Europe (Medrano, 2003). However, cognitive frames differed slightly between countries with the UK press a notable outlier. The subsequent paper by Medrano and Gray (2010) also examined framing structures in the national mass media. The same scholars explore to what extent representations of Europe are similar across member states. The author devised three frames, namely, identity, instrumental and historical frames, and frames internal to the European integration process (see Medrano, 2010:200, for details). These scholars hypothesise that political elites will employ political frames more than interest groups and civil society actors; national actors will describe the EU from the perspective of sovereignty more regularly than EU actors; and

larger, more powerful member states (e.g. France) will be more sensitive to issues of sovereignty than other member states. In short, they expect differences in the ways actors' from different countries frame the EU as a result of variegated actor-driven logics and specific national contextual factors (Medrano, 2010:198). The empirical findings lend support to these hypotheses. Civil society and interest group actors invoked economic frames more than state and party actors (2010:203). National actors were found to employ sovereignty frames more than EU actors. Interestingly, frames varied markedly according to member state (2010:204). For instance, sovereignty frames were invoked 7% on average, whereas in the United Kingdom, this figure was 20%. On balance, the old adage, 'we have far more in common than that which divides us' encapsulates the authors' main conclusions regarding patterns of framing across member states. Again, the United Kingdom was found to be the outlier, frequently employing sovereignty frames, viewing the EU in a largely negative light, broadly interpreting EU politics in terms of national interests, and rejecting a Europe of common values, culture, identity (2010:218). Few differences in framing were found between media and nonmedia actors. The main cleavages were between those actors who frame the EU as a progressive, politico-cultural project (e.g. Germany) and those that perceive it as a threat to national sovereignty (e.g. UK). Furthermore, the authors' 'international pedigree' hypothesis did not find support in the data; on the one hand, this hypothesis may partially explain the United Kingdom's reticence towards the EU, on the other hand, France seldom employed national sovereignty frames (2010: 212-213). The EU was regularly depicted as an economic institution comprised of democratic countries. However, it was also described as a fetter on state sovereignty and as fostering peace and stability in Europe, to a lesser extent. On balance, these scholars' conclude that a shared political culture can be found in six of the seven cases under examination¹⁷².

However, the paper by Schünemann (2015) arrives at a more negative conclusion. The same examined the EU referendum debate in Ireland, France, and Germany. The main finding is that what he calls, 'narrative nationalism', was prevalent in all countries under examination (2015:4). More specifically, this scholar distinguishes between two types of narrative nationalism: 'ideational nationalism' and 'historicist nationalism'. The former refers to the exceptionality of a nation's constitution akin to Habermas's *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitutional patriotism) concept, and the latter, as the name implies, refers to meta-narratives depicting the history of one's nation favourably. Both nationalist frames were pervasive, however, 'ideational nationalism' was especially prominent in public debates. The caveat of these findings was that data were only collected from the 'non' camps so the pervasiveness of national tropes is not particularly surprising as politicians who opposed the constitutional treaty tended to represent sovereignist, conservative party denominations. However, the paper is very instructive for elucidating the various dimensions and manifestations of nationalism such

¹⁷² Medrano and Gray (2010) rightly emphasise the importance of framing for EU integration as it is instructive for gaging the progress (or lack thereof) in the direction of cultural (dis-)homogeneity and social (dis-)integration.

as ‘ideational’, historicist’ and ‘deictic nationalism’¹⁷³. The paper by Vollmer and Karakayali (2018) underlines the dynamic and ephemeral nature of discursive frames. These scholars employed the method of critical discourse analysis to examine how migrants were portrayed in the German media during the height of the 2015-16 migrant crisis. Interestingly, the results reveal that discourse shifted from the topoi of the ‘security/power paradigm’ and ‘cultural protest’ to a more sympathetic and solidaristic topoi, the latter of which coincided with the Aylan Kurdi scandal, before reverting back to the initial topoi as the newsworthiness of the scandal wore off¹⁷⁴. In the authors words, “the discourse shifted from a philanthropic tone of the deserving migrant to the re-demonizing process of refugees and their labelling as undeserving migrants or economic migrant” (Vollmer and Karakayali, 2018:133). Interestingly, as de Wilde (2019) points out, this U-turn in framing coincided, incidentally or not, with Merkel’s policy shift from the initially welcoming position to the more hard-line stance during the ensuing crisis. De Wilde (2019) surmises that the German mass media probably had a decisive influence on Merkel’s policy U-turn.

The paper by Van de Steeg (2006) examined newspaper coverage of the Haider Affair in European and US newspapers. The main finding was that the US press covered the debacle markedly different from European newspapers. American newspapers covered the issue in a detached matter, largely remaining neutral, whereas the press in EU member states engaged vociferously in debates, taking positions, and mainly framing the affair as an affront against Europe’s liberal and cosmopolitan values. The US press barely mentioned American politicians which indicates that the Haider Affair was perceived as ‘foreign’ and tangential, whereas in European newspapers, both national and supranational actors featured prominently¹⁷⁵ (i.e. horizontal and vertical Europeanisation). In commenting on Van de Steeg’s (2006) work, Risse concurs that, “European newspapers presented the issues not only as being of concern to Austria and its democracy but also to the whole of Europe”¹⁷⁶ (Risse, 2010: 143–4).

Kandyla and De Vreese (2011) analysed news coverage of the EU’s common foreign, security and defence policy (CFSP) in the quality press of eight European countries. Herein, they adopted the binary framing typology of ‘risk’ and ‘opportunity’ frames to examine media evaluations of the EU. The results reveal that the EU in general and the CFSP in particular were more regularly framed in terms of ‘opportunity’ than ‘risk’. The results also show that the CFSP was connected more frequently to the EU than the nation state. This demonstrates that, as far as quality newspaper coverage of foreign policy is concerned, the media portray the EU from a European perspective, employing positive valence frames. Vliegthart et al. (2008) opted instead for the typology of EU framing in terms ‘benefits’, ‘disadvantages,’ and ‘conflicts’. Conflict frames were particularly prominent in German and UK

¹⁷³ The latter of which is similar to the concept of ‘banal nationalism’ (a la Billig, 1995).

¹⁷⁴ Aylan Kurdi was a 3-year old boy who sadly drowned and was washed up on a beach in Turkey.

¹⁷⁵ As Trezn makes plain in his 2007 study, the visibility and resonance of a given actor is a type of media framing in its own right.

¹⁷⁶ Risse reached a similar conclusion in his book, ‘*A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*’, in which he argues that similar structures of meaning can be observed (2010:159).

newspapers, but much less so, in Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands. The UK and German media adopted the ‘benefit’ frame the least, Dutch and Spanish outlets represented the middle ground, and Irish and Italian newspapers adopted the ‘benefit’ frame the most. Overall, ‘benefit’ frames appeared much less than ‘conflict’ frames in almost all newspapers. Similar patterns were found in regard to ‘disadvantages’ frames, with low levels observed, with the exception of Ireland and Italy (2008: 428).

Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) adopted five generic frames in their content analysis of EU news in the Dutch press and television broadcasting, namely: (a) conflict, (b) human interest, (c) economic consequences, (d) morality and (e) the attribution of responsibility frame (Ibid., 95-6). They analysed 1,522 television news stories and 2,601 newspaper articles during the period of Treaty of Amsterdam (1997). The findings revealed that the Dutch media tend to frame EU affairs in terms of attribution of responsibility and conflict to a lesser extent. This can be explained by the fact that the media thrive on conflict and scandal as it is understood to attract wider audiences’. EU coverage was framed, to a lesser extent, in terms of economic consequences, human interest, and least of all, in terms of morality (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). The univariate analysis showed that the type of topic, medium, and outlet can all affect frame salience. In regard to the former, these scholars compared frame salience according to two topics: stories on crime, and stories on EU integration. The results show that crime was most often framed in terms of human interest whereas stories on EU integration were most often framed in terms of economic consequences and attribution of responsibility (Ibid., 104-6). Conflict frames were equally prevalent in both topics (2000: 103-104). However, the most significant differences were found according to outlet type. The results show that sensationalist-oriented newspapers invoked the human interest frame more often whereas quality newspapers and television news programmes used the conflict and responsibility frames more often (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000:93). The scholars suspect that differences according to the type of media outlet are probably due to the prevalence of political-oriented news in quality newspapers, whereas sensationalist outlets tend to report more on ‘soft news’. In fact, the results on topical distribution show that the sensationalist-oriented press cover non-political news more than the quality press.

Semetko’s (2000) framing typology was also adopted by D’Haenens (2005) who analysed EU-related news in the quality press of seven countries. The findings reveal that all frames (see above) were discernible in all countries under examination. However, there were some notable cross-country variations. Interestingly, other variables such as tonality, origin, article length, and timeliness also affected framing salience. In addition, D’Haenens (2005) measures the prevalence of four types of discourse: (1) power, (2) culture, (3) expansion, and (4) inclusion/exclusion (found in Triga et al., 2016:11). All four discourses were salient in the countries under examination although there were marked cross-country differences. This reinforces the notion that EU news is represented quite differently across different national public spheres’ (found in Triga et al., 2016:12). The paper by de Vreese and Semetko (2001) examine news on television in four EU member states around the time of

the introduction of the Euro currency. These scholars focused, in particular, on the conflict and economic consequences frames (see above). Not surprisingly, the economic consequences frame was most prominent during news coverage related to the introduction of the Euro currency. However, the conflict frame was also dominant in most news items. Schuck and de Vreese (2006) carried out a content analysis of debates on EU enlargement in eleven German newspapers, adopting the 'risk' and 'opportunity' framing typology. Both frames were prominent to a similar degree in all newspapers examined¹⁷⁷.

Van Cauwenberge et al. (2009) analysed the EU constitutional debate in four quality newspapers, namely, *De Volkskrant* (Netherlands), *De Standaard* (Netherlands), *Le Monde* (France), and *Le Soir* (France). The results show that the media mainly framed the debate in terms of economic consequences followed by power relations and conflict. As expected, the human interest, and nationalisation frames were less salient (Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009). These trends held across both countries save for the Dutch newspaper, *De Volkskrant*, where the nationalisation frame appeared almost as much as the power frame (2009:51). Due to the similarities in framing that were found in the cases examined, these scholars make a positive assessment regarding the emergence of the EPS. The caveat of these findings was that sensationalist-oriented newspapers were not analysed (Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009; see Triga et al., 2016:12, for a neat summary). Barth and Bijsmans (2018) analysed media discourses in German and British quality newspapers before and after the Maastricht treaty. They focused in particular on the prominence of meaning structures in newspapers. Changes in meaning structures over time were found herein. The press in these two countries gradually converged over time with the increasing prominence of negative EU evaluations which coincided, incidentally or not, with the period after the Maastricht treaty (Barth & Bijsmans, 2018). According to the latter, EU integration was predominantly debated in terms of national sovereignty, efficiency, and economic consequences (2018:227). In line with previous findings, national sovereignty was particularly salient in British debates. The intensity of EU debates were more pronounced in the UK press, however, EU integration became more contested in the German press over time. Their findings lend support to the notion that public spheres' are converging in terms of meaning structures. However, as these scholars openly admit, frame convergence may be a result of case selectivity bias as only quality newspapers were examined¹⁷⁸. Heller and Rényi (2007) carried out a qualitative analysis of EU accession debates in Hungary, which is a welcome development as Eastern European countries have been hitherto underexplored in the EPS scholarship. Generally speaking, in the Hungarian media, both NATO and the EU were negatively framed as interest-based organisations seeking to undermine the national interest (2007:180). However, palpable differences were observed across different outlets (2007:183). They argue that these

¹⁷⁷ As Pfetsch (2014) points out, the weakness of frame analysis is that it ignores the relational and transnational features of the EPS. They also limited their analysis to exceptional periods – it would be interesting to see if these findings also hold in regular periods (Barth & Bijsmans, 2018).

¹⁷⁸ These scholars justify the omission of tabloids, as in their opinion, quality newspapers are more influential as agenda-setters than other media outlets.

differences can be explained by pre-conceived notions of civic or essentialist notions of citizenship and politico-cultural identity¹⁷⁹.

The paper by Bossetta et al. (2019) adopted the method of LDA topic modelling to examine how media debates on Euroscepticism were framed. Interestingly, the results reveal that circa 70% of articles mentioning the word 'Eurosceptic' were framed in a non-domestic context (2019:1051). The articles were also remarkably similar in content in five of the six countries examined (namely, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, and France). The familiar outlier was the UK which framed Euroscepticism in more nationalistic terms. More specifically, the results demonstrate that two topics, namely, the financial crisis, and European Parliamentary elections, were prevalent in the press of at least three countries. 93% of topics were 'linked', providing demonstrative evidence that most topics were shared (i.e. European scope) among different countries' media. These scholars also undertook a qualitative manual coding of 1,545 newspaper articles to verify the results of the LDA model. 70% of articles (1075) were labelled as European in scope which corroborates the findings of topic modelling. The authors, moreover, identified three 'macro-level structural levels' which correlated significantly with Europeanised discourse, namely: (1) a country's relationship to the EU budget (i.e. net creditor or receiver of EU funds), (2) the presence of a strong domestic Eurosceptical party, and (3) newspaper type (Ibid., 2019). The strongest predictor variable was newspaper type, with quality newspaper more likely to cover Eurosceptic events or actors in a European context by a ratio of three to one (3:1). This contradicts the findings of Pfetsch et al. (2008) who claim that the degree of a member state's integration matters more than newspaper type (Pfetsch et al., 2008). The second strongest predictor variable was a country's position in relation to the EU budget. Net-receiving member states (i.e. Spain, Ireland) were over two times more likely to cover Euroscepticism with a European scope than net-creditor member states (i.e. Sweden, Denmark, France, UK, see Bossetta et al., 2019:1061). In last place but still with a significant coefficient was the 'presence of a strong Eurosceptic party'. The multivariate analysis showed that the media of member states with the presence of an electorally weak Eurosceptic party (e.g. Ireland) were one and a half times more likely to present content with a 'European scope' (Ibid.,). The paper by Kantner (2014) examined articles on humanitarian military interventions in six EU member states and the United States to see whether shared European frames can be discerned. There were two main findings: EU debates were framed neither in an exclusively national nor European context (Kantner, 2014: 92) and three master frames – namely the interest, identity, and universalist principles frames – were prevalent in all cases. The caveat of this study is only quality newspapers were analysed.

As previous scholars show, notably, Bossetta et al. (2019), the medium and outlet type can affect how the Europe is framed. Indeed, there is a rich body of scholarship which supports this hypothesis. Indeed, the results of Pfetsch's PCA analysis (2004) reveal that tabloid newspapers are more parochial in scope,

¹⁷⁹ In other words, there are those who conceive of citizenship in terms of an ethno-cultural identity and nation-specific values, or political identity based on equality, universal rights, and cosmopolitan values.

with 63 % of addressee scopes confined to the national level compared to 54% in quality newspapers. Similar findings are also found in regard to object scopes, with the quality press citing European actors more frequently than tabloid newspapers (Pfetsch, 2004: 25). In line with previous findings, the UK press were found to be the most parochial and negative towards EU actors. Notwithstanding these findings, the author plays down the impact of newspaper type as differences were modest. The same concludes that the country and issue field are stronger predictors of patterns of discourse than newspaper type (2004:28). The study by Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Tomaszczyk (2012) identified marked differences in the portrayal of Europe in the Polish press. The *Nasz Dziennik* newspaper (which is considered 'Eurosceptic') tended to frame EU debates in terms of the perceived loss of sovereignty, national identity and culture, and the Christian faith. By contrast, *Gazeta Wyborcza* tended to speak more positively about the benefits of being an EU member. This paper suggests that the Polish public sphere is highly fragmented. The paper by Conrad (2010) examined debates on the EU constitutions in six German and Swedish newspapers. The results reveal that debates were framed very differently in the newspapers examined, however, as the scholar claims, these differences appeared to be structured ideologically rather than nationally. The liberal and left-wing orientated newspapers tended to frame the EU constitution as an opportunity to democratise and consolidate EU citizens' rights, whereas, in the conservative-oriented press, the EU constitution was frequently portrayed as an affront against national sovereignty and the democratic nation-state model. These findings lend support to the claim that different outlets can represent EU institutions and politics very differently.

The paper by Triandafyllidou (2003) also identified large differences in meaning structures across different outlets and mediums. In the debates on joining the Euro, state television (i.e. Rai Uno), the left-wing regional newspaper (MAT) and the mainstream press (i.e. *Corriere della Sera* and *La Repubblica*) tended to underline the political, historical, and symbolic importance of the Euro, celebrate Italy's unity with other EU member states, and frame national identity as congruent with European identity. By contrast, the right-wing press tended to represent the EU from an economic perspective, downplaying the historical, political, and symbolic importance of joining the Euro. The issue of national sovereignty and opposition to the Euro was more prevalent in the right-wing press. Joining the Euro was perceived as an important economic development, but not a step towards a feeling of European sense of belonging or political integration. In short, competing discourses and narratives were found in the Italian media landscape, reinforcing the notion of a 'multi-segmented' and 'fragmented' public sphere¹⁸⁰ (Triandafyllidou, 2003). The paper by Negrine et al. (2008) shows how countries represent EU-related politics in markedly different ways. This article examines how the print media in Greece, Turkey, France, and Britain, covered Turkey's bid to become a member of the EU from October to December 2004 (Negrine, Kejanlioglu, Aissaoui, & Papathanassopoulos, 2008). In order to operationalise the 'same structures of meaning' requirement, the authors coded articles according to

¹⁸⁰ This paper aptly demonstrates that 'similar meaning structures' do not seem to exist within national public spheres themselves.

themes (e.g. 'Human rights record of Turkey', or 'economic issues' or 'Turkey is not European', see 2008:55, for details). It is clear from the main themes coded that Turkey's bid was treated by the press in different ways. In regard to support for Turkish accession, there are marked differences across countries. The French press emphasised that EU membership can bring about positive change to Turkey (16%), the Greek press focused on the improving Greco-Turkish relations (31%), and the British press underlined Turkey's meeting of the conditions and the lengthy nature of the process (4%, 2008:59). The economic case for supporting Turkish-EU accession was more prevalent in the British press than other countries. Generally speaking, the Greek, French, and British press mainly opposed accession on religious, cultural, or historical grounds (2008: 61). However, Turkey's incompatibility with EU economic and political structures was also a prominent theme in the British press (37%). However, this was not the case in the Greek and French press.

The paper by Pfetsch (2004) adds further weight to the thesis that countries emphasise different themes when discussing EU-related matters. Generally speaking, German editorials focused on the economic aspects of EU integration, whereas British and Dutch editorials equated EU integration with threats to national sovereignty and national identity to a lesser extent. French editorials, instead, highlighted the contribution of the EU to unite Europe culturally, and promote a community of values. In contrast to the findings of Pfetsch (2004), Van de Steeg's (2006) which examines the Haider debate (see above) found that differences in EU-related public discourses were not nationally defined. In other words, the nationality of the newspaper was not a predictor variable. For example, two different perspectives on the Haider issue were observed in the *Die Presse* and *Der Standard* Austrian newspapers. However, many common themes were identified across different countries' newspapers. In short, differences were more stark within rather than across countries. The paper by Statham and Gray (2005, see above) found that, as far as the British case is concerned, political parties frame EU politics quite differently. For example, claimants from more Eurosceptic-oriented parties tended to focus on issues of democracy, sovereignty, federalism, and EU centralisation. Pro-Europeans, from both the Labour and Conservative Party, focused more on the economic benefits of the Single Market, whilst also highlighting the benefit of greater geopolitical influence. Few political actors' from both parties (circa one-fifth) constructed Europe in terms of its historical and cultural meanings. In light of these findings, these scholars argue that Eurosceptics' have a greater potential to mobilise supporters as they focus on the themes of 'high politics' (e.g. national sovereignty), the issues that voters are sensitive to, rather than 'low politics' (e.g. economic cost/benefit issues, see Statham & Gray, 2005:76).

The paper by Downey and Koenig (2006) analysed national newspapers around the time when Berlusconi, the then President of the European Council, controversially likened the then MEP, Martin Schulz, to an auxiliary concentration camp guard. The results show that common European framing was largely absent and palpable national differences found. The most perceptible political fault lines were between nations, with left-right conflict lines largely absent. Italians were depicted unfavourably

in German newspapers. And Germans were portrayed in an unfavourable light in Italian newspapers. In all cases studied, the main protagonists of the debate were depicted as representatives of their own respective ethnic nations rather than their respective political parties. As the authors argue, this is a problem for the emergence of an EPS as ethnicity is largely understood as immutable, that is, resistant to change. The ‘Emediate’ project (2004) carried out a longitudinal text analysis in order to identify the main representations of Europe and the EU in the media. The study revealed that, pre-2006, the EU was mainly depicted as an economic organisation and a geographical space between the ‘East’ and ‘West’ (Emediate, 2004:19). Furthermore, Europe and the EU were generally perceived through a national filter, with values predominantly perceived as national (Emediate, 2004: 24-25). The same scholars attributed this ‘myopic’ style of news reporting to heavily entrenched ‘national media cultures’ and the ‘intrinsic ethnocentrism’ of journalists’ (Emediate, 2004:25).

European identity

As Follesdal (2014) and Checkel (2014) point out, the evidence regarding the public spheres’ European identity-making credentials remains inconclusive¹⁸¹. However, the paper by Harrison and Bruter (2014) – which combines opinion poll data and panel-study experiment methods – indicates that symbols and messages can affect both public attitudes towards the EU and foster a European sense of belonging (particularly the civic dimension of European identity). In crude terms, the paper rather convincingly shows that ‘good news’ about the EU is ‘good news’ for European identity (2014:174). However, the caveat of this study is the rest period of the experiment was only 6 months. We therefore do not know the effects of news on identity over longer periods of exposure to news. Furthermore, tabloids and social media were not analysed; it therefore remains to be seen whether the effects of news exposure are the same across different mediums. The conclusions of the same appear contradictory; on the one hand, they argue that politicisation of the EU is, on balance, good for European identity. However, they also concede that ‘bad news’ could be ‘bad news’ for European identity. Indeed, little is known from this study about the effects of bad news on identity (Checkel, 2014). In their words, “a steady stream of bad news on Europe can negatively affect the European identity of citizens” (2014:185). As politicisation and the increasing mediated news coverage it engenders tends to elicit plenty of bad news, I find these optimistic claims on the positive effects of politicisation on European identity irreconcilable. Indeed, in the same paper, they concede that exposure to “systematically bad news... is a veritable ‘identity killer’” (Harrison and Bruter, 2014: 185). We should also bear in mind that the study was carried out at a time

¹⁸¹ Koopmans and Pfetsch (2003: 30) conclude from their analysis that German newspapers “emphasise the collective identities, norms and values that Europe should stand for”. However, again, the study suffers from a selectivity bias problem as tabloid newspapers were omitted from the sample (Kermer *et al.*, 2020).

when EU integration was not particularly contentious¹⁸². Moreover, we cannot ascertain from these findings whether the EPS is a cause or consequence of European identity¹⁸³ (2014:186). The results of an Italian case study by Scalise (2013) show that different narratives of Europe are shared among Europeans¹⁸⁴. There is no meta-narrative of Europe but pluralistic narratives embedded in regional territories. There are 'cosmopolitan European identities' juxtaposed with 'functional and localistic European identities'. The results "underline the relevance of the local dimension on meanings associated with Europe" (2013:59).

The qualitative content analysis of the British, French, and Italian media, by Thornborrow, Haarman, & Duguid (2012) encapsulates how Europe can be discursively constructed in markedly different ways. The study shows that a European identity was prevalent in the French media. In the Italian media, European 'we-ness' is less perceptible than in the French media, but is nevertheless features prominently, particularly the EU's institutional and political role. However, references to a European identity are much weaker in the British media, supporting previous findings that "for many in the UK, 'Europe' remains a place that is elsewhere: people speak of travelling to Europe, or of the virtues or otherwise of the UK being in Europe, sentiments clearly at odds with any sense that the UK is inherently, politically, or culturally, already part of something called Europe" (Golding et al. 2005:15, cited in Thornborrow et al., 2012:115-6). The paper by Kleiner-von Königslöw (2010) reveals that collective references to "The Europeans" increased from 4 to 9% from 1982 to 2008. Interestingly, collective 'we' references decline in 2008, which might, as the author suspects, be a result of the ensuing global financial crisis which led to the resurgence of national identities (2010:53). The effects of crises on discursive identity would certainly be an interesting aspect to explore in more depth¹⁸⁵. Differences in identity constructions were found across different media outlets; contrary to expectations, we-references to the nation are higher in quality (37%) than tabloid newspapers (21%). However, the author suspects that this is because quality newspapers tend to focus more on politics which inevitably touches more on questions of identity than 'soft news'. Nevertheless, exclusive 'we-phrases' were more prevalent in tabloid than quality newspapers (Kleiner-von Königslöw, 2010).

Brüggemann et al. conclude that there are only "weak indications of a gradually developing European 'we'-perspective" (2006, abstract). A European identity is largely undetectable within political discourse (Bärenreuter, Brüll, Mokre, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009). Similarly, Slavtcheva-Petkova (2014) claims that, as far as the British and Bulgarian media are concerned, there are few references to a collective European "we". However, the findings suggest a disconnect between banal identity

¹⁸² For example, data was collected before the 'Eastern' EU enlargement in 2004, and the Euro sovereign debt and migrant crisis several years later. These 'critical junctures' provoked a climate of contentious politics in the EU.

¹⁸³ The same applies to politicisation which could be either a cause, consequence, or both, of European identity.

¹⁸⁴ According to the same, the EPS exists, but it does not involve everyone, and is divided and fragmented.

¹⁸⁵ Interestingly, the paper by Brantner et al. (2005) reveals that the Haider affair (2000) 'pushed national self-referentiality and vertical Europeanisation significantly'. In the year 2000, national self-referentiality reached a peak of 57 % in the Austrian media. The proxy in this paper for 'self-referentiality' is the amount of news about Austria in coverage of EU news.

representations in the media (see Billig, 1995) and the results of survey data which revealed that over half of English and Bulgarian children endorse a European identity. This suggests that identity may be influenced more by contextual factors such as socialisation, travel opportunities, socioeconomic status, and education¹⁸⁶. Similarly, the findings of Peters et al. (2005) suggest that identity frames are still rooted in the national deixis (2005:148). However, in line with the findings of Kleiner-von Königslöw (2010), European we-references increased from only 1 to 6% from 1982 to 2003. However, the margin of fluctuation was so wide that they could not discern a clear trend. In sum, the same scholars conclude that the development of a European identity is still weak (Peters et al., 2005:152).

The paper by Lichtenstein and Eilders (2019) lends support to the notion that the mass media construct European identity very differently. For these authors, “it is reasonable not to assume a single shared, transnational European identity but different national constructions of European identity” (2019:606). This article explores which kinds of identity constructions pertained during the euro crisis. They conducted a content analysis of two magazines and newspapers in the Germany, France, and the UK from 2011 to 2014. They found that support for belonging to the EU is low in general (Ibid., 602). This assessment is based on the finding that the frame conceiving of the EU as a ‘community united by political values’ was largely absent in the results (Ibid., 617). As expected, notable cross-country differences in how the EU is constructed were found; the German and French media tended to frame the EU as a ‘strongly integrated federation’ whereas the British media tended to frame the EU as a loose ‘confederation of states’ (Ibid., 607-617). According to the same, the cleavage of ordoliberalism (Germany) and market regulation (France) vis-à-vis the neoliberal free market (Britain) was evident during the euro crisis. However, the French and German media differed in terms of finance policy: not surprisingly, the former emphasised that economic growth should be prioritised during the euro crisis, whereas the German media underlined financial stability. The same scholars argue that these variegated constructions of belonging are due to ‘specific national interests’. In sum, they conclude that during the euro crisis, pre-existing disagreements between countries on finance policy, market regulation, and political integration culminated and notions of European togetherness were rejected (Lichtenstein and Eilders, 2019).

The puzzle

It is widely accepted that European actors and issues have gradually become more salient in the national public spheres’ which constitute Europe. As numerous studies show, the mass media are reporting more

¹⁸⁶ In my view, media representations of Europe (symbols, visibility) are important to nation-building, and there is no logical reason why it cannot work in the same way on a supranational level. However, in reality, there are still nationally embedded media cultures and media logics that project Europe through a national prism. Thus, there are compelling empirical reasons to doubt the public spheres’ identity-building capacity.

frequently on EU-related happenings. Most studies, moreover, suggest that the public spheres of Europe are synchronised and interconnected. More controversial is the claim that public spheres are employing ‘common frames of reference’ or as other scholars prefer to call, ‘similar meaning structures’. In fact, empirical evidence is inconclusive in this respect. Some scholars claim that shared interpretative frames and even a European sense of belonging can be found in public debates (Risse, 2010). However, the study by Medrano (2003) reveals the dominance of nation-specific frames (see also Bijmans et al., 2007). The study by Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) shows that the ‘We’ tends to be the nation (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). Studies on the internet also show that cyberspace is nationally embedded (Barisione & Michailidou, 2017; Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2003). Nonetheless, on balance, the prevailing consensus is that the conditions are ripe for the emergence of a European identity. However, it is, in my view, an overextrapolation to assume that European identity would emerge in the context of increasing salience and transborder connections alone. On the contrary, the increasing visibility of the EU may serve to strengthen national identity through, inter alia, discourses of ‘othering’ and ‘conflict framing’¹⁸⁷. The crucial scope condition for genuinely Europeanised communication is how the EU is framed. The increasing conspicuousness of the EU could be a blessing or a curse for European identity. National discourses may frame the EU either as a friendly in-group or inimical other. For example, when a political party complains that the EU is ‘encroaching’ on national sovereignty, the EU is visible but nonetheless framed as the pernicious other. It is commonly accepted that identities become more salient when they are in conflict with other ones. Indeed, Kelman claims that identity constructions become more salient and exclusive when they are in conflict (Kelman, 2005:2). Similarly, as Oleart points out, the EU’s increasingly visibility may conceivably lead to heightened confrontations between member states. Indeed the likes of Mudde (2016) and Hooghe and Marks (2009) see the politicisation of EU integration as a ‘strategic tool’ for right-wing, Eurosceptic parties to mobilise national identity and provoke anti-EU sentiment (found in Oleart, 2021:41). The latter adds that politicisation could provoke conflicts between national ‘in-groups’ and EU/member state ‘out-groups’ (Ibid.,). In sum, the increasing ubiquity of EU affairs in national politics may accentuate national identity. With these insights in mind, we should be examining how national identity is juxtaposed with other territorial levels of belonging such as European identity in public discourse. Scholars have largely overlooked the question, how the increasing volume of EU-related news may affect the nature and dynamic of debates within national public spheres. Are national actors, issues and identities usurped by the increasing presence of European counterparts, or, conversely, are national channels of representation and the salience of national identity invigorated?¹⁸⁸ Until now, most scholars subscribe to the zero-sum view that the increasing volume of EU news coverage stands to benefit European actors, and issues in terms of publicity, and may even promote common frames of reference, and ipso facto deep social stuff of

¹⁸⁷ A similar argument was developed by De Wilde (2019) who hypothesises that EU coverage may serve to the strengthen the national channels of representation, and increase the salience of national identity. For ‘conflict framing’, see the paper by de Wilde *et al.*, (2014).

¹⁸⁸ Similar questions were initially posed by de Wilde (2019).

European identity. In other words, from the EU's perspective, is all publicity really good publicity? I suspect there is more than meets the eye.

Indeed, there are good reasons to doubt the EPSs transnational community-building credentials. As the likes of Trenz (2008) and de Wilde (2019) point out, the mass media are strongly embedded in national structures. The insights from media logic theory provide a compelling theoretical argument against the notion that public spheres are amenable to European community-building. By way of a quick summary, Schulz (1982) proposed four criteria which determine 'newsworthiness': valence (i.e., controversy, aggression, success, values); identification (i.e., ethnocentrism, emotions, personalisation); relevance (i.e., concern, consequence, proximity); and status (i.e., elites, leaders, de Wilde, 2019:1196). The argument goes that as the mass media mainly cater to national audiences, they can be expected to evoke national identity as it is the target audiences' most salient identity. The mass media are expected to report more on national executives given their notoriety in the public domain and elevated status and domestic actor and issues that the reader can relate to. Eurosceptic actors are also expected to receive a disproportionate level of attention because they tend to fuel controversy. In sum, the media are hardwired to evoke national identity and frame stories in ways that appeal to national audiences. De Wilde (2019) argues that these criteria should also apply to politicians given that the resonance of their political cues hinges largely on the mass media. National identity populist should be understood as a logical and successful media strategy, and political claims that lack an identitarian component contain less news value. Invoking the general 'national interest' and evoking 'national consciousness' should be interpreted as an effective political mobilising strategy. This ethnocentricity of the media has led scholars, particularly, de Wilde (2019) to speculate that the increasing media coverage of EU affairs might reinforce the national interest and saliency of national identity. He convincingly argues that media logics functions to reify the logic of 'discursive intergovernmentalism', namely, nations vying for influence, and defending 'national interests' at the expense of supranational ones. In sum, I share de Wilde's expectation that national identity will be more salient as a result of media news values (2019). Building on de Wilde's theoretical framework, I expect the mass media to militate against the congealment of an EPS and ergo European identity (de Wilde, 2019:1206).

Furthermore, political opportunity structures, in their current form, do not incentivise political actors to speak on behalf of 'Europeans' or in the name of the general 'European interest'. As de Wilde (2013) points out, representative channels connect nationally elected representatives to their respective local constituents. There is no genuine European election akin to the national electoral process because each country elects national politicians to represent national constituencies in Brussels. National executives during EU Council summit meetings represent the national interest, first and foremost. National governments and ministers may, on the odd occasion, be compelled to tailor their political cues to European audiences' but this is the exception rather than the rule. National politicians – convening in national parliaments, and vying for attention from national news outlets – frankly have little incentive

to speak on behalf of EU citizens. The institutional location and role expectations of supranational actors ensure that only they can be expected to speak in the name of ‘Europeans’ (Medrano, 2010).

Moreover, the European ‘community of communication thesis’ (a la Risse) does not square with the current political climate and sustained support for right-wing national populist parties in recent years. Indeed, scholars such as Kriesi and Grande predicted that ‘traditional-authoritarian-nationalist’ (TAN) parties would be best placed to benefit from the increasing salience of European integration (cf. Hooghe & Marks, 2018). Indeed, this ‘transnational cleavage’ theory (Kriesi, 2006; Marks et al., 2017) appears vindicated by the electoral trends in recent years. This theory, however, does not fit neatly with the public sphere scholarship. Empirically speaking, several studies have shown that national executives, but also transnational actors, are the big ‘winners’ of Europeanization in terms of visibility, agenda-setting, and so on. By the same token, the same studies demonstrate that legislative actors are the biggest ‘losers’ of Europeanization. In sum there is an incongruence between cleavage theory and political realities on the one hand, and the findings of the public sphere scholarship, on the other hand. Perhaps it is simply the case that traditional-authoritarian-nationalist (TAN) parties have performed better in the recent past for reasons unrelated to mass media coverage. Moreover, for several decades, countless Eurobarometer surveys have shown that national identity is the strongest source of territorial attachment, with no discernible trend of increasing European identity. Can the entrenchment of national identity be partially explained by how European politics is framed in the mass media? Indeed, previous research show that national frames still characterise public debates. Preliminary analyses of political and representative claims (see Pfetsch, 2004; de Wilde, 2011) reveal that the national claimants’ are the most active participants in EU-related debates, and, moreover, national constituencies are the most frequently invoked objects (see also Monza, 2017).

However, the main shortcoming of these analyses is that they tend to overestimate the extent of Europeanisation. Political claims analysis typically focus on the quantitative aspects of communication, namely, the density and distribution of claim-makers (i.e. sender) and addressees (i.e. receiver). In the political and representative claims analyses that have examined the objects of claims, there are some weaknesses with the heuristic tool of horizontal and vertical Europeanisation (a la Koopmans). Crucially, these analysis do not distinguish between what I call ‘discursive national’ claims, for example, the leader of Lega, Matteo Salvini, making a claim in the interest of ‘popolo Italiano’, and for example, the Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, iterating a statement claiming to represent both the national and European interest. Based on the Koopman’s heuristic tool, both claims would be categorised as ‘Europeanised’ claims purely based on the fact that the claim maker and the object are different from the nationality of the newspaper where the political claim is published. However, there is a crucial distinction between the former and the latter: the former is a paradigmatic case of, what I call, ‘discursive nationalism’ (i.e. defending the ‘national interest’) while the latter is a more ideal-type of Europeanised claims making (i.e. ‘discursive federalism/supranationalism’) as European

constituencies are invoked. In sum, Europeanisation should be understood as ‘Janus faced’ (see Kuhn, 2011). On the one hand, the increasing attention to EU affairs may enable the ‘opening up’ of national public spheres’ to European and supranational entrepreneurs by allowing their political cues to resonate to multiple international audiences’ (de Wilde, 2019); on the other hand, Europeanisation also provides opportunities for national actors, including the mass media, to ‘domesticate’ issues of European origin, frame EU-origin issues in the context of ‘national interests’, and show voters that they are acting in their interests. As I argued earlier, this is an effective political communication strategy because it conforms, in particular, to the newsworthiness criteria of identity and relevance.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic is an issue that has significantly impacted relationships between the EU member states, it would, moreover, be interesting to investigate patterns of news coverage before and during the ensuing crisis. Does the inevitable politicisation induced by the Covid-19 pandemic act as a centripetal force which binds the distinct national fragments together, or do national actors rally behind a national coalition of interests? On an intuitive level, I would expect the latter state of affairs as people and nations tend to revert inwards when threats, real or perceived, are anticipated. We witnessed how national governments initially confronted the Covid-19 crisis, with national leaders portraying the crisis as though it were a national one. Empirically speaking, previous studies would lend support to my expectations. Firstly, previous research shows that discourses are fluid constructs that can quickly evolve, particularly during crises (Vollmer and Karakayali, 2018). For example, the study by Koopmans (2014) compares the relatively serene period of 2000 to 2002 to the more political unstable period from 2010 to 2012 to investigate to what extent politicisation alters the discursive balance of power. The findings reveal that the nature and content of European discourses was markedly different during the euro crisis compared to regular periods. More specifically, he found that legislative actors who became more assertive in public debates and public debates became more ‘domesticated’. The intergovernmental logic was also found to be more pronounced during the euro crisis. Kriesi et al. (2014) found that, contrary to expectations, the euro crisis did not present a discursive opportunity for political parties and civil society. The debate was largely dominated by state and economic actors (save for Germany which showed a strong legislative presence in debates, cf. Koopmans 2014). In Germany, during the euro crisis, legislative actors were almost as visible as national governments, which indicates a more inclusive public sphere. In any event, national actors dominated public debates. This suggests that politicisation induced by crises can turn a European issue into a nationally oriented debate. It would be interesting to see if these results were found during the Covid-19 pandemic? Several other studies show that patterns of discourse can change during a crisis. The paper by Brantner et al. (2005) shows how a large scandal can alter the dynamics of discourses. Indeed, their work perfectly encapsulates the ‘double-edged sword’ nature of event-driven Europeanisation: on the one hand, the Haider Affair (2000) provoked a spike in levels of vertical Europeanisation, on the other hand, national self-referentiality reached its zenith. These scholars conclude that Europeanisation is mainly driven by

conflict, however, I argue that increasing communicative linkages between Austria and EU should not be conflated with Europeanised discourses, as crucially, the qualitative dimensions of Europeanisation were overlooked. The findings of Kleinen-von Königslow's paper (2010) also detected changes in patterns of discourse at the beginning of the financial crisis. She found that the patterns of increasing vertical Europeanisation ended abruptly in 2008 coinciding with the beginning of the financial crisis. The results reveal cross-country differences: in 2008, the interest in EU institutions stagnated in Germany and Poland, while in Austria, Great Britain, Denmark, and France, it decreased. The paper by Kleiner-von Königslöw (2010, see above) reveals that European 'we' references declined in 2008, which might, as the author suspects, be a result of the global financial crisis. This suggests that crises might affect patterns of political communication, although crisis dynamics have not been systematically examined by scholars to date. With these questions in mind, I wish to examine whether national self-referentiality increased during the ensuing Covid-19 pandemic? Do debates become more 'domesticated' during the pandemic, that is, do issues of a transnational origin become conflicts between domestic actors? Does the defence of the 'national interest', and in turn the intergovernmental logic become more discernible during the pandemic, as indicated by previous research? The horizontal-vertical Europeanisation heuristic tool (a la Koopmans) is useful for determining the strength of Europeanisation in discourses; however, I argue that it overestimates the level of Europeanisation. This stems from the fact that the approach is predominantly quantitative, i.e. tallying up the number of references of actors in a debate. However, the passive actor (object) of claims-making has been largely overlooked. Arguably, the object of a political claim is the most crucial element of a political claim because the target constituent represents the largest 'imagined community'. Preliminary evidence suggests that the national constituency (i.e. national interests) is the most prominent objects of claims which begs the question: how would a genuine EPS and common sense of European belonging emerge in this discursive context? Until now, a systematic enquiry exploring the communicative links between representatives (i.e. claimants) and the represented (i.e. objects) of political claims has been found wanting. I question the prevailing view that European 'communities of communication' can 'emerge through social and discursive practices' (Risse et al., 2003:15). In essence, I empirically test this thesis. I explore whether nationally 'imagined communities' discourses prevail during European debates as one would expect (a la de Wilde, 2019). If it transpires that political actors predominantly claim to represent different interests and constituencies, it is highly questionable whether a genuine EPS exists and whether a collective European identity can follow.

Preliminary Research questions¹⁸⁹

- Which identities are most frequently and most powerfully mobilised in EU public debates? Can differences be discerned between pre and during the Covid-19 pandemic?¹⁹⁰
- Who are the prominent voices leading EU debates and whose interests are/are not represented? Can differences be discerned between pre- and during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Are debates on EU affairs characterised by a national, intergovernmental or supranational logic? Can differences be discerned between pre- and during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Are the issues pervading EU debates of a national or European scope? Can differences be discerned between pre- and during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Preliminary Hypotheses

- As a result of implicit news values and nationally embedded politics, media coverage of EU affairs can be expected to be dominated by national actors that claim to defend the general ‘national interest’ particularly among right wing political party actors¹⁹¹.
- These patterns of ‘discursive nationalism’ and national self-referentiality are more pronounced in tabloid newspapers.
- The politicisation induced by the Covid-19 pandemic causes debates to become more domesticated and nationally self-referential¹⁹².

¹⁸⁹ Although these questions differ slightly from the research questions I eventually settled on (see Chap.2), I wanted to keep them in this chapter to show how my train of thought evolved during the project.

¹⁹⁰ My expectations are underpinned by media logic theory. My research questions and hypotheses build on those developed by de Wilde in his 2019 research paper titled: “*Media logic and grand theories of European integration*” (2019). As de Wilde (2019) argues, national identity and intergovernmentalism are more congruent with news values. For this reason, De Wilde (2019) expects ‘discursive intergovernmentalism’ and national interests/identities to be mobilised the most in EU public debates. However, in a departure from de Wilde, I opt for the term, ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism’ as ‘intergovernmentalism’ implies that only state actors are mobilize on national identity in debates. Although I acknowledge that state actors have a preeminent role in debates, they are not the ones.

¹⁹¹ In other words, national identity becomes more salient in debates.

¹⁹² i.e. political conflicts between domestic actors.

Appendix

Table 1.4: Cases examined and period chosen for analysis therein

Studies	Event	Start	End
Adam, 2012	EP Elections	01/05/2009	30/06/2009
Adam, 2012	Treaty of Lisbon	01/10/2009	30/12/2009
Adam, 2012	Van Rompuy appointment	01/10/2009	30/11/2009
Adam, 2012	Copenhagen Climate summit	01/12/2009	31/01/2010
Antonsich, 2008	Routine period	01/05/2005	NA
Antonsich, 2008	Routine period	01/01/2006	NA
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Dublin EU summit	25/06/1990	26/06/1990
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Maastricht EU summit	09/12/1991	10/12/1991
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Lisbon EU summit	27/06/1992	30/06/1992
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Copenhagen EU summit	21/06/1993	22/06/1993
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Corfu EU summit	24/06/1994	25/06/1994
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Danish referendum	30/05/1992	05/06/1992
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Irish referendum	15/06/1992	21/06/1992
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	French referendum	17/09/1992	13/09/1992
Barth & Bijmans, 2018	Danish referendum	14/05/1993	20/05/1993
Bennett, Lang, & Segerberg, 2014	Routine period	01/04/2010	01/06/2010
Boomgaarden, et al., 2013	EP Elections	01/06/1999	07/06/1999
Boomgaarden, et al., 2013	EP Elections	01/06/2004	07/06/2004
Boomgaarden, et al., 2013	EP Elections	01/06/2009	07/06/2009
Bossetta & Segesten, 2019	Routine period	01/01/2014	31/12/2014
Brantner et al. 2005	Routine period	01/01/1995	31/12/2004
Brüggemann, Sifft, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006	Constructed weeks	01/01/1982	31/12/1982
Brüggemann, Sifft, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006	Constructed weeks	01/01/1989	31/12/1989
Brüggemann, Sifft, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006	Constructed weeks	01/01/1996	31/12/1996
Brüggemann, Sifft, Kleinen von Königslöw, Peters, & Wimmel, 2006	Constructed weeks	01/01/2003	31/12/2003
Conrad, 2006	Routine period	01/06/2003	15/06/2003
Conrad, 2006	Routine period	15/04/2005	30/04/2005
Conrad, 2010	EU Council Meeting	01/03/2000	31/03/2000
Conrad, 2010	Constitutional Treaty debate	01/05/2005	31/05/2005
Conrad, 2010	Treaty of Lisbon debate	01/12/2007	31/12/2007
de la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016	EUSES debate	01/01/2000	31/12/2010
de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006	EU Council Meeting (Copenhagen)	01/12/2002	21/12/2002
Downey & Koenig, 2006	Berlusconi 'kapo' remark controversy	02/07/2003	NA
Gerhards & S. Schäfer, 2009	Routine period	01/01/1999	31/12/2001
Grande & Kriesi, 2014b	Euro crisis	01/12/2009	31/03/2012
Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017	Routine period	01/04/2014	01/05/2014
Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017	EP Elections	02/05/2014	31/05/2014
Grill & Boomgaarden, 2017	EP Elections Aftermath	01/06/2014	31/06/2014
Hänska & Bauchowitz, 2019	Greek bailout negotiations	01/01/2015	31/12/2015
Kantner, 2014	Routine period	01/01/1990	31/03/2006
Kleinen-von Königslöw et al., 2005; 2010; 2012	Constructed weeks	01/01/1982	31/12/1982
Kleinen-von Königslöw et al., 2005; 2010; 2012	Constructed weeks	01/01/1989	31/12/1989
Kleinen-von Königslöw et al., 2005; 2010; 2012	Constructed weeks	01/01/1996	31/12/1996
Kleinen-von Königslöw et al., 2005; 2010; 2012	Constructed weeks	01/01/2003	31/12/2003
Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010; 2012	Constructed weeks	01/01/2008	31/12/2008
Koopmans & Erbe, 2003	Routine period	01/01/2000	31/12/2000
Koopmans & Statham, 2010; 2014	Constructed weeks	01/01/1990	31/12/1990
Koopmans & Statham, 2010; 2014	Constructed weeks	01/01/1995	31/12/1995
Koopmans & Statham, 2010; 2014	Constructed weeks	01/01/2000	31/12/2002
Koopmans & Zimmermann, 2010	Routine period	01/01/2002	31/12/2003
Koopmans, 2014	The global financial crisis	01/01/2010	31/12/2012
Kriesi & Grande, 2014a	Euro crisis	01/12/2009	03/03/2012
Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Tomaszczyk, 2012	Routine period	01/01/2007	31/12/2007
Lichtenstein & Elders, 2019	Routine period	01/01/2009	31/12/2009
Medrano & Gray, 2010	Routine period	01/01/2003	31/12/2003
Monza, 2017	Euro crisis period	01/01/2008	31/12/2014
Morley & Taylor, 2012	Routine period	01/02/2007	31/04/2007
Morley & Taylor, 2012	Routine period	01/02/2009	31/04/2009
Negrine, Kejanlioglu, Aïssaoui, & Papatianassopoulos, 2008	Turkish EU membership negotiations	12/12/2004	20/12/2004
Negrine, Kejanlioglu, Aïssaoui, & Papatianassopoulos, 2008	Turkish government proposals to criminalise adultery	01/09/2004	31/10/2004
Pawley, 2017	Routine period	01/01/2010	31/12/2017
Peter & de Vreese, 2004	Routine period & EU summit	01/02/2000	31/12/2000
Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2004; 2010	Routine period	01/01/2000	31/12/2002
Schuck & de Vreese, 2006	2004 EU enlargement	01/11/2002	31/10/2003
Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000	Amsterdam EU summit	01/05/1997	20/06/1997
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	18/11/2009	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	10/12/2009	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	18/12/2009	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	12/01/2010	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	18/01/2010	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	31/01/2010	NA
Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014	Routine period	07/02/2010	NA
Statham & et al., 2005; 2007; Statham & Tresch et al., 2010	Routine period	01/01/1990	31/12/1990
Statham & et al., 2005; 2007; Statham & Tresch et al., 2010	Routine period	01/01/1995	31/12/1995
Statham & Gray, 2005; Statham & Tresch et al., 2010	Routine period	01/01/2000	31/12/2002
Thornborrow, Haarman, & Duguid, 2012	Climate change EU summit - 50th anniversary of Treaty of Rome	09/03/2007	23/03/2007
Thornborrow, Haarman, & Duguid, 2012	Financial Crisis & G20 summit	09/03/2009	23/03/2009
Trenz, 2007	Fischer speech - Nice summit	11/05/2000	31/12/2000
Triandafyllidou, 2003	Euro currency launch	30/12/2001	03/01/2002
Van Cauwenberge, Gelders, & Joris, 2009	Treaty of Lisbon debate	01/06/2007	31/12/2007
Van de Steeg, Marianne, 2006	EU sanctions against Austria	01/10/1999	31/09/2000
Vliegenthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden, de Vreese, 2008	Routine period	01/01/1990	31/12/2006
Walter, 2014	EP Elections	14/05/2009	07/06/2009
Wodak, 2018	Refugee crisis	01/04/2015	31/02/2016

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Chapter 2 – Theoretical framework

Introduction

Europeanisation was and still is widely understood as an inevitable and linear process that would lead to peoples loyalties shifting from the national to the transnational level. During the lofty optimism of the 90s in particular, many scholars expected that the increasing news coverage of EU affairs in national public spheres would foster a greater sense of European belonging, and the dramatic rise of the Internet was expected to accelerate this process of transnational community-building. However, these idealistic expectations remain popular with many scholars. Indeed, McLuhan's (1964) cliché of the 'global village' and the meta concept of 'Europeanisation of public spheres' remain two popular buzzwords among communication scholars. Nevertheless, these expectations do not square with the current electoral climate, namely the rising popularity of national populist and Eurosceptic parties, and the entrenchment of national identity. In this chapter, I lay out the case to challenge the prevailing view (laid out above) that public debates on European politics are conducive to fostering a European sense of belonging. In essence, I argue that Europeanisation is a double-edged sword to the extent that the increasing volume of news coverage may actually serve to reinforce the national and intergovernmental channels of representation and reify national identity. I build on the insights of media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) and the political opportunity structures perspective (à la Tarrow, 1994) to support my hypotheses. The former implies the enduring ethnocentricity of international news flows, and the latter reminds us that, although—on the one hand—political actors are increasingly incentivised to target political demands at the European level as a result of advancing European integration—on the other hand—political and electoral systems are still heavily embedded in national structures. In short, the output of political communication is governed by media and political logics which function to 'domesticate' foreign news and reify national identity in public discourse¹.

The ethnocentric nature of politics

Democracy is nationally structured; its organization follows national boundaries; nations, or their 'people', are the democratic actors, who are conventionally said to make their choices, and who are to be represented democratically. It is as if democracy

¹ Parts of this chapter are due to be published in: Kermer, J. E. (forthcoming). *Debating Europe and the (Re-)Nationalisation of Public Spheres? Insights from Media Logic Theory and a Political Opportunity Structures Perspective*. In *Politics of Dissent and State Response: Socio-political Change in Comparative Contexts*. Routledge.

today knows no other home, no other grounding, except national homelands... If the nation-state constitutes the grounding for political discourse, then politicians, seeking to represent the nation, must... stand in the nation's eye. (Billig, 1995:97-8)

Events are not merely plucked out of thin air. There is a domain beyond the mediated sphere – namely the political sphere – with its own immanent logic which shapes public discourse. In essence, I argue that politics is socio-culturally and institutionally embedded in national structures which explains why political actors may be expected to evoke the national consciousness in public discourse. My argument builds on Meyer's political logic perspective. The core of my argument is that the logic of politics is nationally embedded. Collective actors operate, in the main, within the parameters emanating from nationally embedded rules and de jure representative channels (polity). Collective actors must identify practical solutions that benefit the 'national interest' (policy) and justify these decisions by appealing to the national electorate. In other words, politicians focus their attention on national voters to legitimize their decisions. In short, the polity, policies and political processes remain anchored to the nation state. And EU integration has only altered this dynamic to a modest but largely insignificant degree. Meyer (2002) was, to my knowledge, the first scholar to coin the term political logic. What is the logic of the political and why is it relevant to my dependant variable discursive nationalism?

Polity

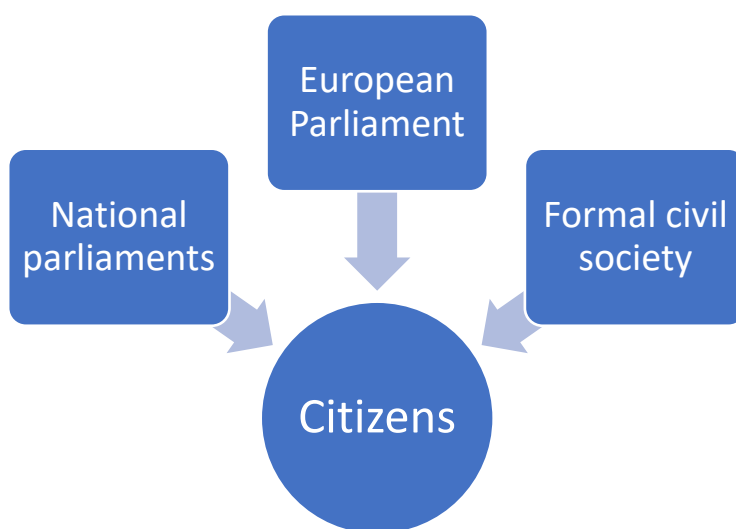
Political logic is a helpful heuristic tool enabling us to better understand how politics works: how does politics function? How is politics structured? What form does it take? What are the rules underpinning a political order, so on and so forth. Meyer was the first scholar – to my knowledge – to coin the term, political logic (Meyer, 2002). Political logic may be reduced to polity, policy, and processes. Polity entails the constitutive elements of politics, policy entails the substantive elements of politics, and political processes entail the procedural elements of politics. I will now explore each of these dimensions in more detail, while, at the same time, underlining how the logic of the political strengthens the national modus operandi despite the increasing pertinence of the EU in policy making. My theoretical framework builds on Meyer's political logic thesis. In short, polity denotes the form and structure of a political entity (Merriam Webster). The concept's intensional definition consists of norms and rules, political cultures and other constitutive elements of a political order (Meyer, 2002:11). The polity is an entity wherein power and authority are organised through institutions, rules, conventions, and socio-cultural norms. Despite EU integration and the pooling and sharing of sovereignty which this has engendered, politics still functions within the Westphalian national institutional framework. The EU is a multi-level polity in its own right which nonetheless plays second fiddle to the nation state

institutional order. Multi-level governance within the EU implies the interdependence of several polities with the diffusion of power at the local, national, and supranational level². However, the EU functions mainly according to an intergovernmental logic. For example, representative channels are overwhelmingly national. Members of national parliaments represent their (sub-)national constituents, and national executives represent national constituents. The same applies at the EU level. MEPS represent, first and foremost, their national constituencies. The excerpt from the EU parliament website reinforces the mandate of European parliamentarians: “MEPs are your elected representatives in the EU, and they represent your interests and those of your city or region in Europe. They listen to people with local and national concerns, interest groups and businesses. They can question and lobby the Commission and the Council of Ministers” (europarl.eu, italics added for emphasis). MEPs may thus be expected to frame their cues to appeal to their local and national constituents accordingly. MEPs must give the impression that they are fighting for ‘the national interest’ as they are formally accountable to national citizens. They are voted in by them after all. It is also important to remember that MEPs are members of national parties. Although MEPs are also representatives of transnational party groups, their political careers hinge ultimately on their popularity in the eyes of the national electorate. MEPs occupy a “Cerberus” triple-cap role as representatives, first and foremost, of their nation or local region, secondly, as members of national parties, and lastly, as representatives of transnational party alliances. It is also striking to note that around a third of MEPs previously held national parliamentary mandates or national ministerial positions. MEPs are thus hardwired to defend ‘the national interest’. Needless to say that members of national parliaments represent their local constituencies. MPs are sworn in under a national oath of allegiance. All UK MPs bear true allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen; Dutch MP’s swear allegiance to King Willem-Alexander; and in a more republic tradition, French members of L’Assemblée Nationale and German members of the Bundestag swear allegiance to the French and German Constitution respectively. Elected representatives are thus formally bound by national rules and norms. This is but one example of a myriad of rules and conventions emanating from the national constitution. In spite of advancing EU integration, national structures still prevail. The EU polity is gaining impetus but is perennially in the shadow of institutional structures residing at the national level. Naturally, government executives represent their own member states which is played out in soap opera of EU council summits. Even supranational institutions operate

² The EU is described as a form of ‘multi-level governance’ with supranational institutions comprising the political centre and national institutions comprising the periphery (Hooghe & Marks, 2001). Multi-level governance denotes “policymaking as multi-level, with power spread horizontally between governmental and non-governmental actors, and vertically between many levels of government” (Cairney, 2019, para.2.2). The EU is a paradigmatic case of multi-level governance – the EU is comprised of 27 member states that are themselves divided into *lander* (in the case of Germany) or *régions* (in the case of France). The political units of the EU can be disaggregated into smaller politico-administrative units. The EU is the largest unit which can be understood as the *meta* level of the polity. Member states represent the *meso* level of the EU polity, and local and regional administrative bodies represent the *micro* level. France may be divided into 18 *régions* which may be divided into 101 *départements* which may be further divided into *arrondissements*, and 2054 *cantons*. For the purposes of the EU parliamentary elections, France is divided into eight large constituencies and elected French MEP’s formally represent these eight large constituencies. For example, the ‘Île-de-France’ constituency – centred in the *Région Parisienne* – is composed of 14 MEPs. Although these *départements*, *arrondissements* and *cantons* cannot directly influence EU policy-making, they do influence political decisions in France and thus EU policy-making indirectly speaking.

under a national and intergovernmental logic. For example, the EU Council is composed of national heads of state and the Council of Ministers is composed of national ministers³. In sum, the EU's representative channels may extend to Brussels and Strasbourg, but they are concentrated at the national level. Crudely put, representatives (governors) manifest at three territorial levels; the local, national, and supranational level. However, the represented (governed) overwhelmingly reside at the national level with the exception of the EU Commission which de jure represents EU citizens on the international stage. Only the latter may be expected to frame politics as a common European endeavour⁴.

Figure 2.1: Main representative channels in EU decision-making



As de Wilde points out, citizens are represented in EU decision-making via three channels (2013:281). Firstly, citizens delegate political authority to representatives whom they choose – via national elections – to represent them in national parliaments. National parliamentarians, as part of their mandate, are entrusted to hold national governments to account. National executives are accountable to the national citizenry and thus expected to deliver results (i.e. output legitimacy) that safeguard ‘the national interest’. The enduring authority of national governments ultimately hinges on their perceived performance and responsiveness in the eyes of the national citizenry.

Concerning the EU level, formally speaking, the Council of Ministers and the EU Council are supranational institutions. In essence, however, these bodies function according to an

³ Representative channels predominantly flow back to the national level. As the TFEU stipulates, national citizens are directly represented in the European Parliament, and member states are both represented “in the European Council by their heads of state or government...in the Council of the EU by their governments [who are] themselves democratically accountable either to their national Parliaments, or to their citizens” (europa.eu, n.d.)

⁴ Alas, Zielonka argues that the European Council cannot move from negotiation to collective problem-solving because each member state focusses on its own narrow national interests in a zero-sum game. (Zielonka, 1998:82, cited in Kermer, 2019:7). The pre-eminence of the EU council reduces EU policy-making to inter-state bargaining wherein member states vie for influence to promote their own narrow set of values and safeguard their national interests.

‘intergovernmental logic’ as national governments use these institutions to further the interests of their own citizens (de Wilde, 2019). National citizens are represented by regionally designated MEPs in the European Parliament. Citizens from different member states choose who they wish to represent them in the quintennial ‘European elections’⁵. MEPs represent their local and national citizens, foremost, with national party membership playing second fiddle. And MEPs membership in transnational party groups are the only channels of representation that transcend the ‘national container’. However, their *de jure* political authority is ultimately secured by accruing votes from national citizens via elections. Formal civil society organisations and interests groups represent the third channel of representation for citizens. However, as Kriesi and Jochum demonstrate, civil society is embedded in a national *modus operandi*, that is, civil society organisations and interest groups mainly access domestic channels to influence EU policy-making due to limited financial and informational resources (2010:243)⁶. Civil society actors, in essence, must convince *de jure* political actors – whose interests are orientated to the nation – how their initiatives would benefit the interests of their national constituents. Otherwise their pitches are likely to fall on deaf ears. Crudely put, Italian interests groups habitually lobby Rome to persuade Brussels. In short, the institutional make-up of the EU and the *modus operandi* of EU policymaking invigorates national representative channels. The EU Commission is the sole EU institution that is explicitly dutybound to represent the interests of EU citizens (European Commission, n.d.). But, even so, the representative link between EU citizens and EU commissioners is a tenuous one as EU commissioners are not directly elected by citizens unlike national parliamentarians and MEPs. National executives are accountable to their national legislatures and citizenry, first and foremost. Indeed, there is mounting evidence that the EU still functions according to an intergovernmental logic. For instance, member states still have a decisive role in EU policy making via the power of veto (i.e. unanimity). Intergovernmentalism confers significant power to national heads of states whom are directly accountable to national citizens via periodic elections (Pierson, 1996). The enduring power of national governments hinges on electoral success. With that in mind, it is not surprising that national executives apply high-discount rates to long-term effects of policy decisions. Put bluntly, the nature of electoral competition incentivises posturing, short-sightedness, and prioritising national policy preferences at the expense of the long-term collective interests of the Union. National governments are unlikely to benefit electorally speaking from any net benefits of policy decisions for the Union as a whole. National governments are more likely to benefit electorally when policy decisions are perceived to benefit the ‘the nation’. There is, moreover, a strong case to be made that the mediated public sphere enhances the intergovernmental logic of EU policymaking. As de Wilde (2019) argues, the perceived influence of national governments is manipulated by the media who shine the spotlight on well-known political figures and seize on any conflicts between them to make a story more newsworthy. Indeed,

⁵ I have put this word in inverted commas because they are akin to ‘second-order’ national elections.

⁶ In other words, consultative and lobbying practices are concentrated at the national level.

several scholars expect the EU Council⁷ to receive a disproportionately high amount of news coverage compared to other EU bodies because EU summits are newsworthy. EU council summits tend to involve well-known political figures and charismatic personalities debating highly contentious issues where the stakes are high. In a nutshell, as a result of news values, the media are likely to portray the EU as a predominantly intergovernmental organisation.

Policy

Meyer defines policy as “the effort to find solutions for politically defined problems by means of programs for action, which identify and apply the means that seem best suited to handle them. As a rule, interests and values shape our ideas about the appropriate solutions to problems and give us a way to choose a preferred alternative from among the many possibilities” (Meyer, 2002:12). This begs the question: to whom should these solutions and programs of action be sought? As I argued previously, most political actors – as formal representatives of national constituencies – are incentivised to find solutions and programs of action that benefit national constituencies. They will, thus, frame their cues accordingly so that they can be seen to be ‘fighting’ for the interests of their constituents. We may thus expect deictic references to invoke national objects, for example, ‘Italian workers’, ‘Dutch farmers’, ‘Spanish citizens’, and so on. Political actors may be expected to frame their claims – as part of their role expectation and identity orientation – to give the semblance of defending the ‘national interest’. This, I argue, is one of the rhetorical devices used by politicians to legitimise their policy proposals. The main source of legitimacy is the approval of national citizens for a program of action. As Meyer adds, interests and ideas shape what political actors deem to be the most appropriate course of action. This begs the question: what are the interests of political actors? There are, broadly speaking, two different types of interests that political actors have in mind: vested interests and general interests. The former refers to a narrow set of interests pertaining to their own milieu or social group. And the latter designates interests pertaining to a larger, more abstract, social unit, typically, ‘the nation’. The former is a more sinister, Machiavellian perspective of political actors, whereas the latter interprets the political actor – in a more righteous, benevolent light – as a public servant who is interested in safeguarding the interests of ‘society’. Politicians probably fall somewhere between these two extremes: some will use cunning strategies to maintain their firm grip on power (i.e. vested interests). We would hope, however, that most political actors are driven by a sense of public duty with a genuine interest in bettering society (i.e. general interest). The latter is virtually synonymous with ‘the national interest’. When politicians speak in the name of ‘the common good’ or ‘societal interest’, they are almost always referring to their

⁷ The European Council is composed of 27 heads of state each of whom govern in unique national contexts which vary according to different electoral schedules, constitutional arrangements, parliamentary structures, socio-economic circumstances, party manifestos, and budgetary conditions, among other things (Kermer, 2019).

own nation⁸. Moreover, as Meyer argues, values shape programs of action. But every nation has its own repertoire of idiosyncratic values. Granted, values differ within nations, however, Europe is far more heterogenous in this regard. Although it may be true that ‘there is more that unites us [Europe] than divides us’ – in regard to shared European values – the nation state has the upper hand in this respect as common values, norms, and customs have had centuries to take root.

Political processes

The third dimension of political logic identified by Meyer is political processes. Politics is not merely about form (polity) or content (policy) but procedure (political processes). To satisfy the normative standards of deliberative democracy, we are interested not only in the end (output-legitimacy) but the means through which policies and decisions are reached (throughput-legitimacy). In essence, the political process is about questions of legitimacy. In the words of Meyer, political processes entail “the effort to gain official acceptance of one’s chosen program of action...try[ing] to make them appear legitimate by citing convincing reasons for adopting them” (Meyer, 2002:12). Political actors may justify their decisions in a myriad of ways, one of which is via the process of argumentation and deliberation within institutionalised fora of the political sphere. Political actors must persuade a broad coalition of different groups ranging from their parliamentary colleagues to the general public. In politics, no (wo)man is an island. Political actors depend on a coalition of the willing to legislate (ex-ante) without confronting resistance and legitimise (ex post) decisions already made. As part of the workings of Western democracy, politicians must pursue strategies of consensus-building, work in the spirit of compromise, and drum up majority support for their programs. A similar logic applies to civil society actors and interest groups who must lobby decision-makers for their policy proposals. Alternatively or correspondingly, actors may rely on publicity in the mediated sphere to persuade the general public of their proposed solutions. This begs the question: to whom must political actors convince to justify their mandate: politicians and citizens on the home front or those beyond the nation state? As I mentioned beforehand, the formal representative and accountability channels impel political actors to focus their political resources on the home front rather than Brussels⁹. The chains of representativeness and accountability are entwined to the nation: citizens are represented by national

⁸ Billig (1995) lucidly argues this point in his exposition of *Banal Nationalism*.

⁹ It can be reasonably argued that the domestic political climate has had a strong influence on decision-making at the EU level. The then-British PM, David Cameron vetoed the Fiscal Compact Treaty of December 2011 because he did not wish to be seen as ‘capitulating’ to the EU’s demands. I suspect this is because Cameron was only one year into his first term as Prime Minister, and he was therefore keen to take a hard line. Similarly, the Czech Republic abstained from the Fiscal Compact Treaty as 2012 was a decisive year in the domestic political calendar (the Senate and regional elections were being held later on the same year) for the ruling Civil Democratic Party. Germany was probably a reticent actor during the Libyan Crisis because there were ‘Lander’ elections looming. And Merkel probably did not wish to be embroiled in an unpopular military intervention (Koenig, 2014). By contrast, Sarkozy’s government were probably more assertive because they were keen to win the support of the sizeable North-African community in French while exhibiting France’s military prowess. (Koenig, 2014; see also Fabbrini, 2014b:185). N.B: this footnote has been partially taken from an earlier paper I wrote in 2019 (unpublished).

governments which implies that they are accountable to them. But national governments also represent and are accountable to national parliaments whom represent and are themselves accountable to their respective local constituencies. Even in EU policy-making, the Italian Prime Minister, Mario Draghi, must persuade both domestic strong and general publics. He and his government are tasked with drumming up support (i.e. will formation) for the EU Recovery Fund – not in Las Cortes Generales, but in La Camera dei Deputati. In a similar vein, Draghi must justify decisions by persuading ‘i cittadini italiani’ and not ‘los ciudadanos espanoles’ about the purported appropriate course of action (i.e. opinion formation). Political actors may thus be expected to tailor their frames accordingly in order to give the impression that they are defending national interests. Behind closed doors, political actors may be more inclined to negotiate with key power holders in Brussels guided by the hard logic of realpolitik. In the public domain, however, political actors must convince the general public of their course of action. This implies framing political demands accordingly to improve the prospect that a political cue resonate with audiences and ergo voters. In essence, the political process concerns questions about legitimacy. Political actors are relentlessly vying for support of their programs and seeking justifications for their claims to authority. Again, this begs the question: how – and at which level of the EU’s polyarchic, multilevel governance – may legitimacy be obtained? The next few pages sets out the main sources of legitimacy whilst emphasising its embeddedness in national structures.

Legitimacy

Majone defines legitimacy as “the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that its institutions are capable of resolving the major problems facing society.”¹⁰ (Majone, 2009:44). The principal source of legitimacy derives from elections. Candidates present their manifestos and voters choose accordingly. Elected representatives are then bound by a mandate which is essentially a legitimated manifesto. In essence, a manifesto outlines the policies a political party would implement if elected, and a mandate is an order by the electorate to deliver on these manifesto pledges. Broadly speaking, decisions made by the national government are legitimate on the condition that they accord with the ‘winning’ manifesto¹¹. However, another important but often overlooked locus of legitimacy is the public sphere¹². Indeed, legitimacy and the public sphere are inextricably linked. Trezn (2008)

¹⁰ Majone builds on the definition provided by Martin Lipset (1963:65-68).

¹¹ Tarrow (2001) rightly argues that elections are not the only source of legitimacy. Legitimacy may also be obtained by providing a public platform for non-state actors (e.g. social movements organisations, informal civil society, and interest groups) to communicate their policy preferences or grievances, for example, via protest, lobbying, or citizen initiatives in the public sphere (Tarrow, 2001, found in Statham, 2010: 284). Scharpf tersely labels this understanding of legitimacy as “input legitimacy” (Scharpf, 1999).

¹² The public sphere enables opportunities for non-elected actors to obtain political legitimacy. An actor’s enduring visibility and resonance in the public sphere is a tacit acceptance that the actor’s voice is legitimate. For example, Greta Thunberg is an unelected but nevertheless *de facto* representative, having effectively become the face of the climate change movement. She has become a ‘household name’ of the movement despite not being formally elected. Needless to say that many of her opponents see her activism as illegitimate because she is not

defines the EPS as a “communicative infrastructure used for the debating legitimacy” (2008:1). Elections are not the only means through which representatives and their mandates are legitimated. Visibility and resonance in the mediated public sphere offer alternative and arguably more lucrative sources of legitimacy¹³. Put another way, legitimacy may be accrued through two means: via periodic elections or steadfast media coverage in the public sphere (Rehfeld, 2006; found in de Wilde, 2011). As de Wilde argues, an actor’s visibility and resonance in the mass media is a tacit acceptance both by the journalist and the reader that their authority is legitimate. Legitimacy via the public sphere opens the revolving door to de facto representatives to enter the foray of politics. Greta Thunberg immediately comes to mind. She receives ample news coverage and has become virtually synonymous with the climate change movement despite not having any de jure political authority. If representatives are not able to draw media attention, their role is effectively de-legitimated. As several scholars have argued, notably Hans-Jörg Trenz, the mass media are wedded to national structures which in turn has repercussions for the modus operandi of politics¹⁴. As the nation-oriented mass media are axiomatic to legitimacy, political actors are incentivised to conduct politics in a way that conform to the logic of the media. Some scholars, notably Meyer (2002) and de Wilde (2019) even argue that political actors internalise media logics which conditions how they act in the public domain. In other words, politicians, before public interventions, will implicitly ask themselves how their cues will play out in the mass media (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999: 214; cited in de Wilde, 2019:1196). Political processes are, thus, partially governed by media logics, which are immanently ethnocentric. We, therefore, have a vicious cycle. In sum, national mediated public spheres provide fundamental sources of legitimacy for political actors. In the era of mediated politics, the mass media are key gateways for political actors to obtain publicity and ergo legitimacy on a far-reaching scale beyond the ‘national container’¹⁵ (Koopmans & Statham, 2010:46). However, the logic of the mass media implies that journalists present stories with a national focus for example by giving more coverage to domestic actors. The mass media, in essence, render domestic actors more legitimate by granting them more media coverage compared to transnational actors. As the logic of the media becomes more conspicuous, political actors will continue to vie for the mass media’s attention with news values at the forefront of their minds¹⁶. This dynamic increases the likelihood that actors employ national frames of reference and ‘re-produce’ the nationally imagined community as they vie both for the vote of the national electorate and attention of journalists

an elected representative. But this is an overly restrictive interpretation of legitimacy. The bottom line is that there are many sources of legitimacy beyond periodic elections.

¹³ Nigel Farage had a profound impact on British politics despite his party only ever winning one seat in the House of Commons. His political influence was arguably obtained due to the abundant publicity he received in the predominantly Eurosceptic British press.

¹⁴ This is why it is important to analyse the logic of politics and the media simultaneously.

¹⁵ The mass media can be thought of as the bridge which connects civil society to EU politics. Civil society obtains information about EU politics almost exclusively via the mass media. If political actors cannot attract publicity, their influence wanes, and so too does their legitimacy. The old adage, ‘adapt or perish’ is particularly relevant to political actors who must adapt to the process of mediated politics – and the logic of the media – to increase the prospect of gaining publicity or fade into obscurity.

¹⁶ National actors are likely to receive more media coverage which in turn increases the prospect that they would be accepted by the audience as legitimate.

in the mass media. This toing and froing between political and media logics maintains ‘the nations’ monopoly on communicative power – despite weakening administrative power as a result of advancing EU integration. In short, politics manifests in the public sphere which is bounded to national structures.

Several scholars underline the centrality of the public sphere for enhancing legitimacy. Domestic intermediary organisations – particularly the national popular press and public TV broadcasting – are the most effective means for acquiring publicity due to their significant audience reach. The resonance of a political cue in the mass media is crucial for opinion formation¹⁷. Legitimacy is cultivated both at the level where decisions are made (administrative power) and discussed (communicative power). However, according to Conrad (2010) there is an incongruence between administrative and communicative power. Decisions are made at both the national and supranational level, however, decisions are discussed, and opinions are formed at the national level. This is, in his view, the root cause of the EU’s legitimacy deficit. As the most influential political actors namely national governments and parliamentarians make most of their decisions at the domestic level, they are compelled to communicate at the level where these decisions are made. Indeed, the media provide a legitimacy function by affording actors and their policy initiatives visibility and resonance in the public sphere (Koopmans and Erbe, 2003). The stage provided by the media enables political actors to drum up support for their manifestos (Monza, 2017). As we know from a rich body of research, domestic actors receive the most media coverage which strengthens their claims to legitimacy. The nationally embedded mass media also provide an accountability and participatory function; citizens’ opinions about European institutions are formed via the mass media, and participation of citizens in EU policy making requires that they are informed in the first place, with national media organisations the main resource for citizens to acquire information. Policies are legitimized via an enduring process of free and rational debate predominantly at the locus of the mass-mediated national public sphere. Legitimacy stems from deliberation in the public sphere (Eriksen, 2007). Political actors are required to garner support for their programs via communicative means in the public sphere (Eriksen, 2007). The mass media are the cornerstone for obtaining publicity¹⁸. This implies that they must conform to media logics to increase the chances of publicity. The public sphere is also an important source of input legitimacy, enabling citizens and civil society organizations to “voice” their policy preferences or grievances. For practical and logistical reasons, however, civil society actors may be expected to employ domestic channels of action because they speak the same language and the transaction costs of consulting and lobbying at the domestic level are lower than recourse to EU institutions (see Kriesi & Jochum, 2010). The public sphere provides a space for citizens to shape and voice their opinions (Trenz & Michailidou, 2014). As a result of the

¹⁷ Public opinion formation denotes “the spectrum of opinions expressed, and the justifications delivered” (Schneider et al., 2007, cited in Trenz et al., 2014: 482)

¹⁸ “Legitimacy is mainly shaped through the news media frames of political processes and events and through visibility filters that news media apply on competing arguments and justifications put forward by government or by oppositional parties. There is, in short, no EU polity legitimation without the news media” (Trenz & Michailidou, 2014: 477).

increasing politicisation of EU integration, and the fact that the EU can no longer rely on the output legitimacy engendered by stable and sustained economic growth,¹⁹ policy-making behind closed doors may no longer suffice. In the words of Eriksen and Fossum, now, more than ever, “decision-makers are compelled to enter the public arena in order to justify their decisions and to gain support” (Eriksen, 2007:25).

Moreover, the lack of a common European identity helps us to explain why the nation state has a monopoly on legitimacy claims. As several scholars argue, identity is axiomatic to legitimacy²⁰. In the words of Michael Bruter, “without identity, it seems that there can be no true, durable, legitimacy attached to a political entity, no conscious acceptance of the power of the State and of its monopolistic right to use legitimate coercion.” (Bruter, 2005:2). Decisions by ingroups are self-evidently more legitimate than outgroups. Appealing to national identity has a quasi-automatic legitimising function. Justifying claims with reference to “the national interest” are akin to claims to authority by divine right prior to the age of modernity wherein claims to power were ineluctable because authority was bestowed by the God²¹. Today, national identity confers a self-legitimising force in an analogous way. Decisions made by compatriots perceived to be more legitimate than decisions made in Brussels. And political actors are fully cognizant of the mobilising appeal that national identity holds. Legitimacy is self-evident when the perceived identity of governors and the governed are congruent. Few questions are posed. Elected officials are entrusted to represent ‘my nation’ because they share the same national identity which is a source of legitimacy in itself. In short, claiming to act in the interest of ‘the nation’ is self-evidently legitimate. A European sense of belonging helps foster feelings of trust and loyalty in European governance. The ruled are more likely to respect authority when a common identity with rulers is shared. To illustrate the legitimising power of identity, imagine a situation in which Danish parliamentarians are represented in the Bundestag. Why are they likely to reject this hypothetical political arrangement? They would be fully represented in proportion to population size in the same way that the German Green Party is represented as a proportional share of total votes in the German Bundestag. Danish parliamentarians would, nevertheless, be dissatisfied not because they are condemned to permanent minority status but because the ‘Germans’ would invariably rule the ‘Danes’. That is to say that minority rule is not a problem per se on the condition that identities between governors and the governed are congruent (Weiler, 1995). Why do German Greens accept the decisions of the Bundestag while being condemned to permanent minority status? Because there is, nonetheless, a feeling of loyalty and solidarity among compatriots that is in short supply for ‘foreigners’. Identity is

¹⁹ As was the case during the ‘*Les Trente Glorieuses*’ period following the end of the Second World War.

²⁰ Indeed, several scholars notably Zürn (2000) and Scharpf (1999) argue that a common European identity or European demos would resolve the EU’s legitimacy problem.

²¹ Descendants to the throne were legitimate because they were descendants of kings and queens who were endowed with the divine right to rule by the Lord Our God. National identity works in a similar way to divine law or traditional authority when the Roman emperors posed for the masses. Identity works in a similar way – legitimacy is unquestionable and unwavering when the identity of the *ruler* and the *ruled* is congruent.

the social glue that engenders feelings of trust which are axiomatic to legitimacy. And trust is in abundance when people feel a sense of being part of the same group.

Accountability

In a similar vein, the chains of accountability are anchored to national structures. Accountability, in a nutshell, is the obligation to explain, justify and take responsibility for one's actions. The nation-oriented channels of representation, both formal and informal, logically imply accountability that is nationally bound. Representatives may be conferred hard power as prescribed by a given constitution and/or obtain soft power as a result of its deliberative influence in the public sphere. The power and influence of elected representatives demands that they explain, justify and take responsibility for their actions (viz. accountability). The latter is axiomatic to the political process. In the main, nation state structures hold both national and European policy-makers to account. And this is the case for EU politics as well. As Schlesinger (1999) argues, genuinely transnational media outlets represent a negligible share of the overall media market, and so-called transnational media outlets are heavily Anglocentric in outlook. The Financial Times and The Economist immediately come to mind. National parliamentarians and national governments including their supranational counterparts are held to account by the nation-bounded mass media, national civil society organisations and interest groups, and social movements (Kriesi and Jochum, 2010). Civic action, organised on a supranational level, is an exception rather than the norm²². MEPs represent their local and national constituents which implies they are answerable to them. The function of the mass media, normatively speaking, is to monitor governance, whether on a national or supranational level. Whether they fulfil this function is debatable as objective scrutiny is susceptible to the mass medias ideological distortions and institutional cultures (e.g. Eurosceptic editorial lines). In addition, MEPs must generally follow party lines from party manifestoes negotiated at the domestic level. The political process, even in EU politics, is wedded to a national modus operandi. The main source of legitimacy derives from national institutions – the national press, civil society, and so on. As a result, legitimacy is sought at the national level. Politicians appeal to national constituents to justify their policy solutions. They must frame their claims accordingly to mobilise their target voters. People, as citizens of their member states, hold national governments to account via elections and civic action organised on the national level. Citizens' lack of awareness about the European Citizens Initiative is emblematic of Europe's under-developed civil society. The national press, moreover, hold national governments to account and international bodies to a lesser degree²³. National parliaments hold national governments to account, who are chiefly accountable to their constituents that elected them to

²² Accountability – both formal and informal – resides predominantly at the national level.

²³ Accountability stems from national intermediary institutions.

office. In short, formal channels of accountability are guaranteed by national structures, and political processes, most importantly, the deliberative mechanisms in the public sphere manifest at the national level²⁴. This begs the question: answerable to whom? In short, national parliaments, national governments, and even MEPs are ultimately answerable to their national constituents. The European Commission is the only institution that officially represents and is accountable to EU citizens. We may, thus, expect the discursively imagined community of ‘the nation’ to prevail over references to ‘Europe’ or the ‘EU’.

The polity formally establishes who governs and whose interests are represented. The delineation of power configurations are determined by the architectonics of the polity, that is, the rules, conventions, political norms and cultures embodying an organised social unit of power relations, i.e. the constitutional elements of politics. The polity sets out the terms and conditions of the social contract between rulers and the ruled. It is more normative in nature, determining how the political rules of the game should be conducted. However, in reality, informal political processes may override the formal rules of the game. Nowhere was this more evident than during the Brexit Referendum. There was nothing in the conventions – accumulated over time thus comprising the UK’s unwritten constitution – to suggest that a democratic plebiscite was legally binding, yet the UK Government effectively made an oath with the British people to deliver on the outcome of the referendum. The Government was bound – of their own making – not by any law but a promise made with the British people. Leaflets were sent to every household in the UK stating: “The referendum on 23rd June is your chance to choose if we should remain in or leave the European Union”. Nothing in the leaflet implied that the vote was merely advisory. In effect, political processes superseded UK laws and conventions. This unprecedented move revealed the elasticity of the UK constitution and its lack of legal certainty, and how political processes, deliberative covenants, may trump UK conventions.

Policy concerns the what and to whom of politics, whereas political processes concern the why and to whom decisions must be justified. Political processes concern the procedural aspects of politics, that is, the informal modus operandi of politics. Procedure concerns how politics functions in practice. As I argued beforehand, the primary mechanisms for shoring up legitimacy mainly operate within nationally bounded public spheres, and these dimensions are interwoven and mutually reinforcing. Naturally, the formal rules of the game condition the modus operandi of political processes. Policies come to fruition as a result of deliberation among decision-makers (i.e. strong publics) in institutionalised fora, and civil society (i.e. general publics) at the periphery of the political system. Events are not plucked out of thin air. Political goings-on manifest irrespective of whether or not the media report them. That is to say that there is a political domain with its own immanent logic beyond the mediated sphere which determines how politics functions. Policies and political processes are governed by the parameters established by

²⁴ Through public television broadcasting and the popular press.

the polity and vice-versa particularly in the case of the UK with conventions constantly evolving due to evolving political circumstances. National citizens delegated authority to elected representatives – via the ballot box – whom are bound thereafter by a mandate to carry out their demands. In the ‘social contract’ of democratic governance, rulers are bound by terms and conditions engendered by the constitution and party manifestoes to a lesser extent in order to safeguard the interests of the ruled. In addition, principal power holders are answerable to national parliaments whom are accountable to their fellow national constituents. The informal levers of accountability are powerful, nationally bound media juggernauts such as newspaper organisations and public broadcasting news stations. Power holders are impelled to take the stand in front of a jury of journalists and testifying to them on a regular basis to justify their decisions. Although there are media outlets of a transnational equivalent, their audience share is negligible compared to national media organisations (Schlesinger, 1999). The latter plays a devil’s advocate role in politics. The mass media are one of the crucial surveillance mechanisms in Western democracy including EU politics. If, as Walter et al. (2004:3) argues, accountability “assures that responsibilities can be assigned to political actions”, this begs the question: How may we, as citizens, assign responsibility to actors and their actions without ever directly meeting them? This is when the role of the media becomes decisive. Responsibilities cannot be assigned to political actors and their actions without the hawk-eyed surveillance function assured by the mass media. The mass media keep tabs on the actions of political actors, scrutinizing or praising them where necessary. The mass media fulfil a democratic function of providing information to citizens so that they are able to form opinions about policy preferences and make informed judgments on whom they regard as fit for office.

As Trenz (2014) argues, the mass media are the cornerstone to public legitimation, and supranational actors should welcome the increasing publicity and scrutiny of EU actors, and policies resulting from politicisation. In the EU’s polyarchic, multilevel system of governance, it is important that there are several channels for citizens to engage and participate in EU policy making. A sine qua non for engagement in politics is information which predominantly derives from media organisations. Building on the words of Koopmans and Erbe, even “European policy-makers depend for their information about the desires and concerns of the citizenry on the communicative channels of the [nationally structured] mass media” (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003:1-2). Starved of information, citizens are unable to make informed decisions. We may also reasonably argue that citizens deprived of information may resort to misinformation spread through hearsay or unreliable sources²⁵. If, as Francis Bacon claimed that “*ipsa scientia potentia est*” (i.e. knowledge is power), we may extend this adage to political participation. Indeed, several studies show that political knowledge has a positive effect on electoral turnout (Larcinese, 2007). The same work also demonstrates that the mass media play an integral role in

²⁵ Remarkably, the second most popular search item on *Google* on the day after the referendum was: *What is the EU?* which is emblematic of the lack of information and understanding that British citizens have for EU politics.

increasing voters' knowledge of political issues. This study suggest that the mass media may influence voter turnout albeit only indirectly. The domestication of contention is due to the fact that democracy is still structured nationally (Lahusen, 2013). Elected representatives represent and are thus accountable to national citizens who entrusted them with political authority. The nation state is seen as more legitimate in the eyes of its citizens compared to the European Union because national identities have had decades if not centuries to crystallise. As I argued beforehand, national identity elicits a quasi-divine source of legitimacy. Majoritarian decisions from nationally elected governments are legitimate because they are voted into power by national voters sharing the same national identity. By contrast, decisions taken by policy makers in Brussels (e.g. QMV in the EU Parliament) are perceived as less legitimate because they are made by actors considered 'foreign' and decisions may be incongruent with the interests of the national majority. The EU's democratic problems derive from the fact that many EU policies are made by non-majoritarian institutions, and decisions may be counter-majoritarian or clash with national interests which may also be perceived as an affront on one's national identity. The central problem for the EU is that there is no direct democratic link in terms of representativeness, accountability and legitimacy between rulers (i.e. supranational policy makers) and the ruled (i.e. national citizens).

As far as EU accountability is concerned, European heads of state in the European Council are solely accountable to their national parliaments with the European Parliament having a negligible role. One scholar refers to this problem as the "joint-decision trap" (Scharpf, 1988). Despite legitimation at the domestic level, national heads of state in intergovernmental institutions are not formally legitimated to take decisions with Union-wide effects. Although European Council decisions have Union-wide effects, the European Parliament which is supposed to represent EU citizens has been marginalised. National parliaments are supposed to legitimise intergovernmental decision-making through a national system of checks and balances vis-à-vis the European Council. In reality, however, national parliaments neither possess the resources nor the formal powers to do so. For example, the Dutch Parliament formally represents Dutch citizens (not European citizens) and is responsible for holding the Dutch Prime Minister to account (not the German Bundeskanzler or the Italian PM in the European Council). Furthermore, the German government is only accountable to the Bundestag and German electorate, not the EU in general nor the EU member states in particular (Hayward, 2012:79). Consequently, when member state governments sought Germany to foot the bill during the Euro zone crisis, the German Bundestag and German Court intervened to provide a further system of checks and balances (Kermer, 2019). Furthermore, European heads of state comprising the EU Council are not accountable to Brussels in the same way that they are to their national parliaments and national voters. The fate of a politician's career is ultimately determined by national voters. They thus tend to approach policy through the prism of short-sighted, national interests (Devuyst, 2012). The Ex-President Sarkozy sums up the shortcomings of the European Council: "I would remind those who are watching Europe that there are

twenty-seven countries here, and that it is not easy to give those twenty-seven countries the same policy at the same time when any country could be subject to electoral pressures – because we do not all have elections on the same day...everyone understands that upcoming electoral campaigns are not exactly conducive to obtaining consensus” (cited in Devuyst, 2012:342).

Responsibility

Another integral dimension of democracy is responsibility, defined by Bardi et al. (2014) as:

...the necessity for [power holders] to take into account (a) the long-term needs of their people and countries, which have not necessarily been articulated as specific demands and which underlie and go beyond the short-term demands of those same people, and (b) the claims of audiences other than the national electoral audience, including the international markets that ensure their financial alimentation, the international commitments and organisations that are the root of their international credibility, and, in the European context in particular, the heavy transnational conditions of constraint that are the result of a common currency and common market. (Bardi et al., 2014:237, cited in Linde et al., 2020:293)

Bardi et al. (2014) interprets responsibility through the prism of accountability. Collective actors are responsible to their voters and commitments from international organisations and markets. Nowhere is this more evident than in EU’s multi-level system of governance. Member states are not only bound by national covenants and delivering on the will of the people, but they increasingly subject to international treaties and obligations signed by their predecessors. In other words, their hands are tied by decisions of their predecessors. And inevitably as a result of increasing economic and political interdependence, member states are compelled to consider the international markets and political decisions of their neighbours. We may also ask ourselves: Who has responsibility to act in the formal sense and whom do citizens attribute responsibility to? These questions are not one and the same as politicians will craftily find ways to shift the blame when matters go pear-shaped, but readily seize on favourable circumstances that may strengthen their hand in politics. The first question which is self-evident but nonetheless important to emphasise. In EU politics, the bucks stops with the EU or national governments depending on the policy field. As enshrined in the EU treaty, the European Commission is responsible for, *inter alia*, implementing and enforcing trade policy. The European Central Bank is legally responsible for monetary policy. And although several policy domains are shared competences between national governments and the EU – in accordance with the ‘subsidiarity’ principle, e.g. foreign policy and defence – national governments are exclusively responsible for the implementation and

enforcement of education, security, pensions, health, and taxes policy. We may thus assert that, broadly speaking, most prerogatives reside at the national level in spite of the EU's increasing influence. In regard to the second question, we may reasonably argue that the cunning manoeuvrings of politicians are likely to determine whom citizens attribute responsibility to. EU politics allows national governments to indulge in their own self-importance. Political actors, harnessing the mouthpiece of the mass media, cunningly use EU politics as a means for elevating their importance in the final outcome of EU policies, particularly when outcomes are favourable. When matters go pear-shaped, national politicians are quick to pass the buck onto the EU, however, when matters go their way, they are quick to sing their own government's praises and proclaim victory for 'the nation'. This inevitably distorts the picture that citizens have regarding who is responsible and ergo accountable for EU policy making. The media also play their part in distorting responsibility attribution as they are more inclined to give domestic actors media coverage – in accordance with ethnocentric news values – which provides national policy makers with a comparative advantage over their transnational counterparts. Attributing blame to supranational institutions is not bad for democratisation per se and may sow the seeds of a Pan-European public sphere by provoking debate and contestation²⁶. However, disproportionately attributing praise to national governments and blame to the EU may delegitimize the EU and in turn accelerate the process of disintegration. This one-sided bias increases the prospect that situational criticism of policy (isomorphic contestation) may mutate into systemic and sustained opposition of the polity (constitutive contestation). To wrap up, domestic actors are able to garner disproportionately high levels of publicity, and in so doing, legitimacy. Moreover, as a result of newsworthiness criteria, domestic actors are framed as the main protagonists and political entrepreneurs in policy-making, and readily claim to be responsible for decisions with favourable outcomes but quick to pass the buck to the EU when matters turn sour. This creates a distorted impression of responsibility. In regard to responsibility, the crucial question is not only who is formally responsible for decision-making, and whom are they responsible to, but whom do the media and citizens attribute responsibility to? As de la Porte, argues, media criticism may influence whom audiences attribute responsibility to (De la Porte & Van Dalen, 2016). As Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) reveal, the media tend to frame news stories in terms of responsibility attribution; in other words, they present “an issue by attributing responsibility for its cause or solution to an individual, group or institution such as the government” (Van Cauwenberge, 2009:43). The role of the media is, thus, crucial for shaping public perceptions about who is responsible for policy making. The bottom line is that political actors overstate their influence in EU policy making when policy decisions go their way, and underplay their role when outcomes are politically inconvenient. The context of EU decision making enables national governments to abdicate responsibility for unpopular policy decisions²⁷. Daugbjerg and Swinbank (2007) argue that the complex

²⁶ As scholars such as de Wilde and Risse argue in respect of *politicisation*.

²⁷ This is despite recent evidence showing that “responsibility [is] so opaque and shared that no one can be blamed” (Hobolt & Tilley, 2014: 117). In other words blame is neither directed at one country nor the EU in general (De la Porte *et al.*, 2016).

institutional set-up of the EU makes it vulnerable to blame attribution. In their words, the multi-level distribution of authority confers practical advantages for political actors, enabling them to “blame shifting to Brussels or to certain member states in case of expensive and unpopular deals, and blowup of the national role in case of profitable and popular results of bargaining” (De Beus, 2010:18). The EU is habitually portrayed as obstructing the ‘national interest’ with positive policy outputs attributed to ‘the nation’ and negative externalities attributed to the EU. As previous research shows, whom the media criticises influences whom audiences attribute responsibility to (Iyengar, 1991; de la Porte and Van Dalen, 2016). However, criticism is not necessarily aimed at a specific target. Indeed, the study by de la Porte (2016) shows that criticism is directed at the EU in general rather than an individual member state in particular. To compound matters, Semetko et al. (2000) found that the conflict and attribution of responsibility frames were the most salient when covering stories on European politics²⁸. These framing combinations are likely to provoke negative sentiments towards the EU. Times have changed since Gerhard (1993;2000) who claimed that citizens were unable to assign responsibility to EU actors and institutions due to insufficient news coverage. On the contrary, as previous research consistently shows, the EU and affairs of other European countries receive ample and increasing coverage.

Responsiveness

In a representative democracy, government action should respond to the preferences of its citizens (responsiveness). Responsiveness refers to the process where “the government is formed and implements policies according to citizens’ preferences” (Walter, 2016:35). Collective actors in civil society situated on the periphery of the political system signal their preferences to the institutionalised centre in the public sphere. The latter is the bridge that connects civil society to power holders. Power holders are able to gauge the preferences of civil society and public opinion via the mass media which may be understood as an important conductor of citizens preferences. The bottom line is that public opinion is only consequential for power holders at the national level. As a result of the structure of electoral competition, only national public opinion matters. EU elections are of a ‘second-order’²⁹, in other words, elections are fought on domestic issues and how well received they are among the national citizenry. EU elections are, in essence, a litmus test on the performance of national governments. This is the case in national and European politics. European public opinion is not consequential for elected

²⁸ The responsibility frame “presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko *et al.*, 2000:96).

²⁹ With the nationally embedded political logic in mind it is not surprising that debates during the European parliamentary elections recurrently manifest as ‘second-order’ elections (Reif and Schmitt, 1980). This is because the *polity*, *policy*, and *procedural* aspects of the logic of politics are anchored to national structures. The success of political elites ultimately hinges on winning over national electorates and competing with political adversaries over national issues. Although transnational issues such as climate matters are gaining traction in some member states, this is the exception rather than the rule. Every member state inexorably has its own unique issues and priorities.

representatives. In the main, pollsters, with the exception of Eurobarometer, track the signals of domestic publics, and the ‘national public mood’ on a periodic basis. This is not overly surprising as power holders are concerned primarily with national public opinion as political careers ultimately rest on responding to citizens at the national level. To illustrate, to win another national election, the Dutch Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, must buoy public opinion at home. Any negative evaluations of Mark Rutte from citizens in Italy or Spain is not consequential. Dutch citizens make the ultimate verdict on the Dutch Government’s perceived responsiveness.

Political opportunity structures

The question boils down to why political actors would be more inclined to target their fellow compatriots at the national level, and evoke a national consciousness when discussing EU affairs? The insights from the literature on political opportunity structures (referred as POS hereafter) provide a plausible explanation. The crucial question we should ask ourselves is: how has the EU integration process altered the opportunities and constraints for politically engaged actors?³⁰ (Koopmans, 2010). My answer is frankly—quite little. The institutional context in which political actors operate remains anchored to national structures and a nation-oriented modus operandi. As de Wilde (2019) argues, the channels of representation are still predominantly national. And these channels have changed only modestly in the last few decades in spite of Europe’s unprecedented political integration. EU citizens are formally underrepresented and are only represented symbolically as an inscription on our passports. In substance, representation is bound territorially to the nation state. Formally speaking, only EU commissioners represent the interests of the Union as a whole³¹. And ministers of the European Council are chosen by national governments whom are voted for by their national constituents. With that in mind, we should expect the prevalence of nationalistic frames in order to maximise voter mobilisation³². Assuming identity is a discursive construct and based on our understanding of POSs, there is little reason why politically engaged actors would be inclined to ‘flag’ – as Billig would say – European identity. Building on the discursive opportunity structure (DOS) perspective which identifies “the contextual factors that affect a given frame’s chances of diffusion in the media” (Medrano & Gray, 2010), I wish to examine whether identitarian discursive scopes are nationalised or Europeanised

³¹ The EU Commission represents the EU at the international level which is why they participate in the G7.

³² *Discursive nationalism* denotes many aspects of discourse including but not limited to: political actors pitching to national citizens; the re-production of positive stereotypes of in-groups (i.e. nation) and negative stereotypes of the outgroups; and summoning the national spirit during a crisis. When the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson addressed national TV audiences on 22nd September 2020, he effectively portrayed the Covid-19 pandemic as a national crisis: “When the sickness took hold in this country in March, we pulled together in a spirit of national sacrifice and community” (BBC News, 2020).

(explanans) and identify the structural factors underpinning them (explanandum)³³. In essence, I build on the POS perspective to begin to explain patterns of discourse. Advancing EU integration has provided a new institutional arena for actors to say and do politics (Hix and Goetz, 2000:12). EU integration has provided a new structures of opportunities for some actors at the expense of others (ibid.). For example, national executives have privileged access to first-hand information emanating from EU institutions, whereas national parliamentarians must settle for second-hand information deriving from ministerial briefings in the national parliaments or reports via the mass media³⁴. Moreover, the reconfiguration of competences as a result of EU integration has emboldened the political agency of some actors (e.g. national executives and transnational interest groups) at the expense of others (e.g. national parliaments). And as I touched upon earlier, the transfer of competences to the EU level provides opportunities for national governments to shift the blame to the EU for policy shortcomings.

POS – a definitional overview

The most cited definition of POS's is Tarrow's definition. POS's are defined as "consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national – sets of clues that encourage people to engage in contentious politics" (Tarrow, 1994: 32). Opportunities are defined by Tarrow as "the [perceived] probability that social protest actions will lead to success in achieving a desired outcome" (1994:160). The 'clues' to which Tarrow refers may be found in the political environment where political actors operate, in other words, they are exogenous factors. Put differently, external circumstances may enhance or inhibit the prospect of discursive interventions in the public sphere. The political-institutional context where political actors govern determine what opportunities are available. Several public sphere scholars notably Koopmans and Statham (2010) argue that the political environment shapes discourse in the public sphere—in other words, what is said (i.e. agenda-setting) and how it is expressed (i.e. framing). Kriesi defines POS's as "the totality of signals to the social and political actor which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements" (Kriesi et al., 1995:13, found in de Swaan, 2007:140). That is to say that the POS perspective focusses on the broader social context wherein actors operate (i.e. exogenous factors influence the prospect of collective action). A shortcoming, however, of the POS perspective is the neglect for individual motivations (i.e. endogenous factors) which may, or not, motivate collective action in general and discursive interventions in particular. Needless to say that an actor's role expectations, institutional locations, and identity orientations may also play their part (i.e. an "actor-driven logic" à la Medrano, 2010). For Meyer, POS's

³³ The *Results* chapter will shed light on the former, and the *Discussion* chapter will elucidate the latter.

³⁴ In addition, the context of EU politics allows national executives to use the EU as a scapegoat for unpopular or ineffective policies.

denote exogenous factors which either enhance or inhibit the sorts of claims to be advanced (Meyer, 2004:1457-58). The prospect of a discursive intervention in the public sphere depends on opportunities and constraints provided by the political-institutional setting where political actors operate (Koopmans, 2004:201; Koopmans et al., 2008:6). The role of the media is crucial and should not be overlooked when considering the role of POS's in shaping political communication. As Koopmans aptly points out, POS's only become 'opportunities' because they are made public by the mass media.

The EU may be described as a polyarchic, multilevel polity whose political authority has increased incrementally over time. The argument goes that EU integration has altered the political environment in which political actors operate. We may, thus, expect POS's to vary across time. Moreover, as the institutional context in which political actors operate varies from place to place, we may thus expect POS's to vary across space as well. Politics, policies and political actors are in a state of flux and so too are POS's. There are, nonetheless, some aspects of politics that have remained stable over time and across most Western democracies. Electoral competition is structured nationally, and elections are ultimately 'won' or 'lost' on domestic issues. The channels of representation, accountability, responsibility and responsiveness all flow back towards the nation state. This is an ineluctable fact of the logic of politics despite the pre-eminence of new forms of transnational governance. As a result, we may reasonably expect political cues to be tailored towards national audiences and voters accordingly.

According to Tarrow, there are several factors which encourage collective action: (1) increasing access; (2) divided elites; (3) shifting alignments, and (4) influential allies (1994:165-7). EU integration is regarded by most scholars and political commentators as a significant change to the political environment and seems to satisfy one of the conditions laid out above. EU integration has empowered new types of actors (e.g. transnational interest groups / MEPs etc.) and weakened other ones (e.g. national parliamentarians). Moreover, the EU polity provides an alternative and more favourable route for political actors to advance their political agenda. MEPs can, for example, seek transnational allies in the European Parliament, and interest groups can lobby Brussels instead of national capitals. The empowerment of the EU has rendered it more relevant and consequential for people's lives, and, ipso facto, more newsworthy, as issues of an EU origin are now more salient to national politics. Political actors, thus, have a myriad of issues of domestic and European issues with which to seize upon to help further their agenda. The Brexit Referendum presented an unmissable opportunity for less prominent political parties to garner support. The Brexit Party (formerly UKIP) and Liberal Democrats, historically speaking, have taken unequivocally anti- or pro- integration positions. The 2016 Referendum presented the perfect opportunity for these parties to 'own' the issue (see issue ownership theory). And not surprisingly, these parties performed relatively strongly in the follow-up 2018 elections for the EU Parliament. Moreover, the question of EU integration has divided elites within and

across parties. The increasing concentration of power in Brussels institutions, in theory, incentivises collective actors³⁵ to seek allies and build transnational coalitions (see Haas's neofunctionalism theory).

We know, furthermore, from countless polls that EU integration is divisive among not only political actors but the general public as well. Support for the EU can oscillate dramatically particularly during periods of crises or upheaval. The European question has provoked significant electoral volatility. A paradigmatic example is the recent electoral dynamics in the United Kingdom. Numerous political commentators attribute the waning support for the two main parties and correspondingly prominent rise of UKIP to the lack of support for the EU among British voters. As happened during the American Civil Right movement during the 1950s – with the declining white vote in Southern states and pivoting towards African American voters in the cities – for several years preceding the Brexit Referendum, the Tories were haemorrhaging votes to UKIP as a result of their reticence on the European question. In order to stem the tide, the Tories promised a Referendum on membership of the European Union and thereafter effectively rebranded themselves as the de facto 'Leave' party following the 2016 referendum result. In so doing – and with the issue of Brexit at the heart of the most recent UK election in 2020 – they were able to sweep up votes from the traditionally Labour heartlands – the so-called 'red wall' – while stemming the exodus of votes towards the Brexit Party. This is a paradigmatic example of how EU integration has engendered shifting political alignments³⁶. In sum, EU integration has presented new opportunities and challenges for political actors. In short, we may expect political actors to be more inclined to make public interventions concerning European matters. Notwithstanding the ineluctable changes resulting from EU integration, POS's have not changed enough to alter how EU politics is represented in the public sphere (i.e. framing). As I argued in the first preceding section, the political rules of the game, and polity architectonics remain structured nationally.

Discursive opportunity structures

Discursive opportunity structures are defined by Koopmans as, "the aspects of the public discourse that determine a message's chances of diffusion in the public sphere" (Koopmans, 2004:202). For Koopmans, there are three types of discursive opportunity: (1) visibility, (2) resonance, and (3) legitimacy. Visibility depends on the number of communicative channels (e.g. the number of newspapers or television broadcasts covering the public message) and prominence of such inclusion,

³⁵ I support Koopmans *et al.*, (2010) emphasis on collective actors as drivers of Europeanisation rather than focussing on state actors alone. For this reason, I object to De Wilde's concept of 'discursive intergovernmentalism'. Although this concept is useful in highlighting the pre-eminence of the nation state and national identity in EU politics, it belies the crucial role of non-state actors. Collective actors, that is, both state and non-state actors, are crucial drivers of the '*Euro-(nationalism)*' in the public sphere. The central premise of my thesis is that debates of a European origin are internalised and 'domesticated' insofar as debates are epitomised by the dominance of domestic actors, and *national* values, norms, and identities.

³⁶This shift would have been inconceivable only a decade earlier. The question of EU membership has provoked significant political alignments, and largely explains the exodus of traditional Labour voters to the Conservative Party.

i.e., the amount of time and space dedicated to a political message (Koopmans et al., 2008:7). Visibility is a *sine qua non* for the other types of discursive opportunity as a message cannot spread (resonance) without prior coverage of it (visibility). Moreover, a claim without visibility in the public sphere is effectively rendered illegitimate (Koopmans, 2004:203). As I argue below in the subsequent section on media logic theory, the visibility of a claim largely rests on its congruence with news values. However, the prospect of a claim's diffusion also depends on another discursive opportunity—resonance. For a message to resonate, it must provoke a reaction. And as the old adage goes, even 'bad publicity is better than no publicity'. A claim or public demand that is supported by political actors is likely to reach far and wide audiences (resonance). But so too are political demands that political adversaries vehemently disagree with. Any widespread public rebuttal of a political demand is nevertheless a tacit acknowledgement that the claim is relevant and legitimate (Koopmans, 2004: 202). In sum, agreement or disagreement with a political demand has positive effects on its chances of diffusion in the public sphere (Koopmans, 2004:205; Koopmans et al., 2008:7). The final element of discursive opportunity is legitimacy. The latter denotes "the degree to which, on average, reactions by third actors in the public sphere support an actor's claims more than they reject them" (Koopmans & Olzak, 2004: 205). Crucially, the relationship between resonance and legitimacy is non-linear. A message which is unanimously supported (e.g. valence issues) is *a priori* uncontested which means that it is likely to fall on deaf ears in the public domain. By contrast, a political demand that is out of kilter with the public consensus (i.e. illegitimate) is likely stir debate and travel far and wide in the public sphere (resonance). In sum, as a general rule, claims whose legitimacy is controversial are more likely to pervade the public sphere than valence issue claims.

The DOS perspective³⁷ asks the more pertinent question for my research: which contextual factors affect a frame's chances of diffusion in the public sphere? (Medrano & Gray, 2010:196). According Medrano et al., frames are formulated according to an actor-driven logic, among other things. Crudely speaking, we can make the following dichotomy: the prospect of a claim's diffusion depends on exogenous factors (i.e. POS's) but its framing depends on endogenous factors such as the actor's identities, ideologies, values orientation, and role expectations. Medrano (2010) argues that an actor's nationality and profession may be expected to shape patterns of discourse. Following this train of thought, we may hypothesise that the frame will be affected by variables such as the type, nationality and political affiliation of the actor concerned. Indeed, previous research has shown that political parties tend to be more critical of EU actors than national executives and EU actors tend to refer more to supranational actors than domestic actors (Statham et al., 2005). Moreover, the study by Hooghe et al., (2008) shows that 'TAN' parties tend to be more critical of the EU than 'GAL' parties. In other words, actor type and

³⁷ The DOS perspective helps us to understand why EU actors and issues are becoming more ubiquitous in national mediated systems. Generally speaking, the claims of EU and non-national actors are regarded as less legitimate compared to domestic ones as they represent 'internal-other' groups, at best, and 'out-groups', at worst. In other words, a shared identity is a fundamental source of legitimacy. Thus what these 'outsiders' say on a given issue is likely to stoke controversy especially when it contradicts national interests.

political orientation appear to condition how political actors' evaluate EU governance. With the DOS perspective in mind, I expect supranational actors to invoke European identity more than national actors, and German actors to invoke European identity more than Polish actors. DOS's refer to "the aspects of the public discourse that determine a message's chances of diffusion in the public sphere" (Koopmans and Olzak, 2004: 202). As Monza points out, the DOS perspective may be helpful in explaining why some actors' interpretations of reality diffuse in the public sphere while other interpretations fall on deaf ears. I argue, in essence, that claims containing a nationalistic component are more congruent with news values – particularly proximity and ethnocentrism – and DOS's, namely visibility, resonance, and legitimacy. Nationalistic claims are more likely to travel further and are perceived as more legitimate compared to non-nationalised claims. As I mentioned earlier, the invocation of national identity in the public sphere is expected to prevail in terms of visibility and resonance over non-identitarian claims or appeals to less salient and affective source of belonging such as European identity³⁸. As the DOS perspective underlines, visibility and resonance provide an additional legitimising function.

Koopmans et al., main premise is that "opportunity structures will vary from country to country, among policy domains, as well as over time" (2010:46). That is to say that POSs are not static but vary from country to country over time. At the signing of the Treaty of Rome, the composition of the EU was markedly different to the constitutional settlement post-Lisbon treaty: there was no EU parliament, no common currency and EU policy-making was largely obscured from public view. The desire to mend fractured relations between European nations was strong, undoubtedly, because of the trials and tribulations of two world wars. As a result, EU integration was a quasi-valence issue. At the beginning of the EU integration process, EU integration was, moreover, confined to the areas of 'soft politics' and negative integration (i.e. removal of trade barriers) which are less susceptible to politicisation. As a result, there were few incentives for political actors to debate Europe as there was frankly little to debate on hence the term—'permissive consensus'. However, over the past few decades, EU integration has 'deepened' with EU member states pooling their sovereignty into competences that strike at the heart of sovereignty such as monetary policy. A monetary union is a remarkable and unprecedented relinquishment of sovereignty. And not surprisingly, the increasing influence of the EU in decision making has been met with political conflicts that not only divide parties themselves but politicians within the same party. The increasingly politicised nature of EU integration has led to diminishing levels of public support for the EU. Collective actors are increasingly incentivised to voice their opinions on EU policies and European matters in the public sphere. In short, these changing structures have re-written the rules of the political game. Some actors have been empowered by these changes whilst others have been constrained by them. The onus is on scholars to examine who has, or not,

³⁸ As underlined earlier, broadly speaking, national identity is manifestly self-legitimising for historical and contingent reasons, with centuries more time to congeal in the minds of citizens compared to the nascent EU civic identity.

benefited from EU integration, which can be assessed by gaging the extent of an actor's visibility in the public sphere.

POS – the state of the field

Pfetsch (2014) argues that exogenous factors such as, inter alia, the geographical distance from Brussels; levels of intra-EU trade; budgetary standing with the EU; prominence of Eurosceptic parties in national parliaments; levels of public support for EU integration; and the shifting of competences to the EU level³⁹ determine a public sphere's amenability to Europeanisation. Regarding the latter, it is seems intuitive to expect EU and supranational actors to dominate public debates regarding monetary policy because they are the ones with decision making power. By the same logic, we may reasonably expect domestic actors particularly national executives to dominate discourse on education and health policy which are exclusively national prerogatives. In other words, discursive power is expected to mirror the distribution of competences. Indeed, previous studies show that exclusive EU competences contain a higher volume of Europeanised claims than shared ones. Moreover, Pfetsch identifies other contextual factors namely the size of the country, and extent of political integration which are expected to engender Europeanisation in the public sphere. Similarly, the study by Wessler et al. (2008) found that smaller and 'opt-out' member states talked less about the EU and fellow European member states than bigger and more integrated ones. The rationale underpinning these expectations seems intuitive enough. We would expect non-Schengen and non-Eurozone member states (e.g. Romania) to debate less about issues related to immigration and monetary policy than fully integrated member states (e.g. Germany) because these issues are less relevant to the reporting country. EU monetary policy decisions are less consequential for non-Eurozone member states by default. Moreover, Pfetsch expects the extent of public support for the EU to influence the framing strategies of political actors (Pfetsch, 2014:48). Countries with deep distrust and animosity towards the EU are expected to contain claims of negative valence towards the EU. Countries that are deeply divided on the issue of EU integration (i.e. politicisation) are expected to contain more claims about EU affairs because it has become a hotly contested issue in the public sphere. In other words, higher levels of politicisation are expected to increase the volume of Europeanised claims, at least quantitatively speaking. Previous studies have shown that within- and cross-party conflicts on EU integration are positively correlated with levels of Europeanisation in news coverage which is not surprising as media organisations thrive on dissonance and conflict. The strength of Eurosceptic voices in domestic politics are also positively correlated with increasing Europeanisation in public spheres (Pfetsch, 2014:50).

³⁹ i.e. are competences handled *exclusively* by the EU, nation state, or *shared*?

Koopmans et al. (2010) adopts a POS perspective to explain patterns of Europeanised discourse. The argument goes that European integration process has transformed the political system and corresponding POS's of member states. Since the Treaty of Rome (1957), the EU has accrued far-reaching decision-making powers. Many scholars therefore expect European discursive influence to increase (Koopmans et al., 2003) and reflect antecedent de jure power configurations as a result of EU integration (Kriesi et al., 2020). The former is labelled by Koopmans as the 'compensatory Europeanisation' hypothesis and the latter is labelled by Kriesi et al. as the 'persistence hypothesis'. Kriesi et al. (2010) argue that the "juridification" of EU integration has strengthened administrative institutions vis-à-vis parliamentary institutions, thus benefiting executive and interest groups in particular⁴⁰. In other words, the shift in competences towards the supranational level has favoured some actors particularly executive actors at the expense of others (e.g. political party actors).

Building on the POSs expectation that 'closed' political institutions⁴¹ will be more critical compared to 'open' ones, Koopmans et al. (2010) expect actors who receive vast publicity in Europeanised debates to be more inclined to speak positively about the EU than actors who are overlooked (Kriesi et al. 1995:44-51). By the same logic, countries that receive high levels of publicity are expected to frame the EU more positively. Statham et al. (2010) argue that varying levels of access to EU policy-making may affect evaluations of the EU. In particular, these scholars expect party, regional, and civil society actors' to be more 'Eurocritical' because they have less access to European policy circles (Statham et al., 2010:258). In the same way, national executives and supranational actors are expected to speak more positively of the EU due to their privileged access to information emanating from EU institutions (Statham, Koopmans, Tresch & Firmstone, 2010:258). Indeed, their findings show that parties in government are generally more supportive of the EU than parties in opposition (Ibid., 250; see also Bartolini, 2005:321). Several scholars, moreover, expect discursive influence to vary according to the distribution of competences (Eder, 2000; Peter & de Vreese, 2004; Koopmans & Erbe, 2004; de Vreese and Boomgaarden, 2006; Kriesi & Jochum, 2010: 226). This expectation is intuitively appealing. We may reasonably expect EU actors to be more vocal in issue fields for which the EU has an exclusive competence such as monetary and agricultural policy (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). By the same logic, these scholars expect the discursive influence from member states to be stronger in traditionally intergovernmental policy fields (e.g. troop deployment and immigration policy). These scholars also expect that countries which are overrepresented in Europeanised debates relative to their share of the European population will be more likely to evaluate the EU positively than underrepresented ones (Statham, 2010). Likewise, Pfetsch et al. (2010) expect the news coverage of integrated EU member states – ranging from non-EU nation states (e.g. the United States) and 'opt-out' (e.g. Denmark) to integrated 'opt-in' EU member states (e.g. France) – to be more Europeanised (Pfetsch, Adam, &

⁴⁰ These scholars, therefore, expect state actors and interest groups to be more active at the EU level in terms of insider lobbying and public-oriented strategies than political parties and social movement organisations.

⁴¹ 'Closed' to the extent that some actors have little influence policymaking.

Eschner, 2010). This expectation rests on the assumption that political institutions and decision-making structures at the EU level stimulate flows of Europeanised communication.

Ladrech (2002) employs a POSs perspective to begin to make sense of positioning on the meta issue of EU integration. The same scholar expects political parties to hold predominantly negative evaluations of the EU integration because Europeanisation has eroded their influence in policy-making due to, *inter alia*, insufficient financial, infrastructural and informational resources vis-à-vis government-executive actors (Ladrech, 2002:395). De Beus (2010) argues that POS's may vary depending on the issue field, time, and country observed (see also Koopmans et al., 2010:46). These studies remind us that a myriad of contextual variables must be considered in order to explain patterns of political communication⁴². As Ladrech underlines (2002), every country possesses a unique repertoire of socio-economic and political circumstances which in turn condition political party responses⁴³.

Koopmans et al. (2010) expects media coverage to be positively correlated with the extent “to which EU integration is a controversial issue in national politics” (Ibid.,46). This is because controversy increases the newsworthiness of a potential news item (Ibid.,). Moreover, in the same book, Koopmans expects actors who have limited access to Europeanised public debates to be more critical of the EU whereas actors who are prominently represented in Europeanised debates are expected to hold more positive evaluations (Koopmans, 2010:99). This is based on the maxim that “closed political institutions tend to provoke confrontational challenges, whereas open opportunity structures invite more consensual and cooperative strategies from collective actors” (Ibid., 99). According to a similar logic, Statham et al., (2010) expects local, regional, and national opposition party actors to be more critical towards to the EU than the national executive because (sub-)national party representatives have inferior access to supranational policy-making (Koopmans, Tresch, & Firmstone, 2010:258). Similarly, Kriesi et al. expect debates during the euro crisis to be more salient in Eurozone countries than non-Eurozone ones (Kriesi & Grande, 2015). De Swaan (2007) identifies the lack of a European cultural opportunity structure, which is comparable to Bourdieu's concept of ‘cultural capital’ (1983; 2018). In essence, De Swaan argues that Europe does not have pan-European intelligentsia, cultural events, or newspapers and journals on a par with the nation state. The argument goes that citizens and intellectuals alike continue to acquire ‘cultural capital’ within national structures. Intellectuals predominantly occupy a national ‘habitus’ to quote Bourdieu (1977), attending national events, and exhibitions and museums, among other things. Although we may reasonably expect the intelligentsia milieu to be more transnational in outlook, as De Swaan argues, they continue to participate culturally within their ‘home’ nation.

⁴² In a similar vein, De Wilde *et al.* (2016) argue that politicization is a function of several intermediating variables such as country-specific economic, cultural conditions and unique institutional settings.

⁴³ E.g. the level of economic development, the prevalence of Eurosceptic public opinion, two-party/multiparty systems, referenda traditions, and so forth (see Ladrech, 2002, for details).

According to Koopmans, Erbe and Meyer (2010), patterns of discourse depend on several POS's such as the distribution of competences. Supranational actors are expected to dominate 'supranational' political fields and by the same token domestic and national and European government executives are expected to prevail in debates pertaining to 'intergovernmental' policy fields. The same scholars also expect that powerful nations (e.g. Germany) will be less inclined to talk about the affairs of their EU counterparts than smaller ones (e.g. Malta). A country's level of dependency on EU trade is also expected to affect levels of Europeanisation with highly dependent member states more likely to engage in European debates compared to their more economically globalised partners. Moreover, the length of time as an EU member is positively correlated with Europeanised discourse. Lastly, a country's fiscal position with the EU is expected to alter patterns of public discourse with a balance of payments surplus expected to be accompanied by increasingly negative EU sentiments.

POS as the independent variable

The argument goes that advancing political integration has altered the opportunities for collective action. For several scholars, notably Koopmans, EU integration has – to quote Tarrow – “shift[ed] the balance of political and economic resources between [the nation state] and [the EU] [thus] weaken[ing] a state's ability to reward its followers or opponents or to pursue a coherent policy” (Tarrow, 1994:182–183). In my opinion, however, this argument needs qualifying. I acknowledge that the political environment has changed but not to such a degree that would affect the more qualitative aspects of political communication. Ultimately POS's remain anchored firmly to national structures. Advancing EU integration and the evolving POS's which it has engendered may incentivise actors to make more public interventions about EU politics. POS's have largely remained stable over time and any changes are unlikely to have affected how EU politics is discussed (i.e. framing). As Pfetsch states, Europeanization enables opportunity structures which may empower, or not, certain actors⁴⁴ (Pfetsch, 2014). Similarly, Hix and Goetz argue that Europeanization provides a new 'structure of opportunities' for domestic actors (Goetz, 2012:12, found in Koopmans, 2010:98). Koopmans gets to the heart of the matter: “European integration shifts the distribution of discursive opportunities and resources to influence public debates, improving the relative influence of some actors and weakening that of others” (Koopmans, 2007:205).

The consensus view is that POS's have changed to such a degree that collective actors are increasingly predilected to engage in European politics. I, however, flip this argument on its head. Yes—the politicisation of EU integration has altered POS's which in turn renders EU issues more relevant for

⁴⁴ Namely *exogenous* factors (e.g. the type of domestic media culture or certain macroeconomic conditions).

national politics. However, POS's are principally governed by what happens domestically. Politics is fought on the home front, and national circumstances ultimately determine electoral competition. Decades of political integration may have raised the salience of EU politics, however, it has not altered to such an extent that would fundamentally change how political reality is represented. In crude terms, changing POS's as a result of political integration have altered the quantitative rather than qualitative aspects of political communication. In respect of the former, as past research has consistently shown, news coverage concerning EU-related issues has increased over time. This is, most likely, because the EU has gained more policy competences over time, and EU policy-making has inevitably become increasingly consequential for people's lives. However, POS's have not changed to such a degree that would fundamentally alter how EU politics is discussed. Most political actors still operate mainly within the confines of the nation state; for example, party actors are accountable to their national constituents. And interest groups principally operate within national structures because of lower transactional costs namely the avoidance of language barriers and high travel costs and familiar customs and habits. In essence, POS's should be understood as a 'double-edged sword'. On the one hand, as a result of EU integration, political actors are encouraged to target political demands at the supranational level. On the other hand, political and electoral systems remain anchored architectonically to the model of the Westphalian nation state. For instance, most national and European political actors primarily represent their national constituents (de Wilde, 2011). National parliamentarians represent national and local constituencies. The respective heads of state in the European Council meetings principally represent national interests. Even the legislative arm of the EU is wedded to national channels of representation. The Council of Ministers consists of national government ministers, and members of the European Parliament comprise politicians occupying a 'double-cap' role as representatives of national parties and local/national constituents of their respective member states. Although we may expect an increase in "communicative linkages" to quote Koopmans (2010) between the national and supranational level, the POS perspective elucidates why we should expect nationalistic frames to endure. Crucially, I believe that the increasing density of communicative flows between the national and European level should not be conflated with Europeanisation in the 'thick' normative sense.

Moreover, as Medrano and Gray (2010)⁴⁵ explain, the framing of political actors is primarily governed by an actor-driven and strategic logic. The former "reflects the actors' different identities and their embeddedness in institutional contexts" (Medrano, 2010:198). Thus, in the authors view, the type,

⁴⁵ As Medrano (2010) argues, actors framing repertoires are governed by a *strategic*, *thematic*, and *actor-driven* logic. The former asks whether a given frame would resonate with the audience. Thematic considerations ask whether a given frame is an appropriate and understandable way of discussing a certain topic. And the latter asks whether a given frame is congruent with his or her role expectations, values, and identities. There are different types of actors who possess their own unique set of characteristics and personal circumstances. For instance, actors may vary according to job title and role expectations, institutional location, political affiliation, and national origins. With this heterogeneity in mind, we can expect the discursive frame to vary according to the type of actor, political affiliation, and nationality of the claimant. Indeed, the results show that discursive frames varies according to actor type – for instance, interest groups were found to invoke economic frames than party actors, and sovereignty frames were used more by domestic party actors than supranational ones, with marked differences by country, party and so on.

nationality and political affiliation of a given actor is expected to affect how political realities are represented. But while we may expect politicians to be more transnational in outlook than the general public, the enduring prevalence of Eurosceptic parties and Haas's (1966) inaccurate prognostications (i.e. neofunctionalism) suggest that national identity remains highly salient⁴⁶. Moreover, the political strategy may vary according to the specific role, or institutional location of the actor, or political identity, that is, the values and ideological stance of the party⁴⁷. Needless to say that most actors do not operate in a vacuum but operate within the parameters laid out by the party machine. Party actors must conscientiously toe the party line. For example, the CDU party chairman when discussing the issue of migration cannot be completely forthright but must express a point of view that is more or less in line with the party's manifesto. This is the implicit role expectation deriving from his position as party chairman⁴⁸. To use another example, we would expect a political party that brands itself as 'sovereignist' (e.g. Fratelli d'Italia) to interpret Europe through the prism of national sovereignty and national interests. The perennial issue is sovereignty, national interests, values, national pride and identity. By contrast, a political party that claims to be 'culturally liberal' is likely to frame Europe in terms of social rights, cosmopolitan values and transnational identities. Then there are political parties that market themselves as unabashedly Eurosceptic (e.g. The Brexit party) or pro-EU (e.g. Christian Democratic parties). Similarly, social movement organisations typically have mission statements setting out their vision, ethos, values, beliefs and so on. In other words, we may expect the ideology and core beliefs of an organisation to condition patterns of discourse, namely what is discussed, how political reality is interpreted, which issues are emphasised, and so forth. Political actors operate within unique institutional, organisational, and national contexts. Countries vary according to cultural, historical, political stocks of knowledge, meta narratives, and institutional settings, among other things. These variegated cultural and political opportunity structures condition how actors frame EU politics. Framing is, moreover, governed by strategic considerations (Medrano, 2010) which are themselves shaped by the logic of the media which 'colonises' politics – to quote Meyer (2002). We may also reasonably expect political actors to internalise the logic of the media, in other words, to think about how their cue would play out in the public eye (de Wilde, 2019). Actors are not homogenous but vary according to type⁴⁹, organisation, and political affiliation⁵⁰. Most actors have a specific role which implies a list of duties, and expectations, namely behaviours, attitudes and traits deemed appropriate for the position (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.). The role of every actor entails expectations, duties and responsibilities akin to a job advert. Actors operate within a variegated institutional location. Some

⁴⁶ In essence, Haas (1966) hypothesised that elites' national loyalties would shift to the supranational centre over time due to a functional 'spill over' in which economic and political interests converge, and in turn affective loyalties and identities. However, in reality, these expectations have not materialised.

⁴⁷ For instance, is the actor in government or opposition?

⁴⁸ We may call this an 'institutional straitjacket'...

⁴⁹ A myriad of different actors – ranging from public intellectuals and academics, interest groups, social movements and civil society organisations, media organisations, political parties to state actors and institutions – frame Europe in different ways which is likely to alter the perceptions and opinions of the EU among the general population (Medran & Gray, 2010).

⁵⁰ E.g. *Forza Italia*, *Partido Popular*, *Google* etc.).

actors have a fixed institutional location such as a press office, church, parliamentary or governmental building, and others have fluid and mobile ones, for example, MEPs periodically traveling between their home member state, and EU institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg⁵¹. Furthermore, actors, as with most people generally, possess their own repertoire of values, worldviews, norms, and perspectives, which shape who they are, how they behave, and what they say and do. It is also important to note that most actors do not operate in a vacuum but as part of an organisation, that is, within a wider social setting with its own identity (i.e. party ideology, brand identity, values, ethos, mission statement, partisanship, etc.). In other words, most actors cannot act arbitrarily and unfettered but must kowtow to party lines⁵². These endogenous factors produce a variegated interpretation of the political reality and representations of Europe. The nation remains the central node of reference for political actors. Their role is to defend the ‘national interest’ or at least give the impression that they are doing so. Many political parties were established around the time of state building at the beginning of the 20th century and were conceived of to mobilise national voters on domestic issues. This has not fundamentally changed: parties still operate according to specific domestic electoral cycles (e.g. national party conferences, local and national election dates).

We have witnessed the ascendancy of the ‘traditional-authoritarian-national’ (TAN) political parties in recent years. National frames are likely to endure in these circumstances. Previous research has shown that the prevalence of Eurosceptic and far-right political parties in party systems is positively correlated with nationalistic framing. European integration presents opportunities and challenges for actors ranging from hostile to lukewarm and enthusiastic supporters of EU integration. Most scholars assume that actors who are already powerful in terms of de jure authority are the main beneficiaries of EU integration in terms of publicity (the so-called ‘persistence hypothesis’). However, it can be reasonably argued that EU integration also presents discursive opportunities for adversaries of the European integration process. Over the past few decades, policy competences have shifted to the EU from the areas of low politics to high politics which are more likely to elicit questions about identity, citizenship and sovereignty. We thus may expect the issues of sovereignty, migration, and social security to become more salient. These issues are the bread and butter of nationalist, interventionist political parties. This heuristic distinction helps us to understand why Eurosceptic parties have grown in recent years. The context of EU integration presents a favourable environment – or more aptly “discursive opportunity” – for populist, nationalist party actors to mobilise supporters by employing identitarian framing devices which pit national in-groups against ‘foreign’ out-groups.

⁵¹ The phenomenon of ‘smart working’ and ‘digital nomadism’ entails working without a fixed institutional location.

⁵² Needless to say that not all actors are part of an organisation. For example, *former states(women)* and the *general public*. *Vox pops* are granted actor status albeit momentarily. We can reasonably expect *vox pops* to be more forthright in expressing an issue because they do not represent an organisation. By contrast, *former states(women)* are more likely to be less outspoken as they may want to keep their reputations intact and not say things to harm the reputation of their former organisation.

EU integration, furthermore, enables national executives to disavow responsibility for unpopular policy decisions and shift the blame to the EU. My main point is that scholars tend to overlook discursive opportunities that EU integration presents for Eurosceptic actors. EU actors may be more exposed to identity-conflict framing. EU actors may well be more visible in debates on European affairs. However, crucially, if EU actors are framed as ‘others’, it is difficult to see how this may be regarded as ‘Europeanised’ discourse. We know, moreover, from several studies that European actors and issues are more visible albeit as mainly passive actors (i.e. targets) which renders them more vulnerable to delegitimization in the eyes of the public as they have a limited platform with which to respond to political demands or accusations from political actors. Supranational actors are more often than not on the losing side of an argument as their voices are seldom voiced. Furthermore, as previous research consistently shows, although EU politics may be more salient than ever before, national actors habitually internalise EU politics, turning an EU issue into a domestic conflict. The constitutional treaty debates in France and the Netherlands, and the Brexit referendum debate are two cases which immediately come to mind. The bottom line is that political protagonists mainly operate within the confines of a nationally embedded political-institutional setting which conditions how public discourse is framed.

The POS perspective helps explain why public spheres are, quantitatively speaking, more Europeanised. The increasing transfer of authority to Brussels has empowered new types of transnational actors and weakened domestic actors such as national parliamentarians. The decisions of EU policy makers are more consequential than ever before, which increases its relevance to people’s lives and ergo purported newsworthiness. However, the prospect of a discursive intervention in the public sphere—is one thing, but how the intervention is expressed (i.e. framing)—is another. The latter, I argue, requires a more fundamental change in POS’s. For example, the introduction of transnational parties participating in European elections would likely incentivise candidates of these parties to frame their political cues in such a way that would mobilise EU citizens whom they would formally represent. There is, hitherto, no genuinely EU-wide election equivalent to national elections. Instead, party actors represent national parties who themselves represent national constituents. Kriesi and Jochum (2010) argue that political opportunity structures still pivot to the national vis-a-vis European level for the following reasons: state actors are formally accountable to national parliaments (2010:225) and informally accountable to the mass media. They rightly point out that most actors particularly elected representatives take their cues from domestic politics (2010:225). More specifically, local and national constituents signal – via mediated communicative channels such as the mass media – to their de jure representatives in national parliaments, the demands at stake in an upcoming vote, and vice versa, with representatives simultaneously signalling back to national voters, their proposals, accordingly. Institutionally speaking, EU policy-making functions according to a domesticated logic. EU directives are negotiated first in Brussels and thereafter transposed into the national statute book by national legislatures. Even though

the substance of the directive is drafted and agreed in Brussels, national capitals are left to their own devices in regard to implementation and enforcement. The end result is a slightly adapted EU directive with a ‘national flavour’. To compound matters, the rate of enforcement of EU directives varies widely across member states which may further contribute to national divergences between member states.

Moreover, as Kriesi and Jochum (2010) argue, electoral competition structured nationally. Every nation state follows their own electoral calendar⁵³ wherein nation-specific issues – which rarely transcend national borders in terms of salience – tend to dominate the electoral agenda. It is widely accepted that EU elections are of a ‘second-order’, in other words, EU elections are essentially a litmus test for national governments which are judged on their domestic performance, and domestic issues preponderate debates (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010:225). In the words of Kriesi et al., the governance of national executives is not at stake in EU elections⁵⁴. According to the same, this ethnocentric political logic extends to interest groups and other formal civil society organisations. There are few incentives for national interest groups to lobby at the EU level⁵⁵. In regard to social movement organisations (SMOs), European-wide campaigns are negligible. At best, campaigns take place outside national parliaments protesting EU policies. There is seldom a protest in Brussels involving SMOs from different member states. This is not surprising when you factor in the high transaction costs of protesting in Brussels. Politics is geared towards the national level. State actors inform national constituents about their policies to show that they are acting in their best interests and implementing the ‘national manifesto’. And political parties address national publics as a means of obtaining votes and mobilising support from the mass media (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010:243-245).

Attracting the attention of national media organisations and their predominantly national audiences is a necessary but not sufficient condition for gaining votes. It is through sustained media coverage that voters support ultimately takes root. Voters are unlikely to vote for something they cannot understand. Crudely speaking, ‘winning over’ the audience viz. voters is a sine qua non for ‘winning’ national elections. Receiving publicity is a crucial first step in obtaining political power. Needless to say that the substance (i.e. policy) also matters to electoral success, and a publicly visible but unpopular manifesto may be more detrimental in terms of electoral success than a publicly concealed one. Moreover, publicity is sought and achieved in nationally mediated public spheres. To illustrate the point, a modestly visible politician in a national newspaper (e.g. *Corriere della Sera*) is more lucrative from a publicity standpoint than a moderately visible politician in a transnational outlet (e.g. *The Economist* and *Financial Times*). Moreover, as Trenz (2008:7) argues, mass communication depends on infrastructural requirements that are largely supplied by the nation state; communicative inputs mainly coming from domestic actors (inputs), intermediary capacities (throughputs) deriving from national

⁵³ Even in the EU elections, many member states vote on different days!

⁵⁴ In other words, their enduring power rests on ‘winning’ national elections.

⁵⁵ Think of fewer transaction costs i.e. same language and a familiar *modus operandi* of ‘doing’ politics.

media organizations, and opinions are formed at the national level⁵⁶(outputs). The inputs of mass communication are heavily influenced by communicative outputs emanating from the national electorate akin to the ‘tail wagging the dog’. There is no ‘European electorate’ per se, and European elections are ‘second-order’ at best.

Media logic and ethnocentrism

Europeanisation was and still is widely understood as an inevitable and linear process that would lead to peoples’ loyalties shifting from the national to the transnational level. It was expected that the increasing news coverage of European politics in national public spheres would foster a greater sense of European belonging. The continuing growth of the Internet was expected to accelerate the process of transnational community-building. McLuhan’s (1964) cliché of the global village and the Europeanisation of public spheres meta concept remain two popular watchwords for public sphere scholars. These optimistic expectations, however, do not square with the sustained popularity of national-populist and Eurosceptic parties, and the entrenchment of a national consciousness. To put it bluntly, Hannerz’s (1996) prognostication about the “withering away of the nation” has not materialised.

Below I lay out the case against – what I label – the “Euro-optimistic” stance (à la Thomas Risse) that public debates on European politics are conducive to fostering a European consciousness. I argue, in essence, that Europeanisation should be understood as a double-edged sword insofar as the increasing volume of news coverage may actually serve to reinforce national and intergovernmental channels of representation (i.e. structural nationalisation) and reify national identity (i.e. normative nationalisation). I build on the insights of media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) and political opportunity structures perspective (à la Tarrow, 1994) to support my hypotheses. The former, as I argue below, implies the enduring ethnocentricity of the international news flow, and the latter reminds us that political and electoral systems remain embedded in national structures⁵⁷. In short, the output of political communication is governed by media and political logics which have the effect of domesticating foreign news and reifying national identity. This chapter is structured as follows: In Section 1, I outline two closely related perspectives, namely Meyer’s political logic perspective and the concept of political opportunity structures. Both these insights are useful in emphasising the overwhelmingly national structure of politics. In Section 2, I outline the theory of media logic and present my central argument

⁵⁶ In the sense that only national public opinion is consequential to politics. European public opinion, if indeed there is such a thing, does not have any repercussions for politics. For example, there are no genuine European elections in which EU citizens can ‘throw the scoundrels out’.

⁵⁷ That said, as a result of European integration, political actors are increasingly inclined to *target* political demands at the European level. Thus, as previous research has shown, we can expect to find increasing communicative linkages toward the supranational level (I call this “structural Europeanisation”).

which is that the mass media are governed by a predominantly ethnocentric logic. In Section 3, I outline my concept of “discursive nationalism” which takes its inspiration from Billig’s concept of banal nationalism (Billig, 1995).

The title of this chapter begs the question: why should political science scholars be interested in the role of the media? Because politics, and particularly EU politics have become mediatised⁵⁸ (Strömbäck, 2008). The happenings of politics may initially emanate from the political sphere, but the representation of these happenings is supplied by the mass media in the public sphere. The (re-)construction of political reality undergoes a process of mediatisation. The latter denotes “a situation in which the media have become the most important source of information and vehicle of communication between the governors and the governed”⁵⁹ (Strömbäck, 2008: 230). Mediated politics may be distinguished from politics that is directly experienced by people through interpersonal communication (Strömbäck, 2008:231). It can be reasonably argued that the media’s depiction of reality is more decisive to opinion formation than objective reality itself, namely, what actually happened. Peoples’ information about European politics stems almost entirely from the media. European politics is mediated as we cannot directly experience the goings-on in Brussels, Paris, or Rome. We depend entirely on the media to supply images, sounds, and texts about European politics. Via the media, one “is learning to see with his mind vast portions of the world that he could never see, touch, smell, hear, or remember” (Lippmann, 1922:7, cited in Strömbäck, 2008: 230-231). The media are crucial for retrieving information about politics. In the words of Strömbäck, “the media have become the most important source of information for most people in advanced democracies around the world” (2008:229). The role of the media is increasingly seen as crucial for understanding what drives European (dis-)integration. The integration theory of postfunctionalism implies a fundamental role for the media which has been largely overlooked⁶⁰. Simply put, postfunctionalism posits that integration is contingent on the general public’s affections shifting to the European level. However, post-functionalists ignore an elephant in the room—the mass media (de Wilde, 2019). The latter is, after all, the key bridge that political actors to civil society. Nonetheless, postfunctionalist’s agree that some form of attachment to Europe is integral to the prospect of ‘ever closer union’ (Kermer, 2020). It is common knowledge that public spheres in general and the mass media in particular are crucial to the congealment of identity. This is why any research on identity, discourse, and the public sphere should not overlook the decisive role of the mass media.

To begin to understand why collective actors may have a predilection for nationalistic frames, I build on the insights of media logic theory in general and the news values of proximity, relevance, and meaningfulness in particular. Two questions are crucial to my research: Why should we expect national

⁵⁸ Information about the daily happenings in one’s local community can also be obtained through direct experience or interpersonal communication, which is not the case with European politics. Due to the distance between Brussels and Rome, an Italian citizen is left with no alternative but to refer to the media in order to keep abreast of European politics.

⁵⁹ It is a nonnormative (empirical-descriptive) term.

⁶⁰ Save for de Wilde (2019).

identity to be salient in national debates on EU affairs? And why should we expect domestic actors to receive more publicity compared to European or supranational actors when debating European politics? Although other scholars notably Koopmans and de Wilde have begun to address these questions, the former only referred to media logic theory *en passant* and the latter overlooks the obvious importance of political actors who are after all the “primary definers [and ultimate source] of the news discourse” (Brighton, 2007:10). Without politicians intervening in the public sphere, there are no stories to be made, no issues to wrangle over, and we return to the closed, refeudalized public sphere which was anything but public. Crudely put, there is no politics without politicians⁶¹. What is needed is a synthesis of the political and media logic perspectives which emphasises that both logics are not mutually exclusive but feed off each other⁶². We can safely make the following assumption—the mass media have a decisive role in portraying European politics to the general public.

Before commencing with my main argument, I set out the delimitations of my theoretical framework below. As with Galtung et al., (1965), my focus is on the supply side of political communication (i.e. the input and throughput of political communication)⁶³. I am interested in tracing the process of communication from the medias perception of world events – and the formatting by journalists thereafter – to the end-product, namely the newspaper article (see Figure x below). Let me explain. The inputs of communication derive primarily from political entrepreneurs. Media actors, however, can also be entrepreneurs in their own right, for example, via newspaper editorials (Östgaard, 1965). Political actors perceive the world around them and select certain issues or aspects of reality – from an innumerable quantity of happenings in the external world – which are considered salient because they accord with their worldview or reinforce their ideology. However, as Machiavelli argued long ago, we can expect political actors to be opportunistic and exploit circumstances in order to cement their authority. Politics is ultimately a popularity contest, and politicians will seize upon happenings that advance their cause to mobilise support—the ends justifying the means. Politicians select, accentuate and (re-)contextualise specific aspects of the external world⁶⁴. Similarly, journalists pick an event⁶⁵ regarded as newsworthy from a multitudinous supply of happenings in the external world. Thereafter, a news item is formatted in such a way that draws the audience’s attention. Although there is some overlap between media and political logics, generally speaking, political actors provide the main source of communicative inputs, and not surprisingly, they are the most active protagonists in the public sphere, which reflects their *de jure* power⁶⁶. The media, generally speaking, provide the throughputs of communication, selecting and formatting ‘events’ deemed to be relevant or interesting to the reader⁶⁷,

⁶¹ Politicians without politics is a *technocracy*.

⁶² I do not weigh in on the debate regarding which logic is more influential in determining patterns of public discourse. Strömbäck (2008) does a valiant job of this already.

⁶³ I.e. the first half of the chain of news communication (see the left hand side of Fig.2.2).

⁶⁴ Akin to journalists choosing what they deem to be ‘newsworthy’.

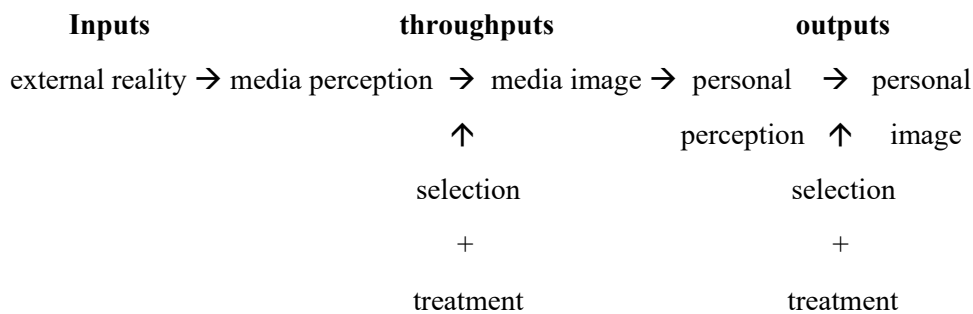
⁶⁵ An ‘event’ can be understood as a snapshot of reality.

⁶⁶ The work of Trenz (2008) helped me to think of political communication as a conveyor belt which can be dissected into *inputs*, *throughputs*, and *outputs*.

⁶⁷ I.e. a ‘gatekeeping’ function.

and repackaging the final product. The end product is a reconstruction of reality that tends to deviate from objective reality. However, we may reasonably argue that the reconstruction is more decisive to public opinion than objective reality because the representation is what the public perceive. The output of the political communication concerns the attitudes and opinions from the general public. My research focusses on the input and throughput of political communication.

Figure 2.2: The chain of news communication⁶⁸



I am, moreover, primarily interested in news selection and news treatment. The former is analogous to a photographer who must decide which photos to keep for the final wedding album, and the latter is akin to editing considerations that the photographer must decide upon such as whether to crop the photo, make it monochrome, or add captions⁶⁹. I prefer the term treatment as distortion implies a more sinister, pre-meditated act. I argue that the media and political logics are internalised to such a degree that the depiction of an event is largely pre-determined. McQuail (2010) opts for the term “unwitting bias” to refer to a journalist’s predilection for certain ‘angles’ (frames) when presenting a story. In a nutshell, news selection examines what is reported, and why, or put differently, which factors determine the prospect that an event will be registered as news (Galtung et al., 1965). News treatment, however, examines how news is presented to the audience and why it is presented in such a manner. In other words, how do news values shape the portrayal of an event by the media—which aspects are accentuated and by the same token which aspects are obscured from a story? News values do not just determine which event becomes news (selection) but what aspects of the ‘event’ are accentuated (distortion). Political and media actors perceive the world around them, choose one segment of reality from a myriad of happenings and in turn accentuate certain aspects of the event because accords with their role expectations, or worldview, amongst other things. Both selection and treatment feature in Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) theoretical framework on newsworthiness. They hypothesise that “the more events satisfy [news values], the more likely that they will be registered as news [i.e. selection] ... and once a news item has been selected what makes it newsworthy according to the factors will be accentuated [i.e.

⁶⁸ My illustration is an elaboration on the graph by Galtung & Ruge (1965:65).

⁶⁹ I am interested in tracing *how* European politics is represented in general and identity is constructed in particular.

treatment]” (Galtung and Ruge, 1965: 71). Or, as Hall puts it, “events which score high on a number of these news values will have greater news potential than ones that do not [and] journalists will tend to play up the extraordinary, dramatic, tragic, etc. elements in a story in order to enhance its newsworthiness [i.e. treatment]” (Hall, 1978:54). The effect is that both the media and politicians “produce an image of the world different from what really happened” (Galtung & Ruge 1965: 71). I am chiefly concerned by the treatment of news in general and political claims in particular⁷⁰. In essence, both news selection and news treatment are forms of framing. Entman’s classical definition of framing (see above) is helpful in highlighting the overlap between these concepts. As Entman remarks:

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem, definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993: 52, cited in Phillips, 2015:8, italics added for emphasis).

For this reason, I opt for the term news treatment as framing is a rather broad and polysemous concept. That said, scholars across a range of disciplines are more familiar with this concept so it is useful to underline the semantic proximity between news selection, treatment and framing. In this section, I build on the insights of media logic theory (Galtung et al., 1965) to support my hypotheses. Media logic theory, put briefly, implies the enduring ethnocentricity of the news flow. A logical point of departure is to outline how other scholars define media logic and other proximate concepts such as newsworthiness, news values, mediation, and mediatization. I am interested in how information is presented – or more specifically – which aspects of the story are selected and emphasised, and which pieces of information are obscured—what we may tersely label as framing. To my knowledge, Altheide and Snow (1979) were the first scholars to coin the term media logic, described as:

...the process through which media present and transmit information. Elements of this form include the various media and the formats used by these media. Format consists, in part, of how material is organized, the style in which it is presented, the focus or emphasis on particular characteristics of behaviour, and the grammar of media communication. Format becomes a framework or a perspective that is used to present as well as interpret phenomena”(Altheide and Snow 1979: 10, cited in Strömbäck, 2008:233, italics added for emphasis).

⁷⁰ The concept of *news selection* and *news values* also helps us to understand why coverage of EU politics has increased in recent decades. The EU has accrued further competences and the decisions have become more consequential and relevant to the public. Arguably, the magnitude of a European event increases insofar as it is likely to touch upon the people’s lives in tangible ways. The study by Statham (2010) shows that EU actors were most visible in policy domains where the EU has exclusive competences such as monetary policy.

Proponents of media logic theory argue that journalists are implicitly governed by certain news values which shape not only what is reported (i.e. first-order agenda-setting), but how it is presented to the public (i.e. second-order agenda-setting). The argument goes that the media have a predilection for certain news items as a result of tacit news values which shape their decision-making. Journalists apply certain criteria, pre-meditated or not, in the selection and framing of political stories (Bohle 1986, found in Galpin & Trenz, 2017).

The overarching assumption of media logic theory is that news values (what some scholars prefer to call ‘news factors’) influence the selection and treatment of news⁷¹. Below, I briefly outline both concepts as there are important differences between them, and nuanced perspectives of both which remind us that formatting is conditioned by the nature of the event as well as journalistic standards⁷². In the words of O’Neill et al., “news selection is not based merely on intrinsic aspects of events, but also on external functions, including occupational routines and constraints, and ideology” (found in Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009:168). Sande defines news factors as “a property of an event that increases its chances of becoming ‘news’” (Sande, 1971:222, cited in Peterson, 1981:144). However, defined in this way, the concept overlooks important factors exogenous to the event such as ideological and commercial considerations⁷³. By contrast, building on Brighton et al., definition, news values can be defined as the criteria or rules that news workers apply to determine what is ‘news’ and how it is presented (Bell, 1991:155, cited in Bednarek et al., 2012, para.2). The paper by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2013) helps elucidate the differences between news values and news factors. The former are more about what the journalist regards as newsworthy, for example stories which may attract advertising revenue, or accord with a media organisation’s ideological orientation. By contrast, the latter are newsworthy according to the nature of the event such as the status of the protagonists involved in the story, the magnitude of the event, or the geographical distance between the event and reporting country (Caple, 2013: 27).

No exposition of media logic theory and ‘news values’ should proceed without mentioning the seminal work of Galtung et al. (1965). These scholars were pioneers in developing the theory of news values and their insights laid the groundwork for later studies. Just as Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein are synonymous with the concept of gravity and the theory of relativity, Galtung and Ruge have become household names in the theory of media logic. Almost every scholar traces the study of newsworthiness to Galtung and Ruge’s taxonomy of news selectivity (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). As I mentioned earlier, news selection depends more on factors endogenous to the event such as the magnitude, whereas news treatment hinges more exogenous considerations such as the values and norms of journalists⁷⁴. Needless

⁷¹ What Altheide refers to as “formatting”.

⁷² Which journalists apply to varying degrees when selecting what to report and how to present it to the audience.

⁷³ Both *news values* and *news factors* help us to explain what makes a news item newsworthy.

⁷⁴ E.g. the worldview and ideological orientation of the media organisation, the professional standards of the journalist, the ethos and ideological leaning of the newspaper, and commercial demands.

to say that any binary classification is prone to fuzzy sets. However, in the interest of parsimony and unambiguity, I have grouped the newsworthiness criteria according to news selection or news treatment categories. Galtung and Ruge (1965)⁷⁵ devised a list of criteria⁷⁶ determining the prospect of an ‘event’ becoming news:

News selection

Frequency – Journalists are more inclined to select transient events because they conform to the finite demands of the publication cycle.

Threshold – Events with a greater magnitude are more likely to be selected because they are more likely to impact peoples’ lives than minor ones.

Unexpectedness – Events which are considered rare or unexpected are more likely to be selected as news.

Continuity – Events that were reported in the past have a higher prospect of being selected as news again because the audience is familiar with the story, and it is easily understood.

Reference to elite nations – Events involving elite nations are more likely to be selected because the actions of the powerful are more consequential⁷⁷.

Reference to elite persons – Events involving well-known public figures are more likely to be selected because their actions are considered more consequential given their influence. Moreover, the reader can more readily identify with an elite person given their ubiquity in the public eye⁷⁸.

News treatment

Meaningfulness – Events which are proximate geographically or which take place in culturally similar places are more likely to be selected as news. In addition, the portrayal of the news story is likely to be framed in ways that are familiar (i.e. similar meaning structures) and relevant to the reader (i.e. how does this event affect ‘us’?). A story can be made meaningful even if on first sight it does not seem to be so. For example, the relevance of a story can be constructed by connecting an event in a ‘far and distant’ land to the nation. In short, meaningfulness depends on the nature of the event, that is, what happened, where (e.g. geographical proximity) as well as how the story is presented.

Unambiguity – Events which can be clearly understood and interpreted by journalists and the audience are more likely to be selected as news. The onus here is mainly on the journalist and their ability to describe an event in succinct and unambiguous terms.

⁷⁵ Galtung et al. (1965) hypothesised that the more these criteria are observable in a potential news item, the more likely it is that the story would be covered (*news selection*). After the ‘sluicing’ phase, they expect that these criteria would be accentuated during the formatting phase (Phillips, 2015:14).

⁷⁶ For completeness sake, I set out a brief overview of each criterion above.

⁷⁷ Events involving the United States are more newsworthy because their circumstances inevitably affect other countries (the old adage “When America sneezes, the World catches a cold” comes to mind).

⁷⁸ For example, an Italian audience is more likely to self-identify with the Italian Prime Minister – compared to a peripheral political figure such as an Italian local councillor – because of their familiarity and notoriety.

Personalization – Events which are presented in terms of individual people – rather than structures, processes, abstractions and phenomena – are more newsworthy. Journalists are predilected to accentuate personification in the recital of an event⁷⁹.

Miscellaneous

Consonance – Events which are congruent with pre-existing narratives and frames of interpretation are more likely to be selected and accentuated accordingly.

Composition – Events which fit the medias ideological assumptions or meta-narratives are more likely to be selected and accentuated accordingly.

Negativity – Journalists are more inclined to report ‘bad’ news because it is generally more unambiguous as most people can agree on the tragedy or horror of an event (e.g. terrorist attacks). As such, journalists are more likely to accentuate the negative implications of an event.

It is important to note that these criteria are not mutually exclusive. For example, events which have been in the news several times in the past (i.e. continuity) are both more familiar and meaningful and thus easier to understand and interpret (i.e. unambiguity). As mentioned above, these factors have implications for both the selection and treatment of news, however, some values have more to do with the nature of the event itself (such as threshold) whereas personalisation has more to do with how journalists recite a happening.

As several studies demonstrate, newspapers, particularly the popular press, tend to dramatize events and reduce them to clashes between different characters akin to a soap opera. In crude terms, the study by Palmer shows that the popular press focus more on politicians and the quality press focus more on policy. In other words, there is a stronger human interest angle in the popular press (Palmer, 2000:167, found in Wahl-Jorgensen, 2009:167). In the mass media, an event is rarely portrayed as a manifestation of ongoing socioeconomic and political structures, and trends. My focus is on a subset of the news values, particularly, the meaningfulness criterion. Following Galtung et al. (1965) numerous scholars have modified this taxonomy either by subsuming criteria, changing the taxonomies wording, or adding additional news factors. The purpose of this paper is not to favour one taxonomy over another or generate my own list of news values. The aim of this chapter is, instead, to gather the different theoretical angles on the meaningfulness criterion and generate my own unique insights. In the next section, I begin to summarise how scholars have interpreted meaningfulness. I, secondly, argue that meaningfulness is inextricably linked to ethnocentrism which helps to explain why the media (and politicians) tend to adopt nationalistic frames and domesticate news coverage. Advocates of media logic theory have approached meaningfulness from different angles and employed different terms. Meaningfulness may be understood as an umbrella term for related concepts such as identity, proximity, familiarity and relevance. People will readily make sense of other people whom they regard as culturally

⁷⁹ The audience is, generally speaking, more interested in the characters composing a plot than its subtext.

similar or can readily identify with (proximity). Moreover, information that is regarded as important and consequential is more likely to grab an audience's attention.

Meaningfulness

Most scholars trace news values in general and meaningfulness in particular to the seminal work of Galtung and Ruge. Of the myriad of frequencies emitted by the countless happenings around the world likened to broadcasting stations by Galtung et al., only a handful of them are able to capture the radio receiver's attention. According to Galtung, "the more meaningful the signal, the more probable that it will be recorded as worth listening to" (Galtung et al., 1965:65). The external world effuses a myriad of happenings which cannot all be experienced by us at once given our limited vantage point. We do not have a bird's eye view of the world. We can only directly experience happenings in our immediate surroundings. To make sense of the inchoate, illimitable phenomena deriving from the external world, we must compartmentalise these unbounded stimuli into bitesize segments of reality which are commonly referred as 'events'. However, selecting an event alone is not sufficient. In order to be palatable to prospective viewers, events must be simplified and rendered meaningful by journalists. The media do not merely recite happenings—they help us to make sense of them. There are both normative and commercial reasons why journalists aim to make a story meaningful. Their job is to make events intelligible to the reader in order to increase the saleability of the product viz. news item (Allern, 2002). Loading context, identification and meaning onto a story, for example, by referring to familiar public figures (i.e. celebrities) or relating current happenings to past events that the audience are familiar with not only attracts audience's to a story but helps them to make sense of it. An event only makes sense if the audiences senses are (re-) acquainted with, inter alia, familiar characters, narratives, themes, symbols, and language. But this begs the question: where does the process of signification take root? As Hall argues, news values taken alone do not explain how and why stories acquire meaning. They tell us little about what shapes the priorities and choices of journalists. The main thrust of Hall's argument is that news values do not exist in a vacuum but are embedded in deep-rooted ideological structures. In essence, "news values...can be seen as an ideologically loaded way of perceiving – and presenting – the world" (Hall, 1973:235, found in Jorgensen, 2009:169). News values are not neutral but reflect pre-existing 'ideological structures' which have the effect of buttressing pre-existing power structures (Hall, 1973:235). In short, formal news values are undergirded by 'cultural maps of meaning'⁸⁰. Hall adds that there is a deep latent structure and 'cultural map' of pre-existing 'consensus

⁸⁰ What we can also describe as "stocks of cultural knowledge" or "cultural frames of reference".

knowledge' which primes how journalists process and depict the world around them⁸¹(Hall, 1978:10). These 'cultural maps' help journalists to navigate through the chaos of the external world by providing stories that people can make sense of—turning an ostensibly tangential happening into something intelligible and meaningful⁸².

Identification

Other scholars, notably Schulz, opt for the term identification. According to Schulz (1982), identification increases the prospect of a story being read. For Schulz, identification is the umbrella term for proximity and relevance. The closer an event is geographically or socio-culturally, the more newsworthy a story is (Schultz, 2007). Events that happen close to 'home' and stories that are seen through a national pair of glasses help audience's readily identify with a story (Jorgensen, 2009:165). Similarly, in Galtung's view, the common denominator of cultural proximity and relevance is identification⁸³. For Östgaard, a story "must give the receiver some possibility of identifying himself with the news ... the greater the possibilities of identification with the news, the greater will be the news flow, and conversely, that the less the possibilities of identification, the more the news flow will be hampered" (Östgaard, 1965:46-51). For Östgaard, familiarity yields greater possibilities for identification⁸⁴. In the words of Watson, "we are more 'at home' with what is familiar to us, [and] generally more interested in people and places we know than those strange to us" (Watson, 1998:119). Likewise, Phillips argues that an 'event' is more likely to resonate when audiences can identify with the person(s) involved (Phillips, 2015: 20-21). Galtung asserts that news should "provide the reader with some kind of identification—it should refer to him or his nation or group of nations" (1965:84). These remarks still ring true today. Had you watched the BBC News coverage of the 9/11 terror attacks, you probably would have heard about the dozens of British victims, and in a similar vein, if you had tuned in to Rai News, you would probably have been told about the dozens of Italian casualties. This is not the recollection of two separate events but two different accounts of the same event. This re-contextualisation of the event is not completely unpremeditated, but rather a part of a media strategy to enhance an audiences identification with the story. This re-packaging of the event prompts viewers to think to themselves: it could have been me in those towers...

⁸¹ However, the 'consensus knowledge' to which Hall (1973) refers is not part of some sinister plot to manipulate the public but results from, *inter alia*, a reliance on traditional and accredited sources in order to maintain the quality and objectivity of journalism. As a result, journalists maintain and reinforce existing power structures.

⁸² Hall's thesis is supported by Hartley who argues that there are important ideological determinants governing the selection and presentation of news (Jorgensen, 2009:163).

⁸³ What Jorgensen calls 'cultural familiarity'.

⁸⁴ We can put it another way: it is easier to 'put oneself in another person's shoes' if one is already familiar with whom is putting on the shoes. In short, what is familiar, is also relevant.

Proximity

Proximity was identified as a news value as far back as 1695 by the German writer, Kaspar Steiler (found in Watson, 1998:117). More recently, Østgaard (1965) argues that a story is meaningful insofar as it is proximate. The same scholar adds that proximity is a three-dimensional concept that may refer to geographical, cultural and temporal dimensions⁸⁵ (Østgaard, 1965:46). Cultural proximity means to be similar to the hegemonic culture of the reporting country. For Peterson, proximity means “the extent to which the event involves an international actor similar to one's own country” (Peterson, 1981:146). I, however, would extend this definition to issues and themes that are similar to the country of the reader. Indeed, as Harcup (2020) aptly points out, proximity may refer to, inter alia, the event, issue, people, and/or location. An event is newsworthy if it literally takes place near the reporting country or involves issues which are salient and consequential for the reporting country (e.g. economic interdependency, or historical and strategic alliances)⁸⁶. For instance, the 2005 London bombings were acutely newsworthy to American audiences because they were familiar with and could relate to the ‘event, with the memory of 9/11 still raw. The incident also happened in the UK which is a strong cultural, historical and strategic ally and American citizens were among the casualties. In the words of Harcup, “stories about groups or nations perceived to be influential with, or culturally or historically familiar to, the audience” are more newsworthy (Harcup, 2017:1482). An event may also be meaningful by virtue of the circumstances of the event. For example, an event which literally takes places on ones doorstep engenders more meaning for audiences compared to events in faraway lands. The scholar, Venables, offers an interesting explanation. For him, events happening in one’s own backyard are more amenable to drawing attention because of acute perceptions of risk and imminent security concerns⁸⁷ (Venables, 2005:1-24; found in Brighton and Foy, 2007:13). According to Watson, news or gossip about your neighbours across the road or neighbouring towns and nations is more important because it feels more consequential and real (Watson, 1998: 119). He adds that what affects ‘them’ could also affect ‘us’ hence the newsworthiness of an event involving a neighbour.

For Galtung et al., (1965), an event should also be culturally proximate to the reporting country. In their words, “the culturally distant will be passed by more easily and not be noticed” (1965:54). These scholars use the analogy of a radio listener from England, in Marocco, who skips Arabic radio stations because they are unintelligible to her until she stumbles upon an English-speaking radio station

⁸⁵ This begs the question: *proximity* to whom—the news gatherer or the audience? For Harley (1982), cultural proximity to the target audience should be prioritised as news values are widely accepted to be audience-oriented (Einar Østgaard, 1965).

⁸⁶ For example, the happenings emanating from Brexit were geographically (the distance separating the UK from the Netherlands is approximately only 442km) and figuratively proximate to the Netherlands, for the latter has strong economic and strategic ties with the United Kingdom. Brexit was a salient issue in the Netherlands since what happened in the UK had significant ramifications for the lives of Dutch people. For example, the livelihoods of Dutch fisherman were at stake in Brexit negotiations, as they are heavily reliant on unfettered access to British waters.

⁸⁷ Venables draws on insights from evolutionary psychology and anthropology.

(1965:67). The radio frequency is meaningful because it is culturally and linguistically familiar to the listener⁸⁸. In sum, familiar signals are more likely to grab the audience's attention. Cultural proximity is broadly defined by Østgaard to include political views and attitudes (Østgaard, 1965:46). For Harcup et al., (2001), events involving nations or other social groups considered 'culturally similar' are meaningful and ipso facto newsworthy⁸⁹. An event is meaningful if it takes place in a country with deep cultural or political ties to the reporting country. For example, news about a severe drought in Australia would be more meaningful to British audiences than news about flash floods in Bangladesh given the strong cultural affinities between these two countries. In a similar vein, news about a plane crash in Qatar involving British passengers would be regarded as more meaningful because the story involves nationals of the reporting country. For Jewkes, cultural proximity refers to the relevance of an event to the audience. Cultural proximity may also refer to news stories which are congruent with the values, beliefs, and interests of the observer (Jewkes, 2004). However, cultural proximity may strengthen or weaken depending on the cultural mood and political climate of the times (Jewkes, 2004: 219). The tenure of Donald Trump probably contributed to 'transatlantic drift' between the United States and Western Europe. Similarly, the Brexit debacle will probably drive an ideological wedge between the United Kingdom and continental Europe for years to come. Although cultural changes tend to lag behind political ones, we can confidently predict that the UK will diverge politically and culturally from the EU in the next few decades.

Relevance

Other scholars such as Harcup opt for the term relevance which denotes "stories that might affect someone personally, their family, neighbours, workmates, or their locality" (Harcup, 2020: 28). With this definition in mind, geographical proximity, and to a lesser extent, cultural familiarity are more likely to rouse affections. Events which are proximate in both senses of the word are relevant. A foreign event is immediately relevant if it happens near the reporting country. Although geographical proximity generally depends on where the event happened, it can also depend on where correspondents are based (Golding and Elliot, 1979; found in Jorgensen, 2009: 166). For example, the BBC has newsrooms all over the world, with a high number of journalists in Northern America. Events are, thus, 'closer' despite the reporting country being far away geographically speaking. However, proximity is also in the eye of the beholder⁹⁰. For instance, an event can 'feel' close to home if a family member is involved. To use

⁸⁸ For Golding and Elliot (1979) an event should be familiar for journalists and the audience.

⁸⁹ A shortcoming of Harcup's paper is the lack of explanation on *why* events involving culturally similar social groups are considered more newsworthy. The only explanation provided by the author is that "it fits into the news selector's frame of reference" (2001:263). The answer is provided by Hall's exposition of what he calls "informal news values". In other words, there is essentially a pre-existing ideological substratum that grounds news values.

⁹⁰In other words, proximity is subjective as well.

the example by Østgaard, “a fight in an American city may be physically nearer than a battle in the South Pacific, but if a mother has a son in the battle, then how much more easily can she identify herself with the distant battle than with the nearer fight!” (Østgaard, 1965:61). In this example, the relevance of the event is magnified because it affects a personal family member—the mother is emotionally and psychologically engrossed in what is happening to her son in the battlefield⁹¹.

Crucially, for a journalist, a news story can also be made relevant by linking an event in a ‘galaxy far, far away’ to the homeland. To juxtapose the words of Harcup and Galtung, the relevance of an event can be “bolted on” (Harcup, 2020:28) “via a pattern of conflict with one’s own group” (Galtung et al., 1965:67). Alternatively, a seemingly irrelevant foreign event can be re-contextualised within the mediated sphere by incorporating domestic actors in a given story or connecting a foreign event to a domestic issue. Similarly, the journalist can describe an event by employing meaning structures⁹² that audiences are familiar with. Galtung hits the nail on the head: “an event may happen in a culturally distant place but still be loaded with meaning in terms of what it may imply for the reader or listener” (1965:67). For example, in American newspapers, news items reporting on suspected human rights abuses in Belarus can be loaded with meaning by interviewing the American Ambassador to Belarus or relating the event to American foreign policy strategy. In short, relevance is both a product of the event itself⁹³ and news treatment⁹⁴. It is difficult for a news reporter to fabricate the location of the event. But a news reporter can format a story in such a way that it ‘feels’ proximate. To paraphrase Harcup, events involving issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience – that is, culturally familiar social groups – are more newsworthy (Harcup et al., 2001:279). Events in faraway lands can be rendered newsworthy “if they impinge on the news-gatherer’s home culture” (Harcup, 1982:77). However, I disagree with Harcup’s emphasis on the newsgatherer. In my opinion, an event should be first and foremost relevant to the audience secondly the newsgatherer⁹⁵. This view is shared by McQuail who argues that it is the audience who ultimately decide what is relevant. For Allern, the event should be “relevant to the cultural circle to which the medium caters” (2002:151). But just as waiters cater to their diners, journalists largely cater to their audience⁹⁶. A caveat is in order, however. Needless to say that we cannot discern from the fuzzy social aggregate of the audience what every member considers to be interesting and relevant. There is not one audience but pluralistic and fragmented audiences. That said, we can broadly claim that most audiences are interested in news that is geographically or culturally proximate to them.

⁹¹ In other words, an event may ‘feel’ close to home despite being thousands of miles away.

⁹² Also referred to as ‘frames of interpretation’.

⁹³ i.e. the people involved in events or features of the event itself such as location (Caple, 2013:5).

⁹⁴ In other words, *how* the story is told (i.e. frames of interpretation, structures of meaning etc.).

⁹⁵ Or as Peterson (1981) states, the event should be relevant to the ‘observer’ (i.e. consumer of news).

⁹⁶ That said, I acknowledge that journalists also have to cater to the demands of the editor (which is inexorably tied to what the audience demands).

In Peterson's view, relevance implies that an event should include an actor which is regarded as 'important' to the reporting country (Peterson, 1981). This is, however, an overly restrictive definition which belies its constructivist nature. Journalists can enhance the relevance of a news item by recontextualising the event by linking the event to national issues, themes, narratives, ideologies, and so on. In other words, relevance depends as much if not more on how the story is told rather than what happened. Put another way, relevance is both endogenous and exogenous to the event itself. Regarding the former, what happens 'out there' (i.e. factors endogenous to the event) largely determines its importance and relevance. For example, cataclysmic events such as earthquakes and tsunamis with large death tolls are self-evidently more newsworthy than minor seismic disturbances with no lasting damage⁹⁷. In regard to the latter scenario, how the 'event' is formatted (i.e. factors exogenous to the event) determine its relevance. Journalists can manufacture the relevance of a seemingly unrelated and isolated event in a faraway land in both the geographical and cultural sense by highlighting how it affects 'the nations' wider economic and strategic interests⁹⁸ (McQuail, 2010:262). In short, events that impinge on the "national interest" are self-evidently relevant to journalists and observers of the reporting country. News about elite nations and influential politicians are more relevant because their actions are more consequential to audiences' lives. Foreign news that point towards "the homeland" to quote Billig is more newsworthy because they rouse the affections, sentiments, and loyalties of the reader⁹⁹. For Schulz (1982), events that are "consequential" or "interesting" to the reader are relevant (Jorgensen, 2009:165). Regarding the former, news involving elite nations or powerful persons is relevant because their actions are more likely to impact the lives of the audience, and news that is deemed interesting is ergo relevant (and vice versa). In the words of Östgaard, "a report must obviously be of some interest or importance...before it is published" (Östgaard, 1965:51). McQuail's Mass Communication theory enriches our understanding of relevance. McQuail reminds us that relevance and interest are two sides of the same coin. According to one prominent Fleet Street journalist, the key question governing news selection boils down to: "Does it interest me?" (Hetherington, 1985: 8-9, found in Jorgensen, 2009). Although journalists¹⁰⁰ decide what they think the public would find relevant or useful¹⁰¹, the audience ultimately choose what is interesting and useful information¹⁰² (McQuail, 2005). For O'Neill et al., news should ultimately be relevant to the audience (2001:279). In order to enhance the relevance of a foreign story, journalists can refer to familiar faces, link an event to 'hot' domestic issues, or report on nations that are strategically and economically important (i.e. trade ties)

⁹⁷ Media organisations – perhaps reflecting audience demands – are perversely curious about tragic events.

⁹⁸ The Netherlands and Brexit issue comes to mind given the Dutch economy's significant trade dependency with the United Kingdom.

⁹⁹ There is ample evidence showing that most peoples' loyalties are primarily national (see countless Eurobarometer polls, for instance).

¹⁰⁰ Normatively speaking, we would hope and expect journalists to be bound by values, editorial standards and have a sense of duty to inform the public.

¹⁰¹ i.e. agenda-setting and gatekeeping role.

¹⁰² What journalists deem as relevant is not necessarily congruent with what audiences are actually interested in. The study by Burgoon suggests an incongruence between the expected interest of an event in the eyes of journalists and what the audience regards as interesting (Burgoon, 1992:218, found in McQuail).

to the reporting country¹⁰³. As for Golding et al., the newsworthiness of an event largely hinges on what the majority of the audience deems interesting, significant, and relevant (Golding & Elliot, 1979; found in Jorgensen, 2009, 166). According to Burgoon whose study reveals what journalists consider as relevant news, a news item is relevant if one of three elements are satisfied: firstly a news story must ‘touch upon’ the audience’s lives in some way, secondly the content of the story should be ‘unexpected’ or ‘interesting’, and thirdly, the event should relate to ‘nearby or large-scale happenings’ (McQuail, 1992:218, paraphrased). As far as the UK National Council for the Training of Journalists is concerned—relevance is news, period. The same define news as “information—new, relevant to the reader, topical and perhaps out of the ordinary” (found in Harcup et al., 2009:162). For the journalist, Olav Njaastad, proximity consists of several dimensions, inter alia: time, emotional proximity, geographical proximity, cultural proximity, effects, and proximity in terms of effects or consequences (Njaastad, 1999:36, found in Allern, 2002:140). The last of these (in italics above) overlaps with but is not the same as relevance. For instance, an event can be made relevant by reformatting its contents insofar as it ‘feels’ familiar to domestic audiences. However, a relevant event is not always consequential for the audience. To illustrate, an event might be relevant by virtue of its unexpected, quirky, and interesting content despite having no ramifications for the domestic audience. A story might also be relevant because it evokes memories of a similar recent happening. For example, the 2011 Japanese tsunami likely to have struck a chord with audiences in Thailand, with the tsunami devastation in 2004 still fresh in their memory. Schulz (1982) uses the terms relevance and importance interchangeably. For him, what is interesting is relevant, and vice versa. Compared to the news values of unexpectedness or timeliness, relevance is a highly subjective and qualitative news value. What is perceived as relevant to one person might be ignored by others, whereas most people can agree that a school shooting is an extraordinary and unexpected event. But why should journalists provide stories of relevance? The answer is self-evident but should nonetheless be pointed out to enrich our understanding of why relevance and identification make a story newsworthy. Allern’s theoretical insights help to demystify the debate concerning these news values which are rather abstract, and which tell us little about what governs news selection. In his view, a market-driven and commercial logic underpins news values—particularly relevance and identification. Media organisations ultimately want to sell as many news stories (i.e. products) as possible on the media market. As Allern bluntly remarks—“news is literally for sale” (Allern, 2002:142). To this end, they must make a product which is palatable to many consumers (i.e. the reader). In other words, relevance is not an end in itself but a means to making the product more desirable for consumers. To use an analogy, high street fashion labels keep abreast with the latest trends in the world of fashion because they ultimately want people to buy their clothes and maximise profitability. According to Allern, the media market should be understood in a similar way—market-based reasons ultimately determine news selection. In essence, Allern argues that

¹⁰³ Not surprisingly, domestic ones are more notorious because they dominate media coverage.

news selection and treatment is shaped by, inter alia, “the geographical area of coverage and type of audience” (2002:142). However, as Allern argues, this is about more than proximity—yes, events closer to home tend to be more interesting and relevant to the audience than distant ones. But the relevance of and identification with a story should reflect the socio-economic and cultural background of the target audience because it is more newsworthy and ipso facto saleable (Allern, 2002, found in Jorgensen, 2009:167). The selection and format of a news story should therefore be tailored to the target audience of the newspaper. If national newspapers’ main catchment area is domestic audiences, a news story should prioritise domestic news accordingly as it feels more proximate. Or at the very least, a foreign event should be formatted in such a way that highlights the relevance of the story to ‘the nation’ or ‘the national interest’ in order to make the ‘product’ more desirable to prospective buyers. By the same logic, a local newspaper should emphasise the relevance of a story to local audiences (Allern, 2002: 142). Not surprisingly, the main catchment area national dailies¹⁰⁴ should be everyone residing in the nation¹⁰⁵.

Meaningfulness and media ethnocentrism

Hartley poses the timely question “[whether] news [is] a propaganda mouthpiece for mindless nationalism?” (Hartley, 1982:8). I would answer this question in the affirmative for several reasons laid out below. One of the main questions of my theoretical framework is: To what extent do communicative throughputs¹⁰⁶ subvert the initial inputs of political communication?¹⁰⁷ By ‘subversion’ I refer to the media’s role in domesticating and dare I say nationalizing discourse¹⁰⁸. News values particularly the meaningfulness and status/elite criterion provide a partial, but nevertheless plausible explanation for why we may expect public discourse to be ethnocentric. The reasons for this ‘unwitting [ethnocentric bias]’ – to quote McQuail – in news reporting can be traced back to the interest/relevance¹⁰⁹ criterion outlined earlier. It is generally accepted that news flow is audience-oriented (see McQuail, 1983 and Ostgaard, 1965). In other words, the final arbiter of news flow is the audience viz. consumer who is assumed to be uninterested in faraway happenings¹¹⁰. To interest the reader, a foreign event needs to be

¹⁰⁴ The clue is in the name...

¹⁰⁵ This implies that instances of ‘banal nationalism’ (a la Billig, 1995) can be expected to pervade discourses concerning foreign news because they rouse the most palpable affections and loyalties of the reader.

¹⁰⁶ The heuristic device of communicative *inputs*, *throughputs*, and *outputs* is useful in helping us to understand the dynamics of political communication. Communicative *throughputs* derive, for the most part, from the mass media, whereas *inputs* are supplied by political protagonists through political claims.

¹⁰⁷ Or, as Gould asks, why should we expect newspapers to indulge in “national narcissism”? (Gould, 1969:69, found in Peterson, 1981:146).

¹⁰⁸ These are two perverse effects of media throughputs.

¹⁰⁹ As I touched on earlier, interest and relevance are inextricably linked.

¹¹⁰ Needless to say that we cannot treat the ‘audience’ as one, homogeneous entity. For instance, some people may have an acquired taste for certain topics, or news that is presented in different ways. Some people for personal reasons may be more interested in events that happen on the other side of the world. However, the taxonomy of news values were devised as a rough guide for identifying which factors determine the newsworthiness of a potential news item.

relevant to the ‘home’ audience who is typically bound to the nation¹¹¹. This is because both news production and consumption is nationally structured. Most newspapers are distributed nationwide, or at most, to other countries with a large diaspora of the reporting country. Readerships, moreover, are mainly confined to natives of the reporting country. I suspect the share of domestic audiences is even more pronounced for media organisations in which the language communicated is not widely spoken on an international scale (e.g. Dutch or Polish). That is to say that the transnationality of news flow is conditioned by the degree of ubiquity of a given language. Inevitably, *de Telegraaf* – which reports news in Dutch – is unlikely to attract audiences beyond the reporting country save for Dutch expats around the world. McQuail identified several foreign event factors predictive of news coverage, *inter alia*, “occurrence close to home” and “relevance [or interest] to the audience¹¹²” (McQuail, 2010:311). It immediately becomes apparent that these news factors “point towards the [national] homeland” – to quote Billig. As a result, McQuail concludes that news coverage can be expected to have “a nationalistic and ethnocentric bias in the choice of topics and opinions expressed and in the view of the world assumed or portrayed” (McQuail, 2020:386).

The connection between proximity and ethnocentrism appears self-evident but this does not mean we should not restate the obvious or explore it further. In the words of George Orwell, “sometimes the first duty of intelligent men is the restatement of the obvious”¹¹³. What seems self-evident is not always straightforward to explain. In the words of George Bernard Shaw, “no question is so difficult to answer as that to which the answer is obvious.”¹¹⁴ It seems obvious that for a Calabrian, happenings in Italy feel more relevant compared to happenings in Brussels or Madrid. Nevertheless, it is not immediately clear why we should expect ‘the nation’ to reign supreme *vis-à-vis* closer sources of identification such as local or regional identities. However, as several scholars argue, identity is situational. We possess multiple and overlapping identities that often lie dormant but may be roused in the appropriate context. If, for example, I am in the United Kingdom (my home country) and a passer-by asks: where are you from...? I would reply with the town or region where I grew up (in my case, Weybridge in the region of Surrey). By contrast, if I am abroad, and am asked the same question, I would respond with the country where I grew up (the United Kingdom in my case). In short, in a domestic context, one habitually refers to the local level of territorial attachment, but in a transnational context, one typically refers to the national level. The inter-state bargaining logic of EU politics lends itself to reifying the national ‘we’ at the expense of the European ‘other’. EU politics is framed – particularly during EU council summits – as a zero-sum game between nations. Disagreements and at times deep conflicts

¹¹¹ This is McQuail’s argument in a nutshell.

¹¹² This begs the question: *whose* home and relevance to *whom*? The answer seems largely self-evident: mass media organisations cater predominantly to domestic audiences. Thus, news flow must be relevant to the domestic market. In the context of EU news coverage, ‘home’ for French, Italian, and German people is not Brussels, but Paris, Rome, and Berlin respectively. This is not merely conjecture but is reflected in countless polls gaging levels of territorial attachment.

¹¹³ This is a paraphrased quote from George Orwell in his 1939 review of Bertrand Russell’s book: *Power: a New Social Analysis*. The quote was paraphrased by the famous English literary journal, *The Adelphi* (quotesfromthepast.com).

¹¹⁴ In the wise words of Sherlock Holmes, “there is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact” (Doyle, 1992:161).

come to the fore between different nations and the EU, not between different towns, cities, and regions. Conflicts in EU politics manifest as national power struggles which provide a favourable environment for national identities to flourish. Identities lie dormant without some threat or conflict between competing identities.

In the bartering of EU politics the stakes are high for nation states: national governments are eager to seize upon a ‘victory’ in an EU council summit to boost their own popularity among the national electorate. National governments are aware that the media at home would eviscerate them if they made concessions to Brussels that weakened the ‘national interest’. By contrast, in EU politics, local governments and city mayors have little or nothing to play for. The interests of the commune or *département* and thus local identities and interests are not at stake in EU politics. In sum, the context of EU politics squares up the nation state against the EU. Needless to say that EU politics does not purely function according to an intergovernmental logic. The EU’s day-to-day ‘comitology’ policy-making confers an integral role to non-state actors in EU policy-making. However, the mass media’s portrayal of EU politics is more decisive to shaping public opinion for reasons laid out above. As de Wilde (2019) argues, the logic of the media portrays EU politics predominantly as an intergovernmental institution. The mass media hone in on conflict, bad news, and seize on any disagreement between national governments and the EU. The mass media are interested in personalities and conflicts. EU council summits are more readily newsworthy – compared to other areas of EU decision-making – because they tend to be fraught by conflict and controversy between well-known politicians. Not surprisingly, both national media organisations and national politicians will be predisposed to emphasise the relevance of an event to the national interest and evoke national identity when debating EU politics. By the same token, local newspapers will frame national events by emphasising their relevance to the local community and appealing to local identities. The bottom line is that journalists need to tailor the news story to whom they are reporting. Both media organisations and politicians alike must tailor their discourse according to where their target audience is based¹¹⁵. Identities are contextual; national news is likely to rouse local, regional, and national identities, whereas European news is likely to galvanise national identities because the national interest is habitually pitted against other member states or the EU as a whole.¹¹⁶ It is also important to note that the logic of *de jure* political authority is mainly intergovernmental. Sovereignty is pooled and shared between national member states and not between cities and regions. It is thus no surprise that news is typically framed as an intergovernmental ‘toing and froing’ between nations. As enshrined by the EU treaties, national member states remain the cornerstone of political power at the EU level (the power of veto) whereas towns and cities merely have an advisory role.

¹¹⁵ Just as I tailor my response to the question: *where are you from?* according to where the question is asked (see above).

¹¹⁶ According to Risse, we can discern a European identity *lite* but not a thick European identity on a par with national belonging Risse (2010). In the pecking order of identities – if we are to trust countless Eurobarometer polls – most people would opt for the national-*first*-and-European-*second* orders of allegiance.

Trenz (2008) espoused the term “media nationalism” to denote the re-interpretation of transnational issues by the media “within contextualised systems of meaning and particular cultures” (Trenz, 2008:297). The crux of his argument is that events of a European origin are essentially re-contextualised, and in so doing, re-nationalised, by media organisations operating within their own unique and variegated national frameworks. The process is analogous to white light shining through a prism at one end and emitting kaleidoscopic colours at the other¹¹⁷. In a prism, the same source of light may create an array of different colours, just as events of a European origin may fragment into 27 nationalised debates¹¹⁸. The perverting effects of reporting European news means that audience’s essentially see Europe through a national pair of glasses¹¹⁹. Journalism essentially operates within a straitjacket of specific political and national editorial cultures (Michailidou et al. 2014). Media organisations from different countries operate within distinctive socio-economic, cultural, and political settings. They will thus employ the appropriate meaning structures and depict events in ways that audiences will be familiar with¹²⁰. Media output, thus, manifests as the reproduction of ethnocentric norms, values, and interpretations (Trenz, 2008:297). Journalists, not unlike politicians, will defend the ‘national interest’ because it enhances a news items potential relevance and meaning for prospective readers. Media systems in general and journalists in particular are embedded in national ways of doing, norms and values, customs and habits (Trenz, 2008). As a result of the heterogeneous national journalistic cultures and routines, foreign events are effectively translated into bespoke frames of interpretation that make sense to national audiences. The result is 27 variegated representations of ‘European’ happenings. This phenomenon has been labelled by scholars as ‘segmented Europeanisation’¹²¹. If, as Van Dijk claims, “events are attributed higher news values if they are about our own people or when our own people are involved”, then stories of a European origin that focuses on ‘the nation’ or about our fellow ‘national citizens’ will score higher in terms of newsworthiness (Van Dijk, 2009:200). This is because the most salient territorial level of attachment is national identity according to countless Eurobarometer polls. If you pit the national-first and European-second identities against each other, there is a runaway winner—national identity.

This ethnocentric bias also manifests in the portrayal of events. If a seemingly tangential ‘foreign’ event does not initially embroil a nation, journalists can nonetheless (re-)format a story to enhance its relevance. For example, journalists can ‘bolt on’ well-known domestic actors in a news item; relate

¹¹⁸ Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon* album cover comes to mind.

¹¹⁹ News reporting can also be compared to the process of casting with liquid iron being poured into congealed cavities of 27 different moulds.

¹²¹ I believe, however, that this term is inappropriate on the following grounds: can the Europeanisation concept which implies converging norms and interpretations coexist with fragmented debates within national boundaries? The only common denominator of debates on European affairs is that Europe is highly visible in terms of media coverage. The volume of coverage should not be interpreted as part of a more profound teleological process of Europeanisation in political communication.

issues deriving from the foreign event to domestic ones; or interpret events from perspectives that domestic audiences are familiar with. To illustrate, the issue of migration can be interpreted from a national perspective in terms of ‘them’ (i.e. migrant) not being able to assimilate with “our” national values¹²² (Van Dijk, 2009:200). This framing of the issue makes it feel more intimate because “our” values and national *modus vivendi* are at stake. The context of European politics lures journalists into the temptation of highlighting issues of national concern and European ‘othering’. As Curran and Seaton argue, nations differ in respect of media consumption and media content. Audiences viewing habits vary widely according to nationality, and the national container remains a very meaningful way for understanding politics (Curran et al., 1997:253). For instance, the nation state is the main territorial level where decisions are made. Decisions are made in the interests of the national constituency, with the interests of non-nationals largely excluded. The national container gives order and structure to the unboundedness, vastness and chaos of the external world. The nationally imagined community is loaded with meaning compared to the nascent and faintly imagined European community. National meta narratives and national stereotypes have had much more time to crystallise in the minds of people than European equivalents. The relatively new EU polity evokes a plethora of – at times irreconcilable – meanings¹²³. This makes it even more difficult for people to make sense of this polysemantic Europe. Despite the nation evoking multiple meanings, there is still more national ‘unity in diversity’. The European Union consists of 27 member states whose citizens understanding and representation of the EU varies considerably according to country, region, town, and village. In this respect the nation holds a ‘home advantage’ (excuse the pun!) compared to the novel EU construct, with narratives having benefited from centuries of national storytelling.

We should also ask ourselves: what is at stake in debating EU politics? Political integration has begun to incorporate issues of high politics, that is, issues that strike at the heart of the sovereignty of a nation state. These matters are a fertile ground for journalists and politicians alike to rouse national sentiments. With advancing political integration, EU politics is, thus, increasingly debated in the context of sovereignty and defence of the national interest. A strong intergovernmental zero-sum game logic underpins EU politics. National executives go to Brussels to seek concessions for their respective member states. This logic is accentuated by the mass media who are drawn to the inter-state bargaining ‘soap opera’ of EU Council summits¹²⁴ (de Wilde, 2019). As de Wilde (2019) rightly argues, identity should be understood as an effective political mobilisation strategy. Appealing to the most palpable sources of belonging will help both journalists to draw in audiences and politicians attract voters. The same dynamics of news values may also apply to the world of politics: political statements which are relevant, consequential, important, and identitarian are more likely to grab voters’ attention. Because

¹²² Van Dijk made similar observations on racism in the news.

¹²³ For some people, Europe is understood as monoracial and Christian, and a cosmopolitanism, religiously pluralistic, multicultural Europe is conceived as incompatible.

¹²⁴ By contrast, happenings involving supranational actors are less newsworthy because they score lower on *identification* (de Wilde, 2019:1199-1200).

national identity remains a stronger source of belonging, we can expect increasing EU coverage to be met by strengthening national narratives (de Wilde, 2019). The politicisation of European integration is a fertile terrain for national doctrines to prevail because issues touch upon national sovereignty. The question at the forefront of most politicians' minds in the context of EU politics is: what is the national interest? Furthermore, arguably, the entitativity of the nation has become more pronounced as a result of advancing political integration. EU integration began in the areas of soft politics¹²⁵ – which left untouched the most important prerogatives of member states – but has slowly encroached in matters of hard politics¹²⁶. EU debates changed from questions such as—should we classify Cassis as a liquor? to—should we open up our borders to refugees¹²⁷? In EU politics, national self-referentiality is highly salient, and the “we” is almost always “the nation” (de Wilde, 2019:12).

Moreover, non-domestic actors are expected to score lower in respect of status/elite because domestic actors are *ceteris paribus* more well-known than international actors. Most Italians are more familiar with the current Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Luigi di Maio than his German counterpart, Heiko Maas. We can reasonably expect that Italian people will probably be more familiar with the Mayor of Rome, Roberto Gualtieri, than the Prime Minister of Finland, Sanna Marin, despite the former occupying a lower ranking position. That is to say that status also depends on levels of publicity. A ruler's *de jure* political authority is diminished if they cannot attract publicity. This insights help us explain the domestication¹²⁸ phenomenon of foreign news in public spheres¹²⁹. Journalists recontextualise events to enhance the relevance and interest of the story¹³⁰. As de Wilde rightly points out, journalists' “tell EU stories through national lenses to score higher on identification” (de Wilde, 2019:1206). As national identity is the strongest level of attachment, it is logical for journalists and political actors to evoke it in public discourse¹³¹.

In sum, I raise doubts about the propensity of national public spheres' to transnationalize. This is because communicative inputs are essentially hardwired to speak on behalf of ‘the nation’. This is not surprising bearing in mind that elected representatives represent, first and foremost, local and national

¹²⁵ i.e. negative integration such as removing obstacles to trade.

¹²⁶ i.e. issues concerning migration and defence policy.

¹²⁷ See the Cassis de Dijon case (120/78).

¹²⁸ Referring to domestic actors in events of foreign origin is an example of ‘domesticated’ news coverage.

¹²⁹ As I argued earlier, the script either writes itself, that is, the event already contains a story by virtue of what happened (e.g. event 1 involving *x* and *y*) or the script is amended by the film director who invites new actors onto the stage (e.g. event *Mark2* involving *x*, *y* and *z*).

¹³⁰ Journalists behave in a similar way to global fashion companies: just as the latter adapt to the local market by restyling clothes according to local and national tastes, journalists format news in their own language using national frames of interpretation.

¹³¹ It is fairly uncontroversial to claim that *the nation vis-à-vis the European Union* remains the most readily identifiable socio-political unit. Countless Eurobarometer polls testify to the steadfast sense of belonging to one's nation. This contradicts Hannerz's hasty prophesising about the “withering away of the nation” (Hannerz, 1993). It is more difficult for people to familiarise with the European ‘meta nation’ which lack a coherent and homogenous identity¹³¹. A caveat is in order. I do not claim that nations are homogenous social units—quite the contrary, actually. We can, however, safely claim that the nation is less marked by diversity than the monolithic, heterogeneous EU polity. Moreover, national stories, metanarratives, symbols, and stereotypes have had longer to set in the minds of people. The European ‘meta nation’ is a comparatively novel construct. To compound matters, the nation continues to steal the limelight in terms of publicity, with Europe concealed from the audience's view, save for exceptional periods.

constituents. Ethnocentric framing should be understood as a calculated and effective mobilising strategy. Lobbying practices and protests, moreover, are generally undertaken at the domestic level. Interest groups, formal civil society organisations, and SMO's generally revert to the domestic institutions to voice their political demands due to lower transactional costs and familiar ways of 'doing' politics. The crux of my argument is that the political sphere should not be treated in isolation from the mediated sphere. To mobilise support for their programs, collective actors must gain publicity via the mass media. But the latter's receptiveness to a political message ultimately depends on its congruence with news values which implies that news values also apply to non-media actors. News values give the home advantage to 'the nation' and the 'national interest'. To maximise the chances of a message's diffusion in the public sphere, when debating EU affairs, we may thus reasonably expect political actors to relate EU-related happenings to domestic issues, embroil better known domestic counterparts in debates, 'wave the flag' of national interests, and engage in European 'othering', among other things. In short, as a result of ethnocentric political and media logics, we can expect political protagonists and journalists alike to filter and re-format happenings in such a way that increases the salience of national identity in public discourse. Discursive patterns of this kind would, however, be incompatible with the notion that public spheres' are amenable to transnational community building. With that in mind, I question the claim that Europe's variegated national public spheres' are amenable to peoples' loyalties shifting from the national to supranational level. On the contrary, despite advancing EU integration over the past few decades, I expect national identity to be highly salient in public discourse.

Discursive Nationalism as the dependant variable

This section reviews the literature related to nationalism, and begins to explore the main hallmarks of the concept, which I label as, 'discursive (euro-)nationalism'. A natural point of departure is Benedict Anderson's 'imagined community' exegesis on nationalism¹³² whose seminal work has become virtually synonymous with research on nationalism. Anderson defines the nation as:

...an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign ...it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion ...it is imagined as a community because the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship"(Anderson, 1983:6-7).

¹³² An exposition of nationalism without citing Benedict Anderson's 'imagined community' thesis would be akin to recounting the history of the telephone without citing the pioneering work of Antonio Meucci.

The nation is described in a similar fashion by Seton-Watson who claims that “a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community...behave as if they formed one” (found in Anderson, 1983:5, italics added for emphasis). The nation is a will and desire to be, say and do things as part of a larger group. So much so that no one can possibly know every member pertaining to that group whose existence is sustained by the collective imagining of its imaginers¹³³. Although Anderson’s exposition of nationalism is insightful from an historical¹³⁴ and socio-psychological perspective, Billig’s ‘banal nationalism’ is more instructive from a methodological and theoretical standpoint¹³⁵.

Building on Anastasiou’s (2019) definition of populism, “discursive nationalism” denotes a similar process wherein variegated micro-identities are aggregated via the hegemonic signifier of the nation and evinced through discourse¹³⁶ (Anastasiou, 2019:330). Nationhood can be found in and traced to, inter alia, political statements, and meta narratives which typically evoke feelings of exceptionalism, positive stereotypes, and a general ‘feel-good’ factor about the nation. Most scholars trace nationalism by tallying the number of ‘we’ references discourse. The main shortcoming of this metric, however, is that political statements do not always contain these deictic markers¹³⁷. The claim, for example, by the Italian Prime Minister, Mario Draghi that: The Italian people will not accept the terms of the EU Recovery Fund would elude the ‘we-o-meter’ despite the explicit reference to an Italian ‘imagined community’. Put differently, the statement above is a representative claim wherein the Italian imagined community is the invoked constituency. A representative, namely Mario Draghi, claims to represent the Italian people. As I argued in the preceding pages about nationally entrenched political logics, EU decision-making functions according to a strong intergovernmental accent (de Wilde, 2019). EU council summits culminate in skirmishes between national heads of state, or, at least, this is how it is portrayed

¹³³ Nations are distinguished by the style of their ‘imagining’ and modes of representation in public discourse (Smith, 2013). Political claims provide clues regarding identity orientation, revealing an actors’ footing in relation to the nation and how nations are represented in discourse. With the latter in mind – and acknowledging the multiple territorial levels of attachment – we should ask what an actor’s *footing* is in relation to Europe and how Europe is represented in the media? Smith (2013) provides a highly instructive synopsis of Benedict Anderson’s work.

¹³⁴ Anderson’s analysis on the integral role of print capitalism in nation-building is a useful insight. Print capitalism created “unified fields of exchange”, “a new fixity to language” and “languages of power” (Anderson, 1983:42-45). His work is particularly useful in tracing the genesis and origins of nationalism in Europe and understanding ‘national feeling’ as a cognitive and psychological condition.

¹³⁵ ‘Banal nationalism’ is particularly instructive in regard to operationalisation. The ‘daily plebiscite’ and ‘imagined communities’ concepts do not readily lend themselves to operationalisation. In the wise words of Karl Deutsch, “each concept should be *operational*. It should be clearly specified in terms of possible observations or measurements, from which it is derived and by which it can be tested” (Deutsch, 2020:51). With that in mind, the ‘banal nationalism’ concept (i.e., counting the volume of pronominal references or symbols in discourse) seems more amenable to measurement.

¹³⁶ As Wodak aptly points out, *discourse* is more than the mere physical embodiment of written work (i.e. text). The text may also reveal a substratum of meaning structures. The emphasis on structure takes inspiration from the German pragmatics interpretation of *diskurs* as a “structured set of speech acts”. Wodak broadly defines discourse as the social activity of making meanings with language whose meanings can vary according to the situation and setting (see Wodak, 2006:158 for a comprehensive definition of *discourse*).

¹³⁷ As Wodak exposes, the ‘we-ness’ metric is a flawed tool to gage the footing of one’s identity (Wodak, 2006:167). There are a myriad of pronominal combinations of the first person singular (i.e. I, Me, Mine), second (i.e. you, your, yours) and third person (i.e. He, She, Him, Her, His, Hers, It, Its, They, Their, Theirs) which are functional equivalents of first person plural pronouns (i.e. We, Us, Our, Ours). For example, the statement: ‘*You’ and ‘I’ share a European identity* illustrates how first and second person pronouns can be paraphrased to: ‘*We’ share a European identity*, as ‘you’ and ‘I’ are explicitly acknowledged as equivalent to ‘we’. As the previous example demonstrates, an assortment of first, second and third person singular and plural pronominal tags can refer to a common identity without referring to a ‘we’. The bottom line is that we should examine the full array of referential indexicals when deciding which ‘imagined community’ is being represented and thus ‘re-imagined’ (Wodak, 2006: 167).

in the media. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers consists of government ministers of their respective nation states. And even the European Parliament, a supranational body of the EU, is composed of members of national parties representing their local and national constituencies. In sum, both representatives and the represented are rooted to the national structures. As a result, we should expect floating signifiers such as ‘nation’, ‘people’ – which often implies national citizens – and ‘national interest’ to pervade political discourse¹³⁸. This view is shared by De Cleen et al. who remark that, “the nation-state remains the primary context for democratic political representation, and public debate. Thus, making references to the nation [is] unavoidable for most political discourses” (De Cleen and Stavrakakis, 2017:1). Discursive nationalism as with populism can be understood as a shrewd political strategy¹³⁹. Floating signifiers such as ‘people’ and ‘nation’ are effective catchall terms for mobilising a heterogeneous and pluralistic set of demands and identities. For example, the signifier of ‘nation’ encapsulates a broader range of demands, interests, and identities than ‘working class’. And as numerous surveys show, national identity appears to be the most salient source of belonging. The ‘the nation’ signifier has “come to be imbued with high value and cathected with affect” (Anastasiou, 2019:336). Hegemonic signifiers such as ‘nation’ and ‘British people’ help to bind heterogeneous and at times irreconcilable demands, interests, and identities together¹⁴⁰. In short, the nation is a ‘broad church’.

The nation fosters symbolic contiguity between otherwise heterogeneous elements (Anastasiou, 2019:336). In the words of Deutsch, “nationality implies [a] claim to privilege” for in-groups at the expense of out-groups. Fundamental rights, public services, job opportunities and social protections are bestowed on those who have sworn allegiance to the nation at the expense of ‘foreigners’ (Deutsch, 1953:102-3). Nationalism is a form of categorisation which logically implies division. We distinguish a car from a bicycle according to their different attributes – the former has a motor and four wheels while the latter is motorless with two wheels. But crucially a car is never a bicycle, and vice versa. Humanity has decided to divide itself into approximately 300 ‘nationalistic’ categories. A ‘Frenchman’ cannot be ‘German’ and vice versa unless one is of mixed heritage. By the same logic, identifying as ‘European’ logically implies that one is not Chinese or American. Every national category is limited in terms of membership hence why all nations have boundaries. In the words of Anderson, “the nation is limited because even the largest of them, has boundaries, beyond which lie other nations” (Anderson, 1983:7). Even the notion of global citizenship would entail boundary of some kind as denizens from other planets would be excluded– assuming they exist! Even the more inclusive forms of nationhood such as citizenship based on the principle of *ius soli* and civic forms of citizenship are exclusionary albeit to a lesser extent than *ius sanguinis* and citizenship based on cultural heritage. In short, ‘them’ constitutes ‘us’, and vice versa, and one cannot exist without the other. Demarcation is the name of the

¹³⁸ Thus, one would also expect *the people* to be used in conjunction or interchangeably with *the nation*.

¹³⁹ Laclau (2005) argued along these lines, claiming that populism is a logical and pragmatic political strategy.

¹⁴⁰ A powerful social adhesive...

identity game. Borders – both real and imagined – and other means of exclusion help to increase the entitativity of the nation.

Nationalism is a form of political opposition in which nationals and non-nationals are demarcated along an in/out axis (Anastasiou, 2019:334, paraphrased). Paradoxically our awareness of the out-group is integral to our imagining of the in-group to which we belong. Our imagining of ‘we’ depends almost in equal measure on our imagining of ‘them’ (Billig, 1995:66). ‘Our’ imagining of ‘them’ is made clear through modes of discourse such as conflict framing, negative othering, and narratives which stigmatise out-groups. However, nationalism can manifest in more subtle and mundane forms as Billig (1995) elucidated in his exposition of ‘banal nationalism’. The context of EU politics presents a propitious environment for national political actors to mobilise a heterogeneous set of demands and identities under the catchall signifier of “the nation”. Nationalism emphasises oneness and homogeneity – the monolithic “people” are treated as one, coherent whole. The state is one, the nation is one and the people are one. Nationalism thrives on accentuating differences between groups of nations. We assign labels and clichés, often lazy stereotypes, to nations, to accentuate differences between groups to aid us in the process of categorisation. Italy is synonymous for good food and sunny weather and the UK is synonymous with the royal family and rain. Praising ‘us’ and denigrating ‘them’ helps to demarcate one group from another. ‘We’ are almost always honourable in stark contrast to ‘them’ whom are corrupt. Many scholars refer to this dichotomous framing strategy as othering. Nationalism thrives on emphasising sameness among ‘us’ and accentuating differences between ‘them’. Positive representations of ‘us’ and negative depictions of ‘them’ create symbolic contiguity and borders in the figurative sense of the word (Wodak, 2006:105). The ‘other’ is often viewed pejoratively with ‘their’ culture typically perceived as inferior. The ‘nation’ is viewed in terms of oneness and homogeneity of one common culture, one people, and one history. In reality, there is not one identity of any kind and identity representations depend on the context: who is doing the talking (i.e. the speaker), who is listening (i.e. audience), and what is being discussed (i.e. the topic, Wodak, 2006: 157).

The concept of discursive nationalism builds on the seminal work of Billig who was a pioneer in tracing identity and nationhood to public discourse. However, in a departure from Billig, I opt for the term discursive nationalism because banal nationalism includes non-discursive aspects such as flags in public places. I restrict my analysis to political claims-making in newspapers. According to Billig, nationhood is ‘flagged’ on a daily basis in discourses by political actors whose public interventions are diffused via the mass media¹⁴¹. National emblems and public landmarks have become virtually synonymous with national identity. London’s “Big Ben” landmark immediately comes to mind. Billig argues that nations

¹⁴¹ In the words of Anderson, the newspaper “provide[s] the technical means for re-presenting the kind of imagined community that is the nation” (Anderson, 1983:24).

are reproduced on a daily¹⁴² basis in a “banally mundane way” through discourse and symbols (Billig, 1995:6). Billig defines ‘banal nationalism’ as “the ideological¹⁴³ habits which enable the reproduction of nationhood” (Ibid.,). However, as Billig stresses, these habits are part and parcel of everyday life. In his words, “daily, the nation is ‘flagged’ in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an intermittent mood in established nations—is the endemic condition” (Billig, 1996:6). The term ‘banal’ refers to the pervasiveness of nationalism in public discourse to such an extent that it is taken for granted. Common observers do not reflect on how many times the “United States”, or “American dream” was mentioned during the speech of the President of the United States. Importantly, ‘banal’ is not the same as benign. As Billig wrote: “It would be wrong to assume that ‘banal nationalism’ is ‘benign’ because it seems to possess a reassuring normality, or because it appears to lack the violent passions of the extreme right” (Billig, 1995:7). The Daily Mail headline “Enemies of the People!” immediately comes to mind (Slack, 2016). Nationhood, however, cannot merely be ‘imagined’ but must be ‘re-imagined’¹⁴⁴. Identities are sustained with the (re-)iteration of words such as ‘national interest’ and ‘cittadini Italiani’.

How can we identify discursive nationalism in political claims? As Billig argues, political statements are bestrewn with buzzwords aplenty such as: ‘nations’, ‘national duty’, ‘us’, ‘we’¹⁴⁵, ‘our society’, and ‘our homeland’ (Billig, 1995:4). Anderson also alludes to those ‘little words’ that point to the ‘homeland’—“The unselfconscious use of ‘our’ nation is ‘the best’ is paradigmatic language used by many nationalists” (Anderson, 1983:17, italicised for emphasis). Referential indexicals (deixis labels¹⁴⁶) such as ‘we’, ‘here’, ‘our’, and ‘this’ help us to establish whom political actors claim to

¹⁴² Renan describes ‘the nation’ in a rather allegorical fashion as a spiritual soul constituted by memories¹⁴² and sustained by a “daily plebiscite”, that is, a current willingness to live together as “one nation”. For Renan, the past is as important, if not more, as the present for sustaining nationhood. The past, that is, the memories – particularly a tendency to remember the ‘good’ and forget ‘the ‘bad’ – legacies, chronicles, myths, legends, folklores and stories ensure that the nation is imbued with sentiment, and ‘cathected with affect’ (Anastasiou, 2019:336). As Renan points out, mourning and celebration of ‘our ancestors’ provides continuity – tying the past to the present. But the conditions of the present are crucial to sustaining nationhood. According to Renan, nationhood is sustained through a “daily plebiscite”, namely a quotidian willingness to live and do things together. Although Renan is right to underline the diurnal and enduring qualities of nationalism, the ‘plebiscite’ metaphor is misrepresentative for it implies a conscious approval of decisions when in actual fact consent is tacitly given (Renan, 1882). Billig makes a valid critique of Renan’s ‘daily plebiscite’ thesis. Unlike plebiscites wherein voters consciously decide on a choice, nationals do not literally choose on a daily basis which nationality they wish to be part of (Billig, 1995:95). Fortunately, one does not need to apply to renew their passport on a daily basis!

¹⁴³ Delanty understands nationalism as a form of ideology. In his words, nationalism is akin to “a religion, a set of beliefs of common origins, specialness and destiny, and rituals, patriotic pledges, songs, anthems and celebrations that unite a ‘people’ into an identity granting, imagined [political] community that creates ‘citizens’ ” (Delanty *et al.*, 2006:72).

¹⁴⁴ A national sense of belonging is sustained – or more aptly, ‘re-imagined’ – via public discourse in the public sphere. The latter is one *locus* where identities are congealed, and identities are also forged as a result of socialisation processes, for example, at school or within the immediate household (i.e. the domain of the *oikos*). Discourse in the public sphere is only one locus for re-producing ‘the nation’ (Smith, 1998). There are a myriad of ways in which ‘the nation’ can be re-imagined (e.g. through socialisation processes at school, symbols, festivals, rituals, art etc.).

¹⁴⁵ As Billig points out (1995: 90-91), it is not always clear whom the ‘we’ refers to. For example, ‘We’ can be universalistic, referring to, for example, the collective good of humanity (e.g. “We have a moral duty to save the environment”). Alternatively, ‘we’ may refer to a particularistic set of interests such as race, class, gender or religion wherein nationhood is not flagged (e.g. “We have a duty to protect the poor”).

¹⁴⁶ What is *deixis*? Billig describes *deixis* as a form of “rhetorical pointing”, referring to those little but nonetheless important words such as ‘now’, ‘here’, ‘we’, ‘our’, ‘you’, and ‘I’. Brown and Levinson define *deixis* as “the ways [in] which sentences are anchored to certain aspects of their contexts of utterance” (Brown and Levinson, 1987:118, found in Billig, 1995:106). These linguistic signposts can reveal the *place* being referred to (e.g. ‘here’), the *time* of the utterance (e.g. ‘now’), *whom* is being addressed (e.g. ‘you’), and the *scope* of representation (e.g. ‘I/my’ or ‘we/’our’?). In respect of the latter, does the speaker use the first-person pronoun of ‘I’ or pluralistic ‘we/our’, the latter of which

identify with (Billig, 1995:94). Sometimes it is even more unambiguous: ‘the British people’ or ‘popolo Italiano’ clearly point to a specific ‘imagined community’. However, at other times, ‘the people’ are invoked without any explicit reference to any nation. However, ‘the people’ has become virtually synonymous with ‘the nation’ (Hall and Held, 1989, cited in Billig, 1995:94). When politicians talk regularly about the sovereignty of ‘the people’, they are referring not to humanity in general but their own nation. As Billig comprehensively argues, there are a myriad of deictic ‘signposts’ not limited to ‘we’ (Billig, 1995:115). Politicians habitually refer to ‘the country’ and ‘the nation’ without explicitly specifying which nation they are referring to. They, instead, take it for granted that the audience will be able to infer the context, that they need not specify it as—‘ours’ (Billig, 1995:107). When the American military commander, Winfield Scott wrote: “My politics are of a practical kind – the integrity of the country, the supremacy of the Federal government, an honourable peace, or none at all,” he neither name-dropped – nor referred to – the country in the first-person plural, probably regarding it as self-evident (Billig, 1995:107, italics added for emphasis). ‘The economy’ and ‘the society’ are other subtle gestures to ‘the nation’¹⁴⁷. David Cameron’s “Big Society” slogan was a reference to ‘our’ British society and certainly not ‘them’ in Brussels (Billig, 1995). Moreover, replacing ‘the’ with ‘this’ is a subtle but more flagrant gesturing which takes it for granted that the audience will know which nation is being invoked. Tony Blair’s promise that “under my leadership I will never allow this country to be isolated or left behind in Europe” is referring to ‘this’ and ‘our’ country—the United Kingdom (Billig, 1995:107).

Representative claims analysis (RCA) is suitable for gaging the extent of nationalism in public discourse for reasons laid out below. Political statements are bespattered with identity markers which typically manifest themselves as objects of representative claims. The iterator of a representative claim can invoke the object in a myriad of ways. Claims containing common nouns such as “the people”, “the society”, and “the economy” juxtaposed with proper nouns such as “Westminster” or “Downing Street” provide clues that the claimant is referring to the British imagined community. The advantage of RCA compared to the ‘we-o-meter’ approach is that the whole context of the claim is examined rather than one word in isolation. Nationalist clichés, furthermore, can help us to identify which nation is being (re-)produced. For example, we can infer from the following statement: “Our bulldog spirit will get us through the Covid crisis” that the speaker is evoking a British national consciousness. Political actors’ claims function as a type of representation in both senses of the term. Claimants can represent by portraying the nation – whether through meta narratives or mundane labels – in everyday discourse. But they can also represent by speaking on behalf of other social groups (Billig, 1995:98). The first type

implies *representation* as he/she is speaking in the plural sense, on behalf of other people. *Deictics* has traditionally been used as a metric to trace the orientation of one’s identity. Wortham (1996) conducted “deictic mapping” to index a person’s footing in relation to others, and Wilson analysed the ‘pronoun distribution in discourse’ to ascertain one’s identity orientation (found in Wodak, 2006:167).

¹⁴⁷ Indeed, according to the study by Rae *et al.* (1993), ‘the economy’ is predominantly a national frame.

of representation is analogous to painting the flag, while the second is akin to waving the flag on behalf of other people.

In a similar vein, discursive Europeanisation refers to words that point to transnational sources of belonging. The ‘we’ can either be aggregated to a larger territorial unit or directed at other European nations as a form of solidaristic identity. As Koopmans sophisticated typology of Europeanisation shows, Europeanisation can manifest “horizontal”, “vertically” and “supranationally”. However, a shortcoming of the concept of Europeanisation is its neglect for the concept’s negation, namely—nationalism in public discourse. Focusing on Europeanisation alone implies that we are moving inexorably towards Europeanisation in the public sphere. In order to enrich our understanding of Europeanisation, we should examine the concept of ‘nationhood’¹⁴⁸. The nation was after all the locus where public spheres took root¹⁴⁹. The increasing coverage of EU affairs should not be interpreted as indicative of a teleological process of Europeanisation. In my view, the increasing density of connections is a ‘red herring’. We should instead be focusing our analytical lens on the more qualitative dimensions of claims-making such as the object and frame, that is: whose interests and/or identities does the speaker claim to represent, and how is European politics portrayed by political actors and the mass media? The deictic markers found in representative claims can reveal who is ‘us’, who is ‘them’, and how are these respective groups are portrayed. Remarkably, European public sphere scholars pay scant attention to banal forms of identity in public discourse¹⁵⁰.

As with ‘banal nationalism’, we can trace ‘banal’ Europeanism to words such as ‘our continent’, ‘our Union’, or talk about ‘European values’ which patently points to Europe. The claim by Angela Merkel, “We will enforce freedom, justice, and self-determination on the European continent” clearly flags European identity. Other European identity markers could be tropes such as ‘our four freedoms’ or ‘the Single Market’ which have become synonymous with the EU’s political identity. For example in Von der Leyen’s claim, “We must restore the four freedoms in full and as far as possible” (italics added for emphasis) the ‘we’ is clearly European, not local, or national. As numerous scholars point out, we have multiple, overlapping identities. This is especially the case for transnational sources of attachment which may coexist in harmony with local and national territorial levels of attachment. For example, in David Cameron’s claim, “At the core of the European Union must be, as it is now, the single market. Britain is at the heart of that Single Market, and must remain so”, British identity is embedded in Europe¹⁵¹.

¹⁴⁸ Just as our understanding of ‘us’ depends on ‘them’.

¹⁴⁹ Albeit contingently so...

¹⁵⁰ The research of Slavtcheva-Petkova is a noteworthy exception. This scholar makes a timely contribution to the public sphere scholarship by transposing the ‘banal’ concept in the European context. According to the same scholar, ‘banal Europeanism’ refers to a supranational identity in which belonging is tied to being part of Europe as either a continent, civilisation, or political organisation (Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2014:46). Slavtcheva-Petkova (2014) is right to question Billig’s taken-for-granted assumption that banal representations of identity prime peoples identities, especially because Billig did not probe it with a robust empirical study.

¹⁵¹ Disclaimer alert: these quotes were found on the search results of the Google search engine. The speakers whom I have cited could have been misquoted but they are used to illustrate how discursive nationalism or Europeanism can manifest in discourse.

Karl Deutsch's theory of nationalism bridges the concepts of society, culture, community, communication, people, and nationalism, with the latter understood as a specific form of cultural community that has developed extensive degrees of social communication over time¹⁵². According to Deutsch, national boundaries result from "gaps in the efficiency of communication [i.e. communicative barriers]" (Deutsch, 1953:100). In essence, Deutsch attributes the congealment of nationhood to extensive levels of social communication. Crudely put, society – limited to economic ties and transport links – represents the most rudimentary form of communication and community represents the most developed form of social communication. For Deutsch, society – that is, a "group of individuals made interdependent by the division of labour, the production and distribution of goods and services" (Deutsch, 2020:53) – is a necessary but insufficient condition for culture and ipso facto community-building. Society consists of non-affective forms of communication such as the exchange of goods and services and transport networks which are unlikely to foster deep and meaningful bonds between people. People may exchange goods and services but little information (Ibid.,61). By contrast, 'community' is a function of social communication consisting of a "collection of living individuals whose minds [à la Andersen] and memories [à la Renan] the habits and channels of culture are carried ... [and] who have learned to communicate and understand each other well beyond the mere exchange of goods and services [i.e. society]" (Deutsch, 2020: 55-57). For Deutsch, community building is not so much similar as shared experiences. Deutsch uses the example of Czech and German miners of the same mining town who had very few complementary channels of communication (i.e. few shared experiences) despite having similar livelihoods (Ibid., 61). However, German mine owners and German miners had shared experiences which fostered a sense of community over time despite having dissimilar experiences (Deutsch, Ibid.,). Deutsch underlines – not unlike Andersen and Renan – the psycho-cognitive component of 'community'. What distinguishes community from society is culture. A community requires a common culture whereas a society does not. Culture is understood as a deep-rooted and advanced form of communication that demands vast exchanges of information (i.e. social communication) rather than the mere exchange of goods (i.e. society). Culture refers to both the visible configuration of customs (e.g. a particular dance, marriage ceremony, ways of dressing etc.) and the invisible configuration of preferences and values (i.e. the 'likes' and 'dislikes', and the 'do's' and 'don'ts') which condition peoples' reactions and behaviour to internal and external stimuli (Deutsch, 2020:54). Culture communicates patterns of information such as the arrangement of objects (e.g. from pottery and building styles to the share of tools and ornaments), patterns of action (e.g. games, dances, etiquette practices), patterns of preferences (e.g. the do's and don'ts) and patterns of codes or symbols such as art, statues, emblems (Deutsch, 1953:92). Deutsch defines a common culture as "a common set

¹⁵² The genesis of research on transnationalism can be traced back to the work of the Psychologist, Gordon Allport, in 1954. He developed the "contact hypothesis" which posits that increasing intergroup contact may mitigate prejudices and foster community-feeling between groups (Allport, 1954). Deutsch builds on these arguments in his exegesis on nationalism (Deutsch, 1953). He argues, in essence, that social communication produces and sustains nationhood.

of stable, habitual preferences and priorities in men's attention, and behaviour, as well as in their thoughts and feelings" (Deutsch, 2020:54). Deutsch, in essence, conceptualises nationalism as a particular form of community as defined above. In short, Deutsch proposes a functional definition of nationality: "Membership in a people essentially consists in wide complementarity of social communication. It consists in the ability to communicate more effectively, and over a wider range of subjects, with members of one large group than with outsiders" (Ibid., 62). According to Deutsch, to cultivate a sense of nationhood, the people must have an economic and political stake in the country, that is, opportunities for socialisation via social institutions such as hospitals, schools, churches, government etc. that confer security on its citizens. The welfare state is a paradigmatic example of social institutions that protect citizens and in turn help to strengthen the affective bonds between citizens and the nation. These social institutions enhance the flow of social communication across class lines resulting in a "far more effective complementarity of social communication" within than across borders (Deutsch, 1953:99). Deutsch uses the example of Bismarck's social reforms (*Staatssozialismus*) which helped to mobilise support for the nascent German state among working class people.

Bourdieu, not unlike Deutsch, also underlines the importance of 'cultural capital' in cultivating a sense of community feeling. Bourdieu argues that sharing similar forms of cultural capital (i.e. tastes, mannerisms, material belongings etc.) may foster a sense of community-feeling. Bourdieu distinguishes between three forms of cultural capital—objectified, embodied, and institutionalised. The former refers to cultural artefacts in its objectified state such as cars, embodied refers to intangible forms of cultural capital such as one's accent, and the latter refers to educational qualifications. Embodied cultural capital is similar to Deutsch's reference to "invisible cultural configurations" (e.g. particular quirks and habits) whereas the other two artefacts are visible cultural configurations. Another important concept of Bourdieu which relates closely to the concept of culture is *habitus*. Bourdieu defines 'habitus' as "a schemata of perception, of related emotional dispositions and attitudes, as well as of behavioural dispositions and conventions – practices – all of which are internalized through socialization" (Wodak, 2006:106, found in Cowen et al., 2009). Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* refers to deeply embedded dispositions, habits and skills which shape and are shaped by our social environment viz. *habitat* hence the term: *habitus*. Our *habitus* – or 'feel for a culture' – is a product of accumulated life experiences in a particular social environment. We accrue – via socialisation processes – cultural capital and refine our *habitus* to 'fit in' to a specific community accordingly. Similarly, I argue that every nation possesses its own unique repertoire of cultural capital which is internalised by citizens and in turn enables them to integrate and thrive in their social environment (Routledgesoc, 2016).

Structural and normative ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism

The scholars, Sicakkan et al. (2018) distinguish between structural and normative Europeanisation which is a helpful heuristic tool to appreciate the multifaceted nature of Europeanisation, and allows us to be more specific about the aspects of discourse we wish to analyse. What do I mean by structural and normative dimensions of discursive nationalism or its inverse—discursive Europeanism? The former concerns aspects of political communication such as synchronized timing in news reporting (i.e. temporal synchronicity), attention to similar issues (i.e. thematic synchronicity), and interconnectedness between national public spheres in terms of ‘communicative linkages’ that transcend national borders¹⁵³ (a la Koopmans). Broadly speaking, structural aspects of discourse are more quantitative in nature (e.g. measuring the volume of domestic vis-à-vis transnational connections). By contrast, normative dimensions of discourse refer to converging norms, values, goals, perspectives, meaning structures, frames of interpretation, and identities, and so forth. As Sicakkan and Heiberger rightly argue, these two dimensions are not necessarily mutually exclusive¹⁵⁴(2018:4). Indeed, interconnectedness, similarity and convergence of some kind are axiomatic to both dimensions. However, the main difference between normative and structural Europeanism is that the latter calls for interconnectedness through shared norms and perspectives. The common denominator is a shared EU or European perspective (Sicakkan and Heiberger, 2018:4). By contrast, a connection is regarded as ‘structurally Europeanised’ on the condition that an interaction transcends borders. To date, research on the EPS has mainly been analysed in terms of the density of communicative linkages (i.e. structural aspects of political communication). In particular, the method of political claims analysis (PCA) has been used to gauge the extent of interconnectedness between national mediated spheres. However, the more normatively demanding aspects of discourse have largely been overlooked. I, thus, aim to redress this imbalance by focusing on the more qualitative aspects of public discourse such as the object and frame of representative claims.

The EPS concept along with Europeanisation and integration theory in general has been traditionally conceived of as a gradual but inevitable, linear, and teleological process, hence the suffix ‘ization’¹⁵⁵. Indeed, political science in general and studies of the EPS in particular suffer from a clear normative bias. The concepts of integration, Europeanism and Europeanisation remain the academic watchwords of European studies scholars. But, as Goerz (2012) and Eppler & Anders (2016) emphasize, we should not lose sight of a concept’s negation (e.g. disintegration and nationalisation). As my analysis is

¹⁵³ The volume of trans-border interactions (a la Deutsch, 1966).

¹⁵⁴ For example, similarity in terms of the framing of issues across national public spheres could also be indicative of structural rather than normative convergences in discourse. Indeed, Sicakkan & Heiberger (2018) deem it as such. I, however, consider converging meaning structures to be more about shared perspectives which is a more qualitative and normatively demanding requirement of Europeanisation in the public sphere.

¹⁵⁵ This suffix implies a process.

restricted to a particular period of time (2 year dataset), I opt for the term discursive nationalism and its opposite, European nationalism hence the term, (euro-) nationalism'¹⁵⁶. Eppler & Anders (2016) are right to underline the bidirectionality and multidimensionality of the concept of (dis-)integration. The same applies to Europeanisation in general and EPS in particular.

Figure 2.3: Illustration to show the bi-directionality of 'discursive (euro-)nationalism



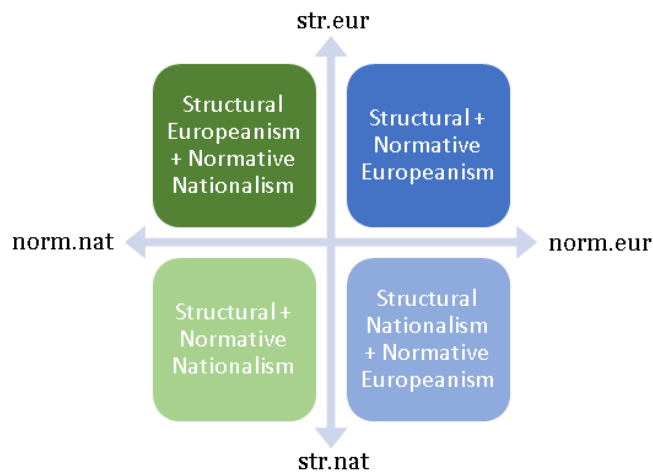
These scholars are also right to underline that both phenomena can occur simultaneously. Europeanisation may occur in some respect (i.e. transborder interactions viz. structural) but be absent in other respects (i.e. norms, perspectives, and identities). Euro-nationalism is not a dichotomous concept, that is, it is not mutually exclusive. It is not logically inconceivable to have dense trans-border connections (structural) which are nevertheless qualitatively embedded in national perspectives (normative). In essence, public discourse may be 'Europeanised' in some respect but 'nationalised' in other respects¹⁵⁷. The figure below illustrates the various combinations of 'discursive (euro-)nationalism' ranging from the most quali-quantitative Europeanised discourse (in the top-right corner coloured dark-blue) to the least (in the bottom-left corner coloured in light-green)¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁶ If I use the term '*nationalisation*' during the thesis, I am referring to the mediated process through which 'events' of an EU/European origin are 'domesticated', for example, when 'foreign' happenings are interpreted from a national perspective. I am not claiming that public discourse is becoming more 'nationalised' or 'Europeanised' over time. For most scholars, evidencing the same is unfeasible and would require decades of time-series data. For these reasons, claiming that there is a process of Europeanisation is an overextrapolation. For too long, scholars have argued that there is evidence of 'Europeanisation' without sufficient empirics to back up these inferences. At most, we can safely assert that the volume of EU news coverage has increased over time.

¹⁵⁷ To this end, both positive and negative poles of concepts need to be analysed to enrich our understanding (Goertz, 2012). As the old adage goes, 'stars cannot shine without darkness'.

¹⁵⁸ For the purpose of clarification, the x-axis represents 'normative' dimensions of discourse, and the y-axis represents structural dimensions. The top-right box means that public discourse is both structurally and normatively more 'Europeanised' vis-à-vis 'nationalised'. The bottom-right box means that discourse is structurally more 'nationalised' than 'Europeanised' but normatively more 'Europeanised'. The bottom-left box means that discourse is structurally more 'Europeanised' but normatively more 'nationalised' than 'Europeanised'. The bottom-left box is the most nationalised form of discourse denoting discourses which are both structurally and normatively more 'nationalised' than 'Europeanised'.

Figure 2.4: The four dimensional space of structural and normative (euro-)nationalism



Research Questions and hypotheses¹⁵⁹

RQ1: Whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics? Can discernible trends be ascertained according to, inter alia, country, newspaper format, actor type, actor nationality, and party family? And does identity mobilisation change substantially prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic?

HP1: As a result of media and political logics which remain anchored to nationally bounded structures (see Chapter 2), I expect national interests and identities to be the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics. In essence, I argue that although the topic of Europe has become more relevant, consequential, and thus newsworthy as a result of the advancing EU integration, the modus operandi of politics and news presentation has not fundamentally changed. Political actors must mobilise national voters which implies mobilising the most salient (sub-)national interests and sources of belonging. In a similar vein, to attract audiences, journalists must present news which is relevant and ‘feels’ proximate. This gives the ‘home advantage’ (excuse the pun) to national identity as most nationally based readers’ and listeners’ are unlikely to read or listen to news in which the interests of a ‘foreign’ country are at stake. In other words, mobilising national identity in public discourse should be understood as a cunning political and media strategy to mobilise voters in the former and attract audiences in the latter. In regard

¹⁵⁹ The first two research questions (RQ1 and RQ2) can be categorised as ‘hypothesis-testing’ research questions, whereas the final one (RQ3) is hypothesis-generating. The difference is aptly elucidated by Hartwick et al., (1994) who states that in the former, “the researcher specifies one or more a priori hypotheses, based on existing theory and/or data, and then puts these hypotheses to an empirical test with a new set of data” (1994:447). However, in the case of the latter, “the researcher explores a set of data searching for relationships and patterns, and then proposes hypotheses which may then be tested in some subsequent study” (1994:447). Because of these differences, in RQ3, I do not have a hypothesis in the narrow sense of the term, as I do not have previous results or a pre-existing theory to draw on. RQ3 is an exploratory research question.

to contextual variables, as a result of specific national circumstances, I expect to find marked across-country differences. In particular, I expect public discourse in the Dutch and German samples to evoke supranational interests and identities the most. This is because these countries have a comparatively low prevalence of ‘far-right’ political denominations represented in parliament. For obvious historical reasons, I expect public discourse in the German sample to evoke national interests and identities the least. Both countries’ also have comparatively open economies which are highly dependent on international trade in general and intra-EU trade in particular. By contrast, I expect representative claims in the Polish and Italian mediated public spheres’ to be more emblematic of nationalised discourse. In my view, the crucial scope condition is the prevalence of ‘Conservative/far-right’ political denominations in domestic politics. In stark contrast to the Netherlands and Germany, right-wing political parties are fairly well-represented in the Polish and Italian parliaments to a lesser extent. As previous studies tentatively show, conservative/right-wing political actors’ are more inclined to invoke nationalistic frames compared to their left-wing counterparts. Moreover, for obvious historical reasons, we can reasonably expect Polish discourse to be emblematic of discursive nationalism¹⁶⁰. In regard to newspaper format, as several studies attest, tabloid newspaper have shown to be more parochial in scope and invoke nationalistic frames much more compared to quality-format newspapers. The explanation is fairly self-evident but is worth reemphasising. The catchment area of newspapers varies from paper to paper; quality-format newspapers are generally tailored towards audiences’ with a lower socioeconomic status, whereas tabloid-format newspaper attract readers with a higher one. Tabloid newspapers typically target readers’ who are interested in domestic ‘soft news’. By contrast, although quality-format newspapers target predominantly nationally based readers, they tend to be more transnational in outlook. Moreover, quality-format newspapers attract more international readers than tabloid newspapers. I expect, moreover, wide variation in discursive scopes according to actor type. This is because every actor fulfils a specific job role, role expectation, institutional location, and possesses a unique set of identities and ideologies. With that in mind, I expect supranational actors to evoke EU interests and identities much more compared to domestic actors¹⁶¹. By the same logic, I expect domestic de jure political representatives to evoke national identity much more compared to their supranational counterparts. Lastly, as I touched upon above, I expect ‘TAN’ politically denominated actors to evoke national interests and identities considerably more than ‘GAL’ and centrist political actors. This is because of the actor-driven logic (a la Medrano 2010) I touched on earlier. Most actors do not act in isolation are embedded into larger organisations which represent a specific ideology. Invoking national identity should be understood as part of the ‘job description’ of sovereigntist parties (i.e. ‘TAN’ political

¹⁶⁰ For over a century, the nation of Poland was erased from the map, however, Polish national consciousness endured, nevertheless. Neighbouring states did their utmost to suppress Polish identity but Polish revanchism prevailed in the end. The historical trauma of persistent aggression coming from Germany in the West, and the Soviet Union in the East, has arguably stuck with the Polish people, and still affects Polish politicians frame Polish identity in the context of European debates.

¹⁶¹ It seems intuitively appealing to expect actors to predominantly refer to the same territorial level of interests and identities. For example, as a result of actor- and strategic-driven logics (a la Medrano, 2010), it seems likely that supranational actors would predominantly refer to European interests and identity, and by the same token, domestic actors would refer to national interests, local actors would refer to local interests, and so on.

parties). By contrast, it would be inconceivable for green parties' to evoke purely national interests when they purport to stand for the environment, a transnational common good. That is to say that most actors must 'toe the party line' acting within the strictures of the party manifesto, or in the case of formal civil society actors, act within the parameters emanating from a given organisation's vision or 'mission statement'. We could call this 'ideological path dependence'. It is thus reasonable to expect patterns of discourse to vary according to political partisanship. Lastly, I wish to explore whether identity mobilisation changes substantially during the ensuing Covid-19 pandemic? Building on the scholarship of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and insights from social psychology, I expect nationalistic frames to increase during the ensuing pandemic. This notion is also intuitively appealing. Humans, in response to an imminent threat, seem to have a proclivity for 'looking inwards' and helping 'their own'. Anecdotally speaking, this is the impression I had when the pandemic began to ensue. Politicians fended for themselves and there appeared to be a palpable lack of European and global solidarity. It would thus be interesting to examine the intervening variable of crisis to gauge to what extent patterns of discourse change during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RQ2: Which actors are the most visible in public debates concerning European politics? Can discernible trends be ascertained according to, inter alia, country, newspaper format, actor type, actor nationality, and party family? And do patterns of actor visibility evolve substantially prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic?

HP2: For reasons laid out above, I, furthermore, expect domestic actors to dominate claims-making. The logic of the media inclines journalists' to choose new items in general and political claims in particular which embroil domestic actors who audiences' are generally more familiar with. In particular, I expect domestic actors to dominate claims-making as claimants. In other words, the media will afford domestic actors more publicity and ipso facto be seen as more legitimate political protagonists. By contrast, I expect EU actors to be more prevalent as 'targets' of claims-making (i.e. addressees). These expectations are based on the insights from POS. Advancing EU integration – and the shifting of competences to the supranational level it has engendered – provides an opportunity for national governments to 'shift the blame' for unpopular policy decisions and suboptimal performance. Collective actors at home also have another political arena to 'target' for their political demands (see Chap. 2 for more). These expectations, if found, may pose a problem for the EU from a democratic standpoint as EU actors would be framed as passive, nonresponsive actors. These skewed patterns of claims-making would also render the EU vulnerable to wrongful blame attribution ('EU scapegoating') without a stage with which to respond. With the newsworthiness criteria in mind, I also expect larger member states to dominate political claims – both as claimants and addressees – which is in line with previous findings. In regard to contextual variables, as a result of idiosyncratic national circumstances,

I expect to find marked across-country differences in patterns of actor visibility in claims-making. In particular, I expect the newest and least integrated (non-Eurozone member) member state of the sample, namely, Poland, to be the most ‘domesticated’ in terms of actor visibility. This is in line with previous findings and can be explained by integration theory (see Chap.1, for details). It is widely accepted that ‘older’ member states report more on Europe than ‘newer’ ones. The so-called ‘compensation hypothesis’ expects political integration to be met by increasing contestation and debate in the public sphere. As Poland is an ‘opt-out’ member state compared to the other countries in the sample, I, thus, expect communicative linkages to be the least Europeanised. By contrast, I expect the other three countries to be considerably more transnationalised. However, macroeconomic circumstances of a given country will also need to be accounted for. For example, Poland and the Netherlands are highly trade dependent on the Single Market compared to Germany and Italy. Previous studies show that countries with high European trade dependency are more likely to report on European affairs. Moreover, in line with previous findings, I expect larger, neighbouring countries, or historical/strategic allies to receive more publicity in the respective national public spheres. For example, Poland and the United Kingdom are historical allies and there is a large diaspora of Polish nationals residing in the UK. I, thus, expect British actors and the ‘Brexit’ issue to receive ample news coverage. For economic reasons, I expect British actors and the ‘Brexit’ issue to be resonant in the German and Dutch media as both countries trade a lot with the United Kingdom. In all four countries, moreover, I expect Dutch, German, and British actors to be the most prominent actors due to their superior power and autonomy in the international system. For similar reasons laid out above, I expect the claims found in tabloid-format newspaper to contain more domestic actors – both as claimants and addressees to a lesser extent – than transnational actors. In regard to actor type, in congruence with previous findings, I expect national executives to dominate claims-making due to their elevated status (elite persons / status) and notoriety (identification / familiarity) among audiences. In a similar vein, I expect supranational actors to receive moderate levels of publicity particularly as addressees. For the same reasons, I expect civil society actors, both formal and informal, to be modestly receive negligible levels of publicity in public debate. Concerning the territorial scope of actor types, as a result of implicit ethnocentric news values, I expect domestic actors to dominate public debates. I, moreover, broadly expect political parties to receive levels of publicity which reflect their de jure political representation. For example, I expect political parties in government, coalition partners, and large opposition parties to receive more coverage than ‘fringe’ parties. As a result of the inexorable politicisation induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, I expect debates to become ‘domesticated’ (i.e. political debates between domestic actors). This is in line with previous findings (e.g. Koopmans, 2014; see also Kriesi et al., 2014¹⁶²) which show that crises may invigorate debates among domestic actors. In accordance with previous research, I, furthermore, expect national executives to ‘benefit’ in terms of visibility from the Covid-19 pandemic. By the same token,

¹⁶² Kriesi et al. (2015) found that debates during the euro crisis in Germany became more ‘domesticated’.

I expect political parties and legislative actors to ‘lose out’. With the above in mind, I expect public debates concerning European politics to be characterised by what I call, ‘discursive nationalism’ which denotes domestic level actors who predominantly refer to a national constituency of interests and identities in public discourse. In a departure from de Wilde (2019) who expects ‘discursive intergovernmentalism’ to characterise European debates, I opt for the term, ‘discursive nationalism’ because the former implies that only national governments/executives shape public debates. In reality, a repertoire of collective actors participate in public debates and receive publicity albeit to varying degrees. In essence, ‘discursive intergovernmentalism’ refers to a narrow milieu of national executives invoking the national interest. The term, however, neglects the nationalistic and identitarian features of representative claims-making.

RQ3: Is there a correlation between structural and normative dimensions of ‘discursive (Euro-)nationalism?’

HP3: The final phase of my analysis is to explore the correlation between structural (i.e. act2adr) and normative (i.e. act2obj) dimensions of ‘discursive (Euro-)nationalism’. Firstly, I wish to explore which of the two dimensions are more ‘Europeanised’. In line with previous studies, I expect structural discourse to be more ‘Europeanised’ as this dimension is a less normatively demanding form of Europeanisation. Put another way, speaking about ‘Europe’ is a less normative kind of Europeanisation than speaking on behalf of ‘Europe’. Claiming to be ‘European’ or represent ‘European interests’ is a higher benchmark of Europeanisation than targeting ‘Europe’ for a political demand. In sum, structural Europeanised diskurs can be expected to be more prevalent in representative claims-making than normative Europeanised diskurs. Secondly, I wish to explore at different levels of analysis, where countries, newspapers, and actors can be collated along the continuum of ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism’. As explained above, I expect all four countries, and particularly Poland and Italy, to be both more structurally and normatively nationalised. I, furthermore, expect the representative claims found in tabloid newspapers to be much more structurally and normatively nationalised. On the actor level, I expect the claims of political parties’ (particularly right-wing party actors) and civil society actors’ to be more emblematic of ‘discursive nationalism’ in both senses of the term. The third and most interesting phase of my analysis is to explore whether a correlation can be found between these two dimensions of ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism’. If it transpires that a relation holds between these two variables this means that increasing visibility is likely to lead to a stronger collective European identity. A correlation between act2adr and act2obj would effectively mean that political actors tend to target the same territorial level as the interests they claim to represent. For example, a correlation would imply that when the leader of Il Partito Democratico¹⁶³ targets Mario Draghi for a political demand, they are,

¹⁶³ Ignoring the fact that PD are a self-proclaimed ‘europeista’ (Europhile) political party...

ceteris paribus, more likely to refer to the national level of interests and identities. By the same logic, when the leader of Il Partito Democratico targets Ursula Von der Leyen for a political demand, they are more likely to evoke European interests and identities. Although a correlation between structural and normative dimensions of discourse seems intuitively appealing, there is also good reason to doubt it. 'Eurosceptic' political actors come to mind. They habitually address (or more aptly 'lambast') the EU as a target of criticism. And Eurosceptics by and large tend to be more inclined to defend the national interest and evoke national identity. In these circumstances, if Eurosceptic actors dominate public debates, a correlation would be unlikely to be found.

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Chapter 3 – Methodological framework

Political Claims Analysis

To the best of my knowledge, Koopmans and Erbe (2003) were the first scholars to utilise political claims analysis (referred to hereafter as PCA) in public sphere research. Koopmans (2014) defines PCA as “purposeful communicative action in the public sphere consisting of a public-speech act that articulates political demands, calls to action, proposals, or criticisms, which, actually or potentially, affect the interests or integrity of the claimants and/or other collective actors” (Koopmans, 2014:56). The main distinguishing feature of PCA vis-à-vis content analysis is the unit of analysis is an individual act of claims-making rather than a newspaper article (Rucht et al. 1998, Statham, 2007). This method takes newspaper articles as the main source of political claims. As Statham adds, “claims analysis sees reported news as a record of public events and retrieves information on this aspect” (2007:112). The virtue of PCA is that scholars can explore the relational aspects of communication. We can ascertain which actors are prominent in debates and what kind of role they have in debates. In the words of Pfetsch, PCA “serves to measure the density, direction, and scope, as well as the content of communication, and to determine the degree to which these elements remain national or become European” (Pfetsch, 2014:37). Are actors mainly protagonists in debates (i.e. claim-makers) or passive bystanders or targets of claims-making (i.e. addressees?). Which actors are seen as responsible for the success or failure of a political demand (i.e. addressee?). Whose interests and identities are fought for in discursive acts of claims-making? These are some of the questions which the method of PCA is able to shed light on.

Political claims reveal actor-issue-object constellations which are a useful proxy for patterns of discourse. An actor (subject), ordinarily a representative, directs/targets a claim on a specific issue at an addressee – typically a fellow representative – in the interests of an object (constituency) whom usually comprises the represented. Through PCA, we are also able to gauge levels of publicity according to actor type. PCA codes for actor type ranging from trade unions, non-governmental organisations, legislatures, courts, political parties and governments to supranational institutions (Statham, 2007). In crude terms, claims analysis is interested in who addressed whom on what issue, on behalf of whom, for what reason, how, when, and where (Koopmans, 2002). In the words of Statham, “at a time and place, an event occurs, where an actor mobilises a speech act ... about an issue which addresses another actor calling for a response, on the basis of a justifying argumentation. The claim is made with reference to a public constituency, whose interests are affected” (2007:113). In other words, a claim consists of three components: actors, content, and context. The following information can be extrapolated from a political claim: actor constellations, namely the subject, addressee, and object; the specific issue and

frame (i.e. content) and the location and form by which a claim was made (i.e. context). More specifically, as Statham (2005:100) clearly lays out, political claims may be broken down into seven sub-elements:

1. Location of the claim in time and space (i.e. where and when is the claim made);
2. Form of the claim i.e. how is the manifest in the public sphere? (e.g. newspaper or TV?);
3. Subject making a demand, proposal, appeal, or criticism (i.e. who makes the claim?);
4. Addressee who is the target of criticism or support or is held responsible for implementing the claim (i.e. at whom is the claim directed);
5. Object (or constituency) whose interests are or would be positively (beneficiary) or negatively affected by the claim (i.e. who would be affected by the claim if it were realised)?
6. Substantive issue of the claim, stating what the claim is about; and,
7. Justification for the claim, (i.e. why should the action demanded in the claim be carried out?)

As Statham and Gray (2005) show, PCA can reveal how actors frame an issue, event, or problem. To paraphrase Statham et al. (2005), when a national actor makes a claim on the subject of European integration, they reveal insights on their country's "relationship to Europe by focusing on certain aspects of that relationship" which invariably excludes other aspects (Statham et al. (2005:74). In so doing, political actors' "give a specific interpretation of the situation to convince political actors of their claim's validity, and to mobilize public support for their cause" (Ibid.). In the words of Gerhards et al., all actors endeavour, "to make their definition into a public definition of the problem, to convince as many groups and people as possible by their framing of the situation, to create support for their cause, and to motivate others to participate" (1992:572). Koopmans (2010) develops a typology of four different types of claims-making:

1. National claims-making over Europe refers to domestic actors addressing their domestic counterparts over European issues;
2. horizontal claims-making refers to national actors addressing other EU member states (and vice-versa);
3. vertical claims-making refers to national actors addressing EU institutions (and vice-versa); and
4. supranational claims-making refers to the interaction among European-level institutions and EU level actors.

The first type of claim is proxy for an 'internalised' (or 'domesticated') public debate (Statham, 2007) as there is less direct engagement with member states (horizontal) or supranational institutions (vertical)

and interaction is limited to exchanges between domestic actors. Instead, horizontal claims-making is regarded as ‘Europeanised’ political communication as it “depict[s] a Europe of interacting nation states whose politics are being more closely interwoven with one another by conflict over, or collaboration in, European integration” (Statham, 2007:116). Vertical claims-making is emblematic of Europeanised discourse because it shows that the different levels of governance, communicatively speaking, are highly embedded, interconnected, mutually relevant, and interdependent.

As Koopmans et al. (2003) argue, PCA is preferable to frame analysis and content analysis because it is able to capture the dynamic and relational character of political communication. Content analysis tells us little about the role of actors in public debates, the relations between them, and the positions they take on a given issue (Koopmans & Erbe, 2003; Monza, 2017). PCA is useful for gaging the density of communicative linkages between actors within and across national and transnational communicative spaces. In the words of Pfetsch, “it is an elaborate approach to investigate the spatial reach, interconnectedness and relative density of public communication within and between different political spaces” (found in Risse, 2014: 37). Utilising PCA, scholars can trace communicative linkages across different political levels. As several scholars highlight, notably Pfetsch and Koopmans, Europeanisation should be measured in relative terms as its strength is also determined by how structures of communication develop at a (sub-)national and trans-European (i.e. global) level. Gaging levels of Europeanisation implies adopting a standard of comparison. PCA is apposite for this yardstick approach (Koopmans, 2014). Furthermore, as Statham rightly points out, another benefit of PCA one can trace and compare the degree of Europeanisation over time. As Statham argues, “[claims-making] retrieves a party’s actual intervention in the public domain, drawn from the medium by which parties communicate with citizens as an ongoing process, and in a way that is continuous over time. It is not based on their one-off strategic attempts to woo citizens at election times, or expert or public perceptions” (Statham, 2007:127). We are, thus, able to trace the dynamic nature of discourse over long periods of time ranging from unexceptional to exceptional periods. In sum PCA is tailor-made for mapping patterns of discourse. By gaging the distribution of claimants in claims-making, we can ascertain which actors’ are able to shape debates in terms of agenda-setting and gatekeeping. And by gaging the distribution of addressees, we can gage which actors’ are attributed responsibility, praised, or conversely, criticized for political demands. By coding the issue and justification, we can also see how different types of actors’ frame politics. Which issues and justifications are emphasised by whom and in the interests and identities of whom?

Representative Claims Analysis

Representative claims analysis (hereafter referred to as RCA) is a derivative of PCA. Although there is much overlap between these two methods, they shed light on nuanced aspects of political communication. The main distinguishing feature of RCA compared to PCA is the emphasis on different facets of a political claim. In PCA, the analytical lens focuses on who (i.e. claimant) and to whom (i.e. addressee) the claim is addressed, in other words, the actual sender and intended recipient. By contrast, in RCA, the analytical lens focuses on the discursive relation between claimant (or representative) and object (or represented). Put simply, PCA maps interactions among actors, whereas RCA maps interactions between actors and their intended constituency (de Wilde, 2013:279). Even though the object variable is nominally part of PCA it has largely been overlooked. As de Wilde bemoans, “this [state of affairs] is unfortunate since [objects] stand at the very core of representation” (2013:279, italics added for emphasis).

As with any method of research, there is a theory underpinning it. Not surprisingly, representative democratic theory and the concept of representation were crucial to the development of RCA. Michael Saward (2010) can be regarded as the forerunner of RCA. He developed a novel theoretical angle on representativeness, which had been, hitherto, seen through the prism of electoral democratic theory¹. For Saward and de Wilde, “representation ought to be understood as a dynamic continuous process between represented and representatives, rather than as the static product of elections” (de Wilde, 2013:278; Saward 2006; 2010). In other words, representation can manifest as both a product of elections or as part of an ongoing process in the public sphere, which is a dynamic representative space in itself (de Wilde, 2013:281). As de Wilde adds, “who is representing whom, on what basis and to what effect’ are central questions, not only to electoral democratic theory, but also the public sphere” (de Wilde, 2013:279). One of the main pioneers of RCA, de Wilde, defines RCA as, “the study of the act of representation in the form of claims through which connections between representatives and represented are made” (2013: 278). The two main variables of interest are the claim maker – who is almost always a political representative – and the object of the claim whom is almost always a represented group/constituency. As the definition of the claim maker is largely self-evident and has been covered above, I focus my attention on the object of the claim below. Koopmans defines the ‘object’ as “actors whose interests are materially affected by the (implementation of) the claim” (Koopmans 2002:43). However, ‘objects’ are not actors in the traditional sense of the term. In fact, the word ‘act’ derives from the Latin words ‘actus’ (event, thing, done) and ‘agere’ (to do). The object does not literally ‘say’ or ‘do’ anything. But neither does the intended recipient of a letter or an email act in the literal sense. Nevertheless, both addressees and objects are passive actors. Addressees exist in the

¹ Saward is considered the pioneer of representative claims analysis, developing a model of the ideal typical representative claim, which, incidentally or not, includes some of the main components of PCA, namely, a *claim-maker*, *subject*, *object*, and *audience*.

more tangible sense, whereas objects can include both actual groups (e.g. trade unions) and ‘imagined communities’ (e.g. ‘popolo Italiano’). However, even though the latter may be imagined, they are not ‘imaginary’ – to quote Schünemann (2015). These constituencies exist, not in the essential and concrete sense, but as social constructs. In the words of Pitkin, the object is “present in some sense which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact” (Pitkin 1967: 8–9; cited in de Wilde, 2013:287).

Whereas the addressee is usually an institutional political entity, objects typically represent fuzzy sets. For example, migrants and workers are not formal *de jure* entities with a specific legal identity. That is to say that it is not immediately apparent who constitutes a worker or migrant. Assuming that identity is performative, we can begin to understand why the object of political claims is pertinent. Identities are continually reified in public discourse through several means. The entitativity of a common identity may be enhanced in public discourse through meta-narratives that describe the superiority, valour, or heroism of one identity over competing identities². Alternatively, banal ‘we’ references (Billig, 1995) may (re-)produce certain identities. The advantage of RCA is that we can decipher the discursive production of imagined communities (2013: 291) by identifying deictic markers in addition to empty signifiers such as ‘il popolo Italiano’ or ‘the British people’ (Billig, 1995). RCA is suitable for my analysis because questions of identity strike at the heart of my research. In the words of de Wilde (2013), “representative claims-making may be considered a particular form of discursively constructing imagined communities’ by distinguishing ‘in-groups’ from ‘out-groups’ to the audience” (de Wilde, 2013: 287). Objects may be prominent or may lie dormant depending on who makes the claim (i.e. the claim maker) and what the claim is about (i.e. the issue/topic). Objects can be explicitly mentioned in claims (e.g. “...on behalf of asylum seekers”) or invoked through pronouns such as “We”, “Our”, or “Us” (e.g. Dutch PM: “We will not approve the EU budget because it is not in our nation’s best interests”). In the latter example, we can infer from the statement that ‘Dutch citizens’ are the objects whose interests would be materially affected by the implementation of the claim³ (Koopmans, 2002:43).

But why should we care about the object of a political claim in studies about the European public sphere? Because the object of a political claim helps shed light on which ‘imagined community’ is being (re-)constructed in the European public sphere. To whom does the representative claim to represent? To gauge whether Europe constitutes a genuine ‘community of communication’, normatively speaking, one should expect that national and European interests and identities are both prominent in RCA. What is the territorial scope of identity constructions in public discourses concerning EU politics?⁴ What kind of ‘imagined community’ is being constructed by the claim maker? Through analysing patterns of representative claims making, we can begin to address the age-old question whether the public sphere

² *Conflict framing* is another identity-enhancing framing device which has the function of demarcating ‘in-groups’ and ‘out-groups’.

³ I acknowledge that it may not be always clear who the object of a claim is. In these cases, I would not code for the object.

⁴ E.g. sub-national, national, European, or global.

in its current composition can foster a European ‘community of communication’?⁵ Identity strikes at the heart of representation as the latter is ultimately “about constructing a relationship between an ‘imagined community’ and its political representatives” (de Wilde, 2013: 288). De Wilde concludes that, “this method should be aimed at reliable measurement of object actors that indicate the discursive reproduction of imagined communities” (de Wilde, 2013: 291). With that in mind, this method seems tailor-made for my project which seeks to examine the scope of ‘imagined communities’ which are discursively reproduced in public debates on coverage of European issues, and to examine how identity constructs evolve during the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous research lends tentative support to the notion that public spheres tend to become more nationally self-referential during crises. For example, the study by Kleinen-von Königslöw shows that the share of European “We” references declined in 2008 which, as she surmises, may have been an effect of the global financial crisis which led to the reawakening of national identities (2010:53). She suspects that Europe’s fragile collective identity is not yet robust enough to withstand a crisis (Ibid.,). As mentioned above, the advantage of RCA over the deictic ‘we-o-meter’ approach is objects can usually be deciphered even when no ‘We’ is explicitly made. For example, the claim, ‘the Dutch want their money back!’ patently refers to the ‘Dutch’ constituency. In accordance with previous studies, I expect the national channels of representation and national identities were more prominent during the Covid-19 pandemic. By the same token, I would expect the EU constituency to be less represented particularly during the crisis. These expectations would also shed light on questions about the public spheres degree of inclusivity (i.e. are EU citizens adequately represented in public debates?) and identity (what kind of imagined community is being reproduced before and during the crisis?)⁶.

Social Network Analysis

I mainly employed Social Network Analysis (referred to hereafter as SNA) as a visualisation tool. In essence, for my research design, representative claims are coded, and the data is transposed as a network graph thereafter. Through SNA, I am able to map actor-addressee-object constellations – deriving from representative claims data – which is a proxy for mapping discourse patterns. SNA is an immensely powerful theoretical, analytical and visualisation tool. SNA allows us to gain a ‘birdseye’ overview of the whole dataset and identify patterns within it. SNA allows us to gain rich insights into high volumes of data, uncover latent patterns, and identify cliques and sub-structures, among many other things. SNA is tailor-made for my project as I am interested in visually representing communicative linkages between

⁵ As far as the supply side (i.e. output) of political communication is concerned. I accept that identity is a multifaceted concept which can be shaped by many variables. As Checkel (2014) argues, the public sphere is just one *locus* where identity can be made (see also Kermer et al., 2020).

⁶ These expectations would lend support to de Wilde’s hypothesis that the increasing penetration of EU affairs in public spheres may strengthen national channels of representation and national identity (de Wilde, 2019).

actors and objects. In a nutshell, networks are webs of nodes (vertices) connected via ties (edges). Networks contain a finite set of nodes – which may represent units of analysis of varying size ranging from individuals, groups to organizations, countries, and so on – and edges whose relations are represented via a network graph⁷ (Mascia, 2019, slide 24). An example of a network is a friendship among children at school. The nodes in this network would be the children, the friendship reveals the quality of ties/edges between them, and the setting of the network is school (Ibid., slide 25). A social network is defined as, “a collection of social actors connected directly or indirectly to each other by a set of ties” (Mascia, 2019, slide 51). As the name implies, SNA is the study of social networks – to understand their origins, evolution and change (Ibid.,). SNA helps us to understand how actors are embedded in social structures. Unlike other methods of social science, the emphasis is on relationships among actors, in other words, actors are not in isolation. Network algorithms and mathematical formulas of SNA derive from graph theory. SNA research typically consists of analysing network structures, developing arguments about how these structures affect individual action, and adopting mathematical/computational models (Ibid., slide 52). SNA is both a theoretical and methodological approach. For instance, it is widely accepted that centralised network structures are better performing (see the ground-breaking “Bavelas-Leavitt Experiment” – Bavelas, 1948; Bavelas, 1950; Leavitt, 1951). SNA contains an array of analytical concepts such as eigenvector centrality which not only measures certain attributes of a given network but reveals theoretical insights about what we can expect to happen as a result of these attributes. The unit of interest in a network is actors and their relations. Networks contain actors. Nodes can either be individuals or group entities (e.g. individuals, households, family, research groups, political parties, unions, cities, countries, continents, and so forth). Nodes typically contain attributes (typically color-coded for categorical data). In my case, nodes are colour-coded according to actors’ country of affiliation. Actors are typically represented as circular dots/orbs and relations are represented as lines. In SNA, actors are often referred to as nodes, vertices, or points, and relations are referred to as edges, ties, or lines. In many cases, we are interested not only in whether a connection exists, but also the frequency, intensity and kind of connection. For example, we may be able to characterise the interaction between two nodes as positively or negatively valenced. That is to say that in most interactions, there is a qualitative aspect. There is a rich taxonomy of types of interactions. For instance, in a business board meeting where A advised B, C made friends with D, and E argued with G, there are various types of interactions. In the former, the interaction can be evaluated in terms of positive sentiment. In the second example, the interaction can be adjudged as a positive relationship and in the latter, the interaction can be regarded as a negative relationship. As the cases above show, ties/relations, as with nodes, also contain attributes.

⁷ Also known as a Network Map, Network Diagram, or Node-Link Diagram.

A value of 1 is added for every tie in an adjacency matrix, and the absence of a tie is labelled as 0. A value of 2 means two ties were established between two nodes, by the same logic, a value of 3 means 3 ties between two nodes, and so forth. The frequency or intensity of a tie is typically represented by the thickness of the line between nodes, with a thick line indicative of an intense connection between nodes (weighted ties). In my case, ties are colour-coded according to the type of discursive ‘Euro-nationalism’. Networks can either contain directed or undirected ties. The former implies an asymmetrical relationship between two actors. For example, a telephone call initiated by Angela Merkel to Joe Biden is a directed tie from Angela (source) to Joe (target). Directed networks help us to understand the extent to which a relation is from one actor to another (Mascia, 2019, slide 66). Through directed networks, we can gauge the extent to which a relationship is reciprocal (bi-directional). By contrast, undirected ties imply the co-occurrence (co-presence) between pairs of actors with no distinction made between them. For example, a G-7 meeting wherein Angela and Joe are present would represent an undirected network. In this example, no distinction is made between the vertices which comprise the network. Their presence in the meeting already represents a tie of some sort. Ties can also be weighted by counting the number of ties between pairs of actors. For example, if Angela directly refers to Joe twice during the G7 meeting, a value of 2 would be assigned in the G7 network accordingly. Weighted networks are useful for gauging the intensity of relations between pairs of actors. Network graphs are typically transposed to adjacency matrixes. In other words, each node is labelled on both the row and the column of the matrix⁸. For example, in a network containing two nodes, a and b, the first row, labelled a, and the second column, labelled b, records the value of a tie from node a to node b. Table 3.1 (see below) illustrates a basic adjacency matrix wherein both $X(ab)$ and $X(ba)$ equal 1. In other words, a “sends” to b and vice versa. We can see from Table 3.2 that $X(ba)$ equal 1 while $X(ab)$ is equal to 0 which means that b “sends” to a, but a does not reciprocate to b. The respective values tell us about the frequency/intensity of relations between pairs of actors. From Table 3.3, we can see that $X(ab)=1$ and $X(ba)=3$, which means that b sends to a three times more than a sends to b.

⁸ SNA data is sorted via an adjacency matrix. As the name implies, an adjacency matrix records if the nodes are adjacent or not. An adjacency matrix is also called a relational data set because it stores information for connections only. A binary adjacency matrix only records if there is a connection or not. A connection is recorded with a value of 1, and its absence, with a value of 0. In an adjacency matrix, nodes are labelled on both the row and column margins. Ordinarily, a node does not connect with itself, or, at least, we are not interested in recording this information. However, in some cases, we are, and these ties are called *reflexive* ties. It is important to ensure that the same order for nodes is maintained for both rows and columns. Undirected graphs are always symmetrical data sets, so whatever you have on the top of the main diagonal will be reflected on the bottom of the diagonal. Whether one reads the matrix up-side down should not make a difference as rows and columns contain the same information. By contrast, directed datasets are not symmetrical, that is, they record for out- or in-degree (e.g. I record for 1->2, but not 2->1 in a directed graph whereas in an undirected graph, we would record a value of 1 in both cases for a tie). In addition to the adjacency matrix, we have *node-* and *attribute list* which contains information about nodes (e.g. the *gender* and *age* of actor) and an *edge list*. An edge list contains information about the weight of ties. In the attribution list, the first column always contains the node ID, and the other columns contain information pertaining to node attributes (e.g. gender, age). An adjacency matrix can be valued (weighted) or binary.

Table 3.1: Undirected graph

	A	B
a		1
b	1	

Table 3.2: Directed graph

	A	B
a		0
b	1	

Table 3.3: Weighted graph

	A	b
a		1
b	3	

The networks above are examples of one-mode networks (unipartite) which in effect means they contain one set of nodes that are similar to each other. For example, the ‘G7 meeting network’ contains heads of state, that is, actors of the same type. By contrast, two-mode networks (bipartite) contain two different types of nodes in which ties only pertain to vertices (nodes) belonging to different sets (e.g., actors and concepts). Two-mode networks are used to represent affiliation ties, for example, how actors are affiliated with different events (Mascia, 2019, slide 73). An example of a two-mode network is recording the attendance of G7 leaders to a series of events (e.g. UN Climate Change Conference, UN Security Council Meeting etc.). The G7 leaders are linked (i.e. tied) to an event if they attend it. All ties in a bipartite network are undirected. President Joe Biden’s attendance at the UN Security Council and NATO Summit represents two ties at two different nodes. However, it is logically inconceivable (and unintelligible) to claim that the NATO Summit made a tie with Joe Biden as the former is not an

actor per se but an event. That is to say that the network contains nodes of two different types. As the adjacency matrixes above show, undirected graphs are symmetric (Table 3.1) whereas directed graphs are asymmetric (Table 3.2).

SNA contains several metrics which help us to ascertain which are the most important nodes in a given network. Centrality provides information about the position of a node in a network⁹. As a general rule, nodes located at the centre of a network are more important than nodes located on the periphery. There are three standard centrality measures which capture the ‘importance’ of a node in a network which I outline below in the following order: degree centrality, closeness centrality and betweenness centrality. Degree is the number of direct links to and from a node (Mascia, 2019). A high score for degree centrality implies that a node has many direct ties with other nodes in the network. Degree centrality is measured by counting the number of direct connections made by a node. In matrices speak, degree centrality is the sum of all cell entries (Table 3.4). In undirected graphs, the sum of all entries in both the column and row margins will match (Table 3.4). In a directed networks, we can further distinguish between in- and out-degree centrality. The former measures the number of ties received, and the latter, the number of ties sent. As directed graphs are asymmetric, the sum of in-degree and out-degree will be different (Table 3.5). In a directed network, the ‘degree’ metric is the sum of in- and out-degree ties (Table 3.6). Individuals that receive many ties (i.e. high in-degree) is indicative of notoriety in the network. Individuals that send many ties (i.e. high out-degree) suggests strong influence in the network (Mascia, 2019).

Table 3.4: Degree centrality (undirected graph)

	a	b	c	d	Σ
a	0	1	2	4	7
b	1	0	0	2	3
c	2	0	0	1	3
d	4	2	1	0	7
Σ	7	3	3	7	

⁹ For example, are nodes at the centre or periphery of the network?

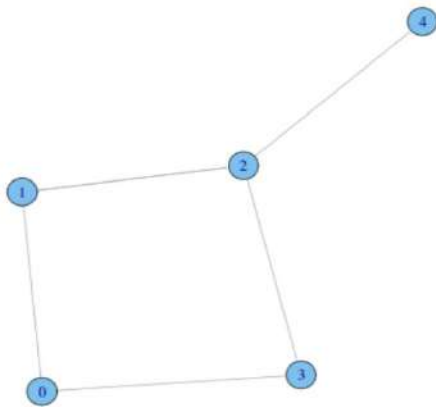
Table 3.5: Degree centrality (directed graph)

	a	b	c	d	\sum out-degree
a	0	1	2	0	3
b	2	0	1	1	4
c	3	1	0	0	4
d	1	2	1	0	4
\sum in-degree	6	4	4	1	15

Table 3.6: Degree, in- and out-degree

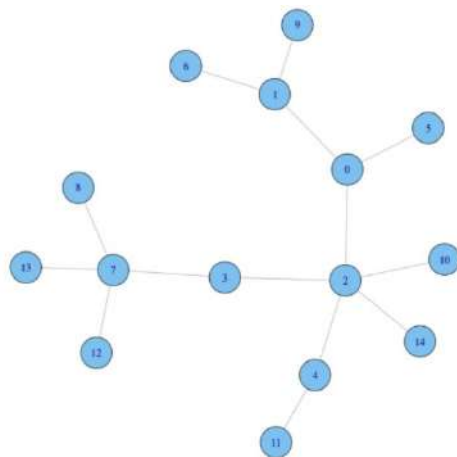
	a	b	c
Degree	3	4	2
In-degree	2	2	0
Out-degree	1	2	2

Betweenness centrality is another widely used centrality metric. Betweenness centrality measures the extent to which a node lies ‘between’ all other nodes in the network (Mascia, 2019, slide 91). In graph theory jargon, ‘between’ is shorthand for lying on the shortest path connecting every other node in the network (Gaito et al., 2014). Betweenness centrality builds on the concept of dependency; 0 is dependent on 2 to reach 4 because all the paths connecting 0 to 4 pass through 2 (Fig.3.1). In contrast to degree centrality – which gages ‘local’ centrality, in other words, it ignores indirect connections – betweenness centrality measures ‘global’ centrality, that is, indirect connections are considered too. In the Figure 3.1 below, although 0, 2 and 4 are not directly connected, 0 is depends on 2 to reach 4.

Figure 3.1: Betweenness centrality¹⁰

Betweenness centrality is useful for gauging the level of power and control nodes have over other nodes in the network. High betweenness centrality means that nodes have the potential to withhold or distort information in the network. It means, in effect, that nodes play a crucial mediating and intermediary role in the network. Nodes can record low degree centrality (i.e. few direct ties) but high betweenness centrality (i.e. high volume of indirect connections). For example, in Figure 3.2 below, 3 has a key intermediary role in the network. Although this node only has two direct ties (low degree centrality), it is an important bridge that connects one clique to other cliques in the network. Nodes with high betweenness centrality tend to act as ‘cut points’ in the network, that is, nodes, which if deleted, would disconnect the network (Mascia, 2019, slide 94-5). For example, in Figure 3.1(see above) if 2 is removed, the network is disconnected.

Figure 3.2: Betweenness centrality (large n)



¹⁰ These graph illustrations were found in

Closeness centrality, similar to betweenness centrality, considers both direct and indirect ties. In other words, it is a measure of global centrality. A node is regarded as central if it is ‘close’ to all other nodes (Mascia, 2019, slide 96). Closeness centrality is expressed in terms of the distance a node is from other nodes in the network. The distance is measured as the length of the shortest path connecting other nodes in the network (Mascia, 2019). The smaller the number, the ‘closer’ the node is to all the other nodes. In Fig. 3.3 (see below), the sum of node no.2’s closeness centrality is 5, making it the most central node in terms of closeness centrality (see Table 3.7 for a full breakdown of closeness centrality scores). The metric of closeness centrality is useful for gaging efficiency, that is, the extent to which a node can reach all other nodes in the shortest number of steps, and independence insofar as being close to other nodes in the network means they are less dependent on intermediaries (Mascia, 2019, slide 98-101). In sum, degree centrality implies influence; betweenness centrality implies control, intermediation and gatekeeping; and closeness centrality implies efficiency and independence.

Figure 3.3: Closeness centrality for node no.2

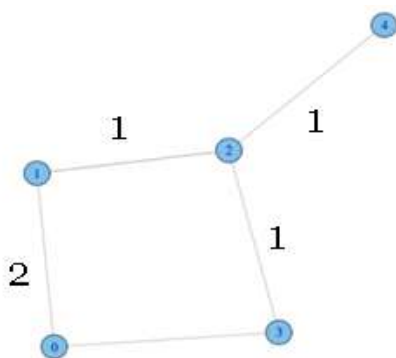


Table 3.7: Closeness centrality scores from Fig 3.3

Node	1	2	3	4
Closeness \sum	6	5	6	7

In SNA, several measures can be employed to uncover characteristics of whole networks. Density calculates the ratio of the number of actual ties to the number of possible links in the network¹¹. Density indicates the degree of connectivity among actors in the network (Mascia, 2019, slide 119). In Table

¹¹ i.e. n multiplied by $n-1$ divided by 2.

3.8 (see below), the density of the network is 0.5 as the number of actual ties is equal to 5 and the number of possible ties is equal to 10 (i.e. $5 \times 4 / 2 = 0.5$).

Table 3.8: density

	A	b	c	d	e
a		1	0	0	0
b	1		1	0	0
c	0	1		1	1
d	0	0	1		1
e	0	0	1	1	

The density metric is meaningless on its own and should be used in conjunction with other networks across space or time. The centralisation metric should not be conflated with centrality. For instance, an individual can be central in a decentralised network¹². As outlined earlier, centrality is a node level metric gauging the centrality of a node in a given network (also referred to as ‘point centrality’; Freeman, 1979). In contrast, centralization (or ‘network centrality’) is a network level metric indicating the extent to which a network has a centralised structure (Mascia, 2019, slide 122). A centralised network indicates that links are concentrated in one or few nodes whereas a decentralised network means that links are more equally distributed among nodes in the network. Graph theory also employs terms such as cliques to describe sub-structures within a network. Mascia defines a clique as a “subset of nodes of an undirected graph such that its induced subgraph is complete; that is, every two distinct nodes in the clique are adjacent” (Mascia, 2019, slide 130).

I use both one-mode and two-mode networks for my analysis, the former, to gage the extent of structural Europeanisation, that is, ties forged between nodes of the same type, namely claimant and addressee¹³. More specifically, I transpose the coded claims data for the claimant and addressee as a directed unipartite graph as these variables represent vertices of the same type, namely, political actors. A tie is formed when the claimant invokes an addressee as part of a representative claim. By quantifying the

¹² By the same logic, a highly centralised network can contain nodes with low centrality scores.

¹³ *Structural Europeanisation* is an umbrella term which may refer to synchronised timing of news reporting, attention to similar issues, similar frames of interpretation and interconnectedness across national public media system. *Normative Europeanisation* refers to becoming “European” in terms of identities, norms, values, goals, perspectives, and so forth.

in- and out-degree centrality of vertices, we can determine whether actors are predominantly claimants (i.e. protagonists / political entrepreneurs) or addressees (i.e. passive actors) in the mediated sphere¹⁴. As stated in the preceding pages, in-degree centrality means that nodes are predominantly ‘receivers’ (addressees) rather than ‘senders’ of information (claimants) in the network. In addition, I transpose the coded claims data for the claimant and object as an undirected bipartite graph as these variables represent nodes of different types. The claimant is a political actor, and the object is the constituency represented in the claim. The object is seldom if ever also a claimant as constituencies are typically ‘imagined communities’ or floating signifiers such as ‘the people’. In my two-mode network, a tie is formed when the claimant invokes an object as part of a representative claim. The relation between the claimant and represented is unidirectional as the claimant is seldom the object, and vice versa. A directed graph thus makes no sense for networks of this kind.

There are two main levels at which we can do SNA: (1) at the node level and (2) structural level. At the node level we are trying to understand where individuals are located within the network. The node level helps us to understand the position of actors within the network. Node level analysis helps us to identify key players, and power brokers in the network. Analysis at the node level sheds light on questions such as: who are the influential individuals within the network? And who are the main power brokers in the network? There are many ways to gage ‘power’ and ‘influence’ within networks and, ipso facto, several concepts and metrics for measuring centrality in SNA. The most commonly used centrality metrics are: total degree centrality (also called ‘freeman degree centrality’), betweenness centrality, and eigenvector centrality. I outline each of these in turn below. Total degree centrality (TDC) calculates the number of direct connections that a node has. It is a measurement to gage local influence in the network. TDC is “useful in assessing which nodes are central with respect to spreading information and influencing others in their immediate 'neighbourhood'” (Dosen, 2017, slide 8). TDC is useful for determining who are the most directly connected actors in the network. Betweenness centrality (BC) elucidates how many times a particular node is located on the ‘geodesic path’ between any other two nodes in the network¹⁵ (Racherla & Hu, 2010:1023). BC is instructive for establishing who are the main vectors, bridges, or gatekeepers for diffusing information in the network¹⁶. In contrast to total degree centrality, betweenness centrality takes a more global perspective to influence. Eigenvector centrality, in essence, detects who is the most powerful actor in the network insofar as those who have high EC will be nodes who are well-connected to other well-connected nodes in the network. Eigenvector centrality is useful in ascertaining who is connected to the most connected actors (Dosen, 2017, slide 12). Total degree centrality takes a local view for gaging the importance of nodes,

¹⁴ Political debate implies communicative exchanges between two or more actors. We should, in theory, expect actors’ deliberative roles to switch from time to time. The ‘toing and froing’ of political debate implies that *claimants* will sometimes be targets (*addressees*) of political demands, and vice versa.

¹⁵ The ‘geodesic path’ is the optimal path between two nodes in a network.

¹⁶ The ‘bridge’ is located along the shortest path between pairs of nodes (Calboli *et al.*, 2021:509).

but eigenvector and betweenness centrality takes a more holistic (global) perspective of the network. This is because indirect connections are included in the latter two centrality measures.

SNA also helps us to understand the structure of a network. Through SNA, scholars are able to view all the connections in the network akin to a birds eye view. SNA enables us to examine networks in toto to understand patterns of interaction on a meta level. At the structural level of analysis, we can evaluate whether people are communicating as one coherent group or communicating in subgroups. Can subgroups or communities be discerned in the network, or is the whole network so densely connected that it forms one, coherent whole. A clique is the term for all nodes in the network that are connected with all other nodes. Cliques have a density of 1 – the theoretical maximum – which means that all possible ties have been formed. We may also wish to know the size, density, reciprocity or homophily of the network¹⁷. The size of the network is self-evident and concerns the number of nodes in the network. With density, we are trying to understand, out of all possible connections between nodes, what percentage of those connections are there. A high density on a structural level, that is, many connections between many nodes, implies cohesion in the network. Network density is the percentage of ties present in the network out of all possible ties. Density informs us about the speed at which information spreads among nodes and reveals the extent to which actors have high levels of social capital. Reciprocity refers to “the ratio of the number of mutual relations (i.e. there is an edge in both directions) over the total number of relations in the network...where two vertices are said to be related if there is at least one edge between them” (Dosen, 2017, slide 17). Reciprocity is a useful indicator for ascertaining the degree of mutuality in a network, with high levels of reciprocity in the network indicative of social cohesion (Ibid.). To quote Scott et al., “a network that has a predominance of null or reciprocated ties over asymmetric connections may be a more ‘equal’ or ‘stable’ network than one with a prevalence of asymmetric connections (which might be more of a hierarchy)” (Scott et al., 2011: 344). Lastly, homophily refers to the theory that people tend to associate with people who are similar to themselves. Homophily is the tendency to relate to actors with similar characteristics (e.g. status, nationality, beliefs etc, see Cheliotis, 2010, slide 16, for details). To paraphrase Cheliotis, homophily leads to the formation of homogeneous groups (i.e. clusters) where forming bonds is easier (Ibid.). However, as Cheliotis adds, heterophily can be desirable in some contexts as extreme homogenisation can curtail innovation (Ibid.). The standard measure of association for homophily is the ‘EI index’¹⁸.

¹⁷ There are, of course, other analytical concepts to examine the structure of networks, but these are the most commonly used ones.

¹⁸ The EI Index is an inverse index of homophily with values ranging from -1 to 1. A value of -1 means perfect homophily and a value of +1 means perfect heterophily. More specifically, a score of -1 means that nodes only have ties with others in the same category as themselves whereas a score of +1 means nodes only have ties with others in different categories.

Operationalisation

Crucially, I argue, that we should employ nuanced taxonomies when gaging the extent of ‘discursive Europeanism’ – or its converse ‘nationalism’ – in the public sphere. We should employ all the heuristic tools at our disposal to ensure that we accurately capture the concepts we wish to measure. To this end I build on two typologies, namely that of the RECONNECT (de Wilde & Gora, 2019) and EUROPUB projects (Koopmans, 2002) – both of which have merits and weaknesses – to gage the extent of ‘(Euro-)nationalism’ in public discourse. Broadly speaking, the first taxonomy is better equipped to measure the extent of media ethnocentrism while the latter is better suited to measure levels of Europeanisation among political actors in the public sphere. The former, broadly speaking, examines the gatekeeping and agenda-setting role of the mass media (i.e. selectivity and distortion biases of media representations) whereas the latter treats the mass media as an archive where we can trace claims and map discourse among political actors. For the purpose of clarity, I lay out each typology below:

Table 3.9: Taxonomy for measuring the extent of (Euro-)nationalism in the mass media

Object scope	Description	Example
Own Country, (Sub-)National	This code is used when the object(s) of the claim refer to the same nationality as that of the reporting newspaper.	‘Italian citizens’ (Source: Corriere della Sera)
Other EU Member State(s)	This code is used when the object(s) of the claim refer to the nationality of another EU member state.	‘French fisherman’ (Source: NRC Handelsblad)
EU Supranational	This code is used when the object(s) of the claim refer to the EU-supranational level.	‘EU citizens’ (Source: Bild)
Regional/Global (other)	This code is used when the object(s) of the claim refer to the nationality of a third country/non-EU member state or an international/borderless constituency.	‘the common good of mankind,’ OR ‘Brazilian farmers’ (Source: La Nazione)

Because I am interested in gaging the extent of ethnocentricity in news reporting (i.e. media logic theory), I employ the ‘RECONNECT’ taxonomy which is tailormade for tracing the scope of Europeanisation in the mass media of the reporting country. However, I also wish to measure ‘(Euro-)nationalism’ among political protagonists which necessitates devising a suitable taxonomy which can be applied universally irrespective of where the political claim is published. In a departure from the ‘EUROPUB’ codebook, the ‘discursive scope’ is determined by the relation between the claimant and object variable irrespective of where the newspaper published¹⁹. This taxonomy enables me to accurately ascertain to what extent claimants discursively construct a European ‘community of communication’ and ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983). In this way, we can gage to what extent public spheres are Europeanised in the qualitative sense.

Table 3.10: Taxonomy for measuring the extent of (Euro-)nationalism in political discourse²⁰

Discursive scope (i.e. act2obj)	Description	Example
National	Use this code when the constituency referred to in the claim is the same as the claimant’s nationality.	Matteo Salvini -> Italian businesses
Horizontal Europeanisation	Use this code when the objects of the claim are citizens’ of another EU member state which is different to that of the claimant.	Matteo Salvini -> German people
Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant’s nationality is one of the European member states (e.g., Italy) and the constituency invoked in the claim is an EU-wide scope.	Matteo Salvini -> EU citizens
Top-down vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant’s nationality is ‘EU-supranational’ (e.g., Von der Leyen, EU Commission President) and the constituency invoked in the claim refers to a European member state.	Von der Leyen -> Italian people

¹⁹ This category intends to capture the more normatively demanding (*identitarian*) aspects of discourse (i.e. the *object* being represented in a political claim) emanating from collective actors in the public sphere.

²⁰ My taxonomy builds on the seminal work of both Koopman’s PCA codebook (2002) and the ‘Reconnect’ project’s RCA handbook (see de Wilde & Gora, 2019: 29-30, in particular).

Supranational Europeanisation	Use this code for when the claimant holds the nationality of ‘EU-supranational’ and the represented constituency is an EU-wide scope. For example: EU citizens, European Farmers, European students, European industry etc.	Von der Leyen -> European students
Regional / Global (Other)	Use this code for third-country individuals, reference groups (e.g. ‘workers of the world unite’) or organisations.	Von der Leyen -> Syrian migrants

Even though these two typologies purport to measure similar phenomena there are some crucial differences which I lay out below. In a departure from Koopman’s typology of Europeanisation, I have subsumed weak- and strong horizontal Europeanisation into one category, namely—horizontal Europeanisation. Koopmans makes a distinction between what he calls ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ forms of horizontal Europeanisation. However, my objection to this distinction is that the ‘weak’ variant is classified as ‘Europeanised’ political communication. Representative claims of the weak horizontal kind include claims in which the nationality of the claimant and object are the same but nonetheless different to the reporting country. For example, the claim found in the Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica*, by the Dutch PM, Mark Rutte, to fight ‘tooth and nail’ for Dutch interests in the upcoming Covid-19 recovery fund negotiations would be classified as a ‘weak’ horizontally Europeanised claim solely on the basis that the claim was reported in a non-Dutch newspaper. By contrast, the ‘strong’ kind of horizontal Europeanisation includes claims wherein the nationality of the claimant and object are different to one another (e.g. Mark Rutte implores fellow EU member states “to act in solidarity for our Italian friends and fellow Europeans” as a result of the economic harm inflicted by the Covid-19 pandemic). Thus, somewhat bizarrely, the first kind of Europeanisation – and not the latter – is determined by where the claim is published. As per the Koopman’s typology, the claim – in the above example – may be coded differently if the claim is published in a Dutch newspaper²¹. This is unproblematic if we are interested solely in measuring the extent of Europeanisation in mediated discourse. However, as I am interested in mapping discourse between political actors generally, I adapt the ‘EUROPUB’ typology accordingly by subsuming ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ forms of horizontal Europeanisation into one category²². It, moreover, seems counterintuitive and misrepresentative to

²¹ For the purpose of clarity, I am referring to this example: Mark Rutte claims “to fight ‘tooth and nail’ for Dutch interests in the upcoming Covid-19 recovery fund negotiations”.

²² It does not make much sense to distinguish between ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ forms of horizontal Europeanisation – which depend on where the claim is published – because I am also interested in gaging the extent of Europeanisation in the public sphere irrespective of the where the claim is published.

classify ‘weak’ horizontal claims as ‘Europeanised’ when the claimant is referring to their own national constituency. For example, can we really regard a claim found in the Dutch newspaper, *NRC Handelsblad* by Matteo Salvini endeavouring to “protect the interests of ‘Italian businesses’” as a form of Europeanised political communication? On the contrary, I argue that political claims of this sort militate against the notion of a Europeanised public sphere, instead, reinforcing a divided Europe of nations rather than one nation of Europe working in the spirit of common endeavour and unity. Using my adapted typology, the claim above would be coded as ‘national’.

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Chapter 4 – Research Design and Codebook for RCA

Introduction

The purpose of the research design is to delineate the parameters of analysis and delimit the scope of empirical inquiry. The research design helps to ensure the validity and reliability of analysis. To this end, a robust research design should clearly specify how to collect, measure, analyse and interpret one's data. The research design crucial "for defining the criteria by which you will evaluate your results and draw conclusions" (Scribbr, 2021). Firstly, a research design should define the methodological approach and overall aims of the project. This refers to the ternary choice between quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods approach. The former, crudely speaking, "deals with numbers and statistics, while qualitative research deals with words and meanings" and the latter, as the name implies, incorporates aspects of both (Scribbr, 2021). Secondly, the research design should stipulate the type of data to be used and methods employed for collecting and analysing data. For example, a qualitative researcher may refer to newspaper archives to examine the topoi within a text and a quantitative-oriented researcher may opt for an experimental research design, that is, collecting data unobtrusively via direct observation. Thirdly, the location and timeframe of analysis should clearly be laid out in the research design. As we have finite time and resources at our disposal, we should pick a manageable but nonetheless ambitious sample that is representative of the population. The population is the entire group from which inferences and conclusions are derived, while the sample is a subset of the population where data is collected from (Scribbr, 2021). The population of interest should be clearly defined in the research design. It is, moreover, important to justify case selection with reference to the research questions. For example, we may opt for a case study of one country because it reveals unusual or anomalous features. Alternatively, we may wish to compare across several similar or heterogeneous cases (Scribbr, 2021). Fourthly, the research design should clearly specify the research questions, hypotheses and main variables of analysis. Regarding the latter, the researcher should explain how each variable can be reliably measured (i.e., operationalization). Fifthly, what steps will be taken for collecting and managing the data? Lastly, but certainly no less importantly, the research design should spell out how we will analyse the dataset.

Overview of research design

With the above in mind, in this section, I set out the main features of my research design. I opted for a mixed-method research approach, namely a method which incorporates qualitative and quantitative aspects, and inductive and deductive aspects. As with most decisions in life, the choice of research design invariably involves trade-offs. Whereas qualitative research sacrifices breadth and scope of knowledge in order to gain a rich understanding of a specific phenomenon or context, quantitative research neglects depth for breadth and generalizability of knowledge to a larger population. My research design is predominantly qualitative as I am particularly interested in interpreting words and their meanings. That said, I also incorporate quantitative methods into my research design as I endeavour to measure the frequency of certain words and frames from text. As with most qualitative research, there is an element of subjectivity in the interpretation of data. However, any subjectivity can be limited by clearly setting out objective criteria through which variables will be measured, in addition to explaining how to deal with problematic cases and fuzzy sets. My research design is predominantly descriptive-correlational – in other words, I aim to both measure and examine whether variables are related to one another. As touched upon above, I employ deductive and inductive methods for my research design (Scribbr, 2021). In crude terms, the former entails building on a pre-existing theoretical framework based on extant research and developing hypotheses and testing them using data thereafter. By contrast, an inductive approach entails observing patterns in data, and developing (or refining) theories (or hypotheses) thereafter. In reality, matters are a little more complex, and research designs typically fit somewhere in the middle between these two epistemological approaches. In the spirit of Mill's 'methods of difference' approach, I selected four case studies, namely Italy, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands which I deem to be sufficiently heterogenous and representative of Europe. The data source for my project is primary data, namely newspaper articles collected from the LexisNexisUni database. I employ the methods of Representative Claims Analysis (referred to as RCA hereafter) and Social Network Analysis (referred to as SNA hereafter) for my analysis. RCA provides the instructions and practical tools for measuring the concepts that are integral to addressing my research questions¹. RCA is also useful for gaining theoretical insights on the concept of political representativeness in the context of public spheres. SNA's powerful analytical toolkit is utilised to complement the analysis. SNA is mainly used for displaying the results of my dataset in addition to providing theoretical insights.

The codebook below outlines which variables will be measured and how I will measure them which is a crucial step for ensuring the validity and reliability of results. I have adopted the method of RCA to analyse public discourse on European affairs prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic was a crisis of epochal proportions and a remarkable opportunity for scholars to understand how crises

¹ Such as political interests, identity, political representativeness, and political agency, amongst other things.

might alter patterns of political communication. Previous empirical work and theoretical insights particularly Social Identity theory argue that crises may induce public spheres to become more ethnocentric and nationally self-referential. However, empirical evidence remains scant on this question. That said, it would be a mistake to focus entirely on the pandemic period alone as the generalizability of findings to less extraordinary periods would be questionable. To this end, I have therefore decided to include a control year sample called the ‘pre-Covid-19’ dataset to enhance the reliability of my analysis. The inclusion of two years of data, moreover, allows me to compare results prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RCA enriches our understanding of the character and framing of debates concerning European politics. In particular, RCA helps us to identify who are the key actors, to whom are political demands (and/or support/criticism) addressed to, and whose interests/identities (or ‘imagined communities’) they claim to represent (de Wilde & Gora, 2019). To paraphrase de Wilde et al. (2014:40), representative claims serve the purpose of accentuating differences between ‘in-’ and ‘out-groups’ (see also Tajfel and Turner, 2004). There are three modes of framing by which political actors can do this: (1) valence framing, and (2) pitting ‘targets’ (i.e. addressees) of political demands against represented constituencies (i.e. objects), and (3) justifications which invoke moralistic or value judgments about the virtues of the in-group and/or deficiencies of out-groups (e.g. defending our ‘sacred institutions’ (i.e. sovereignty frame) against ‘foreign’ meddling, or chastising out-groups because of their inability to integrate into society (i.e. identity/culture frame)). The former would be categorised as a ‘sovereignty’ frame and the latter would be categorised as ‘identity/culture’ frame. These three modes of framing can overlap with one another, for instance, in the latter examples, there is a moral judgment (i.e. justification) which is negative (valence). Indeed, these modes of framing are not mutually exclusive and can occur simultaneously. For example, as de Wilde rightly points out, frames which contain an addressee that is negatively evaluated is also a form of ‘conflict framing’² (2014:40).

As with traditional content analysis, RCA codes the meta data of newspaper articles such as the date, source, and issue field, amongst other things. The crucial variable of my analysis is the object of representative claims which codes to whom political actors claim to represent³. Revealing the patterns of representative claims help us to address the age-old question whether public spheres in their current form can be expected to contribute, or not, toward a European sense of belonging. If, as Billig’s presaged, banal forms of nationalism continue to dominate public discourse, this would provide further evidence that the post-modernist prophecy of the ‘global village’ of transnational identities is out of kilter with empirics. A caveat is in order: I do not claim that the public sphere is the only site where

² The term, ‘conflict framing’ is largely self-explanatory. Representative claims are typically framed in ‘zero-sum game’ terms; rarely are both in- and out-groups positively evaluated together (i.e. valence framing) such is the conflictual nature of politics; the realisation of the claim or political demand is typically beneficial to the interests of the represented group (i.e. object) but may ‘conflict’ with the political demands of the addressee; and the addressee is typically viewed in a negative light and objects are typically portrayed in a positive one (de Wilde, 2014).

³ Or to borrow the words of Billig, which banal identities are (re-)produced in public discourses on European affairs? (1995).

identities are re-produced. The public sphere is nonetheless an important site for the congealment of identity with newspapers a particularly useful archive to trace identity orientation. Building on previous research, I expect banal forms of national identity to be the most resonant as a result of the continuing dominance and embeddedness of media organisations in national structures. Furthermore, the logic of the media favours national actors and issues due to their perceived newsworthiness for the mainly national target audience. Moreover, I argue that political opportunity structures still incline political actors to invoke national frames of reference and interpret European issues from a national perspective (i.e., ‘domestication’). As previous studies show, the widely documented politicisation of EU politics has played into the hands of Eurosceptics and nationalist-oriented political parties. I have opted for the Discourse Network Analyzer interface (referred to as DNA hereafter, designed by Leifeld, 2018) for manual coding as it is open source, easy to use, and readily exportable to R – a powerful analytical tool for data manipulation (e.g., Dplyr and Tidyverse packages). The other advantage of DNA over its better known counterparts (e.g. NVivo and ATLAS.ti) is its seamless functionality with R. For example, the R package ‘LexisNexisTools’ (Gruber, 2019) is a useful tool for automatically importing of newspaper articles to both R and DNA, respectively metadata (e.g., the date/time of publication, author, source etc.).

Research Questions

- Whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics?⁴
- Which actors are the most visible in public debates concerning European politics?⁵
- Are public debates concerning European politics characterised by discursive nationalism, intergovernmentalism or supranationalism?⁶
- Can discernible trends be ascertained according to, inter alia, country, newspaper format, newspaper source, actor type, actor nationality, and party family? And does identity mobilisation change substantially prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Is there a correlation between structural and normative dimensions of ‘discursive (Euro-)nationalism?’

⁴ The key variable for answering this question is the *object* variable.

⁵ The key variable for answering this question is the *claimant* and *addressee* variables.

⁶ The key variable for answering this question is the *claimant*, *addressee*, and *object* variables.

Case selection

Countries

Table 4.1: Country selection

	IT	NL	DE	PL
Population (in millions)	61	17	83	38
Region	S Europe	NW Europe	NW Europe	CE Europe
Political system	Parliamentary republic	Parliamentary representative democracy	Federal parliamentary republic	Semi-presidential representative democratic republic
Electoral system	Mixed	PR	PR	PR
Date of EU accession	1957	1957	1957	2004
Support for the EU (% , April, 2019)	36	43	76	68

My analysis comprises four countries, namely Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, and Poland. As Figure 1 above shows, these countries represent a heterogeneous set of cases. As my central aim is, firstly, to collect a representative sample of Europe⁷ and secondly compare across countries, I have opted for countries that vary according to, inter alia – population size, geographical location, public opinion, and the type of political system. As I argued in the Literature Review, few empirical studies of Central and Eastern Europe have been carried out. The countries of this region are interesting to explore from a research perspective as they are newer EU members. As Europeanisation is understood as a linear and temporal process, many scholars expect the newer CEEC member states to be ‘less Europeanised’ than their older Western European counterparts. With the above in mind, I have included Poland in my analysis. Germany is, traditionally speaking, a staunch and consistent supporter of the EU, and according to recent Eurobarometer surveys, Italy – one of the founding member states of the EU – is

⁷ Which is no easy feat due to Europe’s vast population size and variegated social and political environment.

one of the most Eurosceptic EU member states. By contrast, support for the EU is much higher in Poland and Germany.

In order to collect a representative sample of the public spheres comprising Europe, my analysis examines patterns of discourse in three different regions of Europe: two North-western European countries, namely, Germany and the Netherlands, one Eastern European country, Poland, and one Southern European country, Italy. I opted for countries that vary according to, *inter alia* – population size, geographical location, public opinion, duration of EU membership, levels of media freedom, and the type of political system. Regarding the latter, Italy's political system may be categorised as a *parliamentary republic* and the Netherlands operates under a *parliamentary constitutional monarchy*. The political system in Germany may be categorised as a *federal parliamentary republic*, and Poland operates under a *semi-presidential representative democratic republic* (i.e. the prime minister and president are directly elected under a fixed term, the latter of whom is responsible to parliament)⁸. Germany is the most populous EU member state (approx. 80 million) followed by Italy (approx. 60 million), Poland (approx. 40 million) and the Netherlands (approx. 20 million). These four case studies also represent a good spread in terms of media freedom levels. According to the *Press Freedom Index* – conducted by the RSF – the Netherlands is the second freest nation in terms of media freedom, followed by Germany in seventeenth place, Poland in twenty-second place, and lastly, Italy, in a distant fifty-seventh place⁹. Moreover, this sample represent a good spread in terms of levels of EU support. Germany is, traditionally speaking, a staunch and consistent supporter of the EU, and according to recent Eurobarometer surveys, Italy is one of the most 'Eurosceptic' EU member states. Indeed, as of April 2019, under half of Italian (36%) and Dutch citizens (43%) supported EU integration compared to over two-thirds of German (68%) and Polish citizens (76%). The inclusion of Poland, moreover, allows me to compare public discourse in older and newer member states, and euro with non-euro member states. As Europeanisation is understood as an incremental process, newer CEEC member states are expected to be less Europeanised than their older Western European counterparts.

Newspaper selection

In regard to newspaper selection, I have chosen a heterogeneous sample that is representative of Europe's variegated media cultures. Naturally, to avoid selectivity bias, samples were collected from two newspapers, namely, one sensationalist-oriented format newspaper, and one 'quality' newspaper for each country. Moreover, I endeavoured to select newspapers with high audience shares in their

⁸ van der Meer Krok-Paszowska, A. (1999)

⁹ RSF (n.d.)

respective countries. To this end, I selected newspapers according to format, political orientation, and general stance to EU integration. A caveat on is in order. I would have opted for the Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica* instead of *Corriere della Sera* because the former is widely accepted to be more left-wing and liberal in political orientation than the latter. However, regrettably, LexisNexis does not archive newspapers for *La Repubblica*. My Italian peers, however, advised me that any differences between the two newspapers are modest. Furthermore, as there are no archetypal ‘tabloid’ newspapers in Italy – akin to the British (*The Sun*), German (*Bild*), and Polish (*Fakt*) ‘red tops’ – I therefore opted for *La Nazione* which is a regionally based but widely read newspaper that is distributed nationwide¹⁰.

In particular, my research examines patterns of representative claims making found in eight newspapers, two for each country. To avoid selectivity bias, I opted for one quality and one tabloid newspaper for each country. Moreover, I opted for newspapers with high audience shares in their respective countries. My principal aim was to identify a heterogeneous sample that is representative of Europe’s variegated media landscape. To this end, I selected newspapers which vary according to newspaper format, political orientation, and general attitudes to EU integration. In the end, I settled on the following newspapers: *Corriere della Sera* and *La Nazione* in Italy; *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Bild* in Germany; *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Fakt* in Poland; and *HRC Handelsblad* and *De Telegraaf* in the Netherlands. The newspapers are treated as archives of representative claims-making. The advantage of analysing newspapers is that they contain public statements from a broad range of actors. *Fakt* is a tabloid newspaper modelled on the German tabloid, *Bild*. *Fakt* is owned by the German-Swiss venture, *Ringier Axel Springer*. *Fakt* is the most widely read newspaper in Poland (Statista, 2022a). The newspaper aims to portray itself as the defender of the average citizen. The newspaper reports on a range of topics from soft news to current affairs and reports news in plain language (International Media Sales, n.d.-a). *Fakt* has no discernible political orientation and it is not clear whether the newspaper holds pro- or anti-EU sentiments. That said, *Fakt*, particularly around the time of its founding, has a track record of stirring nationalism and fomenting anti-German sentiments. The newspaper does not report in English and does not market itself as a newspaper for international audiences. *Gazeta Wyborcza* is Poland’s biggest selling quality newspaper and the second most widely circulated newspaper overall. *Gazeta* is owned by *Agora*, a Polish media company. An American media company, *Cox Communications* and an American NGO, *Media Development Investment Fund*, also have a stake in *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The political orientation of the newspaper can be classified as left-wing, liberal, generally pro-EU, and highly critical of the ruling *PiS* party. The newspaper also reports news in English in order cater to growing international audiences. Despite Polish president vowing to “repolonise” the national media, both *Fakt* and *Gazeta* are free from government influence (RSF, 2020). Both newspapers are

¹⁰ The EUROPUB project applied the same strategy (Koopmans *et al.*, 2002). To circumvent this issue, they selected *La Nazione* as well.

heterogenous particularly in their target audience, the kinds of topics they report on, and their style of reporting¹¹.

In Italy, *La Nazione*, is a regional newspaper published nationwide and presented in tabloid format. The newspaper is joint owned by the RCA MediaGroup, a private, international multimedia publishing group, and Monrif S.p.A, an Italian media company. The political orientation of the newspaper is moderate-conservative and it does not have a clearly identifiable pro- or anti-EU position. Despite being a regional newspaper, *La Nazione* still performs highly in terms of daily readership figures. News articles are reported in Italian alone and there is no English language version. The newspaper reports on a gamut of domestic and international topics from politics to sport. *Corriere della Sera* is a quality newspaper and, according to Statista, is Italy's most read newspaper (Statista, 2022b). The newspaper shares the same ownership as *La Nazione*, namely, *RCS MediaGroup S.p.A*, a publicly listed media company. Almost 50% of shares are owned by Urbano Cairo, a media mogul who owns the Cairo Communication Group, a publishing company which owns men's magazines and tabloids in addition to travel, cooking and gardening magazines. *Corriere della Sera* is widely regarded as a centre-right conservative newspaper with generally pro-EU attitudes. According to one source, most readers are highly educated, and tend to be entrepreneurs or freelancers (International Media Sales, n.d.-b). Although the newspaper reports numerous stories of international scope, there is hitherto no version of the newspaper in English. These two newspapers, I believe, are a heterogenous sample that is representative of the Italian media landscape¹².

Bild newspaper can be considered an archetypal 'red-top' newspaper, presenting news stories in a direct and unique style, using plain language accompanied by lots of imagery. *Bild* reports on a range of 'soft news' and gossip, entertainment, and domestic and international political affairs (International Media Sales, n.d.-c). *Bild* shares the same owners as the Polish tabloid newspaper, *Fakt*, namely Axel Springer SE (see above). *Bild* is widely regarded as oriented to ring-wing, conservative views and displays, more of than not, views which are critical of the EU. According to Statista, as of 2021, *Bild* is the most read newspaper in Germany (Statista, 2022c). *Bild* markets itself as a newspaper for a broad audience. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* is the second most popular newspaper in Germany. This newspaper is *Südwestdeutsche Medien Holding* which is one of the largest companies in German print media. The general consensus is that *SZ* is political aligned to the centre-left and is generally supportive of the EU. *SZ* also publishes articles of international interest in English (Zeitung, 2021). *SZ* predominantly reports

¹¹ I avoided *Polska Press* because it is widely regarded as the most pro-government newspaper and is partly owned by the Polish government (Schmitz, 2021).

¹² My one regret is that both newspapers hold similar political views, and it is questionable whether *La Nazione* is a genuine 'tabloid' newspaper. I would have opted for the Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica* to replace *Corriere della Sera* because the former is regarded as more left-wing and liberal in political orientation. Unfortunately, the *LexisNexis* archives do not contain newspaper articles from *La Repubblica*. My Italian peers reassure me, however, that the differences between the two aforementioned newspapers are modest. Moreover, as there are no archetypal tabloid newspapers in Italy akin to the British (*The Sun*), German (*Bild*) and Polish (*Fakt*) 'red tops', I, therefore, opted for *La Nazione*. This case selection takes its inspiration from the EUROPUB project which employed the same strategy (Koopmans et al., 2002).

on domestic and international current affairs. Both SZ and Bild, I believe, capture the variegated media landscape in Germany.

According to Statista, the Dutch tabloid newspaper, *De Telegraaf*, is the most read newspaper in the Netherlands (Statista, 2021d). The newspaper is owned by *Mediahuis*, a Belgian media company with assets in several European countries. The newspaper is mainly read by low earners and the middle class. The newspaper is unabashedly critical of the EU, and it is widely accepted that the newspaper veers to the political right on many issues. *NRC Handelsblad* is owned by the same company as *De Telegraaf*. *NRC* holds generally positive views on the EU, and is of a liberal, centre-left political orientation. According to one source, *NRC*'s target group is highly educated, affluent professionals (International Media Sales, n.d.-d). *NRC* is clearly keen to attract worldwide audiences, as it has a bespoke website offering newspaper articles in English. *NRC* also provides domestic news, in addition to opinion articles aimed at those interested in European current affairs (Voxeurop, n.d.). All in all, *De Telegraaf* and *NRC*, I believe, represent contrasting case studies in several aspects particular in regard to their views of the EU, political orientation, and target audiences.

Table 4.2: Newspaper selection¹³

Newspaper	Format	Popularity (national)	Target audience	Scope	Political orientation	EU stance
<i>Fakt</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Unknown	Neutral
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	Quality	2 nd	Niche	Domestic and international	Left-wing; Liberal	Supportive
<i>La Nazione</i>	Regional / Tabloid	11 th	General	Mainly local/domestic	Moderate-conservative	Neutral
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	Quality	1 st	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-right; Conservative	Supportive
<i>Bild</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Right-wing; Conservative	Critical
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	Quality	2 nd	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-left	Supportive
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	Tabloid	1 st	General	Mainly domestic	Right-wing	Critical
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	Quality	4 th	Niche	Domestic and international	Centre-left; Liberal	Supportive

¹³ The national circulation ranking (popularity) was obtained by accessing the *Statista* database (please refer to the Bibliography (p.38-39) of Chapter One.

Sampling and Sources

Keyword search strings

For each newspaper, articles were collected from LexisNexisUni using Boolean keyword searches. The table below shows the search string combinations I used to collect relevant articles about EU/European politics¹⁴. The articles sample is limited to articles found in the political news section of newspapers (i.e., mere ‘soft news’ is excluded). More specifically, general gossip and so-called ‘soft news’, book and film reviews, sports, and obituaries are omitted (De Wilde & Gora, 2019:7). All representative claims contained in a newspaper article were coded so long as they were made no later than two weeks (Koopmans et al., 2002). As articles were collected every two weeks, including claims back in time increases the sample size. As with the EUROPUB codebook, if it is not clear when the claim was iterated, it is assumed that the claim was made on the day when the newspaper article was issued (Koopmans et al., 2002:8). If no newspaper articles are published for a particular date, articles from the following day are collected. Furthermore, I read up to the 500 words of the initial sample of each article to detect references to EU and/or European actors or issues. This approach builds on that of the EUROPUB codebook¹⁵. I am, naturally, only interested in debates relating to politics in the European Union and EU member states¹⁶ (de Wilde et al., 2019:7). This can include debates at the EU level in addition to domestic debates within EU member states (e.g., German asylum policy reported in an Italian newspaper) and news about relations between the EU and third countries (e.g., EU-US trade policy). However, current affairs between EU member states and third countries are excluded¹⁷ (e.g., Italy’s bilateral relations with Libya). To recap, I adopted a two-step filtering strategy to ensure that articles retrieved were pertinent. Firstly, I used a combination of keyword Boolean search strings on LexisNexis¹⁸ (See Figure 3 below). Thereafter, I read up to the first 500 words of the initial sample of each article to detect references to EU and/or European actors or issues.

Table 4.3: Boolean search string combinations

NL	europese unie	OR	Eu	OR	euro*	OR	europese*
DE	europäische union	OR	Eu	OR	euro*	AND	europäische*

¹⁴ I tried various search string combinations before settling on the below which offered the best match in terms of both relevance and volume of articles retrieved.

¹⁵ However, in a departure from the EUROPUB codebook, I read up to the first 500 words in each article which is more than the 150-word threshold of EUROPUB. This is because I consider the 150-word limit an unnecessarily low benchmark. In fact, many articles were found to be relevant after the 150-word limit.

¹⁶ Including EFTA/EEA member states and candidate countries such as Kosovo, Albania and Turkey.

¹⁷ In accordance with the approach adopted by the RECONNECT project (2019:7).

¹⁸ I used the *LexisNexis* ‘building a search string’ guidelines to help me identify an effective combination of search strings (see *lexisnexis*, n.d. for details).

IT	unione europea	OR	Ue	OR	euro*	OR	eu
PO	unia europejska	OR	Ue	OR	europ*	AND	europejska*

Articles are deemed relevant if they refer to European actors and issues within the first 500 words. Following the approach of Koopmans et al., if the word limit falls in the middle of the sentence, the rest of it is included to determine whether the article should be included¹⁹ (Koopmans et al., 2002:10). In contrast to the EUROPUB codebook, however, I do not limit my analysis to the seven pre-defined issue fields. All articles are considered so long as they are of a European scope. The 500-word limit rule was adopted for practical reasons. In general articles which did not contain European references within the 500 word limit did not contain them beyond that threshold. Notwithstanding the arbitrarily selected word threshold, in my defence, very few articles were found to be relevant beyond the 500-word limit. In the end, it transpired that only a handful of articles of a European scope were excluded from the analysis for not satisfying the 500-word limit rule²⁰.

In a similar vein to the EUROPUB project, I not only code for news articles but also news analyses, commentaries, opinion pieces, and editorials from journalists. This is because I am interested in claim-making from both de jure political actors and media actors, the latter of whom should be treated as de facto political actors in their own right given the latter's much-publicized agenda-setting and gatekeeping role. Regarding editorials and guest commentaries, as with EUROPUB codebook, only one claim per article is coded. By contrast to news articles – which habitually contain several claims from different actors – in editorials, the whole article is treated as one act of claim-making. The date of the claim is coded as the date when the newspaper is published unless explicitly stated otherwise. The type of actor is coded by applying the following rule: in guest commentaries, the contributor's main role/responsibility is coded. For example, an article written by the Italian Minister of Health, Roberto Speranza, is coded as 'government/executive' accordingly, not 'media and journalists'. In editorials, that is, articles written by the editor of the newspaper, the type of actor is coded 'media and journalists' (EUROPUB, 2002:9).

Time period

My research covers a period of two years, one year *prior to* and one year *during* the Covid-19 pandemic. This allows me to compare patterns of public discourse during relatively ordinary and extraordinary periods. Although not a year seems to go by without a 'crisis' of some sort, the year prior to the Covid-

¹⁹ A similar approach was adopted by the EUROPUB project.

²⁰ The newspaper articles selected for my analysis may be found on my *Github* repository: <https://github.com/JKerms89/phd-repo>

19 pandemic was relatively uneventful, historically speaking; the dust had settled with regard to Brexit, and support for the EU, perhaps, not coincidentally, appeared to rebound. By contrast, the Covid-19 pandemic represented an extraordinary epochal event. Comparing between ordinary and extraordinary periods is interesting from a theoretical standpoint because European political communication is understood to be more visible and salient in the latter. As Peter *et al.* pithily puts it, “the EU is somewhat like the moon: though of major influence on the ebb and flow of Europe, it is only cyclically fully visible” (2004:16). However, empirical evidence suggests that crises may inhibit Europeanised communication in the sense that national public spheres’ tend to be more nationally self-referential²¹.

Sampling was stratified over a two-year time period. In other words, I retrieved newspaper articles over a period of two years. For the ‘pre-Covid-19’ dataset, I collected articles from 18 March 2019 to Sunday 23 February 2020 which is circa 1 year or precisely 342 days in total. For the ‘Covid-19’ dataset, I retrieved articles from Monday 24 February 2020²² until 31 January 2021 which is approximately 1 year or precisely 342 days since the Covid-19 pandemic began to escalate in Europe. To obtain a manageable sample size, I opted for the ‘constructed weeks’ method. This stratified sampling method entails collecting data based on different days spread over the calendar year. The commonly adopted approach is to select fourteen randomly chosen days (i.e., two weeks) representing all the days of a week in one particular year, in other words, two Mondays, two Tuesdays, two Wednesdays, and so forth. The prevailing consensus is that two constructed weeks (i.e. 14 days) is sufficient to measure one year’s worth of news coverage (Hester & Dougall, 2007; Kim, Jang et al. 2018; Riffe, Lacy and Fico, 2019). Indeed, several public sphere scholars adopted this approach. For instance, Peters et al. (2005) analysed press articles for two constructed weeks in 1982, 1989, 1996, and 2003. Likewise, Brüggemann et al. (2006) and Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010; 2012) opted for a sample size of two weeks. Similarly, Wessler et al. (2008) adopted this sampling procedure. However, I had considered other options to leave no stone unturned. In sum, I deliberated over the ‘constructed weeks’ and ‘consecutive day’ sampling approach. In essence, the constructed weeks sampling procedure may be divided further into two nuanced approaches. We can either construct weeks randomly (e.g. 2nd May: Monday, 8th March: Tuesday, 19th January: Wednesday etc.) or sequentially over time (e.g. 3rd January: Monday, 18th January: Tuesday, 2nd February: Wednesday etc.). Alternatively, we could select a sample of seven or more consecutive days in a month (e.g., 1-7 August, 8-14 September etc.). However, a shortcoming of the latter is that the weeks may coincide with key events so the sample would not be representative of the population. The sequential consecutive weeks option is the most reliable option

²¹ Survey data lend further support to the notion that crises may be detrimental to supranational levels of territorial attachment. As the paper by Polyakova et al. (2016) demonstrates, those holding exclusive national identities increased by 5% from 2005 to 2010, and those holding dual national-EU identities fell by a similar margin. The surge in exclusive nationalism was found in the majority of EU member states. Interestingly, these authors found that exclusive national identity increased the most in the countries most affected by the 2007-8 financial crisis.

²² The start date seems logical as Covid-19 was first detected in Italy on 22 February 2020, or at least, that is the date when it started to become ‘newsworthy’ in Europe.

because the sample would be spread more equally across the whole calendar year. A shortcoming of the other options is the risk that articles would coalesce around a certain event or extraordinary period²³. According to previous research, ‘constructed weeks’ sampling is more accurate than ‘consecutive day’ sampling (e.g., Hester & Dougall, 2007, found in Kim, Jang et al. 2018). Thereafter I had to decide how large I wanted my article sample size to be. As 14 days is considered the minimum threshold for a representative sample in a calendar year, I needed to select a sampling strategy would fulfil this threshold. The bi-weekly ‘staged’ consecutive weeks approach amounted to 45 days spread over two years, and the tri-weekly equivalent amounted to 35 days. Although I could have chosen the former, I opted for the bi-weekly sequential consecutive weeks approach because the sample is larger but still manageable.

Table 4.4: Consecutive day sampling procedure (option 1)

Example of stratified weeks t case design (De Telegraaf, NL)		
Month	Day	Articles (N)
August	1-7	17
September	8-14	27
October	15-21	48
November	22-28	18
December	1-7	23
January	8-14	22
February	15-21	30
March	22-28	23
April	1-7	29
May	8-14	9
June	15-21	23
July	22-28	42
12 months ²⁴	84 days	311

²³ E.g., 7 days in January and only 1 day in December.

²⁴ Timeframe: 6 months pre- and during Covid-19 pandemic (12 months).

Table 4.5: Bi-weekly ‘staggered’ constructed weeks (option 2)²⁵

Day	Week	Date
Monday	Week 1 (pre-covid)	18 Mar 2019
Tuesday	Week 3	2 Apr 2019 ²⁶
Wednesday	Week 5	17 Apr 2019
Thursday	Week 7	2 May 2019 ²⁷
Friday	Week 9	17 May 2019
Saturday	Week 11	1 June 2019* ²⁸
Sunday	Week 13	16 June 2019 ²⁹
Monday	Week 15	1 Jul 2019
Tuesday	Week 17	16 Jul 2019
Wednesday	Week 19	31 Jul 2019
Thursday	Week 21	15 Aug 2019
Friday	Week 23	30 Aug 2019
Saturday	Week 25	14 Sep 2019
Sunday	Week 27	29 Sep 2019 ³⁰
Monday	Week 29	14 Oct 2019
Tuesday	Week 31	29 Oct 2019
Wednesday	Week 33	13 Nov 2019
Thursday	Week 35	28 Nov 2019
Friday	Week 37	13 Dec 2019
Saturday	Week 39	28 Dec 2019
Sunday	Week 41	12 Jan 2020 ³¹
Monday	Week 43	27 Jan 2020
Tuesday	Week 45	11 Feb 2020
Wednesday	Week 1 (during covid ³²)	26 Feb 2020
Thursday	Week 3	12 Mar 2020
Friday	Week 5	27 Mar 2020
Saturday	Week 7	11 Apr 2020

²⁶ No articles were found in Bild on this day, so I picked the following one.

²⁷ No articles were found for 2 May in the Corriere della Sera (CdS), so I picked the next day. I did the same with La Nazione.

²⁸ No articles were found for 2 May, in CdS, so I used the next day.

²⁹ Articles for De Telegraaf & NRC were collected on 17 June 2019. The same was done for the German sample.

³⁰ Articles for both NRC/De Telegraaf were collected on 30th September 2019. The same was done for the German sample.

³¹ Articles for NRC/De Telegraaf were collected from 13 Jan 2020. The same was done for the German sample.

³² Although COVID-19 was reported on in Europe before this date, it was widely considered a foreign and non-proximate threat, as no cases were reported in Europe during this period.

Sunday	Week 9	26 Apr 2020 ³³
Monday	Week 11	11 May 2020
Tuesday	Week 13	26 May 2020
Wednesday	Week 15	10 June 2020
Thursday	Week 17	25 June 2020 ³⁴
Friday	Week 19	10 July 2020
Saturday	Week 21	25 July 2020
Sunday	Week 23	9 Aug 2020 ³⁵
Monday	Week 25	24 Aug 2020
Tuesday	Week 27	8 Sep 2020
Wednesday	Week 29	23 Sep 2020
Thursday	Week 31	8 Oct 2020
Friday	Week 33	23 Oct 2020
Saturday	Week 35	7 Nov 2020
Sunday	Week 37	22 Nov 2020 ³⁶
Monday	Week 39	7 Dec 2020
Tuesday	Week 41	22 Dec 2020
Wednesday	Week 43	6 Jan 2021
Thursday	Week 45	21 Jan 2021
Total = 45 days sample (spread over an approx. 2 year period) ³⁷		

Table 4.6: Tri-weekly 'staggered' constructed weeks (option 3)

Day	Week	Date
Monday	Week 1	4 Jan
Tuesday	Week 4	26 Jan
Wednesday	Week 7	17 Feb
Etc...	Etc...	Etc...
Total = 35 days over 2 years		

³³ Article for CdS and De Telegraaf were collected on 27 April 2020. The same was done for the German sample.

³⁴ 0 articles were found to be relevant in CdS on this date.

³⁵ Articles for NRC/De Telegraaf were collected on 10 August 2020. The same was done for the German sample.

³⁶ Articles for NRC/De Telegraaf were collected on 24 November 2020. The same was done for the German sample.

³⁷ Adopting this approach, I estimate the number of articles to be in the region of 200 articles per paper (400 per country, ergo 1600 articles for 4 countries). The timeframe would be two years: one year pre-COVID-19 (2019-2020), one year during COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021)

Table 4.7: Two or three weeks randomly constructed (option 4)

Day	Week	Date
Monday	Week 5	3 Feb
Monday	Week 41	6 Oct
Monday	Week 33	12 Aug
Tuesday	Week 7	18 Feb
Tuesday	Week 1	Etc...
Tuesday	Week 52	Etc...
Wednesday	Week 12	Etc...
Wednesday	Week 33	Etc...
Wednesday	Week 32	Etc...
Total sample = 42 days over 2 years		

The weakness of the first option is that the weeks may coincide with key events so the sample may not accurately represent the period of interest. The second option is my preferred option as the sample size is more manageable than the first option, and the days are more equally distributed in the calendar year. As this approach selects one day every two weeks, the sample is less vulnerable to ‘distortions’ resulting from key events compared to the first option. The second option, moreover, enables me to cover a more extended period of time. Under the second option, I would collect articles for 45 days (exc. Sundays) over a time span of 2 years. It is projected that I would have circa 200 articles per newspaper and thus 400 articles per country. As I aim to code articles for 4 countries, I estimate that the size of my sample will be approximately 1200-1600 articles which is a sizeable but manageable sample size. The third option is similar to the second but with tri-weekly intervals. However, one could argue that the sample size is too small, although, the consensus view is that 2 constructed weeks (i.e., 14 days) is sufficient for a representative sample of one calendar year. As with the first option, the risk of the fourth is that sample days may cluster around key events. This is problematic because extant research shows that EU politics is more salient during exceptional periods or around the time of EU council summits. With the above in mind, in the end, I opted for the second option because the sample size was sizeable yet manageable and I would have data evenly spread throughout the calendar year.

After collecting articles from the LexisNexisUni database, I downloaded the articles in docx format and translated them using the DeepL deep learning and neural machine translation software which is considered to be one of the most accurate and reliable tools for translation. Indeed, several studies show that DeepL is the more reliable than its competitors (Hidalgo-Ternero, 2020; Yulianto, 2021). Some scholars may question the reliability of translating corpora prior to the manual coding of text, however,

in my defence, DeepL is very accurate and adept at translating highly technical corpora as several studies attest (e.g. Zulfiqar et al., 2018; Yulianto, 2021; Takakusagi, et al., 2021). Secondly, the key variables of my analysis are relatively easy to detect in the text; the claimant and addressee are almost always made explicit in the text. And as ‘Angela Merkel’ or the ‘President of the ECB’ are comprehensible in whatever language, I did not encounter any issues in this respect. Although the object is visible to a lesser a degree, there are several words, whether pronouns or nouns which usually reveal whose interests or identities are being represented in the claim. For the avoidance of doubt, I did not code the object when it was not clearly decipherable. After the corpora was translated, I utilised the handy R package, *LexisNexisTools* (Gruber, 2019) to convert the unstructured data into a data matrix that would be exportable to the Discourse Network Analyzer (DNA) Java software³⁸. In a nutshell, “discourse Network Analyzer (DNA) is a qualitative content analysis tool with network export facilities. You import text files and annotate statements that persons or organizations make, and the program will return network matrices of actors connected by shared concepts” (Leifeld, n.d.). However, I merely used DNA as a manual coding interface, opting instead for Gephi to transpose the structured data as a network graph. This is because DNA uses the R package, *Statnet*, for network visualisations which, in my opinion, create visually unappealing graphs and do not handle large networks very well³⁹. Gephi, by contrast, is much better at handling big datasets, and creates powerful network visualisations. When the structured meta data was exported to the DNA, I created a bespoke DNA database with 11 variables in total, namely: *actname*, *actorg*, *adrname*, *adrorg*, *adreval*, *objs*, *objtype*, *objnat*, *issfield*, *frame*, and *EUeval*⁴⁰. Thereafter, I was ready to start the coding procedure.

³⁸ The *rDNA* function from *LexisNexisTools* is a very useful tool which not only extracts meta data from newspaper articles from the *LexisNexis* newspaper archives, but also structures the data in a format which is exportable to DNA. In particular, *rDNA* extracts the following newspaper article meta data: the *title* of the newspaper article, *date* and *time* of publication, *author*, *source*, *section* and *medium type*.

³⁹ That said, *Statnet* has a wide range of functionality for the statistical analyses of social networks. *Statnet* is particularly useful for running Exponential Random Graph Models which are a “class of statistical model for social networks. They account for the presence (and absence) of network ties, and so provide a model for network structure” (Lusher et al., 2013:1). ERGM models are useful if one wishes to calculate the probability of a tie based on a certain node attribute.

⁴⁰ These variable names are abbreviations for *actor name*, *actor organisation*, *addressee name*, *addressee organisation*, *addressee evaluation*, *object summary*, *object type*, *object nationality*, *issue field*, *frame*, *EU evaluation*.

Codebook

Article level codes⁴¹

Firstly, I coded the metadata of every newspaper article. As I am interested in cross-time and country comparisons, I have retrieved data concerning newspaper source, country of origin where the claim was published and publication date. Fortunately, this data was parsed automatically from the package, ‘LexisNexisTools’ which imports newspaper metadata from LexisNexisUni to R Studio.

Claimant

In basic terms, the claimant is the person(s) or organisation(s) iterating the claim. This can be either an individual (e.g., Angela Merkel) or institution (e.g., WHO). Put another way, the claimant is the source and output of political communication. It is heuristically useful to conceive of politics in terms of supply- and demand side dynamics. Claimants provide the output of political communication. In other words, they invigorate the supply-side of political communication. The media also supply communicative outputs but by and large they perform a filtering role to the extent that they determine (tacitly or not) which claims receive publicity in the public sphere. The extent of political claims’ visibility and resonance – that is, its ability to pervade the public sphere – depends on the transmissibility function of the mass media. Due to the myriad of political claims that are iterated daily, and inexorably limited time and space available for the mass media to report these claims, not every political statement is made public. In the latter case political claims are rendered null and void. These initially public claims are effectively equivalent to making no public intervention in the first place. The claimant is the most straightforward variable to code for as they are invariably referred to explicitly in the newspaper article. The name of the claimant is readily identifiable in the text as the ‘speaker’ of the claim is habitually accompanied by performative verbs such as ‘stated’ or ‘decided’ (e.g., Angela Merkel ‘stated’ that...the Hungarian government ‘decided’ to...). If the name of the claimant is not explicitly mentioned, I code the claimant organisation (see below). If both the name and organisation are unknown, then I do not code for the claim herein.

⁴¹ The full text of the articles can also be used as a variable for any quantitative metanalysis of the text I wish to conduct in the future. I could create a corpus from the articles collected and then conduct QTA to complement my manual coding. Two methods might be interesting to investigate further. Topic modelling (to see if articles are discussing similar topics) and sentiment analysis (to see if there are differences in tonality according to paper/country. Also, NER could be interesting to see which actors receive the most visibility (compare pre-COVID-19 corpora to during Covid-19?).

Example

“Angela Merkel calls on the SPD to support the government’s new lockdown measures to contain Covid-19”.

In the example above, ‘Angela Merkel’ would be coded as the claimant as she is the actor making the public iteration by ‘calling on’ another actor – in this case, the SPD – to support the German Government. Three other sub-variables – deriving from the claimant name – are also coded herein, namely, the claimant organisation (if applicable), claimant type, claimant nationality and claimant partisanship (if applicable). These sub-variables – if not explicitly mentioned in the article – can be derived from the name of the claimant which is the unique identifier through which attributes of the claimant can be derived. For example, in the claim, “Angela Merkel says that she supports ‘Coronabonds’ because Italians desperately need our support”, we can derive more information about Angela Merkel. The latter is a German national (claimant nationality) and Minister of Health (claimant organization) for the German Federal Government (claimant type). Performing a ‘double-cap’ role, we also know that Angela Merkel is affiliated with the CSU which is widely considered a centrist, pro-European party (claimant partisanship).

The claimant variable is instructive for gaging the visibility and prominence of actors particularly in terms of agency. The claimant type category enables comparison across different types of actors. The claimant nationality variable is particularly crucial to my analysis as it enables me to determine the territorial scope of the discursive interactions between the claimant, addressee, and object of the claim. For example, if the nationality of the claimant is congruent with that of the addressee, the claim is coded as ‘national’ accordingly. In the words of De Wilde and Gora, coding for nationality, type and party affiliation of the claimant allows for “comparison between the identity of the claimant and those whom he or she claims or aims to represent” (2019:11). Below, I outline in more detail what each of these sub-variables specifically measure.

Claimant type

The claimant type designates the role or function held by the claimant. The typology is an elaboration on the typology adopted by the EUROPUB project (2002).

Table 4.8: Actor type⁴²

Claimant Type	Description
Other state executive agencies	This code is used for international intergovernmental organisations (e.g., UN, WHO, IMF etc.) and institutional organs of the nation state such as health bodies (e.g., the NHS), government welfare organisations or the civil service. This category also includes social security public institutions and state pension fund institutions.
Whole polities	This code is used when the claimant refers to a polity as a whole without further specification or reference to any other specific actor or institution. For instance, articles often refer to ‘Brussels’ when referring to the EU, or ‘Italy’ when referring to the Italian government. Although whole polities are not actors literally speaking, they are generic terms to refer to executive actors. For instance, ‘Brussels’ is often used interchangeably with the ‘European Union’.
Government/executive	This is used for domestic (e.g., city mayors and municipal governments) national (e.g., Presidente del Consiglio), EU (e.g., European Commission) and third country government/executive actors (e.g., US Security Council). This actor type also includes the EU’s intergovernmental institutions such as COREPER and ‘EU diplomats’ in general.
Legislative	This code includes elected upper and lower chambers (e.g., Folketing) in addition to individual members of parliament (including senators – e.g., ‘Liliana Segre’), parliamentary groups (e.g., Committee on Foreign Affairs of the EU Parliament) and party groups within parliament (e.g., CDU-CSU Fraktion im Bundestag). This category includes legislative actors and bodies at the

⁴² I employ the same taxonomy of actor types as the PCA codebook (Koopmans *et al.*, 2002). I also referred to the Reconnect project handbook which employs a similar taxonomy.

	domestic (e.g., Bundesrat) and international level (e.g., MEPs and European party groups). Further examples include the Bundestag, the House of Lords, regional parliamentary assemblies, the European Parliament and the General Assembly of the UN.
Politicians	This actor type refers to unelected politicians and political parties with no parliamentary representation ((de Wilde et al., 2019:19). It also includes politicians who are not part of a political party nor parliamentary representatives (e.g., an independent MEP candidate).
Political parties	This category refers to political parties (e.g., SPD) as well as subsidiary organisations which are affiliated with political parties (e.g., Junge Sozialisten) and members of political parties (e.g., the CDU party chairman).
Judiciary	This category refers to domestic (e.g., UK Supreme Court), EU-level (e.g., CJEU) and international courts (e.g., International Criminal Court) in addition to individual representatives of courts (e.g., judges).
Central banks	This code refers to national (e.g., Banca d'Italia), EU (e.g., ECJ), third country central banks (e.g., US Federal Reserve) and international banking institutions (e.g., IMF) including individual representatives of these institutions (e.g., Christine Lagarde). This also includes advisory boards and bodies affiliated to central banks (e.g., ECB Council).
Economists and financial experts	This refers to professionals, research institutions and think-tanks in the field of economic and financial policy. This includes rating agencies and financial analysts.
Police and internal security agencies	This includes actors belonging to or representing police and border force agencies and other security personal at both the national (e.g., Bundespolizei) and EU level (e.g., Frontex) as well as third country agencies (e.g., US

	Customs and Border Protection). Some examples are the following: Verfassungsschutz, Bundesgrenzschutz, Marechaussee). N.B: police unions are coded as ‘unions and employees’ (see below).
Military	This includes members of military organisations at a national (e.g., Bundeswehr), European (e.g., European Defence Agency) and international level (e.g., NATO).
Unions and employees	This category refers to trade unions and their representatives (inc. spokespersons). This includes both the general category of ‘worker(s)’ and ‘employees’. For example, both the leader of Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB) and their members would be coded in this category.
Employers organizations and firms	This category includes individual companies and their representatives (e.g., CEOs) and general persons of the business community (e.g., entrepreneurs and business magnates). This category also includes lobbying organizations, business consortia and institutions representing the interests of several companies (e.g., Confederation of British Industry).
Churches and religious organizations and groups	This category includes religious institutions such as churches, synagogues and mosques as well as the clergy and other actors speaking on behalf of a religion. N.B. Religious charities fall under the ‘civil society’ organizations category (de Wilde et al., 2019:19).
Media and journalists	This category includes both media organisations (e.g., Fakt newspaper), individual journalists and commentators, authors and writers, artists, actors, and cultural institutions.
Other scientific and research professionals and institutions	This category includes research organisations, thinktanks and their representatives, scientists and anyone else who is presented as an expert on a particular topic .

other professional organisations and groups	This category includes lawyers, doctors and professional groups representing their interests.
Educational professionals and organizations	This category refers to academics, schools and teachers, universities and other institutions acting in an educational capacity.
students, pupils, and their parents	This category refers to students and parents.
Former states(wo)men	This category refers to former politicians and states(wo)men including their relatives (e.g., the wife of the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands).
The general public	This categories refer to the general public. And includes generic references to ‘citizens’, ‘the electorate’, ‘the population’, ‘taxpayers’, ‘die Öffentlichkeit’ and ‘nationals’ of a country treated as a homogenous group ⁴³ . For example, when an article includes interviews from a member of the ‘Italian public’ (vox pop), I code for this category accordingly.
activists and protestors	This category refers to political activists and protestors (e.g., Rafał Gawel).
solidarity and human rights organisations	This category refers to solidarity and human rights organisations (e.g., Médecins Sans Frontières).
environmental organisations and groups	This category refers to environmental organisations and groups (e.g., Greenpeace) and de facto representatives of climate change (e.g., Greta Thunberg).
farmers and agricultural organisations	This category refers to farmers and agricultural organisations including agricultural consortia and lobbying groups representing the agricultural sector.
migrant organisations and groups	This category refers to migrants and asylum seekers, migrant organisations and groups, and non-governmental and humanitarian organisations representing migrants (e.g. SeaWatch).

⁴³ N.B. Only if explicitly mentioned.

consumer organisations and groups	This category refers to consumer organisations and groups (e.g., British Retail Consortium and Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband etc).
other civil society organisations and groups	This category refers to any other civil society organisation(s) that do not fit any of the above formal civil society categories.

Claimant nationality

The claimant nationality, as the name implies, designates the nationality of the claimant. In cases in which the claimant is an individual, I code for the de jure nationality of the claimant. In cases wherein the nationality of the claimant is not known, I code as ‘NA / unspecified’ unless the nationality to whom the claimant belongs is explicitly stated by the claimant. For organisations, the nationality is coded according to where the organisation is legally established. For example, we know that ‘Fratelli d’Italia’ is a political party based in Italy. I would therefore code the nationality of the organization as ‘Italy’ accordingly. In a similar vein to the 2019 RECONNECT project, the nationality of de jure representatives of EU and international institutions are coded as ‘European Union’ or ‘global / regional (other)’ respectively. Although the ‘European Union’ is not a nationality strictu sensu, this category is included nevertheless as I am interested in gaging the level of transnational attachment. This transnational category applies to institutions, groups, organisations, and individual claimants acting in an official capacity as representatives of institutions at the EU level (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:14). For example, as of 2018, Von der Leyen was a German national acting in her official capacity as the German Minister of Defence. However, from 2020 onwards, her nationality would be coded as ‘European Union’ as a result of becoming the President of the European Commission in 2020. By the same token, in 2018, Donald Tusk as President of the EU Council would be coded as ‘European Union’. However, from 2020 onwards, his nationality would be coded as ‘Polish’ as his tenure as EU Council President would have ended then. In the example below, the nationality of the claimant would be coded as ‘Italy’.

Example

“Matteo Salvini criticises Roberto Speranza’s handling of the Covid-19 calling him ‘incompetent’”.

Claimant partisanship

Lastly, I code for claimant partisanship which refers to the claimant's ideological leaning and political orientation as per the Chapel Hill Survey (CHES, 2017). For parties which are not included in the survey but whose ideological leaning can be confidently deduced, the ideological leaning is coded accordingly. Borderline cases are omitted as well as claimant's with no party affiliation or which is unbeknownst to the coder. This category is inevitably limited to the actor types operating in a formal political capacity, namely: government/executive, politicians/political parties, former states(wo)men, and legislative actors. If the party of the claimant is not included in the Chapel Hill Survey, but I am nonetheless confident of the claimant's political orientation, cases of this sort are coded using my carefully considered judgment accordingly. As I am interested in how claimants from different ideological leanings represent 'Europe' I therefore limit my sample to European actors only. For claimants without a party affiliation (i.e. independents and 'lista civica' politicians) I code as 'no family' accordingly. The claimant partisanship variable enables me to compare results according to party family. Do, for example, Traditional-Authoritarian-Nationalist parties (TAN) refer more frequently to domestic affairs and national identity, as one would expect? In the example below, in accordance with the CHES taxonomy (2017), the claimant, namely Giorgia Meloni, would be assigned the 'Radical TAN' partisanship denomination.

Example

"Giorgia Meloni criticises the EU for their dithering in agreeing to the new EU budget which she laments has 'destroyed Italian businesses due to the protracted uncertainty'".

Table 4.9: Actor partisanship

Claimant Taxonomy	Partisanship	Example
Radical TAN		Lega
Agrarian		PSL
Conservative		Forza Italia
Liberal		Freie Demokratische Partei
Christian-Democrat		CDU
Socialist		Parti Socialiste
Radical Left		Podemos

Green	GroenLinks
Regionalist	Scottish National Party
No family	Movimento Cinque Stelle

Addressee

Compared to the claimant variable, the addressee variable is harder to measure as there are different types of addressees and one claim alone can contain several ‘targets’ of political demands. However, generally speaking, most political claims do not contain more than one main addressee. Moreover, it is often clear from the political statement whom the claim is mainly directed at. To help me define this variable, I referred to the EUROPUB and RECONNECT handbooks, respectively. The latter loosely defines the addressee as, “the individual or collective actor at whom the claim is directed, and with whom authority is negatively or positively associated over the issue at hand” (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:18). The EUROPUB codebook distinguishes between three types of addressees which I paraphrase:

The *attributor of responsibility* – refers to the “individual or collective actor at whom the claim is directly addressed in the form of a call or appeal to do or leave something” (Koopmans, 2002:42). The *attributor of responsibility* may also be referred to as the ‘target’ or ‘object’ of political demands.

The *‘supported’ actor* – refers to the actor who is seen as contributing to the claim’s realisation. It is sufficient that the actor is explicitly identified as a supporter concerning the issue of the claim or that the opponent’s position is supported in one way or another. This also includes general praise for the actor without necessarily advocating a position which is congruent with that of the claimant (Ibid.);

The *‘criticised’ actor* – refers to the actor who is seen as standing in the way of the claim’s realisation. As with the supported actor, it is sufficient that the actor is explicitly identified as an opponent concerning the issue of the claim or that the opponent’s position is criticised in one way or another. This also includes general rebuke or criticism of the actor without necessarily advocating a position which is contrary to the claimant (Ibid.).

It is important to clarify that the addressee is not necessarily equivalent to the recipient of the claim in the literal sense. Let me explain with the following example. If Matteo Salvini is interviewed by a Rai journalist and criticises the Italian government position on the EU budget, the addressee is the Italian government—not Rai. To use another example, if Angela Merkel speaks in front of CDU delegates at

the annual party conference calling on the Dutch Prime Minister to support the EU recovery fund package, the addressee is the Dutch prime minister, not CDU delegates. (Koopmans, 2002:42). Furthermore, the addressee is only coded when it is explicitly mentioned in the claim. In the spirit of parsimony, if there is more than one addressee, I code for the most salient one, namely, the addressee who is most frequently targeted. If there is no differences can be discerned, I code for the addressee who is mentioned first in the political claim. As with the claimant variable, I code for the following sub-variables⁴⁴:

Addressee name – refers to the specific person or institutional actor that is explicitly mentioned in the claim. It is the actor’s unique identifier label which is important for retrieving attributes about the claimant such as addressee-type and nationality.

Addressee organisation – refers to the organisation or institution that the addressee is affiliated to. If the organisation is not explicitly referred to in the claim, the same is inferred from my own general knowledge and online research.

Addressee type – codes for the type of actor based on the same typology and rules for claimant type.

Addressee nationality – codes for the addressee’s nationality, applying the same rules as for the claimant (see above).

Addressee partisanship – codes for the ideological leaning and partisanship of the addressee, (if applicable) using the same typology and rules as for the claimant (see above).

However, in a departure from the claimant variable, I also code for the general evaluation of the addressee⁴⁵. When there is a positive evaluation of the addressee, I assign a value of 1 accordingly. By the same token, when there is a negative evaluation of the addressee, I assign the value -1. Naturally, in some cases, the claimant may not make any evaluation of the addressee. In other words, the attributor of responsibility may be neither supported nor criticised. In cases such as these, I assign the value of 0 accordingly.

As de Wilde et al. (2019) summarises, evaluative claims are a form of ‘conflict framing’⁴⁶ (de Wilde et al., 2019; see also De Wilde et al., 2014:40). Evaluative frames have the effect of demarcating ‘in-groups’ from ‘out-groups’ or ‘dichotomous groups’ of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ in the eyes of the claimant⁴⁷ (Tajfel and Turner, 2004, cited in de Wilde et al., 2019; see also De Wilde et al., 2014:40). It is commonly understood that people tend to hold negative evaluations of ‘others’ to distinguish themselves from ‘others’ and accentuate differences between them. This, what I call, ‘valence

⁴⁴ I employ the same sub-variables as those proposed by the ‘Reconnect’ project, namely, claimant/addressee *name*, *organisation*, *type*, *nationality*, and *partisanship* (de Wilde & Gora, 2019).

⁴⁵ The words ‘supported’ and ‘criticised’ imply that the claimant has made an evaluation of the addressee.

⁴⁶ As de Wilde *et al.*, argue, negative evaluations of addressees are a form of ‘conflict [identity] framing’ (de Wilde et al., 2019, 21).

⁴⁷ Indeed, as de Wilde *et al.* argues, humans are hard-wired to “create dichotomous opposing camps create dichotomous opposing camps like ‘good’ and ‘bad’, ‘government’ and ‘opposition’, ‘left’ and ‘right’” (2014:40).

polarization' can be understood as another form of identity-making. Coding for the evaluation of the addressee is also desirable from a methodological point of view as measuring both the valence and territorial scope of the object (see below) can be used as a proxy for inclusive-solidaristic and exclusive-antagonistic forms of identity-building. The juxtaposition of conflict and national identity framing is more conducive to mutually exclusive kinds of identity and has the function of delimiting 'in-groups' (i.e., the claimant's standpoint) from 'out-groups' (i.e., target of political demands). Negative evaluations generally imply that the claimant does not consider the addressee to be part of the same 'imagined community'. However, in cases where the claimant holds a positive evaluation of another group despite being considered not part of the same 'imagined community', this combination of identity and evaluative framing is amenable to inclusive and solidaristic forms of identity making.

Table 4.10: An illustration of the possible node/node attribute combinations for the one-mode network in 'De Telegraaf' (NL) ⁴⁸

Node Claimant name	Node Organisation	Node attribute Claimant type	Node attribute Claimant nationality	Node Addressee name	Node Organisation	Node attribute Addressee type	Node attribute Addressee nationality	Edge attribute Discursive territorial scope
Matteo Salvini	Lega	Legislative	Other EU Member State	→ Von der Leyen	European Commission	Gov/exec	EU supranational	Bottom-up Vertical Europeanisation
Angela Merkel	German Government	Government	Other EU Member State	→ Charles Michel	European Council	Gov/exec	EU supranational	Bottom-up Vertical Europeanisation
Christine Lagarde	ECB	Central bank	EU supranational	→ Von der Leyen	European Commission	Gov/exec	EU supranational	Supranational
Von der Leyen	European Commission	Gov/exec	EU supranational	→ Giuseppe Conte	Italian Government	Gov/exec	Other EU Member States	Top-down Vertical Europeanisation
Charles Michel	European Council	Gov/exec	EU supranational	→ Angela Merkel	German Government	Gov/exec	Other EU Member States	Top-down Vertical Europeanisation
Geert Wilders	PVV	Legislative	Own Country, National	→ Matteo Salvini	Lega	Legislative	Other EU Member States	Horizontal Europeanisation
Giuseppe Conte	Italian Government	Gov/exec	EU Member State	→ Christine Lagarde	ECB	Central banks	EU supranational	Bottom-up Vertical Europeanisation
Martin Schulz	SDP	Legislative	Other EU Member State	→ Reiner Hoffmann	DGB Trade Union	Unions and employees	Other EU Member States	Horizontal Europeanisation
Reiner Hoffmann	DGB Trade Union	Unions and employees	Other EU Member State	→ Angela Merkel	German Government	Government	Other EU Member States	Horizontal Europeanisation
Mark Rutte	Dutch Government	Gov/exec	Own Country, National	→ Geert Wilders	PVV	Legislative	Own Country, National	Domestic/National

Issue field

The issue field variable is fairly self-explanatory. In a nutshell the issue field refers to the substance of the claim, that is, what the claim is about. If it is not clear what the claim is about, I refer to the whole context of the article to code the issue field. Any changes in the issue field implies a new claim that should be coded separately accordingly. A mixed deductive and inductive approach was adopted. I initially devised a preliminary list which built on the issue fields proposed by the EUROPUB and RECONNECT codebooks. More specifically, I compiled a list of issue fields and would modify or subsume categories during the coding procedure where deemed appropriate. In the end, I identified 17 issue fields. There are two other types of variables we can derive from the issue field, namely, the issue scope, that is, whether the issue is mainly a national or EU competence, and the type of competence,

⁴⁸ For the purposes of data retrieval, the claimant and addressee name variables are the most important information as the data from the other columns can be extrapolated from it.

that is, whether the issue field an exclusive, shared, or supporting EU competence. Exclusive competences refer to competences which are exclusively held by the EU. Shared competences are inevitably more difficult to divide into binary categories. The issue scope categorizations are thus mere approximations at best. Generally speaking, as the name implies, shared competences mean that domestic and EU-level competences are interwoven. The meta-issue⁴⁹ of ‘European integration’ is a case in point: further European integration mainly depends on the unanimity of every member state (i.e. intergovernmental logic). However the day-to-day running of the EU mainly operates according to a supranational logic (e.g. comitology policy-making). The issue scope of ‘European Integration’ is thus categorised as a ‘mixed’ competence even though European integration is not one issue per se. By contrast, the ‘legal and constitutional’ issue field can involve both matters pertaining to EU law – which is an exclusive EU competence – or entirely domestic legal and constitutional issues. This issue field is thus coded as a ‘mixed’ issue scope. ‘Supporting’ competences are, broadly speaking, domestic competences as the EU’s power is merely advisory (EUR-Lex, 2016). ‘Travel and immigration’ is an umbrella term for a number of issues such as, inter alia, entry and border controls; expulsions and deportations; migration programs and quotas, visa and consular policy; actions relating to smuggling and illegal entries; general evaluation or policy direction of migration; and the role of third parties in preventing migration (Koopmans, 2002:52). However, in contrast to EUROPUB, I include issues pertaining to travel and tourism, social cohesion and the integration of migrants and ethnic minorities, issues related to citizenship, Schengen policy, human trafficking, and asylum and travel restrictions resulting from the Covid-10 pandemic (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:32)⁵⁰. Building on the RECONNECT and EUROPUB codebooks, ‘macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ includes a non-exhaustive list of the following matters: financial transfers and bailouts, monetary policy, the Euro currency, claims related to the internal functioning of the ECB and other central banks, budgetary matters, exchange rates, banking regulations, and taxes. Anything related to the EU Recovery Fund or the ESM is also placed in this category. The issue field, ‘energy and the environment’ includes issues such as climate change and emissions targets, biodiversity and animal welfare, waste disposal, and energy policy such as nuclear power strategy and energy sustainability. The ‘legal and constitutional’ issue field contains several issues such as debates concerning respect for the rule of law, *acquis communautaire* compliance, rules pertaining to the internal market, law courts and tribunals, lawsuits and legal proceedings – both domestic and foreign – infringement proceedings, judicial processes, and national and international treaties. The ‘Trade and competition’ issue field includes claims relating to the import or export of goods, retail and commerce issues, FTAs and international trade treaties and trade deals (e.g., the EU-Mercosur trade deal and CETA), issues related to Brexit, trade tariffs, trade embargoes and sanctions, trade disputes, mergers and acquisitions, competition policy, and state aid rules. To paraphrase

⁴⁹ Questions pertaining to ‘European integration’ can involve several interrelated issues.

⁵⁰ Travel and Immigration’ concerns issues related to migration and border control, human-trafficking, travel restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, Schengen policy, issues related to social cohesion and integration of migrants and religious minorities, amongst other things.

Koopmans et al., (2002), the ‘European integration’ issue field concerns several issues such as issues related to EU membership, EU elections and leadership campaigns, institutional reforms, transnational party alliances, bilateral relations between EU member states, the principle of subsidiarity, the functioning of EU institutions, European culture and values, the role of a specific country (or group of countries) in the process of European integration, the balance of power and coalitions among political parties and member states, the relationship between EU and national/regional levels, EU constitutional questions, the institutional structure and relationship between EU institutions, and debates about EU enlargement, among other matters (Koopmans, 2002:56). The ‘agriculture’ issue field entails issues related to food and agricultural subsidies, food and agricultural supply chains, Common and Agricultural policy (CAP), and GEM foods and sustainable agriculture, amongst other things. ‘Social welfare and labour’ includes issues related to social inequality, welfare policy and social security, employment conditions and salaries, labour policy and employment statistics, housing, retirement and pensions, and social cohesion, amongst other things. The issue field ‘digital, culture and media’ includes debates related to media bias, historical and commemorative events, digitalization and telecommunications, and issues related to press freedom, and disinformation among other things. ‘Defence and Foreign Policy’ includes the following: geopolitical issues and international relations, bilateral relations between third countries, arms embargoes, armed conflicts, defence spending, diplomatic events, and the deployment of troops for military invasion, peacekeeping, non-military humanitarian purposes or in response to catastrophic events, amongst other things (Koopmans, 2002:53). ‘Crime and Security’ includes issues related to data protection and privacy, general scandal and corruption, hate speech including racism, xenophobia and antisemitism, issues related to terrorism, counter-terrorism policies, espionage, domestic crime, smuggling, and human rights violations, amongst other things. The ‘Transport and Infrastructure’ issue field concerns issues related to the economic performance of the aviation industry, haulage, rail transportation networks, road transport networks and so on⁵¹. The ‘Data Protection and Privacy’ issue field is a relatively narrow category which includes issues related to privacy, internet regulations, and data protection (e.g. debates relating to GDPR). With the increasing use of the Internet, the latter has become an increasingly salient issue in public debate. The ‘Health’ issue field is fairly self-explanatory and was unsurprisingly a relatively salient issue due to the pandemic. Issues related to the pandemic in addition to lockdown measures, vaccinations programs, and health government spending, are placed in this category. ‘Education’ includes issues related to education spending, education performance, the Erasmus program, and so on. By contrast, the ‘Human Rights and Civil Liberties’ category includes but is not limited to the following: debates about the state of democracy, human rights violations, and issues related to LGBT persons. The last category, ‘Politics: General (Other)’ is not an issue field per se, and contains claims related to politics which are difficult to categorise. For example, debates about domestic elections or party politics

⁵¹ As there are very few claims contained in this category, I may remove it and amalgamate into a different category.

are not issues per se insofar as they do not touch on a particular issue such as healthcare or education even though they might refer en passant to the same.

Table 4.11: Issue field typology

Issue Field	Issue scope	Type of EU competence
Travel and Immigration	Domestic / national	Supporting
Macroeconomic and Fiscal Governance	EU-level competence	Exclusive / Shared
Energy and Environment	EU-level competence	Shared
Legal and Constitutional	Mixed	Exclusive / Shared
Trade and Competition	EU-level competence	Exclusive
European Integration	Mixed	Exclusive / Shared
Agriculture	EU-level competence	Exclusive
Social Welfare and Labour	Domestic / national	Shared
Digital, Culture and Media	Domestic / national	Supporting
Defence and Foreign Policy	Domestic / national	Supporting
Crime and Security	Domestic / national	Supporting
Transport and Infrastructure	Domestic / national	Shared
Health	Domestic / national	Shared / Supporting
Data Protection and Privacy	Mixed	Exclusive / Shared
Education	Domestic / national	Supporting
Human Rights and Civil Liberties	Domestic / national	Shared / Supporting
Politics: General (Other)	Mixed	NA

Object

The object is the most crucial variable of my analysis as it is the proxy for gauging the identitarian and solidaristic orientations of the claimant. For example, an Italian actor who claims to represent Syrian refugees reveals his or her global solidaristic preferences. However, it would be wrong to suggest that this revealed the claimant's Syrian identity. By the same token, a representative claim in which an Italian actor claims to represent 'Italian citizens' reveals the territorial bounds of the actor's identity and solidarity orientation which remains national in scope. As de Wilde et al., rightly underline, the object is axiomatic to a representative claim as a claim without an object is not representative (de Wilde

& Gora, 2019:27). To paraphrase de Wilde et al., the object is the individual, group, or constituency “that the claimant is alleging to represent or on behalf of whose interests he or she is making the claim” (Ibid.,).

In accordance with the PCA codebook, I code for all actors whose interests are (or would be) materially affected by the realisation of the claimant’s claim (Koopmans et al., 2002:62). As the latter helpfully points out, the object can sometimes be identical to the claimant. For example, when Dutch fishermen call upon the Dutch Government to provide subsidies for the fall in their revenue as a result of Brexit. In this case, the subject and object would be coded as ‘Dutch fishermen’ accordingly. Alternatively, the object can be identical with the addressee (Ibid.,). For example, when British MPs call upon the UK Prime Minister to resign from his post to keep the integrity of Downing Street intact. In this case, both the object and addressee would be coded as ‘UK Prime Minister’ accordingly. However, the object can also be different from both the claimant and addressee (Ibid.,). For example, when Sea-Watch calls upon the European Union increase spending on rescue boats to help Libyan refugees drowning at sea. In this example, the claimant is Sea-Watch, the addressee is the European Union, and the object is Libyan refugees. In cases where there are several objects invoked in a claim, I code for the most salient object. For example, in the claim: “Marine Le Pen complains that the EU Recovery Fund does not go far enough and has ‘let down French and EU citizens’”⁵². She calls on Macron and other EU leaders to ‘go back to the drawing board’ and increase the Recovery fund to ensure that French businesses’ have ‘sufficient economic support’. In this example, the main object nationality is ‘France’ (mentioned twice) despite ‘EU citizens’ being mentioned as well. If the main object cannot be discerned, I code the order in which objects are invoked in the claim. For example, when Angela Merkel “calls on the German Bundestag to elect the governor of North Rhine-Westphalia, Armin Laschet, to succeed her as Chancellor because only with Laschet at the helm is the future of Germany and the European Union secure” – the object coded would be Germany. Moreover, the object that is explicitly mentioned by the claimant is coded. However, if the object is not explicitly mentioned, but there are hallmarks from the overall context of the claim indicating the object such as ‘we’ pronouns, I rely on my own diligent judgment. In line with the ‘europub’ codebook, I do not code claims where the object is neither mentioned nor can be inferred from the claim (Koopmans et al., 2002:62). However, in a departure from both the ‘europub’ and ‘Reconnect’ codebooks, I wish to code, not only for explicit and specifically named interests of a particular individual or group of people, but also in cases where interests and identities may be inferred from deixis pronouns⁵³ (a la Billig, 1995). For example, “...in

⁵² These claims are purely illustrative.

⁵³ It is important to mention that traces of nationalism cannot always be easily discerned in discourse. Not every representative claim contains a clear-cut object. Populist claims may invoke ‘the people’ without a clear referential indexical (*deixis*). For example, from Lincoln’s famous quote – “*We the people* are the rightful masters of both Congress and the Courts, not to overthrow the Constitution but to overthrow the men who would pervert the Constitution” – it is not made explicit *to whom* ‘the people’ refers. We can infer from our more extensive knowledge of Abraham Lincoln – as the 16th President of the United States – that he is obviously speaking on behalf of the people of the United States. However, I do not code for the represented object of the claim if it cannot be inferred from the claim therein.

the interests of Dutch taxpayers”, it is patent that the Dutch nation has been ‘banally flagged’ (Billig, 1995). Similarly, when the Hungarian PM proclaims that he will “...fight for the sovereignty of ‘the people’ during EU budget negotiations”, we can infer from this statement which imagined community is being invoked, namely the Hungarian people. As Billig convincingly argues, the claimant – typically an elected representative – can invoke several ‘discursive formations’ (Billig, 1995) that, in the words of Billig, ‘flag’ or ‘point to’ the homeland. From the words, ‘the people’ or ‘the country’ we can be often infer whose interests and identities are being invoked by analysing the full context of a claim. For example, in the statement, “sovereignty of the people”, the latter does not refer implicitly to the people of the world but the people of one state (Billig, 1995:94). And we can infer this because sovereignty is almost always used in the context of national sovereignty (Ibid.). As Billig remarks, there are a panoply of words which ‘point to’ the homeland – little words such as ‘we’, ‘this’, ‘here’, ‘this nation’, ‘this country’, ‘the people’ and so on (see Chapter 2 for a recap).

A few caveats are in order. I acknowledge that the object is not always equivalent to the identity professed by the claimant. For example, the claim, “We in Italy wish the best for the Libyan people. We are committed to striking an accord with the Libyan government to safeguard the interests of Libyans who have faced political and economic strife for too long”. In this example, the object is clearly ‘Libyan people’, however, the identity professed by the claimant is ‘Italians’ as the ‘we’ pronoun ‘points to’ the Italian homeland. However, examples such as these are rare and the identity and object of the claim are generally congruent to one another. This is an unfortunate trade-off for endeavouring to measure the rather nebulous concept of identity which is notoriously difficult to measure. Moreover, as de Wilde et al., rightly point out, “the object is always a human person and never a non-human purpose like ‘the environment’ ” – the latter of which is captured instead by the justification category (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:27). As stated beforehand, naturally, I do not code the object if it does not contain an object or cannot be inferred from the whole context of the claim. However, in a departure from previous approaches to RCA, the object is coded where the claimant explicitly mentions or refers implicitly to the interests of an individual or group of people. Similar to the claimant and addressee variables, I also code the summary of the object, identifying both the object type and nationality of the group where applicable. I also code for the object type: namely, whether the object is a polity, organisation, citizens and taxpayers, workers, businesses, farmers and industry or miscellaneous category? Lastly and most importantly I code the nationality of the object. The nationality is either made explicit (e.g., British workers) or must be inferred from the overall context of the claim (e.g., Rutte: “Our citizens will not pay for Spanish profligacy which is why I am resisting the current EU budget”). In the latter example, it is clear that the object nationality of this claim is ‘Netherlands’. As mentioned beforehand, in cases where two objects are invoked, I code for the most salient. In cases where two objects are invoked in equal number, I code for the first-mentioned object. I concede that this rule is somewhat arbitrary, but I do not expect many claims to refer to two object nationalities.

Justification⁵⁴

The justification of a representative claim is defined as, “explicit or implicit reasons given by a claimant to rationalize and/or legitimize his or her claims...This could be presented as evidence that backs up the claim in question or beliefs and value systems used to legitimize it”⁵⁵ (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:39). In keeping with the RCA handbook, explicit justifications are prioritised over implicit ones and the most dominant justifications are coded in claims with multiple justifications. I code, furthermore, the first justification mentioned in the event that no dominant justification can be discerned (Ibid., 30). Naturally, not all claimants provide justifications. In these circumstances, I assign the ‘NA value’. I adopt a mixed deductive-inductive approach to framing. I initially identified several meta arguments and these broad categories were amended during coding where necessary. In the end, I settled upon the following seven justifications: (1) rule of law (2) democracy (3) solidarity; (4) principles, norms, values, culture & identity; (5) sovereignty; (6) peace and security; (7) instrumental / utilitarian; (8) freedom and equality, and (9) EU integration. Below I outline each one in turn. To paraphrase de Wilde, rule of law is used for justifications relate to (il-)legality, corruption, constitutionalism, legal certainty, effective judicial protection by independent and impartial courts, effective judicial review, including respect for fundamental rights, and naturally, explicit references to the rule of law (de Wilde et al., 2019:31). As per, de Wilde (2019), frames related to corruption are coded as rule of law as they have legal repercussions (de Wilde et al., 2019:32). However, justifications that refer to the rule of law in terms of what the EU (or nation) stands for, or not, are coded as ‘principles, norms, values, culture & identity’ frames as they evoke questions related to the EU (or nation’s) political identity. The democracy code is used for references to participation, legitimacy, accountability, transparency, ‘democratic deficit’ arguments, civil society, active citizenship, public sphere/space, subsidiarity /separation of powers, centralisation/federalism, dictatorship/totalitarianism, pluralism, politico-institutional matters, and naturally, explicit references to democracy. The solidarity code is used for justifications that “defend voluntarily helping others (whether individuals, groups, other countries etc.) based on a notion of solidarity / feelings of unity with them...[or] for claims in support of solidarity with other EU member states based on shared ‘Europeanness’ or EU membership” (de Wilde et al., 2019:32). I acknowledge that the latter overlaps with the ‘principles, norms, values, culture & identity’ frame, however, in the spirit of parsimony, the ‘solidarity’ frame is coded when it is explicitly mentioned alongside ‘EU membership’ and ‘Europeanness’. When claims mention ‘solidarity’ in conjunction with ‘European values’ (e.g. “ we must act in solidarity in the spirit of shared European values”), I code for the latter accordingly (see also de Wilde et al., 2019:32 for a similar approach). The principles, norms, values, culture & identity code is used for references to history, such as linking European integration to shared

⁵⁴ I am indebted to both the ‘Reconnect’ (de Wilde *et al.*, 2019) and ‘europub’ (Koopmans *et al.*, 2002) codebooks for providing a deductive list of meta arguments and frames which were an instructive guide for the final list of justifications I settled on for my analysis.

⁵⁵ i.e., *why* is political demand being made?

past experiences, common historical roots, or alluding to a shared European (or national) history (e.g. the Renaissance, WW2, the Cold War, etc.); or references that touch upon what the EU (or nation) is or should (not) stand for such as: the rule of law, a community of values, human dignity, democracy, cosmopolitanism, intercultural, international understanding/dialogue, values of tolerance, etc. (Koopmans, 2002:67). Sovereignty justifications can refer to both national and European sovereignty, accusations that EU integration has gone ‘too far’, notions of a European ‘superstate’, and concerns about the freedom/self-determination of member states (de Wilde et al., 2019: 31-33). However, justifications related to the freedom of individuals are coded in the freedom and equality category (Ibid., 2019: 33). The EU integration code is used for references to the common currency, questions about deeper political, social, or economic integration, EU (dis-)membership, EU political and institutional reforms, constitutional/treaty change, EU enlargement, the single market, general spill-over arguments, etc. (Koopmans, 2002:71). The freedom and equality code refers to arguments related to personal freedom, equality, the protection of human dignity, defence of human rights, and individual justice. Lastly, the instrumental /utilitarian justification refers to a myriad of arguments about efficiency of policies / processes / decisions, competence, credibility, national (or European) interests, opportunities/threats, (dis-)advantages, economic growth, fiscal stability, security / peace, political stability, influence/weight in international relations, cross-border transport/traffic, transnational problem-solving, environmental protection, economic stability, economy of scale, , social standards/social security, strength in global competition etc.⁵⁶ (Koopmans, 2002:69).

Evaluation

Evaluative statements are claims which contain a positive or negative valence which can be regarded as types of framing in their own right. As stated by de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003: 363), valence frames “are indicative of ‘good and bad’ and carry positive and/or negative elements” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). According to Entman (1993), “frames have inherent valence by nature as they contain a ‘moral evaluation’ as one of their defining characteristics” (cited in Schuck & de Vreese, 2006:6). Political statements habitually contain positive or negative evaluations which can be deduced either explicitly or implicitly. Of course, not all claims can be placed in binary positive or negative evaluation camps. However, neutral evaluations are still important to measure as a high number of

⁵⁶ I found the Europub PCA codebook (2002) and Reconnect RCA handbook (2019) particularly instructive for identifying the appropriate frames for my analysis. However in a departure from previous approaches, I ensured that frames captured both national and European-scope frames. For example, both national and European interests are coded as ‘instrumental / utilitarian’, whereas in the PCA codebook, only national interests are coded. Furthermore, arguments pertaining to dismemberment of the EU are coded as ‘EU integration’ frames. In other words, I endeavoured to remove any normative biases in the selection of frames. A further shortcoming of the PCA codebook is that identity frames focus on ‘what the EU stands for?’ (Koopmans, 2002:67), but I think an equally pertinent question is to explore ‘what the nation stands for?’. In other words, we should not only examine how the EU is framed in public discourse but where the nation ‘fits in the frame’? To this end, although I expect the ‘sovereignty’ frame to be used predominantly in conjunction with national objects, if ‘European sovereignty’ is invoked, I code as ‘sovereignty’ accordingly.

neutral statements can be indicative of unpolemical, unpolarised discourse. Gaging the orientation of evaluative statements is a proxy for the level of polarisation of public debate. This category refers to the claimants general evaluation of the European Union. I assign the integer value, 1, for positive valence, and 0, for negative valence. If the EU is not evaluated in the claim, it is not coded as such. And if the valence is not clear, I assign the integer value, 0, accordingly. Coding for this variable allows me to conduct bivariate analyses and explore correlations between the territorial scope of identity and EU valence. In congruence with conflict-identity framing theory, I expect nationalistic frames to be accompanied by predominantly negative evaluations of the EU.

Territorial discursive scope (i.e. act2adr)

This category intends to capture the territorial scope of the claim. This variable, in particular, measures the extent of transnational communicative linkages between the claimant and the addressee irrespective of where the claim was published. In this way, we can gage to what extent public spheres are Europeanised in terms of the volume of transnational interactions (i.e. quantitative Europeanisation). The table below sets out the typology for the territorial scope of communicative linkages. However, I also employ the taxonomy used by the ‘Reconnect’ project which is useful for gaging to what extent claims found in the media are structurally transnationalised (see Table 4.12, for details) .

Identity/representative scope (i.e. act2obj)

This category intends to capture the territorial scope of the object being represented in the claim. However, in contrast to the EUROPUB codebook, the scope is ascertained by examining the discursive relational scope between the claimant and object irrespective of where the claim is published. This allows us to gage to what extent, or not, claimants construct a European ‘community of communication’ and ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983). In this way we can begin to address the age-old question to what extent public spheres are Europeanised in the normative sense. However, I also employ the taxonomy used by the ‘Reconnect’ project which is useful for gaging to what extent the media represent European interests and/or identities in national public spheres (see Table 4.13, for details).

Table 4.12: Summary of territorial discursive scope typology

Territorial discursive scope⁵⁷ typology (act2adr)	Description	Example	Claimant Addressee scope⁵⁸ (act, adr)	Description	Example
National	Use this code when the nationality of the addressee referred to in the claim is the same as the claimant's nationality.	Matteo Salvini -> Giuseppe Conte	Own Country (National)	Use this code when the nationality of the claimant /addressee is the same as that of the reporting newspaper	Partij Van De Arbeid Source: De Telegraaf
Horizontal Europeanisation	Use this code when the nationality of the addressee is different to that of the claimant, the latter of whom holds the nationality of another EU member state.	Matteo Salvini -> Angela Merkel	Other EU member state(s)	Use this code when the claimant /addressee holds the nationality of another EU member state which is different to that of the reporting newspaper	Lega Source: De Telegraaf
Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant's nationality is one of the European member states	Matteo Salvini -> Von der Leyen	EU Supranational	Use this code when the 'nationality' of the claimant /addressee is	Charles Michel

⁵⁷ This taxonomy was conceived and adopted by the 'Europub' project (see Koopmans et al., 2002, for details).

⁵⁸ This taxonomy was conceived and adopted by the 'Reconnect' project (see de Wilde et al., 2019, for details). As I pointed out in the previous chapter, the 'Europub' taxonomy is useful for measuring the territorial scope of communicative linkages between the claimant and addressee/object, whereas the latter is more apposite for measuring the extent of national self-referentiality in the media.

	and the addressee's nationality is 'EU-supranational'.			'EU Supranational'	Source: De Telegraaf
Top-down vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant's nationality is 'EU-supranational' and the nationality of the addressee is that of one of the EU's member states.	Von der Leyen -> Giuseppe Conte	Global / Regional	Use this code when the nationality of the claimant /addressee is non-European / third country national which is different to that of the reporting newspaper	Vladimir Putin Source: De Telegraaf
Supranational Europeanisation	Use this code when both the claimant's and addressee's nationality is 'EU-supranational'.	Von der Leyen -> Charles Michel			
Regional / Global (Other)	Use this code when the nationality of the addressee is non-European / third country national.	Von der Leyen -> Joe Biden			

Table 4.123: Summary of identity/interest scope typology

Identity/interest scope typology (act2obj)	Description	Example	Object scope (obj)	Description	Example
National	Use this code when the constituency referred to in the claim is the same as the claimant's nationality.	Matteo Salvini -> Italian businesses	Own Country (National)	Use this code when the nationality of the object is the same as that of the reporting newspaper	Dutch farmers Source: De Telegraaf
Horizontal Europeanisation	Use this code when the objects of the claim are citizens' of another EU member state which is different to that of the claimant.	Matteo Salvini -> German people	Other EU member state(s)	Use this code when the object holds the nationality of another EU member state which is different to that of the reporting newspaper	Italian medical staff Source: De Telegraaf
Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant's nationality is one of the European member states (e.g., Italy) and the constituency invoked in the claim is an EU-wide scope.	Matteo Salvini -> EU citizens	EU Supranational	Use this code when the 'nationality' of the object is 'EU Supranational'	EU citizens Source: De Telegraaf
Top-down vertical Europeanisation	Use this code when the claimant's nationality is 'EU-	Von der Leyen ->	Global / Regional	Use this code when the nationality of	Syrian refugees

	supranational' (e.g., Von der Leyen, EU Commission President) and the constituency invoked in the claim refers to a European member state.	Italian people		the object is non-European / third country national which is different to that of the reporting newspaper	Source: De Telegraaf
Supranational Europeanisation	Use this code for when the claimant holds the nationality of 'EU-supranational' and the represented constituency is an EU-wide scope. For example: EU citizens, European Farmers, European students, European industry etc.	Von der Leyen -> European students			
Regional / Global (Other)	Use this code for third-country individuals, reference groups (e.g. 'Syrian migrants') or organisations.	Von der Leyen -> Syrian migrants			

Table 4.14: Summary of node and node/edge attributes (with examples)

Node Subject / Representative	Node Attribute Claimant Nationality	Node? Object/Constituency	Node/Node Attribute? Object-type	Node/Node Attribute? Object Nationality	Origin	Edge Attribute Claimant > Object identity scope
SDP	Germany	"German people"	Citizens	Germany	NL	National
French Government	French	"French farmers"	Industry	France	NL	National
Italian Government	Italy	"Popolo italiano"	Citizens	Italy	NL	National
European Commission	EU supranational	"EU citizens"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	Vertical Europeanisation
European Council	EU supranational	"Syrian migrants"	Migrants	Global/regional	NL	Global/Regional
German Government	Germany		Ethnic minorities	Global/regional	NL	Global/ Regional
PVV	Netherlands	"Dutch taxpayer"	Citizens	Netherlands	NL	National
Party of Law & Justice	Poland	"Polish workers"	Workers	Poland	NL	National
French Government	France	"European people"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational
French Government	France	"EU farmers"	Industry	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational
European Commission	EU supranational	"European students"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational
Dutch Government	Netherlands	"Italian citizens"	Italian People	Italy	NL	Horizontal Europeanisation
Austrian Government	Austria	"Italian farmers"	Workers	Italy	NL	Horizontal Europeanisation

Data visualisation using SNA

After the manual coding procedure (RCA), I wish to transpose the coded data onto a network graph. The claimant and addressee variables will be transposed as a bidirectional one-mode network (unipartite) as both represent actors' of the same type, namely political protagonists in the public sphere. The claimant and object variables will instead be transposed as a unidirectional two-mode network (bipartite) as the nodes represent two distinct types. Claimants are political actors, and objects are 'imagined communities' (or 'constituencies' to quote de Wilde) which are not actors in the narrow sense of the term. For example, 'Italians' or 'migrants' do not literally make interventions in the public sphere; instead, it is representatives (i.e. claimants) of 'Italians' or 'migrants' that do so. For the purpose of clarity, the nodes (vertices) represent the claimants and addressees in the one-mode network, and the claimants and objects in the two-mode network. I also assigned node attribute of 'nationality' to each node. The size of each node represents the node's degree centrality and the colour of the node represents the nodes country of origin. The edges in the network represent the ties between claimant and addressee in the one-mode network, and claimant and object in the two-mode network. I assigned the edge attribute of discursive territorial scope to every edge in the network. The thickness of the edge illustrates the edges weight in the network and the colour of the edge illustrates the discursive scope relation between nodes. Fig. 4.1 and 4.2 are early prototypes roughly encapsulating how I want the one-mode and two-mode networks to look like. I used the programming language R for the cleaning⁵⁹ and

⁵⁹ I had to reformat the data matrix to ensure its exportability to *Gephi*. To be exportable to *Gephi*, the data matrix requires an 'id' and 'label' column. In my case, the 'id' column contains a list of all the claimants and the 'label' column contains all the 'addressees' in the one-mode network or 'objects' in the two-mode network.

manipulation of data. For example, the nationality (country of origin) or each actor was assigned a hex colour value. The same was done for the territorial discursive scope of the representative claim. In this way the nodes and edges could be color-coded in order to obtain a quick snapshot of patterns of discourse prevalent in each network. Thereafter I exported the data to Gephi which is a popular open-source network analysis and visualisation software package. Gephi is a fairly intuitive, easy-to-learn-and-use software which allows us to analyse large networks at high speed. The size of the node was determined by the degree centrality of a given node and the colour of the node was determined according to pre-assigned unique hex values for each nationality. In the same vein, the thickness of the edge was determined by the weight of a given edge in the network and the colour of the edge was determined according to pre-assigned unique hex values for the discursive relation of the tie. Thereafter, for the one-mode network, I used the Yifan hu proportional graph layout algorithm which, as the name implies, uses a “proportional displacement strategy for node placement in the graphical space” (Khokhar, 2015). After experimentation with other layouts, I found this one to be the clearest, most visually appealing, and easiest to decipher. Thereafter I used the Giant Component filtering tool to remove nodes with a negligible influence in the network. The Giant Component filter is a quick and easy way to remove peripheral nodes in the network which are not part of the largest part of the network; it is thus useful for honing in on the most important areas of the network (Cherven, 2015: 155). For the two-mode network, I undertook the same process with the exception that I used a different graph layout, namely the Event Graph Layout⁶⁰ which is more desirable for the visualisation of bipartite data. In order for the Event Graph layout to function, I had to assign an integer variable to the nodes data table (i.e. the ‘id’ and ‘label’ column). More specifically, the ‘claimant’ nodes data column (i.e. ‘id’ column) was assigned the value of 1, and the ‘object’ nodes data column (i.e. ‘label’ column) was assigned the value of 2. In this way, the ‘claimant’ nodes can be separated into one column from the ‘object’ nodes.

⁶⁰ The ‘Event Graph Layout’ plugin can be downloaded on Gephi from: Tools -> Plugins -> Available Plugins.

Figure 4.1: Prototype of a one-mode network

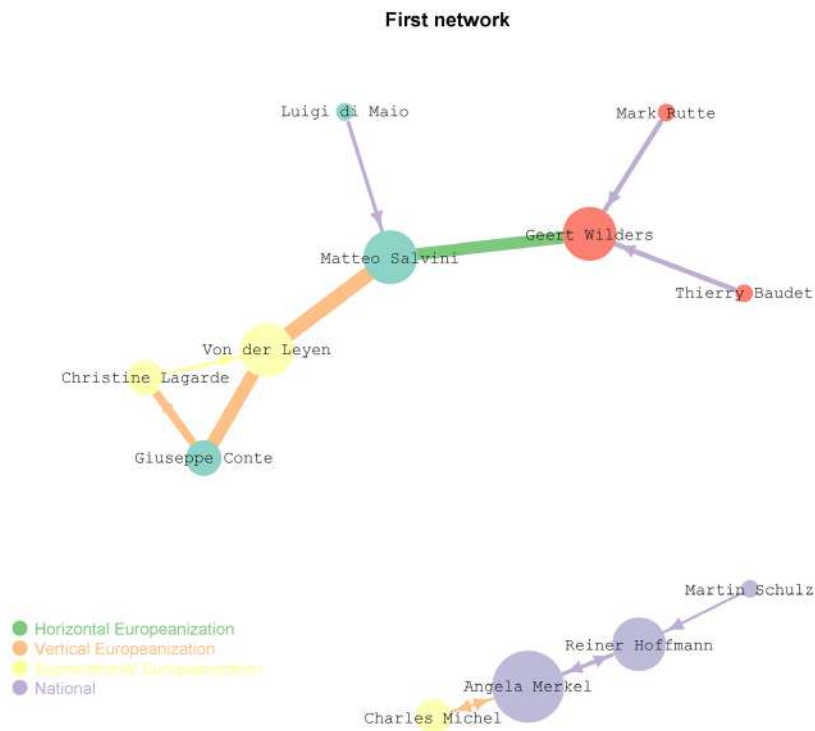
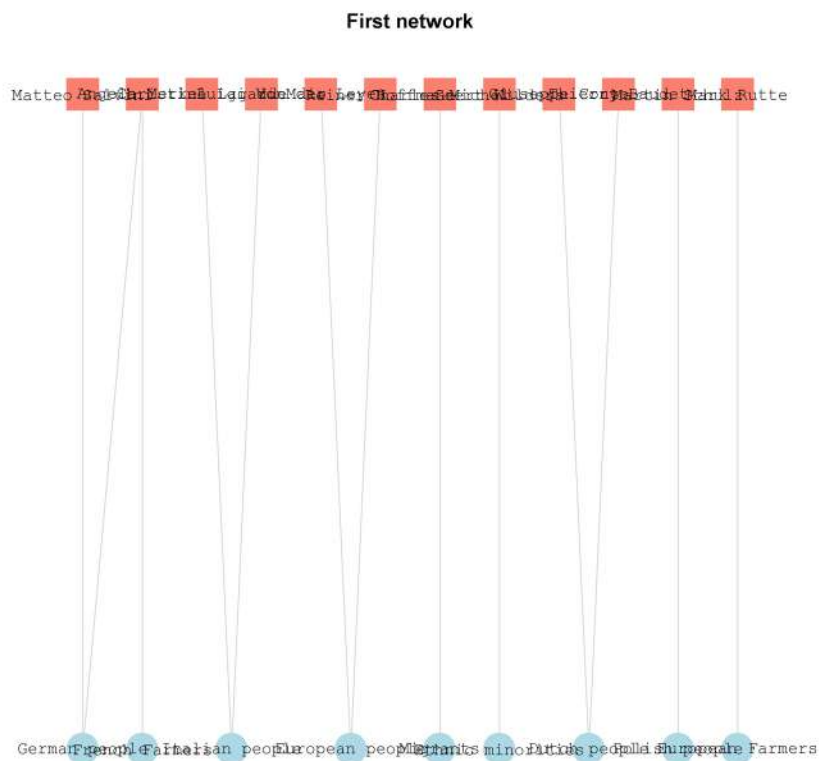


Figure 4.2: Prototype of a two-mode network



Final dataset

In the end, from 1552 newspaper articles, I coded 3768 political claims⁶¹, 2729 of which contained an addressee and 1312 contained an object. This leaves 1039 political claims which contained neither an addressee nor object. Table 4.15 shows the distribution of newspaper articles by source. Table 4.16 shows the distribution of representative claims according to source. And Table 4.17 shows the distribution of political claims containing an addressee according to source. As all three figures show, tabloid newspaper featured little which is already an indicator that tabloid newspaper are less transnational in outlook than their quality newspaper counterparts. Although there is less data available with which to compare across newspaper format, I believe there is sufficient data for to carry out a comparative analysis. In total, my sample contains 393 newspaper articles from tabloid newspapers which is 25% of the whole dataset⁶².

Table 4.13: Distribution of newspaper articles

<i>source</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	358	23%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	308	20%
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	297	19%
<i>NRC</i>	196	13%
<i>Handelsblad</i>		
<i>La Nazione</i>	177	11%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	147	9%
<i>Bild</i>	35	2%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	34	2%
Σ	1552	
μ	194	

⁶¹ Naturally, there was sparsity in the dataset as not all the claims contained every variable.

⁶² The DNA dataset may be found on my *GitHub* repository: <https://github.com/JKerms89/phd-repo>.

Table 4.14: Distribution of representative claims by source

<i>source</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	402	31%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	284	22%
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	218	17%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	143	11%
<i>La Nazione</i>	130	10%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	91	7%
<i>Bild</i>	26	2%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	18	1%
Σ	1312	
μ	164	

Table 4.15: Distribution of political claims (containing an addressee) by source

<i>source</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	782	29%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	662	24%
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	442	16%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	353	13%
<i>La Nazione</i>	181	7%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	213	8%
<i>Bild</i>	57	2%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	39	1%
Σ	2729	
μ	341	

Table 4.16: Summary of all variables to be coded

Representative claim aspect	Variables	Sub-variables	Network graph variable type	
Location	Date		Node /Node attribute?	
	Origin (Country)		Node /Node attribute?	
Who is making the claim?	Source	Tabloid/Quality?	Boolean qualifier AND/OR edge attribute?	
	Outlet type	Name	Node	
	Claimant	Organisation	Organisation	Node
		Claimant type	Claimant type	Node /Node attribute
Who is the claim directed at? / Who is responsibility attributed to? (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:10)	Addressee	Claimant nationality	Node /Node attribute	
		Name	Node	
	Addressee	Organisation	Organisation	Node
		Addressee type	Addressee type	Node AND/OR Node attribute
On whose behalf or in whose interests is the claim being made? (de Wilde & Gora, 2019:10)	Object	Addressee nationality	Node AND/OR Node attribute	
		Addressee evaluation? (+/or -)	Boolean qualifier AND/OR edge attribute?	
	Object	Object name	Object name	Node
		Object type	Object type	Node /Node attribute
What is the main issue being claimed? How/why is the claim being made?	Issue	Object nationality	Node /Node attribute	
		Issue Field	Node	
	Justification / Frame	Frame	Frame	Edge attribute
		Evaluation of EU (+/-/?)	Evaluation of EU (+/-/?)	Boolean qualifier AND/OR edge attribute?
What is the scope of the claim?	Scope	Actor scope (a la Koopmans)	Edge attribute	
		Claimant -> Addressee relational scope (Kermer, 2020)	Edge attribute	
		Object scope (a la Koopmans)	Edge attribute	
		Claimant -> Object: relational scope (Kermer, 2020)	Edge attribute	

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Appendix

Table 4.17: An illustration of the possible object node/node attributes for the two-mode network in 'De Telegraaf' (NL)

Node Subject (Representative)	Node Attribute Claimant Nationality	Node? Object (Represented)	Node/Node Attribute? Object-type	Node/Node Attribute? Object Nationality	Origin	Edge Attribute? Claimant > Object scope	Edge Attribute Object scope
SDP	Germany	"German people"	Citizens	Germany	NL	National (discursive nationalism)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)
French Government	French	"French farmers"	Industry	France	NL	National (discursive nationalism)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)
Italian Government	Italy	"Popolo italiano"	Citizens	Italy	NL	National (discursive nationalism)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)
European Commission	EU supranational	"EU citizens"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	Vertical Europeanisation	EU Supranational
European Council	EU supranational	"Syrian migrants"	Migrants	Global/regional	NL	Global/Regional	Global/Regional/rest of world
German Government	Germany		Ethnic minorities	Global/regional	NL	Global/ Regional	Global/ Regional/rest of world
PiW	Netherlands	"Dutch taxpayer"	Citizens	Netherlands	NL	National (discursive nationalism)	Own Country, National (Domestic)
PiS (Party of Law & Justice)	Poland	"Polish workers"	Workers	Poland	NL	National (discursive nationalism)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)
French Government	France	"European people"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational	EU Supranational
French Government	France	"EU farmers"	Industry	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational	EU Supranational
European Commission	EU supranational	"European students"	Citizens	EU-supranational	NL	EU Supranational	EU Supranational
Dutch Government	Netherlands	"Italian citizens"	Italian People	Italy	NL	Horizontal Europeanisation (solidaristic claim)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)
Austrian Government	Austria	"Italian farmers"	Workers	Italy	NL	Horizontal Europeanisation (solidaristic claim)	Other EU Member State(s) / (EU-horizontal)

Table 4.18: Summary of node and node/edge attributes

Node Claimant/Representative	Node Object/Constituency	Node Attribute Object scope	Edge attribute Discursive territorial scope
SDP	German people	Own Country, National	National
French Government	French Farmers	Own Country, National	National
Italian Government	Italian people	Own Country, National	National
European Commission	European people	EU Supranational	Supranational
European Council	Migrants	Global/Regional	N/A
German Government	Ethnic minorities	Global/ Regional	N/A
PiW	Dutch people	Own Country, National	National
PiS (Party of Law & Justice)	Polish people	Own Country, National	National
French Government	European people	EU Supranational	Vertical
French Government	European Farmers	EU Supranational	Vertical
European Commission	European Students	EU Supranational	Supranational
Dutch Government	Italian People	Other EU Member State	Horizontal
Austrian Government	Italian Farmers	Other EU Member State	Horizontal

Chapter 5 – Results

SNA overview – Bipartite network

Initial verdict...

The central question guiding my analysis is to ascertain whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates concerning European politics¹. With this question in mind, a logical starting point is to observe the distribution of discursive identity scopes (i.e. edge attributes) of the German, Italian, Dutch and Polish networks. The most striking thing to note is that circa half of all representative claims referred to national identity (see Fig.5.1 in Appendix A). In other words, actors would refer to their own national identity approximately 50% of the time when debating European politics. This result was found in every network, with the Dutch and German networks recording the lowest share of national discursive scopes, at 42.21% and 47.85% respectively, and the Italian and Polish networks recording the highest percentage at 50.93% and 52.08% respectively. From the snap verdict, We can tentatively conclude that European debates have the effect of accentuating the saliency of national identity. As the aggregate network (see Fig.5.2) emphatically illustrates, circa half of the edges are coloured red which is indicative of discursive nationalism. More specifically, of the aggregate network's 1252 ties, 596 of them were national. In other words, actors still have a penchant for referring to their own nationally imagined community rather than the invoking the general European interest. This is distantly followed by claims with an EU/European identity scope (i.e. both bottom-up and supranational Europeanisation) which comprised 30% of all representative claims², with actors in the Polish network only referring to the EU/European object in 22.65% of all claims, with the other three networks recording a markedly higher figure at circa 34%. The results also reveal that regional/global identities and interests (i.e. non-EU/third country identities) are better represented in European debates than the interests and identities of other member states (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation), ranging from 9.81% in Poland to 14.07% in Germany (see Fig.1). Horizontal and top-down vertical claims were very low, at only 11% in the aggregate network. These results indicate a palpably low level of solidarity during instances of claim-

¹ This question concerns the more normative aspects of discourse. This research question is inspired by De Wilde whose paper titled *Media Logic and Grand Theories of European Integration* (2019) laid the groundwork for my research. I found the paper particularly useful from a theoretical perspective. He encourages scholars to examine identity questions in public discourse in regard to EU affairs. He expects the politicisation of EU integration and the EU's predominantly intergovernmental logic (accentuated by the mass medias penchant for confrontational happenings between elite persons) to increase the salience of national identity.

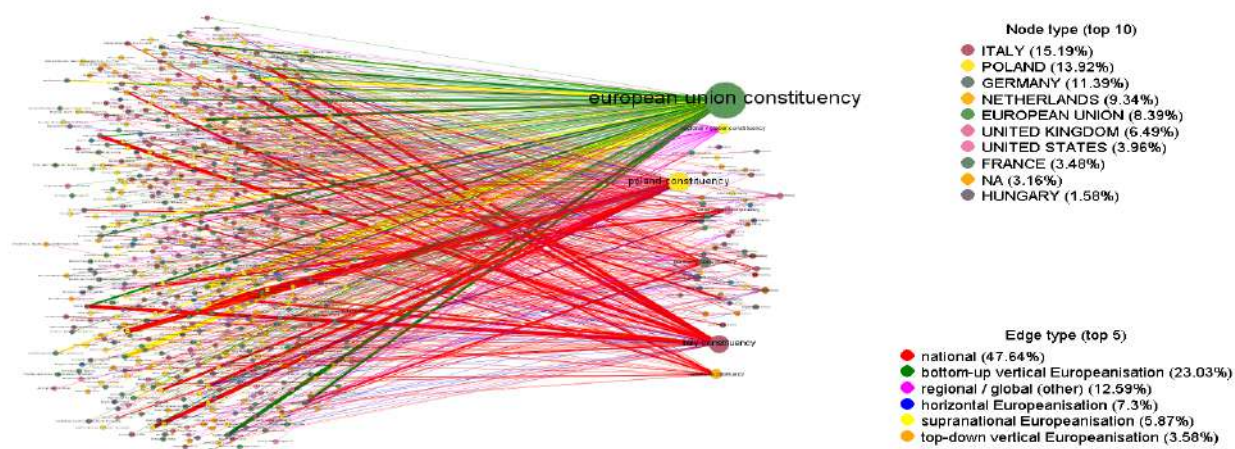
² 28.9% to be precise...

making³. Over one in ten claims referred to non-EU/European objects (12.59%). Similarly, over one in ten claims were solidaristic (i.e., horizontal and top-down vertical at 7.3% and 3.58% respectively⁴).

Figure 5.1: Object scope (%) edges distribution (Two-mode network)

<i>Identity scope</i>	Network					
	Agg.	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean
<i>National</i>	47.64	42.21	50.93	47.85	52.08	48.26
<i>Horizontal Europeanisation</i>	7.3	7.54	3.11	4.91	9.06	6.16
<i>Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	23.03	23.12	24.84	25.77	17.74	22.88
<i>Top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	3.58	2.51	1.24	0.61	6.42	2.70
<i>Supranational Europeanisation</i>	5.87	10.55	8.7	9.82	4.91	8.50
<i>Regional / global</i>	12.59	14.07	11.18	11.04	9.81	11.53

Figure 5.2: Two-mode network visualisation of the “Euro net”



³ Horizontal and top-down vertical claims can also be considered as proxies for solidaristic claims. For example, Von der Leyen’s claim on 11 March 2020 that “We’re all Italians...” is a quintessential solidaristic claim (Von der Leyen, 2020). Markus Söder’s claim on Twitter on 24 March 2020 that: “Bavaria shows solidarity. We will help Italy with medical equipment and accept as many patients as we can. In times of need, it is important to help. We want to send a signal of humanity” (“Bayern ist solidarisch. Wir helfen Italien mit medizinischem Gerät und nehmen einige Patienten im Rahmen unserer Möglichkeiten auf. Gerade in der Not ist es wichtig, zu helfen. Wir wollen ein Signal der Humanität setzen” – translation by Google) is both an explicit act of solidarity and claim to represent the interests of Italy (Söder, 2020). The ECFR website is a very useful database for retrieving instances of solidaristic claims. I Invite scholars who are interested in examining the concept of solidarity in public discourse to revert to the ECFR website (Coratella, 2020).

⁴ That is, referring to other EU member states,

Across country differences

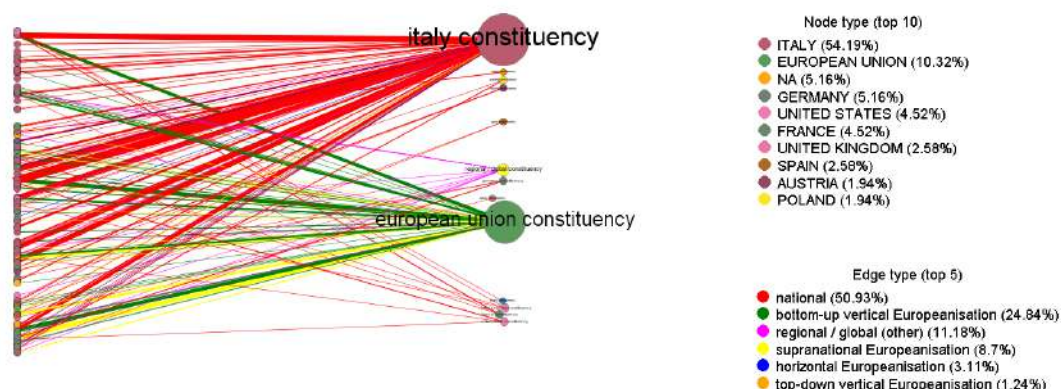
Italy

In the “Italian” two-mode network – which contains vertices of two different types, namely, actors and objects – what is immediately striking is the proliferation of ties that are color-coded red. Indeed, as Fig.5.3 shows, over 50% of representative claims (i.e., claims containing an identity component viz. object) were nationalized. In other words, most politically engaged actors in the public sphere referred to their own nationally imagined community. In a distant second place were claims that referred to the EU/Europe as the main object of representative claims at just over 30%⁵. This is also illustrated by the size of the vertices on the right-hand side of the graph below; the node labelled ‘Italy constituency’ (colored in red) is clearly the largest followed by the ‘European union constituency’. As far as claimants are concerned, the left-hand side of Fig.5.3 clearly shows the prevalence of Italian actors (colored in red). The legend in Fig.5.3 titled ‘node type’ gives a breakdown of the actor prominence by nationality. Italy is the standout actor in this regard with 54.19% of vertices containing the attribute of Italian nationality. In a distant second place is the European Union (10.32%). This implies that public spheres are highly domesticated as far as representative claims are concerned. In sum, the results show that Italian actors re-produce a nationally imagined Italian community at the expense of other communities whose imagining is largely forgotten. Over one in ten claims referred to non-EU/European objects (12.59%). Circa one in twenty claims were solidaristic in scope (i.e., horizontal and top-down vertical at 3.11% and 1.24% respectively⁶).

⁵ Bottom-up vertical claims and supranational claims equaled 24.84% and 8.7% respectively.

⁶ I.e. referring to other EU member states.

Figure 5.3: Two-mode network visualisation of the Italian network

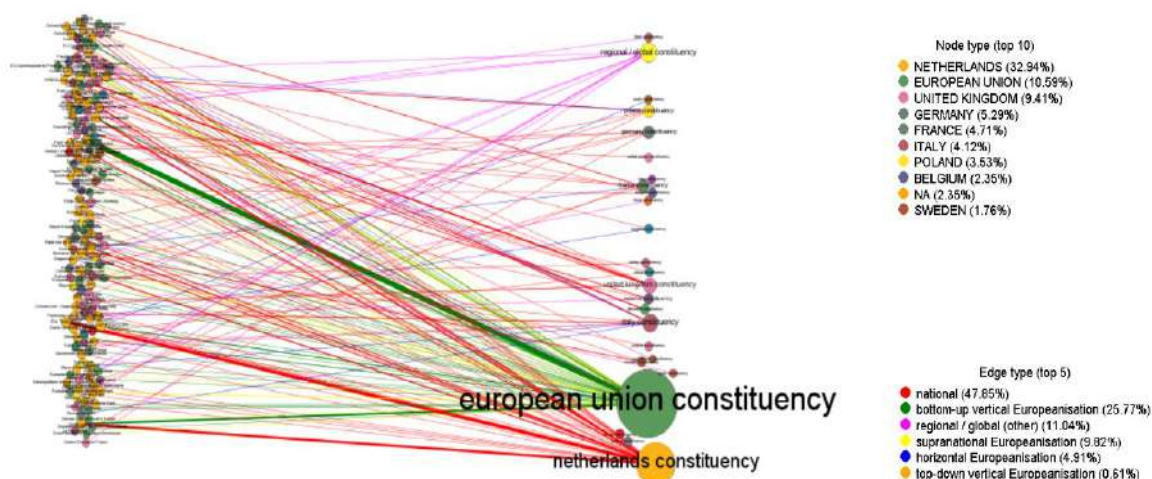


Netherlands

Similarly, red-colored ties predominate in the “Dutch” network. Indeed, as Fig.5.4 shows, 48% of representative claims contain a national identity component, i.e., most politically engaged actors in the public sphere referred to their own nationally imagined community. In a distant second place were claims that referred to the EU/Europe as the main object of representative claims at just over 35%. However, in contrast to the “Italian” network, the EU/European constituency was the most prevalent object of representative claims. We thus have a mixed picture; on the other hand, national identity scopes were the most prevalent, on the other hand, the ‘Europe’ is the most visible constituency. This is illustrated by the size of the vertices on the right-hand side of the graph below; the node labelled ‘European union constituency’ (colored in red) is the largest followed by the ‘Netherlands constituency’. As far as claimants are concerned, the left-hand side of Fig.5.4 clearly shows the prevalence of Dutch actors (colored in orange). The legend in Fig.5.4 titled ‘node type’ gives a breakdown of the actor prominence by nationality. The Netherlands is the standout actor in this regard with 32.94% of vertices containing the attribute of Dutch nationality which is markedly lower than the Italian network (54.19%). In a distant second place is the European Union (10.59%) which is almost identical with the Italian network (10.32%). This implies that public spheres are highly domesticated as far as representative claimants are concerned. Over one in ten claims referred to non-EU/European objects (11%) which is virtually identical with the Italian network. Circa one in twenty claims were solidaristic in scope (i.e., horizontal and top-down vertical at 4.9% and 0.61% respectively⁷) which is virtually identical with the ‘Italian’ network.

⁷ I.e. referring to other EU member states.

Figure 5.4: Two-mode network visualisation of the Dutch network

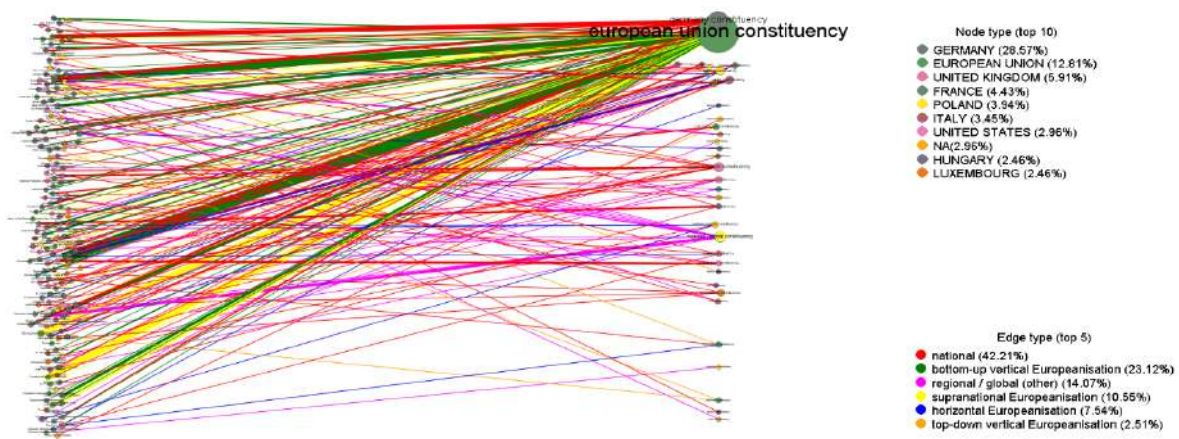


Germany

As with the previous two networks, red-colored ties predominate the “German” network. Indeed, as Fig.5.5 shows, 42% of representative claims contain a national identity component – i.e., most politically engaged actors in the public sphere referred to their own nationally imagined community – which is the lowest share of the four networks analyzed. Again, in second place were claims that referred to the EU/Europe as the main object of representative claims at a cumulative total of 34% (i.e., bottom-up vertical (23.12%) and supranational Europeanisation (10.55%). As with the ‘Dutch’ network, the EU/European constituency was the most prevalent object of representative claims as illustrated by the green colored orb on the right-hand side which is the biggest. In a close second place is the ‘German’ constituency. As far as claimants are concerned, the left-hand side of Fig.5.5 clearly shows the prevalence of German actors (29%). This is markedly lower than the Italian (54.19%) and the Dutch network (32.94%). In a distant second place is the European Union (13%) which is similar to the Italian and Dutch networks (circa 10%). These results reinforce that public spheres’ are highly domesticated as far as representative claimants are concerned. 14% of claims referred to non-EU/European objects which is higher than that of the Netherlands and Italy (circa 11%). 15% of claims were solidaristic in scope (i.e., horizontal and top-down vertical at 9% and 6% respectively⁸) which is circa 5% higher than that of the Italian and Dutch networks.

⁸ That is, referring to other EU member states,

Figure 5.5: Two-mode network visualisation of the German network



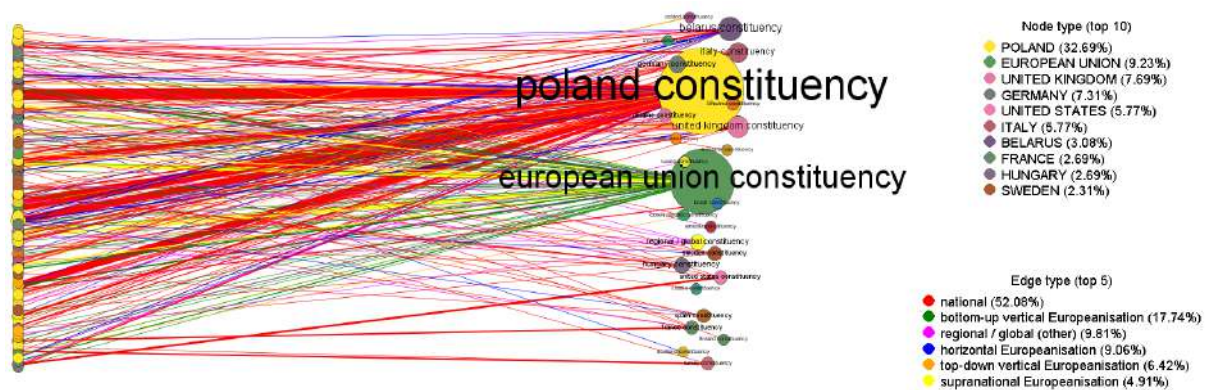
Poland

In the “Polish” two-mode network – as with the Italian network – what is immediately apparent is the proliferation of ties that are color-coded red. Indeed, as Fig.5.6 shows, 52% of representative claims (i.e., claims containing an identity component viz. object) were nationalized. In a distant second place were claims that referred to the EU/Europe as the main object of representative claims at circa 34%⁹. This is illustrated by the size of the vertices on the right-hand side of the graph below. As we can see, the node labelled ‘Polish constituency’ (colored in red) is clearly the largest with the ‘European union constituency’ in a distant second place. As far as claimants are concerned, the left-hand side of Fig.5.6 clearly shows the prevalence of Polish actors (33%, colored in yellow) which is lower than the Italian network (54%) but similar to the German (29%) and Dutch network (33%). In all four networks, actors possessing the EU nationality attribute represent circa one-tenth of all vertices. These results reinforce the view the finding that public spheres are highly domesticated as far as claimants are concerned. 14% of representative claims referred to non-EU/European objects which is the highest of all four networks. And circa one-seventh of all claims were solidaristic in scope (i.e., horizontal and top-down vertical at 9% and 6.4% respectively¹⁰) which is the highest of all four networks.

⁹ Bottom-up vertical claims and supranational claims equaled 23.12% and 10.55% respectively.

¹⁰ That is, referring to other EU member states.

Figure 5.6: Two-mode network visualisation of the Polish network



SNA statistics overview

In the Italian network, the Italian constituency recorded the highest betweenness centrality (6189), degree (73), weighted degree (174), and eigenvector centrality (1). In distant second place is the European constituency, with a betweenness centrality of 4937, degree of 57, weighted degree of 110, and eigenvector centrality of 0.7. Similarly, in the Polish network, the Polish constituency recorded the highest betweenness centrality (14745), degree (95), weighted degree (191), and eigenvector centrality (1). In distant second place is the European constituency, with a betweenness centrality of 13064, degree of 68, weighted degree of 95, and eigenvector centrality of 0.59. By contrast, in the Dutch network, the European constituency recorded the highest betweenness centrality (5993), degree (59), weighted degree (85), and eigenvector centrality (1). In distant second place is the Dutch constituency with a betweenness centrality of 3015, degree of 35, weighted degree of 61, and eigenvector centrality of 0.43. Similarly, in the German network, the European constituency recorded the highest betweenness centrality (6266), degree (70), weighted degree (134), and eigenvector centrality (1). In distant second place is the German constituency with a betweenness centrality of 2461, degree of 30, weighted degree of 44, and eigenvector centrality of 0.33 (see Tables 5.141-5.144 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown of results).

Below I examine the betweenness, eigenvector, and degree centrality results in more detail. Firstly, let us remind ourselves what each of these node centrality indicators are. In a nutshell, betweenness centrality (BC) measures the extent to which a node has control over the flow of information in the network (Neo4j, n.d.). In simple terms, BC measures the importance of a node in a network. As the results clearly show, in the Italian network, the 'Italian constituency' is hands down the most important node serving as a bridge to other nodes in the network. The Italian object is the central node of reference, or in other words, the common denominator, connecting multiple claimants to one another.

Notwithstanding this, European objects recorded quite a high BC score. Interestingly, global constituencies were the third most important object node in the network. The most important claimant node in terms of BC was an EU-level actor, namely, the European Commission, which reinforces the notion that EU-level actors are highly visible in public debates. Not surprisingly, nodes representing the largest EU member states, namely France and Germany, scored a high BC both as claimants and objects (see Table 5.141 for a full breakdown). Not surprisingly, Italian actors scored a moderately high BC. Overall, objects were more important than claimants in the Italian network. In the Polish network, similar to the Italian one, domestic objects scored the highest BC. Notwithstanding this, European objects recorded quite a high BC score. Interestingly, the 'British' object was the third most important object node in the network. I expect this is because of historical strong ties between Poland and the UK. The nodes representing a neighbouring countries, namely German and Belarus, also scored a high BC. Nodes representing the Hungarian constituency also scored a high BC, I suspect because they have historical strong ties. As with the German network, the most important claimant node in terms of BC was a domestic newspaper actor, namely *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Although Polish claimant nodes scored moderately a moderately high BC, several non-Polish claimants and objects were more central in terms of betweenness. In stark contrast, in the German network, European objects were demonstrably the most important nodes in terms of BC with a score circa three times the value of German objects. Interestingly, global constituencies were the fourth most important object node in the network. The most important claimant node in terms of BC were domestic (German) actors, namely, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the German government and *Bundnis 90 - Die Grünen*. Objects representing neighbouring (i.e. Poland) and moderately large member states (i.e. Spain and Italy) were also important nodes in terms of BC. Again, the results show that objects scored a higher BC compared to claimant nodes. In the Dutch network, similar to the German one, EU-level constituencies were the most important nodes with a BC score circa twice that of the Dutch constituency. As with the German network, global and Italian constituencies also registered at high BC score. The most important claimant nodes in terms of BC were Italian and German actors. I suspect the centrality of Italian actors and objects in the Dutch network is due to the disagreements between Italy and the Netherlands regarding debt mutualisation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Not surprisingly, Dutch claimants were moderately important in the Dutch network. Again, the results show that objects were more important in terms of BC compared to claimants (see Table 5.141 for details).

Eigenvector centrality (EC) measures the transitive influence of nodes in the network (Neo4j, n.d.). Put differently, EC not only counts the number of ties a node X has with node Y, but also measures how many ties node Y has with node Z in the network. For example, a node which has few connections with highly connected nodes will score a higher EC than a node with many connections to nodes with few connections in the network. In the Italian network, Italian constituencies and European constituencies to a lesser degree record the highest transitive influence. This means that these nodes are connected to

nodes which are themselves highly connected. The European Commission was the most influential claimant node in terms of EC, however, when aggregated, domestic-level actors were demonstrably the most influential claimant nodes in the network. The Polish network reveals remarkably similar results; the Polish constituency is clearly the most influential node succeeded by the European constituency and domestic-level actors were clearly the most influential claimant nodes in the network. By contrast, in both the Dutch and German networks, the European constituency was overwhelmingly the most influential node in the network followed by domestic-level constituencies. However, in all four networks, domestic level actors were found to be the most influential claimant nodes (see Table 5.144 in the Appendix for details).

Degree centrality (DC) simply quantifies the number of ties a node has and is considered to be a proxy for gaging the popularity / importance of a given node in a network. Again, we find a similar dichotomy between Polish and Italian networks on the one hand, and German and Dutch networks on the other. In the cases of the former, European constituencies were the most 'popular' compared to domestic level constituencies in the cases of the latter. As expected, the interests / identities of neighbouring and/or the largest, most powerful European countries scored a high DC across all four networks. For example, in Germany, Polish and Italian and British constituencies were important in terms of DC. In the Netherlands, Italian and British constituencies scored highly in terms of DC, and in Poland, Italian, German, Dutch, British and Belarusian constituencies scored highly in terms of DC. In three out of the four networks, regional/global constituencies scored high in terms of DC save for Poland. Across all four networks, object nodes scored higher in terms of DC than claimant nodes (see Table 5.142 for details). Weighted degree centrality calculates the number of edges' of each node, taking into the account also the edges' weight (Abraham et al., 2009: 396). Again, a similar picture emerges. In the Dutch and German networks, European constituencies were overwhelmingly the most central nodes in terms of WDC. By contrast, in Italian and Polish networks, the inverse was found, with domestic level constituencies the most central in terms of WDC. Across all four networks, nodes representing domestic actors generally scored higher a WDC compared to nodes representing European and supranational actors (see Table 5.143 in the Appendix for details).

In sum, in crude terms, in the Polish and Italian networks, vertices representing domestic claimants and objects were found to be the more important (BC), influential (EC) and popular (DC / WDC) compared to European and supranational counterparts. In stark contrast, in the Dutch and German networks, supranational objects were the most important (BC), influential (EC), and popular (DC / WDC) compared to national counterparts. However, domestic actors were generally found to be more important (BC), influential (EC) and popular (WDC) compared to transnational actors. The main takeaway from the analysis of SNA statistics is that public spheres' largely remain domesticated in terms of actor agency (i.e. claims-making). In Italian and Polish networks, public spheres' remain heavily ethnocentric in terms of the identities and interests represented in public discourse. By contrast,

in the Dutch and German networks, interests and identities are oriented mainly toward the supranational level.

Exploratory data analysis

Across country differences

As Fig.5.7 shows, national discursive scopes were the most prominent (49.07%), with Polish (57.62%), Italian (54.02%) and Dutch networks (49.15%) invoking national objects in half of all the claims¹¹. Germany is the outlier in this regard with only 35.48% of claims national in scope which was 15% less than the mean. This is followed by bottom-up vertical claims which made up 23% of claims, with the German (29%) and Dutch (27%) networks recording the highest share of bottom-up claims, Italy around the mean (22%), and the Polish network was an outlier in this respect with only 13% of claims of a bottom-up variety. However, when we include supranational representative claims, over one-fifth of total claims invoke the European constituency. As with bottom-up vertical claims, the German network records the highest percentage for supranational claims, providing further evidence that the German network is the most Europeanised in terms of normative discourse. In fact, the German network (13.55%) is an outlier in this regard, as the datapoint located outside the whiskers of the boxplot below shows. In all networks analysed, circa one-tenth of all claims invoke regional/global objects (e.g. the ‘world citizenry’). Interestingly, solidaristic claims were more prominent in the Polish network (12%) than the other three countries which was double the mean (circa 6%). Indeed, as the boxplot below shows, As Fig.5.7 demonstrates, Poland is the outlier in respect of top-down vertical Europeanisation (at 6% compared to the mean of 2%). Interestingly, discursive scopes followed a consistent pattern in all four networks, with national scopes at the top, followed by bottom-up vertical, regional/global, supranational, horizontal and lastly top-down vertical claims. As the Fig.5.8 elucidates, national and bottom-up discursive scopes vary markedly by country.

As Fig.5.9 shows, there are marked differences between Germany and Netherlands on the one hand and Poland and Italy on the other¹². 50% of objects in the Italian network referred to the Italian constituency

¹¹ See Table 5.1 for a detailed breakdown of percentages (Appendix, for details)

¹² However, this typology does not tell us the whole story about the extent of a public spheres domestication. The typology I principally adopt is useful for categorising the discursive relation between *claimant* and *object* irrespective of where the claim is reported. For example, a claim by Mario Draghi that invokes the Italian constituency is *national* – whether or not it is reported in the Italian, German or Polish media – because both the claimant and object share the same nationality. However, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the public sphere, I adopt the RECONNECT project’s typology of object scopes to complement my analysis. This typology is particularly instructive for gauging the extent of a public spheres domestication. This typology treats the object of the claim in isolation irrespective of its relation to the claimant. Crudely put, the initial typology sheds light on political logics and the latter typology sheds light on media logics. The main premise of my thesis is that political logics are still embedded in national structures. I thus expect claimants to invoke national objects (claimant > object = national). Furthermore, the ethnocentric bias of journalists means they will prioritise political claims that invoke national interests/identities over supranational/global ones. I thus expect the objects scope to accord with the nationality of the reporting newspaper.

followed by over 45% in the Polish network (see Table 5.3 for a full breakdown). In stark contrast, only circa 20% of objects referred to the Dutch constituency in the Dutch network, and under 15% of objects invoked the German constituency in the German network. We find the same dynamic in regard to the object as ‘EU supranational’. In the Polish and Italian network, only 20-30% of objects were of a supranational scope. In the Dutch and German network, between 35-45% of objects were of a supranational scope. In three of the networks (DE,NL,PL) circa 25% of objects referred to EU member states different from the reporting country. Italy is the outlier in this regard wherein less than 5% of objects referred to other member states. In fact, as Figure 5.10 demonstrates, Italy is an outlier in this regard, as the datapoint located outside the whiskers of the boxplot show. Moreover, Figure 5.10 clearly shows the varied distribution in national and supranational object scopes. The main takeaway from this analysis is that there are marked divergences between Germany and the Netherlands on the one hand and Poland and Italy on the other, with the former networks showing hallmarks of normative Europeanisation and the latter showing hallmarks of a heavily domesticated and nationalised network.

Figure 5.7: Bar plot of the relative frequency of representative claims according to discursive territorial scope

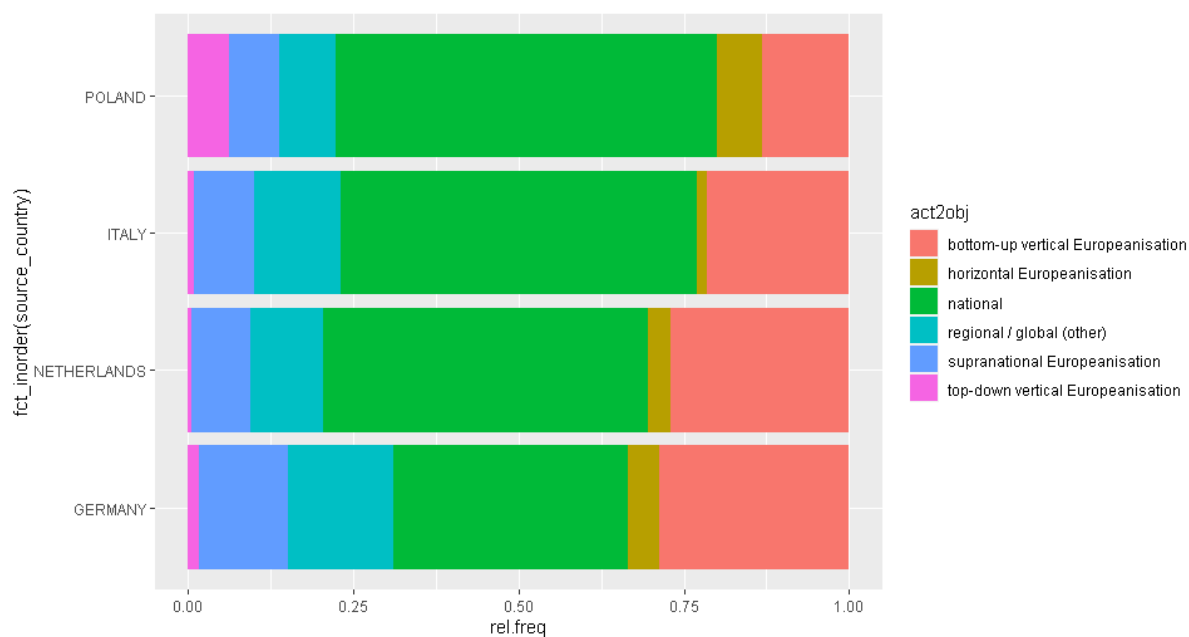


Figure 5.8: Boxplot to illustrate the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by source country

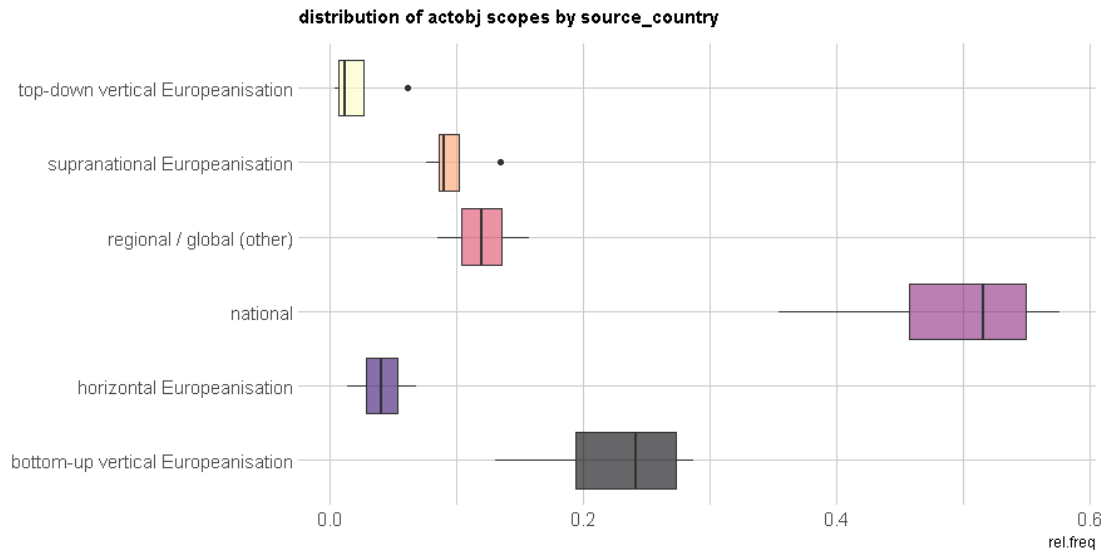
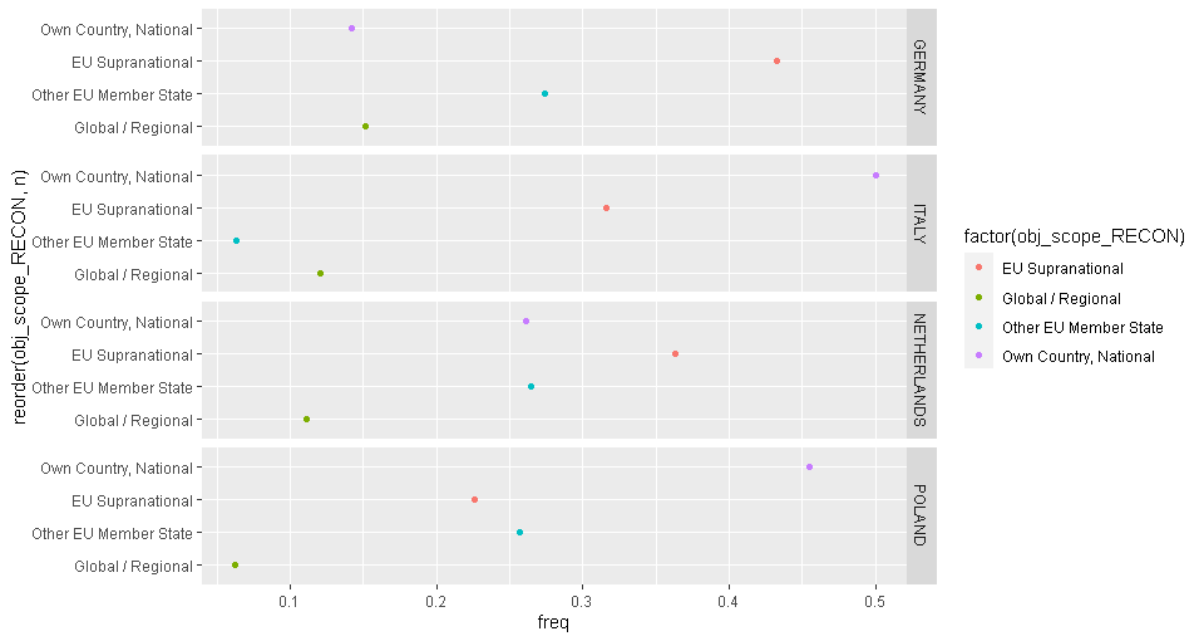


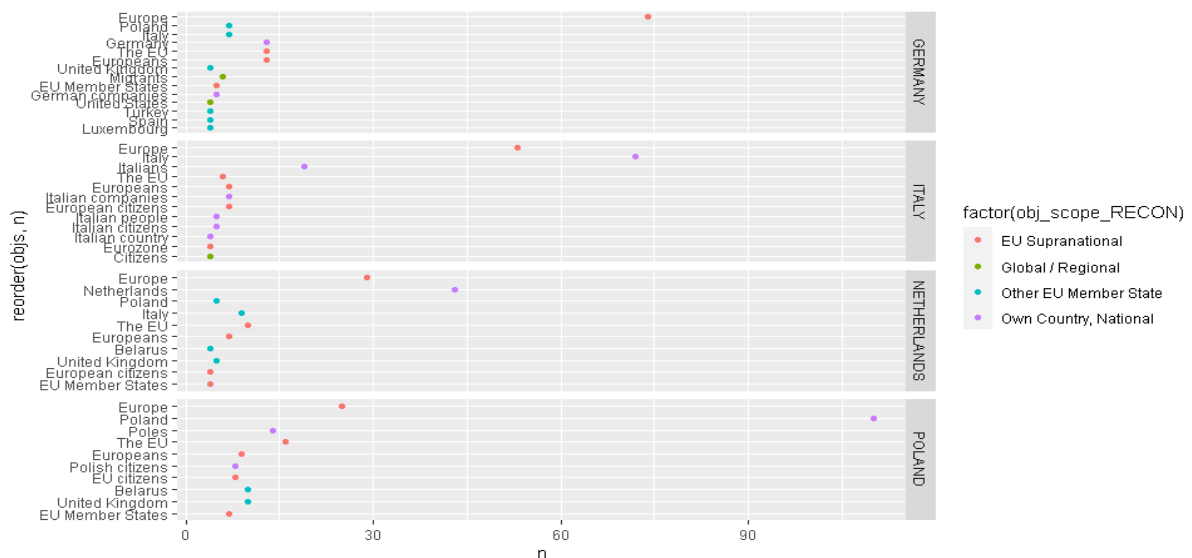
Figure 5.9: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by country



Main object

Examining the object in more detail, we can see from Figure 5.11 that in Germany, the main object was ‘Europe’ (n = 75). In the Netherlands, although the main object was ‘Netherlands’ (n = circa 45), EU supranational objects exceed this number when aggregated (‘Europe’, ‘The EU’, ‘Europeans’ etc.). In Poland, over 140 objects refer to ‘Poland’, ‘Poles’, and ‘Polish citizens’ whereas EU/European objects were not very visible (n <50). Although EU objects were slightly more salient in the Italian network (n = circa 70), objects referring to the Italian constituency were much more salient (n = 130)¹³. As the Figure 5.12 demonstrates, in regard to the object nationality, the ‘European Union’ was the most salient identity in the German (circa 135) and Dutch network (circa 90). In contrast, the nationality of the reporting paper was the most salient identity in the Polish (n = circa 190) and Italian network (n = 175). Figure 5.12 also clearly shows that the most contested identities in discourse are national (color-coded in purple) and supranational identities (color-coded in red). ‘Global’ and ‘other EU member state’ identities represent a negligible share of total claims. Table 5.6 gives a more detailed breakdown of the top 10 most prominent object nationalities. Regarding the dataset as a whole, as Fig 5.13 and Fig 5.14 demonstrate, the ‘European Union’ object is clearly the most frequently invoked constituency nationality (n > 400, circa 35%). Not surprisingly, ‘Italy’ and ‘Poland’ also record a relatively high number at over 200 claims (circa 15%) respectively. ‘Germany’ and ‘Netherlands’ registered an n of circa 70% (5%)¹⁴.

Figure 5.11: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of main objects by country



¹³ Table 5.5 gives a more detailed breakdown of the main objects invoked in claims-making.

¹⁴ Figure 5.15 reinforces the finding that EU supranational objects (text coloured in blue) are the most salient when the dataset is analysed as a whole.

Figure 5.12: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of main object nationalities by country

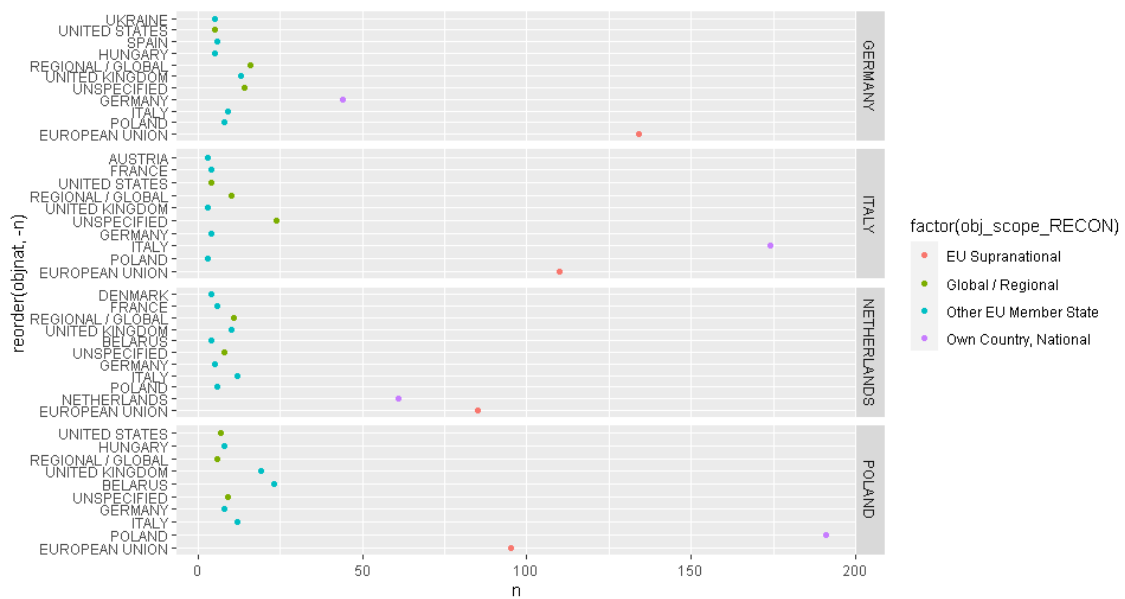


Figure 5.13: Dot plot illustrating the Top 20 most prevalent object nationalities

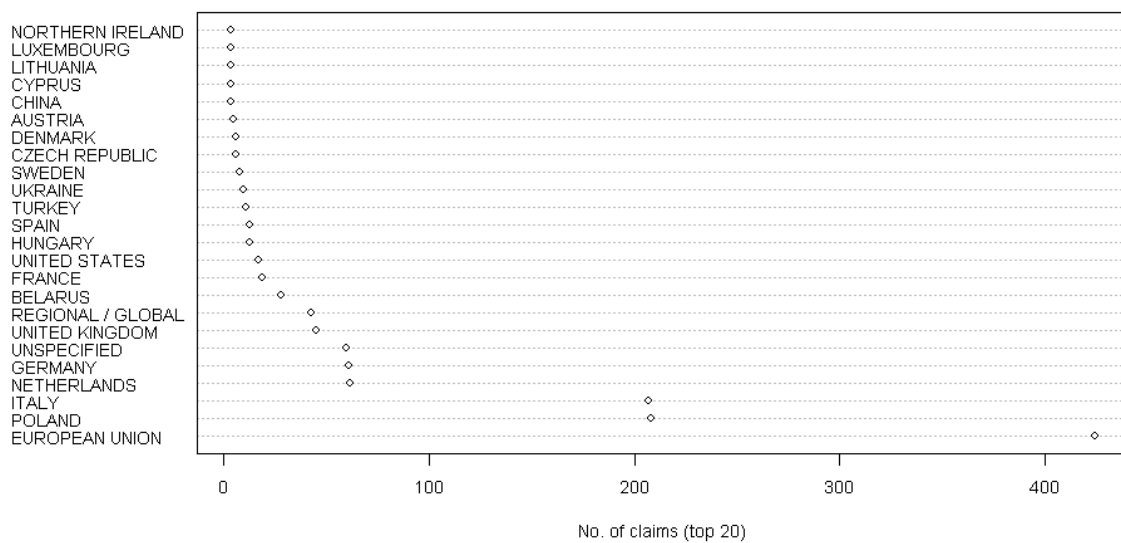


Figure 5.14: Dot plot illustrating the Top 20 most prevalent object nationalities

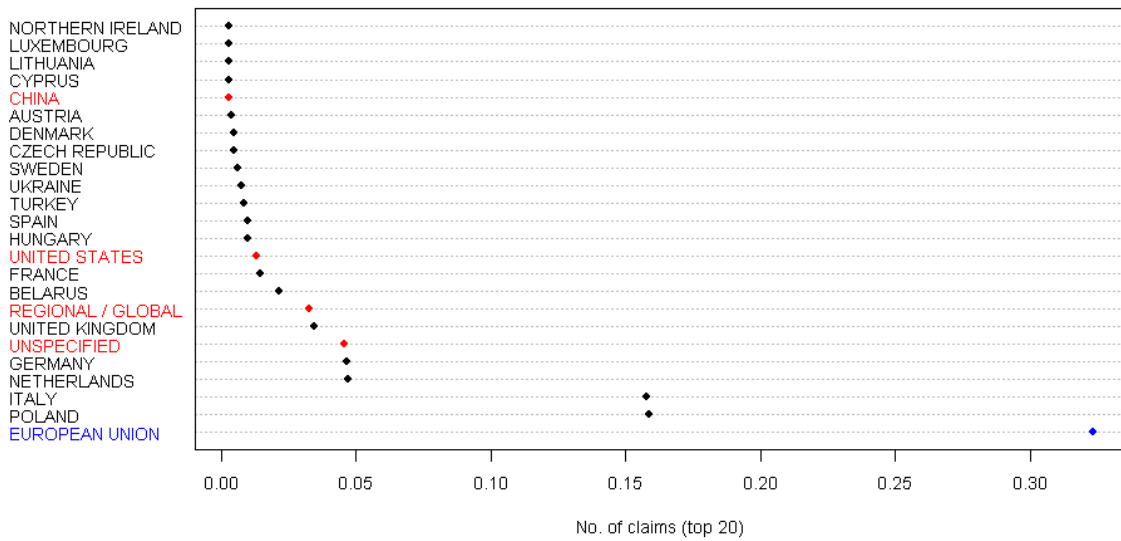
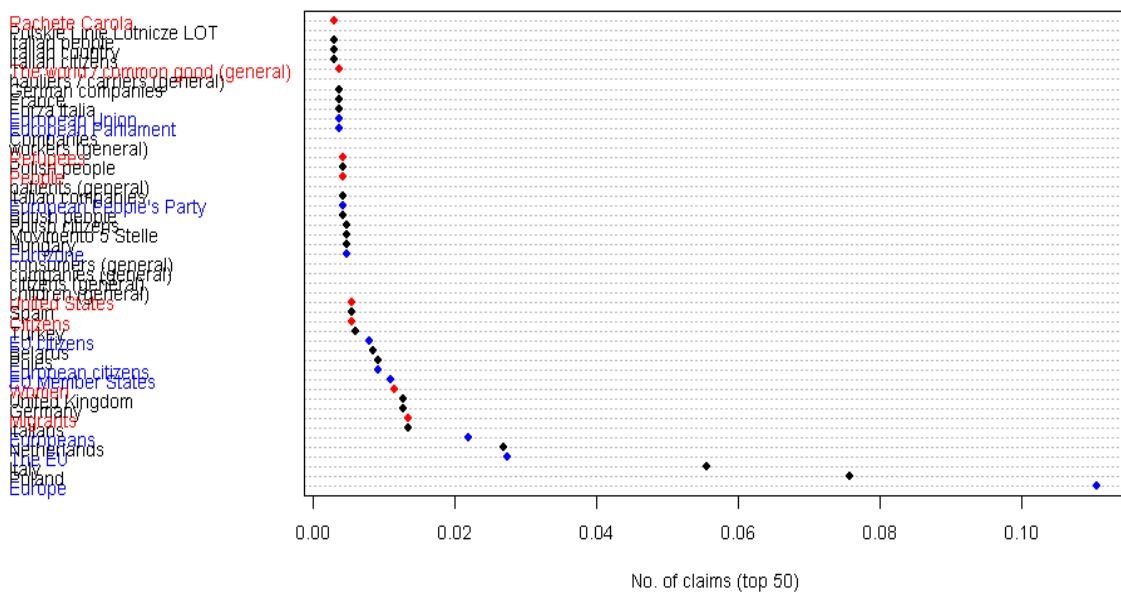


Figure 5.15: Dot plot of the Top 50 most prominent objects



Object type

Which types of objects were the most prominent in the dataset? Objects were most commonly invoked as polities in general (e.g. ‘The EU’, ‘France’, ‘UK’) rather than specific groups. In fact, of the 1312 representative claims, over half of them (56%) referred to polities (Table 5.7). This was the case in

every country examined. ‘Citizens/Taxpayers’ were a distant second place with a mean of 19% of representative claims. City/regional interests represented a slim share of total claims with a mean of 4% although one-tenth of representative claims in Italy referred to city/regional interests which is probably explained by Italy’s enduring strong local identities. Farmer/industrial interests and identities represented 2.5% of total claims although in the Netherlands it was double that figure (5%). Interestingly, Gender/LGBTQ group identities were almost three times (3.39% vis-à-vis the mean of 1.33%) more salient in the Polish network which is probably because identity politics is particularly resonant in debates about the EU as the Polish government has taken a controversial line against the rights of women’s and LGBTQ rights. In the German network, migrant and asylum seeker groups and constituencies represented 3.32% of representative claims which is over double the average of the overall sample (1.64%). In the Polish network, there was not a single claim invoking migrant group constituencies. In sum, European debates tend to rouse national and supranational identities which manifest as politics or citizens rather than sub-national/regional ones, and the identities of niche groups and sectoral interests are underrepresented in representative claims making.

Figure 5.16: Bar plot of relative frequency distribution of object types by period



Main actors

As far as representative claimants as concerned, in all four networks, the most prominent claimants were of the same nationality as the reporting country (see Table 5.10 for details). In descending order, in Italy, 34 of the top 50 claimants were Italian. In Germany, 27 of the top 50 claimants were German. In the Netherlands, 22 of the top-50 most prominent claimants were Dutch nationals, and in Poland, 19 of the top-50 most prominent claimants were Polish nationals. In all four networks, the governmental executives/ministries of their respective nations were clearly the most frequent representative claimants

(see Tables 5.11-5.14 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown). This domesticated picture is reinforced by Table 5.15 (see the Appendix for details) which tallies up the territorial scope of representative claimants. In other words, is the actor of the same nationality as that of the reporting newspaper (i.e. 'Own Country, National'), another EU member state, a third country, or the European Union? As Table 5.15 shows, over half of representative claimants (54%) hold the same nationality as that of the reporting newspaper. The clear outlier in this respect is Italy with almost three-quarter of all representative claimants holding Italian nationality (70%). Circa 27% of representative claimants hold the nationality of another EU member state. Again, Italy is the outlier with only 13%. An average of 13% of representative claimants were EU actors, and an average of 6% of representative claimants hold the nationality of a non-EU country. Tables 5.16 and 5.17 clearly show that Italy is the most domesticated as far as actor scopes are concerned, but all four networks show a strong ethnocentric bias in the reporting of claims. It seems that political actors that hold the same nationality of the reporting newspaper receive more publicity than non-national actors.

Table 5.10: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50)

<i>Most prominent representative claimants (top 50)</i>	n	IT	n	NL	n	PL	n
Süddeutsche Zeitung	22	Partito Democratico	28	NRC Handelsblad	15	Platforma Obywatelska	25
German Government	18	Italian Government	23	Dutch vox pop	11	Gazeta Wyborcza	22
Bundnis 90 - Die Grünen	10	Forza Italia	16	De Telegraaf	10	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	20
European Commission	10	Corriere della Sera	14	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	6	Polish PM	18
President of the EU Commission	9	Presidente del Consiglio	14	Dutch PM	5	President of the EU Commission	11
Bild	7	Movimento 5 Stelle	12	Ministerie van Financiën	5	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	11
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	7	Lega Nord	11	British PM	4	European Commission	8
Bundesministerium des Innern	5	European Commission	7	Christen-Democratisch Appel	4	US President	6
Christlich Soziale Union	5	President of the EU Commission	7	President of the EU Commission	4	Vice-President of European Commission	6
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	4	French Government	6	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	3	minister sprawiedliwości	5
Italian Government	4	President of the European Parliament	6	Partij voor de Vrijheid	3	Council of Europe	4
SeaWatch	4	ECB President	5	Presidente del Consiglio	3	EU Council	4
DGB	3	Fratelli d'Italia	5	Centraal Plan Bureau	2	EU High Representative	4
ECB President	3	La Nazione	5	Dansk Folkeparti	2	European People's Party	4
EU Commissioner for Competition	3	Presidente della repubblica	5	De Sociaal-Economische Raad	2	French Government	4
French Government	3	Italian vox pop	4	Democraten 66	2	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	3
Hungarian Government	3	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	4	ECB President	2	BYHelp	3
Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei	3	European People's Party	3	European Commission	2	Do Rzeczy	3
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	3	German Government	3	Financial Times	2	En Marche	3
Turkish Government	3	Ministero della Salute	3	French vox pop	2	Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów	3
UK Government	3	Ministero delle Finanze	3	German Government	2	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	3
US President	3	Ministero Esteri IT	3	InnoEnergy	2	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości	3
Alternative für Deutschland	2	Ministero Finanza Italia	3	Lega Nord	2	President of Turkey	3
Augsburg University	2	Politecnico Milano University	3	Ministère de l'Europe	2	Auswärtiges Amt	2
Austrian PM	2	Presidente della Regione Siciliana	3	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	2	Brexit negotiator	2
British PM	2	University of Bologna	3	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	2	British PM	2
Bundesverfassungsgericht	2	University of Verona	3	President of Belarus	2	Commerzbank	2
Christlich Demokratische Union	2	Viminale- Ministero Interno	3	Socialdemokraterne	2	Die Welt	2
Czech PM	2	Banca d'Italia	2	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	2	European External Action Service	2
Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung	2	Bocconi University	2	Swedish vox pop	2	European Medicines Agency	2
DIHK	2	Confcommercio	2	UK Conservative Party	2	Fakt	2
EU Council	2	European Parliament	2	UK Labour Party	2	Fundacja Odpowiedzialna Polityka	2
European People's Party	2	Export USA	2	University of Amsterdam	2	Goethe-Institut	2
German vox pop	2	Ferrera Maurizio	2	University of Groningen	2	Hungarian Government	2
Lega Nord	2	Fondazione Il Faro	2	VisNed	2	Koalicja Obywatelska	2
Mayor of Freising	2	Gilet jaunes	2	Wageningen University	2	Koalicja Sojuszu Lewicy Demokratycznej i Unii P	2
Ministère de l'Economie	2	Hungarian Government	2	Al-Azhar Institute	1	Magyarország igazságügy	2
Ost-Ausschuss	2	Maltese Government	2	Amsterdam Court of Appeal	1	Ministero della Salute	2
Presidente del Consiglio	2	Ministry of Finance of Austria	2	Austrian hospitals	1	Ministerstwo Klimatu	2
Presidente del Gobierno	2	Monti Mario	2	Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	1	Ministerstwo Skarbu Państwa	2
UK Conservative Party	2	Piu Europa	2	Badr Organisation	1	Polish vox pop	2
Academic	1	Popolari per l'Italia	2	Bijkerk Rein	1	Polityka	2
Adler	1	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	2	Bionext	1	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe	2
AHK Beijing	1	Reichlin Lucrezia	2	Blackrock	1	President of Belarus	2
Airbus	1	Sace-Simest	2	Bové José	1	President of Brazil	2
Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	1	US Embassy in Italy	2	Bovenkerk Frank	1	RMF FM	2
Auswärtiges Amt	1	Vice-President of European Commission	2	Brexit Party	1	Rządowej Agencji Rezerw Strategicznych	2
Avenir Suisse	1	ABI	1	Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives	1	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	2
Bayerischer Ministerpräsident	1	Accademia della Pace	1	Bundestagspräsident	1	Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija	2
BDA	1	Agenzia delle dogane e dei Monopoli	1	Carbon Disclosure Project	1	UK Conservative Party	2

Actor type

As far as the type of actor is concerned, the results reveal that the representative claims of government/executive actors receive the most coverage. As Table 5.18 shows, 37% of representative claimants were government/executive actors¹⁵. The Netherlands is the outlier in this regard with circa 10% less than the average (28%). In a distant second place is political parties with less than half the coverage of government/executive actors (17%). The media and journalists – despite not holding de jure political power – were prominent representative claim-makers and were almost as proactive as political parties in representative claims-making (12.13%). The media were particularly enterprising in the Netherlands with almost 16% of representative claimants belonging to the media. Italy is an outlier in this regard with only 7% of representative claimants belonging to the media. This shows that the media should be treated as political actors in their own right, and not mere neutral transmitters of information. In fourth and fifth place are ‘employers organisations and firms’ and ‘educational professionals and organisations’ which recorded a figure ranging between 4-5%, with little cross-country variability. Legislative actors and politicians compared to government were highly under-represented providing further support to the much publicised ‘deparliamentarisation’ thesis which argues that EU integration has contributed to the erosion of parliamentary control over the executive branch. In terms of discursive influence – which is an often overlooked but nevertheless integral form of political power – these results indicate that a similar dynamic is at play in the public sphere. The general public were largely overlooked as representative claimants (3%) although remarkably, in the Dutch network, over 8% of representative claimants were ‘the general public’. Indeed, the Dutch media were more inclined to ask the views of general publics than other countries.

Table 5.20: Distribution of representative claimants by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>freq. (%)</i>
<i>government/executive</i>	501	38.19
<i>political parties</i>	227	17.30
<i>media and journalists</i>	156	11.89
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	67	5.11
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	51	3.89

¹⁵ See also Table 5.19 and 5.20 in the Appendix for an *n* breakdown by actor type according to country (5.19) and by actor type alone (5.20).

<i>legislative</i>	38	2.90
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	35	2.67
<i>the general public</i>	32	2.44
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	25	1.91
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	23	1.75
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	23	1.75
<i>politicians</i>	22	1.68
<i>central banks</i>	19	1.45
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	14	1.07
<i>judiciary</i>	13	0.99
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	9	0.69
<i>unions and employees</i>	9	0.69
<i>whole polities</i>	9	0.69
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	8	0.61
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	8	0.61
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	7	0.53
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	5	0.38
<i>military</i>	4	0.30
<i>activists and protestors</i>	3	0.23
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	2	0.15
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	1	0.08
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	1	0.08

Regarding actor type and the territorial scope, as I mentioned earlier, government/executive actors were the most assertive representative claim-makers, and this is the case for every discursive dimension. As the Table 5.21 demonstrates, concerning bottom-up vertical Europeanisation, in terms of absolute frequency, government actors topped the bill at 30% of claims (see also Table 5.23). This is followed by media and journalists (18%) and political parties (17%). In a distant fourth and fifth position are employers and educational organisations at 8% respectively. However, if scientific and educational organisations become one group, that figure increases to 11%. However, in terms of relative frequencies (Table 5.23), the results tell a different story (see Fig.5.17 for an illustration and Table 5.22 for a detailed

breakdown of results). Interestingly, the top-10 most prominent representative claimants in relation to the total number of claims made is composed of non-political actors in the formal sense. In descending order are educational professionals and organisations (45%), economists and financial experts (39%), employers organisations and firms (34%), unions and employees (33%), media and journalists (33%), and civil society organisations and groups (29%). In contrast, de jure political actors such as legislative (18%), politicians and political parties (21%), government/executive (17%) and other state executive agencies (4%) fall below the mean (27%). This suggests that a political logic might be at play. Concerning horizontal Europeanisation (Table 5.24), media and journalists top the bill at 35%. This is closely followed by government/executive actors (32%) and in distant third place are political parties (9%). Other state executive agencies and whole polities each make up 5% of claims respectively. We cannot infer a great deal from the relative frequency values as only 7% (n = 57) of total claims were of the horizontal variant.

Table 5.22: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by claimant type

act_type	bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	horizontal Europeanisation	national	regional / global (other)	supranational Europeanisation	top-down vertical Europeanisation
activists and protestors	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
central banks	5%	0%	21%	11%	63%	0%
churches and religious organisations and groups	20%	0%	20%	60%	0%	0%
civil society organisations and groups	29%	0%	57%	14%	0%	0%
economists and financial experts	39%	9%	30%	22%	0%	0%
educational professionals and organisations	45%	2%	35%	18%	0%	0%
employers organisations and firms	34%	0%	49%	16%	0%	0%
environmental organisations and groups	13%	13%	25%	38%	0%	13%
farmers and agricultural organisations	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
former states(wo)men	21%	7%	64%	7%	0%	0%
government/executive	17%	4%	48%	9%	18%	5%
judiciary	23%	0%	38%	15%	8%	15%
legislative	18%	0%	24%	21%	32%	5%
media and journalists	33%	13%	47%	6%	1%	1%
military	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%	0%
other civil society organisations and groups	22%	0%	22%	44%	11%	0%
other professional organisations and groups	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
other scientific and research professionals and institutions	23%	6%	54%	11%	6%	0%
other state executive agencies	4%	12%	60%	0%	20%	4%
police and internal security agencies	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
political parties	21%	2%	67%	8%	1%	0%
politicians	14%	0%	68%	18%	0%	0%
solidarity and human rights organisations	4%	0%	35%	61%	0%	0%
students, pupils, and their parents	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
the general public	25%	0%	69%	6%	0%	0%
unions and employees	33%	0%	33%	22%	0%	11%
whole polities	0%	33%	11%	22%	33%	0%
μ	16%	7%	42%	25%	7%	2%

In respect of national object scopes (Table 5.25), government/executive actors made the most claims (37%, n = 241). Political parties trailed by 14% at 23% (n = 152) and 11% of national-scope representative claims came from media and journalists and 5% came from employers organisations and firms. 3% of representative claims of a national-scope derived from the general public, scientific and research institutions, and educational organisations respectively. When the values are weighted, in descending order, activists and protestors top the bill (100%), followed by farmers and agricultural organisations (75%), the general public (69%), politicians (68%), political parties (67%), former states(wo)men (64%), other state executive agencies (60%), and civil society organisations and groups (57%). These types of actors all score higher than the mean (54%). Actor types that score around the average for actor type are: other scientific and research professionals and institutions (54%), other

professional organisations and groups (50%), employers organisations and firms (49%), government/executive (48%) and media and journalists (47%). Formal civil society actors (e.g. educational organisations, human rights organisations, environmental organisations etc.), the judiciary, central banks, and church and religious organisations seldom invoke national-scope representative claims (see Table 5.25 for a detailed breakdown). In sum, these results are roughly in accordance with expectations: broadly speaking, actors fulfilling a *de jure* political role tend to invoke national scopes more than other types of actors, and the general public invoke national objects more relative to elite actors (e.g. central banks, economists etc.), and political parties appeal to the national interest more relative to incumbents.

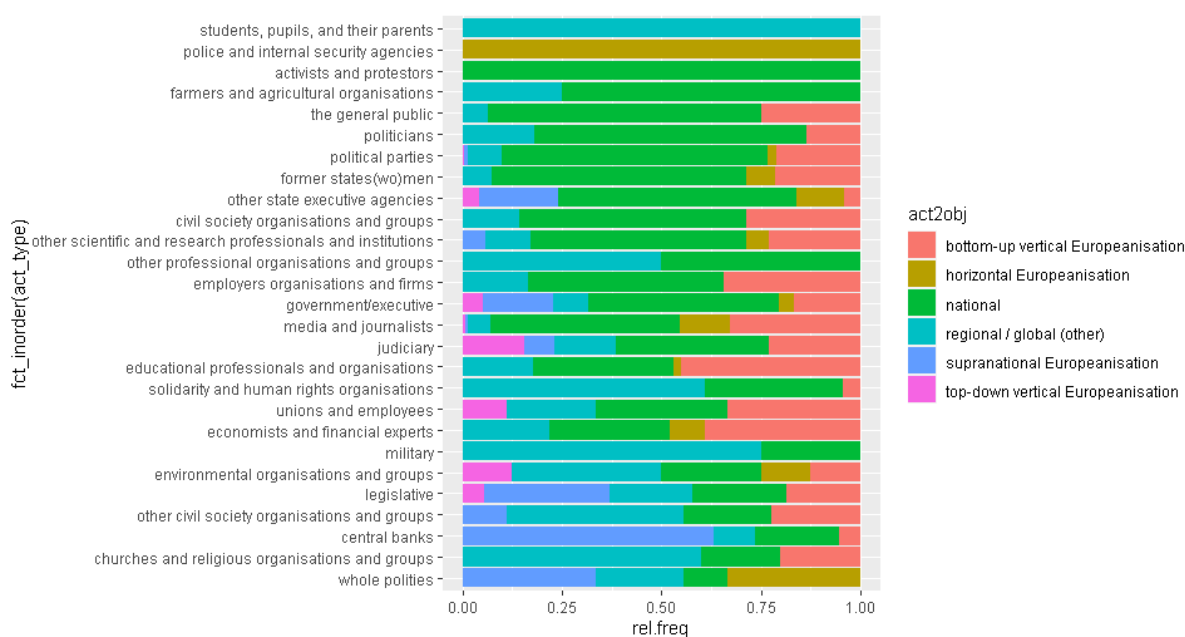
As far as regional/global discursive scopes are concerned (Table 5.26), government/executive actors contributed 28% of all representative claims. In a distant second place were political parties with less than half that of government/executive actors, at 12%, closely followed by solidarity and human rights organisations, at 9%, employers organisations and firms, at 7%, and the media and educational professionals at 6% respectively. This is not surprising given these types of actors typically entail international mobility and job roles with an interest in what happens globally (e.g. academics and human rights organisations) and whose interests are embedded in global networks (e.g. business). When the values are weighted, we see that the ‘military’ top the bill with 75% of their claims invoking objects of a global scope, followed by solidarity and human rights organisations (61%), churches and religious organisations and groups (60%), other civil society organisations and groups (44%), environmental organisations (38%), economists and financial experts (22%) and legislative actors (21%) scoring above the mean (19%)¹⁶. It is interesting to note that generally speaking, formal civil society organisations (e.g. environmental, human rights organisations) invoke objects of a global scope more than the mean (19%). Interestingly, political actors operating in a formal political capacity invoked objects of a global scope very few times relative to the number of claims they made. Only 9% of representative claims from government/executive actors invoked objects of a global scope, and the figure is lower for political parties (8%) and the media (6%). We can broadly speaking reach the conclusion that formal civil society actors, academics, and business tend to call upon global constituencies much more than *de jure* political actors.

In respect of supranational Europeanisation (Table 5.27), we cannot read too much into the data as the sample is rather limited ($n = 127$). As with other discursive dimensions, government/executive actors made the most claims of a supranational scope ($n = 88$, i.e. 68%). In joint second place were legislative and central bank actors ($n=12$, i.e. 9%) followed by other state executive agencies ($n = 5$, i.e. 4%) and whole polities ($n = 3$, i.e. 2%). When the values were weighted, central banks came out on top, representing 63%, followed by whole polities with one-third of their claims of a supranational variant

¹⁶ Actor types with an N below 3 were omitted from the list.

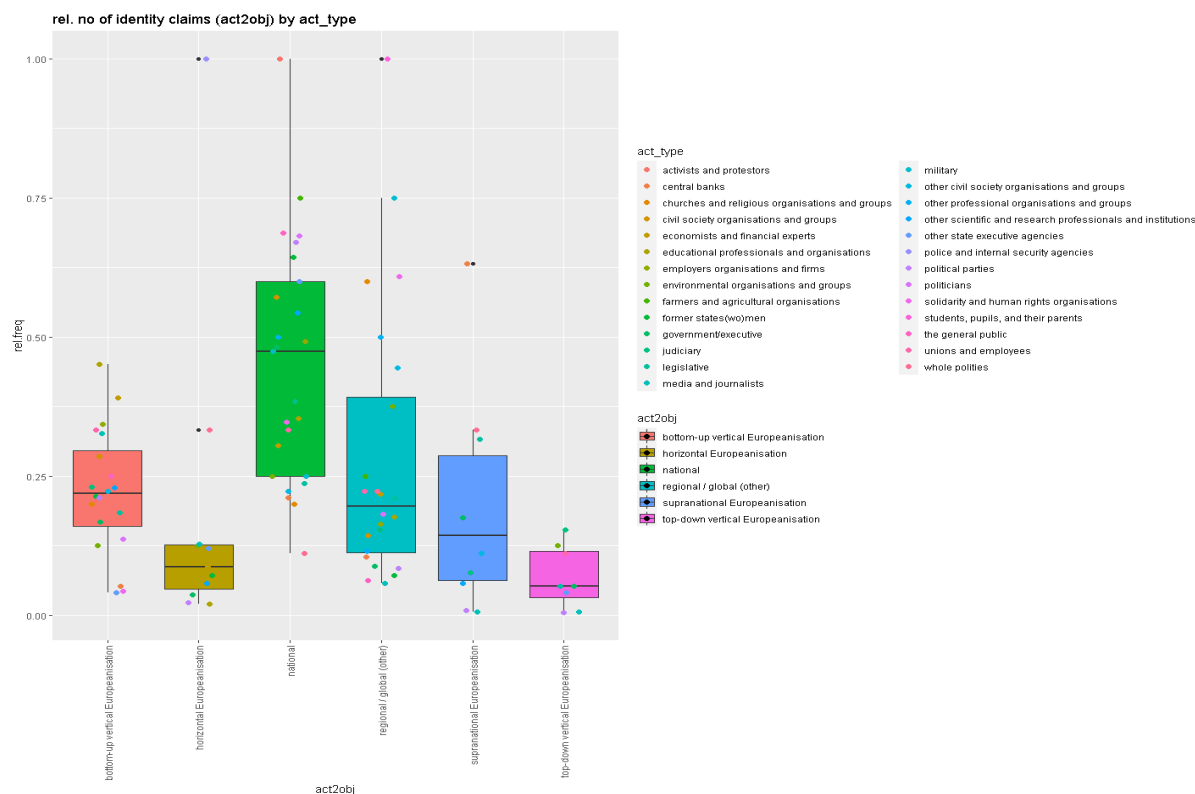
(33%) compared to legislative actors at 32%, state executive agencies at 20%, and government/executive actors at 18%. The main takeaway from this analysis is that central banks, whole polities, and legislative actors invoke the EU constituency more much more compared to other types of actors¹⁷. Almost three-quarter of all top-down vertical claims came from government/executive actors (Table 5.28). The legislature and judiciary constituted 6% of top-down claims each. And the media, political parties, other state executive agencies, unions and employees, and environmental organisations made up 3% each. As there were very few claims of the top-down vertical variant (n = 35 i.e. 2%) it would not be particularly informative to discuss the weighted values. In terms of the distribution by actor type, Figure 5.18 shows there is a wide distribution on every discursive dimension particularly for national and regional/global scopes. The wide distribution provides strong evidence that territorial discursive scopes are a function of actor type. Lastly, Fig. 5.19 illustrates the distribution by actor type across country. Fig. 5.19 clearly shows a varied distribution across all four countries. In all countries save for Germany, the median is highest in the national scope category. In Germany, the bottom-up vertical discursive variant records the highest median value.

Figure 5.17: Bar plot of the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by claimant type



¹⁷ Most of claims from the central bank were EU-level actors which probably explains why the figure was so high.

Figure 5.18: Boxplot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by actor type



Partisanship

As Table 5.30 shows, a political affiliation could be assigned to less than half the sample of representative claims (47%)¹⁸. Socialist, radical TAN, Christian-democratic, conservative and liberal party families topped the bill. When NA values are excluded, socialist party families represent 23% of claimants, radical TAN represent 22%, Christian-democratic, 16%, conservative, 15%, and liberal, 11% (. The results are not particularly surprising as the share of claims broadly represent the party families that are in government or close to the reins of power. Christian-democratic parties hold considerable power in Germany, a radical TAN party, namely Prawo i Sprawiedliwość are the incumbents in Poland, and the Netherlands is ruled by a liberal-conservative coalition. The relatively high number of claims belonging to ‘no family’ mainly come from the Italian sample (74%) which can be explained by the fact that Movimento Cinque Stelle were in government around the time when the sample was collected (see Table 5.32 for details). The lion share of claimants ascribed the ‘socialist’ category derive from Italy (59%, see Table 5.32 for details). This is because Partito Democratico were classified as such in

¹⁸ Claimants who did not belong to a political party or whose political affiliation could not be inferred, were ascribed the NA value. 53% of claims were of this sort.

accordance with the taxonomy of the Chapel Hill Survey. As I mentioned earlier, most ‘radical TAN’ claimants were found in the Polish public sphere (65%, see Table 5.32 for details). Almost half of all ‘Christian-democratic’ claimants came from Germany (44%) although Poland also figures prominently (29%, see Table 5.32 for details). As the table below shows, almost all ‘green’ claimants came from the German sample (see Table 5.32 for details). The table below gives a detailed breakdown of absolute and relative frequencies.

Concerning bottom-up vertical scopes according to political orientation, as Table 5.34 below demonstrates, claimants without a clearly identifiable political leaning (i.e. NA values) represent over half of all claims of this sort (51.4%). This is followed by claimants ascribed as ‘socialist’ (14%), ‘Christian-democratic’ (13%) and ‘liberal’ (9%). These patterns mainly hold across all four countries although there are some notable differences. For example, in Poland, ‘radical TAN’ parties comprise the second largest shared of bottom-up claims, at 16%. And in Italy, claimants categorised as ‘conservative’ represent one-tenth of the total (9%) comprising the third largest share of bottom-up claims (Table 5.37). When the values are weighted (Table 5.35), ‘liberal’ parties come out in front (40%) followed by ‘christian democrats’ (35%), ‘greens’ (33%) and ‘socialists’ (29%)¹⁹. In respect of horizontal Europeanisation, again, we find that over one-half of all claims (58%) of this sort came from claimants without a clearly identifiable political affiliation (i.e. NA values), followed by actors attributed the ‘radical TAN’ (11%) and ‘Christian-democratic’ (9%) partisanship category (Table 5.34). As the fig. below shows, there is an insufficient amount of data to compare across countries (N = 57). In Poland, only 29 claims invoke objects of a horizontal sort, in Germany, the number is 15, in Netherlands, 8, and in Italy, 5 (Table 5.36). I have not weighted the values given the low N value (N = 57). From these results, we may that very few claimants with a political affiliation chose to invoke horizontal forms of Europeanisation which indicative of a lack of solidarity on the part of political actors. Indeed, the weighted scores show that less than 10% of political actors’ claims invoked horizontal forms of Europeanisation, and this was the case across all party families (see Table 5.34 and Fig.5.21 for details)²⁰.

In respect of claims of a national scope, again, ‘NA values’ feature prominently in terms of the absolute number of claims (40.5%) followed by ‘radical TAN’ (17.3%), ‘socialist’ (12.1%), ‘conservative’ (9.2%), ‘christian-democratic’ (7.5%), ‘no family’ (6.9%) and ‘liberal’ (4.4%) categories (Table 5.34). Virtually no claims of this sort were made by ‘regionalist’, ‘green’, ‘agrarian/centre’ and ‘radical left’ parties (all under 1%). This pattern consistently holds across all four countries but there are some notable differences (Table 5.38). In the German sample, claimants of a radical TAN ascription are

¹⁹ Claimants of the ‘radical left’ were omitted from the results write-up as the N number is too small.

²⁰ This is not surprising as political actors have few incentives to tailor their claims to pitch to constituencies to whom they do not formally represent. As I discussed in my theoretical framework, POS’s are still embedded in national structures. Why would Matteo Salvini, for example, pitch to Spanish voters in an upcoming European election when the success of Lega in the polls hinges on their popularity among Italian voters?

minimal (8.2%) compared to other sample countries (30.6% in Poland). This result is, however, unsurprising as there is only one party, namely AfD which would be classified as a radical TAN party, and in Germany, the AfD is a largely peripheral party compared to PiS which is the ruling party in Poland. A similar result was found in the Italian sample with ‘radical TAN’ claimants comprising only 8% of total claims of a national scope (Table 5.38). In Italy, after ‘NA values’ (32.4%), ‘socialist’ (25%), ‘no family’ (18.6%) and ‘conservative’ (10.6%) categories comprised the most national claims. The Dutch sample is similar to the German one although liberal parties figure more prominently in the former (Table 5.38). In the Polish network, most claims of a national scope were iterated by claimants not belonging to any party family (i.e. NA values, at 41%) followed by radical TAN parties (31%, see Table 5.38 for details). When the percentage values are weighted (Table 5.35), remarkably, over fourth-fifth of national claims iterated by political actors without a recognisable political affiliation (i.e. ‘no family’) were of a national scope (84.9%)²¹ followed closely by ‘radical TAN’ (83.1%, $n = 113/136$)²², ‘conservative’ (65.9%), ‘socialist’ (54.9%), ‘Christian-democratic’ (48%), ‘liberal’ (46%), ‘NA values’ (38.5%), and lastly ‘greens’ (22%). In sum, we can broadly assert that parties on the right of the political spectrum made more claims than their left wing counterparts, and claimants without a *de jure* political position (i.e. ‘NA values’, e.g. economists) made far fewer claims containing an identarian component relative to political actors. We also find this dynamic in respect of other discursive dimensions, particularly horizontal and bottom-up vertical Europeanisation (see Table 5.34 for an overview). These results lend tentative support to the hypothesis that an actor’s institutional location, role expectations, and ideological standing may affect how they deictically position themselves in relation to the EU (a la Medrano, 2003).

Regarding regional/global discursive scopes, again, ‘NA values’ lead the pack in terms of the absolute number of claims ($n = 102$, 65.4%, see Table 5.34 for details). Very few claims were made by other political families. ‘Socialist’ denominations comprised 9% of claims of this sort followed by ‘Christian-democrats’ at 7.7%. A negligible share of claims were made by ‘radical TAN’, ‘no family’, ‘regionalist’, ‘agrarian/centre’ and ‘radical left’ denominations. These patterns held consistently across all four countries (see Table 5.41 for details). That said, there were some notable differences. In the Dutch and Polish sample, 73% and 86% of representative claims of a global scope were made by actors without a readily identifiable political orientation²³. In contrast, in Germany and Italy, when NA values are excluded, the share of claims of this sort are more equally distributed. There is a prominent role of the ‘greens’ in the German sample (14.29%, see Table 5.41 for a detailed breakdown). There were only

²¹ Although this is only anecdotal evidence, I recall from my analysis that *M5S* made several claims of a national scope, so this probably explains the high percentage.

²² I omitted ‘agrarian/centre’, ‘radical left’, and ‘regionalist’ categories from my analysis as the N number is too small. You may, however, refer to the table for your own reference.

²³ In most cases, actors of the ‘NA value’ denomination are actor types without a formal political function (e.g. employers organisations and firms).

49 claims of this sort in the German sample, whereas in Italy, the figure was 45, in Poland, 36, and in Netherlands, a mere 26. When the values are weighted, the ‘greens’ came out on top (39%) followed by ‘NA values’ (14.8%) and ‘christian democrats’ (11.8%)²⁴. We can broadly conclude that ‘greens’, non-political actors, and ‘christian-democrats’ made the most claims of this sort²⁵. The caveat of these relative frequency values is that the N value is low so we cannot read too much into these results (Table 5.41). Concerning supranational and top-down Europeanisation, virtually all claims derived from actors without a political function (i.e. NA values, see Table 5.34 for details). This is largely inevitable as top-down claims must contain a supranational component. These discursive forms of Europeanisation represent a negligible share of total representative claims. We thus cannot infer much from the dataset. As the bar plot below elucidates, claims of a national scope were the most frequently invoked and this was found in all four cases studied (Fig.5.20)²⁶. This is the case in terms of absolute (Fig.5.20) and relative frequency values (see Fig.5.22).

Fig.5.23 shows a varied distribution for national and bottom-up vertical claims in particular. Regarding the former, values range from circa 20-100% claims. In respect of the latter, values range between 10-40%. Concerning the remaining discursive dimensions, the distribution is more narrow which is not surprising as the N number is much lower. We must, however, be mindful of the fact that the sample is very small particularly for ‘agrarian/center’ and ‘radical left’ political denominations. The box plot below highlights two outliers scoring %s exceeding the median, namely, the ‘greens’ in the regional/global discursive scopes category (38.9%) and the ‘regionalist’ denominations in the horizontal Europeanisation category (37.5%, see Fig.5.23 for details). However, due to the limited number of cases, we cannot infer too much from these standout cases. Comparing across newspapers (Fig. 5.24), the first thing to note is that top-down vertical claims are non-existent in all but the two ‘quality’ newspaper formats—Gazeta Wyborcza and Sueddeutsche Zeitung. Supranational claims are present in only four newspapers, three of which are ‘quality’ newspaper formats—Corriere della Sera, Gazeta Wyborcza, Sueddeutsche Zeitung. Claims of a regional/global scope are present in all newspapers save for the tabloid newspaper—Fakt. In all newspapers, national claims feature most prominently, particularly in the three tabloid newspapers—Bild (80%), de Telegraaf (90%), and Fakt (78%). The regional/tabloid newspaper, La Nazione is the exception to the rule that tabloid newspapers are more national in scope (58%). In fact, the median is higher in NRC Handelsblad (75%) and Gazeta Wyborcza (65%). Horizontal claims are present in all but two tabloid newspapers—Bild and Fakt. Bottom-up vertical claims are present in all newspapers, consistently hovering around the 20-30% mark (see Fig.

²⁴ I omitted ‘agrarian/centre’ from my analysis as the N number is too small. You may, however, refer to the table for your own reference.

²⁵ This is broadly in line with expectations as non-political affiliated actors particularly in the context of EU affairs may be more transnational in outlook. For example, business directors, economists, and central banks tend to be apolitical and have a more transnational orientation. And green parties, although they do fulfil a political function, focus mainly on global issues such as the environmental and climate change.

²⁶ ‘NA values’ were omitted from the bar plot to foster easier comparison across discursive dimensions.

5.24 for details). Across countries, we see a similar pattern. In Italy, no top-down vertical claims were iterated (Fig. 5.25). In the Dutch sample, no top-down vertical nor supranational Europeanised claims were made. In both box plots, there is a varied distribution which lends support to the thesis that patterns of discourse are a function of endogenous factors such as an actor’s ideological standing (see Fig.5.23-5.25 in the Appendix for details).

Figure 5.20: Bar plot of absolute frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

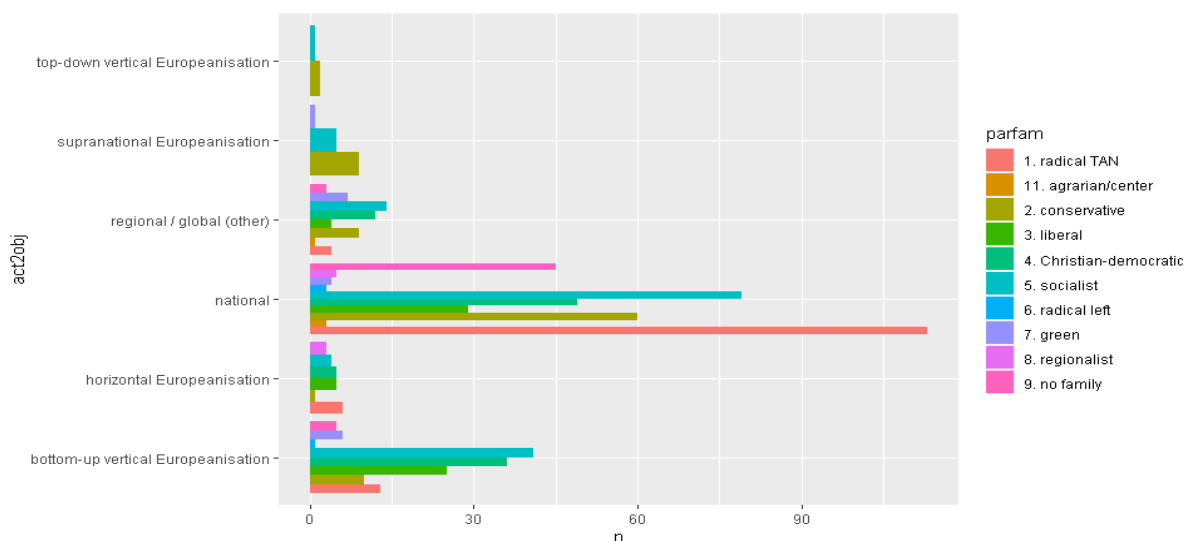


Figure 5.21: Bar plot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

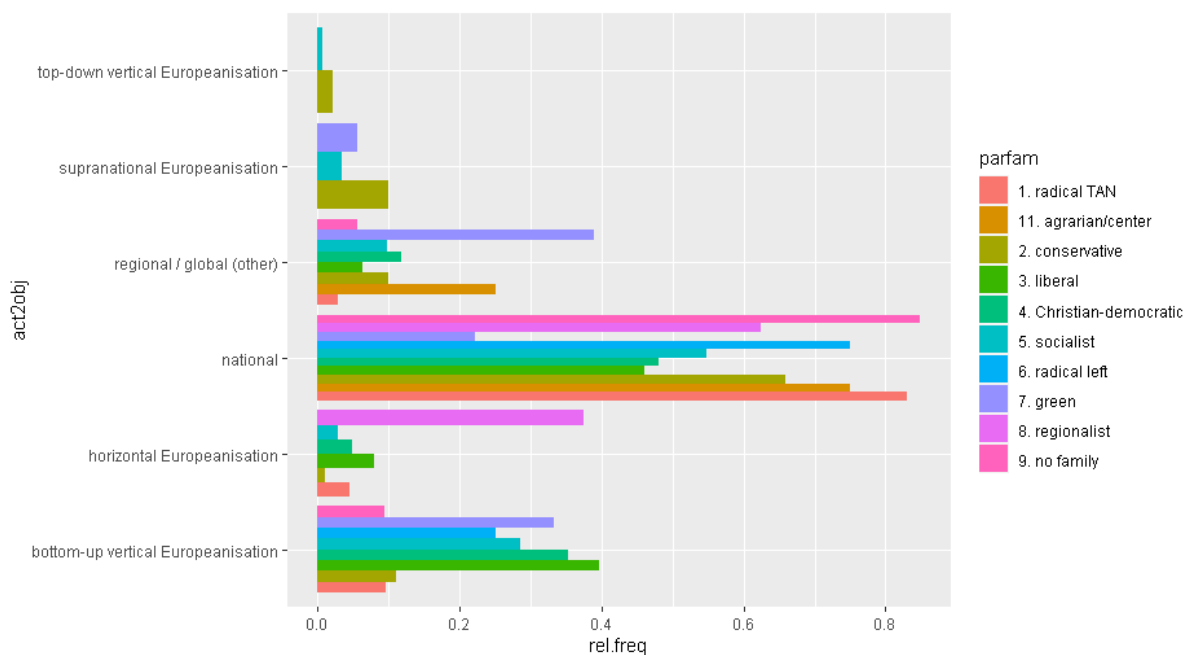


Figure 5.22: Bar plot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

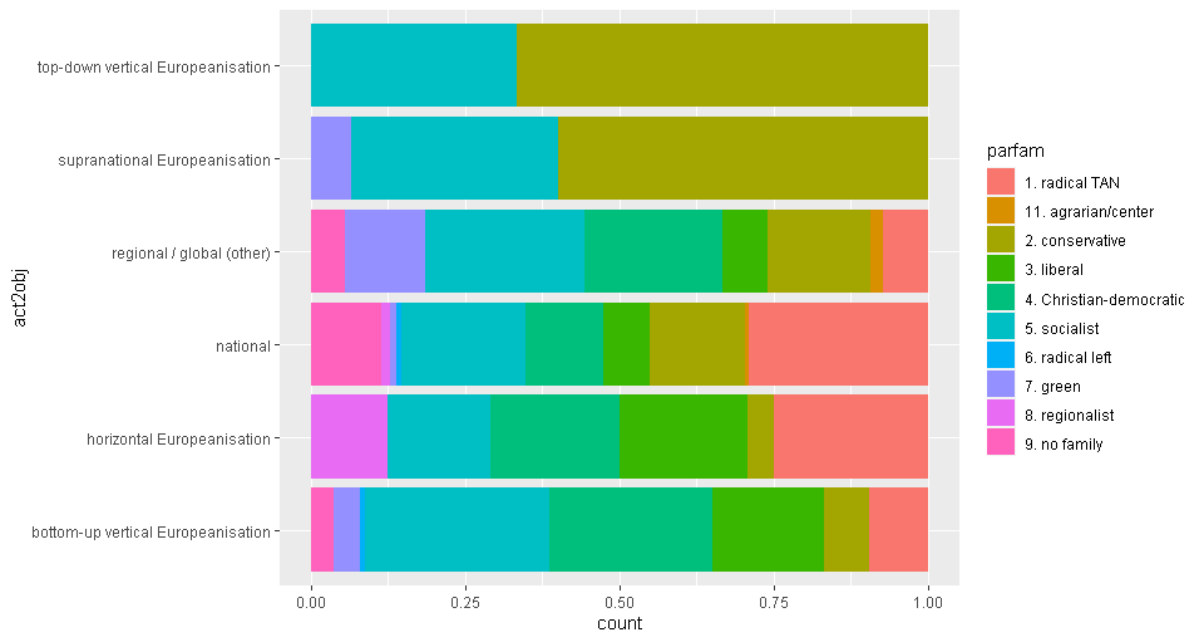
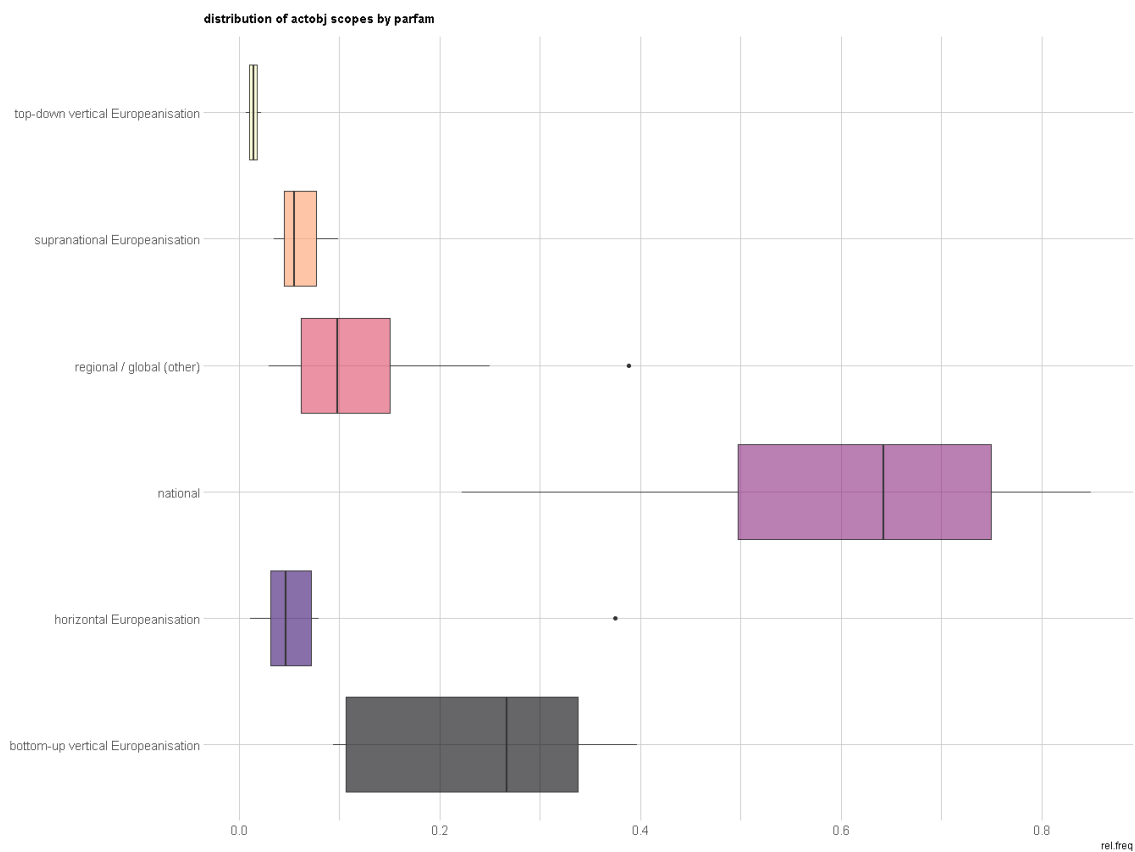


Figure 5.23: Boxplot illustrating the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by party family



Newspaper

This section aims to shed light on the question to what extent media logics might be influencing patterns of discourse. To this end, I opted for the RECONNECT handbook (de Wilde & Gora, 2019) taxonomy which is better equipped for gaging the extent of a public spheres domestication in terms of media reporting. My initial verdict is that there appears to be strong evidence of an underlying media logic. Not only are there strong across-country variations but differences across-newspaper formats which I discuss in the next section. As far as the overall number of representative claims are concerned, as expected, ‘quality’ newspapers top the bill. As past research has consistently shown, quality format newspapers tend to be more international in terms of content. By the same token, tabloid newspapers concentrate more on local and national news content. It is, thus, little surprise that all four ‘quality’ newspapers made more claims relative to their ‘tabloid’ counterparts. In fact, 80% of all representative claims were found in ‘quality’ newspapers (Table 5.42). Two Polish newspapers scored the highest and lowest in this respect, with *Gazeta Wyborcza* comprising the most claims (31%) and *Fakt*, the least (1%). Remarkably, the same is true in the German sample, with *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in second place (22%) and *Bild* (2%) in penultimate position. In the Italian sample, *Corriere della Sera* comes in third place (17%) and *La Nazione* takes fifth place (10%). In the Dutch sample, we found a more balanced distribution across quality and tabloid newspaper formats, with *NRC Handelsblad* comprising 11% of total claims and *De Telegraaf*, 7% (Table 5.42 for details). Concerning object scopes, as the table below shows, most ‘EU supranational’ representative claims were found in the four quality newspapers, in descending order: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (128) followed by *Gazeta Wyborcza* (90), *Corriere della Sera* (72), and *NRC Handelsblad* (62). All tabloid newspapers scored under 40 claims with *La Nazione* comprising 38 claims, *de Telegraaf*, 23, and *Bild* and *Fakt* with 6 and 5 claims respectively (see Table 5.43). In terms of weighted values, three quality newspapers comprise the top three—namely *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (45%), *NRC Handelsblad* (43%), *Corriere della Sera* (33%, see Table 5.44 for details). All four tabloid newspapers fall below the mean value (31%) with *La Nazione* at 29%, *Fakt* scoring 28%, *de Telegraaf*, 25 %, and *Bild*, 23% (see Table 5.44 for details). Interestingly, in the Polish newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza* invoked the fewest objects of an ‘EU supranational’ scope as a proportion of the total number of claims found in the newspaper, at only 23%. In total, 424 representative (31%) claims invoked the EU constituency (see Table 5.43-44 for a detailed breakdown).

Regarding objects of a regional/global scope, in terms of absolute numbers, again, all four quality newspapers made the most claims of this sort, in descending order: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (44) followed by *Corriere della Sera* (29), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (26), at *NRC Handelsblad* (19, see Table 5.43 for a detailed breakdown). In terms of weighted values (Table 5.44), the top 3 comprise three quality newspapers—*Süddeutsche Zeitung* (15%) followed by *Corriere della Sera* and *NRC Handelsblad* (13% each). Only one tabloid newspaper, namely *Bild* (12%), scored higher than the mean (10%). Two

tabloids comprise the bottom three— namely Fakt (0%), De Telegraaf (8%), and La Nazione (10%). Interestingly, as with EU supranational scopes, *Gazeta Wyborcza* scores one of the lowest values (6%) which is 4% lower than the mean (10%). Remarkably, no claims of this sort were found in Fakt (see Table 5.44). In total, only 141 claims (11%) of this sort were found in the eight newspapers, which is the lowest share of all four object scopes (see Table 5.43-44 for a detailed breakdown).

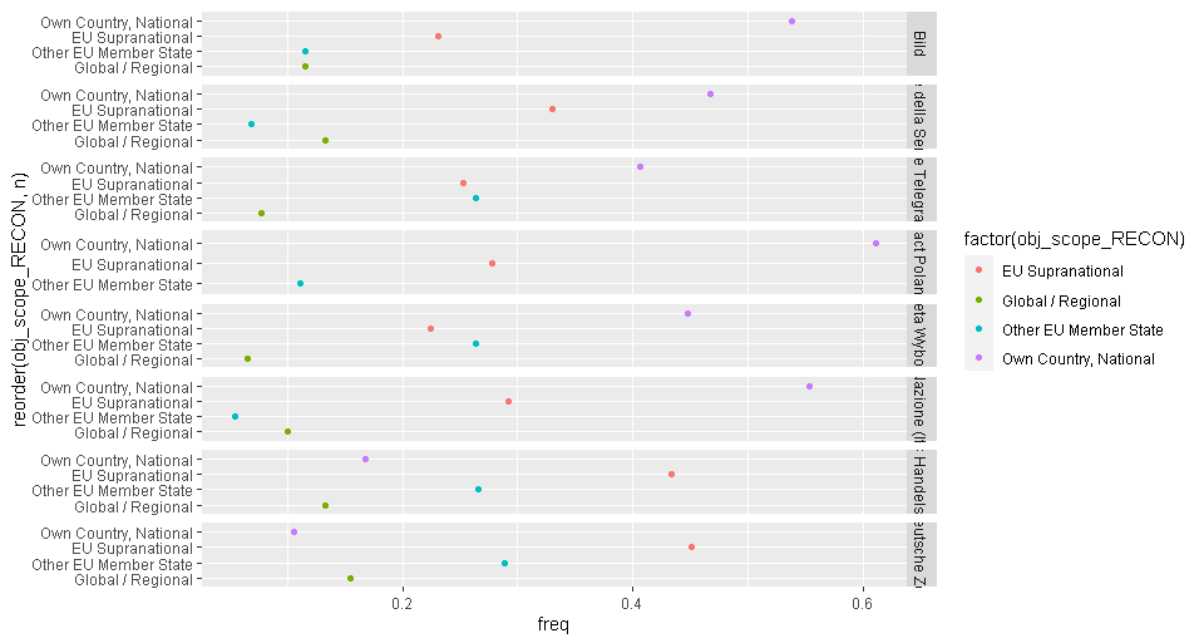
In respect of objects referring to other EU member states, three quality newspapers, namely *Gazeta Wyborcza* (106), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (82) and *NRC Handelsblad* (38) comprise the most claims (Table 5.43). All four tabloid newspapers score below the mean (35) in descending order: *De Telegraaf* (24), *La Nazione* (7), *Bild* (3), and *Fakt* (2). One quality newspaper, namely *Corriere della Sera* (15) scored below the mean (Table 5.43). In total, only 277 claims (17%, see Table 5.44) of this sort were found in the eight newspapers, which is the second lowest share of all four object scopes (Table 5.43). When values are weighted (Table 5.44), three quality newspapers lead the line, with *Süddeutsche Zeitung* scoring the highest (29%) followed by *NRC Handelsblad* (27%), and *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *De Telegraaf* with 26% each, respectively. Three tabloid newspapers score below the mean (18%), in descending order: *Bild* (12%), *Fakt* (11%) and lastly *La Nazione* (5%). Which leaves one quality newspaper scoring below the mean, namely, *Corriere della Sera* (7%) and one tabloid newspaper scoring above, namely, *De Telegraaf* (26%, see Table 5.44 for details). Again, broadly speaking, claims of this type, figure more prominently both absolute and relative terms vis-à-vis tabloid newspapers.

Lastly, in respect of objects of a domestic/national scope (i.e. wherein the object/constituency ‘nationality’ is congruent with that of the reporting newspaper), in absolute terms, three newspapers – two of which are of the ‘quality’ format and all three of Polish and Italian origin – namely, *Gazeta Wyborcza* (180), *Corriere della Sera* (102) and *La Nazione* (72) scored the highest absolute number (Table 5.43). Five newspapers – of which three were of the ‘tabloid’ format– scored below the average (59). In descending order, these newspapers are: *De Telegraaf* (37), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (30), *NRC Handelsblad* (24), *Bild* (14), and lastly *Fakt* (11). In total, 36% of representative claims (1312) contained a domestic object (470) which is the highest share of all four object scopes (Table 5.43). In terms of weighted values (Table 5.44), as expected, tabloid newspapers figure most prominently. In descending order, the Polish newspaper, *Fakt*, scores the highest, at 61%, followed by *La Nazione*, at 55%, *Bild*, at 54%, succeeded by two ‘quality’ newspapers, namely *Corriere della Sera* (47%) and *Gazeta Wyborcza* (45%), followed closely by *De Telegraaf* (41%). The two ‘quality’ newspapers from Northern Europe, namely *NRC Handelsblad* (NL) *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (DE) represent outliers scoring only 17% and 11% each respectively (Table 5.44). Interestingly, domestic/national object scope claims appear to be inversely proportional to European and supranational object scope claims (Table 5.44). This suggests that discursive identity constructions are framed as a zero-sum game²⁷. Generally speaking,

²⁷ A word of caution, however. Although from my recollection, few representative claims contained both national and supranational scopes,²⁷ I coded for the most salient object. With the benefit of hindsight, I would also have coded whether the claim contained single or multiple

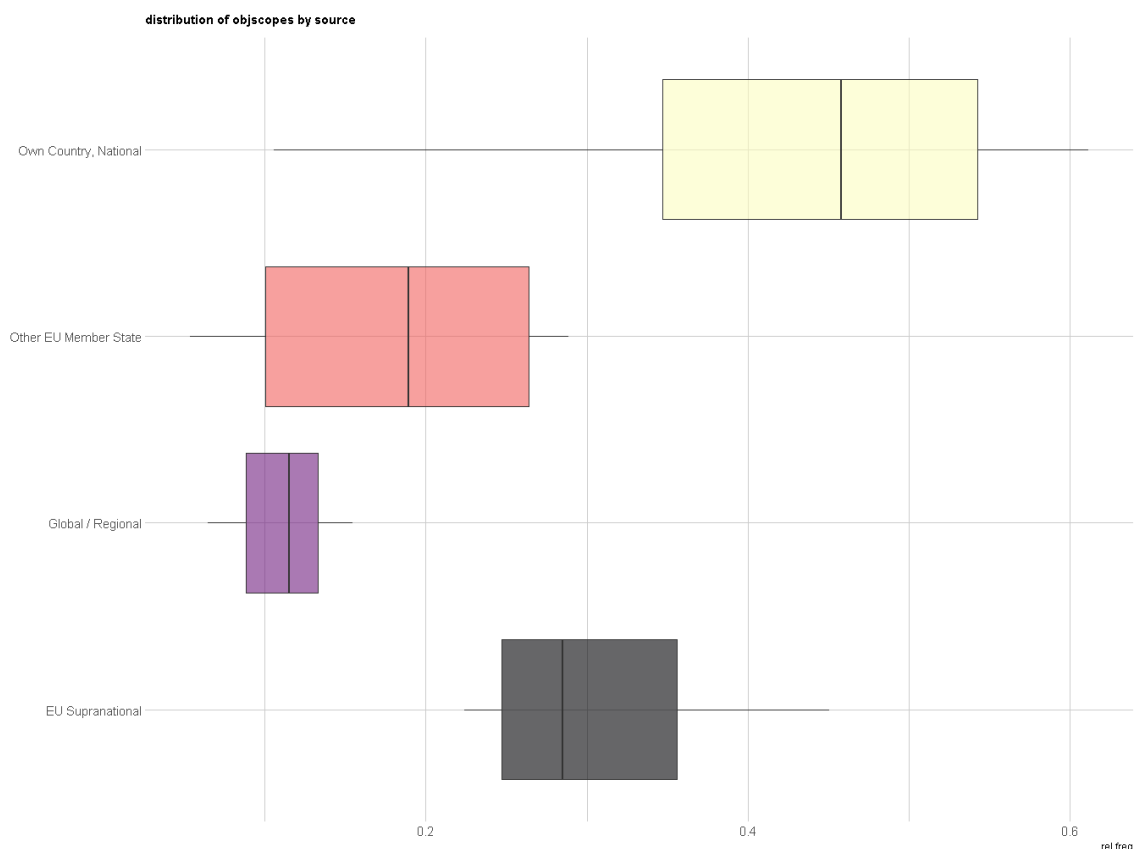
domestic/national scopes were the most prevalent, with tabloid newspapers “waving” the national flag – to use Billig’s analogy (1995) – more vigorously than quality-format newspapers (see Fig 5.26 for details). Moreover, as the box plot below (Fig 5.27) illustrates, object scopes were predominantly domestic. That said, there is a wide distribution across newspapers as the large box coloured in yellow shows (Fig 5.27). Analysing each country in isolation, we can see that in the Italian and Polish samples, the distribution is much narrower than the German and Dutch sample (Figure 5.28). This indicates that differences by newspaper format are not so stark in the Italian and Polish media. Indeed the box plot below (Fig 5.28) shows that the differences in the relative frequency of domestic/national object scopes between these two newspapers are not so different (ranging between 5-10%). By contrast, the distribution varies from 12% in the Dutch sample to 20% in the German one (see Figure 5.28 for details).

Figure 5.26: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source



constituencies (i.e. inclusive). For example, if a claim referred to both national and EU constituencies, the claim would be coded as inclusive. In this way, I would be able to gauge to what extent claimants invoked the interests and identities of one (exclusive) or multiple (inclusive) constituencies.

Figure 5.27: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes by source



Concerning claimant territorial discursive scopes, the results tell us a similar story of a domestic-oriented debate. Over half of all representative claimants held the same nationality ('own country, national') as that of the reporting country (54%, see Table 5.15). In second position, trailing by 28%, are claimants holding the nationality that is different to the reporting country ('other EU member state') at 26%. With half as many claims as second position were supranational actors ('EU supranational') at 13%. Very few representative claimants held the nationality of a non-EU country ('global/regional', 6%) which is not surprising given that the articles collected were limited to articles about EU/European affairs (see Table 5.15 for a detailed breakdown). In respect of claimant scopes of the 'EU supranational' denomination comparing across newspapers, in terms of absolute frequency, three quality newspapers – in descending order *Gazeta Wyborcza* (59), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (48) and *Corriere della Sera* (28) – comprise the most claimants of the 'EU supranational' denomination, scoring above the mean of 22 (Table 5.45). *NRC Handelsblad* (18) and *La Nazione* (13) comprise fourth and fifth position. The last three newspapers, all tabloid newspapers, comprise a pecuniary share of total claims, with only 5 claimants found in *de Telegraaf*, and 1 found in *Bild* and *Fakt* each, respectively (Table 5.45). In terms of relative frequencies, all four quality newspapers scored above the mean (11%), in descending order: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (17%) *Gazeta Wyborcza* (15%), and *NRC Handelsblad* and

Corriere della Sera tied at 13% respectively (Table 5.46). La Nazione tops the ‘tabloid’ chart (10%), succeeded by Fakt (6%), de Telegraaf (5%) and lastly Bild (4%, see Table 5.46). In sum, in both absolute and relative terms, EU actors’ claims found more publicity in the more transnationally-oriented ‘quality’ press.

For ‘regional/global’ actor scopes, the mean score was 11 claims per newspaper. In total, only 84 representative claims were non-EU/third country nationals. Again, the four quality newspapers comprise the top-4 with the most found in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (30), followed by *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (19), *Corriere della Sera* (15) and *NRC Handelsblad* (10, see Table 5.45). Of the ‘tabloid’ format newspapers, only 2-3 representative claimants held non-EU nationalities (Table 5.45). Due to the low N value, we cannot infer a great deal from the weighted values. However, to leave no stone unturned, here is a detailed percentage breakdown, in descending order: *Bild* (12%), *Fakt* (11%), *Corriere della Sera* (7%), *NRC Handelsblad* (7%), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (7%), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (7%) and three newspapers below the mean (6%): *De Telegraaf* (2%) and *La Nazione* (2%, see Table 5.46). Representative claimants in the ‘other EU member state’ category made a total of 347 claims, of which 88% were found in ‘quality’ format newspapers (304 out of 347, see Table 5.45 for a detailed breakdown). 37% (128) of claimants in this category were found in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, succeeded by 26% (90) in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and 16% (57) in *NRC Handelsblad*. Falling below the mean (12%) were *Corriere della Sera* (8%), *de Telegraaf* (7%), *La Nazione* (5%), *Bild* and *Fakt* with less than 1% respectively (Table 5.45). In terms of weighted values (Table 5.46), four newspapers score above the mean (23%) of which three of them are quality format newspapers, in descending order: *NRC Handelsblad* (40%), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (32%), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (32%) and *de Telegraaf* (26%). Three ‘tabloid’ format newspapers comprised the bottom three, namely—*La Nazione* (12%), *Bild* (8%) and *Fakt* (6%). *Corriere della Sera* scored 10% below the mean, at 13% (see Table 5.46 for details).

Last, and by no mean least, is the ‘domestic/national’ actor scope category. This category featured most prominently with over half (54%) representative claimants falling into this category (Table 5.45). On average, 89 claims of this type were found in each newspaper. In terms of absolute values, domestic actors featured most prominently in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (185), *Corriere della Sera* (146), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (127), *La Nazione* (98) and *NRC Handelsblad* (58). Tabloid newspapers featured prominently despite the low volume of claims with *De Telegraaf* (60), followed by *Bild* (20) and *Fakt* (14, see Table 5.45). When the values are weighted, the tables are turned, with over three-quarters of claimants falling in this category in proportion to the total number of claims found in the newspaper (Table 5.46). Over three quarter of all representative claimants in *Fakt* (78%), *Bild* (77%) and *La Nazione* (75%) shared the same nationality as the reporting newspaper (Table 5.46). And in *Corriere della Sera* (67%) and *de Telegraaf* (66%) it was two-thirds. Three quality newspapers, namely—*Gazeta Wyborcza* (46%), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (45%) and *NRC Handelsblad* (41%)—fell under the mean (60%, see Table 5.46

for a detailed breakdown). These results lend further support to the claim that patterns of discourse depend on the format of the newspaper concerned.

Table 5.46: Relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

<i>source</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>
<i>Bild</i>	4%	12%	8%	77%
<i>Corriere della Sera (Italy)</i>	13%	7%	13%	67%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	5%	2%	26%	66%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	6%	11%	6%	78%
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	15%	7%	32%	46%
<i>La Nazione (Italy)</i>	10%	2%	12%	75%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	13%	7%	40%	41%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	17%	7%	32%	45%
μ	10%	7%	21%	62%

The results also show that the Polish and Italian media are much more nationally self-referential than their Dutch and German counterparts. In Germany, only 14% of objects referred to the German constituency, compared to 26% referring to the Dutch constituency, 45% in the Polish network, and 50% in the Italian network (Table 5.48). However, as the Table 5.47 shows, the respective shares of national scopes are lower when the location where the claim is published is factored in. The results indicate that ethnocentric biases are more pronounced when we focus on the discursive relation between actors and constituencies alone (Table 5.47). When we map the discursive relation between claimant and object alone (i.e. act2obj), there is an even stronger tendency for collective actors' to refer to their own national interests and identities. Interestingly, the mass media, provide a more transnational representation of interests and identities than the network graphs would suggest. Indeed, in Germany, circa 21% of national discursive scopes (act2obj) derive from non-German actors (i.e. Dutch actors invoking Dutch interests and identities) which is circa 7% higher than the figure for domestic discursive

scopes (i.e. German actors invoking German interests and identities, see (Table 5.47 for a full breakdown). In the Netherlands, almost half of all national discursive scopes (act2obj) consist of non-Dutch actors and objects. By contrast, in Poland and Italy, most national discursive scopes were made by domestic actors invoking their own respective national interests and identities (Table 5.47). This exploratory analysis suggests that the political public sphere is even more ethnocentric than the mediated sphere. The results of this exploratory analysis indicate that political actors' claims are perhaps even more nationally self-referential than mediated discourses²⁸.

Newspaper format

Of the 1312 representative claims, 80% of them were found in quality-format newspapers which provides compelling evidence that quality newspapers' report more on European affairs than their tabloid newspaper counterparts (Table 5.49). When newspapers are aggregated according to newspaper format, the dot chart below provides demonstrative evidence that patterns of discourse are a function of newspaper format (Fig. 5.30). As Fig. 5.30 exemplifies, in quality newspapers, 'EU supranational' object scopes feature most prominently (circa 34%), followed closely by 'domestic/national' object scopes (circa 32%). By contrast, in regional/tabloid newspapers, over 50% of claims contain an object scope of a 'domestic/national' character compared to circa 27% of claims of an 'EU supranational' scope. Object scopes referring to EU member states different from the reporting country featured more prominently in quality newspapers (24%) which was over 10% more than that found in regional/tabloid newspapers (13%). In both newspaper formats, 'regional/global' scopes were the least prevalent, comprising 11% in quality newspapers and 9% in tabloid newspapers (see Table 5.51 for details). Domestic/national scopes were widespread in all four countries, with divergences particularly noteworthy in the German sample (variance of over 40% between Bild (45%) and Süddeutsche Zeitung (circa 10%)) and the Dutch one (variance of almost 25% between de Telegraaf (41%) and NRC Handelsblad (circa 17%, see Fig. 5.33 for details)). However, differences across format were less acute in the Italian and Polish samples (between 10-15% in both cases). As far as 'EU supranational' scopes are concerned, only in the Polish sample were scopes of this sort more prevalent in regional/tabloid newspapers (see Fig 5.31). And lastly, object scopes of 'other EU member state(s)' and a 'regional/global' character were slightly more prevalent in the quality newspapers of all four countries (Fig 5.31).

²⁸ The study by de Wilde (2011) has explored these aspects. However, a follow-up analysis would be useful to see if the results are confirmed. In this paper, the study revealed that claims in national parliaments were even more nationality self-referential than representative claims found in newspapers. The caveat of my analysis is that all political claims were ultimately collected in newspapers, we, thus, cannot isolate media effects completely from the analysis of public discourse. It would, therefore, be timely to compare claims in national parliaments with claims found in the mass media.

In regard to the distribution of values, the large candlesticks in the boxplot (Fig 5.32) show a wide distribution particularly in respect of domestic/national object scopes (values range between circa 10-70%). However, differences are less stark concerning the other dimensions (values range between 5-30% for 'other EU member state', 22-45% for 'EU supranational' and only 5-15% for 'regional/global' object scope claims (Fig 5.32). Comparing the values distribution in each country, we can see that across-format differences are very modest in the case of Italy (Fig 5.33). I suspect this is because there is no genuine tabloid newspaper in the case of Italy. Indeed, with the benefit of hindsight, I would have included a different country as part of my research design. By contrast, in Germany, where there are acute differences in the presentation of news between Bild – which is considered a quintessential 'red-top' – and Süddeutsche Zeitung – the differences across-format were more discernible as exemplified by the large boxes (see Fig 5.33 for details). The Dutch and Polish sample occupy a middle ground with differences most apparent in 'domestic/national' scopes but not so marked in respect of the other dimensions (Fig 5.33).

In respect of claimants, as expected, claimants of a domestic scope were more abundant as a proportion of the total number of claims in tabloid newspapers vis-à-vis quality ones (Table 5.53). In tabloid newspapers, 72% of claimants were domestic compared to 49% in quality newspapers. The reverse was found in respect of 'EU/supranational' actors with almost twice as many found in quality newspapers (15%) compared to tabloids (8%). Again, there were almost twice as many claimants belonging to 'other EU member state(s)' in quality (29%) compared to tabloid newspapers (16%). In quality newspapers, the proportion of non-EU representative claimants was 7% compared to 4% in tabloids (see Table 5.53 for a detailed breakdown of results and Fig 5.34 for an illustration).

In regard to the distribution of values, the large boxes in Fig 5.35 show a wide distribution particularly in respect of claimants of a domestic/national scope (values range between circa 30-70%). However, differences are less stark concerning the other dimensions (values range between 5-40% for 'other EU member state', 10-22% for 'EU supranational' and only 4-12% for 'regional/global' actor scope claims (Fig 5.35). Again, when comparing the values distribution in each country (Fig 5.36), we can see that across-format differences are very modest in the case of Italy which I suspect are for the same reasons as outlined above. Interestingly, the respective shares of each dimension follow a similar pattern in the other three countries, with values of 'own country, national' actor scopes varying between circa 30% in all three countries but modest differences in the 'regional/global' and 'EU supranational' actor scopes (0-5%). Only in the 'Other EU member state' dimension were there marked differences across all four countries with a differential of 25% in Germany, 2% in Italy, 15% in Netherlands, and over 30% in Poland (see Fig. 5.36 for more).

Figure 5.29: Bar plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by source

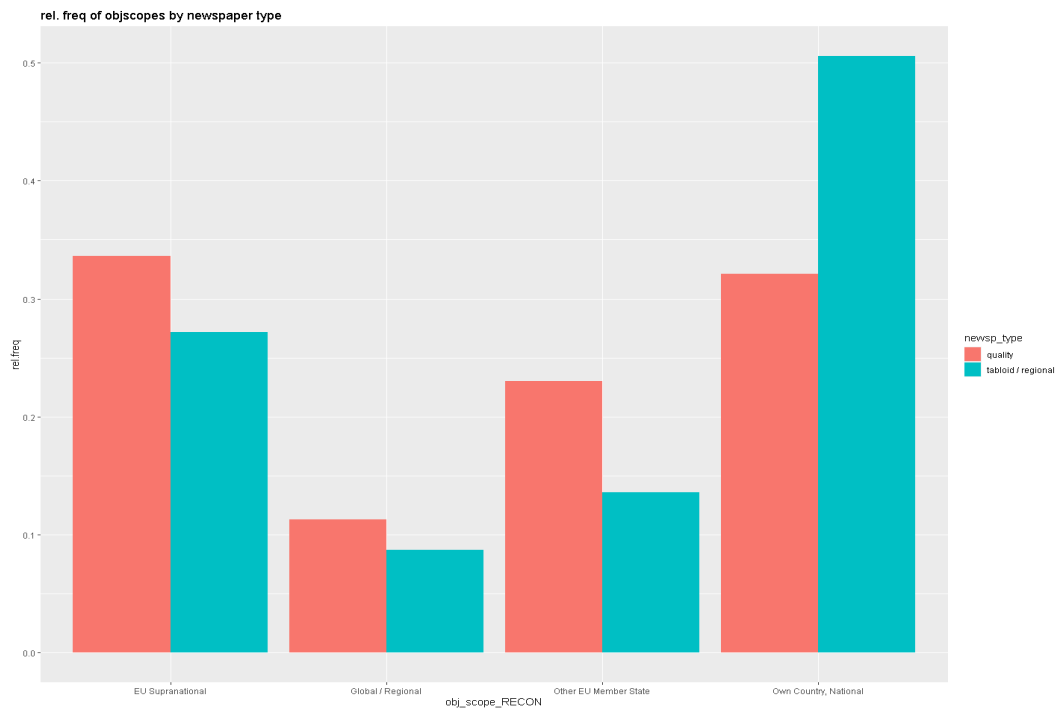


Figure 5.30: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by source

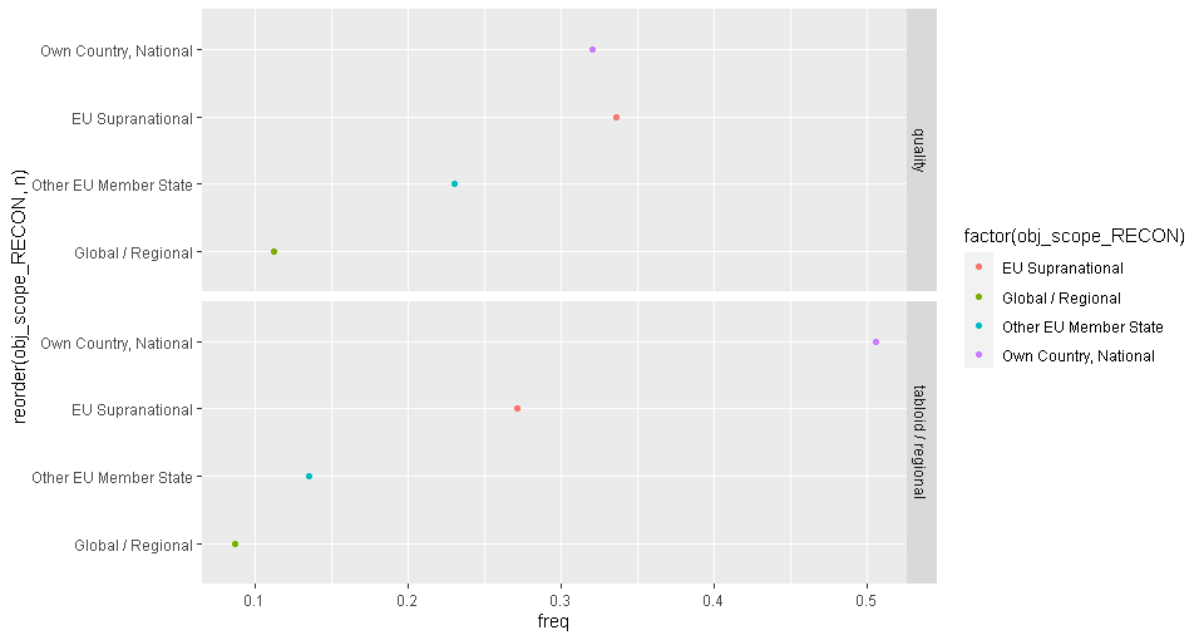


Figure 5.31: Bar plot of the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

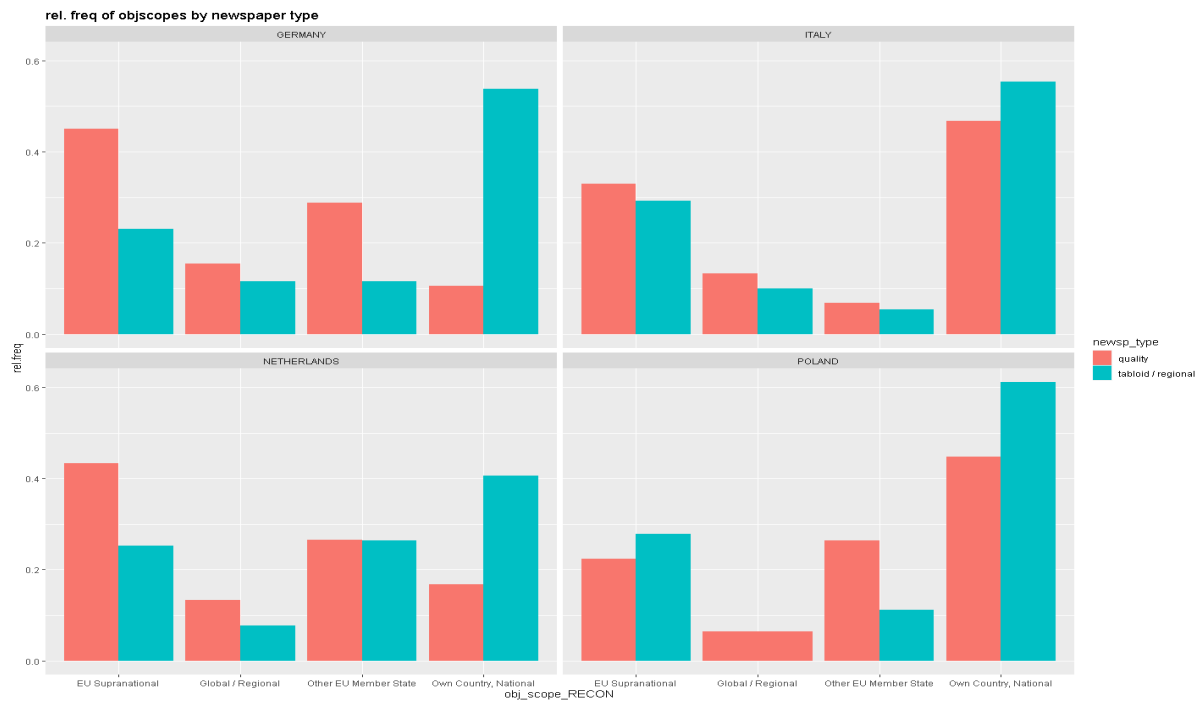


Figure 5.32: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes newspaper format

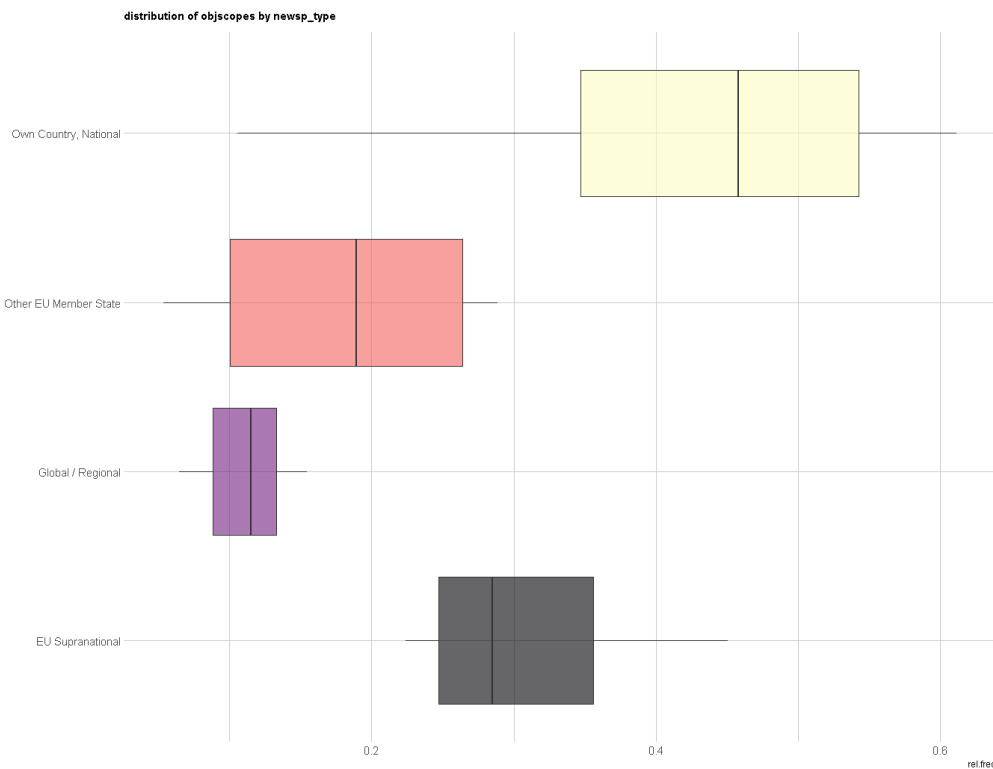


Figure 5.34: Dot plot displaying the distribution of claimant scopes (%) by newspaper format

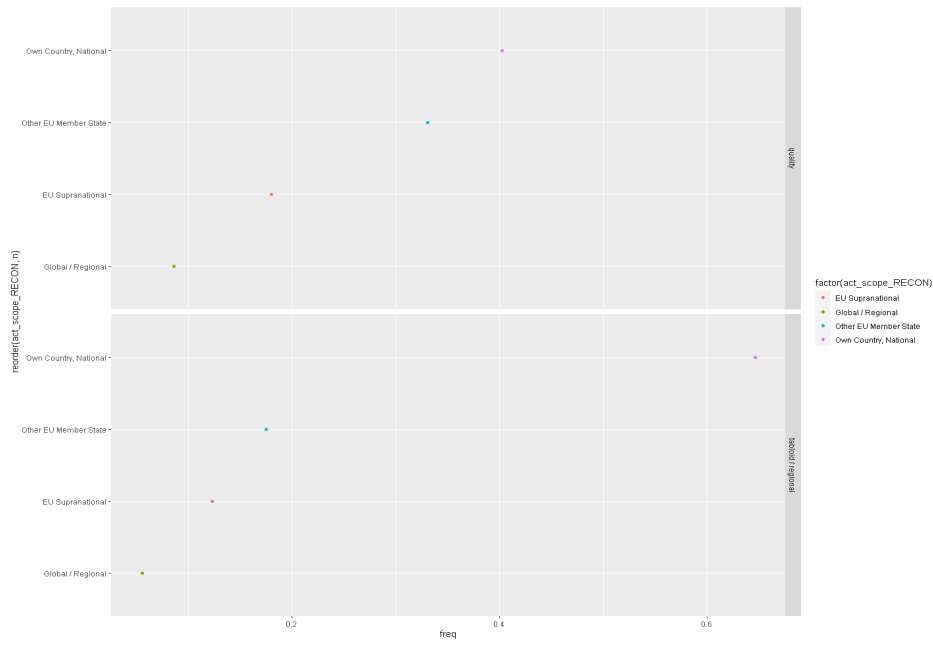
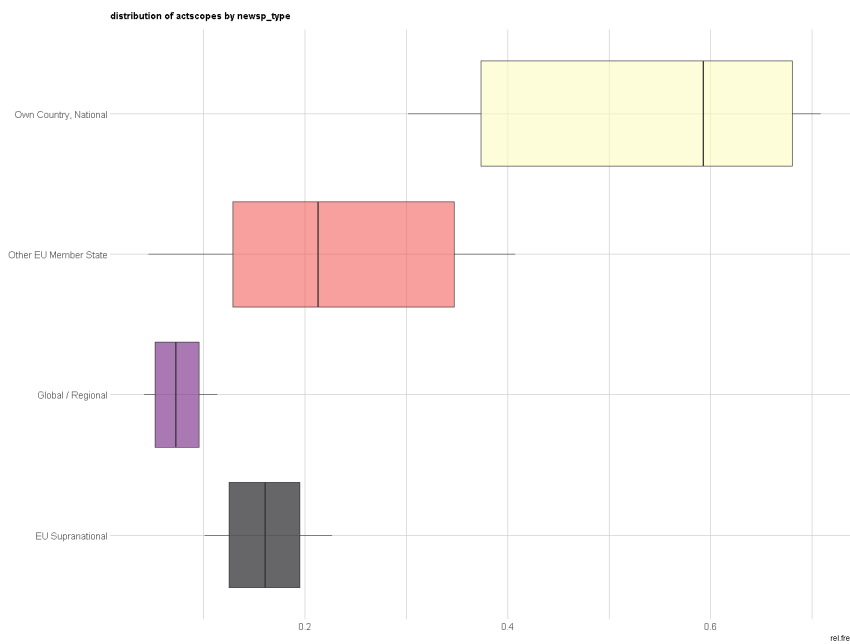


Figure 5.35: Boxplot showing the statistical distribution of claimant scopes by newspaper format



Time

This section aims to shed light on the question to what extent the Covid-19 crisis – a crisis of such unprecedented magnitude – affected patterns of political discourse. Scholars have already floated the concept of “Krisenkommunikation”. Indeed, past research suggests that crises of a European or global dimension may intensify European debates in terms of increasing communicative linkages between national and supranational public spheres. However, research has been found wanting in respect of the more normatively demanding aspects of political communication. Insights from social psychology and social identity theory (SIT) posit that crises are likely to impel people to look inwards and revert to more intimate sources of belonging. This hypothesis is intuitively appealing. Indeed, we witnessed how political leaders seemed to treat the pandemic – at least at the very beginning – as a profoundly domestic affair that would be resolved through national resources and national solidarity. My immediate impression was that political leaders were – in the main – addressing their own respective nations. The Covid-19 pandemic was more akin to multiple, contemporaneous crises manifesting in the ‘national container’. The discussion was not how can we globally address this global challenge, but how can we as one nation nip this crisis in the bud. This is, at least, the impression I had when following the news. I, thus, expect for the reasons laid out above, patterns of discourse to become more internalised compared to dataset prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. I acknowledge that I cannot make robust evidence-based inferences based on a modest dataset that covers only two years. This analysis is, thus, more exploratory than statistical. The aim of this section is to compare two datasets: claims in articles one year prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and claims in articles one year during the pandemic. Coincidentally, as the Table 5.54 shows, the two datasets are similar in size with an almost 50:50 split between them. That said, we found 32 more claims during the pandemic. In the prior to Covid-19 dataset, the number of claims are distributed unevenly with almost double the number of claims found in Italy (228 i.e. 36% of pre-Covid claims) compared to Poland (119, i.e. 19% of pre-Covid claims). 189 claims (i.e. 30% of pre-Covid claims) were found in the German sample and 104 (i.e. 16% of pre-Covid claims) in the Dutch sample (see Table 5.55 & 5.57 for details). The relatively low number of claims found in the Polish sample were compensated by the dataset covering the first year of the pandemic with a value almost three times higher than the other three countries (301, i.e. 45% of claims during the Covid-19 pandemic, see Table 5.55 & 5.57 for details). A similar number of claims were found in the other three countries: 130 in the Netherlands (19%), 121 in Germany (18%) and 120 (18%) in Italy (Table 5.55). In total, the highest volume of claims were detected in Polish newspapers (32%), followed by Italy (27%), Germany (24%) and lastly Netherlands (18%, see Table 5.56). In Italy, in terms of the proportion of claims prior to and during Covid-19, almost twice as many claims were found in the former (66%). The German datasets are similarly skewed in favour of the former (61%). In the Polish sample, the reverse is true with almost three-quarter of claims (72%) found in the Covid-19

sample. The Dutch dataset is the most equally distributed with a 56:44 ratio in favour of the Covid-19 sample (Table 5.58).

Concerning the discursive dimensions, fewer bottom-up vertical claims were made during the pandemic ($\downarrow 10\%$, see Fig. 5.38 for a visualisation of the absolute frequency of claims made according to period). Interestingly, national claims increased by the same percentage ($\uparrow 10\%$, see Table 5.61). However, the decrease in bottom-up vertical claims was more than compensated by supranational claims ($\uparrow 14\%$). Almost 9 in 10 horizontal claims were made during the pandemic, and top-down vertical claims almost doubled in number during the pandemic, lending tentative support to the notion that crises may induce solidarity both from above (top-down) and among member states (horizontal, see Table 5.61 for a full breakdown and Fig 5.39 for a visualisation of results). Remarkably, the number of regional/global discursive-scope claims dropped by almost 45% (Table 5.61). The main takeaway from is the decrease in global/supranational claims and corresponding increase in national and EU-solidaristic claims. These patterns suggest that nation state interests, identities, and representativeness increases during crises at the expense of global/supranational interests, identities, and representativeness. The crisis appears to have been a double-edged sword: on the one hand, appeals to national interests and identities increased at the expense of EU-supranational level interests and identities. On the other hand, appeals to fellow European member states' interests and identities became more pronounced during the crisis²⁹. In descending order of the most prevalent discursive scopes in the pre-Covid dataset, we found national in first place (46%), followed by bottom-up vertical (24%), regional/global (18%), supranational (9%), top-down vertical (2%), and lastly horizontal claims (1%, see Table 5.60 for details). The order is slightly different in the Covid-19 dataset with supranational claims becoming the third most prevalent (11%) and horizontal claims level with regional/global-scope claims at 7% each respectively (Table 5.60).

Table 5.60: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) by period

<i>period</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	24%	19%	43%	22%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	1%	7%	9%	4%
<i>national</i>	46%	53%	100%	50%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	18%	7%	24%	12%

²⁹ For the purpose of clarity, the proxy for solidaristic claims are the 'top-down vertical' and 'horizontal' representative claims. They are solidaristic because the actor is claiming to represent the interests and identities of constituencies that are different to that of the claimant. To illustrate, the President of the EU Commission, Von der Leyen claiming, "We are all Italians" is a paradigmatic case of a 'top-down vertical' and solidaristic representative claim (Von der Leyen, 2020). An even more explicit example of a 'horizontal' and solidaristic claim is that of the French President, President Macron when he "reaffirmed his solidarity with Poland in the face of the destabilisation efforts it faces on its eastern border" (Macron, 2021).

<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	9%	11%	19%	10%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	2%	3%	5%	3%
μ	17%	17%		

Table 5.61: Distribution of discursive territorial scopes (%) in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

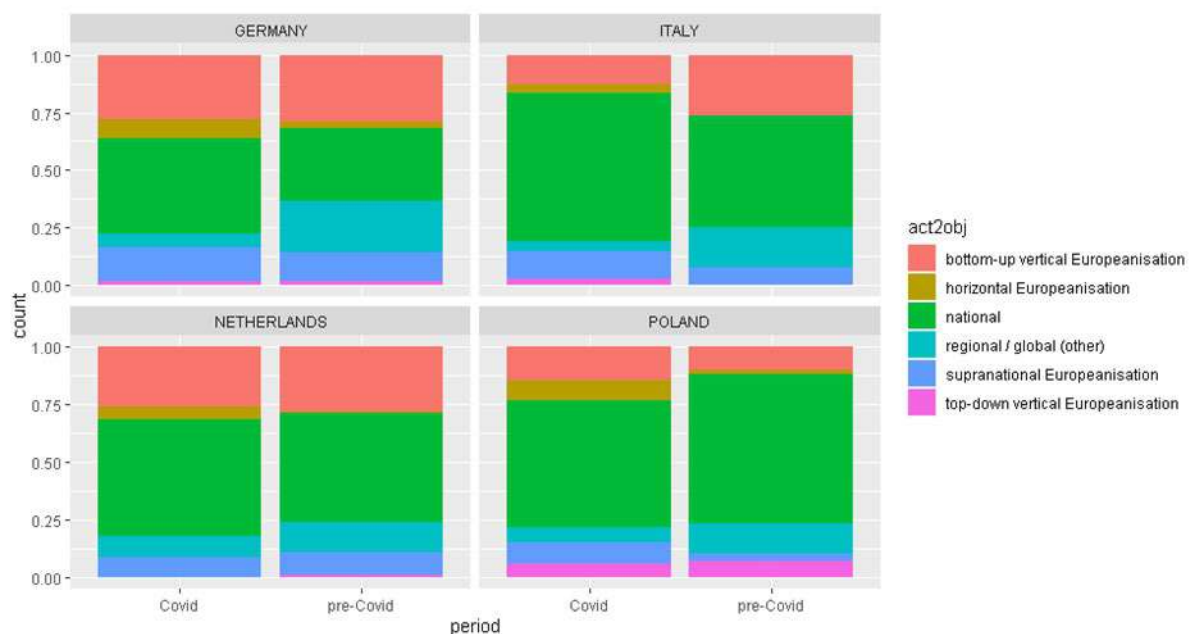
<i>period</i>		<i>pre- Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>bottom-up Europeanisation</i>	<i>vertical</i>	55%	45%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>		14%	86%
<i>national</i>		45%	55%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>		72%	28%
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>		43%	57%
<i>top-down Europeanisation</i>	<i>vertical</i>	34%	66%
μ		44%	56%

And these patterns seem to hold across all four countries. In the German, Dutch and Italian pre-Covid datasets, discursive national claims featured most prominently followed by bottom-up vertical, regional/global, supranational, horizontal and top-down vertical claims³⁰. By contrast, in Poland, national claims were the most prominent succeeded by regional/global, bottom-up and top-down vertical, supranational, and lastly horizontal claims (see Table 5.62-5.65). In the German Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.62), national claims are the most numerous ($\uparrow 9\%$) followed by bottom-up vertical ($\downarrow 1\%$), supranational ($\uparrow 2\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 5\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 16\%$) and lastly top-down claims (-). The Polish sample (Table 5.64) follows the same order with national claims in first place but down 10% followed by bottom-up ($\uparrow 4\%$), supranational ($\uparrow 6\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 7\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 6\%$) and lastly top-down claims ($\downarrow 1\%$). In the Dutch sample (Table 5.63), national claims featured most prominently and increased by 4% from pre-crisis levels, followed by bottom-up ($\downarrow 2\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 4\%$), supranational ($\downarrow 2\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 4\%$) and top-down claims ($\downarrow 1\%$). In the Italian sample (Table 5.65),

³⁰ The only difference in Poland and Italy compared to Germany is that the last two discursive dimensions (namely *horizontal* and *top-down vertical* claims) were invoked in equal proportion.

national claims featured most prominently and increased by 15%. The increase in national claims were almost offset alone by bottom-up claims which fell by 13%. Supranational claims were the third most prominent discursive dimension ($\uparrow 4\%$) followed by regional/global claims which fell dramatically ($\downarrow 14\%$), horizontal claims ($\uparrow 4\%$) and lastly top-down claims ($\uparrow 3\%$). When both pre and during-Covid 19 datasets are combined, the Dutch, German, and Italian datasets follow the same order, namely: national, bottom-up, regional/global, horizontal, and top-down claims (see Table 5.62-5.65)³¹. The outlier is Poland with national claims the most dominant followed by bottom-up, regional/global, supranational and top-down claims in equal number and horizontal claims the least prevalent. In sum, national claims were up in three out of four countries by an average of 5%, with Poland the outlier where national claims actually fell. The reverse is true for bottom-up vertical claims which fell in three out of four countries by an average of 3%, with Poland again found to be the outlier where it actually increased. Regional/global claims fell in all four countries by an average of 10%. Supranational claims increased in three countries save for the Netherlands by an average of 3%. Horizontal claims increased in all four countries by an average of 4%. Lastly, top-down vertical claims remained virtually flat with a negligible increase of 0.25% (see Table 5.62-5.65 for a full breakdown and Fig 5.37 for a visualisation of results).

Figure 5.37: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by country in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets



³¹ The only difference is that supranational claims are equal to regional/global ones in the German sample. In the Italian and Polish sample, regional/global claims exceed supranational ones.

Figure 5.38: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

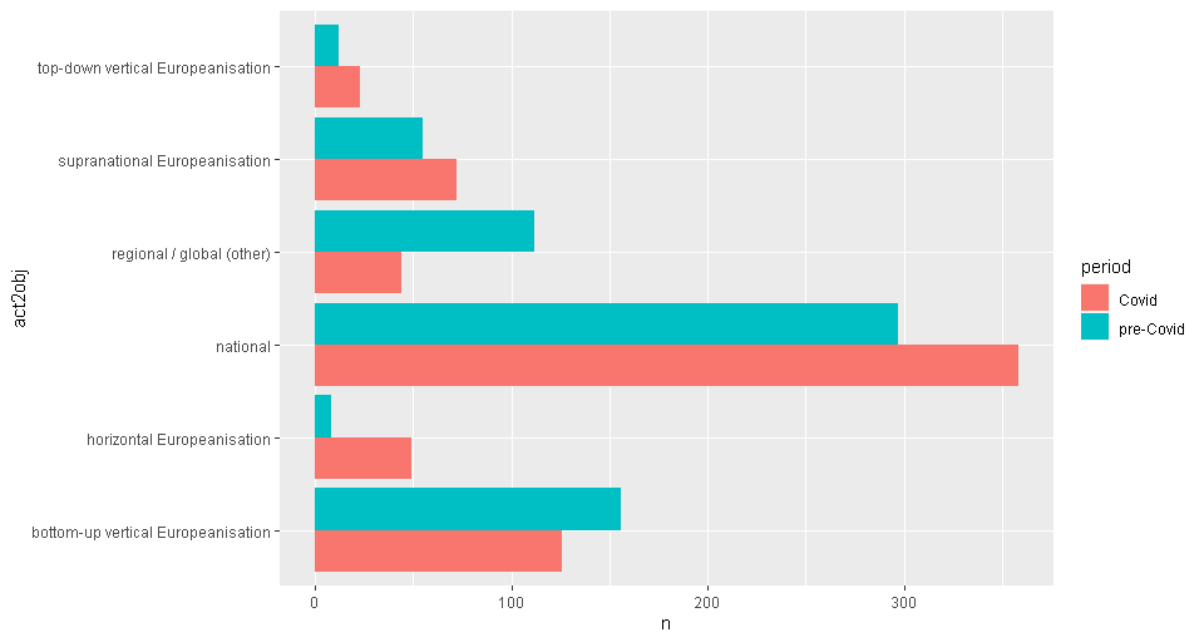
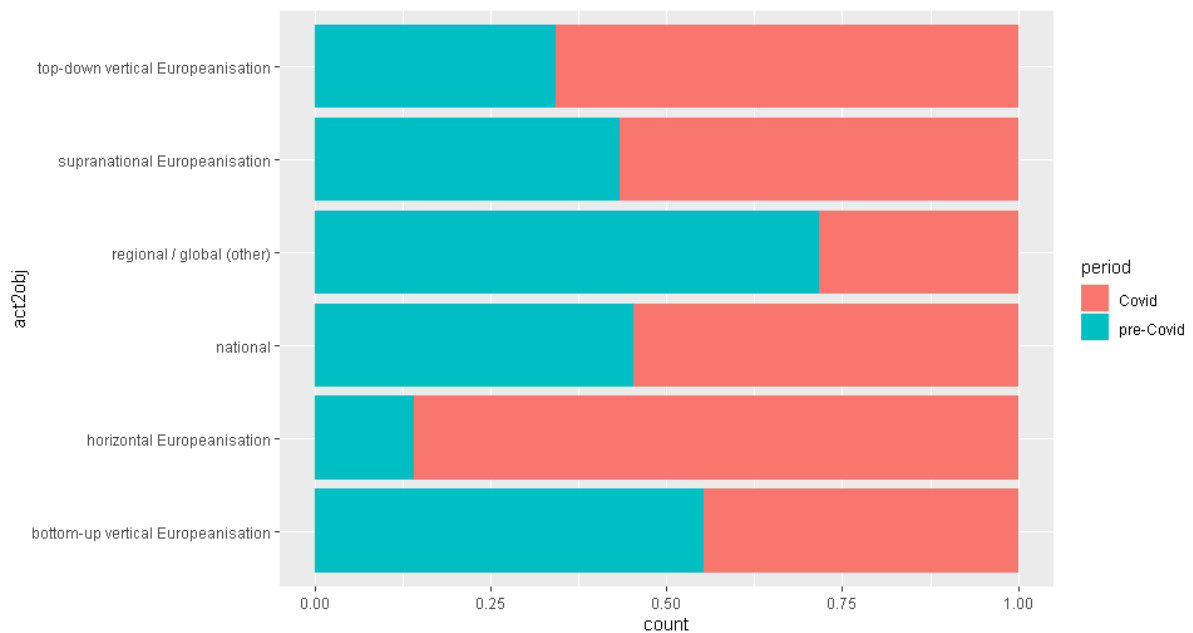


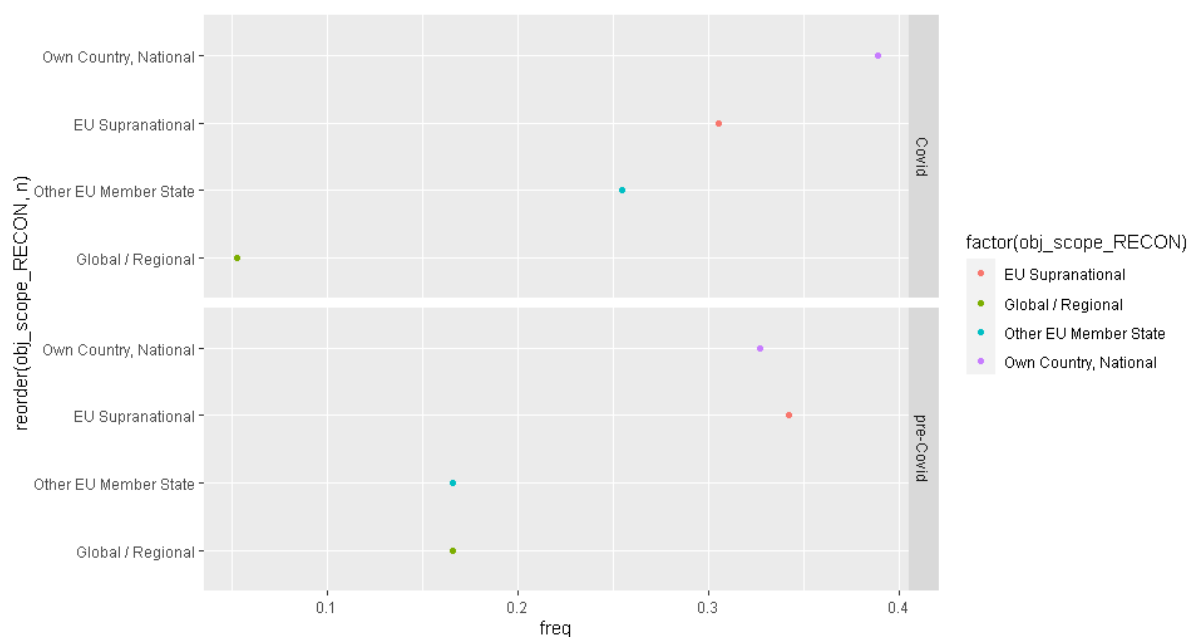
Figure 5.39: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets



In addition, I opted for the RECONNECT handbook’s (2019) taxonomy which is better equipped for gaging the extent of a public spheres domestication in terms of the media’s reporting. As Table 5.66

and Table 5.67 show, in the pre-Covid dataset, ‘EU supranational’ claims were the most prominent comprising 34% (N =219) followed closely by ‘domestic/national’ claims at 33% (N= 209, see also Table 5.67 for a breakdown of the absolute number of claims). Almost half as many claims invoked ‘regional/global’ and ‘other EU member state(s)’ object scopes which comprised 106 claims each respectively (17%). Interestingly, and as expected, ‘domestic/national’ object scope claims featured most prominently (39%, an ↑ of 6%) in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.66). By contrast, EU supranational-scope claims fell by 3% registering a share of 31%. The volume of objects referring to constituencies of other member states increased by 8% (to 25%). Lastly, ‘regional/global’ claims registered the largest decrease, falling by 12% to 5% (see Table 5.66 for a full breakdown of results and Fig. 5.40 for a visualization of results). Moreover, as Table 5.68 shows, 75% of ‘regional/global’ and 52% of ‘EU supranational’ object scopes were found in the pre-Covid-19 dataset. And 62% of ‘other EU member state’ and 56% of ‘domestic/national’ object scopes were detected in the Covid-19 dataset.

Figure 5.40: Dot plot to show the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by period



Actor type

As Table 5.73 shows, more national discursive scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset, with these patterns pertaining to most types of actors. This result was particularly noticeable in respect of ‘media and journalists’ (Table 5.73). In fact, 13.5% of national claims came from this cohort which is an increase of 5% from the share prior to the pandemic (Table 5.75%). Indeed, for ‘media and journalists’, 30% more national claims were found in the Covid-19 dataset than the pre-Covid-19 one (Table 5.74). Of the top-10 most prominent representative claimants for claims of a national discursive scope, the

absolute value of national claims increased in all actor types save for politicians and political parties (see Table 5.73 for a full breakdown of results by actor type). As Table 5.76 elucidates, fewer ‘bottom-up vertical’ scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The decrease is attributed mainly to the ‘political party’ and ‘government/executive’ actor cohorts which recorded the largest fall in absolute values (↓ circa 30 claims). Indeed, only 27% of political parties’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. And 42% of governmental actors’ claims of this kind were detected in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.77). As a result, the proportion of claims deriving from governmental actors fell by almost 4% from pre-crisis levels. And for political parties, the share fell dramatically by circa 12% (see Table 5.78 for details). As the Table 5.79 shows, top-down vertical claims were negligible in both the pre-Covid-19 and Covid-19 datasets. However, the absolute number of claims of this sort were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.79). The increase is mainly attributed to the increase in claims of this kind by ‘government/executive’ actors who made more than double the number of claims in respect of pre-crisis levels (see Table 5.79 and Table 5.81 for details). Indeed, actors of this type increased their share of claims of this sort by over 10% compared to pre-crisis levels (Table 5.80). Furthermore, Table 5.82 shows, horizontal claims increased five-fold from pre-crisis levels from modest levels (from 8 to 49 claims). 73% of the net increase in horizontal claims (from 8 to 49 claims) are attributed to ‘government/executive actors’ (24%) and ‘media and journalists’ (49%, see Table 5.82 for details). These two cohorts alone account for circa 70% of the share of claims of this sort in the Covid-19 dataset compared to 50% in the pre-Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.83). Indeed, 78% of governmental actors’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. And 100% of media and journalists’ claims of this kind were detected in the Covid-19 dataset (see Table 5.84 for details). The share of claims from ‘media and journalists’ increased from 0- to 41% in the Covid-19 dataset. The relative decrease in the share of government/executive claims (50- to 28.6%) was largely due to the exponential increase in claims from ‘media and journalists’ (Table 5.83). As Table 5.85 shows, supranational claims increased modestly from 55 to 72 claims. Indeed 58% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.87). Not surprisingly, the increase is mainly attributed to ‘government/executive’ actors (see Tables 5.85 to 5.87 for a full breakdown of results). The absolute number of claims from ‘central banks’ fell in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.85), I suspect, because the pandemic was foremost a health crisis. The share of claims of this kind deriving from central banks decreased by 12% from pre-crisis levels from 16- to 4% (Table 5.86). And only 25% of central banks’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.87). By contrast, the share of claims of this kind deriving from government actors increased from pre-crisis levels by 10%, to 74% (Table 5.86). Moreover, 60% of governmental actors’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.87). As Table 5.88 shows, markedly fewer ‘regional/global’ discursive scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset. Indeed, only 26% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. This dramatic decrease (from 74% to 26%) is mainly attributable to three actor types: government/executive actors, legislative actors, political parties, and solidarity and human rights organisations (see Table 5.88 and 5.90 for details). Indeed, 76% of the

net decrease (from 112 to 44 claims) derived from these actor cohorts: 29% from governmental actors, 25% from political parties, 12% from solidarity and human rights organisations, and 10% from legislative actors (these findings were extrapolated from the data contained in Table 5.88 herein). Only 5% of political parties', 27% of government actors', 13% of legislative actors', 21% of solidarity and human rights organisations' claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.90). As a result of the net decrease in claims of this kind in the Covid-19 dataset, the share of regional/global claims according to actor type remained relatively stable over time (Table 5.89). That said, the share of claims deriving from 'political parties' decreased significantly by 14% from pre-crisis levels from 16 to 2% (Table 5.89).

Table 5.74: Relative frequency distribution of "national" representative claims by period across different actor types

act_type	pre-Covid	Covid
<i>activists and protestors</i>	67%	33%
<i>central banks</i>	75%	25%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	25%	75%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	14%	86%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	44%	56%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	36%	64%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	17%	83%
<i>former states(women)</i>	22%	78%
<i>government/executive</i>	47%	53%
<i>judiciary</i>	100%	0%
<i>legislative</i>	33%	67%
<i>media and journalists</i>	35%	65%
<i>military</i>	100%	0%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	50%	50%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	32%	68%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	40%	60%
<i>political parties</i>	53%	47%
<i>politicians</i>	73%	27%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0%	100%
<i>the general public</i>	50%	50%
<i>unions and employees</i>	67%	33%
<i>whole polities</i>	0%	100%
μ	43%	57%

Table 5.75: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

act_type	pre-Covid	Covid	μ
<i>government/executive</i>	38.05%	35.75%	36.90%
<i>political parties</i>	27.27%	19.83%	23.55%
<i>media and journalists</i>	8.75%	13.41%	11.08%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	4.04%	5.87%	4.95%
<i>the general public</i>	3.70%	3.07%	3.39%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	2.02%	3.63%	2.83%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	2.69%	2.79%	2.74%
<i>politicians</i>	3.70%	1.12%	2.41%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	2.02%	2.51%	2.27%
<i>legislative</i>	1.01%	1.68%	1.34%
<i>former states(women)</i>	0.67%	1.96%	1.31%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0.00%	2.23%	1.12%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0.34%	1.68%	1.01%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	0.34%	1.40%	0.87%
<i>judiciary</i>	1.68%	0.00%	0.84%
<i>central banks</i>	1.01%	0.28%	0.64%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.84%	0.59%
<i>activists and protestors</i>	0.67%	0.28%	0.48%
<i>unions and employees</i>	0.67%	0.28%	0.48%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.28%	0.31%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	0.56%	0.28%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.00%	0.17%
<i>military</i>	0.34%	0.00%	0.17%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	0.28%	0.14%
<i>whole polities</i>	0.00%	0.28%	0.14%

Partisanship

As Table 5.93 shows, 57% of ‘national’ representative claims were found in the Covid-19 dataset (N = 358). The main takeaway from the table below is that the number of ‘national’ representative claims from politically affiliated actors largely stayed the same. The increase in ‘national’ claims mainly derives from non-politically affiliated actors whose share of total ‘national’ claims increased by 10% (see Table 5.92), making 55 more national claims than prior to the pandemic (see the ‘NA’ value column in Table 5.91). Indeed, 60% of ‘national’ representative claims from non-politically affiliated actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.93). Other noteworthy increases came from ‘radical TAN’

parties with 54% of their ‘national’ claims found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.93). However, changes in the distribution of ‘national’ claims were minimal save for non-politically affiliated actors who appeared to make many more claims of this kind during the pandemic (Table 5.91). 12% fewer representative claims of a ‘bottom-up vertical’ discursive scope were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.96). There were no notable changes according to political partisanship save for two political groups, namely the ‘christian-democratic’ and ‘socialist’ denominations whose share of total claims of this kind fell by 12% and 8% respectively (Table 5.95). Indeed, over 70% of claims of this kind from these political denominations were found in the pre-Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.96). There were no other notable changes in the temporal distribution. The net decrease mainly derives from the fewer claims of the kind made by the ‘Christian-democratic’ and ‘socialist’ political categories (see Table 5.94). 66% of representative claims of a ‘top-down vertical’ discursive scope were found in the Covid-19 dataset. However, the net share of claims of this sort remained negligible (circa 3% of total claims in the Covid-19 dataset). Virtually all claims (90%) of this sort were made by non-political affiliated actors and this applies to prior to and during the pandemic (see Table 5.97 and 5.98 for details). Indeed, non-politically affiliated actors made double the absolute number of claims of this kind during the pandemic (Table 5.97). The main takeaway from this analysis is that actors with an identifiable political affiliation made virtually no claims of this kind (see Table 5.97 and 5.98 for details). The other type of solidaristic claim, namely horizontal claims, increased during the Covid-19 pandemic (see Table 5.100). Indeed, 62% of claims of this sort were found in the Covid-19 dataset. However, the increase was largely attributable to non-politically affiliated actors (‘NA values’, see Table 5.100 and 5.101 for a full breakdown of results).

Remarkably, 97% of claims of this kind made by non-politically minded actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.102). 65% of horizontal claims came from non-politically affiliated actors during the pandemic (Table 5.101). In sum, politically affiliated actors made a handful of claims of this kind and this held during the pandemic³². The modest increase almost entirely derives from actors’ without an identifiable political orientation. A similar result can be found in respect of ‘supranational’ claims although non-politically affiliated actors’ claims of this kind are predominant both prior to (84%) and during (92%) the Covid-19 pandemic (Table 5.104). In fact, 59% of claims of this kind from non-politically affiliated actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset (Table 5.105). The number of supranational claims increased modestly during the Covid-19 pandemic (Table 5.103). Indeed, 58% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. Politically affiliated actors made very few claims of this kind (see Tables 5.103 and 5.104 for details). In fact, no political group made more than 5 claims in both prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic. These results are not surprising as most supranational actors occupy non-partisan roles (e.g. EU Commissioners). The number of claims decreased in all political groups in the Covid-19 dataset (see Table 5.103 for details). The number of

³² No political category registered more than 10 claims and this was the case prior to and during the pandemic.

‘regional/global’ claims decreased exponentially during the Covid-19 pandemic (see Table 5.106 for more). Indeed, 72% of claims of this kind were found in the dataset prior to the pandemic. Decreases in claims of this sort were found across all political families in addition to non-politically affiliated actors (see Tables 5.106 and 5.108 for a detailed breakdown). We, thus, have a mixed, and somewhat paradoxical result. On the one hand, national claims increased during the pandemic, and bottom-up, supranational, and global claims fell which lend tentative support to the notion that public spheres’ become more insular as a result of crises. On the other hand, solidaristic claims (i.e. horizontal and top-down vertical claims) increased. The results show that the salience of ‘the nation’ (whether invoked from a narcissistic, domestic, or solidaristic, horizontal perspective) shows no sign of abating. A caveat is in order. Due to the limited number of claims for each party family, I cannot make strong evidence-based inferences. This analysis was purely exploratory, and a more data is needed to support these findings. We can, however, assert with caution that public spheres, broadly speaking, became more insular during the course of the Covid-19 pandemic.

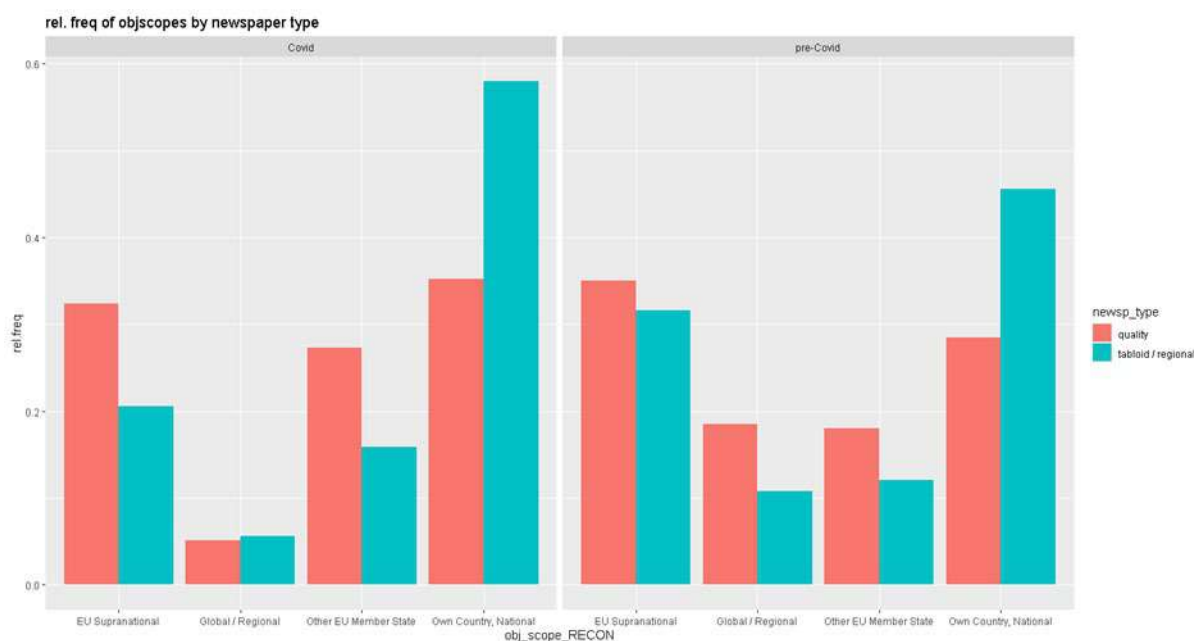
Table 5.93: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>1. radical TAN</i>	46%	54%
<i>11. agrarian/center</i>	0%	100%
<i>2. conservative</i>	50%	50%
<i>3. liberal</i>	52%	48%
<i>4. Christian-democratic</i>	45%	55%
<i>5. socialist</i>	53%	47%
<i>6. radical left</i>	33%	67%
<i>7. green</i>	75%	25%
<i>8. regionalist</i>	20%	80%
<i>9. no family</i>	58%	42%
<i>NA</i>	40%	60%
<i>μ</i>	43%	57%

Format

When analysing and comparing newspaper formats across time, ‘national’ and ‘other EU member state(s)’ object scopes featured more prominently as a proportion (%) of the total number of claims made, and this result was found in both quality and tabloid-format newspapers in the Covid-19 dataset (see Table 5.109 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown of results and Fig. 5.41 for a visualization of results). In regard to ‘national’ object scopes, changes across time were particularly marked in regional/tabloid newspapers (Table 5.109). The reverse is true for ‘EU supranational’, ‘other EU member states(s)’ and ‘regional/global’ objects scopes which changed more considerably in quality newspapers (see Fig. 5.41). In fact, in tabloid and quality newspapers, the share of ‘national’ object scopes increased from 46- to 58% (↑12%) and 28% to 35% (↑7%) respectively (Table 5.109). And in tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to ‘other EU member states’ increased from 12- to 16% (↑4%) and 18- to 27% (↑9%) respectively (Table 5.109). By contrast, the volume of ‘EU supranational’ and ‘regional/global’ object scopes fell, and these patterns held across both newspaper formats. In tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to the ‘EU supranational’ level decreased from 32- to 21% (↓11%) and - to % (↓%) respectively (Table 5.109). In tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to the ‘regional/global’ level decreased from 11- to 6% (↓5%) and 35- to 32% (↓3%) respectively (see Table 5.109 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown of results and Fig. 5.41 for a visualization of results).

Figure 5.41: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by newspaper format in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets



Frame

One shortcoming of representative claims analysis is that analysing the object alone does not tell us a great deal about how an argument is framed (i.e. justification). In order to better understand the meaning and context by which the claim is made, I have also coded for the justification which focuses on the why of claims making, that is, why does the claimant intervene in the public sphere and what are the main arguments used by the claimant to justify their argument. By examining the object and justification of a claim together, we are able to ascertain which frames are more prevalent according to discursive scope. We may, for example, expect that the ‘sovereignty’ frame would be prevalent for objects that invoke ‘the nation’ as the ‘sovereignty’ has virtually become synonymous with nationhood. We may also expect the ‘protection of human dignity’ frame to be prevalent for objects of a ‘global’ scope as human rights are not bounded to ‘one nation’ in particular. We should also expect the ‘solidarity’ frame to be more prevalent when European constituencies are invoked as ‘solidarity’ typically extends beyond borders, both horizontally and vertically. Indeed, the word ‘solidarity’ has become more prevalent with advancing EU integration which is not surprising as the term is frequently referenced in the EU treaties. There is even a ‘Solidarity clause’ introduced by Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). In a nutshell, the aim of this section, thus, is to examine which frames are most prevalent according to discursive territorial dimensions. As Table 5.110 and Table 5.111 show, the ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frame was the most prevalent (523, i.e. 43%) followed by the ‘culture and identity’ frame (114, i.e. 9%), ‘solidarity’ frame (87, i.e. 7%), ‘democracy’ frame (82, i.e. 7%), ‘rule of law’ frame (5%), ‘protection of human dignity’ frame (50, i.e. 4%), ‘sovereignty’ frame (44, i.e. 4%), ‘freedom and equality’ frame (34, i.e. 3%), and lastly, ‘EU integration’ frame (26, i.e. 2%)³³. As Fig. 5.42 and 5.43 show, the share distribution of frames is similar in all four countries with modest differences between them (see also the boxplot, Fig. 5.44 which shows a narrow distribution of frames according to country³⁴).

³³ ‘Other’ categories were excluded (i.e. claims which did not contain a justification or had justifications which did not fit any of the pre-defined categories).

³⁴ Fig. 5.44 adds further support to the claim that EU politics is similarly framed across different European countries. However, I argue that these general frames are only one facet of framing. Framing manifests in a myriad of ways. In respect of discursive scopes – which are framing devices themselves – discourse is overwhelmingly national, that is, similar cognitive frames are used whilst referring to very different interests and ‘imagined communities’.

Figure 5.42: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of frames (%) in each country

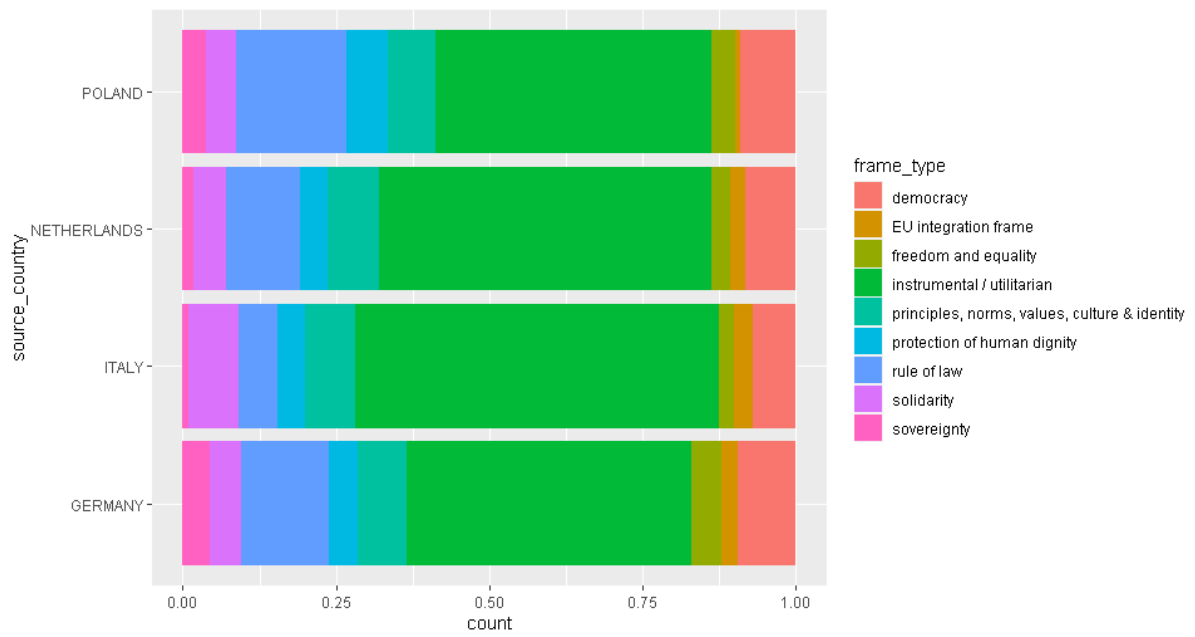


Figure 5.43: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of frames (%) by country

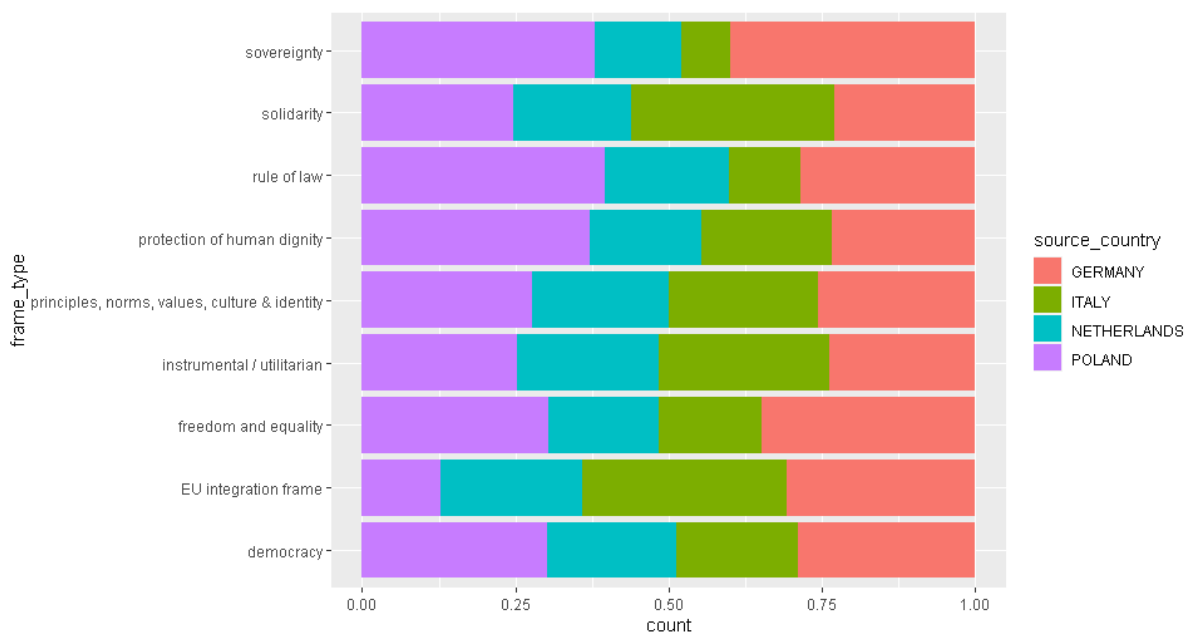
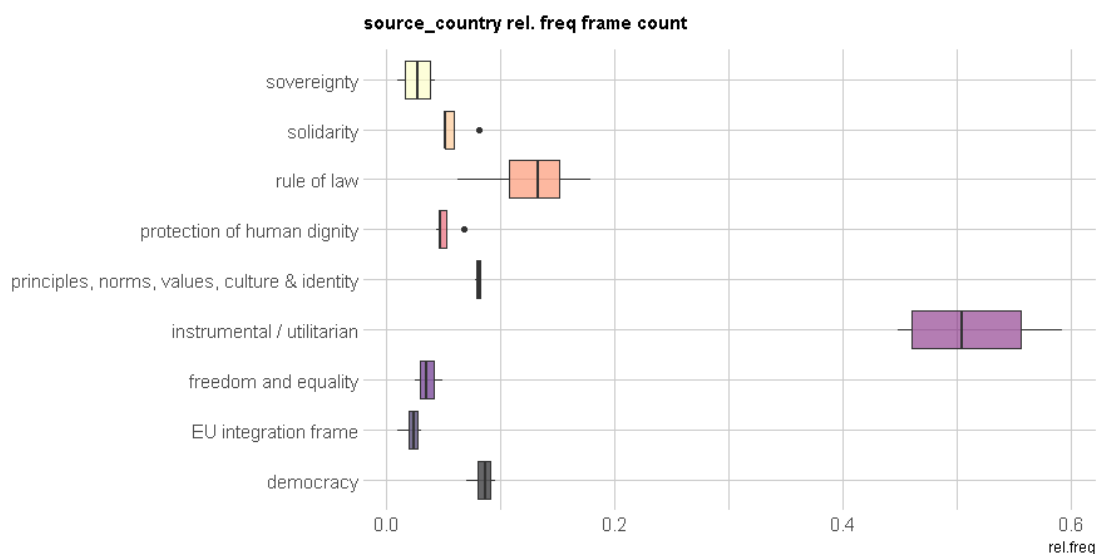


Figure 5.44: Boxplot showing the statistical relative frequency distribution of frames according to country



As Table 5.111 shows, almost half of the ‘democracy’ frames referred to the national constituency (44%) followed by 36% which referred to the EU/European constituency (comprised of 20% of bottom-up vertical claims and 16% supranational claims). 16% of ‘democracy’ frames referred to constituencies of other member states (comprised of 11% horizontal and 5% top-down vertical claims). And, not surprisingly, only 4% of ‘democracy’ frames referred to regional/global constituencies. In sum, the ‘nation’ remains the most commonly invoked object in the context of democracy (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). Interestingly, most frames pertaining to arguments about the process of ‘EU integration’ referred back to the national constituency (42%). However, when ‘bottom-up’ and ‘supranational’ dimensions of discursive Europeanisation are aggregated, EU-level scopes exceed national ones (46%). Just over one-tenth (12%) of solidaristic representative claims (i.e. top-down and horizontal) invoked the ‘EU integration’ frame. In sum, not surprisingly, for ‘EU integration’ frames, discursive dimensions of a Europeanised scope (58%) outnumber ‘national’ claims by a ratio of 3 to 2 (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). Almost half of all frames pertaining to ‘freedom and equality’ referred to national constituencies (47%) followed by 30% of European constituencies (comprised of 21% of bottom-up vertical and 9% supranational claims). Only 12% of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with constituencies of at the regional/global level (non-EU) and constituencies comprising other EU member states (i.e. top-down and horizontal) respectively (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). Almost two-thirds of ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frames (63%) referred back to national constituencies that were the same as that of the claimant, with less than half as many referring to European/supranational constituencies (29%). Only 4% of frames of this kind referred to regional/global and constituencies of other EU member states (i.e. top-down and horizontal)

respectively (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). Over half of all claims (53%) pertaining to ‘principles, norms, cultures, and identities’ invoke EU/supranational-level constituencies, when bottom-up vertical and supranational discursive dimensions are aggregated. This is succeeded by 44% of frames of this kind referring to national constituencies. A fraction of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with scopes of a horizontal (2%) and global dimension (1%). As expected, most frames pertaining to the ‘protection of human dignity’ were made in the context of regional and global constituencies (34%). However, an almost equal number were made in reference to national constituencies (32%). 24% of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with reference to supranational-level (i.e. EU) constituencies. And only one-tenth of frames of this kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical discursive dimensions (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). Almost half (44%) of all justification referring to the ‘rule of law’ identities’ refer back to the domestic/national level, closely followed by the EU/supranational level constituencies (35%, when bottom-up vertical and supranational discursive dimensions are aggregated. 20% of frames of the kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical scopes of a European dimension. And only 2% refer to scopes of a regional/global dimension (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). As expected, when bottom-up vertical (43%) and supranational dimensions (16%) are aggregated, most claims (59%) invoking the ‘solidarity’ argument refer to supranational-level constituencies (i.e. objects), which is almost three times higher than nationalistic claims (23%). 13% of frames of this kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical discursive dimensions. And only 5% refer to regional/global constituencies. In sum, the ‘solidarity’ argument is typically used when referring to EU-level constituencies (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results). As expected, almost three-quarter of frames pertaining to ‘sovereignty’ referred to national constituencies (70%). When bottom-up vertical (20%) and supranational dimensions (7%) are aggregated, only 27% referred to the supranational level (see Table 5.111 for a full breakdown of results).

Table 5.111: Relative frequency distribution of frames (%) according to discursive territorial scope

act2obj	democracy	EU integrat	freedom	instrument	principles, norm	protection of hum	rule of law	solidarity	sovereignty	other	μ
bottom-up vertical	20%	31%	21%	20%	39%	18%	26%	43%	20%	15%	25%
horizontal Europea	11%	4%	9%	3%	2%	2%	9%	11%	0%	4%	6%
national	44%	42%	47%	63%	44%	32%	44%	23%	70%	60%	47%
regional / global (o	5%	0%	12%	4%	1%	34%	2%	5%	2%	7%	7%
supranational Euro	16%	15%	9%	9%	14%	6%	9%	16%	7%	9%	11%
top-down vertical	5%	8%	3%	1%	0%	8%	11%	2%	0%	5%	4%

‘Instrumental/utilitarian’ frames were the most prevalent in every discursive dimension save for top-down vertical claims (Table 5.112). Regarding bottom-up vertical claims, the top-3 most prevalent

frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were ‘principles, norms, cultures and identities’ (16%), ‘solidarity’ (13%), and ‘other’ (Table 5.112). Regarding horizontal claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘solidarity’ (18%), ‘democracy’ (16%), and ‘other’ (14%, see Table 5.112, for details). Regarding national claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘other’ (18%), ‘principles, norms, values, cultures/identities’ (8%), and ‘sovereignty’ (5%, see Table 5.112 for details)³⁵. Regarding horizontal claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘the protection of human dignity’ (26%), ‘other’ (20%), and ‘solidarity’ (6%, see Table 5.112, for details)³⁶. Regarding supranational claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘other’ (14%), ‘principles, norms, values, cultures/identities’ (13%) and solidarity (11%, see Table 5.112, for details). Regarding top-down vertical claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames were: ‘other’ (26%), ‘rule of law’ (20%) and ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frames (17%). The ‘democracy’ and ‘protection of human dignity’ frame registered 11% each, respectively. In sum, representative claims tend to be framed in utilitarian terms, that is, in terms of what may be considered good or bad for the constituency concerned (see Table 5.112, for details). There are also a fair share of representative claims that do not contain a justification whatsoever (i.e. ‘other’). This applies also to national representative claims (Table 5.112). This lends support to the notion that nationalism can manifest without necessarily evincing arguments about sovereignty, the state of democracy, values or culture, and so forth. The crux of my argument is that political communication can be nationalistic in ostensibly innocuous ways, for example, by arguing that a policy may be harmful to the ‘national interest’ (i.e. instrumental/utilitarian). This is a form of nationalism per se because the political actor frames EU politics in terms of the national interest.

Table 5.112: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by frame type (%)

frame_type	bottom-up	horizontal	national	regional / global	supranational	top-down vertical	μ
democracy	6%	16%	5%	6%	10%	11%	9%
EU integration frame	3%	2%	2%	0%	3%	6%	3%
freedom and equality	2%	5%	2%	6%	2%	3%	4%
instrumental / utilitarian	37%	30%	50%	31%	37%	17%	34%
principles, norms, values	16%	4%	8%	2%	13%	0%	7%
protection of human dign	3%	2%	2%	26%	2%	11%	8%
rule of law	6%	11%	4%	2%	5%	20%	8%
solidarity	13%	18%	3%	6%	11%	6%	9%
sovereignty	3%	0%	5%	2%	2%	0%	2%
other	11%	14%	18%	20%	14%	26%	17%

³⁵ The ‘democracy’ frame also registered 5%.

³⁶ The ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom and equality’ frames also scored 6%.

Figure 5.48: Faceted bar plot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes according to frame type

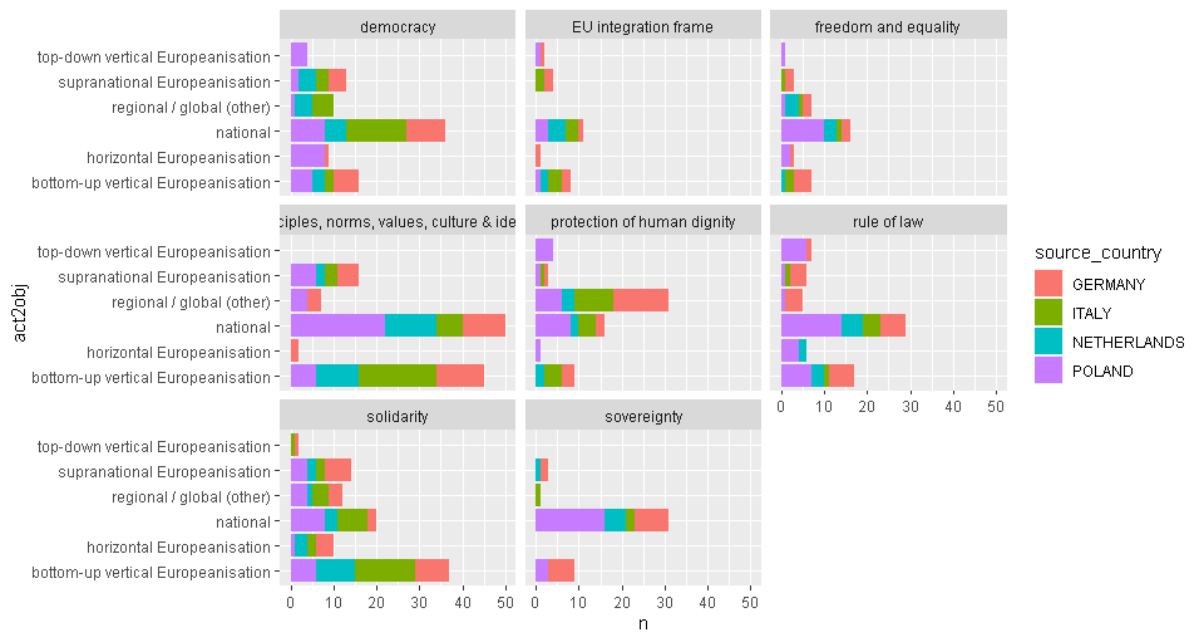
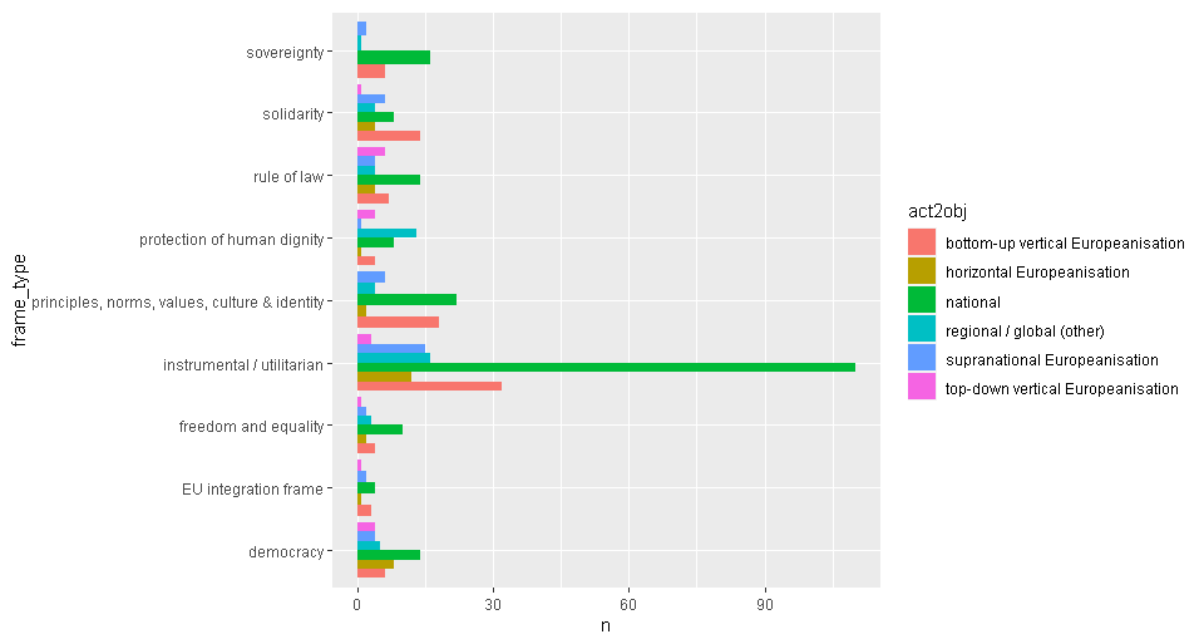


Figure 5.49: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of frame types according to discursive territorial scope



Issue field

As Table 5.113 shows, ‘macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ was the most prevalent issue field (250, i.e. 20%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (171, i.e. 14%), ‘trade and competition’ (124, i.e. 10%), ‘health’ (105, i.e. 9%), ‘travel and immigration’ and ‘defence and foreign policy’ (96, i.e. 8%), ‘European integration’ (92, i.e. 8%), and ‘energy and environment’ (88, i.e. 7%). The remaining ten issue fields (see Table 5.113 for details) fall below the mean (68, i.e. 6%). As Fig. 5.55 demonstrates, there does not appear to be much in the way of thematic convergence across the four countries, with a wide distribution present. As Table 5.114 elucidates, almost two-third of all representative claims in the field of ‘agriculture’ invoked national constituencies (61%) with half as many invoking EU/European objects. Almost half of claims in the field of ‘crime and security’ invoked national objects (45%) followed by 30% invoking EU-level objects (see Table 5.114 for a detailed breakdown of results). By contrast, three quarter of claims in ‘data protection and privacy’ invoked global constituencies with the remainder going to EU-level objects (Table 5.114). This is not overly surprising as issues related to data protection as perceived as global problems requiring solutions at the regional/global level. In contrast, the spread is more equally distributed in respect of ‘defence and foreign policy’ (Table 5.114). Although national objects are the most prevalent representing almost half of all representative claims of this sort (45%), EU-level objects are invoked 36%. 52% of claims in the issue field of ‘digital, culture, and media’ appeal to EU-level constituencies compared to 36% in respect of national constituencies (Table 5.114). Most claims in the field of ‘education’ refer to national objects (43%). This is not overly surprising as education firmly remains an exclusive competence of the nation state (Table 5.114). Interestingly, however, 29% of claims invoke global-level objects, closely followed by 28% of EU-level objects (Table 5.114). Despite the ‘energy and the environment’ becoming increasingly more Europeanised at the level of EU competences, almost half (44%) of all claims in this domain invoked national objects, which suggests that political actors still frame the issue as a domestic problem (Table 5.114). That said, when bottom-up and supranational variants of discursive Europeanisation are aggregated, almost an equivalent number refer to EU-level constituencies (41%). Not surprisingly, most claims in the field of ‘EU integration’ refer to supranational-level constituencies (50%). However, 39% still invoke national-level constituencies (Table 5.114). Not surprisingly, in the field of ‘health’ which is an exclusive national competence, claims are monopolised by national-level constituencies (63%) which was almost two-thirds higher than that of EU-level constituencies (Table 5.114). This provides strong evidence that the Covid-19 pandemic was approached from a strongly nationalistic perspective (Fig. 5.56 provides a visualization of results).

In the field of ‘human rights and civil liberties’, most claims, paradoxically, referred to national-level objects (53%) followed by three-tenths of EU-level objects (32%, see Table 5.114 for details). In ‘legal and constitutional’ matters, over half of all claims (53%) invoked national-level claims followed by

almost 30% referring to EU-level constituencies (Table 5.114). This provides evidence that the ‘nation state’ remains the central node of reference when discussing constitutional matters in the context of EU/European politics. Remarkably, despite monetary policy being conferred upon the EU, almost two-third of all claims in this policy domain referred to national-level interests (61%) whereas 35% of claims referred to EU-level objects (Table 5.114)³⁷. In the miscellaneous category of ‘general politics’, most claims referred to national objects (61%) with less half this amount referring to EU-level constituencies (Table 5.114). This reinforces the notion that the *modus operandi* of politics is predominantly national, that is, political actors chiefly frame political matters in terms of national interests and pitching to national constituencies whom are after all the *de jure* represented. Interestingly, almost three-quarter of claims in the domain of ‘science and technology’ refer to EU-level objects (72%), with only 18% invoking national-level constituencies (Table 5.114). Not surprisingly, national-level objects prevail in the issue field of ‘social welfare and labour’ (50%) with the EU-level registering 20% fewer objects (Table 5.114). This is not particularly surprising as welfare and issues related to employment as mainly national-level prerogatives. Remarkably, despite ‘trade and competition’ policy being an exclusive EU competence, national-level objects prevail (52%) compared to EU-level constituencies (35%, see Table 5.114 for details). I suspect this is because Brexit was the most pertinent issue and plenty of publicity was afforded to British political actors, particularly in the Dutch newspapers (see Fig. 5.67, the one-mode Dutch network which elucidates the prominence of British actors in the Dutch public sphere). As expected, in the principally national competence of ‘transport and infrastructure’, national-level objects prevailed (64%) compared to 36% of EU-level objects (see Table 5.114 for details). In a similar vein, in the issue domain of ‘travel and immigration’, national-level objects dominated (59%) with almost three times fewer claims invoking EU-level constituencies (21%, see Table 5.114 for details). This is not wholly surprising as migration policy remains the exclusive competence of nation states (Fig. 5.56 provides a visualization of results).

As Table 5.115 shows, ‘Macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ was the most prevalent issue field in all but three variants of Europeanisation, namely, regional/global, and horizontal and top-down vertical (Table 5.115). Regarding bottom-up vertical claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘macroeconomic and fiscal’ (19%) followed by ‘European integration’ (15%) and ‘politics: general (other)’ (13%), ‘defence and foreign policy’ and ‘trade and competition’ (9%, see Table 19 for a detailed breakdown of results). Regarding horizontal claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘health’ (19%) closely followed by ‘defence and foreign policy’ and ‘politics: general (other)’ (18%), and ‘trade and competition’ and ‘travel and immigration’ (9% each, see Table 19 for a detailed breakdown of results). Regarding national claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘macroeconomic and fiscal policy’

³⁷ I expect this is because many of the claims relate to fiscal policy and taxes which remain the firm prerogative of nation states. With the benefit of hindsight, I should have disaggregated monetary from fiscal issues as the former is an exclusive EU competence in contrast to the latter which is an exclusive national one.

(23%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (16%), ‘trade and competition’ and ‘health’ with 10% each respectively, and ‘travel and immigration’ (9%, see Table 19 for a detailed breakdown of results). Concerning representative claims of a ‘regional/global’ scope, the most prevalent issue domains were matters pertaining to ‘travel and immigration’ (20%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (12%), and ‘defence and foreign policy’, ‘energy and environment’ and ‘social welfare and labour’ scoring 11% each respectively (Table 5.115). For supranational claims, the most prevalent issue field was ‘macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ (25%), succeeded by ‘trade and competition’ (15%) and ‘health’ (13%, see Table 19 for a detailed breakdown of results). Regarding top-down vertical claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘trade and competition’ (23%), followed by ‘legal and constitutional matters’ (20%), ‘macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ (11%), and matters pertaining to ‘energy and the environment’ (9%).

Table 5.115: Relative frequency distribution of issue fields by discursive territorial scope

issfield	bottom-up vertical	horizontal	national	regional / global	supranational	top-down vertical	μ
Agriculture	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Crime and Security	1%	2%	1%	5%	2%	3%	2%
Data Protection and Privacy	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%
Defence and Foreign Policy	10%	18%	7%	11%	6%	3%	9%
Digital, Culture and Media	4%	0%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Education	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%
Energy and Environment	9%	5%	6%	11%	9%	9%	8%
European Integration	15%	5%	5%	9%	4%	3%	7%
Health	3%	19%	10%	2%	13%	6%	9%
Human Rights and Civil Liberties	1%	2%	2%	0%	2%	6%	2%
Legal and Constitutional	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	20%	5%
Macroeconomic and Fiscal Governance	19%	9%	23%	5%	25%	11%	15%
Politics: General (Other)	13%	18%	16%	12%	7%	6%	12%
Science and Technology	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%	1%
Social Welfare and Labour	4%	4%	3%	11%	2%	0%	4%
Trade and Competition	9%	9%	10%	5%	15%	23%	12%
Transport and Infrastructure	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Travel and Immigration	6%	9%	9%	20%	3%	3%	8%

Figure 5.53: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of issue fields by country

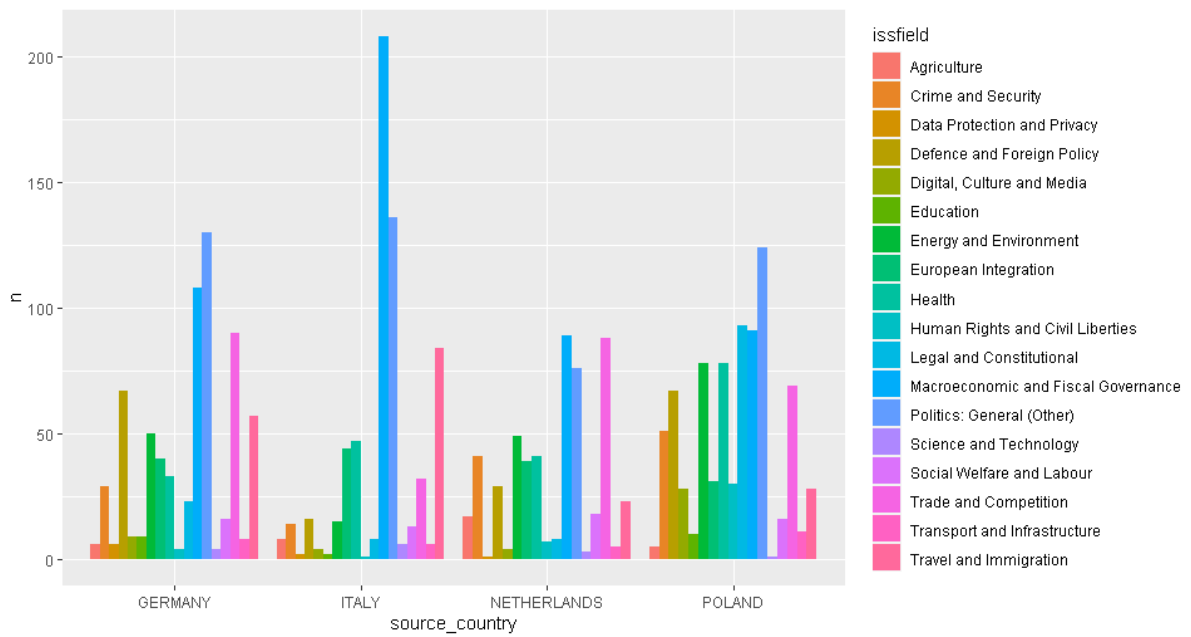


Figure 5.54: Faceted bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of issue fields by country

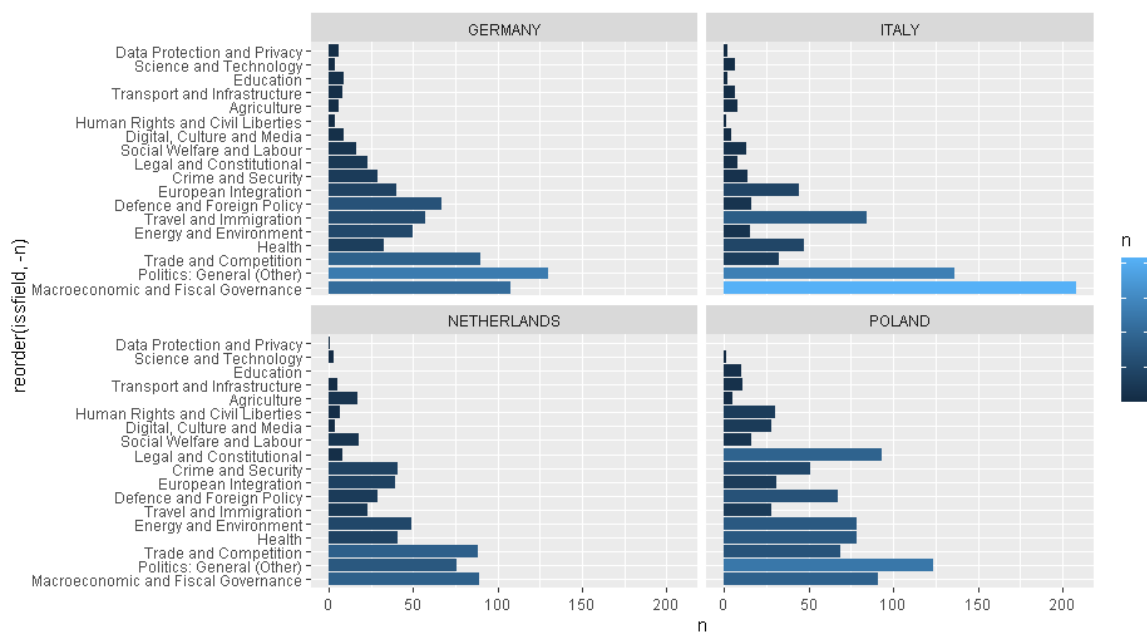


Figure 5.55: Box plot to show the statistical relative frequency distribution of issue fields by country

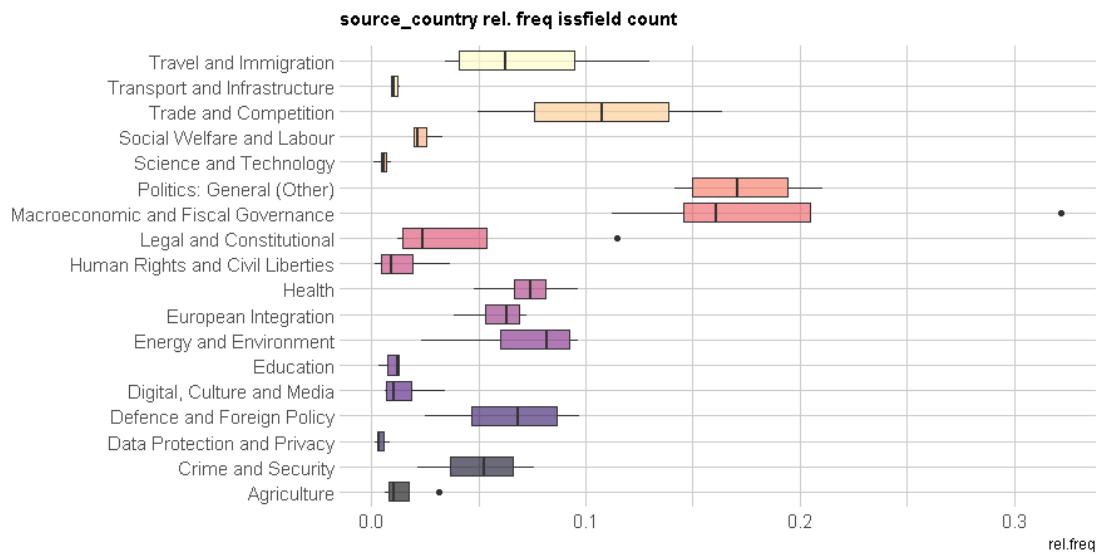


Figure 5.56: Bar plot to illustrate the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by issue field

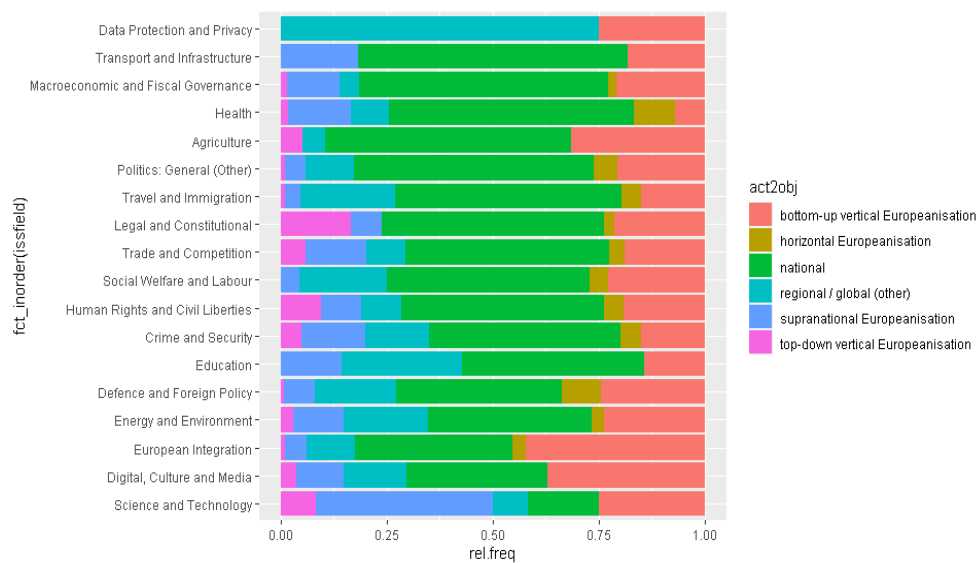
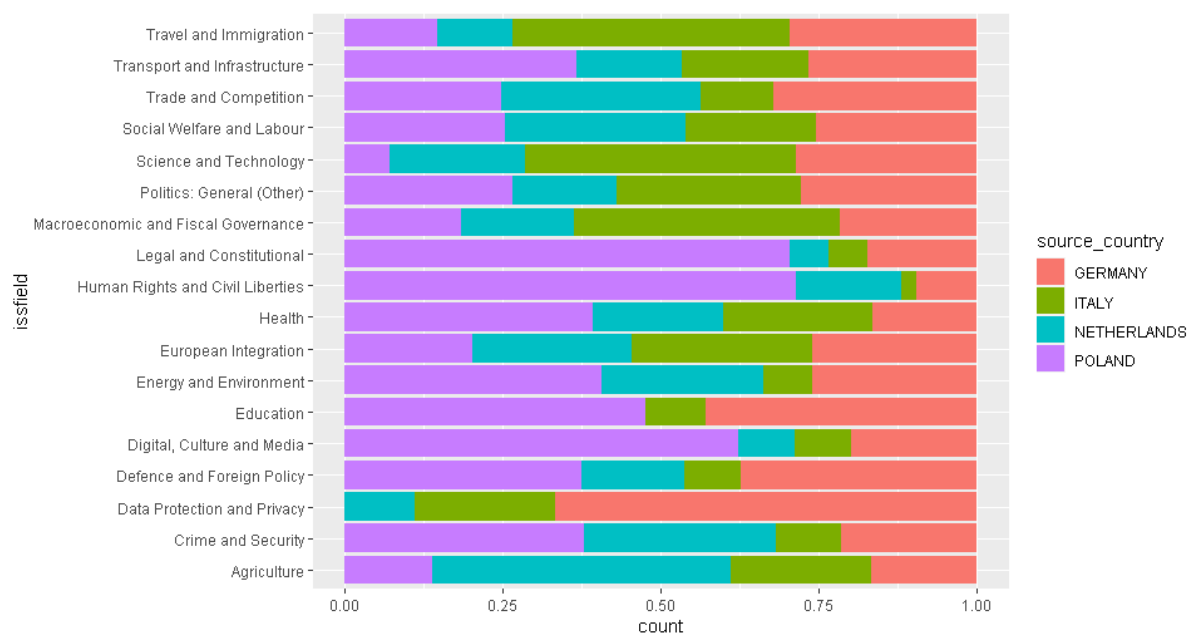


Figure 5.57: Bar plot to illustrate the relative frequency distribution of issue fields by discursive territorial scope



Valence

‘National’ discursive scopes have a negative valence mean score (-0.13) which is broadly in line with expectations (Table 5.116). As the bar plot below (Fig. 5.58) shows, there were more negative evaluations of the EU when national interests/identities were invoked. Claimants who invoked constituencies of ‘other EU member states’ different to that of the claimant (i.e. horizontal) generally held negative evaluations towards the EU (see Table 5.116 for a details breakdown and Fig. 5.58 for a visualisation of results). Thus, the flagging of national identity – whether via domestically or horizontally – appears to be accompanied by generally negative evaluations to the EU. This provides tentative support to the ‘conflict identity’ framing thesis. However, ‘global (other)’ discursive scopes registered the highest negative value (-0.75). This is not surprising as claimants’ are of third country origin so are unlikely to hold favourable evaluations toward a ‘foreign’ polity entity. Discursive dimensions of a ‘top-down’ kind did not contain any evaluative statements about the EU (see Table 5.116 for details). Not surprisingly, there were generally positive evaluations of the EU when European-level constituencies were invoked (e.g. supranational). Naturally, actors operating at the supranational level are going to hold broadly favourable views about the EU (Fig. 5.58). In total, there is a fairly balanced assessment of the EU (0.02, see Table 5.116). Remarkably, despite the precarious circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic, evaluations of the EU were more positive than negative (0.02, see Table 5.116). Moreover, Table 5.118 reveals two notable findings: firstly, there is a significantly higher proportion of national claims with negative EU valence (63% compared to 34%) and secondly, there is a significant difference in the number of supranational claims accompanied by

positive valence (see Table 5.118 for a detailed breakdown and Fig 5.63 for an illustration of results). This is in line with expectations as negative valence is a form of accentuating differences between in- and out-groups via evaluative statements. This lends tentative support to the ‘conflict identity framing’ thesis.

As we have more data available for evaluations of addressees, I thought it would be instructive to also examine discursive dimensions and addressee evaluations together. Again, as Table 5.117 elucidates, we see a similar trend to above, with ‘national’ (-0.59), ‘horizontal’ (-0.58), and ‘regional/global (other)’ (-0.65) discursive scopes more negative in evaluation toward addressees than ‘top-down vertical’ (-0.54), ‘bottom-up vertical’ (-0.13) and ‘supranational Europeanised’ (-0.31) discursive scopes (see Fig.5.60 for a visualisation of results). Invoking ‘the nation’ (whether domestically, horizontally) appears to yield more negative evaluations towards internal or external ‘others’ (whom are typically the targets of political demands and sources of criticism). As the Fig.5.60 demonstrates, there was a significant net decrease in the number of ‘national’ and ‘horizontal’ discursive dimensions holding positive evaluations of the addressee. The decrease in ‘national’ scopes are particularly noticeable, with circa 225 claims with negative valence compared to only circa 50 with positive valence (see Fig. 5.61 and Fig 5.62). Interestingly, net addressee evaluations (-0.47) were more negative than evaluations of the EU (0.02) which suggests that claimants are more critical of actors in general than EU actors in particular (see Table 5.116 and Table 5.117 for a comparison).

Figure 5.58: Bar plot to show mean EU evaluations according to discursive territorial scope

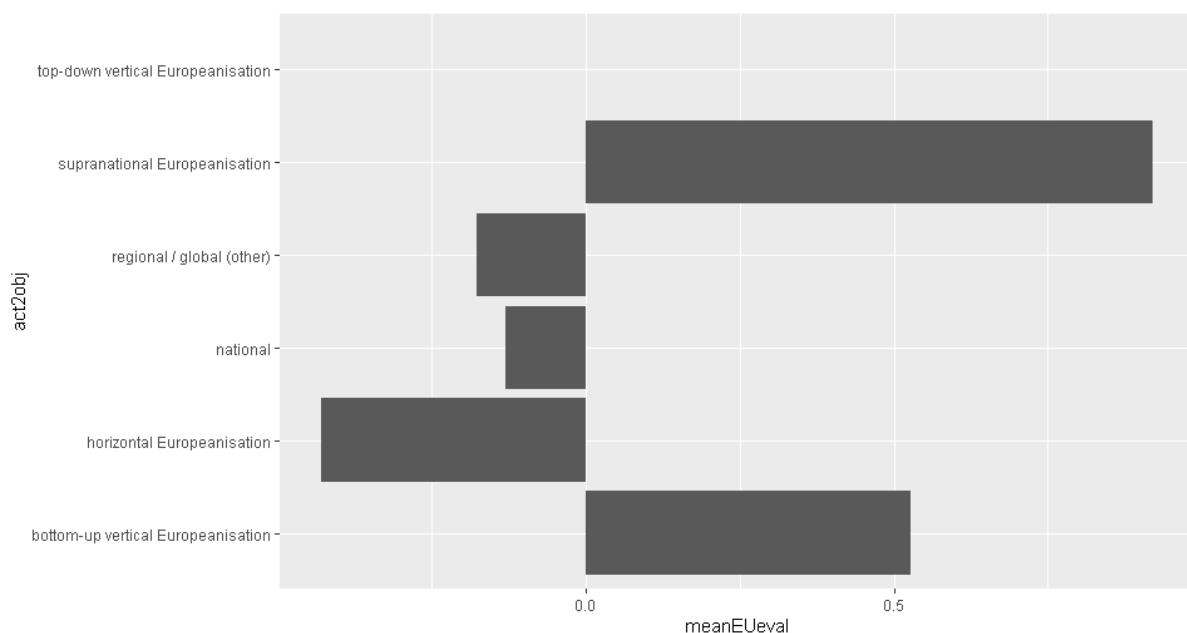


Figure 5.59: Absolute frequency of “national” representative claims according to EU valence (+/-)

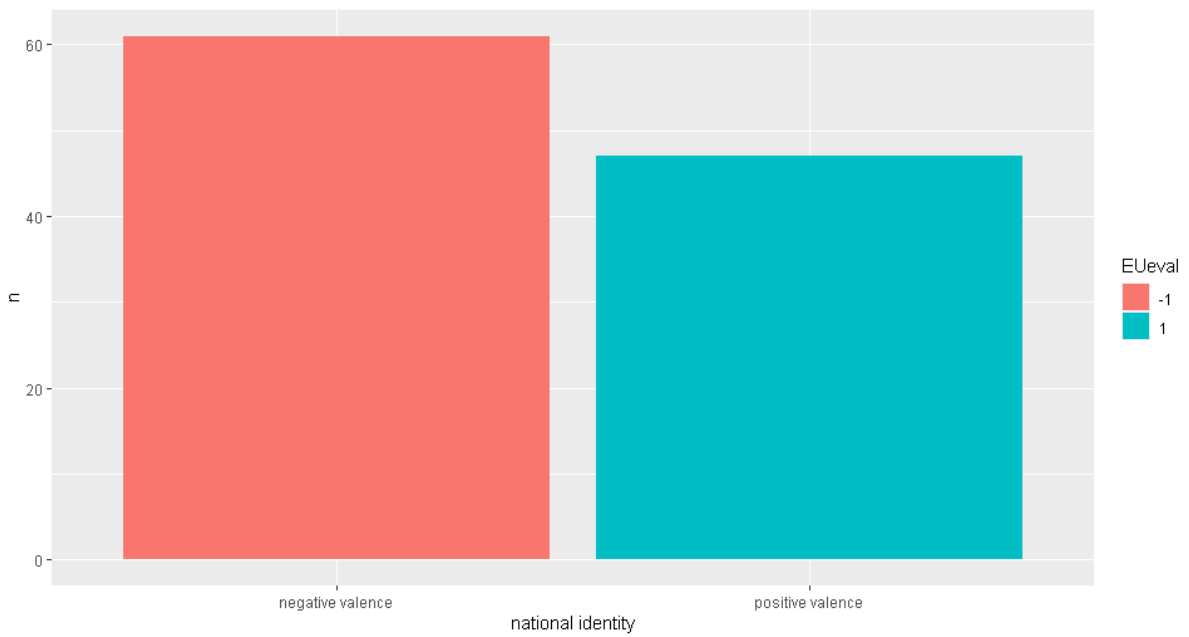


Figure 5.61: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of “national” representative claims according to addressee valence (+/-)

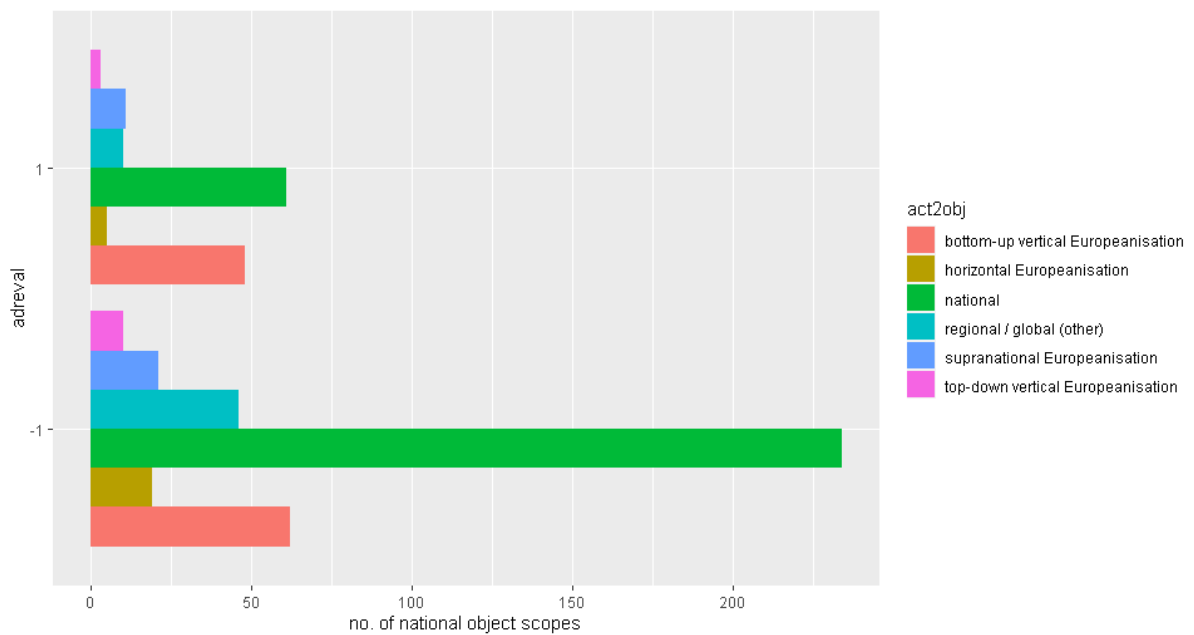


Figure 5.62: Absolute frequency of “national” representative claims according to addressee valence (+/-):

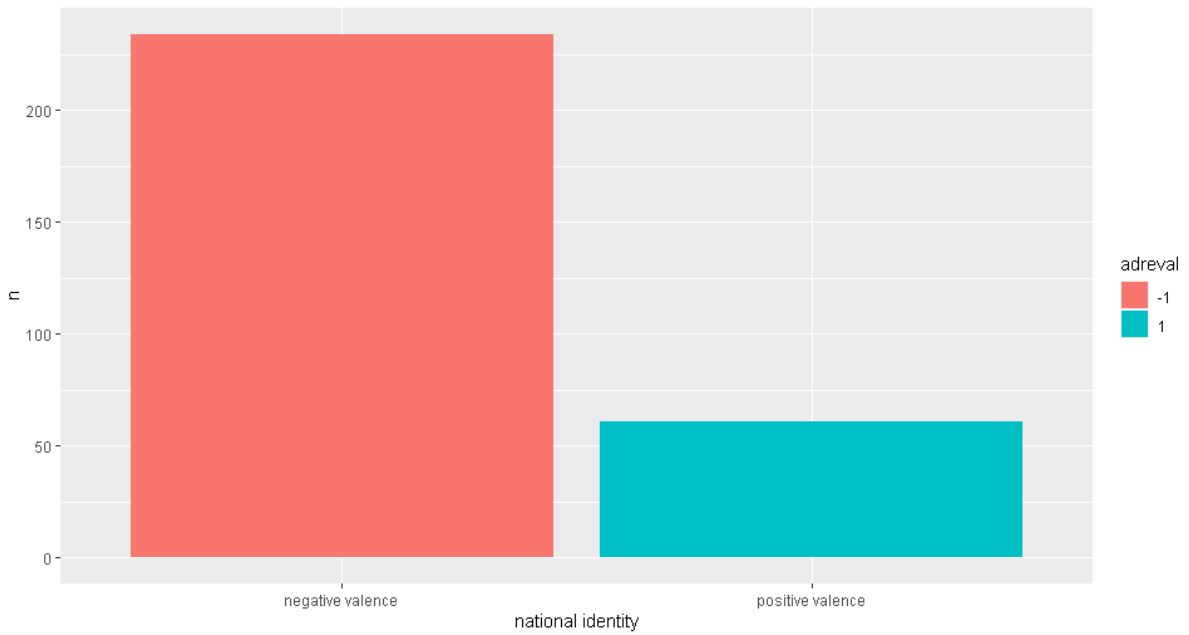
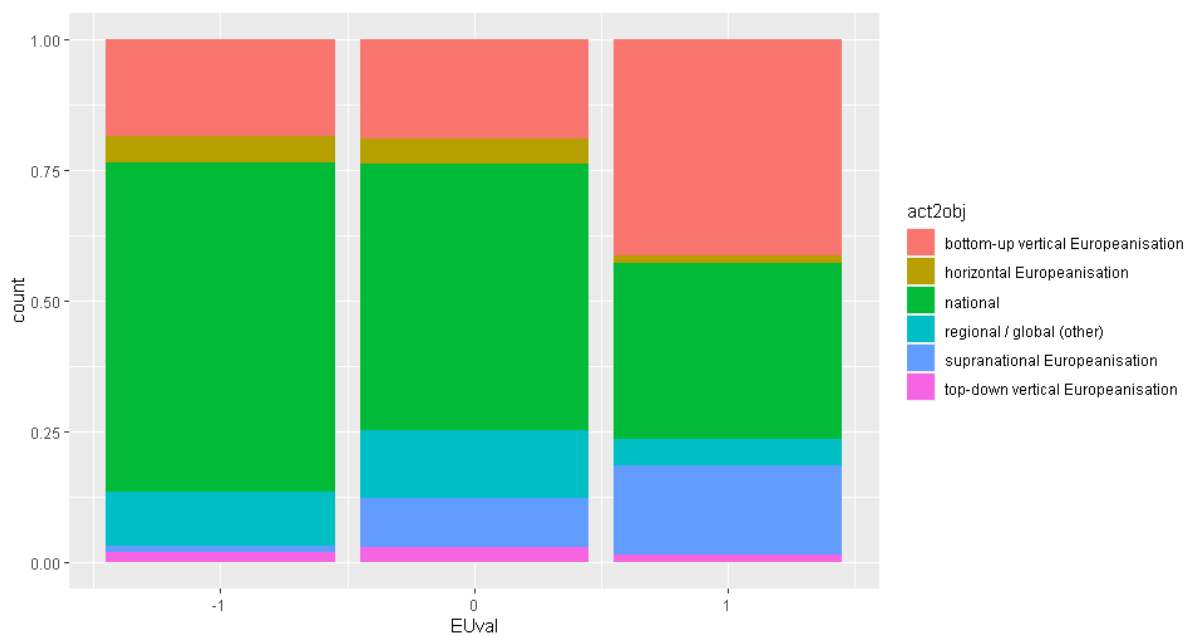


Figure 5.63: Bar plot to show the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes according to EU valence



SNA overview – Unipartite network

Initial verdict...

An ancillary question of my research project is to also gauge to what extent networks are structurally nationalised or conversely—Europeanised? I would also like to conclude my analysis by exploring whether there is a correlation between structural and normative dimensions of discourse. Previous research shows that public spheres are fairly well connected to the supranational level, however, public spheres have shown to be resolutely domesticated in scope, that is, EU affairs tends to be ensnared in domestic politics. To this end, in this section, I limit my analysis to the claimant and addressee of political claims. Previous research has already examined these two variables in depth. I, thus, do not deem it is necessary to examine the structural aspects of political claims in depth. Previous research has consistently shown which types of actors are most visible (government/executive) and communicative linkages remain denser at the domestic level, that is, contestation is more pronounced between political actors operating within the domestic political landscape. As this question does not comprise the main focus of my research, I synthesise the main findings using SNA. A logical starting point is to gauge the territorial scope of communicative linkages (a la Koopmans). To this end, I have generated one-mode (unipartite) networks for each of the country samples in addition to an aggregate network which I call—the “Euronet”³⁸. Fig. 5.64 is a network graph visualisation of the “Euronet”.

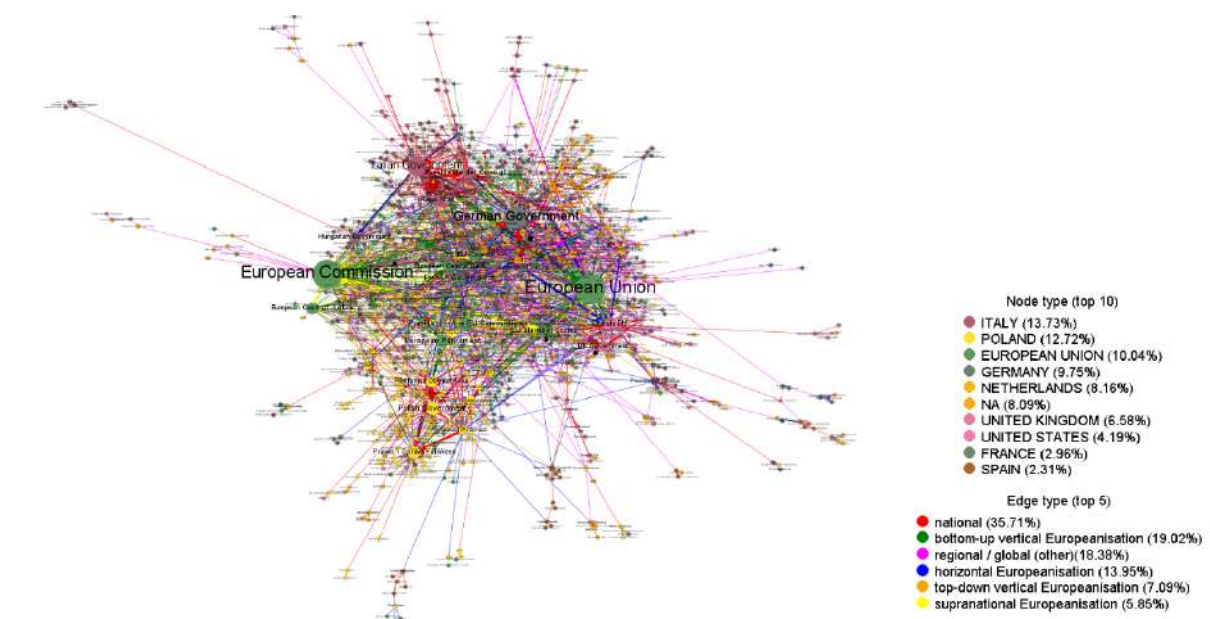
As Table 5.119 shows, circa 35% of claimants referred to addressees of the same nationality³⁹. This indicates that debates about EU politics tend not to travel beyond the borders of the nation state, and in the main, debates remain a toing and froing between political actors of their respective nations. The preponderance of domestic communicative linkages (i.e. act2adr) was found across all networks, with the Italian (38.76%), Polish (38.42%), and Dutch networks (37.75%) recording the highest share of political claims of this kind (see Table 5.119 for a detailed breakdown). The German network represents an outlier with the share of domestic claims lower than the other three networks by circa 10% (27.47%). In line with previous findings, communicative linkages of a bottom-up vertical kind (mean = 19.26%) demonstratively outweigh top-down vertical communicative linkages by a ratio of three-to-one (mean = 6.85%). This marked asymmetry in terms of vertical communicative linkages were found across all networks, however the differences between them were rather modest in the Polish network (bottom-up vertical linkages registered a share of 14.41% of claims vis-à-vis top-down vertical linkages comprising 8.90% of claims, see Table 5.119 for details). Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results (see Tables 5.120-5.123 for more), we can clearly see that EU-level actors score

³⁸ That is, a network containing actors of the same type. As claimants and addressees are both political actors whom can both be *senders* and *receivers* of claims, the network is bidirectional.

³⁹ The alignment of the *claimants'* and *addressees'* country of origin is the proxy variable for *domestication*.

much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality which is indicative of node passivity in the network. These patterns reinforce our understanding that the EU is largely a passive actor in the public sphere with limited inputs of political communication. These inferences are supported by the modest share of supranational communicative linkages (mean = 6.93%, see Table 5.119 for details). These results held across all four networks, although in the German network, circa one-tenth of all claims (9.05%) were of supranational in territorial scope (see Table 5.119). In all four networks, the share of horizontal linkages were remarkably similar (ranging from 12.45% in the Dutch sample to 14.14% in the German sample). This modest share of horizontal Europeanisation in structural discourse is in line with previous findings (see Table 5.119). Remarkably, communicative linkages between among non-EU actors comprised the third most prominent territorial scope of political claims (mean = 17.93%). Italy, however, was the notable outlier with only 12.25% of political claims composed of regional/global communicative linkages (see Table 5.119 for a detailed breakdown of results).

Figure 5.64: One-mode network graph of the “Euro net”



Across country differences

Germany

As the network graph below shows (Fig. 5.65), in the German network, domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (27.47%). However, if we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they exceed domestic communicative linkages (circa 51%). Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were Europeanised, on the whole. However, actors representing nation states remain the main protagonists. The patterns of structural Europeanisation indicate a strong intergovernmental logic of Europeanisation, as exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (20.39%) and horizontal claims (14.14%), implying that non-supranational actors drive Europeanisation. By the same token, EU-level actors appear to play a bit-part role as shown by the modest share of top-down vertical (7.73%) and supranational claims (9.05%). As far as actors are concerned, the top-10 most prominent actors (nodes) were: German actors (20.91%) followed by EU-level (15.3%), British (9.48%), NA⁴⁰ (7.54%), Hungarian (4.09%), Italian (3.88%), Polish (3.66%), American (3.45%), French (3.23%) and Dutch actors (3.23%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques and communities within the whole network. The most discernible cliques are vertices representing the EU (coloured in green) and a German clique (coloured in grey). However, on the periphery of the network, there are several small British (coloured in pink), Polish (coloured in yellow), Italian (coloured in red) and Hungarian cliques (coloured in dark grey, see Fig. 5.65 for an overview of the German network). Below is a summary of SNA statistics for the German network.

⁴⁰ The ‘NA’ value was ascribed to claimants in cases wherein I was not able to infer the nationality of the claimant.

Figure 5.65: One-mode German network graph

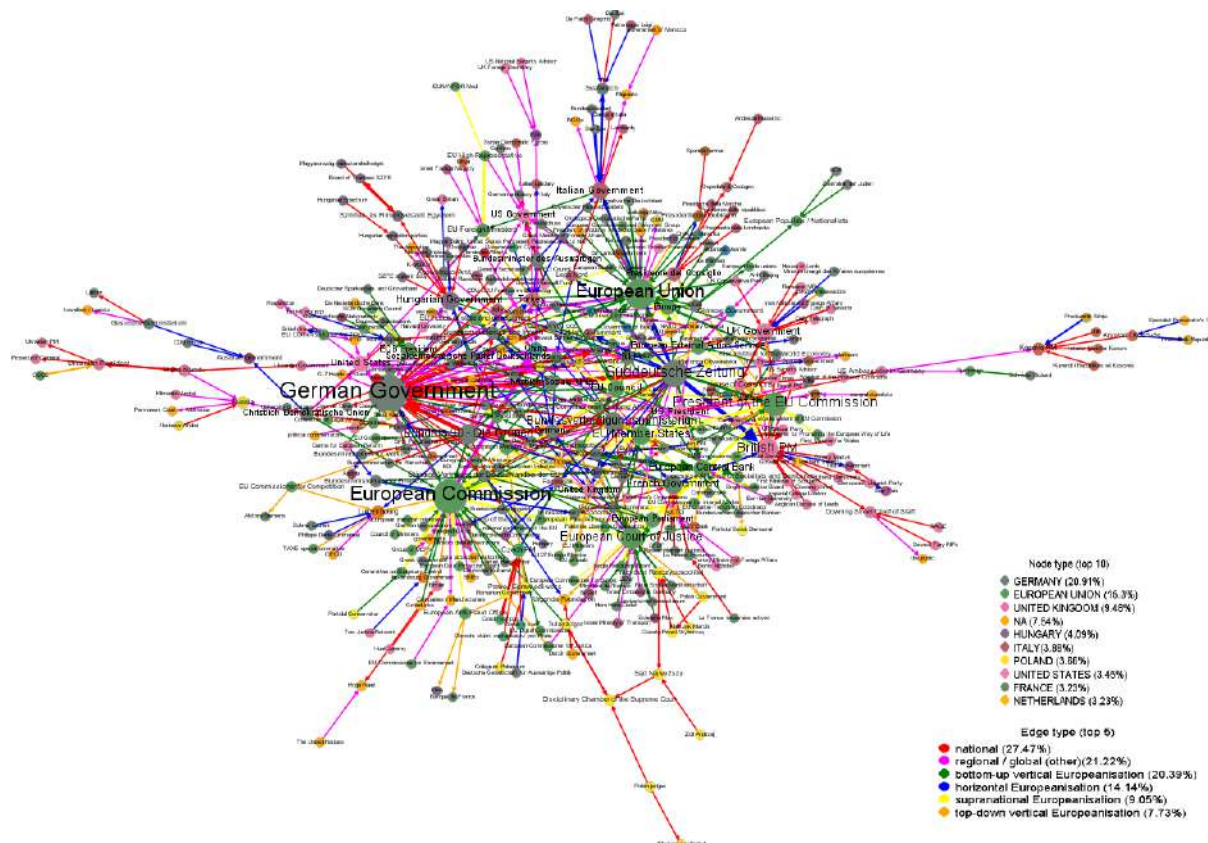


Table 5.120: SNA summary statistics for the German network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
European Commission	4381	European Commission	1.00	German Government	48	European Union	31	SAÄ'deutsche Zeitung	29
German Government	4221	China	0.61	European Commission	41	European Commission	27	German Government	25
British PM	3392	EU Member States	0.60	European Union	35	German Government	23	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	17
European Court of Justice	3276	United States	0.58	SAÄ'deutsche Zeitung	29	British PM	15	President of the EU Commission	17
French Government	3272	European Court of Justice	0.57	President of the EU Commission	24	European Court of Justice	14	European Commission	14
President of the EU Commission	2238	European Union	0.54	British PM	22	EU Member States	14	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11
Polish Government	1948	German Government	0.51	European Court of Justice	21	European Central Bank	11	Bundesminister des AuswÄrtigen	9
GazetÄ™ Przed-WyborczÄ™...	1856	EU Council	0.49	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	18	Hungarian Government	10	European External Action Service	8
Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	1820	French Government	0.48	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	17	UK Government	10	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	8
EU Council	1690	EU heads of state and government	0.45	EU Member States	16	United States	10	Bild	8
SA...d NajwyÅšszy	1603	ex-ECB President	0.44	Hungarian Government	15	French Government	9	Christlich Soziale Union	7
Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	1568	Netherlands	0.43	French Government	15	EU Council	9	European Court of Justice	7
Tuleya Igor	1476	European Central Bank	0.39	UK Government	14	China	9	British PM	7
House of Commons	1430	European Parliament	0.38	European Central Bank	14	Europe	9	French Government	6
Hungarian Government	1378	United Kingdom	0.37	Italian Government	13	Turkey	9	Italian Government	6
Czech PM	1296	Luxembourg	0.35	EU Council	13	European Parliament	8	US President	6
European Parliament	1181	Czech PM	0.33	US President	12	United Kingdom	8	Hungarian Government	5
European People's Party	1126	Turkey	0.33	United States	11	President of the EU Commission	7	DGB	5
UK Government	1120	Romanian Government	0.33	European External Action Service	10	Italian Government	7	Christlich Demokratische Union	5
Presidente del Consiglio	1073	Britain	0.33	ECB President	10	Germany	7	European People's Party	5
US President	1024	Companies / Manufacturers	0.33	European Parliament	10	US Government	7	Bundesminister des Innern	5
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	940	governments	0.33	Bundesminister des AuswÄrtigen	9	Luxembourg	7	Presidente del Consiglio	5
EU Member States	823	European transport ministers	0.33	Christlich Soziale Union	9	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	6	UK Government	4
Christlich Soziale Union	817	SMEs	0.33	China	9	ECB President	6	European Union	4
Single Resolution Board	793	Greek Government	0.33	Europe	9	US President	6	EU Council	4

Italy

As the network graph below shows (Fig. 5.66), in the Italian network, domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (38.76%). This share is the highest of all four networks, suggesting that political claims found in Italian newspapers, were the most domesticated. However, as with the German network, when we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they slightly exceed that of domestic communicative linkages (circa 48.8%). Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when national and non-European political claims are aggregated (circa 51%), they exceed that of Europeanised claims. As with the German network, collective actors at the national level remain the main protagonists. The patterns of structural Europeanisation indicate a strong intergovernmental logic of Europeanisation, as exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (22.29%) and horizontal claims (13.45%), which indicates that non-supranational actors drive structural Europeanisation in the public sphere. By the same token, EU-level actors play a bit-part role as active protagonists, as shown by the modest share of top-down vertical (6.43%) and supranational claims (6.63%). In fact, the differences between the number of claims emanating from the national and EU-level are even more pronounced in the Italian vis-à-vis the German sample (see Fig. 5.66 for details). Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results (Table 5.121), we can clearly see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality, which is indicative of node passivity in the Italian network. These patterns reinforce our understanding that the EU is largely a passive actor in the Italian public sphere with limited inputs of political communication. As far as actors are concerned, the top-10 most prominent actors (nodes) were Italian actors who comprised almost half of all actors (44.63%). By contrast, there were one-third fewer EU-level actors (15.54%), followed by actors without a decipherable country of affiliation (8.47%), German (5.65%), American (3.95%), French (3.39%), British (3.39%), Polish (2.54%), Spanish (1.98%) and Dutch actors (1.98%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of 'national' cliques and communities within the whole network. There are several cliques and sub-groups of Italian origin (the vertices coloured in rose-pink) and EU-supranational origin (the vertices coloured in green), and a small clique of British origin (coloured in light-pink) positioned in the periphery of the network (see Fig. 5.66 for an overview of the Italian network). Below is a summary of the most important node centrality measures for the Italian network.

Figure 5.66: One-mode Italian network graph

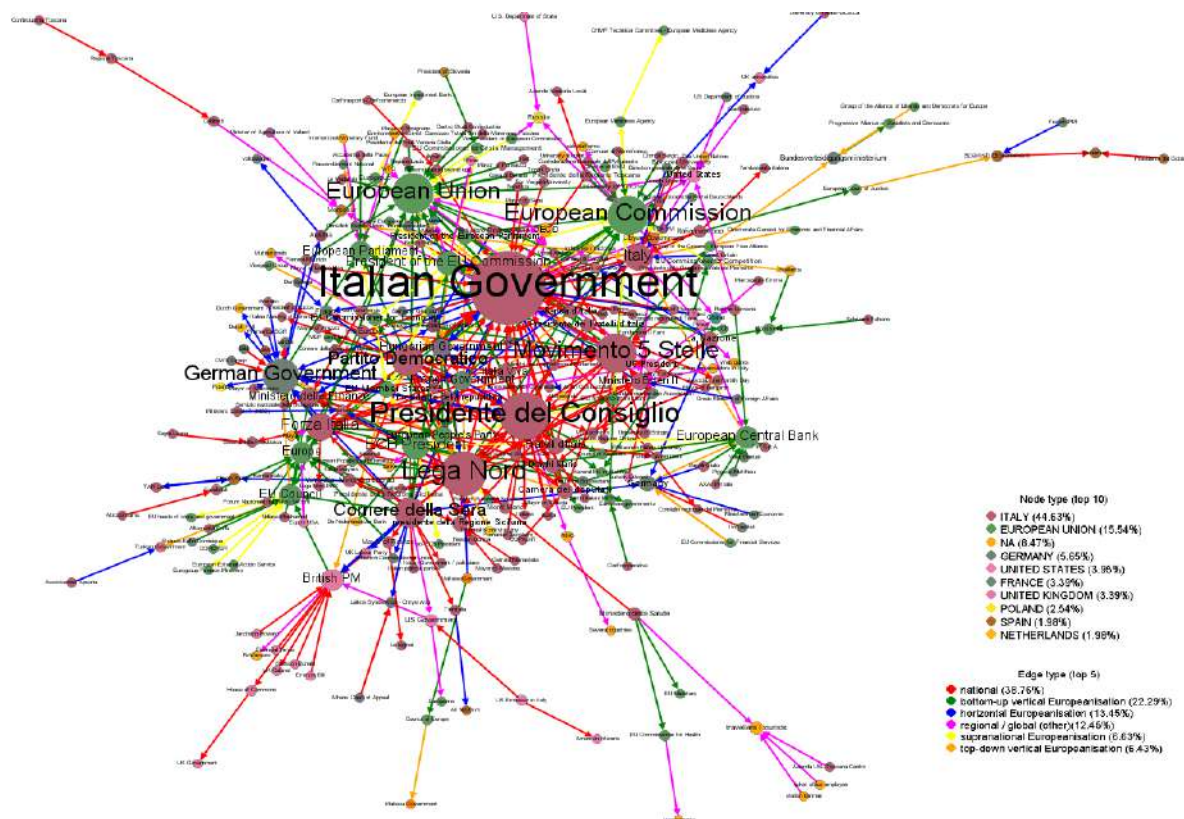


Table 5.121: SNA summary statistics for the Italian network

	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
Italian Government	7087	1.00	Italian Government	61	Italian Government	44	Presidente del Consiglio	22	
Lega Nord	4085	0.71	Presidente del Consiglio	37	European Union	29	Corriere della Sera	20	
European Commission	4017	0.68	Lega Nord	34	European Commission	20	Partito Democratico	17	
Presidente del Consiglio	3821	0.53	European Union	30	Lega Nord	17	Lega Nord	17	
German Government	3444	0.46	Movimento 5 Stelle	29	Italy	17	Italian Government	17	
Movimento 5 Stelle	2306	0.41	European Commission	29	Presidente del Consiglio	15	Movimento 5 Stelle	17	
European Union	2001	0.39	German Government	25	German Government	15	Forza Italia	14	
EU Council	1666	0.36	Partito Democratico	21	Movimento 5 Stelle	12	German Government	10	
British PM	1527	0.32	Corriere della Sera	20	Europe	12	President of the EU Commission	9	
President of the EU Commission	1398	0.31	Forza Italia	18	European Central Bank	11	European Commission	9	
EU Member States	1387	0.31	Italy	17	ECB President	10	La Nazione	7	
Partito Democratico	1265	0.26	ECB President	16	European Parliament	9	French Government	7	
ECB President	1003	0.25	President of the EU Commission	14	British PM	8	European People's Party	6	
Ministero delle Finanze	883	0.23	European Central Bank	13	EU Council	7	Ministero delle Finanze	6	
European Parliament	776	0.23	European Parliament	12	Germany	7	ECB President	6	
Fratelli d'Italia	647	0.22	EU Council	12	Hungarian Government	6	EU Council	5	
Ministero Esteri IT	644	0.22	British PM	12	presidente della Regione Siciliana	6	President of the European Parliament	5	
Italia Viva	621	0.21	Europe	12	President of the EU Commission	5	Ministero Esteri IT	5	
Austria	409	0.21	French Government	10	EU Member States	5	Italia Viva	5	
Camera dei deputati	292	0.20	Hungarian Government	10	Camera dei deputati	5	Piu Europa	4	
Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	289	0.18	Ministero delle Finanze	10	United States	5	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	4	
European People's Party	286	0.18	European People's Party	9	Partito Democratico	4	Fratelli d'Italia	4	
Viminale - Ministero Interno	277	0.18	Italia Viva	9	Forza Italia	4	Hungarian Government	4	
Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	276	0.18	Fratelli d'Italia	8	Fratelli d'Italia	4	Italian vox pop	4	
Presidente della repubblica	261	0.18	Ministero Esteri IT	8	Ministero delle Finanze	4	British PM	4	

Netherlands

As the network graph below shows (Fig. 5.67), in the Dutch network – as with the other networks – domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (37.75%) which is remarkably similar to the Polish and Italian networks, with the German network a clear outlier in this regard. However, as with

the other networks, when we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they exceed that of domestic communicative linkages (circa 43.28%). Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when national and non-European political claims are aggregated (circa 57%), they exceed that of Europeanised claims. As with the other three networks, collective actors at the national level remain the main political entrepreneurs. This is exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (19.96%) and horizontal claims (12.45%) compared to the modest share of top-down vertical (4.35%) and supranational claims (6.62%). Indeed, the level of top-down vertical communicative linkages is particularly low in the Dutch network. Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results (Table 5.122), we can clearly see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality, which is indicative of node passivity in the Dutch network. These patterns reinforce our understanding that the EU is largely a passive actor in the Dutch public sphere with limited inputs of political communication. As far as the proportion of vertices are concerned, although domestic actors were the most abundant (circa 25%), EU actors comprised almost 15%, followed by a prominent share of British actors (circa 9%). This is remarkably similar to the German network, which indicates that the Dutch and German networks were far more Europeanised than the Polish and Italian networks. The prominent coverage conferred upon British actors in the Dutch and German networks (circa 9% respectively) suggests that the Brexit issue was more salient compared to Polish (6%) and Italian networks (3%). Actors without a decipherable country of affiliation comprised 8.62% of vertices, followed by neighbouring countries of the Netherlands namely French (5.13%) and German actors (4.9%), succeeded by Italian (4.66%), American (4.43%), Spanish (2.56%) and Polish actors (2.33%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of 'national' cliques and communities within the whole network. There are several cliques and sub-groups of Dutch (the vertices coloured in orange), EU-supranational (the vertices coloured in green) and British origin (the vertices coloured in pink) and a small clique of German origin (coloured in light-pink) positioned in the periphery of the network (see Fig. 5.67 for an overview of the Dutch network). Below is a summary of the most important node centrality measures for the Dutch network.

Figure 5.67: One-mode Dutch network graph

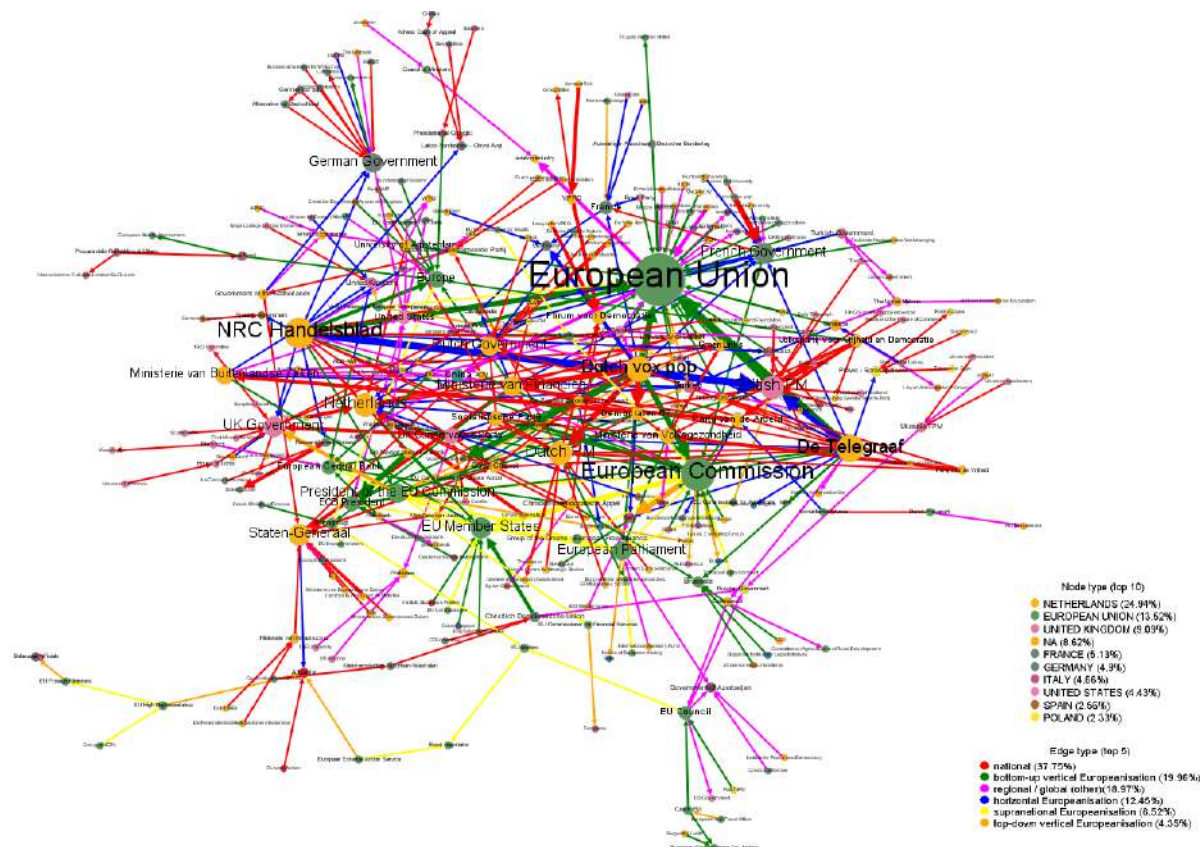


Table 5.122: SNA summary statistics for the Dutch network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
Dutch PM	470	China	1.00	European Union	42	European Union	37	NRC Handelsblad	22
European Union	319	EU Member States	0.93	European Commission	25	European Commission	20	Dutch vox pop	18
Socialistische Partij	307	Turkey	0.76	NRC Handelsblad	22	Netherlands	14	De Telegraaf	18
European Commission	298	European Commission	0.71	De Telegraaf	19	EU Member States	14	President of the EU Commission	8
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	297	European Union	0.64	Dutch vox pop	18	British PM	12	Ministerie van Financiën	7
Partij van de Arbeid	293	aviation industry	0.44	Dutch PM	16	Dutch Government	12	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	7
Ministerie van Financiën	291	Azerbaijan	0.43	Netherlands	16	French Government	11	University of Amsterdam	6
British PM	276	Indonesia	0.43	British PM	16	Dutch PM	11	Democraten 66	6
GroenLinks	268	Italy	0.41	Staten-Generaal	14	UK Government	11	Socialistische Partij	6
Forum voor Democratie	235	AstraZeneca	0.39	EU Member States	14	Staten-Generaal	11	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	6
President of the EU Commission	204	Bulgaria	0.39	French Government	13	Europe	10	European Parliament	5
French Government	166	Dutch Government	0.36	Ministerie van Financiën	13	German Government	9	Dutch PM	5
European Parliament	119	UK Conservative Party	0.33	UK Government	13	European Parliament	7	European Union	5
Staatskundig Gereformeerde Partij	119	Staten-Generaal	0.32	European Parliament	12	European Central Bank	7	European Commission	5
Government of the Netherlands	110	UK Government	0.31	President of the EU Commission	12	China	7	Christen-Democratisch Appiel	5
Staten-Generaal	104	Dutch PM	0.26	German Government	12	United States	7	UK Conservative Party	4
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	88	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	0.25	Dutch Government	12	Ministerie van Financiën	6	De Sociaal-Economische Raad	4
German Government	71	United States	0.24	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	11	France	6	EU Council	4
VPRO	62	British PM	0.23	Europe	10	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	6	Partij van de Arbeid	4
UK Conservative Party	61	Forum voor Democratie	0.22	UK Conservative Party	9	ECB President	6	British PM	4
France	61	GroenLinks	0.21	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	9	Turkey	6	GroenLinks	4
Eurogroup	61	Dutch Cabinet	0.20	ECB President	9	UK Conservative Party	5	Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	4
UK Government	54	Albania	0.20	European Central Bank	8	United Kingdom	5	University of Leiden	4
ECB President	54	French Government	0.19	Socialistische Partij	8	Brussels	5	Greece	4
Turkish Government	52	Europe	0.19	France	7	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	4	Government of the Netherlands	3

Poland

As the network graph below shows (Fig. 5.68), in the Polish network, domestic communicative linkages are clearly the most prevalent (38.46%) which is in line with the Dutch and Italian networks. This is illustrated by the preponderance of red-coloured edges (ties) in Fig. 5.68 below. However, as with the other three networks, when we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope (42.52%), they narrowly exceed that of domestic communicative linkages by just over 4%. Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when aggregated, national and non-European political claims (57.49%) exceed that of Europeanised political claims. As with the other three networks, collective actors at the national level remain the main protagonists. The patterns of structural Europeanisation indicate a strong intergovernmental logic of Europeanisation, as exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (14.41%) and horizontal claims (13.70%) compared to the modest share of top-down vertical (8.90%) and supranational claims (5.51%). Indeed, collective actors in EU member states operating at the national level (28.11%) make approximately twice as many claims as those operating at the supranational level (14.41%). In a departure from the other three networks, the share of bottom-up vertical communicative linkages are much lower. This suggests that political actors in the Polish public sphere still tend to target political demands at the national level. These lower levels of bottom-up communicative linkages appear to be compensated by above average linkages of the top-down kind (8.90%). Despite this, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results (Table 5.123), we can see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality (see Fig. 5.68, for details), which is indicative of node passivity in the Polish network. These patterns reinforce our understanding of the EU as a largely passive actor in the Polish public sphere, providing limited inputs into the chain of political communication. As far as actors are concerned, Polish actors (29.79%) were the most prominent – which is roughly in line with the mean value when all four networks are considered⁴¹ – featuring circa three times more vis-à-vis EU-level actors (10.82%). The share of vertices of EU-origin is the lowest of all four networks (10.82%). As I documented earlier, the share of EU-level actors was circa 15% in the German and Dutch networks respectively and circa 13% in the Italian network. The third most prominent vertices by country of origin (excluding NA values at 8.51%) were German (7.09%), British (6.56%), American (5.5%), Italian (4.96%), Spanish (3.37%), Belarusian (2.66%), and Russian actors (2.66%). As with the other four networks, clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques and communities within the whole network. There are several cliques and sub-groups comprising the network, with the most discernible ones being the Polish (the vertices coloured in yellow), EU-supranational (the vertices coloured in green) and British cliques (the vertices coloured in dark-pink). There are also several smaller

⁴¹ In the German network, domestic actors comprised circa 21%, in the Dutch network, 25%, and Italian, 45%.

American, Belarusian, and Italian cliques positioned in the periphery of the networks (see Fig. 5.68 for an overview of the Polish network). All four networks reinforce the phenomenon of ‘segmented Europeanisation’ which is a weak form of Europeanisation. This means that, in the main, collective actors talk about Europe within their own respective national public spheres. National collective actors may sparingly refer to EU-level actors and engage with other actors from different member states, however, in the main, debates remain domesticated. Below is a summary of the most important node centrality measures for the Italian network.

Figure 5.68: One-mode Polish network graph

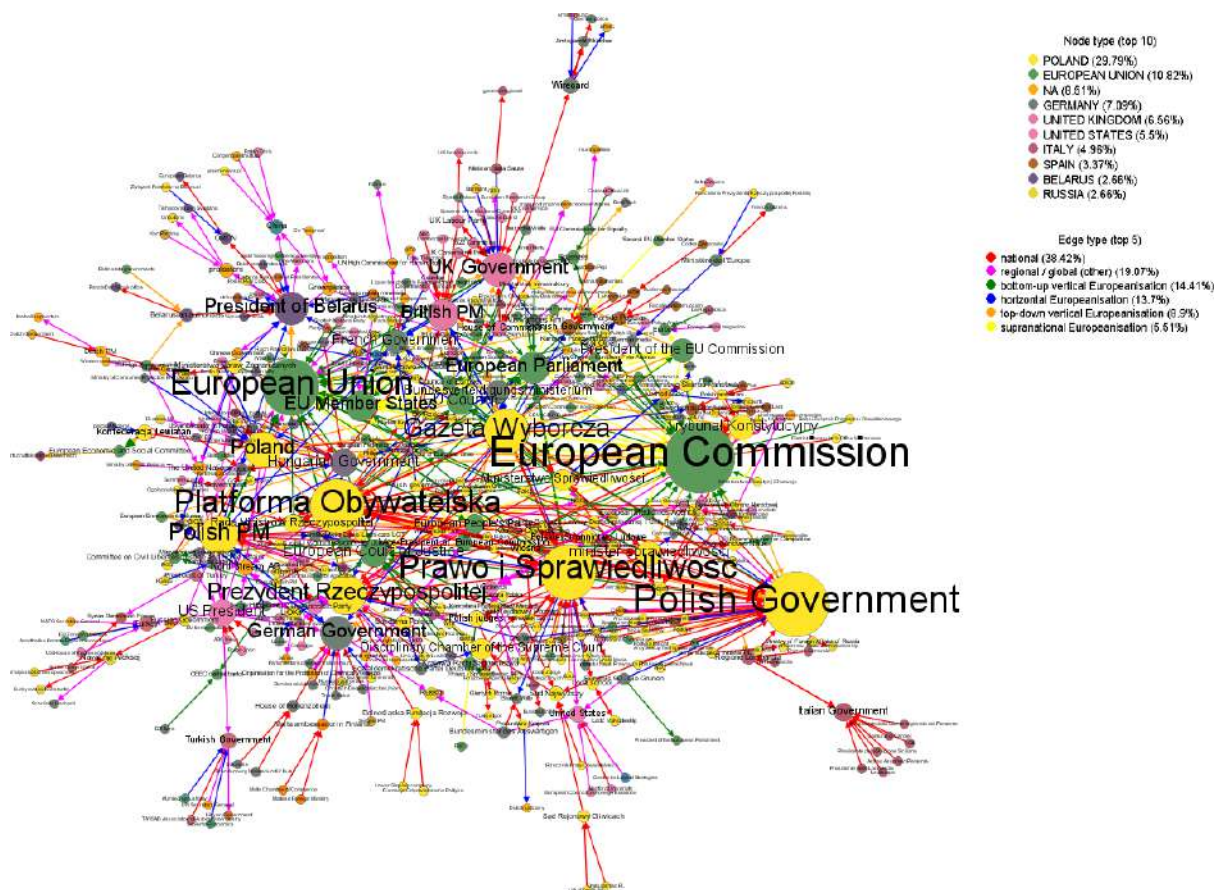


Table 5.123: SNA summary statistics for the Polish network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
European Commission	18047	European Union	1.00	European Commission	47	Polish Government	37	Gazeta Wyborcza	28
Polish PM	11084	European Commission	0.73	Polish Government	43	European Commission	31	Platforma Obywatelska	26
German Government	10905	Polish Government	0.42	European Union	37	European Union	31	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	17
European Court of Justice	8504	European Court of Justice	0.40	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	36	Poland	20	European Commission	16
Polish Government	6821	Poland	0.40	Platforma Obywatelska	35	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	19	Polish PM	14
Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	6258	German Government	0.37	Gazeta Wyborcza	28	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	18	President of the EU Commission	9
UOKiK	5718	President of Belarus	0.36	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	24	UK Government	15	minister sprawiedliwosci	9
Nord Stream AG	5705	EU Member States	0.36	Polish PM	23	EU Member States	15	US President	7
Poland	5356	TrybunaA, Konstytucyjny	0.33	Poland	21	President of Belarus	14	European People's Party	7
Staszewski Kazik	4416	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.27	UK Government	20	German Government	13	EU Council	6
Platforma Obywatelska	4073	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.25	German Government	19	European Parliament	13	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	6
French Government	4069	Spanish Government	0.24	President of Belarus	19	British PM	12	Polish Government	6
US President	3287	EU Council	0.23	European Parliament	18	European Court of Justice	11	German Government	6
Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	2961	Hungarian Government	0.23	British PM	17	TrybunaA, Konstytucyjny	11	European Union	6
British PM	2876	London	0.23	EU Member States	17	Hungarian Government	10	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	6
minister sprawiedliwosci	2736	Belarusian officials	0.23	European Court of Justice	15	Polish PM	9	UK Government	5
European Union	2607	Brazilian authorities	0.22	EU Council	14	Platforma Obywatelska	9	European Parliament	5
Hungarian Government	2415	minister sprawiedliwosci	0.22	US President	14	French Government	8	British PM	5
UK Government	2355	Polish judges	0.21	Hungarian Government	14	EU Council	8	Vice-President of European Commission	5
EU Council	2278	British PM	0.20	minister sprawiedliwosci	13	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	8	President of Belarus	5
Sejm	2148	Moderna	0.19	TrybunaA, Konstytucyjny	13	Italian Government	8	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	5
TrybunaA, Konstytucyjny	2141	United Kingdom	0.18	French Government	12	US President	7	French Government	4
President of Belarus	2136	Regione Lombardia	0.18	President of the EU Commission	12	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	7	AuswAortiges Amt	4
EU Member States	1949	PKN Orlen	0.18	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11	Rada MinistrA>w Rzeczypospolitej	6	European Court of Justice	4
Senat	1920	EU officials	0.18	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	10	United States	6	Wiosna	4

Scatter Analysis

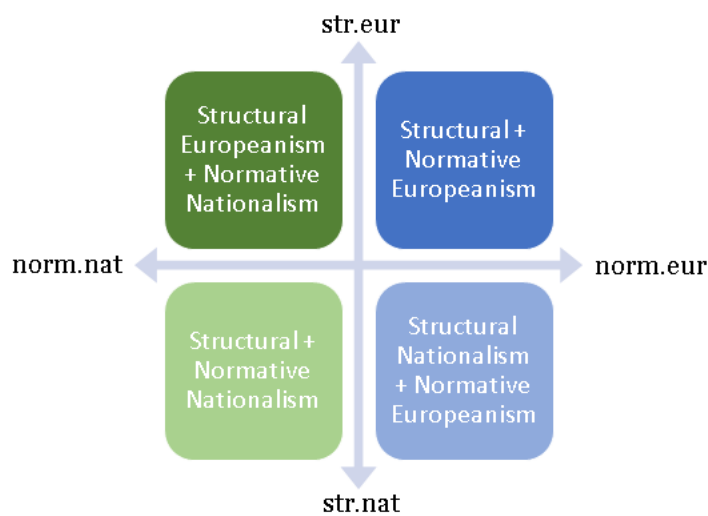
Building on the advice of Goertz (2006) and Fligstein (2008)⁴² who encourage researchers to theorise linkages between the dimensions of a concept, I explore whether relations pertain to structural (i.e. act2adr) and normative (i.e. act2obj) dimensions of (euro-)nationalism⁴³. In addition, with the use of scatterplots, I aim to establish where along the two-dimensional continuum model of discursive nationalism and/or Europeanism, the case studies under analysis can be collocated (see Fig. 5.69 for an illustration of the two-dimensional conceptual space model for types of ‘discursive nationalism’)⁴⁴. My expectation is that the cases analysed will be concentrated in the top left corner of the 2D graph as although I expect EU transborder connections to outweigh domestic/national ones (act2adr), I also expect national constituencies (act2obj) to outweigh EU ones.

⁴² Fligstein (2008:10) encourages researchers to not only appreciate the multidimensionality of ‘integration’ as a concept (i.e. political, economic, social), but to theorise linkages between these various dimensions (found in Eppler & Anders, 2016).

⁴³ To this end, I filtered all representative claims without *addressees* or *objects* (N = 978).

⁴⁴ No filter was applied as political claims without *addresses* and/or *objects* are nevertheless claims albeit without certain elements constituting representative claims-making (N = 3768). In order to create the scatterplot, firstly, I transposed the possible *act2adr* nominal variables into Boolean values. The value -1 was assigned to national scopes, the value of 0 was assigned to NA values and regional/global scopes, and a value of +1 was assigned to EU/European scopes. I then aggregated the mean scores according to newspaper, country, party family, and actor-type, and created a scatterplot to visualise the results.

Figure 5.69: A two-dimensional conceptual space model for types of ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism’



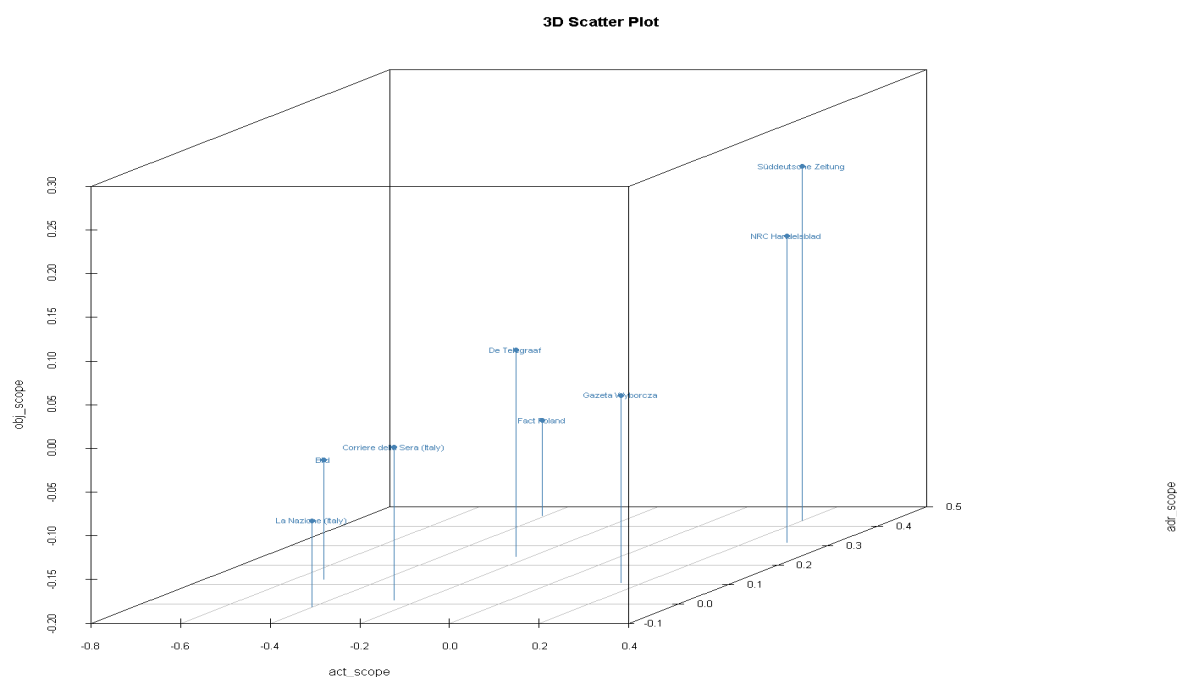
Newspaper

As the scatterplot shows (Fig. 5.70), we cannot generalise about all the newspapers examined. At most, we can argue that representative claims found in two newspapers, namely, NRC Handelsblad and Süddeutsche Zeitung are indicative of a structurally and normatively EPS. By contrast, the representative claims found in Bild and La Nazione are structurally and normatively nationalised. Representing the middle ground are Gazeta Wyborcza and de Telegraaf, with the former structurally quite Europeanised and the latter slightly more normatively Europeanised (see Fig. 5.70). In the Corriere della Sera, representative claims were mostly domesticated and more nationally self-referential than Europeanised (Fig. 5.70). By contrast, the opposite was found in the Fakt newspaper, with claims overwhelmingly nationally self-referential and only slightly Europeanised in terms of transborder connections (Fig. 5.70). As Table 5.125 shows, most mean scores are positive values. As such, we find structural dimensions of Europeanism residing mostly in the upper half of the scatterplot (Fig. 5.70). Indeed, this was found in five out of the eight newspapers. However, the mean for structural Europeanisation (0.03) was only a fraction higher than that of normative Europeanisation (0.02, see Table 5.125 for a full breakdown). Starting with structural dimensions of discourse in descending order are: Süddeutsche Zeitung, NRC Handelsblad, Gazeta Wyborcza, Fakt, de Telegraaf, Corriere della Sera, Bild, and lastly La Nazione. In respect of normative dimensions in descending order are: Süddeutsche Zeitung, NRC Handelsblad, de Telegraaf, Gazeta Wyborcza, Corriere della Sera, Bild, Fakt, and lastly, La Nazione (see Table 5.125 for a detailed breakdown of mean values). A caveat is in order, however. The typology used to generate the scatterplot may be overstating the levels of Europeanisation as objects that refer to ‘other EU member states’ are categorised as Europeanised herein. However, crucially, the

actor making the claim may be merely referring to their own narrow national interests rather than the general European interest.

With that in mind, it is necessary to also examine the discursive relation between claimant, addressee, and object (i.e. act2adr and act2obj). As Fig. 5.72 shows, most newspapers are collocated in the top-left corner of the scatterplot. Interestingly, Fakt is the most structurally Europeanised (act2adr) succeeded by Süddeutsche Zeitung, Bild, La Nazione and NRC Handelsblad in equal measure, Gazeta Wyborcza and de Telegraaf in equal measure, and lastly, Corriere della Sera. In respect of the act2obj variable, all four quality newspapers top the table with Süddeutsche Zeitung in first place, followed by NRC Handelsblad, Corriere della Sera, Gazeta Wyborcza, de Telegraaf, La Nazione, Fakt and lastly, Bild (see Table 5.126 for a detailed breakdown of results). These results reinforce my expectations that even though collective actors' representative claims may refer more often to the European and supranational level in terms of transborder connections, they nevertheless refer in the main to their own narrow national interests and identities when debating European politics. These findings lend support to the thesis that Europeanisation should be understood as a double-edged sword concept. On the one hand, as numerous studies have pointed out, we observe an abundance of transborder connections. On the other hand, political actors appear to interpret European issues, in the main, from a national perspective (see Fig. 5.71 for a visualisation of results).

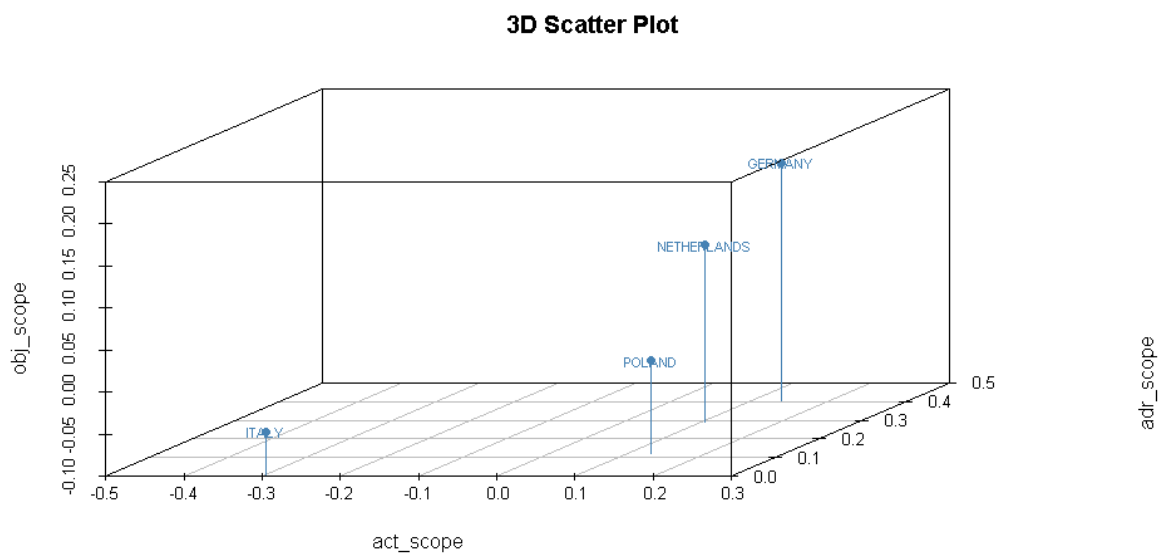
Figure 5.71: 3D scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural and normative dimensions of (euro-)nationalism according to newspaper



Country

When representative claims are aggregated by country, we may summarise the following: the Dutch and German public spheres are both structurally and normatively Europeanised; the Polish public sphere is structurally Europeanised, and the Italian public sphere is structurally and normatively nationalised (see Fig. 5.73 for a visualisation of results and Table 5. 127 for a detailed breakdown of results). However, again, when we consider the discursive relation between claimant, addressee, and object, the levels of Europeanisation appear overstated, with three out of four countries collocated in the top left segment of the scatterplot (see Fig. 5.75 for a visualisation of results and Table 5. 129 for a detailed breakdown of results). Representative claims in the German sample is the notable outlier with claims still structurally and normatively Europeanised. The Dutch sample represents a middle ground between then countries examined, although claims were still predominantly nationally self-referential. Representative claims in the Polish and Italian sample were remarkably similar with an overwhelming proportion of ‘discursively nationalistic’ claims (see Fig. 5.74 for a visualisation of results).

Figure 5.74: 3D scatterplot of mean values for claimant, addressee territorial scopes (structural) and object scopes (normative) according to country

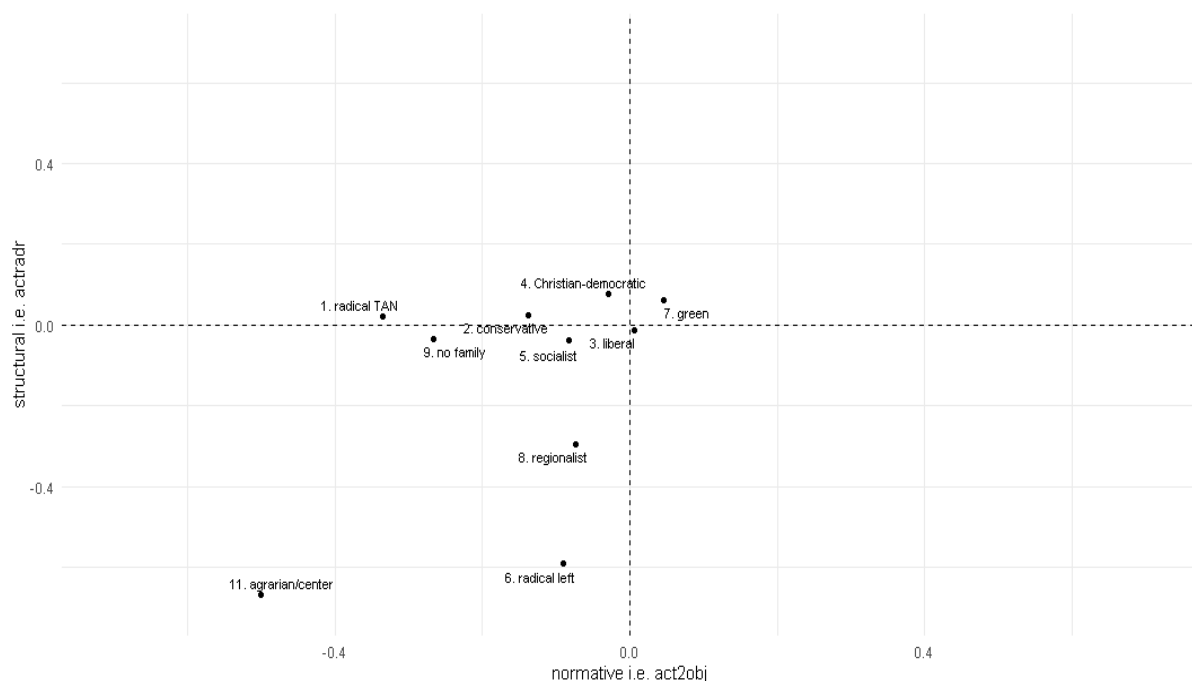


Partisanship

Analysing the actor level, we can see that political parties or actors with a readily identifiable political leaning clearly cluster around the bottom left segment of the scatterplot (see Fig. 5.76 for details).

However a word of caution is necessary. There were very few claims made by ‘agrarian/center’, ‘radical left’ and ‘regionalist’ political denominations. Most political denominations cluster around the centre-left of the scatterplot (see Fig 5.76 for details). In respect of structural Europeanisation, ‘agrarian/center’, ‘radical left’ and ‘regionalist’ denominations referred overwhelmingly to the domestic level in terms of political demands (act2adr). The results from the remaining political denominations are more ambivalent although ‘no family’, ‘socialist’ and ‘liberal’ denominations still referred more to the domestic vis-à-vis European level for political demands. In respect of normative dimensions of discourse, the results are more clear-cut with all denominations save for the ‘greens’ and the ‘liberals’ to a less extent referring to their own set of national interests and identities when discussing European politics. As I already outlined above, when low N values are filtered (i.e. ‘agrarian/center’, ‘radical left’ and ‘regionalist’), ‘radical TAN’ denominations were the most nationally self-referential, followed by ‘no family’ (mainly M5S), ‘conservative’, ‘socialist’, ‘Christian-democratic’, ‘liberal’ and ‘green’ denominations. This is mainly in line with expectations (see Fig. 5.76 for a visualisation of results). In sum, these scatterplots show that nationalism in discourse reigns supreme as far as de jure political actors are concerned.

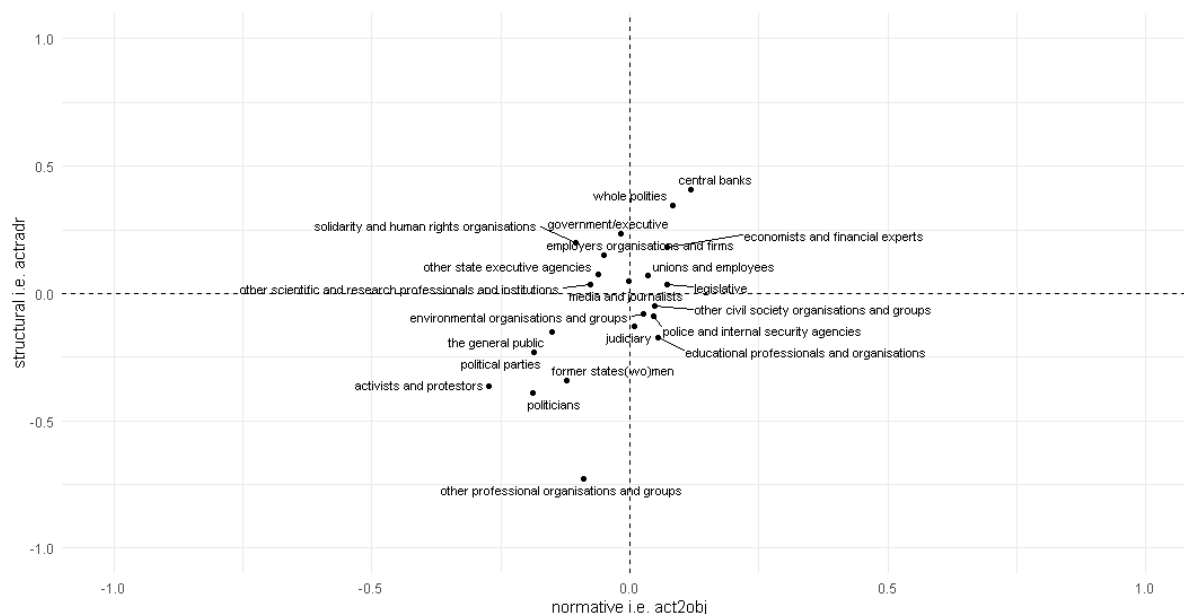
Figure 5.76: Scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) dimensions of ‘(Euro-nationalism)’ by party family



Actor type

The dynamic is less clear cut in respect of the type of actor making the claim. As scatterplot shows (Fig 5.77), actor types can be separated into four groups. The types of actors that can be classed as Europeanised in both senses of the term in descending order are: ‘central banks’, ‘whole polities’, ‘economists and financial experts’, ‘legislative’ and ‘unions and employees’ (see Fig. 5.77). Not surprisingly, most of these actor types represent ‘elite’ groups. The actors that may be classified as normatively Europeanised but rooted to domestic structures – discursively speaking – are: ‘educational professionals and organisation’, ‘other civil society organisations and groups’, ‘police and internal security agencies’, ‘environmental organisations and groups’, and the ‘judiciary’ (see Fig. 5.77). Not surprisingly, many of these types of actors represent civil society or domestic state institutions (e.g. police, judiciary etc.). Actor types which may be regarded as structurally Europeanised but normatively nationalised are: ‘solidarity and human rights organisations’, ‘other scientific and research professionals and institutions’, ‘other state executive agencies’, ‘employers organisations and firms’, ‘government/executive’, and ‘media and journalists’ (see Fig. 5.77). The latter represents a middle ground along the continuum of structural and normative (Euro-)nationalism. The actor types which can be considered to most nationalised in both senses of the word are: ‘activists and protestors’, ‘politicians’, ‘political parties’, ‘the general public’, ‘former states(wo)men’, and ‘other professional organisations and groups’ (see Fig. 5.77). In sum, we may summarise the following: the discourse emanating from economists, central banks, legislative (i.e. senators) are the most Europeanised, and political parties, the general public and activists/protestors are the least so. Government/executive actors and the media represent a middle ground. There does appear, moreover, to be differences in the extent of (Euro-)nationalism between elite and non-elite actors with civil society – both formal and informal kinds – less Europeanised than elite actors. That said, politicians/political parties, in line with previous findings, tend to frame European politics in nationalistic terms, and much more so, when compared to government/executive and legislative actors (see Table 5.131 for a detailed breakdown of results).

Figure 5.77: Scatterplot of mean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) dimensions of '(Euro-nationalism)' by actor type



Correlation analysis

In the correlation analysis, I filtered claims without addressees and objects ($N = 978$). As the scatterplot shows (Fig. 5.78), there is a weak-to-moderate positive linear relationship (correlation coefficient is 0.31) between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables, which is not statistically significant (p value of 0.45). Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. However, when we aggregate newspapers by country (see Fig. 5.80), a very strong positive linear relationship (correlation coefficient is 0.94) is observed that is statistically significant (p value of 0.055). When examining the territorial scope of the claimant, addressee and object alone (thus factoring out the relational aspects of discourse), there also appears to be a correlation (see Fig. 5.88 and Fig. 5.90 for more). In the bivariate analysis, we found a moderate correlation between both claimant and object-scope (Fig. 5.83) and addressee and object-scope (Fig. 5.84) variables. This means that newspapers containing more claims from domestic claimants or addressees also tended to be more nationally self-referential. However, there does not appear to be any correlation between the territorial scope of the claimant and addressee (see Fig. 5.85). The three-dimensional scatterplot lucidly illustrates this (See Fig. 5.85 and Fig. 5.86). This suggests that public spheres are more Europeanised in the structural rather than normative sense⁴⁵. When the claimant and addressee variables are aggregated (i.e. structural) and plotted vis-à-vis the object variable

⁴⁵ The correlation between normative (object) and structural (claimant, addressee) dimensions was found, however, the correlation between structural dimensions (claimant, addressee) does not.

(i.e. normative), there appears to be a strong and statistically significant correlation between them (see Fig. 5.88). When newspapers are aggregated by country, the correlation is moderate but not statistically significant (see Fig. 5.90).

Figure 5.78: Pearsons correlation plot between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by newspaper

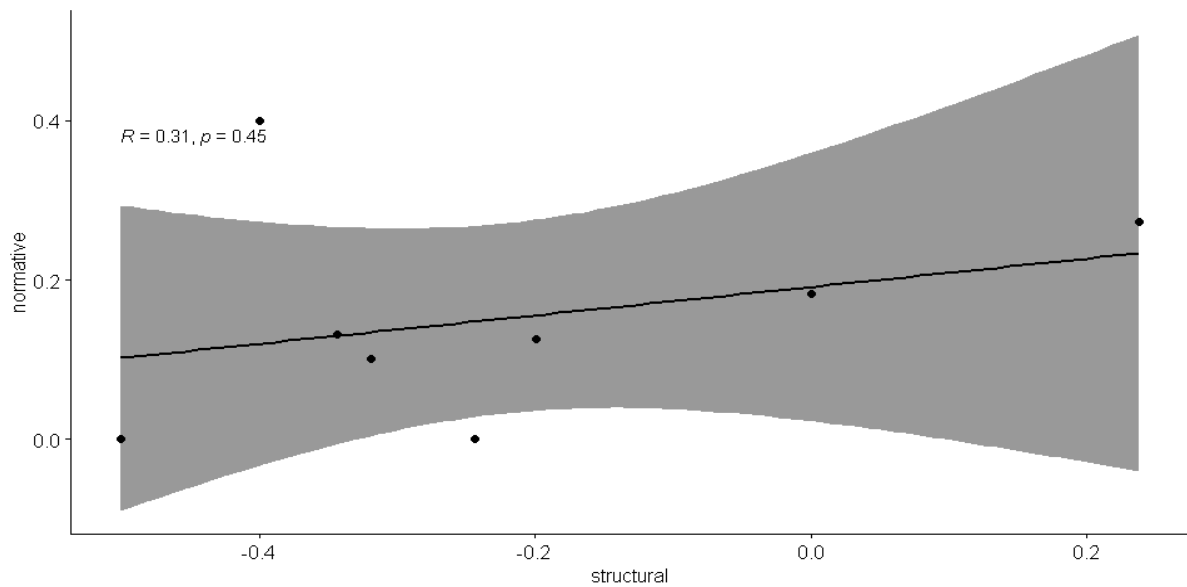
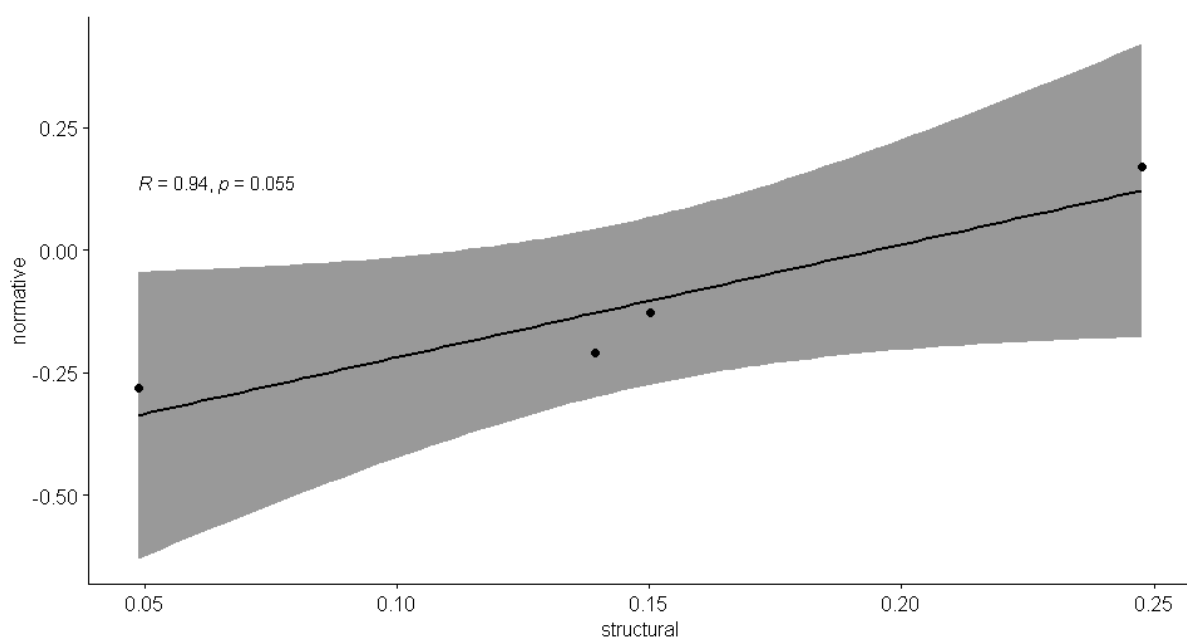


Figure 5.80: Pearsons correlation plot between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by country



Summary of main findings⁴⁶

Herein, I provide a recap of the main findings of my research. Analysing the aggregate network, claims of a nationalistic scope were found to be the most prevalent. National interests and identities were found to prevail over European identity by almost 25%. Horizontal, supranational and top-down vertical claims recorded a minimal share in comparison. Political actors in the Italian public sphere were the most nationally self-referential followed by the Polish network which is less domesticated than the Italian network and similar to the Dutch and German networks in terms of the distribution of representative claimants; succeeded by the Dutch network which nonetheless remains almost as nationally self-referential as the Polish network. However, in contrast to the Italian and Polish networks, the EU/European constituency was the most prevalent object of representative claims. The Netherlands is the most visible node attribute which is a similar share to the Polish and German networks but markedly lower than the Italian network. In sum, as far as the actor level is concerned, the Italian public sphere was found to be the most nationalized followed by the Polish, Dutch and German public spheres.

The results of the exploratory data analysis reinforce these findings although there were some minor differences. National discursive scopes were the most prominent comprising circa one in two representative claims, with Polish, Italian, and Dutch networks found to contain national discursive scopes in half of all claims. Germany is the outlier in this regard with only 35.48% of claims found to be national in scope. This is succeeded by bottom-up vertical claims with the German and Dutch networks recording the highest share of bottom-up claims and the Italian network recorded around the mean. The Polish network is an outlier in this respect with markedly fewer claims of this sort compared to the other three networks. As with bottom-up vertical claims, the German network records the highest percentage for supranational claims. Poland is the outlier in respect of top-down vertical Europeanisation with three times as many claims of this sort compared to the other three networks. Interestingly, discursive scopes followed a consistent pattern in all four networks with (1) national scopes at the top, followed by (2) bottom-up vertical, (3) regional/global, (4) supranational, (5) horizontal and lastly (6) top-down vertical claims.

When gaging the extent of national self-referentiality in newspapers, there are clear divergences between representative claims found in Italian and Polish newspapers on the one hand and Dutch and German newspapers on the other. Italian and Polish newspapers were predominantly nationally self-referential. By contrast, Dutch and particularly German networks were much less so. The opposite is true in respect of references to the EU-level of represented interests and identities which were markedly higher in the Dutch and German networks compared to Polish and Italian ones. In three of the networks,

⁴⁶ This section is a condensed version of the results section (see above). I thought it would be useful to pick out the most relevant findings as I acknowledge that the results section is rather lengthy.

namely, Germany, the Netherlands, and Poland, circa one-fifth of objects referred to EU member states different from the reporting country. Italy is the outlier in this regard wherein less than 5% of objects referred to other member states. In the Dutch and particularly in the German network, the main object was 'Europe'. 'Global' and 'other EU member state' identities represent a negligible share of total claims. In Italy and in Poland, the main object was 'Italy' and 'Poland' respectively. In contrast, in the Dutch and German networks, the EU constituency is the most salient object. The most salient identities in discourse are national followed by supranational identities. Concerning the dataset as a whole, not surprisingly, the EU constituency is the most salient, followed by the countries that comprise the study.

As far as representative claimants are concerned, in all four networks, the most prominent claimants were of the same nationality as the reporting country. In all four networks, the governmental executives/ministries of their respective nation states were demonstrably the most frequent representative claimants. Over half of representative claimants hold the same nationality as that of the reporting newspaper. The clear outlier in this respect is Italy with almost three-quarter of all representative claimants holding Italian nationality. Concerning the dataset as a whole, 27% of representative claimants hold the nationality of another EU member state. Again, Italy is the outlier with half as many claims of this sort compared to the average. Concerning the dataset as a whole, an average of 13% of representative claimants were EU actors, and an average of 6% of representative claimants hold the nationality of a non-EU country. In short, Italy is the most domesticated as far as actor territorial scopes are concerned, however, all four networks show a strong ethnocentric bias in the selection of representative claims.

The most dominant representative claimants in descending order were: government/executive, political parties/politicians, media and journalists, employers organisations and firms, educational professionals and organisations/scientific research. In commanding first place with over twice as many claims as politicians/political parties were government/executive actors. Civil society was underrepresented in comparison. In regard to bottom-up vertical Europeanisation, the results show that de jure political and government actors (gov/exec, legislative, political parties etc.) make fewer references to supranational objects compared to non-political actors (e.g. civil society, economists, academics). In respect of horizontal Europeanisation, media and journalists made the most claims of this sort, closely followed by government/executive actors, distantly succeeded by political parties. In regard to 'national' discursive scopes, actor types scoring above the mean in descending order were: activists and protestors top the bill, followed by farmers and agricultural organisations, the general public, politicians, political parties, former states(women), other state executive agencies, and civil society organisations and groups. Actor types that score around the average for actor type were: other scientific and research professionals and institutions, other professional organisations and groups, employers organisations and firms, government/executive, and media and journalists. Formal civil society actors, the judiciary, central banks, and church and religious organisations were found to seldom invoke representative

claims of a national discursive scope. In respect of discursive scopes of a 'regional/global' denomination, in terms of weighted values, the 'military' topped the bill with three quarter of their claims invoking objects of a global scope, followed by solidarity and human rights organisations (61%), churches and religious organisations and groups (60%), other civil society organisations and groups (44%), environmental organisations (38%), economists and financial experts (22%), and legislative actors (21%) who all scored above the mean (19%). It is interesting to note that generally speaking, formal civil society organisations (e.g. environmental, human rights organisations) invoked objects of a global scope more than the mean (19%). Interestingly, political actors operating in a formal political capacity invoked objects of a global scope very few times relative to the number of claims they made. Indeed, only 9% of representative claims from government/executive actors invoked objects of a global scope, and the figure is lower for political parties (8%) and the media (6%). We can broadly speaking reach the conclusion that formal civil society actors, academics, and business tend to call upon global constituencies much more than de jure political actors. Concerning supranational Europeanisation, when the values are weighted, central banks came out on top, representing 63%, followed by whole polities with one-third of their claims of a supranational variant (33%) compared to legislative actors at 32%, state executive agencies at 20%, and government/executive actors at 18%. The main takeaway is that central banks, whole polities, and legislative actors invoke the EU constituency considerably more compared to other types of actors. Moreover, the wide distribution of discursive scopes according to actor type provides strong evidence that discursive scopes are a function of actor type.

Almost half of representative claimants could be attributed a recognisable political affiliation. When 'NA values' are excluded, socialist party families comprised 23% of claimants, radical TAN represented 22%, Christian-democratic, 16%, conservative, 15%, and liberal, 11%. The relatively high number of claims belonging to 'no family' mainly come from the Italian sample (74%). The lion share of claimants ascribed the 'socialist' category derive from Italy (59%). Most 'radical TAN' claimants were found in the Polish sample (65%). Almost half of all 'Christian-democratic' claimants came from Germany (44%) although Poland also figures prominently (29%). Almost all green denominated claimants came from the German sample. Regarding bottom-up vertical Europeanisation, claimants without a clearly identifiable political leaning (i.e. NA values) represent over half of all claims of this sort (51.4%). This is followed by claimants ascribed as 'socialist' (14%), 'Christian-democratic' (13%) and 'liberal' (9%). When the values are weighted, 'liberal' parties come out in front (40%) followed by 'Christian democrats' (35%), 'greens' (33%) and 'socialists' (29%). Over half of all horizontal claims came from claimants without a clearly identifiable political affiliation (i.e. NA values) followed by actors attributed the 'radical TAN' (11%) and 'Christian-democratic' (9%) partisanship category. There is an insufficient amount of data to make meaningful across-country comparisons (N = 57).

'NA values' feature prominently in terms of net nationalist claims (40.5%) followed by 'radical TAN' (17.3%), 'socialist' (12.1%), 'conservative' (9.2%), 'Christian-democratic' (7.5%), 'no family' (6.9%)

and 'liberal' (4.4%) categories. Virtually no claims of this sort were made by 'regionalist', 'green', 'agrarian/centre' and 'radical left' parties (all under 1%). This pattern consistently holds across all four countries but there are some notable differences. In the German sample, claimants of a radical TAN ascription are minimal (8.2%) compared to other sample countries (30.6% in Poland). When the percentage values are weighted, over fourth-fifth of national claims iterated by political actors ascribed the 'no family' denomination were of a national scope (84.9%) followed closely by 'radical TAN' (83.1%), 'conservative' (65.9%), 'socialist' (54.9%), 'Christian-democratic' (48%), 'liberal' (46%), 'NA values' (38.5%), and lastly 'greens' (22%). In sum, broadly speaking, we can assert, that parties on the right of the political spectrum made more nationalistic claims than their left wing counterparts.

In respect of regional/global discursive scopes, 'NA values' lead the pack in terms of the absolute number of claims. Very few claims were made by other political families. 'Socialist' denominations comprised 9% of claims of this sort followed by 'Christian-democrats' at 7.7%. A negligible share of claims were made by 'radical TAN', 'no family', 'regionalist', 'agrarian/centre' and 'radical left' denominations. When the values are weighted, the 'greens' came out on top (39%) followed by 'NA values' (14.8%), and 'Christian democrats' (11.8%). In sum, there were very few claims of this sort made by politically affiliated actors. Of the claims made of this kind, we can broadly conclude that 'greens', non-politically affiliated actors, and 'Christian-democrats' made the most claims. In respect of both supranational and top-down Europeanisation, virtually all claims derived from actors without a political function (i.e. 'NA values'). These discursive forms of Europeanisation represented a negligible share of total representative claims. In sum, claims of a national scope were the most frequently invoked and this was found across the board. And actors without a political function featured most prominently in most discursive scopes. Interestingly, however, non-politically affiliated actors scored much lower for discursive nationalism. Generally speaking, centre-left, mainstream political parties invoked supranational-level constituencies more than political actors who were right-wing inclined. However, the reverse was found in respect of national discursive scopes with right-wing politically affiliated actors tending to invoke national objects more vis-à-vis their left-wing counterparts. Naturally, however, were some outliers of this general finding. Moreover, a varied distribution for national and bottom-up vertical claims in particular which lends support to the thesis that patterns of discourse are a function of an actor's ideological standing. Comparing across newspapers, the most striking finding was that top-down vertical claims are non-existent in all newspapers save for two quality-format newspapers. Supranational claims were present in only four newspapers, three of which are 'quality' newspaper formats. In all newspapers, national claims feature most prominently, particularly in the three tabloid newspapers. The regional/tabloid newspaper, *La Nazione* was a notable exception, however. Horizontal claims are present in all but two tabloid-format newspapers. Bottom-up vertical claims are present in all newspapers. In the Italian sample, remarkably, no top-down vertical claims

were iterated. In the Dutch sample, no top-down vertical nor supranational Europeanised claims were made.

As expected, there were marked across-newspaper differences in the distribution of object scopes. As far as the overall number of representative claims are concerned, as expected, a disproportionate number of representative claims were found in quality newspapers. As expected, claims invoking the 'EU supranational' constituency were mainly found in quality-format newspapers. In fact, three quality newspapers comprise the top three—namely *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (45%), *NRC Handelsblad* (43%), *Corriere della Sera* (33%). All four tabloid newspaper fell below the mean (31%), in descending order: *La Nazione* (29%), *Fakt* (28%), *de Telegraaf* (25 %), and *Bild* (23%). Interestingly, in the Polish newspaper, *Gazeta* invoked the fewest objects of an 'EU supranational' scope as a proportion of the total number of claims found in the newspaper, at only 23%. In total, 424 representative (32%) claims invoked the EU constituency. As expected, claims invoking the 'regional/global' constituencies were found predominantly in quality-format newspapers. In fact, the top-3 comprise three quality newspapers—*Süddeutsche Zeitung* (15%) followed by *Corriere della Sera* and *NRC Handelsblad* (13% each). Only one tabloid newspaper, namely *Bild* (12%), scored higher than the mean (10%). Two tabloids comprise the bottom three— namely *Fakt* (0%), *De Telegraaf* (8%), and *La Nazione* (10%). Interestingly, as with EU supranational scopes, *Gazeta Wyborcza* very little (6%). Remarkably, no claims of this sort were found in *Fakt*. In total, only 141 claims (11%) of this sort were found in the eight newspapers, which is the lowest share of all object scopes. Claims referring to 'other EU member state' constituencies were predominantly found in the quality-format newspapers, with *Süddeutsche Zeitung* featuring most prominently (29%) followed by *NRC Handelsblad* (27%), and *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *De Telegraaf* with 26% each, respectively. Three tabloid newspapers score below the mean (18%), in descending order: *Bild* (12%), *Fakt* (11%) and lastly *La Nazione* (5%). One quality newspaper scored below the mean, namely, *Corriere della Sera* (7%), and one tabloid newspaper, namely, *De Telegraaf* (26%) scored above the mean. Again, broadly speaking, claims of this type featured more prominently in quality-format newspapers – in both absolute and relative terms – vis-à-vis tabloid-format newspapers. Over one-third of representative claims contained a domestic object (470) which is the highest share of all four object scopes. In terms of weighted values, as expected, tabloid newspapers featured most prominently. In descending order, the Polish newspaper, *Fakt*, registered the highest share (61%), followed by *La Nazione* (55%), *Bild* (54%). This is succeeded by two 'quality' newspapers, namely *Corriere della Sera* (47%) and *Gazeta Wyborcza* (45%) . The two 'quality' newspapers from Northern Europe, namely *NRC Handelsblad* (NL) *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (DE) represent outliers scoring only 17% and 11% each respectively. Interestingly, domestic/national object scope claims appear to be inversely proportional to European and supranational object scope claims. In sum, generally speaking, object scopes were predominantly anchored to the 'nation' and the national interest with this finding particularly noticeable in tabloid newspapers. A wide distribution of values were found across all four

newspapers. That said, the distribution is much smaller in the Italian and Polish sample compared to the German and Dutch one. Indeed, the differences in the relative frequency of national-object scopes between the two newspapers analysed are not so stark (5%). By contrast, the distribution varies from 12% in the Dutch sample to 20% in the German one.

In regard to the territorial scope of representative claimants, almost half of all representative claimants held the same nationality ('own country, national') as that of the reporting country (48%). Trailing by 16% are claimants holding the nationality that is different to the reporting country ('other EU member state') at 32%. With half as many claims as actors representing 'other EU member states' were supranational actors ('EU supranational') at 17%. Very few representative claimants held the nationality of a non-EU country ('global/regional'). Comparing across newspapers, the weighted share of actors of an 'EU supranational' scope, all four quality newspapers scored above the mean (11%), in descending order: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (17%) *Gazeta Borza* (15%), and *NRC Handelsblad* and *Corriere della Sera* tied at 13% respectively. *La Nazione* leads the tabloid newspapers (10%), succeeded by *Fakt* (6%), *de Telegraaf* (5%) and lastly *Bild* (4%). In sum, the representative claims of EU actors resonated more in the 'quality' press. Concerning the weighted share of actors of an 'regional/global' scope, again, four quality newspapers comprise the top-4 with the most actors of this scope found in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (30), followed by *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (19), *Corriere della Sera* (15) and *NRC Handelsblad* (10). Of the 'tabloid' format newspapers, only 3 representative claimants held non-EU nationalities. Representative claimants in the 'other EU member state' category made a total of 347 claims of which 88% were found in 'quality' format newspapers. In terms of the weighted share, four newspapers score above the mean (23%) of which three of them are quality format newspapers, in descending order: *NRC Handelsblad* (40%), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (32%), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (32%) and *de Telegraaf* (26%). Three 'tabloid' format newspapers comprised the bottom three, namely—*La Nazione* (12%), *Bild* (8%) and *Fakt* (6%). *Corriere della Sera* scored 10% below the mean, at 13%. Over half (54%) of representative claimants were domestic actors. As expected, when the values are weighted, over three quarters of all representative claimants in *Fakt* (78%), *Bild* (77%) and *La Nazione* (75%) shared the same nationality as the reporting newspaper. In the *Corriere della Sera* (67%) and *de Telegraaf* (66%) circa two-third of representative claimants were domestic actors. Three quality newspapers, namely—*Gazeta Wyborcza* (46%), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (45%) and *NRC Handelsblad* (41%)—fell under the mean (60%).

Interestingly, marked across-country differences pertain to the territorial scope of objects of representative claims. The reporting media in Poland and Italy applied a much stronger national filter to representative claims-making than the Dutch and German media. In German media, only 14% of objects referred to the German constituency, compared to 26% referring to the Dutch constituency, 45% in the Polish network, and 50% in the Italian network. Interestingly, the proportion of national scopes is lower when the location where the claim is published is considered. When we map the discursive

relation between claimant and object alone (see the network graphs above) there is a stronger tendency for collective actors to refer to their own national interests and identities. Interestingly, the mass media provide – despite tending to report nationally self-referential claims – a more transnational representation of interests and identities than the network graphs suggest. Indeed, in Germany, circa 21% of national discursive scopes (act2obj) derive from non-German actors (i.e. Dutch actors invoking Dutch interests and identities) which is circa 7% higher than the figure for domestic discursive scopes (i.e. German actors invoking German interests and identities). In the Netherlands, almost half of all national discursive scopes (act2obj) consist of non-Dutch actors and objects. By contrast, in Poland and Italy, most national discursive scopes were made by domestic actors invoking their own respective national interests and identities.

Moreover, 80% of representative claims were found in quality-format newspapers. In quality newspapers, ‘EU supranational’ object scopes feature most prominently (circa 34%), closely followed by ‘domestic/national’ object scopes (circa 32%). By contrast, in regional/tabloid newspapers, over 50% of claims contain ‘domestic/national’ object scopes compared to circa 27% of claims of an ‘EU supranational’ scope. Object scopes referring to ‘other EU member states’ featured more prominently in quality newspapers (24%) which is 10% higher compared to regional/tabloid newspapers (13%). ‘Regional/global’ object scopes were the least prevalent, comprising 11- and 9% in quality and tabloid newspapers, respectively. Domestic/national object scopes were found to be the most prevalent across all four countries, with differences across-format particularly discernible in the German and Dutch sample. However, across-format differences were less acute in the Italian and Polish samples. Only in the Polish sample were ‘EU supranational’ object scopes more prevalent in regional/tabloid newspapers. Object scopes referring to ‘other EU member state(s)’ and ‘regional/global’ constituencies were slightly more prevalent in the quality newspapers of all four countries. A wide distribution was found particularly in respect of object scopes of a domestic/national character (values range between circa 10-70%). However, differences are less stark concerning the other dimensions (values range between 5-30% for ‘other EU member state’, 22-45% for ‘EU supranational’ and only 5-15% for ‘regional/global’ object scope claims. Across-format differences were found to be very modest in the Italian sample. By contrast, in Germany, where there are acute differences in the presentation of news between Bild. The Dutch and Polish sample occupy a middle ground with differences most apparent in ‘domestic/national’ scopes but not so stark for the other dimensions.

In respect of representative claimants, as expected, claimants of a domestic scope were more abundant – as a proportion of the total number of claims – in tabloid newspapers vis-à-vis quality ones. Remarkably, in tabloid newspapers, 72% of claimants were domestic compared to 49% in quality newspapers. The reverse was found in respect of ‘EU/supranational’ actors with almost twice as many found in quality newspapers (15%) compared to tabloids (8%). Again, there were almost twice as many claimants belonging to ‘other EU member state(s)’ in quality (29%) compared to tabloid newspapers.

(16%). The proportion of non-EU representative claimants was 7% in quality newspapers compared to 4% in tabloids. In regard to the distribution of values, there is a wide distribution, particularly in respect of claimants of a domestic/national scope (values range between circa 30-70%). However, differences are less stark in regard to the other dimensions. Again, across-format differences were very modest in the Italian sample. Interestingly, the respective shares of each dimension follow a similar pattern in the other three countries, with values of 'own country, national' actor scopes varying between circa 30% in all three countries but modest differences in the 'regional/global' and 'EU supranational' actor scopes (0-5%). Marked across-format differences were found in regard to claimants that held the nationality of another 'EU member state', with a differential of 25% in Germany, 2% in Italy, 15% in Netherlands, and circa 30% in Poland.

The two datasets – namely the pre- and during Covid ones – are similar in size with roughly a 50:50 split between them. In the prior to Covid-19 dataset, the number of claims are distributed unevenly with almost double the number of claims found in Italy (228 i.e. 36% of pre-Covid claims) compared to Poland (119, i.e. 19% of pre-Covid claims). 189 claims (i.e. 30% of pre-Covid claims) were found in the German sample and 104 (i.e. 16% of pre-Covid claims) in the Dutch sample. The relatively low number of claims found in the Polish sample were compensated by the dataset covering the first year of the pandemic with a value almost three times higher than the other three countries (301, i.e. 45% of claims during the Covid-19 pandemic). A similar number of claims were found in the other three countries: 130 in the Netherlands (19%), 121 in Germany (18%) and 120 (18%) in Italy. In total, the highest volume of claims were detected in Polish newspapers (32%), followed by Italy (27%), Germany (24%) and lastly Netherlands (18%). In Italy, in terms of the proportion of claims prior to and during Covid-19, almost twice as many claims were found in the former (66%). The German datasets are similarly skewed in favour of the former (61%). In the Polish sample, the reverse is true with almost three-quarter of claims (72%) found in the Covid-19 sample. The Dutch dataset is the most equally distributed with a 56:44 ratio in favour of the Covid-19 sample.

Concerning the discursive dimensions, fewer bottom-up vertical claims were made during the pandemic (↓10%). Interestingly, national claims increased by the same percentage (↑10%). However, the decrease in bottom-up vertical claims was more than compensated by supranational claims (↑14%). Almost 9 in 10 horizontal claims were made during the pandemic, and top-down vertical claims almost doubled in number during the pandemic. The number of regional/global discursive-scope claims dropped considerably by almost 45%. The main takeaway from this analysis is the decrease in global/supranational claims but increase in national and solidaristic claims. In descending order of the most prevalent discursive scopes in the pre-Covid dataset, we found national in first place (46%), followed by bottom-up vertical (24%), regional/global (18%), supranational (9%), top-down vertical (2%), and lastly horizontal claims (1%). The order is slightly different in the Covid-19 dataset, with supranational claims found to be the third most prevalent (11%) and 'horizontal' claims level with

'regional/global' claims at 7% respectively. These patterns roughly held across all four countries. In the German, Dutch and Italian pre-Covid datasets, discursive national claims featured most prominently followed by bottom-up vertical, regional/global, supranational, horizontal and top-down vertical claims. By contrast, in Poland, national claims were the most prominent succeeded by regional/global, bottom-up and top-down vertical, supranational, and lastly horizontal claims. In the German Covid-19 dataset national claims are the most numerous ($\uparrow 9\%$) followed by bottom-up vertical ($\downarrow 1\%$), supranational ($\uparrow 2\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 5\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 16\%$) and lastly top-down claims (-). The Polish sample follows the same order with national claims in first place but down 10% followed by bottom-up ($\uparrow 4\%$), supranational ($\uparrow 6\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 7\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 6\%$) and lastly top-down claims ($\downarrow 1\%$). In the Dutch sample, national claims featured most prominently and increased by 4% from pre-crisis levels, followed by bottom-up ($\downarrow 2\%$), regional/global ($\downarrow 4\%$), supranational ($\downarrow 2\%$), horizontal ($\uparrow 4\%$) and top-down claims ($\downarrow 1\%$). In Italy, national claims featured most prominently and increased by 15%. The increase in national claims were almost offset alone by bottom-up claims which fell by 13%. Supranational claims were the third most prominent discursive dimension ($\uparrow 4\%$) followed by regional/global claims which fell dramatically ($\downarrow 14\%$), horizontal claims ($\uparrow 4\%$) and lastly top-down claims ($\uparrow 3\%$). Interestingly, when both pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets are combined, three countries (DE, NL, IT) follow the same order: national, bottom-up, regional/global, horizontal, and top-down claims. The outlier is Poland with national claims the most dominant followed by bottom-up, regional/global, supranational and top-down claims in equal number, and horizontal claims the least prevalent. In sum, national claims were up in 3 out of four countries by an average of 5% with Poland the outlier where national claims actually fell. The reverse is true for bottom-up vertical claims which fell in three out of four countries by an average of 3%, with Poland again found to be the outlier where it actually increased. Regional/global claims fell in all four countries by an average of 10%. Supranational claims increased in three countries save for the Netherlands by an average of 3%. Horizontal claims increased in all four countries by an average of 4%. Lastly, top-down vertical claims remained virtually flat with a negligible increase of 0.25%.

In the pre-Covid dataset, 'EU supranational' claims were the most prominent comprising 34% (N=219) followed closely by 'domestic/national' claims at 33% (N= 209). Almost half as many claims invoked 'regional/global' and 'other EU member state(s)' object scopes which comprised 106 claims each respectively (17%). As expected, 'domestic/national' object scope claims featured most prominently (39%, an \uparrow of 6%) in the Covid-19 dataset. By contrast, EU supranational-scope claims fell by 3% registering a share of 31%. The volume of objects referring to constituencies of other member states increased by 8% (to 25%). Lastly, 'regional/global' claims registered the largest decrease, falling by 12% to 5%. Moreover, 75% of 'regional/global' and 52% of 'EU supranational' object scopes were found in the pre-Covid-19 dataset. And 62% of 'other EU member state' and 56% of 'domestic/national' object scopes were detected in the Covid-19 dataset. That said, there were some

noteworthy across-country differences. In both the German and Dutch pre-Covid-19 datasets, EU supranational objects are the most prevalent. The similarities, however, end there. In the German sample, remarkably, domestic/national object scopes are the least prevalent objects, whereas, in the Dutch sample, they are over twice as prevalent, at 27%. In the German sample, objects referring to other EU member states are the second most prevalent object scope (23%) which is a similar value recorded in the Dutch sample (22%). In the German pre-Covid dataset, regional/global scopes were third most prevalent scope, found in one-fifth (21%) of representative claims, compared to 13% in the Dutch sample (the least prevalent scope). The Polish and Italian pre-Covid datasets are similar insofar as domestic/national scopes are the most frequently invoked objects comprising 51% and 42% each respectively. However, again, the similarities end there. In the Polish sample – as with the German one – objects referring to other EU member states are the second most prevalent object scope representing one-fifth (20%) of total claims. In contrast, in the Italian sample, objects of this kind were the least prominent scope, representing only 7% of total claims. In the Italian pre-Covid dataset – as with the German sample – regional/global scopes were the third most prevalent scope, found in 16% of representative claims, compared to only 13% in the Polish sample (which was the same % recorded in the Dutch sample).

In the Covid-19 German sample, the order largely remained consistent, with supranational objects found to be the most prevalent (-%) followed by a profound increase in scopes referring to other EU member states (↑12%), succeeded by national objects (↑4%), and regional/global object scopes which became the least prevalent with a dramatic decrease of 15%. Interestingly, the Dutch sample followed the same order as the German one: EU supranational (↓3%), horizontal (↑8%), domestic (↓2%) and lastly regional/global (↓4%) objects. In the pre- and during-Covid-19 Polish datasets, the % shares remained in the same order: the fall in national objects by 8% was offset by an increase of the same amount in horizontal objects (↑8%). And the increase in EU supranational objects by 9% was offset by the decrease in regional/global objects by the same value (↓9%). In the Italian Covid-19 dataset, national objects increased exponentially (↑23%) followed by supranational (↓9%), horizontal (↓2%) and regional/global objects (↓12%). Overall, horizontal and national objects increased by a mean of 7% and 4% respectively. Supranational objects fell by 0.75% and regional/global scopes fell by 10%.

Comparing actor-type prevalence across the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets, as expected, more national discursive scopes were found in the latter with these patterns pertaining to most types of actors. Of the top-10 most prominent representative claimants for claims of a national discursive scope, the absolute value of national claims increased in all actor types save for politicians and political parties. This result was particularly noticeable in respect of ‘media and journalists’. In fact, in the during-Covid-19 dataset, 13.5% of national claims came from this cohort, which is an increase of 5%. Indeed, for ‘media and journalists’, 30% more national claims were found in the Covid-19 dataset than the pre-Covid-19 one. Fewer ‘bottom-up vertical’ scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The decrease is

attributed mainly to the ‘political party’ and ‘government/executive’ actor cohorts which recorded the largest decrease. Twice the number of top-down vertical discursive scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The increase is mainly attributed to the increase in claims of this kind by ‘government/executive’ actors who made more than double the number of claims compared to pre-crisis levels. Indeed, actors of this type increased their proportion of claims of this sort by over 10% compared to pre-crisis levels. Remarkably, horizontal claims increased five-fold from pre-crisis levels. 73% of the net increase in horizontal claims (from 8 to 49 claims) is attributed to ‘government/executive actors’ (↑24%) and ‘media and journalists’ (↑49%). These two cohorts alone account for circa 70% of the share of claims of this sort in the Covid-19 dataset compared to 50% in the pre-Covid-19 dataset. Indeed, 78% of governmental actors’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. And 100% of media and journalists’ claims of this kind were detected in the Covid-19 dataset. The share of claims from ‘media and journalists’ increased from 0- to 41%. The relative fall in the share of government/executive claims (from 50 to 28.6%) was largely due to the exponential increase in claims from ‘media and journalists’. Supranational claims increased modestly compared to pre-crisis levels. Indeed, 56% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The increase is mainly attributed to ‘government/executive’ actors. The absolute number of claims from ‘central banks’ fell in the Covid-19 dataset. By contrast, the share of claims of this kind deriving from government actors increased from pre-crisis levels by 10%, to 74%, and 60% of governmental actors’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. Markedly fewer ‘regional/global’ discursive scopes were found in the Covid-19 dataset. Indeed, only 28% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. This dramatic decrease (from 72% to 28%) is mainly attributable to three actor types: government/executive actors, legislative actors, political parties, and solidarity and human rights organisations. Indeed, 76% of the net decrease (from 112 to 44 claims) derived from these actor cohorts: ↓29% from governmental actors, ↓25% from political parties, ↓12% from solidarity and human rights organisations, and ↓10% from legislative actors. Only 5% of political parties’, 27% of government actors’, 13% of legislative actors’, 21% of solidarity and human rights organisations’ claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The share of claims deriving from ‘political parties’ decreased significantly from pre-crisis levels by 14%, from 16.1% to 2.3%.

58% of ‘national’ representative claims were found in the Covid-19 dataset (N = 358). There was a 12% decrease in the number of representative claims of a ‘bottom-up vertical’ discursive scope compared to pre-Covid-19 crisis levels. 66% of representative claims of a ‘top-down vertical’ discursive scope were found in the Covid-19 dataset. However, the net share of claims of this sort remained negligible (circa 3% of total claims in the Covid-19 dataset). The other type of solidaristic claim – namely horizontal claims – registered an increase during the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, 62% of claims of this sort were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The number of ‘regional/global’ claims decreased dramatically during the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, 72% of claims of this kind were found in the dataset prior to the

pandemic. The number of ‘supranational’ claims increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, 58% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset.

Comparing the distribution of representative claims by political affiliation across the two datasets, the number of ‘national’ representative claims from politically affiliated actors largely stayed the same. The increase in ‘national’ claims mainly derives from non-politically affiliated actors whose share of total ‘national’ claims increased by 10%. Indeed, 60% of ‘national’ representative claims from non-politically affiliated actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset. In short, small changes were found in the temporal distribution of ‘national’ claims save for non-politically affiliated actors who appeared to make many more claims of this kind during the pandemic. There were no significant differences in the temporal distribution of bottom-up vertical claims save for two political denominations, namely the ‘Christian-democratic’ and ‘socialist’ denominations whose share of total claims of this kind fell by 12% and 8% respectively. In fact over 70% of claims of the kind from the aforementioned political denominations were found in the pre-Covid-19 dataset. In sum, there were no other discernible shifts in temporal distribution and the decrease appears to have come from fewer claims of the kind made by the ‘Christian-democratic’ and ‘socialist’ political categories. Virtually all ‘top-down vertical’ representative claims were made by non-political affiliated actors, and this applies both prior to and during the pandemic. Indeed, non-political affiliated actors doubled the number of claims of this kind during the pandemic. The increase in horizontal representative claims in the Covid-19 dataset was attributable in the main to non-politically affiliated actors. Remarkably, 97% of claims of this kind made by non-politically minded actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset. In sum, politically affiliated actors made a handful of claims of this kind, and this held during the pandemic. A similar result can be found in respect of ‘supranational’ claims although non-politically affiliated actors’ claims of this kind are predominant both prior to (84%) and during (92%) the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, 59% of claims of this kind from non-politically affiliated actors were found in the Covid-19 dataset. The number of ‘supranational’ claims increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, 58% of claims of this kind were found in the Covid-19 dataset. Politically affiliated actors made very few claims of this kind. In fact, no political group made more than a handful of claims of this kind. The number of claims decreased in all political groups in the Covid-19 dataset. We, thus, have a mixed, somewhat paradoxical result. On the one hand, national claims increased during the pandemic, and bottom-up, supranational, and global claims fell. On the other hand, solidaristic claims (i.e. horizontal and top-down vertical claims) increased.

When analysing and comparing newspaper formats across time, ‘national’ and ‘other EU member state(s)’ object scopes featured more prominently – in proportion (%) to the number of claims made – and this result was found in both quality and tabloid-format newspapers in the Covid-19 dataset. In regard to ‘national’ object scopes, changes across time were particularly noticeable in regional/tabloid newspapers. The reverse was found for ‘EU supranational’, ‘other EU member states(s)’ and

‘regional/global’ object scopes, with changes more perceptible in quality newspapers. In fact, in tabloid and quality newspapers, ‘national’ object scopes increased from 46- to 58% (↑12%) and 28% to 35% (↑7%) respectively. And in tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to ‘other EU member states’ increased from 12- to 16% (↑4%) and 18- to 27% (↑9%) respectively. By contrast, the volume of ‘EU supranational’ and ‘regional/global’ object scopes fell, with these patterns holding across both newspaper formats. In tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to the ‘EU supranational’ level decreased from 32- to 21% (↓11%) and - to % (↓%) respectively. And in tabloid and quality newspapers, objects referring to the ‘regional/global’ level decreased from 11- to 6% (↓5%) and 35- to 32% (↓3%) respectively.

The ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frame was the most prevalent (43%) followed by the ‘culture and identity’ frame (9%), ‘solidarity’ frame (7%), ‘democracy’ frame (7%), ‘rule of law’ frame (5%), ‘protection of human dignity’ frame (4%), ‘sovereignty’ frame (4%), ‘freedom and equality’ frame (3%) and lastly, ‘EU integration’ frame (2%). The share of frames holds across all four countries with modest differences between them. Almost half of the ‘democracy’ frames referred to the national constituency (44%) followed by 36% which referred to the EU/European constituency (comprising 20% of bottom-up vertical claims and 16% supranational claims). 16% of ‘democracy’ frames referred to constituencies of other member states. And, not surprisingly, only 4% of ‘democracy’ frames referred to regional/global constituencies. In sum, the ‘nation’ remains the most commonly invoked object in the context of democracy. Interestingly, most frames pertaining to arguments about the process of ‘EU integration’ referred back to the national constituency (42%). However, when ‘bottom-up’ and ‘supranational’ dimensions of discursive Europeanisation are aggregated, EU-level scopes exceed national ones (46%). Just over one-tenth (12%) of solidaristic representative claims (i.e. top-down and horizontal) invoked the ‘EU integration’ frame. In sum, not surprisingly, for ‘EU integration’ frames, discursive dimensions of a Europeanised scope (58%) outnumber ‘national’ claims by a ratio of 3 to 2. Almost half of all frames pertaining to ‘freedom and equality’ referred to national constituencies (47%) followed by 30% of European constituencies (comprised of 21% of bottom-up vertical and 9% supranational claims). Only 12% of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with constituencies of at the regional/global level (non-EU) and constituencies comprising other EU member states (i.e. top-down and horizontal) respectively. Almost two-thirds of ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frames (63%) referred back to national constituencies that were the same as that of the claimant, with less than half as many referring to European/supranational constituencies (29%). Only 4% of frames of this kind referred to regional/global objects and constituencies of other EU member states (i.e. top-down and horizontal) respectively. When bottom-up vertical and supranational discursive dimensions are aggregated, over half of all claims (53%) pertaining to ‘principles, norms, cultures, and identities’ invoke EU/supranational-level constituencies. This is succeeded by 44% of frames of this kind referring to national constituencies. A fraction of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with scopes of a

horizontal (2%) and global dimension (1%). As expected, most frames pertaining to the ‘protection of human dignity’ were made in the context of regional and global constituencies (34%). However, an almost equal number were made in reference to national constituencies (32%). 24% of frames of this kind were made in conjunction with reference to supranational-level (i.e. EU) constituencies. And only one-tenth of frames of this kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical discursive dimensions. Almost half (44%) of all justification referring to the ‘rule of law’ identities’ refer back to the domestic/national level, closely followed by the EU/supranational level constituencies (35%, when bottom-up vertical and supranational discursive dimensions are aggregated). 20% of frames of the kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical scopes of a European dimension. And only 2% refer to scopes of a regional/global dimension. As expected, when bottom-up vertical (43%) and supranational dimensions (16%) are aggregated, most claims (59%) invoking the ‘solidarity’ argument refer to supranational-level constituencies (i.e. objects), which is almost three times higher than nationalistic claims (23%). 13% of frames of this kind refer to horizontal and top-down vertical discursive dimensions. And only 5% refer to regional/global constituencies. In sum, the ‘solidarity’ meta-argument is typically employed when referring to EU-level constituencies. As expected, almost three-quarter of frames pertaining to ‘sovereignty’ referred to national constituencies (70%). When bottom-up vertical (20%) and supranational dimensions (7%) are aggregated, only 27% referred to the supranational level.

‘Instrumental/utilitarian’ frames were the most prevalent in every discursive dimension save for top-down vertical claims. Regarding bottom-up vertical claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were ‘principles, norms, cultures and identities’ (16%), ‘solidarity’ (13%), and ‘other’. Regarding horizontal claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘solidarity’ (18%), ‘democracy’ (16%), and ‘other’ (14%). Regarding national claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘other’ (18%), ‘principles, norms, values, cultures/identities’ (8%), and ‘sovereignty’ (5%). Regarding horizontal claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘the protection of human dignity’ (26%), ‘other’ (20%), and ‘solidarity’ (6%). Regarding supranational claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames (after ‘instrumental/utilitarian’) were: ‘other’ (14%), ‘principles, norms, values, cultures/identities’ (13%) and solidarity (11%). Regarding top-down vertical claims, the top-3 most prevalent frames were: ‘other’ (26%), ‘rule of law’ (20%) and ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frames (17%). The ‘democracy’ and ‘protection of human dignity’ frame registered 11% respectively. In sum, representative claims are habitually framed in utilitarian terms. There are also a significant number of representative claims that do not contain a justification.

The results reveal the similar intensity of issue fields (thematic convergence?) across countries. However, in some issue fields, there is a wide across-country distribution. ‘Macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ was the most prevalent issue field (250, i.e. 20%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (171, i.e. 14%), ‘trade and competition’ (124, i.e. 10%), ‘health’ (105, i.e. 9%), ‘travel and immigration’

and ‘defence and foreign policy’ (96, i.e. 8%), ‘European integration’ (92, i.e. 8%), and ‘energy and environment’ (88, i.e. 7%). The remaining ten issue fields fall below the mean (68, i.e. 6%). Almost two-third of all representative claims in the field of ‘agriculture’ invoked national constituencies (61%) with half as many invoking EU/European objects. Almost half of claims in the field of ‘crime and security’ invoked national objects (45%) followed by 30% invoking EU-level objects. Three quarter of claims in ‘data protection and privacy’ invoked global constituencies with the remainder going to EU-level objects. This is not overly surprising as issues related to data protection as perceived as global problems requiring solutions at the regional/global level. In contrast, the spread is more equally distributed in respect of ‘defence and foreign policy’. Although national objects are the most prevalent representing almost half of all representative claims of this sort (45%), EU-level objects are invoked 36%. 52% of claims in the issue field of ‘digital, culture, and media’ appeal to EU-level constituencies compared to 36% in respect of national constituencies. Most claims in the field of ‘education’ refer to national objects (43%). Interestingly, however, 29% of claims invoke global-level objects, closely followed by 28% of EU-level objects. Almost half (44%) of all claims in the ‘energy and the environment’ issue domain invoked national objects. One in two representative claims in the field of ‘EU integration’ referred to supranational-level constituencies (50%) compared to 39% which invoked national-level constituencies. In the field of ‘health’ which is an exclusive national competence, national-level constituencies were most prevalent (63%) which is approximately two-thirds higher than that of EU-level constituencies. In the field of ‘human rights and civil liberties’, most claims, paradoxically, referred to national-level objects (53%) followed by three-tenths of EU-level objects (32%). In ‘legal and constitutional’ matters, over half of all claims (53%) invoked national-level claims followed by almost 30% referring to EU-level constituencies. Almost two-third of all claims in the ‘macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ issue domain referred to national-level interests (61%) compared to 35% of claims which referred to EU-level objects. In the miscellaneous category of ‘general politics’, most claims referred to national objects (61%) with less half this amount referring to EU-level constituencies. Almost three quarter of claims in the domain of ‘science and technology’ refer to EU-level objects (72%), with only 18% invoking national-level constituencies. National-level objects prevailed in the issue field of ‘social welfare and labour’ (50%) with the EU-level registering 20% fewer objects. In the issue field of ‘trade and competition’, national-level objects prevailed (52%) over EU-level constituencies (35%). As expected, in the principally national competence of ‘transport and infrastructure’, national-level objects prevailed (64%) compared to 36% of EU-level objects. In a similar vein, in the issue domain of ‘travel and immigration’, national-level objects dominated (59%) with almost three times fewer claims invoking EU-level constituencies (21%).

‘Macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ was the most prevalent issue field in all but three variants of Europeanisation, namely, regional/global, and horizontal and top-down vertical. Regarding bottom-up vertical claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘macroeconomic and fiscal’ (19%) followed by

‘European integration’ (15%) and ‘politics: general (other)’ (13%), ‘defence and foreign policy’ and ‘trade and competition’ (9%). Regarding horizontal claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘health’ (19%) closely followed by ‘defence and foreign policy’ and ‘politics: general (other)’ (18%), and ‘trade and competition’ and ‘travel and immigration’ (9% each). Regarding national claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ (23%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (16%), ‘trade and competition’ and ‘health’ with 10% each respectively, and ‘travel and immigration’ (9%). Concerning representative claims of a ‘regional/global’ scope, the most prevalent issue domains were matters pertaining to ‘travel and immigration’ (20%), followed by ‘politics: general (other)’ (12%), and ‘defence and foreign policy’, ‘energy and environment’ and ‘social welfare and labour’ scoring 11% each respectively. For supranational claims, the most prevalent issue field was ‘macroeconomic and fiscal policy’ (25%), succeeded by ‘trade and competition’ (15%) and ‘health’ (13%). Regarding top-down vertical claims, the most prevalent issue domains were ‘trade and competition’ (23%), followed by ‘legal and constitutional matters’ (20%), ‘macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ (11%), and matters pertaining to ‘energy and the environment’ (9%).

When national interests/identities were invoked, negative evaluations of the EU exceeded positive ones. Moreover, claimants who invoked constituencies of other EU member states that were different to that of the claimant (i.e. horizontal) held generally negative evaluations towards the EU. However, ‘global (other)’ discursive scopes registered the highest negative value (-0.75). Discursive dimensions of a ‘top-down’ kind did not contain any evaluative statements about the EU. Not surprisingly, there were generally positive evaluations of the EU when European-level constituencies were invoked (i.e. supranational). Net evaluations of the EU were found to be fairly balanced, with positive evaluations slightly outnumbering negatives ones (mean = 0.02). Moreover, a significantly higher proportion of national claims were found to contain a negative EU valence (63% compared to 34%). The reverse was found for supranational claims which contained mostly positive EU valence. Concerning evaluative statements of the addressee, again, we see a similar trend to above, with ‘national’ (-0.59), ‘horizontal’ (-0.58), and ‘regional/global (other)’ (-0.65) discursive scopes more negative in evaluation toward addressees than ‘top-down vertical’ (-0.54), ‘bottom-up vertical’ (-0.13) and ‘supranational Europeanised’ (-0.31) discursive scopes. Invoking ‘the nation’ (whether domestically, horizontally) appears to yield more negative evaluations towards addressees. For ‘national’ and ‘horizontal’ discursive dimensions, negative evaluations of the addressee outnumber positive evaluations. Interestingly, addressee evaluations (mean = -0.47) were more negative than net evaluations of the EU (mean = 0.02).

In regard to the one-mode network (i.e. act2adr) circa 35% of claimants referred to addressees of the same nationality. The preponderance of domestic communicative linkages (i.e. act2adr) was found across all networks, with the Italian (38.76%), Polish (38.42%), and Dutch networks (37.75%) recording the highest share of political claims of this kind. The German network represents an outlier

with the share of domestic claims lower than the other three networks by circa 10% (27.47%). In line with previous findings, communicative linkages of a bottom-up vertical kind (mean = 19.26%) demonstratively outweigh top-down vertical communicative linkages by a ratio of three-to-one (mean = 6.85%). This marked asymmetry in terms of vertical communicative linkages were found across all networks, however the differences between them were rather modest in the Polish network. Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown, we can clearly see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality. A modest share of supranational communicative linkages (mean = 6.93%) was found. Similar results were found in three networks, although in the German network, almost one-tenth of representative claims (9.05%) were of supranational. In all four networks, the share of horizontal linkages were remarkably similar (ranging from 12.45% in the Dutch sample to 14.14% in the German sample). Remarkably, communicative linkages among non-EU actors comprised the third most prominent territorial scope of political claims (mean = 17.93%). Italy, however, was the notable outlier with only 12.25% of political claims composed of regional/global communicative linkages.

In the German network, domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (27.47%). However, if we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they exceed domestic communicative linkages (circa 51%). However, actors representing nation states remain the main protagonists. A relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (20.39%) and horizontal claims (14.14%) were found. There was a modest share of top-down vertical (7.73%) and supranational claims (9.05%). As far as actors are concerned, the top-10 most prominent actors (nodes) were: German actors (20.91%) followed by EU-level (15.3%), British (9.48%), NA (7.54%), Hungarian (4.09%), Italian (3.88%), Polish (3.66%), American (3.45%), French (3.23%) and Dutch actors (3.23%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of 'national' cliques and communities within the whole network. The most discernible cliques are vertices representing the EU and Germany (coloured in grey). However, on the periphery of the network, there are several small British, Polish, Italian, and Hungarian cliques.

In the Italian network, domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (38.76%). This share is the highest of all four networks, suggesting that political claims found in Italian newspapers, were the most domesticated. However, as with the German network, when we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they slightly exceed that of domestic communicative linkages (circa 48.8%). Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when national and non-European political claims are aggregated (circa 51%), they exceed that of Europeanised claims. A relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (22.29%) and horizontal claims (13.45%) were found. EU-level actors play a bit-part role as active protagonists, as shown by the modest share of top-down vertical (6.43%) and supranational claims (6.63%). In fact, the differences between the number of claims emanating from

the national and EU-level are even more pronounced in the Italian vis-à-vis the German sample. Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results, we can clearly see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality. As far as actors are concerned, the top-10 most prominent actors (nodes) were Italian actors who comprised almost half of all actors (44.63%). By contrast, there were one-third fewer EU-level actors (15.54%), followed by actors without a decipherable country of affiliation (8.47%), German (5.65%), American (3.95%), French (3.39%), British (3.39%), Polish (2.54%), Spanish (1.98%) and Dutch actors (1.98%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques within the whole network. There are several cliques and sub-groups of Italian and EU-supranational origin, and a small clique of British origin positioned in the periphery of the network.

In the Dutch network – as with the other networks – domestic communicative linkages are the most prevalent (37.75%) which is remarkably similar to the Polish and Italian networks, with the German network a clear outlier in this regard. However, as with the other networks, when we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope, they exceed that of domestic communicative linkages (circa 43.28%). Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when national and non-European political claims are aggregated (circa 57%), they exceed that of Europeanised claims. As with the other three networks, collective actors at the national level remain the main political entrepreneurs. This is exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (19.96%) and horizontal claims (12.45%) compared to the modest share of top-down vertical (4.35%) and supranational claims (6.62%). Indeed, the level of top-down vertical communicative linkages is particularly low in the Dutch network. Indeed, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results, we can clearly see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality. As far as the proportion of vertices are concerned, although domestic actors were the most abundant (circa 25%), EU actors comprised almost 15%, followed by a prominent share of British actors (circa 9%). This is strikingly similar to the German network. The prominent coverage conferred upon British actors in the Dutch and German networks (circa 9% respectively) suggests that the Brexit issue was more salient compared to Polish (6%) and Italian networks (3%). Actors without a decipherable country of affiliation comprised 8.62% of vertices, followed by neighbouring countries of the Netherlands namely French (5.13%) and German actors (4.9%), succeeded by Italian (4.66%), American (4.43%), Spanish (2.56%) and Polish actors (2.33%). The clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques and communities within the whole network. There are several cliques and sub-groups of Dutch, EU-supranational, and British origin, in addition to a small clique of German origin located in the periphery of the network.

In the Polish network, domestic communicative linkages are clearly the most prevalent (38.46%) which is similar to that of the Dutch and Italian networks. However, as with the other three networks, when

we aggregate communicative linkages of a European territorial scope (42.52%), they narrowly exceed that of domestic communicative linkages by just over 4%. Thus, debates in terms of structural discourse were more Europeanised, on the whole, than communicative linkages bound to the national level. That said, when aggregated, national and non-European political claims (57.49%) exceed that of Europeanised political claims. As with the other three networks, collective actors at the national level remain the main protagonists. The patterns of structural Europeanisation indicate a strong intergovernmental logic of Europeanisation, as exemplified by the relatively high share of bottom-up vertical (14.41%) and horizontal claims (13.70%) compared to the modest share of top-down vertical (8.90%) and supranational claims (5.51%). Indeed, collective actors in EU member states operating at the national level (28.11%) make approximately twice as many claims as those operating at the supranational level (14.41%). In a departure from the other three networks, the share of bottom-up vertical communicative linkages are much lower. These lower levels of bottom-up communicative linkages are compensated by above average linkages of the top-down kind (8.90%). Despite this, when comparing the in- and out-degree breakdown of results, we can see that EU-level actors score much lower in terms of out-degree compared to in-degree centrality. As far as actors are concerned, Polish actors (29.79%) were the most prominent – which is roughly in line with the mean value when all four networks are considered – featuring circa three times more vis-à-vis EU-level actors (10.82%). The share of vertices of EU-origin is the lowest of all four networks (10.82%). As I documented earlier, the share of EU-level actors was circa 15% in the German and Dutch networks respectively and circa 13% in the Italian network. The third most prominent vertices by country of origin (excluding NA values at 8.51%) were German (7.09%), British (6.56%), American (5.5%), Italian (4.96%), Spanish (3.37%), Belarusian (2.66%), and Russian actors (2.66%). As with the other four networks, clusters of homogenous coloured vertices indicate the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques within the Polish network. There are several cliques and sub-groups comprising the network, with the most discernible ones being the Polish, EU-supranational, and British cliques. There are also several smaller American, Belarusian, and Italian cliques located at the periphery of the Polish network.

As far as the territorial scope of claimants, addressees, and objects are concerned, the scatter analysis reveals that the representative claims found in *NRC Handelsblad* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* are the most structurally and normatively Europeanised. By contrast, the representative claims found in *Bild* and *La Nazione* are structurally and normatively nationalised. Representing the middle ground are *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *De Telegraaf* with the former structurally quite Europeanised and the latter found to be slightly more normatively Europeanised than vice versa. In *Corriere della Sera*, representative claims were predominantly domesticated and nationally self-referential. In the *Fakt* newspaper, claims were found to be overwhelmingly nationally self-referential and only slightly Europeanised in terms of transborder connections. The mean score for structural dimensions of Europeanism were mostly positive. Indeed, this was found in five out of the eight newspapers. The mean for structural

Europeanisation (0.03) was only a fraction higher than that of normative Europeanisation (0.02). Starting with structural dimensions of discourse, in descending order: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Fakt*, *de Telegraaf*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Bild*, and lastly *La Nazione*. In respect of normative dimensions, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* was found to be the most Europeanised, followed by *NRC Handelsblad*, *de Telegraaf*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Bild*, *Fakt*, and lastly, *La Nazione*. When representative claims are aggregated by country, we may summarise the following: the Dutch and German public spheres are both structurally and normatively Europeanised; the Polish public sphere is structurally Europeanised, and the Italian public sphere is structurally and normatively nationalised.

In regard to discursive scope between actor and addressee/object (i.e. *act2adr* + *act2obj*), most newspapers can be collocated in the top-left corner of the scatterplot. Interestingly, *Fakt* is the most structurally Europeanised (*act2adr*) succeeded by *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Bild*, *La Nazione* and *NRC Handelsblad* in equal measure, *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *de Telegraaf* in equal measure, and lastly, *Corriere della Sera*. In respect of the *act2obj* variable, all four quality newspapers top the table with *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in first place, followed by *NRC Handelsblad*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *de Telegraaf*, *La Nazione*, *Fakt* and lastly, *Bild*. Compared to the territorial scope (see above), the discursive relation between claimant, addressee, and object, the levels of Europeanisation are lower, with 3 out of 4 countries collocated in the top left segment of the scatterplot. Representative claims in the German sample is the notable outlier with claims still structurally and normatively Europeanised. The Dutch sample represents a middle ground between the countries examined, although claims were still predominantly nationally self-referential. Representative claims in the Polish and Italian sample were remarkably similar, with claims predominantly nationalistic .

In respect of political affiliation, we can see that political parties or actors with a readily identifiable political leaning clearly cluster around the bottom left segment of the scatterplot. In respect of structural Europeanisation, ‘agrarian/center’, ‘radical left’ and ‘regionalist’ denominations referred overwhelmingly to the domestic level in terms of political demands (*act2adr*). The results from the remaining political denominations are less clear cut; that said, ‘no family’, ‘socialist’ and ‘liberal’ denominations still referred more to the domestic vis-à-vis European level for political demands. Concerning the normative dimensions of discourse, the results are more clear-cut with all denominations save for the ‘greens’ and the ‘liberals’ to a lesser extent referring to their own set of national interests and identities when discussing European politics. As I already outlined above, ‘radical TAN’ denominations were the most nationally self-referential, followed by ‘no family’ (mainly M5S), ‘conservative’, ‘socialist’, ‘Christian-democratic’, ‘liberal’ and ‘green’ denominations . In sum, these scatterplots show that nationalism in discourse reigns supreme as far as de jure political actors are concerned.

The types of actors that can be classed as Europeanised in both senses of the term in descending order are: 'central banks', 'whole polities', 'economists and financial experts', 'legislative' and 'unions and employees'. Not surprisingly, most of these actor types represent elite actors. The actors that may be classified as normatively Europeanised but structurally nationalised are: 'educational professionals and organisation', 'other civil society organisations and groups', 'police and internal security agencies', 'environmental organisations and groups', and the 'judiciary'. Not surprisingly, many of these types of actors represent civil society or domestic state institutions (e.g. police, judiciary etc.). Actor types which may be regarded as structurally Europeanised but normatively nationalised are: 'solidarity and human rights organisations', 'other scientific and research professionals and institutions', 'other state executive agencies', 'employers organisations and firms', 'government/executive', and 'media and journalists'. Interestingly, the latter were located roughly at the centre of the scatterplot axis. The actor types which can be considered to most nationalised in both senses of the word are: 'activists and protestors', 'politicians', 'political parties', 'the general public', 'former states(wo)men', and 'other professional organisations and groups'. In sum, we may summarise the following: the discourse emanating from economists, central banks, legislative (i.e. senators) are the most Europeanised, and political parties, the general public and activists/protestors are the least so. Government/executive actors and the media represent a middle ground. There does appear, moreover, to be differences in the extent of (Euro-)nationalism between elite and non-elite actors with civil society – both formal and informal kinds – less Europeanised than elite actors. That said, politicians/political parties, in line with previous findings, tend to frame European politics in nationalistic terms, and much more so, when compared to government/executive and legislative actors.

In the bivariate analysis, concerning discursive scopes, there is a weak-to-moderate positive linear relationship (correlation coefficient is 0.31) between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables which is not statistically significant (p value of 0.45). Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. However, when we aggregate newspapers by country, a very strong positive linear relationship (correlation coefficient is 0.94) was found that is statistically significant (p value of 0.055). When examining the territorial scope of the claimant, addressee and object alone (thus factoring out the relational aspects of discourse), there also appears to be a correlation. In the bivariate analysis, we found a moderate correlation between both claimant and object-scope, and addressee and object-scope variables. However, there does not appear to be any correlation between the territorial scope of the claimant and addressee. When the claimant and addressee variables are aggregated (i.e. structural) and plotted vis-à-vis the object variable (i.e. normative), there appears to be a strong and statistically significant correlation between them. However, when newspapers are aggregated according to country, the correlation is moderate but not statistically significant.

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Chapter 6 – Discussion and Conclusion

Summary of the research problem

Let us remind ourselves of what is deemed as largely self-evident and uncontested by public sphere scholars. It is widely accepted that EU news coverage has increased significantly over the past few decades, and national governments are the most visible types of actors to the detriment of legislative and civil society actors. Empirical studies have repeatedly shown that similar issues are discussed contemporaneously across different national media systems. Moreover, several studies point to converging frames of interpretation across national public spheres. Regarding the public sphere's normative function, it is generally accepted that public spheres enrich democracy and help foster and sustain national identity. Before the interpretation phase of my analysis, I deem it important to remind prospective readers of the overarching aims and motivations of my research. By way of a quick summary, my research aims to contribute to the debate on the process of Europeanisation in the public sphere. In essence, I challenge the dominant view that public debates are conducive to fostering a European sense of belonging. Europeanisation should be understood as a Janus-faced process. As de Wilde (2019) aptly points out, more Europe in terms of the increasing volume of news coverage may serve to reinforce the national channels of representation and reify the nationally imagined community. As several scholars point out, (Euro-)nationalism exists along a continuum, however, it is not a one-dimensional concept. Europeanisation should be understood not only as bidirectional but—*quadirectional*¹. We may distinguish between structural and normative dimensions of (Euro-)nationalism. Europeanisation in the public sphere has been analysed in terms of its normative and structural dimensions or more precisely: (i) becoming “European” in terms of identities, norms, values, goals and perspectives and (ii) synchronised timing in news reporting, attention to similar issues and interconnectedness between national media systems. There are four different combinations of discursive Euro-nationalism which I lay out below:-

- Firstly, we may observe more transborder connections between the national and European levels, whilst at the same time, predominantly nationally self-referential discourses in terms of affections (i.e. structural Europeanism and normative nationalism);
- Secondly, we may observe fewer transnational connections between the national and European level vis-à-vis domestic ones but more references to ‘European interests’ and/or a common European endeavour (i.e. structural nationalism and normative Europeanism);

¹ It is, at the very least, a two-dimensional concept.

- Thirdly, we may observe both more transborder connections between the national and European levels in addition to the predominance of references to ‘European interests’, a common European endeavour, or ‘European’ identity (i.e. structural and normative Europeanism);
- Fourthly, at the other extreme, we may observe both the predominance of domestic interactions and nationalistic frames (i.e. structural and normative nationalism).

Put another way, the concept should not be understood as a zero-sum game. It is not a logical contradiction to simultaneously countenance both *more* and *less* Europeanism – or for the same reason, *more* or *less* nationalised discourse. That is to say that we should not understand the relationship between Europeanism and its negation as a linear one². In my opinion, scholars have hastily concluded from the increasing visibility of EU actors and salience of European issues in national public spheres that the nation-state is ‘withering away’. On the contrary European politics may be a conduit for nationalism to thrive³. Moreover, scholars have readily jumped to the conclusion that national public spheres discussing the same issues at the same time constitute Europeanisation. Previous research has shown that issue cycles on global issues are fairly synchronous – should we, thus, countenance a ‘European-’ or ‘global village’ in the making? I would be reluctant to do so. Paradoxically, in research on the transnational public sphere in general and Europeanisation in particular, the elephant in the room is public spheres residing at the local and *national* levels. The crucial question is how the discussion of European politics affects the variegated national public spheres that constitute Europe. With that in mind, our analytical lens should focus on how the multi-level national and European politics relate to one another. That is to say that we should not focus merely on the national or EU level in isolation but explore how these spherical levels interact with one another. Thus, my first aim is to encourage scholars to think of these concepts in a more nuanced way. Discourse manifests in a manifold number of ways and to varying degrees of intensity hence why scholars often talk about ‘patterns of discourse’.

I, moreover, call upon scholars to refrain from teleological reasoning unless there is sufficient data to support it. As most studies cover a limited period (2 years in my case), it is more appropriate to settle for terms such as ‘nationalism’ and/or ‘Europeanism’. We may, of course, refer to a rich body of empirical research and carry out meta-analyses to ascertain whether processes and transformations are taking place. For example, it is fairly incontrovertible to claim that EU politics has received more news coverage over time. However, we are still left in the dark about *how* the increasing salience of EU politics has affected the more qualitative, affective, and normative aspects of discourse. It would, thus, be interesting and timely to trace representative claims over a longer period. More specifically, it would be interesting to trace representative claims around the time when the European Community was

² In my opinion, there is no straightforward inverse linear relationship between Europeanism and nationalism. In plain terms, more in one does not mean less in another.

³ We should be asking these questions rather than being guided by wishful thinking or normative bias.

established until more recently (every 5-10 years) to determine whether public spheres have become more Europeanised in *affective* terms.

Moreover, Koopman's – albeit very – helpful heuristic tool to gauge levels of Europeanisation needs revision particularly if we want to better understand patterns of discourse at the actor level. According to Koopmans, 'weak horizontal Europeanisation' – that is, a communicative linkage between claimant and object that is national in scope – is nevertheless 'Europeanised' because of where the claim is published. But the relation between actor and object is an archetypal nationalistic claim. I would, thus, be reluctant to label this as emblematic of Europeanised political communication. Even though Koopmans is right to consider both the discursive relationship between actors and where the claim is published, it is necessary to map discourses between political actors irrespective of where the claim is published⁴ and supplement the analysis with the media component while adopting a bespoke taxonomy for the latter accordingly.

The second motivating factor for my research is the theoretical inconsistencies alluded to in Chapters One and Two. In media and journalistic studies, much has been written about the mass media's ethnocentric, narcissistic and myopic selection and formatting of 'foreign' news items. The adage 'one picture can tell a million stories' aptly applies to journalists who are cunningly able to recite the details of one happening in countless ways. Journalists have a penchant for describing happenings through a national pair of glasses. This widely accepted understanding of the workings of the mass media does not sit comfortably with the scholarship on the process of transnationalism in the public sphere which hastily concludes that public spheres are becoming boundless spaces emancipated from national discursive structures. In short, there is an incongruence between media logic theory and the European public sphere scholarship. The former implies the enduring ethnocentricity of news output, whereas the latter argues that discourse is shifting beyond the national container – both structurally and normatively. Moreover, building on Meyer's exposition of political logic theory (2002), I argue that the triumvirate of *polity*, *politics*, and *policies* remains anchored in national structures. Although political opportunity structures have evolved as a result of European integration they are predominantly conditioned by national circumstances. Political influence is mainly cultivated at the national level and the fate of politicians' careers largely hinges on how effectively they mobilise national constituents.

Thirdly, scholars continue to disagree on the age-old question of whether public spheres can help foster a European identity. Simply put, there are two opposing camps. On the one hand, Thomas Risse claims – in his words – that 'European identity [would] emerge in the course of the debate itself' (Risse et al., 2003:8-20). On the other hand, Kriesi expects the politicization of EU integration in public debate to contribute to a 'renaissance of nationalism' (Kriesi et al., 2016:242). The third motivational factor is to address some methodological gaps in particular to redress the omission of 'red-top' newspapers in

⁴ See the network graphs in Chapter 5.

research. Remarkably, tabloid newspapers – despite their larger readership – have been overlooked which poses a selectivity bias problem. Tabloid newspapers are widely regarded as more parochial and insular in scope. To obtain a more representative sample of ‘general publics’ in European member states, analyses should collect data from both quality and tabloid newspapers. Of course, in an ideal world with limitless resources at our disposal, we should not stop at newspapers, particularly with the increasing ubiquity of social media platforms. Indeed, one could argue that newspapers are becoming increasingly less relevant given their waning readership. That said, the print press still possesses a strong gatekeeping and agenda-setting role and remains one of the most widely used mediums for news consumption.

Fourthly, there are noticeable gaps in our knowledge of the public sphere in the context of European integration that I aimed to address in my research. As touched upon earlier, we can safely assert that European politics makes the front pages of newspapers more regularly. The EU is visible, particularly in the midst of crises or extraordinary periods such as EU Council summits. We can call this a Europeanisation in terms of the volume of media coverage. But this is a purely quantitative measure. Is not Europeanisation more profound than merely debating about the *same issues* at the *same time*?⁵ And crucially, can we speculate from the increasing penetration of EU affairs in national public spheres that a convergence of values, norms, and even identities would emerge? This could happen, but it is logically conceivable that the topic of Europe actually serves to strengthen national identity. If the EU is framed as the passive target of political demands and political actors’ are found to fight tooth and nail for national interests and identities, it is difficult to see how an emerging European identity would follow⁶. Indeed, earlier studies suggest that the national constituency (i.e. national interests) is the most prominent object of claims-making which begs the question: how would a genuine EPS and common sense of European belonging emerge in this discursive context? Until now, a systematic enquiry exploring the communicative links between representatives (i.e. claimants) and the represented (i.e. objects) of political claims has been found wanting. Moreover, it remains to be seen how the increasing coverage of European political happenings affects the nation’s footing in the public sphere. How is ‘the nation’ positioned in respect of EU politics? Are the interests of the nation congruent with Europe’s in terms of framing? How does a given political actor frame the national interest vis-à-vis wider EU

⁵ Increasing transborder communicative linkages are a *sine qua non* of transnationalised public spheres, however, they are insufficient by themselves. For example, Brantner *et al.* (2005) found that during the Haider affair, transborder connections between Austria and the EU increased but so too did self-referentiality. Despite the spike in volume of coverage of EU-related politics, it would be overstepping the mark to label this as Europeanised political discourse.

⁶ Indeed, self-proclaimed Eurosceptic and sovereignist parties seem to have a penchant for talking about the EU — albeit in a negative light. However, these parties have invigorated national narratives and cognitive frames about what it means to be British, Italian, French and so on, and they are ideologically opposed to further EU integration. If political protagonists claim to represent different interests and constituencies and the intergovernmental logic characterises debates, it is unlikely that a genuine EPS and ergo European identity would follow. On the face of it, Sovereignist and Eurosceptic parties have been the most successful in (re-)defining what the nation means. Schlesinger is right to opine that “those who successfully articulate a dominant vision of what the nation is, what it could be, and what it ought not to be, possess immense cultural power” (Schlesinger, 2019:10). However, this also extends to political power generally as political actors are more likely to mobilise voters when they are able to tap into their most salient identities. And as countless surveys demonstrate, the most salient source of identification is still that of one’s nation – at least when compared to regional or transnational territorial levels of attachment.

interests? There is ample evidence of communicative linkages that transcend national borders. EU actors are visible and EU issues are salient. Moreover, these same issues are discussed at roughly the same time. It is, however, an open question whether similar meaning structures hold across national public spheres. With that in mind, I deemed it appropriate and timely to examine the more qualitative dimensions of political claims. Moreover, a hitherto underexplored aspect of political communication is to explore the effects of crises on patterns of discourse. Earlier studies indicate that national self-referentiality increases during a crisis which makes intuitive sense and is also supported by Social Identity Theory (SIT).

Noting the above, the most pressing question at the forefront of my mind was to ascertain: Whose identities (and/or) interests are the most salient in public debates about EU/European politics? Do national interests and identities prevail over transnational sources of attachment such as regional, European and global identities? Are public debates concerning European politics characterised by discursive nationalism, intergovernmentalism or supranationalism? Which actors are the most visible in public debates concerning European politics? Can discernible trends be ascertained according to, *inter alia*, country, newspaper format, newspaper source, actor type, actor nationality and party family? In addition, does discursive identity mobilisation change substantially before and during the Covid-19 pandemic? And last, but certainly not least, is there a correlation between the territorial scope of communicative linkages between actors (i.e. *structural*) and the territorial scope of political actors' purported affections and source of belonging (i.e. *normative*)?

By way of a recap of my hypotheses, I expect the nationally imagined community of interests and identities to resonate most strongly in debates about EU-related matters. These expectations are grounded in media and political logic theory. I, thus, expect European debates to be characterised by what I call, 'discursive nationalism', that is, collective actors referring to their own national constituency of interests and identities⁷. In line with previous findings, I, moreover, expect domestic actors to dominate debates about European affairs both as political entrepreneurs (i.e. claimants) and targets of political demands (i.e. addressees)⁸. I, furthermore, expect to observe marked variation across the different contextual variables such as county, format, source, actor type, party family and so on. This is because media logics and editorial standards vary across different newspapers, and similarly, political and discursive opportunity structures vary across different actors. The intervening variable of the Covid-19 pandemic represented an unmissable opportunity to gauge the effects of *crises* on patterns of discourse. In line with the groundwork of previous studies and Social Identity Theory (SIT), I expect

⁷ In a slight departure from de Wilde's (2019) hypothesis wherein he expects 'discursive intergovernmentalism' to characterise European debates, I opt for the term, 'discursive nationalism' as the former implies that only governmental actors permeate the public sphere. Although governmental actors dominate EU political debates, as Koopmans aptly points out, a repertoire of actors participate in the public sphere ranging from social movement and civil society actors to legislative and governmental actors. Thus, Koopmans rightly emphasises the participation in the public sphere of 'collective actors' (2010).

⁸ What scholars would label 'the domestication of public spheres'.

public spheres to be more nationally self-referential in the Covid-19 dataset. Lastly, I do not expect to find a correlation between structural and normative dimensions of *discursive (Euro-)nationalism*. In plain terms, speaking more about Europe does not imply that we speak more as or in the name of—Europeans. Below I provide a bullet point summary of the main findings from the analysis.

Bullet point summary of main findings

- Below, I see it fit to summarise the main findings of my analysis. First and foremost, in answer to the overarching research question, national identity and national interests were demonstrably more salient in debates about Europe although marked across-country differences were found. As far as representative claims are concerned, the most nationally self-referential public sphere was that of Italy (50%), Poland (45%), the Netherlands (26%), and Germany (14%). The results show a striking dichotomy between patterns of discourse found in Dutch and German newspapers on the one hand and claims in Polish and Italian newspapers on the other. Representative claims found in German newspapers referred more often than not to supranational objects. Dutch public debate represents a middle ground and the Polish and Italian debates were emphatically nationalistic. The results suggest that the ‘two-speed Europe’ metaphor can also be applied to public spheres. If the prognostications of post-functionalists bear fruit, these dichotomous patterns of discourse may have pernicious effects on European integration.
- The distribution of discursive scopes is remarkably similar across all four networks, with nationalistic claims featuring the most followed by bottom-up vertical, regional/global, supranational, horizontal, and top-down vertical representative claims. These results fit the description of public spheres’ as ‘pillarized’ – that is, exhibiting strong verticalized links between the national and supranational level – and ‘segmented’, weak horizontal linkages between fellow EU member states. The negligible share of top-down vertical and supranational claims frames the EU as a passive, nonresponsive, and nonlegitimate participant in public debates. Put another way, the EU appears to be more visible as a topic and target of claims-making. Domestic-level actors dominate the role of ‘speaker’ in public debates (particularly in the Italian public sphere) which means they can shape discourse and (re-)produce identities as they see fit.
- In congruence with previous research, government-executive actors dominated claims-making to the detriment of political parties, legislative actors, and civil society, the latter of whom were virtually negligible as representative claimants. This reinforces the notion that the European ‘spheres of publics’ are elitist, top-down, and exclusive in terms of opportunities for

participation. As de Wilde (2019) envisaged, the intergovernmental logic of EU integration appears to strengthen in media coverage. That said, a myriad of actors, not limited to state actors, were still moderately represented in public debates as ‘speakers’.

- As expected, palpable differences in patterns of representative claims-making were found across different actor types. The wide distribution of particularly bottom-up vertical and nationalistic representative claims provides demonstrative evidence that patterns of discourse are a function of actor type. Loosely speaking, political parties and government-executive actors made fewer references to the supranational level of interests and identities compared to formal civil society actors, the judiciary, and central banks. These findings support the notion that political logics engender nationalistic discourses as claimants acting in a formal political capacity (e.g. political parties, government ministers) were generally found to be comparatively more nationally self-referential. That said, the general public and activists/protestors were also found to be predominantly nationally self-referential. Not surprisingly, domestic-level actors were more nationally self-referential than supranational actors. In sum, actor-driven logics appear to condition patterns of discourse.
- In line with expectations, patterns of claims-making were detectable across different party families. Far-right and conservative party families were found to invoke national objects more frequently than left-wing or centre-ground party families. By the same token, the latter invoked supranational and global objects more frequently. Interestingly, claimants without an explicit political affiliation featured most prominently across all discursive scopes. However, non-politically affiliated actors scored much lower for discursive nationalism. A varied distribution for particularly national and bottom-up vertical claims lends support to the claim that patterns of discourse are a function of political partisanship.
- As expected, the results suggest that quality-format newspapers were more transnational in outlook with the lion’s share of EU-related articles found therein. Not surprisingly, as a result of quality newspapers’ larger sample size, over three-quarters of representative claims were found therein. In quality newspapers, interestingly, EU supranational objects featured the most closely followed by national objects. By contrast, in regional/tabloid newspapers, double the number of claims contained national objects compared to supranational ones. A wide distribution in object scopes according to newspaper format was found particularly in Dutch and German newspapers. However, the tabloid-quality dichotomy appeared to be less clear-cut in Italian newspapers. Tabloid newspapers were also found to be much more ‘domesticated’ in terms of the share of representative claimants, with domestic actors dominating the role of ‘speaker’. This finding was particularly noticeable in Italian and Polish newspapers. In sum, as expected, patterns of claims-making seem to vary markedly⁹.

⁹ I caveat these findings by acknowledging that the sample size of tabloids is much smaller than that of quality newspapers. These results are, thus, indicative at best.

- The results – comparing representative claims before and during the Covid-19 pandemic – suggest that Krisenkommunikation is a mixed blessing for Europeanisation. Paradoxically, public spheres appear to be both more insular and ethnocentric and solidaristic towards fellow European countries. On the one hand, in the Covid-19 dataset, horizontal, top-down vertical and supranational claims were higher; on the other hand, national representative claims were higher, and bottom-up and regional/global discursive scopes fell sharply. Interestingly, in the pre-Covid-19 dataset, EU supranational objects featured the most, however, in the Covid-19 dataset, national objects were the most prominent.
- Interestingly, the increase in national self-referentiality in the Covid-19 dataset came from media and journalists. The marked decrease in bottom-up vertical claims mainly derives from formal political actors (e.g. political parties, government-executive cohorts). The increase in top-down vertical representative claims is mainly attributed to government-executive actors. The sharp fall in regional/global claims is mainly due to government-executive, political parties and legislative actors. Lastly, the spike in horizontal claims is attributed to media/journalists and government-executive actors. In sum, loosely speaking, the shift in discursive patterns during the Covid-19 pandemic was most palpable in respect of formal political actors who tended to refer to the domestic level of interests and identities. These findings lend support to the notion that public debates tend to become more internalised during a crisis. However, somewhat paradoxically, discourse tends to be more solidaristic during crises.
- Interestingly, the increase in nationalistic claims and the corresponding decrease in bottom-up vertical claims in the Covid-19 dataset were mainly attributable to actors without a readily identifiable political affiliation. Virtually all top-down vertical representative claims were made by non-political affiliated actors both before and during the pandemic. The increase in horizontal representative claims in the Covid-19 dataset was attributable in the main to non-politically affiliated actors. A similar result can be found in respect of supranational claims although claims of this kind by non-politically affiliated actors were prevalent in the pre-Covid-19 and Covid-19 datasets. On the whole, no clear patterns can be discerned according to party family across time.
- As expected, domestic/national objects featured much more prominently in both quality and tabloid newspapers in the Covid-19 dataset. These changes were most noticeable in tabloid newspapers (↑12%). However, objects referring to other EU member states were also more prominent in the Covid-19 dataset with these changes most noticeable in tabloid newspapers (↑9%). The share of ‘EU supranational’ and ‘regional/global’ object scopes was lower in the Covid-19 dataset across both newspaper formats, with this finding particularly discernible in tabloid newspapers. The main takeaway from this analysis is that, as far as representative claims are concerned, tabloid newspapers were particularly nationally self-referential and insular during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Instrumental/utilitarian frames were the most prevalent, comprising almost half of all representative claims. Interestingly, almost half of the democracy frames referred to the national constituency which demonstrates that democracy continues to be understood in the context of ‘the nation’. Not surprisingly, most frames about EU integration referred to EU-level (58%), however, almost one in two claims referred to the national level of interests and identities. Almost half of all frames about freedom and equality referred to national constituencies (47%). Almost two-thirds of instrumental/utilitarian frames referred to national constituencies. When bottom-up vertical and supranational discursive dimensions are aggregated, over half of all claims about principles, norms, cultures, and identities invoked EU-level constituencies. As expected, most frames pertaining to the protection of human dignity were made in conjunction with regional/global-level constituencies. Almost half of all rule of law frames referred to national constituencies. As expected, most claims (59%) invoking solidarity referred to supranational constituencies and almost three-quarters of frames about sovereignty referred to national constituencies. In sum, democracy, the rule of law, sovereignty, and instrumental justifications are framed in the context of national interests/identities. By contrast, solidarity and EU integration justifications are framed in the interests of European/global constituencies.
- Most claims in the field of crime and security invoked national objects. Three-quarters of claims in data protection and privacy invoked global constituencies. National objects are the most prevalent in defence and foreign policy representing almost half of all representative claims. Most claims in the issue field of digital, culture, and media refer to EU-level constituencies. As expected, most claims in the issue field of education refer to national objects. Most claims in the issue domain of energy and the environment invoked national objects. As expected, most claims in the field of EU integration referred to supranational-level constituencies. In the field of health, an exclusive national competence, national-level constituencies were the most prevalent. In the field of human rights and civil liberties, most claims, paradoxically, referred to national-level objects. Almost two-thirds of all claims in the macroeconomic and fiscal policy issue domain referred to national-level objects. In the miscellaneous category of general politics, most claims referred to national objects. Almost three-quarter of claims in the domain of science and technology refers to EU-level objects. National-level objects prevailed in the issue field of social welfare and labour. In the issue field of trade and competition, national-level objects prevailed. As expected, in the principally national competence of transport and infrastructure, national-level objects prevailed here as well. In the issue domain of travel and immigration, national-level objects dominated. In conclusion, we can broadly assert that supranational objects were more prevalent in the more ‘transnationally-oriented’ issue fields such as data protection, science and technology, and EU integration. That said, remarkably, in the environmental, monetary policy and human rights issue fields, national objects prevailed.

- Not surprisingly, when bottom-up vertical claims were made, the most prevalent issue fields were ‘communitised’ ones such as macroeconomic/fiscal, EU integration, and trade and competition. When horizontal claims were iterated, the most prevalent issue field pertained to health, defence and foreign policy, ‘politics (general)’, trade and competition and travel and immigration. Regarding national claims, the most prevalent issue domains were macroeconomic and fiscal policy, followed by ‘politics (general)’, trade and competition, health, and travel and immigration. When representative claims of a regional/global scope were iterated, the most prevalent issue domains were matters pertaining to travel and immigration, followed by ‘politics (general)’, defence and foreign policy, energy and environment, and social welfare and labour. When supranational claims were made, the most prevalent issue field was macroeconomic and fiscal policy succeeded by trade, competition, and health. Regarding top-down vertical claims, the most prevalent issue domains were trade and competition, followed by legal and constitutional matters, macroeconomic and fiscal governance, and matters pertaining to energy and the environment. The findings lend tentative support to Koopmans et al., (2010: 64-7) expectation that public debates will be more Europeanised in ‘communitised’ policy fields.
- Not surprisingly, representative claims which contained an EU-level object mainly contained positive EU evaluations. By contrast, interestingly, when national interests and identities were invoked in representative claims-making, negative evaluations of the EU exceeded positive ones. Moreover, claimants who invoked constituencies of other EU member states that were different to that of the claimant held generally negative evaluations of the EU. These findings lend support to the identity ‘conflict framing’ hypothesis. It appears that when national identities are invoked – either nationally self-referentially or horizontally – the EU is evaluated in a negative light. I expect this is an implicit ‘othering’ framing strategy that political actors employ to demarcate national in-groups from EU out-groups. Interestingly, however, invoking the interests of another member was accompanied by the most negative evaluations of the EU. As far as representative claims are concerned, national identity appears to be framed in conflict with the EU. Reassuringly, from the EU perspective, net evaluations of the EU were fairly balanced, with positive evaluations slightly outnumbering negative ones.
- Concerning addressee evaluations, again, we see a similar trend to above with national, horizontal and regional/global discursive scope claims holding overwhelmingly negative evaluations. Representative claimants invoking EU-level constituencies held modestly negative evaluations. Interestingly, net addressee evaluations were more negative than net EU evaluations.
- Regarding communicative linkages (i.e. act2adr), although domestic interactions were the most prominent when EU discursive scopes are aggregated, transnational interactions outnumber domestic ties. The results suggest that public debates are more structurally Europeanised than

normatively so. Italian debates were the most ‘domesticated’ followed by Polish, Dutch and German debates. In line with previous findings, bottom-up vertical ties outweigh top-down vertical ties by a ratio of 3:1. Ties confined to the supranational level were negligible. These skewed patterns are reflected in the in- and out-degree node centrality results, with EU-level actors scoring much higher in the former compared to the latter. These results mean that the EU is predominantly framed as a ‘target’ in public debates. Vertical ties clearly outnumber horizontal ones which reinforce the notion that public spheres’ are ‘pillarized’. Across all networks, larger countries tended to receive more publicity, with the two largest EU member states, namely, France and Germany, and two non-EU member states, namely, the UK and United States, featuring prominently. Italy, Poland, Spain and the Netherlands were moderately visible albeit to a lesser degree. Furthermore, neighbouring countries, and countries with historical or strategic ties, tended to receive more coverage. As encapsulated by the colour-coded nodes according to country of origin, national cliques could be discerned across all four networks. This reinforces the notion that public spheres are ‘nationally segmented’.

- The mean score for structural Europeanisation (+0.03) was only a fraction higher than normative Europeanisation (+0.02). The scatterplot analysis shows that representative claims found in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* were the most structurally Europeanised, followed by *NRC Handelsblad*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Fakt*, *de Telegraaf*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Bild*, and lastly *La Nazione*. Representative claims found in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* were the most normatively Europeanised succeeded by *NRC Handelsblad*, *de Telegraaf*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Bild*, *Fakt*, and lastly, *La Nazione*. When representative claims are aggregated by country, we can broadly assert that the Dutch and German public spheres are both structurally and normatively Europeanised; the Polish public sphere is structurally Europeanised and normatively nationalised, and the Italian public sphere is structurally and normatively nationalised. Compared to the territorial scope of the object (see above), the levels of Europeanised communication were found to be lower when the discursive relationship between claimant and addressee (i.e. act2adr), and claimant and object (i.e. act2obj) were factored in. Indeed, three out of the four countries were collocated in the top-left segment of the scatterplot which implies that debates are structurally Europeanised but normatively nationalised.
- The scatterplots show that the representative claims of actors’ belonging to an identifiable party family were much more nationalistic, clustering around the bottom-left segment of the scatterplot. In respect of structural Europeanisation, agrarian/center, radical left and regionalist’ denominations referred mainly to the domestic level for political demands (i.e. act2adr). Interestingly, the traditionally more pro-European party families, namely socialist and liberal denominations, still referred more to the domestic level. Concerning the normative dimensions of representative claims, the results are more clear-cut, with all party families – save for the greens and liberals – referring predominantly to national interests and identities when

discussing European politics. As I already outlined above, radical TAN party families were the most nationally self-referential, followed by ‘no family’ (mainly M5S), conservative, socialist, Christian-democratic, liberal and green party families¹⁰. In sum, these scatterplots demonstratively show that discursive nationalism reigns supreme as far as de jure political actors are concerned.

- The scatterplot, furthermore, shows that elite, technocratic actors, and actors operating in a supranational capacity, tend to exhibit more Europeanised discourses. In stark contrast, discursive nationalism appears to be more prominent among political parties, the general public, and activists/protestors. Representing a middle ground are formal civil society actors, state agencies and public bodies which refer more often than not to the domestic level albeit in the general European interest. The reverse is true for national government executives, the media, and employers organisations, which tended to refer more to the European level but predominantly in the interests of ‘the nation’.
- Interestingly, the bivariate analysis reveals a very strong positive linear relationship between structural (act2adr) and normative Europeanisation (act2obj) that is statistically significant. In the bivariate analysis of claimant, addressee, and object scopes, a moderate correlation was found between claimant and object variables, and the addressee and object variables. However, no correlation was found between the claimant and addressee variables. Interestingly, when the claimant and addressee variables (i.e. structural) are aggregated and plotted vis-à-vis the object variable (i.e. normative), a strong and statistically significant correlation was found between them.

Interpretation

Normative (Euro-)nationalism

As mentioned above, in debates about European politics, national interests and identities were significantly more salient than supranational interests and levels of attachment. In other words, the mundane aspects of nationalism – what I label as “discursive nationalism” – were highly salient in public discourse. As far as political communication from political actors is concerned, the Europeanisation of collective identities and interests is found wanting. Political actors continue to evaluate European news from a national rather than European perspective, thus falling short of the normative benchmarks of Europeanised political communication. A European ‘community of communication’ remains elusive, with the ‘we’ still heavily anchored to ‘the nation’ (Peters, 2005). This means that European actors and interests are not perceived as legitimate in the respective national

¹⁰ The ‘small-N’ party families were omitted from the list (i.e. ‘agrarian/center’, ‘radical left’ and ‘regionalist’).

public spheres' comprising Europe (Risse, 2003:8-9). These results are in line with previous research. For example, Medrano's study (2003) found that national frames predominated when debating EU politics. In the study by Schünemann (2015) nationalistic discourse prevailed in all the countries under examination (2015:4). Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) found that collective references to the "European" deixis were ancillary to the national deixis. Similarly, the findings of Peters et al. (2005) found that identity frames are still rooted in the national deixis (2005: 148). Brüggemann et al. (2006) conclude that there is only a weak indication of a developing European "we" perspective (Brüggemann et al., 2006: abstract). In both Pfetsch's (2004) and Koopman's (2010) studies, the objects of claims-making predominantly invoked the national level of interests and identities. These findings contradict those of de Wilde (2011) who found that European member state constituencies were the most prevalent followed by national constituencies¹¹.

The prevalence of discursive nationalism poses several problems for advocates of European integration. In plain terms, political actors are speaking about Europe but not on behalf of Europe. In essence, this is a two-pronged problem of *identity* and *democracy*. If political actors claim to act in the narrow interests of 'the nation' without due regard for EU-level interests, public discourse of this kind may impede the establishment of a federal union. Needless to say that political integration may still advance without social integration. We witnessed this during the ensuing Covid-19 crisis when a raft of emergency measures was implemented, which represented an unprecedented advance in political integration. However, in the long term, if political communication remains anchored to national structures, will- and opinion formation are likely to remain docked at the national harbour. The results of my study can be partially explained by the reasons laid out in the theoretical framework (Chapter Two). In short, the triumvirate of *polity*, *policy* and *politics* function with a heavy national accent. Why would political actors claim to speak on behalf of EU citizens (i.e. supranational) or the interests of other European member states (i.e. horizontal solidarity) when they are appointed *de jure* to act and represent on behalf of the national citizenry? Pitching to the nation conjures more mobilising force than pitching to nascent and nebulous sources of belonging. National identities are cathected with more affect than nascent, distant territorial sources of belonging, as evidenced by numerous surveys (e.g. Eurobarometer polls). In addition, we should not discount the influence of media logics. National-identitarian representative claims are arguably more newsworthy as they touch upon the readers' strongest affections, identities and interests.

Interestingly, the proportion of national representative claims is lower when the *location* where the claim is published is considered. When we map the territorial scope between claimant and object, collective actors typically refer to their own national interests and identities. Interestingly, the mass

¹¹ However, a shortcoming of this study was that the sample was limited to member states that are generally pro-European, namely the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland. My study, in contrast, sought to examine public discourse in countries which represent a more heterogeneous sample.

media – despite tending to report nationally self-referential claims – provide a more transnational representation of interests and identities than the network graphs suggest. The results show that ethnocentric biases are more pronounced when we measure the discursive scope between actor (claimants) and constituency (objects). The findings, furthermore, indicate that public discourses are probably even more domesticated and nation-oriented than the claims found in newspapers would suggest. In particular, in Germany and the Netherlands sample, although foreign actors comprise a relatively high proportion of national representative claims, they often refer to their own set of national interests and identities. By contrast, in Poland and Italy, most national discursive scopes were made by domestic actors invoking their own respective national interests and identities. These results suggest that the political arena is even more ethnocentric than the mediated sphere. I acknowledge, however, that ultimately all the claims were collected in newspapers, we, thus, cannot isolate media effects completely. With the above in mind, it would be timely to compare representative claims in national parliaments vis-à-vis the mass media. Indeed, the study by de Wilde (2011) has already carried out an analysis of this kind. However, it would be useful to see if the results are confirmed in a follow-up analysis¹².

Country comparative analysis

Loosely speaking, the representative claims in Polish and Italian newspapers were found to be markedly more nationally self-referential compared to German and Dutch newspapers. The opposite is true in respect of references to the EU-level of represented interests and identities which were markedly higher in Dutch and particularly German newspapers. This indicates that representations of Europe vary markedly across member states. In particular, the German public sphere represents an outlier, with patterns of claims-making that were more emblematic of a Europeanised public sphere. How can we begin to explain these findings? Below I provide a more in-depth comparative analysis to begin to explain the dichotomous patterns of discourse found in the countries examined, starting with the Polish public sphere. As mentioned earlier, Polish representative claims were found to be the most ethnocentric in terms of identity and interests (*actor -> object*). This finding may be explained by several factors, including, *inter alia*, Poland's specific historical, religious and political contexts. Throughout much of its history, Poland was occupied by foreign powers, firstly, from 1795 to 1918, when Poland was divided between Prussia, the Habsburg monarchy and Russia, secondly, from 1939 to 1945, when Poland was occupied by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, and thirdly, from 1945 to 1989, when Poland was under Soviet occupation¹³. Davies (2000) raises a pertinent question: "If Poland really got

¹² Interestingly, in the same paper, the same study revealed that claims in national parliaments were even more nationality self-referential than representative claims found in newspapers (de Wilde, 2011).

¹³ For almost two centuries, the nation of Poland was erased from the map, however, Polish national consciousness endured, nevertheless. Neighbouring states did their utmost to suppress Polish identity but Polish revanchism prevailed in the end. The historical trauma of persistent

destroyed, how could it be brought back to life later? If Poland came back, there must be something surviving its physical destruction” (Davies, 2000:285). According to Wagner, a possible answer may lie in Poland’s vivid and everlasting *cultural memory* which helped it to form a “bridge between the Poland of the honorable past and its uncertain future” (Davies, 2000:286). Moreover, as Wagner rightly adds, liberation from these occupations probably would not have been possible without a strong pre-existing, national identity: “National self-determination and the change from Lenin’s ideology of a struggle between classes to a national consensus represent[ed] the only common bond that unifie[d] the many groups and interests in these countries” (Schulze 1999: 335). Polish citizens may thus be forgiven for feeling that EU integration represents an assault on Poland’s national sovereignty which was indefatigably reobtained after decades of Soviet rule. Poland’s history of foreign subjugation and national resistance to it has become part of its self-image (Wagner, 2003:194). Poland’s undeniably tragic past, moreover, conforms to narratives of victimhood which are typical features of populist-nationalist rhetoric (Al-Ghazzi, 2021; Feinstein et al., 2021; Coulson, 2022).

Another plausible explanation for the high salience of Polish identity in Polish newspapers is that the ideas of what constitutes nationhood in Poland are arguably less compatible with other territorial levels of attachment. In Central and Eastern Europe, the idea of the nation has its intellectual roots in German romanticism which posits that the core idea of the nation is constituted by cultural and ethnic components (Fetahagić, 2017; Wagner, 2003:192-4). It can be reasonably argued that citizenship based on ethnic and cultural components is generally incompatible with EU identity which is based on civic-political citizenship. The former conceives of identity in more exclusive/exclusionary terms – one is *born* Polish, one cannot become Polish. The cultural and ethnic notion of the nation is less amenable to other territorial levels of belonging as ethnic and cultural capital remains vested in the nation. The outward-looking, cosmopolitan, and civic notions of EU identity (i.e. political rights) are incongruent with *völkisch* (i.e. ethnic-primordial) conceptions of nationhood that continue to hold sway in Central and Eastern Europe (Bellucci et al., 2012:63). This may partially explain why public discourse in Polish newspapers seldom contained transnational constituencies as objects of claims-making.

The connection between Catholicism and Polish nationalism may provide another plausible explanation. Poland has managed to carve out a unique relationship with the Catholic Church which has become a hallmark of Polish identity. The canonization (1253 C.E.) of the patron saint of Poland, *Stanislaus of Szczepanów*, helped foster national narratives that were inextricably tied to the Catholic faith (Grosby, 2016). In essence, the Catholic religion’s purported universality became specific to a distinct territory (*Ibid.*, 2016). In the words of Grosby, “It is obvious enough that the Catholic Church in Poland has a long history of being understood as the Polish Catholic Church, hence, a vehicle for

aggression coming from Germany in the West, and the Soviet Union in the East, has arguably stuck with the Polish people and still affects how Polish politicians frame Polish identity in the context of European debates.

Polish national consciousness” (*Ibid.*, 2016:4). Particularly for Poland’s ultra-traditionalist Catholics, the EU’s secular and ostensibly non-Christian values are increasingly perceived as an affront to the Polish way of life and incompatible with Polish culture (Spohn 2000:235). These grievances have – according to one scholar – found political expression in the ruling party, *PiS*, with its predominantly traditionalist Catholic leadership and electoral constituency¹⁴ (Nelson, 2016). In sum, the Polish-EU debate revolves around the question: “Isn’t [EU] integration a threat to our national identity, the realization of our newly gained sovereignty, and to the strength of Catholicism?” (Bachmann 2001:200; found in Wagner, 2003:200).

However, a more compelling explanation is the substantial representation of far-right political parties in the Sejm. Indeed the results indicate a strong link between the prominence of right-wing parties in party systems and discursive nationalism (see above). The discursive opportunity structure (DOS) insights elucidated in Chapter Two help us to make sense of these findings (a la Medrano, 2003). In essence, the DOS perspective posits that an actor-driven logic conditions patterns of discourse. To recap, political actors generally do not operate in a vacuum but are embedded within larger organisations which represent a specific ideology and worldview. We should understand mobilising on national identity as an intrinsic part of the job description of sovereigntist parties as it corroborates with their own (or their party’s) ideological, strategic interests, values, identity and manifesto. For instance, party actors must generally act within the strictures laid out by the party manifesto. As a corollary of the preceding point, the encroaching influence of the ruling far-right *PiS* Party in the Polish media landscape may provide another explanation for the nation-oriented patterns of discourse in Poland. However, this explanation is not a compelling one¹⁵. Despite the Polish President vowing to ‘repolonise’ the national media, *Fakt* and *Gazeta* are – to my knowledge – free from government influence¹⁶.

Moreover, recent political events have arguably created a fertile ground for nationalist discourse to thrive in Poland. Right-wing political actors exploited the public grievances induced by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russo-Ukrainian War, and the ongoing border issues at the Polish-Belarus border to indulge in nativist re-bordering narratives. Arguably Poland is more directly affected by the Russo-Ukrainian war and the migration crisis – compared to the Netherlands and Germany – given its geographical location¹⁷. Moreover, the ensuing rule of law crisis and concerns about media pluralism in Poland has created a fertile ground for clashes between the Polish government and the EU (Riebert,

¹⁴ The historic link between the Catholic Church and the Irish nationalist movement in the late nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century is well-documented (White, 2017:47).

¹⁵ This argument would have been more plausible had I opted for *Polska Press* or *TVP*. The former is widely regarded as a pro-government newspaper and is indirectly owned by the Polish Government. At the end of 2021, the state-backed oil refiner, *PKN Orlen*, announced that it would buy *Polska Press* (Schmitz, 2021). Similarly, *TVP* is now under the supervision of a Polish government agency, the National Media Council (*Rada Mediów Narodowych*) and the public broadcaster’s editorial leadership has been replaced by party loyalists (*Ibid.*, 2021).

¹⁶ *Fakt* is owned by the joint German-Swiss venture, *Ringier Axel*, and *Gazeta* is owned by *Agora*, a Polish media company, with two American organisations, namely Cox Communications and the Media Development Investment Fund also holding a stake.

¹⁷ Poland shares a border with three non-EU countries, namely, Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, making them more exposed to the problems engendered by the ongoing migrant crisis.

2021). These recent political circumstances have inevitably exacerbated pre-existing inter-state antagonisms, and thus, created a favourable environment for nationalist rhetoric to thrive. As elucidated earlier, Poland, furthermore, stands out from the other countries in two other respects: Poland is a newer and ‘opt-out’ member state of the EU. Polish discourse may thus reflect the fact that Poland is less integrated institutionally than older, Eurozone member states¹⁸.

Loosely speaking, we can say that Polish politics (and society for that matter) is more polarised than its Dutch and German counterparts. The consensus view is that Polish parties are deeply divided ideologically which has its roots in the Solidarity Movement¹⁹. Polish society is also deeply polarised on divisive, emotively charged issues related to, *inter alia*, abortion, gay rights, EU membership and the role of the Catholic Church in modern Polish society. The rise of the far right in Poland both reflects and accentuates societal divisions. Moreover, although Poland has a history of coalition governments which help facilitate consensus²⁰, as Savage (2013) observes, Polish parties tend to form coalitions within distinct ideological blocs²¹. In other words, parties form ideologically homogenous rather than disparate coalitions which arguably contribute to the polarisation of debate²². The deep polarisation of Polish politics and society creates a propitious environment for nationalist-populist rhetoric to thrive. Despite the above, Polish discourse was found to be decisively more Europeanised in structural terms²³. The most plausible explanation for this finding is that Poland is highly dependent on intra-EU trade with intra-EU trade accounting for 74% of exports and 67% of imports (European Union, n.d.-a). Thus the Polish economy, despite not being part of the Euro Area, is heavily embedded in the Single Market. The ‘compensatory Europeanisation’ hypothesis – that is, “the expectation of an increase in media coverage on European affairs in line with the increased influence of Europe on public policy development” – helps us shed light on these findings (Meyer, 2005:124).

As touched upon earlier, Italian discourse exhibited similar characteristics to Poland, however, debates were more domesticated than that in all the countries examined. Some of the arguments posed above such as the role of Catholicism and the intellectual roots of nationalism may also be extended to the Italian case. There is an argument to be made that the EU’s secular, religiously pluralistic, and

¹⁸ The insights from integration theory (a la Deutsch), and to a lesser extent, the neo-functional perspective (Haas) may help explain why discursive nationalism was so prevalent in Polish discourse.

¹⁹ The consensus view is that Polish parties are deeply divided ideologically and the party system is deeply polarised, which may be explained, in part, by the post-communist political settlement. The Roundtable Accord in April 1989 earmarked 65 per cent of the 460 seats to the Communists – and their allies – and the remainder were fought in free elections. The Solidarity Citizens' Committee won all but one of the seats on offer in the 1989 elections. The results of this election paved the way for the bipolar polarization between competing ideological blocs. The 1993 electoral reforms introduced, *inter alia*, a 5% threshold for political parties to obtain representation in the Sejm in addition to the D'Hondt formula which consolidated the power of stronger parties and essentially weeded out the weaker parties from the Sejm (Millard, 2009:171). As a result, in the 1997 elections, the five parties that reached the threshold formed coalitions to consolidate their influence in the Sejm. Right-wing parties united under an Electoral Action Solidarity (AWS) coalition and the post-communist SLD led a left-wing coalition (Ace Project, n.d).

²⁰ ...as is customary in electoral systems based on proportional representation.

²¹ Savage (2013) argues that similar patterns of party competition extend to the whole region of Central and Eastern Europe.

²² These sentiments are shared by Ieraci (2007) who claims that patterns of party competition in Poland and the CEEC region conform to the ‘polarised bilateral distribution’ model. In other words, there is little or no overlap between the two antipodal ideological blocs.

²³ In other words, Polish representative claims were found to be much more Europeanised in terms of communicative linkages between actors and addressees.

multicultural society may be perceived as an affront to Italy's traditional Catholic values, and by extension—Italian identity²⁴. These concerns have found political expression through right-wing political parties – such as *Lega* and *Fratelli d'Italia* – which recognise the crucial role of the Catholic Church in Italian society (Coffman et al., 2021:207). Arguably, the Catholic faith has been exploited by conservative nationalists to advance the notion of a “Christian Europe” rather than a religiously pluralistic, secular Europe (Wolkenstein, 2022). Mobilising voters on religious identity appears to be working with Catholic voters increasingly drawn to populist anti-immigrant parties (Nelson et al., 2016:86). However, it is difficult to gauge to what extent Catholicism was a significant factor in the prevalence of discursive nationalism in Italy and Poland given that the negative fallout engendered by recent crises (e.g. the sovereign debt crisis, Covid-19, and the migrant crisis) were more acute in Catholic-majority nations (Nelson et al., 2016). Italy was particularly affected by the sovereign debt crisis, migrant crisis, and Covid-19 pandemic. These crises were undoubtedly seized upon by TAN parties to advance their Eurosceptic, nationalistic agenda. The latter point seems to be a compelling explanation for the prevalence of discursive nationalism in Italian discourse. By contrast, it is fair to say that Germany and the Netherlands were relatively untouched by recent crises compared to Poland and Italy.

Furthermore, in Italy, particularly in contrast to the Netherlands, the idea of nationhood was viewed predominantly in ethnic-racialist terms (Barsotti, 2019). In the words of Re, “An imaginary construction of racial difference [...] and the fashioning of an imaginary ‘Italian’ racial identity, contributed more than any other element to unify Italians and give them the sense of being ‘one nation’ ” (Re, 2010:9-10). Similar sentiments are shared by Barsotti who argues that ideas of race which developed during the *Risorgimento* played an integral role in the construction of Italian identity and racial subtexts continue to permeate Italian discourse and shape Italian consciousness (Barsotti, 2020). Similarly, Banti et al., argue that the *Risorgimento* helped inculcate ethnocultural notions of nationhood²⁵ (Banti et al., 2014).

Italy's history of division is well-documented and may help explain why national identity remains highly salient in public discourse. For centuries, the peninsula was composed of a hotchpotch of independent city-states, several kingdoms, merchant republics, papal states, and communes, many of which were controlled by foreign dynasties. As the historian, Alexander Grab, points out, before Napoléon's invasion in 1796, there were ten Italian states: the Republic of Genoa, the Republic of Lucca, the Republic of Venice, the Duchy of Milan, the Duchy of Parma, the Duchy of Modena, the

²⁴ The Roman Catholic Church was and continues to be crucial to Italian identity (Cole et al., 2011). Indeed, in the words of Coffman et al., “The Church is still deeply embedded in Italian society [...] [and] remains the default element in Italian national identity” Coffman et al., 2021:207).

²⁵ That is not to say that civic conceptions of the nation were negligible. Indeed, two crucial players in the Italian unification movement, Garibaldi and Cavour, conceived of nationhood in more civic-oriented terms. However, generally speaking, ethno-racialist elements continue to shape notions of Italian citizenship.

Grand-Duchy of Tuscany, the Papal State, the Kingdom of Sardinia, and the Kingdom of Naples. These states were remarkably different from one another in terms of customs, culture, language and dialect, and socio-economic background (Kovick, 2021). These disparate territories were essentially at loggerheads for centuries, thwarting any potential for unification until French troops invaded Italy in 1796 which thereby fostered unity among them. Even today, “Italia settentrionale” (Northern Italy) and “il Mezzogiorno” (Southern Italy) are divided politically, culturally and economically, and the peninsula contains several languages and hundreds of dialects. In the pecking order of territorial attachment, Italian people identify, first and foremost, with the town and region where he or she was born, and their country, second²⁶. It is also important to bear in mind that Italy is a relatively new country²⁷ and national identity remains highly contested, particularly in the Northern regions of Italy and Sardinia. This ironically may render discursive nationalism more salient as national identity is not taken for granted. To paraphrase Billig, the *nation* is an essentially contested construct, and definitions will be (re-)produced to prove what the nation is (Billig, 1995:64).

Moreover, the Italian political system, especially in contrast to its Dutch and German counterparts, represents a less consensual form of governance. Without digressing too much on debates about party competition, most scholars agree that the Italian party system is deeply polarised on an ideological level (Bosco *et al.*, 2020). Indeed, the Italian political system is an exemplification of what several scholars have labelled ‘polarised bipolarism’ which denotes a model of party competition wherein two poles are formed by coalitions of parties (Ieraci, 2007; Bosco *et al.*, 2020:265). The well-documented ‘dealignment’ and ‘destruction’ of the Italian party system comprise unstable coalitions and splits among weak and internally divided parties which can no longer rely on party loyalty from voters (Magone, 2014:304). In short, relations across and within parties – and even within ruling coalitions – are highly polarised which partly explains Italy’s high turnover of governments²⁸. One could reasonably argue that Italy’s highly polarised and destabilised political system is more conducive to the nationalist-populist rhetoric of identity politics.

As I mentioned beforehand, Italy was overwhelmingly the least Europeanised in terms of communicative linkages (i.e. *structural*). The most compelling argument for this finding is that the Italian economy is less entwined in the Single Market than the other countries. Intra-EU trade accounts for 51% of Italy’s exports and 58% of imports come from EU Member States which is much lower than other countries in my analysis. The fallout from several recent crises in Europe – which inflicted asymmetric shocks on Italy in particular – may also have been an enabling condition for the domestication of European debates (Kriesi *et al.*, 2016). Perhaps the strong presence of radical right-

²⁶ The Italian term “campanilismo” encapsulates the primacy that local/regional identity holds for Italian citizens vis-à-vis national identity.

²⁷ As recently as 1861, after formal Italian unification, the former Prime Minister of Sardinia uttered a famous aphorism: “We have made Italy. Now we must make Italians” (found in Hutchinson *et al.*, 2000:984).

²⁸ The 2018 *Movimento 5 Stelle – Lega* coalition under the first Italian cabinet under Giuseppe Conte comes to mind.

wing parties in Italy also contributed to the domestication of European debates as party actors exploited the crisis for domestic political gain.

Dutch discourse was found to be both less ethnocentric and domesticated than its Polish and Italian counterparts. The Netherlands' unique history provides clues on why patterns of discourse were comparatively more transnationalised. The Dutch nation-state is much older particularly compared to Italy (The Union of Utrecht was signed in 1579). Compared to Italy, there was less internal division and conflict between the various territories. Even today – apart from the marginalised Friesian nationalist movement – the Netherlands is a highly cohesive, unified nation-state. One could, thus, argue that – unlike Italy – Dutch consciousness is taken for granted, rendering it less salient in public discourse²⁹.

The Netherlands' rich history of tolerance and assurance of religious freedom has been well-documented³⁰. Indeed, as far back as 1579, Article 13 of the Union of Utrecht stated that “every particular person shall remain free in his religion and that no one because of religion shall be persecuted or investigated” (found in Selderhuis, 2014:283). The intellectual movement of Renaissance Humanism³¹ helped to cultivate a climate of tolerance. The Netherlands became a refuge for religious exiles facing persecution, notably Portuguese and German Jews, protestants from Antwerp and Flanders, French Huguenots, and English dissenters. In the more recent past, secularisation and the decline in religiosity have become more pronounced. The high-water mark of Dutch tolerance culminated in the Dutch government's tolerance policy in the 1990s (*gedoogbeleid*) which ushered in a new era of more tolerant attitudes to abortion, euthanasia and drugs (Hekscher et al., 2004).

Particularly during the 17th century, the Netherlands became a global trading powerhouse with Amsterdam the indisputable centre of world trade. The Netherlands became a nation of seafarers, international explorers and global tradesmen. The Low Countries exploited a favourable geography, namely, unfettered access to both the North Sea and the Rhine river – which connected the Netherlands to the German hinterland – and extensive canal networks to develop extensive trade routes all over the world. The Netherlands has long been a global, outward-looking nation as exemplified by its prominent role during the Age of Discovery. The Netherlands – unlike the other countries in my analysis – also had an extensive colonial empire *beyond* Europe and played a pivotal role in the transatlantic slave trade. Although these circumstances represent the dark side of Dutch history, they unquestionably helped foster a more tolerant, multicultural society in the long term. In the more recent past, the

²⁹ However, it would be wrong to overstate this point as Poland is also a relatively old, cohesive nation however patterns of discourse were markedly different here.

³⁰ However, it is helpful to consider the old adage, “there are two sides to every story”. Although we can safely say that tolerance was more pronounced in Dutch society compared to the other countries in my analysis, it would be wrong to overstate it. Baruch (de) Spinoza, for example, was on the receiving end of Dutch intolerance, when at the age of 23, he was excommunicated and convicted of religious heresy in 1656 (Gorham, 2011).

³¹ ...which gained a foothold in the Netherlands courtesy of the seminal work of Desiderius Erasmus amongst others.

Netherlands played an integral role in European integration having formed the *Benelux Customs Union* with Belgium and Luxembourg which provided a template for the European Community (EC). Moreover, the Netherlands was a founding member of several important international organisations such as the EU, NATO, WTO and OECD.

That said, national naval gazing was still prevalent in Dutch public discourse which can be partially explained by examining the Netherlands' past. Dutch history was less fraught by internal division with its provinces much more united compared to Italian territories. As a result, a Dutch national consciousness began to congeal many centuries ago. The Netherlands, moreover, has a richer tradition of centralisation and a unitary state structure compared to the other countries. Already in 1384, several provinces in the Low Countries were partially united politically under the *Bourgondische Nederlanden*, and in 1464, the Dutch provinces set up a parliamentary assembly of the representatives of the constituent territories (*Staten Generaal*) which set in motion a more centralised system of governance (Prevenier et al., 2000). Moreover, several wars with foreign subjugators helped foster a strong sense of unity among the Dutch provinces.

It can also be reasonably argued that Dutch notions of nationhood differ considerably from that of the other countries examined, with civic notions of citizenship more pronounced in the Netherlands. Whereas in Poland and Germany national identity was rooted in primordialism, in the Netherlands, civic notions of national identity were more prevalent, as typified by the *Burgerlijk Wetboek* (civic code) which was adopted by the Netherlands in the early 19th century (van der Burg, 2015). Already in the 18th century, *Burghers* of the Dutch Republic were granted political and civic rights which surpassed that of other European countries (Kloek et al., 2004). It can be reasonably argued that Dutch conceptions of citizenship are more congruent with civic-based notions of EU identity (Bellucci, 2012). This might partially explain why Dutch political discourse was less nation-oriented than Polish and Italian discourse which continues to view nationhood in predominantly ascriptive (i.e. ethnocultural) terms. This is because civic conceptions of identity are generally more accommodating to other ethnic groups and, by extension, other identities (Coenders et al., 2022:3).

Beyond historical factors, it is also important to consider the Netherlands' economic profile. The Dutch economy is one of the most trade-dependent economies in the World. In fact, according to World Bank data, the Dutch economy records one of the highest trade-to-GDP ratios³² in the world (156%) followed by Poland (118%), Germany (89%), and lastly, Italy (63%). The Netherlands is, furthermore, heavily embedded in the Single Market with intra-EU trade accounting for 66% of Dutch exports and 42% of imports (European Union, n.d.-b). This may partly explain why representative claims in the Netherlands were fairly transnational in scope compared to Italy whose economy is less dependent on trade in general and intra-EU trade in particular. However, this explanation fails to explain the prevalence of

³² The trade-to-GDP ratio measures the relative importance of international trade in the economy of a country.

Eurocentric frames in German discourse. It is also important to note that the Netherlands is a member of the Schengen and Euro Area, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the latter two of which Poland is not a member. This may help us to explain why Dutch discourse was more transnational in scope compared to its Polish counterpart.

Moreover, the Dutch political system, like its German counterpart, is widely regarded as a consensus democracy (Hendriks, 2017). Indeed, the Dutch political system bears the label of the ‘Polder Model’ to describe its consultatory, consensus-oriented *modus operandi* of policy making. With this in mind, one could argue that the Dutch political system is less conducive to the polarising discourse of identity politics. In terms of political representation, far-right parties are weakly represented in the Dutch House of Representatives, especially when compared to Italy and Poland. This provides a compelling explanation for the varied strength of discursive nationalism in the countries examined. Recent political events, moreover, provide a further explanation for the Dutch public sphere’s less nation-oriented debate. Loosely speaking, the Netherlands was not affected by the Sovereign Debt Crisis or the 2015 Migrant Crisis to the same degree as Italy and Poland³³. The former inflicted an asymmetric shock on Southern European Union member states, and the latter was especially consequential for EU member states proximate to non-EU countries such as Italy and Poland³⁴. Indeed, not surprisingly, the migrant debate has been particularly vociferous in both these countries³⁵.

German discourse was found to be the most Europeanised, particularly in terms of communicative linkages. Germany’s specific historical circumstances provide one compelling explanation for the subdued presence of discursive nationalism in Germany. Loosely speaking, Germany’s history is one of European conquest and domination: the Kingdom of Prussia, the German Empire, and the events of the First and Second World Wars are notable cases in point. In this sense, German history, unlike Poland, provided a less fertile ground for the powerful identity narrative of victimhood nationalism to bear fruit in Germany³⁶. The events of the Second World War undoubtedly cast a long shadow on modern notions of nationhood in Germany. Germany’s unpalatable history of militarism, ethnonationalism and antisemitism – culminating in the tragic events of the Holocaust – discredited nationalist notions of Germany³⁷. The travails of the 20th century left an indelible mark on national self-conceptions. To paraphrase Mark Davis, the responsibility for the Second World War, and the national

³³ Poland, as a non-member of the Euro Area, was relatively unexposed to the debt crisis, however, Poland, as recent events at the Belarus-Poland border show, is particularly exposed to the migrant issue.

³⁴ By contrast, all EU member states were embroiled in the debate regarding the EU’s Covid-19 rescue package proposals, albeit for different reasons. The Dutch and Austrian governments, in particular, bitterly opposed common debt-sharing proposals, and the Southern European governments lamented the lack of economic solidarity shown on the part of Northern Europe. Not surprisingly, the results reveal that discursive nationalism was more pronounced in both Italy and Poland.

³⁵ Both Poland and Italy have become epicentres for the influx of illegal migrants into the EU.

³⁶ With the notable exception of the Treaty of Versailles and its draconian terms which indubitably allowed Hitler to indulge in German victimhood to help foster nationalist sentiments.

³⁷ German nationalism was widely viewed as a pernicious, antiquated relic of the past, and had become synonymous with authoritarianism, militarism, and antisemitism (Risse, 2000).

sentiment of guilt shaped the national self-conceptions of German politicians and citizens in Europe for decades (Davis, 2015).

German politicians had to reconstruct German identity to soothe the scars of the past. EU integration provided an opportunity for German elites to reconstruct a modern, post-national, civic German identity embedded in Europe. German elites perceived EU integration as congruent with Germany's vital interests and saw it as an opportunity for Germany to turn a new leaf (Risse, 2000). As Ernst Haas stated, "in leading circles of the CDU, the triptych of self-conscious anti-Nazism, Christian values, and dedication to European unity as a means of redemption for past German sins has played a crucial ideological role" (Haas, 1958:127; found in Risse, 2000:9)³⁸. As Risse argues, in Germany, there was an elite consensus on the need to embrace EU integration and construct a post-national German identity embedded within Europe (Risse, 2000). German and European identities went hand in glove with one another. This was not the case in Britain where Englishness and Europeanness were often at loggerheads. Elite narratives in Britain framed "Europeanness" as the "other" (Risse, 2000:1) whereas, in Germany, its militarist, nationalist past was portrayed as the "other" (Risse, 2000:10). German elites virtually all agreed that a unified Europe³⁹ and post-national European identity were effective assurances against resurgent nationalism (*Ibid.*).

Although German identity was traditionally understood as based on primordial and essentialist characteristics⁴⁰, Germany's war guilt led to an emphatic re-assessment of national belonging (Risse, 2000). After the Second World War, German nationalism became synonymous with Germany's Nazi past and Germany had to reinvent itself as prior conceptions of nationhood had become discredited. The international post-war policy of *Entnazifizierung* (denazification) was an emphatic rebuttal of German nationalism. Over time, German identity has evolved to become more civic and inclusive in character (Hulsse, 2006:399; Mitra, 2022). Since the turn of the millennium, German citizenship laws have shifted gradually from the principles of *ius sanguinis*, that is, citizenship granted only to those of German descent – to *ius soli*, namely citizenship granted to anyone born in Germany. That is not to say that primordial-exclusivist conceptions are no longer pertinent, however, we can safely claim that civic identity based on *Verfassungspatriotismus* has become more pronounced in recent times⁴¹ (Rowan & Baram, 2004:144-148).

³⁸ Although the CDU, under the leadership of Kurt Schumacher, were initially reticent to embrace EU integration, they changed tack after two major election defeats in 1953 and 1957 (Risse, 2000).

³⁹ "Europe" stood for peace and stability, democracy, and human rights, and thus provided the perfect opportunity for Germany and Europe to right the wrongs of the past, and reconstruct more inclusive, civic forms of national identity (Risse, 2000).

⁴⁰ In essence, *primordialism* means that collective identities are based on inherent characteristics such as, *inter alia*, a common culture, language or ethnicity. German nationhood was based on *Gemeinschaft* (community), which "relates to a certain sense of belonging based on shared loyalties, norms, and values, kinship or ethnic ties; it is conditioned by the feeling that this is a 'natural' and organic association based on an a priori social unity" (van Ham, 2001:230).

⁴¹ These legal changes appear to reflect German citizens' public attitudes. Indeed, the study by Cynthia Miller-Idriss (2006) found that German citizens generally conceive of citizenship in non-primordial, civic terms.

Below are some remarks about Germany's unique mode of governance which has arguably created a less favourable environment for the rhetoric of identity politics. Since the post-World War II period, Germany has built a reputation for consensual governance, which is not overly surprising when one considers Germany's electoral and political system, and particular constitutional arrangements (Behnke, 2019). Regarding the former, prospective members of the Bundestag are elected predominantly under a proportional representation (PR) electoral system with a 5% threshold. This ensures that radical and polarising political forces generally fail to obtain representation in the *Bundestag*. The PR electoral system also helps foster coalition governments which are generally more conducive to consensus. As a result, we have witnessed increasingly parliamentary fractionalisation, culminating in the (albeit slightly) waning influence of the two main parties – namely, the SPD and the CDU – in recent years. This has prevented a strong opposition between the two party camps from bearing fruit (Behnke, 2019). Fractionalisation of the party system also manifests at the federal and *lander* level largely as a result of the institutional structure of the *Bundesrat* (Behnke, 2019). The latter is composed of *Lander* representatives who represent both party interests and territorial interests. As *Lander* governments are also formed by coalition governments, the political composition of the *Bundesrat* is fractionalised further. As a result, negotiations before votes in the *Bundesrat* are often intense and protracted, and building a consensus is often the only way that laws are passed. In essence, Germany's bicameral legislature ensures a tight institutional connection between the party system and federalism (Lehmbruch, 2000; Behnke, 2019). Moreover, the constitutional principle of 'creating or sustaining equal living conditions' and safeguarding the 'legal or economic unity' (Article 72 of the German Basic Law) in the *Lander* helps foster cooperation rather than competition between them (Behnke, 2019). With that in mind, one could reasonably argue that Germany's consensual style of governance is not conducive to the rhetoric of identity politics, unlike Italy, for example.

At the European level, Germany, along with France, is widely regarded as the metaphorical 'motor' of Europe. Moreover, Germany is one of the founding and fully integrated members of the EU with no opt-outs, conditions which are understood to foster Europeanised communication. Germany has assumed the *de facto* leadership of the European Union, as we witnessed during the apogee of the eurozone and migrant crisis, albeit with mixed results⁴². It is, thus, not surprising that European-level constituencies were more salient in German representative claims-making as German politicians assumed the responsibility in the public sphere, at least, of safeguarding the collective European interest. The economic pedigree and global embeddedness of the German economy, provide another piece to the puzzle. Germany is the largest exporter in the EU (circa 38% of all exports) and one of the largest exporters globally. The German economy is also the largest one in Europe, contributing to

⁴² A caveat is in order. During data collection, Germany recently assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and thus Germany assumed not only *de facto* but *de jure* leadership of the European Union.

approximately one-quarter of the EU's GDP. These contextual factors are understood to be favourable to transnationalist discourses.

Furthermore, as with the Netherlands, Germany was relatively unexposed to the negative externalities engendered by the recent EU crises. Needless to say that during the Sovereign Debt Crisis, all member states were embroiled in the crisis and the stakes were high for the whole of the Euro Area. That said, we can confidently claim that Southern European members, notably Greece, bore the brunt of economic pain. During the 2015 migrant crisis, although Germany undoubtedly took the initiative – with Merkel's 'open-door' refugee policy – Germany was less affected by the problems engendered by the crisis than the likes of Italy or Poland which represent the EU's external frontier. As a result, we can expect nationalist rhetoric to thrive in countries that were disproportionately affected by the crisis. The disproportionate impact of recent EU-related crises provides another explanation for why German discourse was more transnational in scope compared to Italy and Poland have borne the brunt of recent crises.

Several scholars have long maintained that geography shapes identity (Kaplan *et al.*, 2011; Feinberg *et al.*, 2017; Scholte, 1996). Indeed, Tim Marshall, in essence, argues that geography conditions geopolitics. In the same scholar's words, nations are 'prisoners of geography' (Marshall, 2016). According to Marshall, Europe is destined to be never completely united due to historical and geographical conditions. Although I do not entirely agree with this pessimistic outlook, the author is right to underline the importance of geography in shaping politics in general and national identity in particular (Kaplan *et al.*, 2011). Poland and Italy, for instance, represent the frontiers of the EU. The former shares a border with several politically unstable non-EU countries, namely Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, that are, at the time of writing, embroiled in war. This set of circumstances, arguably, contributes to the sense of vulnerability on the part of Poland and galvanises defensive re-bordering narratives of resistance against outside aggressors. Poland, furthermore, shares a large land border with Belarus and Ukraine which has been the epicentre of migrant flows in recent years. This makes immigration a consequential and thus highly salient issue in Poland particularly compared to the Netherlands, a country not affected by migrant crossings to the same extent. As previous research shows, the issue of immigration is amenable to nationalist, re-bordering narratives (Yerly, 2022). Poland is a country with precarious sovereignty – wedged between two global powers, namely Germany and Russia – and the narratives of victimhood (Dempsey, 2018) create a perfect storm for exclusionary nationalist rhetoric (Feinstein *et al.*, 2019). Indeed, this may partly explain why nationalist narratives are so discernible in Israel whose sovereignty is frequently threatened (*Ibid.*). Similarly, Italy also shares a maritime border with African, and non-EU countries, and is particularly affected by migrant flows from Africa, thus creating a fertile ground for nationalist discourses.

Another characteristic shared by Italy and Poland is that they are further away from Brussels and Strasbourg than the other two case studies. By contrast, the Netherlands and Germany share a border with Belgium. It is reasonable to claim that countries geographically proximate to EU institutions may be more Europhile in both affections and attitudes as EU politics is – and feels – closer to home and is thus more consequential⁴³. This factor may explain why Euroscepticism in Belgium is virtually non-existent. Indeed, EU integration is a quasi-valence issue as far as the “political topic remains rather low in Belgium when it comes to party competition” (Wolfs *et al.*, 2021:9). It is also important to note that two of the major mountain ranges in Europe are located in Italy (the Alps, Apennines, Dolomites etc.) and Poland (Sudeten and the Carpathian mountains etc.) which may contribute to re-bordering narratives. By contrast, the geography of the Netherlands and Germany is rather different with flat, open plains and very few mountains (save for the *Bayerische Alpen* range in the latter). The geography of the Netherlands may partially explain its tradition of openness and tolerance, values which are generally not compatible with exclusionist, nationalist rhetoric. As Hoving remarks, “the renowned Dutch landscape, with its wide skies and flat meadows, is seen as open to the point of being transparent. Nothing stays hidden in such a space (Hoving 2004:2). In Italy and Poland, there are few major rivers which transcend the national border in stark contrast to Germany (European Environment Agency, n.d.). According to the European Environment Agency, in Italy, the *Po*, *Tevere* and *Adige* rivers sum up to a catchment area of 98km². Although few major rivers flow through the Netherlands, the catchment area of rivers in the Netherlands in proportion to the geographical size of the country exceeds that of Italy, and the Rhine, one of the major European rivers, flows through the Netherlands⁴⁴. Although Poland contains major rivers (e.g. *Oder*, *Vistula*), they are mainly confined to Poland⁴⁵. In Germany, on the other hand, two major rivers – namely, the *Rhine* and *Danube* – flow through Germany and several other European countries.

The Netherlands, moreover, is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe (circa 521km²) followed by Germany (232km²), Italy (200km²) and Poland (123km²)⁴⁶. According to another database, the total urban population in Poland is only 60% in stark contrast to the Netherlands where 93% of the population is urbanised. In Italy, circa 70% of the population is urbanised compared to 77% in Germany (Index Mundi, n.d.). So what? you may ask. Why does it matter? Because previous studies show that rural areas and small towns tend to be more Eurosceptic than urban areas (Dijkstra *et al.*, 2020; Schoene, 2019). This may also explain why discursive nationalism was more evident in the Dutch and German public spheres. In terms of geographical size, the Netherlands is the outlier with a land area of circa 41,000km² while the other three countries exceed a land area of 300,000km² each. This may contribute to the feeling that ‘going it alone’ is not a feasible option, and creates a sense of vulnerability for the

⁴³ To my knowledge, research has not been carried out to test this hypothesis, but it seems intuitively appealing.

⁴⁴ Despite Italy being circa seven times larger than the Netherlands, the catchment area of rivers in Italy is only 3 times higher.

⁴⁵ The catchment area of the rivers in Poland sums up to circa 309 km² which is similar to that of Germany (305km²). However, Germany’s major rivers flow through several other European countries, in contrast to Poland’s major rivers.

⁴⁶ See *WorldAtlas* (2020) for further information.

Dutch people that being part of the European Union helps mitigate⁴⁷. Indeed, smaller member states are expected to report on the affairs of fellow EU states more than bigger ones (Koopmans et al., 2010). It is also important to remember where the countries of my analysis are located in Europe. Germany is both at the heart of Europe figuratively and literally and the Netherlands borders Belgium which is the institutional home of the EU. By contrast, both Italy and Poland represent the outer geographical limits of the EU.

Moreover, Germany and the Netherlands possess highly integrated, interconnected, transnational transport links in contrast to Italy and Poland. Germany and the Netherlands, in particular, possess a vast number of navigable canals, rivers, lakes, and transnational freight networks. According to Eurostat, motorway, railway, and inland water density is particularly high in the Benelux countries and Germany (European Parliament, 2020). It is also important to consider demographics as several studies show that countries with higher migrant populations tend to be less Eurosceptic and evaluate the EU more positively. It can be reasonably claimed that both Poland and Italy have a more homogenous society with the Catholic religion and autochthonous ethnic groups overwhelmingly dominant in these countries⁴⁸. By contrast, Germany and the Netherlands are more religiously and ethnically heterogeneous. The latter two countries' demographic profiles are arguably more congruent with the EU's secular, religiously pluralistic, and cosmopolitan values. We can broadly conclude from the above that the geographical, and topographical characteristics in Northern Western Europe are more amenable to transnationalism. A caveat is in order, however. These contextual factors cannot provide a plausible explanation by themselves, but help us to join the dots, and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of why differences in patterns of discourse are so stark across different countries.

Several scholars have argued that a nation's macroeconomic situation may affect patterns of discourse. More specifically, Bossetta and Segestan (2019) expect newspapers from net budget receiving countries to contain more Europeanised patterns of discourse vis-à-vis net contributors (see also Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010). However, my results do not support this hypothesis. Despite Germany contributing the most to the EU in absolute terms (+17 million euros, as of 2018), German discourse was found to be the most Europeanised while Polish discourse was the least so despite recording a deficit (-11 million euros, as of 2018). Several scholars hypothesise that the degree of intra-EU trade may explain patterns of discourse, arguing that countries with high levels of intra-EU trade are more inclined to report about the affairs of other EU member states (horizontal). The results of my analysis lend only tentative support to this hypothesis. Poland – which records the highest level of intra-EU trade – referred to other EU member state constituencies the most (9.06%). By contrast, Italy has the lowest level of intra-EU trade and scored the lowest in terms of horizontal normative Europeanism

⁴⁷ Indeed, supporters of EU integration argue that being part of the EU emboldens the sovereignty and leverage of smaller countries in geopolitics, providing a bulwark against the pernicious effects of globalisation.

⁴⁸ Indeed, according to *Index Mundi*, over 80% of citizens identify as Catholic in both countries, and over 95% of citizens are ethnic Italians and ethnic Poles, respectively.

(3.11%). That said, Germany's share of intra-EU trade is almost the same as Italy however the portion of horizontal claims was twice as high in the former. Interestingly, the top 3 EU member states for exports of goods featured prominently in all four networks. For example, according to Eurostat, the main trade partners of Germany are France, Netherlands, and Poland. For Italy, it is Germany, France, and Spain. In Poland, Germany is overwhelmingly the most important trade partner followed by the Czech Republic and France. Germany is also the most important trade partner for the Netherlands followed by Belgium and France (Eurostat, 2021). As a matter of fact, in the German public sphere, France, the Netherlands and Poland comprise the top 10 most prominent vertices (in both the uni- and bipartite networks). In the Italian bipartite network, nodes with the German nationality attribute were the fourth most prominent actor/constituency followed by French (6th) and Spanish-affiliated nodes (8th). In the Polish public sphere, German-affiliated nodes are the fourth most prominent actor/constituency in both networks and French-affiliated nodes are the 8th most prominent in the bipartite network. In the Dutch bipartite network, German-affiliated nodes were the fourth most prominent actor/constituency followed by French (5th) and Belgian-affiliated vertices (8th). In the Dutch unipartite network, French-affiliated vertices were the 5th most prominent actor/constituency followed by German-affiliated vertices (6th). These findings lend tentative support to the 'intra-EU trade dependency' hypothesis.

It is argued that Europeanised communication is a function of political integration. The so-called 'opt-out' and newer member states are expected to be less inclined to make Europeanised claims. There seems to be little support for this hypothesis, however. In fact, the Polish public sphere was the most Europeanised, as far as horizontal claims are concerned. And in terms of structural Europeanisation, a similar share of horizontal claims was found in the Polish public sphere. Notwithstanding this, when Europeanised claims are aggregated (i.e. top-down, bottom-up, horizontal, supranational), we find tentative support for the integration hypothesis. In fact, in both the unipartite and bipartite networks, representative claims in the Polish public sphere were found to be the least and second-least Europeanised, respectively. Furthermore, there is evidence that older member states target the EU level more than newer member states⁴⁹. The results indicate that older member states attribute responsibility more to the EU level than newer member states. However, a caveat is in order. My sample only contains one Euro 'opt-out' and a new EU member state, namely, Poland. I thus acknowledge that I have little data to draw upon. Another argument has been put forward by scholars that countries with higher levels of power and autonomy in the international system will be more inclined to national framing vis-à-vis their less powerful counterparts. My results do not lend support to this thesis, however. When the soft power, military power index and GDP variables are taken into account, Germany is indisputably the most powerful member state followed by Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland⁵⁰. We would thus expect

⁴⁹ The proxy for *attribution of responsibility* is bottom-up vertical political claims (i.e. act2adr).

⁵⁰ According to the *Global Soft Power Index* (2020), Germany is the most powerful nation followed by the Netherlands (12th), Italy (19th) and lastly Poland (23rd). According to the *Military Strength Ranking Index* (2021), Italy is the 12th most powerful nation in terms of military clout

the German public sphere to be the least Europeanised, and the Polish to be the most Europeanised. However, the results reveal the opposite.

Some scholars argue that levels of satisfaction with democracy may affect countries' propensity for Europeanised communication. According to the *Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report* (Foa et al., 2020), the Netherlands is the country 'most satisfied' with democracy (6th place) followed by Germany (16th), Poland (18th) and lastly Italy (42nd)⁵¹. On this basis, we would thus expect Italy to be the most Europeanised followed by Poland, the Netherlands, and Germany. However, the results of my analysis do not lend support to this hypothesis. This hypothesis was also rejected by the study of Peter and de Vreese (2004) who found that – contrary to expectations – the level of EU coverage was positively correlated with higher levels of satisfaction with domestic democracy. Other scholars posit the view that levels of support and identity feeling among general publics may influence how political actors frame Europe. According to the 2021 *Eupinions* survey in response to the question: 'Do you identify as European? In addition to other identities...', Poland identifies most strongly as European (86%) followed by Germany (75%), the Netherlands (69%) and Italy (63%). There is little evidence that identity feeling among the general population influences the supply side of political communication (Eupinions, 2021). By the same token, levels of support for the EU among the general population have been identified as another explanatory variable. As of the 2019 *Global Attitudes Survey* (Pew Research Center, 2020), EU support levels are lowest in Italy (58%) followed by the Netherlands (66%), Germany (69%) and Poland (84%). The results do not support this hypothesis. As the results demonstrate, the Polish public sphere was the most nationally self-referential despite high levels of support for the EU among Polish voters. However, the relatively high levels of discursive nationalism in Italy may be a result of wavering levels of support for the EU in Italy. Furthermore, Boomgaarden (2013) argues that strong levels of Eurosceptic elite opinion are positively associated with Europeanisation. The results lend tentative support to this thesis. In fact, in both Germany and the Netherlands – where net evaluations of the EU were more negative – Europeanised claims were more prevalent compared to the Italian and Polish public spheres whose evaluations of the EU were more positive on the whole⁵². Although it is difficult to quantify the extent of Euroscepticism among elites, we can broadly assert that it is more prevalent among the political class in Poland, Italy and the Netherlands compared to Germany which may partially explain why German public discourse was markedly more Europeanised.

Furthermore, historical factors indubitably play a crucial role in patterns of discourse. Arguably, Germany sees the EU as an opportunity to reconcile relations between fellow European nations after

followed by Germany (15th), PL (23rd) and the Netherlands (37th). Germany records the highest GDP (4th) followed by Italy (8th), the Netherlands (17th), and lastly Poland (21st). Overall, we may confidently assert that Germany has the most power and autonomy in the international system, followed by Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland.

⁵¹ Foa, R.S., Klassen, A., Slade, M., Rand, A. and R. Collins. 2020. "The Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report 2020." Cambridge, United Kingdom: Centre for the Future of Democracy.

⁵² See Fig.5.102 in Appendix A, for details.

the ravages of the Second World War. As such, Germany remains reluctant to rouse nationalist sentiments – even in the mundane sense. This may explain why representative claims in the German public sphere were more partial to Europeanised political communication. Poland has historically endured recurring threats to its national sovereignty from its neighbours for centuries. For over two centuries the nation-state of Poland ceased to exist. This helps us to understand why Polish identity is so politicised in the context of EU integration. Italy has been at the centre of recurrent crises (e.g. migrant crisis, eurozone crisis) and decades of high unemployment and low economic growth which political actors have mobilised in order to rouse Eurosceptic sentiments. This may partially explain discourse was found to be predominantly nationalistic. It is also important to remember that the Italian nation is relatively new compared to other European countries, and arguably, identities are not taken as much for granted as in the Netherlands – a comparatively much older nation. Moreover, Italian and Polish citizens are predominantly Roman Catholic. Despite the ostensible tension between the existence of nations and monotheism, the teachings of Catholicism recognise “a natural, legitimate attachment to one’s motherland or fatherland” (Grosby, 2016:1). As the scholar, Topidi pithily puts it, “the Catholic Church is not simply considered as a part of the Polish nation; it is the Polish nation” (2019:1). Germany and the Netherlands are more secular compared to Italy and Poland which may partially explain the dichotomous patterns of discourse that were found between the Northern European countries, and Poland and Italy.

A more compelling explanation is the prominence of right-wing parties in political systems. Several scholars argue that countries with a prominent representation of right-wing parties will contain less Europeanised discourses. The results lend strong support to this hypothesis. In terms of far-right political representation, in descending order: Germany has the smallest share of far-right representation in parliament followed by the Netherlands, Italy and Poland. In the German Bundestag, 11% of seats are held by one far-right party, namely the AfD. In the Netherlands, if you include the PPV, FvD and JA21, 16.6% of seats are occupied by far-right political parties. In the Italian chamber of deputies, 27% of seats are held by Lega and Fratelli d’Italia⁵³. In the Sejm, when the United Right Alliance, Confederation Alliance, Kukiz’15 and Law and Justice Party are aggregated, 52.6% of seats are held by far-right parties. This context may help explain why the prevalence of national discursive scopes was so varied in the countries examined. As we know, the strength of discursive nationalism was most pronounced in the Polish public sphere followed closely by the Italian, Dutch, and German public spheres. Upon reflection of the above, the most compelling explanation for marked cross-country variation in discursive (Euro-)nationalism is the varying prominence of far-right political parties in the political systems of the countries examined.

⁵³ This parliamentary arithmetic was calculated prior to the Italian parliamentary elections on 25th September 2022.

Interestingly, discursive territorial scopes followed a consistent pattern in all four countries with (1) national scopes the most prevalent followed by (2) bottom-up vertical, (3) regional/global, (4) supranational, (5) horizontal and (6) top-down vertical claims. This means that the most salient identities and interests in representative claims-making were national followed by European interests and identities. These patterns of discourse are roughly consistent with previous findings. Vertical claims significantly exceed horizontal claims which are consistent with earlier research. This implies that actors at the national level are more inclined to invoke EU-wide interests and identities rather than those of fellow EU member states. Moreover, the results reveal the predominance of bottom-up vertical vis-à-vis top-down vertical claims. This implies that national-level actors are more active protagonists of representative claims-making than supranational-level actors.

Actor-level analysis

The results show that most claimants were overwhelmingly domestic in origin. A modest share of representative claimants was EU in origin or belonging to another EU member state. This implies that journalists do not report the claims of ‘foreign’ actors. This is not particularly surprising bearing in mind the media logic perspective. As I have argued, domestic audiences are, generally speaking, less familiar with political actors representing other nations. Thus, allocating column inches to domestic actors ensures that articles score high on the news values of identification and personification as domestic readers can readily put a face to the name of the actor iterating the claim – even without the supplementation of a photo. The predominance of domestic actors as claimants underlines a strong media logic at play. Medrano’s claim that the media “give privileged access to national political actors keen on reproducing national identities over European actors” finds strong support in my results (Diez Medrano 2011:44). These results are generally congruent with previous research. Machill’s meta-analysis (2006) reveals that domestic protagonists receive much more coverage than supranational actors. Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) found a modest share of foreign speakers from other European countries. Conrad’s (2006) study reveals that national speakers dominate the debate and non-nationals are barely represented in articles on the constitutional treaty. In line with Conrad’s (2006), the study by Peters et al. (2005) found that ‘discursive contributions’ from non-national speakers were seldom detected in newspaper articles. However, my results contradict those of de Wilde (2011) who found that the most prominent representatives in the mediated sphere were government executives representing other member states. In line with De Wilde’s (2011) findings, the study by Grande and Kriesi (2014b) found that national executives from other member states intervened most frequently in the debate. These findings imply that both the euro crisis (Grande and Kriesi, 2014b) and EU budget negotiations (De Wilde, 2011) increased the penetration of non-national actors in the respective national public spheres. In sum, the results reveal that – as far as representative claims are concerned – there is a lack of ‘voice’

by foreign actors. This implies that the political demands of other EU members are overlooked (Peters, Sifft, Wimmel, Brüggemann, & Konigslow, 2005) and European interlocutors are perceived as less legitimate speakers in the public sphere vis-à-vis domestic actors (Risse, 2003).

In line with previous findings, government/executive actors were the most prominent protagonists in European debates, far exceeding the number of representative claims by political party and legislative actors, and even more so, civil society actors. In fact, government-executive actors made twice as many representative claims as political party actors. This is similar to the finding of Walter (2017) who found that the representation of political party actors was circa three times lower than government-executive actors. Several studies reinforce the top-down nature of European politics. For example, in de Wilde's 2011 paper, the most prominent representatives in the mediated sphere were government executives representing other member states. The findings of Koopmans (2010) confirm that executive actors (e.g. heads of government and cabinet ministers) dominate national debates on the subject of Europe, to the detriment of political parties, whilst civil society representation in the public sphere was negligible. Trezz's 2007 study revealed that national governments and heads of state were the most visible with Fischer and Chirac particularly featuring prominently in the debate on the constitutional treaty. How can we begin to explain this finding? Again, media logic theory provides the most compelling explanation. National executives score high on the news values of status, identification, and personification. However, the insights of POS and political logic theory should also not be discounted. As decision-making shifts from the nation-state to the European governance, these changes in the distribution of decision-making power have disproportionately favoured some actors, notably, executive actors, compared to others (i.e. political party actors). Indeed, Koopmans et al. (2010) expect discursive influence to reflect decision-making. Kriesi et al. (2010) argue that the so-called 'juridification' of EU integration has strengthened administrative institutions compared with parliamentary institutions, and hence benefitted executive and interest groups (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010). They, therefore, expect state actors and interest groups to be more active at the EU level – in terms of both insider lobbying and public-oriented strategies – than political parties and social movement organisations (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010). Civil society, social movements and interest groups still tend to mobilise at the national level and refrain from European politics, and any grievances are commonly articulated within the strictures of domestic politics (*Ibid.*). National governments have a decisive role in EU policy-making, with many key decisions made during EU council summits and the Council of Ministers conferred a key legislative role. By contrast, as numerous scholars have already pointed out, politicians and political parties have a diminished role in EU policy-making with national parliaments mainly holding an advisory role in EU policy-making. This has led some scholars to refer to a process of 'deparliamentarisation', in other words, the changes wrought by EU integration have led to the waning of parliamentary control over the executive branch (McConalogue, 2019:121). Government/executive actors, moreover, have privileged access to information and policy briefs

emanating from Brussels. The scant attention paid to civil society actors – both formal and informal – is not surprising. The claims of unknown public figures are unlikely to grab an audience's attention. What are the implications of the very top-down, skewed nature of European deliberative politics? As de Wilde (2019) argues, the EU functions according to an intergovernmental logic rather than a supranational one which makes the EU susceptible to conflict between national governments that habitually have to confront national specificities and issues which are unique to the domestic political landscape. There are also democratic ramifications of the lopsided nature of interventions in the public sphere. The EU has been widely criticised for alienating and disenfranchising citizens from EU policy-making and people have described the EU as feeling 'distant'. The lack of publicity afforded to civil society may partially explain citizens' disaffections.

As expected, *de jure* political and government actors (government/executive, legislative, political parties etc.) make fewer references to EU-level interests and identities compared to non-political actors (e.g. civil society, economists, academics). By the same logic, actors operating in a formal political capacity invoked objects of a global scope very few times relative to the number of claims they made. The main takeaway is that central banks, whole polities, and legislative actors invoke the EU constituency considerably more compared to other types of actors. Again, political parties and government/executive actors made more nationalistic claims compared to non-politically affiliated actors (e.g. judiciary, central banks, and church and religious organisations). Naturally, there were some exceptions to this observation, but generally speaking, *de jure* political actors were less inclined to refer to invoke EU-level constituencies, and by the same token, political parties appeared to be more amenable to the national levels of interests and identities. The most plausible explanation stems from political logic theory. Actors operating in an official political capacity are more inclined to tailor their claims to the 'national' voter as they are, after all, vying for their votes. By contrast, business leaders, academic institutions, central banks, and the judiciary are expected to act impartially and not in the national interest.

As expected, broadly speaking, parties on the right of the political spectrum made more nationalistic claims than their left-wing counterparts. And by the same token, left-wing parties and parties occupying the centre ground were more inclined to invoke EU-level interests and identities. And actors with an identifiable political affiliation made few claims of global scope. In sum, claims of a national scope were the most frequently invoked and this was found across the board. And actors without a political function featured most prominently in most discursive scopes. Interestingly, however, non-politically affiliated actors scored much lower for discursive nationalism. Generally speaking, centre-left, mainstream political parties invoked supranational-level constituencies more than political actors who are more oriented towards the right of the political spectrum. However, the reverse was found in respect of national discursive scopes, with right-wing politically affiliated actors tending to invoke national objects more vis-à-vis their left-wing counterparts. These findings imply that political logics are not

uniform and may vary according to party family and actor type. Not surprisingly, most political actors do not operate in a vacuum but must follow diktats from party officials and party mandates. Every party has a target constituency and so too do media organisations who have a different catchment area viz. target audience. With that in mind, political communication must be tailored accordingly to mobilise voters. These findings are congruent with previous research. The study by de Wilde (2011) found differences in framing across party families, with centre-right parties claiming the national interest the most frequently. Other studies, most notably, the paper by Statham and Gray (2005) reveal that – as far as the British case is concerned – political parties frame EU politics differently. In this study, it was found that claimants from Eurosceptic-oriented parties tended to focus on issues of democracy, sovereignty, federalism, and EU centralisation. By contrast, pro-Europeans – from both the Labour and Conservative Party – focused more on the economic benefits of the Single Market whilst also highlighting the benefit of greater geopolitical leverage. To find a plausible explanation for these findings, we should cast our minds back to the work of Medrano (2010) who argues that framing is governed by an actor's role expectations, institutional location, identity orientations, and so on. Political actors who are politically affiliated are effectively constrained in respect of the available framing repertoires they can employ. In basic terms, political actors do not operate in a vacuum but must 'toe the party line'. For instance, an actor belonging to a sovereigntist political group would *a priori* be expected to defend the national interest or appeal to national identity. By the same logic, green party actors, as ostensible bastions of the environment, would be expected to defend the common good⁵⁴. This, I believe, provides a compelling argument for the variance that was found across party families.

Newspaper-type

Moreover, an overwhelmingly high number of representative claims were found in quality newspapers. This is not surprising as there were many more articles about European politics found in quality newspapers. In line with expectations, national self-referential representative claims represented a higher share of total claims in tabloid newspapers. By the same token, claims invoking the 'EU supranational' constituency were mainly found in quality-format newspapers and claims invoking the 'EU supranational' constituency were mainly found in quality-format newspapers. And claims invoking the 'regional/global' and 'other EU member state' constituencies were found predominantly in quality-format newspapers. Nationally self-referential representative claims appear to be inversely proportional to European and supranational object scope claims. In short, the claims found in quality newspapers were more transnational in orientation which is congruent with earlier findings. Indeed, overall, representative claims in quality newspapers were found to be more predominantly transnational in

⁵⁴ The environment is not a problem or threat confined to one nation, but a threat to the whole world.

scope. Interestingly, across-format differences were not so stark in the Italian and Polish samples. I suspect this is because Italy does not have an archetypal ‘red-top’ newspaper equivalent to that found in the United Kingdom (e.g. *The Sun*) or Germany (e.g. *Bild*). In the Polish case, it may be that ‘national discourse cultures’ override ‘editorial discourse cultures’ (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). Interestingly, in Germany which has a more variegated media landscape, the differences in representative claims were most stark. Similar trends can be found in the distribution of representative claimants with quality newspapers more amenable to claims from non-domestic actors, inter-alia, EU-supranational and third-country actors and those from other EU member states. Not surprisingly, in all three of these categories, quality newspapers overwhelmingly trump tabloid newspapers. That said, both newspaper types demonstrate a preference for domestic actors. Again, these findings should not come as a surprise. A plethora of studies has found that tabloid newspapers are more nationally self-referential (see Chap.1, for details). There are several plausible explanations for these across-format differences. Firstly, the print press – as with all media organisations – varies according to ideological orientation, values, political beliefs, ethos, rules or habits of their journalists, and organisational and ownership structures, among other things (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012:447). Secondly, newspapers cater to different audiences⁵⁵ who vary by socio-economic background, level of education, ideological orientation and political beliefs, and so forth. Thirdly, and with the above in mind, the news selection and formatting decisions of journalists are likely to vary by media organisation. Tabloid newspapers are oriented more to ‘soft news’ because the reader demands it. As Pfetsch et al. (2010) argue, regional and tabloid newspapers cater to local/national audiences who are more interested in domestic politics and tend to have lower levels of education. By contrast, quality newspapers cater to political elites and white-collar workers who tend to be more transnational in outlook. Accordingly, journalists will report more on European politics, and as a result, we would expect more political claims of a European scope to be found in quality newspapers. These findings fit Hepp’s description of the public sphere as ‘multi-segmented’ and ‘highly fragmented’ (Hepp et al., 2009; see also Hallin and Mancini, 2004). That is to say that public discourse is fragmented along both national lines and across the media landscape (Statham, 2010). The implication is that different people will have different representations of European politics. For readers of tabloids, the EU is likely to feel like a more distant and passive actor with national actors, interests, and identities at the forefront of readers’ minds. By contrast, quality newspapers allocate comparatively more space to transnational actors, interests, and identities. As visibility is a tacit acceptance of an actor’s legitimacy in the public sphere, it follows that domestic actors, interests and identities are seen as more legitimate (and indeed newsworthy!) for both journalists who select the claim and audiences who continue to read about them. The ‘transnational gulf’ between

⁵⁵ For instance, although the *Guardian* is a national newspaper, it attracts a wide readership from abroad. Undoubtedly, news content is tailored with that in mind.

tabloid and quality newspapers – that Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) describes – still rings true today (2012: 446).

Intervening variable: Covid-19

Comparing the datasets before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, the most noteworthy finding is the increase in domestic-national but also solidaristic-Europeanised claims but a decrease in references to EU-supranational and global interests and identities. The results indicate that we may speak of a Europeanisation of some kind in terms of increasing solidaristic claims (i.e. horizontal and top-down vertical). However, when Europeanised claims are aggregated, there is a clear net decrease in claims of this sort and a corresponding increase in discursive national representative claims. These results provide tentative evidence that public discourses may both become nationally self-referential during crises but there is also evidence of increasing solidarity among member states notwithstanding the negligible levels that were recorded in the pre-Covid-19 dataset. In short, the results show that actors tend to focus more on the ‘national interest’ during the Covid-19 pandemic. This result was particularly noticeable in the Italian sample with an exponential increase in nationalistic representative claims detected in the Covid-19 dataset. I suspect this is because EU-related issues became particularly politicised during the Covid-19 pandemic. Italy was one of the first and hardest hit countries at the beginning of the pandemic and faced some macroeconomic instability due to some initial reticence on the part of several member states to support EU-wide measures to support their economy during the crisis. Naturally, this reticence was seized upon by politicians, particularly sovereigntist and Eurosceptic parties who were keen to highlight the failings of supranational problem-solving.

The Covid-19 pandemic appears to have been a mixed blessing for processes of Europeanisation. On the one hand, public spheres’ became more *insular* as claims-making became markedly more nationally self-referential and reticent toward regional, EU and global level identities and interests, particularly in tabloid newspapers. Interestingly, the increase in national representative claims mainly came from non-politically affiliated actors, particularly media and journalists. On the whole, no discernible patterns of discourse were found according to party family across time. The sharp fall in bottom-up vertical claims and regional/global level interests and identities mainly derives from formal political actors (e.g. political parties, government-executive actor types). On the other hand, public spheres’ were more receptive to the interests and identities – both *horizontally* and *top-down* – of fellow EU member states particularly in quality newspapers. Interestingly, the increase in horizontal-solitaristic claims-making mainly came from non-politically affiliated actors, in particular media/journalist actor cohorts. The results suggest that national structuration – be it from a *narcissistic-national* or *solitaristic-horizontal* perspective – becomes more pronounced during a crisis. In the words of Aguirresarobe, the Covid-19

pandemic “emphasized the extent to which the picture of the world as being comprised of a series of nation-states still frames our historical imaginations” (Aguirresarobe, 2022:21). In sum, the results paint a mixed picture. On the one hand, public discourse becomes more ethnocentric and less referential to the supranational and global level of interests and identities. On the other hand, solidaristic claims increased. That said, on balance, European debates were more internalised during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In respect of actor types, national representative claims increase in almost all actor types save for politicians and political parties. I suspect this has more to do with decreasing visibility as government/executive actors tend to receive more publicity during critical junctures. Indeed, the results show that the latter cohort received more coverage in the Covid-19 dataset. Interestingly, ‘media and journalists’ iterated markedly more nationalistic representative claims. This indicates that ‘media nationalism’ (Trenz, 2008) seems to thrive particularly during a period of crisis. This is in line with previous studies which found that the media tend to highlight how their own country has been affected by the crisis (Eilders & Lichtenstein, 2019:606). As expected, the decrease in bottom-up vertical claims derives mainly from ‘political party’ and ‘government/executive’ actor cohorts, which indicates that *de jure* political actors become particularly disinclined to invoke collective European interests and identities during critical junctures. Anecdotally speaking, the lack of collective European solidarity was palpable during the crisis and these findings confirm this. Not surprisingly, the increase in top-down vertical claims during the pandemic is largely attributed to ‘government/executive’ actors which is not surprising as most supranational-level actors are categorised as governmental (e.g. EU Commission). The result means that supranational actors tend to invoke solidarity with other EU member states during a crisis. The increase in horizontal claims during the pandemic derives mainly from ‘government/executive’ actors and ‘media and journalists’. This shows that executive and media actors, on the one hand, are more nationally self-referential, however, they may also be more inclined to appeal to the interests and identities of fellow EU member states. As I mentioned earlier, supranational representative claims increased during the pandemic. This means that, during the pandemic, supranational-level actors – as with national-level counterparts – were more self-seeking for the interests of their own political community. The dramatic fall in regional/global representative claims reinforces the notion that public spheres become more insular during a crisis. This remarkable decrease is mainly attributable to *de jure* political actors, namely government/executive actors, legislative actors and political parties. Again, these findings suggest that political actors overlook global interests when exposed to threats.

The findings show that the increase in national representative claims in the Covid-19 dataset derives mainly from non-politically affiliated actors. That said, ‘Christian-democratic’ and ‘socialist’ political denominations made noticeable more claims of this kind during the pandemic. By the same token, despite no discernible pattern in the temporal distribution of bottom-up vertical claims, ‘Christian-

democratic' and 'socialist' political denominations made substantially fewer bottom-up vertical claims. Virtually all top-down vertical representative claims were made by non-political affiliated actors, and this applies both before and during the pandemic. The increase in horizontal and supranational representative claims in the Covid-19 dataset was mainly attributable to non-politically affiliated actors. In short, there were no discernible patterns found concerning party families. We may broadly conclude from the above that the increase in discursive nationalism during the pandemic mainly derived from actors with no identifiable political affiliation (e.g. civil society actors, economists etc.)⁵⁶.

Across both newspaper formats, 'national' and 'other EU member state(s)' object scopes featured more prominently in the Covid-19 dataset. In other words, both domestic interests and identities and those of fellow member states were more salient during the pandemic. As expected, the increase in national object scopes was particularly pronounced in tabloid newspapers. The reverse is true for 'other EU member states(s)', with the increase more pronounced in quality newspapers, again, reinforcing its transnational credentials. This, in essence, means that, during the pandemic, quality format newspapers were more inclined to invoke the interests and identities of fellow EU member states. As expected, 'EU supranational', and 'regional/global' object scopes fell during the pandemic, particularly in tabloid newspapers. How can we interpret this finding? Put simply, public discourse emanating from tabloid newspapers becomes particularly ethnocentric and nationally self-referential. More specifically, national interests and identities become markedly more salient at the expense of supranational interests and global identities. Interestingly, in tabloids, the interests and identities of other EU member states became – albeit modestly – more salient as well during the pandemic. Similar patterns of discourse were found in quality newspapers albeit to a lesser degree, and supranational interests and identities remained at similar levels both before and during the pandemic. We can tentatively conclude from these findings that crises may have the effect of emboldening national identity, with this finding particularly noticeable in sensationalist-oriented newspapers. These findings imply that sensationalist-oriented newspapers seize on periods of turmoil to rally behind a coalition of national interests and identities. I expect this is because sensationalist-oriented newspapers thrive on conflict, turmoil, and drama as a result of media logic. And we know from previous research that ethnocentric biases are particularly acute in tabloid newspapers. They do, after all, cater to mainly domestic audiences.

The link between crises and the congealment of nationalism has been extensively argued by several scholars, notably Hennen *et al.*, who claim that “cris[es] bring new forces and actors to the fore that are not supportive of European integration and offer views that focus on national interests and thus help to

⁵⁶ This either means that discursive nationalism is sustained by politically affiliated actors at similarly high levels both pre- and during the crisis. An alternative explanation is that politically-affiliated actors receive less publicity during a crisis because of the widely documented dominance of executive actors. However, the latter explanation is not very plausible as actors of this type tend to hold a political affiliation. I suspect that the most likely explanation from the lack of variation according to political affiliation is that discursive nationalism is sustained irrespective of whether a crisis ensues. By contrast, actors who would not ordinarily engage in nationalist discourse are more compelled to do so when a crisis ensues. These are, of course, merely 'thinking-out-load' arguments that require more robust scientific analysis. It would certainly be interesting to delve deeper into the effect of crises on public discourse in a subsequent paper.

strengthen national identities” (2020:83). Similar sentiments are shared by Katzenstein *et al.* who claim that “Europe often reveals itself to be a community of strangers’ during crises” (2009: 214). The link seems intuitively appealing and the anecdotal evidence makes it a plausible hypothesis. When the German Interior Minister remarked that “the coronavirus is no longer merely a health crisis, but a question of national security...it is up to the government to ensure, not only the security of our borders and food supply, but also our medical products and our medicines” (Seehofer, 2020, found in the New York Times) one could be forgiven for thinking that the Covid-19 pandemic was a national crisis alone. In this sentence, the nation is signposted several times. This is a mundane but flagrant appeal to national identity. Crises enable the politics of blame to flourish. A paradigmatic case of this ‘blame-game’ tactic was when Donald Trump labelled the Covid-19 virus, the “Kung-Flu”, which was a flagrant derogatory remark against the Chinese “other”. The pandemic culminated in the glorifying of “us” – politicians were quick to praise their respective vaccine campaigns and general handling of the pandemic while criticising ‘other’ nations for spreading the virus or botching their vaccine rollouts. Beyond anecdotal evidence and intuitive appeal, there is also a wide body of scholarship – particularly from social psychology studies – to support these expectations.

These findings are not overly surprising and are congruent with the theoretical insights of *Social Identity Theory*⁵⁷ (Hogg, 2000) and *Uncertainty reduction theory* (Berger & Calabrese, 1974). Naturally, humans are averse to feelings of uncertainty and will strive to identify coping mechanisms such as *self-categorization* to mitigate these feelings (Hogg, 2007, 2012). Social categorisation (hereafter referred to as SC) and psychological group formation (Hogg & Abrams, 1993) reduce uncertainty by providing clearly defined ingroup and outgroup prototypes, prescribing how one (i.e. us) and others (i.e. them) ought to behave. The process of SC emphasises sameness between ingroup prototypes and highlights differences between in- and outgroup prototypes (Hogg, 2000). To paraphrase Hogg (2000), uncertainty can be mitigated by, *inter-alia*, self-categorisation with a clearly defined, prescriptive, highly salient, self-inclusive and consensual in-group prototype. SC and *ipso facto* group formation provide clarity about one’s identity footing in relation to others thus reducing feelings of uncertainty. SC compensates for the loss of certainty by providing clarity and predictability to one’s own and others’ self-imaginings, thoughts, and behaviours (Hogg, 2000). SC renders the self and others’ behaviour predictable, thus helping to mitigate uncertainty (Hogg, 2000). As a result, SC raises the salience and entitativity of pre-existing and well-established social groups⁵⁸. In short, feelings of uncertainty motivate people to form new social groups or affirm existing social identities (*Ibid.*). A shared social

⁵⁷ The insights from SIT also help us to understand why the Covid-19 pandemic may have provoked the rise in discursive nationalism. SIT, in essence, argues that, out of evolutionary necessity, individuals resort to group affiliation to reduce the feeling of threat and uncertainty engendered by crisis. As national identity continues to be a stronger source of identification vis-à-vis larger and more nascent sources of territorial attachment such as European identity, it is reasonable to expect that individuals would rally behind the former.

⁵⁸ But why should we expect the national identity to benefit from crisis and not larger territorial levels of attachment? Although most people have multiple, overlapping identities, as countless polls show, proximate territorial levels of attachment such as local and national identities continue to be cathected with the most *affect*.

identity is a coping mechanism to deal with perceived threats⁵⁹ (Fiedler et al., 2020). Put slightly differently, Goode argues that ontological insecurity drives people to seek refuge in the familiar community of the nation. During global threats, people call for *national* solutions, bonds and unity to safeguard the national *modus vivendi* (Goode et al., 2020: 13). In a similar vein, Schmid et al. argue that perceived threats or discrimination adversely affect psychological well-being on the one hand while strengthening social identification and thus mitigating some of the negative psychological effects on the other hand. Similarly, Pozzi et al. argue that traumatic events may lead to positive social and psychological changes⁶⁰ such as affirming one's social identity, building trust, and connecting with others – typically in groups.

Moreover, as several scholars point out, periods of turmoil provide a fertile ground for the reproduction of collective memories and narratives (Woods et al., 2020; Atria et al. 2020). Unsettled times heighten the salience of the nation – making visible national practices, narratives, symbols and *topoi* – which are ordinarily taken for granted (Goode, 2020). The 'national spirit' is frequently invoked as a powerful, insuperable force which no threat can overcome⁶¹. Crises provide opportunities for political elites to utilise and re-invent nationalist narratives tied to past crises to reconstruct national identity and consolidate nation-state legitimacy (Gulseven). As Woods et al. point out, national symbols and myths become more visible, and new collective rituals emerge during crises. Indeed, unique national rituals were commonplace during the pandemic⁶². For example, millions of people in the UK stepped outside their front doors and clapped to pay homage to NHS medical staff (Jarvis; see also Atria). In Italy, people draped the '*Tricolore*' on their balconies and sang traditional Italian music with their neighbours (Pozzi). In Austria, a famous 1970s pop song called 'I am from Austria' was played on the streets by the Austrian police (Wodak, 2021:9). Both media and politicians alike invoke national myths to mobilise collective action⁶³. As Wang (2021) aptly points out, many crises tend to be portrayed as declarations of war against the nation (e.g. Macron, 2020⁶⁴). Indeed, war is a powerful catalyst for the congealment of national consciousness (Hutchinson). The theoretical insights of Hutchinson – who examines the hypothetical association between nationalism and warfare – help us to understand why the Covid-19 pandemic may have fostered nationalising discourse. Warfare fosters national narratives

⁵⁹ A crisis generates fear and uncertainty, and people seek the refuge of community to mitigate these feelings (Cercas, 2020).

⁶⁰ What they label 'Posttraumatic growth'.

⁶¹ E.g. 'It is with that great British spirit that we will beat coronavirus and we will beat it together' (Johnson 2020; found in Jarvis, 2022:35). E.g. 'I have firm faith in our Austria' (Kurz, found in Wodak, 2021: 336).

⁶² Woods and Schertzer (2020) surmise that the pandemic would enable nationalism to flourish through travel restriction and border control measures and stigmatising communities perceived as 'others' (Woods et al., 2020:4).

⁶³ Two examples come straight out of the discursive nationalist playbook: "We are up for the fight. There is no better defensive line than the All Blacks" (New Zealand, 03/17/2020, found in Atria, 2022:12); "It's time for the king of Bulldog spirit personified by Winston Churchill (Daily Mail, 11 March 2020; found in Musolff, 2022:310).

⁶⁴ E.g. "Any student of Fijian history watching this evening knows that pandemics – like COVID-19 – must be battled with the same urgency as full-scale military conflicts. If not, they can be just as fatal as any war". (Fiji, 03/27/2020, found in Atria, 2022:12). E.g. "We are at war and, faced with what is coming, the peak of the epidemic, which is before us, I have decided, on the basis of a proposal from the Minister of the Armed Forces and the Chief of the Defense Staff, to launch Operation Resilience". (Macron, 2020; found in Wodak, 2021:16). Several empirical studies show that the rhetoric of warfare was widespread during the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, the study by Berrocal (2021) detected the prevalence of the 'pandemic-as-war' metaphor in their analysis of political leaders' statements during the pandemic (Berrocal, 2021). This was also found in the study by Wodak who identified a 'leading a war' frame (Wodak, 2021; see also Gulseven and the Turkish government's war rhetoric during the pandemic).

of triumph regardless of its historical veracity. In a similar vein, national disasters and tragedies (e.g. droughts in Australia, see Smith and West, 1996; or Tsunami's in Japan, see Shibata, 2016) – and the sense of grief and mourning engendered by them – can help to galvanise national consciousness (Woods et al., 2020; Hutchinson, 2017: 36-42). Moreover, wars enable 'ethnic mythomoteurs' – that is, constitutive myths that give a social group its sense of purpose – to take shape (Armstrong, 2017). Collective memories of the nation are re-produced and re-imagined during warfare (Wang, 2021). Wars also create public commemorative rituals which contribute to in-group commonality (Hutchinson, 2017). Warfare also helps to bind previously disparate groups under one flag (Smith, 1981). Previously excluded minorities can be incorporated to 'fight' under one flag to confront a common enemy (e.g. Jews in America during the war against Germany, Woods et al., 2020). Several studies show how war may induce feelings of patriotism and solidarity, and foster feelings of civic engagement (Borland 2011; Dickie 2008; Clancey 2006; found in Gill & Atria, 2021:278). Interestingly, research by Geys and Konrad (2020) and Atria et al. (2022) shows that citizens tend to be more acquiescent to tax increases during periods of war.

The role of the media is also crucial here. As several studies show, the mass media – with the *meaningfulness* newsworthiness criteria in mind – tend to report and frame global crises as nationally consequential (see Chap.2 for more). Media outlets typically employ divisive, exclusionary, hyperbolic rhetoric and national clichés and stereotypes during periods of turmoil (Skey, 2014; Mihelj *et al.*, 2009; found in Sakki). Hafez (2007) shows that the reporting of global crises tends to be nationally framed. This is because it makes the events easier to comprehend and relate to (Hafez, 2007; see also Hellman & Riegart, 2012). In essence, crises are congruent with news values which explain the mass media's predilection for reporting on crises. Crises are – thankfully – momentary, transient periods, which thus conform to the finite demands of the publication cycle (*frequency*); an ensuing crisis typically involves one or a series of 'events' of great magnitude (*threshold*); a crisis is typically a rare, unexpected event (*unexpectedness*); although a crisis is normally short-lived, it tends to endure for enough time for it to be reported frequently enough to allow the audience to get familiar with the story (*continuity*); naturally, crises of a global magnitude embroil powerful decision-makers whose actions are inexorably consequential to the audience (*references to elite nations/persons*). However, for a global crisis to strike a chord at home, the mass media must imbue the unfolding of events with signification (*meaningfulness*); inevitably, a crisis will adversely affect the lives of many people, thus supplying an innumerable supply of relatable, captivating anecdotes for the audience (*personalisation*); journalist's, moreover, can frame a crisis in such a way that is congruent with pre-existing narratives, ideological assumptions, and frames of interpretation⁶⁵ (*consonance/composition*); lastly, crises invariably entail lots of 'bad' news which is newsworthy for reasons beyond the scope of this paper. As the study of Rott

⁶⁵ As Su *et al.* (2020) argue, people – and we may reasonably extend this logic to journalist too – seek ideological validation to cope with the uncertainties engendered by a crisis.

et al., shows, ‘bad news sells’ (see Rott et al., 2014). The media report international crises through a national filter as they report in front of predominantly domestic audiences (Triandafyllidou *et al.*, 2009). The media report on how the crisis poses an existential threat to ‘the nation’ and political actors propose national solutions accordingly (Eilders & Lichtenstein, 2018:606). Media consumers tend to rely on familiar national news sources, particularly during a global crisis, to learn not only about the unfolding of events but to feel part of a community and reify the nation’s entitativity in terms of its purported unique values and principles in the face of adversity (Hellman and Riegart, 2012; Perez-Lugo 2004; Aufderheide 2002).

Several scholars (Berrocal, 2021; Su et al., 2020; Wang, 2021; Eisenegger, 2021) provide a further plausible explanation for the nation-oriented reactions to the pandemic. As we witnessed with the Covid-19 pandemic, the state has a monopoly on decision-making. Countless countermeasures were introduced by nation states against Covid-19. People are, thus, likely to more readily identify with the nation to which they belong as the state (*claims to*) assume the main responsibility of protecting its own national citizens (Su & Shen, 2021). As Berrocal (2021) points out, efforts to curtail the pandemic were mainly determined at the national level; the armed forces ensured border control, the police enforced lockdown measures, and the public health authorities were tasked with executing the vaccine rollout⁶⁶. National governments consolidate their authority during a crisis through the use of emergency executive powers. Indeed, the pandemic led to an unprecedented expansion of state authority – through illiberal means in some cases (Wang, 2021). The Hungarian Prime Minister’s ruling by decree during the pandemic is a case in point. Moreover, during an ensuing crisis, national governments essentially have a free pass to rule—with the lack of parliamentary oversight an all too familiar development. During a crisis, the levels of *legitimacy*, *trust*, *accountability* and *responsibility* in the nation-state are reaffirmed. The state is largely perceived as both responsible and accountable for protecting its citizens via social security, financial security, and health protection, particularly during periods of turmoil⁶⁷ (Wang, 2021). As Polyakova shows, citizens entrust their national governments – not supranational or international institutions – to defend their interests during the unravelling of a crisis (Polyakova et al., 2013). Indeed, several studies show that national leaders tend to receive higher levels of support during a crisis—what scholars pithily label the ‘rally-around-the-flag’ effect (Mueller, 1970; Brody & Shapiro, 1989; Oneal, Lian, & Joyner, 1996; Woods et al., 2020). In sum, during a crisis, the nation-state becomes the undisputed guarantor of citizen security and public goods. On the contrary, political orders beyond the national level appear non-responsive compared to the nation-state. Indeed, the lack of pan-European collective action – particularly at the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak – gave the impression that the EU was neither willing nor responsible for protecting its citizens. As Wang points out, it is, thus, little

⁶⁶ Similar points are made by Pozzi *et al.* who argue that the pandemic was mainly managed by national institutions most notably the civil protection agency, police, and national health service. For one reason or another, during a crisis, civic participation and political decision-making is mainly concentrated at the nation state level (Eisenegger, 2021).

⁶⁷ The crisis boosts the primacy of the state as sovereign states are perceived as responsible for ensuring the safety, protection, and well-being of its citizens (Su et al. 2020).

surprise that 88% of Italians felt the EU failed to provide adequate support for its citizens during the pandemic (Wang, 2021:32). The EU had a marginal role compared to nation states (2021). As a result, Polyakova *et al.* (2013) hypothesise that citizens adversely affected by a crisis may perceive the EU and other European countries as the cause of their grievances.

Moreover, politicians – particularly of a nativist-populist ideological orientation – feed off the publics’ fear and anguish engendered by the crisis to find scapegoats⁶⁸ and pin the blame on ‘others’ during a crisis (Wang, 2021). Both politicians and the media alike tend to frame a crisis in nationalistic terms, by naming, blaming, and shaming ‘others’, habitually other nations, as responsible for the crisis (Rantanen, 2012:148). Politicians and the mass media alike exploit the fallout from a crisis to validate one’s (or one’s party’s) ideology⁶⁹, reaffirm one’s or one’s party’s worldviews, and maximise political expediency. As argued in the theoretical framework of my thesis (insert page number), an actor-driven logic shapes discourse. Ordinarily, actors’ do not operate in a vacuum and must reaffirm and uphold the values and beliefs of the party to whom they represent. A crisis presents a golden opportunity for ideological validation and worldview affirmation⁷⁰. Politicians can manipulate a crisis to validate their own (or their political party’s) deep-rooted Euroscepticism, peddle myths about the exceptionalism of ‘our nation’, and reemphasize the importance of the nation-state model (and national sovereignty) as the most efficient and effective way of protecting people during a crisis. For example, right-wing conservatives can exploit a given crisis to highlight both the benefits of national sovereignty in steering the country through choppy waters, highlighting the heroism and exceptionalism of ‘our people’, while highlighting the shortcomings of those ‘inept’ technocrats in Brussels, and criticising ‘other’ countries for their indifference in helping ‘us’ weather the crisis. Conversely, politicians from a more internationalist cosmopolitan orientation can exploit the crisis to highlight the value and importance of international cooperation, advance their supranational-integrationist agenda, and highlight the need to protect ‘our fellow Europeans’ from a pending threat (*viz.* European identity). Political and media actors from a more internationalist cosmopolitan orientation can, for example, frame the crisis as a threat to our ‘European way of life’ while pleading for European solidarity to nip the crisis in the bud. Indeed, the results of my analysis show that ideological orientation mediates discursive output. Right-wing political actors tended to invoke nationalist frames compared to left-wing political actors. This result is particularly evident in the Covid-19 dataset, lending support to the notion that crises present discursive (or framing) opportunities for ideological validation. The crisis and ideological validation thesis (Su *et al.*, 2020)⁷¹ may also explain why, paradoxically, *nationalistic*, *horizontal-solidaristic* and

⁶⁸ Indeed, crises induce what Marques *et al.*, (1988) refer to as the ‘black sheep effect’, that is, the perception of outgroup deviance to justify group discrimination. This was clearly evident during the sovereign debt crisis when several countries – particularly Northern European member states – finger-pointed at Greece for purportedly deviating from the rules of the currency union.

⁶⁹ In the words of Su *et al.*, (2020) threats induce people to seek ideological validation.

⁷⁰ For example, the pandemic was exploited by the ruling Turkish AKP Government – widely regarded as a nativist-populist party – to legitimise the nation-state model and discredit global governance. “Turkey, standing on its own two feet, is demonstrating its power at a time when international organizations are losing their meaning” (found in Gulseven, 2020:55).

⁷¹ Su *et al.* (2020), building on the Terror Management Theory (TMT) perspective, argues that threats induce people to seek ideological validation.

supranational claims were more prevalent in the Covid-19 dataset⁷². These insights may help to explain why we saw the increasing entitativity of two imagined communities – at the national and supranational levels. Political actors in favour of institutional nationalism exploited the pandemic as a means to validate the nation-state model of crisis management, and EU-federalists and internationalists exploited the pandemic to advance their EU-integrationist agenda⁷³. The pandemic invigorated both national and transnational representative channels; national governments exploited the precarious set of circumstances induced by the pandemic to consolidate their authority (Berrocal, 2021). However, the borderless threat engendered by the pandemic enhanced the need for international cooperation and reaffirmed the *raison d'être* of international (e.g. WHO) and supranational institutions (e.g. EU). As Eisenegger (2021) points out, discourses may oscillate between an ‘inward-national’ and ‘expansive-transnational’ orientation (see also: Peters et al. 2005). On the one hand, the pandemic enables supranational and international institutions to frame the crisis as a global threat that must be resolved through international cooperation⁷⁴ and acts of EU or global solidarity. On the other hand, national executives seize upon buoyant levels of public support (what scholars label the ‘rally-around-the-flag’ effect) and nativist-populist political actors exploit the crisis to champion the nation and stigmatise the ‘foreign’ other. In sum, the pandemic presented a discursive opportunity for political actors to frame the crisis in ways that corroborated with their political manifesto (e.g. tough border measures) and validated their ideological standpoint (national sovereignty and the effectiveness of the nation-state model in handling the crisis)⁷⁵.

The POS and DOS perspectives, moreover, help us shed light on these findings. POSs, in essence, refer to exogenous factors which either enhance or inhibit the sorts of claims to be advanced (Meyer, 2004). On the other hand, DOSs designate contextual factors endogenous to the individual (e.g. institutional location, political identity, group ideology etc.) which affect a given frame’s chances of diffusion in the media. The intervening variable of crisis can be understood as a POS insofar as it represents an exogenous set of circumstances which brings to the fore a specific set of issues, thus representing a golden opportunity (see Budge, 1983, and *issue ownership* theory) for certain political parties to reaffirm their ideological standpoint, worldviews and political identities. In this sense, the crisis, thus, also represents a discursive opportunity structure. For example, the 2015 European migrant crisis

⁷² In the words of Berrocal, “there appear[ed] to be two interrelated and, in some contexts, competing ‘imagined communities’ namely, the ‘national’ and ‘transnational’ imaginaire” (2021:3).

⁷³ Moreover, as I argued in the preceding pages, national representative channels would have been invigorated by crisis response measures which largely reside at the national level, while supranational channels would also have been strengthened because the pandemic underlines the importance of coordinated action within a supranational framework against a borderless threat.

⁷⁴ The pandemic was a paradigmatic case of a common global threat which necessitated international cooperation (Eisenegger, 2021). Although we live in an increasingly interconnected society in which issues require cooperation and problem-solving on a transnational level, collective action and political decision-making remain concentrated at the nation state level (Eisenegger, 2021). In sum, the pandemic was a double-edged sword for the development of European and global solidarity (Berrocal, 2021).

⁷⁵ Su’s (2020) ideological-validation-during-crisis thesis may explain the finding of co-existing transnational solidaristic and insular-nationalistic discourses. The challenges of the pandemic provoked a ‘narrative battle’ (Jaworsky, 2021) between countries (e.g. the US versus China) and opposing ideologies, namely internationalist vis-a-vis nativist-populist worldviews. We can loosely dichotomize that ‘GAL’ (green-alternative-libertarian) actors are amenable to global-solidaristic perspectives, and ‘TAN’ (traditional-authoritarian-nationalist) actors are conducive to insular, ethnocentric perspectives. The pandemic, I suspect, brought these antipodal perspectives to the fore.

brought issues about immigration and asylum to the forefront of political debate, and nativist-populist parties were able to frame the crisis as a threat to national security and national welfare systems. In a similar vein, the unravelling of Brexit could be seized upon by supranationalists to highlight the negative consequences of leaving the EU. In sum, a crisis opens up opportunities for political actors to frame the political debate in politically advantageous ways. A crisis is, furthermore, a golden opportunity for incumbents to lay the blame on ‘others’ for their mishandling of the crisis at home⁷⁶. National policymakers can use the fallout of a crisis – as a smokescreen – to detract from problems on the home front and indulge in blame-shifting others to detract blame from their own suboptimal domestic measures. Another plausible explanation for “Coronationalism” (Colijn) in the public sphere is the perceived loss of sovereignty engendered by crisis response measures which may have provoked a popular backlash. For example, the EU’s sovereign debt crisis measures touched upon core state powers and invoked questions about national self-determination, thus creating a fertile ground for inter-state conflicts, particularly when burden-sharing measures are perceived to disproportionately negatively affect countries bound by these rules (Hutter et al., 2012; see also Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2018: 182). In sum, the resurgence of discursive nationalism during the pandemic may be explained by people’s predilection for identification with pre-existing salient social groups when exposed to threats. Moreover, pandemic-as-war metaphors help enable national narratives and foster outgroup blame-shifting and nativist-populist rhetoric. Lastly, the nation-state not only assumes responsibility but is perceived as the most trusted and responsible guarantor of citizen protection during a crisis.

Although – as previous scholars argue – crises may provoke the ‘parallelisation of national public spheres’⁷⁷, Kriesi et al., foreboding about a ‘renaissance of nationalism’ induced by crises appear to be the most likely post-crisis scenario⁷⁸ (Kriesi et al., 2014a). This is the view of Hennen et al. (2020: 83) who claim that “crises bring new actors to the fore...that focus on national interests and thus help to strengthen national identities”. These sentiments are shared by Katzenstein et al. (2009: 214) who claim that “Europe often reveals itself to be a community of strangers during crises”.

There are, moreover, countless historical precedents, notably the Wall Street crash in 1929 and more recently, the global financial crisis in 2008 – suggesting that periods of turmoil tend to rekindle nationalism (Cercas, 2020; Rantanen, 2012). During the Wall Street crash and global financial crisis, the culpable ‘other’ was the United States, and during the Euro crisis, Greece was made the fall guy. During the apogee of the migrant crisis in 2015, nationalist parties rose to prominence in most European countries (Wang, 2021). During the initial outbreak of BSE, HIV, SARS, and Ebola, the blame and

⁷⁶ The old adage, ‘it’s easier to blame someone else than to accept responsibility’ rings particularly true when applied to crisis situations.

⁷⁷ That is, national publics debating the same issues, at the same time and in largely similar ways (i.e. the Eder-Kantner criteria)

⁷⁸ Kriesi and Grande expect the politization of the euro-crisis to contribute to the ‘renaissance of nationalism’ due to fears about the loss of national sovereignty and the empowerment of Eurosceptic voices resulting from the euro crisis. These scholars expect national actors and national cultural-identitarian frames to preponderate (Kriesi & Grande, 2016).

responsibility for the virus's transmission were first attributed to foreigners (Washer, 2006; Joffe, 1999; Sakki). The euro crisis provoked inter-state conflict, pitting Northern against Southern Europe and Germany versus Greece (Risse, 2015:156; Galpin, 2017; Nienstedt *et al.*, 2015). Wars and revolutions (notably the French Revolution of 1789) have historically provided strong nationalist impulses. For example, patriotic sentiments flourished in the French army during the Battle of Valmy in 1792, and in Germany, Fichte exploited Napoleon's loss at the Battle of Jena to fuel German nationalism (add citation). Moreover, the naming of viruses after a country is an all too familiar feature of worldwide pandemics. For example, during the influenza pandemic in 1918, the Germans labelled it the 'Russian pest', whereas the Spanish called it the 'French flu' (Nossem, 2020). The 'Great pox' was referred to in Naples as 'il mal francese' – conveniently coinciding with the French army's invasion of Naples at the time. One of the earliest recorded influenza pandemics (1889-90) was commonly referred to as the 'Russian flu'. At the end of the 1950s, the influenza pandemic which spread from China was commonly referred to as the 'Asian flu' (Nossem, 2020). These are examples of the othering practice of attributing blame for threats to 'foreigners'.

Furthermore, my findings are generally congruent with several empirical studies. As the paper by Gulseven demonstrates, during the Covid-19 pandemic, nationalist narratives and 're-bordering' discourses were prevalent in Turkish public discourses. In particular, positive national stereotyping, national exceptionalism⁷⁹, and foreign othering and outgroup derogation were widespread. In sum, the pandemic restored Turkey's 'ontological security' and fostered nationalism (Gulseven). According to the author, discursive nationalism was used by the ruling AKP Party to embolden national legitimacy and the nation's exclusive right to represent the national will and rule by decree (Gulseven). The study by Wodak demonstrates that nationalist exceptionalist rhetoric was also widespread in Austria during the pandemic⁸⁰ (Wodak, 2021). The latter identified four macro frames embedded in nativist and nationalistic rhetoric that were used to legitimise draconian covid-19 measures (Wodak, 2021:1). Similarly, in Italy, as the study by Gillberg *et al.*, (2020) shows, nationalist discourses pervaded the Italian public sphere. Conte spoke frequently of national pride⁸¹, responsibility, trust, empathy, and in terms of duty, sacrifice and moral imperatives for the sake of the Italian nation. The then Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, frequently conjured up the spirit of the nation, proclaiming that, "...together, we [the Italian nation] will do it" (found in Gillberg *et al.*, 2020). Covid-19 was frequently framed as a threat to the Italian nation, however, the 'exceptionalism' of the Italian people would ultimately prevail⁸². The

⁷⁹ The ruling AKP frequently invoked national success stories and underlined Turkish exceptionalism during the pandemic. For example, "...while the novel coronavirus pandemic has incapacitated many developed countries, Turkey is still standing tall" (Zontur and Ergöçün 2020; found in Gulseven, 2021:55).

⁸⁰ E.g. "I guarantee you that Austria will survive this crisis: Austria will get through this crisis better than other countries, Austria will get out of this crisis faster than other countries, but only if we stand together and if we do one thing: persevere" (found in Wodak, 2021:9), and, "We as the Republic of Austria were one of the first countries in Europe to act with restrictive measures by reducing to emergency operation" (Kurz, ZIB Spezial, 30 March 2020, found in Wodak, 2021:9).

⁸¹ E.g. "Italy, we can say it loudly, with pride, is proving to be a great nation, a great community, united and responsible" (found in Gillberg *et al.*, 2020:6).

⁸² E.g. "At this moment, the whole world is certainly looking at us for the numbers of the contagion, they see a country that is in difficulty, but they also appreciate us because we are showing great strictness and great resistance. I have a deep conviction. I would like to share it with

study by Pozzi et al. reveals that the EU was framed as an external entity (outgroup) that did little to support Italy during the pandemic⁸³. On the Swiss Twitter-sphere, the pandemic led to a more inwardly oriented public sphere, particularly during the imposition of Covid-19 lockdown measures (Eisenegger, 2021). As the study by Sakki reveals, pre-existing national antagonisms between Finland and Sweden came to the fore during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Finnish press exploited the crisis to enhance the self-image of the Finnish nation and criticised the Swedish response to the pandemic. In Sweden, the study by Simonsen (2022) reveals how the pandemic was used to highlight Swedish exceptionalism and underline national idiosyncrasies (Simonsen, 2022). The study by Albawardi demonstrates how the pandemic reignited a sense of Saudi unity, loyalty, and citizenship manifested in the form and content of signs, images and texts (Albawardi). The study by Yerly (2022) shows the emergence of strong re-bordering narratives during the pandemic among Swiss right-wing populist party actors who frequently discussed the topics of crime, security and sovereignty, employing the *topoi* of fear and responsibility (Yerly, 2022). The national border was framed by these actors as a bulwark against the ‘outside’ threat. Similarly, the study by Atria (2020) identified dozens of public statements – in Angola and Argentina – indicative of nationalist rhetoric⁸⁴. The study by Yang (2021) reveals that public discourse in China frequently contained self-congratulatory rhetoric, “us” and “them” dichotomization, ingroup glorification (e.g. China) and outgroup derogation (e.g. the US) – to sustain the legitimacy of the CCP at home and promote China’s international reputation abroad (Yang, 2021:109). The *topoi* in Chinese discourse depicted China as a responsible, cooperative, heroic and altruistic actor on the global stage. By contrast, the EU was portrayed as, *inter-alia*, irresponsible, incapable, illicit, threatening, egotistical, and inefficient actors on the world stage. Brammer detected – what he labels as – ‘crisis protectionist’ narratives in Australian texts. Border controls and the reshoring of manufacturing were recurring themes in Australian public discourses during the pandemic. Moreover, the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing antagonisms between Australia and China (Brammer). Similarly, the study by Atria demonstrates that during the COVID-19 pandemic, presidential speeches typically contained patriotic references and nationalist sentiments (Atria; see also Loseke, 2009). Lastly, the study by Sakki reveals that deictic expressions anchored to the nation-state were more pronounced during the pandemic.

The paradoxical finding of both ethnocentric framing juxtaposed with transnational solidarity reinforces Bieber’s argument (2020:187) that “[w]hile nationalism appears to be the antithesis to globalization, it is also closely intertwined with it”. These findings corroborate several recent empirical studies. For

you. Tomorrow not only will they look at us again and admire us, but they will take us as a positive example of a country that, thanks to its sense of community, has managed to win its battle against this pandemic” (*Ibid.*, 6).

⁸³ This study found a positive association between trust in national institutions and national identity which in turn reinforced interpersonal trust. However, trust in supranational institutions was negatively correlated with national identity. Although trust in and identification with national and supranational sources of belonging are not necessarily mutually exclusive, the results of this study suggest that when people are faced with these two choices, they will generally place their trust in national institutions and be wary of international institutions (Pozzi et al.).

⁸⁴ E.g. “We are Argentina. A united country in which everyone must commit to others and everyone to each other, starting with the state”. (Argentina, 03/13/2020, found in Atria, 2022:10). “In this great effort to increase national production, we will work as a team, where each person has a position, as players and supporters of this club, which is called Angola, and as a commitment to raise it to victory”. (Angola, 05/29/2020); found in Atria, 2022:10).

example, Brammer identified both pro-globalizing and anti-globalizing discourses (Brammer). Yang (2021) found evidence of discursive nationalism and globalism in Chinese discourses (Yang, 2021). There is support for international cooperation, multilateralism, and global governance – albeit with China taking the lead – but recurrent criticism of Western countries’ anti-pandemic efforts. More specifically, the *topoi* of threat, disadvantages, irresponsibility and illegality were framed as globalist discourses⁸⁵ constructed in a nationalist manner⁸⁶. A similar result was found by Berrocal (2021:109) who detected – in the statements of leading political figures – appeals to both national and transnational solidarity⁸⁷ (Berrocal, 2021). That said, the nation was discursively constructed as the main ingroup⁸⁸ (Berrocal, 2021).

Several studies, moreover, show that national self-referentiality thrives during crises including but not limited to pandemics. Research by Brantner et al. (2005) reveals that national self-referentiality and vertical Europeanisation peaked during the Haider affair (2000). This study reminds us of the “Janus-Face” of Europeanisation when national public spheres enter crisis mode; on the one hand, the EU may become more conspicuous – or more specifically – there may be more horizontal or supranational claims to European interests and identities – however, any increases in these dimensions are more than offset by the representative claims that invoke national identities and interests. Despite these ambivalent findings, it is clear that the interests of one’s nation and fellow member states override that of the global and supranational level⁸⁹. The study by Kleiner-von Königslöw (2010) shows that European ‘we’ references declined which coincided with the apogee of the global financial crisis in 2008⁹⁰. The same scholar surmises that the fallout from the financial crisis probably explains this finding (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). Negative national stereotypes were found to be particularly prevalent in media discourses during the sovereign debt crisis⁹¹ (Wodak and Angouri, 2014). A ‘renaissance of nationalism’ was detected during the euro crisis (Kriesi and Grande, 2015). The euro crisis was characterised by a nationally oriented debate in Germany (Kriesi and Grande, 2015). The euro crisis

⁸⁵ E.g. “Actions taken by the United States threaten the global community” (found in Yang, 2021:108).

⁸⁶ E.g. “Despite the US administration’s continuous and organized attacks on it, China has never ceased providing assistance to the country. As of last week, China had provided the US with about 2.5 billion face masks, and 5,000 ventilators, making it the largest material supporter of the US in its fight against the virus. To save lives must be its priority. With one-third of the world’s infections and one-fourth of the world’s deaths caused by the virus being recorded on US soil, those advisers, who feel no qualms about earning money from trying to keep the US administration in its comfort zone, should be ashamed that they are in effect taking blood money” (China Daily, 27 April 2020, found in Yang, 2021:109). This example shows how the pandemic reinforced global solidarity, on the one hand, while reinforcing nationalist-exceptionalist rhetoric, on the other.

⁸⁷ The WHO and the EU were frequently referred to in speeches and inter-state solidarity tended to reflect pre-existing geographical alliances between countries (Berrocal, 2021).

⁸⁸ Faced with the pandemic threat, speeches discursively constructed the nation as the main ingroup (Berrocal, 2021). *Vertical* (e.g. the government addressing the people) and *horizontal* (e.g. appeals to voters to protect families, the elderly and children) constructions of solidarity imbued the nation with a renewed sense of purpose in the face of a common external threat (Berrocal, 2021).

⁸⁹ This is because horizontal, top-down and national representative claims all increased in the Covid-19 vis-à-vis pre-Covid-19 dataset. The common denominator of these discursive scopes is that they all invoke a repertoire of national interests and identities. The distinguishing feature is that ‘discursive national’ claims denote discursive relations wherein the nationality of the claimant is congruent with the object, whereas horizontal Europeanised claims refers to a discursive relation whereby a ‘foreign’ actor invokes the national interest of another member state.

⁹⁰ The study by Kleinen-von Königslöw, (2010) found that the European deixis declined in 2008. The author suspects that the global financial crisis led to the resurgence of national identities.

⁹¹ Empirical research carried out by Spencer et al., (1998) suggests that stereotype activation may be triggered when one is exposed to negative feedback. These insights from social psychology may explain why Greek and German negative stereotypes were so prevalent during the sovereign debt crisis.

reinforced tensions between member states and pitted national vis-à-vis supranational actors against one another (ibid.). In sum, conflicts between national sovereignty and supranational solidarity came to the fore (p222). The study by Eilders et al. (2019) revealed low levels of identification with the EU during the euro crisis which contributed to the emergence of inter-state antagonisms⁹². Public sphere scholars also expect crises to foster identity conflict in discourse. For example, Matthijs et al. (2015) point out that conflict framing seems to thrive during a crisis citing the impact of Brexit, the euro, and the refugee crisis. Brexit culminated in a clash between the UK and the EU, the euro crisis culminated in a clash between ‘Northern saints’ and ‘Southern sinners’ and the refugee crisis was framed as a clash between Southern European states and Central and Eastern European ones (Matthijs and McNamara, 2015; found in de Wilde, 2019). Several other studies show that national stereotypes and caricatures flourished during the euro crisis (Galpin, 2017; Risse, 2014; Wodak and Angouri 2014). Similarly, in a longitudinal study, Triandafyllidou et al. (2009) found that national interests override traditional left-right cleavages during crises.

Empirical insights from social psychology also help shed light on my findings. The study by Hofstede (1983) reveals a correlation between uncertainty reduction and collectivism (found in Hogg, 2000). Increased identity salience was found to help mitigate traumatic situations (Kira et al., 2018). The study by Muldoon et al. (2013) reveals that perceived intergroup threats may have a positive indirect effect on well-being via increased social identification (abstract). The paper by Branscombe et al (1999) shows that people when exposed to threats, respond by accentuating their own social identity through ‘outgroup derogation’, increased ‘self-stereotyping’ and perceived ‘ingroup homogeneity’. Strong identification has been shown to safeguard against threats and strengthen one’s self-esteem (Ethier et al., 1994; see also Schmid et al., 2015). As a psychological coping mechanism, those who perceive rejection or discrimination tend to identify more strongly with their in-group (Cronin et al., 2012). In support of TMT, personal mortality salience – the proxy variable for situations of *terror* – was found to increase nationalistic bias (Nelson et al., 1997). Hogg et al. (2007) demonstrated that participants exposed to uncertainty on a personal level augmented their identification with highly entitative in-groups (found in Hogg, 2016). In a study conducted by McGregor et al. (2001), uncertainty-related threats caused, *inter-alia*, extreme ingroup bias, clarified values, self-consistent personal goals, and stronger social identification (abstract)⁹³. Similarly, in a subsequent study, McGregor et al. (McGregor et al., 2005) found that unresolved personal dilemmas elicited an in-group bias and worldview defence responses (found in Hogg, 2016). The study by Hart and colleagues (2005) found that attachment threats triggered self-enhancement of one’s identity and motivated worldview defence⁹⁴. Similarly, the study by Fein et al. (1997) found that inter-group derogation (i.e. negative ‘othering’) followed threats to

⁹² E.g. the schism between Germany and France in relation to EU finance policy.

⁹³ McGregor et al., (2001) found that unresolved personal dilemmas or decreased feelings of control accentuated in-group bias.

⁹⁴ See also Jonas et al., 2014, for an extensive literature review on TMT and other theories explaining peoples’ defensive reactions to perceived threats.

one's self-image (i.e. identity). The study by Fein & Spencer, 1997 showed that threats to self-esteem exacerbated inter-group conflict (found in Hogg, 2016:41). Research conducted by Fritsche et al., (2008) reveals that mortality salience (MS) led to increased defence and support for one's cultural in-group and their norms (e.g. worldview defence). A subsequent study by the same author reveals that threats to one's personal control may provoke ethnocentric tendencies such as in-group bias, outgroup derogation, and pro-organisational behaviour. More specifically, the results show that low control was associated with the increasing tendency to act in terms of group membership – perhaps to mitigate against the loss of control (Fritsche, Jonas et al., 2013). Similarly, one study shows that people tend to revert to more agentic ingroups when personal control is threatened⁹⁵ (Stollberg et al., 2015). The study by Branscombe et al., (1999) shows that discrimination of a minority ethnic group – which is a threat of some sort (e.g. African Americans) – enhances identification with that group⁹⁶.

With the above in mind, we may expect the discursive *praxis* of othering and national 'signposting' to flourish during the Covid-19 pandemic⁹⁷. Statham's assertion (2004) about the 'Europeanisation of events' should be qualified (Statham and Guiraudon, 2004:16; cited in Eriksen, 2009:132). It is an overstatement to claim that crises or critical junctures induce Europeanisation in the public sphere. Granted, this conclusion may be reached if we focus on quantitative dimensions alone. However, crucially, we cannot overlook qualitative-oriented dimensions of discourse. In my opinion, 'events' and critical junctures cannot be treated as one and the same. Some events disproportionately affect certain countries more than others. The negative or positive externalities of a crisis are not distributed equally across all member states, as the asymmetric shocks that culminated during the euro crisis showed.

Distribution of frames

In respect of framing, interestingly, 'instrumental/utilitarian' frames⁹⁸ were overwhelmingly the most prevalent justifications of representative claims-making. This means that claimants refer to

⁹⁵ These authors hypothesise that this response is a coping mechanism to restore the self with a sense of control.

⁹⁶ The study by Adelman et al. (2012) shows that feelings of uncertainty and strong national identification are a potent cocktail for supporting extreme government measures (e.g. targeted assassinations) to defend national identity. In short, national identification and feelings of uncertainty go hand in hand (Adelman et al., 2012:445-6).

⁹⁷ The Covid-19 pandemic is an ideal-type *crisis*. The pandemic is a phase of disorder or "highly disruptive event that create[s] heightened uncertainty" (Woods, Schertzer, et al. 2020:808) and "a moment of decisive intervention" (Hay 1999: 317, found in Monza, 2017:2). Crises are both real and socially constructed. They happen 'out there' in the external world, but the duration and magnitude of a crisis also depends on the *perceived* threat, that is, crises are also socially constructed. Crises are mediated and sustained through discourse. If we burrowed our heads akin to ostriches in the sand, the crises would no longer exist. If we lived like hermits, the crisis would cease to exist in our minds. As Widmaier pithily puts it, crises are "exogenous shocks that are endogenously interpreted" (Widmaier et al. 2007: 749). These interpretations can be mapped via the *actor-object* constellations deriving from representative claims. Crises are also often referred to as 'critical junctures' which denote "situations of uncertainty in which decisions of important actors are causally decisive for the selection of one path of institutional development over other possible paths" (Capoccia, 2016:95). As Woods et al. (2020) point out, this 'uncertainty' can alter the context within which politics operates. From a POS perspective, a crisis presents new opportunities and challenges for actors to advance their own interests and identities, form new strategic alliances or structural alignments (Monza, 2017), redefine what is 'important' to voters, and put forward policies that are ordinarily difficult for voters to accept (Koopmans and Pfetsch 2006). A crisis represents a 'discursive opportunity' (or challenge) for actors (Monza, 2017).

⁹⁸ This means that claimants refer to justifications based on the perceived effectiveness and/or efficiency of decisions in achieving intended outcomes. In other words, *debates* are frequently *centred around* what is 'good' or 'bad' – in the utilitarian sense – for 'the nation' or the European Union. Political actors may ask the question: *what* is the nation (or EU) good (or bad) for? (Koopmans, 2010:199). Instrumental

justifications based on the perceived effectiveness and/or efficiency of decisions in achieving intended outcomes. In other words, debates frequently centred around what is good or bad for ‘the nation’ or the European Union. We know this because the two most salient objects of claims-making are national followed by EU-supranational constituencies. This reinforces the notion that discursive nationalism – or the EU-supranational equivalent – may manifest without invoking arguments that touch upon more sensitive themes such as those related to values, culture, sovereignty, freedoms, and democracy. This supports the work of Billig who argued that nationalism often manifests in rather mundane, non-moralistic forms (Billig, 1995). The results show that the ‘nation’ was the most commonly invoked object in the context of democracy followed closely by EU/European-level constituencies. This means that arguments about democracy are made on behalf of principally national interests. Not surprisingly, in respect of ‘EU integration’ frames, EU interests are most frequently invoked. The explanation appears self-evident as questions about EU integration are a priori relevant to the whole of the EU⁹⁹. Most frames pertaining to ‘freedom and equality’ referred to national constituencies, which means that – despite being one of the key values of the EU – the interests of the nation are paramount to arguments about freedom and equality. Notwithstanding the ostensible universality of these values, it would appear that political actors do not frame it as such. An overwhelming majority of ‘instrumental/utilitarian’ frames referred back to national constituencies, which shows that national interest and identity are commonly framed in terms of what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ for the nation¹⁰⁰. Interestingly, frames pertaining to ‘principles, norms, cultures, and identities’ mainly invoked EU/supranational vis-à-vis national-level constituencies. This means that arguments relating to civic (i.e. norms, values) and cultural conceptions of identity (i.e. ethnicity) are more prevalent when EU/supranational objects are invoked¹⁰¹. Most frames pertaining to the ‘protection of human dignity’ were made in conjunction with regional and global constituencies. This is not surprising as ‘the protection of human rights’ is an archetypal universalistic value. We may also expect the ‘protection of human dignity’ frame to be prevalent for objects of a ‘global’ scope as human rights are not bounded to ‘one nation’ in particular. However, paradoxically, an almost equal share referred to national constituencies. This means that for many political actors, human rights are synonymous with the rights of national citizens. More frames pertaining to the ‘rule of law’ were made in conjunction with domestic constituencies. However, paradoxically, an almost equal number referred to EU/supranational level constituencies. This is to be expected as the EU was originally conceived as a rules-based polity based on the rule of law. As

frames conceive of the nation state or the EU as a rational endeavour to maximise pareto efficiency. In the words of one scholar, instrumental justifications are ‘nonmorality’ frames that “emphasise a rational instrumental view, in which policies are evaluated in light of their potential to achieve certain objectives” (Knill, 2017: 3). By contrast, frames such as ‘sovereignty’ and ‘rule of law’ tend to invoke moral judgments about what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Talk about defending freedom, rights and democracy or protecting culture or values tend to evoke sensibilities about one’s identity and be more emotionally charged compared to utilitarian frames.

⁹⁹ That said, opponents of EU integration may invoke this frame to argue that integration is pernicious to national interests. However, the results suggest that frames about EU integration have the interests and identities of the whole EU in mind.

¹⁰⁰ Indeed, in my exploratory analysis, the results show that national- and EU-scope representative claims are predominantly framed in instrumental terms.

¹⁰¹ This is despite the EU being conceived of as – what Nevola calls (2007:31) – a ‘cold project’ (i.e. in terms of instrumental frames).

expected, frames pertaining to ‘solidarity’ overwhelmingly invoked the EU/supranational level of interests and identities. We should also expect the ‘solidarity’ frame to be more prevalent when European constituencies are invoked as ‘solidarity’ typically extends beyond borders, both horizontally and vertically. Indeed, the word ‘solidarity’ has become more prevalent with advancing EU integration which is not surprising as the term is frequently referenced in the EU treaties. There is even a ‘Solidarity clause’ introduced by Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). As expected, frames pertaining to ‘sovereignty’ invoked overwhelmingly the EU/supranational level of interests and identities. This is not surprising as ‘sovereignty’ is virtually synonymous with nationhood. ‘Le Souverainisme’ is, after all, a doctrine that advocates defending the political independence of ‘d'une nation’ – not the EU (Devecchio, 2022). The *raison d'être* of so-called ‘sovereignist’ parties such as Fratelli d'Italia is to protect the political autonomy and integrity of Italy – not the EU. In sum, when the ‘nationally imagined community’ is invoked, arguments about sovereignty, the rule of law, democracy, freedom and equality, and utilitarian arguments were prevalent. However, when the EU level of interests and identities are mobilised, arguments about solidarity, values, norms and principles, and general arguments about EU integration are commonly made. Not surprisingly, global interests are mobilised in conjunction with arguments about the protection of human dignity. Examining the discursive dimension and frame, when bottom-up vertical claims are iterated, the most prevalent justifications are instrumental, principles, norms and values, and solidarity frames. This means that when national-level actors mobilise EU constituencies, they most commonly employ these meta-arguments. Remarkably similar results were found for representative claims of EU actors invoking the supranational level of interests and identities, which corroborates the earlier findings laid out above. When national-level actors referred to the interests of fellow EU member states, instrumental, solidarity and democracy frames were most frequently invoked. This partially supports my argument that claims of this sort (i.e. horizontal) may be employed as a proxy for solidaristic claims. When a political actor invokes the interests of another member state, this not only has the effect of increasing the entitativity of that identity, but it is an appeal for solidarity. Interestingly, a high proportion of discursive national representative claims invoked instrumental frames, or no justification was made whatsoever. This lends support to Billig’s claim that nationalism can manifest in banal forms – for example, by invoking the ‘national interest’ – without invoking moralistic or value judgments. When supranational-level actors mobilised the interests and identities of member states, arguments about the rule of law, instrumental, democracy and protection of human dignity frames were prominent. Interestingly, the democracy frame is prevalent in all the discursive scopes which invoke either ‘the nation’ (national) or ‘other EU member states’ (i.e. horizontal or top-down). This suggests that democracy is still widely understood in the context of the Westphalian state model. Interestingly, many representative claims were framed in instrumental terms of which a significant number did not contain a justification whatsoever. And this was the case for both claims that invoked the national and supranational level of interests and identities.

Distribution of issues

The results reveal that issues were discussed at similar levels of intensity in all four cases studied, which demonstrates a ‘thematische Synchronizität’ to some degree. It is widely accepted that public spheres satisfy at least two of the three Kantner-Eder criteria of the ‘same issues at the same time’. Not surprisingly, the most salient issues were those for which the EU possesses significant competencies such as monetary and competition policy domains. I expect ‘trade and competition’ issue fields were particularly salient as a result of Brexit. Issues pertaining to ‘health’, ‘macroeconomic and fiscal governance’ and ‘travel and immigration’ were pertinent as a result of the pandemic, which was a multifaceted health and economic crisis of international mobility in terms of both persons and goods. ‘Defence and foreign’ policy is a shared competence with the EU and nation-states working in cooperation with each other. Issues pertaining to ‘energy and the environment’ are transnational issues for which the EU and member states cooperate with one another. It appears, broadly speaking, that issue fields for which the EU possesses exclusive or shared competencies are the most salient in European debates and issue fields for which the nation-state commands exclusive authority (e.g. education) are less salient. These findings can be explained by news values which apply a premium to news deemed as relevant and important. As a result, the most powerful actors, namely government/executive actors, receive the most publicity because their decisions are more consequential for the lives of readers. Moreover, the intensity of debate about certain issues reflects the pre-existing balance of power between the EU and member states (i.e. subsidiarity), with exclusive and shared competencies between the EU and member states more amenable to transborder debates between the national and supranational levels¹⁰². It would, however, appear that this explanation does not apply to normative dimensions of discourse. Despite advancing political integration in policy domains such as trade and monetary policy, collective actors appear to frame issues predominantly in terms of the ‘national interest’. The results reveal that most issues were discussed on behalf of national interests even in purportedly transnational issue domains such as the environment, human rights, trade and immigration¹⁰³. The bottom line is that integration in terms of political communication falls short of political integration. Despite political integration in trade and monetary policy, collective actors continue to frame issues predominantly in terms of the ‘national interest’. This does not bode well for advocates of ‘ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’, particularly when national interests may collide. Eder refers to the lack of a

¹⁰² As the distribution of power varies according to *issue field*, many scholars expect discursive influence to vary accordingly (see also: Eder, 2000; Peter & de Vreese, 2004; Koopmans & Erbe, 2004; de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; Kriesi & Jochum, 2010: 226). These scholars expect EU actors to be more visible in issue fields where the EU possesses extensive competences, such as monetary and agricultural policy (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010, see also Pfetsch, 2004). According to the same logic, these scholars expect the discursive influence of other European countries to be stronger in issue domains with stronger intergovernmental components (e.g. troop deployment and immigration policy, Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010).

¹⁰³ In fact, national interests and identities were the main objects of representative claims in issues pertaining to: agriculture, crime and security, energy and environment, human rights and civil liberties, legal and constitutional, macroeconomic and fiscal policy, social welfare and labour, trade and competition, transport and infrastructure, travel and immigration, education, defence and foreign policy, and general politics (other). The only issue fields that were discussed in terms of collective European interests and identities are issues pertaining to ‘data protection and security’, ‘digital, culture, and media’, ‘EU integration’, and ‘science and technology’.

‘narrative commonness’ (Eder, 2013:42) among Europeans due to the persistence of national interpretations of transnational issues, and these words still seem to ring true today. Again, these findings may be explained by nationally entwined media and political logics which incline political actors to frame issues myopically. Furthermore, issues pertaining to macroeconomic and fiscal policy were the most salient in Italy. I expect this is because the pandemic posed a more real and imminent threat to the economic stability of the indebted Southern European states in particular. However, in all EU member states, the mutualisation of debt became a highly politicised issue during the pandemic. The spectre of the clash between ‘Northern saints and Southern sinners’ during the euro crisis threatened to rear its ugly head once more¹⁰⁴. Interestingly, in the Covid-19 dataset, addressee evaluations decreased the most in horizontal representative claims. In other words, these findings suggest that relations between fellow member states soured during the pandemic¹⁰⁵.

Not surprisingly, national-level actors that invoked the supranational level of interests and identities tended to speak about issues for which the EU holds an exclusive or shared competence with member states. For example, issues pertaining to the economy, EU integration, defence and foreign policy, trade and competition, were commonplace. Interestingly, the results for horizontal and national representative claims were remarkably similar. This is not coincidental as national-level interests and identities are mobilised in both contexts. Issues pertaining to health, trade, immigration and politics in general featured prominently in both types of representative claims. This supports the view that the Covid-19 pandemic was handled with the interests of ‘the nation’ at the forefront of political actors’ minds¹⁰⁶. I suspect that the issue of Brexit explains the high number of national representative claims pertaining to the issue of trade and competition¹⁰⁷. The distinguishing feature was that macroeconomic issues were particularly prevalent in national representative claims. I suspect that this is because of the politicised nature of the debate pertaining to the mutualisation of debt resulting from the pandemic. Anecdotally speaking, political actors seemed to rally behind their own national interests at the expense of collective European ones. The results also show that debates about general political issues tend to manifest with the interests of the nation in mind¹⁰⁸. Regarding top-down vertical claims, macroeconomic and trade issues were also prevalent. I suspect this is because supranational-level actors were particularly vocal in the Brexit debate which was a highly pertinent issue in the period covered. Legal and constitutional matters were also highly salient. I suspect this is because EU-level actors were embroiled in Polish and Hungarian affairs because of concerns about the state of the rule of law in these member states. Predictably, supranational claims were prominent in the ‘communitised’ issue fields such as

¹⁰⁴ Germany, however, struck a conciliatory position between the more hard-line, so-called ‘frugal’ member states such as the Netherlands and advocates of a more flexible approach such as France and Italy.

¹⁰⁵ I was able to ascertain this by calculating the mean of addressee evaluations by territorial scope (i.e. act2adr) and comparing the pre-Covid-19 and Covid-19 datasets.

¹⁰⁶ The issue field of ‘health’ was effectively a debate about the pandemic, and ‘trade’ largely revolved around issues tied to Brexit.

¹⁰⁷ As the four networks demonstrate, British actors – who received ample publicity despite no longer being a member state – tended to invoke national interests and identities.

¹⁰⁸ We know this because the ‘politics: general (other)’ issue domain was particularly salient in both national and horizontal representative claims.

macroeconomic and trade issues, although health issues also featured prominently. As with national-level actors, supranational equivalents were inclined to speak about the Covid-19 crisis as a threat to European citizens. For example, when Von der Leyen's claimed that "the pandemic is having devastating effects in Europe...Protecting the health of our citizens remains our utmost priority" (European Commission, 2021) she was effectively framing the crisis as a European one that would require action to protect European citizens. This framing was commonplace both among national and supranational actors during the pandemic. Not surprisingly, issues of transnational and global relevance such as travel and immigration, foreign policy and defence, and energy and the environment featured prominently when representative claims of a regional/global scope were made¹⁰⁹. The 'social welfare and labour' issue domain was also prevalent. I suspect this is because framing about workers' rights etc. tends not to be restricted to the welfare of national citizens alone but the interests of workers in general.

Valence

As expected, national-level actors generally held negative evaluations of the EU¹¹⁰. Thus, the flagging of national identity – be it domestically or horizontally – appears to be accompanied by generally negative evaluations of the EU¹¹¹. It is not surprising that discursive nationalism was accompanied by generally negative EU valence. This corroborates with findings of Pawley (2017) who – in his analysis of party manifestos – found that the increasing prominence of 'cultural-identitarian' frames was complemented by increasing criticism of Europe (Pawley, 2017: 23). The only exception was bottom-up vertical representative claims in which evaluations were mainly positive. Not unsurprisingly, EU-level actors held overwhelmingly positive evaluations of the EU as elucidated by the supranational types of claims. Similar results were found in Statham's political claims analysis¹¹² (Statham & Gray, 2005). Thus, the flagging of European interests and identities – whether vertically or supranationally – appears to be accompanied by generally positive evaluations of the EU. This is in line with expectations as negative valence is a form of accentuating differences between in- and out-groups via evaluative statements, lending tentative support to the 'conflict identity framing' thesis¹¹³. In some good news for

¹⁰⁹ The explanation is self-evident. When issues of global relevance are discussed, political actors are more inclined to speak on behalf of the 'common good'.

¹¹⁰ We know this from examining the *national, horizontal, and regional/global discursive scopes of representative claims*.

¹¹¹ In a supplementary analysis, I also found that negative valence of the EU was associated with more Europeanisation. For example, in the Dutch and German sample, net EU valence was negative, in stark contrast to Italy and Poland where it was positive. This lends support to the Boomgaarden thesis (2013). The latter expects increasing 'Eurocriticism' to galvanise Europeanisation in national public spheres. I hasten to add that for this supplementary analysis, I analysed the whole dataset including non-representative political claims (i.e. incomplete ones).

¹¹² The caveat is that Statham's (2005) study mapped discourse between claimants and addressees only. My analysis is mainly focused on the claimant and object of claims.

¹¹³ Evaluative claims are forms of 'conflict framing' (de Wilde, 2019) insofar as they create 'dichotomous groups' of 'good' and 'bad' (Tajfel and Turner, 2004, de Wilde *et al.*, 2014:40). People hold negative evaluations of 'others' in order to distinguish oneself from the 'other(s)' and accentuate differences between them. This 'valence polarization' has an identity-making function. Moreover, negative evaluations of addressees are a form of 'conflict [identity] framing' (de Wilde *et al.*, 2019:21). The juxtaposition of conflict and national identity framing has the function of delimiting in- (i.e., claimant's standpoint) from out-groups (i.e., target of political demands), and identities of an exclusive

the EU, net evaluations of the EU were found to be fairly balanced, and addressee evaluations were more negative than net evaluations of the EU. This suggests that the phenomenon of Euroscepticism is perhaps overstated. These findings corroborate previous studies (Statham, Koopmans, Tresch and Firmstone, 2010; Pawley, 2017; Kandyla and De Vreese, 2011¹¹⁴). In the former, the lion's share of claims was found to be pro-European which is a reminder that we refrain from employing the term Euroscepticism too liberally. As Pawley (2017: 23) aptly remarks, “[it would be] more appropriate to talk of a slight erosion of Europhilia rather than a rise of Euroscepticism”. Moreover, Koopmans (2010) – who compared domestic debates and European debates in the German public sphere – found that domestic politics was more critical in tone than European debates. These results support my finding that evaluations of addressees were more negative in valence than evaluations of the EU¹¹⁵.

Structural (Euro-)nationalism

In terms of structural Europeanisation, that is, examining political claims (i.e. act2adr) without the representative component (i.e. object), the most noteworthy findings are as follows: European transborder communicative linkages modestly outnumber domestic political claims. And transborder communicative linkages substantially exceed domestic claims when political claims of a European and global scope are aggregated. It would, thus, be an overstatement to conclude that European politics is ‘domesticated’ in the public sphere. Thus, we may conclude tentatively from these findings that public discourse is structurally Europeanised. These findings corroborate several studies. For example, Bruggemann et al. (2006) conclude that there is sufficient evidence of ‘monitoring governance’ (i.e. visibility of EU politics and EU institutions) and ‘mutual observation’ (i.e. attention to other European countries). For Brantner et al., “increasing mutual interconnections between national public spheres” can be found (2005:8). The findings of Koopmans et al. (2010) point to ‘communicative linkages’ between national public spheres that transcend national boundaries. And contrary to the EU ‘communication deficit’ thesis, Statham maintains that the EU is sufficiently visible in the policy domains in which it commands *de jure* political power (2010: 285). My results reinforce this notion that the EU is sufficiently visible in national public spheres. That said, domestic political claims remain prominent in three countries and Germany to a lesser extent. For example, in Germany, collective actors targeted the EU level almost as much as the national level. However, in Italy and the Netherlands, collective actors targeted the national level approximately twice as much as the European level. The

kind. The claimant does not perceive the addressee to be part of the same ‘imagined community’ insofar as there is a perceived tension between these groups. However, positive valence of out-groups is amenable to inclusive and solidaristic forms of identity making.

¹¹⁴ These scholars found that the CFSP was connected more frequently to the EU than the nation state. This demonstrates that – as far as quality newspaper coverage of foreign policy is concerned – the media portray the EU from a European perspective, employing positive valence frames.

¹¹⁵ Interestingly, in this study, cultural frames were found to be the most prevalent in the 2015 Conservative Party Manifesto which was when the party’s Euroscepticism arguably reached its zenith (Pawley, 2017: 23).

Polish public sphere may be regarded as the most ‘domesticated’ debate, with collective actors targeting the national level circa three times more than the EU level¹¹⁶. This means that Polish actors tend to interpret EU affairs as a domestic issue. These results corroborate with previous studies. Indeed, scholars such as Eilder and Voltmer (2003) refer to the ‘domestication of Europe’ in the national media. Along the continuum of Europeanisation, ‘domestication’ represents a very weak form of Europeanisation as the meta topic of EU integration is visible but domestic actors and issues permeate public debate. Similarly, Schlesinger (1999) acknowledges that EU-related news is likely to be domesticated in different ways according to the language, nation, or region. Several studies point to ‘domestication’ in the public sphere (e.g. Statham, 2007)¹¹⁷. The research by Statham (2007) suggests that public debates in Italy and Poland are remarkably similar to British debates due to the dominance of domesticated communicative linkages whereas the results found in the German sample are similar to that of French debates (see Statham, 2005 and Statham, 2007, for details).

However, in all four networks, domestic actors as claim-makers dominated, particularly in the Italian network. This means that domestic actors are framed as the main protagonists and ‘doers’ of politics. Actors at the domestic level will be perceived by readers – not only as their main representatives but – interpreted more favourably in terms of responsiveness compared to EU-level actors. Fewer claims were made by other EU member states and the share of national claimants was much higher compared to the study by de Wilde (2011) and Kriesi et al. (2014b) but lower than Conrad (2006)¹¹⁸. These findings corroborate with those found in several studies. Indeed, for Bruggemann et al. (2006 – what he calls – ‘discursive exchange’ (i.e. communicative inputs by foreign actors) represents a more demanding dimension of Europeanisation than ‘monitoring governance’ (i.e. visibility). Several studies support this claim. For Conrad (2006), national public spheres display limited levels of ‘permeability’, that is, the extent to which “non-nationals are given – and make use of – the opportunity to get involved

¹¹⁶ In the German one-mode network, national political claims represented 27.47% vis-à-vis bottom-up vertical claims (20.39%); in NL, the figure was 37.75% for national and 19.96% for bottom-up; in Italy, 39% of claims were national vis-à-vis 22% of bottom-up vertical; in Poland, 38.42% were national 14% were bottom up vertical which is similar to the results found in the study by Statham on the UK (Statham, 2007). The results of the study carried out by Statham and Gray (2005) on Britain are similar to my findings in Poland, Italy and NL, whereas the results of French newspapers in the same study are similar to my results of German newspapers. In the aforementioned paper (2005), national claims-making over Europe accounts for only a quarter in France (26.7 per cent) compared to over half (53.9 per cent) of British claims-making. This indicates that competition and conflict between domestic actors characterises the British political communication on Europe (Statham & Gray, 2005: 70).

¹¹⁷ For example, Statham (2007) found that *actor-addressee* constellations confined to national borders – were the most prevalent and almost three times more prominent in the United Kingdom (35%) vis-à-vis France (13%). British actors were also found to be twice as likely to address other British actors (35%) over EU actors (15.5%). This demonstrates that British actors tend to interpret EU affairs as an issue within national politics. In France, the reverse was found. In a follow-up study by Statham (2010), the UK was found to report EU news in a more parochial fashion by affording high attention to EU issues but reporting them as a domestic matter (2010: 286). The author argues that the exceptional case of Britain is probably a result of its relatively low dependency on EU trade, its lukewarm elite commitment to the integration project, and its numerous opt outs from EU institutions. The study by Statham and Gray (2005) found that national claims-making over Europe accounts for only a quarter in France (26.7%) compared to over half (53.9%) of British claims-making. This indicates that competition and conflict between domestic actors characterises the British political communication on Europe (Statham & Gray, 2005: 70).

¹¹⁸ This is not surprising as the benchmark in Conrad study was elusively high as articles had to be written by non-nationals whereas my benchmark is lower; claims only had to be made by non-nationals. Koopmans (2010) adopts a lower and more realistic threshold on what constitutes transnational communication. He notes that publics tend to see transnational ties mainly indirectly through links and references to European member states and the European supranational level. Substantive press contributions from non-national speakers (i.e. direct references) represents an unrealistic threshold for cross-border communication. The caveat of the study by Conrad is that very few articles were examined (roughly 80) and the benchmark for transnational communication was set very high. Naturally, non-nationals are less likely to write articles or be cited in other countries’ newspapers due to linguistic barriers amongst other things.

in an ongoing debate in a particular country” (Conrad, 2006:3). The findings reveal, unsurprisingly, that national speakers dominate the debate and non-nationals are barely represented in articles on the constitutional treaty¹¹⁹. Similarly, Machill et al. (2006) carried out a meta-analysis of the EPS scholarship, concluding that studies consistently show that domestic protagonists receive much more coverage than supranational actors. The studies by Brüggemann et al. (2006) and Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) indicate that European news is largely seen through a national lens. Both studies found no positive trend towards increasing ‘discursive exchanges’, that is, the share of foreign speakers from other European countries. In fact, the latter studies actually observed a decrease in the number of European speakers included in national debates between 1982 and 2008. In line with Conrad’s (2006) findings, Peters et al. (2005) found that ‘discursive contributions’ in newspaper articles from non-national speakers were modest. Meyer (2010), similarly, concludes that the number of opinions from non-national speakers remained stable but paltry over time. In other words, the EU is more visible as a topic or target than as a protagonist.

This sense of passivity and non-responsiveness on the part of the EU is compounded by the fact that supranational claims were modest across all countries and bottom-up vertical claims and horizontal claims overwhelmingly exceed claims of the top-down kind which featured rarely¹²⁰. Poland represented an outlier as top-down vertical claims were almost as prevalent as the bottom-up kind. This means that the EU was mainly framed as ‘targets’ of political claims. In other words, responsibility was attributed mainly to EU-level actors. The paucity of EU-level claimants and abundance of EU-level addressees were found across all networks. These findings are consistent with previous research (Koopmans, 2010) which shows that the EU is mainly the target of claims-making. Moreover, Statham (2007) – who compared French public discourses of Europe with their British counterparts – found that bottom-up communicative linkages were more prevalent vis-à-vis the top-down kind. In fact, Statham (2007) found that bottom-up vertical Europeanised claims were ten times more prevalent than the top-down variant in France (26.6%), and three times more in the United Kingdom (15.%). This means that the EU is habitually invoked in news coverage as an addressee of claims rather than an active political entrepreneur. This is potentially problematic for the EU because they are framed as passive, distant and non-responsive actors¹²¹ (2007:120). A study by Statham and Gray (2005) paints a familiar picture: vertical and ‘segmented Europeanisation’. The results of this study reveal that few claims were iterated by supranational EU actors to national political actors (i.e. top-down)¹²². In respect of the bottom-up

¹¹⁹ The study by Conrad (2006) examines to what extent the debate on the constitutional treaty in two Swedish quality newspapers allows us to identify an emerging European community of communication. Conrad quantifies the number of newspaper article contributions from non-national speakers in order to gauge the ‘permeability’ of national public spheres to one another.

¹²⁰ See also Statham and Gray (2005) who found levels of top-down vertical Europeanisation at similarly modest levels, namely 5.3 per cent in France, and 8.7 per cent in the UK.

¹²¹ Koopmans (2010) found that European-level actors were more visible as *addressees* (i.e. targets) than speakers of claims. As Koopmans (2010) warns, these patterns of claims-making may undermine the legitimacy of the European Union as it implies that EU-level actors appear mainly as objects of criticism, passive, distant, and non-responsive actors.

¹²² At only 5.3% in France and 8.7% in the UK.

variant of Europeanisation, the results showed a threefold increase in the UK (30.1%) and a tenfold increase in France (56.0%). This indicates that the EU is primarily framed as an addressee of claims thereby making (i.e. passive actor) which makes them susceptible to blame (i.e. attribution of responsibility) without an adequate stage with which to respond. In short, national actors are framed as active and responsive claimants whereas supranational actors are framed as passive, non-responsive addressees of claims. De la Porte and Van Dalen's (2016) study found that EU-level actors were the most visible during the EUSES debate but there was little evidence of communicative linkages connecting the EU to the national political arena (i.e. top-down). This observation is similar to the findings of Statham (2007) on the predominance of supranational vis-à-vis top-down vertical claims thus reinforcing the notion of a Union that is largely self-contained and detached from national politics. De Wilde (2011) found that EU actors represented 19% of claimants which is higher than the results of my study. Net top-down and supranational claims were lower than that in all four countries of my case study. Moreover, Peter and de Vreese (2004) also found that EU officials were largely overlooked during news coverage. As Peter (2003:82) pithily remark, "EU coverage resembles a play that does without its inherent protagonists". This asymmetry in claims-making puts the EU in a position of vulnerability as they are effectively unable to defend themselves if unduly criticised by national-level actors or legitimise their decisions via deliberation¹²³. Patterns of discourse of this kind frame the EU as a passive and non-responsive actor and may explain why the EU is described as 'disconnected' and 'distant' by its citizens. Although I think the 'democratic deficit' stance is overstated, the EU, when measured against the normatively high standard of deliberative democracy, appears to fall short in this respect. The EU, through little fault of their own, is essentially ostracised from the debate. The EU is a victim of ethnocentric media biases and the fact that politics is wedded to national structures.

The much-publicized 'verticalization' of public spheres (Medrano, 2003) was also found in my results. In plain terms, vertical communicative linkages significantly outnumbered horizontal ones¹²⁴. However, there is a modest increase in horizontal claims compared to Statham and Gray's (2005) study¹²⁵. Compared to earlier studies, there are increasing horizontal and weakening bottom-up vertical claims, which suggests that the 'pillarization' of public spheres might be abating. However, when vertical claims are aggregated, they significantly exceed horizontal claims. This is consistent with earlier research. The public sphere is 'vertically segmented' or what Medrano (2003) calls 'versäult' (i.e.

¹²³ In the German one-mode network, approximately 17% of political claims were supranational and top-down vertical. In the Dutch sample, the figure was 11%, in Italy, 13%, and in Poland, 15%. In all 3 countries, this is closer to the result of the UK sample found in Statham (2007). When horizontal, bottom-up vertical, and national claims are aggregated, in Germany, 62% of claimants derived from the national level (3.6 times more than EU-level); in the Netherlands, the figure is 70% (circa 7 times more); in Italy, the figure is 75% (circa 6 times more) and in Poland, the figure is 67% (circa 5 times more). This reinforces the passivity of EU actors in European debates. Moreover, in all four networks, EU actors' in-degree centrality was much higher compared to out-degree centrality.

¹²⁴ Interestingly, Statham and Gray (2005) found higher levels of bottom-up vertical claims-making in the UK sample which indicates that public spheres may be becoming more domesticated.

¹²⁵ In this study, mean horizontal claims in the UK and France were 9.5%. In my study, horizontal claims represented approximately 13%.

pillarized)¹²⁶. In other words, nations talk a lot more about the EU than they do about other member states. Put another way, there is little debate among European countries, and more communicative toing and froing between national capitals and Brussels. Wessler (2008) instead opts for the terms ‘segmented Europeanisation’ to describe the verticalized nature of European political communication. In the words of Grundmann, “every member state looks at Brussels ('at the EU') but no one sees her neighbouring country’ and there is no ‘crossing of [national] circles” (Grundmann, 2000:132). Bruggemann et al. (2006) found that ‘monitoring governance’ (vertical) exceeded ‘mutual observation’ (horizontal). Peters et al. (2005) conclude that cross-border flows of communication within Europe are weak (2005: 152). For Statham (2010), European communication is predominantly vertical, and this is confirmed by longitudinal data both offline and online (Statham, 2010: 286). The author concludes that there is little evidence of mutual cross-national observation (Statham, 2010: 286). Statham and Gray (2005) detected modest levels of cross-border political communication (7.3% in the UK, 11.7% in France) between EU member states. Pfetsch’s study (2004) reveals that European networks have become more vertically embedded but horizontal flows of communication remain weak. The study by Grill and Boomgaarden (2017) observed weak cross-national communicative linkages between Austria and fellow EU member states. Moreover, Statham (2007) found that cross-national communicative linkages (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation) were modest. Brantner, Dietrich and Saurwein (2005) carried out a longitudinal study (1995-2004) of EU news coverage on the Austrian television news channel (ORF-ZIB) in which they detected increasing levels of Europeanisation; however, this was mainly a result of increasing vertical Europeanisation, whereas levels of horizontal Europeanisation were meagre but stable over time. Peters et al. (2005) found that national public spheres in the EU seem to pay scant attention to one another, and remarkably, they gave more attention to the US than other EU member states. The results reveal that national publics paid increasing attention to EU policies and institutions, but not necessarily to each other. As the authors point out, this might suggest that national publics tend to look at EU affairs from their own vantage point with little interest in the affairs of other countries. The study by Medrano (2003) – who analysed newspaper commentaries between 1946 and 1997 – detects only modest horizontal connections between the German, Spanish and British national public spheres. Bruggemann et al. (2006) found little evidence of fellow Europeans talking more with each other¹²⁷. Similarly, the study

¹²⁶ In the words of Medrano (2003), “the absence of debate across borders and the limited participation in national debate on the EU point to a public sphere that is *fragmented* or ‘*pillarized*’ (versäult) into separate but congruent national spheres. [...] The recent debate on the European Constitution proceeded as a series of parallel national discussions, albeit in the awareness that the neighbours were talking about the same things at the same time” (Medrano, 2003, found in de Swaan, 2007: 145).

¹²⁷ That said, in de Wilde’s 2011 paper, the most prominent claimants in the mediated sphere were actors from other EU member states (29.6%) which is a remarkable finding when compared with the results above. This suggests that national public spheres are more cross-nationally embedded (horizontal Europeanisation) than previous findings would indicate. However, these results are not particularly surprising as the author collected data during EU budget negotiations which often turn into an intergovernmental tussle between member states rather than EU officials (De Wilde, 2010). In line with De Wilde’s (2011) findings, national executives from other member states (38.5 per cent) intervened most frequently in the debate vis-à-vis 10.9 per cent of domestic executives. Political parties were moderately represented (7.9 per cent) in public debates with more than half composed of foreign party actors. These findings imply that both the euro crisis (Grande and Kriesi, 2014b) and EU budget negotiations (De Wilde, 2011) strengthened hitherto weak levels of horizontal European communication. With these results in mind, it would be timely to examine political claims during EU council summits to see if horizontal communicative linkages are more prevalent compared to the results of my analysis.

by Koopmans (2010) found an increase in claims-making targeted at the European level combined with a decline in political claims directed at EU member state targets. Moreover, De la Porte and Van Dalen (2016) found that EU institutions – rather than specific European countries – were the main targets of blame rather than specific European countries. The results of my analysis, moreover, indicate rather conclusively that public spheres are nationally ‘segmented’ as elucidated by the clusters of homogenous-coloured vertices in the network graphs which clearly show the prevalence of ‘national’ cliques and communities.

The results show that the EU is fairly visible in the cases studied except in Poland. Indeed, the Polish public sphere was also found to be the most domesticated. This may be explained by the fact that Poland is the newest member of the EU compared to the other cases in my dataset. Several scholars, from a Deutschian integrationist perspective, argue that social integration in general and political communication in particular ‘lag’ behind political integration. Across all networks, French, German, Italian, and Spanish actors featured prominently. Remarkably, however, actors from the UK and the US to a lesser degree – were more prevalent than most EU member states including those listed in the previous sentence. This is not surprising as the Brexit debate was highly salient in the countries examined, and the USA and the UK to a lesser extent remain influential economically and geopolitically, therefore their actions are perceived as more consequential and thus newsworthy. UK actors were especially prominent in the Dutch and German public spheres, I suspect because of strong trade ties. However, UK actors were also prominent in the Polish public sphere because of both historical alliances, the significant number of Polish migrants in the UK and strong trade ties between the two countries¹²⁸. Across all networks, neighbouring countries or countries with historical alliances or rivalries received more publicity in terms of actor visibility. For example, in Poland, actors from Germany, Belarus and Russia received ample coverage. In the Netherlands, actors from France, Belgium, and Germany received substantial publicity and so too did French, Dutch and Polish actors in the German public sphere. The ‘power and autonomy’ thesis finds support in the data, with the most powerful EU and non-EU nation states receiving the most publicity in political claims. As I mentioned above, collective actors from Germany, France, and to a lesser extent, Italy and Spain, featured prominently across all four networks. EU actors.

We can broadly summarise the main differences across countries as follows: the German network – in terms of structural Europeanisation – is the most ‘Europeanised’ insofar as political claims of a European scope (act2adr) were the most prevalent in the German newspaper sample¹²⁹. The results of the Italian public sphere are rather ambiguous as, on the one hand, Italian claims-making was found to be the most domesticated, on the other hand, claims-making was found to be the second most

¹²⁸ Thus, what ‘happens’ in the UK is more readily relevant and thus newsworthy even compared to other happenings in other EU member states.

¹²⁹ This was found for all types of Europeanisation particularly supranational claims which comparatively higher and Germany represents an outlier in respect of the low volume of domestic claims.

Europeanised. In fact, bottom-up vertical claims were the most prevalent in the Italian sample and horizontal political claims were the second most prominent type of communicative linkage. This implies that Italian actors target both national and EU-level actors more than other member states. The high level of domestication in the Italian case was mainly due to the negligible share of regional/global, supranational and top-down vertical political claims. This implies that the EU occupies a peripheral role as an active claim-maker, particularly in Italian public discourse. The Dutch public sphere – in terms of structural Europeanisation – may be regarded as the third most Europeanised. More specifically, the results show that the density of horizontal and bottom-up vertical claims was weaker than in Italy and Germany. In addition, top-down vertical and supranational claims were found to be the lowest in the Dutch network. This means that the EU is likely to be perceived as a passive, nonresponsive, and distant actor in the Dutch public sphere. However, regional/global political claims were comparatively high in the Dutch network. The results reveal that the Polish public sphere was the least structurally Europeanised. Bottom-up vertical claims were markedly lower in the Polish dataset compared to the other three countries, and supranational political claims were the lowest after the Dutch sample. Notwithstanding the comparatively weak density of bottom-up vertical and supranational claims, horizontal and top-down vertical political claims were the second highest (after Germany). This suggests that actors in the Polish public sphere may be less disposed to target the EU level for political demands compared to other countries' actors.

The German public sphere is the least domesticated insofar as domestic political claims were comparatively much lower compared to the other three countries. In stark contrast, the Italian public sphere is the most 'domesticated' due to the comparatively high volume of domestic political claims and low volume of regional/global ones. Similar levels of domestication were also found in the Polish and Dutch networks. In sum, the German sample is the noteworthy outlier in terms of domestication. German actors were the most visible, however, EU actors were almost as prevalent as domestic ones. British actors were moderately visible in the German sample. A plausible explanation is that the UK is an important trade partner of Germany and remains an important economic and geopolitical power despite arguably a diminished role in light of Brexit. Moreover, the issues surrounding Brexit are newsworthy as they are likely to provoke controversy and conflict between British and EU member states. France, Poland, and the Netherlands also featured prominently (but to a lesser extent compared to British actors). I expect this is because of their geographical closeness to Germany thereby fulfilling the news value of proximity. U.S actors featured modestly (but more so than many other EU member states) I suspect due to their pre-eminence in the international system. Thus, what happens in the United States is highly consequently and ergo political salient, and newsworthy. EU actors were visible to a similar degree to the German sample in the Italian one. However, in a departure from the German sample, domestic actors were overwhelmingly dominant¹³⁰. UK actors were moderately visible in the

¹³⁰ Almost 1 in 2 political actors were domestic, which is much higher than the other three networks!

Italian network but less so compared to the Dutch and German samples. I expect this is because the level of bilateral trade between Italy and the UK is lower than that of Germany and the Netherlands. Both French and German actors were moderately visible which may be explained by their substantial power and autonomy in the international system. France and Germany are also the most powerful member states in the EU. Thus, their actions are more consequential to Italian readers. Again, domestic actors were the most visible in the Dutch network albeit to a lower degree compared to Italy and Poland. EU actors were visible to a similar degree – to the German and Italian networks – in the Dutch sample. We may thus tentatively conclude that the EU is adequately visible in the respective national public spheres. However, the EU is predominantly framed as a target of political claims. British actors were more prominent in the Dutch network compared to the Italian and Polish networks. I expect this is because of the trade embeddedness between these two countries. Polish actors were visible – to a modest but notable degree – I expect for similar reasons. France and Germany featured prominently which is not surprising as they are neighbouring countries, and are the most influential EU member states. Moreover, Italian and Spanish actors – as medium-sized EU powers – were moderately visible in the Dutch network. U.S actors featured modestly (but more so than many other EU member states) for the reasons mentioned above. In the Polish dataset, domestic actors were comparatively more prominent than in the Dutch and German datasets – but less so compared to the Italian dataset. A hallmark of the Polish dataset is the lack of visibility of EU actors who featured the least. Not surprisingly, actors from the most powerful countries and neighbouring ones – particularly Germany – featured prominently in the Polish dataset. British actors were visible to a moderate degree but less so compared to Dutch and German networks. Historical ties, the UK's relative power and influence in the international system, and a substantial Polish diaspora in the UK may explain their prominence herein. Again, US actors were quite visible in the Polish network for similar reasons to the UK. Belarusian and Russian actors were also quite visible in the Polish network. This is not surprising for historical and geographical reasons. Italian and Spanish actors were quite visible which is not surprising as they are medium size EU powers and the macroeconomic crisis that ensued during the pandemic was quite a salient issue in Poland.

As I mentioned earlier, one predictor variable argued by scholars is a country's position in relation to the EU budget, with net-receiving member states expected to cover EU politics with more Europeanised discourses compared to net contributors (Bossetta and Segestan, 2019). As with the two-mode networks, the 'budgetary hypothesis' thesis does not find support here. Again, we found that Poland – with the highest EU budget deficit – is the least 'Europeanised' in terms of transborder political claims and Germany – with the highest EU budget surplus – was the most 'Europeanised'. Interestingly, the inverse was found, with net-contributing member states containing more Europeanised political discourses¹³¹. One may argue that, on the contrary, member states that contribute more money to the EU may be more

¹³¹ According to figures released by the European Commission (Buchholz, 2018), as of 2018, Germany was the largest net contributor followed by Italy, and the Netherlands. Poland is the only net-receiving EU member state in my analysis. Coincidentally or not, in terms of political claims, the German sample contained the most claims of a 'European' scope followed by Italian, Dutch, and lastly the Polish sample.

inclined to target the EU level to provide an accountability mechanism¹³². As touched upon earlier, building on Karl Deutsch's theory of transactionalism and Ernst Haas's theory of neofunctionalism, several scholars (e.g. Boomgaarden et al., 2013; Zografova et al. 2012; Walter, 2017) expect older member states (i.e. France) to report on EU issues more frequently than newer member states (i.e. Poland). Kleinen-von Konigslow (2012) expects long-standing EU members to report more frequently about the EU. The results of Pfetsch's study (2010) show that the depth of integration affects the degree of EU coverage¹³³, with older member states being more inclined to attribute responsibility to EU actors than national ones (2010: 168). This 'integration hypothesis' may explain why public discourse in the Polish sample was found to be the least Europeanised¹³⁴. Poland is, after all, a relatively new member of the EU (Pfetsch et al., 2008). Indeed, not only are there fewer 'Europeanised' political claims in the Polish dataset, but EU actors are also markedly less visible compared to the other three countries. Moreover, there is evidence that older member states are more inclined to attribute responsibility to the EU level (i.e. bottom-up vertical political claims). Indeed, Poland is an outlier in this respect, with markedly fewer claims of this sort.

Several scholars such as Pfetsch¹³⁵ (2004) and Walter (2017) expect EU member states that are more dependent on EU trade to report more on fellow member states (i.e. horizontal Europeanisation). However, Boomgaarden et al. (2013) found that the amount of intra-EU trade had little or no effect on visibility. As far as horizontal political claims are concerned, we cannot infer much due to the low variance (values range from circa 12-15%). However, Germany reported more on the affairs of other EU member states than any other country and their intra-EU trade dependence is much lower compared to the Netherlands which made the fewest horizontal claims. However, there is tentative support for the notion that countries report more on the member states with which they have strong trade ties¹³⁶. Three important trading partners of the Netherlands, namely, France, the UK, and Germany were quite visible in the Dutch dataset. In the Polish dataset, German and French actors were comparatively quite visible, however, the Czech Republic, an important trading partner for Poland was negligible in terms of visibility. Furthermore, France, NL, and Poland featured prominently in the German dataset. German, French and Spanish actors featured prominently in the Italian dataset. In all the countries examined, the UK is an important trading partner which may explain why UK actors and issues were prevalent in all

¹³² As numerous scholars have underlined, the public sphere has an *accountability* function.

¹³³ Pfetsch et al. (2010) assume that levels of EU integration – ranging from non-EU states (e.g. the United States) and opt-out members (e.g. Denmark) to fully integrated EU member states (e.g. France) – are positively correlated with increasing media coverage of EU affairs (Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010). Indeed, the results show that the strongly integrated member states, namely, Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, France, and Germany, ascribed higher salience to the EU than newer member states.

¹³⁴ By way of a recap, in the one-mode network, the share of political claims of 'Europeanised' scope are as follows: DE = 51.31%, IT = 48.8; NL = 43.28; PL = 42.52.

¹³⁵ Pfetsch (2004) concluded that the low levels of Europeanisation in terms of visibility in Italy and the United Kingdom may be a result of the relatively lower dependence on intra-EU trade.

¹³⁶ The top-three trading partners in descending order are: for Germany, France, the Netherlands and Poland; for Italy, Germany, France, Spain; for Poland, it is Germany, Czech-Republic, and France; for the Netherlands, it is Germany, Belgium and France (source: Eurostat, 2020)

networks. Therefore, there appears to be tentative support for the claim that public spheres report more on countries to which they have strong trade ties. In all four networks, the top-3 of intra-EU trade exports featured in the top 10 most prominent actors. Other scholars such as Walter (2017) expect neighbouring countries to report more about each other (Walter, 2017). In other words, geography matters to patterns of discourse. Grill and Boomgaarden (2017) found that countries neighbouring Austria received a privileged amount of news coverage. The results lend tentative support to the ‘neighbouring hypothesis’. For example, Germany, Poland, France, and the Netherlands also featured prominently in the one-mode network. In the Netherlands – which also shares a maritime border with the UK – actors representing the UK, Germany, and Belgium to a lesser extent were prevalent. And in Poland, Germany, Belarus, and Russia all featured prominently. However, in Italy, there is little support for this thesis with only French actors featured prominently. Other neighbouring states such as Austria, Slovenia and Switzerland recorded negligible levels of visibility.

According to Koopmans et al. (2010), discursive Europeanisation is inversely correlated with a country’s power and autonomy in the international system (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010; Medrano & Gray, 2010: 198). With that in mind, Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012:448) expects smaller countries to report more frequently on the affairs of other European nations and the EU. Previous research lends support to the power and autonomy thesis. Pfetsch (2004) found that the UK, France and Germany received more media coverage than smaller European countries. De Wilde (2011) found that France, Germany, and the UK were the most visible. The paper by Bossetta et al. (2019) shows that the UK is the most referred-to node in the network graph of debates on Euroscepticism. In his words, these results suggest that larger member states tend to have more ‘net gravity’ (the author’s words) to attract media attention than smaller member states. Similarly, Grill and Boomgaarden (2017) found that larger EU member states – namely, Germany, France, and the UK – yielded more news coverage and newer, smaller member states such as Poland were marginally represented. In a meta-analysis, Machill et al. (2006) conclude that highly populated member states such as Germany, the UK, and France are the most frequently cited subjects of European news (2006: 72) and smaller member states report much more on other member states than larger ones. They conclude from the scholarship that generally speaking, Germany, France, and the UK receive prominent amounts of news coverage in other member states; Italy and Spain receive moderate amounts; and the Scandinavian, Benelux, and Irish member states receive the least. The results of a study by Koopmans show that the most economically powerful countries, namely, Germany, France and the United Kingdom receive the most EU coverage, making up for more than half of the claims about the EU despite having less than a third of the European Union’s population (Koopmans, 2010: 67). Moreover, Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) found that the biggest member states received the most coverage. In fact, in six out of the ten newspapers analysed, Germany was the most widely cited country followed by the UK and France. In short, size matters. The results of my analysis do not lend support to the ‘power and autonomy’ thesis as Germany is much more

Europeanised than the Dutch and Polish datasets. In fact, the inverse was found with Germany and Italy – the two most powerful member states – found to be the most structurally Europeanised. However, in respect of whether larger EU member states receive more publicity, the results demonstrably support this. Actors representing the UK, USA, Germany, France, and Italy were the most visible across all networks.

As I mentioned beforehand, the presence of a strong domestic Eurosceptical or far-right party is also understood as a predictor of Europeanisation (Bossetta et al., 2019). Indeed, the results of the multivariate analysis by Bossetta et al. showed that the media of member states with the presence of an electorally weak Eurosceptic party (e.g. Ireland) were one and a half times more likely to present content with a European scope. We find tentative support for the ‘prominence of right-wing parties’ thesis in the data. As we know, Poland has the strongest representative of far-right parties in the Sejm, in stark contrast to Germany, with a relatively weak representation of far-right parties in the Bundestag. This may partially explain why Polish discourse was markedly less Europeanised than German discourse. That said, levels of Europeanisation are not so different to that of the Netherlands which has a much weaker presence of far-right, Eurosceptic parties compared to Poland. Scholars such as Peter and de Vreese (2004) expect the amount of EU news coverage to increase as satisfaction with domestic democracy decreases. However, contrary to expectations, these scholars found that the level of EU coverage was positively correlated with higher levels of satisfaction with domestic democracy. According to the ‘Global Satisfaction with Democracy Survey’ (Foa et al., 2020), the Netherlands is the most satisfied with democracy (6th place) followed by Germany (16th), Poland (18th) and lastly Italy (42nd). We should, thus, expect Italy to report most on EU affairs, followed by Poland, Germany, and the Netherlands. However, the results show almost the opposite. Instead, the findings of Peter and de Vreese (2004) were confirmed here.

Communitarian scholars¹³⁷ such as Sandel (1998) insist on the *sine qua non* of a pre-existing collective identity. In other words, patterns of discourse follow from identity, not the other way around. In practical terms, they argue that member states with a strong identification with the EU may also be expected to report more on EU affairs. As per the 2021 Eupinions survey, Poland scores highest on identification followed by Germany, Netherlands, and Italy (Eupinions, 2021). The results of my analysis suggest that identity-feeling among the general population is incongruous with levels of structural Europeanisation. Other scholars extend this logic to levels of EU support. According to the 2019 ‘Global Attitudes Survey’ conducted by the Pew Research Center, Italy is the most ‘Eurosceptic’ country followed by the Netherlands, Germany and Poland. Again, there is no evidence that EU support is a predictor of structural Europeanisation. Indeed, Poland – which is overwhelmingly supportive of

¹³⁷ Communitarian scholars argue that social and political integration requires a ‘deeper sense of belonging and commonality’ (Miller, 1995, Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007: 6). In Etzioni’s terms, “members of a community listen to the same moral voice. The citizens need to regard each other as neighbours or fellow countrymen, or brothers and sisters. Communitarians argue that the EU must develop ‘pre-political’ elements such as a collective identity, common values and common interests” (Etzioni, 1997, Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007: 6).

the EU – is the least Europeanised¹³⁸. Other scholars have questioned the ‘EU identity/support’ thesis. For example, Machill et al. (2006) found that the Netherlands, UK, and Danish media (see de Vreese, 2003) report EU protagonists more frequently than other member states which indicate that negative public opinion (i.e. Euroscepticism) does not seem to have a negative bearing on the amount of coverage on EU politics (Machill, Beiler, & Fischer, 2006).

Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect negative elite opinion toward the EU and intra-party conflict to increase the visibility of the EU. These scholars hypothesise that polarisation within parties on EU integration would be positively correlated with the increasing EU news coverage¹³⁹. Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect increasingly negative elite opinions and party conflicts (i.e. polarisation) to be accompanied by the prevalence of national actors in general and right-wing actors in particular at the expense of EU actors¹⁴⁰ (see also Peter and de Vreese, 2004:8). This may explain why Polish and Italian actors were particularly dominant in their respective public spheres, as party conflicts are becoming increasingly more pronounced in these member states. In both Italy and Poland, political actors’ relations with the EU have deteriorated in recent years. Koopmans (2010, Chapter 2) expects the extent to which EU integration is a controversial issue in national politics to be positively correlated with increasing media attention¹⁴¹. Koopmans et al. (2010) found that increasing party disagreement and increasing negativity together had the biggest positive effect on increasing news coverage. Conversely, Peter and de Vreese positive expect positive elite opinion and party consensus on EU issues to increase the visibility of EU actors (Ibid.,). Likewise, Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect there to be more EU-news coverage in countries where there is a positive consensus about the EU in the national party system. Gattermann (2013) expects EU news coverage to be more intense in countries with a more positive attitude toward the EU (see also Walter, 2017). However, Peter and de Vreese (2004:14) found that the amount of EU coverage was unaffected by the nature of elite opinion. Regarding EU salience, Pfetsch (2004) found that the number of editorials related to European matters was highest in Germany and the United Kingdom, which shows that even Eurosceptic countries can report substantially on European matters¹⁴². Similarly, Grande and Kriesi (2014b) found that the salience of European issues

¹³⁸ However, there does seem to be a connection between evaluations in discourse (*EUval*) and Europeanised-scope claims (act2adr): Re ‘Europeanised’ claims, in one mode-network, DE = 51.31%, NL = 43.28; IT = 48.8; PL = 42.52).

¹³⁹ ‘...Increases in EU news visibility were strongest in a situation in which there was both increasing negativity about the EU in a country’s party system and increasing party disagreement about the EU’ (Boomgaarden et al. 2013: 621). They conclude that ‘... ironically, euro-scepticism, in the form of elite polarisation, is one of the best chances for improving EU democracy by sparking news coverage of EU affairs’ (Boomgaarden et al. 2013: 625).

¹⁴⁰ Boomgaarden *et al.* (2013) found that EU actors are more visible in the news when parties are more positive towards the EU. By the same token, there is less of a European focus in the news when there is increasing elite conflict. This is an important finding which reminds us that the increasing visibility of the EU can work both ways: it can promote Europeanisation, on the one hand, by giving EU actors a platform to inform and justify decisions, or it can galvanise national debates, on the other hand, as the meta-issue of EU integration provides a fertile ground for domestic party conflict.

¹⁴¹ This is because, as Koopmans (2010) opines, controversy increases the ‘newsworthiness’ of a potential news item.

¹⁴² Interestingly, the United Kingdom commented more on EU affairs than the Netherlands and Spain.

was lowest in Germany (4.4%) and highest in the United Kingdom (8.8%). Based on the above, we should, thus, expect Poland to Italy to have a higher share of top-down vertical and supranational political claims vis-à-vis the Netherlands and Germany insofar as EU valence was positive in Poland and Italy and in negative in Germany and the Netherlands. The results show that although Poland tops the bill in terms of top-down vertical claims, Poland trailed Germany and the Netherlands in terms of supranational claims. And comparatively, in Italy, top-down vertical and supranational claims were modest. In total, net positive EU valence is marginally higher in the Polish and Italian public spheres¹⁴³. The ‘negative elite opinion’ thesis does not find support herein. Moreover, in the Polish dataset, the visibility of EU actors is markedly lower than in other countries. This may be because of the strong representation of far-right political actors in Poland. Indeed, Boomgaarden (2013) expects the strong presence of Euroscepticism and party conflict on the question of EU integration to be accompanied by a more domestic-oriented public discourse.

Bivariate analysis

The scatterplots demonstrably show differences in patterns of claims-making according to newspaper format terms. This corroborates with previous findings. For example, Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010; 2012) found that levels of ‘mutual observation’ (i.e. horizontal communicative linkages) were higher in quality newspapers. Interestingly, my results show the opposite, with horizontal claims higher in tabloid newspapers. My results also show that bottom-up vertical claims were higher in tabloid newspapers contrary to expectations. However, in respect of top-down vertical and supranational Europeanisation, many more political claims of this kind were found in quality newspapers. As expected, domestic claims were more prevalent in tabloid newspapers. Pfetsch (2004) also found that, in terms of transborder connections, 63% of addressee scopes were confined to national actors compared to 54% in quality newspapers. With the results of this previous work in mind, it would appear that public spheres are becoming more ‘open’ and ‘Europeanised’, as my results show that only 28% of addressees are domesticated compared to 35% in tabloids. However, an overwhelming majority of claimants in tabloid newspapers were domestic actors (51%) compared to only 32% in quality newspapers. The study by Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) encapsulates the fragmented nature of national mediated public spheres. As the same scholar lucidly demonstrates, different media outlets of the ‘same’ nation can represent and frame politics in markedly different ways. Her research shows that negative valence of the EU and national indexicality are more prevalent in ‘tabloid’ vis-à-vis ‘quality’ newspapers (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). Likewise, Pfetsch et al. (2010) expect tabloid and regional

¹⁴³ I calculated the mean % of top-down vertical and supranational claims in Italy (12%), Poland (15%), Germany (16%) and the Netherlands (10%). The mean % of top-down and supranational claims in public spheres with positive EU valence was 13.5% compared to 13% in those with negative EU valence.

newspapers to be more parochial and Eurosceptic than quality newspapers. Boomgaarden et al. (2013) expect EU news to be more visible in quality newspapers (see also Peter & de Vreese, 2004: 6-7) compared to their quality newspaper counterparts. These expectations stem from the insight that different media outlets cater to target different audience segments (Pfetsch et al., 2010). Media outlets may vary according to, *inter-alia*, ideological orientation, and the socioeconomic background of their target audience (see Van de Steeg, Marianne, 2006 for more). As Pfetsch et al. (2010) explain, regional and tabloid newspapers cater to local/national audiences who are more interested in domestic politics. By contrast, quality newspapers cater to political elites and the professional classes who tend to be more interested in European and global current affairs. Scholars, therefore, expect the EU to be more visible and more positively evaluated in the quality press (Pfetsch, Adam, & Eschner, 2010). Similarly, Koopmans expects, ‘...significant differences across media in different countries, as well as across media of different types (left versus right, tabloids versus quality, and national versus regional newspapers’ (2010: 108). According to Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012), these differences in reporting according to format are a result of the variegated ‘editorial political discourse cultures’ (see also Hepp et al., 2009). Newspapers can be differentiated according to their political leaning, beliefs, rules, habits, organisational and ownership structures, and the socio-economic and professional background of the target audience, amongst other things (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012: 447). The same scholar, therefore, expects the quality press to report EU affairs more regularly vis-à-vis the tabloid press (2012: 448). Pfetsch et al. (2008) demonstrated that tabloids in the Netherlands, Spain and Germany mentioned the EU less than quality newspapers; the only exception was the United Kingdom where the opposite was found (Pfetsch, Adam & Eschner 2008:474, cited in Risse, 2010:133). The study by Bossetta et al. (2019) found that the strongest predictor variable was newspaper type, with quality newspapers more likely to cover Eurosceptic events or actors in a European context by a ratio of three to one. Kleinen-von Königslöw (2012) hypothesises that newspapers possess different ‘editorial discourse cultures’ which may significantly shape the output of political communication. This hypothesis is supported strongly by a logistic regression analysis which shows that quality newspapers recorded much higher levels of horizontal and particularly vertical Europeanisation. In contrast, tabloid newspapers appear to report less on EU-level politics and institutions. These findings reinforce the notion that public spheres are ‘multi-segmented’, that is, they are fragmented nationally and across different types of media outlets (Hepp et al., 2009:47, Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2012). Kleinen-von Königslöw (2010) found that the focus on EU politics is lower in tabloids than in the quality press and tabloids covered four times more national vis-à-vis international news articles, and almost eight times more national than European news. In contrast, quality newspapers reported two times as many national vis-à-vis international news articles, and almost six times more national than European news articles. Boomgaarden et al. (2013) found that public broadcasting and quality newspapers reported more EU news compared to tabloid newspapers. These results in addition to mine lend support to Hallin and Mancini’s claim (2004) that there is a ‘segmentation of the media system’, that is, the media landscape is segmented within and

across countries (found in Statham, 2010:154). This ‘media segmentation thesis’ is supported by the findings of Pfetsch et al. (2010) paper. The latter shows that the type of media outlet seems to have a strong effect on the degree of EU coverage.

The scatterplots clearly demonstrate that actors with a readily identifiable political affiliation were predominantly national self-referential and comparatively more so compared to other collective actors with this finding particularly noticeable in the case of centre- to far-right parties. For example, only 22.2% of ‘green’ actors referred to the national interest compared to 83.1% of ‘radical TAN’ political actors. In sum, these scatterplots show that nationalism in discourse reigns supreme as far as de jure political actors are concerned. Similar results were found by De Wilde (2011) who detected differences across party families, with centre-right parties claiming the national interest the most. However, it is quite telling how little comparative research has been carried out to examine these aspects of discourse across party families. The scatterplots, furthermore, show that we cannot generalise about actors in toto. Broadly speaking, political claims from economists, central banks, and legislative actors are the most Europeanised, and political parties, the general public, and activists/protestors are the least so. Government/executive actors and media and journalists represent a middle ground. There do appear, moreover, to be differences in the extent of (Euro-)nationalism between elite and non-elite actors with civil society – both formal and informal kinds – less Europeanised than elite actors. That said, politicians/political parties tend to both frame European politics in nationalistic terms and refer more to the domestic level compared to government/executive and legislative actors¹⁴⁴. These findings are in contrast to those of de Wilde (2011) who found that elected national politicians were more inclined to represent the EU interests. In a departure from the findings of Koopmans (2010), legislative actors were found to be more Europeanised than nationalised – in both senses of the concept¹⁴⁵. Executive actors were substantially more structurally Europeanised than legislative actors in line with the findings of Koopmans (2010). However, in terms of normative Europeanisation, legislative actors were more oriented to the European level. Public discourse emanating from the general public (i.e. informal civil society) was predominantly ethnocentric in line with previous works (Koopmans, 2010). The same author found that local and regional actors and legislative and political party actors are far less likely to invoke Europeanised claims than national executive actors. This is partly reflected in my results although legislative actors were more Europeanised, normatively speaking, compared to executive actors. The insights from POS may provide a plausible explanation for these general findings. As decision-making shifts from the nation-state to the European governance, these changes in the distribution of decision-making power have disproportionately favoured some actors, namely executive actors compared to others (i.e. political party actors). Ladrech (2002) argues that, as a result of EU integration, political parties are disadvantaged actors due to the lack of financial and infrastructural

¹⁴⁴ Remarkably, no politicians’ political claims referred to other EU member states and only 14% to E, and 68% referred to the national level.

¹⁴⁵ By contrast, legislative actors represented 15% of overall Europeanised claims which was 5% less than purely domesticated political claims.

resources (2002:395). Similarly, Kriesi et al. (2010) argue that as the ‘juridification’ of EU integration has strengthened administrative institutions compared with parliamentary institutions, which benefits executive and interest groups (Kriesi & Jochum, 2010). They thus expect state actors and interest groups to be more active at the EU level – in terms of both ‘insider lobbying’ and public-oriented strategies – than political parties and social movement organisations. Generally speaking, these expectations find support in the data with the exception of activists and protestors whose discourse was predominantly nationalistic. Moreover, the scatter analysis reveals that structural Europeanisation was fractionally higher than normative dimensions of Europeanisation. Several scholars, in particular, Brüggemann et al. (2006; 2007) and Walter (2017) argue that ‘collective identification’ represents the most normatively demanding form of Europeanised communication¹⁴⁶ (Bruggemann et al. 2006:8). However, these expected differences may be overstated as structural Europeanisation was found to be only fractionally stronger than normative dimensions.

The most striking finding is the strong linear relationship that is statistically significant between the structural (i.e. act2adr) and normative (i.e. act2obj) dimensions of Europeanisation. This bodes well for advocates of EU integration as longitudinal evidence from numerous studies suggests that Europeans are ‘talking more’ to Europe about European issues. We can optimistically claim that perspectives and identities will follow. In the bivariate analysis, moreover, a moderate linear relationship was found between the claimant and object-scope variables, and the addressee and object-scope variables. However, there does not appear to be any correlation between the claimant and addressee-scope variables. This suggests that claimants tend to refer to the same territorial level of interests and identities, but have a higher propensity to target different territorial levels for their political demands. We may tentatively conclude that political claims-making is more transnational than representative claims-making. Or put another way, representative politics is less transnational than politics in general.

In sum, political actors predominantly congregate in the bottom-left corner of the scatterplot, whereas for actors in general, sweeping generalisations about levels of Europeanisation cannot be made. The bottom line is that different actors will target different levels of decision-making (at2adr) and employ different perspectives when discussing EU politics. At the forefront of the minds of political actors are the following questions: At which level of decision-making can I most effectively convey my political demands – the domestic or supranational level? How can I most effectively mobilise voters – by mobilising national interests and identities or supranational equivalents? And how can I most effectively draw the media’s attention?¹⁴⁷ The political claims by collective actors are also conditioned by the news selection and formatting decisions of newspapers who act as a sieve of political claims – by ‘choosing’ those deemed newsworthy and discarding those which are not. At the forefront of the minds of

¹⁴⁶ Brüggemann et al. (2007) demands not only a ‘Europeanisation of news coverage’ but also a ‘Europeanisation of collective identities’ (cited in Walter, 2017).

¹⁴⁷ As a political claim that does not receive publicity via the mass media is rendered as though it was not uttered at all.

journalists are the following questions: Do these claims fit the editorial line and meta-narrative of the newspaper? Are the claims relevant to the headline of the article? And will the claims that I select keep the reader interested? In sum, we cannot generalize about the transnationality (or otherwise) of public spheres. We may regard some newspapers as ‘Europeanised’ and others not so. At the country level, we may regard German public spheres as ‘Europeanised’ but not Polish public spheres. We may regard the discourse of green party actors as ‘Europeanised’ and that of ‘radical TAN’ parties as not. Some types of actors iterate Europeanised claims, some do not. The bottom line is that public spheres’ are segmented and fragmented, which necessitates further multilevel analyses to refine our understanding of it. In conclusion, Medrano’s remarks in 2011 that the media “give privileged access to national political actors keen on reproducing national identities over European actors” still seem to ring true today (Diez Medrano 2011, 44). We may extend this to political actors – irrespective of the mass media – given their penchant for framing European politics as a largely domestic issue that concerns mainly national citizens¹⁴⁸.

Limitations

Although the method of Representative Claims Analysis possesses a rich analytical toolbox, naturally, it cannot measure everything. The granular details and nuances of discourse cannot be traced as effectively compared to purely qualitative methods such as Critical Discourse Analysis. The price of RCA’s gain in breadth is a loss in depth¹⁴⁹. Moreover, it is debatable whether RCA precisely measures identity. RCA, as the name implies, was initially conceived to measure the concept of representativeness in the public sphere. To whom a representative claims to represent is not synonymous with the representative’s professed source of belonging. Although the object of a claim is a fairly accurate guide of one’s affective loyalties it is not a flawless one. For instance, Mario Draghi (i.e. the claimant) may call for the EU (i.e. addressee) to protect the livelihoods of Syrian migrants (i.e. the object) on the Polish-Belarusian border. However, we would be reluctant to infer from this that Mario Draghi had suddenly adopted a Syrian identity. Instead, this is an example of a solidaristic claim. And herein lies the problem. The object of a representative claim may indicate the ‘imagined community’ to which the claimant professes to belong, or it may reveal more about the claimant’s solidaristic orientation. It has been well-documented that there is a fine line between the identity and solidarity concepts. The concept of discursive nationalism suffers a similar fate. Not all representative claims ‘flag’ or ‘signpost’ – to quote Billig – one’s homeland. Seldom is a national flag waved or nation signposted when a representative invokes the interests of displaced people or the ‘common good’. Another important consideration is to remember that political statements – more often than not – do not contain the quality

¹⁴⁸ Indeed, it appears that political actors gravitate even more to the national level than the mass media. However, it would be instructive to verify these findings via an analysis of national parliamentary debates.

¹⁴⁹ As with most – if not all – mixed method and quantitative methods compared to qualitative methods.

of representativeness. In fact, of the nearly 4000 political claims which were found in the whole dataset, only circa one-third of them contained an object. Needless to say that not all the data in a claim is accounted for. RCA traces the actor-issue-object-frame discursive dynamics. However, other words – perhaps crucial – are discarded. For this reason, I compel scholars to complement mixed method or quantitative approaches with purely qualitative approaches such as Discourse Analysis to verify the findings of my study. To summarise, the pros and cons of RCA are as follows: RCA can capture multiple phenomena such as identity, nationalism, and solidarity¹⁵⁰. However, herein lies the problem. It was not always clear what the dependent variable of my analysis was. Was it nationalism, identity, or solidarity? This is not surprising. RCA was not conceived with these variables in mind. These concepts are also notoriously vague, difficult to measure, and there is a lot of overlap between them. They are not mutually exclusive and are often found together. Indeed, the scope of one's solidarity seldom extends beyond national boundaries, and territorial attachment tends to be congruent with the scope of one's solidarity. That is to say that solidarity, identity, and nationalism are proximate concepts which are susceptible to conflation. And, arguably, the method of RCA still fails to untangle these concepts. Moreover, discursive nationalism may manifest in more nuanced and subtle ways that are not captured by the RCA variables. We may, for instance, confidently infer from the claim, "we will fight for the sovereignty of our people" by Polish Prime Minister, Mateusz Morawiecki, that he is referring to Polish identity as sovereignty arguments are habitually made with the interests of 'the nation' in mind¹⁵¹. However, we cannot indubitably infer this because the 'Polish' object is not invoked explicitly. As I mentioned beforehand, many political claims lack a representative component, that is, a clearly identifiable object. There are, however, other identity markers beyond mere pronouns and references to 'the nation'. That is to say that we should harness the whole analytical toolbox of RCA to compensate for the sparsity in the dataset. I, furthermore, concede that I failed to fully harness the rich analytical insights of SNA. For want of time and space, I utilised SNA mainly as a visualisation tool rather than an analytical and theoretical instrument¹⁵². My analysis, however, mainly focused on measuring the prominence of nodes within a network rather than exploring the relations between them. In a follow-up study, I would certainly focus on addressing these gaps. Furthermore, naturally, the generalisability of the results is inevitably restricted by the limited sample of cases examined. My dataset comprised political claims from only eight national newspapers, two for each country. Needless to say that the EU comprises 27 member states, hundreds of regional and national-level newspapers, and a plethora of different mediums such as magazines, television broadcasting, social media, internet forums, and so on. My dataset moreover covers a limited period of two years in which one of the years was during the Covid-19 pandemic¹⁵³. We, thus, cannot generalise the results beyond the 2-year period and the countries examined. I also accept that the tabloid-quality dichotomy is not clear-cut, with some

¹⁵⁰ *And effectively map actor-addressee constellations and gauge the salience of issues and frames in discourse.*

¹⁵¹ Indeed, my results support this view, with sovereignty frames most prevalent when the interests of national constituencies were invoked.

¹⁵² *SNA helps us ascertain the role and relative importance of actors within a network as well as the overall relational network structure.*

¹⁵³ For these reasons, I added the *pre-Covid-19* dataset as a control sample.

newspapers not falling into either category. It is, for instance, debatable whether *La Nazione* is a tabloid format newspaper. Indeed, it may be argued that Italy has no genuine tabloid newspapers. Naturally, I confronted several issues during the collection and coding of data. As I outlined in the codebook, I coded for the most salient object. With the benefit of hindsight, I would also have coded for whether the claim contained single (i.e. exclusive) or multiple constituencies (i.e. inclusive). For example, if a claim referred to both national and EU constituencies, the claim would be coded as inclusive. In this way, I would be able to gauge to what extent claimants invoked the interests and identities of one (exclusive) or multiple (inclusive) constituencies. The former would be interpreted as more pernicious to EU-identity building whereas the latter would be compatible with it. One of the reasons why I refrained from coding more than one object is that it would have been difficult to transpose this data onto a network graph. This is an important reminder that although network graphs have the appeal of reducing complexity, there is data that is overlooked. In addition, my networks – using the *Gephi* filter function – have removed ‘noisy data’, that is, nodes deemed unimportant or not central to the network. A further caveat with my dataset is that duplicate claims were not filtered. I suspect, however, that these claims represent a very small share. In any case, duplicate claims are not a problem per se as they merely reflect the resonance function of the media. Some political claims travel further than others and their resonance should be recorded accordingly. Duplicate political claims are a problem, however, if one wishes to trace public discourse beyond the mediated public sphere. With that in mind, to explore the political logic function, it would have been more appropriate to trace public discourses in national parliaments (a la De Wilde, 2011). Even though I did not confront any problems with the translation of newspaper articles, I acknowledge that scholars may have some doubts concerning the reliability of the results. I, therefore, would like to put some of these concerns to bed. I utilised a cutting-edge translation software named *DeepL* which is regarded as one of the most accurate translation tools and has already been used by many scholars for comparative analysis in a wide range of disciplines. I checked the accuracy of translations with a mother-tongue speaker. Verifying the accuracy of Italian did not pose a problem as I speak C1-level Italian. I verified the accuracy of Polish translations by taking a random sample of 20 newspaper articles and checking them with a native Polish speaker. I checked the sample of Dutch articles with my colleague, Rolf Nijmeijer, who is from the Netherlands. In addition, any borderline problem cases (marked with annotations accordingly) were checked by mother-tongue speakers. In the end, there were only a handful of problem cases that needed verifying by mother-tongue speakers. I did not expect many problem cases as representative claims analysis is fairly straightforward and does not require an impeccable grasp of the language. A representative political claim may be coded so long as the claimant, addressee, and object are readily identifiable. I accept that for the frame/justification, a more comprehensive grasp of the language is more important as one has to read the whole claim rather than mere words in isolation (such as ‘We’, ‘Polish people’, ‘Mario Draghi’). That said, I often found it easy to deduce the justification from keywords such as ‘solidarity’, ‘sovereignty’, ‘democracy’, or the ‘rule of law’. I acknowledge that for a more qualitative analysis of

texts, translations using software such as *DeepL* alone may pose reliability problems. However, for the purposes of my research, *DeepL* proved to be more than satisfactory for the job at hand. In any case, to make my research design more watertight, I investigated problem cases with mother-tongue speakers.

Recommendations

I conclude with some recommendations for future research. As previous scholars have done, I would like to extend the ‘constructed weeks’ sampling method to include additional snapshots in time. For example, it would be interesting to compare the current dataset with snapshots in time stratified over several years. In particular, I would like to compare the current dataset to periods before the Maastricht treaty, which is considered to be an institutional change of epochal proportions in the history of EU integration. Alternatively, it would be interesting to examine representative claims around the time of the so-called ‘permissive consensus’ to explore whether national interests/identities are more salient, or remain latent in debates about Europe. I acknowledge that collecting data during the Covid-19 pandemic may be perceived as a non-representative sample. However, in my defence, I included one year’s worth of data as a control sample. That said, it may be preferable to also examine a larger sample of ‘unexceptional periods’ to see if the results hold over longer periods. As British politics represents a unique state of affairs, with the UK having recently left the EU, it would be interesting, furthermore, to examine European debates in the UK preceding and after Brexit. More specifically, I would like to examine debates two years before the vote, the year of the referendum, and two years after the vote to leave the bloc. In this way, we can begin to map patterns of discourse before, during, and after the vote. Why would this be interesting? Because we can begin to explore whether the Brexit debate acted as a conduit for nationalism, and/or induced Europeanised communication. I suspect that the Brexit debate aroused both nationalistic and Europeanised sentiments to varying degrees. The identity conflicts that the Brexit debate inexorably triggered would likely have fuelled nationalism, but, at the same time, debating about the UK’s place in Europe may have also prompted people to think about European belonging. As my analysis shows it crucially depends on who the speaker is¹⁵⁴. Moreover, I wish to extend my analysis to different mediums to compare patterns of representative claims-making between public and private TV news outlets. Previous research indicates that the former is more Europeanised in media coverage. It would also be interesting to compare representative claims in newspaper articles online and in the comments sections of newspapers. I suspect that the content in the latter would be found to be decisively more nationalised as it is widely understood that the attitudes and preferences of the general public are less Europeanised than European political elites. Furthermore, several studies

¹⁵⁴ An unabashedly Eurosceptic party such as *UKIP* would undoubtedly have used the debate to speak ‘in the name of the nation’. However, more pro-European parties such as the *Green Party* may have used the Brexit debate to speak about ‘working together as Europeans’ to tackle the global threat of climate change.

indicate that online forums are a hotbed for nationalism (see Chap.1, for details). Similarly, it may be worthwhile to trace representative claims on social media platforms such as Twitter to see how political elites frame Europe compared to Twitter users from the general public. The latter option is also desirable from a coding standpoint as “tweets” are no longer than circa 50 words. Indeed “tweets” seem tailor-made for claims-making because they tend to be short, pithy, emotionally charged statements. I concede that, in hindsight, my sample would have been more representative had I included more EU member states in my analysis. It may therefore be worthwhile to extend my analysis to include other member states that have hitherto been overlooked by the literature such as the Scandinavian member states, the Visegrád Group, and Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Portugal and Greece. In this way, we would be in a better position to test the integration hypothesis.

Furthermore, as Koopmans et al. rightly point out, we can only speak of “national”, “European”, or “global” public spheres in the relative sense (2010:38). To gauge the extent or significance of the phenomenon in question, it would be helpful to have a national yardstick to compare domestic with European debates. We can begin to assess how well interests and identities are represented in European debates. We can begin to compare the salience of national identity in national debates with debates about Europe. In other words, this yardstick approach would allow us to measure the relative salience of national objects compared to national debates. In this way, we can begin to probe the question of whether national identity is more salient in European debates than in debates confined to domestic politics. Perhaps it is the case that in domestic debates, the taken-for-grantedness aspects of national identity and the absence of a foreign ‘other’ relegate it to obscurity. European debates, on the other hand, may serve to embolden national interests and identities. Only through a comparative analysis of domestic and European debates can we ascertain whether the salience of a national coalition of interests and identities increases in debates about European politics. These are interesting questions that I would like to delve deeper into in a follow-up analysis. Building on the previous research of de Wilde (2011), another aspect I wish to explore is to compare patterns of claims-making across different deliberative settings such as national parliaments, the mass media and party manifestoes. The results of de Wilde’s study indicate that claims in national parliaments are even more nationally self-absorbed than claims found in the mass media. It would be interesting to see if these results are confirmed in a follow-up analysis. I would be, furthermore, interested to include manifesto data to see how political parties represent Europe in both senses of the term. As the results of my analysis show, we can reasonably expect discourses in manifestoes will be even more nationally self-referential. Moreover, I wish to harness the full potential of SNA in a follow-up analysis in particular the Exponential Random Graph Tool (ERGM) which is a “tie-based regression model that explains how links are formed between nodes” (Krichene et al., 2019:5). The ERGM is useful for calculating the probability of a tie based on a certain node attribute (e.g. country of origin). Using the *nodematch* function, we can calculate the likelihood of a tie based on two nodes which share the same node attribute. The ERGM is useful for

calculating the extent of assortativity (or homophily) in a network, in other words, the likelihood that of edge formation based on a shared node attribute. In particular, it would be interesting to measure the assortativity coefficient in a given network based on the node attribute of nationality. With this statistical tool, I would also be in a position to ascertain which node attribute variables – from nationality and party family to actor type – are the most important predictor of a tie¹⁵⁵.

Although my research focused on the supply side of political communication, we may also begin to hypothesise about effects on the demand side of politics, that is, how political communication may affect voter perceptions and policy preferences. It is widely accepted that the output of political communication may affect the political behaviour and perceptions of voters. Indeed, several studies, notably those of Harrison and Bruter (2014) show that messages and symbols may affect public attitudes towards the EU and a European sense of belonging in particular. The caveat to this study is that they focused on the effect of good news on EU identity, which is not the same thing as political claims framing. Indeed, it would be interesting to examine the effects of predominantly ethnocentric (alternatively Eurocentric) political claims on EU identity via a panel-study experiment similar to that of Harrison et al. (2014).

Conclusions, reflections and final remarks

The key takeaway from this analysis is that political actors are, in the main, speaking about Europe but not on behalf of Europe which may be problematic for the EU in its pursuit toward ‘ever closer union’. A federal model of the EU under qualified majority voting (QMV) may confront resistance, particularly from member states where a thick European identity and solidarity are missing. Under QMV, decisions are inevitably made that benefit some member states more than others, or in the worst-case scenario, benefit one or a handful of member states at the expense of others. However, if political actors continue to frame EU politics in terms of how it benefits, or not, one’s nation, decisions perceived to contradict the national interest are likely to encounter resistance from both strong and general publics. Polish strong publics and citizens are unlikely to ‘take an L for the team’ when the team drapes the red and white strip of Poland and not the blue and yellow of the European Union¹⁵⁶. On the contrary, if EU

¹⁵⁵ I have begun to experiment with the ERGM, the preliminary results of which can be found in Appendix A (Fig.5.91-5.99). The preliminary results show that in the Dutch, Polish and Italian bipartite networks, positive assortativity coefficients were found. Hence actors tend to invoke their own national community (object). However, this is not the case in the German network. Converting the log-odds to predicted probabilities, the results reveal that there is a 52% probability that a tie will be formed between two nodes of the same nationality. In the Polish and Italian networks, there is approx. a 60% chance. The notable outlier is Germany with only a probability of 40%. The probability of a domestic tie (e.g. *node1* with ‘own country, national’ attribute and *node2* with ‘own country, national’ is higher in the Covid-19 unipartite network (see Fig.5.97). Fig.5.98 also shows that national assortativity (homophily) increases in the Covid-19 aggregate bipartite network. This preliminary findings reinforce the notion that national interests/identities become more salient during the Covid-19 pandemic. Interestingly, Fig.5.100 shows that national homophily (e.g. nodes sharing the same nationality) is higher in quality newspaper bipartite network, however, the probability of node referring to the national level is higher in the tabloid bipartite network. This preliminary analysis only begins to scratch the surface of what is possible with the ERGM.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Take an L’ is an abbreviation for ‘taking a loss’.

politics is framed in the spirit of common endeavour, strong publics and citizens alike are likely to accept decisions even if they do not appear to directly benefit their constituency. This is because Germans would more readily accept decisions as they see themselves as being part of a larger ‘imagined community’. As I underlined in the theoretical framework (Chapter Two), identity is axiomatic to legitimacy; decisions are seen as more legitimate when rulers and the ruled are understood to inhabit the same ‘imagined community’. The results of my analysis remind us that an ‘ever closer union’ between the peoples of Europe may be advancing in the legal and political domain, however, the public sphere has some catching up to do.

The glimmer of hope from the EU’s perspective is that German and Dutch debates to a lesser extent were more emblematic of Europeanised communication. However, Polish and Italian debates were overwhelmingly domesticated in terms of communicative ties and nationalistic in terms of interests and identities. The metaphor of a ‘multi-speed Europe’ seems to extend to the public sphere as well. How can we explain this dichotomy in patterns of discourse across different countries? As I outlined above, the ‘EU budget contributions’ hypothesis (Bossetta et al., 2019) does not find support in the data. In fact, the reverse was found with net budget beneficiary countries such as Poland much less Europeanised compared to net budget contributing countries such as the Netherlands and Germany. The results of my analysis lend tentative support to the ‘integration’ hypothesis helping explain why discursive nationalism prevailed in Poland. Indeed, the results also show that older member states attribute responsibility much more to the EU level than newer member states. The ‘power and autonomy’ thesis is not supported in the data, with German public debates, the most Europeanised, and Polish debates, the least so. The latter – when soft power, economic power, and military prowess are considered – is the least powerful country, however, debates in Poland were the most nationally self-referential.

The most compelling explanation for the across-country variation is the prominence of right-wing parties in political systems. The argument goes that countries with a prominent representation of right-wing parties in national parliaments would contain more nationalistic discourses. The results lend strong support to this hypothesis. Right-wing party families are more prominent in Polish and, to a lesser extent, Italian parliaments. By contrast, right-wing parties are moderately represented in the Dutch parliament, and modestly represented in the German parliament. Indeed, public debates in the latter two were found to be more Europeanised. In sum, in my opinion, the most convincing explanation for the varying degree of discursive Euro-nationalism is the extent to which far-right political parties are represented in national political systems. Moreover, Europeanisation does not seem to be a function of low levels of satisfaction with democracy on the national level. On the contrary, Poland and Italy, which score the lowest in levels of satisfaction with democracy, were the least Europeanised. These results confirm those found in the study by Peter and de Vreese (2004). Furthermore, Europeanised communication does not appear to be a function of high levels of EU identity and EU support among

the general public. As we know, Poland, which scores highly in both, was the most nationally self-referential. However, the low levels of European identity feeling and support for the EU among the Italian citizens may partially explain why discursive nationalism prevailed in Italian debates. However, a systematic multivariate regression analysis of more countries is probably necessary to examine the EU identity-support variable in more detail.

Furthermore, Boomgaarden (2013), argues that the strong presence of Eurosceptic elite opinion is positively associated with Europeanisation. My results lend tentative support to this thesis. In fact, net evaluations of the EU were more negative in Dutch and German debates which were more Europeanised. No doubt, historical factors, furthermore, provide a powerful explanation for cross-country variations. Germany's disastrous ethnonationalist experiment in the 20th century no doubt make German people reluctant to 'fly the flag' for fear of being labelled a 'nationalist'. Throughout its history, Poland has been at loggerheads with two mighty world powers, namely, Germany in the West and Russia in the East, and Poland ceased to exist for over one hundred years. Not surprisingly, these persistent external threats have conditioned how Poland sees itself and its relationship with the EU. In its recent history, Italy was at the centre of several crises such as the euro crisis and the migrant crisis. Moreover, Italy's lacklustre economic growth and stubbornly high levels of unemployment over the past three decades are well-documented. This backdrop has provided a fertile ground for the prevalence of anti-EU and nationalist rhetoric. It is also important to remember that Italy is a fairly new nation-state compared to the likes of Poland and the Netherlands which may partially explain why discourse in Italian debates was found to be particularly nationally self-referential. The religious-secular cleavage may also explain why debates in Poland and Italy were more nationalistic. The citizens of these countries are staunchly Roman Catholic. Although these nations are officially secular, religion still encroaches on politics indirectly. The hot issue of abortion in Poland is a case in point with the Polish Catholic Church intervening regularly in the debate. Although the link between nationalism and Catholicism is not immediately self-evident, several scholars argue that there may be one (e.g. Meyer-Resende, 2015)¹⁵⁷.

Apart from debates proceeding with a heavy national accent, another notable finding was that the EU was visible but mainly as a target of political demands. The insights from news values provide a plausible explanation for this finding. EU actors are less well known (*status*) by domestic audiences, and perceived as 'foreign' (*identity*) and thus considered less legitimate. Both legitimacy and publicity are self-reinforcing and 'legitimate participants' – to quote Risse – tend to receive more publicity in the media and vice versa (2014:31). This lack of publicity as active protagonists in public debates hence poses a more profound legitimacy problem for the EU. Furthermore, in line with previous studies, the EPS reveals itself to be elitist, top-down, and non-inclusive. National government-executive actors

¹⁵⁷ These historical factors would certainly be interesting to explore in more detail in a follow-up analysis.

continue to dominate European debates, political parties play a bit-part role and civil society is a mere bystander. This skewed representation may be explained by media logic theory. The audience is more familiar with heads of state and government ministers. Readers can put a face to the name of a government minister (*familiarity*) whose words are perceived as highly consequential (*importance*) given their prominent role. By contrast, interviews with ‘vox pops’ (i.e. civil society) garner less interest as their words are perceived as unimportant.

Another key takeaway from my analysis is the marked variance in patterns of claims-making according to party family, actor type and newspaper format. Interestingly, the claims from *de jure* political actors (e.g. political parties) were generally more nationally self-referential than actors not operating in a formal political capacity (e.g. central banks). This is not overly surprising given that elected political representatives formally represent their national constituents after all. By contrast, business leaders, academic institutions, central banks, and the judiciary act impartially (or at least claim to) and not in the narrow national interest. Medrano’s (2010) emphasis on the actor- and strategic-driven discursive logic is a plausible explanation for these findings (Chapter Two). Furthermore, as expected, parties on the right of the political spectrum made more nationalistic claims than their left-wing counterparts. By the same logic, centre-left, mainstream political parties invoked supranational-level constituencies more than political actors oriented to the right of the political spectrum. These findings suggest that actor-driven and strategic logics are not uniform across all party families. Moreover, an overwhelmingly high number of representative claims were found in quality newspapers, reinforcing their transnational credentials. In line with expectations, the claims found in quality newspapers were also more transnational in scope. Similar trends were also found in the distribution of representative claimants with quality newspapers allocating more space for non-domestic actors. Interestingly, across-format differences were not so stark in the Italian and Polish samples. I suspect this is because Italy does not have an archetypal tabloid newspaper tradition equivalent to that found in the UK or Germany which has a more variegated media landscape. Indeed, in these latter two countries, across-format differences in representative claims were particularly discernible. These findings reinforce the notion that public spheres are segmented within and across different nations. As a consequence, people will inevitably have different representations of the EU depending on which newspaper they pick up or which television channel they choose to watch. For readers of tabloid newspapers, the EU is framed as passive and distant, with national actors, interests and identities at the forefront of readers’ minds. For readers of quality newspapers, we have a similar picture, however, the EU is, at least, more visible both as an active participant (claimant) in the public sphere and source of belonging (object).

One of the most interesting and important findings is the shift in discursive dynamics in the pre-and during-Covid-19 datasets. The most noteworthy finding is the increase in domestic-national but also solidaristic-Europeanised claims and the concomitant decrease in references to EU-supranational and global interests and identities. Interestingly, the media and journalists iterated many more nationalistic

representative claims in the Covid-19 dataset. This indicates that media nationalism seems to thrive during a crisis. This finding corroborates with the findings of Eilders et al. (2019:696) who found that the mass media tend to see crises through the prism of the nation. Moreover, *de jure* political actors were more disinclined to invoke collective EU interests during the crisis. Interestingly, however, the results show that solidaristic claims (i.e. horizontal) increased during the crisis, with the increase largely attributed to government-executive and media actors. These findings show that national executives and journalists are more nationally self-referential on the one hand, however, they also appear to be more receptive to the interests and identities of fellow EU member states on the other hand. Supranational representative claims were also found to increase during the pandemic. This means that supranational-level actors, not unlike their national-level counterparts, also appeared to be more self-seeking. These findings lend support to the notion that political actors tend to overlook global interests when exposed to threats. We may tentatively conclude from these findings that crises may have the effect of emboldening national identity, with this finding particularly noticeable in tabloid newspapers. These findings imply that both political actors and tabloid newspapers, in particular, seize on periods of turmoil to rally behind a coalition of national interests and identities. I expect this is because tabloid newspapers particularly thrive on the news values of conflict, turmoil, and drama.

Interestingly, instrumental-utilitarian frames were overwhelmingly the most prevalent justifications of representative claims-making. This reinforces the notion that discursive nationalism (or euro-nationalism) typically manifests ‘banally’ without invoking arguments that touch upon themes such as those related to values, culture, sovereignty, freedom, and democracy. This lends support to Billig’s claim that nationalism may manifest in banal forms, for example, by invoking national interests without invoking moralistic or value judgments. The main takeaway regarding framing is that when the nationally imagined community is invoked, arguments about sovereignty, the rule of law, democracy, freedom and equality, and utilitarian arguments are commonplace. However, when the EU interests and identities are mobilised, arguments about solidarity, values, norms and principles, and general arguments about EU integration are prevalent. Regarding issue salience, the ‘compensatory Europeanisation’ thesis does not find support in the data. Despite advancing political integration in policy domains such as trade and monetary policy, collective actors appear to frame issues predominantly in terms of the national interest. Again, these findings may be explained by nationally entwined media and political logics which predispose political actors to frame issues myopically in the narrow national interest. Another interesting finding is that discursive nationalism was generally accompanied by negative evaluations of the EU. This is in line with expectations as negative valence framing helps accentuate differences between in- and out-groups. This lends support to the conflict identity framing thesis (Tajfel and Turner, 2004, de Wilde et al., 2014:40). However, in some good news for the EU, net evaluations of the EU were fairly balanced, and interestingly, net addressee evaluations were more negative than net evaluations of the EU. This suggests that the phenomenon of

Euro-scepticism is perhaps overstated. These findings corroborate with those of Koopmans (2010) who found that domestic debates were generally more critical in tone than European debates.

The results regarding the structural dimensions of public discourse are remarkably similar. Although it is probably an overstatement to claim that national public spheres *domesticate* European politics¹⁵⁸, debates between domestic actors comprised a substantial portion of total claims. The paucity of claimants and abundance of EU-level addressees at the EU level were found across all networks. The prevalence of the EU as a topic and target rather than an active protagonist of claims-making essentially renders them ‘sitting ducks’ that are powerless to defend themselves in the public sphere. Again, the widely documented ‘*verticalization* (versäult) of public spheres’ is supported by the findings. However, deviating from earlier findings, the results of my analysis indicate a strengthening of horizontal and weakening of bottom-up vertical ties which suggests that this ‘pillarization’ configuration might be abating¹⁵⁹. The homogenous coloured clusters of vertices in the network graphs clearly illustrate the prevalence of national cliques and sub-communities and encapsulate the nationally segmented configuration of the EPS. As with the bipartite networks, powerful neighbouring countries and those with historical or strategic ties featured prominently in debates. However, the ‘EU budget contributions’ hypothesis (Bossetta et al., 2019) is not supported by the results¹⁶⁰.

Another noteworthy finding is the lack of visibility of EU actors in the Polish representative claims, lending support to the ‘integration hypothesis’. The results of my analysis do not lend support to the ‘power and autonomy’ thesis as German debates were much more Europeanised than Dutch and Polish debates. The ‘prominence of right-wing parties’ hypothesis may partially explain why Polish and Italian debates were markedly less Europeanised than Dutch and German debates. As with the bipartite networks, the results of my analysis do not support the ‘satisfaction with domestic democracy’ hypothesis. On the contrary, the level of EU coverage appears to be positively correlated with higher levels of satisfaction with domestic democracy. The results, moreover, indicate that identity-feeling or levels of EU support among the general population have no bearing on levels of structural Europeanisation. The ‘negative elite opinion’ hypothesis is not supported by the results as Polish and Italian debates contained higher positive evaluations of the EU despite being less Europeanised. However, the ‘negative elite opinion and party conflict’ hypothesis (Boomgaarden et al., 2013) may explain why Polish and Italian debates were more domesticated as EU integration has become especially politicised in these countries in recent years.

¹⁵⁸ ...as transborder communicative linkages outnumbered claims confined to national boundaries.

¹⁵⁹ In the words of Medrano (2003), “the absence of debate across borders and the limited participation in national debate on the EU point to a public sphere that is *fragmented* or ‘*pillarized*’ (versäult) into separate but congruent national spheres...The recent debate on the European Constitution proceeded as a series of parallel national discussions, albeit in the awareness that the neighbours were talking about the same things at the same time” (Medrano, 2003, found in de Swaan, 2007: 145). In other words, nations talk a lot more about the EU than they do about other member states. Put another way, there is little debate among European countries, and more communicative toing and froing between national capitals and Brussels.

¹⁶⁰ Perhaps it instead makes more sense to argue that member states who contribute more money can also be expected to target the EU level more in order to provide an *accountability* function.

Furthermore, a ‘transnational gulf’ – to quote Kleinen-von Königslöw – between tabloid and quality newspapers was observed, however, there were several unexpected results (2012:446). Interestingly, horizontal and bottom-up vertical Europeanised communicative ties were more prevalent in tabloid newspapers. One logical explanation for this finding could be that tabloid newspapers are more inclined to target the EU as an object of attack/criticism (i.e. addressee)¹⁶¹. Moreover, these types of transnational communicative ties may simply be indicative of discursive strategies of othering¹⁶². In a marked departure from the findings of Pfetsch (2004) who found that addressees were predominantly domestic actors, the results of my analysis found the opposite with EU-level actors predominantly addressees of claims-making. However, as I pointed out earlier, this may be more of a curse than a blessing for the EU particularly if it is evaluated negatively and national interests and identities continue to reign supreme in public discourse. As with the structural dimensions, patterns of claims-making varied markedly by actor type, party family, newspaper format, and so on, reminding us that we cannot generalize about the transnationality of public spheres.

The most interesting finding is the strong linear relationship between structural (i.e. act2adr) and normative (i.e. act2obj) dimensions of Europeanisation. These results bode well for supporters of EU integration as it is widely accepted that Europeans are ‘talking more’ to/at Europe about European topics. Perhaps it will transpire that European perspectives, interests, and identities will converge in due time¹⁶³. Interestingly, moreover, when a bivariate analysis was performed on the claimant, addressee, and object variables, strong correlations were found in all combinations, with the exception of the claimant-addressee bivariate. These findings lend support to the notion that talking about Europe or targeting Europe does not necessarily equate to speaking on behalf of Europe. Indeed, it is the latter which trails behind. We may tentatively conclude that structural claims-making is more transnational than normative dimensions of claims-making.

In line with previous studies, my research shows that Europe’s national public spheres are highly fragmented, polarised and segmented along both national and editorial lines (Kleinen-von Königslöw, 2010). This is not necessarily a negative development for EU integration and may indicate that public sphere(s) are sufficiently representative of a diverse set of publics, and pluralistic from a democratic standpoint. Indeed, national public spheres in domestic debates are also intensely polarised and fragmented. That said, the EU is a much larger political entity and thus we may reasonably argue that European public spheres are much more fragmented (Kermer et al., 2020). Europe encapsulates a vast gamut of identities, religions, ethnicities, and so on. The EU consists of twenty-seven nation-states with

¹⁶¹ However, I acknowledge that there is not enough data to draw any conclusions on this point.

¹⁶² For instance, the claim by Nigel Farage (*claimant*) that criticises the EU (*addressee*) for the damage that their intransigence on Brexit trade negotiations has caused upon British businesses (*object*) can be regarded as Europeanised communication (bottom-up vertical) in the structural sense but normatively nationalistic. This example is to hit home the point that Europeanised communication surely must require more than merely transborder connections. Crucially we must speak as Europeans and not purely as French, Italians, Poles and Danes.

¹⁶³ It would be interesting to delve deeper into the relationship between these variables using statistically rigorous methods in a subsequent study

their own unique national and media cultures. As my research shows, Europe is discursively constructed differently both *within* and *across* countries. It is reasonable to claim that Europeanised public spheres are probably even more fragmented than national ones as there are essentially twenty-seven disparate ‘narrative networks’ to reconcile (Kermer et al., 2020:33; Eder, 2009). And recent evidence suggests there is little prospect of national cleavages coalescing into transnational coalitions of collective action. By contrast, national public spheres possess the legitimising glue of national identity and cultural, political, and media institutions to help bind the fragmented narratives together (Kermer et al., 2020:33).

Prospective readers may accuse me of ‘methodological nationalism’, that is, “the assumption that the nation-state society is the natural social and political form of the modern world” (Wimmer et al., 2002:302). Although I acknowledge that there is a danger of conceiving the national *demos* and ‘imagined community’ in an overly idealised and nationally-oriented manner, the danger lies not so much with academics—as —with *political* and *media* actors who continue to treat the nation as though it was the natural and permanent order of things while reducing Europe’s variegated interests and identities to zero-sum game logic. This is the essence of the problem. Granted—most scholars, including myself, acknowledge that communities may be imagined beyond the national container. However, crucially, both politicians and the media alike tend not to re-produce communities in this manner¹⁶⁴. Instead, re-bordering narratives and deictic expressions embedded in the nation continue to permeate the public sphere(s). As Trenz rightly argues, public sphere research’s methodological nationalism may be vindicated because of the media’s entrenched ethnocentrism. This argument may also be extended to the realm of politics wherein political actors continue to re-produce the nation and disregard – or even reject – the existence of supranational-level constituencies or the legitimacy of European interests.

The crux of the matter is – not that transnational communities *cannot* be imagined but rather – that the EU community is nebulously and seldom reified in conjunction with national imagining. More precisely, at best, transnational and European constituents are seldom invoked simultaneously with

¹⁶⁴ As Drew (2022) succinctly argues communities may be ‘imagined’ in several different ways. The rise of the Internet has enabled the production of novel global imagined communities. The Internet provides a means for like-minded people to come together and form digital communities despite being located in different parts of the globe (Drew, 2022). Online users can co-opt photos and symbols to display their allegiance to certain social groups such as those pertaining to, *inter alia*, nationality, ideology, or sports teams. For example, *fora* on Reddit and Quora may be regarded as digital communities in their own right. The LGBTQ community, moreover, displays all the hallmarks of an imagined community: its members may never meet each other but nevertheless feel a strong sense of solidarity based on their common struggles and shared life experiences, and it possesses a common set of myths and symbols such as the rainbow flag and pride parades (Drew, 2022). Although there is no logical reason why transnational, European imagined communities cannot congeal in a similar way, the bottom line is that re-productions of the European community are – at present – nebulously imagined and remain in the shadows of the national “l’imagination communautaire”. Although a European community is flourishing – in the form of a vast, sprawling network of academics, lobbyists and civil servants operating throughout the European continent – it is confined to a narrow milieu of *attentive publics* (Eder, 2013). The crux of the problem is that mediated public discourses – which resonate to *general publics* across the whole of Europe – are conditioned by nationally entrenched media systems (Galtung et al., 1965; Trenz, 2008) and ethnocentric political logics (Meyer, 2002). This set of circumstances militates against alternative notions and conceptions of community and citizenship. As I argued in Chapter Two, it can be reasonably argued that mediated discourse is the most consequential for European integration as the mass media is the bridge connecting people to Europe. As Trenz pithily remarks, the “[European] public sphere needs to be perceived as a *media* sphere.” (Trenz, 2008:8; italics added for emphasis).

other territorial levels of attachment, and, at worst, they are not invoked whatsoever¹⁶⁵. This implies that Europe's variegated interests and identities are seldom framed as overlapping and mutually reinforcing. This set of circumstances is – I argue – not sustainable in the long run and irreconcilable with a more federalised supranational system of governance which the EU has pretensions of becoming¹⁶⁶. The latter model of governance implies burden sharing and accepting that majoritarian supranational decisions (e.g. Qualified Majority Voting) which may, at times, contradict minority national interests¹⁶⁷ (Weiler, 1995). Integration implies accepting that some decisions will be contrary to the national interest, however, the latter, as my analysis shows, remains the *main* – and often *sole* – stakeholder in European politics. This means that politicians and voters alike are less likely to accept burden-sharing measures that contradict national interests. It is difficult to envisage a scenario wherein a federal union – or even a ‘pragmatic federalism’ to quote Draghi (2022) – may flourish in the context of discursive nationalism¹⁶⁸. As Weiler (1995) convincingly argues, majority rule is only legitimate within a *demos* which is a *sine qua non* of democracy¹⁶⁹. However, it is debatable whether a sufficiently thick European *demos* exists. Building on Weiler's argument (1995), Europe lacks both objective elements (e.g. a common language, deeply rooted cultural norms, customs and habits, etc.) and socio-psychological components (e.g. a shared history and national mythologies sustained in banal ‘everyday’ discourses) which are necessary to foster a shared sense of belonging and loyalty to a community (Weiler, 1995). As my analysis demonstrates, the lack of a reified European *demos* seems to apply to the public sphere as well¹⁷⁰. If European politics continues to be framed in terms of the narrow national interest, we may reasonably expect decisions taken in Brussels to face the increased prospect of resistance from citizens as supranational decisions may sometimes (be perceived to) override the holy grail of national interests. Indeed, we are already witnessing signs of a popular backlash with Brexit a notable case in point. Only time will tell whether the lacuna between advancing political integration and plateauing social integration will be sustainable in the long run.

¹⁶⁵ These findings also support de Wilde's (2019) expectation that European politics functions according to an intergovernmental logic of national bargaining.

¹⁶⁶ The widening lacuna between ‘ever closer union’ (political integration) and discursive nationalism (social disintegration) increases the prospect of an unravelling of the project of EU integration. Brexit is a foreboding reminder that the prospect of political disintegration is real. We are already witnessing signs that other member states – particularly Hungary and Poland – are not willing to engage in burden sharing in general and shared migrant quotas in particular.

¹⁶⁷ In essence, federal-supranational modes of governance imply forgoing minority interests for majority ones (Weiler, 1995).

¹⁶⁸ Found in Leali (2022).

¹⁶⁹ For example, a German *Länder* (the minority) accepts the legitimacy of majority decisions ratified by the Bundestag (majority rule) because both political units are – or feel – part of the same nation. By contrast, as Weiler illustrates – with an albeit farfetched example – an *Anschluss* between Germany and Denmark would be a non-starter: representation in the Bundestag would be inconceivable for the Danes who would be condemned to permanent minority status given their small population, and their lack of German sense of belonging would incite them to challenge majority rule. As Weiler eloquently argues (1995), the crux of the matter is the lack of European *demos* which is a proximate issue to the lack of a genuine EPS.

¹⁷⁰ The nation, on the other hand, benefits from a common language, shared history, and common cultural habits which have had centuries to take root (Weiler, 1995). The nation, moreover, is comparatively more ethnoculturally homogeneous compared to the EU and benefits from the myth of common ethnic origin (Weiler, 1995:229). As a result, the nation instils more loyalty, people are more amenable to prosocial behaviour and authority is perceived as legitimate. This level of social capital is not available to the same extent for newer, larger political entities such as the EU.

If, as the adage goes, ‘words have consequences’, the findings of this study are a foreboding reminder for the EU that significant challenges remain. My results show that EU politics is still perceived as a zero-sum game of national bargaining and the “I’m all right Jack!” mentality continues to prevail over collective European endeavour. The palpable lack of common purpose poses a risk to proponents of ‘ever close union’ insofar as the attitudes and loyalties of citizens remain affixed to ‘the nation’. This is not problematic so long as national interests are not at odds with one another. However, when interests are perceived to be irreconcilable, or when the benefits or burdens of EU integration are asymmetrical or perceived as such, the spectre of EU disintegration beckons. Citizens are likely to perceive the EU as a passive and nonresponsive actor given the monopoly of claims-making by domestic actors. As Koopmans (2010) warns, these patterns of claims-making may undermine the legitimacy of the European Union. A word of caution, however. It would be wrong to overstate the effects of political communication on voter perceptions. Indeed, the findings of Slavtcheva-Petkova (2014) reveal a disconnect between banal identity representations in the media which were overwhelmingly national and the results of survey data which revealed that over half of respondents endorsed a European identity. These results suggest that identity may be more influenced by other contextual factors such as socialisation, travel opportunities, socioeconomic status, and educational background. These findings remind us to be cautious not to overemphasise the effects of the media on public opinion.¹⁷¹ There are, moreover, a myriad of communicative channels – be it online or offline via interpersonal contacts – which have the potential to prime citizens’ identities and perceptions. Citizens are also increasingly sceptical and cynical about politics today and we cannot rule out the possibility that political communication has a subdued effect on voter perceptions at best. There are, moreover, marked differences between patterns of discourse in Northern Europe, CEEC, and Southern Europe, which may provide another stress test for the EU’s social integration credentials. It seems that the ‘two-speed Europe’ metaphor may also be applied to the public spheres’ of Europe as well. Discourse, found in the German public sphere, seems most akin to Europeanised political communication, in stark contrast to the Italian and Polish public spheres. This increases the prospect that citizens from some countries will be more resistant to EU integration.

Almost 20 years ago, Peter concluded that the “EU coverage resembles a play that does without its inherent protagonists” (2003:82). On balance, this assessment still seems to ring true. Although the EU’s increasing publicity increases the prospect that the same issues are discussed at the same time, crucially, not all publicity is good publicity. The EU has become more visible, but not necessarily how it would like. The EU is predominantly made public as a topic, and target, rather than an active protagonist taking the centre stage in public debates. Moreover, worryingly, from the EU’s perspective, national interests and identities predominate. The EU’s peripheral role in public debates and the

predominance of national perspectives present several problems related to identity and democracy. Regarding the former, as numerous studies show, the public sphere is the locus of identity formation. However, the proliferation of national frames of interpretation is likely to militate against the development of a European identity. Concerning the latter, the cacophony of domestic ‘voices’ in public debates, and the corresponding lack of ‘voice’ afforded to EU-level actors, means that the former will continue to garner more legitimacy and thus publicity (and vice-versa). In terms of legitimacy, EU actors are on the back foot compared to the national actors. The ‘speakers’, ordinarily domestic actors, are able to define and frame the issues and portray political realities in a politically advantageous way. By contrast, those on the receiving end of claims-making, typically EU actors, are vulnerable to scapegoating and ‘blame-shifting’ from member states without a sufficient means to respond. Moreover, the EU’s increased publicity provides a discursive opportunity for adversaries of EU integration to mobilise on national identity via the discursive strategies of conflict framing and ‘othering’. The crucial question for European public sphere scholars is: are issues framed from a collective national or European perspective? The results of my analysis suggest that, as far as representative claims are concerned, the “withering away of the nation” (Hannerz, 1993) has not materialised, and political actors continue to see EU politics through the prism of the nation.

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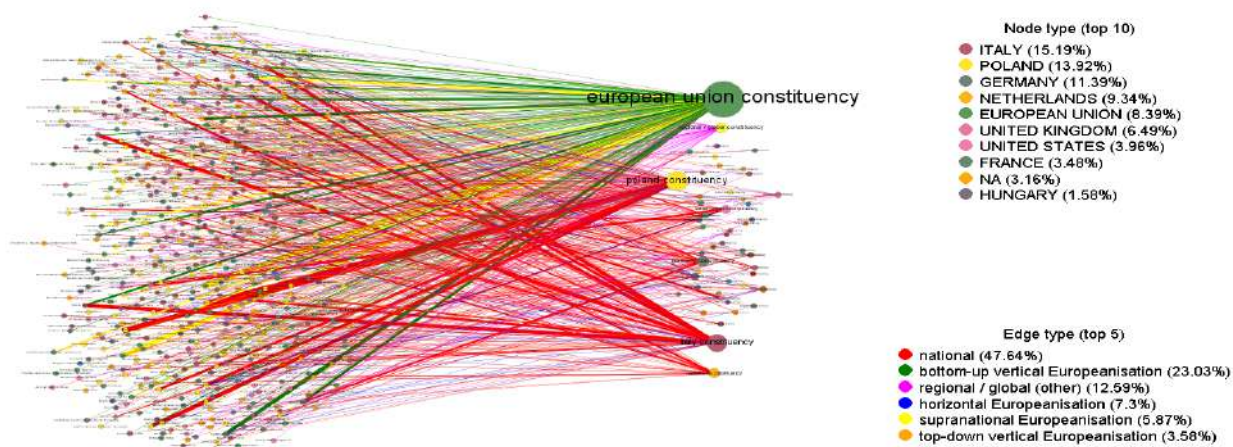
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Chapter 5 : Appendix A – Main figures and tables

Figure 5.1: Object scope (%) edges distribution (Two-mode network)

<i>Identity scope</i>	Network					
	Agg.	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean
<i>National</i>	47.64	42.21	50.93	47.85	52.08	48.26
<i>Horizontal Europeanisation</i>	7.3	7.54	3.11	4.91	9.06	6.16
<i>Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	23.03	23.12	24.84	25.77	17.74	22.88
<i>Top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	3.58	2.51	1.24	0.61	6.42	2.70
<i>Supranational Europeanisation</i>	5.87	10.55	8.7	9.82	4.91	8.50
<i>Regional / global</i>	12.59	14.07	11.18	11.04	9.81	11.53

Figure 5.2: Two-mode network visualisation of the “Euro net”¹



¹ The “Euronet” is aggregates data collected from the Italian, Dutch, German and Polish dataset.

Figure 5.3: Two-mode network visualisation of the Italian network

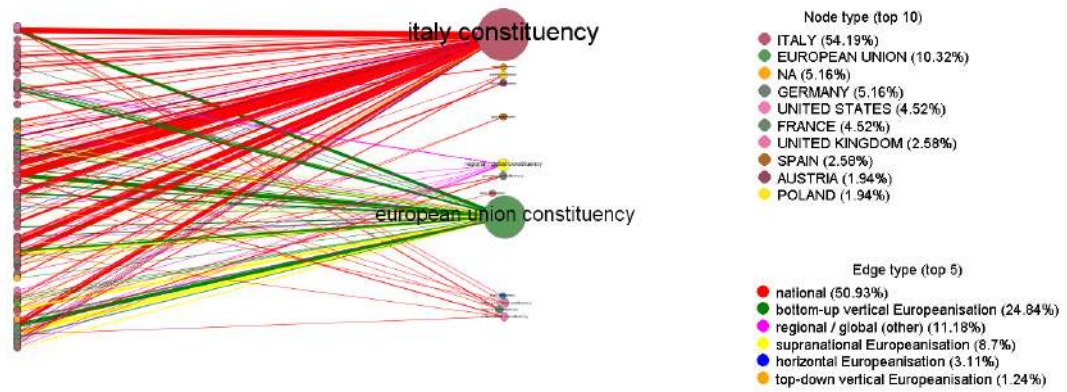


Figure 5.4: Two-mode network visualisation of the Dutch network

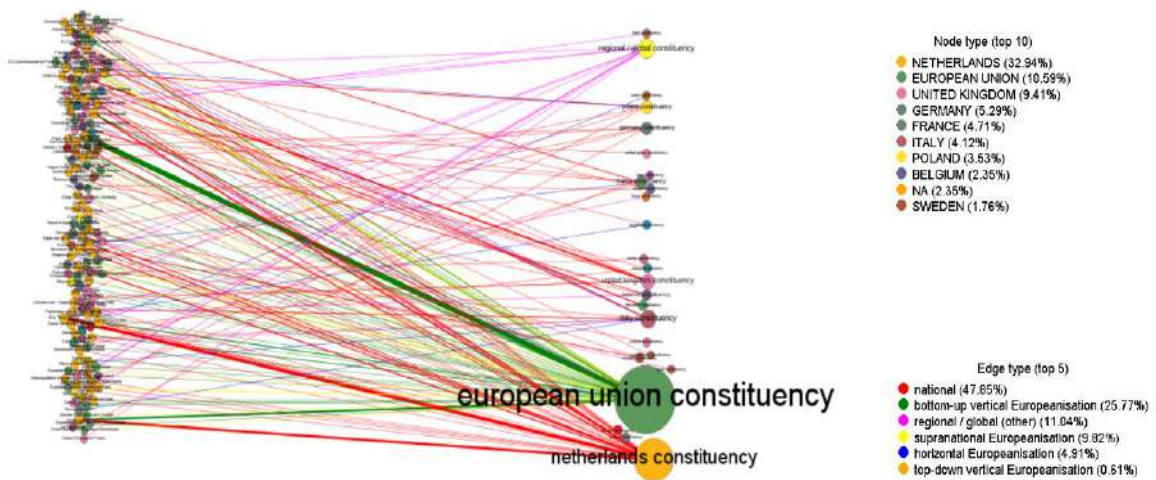


Figure 5.5: Two-mode network visualisation of the German network

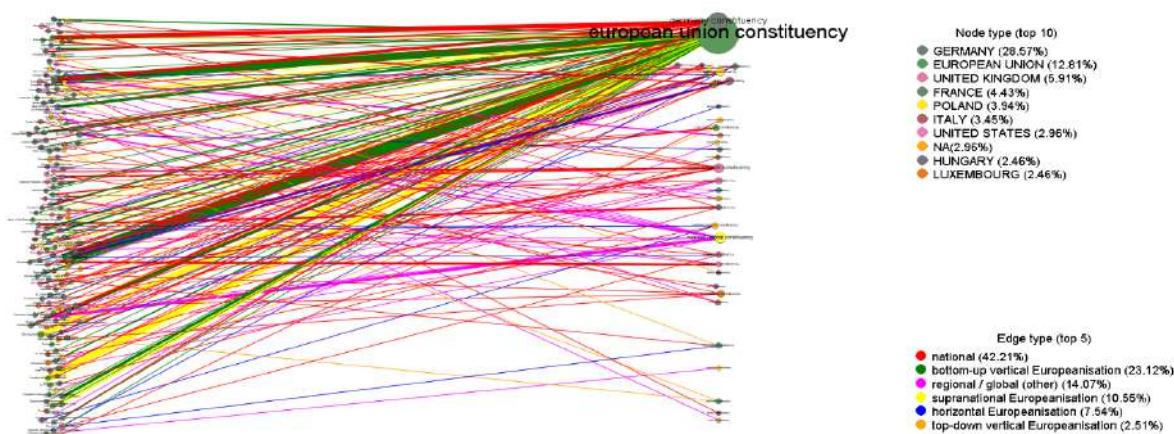


Figure 5.6: Two-mode network visualisation of the Polish network

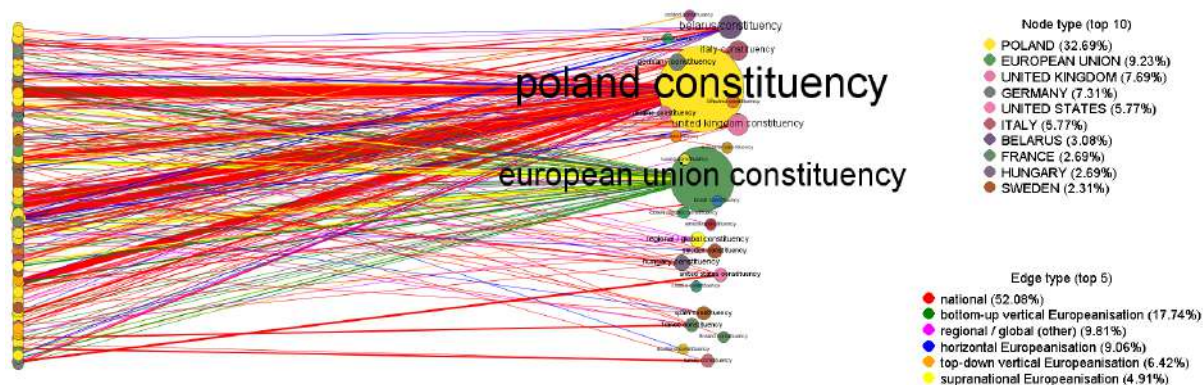


Table 5.1: Relative frequency of representative claims (%) according to discursive territorial scope (act2obj)

<i>Territorial scope</i>	<i>Country</i>					
	DE	IT	NL	PL		Mean
<i>national</i>	35.48	54.02	49.15	57.62		49.07
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	28.71	21.55	26.92	13.10		22.57
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	15.81	12.93	11.11	8.57		12.11
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	13.55	9.20	8.97	7.62		9.83
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	4.84	1.44	3.42	6.90		4.15
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	1.61	0.86	0.43	6.19		2.27

Table 5.2: Absolute frequency of representative claims according to discursive territorial scope

<i>Discursive scope</i>	Country					Mean	Σ
	DE	IT	NL	PL			
<i>national</i>	110	188	115	242	164	655	
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	89	75	63	55	71	282	
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	49	45	26	36	39	156	
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	42	32	21	32	32	127	
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	15	5	8	29	14	57	
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	5	3	1	26	9	35	
Σ	310	348	234	420	328	1312	

Figure 5.7: Bar plot of the relative frequency of representative claims according to discursive territorial scope

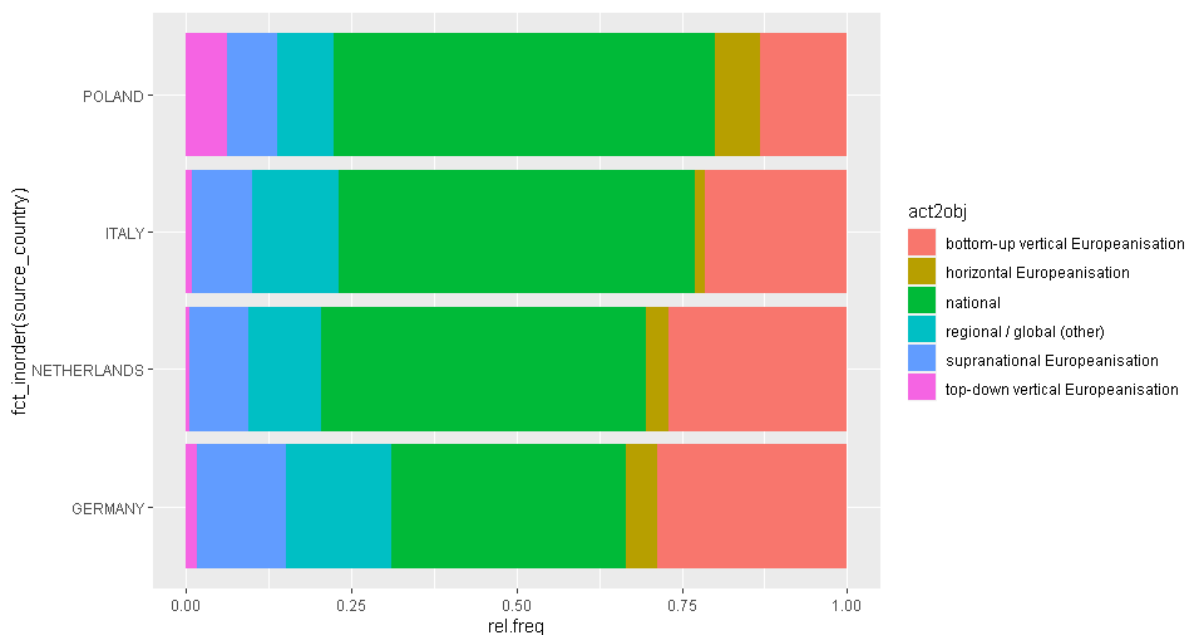


Figure 5.8: Boxplot to illustrate the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by source country

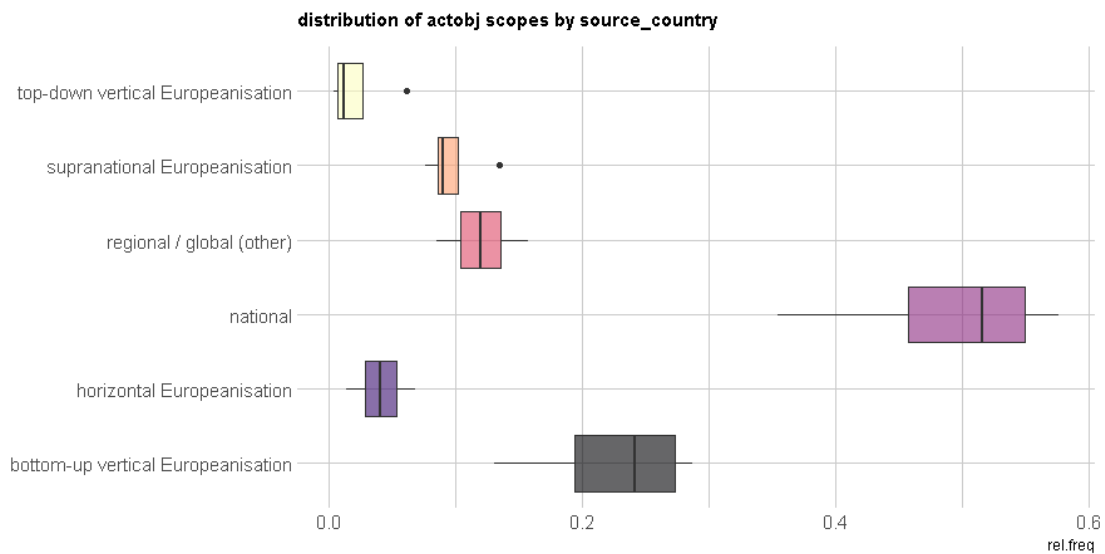


Figure 5.9: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by country

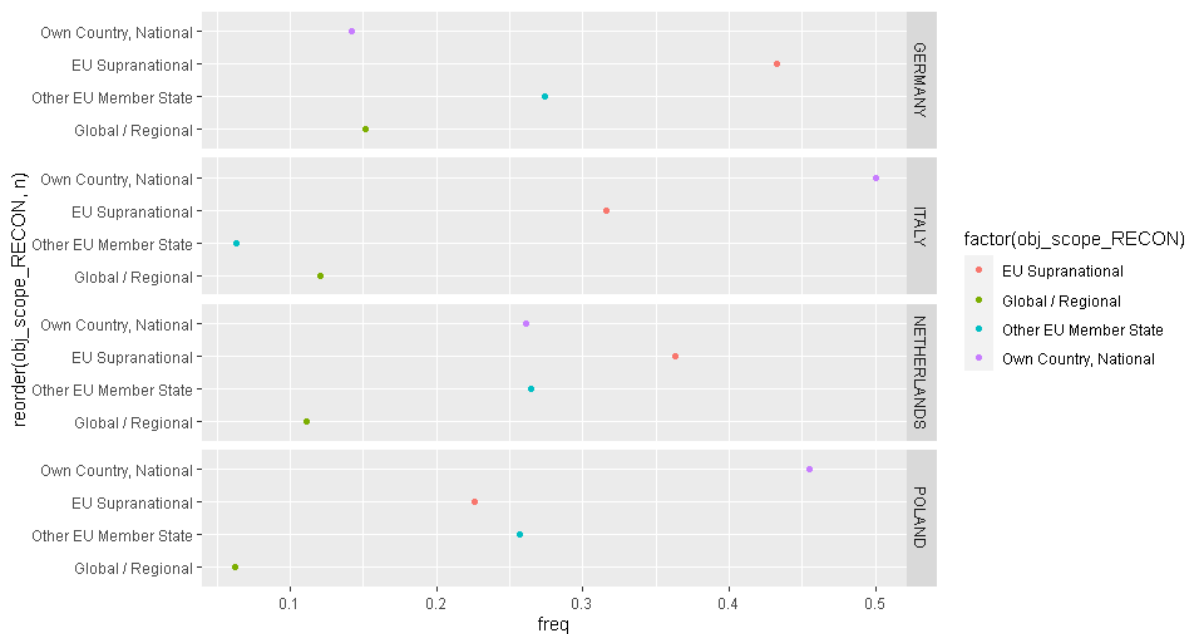


Table 5.3: Object scope relative frequency (%) by country

<i>Object scope</i>	<i>Country</i>	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean
<i>Own Country, National</i>		14	50	26	45	34
<i>EU Supranational</i>		43	32	36	23	34
<i>Other EU Member State</i>		27	6	26	26	21
<i>Global / Regional</i>		15	12	11	6	11

Table 5.4: Object scope absolute frequency by country

<i>Object scope</i>	<i>Country</i>	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean	Σ
<i>Own Country, National</i>		44	174	61	191	118	470
<i>EU Supranational</i>		134	110	85	95	106	424
<i>Other EU Member State</i>		85	22	62	108	69	277
<i>Global / Regional</i>		47	42	26	26	35	141
Σ		310	348	234	420	328	1312

Figure 5.10: Boxplot to illustrate the distribution of object scopes by newspaper format

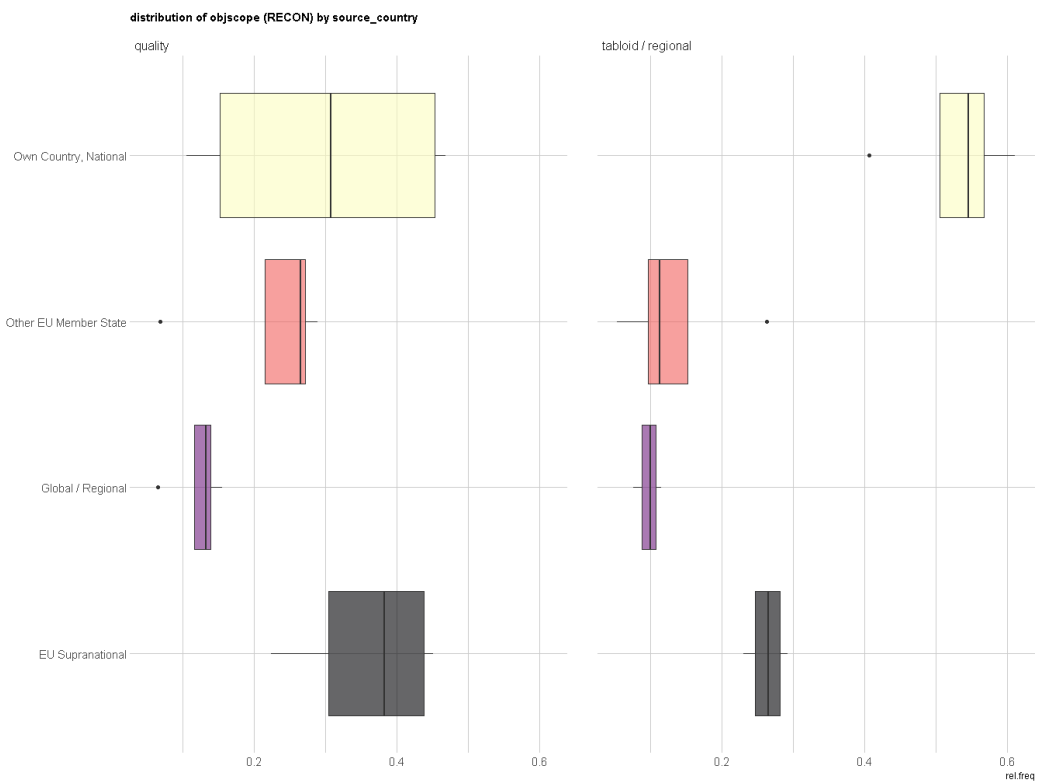


Figure 5.11: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of main objects by country

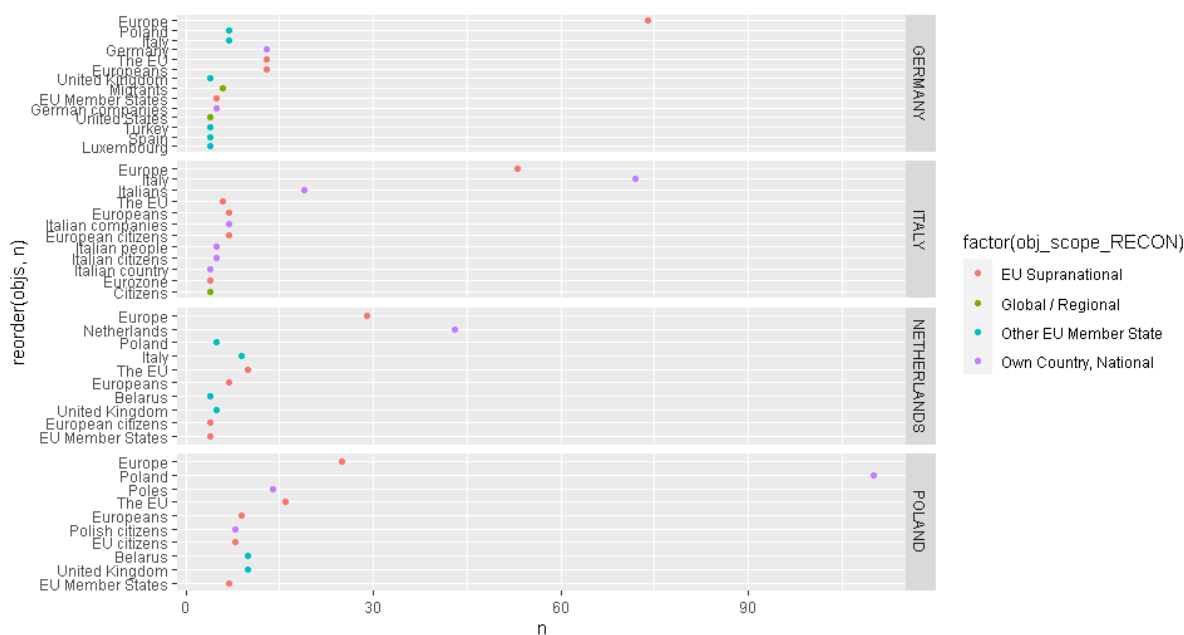


Table 5.5: Summary of the main objects of representative claims (Top 20)

DE	n	IT	n	NL	n	PL	n
Europe	74	Italy	73	Netherlands	43	Poland	110
Europeans	13	Europe	53	Europe	29	Europe	25
Germany	13	Italians	19	The EU	10	The EU	16
The EU	13	European citizens	7	Italy	9	Poles	14
Italy	7	Europeans	7	Europeans	7	Belarus	10
Poland	7	Italian companies	7	Poland	5	UK	10
Migrants	6	The EU	6	United Kingdom	5	Europeans	9
EU Member States	5	Italian citizens	5	Belarus	4	EU citizens	8
German companies	5	Italian people	5	EU Member States	4	Polish citizens	8
Luxembourg	4	Citizens	4	European citizens	4	EU Member States	7
Spain	4	EPP	4	Denmark	3	Polish people	6
Turkey	4	Eurozone	4	Eurozone	3	Women	6
United Kingdom	4	Italian country	4	Albania	2	Hungary	5
United States	4	EU citizens	3	British people	2	Turkey	5
European people	3	Forza Italia	3	Bulgaria	2	Belarusians	4
German people	3	Milan	3	Citizens	2	British people	4
Hungary	3	People	3	Dutch companies	2	France	4
Northern Ireland	3	Sicily	3	Dutch economy	2	Germany	4
The world	3	NA	3	Dutch fisherman	2	CEECs	3
Asylum seekers	2	African migrants	2	Dutch people	2	European citizens	3

Figure 5.12: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of main object nationalities by country

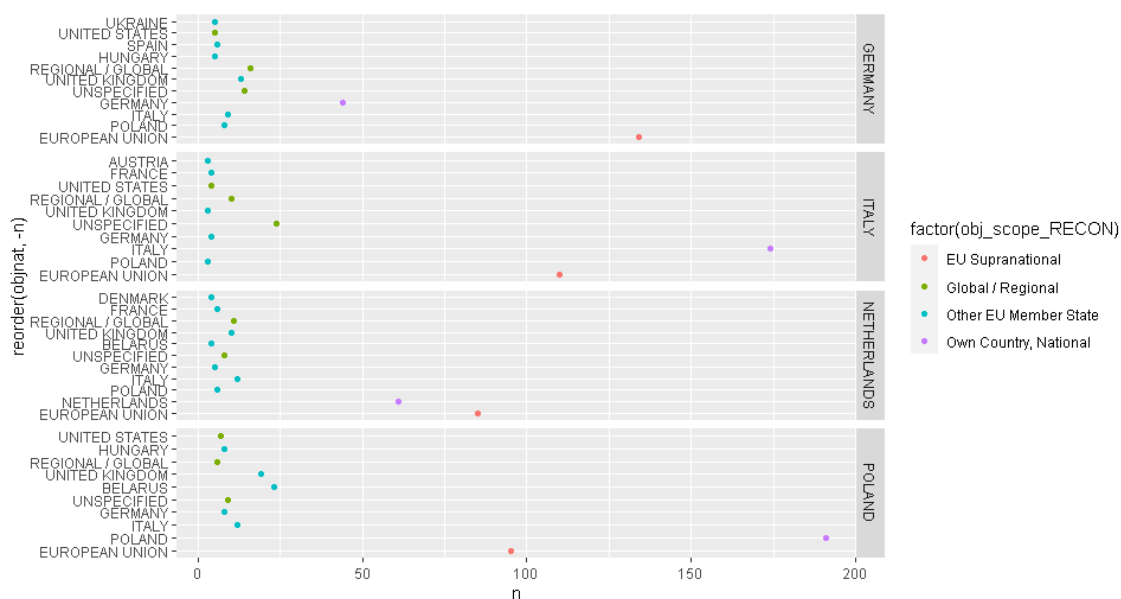


Table 5.6: Top 20 most prevalent object nationalities

DE	n	IT	n	NL	n	PL	n
European Union	134	Italy	174	European Union	85	Poland	191
Germany	44	European Union	110	Netherlands	61	European Union	95
Regional / Global	16	Unspecified	27	Italy	12	Belarus	23
Unspecified	16	Regional / Global	10	Regional / Global	11	United Kingdom	19
United Kingdom	13	France	4	United Kingdom	10	Italy	12
Italy	9	Germany	4	Unspecified	8	Unspecified	9
Poland	8	United States	4	France	6	Germany	8
Spain	6	Austria	3	Poland	6	Hungary	8
Hungary	5	Poland	3	Germany	5	United States	7
Ukraine	5	United Kingdom	3	Belarus	4	France	6

Figure 5.13: Dot plot illustrating the Top 20 most prevalent object nationalities

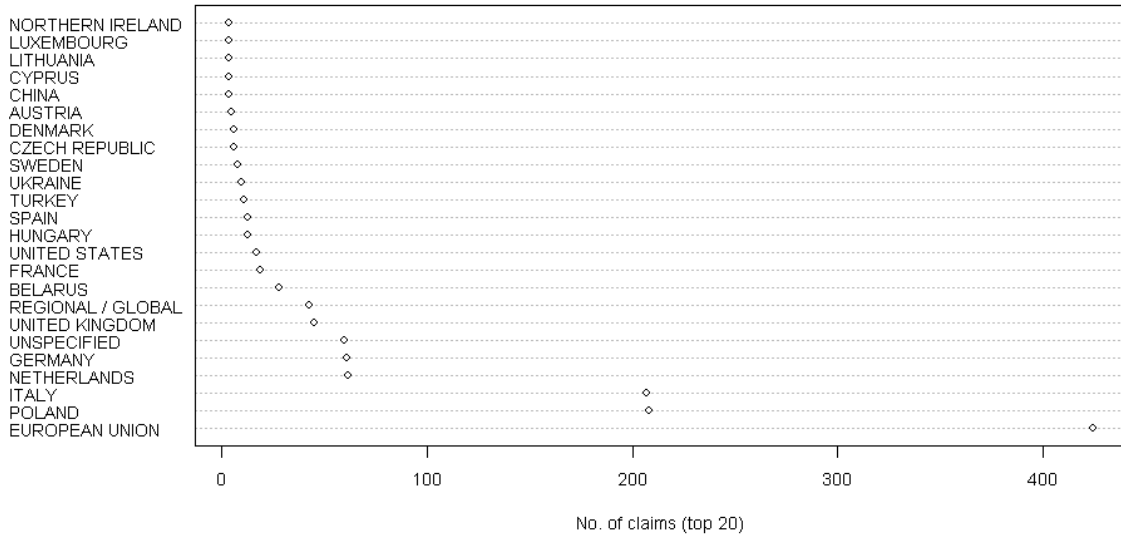


Figure 5.14: Dot plot illustrating the Top 20 most prevalent object nationalities

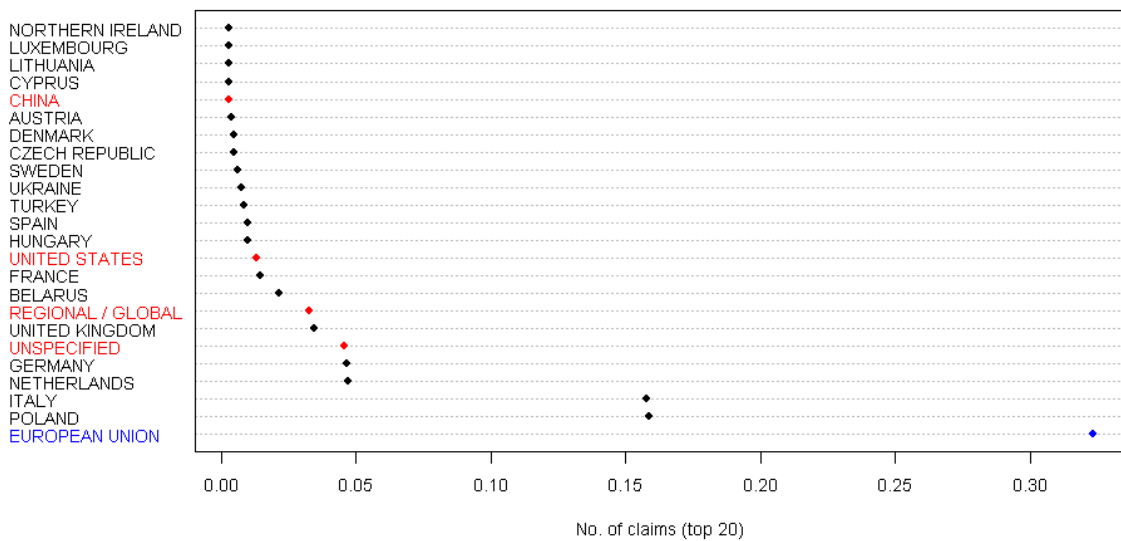


Figure 5.15: Dot plot of the Top 50 most prominent objects

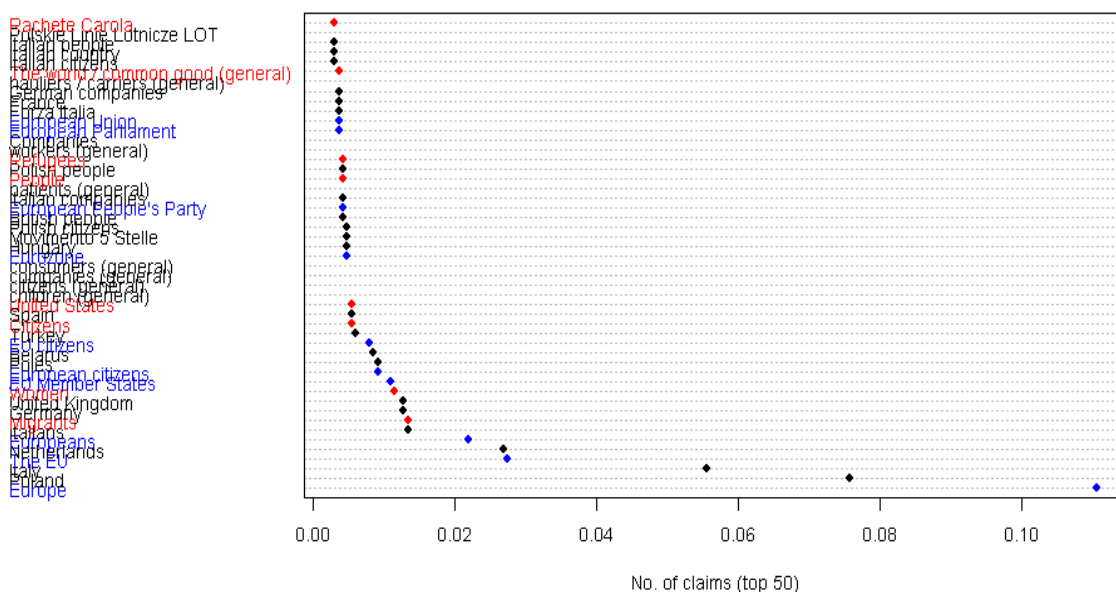


Table 5.7: Distribution of object types (%) according to country

	<i>Country</i>				Mean
	DE	IT	NL	PL	
<i>Polity</i>	58.14	48.51	64.19	55.45	55.82
<i>Citizens/Taxpayers</i>	16.94	20.54	14.41	21.07	18.76
<i>Other/NA</i>	9.63	6.25	8.30	7.26	7.74
<i>Business</i>	3.99	3.87	2.18	3.15	3.36
<i>Farmers/Industry</i>	2.99	1.79	4.80	1.45	2.50
<i>City/Region (Sub-national)</i>	1.33	9.23	0.87	3.63	4.07
<i>Organisation/Institution</i>	1.66	5.06	1.31	1.45	2.42
<i>Workers</i>	0.66	1.79	1.31	2.42	1.64
<i>Gender/LGBTQ</i>	0.66	0.00	0.44	3.39	1.33
<i>Migrants/Asylum seekers</i>	3.32	2.08	1.75	0.00	1.64
<i>Generational</i>	0.66	0.89	0.44	0.73	0.70

Table 5.8: Absolute frequency distribution of representative claims by object type

<i>Object type</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Polity</i>	721
<i>Citizens/Taxpayers</i>	242
<i>Other/NA</i>	111
<i>Business</i>	43

<i>Farmers/Industry</i>	32
<i>City/Region (Sub-national)</i>	45
<i>Organisation/Institution</i>	32
<i>Workers</i>	21
<i>Gender/LGBTQ</i>	17
<i>Migrants/Asylum seekers</i>	22
<i>Generational</i>	9
<i>Individual/Politician</i>	5
<i>Religious groups</i>	6
<i>Military</i>	3
<i>Law enforcement</i>	2
<i>Activists/Demonstrators</i>	2
<i>Banks</i>	1

Table 5.9: Absolute frequency distribution of representative claims by object type and country

	<i>Country</i>				
	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean
<i>Polity</i>	175	163	147	229	179
<i>Citizens/Taxpayers</i>	51	69	33	87	60
<i>Other/NA</i>	29	21	19	30	25
<i>Business</i>	12	13	5	13	11
<i>Farmers/Industry</i>	9	6	11	6	8
<i>City/Region (Sub-national)</i>	4	31	2	15	13
<i>Organisation/Institution</i>	5	17	3	6	8
<i>Workers</i>	2	6	3	10	5
<i>Gender/LGBTQ</i>	2	0	1	14	4
<i>Migrants/Asylum seekers</i>	10	7	4	0	5
<i>Generational</i>	2	3	1	3	2
Σ	301	336	229	413	320

Figure 5.16: Bar plot of relative frequency distribution of object types by period



Table 5.10: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50)

<i>Most prominent representative claimants (top 50)</i>							
DE	n	IT	n	NL	n	PL	n
Süddeutsche Zeitung	22	Partito Democratico	28	NRC Handelsblad	15	Platforma Obywatelska	25
German Government	18	Italian Government	23	Dutch vox pop	11	Gazeta Wyborcza	22
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	10	Forza Italia	16	De Telegraaf	10	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	20
European Commission	10	Corriere della Sera	14	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	6	Polish PM	18
President of the EU Commission	9	Presidente del Consiglio	14	Dutch PM	5	President of the EU Commission	11
Bild	7	Movimento 5 Stelle	12	Ministerie van Financiën	5	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	11
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	7	Legia Nord	11	British PM	4	European Commission	8
Bundesministerium des Innern	5	European Commission	7	Christen-Democratisch Appel	4	US President	6
Christlich Soziale Union	5	President of the EU Commission	7	President of the EU Commission	4	Vice-President of European Commission	6
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	4	French Government	6	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	3	minister sprawiedliwosci	5
Italian Government	4	President of the European Parliament	6	Partij voor de Vrijheid	3	Council of Europe	4
SeaWatch	4	ECB President	5	Presidente del Consiglio	3	EU Council	4
DGB	3	Fratelli d'Italia	5	Centraal Plan Bureau	2	EU High Representative	4
ECB President	3	La Nazione	5	Dansk Folkeparti	2	European People's Party	4
EU Commissioner for Competition	3	Presidente della repubblica	5	De Sociaal-Economische Raad	2	French Government	4
French Government	3	Italian vox pop	4	Democraten 66	2	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	3
Hungarian Government	3	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	4	ECB President	2	BYhelp	3
Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei	3	European People's Party	3	European Commission	2	Do Rzeczy	3
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	3	German Government	3	Financial Times	2	En Marche	3
Turkish Government	3	Ministero della Salute	3	French vox pop	2	Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów	3
UK Government	3	Ministero delle Finanze	3	German Government	2	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	3
US President	3	Ministero Esteri IT	3	InnoEnergy	2	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	3
Alternative für Deutschland	2	Ministero Finanza Italia	3	Legia Nord	2	President of Turkey	3
Augsburg University	2	Politecnico Milano University	3	Ministère de l'Europe	2	Auswärtiges Amt	2
Austrian PM	2	Presidente della Regione Siciliana	3	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	2	Brexit negotiator	2
British PM	2	University of Bologna	3	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	2	British PM	2
Bundesverfassungsgericht	2	University of Verona	3	President of Belarus	2	Commerzbank	2
Christlich Demokratische Union	2	Viminale- Ministero Interno	3	Socialdemokraterne	2	Die Welt	2
Czech PM	2	Banca d'Italia	2	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	2	European External Action Service	2
Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung	2	Bocconi University	2	Swedish vox pop	2	European Medicines Agency	2
DIHK	2	Confcommercio	2	UK Conservative Party	2	Fakt	2
EU Council	2	European Parliament	2	UK Labour Party	2	Fundacja Odpowiedzialna Polityka	2
European People's Party	2	Export USA	2	University of Amsterdam	2	Goethe-Institut	2
German vox pop	2	Ferrera Maurizio	2	University of Groningen	2	Hungarian Government	2
Legia Nord	2	Fondazione Il Faro	2	VisNed	2	Koalicja Obywatelska	2
Mayor of Freising	2	Gilet jaunes	2	Wageningen University	2	Koalicja Sojuszu Lewicy Demokratycznej i Unii P	2
Ministère de l'Économie	2	Hungarian Government	2	Al-Azhar Institute	1	Magyarország igazságügy	2
Ost-Ausschuss	2	Maltese Government	2	Amsterdam Court of Appeal	1	Ministero della Salute	2
Presidente del Consiglio	2	Ministry of Finance of Austria	2	Austrian hospitals	1	Ministerstwo Klimatu	2
Presidente del Gobierno	2	Monti Mario	2	Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	1	Ministerstwo Skarbu Państwa	2
UK Conservative Party	2	Piu Europa	2	Badr Organisation	1	Polish vox pop	2
Academic	1	Popolari per l'Italia	2	Bijkerk Rein	1	Polityka	2
Adler	1	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	2	Bionext	1	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe	2
AHK Beijing	1	Reichlin Lucrezia	2	Blackrock	1	President of Belarus	2
Airbus	1	Sace-Simest	2	Bové José	1	President of Brazil	2
Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	1	US Embassy in Italy	2	Bovenkerk Frank	1	RMF FM	2
Auswärtiges Amt	1	Vice-President of European Commission	2	Brexit Party	1	Rządowej Agencji Rezerw Strategicznych	2
Avenir Suisse	1	ABI	1	Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives	1	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	2
Bayerischer Ministerpräsident	1	Accademia della Pace	1	Bundestagspräsident	1	Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija	2
BDA	1	Agenzia delle dogane e dei Monopoli	1	Carbon Disclosure Project	1	UK Conservative Party	2

Table 5.11: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50 - Germany)

<i>DE actor</i>	<i>actor nationality</i>	<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	Germany	media and journalists	22
<i>German Government</i>	Germany	government/executive	18
<i>Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen</i>	Germany	political parties	10
<i>European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	10
<i>President of the EU Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	9
<i>Bild</i>	Germany	media and journalists	7
<i>Bundesminister des Auswärtigen</i>	Germany	government/executive	7
<i>Bundesministerium des Innern</i>	Germany	government/executive	5

<i>Christlich Soziale Union</i>	Germany	political parties	5
<i>Bundesverteidigungsministerium</i>	Germany	government/executive	4
<i>Italian Government</i>	Italy	government/executive	4
<i>SeaWatch</i>	Germany	solidarity and human rights organisations	4
<i>DGB</i>	Germany	unions and employees	3
<i>ECB President</i>	European Union	central banks	3
<i>EU Commissioner for Competition</i>	European Union	government/executive	3
<i>French Government</i>	France	government/executive	3
<i>Hungarian Government</i>	Hungary	government/executive	3
<i>Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei</i>	Germany	political parties	3
<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>	Germany	political parties	3
<i>Turkish Government</i>	Turkey	government/executive	3
<i>UK Government</i>	United Kingdom	government/executive	3
<i>US President</i>	United States	government/executive	3
<i>Alternative für Deutschland</i>	Germany	political parties	2
<i>Augsburg University</i>	Germany	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>Austrian PM</i>	Austria	government/executive	2
<i>British PM</i>	United Kingdom	government/executive	2
<i>Bundesverfassungsgericht</i>	Germany	judiciary	2
<i>Christlich Demokratische Union</i>	Germany	political parties	2
<i>Czech PM</i>	Czech Republic	government/executive	2
<i>Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung</i>	Germany	other scientific and research professionals and institutions	2
<i>DIHK</i>	Germany	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>EU Council</i>	European Union	government/executive	2
<i>European People's Party</i>	European Union	legislative	2
<i>German vox pop</i>	Germany	the general public	2
<i>Lega Nord</i>	Italy	political parties	2
<i>Mayor of Freising</i>	Germany	government/executive	2
<i>Ministère de l'Économie</i>	France	government/executive	2
<i>Ost-Ausschuss</i>	Germany	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>Presidente del Consiglio</i>	Italy	government/executive	2
<i>Presidente del Gobierno</i>	Spain	government/executive	2
<i>UK Conservative Party</i>	United Kingdom	political parties	2

<i>Academic</i>	Na	educational professionals and organisations	1
<i>Adler</i>	Germany	employers organisations and firms	1
<i>AHK Beijing</i>	Germany	employers organisations and firms	1
<i>Airbus</i>	France	employers organisations and firms	1
<i>Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag</i>	Germany	legislative	1
<i>Auswärtiges Amt</i>	Germany	government/executive	1
<i>Avenir Suisse</i>	Switzerland	other scientific and research professionals and institutions	1
<i>Bayerischer Ministerpräsident</i>	Germany	government/executive	1
<i>BDA</i>	Germany	unions and employees	1

Table 5.12: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50 - Italy)

	<i>IT actor nationality</i>	<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Partito Democratico</i>	Italy	political parties	28
<i>Italian Government</i>	Italy	government/executive	23
<i>Forza Italia</i>	Italy	politicians	16
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	Italy	media and journalists	14
<i>Presidente del Consiglio</i>	Italy	government/executive	14
<i>Movimento 5 Stelle</i>	Italy	political parties	12
<i>Lega Nord</i>	Italy	political parties	11
<i>European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	7
<i>President of the EU Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	7
<i>French Government</i>	France	government/executive	6
<i>President of the European Parliament</i>	European Union	legislative	6
<i>ECB President</i>	European Union	central banks	5
<i>Fratelli d'Italia</i>	Italy	political parties	5
<i>La Nazione</i>	Italy	media and journalists	5
<i>Presidente della repubblica</i>	Italy	government/executive	5
<i>Italian vox pop</i>	Italy	the general public	4
<i>Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia</i>	Italy	political parties	4
<i>European People's Party</i>	European Union	legislative	3
<i>German Government</i>	Germany	government/executive	3
<i>Ministero della Salute</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>Ministero delle Finanze</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>Ministero Esteri IT</i>	Italy	government/executive	3

<i>Ministero Finanza Italia</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>Politecnico Milano University</i>	Italy	educational professionals and organisations	3
<i>Presidente della Regione Siciliana</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>University of Bologna</i>	Italy	educational professionals and organisations	3
<i>University of Verona</i>	Italy	educational professionals and organisations	3
<i>Viminale- Ministero Interno</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>Banca d'Italia</i>	Italy	central banks	2
<i>Bocconi University</i>	Italy	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>Confcommercio</i>	Italy	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>European Parliament</i>	European Union	legislative	2
<i>Export USA</i>	United States	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>Ferrera Maurizio</i>	Italy	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>Fondazione Il Faro</i>	Italy	civil society organisations and groups	2
<i>Gilet jaunes</i>	France	activists and protestors	2
<i>Hungarian Government</i>	Hungary	government/executive	2
<i>Maltese Government</i>	Malta	government/executive	2
<i>Ministry of Finance of Austria</i>	Austria	government/executive	2
<i>Monti Mario</i>	Italy	former states(wo)men	2
<i>Piu Europa</i>	Italy	political parties	2
<i>Popolari per l'Italia</i>	Italy	political parties	2
<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc</i>	Poland	political parties	2
<i>Reichlin Lucrezia</i>	Italy	economists and financial experts	2
<i>Sace-Simest</i>	Italy	other state executive agencies	2
<i>US Embassy in Italy</i>	United States	government/executive	2
<i>Vice-President of European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	2
<i>ABI</i>	Italy	central banks	1
<i>Accademia della Pace</i>	Italy	solidarity and human rights organisations	1
<i>Agenzia delle dogane e dei Monopoli</i>	Italy	other state executive agencies	1

Table 5.13: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50 - Netherlands)

<i>NL actor</i>	<i>nationality</i>	<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	Netherlands	media and journalists	15
<i>Dutch vox pop</i>	Netherlands	the general public	11
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	Netherlands	media and journalists	10
<i>Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie</i>	Netherlands	political parties	6
<i>Dutch PM</i>	Netherlands	government/executive	5
<i>Ministerie van Financiën</i>	Netherlands	government/executive	5
<i>British PM</i>	United Kingdom	government/executive	4
<i>Christen-Democratisch Appel</i>	Netherlands	political parties	4
<i>President of the EU Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	4
<i>Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken</i>	Netherlands	government/executive	3
<i>Partij voor de Vrijheid</i>	Netherlands	political parties	3
<i>Presidente del Consiglio</i>	Italy	government/executive	3
<i>Centraal Plan Bureau</i>	Netherlands	other state executive agencies	2
<i>Dansk Folkeparti</i>	Denmark	political parties	2
<i>De Sociaal-Economische Raad</i>	Netherlands	other state executive agencies	2
<i>Democraten 66</i>	Netherlands	political parties	2
<i>ECB President</i>	European Union	central banks	2
<i>European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	2
<i>Financial Times</i>	United Kingdom	media and journalists	2
<i>French vox pop</i>	France	the general public	2
<i>German Government</i>	Germany	government/executive	2
<i>InnoEnergy</i>	Netherlands	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>Lega Nord</i>	Italy	political parties	2
<i>Ministère de l'Europe</i>	France	government/executive	2
<i>Ministerie van Volksgezondheid</i>	Netherlands	government/executive	2
<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i>	Poland	political parties	2
<i>President of Belarus</i>	Belarus	government/executive	2
<i>Socialdemokraterne</i>	Denmark	political parties	2
<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>	Germany	political parties	2

<i>Swedish vox pop</i>	Sweden	the general public	2
<i>UK Conservative Party</i>	United Kingdom	political parties	2
<i>UK Labour Party</i>	United Kingdom	legislative	2
<i>University of Amsterdam</i>	Netherlands	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>University of Groningen</i>	Netherlands	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>VisNed</i>	Netherlands	farmers and agricultural organisations	2
<i>Wageningen University</i>	Netherlands	educational professionals and organisations	2
<i>Al-Azhar Institute</i>	Egypt	educational professionals and organisations	1
<i>Amsterdam Court of Appeal</i>	Netherlands	judiciary	1
<i>Austrian hospitals</i>	Austria	other state executive agencies	1
<i>Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag</i>	Germany	legislative	1
<i>Badr Organisation</i>	Iraq	political parties	1
<i>Bijkerk Rein</i>	Netherlands	media and journalists	1
<i>Bionext</i>	Netherlands	farmers and agricultural organisations	1
<i>Blackrock</i>	United States	employers organisations and firms	1
<i>Bové José</i>	France	former states(wo)men	1
<i>Bovenkerk Frank</i>	Netherlands	educational professionals and organisations	1
<i>Brexit Party</i>	United Kingdom	political parties	1
<i>Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives</i>	Bulgaria	civil society organisations and groups	1
<i>Bundestagspräsident</i>	Germany	legislative	1
<i>Carbon Disclosure Project</i>	United Kingdom	environmental organisations and groups	1

Table 5.14: Most prominent representative claimants (Top 50 - Poland)

	<i>PL actor nationality</i>	<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Platforma Obywatelska</i>	Poland	political parties	25
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	Poland	media and journalists	22
<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc</i>	Poland	political parties	20
<i>Polish PM</i>	Poland	government/executive	18

<i>President of the EU Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	11
<i>Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej</i>	Poland	government/executive	11
<i>European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	8
<i>US President</i>	United States	government/executive	6
<i>Vice-President of European Commission</i>	European Union	government/executive	6
<i>minister sprawiedliwości</i>	Poland	government/executive	5
<i>Council of Europe</i>	European Union	government/executive	4
<i>EU Council</i>	European Union	government/executive	4
<i>EU High Representative</i>	European Union	government/executive	4
<i>European People's Party</i>	European Union	legislative	4
<i>French Government</i>	France	government/executive	4
<i>Bundesverteidigungsministerium</i>	Germany	government/executive	3
<i>BYhelp</i>	Belarus	solidarity and human rights organisations	3
<i>Do Rzeczy</i>	Poland	media and journalists	3
<i>En Marche</i>	France	political parties	3
<i>Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów</i>	Poland	government/executive	3
<i>Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych</i>	Poland	government/executive	3
<i>Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości</i>	Poland	government/executive	3
<i>President of Turkey</i>	Turkey	government/executive	3
<i>Auswärtiges Amt</i>	Germany	government/executive	2
<i>Brexit negotiator</i>	European Union	government/executive	2
<i>British PM</i>	United Kingdom	government/executive	2
<i>Commerzbank</i>	Germany	employers organisations and firms	2
<i>Die Welt</i>	Germany	media and journalists	2
<i>European External Action Service</i>	European Union	government/executive	2
<i>European Medicines Agency</i>	European Union	other state executive agencies	2
<i>Fakt</i>	Poland	media and journalists	2
<i>Fundacja Odpowiedzialna Polityka</i>	Poland	other scientific and research professionals and institutions	2
<i>Goethe-Institut</i>	Germany	other civil society organisations and groups	2
<i>Hungarian Government</i>	Hungary	government/executive	2
<i>Koalicja Obywatelska</i>	Poland	political parties	2

<i>Koalicja Sojuszu Lewicy Demokratycznej i Unii Pracy</i>	Poland	political parties	2
<i>Magyarország igazságügy</i>	Hungary	government/executive	2
<i>Ministero della Salute</i>	Italy	government/executive	2
<i>Ministerstwo Klimatu</i>	Poland	government/executive	2
<i>Ministerstwo Skarbu Państwa</i>	Poland	government/executive	2
<i>Polish vox pop</i>	Poland	the general public	2
<i>Polityka</i>	Poland	media and journalists	2
<i>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</i>	Poland	political parties	2
<i>President of Belarus</i>	Belarus	government/executive	2
<i>President of Brazil</i>	Brazil	government/executive	2
<i>RMF FM</i>	Poland	media and journalists	2
<i>Rządowej Agencji Rezerw Strategicznych</i>	Poland	government/executive	2
<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>	Germany	political parties	2
<i>Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija</i>	Lithuania	government/executive	2
<i>UK Conservative Party</i>	United Kingdom	political parties	2

Table 5.15: Distribution of representative claims according to claimant scope

<i>act scope RECON</i>	<i>n</i>	
<i>Own Country, National</i>	708	54%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	347	26%
<i>EU Supranational</i>	173	13%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	84	6%

Table 5.16: Distribution of claimant scopes by country

<i>act scope RECON</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	49	41	23	60
<i>Global / Regional</i>	22	18	12	32
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	92	45	81	129
<i>Own Country, National</i>	147	244	118	199

Table 5.17: Relative frequency distribution of claimant scopes by country

<i>act scope</i>	<i>RECON</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	16%	12%	10%	14%	
<i>Global / Regional</i>	7%	5%	5%	8%	
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	30%	13%	35%	31%	
<i>Own Country, National</i>	47%	70%	50%	47%	

Table 5.18: Distribution of representative claimants by actor type and country

<i>actor type</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>%</i>	Σ	μ	μ %
<i>government/executive</i>	132	42.58	130	37.36	66	28.21	173	41.19	501	125	37.33
<i>political parties</i>	45	14.52	71	20.40	38	16.24	73	17.38	227	57	17.13
<i>media and journalists</i>	37	11.94	25	7.18	37	15.81	57	13.57	156	39	12.13
<i>employers</i>	20	6.45	20	5.75	9	3.85	18	4.29	67	17	5.08
<i>organisations and firms</i>											
<i>educational</i>	10	3.23	16	4.60	13	5.56	12	2.86	51	13	4.06
<i>professionals and organisations</i>											
<i>legislative</i>	9	2.90	12	3.45	9	3.85	8	1.90	38	10	3.03
<i>other scientific and research</i>	4	1.29	6	1.72	10	4.27	15	3.57	35	9	2.71
<i>professionals and institutions</i>											
<i>the general public</i>	4	1.29	5	1.44	19	8.12	4	0.95	32	8	2.95
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	5	1.61	4	1.15	9	3.85	7	1.67	25	6	2.07
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	7	2.26	6	1.72	2	0.85	8	1.90	23	6	1.69
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	6	1.94	3	0.86	3	1.28	11	2.62	23	6	1.67
<i>politicians</i>	2	0.65	16	4.60	1	0.43	3	0.71	22	6	1.60
<i>central banks</i>	5	1.61	9	2.59	3	1.28	2	0.48	19	5	1.49
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	1	0.32	4	1.15	3	1.28	6	1.43	14	4	1.05
<i>judiciary</i>	5	1.61	1	0.29	2	0.85	5	1.19	13	3	0.99
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	3	0.97	2	0.57	0	0.00	4	0.95	9	2	0.62
<i>unions and employees</i>	5	1.61	1	0.29	2	0.85	1	0.24	9	2	0.75
<i>whole polities</i>	3	0.97	4	1.15	1	0.43	1	0.24	9	2	0.70
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0	0.00	1	0.29	2	0.85	5	1.19	8	2	0.58

<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	3	0.97	1	0.29	3	1.28	1	0.24	8	2	0.69
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	0	0.00	5	1.44	1	0.43	1	0.24	7	2	0.53
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	2	0.65	2	0.57	0	0.00	1	0.24	5	1	0.36
<i>military activists and protestors</i>	2	0.65	0	0.00	1	0.43	1	0.24	4	1	0.33
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0	0.00	2	0.57	0	0.00	1	0.24	3	1	0.20
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	0	0.00	1	0.29	0	0.00	1	0.24	2	1	0.13
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.24	1	0	0.06
	0	0.00	1	0.29	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0	0.07
Σ	310		348		234		420		1312		

Table 5.19: Absolute frequency distribution of representative claimants by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<i>government/executive</i>	132	130	66	173	125
<i>political parties</i>	45	71	38	73	57
<i>media and journalists</i>	37	25	37	57	39
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	20	20	9	18	17
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	10	16	13	12	13
<i>legislative</i>	9	12	9	8	10
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	4	6	10	15	9
<i>the general public</i>	4	5	19	4	8
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	5	4	9	7	6
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	7	6	2	8	6
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	6	3	3	11	6
<i>politicians</i>	2	16	1	3	6
<i>central banks</i>	5	9	3	2	5
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	1	4	3	6	4
<i>judiciary</i>	5	1	2	5	3
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	3	2	0	4	2
<i>unions and employees</i>	5	1	2	1	2

<i>whole polities</i>	3	4	1	1	2
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0	1	2	5	2
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	3	1	3	1	2
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	0	5	1	1	2
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	2	2	0	1	1
<i>military</i>	2	0	1	1	1
<i>activists and protestors</i>	0	2	0	1	1
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0	1	0	1	1
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	0	0	0	1	0
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	0	1	0	0	0

Table 5.20: Distribution of representative claimants by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>freq. (%)</i>
<i>government/executive</i>	501	38.19
<i>political parties</i>	227	17.30
<i>media and journalists</i>	156	11.89
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	67	5.11
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	51	3.89
<i>legislative</i>	38	2.90
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	35	2.67
<i>the general public</i>	32	2.44
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	25	1.91
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	23	1.75
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	23	1.75
<i>politicians</i>	22	1.68
<i>central banks</i>	19	1.45
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	14	1.07
<i>judiciary</i>	13	0.99
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	9	0.69
<i>unions and employees</i>	9	0.69
<i>whole polities</i>	9	0.69
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	8	0.61
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	8	0.61
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	7	0.53
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	5	0.38
<i>military</i>	4	0.30
<i>activists and protestors</i>	3	0.23
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	2	0.15
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	1	0.08

students, pupils, and their parents | 1 0.08

Table 5.21: Relative frequency distribution of claimant types according to discursive territorial scopes

act type	bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	horizontal Europeanisation	national	regional / global (other)	supranational Europeanisation	top-down vertical Europeanisation	μ
government/executive	30%	32%	37%	28%	69%	74%	45%
political parties	17%	9%	23%	12%	2%	3%	11%
media and journalists	18%	35%	11%	6%	1%	3%	12%
employers organisations and firms	8%	0%	5%	7%	0%	0%	3%
the general public	3%	0%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%
other scientific and research professionals and institutions	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%	0%	2%
educational professionals and organisations	8%	2%	3%	6%	0%	0%	3%
other state executive agencies	0%	5%	2%	0%	4%	3%	2%
politicians	1%	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%	1%
legislative	2%	0%	1%	5%	9%	6%	4%
former states(women)	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
solidarity and human rights organisations	0%	0%	1%	9%	0%	0%	2%
economists and financial experts	3%	4%	1%	3%	0%	0%	2%
farmers and agricultural organisations	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
judiciary	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	6%	2%
central banks	0%	0%	1%	1%	9%	0%	2%
civil society organisations and groups	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
unions and employees	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%
activists and protestors	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
environmental organisations and groups	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	3%	1%
other civil society organisations and groups	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%
whole politics	0%	5%	0%	1%	2%	0%	2%
churches and religious organisations and groups	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
military	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
other professional organisations and groups	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
police and internal security agencies	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
students, pupils, and their parents	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Table 5.22: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by claimant type

act type	bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	horizontal Europeanisation	national	regional / global (other)	supranational Europeanisation	top-down vertical Europeanisation	μ
activists and protestors	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
central banks	5%	0%	21%	11%	63%	0%	0%
churches and religious organisations and groups	20%	0%	20%	60%	0%	0%	0%
civil society organisations and groups	29%	0%	57%	14%	0%	0%	0%
economists and financial experts	39%	9%	30%	22%	0%	0%	0%
educational professionals and organisations	45%	2%	35%	18%	0%	0%	0%
employers organisations and firms	34%	0%	49%	16%	0%	0%	0%
environmental organisations and groups	13%	13%	25%	38%	0%	13%	0%
farmers and agricultural organisations	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
former states(women)	21%	7%	64%	7%	0%	0%	0%
government/executive	17%	4%	48%	9%	18%	5%	0%
judiciary	23%	0%	38%	15%	8%	15%	0%
legislative	18%	0%	24%	21%	32%	5%	0%
media and journalists	33%	13%	47%	6%	1%	1%	0%
military	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
other civil society organisations and groups	22%	0%	22%	44%	11%	0%	0%
other professional organisations and groups	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
other scientific and research professionals and institutions	23%	6%	54%	11%	6%	0%	0%
other state executive agencies	4%	12%	60%	0%	20%	4%	0%
police and internal security agencies	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
political parties	21%	2%	67%	8%	1%	0%	0%
politicians	14%	0%	68%	18%	0%	0%	0%
solidarity and human rights organisations	4%	0%	35%	61%	0%	0%	0%
students, pupils, and their parents	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
the general public	25%	0%	69%	6%	0%	0%	0%
unions and employees	33%	0%	33%	22%	0%	11%	0%
whole politics	0%	33%	11%	22%	33%	0%	0%
μ	16%	7%	42%	25%	7%	2%	0%

Figure 5.17: Barplot of the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by claimant type

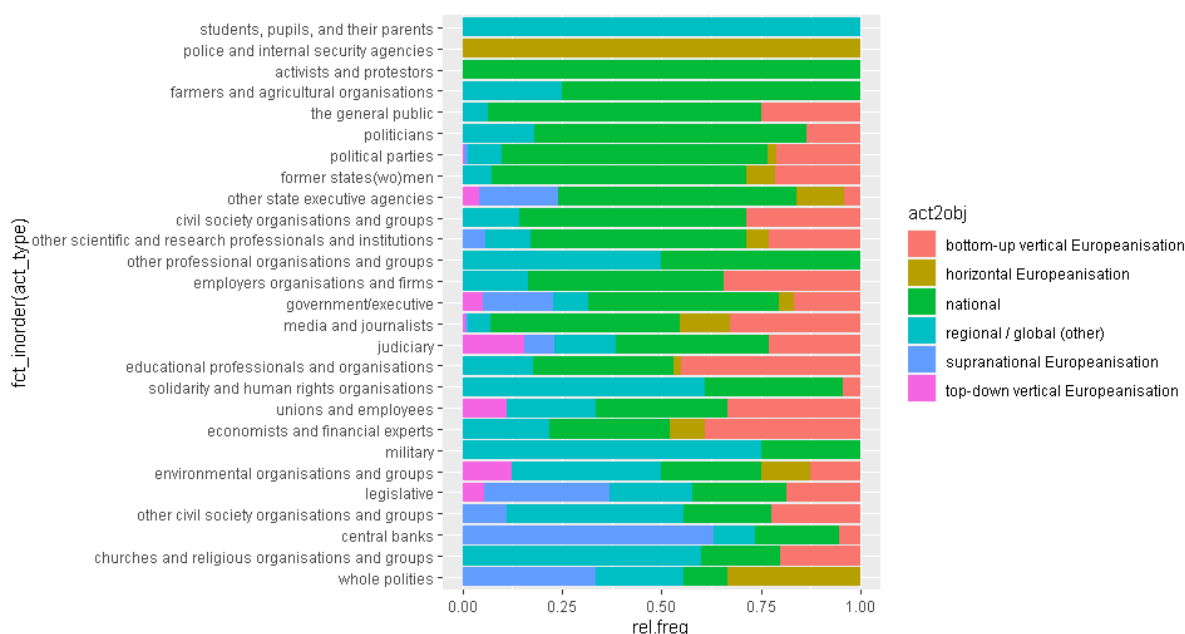


Table 5.23: Distribution of “bottom-up Europeanisation” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	n	rel.freq (%)
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	23	45
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	9	39
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	23	34
<i>unions and employees</i>	3	33
<i>media and journalists</i>	51	33
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	2	29
<i>the general public</i>	8	25
<i>judiciary</i>	3	23
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	8	23
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	2	22
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	3	21
<i>political parties</i>	48	21
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	1	20
<i>legislative</i>	7	18
<i>government/executive</i>	84	17
<i>politicians</i>	3	14
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	1	13
<i>central banks</i>	1	5
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	1	4
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	1	4
Σ = 282		μ = 22

Table 5.24: Distribution of “horizontal Europeanisation” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	1	100%
<i>whole polities</i>	3	33%
<i>media and journalists</i>	20	13%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	1	13%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	3	12%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	2	9%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	1	7%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	2	6%
<i>government/executive</i>	18	4%
<i>political parties</i>	5	2%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	1	2%
$\Sigma = 57$		$\mu = 18\%$

Table 5.25: Distribution of “national” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>activists and protestors</i>	3	100.00%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	6	75.00%
<i>the general public</i>	22	68.75%
<i>politicians</i>	15	68.18%
<i>political parties</i>	152	66.96%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	9	64.29%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	15	60.00%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	4	57.14%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	19	54.29%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	1	50.00%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	33	49.25%
<i>government/executive</i>	241	48.10%
<i>media and journalists</i>	74	47.44%
<i>judiciary</i>	5	38.46%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	18	35.29%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	8	34.78%
<i>unions and employees</i>	3	33.33%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	7	30.43%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	2	25.00%
<i>military</i>	1	25.00%
<i>legislative</i>	9	23.68%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	2	22.22%
<i>central banks</i>	4	21.05%

<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	1	20.00%
<i>whole polities</i>	1	11.11%
	Σ = 655	μ = 45.19

Table 5.26: Distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	1	100.00%
<i>military</i>	3	75.00%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	14	60.87%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	3	60.00%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	1	50.00%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	4	44.44%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	3	37.50%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	2	25.00%
<i>unions and employees</i>	2	22.22%
<i>whole polities</i>	2	22.22%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	5	21.74%
<i>legislative</i>	8	21.05%
<i>politicians</i>	4	18.18%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	9	17.65%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	11	16.42%
<i>judiciary</i>	2	15.38%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	14.29%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	4	11.43%
<i>central banks</i>	2	10.53%
<i>government/executive</i>	44	8.78%
<i>political parties</i>	19	8.37%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	1	7.14%
<i>the general public</i>	2	6.25%
<i>media and journalists</i>	9	5.77%
	Σ = 156	μ = 28.34

Table 5.27: Distribution of “supranational Europeanisation” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>central banks</i>	12	63.16%
<i>whole polities</i>	3	33.33%
<i>legislative</i>	12	31.58%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	5	20.00%
<i>government/executive</i>	88	17.56%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	11.11%
<i>judiciary</i>	1	7.69%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	2	5.71%
<i>political parties</i>	2	0.88%

<i>media and journalists</i>	1	0.64%
Σ = 127	μ = 19.17	

Table 5.28: Distribution of “top-down vertical Europeanisation” representative claims by actor type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>judiciary</i>	2	15.38%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	1	12.50%
<i>unions and employees</i>	1	11.11%
<i>legislative</i>	2	5.26%
<i>government/executive</i>	26	5.19%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	1	4.00%
<i>media and journalists</i>	1	0.64%
<i>political parties</i>	1	0.44%
Σ = 35	μ = 6.82	

Table 5.29: Absolute frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes according to claimant type

<i>actor type</i>	<i>discursive scope</i>						<i>Σ</i>	<i>μ</i>
	<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	<i>national</i>	<i>regional / global</i>	<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>		
government/executive	84	18	241	44	88	26	501	84
political parties	48	5	152	19	2	1	227	38
media and journalists	51	20	74	9	1	1	156	26
employers organisations and firms	23	0	33	11	0	0	67	11
the general public	8	0	22	2	0	0	32	5
other scientific and research professionals and institution	8	2	19	4	2	0	35	6
educational professionals and organisations	23	1	18	9	0	0	51	9
other state executive agencies	1	3	15	0	5	1	25	4
politicians	3	0	15	4	0	0	22	4
former states(wo)men	3	1	9	1	0	0	14	2
legislative	7	0	9	8	12	2	38	6
solidarity and human rights organisations	1	0	8	14	0	0	23	4
economists and financial experts	9	2	7	5	0	0	23	4
farmers and agricultural organisations	0	0	6	2	0	0	8	1
judiciary	3	0	5	2	1	2	13	2
central banks	1	0	4	2	12	0	19	3
civil society organisations and groups	2	0	4	1	0	0	7	1
activists and protestors	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	1
unions and employees	3	0	3	2	0	1	9	2
environmental organisations and groups	1	1	2	3	0	1	8	1
other civil society organisations and groups	2	0	2	4	1	0	9	2
churches and religious organisations and groups	1	0	1	3	0	0	5	1
military	0	0	1	3	0	0	4	1
other professional organisations and groups	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0
whole politics	0	3	1	2	3	0	9	2
police and internal security agencies	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
students, pupils, and their parents	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Σ	282	57	655	156	127	35	1312	219
μ	10	2	24	6	5	1	49	8

Figure 5.18: Boxplot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by actor type

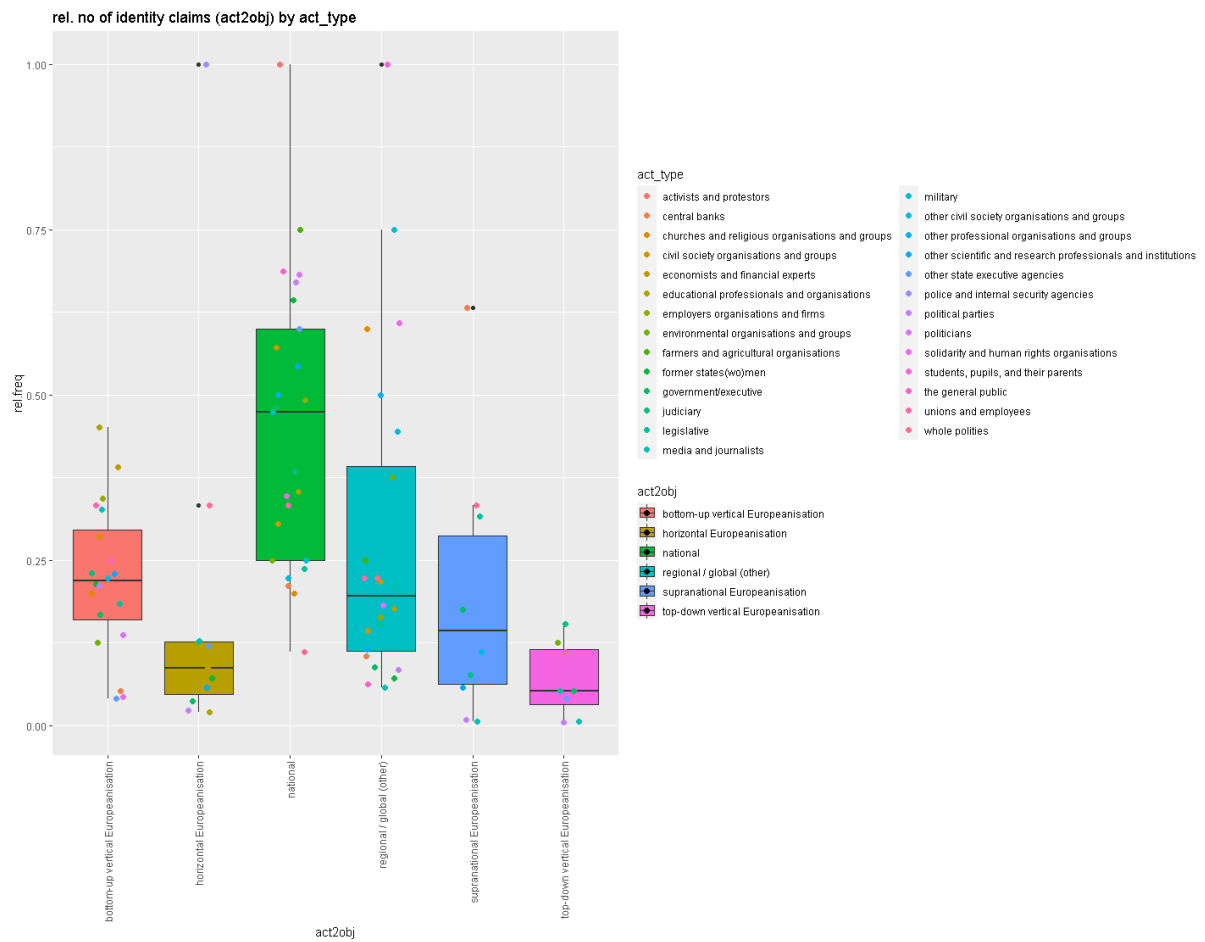


Figure 5.19: Boxplot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by actor type and country

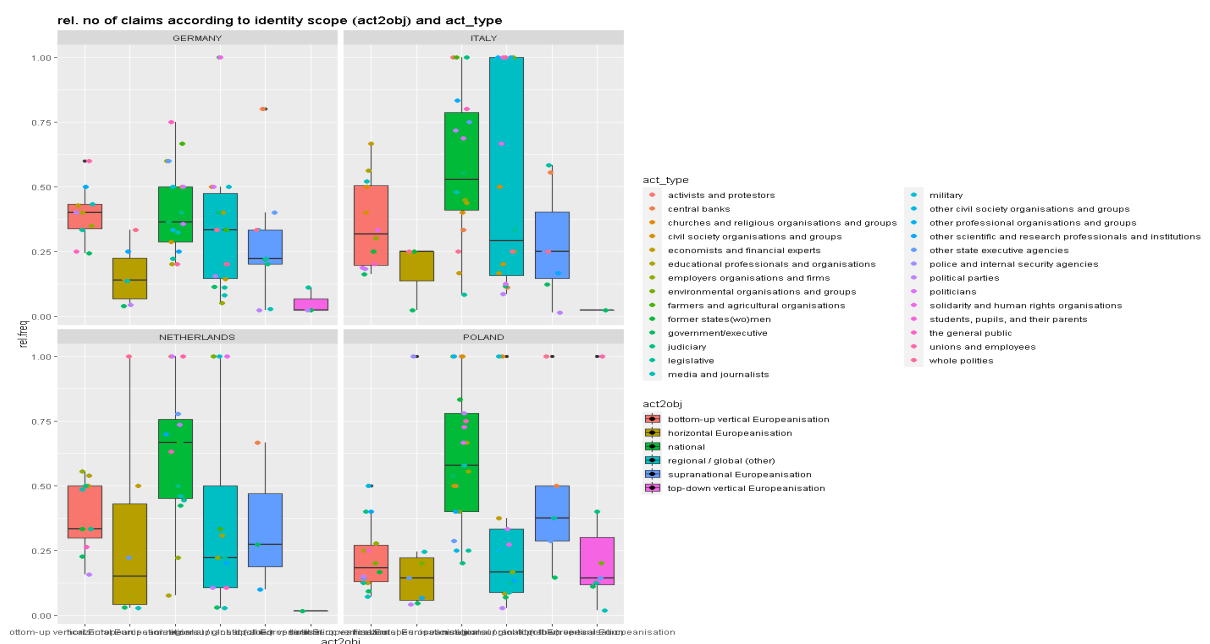


Table 5.30: Distribution of representative claims by party family

<i>parfam</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>NA</i>	689	52.5%
<i>socialist</i>	144	11.0%
<i>radical TAN</i>	136	10.4%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	102	7.8%
<i>conservative</i>	91	6.9%
<i>liberal</i>	63	4.8%
<i>no family</i>	53	4.0%
<i>green</i>	18	1.4%
<i>regionalist</i>	8	0.6%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	4	0.3%
<i>radical left</i>	4	0.3%
Σ	1312	
μ	119	

Table 5.31: Distribution of representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	Σ	μ
<i>NA</i>	169	150	141	229	689	172
<i>socialist</i>	24	85	13	22	144	36
<i>radical TAN</i>	16	15	16	89	136	34
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	45	10	17	30	102	26
<i>conservative</i>	16	37	14	24	91	23
<i>liberal</i>	15	9	26	13	63	16
<i>no family</i>	4	39	4	6	53	13
<i>green</i>	15	NA	2	1	18	6
<i>agrarian/center</i>	NA	NA	NA	4	4	4
<i>regionalist</i>	4	3	NA	1	8	3
<i>radical left</i>	2	NA	1	1	4	1
Σ	310	348	234	420		
μ	31	44	26	38		

Table 5.32: Distribution of representative claims (%) by country across party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>radical TAN</i>	12%	11%	12%	65%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	0%	0%	0%	100%
<i>conservative</i>	18%	41%	15%	26%
<i>liberal</i>	24%	14%	41%	21%

<i>Christian-democratic</i>	44%	10%	17%	29%
<i>socialist</i>	17%	59%	9%	15%
<i>radical left</i>	50%	0%	25%	25%
<i>green</i>	83%	0%	11%	6%
<i>regionalist</i>	50%	38%	0%	13%
<i>no family</i>	8%	74%	8%	11%
<i>NA</i>	25%	22%	20%	33%

Table 5.33: Distribution of representative claims (%) by party family

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	54.5%	43.1%	60.3%	54.5%	53.1%
<i>socialist</i>	7.7%	24.4%	5.6%	5.2%	10.7%
<i>radical TAN</i>	5.2%	4.3%	6.8%	21.2%	9.4%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	14.5%	2.9%	7.3%	7.1%	7.9%
<i>conservative</i>	5.2%	10.6%	6.0%	5.7%	6.9%
<i>liberal</i>	4.8%	2.6%	11.1%	3.1%	5.4%
<i>no family</i>	1.3%	11.2%	1.7%	1.4%	3.9%
<i>green</i>	4.8%	0.0%	0.9%	0.2%	1.5%
<i>regionalist</i>	1.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.2%	0.6%
<i>radical left</i>	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.2%

Figure 5.20: Barplot of absolute frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

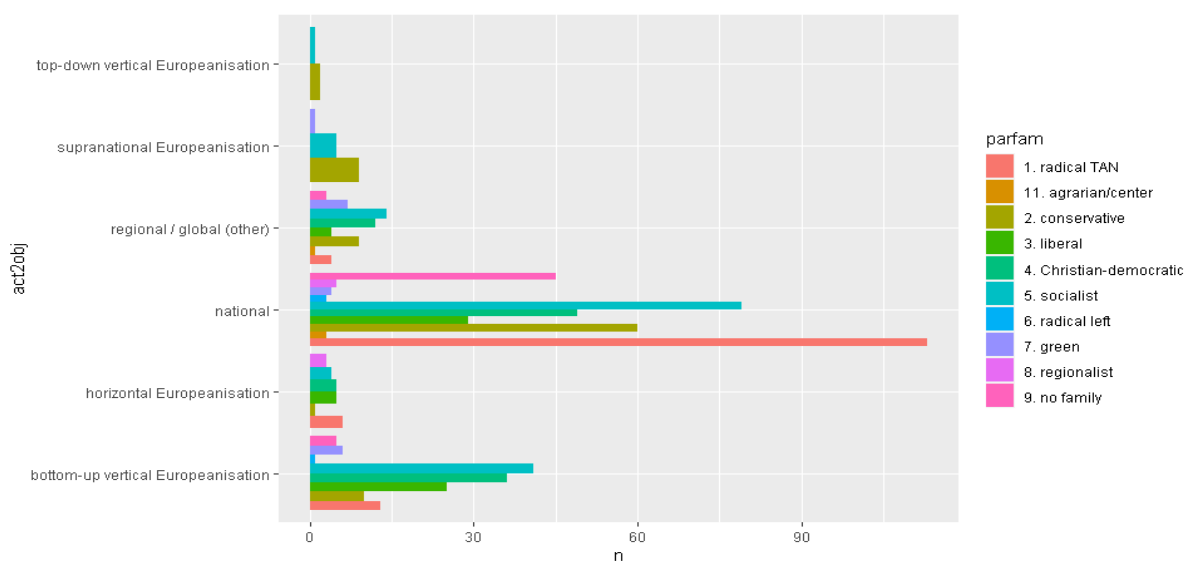


Figure 5.21: Barplot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

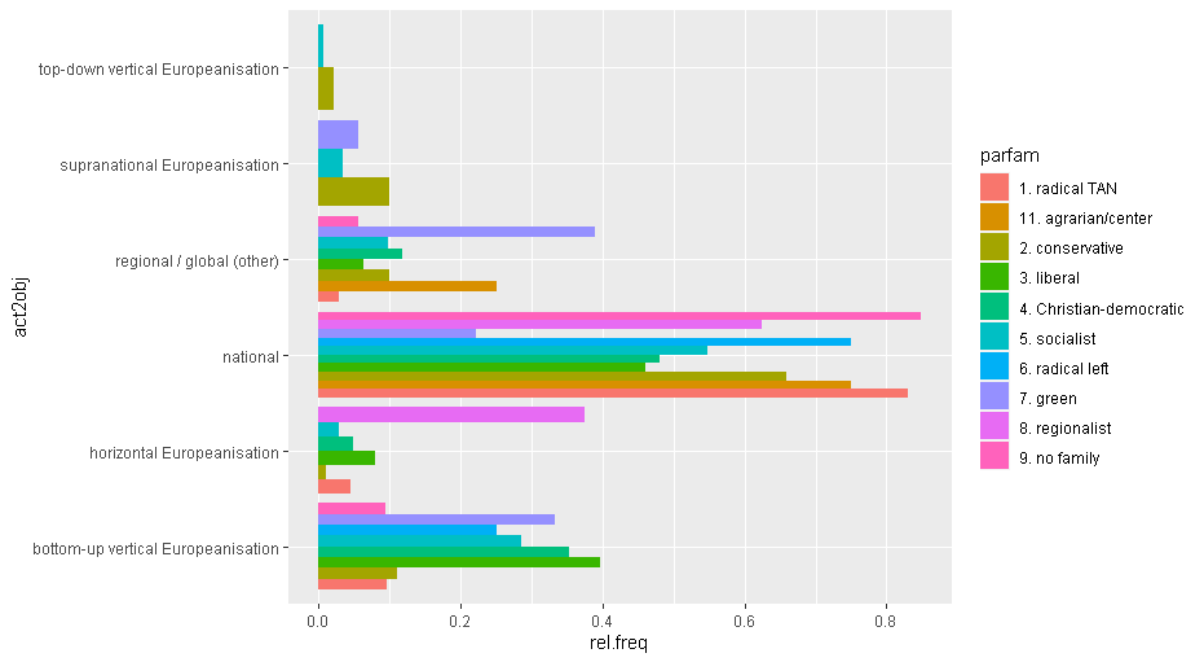


Figure 5.22: Barplot of relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes (act2obj) by party family

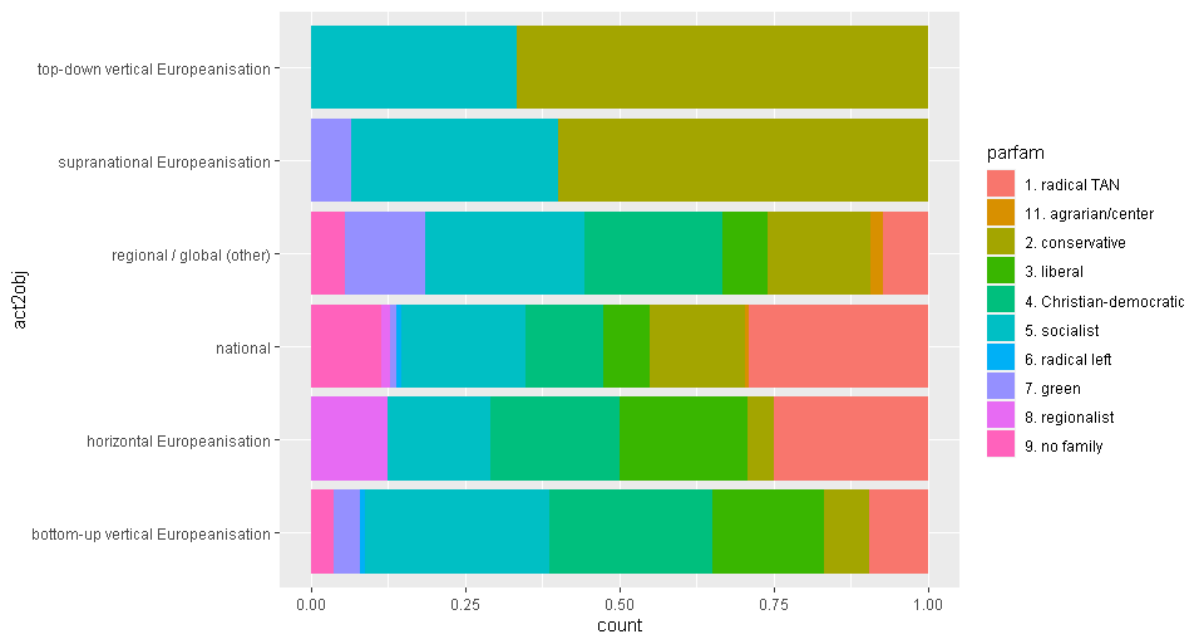


Table 5.34: Distribution of representative claims by party family according to discursive territorial scope

parfam	bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	%	horizontal Europeanisation	%	national	%	regional / global (other)	%	supranational Europeanisation	%	top-down vertical Europeanisation	%	Σ	μ	μ (%)
NA	145	51.4%	33	57.9%	265	40.5%	102	65.4%	112	88.2%	32	91.4%	689	115	65.8%
radical TAN	13	4.6%	6	10.5%	113	17.3%	4	2.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	136	23	5.8%
socialist	41	14.5%	4	7.0%	79	12.1%	14	9.0%	5	3.9%	1	2.9%	144	24	8.2%
conservative	10	3.5%	1	1.8%	60	9.2%	9	5.8%	9	7.1%	2	5.7%	91	15	5.5%
Christian-democratic	36	12.8%	5	8.8%	49	7.5%	12	7.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	102	17	6.1%
no family	5	1.8%	0	0.0%	45	6.9%	3	1.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	53	9	1.8%
liberal	25	8.9%	5	8.8%	29	4.4%	4	2.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	63	11	4.1%
regionalist	0	0.0%	3	5.3%	5	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	1	1.0%
green	6	2.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.6%	7	4.5%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	18	3	1.3%
agrarian/center	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.5%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	1	0.2%
radical left	1	0.4%	0	0.0%	3	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	1	0.1%
Σ	282		57		655		156		127		35				
μ	26		5		60		14		12		3				

Table 5.35: Distribution of discursive territorial scopes by party family

parfam	bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	horizontal Europeanisation	national	regional / global (other)	supranational Europeanisation	top-down vertical Europeanisation
no family	9.4%	0.0%	84.9%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%
radical TAN	9.6%	4.4%	83.1%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%
agrarian/center	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
radical left	25.0%	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
conservative	11.0%	1.1%	65.9%	9.9%	9.9%	2.2%
regionalist	0.0%	37.5%	62.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
socialist	28.5%	2.8%	54.9%	9.7%	3.5%	0.7%
Christian-democratic	35.3%	4.9%	48.0%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
liberal	39.7%	7.9%	46.0%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%
NA	21.0%	4.8%	38.5%	14.8%	16.3%	4.6%
green	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%	38.9%	5.6%	0.0%
μ	19.35%	5.77%	59.64%	11.37%	3.20%	0.69%

Table 5.36: Distribution of “horizontal Europeanisation” representative claims by party family and country

parfam	DE %	IT %	NL %	PL %	Σ	μ	μ (%)
NA	8 53.3%	1 20.0%	6 75.0%	18 62.1%	33	8.3	53%
Christian-democratic	2 13.3%	2 40.0%	1 12.5%	0 0.0%	5	1.3	16%
socialist	1 6.7%	1 20.0%	0 0.0%	2 6.9%	4	1	8%
liberal	1 6.7%	0 0.0%	1 12.5%	3 10.3%	5	1.3	7%
radical TAN	1 6.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	5 17.2%	6	1.5	6%
conservative	0 0.0%	1 20.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1	0.3	5%
regionalist	2 13.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 3.4%	3	0.8	4%
Σ	15	5	8	29			
μ	2	1	1.14	4.1			

Table 5.37: Distribution of “bottom-up vertical Europeanisation” representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>%</i>	Σ	μ	μ (%)
<i>NA</i>	39	43.8%	36	48.0%	43	68.3%	27	49.1%	145	36.3	52.3%
<i>socialist</i>	8	9.0%	24	32.0%	5	7.9%	4	7.3%	41	10.3	14.0%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	21	23.6%	3	4.0%	6	9.5%	6	10.9%	36	9.0	12.0%
<i>liberal</i>	10	11.2%	4	5.3%	8	12.7%	3	5.5%	25	6.3	8.7%
<i>radical TAN</i>	4	4.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	16.4%	13	3.3	5.2%
<i>conservative</i>	0	0.0%	7	9.3%	0	0.0%	3	5.5%	10	2.5	3.7%
<i>no family</i>	1	1.1%	1	1.3%	1	1.6%	2	3.6%	5	1.3	1.9%
<i>green</i>	5	5.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	6	1.5	1.9%
<i>radical left</i>	1	1.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3	0.3%
Σ	89		75		63		55				
μ	9.9		8.3		7.0		6.1				

Table 5.38: Distribution of “national” representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>%</i>	Σ	μ	μ (%)
<i>NA</i>	53	48.2%	61	32.4%	51	44.3%	100	41.3%	265	66.25	41.6%
<i>radical TAN</i>	9	8.2%	15	8.0%	15	13.0%	74	30.6%	113	28.25	14.9%
<i>socialist</i>	11	10.0%	47	25.0%	6	5.2%	15	6.2%	79	19.75	11.6%
<i>conservative</i>	12	10.9%	20	10.6%	12	10.4%	16	6.6%	60	15	9.6%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	14	12.7%	4	2.1%	9	7.8%	22	9.1%	49	12.25	7.9%
<i>no family</i>	3	2.7%	35	18.6%	3	2.6%	4	1.7%	45	11.25	6.4%
<i>liberal</i>	3	2.7%	3	1.6%	16	13.9%	7	2.9%	29	7.25	5.3%
<i>green</i>	2	1.8%	0	0.0%	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	4	1	0.9%
<i>regionalist</i>	2	1.8%	3	1.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	1.25	0.9%
<i>radical left</i>	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	1	0.4%	3	0.75	0.5%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1.2%	3	0.75	0.3%
Σ	110		188		115		242				
μ	10		17.1		10.5		22				

Table 5.39: Distribution of “supranational Europeanisation” representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	%	<i>IT</i>	%	<i>NL</i>	%	<i>PL</i>	%	Σ	μ	μ (%)
<i>NA</i>	39	92.9%	24	75.0%	21	100.0%	28	87.5%	112	28	0.89
<i>conservative</i>	2	4.8%	3	9.4%	0	0.0%	4	12.5%	9	2.25	0.07
<i>socialist</i>	0	0.0%	5	15.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	1.25	0.04
<i>green</i>	1	2.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.25	0.01
Σ	42		32		21		32				
μ	10.5		8		5.25		8				

Table 5.40: Distribution of “top-down vertical Europeanisation” representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	%	<i>IT</i>	%	<i>NL</i>	%	<i>PL</i>	%	Σ	μ	μ (%)
<i>NA</i>	3	60%	3	100%	1%	100%	25	96%	32	8	89%
<i>conservative</i>	1	20%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%	2	0.5	6.0%
<i>socialist</i>	1	20%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.25	5.0%
Σ	5		3		1		26				
μ	2		1		0.3		8.7				

Table 5.41: Distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by party family and country

<i>parfam</i>	<i>DE</i>	%	<i>IT</i>	%	<i>NL</i>	%	<i>PL</i>	%	Σ	μ	μ (%)
<i>NA</i>	27	55.10%	25	55.56%	19	73.08%	31	86.11%	102	25.5	67.46%
<i>socialist</i>	3	6.12%	8	17.78%	2	7.69%	1	2.78%	14	3.5	8.59%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	8	16.33%	1	2.22%	1	3.85%	2	5.56%	12	3	6.99%
<i>conservative</i>	1	2.04%	6	13.33%	2	7.69%	0	0.00%	9	2.25	5.77%
<i>green</i>	7	14.29%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7	1.75	3.57%
<i>radical TAN</i>	2	4.08%	0	0.00%	1	3.85%	1	2.78%	4	1	2.68%
<i>liberal</i>	1	2.04%	2	4.44%	1	3.85%	0	0.00%	4	1	2.58%
<i>no family</i>	0	0.00%	3	6.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.75	1.67%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	2.78%	1	0.25	0.69%
Σ	49		45		26		36				
μ	5.4		5		2.9		4				

Figure 5.23: Boxplot illustrating the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by party family

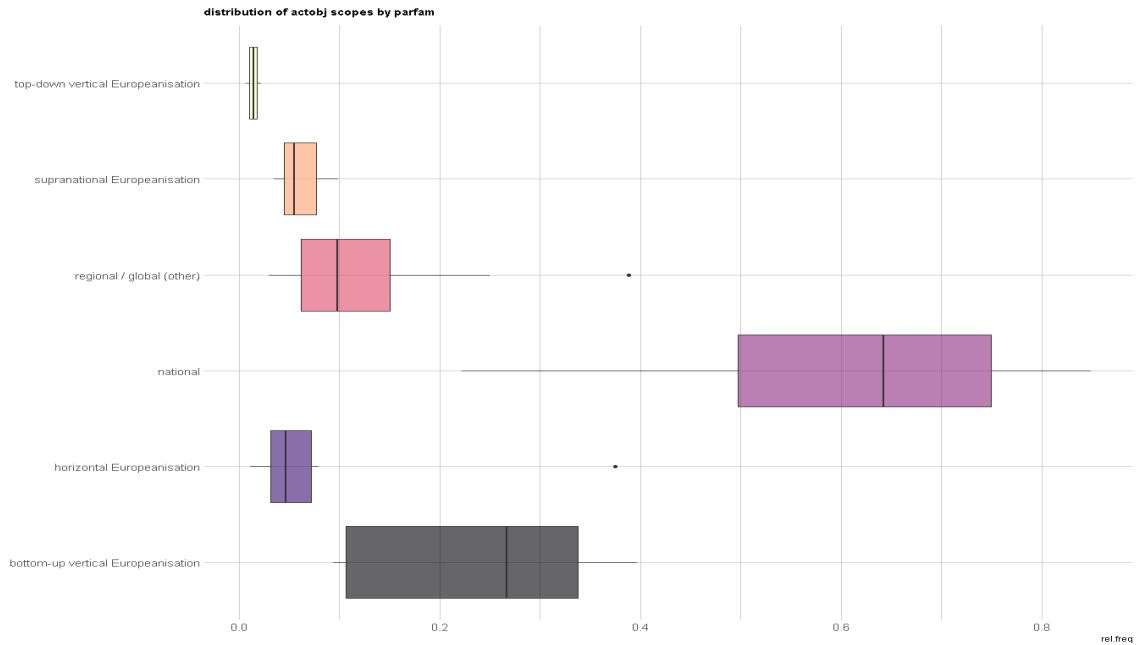


Figure 5.24: Boxplot illustrating the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by party family and source

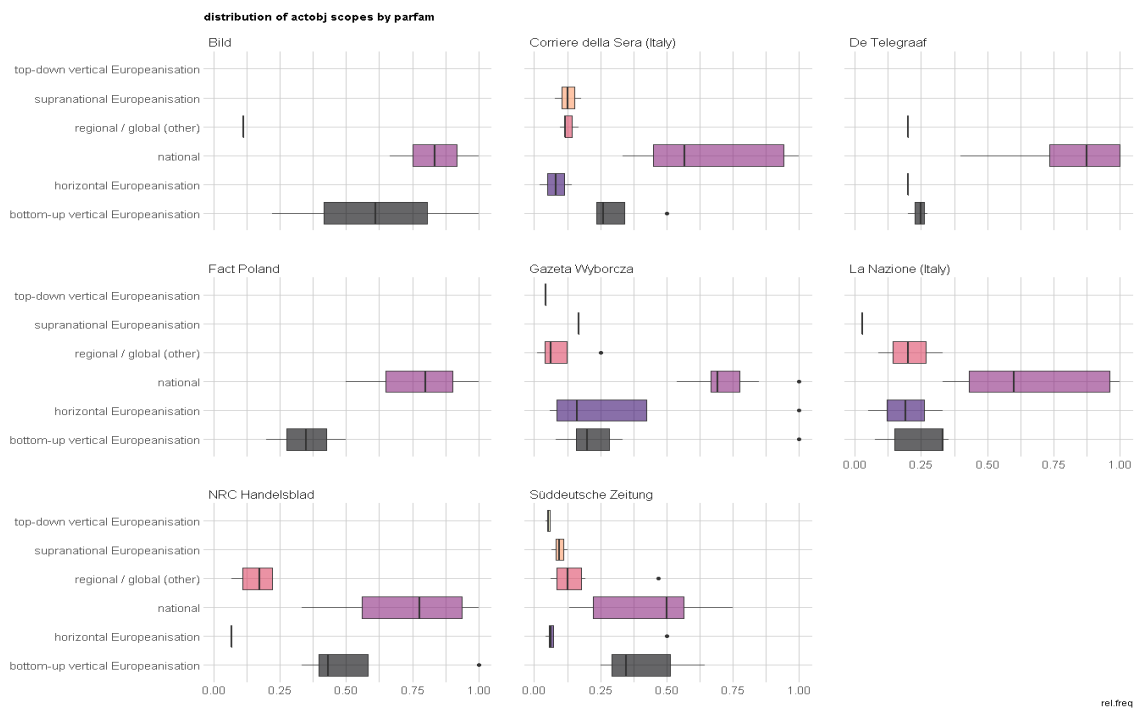


Figure 5.25: Boxplot illustrating the distribution of discursive territorial scopes by party family and country

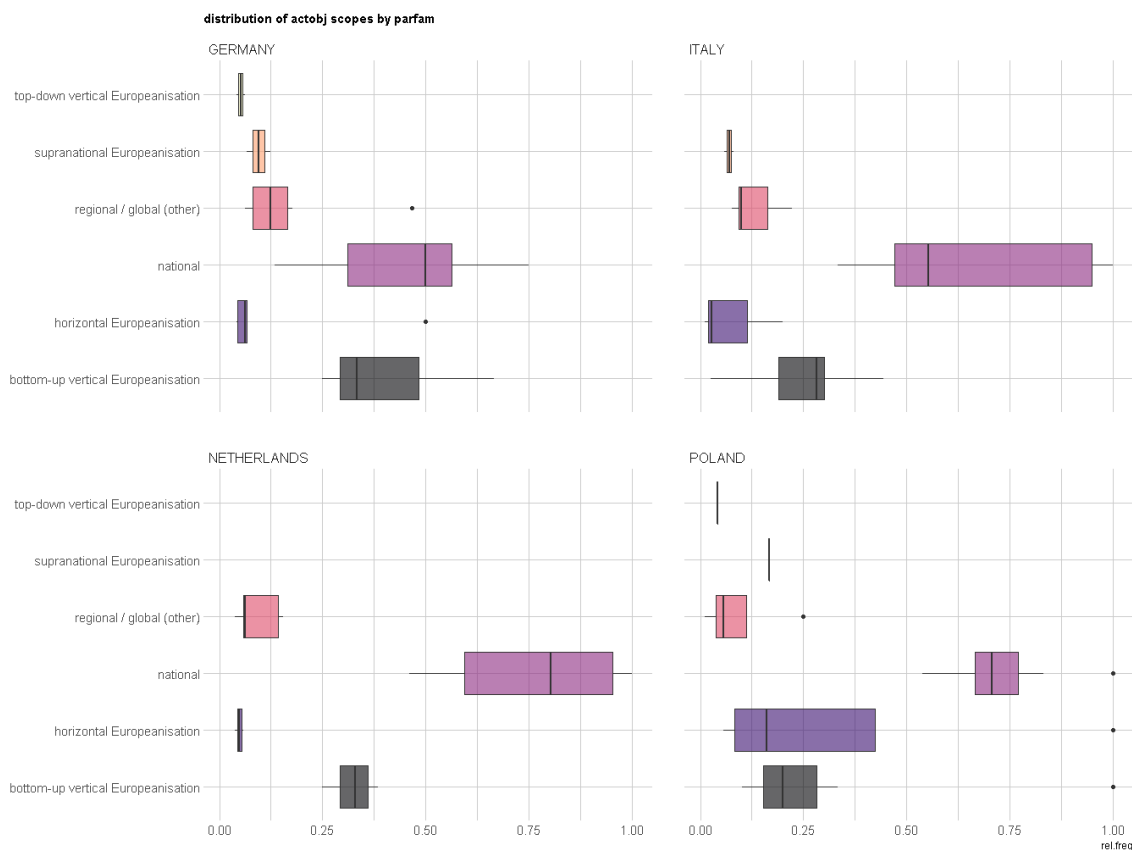


Table 5.42: Distribution of representative claims according to source

<i>source</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	402	31%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	284	22%
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	218	17%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	143	11%
<i>La Nazione</i>	130	10%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	91	7%
<i>Bild</i>	26	2%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	18	1%
Σ	1312	
μ	164	

Table 5.43: Distribution of object scopes by source

<i>source</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>	Σ	μ
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	90	26	106	180	402	100.5
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	128	44	82	30	284	71
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	72	29	15	102	218	54.5
<i>NRC</i>	62	19	38	24	143	35.75
<i>Handelsblad La Nazione</i>	38	13	7	72	130	32.5
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	23	7	24	37	91	22.75
<i>Bild</i>	6	3	3	14	26	6.5
<i>Fact Poland</i>	5	0	2	11	18	4.5
Σ	424	141	277	470		
μ	53	17.625	34.625	58.75		

Table 5.44: Relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

<i>source</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>
<i>Fact Poland</i>	28%	0%	11%	61%
<i>La Nazione</i>	29%	10%	5%	55%
<i>Bild</i>	23%	12%	12%	54%
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	33%	13%	7%	47%
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	22%	6%	26%	45%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	25%	8%	26%	41%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	43%	13%	27%	17%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	45%	15%	29%	11%
μ	31%	10%	18%	41%

Figure 5.26: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

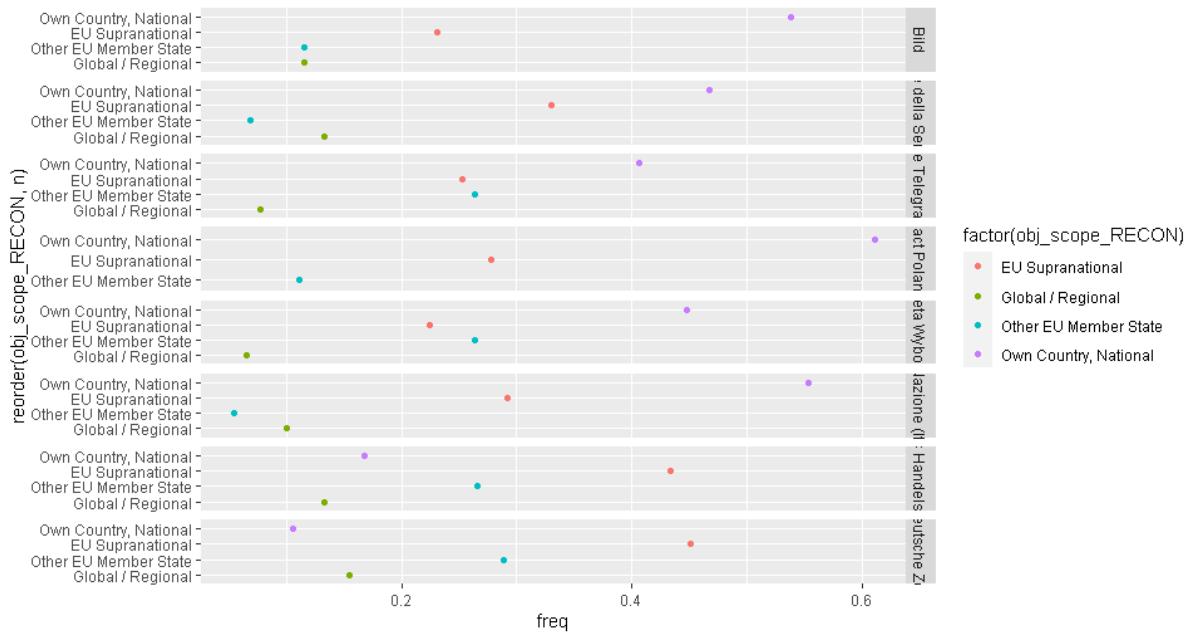


Figure 5.27: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes by source

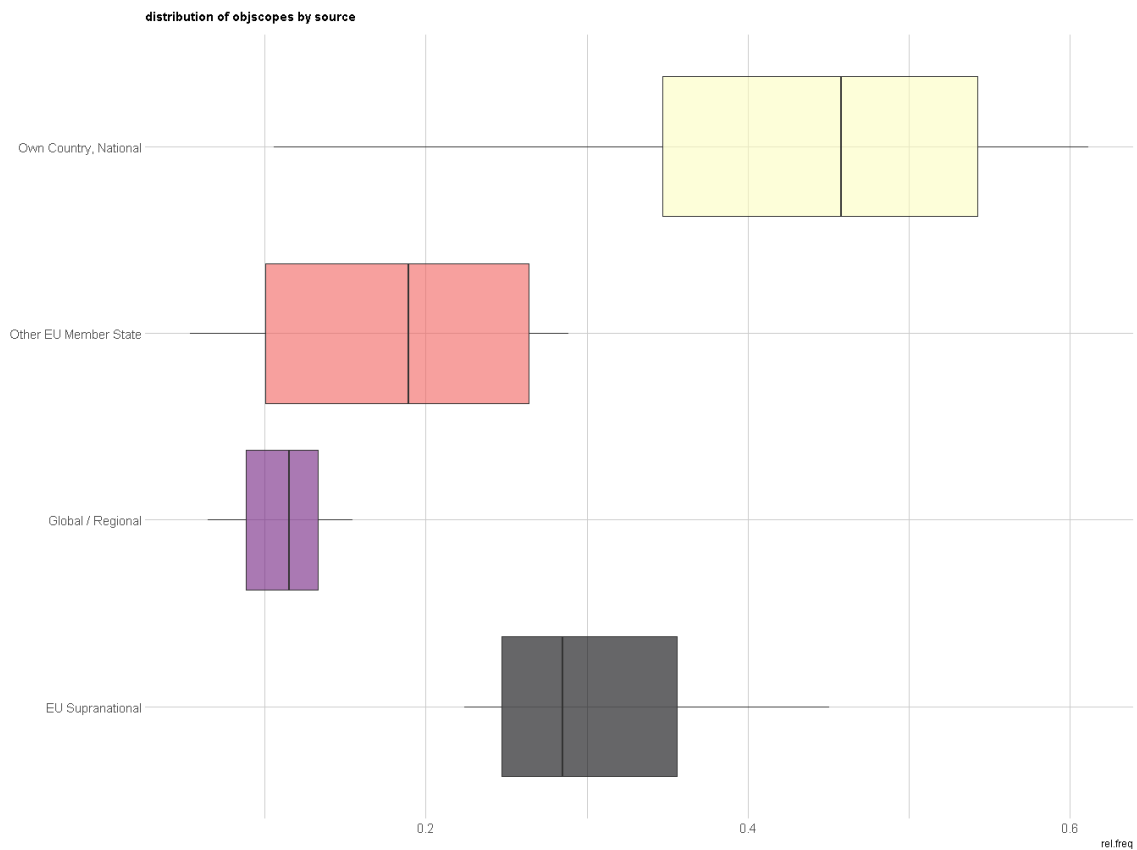


Figure 5.28: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes by country

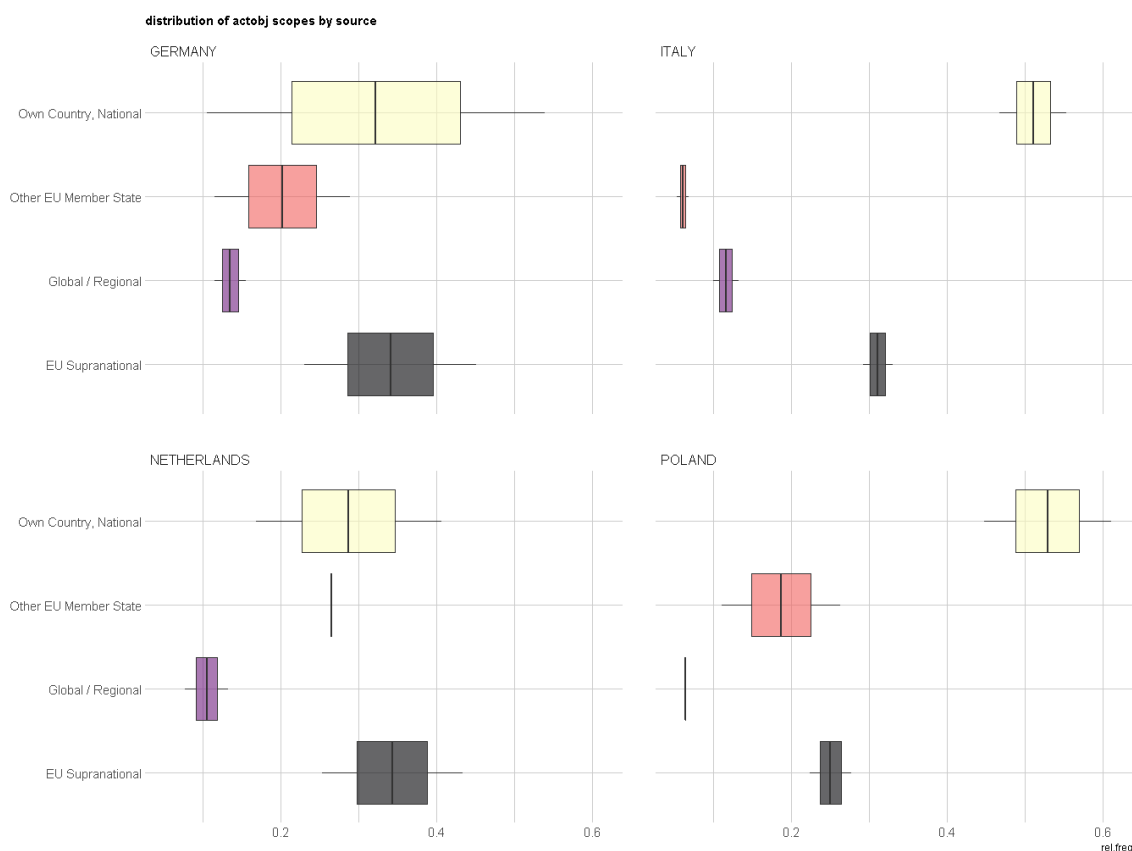


Table 5.45: Absolute frequency of object scopes by source

	<i>source</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>
	<i>Bild</i>	1	3	2	20
	<i>Corriere della Sera (Italy)</i>	28	15	29	146
	<i>De Telegraaf</i>	5	2	24	60
	<i>Fact Poland</i>	1	2	1	14
	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	59	30	128	185
	<i>La Nazione (Italy)</i>	13	3	16	98
	<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	18	10	57	58
	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	48	19	90	127

Table 5.46: Relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

<i>source</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>
<i>Bild</i>	4%	12%	8%	77%
<i>Corriere della Sera (Italy)</i>	13%	7%	13%	67%
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	5%	2%	26%	66%
<i>Fact Poland</i>	6%	11%	6%	78%
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	15%	7%	32%	46%
<i>La Nazione (Italy)</i>	10%	2%	12%	75%
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	13%	7%	40%	41%
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	17%	7%	32%	45%
μ	10%	7%	21%	62%

Table 5.47: Comparison of the distribution of discursive territorial scope relation (act2obj) and object scope variables

	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	<i>Mean</i>
<i>National (i.e. act2obj)</i>	35.48	54.02	49.15	57.62	49.07
<i>Own Country, National (obj)</i>	14	50	26	45	33.75
$\Delta\delta$	21.48	4.02	23.15	12.62	15.32

Table 5.48: Distribution of object scopes (%) across countries

<i>obj_scope_RECON</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	43%	32%	36%	23%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	15%	12%	11%	6%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	27%	6%	26%	26%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	14%	50%	26%	45%

Figure 5.29: Bar plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by source

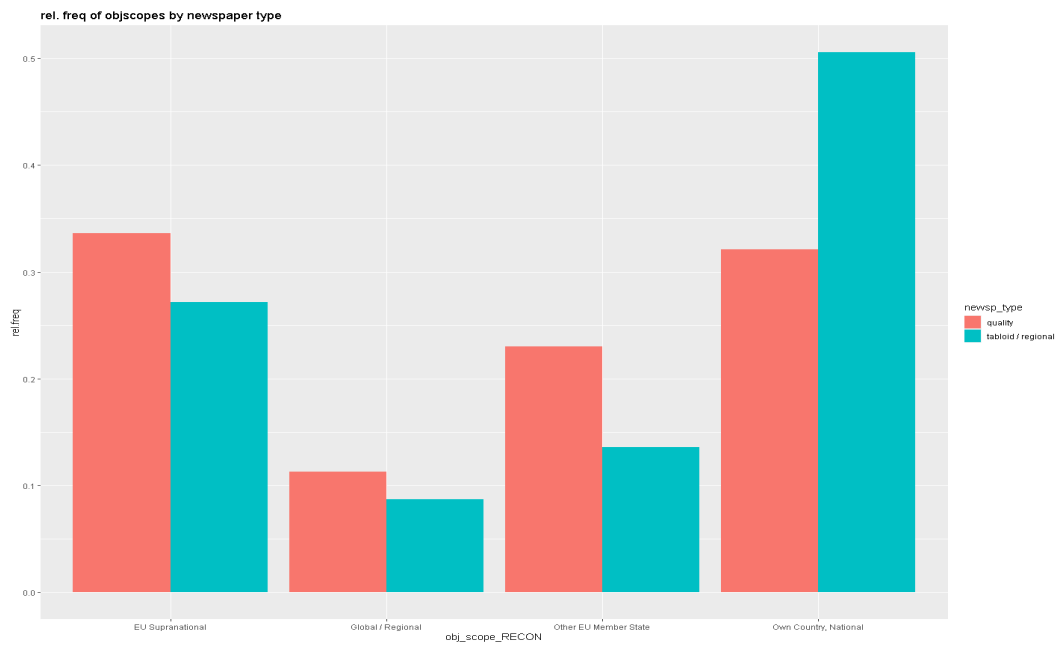


Figure 5.30: Dot plot illustrating the relative frequency of object scopes by source

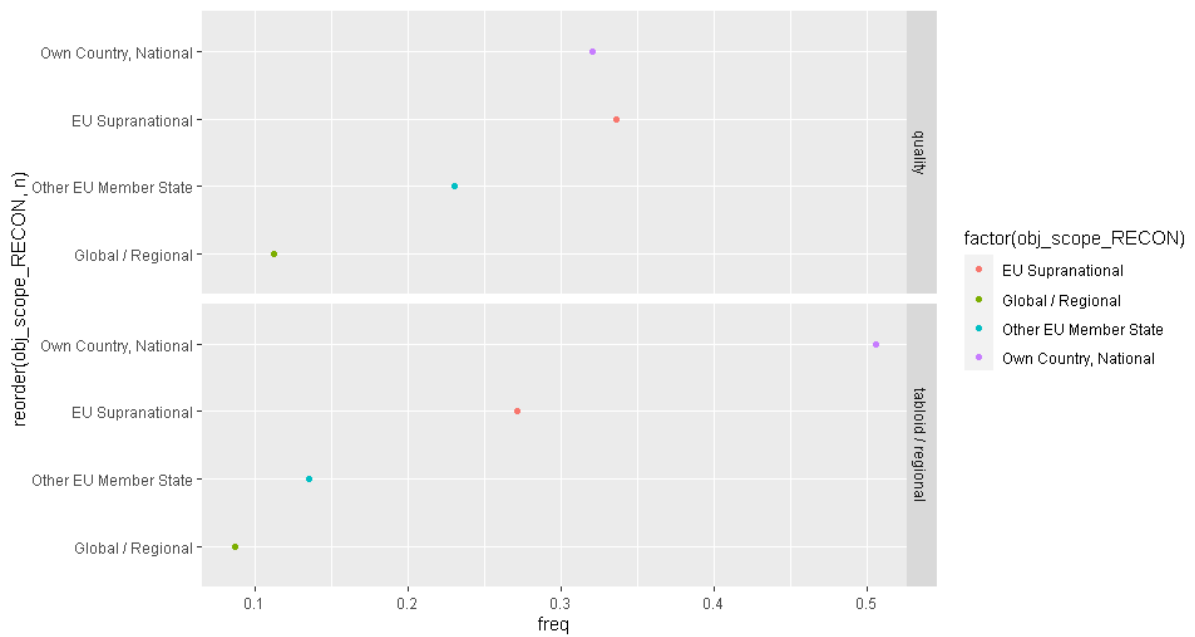


Table 5.49: Distribution of representative claims by source

<i>newsp_type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>quality</i>	1047	0.80
<i>tabloid / regional</i>	265	0.20
Σ	1312	

Table 5.50: Absolute frequency distribution of object scopes by source

<i>newsp_type</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>	Σ	μ
<i>quality</i>	352	118	241	336	1047	261.75
<i>tabloid / regional</i>	72	23	36	134	265	66.25
Σ	424	141	277	470		
μ	212	70.5	138.5	235		

Table 5.51: Relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

<i>newsp_type</i>	<i>EU Supranational</i>	<i>Global / Regional</i>	<i>Other EU Member State</i>	<i>Own Country, National</i>
<i>quality</i>	33.62%	11.27%	23.02%	32.09%
<i>tabloid / regional</i>	27.17%	8.68%	13.58%	50.57%
μ	30.39%	9.97%	18.30%	41.33%

Figure 5.31: Bar plot of the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by source

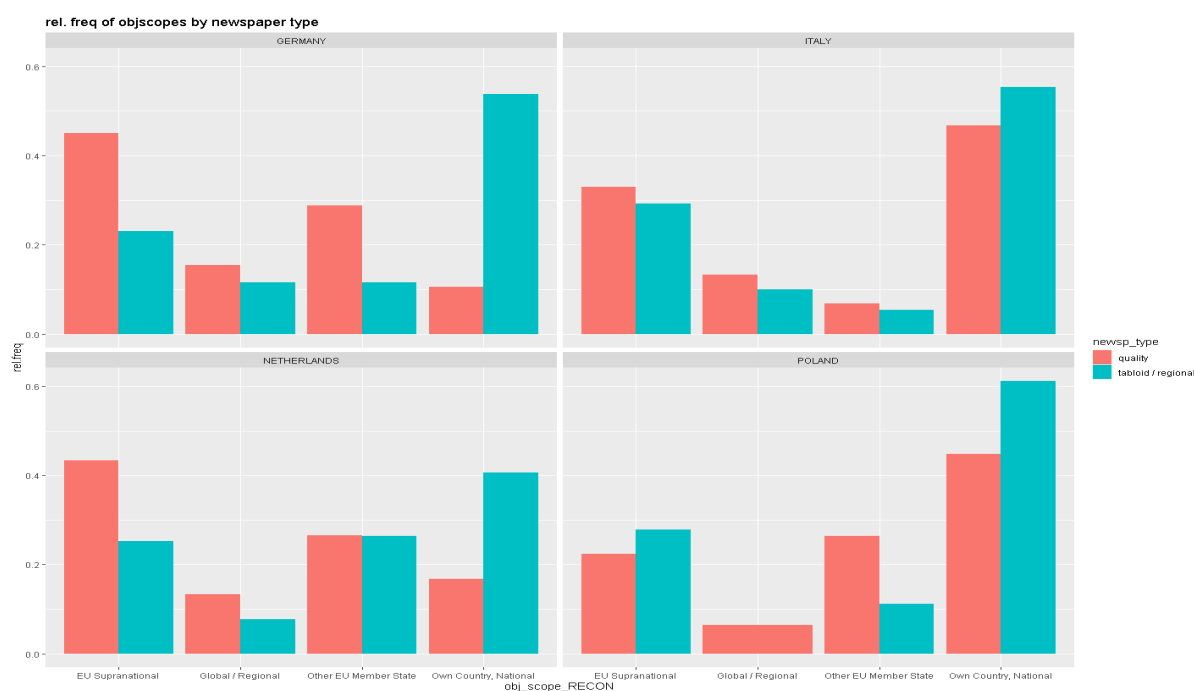


Figure 5.32: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes newspaper format

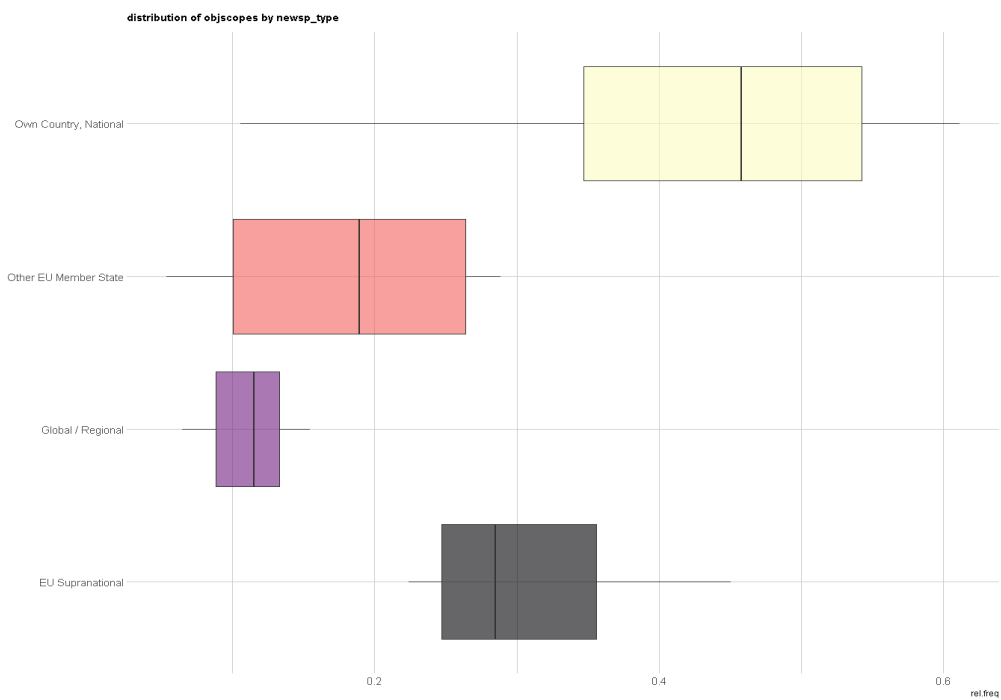


Figure 5.33: Boxplot illustrating the statistical distribution of object scopes newspaper format (across-country comparison)

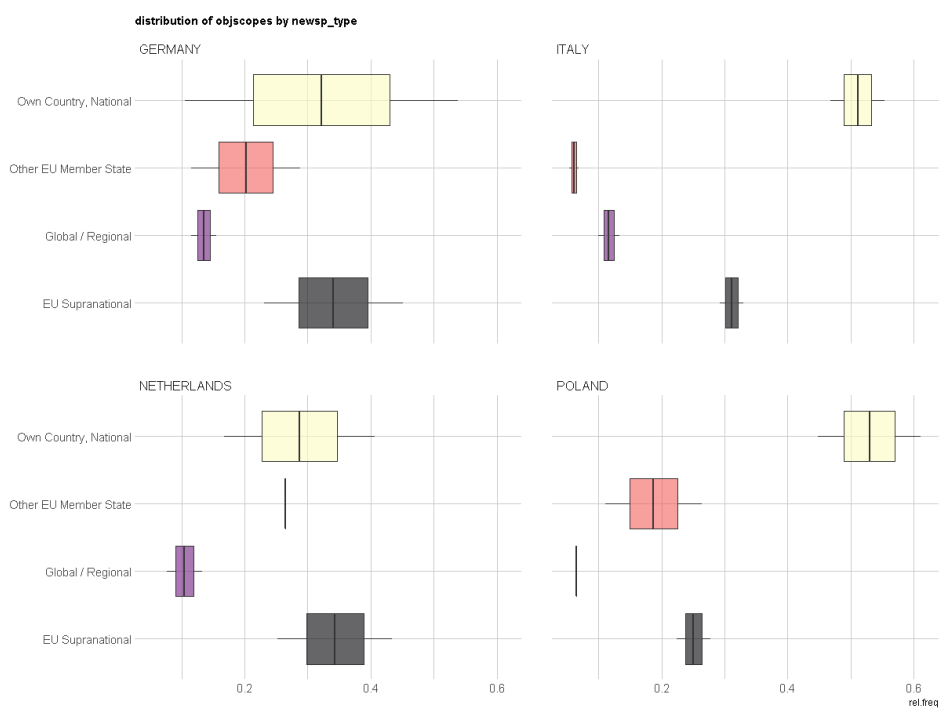


Table 5.52: Distribution of claimant scopes by newspaper format

<i>act_scope_RECON</i>	<i>quality</i>	<i>tabloid / regional</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	153	20
<i>Global / Regional</i>	74	10
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	304	43
<i>Own Country, National</i>	516	192

Table 5.53: Distribution of claimant scopes (%) by newspaper format

<i>act_scope_RECON</i>	<i>quality</i>	<i>tabloid / regional</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	15%	8%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	7%	4%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	29%	16%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	49%	72%

Figure 5.34: Dot plot displaying the distribution of claimant scopes (%) by newspaper format

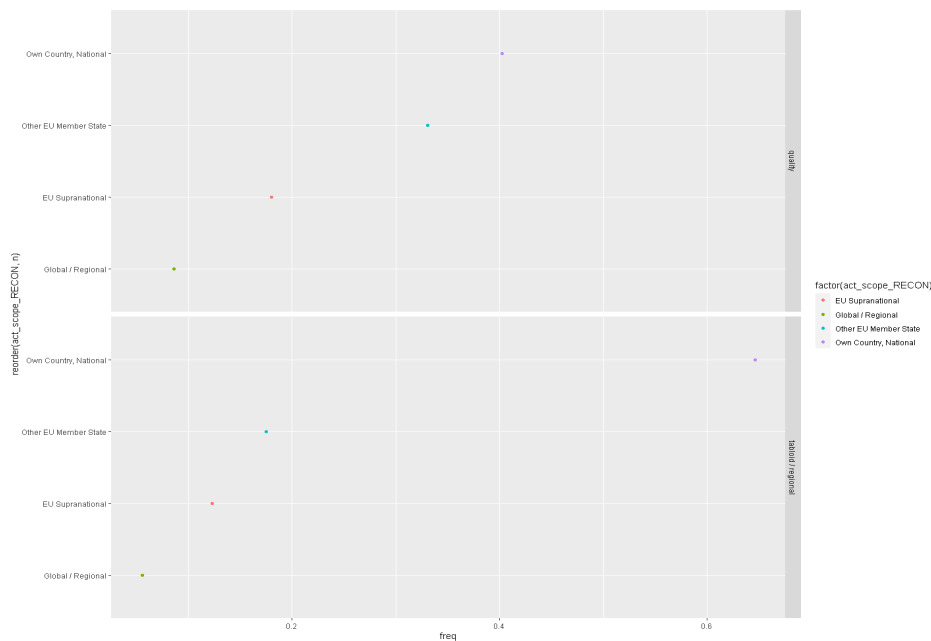


Figure 5.35: Boxplot showing the statistical distribution of claimant scopes by newspaper format

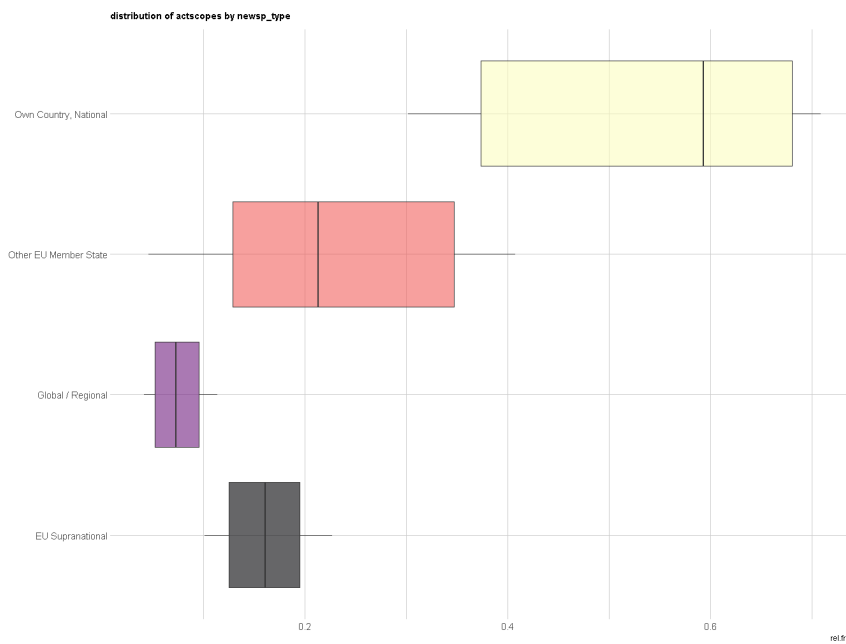


Figure 5.36: Boxplot showing the statistical distribution of claimant scopes by newspaper format (across country comparison)

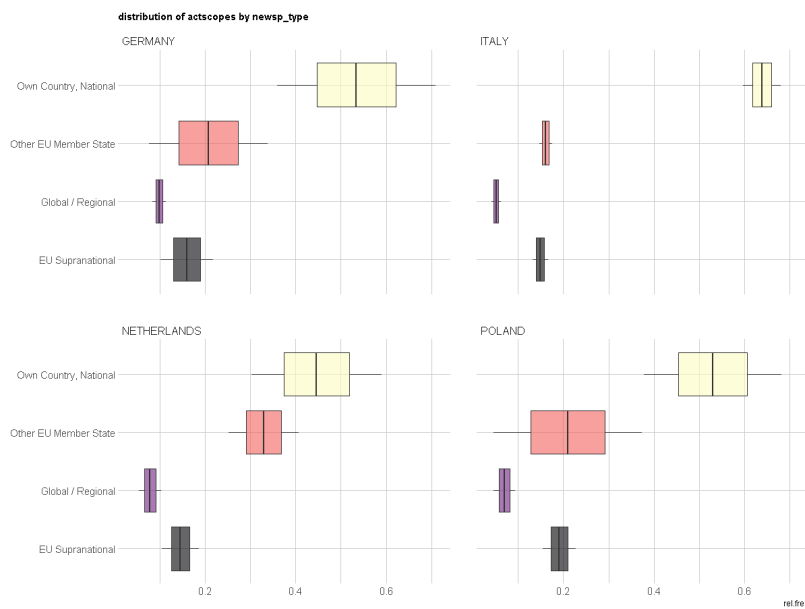


Table 5.54: Distribution of representative claims by period

<i>period</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>pre-Covid</i>	640	0.49
<i>Covid</i>	672	0.51

Table 5.55: Distribution of representative claims by period across country

<i>period</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	Σ	μ
<i>pre-Covid</i>	189	228	104	119	640	160
<i>Covid</i>	121	120	130	301	672	168
Σ	310	348	234	420		
μ	155	174	117	210		

Table 5.56: Distribution of representative claims by period across country (%)

<i>period</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>	Σ	μ
<i>pre-Covid</i>	14%	17%	8%	9%	49%	12%
<i>Covid</i>	9%	9%	10%	23%	51%	13%
Σ	24%	27%	18%	32%		
μ	12%	13%	9%	16%		

Table 5.57: Relative frequency of representative claims (%) by country (across period comparison)

<i>period</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>pre-Covid</i>	30%	36%	16%	19%
<i>Covid</i>	18%	18%	19%	45%

Table 5.58: Relative frequency of representative claims (%) by period (across country comparison)

<i>period</i>	<i>DE</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>PL</i>
<i>pre-Covid</i>	61%	66%	44%	28%
<i>Covid</i>	39%	34%	56%	72%

Table 5.59: Absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes by period

	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	156	126	282	141
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	8	49	57	28.5
<i>national</i>	297	358	655	327.5

<i>regional / global (other)</i>	112	44	156	78
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	55	72	127	63.5
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	12	23	35	17.5
μ	106.7	112		

Table 5.60: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) by period

	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	24%	19%	43%	22%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	1%	7%	9%	4%
<i>national</i>	46%	53%	100%	50%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	18%	7%	24%	12%
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	9%	11%	19%	10%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	2%	3%	5%	3%
μ	17%	17%		

Table 5.61: Distribution of discursive territorial scopes (%) in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

	<i>period pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	55%	45%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	14%	86%
<i>national</i>	45%	55%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	72%	28%
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	43%	57%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	34%	66%
μ	44%	56%

Table 5.62: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) in Germany by period

	<i>period pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	29%	28%	29%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	3%	8%	5%
<i>national</i>	32%	41%	37%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	22%	6%	14%
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	13%	15%	14%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	2%	2%	2%
μ	17%	17%	

Table 5.63: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) in the Netherlands by period

<i>period</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	28%	26%	54%	27%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation national</i>	1%	5%	6%	3%
<i>regional / global (other) supranational Europeanisation</i>	47%	51%	98%	49%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	13%	9%	23%	11%
μ	10%	8%	18%	9%
μ	17%	0%	1%	0%
μ	17%	17%		

Table 5.64: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) in Poland by period

<i>period</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	10%	14%	24%	12%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation national</i>	2%	9%	11%	5%
<i>regional / global (other) supranational Europeanisation</i>	65%	55%	120%	60%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	13%	7%	20%	10%
μ	3%	9%	13%	6%
μ	7%	6%	13%	6%
μ	17%	17%		

Table 5.65: Relative frequency of discursive territorial scopes (%) in Italy by period

<i>period</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	26%	13%	39%	19%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation national</i>	0%	4%	4%	2%
<i>regional / global (other) supranational Europeanisation</i>	49%	64%	113%	56%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	18%	4%	22%	11%
μ	7%	13%	20%	10%
μ	0%	3%	3%	1%
μ	17%	17%		

Figure 5.37: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by country in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

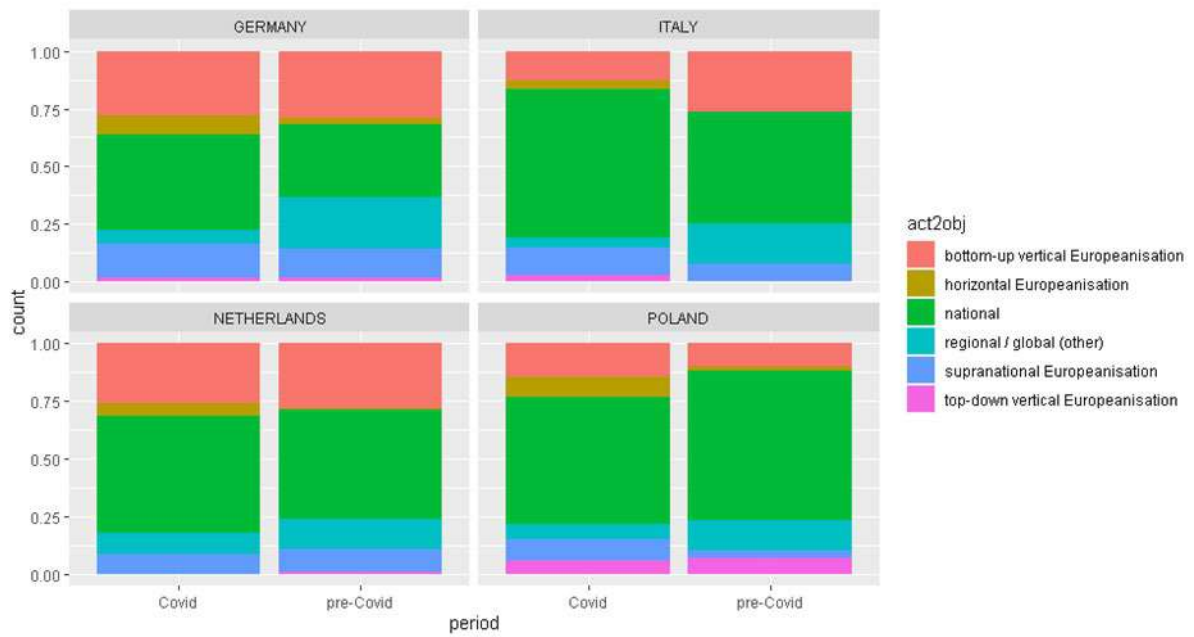


Figure 5.38: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

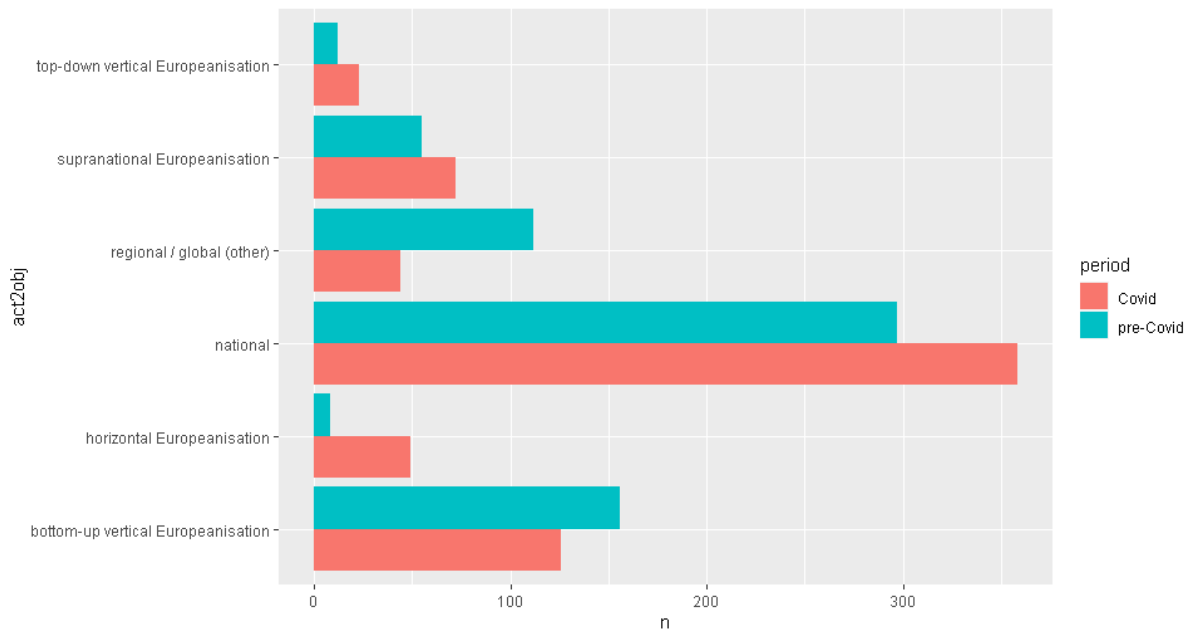


Figure 5.39: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes in the pre- and during-Covid-19 datasets

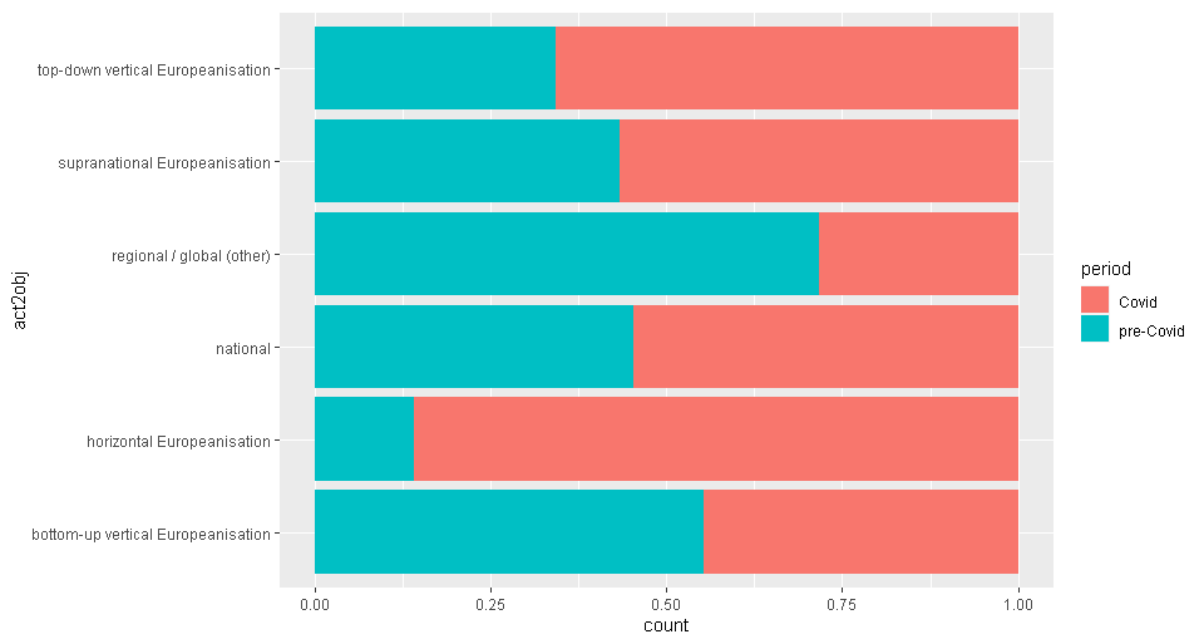


Table 5.66: Distribution (%) of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	34%	31%	32%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	17%	5%	11%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	17%	25%	21%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	33%	39%	36%

Table 5.67: Absolute frequency distribution of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	219	205	424	212
<i>Global / Regional</i>	106	35	141	70.5
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	106	171	277	138.5
<i>Own Country, National</i>	209	261	470	235
Σ	640	672		
μ	160	168		

Table 5.68: Distribution (%) of object scopes by period

	<i>pre- Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>EU Supranational</i>	52%	48%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	75%	25%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	38%	62%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	44%	56%
μ	52%	48%

Table 5.69: Distribution (%) of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets in Germany

	<i>pre- Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	43%	43%	43%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	21%	6%	13%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	23%	35%	29%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	13%	17%	15%

Table 5.70: Distribution (%) of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets in the Netherlands

	<i>pre- Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	38%	35%	36%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	13%	9%	11%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	22%	30%	26%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	27%	25%	26%

Table 5.71: Distribution (%) of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets in the Poland

<i>period</i>	<i>pre- Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	16%	25%	21%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	13%	4%	8%

<i>Other EU Member State</i>	20%	28%	24%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	51%	43%	47%

Table 5.72: Distribution (%) of object scopes in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets in Italy

<i>period</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>EU Supranational</i>	35%	26%	30%
<i>Global / Regional</i>	16%	4%	10%
<i>Other EU Member State</i>	7%	5%	6%
<i>Own Country, National</i>	42%	65%	54%

Figure 5.40: Dot plot to show the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by period

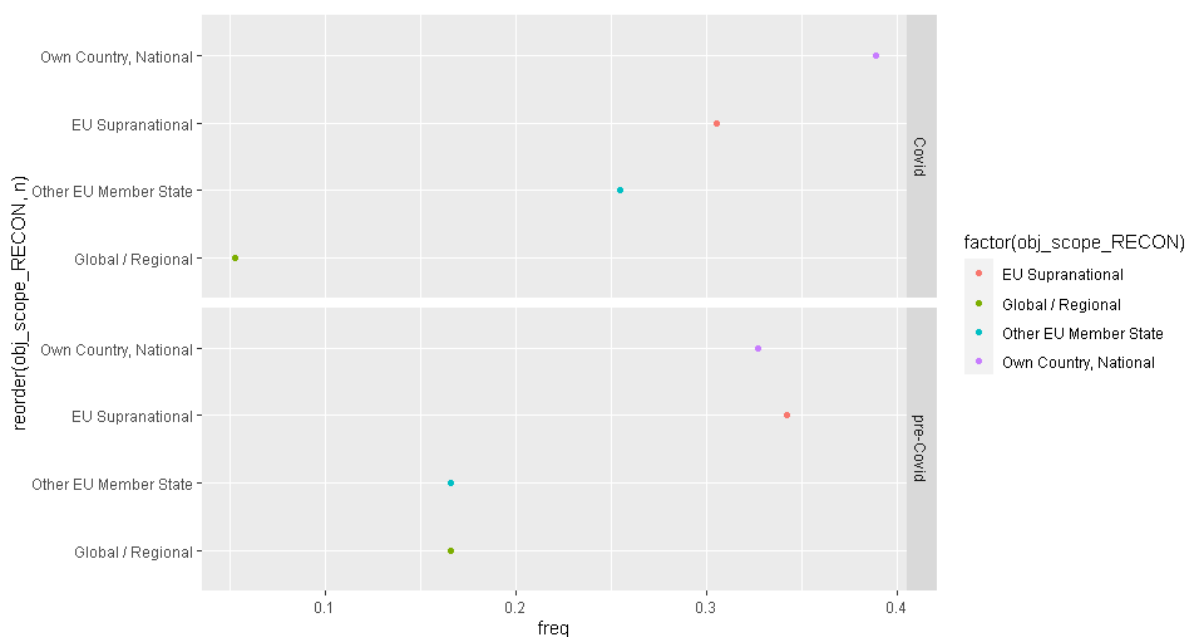


Table 5.73: Absolute frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>government/executive</i>	113	128	241	120.5
<i>political parties</i>	81	71	152	76
<i>media and journalists</i>	26	48	74	37
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	12	21	33	16.5
<i>the general public</i>	11	11	22	11

<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	6	13	19	9.5
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	8	10	18	9
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	6	9	15	7.5
<i>politicians</i>	11	4	15	7.5
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	2	7	9	4.5
<i>legislative</i>	3	6	9	4.5
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0	8	8	4
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	1	6	7	3.5
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	1	5	6	3
<i>judiciary</i>	5	0	5	2.5
<i>central banks</i>	3	1	4	2
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	3	4	2
<i>activists and protestors</i>	2	1	3	1.5
<i>unions and employees</i>	2	1	3	1.5
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0	2	2	1
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>military</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>whole polities</i>	0	1	1	0.5
Σ	297	358		
μ	11.88	14.32		

Table 5.74: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>activists and protestors</i>	67%	33%
<i>central banks</i>	75%	25%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	25%	75%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	14%	86%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	44%	56%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	36%	64%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	17%	83%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	22%	78%
<i>government/executive</i>	47%	53%
<i>judiciary</i>	100%	0%
<i>legislative</i>	33%	67%
<i>media and journalists</i>	35%	65%
<i>military</i>	100%	0%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	50%	50%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%

<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	32%	68%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	40%	60%
<i>political parties</i>	53%	47%
<i>politicians</i>	73%	27%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0%	100%
<i>the general public</i>	50%	50%
<i>unions and employees</i>	67%	33%
<i>whole polities</i>	0%	100%
μ	43%	57%

Table 5.75: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	<i>μ</i>
<i>government/executive</i>	38.05%	35.75%	36.90%
<i>political parties</i>	27.27%	19.83%	23.55%
<i>media and journalists</i>	8.75%	13.41%	11.08%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	4.04%	5.87%	4.95%
<i>the general public</i>	3.70%	3.07%	3.39%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	2.02%	3.63%	2.83%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	2.69%	2.79%	2.74%
<i>politicians</i>	3.70%	1.12%	2.41%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	2.02%	2.51%	2.27%
<i>legislative</i>	1.01%	1.68%	1.34%
<i>former states(women)</i>	0.67%	1.96%	1.31%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0.00%	2.23%	1.12%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0.34%	1.68%	1.01%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	0.34%	1.40%	0.87%
<i>judiciary</i>	1.68%	0.00%	0.84%
<i>central banks</i>	1.01%	0.28%	0.64%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.84%	0.59%
<i>activists and protestors</i>	0.67%	0.28%	0.48%
<i>unions and employees</i>	0.67%	0.28%	0.48%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.28%	0.31%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	0.56%	0.28%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	0.34%	0.00%	0.17%
<i>military</i>	0.34%	0.00%	0.17%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	0.28%	0.14%
<i>whole polities</i>	0.00%	0.28%	0.14%

Table 5.76: Absolute frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>central banks</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	2	0	2	1
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	6	3	9	4.5
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	15	8	23	11.5
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	9	14	23	11.5
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0	3	3	1.5
<i>government/executive</i>	49	35	84	42
<i>judiciary</i>	1	2	3	1.5
<i>legislative</i>	3	4	7	3.5
<i>media and journalists</i>	23	28	51	25.5
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	0	2	2	1
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	1	7	8	4
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>political parties</i>	35	13	48	24
<i>politicians</i>	3	0	3	1.5
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>the general public</i>	4	4	8	4
<i>unions and employees</i>	3	0	3	1.5
Σ	156	126		
μ	7.8	6.3		

Table 5.77: Relative frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>central banks</i>	0%	100%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	67%	33%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	65%	35%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	39%	61%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0%	100%
<i>government/executive</i>	58%	42%
<i>judiciary</i>	33%	67%
<i>legislative</i>	43%	57%

<i>media and journalists</i>	45%	55%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	13%	88%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0%	100%
<i>political parties</i>	73%	27%
<i>politicians</i>	100%	0%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	100%	0%
<i>the general public</i>	50%	50%
<i>unions and employees</i>	100%	0%
μ	49%	51%

Table 5.78: Relative frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>government/executive</i>	31.41%	27.78%	29.59%
<i>media and journalists</i>	14.74%	22.22%	18.48%
<i>political parties</i>	22.44%	10.32%	16.38%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	5.77%	11.11%	8.44%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	9.62%	6.35%	7.98%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	3.85%	2.38%	3.11%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0.64%	5.56%	3.10%
<i>the general public</i>	2.56%	3.17%	2.87%
<i>legislative</i>	1.92%	3.17%	2.55%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0.00%	2.38%	1.19%
<i>judiciary</i>	0.64%	1.59%	1.11%
<i>politicians</i>	1.92%	0.00%	0.96%
<i>unions and employees</i>	1.92%	0.00%	0.96%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	1.59%	0.79%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	1.28%	0.00%	0.64%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0.00%	0.79%	0.40%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0.00%	0.79%	0.40%
<i>central banks</i>	0.00%	0.79%	0.40%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	0.64%	0.00%	0.32%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0.64%	0.00%	0.32%

Table 5.79: Absolute frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>government/executive</i>	8	18	26	13
<i>judiciary</i>	2	0	2	1
<i>legislative</i>	0	2	2	1
<i>media and journalists</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>political parties</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>unions and employees</i>	0	1	1	0.5
Σ	12	23		
μ	1.5	2.9		

Table 5.80: Relative frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	8.33%	0.00%	4.17%
<i>government/executive</i>	66.67%	78.26%	72.46%
<i>judiciary</i>	16.67%	0.00%	8.33%
<i>legislative</i>	0.00%	8.70%	4.35%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0.00%	4.35%	2.17%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0.00%	4.35%	2.17%
<i>political parties</i>	8.33%	0.00%	4.17%
<i>unions and employees</i>	0.00%	4.35%	2.17%

Table 5.81: Relative frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>government/executive</i>	31%	69%
<i>judiciary</i>	100%	0%
<i>legislative</i>	0%	100%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0%	100%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0%	100%

<i>political parties</i>	100%	0%
<i>unions and employees</i>	0%	100%
μ	41%	59%

Table 5.82: Absolute frequency distribution of “horizontal” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0	2	2	1
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>government/executive</i>	4	14	18	9
<i>media and journalists</i>	0	20	20	10
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0	2	2	1
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	1	2	3	1.5
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>political parties</i>	3	2	5	2.5
<i>whole polities</i>	0	3	3	1.5
Σ	8	49		
μ	0.73	4.45		

Table 5.83: Relative frequency distribution of “horizontal” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>government/executive</i>	50.0%	28.6%	39.3%
<i>political parties</i>	37.5%	4.1%	20.8%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0.0%	40.8%	20.4%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	12.5%	4.1%	8.3%
<i>whole polities</i>	0.0%	6.1%	3.1%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0.0%	4.1%	2.0%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0.0%	4.1%	2.0%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%

Table 5.84: Relative frequency distribution of “horizontal” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0%	100%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	0%	100%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	0%	100%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0%	100%
<i>government/executive</i>	22%	78%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0%	100%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0%	100%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	33%	67%
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	0%	100%
<i>political parties</i>	60%	40%
<i>whole polities</i>	0%	100%
μ	11%	89%

Table 5.85: Absolute frequency distribution of “supranational” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>central banks</i>	9	3	12	6
<i>government/executive</i>	35	53	88	44
<i>judiciary</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>legislative</i>	7	5	12	6
<i>media and journalists</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0	5	5	2.5
<i>political parties</i>	2	0	2	1
<i>whole polities</i>	0	3	3	1.5
Σ	55	72		
μ	5.5	7.2		

Table 5.86: Relative frequency distribution of “supranational” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>government/executive</i>	63.6%	73.6%	68.6%
<i>central banks</i>	16.4%	4.2%	10.3%
<i>legislative</i>	12.7%	6.9%	9.8%

<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0.0%	6.9%	3.5%
<i>whole polities</i>	0.0%	4.2%	2.1%
<i>political parties</i>	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	1.8%	1.4%	1.6%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%
<i>judiciary</i>	0.0%	1.4%	0.7%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0.0%	1.4%	0.7%

Table 5.87: Relative frequency distribution of “supranational” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>central banks</i>	75%	25%
<i>government/executive</i>	40%	60%
<i>judiciary</i>	0%	100%
<i>legislative</i>	58%	42%
<i>media and journalists</i>	0%	100%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	50%	50%
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0%	100%
<i>political parties</i>	100%	0%
<i>whole polities</i>	0%	100%
μ	42%	58%

Table 5.88: Absolute frequency distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by claimant type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>central banks</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	2	1	3	1.5
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	2	3	5	2.5
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	4	5	9	4.5
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	6	5	11	5.5
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	2	1	3	1.5
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	2	0	2	1
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>government/executive</i>	32	12	44	22
<i>judiciary</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>legislative</i>	7	1	8	4
<i>media and journalists</i>	5	4	9	4.5
<i>military</i>	2	1	3	1.5

<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	4	0	4	2
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	1	3	4	2
<i>political parties</i>	18	1	19	9.5
<i>politicians</i>	3	1	4	2
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	11	3	14	7
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>the general public</i>	2	0	2	1
<i>unions and employees</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>whole polities</i>	2	0	2	1
Σ	112	44		
μ	4.7	1.8		

Table 5.89: Relative frequency distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by actor type in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	<i>μ</i>
<i>government/executive</i>	28.6%	27.3%	27.9%
<i>political parties</i>	16.1%	2.3%	9.2%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	5.4%	11.4%	8.4%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	9.8%	6.8%	8.3%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	3.6%	11.4%	7.5%
<i>media and journalists</i>	4.5%	9.1%	6.8%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	1.8%	6.8%	4.3%
<i>legislative</i>	6.3%	2.3%	4.3%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0.9%	6.8%	3.9%
<i>politicians</i>	2.7%	2.3%	2.5%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	1.8%	2.3%	2.0%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	1.8%	2.3%	2.0%
<i>military</i>	1.8%	2.3%	2.0%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%
<i>central banks</i>	0.9%	2.3%	1.6%
<i>judiciary</i>	0.9%	2.3%	1.6%
<i>unions and employees</i>	0.9%	2.3%	1.6%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%
<i>the general public</i>	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%
<i>whole polities</i>	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	0.9%	0.0%	0.4%

Table 5.90: Relative frequency distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by period across different actor types

<i>act_type</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>central banks</i>	50%	50%
<i>churches and religious organisations and groups</i>	67%	33%
<i>civil society organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	40%	60%
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	44%	56%
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	55%	45%
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	67%	33%
<i>farmers and agricultural organisations</i>	100%	0%
<i>former states(wo)men</i>	100%	0%
<i>government/executive</i>	73%	27%
<i>judiciary</i>	50%	50%
<i>legislative</i>	88%	13%
<i>media and journalists</i>	56%	44%
<i>military</i>	67%	33%
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	100%	0%
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	25%	75%
<i>political parties</i>	95%	5%
<i>politicians</i>	75%	25%
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	79%	21%
<i>students, pupils, and their parents</i>	100%	0%
<i>the general public</i>	100%	0%
<i>unions and employees</i>	50%	50%
<i>whole polities</i>	100%	0%
μ	74%	26%

Table 5.91: Absolute frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>NA</i>	105	160	265	132.5
<i>radical TAN</i>	52	61	113	56.5
<i>socialist</i>	42	37	79	39.5
<i>conservative</i>	30	30	60	30
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	22	27	49	24.5
<i>no family</i>	26	19	45	22.5
<i>liberal</i>	15	14	29	14.5
<i>regionalist</i>	1	4	5	2.5
<i>green</i>	3	1	4	2
<i>agrarian/center</i>	0	3	3	1.5

<i>radical left</i>	1	2	3	1.5
Σ	297	358		
μ	27	32.55		

Table 5.92: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	35%	45%	40%
<i>1. radical TAN</i>	18%	17%	17%
<i>5. socialist</i>	14%	10%	12%
<i>2. conservative</i>	10%	8%	9%
<i>4. Christian-democratic</i>	7%	8%	7%
<i>9. no family</i>	9%	5%	7%
<i>3. liberal</i>	5%	4%	4%
<i>8. regionalist</i>	0%	1%	1%
<i>7. green</i>	1%	0%	1%
<i>6. radical left</i>	0%	1%	0%
<i>11. agrarian/center</i>	0%	1%	0%

Table 5.93: Relative frequency distribution of “national” representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>1. radical TAN</i>	46%	54%
<i>11. agrarian/center</i>	0%	100%
<i>2. conservative</i>	50%	50%
<i>3. liberal</i>	52%	48%
<i>4. Christian-democratic</i>	45%	55%
<i>5. socialist</i>	53%	47%
<i>6. radical left</i>	33%	67%
<i>7. green</i>	75%	25%
<i>8. regionalist</i>	20%	80%
<i>9. no family</i>	58%	42%
<i>NA</i>	40%	60%
μ	43%	57%

Table 5.94: Absolute frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>radical TAN</i>	4	9	13	6.5
<i>conservative</i>	7	3	10	5
<i>liberal</i>	13	12	25	12.5
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	28	8	36	18
<i>socialist</i>	29	12	41	20.5
<i>radical left</i>	1	0	1	0.5
<i>green</i>	2	4	6	3
<i>no family</i>	1	4	5	2.5
<i>NA</i>	71	74	145	72.5
Σ	156	126		
μ	17.3	14.0		

Table 5.95: Relative frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	46%	59%	52%
<i>socialist</i>	19%	10%	14%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	18%	6%	12%
<i>liberal</i>	8%	10%	9%
<i>radical TAN</i>	3%	7%	5%
<i>conservative</i>	4%	2%	3%
<i>green</i>	1%	3%	2%
<i>no family</i>	1%	3%	2%
<i>radical left</i>	1%	0%	0%

Table 5.96: Relative frequency distribution of “bottom-up vertical” representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>radical TAN</i>	31%	69%
<i>conservative</i>	70%	30%
<i>liberal</i>	52%	48%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	78%	22%
<i>socialist</i>	71%	29%
<i>radical left</i>	100%	0%
<i>green</i>	33%	67%

<i>no family</i>	20%	80%
<i>NA</i>	49%	51%
μ	56%	44%

Table 5.97: Absolute frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>conservative</i>	1	1	2	1
<i>socialist</i>	0	1	1	0.5
<i>NA</i>	11	21	32	16
Σ	12	23		
μ	4	7.7		

Table 5.98: Relative frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>conservative</i>	8%	4%	6%
<i>socialist</i>	0%	4%	2%
<i>NA</i>	92%	91%	91%

Table 5.99: Relative frequency distribution of “top-down vertical” representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>conservative</i>	50%	50%
<i>socialist</i>	0%	100%
<i>NA</i>	34%	66%
μ	28%	72%

Table 5.100: Absolute frequency distribution of “horizontal” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>NA</i>	1	32	33	16.5
<i>radical TAN</i>	9	6	15	7.5
<i>socialist</i>	9	4	13	6.5
<i>regionalist</i>	3	9	12	6
<i>conservative</i>	9	1	10	5

<i>liberal</i>	2	3	5	2.5
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	2	3	5	2.5
Σ	35	58		
μ	5	8.3		

Table 5.101: Relative frequency distribution of "horizontal" representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	13%	65%	39%
<i>regionalist</i>	38%	0%	19%
<i>liberal</i>	25%	6%	16%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	25%	6%	16%
<i>radical TAN</i>	0%	12%	6%
<i>socialist</i>	0%	8%	4%
<i>conservative</i>	0%	2%	1%

Table 5.102: Relative frequency distribution of "horizontal" representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>radical TAN</i>	0%	100%
<i>conservative</i>	0%	100%
<i>liberal</i>	40%	60%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	40%	60%
<i>socialist</i>	0%	100%
<i>regionalist</i>	100%	0%
<i>NA</i>	3%	97%
μ	26%	74%

Table 5.103: Absolute frequency distribution of "supranational" representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>NA</i>	46	66	112	56
<i>conservative</i>	5	4	9	4.5
<i>socialist</i>	3	2	5	2.5
<i>green</i>	1	0	1	0.5
Σ	55	72		
μ	13.75	18		

Table 5.104: Relative frequency distribution of "supranational" representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	84%	92%	88%
<i>conservative</i>	9%	6%	7%
<i>socialist</i>	5%	3%	4%
<i>green</i>	2%	0%	1%

Table 5.105: Relative frequency distribution of "supranational" representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>conservative</i>	56%	44%
<i>socialist</i>	60%	40%
<i>green</i>	100%	0%
<i>NA</i>	41%	59%
μ	64%	36%

Table 5.106: Absolute frequency distribution of "regional/global" representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	Σ	μ
<i>NA</i>	64	38	102	51
<i>socialist</i>	12	2	14	7
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	10	2	12	6
<i>conservative</i>	9	0	9	4.5
<i>green</i>	6	1	7	3.5
<i>radical TAN</i>	3	1	4	2
<i>liberal</i>	4	0	4	2
<i>no family</i>	3	0	3	1.5
<i>agrarian/center</i>	1	0	1	0.5
Σ	112	44		
μ	12.4	4.9		

Table 5.107: Relative frequency distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by party family in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>	μ
<i>NA</i>	57%	86%	72%
<i>socialist</i>	11%	5%	8%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	9%	5%	7%
<i>conservative</i>	8%	0%	4%
<i>green</i>	5%	2%	4%
<i>radical TAN</i>	3%	2%	2%
<i>liberal</i>	4%	0%	2%
<i>no family</i>	3%	0%	1%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	1%	0%	0%

Table 5.108: Relative frequency distribution of “regional/global” representative claims by period across different party families

<i>parfam</i>	<i>pre-Covid</i>	<i>Covid</i>
<i>radical TAN</i>	75%	25%
<i>agrarian/center</i>	100%	0%
<i>conservative</i>	100%	0%
<i>liberal</i>	100%	0%
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	83%	17%
<i>socialist</i>	86%	14%
<i>green</i>	86%	14%
<i>no family</i>	100%	0%
<i>NA</i>	63%	37%
μ	88%	12%

Table 5.109: Distribution of object scopes by newspaper format in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

<i>period</i>	<i>object scope</i>	<i>newsp_type</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>rel.freq</i>
<i>pre-Covid</i>	EU	tabloid / regional	50	32%
	Supranational	regional		
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Global /	tabloid / regional	17	11%
	Regional	regional		
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Other EU	tabloid / regional	19	12%
	Member State	regional		
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Own Country,	tabloid / regional	72	46%
	National	regional		
<i>Covid</i>	EU	tabloid / regional	22	21%
	Supranational	regional		
<i>Covid</i>	Global /	tabloid / regional	6	6%
	Regional	regional		

<i>Covid</i>	Other EU Member State	tabloid / regional	17	16%
<i>Covid</i>	Own Country, National	tabloid / regional	62	58%
<i>pre-Covid</i>	EU Supranational	quality	169	35%
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Global / Regional	quality	89	18%
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Other EU Member State	quality	87	18%
<i>pre-Covid</i>	Own Country, National	quality	137	28%
<i>Covid</i>	EU Supranational	quality	183	32%
<i>Covid</i>	Global / Regional	quality	29	5%
<i>Covid</i>	Other EU Member State	quality	154	27%
<i>Covid</i>	Own Country, National	quality	199	35%

Figure 5.41: Bar plot showing the relative frequency distribution of object scopes by newspaper format in the pre- and during Covid-19 datasets

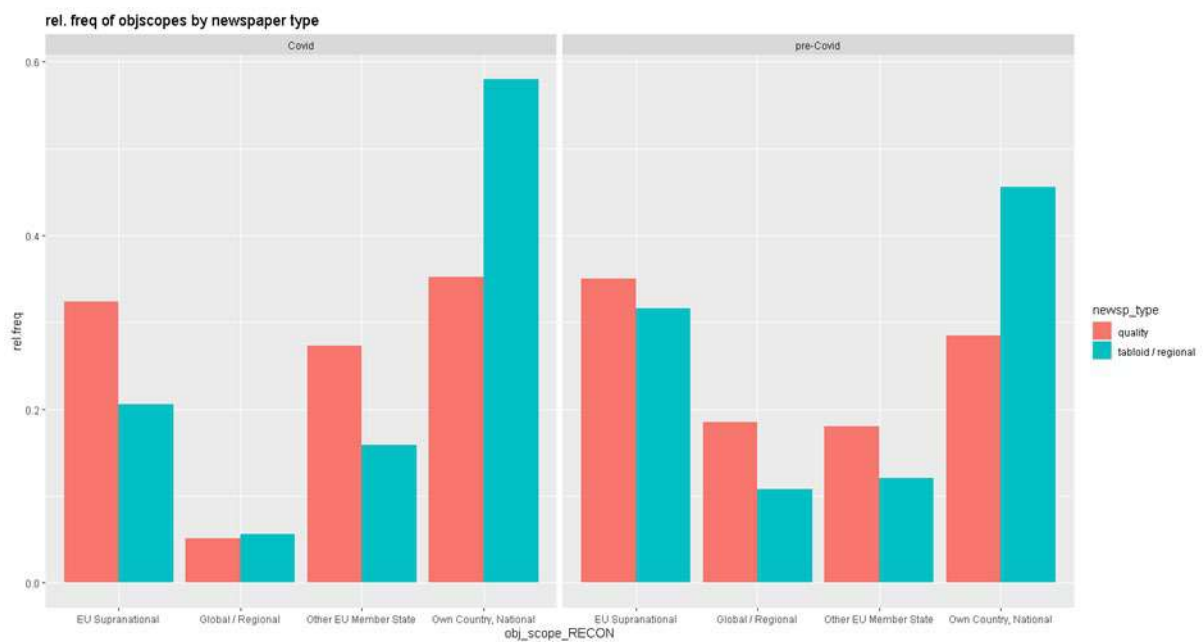


Figure 5.42: Barplot showing the relative frequency distribution of frames (%) in each country

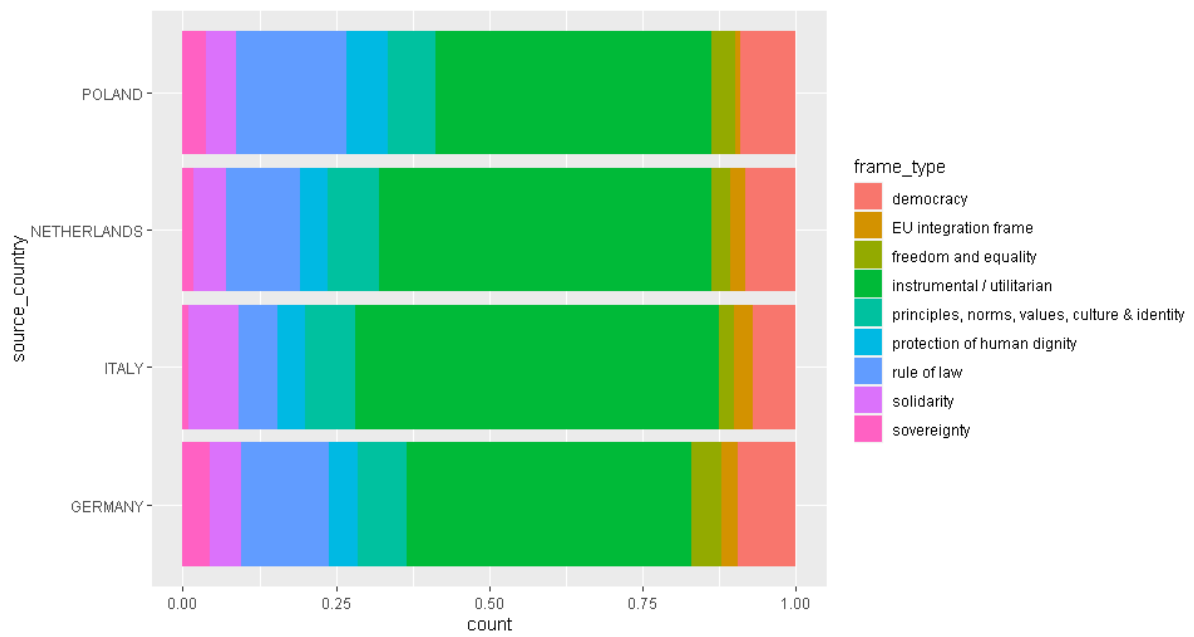


Figure 5.43: Barplot showing the relative frequency distribution of frames (%) by country

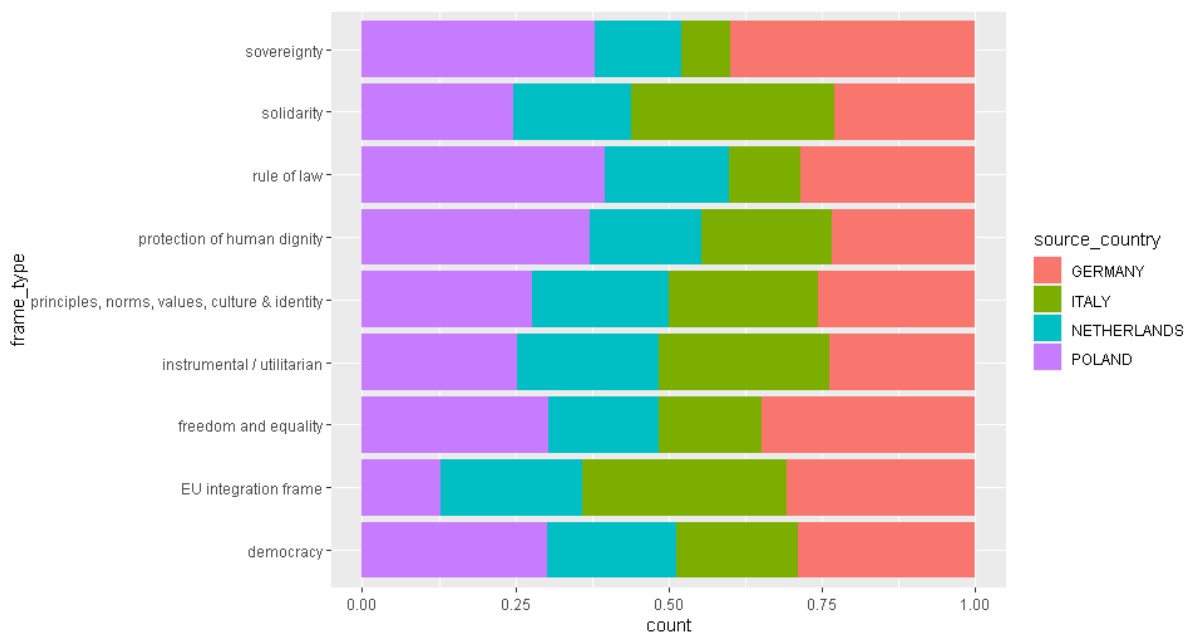


Figure 5.44: Boxplot showing the statistical relative frequency distribution of frames according to country

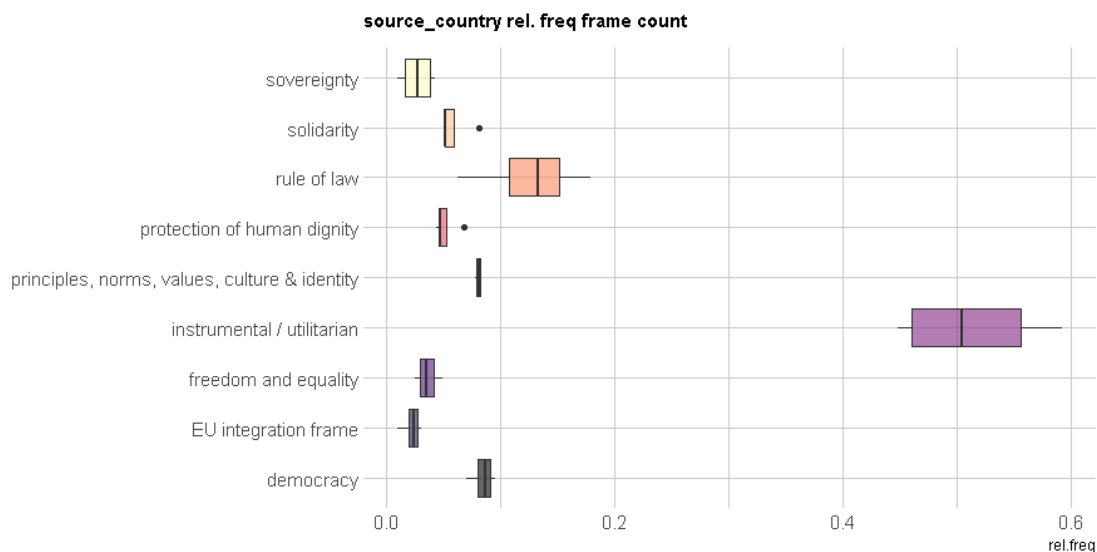


Table 5.110: Absolute frequency distribution of frames by discursive territorial scope

act2obj	democracy	EU integration frame	freedom and equality	instrumental / utilitarian	principles, norms, values, culture & identity	protection of human dignity	rule of law	solidarity	sovereignty	other
bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	16	8	7	104	45	9	17	37	9	30
horizontal Europeanisation national	9	1	3	17	2	1	6	10	0	8
national	36	11	16	329	50	16	29	20	31	117
regional / global (other)	4	0	4	20	1	17	1	4	1	13
supranational Europeanisation	13	4	3	47	16	3	6	14	3	18
top-down vertical Europeanisation	4	2	1	6	0	4	7	2	0	9
Σ	82	26	34	523	114	50	66	87	44	195
μ	23	7	10	149	33	14	19	25	13	56

Table 5.111: Relative frequency distribution of frames (%) according to discursive territorial scope

act2obj	democracy	EU integration frame	freedom and equality	instrumental / utilitarian	principles, norms, values, culture & identity	protection of human dignity	rule of law	solidarity	sovereignty	other	μ
bottom-up vertical Europeanisation	20%	31%	21%	20%	39%	18%	26%	43%	20%	15%	25%
horizontal Europeanisation national	11%	4%	9%	3%	2%	2%	9%	11%	0%	4%	6%
national	44%	42%	47%	63%	44%	32%	44%	23%	70%	60%	47%
regional / global (other)	5%	0%	12%	4%	1%	34%	2%	5%	2%	7%	7%
supranational Europeanisation	16%	15%	9%	9%	14%	6%	9%	16%	7%	9%	11%
top-down vertical Europeanisation	5%	8%	3%	1%	0%	8%	11%	2%	0%	5%	4%

Table 5.112: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by frame type (%)

frame_type	bottom-up vertical	horizontal Europeanisation national	regional / global (other)	supranational Europeanisation	top-down vertical	μ
democracy	6%	16%	5%	6%	10%	9%
EU integration frame	3%	2%	2%	0%	3%	3%
freedom and equality	2%	5%	2%	6%	2%	4%
instrumental / utilitarian	37%	30%	50%	31%	37%	34%
principles, norms, values, culture & identity	16%	4%	8%	2%	13%	7%
protection of human dignity	3%	2%	2%	26%	2%	8%
rule of law	6%	11%	4%	2%	5%	8%
solidarity	13%	18%	3%	6%	11%	9%
sovereignty	3%	0%	5%	2%	2%	2%
other	11%	14%	18%	20%	14%	17%

Figure 5.45: Barplot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes for the ‘sovereignty’ frame

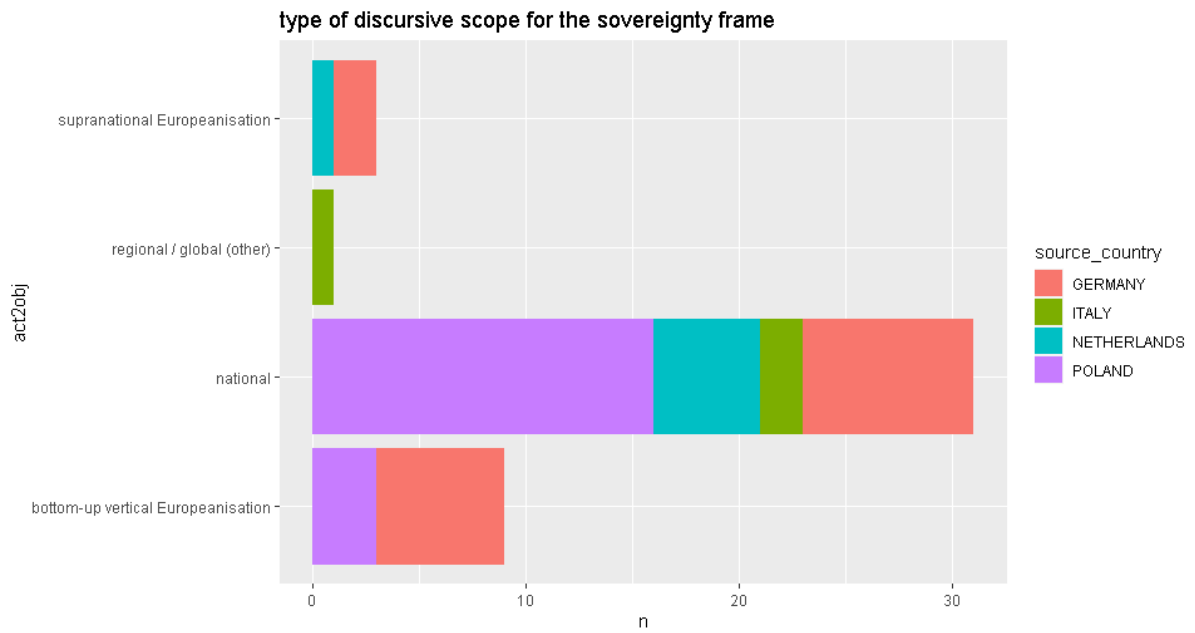


Figure 5.46: Barplot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes for the ‘protection of human dignity’ frame

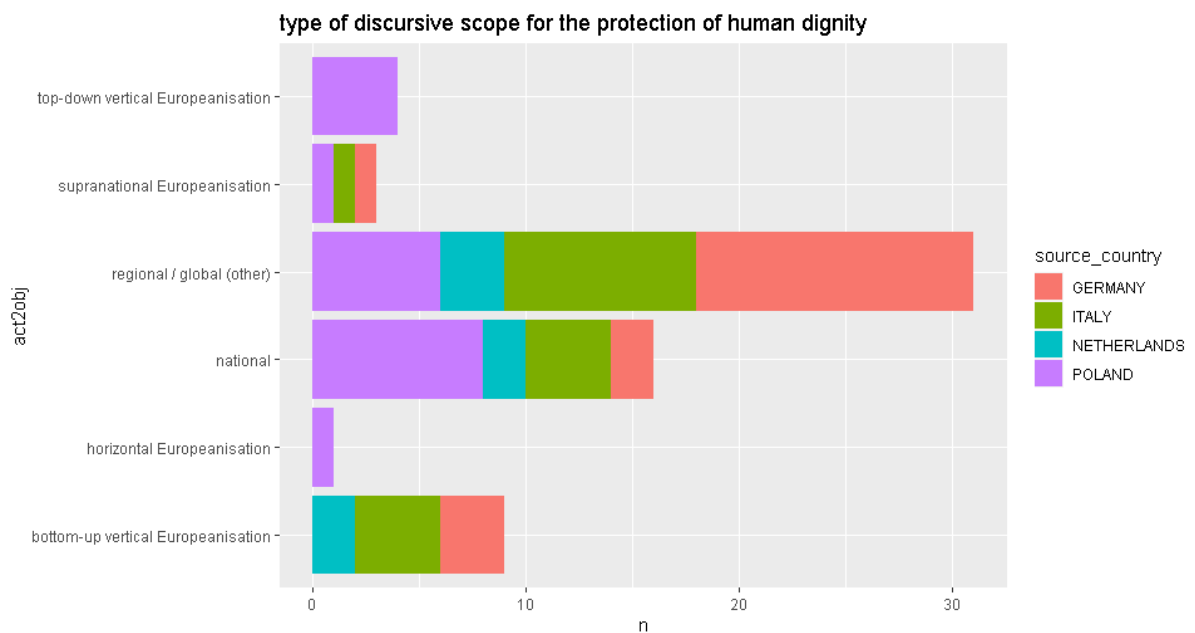


Figure 5.47: Barplot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes for the ‘principles, norms, values, culture & identity’ frame

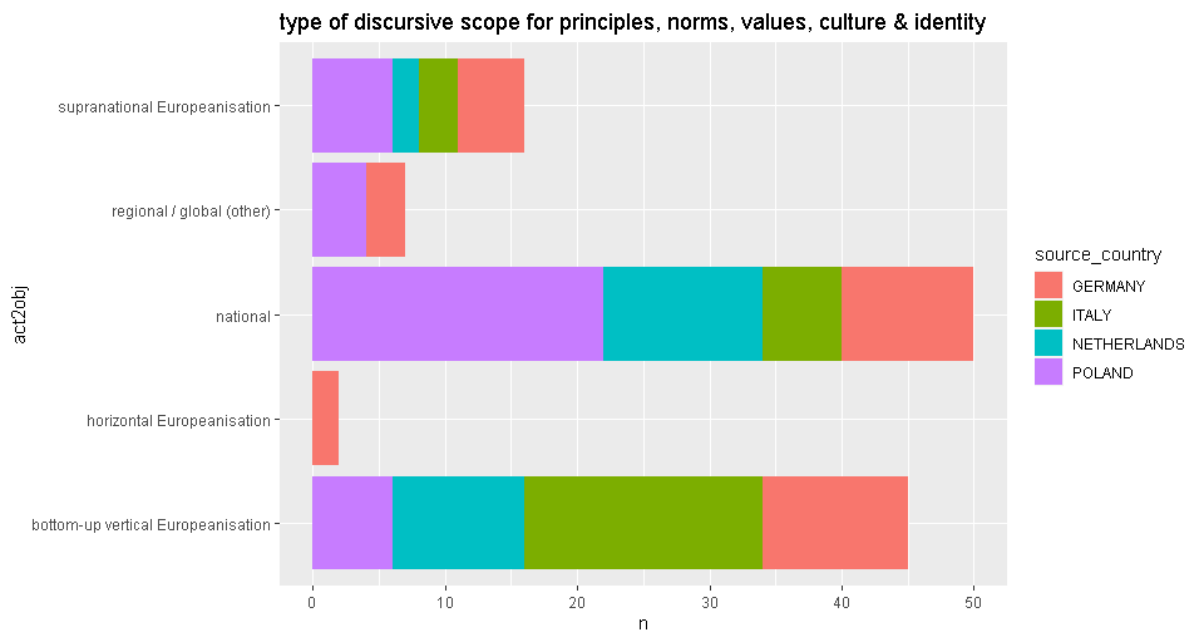


Figure 5.48: Faceted bar plot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes according to frame type

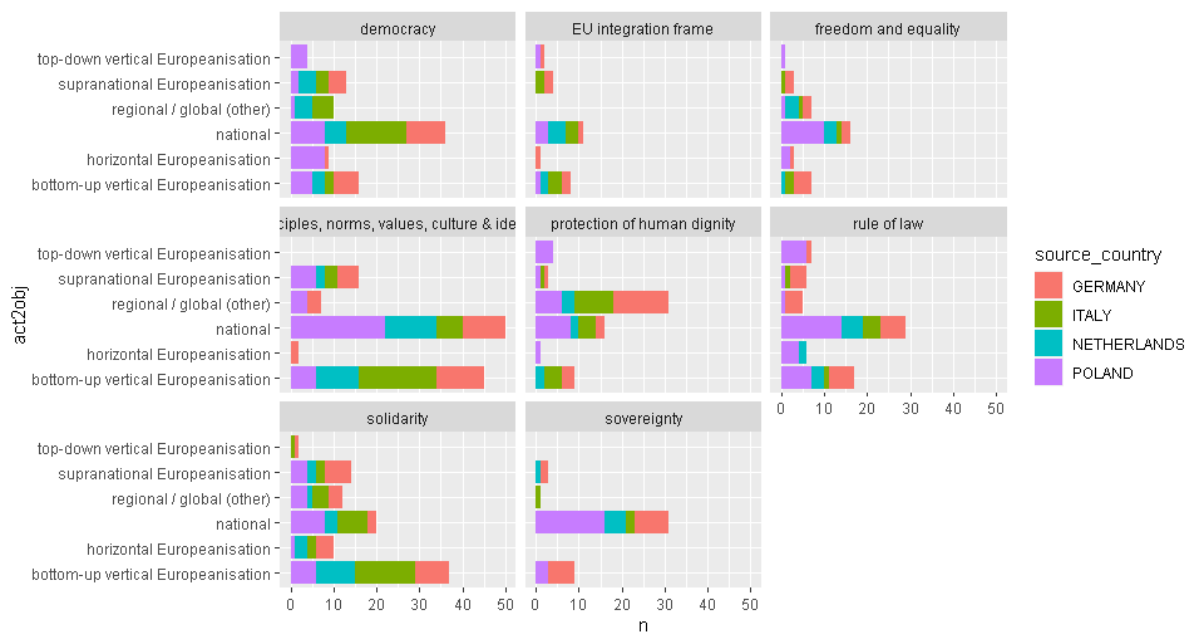


Figure 5.49: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of frame types according to discursive territorial scope

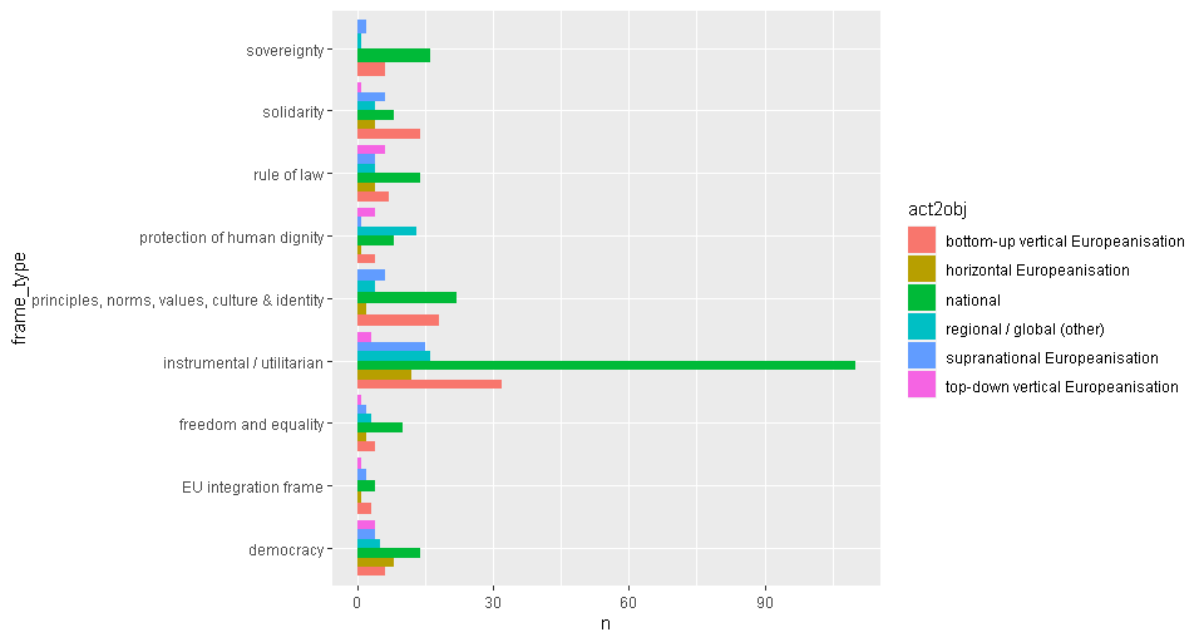


Figure 5.50: Figure 5.51: Barplot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes for the 'sovereignty' frame

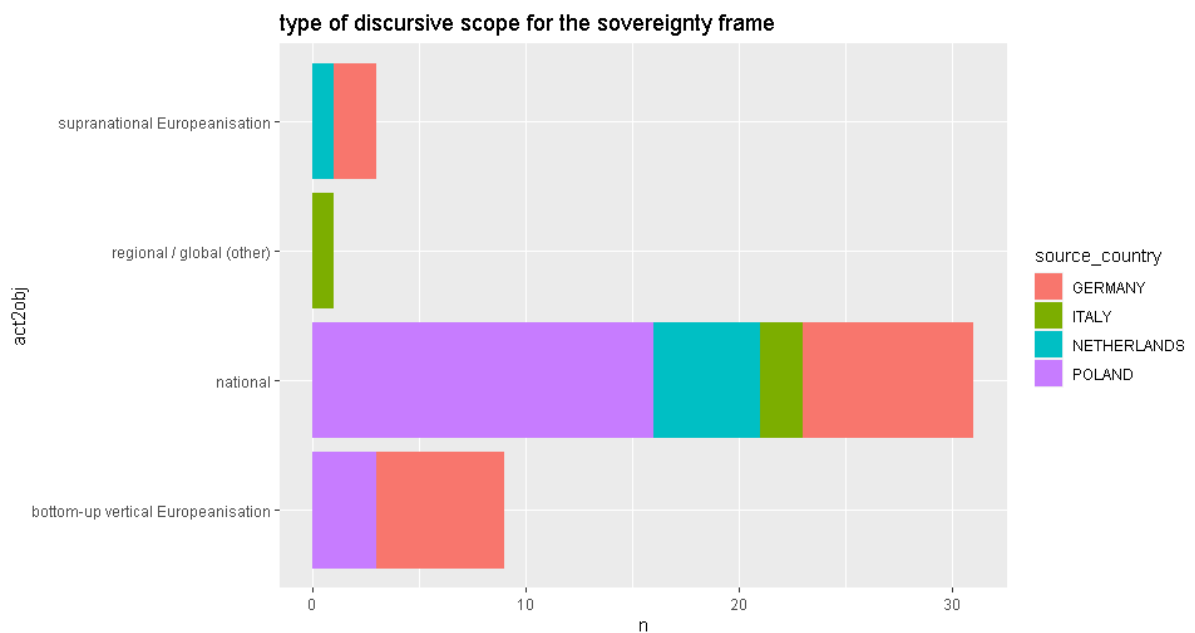


Figure 5.52: Barplot to illustrate the absolute frequency of discursive territorial scopes for the ‘protection of human dignity’ frame

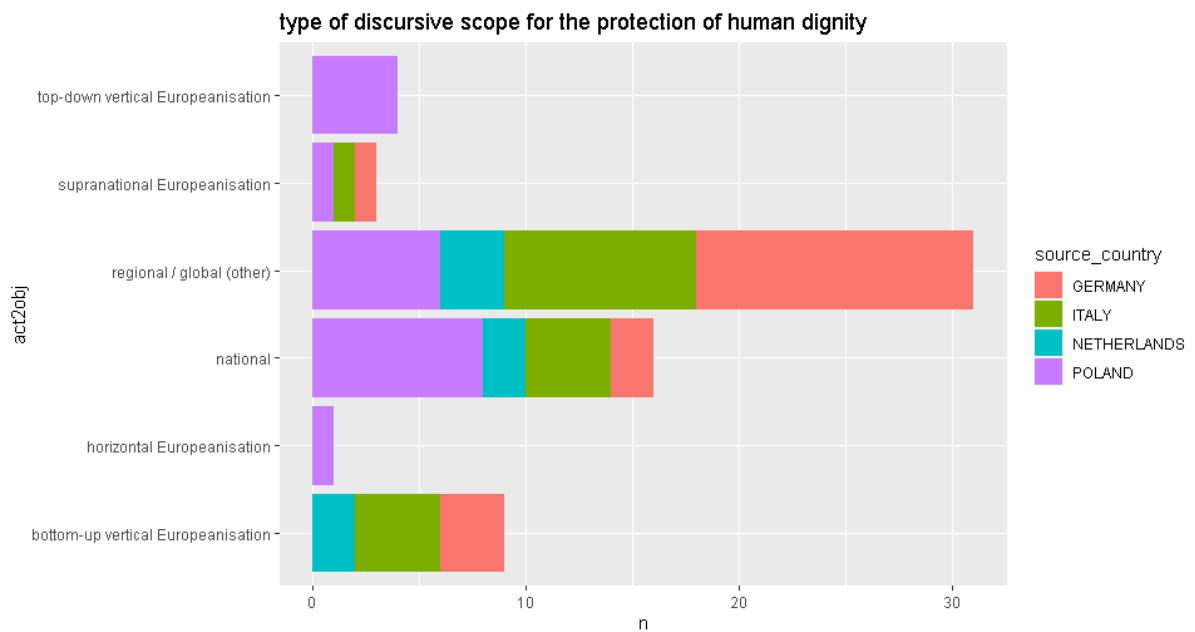


Figure 5.53: Bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of issue fields by country

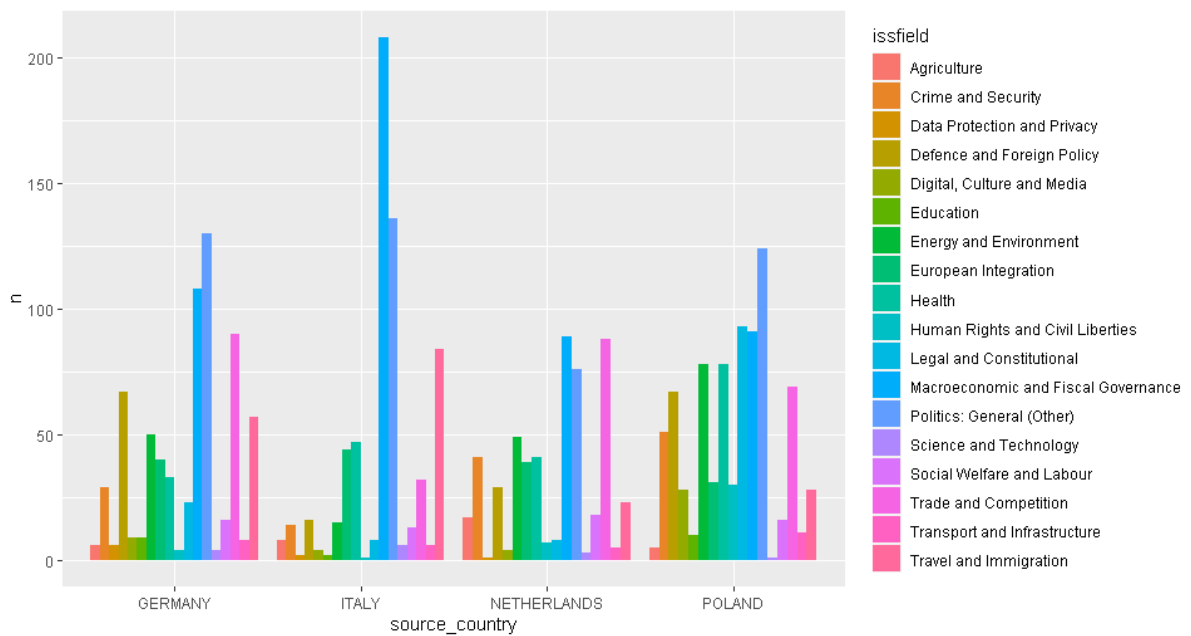


Figure 5.54: Faceted bar plot showing the absolute frequency distribution of issue fields by country

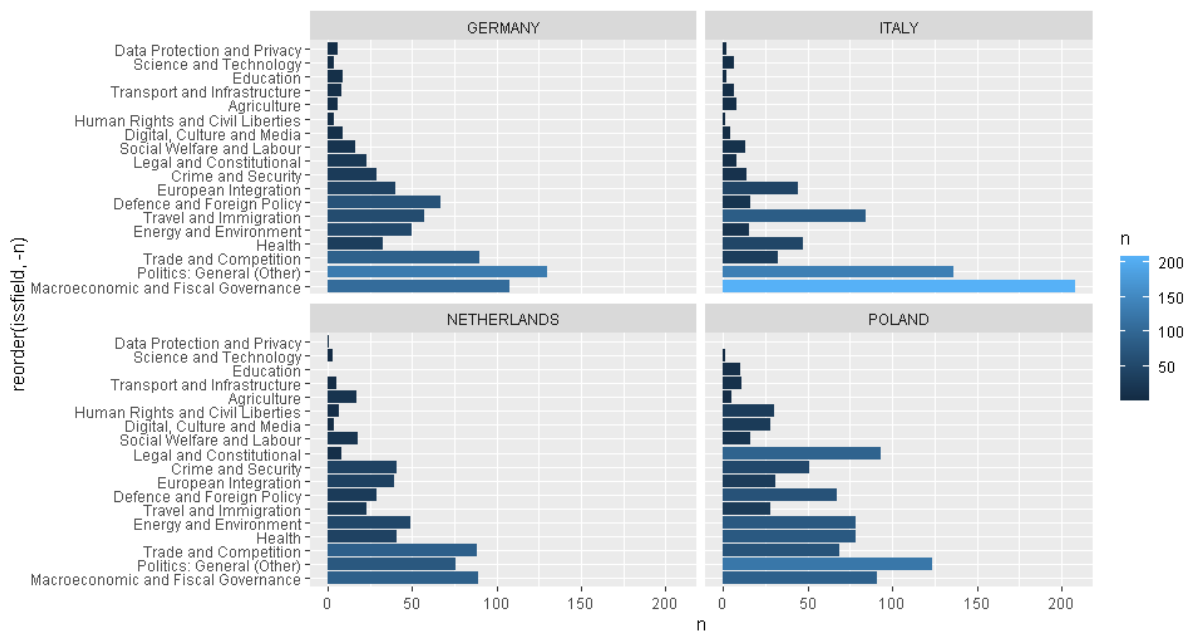


Figure 5.55: Box plot to show the statistical relative frequency distribution of issue fields by country

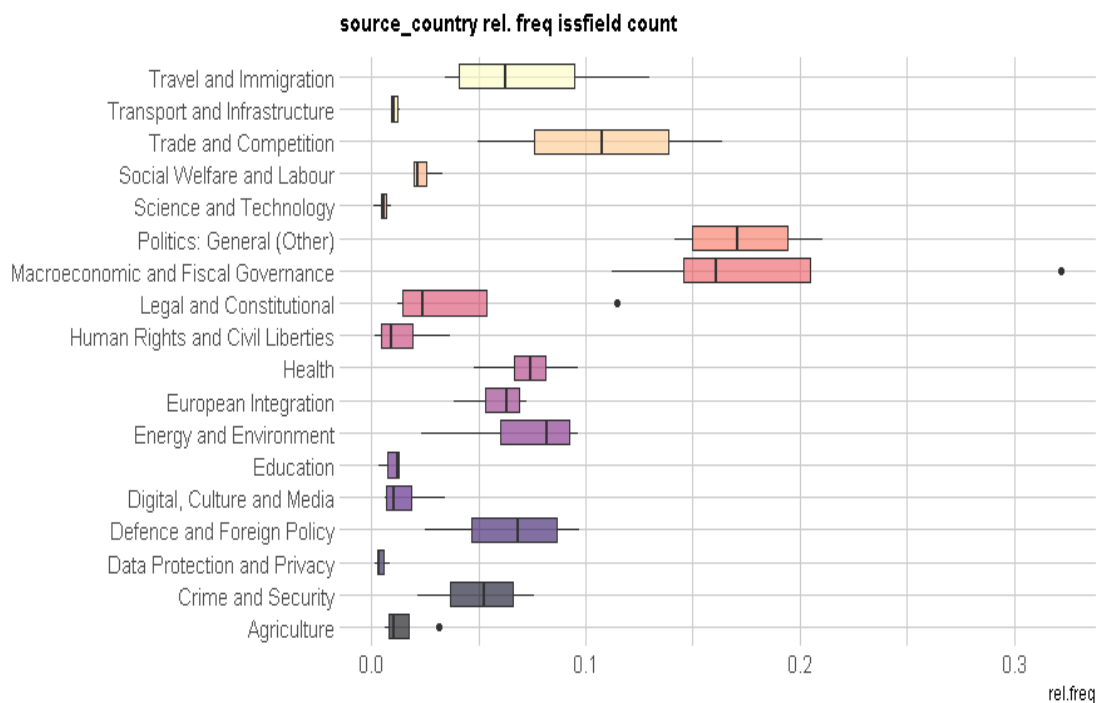


Table 5.113: Absolute frequency distribution of issue fields by discursive territorial scope

issfield	bottom-up vertical	horizontal	national	regional / global (other)	supranational	top-down vertical	Σ	Σ %	μ
Agriculture	6	0	11	0	0	1	18	1%	3
Crime and Security	3	1	9	3	3	1	20	2%	3
Data Protection and Privacy	1	0	0	3	0	0	4	0%	1
Defence and Foreign Policy	27	10	43	7	8	1	96	8%	16
Digital, Culture and Media	10	0	9	2	3	1	25	2%	4
Education	1	0	3	2	1	0	7	1%	1
Energy and Environment	24	3	39	7	12	3	88	7%	15
European Integration	41	3	36	6	5	1	92	8%	15
Health	8	11	66	1	17	2	105	9%	18
Human Rights and Civil Liberties	4	1	10	0	2	2	19	2%	3
Legal and Constitutional	9	1	22	0	3	7	42	3%	7
Macroeconomic and Fiscal Governance	54	5	152	3	32	4	250	20%	42
Politics: General (Other)	38	10	104	8	9	2	171	14%	29
Science and Technology	3	0	2	0	5	1	11	1%	2
Social Welfare and Labour	10	2	21	7	2	0	42	3%	7
Trade and Competition	25	5	64	3	19	8	124	10%	21
Transport and Infrastructure	2	0	7	0	2	0	11	1%	2
Travel and Immigration	16	5	57	13	4	1	96	8%	16

Table 5.114: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by issue field

issfield	bottom-up vertical	horizontal	national	regional / global	supranational	top-down vertical
Agriculture	33%	0%	61%	0%	0%	6%
Crime and Security	15%	5%	45%	15%	15%	5%
Data Protection and Privacy	25%	0%	0%	75%	0%	0%
Defence and Foreign Policy	28%	10%	45%	7%	8%	1%
Digital, Culture and Media	40%	0%	36%	8%	12%	4%
Education	14%	0%	43%	29%	14%	0%
Energy and Environment	27%	3%	44%	8%	14%	3%
European Integration	45%	3%	39%	7%	5%	1%
Health	8%	10%	63%	1%	16%	2%
Human Rights and Civil Liberties	21%	5%	53%	0%	11%	11%
Legal and Constitutional	21%	2%	52%	0%	7%	17%
Macroeconomic and Fiscal Governance	22%	2%	61%	1%	13%	2%
Politics: General (Other)	22%	6%	61%	5%	5%	1%
Science and Technology	27%	0%	18%	0%	45%	9%
Social Welfare and Labour	24%	5%	50%	17%	5%	0%
Trade and Competition	20%	4%	52%	2%	15%	6%
Transport and Infrastructure	18%	0%	64%	0%	18%	0%
Travel and Immigration	17%	5%	59%	14%	4%	1%
μ	24%	3%	47%	10%	12%	4%

Figure 5.56: Bar plot to illustrate the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes by issue field

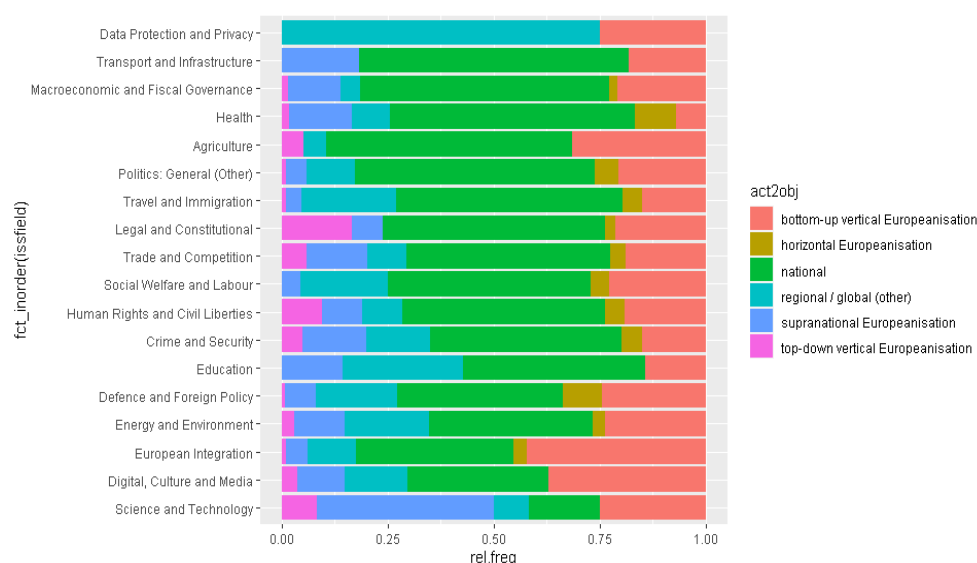


Table 5.115: Relative frequency distribution of issue fields by discursive territorial scope

issfield	bottom-up vertical	horizontal	national	regional / global	supranational	top-down vertical	μ
Agriculture	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Crime and Security	1%	2%	1%	5%	2%	3%	2%
Data Protection and Privacy	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%
Defence and Foreign Policy	10%	18%	7%	11%	6%	3%	9%
Digital, Culture and Media	4%	0%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Education	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%
Energy and Environment	9%	5%	6%	11%	9%	9%	8%
European Integration	15%	5%	5%	9%	4%	3%	7%
Health	3%	19%	10%	2%	13%	6%	9%
Human Rights and Civil Liberties	1%	2%	2%	0%	2%	6%	2%
Legal and Constitutional	3%	2%	3%	0%	2%	20%	5%
Macroeconomic and Fiscal Governance	19%	9%	23%	5%	25%	11%	15%
Politics: General (Other)	13%	18%	16%	12%	7%	6%	12%
Science and Technology	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%	1%
Social Welfare and Labour	4%	4%	3%	11%	2%	0%	4%
Trade and Competition	9%	9%	10%	5%	15%	23%	12%
Transport and Infrastructure	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Travel and Immigration	6%	9%	9%	20%	3%	3%	8%

Figure 5.57: Barplot to illustrate the relative frequency distribution of issue fields by discursive territorial scope

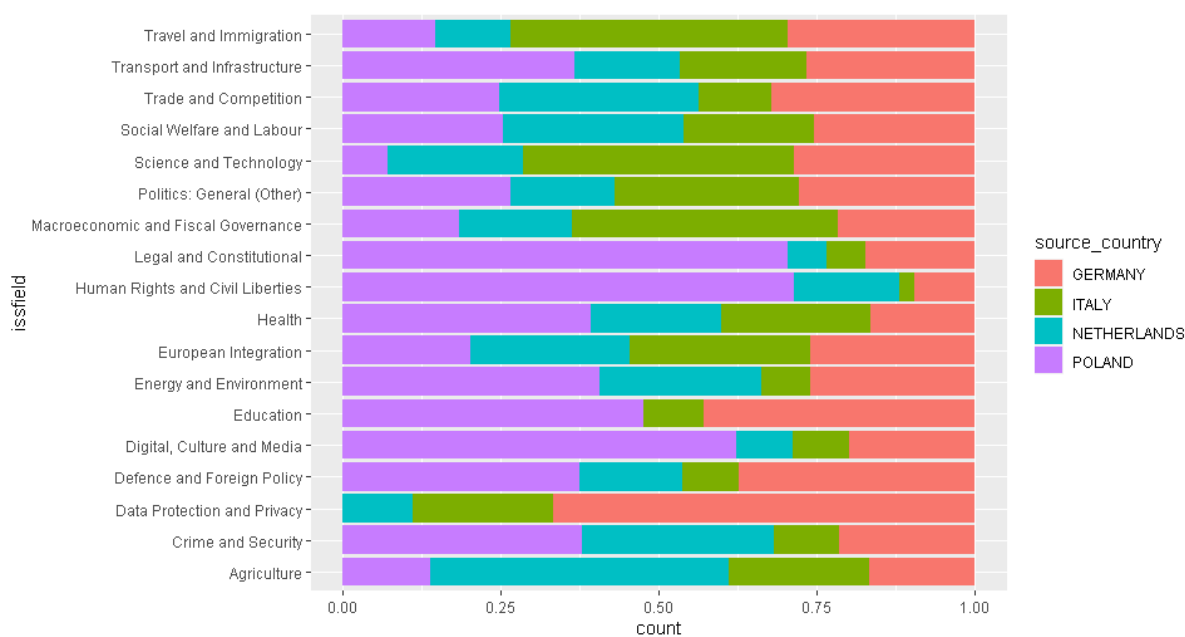


Table 5.116: Mean EU evaluation according to discursive territorial scope

<i>act2obj</i>	<i>EU eval (mean)</i>
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	0.92
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	0.53
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	0.00

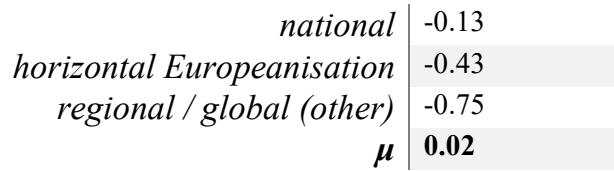


Figure 5.58: Barplot to show mean EU evaluations according to discursive territorial scope

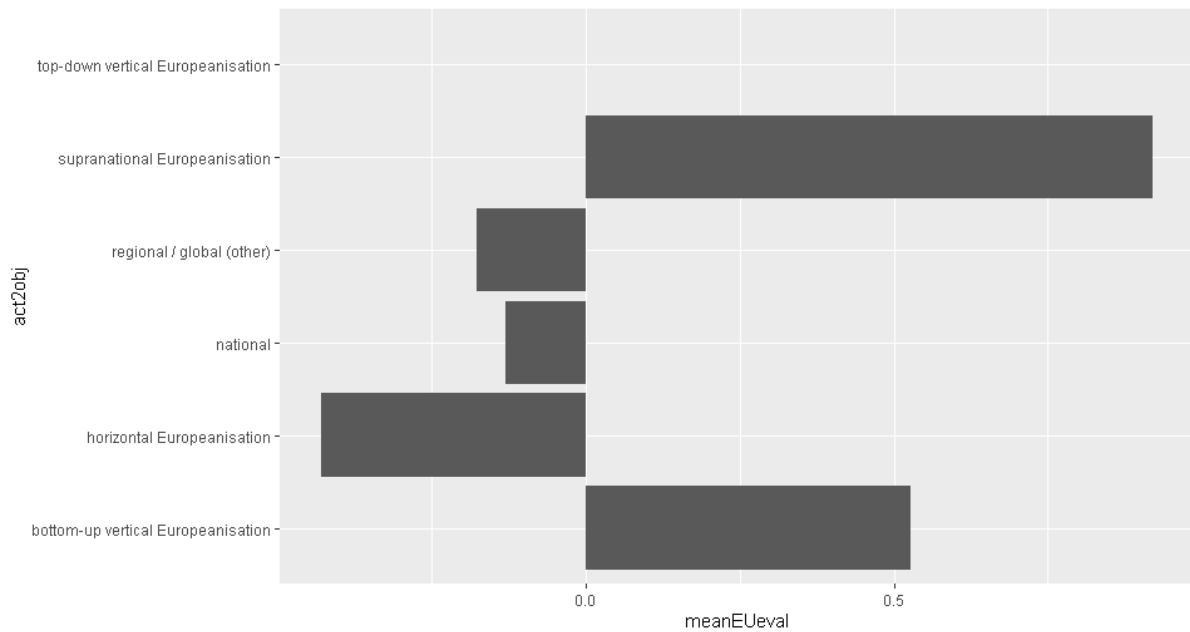


Figure 5.59: Absolute frequency of “national” representative claims according to EU valence (+/-)

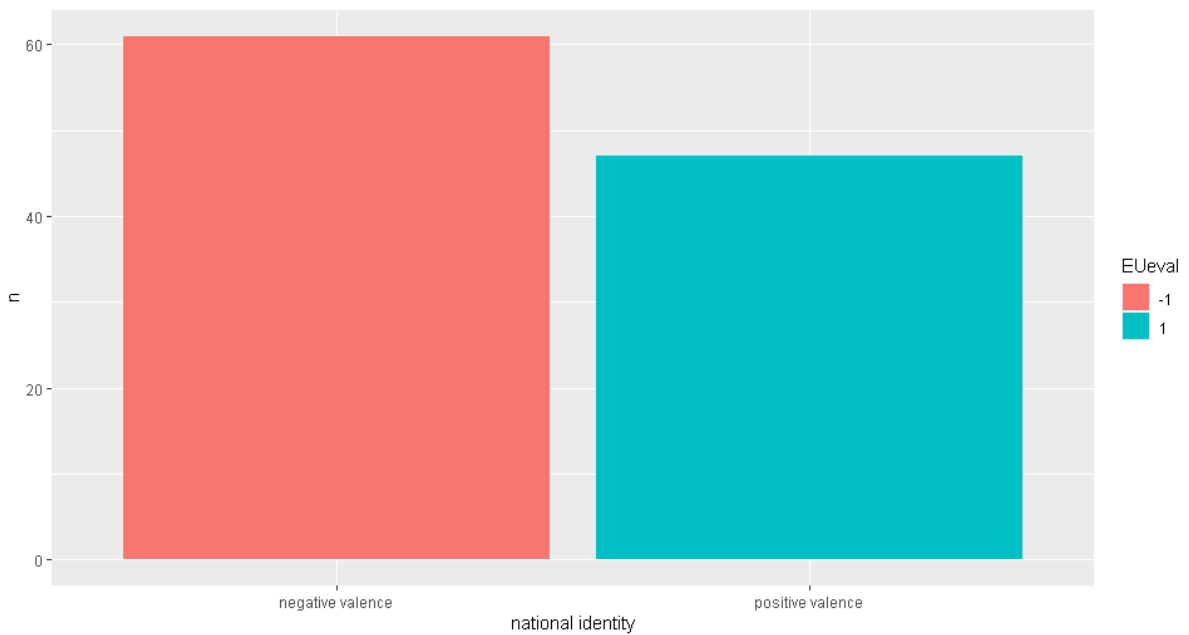


Table 5.117: Mean addressee evaluation according to discursive territorial scope

<i>act2obj</i>	<i>adreval</i>
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	-0.13
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	-0.31
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	-0.54
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	-0.58
<i>national</i>	-0.59
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	-0.65

Figure 5.60: Barplot to show mean addressee evaluations according to discursive territorial scope

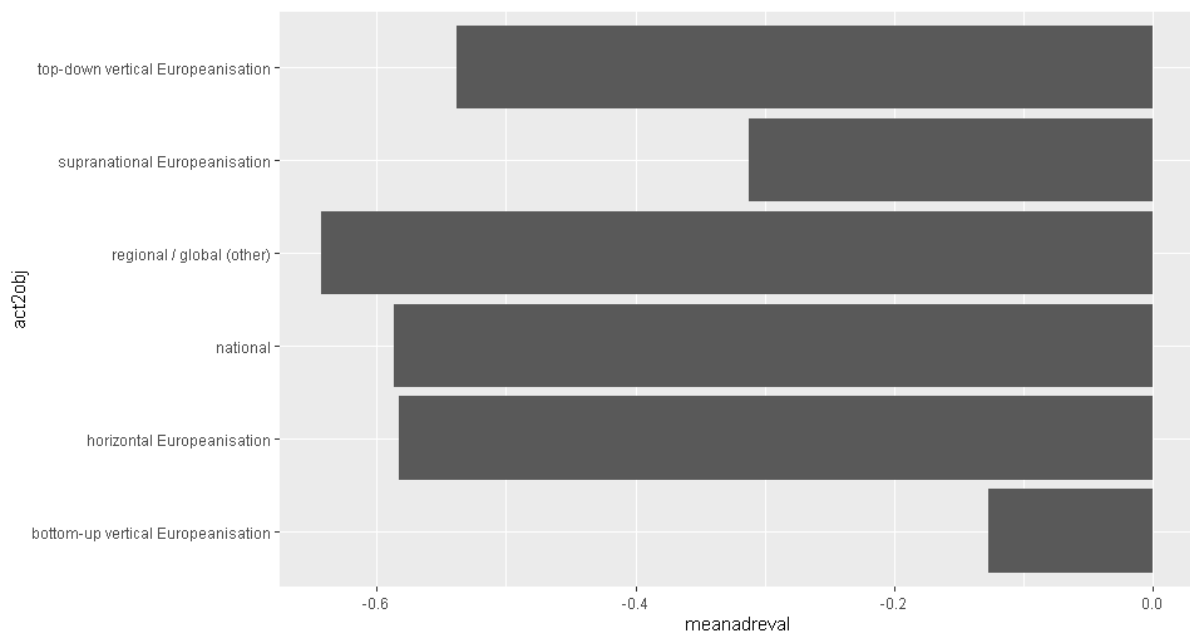


Figure 5.61: Barplot showing the absolute frequency distribution of “national” representative claims according to addressee valence (+/-)

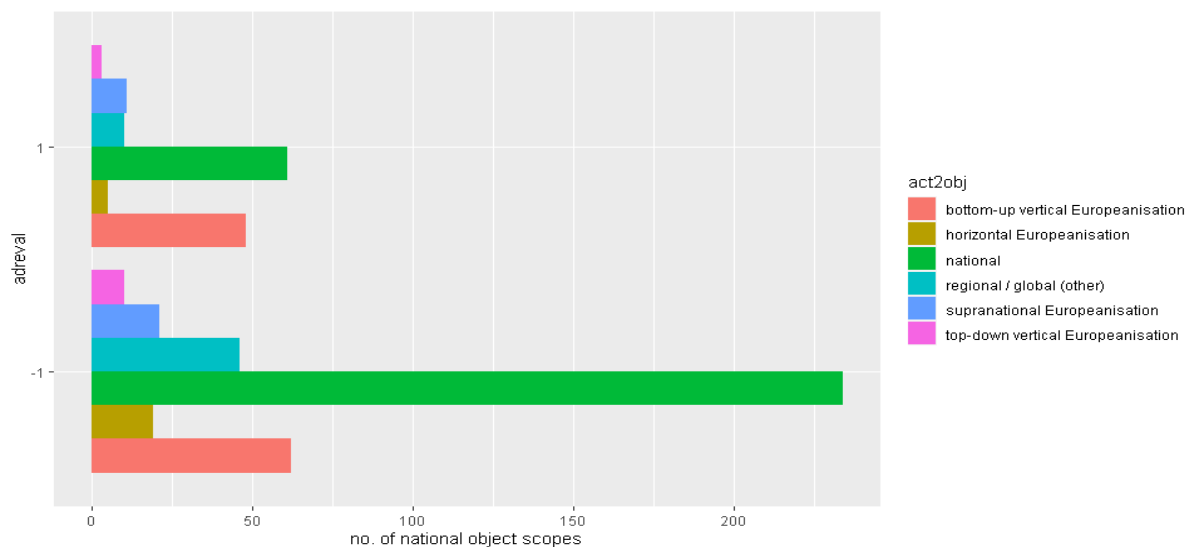


Figure 5.62: Absolute frequency of “national” representative claims according to addressee valence (+/-)

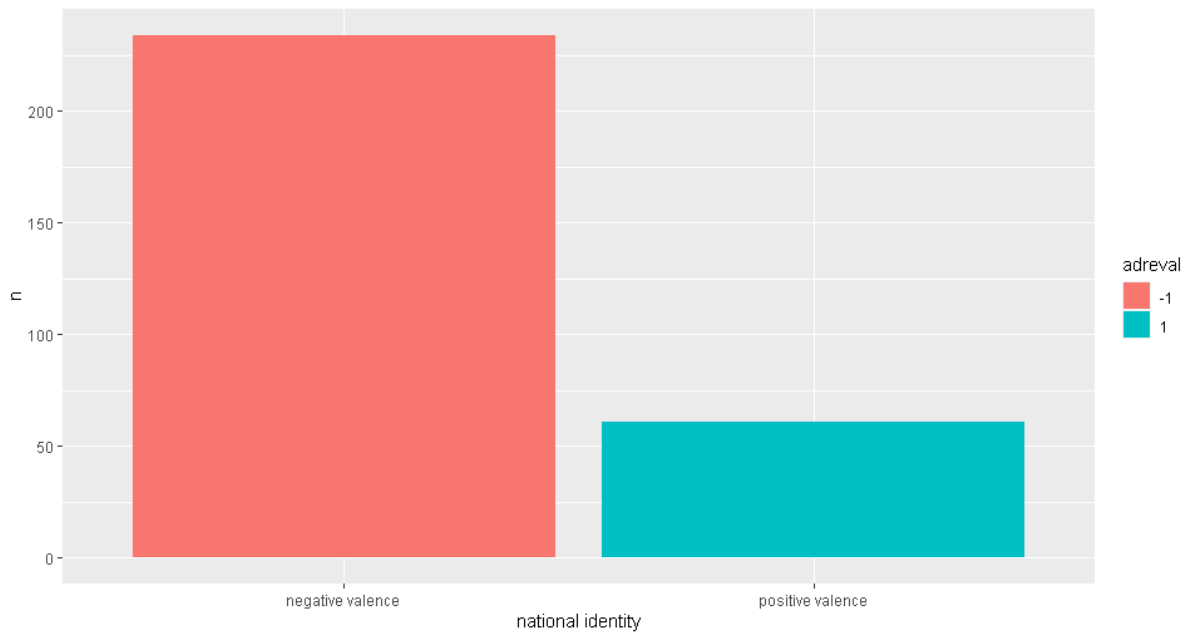


Figure 5.63: Bar plot to show the relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes according to EU valence

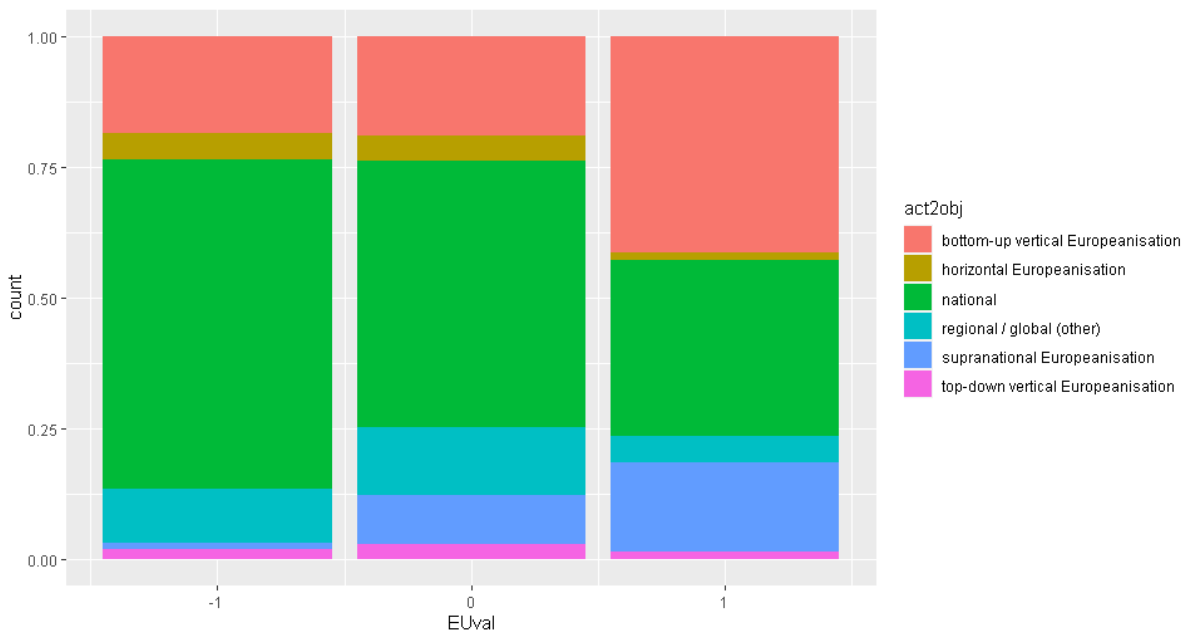


Table 5.118: Relative frequency distribution of discursive territorial scopes according to EU valence

<i>EU Valence and Identity scope</i>	Negative	Neutral	Positive
<i>bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	19%	19%	41%
<i>horizontal Europeanisation</i>	5%	5%	1%
<i>national</i>	63%	51%	34%
<i>regional / global (other)</i>	10%	13%	5%
<i>supranational Europeanisation</i>	1%	9%	17%
<i>top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	2%	3%	1%

Table 5.119: Territorial scope of communicative linkages edges distribution (%) (one-mode network)

<i>Territorial scope</i>	Network					
	Agg.	DE	IT	NL	PL	Mean
<i>National</i>	37.71	27.47	38.76	37.75	38.42	35.60
<i>Horizontal Europeanisation</i>	13.95	14.14	13.45	12.45	13.70	13.44
<i>Bottom-up vertical Europeanisation</i>	19.02	20.39	22.29	19.96	14.41	19.26
<i>Top-down vertical Europeanisation</i>	7.09	7.73	6.43	4.35	8.90	6.85
<i>Supranational Europeanisation</i>	5.85	9.05	6.63	6.52	5.51	6.93
<i>Regional / global</i>	18.38	21.22	12.45	18.97	19.07	17.93

Figure 5.64: One-mode network graph of the “Euro net”

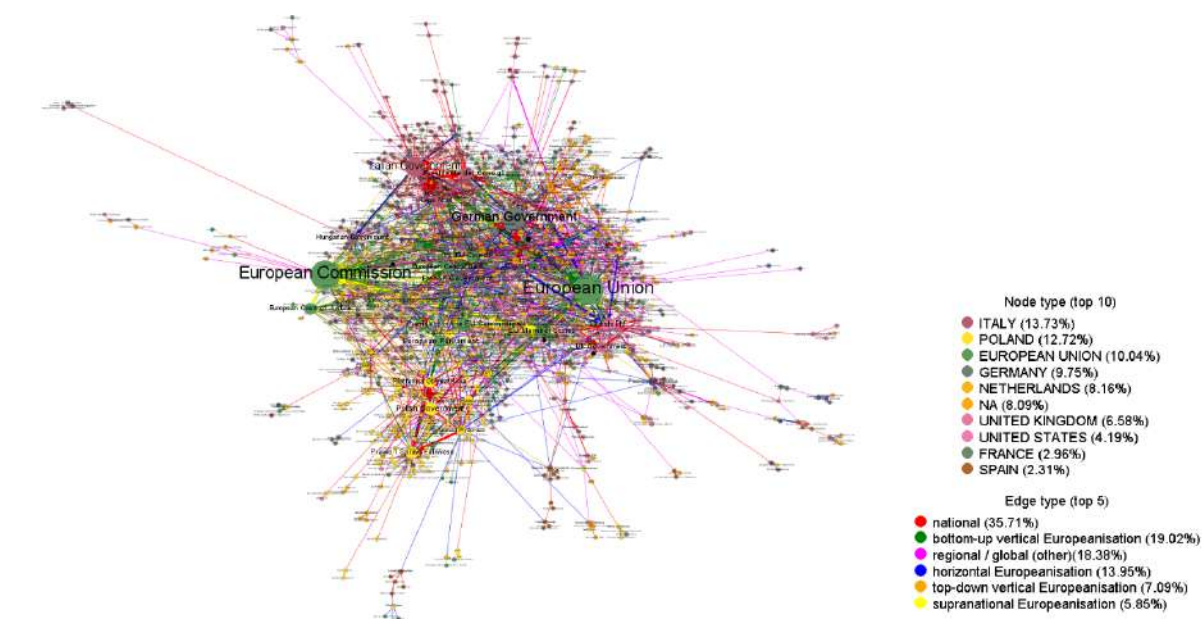


Figure 5.65: One-mode German network graph

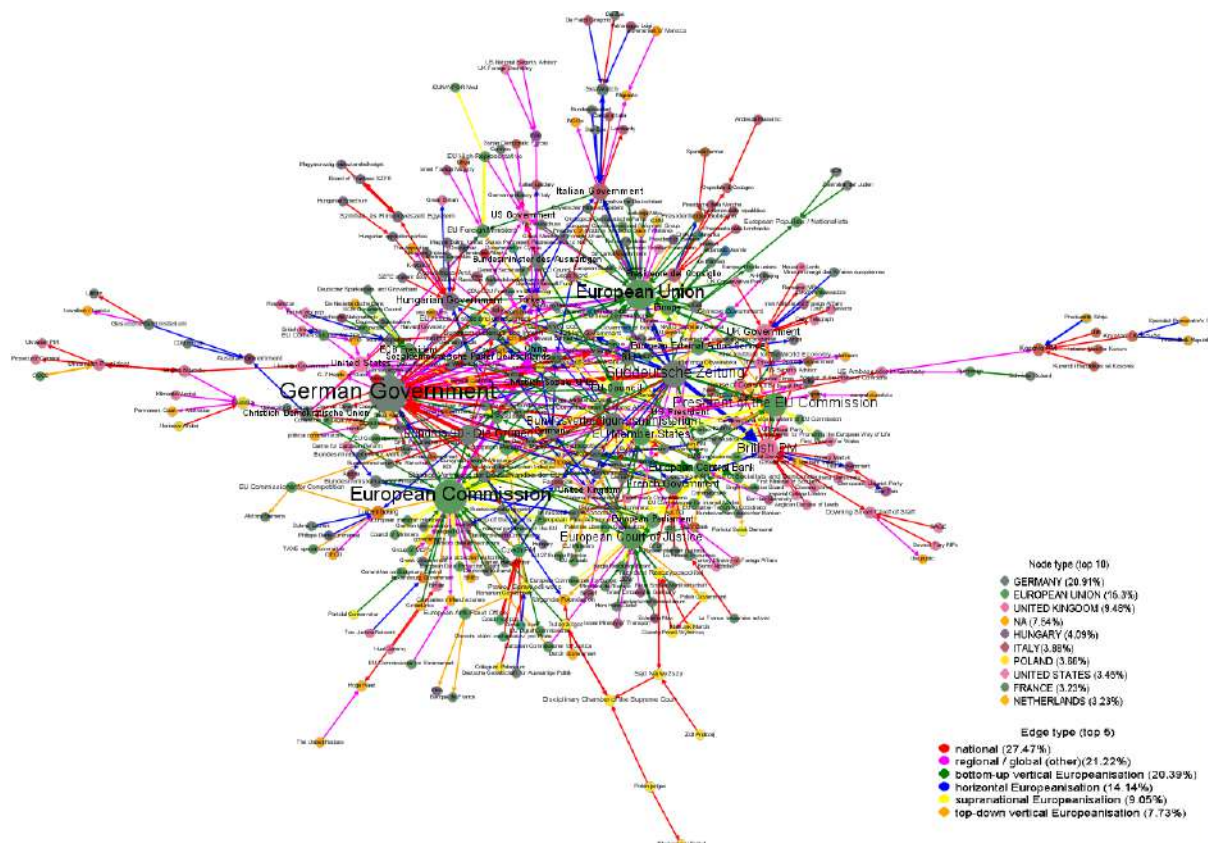


Table 5.120: SNA summary statistics for the German network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
European Commission	4381	European Commission	1.00	German Government	48	European Union	31	SÄ/ddeutsche Zeitung	29
German Government	4221	China	0.61	European Commission	41	European Commission	27	German Government	25
British PM	3392	EU Member States	0.60	European Union	35	German Government	23	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	17
European Court of Justice	3276	United States	0.58	SÄ/ddeutsche Zeitung	29	British PM	15	President of the EU Commission	17
French Government	3272	European Court of Justice	0.57	President of the EU Commission	24	European Court of Justice	14	European Commission	14
President of the EU Commission	2238	European Union	0.54	British PM	22	EU Member States	14	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11
Polish Government	1948	German Government	0.51	European Court of Justice	21	European Central Bank	11	Bundesminister des AuswÄrtigen	9
GazetÄ™ Przed-WyborczÄ™...	1856	EU Council	0.49	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	18	Hungarian Government	10	European External Action Service	8
Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	1820	French Government	0.48	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	17	UK Government	10	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	8
EU Council	1690	EU heads of state and government	0.45	EU Member States	16	United States	10	Bild	8
SÄ...d NajwyÅszy	1603	ex-ECB President	0.44	Hungarian Government	15	French Government	9	Christlich Soziale Union	7
Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	1568	Netherlands	0.43	French Government	15	EU Council	9	European Court of Justice	7
Tuleya Igor	1476	European Central Bank	0.39	UK Government	14	China	9	British PM	7
House of Commons	1430	European Parliament	0.38	European Central Bank	14	Europe	9	French Government	6
Hungarian Government	1378	United Kingdom	0.37	Italian Government	13	Turkey	9	Italian Government	6
Czech PM	1296	Luxembourg	0.35	EU Council	13	European Parliament	8	US President	6
European Parliament	1181	Czech PM	0.33	US President	12	United Kingdom	8	Hungarian Government	5
European People's Party	1126	Turkey	0.33	United States	11	President of the EU Commission	7	DGB	5
UK Government	1120	Romanian Government	0.33	European External Action Service	10	Italian Government	7	Christlich Demokratische Union	5
Presidente del Consiglio	1073	Britain	0.33	ECB President	10	Germany	7	European People's Party	5
US President	1024	Companies / Manufacturers	0.33	European Parliament	10	US Government	7	Bundesministerium des Innern	5
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	940	governments	0.33	Bundesminister des AuswÄrtigen	10	Luxembourg	7	Presidente del Consiglio	5
EU Member States	823	European transport ministers	0.33	Christlich Soziale Union	9	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	6	UK Government	4
Christlich Soziale Union	817	SMEs	0.33	China	9	ECB President	6	European Union	4
Single Resolution Board	793	Greek Government	0.33	Europe	9	US President	6	EU Council	4

Figure 5.66: One-mode Italian network graph

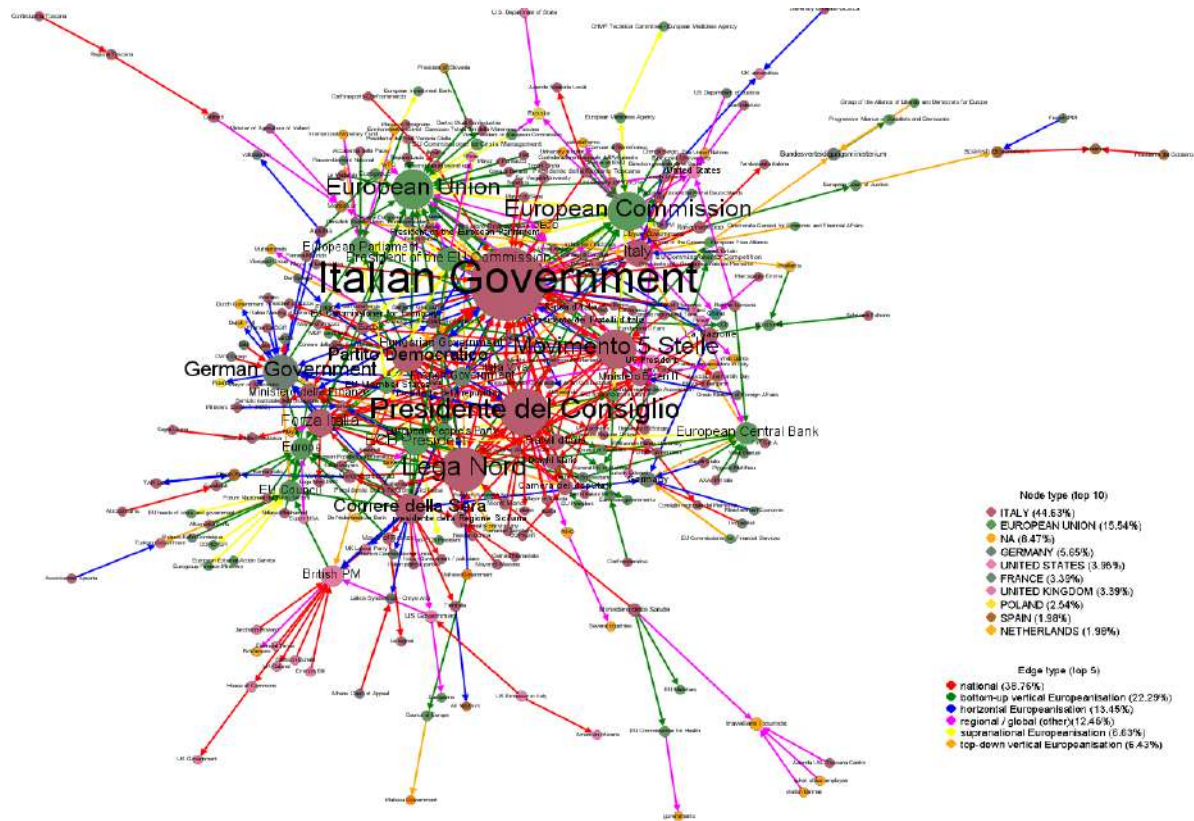


Table 5.121: SNA summary statistics for the Italian network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
Italian Government	7087	Italian Government	1.00	Italian Government	61	Italian Government	44	Presidente del Consiglio	22
Lega Nord	4085	European Commission	0.71	Presidente del Consiglio	37	European Union	29	Corriere della Sera	20
European Commission	4017	European Union	0.68	Lega Nord	34	European Commission	20	Partito Democratico	17
Presidente del Consiglio	3821	Lega Nord	0.53	European Union	30	Lega Nord	17	Lega Nord	17
German Government	3444	Presidente del Consiglio	0.46	Movimento 5 Stelle	29	Italy	17	Italian Government	17
Movimento 5 Stelle	2306	Italy	0.41	European Commission	29	Presidente del Consiglio	15	Movimento 5 Stelle	17
European Union	2001	Hungarian Government	0.39	German Government	25	German Government	15	Forza Italia	14
EU Council	1666	German Government	0.36	Partito Democratico	21	Movimento 5 Stelle	12	German Government	10
British PM	1527	Movimento 5 Stelle	0.32	Corriere della Sera	20	Europe	12	President of the EU Commission	9
President of the EU Commission	1398	Italia Viva	0.31	Forza Italia	18	European Central Bank	11	European Commission	9
EU Member States	1387	Europe	0.31	Italy	17	ECB President	10	La Nazione	7
Partito Democratico	1265	OECD	0.26	ECB President	16	European Parliament	9	French Government	7
ECB President	1003	European People's Party	0.25	President of the EU Commission	14	British PM	8	European People's Party	6
Ministero delle Finanze	883	Partito Democratico	0.23	European Central Bank	13	EU Council	7	Ministero delle Finanze	6
European Parliament	776	EU Member States	0.23	European Parliament	12	Germany	7	ECB President	6
Fratelli d'Italia	647	Banca d'Italia	0.22	EU Council	12	Hungarian Government	6	EU Council	5
Ministero Esteri IT	644	Camera dei deputati	0.22	British PM	12	presidente della Regione Siciliana	6	President of the European Parliament	5
Italia Viva	621	presidente della Regione Siciliana	0.21	Europe	12	President of the EU Commission	5	Ministero Esteri IT	5
Austria	409	France	0.21	French Government	10	EU Member States	5	Italia Viva	5
Camera dei deputati	292	European Parliament	0.20	Hungarian Government	10	Camera dei deputati	5	Piu Europa	4
Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	289	Fratelli d'Italia	0.18	Ministero delle Finanze	10	United States	5	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	4
European People's Party	286	Netherlands	0.18	European People's Party	9	Partito Democratico	4	Fratelli d'Italia	4
Viminale - Ministero Interno	277	Atlantia	0.18	Italia Viva	9	Forza Italia	4	Hungarian Government	4
Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	276	industries / factories	0.18	Fratelli d'Italia	8	Fratelli d'Italia	4	Italian vox pop	4
Presidente della repubblica	261	ECB President	0.18	Ministero Esteri IT	8	Ministero delle Finanze	4	British PM	4

Figure 5.67: One-mode Dutch network graph

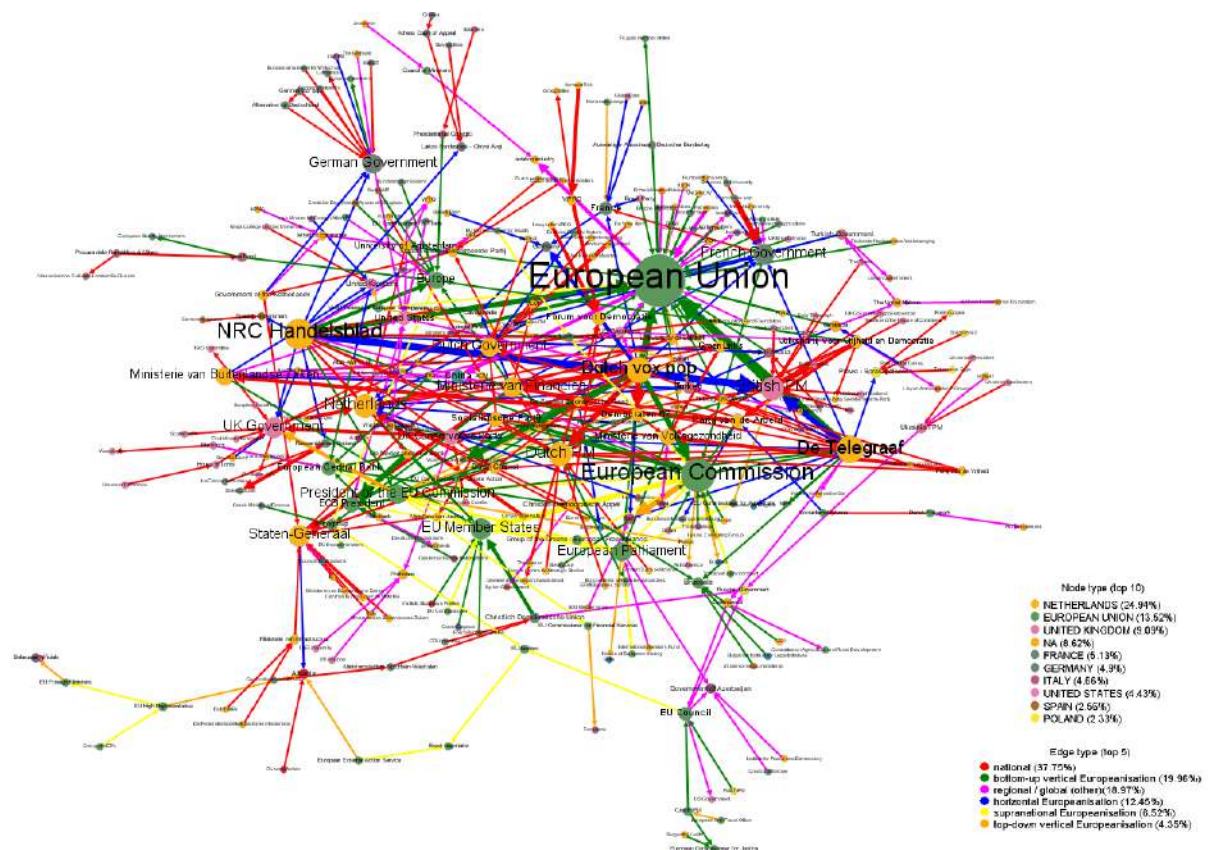


Table 5.122: SNA summary statistics for the Dutch network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
Dutch PM	470	China	1.00	European Union	42	European Union	37	NRC Handelsblad	22
European Union	319	EU Member States	0.93	European Commission	25	European Commission	20	Dutch vox pop	18
Socialistische Partij	307	Turkey	0.76	NRC Handelsblad	22	Netherlands	14	De Telegraaf	18
European Commission	298	European Commission	0.71	De Telegraaf	19	EU Member States	14	President of the EU Commission	8
Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	297	European Union	0.64	Dutch vox pop	18	British PM	12	Ministerie van Financiën	7
Partij van de Arbeid	293	aviation industry	0.44	Dutch PM	16	Dutch Government	12	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	7
Ministerie van Financiën	291	Azerbaijan	0.43	Netherlands	16	French Government	11	University of Amsterdam	6
British PM	276	Indonesia	0.43	British PM	16	Dutch PM	11	Democraten 66	6
GroenLinks	268	Italy	0.41	Staten-Generaal	14	UK Government	11	Socialistische Partij	6
Forum voor Democratie	235	AstraZeneca	0.39	EU Member States	14	Staten-Generaal	11	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	6
President of the EU Commission	204	Bulgaria	0.39	French Government	13	Europe	10	European Parliament	5
French Government	166	Dutch Government	0.36	Ministerie van Financiën	13	German Government	9	Dutch PM	5
European Parliament	119	UK Conservative Party	0.33	UK Government	13	European Parliament	7	European Union	5
Staatskundig Gereformeerde Partij	119	Staten-Generaal	0.32	European Parliament	12	European Central Bank	7	European Commission	5
Government of the Netherlands	110	UK Government	0.31	President of the EU Commission	12	China	7	Christen-Democratisch Appiel	5
Staten-Generaal	104	Dutch PM	0.26	German Government	12	United States	7	UK Conservative Party	4
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	88	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	0.25	Dutch Government	12	Ministerie van Financiën	6	De Sociaal-Economische Raad	4
German Government	71	United States	0.24	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	11	France	6	EU Council	4
VPRO	62	British PM	0.23	Europe	10	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	6	Partij van de Arbeid	4
UK Conservative Party	61	Forum voor Democratie	0.22	UK Conservative Party	9	ECB President	6	British PM	4
France	61	GroenLinks	0.21	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	9	Turkey	6	GroenLinks	4
Eurogroup	61	Dutch Cabinet	0.20	ECB President	9	UK Conservative Party	5	Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	4
UK Government	54	Albania	0.20	European Central Bank	8	United Kingdom	5	University of Leiden	4
ECB President	54	French Government	0.19	Socialistische Partij	8	Brussels	5	Greece	4
Turkish Government	52	Europe	0.19	France	7	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	4	Government of the Netherlands	3

Figure 5.68: One-mode Polish network graph

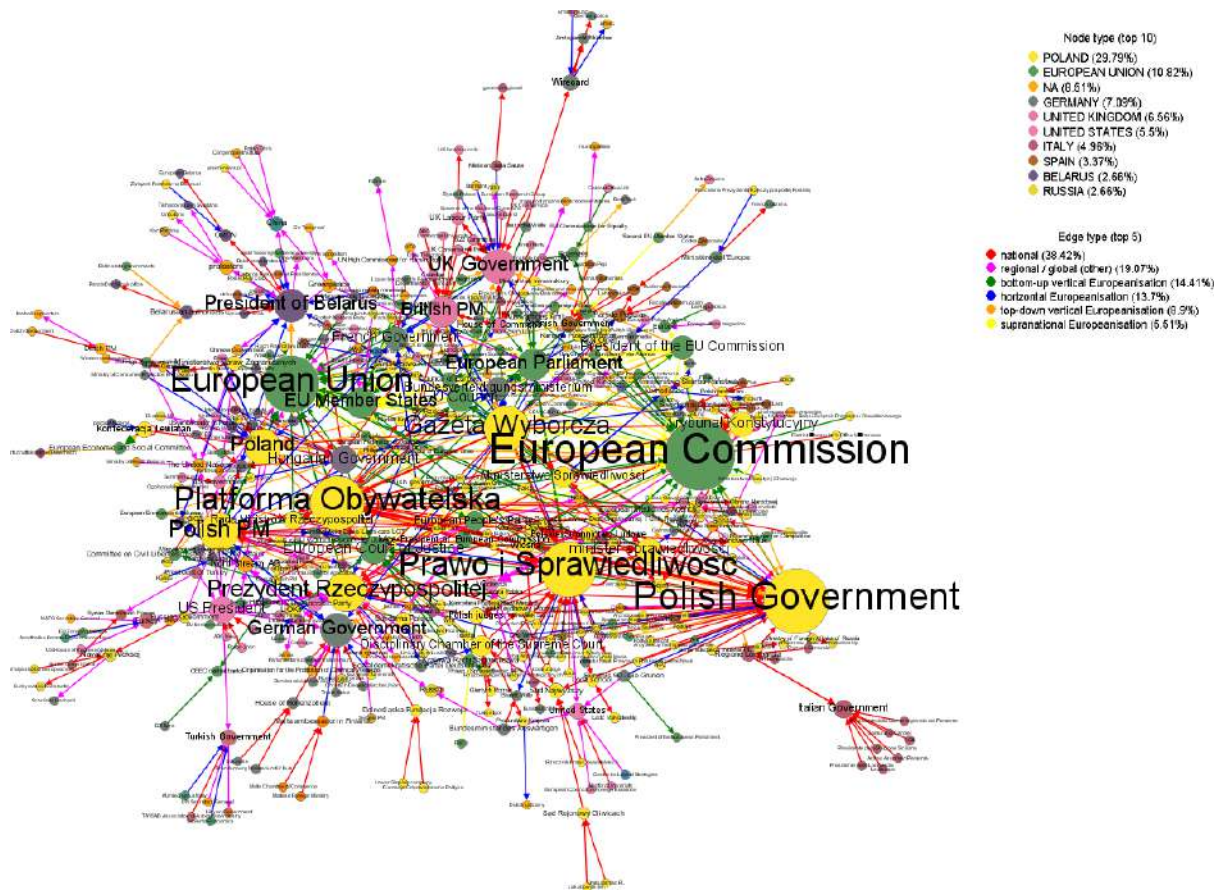


Table 5.123: SNA summary statistics for the Polish network

betweenness centrality	Σ	eigenvector centrality	Σ	degree	Σ	indegree	Σ	outdegree	Σ
European Commission	18047	European Union	1.00	European Commission	47	Polish Government	37	Gazeta Wyborcza	28
Polish PM	11084	European Commission	0.73	Polish Government	43	European Commission	31	Platforma Obywatelska	26
German Government	10905	Polish Government	0.42	European Union	37	European Union	31	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	17
European Court of Justice	8504	European Court of Justice	0.40	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	36	Poland	20	European Commission	16
Polish Government	6821	Poland	0.40	Platforma Obywatelska	35	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	19	Polish PM	14
Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	6258	German Government	0.37	Gazeta Wyborcza	28	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	18	President of the EU Commission	9
UOKiK	5718	President of Belarus	0.36	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	24	UK Government	15	minister sprawiedliwosci	9
Nord Stream AG	5705	EU Member States	0.36	Polish PM	23	EU Member States	15	US President	7
Poland	5356	Trybuna, Konstytucyjny	0.33	Poland	21	President of Belarus	14	European People's Party	7
Staszewski Kazik	4416	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.27	UK Government	20	German Government	13	EU Council	6
Platforma Obywatelska	4073	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.25	German Government	19	European Parliament	13	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	6
French Government	4069	Spanish Government	0.24	President of Belarus	19	British PM	12	Polish Government	6
US President	3287	EU Council	0.23	European Parliament	18	European Court of Justice	11	German Government	6
Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	2961	Hungarian Government	0.23	British PM	17	Trybuna, Konstytucyjny	11	European Union	6
British PM	2876	London	0.23	EU Member States	17	Hungarian Government	10	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	6
minister sprawiedliwosci	2736	Belarusian officials	0.23	European Court of Justice	15	Polish PM	9	UK Government	5
European Union	2607	Brazilian authorities	0.22	EU Council	14	Platforma Obywatelska	9	European Parliament	5
Hungarian Government	2415	minister sprawiedliwosci	0.22	US President	14	French Government	8	British PM	5
UK Government	2355	Polish judges	0.21	Hungarian Government	14	EU Council	8	Vice-President of European Commission	5
EU Council	2278	British PM	0.20	minister sprawiedliwosci	13	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	8	President of Belarus	5
Sejm	2148	Moderna	0.19	Trybuna, Konstytucyjny	13	Italian Government	8	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	5
Trybuna, Konstytucyjny	2141	United Kingdom	0.18	French Government	12	US President	7	French Government	4
President of Belarus	2136	Regione Lombardia	0.18	President of the EU Commission	12	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	7	Auswärtiges Amt	4
EU Member States	1949	PKN Orlen	0.18	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11	Rada Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej	6	European Court of Justice	4
Senat	1920	EU officials	0.18	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	10	United States	6	Wiosna	4

Figure 5.69: A two-dimensional conceptual space model for types of ‘discursive (euro-)nationalism’²

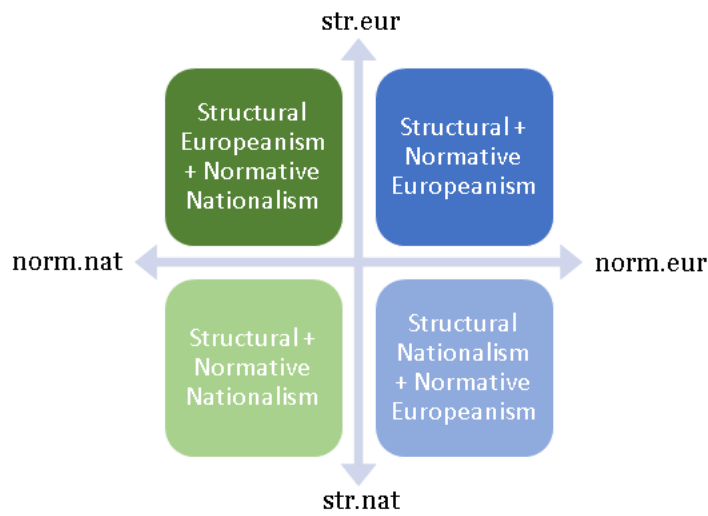
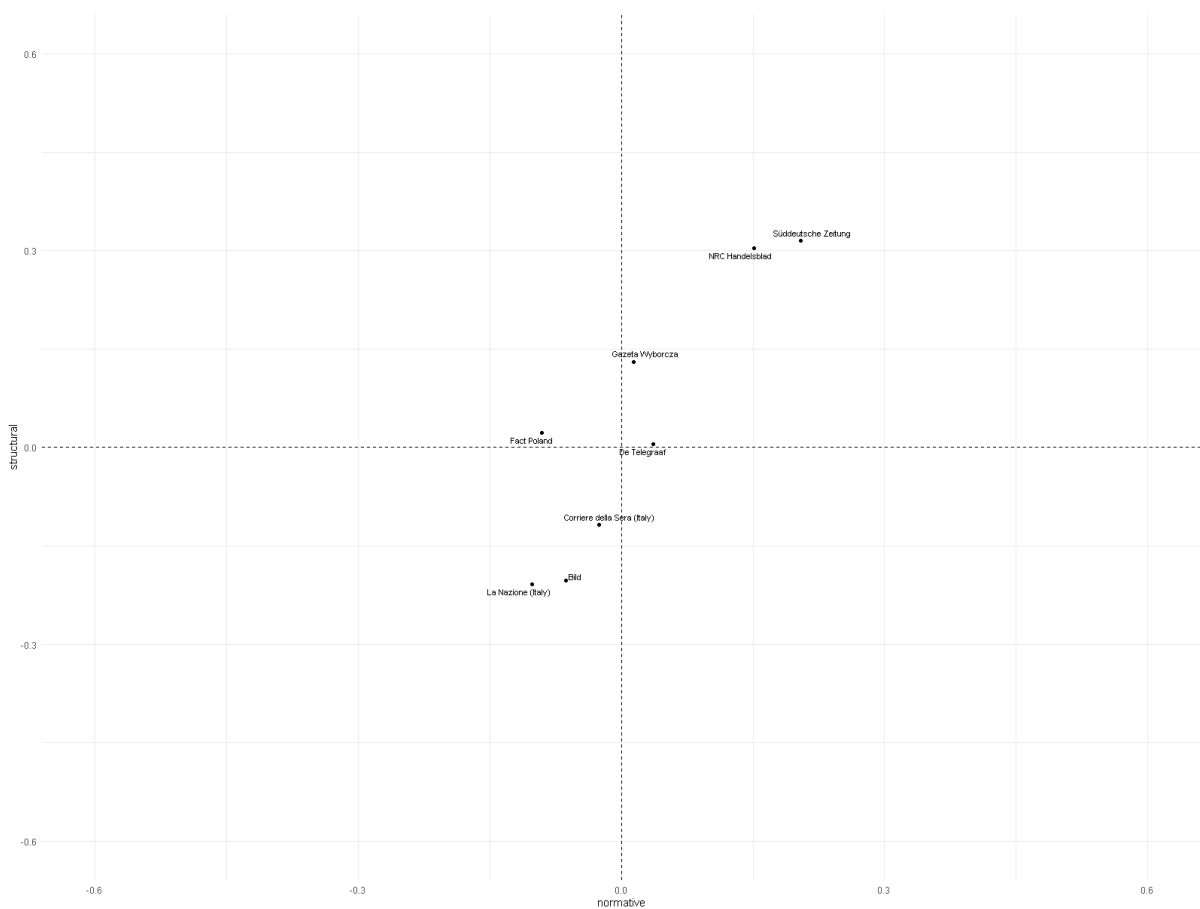


Figure 5.70: A scatterplot of mean values for structural (actscope + adrscope) and normative (objscope) dimensions of (euro-)nationalism according to newspaper



² Fig. 5.69 is a two-dimensional conceptual space model to highlight the various discursive combinations of ‘Europeanism’, or its negation, ‘nationalism’ hence the term: ‘(Euro-)nationalism.’

Table 5.124: Mean Boolean values for the claimant, addressee (i.e. structural) and object (normative) territorial scope

<i>source</i>	<i>Structural</i>			<i>Normative</i>
	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>mean_str</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.53	0.13	-0.20	-0.06
<i>Corriere della Sera (Italy)</i>	-0.26	0.02	-0.12	-0.03
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.23	0.24	0.01	0.04
<i>Fact Poland</i>	-0.41	0.45	0.02	-0.09
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.15	0.11	0.13	0.01
<i>La Nazione (Italy)</i>	-0.40	-0.02	-0.21	-0.10
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.29	0.32	0.30	0.15
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.20	0.43	0.31	0.20
μ	-0.15	0.21	0.03	0.02

Figure 5.71: 3D scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural and normative dimensions of (euro-)nationalism according to newspaper

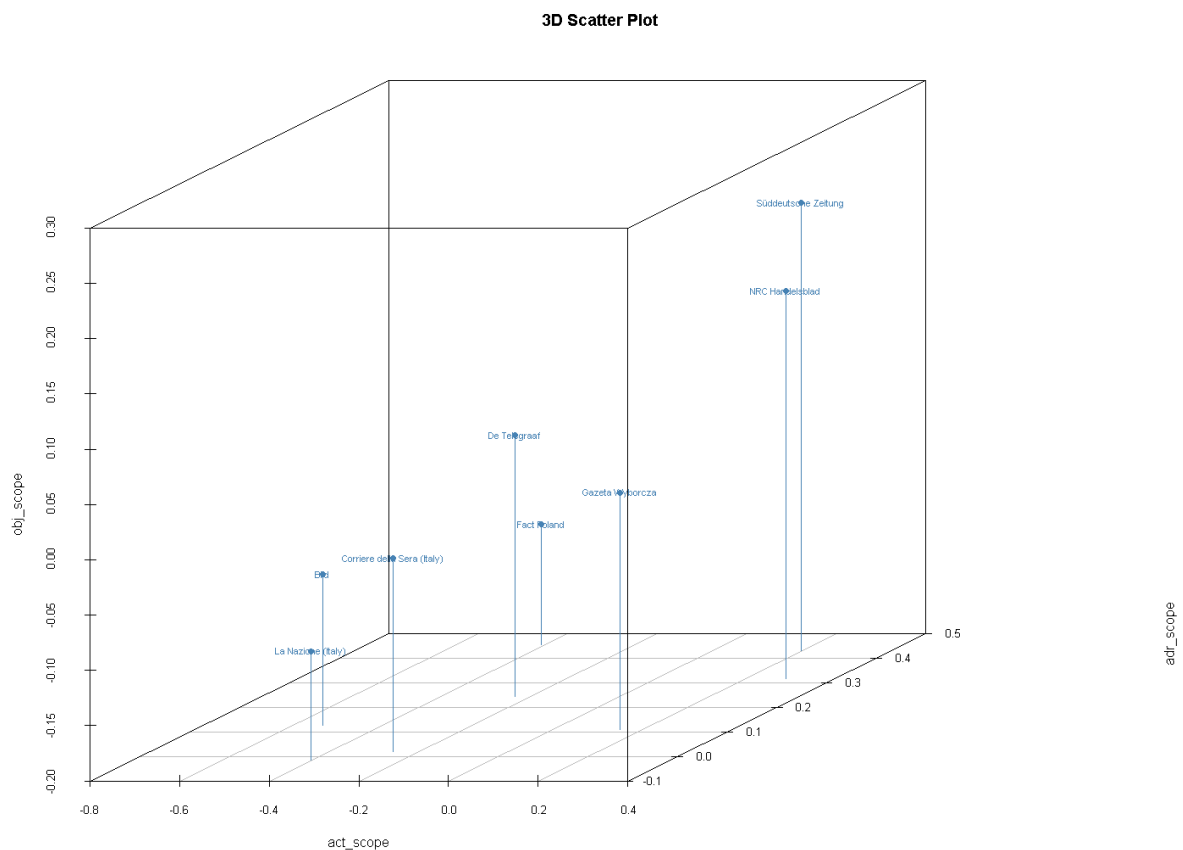


Table 5.125: Mean Boolean values for the claimant, addressee and object territorial scope

<i>source</i>	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.53	0.13	-0.06
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	-0.26	0.02	-0.03
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.23	0.24	0.04
<i>Fakt</i>	-0.41	0.45	-0.09
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.15	0.11	0.01
<i>La Nazione</i>	-0.40	-0.02	-0.10
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.29	0.32	0.15
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.20	0.43	0.20
μ	-0.15	0.21	0.02

Figure 5.72: Scatterplot of mean values for the structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) discursive dimensions by newspaper

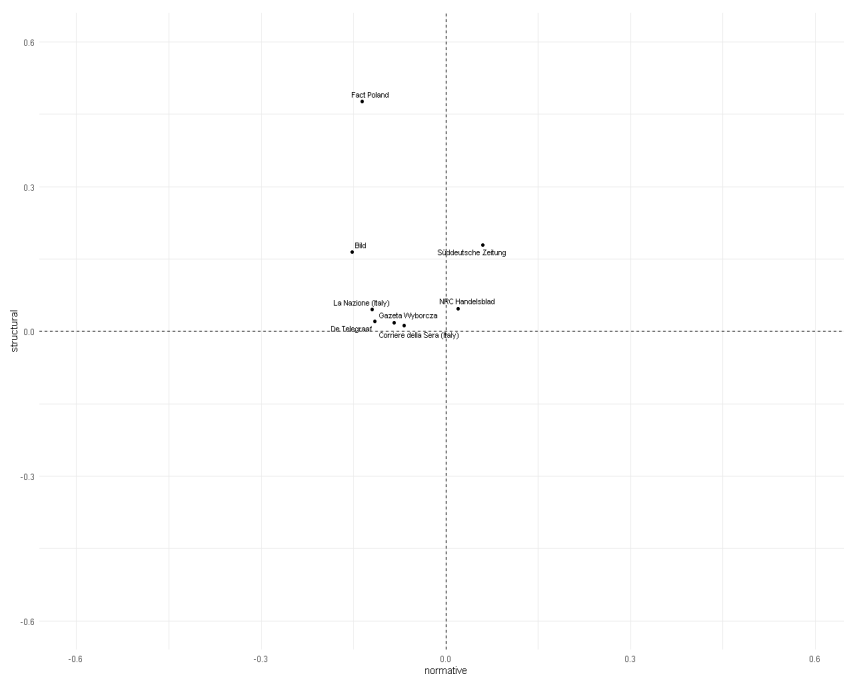


Table 5.126: Mean Boolean values for structural and normative discursive territorial dimensions by source

<i>source</i>	<i>bool_act2adr</i>	<i>bool_act2obj</i>
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.18	0.06
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.05	0.02
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	0.01	-0.07
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.02	-0.08
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	0.02	-0.12
<i>La Nazione</i>	0.05	-0.12
<i>Fakt</i>	0.48	-0.14

<i>Bild</i>	0.16	-0.15
μ	0.12	-0.07

Figure 5.73: Scatterplot of mean values for structural (actscope + adrscope) and normative (objscope) dimensions by country

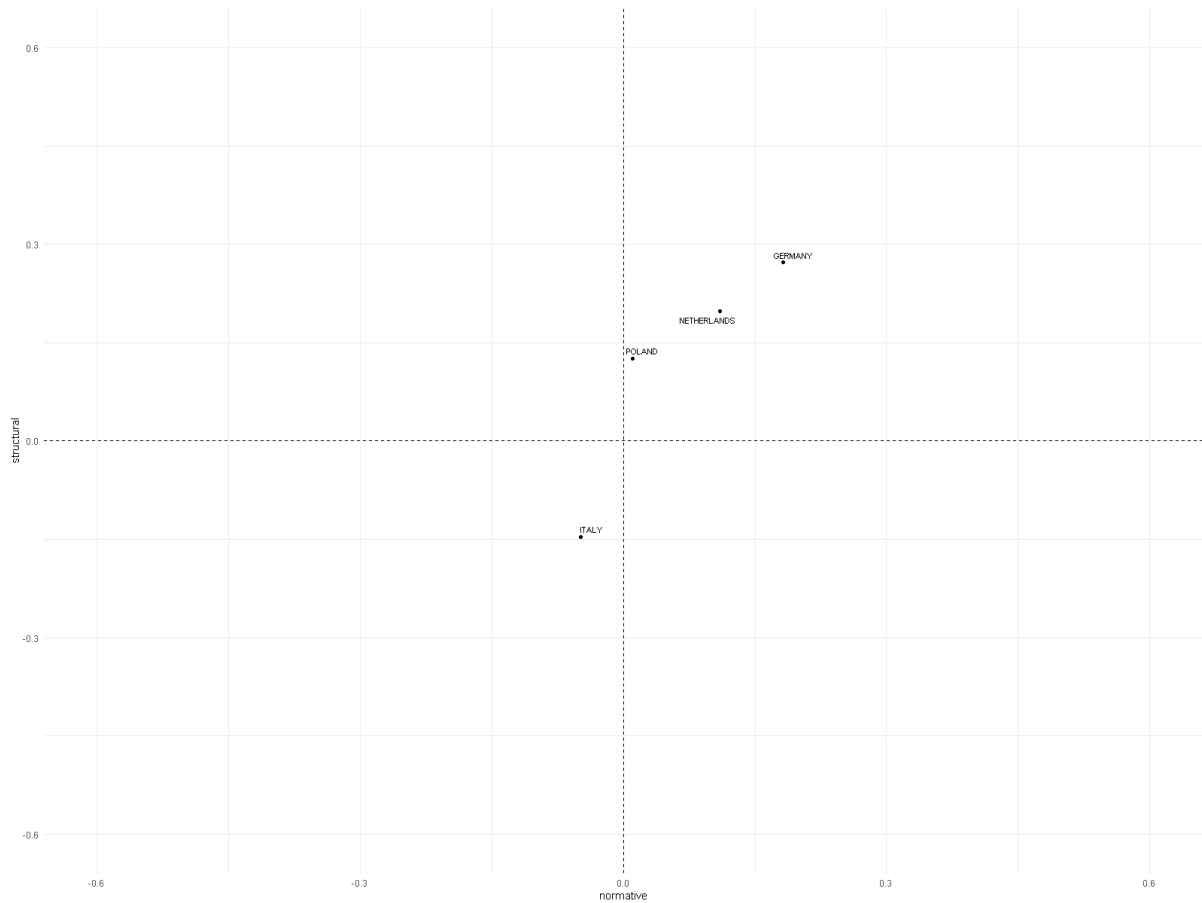


Table 5.127: Mean Boolean values for the claimant, addressee (i.e. structural) and object (normative) territorial scopes by country

<i>source_country</i>	<i>Structural</i>			<i>Normative</i>
	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>mean_str</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>GERMANY</i>	0.14	0.41	0.27	0.18
<i>ITALY</i>	-0.30	0.01	-0.15	-0.05
<i>NETHERLANDS</i>	0.10	0.29	0.20	0.11
<i>POLAND</i>	0.13	0.12	0.13	0.01

Figure 5.74: 3D scatterplot of mean values for claimant, addressee territorial scopes (structural) and object scopes (normative) according to country

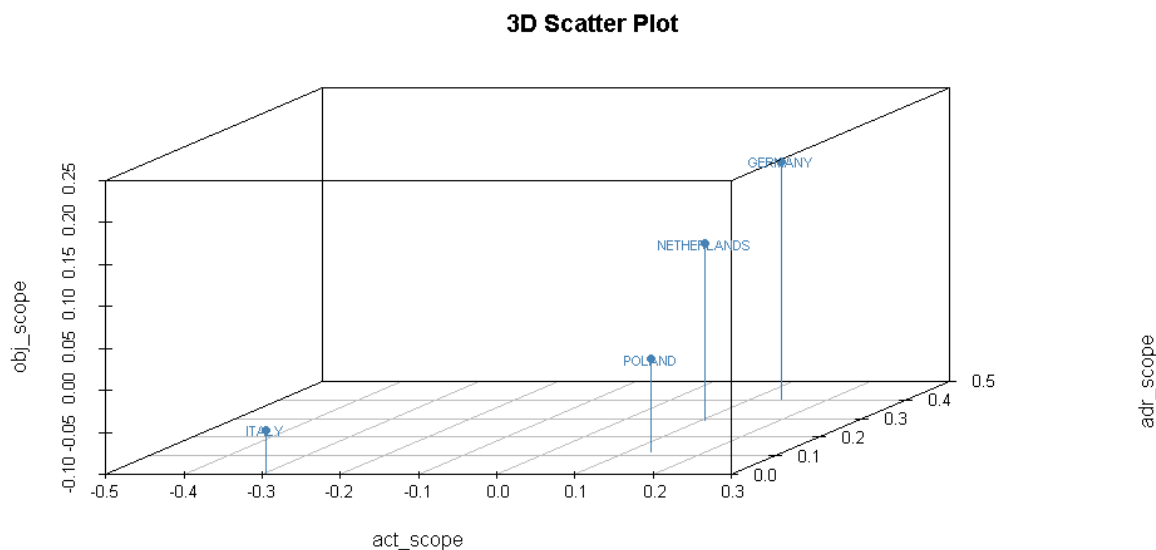


Figure 5.75: Scatterplot of mean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) dimensions by country

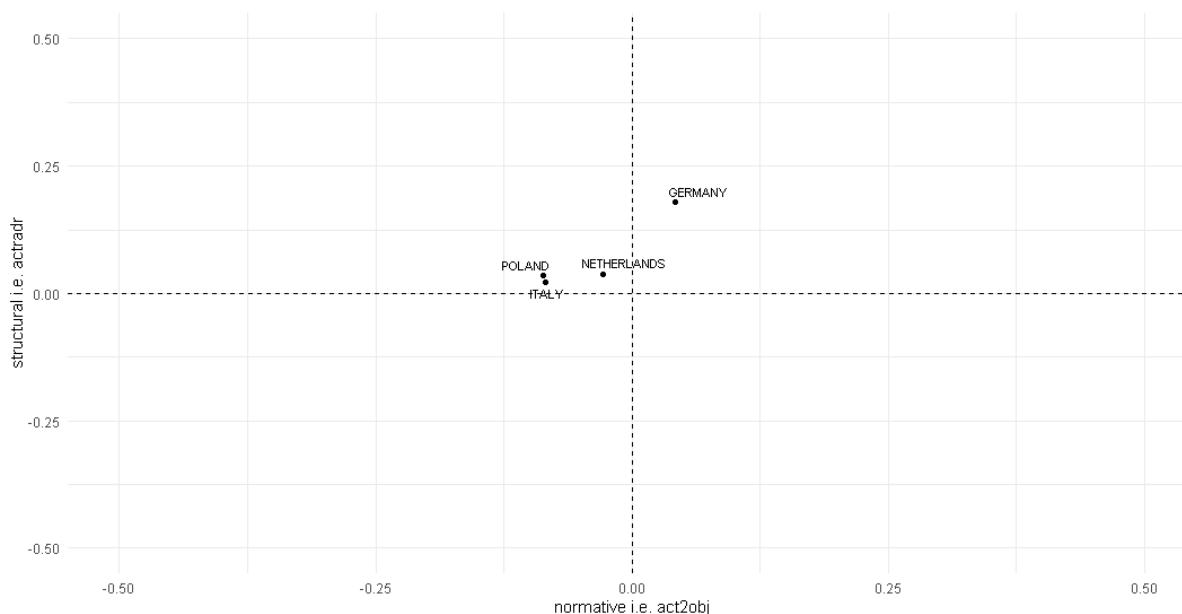


Table 5.128: Mean Boolean values for structural and normative discursive territorial dimensions by country

<i>source_country</i>	<i>bool_act2adr</i>	<i>bool_act2obj</i>
<i>GERMANY</i>	0.18	0.04
<i>ITALY</i>	0.02	-0.08
<i>NETHERLANDS</i>	0.04	-0.03
<i>POLAND</i>	0.04	-0.09

Figure 5.76: Scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) dimensions of '(Euro-nationalism)' by party family

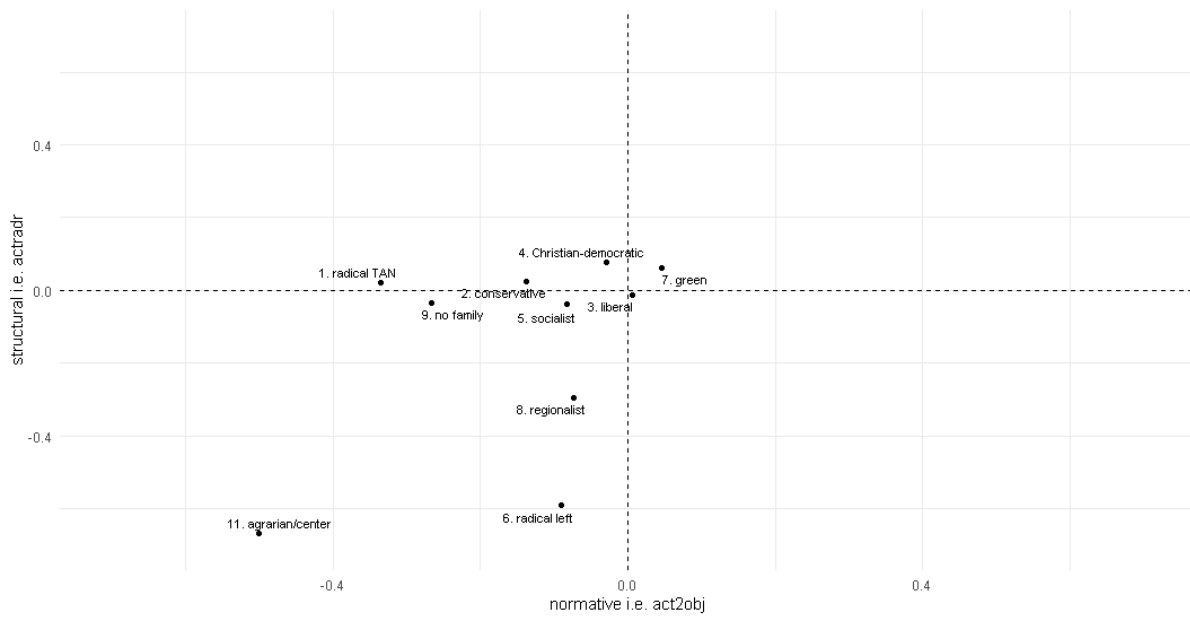


Table 5.129: Mean Boolean values for structural and normative discursive territorial dimensions by party family

<i>parfam</i>	<i>bool_act2adr</i>	<i>bool_act2obj</i>
<i>green</i>	0.06	0.05
<i>liberal</i>	-0.01	0.01
<i>Christian-democratic</i>	0.08	-0.03
<i>regionalist</i>	-0.30	-0.07
<i>socialist</i>	-0.04	-0.08
<i>radical left</i>	-0.59	-0.09
<i>conservative</i>	0.03	-0.14
<i>no family</i>	-0.03	-0.27
<i>radical TAN</i>	0.02	-0.34
<i>agrarian/center</i>	-0.67	-0.50

Figure 5.77: Scatterplot of mean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) dimensions of '(Euro-nationalism)' by actor type

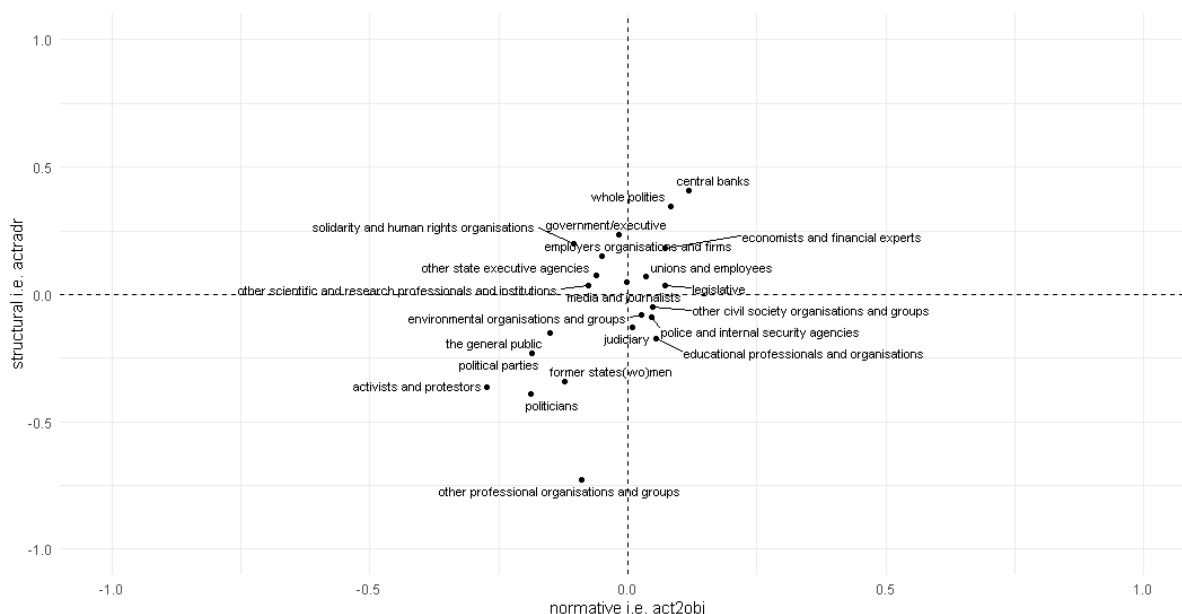


Table 5.130: Mean Boolean values for structural (act2adr) and normative (act2obj) discursive territorial dimensions by actor type

<i>act_type</i>	<i>bool_act2adr</i>	<i>bool_act2obj</i>
<i>central banks</i>	0.41	0.12
<i>whole polities</i>	0.34	0.08
<i>economists and financial experts</i>	0.18	0.07
<i>legislative</i>	0.04	0.07
<i>educational professionals and organisations</i>	-0.17	0.06
<i>other civil society organisations and groups</i>	-0.05	0.05
<i>police and internal security agencies</i>	-0.09	0.05
<i>unions and employees</i>	0.07	0.03
<i>environmental organisations and groups</i>	-0.08	0.03
<i>judiciary</i>	-0.13	0.01
<i>media and journalists</i>	0.05	0.00
<i>government/executive</i>	0.23	-0.02
<i>employers organisations and firms</i>	0.15	-0.05
<i>other state executive agencies</i>	0.07	-0.06
<i>other scientific and research professionals and institutions</i>	0.03	-0.08
<i>other professional organisations and groups</i>	-0.73	-0.09
<i>solidarity and human rights organisations</i>	0.20	-0.11
<i>former states(women)</i>	-0.34	-0.12
<i>the general public</i>	-0.15	-0.15
<i>political parties</i>	-0.23	-0.19
<i>politicians</i>	-0.39	-0.19
<i>activists and protestors</i>	-0.36	-0.27

Figure 5.78: Pearsons correlation plot between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by newspaper

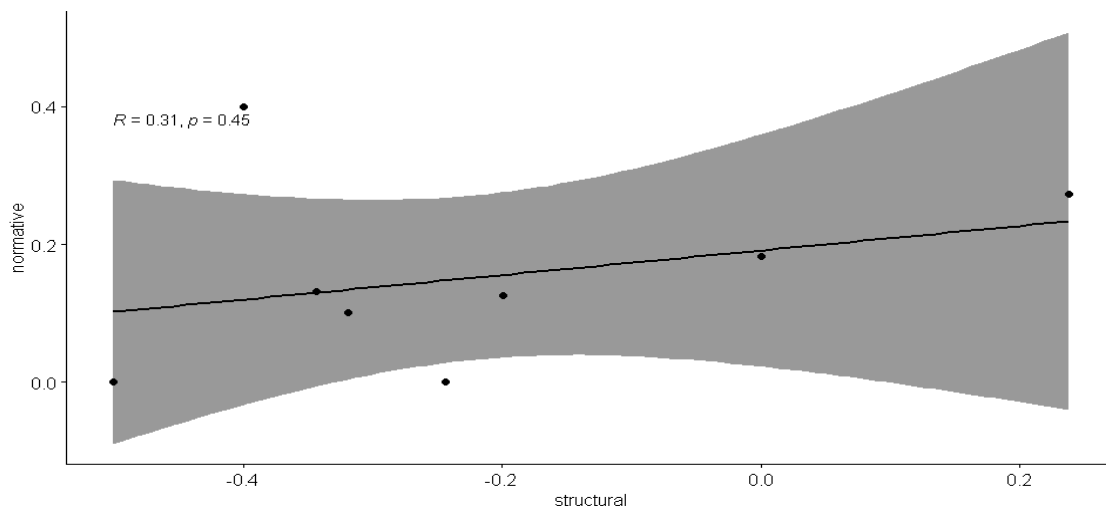


Figure 5.79: Scatterplot to explore the correlation the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by newspaper

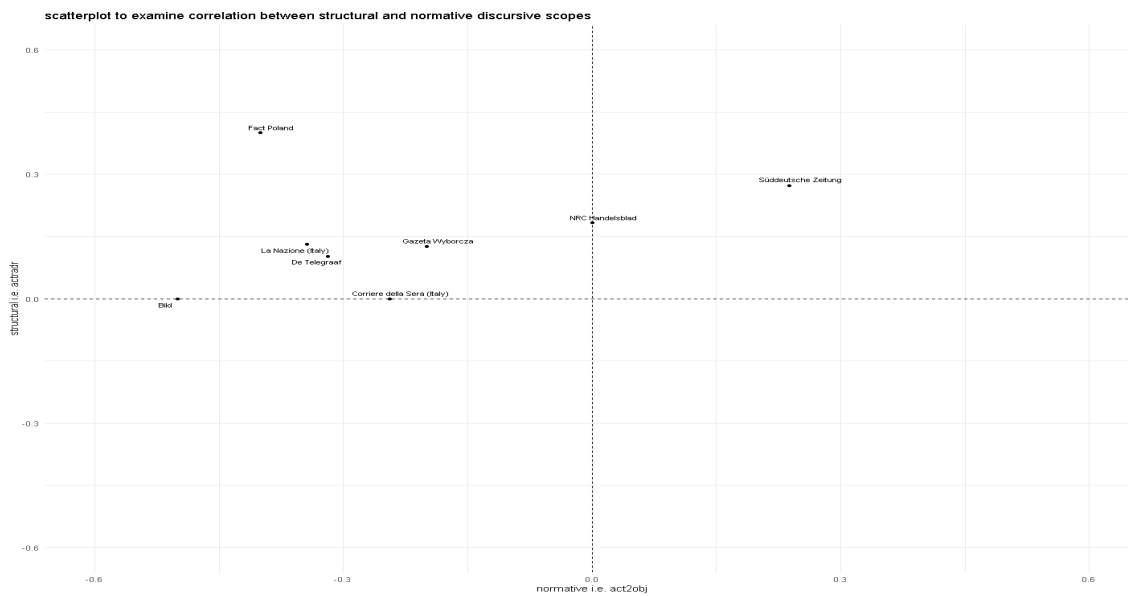


Table 5.131: Boolean mean values for the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>bool act2adr</i>	<i>bool act2obj</i>
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.27	0.24
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.18	0.00
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.13	-0.20
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	0.00	-0.24
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	0.10	-0.32

<i>La Nazione</i>	0.13	-0.34
<i>Fakt</i>	0.40	-0.40
<i>Bild</i>	0.00	-0.50

Figure 5.80: Pearsons correlation plot between the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by country

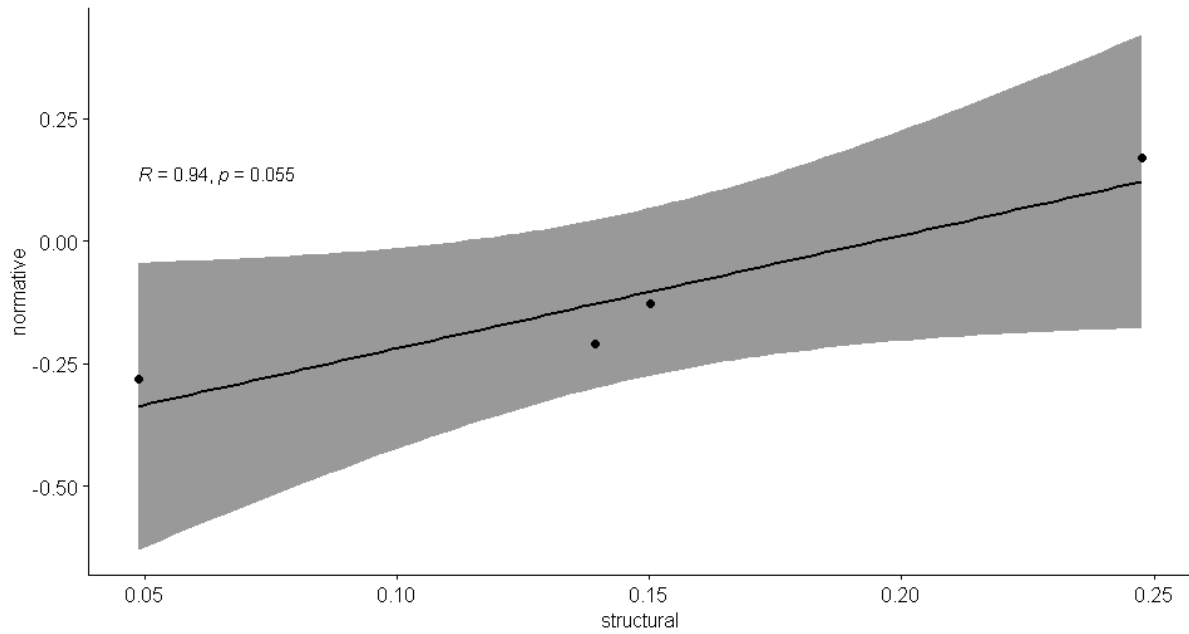


Figure 5.81: Scatterplot to explore the correlation the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by country

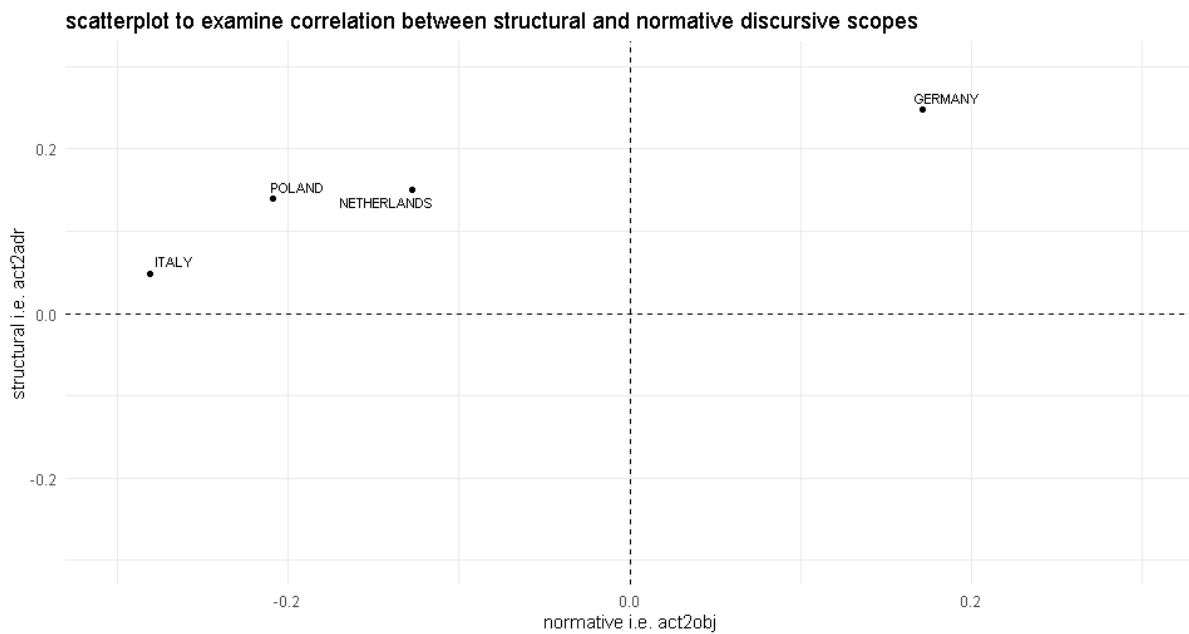


Table 5.132: Boolean mean values for the act2adr (structural) and act2obj (normative) variables by country

<i>source_country</i>	<i>bool_act2adr</i>	<i>bool_act2obj</i>
<i>GERMANY</i>	0.25	0.17
<i>ITALY</i>	0.05	-0.28
<i>NETHERLANDS</i>	0.15	-0.13
<i>POLAND</i>	0.14	-0.21

Figure 5.82: Scatterplot to explore the correlation between claimant and object scopes by newspaper

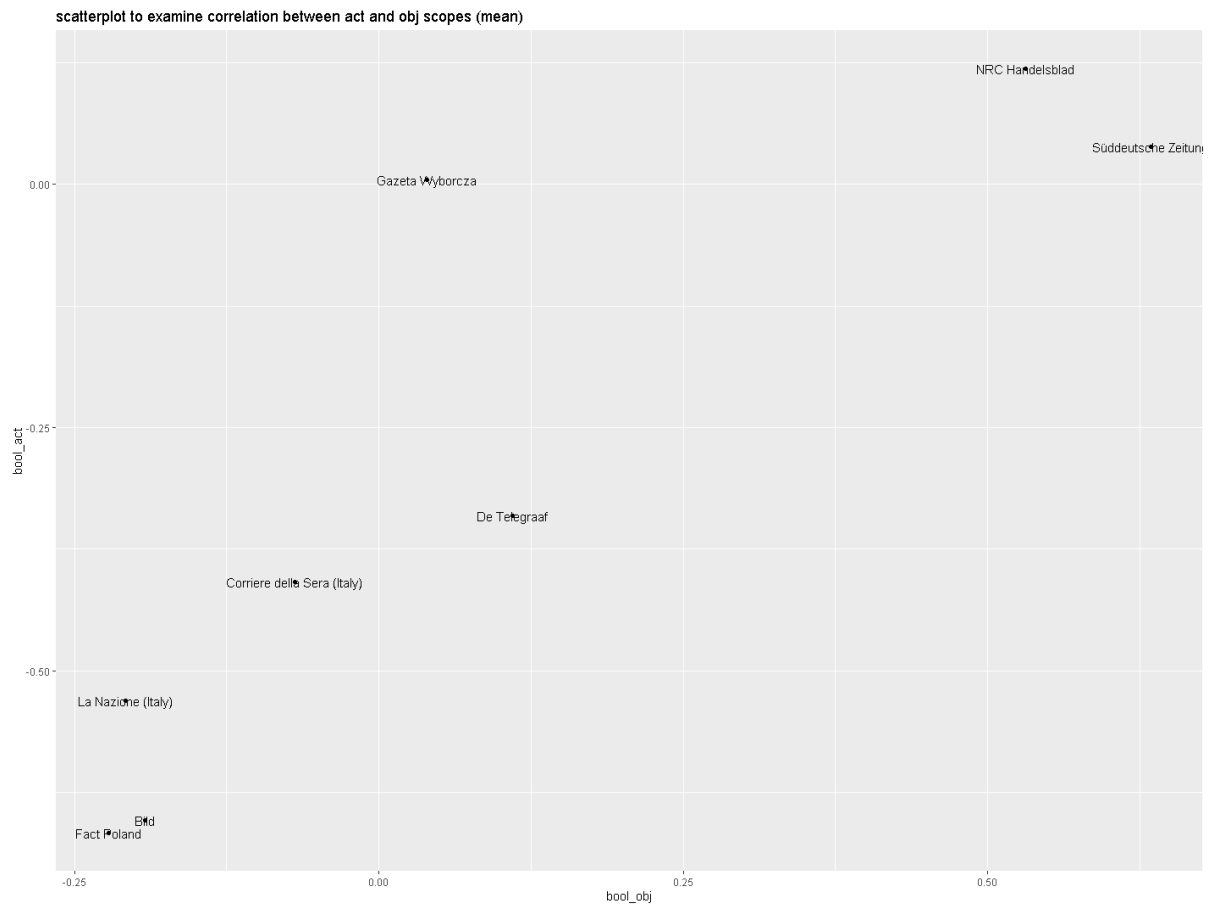


Table 5.133: Boolean mean values for the claimant and object scope variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.65	-0.19
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	-0.41	-0.07
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.34	0.11
<i>Fakt</i>	-0.67	-0.22
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.00	0.04
<i>La Nazione</i>	-0.53	-0.21
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.12	0.53
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.04	0.63

Figure 5.83: Scatterplot to explore the correlation between addressee and object scopes by newspaper

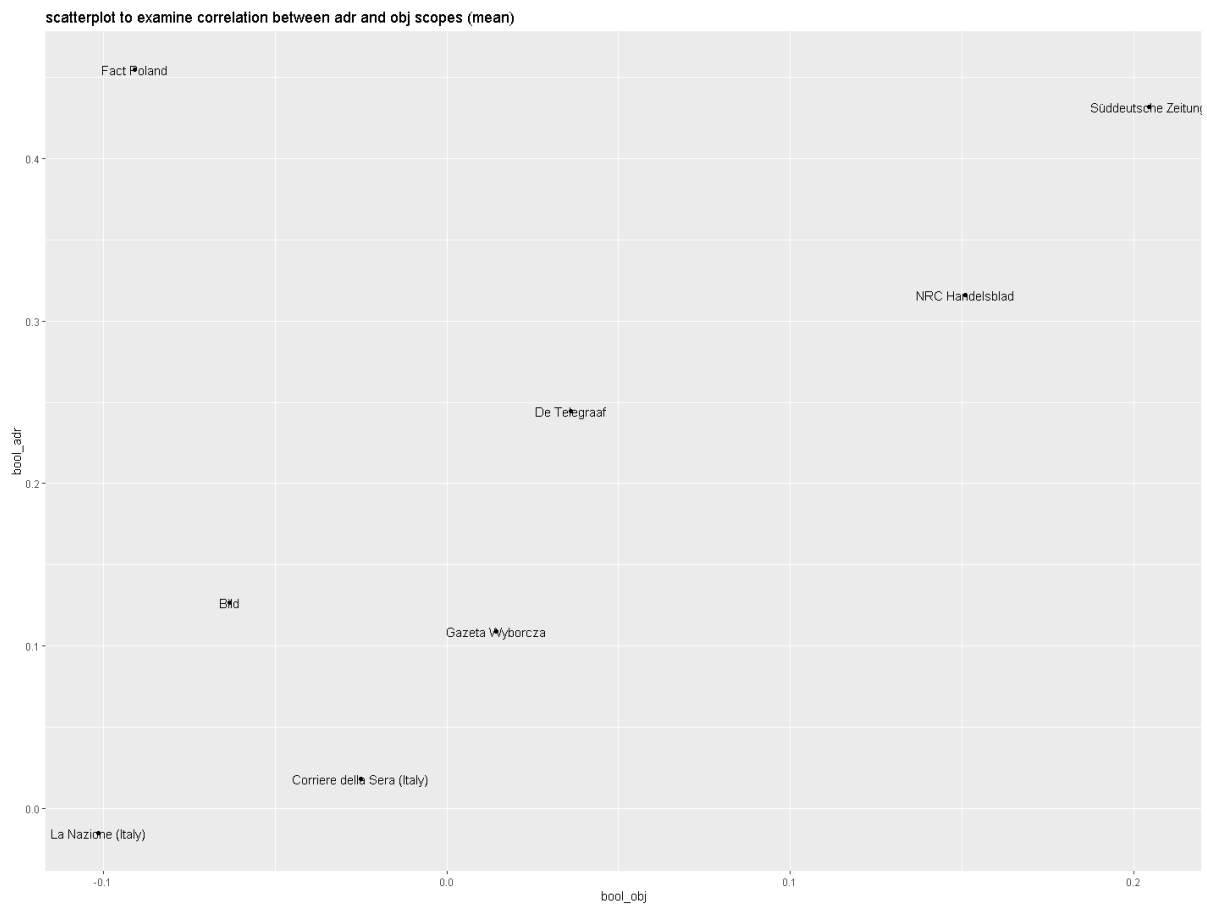


Table 5.134: Boolean mean values for the addressee and object scope variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	0.13	-0.06
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	0.02	-0.03
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	0.24	0.04
<i>Fakt</i>	0.45	-0.09
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.11	0.01
<i>La Nazione</i>	-0.02	-0.10
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.32	0.15
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.43	0.20

Figure 5.84: Scatterplot to explore the correlation between claimant and addressee scopes by newspaper

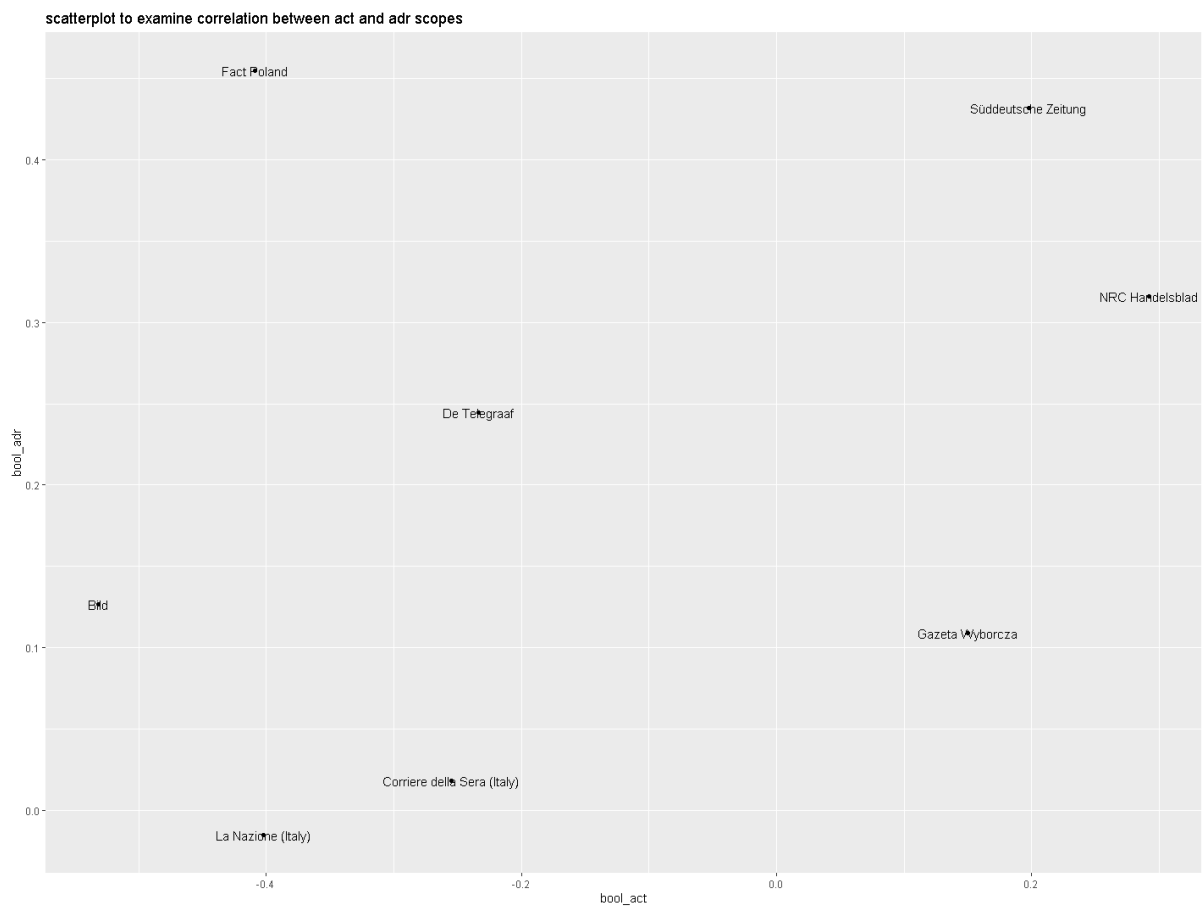


Table 5.135: Boolean mean values for the claimant and addressee scope variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.53	0.13
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	-0.26	0.02
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.23	0.24
<i>Fakt</i>	-0.41	0.45
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	0.15	0.11
<i>La Nazione</i>	-0.40	-0.02
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.29	0.32
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	0.20	0.43

Figure 5.85: 3D scatterplot of mean Boolean values for claimant, addressee, and object scopes by newspaper

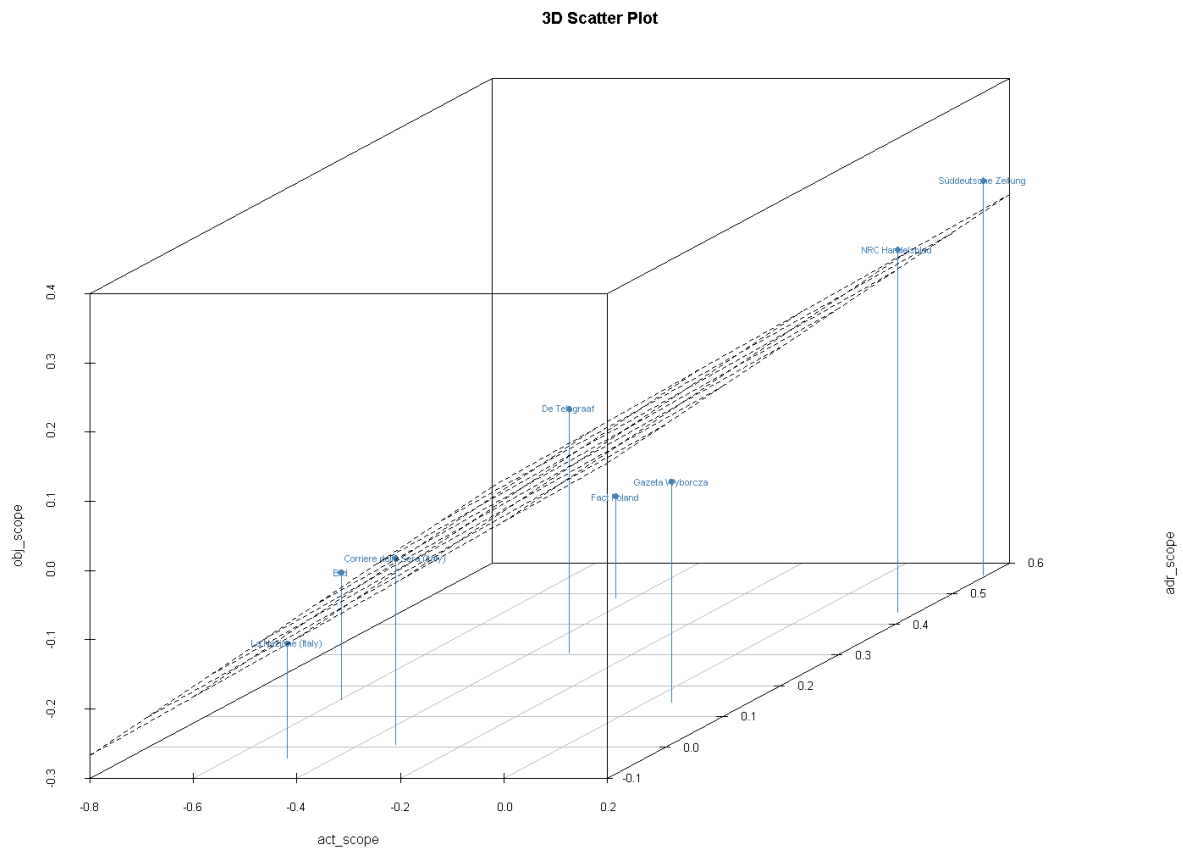


Table 5.136: Boolean mean values for the claimant, addressee and object scope variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>bool act</i>	<i>bool adr</i>	<i>bool obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.80	0.10	-0.30
<i>Corriere della Sera</i>	-0.42	-0.05	-0.12
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.33	0.33	0.12
<i>Fakt</i>	-0.67	0.60	-0.33
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	-0.06	0.18	-0.03
<i>La Nazione</i>	-0.68	0.07	-0.28
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.03	0.42	0.45
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	-0.01	0.49	0.67
μ	-0.37	0.27	0.02

Figure 5.86: 3D scatterplot of mean Boolean values for claimant, addressee, and object scopes by country

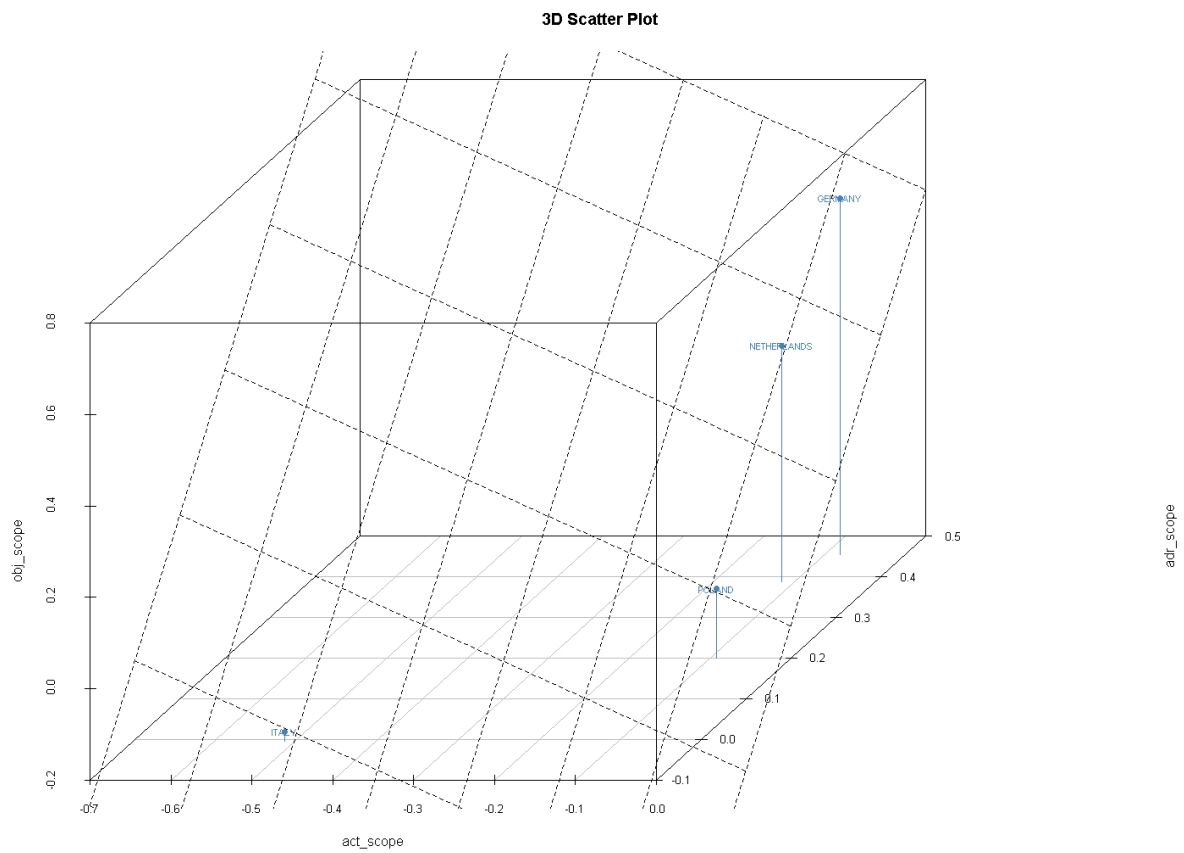


Table 5.137: Boolean mean values for the claimant, addressee and object scope variables by country

<i>source_country</i>	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>GERMANY</i>	-0.08	0.45	0.58
<i>ITALY</i>	-0.51	0.00	-0.18
<i>NETHERLANDS</i>	-0.12	0.39	0.32
<i>POLAND</i>	-0.09	0.20	-0.05

Figure 5.87: A scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (claimant + addressee scope) and normative (object scope) according to newspaper

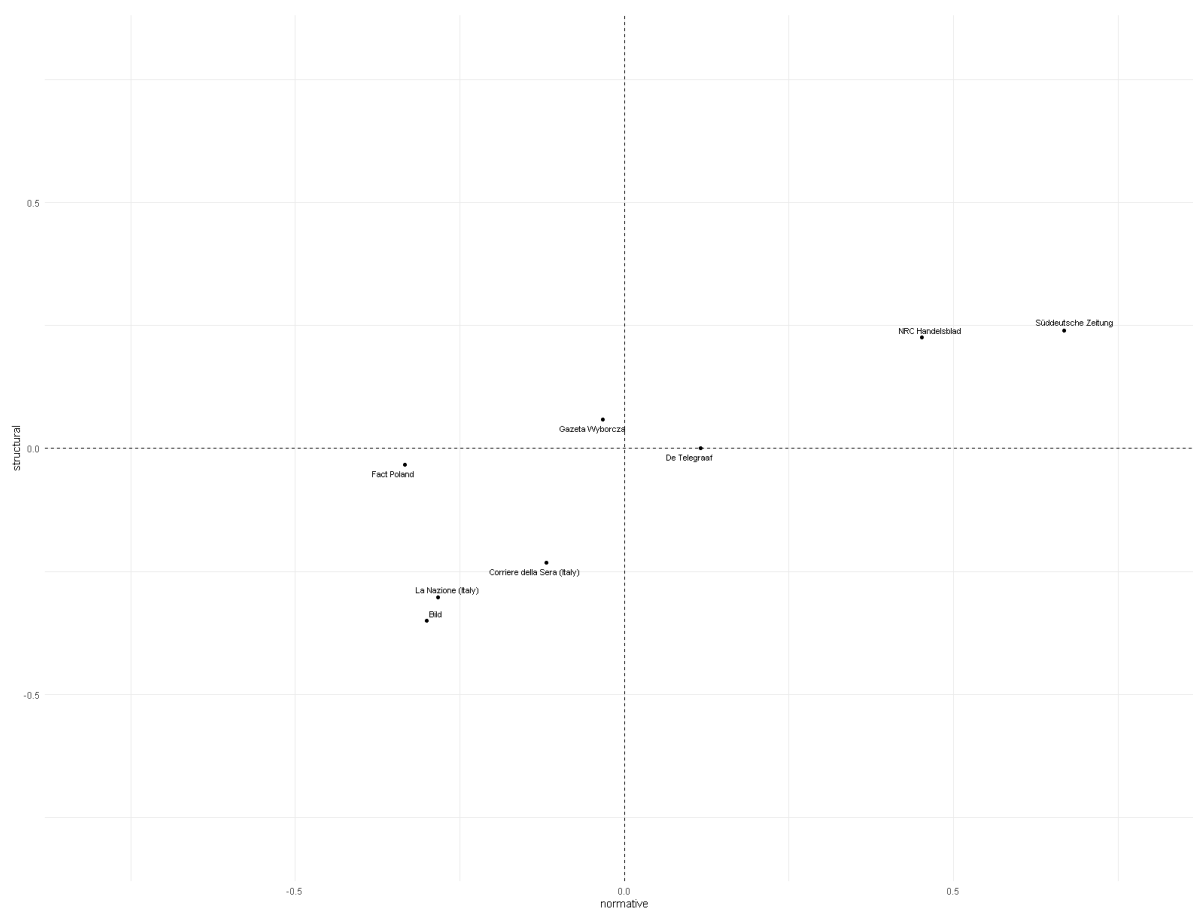


Table 5.138: Boolean mean values for the claimant, addressee (aggregated) and object scope variables by newspaper

<i>source</i>	<i>Structural</i>			<i>Normative</i>
	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>mean_str</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>Bild</i>	-0.80	0.10	-0.35	-0.30
<i>Corriere della Sera (Italy)</i>	-0.42	-0.05	-0.23	-0.12
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	-0.33	0.33	0.00	0.12
<i>Fact Poland</i>	-0.67	0.60	-0.03	-0.33
<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>	-0.06	0.18	0.06	-0.03
<i>La Nazione (Italy)</i>	-0.68	0.07	-0.30	-0.28
<i>NRC Handelsblad</i>	0.03	0.42	0.23	0.45
<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	-0.01	0.49	0.24	0.67

Figure 5.88: Pearsons scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (claimant + addressee scope) and normative (object scope) according to newspaper

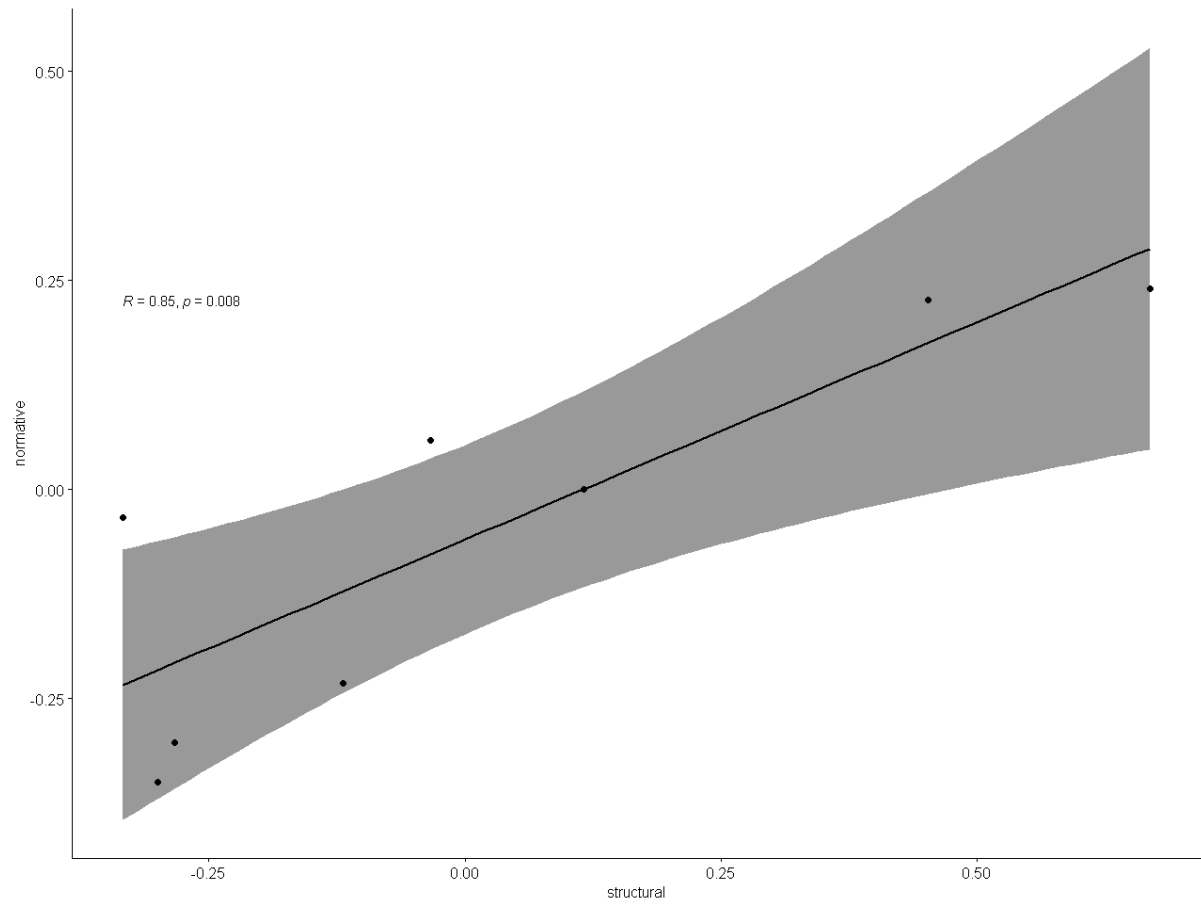


Figure 5.89: A scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (claimant + addressee scope) and normative (object scope) by country

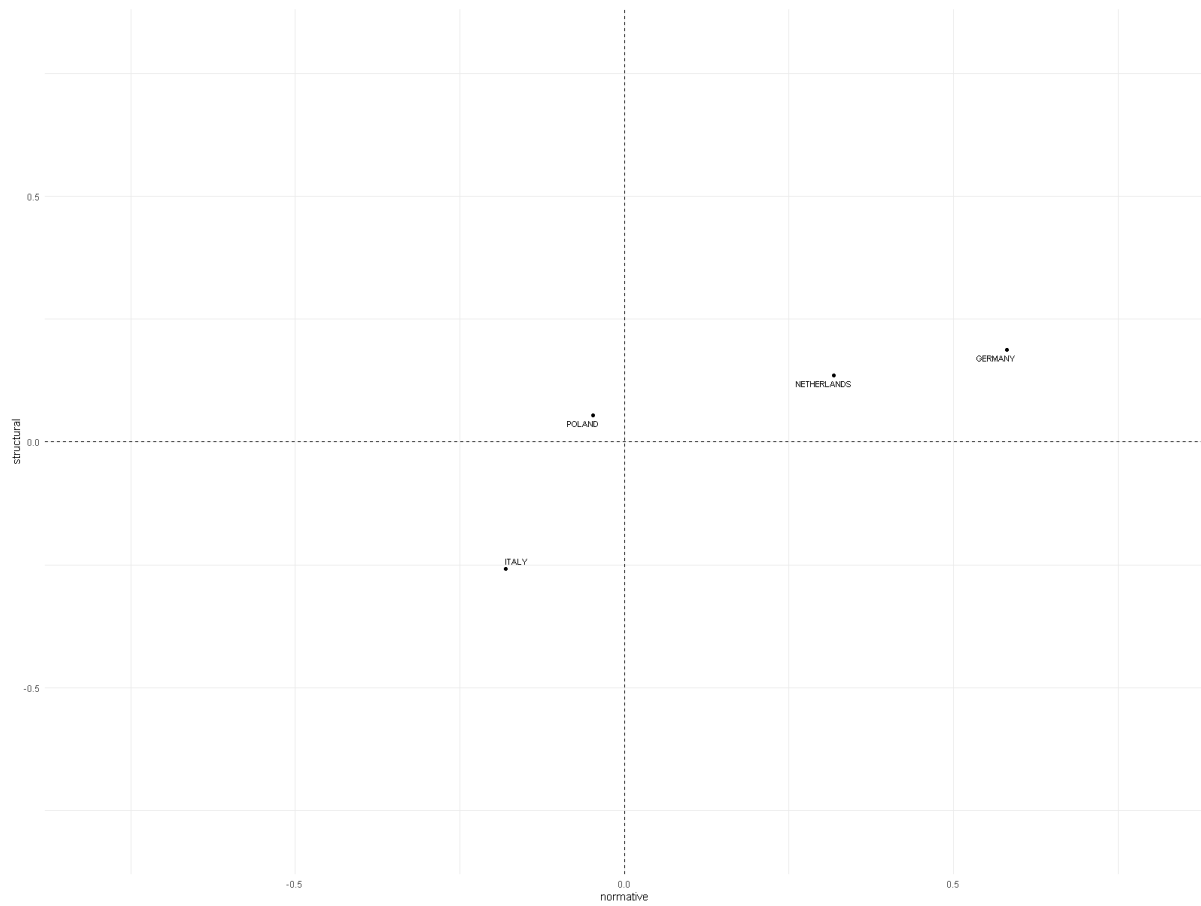


Table 5.139: Boolean mean values for the claimant, addressee (aggregated) and object scope variables by country

<i>source_country</i>	<i>Structural</i>			<i>Normative</i>
	<i>bool_act</i>	<i>bool_adr</i>	<i>mean_str</i>	<i>bool_obj</i>
<i>GERMANY</i>	-0.08	0.45	0.19	0.58
<i>ITALY</i>	-0.51	0.00	-0.26	-0.18
<i>NETHERLANDS</i>	-0.12	0.39	0.14	0.32
<i>POLAND</i>	-0.09	0.20	0.05	-0.05

Figure 5.90: Pearsons scatterplot of mean Boolean values for structural (claimant + addressee scope) and normative (object scope) by country

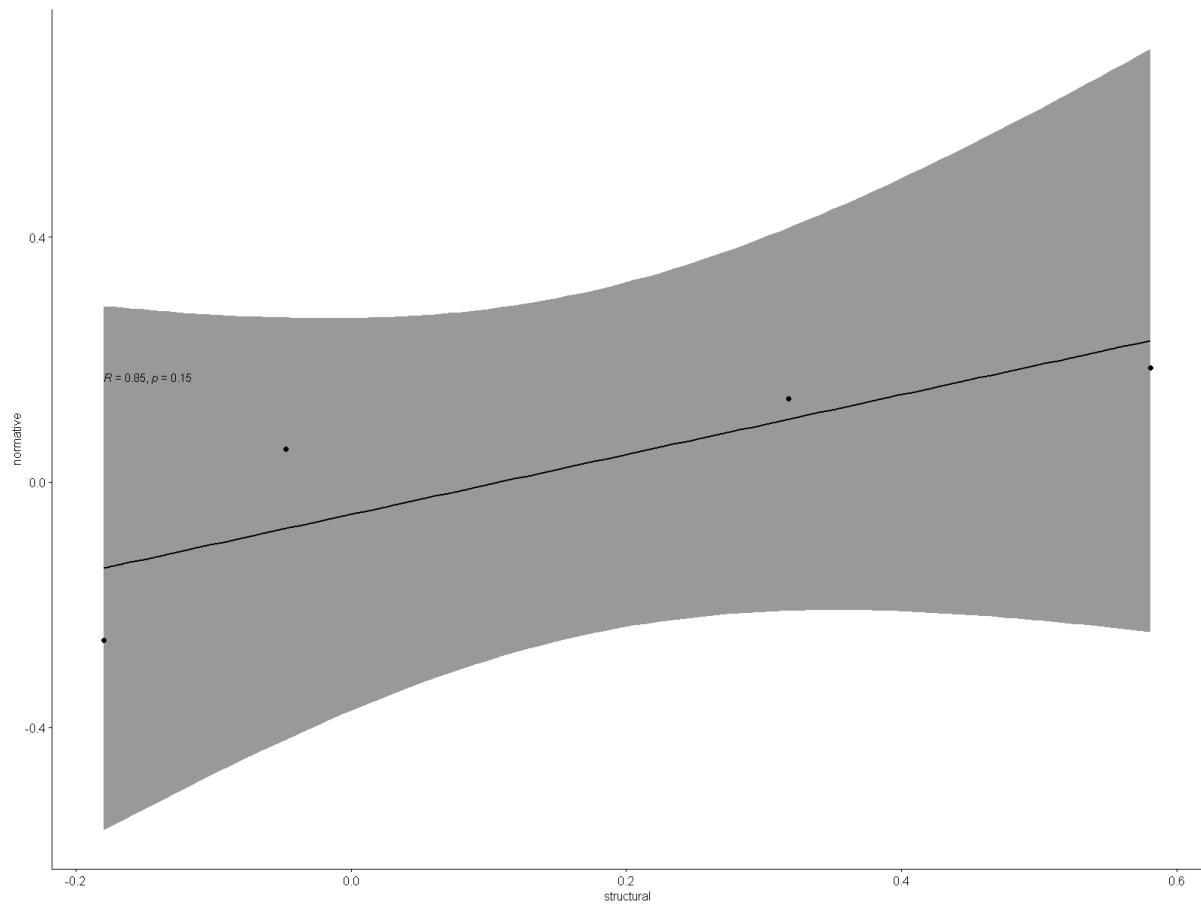


Table 5.140: Authority centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	Authority	Id_IT	Authority	Id_NL	Authority	Id_PL	Authority	Id_agg	Authority
european	0.944368	italy const	0.848478	european	0.941774	poland co	0.908285	european	0.963873
germany c	0.25263	european	0.510167	netherlan	0.286861	european	0.39129	poland co	0.157626
regional /	0.098977	regional /	0.026027	regional /	0.042833	belarus co	0.062149	italy const	0.140415
italy const	0.048706	European	0.021259	france cor	0.038286	regional /	0.023135	germany c	0.082436
turkey cor	0.032109	La Nazione	0.020859	Dutch PM	0.02637	united kin	0.020379	regional /	0.073212
German G	0.026653	Partito De	0.020859	De Telegra	0.026001	Gazeta Wy	0.018076	netherlan	0.046263
Süddeuts	0.026333	Italian Gov	0.020859	Ministerie	0.025994	Polish PM	0.017446	belarus co	0.026842
Bundnis 9	0.026287	Export US	0.020859	NRC Hand	0.025573	Vice-Presic	0.016946	spain cons	0.021025
Bundesmi	0.026282	University	0.020859	Dutch vox	0.025573	President	0.016816	united kin	0.015752
Bundesmi	0.025926	Fondazion	0.020859	Ministerie	0.025573	Platforma	0.01665	france cor	0.014526
French Go	0.023946	Forza Itali	0.020859	Christen-D	0.025573	European	0.01665	denmark c	0.011118
Alternativ	0.023946	Presidente	0.020859	Volksparti	0.025573	Prawo i Sp	0.01665	turkey cor	0.010733
Christlich	0.023946	University	0.020859	bulgaria c	0.020584	Prezydent	0.01665	greece cor	0.009507
Bild	0.023946	Presidente	0.020859	Wagening	0.020494	Polish vox	0.01665	china cons	0.009429
Deutsches	0.023946	Italian vox	0.020859	Financial T	0.020494	En Marche	0.01665	Süddeuts	0.009119
German v	0.023946	Corriere d	0.020859	Ministère	0.020399	minister s	0.01665	hungary c	0.008926
European	0.021162	President	0.020859	spain cons	0.020245	Ministerst	0.01665	European	0.008922
Lega Nord	0.019866	Ministero	0.020859	Presidente	0.019981	European	0.01665	German G	0.008425
Presidente	0.019866	German G	0.013191	German G	0.019948	Koalicja Sc	0.01665	President	0.0084
Turkish G	0.01981	Lega Nord	0.013026	Kings Colle	0.019602	sweden cc	0.014481	Vice-Presic	0.007917
poland co	0.019695	Presidente	0.013026	InnoEnerg	0.019602	spain cons	0.014334	En Marche	0.007917
Harvard U	0.018892	Moviment	0.013026	Dutch Gov	0.019602	ireland co	0.01294	Financial T	0.007917
Pulse of E	0.018892	Monti Ma	0.013026	Hanseatic	0.019602	Kancelaria	0.012433	Gazeta Wy	0.00789
President	0.018892	University	0.013026	Democrat	0.019602	Ministerst	0.012433	Italian Gov	0.007803
Die Linke	0.018892	Mayor	0.013026	Solidarno	0.019602	Council of	0.011933	Polish PM	0.00761

Table 5.141: Betweenness centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	betweene	Id_IT	betweene	Id_NL	betweene	Id_PL	betweene	Id_agg	betweene:
european	6266.313	italy const	6188.5	european	5992.542	poland co	14745.13	european	113281.1
germany c	2461.202	european	4937	netherlan	3015.385	european	13063.66	poland co	46908.47
Süddeutsc	2073.937	European	1035.6	regional /	1514.482	Gazeta W	4775.486	italy const	37258.22
poland co	868	regional /	1029.5	Presidente	1130	united kin	2491.196	Gazeta W	14501.65
regional /	781.1636	French Go	615	italy const	1062	belarus co	2401.615	netherlan	13878.37
German G	632.1611	German G	384	German G	590	Sozialdem	1640	regional /	13712.2
Bundnis 9	507.1611	france cor	259	University	590	germany c	1463	united kin	13675.46
spain cons	502	germany c	259	Dutch PM	538.8485	Magyarors	1442	germany c	12819.35
Turkish Go	487.125	La Nazione	189.1	Wagening	535.2242	hungary c	1257	Süddeutsc	12421.67
italy const	455.309	Partito De	189.1	Financial T	535.2242	Vice-Presie	1201.392	belarus co	7456.984
Bundesmi	382.1611	Italian Gov	189.1	poland co	482	Polish PM	987.2905	European	7290.383
European	351.2058	Export US	189.1	germany c	482	regional /	847.4011	German G	6212.834
turkey cor	292.0131	University	189.1	De Telegra	473.4909	sweden cc	842	President	5753.257
Bundesmi	255.1611	Fondazion	189.1	Ministerie	446.5333	French Go	836	france cor	5003.191
cyprus cor	253	Forza Itali	189.1	france cor	366.5909	US Preside	836	Internatio	4950
syria cons	127	Presidente	189.1	Ministerie	353.4909	President	660.5741	ukraine co	4436
denmark c	127	University	189.1	NRC Hand	231.4909	france cor	633	US Preside	4408
china cons	127	Presidente	189.1	Dutch vox	231.4909	united sta	633	spain cons	4187.314
French Go	113.6362	Italian vox	189.1	Ministerie	231.4909	spain cons	633	hungary c	3885.5
Alternativ	113.6362	Corriere d	189.1	Christen-D	231.4909	EU Counci	546	united sta	3885
Christlich	113.6362	President	189.1	Volksparti	231.4909	Platforma	448.5741	UK Labour	3394.086
Bild	113.6362	Ministero	189.1	Ministère	167.7333	European	448.5741	EU Counci	3394.086
Deutsches	113.6362	united kin	3	bulgaria c	122	Prawo i Sp	448.5741	French Go	3351.329
German v	113.6362	united sta	3	united kin	21	Prezydent	448.5741	sweden cc	3333
Lega Nord	103.5397	austria co	1	belarus co	3	Polish vox	448.5741	Dutch PM	3132.154

Table 5.142: Degree centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	Degree_D	Id_IT	Degree_IT	Id_NL	Degree_N	Id_PL	Degree_PL	Id_agg	Degree_agg
european	70	italy const	73	european	59	poland co	95	european	216
germany c	30	european	57	netherlan	35	european	68	poland co	101
regional /	12	regional /	10	regional /	11	belarus co	17	italy const	88
united kin	10	European	3	italy const	10	united kin	14	regional /	38
poland co	8	French Go	3	united kin	7	italy const	11	germany c	38
italy const	7	france cor	3	france cor	5	germany c	8	netherlan	35
Süddeutsc	6	germany c	3	poland co	5	hungary c	7	united kin	28
German G	5	united kin	3	germany c	5	Gazeta Wy	6	belarus co	20
ukraine co	5	united sta	3	Dutch PM	3	regional /	6	france cor	12
spain cons	5	La Nazione	2	Ministerie	3	sweden cc	5	spain cons	11
Bundnis 9	4	Partito De	2	De Telegra	3	france cor	4	ukraine co	9
Bundesmi	4	Italian Gov	2	belarus co	3	united sta	4	hungary c	9
luxembou	4	Export US	2	NRC Hand	2	ukraine co	4	united sta	8
northern i	4	University	2	Dutch vox	2	spain cons	4	turkey cor	7
turkey cor	4	Fondazion	2	Ministerie	2	Polish PM	3	sweden cc	7
European	3	Forza Itali	2	Wagening	2	Vice-Presic	3	Süddeutsc	6
Bundesmi	3	President	2	German G	2	President	3	Gazeta Wy	6
Turkish Go	3	University	2	Christen-D	2	turkey cor	3	German G	6
hungary c	3	President	2	Ministerie	2	lithuania c	3	European	5
czech repu	3	Italian vox	2	Volksparti	2	French Go	2	French Go	4
cyprus cor	3	Corriere d	2	President	2	Platforma	2	Bundnis 9	4
united sta	3	President	2	Financial T	2	European	2	President	4
israel cons	3	Ministero	2	University	2	Prawo i Sp	2	Bundesmi	4
france cor	3	German G	2	Ministère	2	Prezydent	2	china cons	4
French Go	2	austria co	2	china cons	2	Polish vox	2	czech repu	4

Table 5.143: Weighted degree centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	Weighted	Id_IT	Weighted	Id_NL	Weighted	Id_PL	Weighted	Id_agg	Weighted
european	134	italy const	174	european	85	poland co	191	european	424
germany c	44	european	110	netherlan	61	european	95	poland co	208
Süddeutsc	22	Partito De	26	NRC Hand	15	Platforma	24	italy const	207
German G	18	Italian Gov	19	italy const	12	belarus co	23	netherlan	62
regional /	16	Forza Italia	14	Dutch vox	11	Prawo i Sp	20	germany c	61
united kin	13	Presidente	14	regional /	11	Gazeta Wy	20	united kin	45
European	10	Corriere d	14	De Telegra	10	united kin	19	regional /	43
President	9	Lega Nord	11	united kin	10	Polish PM	18	President	31
italy const	9	Moviment	10	Volksparti	6	italy const	12	belarus co	28
Bundnis 9	8	regional /	10	france cor	6	Prezydent	11	European	27
poland co	8	European	7	poland co	6	President	11	Partito De	26
Bild	7	President	7	Dutch PM	5	European	8	Platforma	25
Bundesmi	6	French Go	6	Ministerie	5	germany c	8	Prawo i Sp	24
spain cons	6	La Nazione	5	germany c	5	hungary c	8	German G	24
Christlich	5	President	5	British PM	4	united sta	7	Italian Gov	23
Bundesmi	5	Presidente	5	President	4	US Preside	6	Süddeutsc	23
ukraine co	5	Fratelli d'I	5	Christen-D	4	Vice-Presic	6	Gazeta Wy	21
hungary c	5	ECB Presic	5	denmark c	4	france cor	6	Polish PM	19
united sta	5	Italian vox	4	belarus co	4	regional /	6	Presidente	19
Italian Gov	4	france cor	4	Ministerie	3	minister s	5	france cor	19
SeaWatch	4	germany c	4	Partij voor	3	turkey cor	5	united sta	17
Bundesver	4	united sta	4	Presidente	3	sweden cc	5	Lega Nord	15
czech repu	4	University	3	sweden cc	3	French Go	4	NRC Hand	15
luxembou	4	Presidente	3	French vo:	2	Council of	4	French Go	14
northern i	4	University	3	InnoEnerg	2	EU Counci	4	Forza Italia	14

Table 5.144: Eigenvector centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	eigencentr	Id_IT	eigencentr	Id_NL	eigencentr	Id_PL	eigencentr	Id_agg	eigencentr
european	1	italy const	1	european	1	poland co	1	european	1
germany c	0.33224	european	0.695348	netherlan	0.433914	european	0.591552	poland co	0.295536
Süddeuts	0.186374	European	0.196269	Dutch PM	0.193812	Gazeta W	0.187891	italy const	0.247064
German G	0.181693	La Nazion	0.187342	De Telegra	0.190137	Polish PM	0.171571	Süddeuts	0.121235
Bundnis 9	0.178036	Partito De	0.187342	Ministerie	0.189471	Vice-Pres	0.163659	European	0.117887
Bundesmi	0.177511	Italian Gov	0.187342	NRC Hand	0.185308	President	0.161185	germany c	0.1115
Bundesmi	0.174052	Export US	0.187342	Dutch vox	0.185308	Platforma	0.158776	regional /	0.111188
French Go	0.156573	University	0.187342	Ministerie	0.185308	European	0.158776	President	0.108267
Alternativ	0.156573	Fondazion	0.187342	Christen-D	0.185308	Prawo i Sp	0.158776	German G	0.104719
Christlich	0.156573	Forza Itali	0.187342	Volksparti	0.185308	Prezydent	0.158776	Gazeta W	0.101756
Bild	0.156573	Presidente	0.187342	Wagening	0.138939	Polish vox	0.158776	Vice-Pres	0.096522
Deutsches	0.156573	University	0.187342	Financial T	0.138939	En Marche	0.158776	En Marche	0.096522
German v	0.156573	Presidente	0.187342	Presidente	0.135347	minister s	0.158776	Financial T	0.096522
European	0.135399	Italian vox	0.187342	Ministère	0.133437	Ministerst	0.158776	Italian Gov	0.093128
regional /	0.129872	Corriere d	0.187342	German G	0.131088	European	0.158776	Polish PM	0.091874
Turkish G	0.124893	President	0.187342	Kings Colle	0.124933	Koalicja Sc	0.158776	European	0.08913
Lega Nord	0.124026	Ministero	0.187342	InnoEnerg	0.124933	Kancelaria	0.109926	Platforma	0.087421
Presidente	0.124026	German G	0.112112	Dutch Gov	0.124933	Ministerst	0.109926	Prawo i Sp	0.087421
Harvard U	0.114423	Lega Nord	0.108674	Hanseatic	0.124933	Council of	0.102014	Prezydent	0.087421
Pulse of E	0.114423	Presidente	0.108674	Democrat	0.124933	belarus co	0.101176	Polish vox	0.087421
President	0.114423	Moviment	0.108674	Solidarnos	0.124933	US Preside	0.100141	European	0.087421
Die Linke	0.114423	Monti Ma	0.108674	EU Counci	0.124933	European	0.09713	European	0.087421
Bundstag	0.114423	University	0.108674	Mayor of	0.124933	Markiel Kr	0.09713	Solidarnos	0.087421
Brexit neg	0.114423	Mayor	0.108674	French Err	0.124933	Fakt	0.09713	minister s	0.087421
Mayor of	0.114423	Mayor of	0.108674	European	0.124933	Razem	0.09713	Ministerst	0.087421

Table 5.145: Hub centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	Hub_DE	Id_IT	Hub_IT	Id_NL	Hub_NL	Id_PL	Hub_PL	Id_agg	Hub_agg
european	0.162335	European	0.152853	Dutch PM	0.161304	Gazeta Wy	0.14009	european	0.095806
German G	0.155049	La Nazione	0.14998	De Telegra	0.15905	Polish PM	0.135206	Süddeutsche	0.091748
Süddeutsche	0.153193	Partito De	0.14998	Ministerie	0.159007	Vice-Presic	0.131332	European	0.089757
Bundnis 9	0.15292	Italian Gov	0.14998	NRC Hand	0.156429	President	0.13032	German G	0.084765
Bundesmi	0.152891	Export US	0.14998	Dutch vox	0.156429	Platforma	0.129035	President	0.084512
Bundesmi	0.150821	University	0.14998	Ministerie	0.156429	European	0.129035	Vice-Presic	0.079654
French Go	0.139302	Fondazion	0.14998	Christen-D	0.156429	Prawo i Sp	0.129035	En Marche	0.079654
Alternativ	0.139302	Forza Italia	0.14998	Volksparti	0.156429	Prezydent	0.129035	Financial T	0.079654
Christlich	0.139302	Presidente	0.14998	european	0.15396	Polish vox	0.129035	Gazeta Wy	0.079377
Bild	0.139302	University	0.14998	Wagening	0.12536	En Marche	0.129035	Italian Gov	0.078507
Deutsches	0.139302	Presidente	0.14998	Financial T	0.12536	minister s	0.129035	Polish PM	0.076562
German v	0.139302	Italian vox	0.14998	Ministère	0.124781	Ministerst	0.129035	French Go	0.075609
European	0.123111	Corriere d	0.14998	Presidente	0.122226	European	0.129035	European	0.075514
Lega Nord	0.11557	President	0.14998	German G	0.122021	Koalicja Sc	0.129035	Bundesmi	0.075275
Presidente	0.11557	Ministero	0.14998	Kings Colle	0.119906	poland co	0.117199	Bundnis 9	0.07527
Turkish G	0.115243	italy const	0.118005	InnoEnerg	0.119906	Kancelaria	0.096355	Platforma	0.074773
Harvard U	0.109902	German G	0.094848	Dutch Gov	0.119906	Ministerst	0.096355	Prawo i Sp	0.074773
Pulse of E	0.109902	Lega Nord	0.093663	Hanseatic	0.119906	Council of	0.092481	Prezydent	0.074773
President	0.109902	Presidente	0.093663	Democrat	0.119906	US Preside	0.09111	Polish vox	0.074773
Die Linke	0.109902	Moviment	0.093663	Solidarnoś	0.119906	European	0.090184	European	0.074773
Bundstag	0.109902	Monti Ma	0.093663	EU Counci	0.119906	Markiel Kr	0.090184	European	0.074773
Brexit neg	0.109902	University	0.093663	Mayor of	0.119906	Fakt	0.090184	Solidarnoś	0.074773
Mayor of	0.109902	Mayor	0.093663	French Em	0.119906	Razem	0.090184	minister s	0.074773
DGB	0.109902	Mayor of	0.093663	European	0.119906	Polish Em	0.090184	Ministerst	0.074773
Augsburg	0.109902	Corte Sup	0.093663	Dorren Ga	0.119906	European	0.090184	Koalicja Sc	0.074773

Table 5.146: PageRank centrality (bipartite network)

Id_DE	pageranks	Id_IT	pageranks	Id_NL	pageranks	Id_PL	pageranks	Id_agg	pageranks
european	0.140366	italy const	0.19577	european	0.146018	poland co	0.152907	european	0.131212
germany c	0.056682	european	0.149793	netherlan	0.085743	european	0.106207	poland co	0.063292
united kin	0.025306	regional /	0.028848	italy const	0.028392	belarus co	0.026473	italy const	0.056152
regional /	0.022025	united kin	0.012383	regional /	0.027826	united kin	0.024151	germany c	0.022168
poland co	0.018362	united sta	0.012383	united kin	0.022106	italy const	0.021526	netherlan	0.022109
ukraine cc	0.013984	germany c	0.010037	poland co	0.014789	germany c	0.01494	regional /	0.021862
italy const	0.013622	france cor	0.009624	germany c	0.014733	hungary c	0.013157	united kin	0.019518
luxembou	0.011719	austria cor	0.009417	france cor	0.013089	regional /	0.010272	belarus co	0.012413
northern i	0.011719	poland co	0.009417	belarus co	0.01129	Gazeta Wy	0.009153	france cor	0.00791
spain cons	0.011538	spain cons	0.009417	china cons	0.008586	ukraine cc	0.00915	spain cons	0.006839
Süddeutsc	0.011404	French Go	0.008374	albania co	0.008586	sweden cc	0.009093	ukraine cc	0.006835
German G	0.009621	European	0.007926	greece cor	0.008586	united sta	0.007818	hungary c	0.006399
hungary c	0.009455	Maltese G	0.006452	denmark c	0.008586	france cor	0.007771	united sta	0.006125
czech repu	0.009455	President	0.006452	sweden cc	0.008586	turkey cor	0.007382	sweden cc	0.005125
united sta	0.009455	Tukano pe	0.006452	belgium cc	0.008586	lithuania c	0.007382	turkey cor	0.004503
israel cons	0.009455	malta con	0.006452	Ministerie	0.007659	spain cons	0.007305	czech repu	0.003762
france cor	0.009455	turkey cor	0.006452	De Telegra	0.007579	czech repu	0.005614	luxembou	0.003762
turkey cor	0.008454	brazil cons	0.006452	Dutch PM	0.007288	President	0.004953	northern i	0.003762
Bundesmi	0.007607	German G	0.006087	bulgaria c	0.005921	Vice-Presi	0.004724	Gazeta Wy	0.00356
Bundnis 9	0.007587	La Nazione	0.005477	ICT	0.005882	Polish PM	0.004592	German G	0.00345
cyprus cor	0.007298	Partito De	0.005477	President	0.005882	US House	0.003846	Süddeutsc	0.003402
moldova c	0.007191	Italian Gov	0.005477	Syria Relie	0.005882	Scottish N	0.003846	cyprus cor	0.003043
Turkish Gc	0.006303	Export US	0.005477	US Preside	0.005882	President	0.003846	austria cor	0.003036
European	0.00605	University	0.005477	Turkish Gc	0.005882	Croatian v	0.003846	israel cons	0.003036
Bundesmi	0.005605	Fondazion	0.005477	Ukrainian	0.005882	Malta Cha	0.003846	lithuania c	0.003036

Table 5.147: Modularity class table sample

Id_DE	modularity_class_DE	Id_IT	modularit_Id_NL	modularit_Id_PL	modularit_Id_agg	modularit
European External Action Service	0	Illarionov Andrei	0	French vox	0	Maltese G
denmark constituency	0	russia constituency	0	French Go	0	Malta Cha
Illarionov Andrei	1	Hungarian Government	1	Bové José	0	malta con
russia constituency	1	Transparency International HU	1	Ministère	0	Partidul C
Hungarian Government	2	Board of Trustees SZFE	1	france cor	0	romania c
Transparency International HU	2	hungary constituency	1	Dvorani A	1	US Presid
Board of Trustees SZFE	2	Partidul Conservator	2	Instituti i S	1	UK Govern
hungary constituency	2	romania constituency	2	albania co	1	UK Labour
Partidul Conservator	3	Austrian PM	3	British PM	2	UK Conser
romania constituency	3	austria constituency	3	Brexit Part	2	UK Civil Se
Austrian PM	4	Luxembourg Government	4	UK Govern	2	EU Counci
austria constituency	4	LSAP	4	UK Brexit i	2	British PM
Luxembourg Government	5	Luxembourg for Finance	5	Daily Mail	2	The New E
LSAP	5	Ministère des Affaires étrangères LU	4	Guardian	2	Patten Chi
Luxembourg for Finance	5	luxembourg constituency	4	UK Chief M	2	Gauke Dav
Ministère des Affaires étrangères LU	5	European Conservatives and Reformist Group	5	united kin	2	Cabinet Of
luxembourg constituency	5	Czech vox pop	5	ICT	3	British-Pol
Lega Nord	6	Czech PM	5	tibet consi	3	Home Offi
Italian Government	6	czech republic constituency	5	Polish vox	4	united kin
Presidente del Consiglio	6	Sri Lanka Government	6	Mayor of f	4	US Presid
Il Fatto Quotidiano	6	sri lanka constituency	6	Wagening	4	Summers
Ministero delle Finanze	6	NATO Secretary General	7	Prawo i Sp	4	Stanford U
Drakulić Slavenka	6	Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei	7	Tokarczuk	4	US Democ
italy constituency	6	SeaWatch	7	En March	4	united sta
European Conservatives and Reformist Group	7	Bundesministerium des Innern	7	ECCHR	4	President
Czech vox pop	7	Schröder Richard	7	Ministerie	4	Turkish Fo
Czech PM	7	Médecins Sans Frontières	7	Council of	4	TAYSAD A
czech republic constituency	7	Hoge Raad	7	Carbon Di	4	turkey cor
Sri Lanka Government	8	regional / global constituency	7	Financial T	4	US House
sri lanka constituency	8	greece constituency	7	Bovenkerk	4	armenia c
NATO Secretary General	9	President of Moldova	8	Kennisplat	4	Scottish N
Ökologisch-Demokratische Partei	9	New Times	8	University	4	scotland c
SeaWatch	9	moldova constituency	8	Al-Azhar I	4	Vaticano
Bundesministerium des Innern	9	US President	9	poland co	4	Harari Yuv
Schröder Richard	9	CDC	9	regional /	4	Tokarczuk
Médecins Sans Frontières	9	Facebook	9	President	5	Chinese G
Hoge Raad	9	united states constituency	9	libya cons	5	regional /
regional / global constituency	9	European Commission	10	Dansk Foll	6	President
greece constituency	9	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	10	Socialdem	6	brazil cons
President of Moldova	10	Süddeutsche Zeitung	10	denmark c	6	Sozialdem
New Times	10	Harvard University	10	Syria Relie	7	Ifo Institut
moldova constituency	10	Pulse of Europe	10	syria consi	7	German G
Alternative für Deutschland	11	President of the EU Commission	10	US Presid	8	Bundesmi
Christlich Soziale Union	11	Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	10	united sta	8	Die Linke
Zentralrats der Muslime	11	French Government	10	Turkish Gc	9	Deutsche
Bundesrechnungshof	11	Die Linke	10	turkey cor	9	Institut de
Bundesverfassungsgericht	11	Bundestagspräsident	10	Swedish vi	10	Robert Ko
Bild	11	Brexit negotiator	10	Folkhälsor	10	germany c
Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband	11	Mayor of Freising	10	sweden cc	10	Croatian v
Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung	11	DGB	10	Ukrainian	11	croatia co
CDU official	11	German Government	10	ukraine cc	11	Malta Cha
Adler	11	Augsburg University	10	Swiss MP	12	malta con
FWI	11	Volkshochschule Eching	10	switzerland	12	Sveikatos
Wiha	11	Academic	10	Badr Orga	13	LitGrid
Landwirtschaftsministerium	11	Mayor of Eching	10	iraq const	13	Lietuvos R
DIHK	11	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	10	Kings Collé	14	lithuania c
VDMA	11	Musician	10	NRC Hand	14	Magyaros
Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund	11	BDA	10	InnoEnerg	14	pénzügym
Verband der Automobilindustrie	11	Merten Hans-Lothar	10	Dutch Gov	14	Hungarian
Land schafft Verbindung	11	BDI - Bundesverband der deutschen Industrie	10	Hanseatic	14	Magyar Hi
Fischer Leohard	11	EU Commissioner for Competition	10	Democrat	14	European
Auswärtiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	11	Airbus	10	Solidarno	14	Human Rij
German vox pop	11	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	10	EU Counci	14	Demokrat
Robert Koch Institut	11	Bayerischer Ministerpräsident	10	Mayor of	14	hungary c
Neue Soziale Marktwirtschaft	11	Ministère de la Défense	10	French Em	14	Eurooppa
germany constituency	11	ECB President	10	European	14	finland co
US President	12	ex-ECB President	10	Dorren Ga	14	#UniteCyp
CDC	12	Ministère de l'Économie	10	European	14	cyprus cor
Facebook	12	Nestlé	10	EU Comm	14	Ušsienio r
united states constituency	12	Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	10	President	14	Polski PEN
Syrian Democratic Forces	13	En Marche	10	EU Comm	14	EU High R
syria constituency	13	Christlich Demokratische Union	10	EU Comm	14	National B
Palestine Liberation Organization	14	EU Commissioner for Trade	10	Ministerie	14	Belarusba
palestine constituency	14	Ost-Ausschuss	10	University	14	Moody's
Israel Embassy in Germany	15	EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator	10	ECB Presid	14	President
Israel Ministry of Transport	15	EU Council	10	Amsterdai	14	Ministerst
George Mason University	15	European People's Party	10	UK Labour	14	utrikesmir
israel constituency	15	EU High Representative	10	Islington C	14	Litvinchuk
Sinn Fein	16	Ministre chargé des Affaires européennes	10	House of f	14	BYhelp
Democratic Unionist Party	16	ECDC	10	Copa-Cogi	14	PandaDoc
Deputy Northern Irish PM	16	EU Commissioner for Environment	10	La Republ	14	Deepdee
Irish PM	16	German economist	10	Eurogrou	14	Foreign M
northern ireland constituency	16	Several EU Member States	10	President	14	belarus co
Germany	17	EU heads of state and government	10	OHV	14	Naval'nyj
bosnia constituency	17	Zentralverband Deutsches Kraftfahrzeuggewerbe	10	Wellink N	14	russia con
US Ambassador in Germany	18	Freie Demokratische Partei	10	German N	14	vox
serbia constituency	18	AHK Beijing	10	GlobalDat	14	Partido Po
Forum voor Democratie	19	Deutscher Bundestag	10	EU Comm	14	Spanish G
netherlands constituency	19	Collegium Polonicum	10	Ušsienio r	14	spain cons
European Commission	20	Infineon	10	Auswärtig	14	Czech PM
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	20	Union des Théâtres de l'Europe	10	De Nederl	14	ECDC
Süddeutsche Zeitung	20	EU Commissioner for Home Affairs	10	Blackrock	14	czech rep
Harvard University	20	EMCDDA	10	ING	14	Slovak PM
Pulse of Europe	20	Bundesversammlung	10	Wethoude	14	slovakia c
President of the EU Commission	20	Avenir Suisse	10	Eurostat	14	Polish PM
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	20	European Court of Justice	10	EU Comm	14	Platforma
French Government	20	Belgian Government	10	Grosser Pi	14	European
Die Linke	20	Hungarian opposition parties	10	Humboldt	14	Prawo i Sp
Bundestagspräsident	20	europa union constituency	10	Utrecht Ur	14	Gazeta W
Brexit negotiator	20	libya constituency	10	European	14	Prezydent

Table 5.148: Authority centrality (unipartite network)

Id_DE	Authority_DE Id_IT	Authority_IT Id_NL	Authority_NL Id_PL	Authority_PL Id_agg	Authority_agg
European Union	0.495314 Italian Government	0.585172 European Union	0.691826 Polish Government	0.481918 European Union	0.600418
European Commission	0.410524 European Union	0.382123 European Commission	0.303482 European Union	0.412508 European Commission	0.39702
German Government	0.316675 European Commission	0.285784 Dutch PM	0.252709 European Commission	0.268086 German Government	0.250871
EU Member States	0.245883 Presidente del Consiglio	0.273926 Netherlands	0.210724 Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.232316 Italian Government	0.206181
China	0.158874 Lega Nord	0.265007 Ministerie van Financiën	0.178558 Poland	0.229658 European Parliament	0.151248
United States	0.150916 German Government	0.198679 French Government	0.159823 European Parliament	0.208001 Europe	0.148547
European Central Bank	0.144742 Hungarian Government	0.142605 British PM	0.142275 Trybunał, Konstytucyjny	0.168504 EU Member States	0.144593
EU Council	0.131351 Italia Viva	0.132126 Dutch Cabinet	0.133813 minister sprawiedliwości	0.155035 French Government	0.129432
Europe	0.131016 Italy	0.130404 UK Conservative Party	0.130716 Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.151229 British PM	0.125292
Turkey	0.125587 Europe	0.129893 ECB President	0.120593 EU Member States	0.146381 Polish Government	0.119573
President of the EU Commission	0.120098 Movimento 5 Stelle	0.124811 Italy	0.116834 Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	0.144993 EU Council	0.11825
US President	0.119102 ECB President	0.116226 Dutch Government	0.115569 German Government	0.143778 Hungarian Government	0.115831
British PM	0.118375 European Parliament	0.113091 President of the EU Commission	0.112507 Rada Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej	0.143451 Italy	0.111814
Belgian Government	0.114964 Camera dei deputati	0.111489 UK Government	0.108596 President of Belarus	0.12232 United States	0.108979
Bundesverfassungsgericht	0.111209 presidente della Regione Siciliana	0.102999 European Parliament	0.107035 French Government	0.118037 Presidente del Consiglio	0.10692
Ständige Vertretung der Deutschland bei der EU	0.106058 Fratelli d'Italia	0.102744 Britain	0.084927 Platforma Obywatelska	0.111065 Lega Nord	0.106638
Christlich Soziale Union	0.10412 EU Commissioner for Economy	0.087256 France	0.082391 British PM	0.105632 President of the EU Commission	0.103095
Italy	0.096987 Partito Democratico	0.084856 China	0.078634 Hungarian Government	0.104692 China	0.096002
Italian Government	0.096112 European People's Party	0.077422 Europe	0.077559 EU Council	0.094671 EU Council	0.095606
French Government	0.09508 EU Council	0.074739 United States	0.076645 PKN Orlen	0.090899 Germany	0.091831
United Kingdom	0.090703 Ministero delle Finanze	0.074681 Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	0.076043 Polish PM	0.08893 Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.090877
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.088675 French Government	0.072326 German Government	0.066276 Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości	0.077026 Turkey	0.084429
European Court of Justice	0.08333 OECD	0.072106 Brussels	0.064519 European Court of Justice	0.072817 United Kingdom	0.081518
EU heads of state and government	0.078826 Draghi Mario	0.071403 US President	0.060896 Germany	0.067802 ECB President	0.076855
UK Government	0.076902 President of the EU Commission	0.070042 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	0.059634 Polska Stronniczo Ludowe	0.067136 US President	0.07592

Table 5.149: Betweenness centrality (unipartite network)

Id_DE	betweennesscentrality_DE Id_IT	betweennesscentrality_IT Id_NL	betweennesscentrality_NL Id_PL	betweennesscentrality_PL Id_agg	betweennesscentrality_agg
European Commission	4381 Italian Government	7087 Dutch PM	470 European Commission	18047 European Commission	92595
German Government	4221 Lega Nord	4085 European Union	319 Polish PM	11084 German Government	71579
British PM	3392 European Commission	4017 Socialistische Partij	307 German Government	10995 European Union	40059
European Court of Justice	3276 Presidente del Consiglio	3821 European Commission	298 European Court of Justice	8594 Italian Government	36490
French Government	3272 German Government	3444 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	297 Polish Government	6821 President of the EU Commission	32720
President of the EU Commission	2328 Movimento 5 Stelle	2305 Partij van de Arbeid	283 Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	6288 EU Member States	31187
Polish Government	1948 European Union	2001 Ministerie van Financiën	291 UOKiK	5718 Polish Government	26677
Gazeta Wyborcza	1856 EU Council	1666 British PM	276 Nord Stream AG	5705 EU Council	25195
Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	1830 British PM	1527 GroenLinks	268 Poland	5356 French Government	25338
EU Council	1690 President of the EU Commission	1398 Forum voor Democratie	235 Staszewski Kazik	4416 Dutch PM	24952
Sąd Najwyższy	1603 EU Member States	1387 President of the EU Commission	204 Platforma Obywatelska	4073 Presidente del Consiglio	24923
Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	1568 Partito Democratico	1265 French Government	166 French Government	4069 European Court of Justice	23482
Tuleya Igor	1476 ECB President	1003 European Parliament	119 US President	3287 Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	21807
House of Commons	1430 Ministero delle Finanze	883 Staatskundig Gereformeerde Partij	119 Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	2961 British PM	21564
Hungarian Government	1378 European Parliament	776 Government of the Netherlands	110 British PM	2876 European People's Party	19438
Czech PM	1296 Fratelli d'Italia	647 Staten-Generaal	104 minister sprawiedliwości	2736 Hungarian Government	18142
European Parliament	1181 Ministero Esteri IT	644 Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	88 European Union	2607 Gazeta Wyborcza	16224
European People's Party	1126 Italia Viva	621 German Government	71 Hungarian Government	2415 European Parliament	15577
UK Government	1120 Austria	409 VVD	62 UK Government	2355 Lega Nord	14552
Presidente del Consiglio	1073 Camera dei deputati	292 UK Conservative Party	61 EU Council	2278 US President	13314
US President	1034 Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	289 France	61 Sejm	2148 Polish PM	13136
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	940 European People's Party	236 Eurogroup	61 Trybunał, Konstytucyjny	2411 Netherlands	12163
EU Member States	823 Mininale - Ministero Interno	277 UK Government	54 President of Belarus	2136 Platforma Obywatelska	11982
Christlich Soziale Union	817 Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	276 ECB President	1949 Sąd Najwyższy	1949 Sąd Najwyższy	11610
Single Resolution Board	793 Presidente della repubblica	261 Turkish Government	52 Senat	1920 Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	9801

Table 5.150: Degree centrality (unipartite network)

Id_DE	Degree_DE Id_IT	Degree_IT Id_NL	Degree_NL Id_PL	Degree_PL Id_agg	Degree_agg
German Government	48 Italian Government	61 European Union	42 European Commission	47 European Union	132
European Commission	41 Presidente del Consiglio	37 European Commission	25 Polish Government	43 European Commission	123
European Union	35 Lega Nord	34 NRC Handelsblad	22 European Union	37 German Government	95
Sächsische Zeitung	29 European Union	30 De Telegraaf	19 Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	36 Italian Government	76
President of the EU Commission	24 Movimento 5 Stelle	29 Dutch vox pop	18 Platforma Obywatelska	35 British PM	50
British PM	22 European Commission	29 Dutch PM	16 Gazeta Wyborcza	28 Polish Government	48
European Court of Justice	21 German Government	25 Netherlands	16 Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	24 President of the EU Commission	47
Bundnis 90 - Die Grünen	18 Partito Democratico	21 British PM	16 Polish PM	23 French Government	45
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	17 Corriere della Sera	20 Staten-Generaal	14 Poland	21 Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	44
EU Member States	16 Forza Italia	18 EU Member States	14 UK Government	20 European Parliament	44
Hungarian Government	15 Italy	17 French Government	13 German Government	19 Presidente del Consiglio	44
French Government	15 ECB President	16 Ministerie van Financiën	13 President of Belarus	19 EU Member States	44
UK Government	14 President of the EU Commission	14 UK Government	13 European Parliament	18 EU Council	40
European Central Bank	14 European Central Bank	13 European Parliament	12 British PM	17 Lega Nord	39
Italian Government	13 European Parliament	12 President of the EU Commission	12 EU Member States	17 European Court of Justice	39
EU Council	13 EU Council	12 German Government	12 European Court of Justice	15 UK Government	38
US President	12 British PM	12 Dutch Government	11 EU Council	14 Hungarian Government	37
United States	11 Europe	12 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	11 US President	14 Platforma Obywatelska	36
European External Action Service	10 French Government	10 Europe	10 Hungarian Government	14 European Central Bank	35
ECB President	10 Hungarian Government	10 UK Conservative Party	9 minister sprawiedliwości	13 Europe	33
European Parliament	10 Ministero delle Finanze	10 Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	9 Trybunał, Konstytucyjny	13 US President	32
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	9 European People's Party	9 ECB President	9 French Government	12 Gazeta Wyborcza	30
Christlich Soziale Union	9 Italia Viva	9 European Central Bank	8 President of the EU Commission	12 Bundesverteidigungsministerium	30
China	9 Fratelli d'Italia	8 Socialistische Partij	8 Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11 Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	30
Europe	9 Ministero Esteri IT	8 France	7 Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości	10 Movimento 5 Stelle	29

Table 5.151: Eigenvector centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	eigencentrality_DE	id_IT	eigencentrality_IT	id_NL	eigencentrality_NL	id_PL	eigencentrality_PL	id_agg	eigencentrality_agg
European Commission	1.00	Italian Government	1.00	China	1.00	European Union	1.00	European Commission	1.00
China	0.61	European Commission	0.71	EU Member States	0.93	European Commission	0.73	European Union	0.95
EU Member States	0.60	European Union	0.68	Turkey	0.76	Polish Government	0.42	Italian Government	0.56
United States	0.58	Lega Nord	0.53	European Commission	0.71	European Court of Justice	0.40	German Government	0.52
European Court of Justice	0.57	Presidente del Consiglio	0.46	European Union	0.64	Poland	0.40	EU Member States	0.42
European Union	0.54	Italy	0.41	aviation industry	0.44	German Government	0.37	China	0.40
German Government	0.51	Hungarian Government	0.39	Azerbaijan	0.43	President of Belarus	0.36	Turkey	0.35
EU Council	0.49	German Government	0.36	Indonesia	0.43	EU Member States	0.36	Poland	0.35
French Government	0.48	Movimento 5 Stelle	0.32	Italy	0.41	Trybunał Konstytucyjny	0.33	Hungarian Government	0.34
EU heads of state and government	0.45	Italia Viva	0.31	Astrazenca	0.39	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.27	Italy	0.31
ex-ECB President	0.44	Europe	0.31	Bulgaria	0.39	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.25	European Parliament	0.30
Netherlands	0.43	OECD	0.26	Dutch Government	0.36	Spanish Government	0.24	Europe	0.29
European Central Bank	0.39	European People's Party	0.25	UK Conservative Party	0.33	EU Council	0.23	European Court of Justice	0.29
European Parliament	0.38	Partito Democratico	0.23	Staten-Generaal	0.32	Hungarian Government	0.23	United Kingdom	0.28
United Kingdom	0.37	EU Member States	0.23	UK Government	0.31	London	0.23	United States	0.28
Luxembourg	0.35	Banca d'Italia	0.22	Dutch PM	0.26	Belarusian officials	0.23	Polish Government	0.28
Czech PM	0.33	Camera dei deputati	0.22	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	0.25	Brazilian authorities	0.22	EU Council	0.27
Turkey	0.33	presidente della Regione Siciliana	0.21	United States	0.24	minister sprawiedliwości	0.22	Presidente del Consiglio	0.27
Romanian Government	0.33	France	0.21	British PM	0.23	Polish judges	0.21	French Government	0.25
Britain	0.33	European Parliament	0.20	Forum voor Democratie	0.22	British PM	0.20	Russia	0.23
Companies / Manufacturers	0.33	Fratelli d'Italia	0.18	GroenLinks	0.21	Moderna	0.19	Netherlands	0.23
governments	0.33	Netherlands	0.18	Dutch Cabinet	0.20	United Kingdom	0.18	Lega Nord	0.22
European transport ministers	0.33	Atlantia	0.18	Albania	0.20	Regione Lombardia	0.18	President of the EU Commission	0.22
SMEs	0.33	industries / factories	0.18	French Government	0.19	PKN Orien	0.18	British PM	0.21
Greek Government	0.33	ECB President	0.18	Europe	0.19	EU officials	0.18	France	0.21

Table 5.152: In-degree centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	indegree_DE	id_IT	indegree_IT	id_NL	indegree_NL	id_PL	indegree_PL	id_agg	indegree_agg
European Union	31	Italian Government	44	European Union	37	Polish Government	37	European Union	117
European Commission	27	European Union	29	European Commission	20	European Commission	31	European Commission	88
German Government	23	European Commission	20	Netherlands	14	European Union	31	Italian Government	54
British PM	15	Lega Nord	17	EU Member States	14	Poland	20	German Government	54
European Court of Justice	14	Italy	17	British PM	12	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	19	Polish Government	41
EU Member States	14	Presidente del Consiglio	15	Dutch Government	12	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	18	EU Member States	39
European Central Bank	11	German Government	15	French Government	11	UK Government	15	British PM	36
Hungarian Government	10	Movimento 5 Stelle	12	Dutch PM	11	EU Member States	15	Europe	33
UK Government	10	Europe	12	UK Government	11	President of Belarus	14	European Parliament	32
United States	10	European Central Bank	11	Staten-Generaal	11	German Government	13	French Government	30
French Government	9	ECB President	10	Europe	10	European Parliament	13	UK Government	29
EU Council	9	European Parliament	9	German Government	9	British PM	12	European Central Bank	29
China	9	British PM	8	European Parliament	7	European Court of Justice	11	Hungarian Government	27
Europe	9	EU Council	7	European Central Bank	7	Trybunał Konstytucyjny	11	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	26
Turkey	9	Germany	7	China	7	Hungarian Government	10	European Court of Justice	25
European Parliament	8	Hungarian Government	6	United States	7	Polish PM	9	Italy	25
United Kingdom	8	presidente della Regione Siciliana	6	Ministerie van Financiën	6	Platforma Obywatelska	9	United States	24
President of the EU Commission	7	President of the EU Commission	5	France	6	French Government	8	EU Council	23
Italian Government	7	EU Member States	5	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	6	EU Council	8	Poland	22
Germany	7	Camera dei deputati	5	ECB President	6	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	8	China	22
US Government	7	United States	5	Turkey	6	Italian Government	8	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	21
Luxembourg	7	Partito Democratico	4	UK Conservative Party	5	US President	7	Netherlands	20
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	6	Forza Italia	4	United Kingdom	5	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	7	Germany	20
ECB President	6	Fratelli d'Italia	4	Brussels	5	Rada Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej	6	Turkey	20
US President	6	Ministero delle Finanze	4	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	4	United States	6	Lega Nord	19

Table 5.153: Hub centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	Hub_DE	id_IT	Hub_IT	id_NL	Hub_NL	id_PL	Hub_PL	id_agg	Hub_agg
SÄkiddutsche Zeitung	0.507	Presidente del Consiglio	0.330	NRC Handelsblad	0.393	Gazeta Wyborcza	0.464	SÄkiddutsche Zeitung	0.210
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	0.292	Movimento 5 Stelle	0.305	De Telegraaf	0.389	Platforma Obywatelska	0.420	President of the EU Commission	0.206
German Government	0.270	Partito Democratico	0.280	Dutch vox pop	0.389	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	0.294	European Commission	0.182
President of the EU Commission	0.253	Forza Italia	0.277	Democraten 66	0.193	European Commission	0.271	European People's Party	0.173
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.220	Corriere della Sera	0.262	University of Leiden	0.155	Polish PM	0.181	German Government	0.167
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	0.203	Lega Nord	0.260	GroenLinks	0.146	European People's Party	0.155	Presidente del Consiglio	0.162
Bild	0.180	Italian Government	0.243	University of Amsterdam	0.138	minister sprawiedliwości	0.150	NRC Handelsblad	0.162
European External Action Service	0.141	French Government	0.192	Forum voor Democratie	0.135	President of the EU Commission	0.115	Corriere della Sera	0.156
French Government	0.133	President of the EU Commission	0.181	De Social-Economische Raad	0.135	EU Council	0.114	Italian Government	0.154
Bundesminister des AuswÄrztigen	0.123	European People's Party	0.143	British PM	0.134	fakt	0.114	Gazeta Wyborcza	0.152
DGB	0.121	Hungarian Government	0.142	Turkish Government	0.122	Vice-President of European Commission	0.112	Dutch vox pop	0.151
Bundesministerium des Innern	0.118	European Commission	0.140	Financial Times	0.112	US President	0.104	Platforma Obywatelska	0.149
German vox pop	0.115	Italia Viva	0.126	Vice-President of European Commission	0.112	Polish government	0.100	Polish PM	0.148
European Commission	0.113	Banca d'Italia	0.125	VisNed	0.112	Wiosna	0.098	Movimento 5 Stelle	0.147
Augsburg University	0.109	OECD	0.110	Socialistische Partij	0.110	Der Spiegel	0.093	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	0.146
Kiel Institute for the World Economy	0.103	Fratelli d'Italia	0.103	Brexit Party	0.109	Die Welt	0.090	Lega Nord	0.142
Brexit negotiator	0.100	Presidente della Regione Toscana	0.103	Greece	0.107	Gazeta Polska	0.088	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	0.138
European People's Party	0.099	PiÙ Europa	0.100	President of the EU Commission	0.103	British PM	0.076	De Telegraaf	0.134
Christlich Soziale Union	0.092	La Nazione	0.090	AuswÄrztiger Ausschuss - Deutscher Bundestag	0.099	EU Commissioner for Justice	0.073	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.129
Hungarian Government	0.090	Italian vox pop	0.086	VNO-NCW	0.097	European Parliament	0.072	Forza Italia	0.120
Turkish Government	0.084	German Government	0.085	Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging	0.097	UK Government	0.069	French Government	0.112
Christlich Demokratische Union	0.082	Ministero Esteri IT	0.080	Fisherman	0.097	Koalicja Obywatelska	0.067	Hungarian Government	0.112
UK Conservative Party	0.077	Gilet jaunes	0.077	Indonesian Minister of Trade	0.097	Reporters Sans Frontières	0.067	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	0.112
UK Government	0.076	Camera dei deputati	0.076	Prime Minister of Malaysia	0.097	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	0.067	European External Action Service	0.108
Bundesministerium der Finanzen	0.076	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	0.074	IUCN	0.097	AuswÄrztiges Amt	0.067	Partito Democratico	0.105

Table 5.154: Out-degree centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	outdegree_DE	id_IT	outdegree_IT	id_NL	outdegree_NL	id_PL	outdegree_PL	id_agg	outdegree
SÄkdddeutsche Zeitung	29	Presidente del Consiglio	22	NRC Handelsblad	22	Gazeta Wyborcza	28	German Government	41
German Government	25	Corriere della Sera	20	Dutch vox pop	18	Platforma Obywatelska	26	European Commission	35
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	17	Partito Democratico	17	De Telegraaf	18	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	17	President of the EU Commission	30
President of the EU Commission	17	Legs Nord	17	President of the EU Commission	8	European Commission	16	SÄkdddeutsche Zeitung	29
European Commission	14	Italian Government	17	Ministerie van Financiën	7	Polish PM	14	Gazeta Wyborcza	28
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11	Movimento 5 Stelle	17	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	7	President of the EU Commission	9	Presidente del Consiglio	27
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	9	Forza Italia	14	University of Amsterdam	6	Minister Sprawiedliwosci	9	Platforma Obywatelska	26
European External Action Service	8	German Government	10	Democraten 66	6	US President	7	Italian Government	22
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	8	President of the EU Commission	9	Socialistische Partij	6	European People's Party	7	NRC Handelsblad	22
Bild	8	European Commission	9	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	6	EU Council	6	Legs Nord	20
Christlich Soziale Union	7	La Nazione	7	European Parliament	5	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	6	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	20
European Court of Justice	7	French Government	7	Dutch PM	5	Polish Government	6	Corriere della Sera	20
British PM	7	European People's Party	6	European Union	5	German Government	6	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	18
French Government	6	Ministero delle Finanze	6	European Commission	5	European Union	6	Dutch vox pop	18
Italian Government	6	ECB President	6	Christen-Democratisch Appel	5	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	6	European People's Party	18
US President	6	EU Council	5	UK Conservative Party	4	UK Government	5	De Telegraaf	18
Hungarian Government	5	President of the European Parliament	5	De Social-Economische Raad	4	European Parliament	5	Polish PM	17
DGB	5	Ministero Esteri IT	5	EU Council	4	British PM	5	Partito Democratico	17
Christlich Demokratische Union	5	Italia Viva	5	Partij van de Arbeid	4	Vice-President of European Commission	5	Movimento 5 Stelle	17
European People's Party	5	Piu Europa	4	British PM	4	President of Belarus	5	EU Council	17
Bundesministerium des Innern	5	Presidente del Fratelli d'Italia	4	GroenLinks	4	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	5	French Government	15
Presidente del Consiglio	5	Fratelli d'Italia	4	Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	4	French Government	4	European Union	15
UK Government	4	Hungarian Government	4	University of Leiden	4	Auswärtiges Amt	4	Forza Italia	14
European Union	4	Italian vox pop	4	Greece	4	European Court of Justice	4	Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	14
EU Council	4	British PM	4	Government of the Netherlands	3	Wlosna	4	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	14

Table 5.155: PageRank centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	pageranks_DE	id_IT	pageranks_IT	id_NL	pageranks_NL	id_PL	pageranks_PL	id_agg	pageranks
European Union	0.027474	European Commission	0.041983	European Union	0.030312	European Union	0.023541	European Union	0.025006
European Commission	0.020318	Italian Government	0.040107	EU Member States	0.019494	European Commission	0.022005	European Commission	0.019571
European Court of Justice	0.017798	European Union	0.030614	European Commission	0.016924	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.020459	Italian Government	0.011544
Urgenda Foundation	0.016582	Italy	0.021589	Staten-Generaal	0.016555	Nord Stream AG	0.019605	European Court of Justice	0.011517
Dutch Government	0.015238	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	0.017784	Gemeente Utrecht	0.013331	Polish Government	0.019393	EU Member States	0.010343
Netherlands	0.013601	Gazeta Wyborcza	0.017324	Dutch Government	0.013127	UOKiK	0.017899	German Government	0.010301
SÄkdhÄiz-ÄDs FilmmÄszvÄDszeti Egyetem	0.013573	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	0.016781	Stadsblad	0.012364	European Court of Justice	0.016713	Netherlands	0.008973
Board of Trustees SZFE	0.012449	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats	0.015442	Turkey	0.012225	Poland	0.01426	British PM	0.008827
British PM	0.012434	German Government	0.016554	China	0.011593	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.012528	Polish Government	0.008345
German Government	0.011456	Legs Nord	0.012089	British PM	0.00953	German Government	0.010455	Nord Stream AG	0.008319
Brussels	0.010255	Europe	0.011744	Netherlands	0.009337	President of Belarus	0.010386	UOKiK	0.00756
London	0.009624	British PM	0.011409	UK Government	0.009273	UK Government	0.010294	Brussels	0.007262
European Parliament	0.009474	Open Arms	0.011205	Europe	0.00869	British PM	0.010152	Turkey	0.007067
UK Government	0.008459	TAR Laio	0.010713	German Government	0.008473	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	0.009599	UK Government	0.007045
EU Member States	0.008072	Presidente del Consiglio	0.010557	CalviÄso Nadia	0.008453	EU Member States	0.008697	Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.007021
French Government	0.008035	European Central Bank	0.010321	Germany	0.008349	SÄ_d NajwyÄszy	0.008351	Dutch Government	0.006727
United Kingdom	0.00798	EU Member States	0.01015	Albania	0.007905	Spanish Government	0.008089	European Parliament	0.006307
Hungarian Government	0.007668	Movimento 5 Stelle	0.010074	aviation industry	0.007836	Italian Government	0.007361	French Government	0.006188
Mercosur	0.007598	President of the EU Commission	0.009422	French Government	0.007766	French Government	0.007016	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	0.006144
United States	0.007567	Germany	0.00932	France	0.007495	TrybunaÄ, Konstytucyjny	0.0069	Poland	0.005894
Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court	0.007559	European Parliament	0.00829	Albanian judges	0.006945	SÄ_d Rejonowy Poznan	0.006678	Germany	0.005547
European Central Bank	0.007381	United States	0.008028	Giykata Administrative e Apelit	0.006945	Giertych Roman	0.006464	Hungarian Government	0.00554
Tuleya Igor	0.007341	China	0.007661	Gillet jaunes	0.006945	Tuleya Igor	0.006464	Europe	0.005453
Italian Government	0.007265	ECB President	0.007766	En Marche	0.006945	Hungarian Government	0.006217	China	0.005399
France	0.00691	EU Council	0.007396	InvesticoÄ	0.006945	ÄÄÄÄÄ school	0.00616	France	0.005331

Table 5.156: Weighted degree centrality (unipartite network)

id_DE	weighteddegree_DE	id_IT	weighteddegree_IT	id_NL	weighteddegree_NL	id_PL	weighteddegree_PL	id_agg	weighteddegree
German Government	72	Italian Government	113	European Union	54	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	57	European Union	192
European Commission	52	Presidente del Consiglio	62	European Commission	32	European Commission	57	European Commission	172
SÄkdddeutsche Zeitung	50	Partito Democratico	52	Dutch vox pop	31	Platforma Obywatelska	56	Italian Government	146
European Union	48	Legs Nord	48	NRC Handelsblad	28	Polish Government	55	German Government	137
President of the EU Commission	30	Movimento 5 Stelle	42	De Telegraaf	24	European Union	50	British PM	87
British PM	30	European Union	40	British PM	23	Gazeta Wyborcza	39	President of the EU Commission	78
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	28	Forza Italia	32	Dutch PM	18	Polish PM	29	Presidente del Consiglio	72
European Central Bank	25	German Government	32	Netherlands	18	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	29	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	68
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	23	European Commission	31	EU Member States	17	European Parliament	28	European Parliament	66
European Court of Justice	22	Corriere della Sera	29	Ministerie van Financiën	16	UK Government	27	Polish Government	63
Italian Government	20	ECB President	22	French Government	15	Poland	24	EU Member States	63
UK Government	19	President of the EU Commission	19	UK Government	15	President of Belarus	23	UK Government	62
EU Member States	19	Italy	19	Staten-Generaal	15	German Government	21	Platforma Obywatelska	57
EU Council	18	Hungarian Government	15	President of the EU Commission	13	US President	20	EU Council	57
China	17	British PM	15	European Parliament	12	EU Member States	20	French Government	55
Hungarian Government	16	Fratelli d'Italia	14	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	12	EU Council	19	Legs Nord	55
French Government	15	European Parliament	13	German Government	12	British PM	19	Partito Democratico	53
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	14	EU Council	13	Dutch Government	12	European Court of Justice	17	SÄkdddeutsche Zeitung	51
European Parliament	13	European Central Bank	13	ECB President	11	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	17	Hungarian Government	47
ECB President	12	French Government	13	Europe	11	President of the EU Commission	16	European Central Bank	46
US President	12	Europe	13	UK Conservative Party	10	TrybunaÄ, konstytucyjny	16	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	45
Czech PM	11	Ministero Esteri IT	12	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	10	Hungarian Government	15	ECB President	45
United States	11	European People's Party	11	Democraten 66	9	minister sprawiedliwosci	14	European Court of Justice	44
European External Action Service	10	Italia Viva	11	Partij van de Arbeid	9	French Government	12	Gazeta Wyborcza	43
Bild	10	Ministero delle Finanze	10	Forum voor Democratie	9	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	12	Movimento 5 Stelle	42

Table 5.157: Degree centrality (unipartite network)

Id_DE	Degree_DE	Id_IT	Degree_IT	Id_NL	Degree_NL	Id_PL	Degree_PL	Id_agg	Degree_agg
German Government	48	Italian Government	61	European Union	42	European Commission	47	European Union	132
European Commission	41	Presidente del Consiglio	37	European Commission	25	Polish Government	43	European Commission	123
European Union	35	Legha Nord	34	NRC Handelsblad	22	European Union	37	German Government	95
SÄkdeutsche Zeitung	29	European Union	30	De Telegraaf	19	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	36	Italian Government	76
President of the EU Commission	24	Movimento 5 Stelle	29	Dutch vox pop	18	Platforma Obywatelska	35	British PM	50
British PM	22	European Commission	29	Dutch PM	16	Gazeta Wyborcza	28	Polish Government	48
European Court of Justice	21	Hungarian Government	25	Netherlands	16	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	24	President of the EU Commission	47
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	18	Partito Democratico	21	British PM	16	Polish PM	23	French Government	45
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	17	Corriere della Sera	20	Staten-Generaal	14	Poland	21	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	44
EU Member States	16	Forza Italia	18	EU Member States	14	UK Government	20	European Parliament	44
Hungarian Government	15	Italy	17	French Government	13	German Government	19	Presidente del Consiglio	44
French Government	15	ECB President	16	Ministerie van Financiën	13	President of Belarus	19	EU Member States	44
UK Government	14	President of the EU Commission	14	UK Government	13	European Parliament	18	EU Council	40
European Central Bank	14	European Central Bank	13	European Parliament	12	British PM	17	Legha Nord	39
Italian Government	13	European Parliament	12	President of the EU Commission	12	EU Member States	17	European Court of Justice	39
EU Council	13	EU Council	12	German Government	12	European Court of Justice	15	UK Government	38
US President	12	British PM	12	Dutch Government	12	EU Council	14	Hungarian Government	37
United States	11	Europe	12	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	11	US President	14	Platforma Obywatelska	36
European External Action Service	10	French Government	10	Europe	10	Hungarian Government	14	European Central Bank	35
ECB President	10	Hungarian Government	10	UK Conservative Party	9	minister sprawiedliwosci	13	Europe	33
European Parliament	10	Ministero delle Finanze	10	Ministerie van Volksgezondheid	9	Trybunał, Konstytucyjny	13	US President	32
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	9	European People's Party	9	ECB President	9	French Government	12	Gazeta Wyborcza	30
Christlich Soziale Union	9	Italia Viva	9	European Central Bank	8	President of the EU Commission	12	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	30
China	9	Fratelli d'Italia	8	Socialistische Partij	8	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	11	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	30
Europe	9	Ministero Esteri IT	8	France	7	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	10	Movimento 5 Stelle	29

Table 5.158: Weighted out-degree centrality (unipartite network)

Id_DE	weightedoutdegree_DE	Id_IT	weightedoutdegree_IT	Id_NL	weightedoutdegree_NL	Id_PL	weightedoutdegree_PL	Id_agg	weightedoutdegree_agg
SÄkdeutsche Zeitung	50	Partito Democratico	46	Dutch vox pop	31	Platforma Obywatelska	43	European Commission	62
German Government	32	Italian Government	32	NRC Handelsblad	28	Gazeta Wyborcza	39	President of the EU Commission	55
Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	27	Presidente del Consiglio	31	De Telegraaf	23	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	27	German Government	53
President of the EU Commission	23	Corriere della Sera	29	European Commission	9	European Commission	21	SÄkdeutsche Zeitung	51
European Commission	21	Forza Italia	26	President of the EU Commission	9	Polish PM	19	Partito Democratico	47
Bundesverteidigungsministerium	15	Movimento 5 Stelle	24	Ministerie van Financiën	8	President of the EU Commission	13	Platforma Obywatelska	43
Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	14	Legha Nord	22	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken	7	Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej	10	Italian Government	43
BfB	10	European Commission	11	European Union	7	EU Council	9	Gazeta Wyborcza	41
Italian Government	9	German Government	11	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	7	US President	9	Presidente del Consiglio	37
European External Action Service	8	President of the EU Commission	10	University of Amsterdam	6	minister sprawiedliwosci	9	Bundnis 90 - Die Grunen	31
Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands	8	French Government	10	Democraten 66	6	European Union	8	Dutch vox pop	31
Christlich Soziale Union	7	Fratelli d'Italia	9	British PM	6	UK Government	7	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc	29
European Court of Justice	7	Ministero Esteri IT	9	Socialistische Partij	6	Polish Government	7	Corriere della Sera	29
Bundesverfassungsgericht	7	La Nazione	7	UK Conservative Party	5	German Government	7	NRC Handelsblad	28
British PM	7	European People's Party	7	European Parliament	5	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	7	Legha Nord	27
Hungarian Government	6	ECB President	7	Dutch PM	5	European People's Party	7	Forza Italia	26
French Government	6	Italia Viva	7	Partij van de Arbeid	5	Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci	7	Movimento 5 Stelle	24
European Union	6	Presidente dei Fratelli d'Italia	6	De Nederlandsche Bank	5	European Medicines Agency	7	EU Council	24
Bundesministerium des Innern	6	Hungarian Government	6	Christen-Democratisch Appel	5	European Parliament	6	De Telegraaf	24
EU Council	6	President of the European Parliament	6	De Sociaal-Economische Raad	4	Konfederacja Lewiatan	6	Bundesverteidigungsministerium	23
US President	6	Ministero delle Finanze	6	Polish vox pop	4	Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych	6	Polish PM	22
UK Government	5	EU Council	5	EU Council	4	UK Labour Party	5	French Government	22
ÖGB	5	Presidente della repubblica	5	Groenlinks	4	Wiosna	5	European Union	22
Christlich Demokratische Union	5	Piu Europa	4	Group of the Greens - European Free Alliance	4	British PM	5	British PM	22
European Central Bank	5	European Parliament	4	Partij voor de Vrijheid	4	Vice-President of European Commission	5	Bundesminister des Auswärtigen	21

Figure 5.91: Assortativity coefficient by node 'nationality' in the bipartite network (ERGM)³

	NL	PL	DE	IT
nodematch.org_nat	0.07 (0.30)	0.49 * (0.22)	-0.42 (0.37)	0.42 * (0.20)
edges	-5.14 *** (0.12)	-5.75 *** (0.10)	-5.43 *** (0.10)	-5.39 *** (0.12)
AIC	1082.61	1692.49	1360.65	1326.00
BIC	1097.83	1709.52	1376.90	1341.84
Log Likelihood	-539.31	-844.25	-678.33	-661.00

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

³ See Handcock *et al.* (2014) for a comprehensive definitional overview of the main terms used in the ERGM.

Figure 5.92: Assortativity coefficients and factor attribute effect coefficients by node territorial scope for the second mode in a bipartite network (ERGM)

	NL	PL	DE	IT
nodematch.org_scope.EU Supranational	0.32 (1.24)	-Inf	0.96 (1.21)	-0.26 (1.09)
nodematch.org_scope.Global / Regional	-0.13 (1.05)	-1.00 (1.05)	-0.32 (1.05)	0.11 (0.90)
nodematch.org_scope.Other EU Member State	-0.09 (0.45)	0.11 (0.36)	0.65 * (0.27)	0.42 (0.57)
nodematch.org_scope.Own Country, National	-0.45 (1.13)	0.05 (0.81)	-0.51 (1.16)	-0.27 (0.94)
nodematch.org_nat	0.04 (1.06)	0.31 (0.76)	-0.61 (1.02)	0.57 (0.89)
b2factor.org_scope.EU Supranational	-0.40 (0.37)	-0.29 (0.33)	0.06 (0.43)	0.51 (0.38)
b2factor.org_scope.Other EU Member State	-0.35 (0.39)	-0.80 * (0.33)	0.44 (0.37)	0.60 (0.43)
b2factor.org_scope.Own Country, National	0.43 (0.33)	-0.02 (0.30)	1.04 ** (0.39)	0.58 (0.38)
edges	-5.04 *** (0.26)	-5.39 *** (0.24)	-5.96 *** (0.32)	-5.84 *** (0.30)
AIC	1087.21	2580.09	1355.49	1335.17
BIC	1155.70	2648.18	1428.60	1406.46
Log Likelihood	-534.61	-1282.05	-668.75	-658.58

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.93: Factor attribute effect coefficients according to node ‘nationality’ and nodal attribute mixing coefficients in unipartite networks

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nodefactor.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION          0.19          0.22          0.41 **       0.37 **
(0.13)          (0.18)          (0.13)          (0.12)
nodefactor.act_nat.POLAND                   -0.67 ***
(0.12)
mix.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION.EUROPEAN UNION  1.35 ***      0.79 *        0.76 **       0.94
***
(0.27)          (0.33)          (0.28)          (0.24)
mix.act_nat.POLAND.EUROPEAN UNION          1.70 ***
(0.20)
mix.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION.POLAND          0.99 ***
(0.24)
mix.act_nat.POLAND.POLAND                   2.46 ***
(0.22)
edges                                        -6.28 ***     -5.74 ***     -6.19 ***     -6.19
***
(0.07)          (0.13)          (0.08)          (0.07)
nodefactor.act_nat.ITALY                    -0.61 ***
(0.17)
mix.act_nat.ITALY.EUROPEAN UNION            1.52 ***
(0.24)
mix.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION.ITALY           -0.30
(0.34)
mix.act_nat.ITALY.ITALY                     1.92 ***
(0.27)
nodefactor.act_nat.NETHERLANDS              -0.44 **
(0.14)
mix.act_nat.NETHERLANDS.EUROPEAN UNION      1.61 ***
(0.22)
mix.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION.NETHERLANDS     -2.51 *
(1.02)
mix.act_nat.NETHERLANDS.NETHERLANDS        2.36 ***
(0.27)
nodefactor.act_nat.GERMANY                  -0.12
(0.12)
mix.act_nat.GERMANY.EUROPEAN UNION          1.49
***
(0.19)
mix.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION.GERMANY          -0.96 *
(0.41)
mix.act_nat.GERMANY.GERMANY                 1.30
***
(0.25)
-----
-
AIC                                          9720.61       6312.91       6695.58       8113.36
BIC                                          9795.26       6381.08       6766.44       8185.32
Log Likelihood                             -4853.31      -3149.46      -3340.79      -4049.68
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*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

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Figure 5.94: Factor attribute effect coefficients by node 'nationality' in unipartite networks

	Poland	Italy	Netherlands	Germany
nodefactor.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION ***	0.86 *** (0.07)	0.78 *** (0.09)	0.81 *** (0.08)	0.83
nodefactor.act_nat.POLAND	0.54 *** (0.06)			
edges ***	-6.72 *** (0.07)	-6.31 *** (0.11)	-6.54 *** (0.08)	-6.42
nodefactor.act_nat.ITALY		0.51 *** (0.08)		
nodefactor.act_nat.NETHERLANDS			0.61 *** (0.07)	
nodefactor.act_nat.GERMANY ***				0.45 (0.07)
AIC	9887.19	6421.49	6860.80	8218.23
BIC	9919.18	6450.71	6891.17	8249.07
Log Likelihood	-4940.59	-3207.75	-3427.40	-4106.12

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.95: Factor attribute effect coefficients according to the 'actor type' nodal attributes

	Poland	Italy	Netherlands	Germany
nodefactor.act_type.central banks	-0.65 (0.59)	0.75 (0.52)	0.53 (0.73)	
nodefactor.act_type.churches and religious organisations and groups	-0.85 (0.63)	-0.69 (1.12)		-1.18 ** (0.44)
nodefactor.act_type.civil society organisations and groups	-0.85 (0.69)	-0.47 (0.67)	-0.69 (0.91)	
nodefactor.act_type.consumer organisations and groups	0.77 (0.59)	-0.69 (1.12)	-0.29 (0.91)	-1.18 (0.73)
nodefactor.act_type.economists and financial experts	-0.85 (0.59)	-0.41 (0.61)	-0.36 (0.80)	-0.98 ** (0.34)
nodefactor.act_type.educational professionals and organisations	-0.58 (0.44)	-0.11 (0.55)	-0.23 (0.73)	-0.75 * (0.29)
nodefactor.act_type.employers organisations and firms	-0.40 (0.39)	-0.56 (0.52)	-0.39 (0.72)	-0.88 *** (0.23)
nodefactor.act_type.environmental organisations and groups	-0.36 (0.47)	-0.29 (0.76)	-0.44 (0.78)	-0.37 (0.37)
nodefactor.act_type.former states(wo)men	-0.64 (0.44)	0.08 (0.57)	-0.69 (0.79)	-1.18 * (0.48)
nodefactor.act_type.government/executive	0.52 (0.38)	0.52 (0.50)	0.48 (0.71)	0.08 (0.17)
nodefactor.act_type.judiciary	0.11 (0.39)	-0.51 (0.58)	-0.24 (0.74)	-0.33 (0.20)
nodefactor.act_type.legislative	0.16 (0.40)	0.52 (0.52)	0.24 (0.72)	-0.47 * (0.21)
nodefactor.act_type.media and journalists	-0.15 (0.39)	0.38 (0.52)	0.47 (0.72)	-0.05 (0.21)
nodefactor.act_type.migrant organisations and groups	-0.85 (1.07)	-0.69 (1.12)	-0.69 (1.00)	-0.49 (0.73)
nodefactor.act_type.military	-0.72 (0.52)		-0.69 (0.87)	-0.67 (0.35)
nodefactor.act_type.other civil society organisations and groups	-0.69 (0.54)	-0.47 (0.67)	-0.69 (1.23)	-1.18 ** (0.39)
nodefactor.act_type.other professional organisations and groups	-0.85 (1.07)	-0.69 (0.76)	-0.69 (0.91)	-1.18 (1.01)
nodefactor.act_type.other scientific and research professionals and institutions	-0.85 (0.43)	-0.69 (0.65)	-0.64 (0.74)	-0.91 ** (0.29)
nodefactor.act_type.other state executive agencies	-0.41 (0.45)	-0.49 (0.58)	-0.35 (0.75)	-0.71 * (0.30)
nodefactor.act_type.police and internal security agencies	-0.60 (0.50)	-0.69 (1.12)	-0.29 (0.78)	-0.26 (0.48)
nodefactor.act_type.political parties	0.57 (0.39)	1.11 * (0.51)	0.39 (0.71)	-0.22 (0.19)
nodefactor.act_type.politicians	-0.47 (0.44)	0.44 (0.54)	-0.33 (0.76)	-0.98 ** (0.34)
nodefactor.act_type.solidarity and human rights organisations	-0.72 (0.43)	-0.44 (0.60)	-0.61 (0.76)	-0.64 (0.33)
nodefactor.act_type.terrorist groups / smugglers / organised crime / spies	-0.15 (0.63)		-0.18 (0.78)	-1.18 (1.01)
nodefactor.act_type.the general public	-0.75 (0.43)	-0.22 (0.56)	0.06 (0.73)	-0.99 *** (0.29)
nodefactor.act_type.unions and employees	-0.85 (0.59)	-0.69 (0.76)	-0.56 (0.79)	-0.67 (0.35)
nodefactor.act_type.whole polities	-0.15 (0.40)	0.77 (0.52)	0.65 (0.72)	0.26 (0.19)
edges	-6.25 *** (0.76)	-6.21 *** (1.00)	-6.22 *** (1.42)	-5.43 *** (0.32)
nodefactor.act_type.farmers and agricultural organisations		-0.41 (0.71)	-0.51 (0.82)	-0.89 (0.53)
nodefactor.act_type.students, pupils, and their parents		-0.69 (1.12)		-1.18 (1.01)
AIC	9775.96	6323.16	6864.25	8217.19
BIC	10074.52	6595.84	7147.69	8505.02
Log Likelihood	-4859.98	-3133.58	-3404.13	-4080.59

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.96: Factor attribute effect coefficients and nodal attribute mixing coefficients according to the ‘territorial scope’ node attribute in unipartite networks

	Poland	Italy	Netherlands	Germany
nodefactor.act_scope2.Global / Regional	0.26 (0.28)	0.52 (0.35)	-0.45 (0.32)	-0.10 (0.26)
nodefactor.act_scope2.Other EU Member State	-0.38 (0.24)	-1.13 ** (0.39)	-1.30 *** (0.25)	-1.38 *** (0.24)
nodefactor.act_scope2.Own Country, National	-0.55 * (0.26)	-0.82 ** (0.31)	-0.85 ** (0.26)	-0.29 (0.22)
mix.act_scope2.Own Country, National.Own Country, National	2.51 *** (0.39)	2.83 *** (0.49)	2.13 *** (0.49)	1.03 ** (0.40)
mix.act_scope2.EU Supranational.Own Country, National	1.33 *** (0.37)	0.61 (0.48)	-2.73 * (1.07)	-1.03 * (0.49)
mix.act_scope2.Other EU Member State.Own Country, National	0.27 (0.34)	1.56 ** (0.51)	-0.40 (0.51)	0.01 (0.41)
mix.act_scope2.Own Country, National.EU Supranational	2.05 *** (0.35)	2.44 *** (0.42)	1.39 *** (0.40)	1.42 *** (0.33)
mix.act_scope2.EU Supranational.EU Supranational	2.00 *** (0.48)	1.71 ** (0.56)	0.53 (0.47)	1.06 ** (0.40)
mix.act_scope2.Other EU Member State.EU Supranational	1.01 ** (0.35)	2.07 *** (0.51)	0.85 * (0.40)	1.12 ** (0.35)
mix.act_scope2.Own Country, National.Other EU Member State	0.67 * (0.32)	2.17 *** (0.49)	1.07 ** (0.41)	1.18 *** (0.35)
mix.act_scope2.EU Supranational.Other EU Member State	0.83 * (0.36)	1.74 *** (0.53)	0.21 (0.43)	1.02 ** (0.36)
mix.act_scope2.Other EU Member State.Other EU Member State	1.25 *** (0.33)	3.16 *** (0.70)	1.89 *** (0.47)	2.46 *** (0.43)
edges	-6.55 *** (0.45)	-6.22 *** (0.53)	-5.15 *** (0.44)	-5.57 *** (0.38)
AIC	9709.74	6288.87	6650.08	8053.09
BIC	9848.36	6415.48	6781.67	8186.73
Log Likelihood	-4841.87	-3131.44	-3312.04	-4013.55

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.97: Factor attribute effect coefficients and nodal attribute mixing coefficients according to the ‘territorial scope’ node attribute in unipartite networks in the pre- and during Covid-19 networks

	pre-Covid	during Covid
nodefactor.act_scope.EU Supranational	0.30 (0.23)	-0.04 (0.20)
nodefactor.act_scope.Other EU Member State	-0.86 *** (0.24)	-0.97 *** (0.18)
nodefactor.act_scope.Own Country, National	-0.64 ** (0.22)	-1.19 *** (0.19)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.Own Country, National	1.74 *** (0.31)	2.49 *** (0.30)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.Own Country, National	0.24 (0.30)	0.54 (0.30)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.Own Country, National	0.62 * (0.30)	0.68 ** (0.26)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.EU Supranational	1.62 *** (0.27)	2.05 *** (0.25)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.EU Supranational	0.93 ** (0.34)	1.46 *** (0.34)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.EU Supranational	0.88 ** (0.30)	1.15 *** (0.26)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.Other EU Member State	0.95 ** (0.29)	1.54 *** (0.24)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.Other EU Member State	0.78 * (0.31)	0.41 (0.29)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.Other EU Member State	1.90 *** (0.36)	1.72 *** (0.28)
edges	-6.21 *** (0.19)	-6.13 *** (0.15)
AIC	14990.46	17252.75
BIC	15134.97	17403.02
Log Likelihood	-7482.23	-8613.37

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.98: Factor attribute effect for out-edges coefficients and nodal attribute mixing coefficients according to the 'nationality' node attribute in unipartite networks in the pre- and during Covid-19 networks

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                                pre-Covid      during Covid
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nodematch.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION      1.47 ***      1.76 ***
                                         (0.15)        (0.16)
nodematch.act_nat.GERMANY              1.06 ***      1.33 ***
                                         (0.17)        (0.18)
nodematch.act_nat.ITALY                1.59 ***      2.49 ***
                                         (0.14)        (0.16)
nodematch.act_nat.NETHERLANDS         1.52 ***      2.45 ***
                                         (0.21)        (0.17)
nodematch.act_nat.POLAND              2.61 ***      2.00 ***
                                         (0.20)        (0.14)
nodeofactor.act_nat.EUROPEAN UNION     0.40 ***      0.42 ***
                                         (0.11)        (0.11)
nodeofactor.act_nat.GERMANY           0.58 ***      0.58 ***
                                         (0.10)        (0.11)
nodeofactor.act_nat.ITALY             0.14          -0.26
                                         (0.11)        (0.14)
nodeofactor.act_nat.NETHERLANDS       0.32 *        0.00
                                         (0.13)        (0.13)
nodeofactor.act_nat.POLAND           -0.33 *       -0.05
                                         (0.16)        (0.12)
edges                                 -6.55 ***     -6.92 ***
                                         (0.06)        (0.05)
-----
AIC                                   14975.05      16884.61
BIC                                   15097.33      17011.77
Log Likelihood                       -7476.52      -8431.31
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Figure 5.99: Assortativity coefficients, factor attribute effect for out-edges coefficients, and nodal attribute mixing coefficients according to the ‘territorial scope’ node attribute in unipartite networks in the pre- and during Covid-19 networks

	quality	tabloid
nodematch.act_scope	-0.60 *** (0.17)	-0.14 (0.43)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Global / Regional	-1.25 *** (0.17)	-1.67 *** (0.40)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Other EU Member State	-1.02 *** (0.19)	-1.05 * (0.48)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Own Country, National	-0.46 ** (0.18)	-0.68 (0.37)
nodematch.act_nat	2.86 *** (0.08)	2.47 *** (0.16)
nodematch.act_type	0.93 *** (0.05)	0.29 * (0.12)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.Own Country, National	-0.30 (0.19)	-0.77 (0.47)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.Own Country, National	-0.30 (0.19)	-1.27 ** (0.44)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.Own Country, National	-0.87 *** (0.17)	-0.40 (0.44)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.EU Supranational	1.31 *** (0.12)	1.75 *** (0.24)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.EU Supranational	-1.05 *** (0.23)	-1.56 ** (0.55)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.EU Supranational	0.95 *** (0.16)	0.65 (0.48)
mix.act_scope.Own Country, National.Other EU Member State	-0.97 *** (0.14)	-0.47 (0.29)
mix.act_scope.EU Supranational.Other EU Member State	-0.38 * (0.18)	-0.60 (0.45)
mix.act_scope.Other EU Member State.Other EU Member State	0.48 * (0.21)	0.32 (0.58)
edges	-6.54 *** (0.14)	-5.39 *** (0.30)
AIC	25653.97	5263.00
BIC	25849.38	5418.18
Log Likelihood	-12810.99	-2615.50

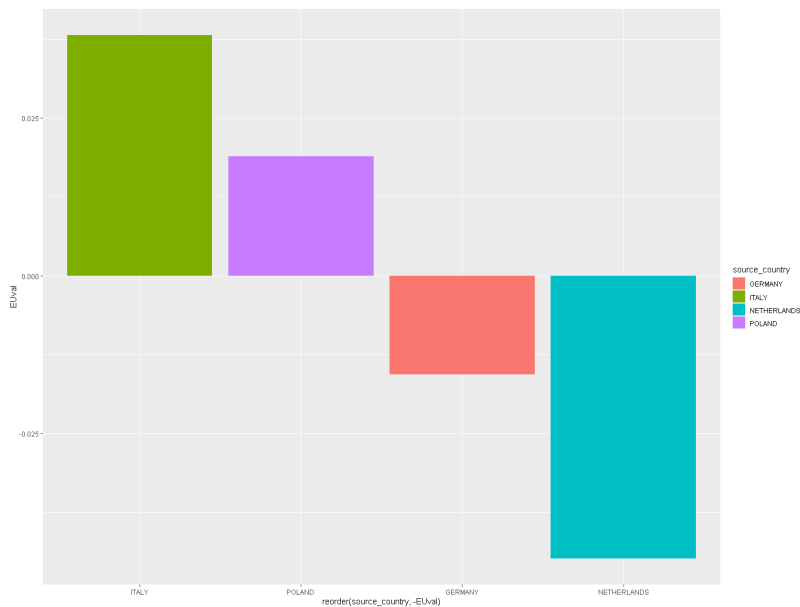
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

Figure 5.100: Assortativity by nationality, actor type and factor attribute effect for out-edges coefficients according to territorial scope

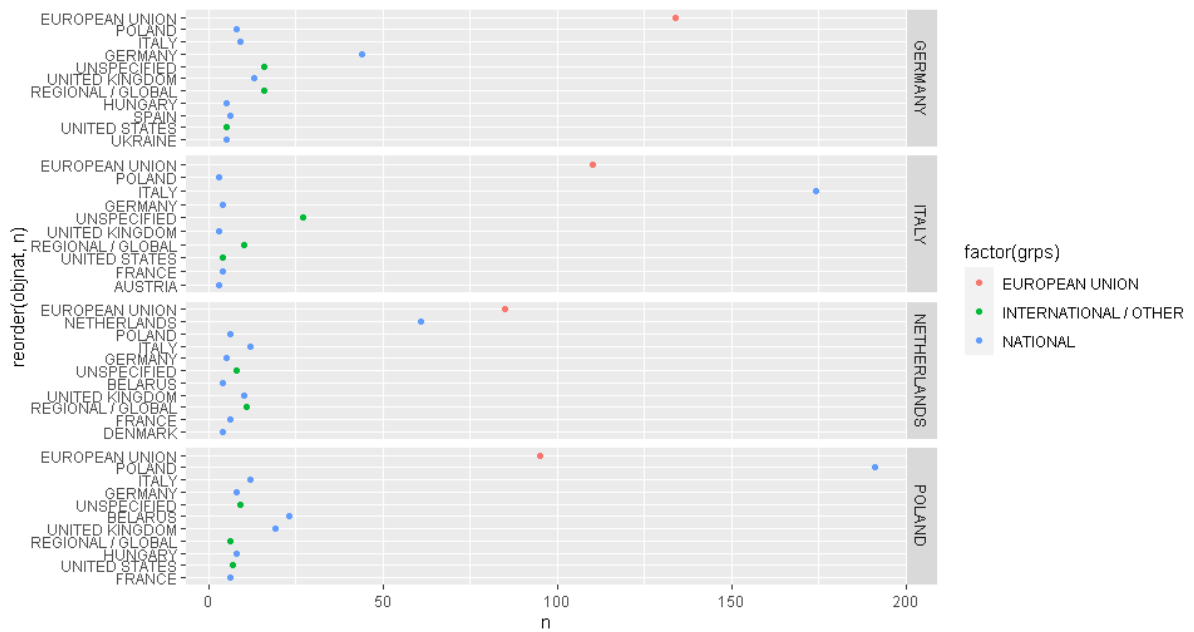
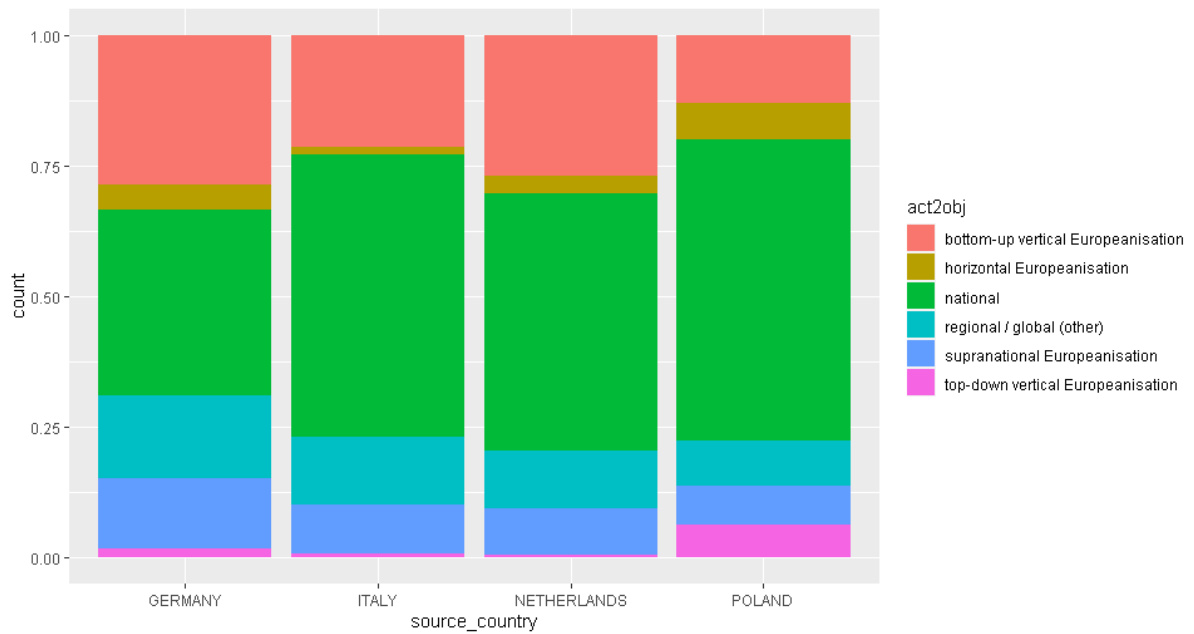
	quality	tabloid
nodematch.act_scope	-0.29 *** (0.06)	-0.77 *** (0.13)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Global / Regional	-0.68 *** (0.10)	-0.70 ** (0.25)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Other EU Member State	-0.36 *** (0.07)	-0.06 (0.19)
nodeofactor.act_scope.Own Country, National	-0.01 (0.07)	0.40 * (0.16)
nodematch.act_nat	2.26 *** (0.06)	2.00 *** (0.13)
nodematch.act_type	0.97 *** (0.05)	0.36 ** (0.12)
edges	-7.04 *** (0.07)	-6.05 *** (0.15)
AIC	26216.53	5448.89
BIC	26302.02	5516.78
Log Likelihood	-13101.26	-2717.45

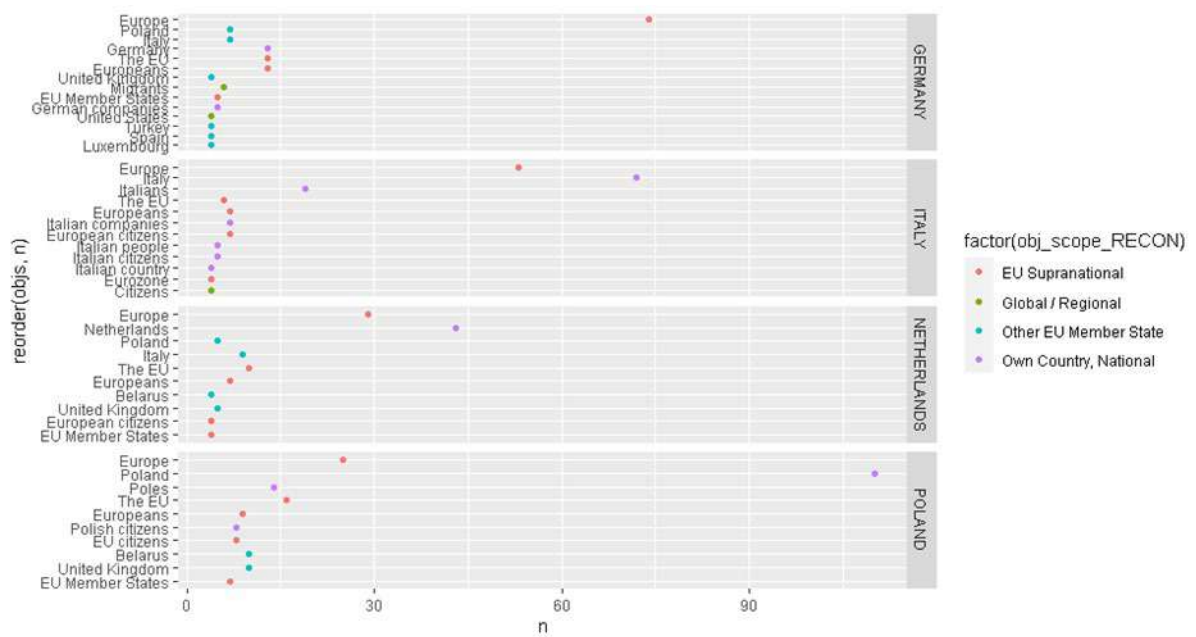
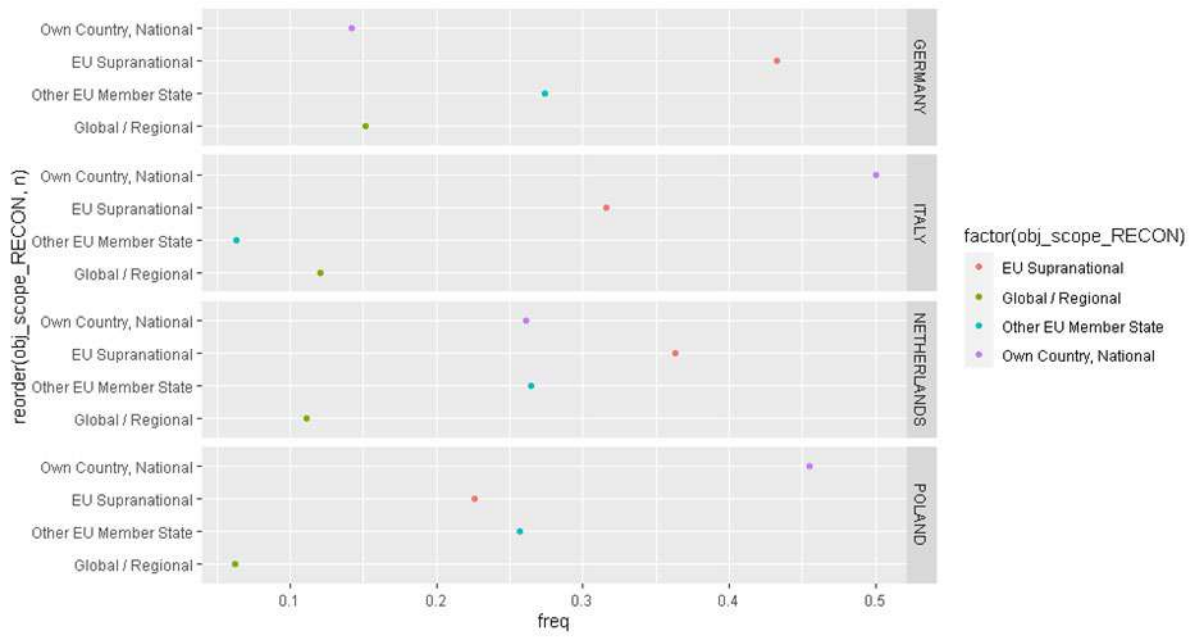
*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05

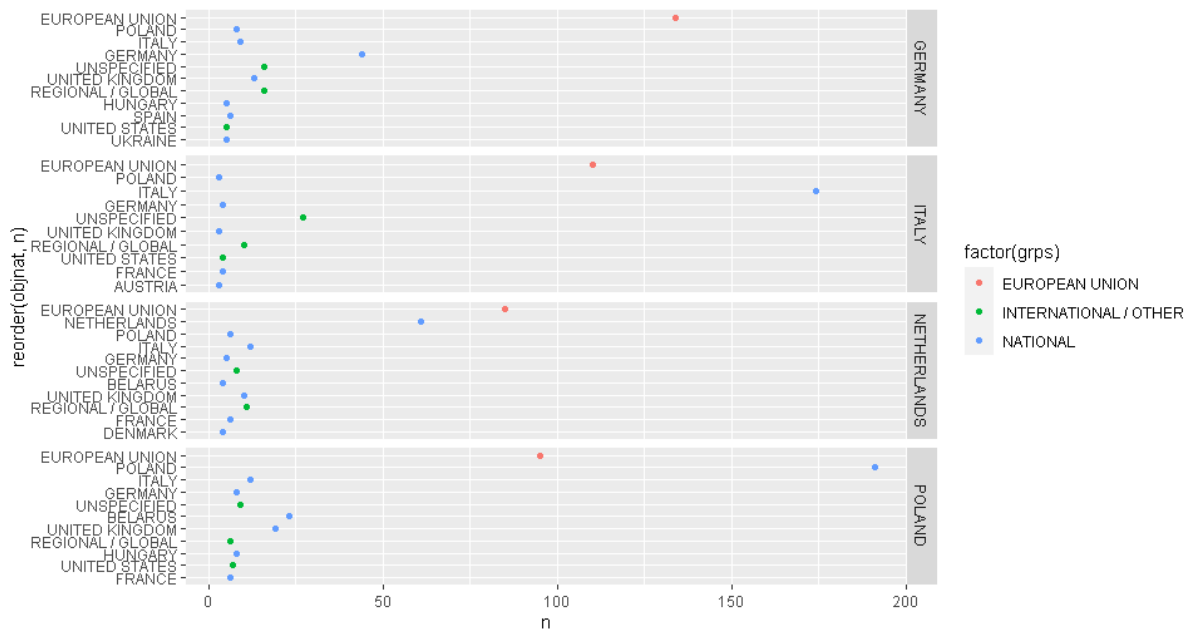
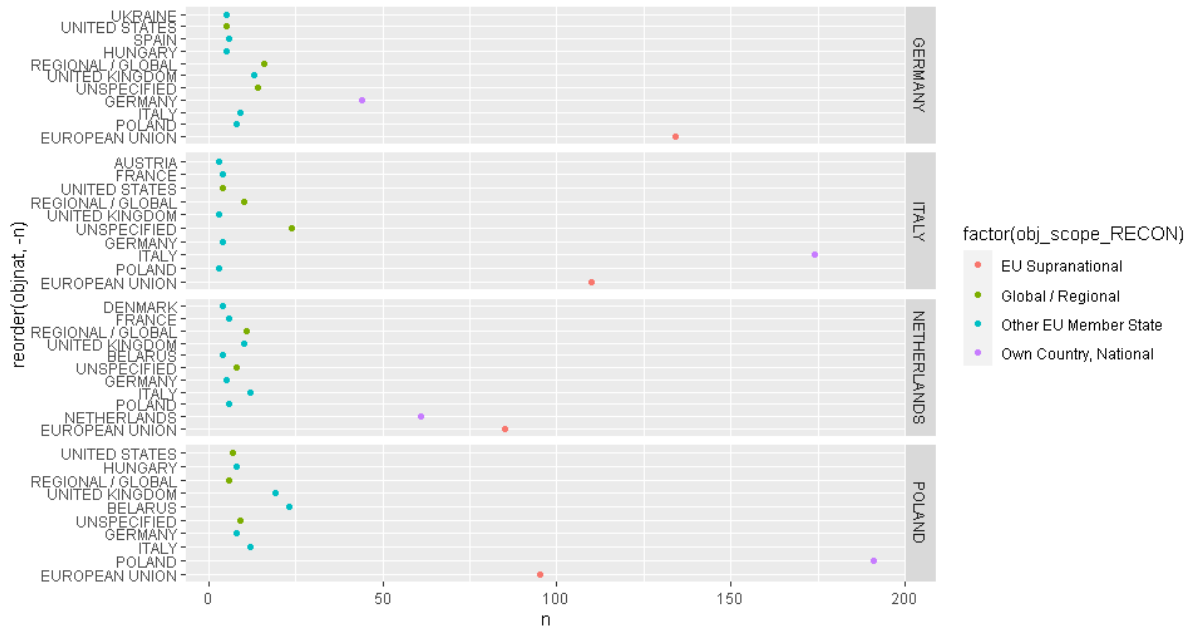
Figure 5.101: Mean EU valence by country

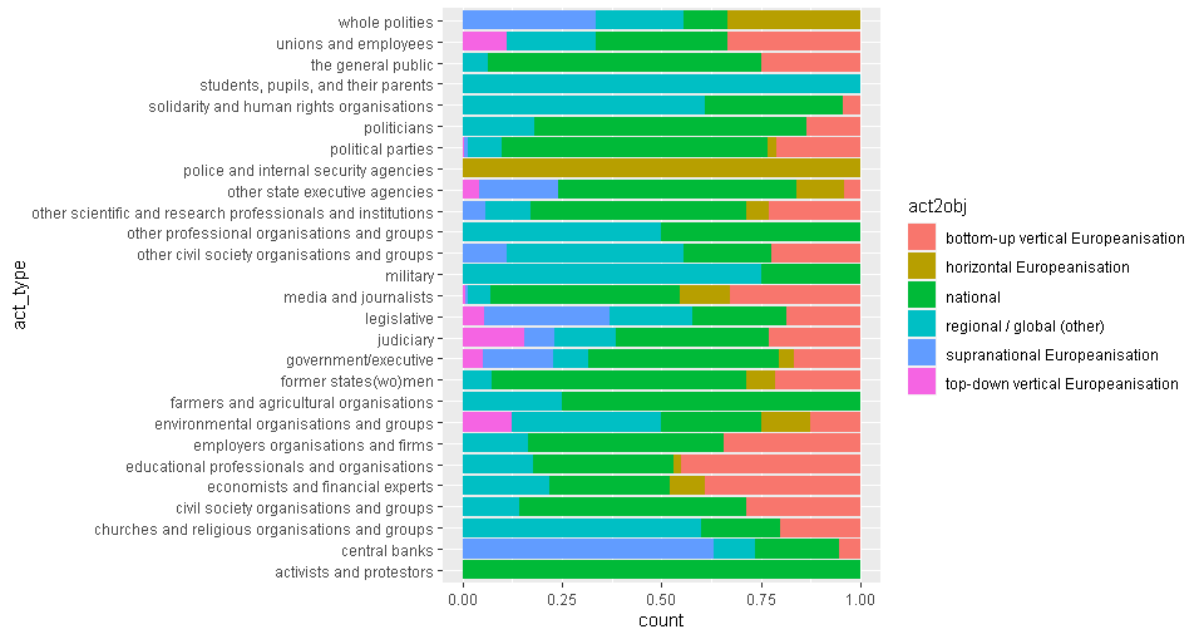
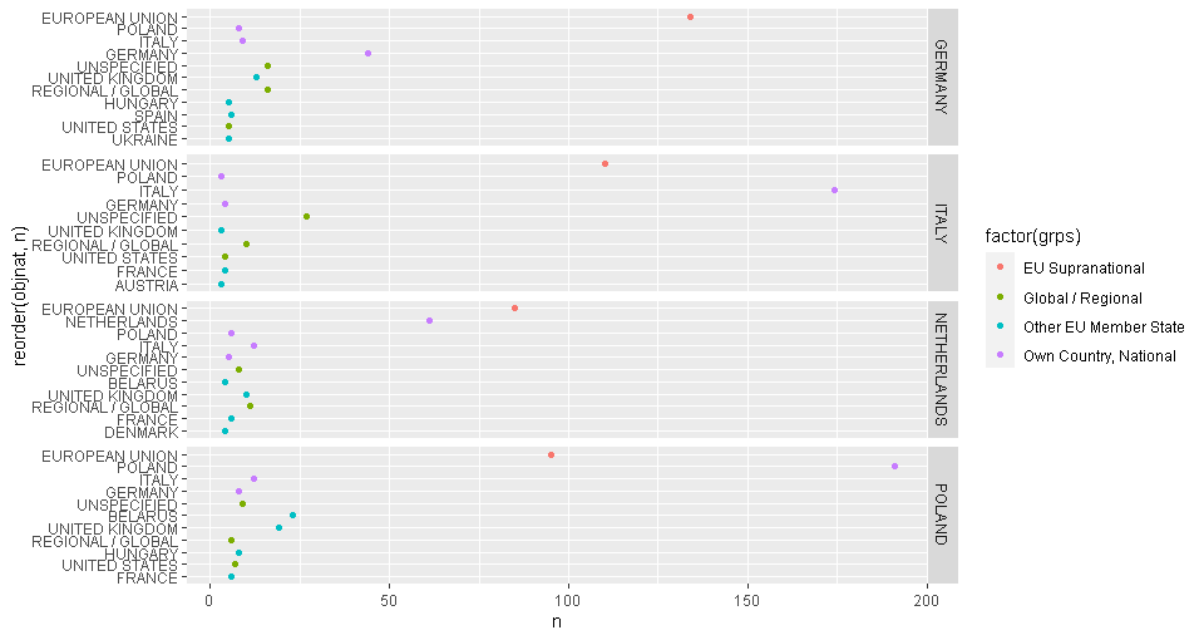


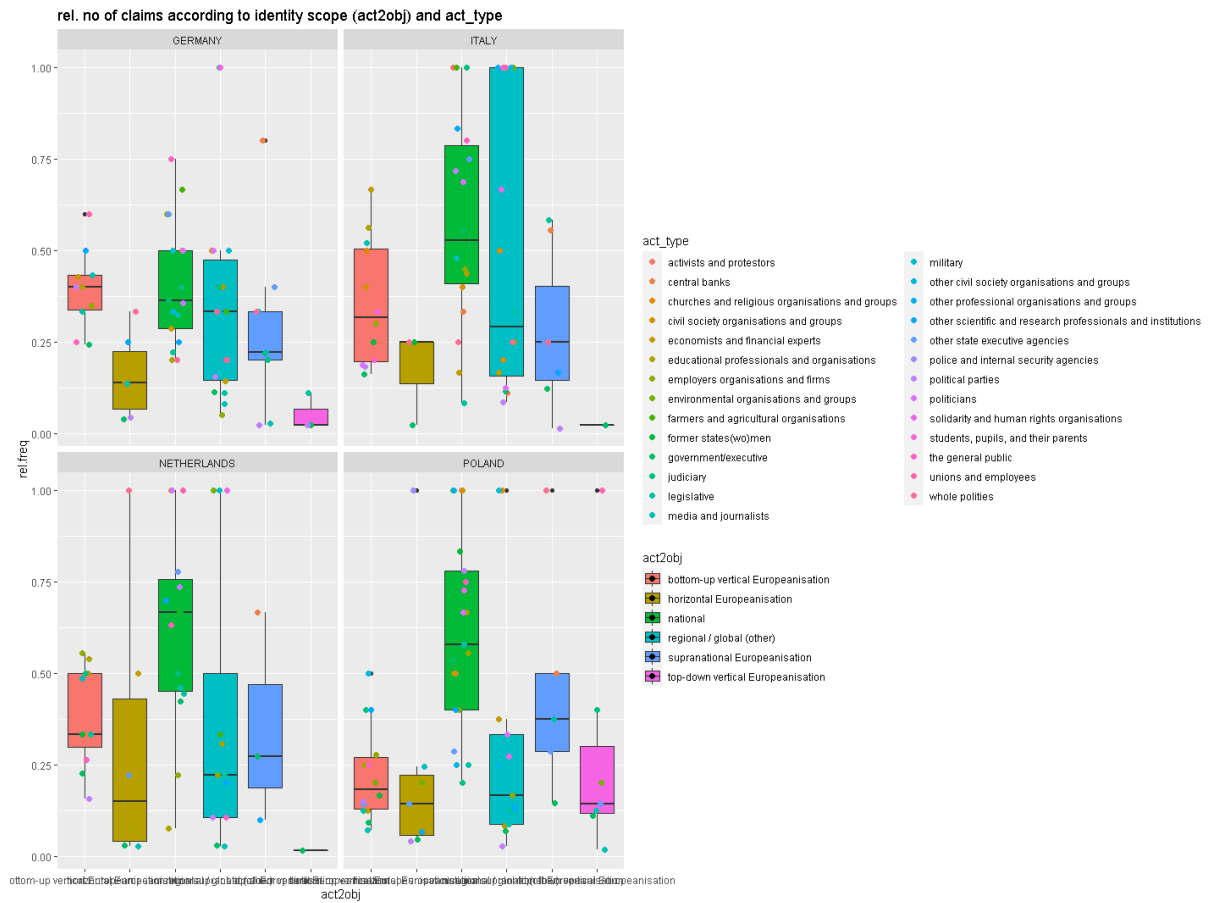
Chapter 5 : Appendix B – Ancillary figures and tables

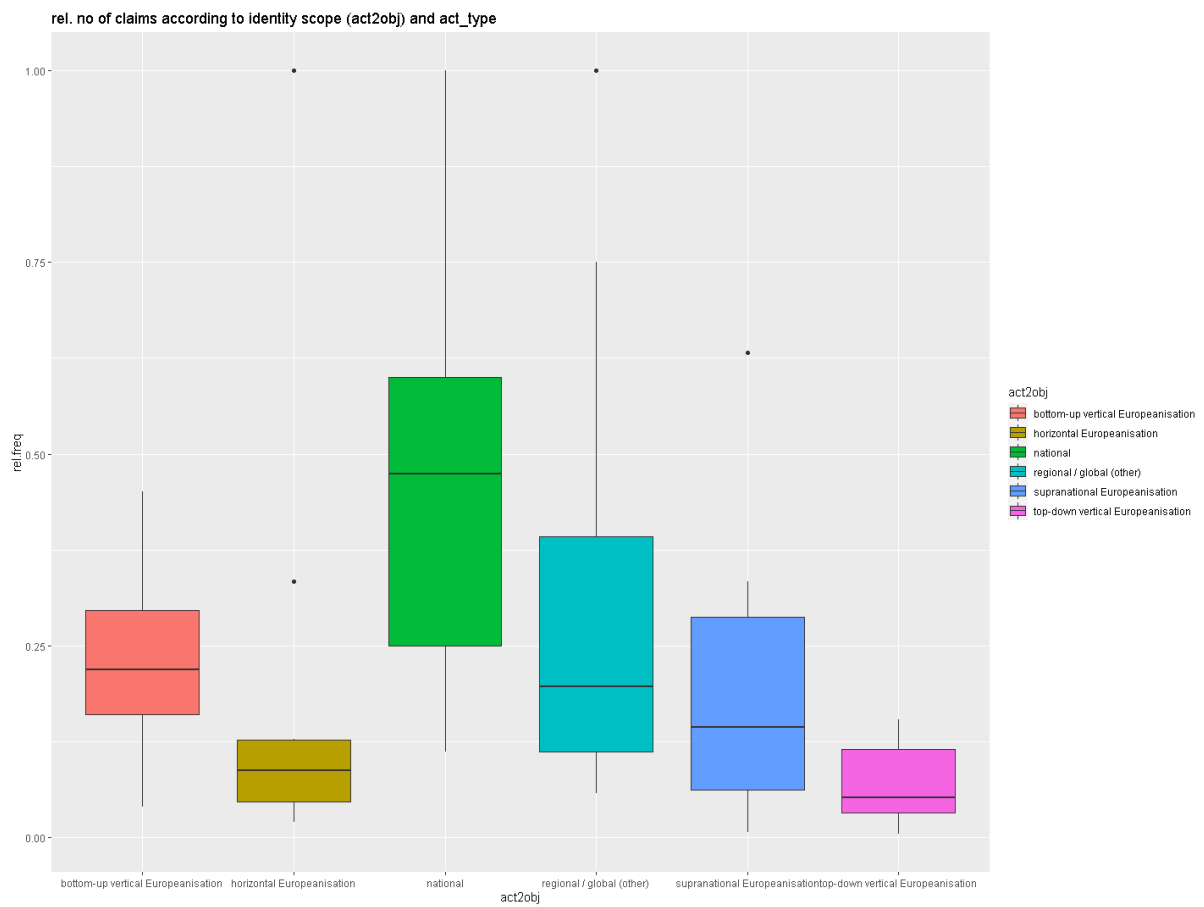
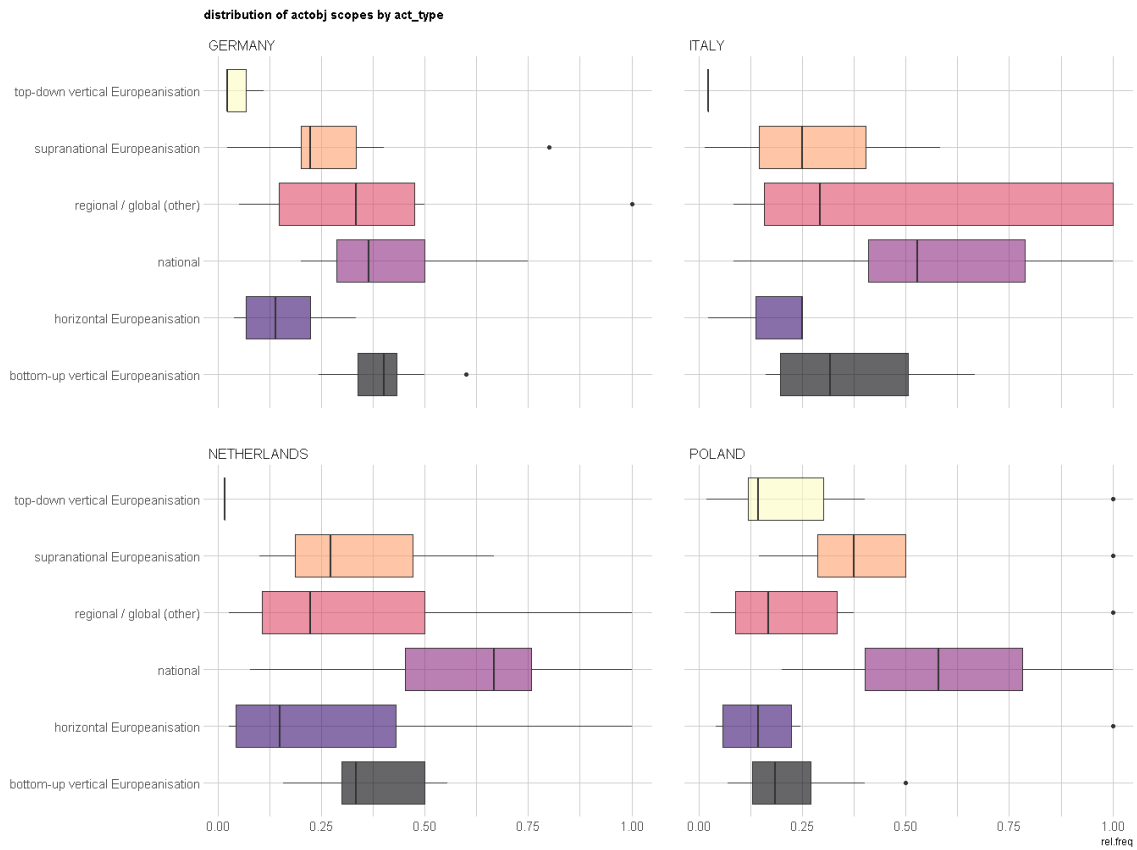


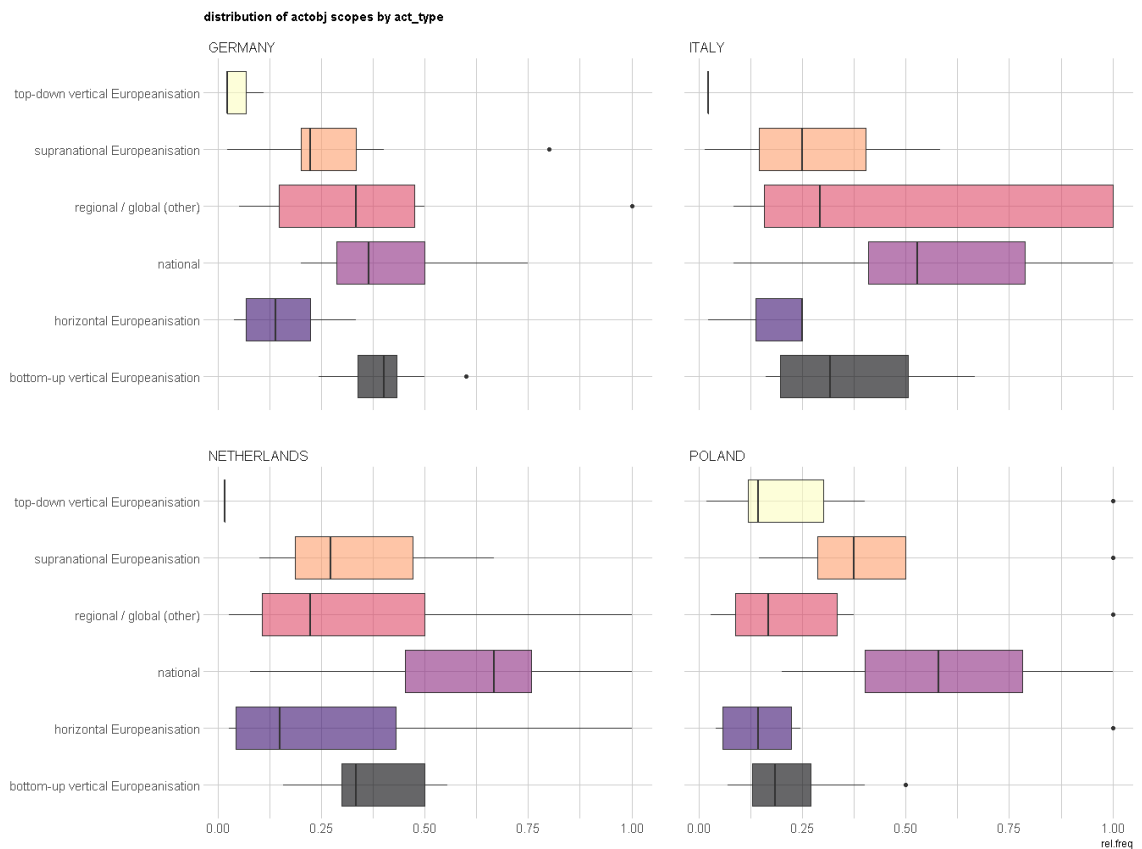
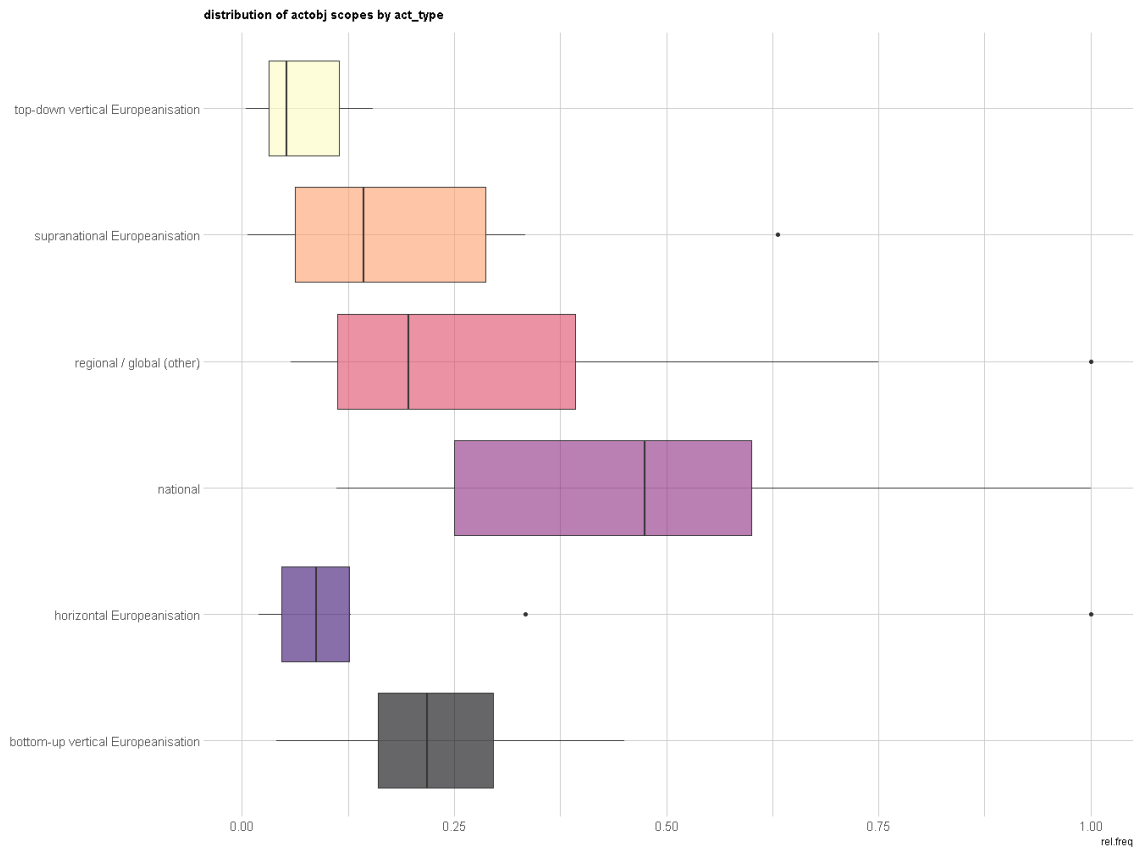


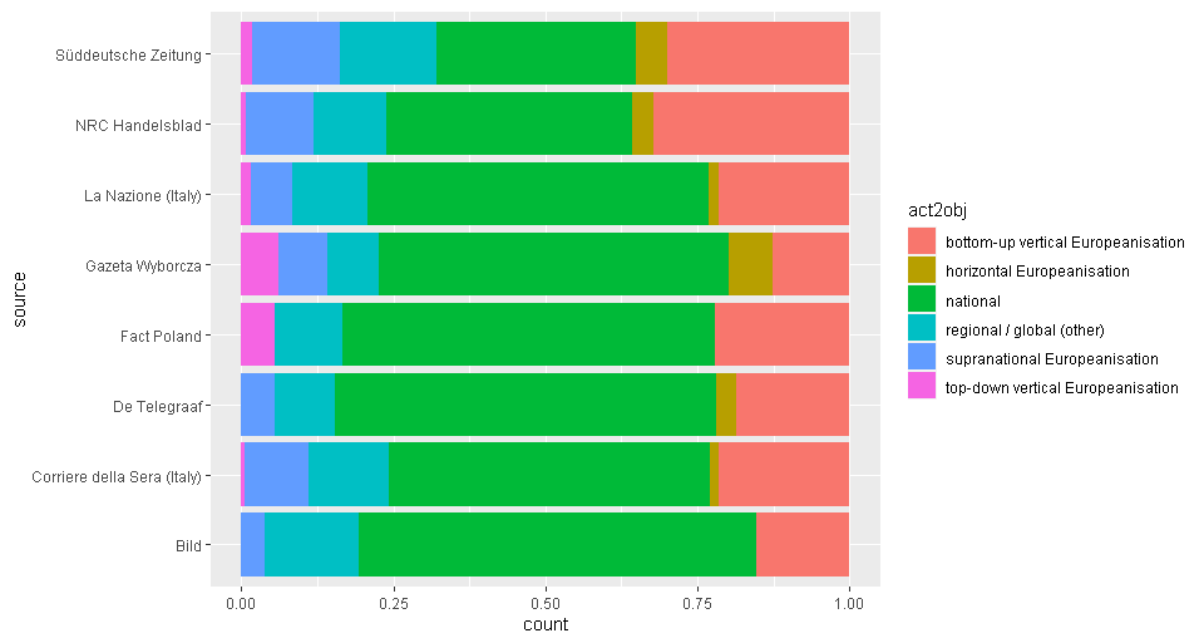
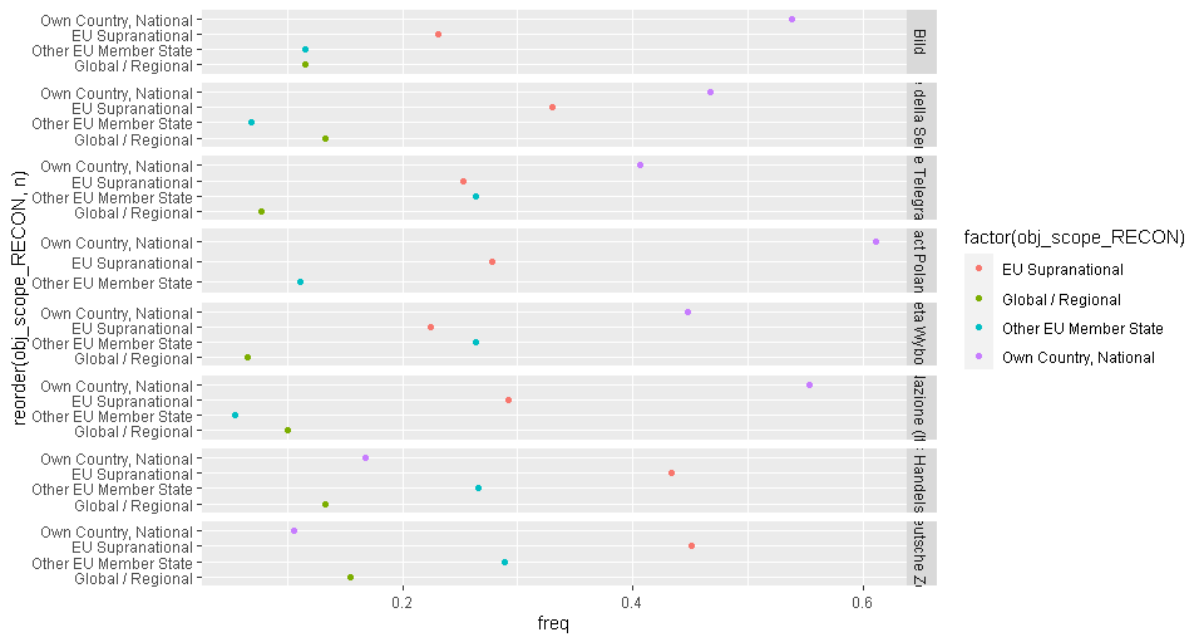


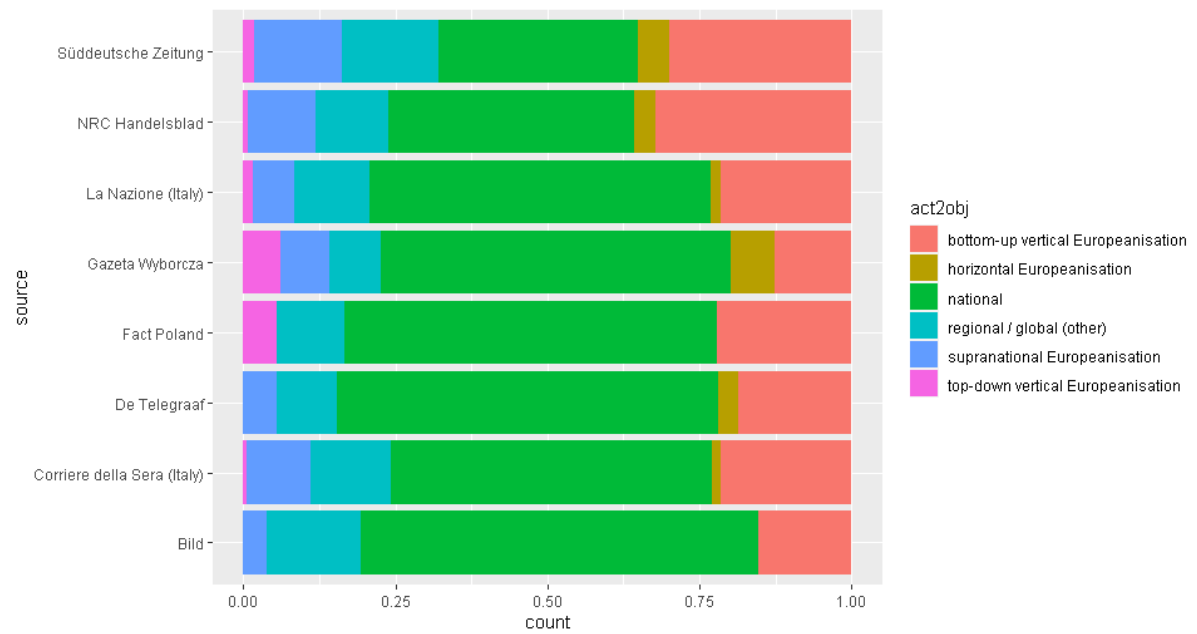
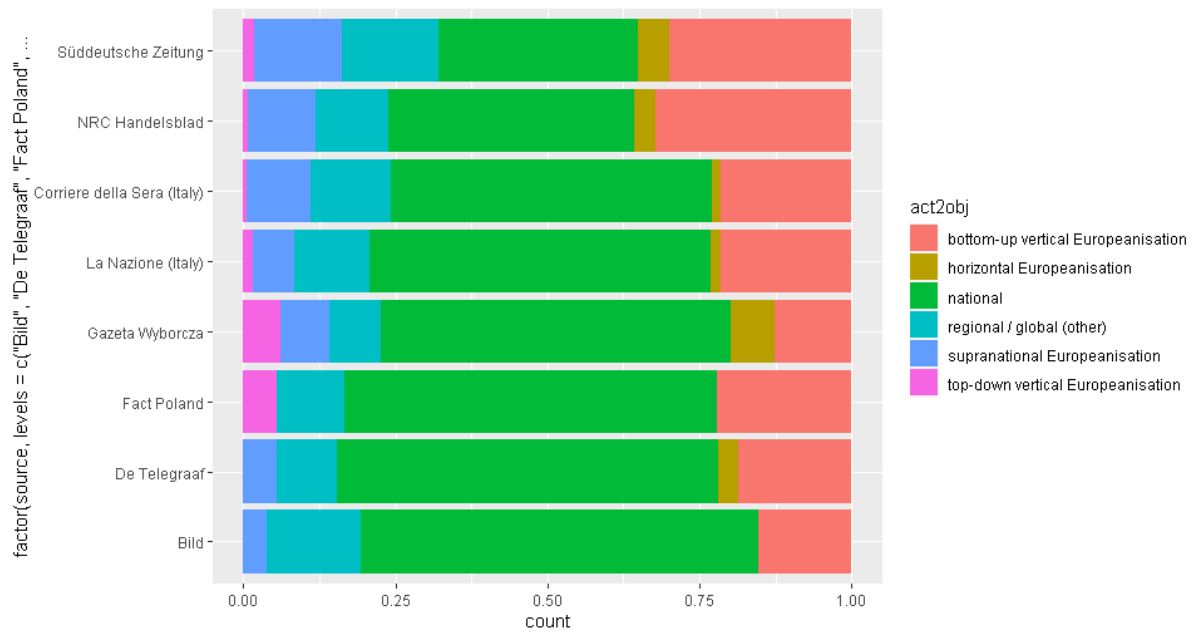


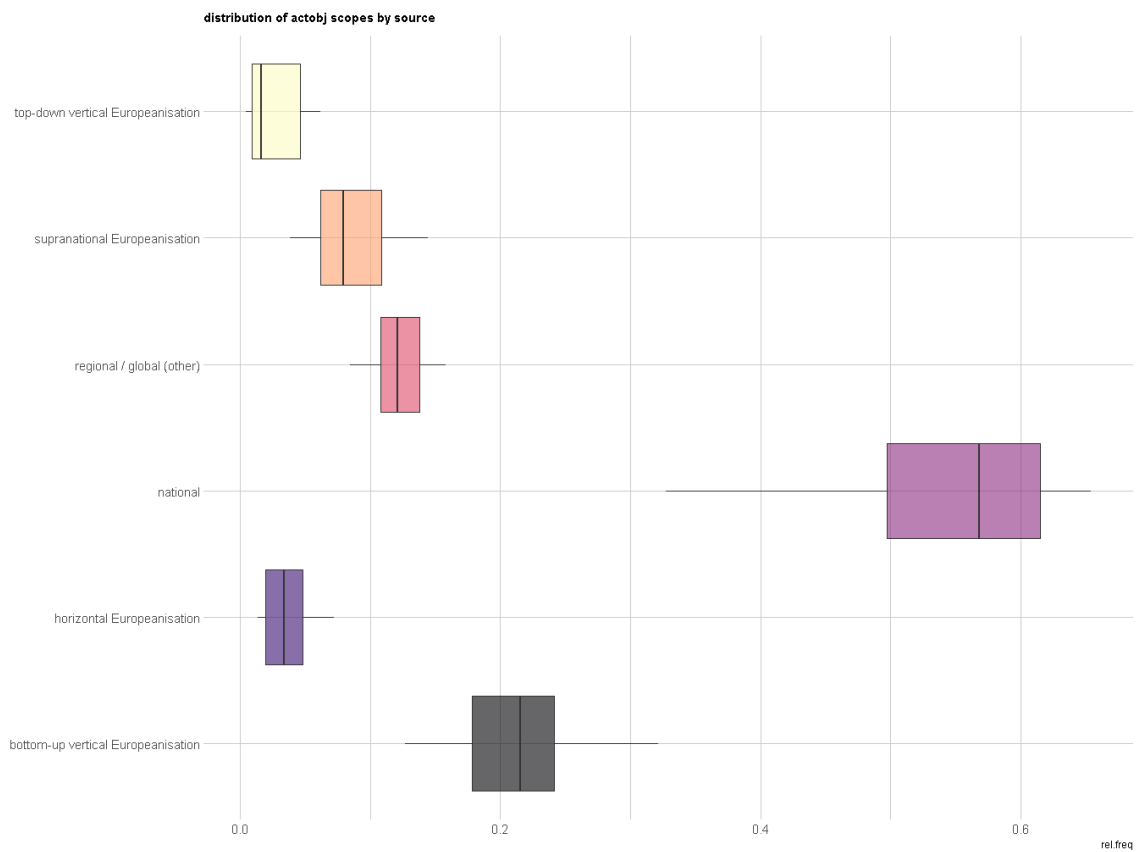
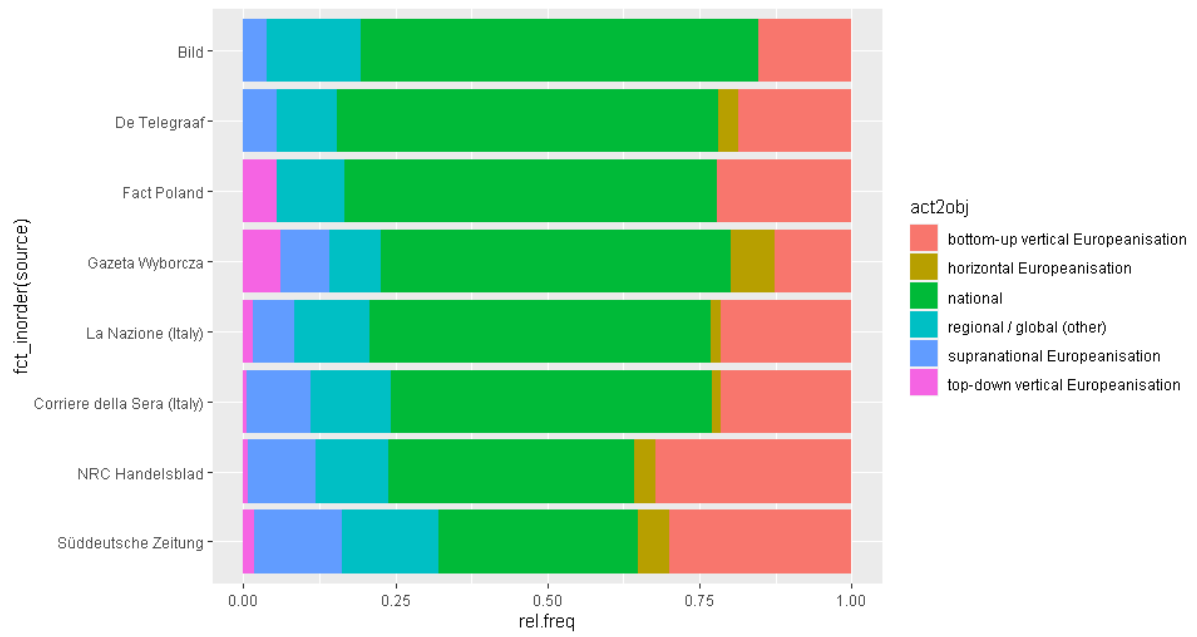


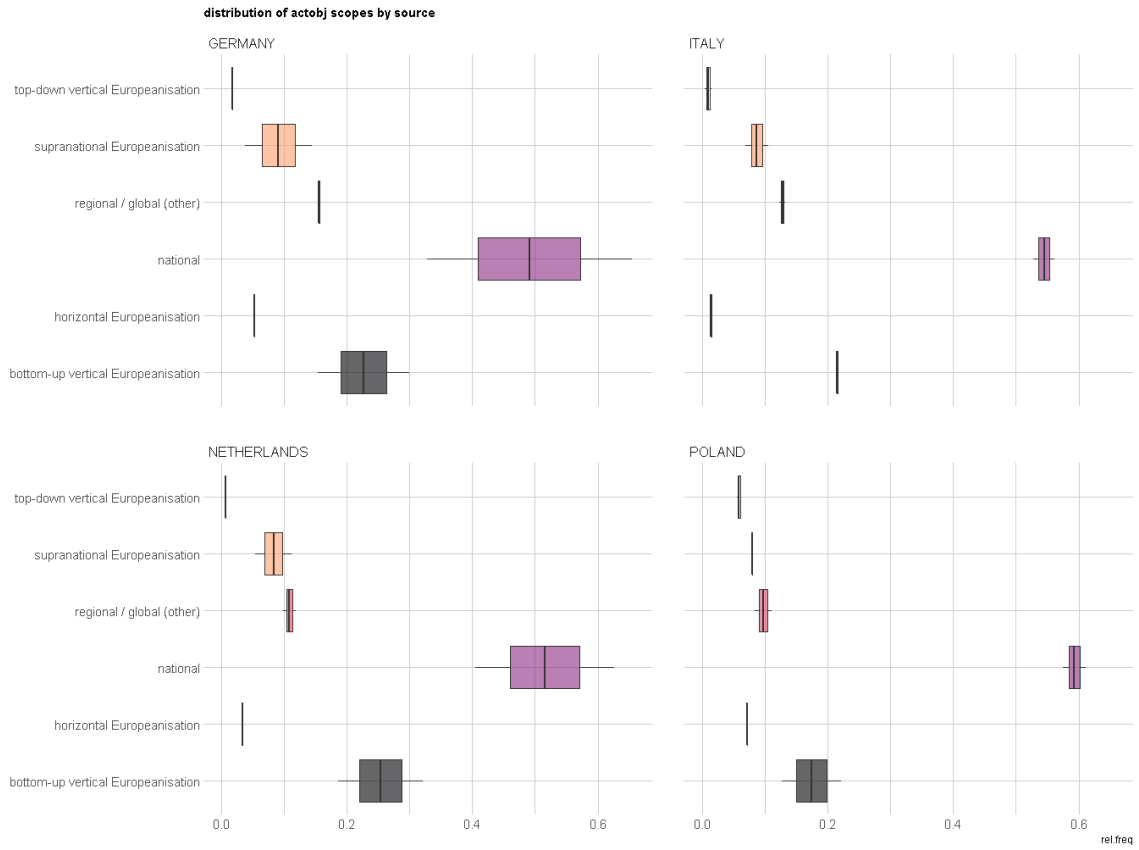


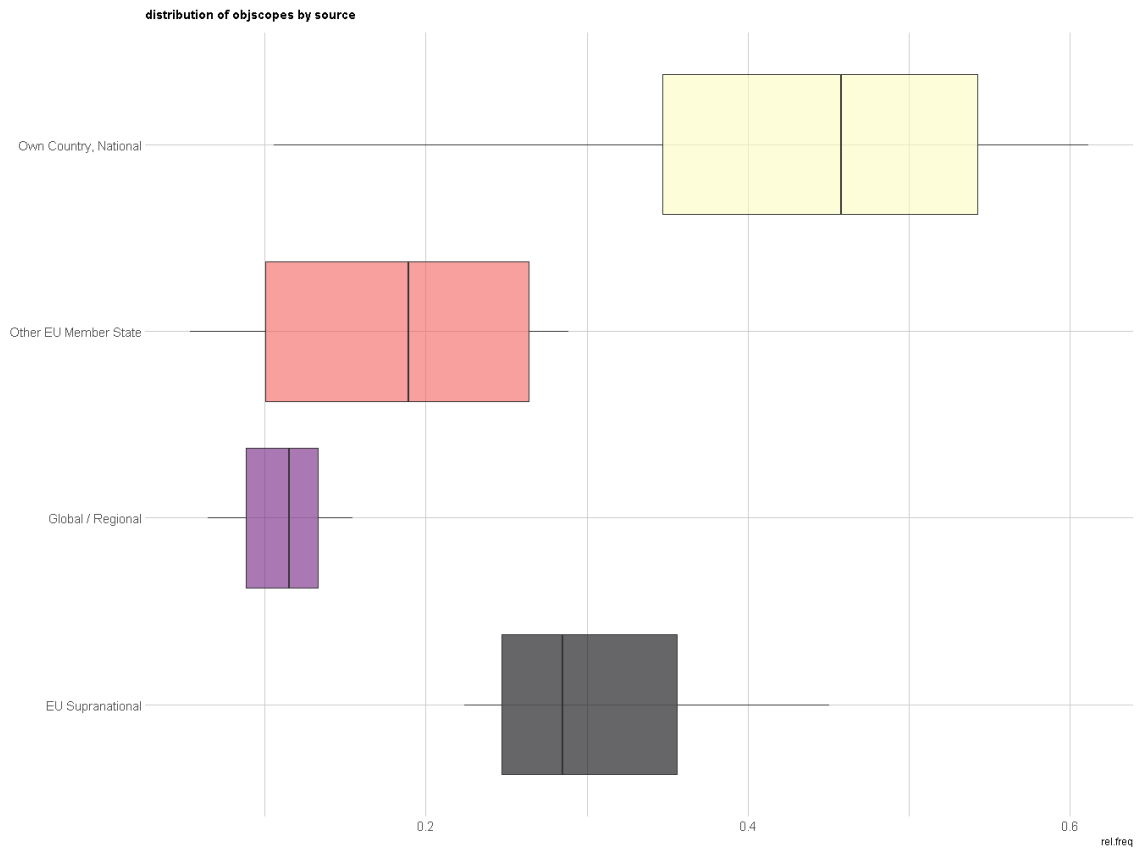
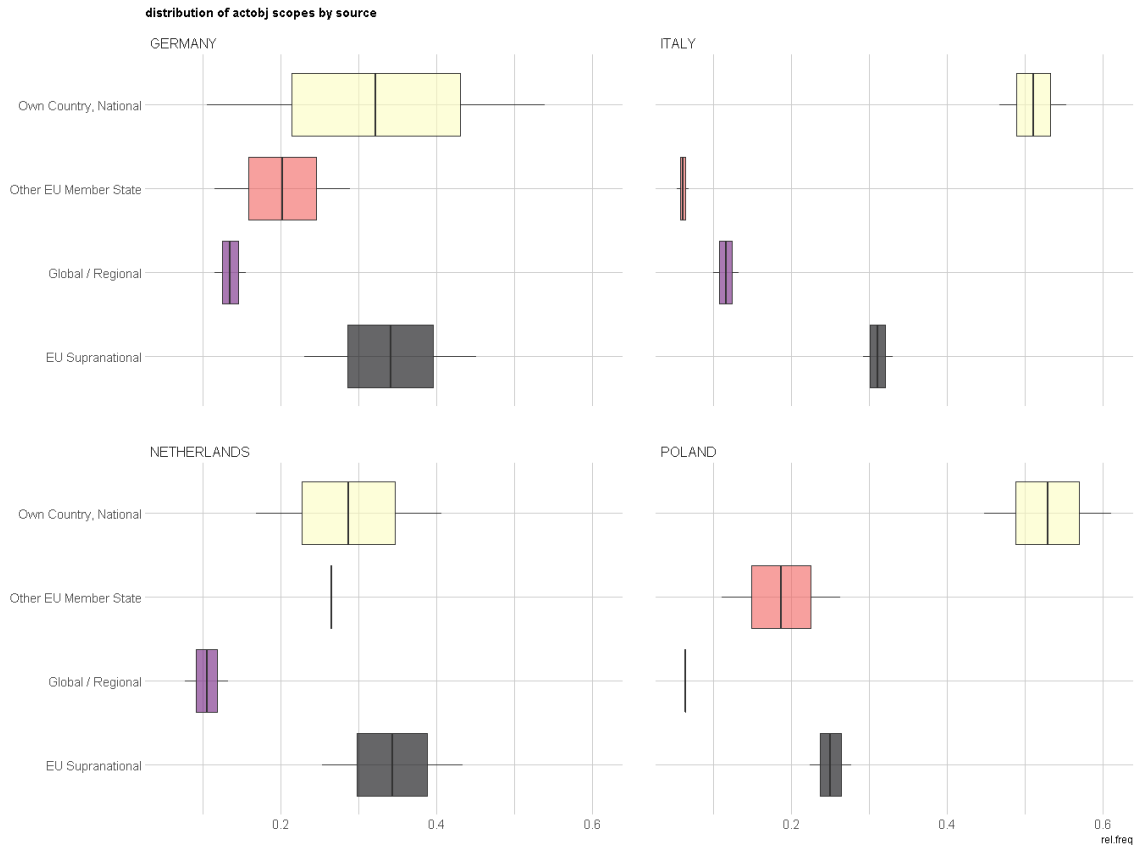


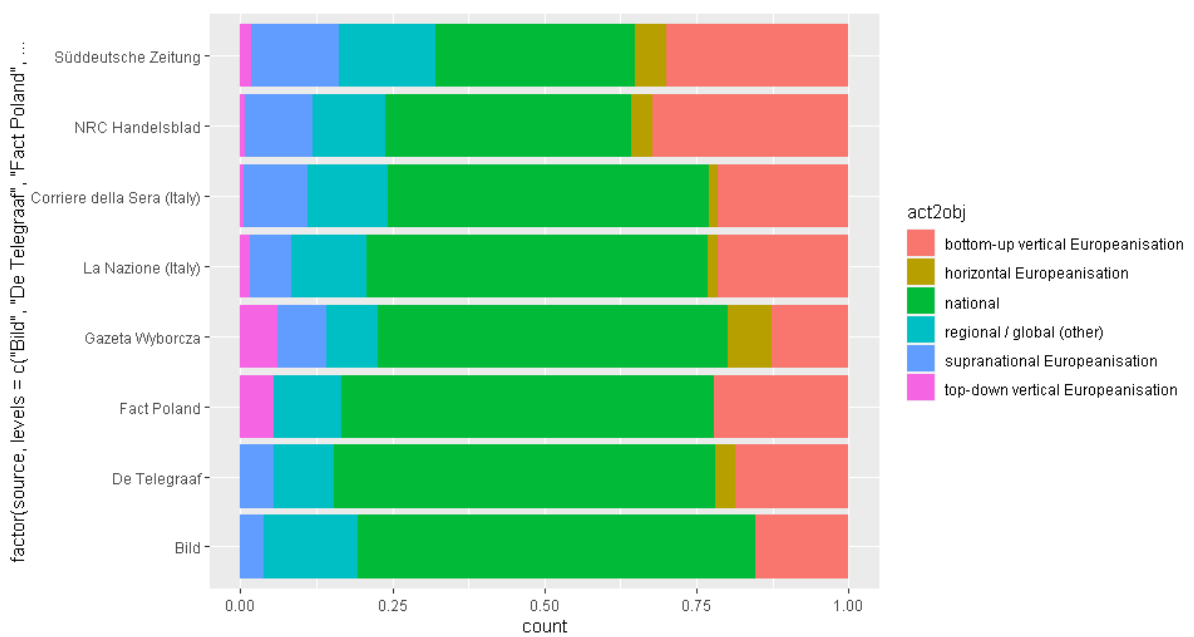
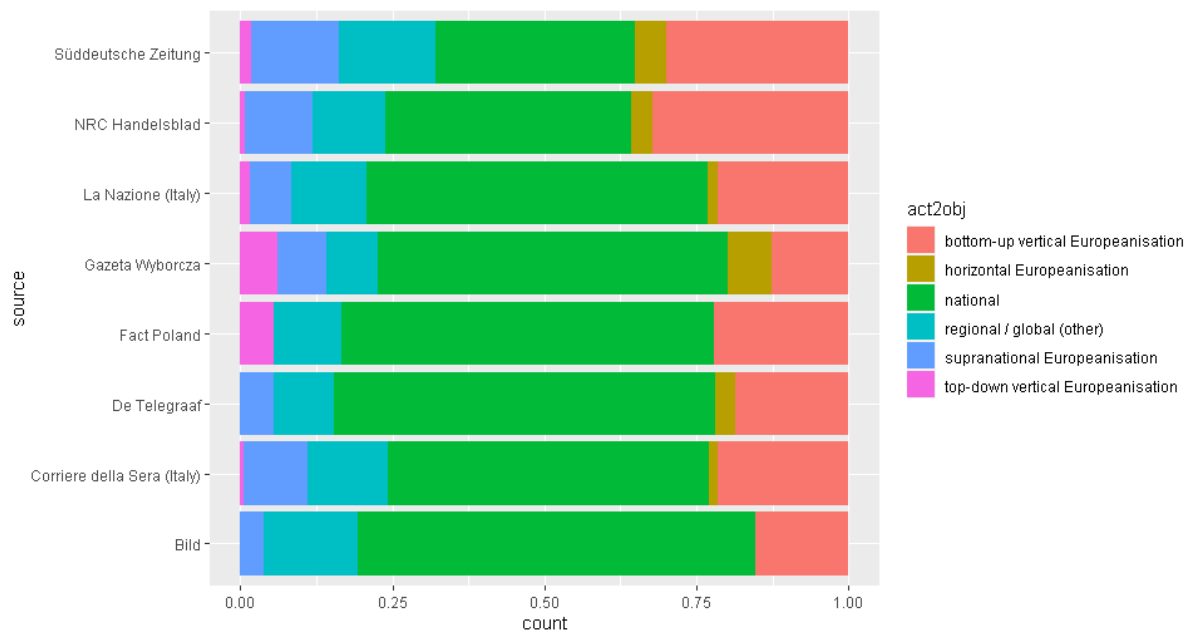


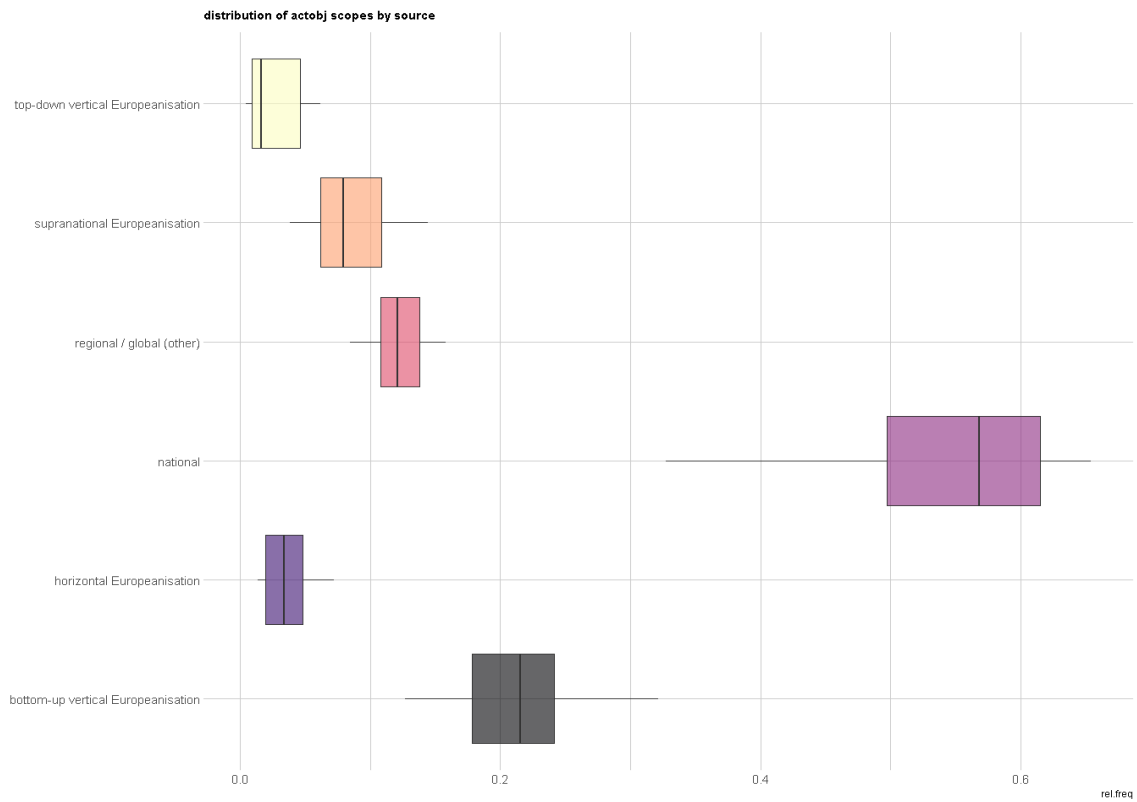
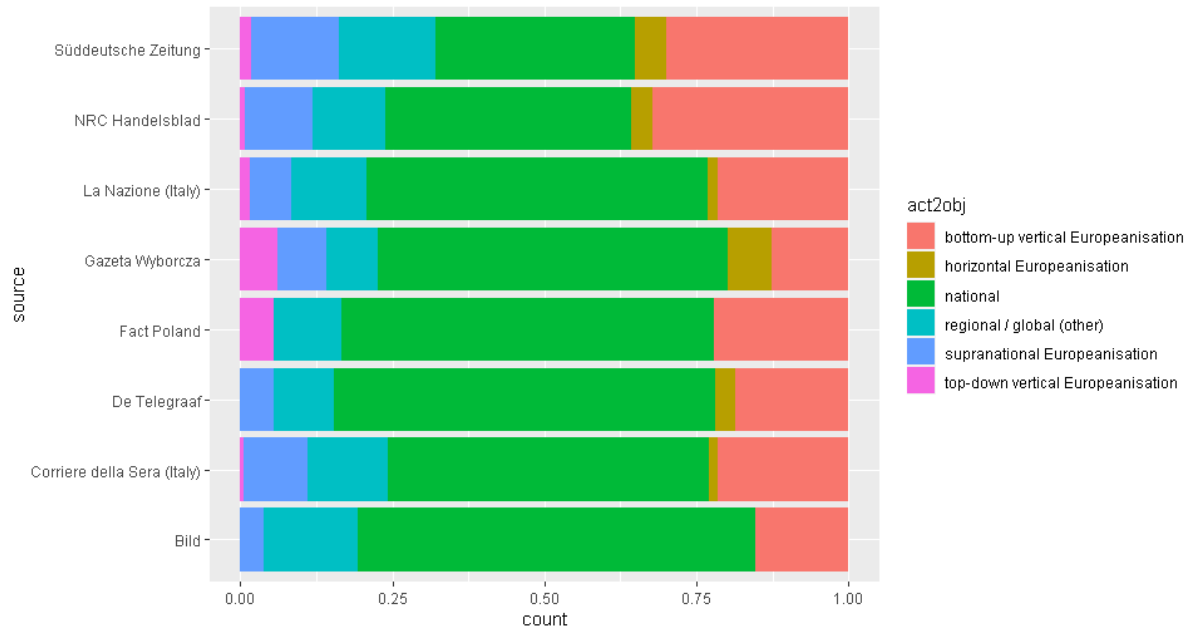


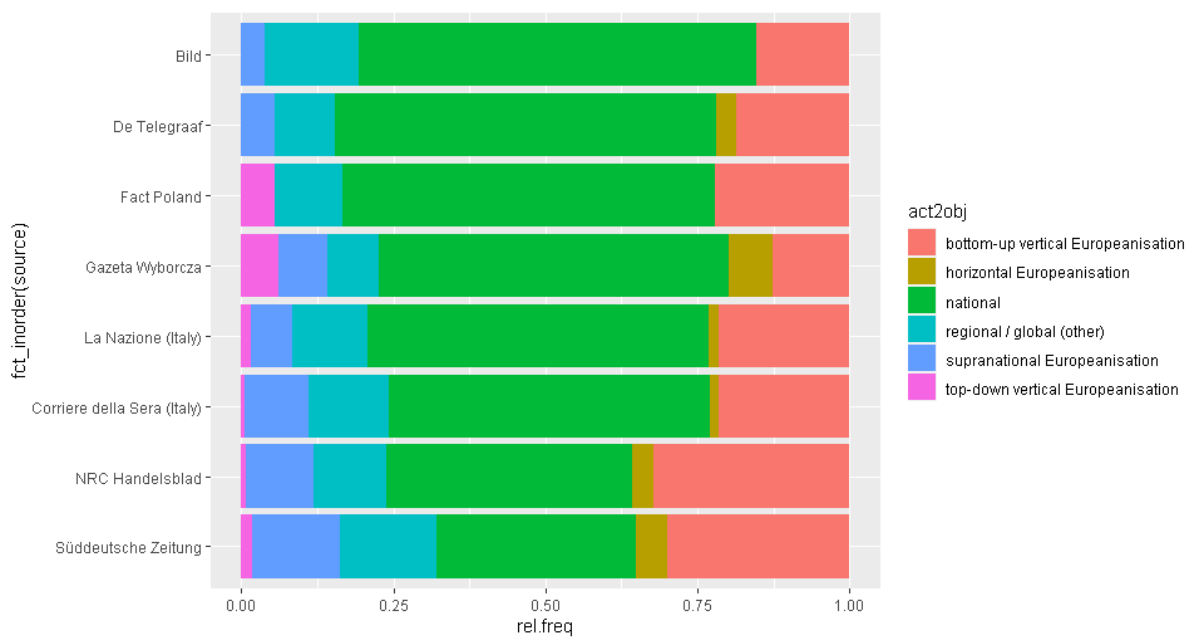
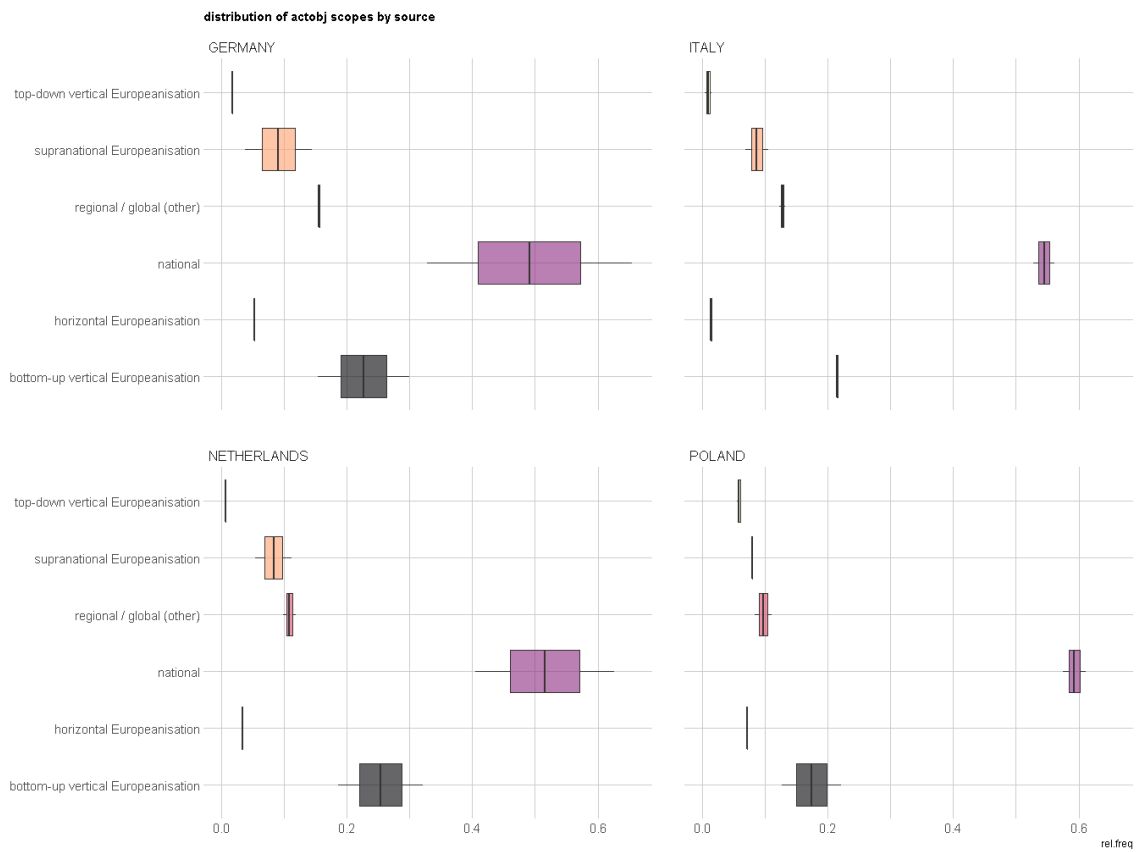


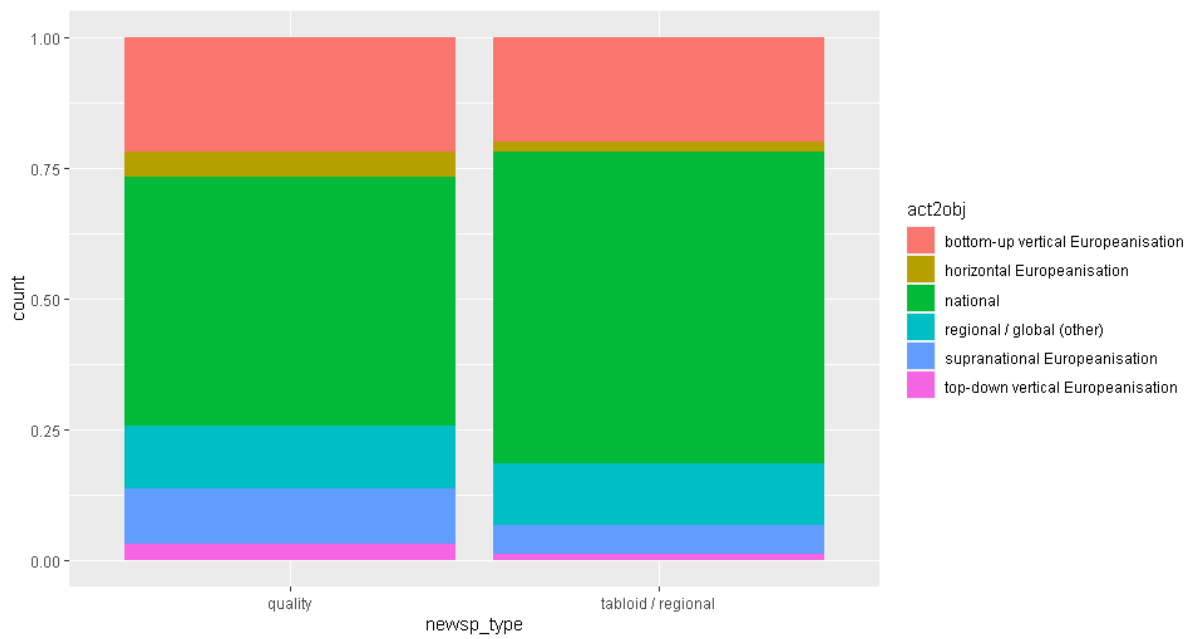


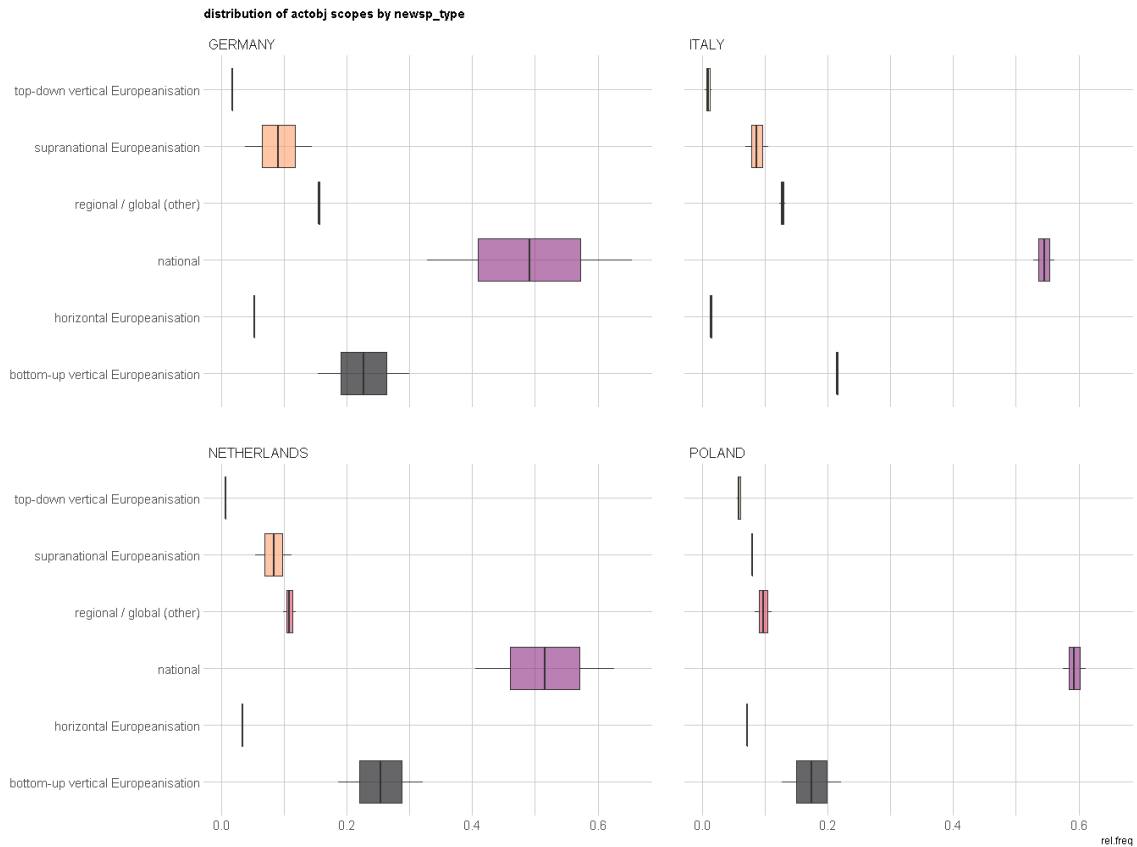
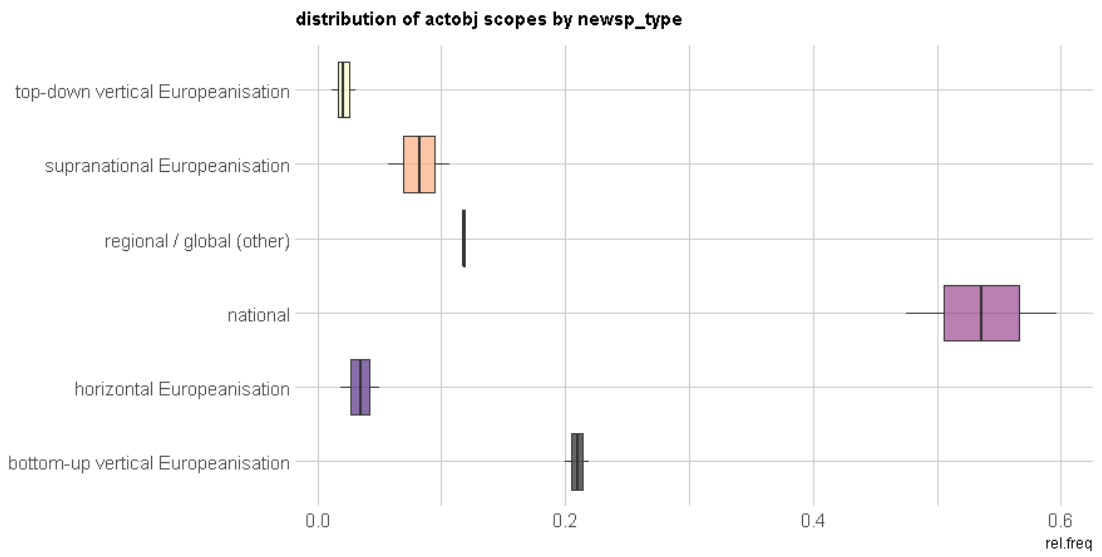


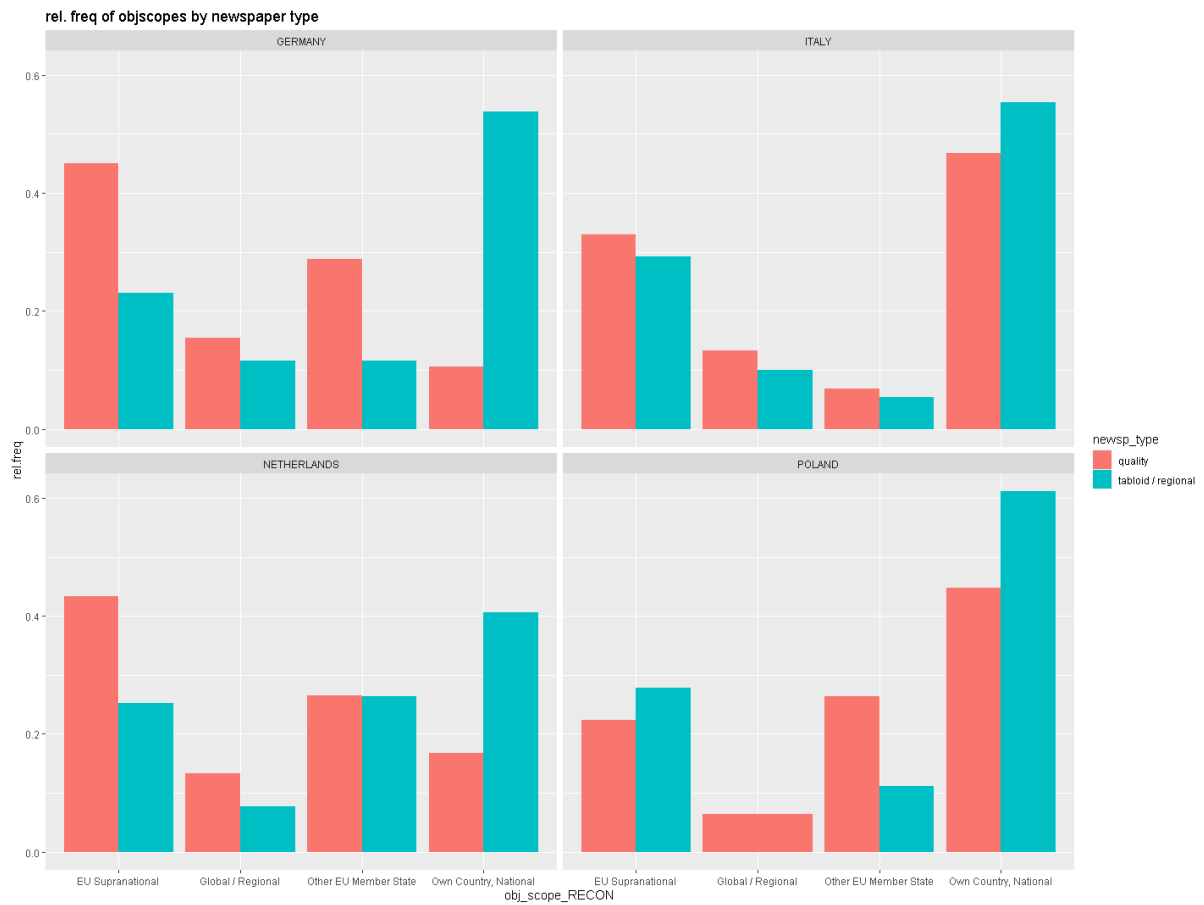
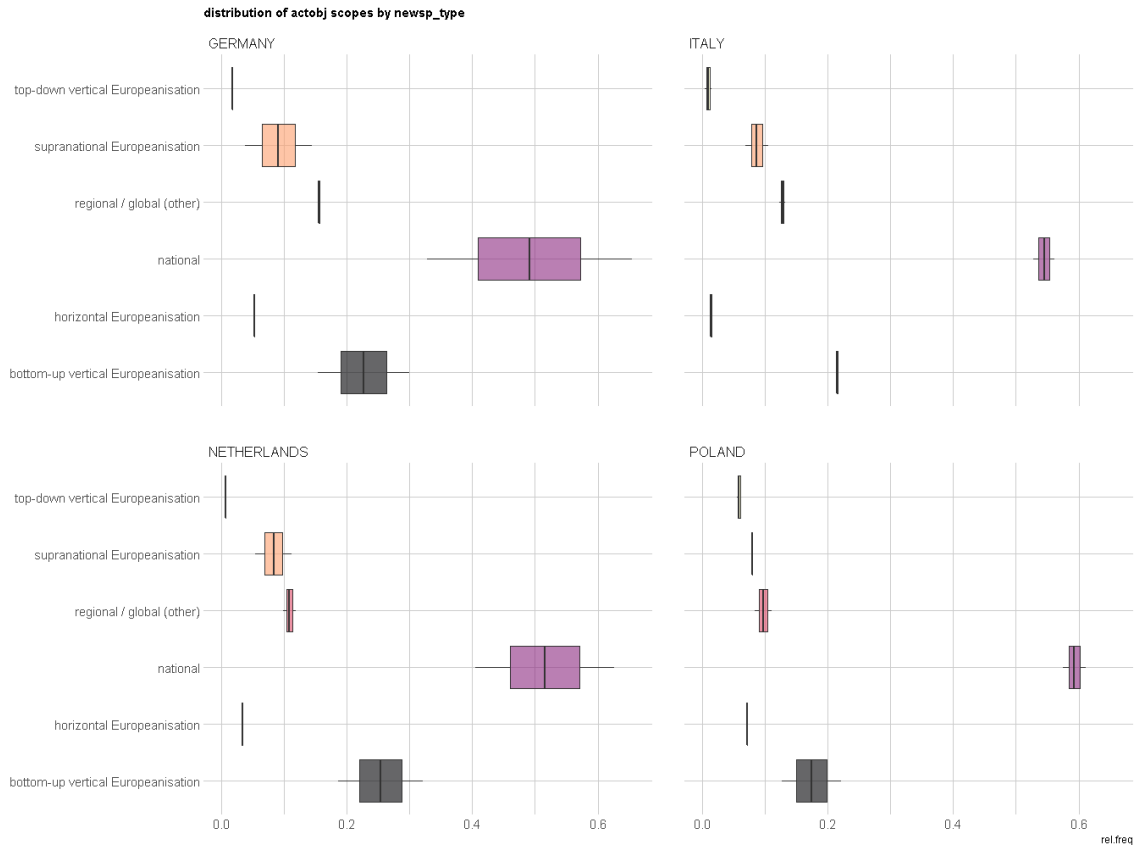


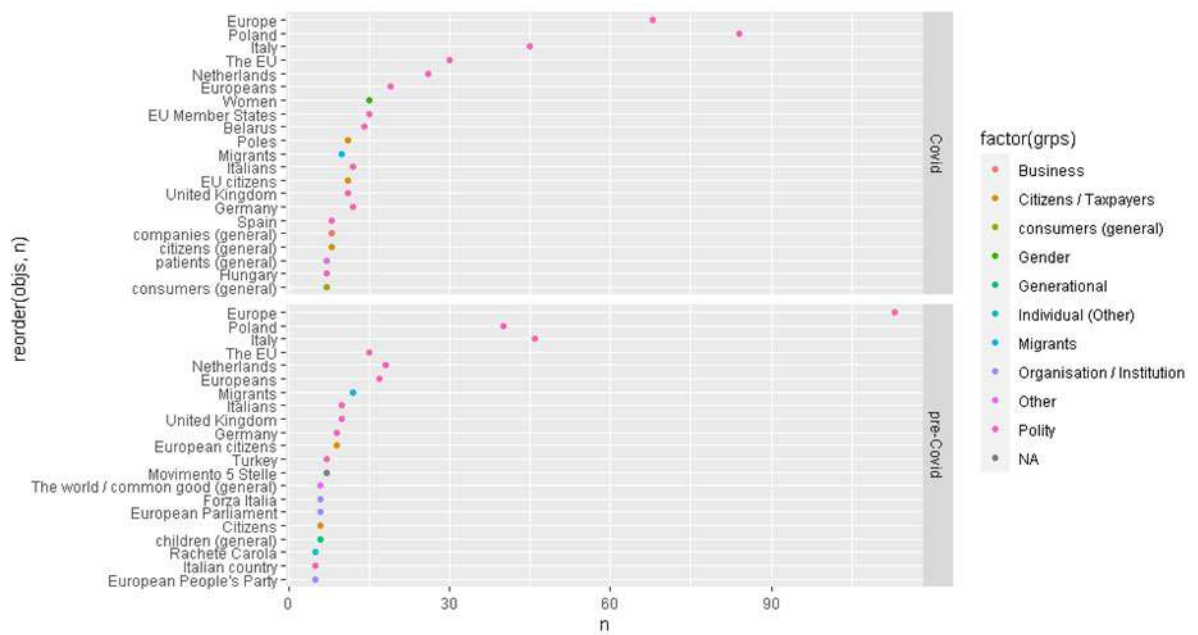
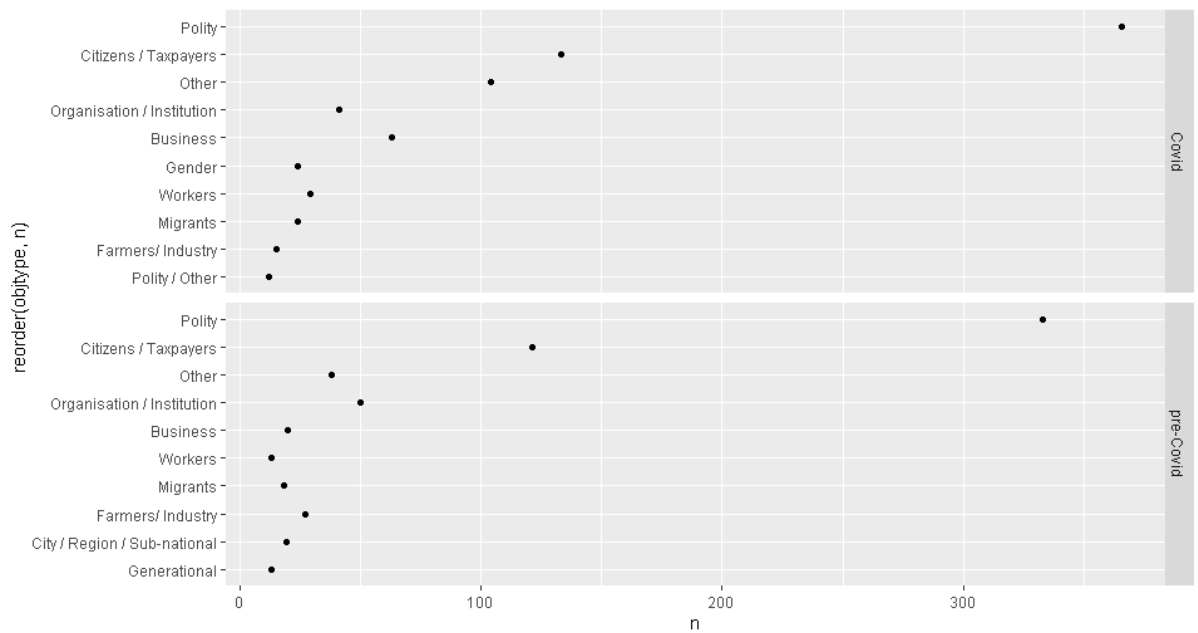


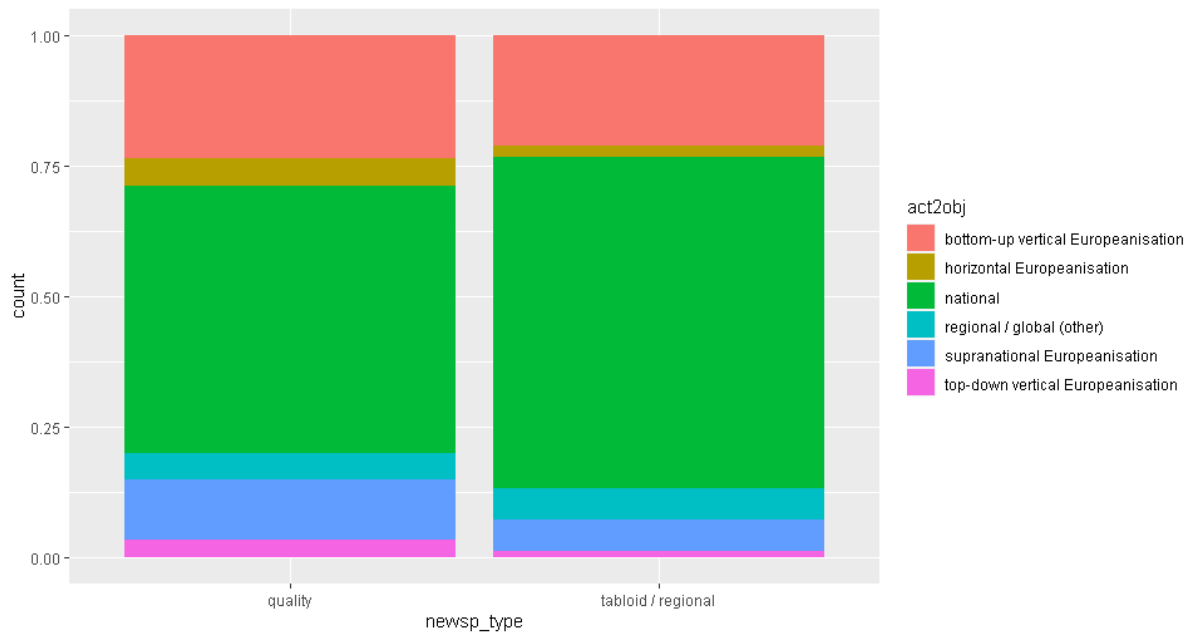




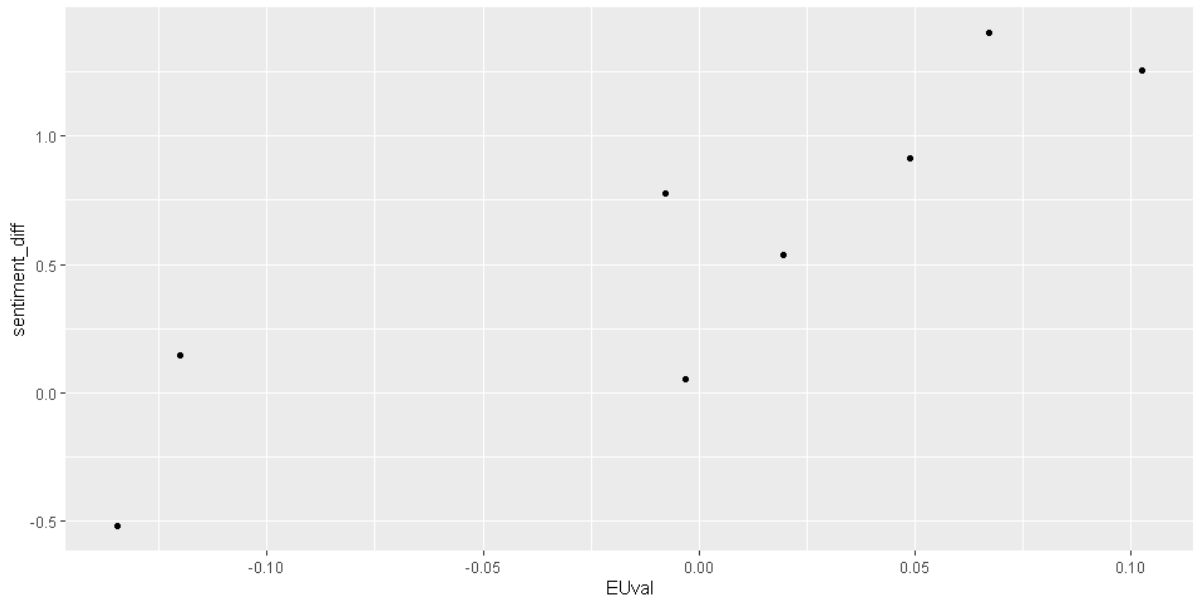


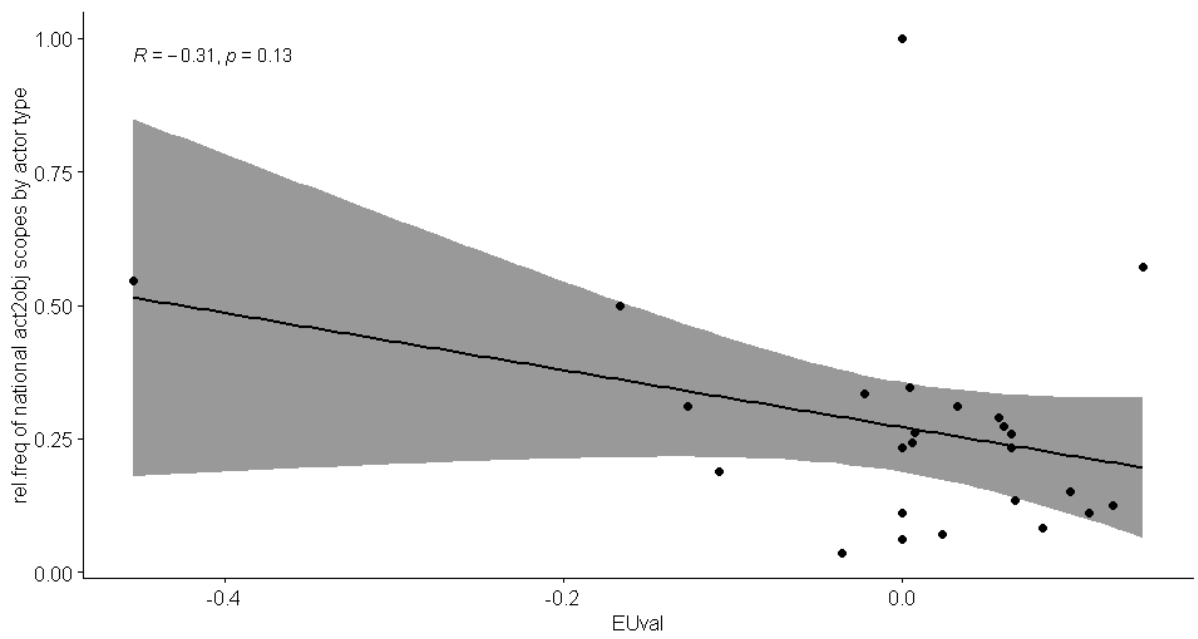
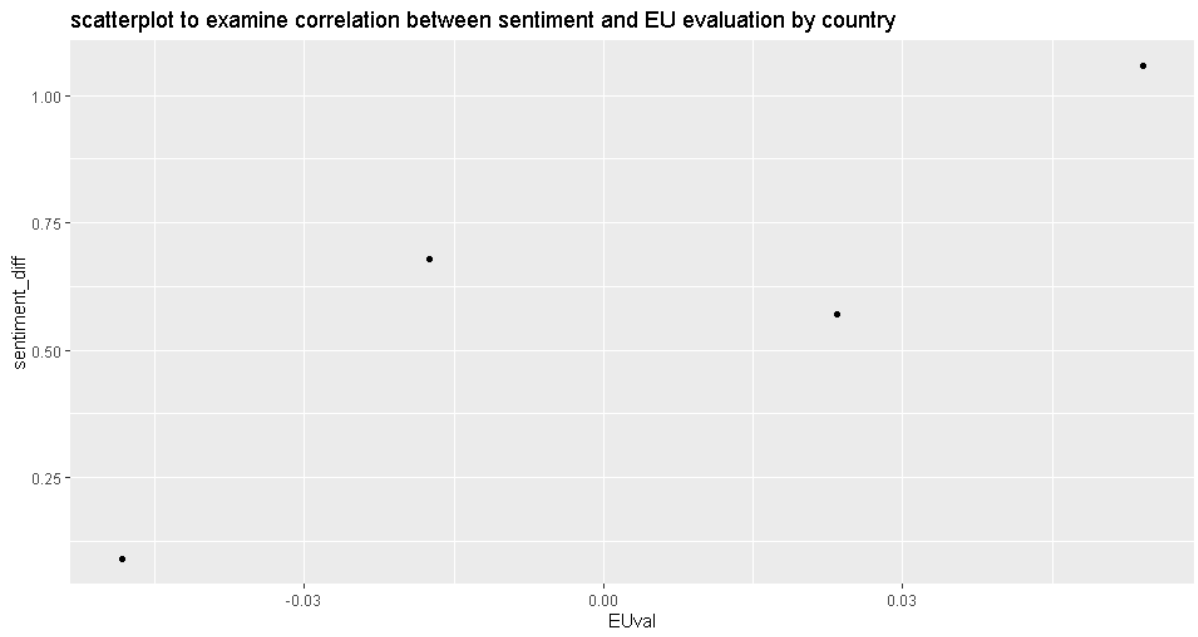


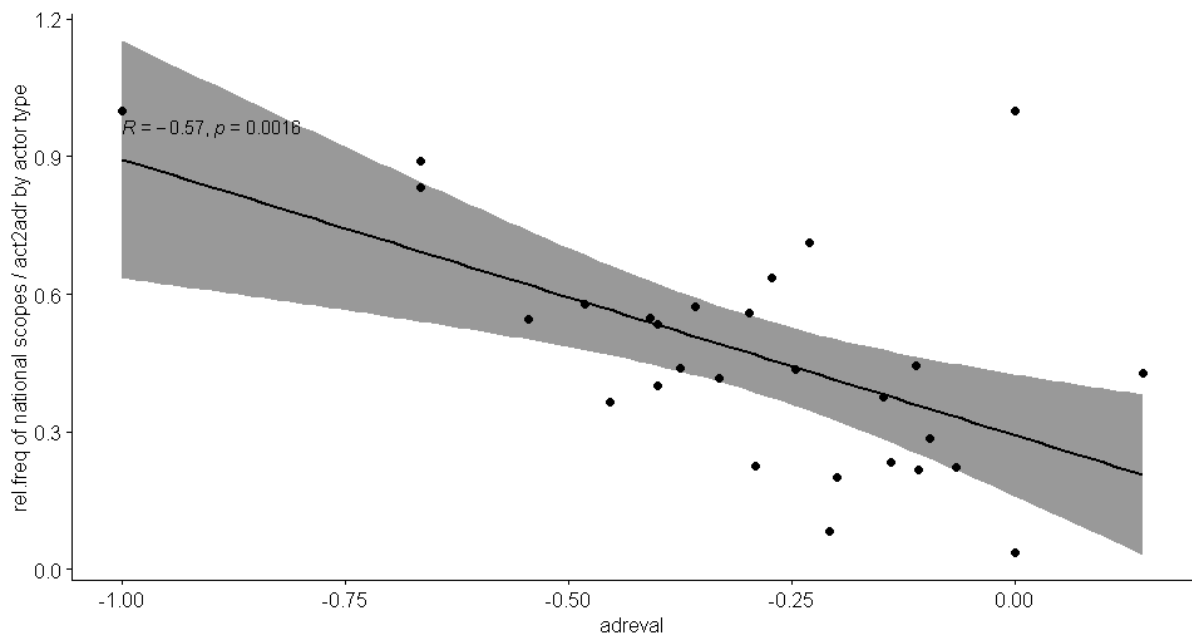
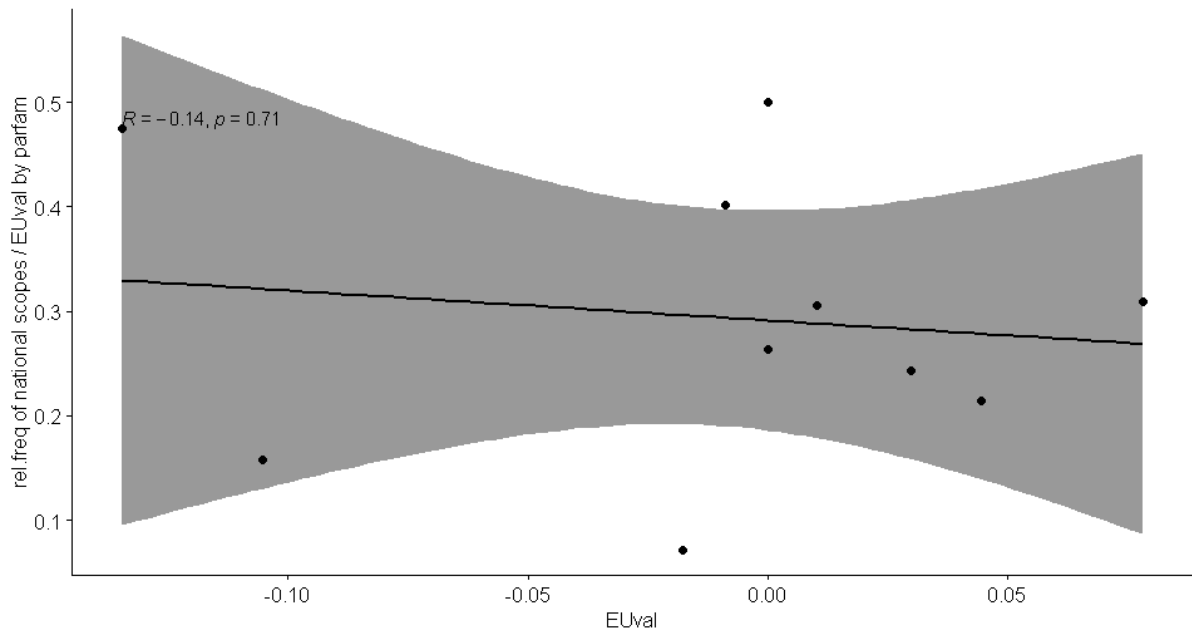


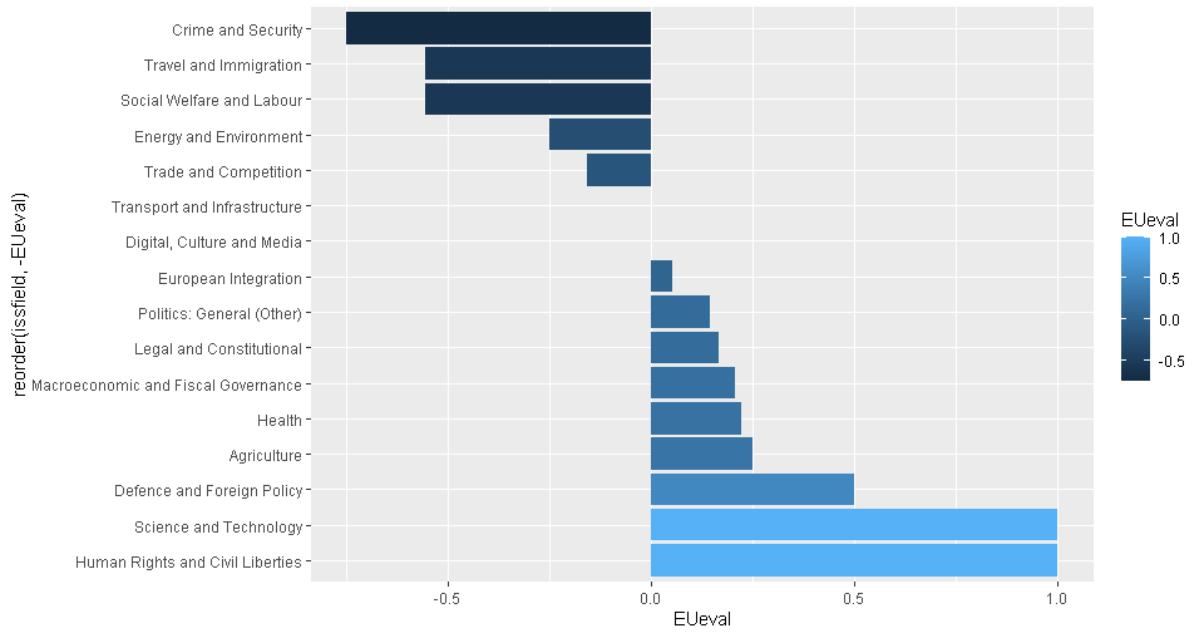


scatterplot to examine correlation between sentiment and EU evaluation by source

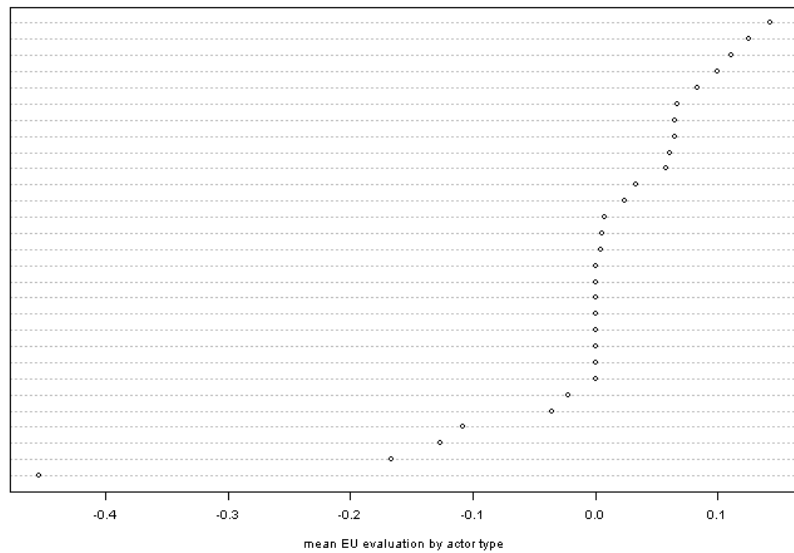


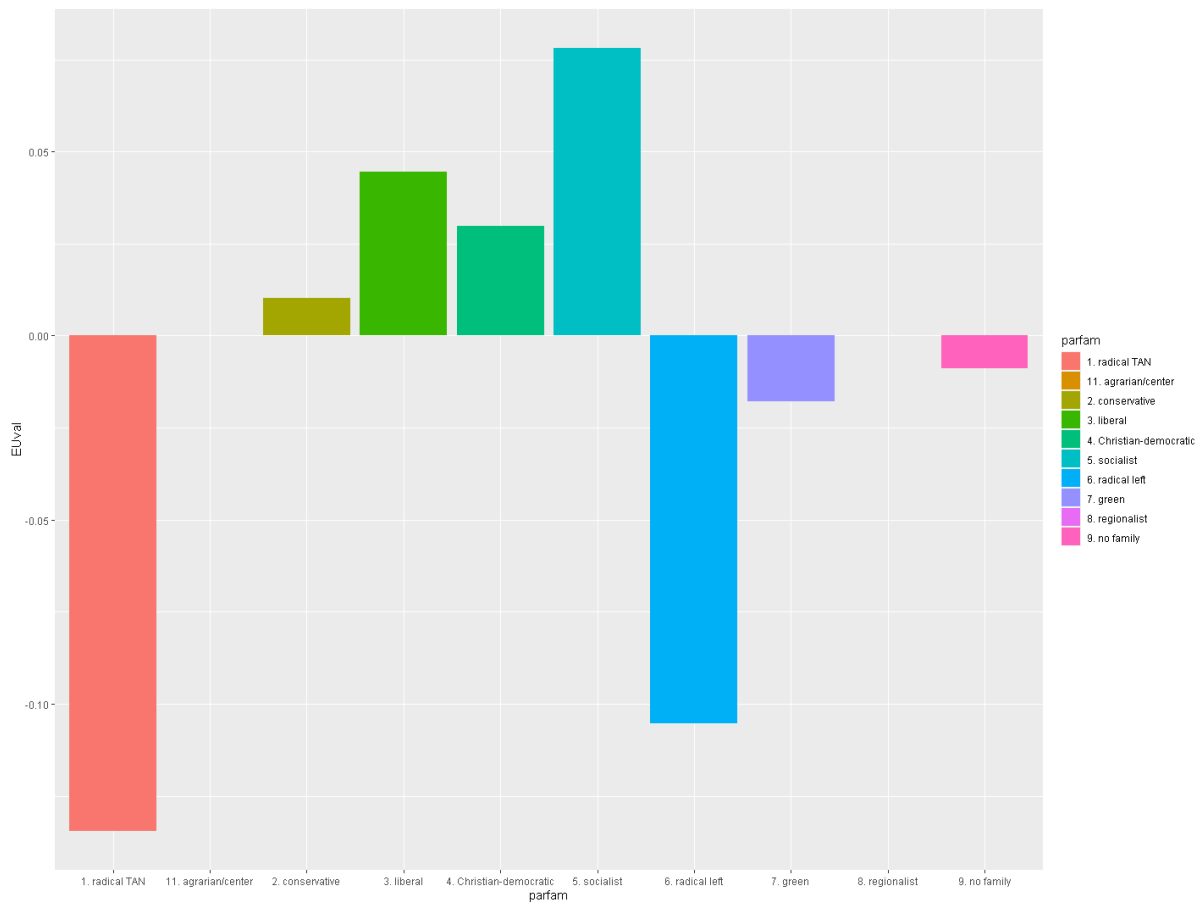
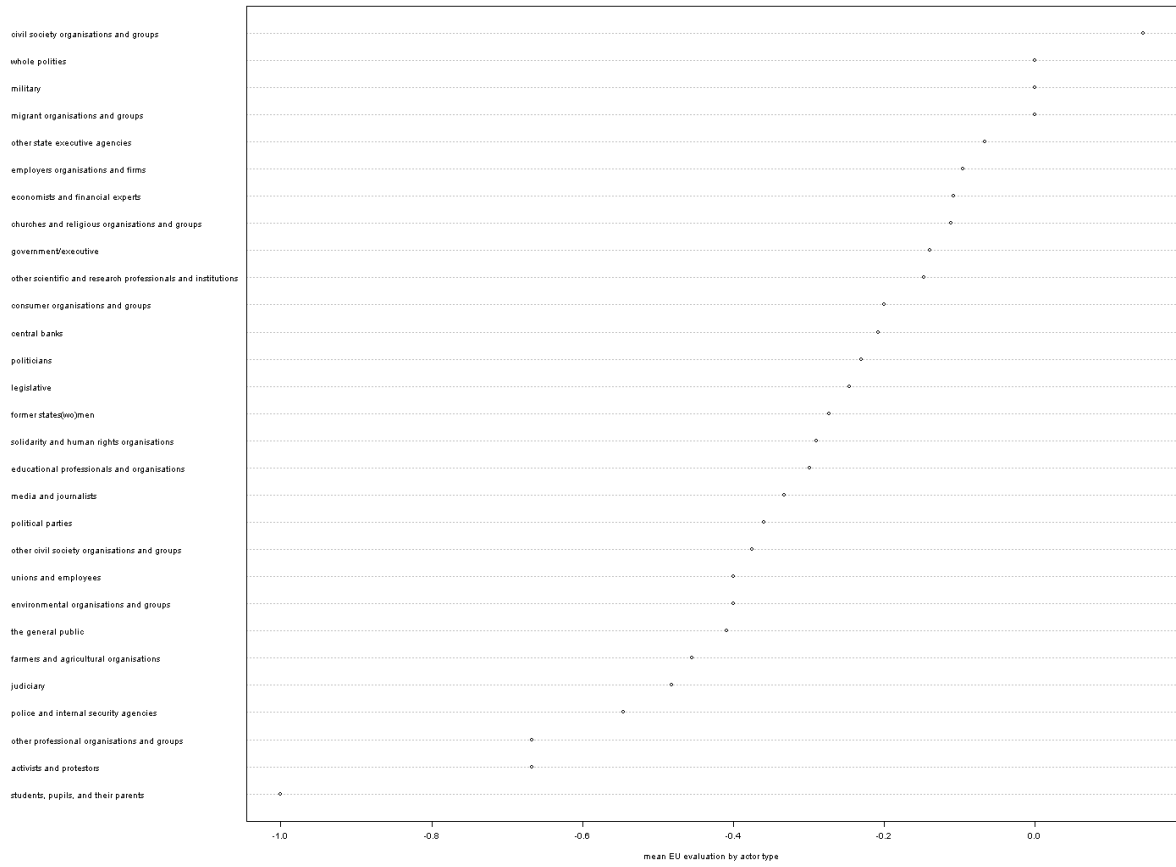


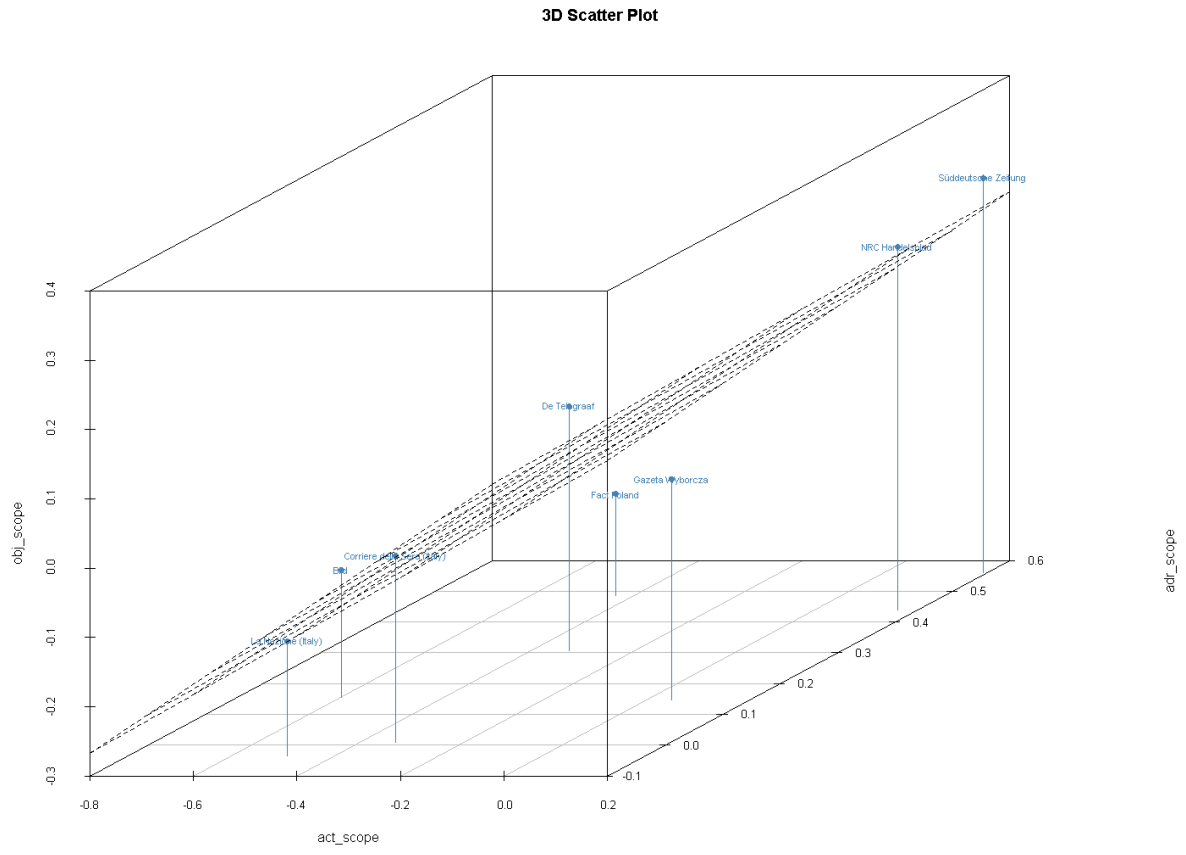


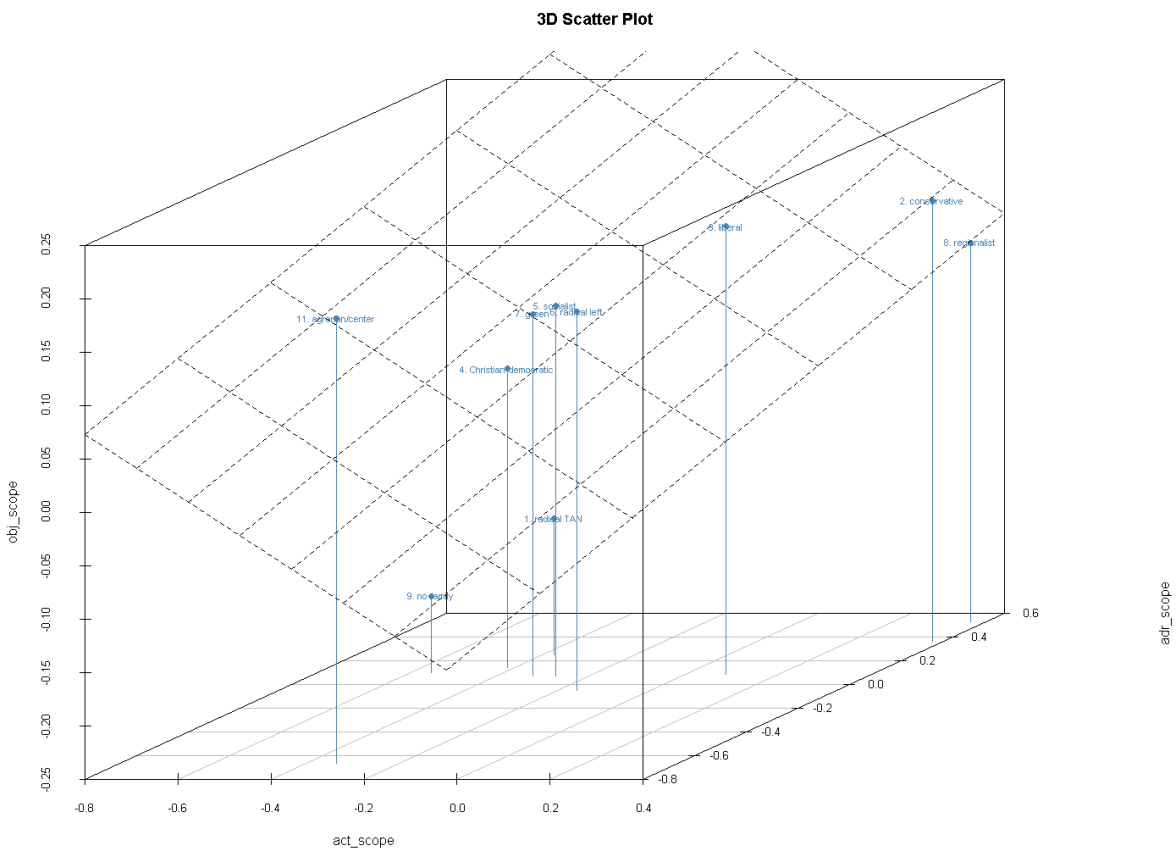
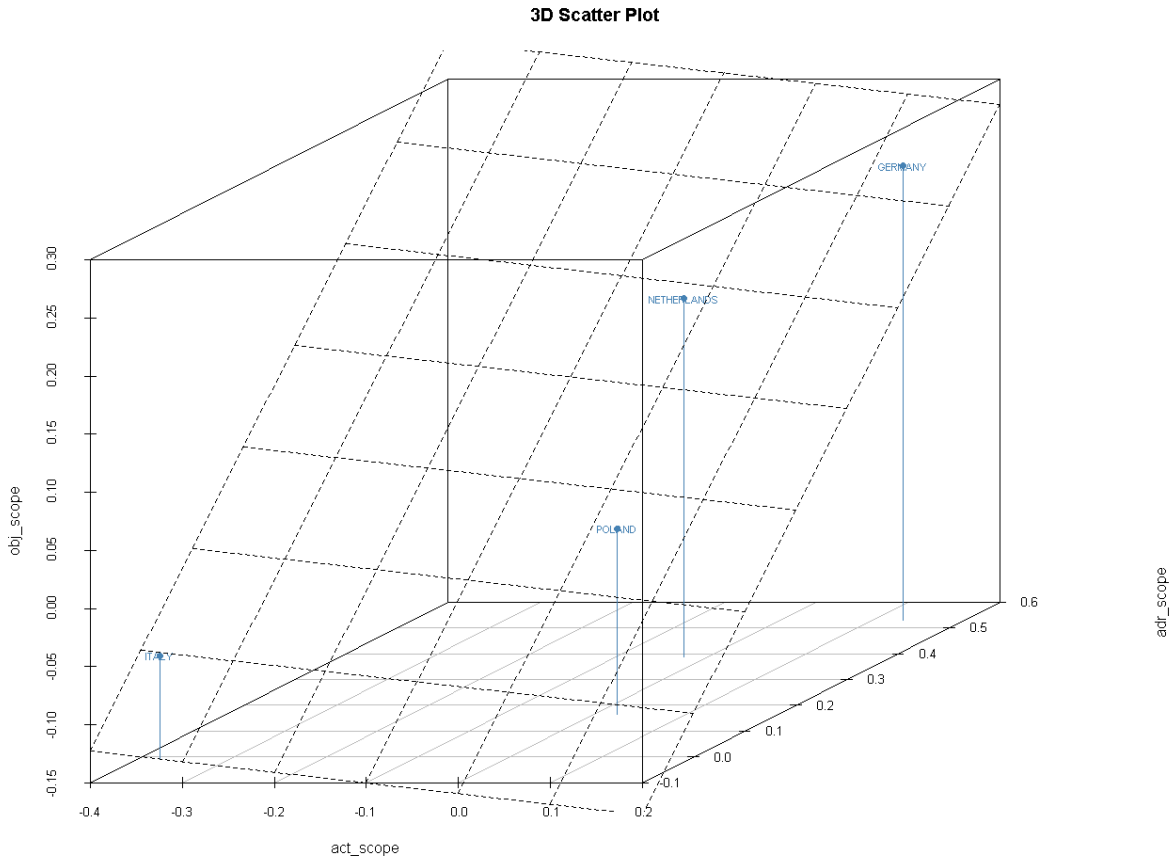


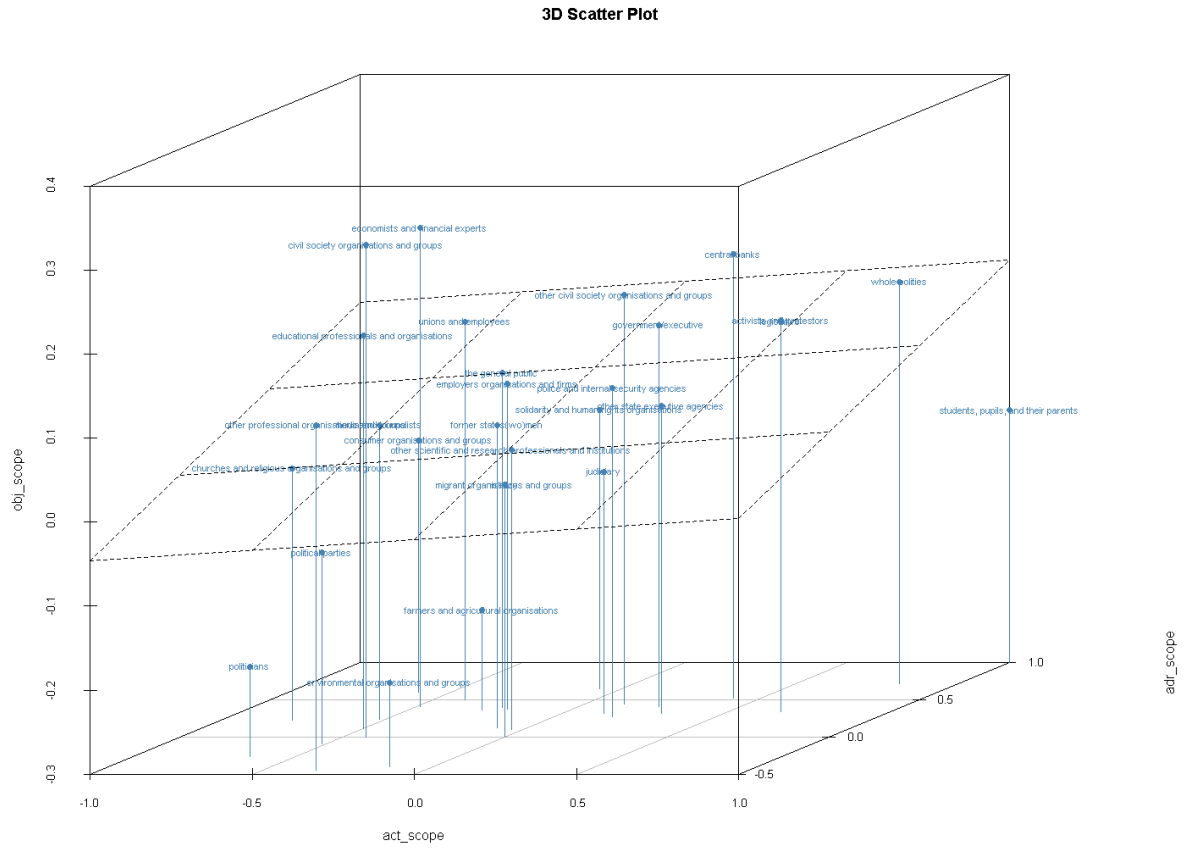
- civil society organisations and groups
- other civil society organisations and groups
- churches and religious organisations and groups
- unions and employees
- central banks
- environmental organisations and groups
- educational professionals and organisations
- solidarity and human rights organisations
- former states(women)
- politicians
- other scientific and research professionals and institutions
- legislative
- employers organisations and firms
- government/executive
- political parties
- students, pupils, and their parents
- police and internal security agencies
- other professional organisations and groups
- military
- migrant organisations and groups
- media and journalists
- judiciary
- consumer organisations and groups
- other state executive agencies
- whole polities
- economists and financial experts
- the general public
- activists and protesters
- farmers and agricultural organisations

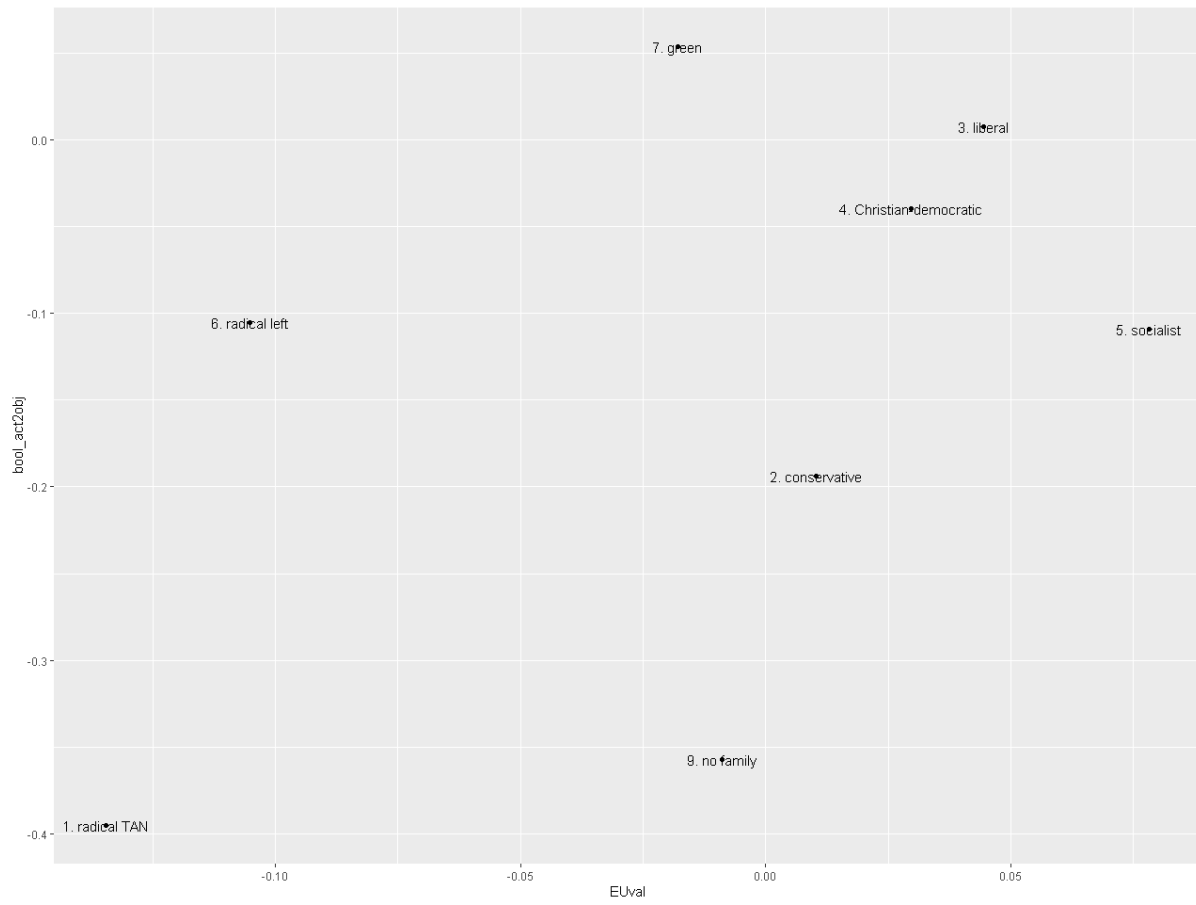


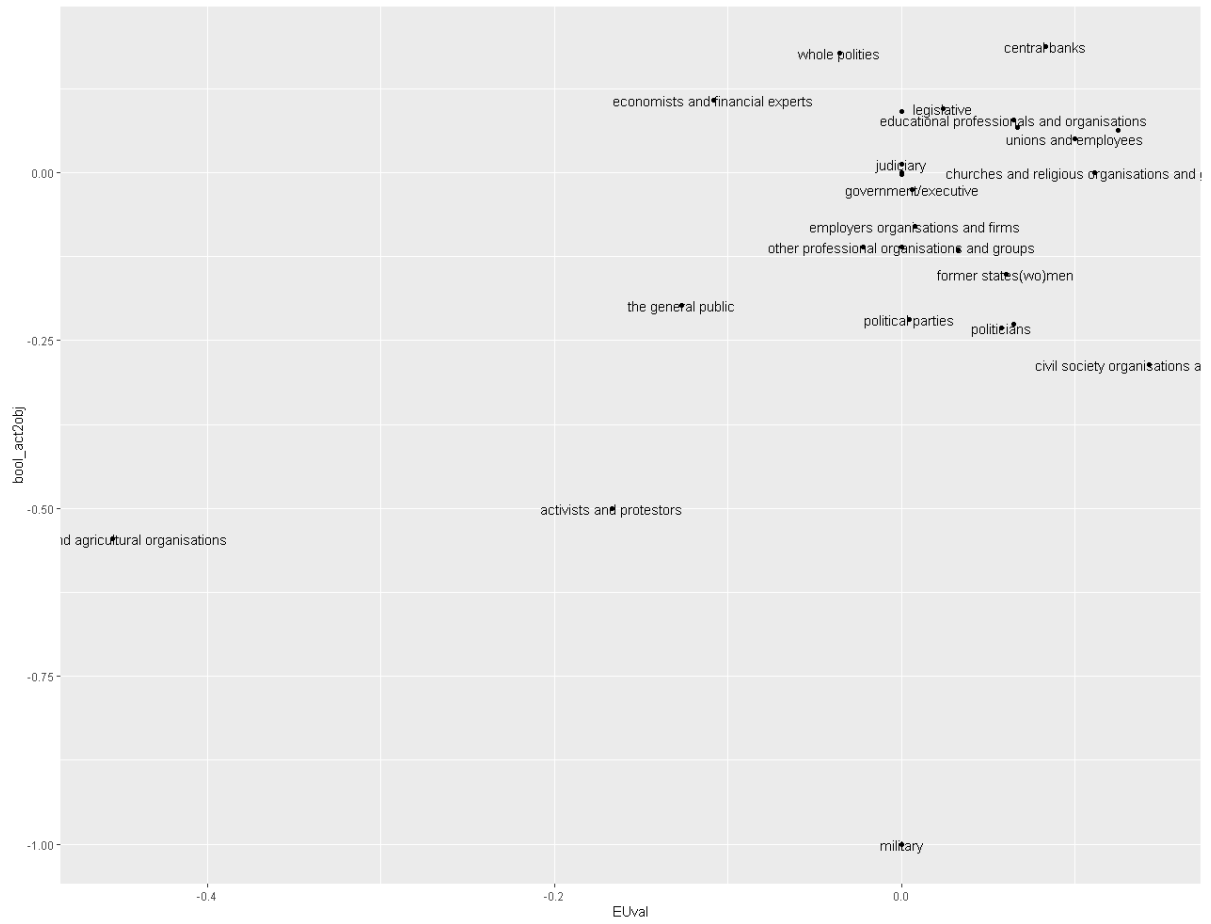


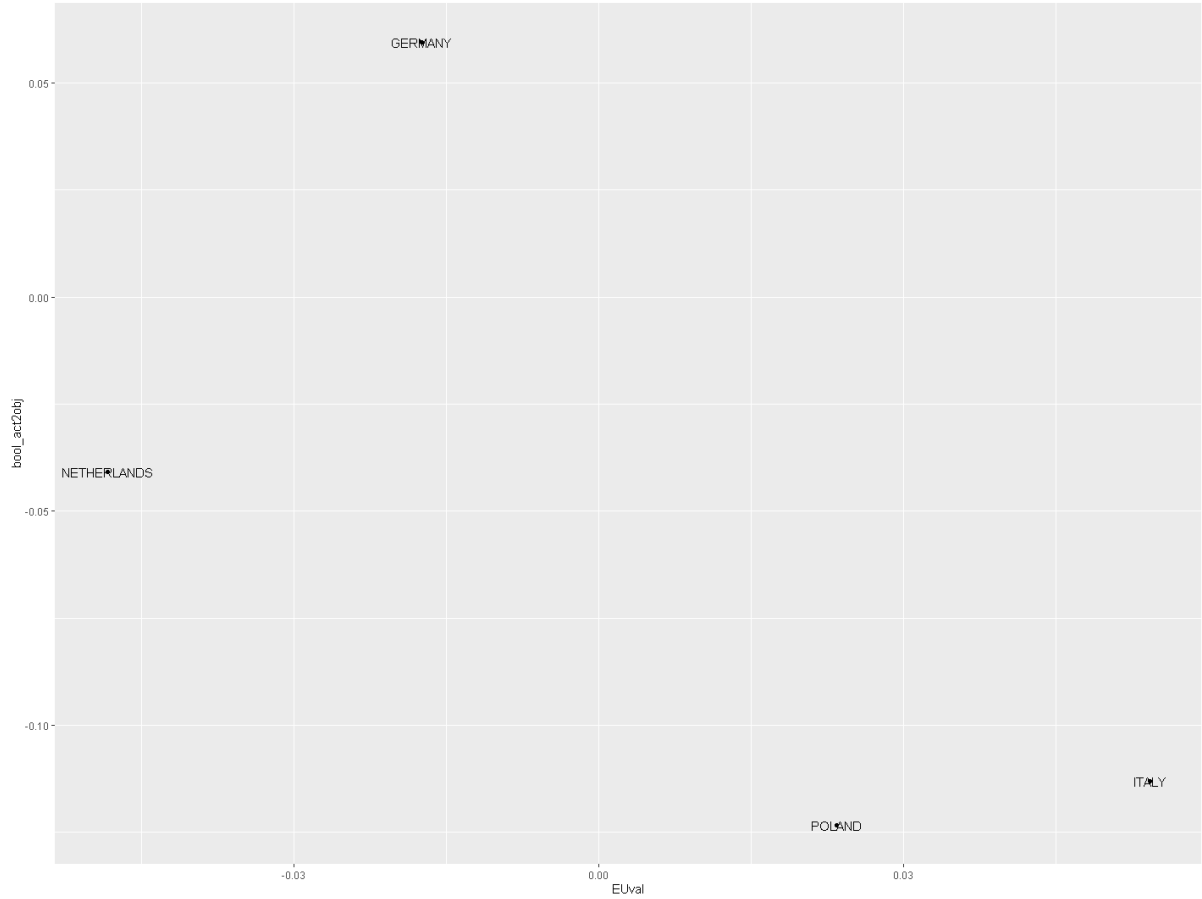
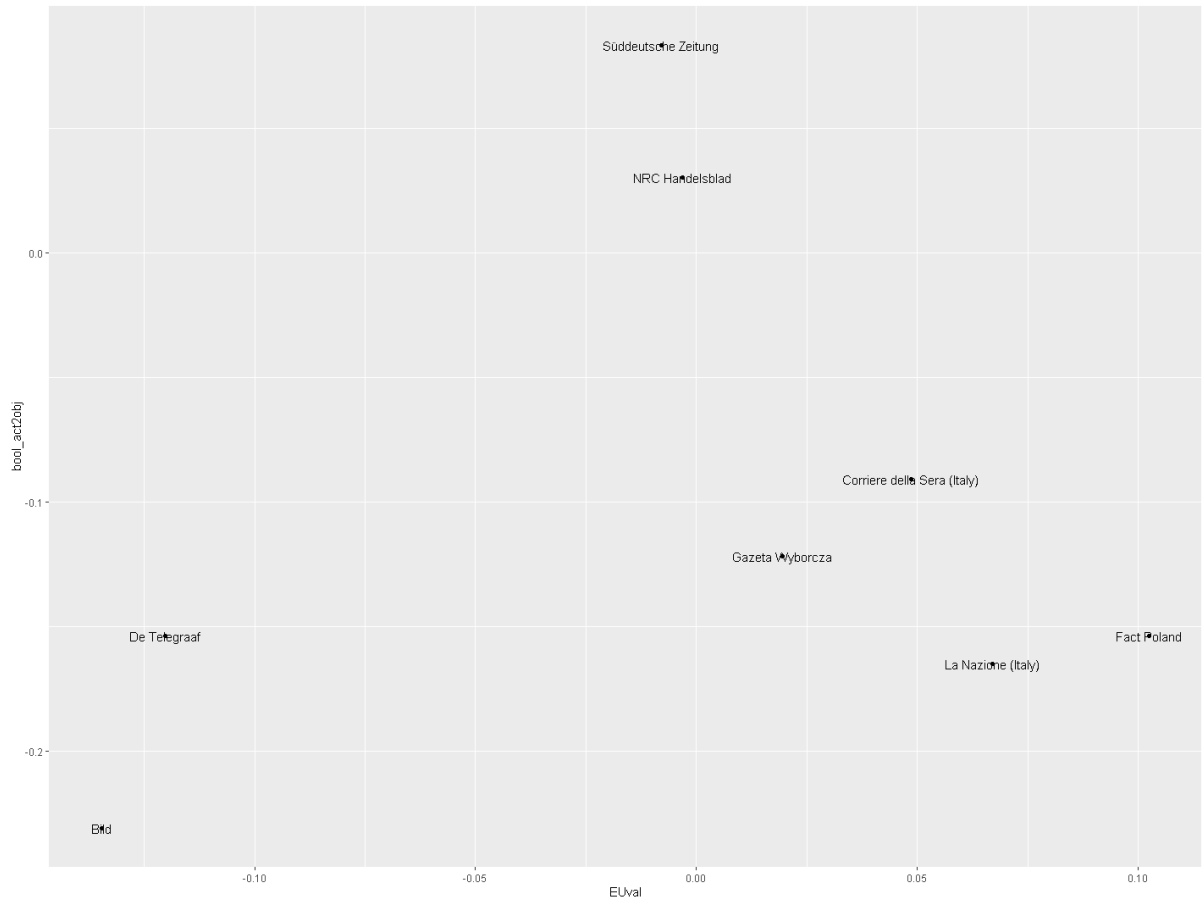


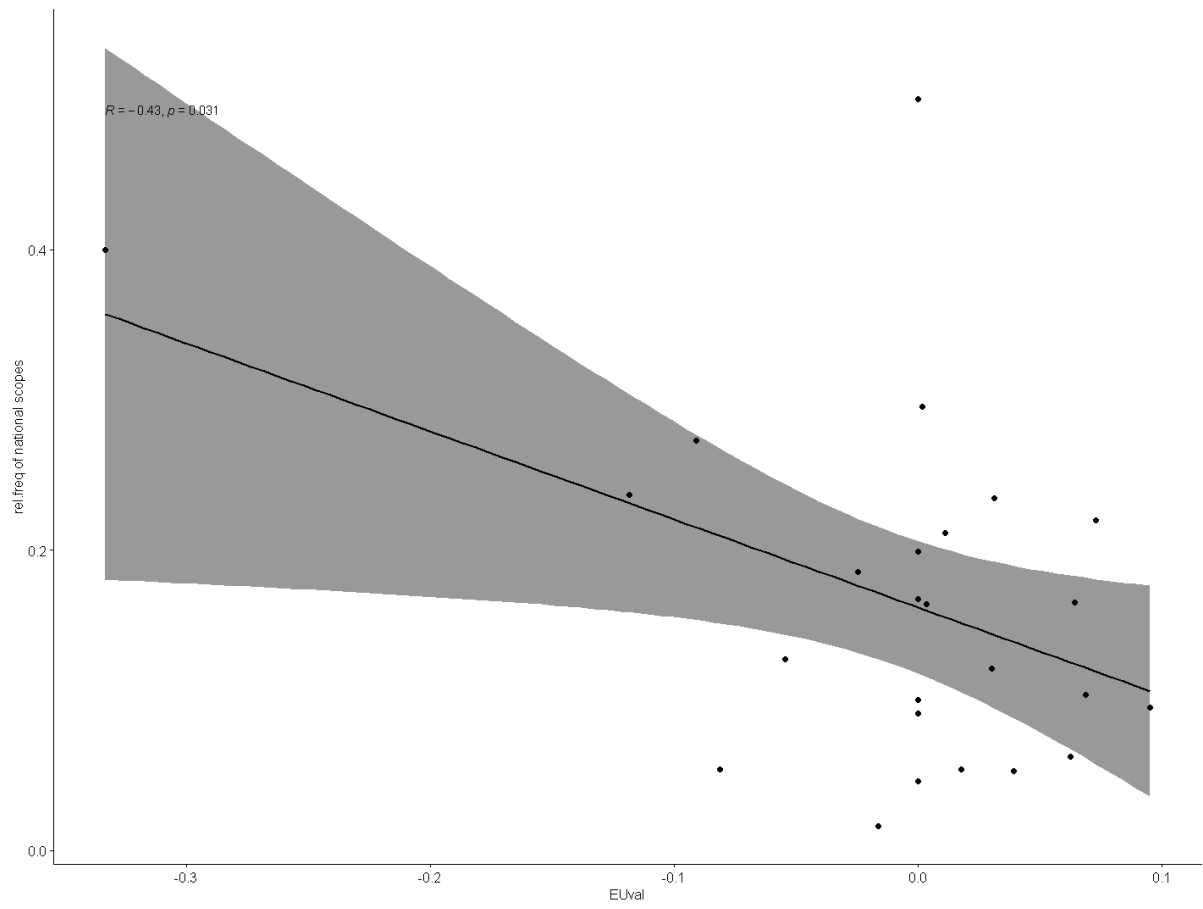


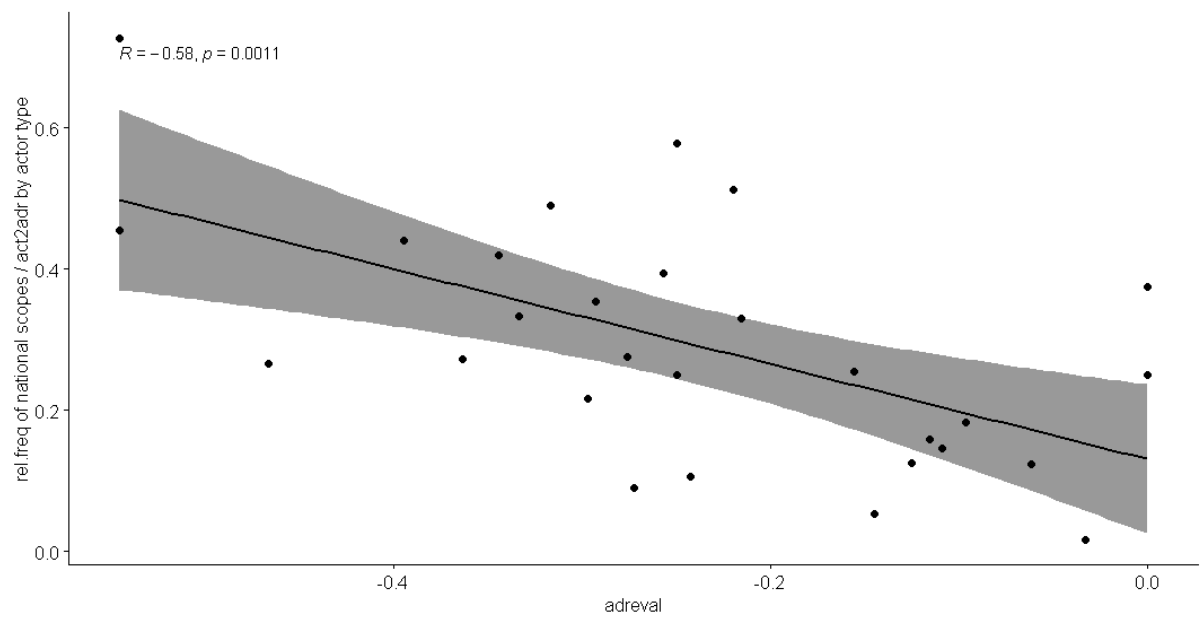
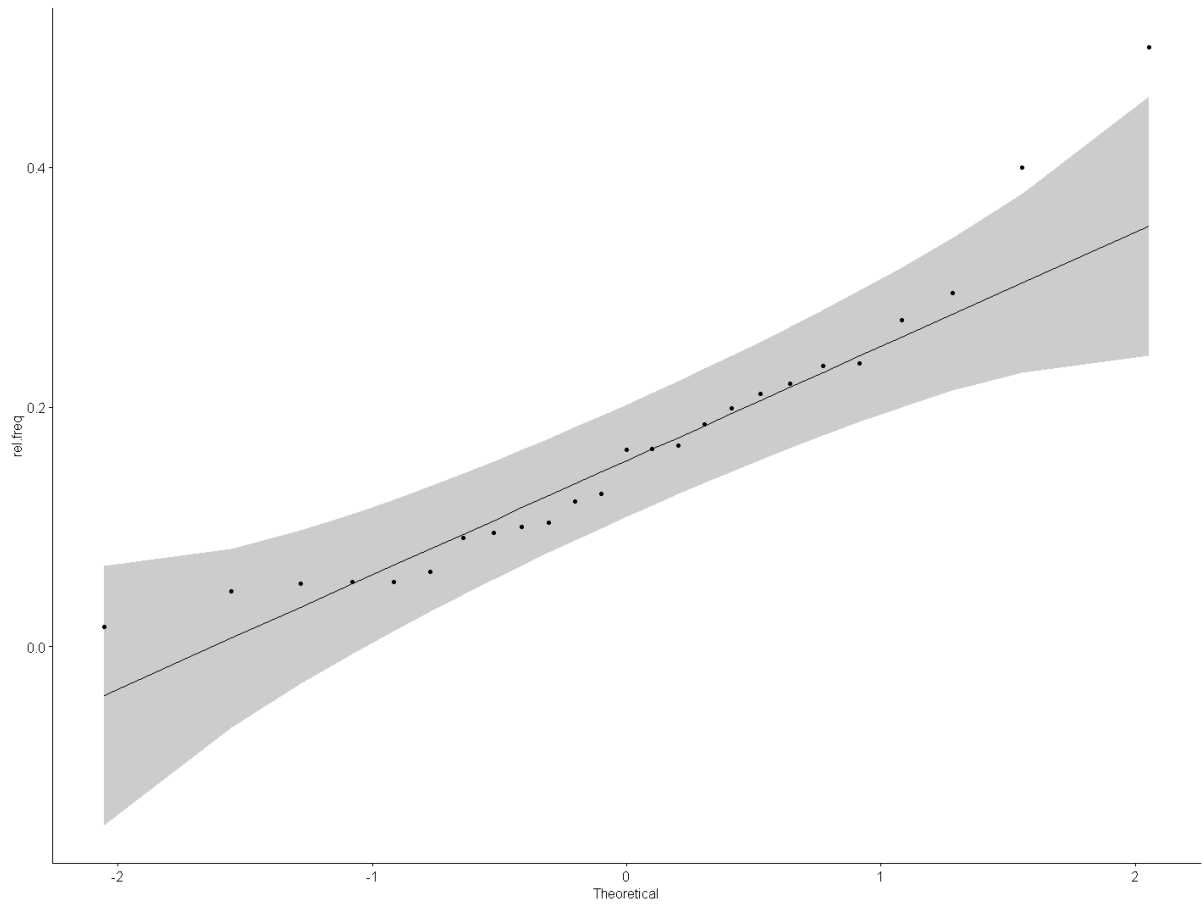


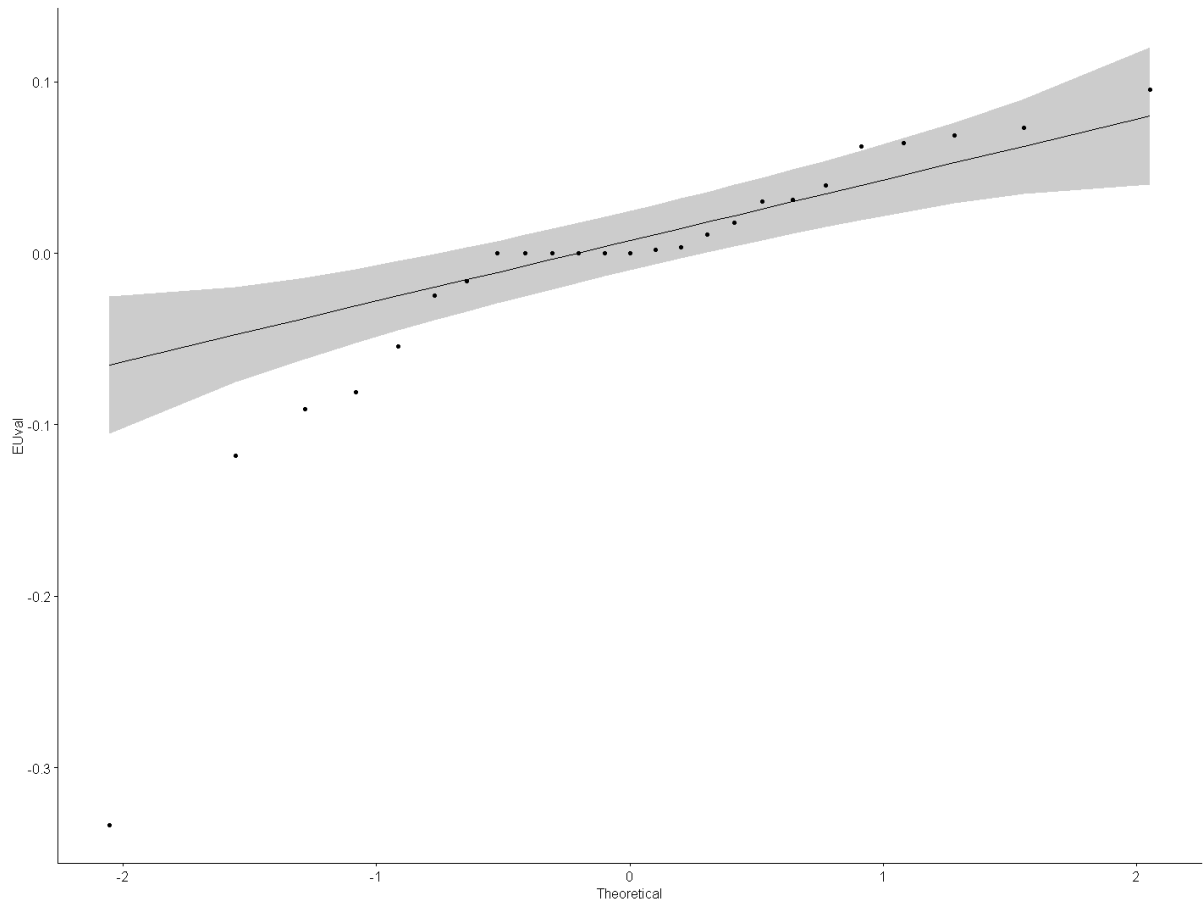


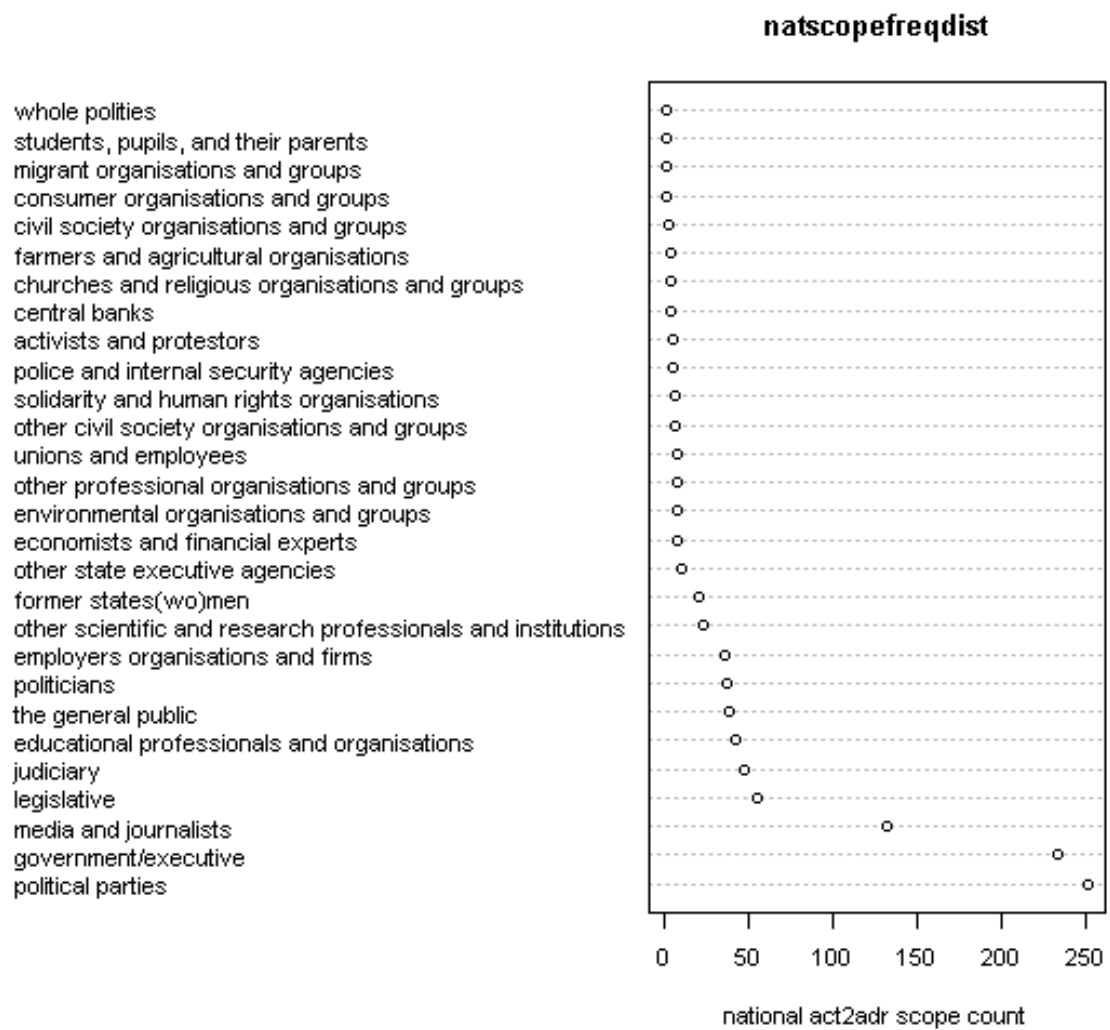




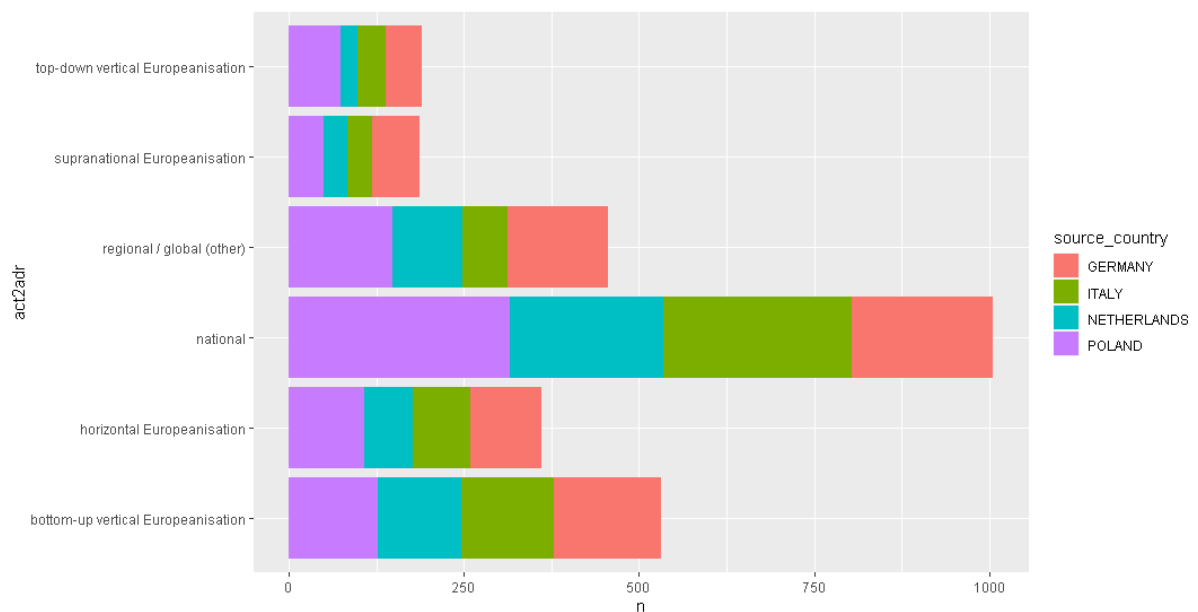
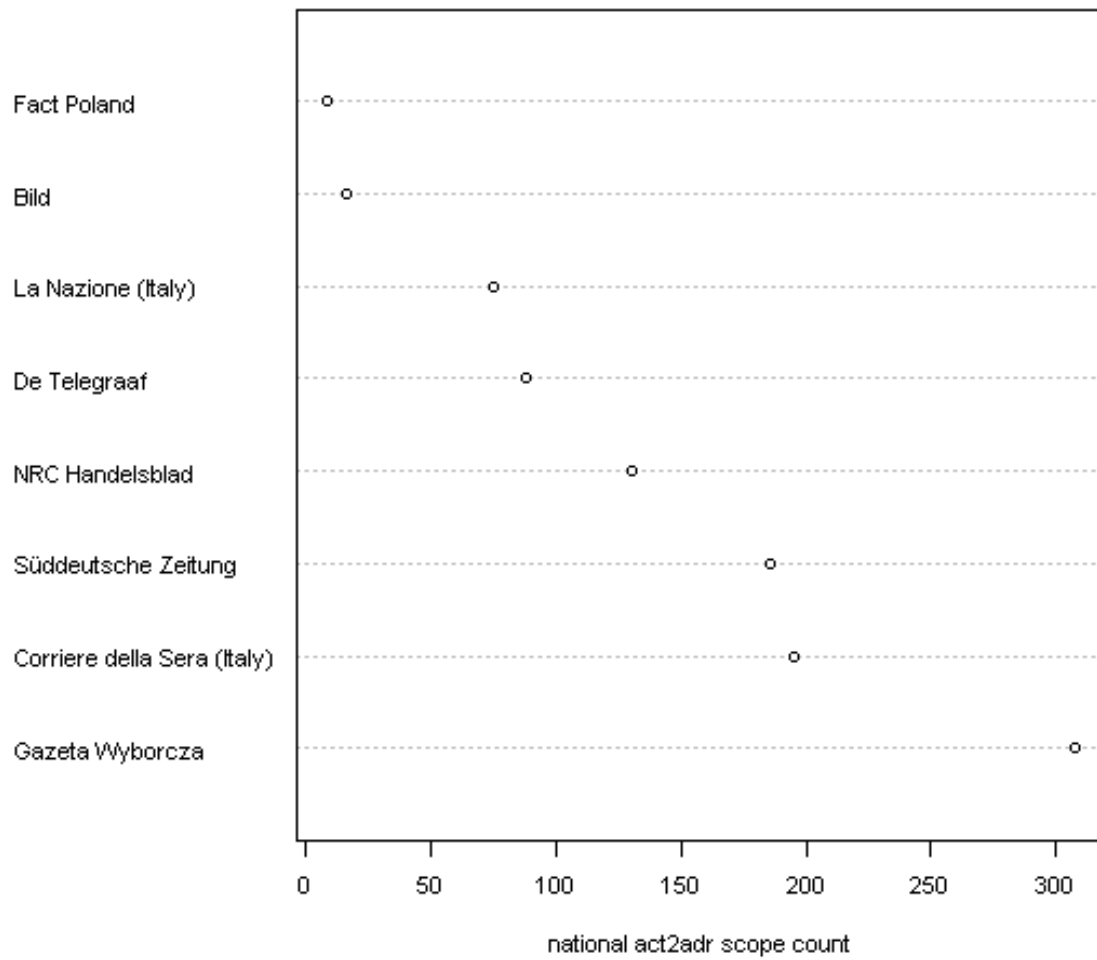


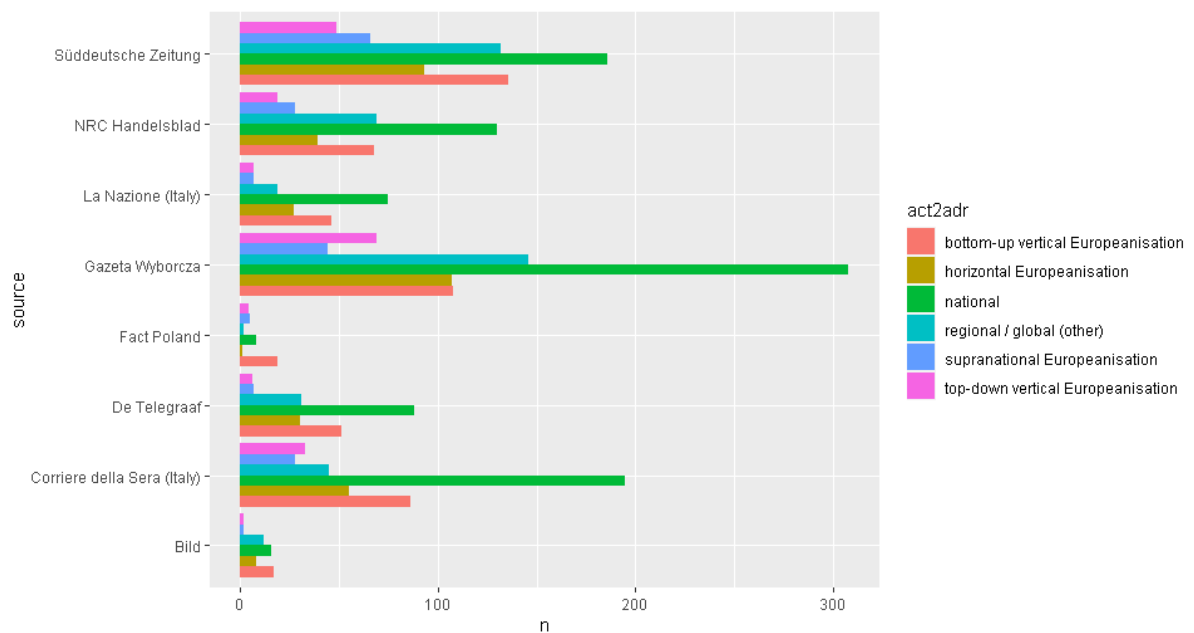
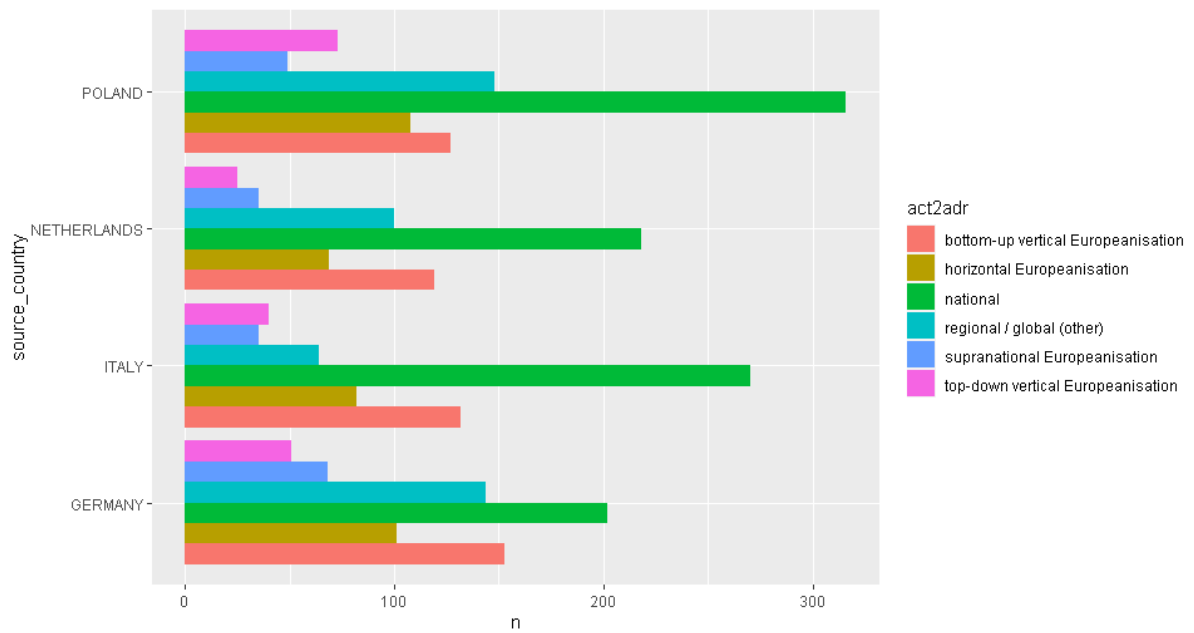


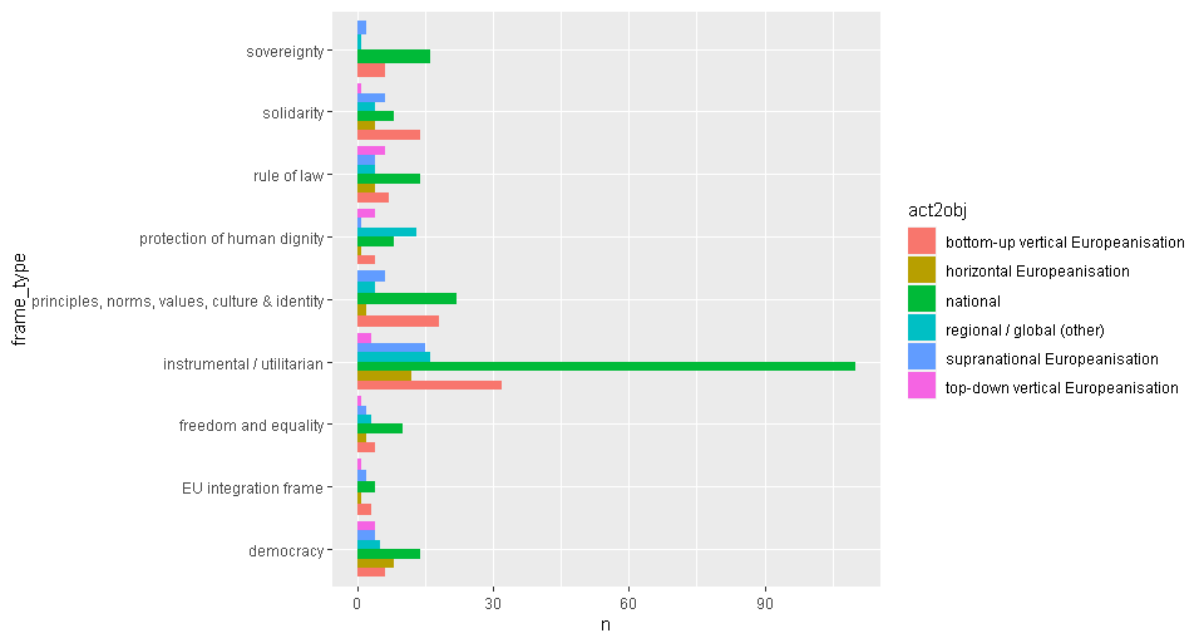
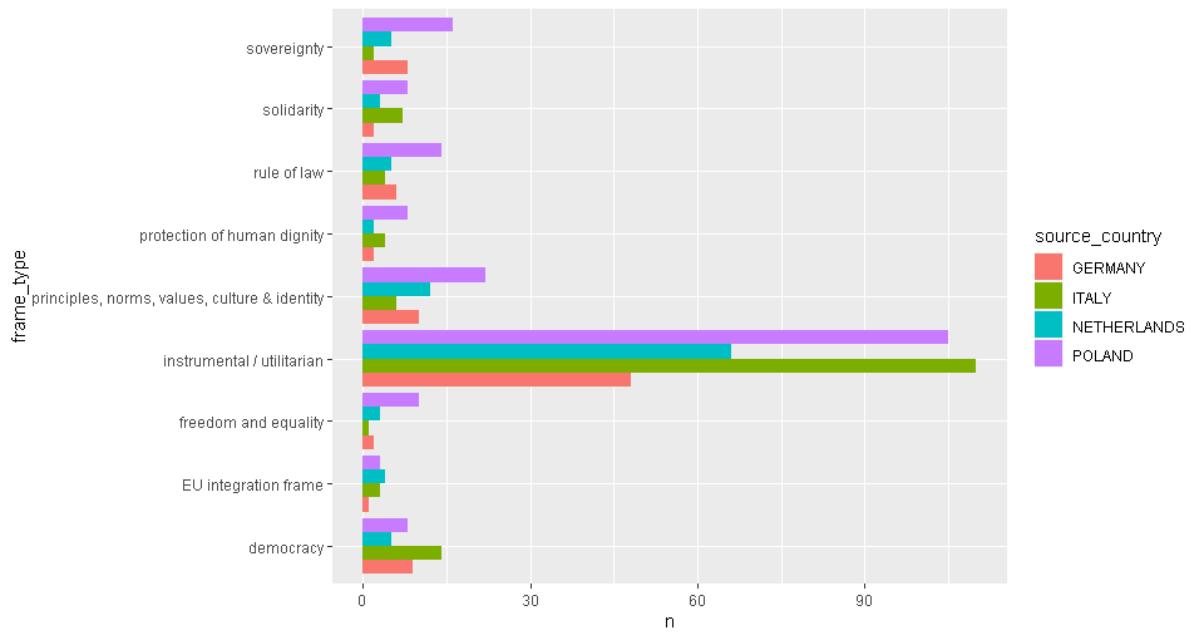


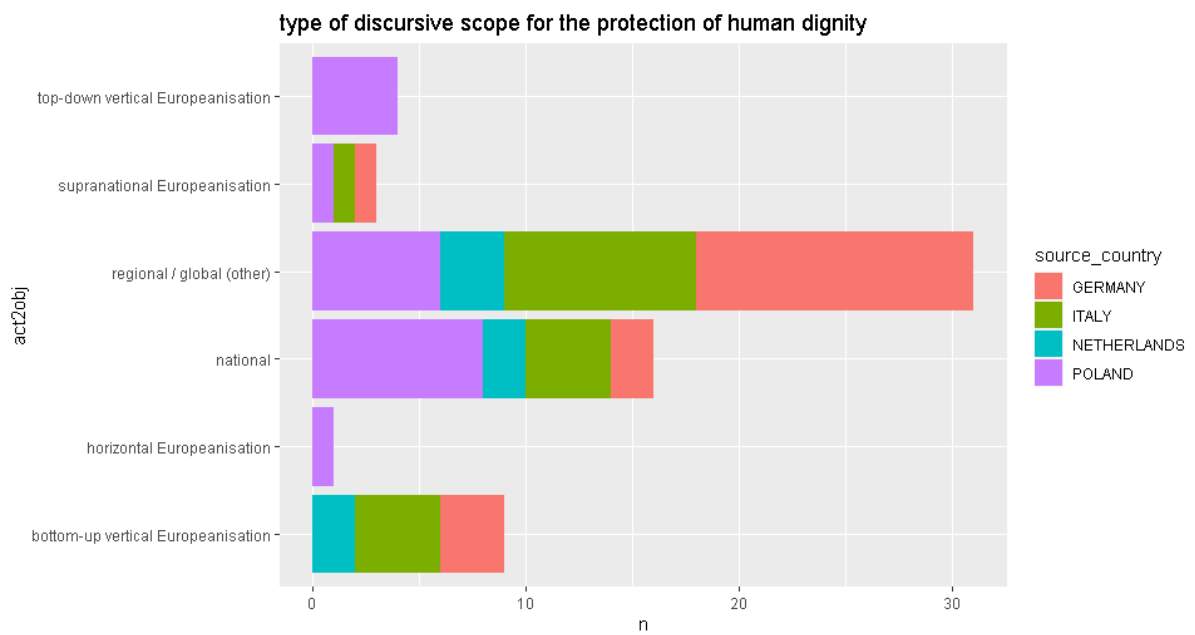
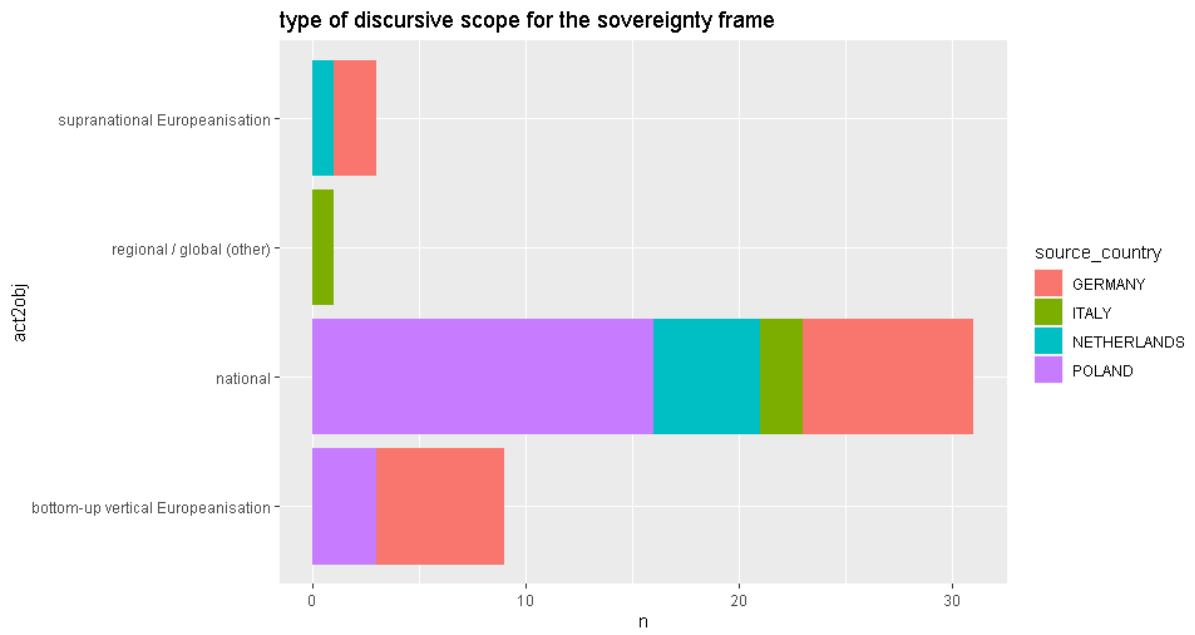


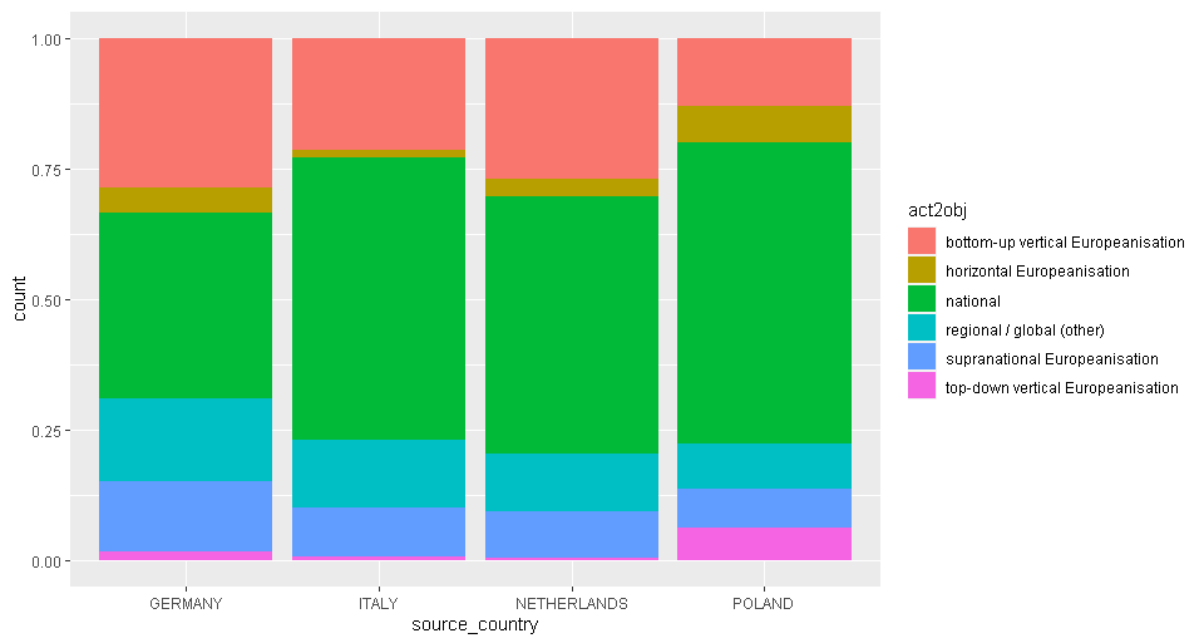
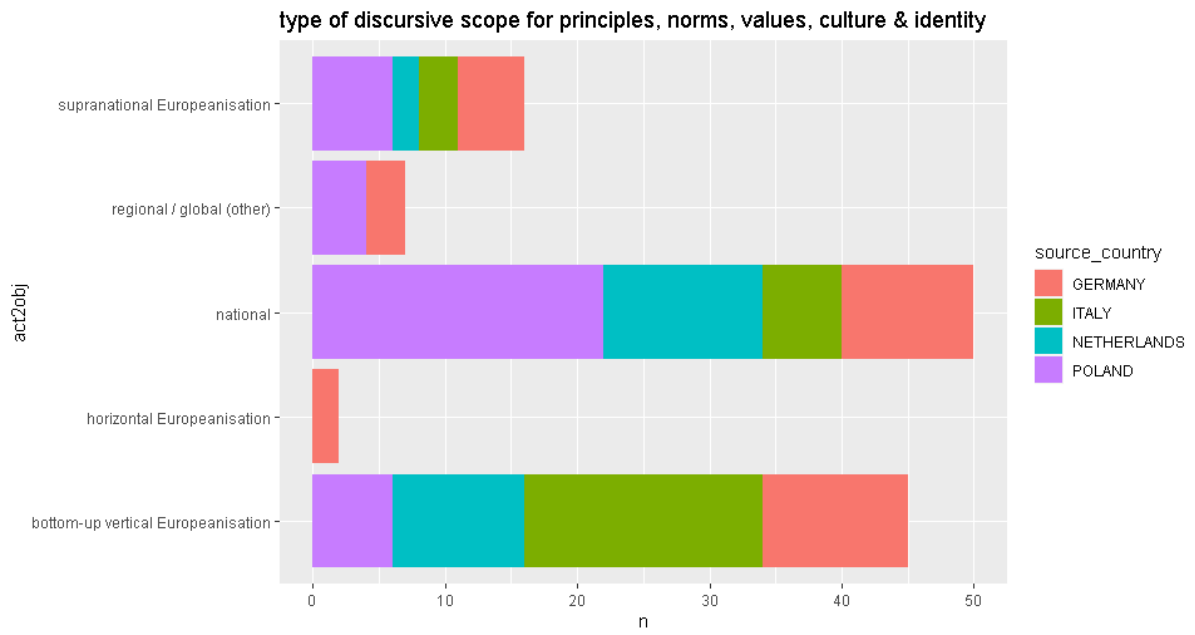
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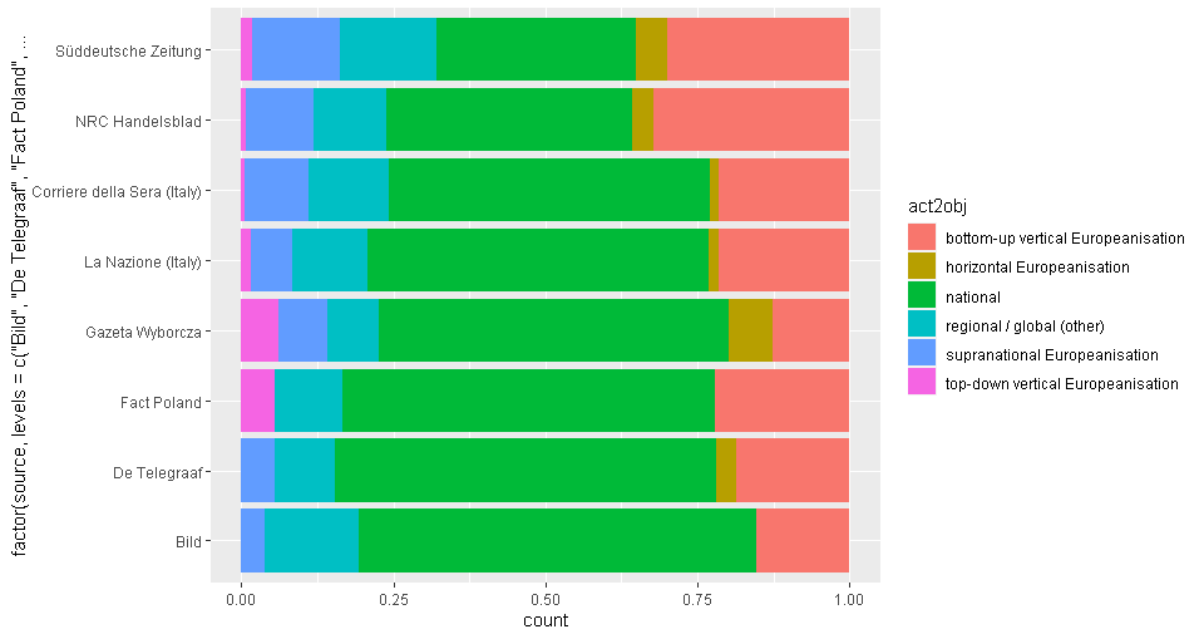
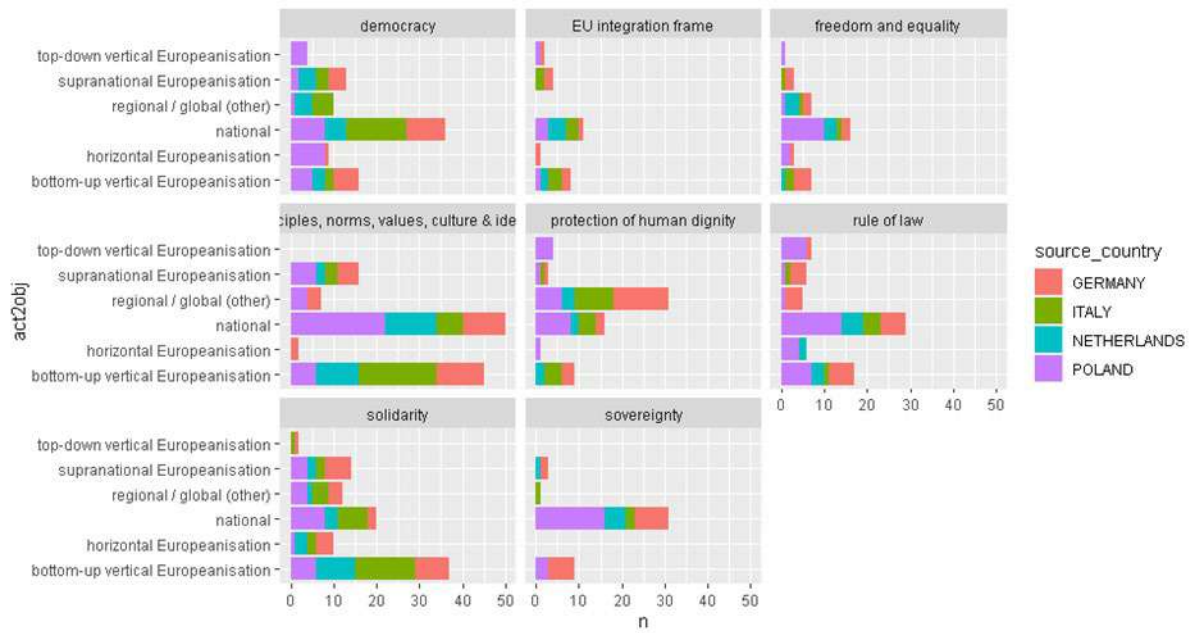


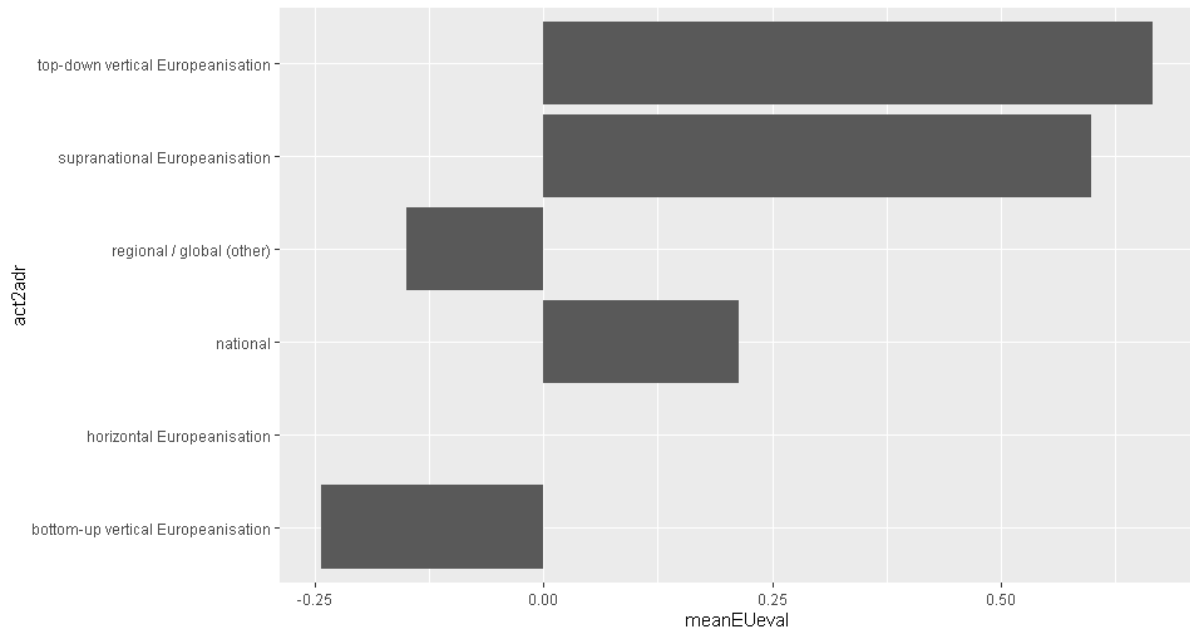
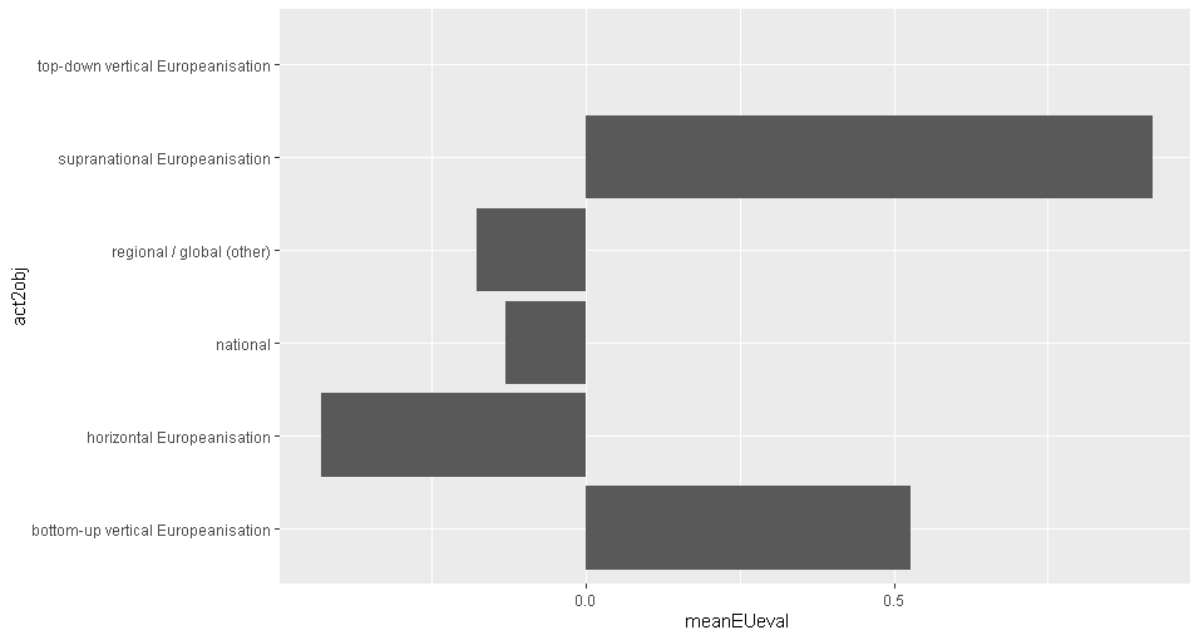


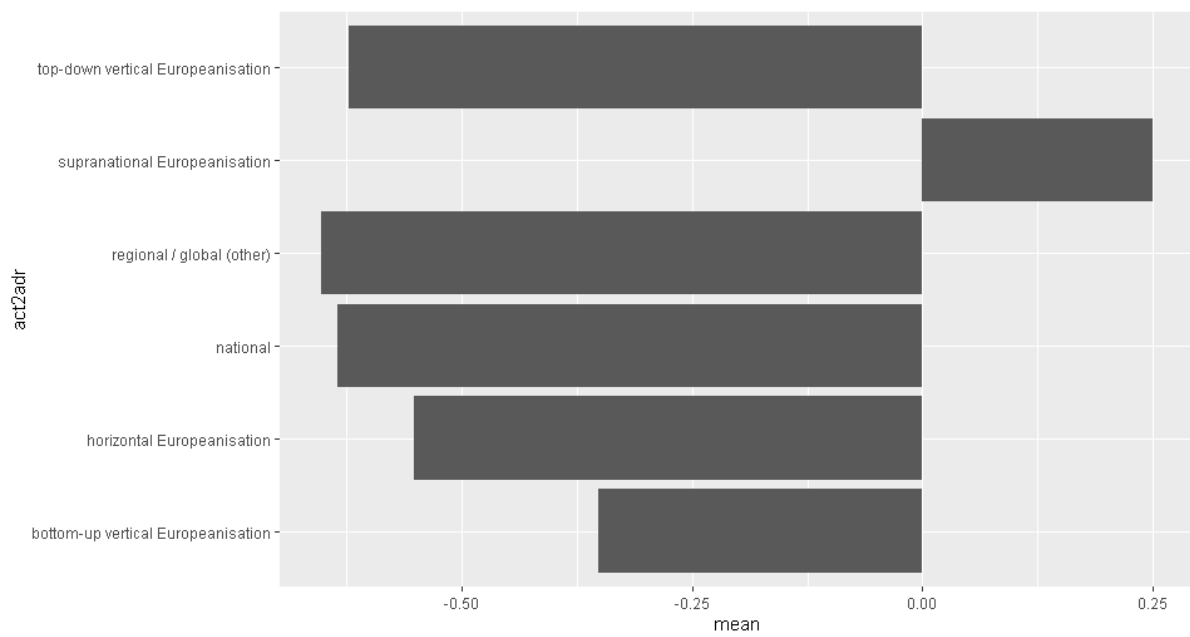
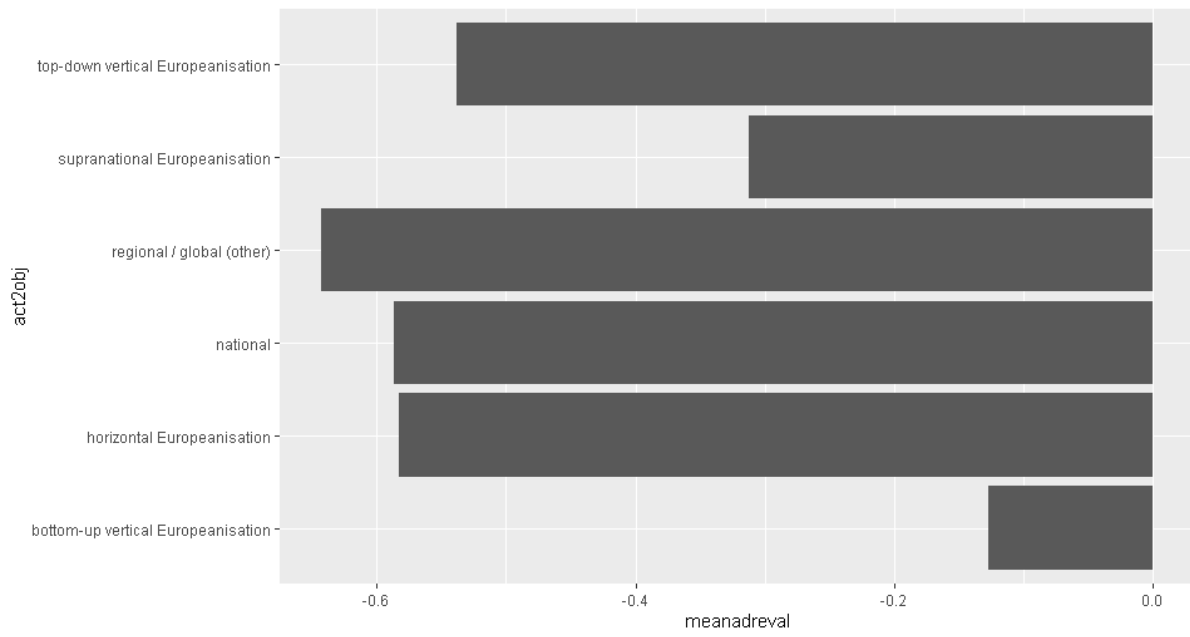




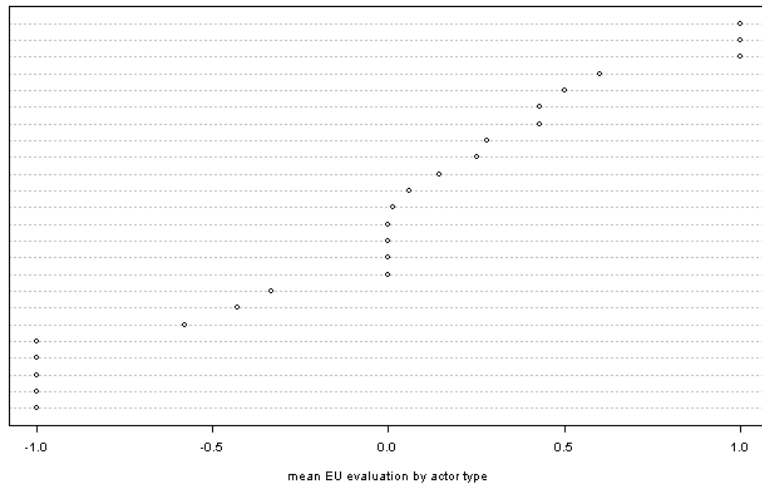




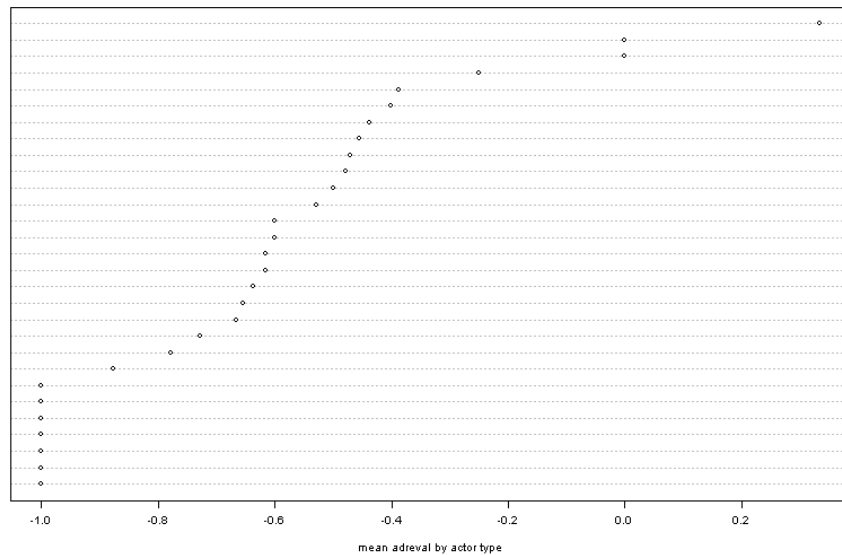


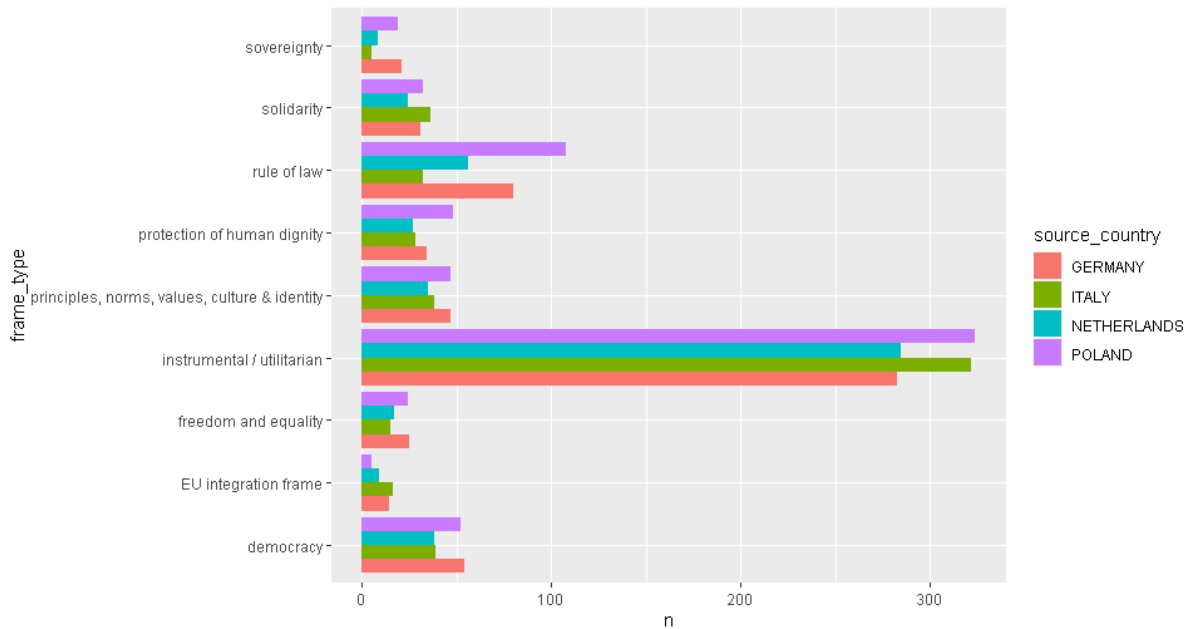
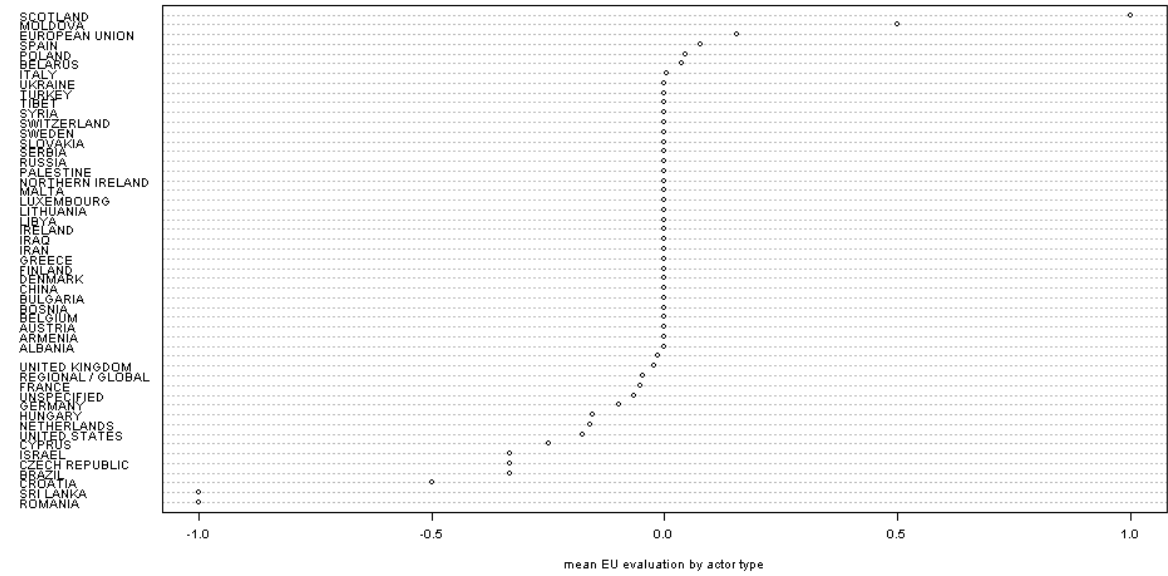


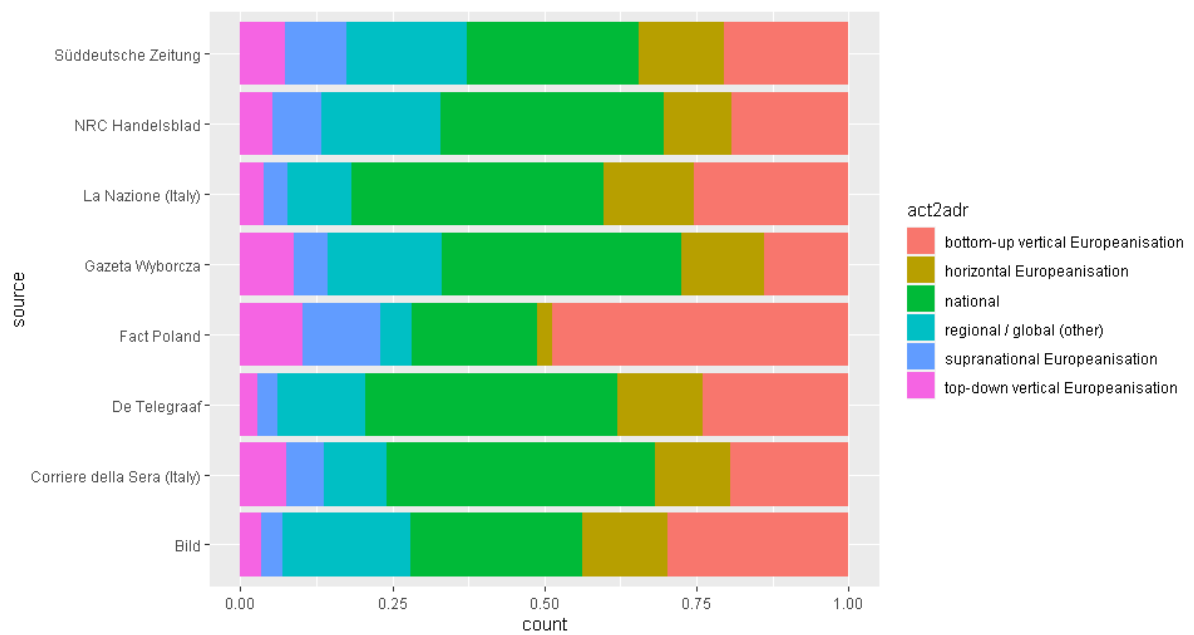
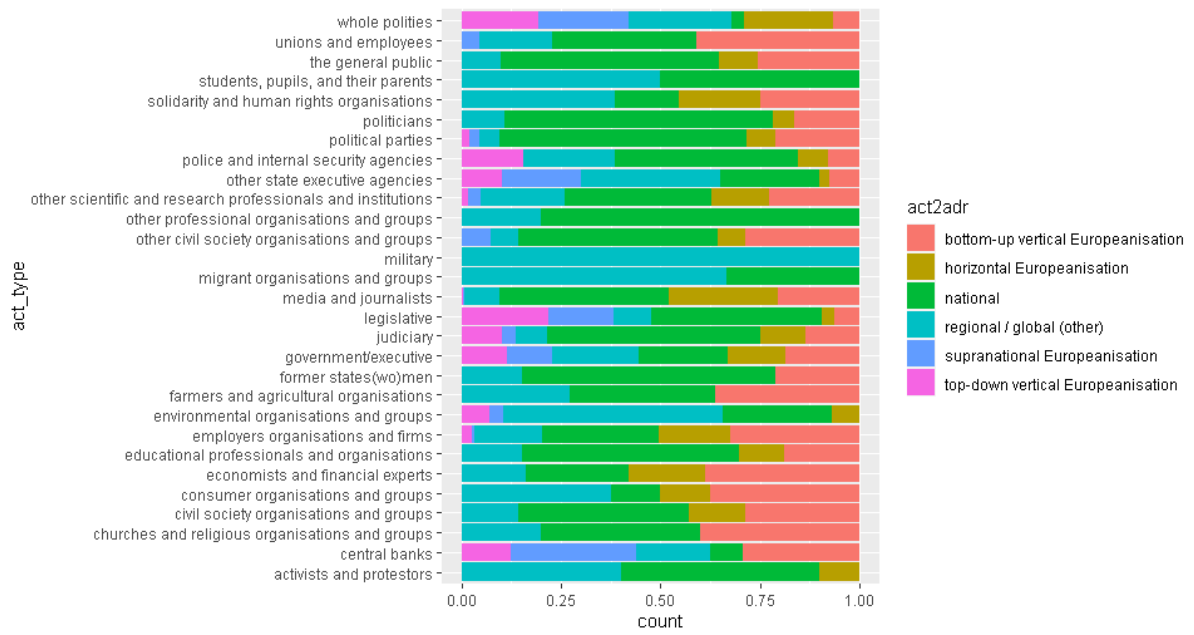
- solidarity and human rights organisations
- other civil society organisations and groups
- churches and religious organisations and groups
- central banks
- unions and employees
- legislative
- former states(women)
- educational professionals and organisations
- politicians
- other scientific and research professionals and institutions
- government/executive
- political parties
- media and journalists
- judiciary
- employers organisations and firms
- civil society organisations and groups
- economists and financial experts
- environmental organisations and groups
- the general public
- whole polities
- other state executive agencies
- migrant organisations and groups
- farmers and agricultural organisations
- activists and protestors

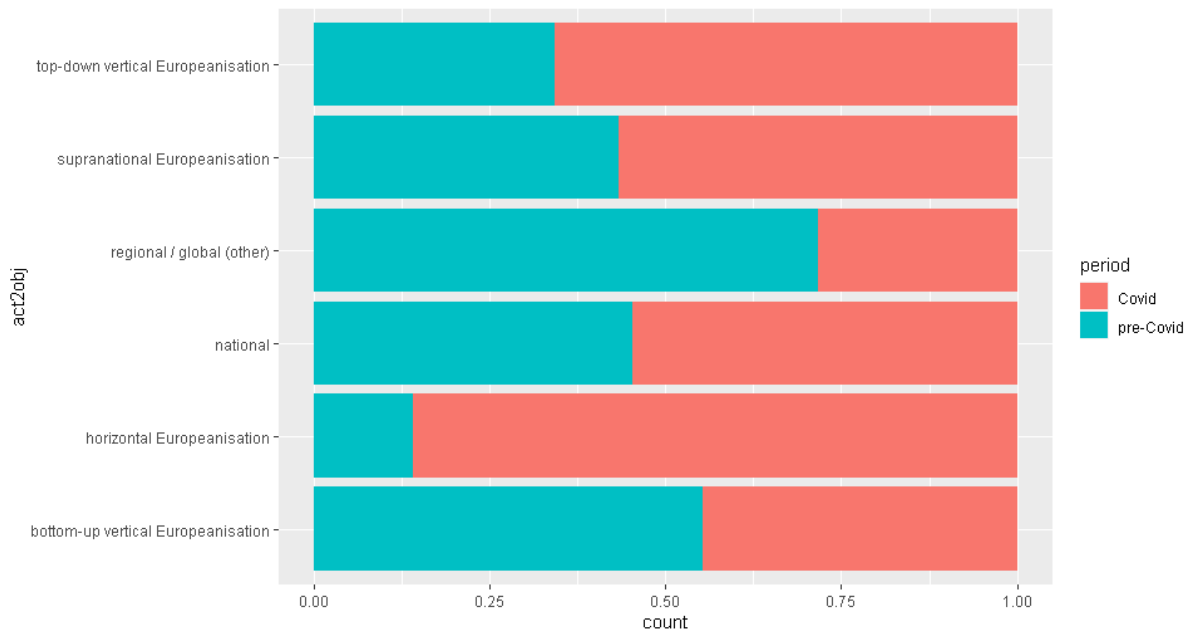
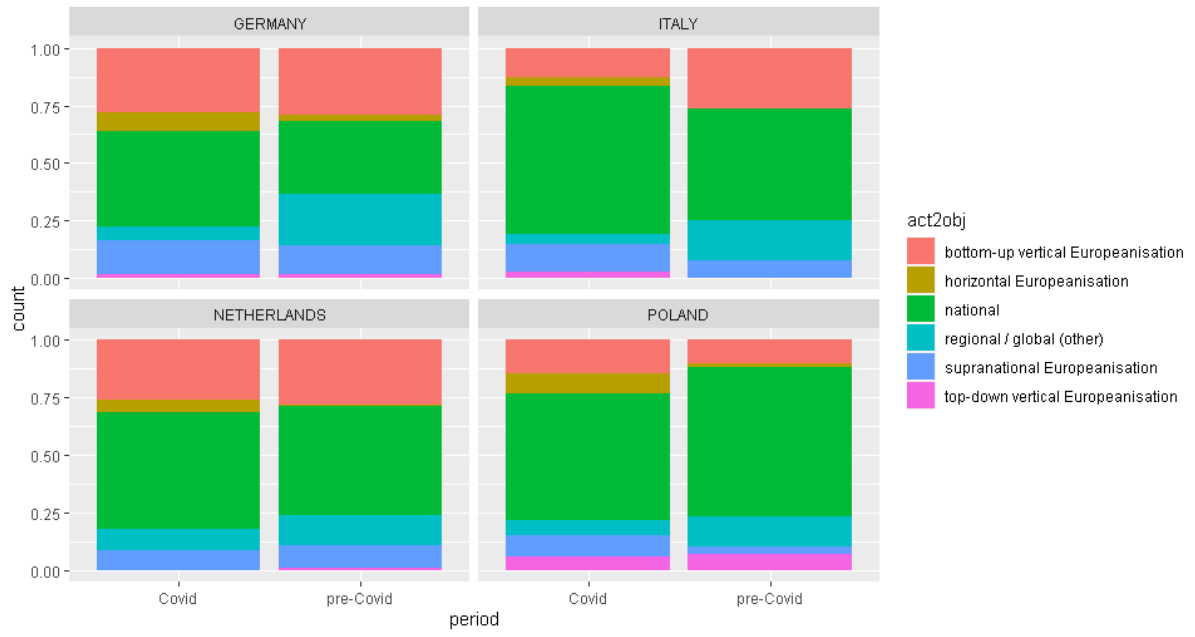


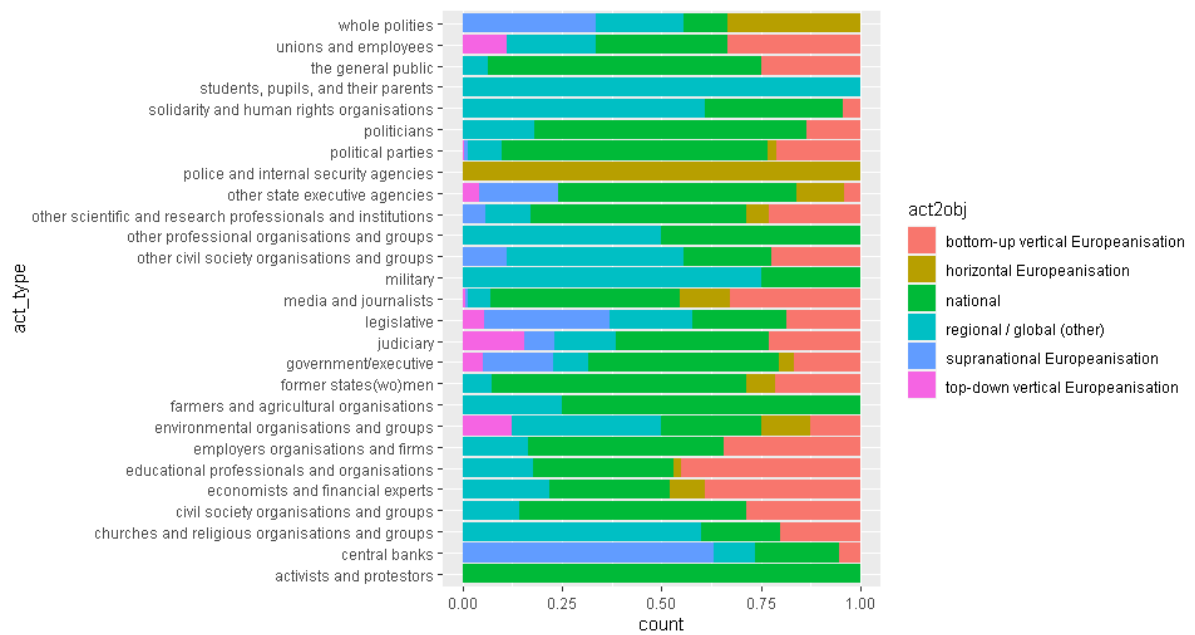
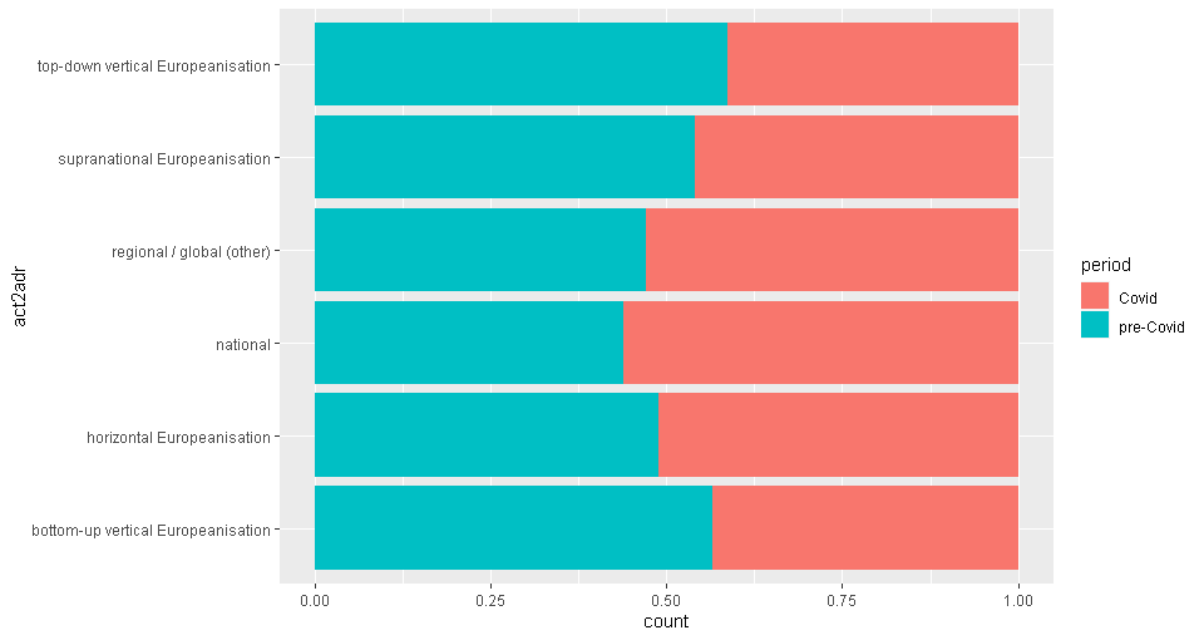
- military
- civil society organisations and groups
- churches and religious organisations and groups
- whole polities
- employers organisations and firms
- government/executive
- other scientific and research professionals and institutions
- other state executive agencies
- politicians
- central banks
- economists and financial experts
- former states(women)
- legislative
- activists and protestors
- the general public
- media and journalists
- educational professionals and organisations
- political parties
- unions and employees
- solidarity and human rights organisations
- other civil society organisations and groups
- judiciary
- students, pupils, and their parents
- police and internal security agencies
- other professional organisations and groups
- migrant organisations and groups
- farmers and agricultural organisations
- environmental organisations and groups
- consumer organisations and groups

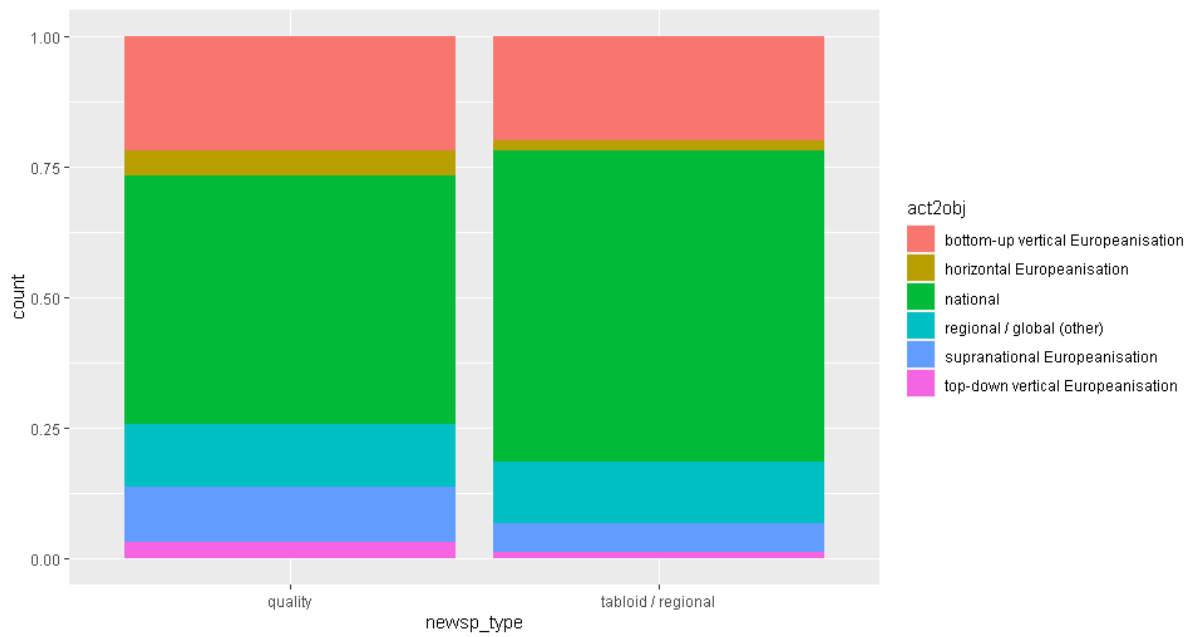
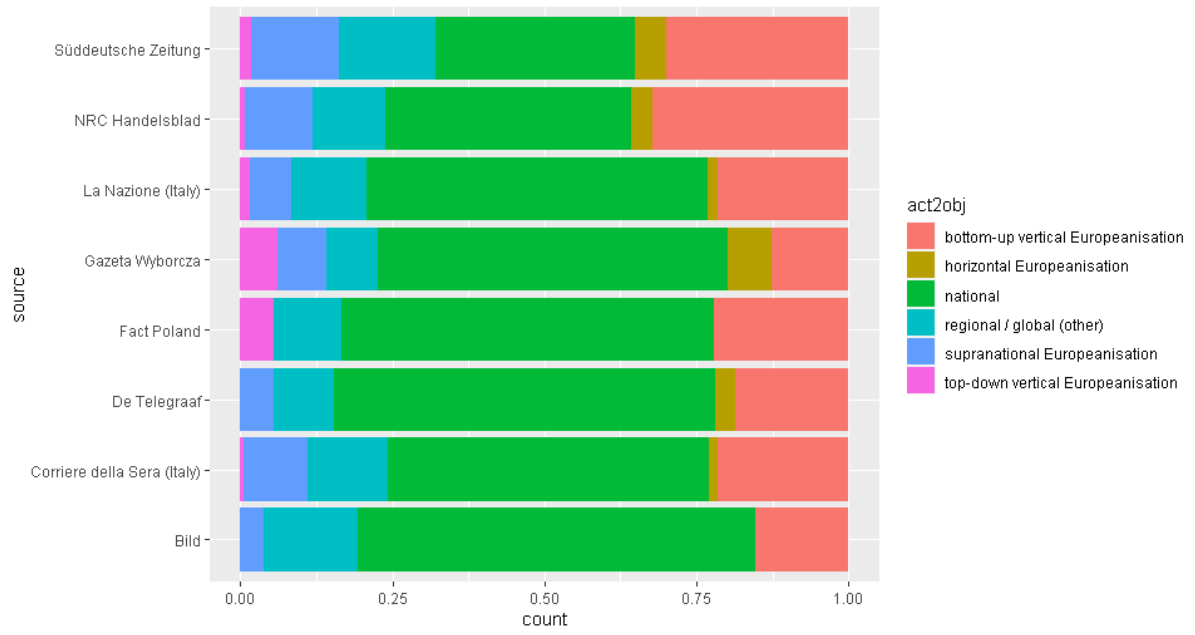


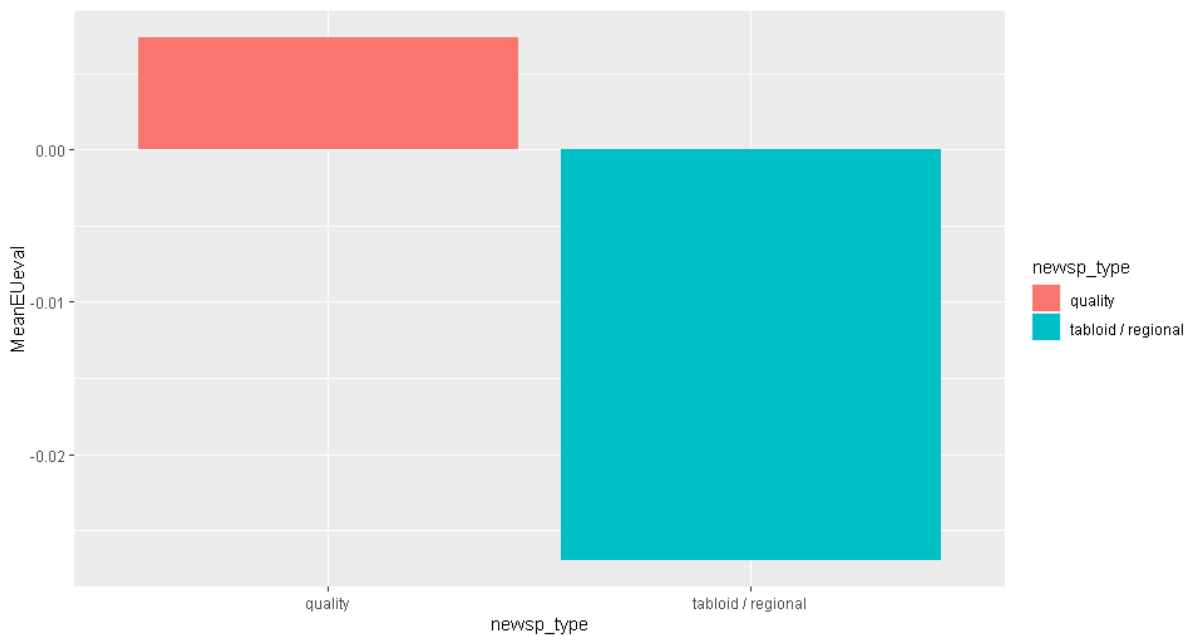
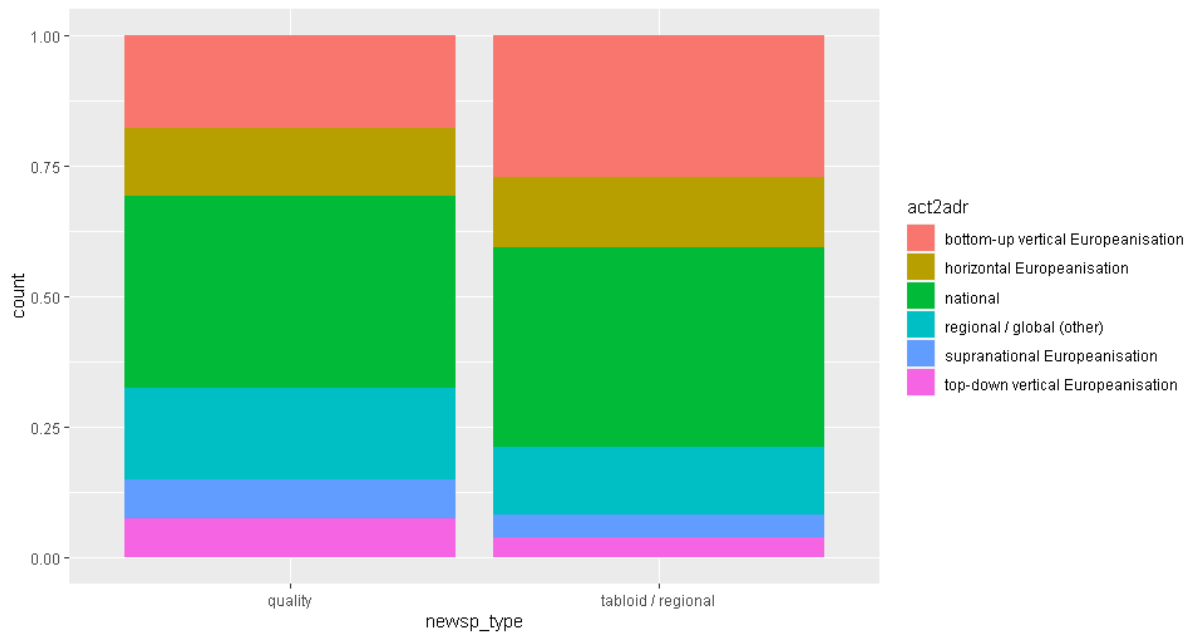


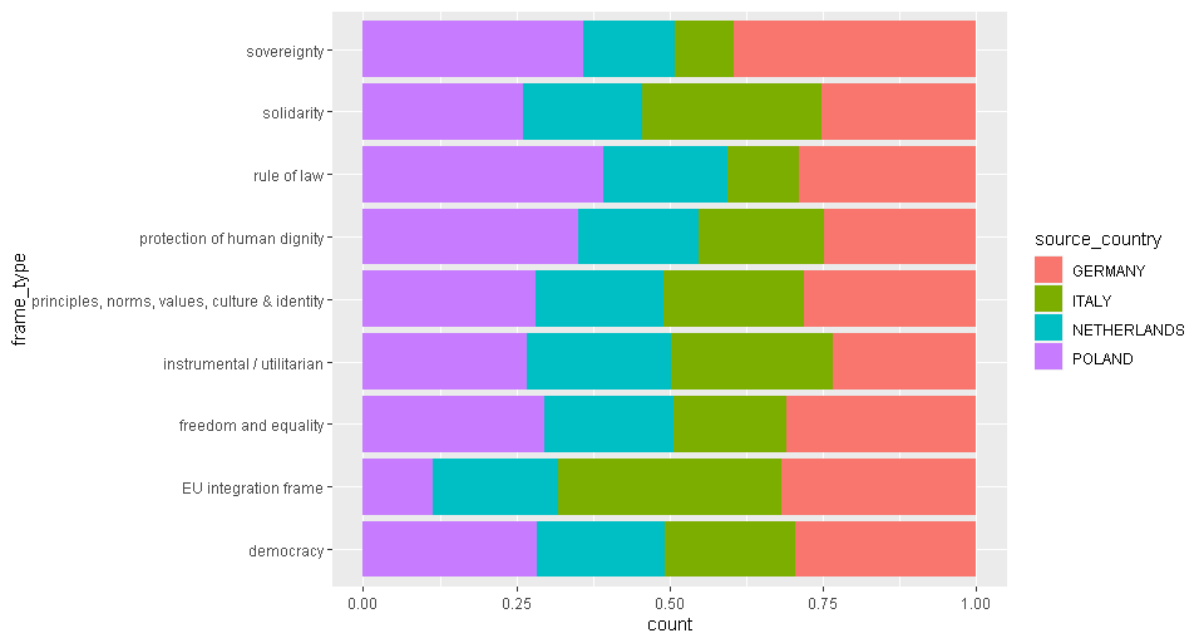
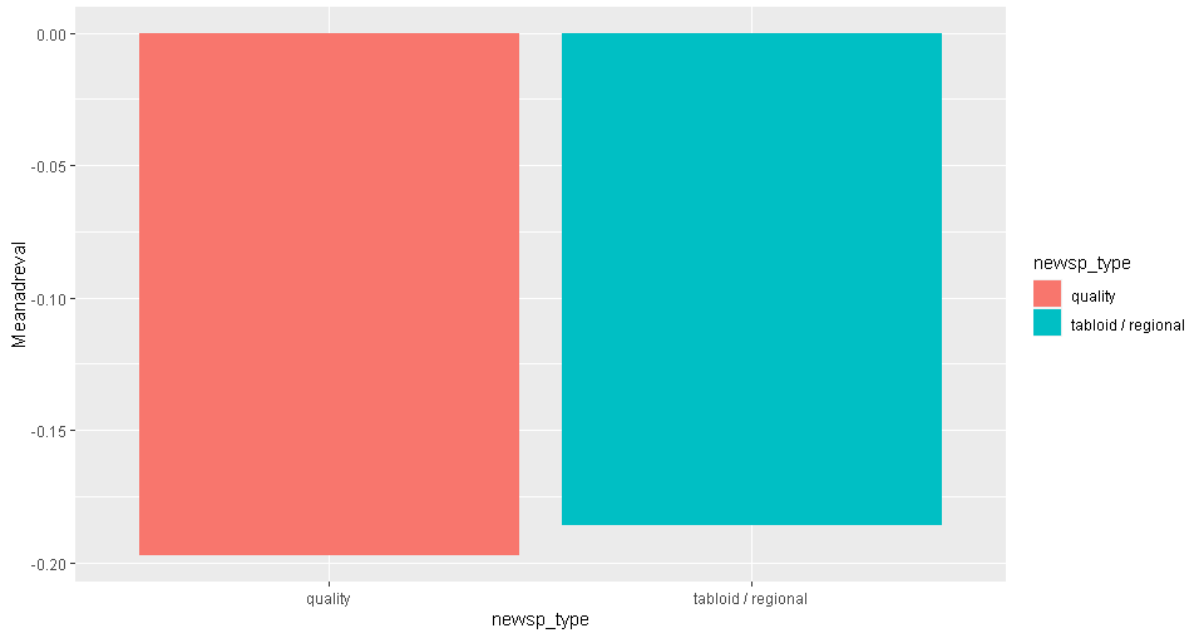


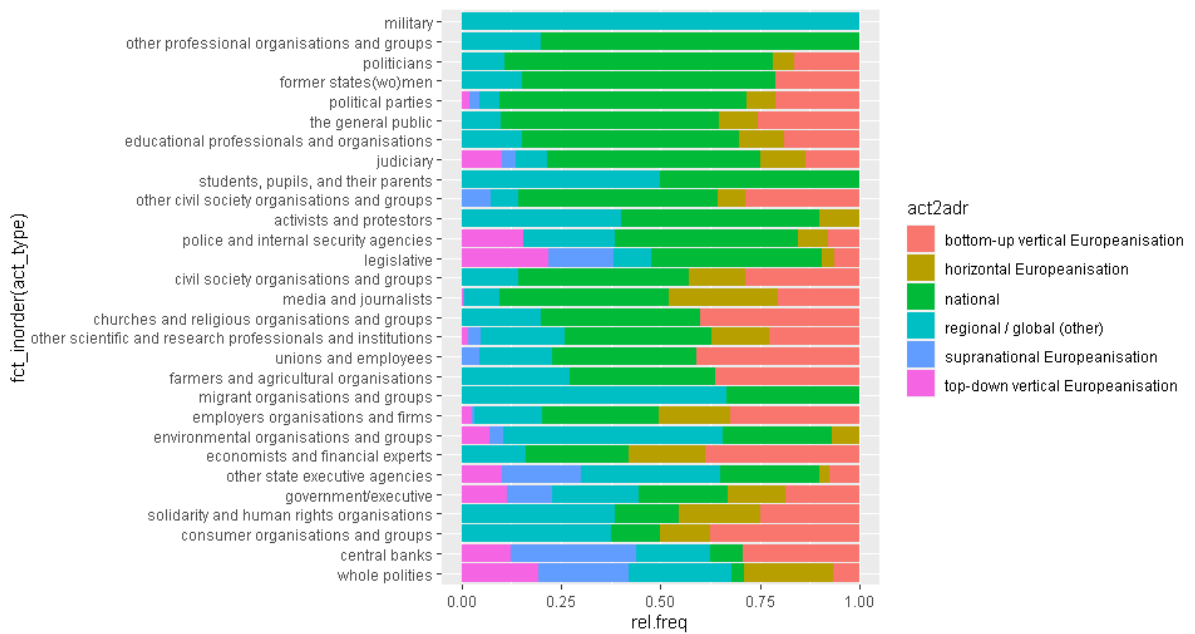
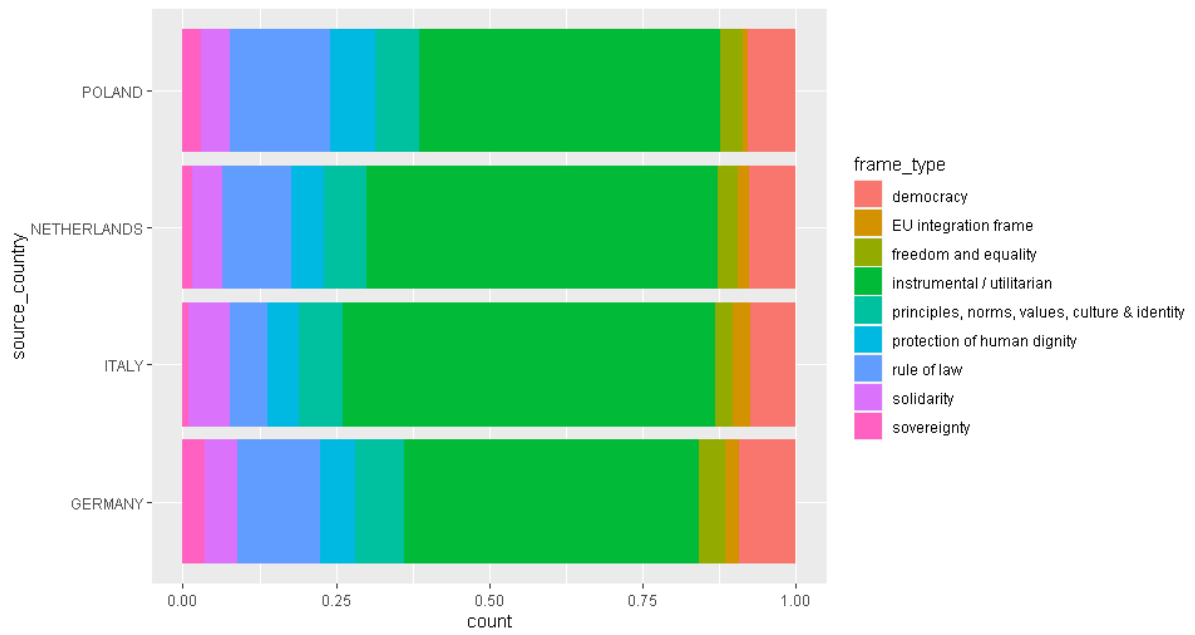


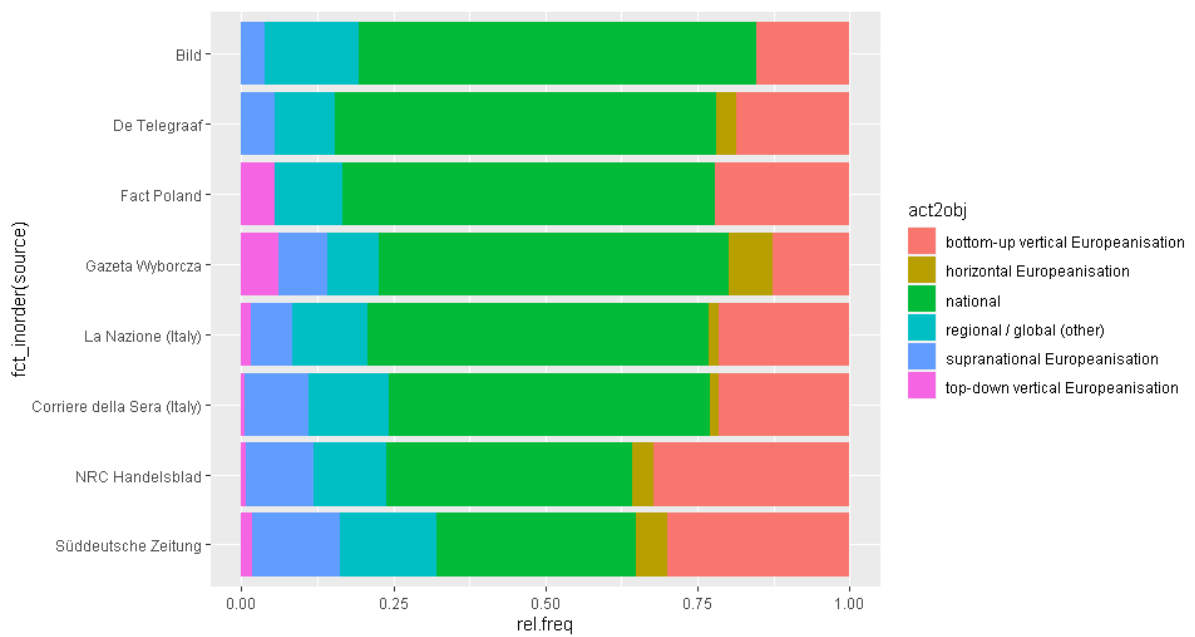
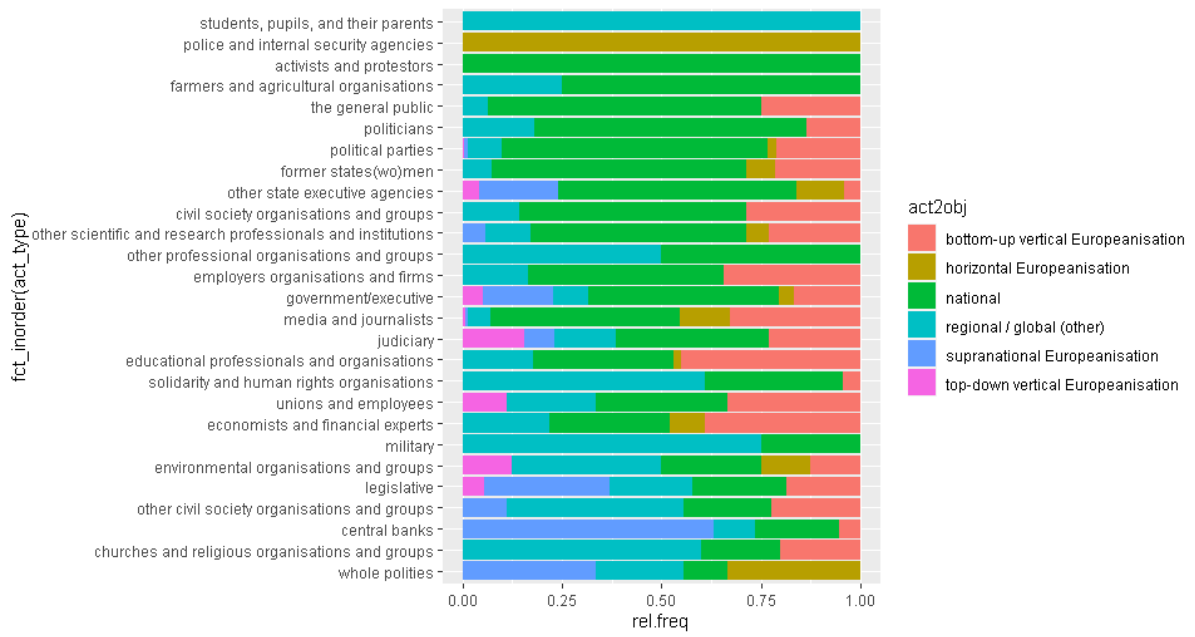


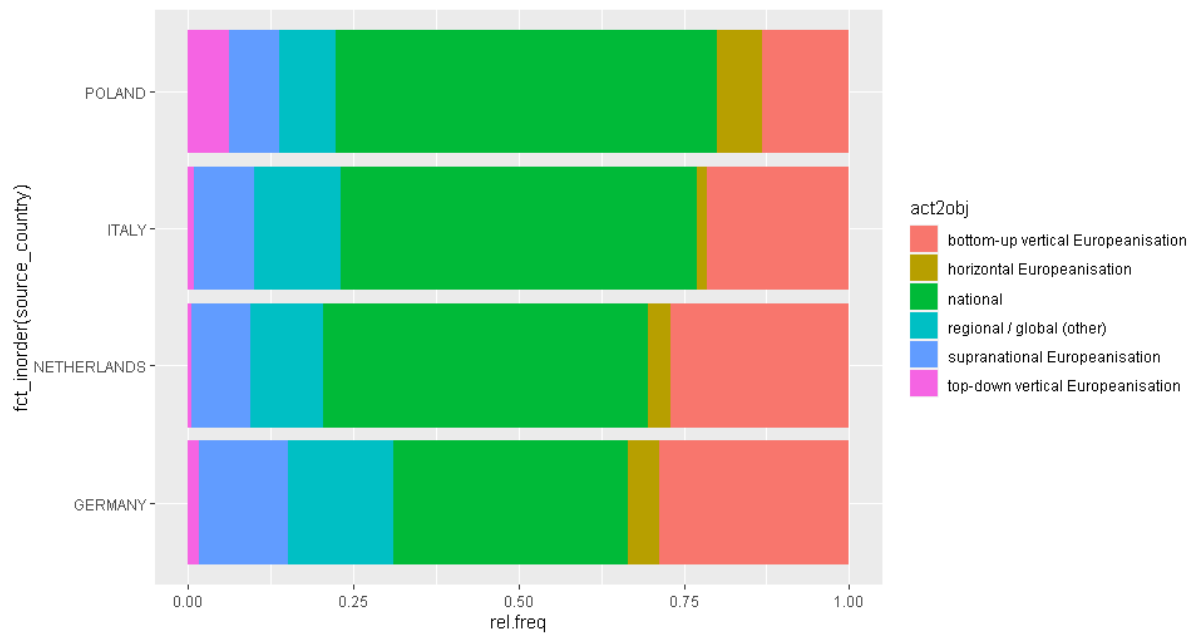
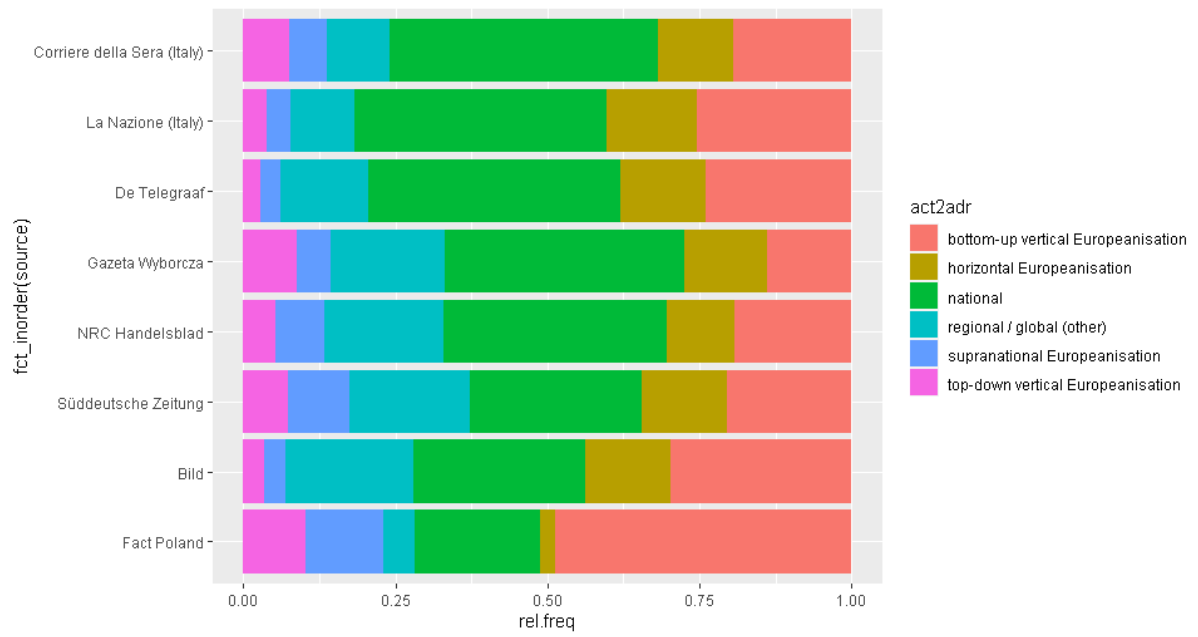


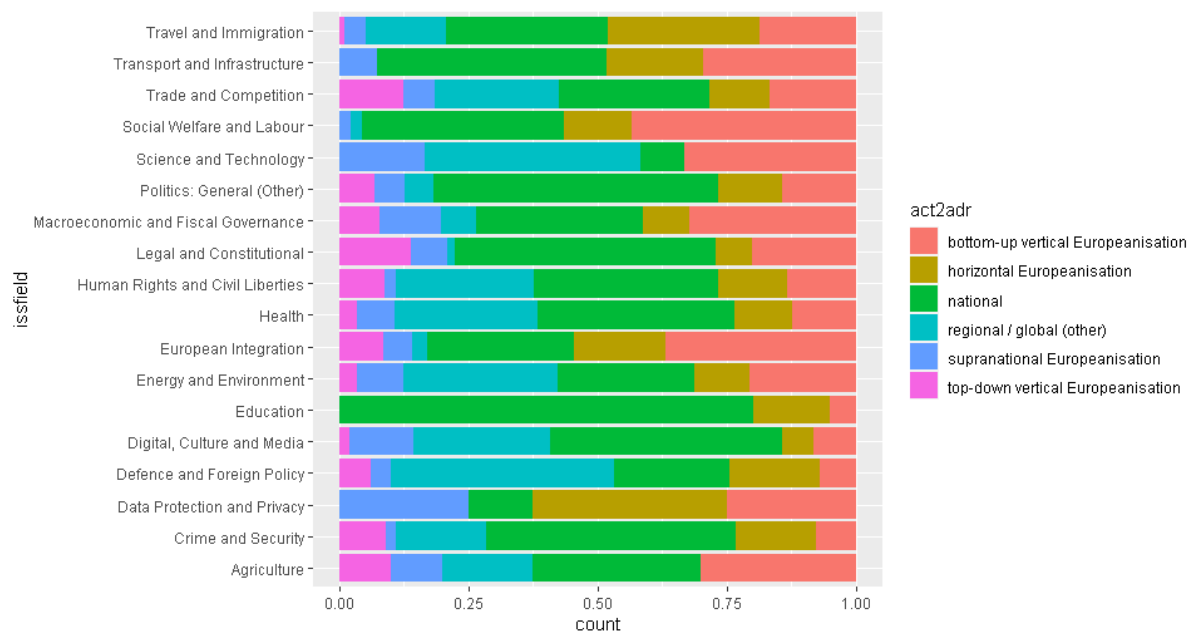
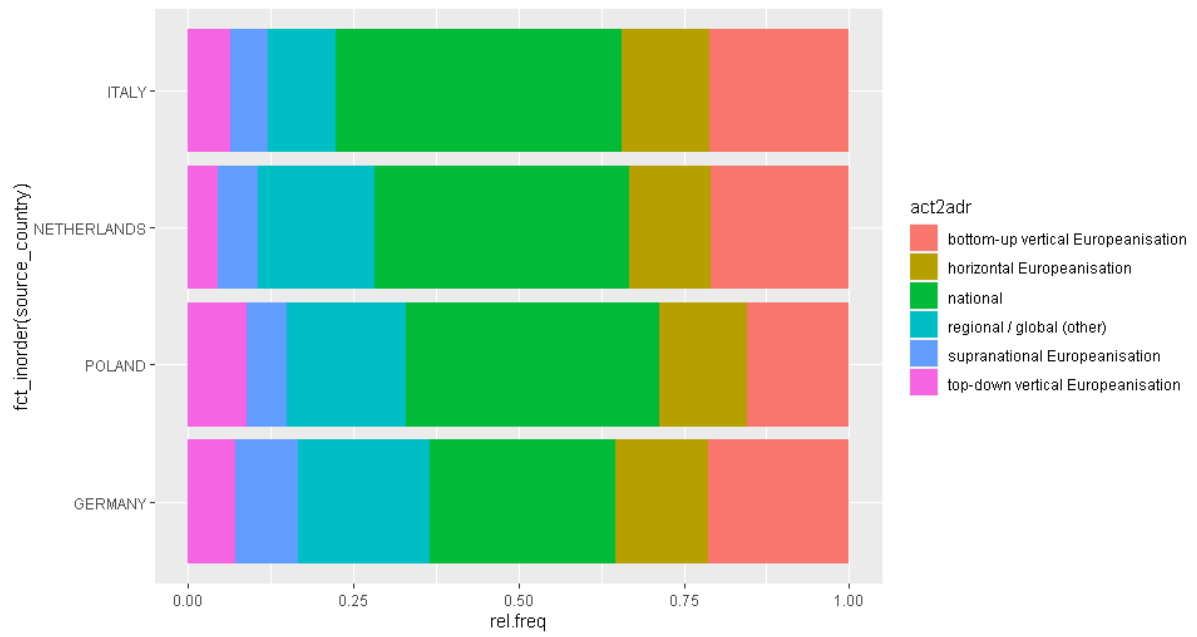


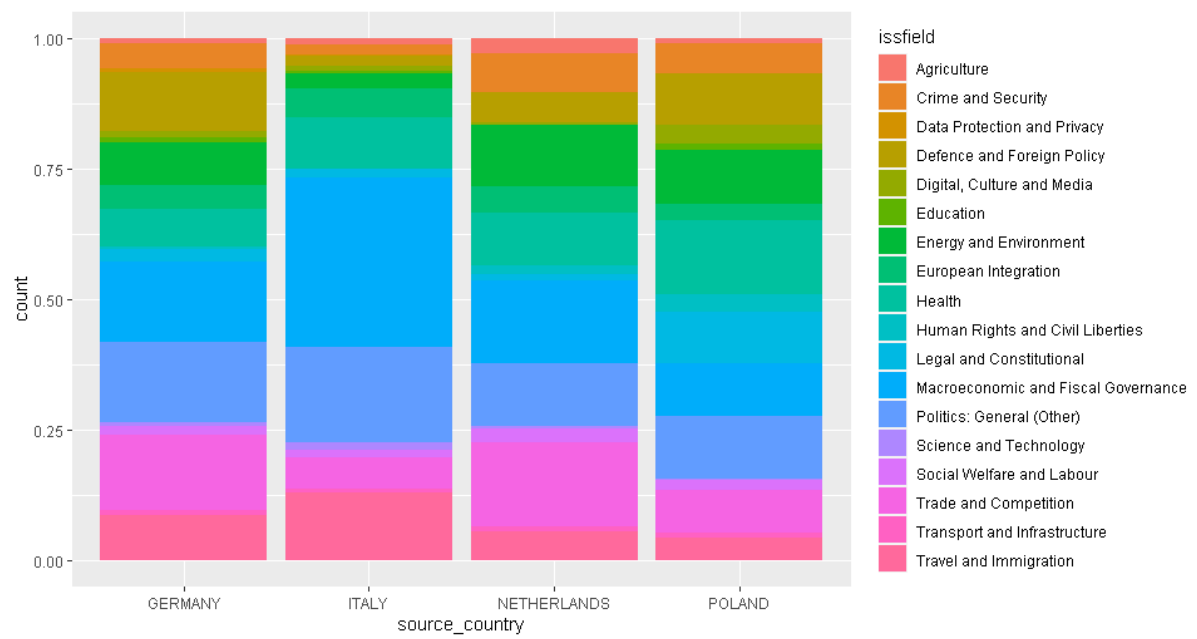
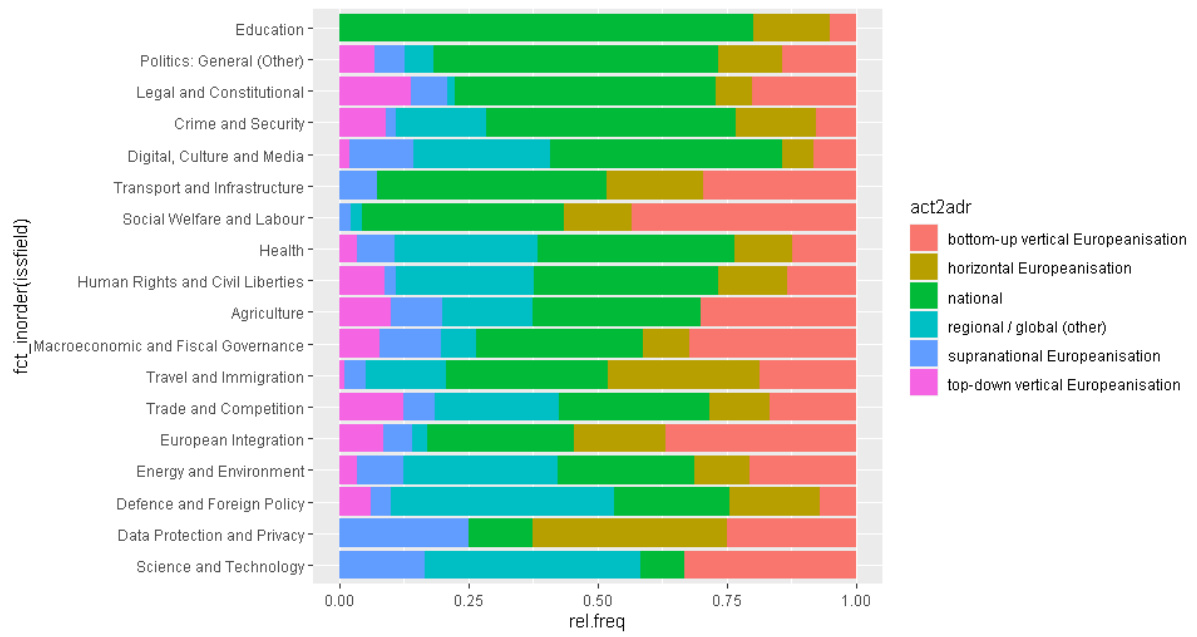


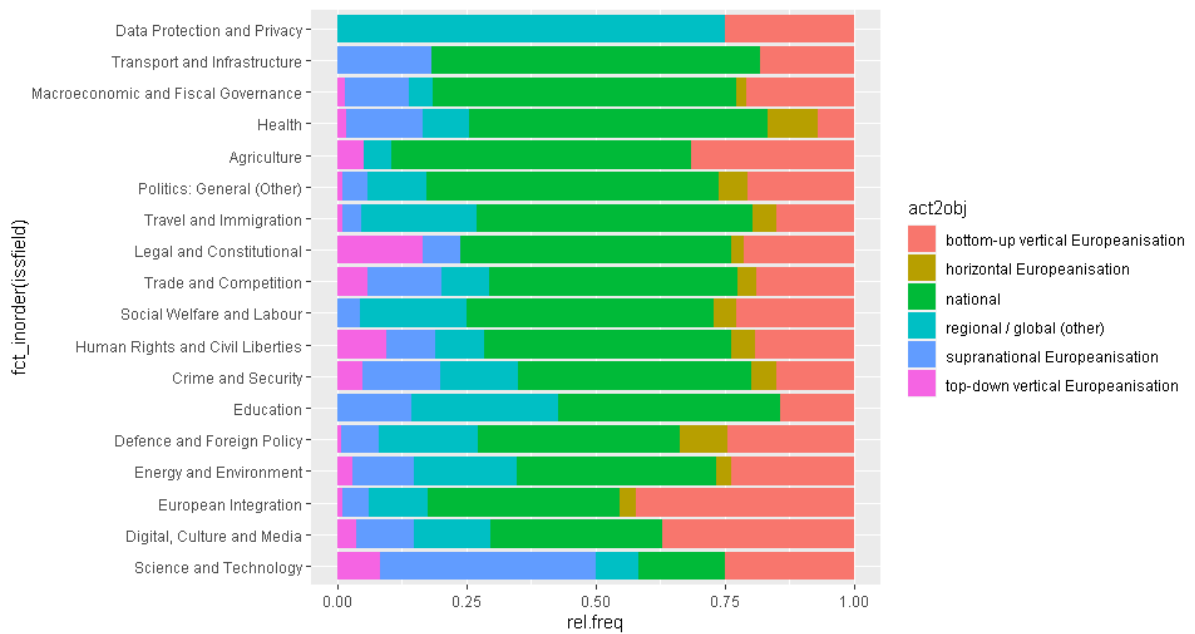
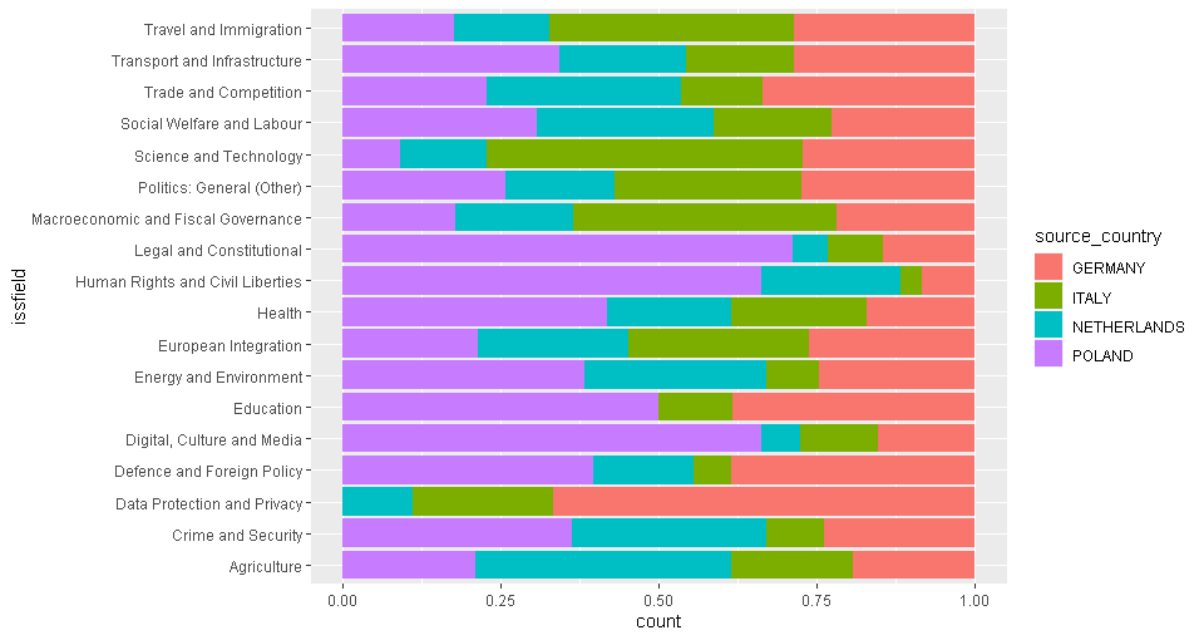


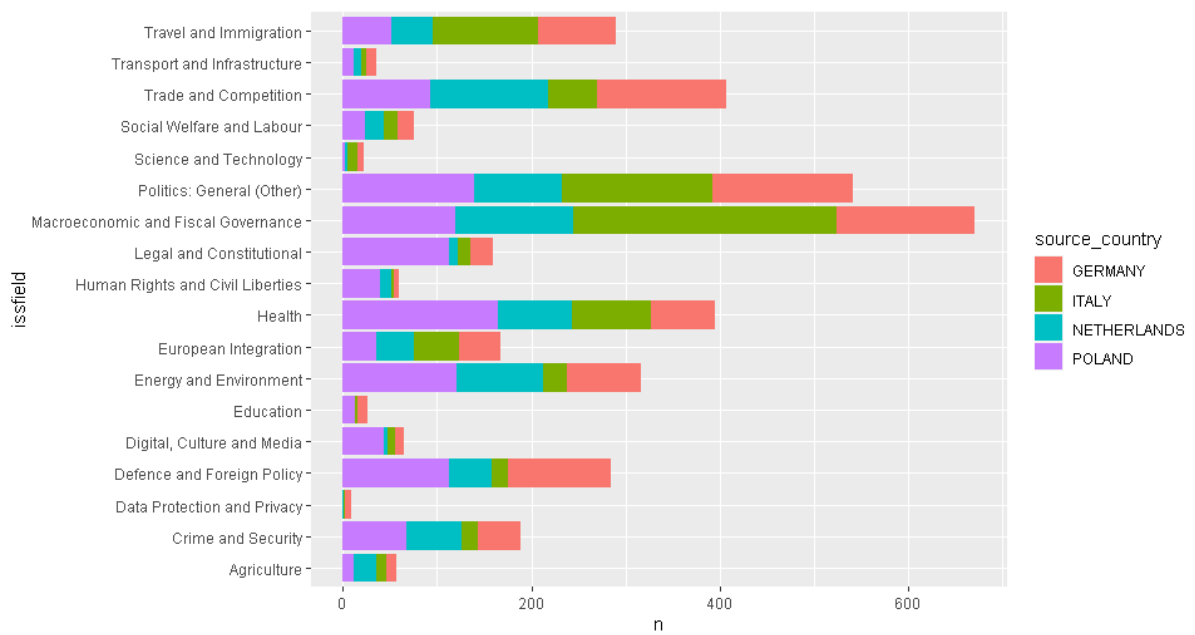
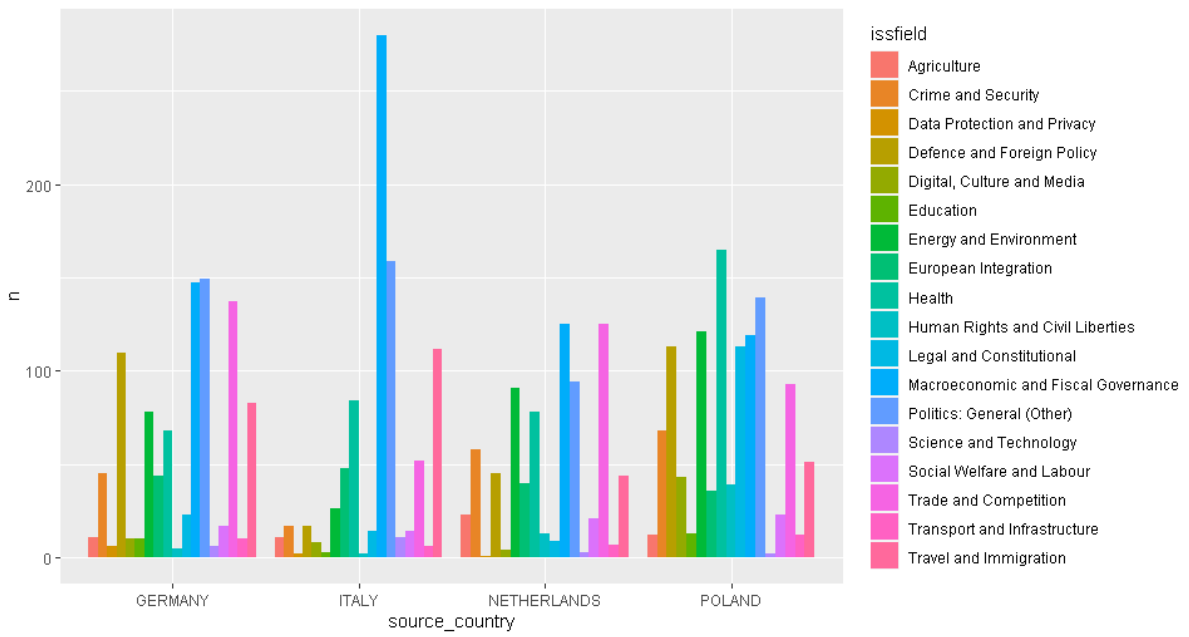


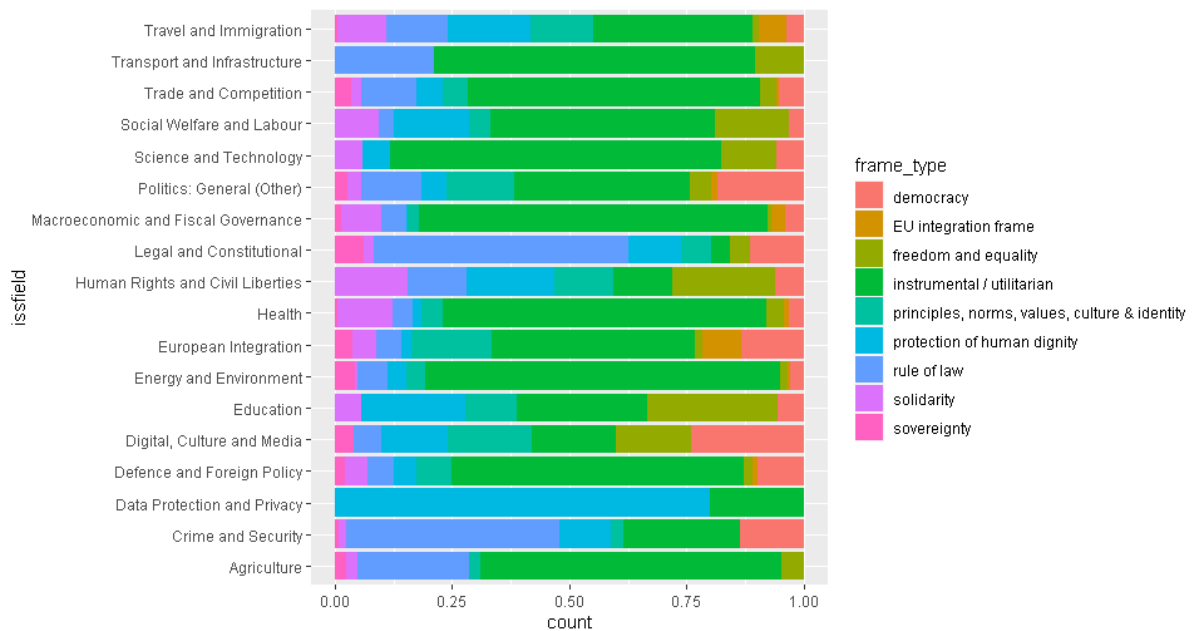
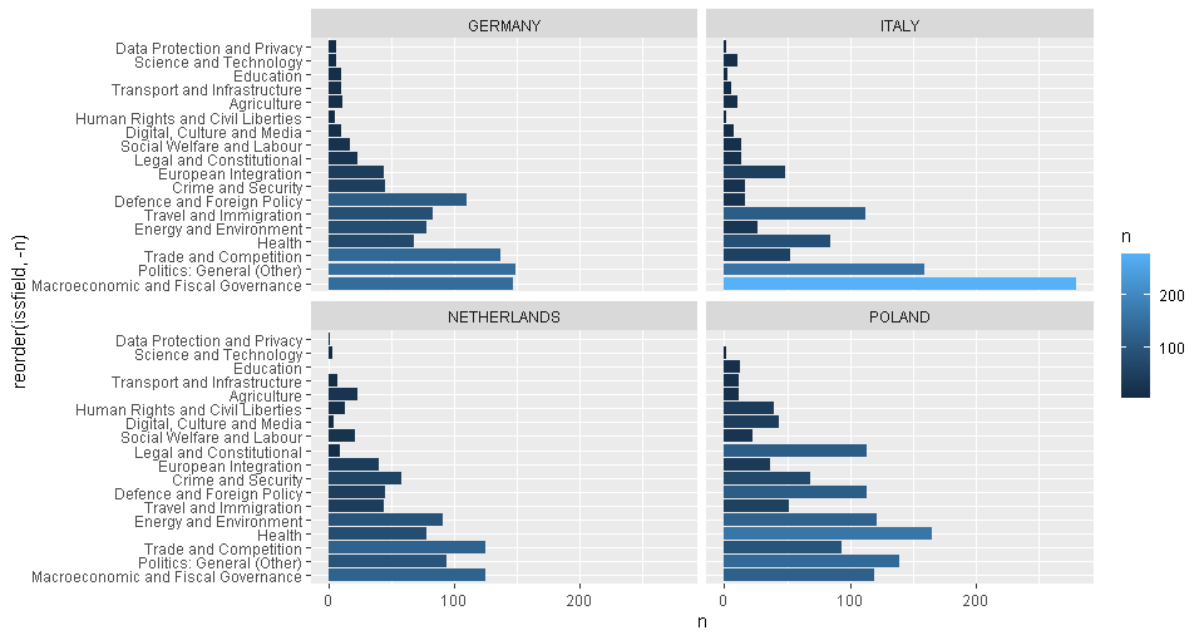


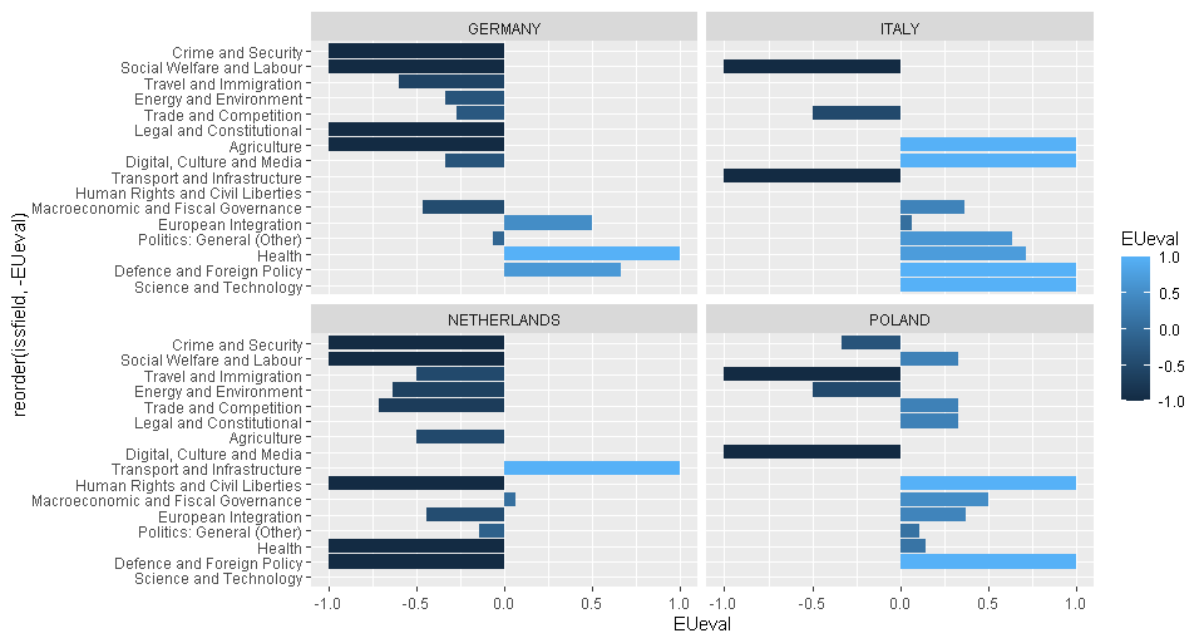
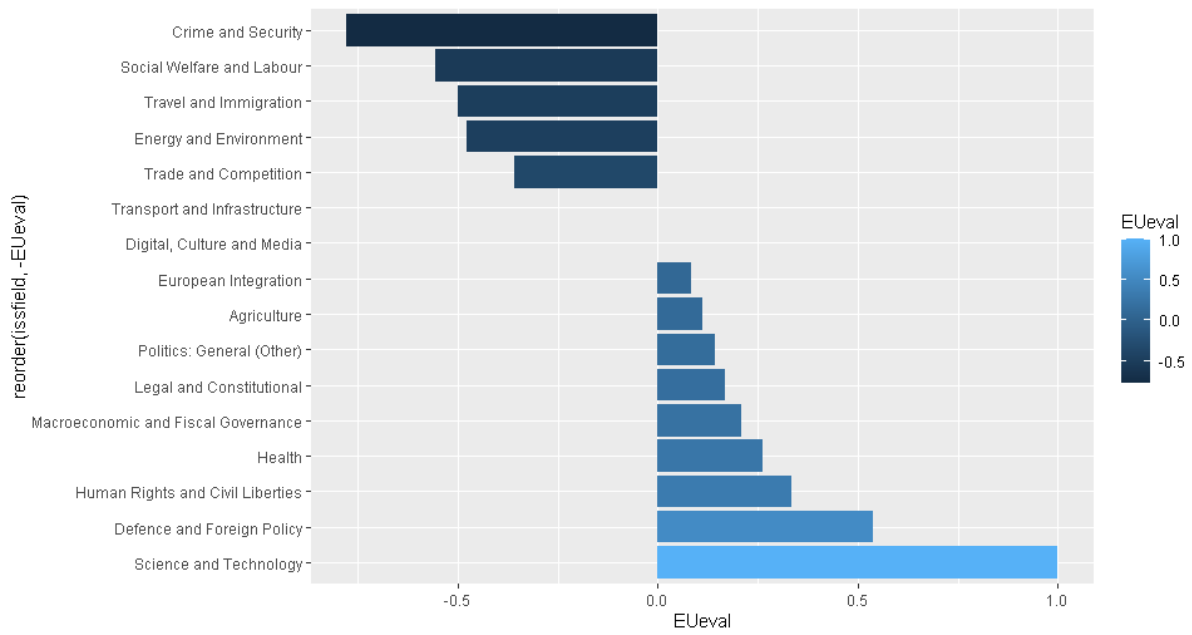


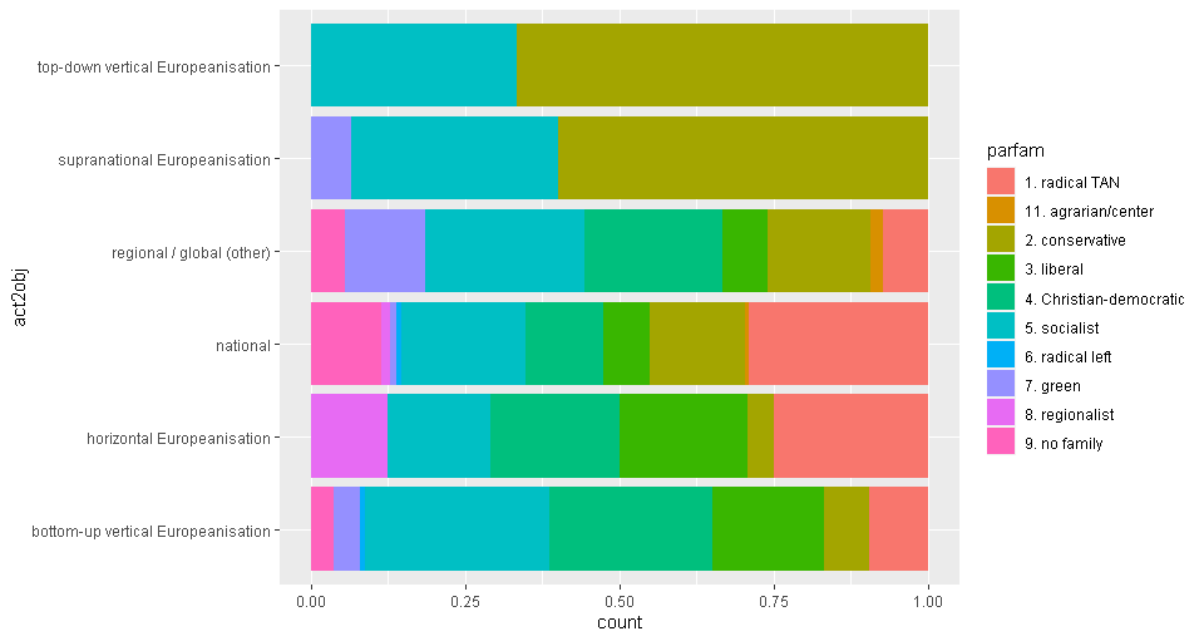
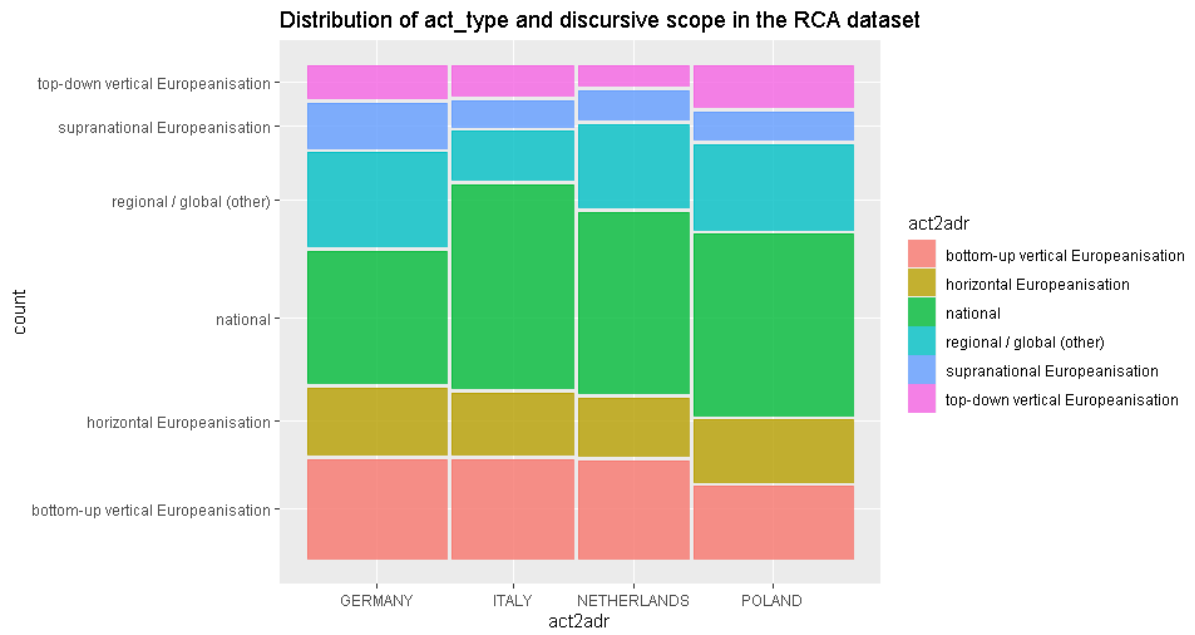


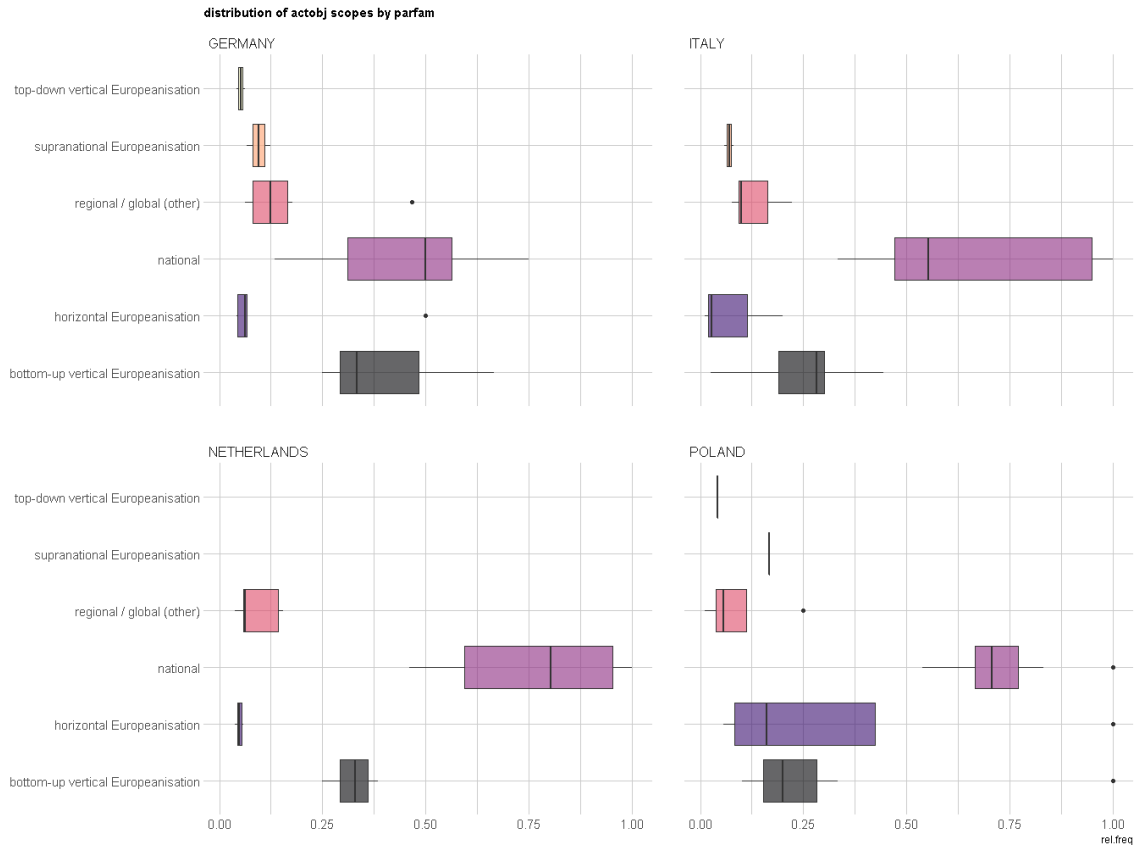


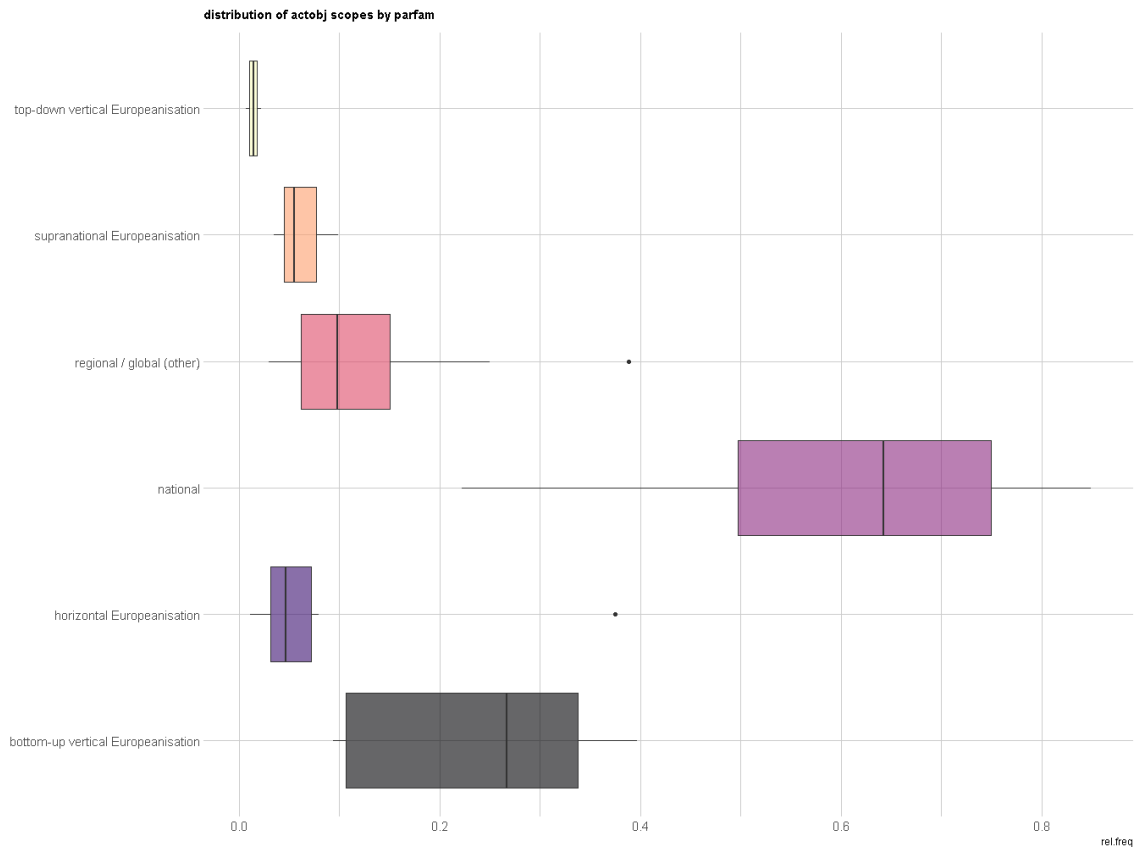
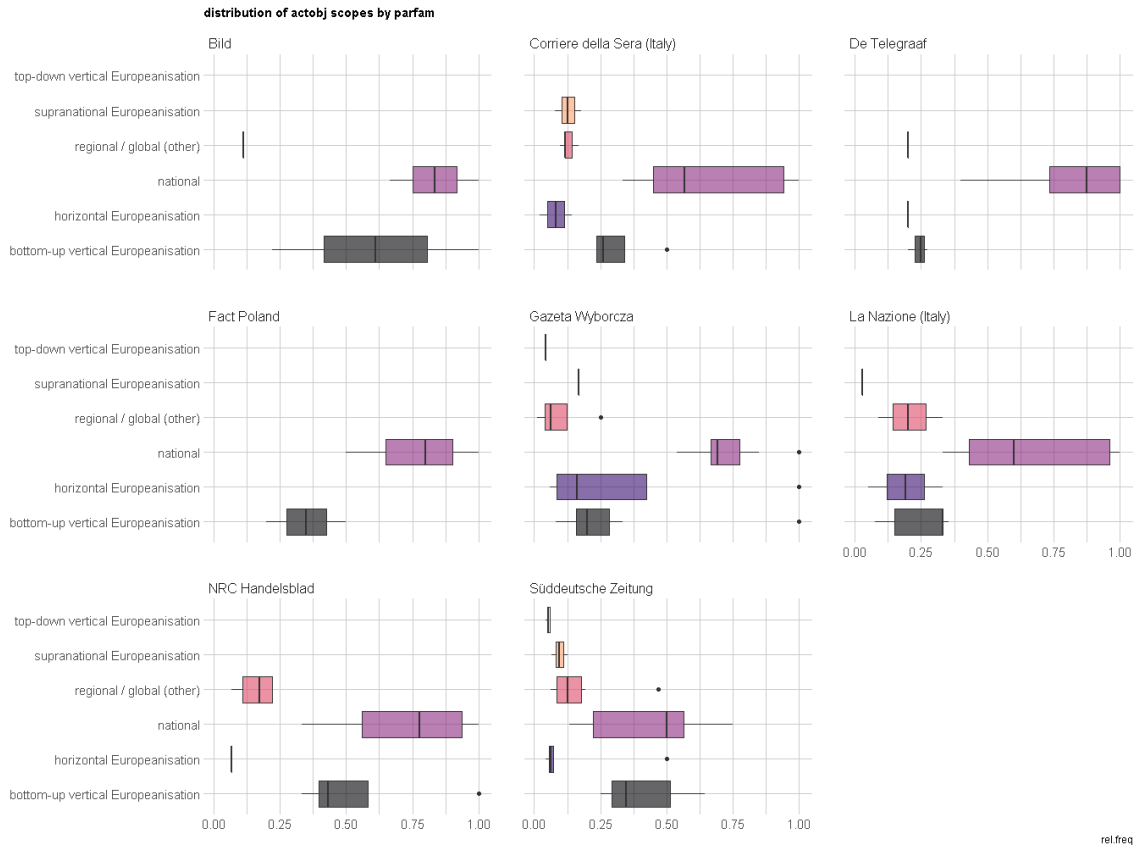


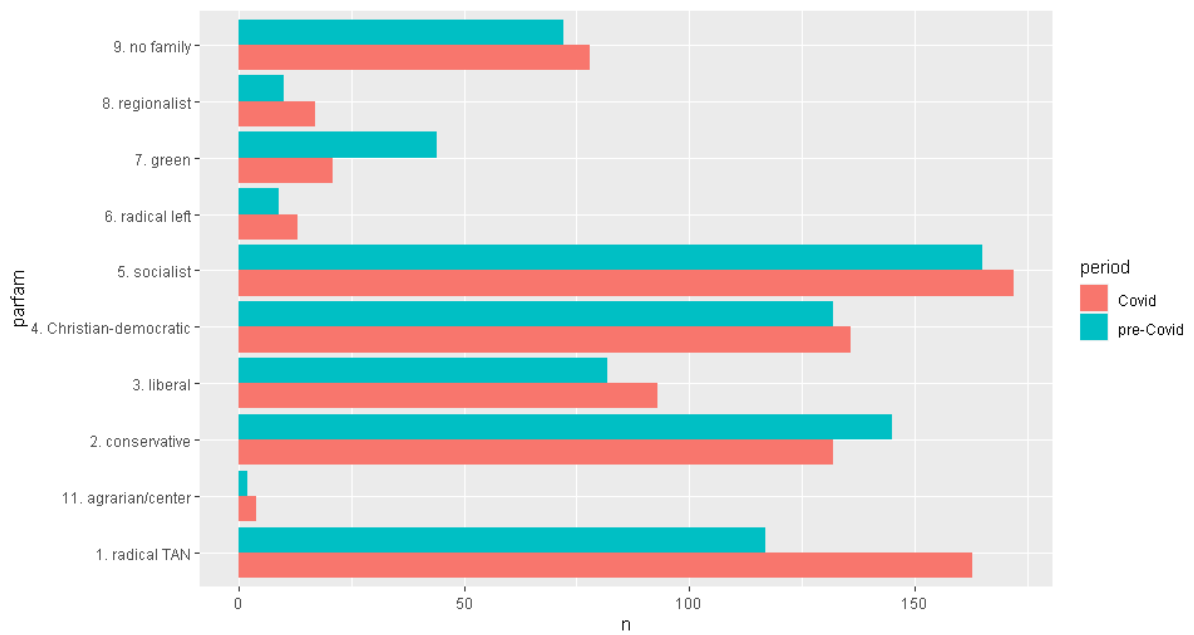
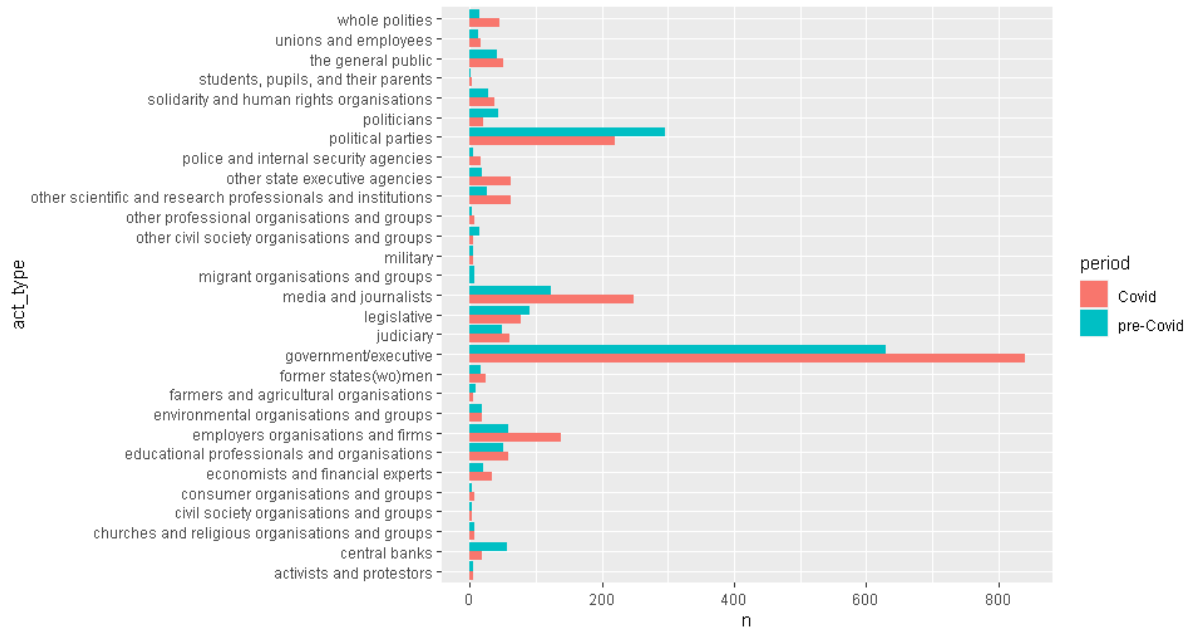


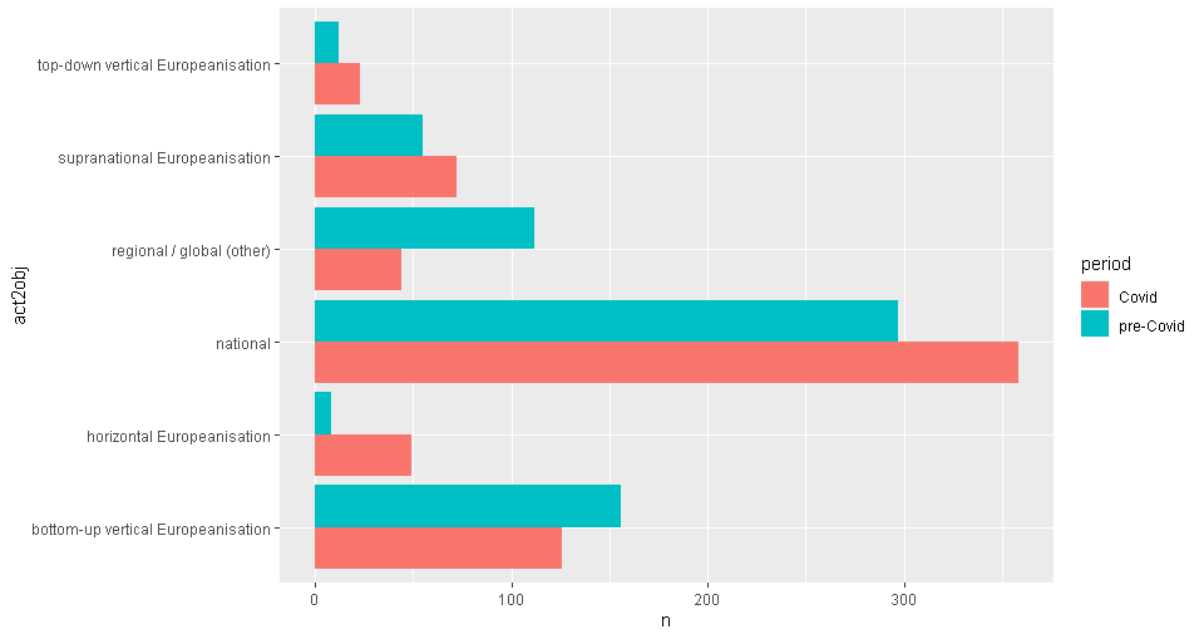
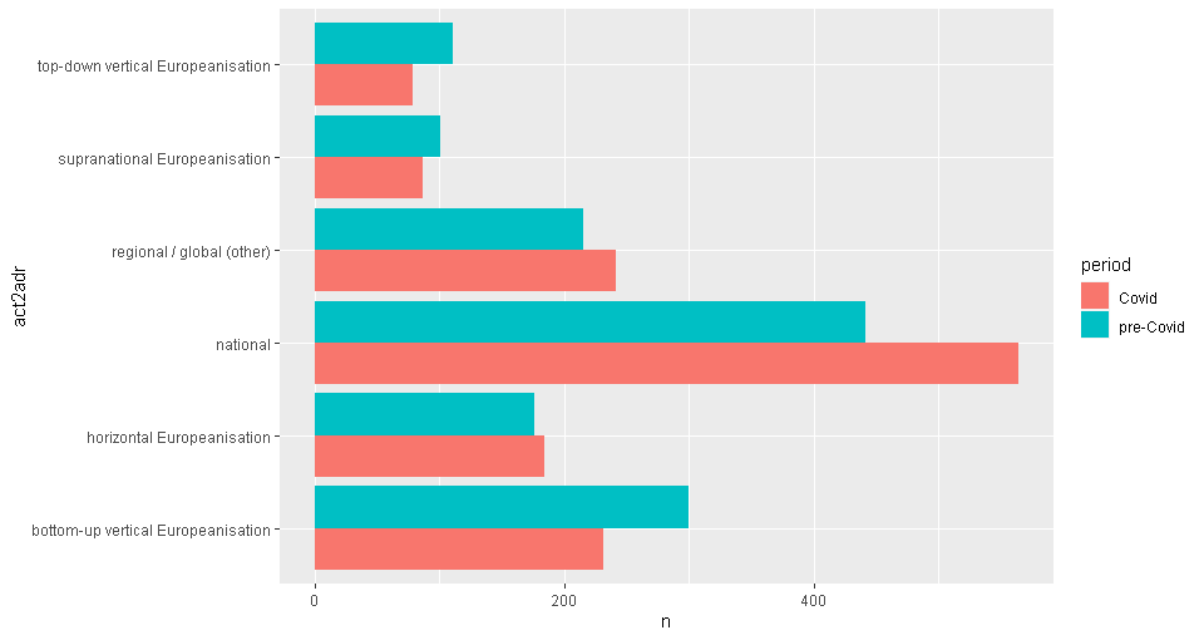


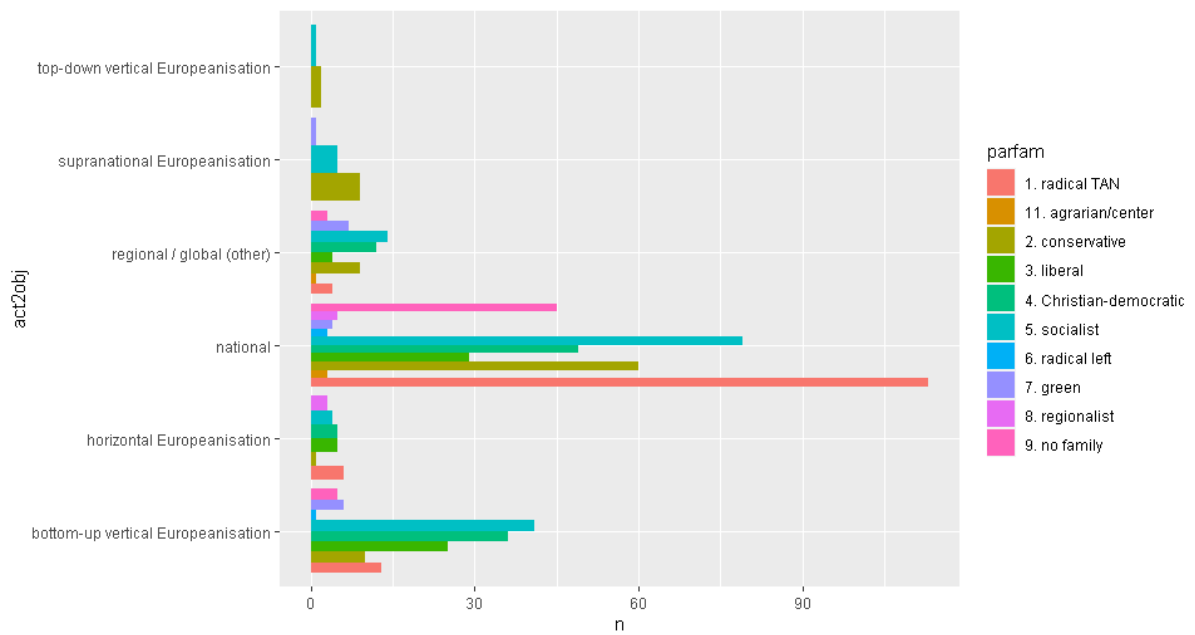
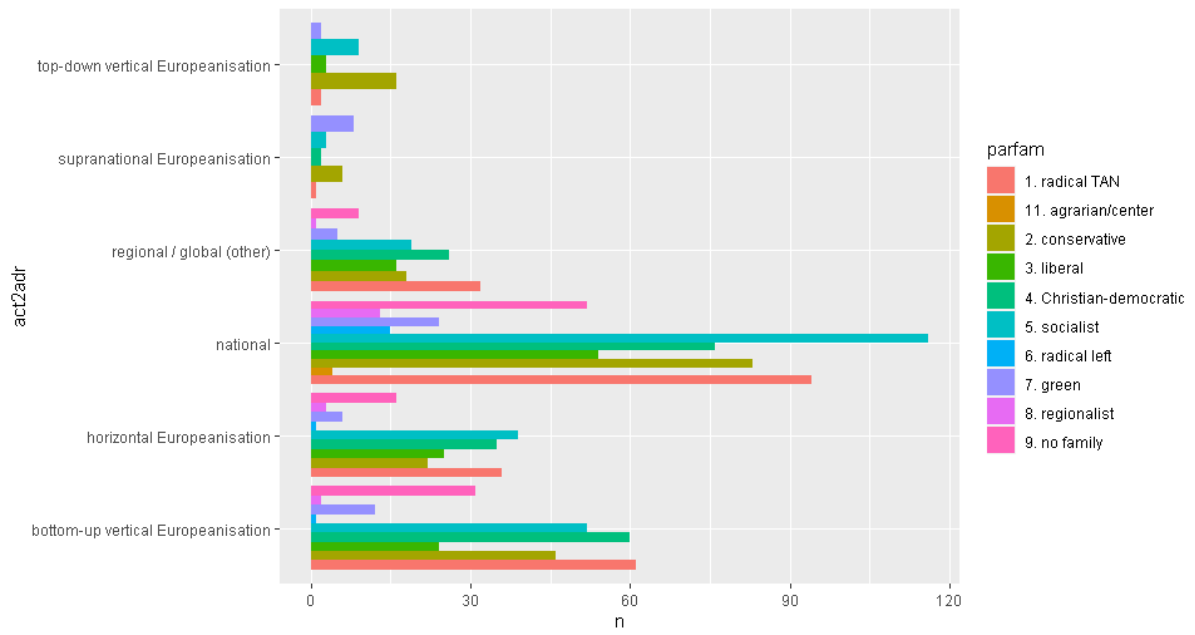


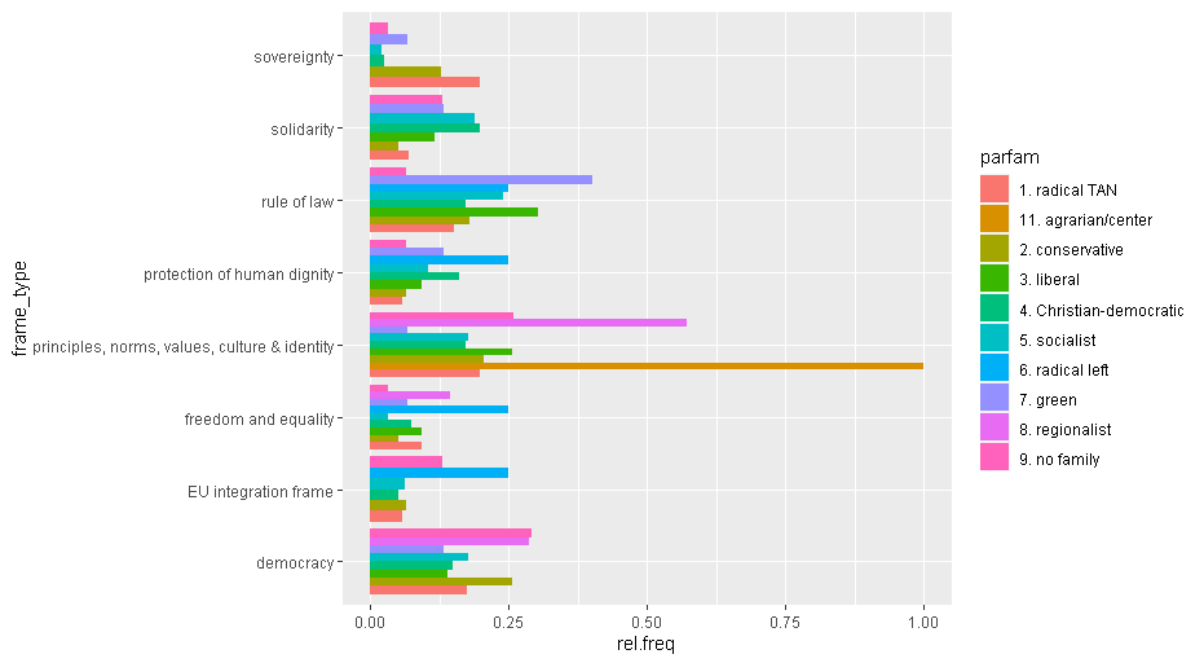
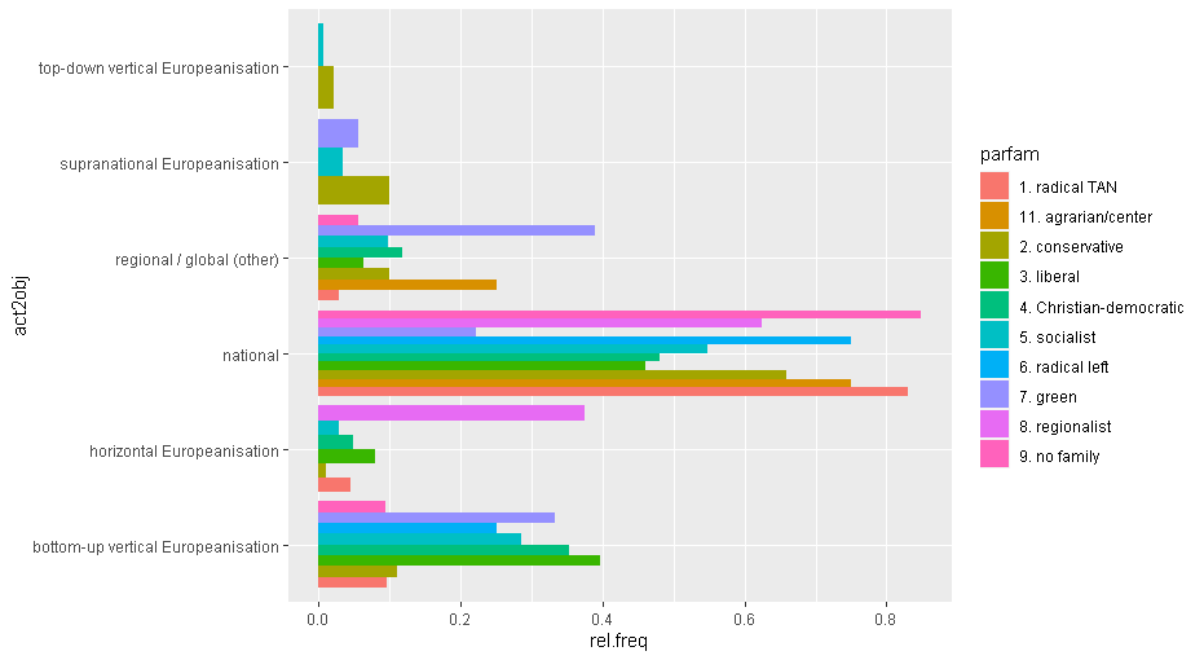


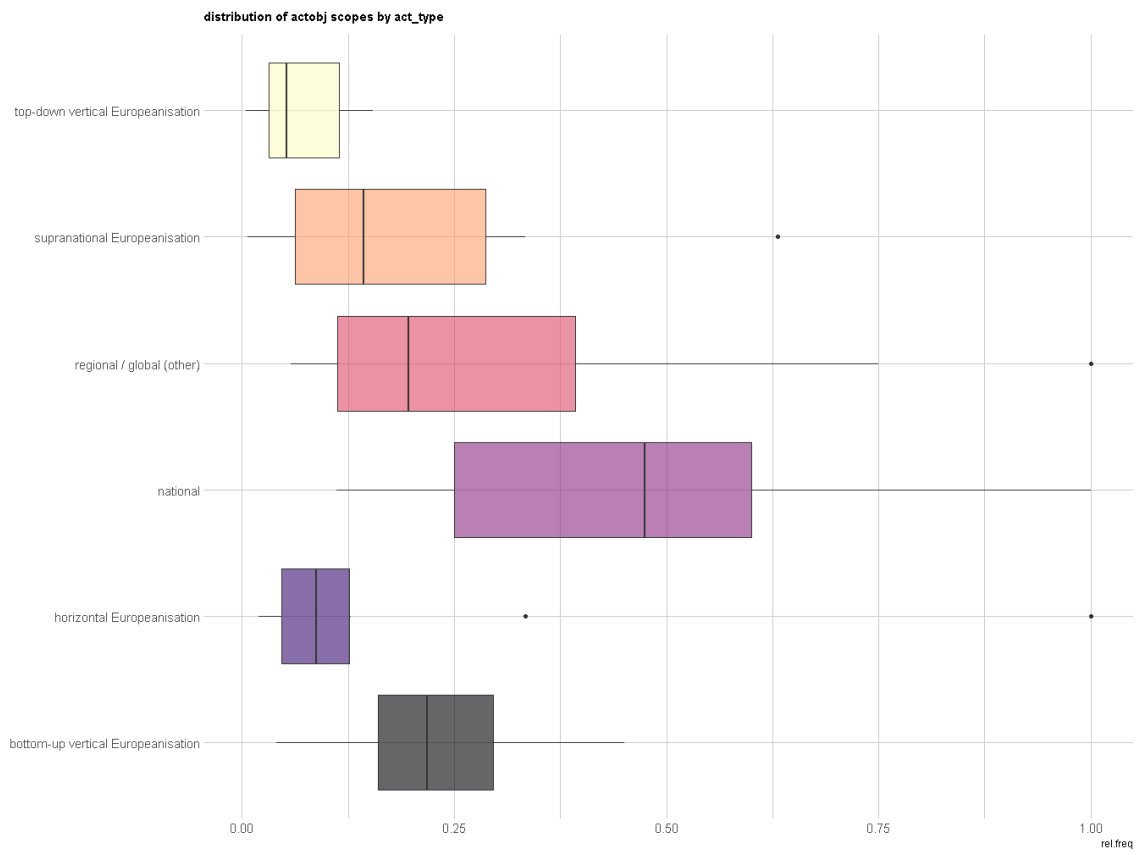
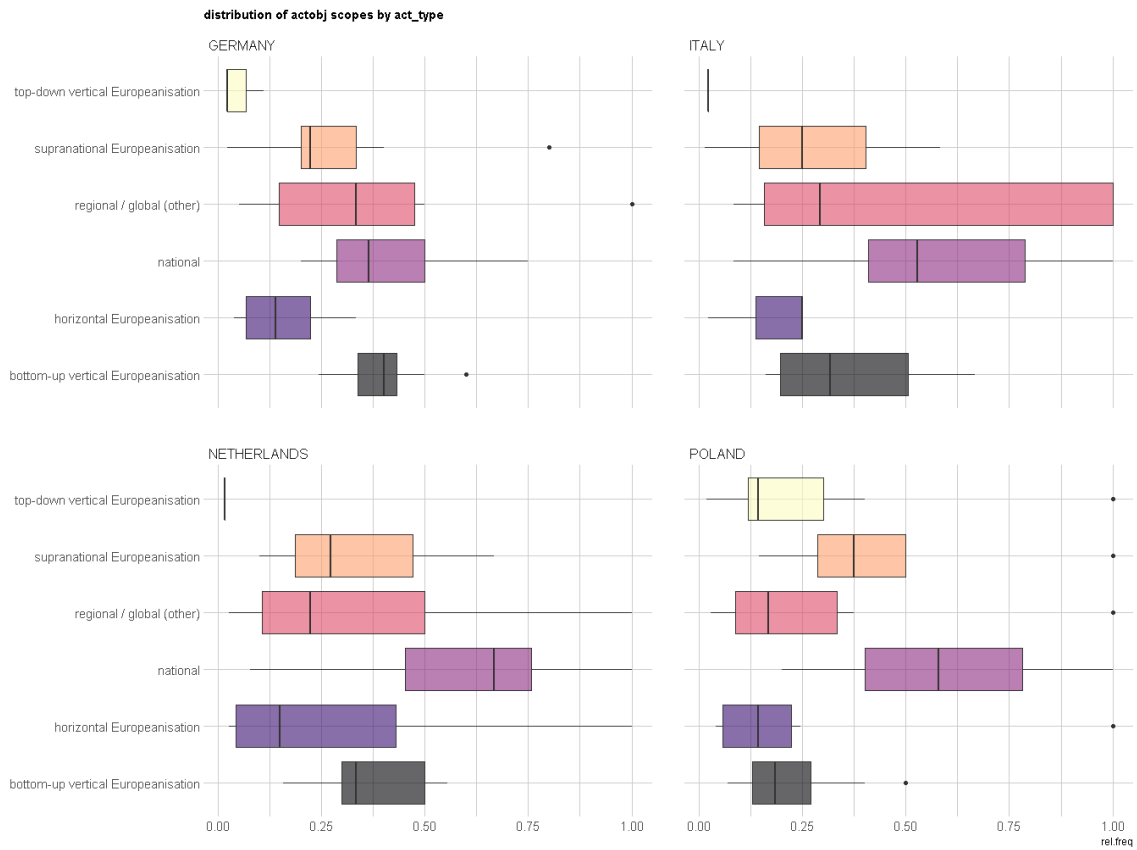


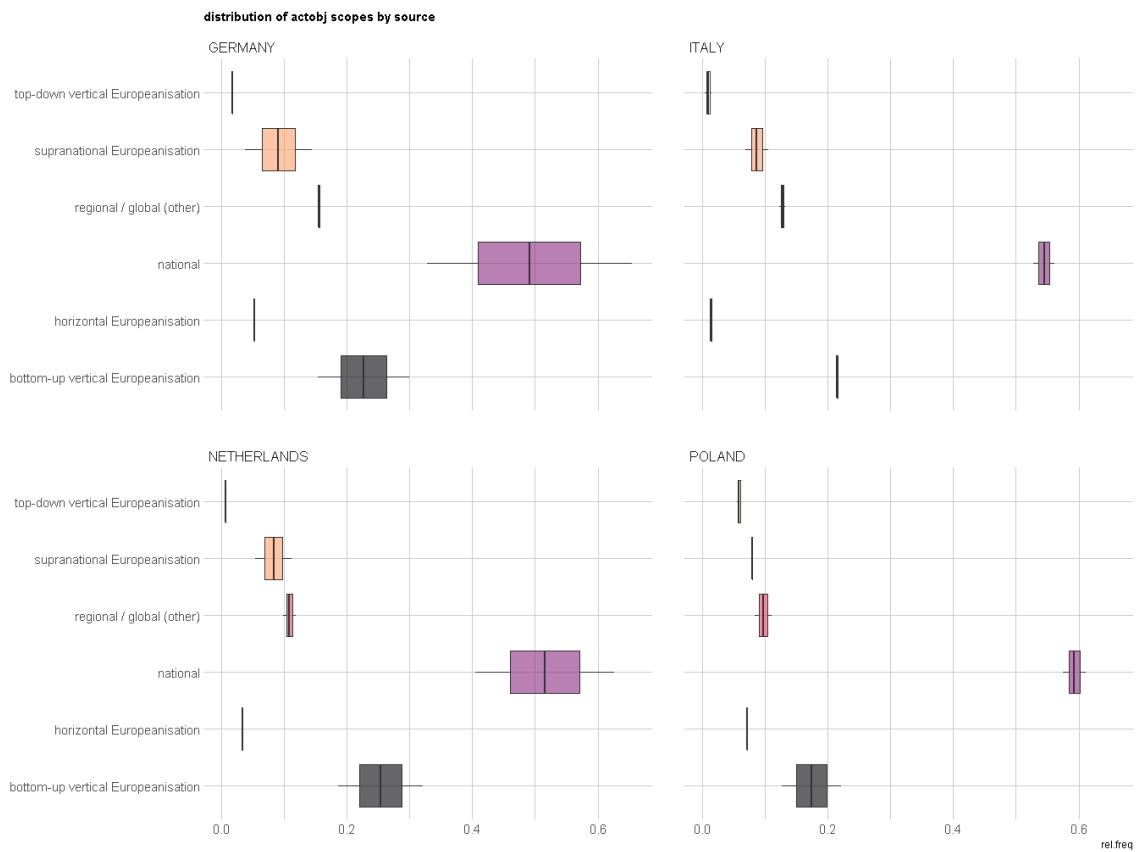
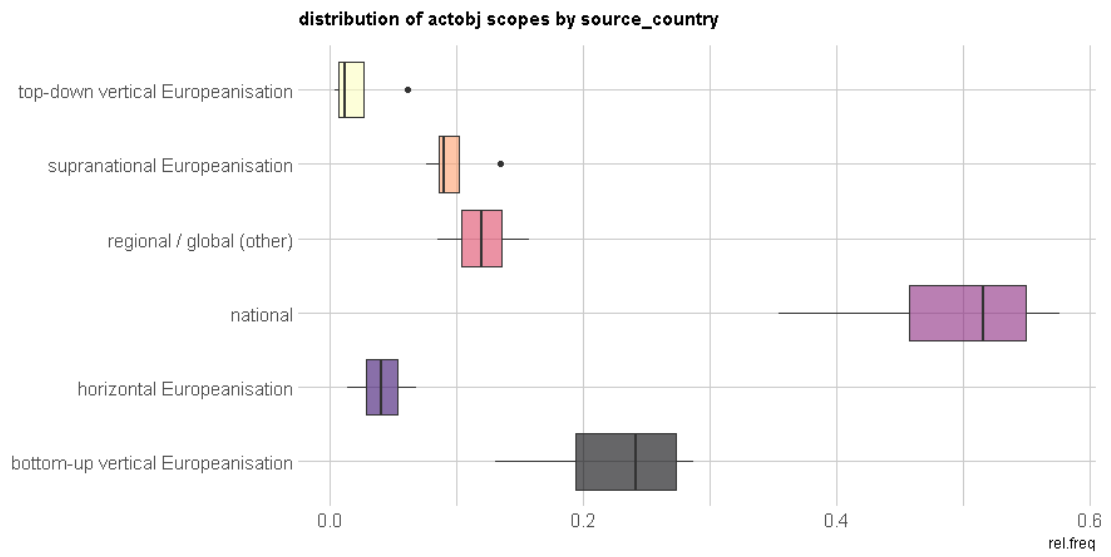


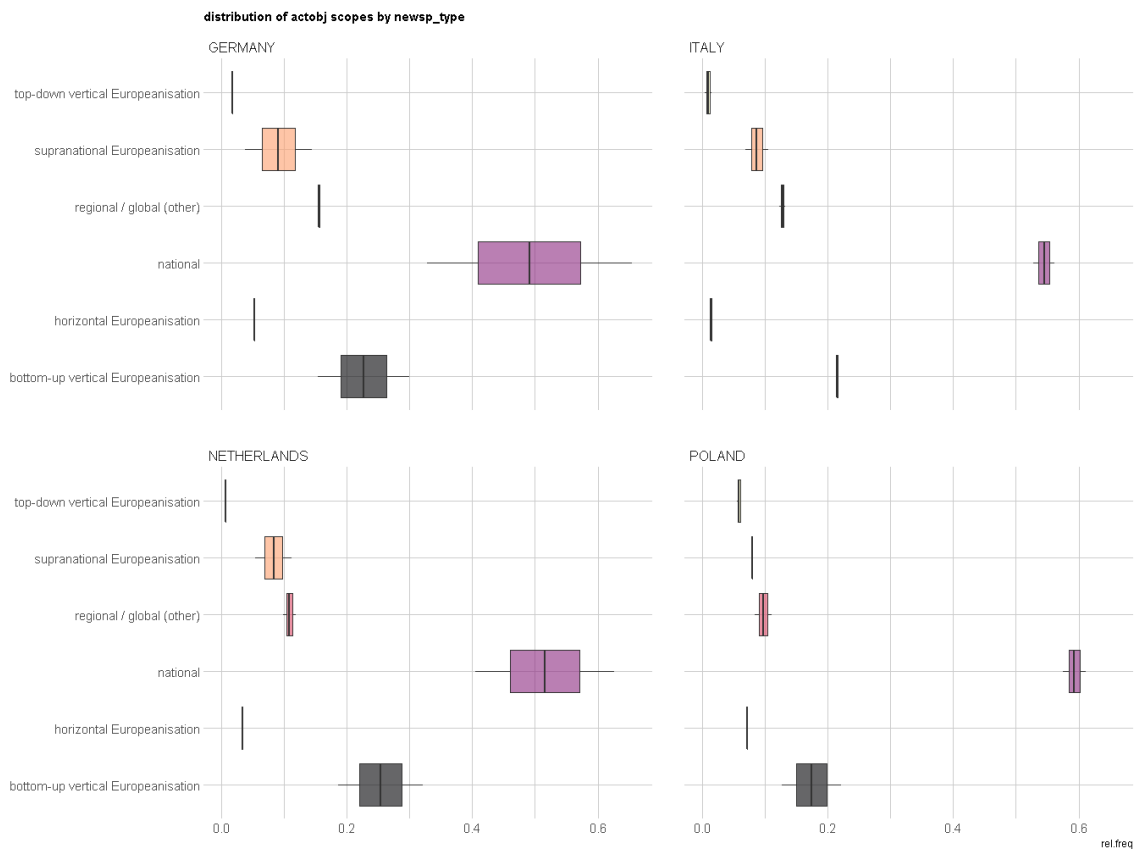
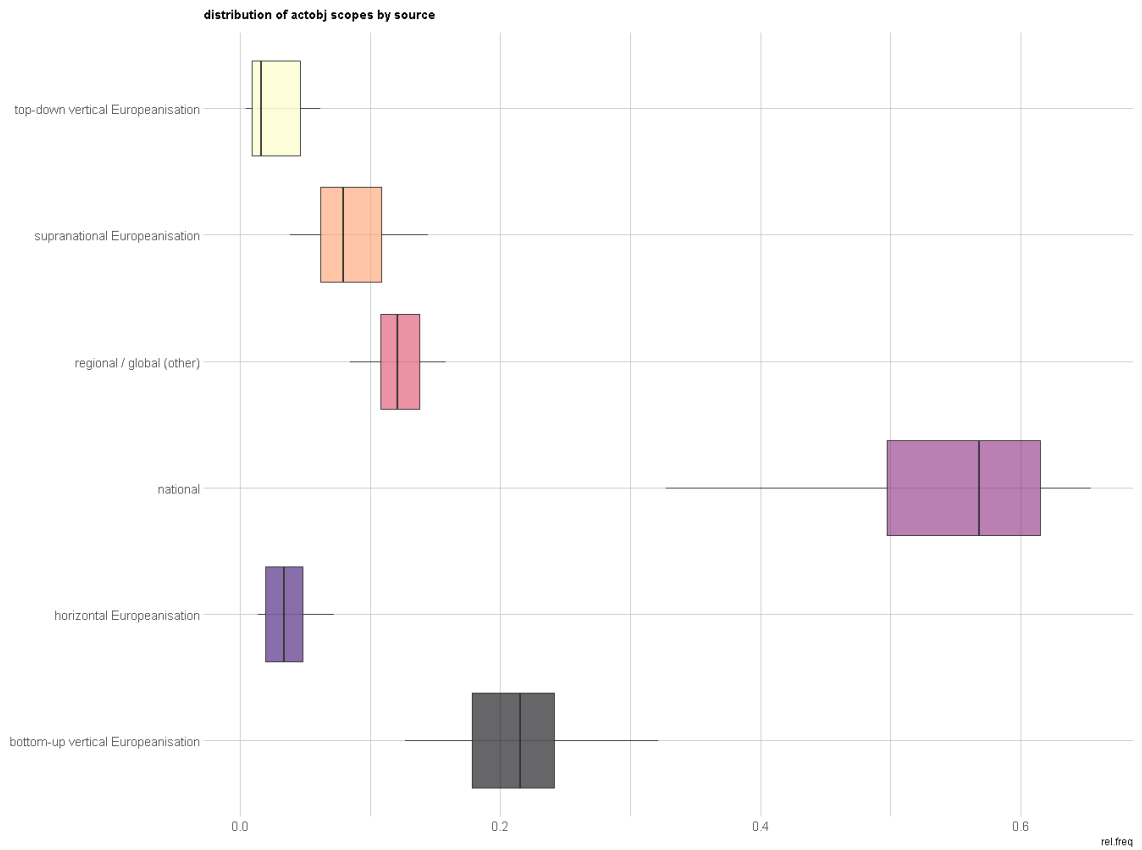


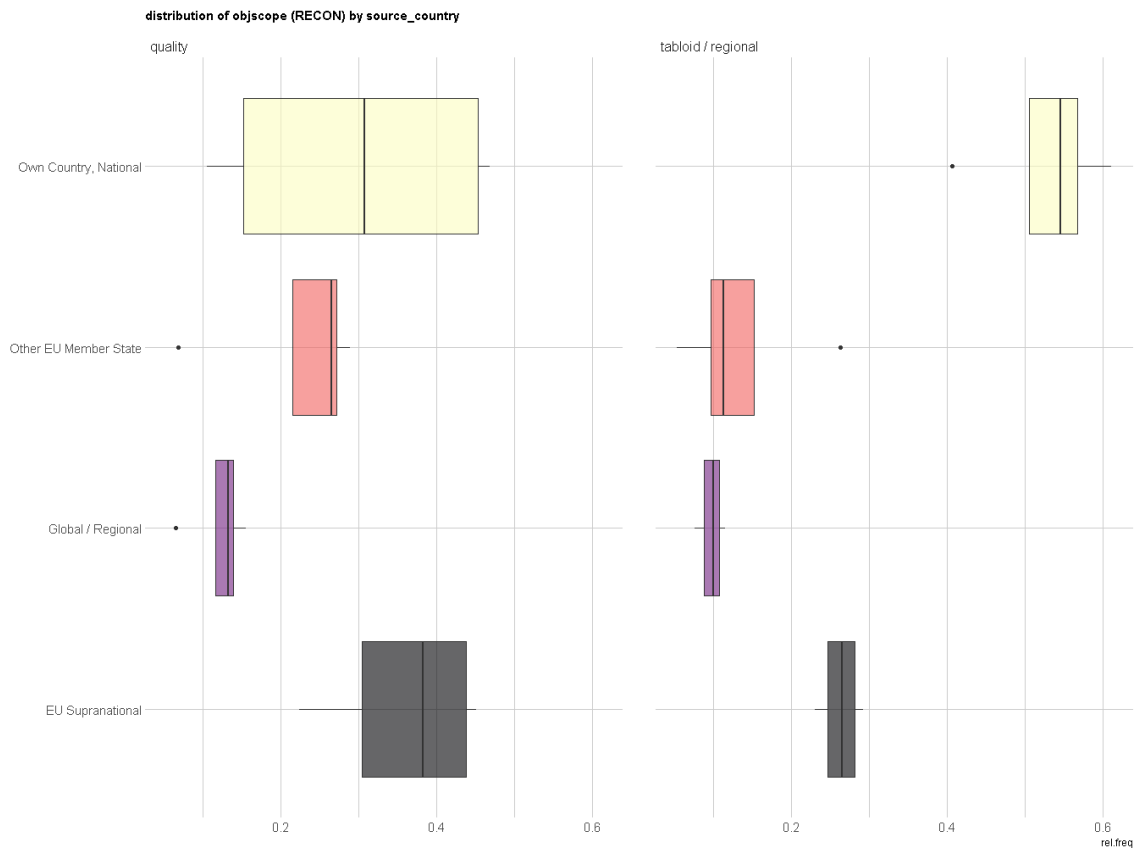
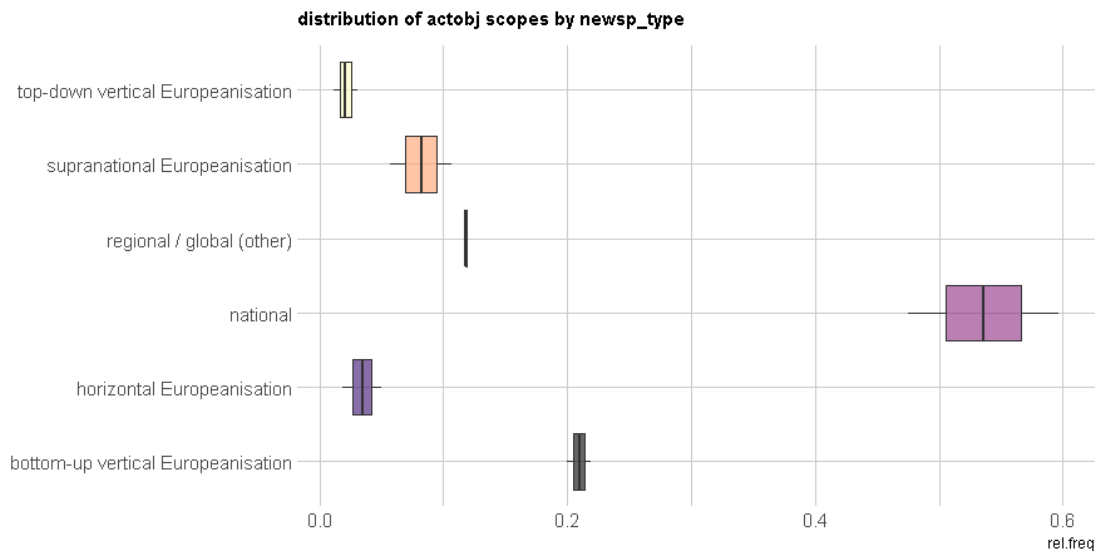


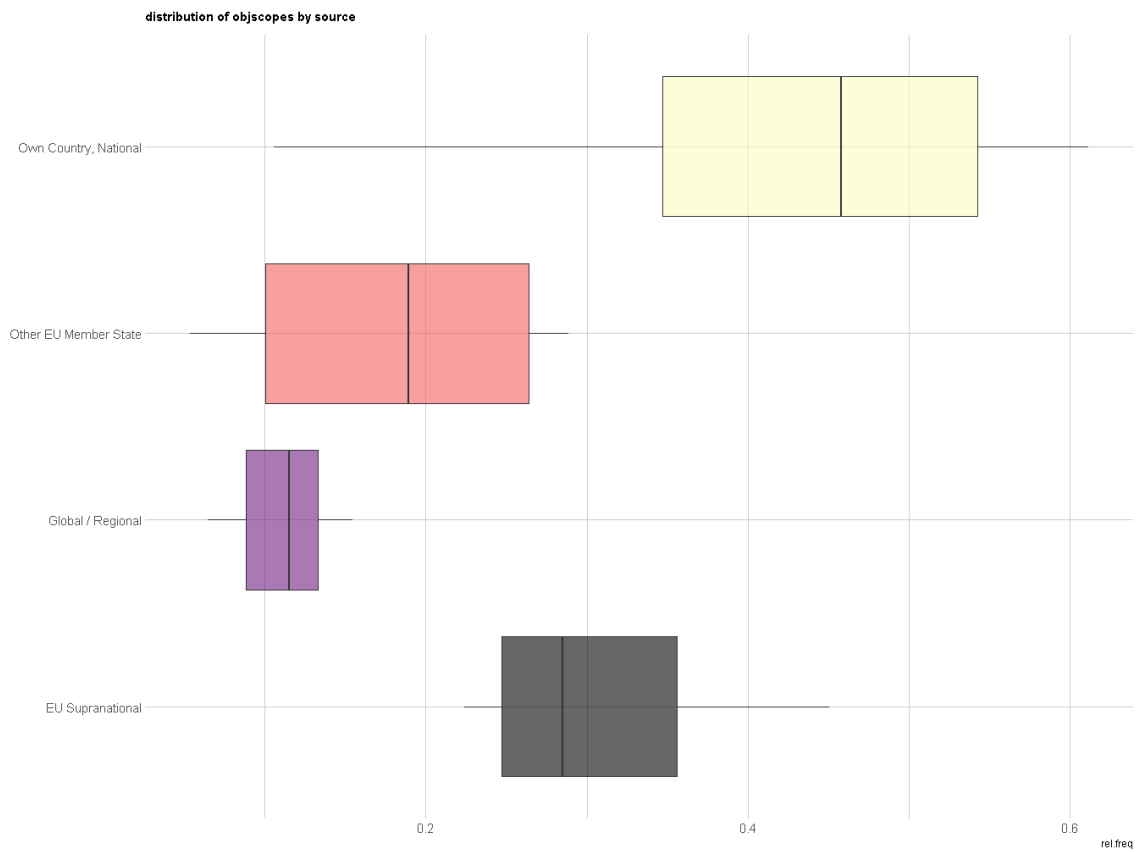
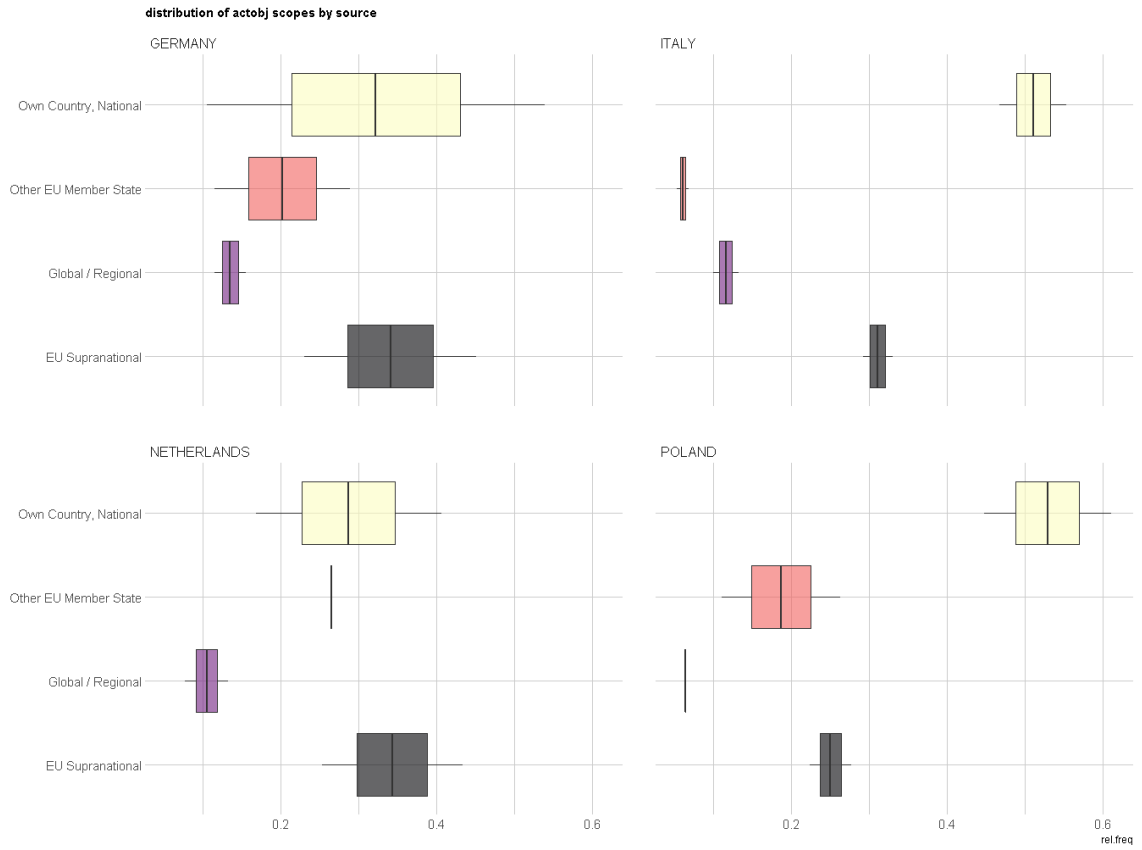


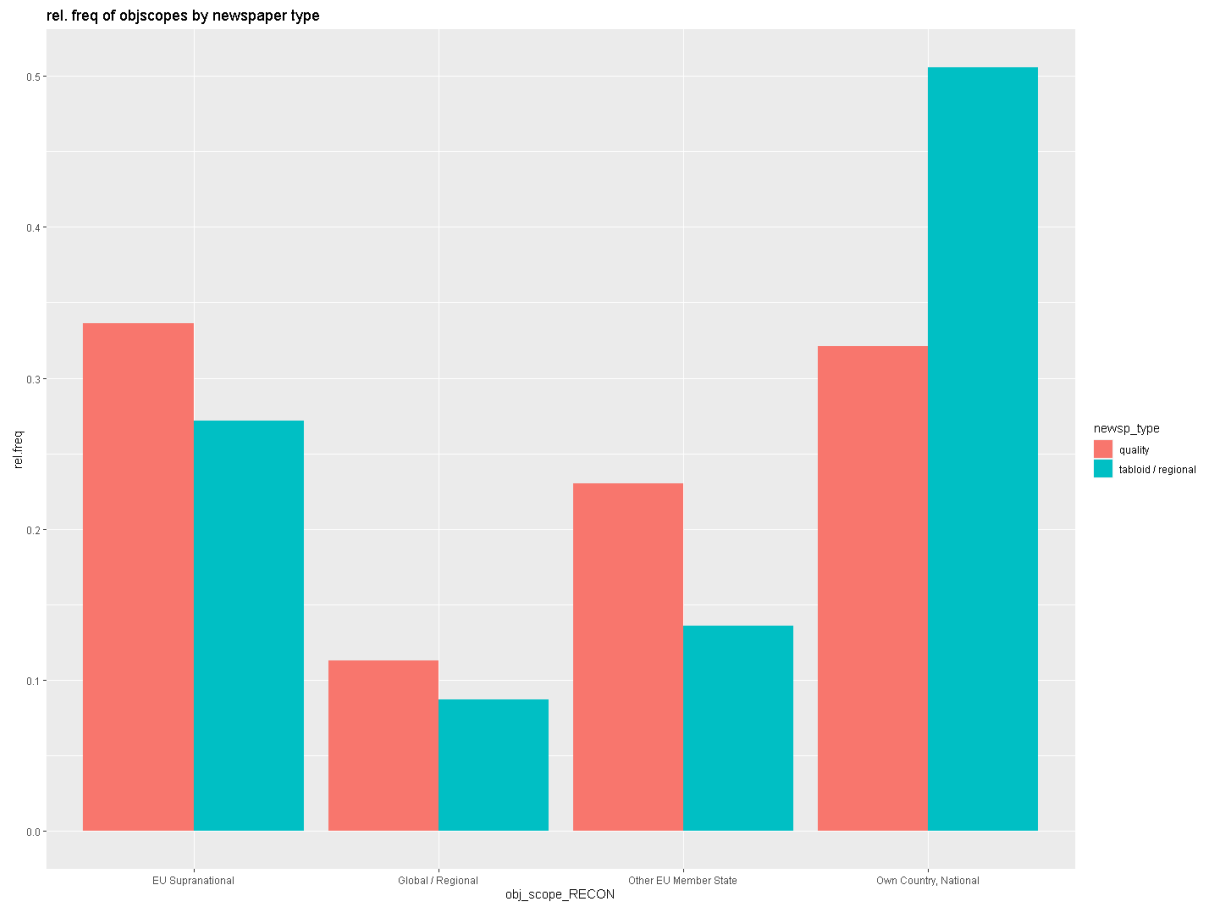


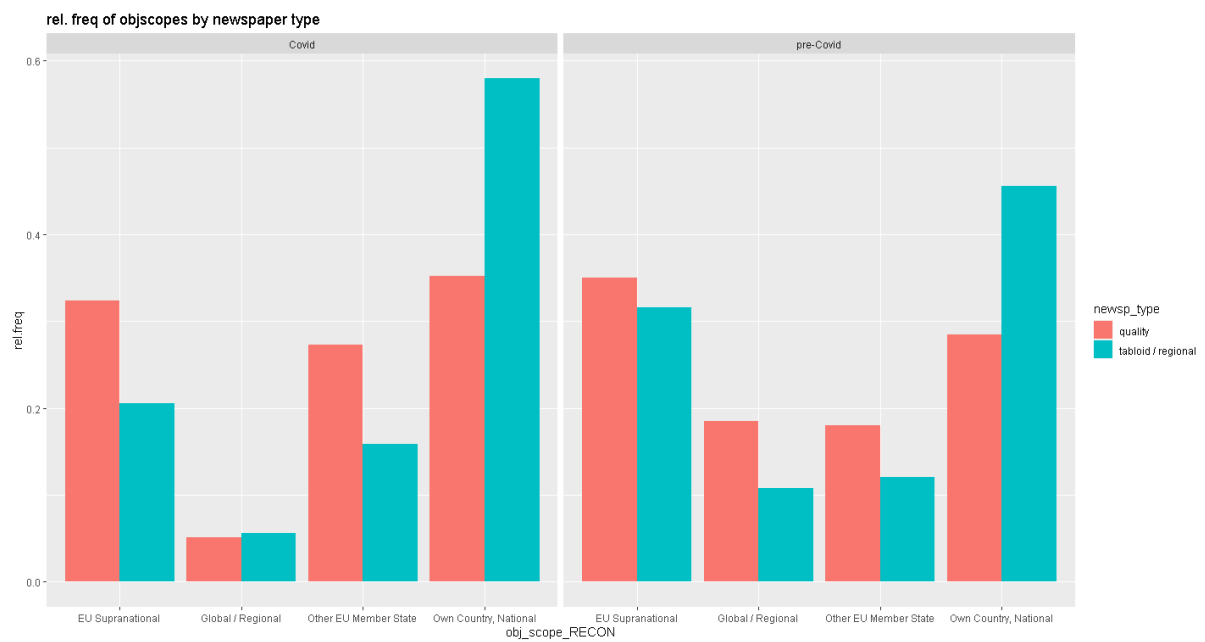
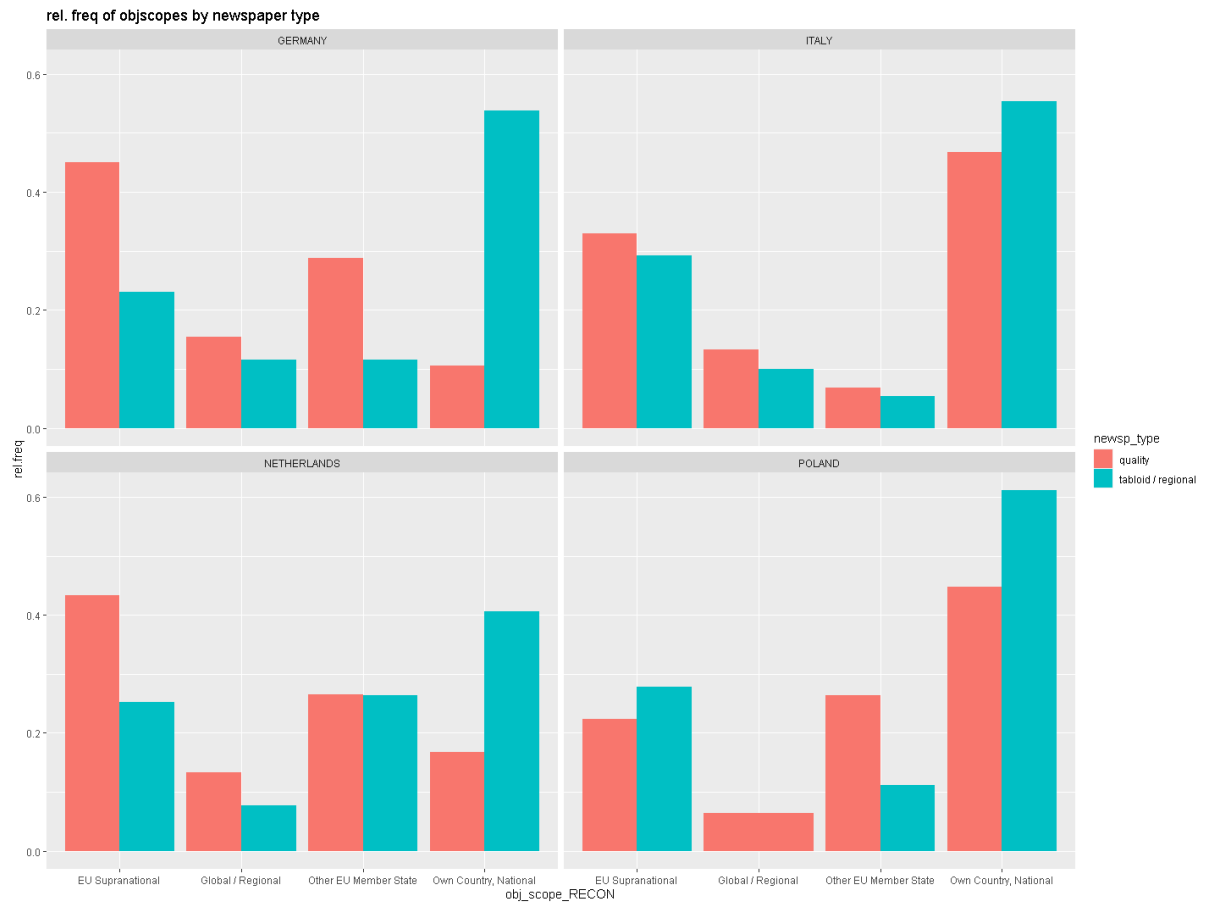


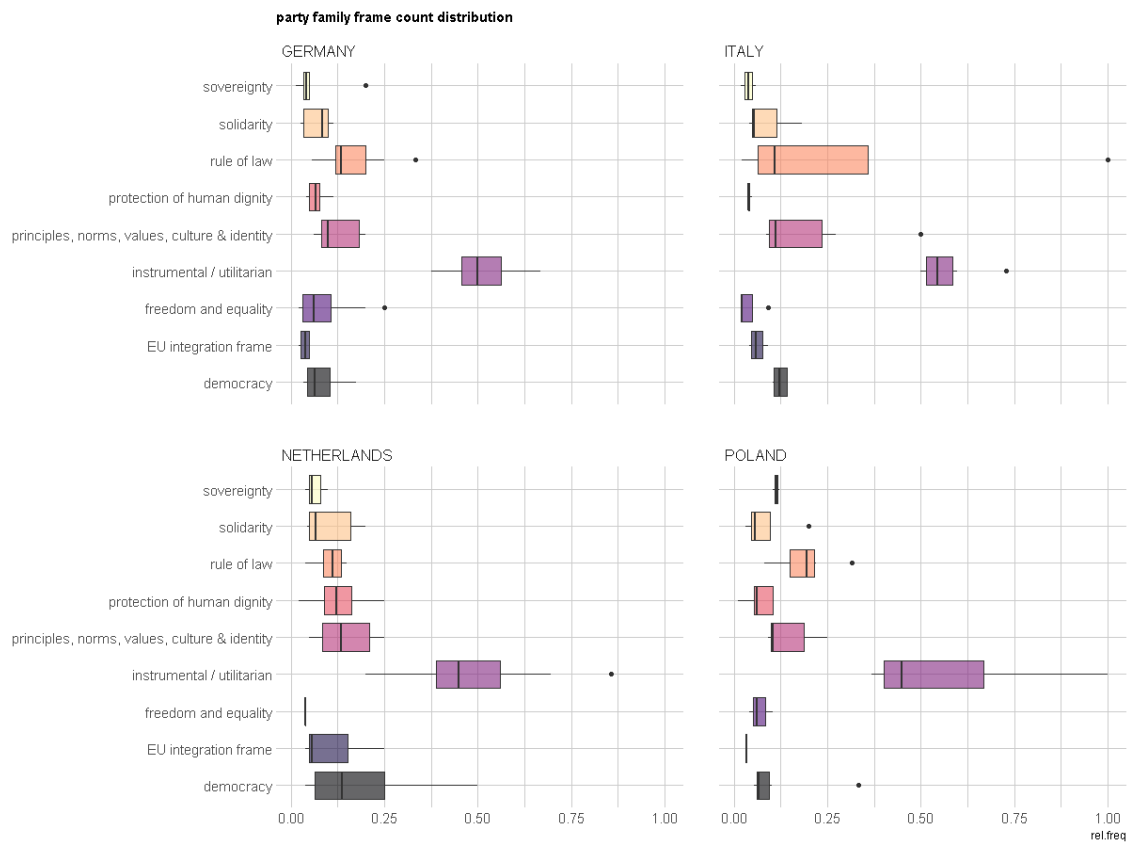
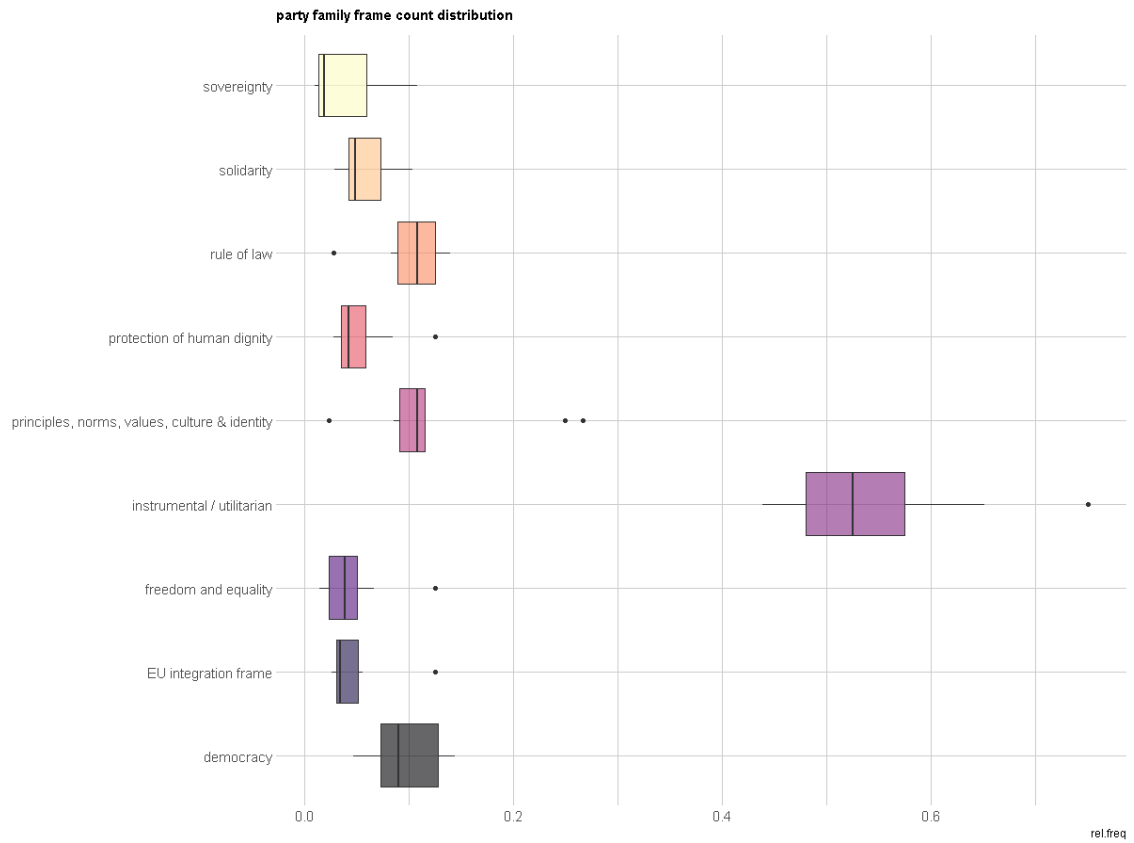


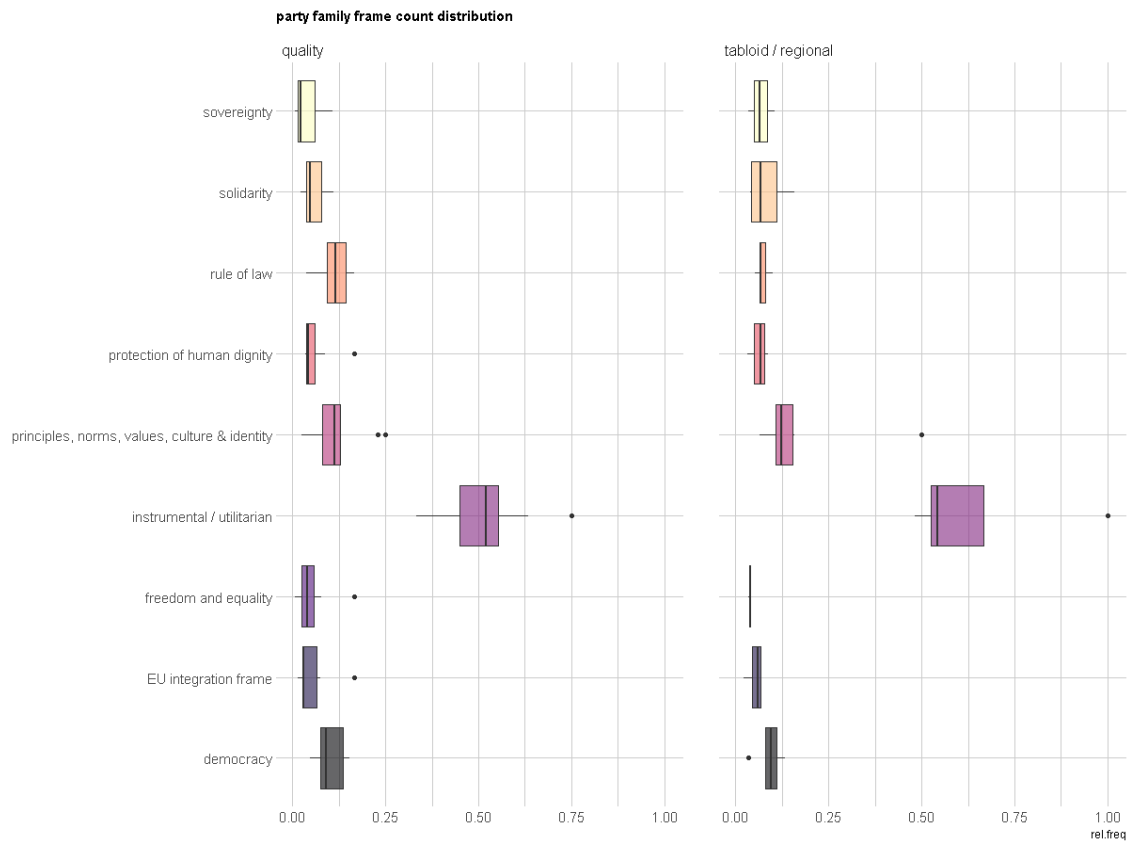


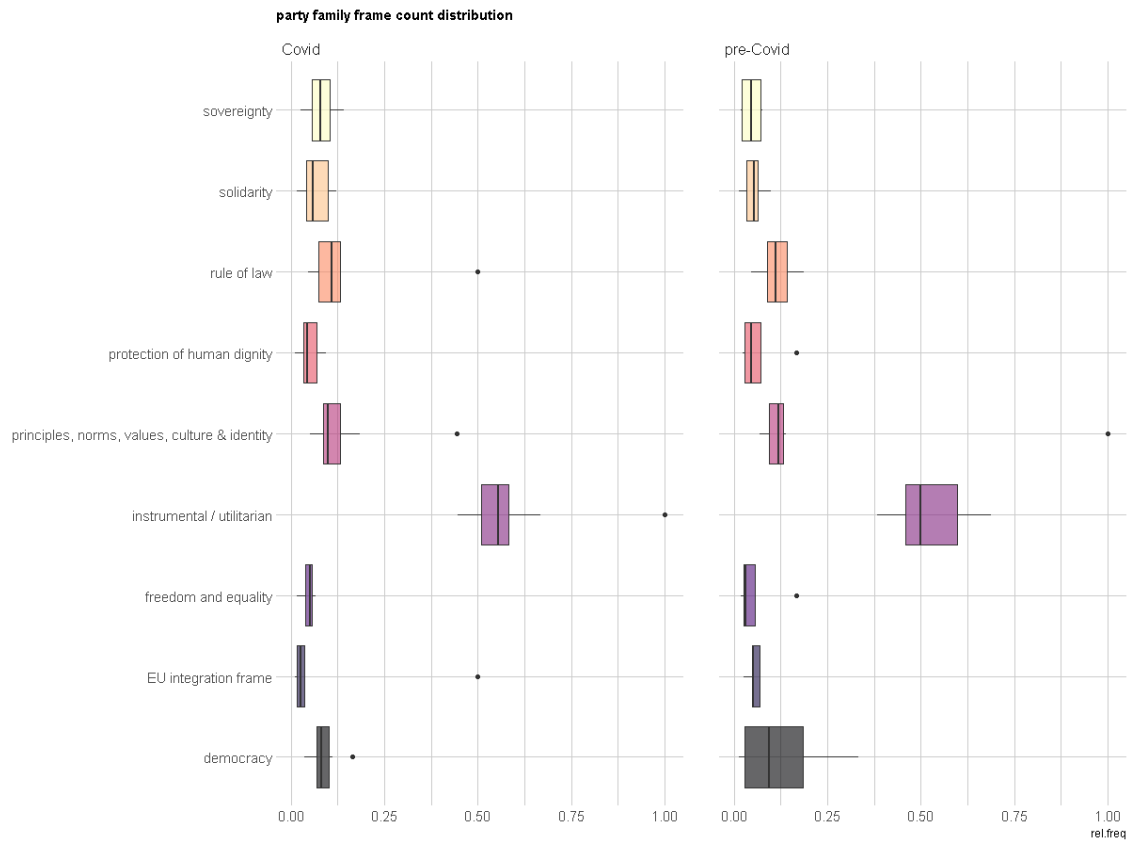


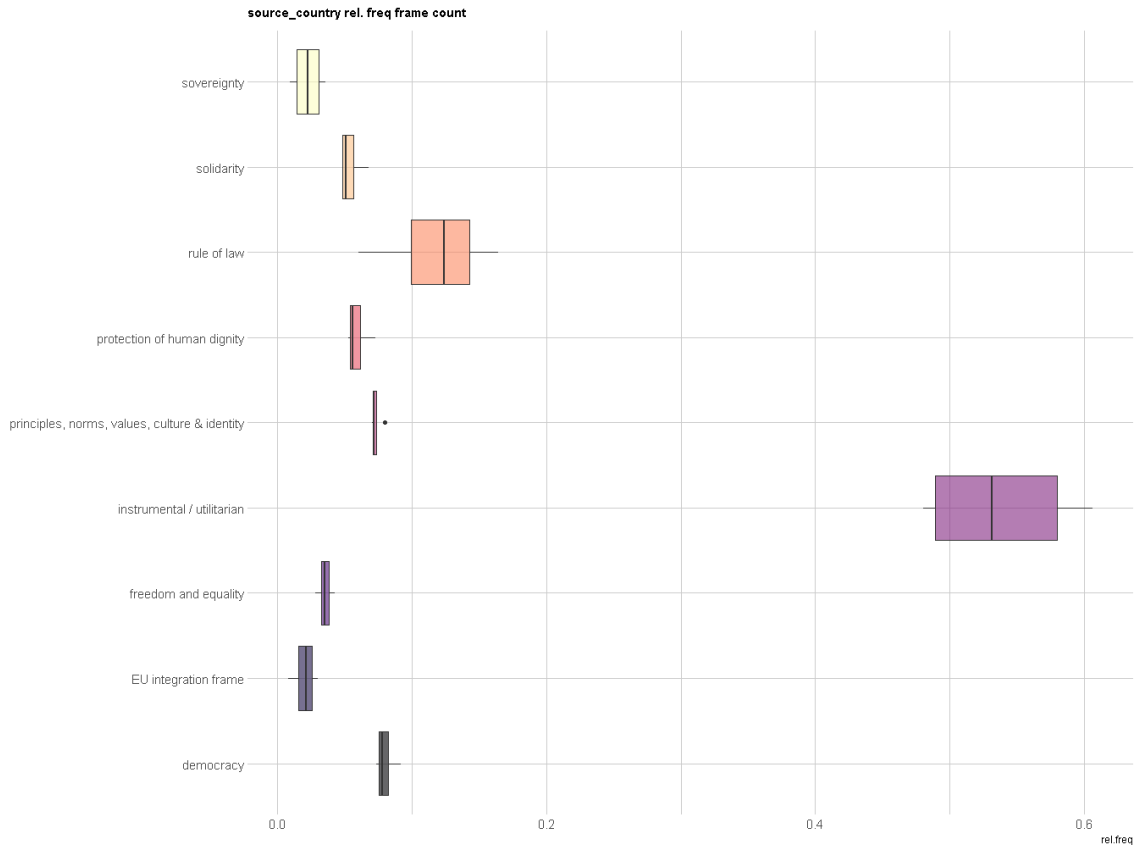


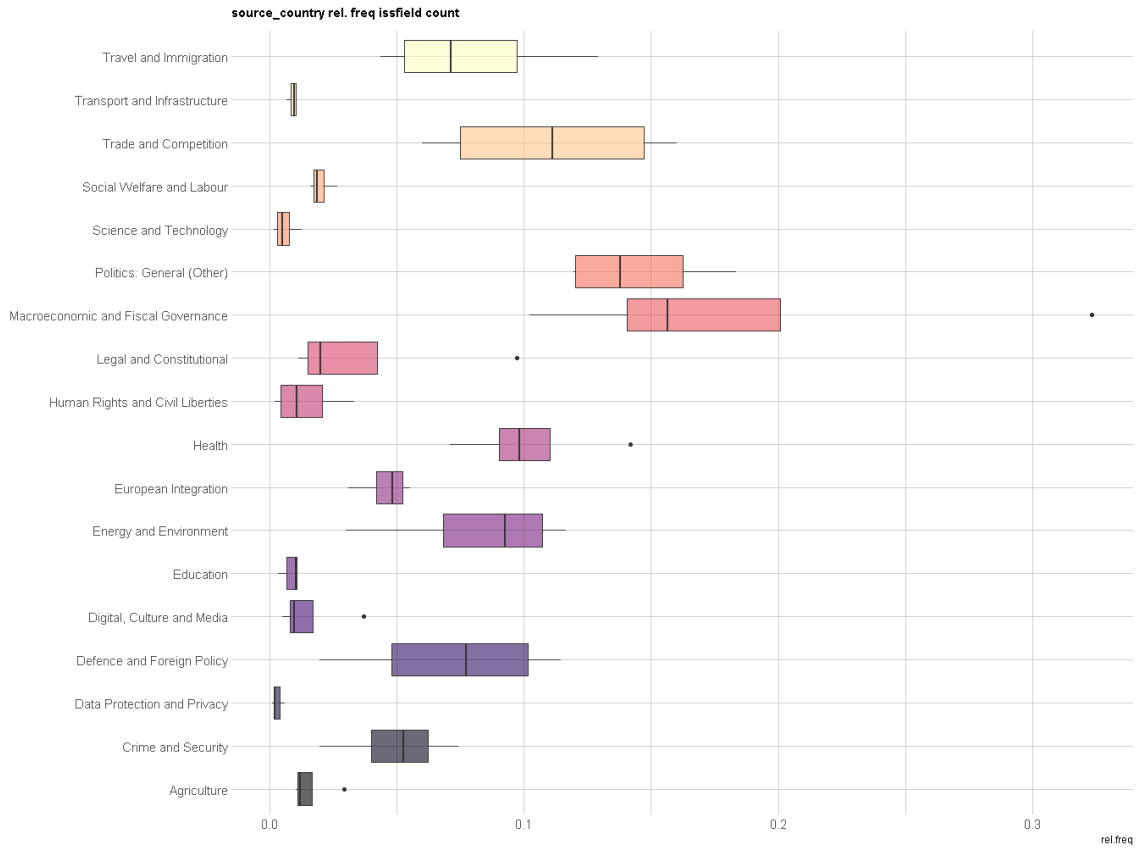


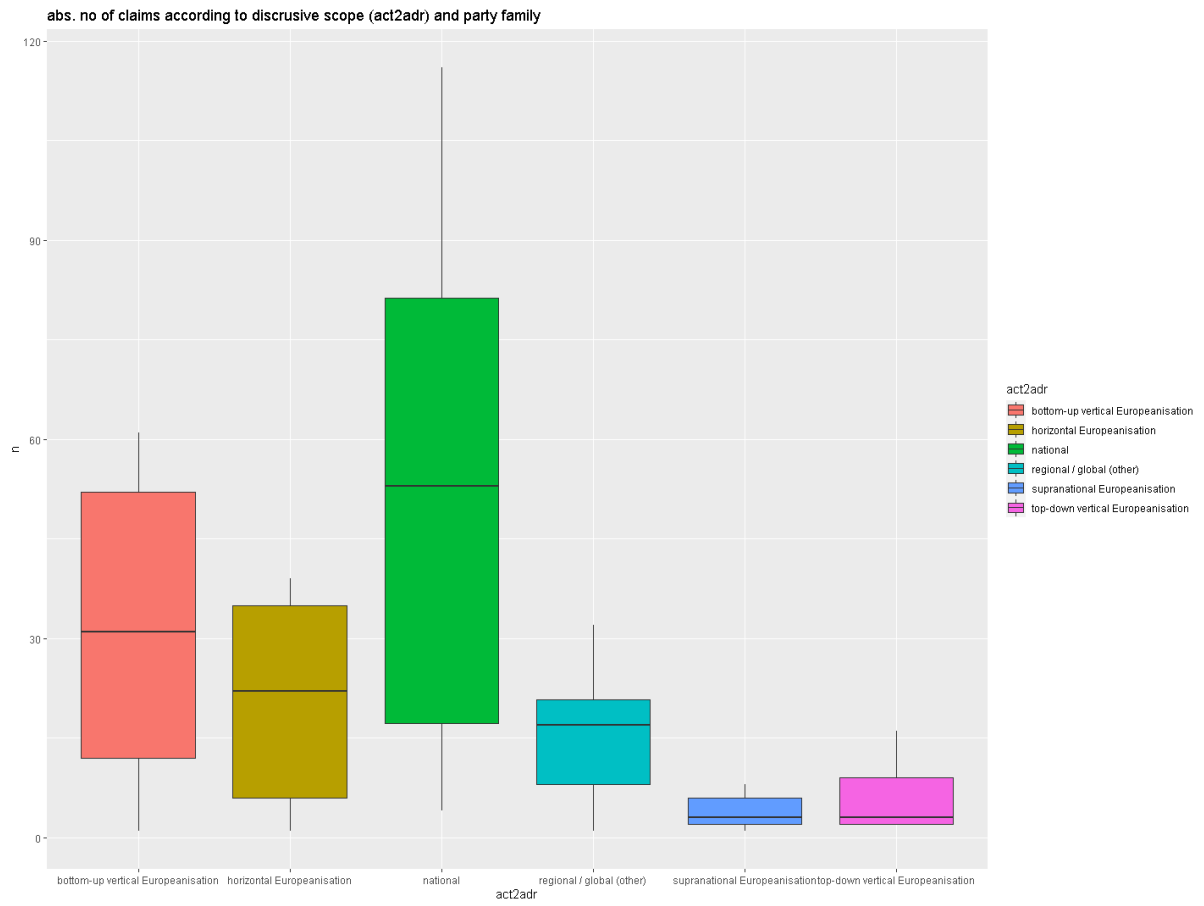


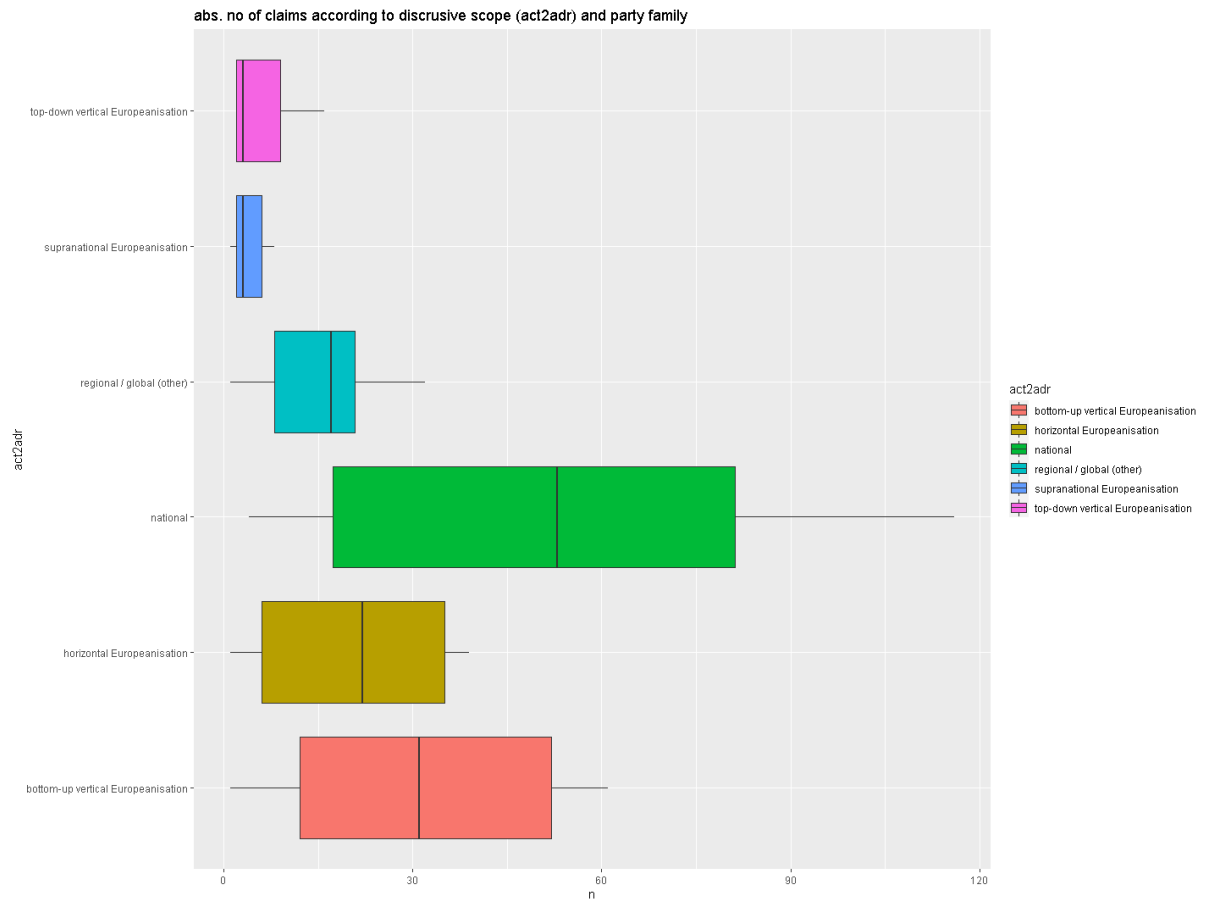


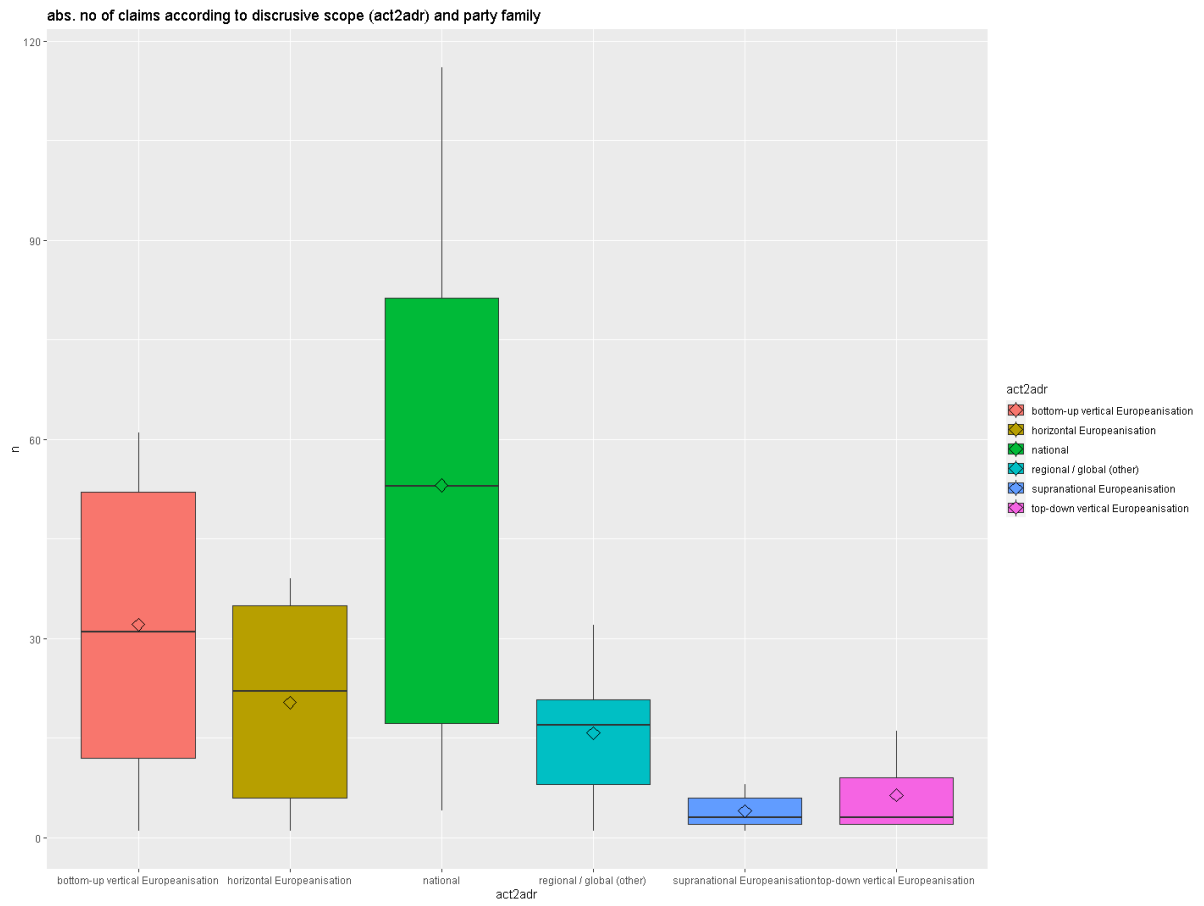


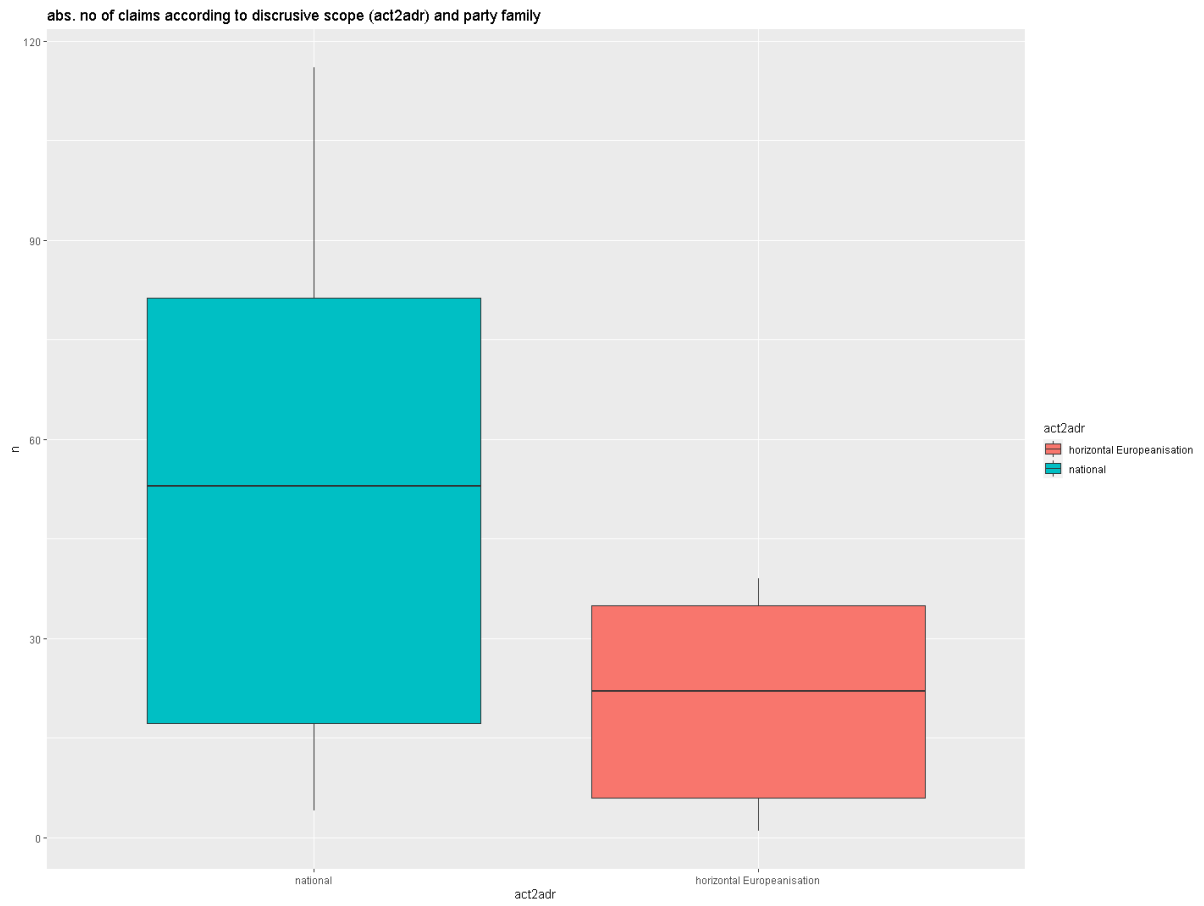


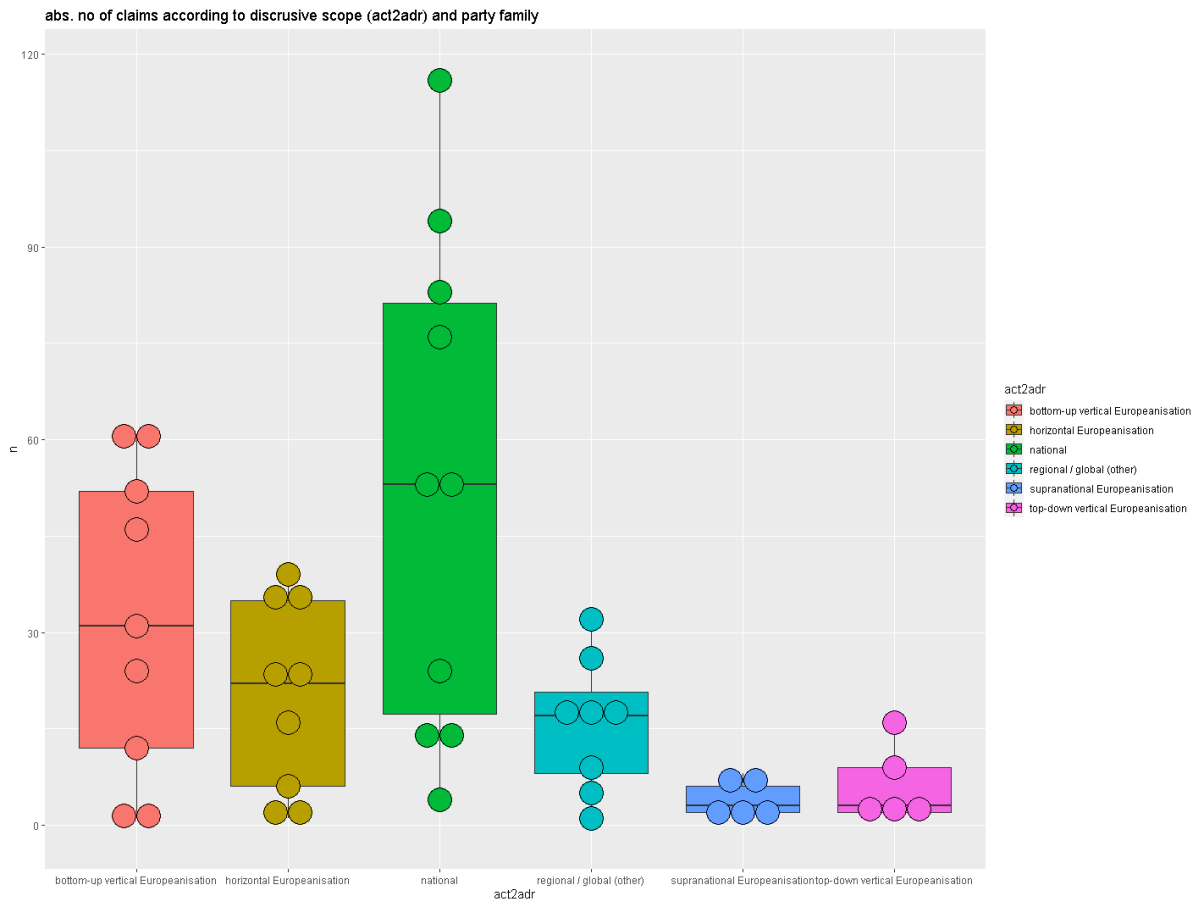


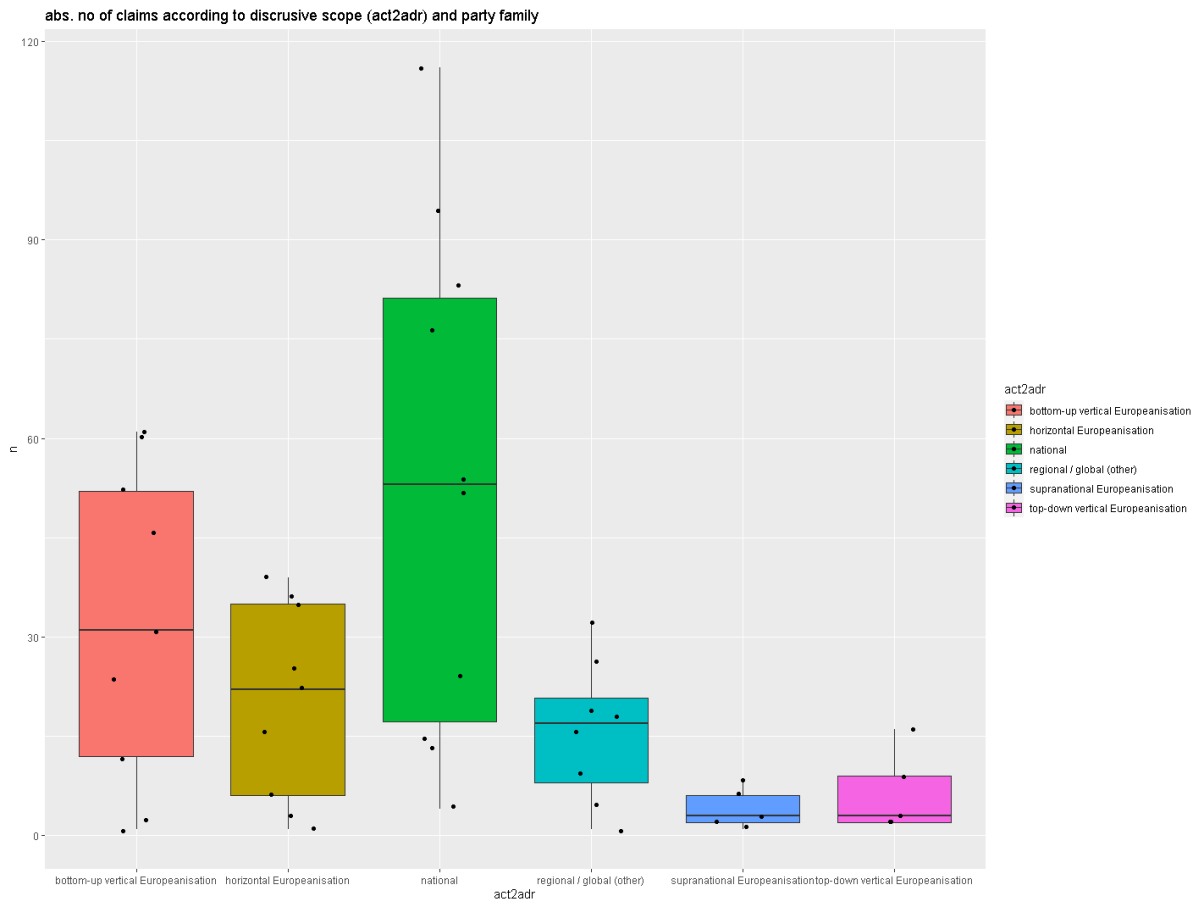


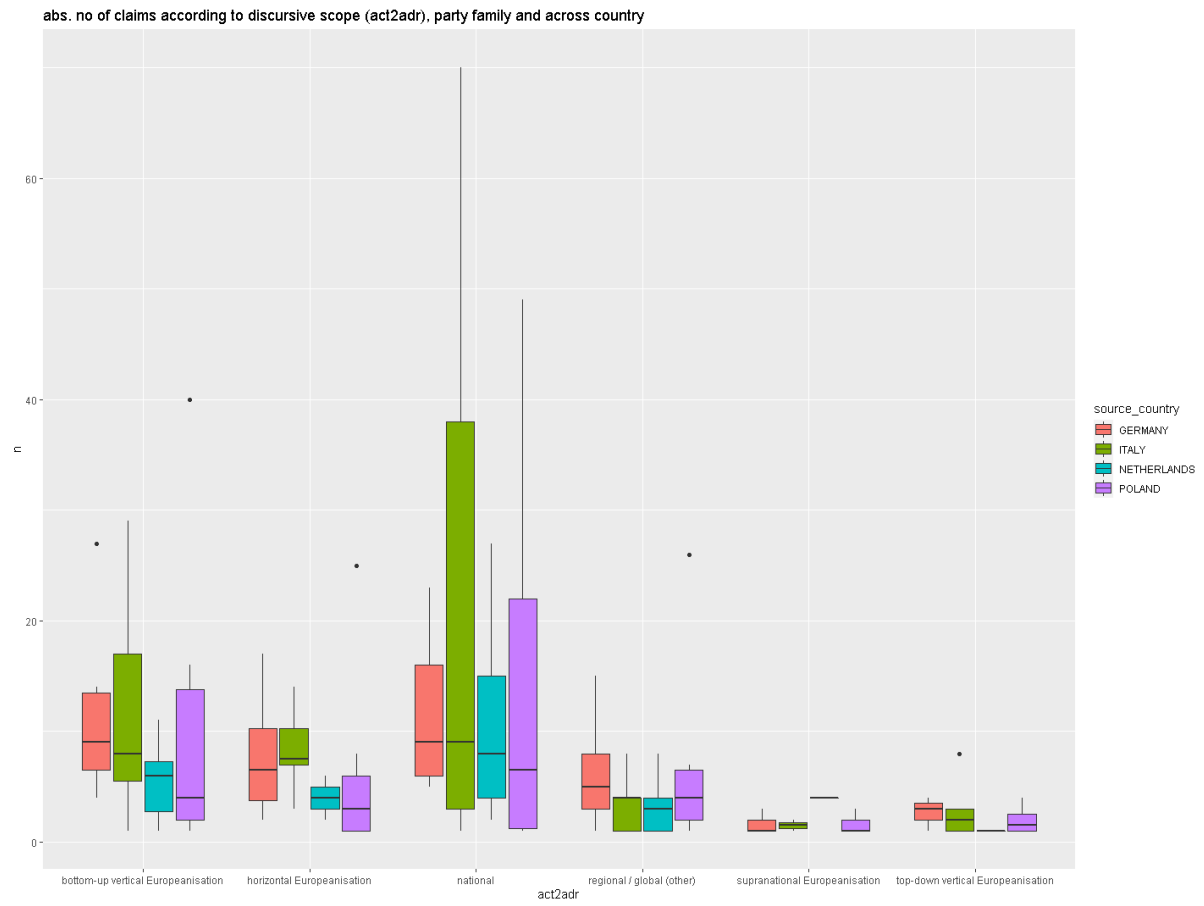


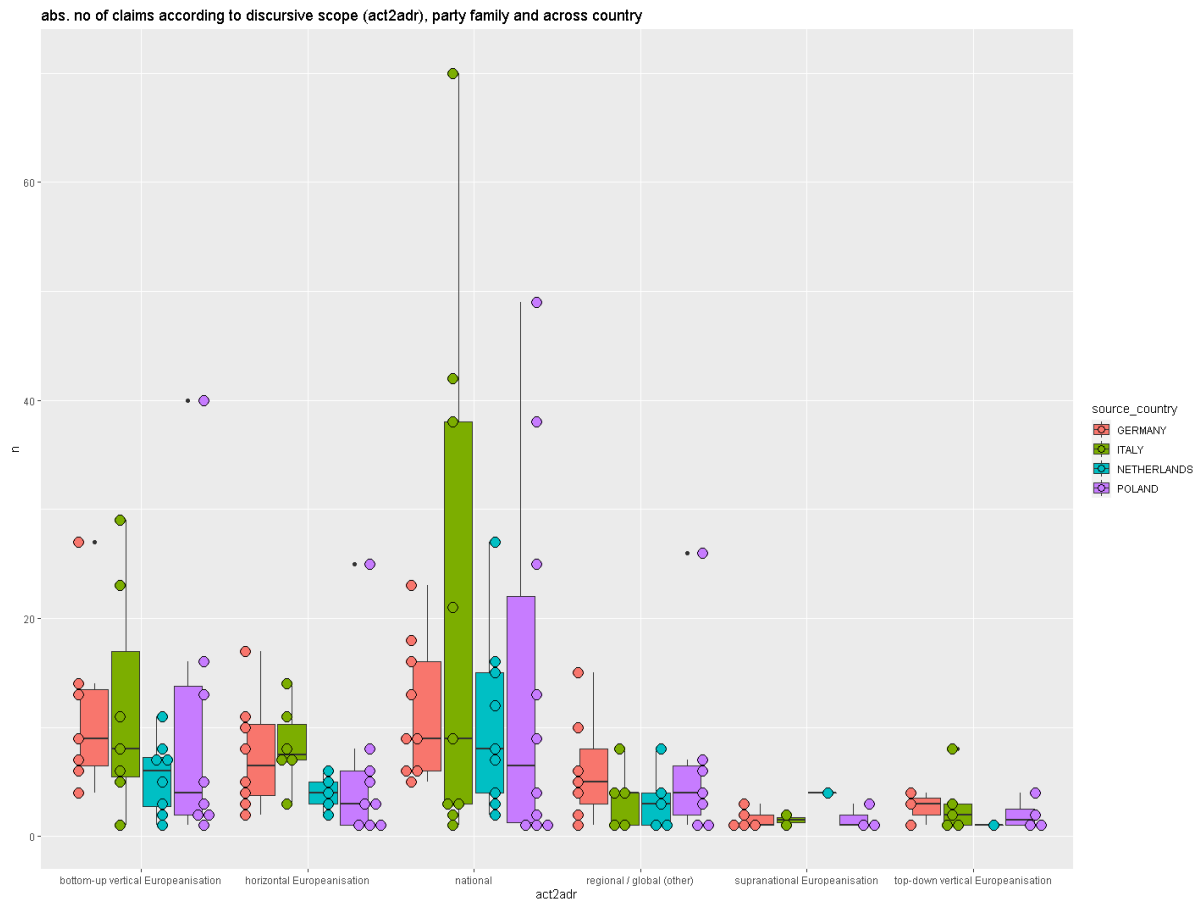


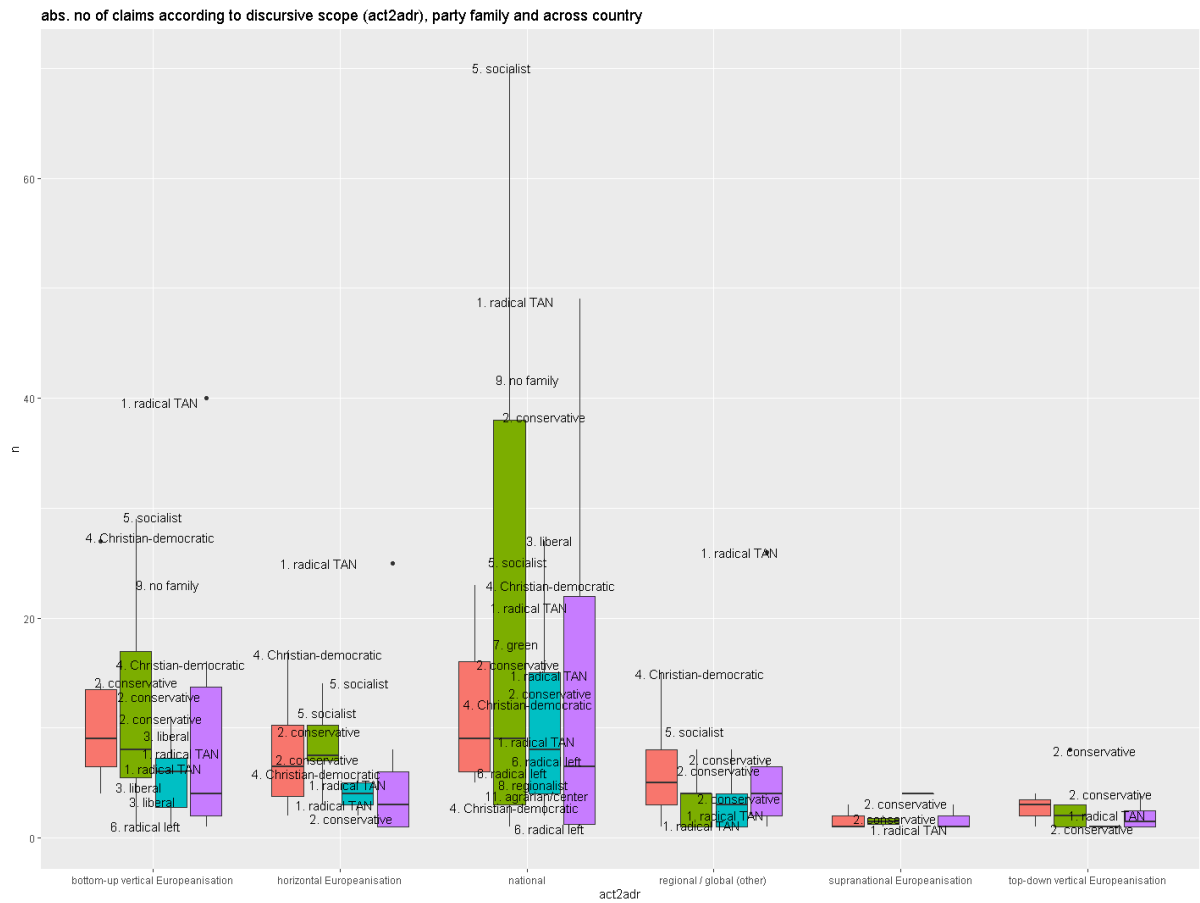


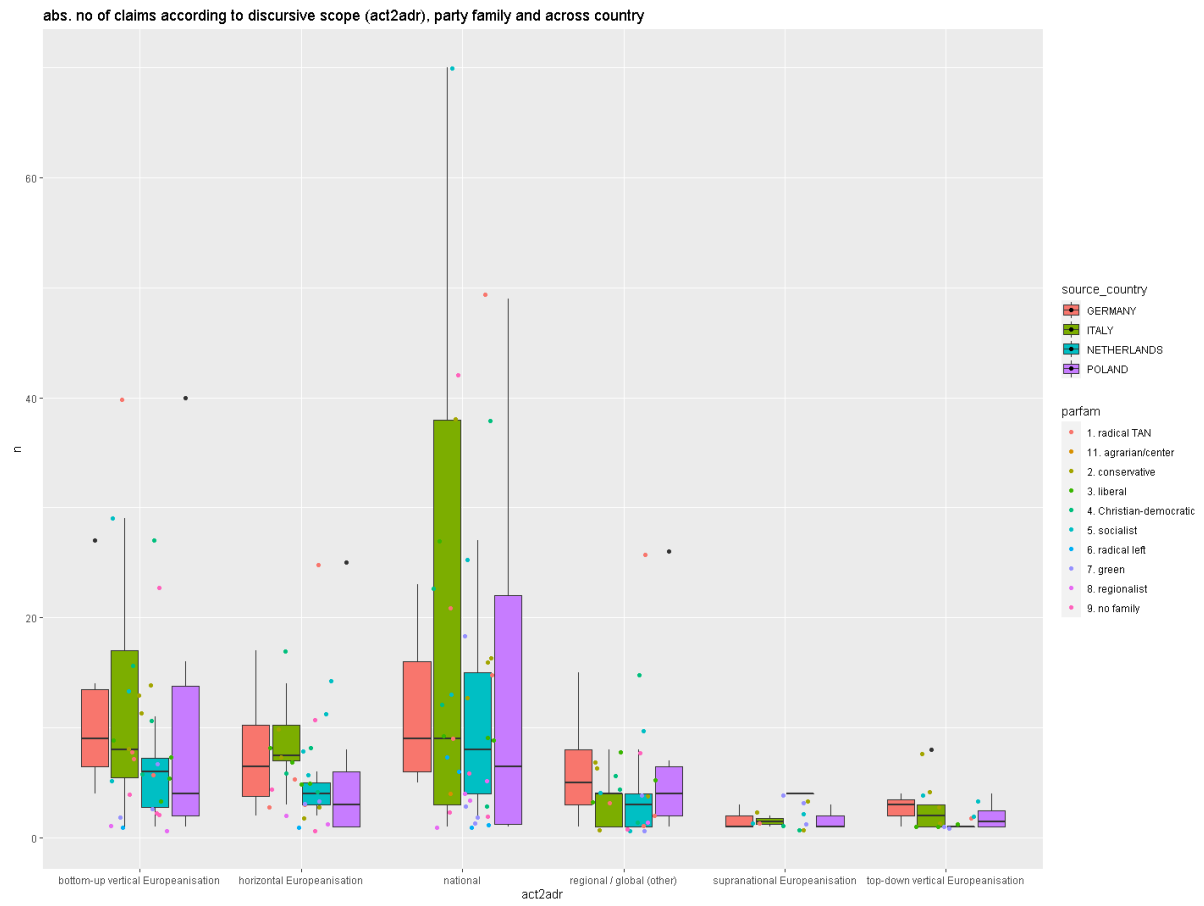


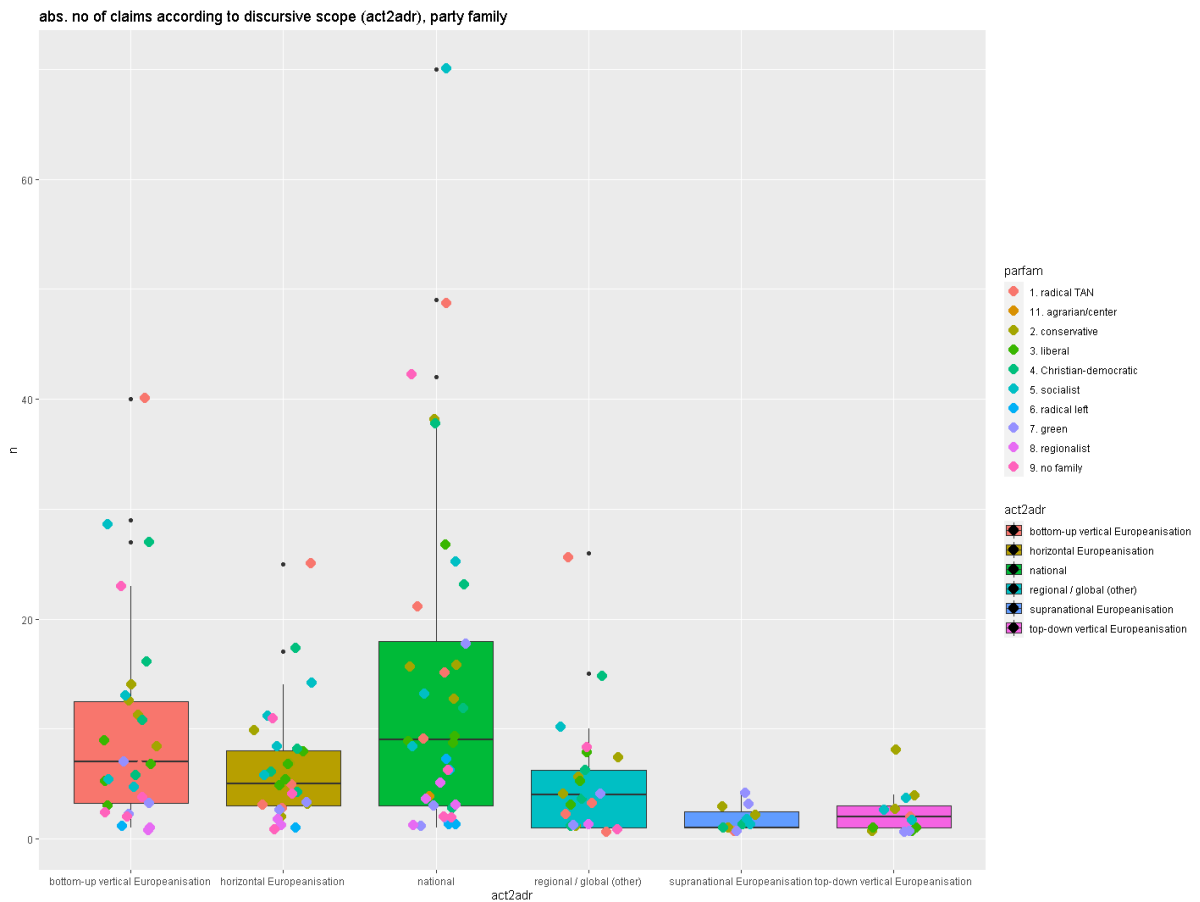
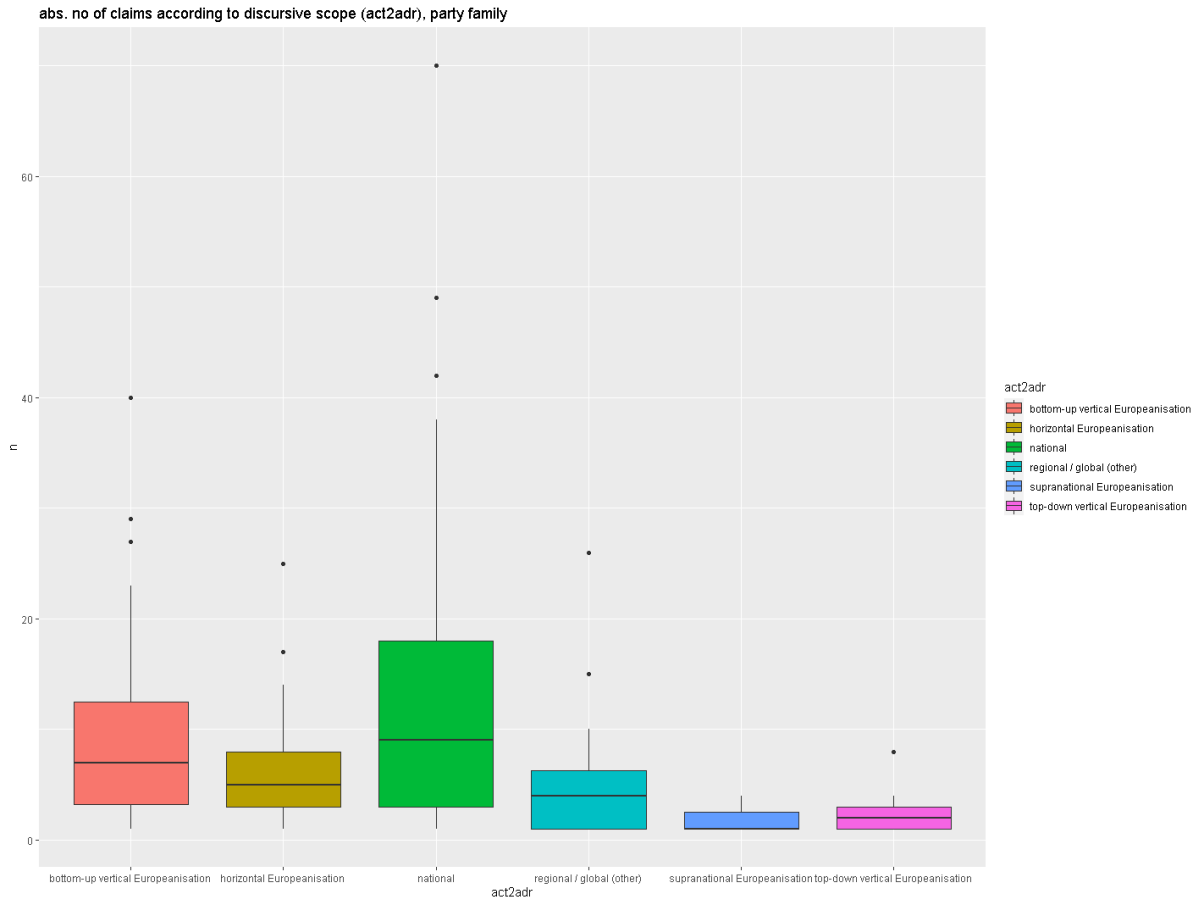


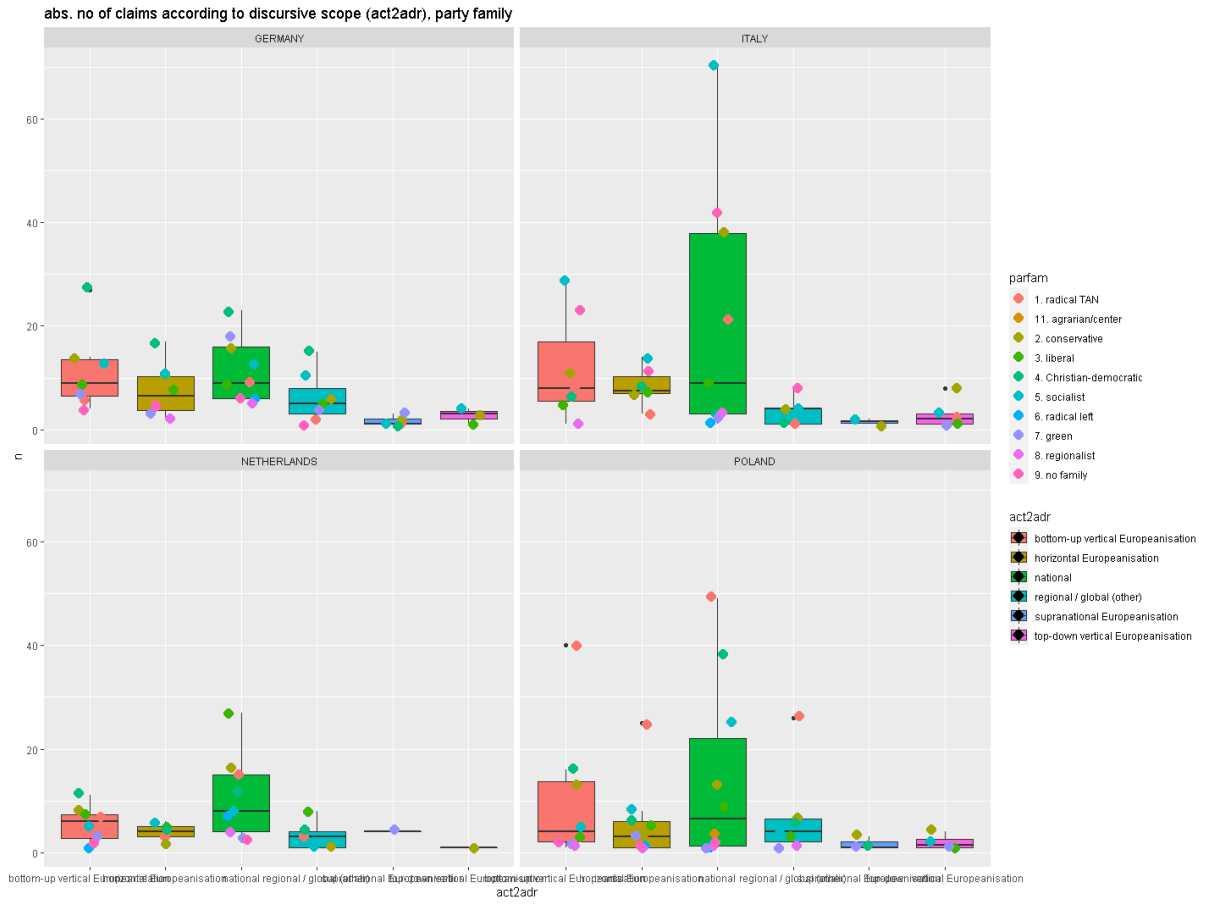


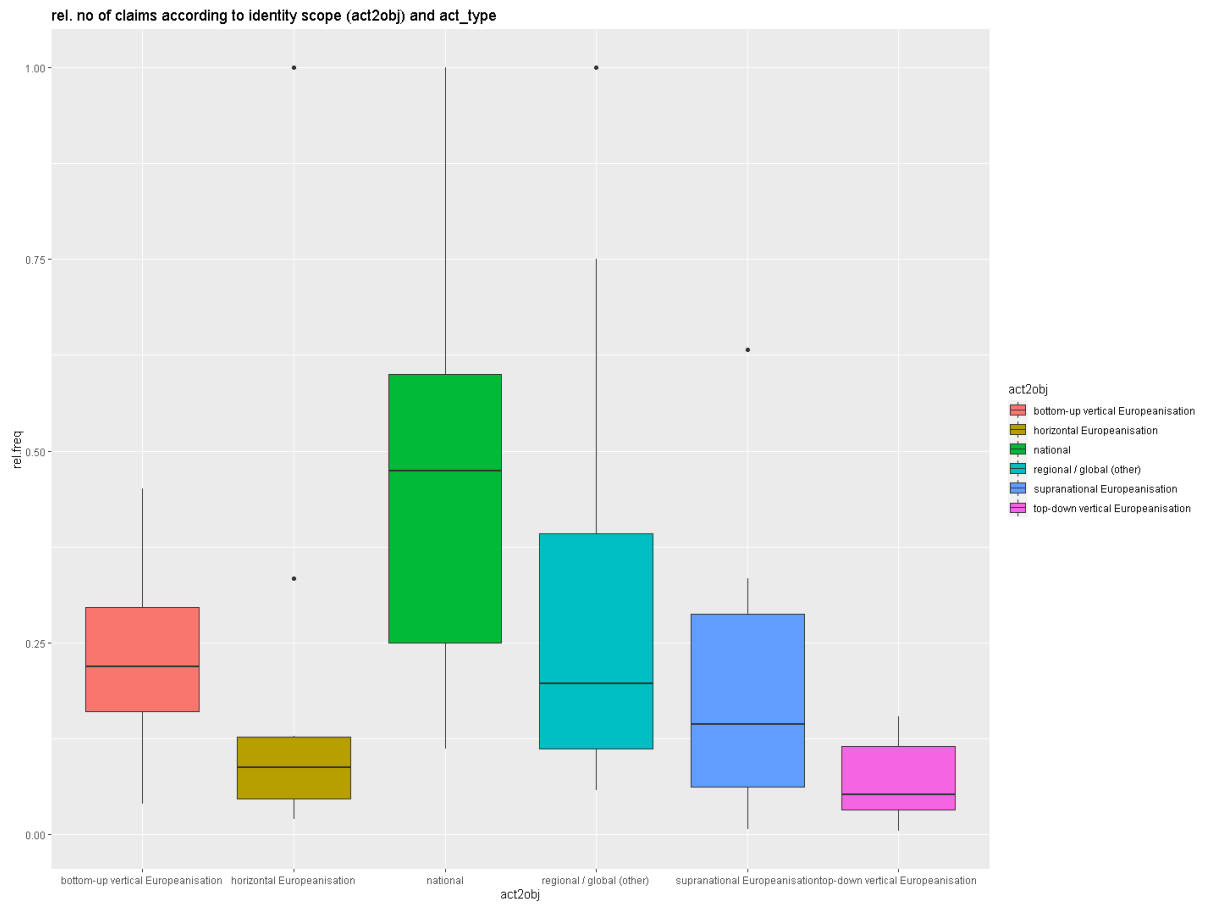


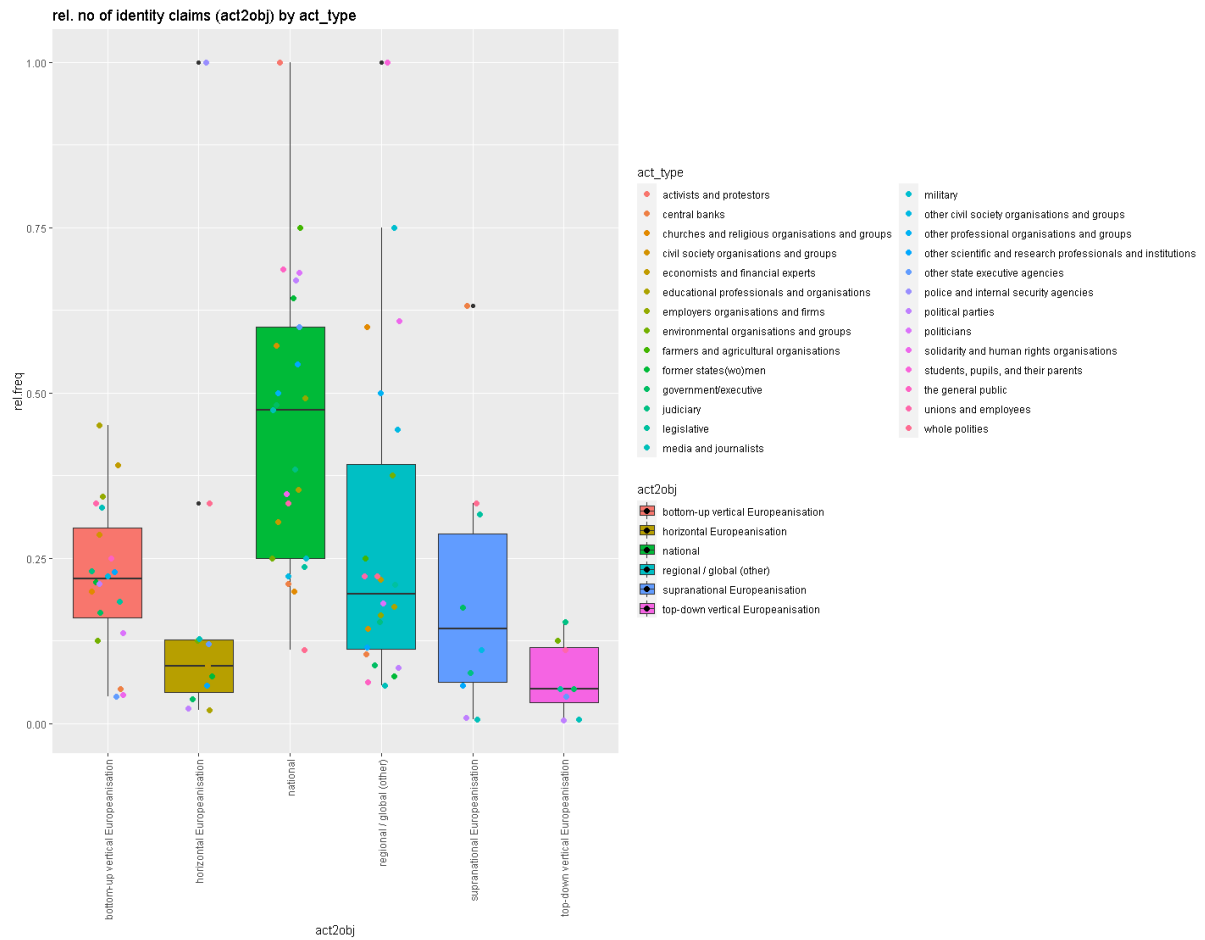


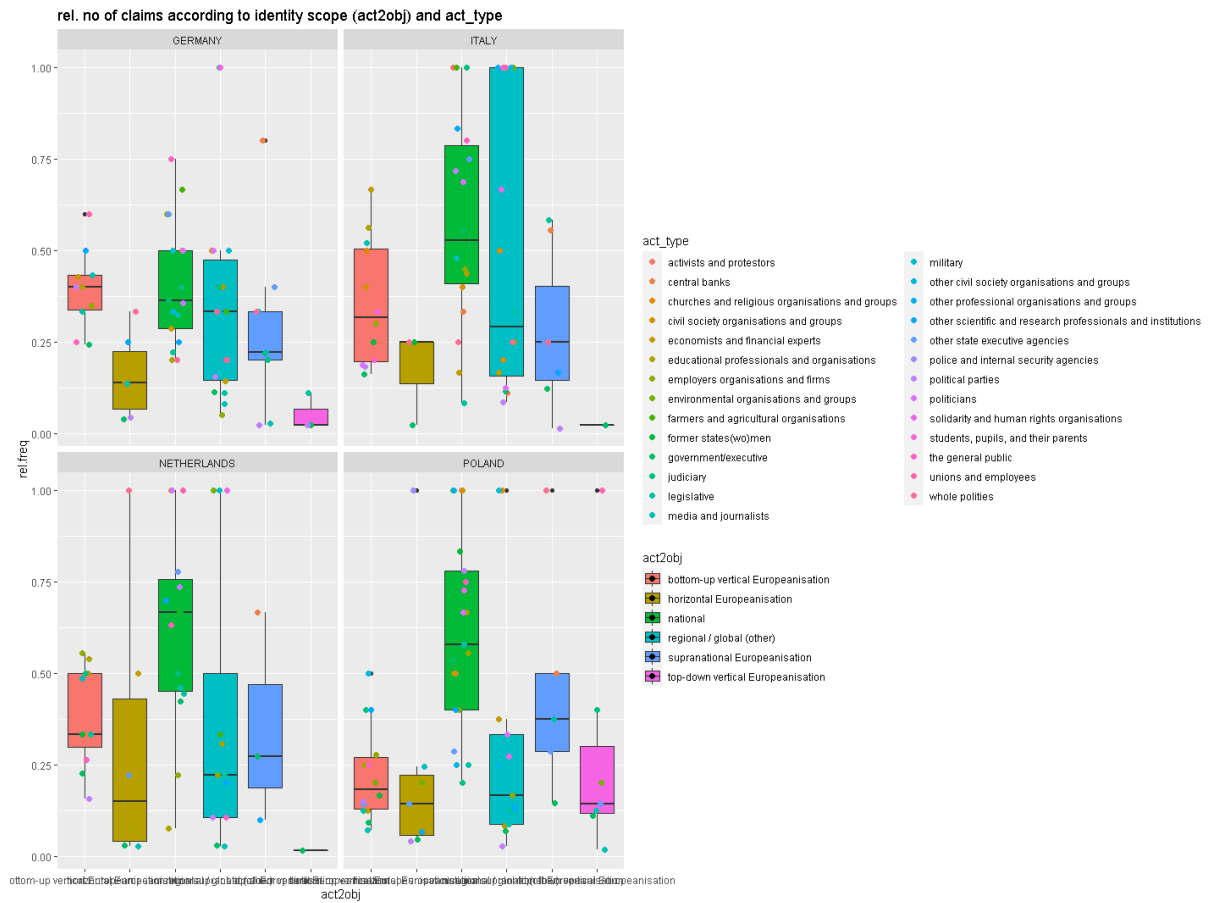


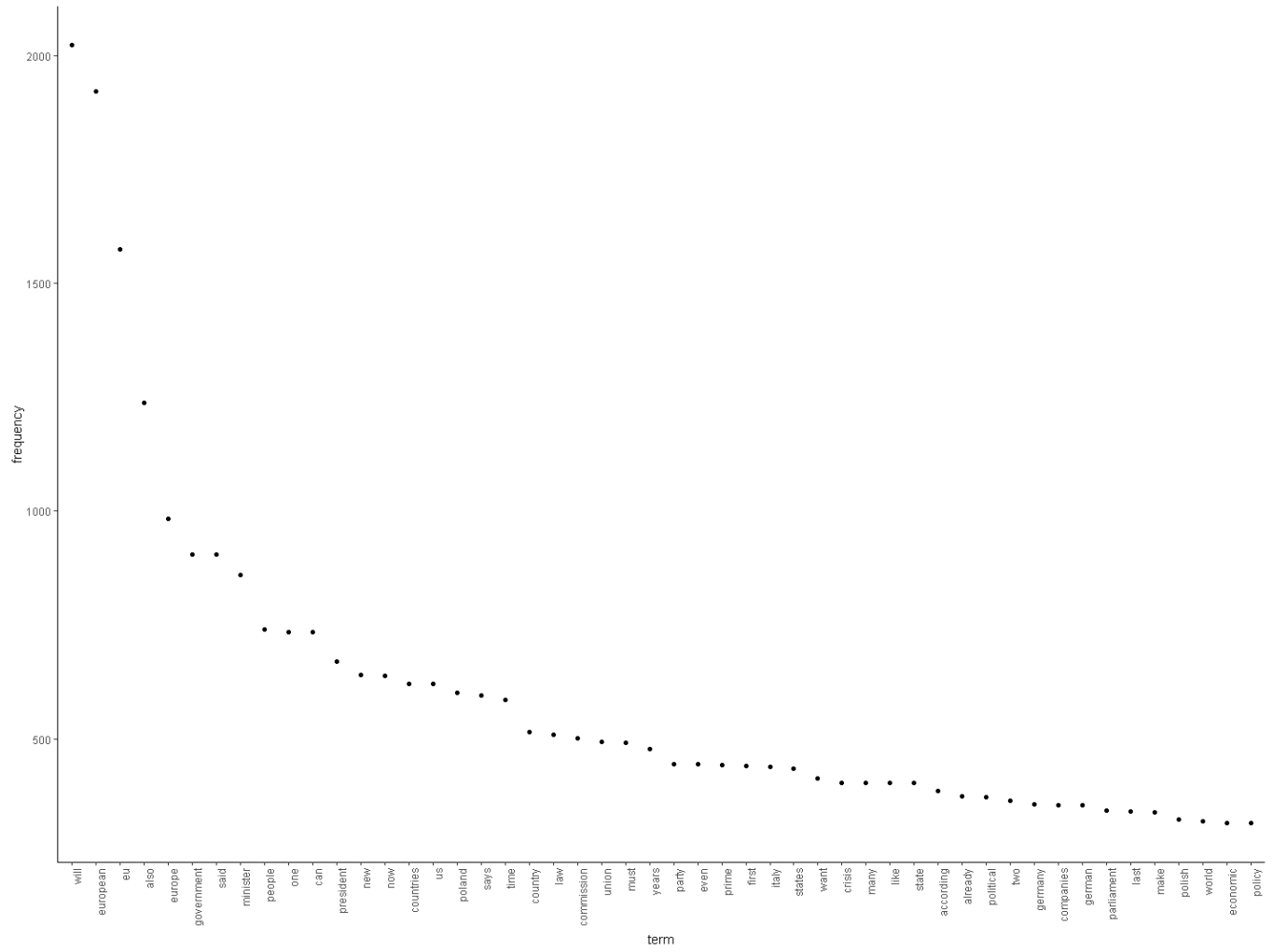




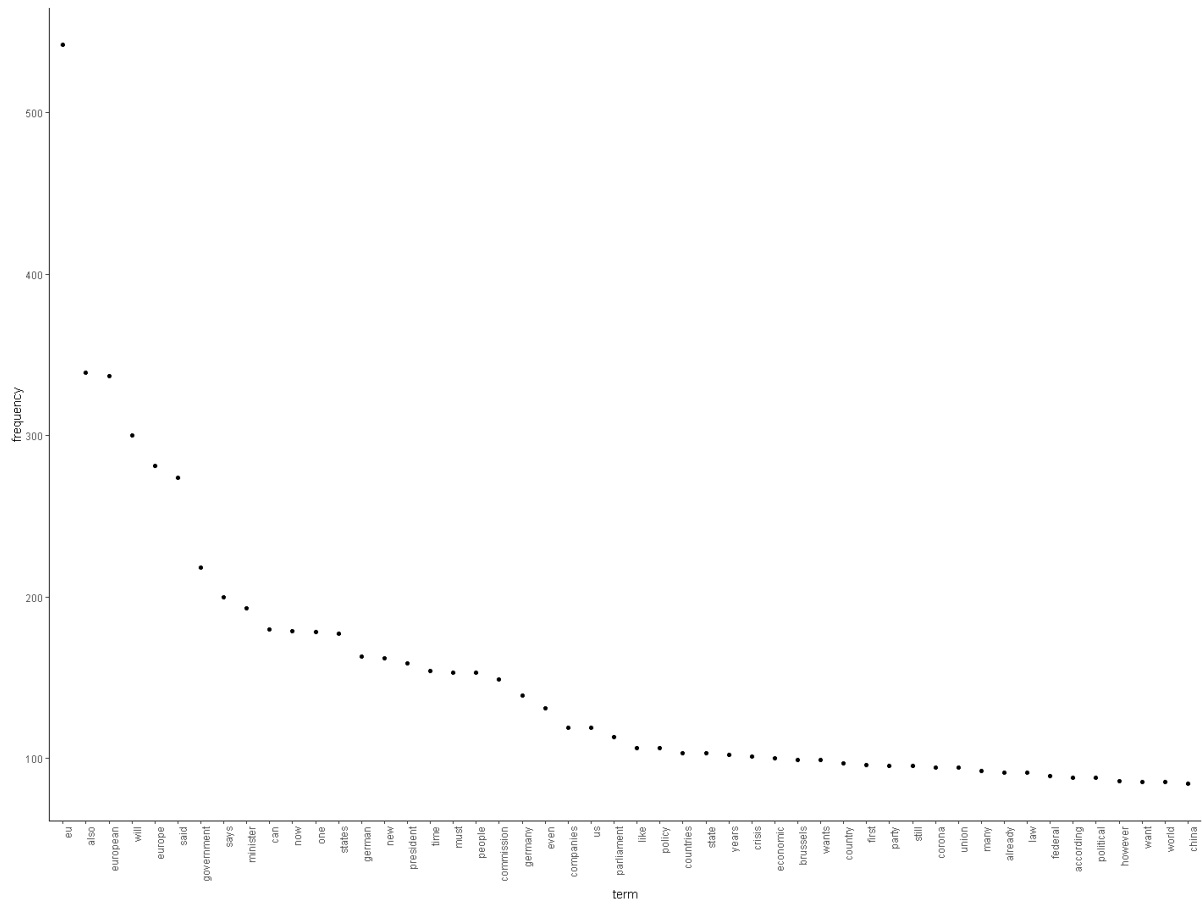




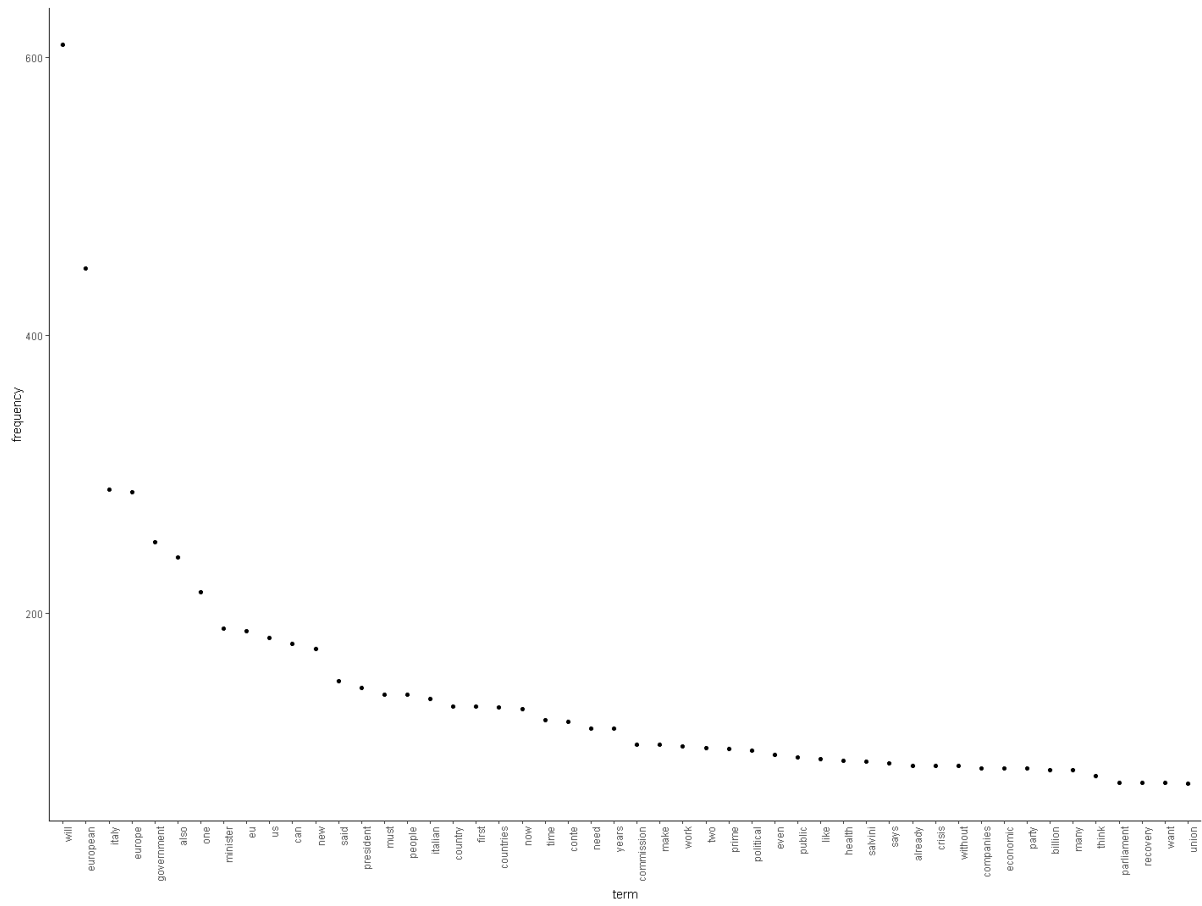




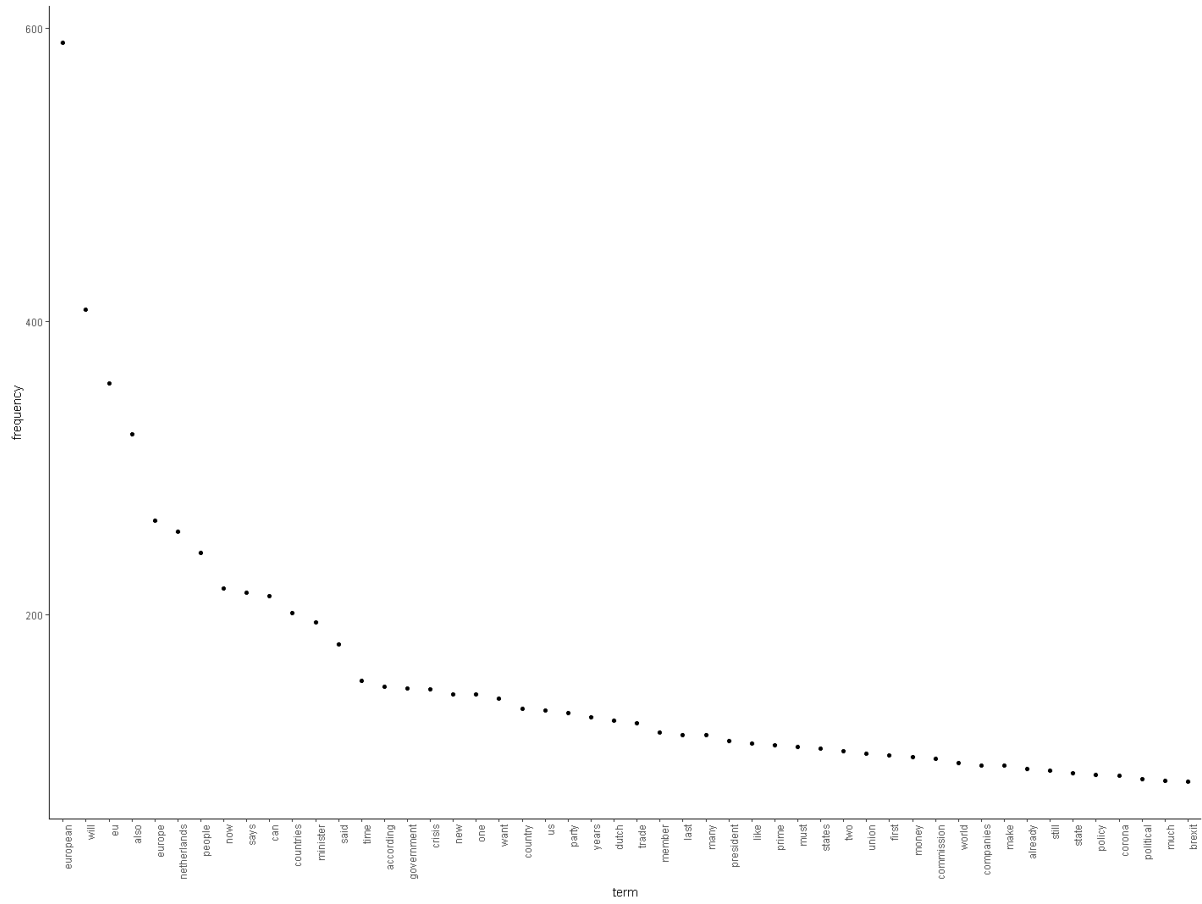
German net



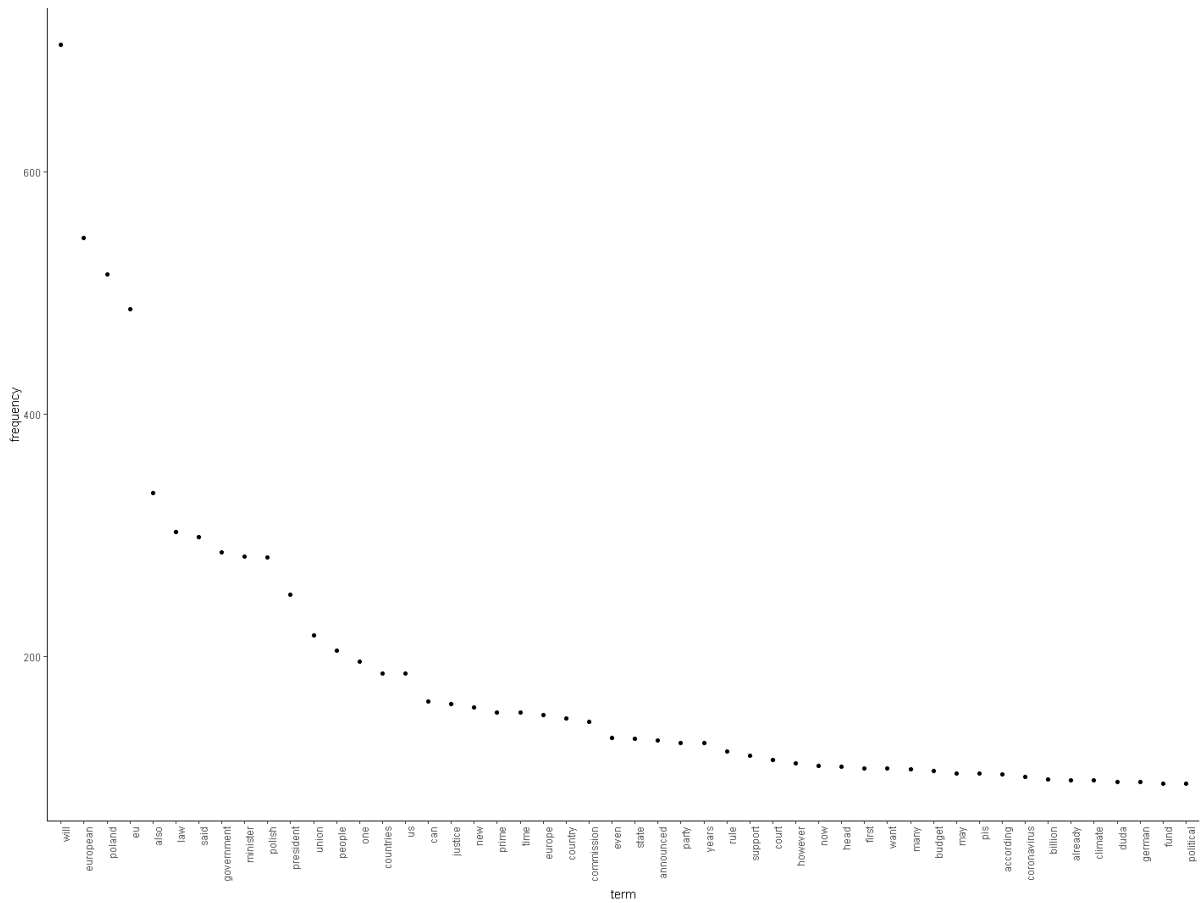
Italian net



Dutch net

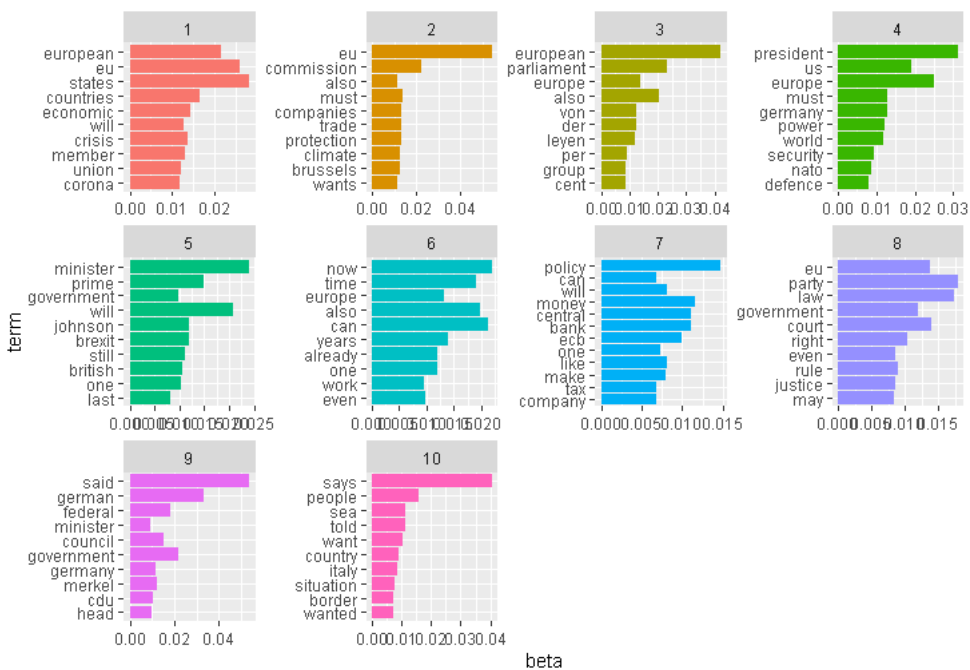


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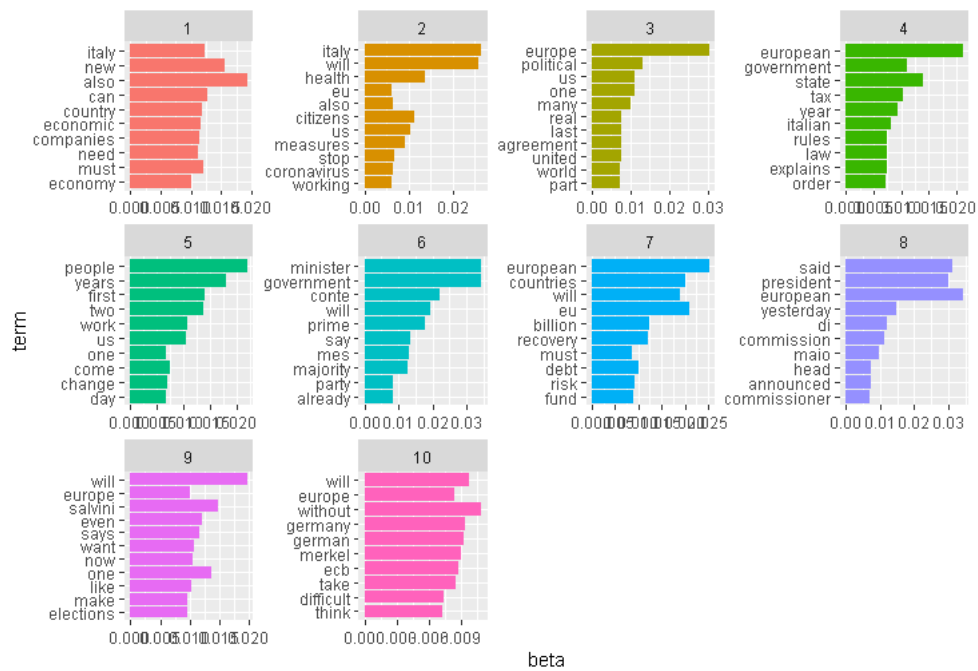


Topic models

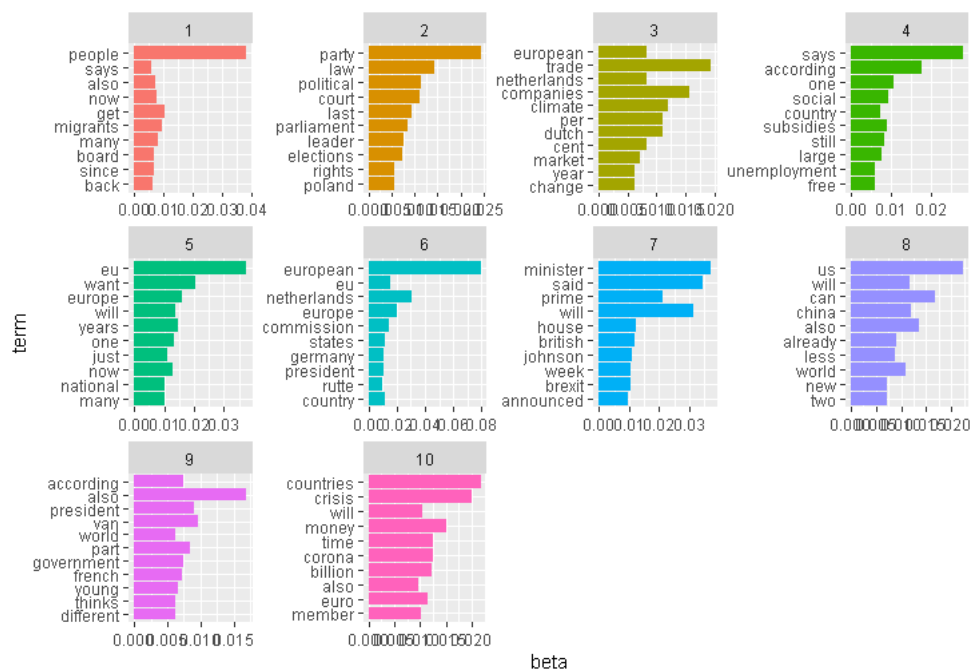
DE topic model



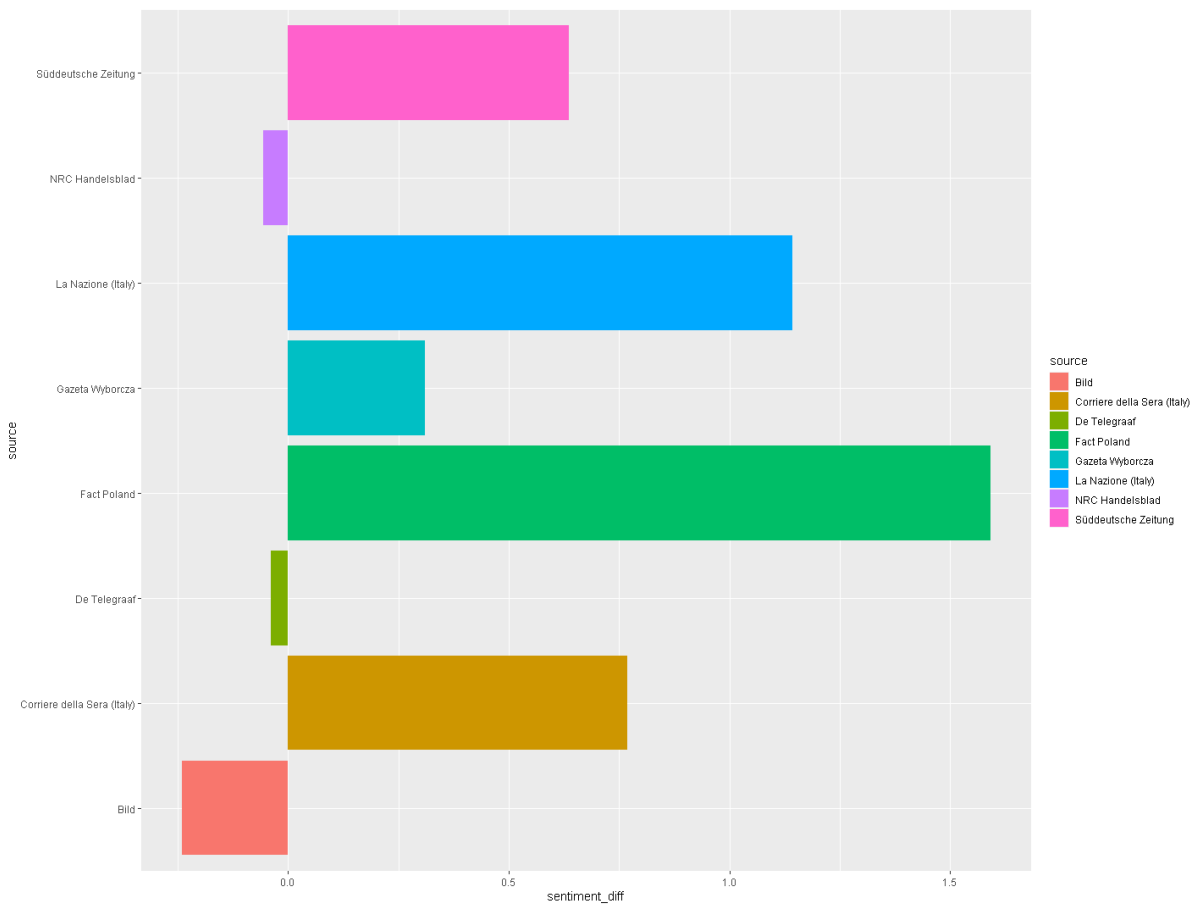
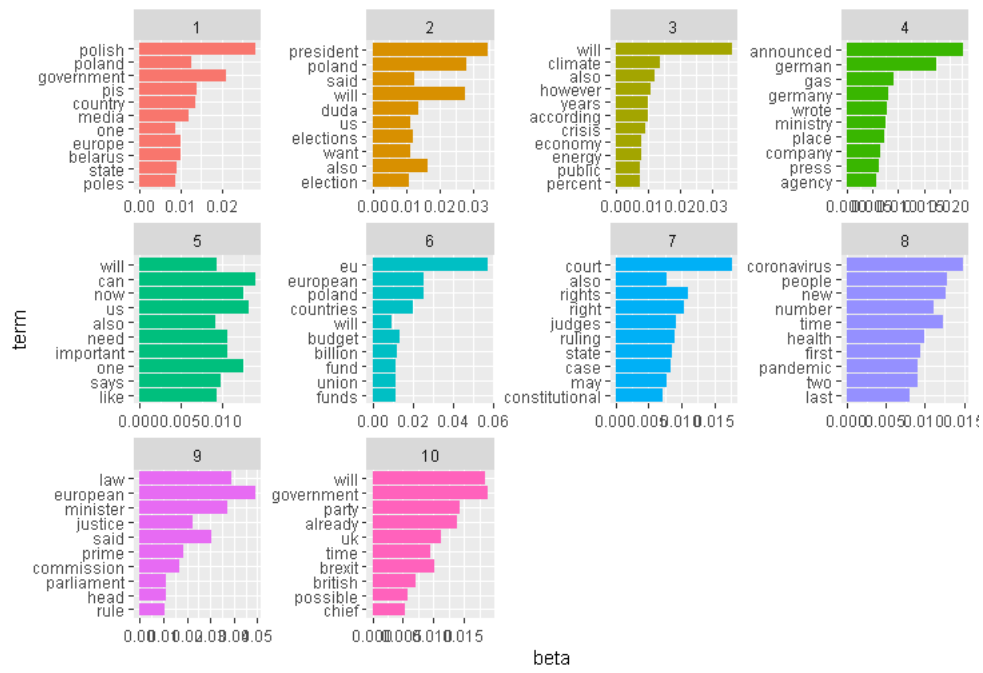
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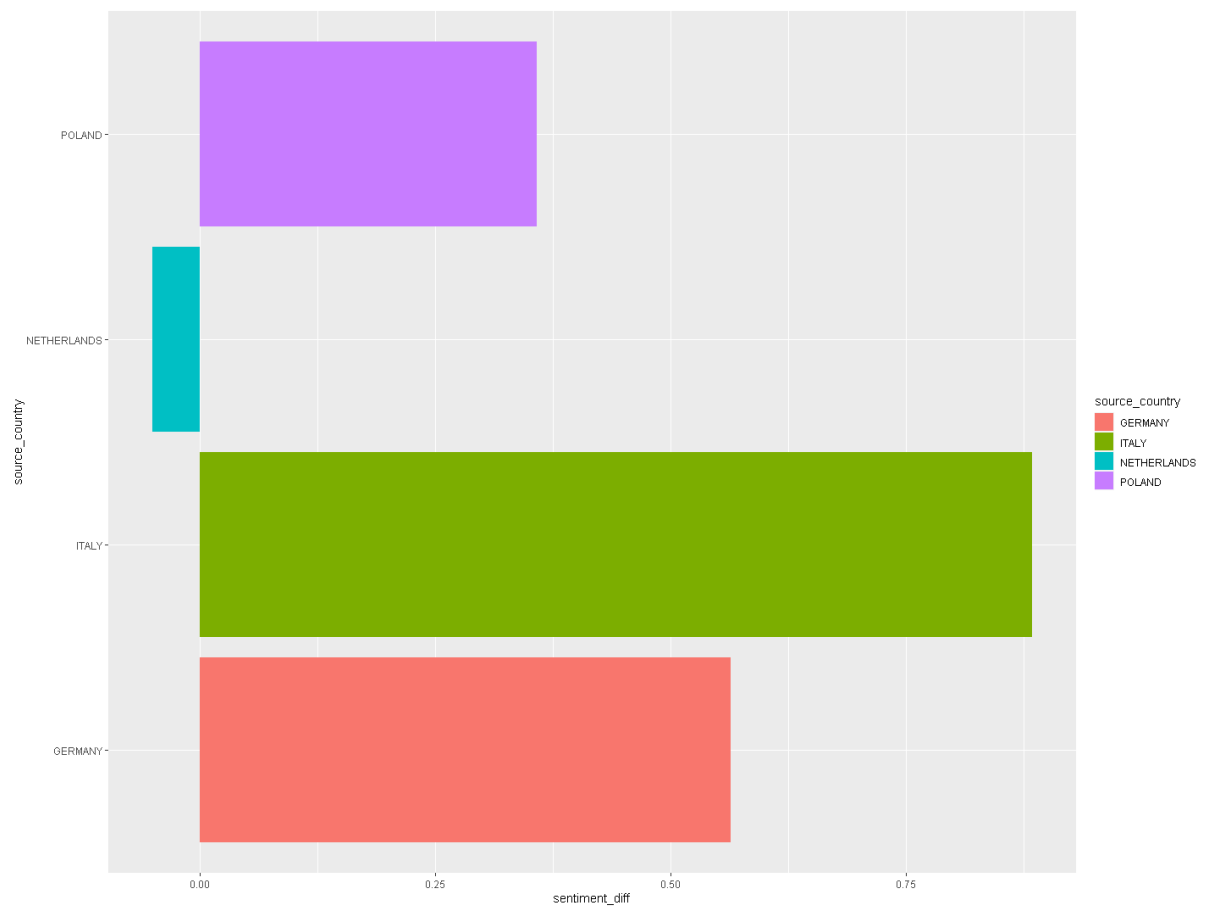


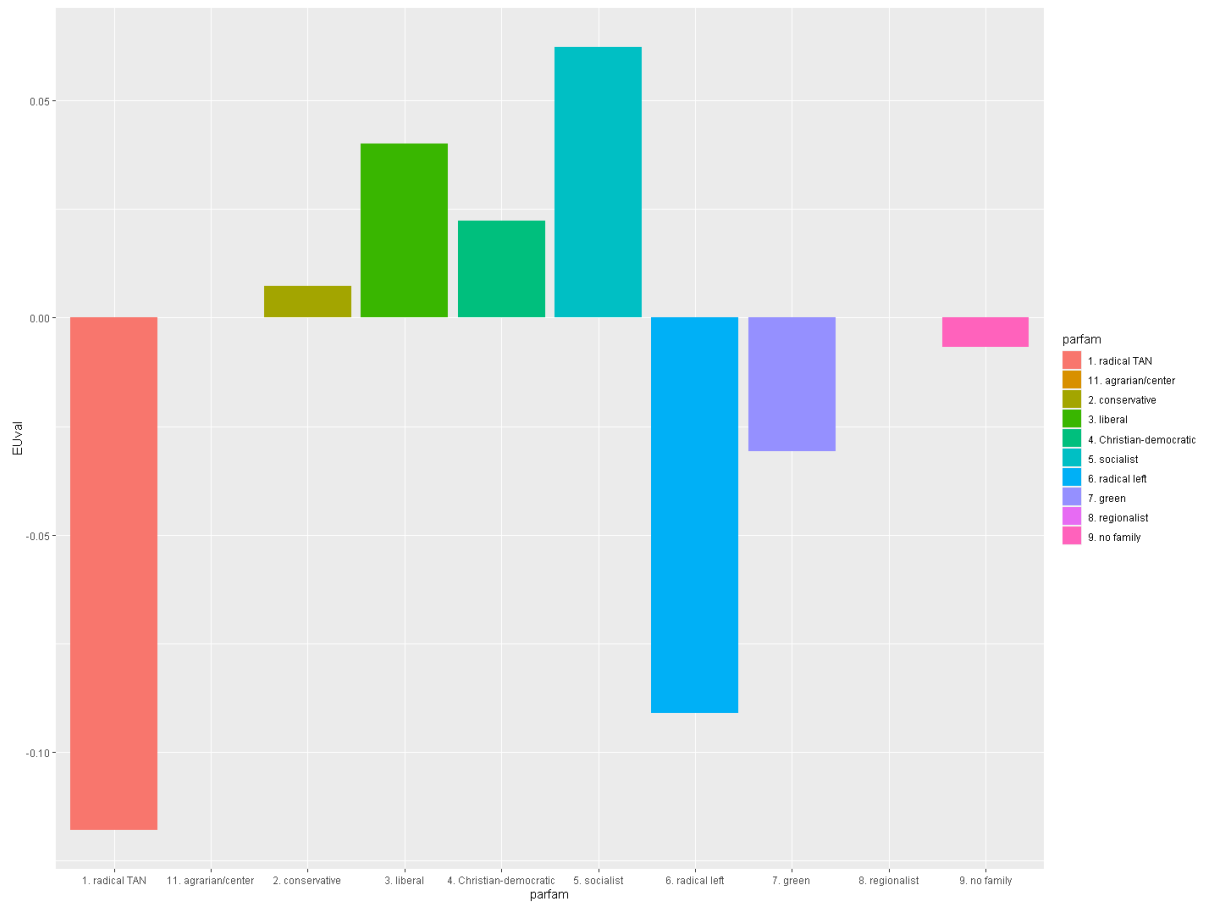
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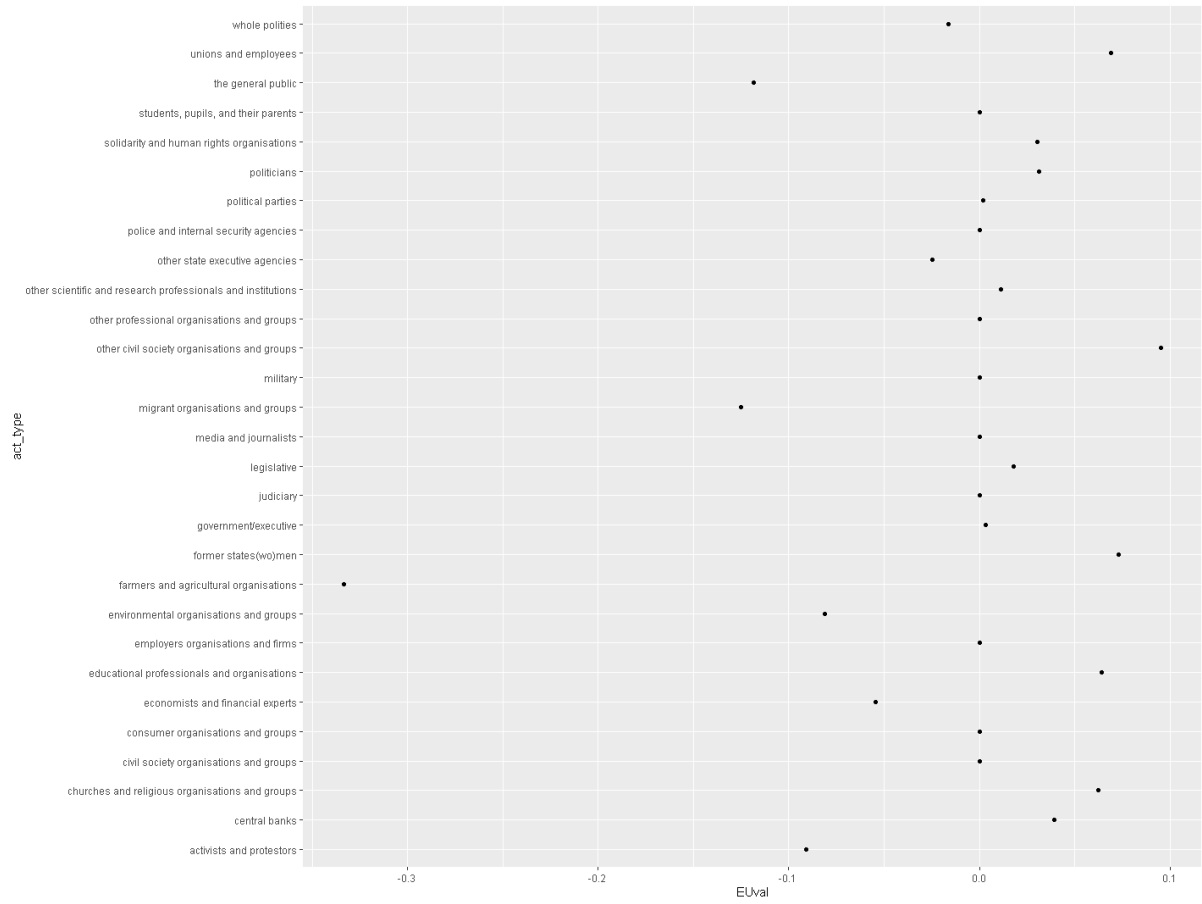


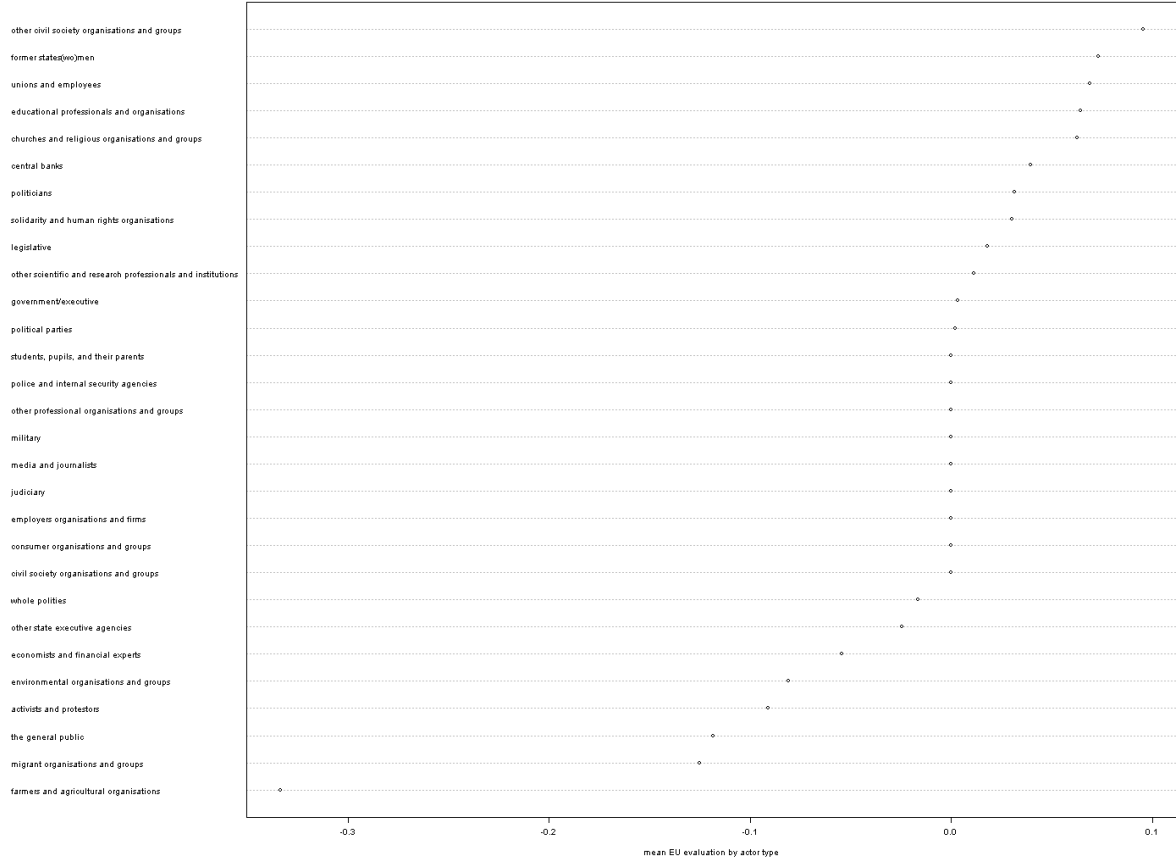
PL topic model

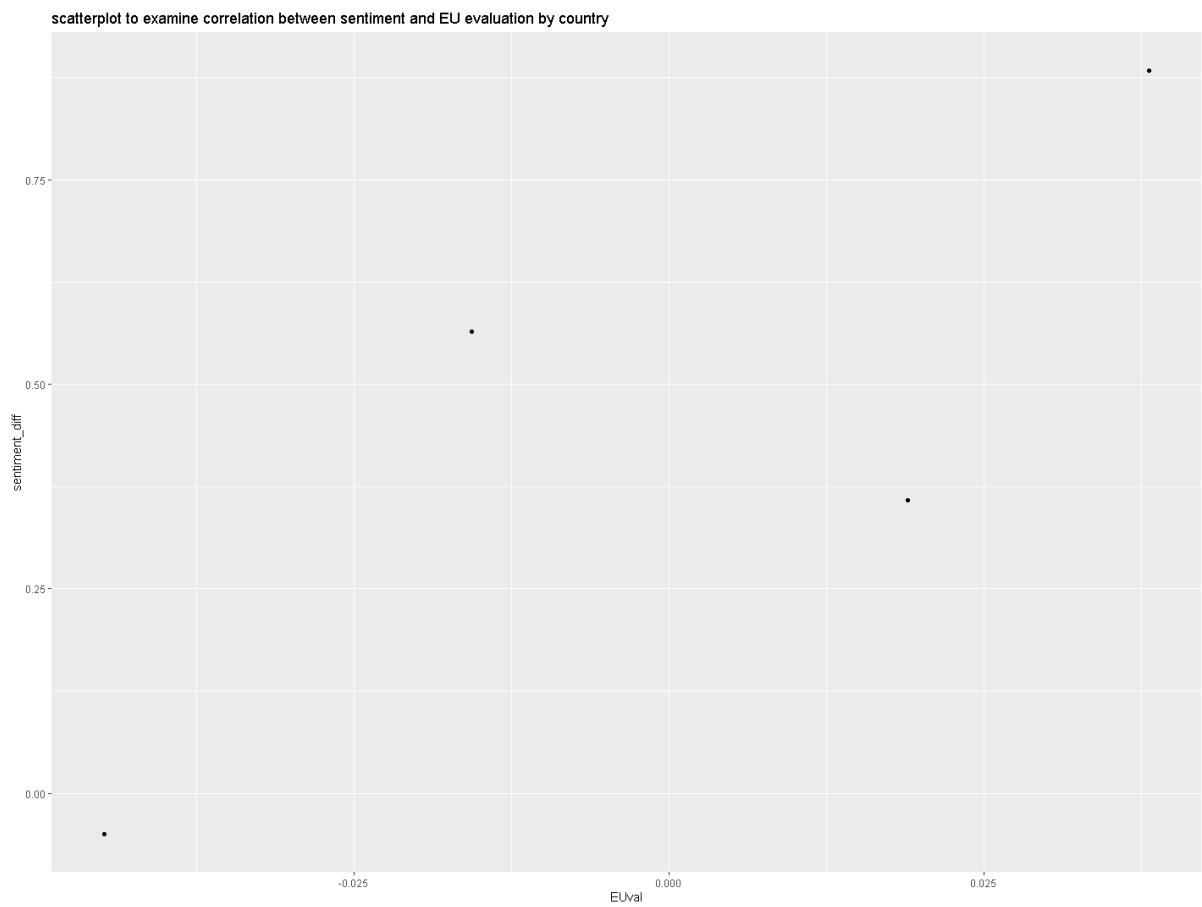
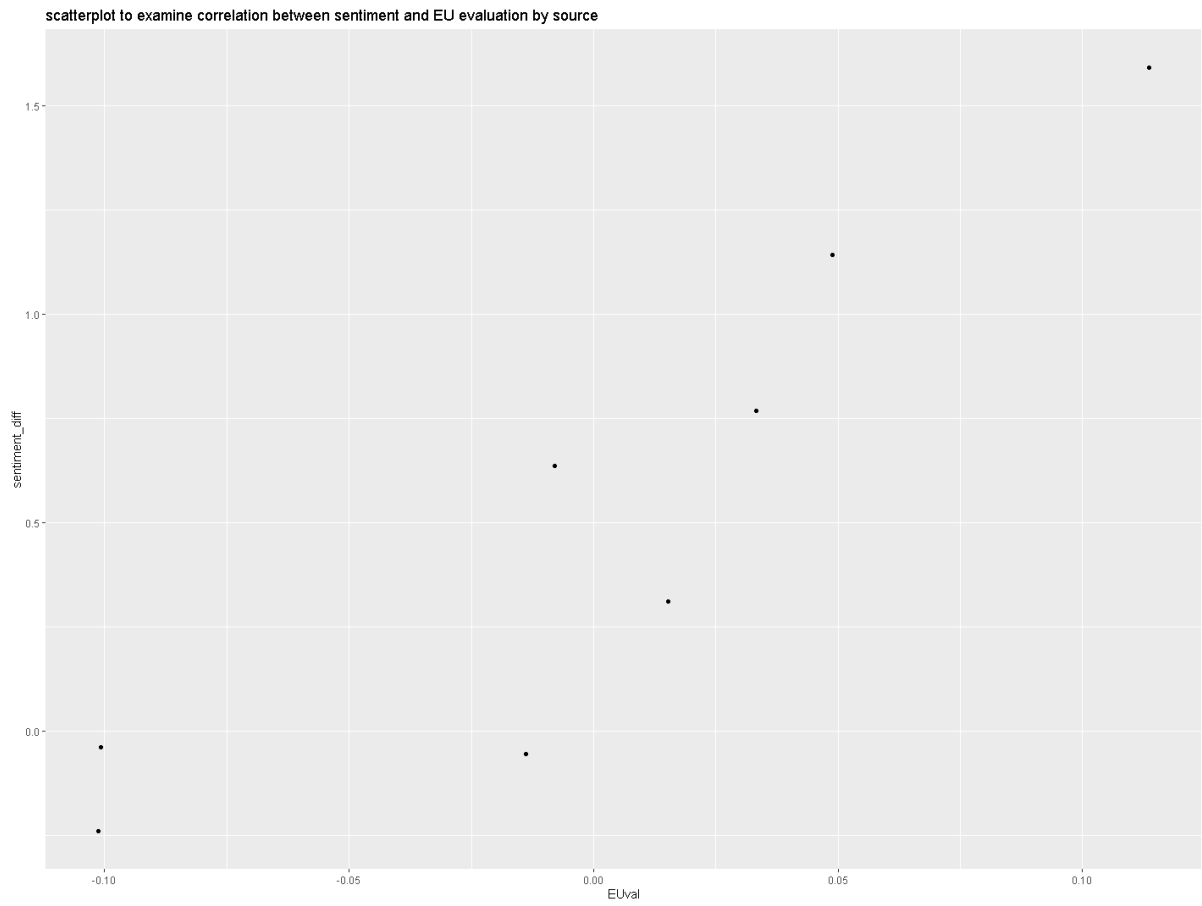


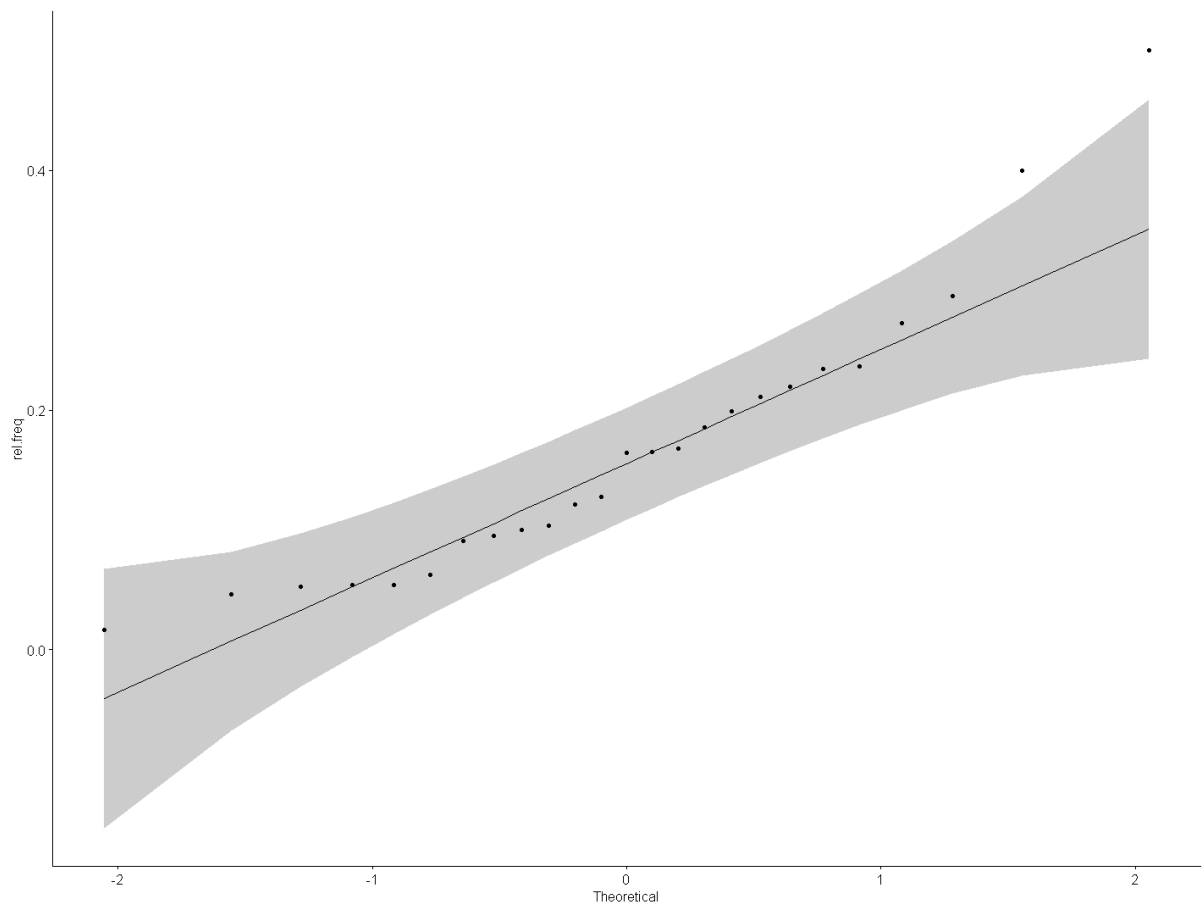
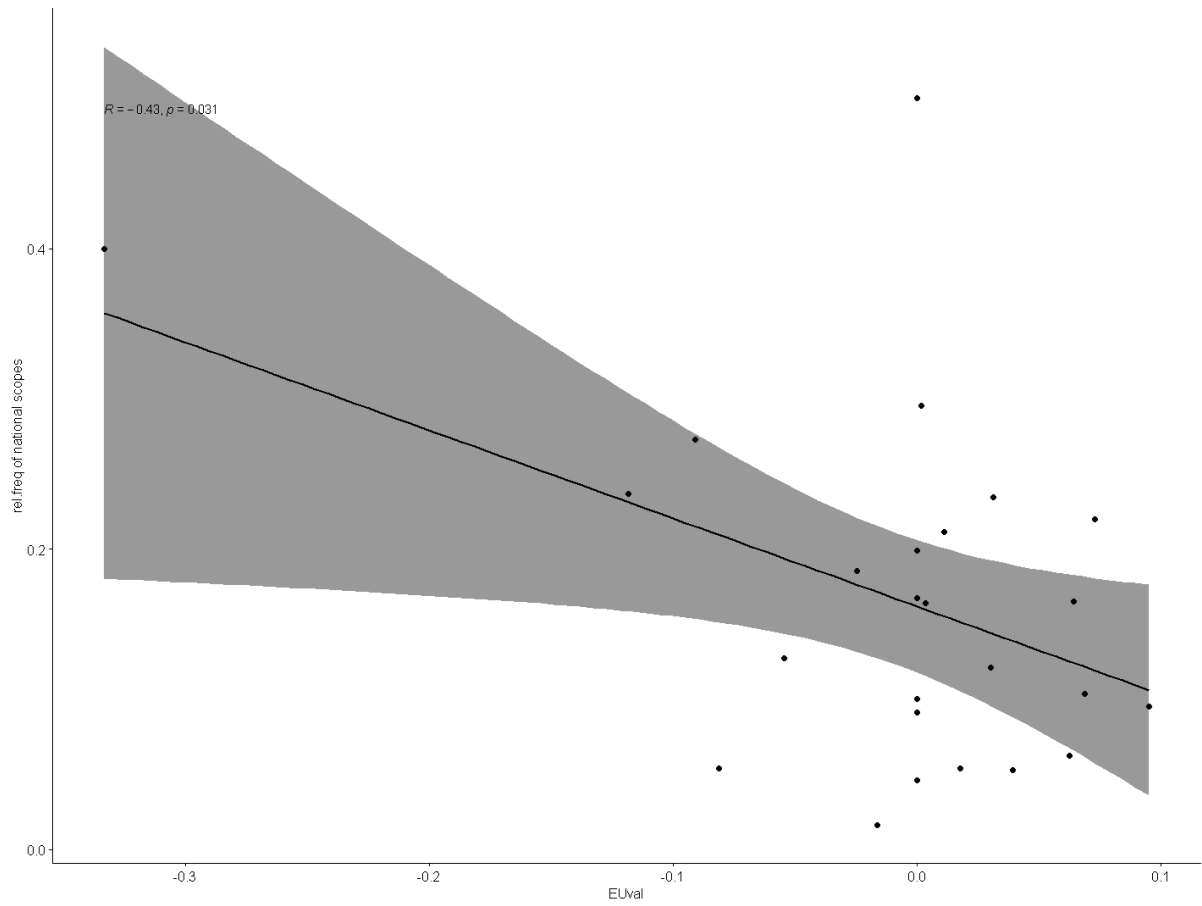


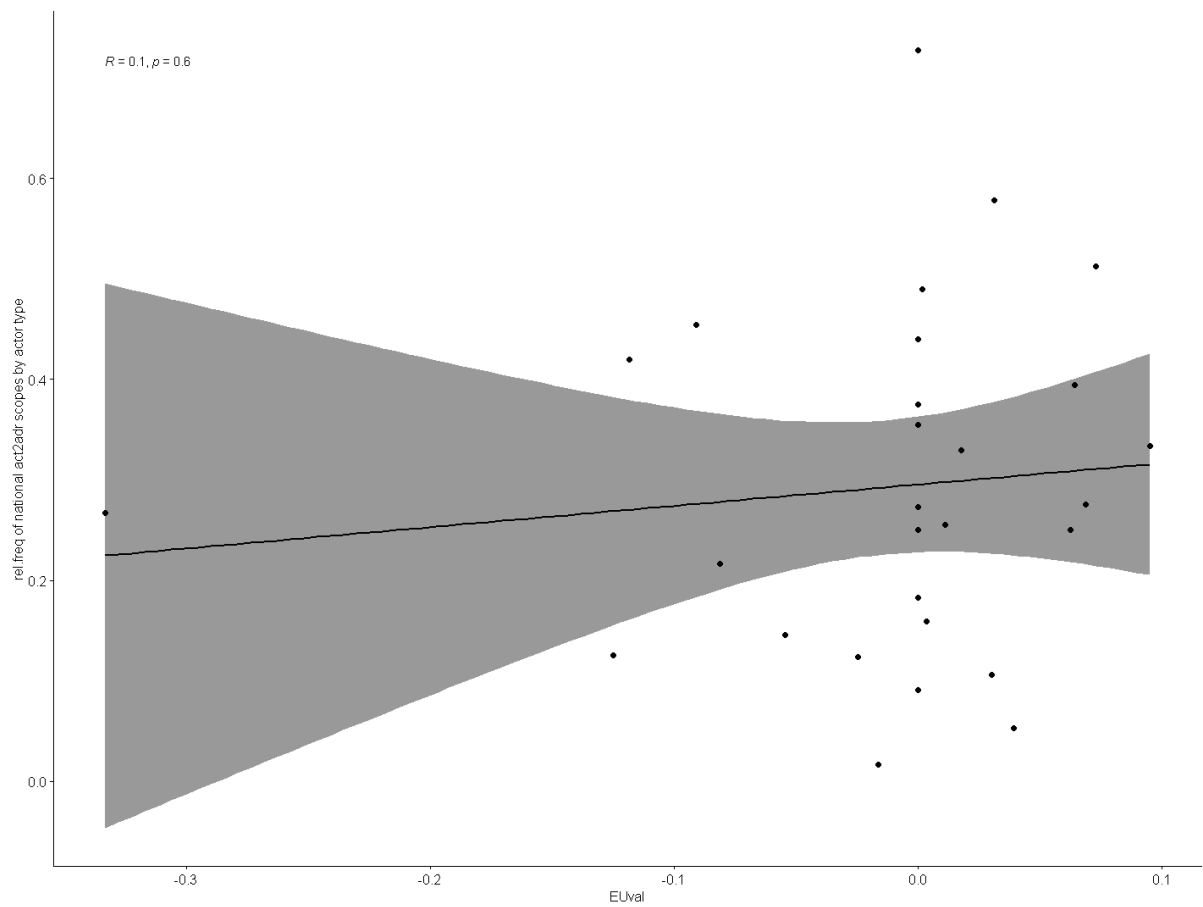
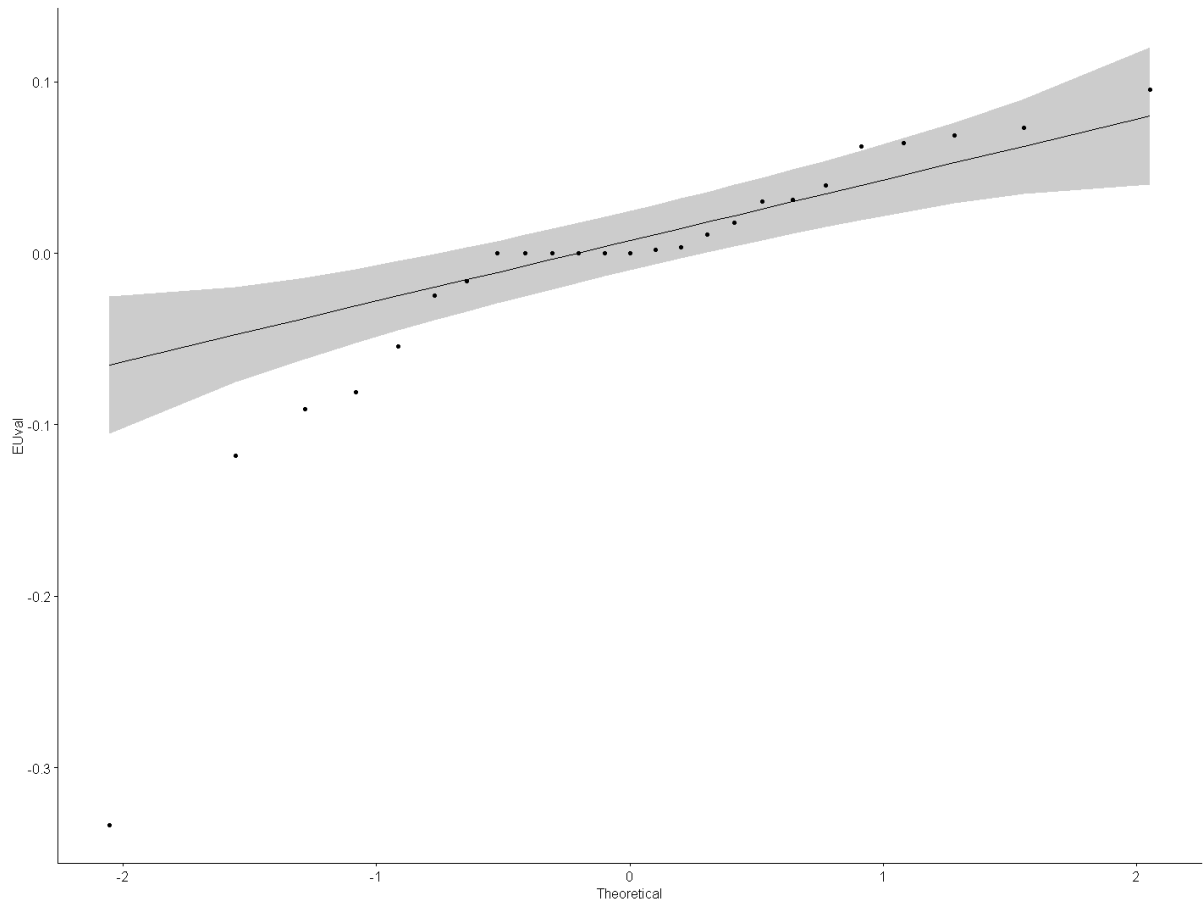


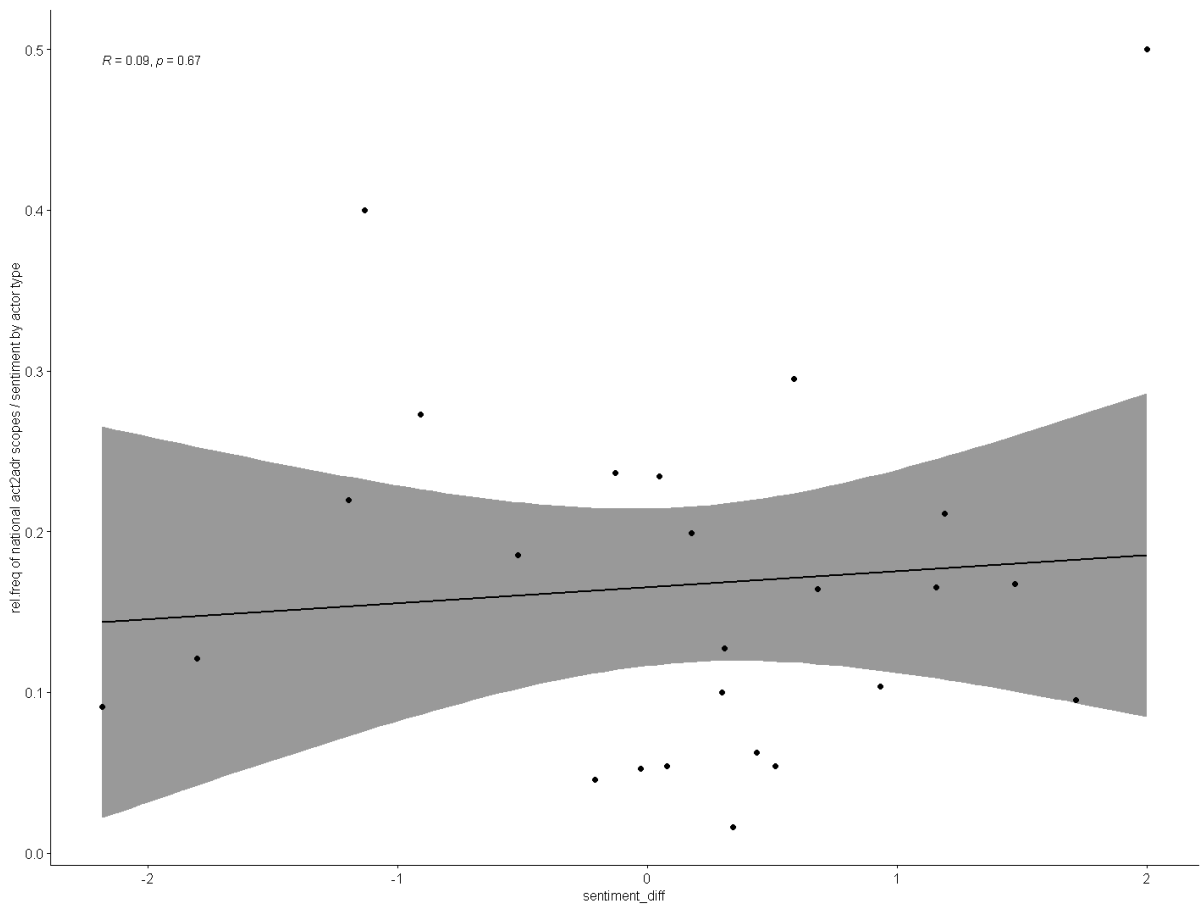
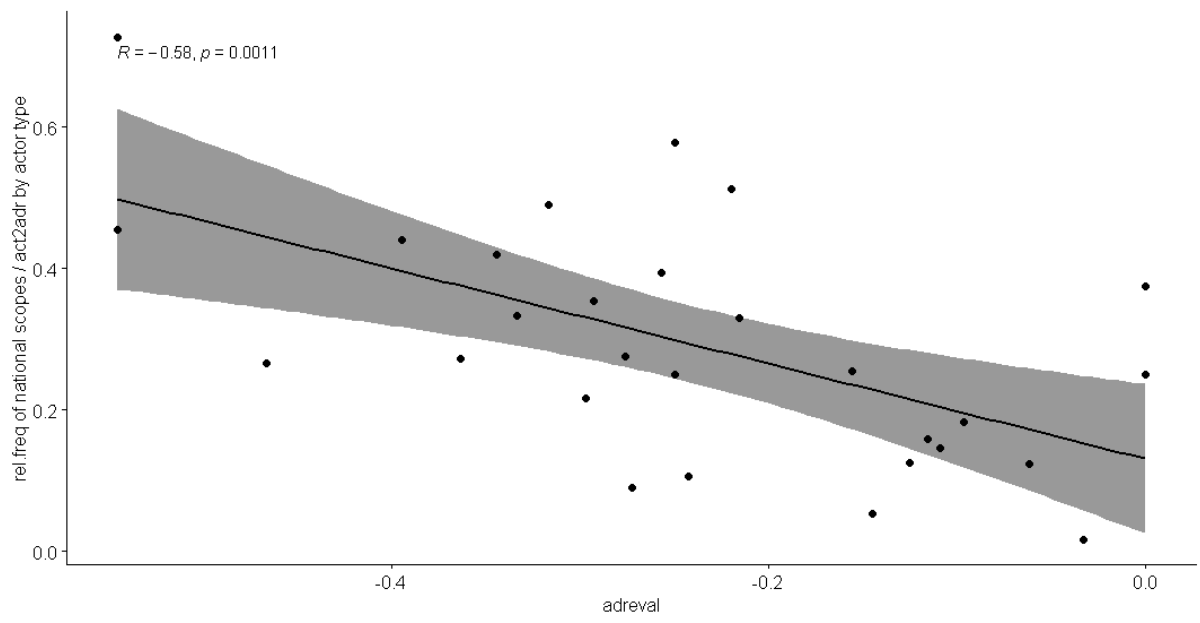


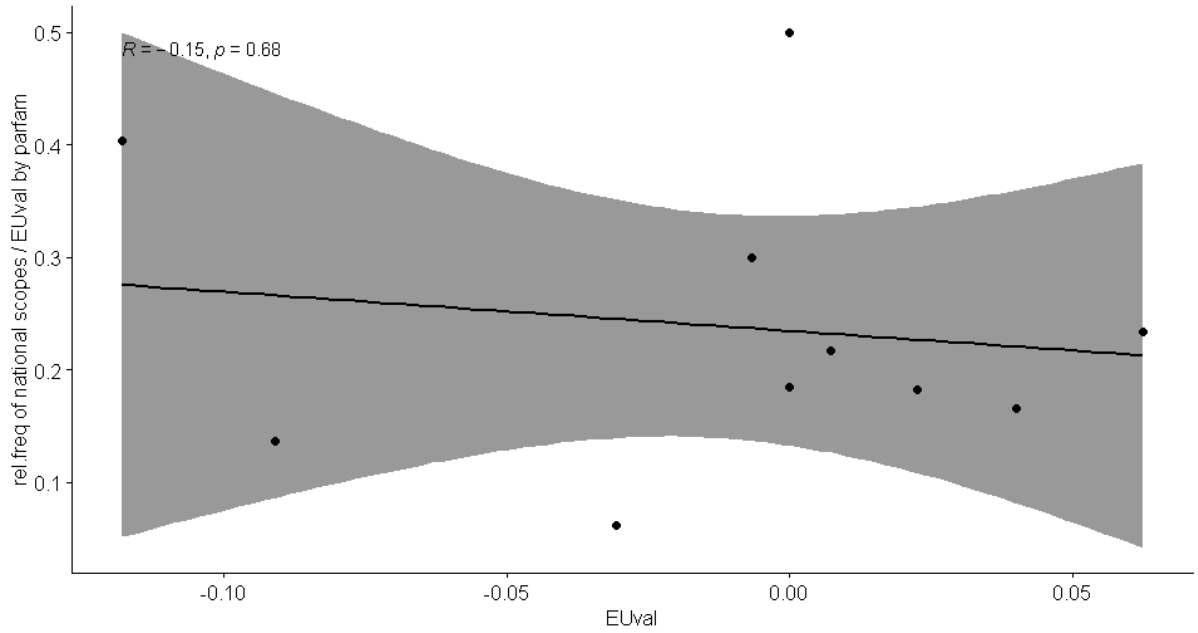
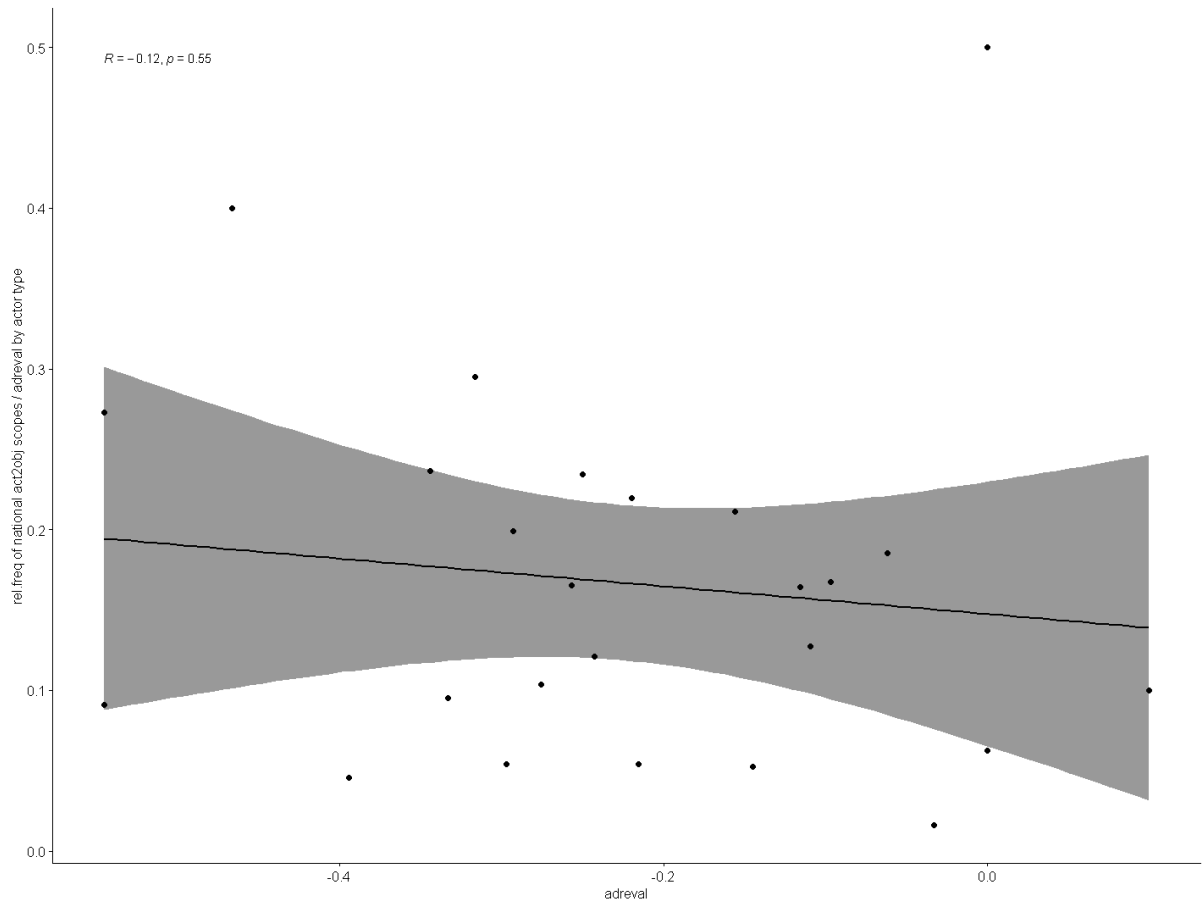


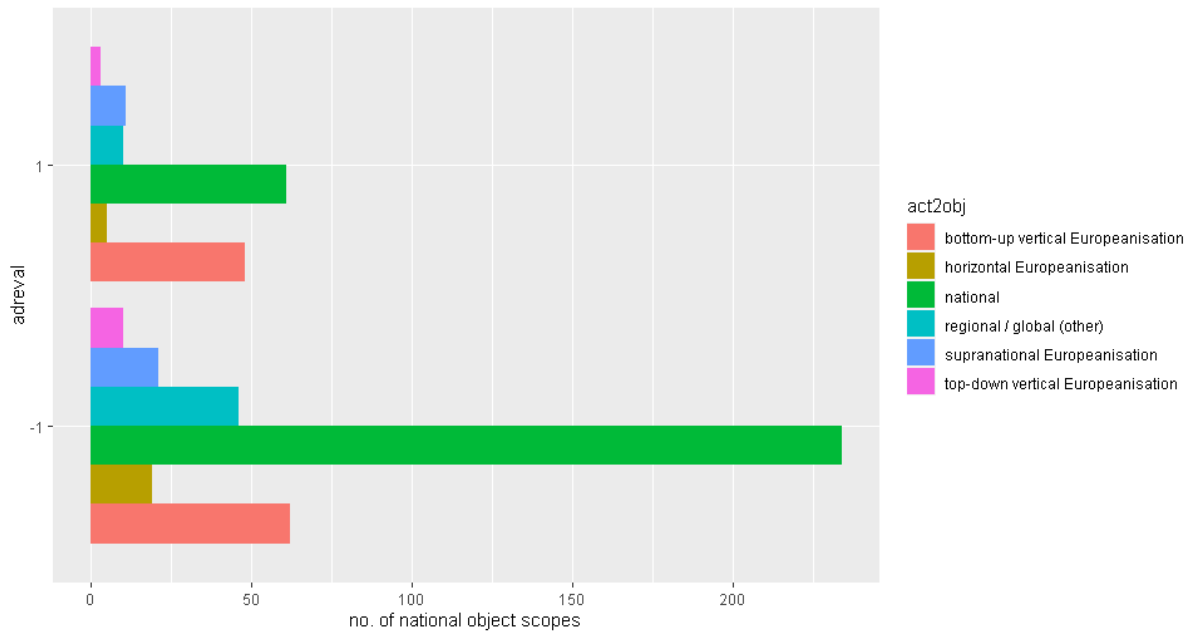
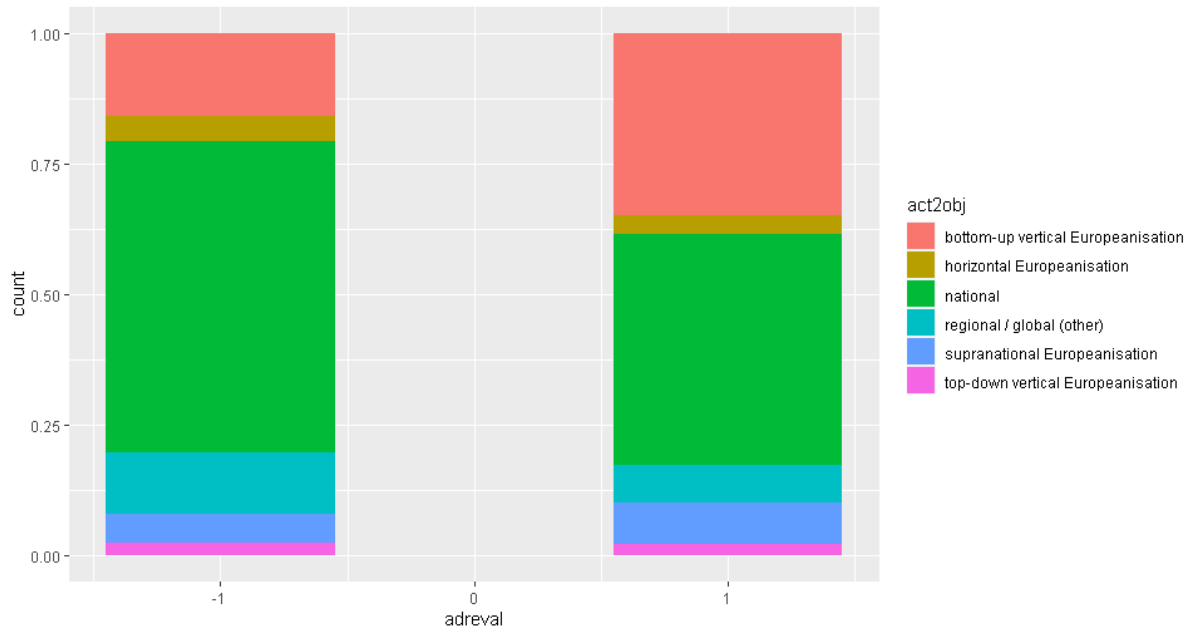


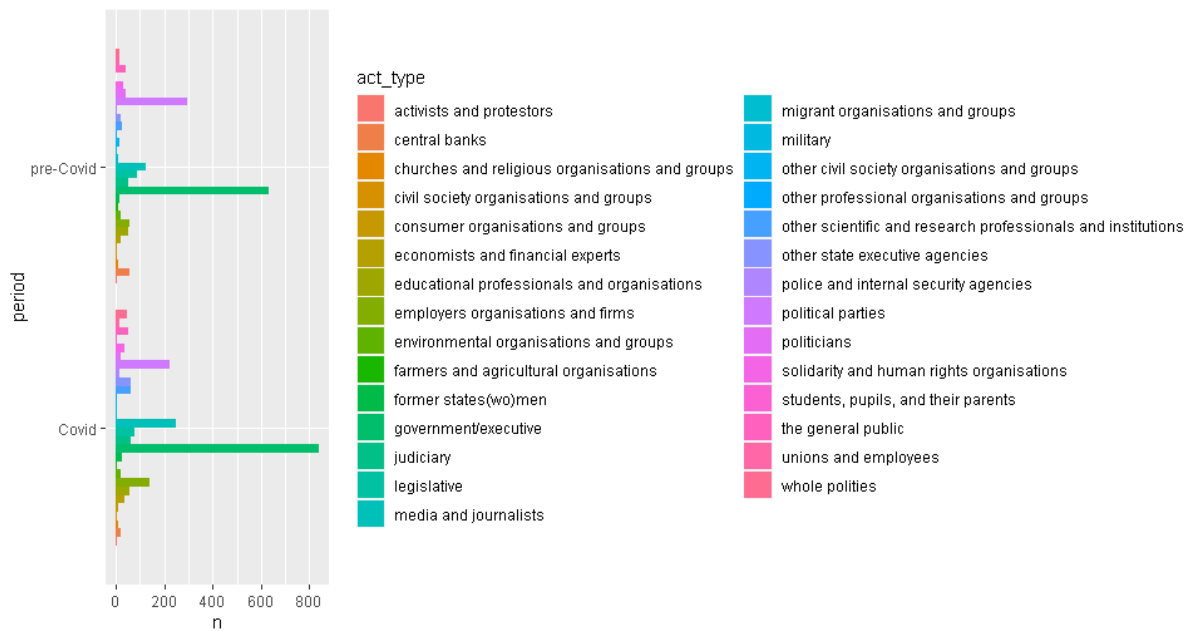
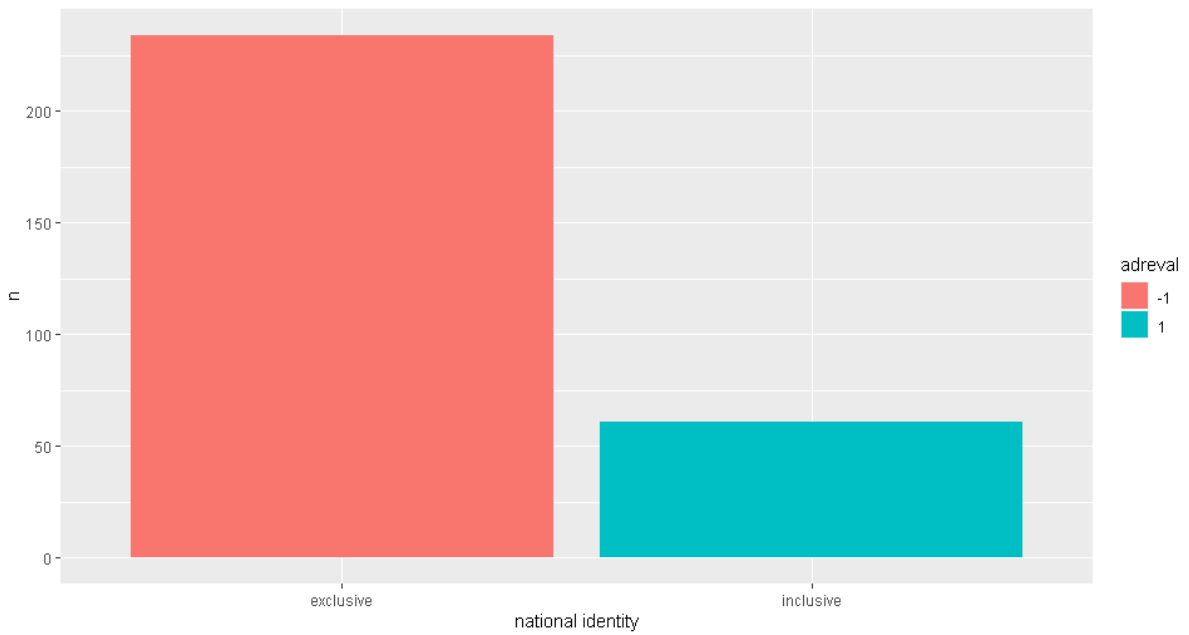






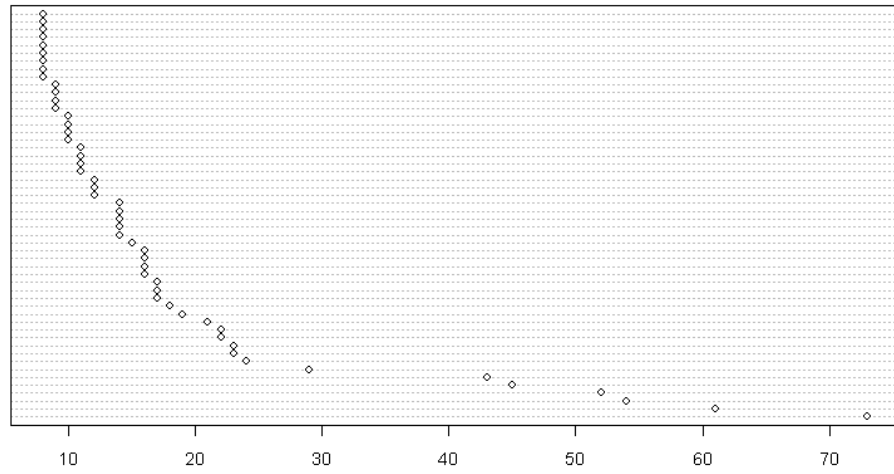






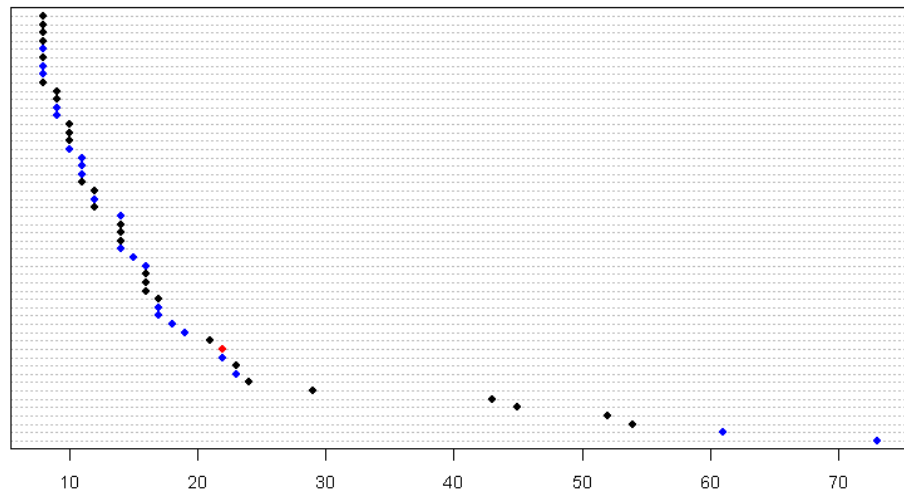
Claimant visibility

UK Government
House of Commons
Berni
Financial Affairs
Valdis
Günther
Government
Wolfgang
Stella
Margrethe
Government
Heike
Wopke
Christ
Włodzisław
Government
Tayyip
Christine
Ministry of Justice
Parliament
Wojciech
Maciej
Mateusz
Wojciech
von der Leyen
Ursula



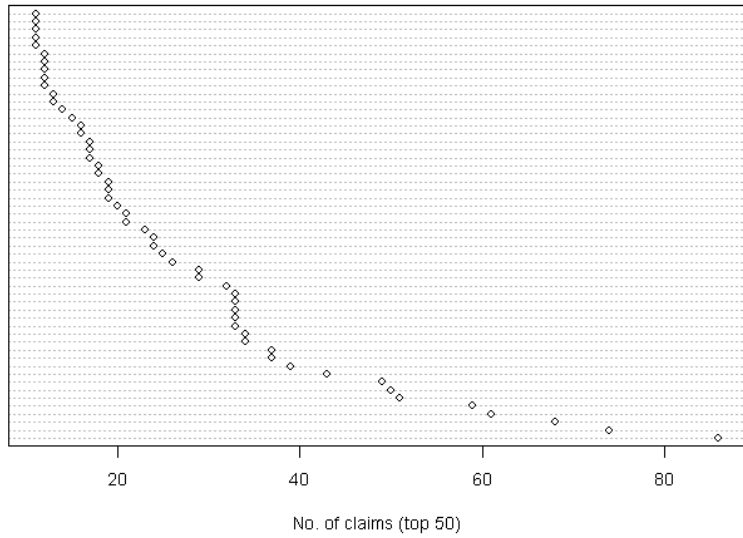
No. of claims (top 50)

UK Government
House of Commons
Berni
Financial Affairs
Valdis
Günther
Government
Wolfgang
Stella
Margrethe
Government
Heike
Wopke
Christ
Włodzisław
Government
Tayyip
Christine
Ministry of Justice
Parliament
Wojciech
Maciej
Mateusz
Wojciech
von der Leyen
Ursula

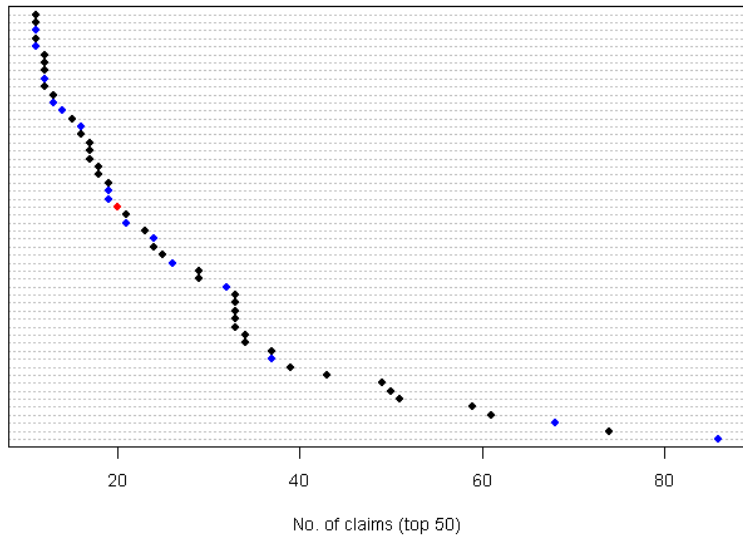


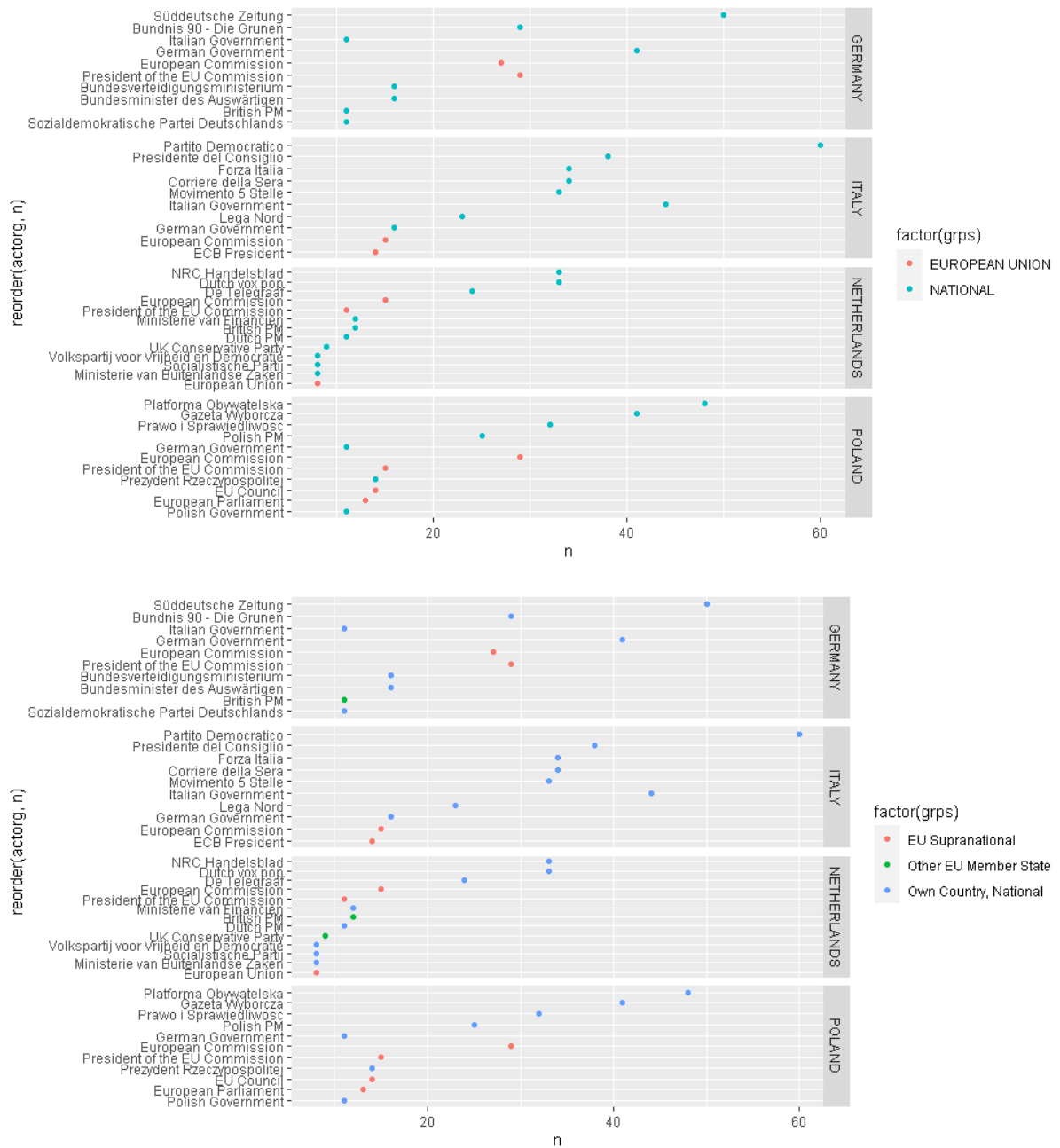
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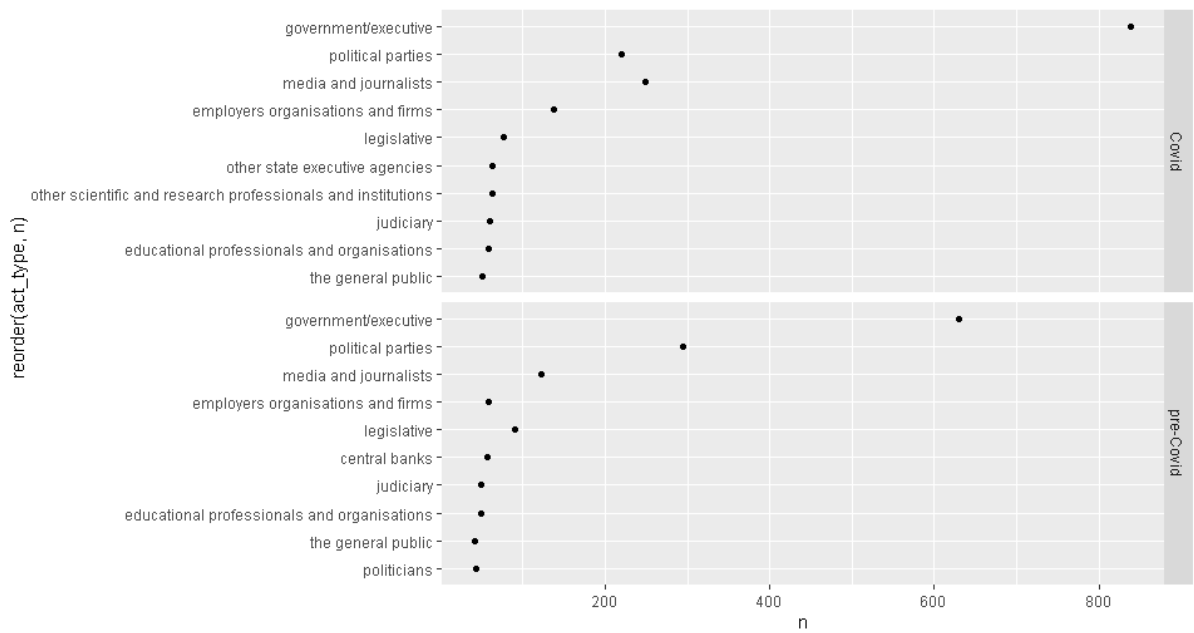
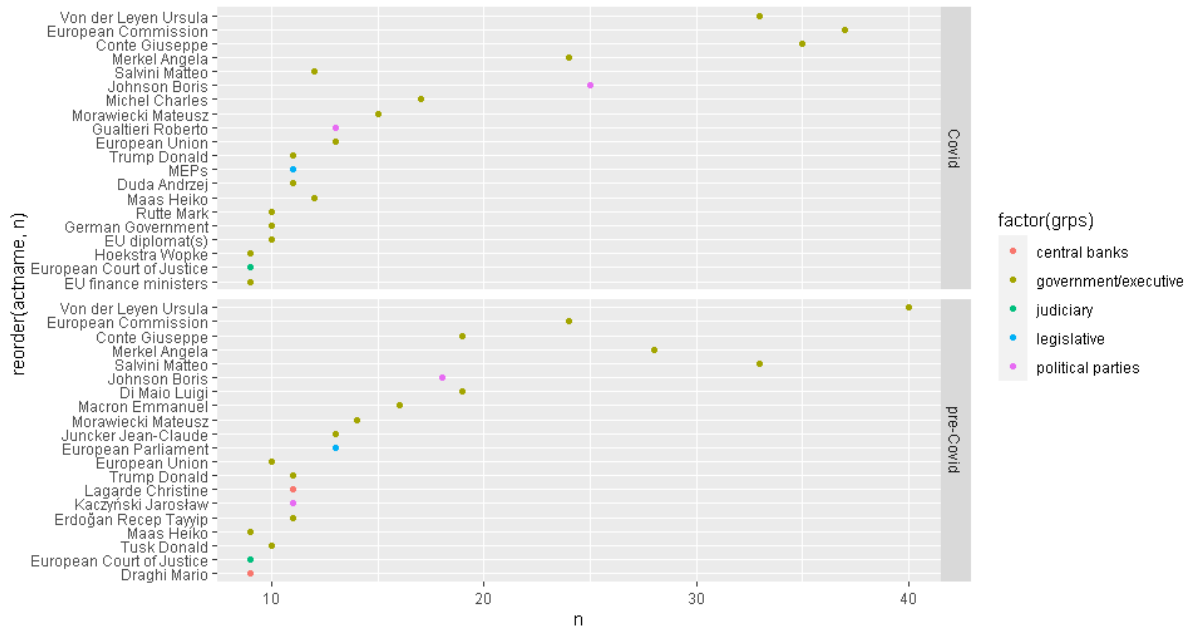
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European Free Alliance
European Representative
European Parliament
European Central Bank
Ministerie van Financiën
European Medicines Agency
European Commission
Cyprusian Party
Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwosci
Minister der Finanzen
European External Action Service
European Parliament
Minister des Auswärtigen
Ministerium der Finanzen
Ministerpräsident
European Parliament
European Commission
Minister des Auswärtigen
Ministerium der Finanzen
European Commission
European Commission

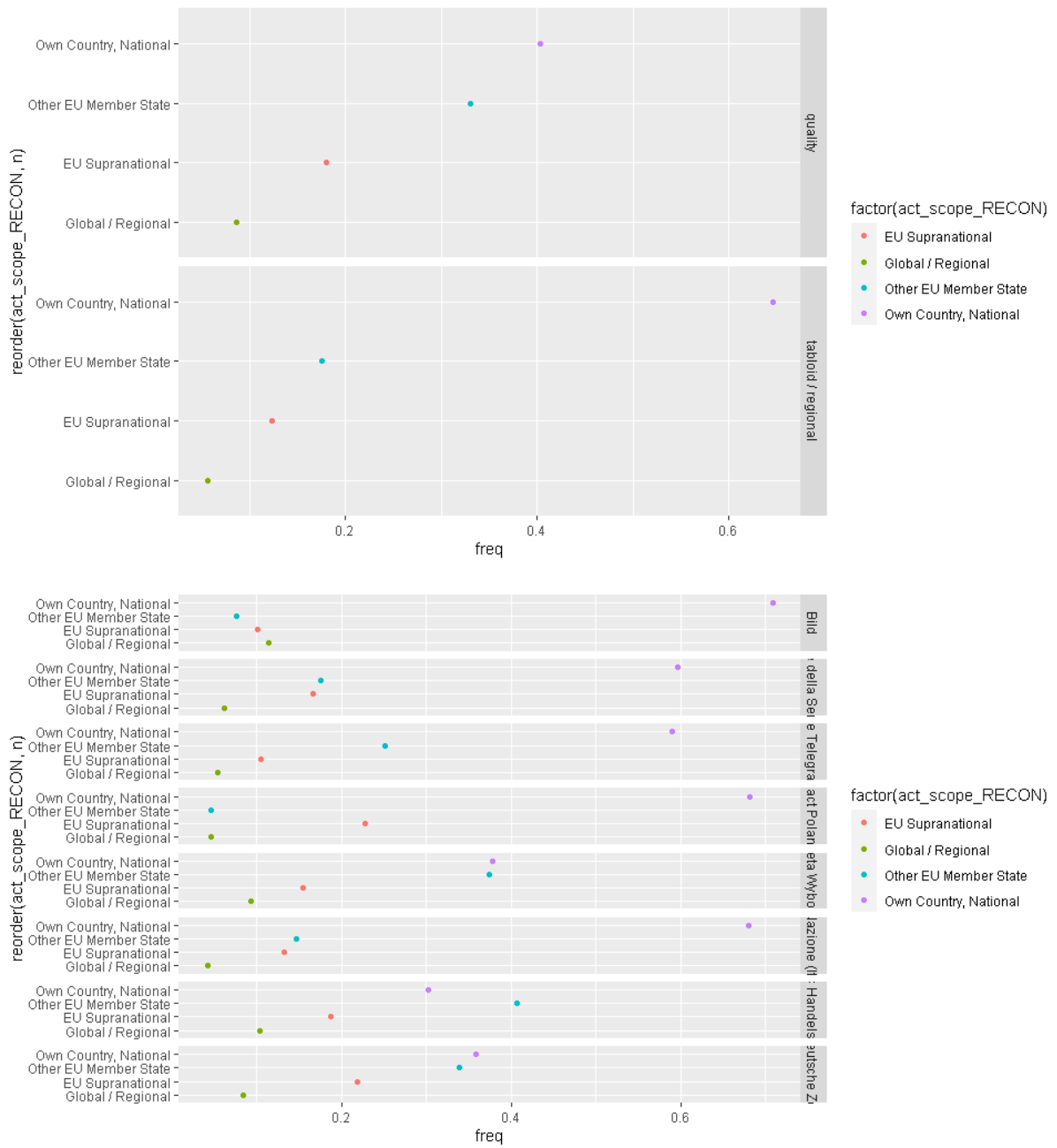


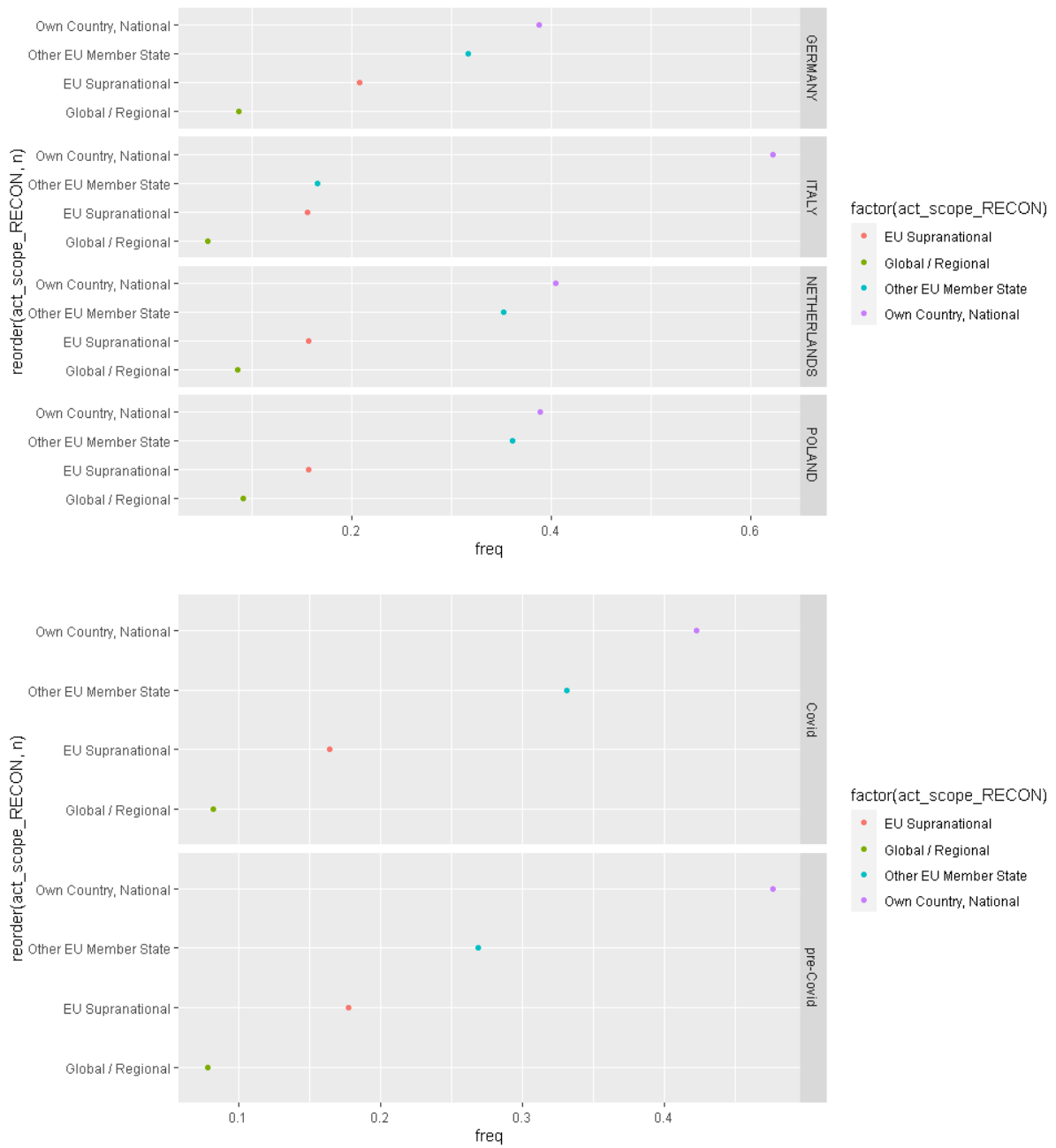
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European Free Alliance
European Representative
European Parliament
European Central Bank
Ministerie van Financiën
European Medicines Agency
European Commission
Cyprusian Party
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European External Action Service
European Parliament
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Ministerpräsident
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European Commission
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Ministerium der Finanzen
European Commission
European Commission



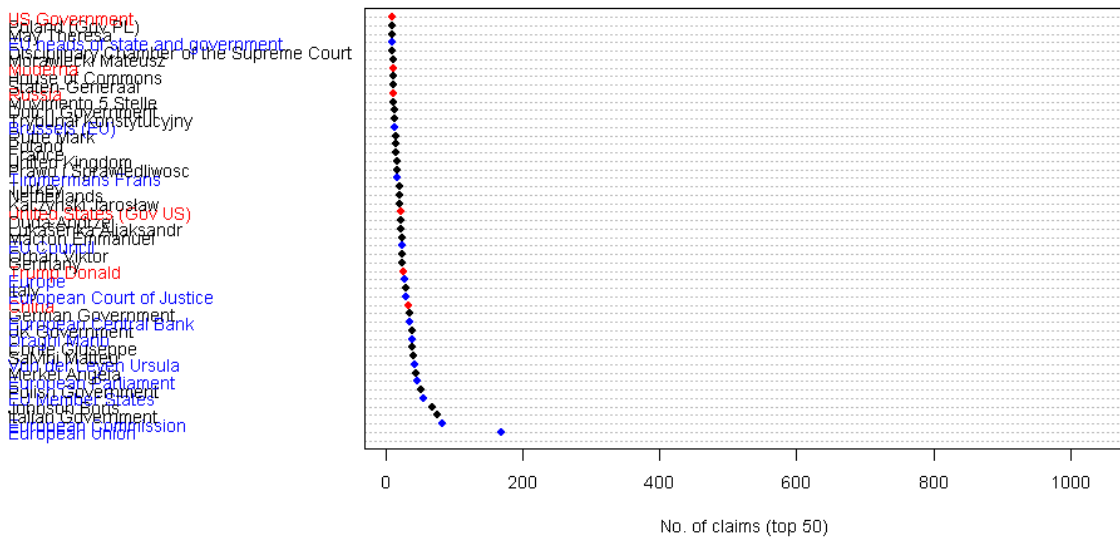
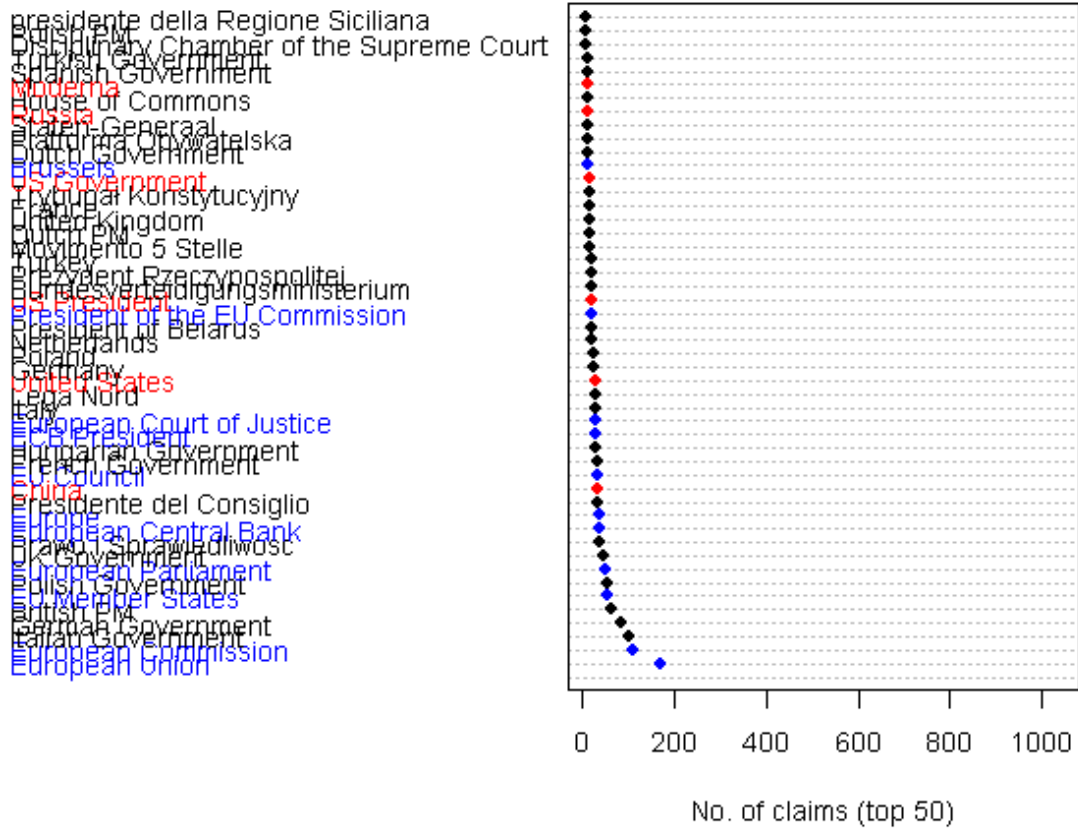


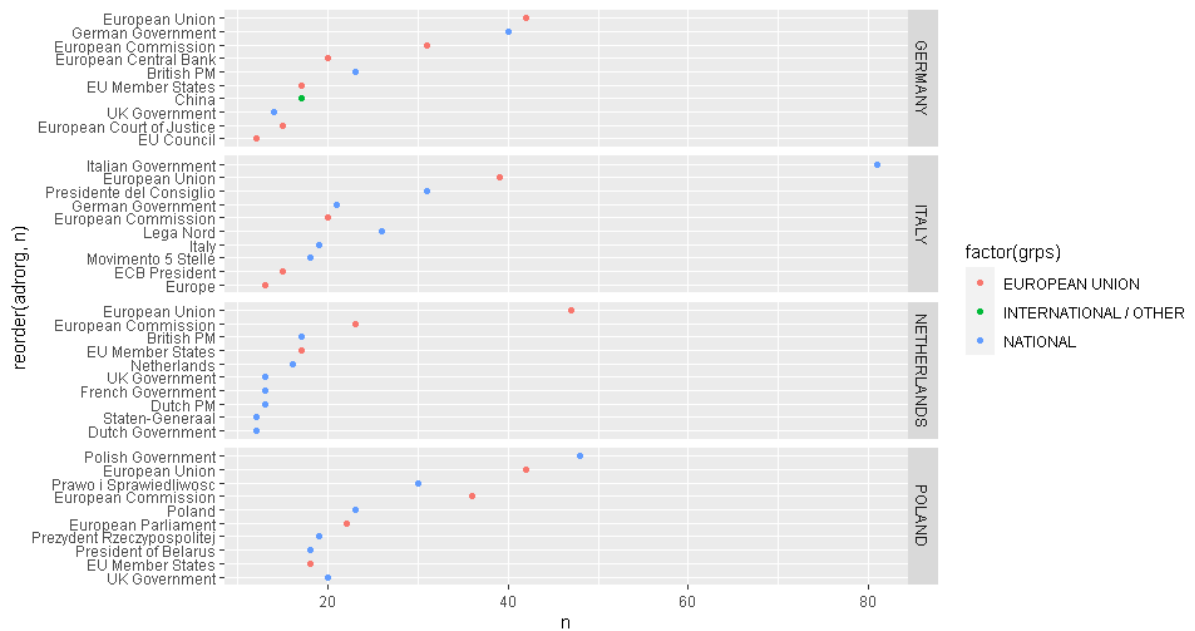
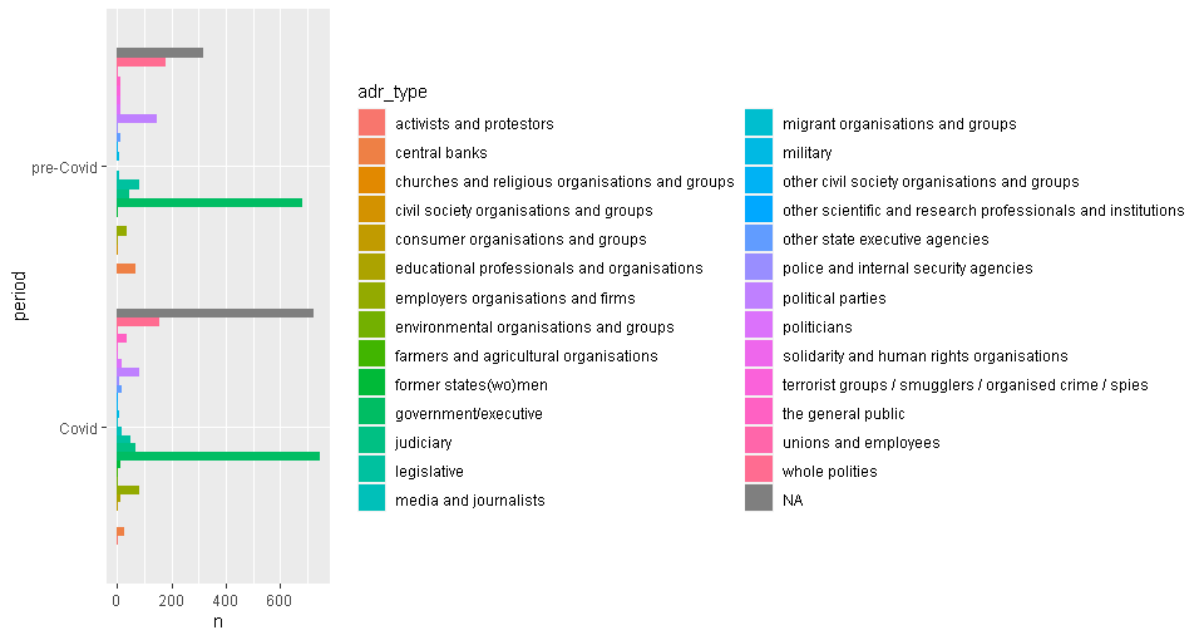


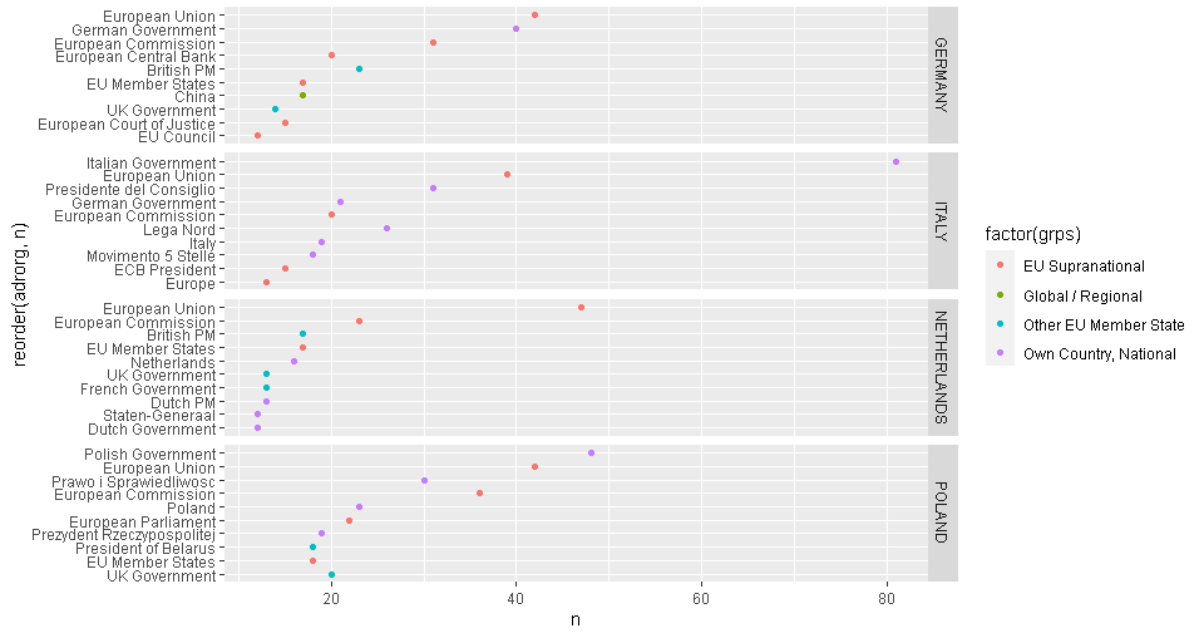


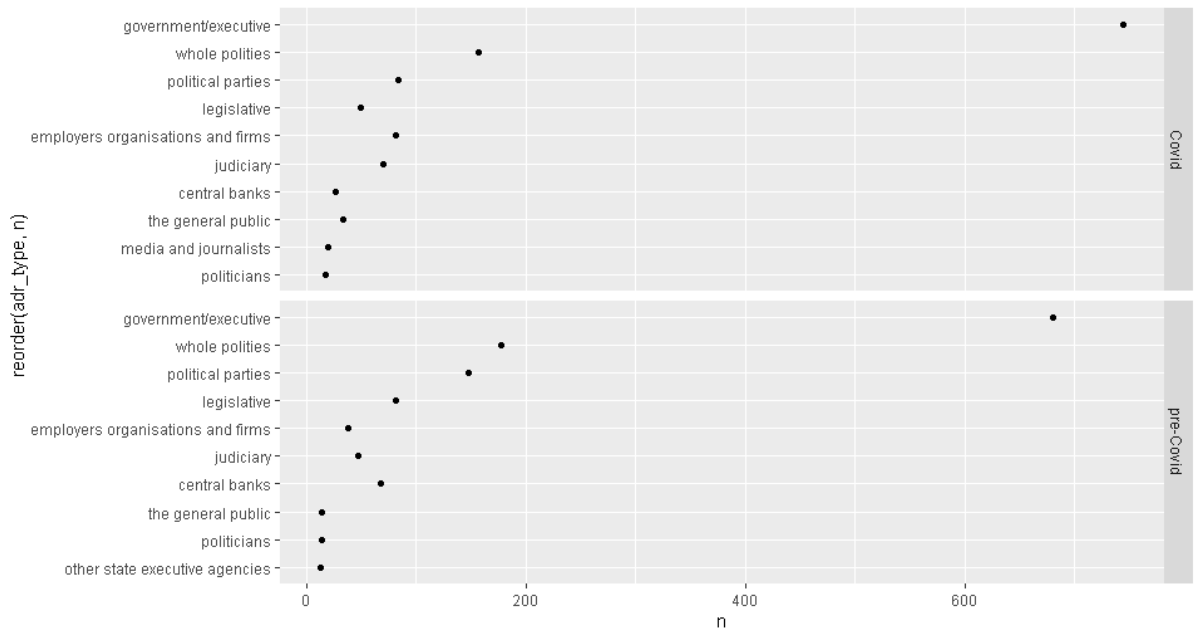
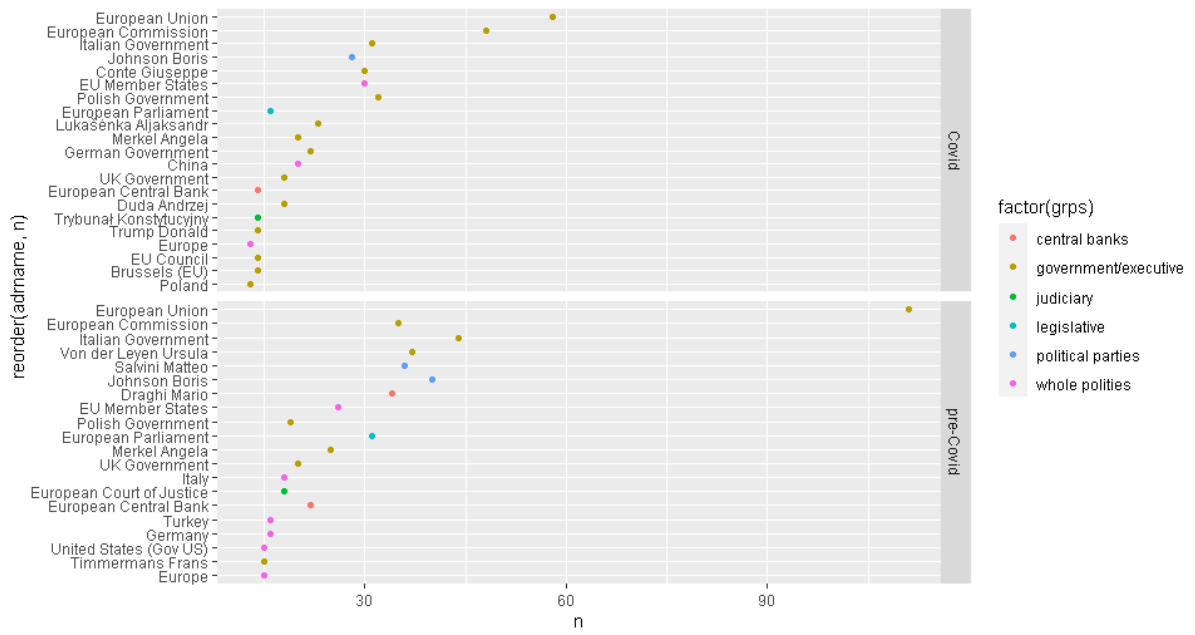


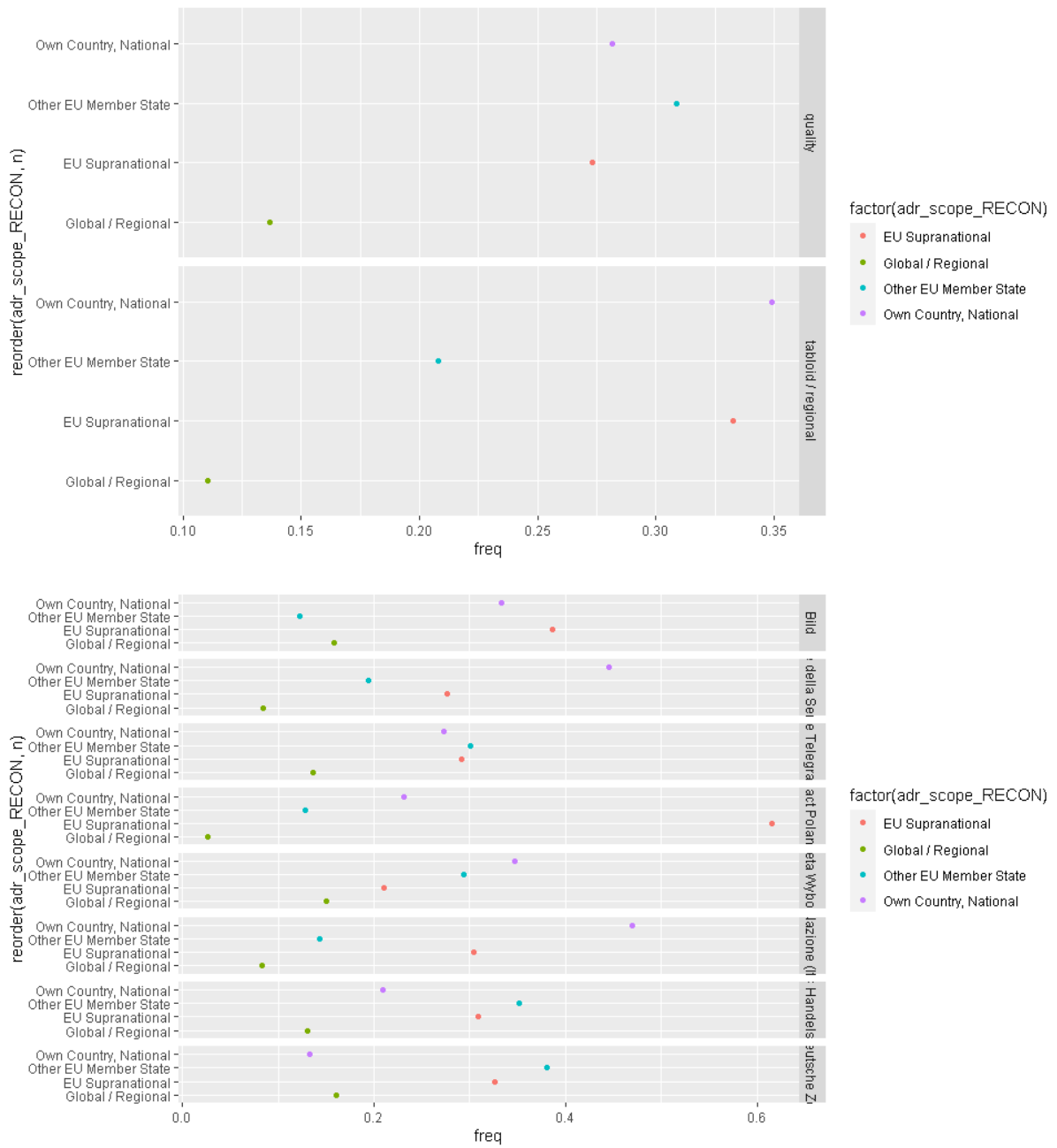
Addressees (visibility)

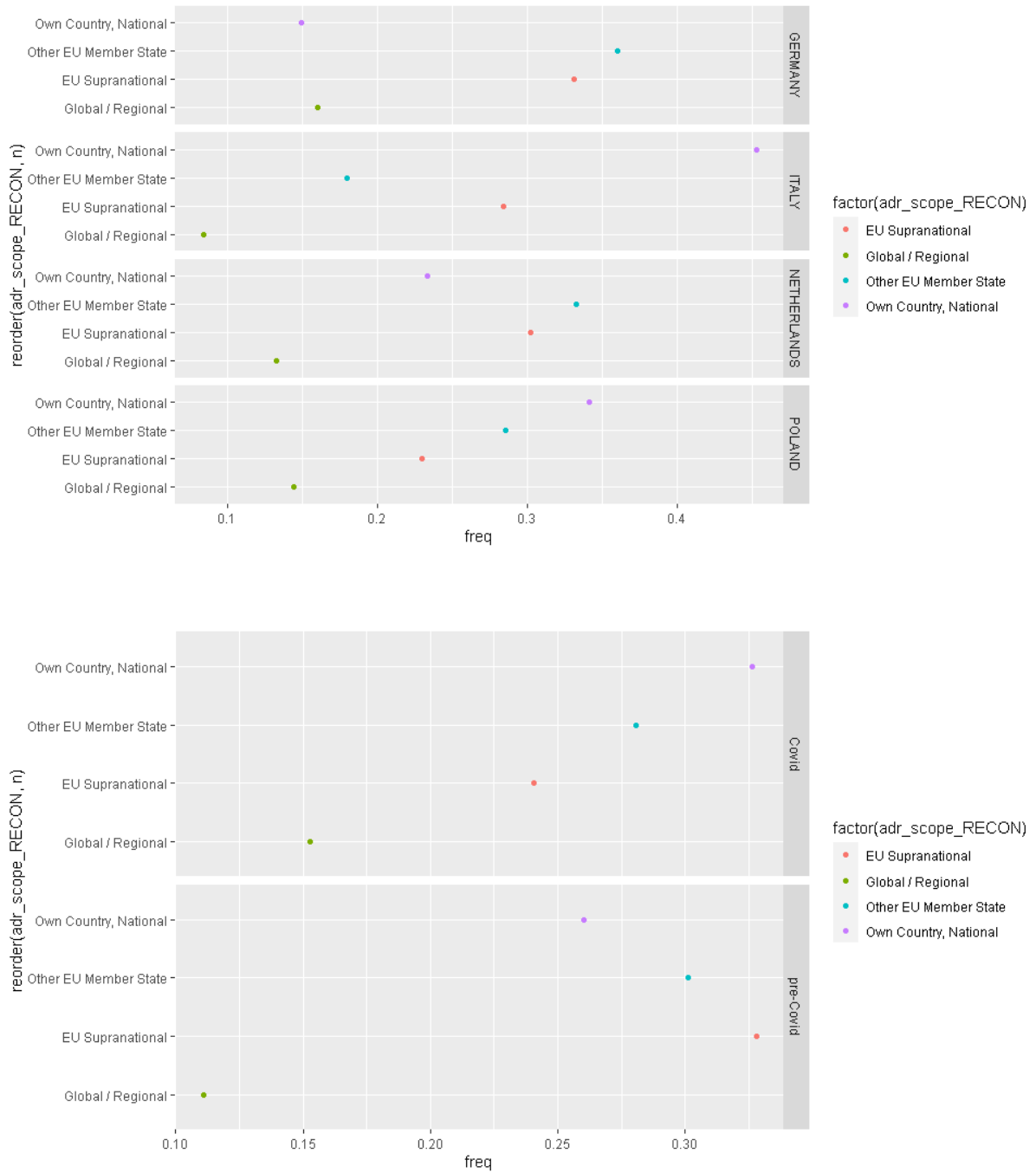


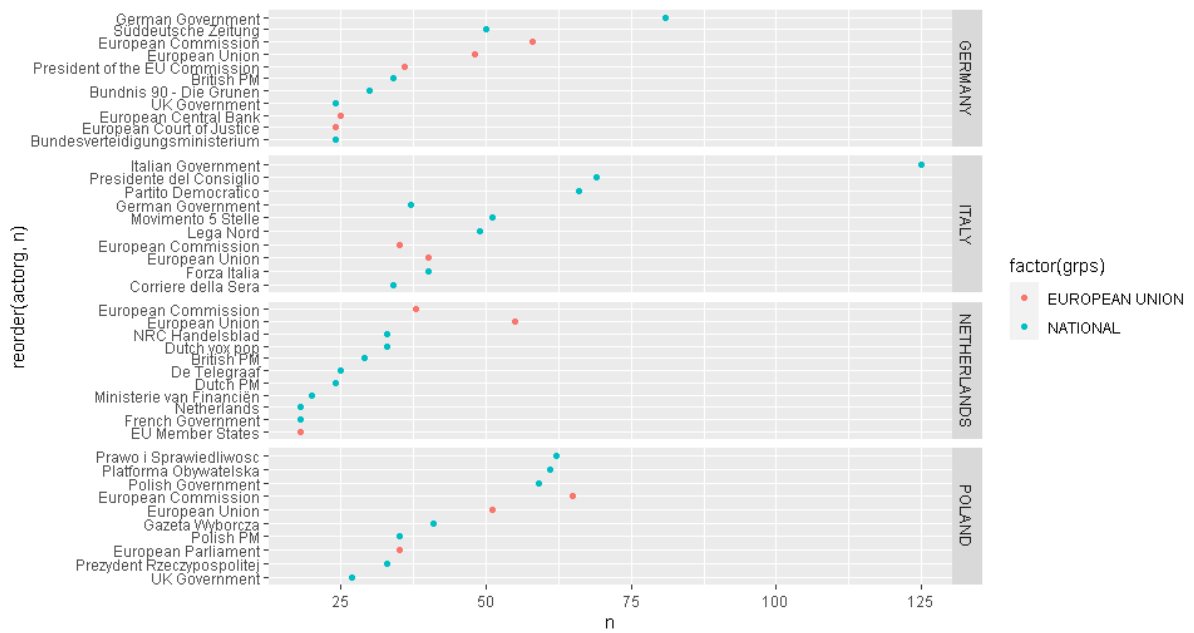
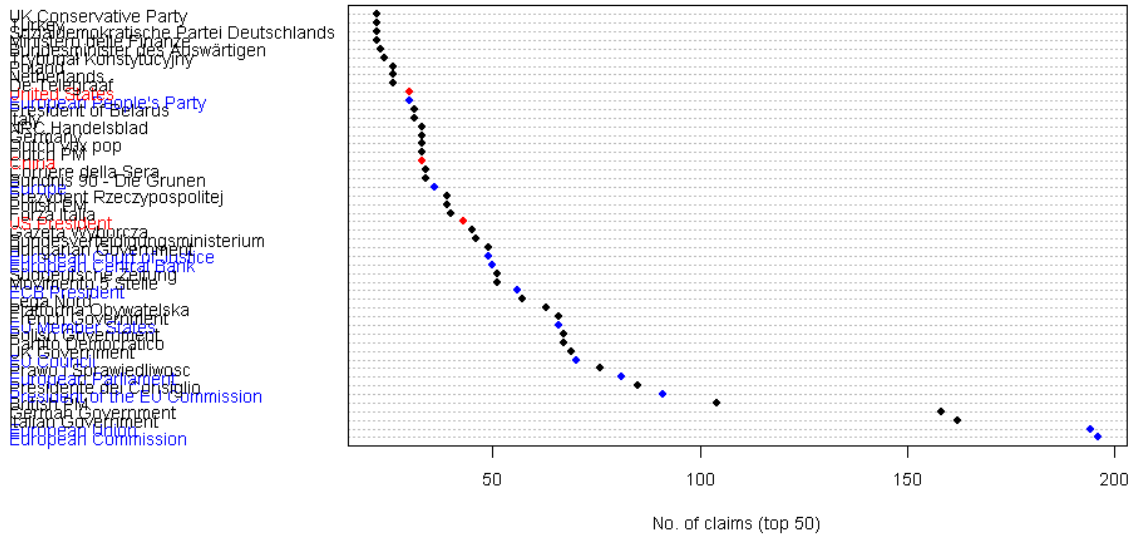


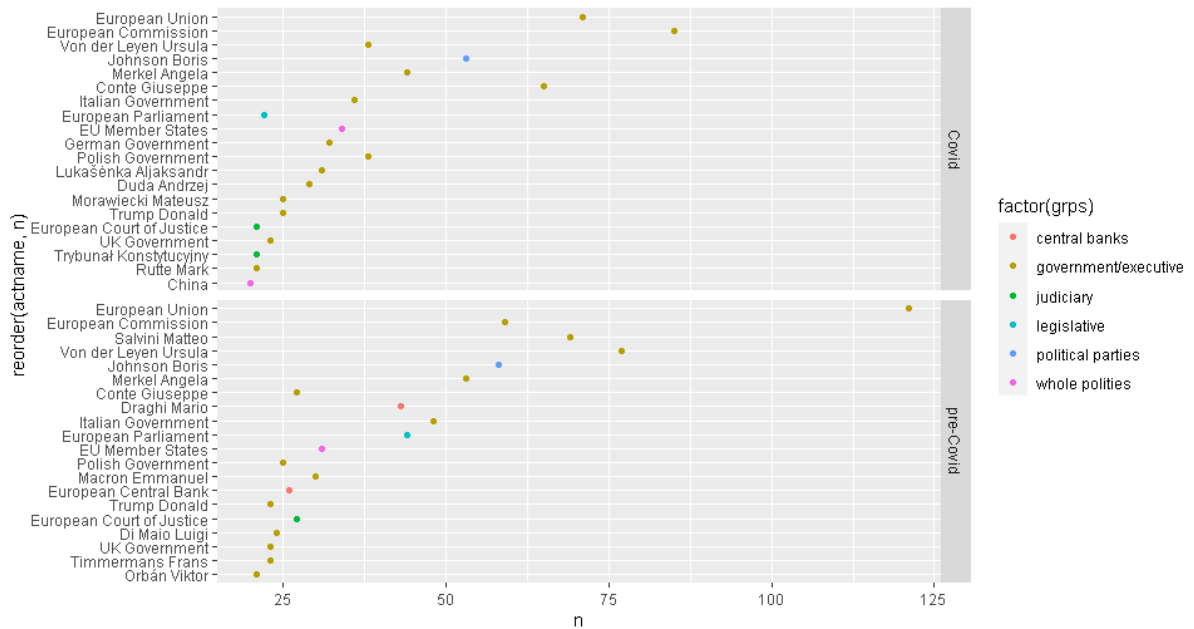
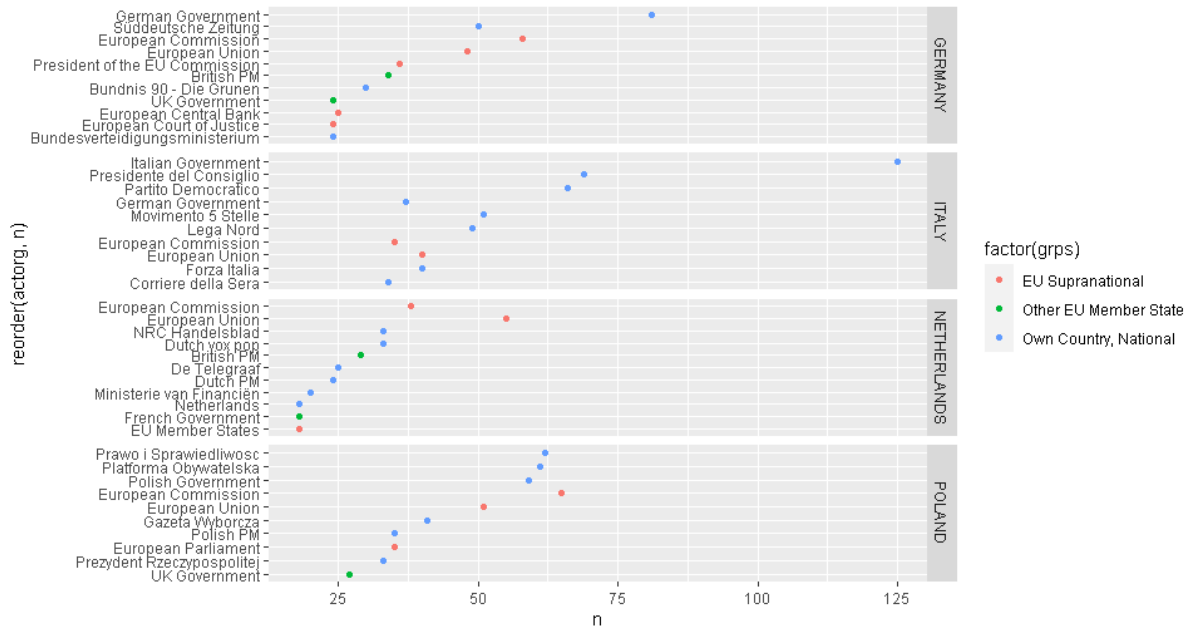


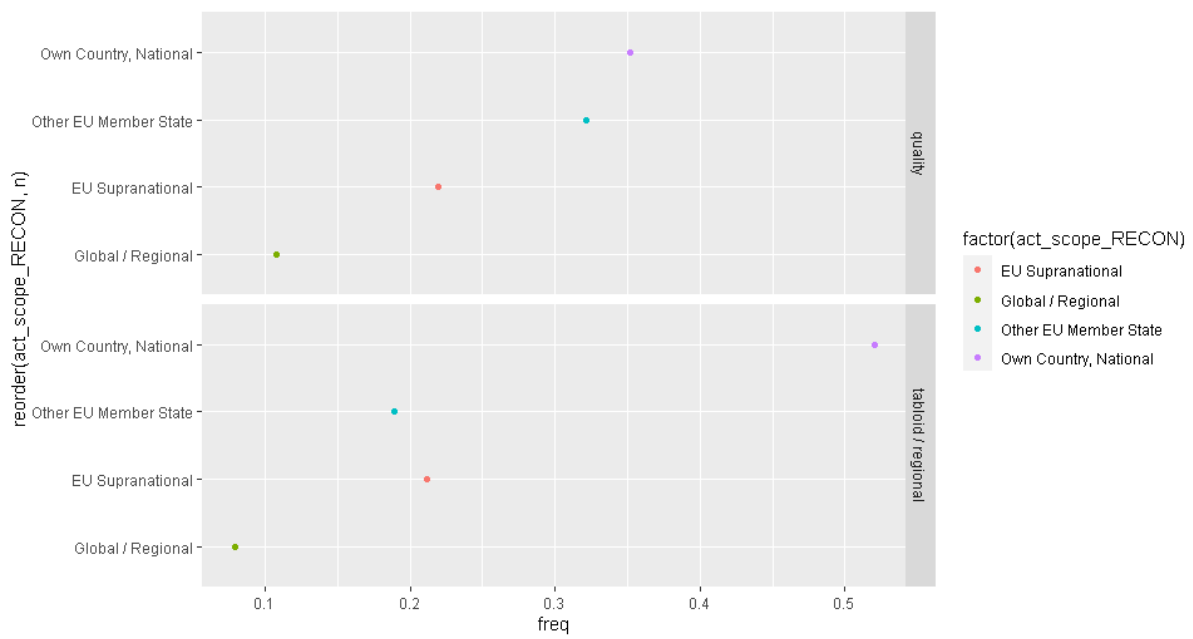
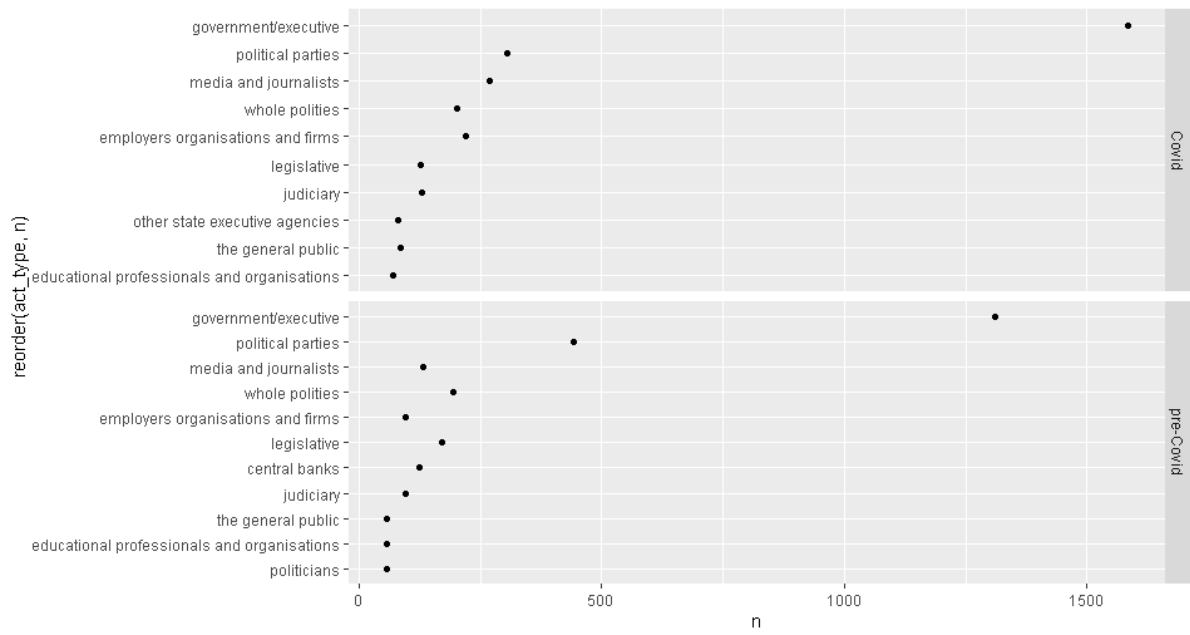


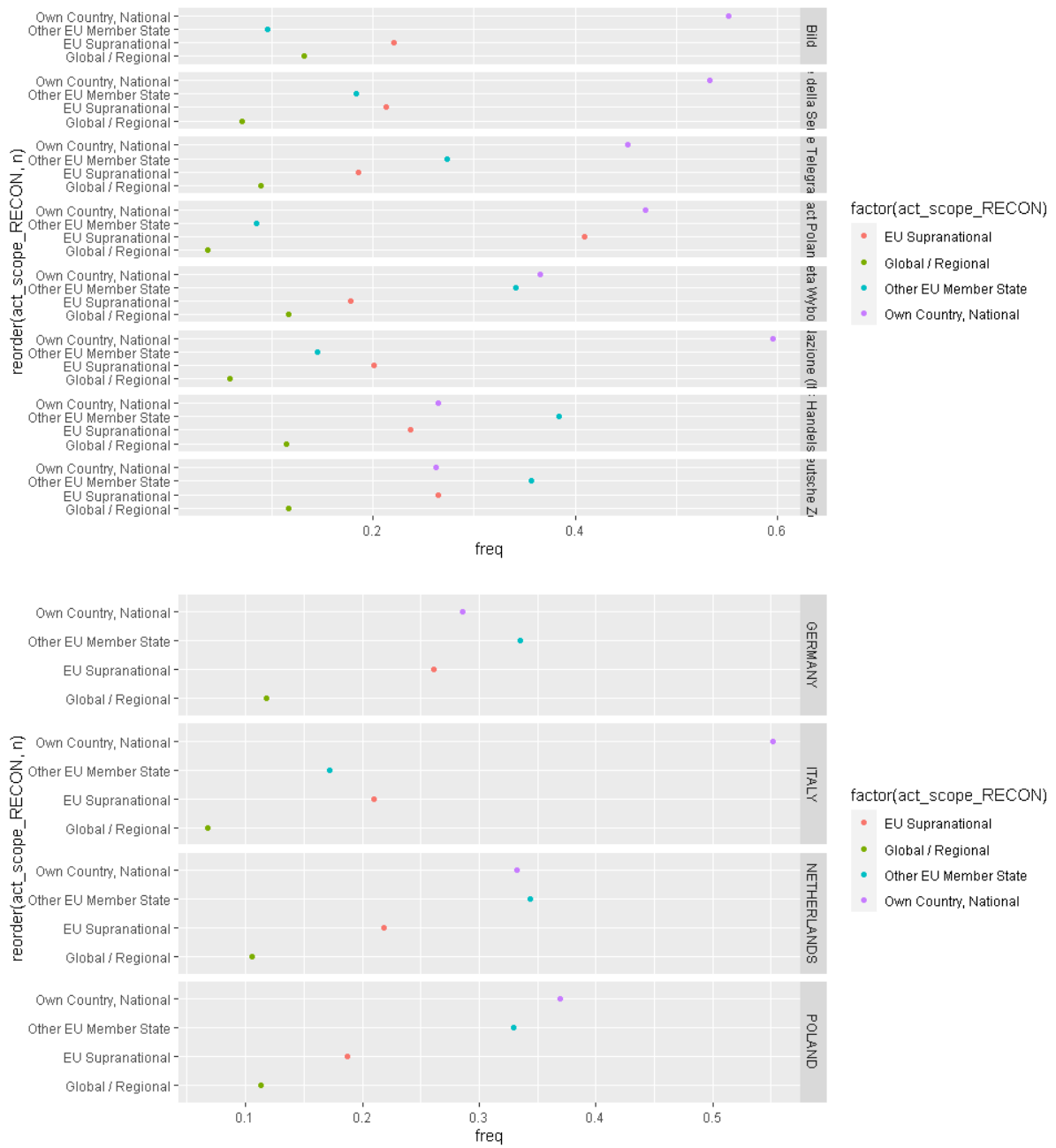


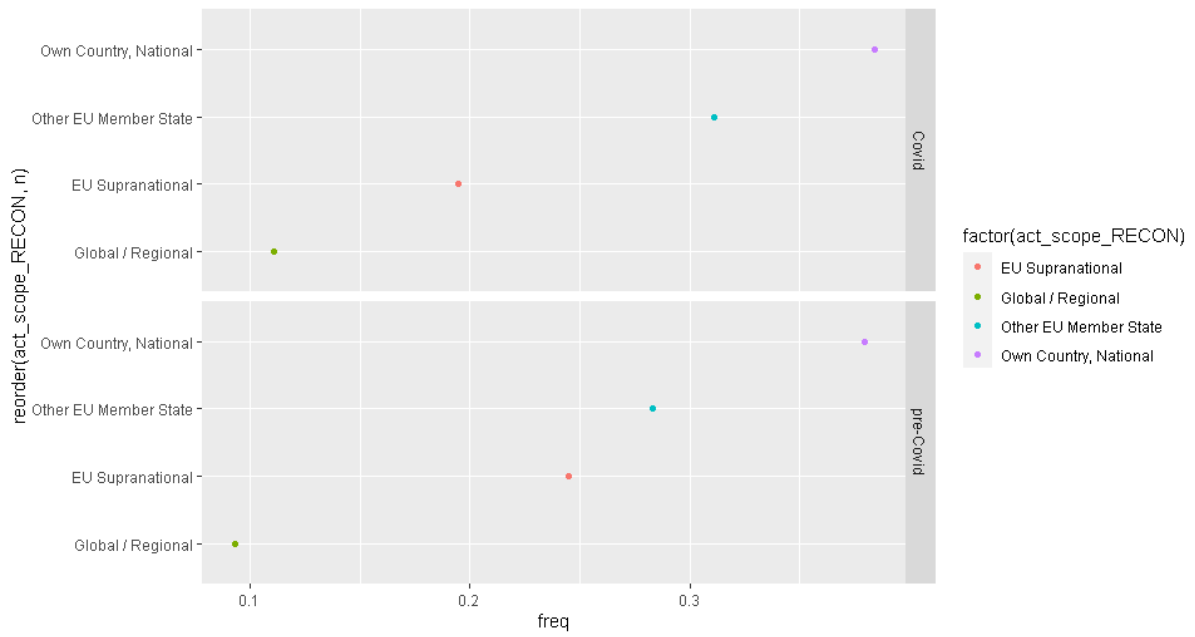












Object visibility

