Explaining Political Party Performance
in European Communication.
A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Party Political Cueing
in domestic EU Treaty Ratification.

Dissertation
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Kathrin Packham

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1. Gutachterin: Prof. Dr. Ulrike Liebert (Universität Bremen)
2. Gutachter: Prof. Ben Crum (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEEC</td>
<td>Central Eastern European Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMP</td>
<td>Comparative Manifesto Project</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Causal Path</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands</td>
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<td>CSU</td>
<td>Christlich-Soziale Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIT</td>
<td>European Integration Theory</td>
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<td>EMP</td>
<td>Euromanifestos Project</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
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<td>EPG</td>
<td>European Parliament Political Group</td>
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<td>EPS</td>
<td>European Public Sphere</td>
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<td>EPF</td>
<td>European Party Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPP-ED</td>
<td>Group of the European People’s Party in the European Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoGS</td>
<td>Head of Government and State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEP</td>
<td>Member of European Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mlg</td>
<td>multilevel governance</td>
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<td>MRG</td>
<td>Manifesto Research Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>QMV</td>
<td>Qualified Majority Voting</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCE</td>
<td>Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEU</td>
<td>Treaty of the European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WZB</td>
<td>Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QQMDA</td>
<td>Qualitative-Quantitative Media Discourse Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PES</td>
<td>Party of European Socialists</td>
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<td>SZ</td>
<td>Süddeutsche Zeitung</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1. Challenge EU: Political Communication under Multi-Level Constraints

This work originates from the idea that political parties play an important role for the processes of democratisation and legitimisation of the European multilevel polity. Party democracy is core to modern political systems. Considering the multitude of functions that political parties fulfil in a democratic system, it is necessary to further specify the focus of this project.

Due to their central role as responsive and representative agencies in modern political systems as well as their (often) broad social basis (“partisan alignment”), political parties are core to contributing to the political “enlightened understanding” (Dahl 2000) of citizens in two ways: First, they provide citizens with information opportunities. Second, by structuring the political space in viable political alternatives – represented by competing parties – they furthermore contribute qualitatively to legitimacy by making mass public information comprehensible. This is the top-down linkage function that political parties theoretically fulfil.

It is argued here that, in the context of increasing politicisation and citizen involvement in treaty ratification, students of European integration need to explore the structures of political communication on EU issues in more detail.

Two specific research questions guide this study:

- How do the mass mediated communication patterns of political parties’ messages on European contentious issues vary comparatively?

- Which political party characteristics, party system features and political context factors explain these variations in party political cueing patterns?

These questions derive from a number of considerations that deal with the increasing mass public politicisation of EU politics and the central role of the media in modern mass society. Some of these shall be briefly laid out in this introduction.

It seems appropriate to study the structures of European political party communication because, besides utilitarian motives, identity conceptions and institutional factors,
political communication constitutes an important factor for explaining public attitudes on European integration (Zaller 1992). Party political and media messages – elite cues – become even more influential in shaping individual’s behavioural predispositions in referendum situations (Ray 2007, Binzer Hobolt 2006). The progress of the European integration process is frequently subject to referendums. It is therefore necessary to study not only the representative function of party politics, which is well explored by party scholars, but also its communicative function. In providing information and focal points of orientation, political parties in their communicative function contribute to citizens’ “enlightened understanding” (Dahl 2000).

It is in the light of growing public contempt with the direction and pace of ‘elite-driven’ European integration and the subsequent setback, deferral, detention of the treaty reform process, that both academics and practitioners have timely rediscovered political parties as actors in the European public sphere.

The repeated rejection of EU treaty reform through citizens certainly implies a lesson which European leaders should have learned – and it is far from new: The role of communication with and information of the citizens is crucial to any treaty reform in an increasingly politicised European political sphere. However, the lessons to be learnt are really even more pragmatic: How can EU affairs be communicated? Who will do it?

The European Commission’s White Paper on a European Communication Policy explicitly addressed political parties’ “responsibility to use national channels to ensure a robust European debate” (2006: 11). At first, this seems an unexpected turn on behalf of the Commission that used to be very keen to advocate an increased involvement of civil society in its earlier White Paper on European Governance (2001). It is logically consistent, though, when one takes into account the different linkage mechanism of democracy. In order to strengthen the bottom-up linkage, the representation of citizens’ preferences in the EU system – a function usually preoccupied by political parties – the Commission had called for civil society. Now that the top-down linkage mechanism was under consideration, it consequentially attempts to get political parties on board.

The function of political parties in public information and opinion formation about Europe has moreover been acknowledged by the very member states themselves in the Treaties.¹

¹ See provisions on the functions of European political parties in Amsterdam and Nice Treaties (Art.191 TEU) and “European Party Statute” (European Union: 2004).
In academic debate, too, it is widely acknowledged that political parties are an important precondition for modern democratic legitimacy (Sartori 1976); but it is also controversially disputed to what degree they should or could fully assert this role in European Union politics. The literature on political parties in EU politics is vast and disparate – and the general tenor rather ‘desperate’: While party structures at EU level seem both too weak and too remote (Day/Shaw 2006, Hanley 2006, Ladrech 2006b, 1999, von Gehlen 2006), national political parties act as (somewhat ignorant) gatekeepers against Europeanisation, carefully guarding their domestic predominance and competences (Mair 2000, 2006, Ladrech 2002, 2006a, Poguntke et al. 2007, Deschouwer 2003, 2006).

Stefano Bartolini finds that:

“The lack of any party thematization of EU issues leaves the mass public attitudes towards the EU largely unstructured, but it also leaves ample room for manoeuvring by anti-EU elites. The integration process then accrues to the already conspicuous tendency to more collusive relationships among the established actors within the channel of political-electoral representation” (Bartolini 2005:385).

In other words, political parties fail to incorporate the European dimension into domestic public debates and, hence, leave citizens without the help of a partisan structure for making up their opinion on EU issues. The central question in this work is: Is this true?

Analytically, the aforementioned research questions are approached from a both variable- as well as case-oriented cross-country comparative perspective. An exceptionally valuable methodology to do so is (Fuzzy-set) Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), a methodology that originated in the work of Charles Ragin’s “The Comparative Method” (1987).

The public ratification debates on the Constitutional Treaty (TCE) in 2004/5 provide an excellent opportunity for empirically taking stock of the national parties’ capabilities in communicating EU issues to a wider public.

A survey conducted in the early 2007 among intermediary actors in the six countries under study here, namely the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom, explored the communication performance of intermediaries in the

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2 The concepts and ideas mentioned here will be more thoroughly discussed in the next chapter.
EU’s reform process. 3 Approximately 120 respondents from civil society organizations, interest groups and political parties were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: “European Political Parties have been active enough in debating the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (TCE)”. Only 30% of the interviewees rather agreed with this statement, while 56% rather disagreed (14% were undecided). Interestingly, the evaluation of party communication was even worse among political party representatives alone. A brief cross-country comparison reveals that the communication performance of political parties is evaluated as weak especially in Poland and Great Britain. In the Czech Republic, Estonia and France the opinions differ more but still tend to be rather negative. German respondents were the only ones who had a slightly more positive than negative impression of parties’ role in debating the TCE.

Thus, while normative and political expectations in regard to political parties’ contribution in European political communication are high, the available empirical evidence seems to point in the opposite direction.

However, studies that measure the communication performance and analyse the actual cues that political parties give to citizens are scarce. This work contributes to filling this research gap by analysing national political parties’ cueing messages on the EU reform process in the respective domestic mass-mediated public spheres. Kriesi’s (2007) and Statham’s (2008) studies are notable exceptions from a general neglect of mass media data for the measurement of party positions. The present work takes this approach an important step further. What distinguishes this study is the scope of the research question which seeks to establish not only the visibility and the content of party political communication but also aims to measure and evaluate the clarity of these cues. It will be argued that party political communication is most likely to have an impact on public opinion formation when parties send clear, i.e. unambiguous, cues on their position.

The findings presented at the end of this study make a mixed picture: On the one hand, Bartolini’s aforementioned assessment can be revised. Political parties are not altogether ignorant gate-keepers. They do cue the public on EU issues and partly they do so in a highly successful manner, providing strong as well as clear cues on their respective positions.

3 This survey was conducted by the ConstEPS research group at the University of Bremen, see Appendix 8.1.3.
On the other hand, it is alarming that often especially pro-European mainstream parties find it difficult to send coherent messages to the public, thus, leaving their followers without viable political alternatives and the public arena open to populism.
1.2. Outline of the Chapters

The present work comprises seven chapters, including this introduction. A brief “roadmap” shall briefly outline the content of each chapter.

The next, second chapter provides the theoretical framework for the study. First, it develops a revised communicative understanding of liberal-representative democracy pointing to the centrality of citizens’ “enlightened understanding” (Dahl 2000), the “political linkage” between citizens and the state (Lawson 1980) and to the crucial role of national political parties in the European political communication processes. Second, it introduces two crucial concepts from communication and media studies, namely the revised transmission model and the theory of elite cueing. The explanandum, political party communication, is conceptualised as “cueing messages” (Zaller 1992) which have three main characteristics, namely strength, position and clarity. Third, the chapter reviews the extensive research on political parties in order to identify those causal factors that impact on party political cues. These factors and the hypothesised impact are finally summarised in three causal networks.

The third chapter presents the study’s “case”: It discusses the European reform process and the debates that led to the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty in 2003 and the subsequent national ratification procedures. In a second step, the chapter outlines the comparative design of the study and justifies the case selection: 39 political parties in six EU member states (Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Poland and United Kingdom) are selected for the empirical analysis.

The fourth chapter constitutes the important link between the analytical framework developed in chapter 2 and the empirical analyses performed later. It presents the analytical method, fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis, which is used to establish causal relationships. It furthermore explains the data collection and data coding processes of a comprehensive media data set that comprises over 8000 news articles from the six countries in the sample. The remaining part of the chapter is devoted to explaining in depth the operationalisation of the dependent and independent variables.

The fifth chapter, the first empirical chapter, aims at answering the first research question and lays out the diverse patterns of political parties’ communication on the
reform process. It studies if and in how far parties succeed in communicating their position on the European treaty reform, suggesting a ‘ranking’ of the communication performance.

The *sixth chapter* is the second empirical chapter. Here, the aim is to actually explain the patterns and puzzles established in the previous chapter using fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis. The analysis shows that the explanation of party cueing patterns is indeed complex. Several causal paths explain the existence of strong or weak, supportive or oppositional, clear or confused cues. A last section aims at synthesising the findings discussing the most central determinants of political party cues in the media.

The *final, seventh chapter, the conclusion*, summarises the most important findings. It stresses the theoretical and methodological contributions made in this work and considers the empirical implications of the findings for political parties in EU politics on the one hand, and for the ongoing process of European integration on the other hand.
2. Theoretical Framework
on Variations in Party Political Communication

This chapter discusses various conceptualisations of party politics in Europe on nation state and EU level with the aim of conceptualising political party communication in EU politics and identifying its determinants as presented in the theoretical and empirical body of literature. In order to do so, it brings together the state of the art of party research with media and communication studies. These are discussed from the more general perspective of democratic theory as well as in the light of European integration and Europeanisation studies.

In the political as well as academic debates it is widely acknowledged that political parties are an important precondition for modern democratic legitimacy (Sartori 1976, von Alemann 2001). In modern political systems it is hardly possible to discuss the meaning of democratic norms and practices without considering the role of political parties. While political parties are accepted as a central element of political life in all democratic (and most authoritarian) nation states, their role has never been entirely undisputed (Sartori 1976, 2005, Scarrow 2002, 2006, White 2006, van Biezen 2004, van Biezen/Katz 2005). “The paradox of party politics” (Becker/Cuperus 2004) today is potentially even more severe than classical critics have envisaged: Parties are seen in decline as social and representative agencies (Bartolini/Mair 2001, Schmitter 2001a, Daalder 2002, Puhle 2002). Authors in the field discuss new challenges – such as new media (Semetko 2006, Römmele 2003) and growing international interdependence (Lawson 2006, Hix/Lord 1997) – which constitute both threat and opportunity for national democracies and political parties, and which provoke reactions (and reforms) on the site of political parties (Schmidt 2006, Schmitter/Trechsel 2004, Mair 2007). In 1995 Katz and Mair published their influential thesis of the “cartel party” as the latest step in party type development (see also Blyth/Katz 2005). Thus, party democracy is a phenomenon in flux and the outcome of this process is not yet foreseeable. In any case,

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4 This type of party is characterised by fusion of the party in public office with important interest groups. The party predominantly seeks to maintain executive power, removing itself from the party on the ground and mediating functions. It is largely dependent on state finances for its survival (cf. Krouwel 2006).
national parties should not only be seen as subjects but also as agents of change that have been involved centre stage in bringing about these changes in the environment (Katz/Crotty 2006, van Biezen 2003, Lawson 2006).

It is also controversially disputed to what degree political parties should or could fully assert their democratic role in European Union politics. The literature on political parties in EU politics is vast and disparate – and the general tenor rather ‘desperate’: While EU level party structures seem both too weak and too remote (Day/Shaw 2006, Hanley 2006, Ladrech 2006b, 1999, von Gehlen 2006), national political parties are found to act as (somewhat ignorant) gate-keepers against Europeanisation; carefully guarding their domestic predominance and competences (Mair 2000, 2006, Ladrech 2002, 2006a, Poguntke et al. 2007, Deschouwer 2003, 2006). In other words: Instead of being a key to, political parties often don’t have a clue how to incorporate the European dimension into domestic politics.

Media analysts claim a similar legitimising role for their object of study, the mass media (e.g. Peterson 1956): “An open, pluralist, and critical public discourse rooted in independent media is considered crucial for providing an interface between state and society in a democratic polity” (Van de Steeg/Risse 2007:1).

This is also not undisputed: Not only does the theory of the “media malaise” (Newton 1999) question the positive impact of media for a democratic civic culture in general. Students of the “European public sphere” (EPS) also have come to ambiguous conclusions about the existence and the benefits of such an arena as well about the degree of Europeanisation that national public spheres have achieved (Gerhards 1993, Fossum/Schlesinger 2007). The democratic deficit of the EU has been said to actually be a communication deficit (Kurpas et al. 2006).

When researchers focus on political parties or on the media they usually conceive them as intermediaries between the state and the citizens. This is the case also in the present work which starts out from a general interest in the linkage between EU constitutional issues and national publics. The direction taken here, however, is a different one since the focus is not on the representative, but on the communicative (opinion-forming) linkage function of political parties. Since communication in societies today is almost

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always mediated, the media are assumed to also play a crucial role in interaction with political parties in this process. The task is therefore to combine both, the research on political parties and on mass media, and to develop an integrated framework of analysis.

Until now, these fields hardly speak to each other, even though the implicit assumption underlying both fields it that political communication matters because it can be expected to influence the way citizens perceive political issue at stake as well as the polity more generally. This basic model of communication is in line with the concept of elite and party cueing theory (Zaller 1992) which is thus the core theoretical concept on which the framework will build.
The chapter's structure: The first part lays out the general framework and leads to two research questions. The following parts are concerned with discussing the dependent and independent variables respectively:

1. The first part focuses on the communicative dimension of democracy. After discussing the indispensability of democracy in the EU, the section proposes a revised liberal-representative framework of democracy which incorporates the communicative dimension. The role of political parties for enlightened understanding and political linkages is reviewed. The section ends with justifying the focus on national political parties when one is interested in the EU’s elites-citizens gap. Two guiding research questions are formulated.

2. The second part more specifically lays out the role of political parties in political communication, introducing the revised transmission model of political communication and, more importantly, the concept of (party) cueing. For theoretical and analytical reasons, the concept of party “cues” is then disaggregated into three components – strength, direction, and clarity.

3. The third part of the chapter is devoted to review the state of the art of party politics in European integration research. Here, central factors and variables that potentially impact on the cueing performance of political parties are identified and finally summarised. Four main spheres of influence are distinguished: Ideological inter-party competition, strategical inter-party competition, intra-party competition and systemic context factors. A ‘map’ of the explanatory variables (conditions) summarises this. Finally, the chapter seeks to identify and model causal relations between cueing characteristics, i.e. strength, direction and clarity, and the independent variables identified in part 3, using causal network drawing. Remaining theoretical and methodological issues like inconsistencies and blind spots are addressed.
2.1. On the Communicative Dimension of Democracy

In this work a revised understanding of liberal-representative democracy is introduced. Taking into account the more demanding European Union context, liberal-representative theory is complemented (not substituted!) by participative, deliberative and communicative elements. In the course of developing this notion of democracy below, it is shown that this understanding does not only have strong support in the academic literature, but also that it best describes the ‘status quo’ as well as the ‘quo vadis’ of the Union’s democratisation/democratic development. This section seeks to furthermore establish the role of political parties in the communication of EU issues. Another aim is to establish the research questions guiding the present analysis.

2.1.1. The Indispensability of Democracy in the EU

Why bother about democracy at all? For this question the reader should refer to the decided answers that Robert A. Dahl offers by providing and discussing a persuasive list of advantages of living in a democracy, including items such as “political equality” and “general freedom” (Dahl 2000: 44-61). Regarding the EU, Phillipe Schmitter in “How to democratize the European Union…And why bother?” (2000) argues, that in the long term, the democratization of the European Union cannot be avoided, because this would mean to risk the accomplishments and benefits that were achieved in the face of declining mass public legitimacy.⁶

While the nature of the EU as a polity ‘sui generis’ is a matter of much discussion, ‘it’ makes laws which bind its members and affect the life of those citizens who are accustomed to electing representatives who build a ‘government by, through and for the people’ (Lincoln 1863). Of course, it is ultimately up to the people(s) themselves to decide on the level (or locus) and degree of democracy.

Despite centuries “during which democracy has been discussed, debated, supported, attacked, ignored, established, practiced, destroyed, and then sometimes re-established”,

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⁶ This is supported by Follesdal/Hix 2005, Hix 2008 and others. Of course, there are those who argue that there is no need to bother, for example, Majone (1996, 1998) and Moravcsik (1998, 2002).
there is, as Robert A. Dahl has pointed out, no “agreement on the most fundamental questions about democracy” (Dahl 2000: 3). Considering this, one cannot (or should not) seriously expect the latest academic debate on the democratic potential, performance, and deficiency of democracy in the European Union to yield any final assessment or conclusions – after only about 15 years of scholarly attention to the issue.

Like Beetham and Lord (1998) many find it difficult to identify and localise the sources of legitimacy in a political system as complex and interactive and in flux as the EU. Whether input-legitimacy is provided solely on the national level or is at least complemented by democratic mechanism at EU level, whether output today is to a large degree generated at the EU level while others claim that output legitimacy is or can be created by the interplay of national welfare policies and EU regulatory policies (Scharpf 1999a, b), is a matter still of open debate. Yet it can be argued that output-oriented notions of legitimacy are never sufficient without complementary appropriate institutions and mechanisms that ensure input legitimacy. The EU multilevel polity relies heavily on the “thick” identities and solidarity among the different demois of its member states (Nicolaidis 2003). But it is probably also true that the same member states economically and politically would be in much more trouble if it weren’t for the EU (despite the rather peculiar attitude of governments to discursively devalue the EU).

Phillipe Schmitter finds it necessary „rather sooner than later“ to „(...) spend a good deal of effort in changing peoples’ notion of what democracy is“ (2001b: 15-6). Although the “question of size” might inhibit the extension of representative democracy as practise in nation-states today beyond the national realm (Dahl 2000), one can acknowledge the value and boldness of Schmitter’s approach – which should not be questioned, because the size-question does not per se prevent ‘new’ ways of doing things.7 Still, it is equally necessary to look for second-best solutions which might be located at the national level and that are more ‘conventional’. This present work assumes that it is both ‘new’8 and ‘conventional’ institutions that, in the contemporary 21st century constellation of the EU, constitute the basis of democratic legitimacy (however fragile this construction and however low the legitimacy) of EU governance.

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7 However, ideas are rather scarce: Normative-theoretical treatises on this issue, e.g. Held 1993, Delanty/Rumford 2005, and Delanty 2006, strongly outnumber the attempts to hypothetically ‘design’ these new democratic procedures and institutions. Notable exceptions are Zürn 1998, Abromeit 1997, and Schmitter/Trechsel 2004.

8 Opinions are divided, of course, on what would count as new. Europarties might appear quite unheard-of to some, while to others (Schmitter 2001b, for example) they are extremely “conventional”.

and reform. In this view it does not make much sense – save for analytical reasons, of course – to distinguish between the EU’s and the member states’ legitimacy.

Dahl is highly sceptical on the question of ‘size’ and the possibilities of supra-national democratic governance (Dahl 1994, Dahl 2000: 114-7). While the perfect democratic system is unlikely to materialise in any case, the chances for democracy are still lower in a multilevel polity reaching beyond the national borders of the state. Following his line of argumentation, it is not sufficient to set up political institutions, not to mention the problems of inclusion and equality. Above all, these democratic opportunity structures must be effectively used by citizens. To do so, citizens must become informed – “enlightened” – by an active and emotionally involving public debate, which is based on and fuelled by the competition between political parties and representatives (Dahl 2000: 117).

Thus, to inform and educate citizens so that they can make use of democratic institutions and processes is such a basic requirement that it is an integral element of any understanding of democratic legitimacy, be it in conceptions of both input and output legitimacy (Scharpf 1999a), of procedural and substantial notions (Schumpeter 1947, Freedom House 2008) or of representative as well as deliberative democracy (Elster 1998), of majoritarian and consensus democracies (Lijphart 1999) or of the responsive just as the “responsible party model” (White 2006).

The search for a democratic settlement is, of course, complicated by the most basic distinction made (not always neatly) between the normatively desirable ‘ideal’ standard of democracy and the way it is actually practised.

To be clear on the scope of this project: The aim is not to assess the overall status quo of democratic development in the European Union in the light of some pre-defined minimum (Lord 2008) or maximum (Dahl 1971, Habermas 1996, 1998) standards. The empirical scope is more limited. However, it is against the backdrop of democratic theory and practice in the EU that the ability of national political parties to provide a communicative linkage between citizens and the EU polity is explored. In order to do so, there is a need for a revised communicative understanding of liberal-representative democracy.
2.1.2. Revised Communicative Understanding of Liberal-Representative Democracy

Informing and educating citizens is a demanding task, considering the challenges which Dahl notes as crucial problems for democracies today and in future. Normally, civic education is acquired through various channels: formal education, the availability of low cost information, party political competition (which reduces the amount of necessary information to “more easily attainable levels” (Dahl 2000: 185)), and the membership in interest and party organisations. Moreover, an important feature of democratic governance is that it is driven by an incremental step-by-step process which allows for a legislative initiative to be observed, approved or rejected by citizens. According to Dahl, three developments do now challenge this satisfactory situation and raise the stakes for citizens’ capacities to effectively participate in democratic processes: Firstly, internationalisation increases the scale of democratic constituencies and challenges the congruence of decisions. Secondly, this contributes to the rising complexity of politics which is difficult to grasp – despite rising levels of formal education. Thirdly, “the sheer amount of information available on political matters, at all levels of complexity, has increased enormously” (Dahl 2000: 187). Communication at this scope does not necessarily heighten, but might actually threaten citizens’ competence in politics. What to do? Dahl strongly pleads: “(...) (I)f the institutions for civic education are weak, only one satisfactory solution remains. They must be strengthened. We who believe in democratic goals are obliged to search for ways by which citizens can acquire the competence they need” (Dahl 2000: 80). In his view, the traditional instruments have to be supplemented using new techniques and technologies that enhance the opportunities for “civic education, political participation, and deliberation” (Dahl 2000: 188).

Before considering in-depth the role of political parties in EU political communication it shall be briefly discussed what will here be called a revised understanding of representative democracy in order to show that the EU’s need for communication (and therefore the “deficit”) is not unique but equally central to “consolidated” democracies at the nation-state level which are badly in need of reform (Dahl 2000, Schmidt 2006).
What is the role of the public sphere in modern conceptions of democracy, within or beyond the limits of the nation state?

The political and academic debate usually distinguishes between „zwei demokratietheoretische Basiskonzepte“ (Sarcinelli 1998: 555), the liberal representative (in the European continental context usually in its parliamentary form) and the discursive deliberative model of democracy, the latter developed (further) by Jürgen Habermas (1994).

Liberal representative democracy is the most widely spread as well as theoretically dominant paradigm. The theoretical concept certainly owes much of its success to parsimony and clear delimitation. However, it hardly ever exists in its ‘ideal’ or pure form, but rather in all kinds of shades and variants. To ignore these – together with other democratic models, such as deliberative or discursive theories – means not only to accept a loss of information in the assessment of democracy, but, more importantly, to ignore the potential for further development of democratic institutions and practices at all levels of governance. Unlikely, that this was intended in the original concept as it has been developed by the likes of John Stuart Mill, James Madison and Jeremy Bentham.

When the deliberative and the representative concepts have traditionally been perceived as mutually exclusive and therefore competing (Auberger/Iszkowski 2007), today the challenge is in establishing if and how both can complement each other and as such contribute to a renewed legitimation of democratic processes. David Held argues that participatory democracy cannot be juxtaposed with liberal representative democracy as both concepts and empirical programs are not that simple and unambiguous (Held 1993: 45). Beetham finds liberalism to be a constraint upon democracy (Beetham 1993: 64).

Indeed, if democratic life was restricted to periodical voting every four (or so) years, there would be few opportunities for citizens to act (and feel) as citizens, active participants in public life, making a difference in society. People are then likely to withdraw from the public to the civil or private sphere, in both of which they are not ‘equal’ to each other, but are equipped with very different means, capacities and opportunities – and their activities are therefore likely to exert a decidedly different influence: “Democratization, in sum, should be sought through a deepening and extending of representative institutions which ,while setting bounds to citizens participation, also provide the necessary framework for it” (Beetham 1993: 65).
The EU can certainly not serve as a role model in *res* democracy but could be understood as a rather unorthodox and not necessarily well designed or evolved experiment. Because of the challenge to develop a model of democracy that would carry beyond the nation state, students of European integration have given relatively close attention to theories of deliberative and participatory democracy.9

Cosmopolitans argue that, because the process of governance escapes the reach of a nation-state (and hence the principles of symmetry and congruence are violated), there is a ‘democratic deficit’ or ‘legitimacy gap’ which requires that “democracy has to become a transnational affair” in the framework of a “cosmopolitan model of democracy” (Held 1993: 40). Held grants that a participatory conception can not easily be stretched to a large-scale democracy. This kind of society is in need of social structuration and institutions allowing for “mediation, negotiation and compromise among struggling factions, groups or movements” (Held 1993: 23). “A system of institutions to promote discussion, debate and competition among divergent views (…) appears both necessary and desirable” (Held 1993: 23). In assessing “democracy beyond the state” in regard to the Union’s constitutionalisation process Ulrike Liebert reaches the conclusion that indeed “(…) the EU has moved beyond liberal democratic intergovernmentalism and has embraced principles of a cosmopolitan strategy of democratisation beyond the state (2006: 271).

Accordingly, a ‘conflict resolution’ between both concepts has been negotiated. (This was only recently and is far from being generally accepted.) Ronald Holzhacler pleads for a conception which meets the peculiarity of EU democracy:

“A proper conception of a democratically legitimate multi-level system will combine both representative and deliberative aspects. The discussions among citizens and civil society, political parties and the electorate, civil society organizations and decision makers, may create a broad dialogue in the public sphere which *enriches* the democratic, representative system” (2007: 261).

Ulrich Sarcinelli, too, seeks to constructively detect the potential of political communication for a change of conventional liberal-representative legitimacy, for a „kommunikative Anreicherung unser Demokratie“ (1998: 555). While doing so he remains sceptical towards a fusion of representation and discourse. Even though public

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discourses can contribute as „gesellschaftliche Sensoren, als Problemwahrnehmungs- und Problemdefinitionsverfahren durchaus zu einer erhöhten demokratischen Sensibilität“, he warns against overestimating the potentials of deliberation and against underestimating the potential for change that lies in representative processes and institutions (ibid.). Representation is understood today as „ein dynamischer und responsiver, insgesamt also als kommunikativer Prozeß“ (ibid.: 556).

Indeed, Jane Mansbridge (2003) identifies in “Rethinking Representation” four analytically distinct, modern forms of representative democracy, all of which do display (however varied) deliberative elements. These are generally compatible, because the classical notion of representation is not substituted by alternative forms of representation and discursive elements, but only complemented: „They do not replace the traditional model; nor do they replace the concept of accountability“ (Mansbridge 2003: 526). If this would be the case, it could be doubted whether these mechanisms would have enough ‘brand recognition’ in order to be accepted as legitimate by citizens.

Theories of participation and deliberation are influential in academic European studies. They did, however, also make their way into various democratisation projects at the EU level, for example in the ‘Governance White Paper’ or the Constitutional Treaty: For the first time, the “principle of participatory democracy” (TCE I-47) complemented representative institutions in the body of EU primary law (European Union 2004a). In the Lisbon Treaty, this innovative democratic (and too overtly modelled along the lines of the state analogy) terminology has been rectified (European Union 2008). The quality of the deliberations in the Constitutional Convention itself, which as an innovative method of treaty reform had raised the expectation that the secrecy of intergovernmental conferences could be overcome, has been extensively studied and discussed. The question if it is superior to the IGC method in regard to content and democratic value is object to an ambiguous verdict (Maurer 2003 a, b, Meyer 2003, Neyer/Schroeter 2006).

In the European Union’s transnational multi-level system the communication between elites and citizens is naturally more difficult than in the national public sphere. This also means that the limits of both models – the representative as well as the discursive –

\[10\] Here Mansbridge deliberates: „As legitimate and useful supplementary forms of representation, however, they require separate normative scrutiny”. Standards for congruence and deliberation need to be secured (2003: 525).
become especially well visible: The lack of a European public sphere (EPS) with transnational media (Gerhards 1993) and strong political parties is understood as a high obstacle to a sufficient democratisation of the Union (Heidar 2003, Lawson 2006).

A dynamic polity beyond the nation state should, however, as has been prominently argued again and again, not be stuck in concepts equivalent to the nation state’s, but should rather embrace an enlarged – not only territory wise – understanding of democracy (Beck/Grande 2004, Fossum/Schlesinger 2007). This should and must not mean, as Mansbridge (2003) demonstrates, that comprehensible and authoritative standards of legitimating for its evaluation through the citizenry are neglected.

A discursively enlarged democratic system has, at least, two immediate advantages: (1) citizens are promptly informed when reform proposals are to be discussed on the national level. (2) The transparency of and participation in decision-making processes is potentially strengthened. This implies, of course, that protest targeted either at the regime or the system as such becomes not only possible but likely.

The next section seeks to elaborate on the concepts of “enlightened understanding” (Dahl 2000) and “political linkage” (Lawson 2005), i.e. on the quality and the mechanisms of communication in European politics.

2.1.3. Enlightened Understanding and Political Linkage

It has become clear above that this work takes a decidedly procedural take on democracy (cf. Dehousse 2001). This section presents two concepts – enlightened understanding and political linkage – that are critical to analytically understanding the processes that take place and involve a diversity of actors. It will be argued that political parties have a special role in these processes.

Robert Dahl proposes that citizens can – ideally – expect five normative criteria to be met in a (polyarchic) democracy:

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11 See for example Fossum/Schlesinger (2007) who argue that the „task is (…) to expand and modify our established political vocabulary rather than to assume that it has completely lost its usefulness“ (2007: 11).

12 As another advantage Holzhacker mentions that the governance performance is increased through respective consultations (2007: 262). This is a debate, though, that reaches beyond the limits of this work.

13 For the distinction between regime- and system-oriented support or protest see Talcott Parson (1968).
– their participation to be effective
– to be equal in voting
– to gain enlightened understanding
– to exercise final control over the agenda
– all adults to be included

Polyarchy, as defined by Dahl, has seven attributes: 1) elected officials, 2) free and fair elections, 3) inclusive suffrage, 4) the right to run for office, 5) freedom of expression, 6) alternative information, and 7) associational autonomy (Dahl 1989: 221). In practice, these standards must (eventually) be institutionalised in order to become effective. Dahl identifies six political institutions of modern representative democracy which are necessary to satisfy the (above mentioned) democratic criteria (2000: 92). 

Moreover, there are essential underlying conditions that have to be fulfilled in order to foster the development and sustainment of democracy (Dahl 2000: 147) and, finally, challenges – or problems – which lie ahead of old and new democracies. The latter include the economic order, internationalization, cultural diversity and civic education (Dahl 2000: 180ff.).

One central condition – not only for thick but also for thin procedural understandings of democracy – is that citizens must have an “enlightened understanding” of political processes and a certain degree of information on current events and political affairs in order to follow (or take part in) public debates and participate in democratic practices such as periodical voting (Dahl 2000: 37, Mill 1958). Usually democracies provide a basic “civic education”. The government might also launch information campaigns on some central issues. However, “alternative sources of information” (Dahl 1989: 221) are the so called intermediary organisations, which – representing different (public or private) interests, small or large clienteles – by competing with each other for attention, resources, votes etc. in the public sphere, provide citizens with plenty of information on issues and interests as well as positions, preferences and personalities. These ‘intermediaries’ are interest and pressure groups, civil society organisations, political parties and (mass) media.

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14 Elected representatives; free, fair, and frequent elections, freedom of expression, alternative information, associational autonomy, inclusive citizenship (Dahl 2000: 92).
For understanding the relationship between citizen and the state, the concept of “political linkage” (Lawson 1980) is particularly helpful. Among the intermediary organisations political parties play a special role for communication because they are not only ‘lobbying’ for some special interest (“policy-seeking”) but vote- and office-seeking, too (Strom/Müller 1999, Wolinetz 2002). In other words: They are competing in elections while other intermediaries are not. Therefore, they are particularly responsive to public opinion and citizens’ preferences which they (claim to) represent at the state level (in case they are elected and supposedly in line with their programmatic outline). This is the bottom-up linkage function that political parties fulfil. At the same time political parties in a top-down approach present political alternatives to their voters by drafting political platforms on which they compete, trying to persuade citizens of the respective party’s positions on certain issues or the overall programme.

In today’s dominant understanding of democracy representation is the central mechanism for political linkage between citizens and the state. Rudy Andeweg’s (2003) distinction between representation ex-ante (delegation/authorisation qua mandate) or ex-post (responsiveness/accountability) does not affect the general necessity for citizens to be informed in order to be able to perform effective choices in either process. Also, in Mansbridge’s “Rethinking of Representation” (2003) the point in time, i.e. in electoral or policy cycles, is of just as little importance for the general claim. In these various models mentioned the devil is in the detail, the difference in degree, and the question they pose is: How can the necessary information, knowledge or understanding be best provided in order to hold the normative or conceptual demands fulfilled? The direction of the linkage mechanism at work is fundamental for citizens’ basic understanding of policy. This means tackling the question of who is responsible for the “civic education” of citizens.

Applying Lawson’s concept of linkage to the European Union, Hermann Schmitt argues that the democratic deficit is not so much in the bottom-up “interest intermediation”, i.e. the representative, linkage mechanism between citizens and polity but rather in the top-down “opinion formation” link, the “process by which the political preferences (...) are created or formed. The actors in this process are political elites, and increasingly also the media. The mechanisms in opinion formation are those of political communication (...)” (2005: 150).
These mechanisms of political communication will be further developed below. At the present stage of the argument the interest is on these two mutually complementing conditions of democratic linkage. Communication, on the one hand, is a precondition for effective representation. On the other hand, communication is furthermore closely connected to the notion of accountability, even if Offe and Preuss, taking a representative’s perspective, find that of the two features of democracy, accountability is usually understood as the passive dimension (after all, one is held accountable), and representation – “to transform support into policies” – as the active dimension of the relationship between governed and governors (Offe/Preuss 2006: 178). In a revised “communicative” understanding of representative democracy – a concept that will be discussed in a moment – juxtaposing these dimensions seems a thoroughly antiquated view, since both require communication.¹⁵

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Fig. 1: Accountability and Representation as opposite but complementary communicative Processes between Citizens and Polity

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¹⁵ Also, representation and accountability form a systemic model which can also be grasped as an ever recurring “policy cycle” (cf. Knill/Tonsun 2008).
It should be noted critically that not all linkage is per se ’good’ (or democratic).\textsuperscript{16} Kay Lawson distinguishes a number of propositions on “linkage by party”. The one concerning this project, i.e. educative linkage, reads: “If they (political parties, K.P.) provide directive linkage of the educative subtype, they (again) contribute to the maintenance of power, which may work for or against democracy” (2005: 163). Political communication by elites is “directive” and must not be necessarily educative or informative, but can also be populist or manipulative. This is why there must be political competition and “alternative sources of information” as Dahl puts it (2000).

To highlight some important insights: Due to their central role in the political system as well as their (often) broad social basis (“partisan alignment”) political parties are a core element in contributing to the political “understanding” by citizens in two ways: First, they provide citizens with information opportunities. Second, by structuring the political space in viable political alternatives – represented by different parties – they furthermore contribute qualitatively by making mass public information comprehensible. This is the top-down linkage function that political parties theoretically fulfil.

The mass media, too, have a special role in political communication because they provide the ‘marketplace’, the \textit{agora}, where different positions, opinions and arguments can be exchanged and discussed.\textsuperscript{17}

The public sphere – as “a kind of hinge between state and society” (Poggi 2008: 91) – is where intermediary organisations seek to set the agenda and voice their position. This implies that they are not independent from, but in fact constantly refer to each other. For analytical reasons they are, however, often treated as isolated entities. Accordingly there are discrete strands of research dealing with the respective roles of civil society, interest groups, media and political parties in political communication. The present analysis is only partly an exception from this. It is foremost concerned with the communication patterns of political parties. A core assumption is, however, that communication nowadays is almost always mediated. The focus is therefore on political parties’

\textsuperscript{16} See also Lawson/Merkel (1988) on ”When Parties Fail”. However, only “directive linkage of the coercive subtype (…) work[s] against the establishment of democracy” (Lawson 2005: 163).

\textsuperscript{17} Of course, there are other ‘market places’ like parliaments, politicians actually hitting the streets etc. but in modern societies the mass media are by far the most important. The media also have a voice of their own. This will be discussed below.
communication via the media, i.e. on the link between both. This link will be explored below. Before, however, it shall be discussed in more detail why it is important to focus on national political parties.

2.1.4. Focus on National Political Parties!
One question needs to be answered before pursuing this study further: Why focus on national political parties when the general interest of this project is on the acknowledged gap between EU level politics and policies and citizens?
This puzzle actually contains two important questions, namely “why political parties” and “why national”? Rather than justifying why this work does not deal with something else – civil society or Europarties, for example – this section seeks to give straightforward answers to both questions.

(1) Focus on national political parties!

Although political parties are a relatively new element of politics – if compared to governments and parliaments for example – they are a phenomenon which is extremely well studied and accounts for a huge body of scholarly literature so that “(...) there is no shortage of books and articles on parties” (Montero/Gunther 2002: 2). That is why there is no chance that this overview could ever be complete; some fields of research will only be mentioned, and some not even that.

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18 Both questions are particularly dear to my supervisors and continuous commentators Ulrike Liebert and Phillip Schmitter who persistently kept asking them even though the answer seemed blatantly obvious to me. Thinking about it, however, it dawned on me that there are libraries full of accounts which put forward other ‘bridges’ for the gap. There is the literature on input and output legitimacy in general, on the democratisation of EU institutions, particularly the strengthening of the EP, on Europarties and the European party system in general, on civil society, on communication policies, on citizenship policies. Justifying the road taken here seems indeed a very appropriate thing to do. Some of the fields mentioned are relatively close and related to my approach. These need more delineation and will be tackled later.

19 There are several studies on the literature as well as databases which try to keep track of the rapidly increasing literature. See e.g. Bartolini et al. (1998): Parties and Party Systems: A Bibliographical Guide to the Literature on parties and Party Systems in Europe since 1945. London: Sage (on CD-Rom).

20 The birth of this “enormous” (ibid.) body coincided with the start of political science as a discipline as such. Important first “classics” include Osdrogorski (2002 [1902]), Michels (1962 [1911]) and Weber (1968 [1922]). Others followed suit. To mention only a few: Schattschneider 1942, Duverger 1954, Eldersveld (1964), Kirchheimer 1966, Epstein 1967, Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Sartori 1976. With Schumpeter’s (1942) and Downs’ (1957) work a distinct rational choice perspective entered the debate. However, only in the last two or three decades has the study of parties and party systems been acknowledged as a sub-field per se (Montero/Gunther 2002: 32, FN3).
The original debate about the desirability of parties or factions circled around the questions of ‘narrow mindedness’ and clientelism versus the common will of people (see e.g. Scarrow 2002, 2006). The early criticism on parties as ‘small-minded’ ‘factions’ has, however, long given way for, as White calls it, “the party consensus” (2006: 7) or, with van Biezen (2003: 175), the “‘centrality of party’ thesis” which acknowledges parties as the one of the most important features of modern states. Today the existence of strong parties is seen as one of the essential criteria indicating the democratic nature of a regime (Lipset 2000).

„An open, participant-oriented, viable, and representative system of parties operating within free and fair electoral procedures performs duties that make democratic government possible; without such parties, a democracy can hardly be said to exist“ (Katz/Crotty 2006:1).

Sartori (1976: ix) claimed parties to be “the central intermediate structures between society and government”. This is why it is worthwhile to examine parties’ communicative role in the EU polity.

Today this consensus is questioned again. There is a basic controversy driving the growing literature on parties (van Biezen 2003: 171) between the positive, essentialist assessment of the centrality of political parties (Sartori 1976) and, for example, Philippe Schmitter’s claim that “parties are not what they once were” (2001a) – and not able to fulfil their functions any more (also Becker/Cuperus 2004). White reminds us that although parties are central to democratic systems, the critical stance towards them, esp. in the USA, has never ceased: Parties have an image problem. They are associated with corruption, self-serving, special interests, rich, immorality, plain lying etc… (White 2006: 9, Linz 2002). Sartori (2005: 25) questions the “major legitimising role” and function of Western pluralist party systems: While parties can help sustain legitimacy by serving as instruments of a legitimate order, he argues, they cannot help create legitimate regimes. Is his earlier statement about the centrality of parties as intermediaries (1976: ix) outdated? Are we flogging a dead horse?

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21 Scarrow describes the dominant perception of parties as it was shaped in the 20th century as “a pluralist view that saw parties as beneficial mediators of individual and group demands” (2006: 23). In order to get rhetorically round the criticism, Sartori proposes to call “factions, secret societies, sects (…) ‘pre-party’ groups” (Sartori 2005: 11).
22 As a very basic summary on the contested notions of parties during the early stages as well as the contemporary developments see van Biezen (2003).
Do we observe an irreversible decline or rather a revival of parties? The case for decline: Among the many challenges for democracy and for parties, a vital question is if and how parties will adapt to the fact that mediating institutions are in decline and social capital is eroding (Putnam 2000). Party membership decline is ubiquitous and seems inexorable (Mair/van Biezen 2001). In regard to the communication aspect, the internet is said to level the playing field as everybody has direct access to the desired (or not desired) information: “In short, political parties no longer provide a filter for information. Instead, they are just one provider – among many – of several different types of information that are available on the World Wide Web” (White 2006: 12). It follows that “(...) the ‘quality’ of political participation is quite different and less interactive” (White 2006: 12, see Römmele 2003, von Alemann 2001: 194).

Becker and Cuperus (2004) acknowledge a major transformation, if not a decline, but argue in a more optimistic fashion the case for revival, that in order to keep their central role in contemporary politics, parties need to redefine their self-understanding and find new functions for them. They identify three strategies in the literature: Parties should become keepers of transparent administration, fight for more direct democracy (and against Politikverdrossenheit), and they have to “offer a far higher calibre of programmes and persons. They now lack adaptive and innovative ability” (Becker/Cuperus 2004). Party adaptation is a central feature of reformulating the role of modern political parties and “will shape the future of democracy” (Katz 2008: 315).

Because political parties are in crisis themselves, they do not enjoy such a promising image as civil society organisations, and it has been questioned if they still matter in view of increasing constraints to policy-shaping. While the representative function is increasingly performed by a range of lobbying groups, policy control is an area in which parties still function well (Katz 2008). “The political parties remain the best organizations to express and channel politically the conflicts between classes, religious groups or regions” (Gaffney 1996: 22). Gaffney furthermore finds:

“The broad view that their importance has diminished, is misplaced; it is the more diffuse and changing nature of their influence which needs to be assessed, in order that their proper place and potential in the political process of European integration be identified, and therefore that the process itself be better understood” (1996: 3).

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24 For example, the EP turned out as responsive to public protest and situations and effectively forced Commission and Council in 2006 to redo the so called “services directive”.

Political parties are still familiar and functioning as intermediary bodies present on all levels of the multilevel polity. In a world which becomes increasingly complex and difficult to overview and comprehend, they can function as ideological and political points of orientation.

(2) Focus on national political parties!

It has been argued above that parties still matter. It is not self-evident, though, why parties on the national level should be the object of the study. Why not rather look at the potential of European-level political organisations?

As European studies progressed, a relocation of the research focus from a neo-functionalist orientation on the European level to the return to the nation state level could be witnessed in the Europeanisation literature. While this has recently led to a “return of the party” on the research agenda of students of European politics, Wonka and Rittberger still find that “we lack research on national parties’ activities in EU multi-level politics” (2006: 2). From their review of the theoretical and empirical literature on political parties in the EU, they conclude that, in regard to the ‘politics’ dimension, “research is heavily centred on partisan politics on the EU level with a particular focus on the EP” (2006: 7). When this work draws on the according literature, it does so with a particular focus on national political arenas.

The assumption made here is that parties enable their members and the general public to form an opinion on European issues and politics and that this will happen at the national level. At least three arguments can be distinguished.

First, euro-parties at the European level (formerly European Party Federations) have gained both status and statute. Their coordination and consultation record preceding the big enlargement round of 2004 has provided them with a new reputation for transnational interest aggregation (Ladrech 2006). However, rank-and-file party members – and citizens in general – are only to be found at the national level. This is why national level political parties are seen as crucial (and so far neglected) agents of

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25 Some euro-parties offer individual membership, e.g. the EPP-ED. The PES offers an online platform for “PES activists”. However, the publications of euro-parties are not automatically distributed to all individual members of the euro-parties’ member parties on the national level. In this case, members must become active out of own interest and be either willing to pay an additional subscription fee or have access to the internet where one can obtain the online versions of europarty publications.
the Europeanisation of the public sphere in this work. They are potent gatekeepers for information on and participation in European affairs. It is also quite obvious that communication as such is a matter of subsidiary character, hence, it is imperative: the closer, the better.

Second, the European Commission has only recently discovered political parties as “partners” in order to “ensure a robust European debate” in its 2006 “White Paper on a European Communication Policy” (see Introduction to this work). It is thus of political relevance to assess the abilities of national political parties to fulfil these expectations.

Third, according to Vivian Schmidt the democratic deficit is foremost a national problem (while she does not ignore the flaws in the democratic practice on EU level). Discussing the treaty reform process she finds that:

“(...) citizens may feel an increasingly significant democratic deficit at the national level – even as all attention is focused on the democratic deficit at the EU level. The dangers here include the rise of the political extremes, which speak only to the negative impact of the EU on national democratic values, and of voter apathy and citizen disengagement. Moreover, no remedies through a new Constitutional Treaty can solve these national problems. This can only be done at the national level, by national leaders engaging the public in deliberations on the changes in the traditional workings of their national democracies in light of Europeanisation. (...) The opportunity for such deliberations will come if and when national referenda and parliamentary debates are held on a new Constitutional Treaty. But will national leaders take advantage of this new opportunity to engage the citizenry in deliberations about their own national democracies rather than focusing solely on the new architecture of the European Union?” (2004).

In Schmidt’s view the EU is a “policy without politics” while national actors practise “politics without policies” (Schmidt 2006: 157). However, Europe has ‘hit home’ in the constitutional referendum debates in 2005 and it is hard to drive out from political contestation in the various national public spheres. Therefore, this is exactly the place for researchers to look at the communication performance of the most influential actors, i.e. national political parties. The analysis consequently focuses on the questions how or how well and why national parties communicate European issues – the European Constitutional ratification – to citizens via the domestic mass media?26 Considering the (potential) importance of the communicative role of European parties on all levels of the multi-level Union, this aspect has been under-researched in the party literature. This

26 See the European View (Vol.3, 2006) for an, in my opinion, overly optimistic account of the potential of transnational euro-parties.
dissertation project aims at adding to the empirical and theoretical knowledge on transnational communication by parties.

An important empirical question is hence if these political and academic expectations are actually met in the coverage of EU issues in general and especially in the case of the Constitutional ratification process as a major European event. In particular, we know little about the determinants of party political EU communication.

Two main questions to guide the present study can be distinguished:

- Whether and to what extent do the mass mediated communication patterns of political parties’ messages on European contentious issues vary comparatively?

- Which factors (individual parties’ characteristics, party system features, political context) can explain these variations in party political communication patterns?
2.2. A Political Communication Perspective on Political Parties in the Public Sphere

This part of the theoretical framework reviews and develops the insights from media and communication studies which are incorporated for the empirical analysis.

It introduces the revised transmission model of political communication and, more importantly, the concept of (party) elite cueing. For theoretical and analytical reasons the concept of party “cues” is then disaggregated into three components – strength, direction, and clarity. These components constitute the *explanandum* of the study.

2.2.1. The Revised Transmission Model

Political communication is shaped by the interaction of three types of actors: (1) political organisations – among them governments, political parties, interest groups and civil society organisations – address or send messages to (2) certain target groups or the general public to convince these of their positions. (3) „In the age of mediation“ they do so mostly via the media (McNair 2007: 3). Political organisations, the media and the citizens thus constitute the core “elements of political communication” (McNair 1995: 5).27

The interplay of these elements is complex and difficult to assess as each actor is not exclusively a sender or a recipient but always both: Using letters to the editor, polls or blogs, citizens voice their opinion and appeal directly or indirectly to politicians raising issues and formulating demands. The mass media do not just function as transmitters of exogenous messages but set the public agenda and advocate positions of their own (McCombs/Shaw 1972, McCombs 2004). Finally, political organisations cannot just – in a top-down manner – ‘cue’ media and audience as had been assumed by early propaganda and media effect studies approaches (Rogers 2004). In order to be continuously successful in the electoral realm, they would be ill-advised to discard agenda and opinions that emerge from public debate (McNair 2007, also Beetham 1993).

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27 Kriesi et al. call these – political elites, the media and the public – the “protagonists of audience democracy” (2007b: 40).
The theoretical starting point here is located in socio-centred theory which mainly views media as a reflection of political and economic forces (McQuail 2005: 13). Society in this view is driven by political rather than media forces. According to both libertarian and social responsibility approaches the media are seen to serve a range of societal functions, among others “servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs” and “enlightening the public so as to make it capable of self-government” (Peterson 1956). However, this has been doubted by authors such as Kenneth Newton (1999) who sees civic culture actually suffering from “media malaise”. Pippa Norris (2000b) was able to give the all-clear and show empirically that, in general, the media in the Western world do promote information on and engagement with politics.

In his seminal “McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory” the author discusses four main models of mass communication: the ritual/expressive, publicity, reception, and transmission model. Each is relevant for different purposes (McQuail 2005: 68-75). The mechanisms described above are known as the (revised) “transmission model”. Although one should be aware of its limits and take into account the merits of the other models, the transmission model is the one appropriate for analysing “media activities which are instructional, informational or propagandist in purpose” (McQuail 2005: 75). It is thus best suited for the analysis of political communication, especially news media.

Here is a graphical illustration of the process:

**Figure 2. The Revised Transmission Model**

![Diagram of the Revised Transmission Model]

The complexity inherent in the process described above is further enhanced by the fact, that in any public sphere in a modern democracy a vast number of these communication

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28 Social responsibility theory especially emphasises that the rights of citizens to be informed must be strengthened (Peterson 1956).
processes is taking place at the same time. On the one hand, a multitude of political actors is putting forward various (and even opposite) messages. Citizens, i.e. the audience, on the other hand, have a huge variety of competing media to pick from. With so much ‘noise’ around it might be difficult to actually perceive (let alone cognitively process) single messages at all.

The transmission model has been challenged furthermore on the grounds that (a) messages are encoded/decoded, (b) media interests and organization influence the messages, and (c) that the media do not actually have those assumed direct effects. A short reply will tackle the question how these issues concern the present research project.

We know from media and communication studies that the mass media use selective criteria for “sifting” the mass of available events and messages, and that they are themselves “important actors in the political process” having a “public voice” of their own (McNair 1995: 13, Neidhardt 1994). For this reason, political actors can certainly not expect their messages to be transmitted unchanged or unchallenged. A given party’s message X – sent out intentionally or not – becomes the message X’ if and when it is transmitted by the media which are really ‘communicators’. In other words, the message represented in the media discourse is probably not exactly the same message the sender would like it to be.

In order to cue citizens (at least: potential supporters), political parties in general want to manufacture their messages as strong and precise as possible.29 The media’s criteria differ from that. While they, too, want messages to make a strong impression on the audience, they apply additional “news values”.30 The message X’ can be more or less ‘pure’ or edited by journalists.31 Interviews are a form of coverage in which a politician can present his or her message X largely unchanged. Editorials, on the other hand, can also refer to and present the message X but by interpreting, discussing and challenging it, distort it quite a bit. The research question which is posed in this work remains,

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29 Blumler and Kavanagh note: “After all, the party publicity ideal is to shape the news environment so that journalists are driven to focus on such and such an issue or theme, on this message about it, and on that spokesperson on it [italics in original]” (1999: 51).

30 These news criteria include: the size or scope of an event/a message, its proximity (emotional and geographical), the clarity of meaning, a short time scale, the relevance, potential for personification, negativity and drama (McQuail 2005: 310).

31 For this point the author is grateful to Aleksandra Maatsch. Possibly one could distinguish between X’ and X”, thereby describing the degree of ‘contamination’ – or rather ‘interpretation’.
however, unchallenged. One could add “in these unfortunate circumstances that apply to all political parties”… how do the mass mediated communication patterns of political parties’ messages on European contentious issues vary comparatively?\footnote{Of course, political actors can also directly address the audience by paid media, posters and advertisement in press and TV (Kriese et al. 2007a: 26). In this case elites remain completely in control of the message – at least in regard to the encoding, not the decoding, however. This is the “fundamental weakness” of advertisement: Since the recipients are aware of the persuasive aim of the message, it is often perceived as biased, partial or even propaganda (McNair 2007). This is why this project refrains from looking into party campaign advertising and focuses on media coverage of party messages instead.}

This work will largely neglect the effects the media coverage might have on citizens’ attitudes and preferences. While this is certainly essential for understanding and evaluating the communicative performance of elites and media, it pushes the boundary of this project. Tackling “the effects issue”, which “is one of great complexity and unending controversy” anyway, is dispensable for two reasons (McNair 1995: 11). First, because “(…)’mainstream’ mass media research (…) has mostly been concerned with the measurement of the effects of mass media, whether intended or unintended” (McQuail 2005: 64), we can trust to be quite well informed about the link between mass media and recipients, as well as the mechanisms involved. The second reason is that a new and independent way of measuring and evaluating elite cues using media as data will be developed further below. Instead of focusing on a passive audience and the media coverage’s potential effect on it, media recipients here are conceptualised as influential participants in the political communication system whose preferences and interests feed back into the considerations and positioning of both political and media actors. This influence can not be ignored but as feedback loops subsumed into a more “systemic” perspective of political communication. Public opinion is considered an important variable for explaining party messages.

The European Public Sphere is perceived as multi-facetteed: There are strong publics (e.g. parliaments), segmented publics (policy field specific actors) and the general publics (Eriksen/Fossum 2002). This project is interested solely in the role that political parties play in the latter: “Of particular relevance with respect to the democratic capacity of EPS are the respective roles of political parties, the mass media and the European civil society [italics K.P.]” (Meyer 2004). Parties, thus, constitute an important factor for the constitutionalisation and democratisation of the European
polity. Their messages stick out from the cacophony of voices because they have a high recognition value, they are familiar. Schmitt notes: “In consolidated democratic systems, political campaigns are the culminating point of opinion formation. (…) The EU today is not such a consolidated democratic system” (2005a: 153) or is it?

An “early question” of communication science asked for the role mass media could play for an ‘enlightened public’, i.e. a well informed and educated critical citizenry: “The democratic task of the press of informing the newly enfranchised masses was widely recognized” (McQuail 2005: 52). Today, EPS research similarly assumes a “democratic task” of the media (Trenz/Eder 2004; Fossum/Trenz 2006, Meyer 1999, 2000). The nature of the task has changed, though: While citizens today have a thorough history of civic democratic education, they indeed lack (or feel to lack) knowledge of the competences, institutions, and decision-making procedures of the EU polity: Only an EU-average of 18% of respondents in a 2007 survey think that their fellow countrymen are well informed about European politics (European Commission 2008: 160f.). Democracy (however deficient) has moved beyond the nation-state – but the traditional scope of mass communication, as far as media and audience are concerned, has only been deficiently extended (Gerhards 2001).

In order to establish the degree of Europeanisation of national public spheres, the most dominant empirical research ‘tradition’ in EPS studies has sought to conduct cross-country (and increasingly longitudinal) comparative media content analyses. Machill et al (2006) provide an overview and “meta-analysis” of the most important content analytical studies in the field.

Machill et al. (2006: 59) summarise the merits of this approach:

“Content analysis can answer questions about which topics occur, when, in which media, about which states and how frequently. In this way, it is possible to examine which information on EU politics is made available to the citizens of Europe via the media”.

No more, and no less.

2.2.2. Elite Cueing Theory
This work is interested in how and (how well) national political parties communicate on genuinely European issues, the nature of party messages X’, i.e. of party messages as
they are transmitted and presented by the media, constitutes the dependent variable. The intention of the project is to describe and explain the variation in political parties’ ability to reach citizens via the mass media. The transmission model points towards explanatory factors within the realm of individual parties and media outlets. However, it has to be taken into consideration that neither is independent from the (national) political system context that is the environment in which political communication on the EU takes place. This is also where the public’s opinion re-enters the model.

In terms of actors the research questions above draw attention to the elites – here: political parties – and their interplay with the mass media.

The concept of “cueing” is frequently used in public opinion research and usually describes the effects of elite discourses on citizens’ perception of issues and preference formation. While the transmission model has a purely procedural take, not necessarily presupposing a causal link, “cueing theory” does exactly that. It assumes that citizens are cued by elites such as political actors and journalists. This assumption – putting all elements introduced in the transmission model in a causal relationship – is also implicitly present in many (campaign and election) studies on the effects of party (de)alignment or partisanship (originally Campbell et al. 1960).

This analysis is based on the concept of “elite cueing” as developed in John R. Zaller’s book on “The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion” (1992), which in turn draws on the work of Lippman (1946) and Converse (1964). Zaller’s central premise is that citizens living in large and complex post-modern societies depend “on unseen and usually unknown others for most of their information about the larger world in which they live” (1992: 6). Political elites, that is politicians, officials, journalists, experts, and sometimes activists, provide the information that contributes to shaping public opinion or individual attitudes. Citizens are particularly attentive towards cues from political parties they tend to support.

Considering that the nature of the elite discourse does take centre stage in Zaller’s model of how citizens learn about issues and convert this information into opinion and that it constitutes ‘only’ an exogenous, pre-conditional factor, he supplies a rather substantial definition of political messages:

“I define two types of political messages: persuasive messages and cueing messages. (…) Cueing messages, which are the second type of message
carried in elite discourse, consist of ‘contextual information’ about the ideological or partisan implications of a persuasive message. The importance of cueing messages is such that, as suggested by Converse (1964), they enable citizens to perceive relationships between the persuasive messages they receive and their political predispositions, which in turn permits them to respond critically to the persuasive messages” (Zaller 1992: 41f.).

Zaller finds that cueing messages – or cues – gain special importance when elites are divided over an issue. When elites are united in their assessment of the situation, the public is likely to follow the lead, accepting and adopting the elite position. He calls this a “mainstream pattern” (ibid: 185). European studies scholars have called it the “permissive consensus” (Lindbergh/Scheingold 1970).

When elites are divided however – as they are more often than not, because such is the nature of party democracy – “members of the public tend to follow the elites sharing their general ideological or partisan predisposition” (Zaller 1992: 9, see also Gabel/Scheve 2004). The citizens tend to reject arguments inconsistent with their ‘belief system’ but only if provided with external cues about their partisan implications (Zaller 1992: 45).

The comparative analysis of party communication is restricted to the study of political parties’ cueing messages on the Treaty reform in the national ratification debate, as held in the domestic mass media. Why not look at the “persuasive messages”? It has already been stressed that each party’s aim is to place its message on the market in a distinctive, strong and clear way – no matter what argument or justification the message contains. To examine persuasive messages would mean to look more explicitly on the content – which concerns second-level agenda setting, priming and framing mechanisms (Entman 1993, Snow and Benford 1988).33

This work follows up on the assumption that partisan cues matter for citizens both more superficially but also more immediately than persuasive messages. Cues allow citizens to link their political predispositions to the sources of the political positions and arguments presented in the media, i.e. to political parties.

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33 For a brief overview see Kriesi et al. (2007a: 28-34).
2.2.3. The *Explanandum*: Political Party Cues – Conceptualisation

The concept of “party cues” is more complex than the referred literature suggests. It is therefore preferable to systematically break it up for analysis. Besides the precise identification of a cues’ ‘source’34 three dimensions of party political messages shall be distinguished:

- Strength of political party cues
- Direction of political party cues
- Clarity of political party cues

Here is why:

Zaller (1992) differentiates between the *direction and the intensity (strength)* of cueing messages. For measuring the attitudinal effects of a divided elite discourse featuring dominant and countervalent messages he examines the change of support levels for the Vietnam War among American citizens. The political communication – a two-sided elite discourse – is measured by counting pro-war and anti-war stories in major news magazines over a 6 year period. He is able to show that “(t)he degree of mass ideological polarization on an issue reflects the relative intensity of the opposing information flows” (Zaller 1992: 210). With his analysis he can certainly capture the content (direction) of the message (pro-war/anti-war) as well as the intensity of either camp’s message. Still, this operationalisation does not correspond to the definition introduced above in one important respect: it is too crude a proxy for a cueing message because “contextual information” about its source or its “partisan implications” is not measured. Instead, he assumes a kind of natural association between in-parliament voting patterns and the representation of party messages in the mass media, which might not hold under closer investigation. Regardless, it is highly unlikely in the case of the Vietnam War that the media always linked messages to political parties (instead of civil society, for example). In the European multiparty system context it is even more important to identify the exact source of a political message.

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34 As a ‘source’ a message must not necessarily originate with a party actor. However, in the coverage the message must be linked to a party (actor). For example, a journalist can be reporting about a party message without prior notion (or consent) of the party actor.
A related argument concerns the fact that the mediated public sphere is not only a multi-faceted phenomenon but that political parties are not monolithic entities either. Instead, they are frequently divided over issues and their respective salience – and consequently about the cues they are intending to give. Using data on party positions on European issues (based on an expert survey), Ray shows that “(p)olitical parties are most effective when they are united. Internal dissent vitiates the persuasiveness of a partisan message” (Ray 2003a, quoted after Ray 2007). Even more explicitly Hooghe formulates: “Top-down theory views parties as sources of information. If parties send weak or mixed signals, either because they wish to avoid competing on an issue or because they are internally divided, this should reduce their cueing capacity” (2007: 7). **While the relevance of sending clear signals has been acknowledged, it has yet not been formally transferred into analytical concepts or research design. This work seeks to close this gap and argues that the clarity of cues constitutes another central dimension of party political messages.**

These three cueing characteristics – strength, direction and clarity – will serve as an analytical distinction for the subsequent analysis of political party communication on European issues. The first research question on the variety of party political communication patterns can now be stated more precisely: To what degree do political parties succeed in communicating strong and clear cues in regard to their respective positions on the European issue?

Summarising these insights from media and communication, two conceptual frameworks were laid out:

First, the revised transmission model explains the relationship between the three main political actors in the public sphere: political parties, the media, and the public. It was explained why this work focuses on the link between the former. In a next step the ‘distorted’ nature of political parties’ messages in the mass media was discussed. Furthermore, drawing on the research on the European public sphere, the method of comparative content analysis was introduced.

Second, Zaller’s concept of elite cueing was presented and discussed. It was proposed to add a third dimension to Zaller’s direction and intensity of cues, namely to expand the concept to the clarity of cues.
2.3. On Cleavages, Politicisation, and Party Competition in the EU

This section serves to develop the explanatory argument of the theoretical framework. It will more concretely identify those variables and causal mechanisms that impact on parties’ cueing performance. In other words, it seeks to specify what makes a party publicly state a certain position on a given policy issue in a strong and clear way. The second research question introduced above limits this endeavour to “(1) individual parties’ characteristics, (2) party system features, and (3) political context factors” (cf. p. 1). This is based on the conviction that the conceptual toolbox of party research as an accomplished discipline does contain the proper theoretical and methodological concepts for the explanation sought here.

Let’s briefly discuss the general design of this three-step.

A first assumption made here is that parties act within a certain context. This does not refer to the multi-level context in the EU polity, which is, as has been explained above, a challenge that concerns all national political parties alike – and is therefore not likely to explain any variation. It is rather assumed that the national ‘context’ contributes to explaining cross-national variation in party communication patterns. The relevant context for political parties on the national level are the relations with ‘society’ on the one hand, and the ‘political system’, i.e. the state, on the other hand.35

The second ‘instrument’ from the toolbox is the work on party systems, i.e. the “relatedness of parties to each other” (Sartori 1976). This line of research draws attention to relations and competition between parties and the fact that party features and behaviour are relational in regard to the two dimensions of competition, the ideological ‘cleavage’ dimension and the strategic ‘electoral’ competition.36

35 Katz and Crotty structured their „Handbook of Party Politics“ in a similar way, part 4 and 5 respectively covering “Party and Society” and “Party and State”, even if the “subjects of these broad sections obviously overlap” (2006: 4).

36 As this project is interested in comparing the communicative behaviour of individual political parties, the literature on party systems is not actually ‘applied’ here (for an overview of party system types see Wolinetz (2006), on party system change see Mair (2006a)). Instead, its heuristic value lies in pointing to the ‘reactive’ nature of politics as a game with multiple players. Political party behaviour cannot be understood as that of independent actors.
The third assumption guiding the present study is that political parties are distinct in a number of features and that these actual differences in size, for example, as well as in importance, ideological positioning and communication strategies, are responsible for variation in parties’ cueing performance. For identifying relevant concepts and mechanisms I draw on adjoining fields of research of European and comparative politics on the Europeanisation of parties.

I will also address and justify the omission of certain variables that might seem valuable to include.

Stein Rokkan’s and Martin Lipset’s “cleavage theory” (1967) can hardly be ignored when dealing with patterns of party competition.

This socio-structural theory of modernisation evaluates the impact of factors like the degree of urbanisation, industrialisation and the development of mass educational systems etc. on society. To briefly recall, the general assumption is: The social structure determines the structure of the party system. The cleavage/freezing-approach developed by Lipset and Rokkan in their seminal work from 1967 “Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-national perspectives” contained two main ideas: First, they identified four major societal conflict lines37 along which ideological party families developed. The coalitions built in these conflicts were permanently institutionalised – “frozen” – with the rise and increase of parliamentary democracy and the extension of suffrage after World War I.38 Party systems, therefore, tend to reduce the complexity of social conflicts and political alternatives because new or minor cleavages and topics are often absorbed by the established parties representing the dominant cleavage. The existence of fix cleavages has thus a stabilising effect on the party system.

Klaus von Beyme, among others, has questioned the value of this approach for explaining European party systems (von Beyme 1982: 35). He presumes that nation building processes led to different systems which were e.g. built on the independence of a former successor (like in Ireland, see also Mair 2006b: 371). Other democracies experienced major ruptures like dictatorial and fascistic regimes in Germany, Italy, but

37 Rokkan/Lipset: Ethnic/Regional, religious, rural-urban, workers versus bourgeoisie societal conflicts.
38 As Nohlen notes, the causal link between electoral and party system is now turned around: Institutions are constructed within the societal conflict structure. He finds neither argument convincing and describes the relation as circular and relative (Nohlen 1989: 54).
also Spain and others. After their breakdown some – mostly left – parties could continue, others were heavily delegitimised like most conservative parties (von Beyme 1982: 31-34). Of course, the situation is different in the CEEC after the breakdown of the Soviet Union (Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006).

This critique points to the particularity of individual party systems. Indeed, Caramani (2004) shows that because of the “nationalisation of politics” the territorial dimension of cleavages had been suppressed and is therefore often ignored by scholars, too. National level party organisations have become the “core party”, usually leaving sub-national party units in a hierarchically lower position (Caramani 2004). Deschouwer argues that this is a reason for ideological and strategic coordination problems within parties that are active on multiple levels (Deschouwer 2003).\footnote{This is especially strong in federal systems, but in a lesser degree true for unitary political systems, too.}

Schmitter even infers from the nationalisation-thesis that sub-national cleavage structures might resonates better with an emerging European-level cleavage structure than the national cleavage structure does (2009).

Despite this critique cleavage theory remains valid and most influential. The conflict between labour and capital – the class struggle – proved the most effective creating a strong functional cleavage structuring most modern democratic nation states, if to differing degrees: from “most radicalized and intense” in France and Italy to less pronounced in the Netherlands (Mair 2006b: 371). Mair, following Sartori (1990), argues that the successful transformation of a struggle or divide into an actual cleavage, namely “the shift from society to politics is determined at least in part by the active intervention of political forces in the society” (2006b: 372).

According to Bartolini and Mair (1990) a cleavage has three constituting elements, namely a social structure/division, a value component, i.e. a sense of collective identity, and an organisational component – “the active intervention of political forces in the society” (Mair 2006: 372). It is furthermore a persistent and durable phenomenon. Change is possible, but happens rather rarely. This can be explained by the fact that – among other reasons – existing party organisations and the cleavages, on which they were built, benefit from the advantage of being able to shape and control the institutional set-up of the national electoral market: In other words, parties “seek to
survive by controlling the terms of reference of political conflict” (Mair 2006b: 374). This is the reason why party systems tend to reduce the potential range of political conflict. Controversial issues such as European integration are likely to be absorbed into the existing cleavage structure and party system. However, this can lead to political distortions when issues cross-cut domestic cleavages.

With the emergence of a ‘new cleavage’ based on postmaterialist values which became visible in the European party systems, e.g. in the appearance of ‘Green’ parties in the 1980s, the study of party competition became much more complex. In addition to the (four) cleavages identified by Lipset/Rokkan (1967), Caramani (2008) lists two more which are effective today – the materialism versus post-materialism cleavage (Inglehart 1997) and the globalization cleavage. Kriesi has argued prominently that European integration “should not be viewed as an isolation” but that “it is one of a number of processes that currently open up and unbundle the boundaries of the nation states” (Kriesi 2008: 222). It brings forth winners and losers of the increasing international economic and cultural interdependence, of the openness/mobility and the patriotism/protectionism paradigms (see also Kriesi et al. 2006, Bartolini 2005: 399-400) Regarding issues Caramani (2008) subsumes cultural issues like xenophobia and nationalism as well as political issues like security threats. Hooghe and Marks speak of a pre-material and a post-material dimension (2008).

2.3.1. Cleavage Theory and the Challenge of European Integration

More specifically, in European Studies party researchers have focused on the incorporation of the ‘European integration issue’. Ever since the establishment of the parliamentary assembly in 1952, the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979, and more then ever with the ongoing integration of the EU towards a political union in the 1990s, political parties as well as party systems have been ‘challenged’ by having to incorporate the European dimension of policies and politics.\(^4\) Both turned out

\(^4\) The question, if European integration constitutes a ‘new cleavage’ with the potential of structuring party competition, has been the matter of passionate discussions not only for practical reasons but also because of the theoretical implications of the answer. If a European integration cleavage and according party positions could be confidently analysed as the explanans (instead of being the explanandum itself) this obviously opens new opportunities for studying European integration. Kriesi argues that European Integration presents a new „critical juncture“. It is „likely to result in the formation of a new structural cleavage that we might call the conflict between integration and demarcation“ (2008: 222).
to be difficult as numerous accounts and studies have stressed (Ladrech 2007, Marks et al. 2002, Mair 2000).

The European Union as the only international organisation seriously aiming to become a representative democratic polity beyond the nation state (Smith 2002) constitutes a specific challenge to the institution of political parties. Again, the role of political parties in European governance was and remains highly disputed among practitioners and academics. Mair (2000), for example, found EU politics to have no profound and direct influence on national party systems. Asking how EU integration impacts particularly on political parties and how party politics is structured in the multilevel system, we can distinguish (at least) three main answers and models in the literature today: (1) the genuine European party system model (von Gehlen 2006, Kreppel 2002, European View Special issue 2006)\(^4\), (2) the Compound Party system model in the multi-level polity (Hix/Lord 1997, Schmidt 2006), which recognises “parties as multilevel organisations model” (Deschouwer 2001, 2003, 2006), and (3) the implicit “Europeanisation” model with a focus on national political parties (Ladrech 2002, 2006a, Mair 2007).

These models closely correspond both chronologically and theoretically to the respective dominant understanding of European integration at the time of their development, ranging from neo-functionalism over a multilevel governance perspective to Europeanisation approaches.\(^5\) They also correspond with the scenarios that Bartolini envisages for the incorporation of the ‘European integration’ cleavage into party political structures which will be later discussed.

2.3.1.1. Four Scenarios for Party Politics in the “Restructuring” of Europe

According to Stefano Bartolini’s ‘Restructuring Europe’ (2005) European integration is the latest phase in European historical development and initially a reaction to the aberrances of two earlier developments, that went from state building and capitalism to global war and global economy, which it was supposed to counteract. However, it did


not incorporate the other features of European nation-states such as nation, democracy and welfare-state. Bartolini finds that “[w]ithin the EU, there is increasingly less overlap among the economic, political, and cultural boundaries and the dissonance between the spheres of social identities and the enlarged social-economic practices is growing (2005: 369). Rejecting a cosmopolitan – i.e. a world without borders – perspective, he stresses the classical understanding that “(T)he scattered elements of identities, interests, and institutions need to be reconciled in some way into a new coherent order” (2005: 411). European integration does not yet seem able to do so, but still must be understood – so his argument goes – as a “‘critical juncture’ in European history” and a cleavage in the above defined sense.

After nation-state formation and the industrial revolution as the two main phases constructing conflict lines in European historical development “(T)he integration revolution would (instead) oppose allegiance to a relatively closed territorial entity versus the internationalization of chances and opportunities” (2005: 401). This potentially re-constructive new integration cleavage contains (at least) three conflicts on two dimensions, the territorial and the functional axis: a centre-periphery opposition, an economic divide between groups of “winners” and “losers” of integration, and a cultural opposition to technocratic and harmonising practices of the EU.

Bartolini identifies four scenarios how this new cleavage could be combined, but not necessarily reconciled, with existing European and domestic conflict lines. These shall be reviewed here in connection with the existing literature on political parties in the European Union.43

The first scenario is the “containment” strategy featuring political parties that try to internalize the integration cleavage threatening the internal cohesion/unity of the organisations. Thus, new parties could emerge from party splits campaigning on contentious EU issues. EU issues and elections would remain second-order. This is – more or less – the description of the status-quo.

The first “containment” strategy can be understood in the framework of the Europeanisation concept: The 1990s saw the emergence of a literature recognising the EU as a multi-level governance system (Jachtenfuchs/Kohler-Koch 1996, Marks et al.

43 Raunio (2007) presents an excellent overview of the state of the art.
1996). This advanced an understanding of a European party system ‘compound’ of different ‘parts’ situated on different levels, i.e. of European level, national level and regional/local levels of party activity and organisation. With the growing interest in the impact of European integration on national policies and institutions and the – initially – “contested” concept of Europeanisation (Vink/Graziano 2007: 3) the research focus was narrowed down to the analysis of EU-implied change at the level of national political parties.

Drawing on recent theoretical approaches and based on new data and analytical methods, scholars then conducted empirical studies on the programmatic Europeanisation of national political parties (Klingemann et al. 2006; Budge et al. 2001, Wüst/Volkens 2003).

A recent project by Poguntke et al. (2007) has systematically studied the effects of European integration on formal and informal internal party organisational change. They were expecting a shift of intra-party power (influence on policy platform, strategy and recruitment) in the direction of party elites and EU specialists at the expense of normal MPs and middle-level elites. Their in-depth analysis confirms that while party elites have indeed gained power, EU specialists – MEPs and staff alike – did not. Because EU expertise is not actually valued high, it is no asset in intra-party power plays. Ladrech concludes on their findings: “(...) party organizations continue to operate as if the EU and its policy competences were confined to the EU arena” (2007: 225). Therefore, national politics remain dominated by national elites. This “continuing perception” (ibid) within parties enhances further the autonomy of party elites because there is a “permissive consensus” among rank-and-file members in regard to European issues.

This (mis)perception and a general resistance of national parties to give up competences (Hanley 2006, Palmer 2006), too, can be hypothesised to influence the Europeanisation of political communication with the public, i.e. European elections campaigns or EU treaty ratification campaigns.

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See for a generic discussion Olson 2002, Radaelli 2000, Eising 2003. A rather constructivist, cosmopolitan view is provided by Delanty/Rumford 2005 and most enlightening by Grande 2006. For a critical discussion and development of the most often used “top-down Europeanisation approach” (prominently in Risse et al. 2001) see Radaelli/Pasquier 2007. A good overview over the current state of the art is provided in Vink/Graziano (2007).
The second scenario that Bartolini drafts is in line with authors who envisage an ‘upgrading’ of the class cleavage onto the European level with an emerging European party system resembling national systems with the system of mainstream and marginal parties remaining largely intact. Territorial conflict lines between and within organisations would eventually erode. National elites, however, keep their agenda-controlling powers and advantages.

When the first scenario corresponds with the Europeanisation literature, the second is in line with European integration theories and draws attention to the developments on the European level.

In regard to the second scenario, neo-functionalism originally envisaged “a regional, i.e. European, system of political parties” (Schmitter 1969, after Schmitter 2004b: 68), even if political parties and politicisation more generally did only play a minor role in EIT (Hooghe/Marks 2008). As neo-functionalism has originally been one of the dominant strands in the European studies, party research has followed and accordingly focused on the institutionalisation of party structures on the EU level. In regard to the normative and theoretical foundations of these studies, we should recall that just as some scholars and practitioners held high expectations for the development of a fully-fledged European federation, the “United states of Europe” (Haas 1948); similar hopes existed for a supranational party system. This conception can be called the “genuine European party system model” (cf. von Gehlen 2006). While neither dream has been fully realised, the European party system has come a longer way than its founders would have thought it was possible. Indeed, the ever increasing strength of the parliament and its groups over the years has proven the “spill-over idea” right in this respect. In institutionalist terms, one could also argue that the path of parliamentary democracy, once entered, has been followed through.

Even though from this perspective party politics have been established on the EU level quite successfully, the success story is restricted to the party in public office, i.e. to the parliamentary groups. Of course, it still stops short of any ideal (or nation state) parliamentary democracy.

The party in central office, so to speak, the European party federation (EPF) or Europarties, have also gained in status (and statute). Although during the constitutional process the role of political parties has not been on the agenda, the TCE’s reference to
the Union’s foundation as a “Union of citizens and States of Europe” (Preamble, European Union 2004a) can be interpreted as a move from a “Europe des patries” to a Europe of parties representing citizens’ interests beyond transnational conflict lines.

Their coordination and consultation record preceding the big enlargement round of 2004 has gained them a new reputation for transnational interest aggregation. This has preceded the introduction of the European party statute which puts euro-parties’ functions and finances on a legal basis. Ladrech (2006a) evaluates this as an important step towards a more independent position of EPFs in the long term. The short term financial constraint might even trigger more linkage activities as EPFs might seek financial contributions from individual party members and, therefore, need to be more present with a better image at the members’ level. Ladrech’s overall conclusion, however, grants parties only a “very modest” linkage function: “party federations are in a weak position to forcefully implement the aspirations in Article 138a” (Ladrech 2006a: 498). The same aspirations referred to can now be found in Art. 10 TEU, which contains the provision that “[P]olitical parties at European level contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of the citizens of the Union”.

Still, europarties have not been able to gain considerable weight in relation to national member parties or the EPGs. The original “promise” to mobilise and coordinate national political parties in EP election campaigns soon proved premature as the European elections turned out to be second-order elections (Reif/Schmitt 1980) and national political parties successfully resisted giving up any control of campaigns.

A new promise or “new purpose” for Europarties is seen in the realm of policy development (Ladrech 2006b), or as a “think tank function” (Hanley 2006: 38). While the former approaches recognise the very limited functions that a European party system is able to perform, others hold true to the idea of a supranational party system – acknowledging that this could only co-exist with and “develop along the lines of” but not substitute the national party systems (von Gehlen 2006: 164). Von Gehlen envisages a “European party democracy” which is based on the present party federations but at the same time is strengthened through essential institutional reforms at the heart of which is “a reform establishing a uniform right to vote” (ibid: 168). Alongside other reforms and flanking measures, this would create the institutional conditions to enable Europarties to act effectively as “intermediaries between citizens and the Community bodies” and thus
contribute to the reduction of the Union’s democratic deficit (von Gehlen 2006: 167). While this argument is clearly driven by an input-oriented institutional perspective on legitimacy, Jansen approaches the issue from a decidedly output oriented point of view. Conflicts between national and European party actors often arise because the “willingness to compromise, necessary for any serious or effective European political work” is not understood at a national level (Jansen 2006: 54). Therefore he sees the need for a distinctively European party system, with European parties based on a “broad supranational consensus (…) that are essentially free of ideology. The key point of these parties is (…) the politico-cultural needs and economic and social interests of those who vote for them” (Jansen 2006: 55).

Despite the differences in their approach to legitimacy both expectations are similar in their sole focus on the EU level party system and its promises for a direct link of legitimacy between citizens and polity, thereby neglecting the difficult role that national political parties play – however reluctantly or ‘unconsciously’ – in EU politics.

Assessing the state of the development of European political parties, Day and Show conclude: “At present…Euro-parties…continue to suffer from a series of ‘deficit-gaps’ which make it abundantly clear that formal-legal developments at the EU institutional level need to be paralleled by forms of direct structural and psycho-emotional linkage with European citizens” (2006: 113).

Turning to the role of political parties in European Parliament elections, another huge field of research opens to us.⁴⁴ Influentially, Reif and Schmitt have coined the term “second-order elections” (1980, Reif 1984). The by-election thesis still holds as turnout has been decreasing ever since the first direct European elections were held in 1979. Using large scale election surveys, the individual attitudes and voting incentives of the national electorates have been studied extensively. However, the existing empirical material it is yet not sufficient for a final evaluation of the impact of intermediary factors, i.e. of pre-campaign internal party debates, party campaigns and media coverage. The lack of a European perspective, respectively the nationally segmented character or framing of EP election campaigns is, however, considered crucial for the

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But how come that not only participation and outcome of the elections are “second order” but the campaigns, too? Among the reasons which are inherent in the institutional complexities of a multi-level democracy is the nationally segmented production and use of (common) Euromanifestos (Corbett et al 2007, Delwit 2002) While EPFs (not all) are an important ‘site’ of producing common manifestos, yet again it’s national parties guarding against “European or transnational ‘intrusion’” (cf. Ladrech 2006a: 496). Candidate selection remains entirely in the competence of national party (headquarters) (Poguntke et al. 2007). Additional difficulties include diverse voting systems (Scheffler 2005, Blais/Massicotte 1997), adequate financing (Nassmacher 2006, van Biezen/Kopecký 2007, Butler/Westlake 2000), and the diversity of party law in the member states (Müller/Sieberer 2006). Recently, critique has pointed to the exploitative effect of the European party statute (of 2004) which institutionalises Europarties as mere “legitimising devices” (Bartolini in Notre Europe 2006: 37).

Bartolini’s third scenario sees a split between national and European system of representation and alignment, with parties fighting national and European elections with different platforms on different issues. This would imply that European integration can again be pushed out of the national realm of competition. According to this argument EU competences would have to be more clearly separated from national level competences. The literature on party politics has largely ignored this so far – probably because of the lack of evidence to make the scenario empirically relevant. However, this seems about to change with the founding of offshoots of the eurosceptic europarty Libertas, which compete in European Parliament elections only, in several member states. Also, the United Kingdom Independent Party (UKIP), though fighting elections

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47 Phillippe Schmitter sees a “2+2” system emerge “in the near future” with two pro-European and two anti-European parties competing in European elections (2004a).
on all levels of the multi-level system till now, started its success story in the EP elections.

A last, fourth scenario has also found some scholarly attention lately, the “mass politicization of the ‘European integration’ cleavage” that Bartolini perceives as – in the absence of external boundaries, a split system of competences, and a common culture and identity – the most dangerous and risky of the four. With the European integration cleavage saliently reshaping national party systems – seeing old parties split, transatlantic alliances emerge, and voters de- and re-align even more, elites might lose control over the electorate and the agenda. He concludes that “(…) politicization and ‘democratization’ could be fatal for any prospect of territorial integration” (Bartolini 2005: 405). Without a left-right dimension to mobilise, any politicisation would necessarily focus on (and against) the EU in its entirety – membership, competences and procedures (Bartolini in Notre Europe 2006: 34f.).

Politicisation, according to Philippe Schmitter, has three constituting features: the increasing controversiality of issues, the widening of mass participation, and “a shift in actor expectations and loyalty toward the new regional centre” (2004b: 58). It has often been argued that the lack of a European(ised) Public Sphere is at the basis of the European Union’s democratic deficit (Gerhards 1993, van de Steeg/Risse 2007, Risse/Kleine 2007). Meanwhile, the future of European integration is at stake because of an overdose rather than a lack of public. Far from silently acknowledging the “ever closer” nature of the European project, European citizens regularly mobilise in order to reject further Treaty reform. Examples include the Irish Nice I Referendum 2001, the French and Dutch constitutional referendums as well as the Irish No to the Lisbon Treaty. Philippe Schmitter admits that: „(…) neo-functionalism misjudged the role of politicization. Not only did it come much later than it should have, but when it did, it proved to be more anti- than pro-integration” (2004b: 56).

Some welcome this development sharing the assumption that only a thorough “politicisation” or “ideologisation” of EU politics can eventually lead to a greater public awareness and supply the Union with democratic legitimacy (Heidar 2003: 3). This ‘democratic turn’ in European integration research has brought forth a whole body of
literature that deals with “European Integration and Political Conflict” (Marks/Steenbergen 2004).

Another argument has been issued prominently by Simon Hix in his contribution to “Politics in the right or wrong sort of medicine?” in which he argues that a politicisation of EU politics along left and right policy positions across the institutions would enhance the visibility and ergo the legitimacy of the Union (Hix in Notre Europe 2006). This expectation in similar form has been supported by others (Wiener/Diez 2004). It is necessary to differentiate between public and institutional politicisation here which are often inadvisably lumped together. Observing increased voting along partisan lines in EP and Council, Hix (2006 in Notre Europe) aims at strengthening this kind of politicised debate and decision-making in the institutional arenas at EU level – in order to present high-profiled policy programmes – and only subsequently give people a policy choice and higher the stakes in European elections. He, thus, proposes a decidedly top-down (electioneering) perspective.48 Other authors observe a politicisation from below which is driven mainly by public contestation (Imig/Tarrow 2001, 2003, Wiener/Diez 2004). This public protest is often mobilised (exploited) by populist political parties from the left and right margins of the political spectrum which seek to mobilise electorally the growing contempt among citizens. If this is true, empirical evidence for the legitimacy providing function of politicisation should be rather difficult to procure. Politicisation in the sole form of protest would rather be suited to delegitimise the Union – at least in the short run. Imig and Tarrow’s studies (2001) show that this pressure or protest is still mostly targeted at domestic governments, even if the “saga” of the so-called services’ directive (Magnette/Papadopoulos 2008) points towards a European-wide mobilisation potential.

Normatively, the expectation of public contestation proponents is closely related to those of deliberative and participatory democracy, but is easily reconciled with liberal-representative conceptions as well. Contentious politics put pressure on the political system pushing it to comply with the citizens’ (or civil society groups’) preferences. Obviously, those preferences must be voiced and defended in public debate first in order to gain support so that pressure might develop. The ultimate expectation,

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48 Hooghe/Marks 2004 argue that the increased use of referenda on integration issue contributes to the rise of Euroscepticism, i.e. contestation. Obviously, this is NOT the kind of top-down politicisation which Hix has in mind. It should not be neglected. In doing so, he opens his argument for critique.
therefore, is that public dissatisfaction and contestation will bring about a real ‘marketplace of ideas’.

No matter what the reason for the increasing politicisation is and what the (positive or negative) consequences might be – for an (emerging) political arena characterised by public conflicts and contestation, political parties representing particular interests and constituencies seem to be ready-made for engaging in contestation as intermediaries between society and the political sphere. The related and growing strand of literature on party politics in the EU underlines that assessment.

The study of Euroscepticism has become a major field of research, too.\(^9\) It severely contradicts the “cartelisation thesis” (Katz/Mair 1995) which asserts that anti-system parties are ceasing. Christopher Flood distinguishes more precisely between hard and soft notions of euroscepticism (2002). Only a certain group of parties fundamentally dismisses the whole ‘system’ of European integration as constituted by Treaty Reform. Some can be expected to be quite outspoken about their positions, others not – for reasons to be discussed below.\(^4\)

Flood draws attention to another important aspect of Euroscepticism concerning its distribution. He notices:

“Euroscepticism is more than a mere attitude. It has an ideological dimension. Like other ideological phenomena, it is communicated in many forms and on varying levels of sophistication, [ranging from everyday exchanges of opinions between individuals of any social class to the production of articles, interviews, broadcasts, pamphlets, and books by politicians, intellectuals, journalists, and other publicists]. It has given rise to single-issue pressure groups, as think-tanks, and protest parties, as well as contributing to the policy platforms of other parties, or to the positions of Eurosceptic factions within parties that are officially Europhile\(^4\)“ (Flood 2002: 73, emphasis by author).

Empirical studies on the programmatic Europeanisation of national political parties use highly structured content analyses of party manifestos to procure information, among others, on the Europeanisation of national political parties (Klingemann et al. 2006, Budge et al. 2001, Wüst/Volkens 2003). This data is complemented by roll-call analysis of voting behaviour in the European Parliament (Hix 2001, 2004, Hix et al. 2003b) and expert surveys on national parties and the European Union (Marks et al. 2002,

marks/steenbergen 2004; marks et al. 2007). academics in the field can thus dispose of substantial accumulated knowledge on the content and salience of as well as on the internal conflict over european integration debates within european parties.

this present work contributes to the understanding of political parties’ attitudes towards european integration, including party euro-scepticism, by studying the public discourse on european integration focusing on political parties’ communication, i.e. dissemination of these attitudes. the basic assumption here is that these attitudes are mirrored in public communication of political parties. concretely, i will compare the respective strength and clarity of euro-sceptic party cues – that reject the european constitutional treaty – with pro-european messages, i.e. support of the tce.

the assumed link between public opinion and party political positions is often investigated without taking into account the actual linkage mechanisms (e.g. in steenbergen et al. 2007), i.e. political communication. notable exceptions are the studies by statham (2008) and by devreese (2006). a productive normative and empirical conceptualisation of a (europeanised) public sphere – in which political parties are but one central component – is mostly absent from this strand of party research. mair, therefore, argues:

“What is really needed here (...) is a much more systematic, inductive, and largely bottom-up comparison of political discussions at the national level (...) we need to know more about how europe actually plays in national political discourse, as well as about the way in which it is conceived: is europe usually cited as a constraint by parties at the national level, for example, or is it seen as an opportunity, or do these parties scarcely cite it at all?” (2007: 162).

this work contributes to this research agenda.

most related empirical research on eu party politics has been done in the fields of comparative party and public opinion research. notwithstanding its methodological omissions, this work profits from the theoretical assumptions and empirical findings established here.

hooghe and marks’ postfunctionalist approach brings together the latest theoretical developments in european integration related party research (2008). their main

50 a systematic test of both instruments, manifesto coding and expert judgements, (and two others) has been conducted by marks and colleagues (i.e. the chapel hill team) who find that, overall, – even though all are weak in the correct measuring of the positions of small and extreme parties – the expert survey is the most valid, but not as good as the instruments combined (marks et al. 2007).
argument focuses on explaining the “substantive character of the debate over regional integration by understanding the underlying conflicts” (2008: 2).

Hooghe’s and Marks’ contribution here is to spell out which and why issues are politicised – limiting their approach to the realm of party politics. To summarise in their own words: “We have kept things simple by assuming that how an issue relates to the major conflicts in a society, and whether it is politicized or not, are determined by political parties seeking votes and avoiding internal conflict, while constrained by their ideology” (2008: 21).

The hypotheses they present are largely developed from a growing body of research on the fit or non-fit of European issues with domestic lines of conflict and competition which Hooghe and Marks have partly initiated and substantially contributed to. An important step in this direction was the volume “European Integration and Political Conflict” edited by Marks and Steenbergen (2004) which assembled a number of comparative studies on the question how European level conflicts are related to the more consolidated conflict lines at domestic member state level. This was investigated over a range of different sites, e.g. civil society, protest movements, media, public opinion and political parties. A more party specific approach was taken in a European Union Politics Special Issue edited by Liesbet Hooghe (2007) that tackled the question “What drives Euroscepticism?” The authors frame this question in a rather broad way, mostly defining Euroscepticism as the downside of EU support and analysing both dimensions. They address the correlation between mass-elites attitudes (Steenbergen et al. 2007), the role of internal party dissent (Gabel/Scheve 2007), party positions in EU referendums (Crum 2007), the role of regionalism for party EU support (Jolly 2007) and European integration in national elections (Kriesi 2007). Most of these studies tackle the linkage function of political parties, some the representative, others the communicative dimension. In the Acta Politica’s special issue (2007) on Euroscepticism a complimentary set of studies was published.

Hooghe and Marks present two sets of concrete hypotheses which will be discussed, incorporated and developed further in the following work. The first set is on “public and party preferences over European integration” and the second one concerns the “conditions under which European integration is politicized in high profile debate” (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 3).
In the present study, the research interest is similar (2008), but focuses more specifically on the questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ parties compete over the first issue of European integration – the constitutional question. Thus, the “which issues” question is irrelevant. Nevertheless, the hypotheses brought forth are helpful for structuring the existing research on European party contestation.

It is important, though, to distinguish more precisely between an ideological and a strategic dimension of party competition because, as Christopher Flood has argued, “ideology is a factor of variable importance in shaping party positions on the EU and it is constrained by other factors, including parties’ locations within the national systems of which they are parts” (Flood 2002: 79). Marks (2004: 239) also notes that there is a substantive and a strategic explanation for actors’ position on European integration. This central insight into the need for political parties of balancing both – ideological and strategic concerns – is core to the models that will be developed in the course of the chapter.

Party competition, furthermore, does not only comprise ideological and strategic considerations in regard to the position on a given issue, but also both issue salience and issue cohesion. In the following, the hypotheses brought forth by Hooghe and Marks (2008) will be discussed in order to develop a set of causal models which seek to explain the strength, the direction, and the clarity of political party cues for subsequent analysis in chapter 6.

2.3.2. Ideology matters
Party ideologies are, contingent with the cleavage theory, central for explaining party positions and behaviour. Hooghe/Marks (2008) formulate three expectations in regard to ideological party political preference formation on European integration issues which will be further discussed below in the light of previous or complimentary work done on the respective approach.

(1) They state that “a previously subsidiary non-economic dimension” has lately become more influential. This relates to earlier assumptions on an effective conflict between liberal and authoritarian attitudes (gal/tan distinction\(^5\))

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\(^5\) gal – Green, alternative, libertarian. tan – traditional, authoritarian, nationalist. Tan-values are thus better called “pre-” than “post-materialist” (Hooghe/Marks 2008)
(Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2002). The latter “taps pre-material (rather than post-
material) values”, i.e. nationalist attitudes. Hooghe/Marks add that the association
between European integration and the gal/tan dimension is stronger on tan, i.e. on
the authoritarian side, meaning that tan parties oppose European integration
stronger than gal parties support it (2008: 17).

(2) The assessment above describes a development that is naturally unfortunate for
mainstream parties because these (new?) salient concerns cannot easily be
integrated into familiar left/right competition patterns. Hence, European
integration puts mainstream parties under the threat of internal division (2008: 18).

(3) Politicisation, Hooghe/Marks argue, is most pronounced in countries with populist
tan parties (2008: 18). Such parties stress national values. While this presents a
hindrance to transnational alliance building, there is not actually a need for tan
parties to seek alliances because anti-Europeans can stop European integration
rather easily single handed by focusing on gaining government (like in PL) or by
winning a referendum.

The hypotheses above refer to the work focusing on the question how existing cleavages
and political parties’ positions correlate – or even explain – parties’ stances towards
European integration. The basic assumption is that these factors should equally
contribute to explaining the direction of partisan cues, of political parties’ messages.

2.3.2.1. Party Family
The hypotheses discussed above are in line with several studies and ongoing research
which show that there is quite some consistency and continuity in respect to party
families’ positions towards European integration. The “inverted u-curve” (Hix/Lord
1997; Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2004; Budge et al. 2001; Marks 2004) has been verified
across time as well as space – although its reliability for the CEEC needs some more
empirical back up (Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006). Political Parties are likely to have
rather stable and structured positions (Marks 2004: 251). It is therefore possible to
cluster parties according to families which are prone to endorse further integration, the
so called “pro-European core” mainstream parties (i.e. the actual curve of the “inverted
U”), and other groups that are strongly opposed, the fringe parties on the extreme left
and right (the sides of the “inverted U”). The latter make rather strange bedfellows: while extremely opposed to each other on the left-right dimension of politics, they share a common position on European integration (if for different reasons).

This demonstrates strongly the difficulty of capturing European integration by the usual understanding of the political space in economic terms. However, it confirms that political parties are driven by ideological rather than territorial considerations (Marks 2004: 249ff.). Furthermore, it allows to analytically justifying a distinction between mainstream (centre) and protest (fringe) parties (cf. Taggart 1998).

While this pattern itself is ‘established wisdom’ among scholars, it is disputed which conflict lines are at the bottom of this pattern. The main questions asked in this respect are:

– How is political contestation at the European level connected to that in domestic arenas?

– How do domestic and European political actors conceive their basic alternatives?

– How is contestation over integration related to left/right divide concerning the role of the states and equality versus economic freedom? (Marks/Steenbergen 2004)

Two models of the structure of the European political space, both of which are based on Rokkan/Lipset’s theory, have become especially influential:

The so-called “Hix-Lord model” identifies two unrelated, orthogonal dimensions that structure the choices. The left/right dimension comprises functional interests while the more/less integration dimension is on national sovereignty and between territorial groups. Originally Hix/Lord (1997) envisaged the eventual “emergence” of 8 europarties (left, centre-right, pro Europe, extreme right, anti-mainstream, greens, radical left, conservatives). Overall, i.e. for European integration over time, so Marks concludes that there are two dimensions that govern patterns of conflict holds (2004: 258).

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52 Marks/Steenbergen (2004) provide a brief comparison between three models, namely the Hix-Lord model, the Hooghe-Marks model and the regulation model.
Unlike Hix and Lord, the “Hooghe-Marks model” assumes that there are two related, but non-fused dimensions. Besides the traditional left/right (regulated capitalism/neoliberalism) dimension they introduce a gal/tan (libertarian/authoritarian) dimension which is derived from the new politics/post-materialism literature (Inglehart 1997). The political space would eventually be structured into two policy-specific camps. According to these authors the position of a party on a left-right or GAL-TAN dimension determines if a party is likely to support or reject European integration. This model holds, so Marks, for the post-1980s when one looks into single issues which involve distributional choices (2004: 259). Steenbergen and Scott (2004) are able to show that the euroscepticism of extreme parties is foremost an anti-regime opposition: since the EU is an entirely centre-party driven project, it is seen as the extension of fighting national centre parties.

Marks/Wilson show that “parties in the same party family have significantly more in common than they do with other parties in the same country” (2000:459). Variation within families can be explained by territorial differences and the historical interactions of cleavages. This research is in line with the comparative politics approach to the MLG research which applies the tested toolbox to the field of European integration (vgl. Pollack 2005: 369). Whereas Hix, who is attributed to have “invented” this approach (1994), has henceforth concentrated mainly on the European level, i.e. the European Parliaments’ party groups and the Europarty federations (1999), Hooghe/Marks and their collaborators continued comparing national level parties. Therefore, the latter work is of more relevance to the present project.

As these data and measurement techniques have achieved such a degree of reliability, they are increasingly used as an independent variable which can possibly predict or explain the behaviour of individual parties belonging to a given party family (Crum 2007, Kriesi 2007). This project proceeds along this line and assumes that parties can be clustered along families which are generally rather in favour of the EU’s political integration and others mainly opposed to it.53 It could be shown that establishing patterns and explanations for party positions on European integration is a major field of research, but it should also be made clear that it is not relevant for the question at hand.

53 Flood argues opposed to this that “there is no automatic correlation between a party’s membership of a particular ideological family and its position in favour of, or against, EU integration” (2002: 79).
why, i.e. because of interests or ideas, parties build their preferences, as long as they can be clustered in a reliable way.

2.3.2.2. Position on Constitutional Treaty
The position a party takes on the Constitutional Treaty is, of course, related to its overall stance on European Integration. There is, however, no automatism. If a party’s attitude towards the EU is based primarily on the ‘free markets paradigm’, it must not necessarily support further political integration. Vice versa, as we have seen in France, the political Left perceived the Treaty as strengthening a neo-liberal ideology (Maatsch 2007). This is why we need to look at individual cases for their respective positions on the Treaty reform.

Certain general assumptions can be made, though. As Crum notes, “government parties are basically constrained to commit themselves to the ‘Yes’ side” because they have negotiated the Treaty at the European level in the first place and have already endorsed it in the formal adoption in the European Council. Governments regularly change, though, so that it is possible that a former oppositional party is now in government and not automatically in favour.

For various reasons which will be discussed below, opposition parties face a more difficult decision in the interplay of ideological and strategical motives. We cannot, therefore, make any assumptions on the positions of mainstream opposition parties.

It is, however, very likely the case that populist right parties will mobilise eurosceptic sentiments and campaign against further integration moves.

2.3.3. Strategy Matters
In regard to strategic party competition, Flood notices in his work on euroscepticism and party politics that “European Parliament elections, and even referenda on European issues, are coloured by domestic political considerations such as the popularity or unpopularity of governments” (2002: 79). This is not to lament on the second-order nature of European contest in regard to the diffusion of national and European level issues, but to point to the political – hence strategic – considerations of actors in the electoral realm, i.e. of voters and of political parties mainly. Various authors in the field
have argued that – besides the ‘ideological’ dimension of party competition – the domestic strategic interparty powerplay is an additional factor for determining the position that parties take in public treaty ratification debates, especially in referendum situations. Crum, for example, explains that “government parties are bound to endorse Treaty revisions because these revisions are established only with the approval of each and every government involved” (2007: 66). Protest parties would want to mobilise against the government in power. Mainstream opposition parties face a dilemma. If they are ideologically attuned to a pro-integration position, they find themselves siding with the government, i.e. strategically in an awkward position. If opposition parties are more sceptical, this might indeed tempt them to join the eurosceptical opposition camp. The danger is in the potential loss of credibility on their future return to office. I.e. the need to find the above mentioned balance between ideology and strategy is particularly difficult for main opposition parties. To summarise, the strategic position (and motives) is expected to be (at least) a good predictor for incumbent and protest parties (Crum 2007, Kriesi 2007, Ray 2003b, Blyth/Katz 2005). Disagreeing with Crum, I assume that these mechanisms hold irrespective of the mode of ratification; that is in parliamentary and referendum debates.

Hooghe/Marks identify another specific set of expectations that concerns the “conditions under which European integration is politicized in high profile debate” (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 3). While, of course, politicization is not per definitionem carried by political parties, Hooghe/Marks admit to keeping “things simple” (2008: 21), assuming that it is indeed and therefore, “we need to investigate strategic interaction among political parties”. Consequently, the key motive identified is electoral success. In doing so, however, Hooghe/Marks oversimplify a little bit. Usually, four incentives for strategic party behaviour are mentioned in party research: votes, office, policy, and cohesion.

2.3.3.1. Political Parties’ strategic considerations

This part of the chapter draws on a number of approaches that discuss the reasons for and implications of strategic incentives, i.e. the rational choices for party behaviour, including party communication.
A main line of argument centres on the distinction between varying goals that parties seek to achieve. This allows categorising certain types of parties. Analytically, this should be given preference over investigating a “homogenising trend” as hypothesised by the “theory of cartelisation” (see below). Of course, the issue of how these different primary goals might influence communication patterns of parties is addressed, too. A particular focus is on the distinction between mainstream and small protest parties.

While a functional approach to the study of political parties and party systems stresses the benefits of parties for the political system, a rational choice approach stresses the parties’ self-interest. Downs’ original assumption (1957) about the parties’ search for the “median voter” has been developed further hence.

In their work “Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions” Müller and Strøm (1999) aim at explaining how preferences of political parties and their leaders are formed. What is the most rational strategic choice for party leaders to seek: Policy, office, or votes? This threefold distinction is criticized because arguably, votes do matter to parties only so far that they help winning an election – and consequently of gaining office (see for example Riker 1962: 33). Analytically, however, the distinction is worth noting and useful for establishing hypotheses:

The office-seeking party might have three types of reasons to seek office. Office (1) might be considered a value in its own right, or it might be valued instrumentally (2) to either influence policy (3) or to gain an advantage in electoral incumbency (Müller/Strøm 1999)

The policy-seeking party model assumes that parties seek the greatest possible control over public policy. In order to achieve this, it is an asset to be in office, and/or to be in a coalition that minimizes the policy range. However, when seeking office via coalition-building, parties often have to give up some of their most preferred policies and give leave to so-called package deals (Müller/Strøm 1999).

The vote-seeking party is the one made prominent in Anthony Downs’ (1957) seminal dissertation. It assumes basically a strong responsiveness of political parties to the “median voter’s” policy preferences. While his model is best applied to two-party-systems, its value is considerable for the analysis of multiparty-systems, too: The more
votes a party wins, the better its bargaining power in coalition talks (Müller/Strøm 1999: 8f).

Steenbergen and Scott (2004) extend this typology by assuming parties to be vote-seeking, office- (and policy-) seeking and cohesion-seeking. The latter goal concerns the internal cohesion and matters of internal democracy of a party – especially the vital task of keeping activists ‘on board’ – that is necessary for the organisation’s survival per se. The major question is when and how the party’s leadership is successful in suppressing dissent on contentious issues.

2.3.3.2. Beyond the Cartel Party
A major impetus for party research has been the “theory of the cartel party” as developed by Katz and Mair (Katz/Mair 1995; Blyth/Katz 2005: 34) which is actually a twofold theory of, to begin with, a cartelization of party systems and a subsequent development of the organisational cartel party type. Their argument is that the historical development of different organisational types of political parties, namely elite (cadre), mass, catch-all and, finally and currently, cartel parties, has been driven by three basic coordination dilemmas: internal coordination in parliament, external coordination and mobilisation of activists and voters, and network coordination between PO and POG in a stable organisation. The financial limits to catch-allism as well a the threats of globalisation have led to a party cartel with a certain dominant discourse downsizing voters expectations and trying to externalize policy commitment to non-accountable agents (Blyth/Katz 2005: 40/4)

As regards this project, two main claims that the theory makes about party behaviour need be considered more closely. First, the cartelization thesis expects electoral competition on policy to decrease and instead to centre on “managerial competences”. Exceptions are anti-party-system parties, “substitute suppliers of policy” and “the only parties likely to attempt to break the established equilibrium” (Blyth/Katz 2005: 34). The question is: can one observe such a cartel in party communication on EU politics?

Second, the theory expects “a profound reversal of the conventional PA relationship”. Parties and politicians as principals can now buy or hire voters (as agents) because the competition over mass support has seized to be the crucial factor (Blyth/Katz 2005: 45).
The increasing independence of political parties from the POG and the electorate implies a certain communicative behaviour. While mass and catch-all parties had strong incentives to run large and prominent campaigns, this is not necessarily true for cartel parties. The cartel is able to narrow the acceptable policy space so that the mainstream cartel parties appear as the only alternative. If, however, anti-party-system parties challenge the cartel by presenting policy and democratic (if not governmental) alternatives, two outcomes are possible: either the cartel might break and competition be re-established, or voters could ignore the cartel and go for the alternative new parties.

Wolinetz, too, distinguishes between vote-seeking, policy-seeking and office-seeking parties. He stresses the usefulness of the distinction which relates to a party’s behavioural features as well as to its structure and organisation (2002: 149). Moreover, it presumes that parties react differently to pressures. Therefore, he rejects a “homogenizing trend” which is “said to lead to the emergence of catch-all and more recently cartel parties” (Wolinetz 2002: 162). Political parties are likely to respond individually to changes depending on their internal characteristics, environment and decisions taken by leaders and members (ibid).

The threefold classification of party types allows empirical researchers to look beyond the “cartel” which might – like the catch-all party – be “exposed to competition from parties freer to take more purely oppositional stances” (Wolinetz 2002:160). In reaction to this, competition might be led onto different paths: stressing one’s own policy goals, refining campaign techniques, ensuring access to subsidies etc., i.e. using different “seeking-strategies” (160/1).

While political parties will usually pursue all of these goals, they are likely to prioritize one over the other two, thereby belonging primarily to one type.⁵⁴

For parties’ communication activities (behaviour/conduct) this has different implications: While a policy-seeking party in a campaign will emphasize policy issues, an office-seeking party might rather avoid such issues (Wolinetz 2002:154f) or favour a personalised, aggressive strategy (Römmele 2003). If a party is divided over an issue, ⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Of course, parties are also subject to – admittedly slow – change. A good example for a party’s shift from policy- to vote-seeking is the British “New Labour” party.
cohesion-seeking becomes the primary goal and the party might refrain from stressing the issue.

2.3.3.3. Goal-Seeking and Communication
The effects that certain goals have on communication concern, on the one hand, the parties’ communication approaches and efforts in the campaign and, on the other hand, the salience which they grant to the issue.

Let’s consider the actual communication efforts first:
Andrea Römmele discusses a number of hypotheses on how these pre-defined strategic choices influence the communication strategies of different types of parties. Her specific focus is on the use of ICTs by political parties. Nevertheless, the general idea holds for mass communication via print media, too. Her main argument is that differences in goal seeking result in different communication and campaign strategies (2003:12).

Parties seeking vote maximization, i.e. catch-all and cartel parties, will pursue a top-down information strategy as they seek to take control over the centre body of the electorate. More interactive communication strategies are actually controlled by the party, thus, only seemingly providing a “more democratic” face of the party (2003: 13).

In a multiparty system office seizure is an important goal. Communication strategies will not vary that much from the above. However, parties might be more inclined to address specifically certain social segments and provide tailored information. Campaigns will be aggressive (or just eye-catching) in order to draw attention.

Another primary goal is intraparty democracy or internal cohesion (also Steenbergen/Scott 2004; Römmele 2003: 13/4). For this purpose, the participatory aspects of ICTs are, of course, very useful. Party leaders will feel representing and being accountable mostly to the members, not the electorate at large. Thus, communication can be expected to be two-directional: bottom-up from members and activists to leaders as well as top-down information sharing by the party leadership. Unnecessary to add, that this approach per se offers a great potential for conflict.
According to Römmele the effects of the policy seeking strategy are among the least studied. There is, of course, a variety of possible areas of interests that parties might seek to promote. However, this category holds mostly single-issue parties: “The communication strategy of policy-seeking parties, therefore, is most likely to be dominated by getting one message across” (2003: 14). They pursue a top-down information campaign directed towards a broad audience, plus targeting clienteles. Their campaign will be supposedly policy- not person-oriented.

Over the last years this last research void has been narrowed.

The downsian “dynamic representation” model which assumes a strong relationship between public opinion and policy platforms of political parties has been challenged in regard to its value for the analysis of small policy-driven parties. Adams et al. (2006) profitably distinguishes, on the basis of empirical data on party positions, between mainstream and niche parties.

Adams et al. finds that the latter policy-driven small (and protest) parties do not enjoy as much “spatial mobility” as do mainstream parties (who seek to appeal to the median voter) but are quite restrained in their options to either moderate or shift policy positions. This is because usually the value dimension is core to these parties – and per se rather stable – so that a shift in policy can be expected to be evaluated negatively by voters. This is even more true for protest party activists, who might even “view such policy moderation as a sign of pandering or ‘selling out’ by the party’s elites, a strategy that niche party activists (…) may see as unacceptable” (Adams et al. 2006: 515). Indeed, the authors establish that neither from a policy- nor from a vote-seeking perspective does it make sense for niche parties in the electoral realm to shift or moderate their policy stances.

Hanspeter Kriesi (2004) distinguishes between two main strategic communication strategies that political actors use in the “audience democracy”. His main assumptions is that the actors in the public spheres are decision makers, the media, and challengers (2004:189) and that these groups use different strategies to put their interests on the public agenda and try to win the public’s support (2004: 191). While we can neglect the media’s own media-centred strategy, the distinction between decision-makers top-down strategies and challengers bottom-up strategies is very helpful and in line with Römmele’s assessment.
Decision-makers, on the one hand, use their advantage in information as well as opinion polling to manufacture messages. However, because of this “intensified professionalization of political advocacy” (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999: 48) they face increasingly a critical relationship with journalists: “Journalists react to attempts of instrumentalization by declaring war” (Kriesi 2004: 193).

Challengers, on the other hand, comment and interpret on the input of decision-makers in order to re-frame the debate. They use protest politics, i.e. create conflict, in order to be granted access to media and then use this platform to inform. Protest and information politics thus mutually reinforce each other (2004: 197). This includes the creation of events with news value intended not only to gain media attention but often to gain positive, supportive media attention. Blumler and Kavanagh observe a general trend in political communication: “Until recently, much political communication was a top-down affair. (…) Since the early 1990s, however, strong currents of populism have been suffusing the worlds of both politics and the media. (…) In such conditions, paternalistic discourse is no longer an option” (1999: 56/7). Of course, mainstream actors, i.e. decision makers, must react to this challenge. By using symbolic politics, personalizing strategies, and attempts to circumvent the media, they try to avoid contentious issues.

The political context, namely the accessibility of state actors and the concentration of power in parliament or government, furthermore, affects actors’ communication strategies. The lower the accessibility and the more power concentrated in government, the more radical challengers will construct their communication.

Given the advantages that government parties enjoy in the public sphere, I would actually furthermore hypothesise their cues to appear stronger to the recipients of the mass media. An additional factor to be taken into account is that a party’s position within the domestic power hierarchy directly affects its visibility in the media. Governments play a special role in political public relations because they have the ability to control (or manipulate) the dissemination of (exclusive) information. Governments therefore enjoy a privileged access to the media.\textsuperscript{55} In line with objectivity and impartiality objectives, the media will usually inform about opposing views too, (McNair 2007: 65).

\textsuperscript{55} Of course, governmental information management can also include ‘selling’ party political ideology or positions as well as stressing specific policy achievements or output (McNair 1995: 133/4).
2.3.4. Salience Matters.
A central approach in party theory is salience theory which basically states that parties – in addition to positioning on an issue preferably in line with their ideology – “manipulate the salience of European integration in a way that best suits the needs of the actor” (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 165). In other words, parties strategically stress or avoid issues in accordance with the primary goal they seek to achieve. The rationale behind this behaviour is the ultimate aim of controlling the policy space, i.e. to be successful in party competition, by setting the agenda, hence by defining which issues are salient (Budge et al. 2001).

Hooghe and Marks present three hypotheses on the strategic considerations of political parties (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 19):

(4) If a party’s strategic calculations result in the conviction that it is likely to win electoral popularity on an issue, it will introduce or stress this issue in party competition. It needs to take into account two aspects, namely “that the issue will count, and will count in a particular direction”. (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 19)

(5) Since political parties are not steered entirely by strategic considerations, but guided or “constrained” by their ideological commitment, they will need to find a balance of strategy and ideology (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 19) (CRUM).

(6) Parties refrain from stressing issues that are likely to lead to internal conflicts and/or divisions. (Hooghe/Marks 2008: 19) In this, they are not primarily vote- but rather cohesion-seeking as Steenbergen and Scott call it. Furthermore, the level of unity a party publicly displays does influence its electoral performance (see Gabel/Scheve 2007).

The main argument made by salience theory (Budge et al. 2001, Budge 2001) is that parties seek to strategically influence the issue salience. However, salience theory is usually about who controls the agenda, i.e. who introduces certain issues to the public agenda. Parties compete over issue control. This is not quite the case here because the issue is introduced top-down, exogenously by the treaty ratification process. The second-order theorem implies that these exogenous issues do not necessarily find attention in the domestic public spheres (Reif/Schmitt 1980). This proved true, for
example, in the referendum on the constitutional treaty in February 2005 in Spain. In this regard, it is helpful to recall Hooghe/Marks’ third hypothesis (above) which stated that the presence of tan-parties, which seek to mobilise on the issue, increases the politicisation on the issue.

Taking a step back, there are two questions this work seeks to answer.

- which parties do put salience on the issue?
- why do they?

Several hypotheses have been developed following the main argument:

- A party will emphasise issues which it considers central to its ideology – a view from the policy-seeking perspective (Budge et al. 2002, Budge 2001)

- A party will de-emphasise issues on which it disagrees strongly from the opinion of voters – is the view from the voting-seeking perspective.

- A party will de-emphasise issues on which it disagrees strongly from potential coalition partners – is the view from the office-seeking perspective (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 171).

- A party will de-emphasise issues on which it is internally divided. However, deep divisions cannot be suppressed and salience will consequently rise. (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 171).

Of course, these goals are not necessarily mutually compatible. Though a party might find it advisable to emphasise European Integration in electoral terms, this could backfire and produce internal dissent (thus, threaten the cohesion) and eventually lead to electoral defeat, or, worse even, cause the break-up of the party. Thus, the careful considerations of stressing or suppressing an issue are “hard decisions” (Müller/Strom 1999).

Beyond the individual parties’ strategies, Steenbergen and Scott identify another factor impacting on the variance of issue salience, namely the political environment. The behaviour of other parties needs to be taken into account as it produces a sort of system salience (2004:169). If an issue is visibly contested by one party, other political parties, mostly mainstream parties, are forced to give the issue more attention than they would maybe have on their own account. In this way, single protest parties can contribute to an
overall increased level of salience and party competition (Kriesi 2007). Or, as Steenbergen/Scott formulate: “A party can ignore those factors only at the risk of removing itself from the mainstream political debate” (2004:169).

- “The salience of European Integration to a party increases when other parties in the system emphasise the issue” (ibid: 170).

More concretely, Hooghe and Marks argue that “the success of tan parties in connecting European integration to their core concerns has spurred their opponents” (HOOGHE/MARKS 2008: 17). While populist tan-parties might have an interest in mobilising against European integration, in theory, others might, too. Namely, mainstream core pro-European parties in government might find it valuable to start a pro-active ratification campaign. The available evidence seems to indeed point in the former direction, though. Therefore, it is to be expected in line with Hooghe and Marks (2008) that euro-sceptic parties in this debate would lead the way into publicly mobilising the integration question. However, we can more concretely expect especially pro-European government parties to react quickly to that challenge and produce similarly strong cues. This might then lead to an enhanced system salience of the issue, i.e. to politicisation.

To summarise: Parties strategically pose salience on European Integration depending on multiple strategic goals. In this, they are constrained by the salience of Integration in the domestic political arena (system salience) which they alone cannot construct. They can, however, do the fine-tuning.

Steenbergen and Scott find that the salience of European Integration in general differs across party families. Extreme parties at the left and right margins of the political system display the lowest issue salience, followed by regional parties. The mainstream party families, i.e. liberals, social-democrats, Christian-democrats and conservatives, put more – and basically the same level of – emphasis on the issue.56

As regards the explanations, only the office- (here, = policy-) seeking hypothesis was found not to contribute to explaining party emphasis on European integration. The vote-seeking incentive has gained importance since 1992. Extreme parties, however, seem

56 These results are derived from the analysis of a time-series expert survey data (Ray 1999). The question raised here is in how far these are significant/ meaningful for the evaluation of party communication.
untouched by this trend and position themselves on European integration irrespective of the public opinion (confirming the findings of Adams et al. 2006). The cohesion-seeking hypotheses could be confirmed for the period after Maastricht in which it was prominent. An important finding is that, as soon as parties reach the point of significant dissent, they are not able to restrain the issue any more. System salience is the most important, however not sufficient, condition for explaining a party’s issue salience.57

What can we conclude from this for the cueing performance of political parties on European treaty reform?

The hypotheses developed here are straightforward: on the salience of European integration issues for political parties. A party’s closeness to power potentially affects how important it evaluates European integration issues. Parties pose salience on European integration depending on their diverse strategic goals (Steenbergen/Scott 2004). For incumbent or main opposition parties (likely to regain power in near future) the EU constitutes the extension of the executive’s realm of power and as such takes precedence. This is in line with the findings on the same level of salience among mainstream party families. Anti-regime opposition, therefore, drives protest parties’ euroscepticism. On the other hand, small parties might find the EU quite irrelevant (as Steenbergen and Scott’s findings suggest).

We do, of course, understand salience not as the dependent but rather as an independent variable explaining political parties’ communication patterns. If, now, a party considers treaty reform an important and salient issue58, I assume this will show in the visibility of its messages in the media – even more so because it can be expected to enforce its activities targeted at the media, i.e. its media management. As a potentially restrictive factor, it must nevertheless be taken into account that the salience of European integration issues for the respective party is linked closely to the degree of unity or dissent within the ranks of party. In case the party disagrees on the issue, it will try to rather downplay the importance and refrain from taking a stance. Opposition parties are particularly prone to intra-party dissent (Crum 2007: 62). If this strategy succeeds in turn, depends on the force of party competition, which is part of the power variable (c)

57 The only way of analytically capturing system salience is to pursue a cross-party system comparison including all relevant parties in the system.
58 Budge (2001) gives a brief overview on the theoretical assumptions of the saliency approach.
and public pressure, that is expected to increase in the context of a referendum, for example (d) (see particularly Steenbergen/Scott 2004).

2.3.5. Context Matters. Referendums and Public Opinion
When Butler and Ranney published their extensive report on Referendums around the World in 1994, they found that the “vast majority of Western-style democracies rarely use the device” (1994: 259). Recently, however, referendums have gathered some attention with scholars as they became more and more frequent in the context of European integration. Not only did most of the Eastern European member states decide on the Union accession by popular vote, but in 2005 as much as 10 member states called a referendum on the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. This situation constitutes the background and context of the present study which is sufficient cause to take a closer look at this phenomenon and its causes.

Butler and Ranney provide an excellent review of both the normative ‘case for’ and the ‘case against’ referendums as put forward in the literature which shall be briefly picked up here.

They show that most advocates of direct democratic elements see “referendums as useful supplements” (1994: 13) rather than a fully fledged alternative to representative democracy. With new communication technologies previously existing limits of direct democracy seem obsolete and an enhanced use of the referendum tool is propagated (Barber 1984). Popular votes are generally considered as beneficial for two main reasons, for “maximising legitimacy” and for “maximising participation” (Butler/Ranney 1994: 14-15). Both arguments re-occurred in the debate over the ratification of the TCE (Maurer/Stengel 2004), even if there is no convincing empirical evidence for these claims (Butler/Ranney 1994:17, Christin/Hug 2002).

Three major arguments are brought forward against the use or referendums: (1) citizens possess neither the skills nor sufficient information to decide on complex matters (of sometimes constitutional scope!). (2) Referendums favour a majority tyranny by circumventing the search for compromise inherent in the normal legislative process and by neglecting minority rights. (3) Referendums subvert democracy by allowing citizens
to overpower elected officials as well as allowing elected officials to avoid difficult
decisions (Butler/Ranney 1994: 16-21).

Both the first and the last point have been discussed in the context of the growing
number of EU referendums in particular and will be discussed further in a moment.
First, a quick overview of the extensive literature on European integration referendums
is provided in order to determine the main research questions in the field and see how
the question posed here – on mediated party political communication – relates to
existing research.

Taggert (2006) distinguishes four main strands of research on referendums in European
studies: The first is a normatively oriented field using empirical examples to study the
advantages and disadvantages of direct democracy (e.g. Qvortrup 2005). The remaining
lines of research, which vary largely in terms of theoretical development and empirical
scope, are all driven by the question on the outcome of referendums, i.e. turnout and
voting behaviour. In doing so, researchers quickly encounter the problem of choosing
either a ‘one-size-fits-all' universal explanatory approach, e.g. a general rise of
Euro scepticism, or identifying a seemingly unique domestic context responsible for the
respective outcomes with the subsequent limitation of generalisable explanations
(Taggert 2006). The second, most limited strand is primarily interested in the outcomes
of specific referendums and thus uses case study research. Given the increasing number
of cases, this is quite a large body of literature. The two remaining approaches are of a
more encompassing nature in terms of theory and empirical scope. Szczerbiak and
Taggert (2005) model turnout and outcomes in European referendums by providing a
solid comparison of the accession referendums in Eastern Europe. A last body of
literature uses the European cases in order to “develop wider hypotheses about the
dynamics of referendums” (Taggert 2006: 13).

This latter research is most important for this work. It is often implicitly or explicitly
‘inspired’ by both the normative expectations and careful reservations discussed above.
It has produced a number of studies on voter behaviour in referendums and its
determinants (Franklin 2002, Francklin et al. 1994). This research is mainly build
around the empirically well-established knowledge that “partisanship” – the closeness
to a given party – is a crucial factor for explaining referendum outcomes (as it is for
elections, originally Campbell et al. 1960), i.e. that voters can be expected to follow the
recommendation of their respective preferred political party (Pierce et al. 1983, Franklin et al. 1994). Extending this ‘partisanship postulate’, Schneider and Weitsman (1996) formulated more concrete expectations starting out from the ”punishment trap” idea: the dilemma that voters face in a referendum situation to either vote on the substance of the proposal or on the performance of the government or – because of strategic considerations or lack of information – to simply follow partisan cues (actually a ‘trilemma’). This assumed automatism of the partisanship-theorem has been questioned on several grounds. For example, Hug/Sciarini (2000) found that incumbent support is effective but affected by the institutional characteristics of the referendum at hand, namely if this is required and/or binding. They argue that voters are receptive to the strategic considerations behind the institutional set-up and act accordingly (Hug/Sciarini 2000: 32). Among others, Siune et al. (1994) have stressed the importance of the campaign (Kriesi 2004, De Vreese 2006) which is closely connected to research looking at the news coverage of referendums (Liebert 2007, Jasson 2008) and its potential effects (De Vreese 2006). Also closely linked are studies on public opinion formation (Ray 2007, Christin/Hug 2002). All of these address foremost the critique of inadequate voter information and competence and seek to analyse how and how well citizens are informed, i.e. on what grounds they make up their voting decision.

Only recently have scholars begun to look more closely at the behaviour of political parties in EU referendums – as well as other contexts, e.g. European elections – and started investigating in more depth how parties actually shape voting behaviour as providers of cues and information (Binzer Hobolt 2006, 2007). In the following, I will attempt to discuss systematically what determines party ‘cuing’ behaviour. In doing so, the knowledge accumulated in the literature outlined above can of course inform us on certain expectations about how different parties are affected by referendums and ergo how they can be expected to behave in this situation.

In the remaining part of this section the following questions will be discussed:

- Why parties would want referendums in the first place?
- Why parties would participate in ratification debates at all – be it in referendum or parliamentary context?
How does the referendum context influence the strategic choices political parties of different kind face? And what are the rational consequences in regard to party behaviour?

2.3.5.1. Why use Referendums for European Treaty Reform?
When considering political party activity and referendums the first question that comes to mind is: why political parties (mostly, but not always, government parties) would call a referendum in the first place. After all, political parties are most powerful in the representative institutions of parliament and government. To put it straightforward: they think they would win the argument, the vote, and a ‘standing’ and popularity with the electorate. Empirically this is a relatively safe assumption since most referendums have indeed yielded the desired result (Butler/Ranney 1994). That they are still unpredictable has been proven by the latest rejections of EU treaty reform qua referendum in 2005 and 2008.

When Butler and Ranney argue that “politicians usually dislike referendums” (1994: 259), one tends to wonder about the large number of referendums on European integration held since Maastricht in 1992 (see Taggart 2006 for an overview: 10-2). The Netherlands held its first popular vote ever on the TCE in 2005. This “dislike” concerns, on the one hand, the normative problems outlined above, the undercutting of representative institutions as well as the reduction of complex political issues to a simple dichotomy. On the other hand, a government calling a referendum faces practical challenges, namely that it cannot control the outcome.

In general, referendums tend(ed) to be used as a last resort: Where elite dissent and party splits on the course of European integration grow, governing parties increasingly tend to offload the decision on EU reform to their electorates, “happy to shift responsibility” and accepting the loss of control of the agenda and legislative power, as well as the strengthening of anti-European, often nationalist movements and the rise of populism (Hooghe/Marks 2004: 6). Studying the TCE ratification pro-referendum decisions in 10 EU member states, Closa finds this to be the reason in four cases, namely the UK, France, CZ and PL. In the other cases a normative understanding about the appropriateness of applying plebiscitary politics for making such a fundamental decision on treaty ratification seems to have been at work (Closa 2007). At the basis of
this is, of course, the underlying (illusory) assumption that the direct participation in
treaty making would lead to an enhanced public support of European integration in
general and the TCE in particular.59

It is important to note that one reason for a reluctant reaction in that direction on behalf
of citizens or a neglectable effect on public opinion could be due to citizens’ very good
understanding of the strategic decisions behind calling a referendum – when this is not
mandatory.

Having discussed why referendums on European integration are called in the first place,
another – for this work more central – question concerns the motives of party political
participation in ratification debates. Franklin has argued that referendums further a trend
of “de-partification” (2004), but other authors hold that parties and party campaigns
continue to play an important role in referendums (Binzer Hobolt 2006: 624), especially
would political parties commit themselves to positioning or, in the case of a referendum,
even to campaigning on a single issue topic like European treaty ratification at all? This
is not in the first place an issue of party political competition – no party or party
candidate is going to be elected – but a question of voters choosing between the
alternatives yes or no or the parliament deciding by majority vote. While some parties
might be ideologically strongly inclined to take a stance on European integration, for
most parties it is rather a matter of considering the strategic consequences. De Vreese
lists a number of possible negative consequences parties face in referendum situation,
especially if they make part of the losing camp, including the loss of credibility, framing
power on the issue at hand and popularity with potential impact on future first order
political contests (2006: 592). Hooghe and Marks stress that referendums “(…) are used
for immediate effect, but their institutional impact has a considerable half-life.
Referendums are not easily forgotten” (2008: 20).

59 Starting out from Eichenberg/Dalton’s (1993) findings on the positive relationships between the use of
referendums and support in public opinion on European integration, Christin/Hug with a larger data set
find only scant (and also partly inconclusive) evidence for this effect of direct democracy in the EU
context which leads them to conclude “some caution is necessary in advocating an increased use of these
instruments of decision making. (…) simply holding a referendum on European integration does not
necessarily increase the standing of the EU in the public’s opinion” (2002: 606).
These arguments hold also, to a lesser degree depending on the level of public awareness and attention, for political parties in the context of parliamentary treaty ratification. The most important effect referendums yield is certainly that they raise the stakes because the contest over a policy issue can become an issue of a party’s public standing and popularity.

2.3.5.2. How Referendums affect Party Choices
The above arguments create an interesting mixture of incentives for party behaviour in the ratification campaigns and debates. Parties’ driving forces have prominently been understood as threefold, as vote-seeking, office-seeking and/or policy-seeking (Wolinetz 2002, 2006, Strom/Müller 1999). In a referendum situation these motives are not eliminated (because strategic long term consideration remain valid as has been just argued) but they are subdued because a) parties do not compete on a range of issues and are not ‘free’ to stress their preferred topics (salience theory), and b) parties do not compete for office. Because, furthermore, the EU question does not correspond with established lines of domestic partisan conflict, other variables come forcefully into play in the relationship between party and voters’ behaviour. The determinants of voters’ behaviour are only of relevance here in so far as they constitute the incentives and constraints that guide party behaviour when parties try to influence these vote choices.60

Obviously, the main challenge for political parties is that they want to mobilise and convince their supporters to vote congruently. In a parliamentary ratification situation, the electorate’s support is desirable, of course, but not immediately necessary.

It will be outlined how the referendum context possibly impacts on a number of – partly counteractive – factors shaping the cueing potential and capabilities of different types of political parties.61

For the present purpose it suffices to distinguish parties in regard to (a) their ideological positions, i.e. as mainstream or protest parties, as in favour or against European integration, and (b) their respective strategic position within the political system, i.e. as government, main opposition, and small/protest parties.

60 Consequently this work refrains from discussing factors which impact on vote choice that are unrelated to party characteristics or behaviour, such as economic conditions or demographic factors. Gattig/Blings (2008) fill this gap.

61 There exists of course a plenitude of party typologies, a literature which shall not be reviewed here. For a recent discussion see André Krouwel’s (2006) synthesis of Party Models.
(1) Campaigns matter

While there is no consensus in the literature under exactly what conditions and to what degree political campaigns influence both turnout and outcome of referendums, a (considerable) number of case and comparative studies demonstrate that the campaigns matter (Siune et al. 1994, De Vreese 2006). Ray (2007) argues that voters are particularly receptive to party cueing in referendums. The amount as well as framing of media campaigns have been found to determine vote choice in referendums (De Vreese and Semetko 2004) This is the case especially when voters do not have stable pre-established preferences on the issue (Zaller 1992) and when there is a large portion of ‘late deciders’ as in the Netherlands in 2005 where “more than half of the electorate took the decision during the hot phase of the campaign” (De Vreese 2006: 585). While political parties in the referendum context have a stronger incentive to try to cue the public via the media, i.e. will pursue an active media management, I argue that the nature of these cues will vary due to party characteristics.

- The omission of the competition for office alters the usual patterns of domestic party competition in several ways. For parties’ communication activities it implies privileging certain strategies: While a policy-seeking party in a campaign will usually emphasize policy issues, an office-seeking party might rather avoid such issues (Wolinetz 2002: 154f.). This implies that political parties used to office-seeking strategies might well be unprepared to switch to the more policy-oriented emphasis of a referendum campaign. In the same line, Kriesi distinguishes between different types of actors (2004:189) and corresponding strategies to put their interests on the public agenda and win the public’s support (ibid: 191). While governments can act top-down, challengers, among them protest parties, must often take a bottom-up approach involving carefully designed protest activities creating media attention and the coverage of their messages. If an issue is visibly contested by one party, other political parties, mostly mainstream parties, are forced to give the issue more attention than they would maybe have on their own account. In this way single protest parties can contribute to an overall increased level of
salience and party competition (Kriesi 2007). A referendum represents a ready-made window of opportunity for this kind of strategy. Small, strongly ideologically oriented (radical) parties thus profit from a referendum situation while large mainstream parties are rather disadvantaged in regard to their usual behaviour. Government parties, though, also profit, because governments enjoy the advantage of the agenda-setter.

– Usually, the media are (self-)bound to report and comment in a balanced way between opposition and government. This maxim remains valid in the coverage of a referendum but the balance must now be created between the yes and the no ‘camps’. This might lead to an over-representation of smaller parties and individuals (De Vreese 2006: 583). When government and opposition both campaign on the yes-side, smaller opposition and protest parties on the No-side can extraordinarily profit from the balanced news coverage. On the other hand, in a referendum situation, other groups of actors also seize the opportunity of shaping public opinion and compete with political parties for scarce media attention.

– Overall, in a referendum context government – due to their agenda setting advantage and privileged access to media – and protest parties – familiar with “challengers” strategies and under balanced media coverage – can be expected to do well in regard to the visibility of their cues, even if competition is high. Mainstream opposition parties used to office-seeking strategies will find it difficult to be as visible as in ‘normal’ domestic contests, especially if they side with the government.

(2) Partisanship matters.

It has already been mentioned above that studies of voter behaviour in referendums have consistently demonstrated a strong effect of partisanship on voting behaviour (Marsh et al. 1996, Hug/Sciarini 2000). Voters can be expected to follow the recommendations of their preferred party in referendums. Recent studies show, however, that this effect is conditional upon several party characteristics which will be
briefly reviewed here. It should be noted that these concern tactical rather than ideological considerations which might determine the policy position taken as well as the strategy a party chooses in regard to its policy recommendation.

- While the dilemma voters face in a referendum (discussed above) – to either evaluate the proposal, i.e. the treaty, or the economic performance of the government - is valid for voters close to the opposition as well as for those close to the governing parties, the latter are more often inclined to solve the problem by enjoying “incumbent support”: Voters of government parties can usually be expected to back the government in the referendum vote (Franklin et al. 1994, Franklin 2002, Hug/Sciarini 2000) because they do consider the (domestic) strategic implications and do not want to ‘embarrass’ the government party. Government parties are (for reasons discussed elsewhere) prone to endorse EU treaties. The ‘danger’ for European integration is that incumbency support cannot be taken for granted as the several rejections since Maastricht demonstrate. I will come back to the reasons below.

- Schneider/Weitsman (1996) convincingly argued that the “punishment trap” dilemma is much more severe for (mainstream) opposition parties than for government parties. Opposition parties naturally perceive popular votes as ready opportunities for ‘embarrassing’ the government. Their decision to seize or not seize this opportunity is crucial for the ratification debate. This decision is, however, difficult to make for those mainstream opposition parties which are ideologically inclined to endorse EU treaty reform. To mobilise against the government – and the EU treaty – for them would mean to act on (short-term!) strategic rather than ideological grounds. Crum (2007) has studied the Party stances in the referendums on the EU Constitution and distinguishes between the “collusive model”, in which the main opposition sides with the government, and the “competitive model”, in which the lines of conflict between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ follow the established camps of government and opposition. Indeed, he finds that only in Great Britain, in the Czech Republic and in Poland the competitive model prevails, because the main opposition parties are
opposed to further European integration. In the seven remaining referendum countries the main opposition parties collide with the government in favour of the treaty proposal. This provides strong evidence that, when exposed to a dilemma between ideological and short-term strategic incentives, mainstream opposition parties opt for ideological continuity.

– The situation is different for small parties. In a parliamentary ratification procedure they might not be involved at all (if not in parliament). Therefore, a referendum is not only a possibility to mobilise against government and mainstream parties but also to actually shape policy outcome – here: European integration – by influencing public opinion. Because most protest parties reject European integration, they do, however, not actually face a dilemma. Other small (e.g. regional) parties, however, might.

– We can consequently say that the referendum context does not affect government, mainstream opposition and protest parties in regard to the direction of their cues, the policy recommendation they make on the issue. It can be furthermore claimed that these basic strategic considerations also concern parties in a salient public debate in the context of parliamentary ratification because here, too, voting differently from the parliamentary majority, thus, demonstrating power and a strong ideological profile, is well possible.

(3) Intra-party dissent matters.

A severe constraint preventing partisanship and party cues to be effective on vote choice is intra-party dissent. How is it related to the mode of ratification? Obviously, the strategic options which particularly mainstream opposition parties must consider trigger internal conflict about which option to choose. Thus, these are particularly prone to internal fractionalisation. A prominent example is the French Parti Socialiste which decided in an internal referendum to endorse the treaty. Important leading figures did not feel bound to this decision, though, and campaigned against the TCE. Partisans are
then likely to follow those “members of the party with whom they share interests, values, and predispositions” (Gabel and Scheve 2007: 43). This is in line with Zaller’s model of opinion formation. But the problem of intra-party dissent is not only one for opposition parties. It is, on the contrary, very real for government parties, too, because these have to endorse treaties drafted and adopted with their consent on EU level. There can very well be, however, criticism also within the domestic party, especially among the rank-and-file members. Semetko addresses this crucial factor – party unity on European integration – from the perspective of political parties in a referendum situation (2006: 521/2): “Referendum issues may split parties in two (...) and may also result in a transformation of the party system, with parties on the extreme ends of the left-right continuum finding themselves on the same side of the referendum fence (…). Conflict is more likely to be within camps than between camps”. In fact, referendum issues can become referendum issues because government parties or coalitions are divided over the issue and do not want to risk ‘open’ internal conflict (Butler/Ranney 1994). This strategy often succeeds: The idea is that public attention and heightened competition in the referendum situation forces the party to close its ranks and present a consistent message. Indeed, as Marsh et al. find in their study that “(...) parties in power – governing parties – had greatest success in suppressing factional dissent” (among partisans, that is) (1994: 466). Hug/Sciarini show, however, that over a larger sample this finding cannot be confirmed. They conclude that: “Often governing parties suffer from defections, whereas opposition parties, equally often, succeed in rallying their supporters around their position, even in cases where they support a treaty” (2000: 32). The evidence is thus inconclusive. We cannot make a certain assumption about the impact of a public vote on the internal unity or dissent of any type of party.

While the authors discussed above are explicitly interested in referendums, they hence limit the scope of their argumentation to this framework. Others, however, claim that some of these mechanisms are valid in any public debate. This shall be tested below.
2.3.5.3. Public Opinion

The research on public opinion on European integration is a large literature which is nicely summarised by Ray 2007. Particularly interesting here is the literature on EU referenda and election where mass opinion obviously has the largest impact. While for a long time a “permissive consensus” (Lindbergh/Scheingold 1973) allowed the EU to be elite-driven, today public opinion is often rather a constraint to European integration. Public opinion scholars distinguish various explanatory approaches: “utilitarian, representation, socialization, political communication, and identity approaches” (Ray 2007: 266). However, to establish what drives public opinion is reportedly not the aim of this work. Rather, public opinion is seen as an independent variable, a factor which possibly impacts on the cueing performance of political parties. This expectation refers to the representation function of political parties and their need to be responsive to voters’ preferences. To recall, the transmission model (chapter 2.2.) understands political communication as a two-way process, in which preferences and interests of ‘the public’ feed back into the considerations and positioning of both political and media actors.

It can be expected that political parties adjust their behaviour – in terms of position-taking and campaigning efforts – to the prevailing mood in the public sphere. Hence, in an environment which is euro-friendly, parties supportive of European integration should be thriving, while in a rather eurosceptic environment anti-European parties can seek to exploit these attitudes by actively campaigning against EU reform. Vice versa, one can expect parties’ cues to be rather subdued in a hostile public opinion.

2.3.6. Mapping the Explanatory Variables – A Summary

In order to bring together the insights discussed in this sub-chapter, the illustration below summarises the factors or variables that were identified in the literature discussed above as potentially influential for political parties’s communication on EU issues. We can broadly distinguish four spheres in which the factors are located:

- Context Matters – Systemic context factors such as (1) the (diffuse) public opinion on European integration in the respective country and (2) the
mode of treaty ratification, i.e. referendum or parliamentary vote that prevails.

- Ideology Matters – Ideological Inter-party competition contains two variables: (1) the position a party’s family takes on European Integration and, more precisely, (2) the position the respective party takes on a Constitutional Treaty.

- Strategy Matters – Strategical inter-party competition encompasses three variables which tackle the power dimension of party competition: (1) a party’s position in the domestic party system, (2) a party’s position in the EU’s power system, as the participation in the Constitutional Convention demonstrates, and (3) the media management a party pursues, have been identified as important factors.

- Salience Matters – the intra-party competition draws attention to two factors which have been identified as potentially crucial for the strength and clarity of cues, namely (1) the salience that European integration has for a respective party and (2) the party’s unity on the issue.
2.3.7. The *Explanans*: Modelling Political Party Cueing in European Communication

As this work is interested in accounting for the three dimension of partisan cues, i.e. their strength, direction, and clarity, three causal models are developed which try to identify the key variables (conditions) influencing the three outcome (dependent) variables. These models are set out graphically below in the fashion of “causal networks” and accompanied by a “narrative”. Miles/Huberman explicitly propose to use causal networks as the final analytic exercise. This is also fully in line with QCA. The narrative verbally describes in a coherent and explicit way “what you think is causing what” and expands on the different values, the chronological occurrence, the relations of variables etc. (Miles/Huberman 1994: 160), i.e. the explanatory model. Please keep in mind that this is a “within-case display” focusing exclusively on the variables of the model. That is to say that is does not take into account that variables occur to a different degree or have different values across cases.

Even though aimed at a reasonable level of parsimony, (parts of) the models are quite complex, especially the last one. The selection of causal factors assumes that these
factors have the best and most explanatory power – and grants that there are additional variables which are excluded because they have been found not to be essential.\footnote{Several additional explanatory variables have been considered, partly even tested, and finally discarded for a lack of theoretical or empirical explanatory power. Among these were several context variables, for example, the public opinion on the TCE, on the perceived threat of immigration, and on a country’s economic prospects, the salience of the debate in general, or the duration of membership. Media level factors are to a good part controlled for through the sample selection.} Below the selection of variables is discussed in detail.

The causal networks are preliminary in the sense that they will be subject to analysis. Because the larger part of the networks is of conceptual nature, the variables need to be operationalised (Ch.4) and tested (Ch.6). Again, this work does not view the inductive and deductive approach to theory and hypothesis-building as mutually exclusive but rather as complementary procedures of “improving theory” (King et al. 1994: 19-23). Accordingly, it should be acknowledged that the process of data collection has led to a modification and refinement of the working hypotheses (Miles/Huberman 1994: 155). Furthermore, the models to be presented here will undergo further revision after the analysis has been completed. These revised models will be discussed in chapter 6.4.

It should be added that the interest is not on the explanatory power of individual components of the models, but that it presumes these variables to indeed function in combination with each other, as configurations of variables. Within these configurations, however, there are individual factors of different quality. Two variables – (a) the mode of treaty ratification and (b) the diffuse mass public opinion on European integration – have been identified as important context conditions representing country specific political opportunity structures (McAdam 1982) which can either be actively exploited by some party actors’ strategies or constrain those of others (Kriesi 2004). Their impact is expected to be of a more indirect (intervening) nature (highlighted). Factors which are hypothesised to be of central importance within the model are graphically set closer to the centre (in addition: bold box). Direct impact is represented by solid arrows, indirect influence by dashed arrows.
2.3.7.1. Model I: Strength of Political Party Cues Model

As Model I shows, the strength of a party cue – measured as the visibility of individual political parties in the media (see above) – is influenced by three main (partly interconnected) factors. These hypotheses are derived from the literature on public opinion, on political communication, and on political parties respectively. The hypothesised impacts and interconnections are discussed quite in detail below but since several variables reappear in the second and third model, the corresponding description can be substantially shorter then.

Centre stage (bold box) is a party’s own behaviour, the way it manages its public relations with the mass media, i.e. its media management. McNair provides a well-defined conceptualisation (2007: 120-31).

63 Media management acknowledges the interdependence between political actors and the media. It refers to the formers’ activities designed for gaining the media’s attention and providing them with (pseudo-) events (such as debates, speeches, party and news conferences) or ready-made

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63 McNair disaggregates the concept of party political integration into two main strands, (1) political advertising and (2) political public relations. Public relations in turn comprises (1) media management or issue management, (2) image-management or marketing, (3) internal communications, and (4) information management. As this work’s prime focus is on the party political communication via the media it is restricted to media (or issue) management.
information via interviews or press releases. In return, the party enjoys media visibility and some control over how its messages are mediated and presented. Here, obviously the hypothesis is that media management is a (necessary or sufficient) condition for transmitting strong cues via the media.64

The second hypothesis on the salience of European integration issues for political parties is equally straightforward. If a party considers treaty reform an important, salient issue65, it is assumed that this will show in the visibility of its messages in the media – even more so because it can be expected to enforce its activities targeted at the media, i.e. its media management. As a potentially restrictive factor, it must be taken into account, though, that the salience of European integration issues for the respective party is linked closely to the degree of unity or dissent within the ranks of party. In case the party disagrees on the issue, it will try to rather downplay the importance and refrain from taking a stance. (Steenbergen/Scott 2004). Opposition parties are particularly prone to intra-party dissent (Crum 2007:62). If this strategy succeeds in turn, depends on the force of party competition (Steenbergen/Scott 2004), which is part of the power variable (c) and public pressure which is expected to increase in the context of a referendum, for example (d).

The macro-variable access to power on European and domestic level actually comprises two causal dimensions: (a) The first is a party’s strategic position in domestic power plays, i.e. its closeness or distance to taking part in government.66 (b) The second variable captures a party’s stake in the European reform arena, i.e. in the constitutional convention.

A party’s position within the domestic power hierarchy directly affects its visibility in the media. Governments play a special role in political public relations because they

64 Of course, this is the best case version. Increasingly, this partnership is eroded as Blumler/Kavanagh (1999) argue. Kriesi puts it figuratively: “Journalists react to attempts of instrumentalization by declaring war” (Kriesi 2004: 193). As long as this leads to a more critical coverage and not to outright neglect, this war does not affect the visibility of actors in the media.

65 Budge (2001:82) gives a brief overview on the theoretical assumptions of the saliency approach.

66 The strategic dimension of party competition is measured by the location of a party in the party system, i.e. its position in relation to the centre of power, the national government. The empirical indicator for the power dimension is a party’s status as government, opposition or protest party. Since most European countries have some type of proportional voting system, coalition governments are the rule. Junior partners (all, if there are several) are considered as less powerful than senior coalition partner parties. All parties not in parliament are considered as protest parties.
have the ability to control (or manipulate) the dissemination of (exclusive) information. Governments, therefore, enjoy a privileged access to the media. In line with objectivity and impartiality objectives the media will usually inform about opposing views, too, (McNair 2007: 65) but public actors do have different “standings” (Höglinger 2007). This is why Kriesi distinguishes between different types of actors (2004:189) and corresponding strategies to put their interests on the public agenda and win the public’s support (ibid: 191). While governments can act top-down, challengers, among them protest parties, must often take a bottom-up approach involving carefully designed protest activities creating media attention and the coverage of their messages. If an issue is visibly contested by one party, other political parties, mostly mainstream parties, are forced to give the issue more attention than they would maybe have on their own account. In this way, single protest parties can contribute to an overall increased level of salience and party competition (Kriesi 2007).

A party’s closeness to power potentially affects how important it evaluates European integration issues. Parties pose salience on European integration depending on their diverse strategic goals (Steenbergen/Scott 2004). For incumbent or main opposition parties (likely to regain power in near future) the EU constitutes the extension of the executive’s realm of power and as such takes precedence. Anti-regime opposition, therefore, drives protest parties’ euroscepticism. On the other hand, small parties might find the EU quite irrelevant.

Parties which took part in the Constitutional Convention are often in power in the domestic system, too, which pushes the chances of being visible in the media anyway, as I have argued above. Having actively participated in drafting the treaty reforms, does provide them with an additional advantage, though: They do have assembled expertise as well as experts who can act as speakers or commentators in a party’s public relations with the media.

As the network shows, the mode of ratification is assumed to influence the model in various ways. Putting treaty reform to a referendum has strong agenda-setting effects – by and for citizens, parties and the media. Party competition can therefore be expected to increase, and the impact of the access to power will be consequently higher. A referendum situation enhances the chances for political challengers – opposition and

67 Of course, governamental information management can also include ‘selling’ party political ideology or positions as well as stressing specific policy achievements or output (McNair 1995: 133/4).
protest parties – to influence public opinion, i.e. the referendum and policy outcome, and in turn constitutes a strategic chance for gaining public support. These parties will therefore increase their public communication efforts, i.e. media management. The growing salience of the debate in general – i.e. the level of coverage – rises the stakes for all political parties to take a stance on European integration in public debate. Public pressure might thus lead (reluctant or split parties) to abandon avoidance strategies, aiming instead at a higher visibility in debate themselves.
2.3.7.2. Model II: Direction of Political Party Cues Model

Model II describes the interplay of causal factors determining the direction of political party cues, i.e. the content of the party messages visible in the media. To recall, the dependent variable is measured as the majority of party statements in favour or against the TCE (or no position discernible). Again, three factors assumedly play a role with public opinion on European integration.

At the centre of the model is a political party’s explicit position on the issue of an EU constitution. Obviously, the expectation here is that a political party will seek to communicate the position it has agreed upon to the public, i.e. that this specific position – in favour or against the TCE – will show in the media coverage on the ratification. The indicator for a party’s stance on the TCE is the official position of the individual political party as represented in the party platforms for the 2004 European Parliament Election.

The variable Party Family Position on European Integration complements the first and captures the general attitude of political parties on European integration and particularly
their stance on the ‘deepening’ of the process, i.e. further political integration (Kriesi 2007). Several studies and ongoing research show that there is quite some consistency as well as continuity in respect to party families’ position towards European integration. Marks/Wilson find that “parties in the same party family have significantly more in common than they do with other parties in the same country” (2000: 459). It is expected that parties belonging to the so-called pro-integrationist core (social-democrats, christian-democrats, liberals) will be able to send out strong positive cues in regard to the TCE to the electorate (via media). Extreme left and populist right wing parties strongly oppose the TCE, if for different reasons. While the Left opposes the market-liberal direction of EU policies, for the extreme Right the European project primarily constitutes a threat to the cultural identity of the respective nation state and to the self-rule of its people. Greens and Conservatives are in-between. These are families which support a particular aspect of the EU process but oppose another. The Greens usually agree with the idea that policy must be supra-national but because of a rather leftist ideology, they often tend to oppose the idea of economic liberalisation (for which the EU stands). However, because the TCE represents a political rather then economic project they can expected to be speaking out rather in favour. The opposite is true for Conservatives.

Various authors in the field have argued that – besides the ‘ideological’ dimension of party competition – the domestic strategic interparty powerplay is an additional factor for determining the position which parties take in public treaty ratification debates, especially in referendum situations. The empirical test does not support this argument, though (a dotted line indicates this). It goes like this:

Crum, for example, explains that “government parties are bound to endorse Treaty revisions because these revisions are established only with the approval of each and every government involved” (2007: 66). Protest parties would want to mobilise against the government in power. Mainstream opposition parties face a dilemma. If they are ideologically attuned to a pro-integration position, they find themselves siding with the government, i.e. strategically in an awkward position. If opposition parties are more

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68 The “inverted u-curve” (Hix/Lord 1997; Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2004; Budge et al. 2001); has been verified across time as well as space – although it’s reliability for the CEEC needs some more empirical back up. It is therefore possible to cluster parties according to families which are prone to endorse further integration, the so called “pro-European core” (i.e. the actual curve of the “inverted U”), and other groups which are strongly opposed, the fringe parties on the extreme left and right (the side lines of the “inverted U”).
sceptical, this might indeed tempt them to join the eurosceptical opposition camp. The danger is in the potential loss of credibility on their future return to office. To summarise, the strategic position (and motives) was expected to be (at least) a good predictor for incumbent and protest parties (Crum 2007, Kriesi 2007, Statham 2008, Ray 2003b). Disagreeing with Crum here, these mechanisms are assumed to hold irrespective of the mode of ratification, that is in parliamentary and referendum debates.

In general, one should expect parties who had representatives in the constitutional Convention to be better primed for the domestic constitutional debate than parties who had no chance to participate in the debate at all. But while the former are likely to position themselves according to the issues contested in Convention and IGC, the latter are more likely to stress issues that are closer to the national discourse than the official EU Convention line of argumentation. Especially the non-members from the candidate states at that time were effectively excluded from participation in the process (and its outcome) – and could thus be expected to either ignore or oppose the ratification which will show in their communication on the issue.

Public opinion on European integration is hypothesised to indirectly influence how parties treat EU treaty reform in public communication. By deliberately including public opinion in the model, I acknowledge the bottom-up (representative/responsive) linkage mechanism of party democracy. Of course, political parties are well advised to bring their positions in line with electorate preferences. If a society is persistently sceptical in regard to European integration, parties face a strategic incentive to move towards this position (and vice versa) in general and also in cases of treaty ratification. This is, of course, more likely in the case of parties which are ideologically more inclined to defend national traditions and sovereignty, such as conservatives and – in the extreme – nationalist parties. Thus, I expect these parties in a diffuse pro-European environment to take a more pro-European stance. Eurosceptic positions should be more salient in countries with a rather critical public (Kriesi 2007:89).

Excluded: Media Management is of minor importance here (and thus not included in the model) because the media’s normal working practices are based on the professional ethics of objectivity and impartiality and thus, call for a representative and inclusive coverage of all positions on the issue at hand (McNair 2007: 65).
2.3.7.3. Model III: Clarity of Political Party Cues Model

Model III, which is supposed to lay out the interplay of causal factors determining if political parties are capable of sending out clear cues, is the most complex. Note, though, that all factors assumed to be involved are familiar by now. To recall, the independent variable, the clarity of political party cues in the media, is measured by the proportion of supportive and negative statements linked to party actors. The narrative will put the cart before the horse and for once start with the context conditions before discussing the more directly relevant variables:

The indirect effects of context conditions – diffuse public opinion on European integration and the mode of treaty ratification – have been described above: The necessity to act in a) either an environment of high public support for or of public scepticism towards European integration, or b) in either a parliamentary ratification process or a referendum campaign represents opportunities for some and challenges for other parties. Still, a few additional arguments should be acknowledged:
Kriesi points out that in eurosceptic environments the salience of European integration issues can be expected to be higher (2007: 89). While this has no immediate impact on the clarity of party cues, it is strongly interconnected with the level of unity or dissent within a party.

Semetko addresses this crucial factor – party unity on European integration – from the perspective of political parties in a referendum situation (2006: 521/2): “Referendum issues may split parties in two (...) and may also result in a transformation of the party system, with parties on the extreme ends of the left-right continuum finding themselves on the same side of the referendum fence (...). Conflict is more likely to be within camps than between camps”. In referendums, Party cues are therefore likely to be more ambiguous. What’s more, they are less under the control or authority of the parties because more actors compete over rare media space and the media can be more selective. That is also a reason for an increased media management on the side of parties. Finally, as explained above, referenda constitute great opportunities for actors excluded from the power centre on domestic and EU level to use public strategies, in plain words: to mobilise protest.

To continue discussing the role of strategic party competition, i.e. the relative closeness or distance to power, which is graphically placed at the far left side of the model. Its influence is expected to be such that parties which were involved in the treaty reform process in Convention and IGC should be able to send clear cues. The same is true for those systematically excluded, i.e. protest parties. This is reinforced by the assumption that these types of parties – incumbent and protest – are the most unified over European integration. On the other hand, mainstream opposition parties with governmental aspirations are likely to fall victim to factionalism – such is the link with party unity (Crum 2007: 68).

The ideological dimension of party competition – Party Position on EI and TCE – naturally had to be included in the model for the simple reason that without having a position in the first place, a party cannot be expected to be clear about it.

Two factors have been identified as central. The first is the degree of unity or dissent within a political party on European integration issue. The straightforward expectation is that a high level of intra-party unity enables the respective parties to give clear cues to the public. A high level of factionalism has the contrary effect. As discussed earlier, this
is closely related to the salience of European integration. Generally, it is imperative that high salience comes with high unity. In an environment of a eurosceptic public, ratification by public vote, and thus, increased party competition, this connection might erode.

Last but not least, a party’s media management is suspected to play a crucial role in securing a precise representation of its messages in the media coverage. Actively aiming at the media is even more important under the difficult condition of a referendum situation because the level of public attention is higher and the group of speakers larger, so the risk for single messages to be distorted increases.

2.3.8. Summary and Theoretical and Methodological Issues
This comprehensive sub-chapter has covered a range of issues which shall be briefly recapitulated here. First of all, “cleavage theory” was introduced and discussed in the light of the “European” challenge. Using Bartolini’s distinction between four scenarios of party politics in the EU, theoretical and empirical insights from the party political literature in the field of European studies were reviewed. Two findings should again be highlighted: The first concerns the fact that national political parties are still the main players in EU party politics. European level parties remain “second order”. The second main insight regards the development of increased discontent with European integration and the resulting politicisation of EU politics. Especially through the study of Euroscepticism the motives and mechanisms driving political party behaviour in relation to European integration issues have been scrutinised and understood. The present project draws from and builds on, among others, this body of research. However, a number of caveats regarding the data used in the field were identified and attention was directed to the actual mediated communication mechanisms.

The next part of the sub-chapter identified the actual influential factors to be ideology, strategy, salience and two contextual factors, namely the mode of ratification and public opinion. In regard to the affects of party choices in referendums again three mechanisms were found to matter: campaigns, partisanship and intra-party dissent.

Finally, three causal network models which seek to explain the occurrence of strong and clear party political cues in the media were developed and elaborated on.
This chapter shall conclude with discussing some theoretical and methodological issues in regard to the literature reviewed above.

The basic assumption of cueing theory – that elites determine (at least partially) what the public thinks – has become a more or less unquestioned article of faith in several disciplines, including European Studies. Even though this work generally follows the idea, too, now some difficult issues in the research which was inspired by it shall be discussed. The underdeveloped notion of the mass media’s role in society is at the bottom of most of these problems.

Following Zaller, public opinion research considers political communication to be one of the major approaches to the explanation of individual attitudes (besides utilitarian, institutional, socialisation and identity-based explanations) (Ray 2007). While scholars in the field do acknowledge the role of the media, they unfortunately often stop short of appropriately operationalising what is for them (one of) the independent variables. Political party cues are measured with either expert judgement or manifesto coding estimates (for example: Steenbergen et al 2007, Ray 2003a, 2003b, Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2004, Budge et al. 2001, Gabel/Hix 2004). In the literature on a European(ised) public sphere the “elite cues assumption” is used – sometimes explicitly but mostly implicitly – as a general justification of studying media content i.e. elite discourse. However, media studies usually have a rather broad scope and seldom acknowledge the central role of political parties as actors in the public sphere.

Campaign literature (in the field of political communication studies), which naturally addresses the top-down link between political parties and the electorate, focuses too narrowly on political advertising (instead of “normal” media coverage). Moreover, research on EP election campaigns has been coined by the predominant “second order elections” hypothesis (Reif/Schmitt 1980, Reif 1997, Schmitt 2005b).

With the exception of campaign studies, mainstream party research seems blind to a certain degree regarding two topics: The first is top-down communication in general.

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69 For a thorough account of research on political advertising see Kaid (2004) where she suggests the defining characteristics to be (1) control of the message through the source and (2) use of mass channels for distribution (2004: 157). McNair critically notes that the recipients’ awareness about the “propaganda” and its subsequently limited effectiveness is increasingly perceived as a weakness of political advertising. In the “free media” political actors gain coverage, which is perceived as more credible but comes with the risk of losing control over the message: “From a politician’s or a party’s or a government’s point of view the media are valuable, indeed indispensable allies, however unreliable and critical ones” (McNair 1995: 114).
(because the liberal-representative paradigm dominantly stresses the responsiveness of political parties for citizens’ preferences). This is a focus which, one should add, also implies the neglect of accountability mechanisms. The second issue concerns the centrality of *mass mediated* political communication in modern democracies.

To overcome the mentioned shortcomings, chapter 4 is devoted to elaborating on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of party political cues in the media.

The next step is, however, to get familiar with the case under study here, namely the debate about the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. In chapter 3 the process which led to the adoption of the Treaty will be reviewed. Afterwards, the selection of country and party cases will be discussed.
3. EU Treaty Reform Ratification Process and Case Selection

The public ratification debates on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (TCE) in 2004/5 provide an excellent opportunity for empirically taking stock of how national political parties treat European contentious issues in terms of party competition and their respective capability to communicate it to a wider public. This work seeks to study the communication of contentious EU related issues because positions and strategies become particularly plain in case of contention.

Treaty revision and reform are a recurring issue in the EU integration process. Therefore, the contribution of this work reaches beyond the study of political party communication as well as beyond the specific case of the (non-)ratification of the Constitutional treaty. Rather, it adds – more generally – to the knowledge on the content and dynamics of public discourses on European integration.

It can be criticised that treaty ratification is by no means an every-day but – quite the opposite – a very particular “EU issue” While this statement is, of course, true, it is, however, not quite obvious why the analysis of every-day politics should be in this respect superior to studying specific events. It is simply a matter of interest in issues dealing with either policy or polity. It should be noted that usually both types of issues are intermingled in the public debate.\(^7\) This fact is acknowledged here but does not prevent distinguishing analytically between both and at the same time focusing on the actual core of the debate - the contentious issue to be decided on - which is the deepening of the European integration through Treaty ratification.

Analysing an instance of treaty reform has a number of other advantages, too:

First and most important, it allows the in-depth investigation of the elites-citizens gap which is most notable in the field of constitutional – integration - issues. Recent research has shown that citizens’ preferences are reasonably well represented in regard to policy (Schmitt 2001, Hix et al. 2003b).

\(^7\) For example Lefkofridi/Kritzinger criticise that political parties in their Euromanifestos devote so much space and salience to “irrelevant” polity issues and interpret this as “a sign of de-politicization” (2008: 287). Equally, the ConstEPS group showed that the “EU constitutional debates” in the member states were not exclusively on constitutional polity topics but on procedural and context (= domestic/European policy) issues, too (Liebert 2007).
Because of the increased usage of referendums in the “age of politicisation” and “contentious politics” treaty ratification is an excellent opportunity to study party competition and communication under heightened public scrutiny.

Because of the large synchrony and similar relevance in all member states, it allows for cross-country comparison. In regard to the content of the debate, party communication is expected to focus on a less diverse range of issues in ratification than in European election campaigns. This justifies the restriction to studying party communication on only one substantial issue – the constitutional treaty – without risking neglecting too much national ‘noise’.

In this case, ratification started in late 2004 and was to be concluded in early 2006. Due to the twofold rejection in May/June 2005 it was suspended even earlier. For the purposes of this analysis this manageable time frame is an additional advantage.

This chapter is structured as follows.

As the treaty reform process sets the frame for the analysis of party political communication, firstly, the driving forces, procedures, main events and positions of the main actors will be briefly described. Secondly, in a context-sensitive approach used in this project, it is assumed that some of these context factors will exercise a certain impact on political parties’ communication patterns. In order to investigate this, the design refrained from selecting the cases – individual political parties – on the basis of specific party characteristics, e.g. social democratic parties only, but opted for a two-step sampling approach. In a first step, a ‘representative’ country sample is identified. This country case selection is guided by the observation of different characteristics of these (intervening) context variables, especially the mode of ratification. Thirdly, the second selection step is then explained, i.e. on what grounds the actual cases of national political parties were selected.
3.1. The Context – Debating the Ratification of Treaty Reform

The ratification of the Constitutional Treaty can be perceived as only one episode – if an important one – of a continuous and ongoing process of constitutionalisation, with the pending Lisbon Treaty representing the latest step in European integration.

Some scholars have argued that the EU integration on the basis of “continuous controversies” and successive treaties superseding or complementing each other does represent a form of “constitutionalisation” process by itself, which therefore started with the Treaty of Rome (Peters 2006, Giegerich 2006). 71 72

A more recent and distinct starting point of EU reform is the Lacken Declaration which was agreed by the EU Heads of State and Government (HoGs) in 2001. Thus, the “Declaration on the Future of the Union” followed shortly after the difficult negotiations on the Nice Treaty (2000) which had been perceived as unsatisfactory by many almost from the day of its adoption after the “Nacht der langen Messer”. The table below illustrates briefly the most important events during this process.

71 Taking a similar procedural perspective but from a critical constructivist point of view, Antje Wiener discusses the evolving and contested norms of constitutionalism in the EU (Wiener 2003).
72 The constitutionalisation literature can hardly be separated from the (earlier) debate about the stateness of the EU (Mancini 1998 versus Weiler 1998). Peters (2006) shows how “Verfassung und Staat” have historically and epistemologically been coupled. Today, however, she finds, that territory and constitution are functionally decoupled. The academic debate about necessity or dispensability of a European demos constitutes another field (e.g. Grimm 1995). While these strands of literature complement each other, they can still be said to differ in their focuses on very distinct features of the Europolicy. The constitutionalisation literature focuses (primarily) on the form and function of the EU’s legal basis. The statehood question concerns mostly structures and institutional set-up. The latter approach doubts (or at best: questions) the cultural foundations of the Union. They all, however, share an interest in the legitimacy dimension entailed in their respective fields. For the sake of completeness a fourth related strand – the debate about the European democratic deficit – must therefore be included (e.g. Höreth 2002).
Table 3.1. Overview of important events in the Treaty Reform Process from Laeken 2001 to Ratification Failure in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Actions and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 December 2001</td>
<td>Laeken European Council</td>
<td>Laeken Declaration(^\text{71})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 February 2002</td>
<td>European Convention</td>
<td>Begins deliberations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 February 2003</td>
<td>European Convention</td>
<td>Entry into force of the Treaty of Nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 July 2003</td>
<td>European Convention</td>
<td>Presentation of the draft TCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 October 2003</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Conference(^\text{74})</td>
<td>(Re-)negotiating the draft TCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13 December 2004</td>
<td>Brussels European Council</td>
<td>Failure to reach an agreement on draft TCE(^\text{75})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 May 2004</td>
<td>10 New Member States</td>
<td>Accession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/17 June 2004</td>
<td>Brussels European Council</td>
<td>Political Agreement on the text of the Constitutional Treaty(^\text{76})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 October 2004</td>
<td>Rome European Council</td>
<td>Signature of the Constitutional Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2006</td>
<td>Member States</td>
<td>Ratification procedure of the TCE(^\text{77})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/17 June 2005</td>
<td>Brussels European Council</td>
<td>Declaration on a “Period of Reflection” in the reform process(^\text{78})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: author’s compilation

This willingness of European leaders to press ahead with European integration – as demonstrated by the common calling of a “Reform Convention” – can only be understood in the historic context: Only shortly before, enlargement had just “happened” on the “fast track” as Joseph Weiler commented, thereby criticising the lack of a “serious discussion at either European or Member State level” (2002: 564). The CEEC were eager and expected to join the EU within the next years. After 50 years of belonging to the ‘West’, the Union was finally to reach its ‘natural’ borders. The fact


\(^{74}\) The 2003/4 IGC’s documents can be found here. They constitute the basis for the agreement on the final text (see also the 2004 Presidency Conclusions) [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_applications/Applications/igc/doc_register.asp?content=DOCandlang=ENandcmsgid=754](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_applications/Applications/igc/doc_register.asp?content=DOCandlang=ENandcmsgid=754) (DL 17/12/2008)

\(^{75}\) The Presidency Conclusions very briefly mention that it was not possible “to reach overall agreement on a draft constitutional treaty at this stage” and refers the process to the Irish Presidency: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/78364.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/78364.pdf) (DL 17/12/2008)


\(^{77}\) See table #### for further information

that the end of ‘widening’ seemed so close-by might have spurred debates about the “finalité” of the EU as well as the about deepening European integration. One after the other, European leaders laid out their visions about the future of Europe. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer’s famous speech at the Humboldt University Berlin in which he presented – as a private citizen – a decidedly federalist Europolisity was in the centre of attention (Schabacher 2003).

When the Convention was summoned in early 2002, its chairman, the former French President Giscard D’Estaing, and his fellow conventionell seized the “constitutional moment” (Walker 2003, Castiglione 2005). Within 16 months, driven by the ex-ante and the ex-post shadow of both the Laeken summit and the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) which was to take over after the Convention, the Convention members deliberated, negotiated and – closely guided by the Praesidium – formulated a “Constitution for Europe”.79 It was adopted by “consensus” by most members – as defined by the chairman – but accompanied by a minority report of 8 members (which was at that time thoroughly ignored and only remembered later) in June 2003.80

Peter Norman called this outcome the “Accidental Constitution” pointing out a number of crossroads at which alternative routes could have been taken (2005). In the Laeken Declaration the HoGs had been much less ambitious (at least thought to be so) so that the Constitutional Treaty can indeed be counted as a prime example for an ‘unintended consequence’.

This mismatch between intention and outcome was also seen when the IGC’s first attempt of adopting the far-reaching and innovative draft TCE in December 2003 failed due to the Polish and Spanish opposition to the new voting procedures (see Maurer/Schunz 2004). Certainly, the constitutional initiative was further extremely ill-timed: While the 10 candidate states did take part in the Convention proceedings they were first and foremost busy with preparing accession.81 Only in July 2004 did the IGC ultimately adopt a revised version of the Convention draft. This left the basic structure as well as the title of the document intact. In a deeply symbolic ceremony in Rome the European Heads of State and Government signed the “Treaty establishing a Constitution

79 For a thorough account and assessment of the Conventions’ procedures etc see Göler/Marhold 2005, Göler 2006.
81 This is especially well documented for the Polish case by Helmut Gaisbauer (2005, 2006).
for Europe” in October 2004. With this act, ratification in the member states was to begin. However, the question of how to ratify – by parliamentary of popular vote – triggered a normative and/or legal debate of its own in many member states (Maurer/Stengel 2004: 8-13).

Because it was considered as a crucial factor for lending legitimacy to what was perceived by many as a qualitatively new treaty (Maurer/Stengel 2004:15), the modus of ratification of the EU constitutional treaty has been hard-fought from the very beginning of its drafting process. Despite many initiatives for a Europe-wide referendum coming from civil society actors (many of whom coordinated in the European Referendum Campaign), EU institutions, or a large group of national and European representatives in the Constitutional Convention, national governments acted as gatekeepers at the end of this process. Opting for the self rule of member states and their citizens, they determined nationally both form and date of ratification. Decisions on either ratification by parliament or referendum were made on legal-constitutional but also on political grounds, both of which varied largely across countries. In some member states TCE opponents saw a referendum as a final opportunity for preventing the constitutionalisation of the EU, e.g. in Britain and Poland, and were successful in committing their respective governments to call a national referendum. (Maurer/Stengel 2004: 7/8, 10, 15).

Carlos Closa (2007) has systematically analysed why as much as 10 member state governments opted for referendums, when this was obligatory only under Denmark’s and Ireland’s constitution. He finds that domestic strategic-instrumental reasons, i.e. “the calculation of electoral and political advantages and costs explain to a great extent decisions in the case of France, the UK, the Czech Republic and Poland” (2007: 1321). However, the Spanish, Luxembourg, Dutch and Portuguese governments followed rather the logic of appropriateness – either the power of the idea that a referendum would enhance the legitimacy of a new quality treaty, or the power of example, i.e. to imitate “already tested responses to similar problems” (ibid: 1325). The accepted “paradigmatic value” of the referendum instrument in public discourse even forced those governments not to call a referendum to justify it (ibid: 1327). This was the case, for example, in Germany (Maurer/Stengel 2004) and Estonia (Evas 2007).

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82 This is in line with Taggert’s analysis of the domestic politics of the 2005 French and Dutch Referendums (2006).
Due to different procedural requirements and active opposition attempts of coordinating national ratification procedures to take place on the same day or during the same week failed, too (Maurer/Stengel 2004: 13). In scheduling national procedures, however, governments often took into account the likely dynamics of the EU-wide ratification process, e.g. parliamentary ratification in Germany was scheduled shortly before the referendum in France was going to take place in order to send “a positive signal” to the neighbours. The referendum in Great Britain was to be held only after most member states had already ratified in order to build up some “pressure” (left outside).\textsuperscript{83} As observations and polls in France began to point increasingly in the direction of a likely no-vote, all of Europe began to take a special interest in the very lively debate (see Liebert 2007).

The rejection of the TCE in France and the Netherlands led to a halt and – by decision of the European Council from 16/17 June 2005\textsuperscript{84} - to a subsequent introduction of a reflection period (in fact abandonment) of the constitutional ratification procedure.

The situation was awkward: The possibility for citizens to participate in treaty ratification varied extremely from country to country and was either restricted from the beginning, granted, or granted and taken away again. While some member states had already ratified the treaty by parliamentary procedure or referendum, others held a referendum and rejected the treaty. As a consequence, many other states cancelled either the parliamentary ratification (Sweden) or a planned referendum (CZ, DK, Ire, PL, P, UK). Some optimistically decided to go ahead as intended (Cyprus, LUX, EST, FIN). We can thus observe in the crucial ratification period from the signing to the abandonment of the constitutional treaty (2004/2005) four different modes of ratification procedures.\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{83} The UK referendum was initially planned for the beginning of 2006. At that time there were two reasons for this timing. First, the government would be able to show that the UK was able to shape policies because it was due to hold the G8 meeting as well as the Union presidency in 2005. Second, the UK would be among the last member states to ratify. In a commons speech, „Blair indicated that he wanted the poll to be a plebiscite over UK membership of the EU“ thus rising the stakes considerably (Norman 2005: 304). The British analyst Peter Norman finds that, while a French rejection would be a crisis for the Union as such, “a rejection by the UK in 2006, at the end of the ratification process and following approval by all or nearly all other member states, would be a crisis for Britain, and for its relations with the rest of Europe” (Norman 2005: 312).

\textsuperscript{84} European Council on 16/17 June on a Declaration on the ratification of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe


BID=76andGRF=8871andLANG=1andcmsId=347

\textsuperscript{85} Information on date and results of ratification procedures in the text is taken from

http://www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Treaties/Treaty_Const_Rat.htm
Table 3.2.: Overview over the state of ratification in the member states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Will there be a referendum?</th>
<th>When / What is the state of play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by national parliament. Lower house voted in favour of ratification on 11 May by 181 votes to 1. Upper house completed ratification process on 25 May. Eighth country to ratify Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified on 8 February 2006 by Belgium's regional parliaments. Fourteenth member state to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>Plans to hold a referendum in June 2006 alongside the national general election have been postponed indefinitely following the French and Dutch 'no' votes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>Referendum scheduled for 27 September 2005 has been cancelled following 'no' votes in France and the Netherlands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by parliament's unique chamber on 9 May 2006 by 73 votes to one. Fifteenth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>After parliament voted in favour of the Constitution on 12 May 2006, ratification is due to take place in December 2006 under the Finnish EU presidency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Yes - second country to hold a referendum.</td>
<td>29 May 2005. Outcome of referendum: 55% 'no' 45% 'yes'. Voter participation: 70%. Treaty rejected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Approved by German parliament's lower house, the Bundestag on 12 May and German parliament's second chamber, the Bundesrat on 27 May. Ninth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by parliament on 19 April 2005 by 268 votes to 17. Fifth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by parliament on 20 December 2004. Second country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>A binding referendum provisionally scheduled for October 2005 has been postponed indefinitely after the results of the French and Dutch referenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lower chamber ratified the Constitution in January 2005. The senate completed approval by a substantial majority of 217 votes to 16 on 6 April 2005. Fourth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by parliament on 1 June 2005. Tenth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ratified by parliament on 11 November 2004. First country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Yes - fourth country to hold a referendum.</td>
<td>10 July 2005. Outcome of referendum: 56.5% 'yes', 43.5% 'no'. Thirteenth country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Will there be a referendum?</td>
<td>When / What is the state of play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><strong>Ratified</strong> by the Maltese parliament on 6 July 2005. <strong>Twelfth</strong> country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Yes - <strong>third</strong> country to hold a referendum</td>
<td>1 June 2005. <strong>Outcome of referendum:</strong> 61.8% 'no', 38.2% 'yes'. Voter participation: 62%. <strong>Treaty rejected in a consultative vote.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>Original plans for a referendum on 9 October 2005 to coincide with the Presidential election have been suspended. On 5 July the Polish lower house voted against taking a decision on how to ratify the Constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>Original plans to hold a referendum on 9 October 2005 to coincide with local elections have been suspended following failed referenda in France and the Netherlands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><strong>Ratified</strong> by parliament on 11 May 2005 by 116 votes to 27 with 4 abstentions. <strong>Sixth</strong> country to ratify the treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><strong>Ratified</strong> by parliament on 1 February 2005. <strong>Third</strong> country to ratify the treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Yes - <strong>first</strong> country to hold a referendum</td>
<td>20 February 2005. <strong>Outcome of referendum:</strong> 76.73% 'yes', 17.24% 'no'. Approved by parliament's lower house on 28 April and upper house on 19 May. <strong>Seventh</strong> country to ratify the Treaty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Tradition of holding referenda only when there are splits within the parties (eg on EMU). Decision on whether to proceed with ratification process has been delayed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>On hold</td>
<td>Original plans to hold a referendum in 2006 were cancelled on June 6 following French and Dutch noes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><strong>Ratified</strong> by parliament on 11 May 2005 as part of preparations to join the EU on 1 January 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><strong>Ratified</strong> by parliament on 17 May 2005 as part of preparations to join the EU on 1 January 2007.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Only in March 2007 was the reform process called back to life. The Berlin „Declaration on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome“ mentions “a renewed common basis before the European parliament elections in
The European Council in June 2007 called for the opening of an IGC before the end of July. This led to the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2007. At the time of writing, the treaty is still not ratified by all member states. The European reform process goes on.

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89 For the state of ratification in the member states, see: Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung at http://www.cap-lmu.de/themen/eu-reform/ratifikation/index.php.
3.2. Case Selection Strategy

The selection of cases takes place in two steps. First, country cases are chosen on the basis of a most dissimilar cases design. This implies a selection of cases as instances of varying values of the explanatory variable(s). The same approach holds for selecting individual cases – political parties – within the country sample. This is in line with the orientation towards a variable-based explanation guiding this research. However, because the same selection criteria are used for sampling the individual party cases, a more genuine comparative analysis of parties of similar types (e.g. parties belonging to the same party family or government parties) becomes possible by adding a case-oriented perspective.

3.2.1. Selecting the Country Cases

The selection of cases followed a two-step approach with the first step aiming at identifying a country sample as diverse as possible on the dimensions that were assumed to have impact on party political behaviour taking place within this national context.

This most dissimilar cases design pays attention to three main criteria which allow for a meaningful comparison a) across East and West, i.e. old and new member states, b) across different positions of member states’ governments during the IGC 2003-4 which negotiated the TCE, and c) across the different modes of ratification, if a parliamentary procedure or a referendum was planned. This shall be explained in some more detail.

a) On the basis of the first criterion three new EU member states, Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, as well as three old member states, France, Great Britain and Germany, were selected. This sample covers furthermore large as well as small states.

b) At the supposedly final but failed IGC meeting in December 2003 in Brussels, governments showed very varied support for the treaty. While Germany and France strongly argued in favour, some member states – among them the Czech Republic and Estonia – opposed certain provisions, e.g. the further harmonisation strategies in social

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90 The methodological advantages of this approach are discussed at length in King et al. (1994) ch.4 as well as in Peters (1998: 36-41).
policies, and Poland altogether vetoed the TCE which the Convention for the Future of the Union had drafted and passed earlier that year.91 It is assumed that these European level conflicts and strategies re-enter the arena of national party competition over the issue of treaty reform.

c) Regarding the mode of ratification, the case selection includes two member states which opted for a parliamentary procedure, Estonia and Germany. The remaining countries decided to call national referenda on the European Constitution. Even though in retrospective it would have been, of course, interesting to include a case of a referendum with a positive outcome, i.e. Spain or Luxembourg, in order to investigate if communication patterns were decidedly different – not only in terms of “camps” and direction of given cues but also in regard to the strength and clarity of party cues in the respective national debates. Unfortunately, this was not possible due to the usual restriction of resources. The lack, however, can be compensated for by including secondary studies on the ratification debates. Still, four ‘modes’ of ratification can be distinguished (see above, too); selected country cases are underlined:

- **Parliamentary ratification carried out.** By 17 June 2005 the parliaments of 12 member states had ratified the TCE, namely of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, **Germany**, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

- **Parliamentary ratification planned – postponed/cancelled.** This was the case for Cyprus (ratification on 30 June 2005), Malta (ratification on 06 July 2005), **Estonia** (ratification on 9 May 2006) and Sweden which postponed and finally cancelled the vote.

- **Referendum has taken place.** By June 2005 three referenda had been held on the TCE. On 20 February 2005 the Spanish citizens decided in favour of the Treaty. On 29 May 2005, respectively 01 June 2005, the **French** and Dutch rejected the TCE. Luxembourg held a referendum as scheduled, thus adopting the TCE on 10 July 2005

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91 For a well informed analysis of the different positions and conflict lines between member states during and at the final Brussels meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference 2003 see Maurer/Schunz 2004. For a special focus on the new member states see Kai-Olaf Lange 2003.
- **Referendum planned – postponed/cancelled.** The majority of pending referenda, however, was postponed and finally cancelled. This was the case in **Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.**

These processes do not, of course, take place in a vacuum but are embedded into the domestic politics for which the national election cycle is of particular relevance. There were no elections in the year under scrutiny in the Czech Republic, Estonia and France. General elections were to take place, however, in Great Britain (in May 2005), Germany (September 2005) and Poland (October 2005). The Polish electoral debate is reportedly the only one which “merged constitutional topics with the electoral campaigns of the left- and right-wing parties (…)” (Wyrozumska 2007: 316).

The chosen selection strategy aims at increasing the level of variance across countries. At the same time it is necessary to limit the number of cases in order to ensure that a certain familiarity with individual units of analysis – political parties – is possible as is required for a proper QCA application. Because the first selection step identified six country cases – a considerable but still manageable number – the second selection step can be taken a little more liberal.

### 3.2.2. Selecting National Political Parties – Units of Analysis

In line with such a more generous approach to case selection, most relevant political parties in the six countries were included in the analysis. The most relevant parties were selected using a mixed bottom-up/top-down approach.

- **Bottom-up:** The national mass media were scanned for political parties.
- **Top-down:** All parties in the national parliament were automatically included.
- **Top-down:** If the sample was still too centre-centred, i.e. the national party spectrum was not yet well represented, the sample was completed by adding parties from the left and right margins, e.g. the right-wing populist or Die Republikaner in Germany.

This strategy resulted in a most diverse sample permitting various possible comparative approaches. The sample includes:
- government parties (senior and junior coalition partners),
- opposition and protest parties,
- parties from all European party families,
- small and large parties,
- national and regional parties and
- parties supportive of, opposed to, and neutral on the issue of European constitutional treaty reform.

A total of 39 political parties were included in the sample. In what follows, the main characteristics of the selected cases will be introduced briefly in order to provide the reader with an overview. Individual characteristics will be discussed in the course of the operationalisation of indicators in more detail (see ch.4). All information refers to the period of scrutiny in 2004 and 2005.

3.2.2.1. Selected Czech Political Parties
The Czech voting system is a preferential proportional one and includes a threshold of usually 5%. Economic politics constitute the most important conflict line with the ODS and KDU on the liberal and the CSSD and KSCM on the social-democratic side of the conflict (Vlodicka 2002).

For the Czech Republic six political parties were selected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Selected Political Party (Unit of Analysis)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Czech Social Democratic Party, Christian Democratic Union - People's Party, Freedom Union - Democratic Union, Civic Democratic Party, Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, SNK European Democrats</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) is one of the two “big” Parties in CZ. It has been the main partner in the governing coalition since 2002. It aims for more state intervention and subsidies. The party is a member of the Party of European Socialists (PES) and supports European integration as well as the TCE.

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92 For a list of all selected parties and their original names in the national language refer to Appendix 8.1.1.
93 Thanks go to Petra Rakusanova Guasti for providing additional information and insight.
The Christian Democratic Union - People's Party (KDU–ČSL) was in coalition with the CSSD. Its ideology can be described as social conservative, right wing. It has a low but stable support of voters (6-10%) and is strongest in the traditionally Catholic rural areas in Moravia.

The Freedom Union - Democratic Union (US–DEU) is a small, pro-European free market liberal party which has been in coalition with the CSSD since 2002.

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) was the largest opposition party. Founded in 1991, the party is best described as liberal-conservative in the sense that it supports market liberalism but is socially conservative. Because of its chairman, Czech President Vaclav Klaus, its eurosceptic attitude is often overstated.

KDU-CSL, US-DEU and ODS were at the time members of the European People’s Party - European Democrats (EPP-ED).

The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM) is an oppositional left party. Accordingly, the party is member of the European Left (EL). It is the only former ruling party in post-communist Eastern Europe which has not dropped the communist title from its name. It is critical of European integration.

The SNK European Democrats (SNK ED) were founded only in 2002. They are a small liberal - conservative political party which finds its main support in Prague and larger cities. On the European level the party is a member of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR).

3.2.2.2. Selected German Political Parties

Political parties in Germany are constitutionally acknowledged public institutions according to Article 21 GG which are co-financed through state subsidies. The multi-party system is affected by party concentration through economic and social conflict lines. While until 1982 there were only three parties in the parliament, the Bundestag, today there are six different parties which build two basic camps: The CDU/CSU and FDP on the one side, and the SPD, the Greens and – with reservations – the Left on the other side (cf. Ismayer 2003).

Seven political parties were selected for the German case:
The Christian-Democratic Union (CDU) is one of the two major parties in Germany, regularly competing with the Social-Democrats for the leadership of government. Its ideology can be described as conservative in both social and economic terms. At the time (2004/5) it was the largest opposition party. Accordingly, it is a member of the EPP-ED on the European level and a long-time proponent of European integration.

The Christian-Social Union (CSU) is the CDU’s regional sister party in Bavaria, where the CDU abstains from running for office at the benefit of the CSU. Even though both parties are united in the CDU/CSU group in the national parliament, the CSU is more critical towards European integration than the CDU.

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) was the main government partner in coalition with the smaller Green Party. It was then led by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. In ideological terms the party can be understood as social liberal and economically centre left. Its stance towards EU integration has developed to being strongly supportive. The party is an important member of the Party of European Socialists (PES).

The Free Democratic Party (FDP) is a small, but important liberal party and a former long-time coalition party of the CDU. Its European affiliation is with the ELDR.

The Alliance 90/The Greens is a small, but significant, green party with a centre left economic programme. It was the SPD’s junior partner in a coalition government. Its best known representative is the Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, who also took part in the European Constitutional Convention.

The Left in Germany is a merger between the former PDS – Party of German Socialists – which is the successor of the East German state party SED, and the WASG, a new left wing party led by former Minister of Economic Affairs Oscar Lafontaine, which was active primarily in the West German Länder. Its ideology is located at the far left wing of the political spectrum. Accordingly, it joined the Party of the European Left at the EU level.
The Republicans are a populist right party which is strongly against European integration on nationalist grounds. This party was included in the analysis in order to cover properly the political left-right spectrum even though the party is not represented in the German Bundestag. Moreover, they do not maintain a European affiliation.

3.2.2.3. Selected Estonian Political Parties
The number of political parties in the Riikogu, the Estonian parliament, has stabilised since the first elections in 1992. Only app. 1% of the population is a member of a political party. Almost all parties describe themselves as centre left or right parties. The left-liberal camp consists of the Centre, the Reform and the Social Democratic Party, the right-liberal consists of the Res Publica and the People’s Union. Parties finance themselves through membership, business donations and state subsidies depending on their seats in the parliament (cf. Lagerspetz/Maier).

For the Estonian case five political parties were selected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Selected Political Party (Unit of Analysis)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Reform Party, Centre Party, Social Democratic Party, Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica (former RPU), People’s Union of Estonia</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reform Party (RP) is the biggest government coalition partner. It governs with changing partners since 1999. It has been founded in 1994 as a liberal-democratic party. Hence, it is a member of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR). At that time Reformierakond was led by Andrus Ansip who was elected Prime Minister in March 2005 (succeeding Juhan Parts).

The Centre Party (CP) is the largest opposition party. In ideological terms it can be classified as social liberal and is also a member of the ELDR.

The Estonian Social Democratic Party (SDE) is an important opposition party. On the European level it is a member of the Party of European Socialists (PES).

The parties above can be characterised as pro-European. The stance of the following parties ranges from less supportive of European integration to eurosceptic.
The Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica (former RPU) is a coalition partner of the Reform Party. It is the leading conservative power in the country. Hence, it is a member of the European Democrats/People’s Party.

The People's Union of Estonia (Rahvaliit) can be best described with the terms Agrarianism, Populism and Euroscepticism. Its European affiliation is the Alliance for Europe of the Nations. In 2005 it became a junior coalition partner in the government.

3.2.2.4. Selected French Political Parties
The French party system is characterised by “bipolarisation” (Kempf 2003), meaning that there is a division in two blocks of about the same size: the left camp with the PS, the PCF and the Greens, and a right camp with UMP and UDF and the extreme Front National. Generally, French parties tend to re-group and re-name themselves frequently, thus mirroring the fragmentation of the party system. Since 1988 parties receive state subsidies, but political parties in France are nevertheless chronically under-organised and under-financed (cf. Kempf 2003).

Eight parties were selected for the French case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Selected Political Party (Unit of Analysis)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Union for the French Democracy, Socialist Party, The Greens, Union for a Popular Movement (former RPR), Movement for France, National Front, French Communist Party, Left Radical Party</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Union for the French Democracy (UDF) is a merger between left-liberal as well as Christian-democratic traditions and a decidedly pro-European party of the political centre, led by Francois Bayrou. In the EP the UDF is aligned with the ELDR group.

The Socialist Party (PS) is the leading party among the French left. It is the major French social democratic party and at the time of analysis, the largest opposition party. In 2002, however, it had lost the Presidential election in a landslide. Its stance towards European integration is a generally positive one.

The French Greens (VERTS) are a small party in the Assemblée Nationale. It is difficult to classify its ideological position – and with it its position on European integration –
which wavers considerably. By now, however, they must be considered a permanent institution. The party is, however, a member of the European Green Party.

The Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) has been the governing party since 2002. It is a Union of centre-right parties which has a Gaullist-conservative as well as a liberal wing. In 2004/5 UMP-candidate Jaques Chirac led the Republic as President. On the European level, the party is aligned with the EPP-ED.

The Movement for France (MPF) is a small right-wing parliamentary party with national-conservative ideology. Its European alignment was with the eurosceptic Independence/Democracy Group with, e.g. the UK Independence Party and the League of Polish Families as co-members.

The National Front (FN) is the third force in the national parliament. It is a populist extreme right-wing party led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. It strongly opposes European integration. Accordingly, in the EP the party was aligned with the Independence/Democracy Group.

The French Communist Party (PCF) is a small, traditional left-wing communist party. The PCF is against further European integration which it perceives as a market-liberal project. In May 2004 it therefore left the European Socialist Party and co-founded the European Left – with, among others, the German Die Linke.

The Left Radical Party (PRG) is a minor left-liberal, actually not very radical French party. It is often in close alliance with the Partie Socialiste. The party has no European-level alignment.

3.2.2.5. Selected Polish Political Parties
The Polish party system is characterised by socio-cultural more than left-right conflict dimensions. The handling of the communist past is, of course, an important issue as well. Because of a quite liberal voting system, the first Sejm after the regime change saw a very fragmented party system. Political parties are state subsidised depending on the seats the won in parliament (cf. Ziemer/Matthes 2002).

Six Polish political parties were selected for analysis.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{94} Thanks go to Aleksandra Maatsch for providing additional information and insight.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Selected Political Party (Unit of Analysis)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Alliance of Democratic Left, Polish Peasants' Party, Civic Platform, Self Defense of the Polish Republic, Law and Justice, League of Polish Families</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Alliance of Democratic Left (SLD) is a social-democratic, anti-clerical, pro-European party which led the minority government coalition at the time with Marek Belka as Prime Minister in 2004/5 Aleksander Kwaśniewski was elected a President of Poland at that time. The party is a member of the PES.

The Polish Peasants' Party (PSL) as a pro-European, left oriented agrarian party in coalition with the SLD. On the European level, it cooperates with the EPP-ED, though.

The Civic Platform (PO) is the largest opposition party. Its ideology is best described as pragmatically liberal-right, close to conservatism. Accordingly, they are a member of the EPP-ED. The party has no clear position on European matters.

The remaining parties included in the analysis are to a different degree sceptical in regard to European integration.

The Self Defence of the Polish Republic (S) is an aggressively populist agrarian party which won astonishing 10,2% of the overall votes in the national elections 2001.

The League of Polish Families (LPR) is based on a family-orientation, catholic nationalism and hard euroscepticism. On the EU level, it is a member of the Independence/Democracy group.

The Law and Justice party (PiS) is an increasingly populist radical right party and opposed to European integration. It is led by the Kaczynski brothers, of whom Lech Kaczynski ran in the Presidential Elections in October 2005. The PiS joined the Alliance for Europe of the Nations on European level.
3.2.2.6. Selected British Political Parties

Seven parties were selected for the British case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Selected Political Party (Unit of Analysis)</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Scottish National Party, Party of Wales, Green Party, Conservative Party,</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom Independent Party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparison with other European states, political parties in the UK are relatively independent from the state. Only since 1998 does public financing of parties exist. There is still no law regulating the internal affairs or organisational setup of political parties. The United Kingdom is a majority system in Lijphart’s (1999) sense and hence, has long been regarded as a typical two-party system (cf. Sturm 2003). European affairs constitute an exception because under the European treaties, all member states are subject to the same voting procedure for the European elections, i.e. proportional voting. This means that in this area, other parties like UKIP and the LibDems are quite successful.

The Labour Party (Labour) is the governing party in the UK at the time of analysis. Under the Westminster system it does not need to form a coalition. Its ideology is social-democratic after it has practically re-established itself as “New Labour” under Tony Blair in the 1990s. It’s stance towards European integration has also changed from highly critical to quite supportive. On the European level Labour is a member of the European Socialists (PSE). The party was led by Tony Blair at that time.

The Liberal Democrats (LibDem) are a small centre-left liberal party which is a member of the ELDR on the European level. The party supports further European integration. They have been increasingly successful electorally but institutionally hampered by the majority system.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) is a social-democratic party which aims for the independence of Scotland from the UK. On these grounds it welcomes the federal structure of the European Union. It is represented in the House of Commons. It is actively involved in the European Free Alliance.
The Party of Wales (Cymru) is a small social-democratic party similar to the SNP, only that it seeks Welsh independence from Great Britain. It often cooperates with the SNP on national and European level.

The Green Party (Greens) of England and Wales is an ecological leftist party which generally supports European integration but is opposed to the European Constitutional Treaty. It is aligned with the European Green Party.

The Conservative Party (Cons) is a centre-right conservative party. It is the largest and most important opposition party – the only one with real governmental prospects. The “Tories” are split over Europe even though they are generally supportive as regards the programme. It was then still aligned with the European People’s party.

The United Kingdom Independent Party (UKIP) was founded only in 1993 as a conservative, eurosceptic party with the aim of withdrawing the UK from the EU. It ran first in European elections but has run in national and regional elections since then. However, its success is restricted to the EP elections so far. It has been included in the party sample – even if not in national parliament – for the reason that it is the only outspoken hard eurosceptic party in the UK. On the European level it sits with the Independence and Democracy Group.
4. Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Research Design

The aim of this research project is to identify the determinants and mechanisms that impact on three characteristics of political parties’ communicative cues – the strength, the direction and the clarity. The link under investigation here is between political parties’ behaviour and characteristics and their EU-specific communicative performance in the domestic public arena.

The general approach to research deliberately selected for this work is a comparative one which is understood with Lijphardt as a “method of discovering empirical relationships among variables” (1971: 683). This is not the place to discuss the merits and perils of the comparative method or of “Comparative Research Methods” (Keman 2008) in depth. This has been done elsewhere (Lijphardt 1971, Peters 1998).

In this project causality is not established by statistical means, but by using a more qualitative method: In the second part of this chapter (4.2.) the methodological approach and technique – Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) – is presented and discussed. It will be argued that viewing the cases as configurations of dependent and independent variables allows the researcher to combine a case- with a variable-oriented approach and accordingly maximise insight and explanatory power. Set-theoretical assumptions ask for a very exact coding – or calibration – of the case characteristics with values between 0 and 1.

This chapter’s more specific intention is to tie the theoretical discussion in chapter 2 to the empirical analysis that follows in chapters 5 and 6. It hence lays out the general design of the study, the method and the data used as well as the operationalisation of indicators. Still more importantly, specific hypotheses on the causal mechanisms are developed. The case selection has already been described and justified in chapter 3.

Above, two guiding research questions have been formulated:

How do the mass mediated communication patterns of political parties’ messages on European contentious issues vary comparatively?
Can (a) individual parties’ characteristics, (b) party system features and/or (c) political context factors explain these variations in party political communication patterns?

These questions clearly distinguish between the dependent (1) and the independent (2) variable(s). The first question aims at the assessment of the dependent variable – the cueing performance of political parties. The second question clearly addresses the determinants of the former and seeks to discover the causal links between both. Design follows function in the identified order, i.e. the first task is to plan for the empirical measurement of the mediated communication of political parties, the second to plan for measuring and explaining the causal factors.

A media content analysis is the obvious choice of a method in order to answer the first research question and capture political party cueing patterns on EU issues. This is in line with the central argument (of cueing theory) that party communication on European issues can be expected to influence the way citizens perceive the European issue at stake. There is, normally, no direct effect of party communication as political communication is almost always “mediated” nowadays. Citizens inform themselves through the mass media.

The analysis is a genuinely cross-country as well as cross-party comparative one. Six country cases have been selected in line with the argument in chapter 3. The mass media coverage on the constitutional process in these six domestic public arenas constitutes the data which is collected, subsequently coded and analysed according to the procedures described below. In part 4.3. it is demonstrated how the dependent variable, party’s mediated communication, will be measured and evaluated using an original mass media data set on the EU’s reform process. The section describes the data collection, coding, and operationalisation of indicators.
As a second step, chapter 3 has already identified the relevant parties in these arenas. For each party nine different party characteristics (chapter 2) are measured – from parties’ positions on European integration over their degree of involvement in government to the level of their internal unity. The last part of this chapter (4.4.) presents and discusses concrete hypotheses on how these explanatory factors are expected to affect party political cueing. Furthermore, this section contains information on indicators and measures, on the data used, on the coding (cases) of these variables, and on the distribution of cases across categories.

The chapter is followed by the execution of the media analysis and the QCA in order to actually provide empirical answers to the theoretical puzzles discussed in chapter 2.
4.2. Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

The following briefly introduces and discusses the origin, aims and strengths of QCA as a theoretical and methodological approach. Regarding QCA as an analytical technique, the specific procedures will be described later in the course of their application.

This study applies (fuzzy set) Qualitative Comparative Analysis ((fs)QCA), a methodology which originated in the work of Charles Ragin’s “The Comparative Method” (1987). It has been extensively developed further since (Ragin 2000), including the development of specific software tools\textsuperscript{95}, termini\textsuperscript{96} and textbooks (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a). QCA cannot ultimately solve the problem of “small n studies” in qualitative research, i.e. the problem that causal inferences are based on only a small number of cases. However, it can reduce it by maximising the number of possible comparisons across the independent variables and dependent variables and the use of theory of sets and Boolean algebra. In perceiving cases as configurations of conditions and outcomes, QCA combines the strengths of case-oriented (qualitative) and variable-oriented (quantitative) approaches. In other words, it aims at both qualitative in-depth insight which case studies can provide and the analytical scope of extensive cross-case comparative research (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a: 14). Each logically possible configuration of relevant aspects is understood as a qualitatively different variable displaying causal forces of varying degrees. Because of this, QCA is able to distinguish between and capture the interdependence of necessary and sufficient independent variables. In Schneider’s and Wagemann’s words:

“The general goal of a QCA analysis is to support the researcher in his/her attempt to arrive at a meaningful interpretation of the patterns displayed by the cases under examination. The main principle dominating the technical aspect of QCA is the examination of set-theoretic relationships between causally relevant conditions and a clearly specified outcome. These set-theoretic relationships are then interpreted in terms of necessity and/or sufficiency.

\textsuperscript{95} The software fs/QCA 2.0 and manuals can be downloaded at http://www.u.arizona.edu/~cragin/fsQCA/software.shtml. In addition, several background reading papers by Ragin (and others) on the correct application, procedures, and interpretation of QCA are available there.

\textsuperscript{96} Schneider and Wagemann propose that researchers use the appropriate “QCA” terminology (2007b). For the sake of easy reading also for those among the readers who are not familiar with that “language”, the author opted against QCA specific speak. That means that “conditions” are interchangeably called “independent variables” or “explanatory factors”, “outcomes” are called dependent variables, and “calibration” is called measurement or coding – as these are the terms most common in the discipline.
More precisely, if also theoretical arguments at hand, then a condition can be interpreted as sufficient, if always when the condition is present, the outcome is also present. Consequently, the sufficient condition is sub-set of the outcome. By contrast, a condition is necessary, if always when the outcome is present, the condition is also present. The necessary condition is a super-set of the outcome (Ragin 2000)” (Schneider/Wagemann 2007b:3).

This theoretical approach relates very well not only to the complexity of life’s reality and our everyday understanding of it, but also to modern social science theories which are mostly based on set-theoretical arguments, understanding the one or other social phenomenon as a necessary or sufficient (or both) condition of another phenomenon (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a: 16, 277, see Goertz/Starr 2003).

While the original crisp set QCA approach (Ragin 1987) recognised any given condition as dichotomous, that is in a binary way as either existent or non-existent (which had been heavily criticised), Fuzzy-Set QCA (Ragin 2000), which is applied in this analysis, allows independent variables to be coded as existent in varying degrees between 0 and 1. To give an example: religiousness could comprise people being very religious, religious, rather non-religious, atheistic etc. A fuzzy set condition thus permits membership in degrees while keeping the two qualitative anchors – full membership and full non-membership – intact (Ragin 2000:6). A rudimentary fuzzy set contains at least three values, namely 0, .5, and 1 for non-membership, partial membership, and full membership respectively. This “three-value logic” is retained with more fine-grained sets (see Ragin 2000: 155-9). This analysis will actually introduce different types of sets, some of which are crisp, others five-value fuzzy sets, again others seven-values fuzzy sets. It refrains from explicitly reporting the cross-over point of .5 because all cases are identified as either ‘more in’ or ‘more out’ a given set.

The selection and subsequent measurement (or coding) of condition variables is a highly important qualitative preparation and aims at an empirically grounded and theoretically justified, precise measurement (see Ragin 2000: 165-171). So the word “fuzzy” does not actually apply to the scientific concepts, which are quite on the contrary very clear and well defined, but to the fuzzyness of membership within these concepts. QCA advocates the use of raw, not yet formatted data und cautions against the mere transformation of statistical scales (e.g. mean) into fuzzy-values. The procedures

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97 As a general rule in this study, when coding the membership values of a certain condition variable we attribute the highest (1) and lowest membership value (0) to the anchor values of the existing cases. This reduces the problem of empirical limited diversity.
of assigning fuzzy membership scores should be made explicit and transparent (Ragin 2000: 6, Schneider/Wagemann 2007b). In the context of this analysis chapters 4.3.3. and 4.4. below are devoted to this task.

The QCA operations used in this work (as well as commonly most used) include the negation of variables, the use of ‘logical AND’, and the use of ‘logical OR’. The ‘logical AND’ creates a compound set which includes the intersection of two sets, e.g. ‘pro-European AND in government’. The mathematical operation to accomplish the ‘logical AND’ is to take the minimum membership score of each case in the two (or more) intersecting sets. Another compound set is joined by ‘logical OR’ which describes a union of sets, assuming that the two (or more) conditions might actually be equivalent, e.g. ‘high level of debate OR referendum’. This is mathematically captured by the use of the maximum of the cases’ membership values (see Ragin 2000: 171-6).

As an analytical technique QCA is rather similar to conventional quantitative methods (Schneider/Wagemann 2007b), in the sense that, after all patterns in the data are made visible with PC support. Sometimes this process misleads into a superficial or mechanical interpretation of the results. This is one reason why Schneider and Wagemann explicitly require that QCA should not be used as the only data analysis technique (2007b:17). They prominently stress the importance of combining QCA with case study research for maximum insight. Case studies not only provide important empirical information (for example on the time dimension) but also force the researcher to better describe and specify the analytical concepts used (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a: 278). This requirement is sufficiently met in this study as the six-country comparison is complemented by more in-depth information of the British and the German case.

Fuzzy-set QCA uses two measures which can be seen as broadly parallel to the statistical measures of significance and variance (relevance) - consistency and coverage. Consistency measures proportionally the percentage of cases which are consistent with the solution term, i.e. correctly described by it. Additionally, in fsQCA the fuzzy membership values of the individual cases are also taken into account. The relevance of

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98 In this work the coding of independent variables is described in chapter 4.3. for the dependent variables, and in chapter 4.4. for the independent variables.

99 These operations can be used to identify “higher-order constructs”, i.e. macrovariables, in order to simplify rather complex arguments encompassing various condition variables. This involves a careful re-conceptualisation of concepts, of course (see Ragin 2000: 321-8).
individual cases is thus weighted according to its degree of membership in dependent and independent variables. In order to signal the necessity of an independent variable, consistency scores should at best be above .9. For sufficiency, they should not fall below .8 or at least .75.

Coverage, on the other hand, measures proportionally how much of the outcome is explained by the solution, i.e. the proportion of the total number of cases (for which the outcome is present) covered by the solution term.

Consistency and coverage do not go together: The more a solution covers, the less precise, i.e. consistent, it will be and vice versa. If a solution is considered as inconsistent due to low consistency values, its performance in terms of coverage can be neglected. Consistency beats coverage – if an explanation is not good enough, it does not matter how far it reaches.\textsuperscript{100}

Consistency and coverage should always be measured separately for necessity and sufficiency. This implies that for every condition two separate analyses must be performed. In fsQCA the analysis of necessary conditions is done in an extra operation.

The output of Fuzzy-Set QCA operations rarely provides a straightforward answer. Instead, there is usually more than one causal path leading to the same outcome. The impact of any condition might change considerably depending on which other conditions it is combined with. This means that each path will display a different degree of coverage and consistency. If results are very complex, their interpretation might pose a real challenge for the researcher which she can master only with a sound theoretical and case-oriented knowledge.

Results of fsQCA are displayed in various forms:\textsuperscript{101}

- the ‘truth table’ is an important, if only intermediate result. It lists every possible configuration of conditions, the number of cases each configuration displays, and the level of consistency each configuration meets. For example, for three conditions eight combinations are logically possible. Each line of the truth table can be read as a description of cases as configurations of conditions (present or absent). Truth tables show the

\textsuperscript{100} Even if there is a stork’s nest on the roof of every single delivery room, the stork is NOT the reason for the babies born…

\textsuperscript{101} For a thorough descriptive as well as analytical overview see Schneider/Wagemann (2007a: 188-207).
empirical distribution of cases among configurations and can thus be used for analytical categorisation. Additionally, they reveal the limits of empirical diversity, i.e. which configurations are empirically observable and which not.

- the ‘property space’ is the graphical equivalent of the truth table. With, for example, three conditions and thus eight possible combinations, a three-dimensional property space (i.e. a cube with 8 corners) can be created. Each corner stands for one configurational set of three conditions. By calculating their respective membership, cases can be attributed to these eight categories. Since these represent the intersection of conditions, the necessary operation to apply is the ‘logical AND’, i.e. calculating the minimum membership in the intersecting sets. Thus, each case can be attributed to the one corner in which its membership is >.5. This is logically not possible when the fuzzy membership value of .5 has been applied.

- the ‘solution term’ is the main output from fsQCA. It usually comprises a number of more or less complex equations of configurations of conditions which are subsets of, i.e. sufficient conditions for, the outcome. These causal expressions can be read as different paths leading to the outcome (with varying levels of coverage and consistency). The software allows the researcher to make a number of decisions on threshold in regard to the required consistency etc. These might change the results considerable and therefore have to be carefully reported.
4.3. Media Analysis: Data, Coding, Operationalisation

In order to tackle adequately the first research question and investigate the communication patterns of parties on European issues – a classification of mediated party political communication was deductively developed in the previous chapter 2. It comprises three criteria – strength, positioning, and clarity – which in practise can be met to varying degrees.

For measuring how parties can communicate via the media, a media content analysis is the obvious choice of a method. However, there are two problems which have to be overcome. The first is the inconvenience that for media data there are no established cross-country data sets available that one could use – which is possible for all kinds of other data (see appendix 8.1.3.). The second problem is that EU coverage has so far not been studied with a systematic focus on political parties. In one of the earliest media content analyses on the EU, McQuail et al (1982) have explicitly studied how the media covered the first direct European Elections. They did so – as did subsequent studies – from a media research perspective on the link between media and audience. Thus, they were interested in the treatment of issues (which are often more domestic than European) as well as in the transnational or European dimension. Political parties were only a side note, one set of actors among others. Consequently, appropriate indicators and measures to explicitly capture their relationship with the representation in the media coverage on Europe have not been developed yet.

This is why this project has to go to some length to collect data on it as well as to measure, analyse and evaluate the dependent variable. Thus, the aim of the following section is to outline how this will be done.

4.3.1. The Media Data Set
Mediated party communication will be measured using an original Print Mass Mediadata set comprising media coverage of the domestic debates on the European

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102 Statham 2008 and DeVreese 2006 are laudable exceptions.
Constitution in the selected east and west European countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{103}

\subsection*{4.3.1.1. Collection and Sampling of Media Data Set}

The selection of media outlets applies the assumption that the media landscape of a given country should not be artificially reduced to a sample of two quality newspapers from the left/right spectre of politics as is so often done. Even though “opinion leadership” is an important selection criterion (applied in this study, too), and the left-right-approach allows for a clear-cut cross-country comparison, for the qualitative approach the loss of information as a result of it is deemed to be unacceptable.

The sampling should rather try to follow the characteristic features of a given media system in sampling the appropriate sources which reflect the whole range of possible sources of information which readers have (theoretically).\textsuperscript{104} An example demonstrates why this is important: De Vreese (2004) found that anti-immigration attitudes are an important factor for explaining voters’ preferences in EU referenda. However, often the quality papers refrain from these political non-correct or delicate issues, esp. in the German case for obvious historical reasons. By including tabloids that are more outspoken in some cases we are able to capture these voices from the “margins”. In order to perform a consistent sampling of relevant media outlets, country experts were employed.

In order to ensure comparability it was necessary to rely on common selection criteria, as well. Newspapers were selected according to several criteria: The sample should be as diverse as possible according to the given national media landscape, i.e. should include dailies and weeklies, quality papers and tabloids, left and right papers. Among these, outlets with high print-run as well as particularly influential media were preferred.

\footnotetext[103]{The data collection and coding procedure have been conducted by an international team of researchers at the University of Bremen in the framework of ConstEPS, by name: Tatjana Evas (Estonia/Latvia), Kathrin Packham (Germany/Great Britain), Alexandra Wyrozumska (Poland), Petra Rakusanova (Czech Republic), Sönke Maatsch (France), Ewelina Pawlak, Alexander Gattig. See for more information on the country samples: PEPS special issue 2007}

\footnotetext[104]{For this approach see Liebert et al 2009: Comparative Political Discourse Analysis: A Qualitative–Quantitative Approach (QQC - PDA), to be presented at ECPR Conference Potsdam.}
To give an example: The six newspapers included in the UK study cover the major political positions and have high print-runs within their respective sector. The intention was to ‘map’ the political space and to cover as many positions as possible. Two daily quality newspapers were selected, The Times and The Guardian, as well as two ‘yellow press’ tabloids, The Sun and The Daily Mirror. The sectoral paper, The Economist, and a Sunday paper, The Observer, were also included.\(^\text{105}\) While The Times, Sun and Economist display a conservative or liberal political orientation and as such are rather sceptical with regard to European integration, The Guardian, Mirror and Observer represent a centre-left and modestly pro-European position. A total of 838 articles dealing with the ratification process from the dailies and 105 from The Economist and Observer (943 in all) were collected using the Factiva databases as well as online archives (see Appendix 8.1.2.).

The quantitative sample of articles has been collected using the following search terms: "European Constitution", "European Constitutional treaty" “euro-constitution” (national language equivalents were provided by native speakers). Different electronic archives were used, e.g. the internet archives provided by the newspapers themselves (free in some cases, with costs in others), the Dow Jones Factiva archive and others. Articles with one or more of the search terms in it were selected.

4.3.1.2. The completed Media Data Set

The ConstEPS media data base consists of 8842 newspaper articles which were published across 35 different media outlets between October 28, 2004 and October 31, 2005. The period of analysis, thus, starts with the signing of the Constitutional Treaty in Rome in 2004. It covers the ratification up to its metamorphosis to reflection and the introduction of the Commission’s “Plan D” on Communication. The table below provides an overview on country cases, media outlets and respective sample sizes. It is obvious that the amount of coverage varied quite a lot across countries. The exceedingly

\(^{105}\) Although originally founded as an independent newspaper, owned by the Guardian Media Group, The Observer is now, more or less, the Sunday supplement of The Guardian, and thus is similar in terms of political stance and features more or less the same authors. As a weekly paper its articles are more of the analytical and opinion piece variety as opposed to daily news items, making it especially interesting for the purposes of our analysis. The Economist is a weekly high-end international(ist) business paper based in London. Although it is printed in newsmagazine format, it was founded and still presents itself as a newspaper. It has been included here for two reasons: first, for its party-independent political position advocating economic liberalism at the same time as political libertarianism—and thereby mostly escaping the pattern of party politics in the UK, and second, to complement the available range of print media with an influential and strongly opiniated paper in the elite section.
highest amount of coverage was published in pre- and post-rejection France. German papers also paid a high level of attention throughout the process. Similar levels of coverage were reached in the Czech Republic and Great Britain, followed by Polish media. The media debate was especially low-key in Estonia with only 367 articles published.106


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Selected Newspapers</th>
<th>Quantitative Sample (no. of articles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Blesk, MFDnes, Právo, Reflex, Respekt, Tyden (6)</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Postimees, Päevaleht, Molodezh Estonii (3)</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Le Figaro, Le Monde, L’Express, Le Nouvel Observateur, Le Point (5)</td>
<td>4071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Bild, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Focus, Spiegel, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Die Welt, Die Zeit (7)</td>
<td>1451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita, Nasz Dziennik; Wprost, Newsweek Polska, Tygodnik Powszechny; Super Express, Europa (Fakt) (8)</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35 domestic print media outlets</td>
<td>8842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ConstEPS, compiled by author

As noted above, an in-depth analysis of mediated party communication of British and German parties will complement the main analysis. This draws on two respective subsamples selected from the large quantitative sample. The following footnote therefore

106 For Estonia only three papers were selected which was due to research capacities as the Latvian Press was also under investigation. However, this might contribute to but does not account for the overall low coverage level as presented here.
provides information on the sampling strategy and the reduced sample for the qualitative analysis.\textsuperscript{107}

4.3.2. Coding Media Data
This section outlines the procedure for extracting information from the media data set described above through coding. Because several kinds of coding were used to investigate all three aspects of mediated party communication – visibility, direction and clarity of cues, – this section deals only with the overall procedure. More detailed information on the operationalisation, measurement and subsequent calibration of the three outcomes is given in the following sub-chapters.

For the analysis the media data was structured by country – or rather by language, which is of higher relevance for coding text. These country samples were read into Atlas.ti, a computer software developed for the qualitative analysis.\textsuperscript{108}

A sequential coding procedure allowing for several analytical steps was developed in order to deal efficiently with the great amount of text. It involves instances of (semi-) automatic coding as well as personal coding by hand. In doing so, the approach pays great respect to the critique concerning the deficiencies of auto-coding of text (cf. e.g. Tsebelis 2005).

\textsuperscript{107} These sub-samples were selected in two steps: For the qualitative discourse analysis, first, a representative sample of 30-40 substantive articles was selected by carefully “scanning” all articles. An article was considered as relevant in this sense when it fulfilled the following criteria: 1) covering peak domestic and European events depending on the quantity of coverage, 2) diversity of actors and Constitutional topics, and 3) supplying a sufficient “density” or “richness” of arguments. These substantive articles formed the sample for the subsequent qualitative in-depth content-analysis. Equivalent to the ‘substantive’ articles are the „discursive“ articles in the SFB project: “These include editorials and editorial page opinion articles as well as political columns, interviews, and contributions from external authors such as intellectuals, politicians or experts, but also a range of other non-op/ed articles and pieces which analyse, interpret, argue or justify rather than simply report news” (Weßler et al. 2005).

Additionally, the key events within the ratification process, e.g. the signing of the Constitutional Treaty in October 04 or the Spanish Referendum in February 05, had to be covered. To a large extent these were included in the regular sample. However, if for example the coverage did not reach up to the standards of “substantiveness”, up to three articles per event were separately analysed (in order not to distort the sample’s representativity). Contrary to Trenz et al. (2006) we do not aim to capture the media’s voice but seek to cover the whole array of article types (e.g. editorials, reports, interviews), authors (journalists, guest commentators), and topics (ratification debate and context issues) any reader is exposed to.

In a second step, we selected articles which explicitly deal with or give a platform to political party messages. This sampling was based on the semi-automatic coding of the quantitative sample (below). Those articles which displayed a comparatively high level of party positions were selected – additional 25 for German and 23 for British coverage – allowing for an in-depth analysis of party positions, party strategies and inter- as well as intra-party competition over the European constitution. Overall, 65 articles were finally selected for the German and 53 articles for the UK case study (see Annex 8.1.2).

\textsuperscript{108} http://www.atlasti.com
1) In a first step, the entire sample of over 8000 articles was semi-automatically coded using the “auto-coding” function of the software. This allows for entering single search terms as well as so called “search strings” containing variations and synonyms of one search term. The search strings were developed with the help of native speakers and country experts. In all cases, the search strings have been thoroughly tested before the final application. Whenever there is a hit, the programme can be adjusted to either code it immediately or to ask the user for confirmation. During the coding procedure – in every case – random checks were conducted using the confirmation function to further secure the validity of coding. This process was used for three tasks:

- Counting the occurrences of political parties in the sample. For this, the software was adjusted to code single words, i.e. party names, abbreviations etc. This information was than exported and used to assess the visibility or strength of parties (see below).

- The quantitative coding was used to identify additional articles for the German and the British qualitative sub-samples. Those articles which displayed a high level of party positions were selected for an in-depth media discourse analysis of party communication about the European constitutional treaty.

- Identifying those statements within the articles that dealt explicitly with the constitutional treaty. For this purpose, the software was set to code paragraphs (instead of single words or sentences).

2) In a second step, these paragraphs on the TCE were filtered out of the larger sample. They were distributed to country experts who were instructed on how to hand-code the positions of domestic political parties on the TCE as expressed in the distinguished text.

3) Third, the British and German qualitative sub-samples were imported into atlas.ti. The author carried out an in-depth media discourse analysis of party communication on the European constitutional treaty ratification. This information will contribute to a correct and well-grounded evaluation of the quantitative findings.
4.3.3. Operationalisation and fsQCA-Calibration of 3 Independent Variables

Party messages which are likely to work as successful cues are strong and convey a clear position. This sub-chapter serves two functions:

First, it explains how these standards can be measured applying different empirical indicators. The concept of a successful cue has been disaggregated into three criteria which will be measured separately from each other. Three questions therefore guide the operationalisation:

- Are a given party’s messages strong enough to gain access into the media and be visible among competing messages?
- Do a given party’s messages contain the party’s position on European Constitutionalisation?
- Are a given party’s messages clear and unambiguous on that position?

Second, the operation of the QCA renders it necessary to eventually rate all cases according to their membership in the three sets of outcomes. To be able to do so, calibration patterns for the different sets will be developed below. In this way, the approach follows the “good praxes” established for QCA (Schneider/Wagemann 2007b) Cases, i.e. political parties, will ultimately be assigned membership values in these three sets:

- Set of strongly visible party messages
- Set of positive party messages on the TCE
- Set of clear party messages on the TCE

This allows for two applications: On one hand, if the data is calibrated in such a way, causal relations in terms of necessity and sufficiency can be tested. On the other hand, it can be used for classificatory purposes.

All cases and assigned fsQCA membership value can be found in the matrix in Appendix 8.2.2.
4.3.3.1. Measuring the Dependent Variable I – Strength of Political Party Cues

The strength of a party’s messages will be operationalised as the party’s visibility in the media. This is measured by counting the occurrences – that is the mentioning – of individual political parties and distinguishable party actors in the press coverage. It should be made clear that the presence of a party and its actors is thus used as an indicator for the strength of actual party messages.

As has been explained above, this is technically accomplished by computer-assisted semi-automatic coding of media samples structured by country. The auto-coding tool was programmed to search for and code all sentences in which a party name or synonym appeared. Random sample tests were carried out to ensure the coding’s quality.

For each country sample a given set of actors\textsuperscript{109} was coded so that the total number of all occurrences per country amounts to 100\% of actor occurrences. This ensures the comparability of six country samples which are very different in size. The visibility of a given party is thus measured as the percentage of its occurrences relative to all coded quotations, i.e. “hits” in the respective country’s media coverage.

In proceeding this way, strength is defined as a proportional, not an absolute, status. In the domestic arena a party is visible vis-à-vis the other actors. Capturing message strength means to measure the ability of a party to survive in the highly competitive market of media attention.

Even though this procedure does acknowledge that the media coverage was at very different levels in the countries studied, there is still a high variation across cases. In one country the most visible party A has a share of 20\% of occurrences, in another the most visible party B only 5\%. This has implications for the QCA calibration: The apparently very different nature of the domestic ratification debates demands a context-sensitive classification of a respective party’s strength. In other words, the first party A cannot be classified as strong and party B as marginal because both are the most visible party in their respective domestic public sphere.

\textsuperscript{109} The quantitative coding process included app. 50 other codes, e.g. relevant parties, the EP, EUCommission, HoGs, public/voters/citizens etc.
In the set of strongly visible party messages we distinguish between four degrees of membership: Political parties which are highly visible are assigned full membership, i.e. the value 1. Parties which are not visible accordingly have 0 membership in the set. This is the full set:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Calibration</th>
<th>TsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Set of strongly visible party messages</td>
<td>Occurences of parties in media sample: a) percentage of occurences, b) relation to visibility of VIP, and c) even vs. uneven distribution</td>
<td>1= strongly visible 0.7= visible 0.3= weakly visible 0= invisible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does strongly visible mean, though? The QCA membership values of individual party cases are applied according to three calibration criteria: a) percentage of occurences, b) even versus uneven distribution, and c) relation to visibility of the most mentioned individual, the VIP.

The first is straightforward and refers to a quantitative ranking of parties according to the frequency of their occurrences. It is particularly important for evaluating cases with a lesser membership value, e.g. parties whose share of occurrences tends towards 0% certainly will be assigned a membership value of 0, too.

Second, the role of parties is established in relation to the occurrences of the most visible domestic actor in the media coverage, usually the head of government or of state (but not in all cases). Here we assume that if the VIP takes on an important role in the media debate, party messages will appear to be less strong. Therefore, a party can only be considered as strongly visible if it is more or about as visible as the VIP.

The third criterion – distribution – recognises the fact that even if the general visibility of political parties is rather low, one or two parties stand out if only the gap to the ensuing parties is big enough. Thus, the distance between groups of cases must always be larger than within the groups.

4.3.3.2. Measuring the Dependent Variable II – Direction of Political Party Cues
A cueing message must contain a position on the issue at stake, in this case on the Constitutional Treaty ratification. Note that content is captured only in regard to a party’s position on the constitutional treaty as visible in the media. All newspaper
article paragraphs which explicitly dealt with the TCE had been identified from the media data set using semi-automatic coding processes as described above.

The table below shows the different amount of paragraphs on the TCE. Even though the distribution is quite wide and some samples are only a fraction of others, all samples allowed a meaningful analysis. It will be demonstrated below that the difference in numbers does not distort the findings. And neither does the different length of the paragraphs.\textsuperscript{110}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Country Case & Czech Republic & Estonia & France & Germany & Poland & United Kingdom \\
\hline
No. of paragraphs & 160 & 243 & 3867 & 1427 & 2488 & 3169 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Paragraphs on the TCE in Media Coverage}
\end{table}

These statements have been coded by country specialists in accordance with a uniform procedure. Coders have been instructed by the author as follows:

“If the selected paragraph contained a statement or position on the TCE that is delivered by or accredited to a party or a party actor\textsuperscript{111}, it is coded according to its fit with the following code definition adapted from the Euromanifestos Coding Scheme (EMCS).

- \textit{Code TCEpos: EU Constitutional Treaty: Positive} [Need for a European Constitution, support for a constitution/constitutional treaty in general and/or for the specific “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” (TCE), as it was signed by the 27 heads of states and governments of the EU in October 2004 in Rome] or

- \textit{Code TCEneg: EU Constitutional Treaty: Negative} [No Need for a European Constitution, rejection of a constitution/constitutional treaty in general and/or of the specific “Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” (TCE), as it was signed by the 27 heads of states and governments of the EU in October 2004 in Rome].

\textsuperscript{110} Because paragraphs in the French journals were considerably longer than, for example, in British papers, the entire amount of text was too large to be hand-coded. A representative proportion of each month’s statements selected and only every second, fourth, sixth etc statement was actually coded.

\textsuperscript{111} An individual is counted as a party actor only when he is immediately identifiable as such, either because party affiliation is explicitly mentioned or is commonly know.
If a message can not be attributed to one or the other code, because it is ambiguous, divisive, speculative, or undecided it will be coded as both positive and negative.”

The content of a given party’s messages is operationalised as the position represented in the majority of statements, i.e. if most of the statements related to a political party displayed a favourable attitude towards the TCE, this party’s position counts as positive – and negative, if vice versa.

For the QCA calibration this means that the set of positive party messages on the TCE is constructed as a simple dichotomy: Either a party’s message is positive (and it is accordingly assigned full membership, value 1) or it is negative (and therefore has no membership, value 0).

However, there is a constraint which logically follows from the first step of analysis: It is not possible to establish the position of a political party which is not visible in the first place. A second reason could be that exactly the same amount of positive and negative messages has been counted which would result in an indistinguishable position, too. In order to thoroughly investigate the patterns of mediated party communication and draw a complete picture, we need to include them. They will be excluded from some parts of the analyses, though. For now, they are assigned the value 0, too, because they do not belong clearly into the set of positive party messages on the TCE.

This set can be summarised as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Calibration</th>
<th>BQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Set of positive messages on the TCE</td>
<td>Sum of positive and negative statements on TCE (undecided counted as both negative and positive). Majority is decisive</td>
<td>1 = positive on EU Const. 0 = negative on EU Const./ no position visible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3.3. Measuring the Dependent Variable III – Clarity of Political Party Cues

The measurement of the degree of clarity or consistency of a given party’s message builds on the coding of parties’ positions in the media as described in the previous subsection. Few parties have been coded as perfectly supportive or completely against the TCE. Instead, most parties are accredited with positive and negative messages. This has two reasons: The first is related to the coding strategy, of course. Remember that statements which indicated inconclusiveness, disagreement, or speculation were not
coded as ‘neutral’ or ‘divided’ but as both positive and negative. The second reason is that there actually are opposing views within a party and both are publicly expressed or reported on in the media. The question is: To what degree is a party able to deliver clear messages?

The degree of consistency of a party’s position on the TCE is operationalised as the ratio of supportive and negative statements per party. For example, if – out of the statements related to a given party – 35 statements were coded as supportive and 5 as negative, this party’s cues can count as much more consistent than those for which the ratio of statements was 20:20.

In the set of clear messages four levels of membership are distinguished:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of Set</th>
<th>Calibration</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Set of clear messages on the TCE</td>
<td>Degree of consistency of a party’s position on the TCE is measured using the ratio of supportive and negative statements per party.</td>
<td>1= clear message 0,7= rather clear message 0,3= less clear 0= not clear at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In more detail: A party sends clear supportive messages when the ratio is greater than 10, e.g. 29 positive versus 2 negative statements. It sends clear negative when a party’s ratio is between 0,1 and 0, e.g. 0 positive versus 35 negative statements. Both parties would be assigned the membership value 1, full membership.

On the other hand, parties are not members of the set, if the ratio of supportive and positional statements tends towards 1. This would imply that a party presents itself – or is presented as – completely divided on the issue.112

Finally, the problem encountered earlier in regard to the calibration of positions repeats itself here: We cannot establish the clarity of a message which is not visible in the media. This means that, if a message is not visible, it is not clear either. Accordingly it is no member of the set of clear messages on the TCE. These cases, too, are assigned the membership value 0.

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112 The degrees are calibrated as follows:
Clear: 0,1<X<10; rather clear: 0,1<X<10; less clear: 0,3<X<4; not clear at all: 0,725<X<1,4
4.4. Measuring Explanatory Factors: Operationalisation, Data, and Coding

The aim of this sub-chapter is to approach the second research question from a methodological perspective. In order to explain different patterns of party political performance in European communication, an explanatory model as well as a number of different explanatory factors (independent variables or conditions) have been deductively distinguished as potentially influencing the patterns of mediated party communication (see chapter 2). Here, more concrete hypothesis shall be developed.

To recall, certain configurations of explanatory factors are expected to impact on media coverage only in combination with each other. In the list below, however, they are not weighted or ranked but just listed.

The table gives an overview of: a) explanatory factors (= independent variables); b) the empirical indicators; and c) the respective data sets. More elaborate information on some of the data used can be found in appendix 8.1.3..
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Explanatory Variables</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ideological inter-party competition | Party Family Position on EU Integration      | Stances towards European Integration in general but particularly political integration as it proposed by TCE | - Euromanifestos (EMP)  
- the Chapel Hill Expert Judgements,  
- Lewis/Mansfeldova 2006 |
|                            | Party Position on EU Constitution              | Official Position on the issue of an EU constitution                      | - Euromanifestos (EMP)  
- ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey  
- Kurpas et al. 2005 a,b  
- Maurer/Stengel 2004 |
| Strategic inter-party competition | Strategic Party competition                  | Closeness/distance to power centre in domestic party political arena, i.e. to government | Own compilation |
|                            | Party Participation in Constitutional Convention | Closeness/distance to power in European political reform arena, i.e. Constitutional Convention | Own compilation, use of Convention Archive at http://european-convention.eu.int/ bienvenue.asp?lang=EN |
|                            | Party Media Management                         | self-assessment of political party actors in respect to organising/participating in public events, public protest and media relations | ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey on Constitutionalisation |
| Ideological and strategic intra-party argument | Salience of EU Integration for Party         | Degree of salience a party attaches to EU integration issues              | - Euromanifestos (EMP)  
- Chapel Hill Expert Judgements |
|                            | Party Unity on EU Integration                 | Degree of internal consent and dissent in party leadership               | - Chapel Hill Expert Judgements  
- ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey  
- Sikk (in Lewis/ Mansfeldova 2006) |
| Context Conditions         | Public Participation in Treaty Reform          | Mode of TCE ratification                                                | Own compilation |
|                            | Diffuse Public Opinion on EU Integration      | Standard Eurobarometer measure “Support to the membership” 2003-2005    | Eurobarometer |
The following sub-sections provide information:
- on the expectations (hypotheses) related to individual factors (variables)
- on the operationalisation of variables: indicators and measures,
- on the various kinds and data sets used,
- on the coding of measures for the fsQCA matrix,
- on the distribution of cases (and missing cases) across measurement categories,
- and on potential and actual measure and data issues.

This information as well as the abbreviation of the independent variables used in the QCA-Matrix (see appendix 8.1.1., including a full list of sampled party organisations) is summarised in a table with each variable at the end of each of the following sections. An appendix 8.1.3. containing additional information on the various data sets used complements this chapter.

4.4.1. Party Family Position on European Integration
This variable captures the general attitude of political parties on European integration and particularly their stance on the ‘deepening’ of the process, i.e. further political integration.

Several studies and ongoing research show that party families’ position towards European integration are quite consistent and permanent. The “inverted u-curve” (Hix/Lord 1997; Hooghe/Marks/Wilson 2004; Budge et al. 2001) has been verified across time as well as space – although it’s reliability for the CEEC needs some more empirical back up (Rohrschneider/Whitefield 2006). It is therefore possible to cluster parties according to families which are prone to endorse further integration, the so called “pro-European core” (i.e. the actual curve of the “inverted U”), and other groups which are strongly opposed, the fringe parties on the extreme left and right (the sides of the “inverted U”). There are three main data sources for the measurement of party positions: manifesto coding data, expert judgement data, and opinion survey data. For all three, data is available for cross-country as well as over-time comparisons.
Because the above mentioned data and measurement techniques have achieved a high degree of reliability, they are increasingly used as an independent variable which can possibly predict/explain the behaviour of individual parties belonging to a given party family (Crum 2007, Kriesi 2007). This project proceeds along this line and assumes that parties can be clustered along families which are generally rather in favour of the EU’s political integration and others mainly opposed to it. By operationalising according to this classification, it deliberately refrains from measuring single parties’ positions in order to establish the impact of family-belonging on a party’s representation in the media coverage. In this way, it follows the argument made by Crum (2007) and Kriesi (2007).

Based on the above literature review, the following expectations (hypotheses) can be formulated:

- It is expected that parties’ belonging to the so-called pro-integrationist core (social- democrats, christian-democrats, liberals) will be able to send out strong positive cues in regard to the TCE to their electorates (via media). They can be described as what is called here mainstream parties.

- Extreme left and populist right wing parties strongly oppose the TCE, if for different reasons. While the Left opposes the market-liberal direction of EU policies, for the extreme Right the European project constitutes primarily a threat to the cultural identity of the respective nation state and to the self-rule of its people. For this, they are considered in this study as protest parties.

Greens and Conservatives are in-between. These are families which support a particular aspect of the EU process but oppose another.

- The Greens usually agree with the idea that policy must be supra-national (as polluted rivers across borders, too, etc…) but as they have often developed rather leftist ideas, they often tend to oppose the idea of economic liberalisation (for which the EU stands). However, because the TCE represents a political rather than economic project, they are expected to be speaking out rather in favour (gal).

- The opposite is true for Conservatives. They will hesitate to – ideologically – embrace the political aspect of further integration (tan).
Despite their ambivalent attitude to the European integration they are still considered as mainstream parties.

The accurate classification of parties in party families draws on different data sets, mainly a) the Euromanifestos Coding Scheme, and b) the Chapel Hill data set. Each distinguishes between 10 categories of party families which are clustered into four categories which cover their (often overlapping) perspective on EU integration.\textsuperscript{113} For the Western European parties both data sets usually concur. Presumably because of the (still) more transient nature of the party systems in the CEE countries, they tend to disagree rather often about the assignment of Eastern European parties into the existing categories. Where this is the case, c) a third source, namely the country chapters in Lewis/Mansfeldowa (2006), is consulted.

Following the argumentation above, the categorisation is defined (in accordance with fsQCA requirements) based on the varying degrees to which a party is affiliated to the set of parties belonging to the core of pro-European core party families. Solid and continuous support for the integration project signals the unqualified membership in this group (=1), while fundamental opposition to EU integration (for whatever reason) marks the non-membership (=0):

1 = the party belongs to the strong pro-integrationist core, i.e. social-democrats, christian-democrats and liberals;

0,7 = the party belongs politically to the general pro-integrationist green party family, which is sceptical on the left/right dimension but positive on political integration.\textsuperscript{114}

0,3 = the party belongs to the conservative party family which in general embraces the economic integration and liberalisation while politically safeguardes the nation state and appears sceptical about further political integration.

0 = the party belongs to the radical left or populist right which strongly oppose further European integration, if on different grounds ("strange bedfellows").

\textsuperscript{113} The MRG distinguishes the following 10 party families: green, (post-)communist, social democrats, liberal, christian democrats, conservative, nationalist, agrarian, regional, special interest (Euromanifesto Documentation, p.49).

The Chapel Hill Group (according to own statement) largely follows the classification by Hix/Lord (1997) and lists 11 families: radical right, conservatives, liberal, Christian-democratic, socialist, radical left, green, regionalist, no family, confessional, agrarian (codebook, chapel Hill Party Dataset 2002)

\textsuperscript{114} The regionalist parties in the UK, i.e. Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party, take a decidedly left position on the left-right dimension. They do, however, support European integration on the grounds of a distinct federalist vision in their ideology.
The table summarises the central information on this variable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Core        | Set of parties belonging to the core of pro-European core party families | Stances towards European Integration in general but particularly political integration as it proposed by TCE | 1 = party belongs to strong pro-integrationist core, i.e. social-democrats, christian-democrats and liberals; 0,7 = party belongs to politically in general pro-integrationist green party family, 0,3 = party belongs to conservative party family, 0 = party belongs to radical left or populist right, strongly opposed to further European integration | - Euromanifestos (EMP)  
- the Chapel Hill Expert Judgements,  
- Lewis/Mansfeldova 2006 |

The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2. shows how the individual parties are assigned into the four categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided by the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>core</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It illustrates that the cases are quite evenly distributed between 19 which are ‘more in than out’ of the pro-European core of parties (those classified as 1 or 0,7) and 20 which are ‘more out than in’ (classified as 0,3 or 0, not belonging into this group). It is to mention that all cases have been coded, therefore, there are no missing cases. For information regarding the coding of individual parties, please refer to appendix 8.2.2.
4.4.2. Party Position on the European Constitutional Treaty

As a second independent variable which complements the party family condition outlined above, a political party’s explicit position on the issue of an EU constitution is identified. This position is not necessarily the same as its general ideology as captured by the party family position would suggest – for reasons discussed in chapter 2.

Obviously, the normative and empirical expectation here is that a political party will seek to communicate the position it has agreed upon to the public, i.e. that this specific position – in favour or against the TCE – will show in the media coverage on the ratification. This means that:

- parties which have formulated a positive statement on a European constitution in their respective election programmes are expected to represent this position in the media, i.e. provide supportive (positive) cues on the TCE

- parties that have positioned themselves negative on a European constitution in their election platforms are expected to speak out against the TCE in the media, i.e. provide negative cues.

The indicator for a party’s stance on the TCE is the official position of the individual political party as represented in the party platforms for the 2004 European Parliament Election. The measurement relies on a) party manifesto data, where possible. The respective codes used by the “Euromanifesto project” are defined as follows\textsuperscript{115}:


- \textit{TCEneg: EU Constitutional Treaty: Negative} [No Need for a European Constitution, rejection of a constitution/constitutional treaty in general.]

Information on some party positions was missing because in two cases (CZ US-DEU und UK Greens) there is no manifesto data; in other cases parties did not formulate a position on the TCE or a European Constitution in general (10/39). The following 9 among the 39 parties included in the study did not formulate a position in their 2004 EP election manifesto: KSCM, SNK-ED, KDU-CSL, REP, SDE, ER, SO, PSL, and Plaid

\textsuperscript{115} For more information on the Euromanifestos project see appendix 8.1.3.
Cymru. This neglect of the issue is an interesting fact per se because at the time of the European Elections the Constitutional Convention had well completed its work, the (second) IGC was convening, and the signing was to take place in October 2004. Among others, one possible reason is a lack of agreement on the issue in the party. This will be discussed further below. Taking into account the identity of specific parties, it is apparent that these are mostly from the new member states (which had only joined in May) and had thus been occupied with accession matters and not yet dealt en detail with the constitutional reform process.

In these cases, other sources have been consulted, namely the b) ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey, c) Kurpas et al’s EPIN Ratification Updates 2005, and d) Maurer/Stengel (2004) It was possible to obtain information on the ‘official’ party position for most of the cases, and there is no information only for the Estonian Social Democrats (SDE) and the Polish Peasants’ Party (PSL).

Indeed, when parties do take a position on a given issue, there is of course room for wavering and discussing the pros and cons. In the end, i.e. in a campaign or in parliament, a decision must be made in favour or against the reform. A party can, of course, refrain from formulating a position at all, however difficult this might prove in a lively public debate. Thus, the categorisation (in accordance with fsQCA requirements), i.e. the degree of membership in the set of parties with a declared positive stance on a European Constitution is defined by three characteristics. The first is a positive public stance on the TCE (=1), the second a negative public stance (=0). Equally, if a party does not declare its position at all, it cannot be a member of the set, either (=0). As the table shows the set is thus a dichotomous one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>Set of parties with a declared positive stance on a European Constitution</td>
<td>Official position on the issue of an EU constitution</td>
<td>1= party is in favour of EU constitution 0 = party is against EU constitution or has not formulated a position on EU constitution</td>
<td>- Euromanifestos (EMP) - ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey - EPIN - Maurer/Stengel 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2. shows how the individual parties are assigned into the two categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

### Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>constitution</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to this condition the sample is lopsided in one direction: The 24 parties with a clear stance in favour of the TCE clearly outnumber the15 against (including 2 with no position). All cases have been coded, there are no missing cases.

### 4.4.3. Strategic Party Competition

In regard to European integration an important argument in the literature is that one can observe a generally pro-European party cartel which is increasingly challenged by eurosceptic small protest and anti-system parties which have experienced systematic exclusion from the political process.

Strategic inter-party competition contains three underlying dimensions as the access to power comes with a) the commitment to defend EU decisions on domestic level, b) the ability to shape politics on EU level and c) a privileged access to media and agenda-setting powers. Furthermore, the issue of system salience should be addressed in this context: If an issue is visibly contested by one party, other political parties, mostly mainstream parties, are forced to give more attention to the issue than they would maybe have on their own account. In this way, individual protest parties can contribute to an overall increased level of system salience and party competition. This is another reason why the strategic dimension is of interest in regard to the parties’ presentation of messages. Unfortunately, this hypothesis could not be operationalised in a systematic way well enough to include it into the fsQCA. Nevertheless, it will receive special attention in the subsequent interpretation process of the findings.
Here, first a) the domestic party power play is discussed, before getting to b) and c) in the following sections.

How are the strategic considerations of parties expected to impact on their political messages on EU treaty reform ratification? The following hypotheses can be tested:

- Crum argues that “government parties are bound to endorse Treaty revisions because these revisions are established only with the approval of each and every government involved” (2007: 66). They can be expected to send supportive, positive cues.

- Opposition parties tend to be freer but might face a dilemma. If they are ideologically attuned to a pro-integration position they find themselves siding with the government, i.e. strategically in an awkward position. However, Crum’s analysis suggests that, when exposed to a dilemma between ideological and short-term strategic incentives, mainstream opposition parties opt for continuity. This, however, is open to testing in the fsQCA. Here it is assumed, that strategically these parties are inclined to oppose, hence send negative cues to, the TCE.

- For protest parties – especially in a referendum situation – the situation is different. A referendum is not only a possibility to mobilise against government and mainstream parties but also to actually shape policy outcome – here: European integration – by influencing public opinion. Because most protest parties reject European integration, they do not face a dilemma and therefore can be expected to provide decidedly negative messages on Treaty reform.

- Other small (e.g. regional) parties, however, might face this dilemma. They are, however, considered for this work only if they made it into the parliament. Thus, they fall under the above category of either government or opposition party.

The strategic dimension of party competition is measured by the location of a party in the party system, i.e. its position in relation to the centre of power, the national government. The empirical indicator for the power dimension is a party’s status as government, opposition or protest party. Since most European countries have some type
of proportional voting system, coalition governments are the rule. Junior partners (all, if there are several) are considered as less powerful than senior coalition partner parties. All parties that are not in the parliament are considered as protest parties.

The data on the respective status of the parties in the sample has been compiled by the author. The official internet web pages of the national statistical office, parliament or government have been used to confirm a party's membership in the parliament at the time.\(^\text{116}\) All information refers to the period of scrutiny in 2004 and 2005.

The following categories (in accordance with fsQCA requirements) describe the degree of membership in the set of parties in governmental power according to the strategic location of individual parties within the national political system.

1 = incumbent party, senior coalition partner;

0,7 = incumbent party, junior coalition partner;

0,3 = parliamentary opposition party;

0 = not in national parliament (= protest party)

The table summarises the relevant information on this condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Set of parties in governmental power</td>
<td>Closeness/distance to power centre in domestic party political arena, i.e. to government</td>
<td>1 = incumbent party, senior coalition partner; 0,7 = incumbent party, junior coalition partner; 0,3 = parliamentary opposition party; 0 = not in national parliament (= protest party)</td>
<td>Own compilation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2. shows how the individual parties are assigned into the four categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

Estonian Parliament: http://www.riigikogu.ee/?id=42767&parent_id=42698,
Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>power</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is reported, there are no missing cases. The 6 country cases display 2 governmental parties on average – 1 in France and Great Britain respectively, 2 in Germany, and 3 in the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Poland respectively – and 12 in total. Further 21 parties – more than half of the sample – are parliamentary parties. The sample contains 6 protest parties, namely the Czech SNK European Democrats, the Movement for France, the National Front, the German The Republicans, the British Green Party, and the United Kingdom Independence Party.

4.4.4. Party Participation in the Constitutional Convention

The dimension underlying this independent variable is the access to power in terms of participation and information on the European level which presumably influences the way in which parties frame communication on European issues. Since the object of study here is the communication of the EU’s reform process, the relevant European arena was the European Convention in which the first draft of the Treaty reform was discussed and drafted.

- In general, one can expect parties who had representatives in the constitutional Convention to be better primed (armed) for the domestic constitutional debate than parties who had no chance to participate in the debate at all. The former would be better informed, enjoy an agenda-setting advantage, i.e. could pre-structure the domestic debate on the TCE.

However, this is not a straight cut matter of official participation and non-participation because, even though in theory all Convention members could and should participate on
equal footing (and some alternates or candidate members were rather active), in general, the full members were regarded as more important and the “true” participants. Due to the different – in- versus still-out – status in Union membership, the disadvantage of the non-participants is even more pronounced for non-convention members in the (then) candidate states. Even though the candidate states at that time were invited to send representatives, their status was somewhat unfavourable. While they were to take part fully in the proceedings, they could not disturb a consensus between the member states, hence, they often felt as second class members. Indeed, the Convention had an overall low key prestige in the accession states as Gaisbauer (2005) explains.

- Participation in the Convention will not have a major positive effect on parties’ communication in regard to strength, direction, and clarity in the new member states. However, it is still an advantage in comparison with non-participants.

- Non-members, on the other hand, did not enjoy these advantages at all – and will thus tend to refrain from stressing or discussing the issue of treaty reform.

- These non-members from the candidate states were even more effectively excluded from participation in the process (and its outcome) – and are presumably even more likely to either ignore or oppose the ratification which will then influence their communication on the issue in terms of strength, direction, and clarity of cues.

The European Convention has been praised (and rightly so) for its comparatively high level of transparency. This involves among other features the intensive and timely use of the internet for the distribution of convention proceedings. After the Convention had completed its work, the homepage was preserved and can now be used as a well-accessible archive. This is how the data on the degrees of participation was collected.\footnote{The Convention home page: http://europe-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN. Information on the Convention’s composition: *http://europe-convention.eu.int/Static.asp?lang=EN&Content=Composition* (last access 03 03 2008)}

Following the hypotheses developed above, three types of Convention members can be distinguished, namely full, alternate and candidate members. Parliamentary as well as governmental representatives were included. The following values are applied to the different degrees of membership in the set of parties participating in the Constitutional Convention:
1 = Party representatives were full members;
0,7 = Party representatives were candidate/alternate members;
0,4 = No party representatives acted as full/alternate members;
0 = No party representatives participated as a candidate member

The table summarises the relevant information on this condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convent</td>
<td>Set of parties participating in the Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>Closeness/distance to power in European political reform arena, i.e. Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1 = Party representatives were full members; 0,7 = Party representatives were candidate/alternate members; 0,4 = No party representatives were full/alternate members; 0 = No party representatives were candidate members</td>
<td>Own compilation, use of Convention Archive at <a href="http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN">http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>convent</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution table shows that indeed the number of parties actively involved in the Constitutional process (coded as 1 or 0,7) was relatively limited. The majority of parties (23 cases, 59%) entered the reform process only when it ‘hit home’, i.e. became subject of ratification, either by national parliament or by ratification. For information on the coding of individual parties, please refer to appendix 8.2.2.
4.4.5. Party Media Management

The simple reason for including this variable in the analysis is that

- party messages in the media are expected to be stronger and clearer when parties actively seek to cue their supporters by setting the agenda and making their position and arguments publicly known.

Party’s media management is suspected to play a crucial role in securing a precise representation of its messages in the media coverage. Actively aiming at the media is even more important under the difficult condition of a referendum situation as other groups of actors also seize the opportunity of shaping public opinion and compete with political parties for scarce media attention. The risk for single messages to be distorted is, hence, increased.

This can be done at public events like rallies or demonstrations, via public information and advertisement campaigns, and by direct media management, i.e. activities directly targeted at the news media like press conferences, press briefings, writing guest articles, giving interviews etc. Obviously the latter are the most important in regard to the present research question. Parties can, of course, pursue other roads in order to reach their supporters and the general public, e.g. internet campaigning or door-to-door calling, but these are unlikely to ‘make the news’ and thus irrelevant for this project.

In regard to media management strategies it should be taken into account how the news media practice relates to the power dimension as well as to the mode of ratification. A number of hypotheses have been identified in chapter 2. These shall be reviewed in this context even though the operationalisation of the variable focuses on the respective party’s public relations efforts alone. Eventually, these interrelations of variables will be tested in the fsQCA.

- The Government as well as major opposition parties normally enjoy a privileged access to the media coverage (McNair 2007).

While governments can act top-down, challengers, among them protest parties, must often take a bottom-up approach involving carefully designed protest activities creating media attention for the coverage of their messages (Kriesi 2004).
Under normal circumstances the media are (self-)bound to report and comment in a balanced way between opposition and government. This maxim remains valid in the coverage of a referendum but the balance must now be created between the yes and the no ‘camps’. This might lead to an over-representation of smaller parties and individuals (De Vreese 2006: 583).

- When government and opposition both campaign on the yes-side, smaller opposition and protest parties on the No-side can extraordinarily profit from the balanced news coverage.

- In a referendum context protest parties – familiar with “challengers”’ strategies and under balanced media coverage – can be expected to do well in regard to the visibility and clarity of their cues even if competition is high.

- In a referendum context mainstream opposition parties used to office-seeking strategies will find it difficult to be as visible (and clear) as in ‘normal’ domestic contests, especially if they side with the government.

The measurement of the media management efforts of national political parties is based on the self-assessment of political party actors in respect to organising and/or participating in public events, public protest and media relations. This information is available through the ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey on EU Constitutionalisation, to which the author contributed in development and execution.

The relevant question reads: “Which, if any, of the following activities has [PARTY] employed (…) in the constitutional process, either at the national level or at the EU level?” Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of activity on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Party officials were presented with a list of 8 types of activities, three of which are relevant here:

- Protest (demonstrations, collective action)

- Public information campaign activities (speeches, hiring public relations firms, advertising)

- Media-related activities (giving media interviews, writing newspaper articles, press releases, press conferences)

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118 The complete scale: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always, [More than one answer possible]
All of these activities are likely to increase the presentation of the party messages in the media and therefore should be included in the measure. To acknowledge particularly the central role of media management, these values are weighted double. Then the mean of party actors’ responses for the individual parties is calculated.\(^{119}\)

In cases when this question for one or the other reason was not answered, qualitative responses to open questions from the interviews were incorporated. Where information was available, it was coded respectively.\(^{120}\)

Finally, individual parties were coded accordingly and annotated with the following fuzzy set values.

1 = high effort for public communication on TCE;
0,7 = rather actively communicating on the TCE;
0,3 = somewhat active in communicating the TCE;
0 = no to low effort to communicate on TCE

This table summarises the information given for this condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MediaPR</td>
<td>Set of parties actively communicating on the TCE</td>
<td>Self-assessment of political party actors in respect to organising/participating in public events, public protest and media relations</td>
<td>1 = high effort to communicate 0,7 = rather actively communicating 0,3 = somewhat active 0 = no to low effort</td>
<td>ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey on EU Constitutionalisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2. shows how the individual parties are assigned into the four categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

\(^{119}\) The highest possible value a party could reach is 20 (4 times a 5 on the 5 point scale – with ‘media related activities’ counting twice). The following categories were established: 16<\(x\leqslant\)20 = high effort to communicate with public; 12<\(x\leqslant\)17 = rather active; 7<\(x\leqslant\)12 = somewhat active, \(x\leqslant\)7 = no to low effort to communicate on TCE

\(^{120}\) Qualitative measures were added for FDP, CSU, PS, ODS, and the SNP.
Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mediapr</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 out of 39 cases are missing. These are the Czech US-DEU, the German REP, the Estonian ER and KESK, the French MPR, the Polish SLD, and the British parties LAB, LibDem, Greens and Conservatives. The lack of information for these cases will be made transparent throughout the following analyses.

Since the measure is based on self-assessment, an unsurprisingly large number of party respondents claim that the party they represent has actively communicated on the TCE (coded as 1 or 0,7). However, only four can count as highly active in communicating (coded as 1), the Czech ODS, the French PS and FN, and the Polish LPR. On the other hand, only three parties admit to a no or low effort to participate in public debate (coded as 0), the Estonian Social Democrats (SDE) and Res Publica, and the Scottish National Party (SNP).

4.4.6. Salience of European Integration for Party

The straightforward expectation here is that:

- the salience of EU integration is a condition for an individual party to communicate on the issues and try to cue its supporters in a referendum and/or debate situation.

More concretely, the hypotheses can be formulated like this:

- Parties which consider European integration to be an important issue will provide strong cues to their supporters via the media.
- Parties which consider European integration to be a marginal issue, will refrain from providing strong cues.

The respective level of salience a party assigns to European integration, will be measured independently from other factors. However, in chapter 2 we have distinguished several hypotheses on the reasons why certain types of parties differ in this respect. These shall be very briefly recalled. Distinguishing party types will eventually be helpful for the interpretation of the findings.

Strategic considerations are the main incentives for parties to either stress or de-emphasise issues. Scott and Steenbergen (2004) found four hypotheses to be valid in regard to European integration:

- A party will emphasise issues which it considers central to its ideology – a view from the policy-seeking perspective. This can be considered true for the “core pro-European” parties, i.e. christian-democrats, social-democrats, and liberals. It is also true for decidedly eurosceptic parties, although these might argue that Europe is actually of no relevance.

- A party will de-emphasise issues on which it disagrees strongly from the opinion of voters – is the view from the voting-seeking perspective. This is more true for mainstream than for small, policy-driven parties (Adams et al. 2006)

- A party will de-emphasise issues on which it is internally divided. However, deep divisions cannot be suppressed and salience will consequently rise. (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 171). Some parties are more likely to develop conflicts over European integration than others. This factor will be discussed in the next sub-section in more detail.

- “The salience of European Integration to a party increases when other parties in the system emphasise the issue” (ibid:170). System salience arises only within the process of debate and can hence not be measured independently. It is, however, considered a crucial factor, and will thus be included in the interpretation of the analytical results in chapter 6.

A good indicator for the degree of salience which a party in general attaches to EU integration issues is the content of its EP election manifesto (Marks et al. 2007, Volkens 2007). If a party applies major importance to European integration, it will certainly use
the opportunity of drafting a platform for EP elections in order to formulate its policy alternatives for the EU polity – not for domestic politics. On the other hand, parties might use this opportunity to re-frame the EP elections in a completely nationally segmented way, thereby stressing the importance of the national level. Of course, there are degrees in between these two poles.

This condition is measured drawing on the Euromanifesto coding data by the Euromanifesto Project (EMP, see appendix 8.1.3.). The EMP’s coding scheme consists of 45 content codes categories which are usually applied to national parliament manifestos. For the Euromanifestos coding this scheme has been “mirrored two times (tripled to 162 codes)” (Braun et al. 2007:42) in order to additionally capture the parties’ focus on a) the supra-national European level and/or b) the transnational, respectively world-wide level. We can therefore establish how much importance a party attaches to European level issues in relation to national or transnational issue by calculating the ratio between all EU level codes applied and the total sum of codes (100%) applied. This operationalisation is unfortunately biased in favour of EU importance in two ways. First, one would obviously expect a party platform explicitly formulated for EP elections to be mainly about European level issues. Second, 13 additional codes have been introduced exclusively for the political system of the EU (Braun et al. 2007). Still, a considerable number of party manifestos display a thorough neglect of EU issues as the sample distribution table shows below.

The following categories (in accordance with fsQCA requirements) describe the degree of membership in the set of parties for which EI is an important issue measured as the percentage of EU level codes.

---

121 Because for one case – the CZ US-DEU – data was missing in the manifestos project, the Chapel Hill Expert Judgements (see data appendix 8.1.3.) were consulted. This survey contains the following question: “Q.2. Next, we would like you to think about the salience of European integration. Over the course of 2002, how important has the EU been to the parties in their public stance”. Four answers were possible: o no importance at all, of little importance, of some importance, of great importance (2002 CES Expert Survey: 3).
1 = EI is of great importance, more than 85% of the manifesto is about EU level issues,
0.7 = EI is of some importance, more than two thirds (66%) of the manifesto is about EU level issues,
0.3 = EI is of little importance, more than one third but less than two thirds (33%-66%) of the manifesto is about EU level issues,
0 = EI is of no importance at all, less than 33% of the manifesto is about EU level issues.

The table summarises the main information on this condition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td>Set of parties for which EI is an important issue</td>
<td>Degree of salience a party attaches to EU integration issues</td>
<td>1= EI of great importance 0.7 = EI of some importance 0.3 = EI of little importance 0 = EI of no importance at all</td>
<td>- Euromanifestos (EMP) - Chapel Hill Expert Judgements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>salience</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample is complete, there are no missing cases. As mentioned above, it is somewhat lopsided on the positive side. There are 9 parties for which European issues are of prime and 17 for which they are of considerable importance, but there are also 13 parties which attach little or no importance to European integration. The latter 2 are the
Estonian People’s Union (Rahvaliit) and the United Kingdom Independence Party. For more information on the coding of individual parties, please refer to appendix 8.2.2.

4.4.7. Party Unity on European Integration
The salience of an issue for a party is often related to the level of agreement or dissent within a party on the issue.

- Parties which are divided on European integration issues are likely to downplay these. A party will de-emphasise issues on which it is internally divided.

- However, deep divisions cannot be suppressed and salience will consequently rise (Steenbergen/Scott 2004: 171).

Again, however, the impact of this factor on parties’ communication performance cannot be understood without taking into account other variables, for example, system salience. Furthermore, with the use of referenda and increasingly constraining public dissent, it is often not possible for political parties to suppress the issue, even if leaders would prefer to do so in order to preserve the internal party cohesion. The following expectations can be phrased:

- If parties are thus forced to take a public stand on the European constitutional treaty in the ratification debate, it can be expected that a high level of unity as opposed to internal dissent and conflict will influence the unambiguity of parties’ public messages/cues. Obviously, a high level of internal agreement – no matter if opposed or supportive of the TCE – will positively affect the clarity of party messages in the media.

- On the other hand, parties will expectedly not be able to cover up internal splits under heighthened media scrutiny which will lead to ambiguous cues to party supporters (For interpretation/discussion cf. Poguntke et al. 2007).
It should be noted that this dimension is mostly concerned with the dissent or unity within the party leadership because it is the party leaders whose cues will be received as such as well as covered in the media.

Party unity over the issue of European integration is measured with the Chapel Hill Expert Judgement data (see technical appendix 8.1.3.). The wording of the relevant question is: “How much internal dissent has there been in the various parties in [COUNTRY] over European integration over the course of 2002?”122 Answers are captured on a scale from 1 (completely united) to 10 (extremely divided) with intermediate numbers reflecting “the scale and intensity of disagreement inside the party” (2002 CES Expert Survey: 13). The most divided case in this project’s sample is the British Conservative Party which reaches a 7.72 on the 10 point scale.123

These raw values are the “mean of expert responses” for this particular party. The number of experts for the country cases varies from 8 in Poland, over 13 in Germany and France, to 18 in the Czech Republic and Great Britain. There are no available expert judgements for the Estonian parties. These have been supplemented drawing on other sources.124

The internal unity on the issue of European integration in a given party is categorised as follows:

1 = the party is completely united;
0.7 = the party is mostly united; minor dissent;
0.3 = significant internal dissent,
0 = strong internal dissent, strongly divided

---

122 This was the latest available data at the time of analysis.

123 Using the British Conservatives as one endpoint and the French Front National which constitutes the most united case in the sample (with 1.85 on the 10 point scale), a 4 point scale was developed ( 1-3.23 = completely united; 3.25-4.5 = mostly united; 4.5-5.75 = considerable internal dissent; 5.75-7.75 = strongly divided) and turned around for the fsQCA with 1 representing complete agreement and 0 no agreement at all.

124 The coding of PU, RP, SDE, and KESK is based on Sikk (in Lewis/Mansfeldowa 2006); PU is confirmed in Kurpas et al (2005:11), KESK by ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey Data. Also missing in the Expert Judgement Survey was data on Republikaner, Greens and UKIP which were coded according to the author’s own assessment.
The table summarises the above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Set of parties with a solid agreement on EI within the leadership</td>
<td>Degree of internal consent and dissent in party leadership</td>
<td>1 = a party is completely united; 0,7 = the party is mostly united; minor dissent; 0,3 = significant internal dissent; 0 = strong internal dissent, strongly divided</td>
<td>- Chapel Hill Expert Judgements - ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey - Sikk (in Lewis/ Mansfeldowa 2006)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2 shows how the individual parties are assigned into the four categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unity</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information on three cases – SNK ED, ResP/Isamaa, and MPF – is missing. This will be made transparent throughout the subsequent analysis.

A majority of parties tends to agree on their positions towards European Integration issues, seven of them even counting as completely united. Only three have been rated as strongly divided – the French Rally for the Republic, the British Conservative Party, and the Estonian Centre Party.

### 4.4.8. Mode of Treaty Reform Ratification

In regard to party political communication we expect the degree to which the public has a say in treaty ratification, i.e. the mode of ratification, to influence significantly the system salience that the European constitutional debate reaches on the public agenda.
Putting the constitution to a referendum will draw much more attention to it – by citizens, parties and the media. If a certain level of public salience is procured and the issue is on the public agenda, there is a demand for all political parties to take a stance on European integration in public debate and for the media to cover and comment on it. The salience of the debate in general – i.e. the level of coverage – will be higher than in countries following a parliamentary procedure.\(^{125}\)

Contrary to the factors discussed above the mode of ratification does not refer to characteristics of individual parties, but impacts on all parties in a given domestic context. What kind of impact exactly is expected? Again, this depends on the type of party regarding its strategic position in the system, its ideological inclination towards European integration, its level of internal unity etc. This has been spelled out above in more detail. Here, the concentration shall be on operationalising the variable individually.

To recall the situation in 2004/2005, – in the time frame this analysis is focusing on – the rejection of the TCE in France and the Netherlands had led to a halt. As a result, a reflection period (in fact abandonment) of the constitutional ratification procedure was announced.

The possibility for citizens to participate in treaty ratification had varied extremely and was either restricted from the beginning, granted, or taken away again. While some member states had already ratified the treaty by parliamentary procedure or referendum, others had held a referendum and rejected the treaty. Most other states cancelled either the parliamentary ratification (Sweden) or the planned referendum (CZ, DK, Ire, PL, P). Some optimistically decided to go ahead as intended (Cyprus, LUX, EST, FIN). We can thus observe in the crucial ratification period from the signing to the abandonment of the constitutional treaty (2004/2005) four modes of ratification procedure (country cases in the sample are underlined).\(^{126}\)

- Parliamentary ratification carried out. By 17 June 2005 the parliaments of 12 member states had ratified the TCE, namely of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria,

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125 The referendum-method proved success in terms of mobilising the public via referendum (Packham 2007, Meyer 2007) – for all of Europe, not just France.
126 Information on date and results of ratification procedures is taken from [http://www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Treaties/Treaty_Const_Rat.htm](http://www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Treaties/Treaty_Const_Rat.htm)
Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

- Parliamentary ratification planned – postponed/cancelled. This was the case in Cyprus (ratification on 30 June 2005), Malta (ratification on 06 July 2005), Estonia (ratification on 9 May 2006) and Sweden which postponed and finally cancelled the vote.

- Referendum has taken place. By June 2005 three referenda had been held on the TCE. On 20 February 2005 the Spanish citizens decided in favour. On 29 May 2005, respectively 01 June 2005, the French and Dutch rejected the TCE.

- Referendum planned – postponed/cancelled. Luxembourg held a referendum as scheduled, thus adopting the TCE on 10 July 2005. The majorities of pending referenda, however, were postponed and finally cancelled. This was the case in Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.

As explained above, the constitutional debate witnessed an EU-wide ratification process all in a tumble with four different modes of ratification in the period of investigation. The general effects can be hypothesised to be as follows:

- The strongest effect on party communication in the media can be expected when a referendum was actually taking place.

- The weakest effect will be visible when “only” a parliamentary ratification was planned but then postponed or cancelled.

- In addition the mere prospect of a referendum is expected to have a stronger effect on public debate and party commitment to communication than a constitutional debate accompanying a parliamentary ratification which was actually carried out.

This is because in parliamentary ratification public campaigning is usually not necessary as the governing party (coalition) is in control of the agenda and legislative power. Even if super-majorities are required the government needs to mainly convince the parliamentary opposition. Overall, there is no need for more than usual public communication if public interest is rather low. In a pre-referendum situation, on the other hand the anticipation and interest in the ongoing ratification process will be perceived as directly relevant to the own future campaigns and debate. Therefore, the
following membership values are applied to the different modes of ratification in this study. Please note that this is a context condition and as such concerns all parties from one country respectively.

1 = Coded in case referendum has taken place
0,7 = Coded in case referendum planned – postponed/cancelled
0,3 = Coded in case parliamentary ratification carried out
0 = Coded in case parliamentary ratification planned – postponed/cancelled

The table summarises the relevant information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>fsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| referendum   | Set of parties in a context of high public participation in treaty ratification | Mode of ratification | 1 = referendum has taken place
0,7 = referendum planned – postponed/cancelled.
0,3 = parliamentary ratification carried out.
0 = parliamentary ratification planned – postponed/cancelled. | Own compilation |

An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>referendum</th>
<th>No.of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 8 cases coded with a fully participative environment are the French parties (coded as 1). The cancelled referendum countries – CZ, PL, and UK – provide the context for the majority, almost half, of the sample (coded as 0,7). Parliamentary ratification was
the context for the communication of 7 German parties (0,3). Parliamentary ratification was planned in Estonia, too, but then postponed. This refers to 5 parties in the sample (coded as 0).

4.4.9. Diffuse Public Opinion on European Integration

- When public opinion is rather stable, it acts as a framework for debate which influences how political parties and mass media behave and communicate in regard to the issue at stake.

This is why the interest is not in the immediate position towards the constitutional treaty\textsuperscript{127} but in the overall attitude towards integration.\textsuperscript{128}

For this the Standard Eurobarometer measure “Support to the membership of the European Union” which is captured by the following question “Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)’s membership of the European Union is …? –a good thing – a bad thing – neither good nor bad” is a well-established indicator. The average of the EU support or rejection is calculated over a 2 year period starting with the end of the Convention up to the end of the period under study in 2005.\textsuperscript{129} During this period the level of support or rejection, i.e. Euroscepticism, does fluctuate but not substantively. Fluctuation tends to be larger in the new member states, here Estonia, Czech Republic and Poland. These are the values for the countries in our sample: D (52%), F, PL (49%), CZ (45%), EE (42%), UK (33%).

Because overall the countries in the sample do not display the whole range of variety in regard to Euroscepticism, there is a need to depart from the usual approach of attributing the highest and lowest membership values to the anchor values of the existing cases. With no member state in the sample in which the population is strongly

\textsuperscript{127} This was measured in the Flash Eurobarometer series, no. 159 (wave 1 and 2): “The future European Constitution”. Fieldwork was conducted in January, respectively in June/July 2004.

\textsuperscript{128} As a further limitation it should be noted, that this national context might be to crude a measure in that parties might respond to more specific estimates of their own party’s clienteles’ attitudes. Then the effect of the general public’s attitude would dissolve.

\textsuperscript{129} For Autumn 2003/ Spring 2004 Standard EB 60, 61, and Candidate Countries Eurobarometer (CCEB) 2003.4, 2004.1 were used. In the CCEP the question is: “Generally speaking, do you think that (COUNTRY)’s membership of the European Union would be …? –a good thing – a bad thing – neither good nor bad” For Autumn 2004/Spring 2005 Standard EB were used. All reports can be accessed from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm (DL on 06 03 2008)
supportive of European integration, the membership value 0 cannot be attributed to an actual case. Still, variation is quite sufficient with eurosceptic, moderately eurosceptic, and moderately supportive member states in our sample. First, it can be claimed that if less than a third of respondents are supportive of EU membership, the attitude in the country is rather eurosceptic (<=33%). This very low support is generally found only in the United Kingdom. If, on the other hand, two-thirds of the population support the European integration, one can certainly speak of a pro-European attitude. This measure is met traditionally by countries like Luxembourg or Ireland. In between these anchor values the differentiation is much more difficult. Above-average support (Average EU25: 52%) can certainly count as pro-European. If an average majority of country’s population endorses European membership, this is classified as moderately pro-European. On the eurosceptic side the distinction is between strongly eurosceptic, eurosceptic and moderately eurosceptic. Accordingly, the following categories can be applied to the degrees of membership in the set of parties in a context of public opinion in favour of European integration:

1 = Strongly Pro-European (> 2/3 of population in favour of EU membership)

0,8 = Pro-European (above EU 25 average, >52%, of population supports EU membership)

0,6 = Moderately Pro-European (majority of population supports EU membership)

0,4 = Moderately Eurosceptic (43-49% of population supports EU membership)

0,2 = Eurosceptic (34-42% of population supports EU membership)

0 = Strongly Eurosceptic (less than 1/3 population supports EU membership)

---

130 Average percentage numbers for the country cases are as follows: D (52%), F, PL (49%), CZ (45%), EE (42%), and UK (33%).
The table summarises the relevant information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Abbr.</th>
<th>Name of set</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>tsQCA Membership Values and Definitions</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support_for_EU</td>
<td>Set of parties in a context of public opinion in favour of EU</td>
<td>“Support for EU membership” 2003-2005</td>
<td>1 Strongly Pro-European; 0.8 Pro-European; 0.6 moderately Pro-European; 0.4 moderately eurosceptic; 0.2 eurosceptic; 0 strongly eurosceptic</td>
<td>Eurobarometer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The QCA-Matrix in Appendix 8.2.2. shows how the individual parties are assigned into the six categories. An overview over the distribution of cases is provided in the table below:

**Frequencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for EU</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>% of cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 parties – the German ones – are coded as pro-European (≥ 0.8) because the context in which they act is one in which public opinion is above the EU average. There are no cases coded as strongly Pro-European or moderately pro-European. Most of the cases in the sample – 32 of the 39 parties – are situated in a context of more or less pronounced euroscepticism and are thus “more out than in” the set. Euroscepticism is especially high in Great Britain (parties coded with 0), followed by the Czech Republic and Estonia (parties coded as 0.2). Moderate euroscepticism is measured among citizens in France and Poland (parties coded as 0.4). The sample is complete, no cases are missing.
4.5. Summary

The intention of this chapter was to describe the methods applied in this analysis before the results will be presented in the following chapters.

Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis is the methodological approach chosen here to perform a comparative study of 39 political parties (units of analysis) in six East- and West-European EU member states. The high scientific standards of fsQCA in regard to measurement documentation, precision and reliability have been laid out.

The dependent variable – three characteristics of party political cues on the EU’s Treaty reform – is measured by collecting and analysing an original mass media data set containing the domestic coverage of the ratification debates in the respective countries. Chapter 3.3. developed an innovative method of coding and measuring the strength, direction and clarity of party cues with media data.

The previous subsection laid out a number of hypotheses in regard to the nine independent variables identified in chapter 2. Table 4.3. summarises the information on variables, indicators and operationalisation. Furthermore, the section described elaborately how information on the variables was gained by laying out extensively the operationalisation of various types of data. The chapter is complemented by various appendices which provide additional information on data sources and operationalisation.

Altogether, this part of the study thus constitutes an indispensable link between the theoretical discussion in chapter 2, the case selection described in chapter 3 and the following chapters 5 and 6 which present the findings on the state of party cueing for the 39 selected parties and their determining mechanisms respectively.
5. Empirical Analysis I –
High Variation in Party Political Communication via the Media

This chapter seeks to answer the first research question: To what extent do political parties succeed in communicating their messages on European issues via the national mass media? Variations in the mediated party political communication as well as the outcome conditions, the dependent variables, are measured by performing a quantitative cross-national comparative media content analysis of over thirty media outlets in the six countries. This data provides information on how visible parties were, which position they actually took towards the TCE, and how clear and unambiguous this position was represented in the media. The analysis is further supplemented by a qualitative study of British and German print media. This more in-depth approach will focus on the different justifications actors give for their statements as well as inter- but also intra-party relationships.\textsuperscript{131}

While the following analysis is of theoretical and empirical interest in its own right, it serves particularly as a starting point to identify and discuss factors impacting on the coverage of the constitutional process in a cross-national comparative perspective.

An excursus analysing briefly the representation of Europarties and EP Party Groups in the mediated ratification debate shows that the initial decision of this project to focus on domestic parties and their role in communicating EU issues is empirically well justified.

\textsuperscript{131} The data collection and sampling, the operationalisation and indicators as well as coding and calibration methods have been elaborated in Chapter 4.
5.1. Good Cues, Bad Cues – Party Political Communication Patterns

This chapter shows how – in communicating their messages on European issues via the national mass media – some political parties succeed, other succeed only partially, and again other fail entirely. With Fuzzy Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis we distinguish three sets of cases: (1) set of strongly visible party messages, (2) set of positive party messages on the TCE, and (3) set of clear party messages.

The information has been coded and cases were assigned values according to their degree of membership in the three sets. So each party has been assigned a value between 1 and 0 in each of the three sets, with a value above 0,5 signifying a high membership in the set and a value below 0,5 signifying a low degree of membership.

To recall giving an example: Party A has been highly visible in the domestic media and therefore has a membership of 1 in the respective set. The party and party actors were mostly quoted with positive statements and mostly portrayed as favourable so that its membership here was calibrated as 1, too. In Party A were, however, some party actors who were of different opinion and criticised or opposed the TCE. Depending on the ratio of the positive and negative statements a membership value in the set of clear messages is assigned. Party A had only few dissenting voices and therefore its value is 0,7. It was quite clearly in favour of the TCE.

On the basis of the complete data matrix one can create a so called truth table, which shows the variation of cases on all logically possible configurations of conditions. This can be used as a starting point for explanatory analysis or, for now, for exploratory and classificatory exercises. It will be employed here in order to classify different configurations of the three outcome conditions, i.e. the aim is to develop a typology of party communication patterns.

With three outcome conditions we derive at a truth table with eight possible configurations of conditions.
The basic truth table below reports the eight possible configurations of the conditions STRONG, POSITIVE, and CLEAR, and the number of cases matching each configuration. In total the cases (in row 4) add up to 39.132

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strong</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>clear</th>
<th>number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 5.1. Truth Table: Dependent Variables

Note that the truth table rows do not represent subsets of cases (as they would in crisp set truth tables), but the different logically possible combinations of the conditions (see Ragin 2008). For example, the first row represents a configuration in which STRONG is absent, POSITIVE is absent and CLEAR is present. In plain words: This configuration would fit for parties which messages are neither strong, nor positive, but clear. Nine cases meet this configuration. The third row, to give another example, represents the following configuration: STRONG, POSITIVE, and NOT CLEAR. 5 cases belong to this pattern.

Remember that each case has been assigned a membership value for each of the three conditions. This implies that each case may have a partial membership in each of the eight configurations. In order to be sure that the cases’ membership is real and not trivial, it is important to assess the distribution of cases’ membership scores (ibid). But how do we know which cases do belong to each configuration?

The relation within the configurations is based on a logical AND as the examples above showed. This means that the membership of a case in a certain configuration is always determined by the weakest membership in one of the conditions (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a: 188ff.).

Ragin furthermore demonstrates that it is “an important property of combinations of fuzzy sets, namely, that each case can have only a single membership score greater than

132 It is fortunate that actually all configurations match with empirically existent cases. This is not self-evident. This allows us to make statements on all cases in the sample.
0.5 in the logically possible combinations formed from a given set of (causal) conditions. A membership score greater than 0.5 in a causal combination signals that a case is more in than out of the causal combination in question” (ibid).

For the present study, this means that the membership of individual parties in the respective ideal typical pattern must not be necessarily perfect (value would be 1) in order to qualify for membership in that pattern but must be above 0.5. It is sufficient to report here that there are indeed no cases for which membership in a given constellation would be trivial. 11 cases make perfect examples of their respective communication pattern; for the others the membership in the respective row is 0.7.

A fuzzy set truth table can be displayed in a three dimensional vector space (or property space). In this space, a cube, each condition set would represent one axis and each corner the maximum or minimum of a respective condition (Schneider/Wagemann 2007a: 192f.). In Ragin’s words: “A score greater than 0.5 also indicates which corner of the multidimensional vector space formed by causal conditions a given case is closest to. This property of fuzzy sets makes it possible for investigators to sort cases according to corners of the vector space, based on their degree of membership” (Ragin 2008).

This property is used now in order to classify political parties according to their membership in the different configurations of communication conditions. This can then serve as the basis for a ranking of political parties in regard to the quality of their messages.

With three sets we can derive at eight logically possible combinations of these characteristics and display them in a property space, in this case a cube (below). The bold letters – S, P, and C – stand for Strong, Positive, and Clear. In lower case letters – s, p, and c – they are short for Not Strong (weak), Not Positive (negative), and Not Clear (unclear/ambiguous). Each corner now represents a possible combination of these cue characteristics. It should be noted that the membership of individual parties in the respective ideal typical pattern are not necessarily perfect (value would be 1) in order to qualify for membership in that pattern but must be above 0.5.

Thus, a classification of different party political communication patterns is achieved. Figure 6 shows a high diversity of patterns across the 39 cases included in the analysis, as every corner – every combinatorial type of party message characteristics – is occupied. This advantage allows to make statements on each of the patterns (which
would not have been possible had we encountered the problem of limited empirical diversity, i.e. the problem that empirical cases for the ideal typical combinations were not available). On the other hand, this diversity is a challenge for explanation – but this task is to be tackled only in the next chapter. Before advancing there, we will first take a closer look at the “winners” and “losers” in this competitive realm of media logic.

**Figure 7. Partycube: The Patterns of Political Party Cues**

For an overview, a brief description of each corner and its respective occupants as shown in Figure 6 is provided:

- The upper right corner SPC includes five parties that succeeded in sending strong, positive and clear messages to the newspaper readers. At first glance, this group seems rather heterogeneous. It is made up of conservative parties, the Estonian Res
Publica, the French UMP and the Czech Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL), as well as left parties, the German SPD and Polish SLD. The commonality: All of these are incumbent parties.¹³³

- The three parties just below (corner SpC) have been equally successful in visibly and unambiguously opposing the TCE. All of them are (liberal) conservative parties, the Czech ODS, the British Conservatives and the Polish PiS. This no-camp is made up entirely of the largest opposition parties in the respective countries.

- Among the parties which were most present in the media we distinguish two more corners. In the first, corner SpC, five parties assemble which took a positive stance toward the TCE but failed to do so consistently. This is a mixed group again with the German Christian Democrats (CDU) and Estonian liberal KESK as well as the British, Czech, and French social democratic parties, Labour, CSSD, and PS.

- The other corner SpC contains three parties who did not make it convincingly clear that they were really against the TCE – even though their messages were amply covered in the media. This rather small group makes strange bedfellows, too. The Czech Communist Party (KSCM), the Polish Civic Platform (PO) and the small sister party of the German Christian Democrats, the Bavarian CSU, belong to this groups. All of them have been in parliamentary opposition at that time.

- On the opposite, lower left corner SpC we find a group of eight parties which were not able to send strong enough messages – and thus, were barely or not at all visible in the media, i.e. the challengers in party competition. Most of them are either small regional or small radical parties. The former group consists of the Czech parties SNK-ED and US-DEU, the Scottish and Welsh parties SNP as well as Plaid Cymru. The latter includes the German Republikaner (REP) from the extreme right margin and the French radical left Radical Partie du Gauche (RPG). For most of them no position on the TCE was discernible in the media which automatically results in being classified as ‘not clear’, too. (These cases will be excluded from parts of the further analysis).

- In the corner sPc just above are two parties – the German FDP, a liberal party, and the French Greens – who did not gain much attention from the media. Even though

¹³³ References to incumbency or oppositional status of political parties refer to the time period under investigation between Autumn 2004 and Autumn 2005.
they were in general supportive of the TCE, they did have dissenters speaking out in public. This prevented sending clear cues to sympathetic readers.

- The parties matching the two remaining patterns of communication were more successful. While they had a rather small share of coverage, four parties in corner sPC were able to transport clearly their support for the TCE into the media. This was a heterogeneous group, too, consisting of the British and Estonian liberal parties (LibDems, ER), the French UDF, and Die Grünen from Germany. While ER and Grüne were part of coalition governments at the time, both UDF and LibDems are smaller opposition parties.

- The set of nine parties which assemble in corner spC is the largest. These are parties which were visible, if not very much, in the domestic ratification coverage. However, their decidedly critical stance towards the European constitution became very clear. Of these, only the Polish Peasants’ Party (PSL) was partner in a coalition government at that time. Other Polish political parties represented here are the Selfdefence (S) and the League of Polish Families (LPR). Three French parties can be found here, two of which are located at the (extreme) right, the Front National (FN) and the MPF, one at the left margin, the PCF. Two very different parties in Britain share the same pattern, the eurosceptic UKIP and the Green Party. The socialist party DIE LINKE is the only party speaking out clearly against the treaty in Germany.

Only the French Parti Socialiste and the Polish Law and Justice Party (PIS) make perfect examples of their respective communication type. Moreover, those unsuccessful parties in the below left corner match it perfectly as their invisibility shows that there is no position which could be valued or scrutinised for clarity, so that membership in each of the three sets is 0 – and the membership in the combination 0,0,0 is 1.

In the following three sections the typological property space presented above will be disaggregated into its underlying dimensions, namely visibility, position, and clarity, to provide additional insight in respect to a) the clustering of cases and b) the information underlying the calibration of cases for the QCA. The quantitative findings are explored and complemented by c) insights from the qualitative analysis of the German and the British press coverage.
5.2. Party Visibility in the Media

In order to allow a more familiar perspective on the variation in party political communication, the data is presented here in form of a diagram which shows the different degrees of visibility, i.e. the strength, of party messages based on the percentages of occurrences in the national media.

Figure 8: Visibility of National Political Parties in the Domestic Print Mass Media (Occurrences in %)

Source: Ewelina Pawlak for author

The diagram is based on the semi-automatic coding of the ConStEPS media data set of over 8000 articles. For illustrative and comparative reasons some reference values are included in the diagram. These are intended to cross-check the validity of the measure by comparing the visibility of political parties in the domestic coverage not only among themselves but also with other prominent actors and actor groups. For example, coding included the most often mentioned domestic politician (VIP) to whom the newspapers
paid in most cases more respect than to the individual parties.\textsuperscript{134,135} The visibility of EU COM – the European Commission – in most cases exceeds that of political parties, too.\textsuperscript{136} The Czech Republic and the United Kingdom are telling cases were public support for the EU in general is as low as the visibility of EU actors.\textsuperscript{137}

The British and German samples have additionally been coded for Europarties (European party federations) and European Party Groups. The diagram shows that there is nothing really to show. It was not worthwhile including them into the diagram, as in Britain they occur in just above 0,03\% of all quotations, in Germany in just above 0,1\%. This, of course, is a strong confirmation of the initial assumption that citizens whose life-world is a national, often a regional or local, but less often European, will not be able to observe European party positions via print media even if this is their second most important source of information on EU issues.\textsuperscript{138} In terms of European party politics there is certainly evidence of a disconnect between elites on the EU level and domestic media consumers.

What about national parties’ representation in the coverage on the TCE? In comparison to the public, the Commission, and national leaders, individual parties are clearly outnumbered. However, when seen as a group (party values summed up), in most cases national political parties are the major speakers in the debate. An obvious example of exception to this observation is Estonia which must be attributed to the extremely low level of political debate on the TCE (Evas 2007).

The strongest impression is that party visibility in domestic mass media does differ to a great extent. Furthermore, there is no underlying pattern which could be immediately discernible. Neither is the difference between old and new member states which determines party visibility, nor does a clear distinction between strong incumbent and

\textsuperscript{134} From left to right: Czech President Vaclav Klaus, Estonia’s Prime Minister Andrus Ansip, Polish Presidential Candidate Lech Kaczynski, France’s President Jacques Chirac, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, British Prime Minister Tony Blair
\textsuperscript{135} An interesting fact is that Jacques Chirac is not only the most mentioned VIP in France but also in all other countries under scrutiny.
\textsuperscript{136} In comparison with other EU actors like Council or Parliament – which were not included in the diagram for reasons of clarity – the Commission is most visible in the mass media in the member states.
\textsuperscript{137} In spring 2005 the Czech Republic ranked 15\textsuperscript{5} and Great Britain ranked last in citizens’ support to the membership of the European Union (Eurobarometer 63, 2005:94).
\textsuperscript{138} “Seven out of ten respondents look to television to obtain information about the European Union (a score of 70\%), almost half of the persons interviewed get their information from daily newspapers (43\%) and a third listen to the radio (32\%)” (Eurobarometer 63, 2005: 80).
weak opposition parties exist, though smaller opposition parties are certainly less well represented.

There were no elections in the year under scrutiny in the Czech Republic, Estonia and France. General elections were to take place, however, in Great Britain (in May 2005), in Germany (September 2005) and Poland (October 2005). The party visibility does not reveal any characteristics which can be related to these parliamentary elections, with one exception. In Poland, Lech Kaczynski is the most mentioned VIP in the coverage and with him is his party, the PiS. While this position is occupied by incumbents in all other cases, Kaczynski is the only presidential candidate at that time. Indeed, the Polish electoral debate is the only one which “merged constitutional topics with the electoral campaigns of the left- and right-wing parties (…)” (Wyrozumska 2007: 316).

The visibility diagram is only of descriptive not of explanatory use.
5.3. Party Positions in the Media

All statements on the Constitution were filtered out of the body of data by using the automatic coding function of the computer software. These statements have then been hand-coded for the respective party position on the Constitutional Treaty they contain. Positions could be both, either actively advocated for or against by parties and individual party actors, or attributed to them by journalists.

The table below presents the party preferences per country. It should be mentioned that this serves no analytical but only illustrative reasons as the project’s overall aim is not to explain country specific party political communication patterns, but the communication of individual political parties.

If one considers the probability of referenda in several of these countries at the time of analysis, the findings are alarming. If seen from a bird’s eye view, i.e. a Europe-wide, perspective, the pro- and anti-camp is of approximately the same size with 16 parties demonstrably in favour and 15 against the Constitution. Also, Crum’s analogy of the ‘uphill battle’, meaning an overtly strong opposition, which some governments would have had to fight in support of the TCE, fits very well this pattern, indeed (2007).

After all, the TCE was rejected in France even in the absence of an oppositional party “hill” – the two major parties; UMP and PS were both in favour of the Treaty. According to the analysis the pro-constitution forces in the Czech Republic, Poland and the United Kingdom encountered much more resistance from important political opponents, such as the ODS in CZ, the PO in PL and the Conservatives in the UK than it was the case in France. The prospects of the constitutional treaty were grave indeed, had the citizens followed these cues. The table shows that in Germany and Estonia, where there were no plans to hold referendums but instead to ratify via national parliaments, no serious opposition was voiced in the party political realm.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mostly in Favour of TCE</th>
<th>Mostly Against TCE</th>
<th>No measurable Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Czech Republic</strong></td>
<td>KDU-CSL CSSD</td>
<td>ODS KSCM</td>
<td>US-DEU SNK-ED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estonia</strong></td>
<td>ResPublica KESK ER</td>
<td></td>
<td>SDE Rahvaliit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>UMP PS UDF VERTS</td>
<td>PCF MPF FN</td>
<td>PRG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Germany</strong></td>
<td>SPD CDU GRÜNE FDP</td>
<td>LINKE CSU</td>
<td>REP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poland</strong></td>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>PIS PO LPR PSL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td>Labour LibDems</td>
<td>CONS GREEN UKIP</td>
<td>SNP CYMRU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. of Cases</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To add some substance to these numbers and identify more explicitly the issues discussed, we will take a closer look into the media debates in two cases, the German and the British coverage of the ratification phase. This will provide an insight into the *main lines of justification* which the political parties use to support their respective positions. Furthermore, it serves to – in the best sense of the word – qualify the quantitative analysis. When the latter is based on semi-automatic coding procedures, a systematic qualitative in-depth study of party messages in the media can provide additional insight, especially in the interaction mechanisms involved, which can only be observed when the data is considered a discourse, not a collection of singular statements.

In both countries, the ‘battle lines’ are drawn between as well as within the domestic parties, if however, on different sites. The German political parties were themselves expected to vote on the TCE in a parliamentary vote taking place in May 2005. The role
of political parties in the public debate is therefore very much about the parliamentary parties justifying their positions and vote. Another dimension of ratification in a federal state is, of course, the inter-coalition discourse on the level of the German Länder, between political parties which do not necessarily share the same stance on European Integration.

In Britain the debate took place in the expectation of a referendum campaign on the Treaty to take place late in 2005 (a date had not been decided on). Considering the importance of parliament in British politics, the parliamentary parties are, of course, central in the debate as well. They do, however, more strongly address the public directly.

Overall one finds differences as well as similarities: The pro-camp in Germany claims that the treaty will increase the effectiveness and the democratic life of the Union. While the German debate stresses path-dependency and historical justifications, the British pro-camp warns against Britain being isolated in the EU. Even if the (main) governing parties in both domestic debates do succeed in pressuring their message and the German SPD does so rather clearly, too, they appear oddly pale: their arguments, though quoted most frequently, often remain on a very general level.

*Germany* traditionally meets the “collusive model” (Crum 2007), i.e. all mainstream political parties support the European Constitutional Treaty. This is indeed an important message in the media: German parliamentary parties – with the exception of Die Linke (then PDS) – will overwhelmingly vote for the TCE in the parliamentary ratification in May 2005. This uniform voting behaviour is, however, not to be confused with a tranquil, consensual public debate. Actually the ratification debate in the German media shows that the political parties hold rather diverse opinions on further European integration and on the mode of ratifying treaty reform, that is whether ratification should take place via parliamentary or popular vote. When these views are presented publicly, they are fit to serve as cues for readers’ opinion formation.

The government parties at that time – the Social Democrats and the Greens – speak out greatly in favour of deepening the European Integration. They stress the advantages of the treaty as follows:
„Foreign Minister Fischer stressed the democratisation of European opinion formation through the Constitutional Treaty. The influence of the European Parliament would be strengthened. Fischer said, a result would be that at the next European Parliament elections the political camps should run with their own top candidates for the Commission Presidency and draft Europe-wide political platforms. The Constitution would grant national parliaments additional means of scrutiny of European legislative acts; in part they are granted competences that are those of a second chamber” (FAZ_05 05 13).  

The TCE is consensually understood as an important step within an ongoing process.  

A few quotes from the debate illustrate this:  

– Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (SPD) calls the constitutional treaty a “crowning act of two or three generations” (Zeit_0505),  

– Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer (GRÜNEN) considers the treaty as “a crucial building block for Europe” (Welt_05 02 25).  

– The leader of the main opposition in parliament, the CDU/CSU group, Angela Merkel, also is quoted as “wholeheartedly” supporting the reform, saying that “This ratification is another historic step” (Zeit_0505).  

How does this ‘voting cartel’ go together with the opposition by the Christian Social Union (CSU) which was established by the media analysis above? The CSU is the CDU’s regional sister party. Their relationship is such that they fight elections separately – the CSU in the regional state of Bavaria, the CDU in all the remaining

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139 „Außenminister Fischer hob die Demokratisierung der europäischen Willensbildung hervor, die durch den Verfassungsvertrag ermöglicht werde. Das Europaparlament werde in seinen Einflußmöglichkeiten gestärkt. Fischer sagte, daraus ergebe sich, daß bei den nächsten Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament die politischen Lager mit eigenen Spitzenkandidaten für das Amt des EU-Kommissionspräsidenten antreten sollten und daß sie auch europaweite Wahlprogramme formulieren könnten. Durch die Verfassung erhielten auch die nationalen Parlamente mehr Kontrollkompetenzen bei europäischen Gesetzgebungsakten; ihnen komme auf diese Art und Weise ein Teil der Befugnisse einer zweiten Parlamentskammer zu“ (FAZ_05 05 13).  
140 This as well as the following translations are by the author.  
141 It is an interesting finding that notions of “constitutionalism” and “federalism” – or the idea of a finalité – are completely gone (banned?) from public discourse even in Germany, considering that it was German Foreign Ministers Joschka Fischer’s widely recognised speech at the Humboldt University Berlin, which gave an important impetus to the reform process only five years prior to the debate under scrutiny here.  
142 „Schröder sprach die historische Dimension der Verfassung an. Sie sei das vorläufig „krönende Werk von zwei oder drei Generationen”“ (Zeit_0505).  
„Bundesaußenminister Joschka Fischer (Grüne) (…) bezeichnete die EU-Verfassung als "ganz entscheidenden Baustein für Europa"“(NP3_Welt_05 02 25).  
„Auch die Unionsvorsitzende Angela Merkel sprach sich für die Verfassung aus. Sie könne zu der Verfassung „aus vollem Herzen Ja sagen, auch wenn mir nicht alles gefällt“. Mit Blick auf die europäische Einigung sagte sie: „Diese Ratifizierung ist ein weiterer historischer Schritt.”“ (Zeit_0505).
federal territory – but in the parliament’s second chamber they sit and vote as one group. Still, the CSU must be considered as an independent party as regards both organisation and content. Within the CDU/CSU faction, CSU parliamentarians form the “CSU Landesgruppe”. Especially in regard to European integration the CSU has developed a much more sceptical position than the CDU.\(^{143}\) While the CSU leadership in Munich and Berlin was resolved to vote in favour of the reform – in concession to its executive involvement and ambitions – stark protest came from individual MPs, who claimed, however, to speak for a larger group of disapprovers.

Indeed, the TCE had been confronted with several issues of concern in the CDU/CSU group. These ranged from the lack of a reference to God (…) to the transfer of competences in the areas of immigration and asylum policy, economic, social and employment policy” (FAZ_04 10 28)\(^{144}\). CSU politician Michael Glos stressed that it was “self-evident” that parliamentarians should be “very sensitive” “when transfers of the parliament’s competences and a change in power distribution were imminent” (FAZ_05 01 07).\(^{145}\) To secure the group’s support in the vote,\(^{146}\) the government agreed to introduce an extra-law (“Begleitgesetz”) designed to additionally strengthen the parliaments’ (especially the power of the Länder representation) participation in EU legislation. This silenced some, but not the whole protest (FAZ_05 04 29).

Two entrepreneurs were given especially large room in the media, Gerd Müller, the spokesman for Europe in the CSU-Landesgruppe, and Peter Gauweiler. Peter Gauweiler very outspokenly voiced his protest in an article (among others) in the tabloid DIE BILD with the title “No. Please vote against the EU-Constitution” in which he justified why he issued a constitutional complaint to the German Constitutional Court in

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\(^{143}\) See for example Wolff’s in-depth analysis of the deliberations among the German Länder during the Constitutional Convention process which finds the Bavarian CSU-government to represent a very distinctly oppositional position (2007).


\(^{145}\) “Glos schwächte später noch ab (…) Er sagte, es gehe nicht um einen Beschuß, der das Abstimmungsverhalten der CSU festlege, es gehe bloß um "eine Art erste Lesung" des Verfassungsvertrags in der "CSU-Landesgruppe". Es sei ja auch "selbstverständlich", daß Bundestagsabgeordnete "sehr sensibel" seien, wenn Verlagerungen von Parlamentskompetenzen und Änderungen der Machtverteilung bevorstünden; (…)” (FAZ_05 01 07).

\(^{146}\) The ratification needs a two-thirds majority in both chambers of parliament.
Karlsruhe: “Germany shall not give up its sovereignty of the Grundgesetz for an EU that is lacking a democratic separation of powers and which does not have a legitimate sovereignty itself. That is wrong. According to the Grundgesetz, a new constitution can only come into force by a referendum” (BILD_05 06 03).147

The position of the LINKE, the socialist Left party is crisp- but well-summarised in Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung: “The PDS criticises that the Constitution prefers an unregulated market economy to the social idea” (FAZ_05 05 27).148 Note that this opposition is based on an evaluation of the policy aspect only, and not directed to the more fundamental sovereignty question of European integration that bothers CDU and CSU. In fact, the LINKE has anchored the claim for a European Constitution in its platform but, very much like the French Left, rejects this specific Treaty on the aforementioned grounds.

Great Britain clearly constitutes a case of the “competitive model” (Crum 2007): The incumbent Labour Party is in favour of the TCE, while the largest opposition party, the Conservative Party, campaigns against the treaty reform. Of the smaller parties, the government is supported only by the Liberal Democrats while UKIP and GREENS reject the TCE altogether. The small regional parties, the Welsh Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party, are hardly visible in the debate so that their generally pro-European attitude is not measurable.

Of course, the British political system with its first-past-the-post voting system is more competitive than the German consensus system; a feature that is enhanced by the referendum situation. Nonetheless, we can show that the basic mechanisms of party competition work similar in both contexts. Certainly the general tone of the debate in regard to European Integration is more critical than in Germany.

147 “NEIN * Bitte stimmen Sie gegen die EU-Verfassung”. “Deutschland darf seine Souveränität des Grundgesetzes nicht für eine EU aufgeben, der die demokratische Gewaltenteilung fehlt und die keine legitimierte Hoheitsgewalt hat. Das ist Unrecht. Denn eine neue Verfassung kann laut Grundgesetz nur durch eine Volksabstimmung in Kraft treten” (BILD_05 06 03).

148 “Die PDS kritisiert, daß die Verfassung ungezügelter Marktwirtschaft den Vorrang gebe vor dem sozialen Gedanken. Sie hatte mit einer Unterschriftsammlung versucht, Stimmung gegen die Verfassung zu machen, jedoch wenig Erfolg damit gehabt” (FAZ_05 05 27).
But are the issues and justifications fundamentally different? What are the issues pointed at, the justifications for their positions given by the political parties, the cues suited to influence readers’ opinion formation in one or the other direction?

It becomes quite clear to the average British reader that the Conservative party opposes the TCE because it “would hand more power to Brussels” as Tory leader, Michael Howard, “warned” (Guardian_05 01 27). This is, of course, exactly the same justification like the one which the CSU opposition in Germany puts forward.

It is also “thanks largely to unrelenting pressure from the Tory opposition, he (Prime Minister Tony Blair, KP) pledged that the new European constitution would be submitted for public approval” (Guardian_05 05 26). Here, the claim for a public vote, a referendum is voiced by the opposition as it is in Germany.

It is equally well perceptible that the Labour party at large as well as the Liberal Democrats campaign in favour of the Constitutional Treaty. It is less clear, though, why this is the case. The pro-side seems careful not to use those arguments that the German government parties found adequate. The Guardian quotes Europe Minister Jack Straw as follows: “In an accompanying article, he argued it was time for pro-Europeans to "reclaim the flag", adding: "The real patriotic case is overwhelmingly in favour of Britain's engagement in the European Union." (Guardian_05 01 27).

One can conclude that while the British opposition makes its case, the government seems bereft of any justification going with its pro-constitutional cues.
5.4. Clarity of Party Messages in the Media

Even though most parties displayed preferences in favour or against the Treaty, the degree of certainty and clarity with which they presented these convictions differed substantially. While some parties were very firm, others were rather precarious to say the least. The best example for the latter is the French Socialist Party which had actually decided on its position regarding the TCE through an internal referendum, only to be afterwards torn between the now officially affirmed positive position and the vocal no-campaign led by influential party actors.

The table below shows how the positions parties present in the media vary in regard to the four categories of clearness, i.e. from very clear to not clear at all. The majority of the parties (21 out of 31 cases) are able to transport at least rather clear cues via the media, among which eight parties are very successful in this respect. The same number of parties are rather diffuse or vague (less clear) in the message they disseminate. Only two parties represented in the coverage are completely divided on the issue.

We see that the distribution is surprisingly even if compared across the camps. Clarity and confusion are equally spread among supportive and opposing political parties. Still, it seems to be a little bit more difficult to present the pro-constitutional position in a clear way – or to find an agreement on it within a party in the first place. Six pro-constitutional parties as opposed to two oppositional parties are rather “less clear” on their message. Otherwise, no obvious patterns in regard to party size, family or incumbency are immediately discernible.

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149 Parties which are not visible in the coverage have been excluded from this presentation because could not be classified as either in favour or against the TCE. These were: , SNK-ED, US-DEU, REP, SDE, Rahvalit, PRG, SNP, CYMRU
Table 5.3. Varying Clarity of Party Positions on the TCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Clear</th>
<th>Rather clear</th>
<th>Less clear</th>
<th>Not at all clear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro TCE (15)</td>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>KDU-CSL</td>
<td>CSSD</td>
<td>PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grünen</td>
<td></td>
<td>CDU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>ER</td>
<td>FDP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>ResP/Isamae</td>
<td>KESK</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UMP</td>
<td>VERTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LibDem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con TCE (16)</td>
<td>ODS</td>
<td>KSCM</td>
<td>CSU</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PiS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LPR</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPF</td>
<td>LINKE</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>FN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PSL</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SGreens</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cons150</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking again a more abstract view on the country specific patterns (indicated by colours), it can be noted that the level of clarity of party messages varies quite a lot. In Germany and France we encounter the whole spectrum from very clear to confuse messages. Polish parties rank from clear to less clear, while Czech, Estonian, and British parties refrain from giving either perfectly clear or perfectly confusing cues and thus occupy the middle ground.

These results put our earlier findings on the constellation of oppositional camps into perspective. Applied to the referenda countries again, it implies that the conflict between TCE-supporters and -opponents might actually be less pronounced in the British and the Czech case than the existence of equally strong camps suggests. In other words, the conflict which seemed so likely in Britain, when just looking at the oppositional camps, is not so harsh if you consider that the British parties do not take very clear positions.

150 With a ration of 0.273 the British Conservatives were in actual fact a close case of a less clear message. With this value it is actually closer to “rather clear”. The qualitative analysis strongly supports this regarding.
That might confirm the hypothesis that British parties do not actively compete over EU issues because they are internally too divided. It would furthermore explain why British parties as a group are comparatively little visible (in a country where political conflict and culture is much harder than in other cases). The Czech Republic constitutes a special case, because of President Klaus’ decided and loud opposition which boosted and sharpened the conflict (Rakusanova 2007). There was no Klaus in Britain. In Poland his role was partly played by the Kaczynski twins. Furthermore, in Poland the conflict was confined to an SLD-against-rest-scheme. All parties were quite clear on their position – with the exception of the PO which might be internally divided over the issue. As it led opinion polls at that time, its would-be-government-status might be the reason for its half-hearted opposition. Even though the French press discovers dissidents in the ranks of most parties, the PS constitutes an exception. Most French parties are quite firmly aligned to, i.e. clear on, their respective camp, explaining the ferocity of conflict in the referendum campaigns.

Germany is actually an example par excellence for a loose cartel or a cartel broken into. Even though the large mainstream parties do hold true to the permissive elite consensus, the consensus appears eroded. Neither CDU, CSU, nor FDP can make their EU commitment quite clear in the media. Why is that?

It has already been noted above that there was considerable concern within the CDU/CSU regarding merits and risks of the proposed Treaty. Indeed, substantial disagreement existed not only between CDU and CSU but also within both parties, especially between leaders and backbenchers. Nevertheless, certainly most protest originated within the CSU which argued, by majority, against the TCE. However, its cues must be considered as very confusing for potential readers. In comparison, the LINKE is, even though it has prominent dissenters in its own rows (MEP and convention member Sylvie Kaufmann), rather clear about its opposition to the Treaty.

The CDU managed to transport an overall supportive, but at the same time rather unclear message. The coverage of these internal debates – with some prominent member arguing in favour and others against the Treaty – is not particularly well suited to give a clear idea on why one should reject or support the TCE after all. Consider the following quote:
“Tasks and competences of substantial weight must remain with the German Bundestag.’ Part of the Union considers this principle violated by the EU-Constitution. But there is a deep dissent over this question within the parliamentary CDU/CSU group. The group leadership, especially the vice chair of the group, Schäuble, responsible for European politics, and the speaker on European politics, Hintze, seek to enforce the unanimous consent of the group on the proposed constitutional text. Part of the group, represented by the speaker on European politics for the Landesgruppe, Gerd Müller, and the parliamentarians Silberhorn and Singhammer, raise fundamental objections. Even the chair of the CSU-Landesgruppe, Glos, has voiced fundamental concerns and called the outcome of the ratification procedure still open” (FAZ_04 10 28).151

In the course of the ongoing debate, substantial pressure was put on the MdBs in the “Union” – the CDU/CSU group – in the parliament by the party leadership in order to secure voting cohesion in the support for the TCE, reports the Süddeutsche Zeitung (also FAZ_04 10 28). After a strawpoll the leadership found only 13 members to depart from the party line and gave the all-clear (SZ_05 05 12).152 Of these, CSU parliamentarian Gerd Müller was chosen to represent a ‘minority report’ in the final plenary debate (Zeit_ 05 05). The solution to finally silence most internal protest was, however, a declaration put forward – and loyally co-signed – by the CSU leadership which listed most of the critics concerns and stated that these would vote in favour of the TCE “despite serious objections”153. While this procedure secured the “large majority” (Zeit_05 05 12) that is apparently considered necessary for European treaty ratification in Germany, it certainly contributed to completely obscuring, instead of


153 „Bei der CSU hat die Führung der Landesgruppe EU-Skeptikern eine Brücke gebaut. In einer Erklärung, die auch Landesgruppenchef Michael Glos unterzeichnet hat, drücken die Skeptiker ihr Unbehagen über den Vertrag aus - um dann doch "trotz der schwerwiegenden Bedenken" zuzustimmen. Als wichtigstes Argument für die Zustimmung aber gelten die zusätzlichen Rechte, die dem Bundestag im Gesetzgebungsverfahren eingeräumt werden” (SZ_05 05 12)
clarifying the European issue at stake as regards public debate. The permissive consensus is broken, if not in actual representative, i.e. voting, terms, but in public debate.
5.5. Exkursus Europarties: Visibility, Positioning and Clarity of Cues

In a first step, we will have a quick look at the representation of Europarties and European Party Groups in the British and German media. In terms of quantity they were almost non-visible. It is nevertheless interesting to examine if the few respective articles give the potential reader an understanding of the Europarties’ positions in regard to the Constitutional debate. The smaller Groups are rarely mentioned individually and it is therefore very difficult to establish their position. Besides visibility and positioning of parties we will check if party messages are presented in clear and unambiguous way.

A first observation is that journalists find it difficult to explain who those party actors are (providing us with the explanation for the low visibility). The British as well as the German papers do very rarely report on the Europarty but instead predominantly on the European Parliament Political Group (EPG). They mostly refer to “domestic-European actors”, e.g. the leader of the national party delegation in the EPG, “Gary Titley, the Labour leader in the PES Group” (Times_05 09 10). Since the two major EPGs, the EPP-ED as well as the PES are currently led by Germans, there is no “need” for German journalists to distinguish, for example, between the SPD-Group in the EP and the PSE. However, the PSE leader, Martin Schulz, is never mentioned without putting “(SPD)” behind his name (as for all other actors). Apparently, the media believe it necessary to provide their readers with an additional clue in respect to party affiliation. Readers are not expected to know that the SPD is a member of the European Socialist Party.

These difficulties notwithstanding the (German) media succeed in transporting the EU-level parties’ main messages/positions. They portray the PES as very positive towards the Constitutional treaty. PES actors justify this position often by incorporating a European dimension. According to their position a Constitution would foster “a Europe of citizens” (SZ_05 01 13), as well as “civic values” (FAZ_05 01 12). Another example reads as follows: “Schulz criticised that the EU did not keep its promise to provide for social security and employment. This is the reason why so many turn away” (FAZ_05 06 08).
The EPP-ED, on the other hand is portrayed as generally supportive of the Treaty but more sceptical. However, the arguments ascribed to EPP actors also display a European dimension: A rejection of the treaty, for example, would render the “enlarged EU ineffective” (FAZ_05 05 10). The failure is interpreted as a “message: ‘we should neither politically nor culturally nor geographically overstretch the EU’ said Pöttering” (FAZ_05 06 08). The EU is constructed here as a ‘we’ against the ‘other’ – namely Turkey.

Turning towards the criterion of the unambiguousness of party cues, it is interesting to note that – in the absence of major inter-party competition – the media concentrate on the intra-party dissent. This contributes to a distortion of party messages. Potential supporters might wonder which party faction position is the “true” one.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung notes that the EPP-ED Group has “dissenters in its own ranks”, namely the British and Czech Conservatives who were voting against the constitution in the EP (FAZ_05 01 12). On the occasion of the EPP summer school even more dissent hits the news: „In Lisbon it soon became apparent that the liberalism à la Patten and Madelin is splitting the conservatives”. The Constitutional treaty, the article continues, is causing similar trouble: While Pöttering was quoted saying that he would not let the project down, ex-Prime Minister Aznar was said to be not sorry at all about its rejection (EU11_SZ_05 09 24).

In the British papers the coverage of EU party actors is so low that it is very difficult to establish any patters in regard to “content” at all. In the German papers the coverage basically follows the domestic pattern in picturing a mainstream consensus choir supporting the Constitution, with a few critical notes on the side.
5.6. Success and Failure – a Ranking of Political Parties’ Communication Capabilities

This last part serves to summarise the findings of the whole chapter as well as to pave the ground for explaining them. It is thus conclusion and passage in one.

The above analyses – by focusing first on the overall picture, than on its parts – have brought to the fore different patterns and characteristics which, by way of summary, will be briefly recalled here.

5.6.1. Summarising Findings
The diversity across the 39 cases included in this study along the three characteristics attributed to each case is very high. Parties vary extremely in regard to the way in which they cue citizens (readers) on EU issues. The challenge lies in explaining this variation. The next chapter will explore the causal effect of several possible explanatory factors, such as, among others, party family, manifesto commitment, the status of the party within the domestic system of party competition, and the degree of agreement on EU integration within the party. Furthermore, the influence of context factors like public opinion on the EU and the respective mode of ratification by referendum or in parliament will be measured. These remote factors are likely to impact on all parties in a domestic system in the same way.

- The yes- and the no-camp in our sample are about evenly distributed across our sample (excluding the parties for which no position could be established).

- It is good news that the majority of the parties (21 out of 31 cases) are able to transport at least rather clear cues via the media, and eight of these parties are indeed very successful in this respect. The same number of parties is rather diffuse or vague (less clear) in the message they disseminate. Only two parties represented in the coverage appear completely divided on the issue.

\[154\] While some individual factors might indeed seem to explain parts and patterns of the picture, please keep in mind that we hypothesize them to have a combined effect which will be brought forward by QCA techniques.
- The analysis showed that highly successful parties (strong and clear) are likely to be mainstream parties with governmental aspirations: those in the pro-camp are incumbent; those in the no-camp are the largest oppositional parties in their respective system.

- An interesting finding is that the strong no-camp consists exclusively of liberal-conservative parties while the strong pro-camp is of different political colours (social-democratic, liberal, conservative). This suggests a possible impact of the incumbency status for a supportive position on the TCE.

- However, other parties with governmental prospects are likely to be strongly represented in the media but without having formulated a clear message. Strong but diffuse messages, be they in favour or against the treaty, seems to be a common characteristic of these parties, among them especially social-democratic parties as well as Christian-democrats, i.e. parties said to be generally belonging to a pro-European core. These often large mainstream parties might find it difficult to reach a consensus on European integration issues within the own ranks. In general, it seems to be more difficult to formulate and disseminate a clear position in favour of the TCE than against.

- Many regional and radical parties are almost or completely invisible in the media coverage. The question is if for all efforts they find it especially hard to gain access to the media, or if they do make any effort to take part in the debate in the first place. In particular, regional parties might argue that the issue of EU constitutional reform is of no relevance to them.

- Other small radical and oppositional parties do make it into the media, if only barely. They often display a very clear position for or against the treaty. Is this the reason? Do these parties act as agenda setters? Or is it due to their effective media management? Or to the media’s selection criteria – representative coverage of positions, looking for conflicts?

The following additional observations were made in regard to the country specific patterns of party political debate on EU reform:

- Because the visibility of parties is calibrated in relation to that of other parties in the respective domestic arena, the considerable differences between domestic arenas are
necessarily neglected. The level of party visibility varies considerably across the country cases, being high in CZ and F and low in D or EE. This finding is especially interesting and supports the assumption that political parties can function as important communicators in the EU multi-level polity. When understood as a group (party values summed up), in most public arenas they are the major speakers in the debate (Estonia is an exception). The distribution does not imply the voting system or the size of the party system to be of relevance here. It seems more likely to be an artefact of the mode and phase of ratification and/or of the contestedness of EU issues in the respective public realm. These factors will be included in the analysis.

- The parties form different alliances in support or opposition to the EU constitution in their domestic arenas. While opposition did exist in Germany and France, the pro-TCE alliance of parties was considerably stronger. In Estonia there was a permissive consensus at work. The most difficult position had the Polish SLD as the lonely pro-TCE party with all other parties opposing the treaty. The heaviest conflict, however, in party media terms would be expected in CZ and UK where both camps are about the same size and weight. It seems that the latter party systems perform very well in terms of offering alternatives to citizens.

- These findings had to put in perspective when analysing more closely the degree of clarity which these alliances displayed. In the UK, in particular, the conflict was rather subdued because neither the pro- nor the anti-TCE camp could unambiguously and consistently present its message, presumably because of internal disagreements. In France – in the referendum situation admittedly – the supportive camp might have been much stronger in terms of numbers, but the opposition was more firm in its convictions.

5.6.2. Reducing Complexity – a Ranking
After introducing the cube-shaped property space of party political communication patterns at the beginning of the chapter, the subsequent sections sought to disaggregate it taking a closer look into its specific characteristics. Now the opposite direction is taken in order to reduce variation and complexity where it is possible without losing important information. The aim is to identify the successfully communicating political
parties in a ranking of political parties’ success and failure in mediated communication on EU issues.

Analytically, four groups of parties can be distinguished according to their performance in communicating cues to the citizens, i.e. the readers of national newspapers. The eight ideal typical configurations represented by the cube’s corners can be reduced to four levels of performance. This is due to the fact that four pairs of configurations are actually functional equivalents and differ only in respect to the content of the message which in one case contains a ‘no’ and in the other case a ‘yes’.

These categories will be discussed in relation to the actual distribution of cases as presented in the table 5.4. below. The categories are in bold letters and cases are clustered on left and right according to the parties’ respective positions on the TCE.

**Table 5.4. Ranking of Party Performance in Communication on EU Reform**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In favour of TCE</th>
<th>Political Party Cues</th>
<th>Against TCE</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KDU-CSL, SPD, ResP/Isam, UMP, SLD</td>
<td><strong>Strong and clear message</strong></td>
<td>PiS, ODS, Cons</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LibDem, UDF, ER, Grünen</td>
<td><strong>Weak, but clear message</strong></td>
<td>LINKE, MPF, FN, PCF, PSL, S, LPR, Greens, UKIP</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSSD, CDU, KESK, PS, Labour</td>
<td><strong>Strong, but diffuse message</strong></td>
<td>KSCM, CSU, PO</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERTS, FDP</td>
<td><strong>Weak and diffuse message</strong></td>
<td>US-DEU, SDE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first category is pretty straightforward and contains parties which were able to send strong and clear cues, be they in favour or against the TCE (corners SPC and SpC).

The ranking of the next categories needs some more explanation as it is not completely self-evident why a weak, but clear message (cases in corners sPC and spC) should be superior to a strong, but diffuse message (cases in corners SPc and Spc). From a

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155 One additional category contains those parties which did not manage media appearance at all and therefore cannot be clustered according to the other two dimensions, position and clarity (corner spc): SNK-ED, REP, Rahvaliit, PRG, SNP, Cymru
theoretical point of view party competition serves to structure the policy space along different policy alternatives (which are represented by individual political parties). We know from the party cartelisation theory (Katz and Mair 1995, Blyth/Katz 2005) that the main parties in search for the support of the mean voter tend to develop a mainstream policy cartel. The essential function of presenting clear policy alternatives falls, therefore, to anti-cartel parties. Even if gaining access to the public arena is often restricted for these parties (so that they are only weakly visible in the media), the opposition also forces the cartel parties to sharpen their positions. In short, weak, but clear cues perform a more important function in informing citizens than strong, but diffuse messages do.

Both rank, of course, in front of those parties which messages are neither well visible nor clear (corner sPc and spc). They must be counted as clear communication failures.

After having thoroughly explored the variations in political parties’ communication on the EU reform here, the next chapter looks for possible explanations.

It will systematically investigate the underlying causal patterns using the fuzzy set QCA approach and technique. The three characteristics of party political cues will be separately scrutinised. The relevant factors and their hypothesised configurations will be tested for their necessity or sufficiency for the respective outcome. The respective explanatory paths will be then discussed in the light of the theoretical assumptions developed in chapters 2 and 4.4. as well as the empirical findings established in the previous remarks.

Chapter 6 tackles the second research question and sheds light on the causal relations which lead to variations in the mediated party communication of political parties in respect to the three characteristics of mediated partisan cues. Can (a) individual parties’ characteristics, (b) party system features and/or (c) political context factors explain these variations in party political communication patterns?

The variation of political communication performances established in the previous chapter calls for explanation. In this chapter the contextual system factors as well as the party characteristics, which have been identified as relevant according to the different theoretical approaches discussed above, will be systematically examined. How, to what extent, and in what configuration do they determine partisan cueing on EU treaty reform?

In order to answer this question, the project relies on most dissimilar cases design for comparing across types of political systems and political parties (see chapter 3). The case selection strategy secures empirical diversity for most of the selected variables, which are organised in fuzzy sets. In doing so, it combines a variable-oriented with a case-oriented approach using the Fuzzy-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis as a tool for explaining different configurations of cases and variables (see chapter 4.2.). In regard to data, the description of patterns of party communication was based solely on print mass media data (see chapter 5). In this chapter different types of data will be employed for investigating the independent variables (expert judgements, manifesto data, mass surveys). Furthermore, an original interview data set allows the analysis of positions, actions and communicative behaviour of national political parties’ in the constitutional process in detail.\footnote{A description of the various data sets is provided in appendix 8.1.3.. These data have been calibrated according to QCA-standards and are summarised for analysis in a QCA matrix, to be found in Appendix 8.2.2. A concise description of the measurement (calibration) process and decisions based on set-theoretic assumptions can be found in chapter 4.4.}

The standard QCA procedure provides for two tests, the test for necessity and for sufficiency, both of which will be described in the following.
Necessity Test: In a first analytical step each variable has been tested separately, if it constitutes a necessary condition for one of the outcome variables by itself. For example, it was asked if ‘salience’ by itself, i.e. the degree to which a party considers EU issues important, explains strong mediated party cues. Or, if a party’s unity on the European integration is a necessary condition for its messages being clear.

Expectedly, the explanation is not so easy. A combination of factors determines the production of strong and clear party messages. In one case, however, causality exists in terms of a necessary condition: A party’s official (manifesto) position does necessarily lead to a congruent mediated party message (see 6.2. below).

This necessity test gives, even if actual necessity is the exception, a first impression if the theoretical assumptions on causality are empirically valid which is generally the case in this analysis. Only one variable gives cause for concern: Public support for European integration, which has been introduced as a context variable without direct impact, seems indeed to be a rather marginal factor. This is particularly noticeable if compared to the second context factor – the mode of ratification – which shows comparatively high values of consistency and coverage in relation to the dependent variables. On the other hand, a rather eurosceptical public opinion\(^\text{157}\) – as remote as public support – seems to be of more empirical relevance. The real impact can only be assessed in combination with other factors.

Appendix 8.2.3. provides all information on consistency and coverage values of the causal necessity relations between single independent and dependent variables.

Sufficiency Test and Solution Terms: Even with a moderate number of variables the output of fuzzy-set QCA (fsQCA) operations rarely provides a straightforward answer. The ‘solution term’ is the main output from fsQCA. It is usually comprised of a number of more or less complex equations of configurations of factors that are subsets of, i.e. sufficient conditions, for the outcome. These causal expressions can be read as different paths leading to the outcome. The impact of any condition might change considerably depending on which other factors it co-occurs with. This means that each causal path within an explanation (the solution term) – will display a different degree of coverage

\(^{157}\) There is no extra variable for eurosceptical public opinion. Rather, there is one fuzzy set “Pro-European public opinion”. QCA is able to negate these sets so that the ‘reverse’ impact can be tested separately.
and consistency. To interpret these very complex findings, it often requires a thorough examination of the individual cases.

What’s more, the analysis aims at accounting for the presence as well as the absence of the dependent variable, i.e. at explaining strong but also weak cues, supportive but also opposing messages, clear as well as confused cues. QCA enables the explanation of the absent outcome not merely as the opposite but as determined by other factors (or constellations thereof).

Similar to the previous chapter, the present analysis initially follows a tri-partite structure owing to the three cue characteristics as well as the three explanatory models developed in chapter 2. Accordingly, the first section aims at explaining variation in the strength of partisan cues which is operationalised as visibility of a party in the media. The second part looks at the direction of party messages, i.e. the actual vote recommendation in favour or against the TCE, and at the factors explaining this public commitment. In a third step, the focus is on the clarity of mediated party cues, measured as the deviation of positive and negative messages.

In the fourth section I will finally attempt to pull these findings together and provide an overall assessment of the relevant factors driving party political communicative behaviour.
6.1. Top Dogs and Challengers – The Strength of Political Party Cues in the Media

How come that some parties are among the most potent actors in the (media) public sphere, others are well covered, some are barely visible, and others again are literally invisible?

The explanatory model developed earlier is presented here again in order to facilitate following the analysis. However, I refrain from elaborating it at this point and refer the reader to chapter 2.4.

Figure 4.

![Model I: Strength of Political Party Cues](image)

This model identifies a number of variables hypothesised to contribute to the strength of party cues. Cases, i.e. individual parties, have been coded according to their degree of membership in these variables.

6.1.1. Four Explanations for Strong Cues
A QCA operation has been performed on the basis of 39 cases using the fsQCA software to test if this model does represent a sufficient condition for strong party cues.
The evaluation of the overall explanatory value of the model is satisfactory. No single variable could be identified as a necessary condition. The salience of European integration is particularly relevant – as was expected – even if with a consistency level of 0.88 the threshold of 0.9 (implying necessity) was not achieved. In terms of sufficiency the model has an overall solution consistency of 0.81 and solution coverage is 0.83. It consists of four different causal paths (configurations of cases, CP 1-4) – leading to the same outcome; namely strongly visible party messages in the media. Even better, the following analyses suggest that the model also holds for the absence of the outcome, i.e. it also explains why some parties do fail to give strong cues.

It is important to understand that all of the causal paths below are true, i.e. every individual path represents an explanation for strong (weak) partisan cues. However, each refers to a different configuration of variables, in other words, to a certain type of political party which meets the identified characteristics and context. Each, too, is of different theoretical and empirical relevance.

Within the Model: \( \text{STRONG CUES} = f(\text{SALIENCE, UNITY, POWER, MEDIAPR, CONVENT, REFERENDUM}) \)\(^{158}\) four causal paths leading to the outcome were identified.\(^{159}\) I will first discuss the overall solution term, then the individual paths.

- CP1: SALIENCE*UNITY*power*MEDIAPR+ (raw coverage 0.515625)
- CP2: SALIENCE*UNITY*MEDIAPR*CONVENT+ (raw coverage 0.515625)
- CP3: SALIENCE*MEDIAPR*CONVENT*REFERENDUM+ (raw coverage 0.562500)
- CP4: salience*unity*power*MEDIAPR*convent*REFERENDUM (raw coverage 0.265625)

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\(^{158}\) Rows: 16, Algorithm: Quine-McCluskey, True: 1, frequency cutoff: 1.000000, consistency cutoff: 0.800000, solution coverage: 0.828125, solution consistency: 0.809160

\(^{159}\) Capital letters signal the presence of the variable (case value >0.5) and lower cases the absence (case value <0.5). * is for logical AND, + is for logical OR.
Overall, one finds a complex solution term covering a range of different party types, e.g. some which perceive the EU as a salient issue and others which don’t, some representing a unified position on the EU while others are internally divided over the issue, some of which have been involved in the treaty reform at the EU level and others which haven’t, and finally some that have been exposed to a referendum while others have not been. Common feature for all of them is their strong visibility in the media. Before turning to the different paths, I will first look at the variables included in the solution term.

The only variable recurring in all four paths is the *media management* variable which is indeed at the centre of Model I. As explained above, political party actors were asked about the intensity of their media-related activities in the constitutional process. Obviously, there is a connection between the degree to which parties address the national media and their actual visibility in the coverage. Qualifying this somewhat obvious observation even further, it should be known that an overwhelming majority answered that they “often” to “always” addressed the media. The conclusion that one can safely draw is that parties’ generally active involvement with the media does not pay off for all in a similar way. The variance, therefore, is apparently due mostly to other factors. The reverse effect – i.e. the lack of media management – is easier to understand: Only 5 (out of 22) parties refrained from cueing the media in regard to the TCE to a similar degree and said that they only rarely or even never had published press communiqués etc. in regard to the TCE. For these cases the quantitative media analysis supports a link between the lack of information supply on the side of parties and their respective ‘invisibility’ in the domestic media. The Estonian parties, Reformierakond, Res Publica and the Social democrats never addressed the media of their own accord – and are indeed almost non-visible in the Estonian media coverage. The same logic applies to the Polish Selfdefence and the Polish Peasants’ Party.

Another recurring factor in two explanatory configurations is the *referendum situation* which represents the context for all political parties in a country which held or planned a referendum. While it does not impact on all types of parties in the same way, the hypothesised relationship between the ratification mode, the salience of the treaty ratification in domestic discourses, and the participation of political parties in the debate can empirically be confirmed in general. Conversely, let’s consider the Estonian case as
a counter-example. In both Estonia and Germany the decision not to have a referendum was taken only after the debate on the mode of ratification. In the “low-key Estonian debate” major parties, the Centre as well as the Reform Party expressed the desirability of a referendum because it would foster a public debate on the Constitutional treaty (Evas 2007: 386). Still, in the end parliamentary ratification was given precedence. In the absence of a public vote there was no immediate need for national political parties – in particular not for the ruling parties – to take active measures of informing the public about their respective positions in regard to the Constitutional treaty. And as the evidence shows (see figure 7) – they indeed did not, especially because ratification was not to take place soon and was even postponed for a year in the course of the crisis. The German situation differed from the Estonian in relevance and timing, as Germany was a large country as well as one of the founding members of the European Community, and also because the parliamentary vote was scheduled only days before the French referendum. In displaying the overall lowest visibility of parties in the sample, however, the Estonian print media are followed by the German one. In this respect, political parties are most visible in the French media ratification coverage. Other countries, in which referenda were envisaged, follow this pattern, clearly led by the Czech parties. In these countries – UK, PL, and CZ – the effect was supposedly strengthened by the fact that referenda were called only after serious pressure from conservative opposition parties.

Interestingly, the access to power does not impact quite as hypothesised: Contrary to the earlier argument, membership in government is not a condition for a strong partisan cueing. To recall: We expected the governing party or party coalition to dominate the media coverage because it can set the agenda. In treaty ratification it is procedurally driving the process by either bringing it into parliament or calling for a referendum. It should equally be able to dominate the debate content-wise as it took part (in the Convention and) in the IGC drafting process and was thus able to shape the public perception across a rather long time (Arnold/Pennings 2005). However, this expectation is not met: Only in Great Britain did the governing Labour party receive reasonably more coverage than the parties in opposition. In contrast, the government parties in Estonia and Germany received slightly larger attention than the oppositional parties. Our assumption was contradicted most notably in France where the Parti Socialiste (PS) exceeded all other actors and occurred in 19% of all quotations. The ruling UMP,
Jacques Chirac’s party, got less than half of that share. The remaining opposition parties, the communists (PCF), the conservatives (MPF) and the extreme right populists (FN) were much less visible – although they had put up strong no-campaigns against the Constitution.

Similar, if less distinct, pictures emerge in the Czech and Polish mass media. In the Czech Republic President Klaus’ ODS was mentioned most often, followed by the ruling Social Democrats. Other parties (junior coalition as well as mainstream opposition parties) played an only marginal role. The strong occurrence of the ODS must be accounted to Klaus’ very proactive role in political and public debate. In late 2004 he referred the question of constitutionality of the TCE to the Czech Constitutional Court. He also wrote several contributions for Czech newspapers, especially for MF Dnes, himself. The Civic Democratic Party was not only able to dominate the debate on the TCE itself but also the one on the mode of ratification. Its proposal for a referendum was finally met by the social democratic government (see Rakusanova 2007: 355).

There is no such distinct gap between very visible and marginal parties in the Polish print media. However, here, too, is the opposition covered more than the ruling coalition. The Law and Justice (PiS) and the Civic Platform (PO) outperformed Prime Minister Belka’s Left Wing Alliance (SLD). It is interesting to note that Poland is the only country where no other head of the state or the government, i.e. Belka or Kwasniewski, was more mentioned than the presidential candidate Lech Kaczynski.

Why is the assumption about the visibility of incumbent and opposition parties proven partly wrong? On the one hand, the media’s claim to balance fairly the coverage of all camps might explain some of the findings in those countries that adhere to the “competitive model” (Crum 2007), i.e. the UK, CZ, and PL, in which the opposition parties took a different stance on Treaty reform than the government. On the other hand, the findings might point to the limits of automatic quantitative coding and can be accounted for by the distinction journalists make between political parties on the one hand and “the government” on the other. This is the reason why the executive was additionally coded. In all countries (not coded for France) “the government” as such is perceived as an independent actor whose position is reflected in the media regardless of its “colour”.
In the next step, the individual paths shall be translated into plain English and interpreted using concrete cases as illustrative examples.

CP1: The first causal path – SALIENCE*UNITY*power*MEDIAPR – describes opposition parties which take a strong and united stance towards European integration. These would be liberal, social-democratic and christian-democratic opposition parties – as long as they are unified on their position. Empirical examples include: The German christian-democratic parties CDU and CSU, and the Polish PO. These are large, mainstream opposition parties rather than small or protest parties, suggesting that the status as would-be-government parties can be considered crucial for the visibility of partisan cues.

CP2: The second path – SALIENCE*UNITY*MEDIAPR*CONVENT – describes those unified parties which have been part of the Convention. This includes government as well as (mostly mainstream) opposition parties because often the broad set-up of the Convention enabled representatives of the opposition to take part, too: If a party has a stake in the constitution making on the EU level, this certainly reflects but also promotes its standing in the domestic arena. Parties meeting this configuration of variables are the Czech parties CSSD and KDU-CSL, the German CDU, SPD, GRÜNE, the Polish Civic Platform PO but also (largely) the SLD.

Note that in case parties find the issue EU integration salient and are additionally united on their respective position, it is irrelevant if ratification takes place via parliamentary or popular vote. Parties will not hesitate to promote publicly this position pursuing active media management. Their success in this respect depends partly on their position in the domestic power structure.

CP3: The third causal path – SALIENCE*MEDIAPR*CONVENT*REFERENDUM – contains another quite interesting finding. In a referendum context the effect of ‘unity’ is revised. As hypothesised, the level of unity or dissent on EU integration becomes meaningless in a situation where all parties are challenged to campaign (and compete) publicly on the issue. Still, the characteristic which such parties have in common is that they find European integration generally important, and thus pursue an active media management. The following parties meet this condition: The Czech CSSD, KDU-CSL, ODS, the French PS and UMP, and the Polish PO. The British Conservatives fall also largely into this category.
CP4: The fourth term – salience*unity*power*MEDIAPR*convent*REFERENDUM– is the most complex but empirically of least importance. It covers parties that neither consider European integration as particularly important nor have developed a common stance on it. These are parties that have been more thoroughly excluded from power – and the treaty reform process – on domestic as well as European level. Using challengers’ bottom-up communication strategies (Kriesi 2004), the referendum context provides an opportunity for voicing their general anti-system opposition and trying to utilise or sway public opinion on European integration. These characteristics fit mainly small protest parties on the left and right margin of party competition. An empirical example is the Polish PiS.

Three factors stick out as most important. Taking European integration seriously is undoubtedly the first one. Furthermore, the strategic position in the domestic and EU power structure, i.e. being close to the power centre, is a second relevant factor for the visibility of party cues. These overall conclusions are confirmed by causal path one and two (as well as by considering the additional “deviant” cases) which represent the empirically most relevant conditions for party success in terms of partisan cue strength. Media Management remains at the centre of the model.

6.1.2. Four Explanations for Weak Cues
The next analytical exercise seeks to establish if the model is also able to explain weak cues. This has been analysed in a separate procedure. The Model: WEAK CUES = f(SALIENCE, UNITY, POWER, MEDIAPR, CONVENT, REFERENDUM)\(^{160}\) yields four causal paths (CP 1-4), too.

- CP1: salience*unity*POWER*mediapr*convent+ (raw coverage 0.288732)
- CP2: SALIENCE*unity*power*convent*REFERENDUM+ (raw coverage 0.316901)

\(^{160}\) frequency cutoff: 1.000000, consistency cutoff: 0.823529, solution coverage: 0.711268, solution consistency: 0.863248
- CP3: salience\*UNITY\*power\*convent\*REFERENDUM+ (raw coverage 0.415493)
- CP4: SALIENCE\*UNITY\*power\*mediapr\*CONVENT\*referendum (raw coverage 0.218310)

Be aware that causal explanation is not necessarily symmetric. Since the model was primarily developed for explaining the positive outcome, i.e. the dependent variable “strong cues” and not “weak cues”, the explanatory force can be expected to be somewhat lower. This is indeed the case, but the model does still possess a satisfactory ‘empirical fit’ with solution consistency (0.86) and solution coverage (0, 7) showing sufficient values.

A strong explanans for weak visibility is of course the lack of interest on behalf of the party. This is rather not the case with governing parties or main opposition parties because these are usually involved in the EU policy-making processes. They can be expected to demonstrate this involvement in their respective manifestos (the indicator for this variable). Some parties in office, however, are still encapsulated in the national sphere (an example is the Estonian Reform Party), others deliberately refrain from stressing European level issues, e.g. British Labour. Low salience of European integration on behalf of political parties is part of the explanation for the low visibility.

CP1: The most consistent path 1 – salience\*unity\*POWER\*mediapr\*convent – confirms the assumption that governing parties, if they don’t consider the EU important and have not developed a common position, tend to avoid the issue. This is even more the case when they have had no stance in the EU reform drafting process. There are two empirical examples from Estonia and Poland respectively, the People’s Union of Estonia (Rahvaliit) and the Polish Peasants’ Party (PSL). Both are agrarian parties and (at that time) coalition junior partners which had not been involved in the Convention. Neither one bothered to engage in media management. With this the commonalities end, though. While the Rahvaliit is rather a populist eurosceptical party, the PSL is more left and positively inclined towards European integration.

CP2: As we have seen above, it is possible – if empirically not very likely – to perform strongly even in the absence of a genuine interest. Others, as demonstrated here, fail to
deliver despite of a strong interest. The second causal configuration – SALIENCE*unity*power$convent*REFERENDUM – shows that, even if parties do consider EU integration as a relevant topic, but cannot agree on a common position, then their poor standing in power relations, being excluded from both government and EU-level participation, is not suited to overcome this disadvantage. Note that the degree of these parties’ media management is of no relevance if they are that badly equipped beforehand. This was experienced by the French communist party, the Parti Communiste Francais (PCF), and by the Parti Radical de Gauche (PRG) as well as by Les Verts (VERTS). All of them acknowledged the importance of the EU reform but couldn’t internally come to a common position. In this way, they resemble their larger pendant, the Parti Socialiste (PS) that, of course, draws much attention from these marginal parties which confirms the assumption that the media try to balance the referendum coverage in terms of ‘camps’. This ‘camp’ is well covered by looking at the PS alone.

CP3: The empirically most relevant explanation for low party visibility is causal path 3 with the following factor combination: salience*UNITY*power$convent*REFERENDUM. Empirically, this refers, first, to right wing populist parties which ascribe the EU reform no relevance and at the same time share a firm oppositional stance. Examples for this first category are the French Front National (FN), the Polish Self-Defence (S) and League of Polish Families (LPR), and the eurosceptics in the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). A second group of parties are regional parties, for example, two of the four regional parties in the sample, the Scottish National Party (SNP) and the Party of Wales (Cymru). All of these are rather weakly covered in the media.

CP4: Causal path 4 – SALIENCE*UNITY*power*mediapr*CONVENT*referendum – describes the case when a party has a common position but lacks a public standing. When it additionally refrains from actively addressing the media – especially important in the context of lower public attention when there is no referendum – its communicative performance is low despite of a pronounced interest in the issue. The Estonian Social Democrats are an empirical example.
6.1.3. Overall Assessment of the Visibility of Party Cues

Overall, the model has proven to be valid, although it turned out that there is more than one explanation for strong or weak communicative performance on behalf of political parties. While the explanation is neither perfect nor complete, it does explain the majority of cases in the sample.

In regard to the salience of integration issues the empirical examples show that the ideological preferences of parties in regard to the Constitutional Treaty are indeed of no importance: generally pro-European as well as more sceptical parties might perceive European integration as unimportant.

It must be acknowledged that apart from the substantial interest and unity on the issue the strategic party competition dimension plays also an important role. While being in power is not an equivalent for being in the media, it certainly helps. Being out of power is in most cases a guarantee for one’s messages not being extensively covered in the media too. What is more: The campaign matters, too. An active media management is part of all valid variable configurations within the causal model explaining strong mediated party cues and, the other way round, its absence can lead to a low visibility in the media coverage.

Overall, the impact of the mode of ratification is not so straightforward. Indeed, for many political parties it is no relevant factor at all. A referendum constitutes a window of opportunity for some, but a hindrance for others. Even (or especially) in a referendum situation, it seems particularly difficult for small marginal parties – those which are the farthest from the power centre – to have their public say heard. This modifies our theoretical assumption that such parties can generally profit from a heightened public interest.
6.2. Two Camps – Direction of Political Party Cues in the Media

The academic literature has developed a number of hypotheses on the factors influencing the public stance political parties take on European integration. Some would argue that political parties on European Integration are autonomous actors because people don’t care. Others believe parties to be responsible to citizens’ preferences. Again others assume that the ideological basis determines party cues, even though they lead a heated debate about the underlying cleavage dimension structuring the position of parties on European Integration issues. Membership in the European party families is nevertheless an established indicator for a party’s preference towards European integration. Another recurring assumption in the literature is that parties act on strategic rather than on ideological grounds considering their political position within the domestic party system, i.e. as an incumbent, opposition or protest party, and behave accordingly. While all these factors could potentially influence a party’s position on the TCE as formulated in the official party manifesto, the party could as well have altered this position in the meantime.\(^{161}\)

Most of the assumptions above are compatible and can therefore be combined in a model and tested with QCA. Model II describes the interplay of causal factors determining the direction of political party cues, i.e. the content of the party messages visible in the media. For a more thorough discussion of the model please refer to chapter 2.4. To recall, the dependent variable is measured as the majority of party statements in favour or against the TCE in the media. Three factors are expected to play a direct role with public opinion on European integration being an important context for party behaviour.

\(^{161}\) Party manifestos were drafted in Spring 2004 and the media debate on the TCE started only 6 to 12 months later.
6.2.1. One Explanation for Party Cues in Favour of Treaty Reform

In the QCA\textsuperscript{162}, the Model POSITIVE CUES = f(CONSTITUTION, CORE, POWER, CONVENT, SUPPORT\_FOR\_EU and various combinations of the involved variables were tested. It turned out to be far too complex – and causation rather simple. Indeed, it turned out that a necessary condition for observing political party cues supporting the TCE is that the respective party’s official position (as formulated in the manifestos) is positive, too (consistency 1.0, coverage 0.77). This means that once a party has, in the complex process of drafting an election manifesto, agreed on a common position, this acts as a strong guideline for further communication on the issue. So strong, indeed, that the positive message is transferred in the media coverage.

Let’s illustrate this relation by discussing a few empirical examples: The finding is true for all German parties. An exception is DIE LINKE which does formulate a supportive position on a European constitution in its manifesto but then deviates from it in the actual debate because it considers this Treaty to support a neo-liberal ideology. Still, the pro-European consensus among political parties in Germany remains ideologically most valid.

\textsuperscript{162} based on 33 cases (39 minus those whose position is not measurable because of their low visibility in the media coverage).
In the new member states several parties from the outset had refrained from formulating a position on the Constitutional Treaty in their first European Election Platform. Nevertheless, if they did fix a supportive position, they usually stuck with it, i.e. the mechanism works here, too. In Poland, however, this concerns only one party, the ruling Democratic Left (SLD). The Civic Platform is another exception from the rule, turning from a pro- to an anti-TCE position very quickly.

### 6.2.2. One Explanation for Party Cues against Treaty Reform

Again, it was tested separately if the argument could be reversed. The Model Negative Cues = f(CONSTITUTION, CORE, POWER, CONVENT, SUPPORT_FOR_EU seems highly over-specified whereas explanation for rejection seems a little more complex than for support. Evidence shows that mediated partisan cues recommending the rejection of the Constitutional treaty can be traced back to a party’s membership in a non-core party family and a pre-defined official party position against the treaty.

It should be reported that while the consistency value of this solution term (1.0) points towards an extremely high explanatory power of this configuration, the coverage value is rather low (0.59).

Naturally, empirical examples include the radical left and right in France or Poland, but also mainstream liberal-conservative parties, e.g. the Czech ODS and the British Conservatives.

### 6.2.3. Overall Assessment of the Direction of Party Political Cues

First of all, it can be noted that all variables besides the party family and the position on the TCE can be excluded from the model because they do not strengthen the explanation.

The dimension of strategic party competition is proven to be overestimated in the literature. Rather, Crum’s (2007) argument that mostly main opposition parties face a strategic dilemma, but when strategic considerations become inconclusive, ideological consistency remains the decisive factor, is confirmed. These findings, therefore, underline the importance of existing research on party cleavages, i.e. on the conflict lines structuring the European political space, the sphere of public politics. Ideology
strongly matters, but one should be cautiously aware that there is also an inherent power dimension in belonging to a certain party family.

Interestingly, the impact of public opinion is of no relevance. Apparently the population’s general preference on European integration is a rather remote and not pivotal factor for a party’s public positioning on the issue. In future studies it might be more valuable to include a more precise measurement of the attitudes of partisans.

These results provide also methodological insights: Empirically these findings apparently support all those previous studies which measure party cues with manifesto data or by party family affiliation, instead of understanding them as a precondition of actual mediated partisan cues like it is done in this work. However, there are still reasons for cautioning against this practice:

First, not all parties formulated a position on specific issues in the 2004 election platform, be it for a perceived lack of relevance or for the disability to find a unified position on the issue. This reluctance concerns mostly parties from the CEEC in the sample, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Poland. These data have been supplemented from other sources, showing the limits of manifesto data (as reported in chapter 4.4.).

Second, as noted above, direction and clarity of cues must be distinguished. The strong congruence of manifesto and mediated message must therefore be understood as limited to the content, not the strength and especially not to the unambiguity of the message. To investigate the latter, i.e. what determines clear versus confused cues, is the aim of the next section.
6.3. ‘Friendly Dissenters’
and the Clarity of Political Party Cues in the Media

Model III, which lays out the causal factors determining if political parties are capable of sending out clear cues, is the most complex and therefore the most difficult to measure. To recall: the dependent variable, the clarity of political party cues in the media, is measured by the proportion of supportive and negative statements by party actors on the TCE in the media.

Figure 6.

The QCA was conducted on the basis of 33 cases, with the dependent variable (outcome)– unambiguous party messages – present in 21 cases, and absent – confused cues – in 12 cases (consistency cutoff at 0.79). No single variable could be identified as a necessary condition for the clarity of cues, although the party family variable (here comprised in Party Position on EI and TCE) seems to be more influential than admittedly hypothesised (consistency 0.87).
6.3.1. Five Explanations for Clear Cues
Due to its complexity the explanatory power of the model is overall very good. The consistency (0.92) of the explanation is very high, indicating that the model is able to explain clear party political cues. On the other hand, the scope of the explanation, i.e. the coverage, is limited by the complexity to a (however still satisfactory) value of 0.7.

For the sake of parsimony, one aim of the analysis is to reduce the model’s complexity for future purposes. In the light of the analyses conducted in the upper sections of this chapter, under review are especially those variables which have not proven their explanatory value yet. One might e.g. wonder about the theoretical rational for including a party’s preference in regard to European Integration and reform since clarity is understood as separate from the message’s content. I assume, however, that a positive stance on European integration might be more difficult to communicate clearly than plain opposition (because the latter contains a rather simple message). Tests support the inclusion of the variable.

Even though theoretically the remote variable public support for European integration is seemingly more important, tests show that the explanatory power has increased (solution consistency: 0.97, solution coverage: 0.75) and the number of possible causal paths reduced when this factor is excluded.

All other variables prove equally relevant for the consistency of the Model: CLEAR CUES = f (CORE, CONSTITUTION, SALIENCE, UNITY, POWER, MEDIAPR, CONVENT, REFERENDUM). Thus, the explanation remains complex but by looking into individual cases it becomes manageable and plausible at the same time. There are five causal paths (CP 1-5) leading to the outcome CLEAR CUES:

- CP1:
  core*constitution*salience*power*MEDIAPR*convent*REFERENDUM
  + (raw coverage 0.263636)

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163 Rows: 14  Algorithm: Quine-McCluskey  True: 1 frequency cutoff: 1.000000 consistency cutoff: 0.896552
- CP2:  
core*constitution*SALIENCE*unity*power*MEDIAPR*REFERENDUM+ (raw coverage 0.154545)

- CP3:  
core*CONSTITUTION*SALIENCE*UNITY*power*MEDIAPR*conven
t* referendum +  (raw coverage 0.081818)

- CP4:  core*CONSTITUTION*SALIENCE*unity*POWER*MEDIAPR*
CONVENT* REFERENDUM+ (raw coverage 0.145455)

- CP5:  
CORE*CONSTITUTION*SALIENCE*UNITY*POWER*MEDIAPR*
CONVENT*referendum (raw coverage 0.236364)

Again, I begin interpreting these findings by focusing on the overall features of the explanation.

An indispensable factor which shows that parties foster their chance of being cited clearly at all is that they actively address the mass media on their own account.

The solution terms include parties which are in favour and others which reject the constitutional treaty. Empirically, the latter are considerably more relevant. This is consistent with the assumption that a ‘No’ is easier to bring across than justifying a positive stance.

A referendum context enforces this effect.

Theoretically the degree of unity a party displays should be of prime influence on the clarity of its messages. The QCA shows, however, that this influence depends strongly on other factors. Some types of parties need to have a unified stance on European integration in order to send clear messages, others do not. In a parliamentary context a strong unity is crucial; in referendum campaigns its lack is irrelevant. As argued in chapter 2, a referendum context increases the system salience, parties close their ranks, and “suppress factional dissent” (Hugh/Sciarini 2000).

In the following, the five causal paths (CP) will be verbally summarised. Analytically, they can be understood as sub-types of the two main explanations in the literature. The
hypotheses on the conditions under which parties are able to formulate clear messages are (1) opposition and protest parties will use a referendum context for mobilising against the government and (2) government parties do not face a dilemma and can therefore in any case retain their advantage as agenda-setters.

(1) The first three paths (CP 1-3) concern opposition and protest parties:

CP1: This – empirically most relevant – explanation is about those theoretically almost ideal-typical marginal protest parties, which oppose both European integration and TCE, and in an environment of a referendum are likely to protest very clearly – even though they do not even consider European Integration as particularly important. The internal party unity is therefore of no relevance. A number of parties in the sample meet these characteristics, mostly right, partly radical right parties in France – the MPF and the FN, in Poland – S, PiS and LPR, and UKIP in Great Britain.

CP2: Even if these parties are not unified but consider the EU as important, in a referendum context their rejection of both European integration and the TCE is strong enough to send clear oppositional cues. These parties are opposition parties, too, but they differ from the previous type of party in considering European integration as important. This moves them closer to the strategic power centre. Typical cases in this party category are the British Conservatives or the Czech ODS, i.e. parties which are aware of the importance of the EU for executives. Moreover, oppositional left parties are also to be subsumed here – as for example the Parti Communiste Francais (PCF). They, too, are more prone to acknowledge the EU’s salience than right-wing nationalist parties are.

CP3: This type of party not only perceives European Integration as important but has developed a common position on this issue which enables it to forward a clear message, even when it is located rather at the margins of domestic power plays and even when ratification takes place through a parliamentary ballot. An example for this would be the German leftist party DIE LINKE. This is actually a very equivocal case which illustrates the merits of opposition and the risks of incumbency in regard to the clarity of cues. While the party succeeds in manufacturing clear oppositional cues, the media data shows the arise of internal tensions due to the increased involvement of some party actors in executive tasks. While the LINKE is only barely represented in the Bundestag,
it is a junior coalition partner to the SPD in the government of the Land Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. As the party on the ground had decided firmly against the Treaty, the more positively inclined ministers did not have a choice but to insist upon Prime Minister Ringstorff’s (SPD) abstention from voting in the Bundesrat vote.¹⁶⁴

(2) The next two paths (CP 4-5) concern *parties in power at both national and EU level*. More commonalities exist in the awareness of EU salience, the high level of media activity, and the positive position on the TCE.

CP4: As mentioned above, in a referendum context party dissent is no hindrance for clear coverage. *If a governmental party has called a referendum, it is naturally in favour of the treaty in which negotiation it took part, even if it doesn’t belong to a core pro-European party family*. The French UMP is an empirical example for this configuration here.

CP5: This party is close to the ideal-typical *governmental type of party, being strongly and consistently in favour of both EU and TCE*. Unsurprisingly, this type of party is found where a strong elite consensus is still valid, e.g. in Germany. Both coalition partners, the SPD and DIE GRÜNEN qualify here (SZ_05 05 12).

The QCA revealed that there were five extremely complex explanatory configurations. These results have been interpreted above. In addition, the software was allowed to simulate results for those combinations of causal conditions that lack empirical cases. The output is less cryptic and is thus helpful for backing up the interpretation. The solution consistency (0.96) and solution coverage (0.8) remain high – which implies that this solution is less precise but still provides a very good explanation.

These are the three causal paths (CP 1-3) according to the parsimonious solution¹⁶⁵ as reported by fsqca:

¹⁶⁴ „Jedoch hat sich die Partei selbst in die Falle begeben: Ein Parteitagsbeschuß stellte sich gegen den Verfassungsentwurf, unter den Ministern in der Landesregierung herrscht dazu aber eine andere Meinung. Damit steht die PDS in jenem Widerspruch zwischen Regieren und Opponieren, der schon in den vergangenen Jahren die Schweriner Koalition immer wieder belastet hatte“ (FAZ_05 05 27).

¹⁶⁵ frequency cutoff: 1.000000 consistency cutoff: 0.896552
This more parsimonious explanation reinforces the insight gained above, namely that being in opposition – in both the ideological as well as strategic dimension – is a strong indicator for the ability to send clear cues (CP1). Having a unified common position on the issue itself is secondary (CP2). For bringing a clear message across in a parliamentary ratification context, it is very helpful to be in government (CP3).

6.3.2. Four Explanations for Confused Cues
Even more interesting than the determinants of clear party messages is to find out what might prevent parties from sending clear messages. In order to explain why party messages might appear confusing in the media, it is important to include the variable public opinion again because it showed a considerable relevance in previous (necessity) tests (see Appendix 8.2.3).

The Model: CONFUSED CUES = f(CORE, CONSTITUTION, SALIENCE, UNITY, POWER, MEDIAPR, CONVENT, REFERENDUM, SUPPORT_FOR EU) provides an explanation which is based on a reportedly rather low number of 12 cases with the outcome ‘ambiguous party messages’. Findings should therefore be treated with caution. Nevertheless, solution consistency (0.85) is sufficient while the coverage is accordingly low (0.64). This is the solution term output from the QCA procedure which shows four causal paths (CP 1-4) as an explanation:

- CP1:
  CORE*CONSTITUTION*SALIENCE*UNITY*power*MEDIAPR*
  referendum*SUPPORT_FOR EU+ (raw coverage 0.342857)

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166 Rows: 14 Algorithm: Quine-McCluskey True: 1 frequency cutoff: 1.000000 consistency cutoff: 0.7586
This explanation is quite complex. Remember that the main expectation formulated in chapter 2 is that, of course, internal party dissent would show in the party’s messages. Further assumptions are: a) A referendum context could lead to an increased occurrence of unclear cues because all parties would come out to take a stance, irregardless of possible internal frictions. The analyses above established, though, that in a referendum context parties are forced to position themselves – and send clear cues despite being in disagreement. That is an often mentioned argument regarding the motives of incumbent party leaders to call for a referendum in order to silence any internal critics. b) However, if public opinion on European integration runs counter to a party’s position on the TCE, a certain degree of downplaying or wavering of positions can be expected. This might affect especially pro-European political parties, i.e. government parties which are usually expected to support treaty reform. c) However, according to the “punishment trap” dilemma (Schneider/Weitsman 1996, cf. chapter. 2.3.7) it is the main opposition parties that are likely to be divided – hence unclear – over European integration and treaty reform because ideological and strategic incentives are contradictory. How does the empirical evidence speak to these hypotheses?

Again, we begin interpreting the above findings by focusing on the overall features of the explanation (CP 1-4):
An overall assessment of the solution term shows that a central, ever-recurring part of explaining ambiguous party messages is a party’s support for the TCE (and usually for European integration, too).

Overall, we find that pro-European parties which acknowledge the high salience and a referendum context are prone to send confusing cues.

A recurring feature in the solution is the variable ‘not in power’ indicating that this concerns mostly mainstream opposition parties.

In the following, the individual paths (and their overlaps) will be verbally summarised. While (1) the first three paths (CP 1-3) concur with the above expectations about the difficult situation of mainstream opposition parties, (2) the fourth path (CP 4) reveals an unexpected finding about parties in government.

(1) **Main opposition parties** are in dilemma:

CP1: The first path to sending confused cues is – as hypothesised by the “punishment trap” dilemma – for main opposition parties which are positively inclined towards European integration. This is surprisingly true, even if they are reportedly unified on the issue and even in the context of parliamentary ratification and supportive public opinion. The German christian-democratic sister parties CDU and CSU as well as the liberal FDP are empirical examples for this configuration of variables. The largest opposition party in Estonia at that time, the social-liberal KESK, also largely falls into this category.

CP2: The second path confirms the same mechanism for mainstream opposition parties but in a completely different context – a ratification referendum. Here, and only here, is the effect of a reported dissent within a party visible in its mediated cues. A critical public opinion enhances the wavering which is in line with theoretical expectations concerning the responsiveness of parties to voters. This path explains the confusing messages of the French opposition parties, e.g. LES VERTS, and, of course, the Parti Socialiste.
CP3: This path, too, concerns opposition parties, but mostly those who have opted for officially supporting the TCE even though they do not belong to the pro-European party family core. In the spot light of a critical public going to vote on the issue, this position turns into a rather diffuse opposition to the treaty reform, as observed in the case of the Civic Platform in Poland.

(2) Another line of explanation concerns government parties.

CP4: Only the fourth term here concerns incumbent parties, interestingly, those which appear to be prime candidates for clear pro-TCE messages like the Czech CSSD. Apparently, here too, the context – a public vote in relation to a rather sceptical public opinion – is likely to yield a rather subdued, uncommitted and therefore ambiguous public stance on the Constitutional Treaty. It should be noted that the context is the same for the British Labour party which gives in a similar way a rather lukewarm message to British citizens. In the case of the CSSD, however, the special situation of a mid-term handover of office from Prime Minister Stanislav Gross, who acted noncommittal, to Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek in April 2005, who pursued a very active campaign challenging the strong opinion-making media presence of President Klaus, needs to be acknowledged.

6.3.3. Overall Assessment of Clarity of Political Party Cues
The validity of the model is furthermore strengthened when one considers the overall fit of explaining clear as well as confused cues. Government parties do better in a parliamentary mode of ratification context than in a referendum debate especially when they face an ‘uphill battle’ against a strong opposition and a hostile public opinion. Main opposition parties close to the ideological and strategic centre are likely to fall victim to internal quarrels about the position to take on European treaty reform. These are gladly covered by the media and hence lead to confusing cues. Small anti-European protest parties are best able to send clear cues even in unfavourable conditions like not having a solid position on the issue or competing in the less attractive environment of a parliamentary vote in which they cannot hope to shape policy at all. This is owed to several advantages of these challengers who can send clearer messages because a ‘no’ is easier to communicate than a ‘yes’, or because a smaller number of people in the party
in central (or public) office is easier to coordinate, or because they use different media strategies.  

The discussion of the causal paths greatly enhances our understanding of how different party characteristics work in varying contexts. It furthermore allows inferring the mechanisms at work between these causal paths, which are the effects of interaction between these types of parties on partisan cueing. These findings shall again be complemented by referring to the qualitative analysis of the British and German media coverage.

In line with Crum (2007), the in-depth qualitative media analysis reveals the crucial role of smaller protest parties for fostering debate on the Constitution, i.e. for enhancing the system salience. They constitute the driving forces of EU politicisation, as Hooghe and Marks argue (2008:18). The Christian Social Union (CSU) is voicing vocal criticism on a substantial list of treaty provisions, among others the division of competences and the (missing) reference to god in the preamble. In doing so, it forces the governing SPD – to, first, take a clear stance in favour of the TCE and, second, to take greater efforts in explaining this to the public.

In the British press this effect cannot be observed distinctively, because the Conservative party’s opposition draws media attention away from smaller protest parties. Nevertheless, protest parties’ euroscepticism in the UK did play a small but significant role in the overall ratification debate. The UK Independence Party succeeded partly in launching a debate when it criticised the use of public funding for pro-constitution campaigns, calling it “disgraceful” (Times_05 01 29). This strong message was somewhat softened later on, when, “The UKIP, which has accused the EU of spending public funds to promote European integration, will use the money to begin a campaign for a referendum on withdrawal” (Times_05 09 10).

However, The Times points to the more explicit pressure that the eurosceptic competition from the margins puts on the Conservative Party. It reports that (according to polls) conservative voters would vote for UKIP if the Conservative Party did not “toughen its stance on Europe” (Times_05 01 05). An attempt of “toughening” did indeed occur with the resurface of the “withdrawal-from-the-Union-option” in the

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167 It would make an interesting research question if the means and character of media activities, i.e. ‘normal’ public relations compared to protest activities, are reflected in the degree of clarity of cues.
context of the Tory leadership race during which ‘the European issue’ got some attention. The Sun notes on the candidacy of Liam Fox: “He became the first serious candidate to suggest Britain might one day quit the EU. This is the nuclear option - a deterrent to further expansion of Brussels power” (SUN_05 10 04). Thus, in a two-front opposition to the governing, but in regard to the TCE wavering Labour Party on the one hand, and to the strong protest by UKIP on the other hand, the Tories had to develop a clear negative message on the TCE.

So far, we share the impression that British parties are especially successful in transporting their messages via the media into the public discourse, to be heard by party supporters. But, again, the most important characteristic of both the British and the German press coverage of the ratification debate is the notion of strong intra-party dissent. While inter-party competition is likely to clarify different political options as well as foster debate in general, intra-party dissent potentially diffuses the message a political party would like the public to receive.

For the German CDU-CSU alliance this is most obvious the case. As the CDU is a first-time and strong supporter of European integration, the situation is not only uncomfortable but suited for seriously damaging its strategic position at the domestic but also at the European level. While CDU criticism has so far only been directed at the further enlargement of the Union, particularly opposing accession negotiations with Turkey, the CSU (more fundamentally) criticises further political integration. Because of the generally pro-European attitude of German newspapers, CDU elites are still able to present their pro-arguments but only to find them contested and accompanied by the smaller sister’s criticism. The media also tend to prefer proceedings over content and emphasize how party elites deal (or struggle) with this uncomfortable situation. In the end, the party leadership was able to convince the sceptics to sign a declaration explaining their position – and to vote for the TCE “notwithstanding these serious concerns” (SZ_05 05 12; see also FAZ_04 10 28).

The CDU/CSU’s internal brawl has an interesting effect on the German coverage in general: It directs the media’s attention towards other parties’ intra-party debates on European integration. An individual member of the Green Group in the Bundestag, who
was planning to withhold his support for the TCE, was the object of some concerned article in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ_05 05 12).  

Even the SPD – with no “no-voter” but with two “abstainers” in its parliamentary ranks – is found to be divided over Europe. The cleavage runs “top to bottom”:

“That ‘Europe’ is after all a bit of progressive internationalism (…) is rather deeply rooted in the cultural genes of the SPD. At least among functionaries and members of parliament. Among members and voters, observes the MP Dietmar Nietan, one of the few young EU-experts in the SPD Group, does ‘Europe’ often simply mean the same as ‘globalisation’ – a notion of fear of increased competition” (Zeit_05 05 11).  

This basic conflict over the party’s attitude towards European integration has its close match in the UK. The Guardian detects the very same gap in the British Labour Party. Here, however, the contrasting notions of Europe do not only separate the party on the ground from the party in central office but exist within the party elite, too:

“One on the side is the familiar centre-left case that the EU exists to protect its citizens against the pain of globalisation. It's the case Robin Cook made so eloquently for years. On the other is the claim that the old vision of an integrated social Europe is now bust, and the challenge is to embrace open markets, not raise walls” (Guardian_05 10 24).  

The fact that a number of prominent labour members (of parliament) joined the no-campaign and called for an internal referendum on the distribution of party funds for the  

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yes- and the no-campaign hit the news, too (Observer_05 05 08, Times_04 11 24, Times_05 05 19).

And the party of the strong messages, the Conservatives, is not spared either: On the occasion of Tory leadership competition mentioned above, a leading Tory official is cited when he comments on relatively pro-European Kenneth Clarke’s candidacy: “(...) he would split the party from top to bottom over Europe” (P46: NP18_Observer News Pages.doc).
6.4. Determinants of Political Party Cues in the Media

This last section of the chapter will pull together some of the findings presented above and summarise the variables that determine mediated party political cueing in EU issues. The models developed in chapter 2 and applied in this chapter will be briefly reviewed and amended, where necessary, in accordance with the results established above.

6.4.1. Campaigns Really Matter

Model I, which aims at explaining the strength of parties’ cueing messages has been largely confirmed. An active media management (and the absence thereof) is at the core of the explanation. Similarly, the salience of European integration, i.e. the degree to which a party considers European integration important or not, is a crucial element. A referendum context often serves to enhance party visibility.

The fsQCA established furthermore that internal unity on European integration issues becomes rather irrelevant for the strength of party cues in a referendum context. All parties – regardless of their internal unity – have to participate in the debate. In a parliamentary ratification, however, parties that are internally divided try to avoid the issue. Usually internal unity is a key to sending strong messages.

Other assumptions must be partly revised. The access to power is not influential in the way it was hypothesised. Governmental parties do not per se enjoy privileged access to the media.170 Only in Great Britain did the incumbent Labour Party gain considerably more attention than the opposition. The media must be considered as living up to their own claim of balanced coverage – in a limited fashion, though. Small oppositional parties are clearly disadvantaged in terms of media visibility as the fsQCA of weak cues shows. The same differentiated assessment is true for the involvement in the treaty reform process at the European level.

170 This is not to be confused with the government as an independent institution.
6.4.2. Ideology Really Matters
The necessity test conducted at the outset shows that in one instance causality indeed exists in the form of one condition being necessary for the presence of the outcome, namely the dependent condition “positive attitude towards treaty reform”. This finding demands a revision of model II. When a party has agreed on a supportive attitude towards the issue at stake in its drafting process, which usually involves the party leadership as well as the party on the ground, it can confidently be expected to stick to this position during public debate. For negative cues, the fsQCA shows: Belonging to a more sceptical party family and a programmatic decision explain, in this case, public statements against treaty reform.

This means that expectations raised by some authors on the impact of public opinion could not be confirmed. On the contrary, it strengthens the competing assumption that the party leadership, which monopolises public debate, is not very responsive to public opinion in regard to EU constitutional reform issues.

Also, the “power dimension” does not influence the party’s policy recommendation in measurable terms. The decision for or against treaty reform is thus a foremost programmatic, ideological one.

For further research, Model II explaining the direction of political party cues can thus be revised as follows.
6.4.3. Protest Matters and Unity Puzzles
The most likely explanation for the observation of clear party cues in the media is that these belong to protest parties who rally against the treaty reform in a referendum campaign. To be in favour of the TCE, vice versa, predisposes rather confused cues.

The (non-)impact of the degree of internal unity is especially interesting to perceive. The impact of the unity factor was hypothesised to be most central in the explanation of the clarity of party cues. The expected direction of the impact is most simple: The more a party has a solid common opinion, the more it is likely to send clear cues – and vice versa. This easy mechanism could not be confirmed. The explanation is far more complex and the respective influence of this factor in the overall explanation depends strongly on the type of party. Unity is most important for parties in parliamentary ratification debate. Parties in a referendum context can often send clear cues despite being rather divided over European integration. For most successful parties, however, the degree of unity is irrelevant. Many parties fail to send clear cues even when they are rated as rather unified over the issue by experts. This has consequences not only a) for the use of expert judgement data for the measurement of cues, but also b) for Model III on the clarity of political party cues

a) In several studies on the impact of cueing on public opinion formation, expert judgements on the internal unity of political parties is used in order to measure the cohesion of cues (Ray 2003, Gabel/Scheve 2007). The present analysis shows that this
practice is highly questionable because there is, empirically, no verifiable relation between the expert judgement and the actual clarity of cues as visible in mediated political communication. The use of media data for effect studies would therefore be more recommendable.

b) Two additional problems point to ongoing theoretical debates and empirical problems. While the impact of some variables points clearly in one or another direction, as discussed above, the effects of other factors have been demonstrated but not yet fully understood because at the same time they appear to be indispensable and indistinct.

First, this refers to the influence of the degree of salience that a party ascribes to European integration. The impact is obviously great as parties need to be members in the set of “EU is very important” in order to be among those sending strong as well as clear, but also unclear cues. There are two exceptions to this rule (for strong and clear). When tested if ‘salience’ constituted a necessary condition for any of the outcome variables, the value was high but still under the threshold of 0.9 (0.88 for strong cues, 0.78 for confused cues). When omitted from the models, the explanation loses in regard to either consistency or coverage. To make theoretically sense of the centrality of the concept, one can argue that the impact of salience is supposedly the same for clear and unclear cues because it constitutes a pre-condition for cueing at all.

The same logic applies to the variable media management which displays a rather close relationship with cues being strong and clear (consistency value in the necessity test is respectively 0.83 and 0.79). Media activities do not, however, constitute a necessary condition. When explaining weak cues, the absence of media management is part of the causal relationship which is theoretically consistent. Media activism is, however, equally important for clear and for confused cues, which is not at all logically self-evident – except when considered a pre-condition.

Both factors – salience and media management – therefore need to be moved closer to the centre of Model III on the clarity of cues. The factor party unity, on the other hand, now takes a rather marginal position. Since the necessity test found public opinion of neglectable impact, the revised model could be slimmed down a little bit:
Figure 10.

Model III Revised: Clarity of Political Party Cues

- Party Unity on EI
- Salience of EI for Party
- Access to Power on domestic and EU Level

- Party Position on EI and TCE
- Party Media Management

- Clarity of Cues

- Mode of Treaty Ratification
7. Conclusion

This conclusion first wraps up the findings established in the previous analysis. It proceeds to discuss the theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions of the present work. Finally, it provides some thoughts on the implications of the findings for political parties’ communication on European contentious issues on European integration in general.

7.1. Wrap-Up of Findings

Two research questions were formulated on the outset of this study. The first was: Whether and to what extent do the mass mediated communication patterns of political parties’ messages on European contentious issues vary comparatively? The answer, which is based on data from over 8000 articles from 35 domestic print media outlets in the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Poland and Great Britain, is that these patterns vary strongly. Our analysis finds that party communication on EU Treaty reform is highly diverse.

The data provides information a) on the visibility (strength) of political parties, b) on the position (direction) which they took on the Treaty reform, and c) on how clearly this position was presented to readers. Based on these three characteristics of party political cues, eight party communication types were found, and displayed in a cube-shaped property space. The most successful type of party is the one that succeeds to send strong and clear cues on its respective positions via the media. Ignoring the respective position of a party on EU reform, these eight categories can be reduced to a ranking of four party communication types of varying performance.

This diversity of communication types is not self-evident, but rather an interesting finding in itself disputing both the prevailing theses of “centrality of party” and “parties in decline”. Instead, our findings lend support to a rather heterogeneous picture of party politics in the EU that ought to be analysed closer. While some parties successfully compete for voice in the marketplace of published opinion, others get lost in the crowd. Among the louder voices are those of government and main opposition parties.
However, a loud voice, i.e. strong visibility, does not necessarily equal a good cueing message. Only when parties can send strongly visible, clear cues, can we speak of highly successful mediated communication. And only when parties’ messages are weak and diffuse at the same time, must communication be regarded as completely failed. The “news” (in both senses of the word) are surprisingly good:

After all, about one fifth (8 out of 39) of the parties under scrutiny managed to furnish strong and clear cueing messages on the European Constitutional Treaty. Furthermore, weak but still clear cues were sent by one third (13 out of 39) of the analysed parties. About 25% of parties’ cueing messages were rather or completely confuse; a perfect example of worst practice is the French Parti Socialiste.

Regarding the second research question – what determines these patterns – the analysis suggests that highly successful parties (strong and clear) are likely to be mainstream parties with governmental aspirations: those in the pro-camp are incumbent; those in the no-camp are the largest oppositional parties in their respective system. Strong but diffuse messages, be they in favour or against the Treaty, seem to be a common characteristic of oppositional parties, among them especially social-democratic parties as well as Christian-democrats, i.e. parties said to be generally belonging to a pro-European core. This often large mainstream parties might find it difficult to reach a consensus on European integration issues within the own ranks. For a more detailed answer the reader is referred to chapter 6.4..

Regarding the implications of these findings, the picture of national political parties as ignorant gate-keepers must be revised in some respects. National parties did engage with European reform politics when the reform process “hit home”. They did so with varying success in regard to the three criteria which make a “good cue”, i.e. a party message that supports citizens’ opinion formation processes. Notwithstanding national parties’ performance in EU communication, one has to acknowledge that they are the largest group of collective actors in the public debate. A more in-depth analysis of the British and German coverage showed that European political parties did not make a notable appearance at all (chapter 5.2). Thus, if people are looking for political guidance in EU issues (unknowingly or not), they inevitably have to turn to national parties, not the ones at European level. Europarties are anyway mentioned only secondary to European Parliament Groups. While representation might work well at the EU level, the
linkage function of party political EU elites is indeed highly underdeveloped. In this sense, there is no doubt that national parties remain gate-keepers, but not necessarily ignorant ones.

Considering those parties which have not managed to be clear about their respective position on Treaty reform, it is notable that these were more often than not parties supportive of Treaty reform. It is reportedly more difficult to spin a positive message than a negative one.

The reason for this can be found in the distinction between challengers who defend the status quo (SQ) and the reformers who defend the need for treaty reform. Kriesi et al. (2007a: 37) argue:

“The reformers offer an alternative to the SQ that is not completely understood and is vulnerable, therefore, to deliberate distortion by the defenders of the SQ. Although the reformers’ campaign may be mostly negative, it must also contain some positive elements. The modifying-campaigns of reformers have, on the one hand, to point out the deficiencies of the SQ, and, on the other hand, to point out that the reform proposal constitutes an opportunity to do something about these deficiencies and that the proposed reforms will be effective”.

Furthermore, Snow and Benford (1988) argue that frames need to resonate with the public’s expectation in regard to empirical credibility, experience and narrative fidelity. Hence, complex arguments on a more abstract level, removed from an all-day frame of reference, are more difficult to comprehend. Rather simple, populist frames are more appealing. In conclusion, this means that parties supportive of EU reform have to make an additional effort in communication which they don’t always bother to make.

We may finally conclude from the findings, that in the domestic arenas under scrutiny the parties form different alliances in support or opposition to the EU constitution. While opposition did exist in Germany and France, the pro-TCE alliance of parties was considerably stronger in these countries. In Estonia a permissive consensus was at work. The most difficult position had the Polish SLD as the lonely pro-TCE party with all other parties opposing the treaty. Critical opposition in terms of the existence of strong anti-TCE camps in the national party landscape was visible in the Czech, British and Polish media discourse (chapter 5.3). Further analysis revealed, though, that the party political debates in Britain and the Czech Republic were shaped by a relatively high degree of ambiguity of party cues (chapter 5.4.). Thus, the overall high degree of
conflict is mirrored in internal dissent over the issue. This leads to an overall as confusing as conflictual debate. Polish parties, on the other hand, fought over a very clear conflict.

7.2. Reflections on Political Communication and Party Politics in European Studies

This work makes contributions to existing research in two ways. First, it contributes to the conceptualisation of and knowledge on communicative democratic party politics in the face of the ‘challenge EU’. Second, it advances the field of party research in devising a novel method of measuring political party cueing messages.

7.2.1. Reflections on Theoretical and Empirical Issues

In the framework of what is here called a “Revised Communicative Understanding of Liberal-Representative Democracy” this work bridges two strands of research which are crucial for understanding and analysing democracy in the EU’s multi-level governance system. The research on the role of political parties and on the public sphere in European political communication are brought together by the auxiliary use of media and communication studies which provide the central concepts used here, such as the revised transmission model and, most importantly, the theory of elite cues.

By operationalising these theoretical concepts for empirical analysis, the question on the communicative linkage in European democracy can be partially answered: Political parties are active participants in European constitutional reform debates. They, thus, overall, act as institutions of communicative linkage that provide a) information and b) transparency to an otherwise ‘hidden’ elite project. They add a “communicative” to the “coordinative” discourse that takes place at the European legislative level (Schmidt 2006).

This work contributes to the further development of ‘cueing theory’. First of all, the analytical distinction of three distinct cueing characteristics refines Zaller’s argument but stays true to the original idea. Second, by developing the concept of “clear cues”,
this work considerably advances the research on the elite impact on public opinion formation.

Following Mair’s pladoyer for a more systematic study of party discourses on Europe at the national level, this work has presented a coherent cross-national comparative research design for doing so.

In the light of the empirical results, the study of party political communication allows furthermore to reconsider the status quo of the incorporation of the challenge EU in party politics, especially in regard to the “new European integration cleavage” (Bartolini 2005). National political parties do, indeed, react to this new cleavage. The present analysis shows, admittedly, that there is not one general trend to be observed but that individual political parties respond very differently.

Most national political parties under scrutiny fall into the category of Bartolini’s first scenario, i.e. they follow the ‘containment’ strategy and try to incorporate the European issue into the existing party ideology. The analysis confirms Bartolini’s assumption that this increasingly threatens the internal cohesion and could eventually split established political parties. The Czech ODS, the French Parti Socialiste, the British Labour Party, the Christian-Democratic Union in Germany and the Polish Civic Platform are all telling cases of this scenario. But not only large parties fall victim to “friendly dissenters” within their own rows: The LINKE and the German liberals suffer from similar problems. For these parties, European integration does indeed present a cleavage that runs through the organisation, not only between elites but also but also on the elite level.

While this analysis did not pay particular attention to Bartolini’s second scenario, which is concerned with the emergence of a supranational party democracy, be it under the prerogative of national parties, it is possible to speculate that some parties are better armed for this scenario than others. It can be assumed, that those which do not or not so poignantly show signs of intra-party dissent, are better adapted to the challenge. This group includes – on the pro-EU side – the Czech, Polish and German Social-democracy as well as the French UMP. Smaller parties that are cohesive enough to embrace representation on the EU level are the German GRÜNEN, the British Liberal Democrats and the French liberal UDF. On the eurosceptic side, few parties can be expected to
function very well with an ‘EU branch’ because here the hold on the national power centre’s prerogative tends to be even greater.

For a third scenario Bartolini envisages a split between the national and the European level of party politics. Subject to the assumption that this can be captured by an analysis of domestic mass media data, this development is not very likely. The United Kingdom Independent Party is the only party taking part in the national discourse which is electorally primarily successful at the European level. This can, however, be a consequence of the focus of the case selection strategy which aimed at including the relevant national parties because these are considered crucial for citizens’ political orientation.

Bartolini’s fourth scenario, the “mass politicization of the ‘European integration’ cleavage” (2005: 405) is the one he perceives as the most dangerous of the four. Our findings are rather reassuring in this respect. Political parties do still set the agenda and are the most visible actors in the domestic mass mediated public spheres. When politicisation is understood by Schmitter as threefold, with a heightened controversy of issues, the widening of mass public participation and the refocusing of actors’ expectations on the European level, we could only observe the first of these elements. Political parties struggle but they matter in European politics.

7.2.2. Reflections on Conceptual and Methodological Issues

An important innovation of this work is the development of a method for measuring three characteristics of party political cues. A combined quantitative-qualitative technique of media content analysis provides easy-to-access media data. This type of information has two advantages:

First, the three cue characteristics have formerly been tested using very different data, namely election studies for the strength of political parties, manifesto data for the policy positions of political parties, and expert judgements for the internal cohesion of party cues. The method tested in this work combines valid information on all cueing components in one type of data.

Second, this data allows for a considerable advancement of the empirical study of public opinion formation. Namely, what could be furthermore done with this kind of
data is to use it in order to establish a relationship between actual cues and their effect on the readers, i.e. on the citizens in the respective public sphere. Studies of elite cueing that have been performed in the realm of European studies so far, such as Steenbergen et al’s (2007) study of the “mass-elite linkage” on European integration, Crum’s study (2007) of “party stances in referendums on the EU Constitution” and Gabel/Scheve’s (2007) study of “mixed messages” all fall short on capturing the actual communicative link because they are constrained by using expert judgement for estimating party cues. In order to provide for a systematic analysis compatible with public opinion research, media data can be filed down even more and clustered according to such exogenous characteristics as publication date, media type, types of article and readership.
7.3. Reflections on Political Consequences

This last section provides some thoughts on the political consequences of the findings established in the previous chapters regarding the political debate and the ongoing process of EU reform.

The analysis showed that – in accordance with the literature on europarties – the linkage function of European-level political party elites is highly underdeveloped. This confirms not only this project’s focus on national parties, which are the major speakers in the public discourse, but also the European Commission’s claim to involve national political parties as “partners” in European political communication. While this study draws the overall conclusion that national parties matter in European political communication, we also saw that especially the British and Estonian pro-European parties (in a rather eurosceptic environment) were rather reluctant to make their position clearly heard in the domestic public discourse. A number of generally supportive parties did not even make an appearance in the media, e.g. the British regional parties Plaid Cymru and the SNP or the Czech European Democrats (SNK-ED). Taking into account the argument that it is more difficult to present a constructive than a populist attitude, these parties fall short of the normative claim of parties’ communicative linkage function as well as of the Commission’s call for more participation in European political communication.

The quantitative analysis does not reveal if the established degree of unclarity is due to neutral, undecided statements on behalf of party actors or to an intra-party dissent. Qualitative evidence, however, shows clearly that the ambiguity of party messages is largely due to internal quarrels, i.e. party actors contradicting each other: friendly dissenters. Gabel and Scheve (2007) have confirmed that internal dissent is arguably harmful to the electoral prospects of political parties. The fact that the overall supportive French Parti Socialiste could not mobilise their followers for a yes-vote in the Constitutional referendum in 2005 speaks for itself.

Parties positively inclined towards European integration have to put far more effort into spinning clear messages than more eurosceptic parties. A supportive attitude seems
more difficult to present than mere opposition. Examples of best practice are those parties, which, though not being large parties, managed to send visible and clear cues, such as the liberal parties in Estonia, Britain and France, the Reform Party, the LibDems and the UDF, as well as the German Greens. Among the most successful incumbent parties were the Social-democrats in Germany and Poland.

An important precondition for the fostering of clear supportive cues is to overcome internal opposition which will inevitably be visible in the public debate. Obviously, there are two ways to calming down intra-party dissent. One is to “suppress” it, the other is to deal with it and finally solve the conflict in one way or the other. The latter, however, has unpredictable consequences for party politics in the EU, including the possibility of party splits. This is, for example, rather likely in the short to the middle run for the French Parti Socialiste. If the present trend of increased eurocriticalism within the CSU continues, the prospects for the CDU/CSU electoral Union in Germany are equally poor.

This finding is important not only for parties’ electoral performance but also for the European integration at large, namely in two respects.

As Blumer and Kavanagh note “the populist currents open chances to revisit long-standing disputes in democratic theory, especially between those who mistrusted and those who advocated a more active mass participation in politics (1999: 64)“.

Are referendums on EU reform advisable or not? In the run-up to the next Irish referendum on the Lisbon treaty, which has been ratified by all other member states\(^1\), this is an important question. The analysis showed that the pro- and anti-reform camps among national political parties were of about the same size (chapter 5.3.). This has implications for the discussion about a European-wide ratification referendum about the EU treaty reform. While the EU reform has now repeatedly encountered the problem of ‘critical states’, which could stop European integration all by their own, a Europe-wide referendum could reveal a real European cleavage between supporters and opponents of further European integration.

This assessment is based only on the analysis of party positions taken in the debate. The existence of two camps can foster a controversial debate which can also be beneficial

\(^1\) The ratification in Germany is subject to the decision of the German Constitutional Court which is still pending.
for the clarification of positions, and can thus contribute to the overall legitimacy of the European Union. The caveat is, again, that these positions are often not clearly communicated. This can, quite on the contrary, contribute to the perception of the EU as a rather diffused object of debate. Supporters of treaty reform would, therefore, be well advised to demonstrate their support of European integration more clearly because a ‘head-in-the-sand’ strategy will in any case not only harm the present treaty reform but European integration as a whole.

The problem with European party communication is neither that there isn’t any debate, nor that the debate is overtly de- or over-politicised. The problem with party political debate in Europe is the relatively high degree of intra-party dissent that coins much of the debate. This devalues the potentially positive impact of party competition on public opinion formation on European issues.
8. Appendices

The Appendices come in two parts. The technical appendix primarily contains information on the data used. It provides, first, a list of those political parties included in the analysis. Second, the media data set is presented in detail. A third section describes and discusses the other data sets used from the Eurobarometer to the ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey. The adjacent analytical appendix supplies information that is an inherent part of the analysis, e.g. most prominently the fsQCA matrix which contains the fuzzy set values of both dependent and independent variables. Besides, results of the tests conducted in the course of the analysis are presented.

8.1. Technical Appendix

8.1.1. List of Political Parties included in Analysis

Table 8.1. List of Political Parties included in Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>case_id</th>
<th>partyabbr</th>
<th>partynamel - original</th>
<th>partynamet - English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CSSD</td>
<td>Ceska strana socialne demokraticka</td>
<td>Czech Social Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>KDU-CSL</td>
<td>Krest'anska a demokraticka unie - Ceskoslovenska strana lidova</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Union - People's Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ODS</td>
<td>Obcanska demokraticka strana</td>
<td>Civic Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SNK ED</td>
<td>SNK Evropst demokrate</td>
<td>SNK European Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>US-DEU</td>
<td>Unie Svobody-Democraticka Unie</td>
<td>Freedom Union - Democratic Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>KSCM</td>
<td>Komunisticka strana Cech a Moravy</td>
<td>Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Christlich-Demokratische Union</td>
<td>Christian-Democratic Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party of Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>FDP</td>
<td>Freie Demokratische Partei</td>
<td>Free Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Christlich Soziale Union in Bayern</td>
<td>Christian Social Union in Bavaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Grünen</td>
<td>Bündnis 90/Die Grünen</td>
<td>Alliance 90/The Greens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case_id</td>
<td>partyabbr</td>
<td>partynamel- original</td>
<td>partynamet – English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>LINKE</td>
<td>Die Linke</td>
<td>The Left (former PDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>Die Republikaner</td>
<td>The Republicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>ER</td>
<td>Eesti Reformierakond</td>
<td>Reform Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>KESK</td>
<td>Eesti Keskerakond</td>
<td>Centre Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>SDE</td>
<td>Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ResP/Isama a</td>
<td>Isamaa ja Res Publica Liit or Erakond Isamaaliit</td>
<td>Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica (former RPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Rahvaliit</td>
<td>Eestimaa Rahvaliit</td>
<td>People's Union of Estonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>Union pour la Democratie Francaise</td>
<td>Union for the French Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Parti Socialiste</td>
<td>Socialist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>VERTS</td>
<td>Les Verts</td>
<td>The Greens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>UMP</td>
<td>Union pour un Mouvement Populaire</td>
<td>Union for a Popular Movement (former RPR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>MPF</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la France</td>
<td>Movement for France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>FN</td>
<td>Front National</td>
<td>National Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>PCF</td>
<td>Parti Communiste Francais</td>
<td>French Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>PRG</td>
<td>Parti Radical de Gauche</td>
<td>Left Radical Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej</td>
<td>Alliance of Democratic Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>PSL</td>
<td>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</td>
<td>Polish Peasants' Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Platforma Obywatelska</td>
<td>Civic Platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej</td>
<td>Self Defense of the Polish Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>PiS</td>
<td>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</td>
<td>Law and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>LPR</td>
<td>Liga Polskich Rodzin</td>
<td>League of Polish Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Labour Party</td>
<td>Labour Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>LibDem</td>
<td>Liberal Democrats</td>
<td>Liberal Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>SNP</td>
<td>Scottish National Party</td>
<td>Scottish National Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Cymru</td>
<td>Plaid Cymru</td>
<td>Party of Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>Green Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case id</td>
<td>partyabbr</td>
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<td>partyname2 – English</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Cons</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>UKIP</td>
<td>United Kingdom Independence Party</td>
<td>United Kingdom Independence Party</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 8.2. List of Selected Media Outlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Selected Newspapers</th>
<th>Quantitative Sample (no. of articles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Blesk, MFDnes, Právo, Reflex, Respekt, Tyden (6)</td>
<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Postimees, Päevaleht, Molodezh Estonii (3)</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Le Figaro, Le Monde, L’Express, Le Nouvel Observateur, Le Point (5)</td>
<td>4071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Bild, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Focus, Spiegel, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Die Welt, Die Zeit (7)</td>
<td>1451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita, Nasz Dziennik; Wprost, Newsweek Polska, Tygodnik Powszechny; Super Express, Europa (Fakt) (8)</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35 domestic print media outlets</td>
<td>8842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ConstEPS, compiled by author
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Author’s Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>28.10.04</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Union über Europäischen Verfassungsvertrag gespalten / &quot;Kern der Staatlichkeit Deutschlands darf nicht zur Disposition gestellt werden&quot; / Änderung des Grundgesetzes gefordert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>29.10.04</td>
<td>Stabenow, Michael</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Eine neue Verfassung mit ungewisser Zukunft / Vertragsunterzeichnung in Rom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>30.10.04</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Europa hat eine Verfassung: Krise um die EU-Kommission belastet das Gipfeltreffen in Rom Die wichtigsten Neuerungen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>08.10.04</td>
<td>Zuber, Helene /Hlau, Olaf</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>&quot;Deutschland soll Lokomotive sein&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>26.11.04</td>
<td>Valéry Giscard d’Estaing</td>
<td>President of Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>Zurück zur Vernunft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>30.10.04</td>
<td>Werner Mussler</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Zwischen Freiheit und Gleichheit / Die EU-Grundrechtecharta wird Teil des Verfassungsvertrages / Offener Rechtsstatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>03.12.04</td>
<td>Kröncke Gerd</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Lautes Ja zur EU-Verfassung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>09.12.04</td>
<td>Schwennicke Christoph</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Mit voller Kraft nach Europa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>07.01.05</td>
<td>Leithäuser Johannes</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Wendemanöver in der Glaubwürdigkeitsflaute / Die Klausur der CSU in Kreuth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>13.01.05</td>
<td>Alexander Hagelüken u Frank Nienhuysen</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Europas neue Verfassung: Die Regierungen haben gesprochen - nun müssen Völker und Parlamente entscheiden Ein Vertrag und seine Feinde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WELT</td>
<td>25.02.05</td>
<td>Hans-Jürgen Leersch</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Geburtsurkunde für neues Europa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>25.02.05</td>
<td>Rupp, Hans Heinrich</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Dominanz der Verfassung Europas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>15.03.05</td>
<td>Klaus Vaclav</td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>Eine Gefahr für die Demokratie und Freiheit in Europa Ein Gespräch mit dem tschechischen Präsidenten Vaclav Klaus über die Verfassung der EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>12.02.05</td>
<td>Leo Wieland</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Schrittmacher in der &quot;Avantgarde des europäischen Aufbaus&quot; / Der spanische Ministerpräsident Zapatero wirbt für den Verfassungsvertrag der Europäischen Union / Abstimmung am 20. Februar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>21.03.05</td>
<td>Wirtschaftswissen-schafter EU</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Gegen Zentralisierung in Europa Wirtschaftswissen-schafter rufen zur ablehnung des Verfassungsvertrages auf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>13.04.05</td>
<td>Wiegel Michaela</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Kein Plan B Der französische Außenminister Barnier wirbt für den EU-Verfassungsvertrag - mit prominenter Hilfe aus Deutschland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>14.04.05</td>
<td>Michael Mönninger</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Nein, aber ja! Französische Dialektik: Die Gegner der EU-Verfassung sehen sich als Retter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>21.04.05</td>
<td>Heribert Prantl</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Karlsruhe soll die Brücke sperren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>29.04.05</td>
<td>Horst Bacia</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Viele düstere Szenarien / Brüsseler Gedankenspiele: Was geschieht mit der EU, wenn das Verfassungsreferendum in Frankreich scheitert?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>09.05.05</td>
<td>Gerd Müller</td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>Wir sind Papierkorb der EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>09.092005</td>
<td>Darnstädt Thomas, Hammerstein, Konstantin, Leick, Romain, Schmidt</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Das Pathos hat ausgedient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeitung</td>
<td>Datum</td>
<td>Autor/Innen</td>
<td>Berufsbezeichnung</td>
<td>Thema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>09.05.2005</td>
<td>Elmar Brok</td>
<td>CDU-Politician, MEP</td>
<td>EU-Verfassung ist gut für alle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEIT</td>
<td>12.05.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>569 Ja, 23 Nein. Mit großer Mehrheit hat der Bundestag der EU-Verfassung zugestimmt - Ein klares Signal an den französischen Nachbarn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>13.05.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Bundestag billigt EU-Verfassungsvertrag / Zweitdrittmehrheit deutlich übertroffen / 23 Neinstimmen / Schröder: Krönendes Werk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>28.05.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Bundesrat billigt europäischen Verfassungsvertrag / &quot;Eine echte Verfassung&quot; / Enthaltung der Schweriner Koalition / Ablehnung der Franzosen erwartet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEIT</td>
<td>30.05.2005</td>
<td>Robert Leicht</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Wenn zwei das gleiche tun, ist das noch lange nicht das selbe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>31.05.2005</td>
<td>Gerd Kröhnecke</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Der Vater der Niederlage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>31.05.2005</td>
<td>GUSTAV SEIBT</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Ohne Trikolor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEIT</td>
<td>05.06.2005</td>
<td>Joachim Fritz-Vannahme, Jürgen Krönig und Petra Pinzler</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Die Zeit - Politik: Zurück zur Tagesordnung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILD</td>
<td>03.06.2005</td>
<td>GUNTER VERHEUGEN, PETER GAUWEILER</td>
<td>EU Commissioner, CSU MP</td>
<td>Die Menschen in Frankreich und den Niederlanden haben die neue EU-Verfassung abgelehnt. Heute können die Deutschen im Telefon-TED von BILD und RTL ihre Meinung sagen, ob sie das Pro-CEP verlassen möchten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>03.06.2005</td>
<td>Michael Stabenow</td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>Nach Holland ist ganz Europa in Not / Zeitschinderei in Brüssel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILD</td>
<td>04.06.2005</td>
<td>T. LOBE + J. TOPAR K. UGOWSKI</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>96,9 % bei Abstimmung gegen Europa-Verfassung Deutschland sagt NEIN! Referendum auch in Deutschland?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>04.06.2005</td>
<td>Robert Roßmann</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Die Zukunft Europas: Die Ablehnung der EU-Verfassung bereitet auf dem gesamten Kontinent Sorgen &quot;Niemand darf sich drücken&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>06.06.2005</td>
<td>Habermas Jürgen</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Über die Köpfe hinweggerollt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEIT</td>
<td>16.06.2005</td>
<td>Martin Klingst</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Die Zeit - Politik: Zwei Anwälte des Nationalstaats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEIT</td>
<td>23.06.2005</td>
<td>Josef Joffe</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Die Zeit - Politik: Nur ein Vorort Shanghais?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>04.07.2005</td>
<td>Michael Stabenow</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>London kämpft gegen einen Mythos / Premierminister Blair will als EU-Ratspräsident beweisen, daß seine Regierung keine europasketische ist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>06.07.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Franzose bittet Polen um Pardon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>11.07.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Luxemburger billigen EU-Verfassungsvertrag / 56,5 Prozent der Stimmberechtigten stimmen mit Ja / Juncker kann im Amt bleiben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>14.07.2005</td>
<td>Andrew Moravcsik</td>
<td>Political Scientist</td>
<td>Für ein Europa ohne Illusionen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAZ</td>
<td>11.08.2005</td>
<td>Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger, Günther Nonnenmacher</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Überladen, überdehnt</td>
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<td>FAZ</td>
<td>29.09.2005</td>
<td>José Manuel Barroso</td>
<td>EU Commission President</td>
<td>Barroso beklagt Populismus in der Europa-Debatte / &quot;Wir wünschen ein stabiles Deutschland&quot; / Ein Gespräch mit dem EU-Kommissionspräsidenten</td>
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<td>FAZ</td>
<td>22.10.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Differenzen über Verfassungsvertrag</td>
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<td>FAZ</td>
<td>05.09.2005</td>
<td>Redaktion</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Die Parteien und ihre Wahlprogramme - Antworten auf die wichtigsten Fragen</td>
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Die Welt  17.06.2005  Nikolaus Blome  Journalist  Auch in Deutschland liegt der EU-Vertrag jetzt auf Eis
FAZ  28.05.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  Bundesrat billigt europäischen Verfassungsvertrag / "Eine echte Verfassung" / Enthaltung der Schweriner Koalition / Ablehnung der Franzosen erwartet
SZ  03.06.2005  Robert Roßmann  Journalist  Schröder ist der Totengräber
FAZ  17.12.2004  Redaktion  Journalist  Auch Konservative uneins über "privilegierte Partnerschaft" / Merkel: Meinungen über EU-Beitritt der Türkei zu weit auseinander / Gipfeltreffen mit 25 EU-Regierungschefs in Brüssel
SZ  13.01.2005  Alexander Hageliiken  Journalist  Deutliche Mehrheit für die EU-Verfassung
FAZ  12.01.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  Kaum Verfassungsgegner in Straßburg / Überwältigende Mehrheit im Europäischen Parlament erwartet
SZ  08.04.2005  Christian Wernicke  Journalist  Europas Angst vor dem Asterix-
FAZ  10.05.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  EVP wirbt für das EU-Referendum
SZ  09.06.2005  Cornelia Bolesch  Journalist  Straßburg ratlos über Europas Weg
Die Welt  11.06.2005  Martin Halusa  Journalist  Europas Christdemokraten fordern "Atempause" bei der Ratifizierung
FAZ  08.06.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  EU-Parlament erwartet langsamere Erweiterung / Verheugen: Zusagen an die Türkei einhalten / Kritik an Glos
FAZ  22.06.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  Blair: Britenrabatt eine Anomalie / Auch Persson für Senkung der Agrarausgaben / Fünf-Punkte-Plan der SPD für Europa
FAZ  25.06.2005  Redaktion  Journalist  SPE-Präsident Rasmussen: EU nicht aufgeben
SZ  24.09.2005  Alexander Hageliiken  Journalist  Lektionen in Marktwirtschaft

Source: author/Marko Lübken 2006/2008

Table 8.4. Qualitative Sample United Kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Author’s Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>29. Okt 04</td>
<td>David Gow</td>
<td>Brussels correspondent</td>
<td>Pope steps in for his friend Buttiglione</td>
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<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>03. Nov 04</td>
<td>David Gow</td>
<td>Brussels correspondent</td>
<td>Barroso juggles his lineup in bid for approval</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>29. Okt 04</td>
<td>Robin Cook</td>
<td>Former UK secretary of state, labour</td>
<td>Comment and Analysis: A strong Europe - or Bush's feral US capitalism: The left can embrace the constitution;</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>24. Nov 04</td>
<td>David Charter</td>
<td>Chief Political Correspondent</td>
<td>Debate on European treaty splits Labour; The Queen's speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>25. Nov 04</td>
<td>Jackie Ashley</td>
<td></td>
<td>The anti-Brown campaign will hurt the party, not him: His rivals want to neutralise him, but Gordon holds the trump card</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>17. Dec 04</td>
<td>Michael White</td>
<td>Political editor</td>
<td>Benefits for both sides, insists Straw in pitch to the sceptics</td>
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<td>*Times</td>
<td>05. Jan 05</td>
<td>Bill Cash</td>
<td></td>
<td>No stability, no growth, no pact. It is time to confront the Euro disaster zone</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>18. Jan 05</td>
<td>Simon Wolfson</td>
<td>Head of Next and on the board of the 'Vote No' campaign</td>
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<td>Stronger partnership or a political blank cheque?; Opinion</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>20. Jan 05</td>
<td>Anatoile</td>
<td>Group Political Editor</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Kaletsky</td>
<td>It will be like herding cats</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mirror</td>
<td>27. Jan 05</td>
<td>David Seymour</td>
<td>Read this...then answer this question: Should the United Kingdom approve the treaty establishing a constitution for the European Union?</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>27. Jan 05</td>
<td>Tania Branigan</td>
<td>Straw kicks off the great EU debate: Foreign secretary unveils referendum question that will decide fate of European constitution</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>29. Jan 05</td>
<td>Rory Watson</td>
<td>Constitution made simple for voters</td>
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<td>Economist</td>
<td>10. Feb 05</td>
<td>Charlemagne</td>
<td>The great debate begins</td>
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<td>The Times</td>
<td>28. Feb 05</td>
<td>William Rees-</td>
<td>Are we fools led by liars?; Comment; Opinion</td>
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<td>The Times</td>
<td>24. Mar 05</td>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>The new infantilism;Chirac, European economic reform and the 'new communism'</td>
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<td>Observer</td>
<td>17. Apr 05</td>
<td>Will Hutton</td>
<td>Comment: A French lesson from Britain: It may surprise some, but Britain and the Labour manifesto offer a model for a more prosperous European Union</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>18. Apr 05</td>
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<td>Blair retreats from EU vote: British referendum unlikely if French say no on May 29</td>
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<td>25. Apr 05</td>
<td>William Rees-</td>
<td>Why this baffling silence?; Comment; Opinion</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>02. May 05</td>
<td>David Clark</td>
<td>A dream jettisoned, like ballast, to keep him afloat: Blair's attempt to lead Europe from the right provoked a backlash in France</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>13. May 05</td>
<td>Robert Sturdy,</td>
<td>MEP for Eastern Region (Conservative); Letter</td>
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<td>European Union proposal for a 48-hour working week</td>
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<td>Observer</td>
<td>15 May 05</td>
<td>Denis MacShane</td>
<td>MP Labour, former Europe minister 2002-2005</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Comment: Our last chance to make Europe work For the first time, Britain can lead the way to a truly united Continent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Times</td>
<td>19. May 05</td>
<td>Rosemary</td>
<td>Confusion is answer to referendum question</td>
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<td>Greg Hurst</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>20. May 05</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>'Yes' camp believes it can win in Britain despite Chirac's troubles;EU</td>
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<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>26. May 05</td>
<td>Timothy Garton Ash</td>
<td>Professor of contemporary European history and politics at St. Antony's College, Oxford University Comment and Analysis: Votez oui, malgre tout: The French may vote no out of fear. They should vote yes, for their own sake and ours</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>28. May 05</td>
<td>John Palmer</td>
<td>Political director of the European Policy Centre; from 1975 to 1997 he was the Guardian's European editor Comment and Letters: Scaremongering and delusions: The battle for Europe Who will benefit if France or the Netherlands votes to reject the constitutional treaty? : John Palmer Rejection of the treaty would backfire on those who want a more democratic, social Europe</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>*The Sunday Mirror</td>
<td>29 May 05</td>
<td>Paul Gilfeather</td>
<td>Political Editor French &quot;non&quot; to spark eu crisis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>*Times</td>
<td>30. May 05</td>
<td>Tim Hames</td>
<td>Journalist A thousand times non; Comment; Opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Times</td>
<td>30. May 05</td>
<td>Helen Rumbelow</td>
<td>Political Correspondent Reforms may now be on the agenda, Straw says</td>
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<td>*The Times</td>
<td>30. May 05</td>
<td>Anthony Browne and Rory Watson in Brussels</td>
<td>Brussels correspondents Leaders unite to press ahead with ratification regardless; EU Constitution</td>
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<td>*The Sun</td>
<td>31. May 05</td>
<td>George Pascoe-Watson</td>
<td>Deputy Political Editor No chance to vote no; PM will ditch our referendum</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Times</td>
<td>31. May 05</td>
<td>Anthony Browne and Rosemary Bennett</td>
<td>Battle for the heart of Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>02. Jun 05</td>
<td>Serge Halimi</td>
<td>Le Monde Diplomatique, author of Le Grand Bond en Arriere: Comment l'ordre liberal s'est impose au monde (The Great Leap Backward: How the liberal order was imposed on the world) Comment and Analysis: Thwarted by a surge of democracy: Under cover of unification, free market liberals hijacked Europe</td>
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<td>*The Times</td>
<td>02. Jun 05</td>
<td>Adam Sage</td>
<td>Journalist Discontented Dutch seize on chance to deliver protest vote; EU Constitution</td>
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<td>*Times</td>
<td>03. Jun 05</td>
<td>Anthony Brown</td>
<td>To leaders in Alice's magical land, it was a 'yes';EU Constitutio</td>
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<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>03. Jun 05</td>
<td>diverse</td>
<td>Guardian Weekly: Euro visions: Some suggest the entire European project has been badly damaged by France's decisive rejection of the constitution. Is it possible to salvage the EU dream? We asked key thinkers how they would fix it</td>
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<td>*Guardian</td>
<td>07. Jun 05</td>
<td>Tania Branigan</td>
<td>Political Correspondent MPs warn Straw not to smuggle in treaty by back door: Future of Europe Labour's Eurosceptics join forces with Tory backbenchers to make sure 'dead parrot' treaty is not resurrected in law</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>13. Jun 05</td>
<td>Michael White, Tania Branigan</td>
<td>Policy and politics: Europhile says it's time for Euro-realism</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>17. Jun 05</td>
<td>Anthony Browne</td>
<td>Constitution leaves EU weak and broken; EU Summit</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>20. Jun 05</td>
<td>Peter Mandelson</td>
<td>Comment and Analysis: More than a squabble: this goes to the heart of Europe: The EU faces a stark choice - painful reforms, or economic decline</td>
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<td>Economist</td>
<td>23. Jun 05</td>
<td>Charlemagne</td>
<td>The delusions of Mr Juncker. Introducing the Louis XVI prize, for being out of touch</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>25. Jun 05</td>
<td>Anthony Browne</td>
<td>A wind of change starts to blow across Europe</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>01 Jul 05</td>
<td>Leading Article</td>
<td>Rhetoric and reality; Big ideas must be matched by attention to the practicalities of EU reform</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>25. Jul 05</td>
<td>Rosemary Righter</td>
<td>Why we must all learn to love Brussels; Economic View</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>31. Aug 05</td>
<td>Leading Article</td>
<td>Our watershed moment: Britain and Europe</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>07. Sep 05</td>
<td>John Monks</td>
<td>Europe is all we've got</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>04. Oct 05</td>
<td>Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens</td>
<td>Nationalism has now become the enemy of Europe's nations: If the EU were abolished, we would have less control over our affairs. Article is being published in newspapers across the EU and elsewhere.</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>24. Oct 05</td>
<td>Anthony Browne</td>
<td>We cannot hide. EU must accept globalisation or we are nothing! Interview; Jose Manuel Barroso; EU Summit</td>
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<td>Economist</td>
<td>01. Sep 05</td>
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<td>The bruise returns to the ring! Has enough changed for Ken Clarke finally to be a winner?</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>05. Sep 05</td>
<td>David Clark</td>
<td>Britain's claim to economic superiority is built on sand: Any 'Anglo-social' features to be admired are borrowed from Europe</td>
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<td>Observer</td>
<td>04. Sep 05</td>
<td>Ned Temko</td>
<td>Clarke's crucial cricket summit: Inspired by Flintoff and co, the Tories' 'big beast' wrongfooted his rivals by entering the leadership race early last week.</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>10 Sep 05</td>
<td>Anthony Brown</td>
<td>UKIP given Pounds 170,000 from Europe...to fight Europe</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>04. Oct 05</td>
<td>Leading Article</td>
<td>Doctor has the right medicine</td>
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<td>Guardian</td>
<td>24. Okt 05</td>
<td>Jackie Ashley</td>
<td>Blair and Brown agree on this: Europe isn't working: A radical shift in thinking is quietly under way at both No 10 and No 11, to put the nation-state back at the centre of the EU</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: author 2008
8.1.3. Description of Data Sets

The Eurobarometers

The European Commission started conducting large scale public opinion surveys – the Eurobarometers – in 1973. Since then this has produced a continuous series of bi-annual surveys. Each year one survey is carried out in spring and the other in autumn. Standard Eurobarometers are based on a nationally representative sample of 1000 respondents (exceptions include smaller sample sizes for specific regions, e.g. East and West Germany, and for Luxembourg).

Schmitt (2003) reports three major changes in the operation of the Eurobarometers: (1) the growing number of member states – which grew from then 9 to now 27, (2) the length (or duration) of a Eurobarometer interview which has been extended considerably, and (3) the “dispersion of Eurobarometer instruments”, i.e. the additions made to the original ‘Standard Eurobarometer’, the so-called ‘Flash Eurobarometer’, the ‘Qualitative Eurobarometer Survey’, and last but not least, the ‘Candidate Countries’ Eurobarometer’ (CCEB) (Schmitt 2003: 244). The latter is of particular interest to the present project because Eurobarometer data is used for the time frame between 2001 and 2005. Three of the country cases, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Poland, did not become EU members until 2004, and data is therefore taken from the CCEB.

Christopher Flood cautions us in regard to the Eurobarometer data that this does not represent one ‘European public opinion’ but rather captures “different national public opinions” (Flood 2002: 74). It is in this sense that the data is used in this work. National public opinion is conceptualised as a contextual factor impacting on party political behaviour. Country groups of political parties are therefore coded with one value representing the degree of the respective public’s support for European integration.

All reports and most data on the Eurobarometer findings can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm.
**Comparative Manifesto Project and Euromanifestos Project**

In 1979 the Manifesto Research Group (MRG) was established in Essex and started coding the content of party manifestos (starting with manifestos from 1945) with the aim of analysing policy positions of parties across countries using a standardised framework. In 1989 the MRG was dissolved and the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) continued the research at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB), finally providing a coded manifesto data set on all OECD and CEE countries up to 2003 (Klingemann et al 2006: xvi-xxiii). The coded data sets are available on CD with the project’s publications as cited above.

In the year 2000 a spin-off, the ‘Euromanifestos Project’ (EMP), was established at the MZES in Mannheim which since has coded (guaranteeing comparability with the CMP data) “all European Parliament election programs of all parties ever represented in that body” (Wüst/Volkens 2003: 1, Braun et al. 2007). It does include information on parties’ position on a European Constitution.

For this project the Euromanifestos data set alone provides the necessary information on party positions on European integration and on the TCE respectively. The data is available on request.

For the present analysis only the data on the 2004 election manifestos was used. Even if some parties had declared the need for the constitutionalisation of the Union before, for most parties this only became a ‘campaign’ issue in 2004. Also, the parties from the CEEC had only joined shortly before the 2004 elections, and therefore had not developed a platform on EU issues before at all.

**Chapel Hill Expert Survey on National Parties and the EU**

In 1984 Ray published the first “expert survey on national parties and the European Union” at the University of Carolina, the ‘Chapel Hill dataset’ which has been regularly conducted in a comparable way (the authors claim 95% of the questionnaire to be identical over time). The latest accessible data is of 2002. For data collection questionnaires are sent to leading party experts in the countries analysed who are asked to give their view on the position of the national parties. Actually, the survey is
explicitly interested in the position of the party leadership “as opposed to the party
base” (2002 CES Expert Survey). Information and data can be found at

A range of questions usually addresses specific policy areas. A scale ranging from
support to rejection is provided which the expert is supposed to mark. The survey does
not contain explicit information on a party’s position towards the TCE. It does,
however, explicitly ask which salience European integration has for a respective party.
More important is the question on the degree of conflict or dissent within a party on
European.

As both instruments, the manifesto content analysis and the expert survey, share a
similar aim, opinions differ as to which is best suited to reach that aim and they have
seldom be used in combination for cross-validation or triangulation. Obviously both
data sources have advantages and disadvantages. In 2004, Hix/Gabel on the one hand
and Hooghe/Marks/Wilson on the other used different data – manifesto versus expert
judgements – for answering basically the same question and arrived at rather different
conclusions regarding the structuration of the EU political space. Only recently this mis-
match has been object of academic study, though. A systematic test of both instruments
(and two others) has been conducted by Marks and colleagues (i.e. the chapel hill team)
who find that, overall, – even though all are week in correctly measuring the positions
of small and extreme parties – the expert survey is the most valid, but not as good as the
instruments combined (Marks et al. 2007).

For further information see the special issue of Electoral studies Vol. 26(1), March
2007, here also Volkens 2007.

**ConstEPS Intermediaries Survey on EU Constitutionalisation**

The Bremen ConstEPS group in 2007 conducted a cross-country survey which
explicitly covered intermediary actors’ positions and activities in regard to the
constitutional reform process.

A survey data set of in total 143 interviews with representatives of intermediary
organisations, i.e. political parties, economic interest associations and civil society
organisation, was collected. The questionnaire was designed to assess the European
constitutional process by focusing on the role of political party actors, economic interest associations and social groups. The data set allows exploring the structure, positions, activities and networks of/among these intermediary actors.

The research has been carried out, among others, in the country cases described in chapter 3, i.e. in six old and the new member states, including the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Poland, and Great Britain. Each carefully selected country sample includes 24 interviews with 8 political, 8 economic, and 8 civil society actors. The organisations were sampled according to a pre-defined set of agreed criteria: A number of organisations were chosen ‘bottom-up’, i.e. by their involvement of in the constitutional process (as documented by media analysis or convention documents and internet fora). Other organisations were selected precisely because they did not seem to be particularly interested or involved in the reform process. Additionally, the survey sought to include as wide a range of societal groups as possible – such as youth, women and minority representatives, employers as well as trade unions, pro-European as well as eurosceptic organisations, large and small, government as well as opposition parties etc..

The approximately one-hour interviews have been conducted face-to-face by ConstEPS research fellows and associates (i.e. by native language speakers, with the exception of GB) between January and June 2007 in the respective countries. The timing was fortunate because in June 2007 the European Council in Berlin actually terminated the constitutional process and instead launched of the ‘Reform process’ which succinctly led to the Lisbon Treaty. Thus, the interviewees were able to retrospectively present, explain and evaluate their position and activities throughout the constitutional process.

For this study, primarily the interviews with 38 party actors are of relevance. On the one hand, this is a relatively small number. On the other hand, considering that the interviews have been designed specifically for not only measuring party positions on the constitutional project and its various aspects but furthermore enquire on the activities and communication efforts, the survey constitutes a very valuable source of information.
### 8.2. Analytical Appendix

#### 8.2.1. Empirical Operationalisation of Causal Factors

Table 8.5. Empirical Operationalisation of Causal Factors

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<td>Ideological inter-party competition</td>
<td>Party Family Position on EU Integration</td>
<td>Stances towards European Integration in general but particularly political integration as it proposed by TCE</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Set of parties belonging to the core of pro-European core party families</td>
<td>1 = party belongs to strong pro-integrationist core, i.e. social-democrats, christian-democrats and liberals; 0.7 = party belongs to politically in general pro-integrationist green party family, 0.3 = party belongs to conservative party family 0 = party belongs to radical left or populist right, strongly opposed to further European integration</td>
<td>Euromanifestos (EMP) the Chapel Hill Expert Judgements, Lewis/Mansfeldova 2006</td>
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<td>Party Position on EU Constitution</td>
<td>Official Position on the issue of an EU constitution</td>
<td>Stances towards European Integration in general but particularly political integration as it proposed by TCE</td>
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<td>Set of parties with a declared positive stance on a European Constitution</td>
<td>1= party is in favour of EU constitution 0 = party is against EU constitution or has not formulated a position on EU constitution</td>
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<td>Closeness/distance to power centre in domestic party political arena, i.e. to government</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Set of parties in governmental power</td>
<td>1 = incumbent party, senior coalition partner; 0.7 = incumbent party, junior coalition partner; 0.3 = parliamentary opposition party; 0 = not in national parliament (= protest party)</td>
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<td>Party Participation in Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>Closeness/distance to power in European political reform arena, i.e. Constitutional Convention</td>
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<td>Set of parties participating in the Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1 = Party representatives were full members; 0.7 = Party representatives were candidate/alternate members; 0.4 = No party representatives were full/alternate members; 0 = No party representatives were candidate members</td>
<td>Own compilation, use of Convention Archive at <a href="http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=en">http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=en</a></td>
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<td>Salience of EU Integration for Party</td>
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<td>Set of parties for which EI is an important issue</td>
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<td>Party Unity on EU Integration</td>
<td>Degree of internal consent and dissent in party leadership</td>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Set of parties with a solid agreement on EI within the leadership</td>
<td>1 = a party is completely united; 0.7 = the party is mostly united; minor dissent; 0.3 = significant internal dissent; 0 = strong internal dissent, strongly divided</td>
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<td>Strategic party behaviour/ practice</td>
<td>Party Media Management</td>
<td>self-assessment of political party actors in respect to organising/participating in public events, public protest and media relations</td>
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<td>Set of parties actively communicating on the TCE</td>
<td>1 = high effort to communicate; 0.7 = rather actively communicating; 0.3 = somewhat active; 0 = no to low effort</td>
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<td>Context Conditions</td>
<td>Public Participation in Treaty Reform</td>
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<td>Referendum</td>
<td>Set of parties in a context of high public participation in treaty ratification</td>
<td>1 = referendum has taken place; 0.7 = referendum planned – postponed/cancelled; 0.3 = parliamentary ratification carried out; 0 = parliamentary ratification planned – postponed/cancelled.</td>
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<td>Diffuse Public Opinion on EU Integration</td>
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<td>Set of parties in a context of public opinion in favour of EI</td>
<td>1 = Strongly Pro-European; 0.8 = Pro-European; 0.6 = moderately Pro-European; 0.4 = moderately eurosceptic; 0.2 = eurosceptic; 0 = strongly eurosceptic</td>
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### 8.2.2. fsQCA Data Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables

Table 8.6. fsQCA Data Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables

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The table above represents data related to PCF, PRG, SLD, PSL, PO, S, PIS, LPR, Lab, LibDem, SNP, Cymru, Greens, Cons, and UKIP, with numerical values indicating various metrics or scores.
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Erklärung über die eigenständige Anfertigung dieser Arbeit

Hier mit erkläre ich, dass ich

- die Arbeit ohne unerlaubte Hilfe angefertigt habe,

- keine anderen, als die von mir angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt habe und

- die den benutzten Werken wörtlich oder inhaltlich entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht habe.

Bremen, 01. Juli 2009