

The Conditions and Nature of Europeanized Public Discourse

A Multi-Lingual QTA Analysis of Public Discourses in Europe Using the
Internet Archive, 2016-2019

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Inaugural dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Social Sciences in the Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences
at the University of Mannheim

School of Social Sciences

University of Mannheim

Germany

January 2022

Fakultät für Sozialwissenschaften

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Tag der Disputation: 16. Mai 2022

Summary

European integration considerably changes public discourses in the member states of the European Union. In the late 2010s, the member states of the European Union debate political issues within their respective national public spheres and consider the European multi-level system, implying Europeanized public discourse. In this work, I examine the conditions for the Europeanization of public discourse and the nature of Europeanized public discourse. According to a theoretical framework building on postfunctionalist theories of European integration, mainstream opposition and challenger parties with strong positive and negative preferences on European integration have incentives to strategically shape Europeanized public discourse. Therefore, the interaction of mainstream and challenger parties in the party systems of the member states of the European Union is crucial for the Europeanization of public discourse. Mainstream and challenger parties influence both the saliency and the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. However, as the member states interact within the European multi-level system, public discourses in other member states as well as on the European level must be considered for understanding how Europeanized public discourse evolves. I test several hypotheses considering three important political issues - economy, security and migration - using a self-compiled data set of about 3 million newspaper articles in 24 different languages from all EU member states retrieved from the Internet Archive between 2016 and 2019. Methodologically, I develop several multi-lingual dictionaries using automated translation and propose a novel evaluation method for multi-lingual structural topic models. The results indicate that mainstream opposition and challenger parties increase the saliency of Europeanized public discourse. Furthermore, the polarization of Europeanized public discourse builds upon the interaction of challenger parties with strong preferences on European integration and mainstream opposition parties. Additionally, the national party system must comprise mainstream opposition parties, pro-EU and anti-EU challenger parties for a Europeanized and polarized public discourse to emerge. Finally, as a result of increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse the nature of public discourse as such changes substantially. This work provides a framework and first empirical evidence on the Europeanization of public discourses in all EU member states, using multi-lingual quantitative text analysis on a large data set retrieved from the Internet Archive. It serves as a basis to gain a better understanding on public discourse in the European multi-level system.

Keywords

European integration, Europeanized public discourse, multi-lingual text analysis, mainstream and challenger parties, Structural Topic Models

Acknowledgements

I would not have been able to finish this dissertation project without the support of a large number of colleagues, friends, and my family.

First, I want to thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Harald Schoen. He always encouraged me to think out-of-the-box and supported me during the journey of this project by providing structure and orientation whenever needed. Harald, I want to thank you for a great time, and all the accomplishments we achieved together. You taught me scientific and critical thinking, and I will be forever grateful for what I have learned in the last years. Further, I want to thank Prof. Dr. Marc Debus and Prof. Dr. Richard Traunmüller for agreeing to join the board of examiners.

During my eleven years at the University of Mannheim, I have crossed paths with several remarkable people from which I have learned tremendously. I want to thank my (former) colleagues at the Chair of Political Psychology Maria Preißinger, Dr. Matthias Mader, Dr. Alexander Wuttke, Lea Gärtner, Lukas Isermann, and Leonie Rettig. It was always like working with friends instead of just colleagues. Also thank you, Uschi, for always assisting with administrative tasks at the chair. I also want to thank the staff at the Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences for being always supportive when facing administrative issues. In particular, I want to thank Milanka Stojkovic and Marion Lehnert for their assistance and useful tips. Next, I want to thank my colleagues from the MZES project ‘Fighting Together, Moving Apart? European Common Defence and Shared Security in an Age of Brexit and Trump’ funded by the VW-Foundation. In particular, I want to thank Moritz Neubert, Prof. Dr. Jason Reifler, Prof. Dr. Tom Scotto, Prof. Dr. Stephanie Hoffmann, and Dr. Catarina Thomson. It was a pleasure working with you.

Furthermore, I want to thank Guido Ropers, Verena Kunz, Oke Bahnsen, Dr. Sebastian Juhl, David Hilpert, Britt Bolin, Marcel Neunhoeffler, Dr. Mirka Henninger, Philip Fränkl, Arne Lange, Christoph Theil, Julia Marinitsch, Theresa Bührle, and Dr. Sophie Scharf for the great time we spent together at the University of Mannheim.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for supporting me during the last few years. To my parents, Anastasius and Anna, thank you for paving the way for me to pursue a Ph.D. To my brother Nikolas and my in-laws Andrea and Janik for always encouraging me. Finally, I want to thank my wife Galina. Your motivation, support, and love were the cornerstones to finish this project.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

With the election of Donald J. Trump as president of the United States and the decision of the British people to leave the European Union (EU), political commentators, pundits, and scholars of political communication were reminded of how easily and fundamentally political elites and parties are able to influence and shape political debates (Wells et al. 2020; Walter 2019; C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). This includes both the issues discussed and how political debates are held in media and, more generally, in the public sphere. Although the election of Trump may represent a particularly strong case in this regard, political elites – whether individual candidates or political parties as collective actors – aim to shape public discourse to increase their electoral appeal and credibility compared to their political competitors. Dominating public discourse shapes public opinion and ultimately possibly even the electorate’s voting behavior (Zaller 1992; Habermas 2006; Eberl et al. 2018).

The objective of influencing and shaping public discourse is common to all political elites competing for electoral success. When shaping public discourse, political elites are able to advocate for their narrative of the political world and thus increase the level of legitimization

and support for their political ideas. It is therefore crucial for political elites to control how politics is discussed. In recent decades, public discourse has mainly been restricted to the national (domestic) level, making it relatively easy for political elites to shape what is discussed in politics and differentiate themselves from their political competitors. However, the notion that politics and thus public discourse are restricted to the national level has become obsolete in most modern democracies (Zürn 2019; Zürn and de Wilde 2016). This applies to the member states of the EU perhaps more strongly than for any other democracies in the world (Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016; Kriesi and Grande 2014). The EU has evolved to a multi-level system with shared competencies between the national and the European levels in several policy fields (Marks, Hooghe, and Blank 1996). Given this fundamental shift in policy-making, it is important to examine whether and how these changes are reflected in the public discourse on politics as well.

A large body of literature has focused on the implications of increased European integration, as Europe has gradually moved from mere economic integration to political integration in the last decades. These implications cover not only the decision-making processes in the institutions of the EU, but also their influence on the political systems, the behavior and strategies of political parties, public opinion, and political communication in the member states of the EU (Kuhn 2019; Hooghe and Marks 2019). Starting in the early 1990s, scholars from different sub-disciplines on European integration began to acknowledge that European integration is no longer a technocratic solution to economic issues within a community of more or less sovereign countries. European integration began to interfere in the lives of European citizens so intensively that the existing theoretical models of neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism (Haas 1958; Lindberg and Scheingold 1970; Moravcsik 2005; Hoffmann 1966) were no longer able to explain various phenomena that resulted from further integration, such as agrarian protests against European regulations, votes for anti-EU challenger parties to the European Parliament, and the rejection of the European Constitution by the French and Dutch people (Imig and Tarrow 2001; Hobolt and Brouard 2011; Adam

and Maier 2011; Aarts and van der Kolk 2006). Building upon the relevance of identity and representation, and the resulting politicization of European issues due to neglect of these aspects, new theoretical frameworks have provided reasonable explanations for the changing EU (Gerhards 2000; Koopmans 2004; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Kriesi et al. 2006; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2005). In general, these theoretical frameworks can be subsumed under the label of post-functionalism. They add important additional explanations of public opinion toward European integration both in general (Jabko and Luhman 2019; Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016) and toward specific issues (Irondelle, Mérand, and Foucault 2015; Grande, Schwarzbözl, and Fatke 2019; Lobo and Pannico 2020), voting behavior (Hernández 2018; Ford and Jennings 2020), strategies of political parties (especially considering Euroskeptical challenger parties), (Zürn 2019; Adam et al. 2017), and public discourse on European integration (Risse 2014).

Public discourse on European integration has often only been examined from a normative perspective, discussing which prerequisites are necessary for a true European democracy to emerge (Koopmans 2004; Gerhards 2000). From a post-functional perspective on European integration, the emergence and politicization of a European public sphere as a prerequisite for true European democracy and public discourse of Europeans within the EU is crucial (but see Statham and Trenz 2015). Different approaches have been used to empirically test whether and how signs of Europeanized public discourse can be investigated (Brantner, Dietrich, and Saurwein 2005; Kriesi and Grande 2014; Grill and Boomgaarden 2017; Dutceac Segesten and Bossetta 2019a). However, up to now, Europeanized public discourse research has mostly focused on specific events, media outlets, or countries to examine whether public discourse has actually become Europeanized. The results of these studies have shown that during European elections and in selected quality media outlets, there have been some indications of Europeanized public discourse. What has not yet been examined in depth is whether and how political parties pursuing different strategies for Europeanizing public discourse for electoral purposes actually shape public discourse; in particular the electoral cycle as

a whole in all EU member states has not been considered (but see Guinaudeau and Palau 2016). Furthermore, it remains unclear whether and how the institutional setting of the European multi-level system influences how European issues are discussed within and beyond the member states of the EU.

To answer these research questions, it is important to understand how public discourse is structured in modern European democracies and what roles political parties¹ play in shaping public discourse – both in terms of which and how political issues are discussed. Considering the changed political environment for the member states of the EU with increased European integration in the last decades, I examine the role of national political parties on the domestic level in the (absence of) Europeanization of public discourse. I argue that public discourse and media attention on increased European integration and the implications for policy-making on both the national and the European level do not just follow a functionalist logic, but are dependent on preferences and strategies of the political parties and the arenas of public discourse on the national level. Such Europeanization of public discourse is not inevitably derived from institutional settings and increased competencies on the European level in several policy fields but depends on the dynamics, processes, strategies, and preferences of political parties on the domestic level (Hooghe and Marks 2009).

In accordance with research on issue competition and the politicization of European integration (Green-Pedersen 2007; Hutter and Kriesi 2019), I assume that mainstream parties responsible for governmental positions over the last decades in which European integration has been pursued in an unpoliticized environment do not want to bring “Europe” into public discourse, aiming to depoliticize the idea of a unified Europe. However, from the 1980s on, this “permissive consensus” (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970) has been challenged by new political parties that have identified European integration as a possibility for mobilization and political contestation (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). In line with the notion of main-

¹In this study, I only consider the influence of political parties as collective actors on the Europeanization of public discourse. I do not take into account how individual politicians might have an additional impact. I therefore address political parties rather than political elites from this point forward.

stream and challenger parties in EU member states and their influence on public discourse, I examine different aspects of public discourse in this dissertation. I first examine whether the Europeanization of public discourse increases in both width (saliency) and depth (polarization) with the increasing strength of challenger parties in the political system; then, I explore whether the content of public discourse actually changes – and becomes politicized – with increased depth of Europeanized public discourse. In other words, I examine the conditions under which public discourse becomes Europeanized and analyze the nature of public discourse when Europeanized.

In this dissertation, I conceptualize public discourse in the EU as a multi-level sphere-arena framework with the media arena as the main location of public discourse. Political parties do not actively take part in the media arena, but by using their institutional advantage as part of the electoral, parliamentary, and governmental arenas, they are able to shape public discourse within the national sphere. Going beyond the notion of public discourse within the national sphere, I further examine how public discourse in other member states and on the European level influences the Europeanization of public discourse on the domestic level. By taking into account the interdependence between the member states and the European level in shaping the Europeanization of public discourse, I extend existing research covering the influence of domestic political parties in fostering or preventing the Europeanization of public discourse (Adam and Maier 2011; Guinaudeau and Palau 2016; Braun and Schmitt 2020). Furthermore, I consider not only certain special events but also public discourse during “ordinary political times” to test whether the impact of political parties varies over time. Finally, by using automated natural language processing tools, I cover all EU member states and furthermore examine public discourse in greater detail compared to prior research, which mostly only covered the saliency of Europeanized public discourse (e.g., Guinaudeau and Palau 2016).

To empirically test my framework and the underlying assumptions regarding the strategies

of political parties in shaping public discourse and its Europeanization, I examine newspaper articles in all EU member states and the closest neighbors of the EU (Switzerland and Norway) between 2016 and 2019. This time span offers a good case for testing my assumptions since both the political conflicts within and between the political systems of the EU and the events taking place during this time span provide the potential for the Europeanization of public discourse.

With the decision of the British people to leave the EU on June 23, 2016 and the election of Donald Trump as the 45th U.S. president on November 8 in the same year, the EU faced two fundamental threats (one internal and the other external) to its integrity, forcing political parties to articulate their positions on the future of political decision-making in the EU and of the EU as a whole. Additionally, the EU faced several crises during these four years. In 2016, most countries in the EU had to cope with the challenges of large migration influxes starting in late 2015 and becoming relevant on the European level with the adoption of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement. Between 2016 and 2018 Islamic terrorism threatened European societies with several devastating terrorist attacks in Berlin, Brussels, London, and Paris. Although they had overcome the Great Recession between 2008 and 2013, several European countries still faced slow economic growth and high unemployment rates, challenging social cohesion both within and between the member states of the EU.

The economic and political turmoil after the Great Recession resulted in fundamental shifts in the political systems for almost all European party systems. New challenger parties received political support for proposing alternative ideas on European integration, either proposing stronger cooperation and greater integration of the Union or opposing the integration of the EU altogether (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). As such, these parties significantly differed from established mainstream parties in the European party systems, which usually had not taken strong positions on European integration in the last decades to prevent the politicization of the integration process in Europe (van de Wardt 2015). Between 2016 and

2019, pro- and anti-EU challenger parties received considerable support in many countries, making the Europeanization of public discourse more likely in these countries.

I analyze this four-year time span to take into account temporal and spatial differences over a considerably long period. During this timeframe, each and every member state of the EU has had at least one national election, and the election of the European Parliament took place, allowing for the examination of how differences in the party composition affected the Europeanization of public discourse. However, the timeframe is not excessively long for fundamental changes in the integration process to have taken place, thus holding the level of European integration relatively stable. As mentioned above, the events that took place during this span of time increased the potential for further accelerating Europeanized public discourse. I therefore expect my analysis to be a most likely case to test my framework and its underlying assumptions. In other words, if the influence of political parties on the Europeanization of public discourse is not evident during this timeframe, it is unlikely that my theoretical framework on public discourses in the European multi-level system would find any empirical support at all.

To summarize, in this dissertation I examine the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse. Applying a quantitative text analysis approach on large corpora of newspaper articles from all EU member states, Norway, and Switzerland derived from the Internet Archive, I test whether and how political parties influence the Europeanization of public discourse. The empirical analyses show that both challenger parties with strong preferences on European integration and mainstream opposition parties are crucial to public discourse becoming more and intensively Europeanized. This effect even increases during the election campaign for the European elections. Additionally, the results show that public discourse between member states intensifies when countries are more geographically proximate. It is important to note that public discourse on the European level, driven by the European Parliament, does not influence the Europeanization of public discourse. Thus, the results

of my research indicate that political parties, the structure of the European multi-level system, and specific events are the most important conditions for the Europeanization of public discourse – with regard to both the saliency and the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. The results further indicate that the content of Europeanized public discourse actually varies substantially with increased polarization.

1.2 Approach of This Dissertation

In this study, I apply a post-functional approach to political arenas and the influence of political parties on public discourse in the European multi-level system (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Therefore, I focus on public discourse operationalized as national print media in the online format. Political arenas, in this regard, serve as the space in which political parties interact, shaping political decision-making and public discourse in the European multi-level system. I focus on the political institutions that shape public discourse in the European multi-level system and examine how the preferences and strategies of political parties within these institutions influence the means of public discourse. In addition to shedding light on their institutional impact on public discourse, I also examine the tone and content communicated in Europeanized public discourse. The preferences of political parties in the relevant political institutions do not only influence whether a European component should take place in national public discourses at large. The institutional setup of the European multi-level system should also have a decisive impact on politics and political communication, when public discourse takes into account the European level. Furthermore, I take into consideration exogenous events, as well as economic and political conditions, as it is reasonable to assume that political institutions react to these events or take economic and political conditions into account. Without considering these factors, I am not able to determine the distinct influence of increased European integration on how political issues are discussed in public discourse within the EU and between the member states.

Although I examine the interdependence of political parties located in different political arenas within the public sphere, I do not cover specific sender-receiver relations between individual actors or the relationship between the public, media, and political parties. In contrast, I focus on the function of the respective political parties within their political arenas, considering how public discourse is shaped in the European multi-level system. This implies taking the preferences and strategies of the actors in their respective political arenas into account. However, I do not cover complex patterns of political communication, such as the politicization of issues or the framing of political issues (Hutter and Grande 2014; Semetko, de Vreese, and Peter 2000). Although politicization makes up a substantial portion of the literature on political communication in the EU and on the issue of European integration (Schimmelfennig, Leuffen, and Rittberger 2015; Bruycker 2020; Ares, Ceka, and Kriesi 2017; Börzel and Risse 2018), it is not the main focus of this project.

Politicization of issues usually refers to understanding how and when issues become part of public discourse, such as European integration from the 1980s onward (Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016). In this dissertation, the focus lies on the conditions and strategic decisions of political parties in making new issues relevant to public discourse. I therefore focus on how existing political issues in public discourse are considered differently due to the increased interdependence of member states in the European multi-level system. To do so, I build upon the literature addressing issue competition and politicization of European integration (Green-Pedersen 2007; Meguid 2005). In this sense, one could speak of reframing political issues when considering the Europeanization of public discourse. Although these analyses might be comprised of certain aspects of framing (Entman 1993) and politicization (Hutter and Grande 2014), it definitely does not cover these concepts to a reasonable degree, which prohibits me from addressing changing frames and politicization due to increased European integration in this project.

To summarize, my dissertation follows a post-functional approach of political parties and

their influence on public discourse in an integrated EU. Through this approach, I examine general patterns of public discourse over a reasonably long time span and investigate how strategic decisions by political elites and structural conditions of political institutions in the political arenas shape public discourse. Consequently, I focus on how the Europeanization of politics has influenced public discourse on different political issues in EU member states, shaping public discourse and its contents in terms of Europe's saliency, as well as the interdependence between public discourses in different EU member states. Put simply, I examine the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse.

1.3 Key Innovations and Contributions

This dissertation project is characterized by two theoretical contributions, a self-compiled unique data set of millions of online newspaper articles covering four years of public discourse in 30 European countries, and two methodological contributions on multi-lingual quantitative text analysis. Addressing the theoretical contributions first, I expand classical models of nation-centric public discourse with a multi-level component, including a supra-national level, that shapes public discourse on the national level and also the interdependencies of the member states. Second, in contrast to prior research, I seriously consider political parties and institutions when trying to understand how and under which conditions the Europeanization of public discourse takes place, thereby reshaping how political issues are discussed in public discourse. As a result, I am able to test whether the preferences and strategies of political parties influence not only parliamentary and governmental discourse, but also public discourse. To be able to do so, I make use of a self-compiled dataset of national newspaper articles from all EU member states and its closest non-EU neighboring states (Norway and Switzerland), covering all newspaper articles available online in the Internet Archive from 82 newspaper outlets, encompassing the entire time span of 2016-2019. This dataset contains almost 3 million newspaper articles in 24 languages, one of the most comprehensive

datasets ever used to examine public discourse in the EU. Furthermore, I have developed the R package *archiveRetriever* (Gavras and Isermann 2021), enabling researchers to easily collect data from the Internet Archive on their own and provide reproducible results for research on political communication.

Analyzing a dataset encompassing 24 different languages represented an extraordinary challenge and could not reasonably be accomplished on a manual basis by a single doctoral candidate. I therefore made use of several tools from quantitative text analysis and automated translation APIs. I make use of the Google Translate API (Google 2021) to set up several dictionaries, allowing me to examine different political issues, determine the European component of public discourse, and analyze the sentiment of the articles. Using time-series cross-sectional analyses, this approach allows me to test whether and how political parties played a role in shaping public discourse in the European multi-level system. Based upon this architecture, I applied structural topic models (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019) to examine how the content of public discourse changed when public discourse was Europeanized. By using back-translation tools and similarity scores from natural language processing libraries (Vasilev 2020), I was able to compare, differentiate and cluster topics from corpora in several languages. This allowed for an examination of the nature of Europeanized public discourse on an aggregated level. This may not have allowed me to detect important nuances in the content of public discourse but nevertheless enabled me to visualize general patterns of Europeanized public discourse. This was not possible in former studies on Europeanized public discourse and represents an important step in understanding how political issues are discussed in the context of European integration.

Building upon these three pieces of innovation, I examined the conditions for changes in public discourse due to increased European integration and empirically test whether Europe actually plays an important role in public discourse on the national level. Furthermore, taking into consideration all EU member states enabled me to test whether Europeanization

of public discourse was really driven by the supranational European institutions or whether public discourse was more strongly influenced by public discourse taking place in EU member states. Contrasting these two possibilities allowed me to test a bottom-up approach of Europeanized public discourse against a top-down approach expected by some parts of the literature on Europeanized political communication (Risse 2010; Statham and Koopmans 2010).

To summarize, my dissertation builds upon important but partially fragmented literature, focusing on several different aspects of how European integration changes political communication and public discourse in Europe. By applying a post-functional approach toward political institutions as political arenas and toward the influence of political parties on public discourse, my dissertation provides an important contribution to this literature by linking preferences and strategies of political parties to media reporting and public discourse. Furthermore, by using tools of quantitative text analysis, I provide new descriptive and inferential results on public discourse in all EU member states. This allows me to compare public discourse, the determinants for its changes both over time and between countries, and the content of Europeanized public discourse, providing new insights on an important aspect of political communication within the European multi-level system.

Although the approach used in this dissertation allows me to shed light on the conditions and the nature of Europeanized public discourse, there are important limitations to mention before turning to the conceptual and empirical work. First, it is important to emphasize that I am only able to shed light on this phenomenon during a specific span of time. Thus, the interpretation I set forth should only cautiously be applied to earlier (or later) times of European integration. Only when the boundary conditions and the assumptions about the strategies of mainstream opposition and challenger political parties are taken into account, this study's results might be reasonably inferred on a more general level. Second, I do not take into account national particularities and varying public support of political parties during

electoral cycles. When empirically examining public discourses in the EU one must decide between examining phenomena inwidth or indepth. I have opted for a broader approach of analysis to be able to employ empirical analyses in a large number of countries and test whether the conceptual model developed in this study finds empirical support on a general level. This certainly results in me neglecting important aspects of different public discourses; furthermore, I am constrained to subsume the large variety of political parties from 30 party systems into a common scheme. This ultimately affects the sharpness of detail when conducting the empirical analyses.

Finally, in political communication research that uses non-experimental research designs, it is barely possible to causally identify the effects of important independent variables. Since public discourse is essentially a communicative endeavor with mutual dependencies and relations between a large number of actors, I try to avoid causal language as far as possible. I therefore mostly speak of empirical associations when testing my hypotheses. Nevertheless, it is important to be clear about what a quantitative, machine-learning based approach is able to examine and where its boundaries lie. However, when taking into account these boundary conditions, I am convinced that this dissertation project represents an important extension to existing research on the Europeanization of public discourse.

1.4 Plan of This Dissertation

This manuscript proceeds as follows. In Chapter 2, I define the concepts that underpin my theoretical argument. Subsequently, I establish a new conceptualization of public discourse in the European multi-level system. My approach takes into consideration political institutions, which contain political arenas, relevant to structuring public discourse within the national spheres of the EU member states. By accounting for political institutions from the European sphere and from other EU member states, I examine how Europeanized public discourse and national public discourses in the member states of the EU are shaped by

political institutions and identify the preferences and strategies of the political parties in these institutions. Additionally, I explain why including Norway and Switzerland in public discourse analyses in the European multi-level system is reasonable and constitutes an important asset to my conceptual work. Based on my theoretical argument, I develop four sets of hypotheses, focusing first on the influence of political parties and the institutional setup of the European multi-level system on the saliency of Europeanized public discourse. Second, I focus on how the public discourses in other member states influence the saliency of public discourse between member states. Third, I turn to strategies that mainstream opposition and pro- and anti-EU challenger parties use to influence the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. In the fourth set of hypotheses, I examine how the content of Europeanized public discourse changes depending on the level of polarization.

In Chapter 3, I extensively describe the data collection conducted for this dissertation. In this chapter, I discuss the relevance of the Internet Archive for large-scale political communication and public discourse research. Additionally, I explain how to set up a scalable system to efficiently store and retrieve Big Data from the Internet Archive. Subsequently, I explain the functionality of the *archiveRetriever* R package to scrape data from the Internet Archive (Gavras and Isermann 2021). Next, I describe the newspaper outlets chosen for the analysis of public discourse in all EU member states, the coverage of newspaper articles in the Internet Archive and examine cross-national variation in coverage. Then, I discuss the implications for the empirical analyses. Finally, I propose a validation method for archival data collection by matching the collected data to data from official archives of a newspaper outlet.

Chapter 6 describes the research design used for the empirical analysis in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. In this chapter, I first provide my theoretical and empirical motivations for the political issues covered – economic, security, and migration issues – in the empirical chapters of this project. For the empirical analyses, I use a common research design for all the political issues examined in my dissertation; I use quantitative text analysis tools on multi-lingual

corpora, followed by descriptive and inferential analyses using cross-sectional time-series regressions. To prepare for quantitative text analysis in 24 different European languages, I discuss the difficulties of conducting multi-lingual analysis and evaluate different possibilities and shortcomings when performing analyses on multi-lingual corpora. Specifically, I discuss the use of multi-lingual dictionaries for both topic detection and sentiment analysis, as well as the use of structural topic models to infer content differences in Europeanized public discourse when there is increasing polarization. To enhance the interpretations of the results provided by the structural topic models, I further explain how back-translations of topic words allow for this method of conducting quantitative text analysis for multi-lingual corpora.

Chapters 5 to 7 include the empirical analyses on the three political issues covered in this dissertation. In the first chapter of empirical analysis (Chapter 5), I provide extensive descriptive evidence regarding the saliency of Europeanized public discourse, the saliency of public discourse between member states, and the polarization of Europeanized public discourse in each of the 30 public discourses covered in this dissertation project. Furthermore, I show how mainstream opposition and pro- and anti-EU challenger parties differ in strength among the different countries in the EU. Finally, I also provide descriptive evidence on public discourse on the European level in the European multi-level system. In Chapter 6, I test my hypotheses on the conditions of Europeanized public discourse. Using different multivariate analyses on time-series cross-sectional data, I show that political parties play an important role in shaping Europeanized public discourse – with regard to both saliency and the level of polarization. In Chapter 7, I examine the content of Europeanized public discourse and test my hypothesis on variations in content with increasing levels of polarization. By applying structural topic models, I further examine which topics become more prevalent in a large number of Europeanized public discourses with increasing or decreasing polarization.

In the concluding chapter (Chapter 8), I discuss the implications of my dissertation project for scholars of political communication, European integration, and text-as-data. By applying

a post-functional approach of political institutions, political arenas, and public spheres on mass media political communication, this dissertation is among the first empirical endeavors to examine the impact of European integration on public discourse in all EU member states using a quantitative text-as-data approach with a large-scale dataset. Finally, I discuss the findings and present avenues for further research.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework: Conditions and Nature of Public Discourse in Europe

2.1 Political Communication in the European Multi-Level System

Politics – especially in democracies – is essentially a communicative endeavor (see Blumler and Gurevitch 1975, 168). Political parties communicate their proposals and, if mandated to do so, explain and defend political decisions, as they are held accountable by the public. The public is required to take communicative actions to articulate its demands to the political parties in charge of making political decisions (McNair 2017; Denton and Woodward 1998). However, politics is about not only articulating preferences, but also debating different perceptions, ideas, and propositions on political issues in public, creating an *public sphere* (Calhoun 2011; Habermas 1986). The notion of the public sphere in Western democracies is based on the premise that arguments delivered in rational, critical discourse should

guide political decisions, rather than status, power, or money. In the public sphere, every member of a democratic society is allowed to publicly state their opinion (Calhoun 2011). However, western democracies differ fundamentally from the normative ideal of the ancient agora of Athens, as they are built upon institutions channeling and structuring public discourse. Within these institutions, political parties are able to influence public discourse, and thus shape politics in modern democracies. Building upon this conceptual idea, this dissertation aims to explain how and under which conditions public discourse in the member states of the EU has changed due to increased European integration and the strategic decision of political parties to include political debates on “Europe” within public discourse.

In political communication studies, public discourse has mostly been researched only in the context of electoral (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Swanson and Mancini 1996; Trent, Friedenberg, and Denton 2016) or referenda campaigns (de Vreese 2007).¹ In these campaigns, the competing political parties, seeking electoral success, debate their political ideas publicly (most often via the channels of mass media) to convince the electorate to vote for their proposals. The electorate, on their end, can approach political parties with their demands, wishes, and ideas, again mostly brought forward through the channels of mass media. Public discourse on political issues, however, only culminates in these campaigns, where much is at stake for both the political parties and the public. Nevertheless, even during non-election times, political discourse in the public sphere is fundamental to the proper functioning of democratic societies. As political issues of course do not only occur during electoral campaigns, political discourses during non-electoral times are at least as important as during electoral campaigns. Public discourse in times of “ordinary politics” are important for under-

¹There is also a large body of literature focusing on changes in public discourse on specific political issues in different countries, such as abortion (Simon and Jerit 2007; McDonnell and Murphy 2019), same-sex marriage (Baunach 2012; Lee and Hicks 2011; Perry and Snawder 2016), climate change (Smith 2005; Bolsen and Shapiro 2018) or military interventions (Gilboa et al. 2016; Robinson 2006). These studies, however, either consider changes in public opinions due to elite cueing or focus on specific types and styles of news reporting. Both of these parts of the literature on public discourse are important, but are not the focus of this dissertation and thus are not considered in detail. However, I again address the influence of public discourse on public opinion in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

standing both political decision-making and the interactions between political parties and the public during non-electoral times. To leverage this issue, this dissertation project covers public discourse during the complete electoral cycle.

Given that European societies have already been experiencing deepening European integration for several decades, I assume that public discourses, as well as the structural conditions of the public spheres, have gradually led to an ever closer Union. To clarify and provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for how public discourse in the member states of the EU has been changing due to European integration, I now articulate the most important concepts.

2.1.1 Definition of Important Concepts

There are several definitions of the concept of public discourse, ranging from very broad to extremely nuanced multi-dimensional concepts. Sellers, for example, defines public discourse merely as any public statement “made in pursuit of the public good,” meaning that public discourse consists of any statement made publicly and that regard public policies rather than private matters (Sellers 2003, 62). Habermas, in contrast, provides a highly nuanced definition of public discourse. According to Habermas, public discourse is based on the concept of argumentation as a social practice. This practice might be understood as products, procedures or processes defining the public discourse and ideally guiding any legislative decision-making (Habermas 1996). In contrast with simple speech, argumentation in public discourse needs to be tested for rational justifications for being true and authentic (Habermas 1986). Ward (1997) refused to define this concept altogether, remarking “public discourse, however that is defined” (p. 365) in using this term. Again, others equate public discourse with media discourse, referring it to any kind of media “agenda setting” (McCombs and Shaw 1972) to explain how “the public” discusses certain issues (Ampollini and Bucchi 2020).

In my dissertation, I apply a somewhat broad definition of public discourse, as I am not

interested in the development or state of public discourse per se, but rather the reshaping of public discourse in the European multi-level system on political issues due to increased European integration. Thus, I define public discourse as every public communication related to a political issue, including all political debates, irrespective of the arena, where, in principle, (at least some of) the public is able to participate.

The term political issue, in this regard, is defined very broadly as any issue that is (controversially) debated in public discourse, independent of whether the true, underlying goal for resolving the issue is contested or just the means by which a shared goal is reached. Thus, any issue, whether controversial in goals or means, falls under my rather broad definition of political issues (Stokes 1963; Butler and Stokes 1971). In accordance with this definition, public discourse takes place in different arenas, but its formation is independent of the location at which it takes place. Furthermore, I assume that public discourse mostly takes place within the national public sphere, which serves as the main areas for public discourse due to political, institutional, and cultural reasons (Statham and Koopmans 2010). Nevertheless, one does not necessarily need to take into account political institutions, structures and culture to examine public discourse as a normative goal in itself. However, to understand how changes in political and institutional settings might have influenced and shifted public discourse within the member states of the EU and in the EU itself, it is relevant to define these institutions and identify their decisive influence on public discourse.

In modern democratic societies, public discourse is organized by different institutions, including specific sets of actors and active participants in the debate. Due to the complexity and size of societies in the twenty-first century, it is impossible to understand public discourse without taking into account the institutions organizing, channeling, and structuring public discourse. I call the institutions where public discourse takes place “political arenas” throughout the dissertation to clarify that these institutions serve a distinct purpose in public discourse within the public sphere. Political arenas are *sites of political structuring* where

public discourse takes place (Kriesi et al. 2012, 6; van Aelst and Walgrave 2016). Within these arenas, policy positions and their justifications are introduced by political parties and debated by different members of the public sphere (Hilgartner and Bosk 1988).

These political arenas are decisive in the functioning of public discourse and are comprised of the following features. First, they serve as an environment where political issues compete for attention and are debated. Second, the arenas have limited capabilities in preventing political parties and the public from being able to debate every issue. The debate on certain issues is selective based on institutional, political, or cultural factors that influence both structure and depth of the debate. Third, the political arenas interact with each other, allowing public discourse to flow and be reinforced. Lastly, political parties, which participate in different arenas, aim to promote certain issues and control public discourse within and across the arenas (Hilgartner and Bosk 1988, 56). The arenas in which public discourse takes place have different sets of actors, who participate in the debates of the respective arenas. It is important to note that not all arenas are closely monitored by all members of the public sphere, as some are only monitored by self-selected groups of spectators that channel public discourse in one arena to other political arenas of the public sphere. I therefore argue that the political arenas within the national public sphere have different sets of actors and spectators. Actors in political arenas are defined by the norms and rules set by an arena as an institution and determine entry in the arena. Spectatorship is open to all members of society (the public), but not all members make use of this right. Especially in highly formalized political arenas with strict rules and norms, such as the parliamentary arena, the general public needs the work of active spectators, such as media actors, who transport public discourse in this arena to other arenas, such as the media arena, where the public is a more active spectator.

In modern democratic societies there are four important arenas in which public discourse takes place. Most often, the *electoral arena*, with political parties competing for electoral

support by the voters, is considered the most important arena since the selection of candidates for political office shapes how decisions on a variety of political issues are implemented in subsequent years. Furthermore, being elected to office through the electoral arena allows political actors to make their voices heard in the parliamentary arena as well, shaping public discourse in another (and highly important) political arena. A downside is that the electoral arena is very short-lived, most often ending immediately after an election and therefore unable to take into account issues that come up during non-election times or to shape public discourse substantially when the next election is further away. Additionally, the electoral arena mostly only focuses on issues contested on the elite level and often dismisses issues that are not part of political competition, disregarding important aspects of the public discourse (Bélanger and Meguid 2008). Although this political arena does not reflect all of the important aspects of public discourse, it is still highly relevant for public discourse, as it sets the agenda for the upcoming years and thus substantially influences public discourse.

The *parliamentary arena* is a second important political arena where political issues are debated. Here, elected members of parliaments discuss different proposals by the government and the parliamentary opposition on how to address political issues. Parliamentary debates have a significant impact on public discourse, since they shape how political issues are presented to the public and often even determine which issues are debated in public discourse outside of parliament (Proksch and Slapin 2015). Although parliaments are the most important democratic institution with regard to law-making and political representation, they mostly serve as a driving force for public discourse on highly contested political issues; however, they are not the only arena of public discourse to do so.

In the *governmental arena*, political debate also takes place but is, mostly not visible to the public. Nevertheless, the government is able to provide the public with information about debates within it to measure political support for its proposals. Here, government ministers, the head of government and bureaucratic officials debate political issues to develop

proposals to be brought to the legislature and are thus able to drive public discourse. These three arenas are all important drivers of public discourse since their actors aim to dominate and shape public discourse through their proposals for political issues. To shape public discourse, these political parties, however, face the problem that large parts of the public may not be able or willing to closely follow political debate in their arenas. To actually shape public discourse, political parties must gain access to the most important arena of public discourse in modern Western democracies: the *media arena* (van Aelst and Walgrave 2016; Bennett and Entman 2001; Esser and Strömbäck 2014).

The *media arena* is the least institutionalized, but by far the largest and the most publicly visible political arena where political issues are debated. This arena is the main forum for public discourse and, accordingly, has two main functions (van Aelst and Walgrave 2016). The first function of this arena is to inform the public and political parties about existing political issues and societal problems that accompany these issues. To do so, actors in the media arena move between political arenas, take part in these arenas as spectators, and transport public discourse from these arenas to the media arena. When entering other political arenas, political parties, as actors in these arenas, are able to learn about the preferences and demands of the public enabling them to be responsive to public demands (Druckman 2014). The second function of the media arena allows for competing frames about political issues, including to whom responsibility for political and social problems should be ascribed, and how to resolve these issues (Shah et al. 2002; Entman 1993). Resources in the media arena are scarce, just as they are in every other political arena. Therefore, not all issues brought forward by the public or political parties can be included in the media arena. The media thus acts as a gate-keeper and decides which proposals are important for the public to form their opinions on a particular issue, thereby building public discourse and requiring political parties to focus on specific issues (Shoemaker and Vos 2009).

The media arena is thus the most important political arena for both political parties and

the public providing the closest – yet still mediated – connection between the sovereign and its political representatives. It structures public discourse to identify common denominators debated within the public sphere. Some scholars even argue that the media arena itself can be equated with the public sphere and its underlying public discourse (Koopmans and Statham 2010; de Vreese 2007, 7). Furthermore, the media arena allows the examination of whether shifts in political institutions influence how political issues are debated (Gamson and Modigliani 1987).

Since the media systems have been in fundamental transition since the beginning of the twenty-first century (Jungherr, Posegga, and An 2019), it is necessary to more clearly define which media actors I am referring to when I address the media arena in my dissertation. According to Chadwick (2017), traditional mass media actors such as TV broadcasters and newspaper outlets, have been challenged by new social media actors, such as Facebook and Twitter, which follow different rules of news coverage and reporting. However, when analyzing shifts in public discourse, I believe that traditional mass media actors – in my case, newspaper outlets – are the most important actors in the media arena. The reasons for this are twofold. First, mass media actors already have established connections to political parties and actors in the other political arenas, allowing them to move smoothly between political arenas. Second, there have only been a few unsuccessful attempts from political parties in Europe to circumvent traditional mass media to influence public discourse merely through social media; this is generally because the political parties' outreach on social media is limited. In other political systems such as the USA and Brazil, where political leaders were able to use social media very effectively (Enli 2017; Wells et al. 2020; Araújo and Prior 2020), the second restriction may no longer be relevant; thus, it is essential to define the relevant actors of the media arena according to the political systems under investigation.

After defining public discourse and the most important arenas in which political debates take place, I now turn to a crucial aspect concerning the Europeanization of public discourse –

namely, the public spheres in which the political arenas of public discourse take place. Only through an understanding of how the structure of public spheres has changed within the EU can there be an understanding of the conditions under which the Europeanization of public discourse is actually possible.

When considering public discourse and the political arenas shaping it, the concept of public discourse is traditionally understood within the boundaries of the nation-state (Koopmans and Statham 2010).² In the public sphere, civil society is linked to the structure of the state and its decision-makers (Eriksen 2005). Thus, the public sphere reflects the political, social and cultural spaces in which political actors and citizens discuss matters of common interest (Brantner, Dietrich, and Saurwein 2005). What is implied in these conceptualizations of the public sphere is that all actors within political arenas are members of the respective nation-state and are concerned with national issues.

With increased political and economic integration of the EU, a large body of literature has questioned this concept of the public sphere aiming to conceive of a “European public sphere” as an overarching European sphere of which all members of the respective EU nation-states have become a part (Grill and Boomgaarden 2017; Koopmans 2004; Statham and Koopmans 2010; Risse 2014; Dutceac Segesten and Bossetta 2019a). Consequently, it has been suggested that the current problems of the EU, such as the democratic deficit and the lack of a common European identity should be tackled (Risse 2010; Gerhards 2000). Although I agree that the concept of an European public sphere is important to understand how public discourse has changed in the EU, I do not assume that the European public sphere is simply an extension of the national public spheres, but is – and will probably remain so in the longer term – an elite-based sphere, able to use its political influence to shape public discourse in its member states, without developing a full-scale European public discourse independently of the EU

²Political arenas and public discourse also exist on the local or regional level (Sarrica et al. 2018). In this dissertation, however, I do not take into account these political levels. I assume that the changes in the national political arenas and debates due to increased Europeanization should also apply to these levels. Nevertheless, as European public discourse is often contrasted with national discourse structures (Statham and Koopmans 2010), public discourse on the lower political levels should be less relevant in this regard.

member states.

Therefore, it is even more important to understand how national public spheres operate in times of increased European integration and how political parties trigger changes in public discourse by shifting how political issues are debated. According to the conceptualization of public spheres used in this dissertation, these spheres are not impermeable spheres, in which public discourse is only re-inforced through national public arenas; they also allow actors (and their ideas) from different arenas in other public spheres to enter their own public sphere to shape public discourse. This is a fundamental shift from the traditional definition of public spheres, as it takes into account influences due to inter- and trans-national interdependencies as well as supranational influences, and changes how political issues are discussed within the nation-states of the EU.

2.1.2 The Europeanization of Public Discourse

How European integration has influenced the national electoral, parliamentary and governmental arenas has been extensively researched (Hooghe and Marks 2001; Kriesi 2007; Marks, Hooghe, and Blank 1996; Hutter and Grande 2014; Raunio 2009). During the founding period of the EU, the governmental arena already experienced the impact of European integration, as it needed to consider the interdependencies inherent to national policy-making between the member states of the European Community (Haas 1958; Schimmelfennig, Leuffen, and Rittberger 2015). This influenced public discourse in national governmental arenas, making it necessary for political leaders in Europe to take into account the European component when debating political issues within this arena (Jordan 2003). Furthermore, decisions made exclusively by the European Commission also impact public discourse in this arena, since national governmental arenas are required to react to decisions that strongly influence national policy-making (Kreppel and Oztas 2017; Rauh, Bes, and Schoonvelde 2020).

With the implementation of directly elected political representatives for the European par-

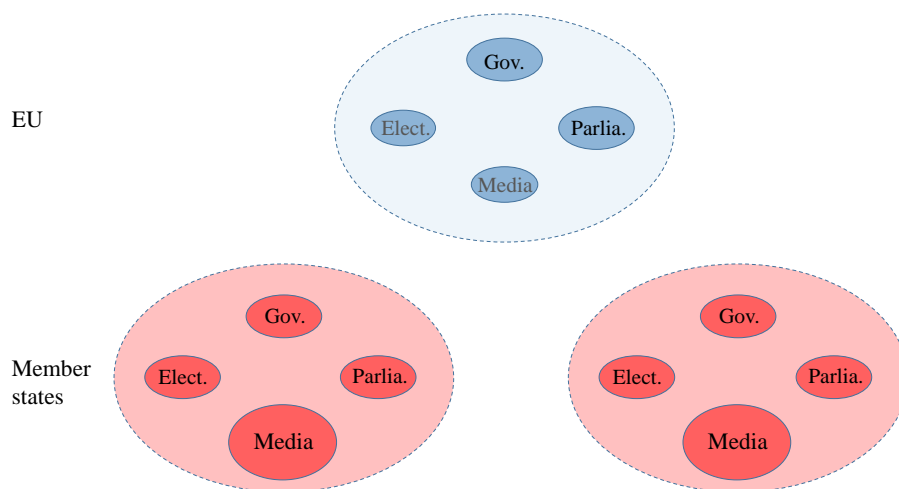
liament in 1979, new electoral and parliamentary arenas were set up, also influencing public discourse between the member states (Katz and Wessels 1999; de Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006; Braun and Schwarzbözl 2019). In the parliamentary arenas of the European multi-level system, political debates in the European Parliament strongly impact political debates in parliamentary arenas on the national level, since the political issues debated in the European Parliament are almost always connected to debates taking place in national parliaments (Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006; Rauh and de Wilde 2018).

The influence of European integration on national media arenas, national public spheres and broader public discourse, however, is far less systematically researched. Although there is much literature on whether specific events of European integration or the emerging conflict on European integration are being covered in national news reporting, contributing to public discourse (de Vreese 2001; Vliegenthart et al. 2008; Mendez et al. 2020; Kaiser and Kleinen-von Königslöw 2017; Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016; Ovádek, Lampach, and Dyevre 2020; Dutceac Segesten and Bossetta 2019b), there is little research on whether contemporary, everyday public discourse on political issues includes a European component. More importantly, it is relevant to examine under which conditions this component has been included in public discourse on everyday politics. To understand how European integration impacts national media arenas and public discourse, it is necessary to systematically revisit the concept of public spheres and political arenas within the European multi-level system.

The conceptual framework of my dissertation operates on two levels: a national level, including the public spheres in the EU member states, and a European level, with a distinct European public sphere. Within each of these levels, several political arenas in which public discourse takes place exist. To simplify my model, I only take the most important political arenas within each level into account: the governmental arena, the parliamentary arena, the electoral arena, and the media arena. Within this framework I focus on the mechanisms by which public discourse in the media arenas on the national level is shaped and influenced by

the other political arenas and public spheres in the European multi-level system.

Figure 2.1: Political Arenas in the European Multi-level System



Note: Own diagram

In Figure 2.1, I visualize the concept of public spheres and political arenas in the European multi-level system. The upper part of the figure illustrates the European level, and the lower part shows two member states as examples of the member states of the EU. Each member state as well as the European level has its own (permeable) public sphere in which the respective political arenas of this polity are located. This necessarily implies that public discourse mainly takes place within the borders of the respective EU member states, but also that space for a European public sphere has been provided. However, this European public sphere does not overlap with national public spheres but exists next to them, possibly influencing the national public spheres.

Within the European public sphere, public discourse takes place, yet is underdeveloped compared to national public discourses, as some decisive arenas are missing in this sphere. The missing arenas are those linked most closely to the public – namely, the electoral and the media arenas. Since the European public has not established a sufficiently strong collective identity to set up these arenas on the European level, the national arenas incorporate Eu-

Europeanized public discourse in this regard. With these two arenas missing in the European public sphere, the sphere is only left with the parliamentary and the governmental arenas, which are highly formalized and exclusive arenas, thus shaping public discourse in this sphere in a very decisive way. Although the European public sphere does not include all arenas necessary to fully develop public discourse, it is still important in shifting public discourse in the EU member states within the European multi-level system. As explained above, the public sphere is shaped by the individual national political institutions in which the political arenas are located. For the European level, with its complex institutional setting, however, I only consider the supranational, exclusively European institutions within the multi-level system. Thus, according to my framework, inter-governmental institutions, such as the European Council, are not included in this sphere but are mostly subsumed under the governmental arenas in the national public spheres.

In the national public spheres, there are four political arenas each where public discourse takes place. Each of these arenas consist of actors and spectators that either shape public discourse in this arena or pay close attention to the debate so that public discourse from this arena can be transported to other arenas and to the public sphere in general. Taking a closer look at these political arenas, several important aspects that impact public discourse must be considered. First, it is important to acknowledge that not all political arenas contribute to public discourse all the time. In particular, the electoral arena only temporarily contributes to public discourse since it only takes place prior to national or European elections. Electoral arenas contribute shortly, but intensely to public discourse, focusing on the most pressing long-term issues and setting the stage for public discourse in the subsequent years.

In most European parliamentary democracies, intense electoral campaigns start about one to three months before an election, with extensive news coverage on national political issues and highlighting differences between the political candidates (Esser and Hanitzsch 2012; Schuck, Vliegenthart, and de Vreese 2016). On the European level, it may not be possible to

speak of an actual electoral arena since the campaign for the European Parliament's election should be marked as different national electoral campaigns for a European election, rather than a single European electoral campaign (de Vreese et al. 2006; Reif and Schmitt 1980; Maier, Strömbäck, and Kaid 2011). As such, one might not speak of a European electoral arena, but rather another electoral arena on the member state level. This arena takes place next to the electoral arenas during national elections, but covers European issues adjacent to national political issues (Beach, Hansen, and Larsen 2018; Braun, Hutter, and Kerscher 2016). Thus, electoral arenas might contribute differently to the Europeanization of public discourse dependent on the type of election taking place at a particular moment. The actors in the electoral arena are the political parties competing for votes by presenting different proposals to address important political issues. Mass media actors are spectators to this political arena and follow public discourse that arises in this arena. Mass media actors then bring these contributions to public discourse into the media arena, where larger shares of the public learn about the debates in the electoral arena and become able to follow and contribute to public discourse.

In the parliamentary arena, the official public political debates of representative democracy take place. This arena contributes to public discourse, as elected representatives discuss political proposals on how to address political issues, either defending proposals made by the government or arguing for other means that might be more suitable for resolving political issues (Proksch and Slapin 2015). This part of public discourse is highly formalized and only includes the elected members of parliament and selected members of the government – when reporting to the parliament – as actors. On a formal basis, such discourse is open to the public to participate as spectators. In reality, however, most of the public is actually unaware of or uninterested in following this formalized type of public discourse. The most important spectators to these debates, therefore, are mass media actors that keep track of public discourse.

The parliamentary arena works more or less the same for both the national and European level, contributing highly formalized political debates to public discourse. In the European public sphere, however, public discourse in the European Parliament has a greater impact on public discourse since the European sphere lacks decisive political arenas of public discourse. Thus, to understand which political issues are most relevant to the European public sphere, it is more important to consider public discourse in the European Parliament than public discourse in national parliaments, as there is no European media arena making issues and public discourse accessible to the European public. As is explained later, understanding this lack of a European media arena is very important toward understanding how the Europeanization of public discourse is shaped.

With regard to public discourse, the governmental arena is not as formalized as the parliamentary arena but is by far the least accessible for spectators and the general public. In this political arena, the members of the governmental branch debate political issues, but due to political and strategic reasons, political disputes within government are only brought to the public sphere when actors deliberately aim to send messages to the public (Herzog and Jankin Mikhaylov 2020; Leahy 2009). After political debates are settled, the results from the governmental arena are usually presented to the public, providing streamlined contributions to public discourse of the governments perception of political issues (cf. Sagarzazu and Klüver 2017). Again, as for the parliamentary arena, the spectators in this arena are mostly mass media actors and almost never the general public. In the European public sphere, the European Commission can be conceptualized as the governmental arena of the EU. The same mechanisms for public discourse that apply to national governments also apply here, with the European Commission aiming to present a common contribution to public discourse and set the agenda and framing of public discourse within the sphere (Kreppel and Oztas 2017).

The media arena is the core of public discourse within any democratic society. It is the most

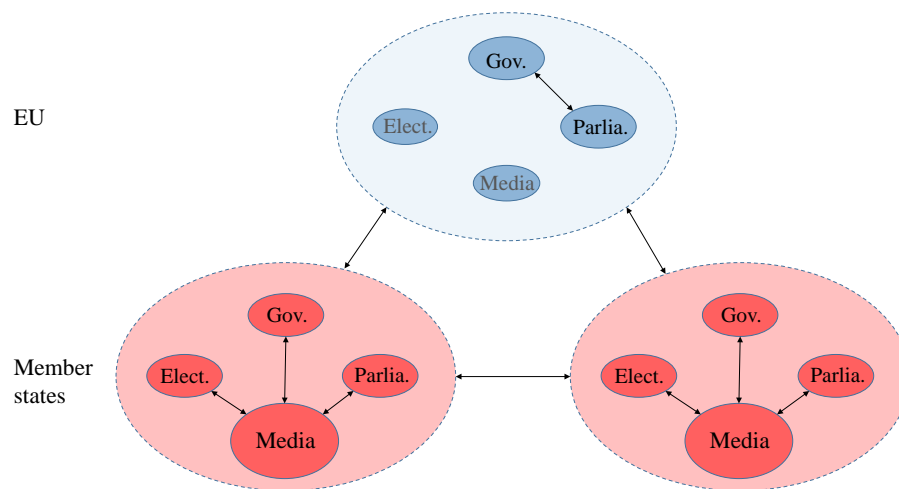
important arena in the public sphere, as through it, the public can easily inform itself about current issues and about different solutions provided by political parties, and then come up with its own stances on these issues (Curran 1991). The media arena includes broadcasting, radio, print, and the Internet and is therefore less structured but by far the most inclusive political arena. In this arena, the mass media are the actors, covering contributions by political parties from other arenas, and the public is the main spectator (van Aelst and Walgrave 2016). In their functions as actors in this arena, mass media processes the information received from spectating in the other arenas, trying to provide the public with the most important aspects of public discourse in other political arenas, where the public might not easily gain access. As such, the media arena aggregates, filters and mirrors the discourse on political issues in the other political arenas.

In the media arena, public discourse within the public sphere finally becomes public, meaning that every member of society is able to become informed about and contribute to public discourse. This implies that the media arena is crucial to public discourse in the member states of the EU. In the European public sphere, however, the media arena faces the same issue as the electoral arena. Due to the primacy of the nation-state in public discourse, one cannot conceive of any proper media arena with truly European mass media actors and even less so of any European public as spectator to this arena (Corcoran and Fahy 2009). The main constraint here is the lack of a common language to communicate within this arena, making media public discourse essentially non-existent in the European sphere. This lack of public European arenas, however, has major implications for the European public sphere, preventing it from becoming a full-scale *public* sphere. Furthermore, and even more importantly it has an impact on public discourse in the public spheres of its member states since the Europeanization of political issues is considered an important part of public discourse that needs to be communicated and discussed publicly.

Before discussing the implications of European integration and the lack of public political

arenas on the European level for public discourse on the national level, it is necessary to understand how issues relevant to public discourse reach the public. An issue is defined as an important topic or problem for debate or discussion; it is any societally relevant phenomena or event that sparks different views from relevant social and political actors (Kriesi et al. 2012). Since I am only interested in issues that are part of public discourse, I restrict my considerations of issues to those that are publicly debated by a larger share of actors with some degree of saliency and are perceived as important by the public. Issues following this definition are debated in every political arena and it is therefore important to understand how public discourse is shaped in the European multi-level system.

Figure 2.2: Public Discourse in the European Multi-Level System



Note: Own diagram

After examining how public discourse has been developed and structured by political arenas within the national public sphere, I now turn to explanations of why and how public discourse in national public spheres might also be shaped by increased European integration. Figure 2.2 illustrates that the national public spheres as well as the European public sphere are interrelated within the European multi-level system, systematically shaping public discourses within and between the national spheres. Thus, I consider two possible ways in which public discourse can be Europeanized: in interaction with the European public sphere and

in interaction with the other member states' public spheres (Koopmans 2004; Brüggemann and Kleinen-von Königslöw 2009). These interactions are certainly not mutually exclusive but may have different implications with regard to how public discourse is Europeanized.

First, I consider the Europeanization of public discourse on the vertical axis, where public discourse in the national public spheres is shaped and influenced by the European public sphere. This implies that national public discourse refers to aspects of the supranational part of Europeanization – namely Europe as a polity, European institutions and Europeanization of national politics – when debating political issues. This type of Europeanization occurs due to two mechanisms.

The first mechanism relies on the assumption that actors in national public spheres decide to take into account current public discourse from the European public sphere and add these debates to the political arenas in the national public sphere, such as public discourse in the European public sphere during the euro crisis shifting public discourse on national levels as well (Rauh, Bes, and Schoonvelde 2020). As such, public discourse ranging across the two levels of the European multi-level system takes place with both public spheres debating the same political issues, taking into account views and arguments from the other sphere. The second mechanism for the Europeanization of public discourse in the national public sphere relates to the permanent process of European integration shaping and influencing national political arenas on the long term rather than current public discourse in the European public sphere (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2012).

As European integration is an ongoing process and political actors have different views on how this process should be implemented, national political parties have incentives to include Europeanization in public discourse in their political arenas independent of current public discourse on the European level (Schmidt 2019). As political parties in the national public spheres have different views on European integration, this topic has become part of everyday public discourse even with regard to political issues that do not relate to current issues in

the European public sphere; this is, due to political disagreement on European integration, expanding public discourse on political issues in everyday politics by incorporating the European component. I explain strategic motivations for political parties to include the European component in public discourse in greater detail in Chapter 2.2.

There have been two sources for the Europeanization of national public discourse: shifts in current discourse in the European public sphere and systematic changes in the preferences of political parties on the national level as they decide to introduce the European component to everyday political discourse. The differentiation between these two sources is important and represents a remarkable step in public discourse within the European multi-level system. In particular, the latter of the two reasons for Europeanization implies that Europe has become an integral part of public discourse in national public spheres, marking another step toward fully integrating Europe into everyday politics.

Other than considering Europeanization on the vertical axis, the interdependence between the member states of the EU implies that public discourse might also shift due to Europeanization on the horizontal axis. This means that public discourse in one member state may influence public discourse in other member states, as political issues debated in one public sphere might be considered for public discourses in other member states as well (Brüggemann and Kleinen-von Königslöw 2009; Bickes, Otten, and Weymann 2014; Walter 2019). Contrary to Europeanization on the vertical axis in my depiction, this type of Europeanized public discourse – which I term public discourse between member states, below, to avoid ambiguity – develops differently, as it is only based on current public discourse in other national public spheres. The second mechanism of changing preferences of political parties does not apply to public discourse between member states, as national political actors do not systematically vary their preferences toward other member states and more importantly do not use existing differences in their preferences to expand public discourse through debates on other nations. The reason for this is rather straightforward. Even though

political differences might exist between national political actors, there is no apparent reason to systematically leverage these differences, as horizontal Europeanization does not imply integration into the nation's political institutions, in contrast to Europeanization on the vertical axis. Thus, only the first mechanism, based on current public discourse in another public sphere applies to public discourse between member states.

2.1.3 Spill-over Effects of Europeanized Public Discourse: Norway and Switzerland

Europeanized public discourse follows the implicit assumption of restriction to member states of the EU, as these are the countries most directly affected by political decisions made in this multi-level system. Furthermore, these countries are able to actively influence policy-making in the EU, providing incentives for political parties to bring such issues into public discourse. There are, however, countries neighboring the EU, although not officially being part of the European Union and its institutions, which are still closely aligned and often even associated to the legal and contractual system of the EU tying these states to the European Union.

Norway and Switzerland can be considered as the two neighboring countries most closely aligned with the EU, although they decided not to become official members (Gstöhl 2002a). Norway is a member of the European Economic Area, which came into force in 1994, allowing countries full access to the Common Market, including the four freedoms of the EU and the Schengen regulations of free movement. Switzerland has signed several bilateral contracts with the EU, regulating the relationship between partners on the economic, political, and cultural levels. Based on these contracts, Switzerland and the EU have become close partners, with Switzerland often adopting EU legislation and the EU consulting Swiss political positions to find sustainable agreements. In the last years, however, there have been some obstacles to the partnership, such as when the Swiss government and the European Commission negotiated the EU-Swiss Institutional Framework Agreement, which should replace

and bundle the large number of existing bilateral contracts. Although they had successfully reached a common position in the negotiations, the Swiss government decided to opt out of the framework agreement due to domestic opposition to this perceived increased European integration of the Switzerland (Linder 2013).

The failure to adopt the Institutional Framework Agreement demonstrates that the Europeanization of public discourse not only takes place in the member states of the EU, but also easily spills over to countries with close relations with the EU. As policy-making and political discussions within the European multi-level system also affects the countries tied to the Union via different contractual agreements, it is reasonable to assume that political parties in these neighboring countries take into account public discourse on the European level and public discourse in the member states of the EU. Kux and Sverdrup (2000) conceptualized this as Europeanization beyond the formal boundaries of the EU, rejecting the concept of EU membership as a dichotomous concept. When perceiving EU membership as a continuum, Norway and Switzerland might be regarded as almost full EU members, implying that the assumptions about the Europeanization of public discourse might apply more or less equally to these two countries as well.

When differentiating between Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states, there might, however, be some differences. Political issues debated in EU member states might be picked up by political actors in the public sphere of neighboring countries, expanding public discourse in the respective political arenas with contributions from other public spheres. Public discourses between member states are independent of any type of formalized European integration toward a supranational organization, only reflecting national interdependencies. This also implies that countries neighboring EU member states may be influenced through this kind of Europeanized public discourse.

Since countries such as Norway and Switzerland are closely aligned to the EU – without being member states – increasing interdependence between European countries should also affect

how these countries incorporate the European component into public discourse. As Norway and Switzerland often also adopt European legislation to profit from easy market access to the EU (and are often even obligated to adopt EU rules to retain access), Europeanization of public discourse should spill over to the countries neighboring the EU (Gstöhl 2002b). However, since the political parties in the countries neighboring the EU are not able to actively influence decision-making within European institutions, there might be fewer incentives to incorporate the Europeanization of public discourse. In times where increased European integration is pursued, this conclusion might, however, be qualified. In the empirical chapters of my dissertation, I take the special situation of these two neighboring countries, Norway and Switzerland, into account and empirically evaluate whether the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse are actually different from or equivalent to those of the official EU member states.

Finally, the United Kingdom is another special case with regard to the Europeanization of public discourse. Due to the decision of the British people to leave the EU in June 2016, the UK's decision to turn its back on European integration can be examined for whether it actually changes the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse.³ Thus, this specific situation also needs to be taken into account when interpreting the results from public discourse.

By differentiating between Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states I am able to test three different dimensions: I can test which type of Europeanization dominates shifts in national public discourse, whether and how the preferences and strategies of political parties significantly impact the Europeanization of public discourse and, most importantly, whether the content of public discourse changes significantly in Europeanized public discourse. In the following section, I present the reasoning behind political parties' decision to include the European component to national public discourse and why

³Since the United Kingdom had not left the EU before January 2020, I consider the United Kingdom a member state of the EU throughout this dissertation.

politics might be debated differently in a polarized Europeanized public discourse.

2.2 Political Parties and Europeanized Public Discourse: Emphasizing Consensus or Sparking Issue Competition?

Until now, this dissertation has only discussed the structure of public discourse in the European multi-level system and how the European level might become an ever more important part of political decision-making and public discourse in Europe. However, the motivations and strategies of political parties for actually making use of this structure and including the European component to public discourse in their respective national public spheres remain an open question (Hutter and Kriesi 2019). As previously mentioned, although interdependencies between member states and the European level have increased substantially in the last decades, the Europeanization of public discourse does not take place automatically; instead, political parties deliberately use the changed structure to shape public discourse. By doing so, political parties expect to increase their electoral appeal to voters (Strom 1990; T. M. Meyer and Wagner 2013). Thus, political parties can strategically include the European component to public discourse. This strategy does not only imply including the European component to public discourse but also involves deciding whether to polarize public discourse or emphasize consensus when including the European component. The strategies therefore encompass the saliency, polarization, and content of public discourse.

The decision to include the European component in public discourse on political issues is closely related to the literature on issue competition and entrepreneurship, with some important differences (Green-Pedersen 2007). First, issue competition usually refers to issues that have not yet been taken into account by the political system, and cross-cut existing political conflicts, such as those regarding environmentalism, migration, or climate change

(Spoon, Hobolt, and de Vries 2014; Green-Pedersen and Otjes 2019). Although one might argue that European integration is also an issue that cross-cuts existing political conflicts, it does not directly refer to policy issues, but rather to political procedures and decision-making processes that need to be taken into consideration when discussing basically any political issue. In other words, European integration refers mostly to *politics*. As such, public discourse is highly susceptible to construction with regard to European integration. This issue can only enter public discourse when interacting with certain framings, aligning “Europe” to specific policies or certain institutional setups when debating it (Hooghe and Marks 2009, 13). Although European integration can become a political (or politicized) issue in public discourse, it is not a policy issue in itself. When political parties decide to include the European component into public discourse, it is usually necessary to embed it within existing policy issues to make it accessible to public discourse (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). Subsequently, political parties are able to put European integration on the agenda, however, primarily within the scope of actual policy issues. In contrast to classical issues referred to in the literature on issue competition, this marks an important difference.

Second, including the European component to public discourse is dependent not only on political parties strategically deciding to add it to public discourse, but also on strategies and behaviors of other national political parties or political parties from other EU member states. In the literature on issue competition, it is often implicitly assumed that competition only takes place within the arenas of the national public sphere (Meguid 2005). For European integration, this is expectedly not the case since bringing this issue into public discourse necessarily implies referring to other public spheres – whether other EU member states or the supranational European level (Hutter and Kriesi 2019). Especially in times of political crises and events, debates within and between the public spheres can become particularly intense, leading to national public discourses between member states debating issues that may affect the EU as a whole (Sacchi 2015; Börzel and Risse 2018). This major difference with other emerging competing issues indicates that there would be a larger variety of political parties to

take into account when answering the question of why the European component is included in public discourse.

The general motivation for political parties to bring new issues in public discourse is often the perception that the issue is relevant for public discourse, but has been deliberately removed from public discourse by other political parties (Meguid 2005). Furthermore, political parties aim to introduce new issues in public discourse when perceiving that a significantly large share of the public prioritizes these issues (Hooghe and Marks 2018). Bringing these issues into public discourse might increase political parties' electoral appeal, rewarding them for bringing them up (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2012). Finally, exogenous factors, such as events, might force political parties to consider issues for public discourse (Whitefield and Rohrschneider 2015). Concerning the issue of European integration, Bruycker (2020) was able to show that Europeanized public discourse increases the responsiveness of political parties to public demands, providing evidence that public discourse on European issues is electorally important.

In general, it is possible to differentiate between two types of political parties. Mainstream parties are already part of the political system, regularly competing against each other for electoral success. Challenger parties contest mainstream parties, often building their platform based on new political conflicts (Hobolt and Tilley 2016). Mainstream political parties are unlikely to pro-actively bring new issues into public discourse and spark political debates on these issues. Mainstream political parties are favored by the status quo, as they already have a clear position on the existing conflict dimensions (Hooghe and Marks 2018). Taking into consideration new issues might harm their electoral appeal and lead to internal divisions over these new issues (C. E. de Vries and van Wardt 2011). In particular, mainstream political parties aim to leave European integration out of public discourse, as they do not expect to make electoral gains from introducing this issue to public discourse.

The status quo of public discourse in the EU member states usually does not include the

European component. Thus, bringing this new issue into public discourse generally does not serve mainstream political parties. In addition to the input-related reasons for refraining from bringing European integration into public discourse, there are also output-related reasons. Mainstream political parties have been a part of the permissive consensus on European integration in the twentieth century, which implied de-politicizing European integration and focusing instead on delegating decisions to technocratic institutions, consensus and accommodation (Scharpf 2009; Moravcsik 2005; Heisenberg 2005). Furthermore, such permissive consensus was necessary for European integration to develop to its current state within the last decades (Radaelli 1999; Schmidt 2013). To keep the current status quo concerning European integration mainstream political parties typically refrain from bringing this issue into public discourse, as it might harm decision-making when negotiating with other national governments on the European level. Thus, avoiding addressing the European component as part of public discourse may be especially pronounced for mainstream political parties currently in government. There are, however, incentives for mainstream opposition parties to bring the issue of European integration in public discourse. When challenged by strong new challengers, mainstream opposition parties might be willing to move away from the consensus to keep the European component out of public discourse and maintain their chances of winning the next election (Evans 1998; van de Wardt 2015; Hutter and Grande 2014, 1016).

New challenger parties are not as politically restricted and can thus thrive more easily by bringing European integration into public discourse. These political parties are able to position themselves quite freely on political issues to increase their electoral appeal (Meguid 2005). Given increasing public dissatisfaction with European integration in recent decades (Hooghe and Marks 2004), it is reasonable for these political parties to adopt decisive anti-European positions, linking political issues with the European component to blame mainstream political parties. However, new challengers do not only stand on the anti-European pole of the integration scale. Since the public has become not only more critical but also more polarized about European integration, decisively pro-European political parties have

recently begun to emerge (Adam et al. 2017). These parties differ significantly from mainstream political parties, which only passively and quietly defend European integration due to internal (e.g. internal division) and external pressure (e.g. permissive consensus) (C. E. de Vries and van Wardt 2011; Williams and Spoon 2015). They aim to include European integration in public discourse to convince the general public that integration needs to be pro-actively pursued and established rather than taken out of public discourse or rejected altogether (Hoppe and Schmälter 2020). Since mainstream political parties are not able to determine which issues are brought into public discourse themselves, these new challengers are able to re-shape public discourse and include the European component in the political issues being debated. In more recent times, however, challenger parties were able to enter government coalitions in some European countries. I assume that being part of government does not affect the strategy of pro- or anti-EU challenger parties to include the European component to public discourse. Due to their strong preferences on European integration, they always aim to foster the Europeanization of public discourse, irrespective of being part of government or not.

As specified in the framework of Europeanization of public discourse, it is reasonable to assume that there are additional factors involved in bringing the European component into public discourse, even without facing domestic challengers to mainstream political parties. When political challengers are part of the political system in a particular member state, however, these events provide strategic incentives for these parties to increase the Europeanization of public discourse. This implies that certain events pressure political parties to consider the European component within public discourse. When political parties aim to make strategic use of Europeanized public discourse, these events should more strongly trigger the Europeanization of public discourse, as they provide a natural setting for changing public discourse accordingly.

According to this framework, both specific events and political discourse in other public

spheres might pressure national public discourse to consider the European component. Specific events include both European events and events throughout Europe, such as the European Parliament elections or EU summits (Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016; Kriesi et al. 2012). These events are particularly important for national public discourse due to the increased interdependence of the public spheres in the EU. On the contrary, there should also be political events, in which the European component should be explicitly be left out of public discourse. Most notably, national election campaigns should lead to shifting the focus of public discourse away from Europe and back to the nation-state.

Additionally, there are political issues, in which the European component takes more space in public discourse, due to the nature of the issue and the current decision-making rules within the European multi-level system (Scharpf 1994). Some issues, such as public security, culture and health are still predominantly implemented on the national level with the EU having almost no competency in these policy areas (but see Riddervold 2016). Other areas, such as economy and trade are strongly shaped by the EU, as it provides common rules for the single market, and the European Commission, which negotiates trade agreements for the whole EU (C. O. Meyer 2005). Other issues, such as migration are strongly Europeanized because migrants arrive at the southern and eastern periphery of the EU, aiming to find shelter in wealthy northern member states (Geddes and Scholten 2016). Although the EU has almost no competencies in migration politics, the actual situation on the ground makes it more likely for these issues to be debated with the European component. In my empirical analysis, I consider these events and specific political issues as test cases for the general assumptions in the framework for Europeanization of public discourse.

Due to the increasing levels of interdependence between EU member states and the deepening of European integration, public discourse in other spheres can have an influence on whether to include the European component in national public discourse. When public discourse in other public spheres includes the European component it is reasonable to assume that it

affects the that particular nation, at least to some degree. The reasons for this spill-over lie in the institutional, political and economic interdependence of EU member states. As previously explained, including the European component to public discourse often occurs due to new political challengers taking issue with the permissive consensus on European integration. This implies that decision-making on the European level can become politicized due to domestic pressures on national governments, for which public discourse includes the European component (Hagemann, Hobolt, and Wratil 2017). Additionally, public discourse on the European level (although underdeveloped compared to national public discourse) can have an influence on the Europeanization of public discourse (Haverland, Ruiter, and van de Walle 2018). However, the European Commission or the European Parliament debating political issues might shape public discourse on the same issues on the national level explicitly adding the European component by addressing issues brought forward by the European institutions.

Including the European component, however, refers to includeing not only “Europe,” but also other European countries in public discourse; this is specified as public discourse between member states in this framework. Thus, it is also possible that public discourse in member states refers to other European countries, taking into account issues and debates taking place in these countries or on the European level, where interests might con- or diverge (Koopmans 2004; Brüggemann and Kleinen-von KönigsLöw 2009). However, the reception of increased Europeanization in other public discourses might be explicitly positive or negative in a particular nation, increasing the necessity to articulate a nation-state’s own position to public discourse from another member state and ultimately accelerating public discourse between member states.

Political parties use different strategies to address in- or excluding the European component in public discourse based both on the composition of political parties on the national level, the nature of European events taking place, and the state of public discourse in other public

spheres within the EU. These strategies concern not only whether to include the European component at all, but also the content and sentiment of the European component compared to national public discourse without references to “Europe.” Although political parties might not necessarily have leverage to influence whether an issue arrives on the political agenda, they have at least always some ability to shaping the tone (e.g. polarization) of debates in public discourse.

Turning to the composition of political parties on the national level whose interactions shape Europeanized public discourse, four possible settings are conceivable: (1) only mainstream political parties; (2) mainstream political parties and anti-EU political challengers; (3) mainstream political parties and pro-EU political challengers; and (4) mainstream political parties, and both anti- and pro-EU political challengers. In the first setting, the level of Europeanization of public discourse can generally be assumed to be low, as no political elite can assume electoral gains from bringing the European component into public discourse. However, as even mainstream political parties cannot refrain from taking Europe into account at all, the share of Europeanized public discourse may also not be particularly polarized if public discourse eventually becomes Europeanized.

The second setting comes along with an increased level of Europeanization of public discourse as anti-EU political challengers have an incentive to include the European component in public discourse. Additionally, the tone of Europeanized public discourse should differ as well. The existence of anti-EU political challengers does not imply that Europeanized public discourse is more polarized per se, as mainstream political parties might choose to stay silent about the issues or even adopt positions from challenger parties, leading to a decreased level of polarization in Europeanized public discourse (Adam et al. 2017). However, based on the strength of an anti-EU political challenger the strategies of the mainstream government and opposition parties might differ, with the latter pushing for polarized Europeanized public discourse (Meguid 2005). Turning to the third setting, the saliency of Europeanization

should increase similar to what occurs in the second setting. With regard to the polarization of Europeanized public discourse, it is reasonable to assume that polarization in general is low, as mainstream political parties do not oppose the positions of pro-EU challengers. In the fourth setting, both the level of Europeanization of public discourse and the polarization of public discourse should be highest, as there are both explicitly pro- and anti-EU political parties competing against each other in public discourse.

European events taking place should increase the saliency of the European component in public discourse, but should not immediately lead to increased polarization. As most European events emphasize consensus it is reasonable to assume that public discourse also adopts this notion accordingly. European election campaigns, however, represent a special case because these European events actually spark discussions and emphasize differences between political parties, critically debating the future of the EU (at least in the most recent European Parliament elections; see Braun, Hutter, and Kersch (2016)), and should increase the polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

Third, when focusing on the influence of public discourse in other public spheres, it is necessary to differentiate between European public spheres and other national public spheres. In cases, where the European public sphere focuses on the same political issues as the national public sphere (and on being received by this sphere), the Europeanization of public discourse increases. However, as this public sphere is driven by consensus-seeking, the polarization of Europeanized public discourse should not increase (de Wilde and Rauh 2019). When referring to Europeanization based on public discourse in other national public spheres – public discourse between member states – the saliency of the European component should increase with increased salience in other public spheres. The polarization of public discourse between member states in their own public spheres, however, might be dependent on the polarization in other public spheres, as the information provided from another public discourse can guide public discourse in a member state’s own public sphere.

Lastly, not only do saliency and polarization of Europeanization of public discourse differ based on political determinants, but also the content of Europeanized public discourse differs from national public discourse. Based on literature on communication strategies utilized by national and European executive leaders since the decline of permissive consensus, there are different ways in which the content of public discourse might change when Europeanized (Rauh, Bes, and Schoonvelde 2020). First, public discourse in the national public sphere might shift toward undermining and blaming European integration when debating political issues (Hooghe and Marks 2009). Second, public discourse could focus technocratic, scientific and procedural aspects of European decision-making to shield European integration and defuse any contentiousness in public discourse (Schimmelfennig 2014). Sánchez-Cuenca (2017) shows that public discourse on the Eurozone debt crisis was dominated by the technocratic aspects of European decision-making, especially among national and European political elites. This example shows that the European public sphere does not debate political issues that are less polarized and to a lesser degree debate according to technocratic, rather than political arguments. Finally, Europeanized public discourse might be pursued to actively defend the European integration of a specific policy being debated (Rauh 2019).

I expect these strategies to be employed depending on the level of polarization within Europeanized public discourse. When polarization of Europeanized public discourse is low, a defusing strategy focusing on technocratic aspects should prevail. With increasing polarization, this strategy is more difficult to uphold, as the public demands active political debates on Europeanization. Now, public discourse should either focus on blaming European integration or actively defending it with regard to the actual policy issue being debated. Thus, public discourse on such a policy is amended with a debate on the polity in which the policy can be implemented most successfully and whom to blame for problems associated with the political issue. These changes in the content of public discourse should not, however, apply to public discourses between member states, in which member states refer to each other in public discourse. Here, the content should not differ fundamentally, as no supranational

polity is directly involved in this type of public discourse.

In summary, the domestic composition of political parties, specific events and the interdependence of public spheres within the EU are the main determinants for changes in public discourse within and between national public spheres. These changes include saliency of the European component in public discourse, the level of polarization in which this component is debated and the content of public discourse in general. In the following section, I propose several hypotheses on the determinants and components of Europeanized public discourse.

2.3 Hypotheses

Public discourse in the member states of the EU is shaped by the increased political, economic, and social integration of the EU and the increasing interdependence of its member states. This has fundamental implications for how everyday politics is debated in national public spheres. Changes in public discourse, however, are either accelerated or inhibited by political parties, becoming salient during certain events or dependent on public discourses in other public discourses within the European multi-level system. In particular political parties play an important role in this regard, as they strategically make use of the European multi-level structure when influencing public discourse. Based on the above assumptions, I develop hypotheses on the three aspects of Europeanized public discourse – namely, saliency, polarization, and content focusing on the political parties, specific events, and the interdependences within the European multi-level system.

2.3.1 Saliency of Europeanized Public Discourse

The saliency of the European component in public discourse is first and foremost dependent on the composition of mainstream political parties and their challengers aiming to bring the European component into public discourse. Thus, saliency critically depends on the strength of the challengers in the parliamentary arena. This implies that an increasing share

of political parties either strongly supporting or strongly opposing European integration may increase the saliency of the European component in public discourse. Both strong supporters and skeptics of European integration aim to shape Europeanized debates on political issues to strategically influence public discourse in favor of their political ideas (Kam 2005; Stoeckel and Kuhn 2018).

Hypothesis 1: A larger share of political challengers with strong preferences toward European integration in the national parliamentary arena increases the saliency of Europeanized public discourse.

When opposed by new challengers, weak mainstream political parties not currently in government, in particular, are likely to further emphasize the European component in public discourse. When it has low prospects of taking over the next government, mainstream opposition parties may address the European component to test whether emphasizing the European component increases their electoral appeal. This strategy may be particularly appealing for mainstream opposition parties with currently low representation. As stated above, however, the strategy of mainstream opposition parties can be difficult to determine as it is dependent on different aspects of both the opposition parties as such and the party system more generally. There are, however, good reasons to assume that weak mainstream opposition parties would emphasize the Europeanization of public discourse to increase their chances of taking over the government in the next election.

Hypothesis 2: A smaller share of mainstream political parties in the opposition in the national parliamentary arena increases the saliency of Europeanized public discourse.

In addition to the composition of the preferences of political parties toward keeping the European component in or out of public discourse, specific events and issues currently salient in public discourse may particularly influence whether or not public discourse is Europeanized. The European component should be especially pronounced during important European polit-

ical events, such as EU summits or European Parliamentary elections. In the latter, the European component in public discourse should already increase during the election campaign with political parties competing for electoral support. Only recently, election campaigns for the European Parliament actually started to debate EU issues in this electoral arena (Beach, Hansen, and Larsen 2018; Eugster et al. 2021), turning these elections into first-order elections. As European integration has become more politicized and politically contested, it has become more important for political actors to articulate their positions towards European integration during election campaigns for the European Parliament. On the contrary, during national election campaigns, the European component should be particularly low. As public discourse is by default concerned with national issues, political parties competing in election campaigns for national elections have no incentives to include the European component in public discourse, as the electorate is mostly interested in how political parties aim to solve current national political issues.

Hypothesis 3a: The saliency of Europeanized public discourse increases during EU summits and campaigns for European Parliament elections. During election campaigns for national parliamentary elections, the saliency of the European component decreases.

Hypothesis 3b: This relationship should be especially pronounced with a larger share of political challengers having strong preferences for European integration or a smaller share of mainstream political parties in opposition.

There are also political issues that are debated within a European context more often than others due to the nature of these issues within the European multi-level system. Political issues may be associated with a larger share of the European component for mostly two reasons. First, issues come along with a larger share of the European component when the European level has the competency to implement laws or regulations on these issues. This is primarily the case for economic and trade issues, necessary to keep up the single market,

and the four fundamental freedoms of citizens within the EU. Second, issues are associated with the European component when the issue itself is attributed to the European level. This is primarily the case for migration issues, where migrants try to enter the EU through its southern and eastern borders but ultimately aim to find shelter and a better life in other EU countries. Thus, although migrants mostly arrive the EU through its periphery, the issue itself is important for the EU as a whole to preserve the open inner-European borders and the single market. For other issues, however, the European component is not particular important. These are clearly national issues, as the EU may have almost no political power. Among others, issues of public safety and security are important in national public discourse but generally fall under the jurisdiction of one's own nation-state.

Hypothesis 4a: Increased public discourse on migration and economic issues is more strongly associated with an increased saliency of Europeanization compared to increased public discourse on security issues.

Hypothesis 4b: With a larger share of political challengers with strong preferences for European integration or a smaller share of mainstream political parties in opposition, all issues should be more strongly associated with increasing saliency of Europeanization.

Public discourse on the European level should also have substantial impact on how political issues are debated in the European multi-level system. As public discourse in the European public sphere mainly takes place in the European Parliament, I consider public discourse on issues currently debated in this parliamentary arena influential toward national public discourse on these issues as well. The rationale behind this assumption follows my main underlying narrative stating that public discourse is able to move between different political levels, as they are all considered important to solving current political issues throughout Europe. Thus, European public discourse on political issues should increase the European component in national public discourse.

Hypothesis 5a: Public discourse on political issues on the European level increase the saliency of Europeanization in these issues in national public discourse.

Hypothesis 5b: This relationship should be especially pronounced with a larger share of political challengers having strong preferences for European integration or a smaller share of mainstream political parties in opposition.

2.3.2 Saliency of Public Discourse between Member States

Turning to the saliency of public discourse between member states, I assume that public discourses in the member states influence each other. This implies that public discourse in a particular member state takes into account the dynamics and changes in public discourse in other member states even though they may not directly communicate with each other often (but see Risse 2010). Due to the interdependence between the EU member states, increasing saliency of the European component in public discourse in some member states should therefore be associated with increasing saliency of the European component in other member states.

Hypothesis 6: Increasing saliency of Europeanized public discourse in other member states increases the saliency of Europeanized public discourse in a particular member state.

Public discourse in the European multi-level system might be influenced not only by the European public sphere, but also by debates between different national public discourses (Sifft et al. 2007). It is possible that political issues have political implications for all member states within the European multi-level system due to increased European integration and political discourses taking place in one national sphere being adopted by discourses in other national spheres. One major implication from this assumption is that geographic proximity is crucial for national public discourses taking place between member states and referring to each other. As political issues often have a geographical scope, political issues emerging in

one country are likely to shape public discourse in other neighboring countries (Geddes and Scholten 2015; Kamkhaji and Radaelli 2017). This is because member states within the EU are often not able or allowed to close their borders, opening up the possibility of spill-over of political issues to a particular nation when political issues emerge in neighboring countries. Thus, I assume that geographic proximity increases the saliency of references to neighboring member states in public discourse on specific issues.

Hypothesis 7: Geographic proximity to other member states increases the saliency of public discourse between member states in these EU member states.

2.3.3 Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse

In contrast to the saliency of Europeanized public discourse, in which the composition of political parties, events and other public discourses definitely matter, the polarization of Europeanized public discourse is predominantly dependent on the motivations of national political parties in the respective public spheres. However, polarization of the European component might also be partially dependent on Europeanized public discourse in other public spheres (whether national or European). However, the political parties are the decisive actors in whether and how public discourse is shaped. As stated above, there are four important compositions of national political parties in national parliamentary arenas, influencing the level of polarization in Europeanized public discourse.

The first composition of political parties involves only mainstream political parties with no actors aiming to introduce the European component into public discourse. As no one expects to electorally benefit from putting the European component on the agenda, Europeanized public discourse in this composition mostly stems from exogenous factors, independent of the national political parties. However, due to the composition of political parties Europeanized public discourse is not likely to become highly polarized.

Hypothesis 8: Public spheres that only include mainstream political parties are

associated with low levels of polarization in Europeanized public discourse.

The second composition of political parties includes both mainstream political parties and anti-EU political challengers. This composition forces mainstream political parties to decide on a strategy to address these challengers. In cases where anti-EU political challengers are relatively weak, mainstream political parties may be more likely to employ a silencing strategy, trying to prevent a polarized Europeanized public discourse in which they do not expect to gain electorally. An anti-EU political challenger might still try to bring the European component to public discourse, blaming “Europe” for several political issues. When anti-EU challengers are somewhat strong, threatening the mainstream political parties – in particular, the mainstream political parties in opposition from gaining access to government – the likelihood for polarized Europeanized public discourse considerably increases. Facing a strong challenger forces mainstream political parties to address the European component in public discourse, objecting to the propositions made by the challengers. Mainstream political parties currently in opposition may agree with strong anti-EU challengers, blaming “Europe” for political issues. It is, however, extremely unlikely that all political parties ultimately agree with the anti-EU challenger, as the political parties currently in government have to take into account the perceptions of the European level and other national governments, preventing it from taking an explicitly anti-EU position within public discourse.

Hypothesis 9: Public spheres that include mainstream political parties in opposition and weak anti-EU challengers are associated with low levels of polarization and negative sentiment in Europeanized public discourse.

Hypothesis 10: Public spheres that include mainstream political parties in opposition and strong anti-EU challengers are associated with high levels of polarization in Europeanized public discourse.

Turning to the third composition – mainstream political parties in opposition and pro-EU challengers in the public sphere – I expect a different association with regard to the level

of polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Here, I assume that polarization is lower compared to the second composition of political parties. The main reason for this is that mainstream political parties should not heavily disagree with the pro-EU challengers arguing that the EU should be positively involved in solving political issues. As argued above, the saliency of the European component should increase as pro-EU challengers are eager to bring these issues to public discourse. However, although the European component might become part of public discourse there are good reasons for mainstream political parties to not polarize the European component: internal pressures on mainstream political parties with regard to European integration and the motivation of national governments and the political parties supporting the government to not polarize political negotiations in the European Council. I therefore assume that a composition only including mainstream political parties and pro-EU challengers should not increase the polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

Hypothesis 11: Public spheres that include mainstream political parties in opposition and pro-EU challengers are associated with low levels of polarization in Europeanized public discourse.

In the last composition, the public sphere includes mainstream political parties, as well as anti-EU and pro-EU challengers. This composition should lead to high levels of polarization concerning the European component in public discourse as all political parties either have incentives or are pressured to take clear positions on European integration. In this composition, anti-EU and pro-EU challengers choose opposing positions on European issues, arguing about whether Europe is to blame or supporting in their solutions for political issues. Due to domestic pressures, mainstream political parties in opposition are also pressured to position themselves on these issues to maintain their electoral appeal.

Hypothesis 12: Public spheres that include mainstream political parties in opposition and both anti-EU and pro-EU challengers are associated with high levels of polarization in Europeanized public discourse.

Before moving to the final expectations about changes in public discourse due to increased Europeanization, it is important to emphasize what can or cannot be examined with preferences and strategies of political parties using a highly aggregated public discourse approach. As this dissertation analyzes public discourse on a systemic level, it is not possible to directly identify which strategies have been employed by the political parties to shape public discourse. In the end, different outputs in the level of polarization might provide hints regarding the specific strategies employed. It is, however, not possible to causally identify these effects. It is therefore necessary for future research to examine changes on the party level, providing additional and clearer evidence for different strategies employed by political parties when shaping public discourse in the European multi-level system. I discuss this issue in the final chapter.⁴

2.3.4 Content of Europeanized Public Discourse

Finally, the content of public discourse might differ considerably when the European component is included in public discourse. In the past, debates that included European matters were considered apolitical and technical, focusing on efficiency and European coordination with regard to political issues. This perspective has changed substantially with increased European integration, making “Europe” often a highly controversial – or, as some refer to it, politicized – issue. Consequently, I assume that the level of polarization of the European component in public discourse is responsible for changes in the content of public discourse. When Europeanized public discourse is not polarized, apolitical, processual and technical aspects should dominate this part of public discourse. On the contrary, when Europeanized public discourse is polarized, the content should be more political. This is because a polarized European component of public discourse should resemble a polarized national public discourse on political issues, only varying with regard to the political levels being responsible

⁴I furthermore discuss how mainstream parties currently in government might play an different role in shaping public discourse depending on their ideological preferences and the composition of the government coalition. Since this dissertation project provides a first glimpse on the conditions for the Europeanization of public discourse, it was beyond the scope of this project to also consider these aspects.

for implementing solutions to these issues.

Hypothesis 13: The content of the European component changes with increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

Public discourse between member states should not be attributed to changes in the content of public discourse. The main reason for this lies in the main drivers of public discourse – national political parties. Thus, even in cases when public discourse takes into account other EU member states, the way public discourse is brought up mainly depends on the strategic decisions of political parties adapting public discourse. There are, however, no apparent reasons that the content of public discourse between member states should differ from national public discourse. Nevertheless, there are reasons for political parties to use negative images of other EU member states, blaming them for political issues. During the European debt crisis, several examples of this were found, especially considering the examples of Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Greece (Bickes, Otten, and Weymann 2014; Doudaki et al. 2016). In these states, both strategies of reciprocal blaming and of emphasizing a country’s own superiority could be observed (Joris, d’Haenens, and van Gorp 2014; Jurado et al. 2020). As structural changes in public discourse on everyday politics in the European multi-level system is the main focus of my dissertation, I do not analyze these specific incidents further. Thus, I have not developed specific hypotheses to consider the connections in public discourse between member states and differences in the content of public discourse. In everyday politics, I do not assume that taking into consideration other member states is usually associated with changes in the content of public discourse, but the increased interdependence between the member states makes it necessary to consider issues taking place in other member states. I discuss these issues in greater detail in the final chapter, also providing suggestions on how further research might be able to obtain more in-depth insights into these new aspects of public discourse in the European multi-level system.

Chapter 3

Measuring Public Discourse in Europe

3.1 Media Sources for Public Discourse

Public discourse mainly takes place in the media arena in modern democratic societies (Gamson 2004). However, there is a wide variety of actors participating in this arena and formats in which discourse takes place. Today, the media contributes to public discourse both offline and online in written, oral, and visual formats, including in newspapers, radio and television broadcasting, and websites (Esser and Strömbäck 2014). The actors in the media arena are no longer restricted to professional mass media actors, but also include social media actors, bloggers, and influencers. As such, the amount of information and the contributions to public discourse have increased substantially compared to times before online political communications (Jungherr, Posegga, and An 2019; Parmelee and Bichard 2013).

Provided the manifold data available in the media arena, it is necessary to make informed decisions on which actors and contributions to public discourse properly measure the Europeanization of public discourse. Most importantly, the decision for feasible media actors to analyze the changes should be guided by considerations on which media actors are most influential in shaping public discourse.

Based on these considerations, I decided to use newspaper articles published by mass media actors and professional journalists to analyze public discourse in my dissertation. These outlets are still assumed to be most relevant for the public to become informed about solutions proposed by political parties to resolve current issues (van Aelst and Walgrave 2016; Esser and Strömbäck 2012). Furthermore, these actors have access to other political arenas in the public sphere based on special broadcasting access or personal relations, which should drive the re-shaping of public discourse in the European multi-level system according to my theoretical framework. Therefore, I assume that newspaper articles published by professional mass media actors are the most accurate reflection of public discourse in the national spheres of the EU member states, allowing me to examine how public discourse is shaped with increased European integration. There is, however, an important scholarly debate on whether it is sufficient to only focus on mass media actors when examining public discourse, as political communication in modern democratic societies differs fundamentally from political communication in the twentieth century (Jacobi, Kleinen-von KönigsLöw, and Ruigrok 2016; Jungherr, Posegga, and An 2019). Due to technical advancements, it has become much easier for the public to take a more active and visible role in public discourse through the use of social media platforms. These platforms allow members of the public to directly inform themselves about political issues through statements from political elites themselves and state their political demands without requiring mass media actors to take and transport them to the media arena (Jungherr, Schoen, and Jürgens 2016; Stier et al. 2018; Wells et al. 2020).

However, there are often fundamental misconceptions regarding how social media contributes to public discourse and regarding its potential to substantially shape public discourse. Although social media provides the members of the public with the means to easily participate in public discourse and make their voices heard, there are three major reasons why public discourse on these platforms might not be able to shape overall public discourse in society. The first reason is that members of social media platforms are not part of the public as such

but rather find themselves in “self-chosen networks or special publics” (McQuail 2010, 140). This prevents individuals from being confronted with different political views, hindering an open and rational discourse on current political issues (Barberá et al. 2015).

Second, although political parties are more easily able to directly communicate with the public using social media, they often do not communicate with *the public* in these platforms. Political parties and individual politicians are confronted with a particular set of users that have specific political preferences (Jungherr, Schoen, and Jürgens 2016) and often only discuss with their own supporters (Stier et al. 2018). Third, news about current political issues requires trust-worthy sources for (most) political actors to be willing to discuss potential solutions to these issues. News distributed solely via social media platforms often lacks credible sources, making it unreasonable or even dangerous to disseminate them in public discourse (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017).

Thus, for both the public and political parties, social media only allows for a specific portion of public discourse that needs to be verified by professional mass media actors in the media arena. Mass media actors provide the public with different political solutions to current issues, taking into account proposals by all relevant political parties and fact-checking the information gained. Furthermore, mass media actors force political parties to communicate with the whole public rather than only their own supporters. In their function of providing the means for public discourse, mass media actors enable all relevant political parties to contribute to public discourse and the public is able to receive information on proposals made by political parties, make up its mind on these proposals, and contribute to public discourse (van Aelst and Walgrave 2016).

When focusing on professional mass media, a large number of actors use different formats to publish contributions to public discourse, which are impossible to analyze empirically in their full scale. In this regard, one may differentiate between broadcast and print media, where the former uses radio and television to reach out to the public and the latter operates traditionally

through books, magazines and newspapers. In my dissertation, I focus on newspapers as they are highly accessible to the public and provide in-depth news reporting. Although broadcasting is also extremely accessible and cheap in modern European democracies, the time available to report on different political proposals from political parties is very limited. Furthermore, there is often only a very limited number of broadcasters, making it difficult to cover the whole spectrum of public discourse (Schudson 1982). Books and magazines provide the most in-depth information about public discourse, however, they are not particularly accessible and require much time for the public to process.

Finally, it is also important to consider transnational newspapers when analyzing public discourse in the European multi-level system (Brüggemann and Schulz-Forberg 2009). As stated above, however, I do not assume an actual public discourse in the distinct European sphere. This is also reflected in the extremely low number of transnational newspapers and their audiences, mostly restricted to insiders from the “Brussels bubble” (Brüggemann and Kleinen-von Königslöw 2009; Corcoran and Fahy 2009). Therefore, I have decided not to cover transnational newspapers in my dissertation. When analyzing newspapers in my dissertation, I use the online versions of national newspapers. In recent years, all major print newspapers in the EU member states launched professional websites to broaden their audiences, reduce costs and generate new revenues through online advertisements. Concerning public discourse, the online versions of print newspapers show more political news and party diversity (Jacobi, Kleinen-von Königslöw, and Ruigrok 2016), more accurately resembling public discourse. Finally, using the online version of newspapers allows for automatic collection of articles, which I explain in detail in the next section.

3.2 The Internet Archive as a Crucial Data Source for Public Discourse

One of the most difficult tasks in measuring public discourse is the availability of written documents produced by mass media actors. Researchers in communication studies usually rely on precompiled resources provided by commercial vendors such as www.lexisnexis.de or www.news.com or make use of news feed distributors such as Reuters, the Associated Press, or Bloomberg (Tamul and Martínez-Carrillo 2018; Weaver and Bimber 2008; van der Meer 2016). There are, however, several drawbacks to using these resources to measure public discourse in Europe (Blatchford 2020). First and foremost, it is not possible to easily access a random sample (or even the full population) of newspaper articles published in a certain span of time. Usually, researchers are forced to enter specific key words to receive a pre-specified set of articles processed by the providers. When aiming to measure public discourse, this approach forces researchers to rely on very specific subsets of public discourse – namely, those in which a specific key word is mentioned (Deacon 2007; Tamul and Martínez-Carrillo 2018). Additionally, one is not able to control which articles are provided, as the data generating process underlying these preprocessed collections of newspaper articles cannot be verified with implications both for the validity of the data and the possibilities of replicating the results derived from these data (Weaver and Bimber 2008). Second, it is extremely tedious to process rather large data sets from these distributors, as they often only allow the download of a very restricted number of articles with each query. Although it is technical possible to automate these queries, these are often prohibited by the operators of the respective homepages. Lastly, downloading bulk data sets from commercial providers can be extremely costly, making them inaccessible for researchers with limited funding.

In my dissertation, I make use of the Internet Archive to systematically and automatically collect data to evaluate public discourse in all EU member states, Norway, and Switzerland. This data source has barely been used in social science research (but see Gade and Wilkerson

2017). It is, however, an extremely valuable and highly accessible data source for conducting research on any kind of political communication or online social behavior (Brügger and Schroeder 2017). The Internet Archive is the largest collection of archived homepages and encompasses mementos – snapshots of homepages – for more than 731 billion homepages. The mementos are saved both automatically by web crawler, which saves snapshots of websites of those explicitly allowing the Internet Archive’s crawler to automatically create snapshots and manually by users, who save snapshots of homepages deemed relevant to archive. Homepages of popular newspapers are among the best preserved homepages in the Internet Archive, as their content is deemed relevant for future generations. This archive contains an incredibly rich data source for public discourse taking place in different times and geographical areas, allowing scholars of public discourse to set up their own datasets, historians to reconstruct Internet history (Rogers 2017), and communication scholars to trace fake news (Woloszyn and Nejd 2018).

One crucial question, however, concerns the availability of data in the Internet Archive. Although most of the Internet Archive is supplied by automated web scrapers that cover large parts of the most frequently visited homepages, the Internet Archive is certainly not – and cannot be – a full archive of all Internet-based communication. It is therefore important to reconsider how mementos are added to the Internet Archive and whether there is reason to assume that the data generating process of providing homepages to the Internet Archive might be systematically biased. The most important limitation of the Internet Archive is that mementos of homepages before 1996 have not been retrieved, as the Internet Archive was created in that year. This limitation, however, is not relevant for this dissertation, as I only consider the time span ranging from 2016 to 2019.

Next, it is important to consider the crawling algorithm used to archive homepages. According to Kimpton and Ubois (2006), the web crawler used to archive the Internet by crawling through a list of very popular homepages and downloading all hyperlinks from these pages.

Building on this sample, the crawler applies snowball sampling to cover wide swaths of the Internet by downloading all homepages linked by the original (or subsequent) homepages. Such snowball sampling has certain advantages and disadvantages with regard to using the Internet Archive provide comprehensive archives of the Internet. The main advantage is the scope of homepages archived and the speed at which the Internet Archive is able to archive homepages. One major downside, however, is that homepages that are seldom visited or have no hyperlinks connecting to popular homepages might not be scraped often (or at all). Furthermore, Thelwall and Vaughan (2004) were able to show that the coverage of homepages of different domains differs substantially. When comparing U.S. homepages with those from China, Singapore and Taiwan, the results indicated substantially more comprehensive coverage of U.S. homepages compared to those from the other three countries. However, as this research is already more than one decade old, with the Internet Archive having significantly increased its capacities, it is reasonable to assume that – although difference between countries might still prevail, the Internet Archive should be able to capture the most popular homepages in the respective countries, which most often are actually homepages of major national newspapers (Brügger and Schroeder 2017). In Germany, for example, the major newspapers BILD, SPIEGEL-Online, and Welt are among the 50 most popular homepages, making it very reasonable that the web crawler of the Internet Archive created regular mementos of these homepages (Similarweb 2021).

One important consideration in using the Internet Archive concerns copyright law and web scraping ethics. The Internet Archive usually does not ask the provider of homepages, whether they consent to web crawlers to scraping their homepages. For homepage providers, however, it is possible to prevent the Internet Archive from scraping content from their homepage by adding a *robots* script to the header of the homepage. There are numerous reasons why homepages might want to prevent the Internet Archive from scraping their content, but copy right violations might be the among the most important. As the Internet Archive creates mementos of the homepages and stores them on its own servers, it is un-

clear who the owner of the mementos is and whether the Internet Archive is responsible for violations of copy right (Berčič 2005). It is also the current policy of the Internet Archive to delete mementos if the owner of the homepage asks it to do so, making it impossible for researchers to gain access to these homepages after this point. Additionally, newspapers have increasingly made use of paywalls to increase their revenues. When captured in the Internet Archive, these paywalls are still active, preventing researchers from accessing these articles and adding an additional possibility for biased measures of public discourse.

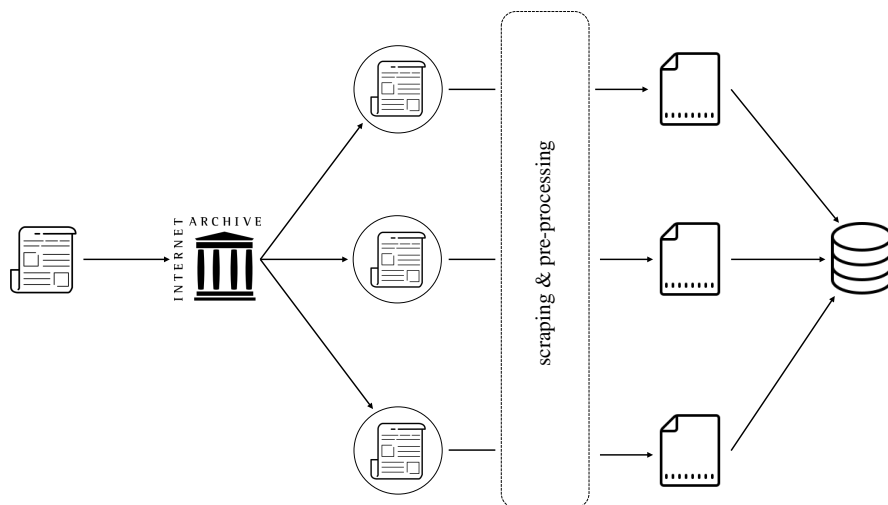
Although there are considerable weaknesses in using this method of archiving for specific research endeavors (Brügger 2009; Milligan 2016), the snowball sampling method of archiving proves to be very useful for my approach of measuring public discourse using newspaper articles. Snowball sampling ensures that most of the articles published on the newspaper's homepage are captured through the generation of one memento every day. As newspaper articles are not removed from the homepage after they have been uploaded but rather stored in the lower parts of the homepages, snowball sampling allows the retrieval of a substantial part of the articles published on the homepage of the newspaper, reflecting public discourse at a particular point in time.

It is expected that most newspapers allow the Internet Archive to scrape their content that is uploaded without a paywall, as part of the job description of journalists involves allowing people to actually be able to read their content. However, the publishers of the newspapers might have a more ambivalent relationship with the Internet Archive, as it might easily violate copyright regulations when scraping the content, without the publisher immediately noticing this. To summarize, having taken into consideration all of the potential drawbacks of the Internet Archive, it is still the most valuable, rich, and comprehensive data source for public discourse available at the moment, enabling researchers to trace public discourse systematically by scraping relevant newspaper article in the countries and time span under consideration.

3.3 Gathering and Storing Newspaper Articles from the Internet Archive

In this subsection, I explain the data generating process of my data corpus, which was derived from the Internet Archive. In line with its goal to store and preserve the history of the Internet, the Internet Archive stores mementos of homepages on its own servers and makes them available to the public. To enable systematic research, the Internet Archive provides an open API, which allows for automated scraping of their servers. The process of gathering and efficiently storing newspaper articles from the Internet Archive is described in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Workflow Data Collection



Note: Own diagram

The first step is to identify the correct URL stems associated with the respective newspapers and define the time range for scraping. Using the Internet Archive API, one is able to obtain all mementos of a particular newspaper within a given time frame if it is stored in the Internet Archive. It is, however, possible that the Internet Archive created several mementos of the newspaper's homepage on one day. In these cases, I have decided to randomly pick one memento. Furthermore, it is possible that the Internet Archive did not preserve a homepage

itself, but needs to rely on other archives having archived the page. Therefore, I make use of the redirected mementos from other archives to increase coverage. Based on memento retrieval from the Internet Archive’s API, it is possible to retrieve links to the corresponding articles.

To do so, I filtered all *href* (HTML-elements including an external link) from the mementos, which included the URL stems of the newspaper, and removed duplicates, which filtered out links to other homepages, advertisements, and spam. For several newspaper, there were no mementos available for every day as the Internet Archive does not preserve the whole Internet every day, but requires automated crawlers to at least preserve substantial parts. This might have led to data losses in my data corpus for single newspapers, but I tried to mitigate this using two different methods. At first, newspaper still stored articles from the previous days on their homepages. These pages just did not show up on the main page any longer. However, by collecting all *href* elements from the mementos, I was able to retrieve at least some of the articles from days in which no memento was available. Additionally, I collected several newspapers from every EU member state. The main reason for doing so was to provide a fuller picture of public discourse in the respective member state; for days where one newspaper is not available, this procedure ensures that at least some part of public discourse is covered in my analysis.

Based upon the links to the articles, the most tedious part of data retrieval then began. To properly scrape the content of the newspaper articles, it is necessary to identify the XPath of the article. XPath, as defined by the World Wide Web Consortium, is a query language used to address parts of an XML document (W3C 2021). As almost all newspaper articles are stored as HTML documents, which also allow for XPath queries, it is possible to apply XPath queries to identify the paths of the articles’ corpora.¹ Unfortunately, there is no universal standard for how and where to store these elements in an HTML document. This implies that it is necessary to open a sample of newspaper articles from every newspaper in

¹The date of the articles can be retrieved from the base URL stored in the Internet Archive.

my corpus and ensure the correct location of the article corpus. Additionally, newspapers often change the appearance of their homepages, which comes along with adaptations to the XPath pointing to the article corpus. Thus, it is necessary to both check a sample of articles for all newspaper outlets and also check a sample at least once a year to make sure that the XPath has not changed.

After collecting the XPaths for all newspaper articles, the next step involves actually scraping the content from the homepages. Here, it is important to adhere to ethical considerations for scraping, such as scraping etiquette (Luscombe, Dick, and Walby 2021). This etiquette is a convention to ensure that users scraping content from homepages with different ownership do not violate the rules imposed by the owner of the homepage or disturb the processes of the homepage. Among others, it is important to not bulk scrape from other homepages. Furthermore, content from the homepage might be stored behind a paywall or in JavaScript containers only accessible via password. It goes without saying that scraper should not try to circumvent these protective measures, although it means leaving relevant content aside. To adhere to scraping etiquette, I let the scraper rest for about 1–3 seconds after scraping a single article and only scraped content that was accessible without logins or credentials. However, to speed up the scraping process, I made use of several servers scraping different newspaper homepages at the same time.

The last step involved in scraping content from the Internet Archive is efficiently storing the data. This implies formatting the data into a rectangular data frame and deleting articles that were accidentally scraped multiple times. Although it might be possible that articles were updated after journalists made corrections or received more information, I do not take old versions of the same article into account and only preserved the most recent version of each article.

3.3.1 A Standardized Workflow of Massively Gathering Data from the Internet Archive: The `archiveRetrieveR` Package

As previously mentioned, the Internet Archive allows researchers to gain access to an incredibly large corpus of digitalized political communication without substantial research funds. However, the accessibility of the Internet Archive for political communication research is still limited, as it requires advanced skills in web scraping and adequate IT-infrastructure to actually gain access to the data. To increase accessibility to the data provided in the Internet Archive, I developed the R package `archiveRetriever` (Gavras and Isermann 2021)² which allows researchers to easily access data from the Internet Archive and set up their own data sets. I now describe the specific functions of the package.

The package comprises of four main functions that allow users to automatically collect a large amount of content from the Internet Archive in a simple workflow. First, the `archive_overview` function provides an overview of available mementos of the homepage from the Internet Archive. As the Internet Archive might not have stored mementos of the homepage every day, it is important to obtain a first glimpse of the available data. After learning about the dates available, the `retrieve_urls` function scrapes the mementos of the main homepage from the Internet Archive from a given time range. After retrieving the mementos, it might be useful to obtain all links stored on the homepage (e.g. when scraping newspaper homepages or press releases by political parties). To do so, the `retrieve_links` function allows users to obtain all links stored in the memento of a homepage. Here, it is important that only Internet Archive links are scraped to adhere to copyright law. The `scrape_urls` function takes the results from `retrieve_links`, a start and end date, appropriate XPaths for specific content of the homepage, and several optional arguments to actually scrape the content from the Internet Archive. The output is stored in a rectangular data frame in R (tibble), allowing researchers to immediately use the data for quantitative

²The implementation of the package into the CRAN library was done in collaboration with Lukas Isermann.

text analyses.

3.4 Country and Newspaper Coverage

In this dissertation, I test my hypotheses against a large corpus of newspaper articles published by different outlets from all EU member states, Norway and Switzerland (Table 3.1). The selection of the newspapers included in my corpus follows both conceptual and technical considerations. First, it is important to cover all relevant newspapers with different political orientations in the corpus to obtain a more complete picture of public discourse in the various member states. Additionally, I deemed it important to include at least one boulevard style newspaper next to quality newspapers to cover an even broader spectrum of public discourse. Based on the database of all relevant newspapers on eurotopics.net and the availability in the Internet Archive, I developed a list of all relevant outlets, including their political orientation, the type of newspaper, and the current circulation (see Appendix A). For each country, I aimed to include at least one liberal, one conservative and one boulevard newspaper. Although this was possible for most of the member states, deviating from this operationalization was inevitable in some countries. In particular, for smaller EU member states, it was not possible to find three newspapers that fit the criteria. In most of these cases, the outlets were not sufficiently captured in the Internet Archive, technically preventing the inclusion of a particular outlet. For countries such as Cyprus and Malta, it was not possible to find three newspapers fitting the conceptual criteria, leaving me with one and two newspaper outlets, respectively, in these countries. For Germany and the United Kingdom, I deliberately decided to include more newspaper outlets in the corpus, as they are the largest countries in my sample with several newspapers having high circulation and covering different aspects of public discourse.

For some years, political and economic elites trying to influence the news reporting in several European countries have been applying pressure to newspapers. Examples of this can be

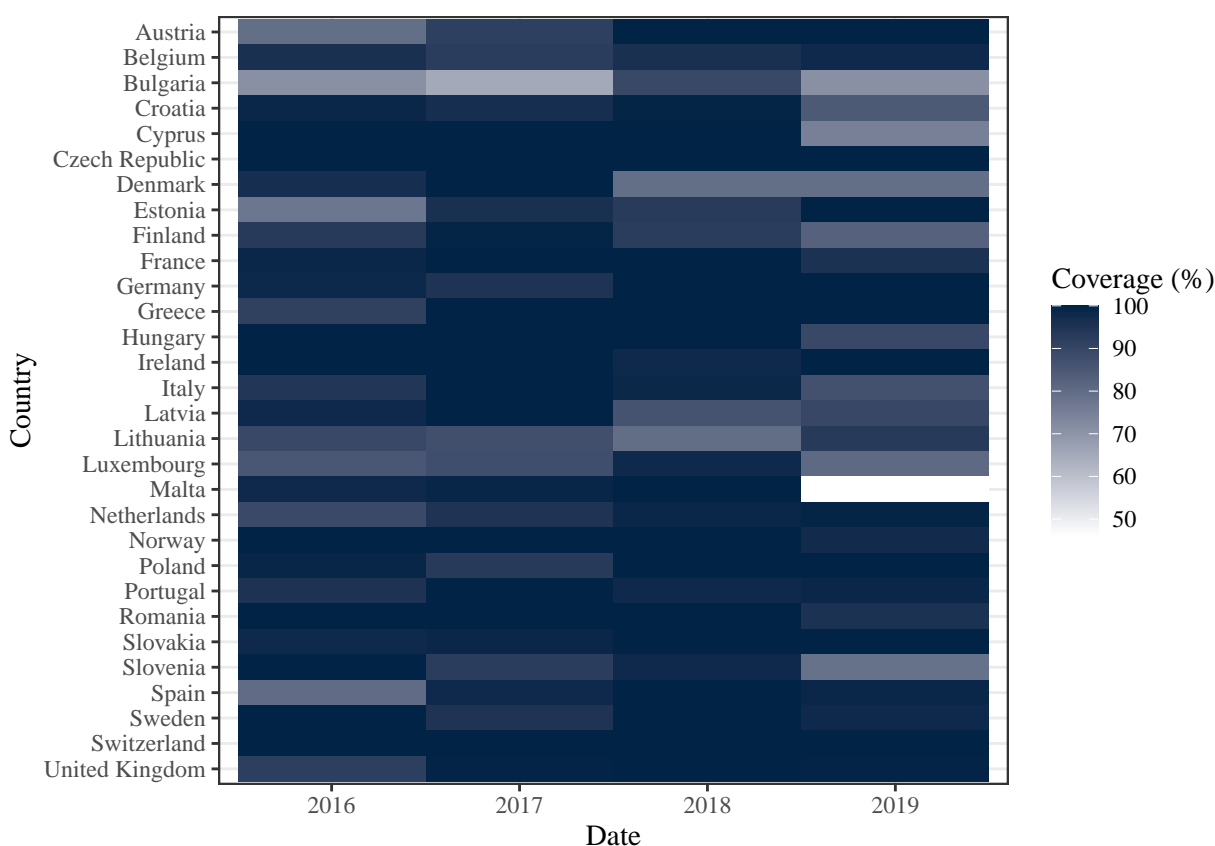
Table 3.1: Country and newspaper coverage

Country	Newspaper	Country	Newspaper	Country	Newspaper
Austria	Der Standard	Greece	Kathimerini	Portugal	DN
	Die Presse		Ta Nea		JN
Belgium	Krone	Hungary	Magyarhirlap	Romania	Publico
	HLN		Nepszava		Adevarul
Bulgaria	Le Soir	Ireland	Independent	Slovakia	EVZ
	24Chasa		Irish Times		Romania Libera
Croatia	Dnevnik	Italy	Il giornale	Slovenia	Cas
	24sata		Il Sole 24 Ore		Pravda
Cyprus	Jutarnji	Latvia	La Stampa	Spain	Sme
	Vecernji		Repubblica		Delo
Czech Republic	Cyprus Mail	Lithuania	Diena	Sweden	Dnevnik
	Blesk		NRA		Slovenske Novice
Denmark	Idnes	Luxembourg	Vesti	Switzerland	20 Minutos
	Lidovsky		Delfi		ABC
Estonia	Berlingske	Malta	Respublika	United Kingdom	El Pais
	Jyllands-Posten		Le Quotidien		DN
Finland	Politiken	Netherlands	Tageblatt		Expressen
	Delfi		Wort		SVD
France	Ohtuleht	Norway	AD		24 Heures
	Postimees		Telegraaf		Blick
Germany	Aamulehti	Poland	Volkskrant		NZZ
	HBL		Adressa		Dailymail
	HS		Aftenposten		Mirror
	Le Figaro		VG		Telegraph
	Le Monde		Fakt		The Guardian
	Liberation		RP		The Sun
	BILD				
	FAZ				
	Spiegel Online				
	SZ				
	taz				
	Welt				

found in Italy, Hungary, and Poland, among others. There are various reasons to do so, including suppressing political opposition, silencing investigative journalism that reveals corruption, or obtaining economic gain (P. D. Kenny 2020; Mastroianni 2019). The inevitable political consequences of this, however, are biases within public discourse since the news-

paper restricts itself in line with the political orientation of its new owner. To make sure that independent newspaper outlets were included in every country of my corpus, I opted for independent newspapers within one political orientation even if it did not have the highest circulation in the member state. In Hungary, I explicitly included Nepszava as main remaining opposition newspaper. For Italy, I decided to include a fourth newspaper (Il Sole 24 Ore), which is explicitly deemed centrist and is known to be the most independent newspaper outlet in Italy. In Poland, I was unfortunately not able to include the most important liberal newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza in my corpus, as all of its articles are behind a paywall leaving me with only two newspapers in Poland.

Figure 3.2: Data availability by country and week 2016-2019



Note: Coverage shows the share of weeks being covered by the Internet Archive, aggregated over outlets. Darker tiles indicate higher coverage.

Although the newspaper outlets selected for the corpus of analysis were also based on data

availability from the Internet Archive this does not mean that it was possible to retrieve all newspaper articles written online from the Internet Archive. Such an endeavor was both not possible and not necessary, as measurements of public discourse were inevitably only a sample of the communication taking place within the public sphere. I aggregate the newspaper articles of all newspaper outlets on a monthly level to both make data analysis manageable and allow matching of the monthly public discourse with political, institutional, and structural variables, which are often at most collected on a monthly basis.

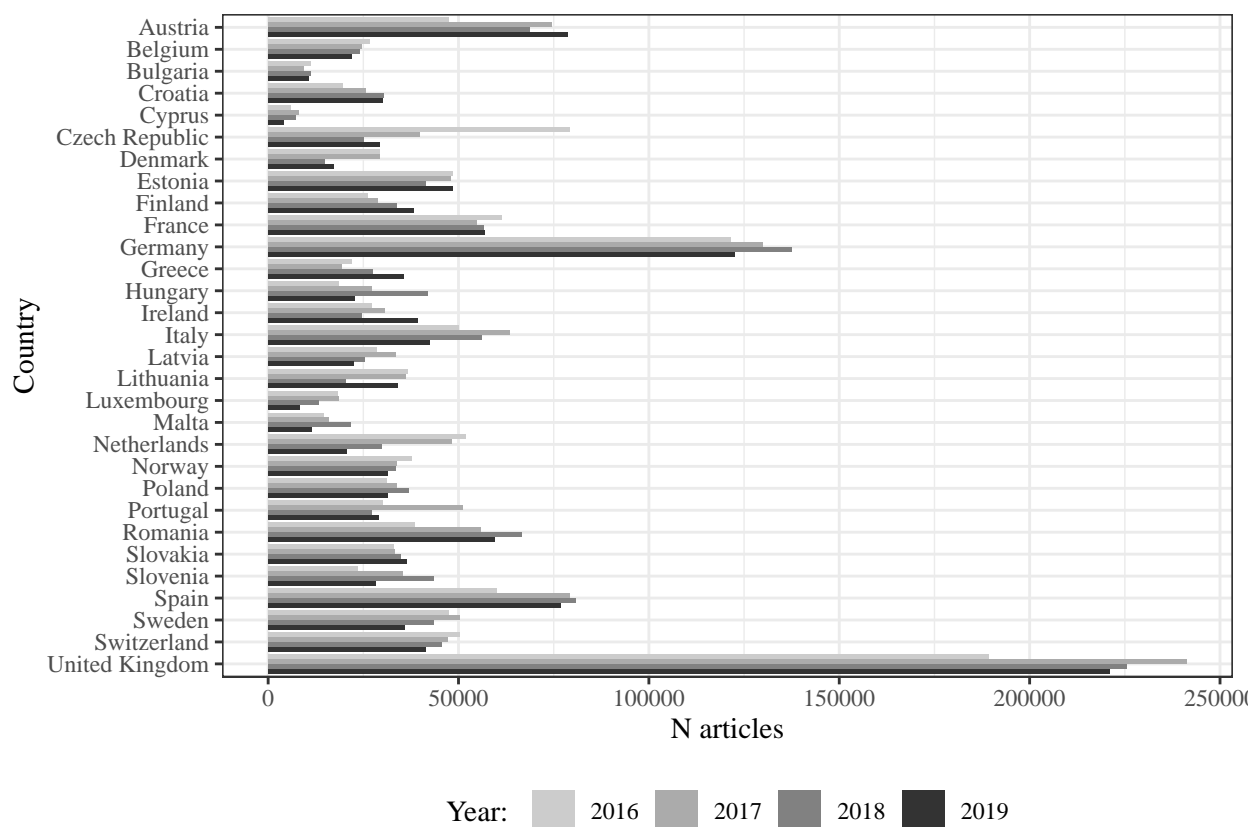
In Figure 3.2, I visualize the data availability as share of weeks being covered in every year of my analysis by country. A coverage of 100 % is achieved if data is available for every newspaper outlet included in the data retrieval for each country; this figure was estimated by taking the average coverage of all newspaper outlets in a particular country.

The figure shows that in most countries, newspaper coverage is at about 100 % for most of the weeks included in the dataset. However, there are some notable exceptions. In Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Spain some newspapers were not archived by the Internet Archive in 2016, perhaps due to technical problems, active deletion from the Internet Archive, or restrictive paywalls set up by the newspapers. The latter issue also became more pressing for articles later included to the dataset. The descriptive results show that more and more newspapers launched somewhat restrictive paywalls, making it impossible to scrape content from their mementos in the Internet Archive. For other newspapers, such as the Independent in Malta or Cyprus-Mail in Cyprus, the publisher of the newspapers demanded that the Internet Archive stop scraping their pages in 2019, a request with which the Internet Archive complied.

Although there are some white spots in the coverage of public discourse between the member states from 2016–2019, I believe that the data availability allows for reasonable analyses of which determinants shaped Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states, as these lacks in availability can be expected to be completely at random.

As I do not aim to examine specific events or analyze the content of certain events in depth, lacking some days or events in individual countries should not critically affect the validity of my results.

Figure 3.3: Number of Articles by Country 2016-2019



Note: N indicates the numbers of articles gathered in the respective country and year.

Figure 3.3 displays the total number of articles available from the Internet Archive and included in the full corpus for empirical analyses. The corpus only includes unique articles, meaning that all full duplicates and the first versions of updated articles were removed from the corpus.

These descriptive results indicate a large variety of articles available in EU member states and in the neighboring European countries for several reasons. First, the number of newspaper outlets covered in each of the member states varies, the result of a larger number of articles from some countries scraped from the Internet Archive. Since six newspaper outlets

from Germany and five from the United Kingdom were included, it is very reasonable that these countries had the largest number of articles scraped among all countries. In Cyprus, Malta, and Bulgaria, where only one or two newspaper outlets were scraped, the numbers were substantially lower. Second, the number of articles published online by the newspaper outlets largely differed according to countries and outlets. In the United Kingdom, tabloid newspapers, in particular, publish up to 200 articles each day, including much trivia, local news, sports and celebrity news, substantially increasing the total number of articles. Third, although there is almost complete weekly coverage from newspaper outlets, sometimes mementos are not available every day for each newspaper, resulting in some articles not being included in the corpus. For the final analyses, I further filter the categories provided through the URLs of the homepages that can reasonably be assumed to be related to political matters. I therefore only included the categories “news,” “politics,” “economy,” “finances,” and “foreign politics” in the final corpus.

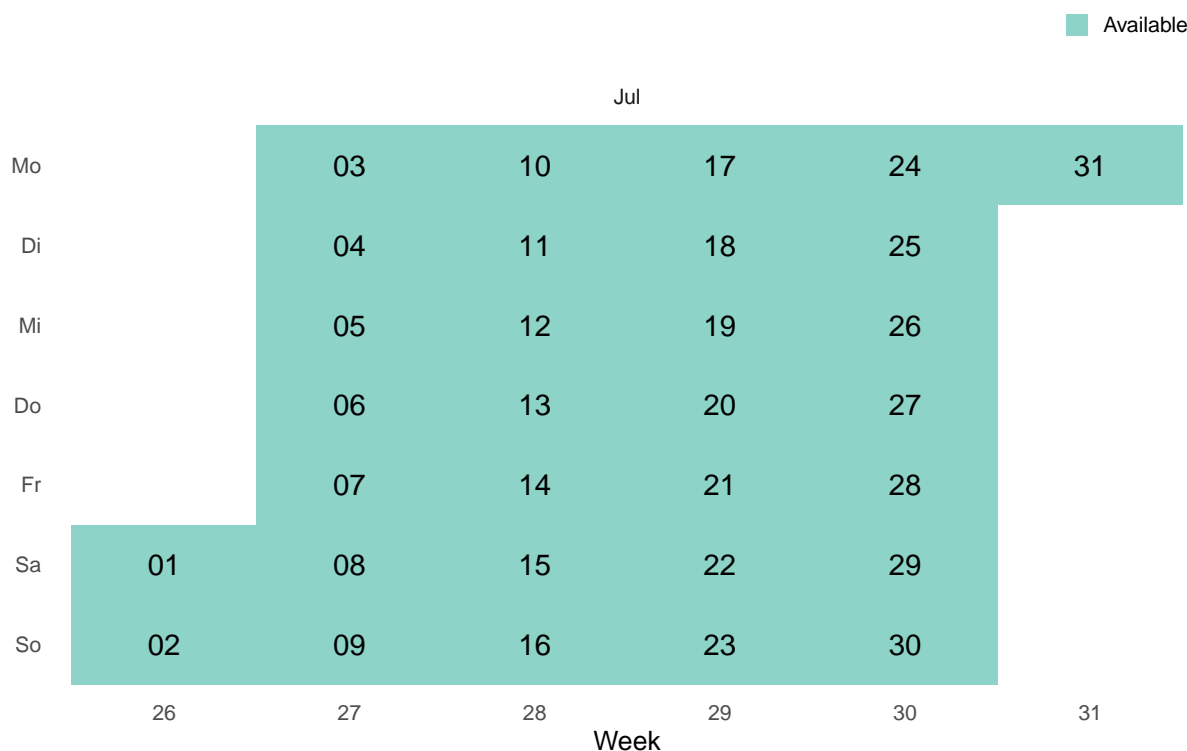
To summarize, the results indicate that it is possible to gather large quantities of newspaper articles from European countries through the Internet Archive including those countries whose public political communication is usually not investigated closely in research on the EU (mostly very small and eastern European countries). The technical and budgetary requirements for setting up the dataset using the Internet Archive are far lower compared to gaining access to commercial providers of newspaper articles on the Internet. By providing an easy-to-use R package (Gavras and Isermann 2021) it is furthermore possible to reproduce the data generating process for the corpus used in this dissertation. There remains, however, one important question concerning the data quality of the newspaper articles being scraped from the Internet Archive: Is a significant portion of the articles published by newspaper outlets actually available in the Internet Archive, and could newspaper articles be selected for the Internet Archive in a nonrandom way?

3.5 Validating Data Collection From the Internet Archive

To test whether the data available from the Internet Archive might lack accuracy in capturing the content actually published by the newspaper outlets, I compared the newspaper articles scraped from the Internet Archive with the articles stored in the archive of a newspaper outlet, which made access to its archive possible. Specifically, I tested the validity of the data generating process using newspaper articles scraped from the German newspaper SPIEGEL Online (DER SPIEGEL 2021). This newspaper outlet is, to my knowledge, the only newspaper in my corpus with a full, openly accessible archive of the published articles.

Figure 3.4: SPIEGEL Online Data Available From the Internet Archive 2017-07

www.spiegel.de
2017



Note: The green tiles in the calendar indicate available dates in July 2017 for spiegel.de by the Internet Archive.

Using a random number generator, I first selected one month to be sampled for the validation task – resulting in July 2017.³ When retrieving mementos of SPIEGEL Online for this month, it was evident that the Internet Archive was able to save a memento of this homepage every day in July 2017 (Figure 3.4).

Building upon this, I scraped the articles from the SPIEGEL Online archive of that particular month and compared them with the articles scraped from the Internet Archive. To obtain more in-depth information about the potential systematic unavailability of data, I also extracted the categories of the articles. I excluded categories that showed up more infrequently than once a day from the sample due to parsimony.⁴ Table 3.2 shows the level of data availability in the Internet Archive, separated by categories.

³The scraping etiquette for the SPIEGEL Online archive asks users to only moderately scrape content. I therefore decided not to scrape the whole four years from its archive for this validation task.

⁴In total, 42 articles were removed from the full sample. The categories were style, history, and internal SPIEGEL categories.

Table 3.2: Share of Missing Content from SPIEGEL Online July 2017 by Category in the Internet Archive

Category	Number of Articles	Share Missing Articles
Career	43	4.7%
Cars	60	6.7%
Culture	169	30.8%
Economy	331	52.0%
Health	68	4.4%
International	35	25.7%
IT	88	15.9%
Live and Learn	59	8.5%
Panorama	485	58.8%
Photo Gallery	595	79.5%
Politics	716	52.6%
Science	109	12.8%
SPIEGEL	87	5.8%
SPIEGEL TV	36	72.2%
Sports	404	56.7%
Travel	63	6.4%
Videos	412	54.1%
Total	3760	50.5%

In total, SPIEGEL Online published 3,760 articles in July 2017. Among these articles, the Internet Archive was able to archive among 50 % of them. This indicates that the Internet Archive is not able to fully cover the content published online, which would be, in fact, somewhat surprising. As the Internet Archive relies on an automated crawler, which follows homepages and links that are frequently visited, it is plausible to assume that newspaper articles that users do not view very often are less likely to be archived by the Internet Archive (Brügger and Schroeder 2017).

When disentangling the share of missing data by category, it is clear that some categories are more likely to be archived than others. This might be due to the specific features and frequency of the categories. The categories that were preserved least frequently are photo

galleries (80 % missing URLs) and SPIEGEL TV links (72 %); due to technical reasons, the Internet Archive has difficulties preserving JavaScript-based content compared to plain and static HTML-based homepages. However, it is more difficult to grasp why other categories are more likely to be preserved than others. Among the categories that were most likely to be archived were lifestyle categories such as cars and travel, and companion categories, such as career and health, which are often very popular among online newspaper readers (D. Bell 2005). However, these categories rarely show up as well (on average less than twice a day); this does not rule out the possibility of statistical artifacts.

When considering which categories are most likely to contain the articles relevant to this dissertation, almost none of the categories just mentioned would actually be relevant. It is conceivable that articles on political issues are covered in the politics, economy or international categories. About half of the articles published by SPIEGEL Online in these categories are available in the Internet Archive, which is important to consider when interpreting the empirical results in the subsequent chapters. Thus, the Internet Archive is not a perfect archive of all content published online, but thrives to preserve as much content as possible for the future. Although there are some indications that the preservation of content is not perfectly random - as the crawlers are more likely to scrape more visited homepages, this violation of sampling completely at random is not critical. I expect to observe that articles on the most relevant political issues in public discourse are also those most likely to be read by the audiences of the newspapers, which should make it more likely that these articles are actually preserved in the Internet Archive. Furthermore, this dissertation cannot claim and does not aim to examine the full scope of public political communication in a large number of European countries. Even within the limited range of examining online versions of the most relevant and popular newspaper outlets in 30 European countries, every analysis of public political communication must inevitably rely on a small sample of the communication actually taking place in these societies.

In sum, this chapter examined the relevance of the Internet Archive to analyzing public discourse in various European countries. The Internet Archive is a promising data source for retrieving historical content from the Internet for various purposes and allows researchers themselves to select samples relevant to answering their research questions. Researchers are able to compile large datasets of textual data without much technical knowledge or significant research funds using the `archiveRetrieveR` R-package (Gavras and Isermann 2021) developed as a companion to this dissertation project. Finally, this chapter provided the first descriptive information about public discourse in 30 European societies from the Internet Archive. The results indicate that it is possible to retrieve public discourse, even in smaller European countries. Data on public discourse are available for almost all countries in every week across the 2016–2019 period.

There are, however, some differences in data availability, leaving some blanks in public discourse for smaller countries. For large-scale analyses over time, these minor lacks in data availability should not pose a significant problem. For more nuanced and very specific analyses focusing on certain events the Internet Archive might not be suitable, as the data might not necessarily be available. There are two major reasons for this. First, homepage owners are able to ask the Internet Archive to delete their homepage from being preserved in the Internet Archive, making them inaccessible. Second, the results testing the validity of data availability of the Internet Archive against the SPIEGEL Online archive revealed that about half of the actually published articles were available in the Internet Archive. As SPIEGEL Online is an extremely frequently used homepage, these values might even be lower for other newspaper outlets. These are two important limitations to be considered when using the Internet Archive for empirical research on online communication.

Consequently, the Internet Archive is an extremely valuable source of data, allowing researchers to retrieve large-scale samples of historic public discourse in different countries without being restricted by the necessity to select articles according to specific keywords or

spending large research funds on gaining access to the data through third parties. Using the `archiveRetriever` package in R, researchers are able to easily gain access to this resource of rich data to support a large variety of projects. In the following chapter, I describe how the data retrieved from the Internet Archive needs to be processed to make it accessible for empirical research using a multi-lingual dictionary-based approach. Furthermore, I examine the challenges in conducting multi-lingual quantitative text analyses. I propose an approach that combines structural topic models, automated translation services, and dictionary-based approaches to derive important insights from the content of multi-lingual newspaper articles. Moreover, I examine how public discourse can be modeled using a time-series cross-sectional research design to better understand the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse.

Chapter 4

Research Design

In this chapter, I describe the research design utilized to test my hypotheses. First, I describe and theoretically justify which political issues are considered throughout the empirical analyses and included when examining the Europeanization of public discourse. The issues included in the analyses encompass economic, security, and migration issues. The chosen issues incorporate both traditionally politically contested issues and more recent, highly salient issues of public discourse. Additionally, none of the three issues considered in my analyses are fully integrated with sole competency on the European level, and none of them are fully the responsibility of the nation-states, making them ideal for examination in this dissertation project.

Next, I examine how large quantities of newspaper articles can be employed in quantitative research using different text-as-data approaches. More specifically, I show how a text-as-data approach allows the handling of multi-lingual text corpora by setting up multi-lingual dictionaries. Applying these dictionaries to newspaper articles allows for the extraction of the most relevant content and sentiment-afflicted information from the articles without needing to read millions of articles. Using these measures, I then describe how the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse and of public discourse between member

states can be determined.

Finally, I describe how these measures form the dependent variables for the main analysis to model the conditions of Europeanized public discourse in the EU member states based on interdependence in the European multi-level system. Furthermore, I describe the operationalization of the independent variables that form the determinants of Europeanized public discourse. Then, I describe how to extract more fine-grained information from my newspaper article corpus, using structural topic modeling. This final measure enables me to test whether the actual content of public discourse changes when Europeanized public discourse is polarized.

4.1 Political Issues Within and Across Europe, 2016–2019

Political competition in Europe has fundamentally been structured by long-lasting political conflicts over the scarce resources available and distributed among the current (and future) population (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Kriesi et al. 2012). As already mentioned, I characterize the issues underlying these political conflicts as political issues, as they accompany controversial debates within the public sphere. Next to the political issues stemming from long-lasting political conflicts, there are also political issues where resources must be preserved for all members of society – namely, public goods, such as public safety or health. These issues are also debated controversially; often these debates do not concern different positions on these issues but how to preserve the public good. In general, these issues are either called position or valence issues although there has been a heated debate on whether political issues are *sui generis* position or valence issues (D’Alimonte, Sio, and Franklin 2020). I therefore refrain from defining political issues according to this definition, but explain their general relevance to public discourse in Europe.

As I examine the Europeanization of political communication within a specific time frame (between 2016 and 2019), it is important to identify the most relevant issues debated within and across Europe in recent years. In traditional work on political conflicts and competition in Europe, conflicts on economic regulation and distribution, the supremacy of the state over the (Catholic) church, and the dominance of the center over the periphery have been identified as particularly salient in the twentieth century (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Brooks, Nieuwbeerta, and Manza 2006). Although the state vs. church and the center vs. periphery conflict are no longer considered as important in the twenty-first century (Goldberg 2020), economic conflicts are still considered the most important issues in modern European societies (Lobo and Pannico 2020; Dassonneville and Lewis-Beck 2020; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau 2011; Winkler 2019).

European societies are characterized by high levels of inequality, with left-wing parties especially aiming to reduce inequality of wealth through economic regulation and re-distribution (Piketty and Saez 2014). However, there are also liberal and conservative political parties that do not see the necessity for the state to intervene in economic processes, rejecting such policies (Hellwig and McAllister 2019). As almost all political initiatives that aim to re-distribute wealth are costly to some degree, political parties must consider how to generate revenue to pay for these policies. This revenue might be generated through either increasing taxes or reducing spending on other means, making economic regulation, taxation and distribution of wealth an unresolvable issue, with political parties almost always having different positions on these issues and keeping economic issues in public discourse.

Public discourse considers not only issues that are politically highly contested, as they structure the party systems in the political systems and require political actors to position themselves, but also issues where the goal itself is not competitive but is nevertheless the means to solving these issues. These issues also make up a large share of public discourse, as any harm to the public good related to these issues is considered highly important for all politi-

cal parties. Although political parties may not differ with regard to the particular goals, in democratic societies, it is crucial to address these underlying issues. These issues might also give rise to conflict, when political parties discuss how to reach the goals.

Public safety, corruption, or public health are prime examples of issues where political parties are required to provide feasible solutions and restore the public good when it is harmed. Furthermore, these issues are inherent to public discourse when media actors and the public do not require other political arenas to trigger these issues (Sheley and Ashkins 1981). Events and incidents harming the public good become part of public discourse, as media actors view it as necessary to inform the public about these issues (Davies, Francis, and Greer 2017). Consequently, political actors are forced to provide solutions for how violations of the public good can be stopped. In my dissertation, I focus on public security in general – in particular, on criminality and terrorism.

With changing European societies grappling with issues such as increased prosperity, educational expansion, and globalization, new political issues have emerged in the twenty-first century. These issues have been described as struggles between postmaterialists and materialists (Inglehart and Welzel 2010), contention between the winners and the losers of globalization (Kriesi et al. 2006), or conflicts on the political integration of the EU (C. E. de Vries 2018), which substantially expanded and shifted the scope of political conflicts (Ford and Jennings 2020).

One important manifestation of these new political conflicts is the issue of immigration to Europe, which might be considered a threat to manufacturing workers, but as societal assets for winners of globalization, making immigration a highly salient issue in current public discourse (Maxwell 2019). Recently, with the beginning of the refugee crisis in 2015, this issue has become a fundamental conflict within and across Europe, salient in almost all European societies (Mader and Schoen 2019; Grande, Schwarzbözl, and Fatke 2019; Green-

Pedersen and Otjes 2019).¹

Three different political issues are covered in this dissertation project. This dissertation project covers economic issues, as well as security- and migration-related issues, which altogether cover a large share of public discourse in the EU member states. This variety of issues – although not covering all of the important issues in European societies during this span of time, such as environmentalism or climate change (Smith 2005; Spoon, Hobolt, and de Vries 2014) – allows me to examine the Europeanization of public discourse for several political issues under different conditions and to adequately test my hypotheses. Now, I provide a more detailed description of the issues and their relevance to public discourse.

4.1.1 Economy

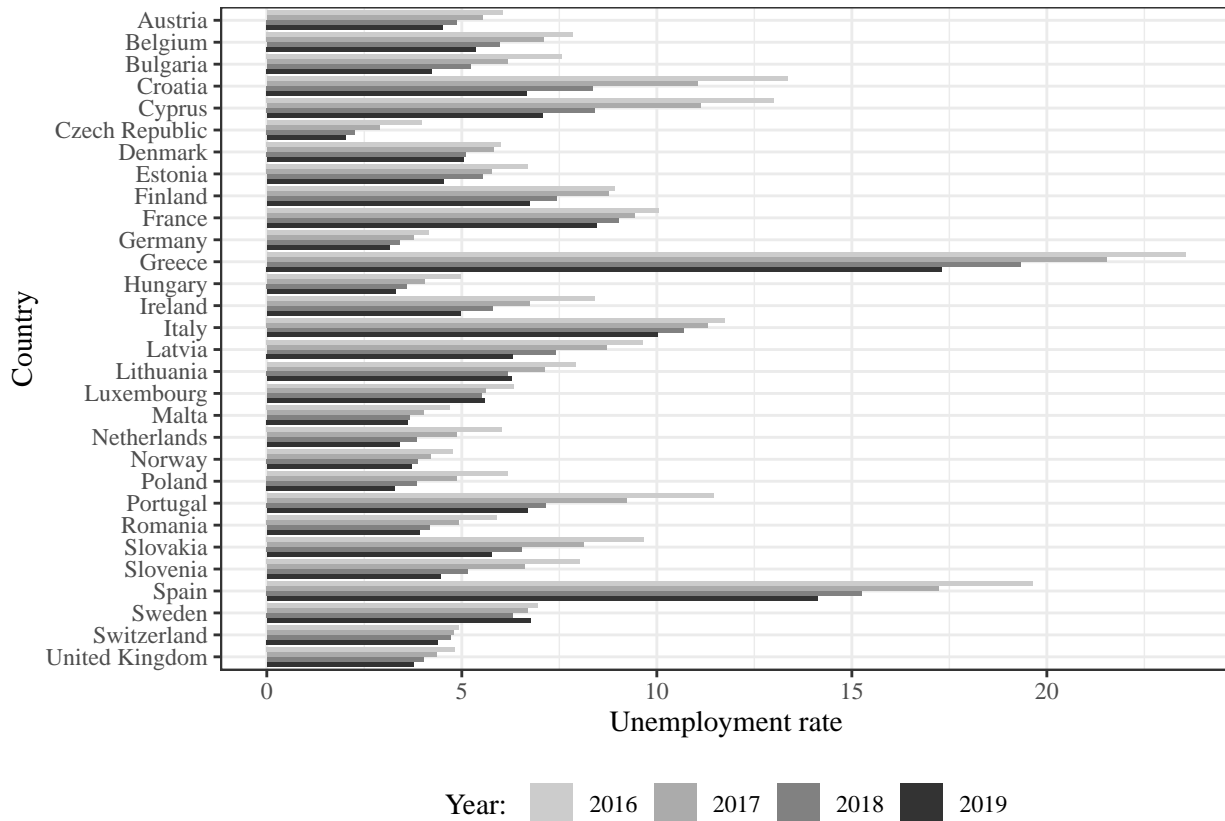
The EU faced almost one decade of economic stagnation after the Great Recession, starting in late 2007 with collapse of Lehman Brothers. This economic crisis prompted substantial unemployment rates throughout Europe; southern and eastern European countries were hit hardest by the crisis. Figure 4.1 shows that even eight years after the Great Recession most EU member states still showed substantially high unemployment rates of about 10% on average. Although these decreased slightly between 2016 and 2019 for most countries, it is reasonable to assume that economic issues were particular salient for public discourse in the public spheres of the EU member states.

Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus and Italy have faced particularly difficult economic situations in recent years, making it essential for political parties in the respective member states to provide solutions for these economic issues. However, for both these and other EU member

¹There is of course also a large body of literature on the political conflicts about European integration as a salient issue that shapes public discourse in itself (Hurrelmann, Gora, and Wagner 2015; Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016; de Wilde 2011; Schmidt 2019). However, according to my framework, European integration is not a political (policy-related) issue in itself. Although it is relevant to examine European integration as an important issue in public discourse, I believe integrating it into a European multi-level system of public discourse allows for an understanding of how European integration shapes political communication within the EU and between member states that is much better than focusing on European integration in isolation from other issues relevant to national public discourses.

states, the repercussions of the Great Recession kept economic issues an important part of public discourse. What remains an open question, however, is how much European integration plays a substantial role in public discourse on economic issues. In 2008, the European Commission announced the European Economic Recovery Plan to fight the economic crisis in the EU. In 2010, the European Commission formed a troika with the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to provide conditional loans to economically suffering EU member states. The measures implemented by the troika, however, sparked strong protests by the populations in the respective member states, since the austerity measures were perceived as excessively strict, leading to several governmental collapses in these countries (Moury and Standring 2017; Featherstone 2015).

Figure 4.1: Unemployment rates in Europe 2016-2019



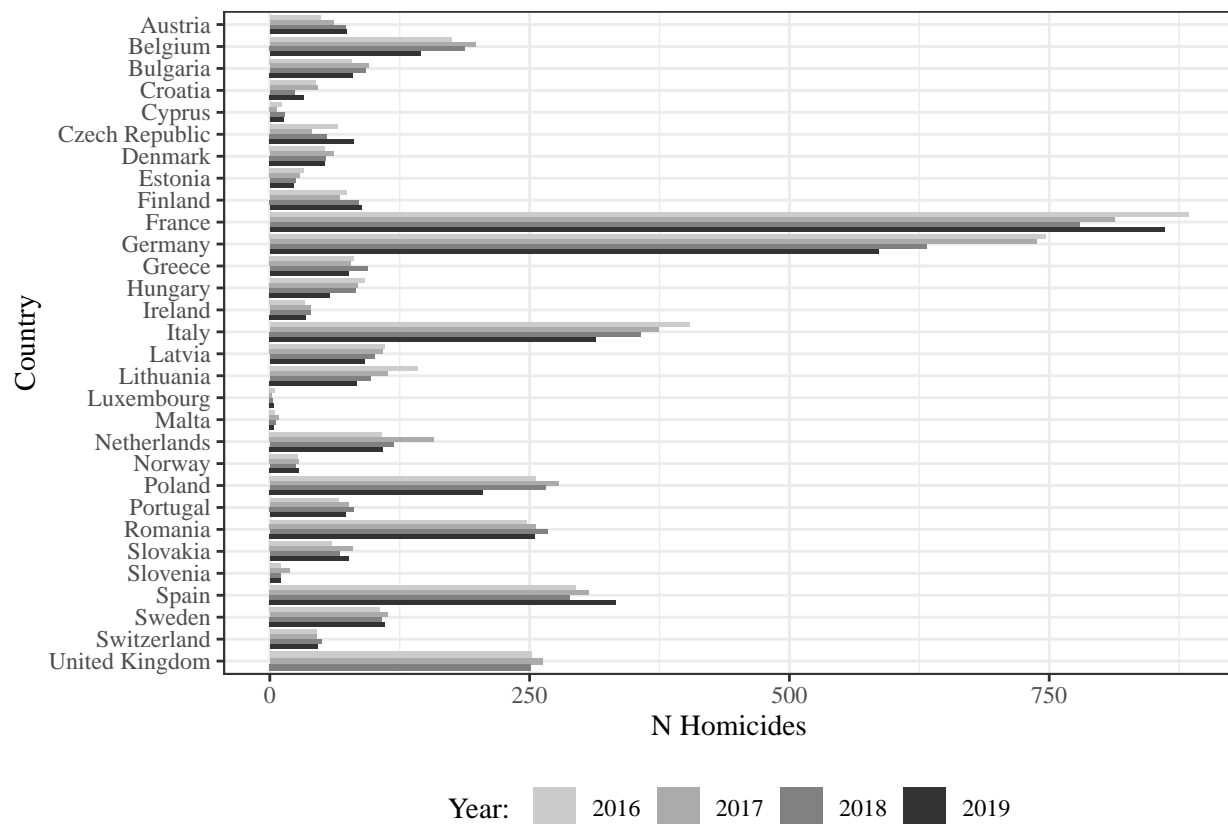
Note: Unemployment rates are provided by Eurostat (2021a).

Since 2015, the troika has not operated in any member state. The experiences made with

the Europeanization of economic issues might, however, still have substantial impact on those member states where the troika once operated – both concerning Europeanized public discourse as well as public discourse between member states (Statham and Trenz 2015). In general, however, it is reasonable to assume that the European component is important to public discourse on economic issues, as the EU member states have close economic relations with each other. Additionally, the European level is able to provide incentives and impulses to public discourse on economic issues because one of its main goals is to provide sustainable growth and reduce social inequalities.

4.1.2 Security

Figure 4.2: Homicides in Europe 2016–2019

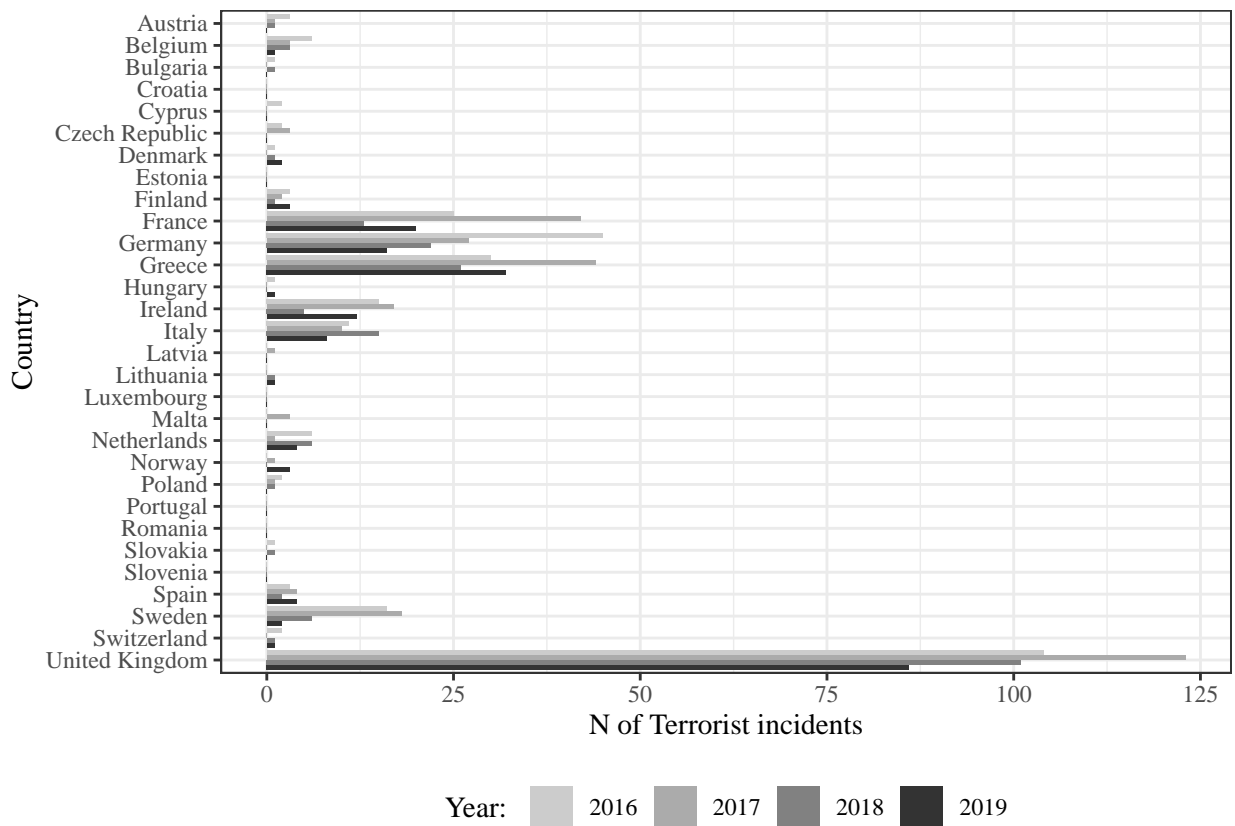


Note: Number of homicides are provided by Eurostat (2021c).

There are also issues that are important for public discourse but are often not part of strong

party political competition with regard to their goals. Public security can be considered one of the most important issues in this regard, as people in democratic societies expect and demand the ability to live their lives without fearing being assaulted or physically harmed. Public discourse often covers these violations to public security very intensively, as the public tends to be highly fascinated by these events and demands political parties provide ideas on how to preserve public safety and security (Davies, Francis, and Greer 2017). Figure 4.2 provides the number of homicides in all EU member states between 2016–2019, indicating that there was a substantial level of violations of public security in many EU member states. As every single homicide is usually covered in public discourse, it is reasonable to assume that this political issues is salient for public discourses within the EU member states.

Figure 4.3: Terrorist Attacks in Europe 2016-2019



Note: Number of terrorist events are provided by START (2019).

Additionally, in recent years, the EU member states have faced severe threats to public

safety and security due to terrorist attacks from Islamic, right-wing, left-wing, and secessionist extremism (Schuurman 2020). Figure 4.3 indicates that several countries experienced successful – meaning deadly – terrorist attacks between 2016 and 2019. These attacks vary both with regard to the number of attacks – highest in the United Kingdom – but also with regard to the reasoning behind them. The United Kingdom mostly experienced right-wing, Islamic and secessionist (in Northern Ireland) terrorist attacks. Other countries, such as France and Belgium, mostly experienced Islamic terrorist attacks, while Germany faced the highest number of right-wing extremist terrorists throughout Europe.

Altogether, these incidents show that public security can be expected to comprise a reasonable amount of Europeanized and national public discourse between member states, as violations against this public good and terrorist attacks are not restricted to national borders, but might easily affect other EU member states as well. Due to the removal of borders within the European Union, perpetrators, political extremists, and terrorists are able to move between EU member states, potentially affecting public safety and security in these member states as well.

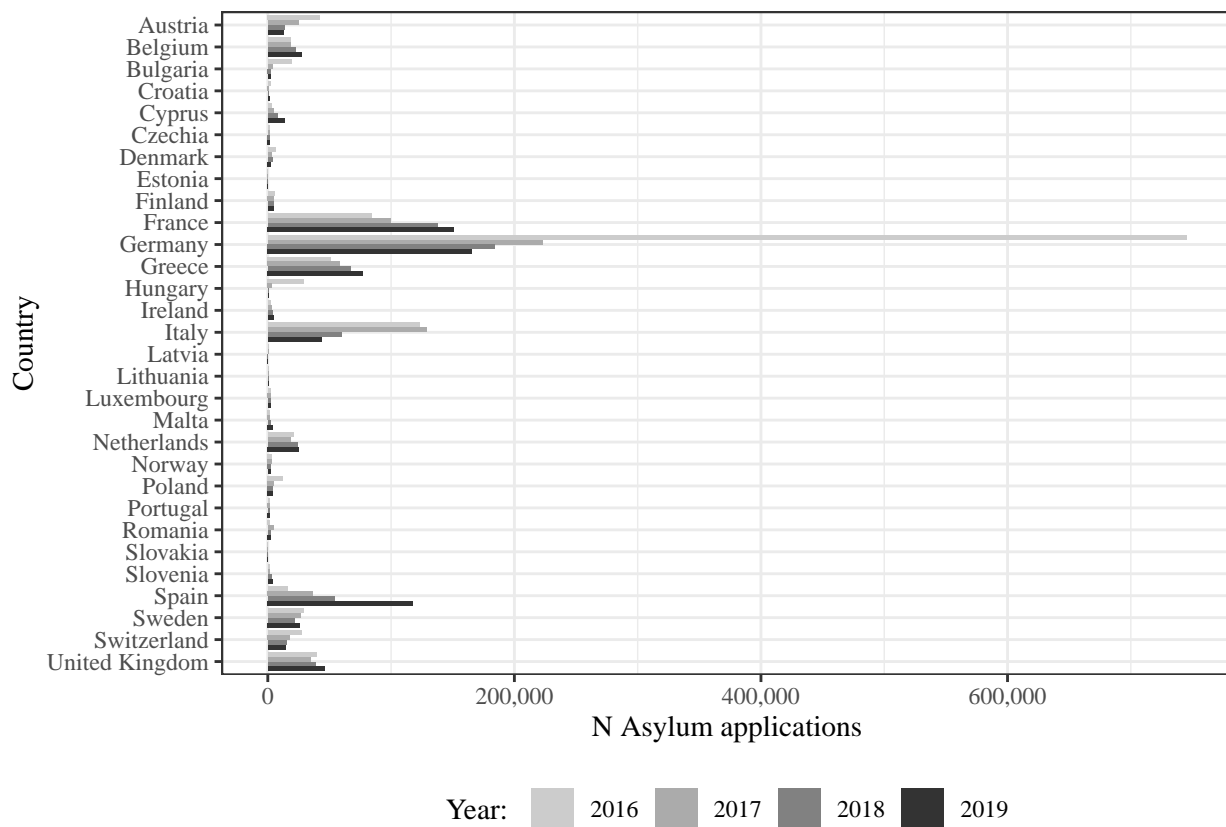
4.1.3 Migration

In August 2015, millions of refugees arrived at the Greek–Turkish border seeking shelter in Europe. The large influx of migrants from different cultural regions increased political, social and cultural tension both within and between the EU member states. However, before the “refugee crisis,” several member states of the EU had already been experiencing substantial levels of migration (Geddes and Scholten 2016). These migration flows occurred for several reasons, including labor migration between EU member states and from third countries as well as refugees fleeing from war and nature disasters. However, only during and after the “refugee crisis” migration has become substantially important for public discourses in the European countries. Figure 4.4 visualizes the number of asylum application by country. As one can see, Germany faced the largest number of asylum applications in the four years

after the influx of refugees in 2015. Furthermore, France, Italy, Greece, Spain and the United Kingdom faced substantial numbers of asylum seekers. Although most of the other European countries did not receive many applications, fierce debates on the re-allocation of refugees evolved after the “refugee crisis,” which have not finally been resolved with some Eastern European countries still refusing to accept refugees to their countries (Bauböck 2018).

Altogether, migration represents an important political conflict shaping public discourse in the EU member states (Green-Pedersen and Otjes 2019). The debates, however, may not have been equivalent between the EU member states, as western European member states discussed how to resolve issues that accompanied the high number of migrants in their respective societies, while eastern European member states discussed whether to allow a substantial amount of migration to their societies at all.

Figure 4.4: Share of Migrants in Europe 2016-2019



Note: Number of asylum applications is provided by Eurostat (2021b).

Additionally, there is good reason to assume that this part of public discourse can become Europeanized. One main reason was that the EU institutionalized labor migration within the EU when setting up the Common Market. Thus, the Europeanization of public discourse on migration is an integral part of public discourse as certain types of migration cannot be shaped nationally. However, when addressing refugee migration, the Europeanization of public discourse might not be inevitable. Refugees are considered differently, as some have potentially illegally entered the EU, with the EU allowing its member states to implement their own national regulations to some degree (Scipioni 2018). Thus, although refugees might formally enter the EU, they actually cross the border of a single member state, whose political parties could aim to keep this particular political issue on the national level. However, in countries where refugees might not be able to cross the external EU border, it might be more reasonable for political parties to engage in Europeanized public discourse or public discourse between member states. As refugees are often able to move freely within the EU, a political issue that another country close to the external border of the EU may be experiencing sooner or later becomes a political issues for other countries as well.

In sum, in this dissertation project three different political issues are covered: economic, security, and migration issues. The selection of these issues allows for a broad overview of the most important issues within the EU in recent years and further enables me to test the hypotheses on very different cases within this multi-level system.

4.2 Measuring Multi-lingual Political Discourse Through a Text-as-Data Approach

As described in Chapter 3, I use online newspaper articles by newspaper outlets from all over Europe scraped from the Internet Archive as the main data source for my analyses of public discourse in the European multi-level system. When handling text data using automated analysis tools, it is important to consider the specific features of this type of data. First,

when conceptualizing text as data, it is usually comprised of an overwhelming amount of information as each word, combination of words, their meanings and their relationships can be interpreted as distinct features of the text (Wilkerson and Casas 2017; Grimmer and Stewart 2013).

When confronted with such a large quantity of data, it is crucial for researchers to extract only the text features that are relevant to testing their hypotheses and answering their research questions. Thus, text-as-data methods significantly reduce the complexity of the given texts, which may prevent researchers from fully understanding the meaning of the text, but allow them to conduct computer-assisted extractions of decisive pieces of information from quantities of data that cannot reasonably be analyzed by hand (Grimmer and Stewart 2013). In the following sub-chapters, I explain the text-as-data methods used in this dissertation to analyze a highly complex multi-lingual data corpus. Building on these methods, I derive a data set that can reasonably be used for quantitative analyses, testing my hypotheses on the variation of saliency, polarization, and content of Europeanized public discourse in the European multi-level system.

4.2.1 Handling Multi-lingual Newspaper Articles

Text-as-data analyses have become common practice in many studies covering different aspects of political communication, including public online communication, media content, and elite political communication. However, these analyses are often restricted to one language, testing hypotheses on single applications – mostly only covering popular languages such as English, Spanish, or German (Baden et al. 2021). In fact, the same holds true for qualitative text analyses, where case decisions are highly dependent on the language expertise of the researcher. Political communication within the EU, however, covers a plethora of different languages. Modern tools in natural language processing and text-as-data analysis allow for multi-lingual text analyses, but require careful decisions on which bridging information to include to compare texts produced in different languages, whether these texts are news pa-

per articles, tweets, or press releases (Proksch et al. 2019). Such bridging information is necessary to connect texts from different linguistic, political, social, and cultural contexts so that they can be examined within one empirical model. Thus, the decision on which bridging information to use is crucial to drawing valid conclusions from a multi-lingual analysis.

In general, there are three ways to attach bridging information to multi-lingual corpora within the text-as-data framework. Quite intuitively, authorship is bridging information often used to benchmark multi-lingual corpora (Proksch et al. 2019, 8). This method is often applied in multi-lingual parliaments, such as those of Belgium, Canada and Switzerland, where members of parliaments are able to speak in several languages or the proceedings are translated to all official languages of the country. Here, the assumption is that authorship defines the meaning of the words used in the corpus, as it should not differ between languages for the same author. Although authorship is very accurate in bridging information between languages there are still fundamental practical limitations to this approach, as there was a plethora of different authors in the news articles corpus used for this dissertation project and none of these authors communicated in more than a few languages in this corpus.

Second, bridging information can be easily applied by translating the whole corpus to a single language, applying the text-as-data methods toolbox on this single-language corpus. In times of automated translation services, such as Google or YouTube this is generally feasible and affordable. There are, however, several crucial assumptions to be made when translating a multi-lingual corpus to a common monolingual corpus. First, one must assume that the meaning of words does not differ between languages, as automated translation services often do not consider linguistic specifics when translating. This assumption may or may not hold but requires manually checking the translations to make sure that they were able to identify the correct meanings of the words.

Considering the languages used in the news article corpus for this dissertation project, Google Translate (Google 2021) was the only option, as it covers all languages in the translation ser-

vice. Although Aiken (2019) was able to show that the accuracy of translation provided has increased substantially in recent years, there are still notable differences between languages with less common languages performing worse than more common languages such as English, Spanish, and Chinese. These differences again result in the necessity to manually check the translations provided by the automated service. Due to the vast quantity of data in different languages used in this dissertation project, such a task would be impossible, preventing me from translating the whole corpus of news articles to a single language.

Finally, it is possible to provide bridging information using a small and carefully selected number of words, which allow the extraction of the necessary aspects within the corpus. This approach is often called dictionary- or lexicon-based approach, which can be used to analyze multi-lingual corpora quite easily. In contrast to translating the whole corpus, the dictionary-based approach only require translations of established dictionaries available in high resource languages (mostly English). Using these carefully selected dictionaries researchers only assume that the words included in the dictionary have the same meaning across languages – and if not, they can adapt the dictionary accordingly if necessary. One important feature of this type of bridging information is the necessity to ensure the relevant specifics to be compared between languages in the corpus, as dictionaries tend to only be applicable to certain aspects of the corpus, such as whether “Europe” is mentioned within the newspaper article or the sentiment of the article.

It is almost always not necessary (or possible) to examine each and every aspect of a corpus, but this suggests that the dictionary-based approach only allows for testing hypotheses on very specific aspects of the corpus. Since dictionaries can be easily checked such an approach is more comprehensible and reproducible in terms of determining which aspects and concepts of the corpus have been examined and whether the keywords used in the dictionary provide a valid representation of these concepts. Additionally, it is overwhelmingly more resource-efficient compared to translating the whole corpus without lacking the ability to test clearly

specified hypotheses. I therefore make use of a dictionary-based approach when testing my hypotheses on the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

4.2.2 Dictionary-Based Text-as-Data Approaches

When testing hypotheses using a dictionary-based approach it is important to first and foremost define the specific concepts within the corpus to be examined (Stone et al. 1966). Dictionary-based approaches assume that prior information on the feature is particularly strong and reliable, meaning that the keywords chosen are able to clearly distinguish the concepts of interest from other concepts (Gentzkow, Kelly, and Taddy 2019, 554). When developing dictionaries, however, it is also crucial to consider potential alternative concepts covered by the keywords included and furthermore consider the linguistic specifics of the corpus in describing the concepts of interest. Thus, dictionaries developed for a specific corpus should not be applied on corpora developed in different contexts, as it might lead to serious errors and invalid conclusions (Grimmer and Stewart 2013, 268).

Dictionary-based approaches are common practice in different multi-lingual social science text-as-data applications. They are commonly used when inferring the sentiment or specific content included in legislative speeches. Proksch and colleagues made use of dictionaries to measure conflict in legislative speeches (2019) throughout the EU. Using a related approach, Rauh and de Wilde (2018) examined two decades of plenary debates in four EU member states to empirically test the saliency of EU issues and the lack of opposition within the legislative arena. Braun and Schwarzbözl made use of a *Spitzenkandidaten* dictionary to analyze their emphasis in multi-lingual social media posts during election campaigns for European elections (2019). Investigating the Euromanifestos, Braun and colleagues also made use of dictionaries to examine whether polity or policy-related issues mattered most during European elections (Braun, Hutter, and Kerscher 2016).

Dictionary approaches are also useful as an initial step in broadly drawing associations be-

tween texts from a large corpus and different issues. When analyzing the politicization of European integration using the core sentence analysis, Kriesi, Hutter and colleagues made use of dictionary-based approaches to filter relevant newspaper articles reporting on election campaigns and national party politics from several countries (Hutter and Grande 2014; Hutter and Kriesi 2019; Kriesi et al. 2012). However, in each of these applications the dictionaries were very carefully selected to match the given text corpus. As I tested my hypotheses on a related, but not equivalent, case, I developed my own dictionaries for the concepts relevant in my dissertation. Before describing the relevant concepts and dictionaries in detail, I briefly discuss alternative text-as-data approaches for multi-lingual corpora and elaborate upon why these approaches are not feasible for this study.

4.2.3 Alternative Text-as-Data Approaches

There is a growing number of alternative text-as-data methods including semi-supervised and unsupervised methods, which can be applied to testing hypotheses on very general aspects of corpora in text-as-data applications (Gentzkow, Kelly, and Taddy 2019). One can also differentiate between classification and scaling approaches when referring to machine-learning based text-as-data approaches (Grimmer and Stewart 2013). In the following subsection, I examine alternative text-as-data approaches broadly following a distinction between (semi-supervised) classification methods and (unsupervised) scaling procedures as the most commonly used methods in political science and communication research next to dictionary-based approaches. I also examine more recent text-as-data approaches. When deciding on text-as-data methods, however, it is important to consider the specific research question of the study and the properties of the textual data used (Grimmer and Stewart 2013). In this dissertation, I aim to examine the determinants of Europeanized public discourse. Answering this research question requires disentangling the decisive components of public discourse – namely, saliency, polarization, and the actual content of public discourse. The most important property of the text data, as such, is the multi-lingualism of the newspaper articles of

all member states within the EU used to capture public discourse. Thus, every text-as-data approach needs to be tested for its applicability to the given research question and easily applied to the text data at hand.

Semi-supervised methods are most often used for text classification procedures (Grimmer and King 2011). To do so, it is necessary to classify a small sub-sample of the corpus to the categories relevant for answering the research question. As such, it is important to choose an appropriate classification scheme to associate this sample of documents to the categories. This procedure is usually easily applicable on a clearly specified set of text documents examining a binary classification scheme (e.g., tweets by political elites covering either political or non-political issues).

For more complicated classification schemes, semi-supervised methods are also applicable but require more careful selection and computational power. However, for the research question and the text data analyzed in this dissertation semi-supervised methods are not applicable for at least two reasons. First, semi-supervised classification methods require a proper understanding of every language in the corpus. If this bridging information is not acquired, semi-supervised methods can result in heavily biased results. Second, the research questions examined in this dissertation are not easily translated into a simple classification scheme. The Europeanization of public discourse can take different forms – ranging in intensity, polarization, and underlying content, and focusing either on policy-issues or the EU as a polity, thereby making it difficult to classify single documents into classification schemes.

Unsupervised text-as-data methods are usually applied to text corpora when aiming to scale them on a small number of dimensions² (Slapin and Proksch 2008; Lowe et al. 2011). These scaling approaches sort the documents by semantic similarity to identify abstract underlying

²Supervised scaling approaches also exist (Laver, Benoit, and Garry 2003). This method represents a special case of dictionary-based approaches and is not further discussed here, as scaling is, in principle, not feasible for examining the research question for this dissertation.

dimensions. The results from these scaling procedures can then be used to infer ideological positions and differences between political or social actors. Unlike classification approaches, unsupervised scaling does not require in-depth language-specific knowledge to be applied to corpora that contain different languages (Glavaš, Nanni, and Ponzetto 2017). Nevertheless, scaling is inherently actor-centered, focusing less on the content of the corpus and more on positional differences and similarities between actors within a political space. Given the focus on public discourse as a decisive feature on an aggregated level within the European multi-level system in this dissertation, scaling approaches are of limited interest. Positional differences between newspaper outlets and between countries or over time are not of specific interest in answering the research questions, making scaling approaches not applicable to this study.

Another applicable and very recently developed text-as-data approach is the word embedding approach (Mikolov et al. 2013). Here, machine learning algorithms are used to assess the meaning of words, allowing researchers to consider different words used to describe the same phenomena (Jurafsky and Martin 2000). Rheault and Cochrane use word embeddings to estimate ideological positions in parliamentary corpora (2020). However, in principle, this method should also allow me to estimate the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse in this dissertation project.

There are, however, serious practical downsides of this complex text-as-data approach. First, word embeddings are always dependent on rather large training corpora that allow the algorithm to clearly associate words with the same meaning with each other. Although there is a large number of these training corpora available in English (Mikolov et al. 2013; Pennington, Socher, and Manning 2014), for other languages training new corpora to make them applicable for word embedding analyses would be necessary.³ This, however, is not feasible – in terms of both resources and time available – for this study. Second, word embeddings are

³There are, however, pre-trained data sets available in more than 150 languages based on the Wikipedia corpus (Grave et al. 2018). However, it is unclear whether they are applicable to newspaper articles. Furthermore, they are not benchmarked for many of the languages used in this dissertation.

often not able to properly consider polysemy and homonymy – words with multiple meanings (Sun, Rao, and Ding 2017). Especially when applying word embeddings on rather prosaic language used in newspaper articles this is a serious limitation. Although the dictionary-based approach used in this dissertation project is also not able to take into consideration polysemy and homonymy, the supervised nature of the dictionary-based approach allows me to approximately test for possible biases in some of the words used in the dictionary. Since dictionary-based approaches rely on the assumption that a selection of words represents the concept of interest, leave-one-out cross-validations, for example, allow for the testing of whether single words distort the estimated concept within the corpus (Efron 1982).

In sum, although there is a large number of highly sophisticated machine learning methods for analyzing text data, it is crucial that an empirical method is chosen that fits with the research question and the specifics of the text corpus at hand. Given these important conditions of empirical research, I opt for a dictionary-based approach. Although it is not highly sophisticated, it is the only feasible method for deriving important insights from the multi-lingual newspaper article corpus used in this study.

4.2.4 Developing Multi-lingual Dictionaries

When analyzing newspaper articles as a written representation of public discourse using a concept-based dictionary approach, the first task is to define the concepts to consider. First and foremost, the analyses require a dictionary covering the European component as well as public discourse between member states. Additionally, separate dictionaries for the three issues under consideration – economic issues, security issues, and migration-related issues – are necessary. Lastly, a decision on a sentiment dictionary needs to be made to estimate the level of polarization in public discourse. Building upon these dictionaries, I can estimate both the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse taking into account the three issue.

There are some important aspects to take into consideration when developing dictionaries for text-as-data applications. In line with Stone and colleagues, it is important to consider “the specification of the content characteristics to be measured and the application of rules for identifying and recording the characteristics when they occur in the data.” (1966, 7). This implies the importance of carefully selecting keywords that describe the concept of interest and recognizing the explicit nature of the keywords describing the concept within the given text corpus.

To create such dictionaries for my concepts of interest, I made use of the Wordnet lexical database (Fellbaum 1998). This database includes a large number of English nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and their semantic and lexical relationship. Using this database, I am able to retrieve synonyms for the most obvious initial keywords for my dictionaries – the words labeling the concepts as such. Wordnet constitutes a significant improvement over classic thesauri, as it groups words based on not only their meaning, but also their semantic similarity. As such, it allows for more exact “synonyms” compared to classical approaches to identifying similar words describing the same underlying concept.

Table 4.1: Issue-Specific Dictionaries

Economy	Security	Migration	Europe
economic	protection	migrant	EC
economy	security	migration	EEC
saving	defence	immigration	Eu
business	force	in-migration	EU
enterprise	defending	refugee	Europe
clientele	defense	deracination	European
commercial	defensive	displacement	Europeanisation
job	refutation	supplanting	Europeanization
work	vindication		
occupation	armed		
cash	forces		
finances	military		
funds	war		
monetary	terror		
resource	panic		
pecuniary	threat		
industry	crime		
manufacture	law-breaking		
economical	protect		
financial			
fiscal			
revenue			
tax			
taxation			
debt			
taxes			

Table 4.1 shows the dictionaries on economic, security, and migration issues, and the European component developed based on Wordnet synonyms and after manual checking for misidentified, unfitting keywords in English. The dictionary describing public discourse between member states is not shown in Table 4.1, as it only includes the names of the countries included in the data set as well as the respective adjective (e.g., Germany and German).

In addition to the issue-specific dictionaries it is necessary to select a sentiment dictionary to estimate the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. In contrast to issue-specific dictionaries, a large number of carefully selected sentiment dictionaries aimed to estimate the sentiment in texts already exists, but they are often developed for application in very specific domains, such as blogs, social media, or mass media (Nielsen 2011; Bradley and Lang 1999; Peng and Park 2011; Pennebaker, Francis, and Booth, Roger, J. 2001). For this dissertation, I chose the Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary (LSD, Young and Soroka 2012), as it has been primarily applied to newspaper content, covering different policy issues (Soroka 2012, 2014) and is expected to cover a wide range of different sentiments, increasing both its precision and its recall in sentiment coding (Proksch et al. 2019).

I make use of the Google translation API to translate the dictionaries into all languages in the text corpus (Google 2021).⁴ This approach is commonly used for multi-lingual text corpora and usually provides good translation results for translating both whole documents and dictionaries (E. de Vries, Schoonvelde, and Schumacher 2018; Proksch et al. 2019). When using automated translations, it is crucial that the words be clearly specified, including all variants necessary for measuring the concept of interest. The self-developed policy-specific dictionaries can easily be translated, as they already include all necessary keywords in the correct semantic form. For the LSD, it is necessary to unstem the keywords. To do so, I match the LSD with the stemmed corpus of the European Parliament debates (Koehn 2005). This corpus includes about 60 million English words, allowing me to develop an unstemmed version of the sentiment dictionary, which then can be inserted into the automated translation API.

To summarize, using automatically translated issue-specific and sentiment dictionaries, I am able to measure the saliency and polarization of multi-lingual Europeanized public discourses.

⁴In total, there are newspaper articles from 24 languages in my corpus: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish. Russian is included, as the Latvian newspaper *Vesti* is published in Russian. All translated dictionaries are available in the Online Appendices A and B here: https://bit.ly/appendix_gavras.

Although this approach might not be the most advanced text-as-data method, it is currently the most promising approach that enables researchers to analyze and categorize political texts from a large variety of languages. However, it only allows for analyses on the word level and is not able to uncover latent information, such as the general content and topics within the corpus.

4.3 Modeling Public Discourse in Europe

To model the determinants of Europeanized public discourse, I made use of multivariate regressions which required transforming the relevant information from the text corpora into numeric representations of public discourse in the different European countries. Time-series cross-sectional multi-level models are best suited to model the determinants of Europeanized public discourse. I therefore aggregated the information from the corpora on the country-month level. Consequently, the explanatory variables were structured in the country-month, country, or month levels. Next, I describe how the dependent and independent variables for modelling Europeanized public discourse were operationalized for this dissertation.

4.3.1 Dependent Variables

Saliency of the European component

The most relevant measurement for Europeanized public discourse is the saliency of the European component. This suggests whether newspaper articles include references to “Europe” according to the dictionary used in this dissertation. The operationalization of the European component therefore follows a simple logic insofar as any reference to “Europe” codes the content of the newspaper article as being related to European politics. Although this might imply overestimating the actual share of newspaper article devoted to Europeanized public discourse, there are good reasons to assume that this is not the case.

Authors of newspaper articles carefully select how they frame their articles. When deciding

whether to include references to “Europe” it is reasonable to assume that such decisions do not occur by chance but are deliberately meant to specifically shape public discourse. This is moreover the reason why I decided to not weigh the strength of the European component in each newspaper article (e.g., summing up the number of references to “Europe”). A newspaper article should be considered part of Europeanized public discourse even when only making reference to the European component once. Additionally, I do not identify which outlet takes part in Europeanized public discourse in the main analysis. As all outlets constitute public discourse in a given country, any outlet referring to the European component should equally contribute to Europeanized public discourse. To make the data fit the modeling strategy, I aggregate all articles from each country related to Europeanized public discourse on a country-month level in a final step, resulting in a measure indicating the share of Europeanized public discourse in a given country and month (between 0 and 1). The same procedure is applied to the analysis of public discourse between member states, replacing references to “Europe” with references to other European countries in the newspaper articles.

Polarization of the European component

When examining how Europeanized public discourse is shaped, it is crucial to understand under which circumstances public discourse that includes the European component is actually polarized. Measuring the level of polarization in public discourse, however, first requires the examination of the general sentiment of newspaper articles devoted to Europeanized public discourse. Relying on the LSD (Young and Soroka 2012), I first determine the sentiment of each newspaper article in the corpus. To do so, I rely on the conceptualization of sentiment proposed by Lowe and colleagues (2011):

$$Sentiment = \log\left(\frac{pos + 0.5}{neg + 0.5}\right)$$

where *pos* represents the number of positive sentiment words according to the dictionary and *neg* represents the number of negative sentiment words. Adding a small penalty prevents

dividing by zero, whereby taking the log considers potential outliers. Using this relative measure of sentiment ensures that the results are not distorted by language-specific differences in the overall tone of newspaper reporting or by language-specific idiosyncrasies.

Thus, only relative sentiment matters and ensures a straightforward interpretation of the results. Negative values refer to a relatively negative sentiment, whereas positive values refer to a relatively positive sentiment. Building upon this sentiment measure, the level of polarization stems directly from the data structure used for modeling Europeanized public discourse. Polarization can be numerically expressed as the spread of sentiment between newspaper articles published in a given period. Given this assumption, the standard deviation of sentiment in articles on Europeanized public discourse should reflect the level of polarization in public discourse:

$$Polarization = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \tilde{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

where n represents the number of newspaper articles in a given country-month, \tilde{x} represents the mean sentiment, and x_i represents the sentiment score of each newspaper article. In this conceptualization, polarization ranges from 0 to ∞ , with larger values indicating a higher level of polarization.

4.3.2 Independent Variables

After describing the operationalization of the dependent variables in the models, I now turn to the explanatory variables included in my models, allowing for a better understanding of the determinants of Europeanized public discourse.

Political issues

First and foremost, it is important to categorize the newspaper articles published between 2016 and 2019 into the three political issues of interest in this dissertation. Using the

dictionaries developed for this project, I classified articles referring to economic, security, or migration issues. I applied the same rule as for the European component. Any mention of a word included in the respective dictionary resulted in classifying the article under a respective political issue. It is certainly possible that a single article might refer to several political issues. Thus, the classification of articles is not mutually exclusive, but allows for the classification of an article to several issues. Again, the classification will be aggregated to the country-month level to allow for modeling Europeanized public discourse. Thus, the variables referring to the three political issues should be interpreted as the share of articles in a given country and month dedicated to each issue.

In the final analyses, I decided to exclude all articles unrelated to any of the three political issues, as it is possible that newspaper articles unrelated to politics have entered the corpora. By removing all articles unrelated to any of the issues, I substantially reduced the number of unrelated articles. This came at the cost of not being able to determine the absolute relative share of articles devoted to each of the issues, but only the relative share to all articles remaining in the corpus. This certainly represented a significant trade-off, but as I am not interested in the absolute share of newspaper articles dedicated to certain political issues but rather the Europeanization of public discourse depending on these issues, I assumed that this decision would pay off when testing my hypotheses.

Share of mainstream, pro-EU challenger, and anti-EU challenger political parties in the parliamentary arena

According to my hypotheses, the composition of the parliamentary arena and, more specifically the strength and preferences of mainstream parties in opposition and political challengers have a substantial impact on the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Classifying political parties as mainstream or challenger parties in a European political system is not straightforward, as the party systems differ significantly between the European countries, with very volatile party systems in some eastern European countries,

highly fragmented party systems in some northern European parties and still partially frozen party systems in countries such as Germany, Portugal, or Malta (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). There have been several proposals on how to define mainstream and challenger parties in Europe (Hernández 2018; Meijers 2017; C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2012). However, most definitions share the consideration of challenger parties as parties not able (or willing) to gain access to government in the past. This approach to challenger parties might be very sensitive to temporal changes, which makes it crucial to define the timeframe of participation in government that should be considered.

The aftermath of the Great Recession in 2010 led to fundamental shifts in many European party systems with challenger parties being swept into government, such as the Five Stars movement in Italy (although this party would usually be not viewed as a mainstream party when considering its partially anti-systemic notion). To properly account for the systemic shifts after the Great Recession, I have differentiated between parties in government anytime before January 2010 and parties not in government before January 2010. Only parties that were already part of national governments before 2010 can be viewed as having become part of the mainstream (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). Parties only in government after 2010 or never in government will be defined as challenger parties.

I made use of the ParlGov dataset (Döring and Manow 2010) to define the time period for national governments. There are two parties, however, which must be manually re-defined as challengers and mainstream parties, respectively, as they have fundamentally changed since their foundations. First, the True Finns are classified as a mainstream party according to my definition, as their direct successor was part of government in Finland in the 1980s. The party, however, evolved to an anti-systemic party in the 1990s (Jungar 2016). In contrast, Syriza in Greece should not be classified as a challenger party since the 2015 election, which led to Syriza replacing the traditional social-democratic party in Greece and moderating its positions when forming the government in 2015 (Kioupkiolis and Katsambekis 2018).⁵ As I

⁵Maintaining the original coding of the two parties does not affect the results substantially.

consider the time span between 2016 and 2019, these re-specifications more accurately cover the current classifications of these parties. They also exemplify, however, the difficulties in applying a common scheme to such a large variety of countries. Building upon this classification, I am able to easily identify the mainstream parties currently in the opposition, which, according to my definition, do not currently hold any position in cabinets on the national level. I define the strength of the respective challenger and mainstream opposition parties by their vote share in the last elections to account for institutional effects of majority voting systems (Bormann and Golder 2013)).⁶

Challenger parties often adopt different positions toward European integration compared to mainstream parties.⁷ Although many very successful challenger parties have run on anti-EU tickets, it is important to acknowledge that some challenger parties also have strong positive positions toward European integration (C. E. de Vries and Hobolt 2020). Among others, La République en Marche in France, Ciudadanos in Spain, GroenLinks in the Netherlands or the Green parties in Switzerland can be considered successful pro-EU challenger parties. Others, however, do not hold strong positions on the EU, but have become challengers based on opposition against corruption, such as the Pirate party in the Czech Republic or Progressive Slovakia.

To identify which challenger parties actually hold strong preferences toward European integration and to be able to test my hypotheses, I take into account data from the Chapel-Hill Expert Survey 2019 (Jolly et al. 2022),⁸ which provides positions toward European inte-

⁶Although challengers might fail to gain representation in the parliament in majoritarian voting systems such as the United Kingdom, one might underestimate their influence on public discourse when only considering their seat share in parliament.

⁷Challenger parties scored 4.6 (SD: 1.7) on a 7-point scale on European integration (1 = strongly opposed; 7 = strongly in favor) from the Chapel-Hill Expert Survey 2019 (Jolly et al. 2022) whereas mainstream parties scored 5.5 (SD: 1.4). Appendix C shows the average position and the variance for challenger and mainstream parties on European integration by country. The results indicate that mainstream parties hold more positive positions on European integration than challenger parties in most countries, but with substantial variation with regard to their average positions and variation between countries.

⁸There is a large number of different data sets providing information about the party positions of a large number of European parties on different policy dimensions including the classical left-right dimension as well as positions towards European integration. These data sets usually rely on expert surveys, party elite surveys or party manifestos. Cross-validating these different data sources, Ecker et al. (2021) showed that

gration from a large number of political parties from all over Europe on a 7-point scale. Challenger parties are coded as having strong anti-EU preferences when their average position is less than or equal to 3 on the 7-point scale. Challenger parties are coded as having pro-EU preferences, when their average score is 5 or higher. Challenger parties with positions between 3 and 5 are classified as challengers without strong preferences toward European integration and are thus disregarded in the analysis on the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Following my assumptions on the strategies of challenger parties, I do not differentiate between challenger parties currently part of a government coalition or in opposition.

European and national political events

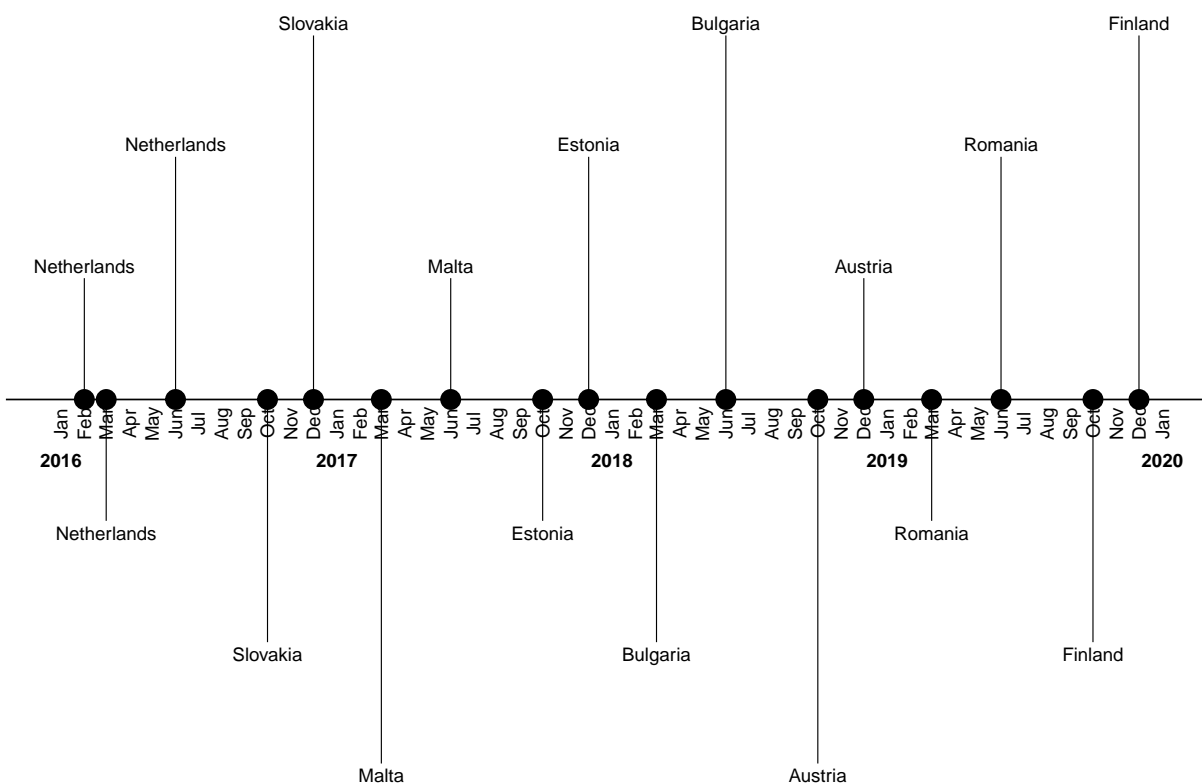
Europeanized public discourse is not only driven by political parties articulating their preferences on European integration but often triggered and re-inforced by events related to European politics. Most notably, the election campaign for the European Parliament represents the most important European political event for public discourse (Walter 2017). However, EU summits are also highly relevant to Europeanized public discourse, as they “ought to inform the public about key manifestations of EU performance” (Elenbaas et al. 2012, 729). Although these events differ substantially, they contribute both to Europeanized public discourse, as they emphasize the relevance of the European component in policy-making within the Union.

I operationalize these events as follows. The three months before the 2019 European election (the only European election in the time period covered in this dissertation) are coded as election campaign time. Although there is no official start date for election campaigns, covering the final three months of the campaign seem to be a reasonable choice. I thus code the time period from March 1, 2019 to May 31, 2019 as the European election campaign period

“questions that refer to parties’ actual behaviour during the legislative period [...] might be better answered based on estimates from expert surveys” (p. 10). Since I cover whole legislative periods in all EU member states, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey serves as a reasonably good data source for testing my hypotheses.

given the country-month structure for modeling Europeanized public discourse. Concerning the EU summits, I decided to only cover scheduled summits, as they are likely covered most extensively by media reporting. Figure 4.5 shows the summits led by the respective EU council presidencies.

Figure 4.5: EU summits 2016-2019



Concerning political events in which Europeanized public discourse may decrease, I focus primarily on national election campaigns. During these election campaigns, public discourse is primarily concerned with national issues, keeping European politics mostly out of public discourse. As for the election campaign for the European election, I consider the three months before the national elections as the campaign period.

Public discourse on the European level

The Europeanization of public discourse in the EU member states is influenced by public discourse taking place in the European public sphere. Although the European public sphere is incomplete because it lacks a well-defined media arena, there are still important political

arenas that might influence Europeanized public discourse in the national public spheres. Due to the lack of a proper European media arena, I made use of public discourse in the European parliamentary arena as a functional equivalent in this arena to retrieve information about which issues are discussed in the European parliamentary arena.

As I am only interested in whether the respective political issues have been discussed in the European Parliament in the respective months and do not aim to uncover actual content or polarization in this arena, it is sufficient to retrieve the agenda items from the respective plenary debates to determine whether certain political issues have been debated in the European public sphere. I retrieved the agendas from the plenary debates online and then calculated how often the particular political issues were debated by applying the same issue dictionaries used to identify political issues in national public discourses. This procedure, although not ideal, reveals the saliency of the particular political issues in European public discourse.

Geographic proximity to other European countries

As argued in Chapter 2, Europeanized public discourse not only relates to the supranational European level, but also refers to taking into account other European countries when debating political issues. In this regard, scholars often discuss horizontal and vertical Europeanization (e.g., Brüggemann and Kleinen-von Königslöw 2009). One important determinant for considering other European countries is geographic proximity to a particular country, which serves as a proxy for economic, political, and social interdependence in this regard. I make use of the CEPII GeoDist data set (Mayer and Zignago 2011) to estimate the distance between the European countries. As many European countries share borders with several other countries, I estimate the distance between capitals to obtain a more nuanced picture of the interdependence between the countries. This approach follows common procedures in regional and economic research on competition and interdependence (e.g., Cassette and Paty 2008).

Exogenous factors

Lastly, exogenous factors should be able to spark public discourse on political issues. Events occurring around the world or in one's own country are necessarily covered by the media arena. When they are related to existing political conflicts, they might become a focal point for public discourse on these issues. Although such events might not inevitably increase Europeanized public discourse, it is relevant to take these factors into account to control for the initialization of public discourse on specific political issues - potentially becoming Europeanized by political parties. Thus, taking into account real-world incidents is important to correctly estimate the conditions of Europeanized public discourse.

To cover the most relevant exogenous factors for public discourse I rely on official data from Eurostat on relevant incidents and economic indicators often used in media reporting to emphasize certain political issues (Eurostat 2021a, 2021b, 2021c; START 2019). With regard to economic issues, I included the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates by month in each country. In particular, negatively developing unemployment rates are often covered extensively in the media (Garz 2014). With regard to migration issues, I included the logged number of asylum applications to the respective countries in each month, which is commonly done when examining the political implications of migration in Europe (e.g., Elshehawy et al. 2021). Concerning security issues, I included two measures indicating disturbances of public order, which are usually followed by public discourse on security issues. I included the number of homicides and the number of terrorist attacks per month in every country as measures. Hereby, I did not differentiate between perpetrators or victims, as any of these types of incidents usually spark public discourse (Lin and Phillips 2014).

4.3.3 Time-Series Cross-Sectional Modeling of Public Discourse

The core of the empirical analyses for testing my hypotheses in a set of multi-level regression models. To test my hypotheses, I re-structured the data to take a time-series cross-sectional

(TSCS) form. More specifically, it follows a country-month structure. Given this data structure, the assumptions of simple OLS models do not hold, as the residuals might either be spatially or temporally correlated (Beck and Katz 2007). To overcome this problem, there is a multitude of different techniques, including correcting for correlations by adding robust standard errors, controlling for the contextual structure using fixed-effects or explicitly modeling the TSCS structure of the data.

In my dissertation, I explicitly model the structure of the data by using linear random-effects multi-level models. These models not only allow for including covariates measured at the higher level but also provide a more accurate picture of the actual data generating process (A. Bell and Jones 2015). The first argument is particularly crucial for testing my hypotheses, as the political preferences and the strength of mainstream opposition and challenger parties are essentially measured at the higher level of the data structure. The data used for this analysis follow the assumption that challenger parties do not significantly change their positions on European integration within a time span of four years. The strength of parties only changes with every election. Thus, the covariates derived from these data are essentially mostly available at the country-level, as they do not vary in each month. When including fixed-effects, I would not be able to test the hypotheses on the effect of the composition of the party system on Europeanized public discourse appropriately.

A simplified random-effects model for the TCSC structure used in this dissertation looks as follows:

$$y_{i,j} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i,j} + \beta_2 x_i + \beta_3 x_j + u_i + u_j + \epsilon_{i,j}$$

where $y_{i,j}$ represents the dependent variable - measured on the country-month level. β_0 represents the general intercept term, $\beta_1 x_{i,j}$ represents the covariates measured on the country-month level, $\beta_2 x_i$ represents the covariates measured on the country level and $\beta_3 x_j$ represents the covariates measured on the month level. Additionally, to the fixed part of the model, u_i ,

u_j and $\epsilon_{i,j}$ enter the equation as random part of the model, indicating the high-level residuals for the two macro levels as well as the observation-specific residuals for the country-month level.

Finally, it is necessary to re-structure the data to test the hypotheses on public discourse between member states, taking into consideration other European countries in public discourse. Provided that geographic proximity is an important factor for explaining public discourse between member states, I set-up a dyadic data structure, linking every country pair, and adding the distance to every other European country as separate observation (D. A. Kenny et al. 2006). This procedure also required slight adjustments to the random-effects model used in the empirical analysis. To correctly specify the model, I included another random-effects component controlling for the respective dyadic country, and retaining the effect of geographic proximity.

4.4 Multi-lingual Content Analysis Using Structural Topic Models

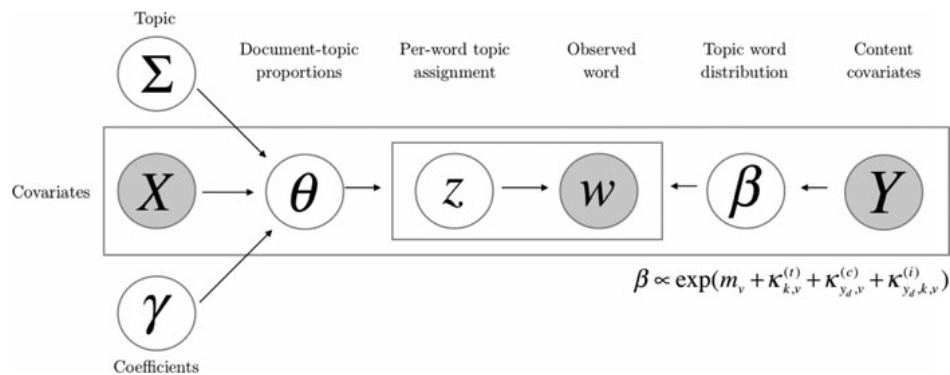
As argued above, several sophisticated text-as-data approaches are not easily applicable to multi-lingual text corpora, due to the necessity to provide labels for a pre-selected subset of the corpus or due to non-applicability of the method because of the research question at hand. In the section above, I explain why more advanced text-as-data methods are not applicable in analyzing the overall structure and low-key aspects of multi-lingual corpora. However, given the limitations of the dictionary-based approach when examining more complex features of human languages, conclusions on more detailed aspects of the content in the text corpus are not possible. These aspects, however, are very important and insightful when trying to answer the research question and testing the hypotheses. In the following sections, I therefore propose an approach combining sophisticated text-as-data methods (in particular structural topic models (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019)), automated translation services, and

dictionary-based approaches, which taken together can be used to derive important insight on the actual content of multi-lingual text corpora.

4.4.1 Modeling News Article Content Using Structural Topic Models

Topic models are a particularly popular text-as-data approach used to model content from large text corpora, assigning words and documents within corpora to specific topics using maximizing likelihood estimators. This text-as-data approach has been developed in the field of information retrieval, in which the sheer volume of data available required the use of automated techniques to efficiently process the corpora. Most often topic models are based on Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA, Blei, Ng, and Jordan 2003), which follows two main principles. LDA assumes that each document is a mixture of topics and every topic is a mixture of words. Based on these rather exploratory models, Roberts and colleagues have developed the structural topic model, which is able to consider contextual information in the estimation of topic prevalence and content, allowing researcher to apply this method more easily to confirmatory research and hypothesis testing (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019). Placed within the general framework of this dissertation, structural topic models allow for testing whether the polarization of Europeanized public discourse actually increases or decreases the prevalence of certain topics in the corpora.

Figure 4.6: Conceptual illustration of STMs



Source: Roberts, Stewart, and Airoldi (2016)

Structural topic models consist of three components (see Figure 4.6). The component on the left-hand side of the illustration represents the topic prevalence model which controls the allocation of words to certain topics based on the covariates provided from meta-data to the corpus. On the right-hand side, the topical content model controls the words describing the underlying topics. Again, this assignment is dependent on the provided covariates. Thus, based on characteristics of the covariates, the words that describe the topic might differ. Finally, the two components just described are combined to produce the actual words in the corpus in the core language model (Roberts, Stewart, and Airoldi 2016).

Structural topic models offer an important advantage over LDA based topic models. It is possible to incorporate explanatory variables testing why some topics might be more prevalent or consist of different words in certain circumstances, moving topic models from being purely descriptive to being more inferential within the text-as-data framework.

Structural topic models are a very popular text-as-data approach for in-depth examination of the content of large text corpora in different fields of social sciences. Moschella and colleagues showed that the ECB changes its legitimation strategy in times of politicization focusing more on policy output than strategic considerations and thus changing the content of their political communication using structural topic models (2020). In a long-term study on U.S. news coverage on Muslim and non-Muslim women, Terman applied structural topic models to investigate how cultural differences were perceived by U.S. newspapers between 1980 and 2014 (2017). Structural topic models have also been applied to parliamentary debates, examining the level of cohesion after electoral reform in Norway (Høyland and Søyland 2019).

When considering structural topic models as rather advanced text-as-data approach, it is, however, necessary to discuss their applicability to multi-lingual corpora. To my knowledge, up to now, research has only considered translating a multi-lingual corpus (or the document-

term matrices) into one pivot language and applying structural topic models to a unified and mono-lingual corpus (Lucas et al. 2015). Using the translated corpus, the researchers have shown how Chinese and Middle East Weibo and Twitter users reacted to disclosures of U.S. surveillance programs by Edward Snowden. In the following subsection, I explain why applying structural topic models on a pivot corpus might cover important differences between the individual corpora due to the data generating process in the different languages. I then propose an alternative method by deriving insights from structural topic based on multi-lingual corpora.

4.4.2 Deriving Insights from Structural Topic Models Based on a Multi-lingual Corpus

There are different degrees of engagement with text using text-as-data approaches. Most advanced text-as-data approaches do not engage very heavily with specific words and their meaning, but merely compare the overall similarity between documents to derive insights from these corpora. Dictionary-based approaches, as used in this dissertation, also do not take the whole variety of different words into account, focusing instead on decisive keywords, aimed at measuring the concepts of interest. Structural topic models differ slightly from other text-as-data methods insofar as they require researchers to qualitatively judge how to label the latent topic derived from the unsupervised machine learning algorithm. In this regard, a by far larger variety of words, their meanings and their semantic relation to other words need to be considered to derive meaningful labels for the topics. When focusing more closely on words, their meanings and their relation to other words it becomes even more important to consider language-specific particularities to actually derive valid insights.

Language has important social functions allowing members of society to interact with each other and provide meaning to the social structure. As such, language is not only used to transmit social interactions but is actually able to maintain social order by assigning

clearly defined meaning to the words used in linguistic interactions (Halliday 2009). These meanings are not necessarily inter-culturally comparable implying that words have different meanings in different languages (Baker 2018). As a result, applying structural topic models to unified mono-lingual corpora might introduce severe biases, as the model might collapse latent topics that are actually distinct into the same topic by referring to the same words when they actually have different meanings; alternatively, the model might differentiate between topics according to languages, but these might actually cover the same latent topics. Given these difficulties in cross-linguistic comparisons there are problems arising from the current methods of applying structural topic models to multi-lingual corpora. When applying automated translation services on the corpora (or the document term matrix created to estimate the structural topic model) the differences in the meaning of the words between languages are not taken into account properly, as the automated translation service is not able to consider differences arising from culturally constructed meaning or the context in which the words are used.

I propose a different approach to applying structural topic models to multi-lingual corpora that more seriously considers potential cross-cultural differences and the specifics on political communication within the multi-lingual European multi-level system. In cross-country comparative research, researchers aim to find a common denominator that would allow for valid comparisons between systems, whether they are political, economic, social, or media-related (Sartori 1970). This can be reasonable and valid when considering different forms of political communication, but usually requires human judgment in identifying the common denominator.⁹ For large-scale text-as-data approaches this is unfortunately not possible. This technical restriction forces researchers to more seriously consider the particularities on the data generating process of the available corpus when comparing its content.

⁹The Comparative Manifesto Project is a prime example of enabling comparative research based on identifying common denominators based on human judgment (Mikhaylov, Laver, and Benoit 2008). Here, human coders with knowledge of the individual political systems and the particularities of the respective languages decide on whether or not quasi-sentences can be associated to a given coding scheme.

First and foremost, public discourse in the European multi-level system takes place mostly within the national public sphere. The public spheres within the EU definitely take each other into account, but due to language barriers one cannot seriously speak of a European public sphere in which members of the European societies jointly debate political issues. Based on this general notion and the issues of cross-cultural differences in the meaning of words it is difficult to justify the translation of multi-lingual corpora of European public discourse into one mono-lingual corpus and subsequently estimating the effects of Europeanization on the content of public discourse. Thus, as public discourse takes place mostly within the national public sphere, it is necessary to estimate changes of the content through Europeanization of public discourse separately for each country. This, however, results in latent topics in 24 different languages, preventing easy comparisons between the results of the distinct topic models. However, as languages might not use the same words to describe the same topics, the words underlying the topics should still be closely related semantically (Baker 2018).

In contrast to translating the corpora into one mono-lingual corpus and then applying structural topic models, structural topic models should be applied to the separate corpus from each country. The resulting topics cover the content of public discourse in the respective countries more closely than aggregating them to a common mono-lingual corpus. To allow for comparisons, I made use of the Google translate API (Google 2021), which can translate the words that describe the respective latent topics. Next, I estimated the average semantic similarity between the words describing the latent topics in the respective languages using the Spacy library (Vasilev 2020), which enabled me to find similar topics although being described by somewhat different words. Consequently, it was possible to implicitly compare the topics of public discourse in the member states of the European multi-level system. The downside of this approach, however, is that it does not allow for the integration of cross-national predictors as covariates for changes in topic prevalence. However, as stated in my hypotheses, I do not expect that the content of public discourse is directly influenced by inter- and supra-national variation, but mainly by the level of polarization in Europeanized

public discourse.

I modeled the content of Europeanized public discourse using structural topic models, as described above. Using this text analysis method requires the specification of an appropriate number of topics within the corpora. To increase parsimony and efficiency of the estimation, I only include words that were mentioned in at least 10 articles and remove all stop words, special characters, numbers and symbols. In accordance with recommendations from Schofield and colleagues (2017), I refrained from stemming the words in the corpora. I made use of the following diagnostic criteria to determine the appropriate number of topics for each corpus (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019; Wallach et al. 2009): high held-out likelihood, low residuals, medium semantic coherence, and low level of lower bound. As there is no definite agreement on how to decide the optimal number of topics in a structural topic model, I made decisions based on the following criteria: I determined the number of topics with the highest value for held-out likelihood and the lowest level of residuals combined with a low level of lower bound and an average value of semantic coherence. Using these criteria, I followed common practice (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019). The topics resulting from the stm determine the relevant content in public discourse. By including the level of polarization as covariates, I was able to test the hypotheses on whether the content of Europeanized public discourse is dependent on how polarized the discourse is.

To summarize, applying structural topic models on multi-lingual corpora requires close attention to be paid to the implicit assumptions made on the data generating process underlying the text. In this subsection, I have described the general intuition behind structural topic models and their advantages in deriving insights on the content of texts compared to other text-as-data methods. However, when deriving insights on the content of multi-lingual corpora, it is important to seriously consider the language-specific features. I therefore propose a new approach to evaluating structural topic models for multi-lingual corpora by running separate analyses for each public discourse and translating the words that most closely de-

scribe the latent topics. From this translated latent topic corpus, semantic similarity analyses allow for the comparison of topics between languages and the examination of the content of Europeanized public discourse.

Chapter 5

Europeanized Public Discourse, 2016–2019

In the following chapter, I provide first descriptive results on public discourse in EU member states between 2016 and 2019 with regard to economic, security and migration-related issues. Building upon this, I describe the Europeanization of public discourse and the degree of public discourse between member states in the time span under consideration with regard to both its saliency and the level of polarization. I provide face and criterion validity of the measures and methods from quantitative text analysis used to determine public discourse in Europe (Creswell 2014). To do so, I estimate the correlation between the issues, as well as to references to Europeanization and other member states. Additionally, I describe changes in public discourse based on selected decisive events between 2016 and 2019. Lastly, I describe the empirical distribution of the independent variables used to test my hypotheses. Here, I describe public discourse on the European level, mainstream opposition parties, as well as pro- and anti-EU challenger parties in the specific European countries.

Before examining the determinants and components of Europeanized public discourse, it is important to gain a better understanding of public discourse in all EU member states and

the closest neighboring countries by providing descriptive evidence of the issues and the level of Europeanization in public discourse. Table 5.1 provides evidence of which issues are discussed most often in the European countries as a whole, as well as the saliency of Europeanization and public discourse between member states. The results indicate that economic and security issues are most common among the three issues considered for analysis in the corpus. Economic issues are mentioned in about 62% of all news paper articles on politics, and security issues are covered in more than 50 % of all articles. Migration issues, although increasingly debated in political elite discourse (Green-Pedersen and Otjes 2019), are still not as extensively covered as the other issues in public discourse totaling less than 10% of all newspaper articles.

Table 5.1: Issues and Europeanization of Public Discourse in Europe

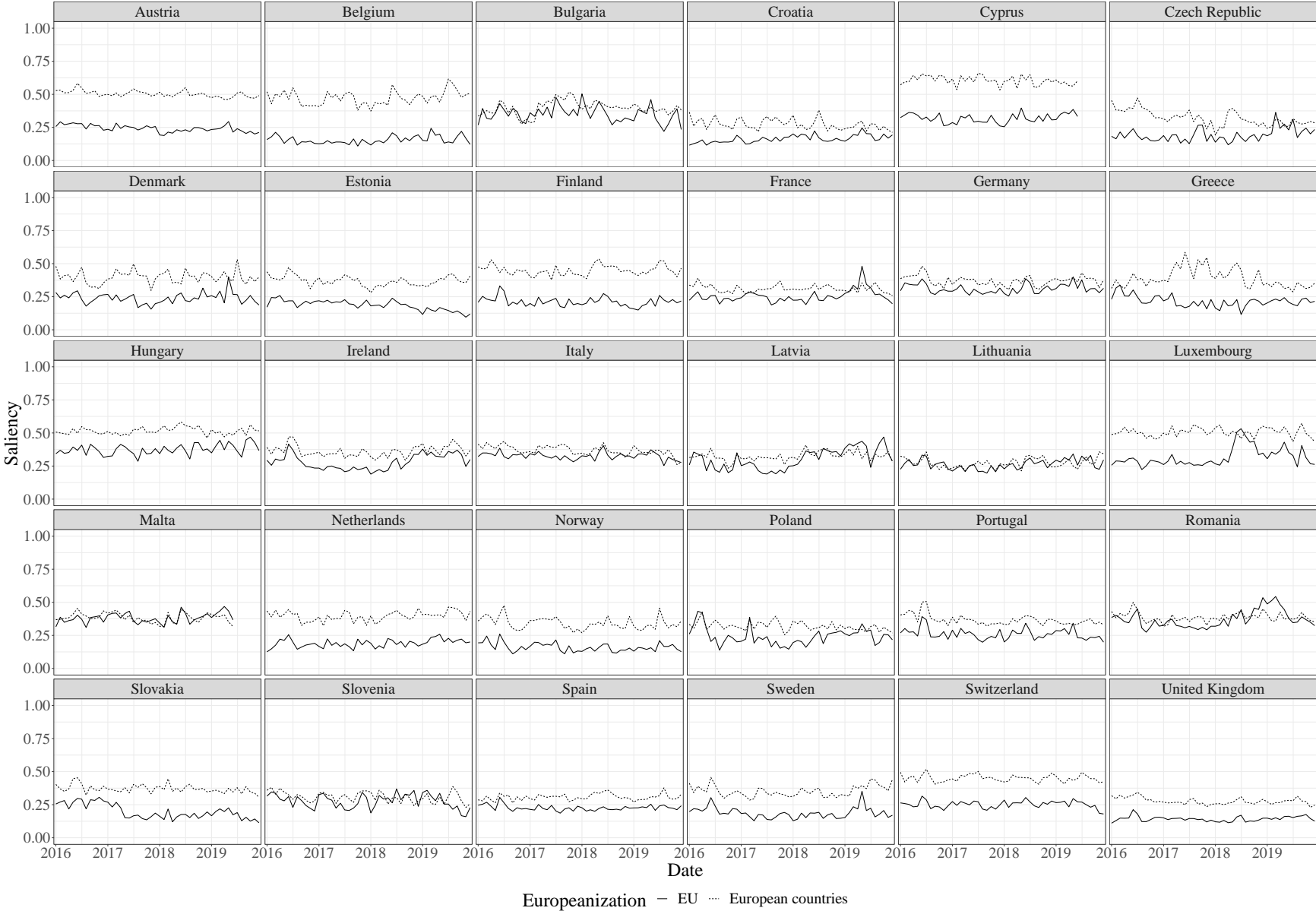
Economy	Security	Migration	Europe	Countries
0.621	0.517	0.095	0.242	0.373

When considering the Europeanization of public discourse, the results indicate a substantially high level of Europeanized public discourse in the EU member states and its closest neighbors. Almost one quarter of public discourse in these countries is related to Europeanization and more than 37% of newspaper articles take into account other European countries, hereby pursuing public discourse between member states. These initial descriptive results have twofold implications. First, economic and security-related issues clearly dominate public discourse compared to migration issues. In contrast to elite discourse, where migration - also due to increased anti-migration parties in European party systems - has become an even more dominant issue, public discourse itself does not cover it as extensively. Second, public discourse in Europe is, in general, relatively strongly Europeanized – at least during the period 2016–2019 – with public discourse in the respective European countries taking into account both Europe as well as other European countries.

5.1 Saliency of the European Component

Figure 5.1 disaggregates the saliency of the European component (Europeanization as well as referring to other European countries) by country. The results indicate differences between countries with regard to the overall saliency of the European component and similarities in that public discourse between member states is more salient than the Europeanization of public discourse. Furthermore, no trend effects towards increased Europeanization show up in public discourse. This indicates that – at least within this span of time – increased Europeanization might be attributed to specific events and strategic decisions by political parties to emphasize Europeanization rather than an overall tendency of public discourse to more strongly involve other countries and Europe over time.

Figure 5.1: Saliency: The European Component



When comparing the different countries, it is evident that the share of the European component for each one varies substantially. Up to 70% of all articles from Hungary and Cyprus considered in my corpus¹ referred to other European countries, and less than 30% of articles in countries such as Lithuania, Croatia, France, Spain and the United Kingdom referred to other countries. With regard to Europeanization, substantial differences between countries can also be found: Malta, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria refer to Europe in more than 35% of all articles published between 2016 and 2019, whereas the United Kingdom, Belgium and Norway only referred to Europe in about 15% of all articles.

Public discourse between member states is relatively difficult to interpret on the aggregated level, as this part of public discourse eventually refers to specific other European countries. In Figure 5.2 I disaggregate public discourse between member states by the specific European countries that are referred to. The results show public discourse between member states aggregated over time. There are two main implications. First, Germany and France seem to be the centroids of public discourse between member states, as they are referred to in almost all public discourses. This is very reasonable finding, as these two countries are politically and economically the most important countries in EU making it important for other public discourses to take these two countries into account.

Furthermore, countries seem to refer to neighboring countries more often than to European countries that are more distant. This is very reasonable and follows my theoretical expectations, as issues debated in neighboring countries tend to be more important for public discourse compared to those debated in more distant countries. Cyprus is the only exception here, as the United Kingdom was mentioned very often, but this might be attributed to the particular newspaper covered in my sample. Cyprus Mail is an English-speaking newspaper, which is often also read by emigrants, especially those from the United Kingdom.

¹As mentioned above, I only consider articles that refer at least to one of the issues covered in this dissertation. This implies that some articles that are part of public discourse are not included in the final corpus. The articles removed from the corpus amount to about 28% of all articles. Since I am not interested in public discourse itself, but rather the Europeanization of public discourse with regard to economic, migration and security issues, this decision allows me an undistorted view of the Europeanization of these issues.

Figure 5.2: Public discourse between member states



Since I make use of automated techniques to measure the concepts used in my dissertation, it is important to share some additional words on the validity of the results with regard to the European component. Although the dictionary on measuring Europeanization is used often (e.g. Hutter, Grande, and Kriesi 2016), providing some simple content validity analyses is important to avoid drawing inaccurate conclusions. The same goes for the dictionaries on public discourse between member states. Content validity should be given for times when events related to Europe or other European countries took place in the real world leading to increases in Europeanization or public discourse between member states. Nevertheless, this validation method does not allow for examining whether the overall level of the European component is correctly specified between countries, but allows for testing of whether the dictionaries actually cover the European component correctly over time. To provide content validity I therefore examine differences over time and check whether they correspond with the events taking place during that time.

One of the most important events with regard to the Europeanization of public discourse between 2016 and 2019 was the decision of the British people to leave the EU in June 2016. This decision was extensively covered by newspapers from all over the world, as it was an unprecedented event in the history of the EU. As one can see, the level of Europeanization showed an increasing spike in June 2016 in almost all countries. As expected, this spike was particularly strong in Ireland and the United Kingdom, which were affected most strongly by this decision due to its historical, cultural and political relations. Nevertheless, in Poland, which has a large number of skilled workers working in the United Kingdom since its admission to the EU, there was a clear indication of Europeanization during the month of the Brexit decision.

The second Europe-wide event during this time-span was the European election taking place in May 2019. Increases in Europeanization occurred again during this month and in the months beforehand in many European countries, but not as strong as during the Brexit

decision almost three years prior. Next to these high impact events, there were also country-specific events, such as taking over the EU council presidency. During the time span covered in my dissertation project, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta, Estonia, Bulgaria, Austria, Romania and Finland took over the presidency. In each of the countries, the level of Europeanization increased substantially during their time taking over the presidency.

Providing content validity on public discourse between member states is less straightforward, as there often are no clear national events relevant for other countries that would lead to public discourse between member states. However, it is possible to easily examine which events should decrease public discourse between member states. As stated in Hypothesis 3a on the saliency of public discourse between member states, national elections should increase public discourse focusing mainly on national events and therefore reducing attention on other countries. When checking the dates of the national elections this exact phenomenon can be observed in many countries during the national election campaigns. The effect is clearly visible for Bulgaria and the Czech Republic in 2017, for Latvia and Sweden in 2018, and for Estonia and Greece in 2019. For some the effects are not visible, which might be due to the nature of the campaigns referring to other countries as good or bad examples of policy-making such as in Hungary or because the national election took place at the same time as the European elections, such as in Belgium.

In sum, content validity provides empirical support that the dictionaries correctly measure the concept of the European component in public discourse. Consequently, it can be inferred that both Europeanization and public discourse between member states has been highly salient in many European countries during the 2016–2019 period but without indications for clear trends of increased orientation toward more inter- and transnational public discourse, but rather event-specific increases of Europeanized public discourse.

5.2 Saliency of the European Component by Issues

In this section, I differentiate between public discourse according to the issues covered in this dissertation project: economic, security, and migration issues.

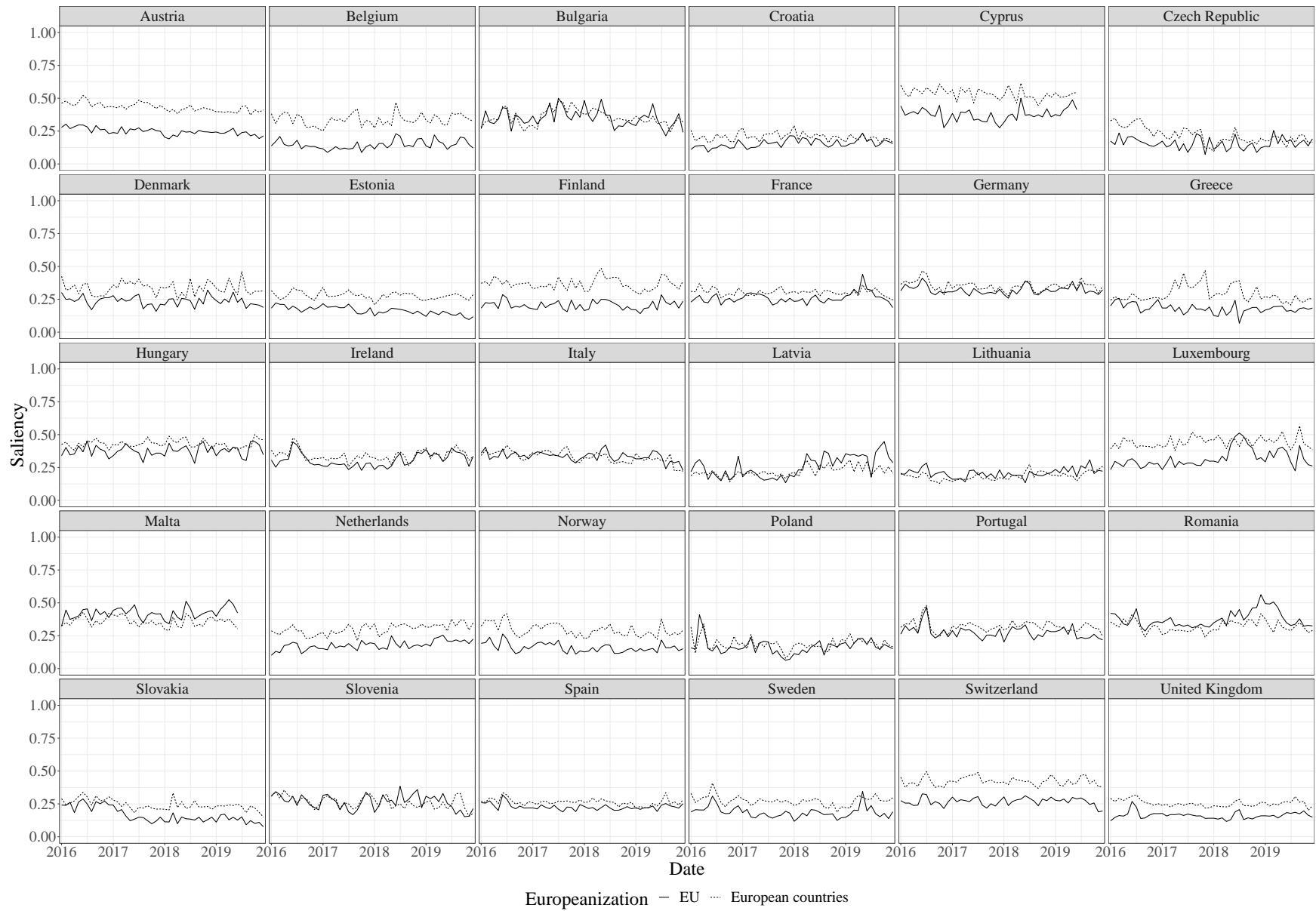
Turning to economic issues in Figure 5.3, a first glimpse indicates that economic issues show a moderate level of Europeanization. Public discourse related to economic issues generally takes into account other European countries, and in many countries, to a lesser degree, discourse refers to Europe. There are, however, remarkable differences between countries. In 15 out of the 30 countries in the sample, there were almost no differences in the saliency of Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states. In Austria, Belgium, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland, however, public discourse between member states was significantly more salient than Europeanized public discourse was.

For Norway and Switzerland this is highly reasonable, as they are not official member states of the EU. This implies that European policy-making on economic issues might not be as relevant for these two countries, but other European countries and their economic conditions might be. Concerning public discourse between member states the economic implications of the financial crises in several European countries in the last decade as well as the conflict between “northern” and “southern” EU member states resulting from negotiating the conditions for bail-outs might have had a long-lasting influence on economic public discourse involving other European countries (e.g., Kriesi and Grande 2014).

For the other countries in which the extent of the two parts of the European component do not differ substantially from each other, however, there might be distinct debates on economic issues that consider other European countries or the EU without cross-referencing the other part of the European component. To test for this possibility, I estimated the correlation between the two parts of the European component for the remaining countries. The resulting correlation coefficient of 0.34 indicates that Europeanized public discourse and

public discourse between member states are rather highly correlated. There is, however, a substantial share of the European component that only takes into account one of the two types of Europeanization. These preliminary results indicate that there is substantial Europeanized public discourse on economic issues. However, the public discourses between the countries in my sample differ significantly; furthermore, there are substantial debates on the economic issues of other European countries without taking the EU into account. With regard to economic issues, it seems that there are – at least to some extent – two distinct types of Europeanized public discourses in European countries.

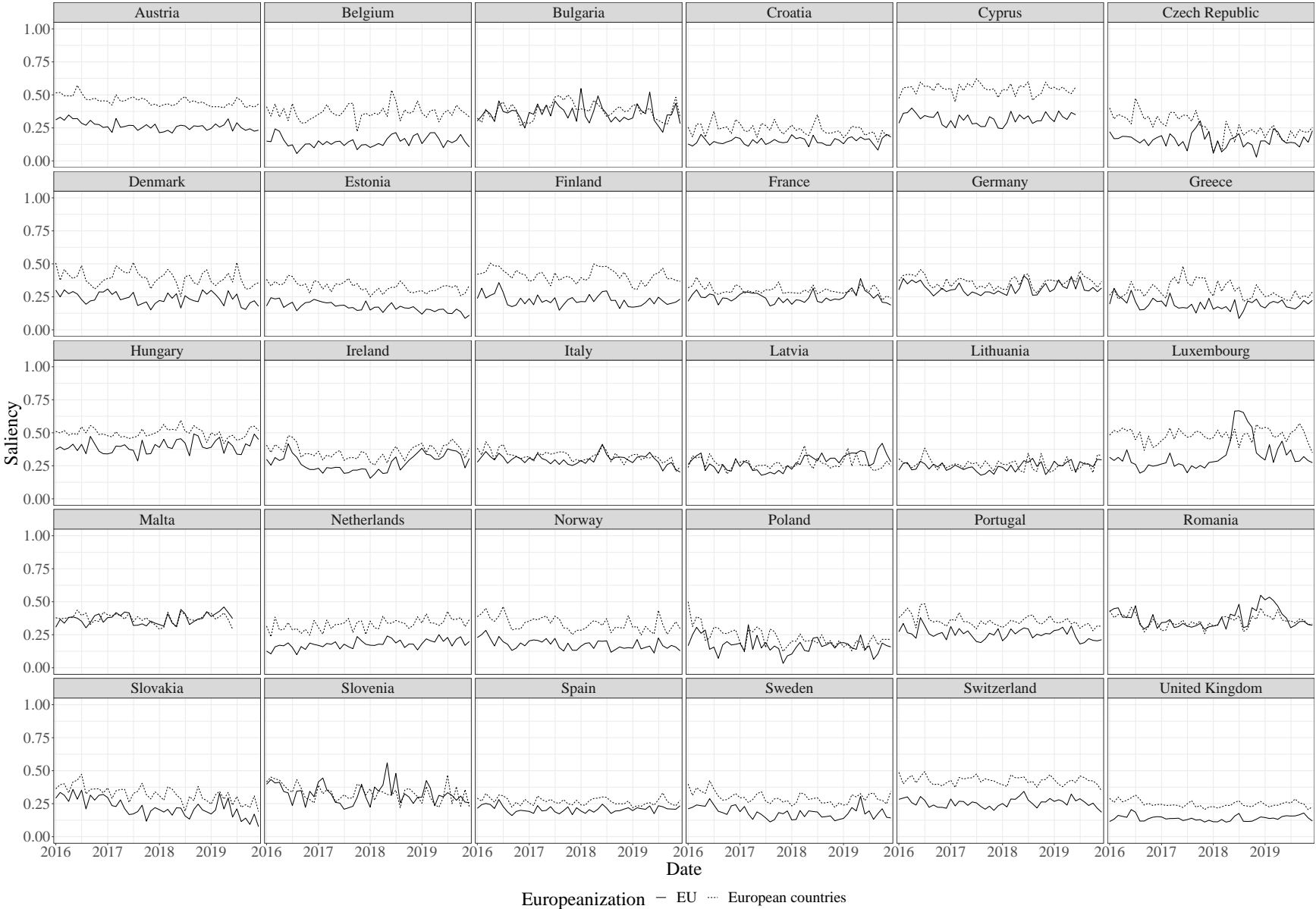
Figure 5.3: Saliency: Europeanized Economic Issues



Turning to security issues in Figure 5.4 a rather similar pattern to that of economic issues appears. Again, the share of public discourse between member states is on average higher than Europeanized public discourse, although the difference is more pronounced in some countries. Because the correlation coefficient between economic and security issues in public discourse is about 0.13, there is some general tendency to refer to the European component for both issues separately. This tendency finds empirical support both through the overall level of Europeanization and through the relative differences between the two parts of the European component within each public discourse in the respective countries. Additionally, the descriptive analyses provide evidence for the validity of using these measures as an operationalization of the relevant concepts. As for the overall saliency of the European component in public discourse and the saliency of the European component on economic issues, increases of Europeanization at specific EU-related events can be found, demonstrating that these events influenced both economic and security issues.

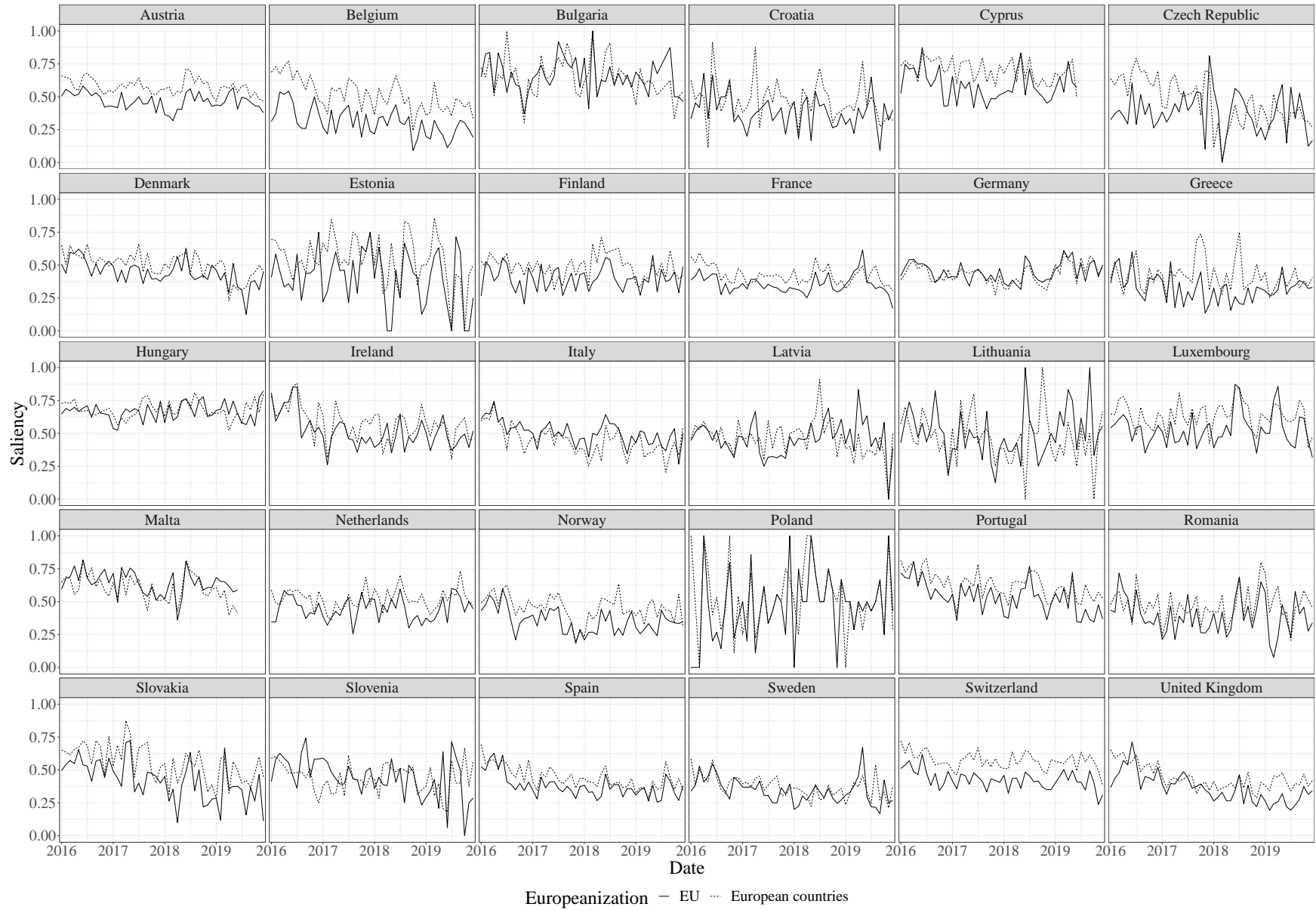
This general tendency of Europeanized public discourse, however, seems to be restricted to economic and security discourse. When examining Figure 5.5 stark differences with regard to Europeanized public discourse compared to the other two issues are evident. In general, the level of Europeanization is substantially higher for migration issues (the volatility is related to the low share of overall articles devoted to migration issues in public discourse compared to the other two issues), in terms of both public discourse between member states and the Europeanization of public discourse. Further, the saliency between public discourse between member states and Europeanized public discourse only differs substantially in Austria and Switzerland. The results further indicate that migration as an issue, differs from the other two issues in that there are declining trends of Europeanization in some countries on migration. Here, Belgium, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Italy, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland, in particular, stand out.

Figure 5.4: Saliency: Europeanized Security Issues



Although migration is considered a new, prominent political conflict in all European countries, it differs in key ways from other political issues, such that public discourse considers this issue differently throughout the 2016–2019 period. Thus, in contrast to the other two issues, migration has been considered less as a European issue when pressing events such as the 2015 migration crisis fade. These results have two implications with regard to public discourse in the European countries. First, they show that public discourse is not uniform across all issues but varies by issue. Second, there are substantial differences with regard to the saliency of the European component within single countries. Some countries that show relatively low levels of Europeanization for economic and security issues show high levels of Europeanization on migration issues. In conclusion, differences can be found between countries, within countries over time, and between issues. Thus, it is highly unreasonable to expect that public discourse plainly follows some mechanic logic of media reporting, but is actually influenced by some exogenous factors, such as specific events or political parties shaping public discourse.

Figure 5.5: Saliency: Europeanized Migration Issues



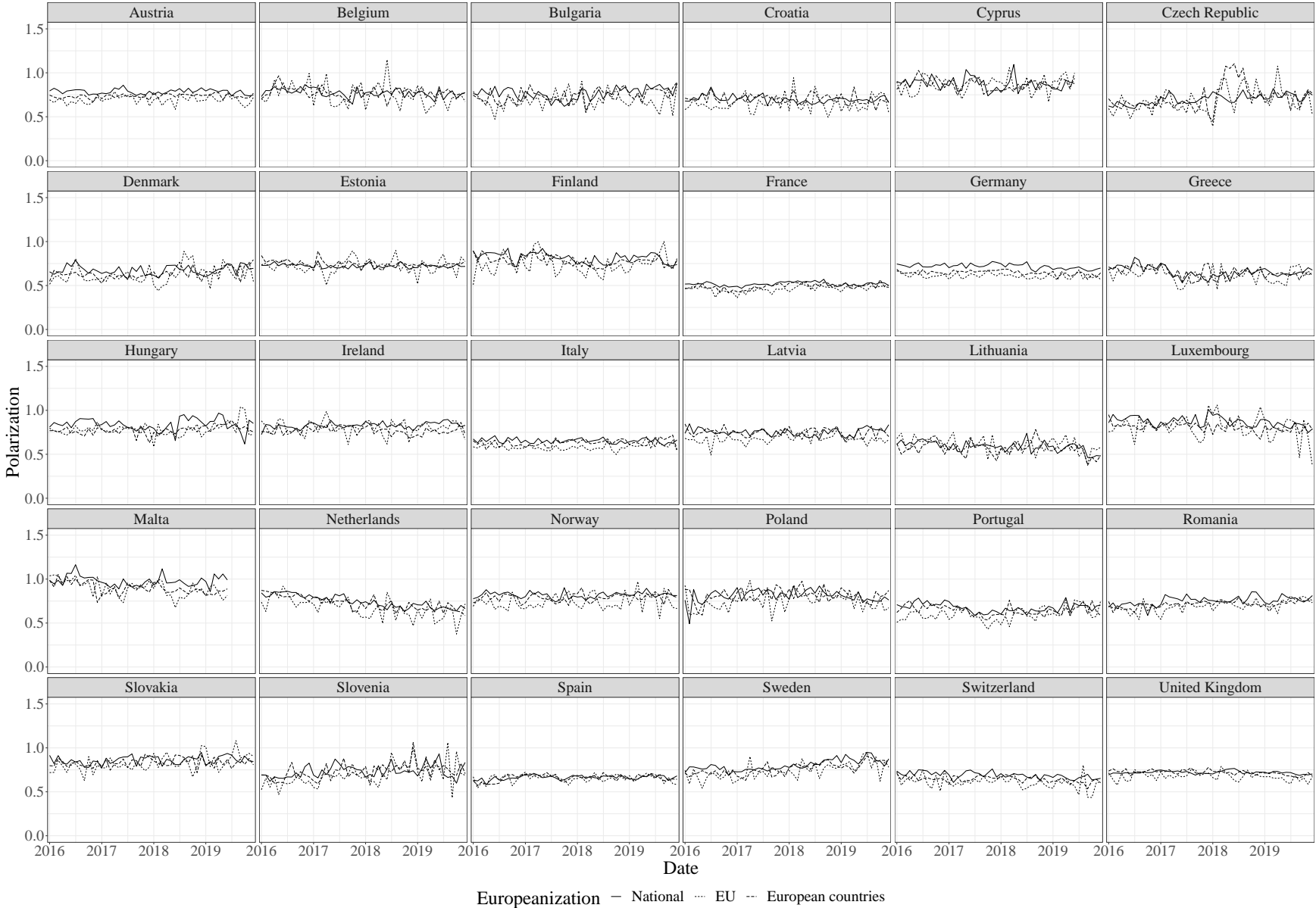
5.3 Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse

The second aspect of public discourse analyzed in this dissertation project is the polarization of public discourse. Figure 5.6 visualizes the polarization of public discourse in the 30 European countries included in the sample, separated by national public discourse, Europeanized public discourse, and public discourse between member states. The measure of national public discourse is considered a baseline measure of political conflict in public discourse against which the other two types of public discourse are contrasted. I only consider the overall pattern of polarization here, since the pattern separated by the three issues of interest – economic, security and migration issues – show mostly the same pattern.²

The results in Figure 5.6 show that Europeanized public discourse is on average, less polarized than national public discourse; however, this polarization has substantially more variation over time. This indicates that Europeanized public discourse can sometimes become polarized. This conclusion is supported through a consideration of public discourse between member states. Here the pattern of polarization follows the polarization of national public discourse more closely, indicating that this public discourse mostly follows the same logic as national public discourse does.

²The results by issues can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 5.6: Polarization of public discourse

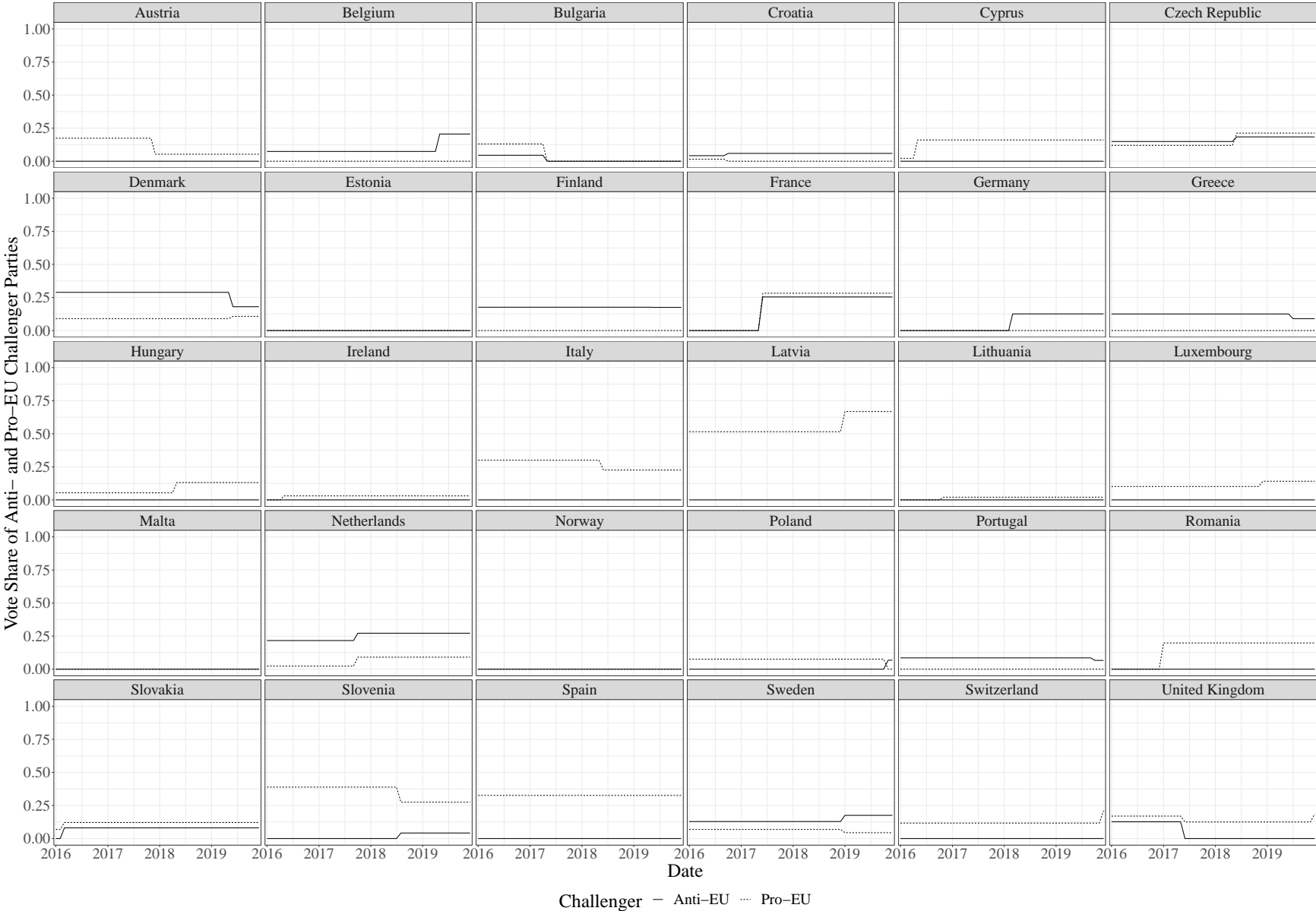


In the last three sections I have described the descriptive results of public discourse on economic, security, and migration issues in 30 European countries. The results show that there are substantial differences with regard to the Europeanization of public discourse between countries, over time, and between issues; comparing Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states also reveals differences. As there is no linear trend toward more Europeanization of public discourse, it is reasonable to assume that changes in Europeanization might be driven by political factors. In the following sections, I provide descriptive results on the main explanatory factors for the Europeanization of public discourse – namely, the composition of mainstream and challenger political parties in the respective European countries as well as public discourse on the supranational European level.

5.4 Mainstream Political Parties and Their Challengers in Europe

The most important explanatory variable in my theoretical model is the composition of mainstream political parties and their challengers in particular national parliamentary arenas. This follows my general assumption that public discourse is mainly driven by the preferences and strategies of political parties. Increasing shares of political challengers with strong preferences on European integration have an impact on both the saliency of Europeanized public discourse and its level of polarization. Additionally, the share of mainstream opposition parties in the parliamentary arena should influence the saliency of the European component since pressures from political challengers might force mainstream parties to more frequently involve Europe in public discourse even though they often aim to keep Europe out of public discourse.

Figure 5.7: Pro- and Anti-EU Challenger Parties in Europe



Figures 5.7 and 5.8 visualize the vote shares of distinctly pro- and anti-EU challenger parties as well as the share of mainstream opposition parties in the parliamentary arenas of the 30 European countries covered in the analysis for this dissertation. In accordance with my definition of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties as parties that must not have been part of any national government before 2010 and have strong preferences on European integration according to the Chapel-Hill Expert Survey, a large variety in the strength of pro- and anti-EU challengers among European countries can be observed. On average, pro-EU challenger parties appear to be stronger than anti-EU challenger parties in Europe.

On average, pro-EU challenger parties attain about 11% of the vote, and anti-EU challenger parties receive 6%. There are, however, large differences between countries. In a non-negligible share of the countries considered in my sample, there are almost no challenger parties with strong preferences towards European integration in the parliamentary arenas. These countries include Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, and Poland. As parties that have taken part in any government before 2010 are not considered challenger parties according to my definition, I exclude some parties from being challenger parties even though they might be included in other definitions of challenger parties (e.g., the FPÖ in Austria). For very volatile party systems, using this definition might imply estimating a comparably high level of challenger parties that might even currently be part or leading a government coalition, since the parties may not have existed before 2010. Nevertheless, this does not present a weakness of the definition, but actually shows that the definition considers the specifics of the very different party systems throughout Europe.

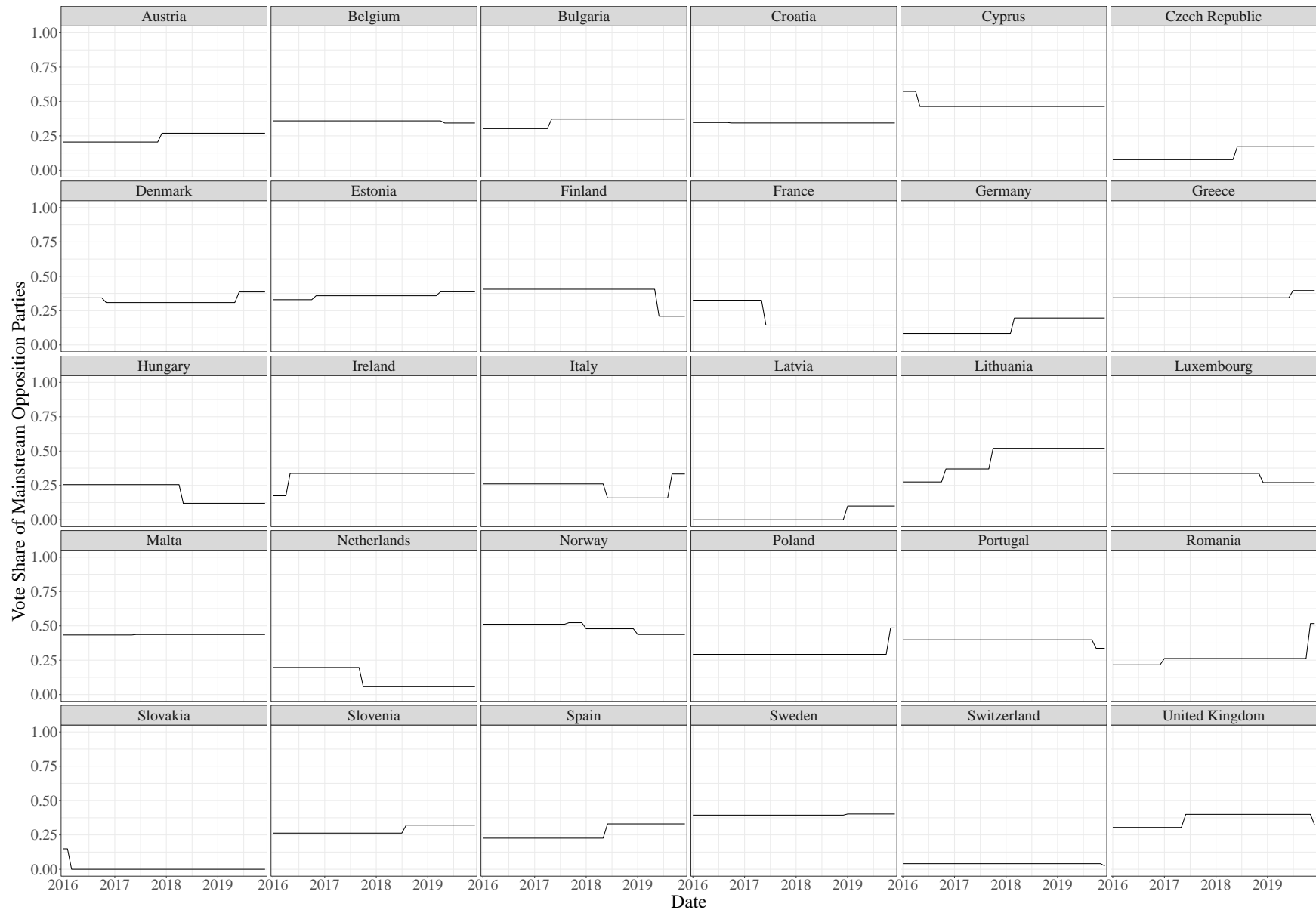
When considering the strength of anti- and pro-EU challenger parties in specific countries, the strongest anti-EU challengers can mostly be found in western European countries such as Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, but some can also be found in Eastern European countries such as the Czech Republic. Challenger parties with strong anti-EU positions are not as strong in eastern European countries as challenger parties do

not articulate as strong anti-EU positions such as leaving the EU as western European challenger parties might. Even though there are somewhat strong challenger parties in some countries such as Jobbik in Hungary, they often do not take strong positions against European integration, often because the new eastern European EU member states are heavily dependent on European subsidies with political parties often only employing some forms of soft Euroscepticism (Hloušek and Kaniok 2020).

Pro-EU challenger parties are present in several European countries, with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain having the strongest pro-EU challenger parties. Latvia represents a special case as pro-EU populist challenger parties are extremely successful in national elections. The individual parties, however, often dissolve quite quickly. To summarize, the results show that pro-EU challenger parties are on average stronger than anti-EU challenger parties. Thus, Europhile and Euroskeptic parties have a non-negligible share in the parliamentary arenas in several national political spheres. This implies that pro- and anti-EU challenger parties are able to significantly share public discourse in European countries.

Turning to the share of mainstream opposition parties in Figure 5.8, considerable differences between the 30 European countries considered can be seen. First and foremost, the share of main stream opposition parties is based on their official participation in government coalitions; thus, parties which might temporarily support minority governments are classified as opposition parties according to this definition. This explains why the vote share of mainstream opposition parties exceeds 50% in some countries. Lithuania, Belgium and Romania represent special cases in some months, as some coalition government broke apart but partially stayed in power in some countries or were taken over by caretakers in others. I have decided to keep these temporary changes in the analyses, as they should have considerable impact on public discourse in these countries during these times.

Figure 5.8: Mainstream Opposition Parties in Europe



When considering individual countries, it is evident that the mainstream opposition in some countries barely exists. Hungary, France, the Netherlands, Latvia, Slovakia and Switzerland stand out in particular. In these countries, mainstream opposition parties are far from able to strongly influence public discourse but must compete with strong challenger parties in public discourse. Latvia and Slovakia have almost no mainstream opposition because most mainstream opposition parties have actually dissolved in the recent years due to the volatility of these party systems. Germany and Switzerland show very low levels of mainstream opposition for entirely different reasons. In both countries, there were over-large government coalitions in power, which, by implication, reduce the share of mainstream opposition parties. Nevertheless, the implications of the weakness of mainstream opposition parties on public discourse should be the same in these countries.

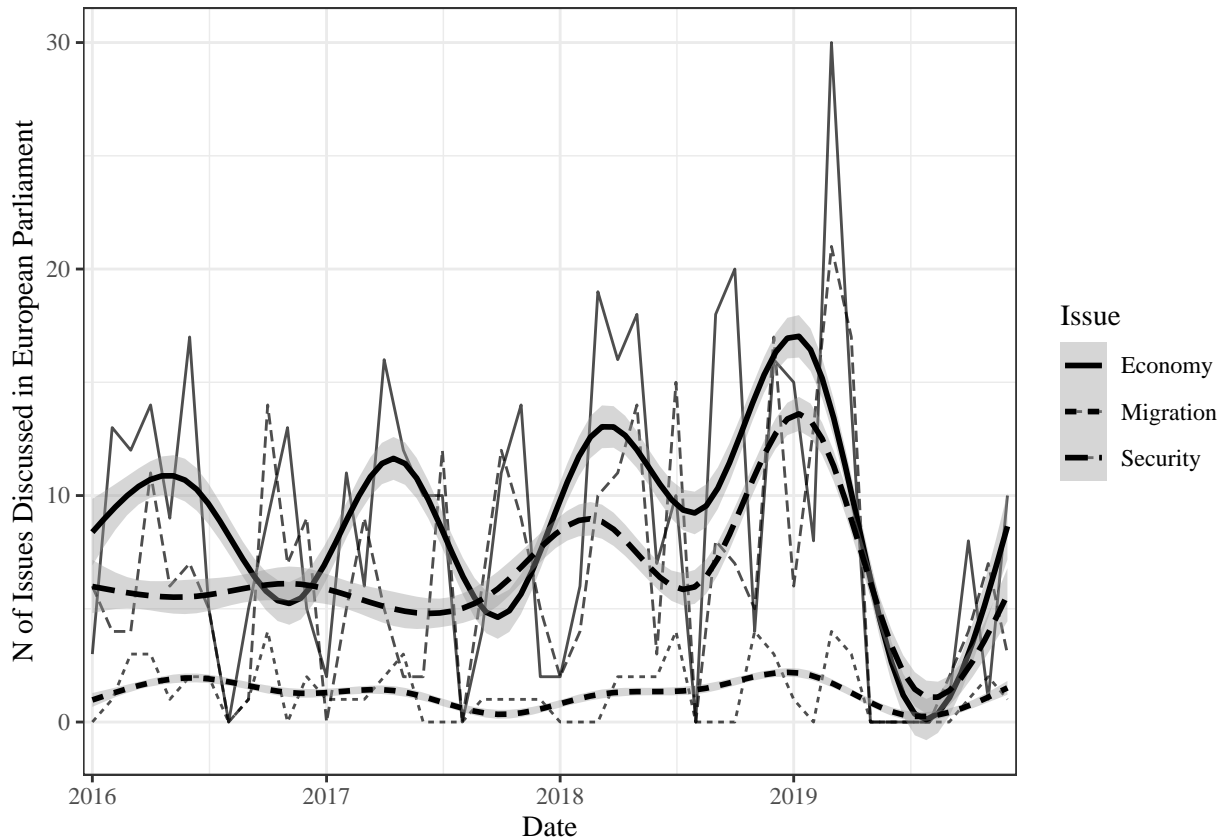
In sum, the descriptive results on the strength of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties and of mainstream opposition parties indicate substantial differences between the 30 European countries covered in my dissertation project. Most significantly, pro- and anti-EU challenger parties take considerable shares in the parliamentary arenas of several, but not all, national political spheres. Thus, mainstream opposition parties are somewhat strong in many European countries and may influence public discourse – especially with regard to the Europeanization of public discourse – in national political spheres. For other countries, however, mainstream opposition parties have a rather small share in the parliamentary arenas, implying differences in Europeanized public discourse in these countries.

5.5 Public Discourse on the European Level

Finally, public discourse on the European level should play a considerable role in whether and how public discourse is Europeanized. Provided that public discourse on the European level, which, according to my definition, only includes public discourse from the European Parliament should trigger the Europeanization of political issues in national public discourses.

Figure 5.9 shows the descriptive results of public discourse on the European level concerning economic, migration and security issues, including a smoothing spline indicating the saliency of the issues over time.

Figure 5.9: Public Discourse on the European Level



Note: The smoothing splines are calculated using GAM.

The results show that economic and security issues dominate public discourse on the European level. In the European Parliament economic issues are discussed up to 10 times more often than migration-related issues, which are seldom discussed in general. In contrast to public discourse based on media reporting – as in the national public spheres – public discourse on the European level certainly follows the institutional logic of the European Parliament. This needs to be taken into account when interpreting these results.

The European Parliament does not meet in plenary session every month, which implies that public discourse on the European level might not emphasize political issues as regularly as

media reporting on public discourse does. However, this, is not conceptually problematic as the European level lacks clearly specified electoral or media arenas. Given the underdevelopment of the European public sphere, it is necessary to consider the institutional restrictions of public discourse in this arena. In accordance with the institutional rules of the European Parliament, it is apparent that economic issues follow a cyclical pattern, as the European Commission reports on economic developments in the EU at the beginning of each year. Furthermore, the increase of saliency in all issues in early 2019 (as well as the sharp decrease afterwards) can be attributed to the end of a legislative term and the beginning of the election campaign for the European elections in May 2019. As such, no plenary sessions could take place shortly before the election and it was important for all European actors to consider as many issues as possible in the last plenary sessions before the electoral break.

Setting aside the institutional restrictions of public discourse on the European level, the results still indicate that economic and security issues are far more salient on the European level compared to migration issues, with economic issues clearly being the most important. Public discourse on the European level increased substantially before the electoral break making it more likely that public discourse on the European level actually influences the Europeanization of public discourse in national public spheres.

In sum, in this chapter, I first provided descriptive results on the Europeanization of public discourse in 30 European countries with regard to economic, security, and migration issues. The results on the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse indicate substantial differences between countries, over time, between issues, and when comparing Europeanized public discourse with public discourse between member states. In the following chapter, I examine whether and how these differences might be attributed to the preferences and strategies of mainstream opposition and challenger parties, specific events, or public discourse on the European level, using different multivariate analyses techniques.

Chapter 6

Conditions for Europeanized Public Discourse

Before I examine the determinants of public discourse explaining the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse, I first turn to the structure of public discourse in the 30 European countries considered in this dissertation project. Using correlation analyses, I examine which issues are associated with each other in public discourse and whether some political issues are more strongly associated with Europeanization or other European countries. Since I analyze public discourse on a monthly level, the indicators measure the share of articles in public discourse devoted to specific political issues, the EU or other European countries. Additionally, I examine whether and how the composition of political parties is associated with increased Europeanization of public discourse.

After examining the overall structure of public discourse in Europe, I explore the determinants of Europeanized public discourse. Here, I test whether and how political parties shape public discourse in the European multi-level system and whether this influence is conditional on the dynamics in the political systems, certain events, political issues or public discourse on the European level. I first address the saliency of Europeanized public discourse and turn to

public discourse between member states afterward.¹ After analyzing the general tendency to consider the European component in public discourse, I examine the sentiment and polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Here, I focus only on Europeanized public discourse and examine whether and how the dynamics of mainstream and challenger parties influence how public discourse is shaped when it is actually being Europeanized. For the analyses on the polarization of public discourse, I thus only consider newspaper articles actually related to *Europe* to avoid estimating four-way interactions.

6.1 Structure of Public Discourse

To examine the structure of public discourse in European countries, I first make use of Pearson's r correlation analyses between each of the three political issues considered in my analysis and the Europeanization of public discourse for each country separately. Figure 6.1 shows how economy, security, and migration issues are associated in the public discourses of the 30 European countries covered in this analysis.

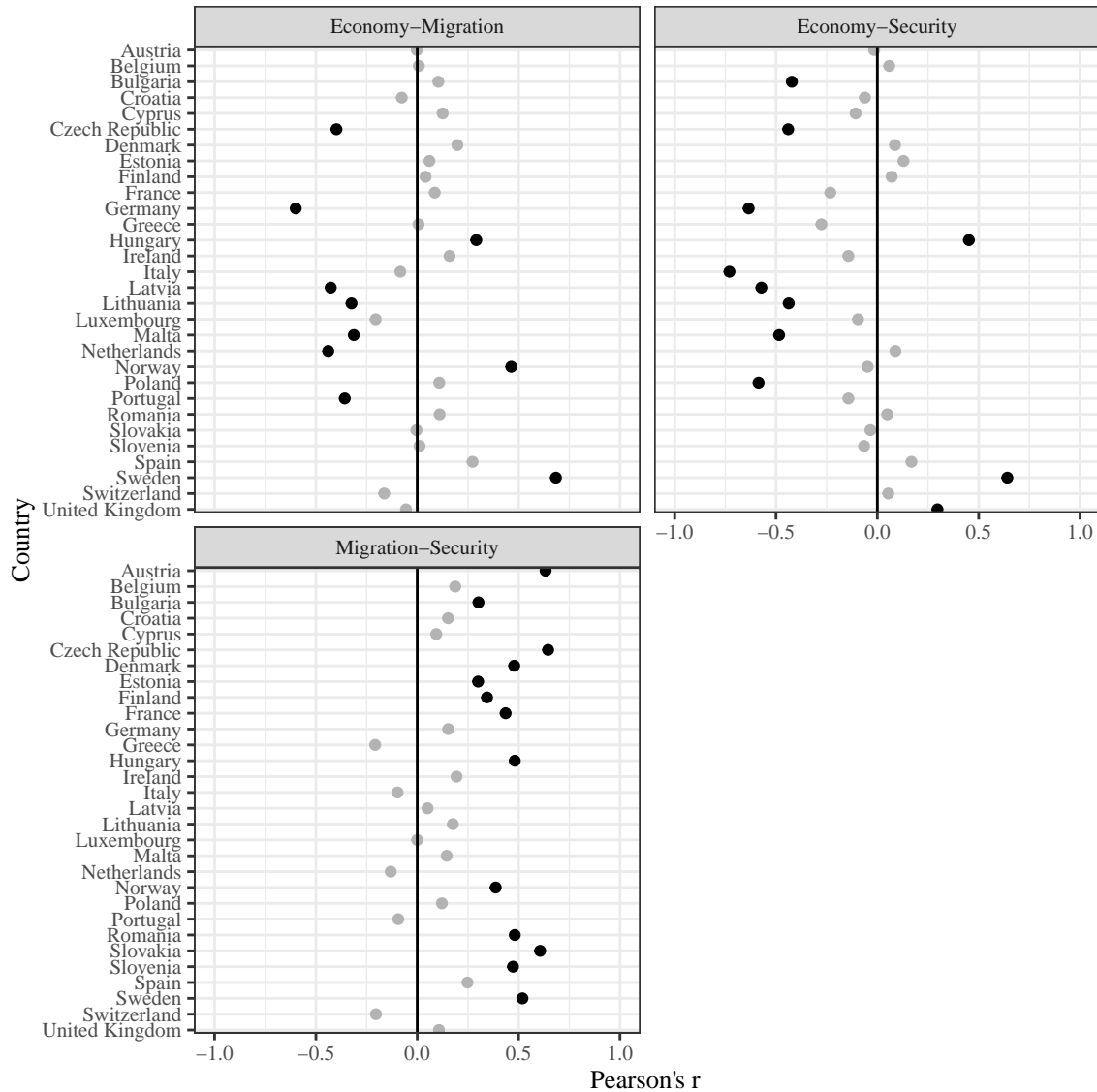
Turning to the upper left panel first, it seems that economic and migration issues are only weakly associated with each other in public discourse. Only in Sweden, Norway and Hungary is there a positive association between the share of articles related to economic issues and the share of articles related to migration issues. In many countries, the association is actually negative or insignificant altogether. This implies that economic and migration issues are not jointly discussed in most European countries making them two distinct issues of public discourse.

The upper right panel shows the association between economy and security issues. As before, these issues are not associated with each other in most public discourses. Only in Sweden, Hungary and the United Kingdom do these issues seem to be jointly discussed in public

¹In contrast to the models on Europeanized public discourse, I not only make use two level random-effects models, but also take into account the dyadic relations between individual member states.

discourse. In eight countries, the association between the two issues is actually significantly negative, indicating that economy and security issues alternate in public discourse rather than going together.

Figure 6.1: Correlations in Public Discourse - Issues

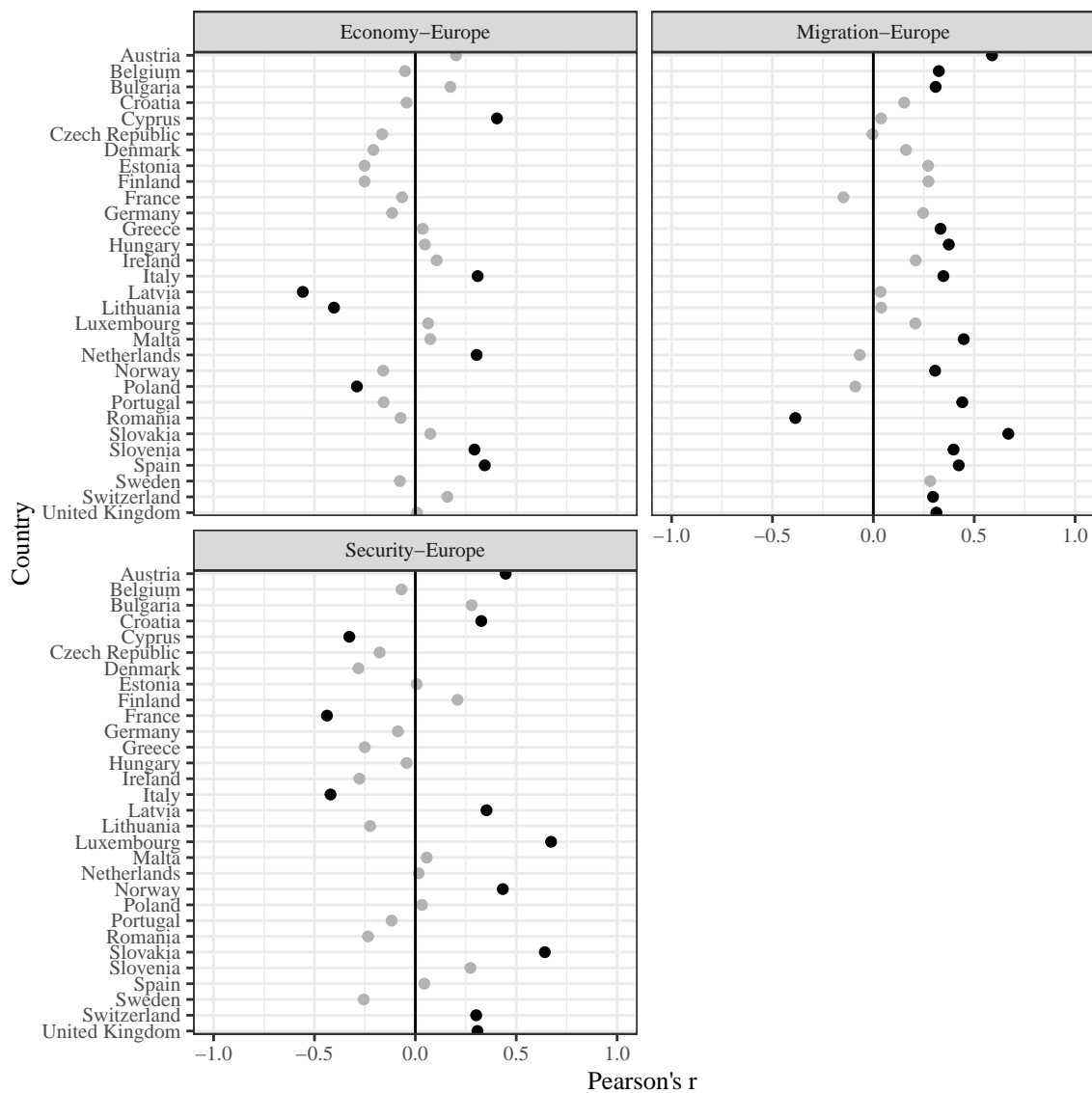


Note: Black points indicate significant correlation at the 95 % confidence level.

Concerning migration and security issues in the lower panel, there are actually strong associations in almost half of the countries considered. Migration and security issues are discussed together in public discourse, providing empirical support for the assumption that migration

is often considered a security concern in many European countries (Adamson 2006; Huysmans 2000). To summarize, the results indicate that economic and security issues are being discussed independently of each other. Only migration and security issues seem to be associated in public discourse in many European countries, providing evidence on how these issues are perceived as going hand in hand in many public discourses – at least between 2016 and 2019.

Figure 6.2: Correlations in Public Discourse - Europeanization



Note: Black points indicate significant correlation at the 95 % confidence level.

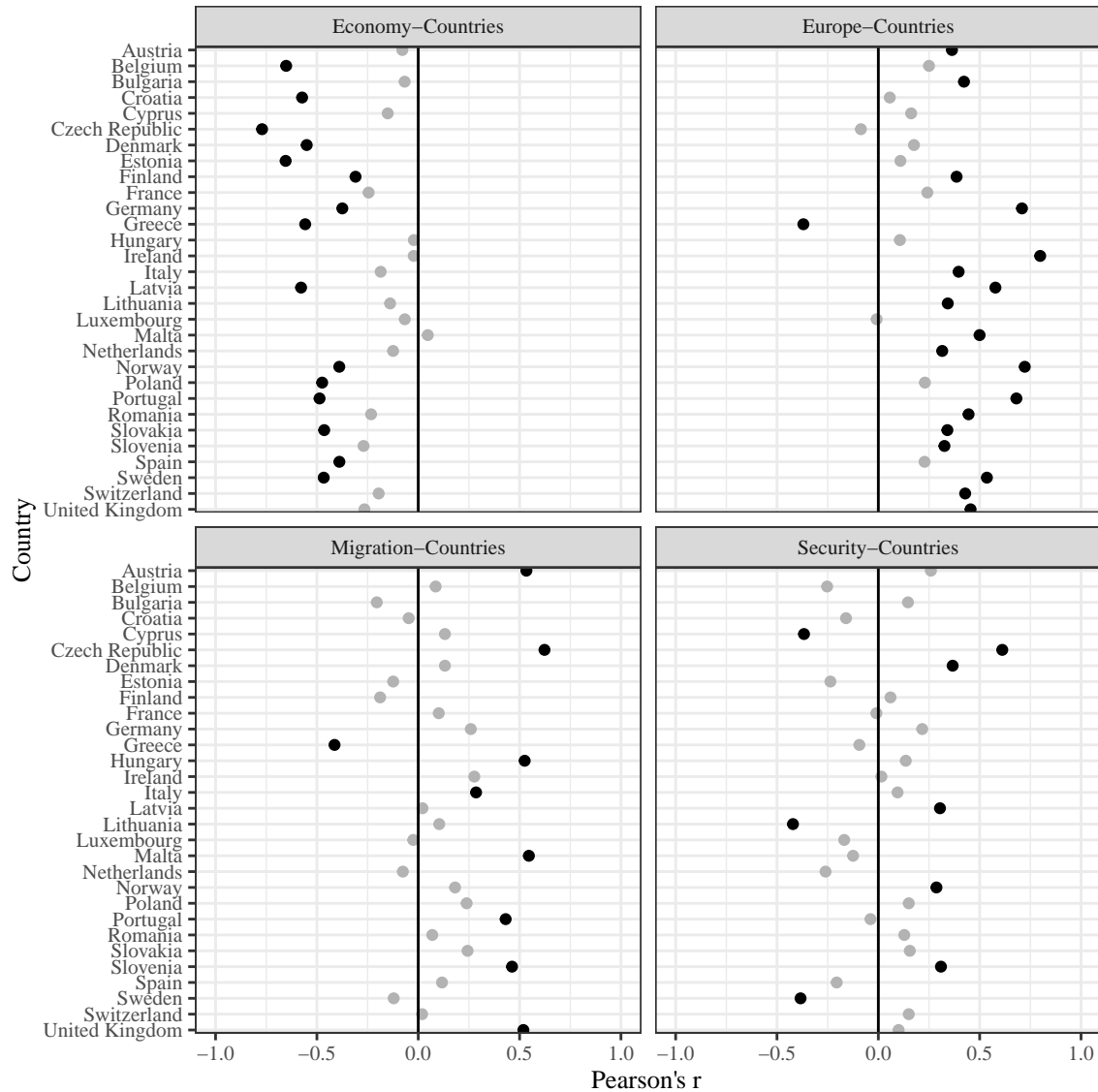
Figure 6.2 considers Europeanized public discourse as a relevant part of the structure of public discourse. In the upper left panel, economic issues and Europeanized public discourse are only found to be correlated (both negatively and positively) in a few countries. For most European countries, increased discussion of economic issues is unrelated to increased Europeanized public discourse. The same goes, more or less, for security-related issues. In the lower left panel, security issues are only found to be positively associated with Europeanized public discourse in eight European countries. In a large majority of countries, these two concepts are not strongly associated. Concerning migration issues, there is a different picture. The results in the upper right panel indicate that migration and Europeanized public discourse are positively associated in 14 European countries. This supports my theoretical expectations, as migration is perceived as an inherently European issue by many political elites on both the national and the European level (Geddes and Scholten 2016). Due to freedom of movement, migrants are able to move between all EU member states once they reach the soil of one member state of the EU.

Next, I examine whether the political issues and Europeanized public discourse are associated with public discourse between member states in the European countries considered in my analysis. The results in Figure 6.3 indicate that public discourse between member states is negatively associated with economic issues and positively associated with Europeanized public discourse. In half of the countries considered economic issues are not often discussed when taking into consideration other European countries.

Europeanized public discourse and public discourse between member states are positively correlated in a majority of the countries considered. As shown in Chapter 5, the two concepts are rather highly correlated on the aggregate level. The results by country confirm this association on the individual country level. They indicate that accounting for Europeanization often goes along with referring to other European countries. This is very reasonable given the institutional set-up of the EU. Since all member states are represented in the European

Council, public discourse takes into account other European countries when debating initiatives on the European level. These results thus serve as a validation of the approach used in this dissertation project.

Figure 6.3: Correlations in Public Discourse - Between member states



Note: Black points indicate significant correlation at the 95 % confidence level.

In the lower two panels of Figure 6.3, it can be seen that migration and security issues are not strongly related to public discourse between member states in most countries, with some notable exceptions. Concerning migration issues public discourse in Greece is mostly

concerned with national issues, which is very reasonable given that Greece has directly experienced strong migrant flows in recent years. Interestingly, in Hungary, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Austria, there are positive associations between both concepts although these countries are not located at the periphery of the EU. What these countries have in common, however, is that migration is highly salient in elite discourse in these countries. Challenger parties in these countries have (successfully) politicized migration (Green-Pedersen and Otjes 2019). As migration to their borders is often not strongly or directly experienced by these countries, public discourse seems to point to other countries – in particular Italy as shown in Figure 5.2. Although these descriptive analyses do not take into account whether political parties play a major role in the different structures of public discourse throughout Europe, these results nevertheless highlight that there are substantial differences concerning the overall structure of public discourse.

Figure 6.4 provides additional evidence for whether the composition of mainstream and challenger parties in the political system is associated with differences in the structure of public discourse. Since the correlation analyses do not take into account conditional effects between challenger and mainstream parties in the political system, which are essential in understanding the political influence on public discourse, the correlations should be interpreted cautiously. For example, a negative correlation between anti-EU challengers and the saliency of Europeanized public discourse ($r = -0.31$) could be interpreted in various ways: First, with stronger anti-EU challengers there might actually be less Europeanized public discourse due to the specific preferences of the challenger. It is also possible, however, that the mainstream parties aim to build a wall of silence, trying to more forcefully keep Europe out of public discourse when anti-EU challengers become more powerful.

However, without taking into account the other political parties using multivariate analyses with interaction effects, it is not possible to infer the influence of political parties on public discourse. What can nevertheless be inferred from Figure 6.4 is that there is Europeanized

variation between increasing shares of (anti- and pro-EU) challengers and issues debated in public discourse. Although the coefficients are not very strong and often do not reach the conventional levels of significance (also due to the comparably low number of cases and the high level of variation between countries), the composition of the political system seems to matter with regard to both the Europeanization of public discourse and political issues.

Figure 6.4: Correlation Matrix of Public Discourse

	% Challenger	% Anti-EU	% Pro-EU	% MS Opposition	Europe	Countries	Migration	Economy	Security
% Challenger	1.00								
% Anti-EU	0.46	1.00							
% Pro-EU	0.82	0.12	1.00						
% MS Opposition	-0.48	-0.13	-0.46	1.00					
Europe	-0.01	-0.31	-0.19	-0.06	1.00				
Countries	-0.16	-0.04	-0.16	0.02	0.32	1.00			
Migration	0.06	0.20	-0.05	-0.17	0.18	0.25	1.00		
Economy	0.03	0.04	0.01	-0.18	0.00	-0.19	0.28	1.00	
Security	-0.16	-0.12	-0.11	0.39	0.08	-0.09	0.21	-0.07	1.00

Note: *X* indicates no significant correlation at the 95 % confidence level.

6.2 Determinants of the Saliency of Europeanized Public Discourse

In this section, I examine the conditions that shape the saliency of Europeanized public discourse in the EU member states between 2016 and 2019. In total, 1427 country-months are covered in the analysis, thus in 19 country-months, there is no data on public discourse in some countries.² Table 6.1 shows the coefficients for varying Europeanized public discourse on a monthly level. Thus, the interpretation of the coefficient follows the notion that an one-point increase in the independent variable leads to an increase from 0 to 100% in the share of Europeanized public discourse in a given month. In the first model, I only consider the main effects of the composition of the party system as well as specific events and issues considered in public discourse. Possible interaction effects between the composition of the party system and events and certain issues are examined in a subsequent step, as the interaction is visualized to increase comprehension of the conditional effects (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006).

With regard to the share of challenger parties with strong preferences toward European integration, an increasing share of challenger parties seems to be associated with an increased saliency of Europeanized public discourse. This association is actually fairly substantial with a 50% increase in challenger parties in the political system increasing Europeanized public discourse by about 5%. These empirical results are in line with Hypothesis 1 on the saliency of Europeanized public discourse.

The results for mainstream opposition parties, however, contradict the expectations of Hypothesis 2. Contrary to the assumption that mainstream opposition mainly try to bring “Europe” into public discourse when they have low levels of support, the results of this analysis indicate that Europeanized public discourse is associated with larger shares of main-

²As mentioned in Chapter 2, the data on Malta and Cyprus is missing for 6 months each in 2019. Furthermore, there is no data available for one month in Bulgaria.

Table 6.1: Regression Results: Europeanization of Public Discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Europeanization
Share Challengers	0.101*** (0.017)
Share MS-Opposition	0.081*** (0.022)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.0003 (0.001)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.001 (0.003)
EU public discourse: Security	−0.0005 (0.001)
Economic issues	0.090*** (0.026)
Security issues	0.142*** (0.025)
Migration issues	0.215*** (0.039)
Other member states	0.308*** (0.028)
National election campaign	−0.001 (0.004)
EP election campaign	0.059*** (0.012)
EU Summits	0.011 (0.006)
EU member state	0.035 (0.047)
East	0.060* (0.025)
Share Unemployment	0.002 (0.001)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	−0.002 (0.002)
N Homicides	0.0000 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	0.001 (0.001)
Constant	−0.111* (0.055)
Observations	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,523.645
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−5,003.289
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−4,887.496

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

stream opposition parties in the parliamentary arena. One reason for this diverging result might be that mainstream opposition parties have actually resigned from the permissive consensus of keeping European integration out of public discourse, given the successes of challenger parties in politicizing European integration. However, I am not able to test this alternative explanation through the available data and thus discuss this issue further in the concluding chapter.

When considering public discourse on the European level – measured according to issues debated in the European Parliament no statistically significant relationship can be determined. This holds for all three issues examined in this dissertation project. Debates on the European level do not seem to inform public discourse in the member states, at least with regard to the level of Europeanization. Thus, Hypothesis 5a is not supported by the results.

Taking into account the specific issues - economic, security, and migration issues - an interesting pattern can be observed. For each of the issues, the saliency of Europeanized public discourse actually increases significantly. The effect is strongest for migration issues, followed by security and economic issues. To fully comprehend this association, the structure of the data and thus the interpretation of the coefficients must be reconsidered.³

Given that the analysis takes place on the country-month level, the interpretation of the results on the three issues is as follows: In country-months where the saliency of one of the issues increased, the share of Europeanized public discourse increased. This implies that when economic, security and migration issues are more important in public discourse, these issues are associated with increased Europeanization. Since the effect holds for all issues considered in my dissertation project, one might cautiously conclude that increased attention

³I have examined the Europeanization of issue specific public discourses in Appendix D. In these analyses, I subsetting public discourse on either economic, security or migration issues. The main effects considering challenger parties, public discourse on the European level and specific events hold for public discourse on economic issues. However, I do not expect splitting public discourse by issues is reasonable given that the content being debated is conditional on the maximal capacity of content debated in public discourse. I thus refrain from subsetting public discourse by issues in the following parts of the analysis on the conditions for Europeanized public discourse.

to individual issues comes along with an increased attention to the European component of the respective issue. Thus, when an issue is covered more extensively, all different aspects are considered – including its Europeanization. However, it is also conceivable that increased Europeanized public discourse in the previous month might trigger the association of economic, security and migration issues with Europeanized public discourse in the current month.

To rule out this possibility, I include the lagged share of Europeanized public discourse as additional independent variable in Table E.1 in Appendix E. Including the lagged share of Europeanized public discourse does not significantly affect most of the results – only the coefficient of economic issues on Europeanized public discourse fails to reach the traditional levels of significance. When calculating the effect of Europeanized public discourse on the three issues (Appendix E, Table E.2), Europeanized public discourse is also found to impact economic, security and migration issues even when controlling for the other issues. This implies that increasingly Europeanized public discourse increases attention to the three issues covered in this dissertation project. Consequently, one can conclude that increased attention on security and migration issues are inherently associated with Europeanized public discourse.

Concerning economic issues, however, this association is not as clear. There seems to be increased attention to economic issues unrelated to Europeanized public discourse – when considering the level of Europeanized public discourse in the previous month. This is reasonable provided that economic issues, especially concerning economic recession and increased unemployment, are often strongly associated within a nation-state. This is apparently true, even in countries within the European multi-level system. Thus, the results indicate only partial support for Hypothesis 4a.

Next, I examine specific events expected to trigger or dampen Europeanized public discourse: national election campaigns, campaigns for the European elections, and EU summits. The

results indicate that national election campaigns are actually not associated with lower levels of Europeanized public discourse as expected in Hypothesis 3a. The same holds true for months during which EU summits take place. Both events do not seem to be associated with the Europeanization of public discourse. This implies that EU summits might not actually be highly relevant to the public. During election campaigns for the European Parliament, the association expected in Hypothesis 3a can be seen. During the three months before the European election, Europeanized public discourse increases by nearly 5% compared to non-campaign times. Thus, campaigns for the European election actually represent a special time in public discourse in the EU member states; such elections might no longer be second-order elections, as they may actually revolve around European politics.

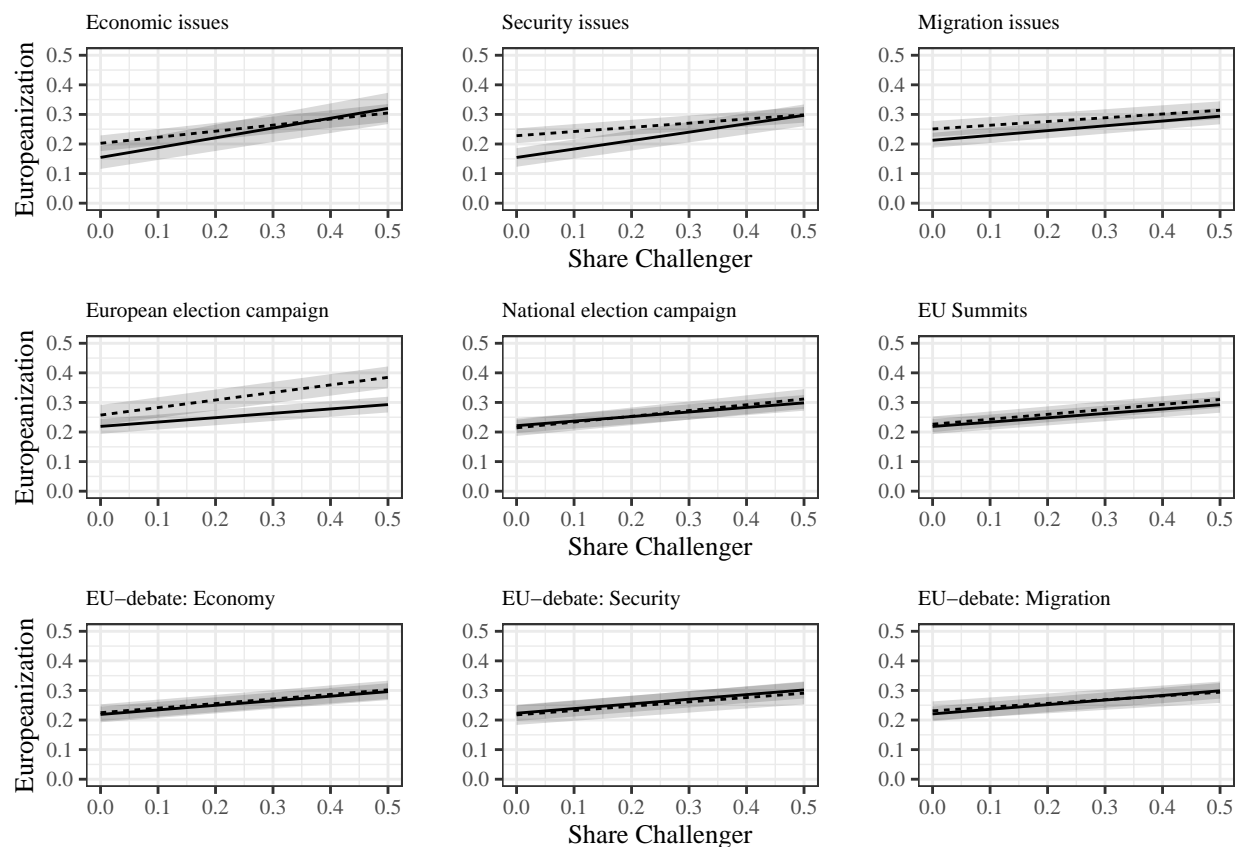
Lastly, when comparing different groups of member states, the results show two important findings. First, the officially non-member states Switzerland and Norway actually do not show lower levels of Europeanized public discourse compared to the EU member states. Thus, being a closest neighbor of the EU seems to make no significant difference with regard to Europeanized public discourse. Moreover, when comparing eastern and western member states, public discourse is found to be significantly more Europeanized in eastern European member states compared to their western counterparts.

I now examine whether the composition of the party system – especially considering the strength of challenger parties with strong preferences toward European integration and the strength of mainstream opposition – has a conditional impact on the influence of other components in public discourse. Following my assumption on the relevance of political parties in shaping Europeanized public discourse, their influence should be especially pronounced for issues and events that are associated with Europeanized public discourse and with public discourse on the European level. Figures 6.5 visualizes the results from the interaction effects between the strength of challenger parties and political issues, important events and public discourse on the European level⁴ (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006).

⁴Appendix F contains the full regression tables for both the interaction effects of the challenger and the

Turning to the interaction between challenger parties and issues, the results in the first row of Figure 6.5 indicate that public discourse for economic, security and migration issues has actually become more Europeanized with the increasing strength of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties. This effect is particularly pronounced when economic and security issues are not particular salient. When these issues are not salient, stronger challenger parties increase the Europeanization even more strongly compared to when economic and security issues are highly salient in public discourse. Thus, we find supportive evidence for Hypothesis 4b. An increasing share of challenger parties does entail differences in Europeanized public discourse with regard to the content of public discourse. This effect is particularly strong when issues do not currently dominate public discourse.

Figure 6.5: Interaction effects: Challenger parties and issues



Note: The dashed lines indicate either the time of the events or higher values on continuous scales, contrasting 10 % and 90 % quantiles between the two lines.

mainstream opposition parties.

Moving to specific events triggering (or in the case of national election campaigns hampering) Europeanized public discourse in the second row, the results show that during the campaign for the European elections, strong challenger parties are associated with significantly higher levels of Europeanization compared to non-election times. This effect, however, only appears with this event. For national election campaigns and EU summits, an increasing share of challenger parties does not matter with regard to the Europeanization of public discourse. Thus, we only find partial support for Hypothesis 3b.

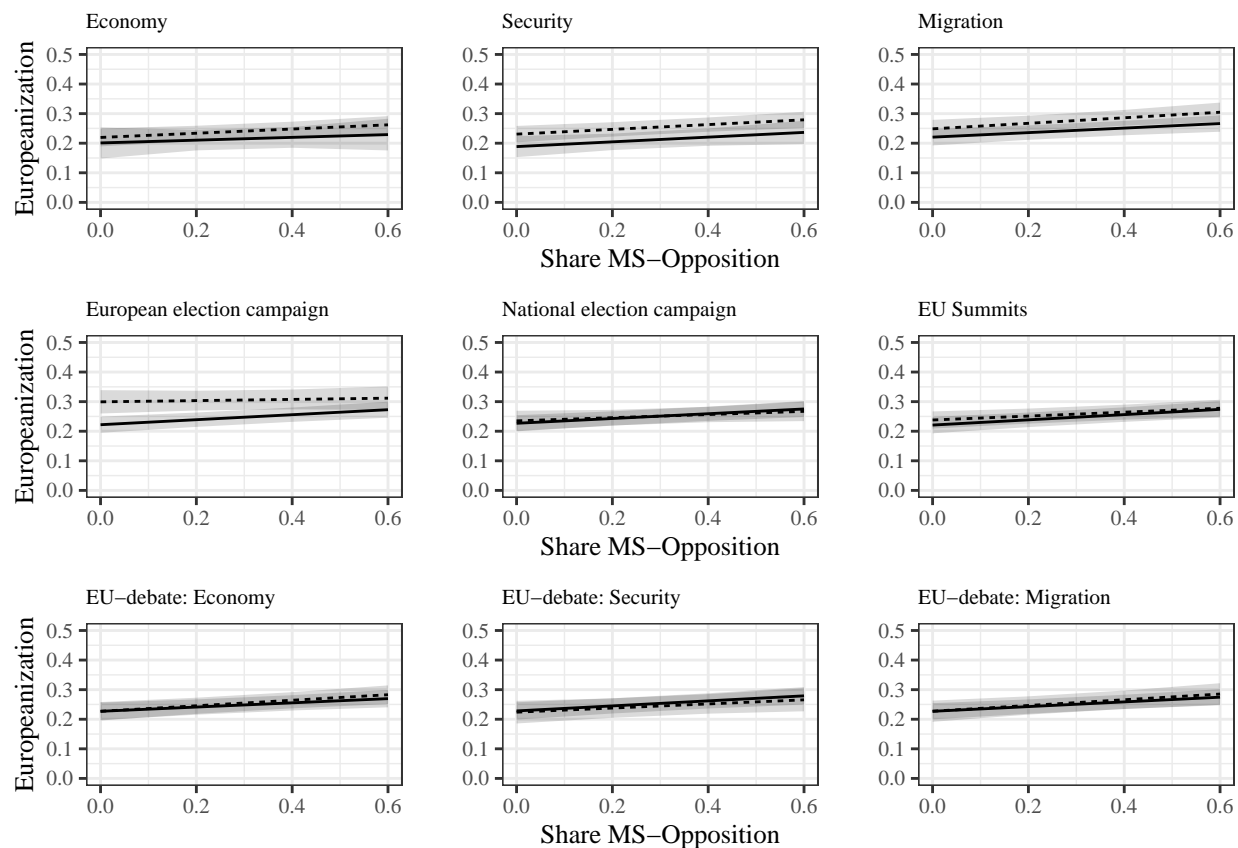
The results on the European election campaign are particularly interesting, as they provide first indications that the existence of strong challenger parties necessarily signifies that public discourse during this debate actually takes into account European issues. When there are no challenger parties in the political system, public discourse during the European election campaigns does not differ significantly from other time periods of public discourse. Finally, the strength of the challenger parties in the political system does not interact with increased public discourse on the European level. Irrespective of whether challengers are part of the political system, public discourse on the European level does not matter for Europeanized public discourse.

In the last part of the analyses on the saliency of Europeanized public discourse, I examine the relationship between mainstream opposition parties and the issues and events already examined above. Figure 6.6 visualizes these results. Concerning the political issues debated in public discourse, there are no statistically significant differences with regard to the strength of the mainstream opposition. The same applies to the issues debated on the European level. The share of political issues discussed seems to not depend on the strength of the mainstream opposition within the political system.

With specific events, there are no effects for national election campaigns and EU summits. Concerning the campaign period before the European elections, there are no effects for the campaign time itself, but during non-election campaign times, the saliency of Europeanized

public discourse increases with as the strength of the mainstream opposition increases. This again countervails my assumptions on the role of the mainstream opposition on the Europeanization of public discourse, but is in line with the results identified above. Mainstream opposition parties seem to emphasize the Europeanization of public discourse just as challenger parties with increasing strength in the political system do (at least during the time span considered). It thus seems that considering European issues in public discourse has increasingly been identified as a winning strategy for any party in the opposition with mainstream opposition parties moving away from the permissive consensus, hoping to hold off the challenger parties. Nevertheless, whether the same strategy will be applied to the polarization of Europeanized public discourse must still be examined.

Figure 6.6: Interaction effects: Mainstream Opposition and events



Note: The dashed lines indicate either the time of the events or higher values on continuous scales, contrasting 10 % and 90 % quantiles between the two lines.

6.3 Determinants of the Saliency of Public Discourse Between Member States

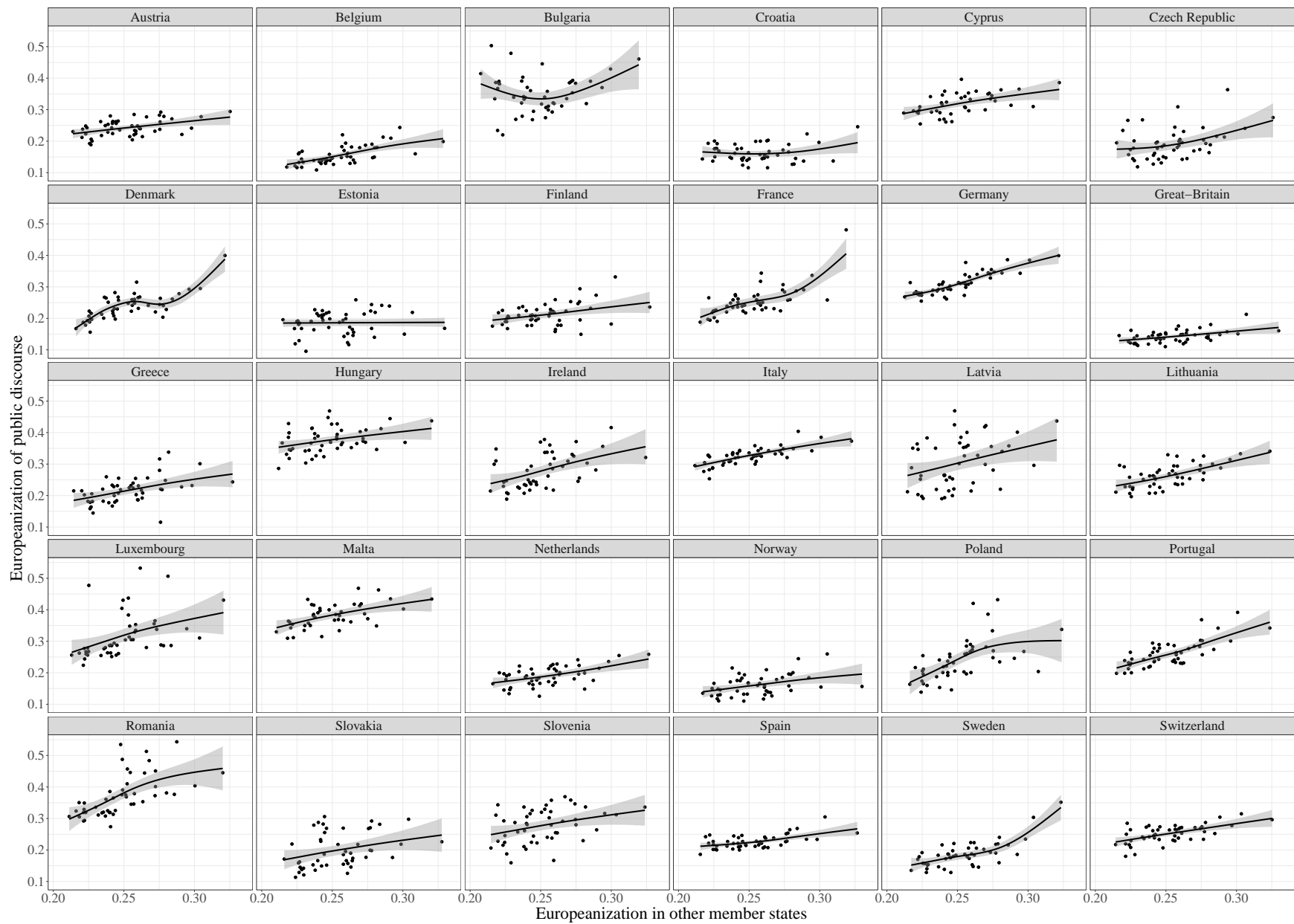
Before addressing the polarization of Europeanized public discourse, I first examine how public discourse between member states is shaped. Considering this aspect is crucial in gaining a better understanding of the structure of public discourse in the European multi-level system. Public discourse in Europe refers not only to “Europe” or the EU as such but also the member states taking their neighboring countries into account when discussing political issues. The following analysis therefore serves as a broader empirical test for the boundaries and implications of my theoretical framework.

I first analyze whether Europeanized public discourse in a single member state is influenced by the level of Europeanization in the public discourses of the other member states. To empirically examine this relationship, I aggregate the level of Europeanized public discourse in the other EU member states and plot this aggregated measure against the level of Europeanization in each member state.⁵ I have decided to plot Europeanization in the other member states against Europeanized public discourse in the respective member state from the same month as it is unreasonable to assume that Europeanized public discourse would take one month to spread.⁶ Examining public discourse between member states in a cross-sectional design on the monthly level might be sub-optimal with regard to causal identification, yet it provides a reasonable descriptive association between the concepts.

⁵As the regression would be unidentifiable due to the fundamental confounding of the aggregated measures when examining the relationship in a multi-level regression model, I analyzed the models separately for each country. Running the analyses separately by country broke the confounding of the aggregation and further allows for a closer examination of between-country differences. Appendix G shows the regression results by country, confirming the positive association between aggregated Europeanization and the Europeanization of public discourse in most member states

⁶When using the lagged aggregated level of Europeanized public discourse in the analyses in Appendix G, this assumption finds empirical support.

Figure 6.7: Europeanized public discourse between member states



The results in Figure 6.7 indicate that Europeanized public discourse actually increase in a large number of countries at the same time that Europeanization was salient in other European countries. In all countries but Croatia and Estonia, this positive association between Europeanized public discourse in other member states and the Europeanization of public discourses in a particular member states was observed. These results provide supporting evidence for Hypothesis 6. The Europeanization of public discourse thus seems to become salient simultaneously in all member states – as expected in my framework on public discourse in the European multi-level system – providing some initial evidence on the interdependencies in public discourse between the member states of the EU (including the closest neighbors to the EU, Norway and Switzerland). These results, however, need to be interpreted cautiously. Since I decided to analyze the impact on public discourse separately in each member state, I blocked out any possible spatial modelling or network structure analyses (Juhl 2019).⁷

Table 6.2: Regression Results: Public Discourse Between Member States

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Member state reference
Distance between Capitals	−0.0000*** (0.0000)
Economic issues	−0.001 (0.003)
Security issues	0.007** (0.003)
Migration issues	0.008 (0.004)
Other member states	0.046*** (0.003)
Europeanization	0.007* (0.003)
Constant	0.015** (0.005)
Observations	20,769
Log Likelihood	56,560.310
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−113,098.600
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−113,011.300
<i>Note:</i>	* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

The member states of the EU should not take into consideration the European component

⁷I discuss possible issues concerning spatial interdependence in the concluding chapter.

of public discourse when other member states have increasingly Europeanized public discourse. Within the European multi-level system, member states should also refer to each other more often due to increased interdependencies. According to my Hypothesis 7, this association should be particularly strong when member states are geographically closer to each other. Geographic proximity therefore serves as a reasonable proxy for even stronger interdependence between countries. Table 6.2 shows the results from the dyadic model taking into consideration all pairs of countries within the European multi-level system. The results show that with increased distance between the capitals of two countries the reciprocal references decrease significantly. This implies that countries that are actually closer to each other are more likely to refer to each other, providing supporting evidence for my Hypothesis 7.

To summarize, the results on public discourse between member states show that the public discourses within the EU take each other into account when debating political issues. This holds true for both Europeanized public discourse, which increases in a particular member state when Europeanized public discourse is higher in the other member states, and public discourse between member states. When considering public discourse between member states, the results show that geographic proximity is an important factor in referencing other member states. Thus, closer countries are more likely to debate issues by referencing each other than countries further apart might. These results imply that public discourse in the European multi-level system is actually Europeanized between the national public spheres. European countries take each other into account when debating political issues and might actually drive public discourse within the European multi-level system.

6.4 Determinants of the Sentiment of Europeanized Public Discourse

I now turn to the conditions under which the content of Europeanized public discourse changes. Here, I first examine whether and how the sentiment of public discourse varies based on the party system, European public discourse, specific issues and events. These analyses are an important pre-requisite for further analyses on the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Learning about substantial differences in sentiment can contextualize its potential effects on the polarization of public discourse.

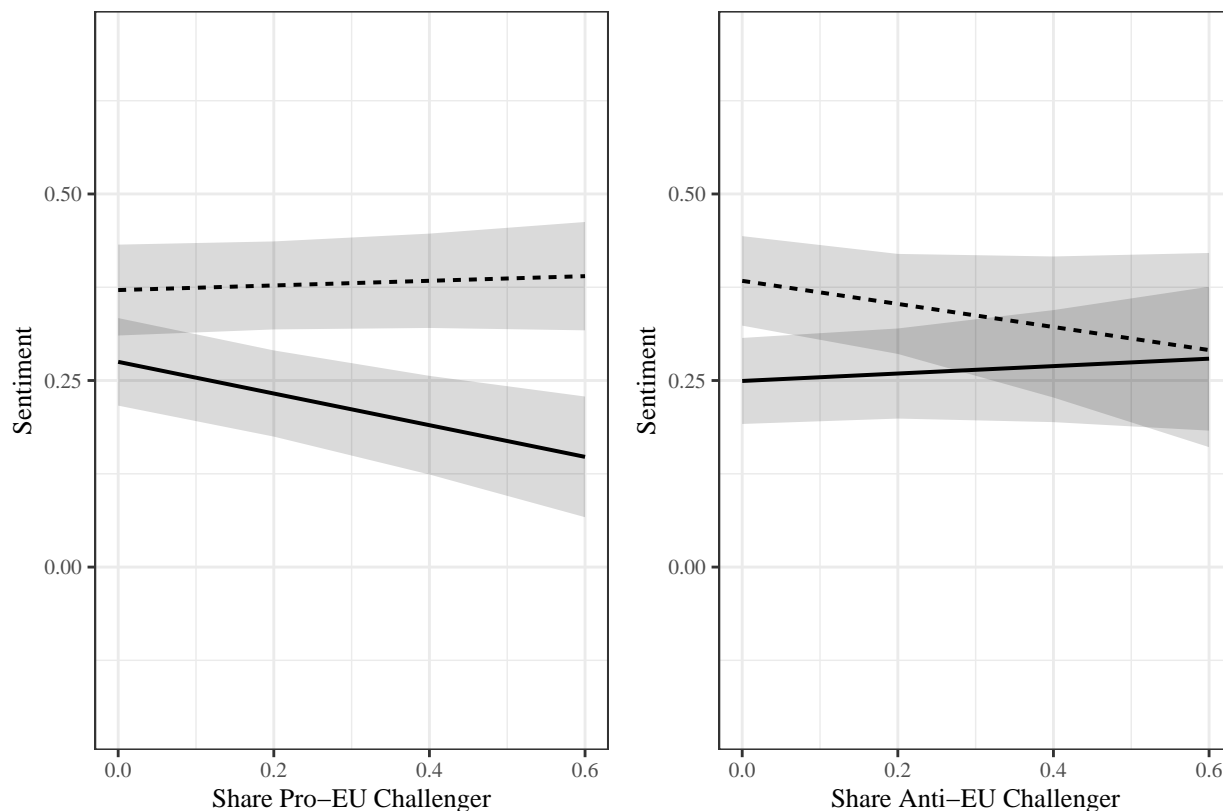
Table 6.3 visualizes the results on the sentiment of public discourse. In column (1), I examine the independent effects of the covariates on public discourse; in column (2) I add the conditional effect of challenger parties and increased Europeanized public discourse to gain a more nuanced understanding of how challenger parties influence the sentiment in Europeanized public discourse. The results from these interaction terms are visualized in Figure 6.8. As I examine the polarization of Europeanized public discourse in the following section, these additional analyses allow the consideration of whether public discourse that includes the European component differs substantially from national public discourse. The coefficients can be interpreted as follows: Positive coefficients indicate more positive public discourse sentiments, while negative coefficients indicate more negative public discourse sentiments.

The results in column (1) show that challenger parties are not able to influence the content of public discourse as such; when not considering Europeanized public discourse specifically, there is no significant effect of stronger pro- and anti-EU challenger parties. For mainstream opposition parties there is a significant negative effect on public discourse, which implies that with stronger mainstream opposition parties, the overall sentiment of public discourse becomes more negative. When considering the interaction of the challenger parties with increasingly Europeanized public discourse in column (2) and Figure 6.8, it can be seen that

increased Europeanized public discourse actually changes the impact of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties.

When public discourse is strongly Europeanized, it can be seen that with stronger pro-EU challengers, the sentiment of public discourse becomes substantially more negative compared to less Europeanized public discourse. For anti-EU challenger parties, such an effect is surprisingly not observed. Only in less Europeanized public discourse does sentiment becomes substantially negative with an increasing shares of anti-EU challenger parties.

Figure 6.8: Sentiment: Interaction Europeanization/Challenger parties



Note: The dashed lines indicate high levels (0.5) on the Europeanization of public discourse. The solid lines indicate low levels (0.1).

These results can be interpreted as indicating that pro-EU challenger parties are actually dissatisfied with the current state of the EU, leading to more negative sentiment when public discourse becomes more Europeanized. For anti-EU challenger parties, this effect

Table 6.3: Regression results: Sentiment of Public Discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Public discourse sentiment	
	(1)	(2)
Share Challengers - Anti-EU	-0.059 (0.053)	0.101 (0.102)
Share Challengers - Pro-EU	-0.063 (0.041)	-0.273*** (0.076)
Share MS-Opposition	-0.082* (0.033)	-0.096** (0.034)
EU public discourse: Economy	-0.0003 (0.0005)	-0.0003 (0.0005)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)
EU public discourse: Security	0.0002 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.001)
Economic issues	0.195*** (0.037)	0.209*** (0.038)
Security issues	-0.327*** (0.037)	-0.335*** (0.037)
Migration issues	-0.052 (0.056)	-0.045 (0.056)
Europeanization	0.334*** (0.038)	0.270*** (0.051)
Other member states	-0.172*** (0.043)	-0.178*** (0.043)
National election campaign	0.026*** (0.006)	0.024*** (0.006)
EP election campaign	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.002 (0.011)
EU Summits	0.002 (0.005)	0.003 (0.005)
EU member state	-0.166 (0.114)	-0.167 (0.115)
East	0.105 (0.060)	0.111 (0.061)
Share Unemployment	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	0.004 (0.003)	0.005* (0.003)
N Homicides	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	0.0002 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.001)
Anti-EU Challenger x Europeanization		-0.511 (0.360)
Pro-EU Challenger x Europeanization		0.608*** (0.184)
Constant	0.454*** (0.118)	0.459*** (0.119)
Observations	1,427	1,427
Log Likelihood	1,995.954	2,002.042
Akaike Inf. Crit.	-3,943.908	-3,952.084
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	-3,817.588	-3,815.237

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

eventually might not hold, as there are different strategies employed by mainstream parties according to my conceptual framework. Mainstream parties might decide to oppose criticisms from anti-EU challenger parties canceling out the negative effect of anti-EU challengers in strongly Europeanized public discourse. This assumption finds empirical support when further considering a three-way interaction including the share of mainstream opposition parties. With weak mainstream opposition parties, there is no impact of anti-EU challenger parties on the sentiment of Europeanized public discourse. However, this impact increases with stronger mainstream opposition parties.

As far as the other factors influencing the sentiment of public discourse are concerned, public discourse on the European level does not matter for this aspect of public discourse either. When debating specific issues more intensively, however, some notable differences can be observed. In times where economic issues are more prevalent, the average sentiment is substantially more positive compared to times where economic issues are not discussed very often. Concerning security issues, the exact opposite can be observed; when they are prevalent, public discourse is more negative. Migration does not significantly influence the sentiment of public discourse. Turning to the Europeanization of public discourse and public discourse between member states, a diverging pattern can also be observed. In strongly Europeanized public discourse, sentiment tends to be more positive, while strong public discourse between member states is associated with a more negative sentiment. This implies that discussing security issues and discussing issues between member states comes along with more negative public discourse. Here, mostly negative aspects are debated in public discourse.

For economic issues and Europeanized public discourse, public discourse generally tends to be more positive. Especially considering Europeanized public discourse, this is highly relevant, as it implies that Europeanized public discourse differs substantially from national public discourse with regard to the content discussed. Finally, events seem to barely matter for the sentiment of public discourse. Only during national election campaigns is public discourse

more positive compared to during non-election campaign times.

To summarize, the results on the sentiment of public discourse show that challenger parties are only able to influence the sentiment of Europeanized public discourse. They do not have significant impact on public discourse on a more general level. Public discourse on the European level does not appear to matter, but the issues discussed and the saliency of Europeanized public discourse are very relevant for this content aspect of public discourse. Building upon this, I now examine whether and how the composition of the party system actually influences the polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

6.5 Determinants of the Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse

In the last section of this chapter, I examine a crucial aspect of public discourse concerning the impact of mainstream and challenger political parties: the political polarization of Europeanized public discourse. With new challenger parties gaining power in European party systems, the permissive consensus on European integration has vanished. Today, the EU is faced with challenger parties opposing European integration in general, aiming to reduce the power of the Union or even abolish it altogether; additionally, there are challenger parties that take decisive pro-European positions but are dissatisfied with the current dead-lock within European institutions. These changes in the party system are expected to have important implications for Europeanized public discourse, since mainstream parties are required to respond to these challenging positions on European integration.

Facing challenger parties with both strong pro- and anti-EU positions, Europeanized public discourse should become more or less polarized, depending on the composition of the party system. As described in the set of hypotheses on polarization of Europeanized public discourse, the level of polarization should vary depending on the strength of both pro- and

anti-EU challenger parties. These hypotheses rely fundamentally on the interaction between political parties. Thus, Figure 6.9 provides a crucial visualization of the three-way interaction involved in testing the hypotheses. Table 6.4 provides evidence for the absence of main effects with regard to the individual political parties, which is highly reasonable as polarization arises from the interaction between actors. It is significant that the results only include public discourse associated with the European component, thus significantly reducing the corpus of media reporting compared to the prior analyses. Focusing on Europeanized public discourse is crucial to avoiding running four-way interactions, which are both difficult to interpret and require very high sample sizes (Dawson and Richter 2006). Furthermore, it allows the hypotheses to be tested on only the relevant subset of public discourse.

Examining the results in Table 6.4 first, it can be shown that neither challenger parties nor the mainstream opposition parties exhibit an individual and independent influence on the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. In essence, the only factors that influence the polarization of Europeanized public discourse are the dominance of single political issues in public discourse and national election campaigns. More specifically, the polarization of Europeanized public discourse decreases when either economic, security or migration issues dominate public discourse; the same goes for referencing other member states in Europeanized public discourse. This implies that when public discourse becomes more single-issued, the level of polarization in Europeanized public discourse decreases. The same goes for national election campaigns, which feature less polarization in Europeanized public discourse compared to non-campaign times.

To investigate the conditional impact of challenger and mainstream opposition parties on the polarization of Europeanized public discourse, I now examine the results from three-way interactions in Figure 6.9.⁸ Using this figure, I am able to test all five hypotheses on the composition of party systems and their impact on the polarization of Europeanized public discourse. In the left panel, the scenario that addresses Hypothesis 8 is indicated by the

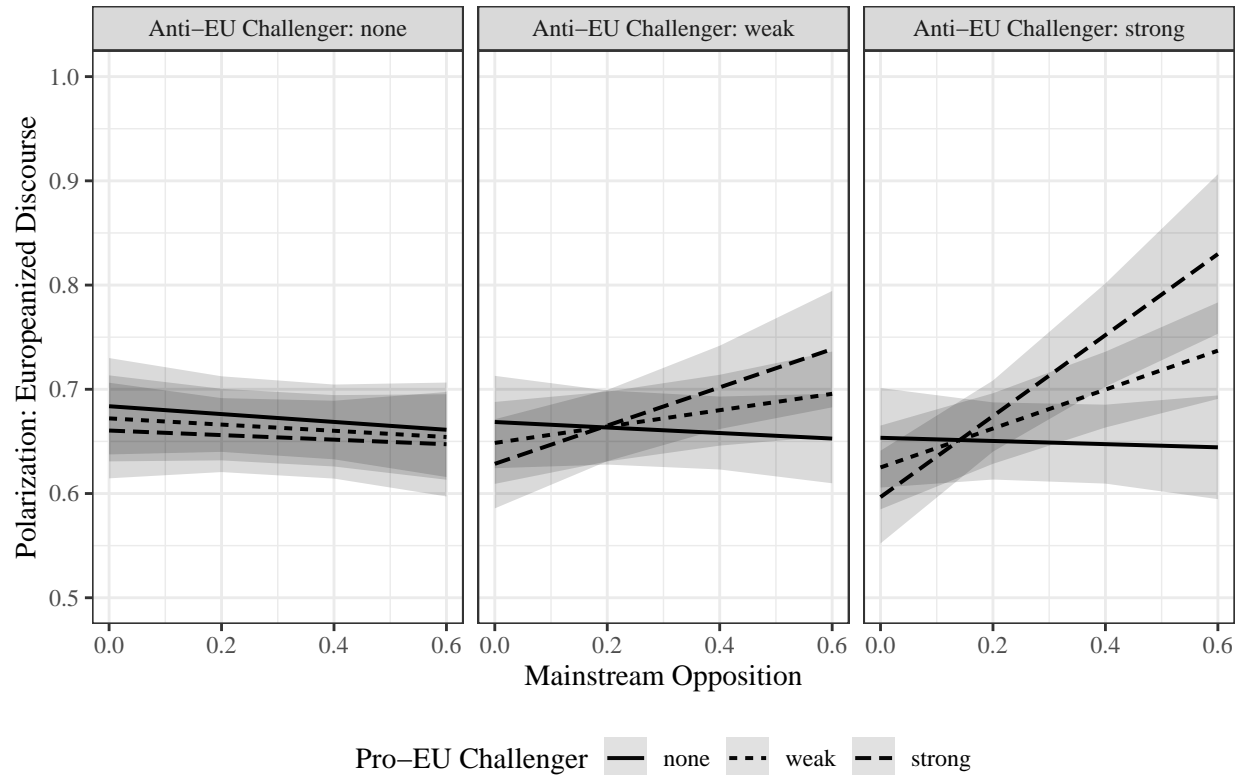
⁸The full regression table is shown in Appendix H

Table 6.4: Regression results: Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Polarization Europeanized Public discourse
Share Challengers: Anti-EU	0.012 (0.057)
Share Challengers: Pro-EU	−0.063 (0.043)
Share MS-Opposition	0.003 (0.037)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.0001 (0.0005)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.002 (0.002)
EU public discourse: Security	0.0001 (0.001)
Economic issues	−0.429*** (0.042)
Security issues	−0.336*** (0.040)
Migration issues	−0.243*** (0.060)
Other member states	−0.256*** (0.045)
National election campaign	0.006 (0.007)
EP election campaign	−0.018 (0.010)
EU Summits	0.005 (0.005)
EU member state	−0.031 (0.068)
East	−0.058 (0.036)
Share Unemployment	−0.003 (0.002)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	−0.004 (0.003)
N Homicides	0.0001 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	−0.001 (0.001)
Constant	1.307*** (0.082)
Observations	1,427
Log Likelihood	1,847.297
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−3,648.593
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−3,527.536
<i>Note:</i> * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001	

solid line. The empirical test for Hypothesis 9 is visualized by the solid line in the middle panel. Hypothesis 10 is tested using the solid line in the right panel and Hypothesis 11 with the dashed and broken lines in the left panel. Finally, the test for Hypothesis 12 finds its visualization in the dashed and broken lines in the middle and right panel.

Figure 6.9: Mainstream and Challenger Impact on the Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse



Note: Weak Anti-EU challenger = 0.05; Strong Anti-EU challenger = 0.1; Weak Pro-EU challenger = 0.1; Strong Pro-EU challenger = 0.2

The results show that when a party system only consists of mainstream parties, Europeanized public discourse is not highly polarized, thus providing supporting evidence for Hypothesis 8. Irrespective of the strength of the mainstream opposition, polarization stays the same and on a relatively low level. There is also supporting evidence for Hypotheses 9. When there are only mainstream parties and weak anti-EU challenger parties, the polarization of public discourse stays unpolarized with relatively low sentiment scores in Europeanized public discourse given this composition of the party system. For Hypothesis 10, no empirical

support is found. Having a strong anti-EU challenger and mainstream opposition parties is not associated with high levels of polarization. It actually does not differ from the scenario with weak anti-EU challenger parties or a party system only including mainstream parties. Concerning Hypothesis 11, which only addresses mainstream parties and pro-EU challenger parties, empirical support was found. Whether pro-EU challenger parties were weak or strong, the level of polarization remained on the same low level as for mainstream party systems alone.

Finally, Hypothesis 12 also finds empirical support. When there are both pro- and anti-EU challenger parties coexisting with relatively strong mainstream opposition parties in the party system, the level of polarization increases substantially. This effect increases with stronger challenger parties, providing additional evidence on the conditions under which Europeanized public discourse actually change. To summarize, party systems must include both pro- and anti-EU challenger parties to polarize Europeanized public discourse. One kind of challenger party alone is not sufficient to do so. It is important to make one last remark on the left-hand parts of the panels that mark weak mainstream opposition parties. These scenarios reflect countries which have over-large governments during the span of time covered in this dissertation project. In these countries, a pattern of polarization with strong pro- and anti-EU challenger parties cannot be shown, since relatively strong mainstream opposition parties seem to be a necessary condition for the polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

In conclusion, this chapter examined the conditions for Europeanized public discourse. Concerning the general tendency to consider the European component, the results show that the strength of challenger parties makes a decisive difference in the saliency of Europeanized public discourse. These effects are even more pronounced during specific events of public interest, such as the election campaign for the European elections. More importantly – and in opposition to my hypotheses – mainstream opposition parties do not seem to emphasize

Europeanization when they are particular weak, but when they have received a considerable share of votes. Thus, it seems that both challenger parties and mainstream opposition have incentives to engage in Europeanized public discourse.

Next to political parties and specific events being associated with an increased saliency of Europeanized public discourse, the results show that Europeanized public discourse in other member states seemed to increase Europeanized public discourse in a particular country's own public discourse. I thus found empirical support for public discourse between member states, which is even more pronounced when considering member states referencing each other when in close geographical proximity.

Finally, this chapter examined under which conditions Europeanized public discourse actually becomes more polarized. The results showed that both strong pro- and anti-EU challenger parties are necessary for Europeanized public discourse to become polarized. In party systems with only one of the two kinds of challenger parties, such an association cannot be found. In the following chapter, I further examine the content of Europeanized public discourse, considering more closely whether the polarization of Europeanized public discourse actually comes along with different topics discussed.

Chapter 7

Nature of Europeanized Public Discourse

In this last empirical chapter, I take a closer look at the actual content of Europeanized public discourse. After having provided empirical evidence that political parties influence both the Europeanization and the polarization of public discourse it is crucial to examine whether the content of Europeanized public discourse actually changes when polarized. Europeanized public discourse has traditionally been known as particularly unpolarized since mainstream political parties and the European actors and institutions had agreed on a permissive consensus concerning European integration and European issues more generally. This implies that public discourse on European issues seldom included dissenting voices.¹ Furthermore, there was a specific set of issues discussed in Europeanized public discourse. Most issues – especially those concerning domestic policies and ideological differences – were explicitly kept out of Europeanized public discourse.

With the increasing strength of both pro- and anti-EU challenger parties, this permissive consensus has collapsed, opening up the possibility of fierce debates within the European

¹On the elite level, there was certainly substantial disagreement on several European issues. In the first decades of European integration, however, they often not reach public discourse (Fursdon 1980).

Union. Based on this increased potential of polarized Europeanized public discourse, two possible implications concerning the content of Europeanized public discourse arise. First, it is reasonable that the same content and topics are discussed, but that the discussion is more polarized compared to times of low polarization. The content, however, does not change with increased polarization. Second, not only have the traditional topics and issues of Europeanized public discourse become more polarized, but also the topics discussed have actually changed to include a more complete set of issues. As already explained in Chapter 2.3.4., I expect that Europeanized public discourse differs in its content with increasing polarization, as it actually becomes part of party political competition in the respective public sphere.

7.1 Boundary Conditions of Structural Topic Models

When examining the content of text corpora using quantitative text analysis, it is necessary to explicate the underlying assumptions to define the boundary conditions of the methods. This clarifies which content in the texts can be examined using these techniques and which content requires more nuanced quantitative or qualitative research methods. Since I analyze a large text corpus with news paper articles from 30 different countries and 24 different languages there are some natural restrictions that narrow the set of possible quantitative text analysis (QTA) methods. Since supervised QTA methods require language expertise in every language available in the corpus, they cannot be applied in my case. To analyze the corpus, I thus make use of an unsupervised QTA method, which structures the topics underlying the text corpora and furthermore considers covariates of public discourse that possibly influence the valence of the debated issues. To incorporate the level of polarization when examining Europeanized public discourse, I therefore made use of structural topic models (STM, Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019).

STMs require researcher to carefully consider the data generating process of the underlying

text corpora, as it is not possible to supervise the algorithm while it estimates the underlying topics of the corpus. In accordance with my theoretical framework, national public spheres are interrelated within the European multi-level system. Public discourse, however, still mainly takes place within the national public spheres of individual countries. In other words, although public discourses take into account what is discussed in other public discourses (including public discourse on the European level), there is almost no public discourse across public spheres.²

To incorporate these assumptions into my empirical model, I examine the corpora for each country separately. Since STMs require all word of the text corpus to be in the same language, multi-lingual countries such as Belgium, Finland, Latvia, Luxembourg, and Switzerland pose a particular challenge in this regard. For these countries, there are two options for analyzing them using STMs. The first option involves translating all newspaper articles into the same language to analyze the corpora within one model. This option poses several difficulties and is not feasible for my analyses. Multi-lingual countries have long traditions of intra-country cleavages with different ethnic and political groups keen to keep their respective languages in public discourse (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). As such, it can be reasonably assumed that there are several public discourses within these public spheres that should be examined separately to not obfuscate potentially important political differences within the country. I thus decided to analyze the corpora in multi-lingual countries separately, resulting in the examination of 35 different Europeanized public discourses³.

The interpretation of resulting topics from STMs poses some particular difficulties both in general and more specifically when considering a multi-lingual approach, as is used in this dissertation project. Interpreting the topics resulting from STMs always requires some initial knowledge about the prevalent topics in public discourse in the countries and over the span

²I explain the reasoning for this assumption more closely in Chapter 2.

³In Switzerland and Belgium I only considered two public discourses, in German and French and in French and Dutch, respectively. I do not consider Italian and Romansh in Switzerland and German in Belgium due to parsimony. The same goes for Spain, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Romania and their significant ethnic minorities with their own languages and public discourses.

of time examined to assign topic labels to the most important (FREX)⁴ words defining the topic. However, since I am working in a multi-lingual setting with 24 languages, this would only be possible for some selected languages (those I am proficient in). To overcome this obstacle, I have opted to translate the most important words that define the topics. Translating these single words is not as heavily affected by the language nuances that must be considered when translating entire corpora of texts.

To test whether the more prevalent topics are the same in the 35 different corpora, I made use of the Spacy vector similarity library in Python to identify the semantic similarity of the words defining the topics in each of the corpora. The similarity score builds upon the notion of vector representations of words. These vector representations are optimized using word2vec algorithms, which make use of large baseline corpora to define how often words occur simultaneously. For the analyses on the similarity of the words describing topics, I made use of the English core vector representation which builds upon 685.000 unique words and has been optimized for written online texts. Thus, I am easily able to assume that this vector representation is suitable for my analyses.

Concerning the interpretation of the topic similarity based on the FREX words, I assume that higher similarity scores indicate that the words actually describe the same topic. There is, however, no natural cut-off point for determining when two word pairs describe the same topic. Thus, I use a small subset of easily identifiable similar topics to infer a reasonable cut-off point.⁵ Based on manual coding, I opted for a cut-off point of 0.8 to define two word pairs describing the same topic.

To be explicit, the machine learning approach used here is certainly not able to identify

⁴The words usually assumed to be defining the topics most accurately are called FREX words. FREX words are both frequent and exclusive for a particular topic, making them most likely to identify the topic. I use these words to define the topics when interpreting the results from the STM.

⁵I have compared words describing migration topics in different corpora, since this topic is often easily identifiable. The similarity scores of these word pairs lie between 0.76 and 0.85. I therefore define a similarity score of 0.8 a reasonably close value to assign word pairs to the same topic to leave some room for discretion for more complex topics.

the nuances of Europeanized public discourse in the different European countries. It is, however, possible to detect broader informative patterns using this unsupervised machine learning algorithm, providing some initial knowledge about whether different topics are actually discussed with increased polarization of Europeanized public discourse, as specified in Hypothesis 13.

7.2 Topics of Europeanized Public Discourse by Country

Before analyzing the content of Europeanized public discourse, it is essential to specify which newspaper articles are included in Europeanized public discourse. I included any newspaper article that was coded as Europeanized according to the “Europe” dictionary. This reduced the full corpora of public discourse substantially, allowing the estimation of unbiased topics of Europeanized public discourse using STM and further decreasing the required computing time.⁶ I also relied on the estimation of polarization for the Europeanized public discourse subset introduced in Chapter 6 when including it as a covariate to the STMs. However, before estimating the STM, one important decision had to be made. The initial step in analyzing the content of large text corpora, such as those of Europeanized public discourse in all EU member states plus Norway and Switzerland, using STMs lies in deciding an appropriate number of topics.

There are three possibilities for determining the number of appropriate topics when initializing STMs. First, when provided with informative priors on the content in the corpus and aiming to identify these topics using unsupervised machine learning techniques one can specify an appropriate number of topics based on personal knowledge of the corpus. Second, the STM algorithm is able to search for an appropriate number of topics by solely minimizing the

⁶Running the 35 STMs on virtual machines using the Europeanized public discourse subset once already takes almost 15 days

likelihood ratio, completely preventing researchers from intervening in the model altogether. Finally, there is a middle ground that relies on human judgment on several diagnostics to determine an appropriate number of topics. These diagnostics include held-out likelihood, residuals, semantic coherence and lower bound (Wallach et al. 2009; Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019). Using the middle-ground strategy allows for some human judgment when determining the number of topics and in considering whether the number of topics seems reasonable; this is why I opted for this approach.⁷

Figure 7.1: K of Topics by Countries

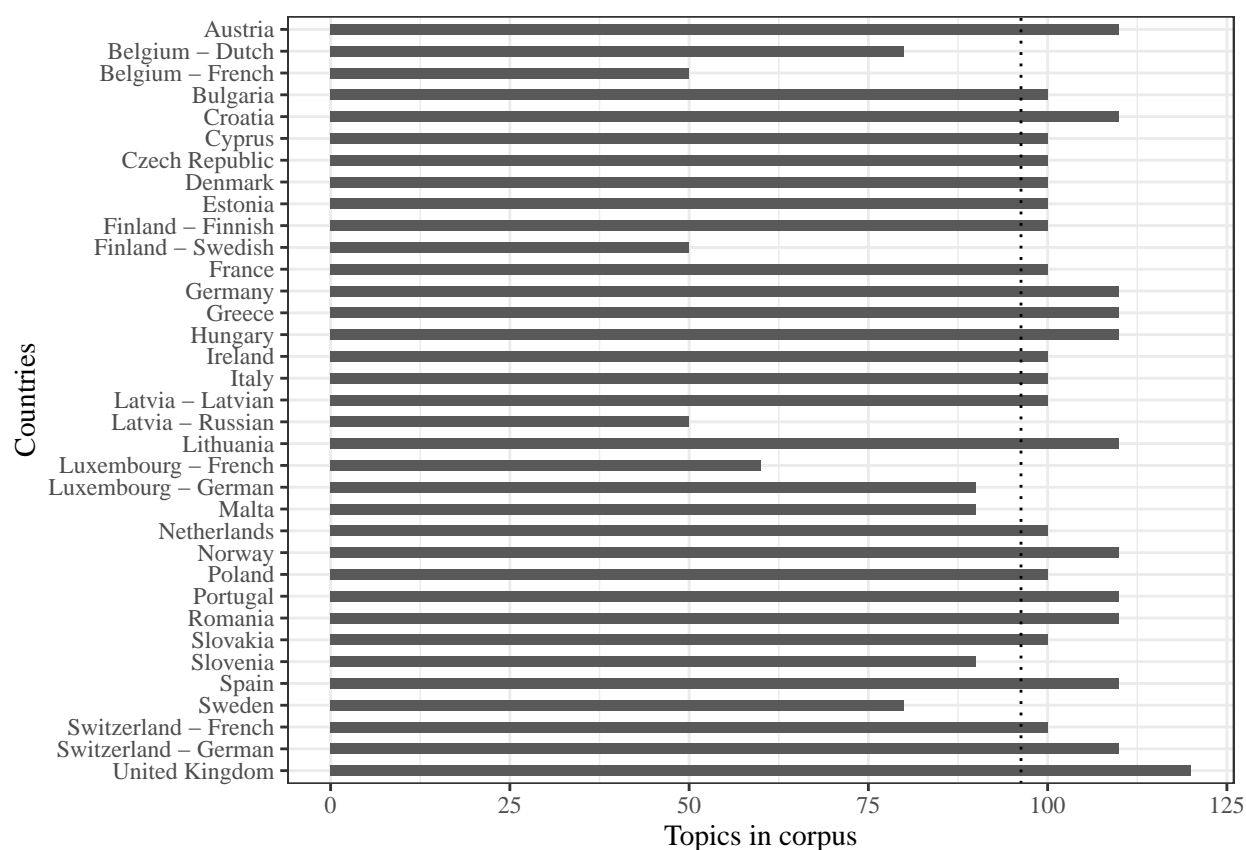


Figure 7.1 shows an appropriate number of topics (K) for each of the 35 corpora. The results show that on average, the corpora consist of slightly more than 90 topics. This means that between 2016 and 2019, more than 90 topics on Europeanized public discourse have been identified on average. Since STMs often consist of topics that simply include general purpose

⁷A more complete explanation of the evaluation criteria for the diagnostics as well as a visualization of all diagnostics for the 35 corpora can be found in Appendix I.

words without actually describing the underlying content, this number of topics should not be considered an actual representation of the content in Europeanized public discourse. Upon more closely examining distinct public discourses, the French corpus in Belgium, the Swedish corpus in Finland, the Russian corpus in Latvia, and the French corpus in Luxembourg seem to consist of significantly lower numbers of appropriate numbers of topics compared to the other corpora. One major reason for a lower number of topics in these corpora may be that they may consist of only one newspaper (often a media outlet of the ethnic minority), thereby explaining why these corpora are a substantially smaller than other corpora.

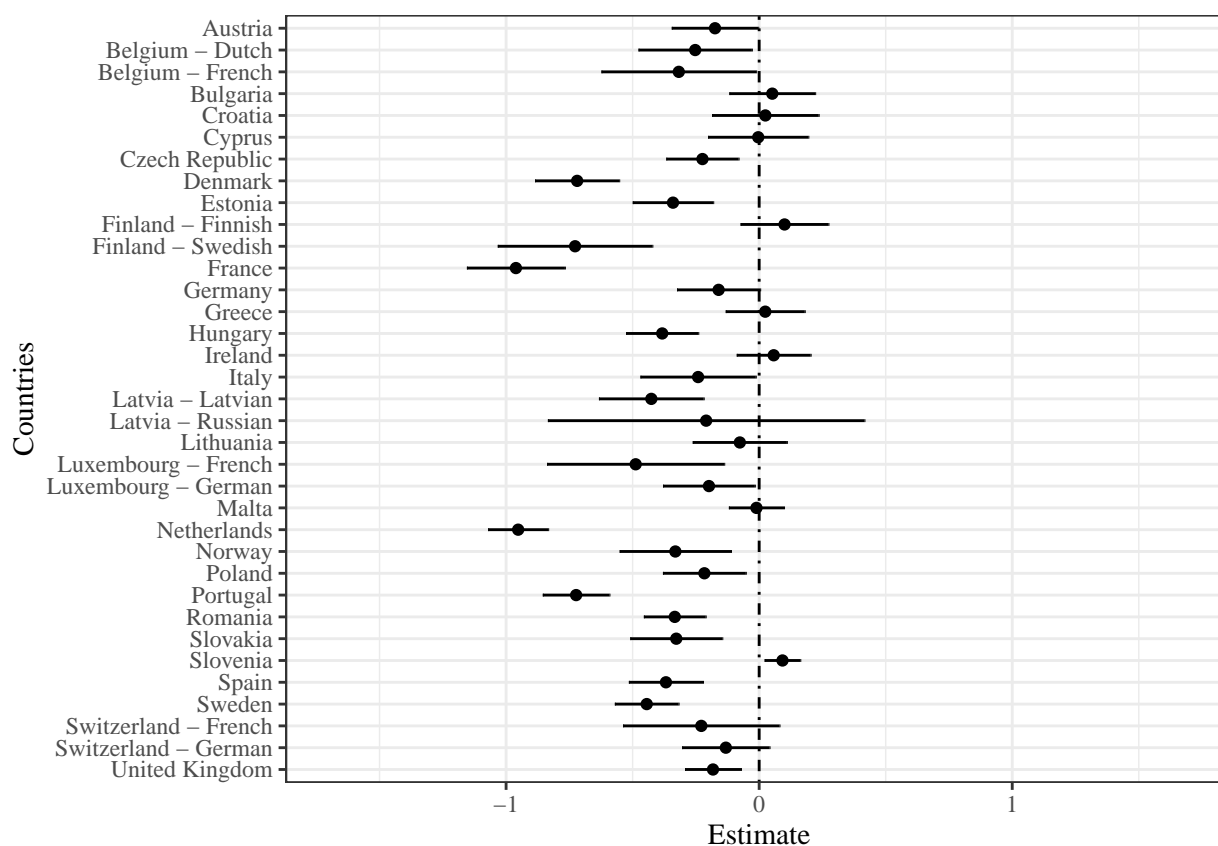
To summarize, the results on an appropriate number of topics indicate a substantial similarity between the different Europeanized public discourses with about 90–100 topics in most countries. There is only substantial variation for public discourses of ethnic minorities in some European countries; however attributing these differences to the smaller size of the corpora in these public discourses cannot be ruled out. Although the number of appropriate topics shows some similarity between the countries, it cannot be inferred that Europeanized public discourse includes the same content in different European countries. The following analyses on the actual results of the STMs try to shed light on this issue, starting with the general variation in Europeanized public discourse with the increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

7.3 Variations in Europeanized Public Discourse With Increased Polarization

Before turning to the results of the STMs, which are rather opaque with regard to the estimation procedures and the identification of underlying topics, I first present descriptive results on the variations in Europeanized public discourse that accompany increased polarization. To do so, I again make use of the issue-specific dictionaries developed in Chapter 3. For a first descriptive glimpse on the potential variation in the content of Europeanized public

discourse with increasing polarization, I estimate the effect of polarization on the different issues (economic, security, migration) as well as reference other European countries using linear regression models – controlling for the other issues considered in this dissertation.⁸ These models, however, do not allow for directly inferring between-issue differences with increasing polarization. Thus, the following coefficients should be interpreted carefully, as it remains unclear which issues enter public discourse when other issues decrease in saliency along with increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse. It is, however, possible to examine and compare which issues increase and decrease in saliency on a descriptive level.

Figure 7.2: Economic Issues in Europeanized Public Discourse by Polarization



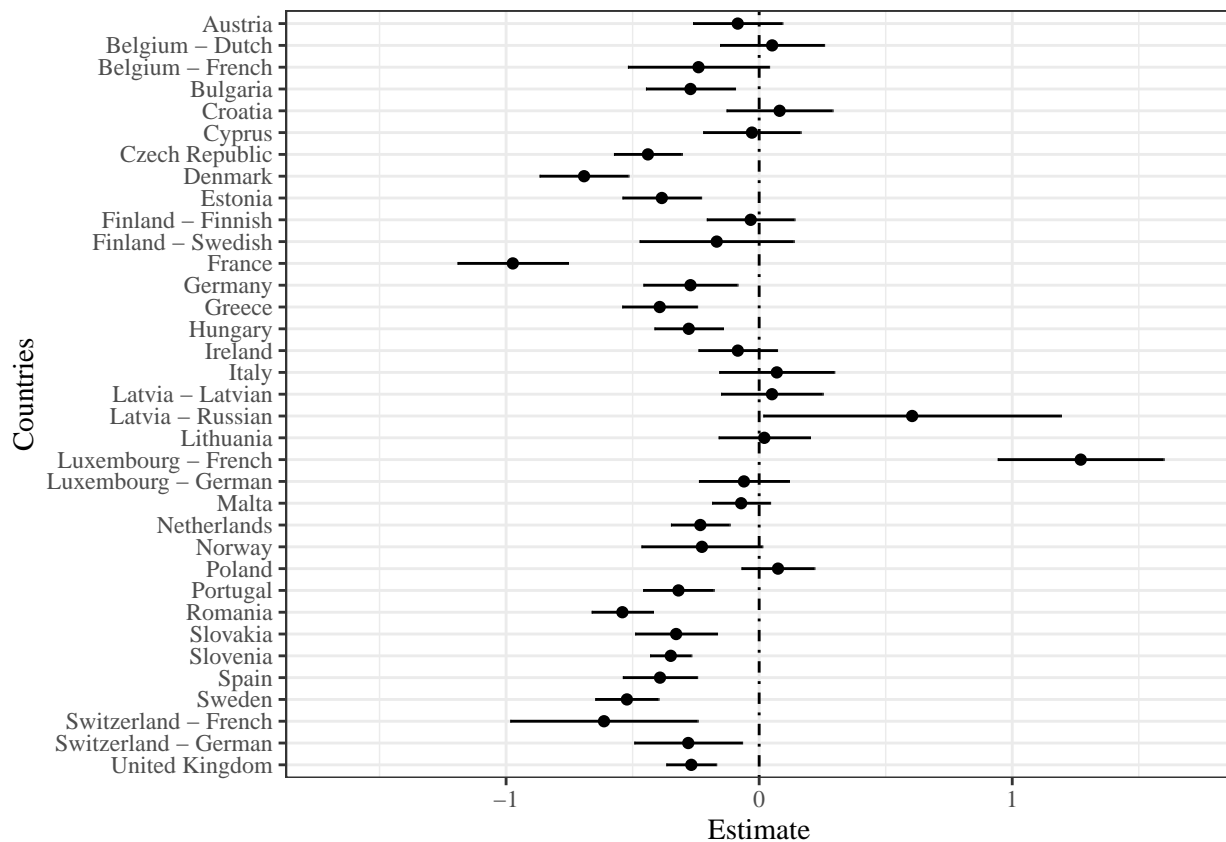
Note: 95%-confidence intervals

Figure 7.2 shows that in most Europeanized public discourses, economic issues are considered less often when polarization increases. In only 10 public discourses, no effect or even an

⁸The full regression tables are shown in Appendix J

increasing share of newspaper articles dedicated to economic issues can be observed. Given that public discourse on European integration has mostly been about economic implications during the times of the permissive consensus, these effects are reasonable and suggest that other issues enter Europeanized public discourse when it becomes more polarized.

Figure 7.3: Security Issues in Europeanized Public Discourse by Polarization

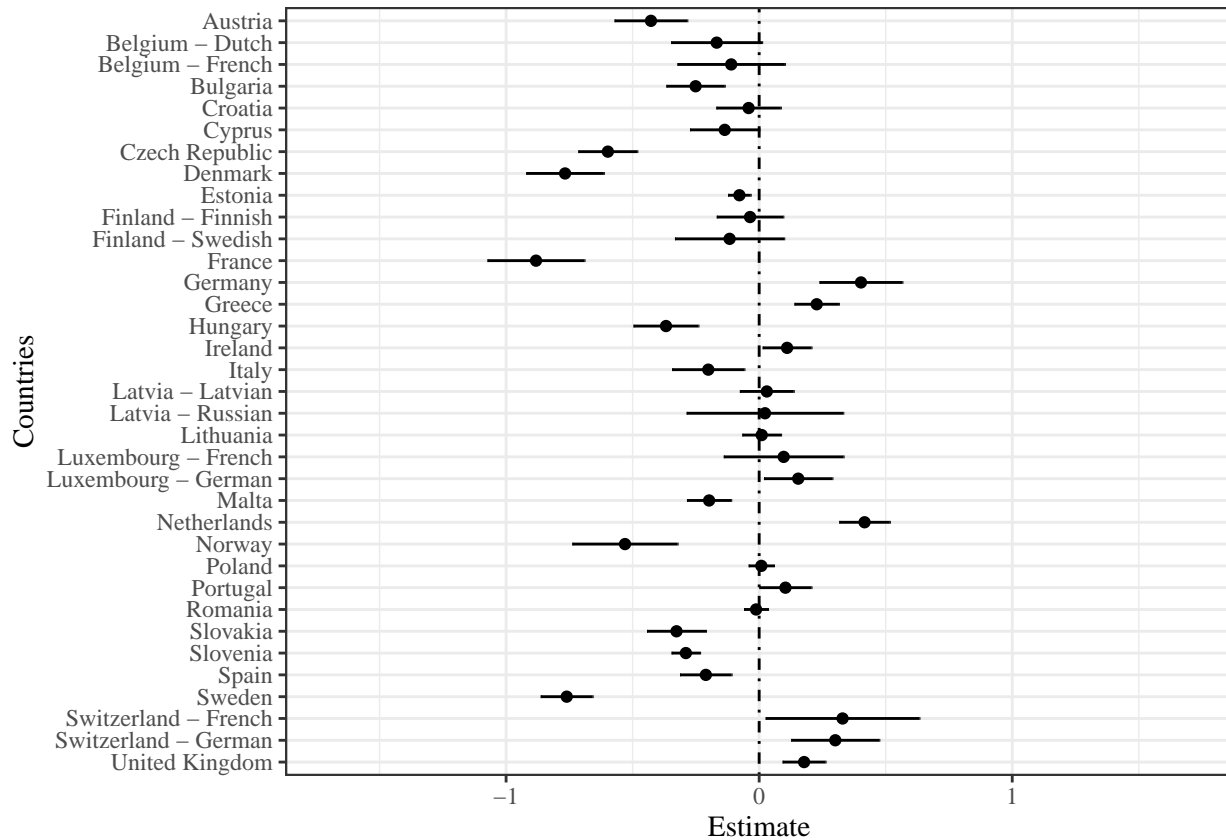


Note: 95%-confidence intervals

Figure 7.3 visualizes the results for security issues. When interpreting the results on an aggregate level, it can be observed that in many public discourses the share of security issues decreases with increased polarization of Europeanized public discourse. There are, however, important differences within public discourses. For many public discourses in which economic issues become less salient with increasing polarization, there are no statistically significant differences or even increases for security issues. Although it is not possible to directly infer whether economic issues are compensated for by security issues in these public

discourse, these results indicate substantial differences between these public discourses. Thus, Europeanized public discourse seems to substantially differ with regard to its content between public discourses.

Figure 7.4: Migration Issues in Europeanized Public Discourse by Polarization

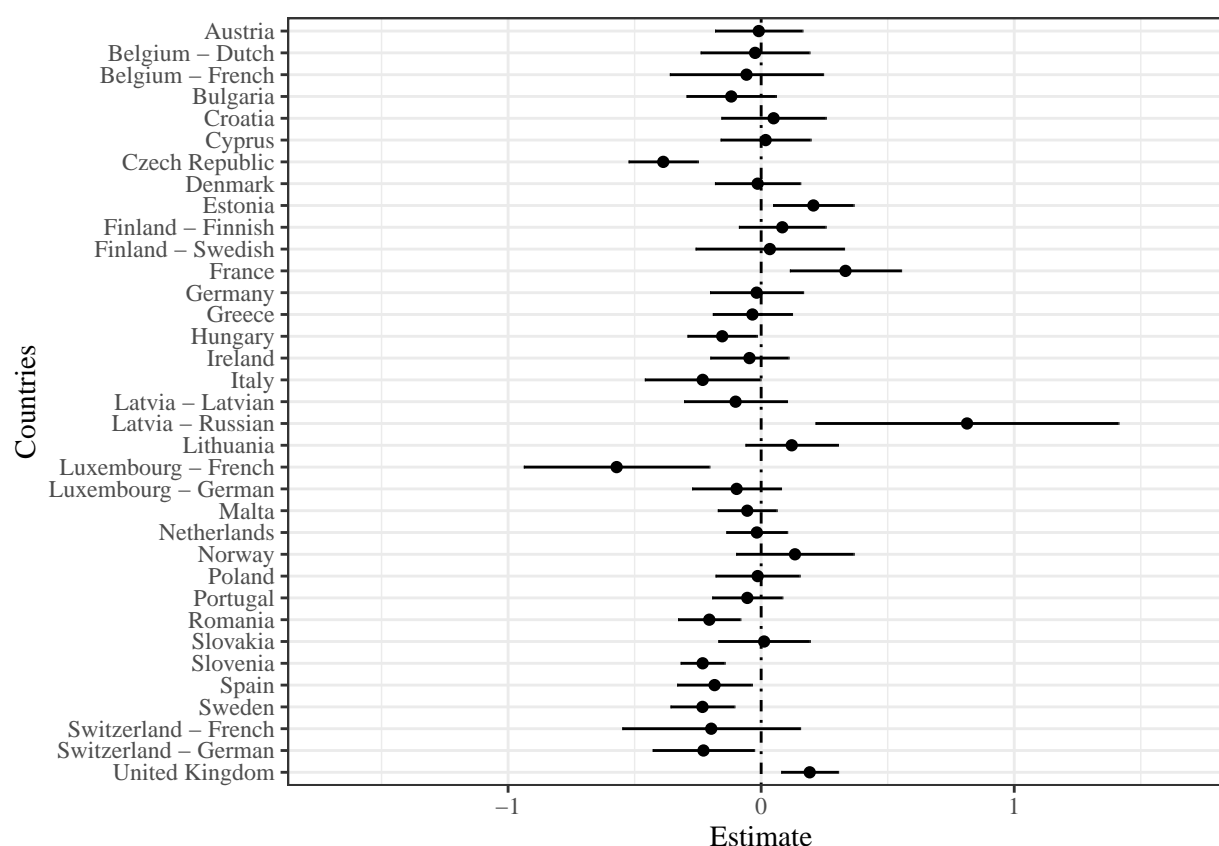


Note: 95%-confidence intervals

This association is even clearer when considering migration issues in Figure 7.4. The stark-est differences can be observed between public discourses about migration with increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse. In eight public discourses, migration issues become more salient with increased polarization, while they become less salient in 15 public discourses. In the remaining ones, there are no differences for migration issues. Again, the pattern shows that in countries where other issues becomes less salient, the issue under consideration becomes more salient. For some countries, the composition of political issues in Europeanized public discourse seems to actually change with increased polarization.

With regard to public discourse between member states within Europeanized public discourse in Figure 7.5, this interpretation only holds true for the political issues discussed in Europeanized public discourse. For public discourse between member states, large effects are not observed. In most public discourses, referencing other European countries does not changes with the increased polarization of Europeanized public discourse although there are certainly again differences between public discourses.

Figure 7.5: Public Discourse Between Member States in Europeanized Public Discourse by Polarization



Note: 95%-confidence intervals

Before turning to the results of the STM, it is essential to highlight one important aspect of these descriptive results. Although in many countries decreasing saliency in some political issues seems to be compensated for by increases in other issues, there are some countries where all three issues (economy, security, and migration) decrease in saliency with the in-

creasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Although the results of this study do not allow for inferences about whether decreasing saliency in some issues is compensated for by increasing saliency in other issues, there are some indications that entirely different issues might become salient with increasing polarization. These issues could include foreign policy issues, climate change or identity politics which are likely not covered by the dictionaries developed for the three political issues under investigation in this dissertation. When considering the topics estimated from the STM this is an crucial aspect since it sheds light on the fact that there is a large variety of possible content covered in Europeanized public discourse.

7.4 Topics of Polarized and Unpolarized Europeanized Public Discourse

The crucial test for varying content of Europeanized public discourse with increased polarization, however, is to investigate whether the topics estimated by the STMs actually vary substantially in their prevalence with increasing polarization. To do so, an essential feature of STMs must be used; the inclusion of covariates structuring the results of the underlying topic model. I included five crucial covariates that structure the content of Europeanized public discourse in the STMs. First and foremost, I included the level of polarization of Europeanized public discourse in the month in which the newspaper article was published. This represents a crucial aspect when examining whether polarization actually changes the content of Europeanized public discourses. Additionally, I control for the outlet in which the newspaper article was published, as it is reasonable to assume that some outlets focus on certain topics more often than others (e.g., tabloid outlets might focus on personal attributes of political elites more often than quality outlets).⁹ Furthermore, I control for economic, security and migration issues. Since this study now operates on the newspaper article level,

⁹For public discourses in which only one outlet is covered this covariate is dismissed.

I included a binary measure coding whether an article is economy-, security-, or migration-related according to my dictionaries. Including these covariates in the model ensures that a measure of topics changing in their prevalence through polarization was obtained, controlling for specific political issues. The resulting model can be described as follows:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Outlet}_i + \beta_2 \text{Economy}_i + \beta_3 \text{Security}_i + \beta_4 \text{Migration}_i + \beta_5 \text{Polarization}_i + \epsilon_i$$

where y_i represents the prevalence for a given topic within one public discourse. The nature of STMs implies that the prevalence of each topic is estimated separately – but in conjunction with the other topics – resulting in a plethora of regression tables for the 35 public discourses. As it would not be feasible to present the resulting 3,370 regression tables,¹⁰ I decided to report only the most crucial information in Figure 7.6.

To test my hypotheses, it is crucial to examine whether the content of Europeanized public discourse changes with increased polarization. I therefore extracted the coefficient for polarization in each regression for every topic and summarized the coefficients that are statistically significant on the conventional 95 % confidence level. The resulting share of topics varying with changes in the level of polarization is depicted in Figure 7.6. The topics that became both more and less prevalent with increased polarization are covered, as changes in content imply some issues becoming both more and others less salient. The results clearly show that the content of Europeanized public discourse changes with varying levels of polarization, providing evidence in support of my hypothesis.

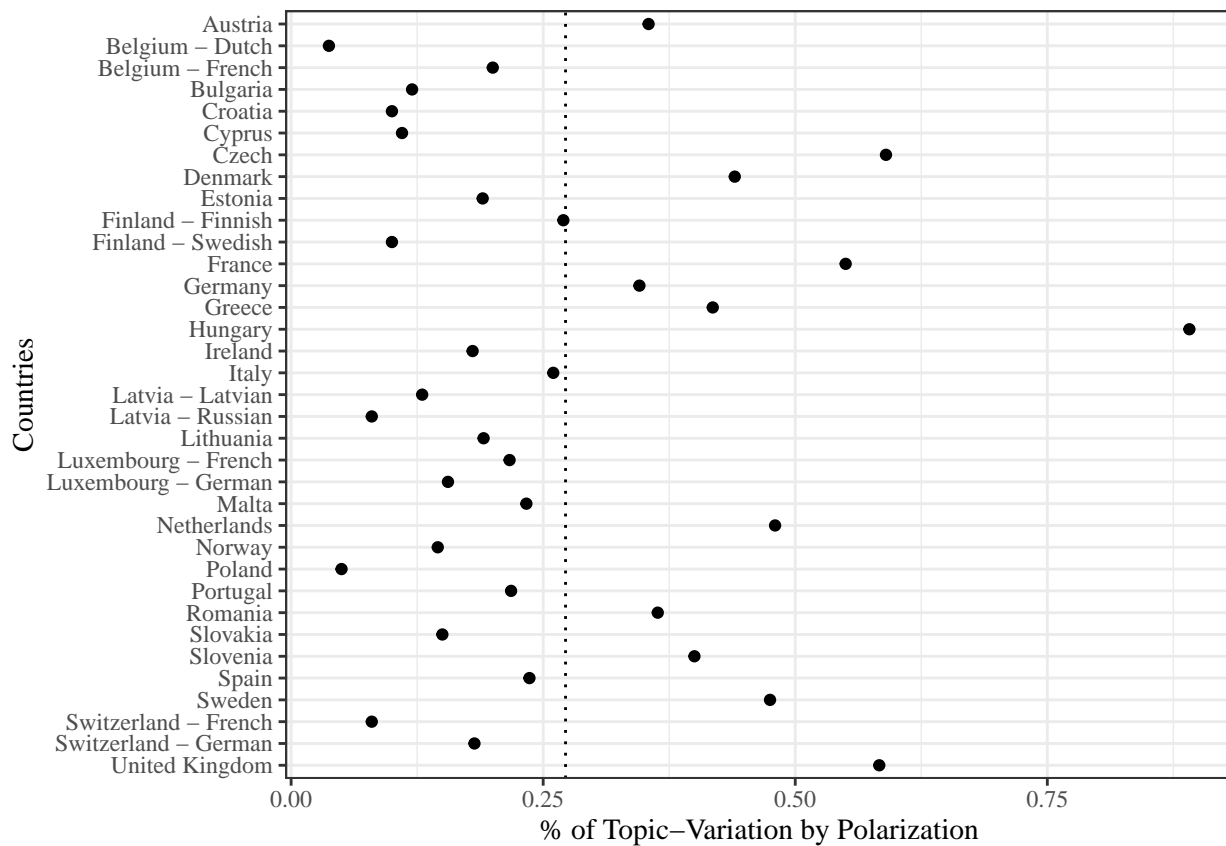
On average, 25 % of the topics varied with increased polarization of Europeanized public discourse. There is, however, significant variation between the European countries. In Hungary the topics of Europeanized public discourse change almost completely with changing levels of polarization, while there are almost no changes in the topics of public discourse in

¹⁰The full regression tables are available in Online Appendix C here: https://bit.ly/appendix_gavras.

Poland or in the Dutch part of public discourse in Belgium.

To summarize, there is empirical evidence for changes in the content of Europeanized public discourse with increased levels of polarization. There are, however, substantial differences by country. To more closely examine these differences by country, I shed light on the topics becoming more or less prevalent with increasing (decreasing) levels of polarization. In this regard, I also examine which topics might differ in several public discourses, indicating some pattern in the content of polarized and unpolarized Europeanized public discourse.

Figure 7.6: Share of Changes in Topics by Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse by Countries



Note: The dotted line indicates the mean share of changes in topics.

Deriving the content of text corpora from STMs is not automatically possible, but requires interpretation of the FREX words describing each topic. As such, the description of the topics estimated through the STMs must always be an object of subjective considerations.

This is not a fundamental flaw of unsupervised machine learning methods of text analysis, but simply describes which analyses, interpretations, and conclusions can be drawn from these models. Since the description of a topic is dependent on interpretation by researchers, some basic knowledge about Europeanized public discourse between 2016 and 2019 is required to make sense of the resulting FREX words that describe the topics. Although I possess some basic knowledge about the public discourse in Europe at that time, some specifics of distinct national public discourses are not easily identifiable without being a country expert.

When interpreting the topics resulting from the STMs, it is very reasonable that some topics explicitly focus on issues only relevant to Europeanized public discourse in a particular country. To identify topics that are more or less relevant with increasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse, I therefore make use of the Spacy vector similarity library. Similar topics showing up in different public discourses indicate that these topics are relevant in a large number of different public discourses with increasing or decreasing polarization.

To estimate whether some topics appear in several Europeanized public discourses with increasing or decreasing polarization, I restructured the results of the STMs into a dyadic data frame, contrasting all topics of each of the 35 Europeanized public discourses with the topics of the other public discourses.¹¹ I created two dyadic data frames, one for topics increasing in prevalence with increasing polarization and one for topics increasing in prevalence with decreasing polarization.¹² The results are shown in Table 7.1. Restructuring the topics results in 142,831 topic-pairs for topics more prevalent with increasing polarization and 76,993 topic-pairs for topics more prevalent with decreasing polarization. This initial analyses already shows that the variety of topics increases with higher levels of polarization,

¹¹I do not, however, contrast topics of the same Europeanized public discourse with each other, following the assumption of the STM that the resulting topics describe different content.

¹²I refrain from drawing between-country and between-polarization comparisons since I am mainly interested in examining commonalities between the content of Europeanized public discourses with increasing and decreasing polarization. However, further research should examine whether the content of different Europeanized public discourses mirrors each other with different levels of polarization. However, it might be easily possible to infer these differences indirectly when examining topics that high or low polarization have in common. I discuss this issue more thoroughly in the last chapter.

as there are almost twice as many topic-pairs for topic in polarized Europeanized public discourse compared to those in unpolarized Europeanized public discourse. Thus, topics more prevalent in unpolarized times are compensated for by a greater number of different topics, providing additional empirical evidence that Europeanized public discourse actually changes substantially when it becomes more polarized.

Table 7.1: Country-Topic Pairs of Polarized and Unpolarized Europeanized Public Discourse

	Polarized	Unpolarized
Topic-pairs	142,831	76,993
Similar topic-pairs	712	360
Percentage (%) of similar topic-pairs	0.49%	0.47%

Building upon my criterion of 80 % similarity to define similar topics between public discourse, I further estimate how many topic-pairs are actually similar in both scenarios (polarized and unpolarized) of Europeanized public discourse. The results in Table 7.1 indicate that for both increasing and decreasing polarization the share of similar topic-pairs is almost the same with about 0.5 % of all topic-pairs being similar. This comparably small number is highly reasonable, given that all topics are compared with each other, resulting in comparisons of extremely different topics. After determining the absolute values of similar topic-pairs, I found that more than 700 topic-pairs were similar for increasing polarization and about 350 topic-pairs were similar with decreasing polarization.

Subsequently, I estimated the number of public discourses in which these similar topics actually showed up. An increasing number of public discourses in which these similar topics showed up would indicate that a topic might be relevant for polarized or unpolarized Europeanized public discourses in a large share of European countries. However, moving from topic-pairs to actual clusters of topics within the EU is computational not straightforward. To do so, I estimated all topic-pairs that can be associated to the same union of topics, assuming transitivity of the similarity scores. As such, I was able to derive a number of topic clusters with larger numbers of public discourses involved.

Figure 7.7 shows the distribution of the topic clusters that showed up in at least two public

discourses. The number of unique topics showing up in at least a two-discourse cluster was 28 with increasing polarization and 33 with decreasing polarization. Furthermore, the results indicate that a large number of topic clusters only exists between two public discourses, indicating topics only became relevant in Europeanized public discourse on a bilateral level. There are, however, several topics that showed up in more than two public discourses. These topics suggest greater relevance in large numbers of public discourses within the EU. For topics becoming more prevalent with polarized Europeanized public discourse, on average, a larger number of public discourses were involved compared to topics becoming prevalent with unpolarized Europeanized public discourse. There was even one topic that became more relevant in almost all (31) public discourses. For topics becoming more prevalent in unpolarized Europeanized public discourse, there were only two topic cluster spanning over more than 10 different public discourses.

Figure 7.7: Number of Public Discourses Debating Similar Topics by Polarization

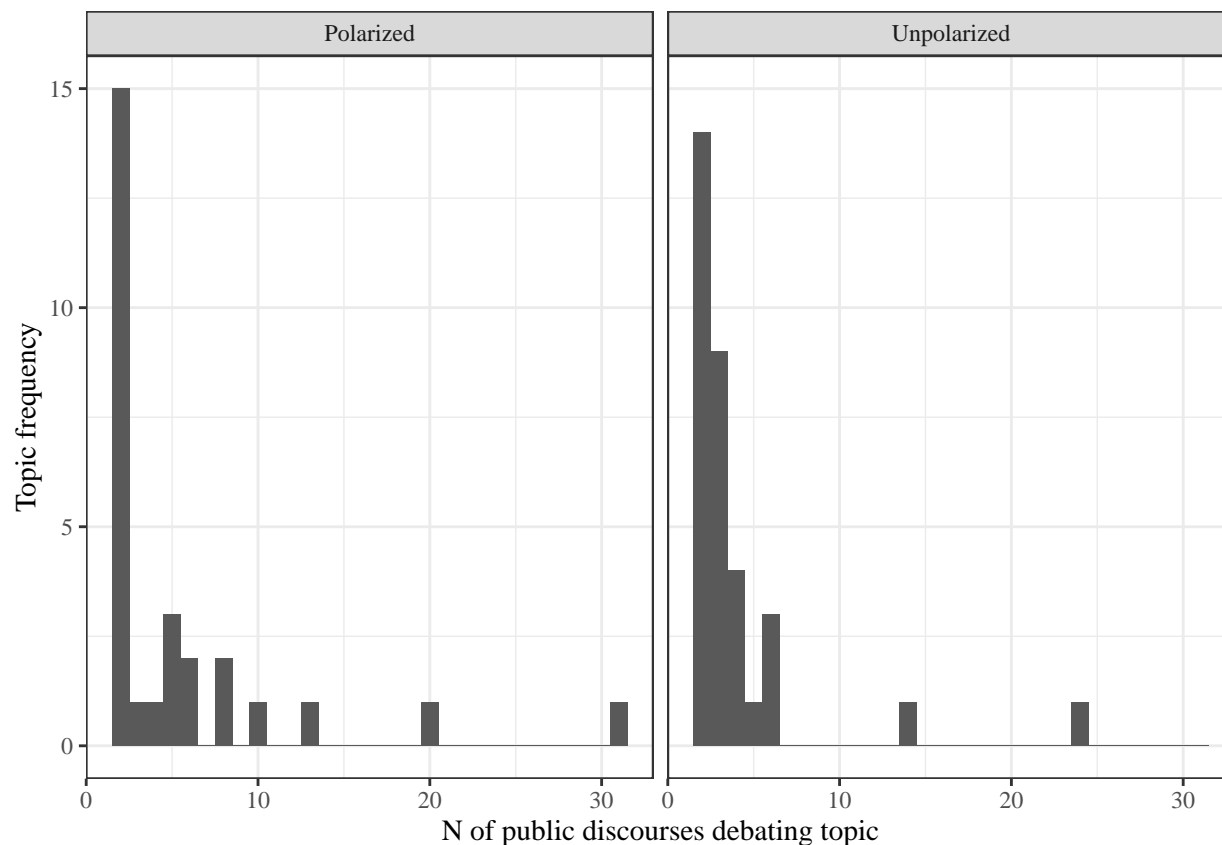


Table 7.2: Topics of Polarized Europeanized Public Discourse

N discourses	Topic label
31	european, minister, europe, eu, government, countries, american, united, union, brexit, president, parliament, states, british, prime
20	police, attack, attacks, terrorism, people, brussels, killed, terrorist, islamic, security, terrorists, authorities, investigation, officers, terror
13	refugees, migrants, asylum, migration, europe, turkey, turkish, greece, refugee, erdogan, immigration, seekers, border, greek, illegal
8	french, france, macron, italian, emmanuel, president, merkel, angela, chancellor, germany, italy, german, league, matteo, paris
8	iran, sanctions, agreement, nuclear, military, syria, united, conflict, iranian, israel, ok, tehran, war, weapons, american
6	companies, business, industry, market, clients, company, conference, environment, executive, international, management, new, services, work, abc
6	data, services, case, conditions, affected, contract, internet, personal, title, users, amazon, companies, customers, digital, eu
5	university, education, school, students, professor, academy, ceu, classes, college, educational, institution, languages, luxembourgish, scientific, student
5	euro, million, euros, billion, costs, counting, month, per, cent, height, largest, millions, money, sales, according
5	city, town, mayor, hall, municipal, people, residents, building, capital, center, community, employee, holy, hundreds, kilometers

Finally, it is relevant to examine the content of the topics identified as prevalent in more than one public discourse with increasing or decreasing public discourse. Before providing topic labels for topics estimated by the STM, it is important to note that some topics that are prevalent in more than one public discourse actually only involve general purpose words and thus do not constitute relevant political topics in Europeanized public discourses throughout the European countries in my sample. Furthermore, I am mostly interested in the topics being relevant in a large share of public discourses. I therefore decided to remove general purpose word topics and only showed the 10 topics being relevant in the largest number of public discourses in the manuscript.¹³

Tables 7.2 and 7.3 show the topics that became more prevalent in the largest numbers of different public discourses with either increasing or decreasing polarization. The first column

¹³The full tables are displayed in Appendix K.

indicates the number of public discourses in which the topic is becoming more prevalent, while the second column shows the 15 FREX words that appear most often in the topic labels of the topics in the different public discourses.

Turning to the topics becoming more prevalent with increased polarization of Europeanized public discourse, I found that the the EU, the United States of America, and Brexit constitute a prevalent topic. It seems that the fundamental threats to the EU as an organization through the decision of the British people to leave the Union and the tough stances of Donald Trump against the EU is an topic that became more relevant when Europeanized public discourse was more polarized. This is highly reasonable, given that these events shuttered the EU and opened up discussions on whether and how the EU might survive this fundamental crisis. Thus, polarization of Europeanized public discourse sparked intense discussions about the EU.

Moving to the other topics of polarized Europeanized public discourse, several topics that were clearly associated with political issues relevant in national public discourse and foreign affairs were found. These topics involved terrorism, migration and the refugee crisis, the Franco-German axis in Europe, the Iran nuclear deal, economic issues, digital services, higher education, funding and local politics. Most of these topics are associated with important political issues both within and between the member states of the EU. Furthermore, in line with my analyses in the last chapters, economic, security and migration issues mark an important part of Europeanized public discourse, as they do for public discourse more generally. What is remarkable, however, is that these topics are often only relevant with increased polarization for some member states and their public discourses and not all 35 public discourses covered in my analysis. This indicates that country-specific features are relevant when examining which topics become more prevalent in Europeanized public discourse with increased polarization.

This conclusion finds empirical confirmation when comparing the above results with the top-

Table 7.3: Topics of Unpolarized Europeanized Public Discourse

N discourses	Topic label
24	government, minister, united, party, parliament, elections, brexit, president, states, american, eu, prime, agreement, trump, deal
6	refugees, asylum, migrants, borders, eu, people, immigration, earth, hospitality, migratory, refuges, said, turkish, yet, border
6	german, germany, merkel, russia, russian, angela, chancellor, berlin, å, putin, ukraine, yet, brand, coalition, government
6	tax, companies, taxes, company, country, customs, days, documents, economics, financial, insolvency, rates, revenue, shadow, vat
5	police, people, officers, crime, spokesman, authorities, authority, commission, deputy, information, investigative, justice, minister, pape, place
4	protesters, protest, manifestation, protests, manifestations, movement, police, thousands, activists, democracy, government, march, people, persons, region
4	turkish, turkey, erdogan, ankara, president, state, tipcat, istanbul, syria, syrian
4	company, companies, production, yet, business, market, receivables, revenue, society, years, brexit, businesses, crown, customers, deal
4	attacks, belgium, brussels, airport, belgian, station, subway, attack, man, paris, police, terrorist, terrorists
3	children, women, child, schools, woman, french, parents, school, time, tongue, zoe

ics becoming more prevalent with decreasing polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Table 7.3 shows the results for the 10 topics becoming prevalent in most public discourses. The most important topic according to this definition again covers mostly institutional aspects and specific non-European actors and events (more specifically Trump and Brexit). However, in this topic, there are barely any references to the EU, indicating that in unpolarized Europeanized public discourse, these two fundamental threats to the EU are discussed very differently compared to during polarized Europeanized public discourse.

Second, and even more importantly, migration issues have become more prevalent in six public discourses with decreasing polarization. This directly opposes the findings for polarized Europeanized public discourse, where 13 public discourse with more prevalence of migration issues with increased polarization were found. These findings reiterate what has already been discovered on several occasions throughout this dissertation project. The conditions

and nature of public discourse – although related between the member states of the EU – differ quite remarkably when examining specific features of national public discourses.

Now, to address the remaining topics that became more prevalent with decreasing polarization in at least some public discourses, there are some rather remarkable differences to the topics becoming more prevalent with increasing polarization. Among others, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, taxation, law enforcement, demonstrations, Turkey and the war in Syria, economic issues, the terrorist attacks in Brussels and Paris, and family and education issues became more relevant in unpolarized Europeanized public discourse. Although the topics from polarized and unpolarized Europeanized public discourse do not differ fundamentally and in every aspect from each other when compared, the findings provide rather clear evidence in support of Hypothesis 13. The nature of Europeanized public discourse actually changes with increased polarization.

Using STMs to analyze public discourse in the member states of the EU allows for the detection of general patterns in the content articulated in public discourse. However, the very highly aggregated analyses might easily obfuscate results on a more disaggregated level, potentially turning a blind eye to country-level specifics of Europeanized public discourse. To shed light on which countries share similarities in Europeanized public discourse, I analyze the variation of topics related to economic, security and migration issues¹⁴ in polarized and unpolarized Europeanized public discourse by country in the last part of the analyses.

This descriptive analysis allows a two-fold examination: First, it allows for the identification of which public discourses are actually associated with varying prevalence and furthermore invites future research to examine potential reasons for between-country differences in the content of Europeanized public discourse, whether they are due to political competition, the respective media systems, or simply national particularities, and events taking place and being covered in public discourse. As assumed in Chapter 6, I do not expect an overall

¹⁴The plotted topics are the second (security), third (migration), and sixth (economy) from Table 7.2 and the second (migration), fourth (economy), and ninth (security) from Table 7.3, respectively.

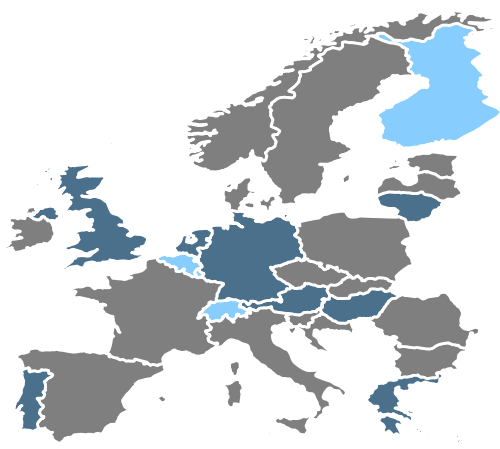
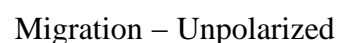
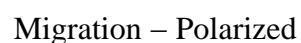
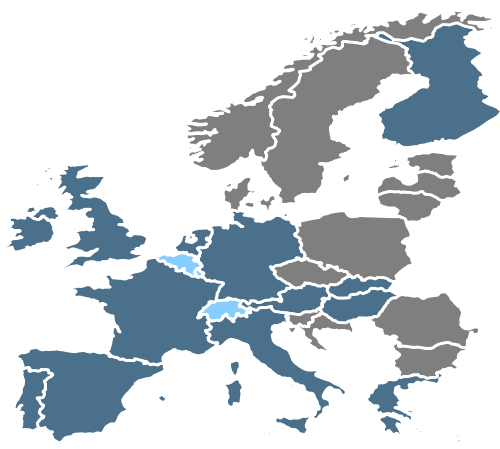
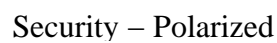
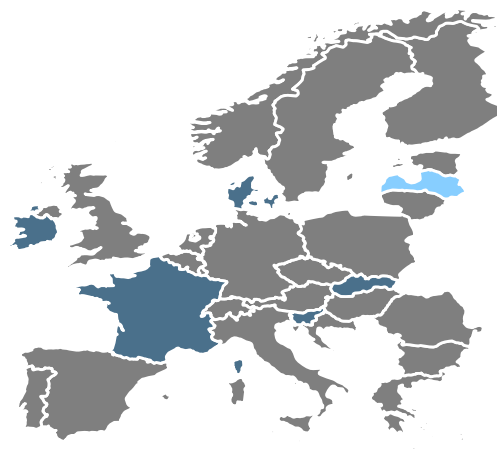
association between the strength of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties and the nature of Europeanized public discourse; however, it is possible that some other pattern of political competition might play an important role when certain issues enter public discourse in the member states of the EU. Examining reasons for variation between public discourses is beyond the scope of this dissertation project but is nevertheless discussed in the last chapter. Figure 7.8 visualizes the public discourses for selected topics on economy, security, and migration-related issues.

Economic issues in Europeanized public discourse shown in the upper panels are not especially prevalent, depending on the level of polarization in Europeanized public discourse in most countries. As assumed, there are almost no public discourses in which economic issues are more prevalent during both polarized and unpolarized Europeanized public discourse - with Slovenia being the sole exception. These results provide some further evidence that public discourses vary strongly between countries and general conclusions on the nature of Europeanized public discourse are difficult to draw.

Security issues (in particular security threats such as terrorism) can be considered the political issues most strongly associated with polarized Europeanized public discourse. In a large majority of the EU member states, this issue is more prevalent when Europeanized public discourse is polarized. However, again, this pattern cannot be found in all public discourses. For some public discourses, security issues arise when Europeanized public discourse is polarized and unpolarized, indicating that certain aspects of security issues play different roles in these discourses.

The conclusion for economic issues are confirmed when considering migration issues. In several public discourses, this issue was strongly associated with polarized Europeanized public discourse, indicating strongly opposing positions on this issue within the public sphere. This, however, does not hold true in all cases. Although this association can be found in some countries from the southern European periphery, such as Portugal and Greece, migration is

Economy – Unpolarized



Note: Dark blue indicates the public discourse in the whole country being more prevalent, light blue indicates only one public discourse in a multi-lingual country.

particularly prevalent when Europeanized public discourse is not polarized in other southern countries, such as Italy, Bulgaria, and Spain. Thus, even so all of these countries have been confronted with strong migration flows in the last years, Europeanized public discourse on migration substantially varies between them.

In sum, in this chapter, I demonstrated that the content of Europeanized public discourse differs with varying levels of polarization in the 35 public discourses covered in my analyses. Using STMs, I showed that on average one quarter of the topics differ in their prevalence when the polarization of Europeanized public discourse changes. There are, however, substantial differences between public discourses of different member states. When examining specific topics and political issues, the results of this study show that economic, security and migration issues vary in prevalence with increasing polarization.

Additionally, foreign policy issues – and in particular, the threats to the integrity of the EU through Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States of America – are in many of the public discourses in the EU member states more strongly associated with high levels of polarization in Europeanized public discourse. Due to the nature of public discourse, it is not possible to ultimately determine whether the topics are always the result of the polarization of Europeanized public discourse or whether they might sometimes even cause polarization. Nevertheless, the results clearly show that the nature of Europeanized public discourse differs when considering the polarization of Europeanized public discourse.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Summary and General Implications

This dissertation project provides the first comprehensive study on the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse in all EU member states. Building upon the conceptual framework of public discourse taking place in national public spheres within the European multi-level system, I have analyzed whether and how political parties shape Europeanized public discourse. According to the post-functionalist theory of European integration political parties have strong incentives to shape public discourse to increase their electoral appeal. Therefore, mainstream opposition parties and challenger parties with strong preferences on European integration crucially influence the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse.

I applied a multi-lingual QTA approach on a large corpus of newspaper articles from the Internet Archive to test whether and how political parties provide the conditions for the Europeanization of public discourse in the member states of the EU. Public discourse in the member states of the EU and their closest neighbors requires both pro- and anti-EU challenger parties to actually become Europeanized. Both the saliency and the polarization of

Europeanized public discourse is influenced by the strength of pro- and anti-EU challenger parties and of the mainstream opposition in the respective party systems. These effects even increase during specific events, such as the election campaign of the European elections. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that public discourses do actually differ quite fundamentally with regard to the content discussed when turning polarized; the underlying conditions for becoming Europeanized public discourse, however, are very similar.

When considering the different aspects of the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse, it is important to acknowledge that not all of my theoretical assumptions have found empirical support. Most importantly, the results on the strategies of mainstream opposition parties differ from my expectations. Europeanized public discourse seems to increase with stronger mainstream opposition, rather than with weak mainstream opposition parties. I discuss the implications of these results on my conceptual framework in greater detail. To be more explicit about the hypotheses tested in this dissertation project, Table 8.1 summarizes whether or not each of the hypotheses have received empirical support.

Table 8.1: Summary: Hypothesis Testing

	Support for Hypothesis
Saliency of Europeanized Public Discourse	
H1: High share of political challengers	✓
H2: Low share of mainstream opposition	✗
H3a: EU and national events	(✓)
H3b: Mainstream & Challenger x EU and national events	(✓)
H4a: Saliency by issue	(✓)
H4b: Mainstream & Challenger x Saliency by issue	✓
H5a: Public discourse on European level	✗
H5b: Mainstream & Challenger x Public discourse on European level	✗
Saliency of Public Discourse between member states	
H6: Europeanized public discourse	✓
H7: Geographic proximity	✓
Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse	
H8: Mainstream parties only	✓
H9: Mainstream & Weak Anti-EU challenger	✗
H10: Mainstream & Strong Anti-EU challenger	✗
H11: Mainstream & Pro-EU challenger	✓
H12: Mainstream, Pro- and Anti-EU challenger	✓
Content of Europeanized Public Discourse	
H13: Differences in content with increased polarization	✓

Note: ✓ indicates support, (✓) partial support, ✗ no support.

Concerning the saliency of Europeanized public discourse, the results indicate that strong challenger parties are associated with a higher share of Europeanization in the public discourses of the respective member states. This effect is particularly strong during the election campaign for the European Parliament and differs according to the issues discussed. The results also show that for mainstream opposition falling short of gaining a majority in the previous election, the association with the saliency of Europeanized public discourse increases. More importantly, such an effect remains strong both during election campaigns for European Parliament and during non-election times. Public discourse on the European level – taking place in the European Parliament – does not affect the Europeanization of public discourse in the member states in any way.

As a side note, this study was also able to provide empirical evidence on how Europeanized public discourse extends beyond the institutional borders of the EU. This study indicates that in both Norway and Switzerland the patterns for Europeanized public discourse do not differ substantially from those for official EU member states. Thus, the results imply that the communicative European sphere is relevant to all public discourses significantly influenced by political decision-making in the EU.

Concerning the saliency of public discourse between member states, the empirical results indicate that Europeanized public discourse in a member state is significantly affected by the level of Europeanization of public discourse in other member states. This implies that not only national political parties but also public discourses in other member states shape Europeanized public discourse. This follows my conceptual framework's claim that public discourses in the EU member states interact with each other. When focusing on public discourse between member states more specifically, the results indicate that countries refer to each other more often with greater geographic proximity. This implies that geographic proximity plays a moderating role in shaping public discourse between member states – and by implication, Europeanized public discourse.

With regard to the polarization of Europeanized public discourse and the interaction of mainstream opposition, pro-EU challenger. and anti-EU challenger parties in public discourse, the results of this study provide important additional insights and empirical evidence that Europeanized public discourse only becomes polarized when the party system is comprised of relevant shares of the three types of political parties. Only with strong pro- and anti-EU challenger parties does Europeanized public discourse become polarized. Most importantly, when anti-EU challenger parties are the only challenger parties in the party system, polarization of Europeanized public discourse does not occur. Pro-EU challenger parties are crucial in shaping Europeanized public discourse, as they bring about conflicts on how politics in the European multi-level system should be implemented.

Finally, the results of applying cutting-edge QTA methods on multi-lingual text corpora indicate that the nature of Europeanized public discourse differs substantially as polarization increases. In times of high polarization, a largely different set of topics becomes more prevalent compared to in times of low polarization. There are, however, substantial differences between public discourses in the member states. This implies that country-specific particularities in public discourse play an important role in understanding how Europeanized public discourse evolves.

To summarize, I have tested several hypotheses on the conditions and nature of Europeanized public discourse. Its results indicate that challenger parties and the interdependence between member states play a crucial role in whether and how Europeanization actually matters in public discourses. The specific European level is actually not substantially relevant for shaping Europeanized public discourse.

This dissertation project provides several important contributions to existing research on public discourse and political communication in general. The innovations of this research consist of both conceptual extensions to existing frameworks, the development of a unique data set, the development of an R package to collect data from the Internet Archive and

new methods for multi-lingual QTA. These contributions provide a potential way forward in examining political communication and public discourse in a larger variety of countries (even beyond Europe).

Explicitly extending the conceptual framework of public spheres and public discourses to the European multi-level system allows to consider the interdependencies between the member states of the EU and the supranational European level. As such, the roles and strategies of mainstream and challenger parties might need to be revised taking into account that public discourses are shaped not only by domestic influences but also by public discourses from neighboring countries. In this regard, public discourse on the European level does not seem to have a direct impact on public discourse in the member states. However, it is self-evident that the European level nevertheless influences Europeanized public discourse in the member states. Without European integration being promoted and negotiated in the institutions of the European level, there would be no basis for Europeanized public discourse in the member states. Thus, the relevance of the European level for Europeanized public discourse in the EU member states needs to be revisited in future research.

Methodologically, I provide an open-access data set with about 3 million newspaper articles from more than 80 newspaper outlets in 30 European countries. This data set has been used to examine Europeanized public discourse over a time span of four years in this study, but can certainly be applied to a variety of different research questions and projects as well. It is thus relevant to future political communication research since it circumvents existing barriers to research projects in this field of communication research. By using the Internet Archive as a data source, researchers might compile their own data sets, customized for their own purposes. In this context, the R package *archiveRetriever* (Gavras and Isermann 2021) - developed to complement this dissertation project - provides researchers with the tools to create datasets based on online newspaper outlets, which are both reproducible and only require minimal technical knowledge to implement.

Lastly, I developed several multi-lingual topic-specific dictionaries and a new evaluation method to interpret results from STMs on multi-lingual corpora. Although there are good reasons why multi-lingual communication research scholars question dictionary approaches and STMs, considering them second-best solutions to gain insights in comparative communication research (Nelson et al. 2021; Lind et al. 2021; Glavaš, Nanni, and Ponzetto 2017), feasible alternatives for research projects covering a large variety of different languages (24 in this dissertation project) do not yet exist. Although there might be more sophisticated alternatives on the horizon, the methods developed here are both an important transitional solution and a feasible and easily applicable method to gain broad insights about the content of large multi-lingual text corpora. In sum, the results derived from this study provide important insights about Europeanized public discourse. However, the results also open up several avenues for further research as some aspects could only be touched upon in this dissertation. I now discuss some possible avenues for further research.

8.2 Avenues for Further Research

This study builds upon a large body of literature on the Europeanization of public discourse and the political implications of European integration more generally. Against this background, I empirically tested important hypotheses on the influence of mainstream and challenger political parties with strong preferences on European integration in shaping Europeanized public discourse. There are, however, several important aspects that could not be thoroughly examined in this project. Further research should consider these avenues when examining public discourses and political communication in the European multi-level system in the future.

In my empirical analyses, I was not able to confirm the hypotheses of mainstream opposition parties' strategies concerning the Europeanization of public discourse. In contrast to my expectations, particularly strong mainstream opposition parties seemed to emphasize the

European component in public discourse. This implies that mainstream opposition parties identify the Europeanization of public discourse as a winning strategy for upcoming elections. There are, however, important nuances that need to be considered. Mainstream opposition parties differ significantly between countries and, depending on the composition of the government coalition, might hold very different political positions. Thus, further research should take a closer look at the specific role of mainstream opposition parties for the Europeanization of public discourse. Furthermore, it could be relevant to differentiate between liberal and conservative mainstream opposition parties, since conservative mainstream opposition might be more inclined to emphasize the European component of public discourse compared to their liberal counterparts (Evans 1998).

Perhaps even more importantly, this study made the assumption that the mainstream parties currently in government do not have strong incentives to increase neither the saliency nor the level of polarization of the Europeanization of public discourse. Further research should closely consider whether this assumption actually holds. With political challenger parties gaining ever more electoral support, government parties might be pressed to present their own narrative on European integration and thus foster Europeanized public discourse (Camatarri and Zucchini 2019; Winzen 2020). Additionally, challenger parties have become increasingly successful in joining government coalitions in the member states of the EU. This might fundamentally change the strategic considerations concerning the government's stance toward Europeanization of public discourse. Further research should test whether the positions of the parties in government and the composition of government coalitions influence the saliency and polarization of Europeanized public discourse. Irrespective of whether the government might play a distinct role for the Europeanization of public discourse, testing hypotheses in this regard represent an important additional test for my theoretical framework.

Additionally, future research should empirically examine further implications and underlying

assumptions of the developed theoretical framework. Two important aspects that could not be examined thoroughly in this project, were the moderating effect of media actors and media systems in the individual political systems. Moreover, it was not possible to test how differing public discourses in the member states of the EU influence voting behavior. Media actors and media systems might moderate how political parties are able to shape public discourse according to their preferences (Aalberg, van Aelst, and Curran 2010). Given that media actors might pursue their own political goals, they could deliberately try to lock some political parties out of public discourse (Page 1996). Although their professional ethics prohibits media actors from significantly intervene in public discourse, they are nevertheless the gate keepers for the topics and issues actually reaching public discourse (Janowitz 1975; Shoemaker and Vos 2009). Further research should examine whether and how media actors and media systems moderate the influence of political parties on the Europeanization of public discourse. Additionally, it should be examine whether Europeanized public discourse actually influences voting behavior and political attitudes of the public in the end. Given that political parties ultimately only aim to shape public discourse to increase their electoral appeal, it is important to empirically examine whether they are actually successful in doing so.

Furthermore, public discourse is not restricted to the newspaper articles examined in this study. Social media has been playing an increasingly important role for public discourses in the EU (e.g., Dutceac Segesten and Bossetta 2019b). Further research should examine whether political parties are able to shape public discourse taking place through social media in the same way they do through traditional media.

In addition to these avenues for further research related to conceptual aspects of this study, there are important extensions to make based on the data collection method developed and the data made available in conjunction with this dissertation project. The span of time studied should be extended to examine whether the strategies of mainstream and challenger

parties are consistent over time. Using the data already made available, future research should aim to zoom in on specific cases triggering the Europeanization of public discourse in particular to gain more in-depth knowledge on the boundary conditions of and the underlying causal mechanisms for this phenomenon. Furthermore, in-depth analyses of the content of Europeanized public discourse should be used to validate the results from the STMs estimated in this project. From a text-as-data perspective, the data made available might also serve to train multi-lingual machine learning algorithms, especially for European languages for which no algorithms are available yet.

Finally, it is important to discuss how the conducted conceptual and empirical work contributes to the normative idea of a European public sphere. There has been important conceptual work on the development of a post-national democracy in Europe when public discourses of the member states create a common communicative sphere in which a truly European public discourse emerges (Eriksen 2005). Following the empirical results on the conditions of Europeanized public discourse, it is unreasonable to expect that a European public sphere can emerge from a top-down process with “Brussels” shaping national public spheres in a way that a common European public sphere develops. A bottom-up approach seems more reasonable given that the Europeanization of public discourse is shaped both due to the preferences and strategies of national political parties and due to the interaction between national public spheres within the EU.

National political parties have strong incentives to retain the national public sphere to shape public discourse in a manner beneficial to their own electoral appeal. Under these circumstances a European public sphere can only emerge within the given institutional structure of the European multi-level system. This implies that a European public sphere might only develop when national political parties add *Europe* to public discourse and consider other member states. With in-depth European integration on additional policy areas incentives for challenger parties increase to further foster Europeanized public discourse. Provided that the

empirical results of this study can be extrapolated to future steps in the integration process, a European public sphere can become incrementally more relevant for public discourses in the EU. However, the normative ideal of a European public sphere replacing national public spheres is unlikely to become a reality anytime soon. The results of this dissertation rather provide supportive evidence that “the solution does not consist in constructing a supranational public sphere, but in transnationalizing the existing national public spheres. For the latter could become more responsive to one another without the need for drastic changes in the existing infrastructure” (Habermas 2009, 183).

Chapter 9

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Appendix A

List of relevant newspapers in Europe

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Austria	Die Presse	quality	moderate-right, liberal, economically	79 000
Austria	Der Standard	quality	liberal, christian leftliberal, social	88 000
Austria	Der Kurier	mix of quality and boulevard	democrat moderate-left, liberal	177 000
Austria	Kleine Zeitung	quality	christian,	303 000
Austria	Kronen Zeitung	boulevard	moderate-right right, conservative,	870 000
Austria	Heute	boulevard	populist social democrat bis	640 000
Austria	Österreich	boulevard	rightpopulist	580 000
Belgium	De Morgen	quality	shifting positions left, socialist	53 000
Belgium	De Standaard	quality	liberal-conservative,	98 000
Belgium	Le Soir	quality	christian-democratic independent, liberal,	66 000
Belgium	La Libre	quality	progressiv liberal-conservative,	35 500
Belgium	La Dernière	boulevard	moderate-right liberal	55 000
Bulgaria	Heure Dnevnik	quality	liberal-conservative,	15 000
Bulgaria	Standart	mix of quality and boulevard	economically liberal left, close to Russia	35 000

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe (*continued*)

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Bulgaria	24 Chasa	boulevard	independent	52 000
Bulgaria	Dneven Trud	boulevard	leftliberal	50 000
Croatia	Jutarnji list	quality	liberal, social	46 000
			democrat	
Croatia	Vecernji list	quality	conservative,	42 000
			nationalist	
Croatia	Novi list	quality	leftliberal	20 000
Croatia	Slobodna	quality	liberal-conservative	24 000
	Dalmacija			
Croatia	24 Sata	boulevard	conservative,	98 000
			nationalist	
Cyprus	Philiftheros	quality	liberal, moderate	15 000 (Sunday: 35 000)
Cyprus	Politis	quality	liberal, moderate-left	16 000
Cyprus	Simerini	quality	conservative	16 000
Cyprus	Haravgi	quality	leftliberal	5 000
Cyprus	Cyprus Mail	quality	liberal-conservative	4 500
Cyprus	Kibris	quality	liberal-conservative	13 000
Czech Republic	Mladá fronta	quality	liberal-conservative,	203 000
	dnes		moderate	
Czech Republic	Lidové noviny	quality	conservative,	49 000
			moderate-right	
Czech Republic	Právo	quality	left, social democrat,	148 000
			liberal	
Czech Republic	Blesk	boulevard	party politically	300 000
			neutral	
Denmark	(Morgenavisen)	quality	liberal-conservative,	100 000
	Jyllands-Posten		economically liberal	
Denmark	Politiken	quality	social, liberal, left	90 000
Denmark	Belingske	quality	conservative	76 000
Denmark	BT	boulevard	liberal-conservative	47 000
Estonia	Postimees	quality	liberal	50 300
Estonia	Eesti Päevaleht	quality	ideologically	21 000
			leftliberal, party	
			politically	
			independent	
Estonia	SL Õhtuleht	boulevard	liberal-conservative,	50 000
			party politically	
			independent	
Finland	Helsingin	quality	party politically	325 000
	Sanomat		neutral, ideologically	
			liberal	
Finland	Aamulehti	quality	liberal-conservative,	103 000
			moderate-right	
Finland	Kaleva	quality	liberal	60 000
Finland	Hufvudstadsbladet	quality	leftliberal	41 000
Finland	Ilta-Sanomat	boulevard	neutral	120 000

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe (*continued*)

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Finland	Iltalehti	boulevard	left, party politically	78 000
France	Le Monde	quality	neutral	280 000
France	Le Figaro	quality	moderate-left, liberal societally	320 000
France	Libération	quality	conservative, economically liberal leftliberal, social	100 000
Germany	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	quality	democrat moderate-right, liberal-conservative	292 000
Germany	Süddeutsche Zeitung	quality	moderate-left, liberal, progressiv	415 000
Germany	Die Welt	quality	moderate-right, conservative	198 000
Germany	Die tageszeitung (taz)	quality	left, grün, progressiv	60 000
Germany	Bild	boulevard	conservative, (right-)populist	2 570 000
Greece	Ta Nea	quality	moderate-left, liberal	13 000
Greece	Kathimerini	quality	conservative, opens comments for every orientation	17 000 (Sunday: 70 000)
Greece	Eleftherotypia	quality	moderate-left, liberal	closed 2014
Greece	Dimokratia	quality	conservative, nationalist, populist	10 000
Hungary	Magyar Nemzet	quality	right, conservative, critical of government	29 000
Hungary	Nemzet Hirlap	quality	nationalist, right, conservative	8 000
Hungary	Népszabadság	quality	leftliberal, critical of government	0 (previously: 55 000)
Hungary	Népszava	quality	left, social democrat, liberal	23 000
Hungary	Blikk	boulevard	close to government, right, conservative	150 000
Ireland	Irish Independent	mix of quality and boulevard	conservative, populist, nationalist, catholic	102 500
Ireland	Irish Times	quality	liberal, social	72 000
Ireland	The Herald	boulevard	conservative	45 000
Italy	La Repubblica	quality	social democrat, leftliberal	341 000
Italy	Corriere della Sera	quality	liberal-conservative	334 000
Italy	La Stampa	quality	liberal-conservative	223 000
Italy	Il Giornale	quality	right, conservative, populist	142 000

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe (*continued*)

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Italy	Il Sole 24 Ore	quality	economically liberal, party politically	157 000
Latvia	Diena	quality	independent liberal, party politically	31 000
Latvia	Neatkarīga Rita	quality	independent conservative,	22 000
Latvia	Avize		nationalist	
Latvia	Latvijas Avize	quality	conservative	16 500
Latvia	Vesti	quality	close to Russia	12 000
Lithuania	Lietuvos rytas	quality	moderate-left, liberal	32 000
Lithuania	Lietuvos žinios	quality	conservative	6 500
Lithuania	Respublika	quality	nationalist,	9 000
Lithuania	Vakaro žinios	boulevard	conservative nationalist, conservative, eurosceptic	30 000
Luxembourg	Luxemburger Wort	quality	conservative, catholic	70 000
Luxembourg	Lëtzebuurger Journal	quality	liberal, moderate	6 000
Luxembourg	Tageblatt	quality	moderate-left, liberal, social democrat	22 000
Luxembourg	Le Quotidien	quality	leftliberal	3 800
Malta	Times of malta	quality	liberal-conservative	37 000
Malta	The Malta Independent	quality	conservative	18 000
Netherlands	De Volkskrant	quality	moderate-left, liberal	220 000
Netherlands	NRC	quality	liberal	140 000
Netherlands	Handelsblad			
Netherlands	Trouw	quality	christian democratic	90 000
Netherlands	De Telegraaf	boulevard	right, conservative, populist	400 000
Norway	Aftenposten	quality	liberal-conservative, independent	morning: 225000 evening: 156000
Norway	Dagbladet	quality	liberal, partly radical	47000
Norway	Vardens Gang (VG)	boulevard	independent, sloganesque	100000
Norway	Vårt land	quality	christian, social, liberal	28000
Norway	Adressavisen	quality	conservative	60000
Poland	Gazeta	quality	left, liberal, social	143 000
Poland	Wyborcza			
Poland	Rzeczpospolita	quality	conservative, christian, nationalist	55 000
Poland	Nasz Dziennik	quality	catholic, conservative	100 000

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe (*continued*)

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Poland	Fakt	boulevard	conservative, populist	285 000
Poland	Super Express	boulevard	right, conservative, nationalist	140 000
Portugal	Journal de Notícias	quality	moderate, liberal	75 000
Portugal	Público	quality	liberal, moderate-left	35 000
Portugal	Diário de Notícias	quality	liberal-conservative	26 000
Portugal	Correio da Manhã	Boulevardzeitung	independent, populist	143 000
Romania	România Libera	quality	conservative	11 000
Romania	Adevarul	quality	liberal-conservative	8 500
Romania	Evenimentul Zilei	quality	depending on financer	11 000
Slowakia	Pravda	quality	leftliberal	66 000
Slowakia	Sme	quality	liberal-conservative, moderate-right	72 000
Slowakia	Nový Cas	boulevard	liberal-conservative, populist	98 000
Slowenia	Delo	quality	leftliberal, social democrat	35 500
Slowenia	Dnevnik	quality	left, liberal	28 000
Spain	El País	quality	liberal, moderate-left sceptic towards Podemos and Separatists	210 000
Spain	ABC	quality	conservative, nationalist, close to the Crown	101 000
Spain	El Mundo	quality	conservative, moderate-right	117 000
Spain	La Razón	quality	conservative, catholic, monarcist, nationalist	80 000
Spain	La Vanguardia	quality	liberal-conservative, moderate regionalist	125 000
Spain	El Periódico de Catalunya	quality	leftliberal, social democrat, pro independence of Katalonia	85 000
Spain	20 minutos	mix of quality and boulevard	liberal, independent	300 000
Sweden	Dagens Nyheter	quality	liberal, social	280 000
Sweden	Göteborgs- Posten	quality	liberal, neoliberal	170 000
Sweden	Svenska Dagbladet	quality	moderate-right, liberal-conservative	140 000
Sweden	Sydsvenskan	quality	moderate-left, liberal	100 000

Table A.1: List of relevant newspapers in Europe (*continued*)

Country	Newspaper	Newspaper type	Editorial orientation	Circulation
Sweden	Aftonbladet	boulevard	leftliberal, social	160 000
Sweden	Expressen	boulevard	democrat liberal, politically	150 000
Switzerland	Aargauer Zeitung	quality	independent liberal, social	167000
Switzerland	Blick	quality	centre-left, liberal	160000
Switzerland	Neue Züricher Zeitung	quality	neoliberal	115000
Switzerland	Tagesanzeiger	quality	liberal, left	156000
Switzerland	Tribune de Génève	quality	liberal, left	55000
Switzerland	Le temps	quality	liberal, socialdemocratic	38000
Switzerland	Corriere del Ticino	quality	neoliberal, conservative	38000
Switzerland	La regione Ticino	quality	left-liberal	35000
United Kingdom	The Guardian	quality	moderate-left, liberal, progressiv, pro-EU	158 000
United Kingdom	The Times	quality	conservative, moderate-right, eurosceptic	438 000
United Kingdom	The Daily Telegraph	quality	conservative, moderate-right	457 000
United Kingdom	The Sun	boulevard	right, conservative, anti-european, populist	1 670 000
United Kingdom	Daily Express	boulevard	right, nationalist, populist,	415 000
United Kingdom	Daily Mail	boulevard	anti-european conservative, right	1 510 000
United Kingdom	Daily Mirror	boulevard	leftliberal, social	756 000

Appendix B

Polarization of Public Discourse

Figure B.1: Polarization: Economic issues

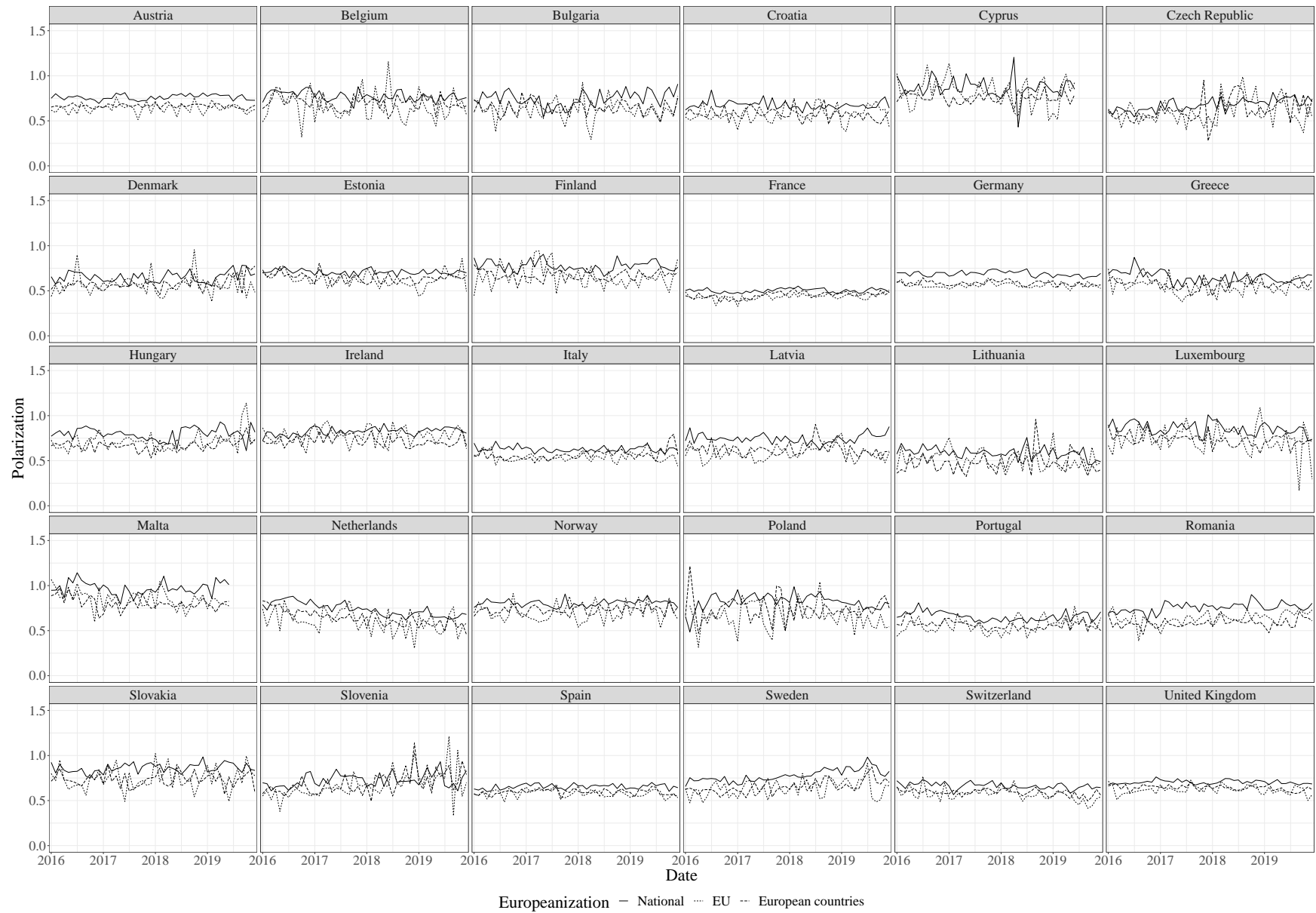


Figure B.2: Polarization: Security issues

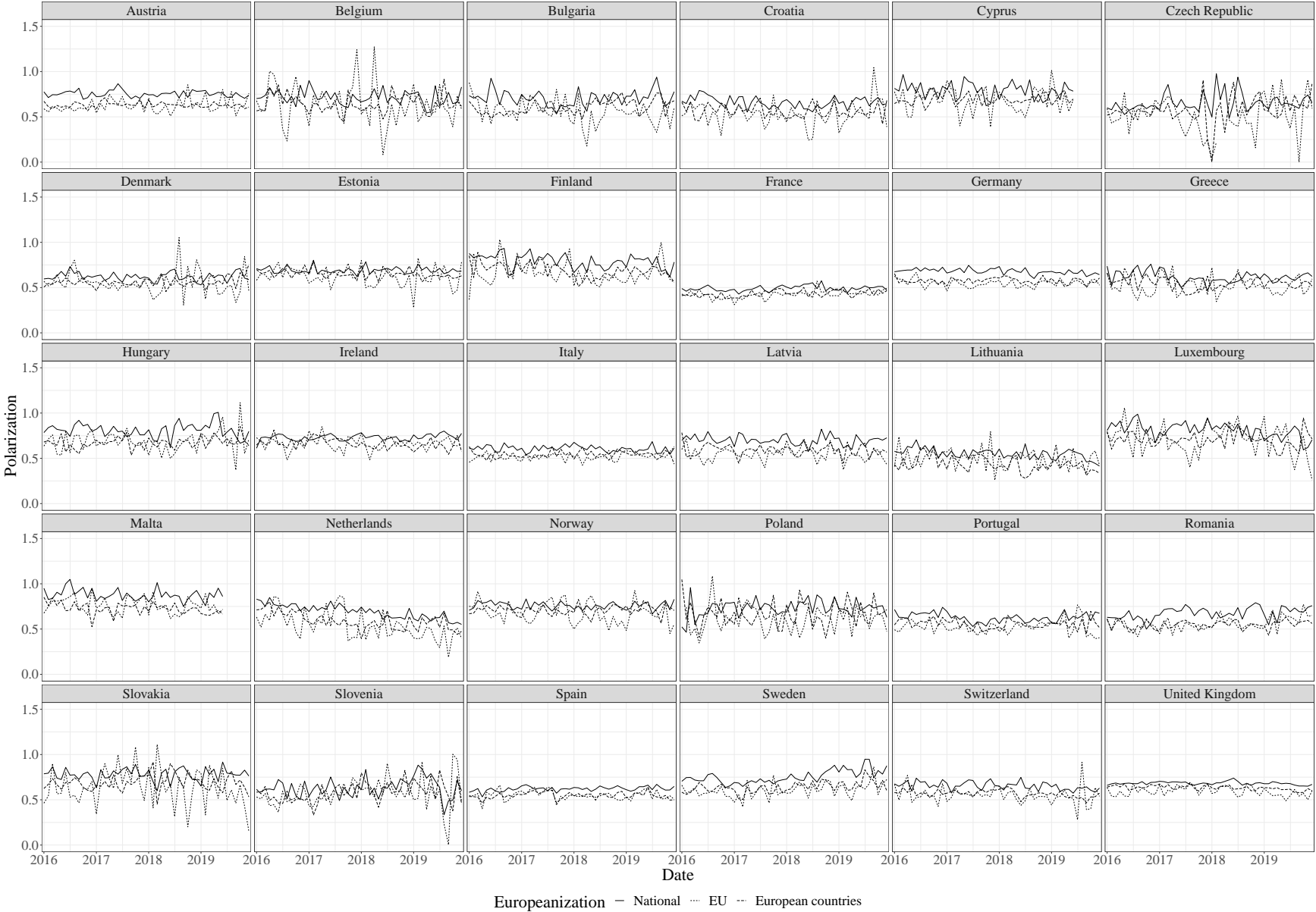
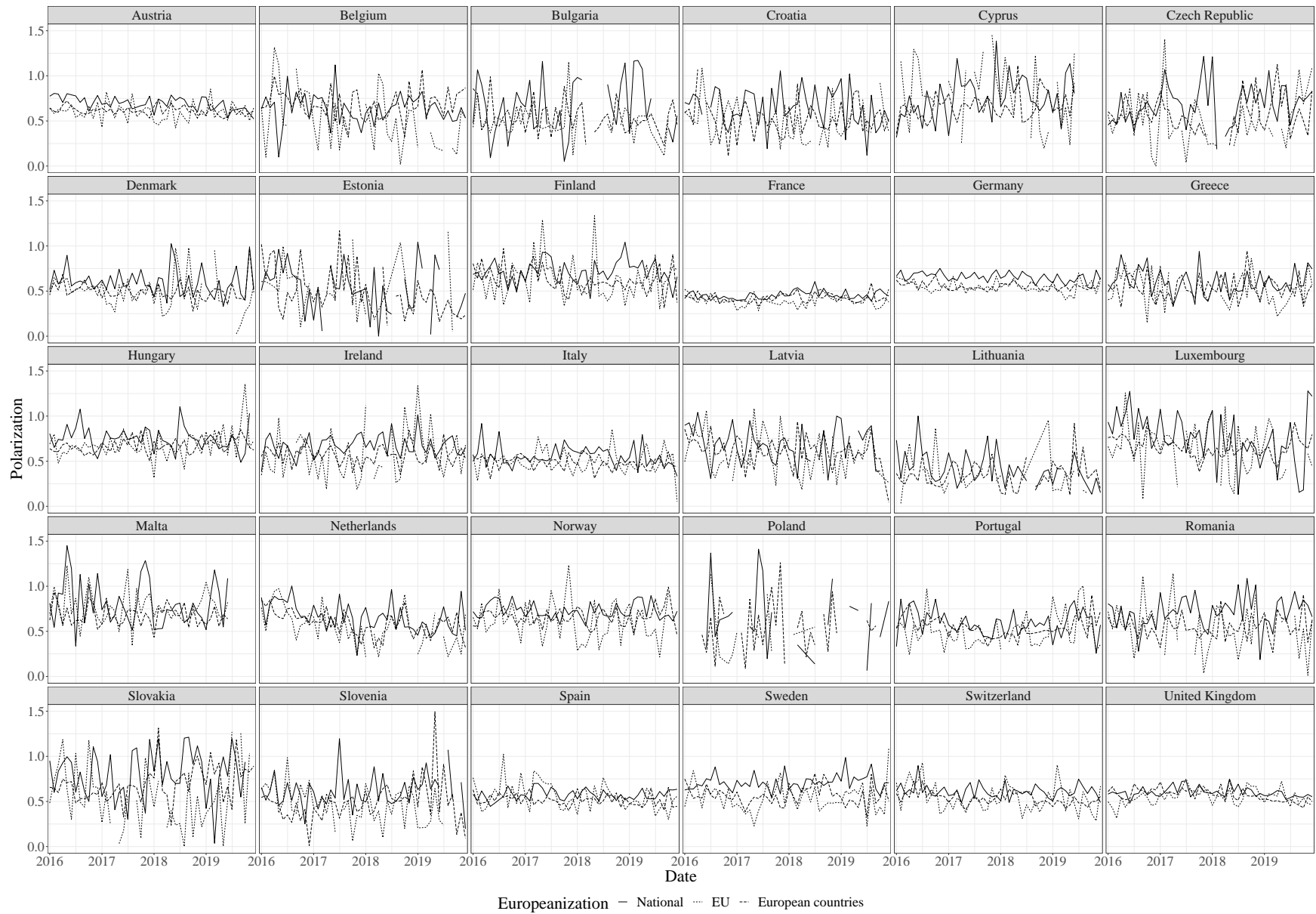


Figure B.3: Polarization: Migration issues



Appendix C

Positions on European Integration: Mainstream and Challenger Parties

Table C.1: European Integration: Mainstream and Challenger Parties

Country	Party type	Mean: EU integration	SD: EU integration
Austria	Mainstream	4.47	1.67
Austria	Challenger	6.61	0.11
Belgium	Mainstream	6.45	0.26
Belgium	Challenger	3.08	0.88
Bulgaria	Mainstream	5.97	0.68
Bulgaria	Challenger	4.19	1.44
Croatia	Mainstream	6.55	0.23
Croatia	Challenger	4.27	1.45
Cyprus	Mainstream	5.62	0.42
Cyprus	Challenger	4.75	0.58
Czech Republic	Mainstream	5.25	1.16
Czech Republic	Challenger	4.77	2.04
Denmark	Mainstream	5.88	0.70
Denmark	Challenger	3.68	1.47
Estonia	Mainstream	5.94	0.69
Estonia	Challenger	-	-
Finland	Mainstream	5.59	0.94
Finland	Challenger	1.64	0.00

Table C.1: European Integration: Mainstream and Challenger Parties (*continued*)

Country	Party type	Mean: EU integration	SD: EU integration
France	Mainstream	5.71	1.12
France	Challenger	2.93	2.30
Germany	Mainstream	6.41	0.35
Germany	Challenger	3.78	1.62
Greece	Mainstream	6.26	0.94
Greece	Challenger	1.32	0.40
Hungary	Mainstream	4.78	1.98
Hungary	Challenger	5.67	1.28
Ireland	Mainstream	6.12	0.15
Ireland	Challenger	3.90	0.87
Italy	Mainstream	3.98	2.06
Italy	Challenger	5.36	1.24
Latvia	Mainstream	4.77	0.05
Latvia	Challenger	5.92	0.68
Lithuania	Mainstream	6.15	0.73
Lithuania	Challenger	4.82	1.19
Luxembourg	Mainstream	6.50	0.00
Luxembourg	Challenger	4.64	0.94
Malta	Mainstream	6.36	0.23
Malta	Challenger	-	-
Netherlands	Mainstream	5.45	1.02
Netherlands	Challenger	3.33	1.83
Norway	Mainstream	3.87	2.02
Norway	Challenger	3.83	0.77
Poland	Mainstream	5.09	1.61
Poland	Challenger	4.76	2.30
Portugal	Mainstream	6.53	0.41
Portugal	Challenger	3.43	0.81
Romania	Mainstream	5.44	1.04
Romania	Challenger	5.81	0.74
Slovakia	Mainstream	4.48	1.06
Slovakia	Challenger	4.38	1.79
Slovenia	Mainstream	5.78	0.52
Slovenia	Challenger	5.26	1.50
Spain	Mainstream	6.63	0.18

Table C.1: European Integration: Mainstream and Challenger Parties (*continued*)

Country	Party type	Mean: EU integration	SD: EU integration
Spain	Challenger	5.48	0.79
Sweden	Mainstream	6.11	0.43
Sweden	Challenger	3.51	1.31
Switzerland	Mainstream	3.67	1.46
Switzerland	Challenger	4.85	0.84
United Kingdom	Mainstream	2.76	1.30
United Kingdom	Challenger	6.06	1.65
Total	Mainstream	5.52	1.38
Total	Challenger	4.60	1.67

Appendix D

Issue-specific Europeanized public discourse

Table D.1: Regression results: Europeanization of economic public discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Europeanization		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Share Challengers	0.052** (0.016)	0.037* (0.018)	0.051** (0.016)
Share MS-Opposition	0.038 (0.022)	0.035 (0.022)	0.041 (0.024)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.0001 (0.0003)	0.0003 (0.0004)	−0.0002 (0.0004)
Other member states	0.565*** (0.024)	0.563*** (0.024)	0.563*** (0.024)
National election campaign	0.003 (0.004)	−0.004 (0.006)	0.015 (0.010)
EP election campaign	0.038*** (0.009)	0.027** (0.010)	0.038** (0.012)
EU Summits	0.009* (0.004)	0.004 (0.005)	0.016** (0.006)
EU member state	0.043 (0.047)	0.044 (0.047)	0.043 (0.047)
East	0.031 (0.025)	0.030 (0.025)	0.031 (0.025)
Share Unemployment	0.0003 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.001)	0.0002 (0.001)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Economy		−0.001 (0.001)	
Share Challengers x Election campaign		0.043 (0.028)	
Share Challengers x EP election campaign		0.060* (0.025)	
Share Challengers x EU Summits		0.036* (0.014)	
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Economy			0.001 (0.001)
Share MS-Opposition x Election campaign			−0.041 (0.031)
Share MS-Opposition x EP election campaign			0.0002 (0.030)
Share MS-Opposition x EU Summits			−0.024 (0.015)
Constant	−0.010 (0.046)	−0.006 (0.046)	−0.009 (0.046)
Observations	1,427	1,427	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,593.856	2,585.668	2,581.867
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−5,159.712	−5,135.337	−5,127.734
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−5,086.025	−5,040.597	−5,032.994

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table D.2: Regression results: Europeanization of security public discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Europeanization		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Share Challengers	0.035 (0.018)	0.024 (0.021)	0.032 (0.019)
Share MS-Opposition	0.034 (0.025)	0.032 (0.025)	0.038 (0.027)
EU public discourse: Security	0.0003 (0.001)	0.0003 (0.001)	0.0001 (0.001)
Other member states	0.484*** (0.024)	0.485*** (0.025)	0.483*** (0.025)
National election campaign	−0.001 (0.005)	−0.003 (0.007)	0.006 (0.012)
EP election campaign	0.036** (0.012)	0.028* (0.014)	0.056*** (0.016)
EU Summits	0.007 (0.006)	0.005 (0.007)	0.010 (0.008)
EU member state	0.030 (0.044)	0.030 (0.044)	0.030 (0.044)
East	0.040 (0.023)	0.040 (0.023)	0.040 (0.023)
N Homicides	−0.0000 (0.0000)	−0.0000 (0.0000)	−0.0000 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	0.002* (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Security		−0.0002 (0.001)	
Share Challengers x Election campaign		0.013 (0.033)	
Share Challengers x EP election campaign		0.044 (0.029)	
Share Challengers x EU Summits		0.017 (0.015)	
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Security			0.001 (0.002)
Share MS-Opposition x Election campaign			−0.023 (0.036)
Share MS-Opposition x EP election campaign			−0.070* (0.035)
Share MS-Opposition x EU Summits			−0.010 (0.017)
Constant	0.015 (0.044)	0.017 (0.044)	0.015 (0.044)
Observations	1,427	1,427	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,386.329	2,374.086	2,375.083
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−4,742.658	−4,710.172	−4,712.167
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−4,663.708	−4,610.169	−4,612.163

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table D.3: Regression results: Europeanization of migration public discourse

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Europeanization		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Share Challengers	0.074 (0.045)	0.094 (0.050)	0.070 (0.045)
Share MS-Opposition	0.040 (0.058)	0.034 (0.058)	0.018 (0.063)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.005 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.003 (0.007)
Other member states	0.456*** (0.025)	0.459*** (0.025)	0.457*** (0.025)
National election campaign	-0.005 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.018)	-0.004 (0.031)
EP election campaign	0.038 (0.024)	0.008 (0.027)	0.058 (0.035)
EU Summits	0.018 (0.012)	0.029* (0.014)	0.006 (0.017)
EU member state	0.054 (0.056)	0.055 (0.055)	0.055 (0.055)
East	-0.010 (0.031)	-0.011 (0.031)	-0.010 (0.031)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	-0.013** (0.004)	-0.013** (0.004)	-0.012** (0.004)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Migration		-0.011 (0.015)	
Share Challengers x Election campaign		-0.002 (0.083)	
Share Challengers x EP election campaign		0.167* (0.073)	
Share Challengers x EU Summits		-0.063 (0.039)	
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Migration			0.007 (0.016)
Share MS-Opposition x Election campaign			-0.002 (0.091)
Share MS-Opposition x EP election campaign			-0.070 (0.087)
Share MS-Opposition x EU Summits			0.042 (0.043)
Constant	0.208** (0.063)	0.205** (0.063)	0.211*** (0.063)
Observations	1,425	1,425	1,425
Log Likelihood	1,102.860	1,098.139	1,095.312
Akaike Inf. Crit.	-2,177.719	-2,160.278	-2,154.625
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	-2,104.052	-2,065.563	-2,059.910

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix E

Reversed Causality: Issues and Europeanized Public Discourse

Table E.1: Regression results: Europeanization of public discourse (lagged)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Europeanization
Share Challengers	0.054*** (0.015)
Share MS-Opposition	0.042* (0.019)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.001 (0.001)
EU public discourse: Migration	−0.001 (0.002)
EU public discourse: Security	−0.0001 (0.001)
Economic issues	0.040 (0.023)
Security issues	0.078*** (0.021)
Migration issues	0.180*** (0.036)
Other member states	0.238*** (0.025)
National election campaign	−0.002 (0.004)
EP election campaign	0.040*** (0.011)
EU Summits	0.011 (0.006)
EU member state	0.019 (0.024)
East	0.039** (0.014)
Share Unemployment	0.001 (0.001)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	−0.001 (0.002)
N Terrorist attacks	0.001 (0.001)
Europeanization (lagged)	0.482*** (0.022)
Constant	−0.099** (0.036)
Observations	1,396
Log Likelihood	2,666.716
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−5,289.431
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−5,174.121
<i>Note:</i>	
* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001	

Table E.2: Reversed Causality: Political issues and Europeanization

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Economic issues (1)	Security issues (2)	Migration issues (3)
Europeanization	0.069** (0.026)	0.119*** (0.027)	0.086*** (0.017)
Security issues	−0.108*** (0.026)		0.161*** (0.016)
Economic issues		−0.106*** (0.027)	0.063*** (0.017)
Other member states	0.128** (0.040)	0.412*** (0.040)	
Migration issues	−0.364*** (0.029)	−0.069* (0.031)	0.086*** (0.019)
Constant	0.781*** (0.021)	0.501*** (0.031)	−0.086*** (0.018)
Observations	1,427	1,427	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,526.965	2,504.673	3,159.904
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−5,037.929	−4,993.346	−6,303.808
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−4,995.823	−4,951.239	−6,261.701

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix F

Saliency of Europeanized Public Discourse - Interaction Effects

Table F.1: Regression results: Europeanization of public discourse - Interaction effects I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i> Europeanization
Share Challengers	0.661*** (0.116)
Economic issues	0.159*** (0.035)
Security issues	0.245*** (0.032)
Migration issues	0.254*** (0.048)
Share MS-Opposition	0.048* (0.022)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.0003 (0.001)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.003 (0.003)
EU public discourse: Security	-0.0003 (0.001)
National election campaign	-0.007 (0.006)
EP election campaign	0.038** (0.013)
EU Summits	0.008 (0.006)
Other member states	0.300*** (0.028)
EU member state	0.038 (0.047)
East	0.057* (0.025)
Share Unemployment	0.003* (0.001)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	-0.003 (0.002)
N Homicides	-0.0000 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	0.001 (0.001)
Share Challengers x Economic issues	-0.422** (0.139)
Share Challengers x Migration issues	-0.479*** (0.119)
Share Challengers x Security issues	-0.239 (0.188)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Economy	0.0000 (0.001)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Migration	-0.008 (0.006)
Share Challengers x EU discourse: Security	-0.001 (0.002)
Share Challengers x Election campaign	0.041 (0.029)
Share Challengers x EP election campaign	0.108*** (0.026)
Share Challengers x EU Summits	0.021 (0.014)
Constant	-0.206*** (0.059)
Observations	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,530.525
Akaike Inf. Crit.	-4,999.050
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	-4,835.887

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table F.2: Regression results: Europeanization of public discourse - Interaction effects II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i> Europeanization
Share MS-Opposition	0.022 (0.130)
Economic issues	0.062 (0.054)
Security issues	0.140** (0.048)
Migration issues	0.188** (0.066)
Share Challengers	0.100*** (0.018)
EU public discourse: Economy	−0.0000 (0.001)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.0001 (0.003)
EU public discourse: Security	−0.0002 (0.001)
National election campaign	0.008 (0.011)
EP election campaign	0.077*** (0.015)
EU Summits	0.017* (0.007)
Other member states	0.306*** (0.029)
EU member state	0.034 (0.047)
East	0.060* (0.025)
Share Unemployment	0.002 (0.001)
N Asylum seekers	−0.002 (0.002)
Homicides	0.0000 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	0.001 (0.001)
Share MS-Opposition x Economic issues	0.080 (0.167)
Share MS-Opposition x Migration issues	0.002 (0.145)
Share MS-Opposition x Security issues	0.112 (0.207)
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Economy	0.001 (0.001)
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Migration	0.004 (0.007)
Share MS-Opposition x EU discourse: Security	−0.001 (0.002)
Share MS-Opposition x Election campaign	−0.027 (0.032)
Share MS-Opposition x EP election campaign	−0.064* (0.031)
Share MS-Opposition x EU Summits	−0.023 (0.015)
Constant	−0.091 (0.065)
Observations	1,427
Log Likelihood	2,501.181
Akaike Inf. Crit.	−4,940.361
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	−4,777.198

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix G

Public Discourse Between Member States - Europeanization of public discourse

Table G.1: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Europeanization									
	AUT	BEL	BGR	CHE	CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK	ESP	EST
Europeanization - aggr.	0.605*** (0.106)	0.849*** (0.139)	0.858** (0.289)	0.544*** (0.120)	0.622** (0.209)	0.701* (0.277)	0.922*** (0.116)	1.120*** (0.213)	0.473*** (0.096)	0.122 (0.225)
Economic issues	0.467** (0.134)	0.185* (0.077)	0.494* (0.200)	0.289 (0.147)	0.231 (0.130)	-0.487* (0.197)	0.070 (0.114)	0.085 (0.135)	0.193** (0.064)	-0.299 (0.188)
Security issues	0.428** (0.144)	0.083 (0.081)	0.335* (0.130)	0.246* (0.107)	-0.167 (0.177)	-0.102 (0.092)	-0.132 (0.095)	-0.194 (0.103)	0.120 (0.082)	-0.053 (0.185)
Migration issues	0.149 (0.092)	0.126 (0.086)	0.526* (0.204)	0.245* (0.103)	-0.153 (0.208)	0.242 (0.176)	0.029 (0.052)	0.171 (0.093)	0.118 (0.107)	2.084 (1.103)
Other member states	0.136 (0.117)	0.225** (0.083)	0.562*** (0.129)	0.416*** (0.103)	0.157 (0.147)	-0.481* (0.209)	0.396*** (0.078)	0.181 (0.123)	0.338** (0.101)	-0.076 (0.192)
Constant	-0.463** (0.134)	-0.308** (0.098)	-0.630** (0.205)	-0.437** (0.133)	0.071 (0.192)	0.472* (0.190)	-0.059 (0.130)	-0.093 (0.144)	-0.196* (0.084)	0.372 (0.209)
Observations	48	48	47	48	42	48	48	48	48	48
R ²	0.666	0.563	0.510	0.624	0.407	0.303	0.832	0.577	0.578	0.157
Adjusted R ²	0.626	0.511	0.450	0.579	0.324	0.220	0.812	0.527	0.528	0.056

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table G.2: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Europeanization									
	FIN	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL	ITA	LTU	LUX
Europeanization - aggr.	0.680** (0.202)	1.333*** (0.242)	0.327** (0.108)	0.715*** (0.202)	0.422* (0.180)	0.752** (0.232)	0.819*** (0.157)	0.653*** (0.117)	0.870*** (0.168)	1.353*** (0.289)
Economic issues	-0.124 (0.159)	-0.023 (0.160)	-0.041 (0.163)	-0.349* (0.158)	0.054 (0.131)	0.227 (0.154)	0.181 (0.107)	0.067 (0.072)	-0.353** (0.114)	0.379* (0.149)
Security issues	0.253* (0.109)	-0.268 (0.171)	0.389* (0.192)	-0.461** (0.147)	0.345** (0.107)	-0.277* (0.137)	-0.503*** (0.131)	-0.099 (0.120)	-0.327** (0.108)	0.847*** (0.104)
Migration issues	0.329 (0.233)	-0.212 (0.179)	-0.059 (0.162)	0.041 (0.263)	0.087 (0.196)	0.471** (0.161)	-0.111 (0.190)	0.213 (0.111)	-0.725 (0.475)	0.200 (0.292)
Other member states	0.275* (0.119)	0.078 (0.192)	0.249* (0.115)	-0.309** (0.107)	0.112 (0.120)	-0.076 (0.229)	0.986*** (0.089)	0.181* (0.075)	0.094 (0.116)	0.133 (0.183)
Constant	-0.151 (0.140)	0.105 (0.206)	-0.280 (0.146)	0.520** (0.185)	-0.180 (0.138)	0.144 (0.183)	-0.079 (0.130)	0.095 (0.104)	0.378** (0.134)	-0.686*** (0.166)
Observations	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
R ²	0.447	0.572	0.412	0.493	0.234	0.381	0.836	0.664	0.617	0.700
Adjusted R ²	0.381	0.522	0.341	0.433	0.143	0.308	0.816	0.624	0.571	0.664

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table G.3: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Europeanization									
	LVA	MLT	NLD	NOR	POL	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Europeanization - aggr.	0.856*	0.710**	0.836***	0.453***	1.547***	1.010***	1.461***	0.794***	0.673*	0.994***
	(0.414)	(0.214)	(0.162)	(0.124)	(0.334)	(0.171)	(0.331)	(0.200)	(0.282)	(0.166)
Economic issues	-0.448	0.413	0.170**	0.086	-0.224	0.057	0.254	0.436*	0.534*	0.197
	(0.338)	(0.210)	(0.053)	(0.101)	(0.224)	(0.046)	(0.219)	(0.176)	(0.232)	(0.123)
Security issues	0.217	0.168	0.019	0.254**	-0.117	0.142	0.018	0.639***	0.113	-0.173
	(0.350)	(0.161)	(0.130)	(0.092)	(0.204)	(0.093)	(0.206)	(0.145)	(0.121)	(0.107)
Migration issues	-0.579	0.208	-0.212	0.043	-0.484	0.143	-2.932***	0.487*	0.217	0.186
	(0.505)	(0.181)	(0.164)	(0.096)	(0.986)	(0.132)	(0.823)	(0.191)	(0.198)	(0.135)
Other member states	0.788*	0.280	0.155	0.439***	0.402	0.492***	0.543*	0.460*	0.407*	0.440***
	(0.324)	(0.162)	(0.100)	(0.078)	(0.283)	(0.106)	(0.227)	(0.175)	(0.193)	(0.098)
Constant	0.018	-0.290	-0.178*	-0.312**	-0.124	-0.309**	-0.250	-0.635***	-0.514*	-0.255*
	(0.403)	(0.209)	(0.084)	(0.106)	(0.247)	(0.091)	(0.185)	(0.167)	(0.213)	(0.107)
Observations	48	42	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
R ²	0.480	0.492	0.539	0.691	0.418	0.753	0.585	0.714	0.401	0.722
Adjusted R ²	0.418	0.422	0.484	0.654	0.349	0.723	0.536	0.681	0.329	0.688

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table G.4: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization (lagged) I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	AUT	BEL	BGR	CHE	Europeanization CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK	ESP	EST
Europeanization - aggr. (lag)	0.189 (0.133)	0.412* (0.201)	0.264 (0.323)	0.047 (0.163)	0.208 (0.212)	0.047 (0.324)	0.314 (0.180)	0.129 (0.265)	0.184 (0.115)	−0.228 (0.223)
Economic issues	0.318 (0.179)	0.148 (0.105)	0.513* (0.231)	0.419* (0.174)	0.330* (0.140)	−0.556* (0.225)	−0.012 (0.196)	−0.045 (0.174)	0.245** (0.079)	−0.294 (0.186)
Security issues	0.190 (0.179)	0.004 (0.106)	0.249 (0.140)	0.316* (0.143)	−0.293 (0.193)	−0.149 (0.104)	−0.294 (0.157)	−0.445** (0.132)	0.005 (0.095)	−0.114 (0.180)
Migration issues	0.325* (0.122)	0.288* (0.119)	0.464* (0.226)	0.433** (0.134)	−0.031 (0.227)	0.286 (0.213)	0.076 (0.084)	0.389* (0.149)	0.186 (0.132)	2.771* (1.153)
Other member states	0.115 (0.153)	0.165 (0.109)	0.520*** (0.146)	0.486*** (0.130)	0.142 (0.166)	−0.452 (0.232)	0.632*** (0.113)	0.289 (0.166)	0.323* (0.124)	0.029 (0.199)
Constant	−0.179 (0.172)	−0.136 (0.128)	−0.426 (0.244)	−0.497** (0.161)	0.203 (0.207)	0.683** (0.227)	0.136 (0.213)	0.304 (0.180)	−0.087 (0.102)	0.443* (0.207)
Observations	47	47	46	47	41	47	47	47	47	47
R ²	0.447	0.268	0.401	0.461	0.284	0.198	0.616	0.301	0.374	0.203
Adjusted R ²	0.380	0.179	0.326	0.395	0.182	0.100	0.569	0.216	0.298	0.106

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table G.5: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization (lagged) II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	FIN	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL	ITA	LTU	LUX
Europeanization - aggr. (lag)	−0.019 (0.218)	0.850** (0.269)	0.027 (0.117)	0.111 (0.248)	0.162 (0.175)	0.288 (0.287)	0.335 (0.223)	0.086 (0.143)	0.200 (0.213)	0.611 (0.325)
Economic issues	−0.202 (0.177)	0.005 (0.200)	0.115 (0.159)	−0.458* (0.179)	0.048 (0.136)	0.110 (0.185)	0.126 (0.135)	0.087 (0.096)	−0.494** (0.144)	0.379* (0.179)
Security issues	0.038 (0.117)	−0.614** (0.186)	0.360 (0.194)	−0.512** (0.171)	0.226* (0.102)	−0.294 (0.152)	−0.616*** (0.172)	−0.263 (0.158)	−0.313* (0.143)	0.849*** (0.126)
Migration issues	0.668* (0.265)	0.076 (0.203)	0.166 (0.154)	−0.069 (0.303)	0.154 (0.202)	0.595** (0.174)	0.089 (0.236)	0.259 (0.148)	−0.443 (0.597)	0.723* (0.333)
Other member states	0.396** (0.137)	0.391 (0.222)	0.362** (0.125)	−0.398** (0.123)	0.149 (0.126)	−0.243 (0.249)	0.973*** (0.126)	0.291** (0.098)	0.133 (0.154)	0.303 (0.217)
Constant	0.082 (0.151)	0.256 (0.248)	−0.310* (0.148)	0.794*** (0.202)	−0.064 (0.140)	0.395 (0.210)	0.144 (0.161)	0.267 (0.136)	0.606** (0.173)	−0.632** (0.216)
Observations	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47
R ²	0.320	0.408	0.412	0.342	0.156	0.252	0.744	0.421	0.391	0.579
Adjusted R ²	0.237	0.336	0.340	0.262	0.053	0.161	0.712	0.351	0.317	0.528

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table G.6: Regression results: Public discourse between member states - Europeanization (lagged) III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Europeanization									
	LVA	MLT	NLD	NOR	POL	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Europeanization - aggr. (lag)	0.238 (0.425)	0.192 (0.228)	0.301 (0.181)	0.059 (0.150)	0.960* (0.385)	0.096 (0.211)	0.850* (0.355)	0.338 (0.227)	0.295 (0.301)	0.270 (0.201)
Economic issues	-0.645 (0.344)	0.396 (0.241)	0.200** (0.062)	0.107 (0.123)	-0.669* (0.303)	0.122 (0.061)	0.251 (0.253)	0.401 (0.201)	0.659* (0.247)	-0.028 (0.164)
Security issues	0.079 (0.363)	0.206 (0.178)	0.113 (0.153)	0.217* (0.106)	-0.307 (0.224)	-0.028 (0.125)	-0.268 (0.229)	0.494** (0.163)	0.090 (0.129)	-0.268 (0.136)
Migration issues	-0.484 (0.599)	0.355 (0.194)	0.357 (0.178)	0.004 (0.133)	-1.151 (1.150)	0.353 (0.176)	-2.595* (0.965)	0.738** (0.235)	0.257 (0.221)	0.629** (0.180)
Other member states	0.724* (0.346)	0.322 (0.177)	0.338** (0.117)	0.504*** (0.092)	0.037 (0.335)	0.721*** (0.140)	0.815** (0.245)	0.581** (0.200)	0.437* (0.207)	0.500*** (0.127)
Constant	0.353 (0.395)	-0.203 (0.251)	-0.216* (0.098)	-0.225 (0.130)	0.428 (0.300)	-0.118 (0.127)	-0.088 (0.213)	-0.519* (0.192)	-0.529* (0.237)	0.032 (0.126)
Observations	47	41	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47
R ²	0.429	0.361	0.363	0.589	0.312	0.553	0.470	0.632	0.329	0.556
Adjusted R ²	0.359	0.270	0.286	0.538	0.229	0.499	0.406	0.587	0.247	0.502

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix H

Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse - Interaction Effects

Table H.1: Regression results: Polarization of Europeanized public discourse - Interaction effects

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Polarization
Share Challengers - Pro-EU	-0.117 (0.104)
Share Challengers - Anti-EU	-0.303 (0.160)
Share MS-Opposition	-0.038 (0.051)
EU public discourse: Economy	0.0000 (0.0004)
EU public discourse: Migration	0.001 (0.002)
EU public discourse: Security	0.0002 (0.001)
Economic issues	-0.388*** (0.043)
Security issues	-0.293*** (0.040)
Migration issues	-0.273*** (0.059)
Other member states	-0.203*** (0.045)
National election campaign	0.007 (0.007)
EP election campaign	-0.015 (0.009)
EU Summits	0.006 (0.005)
EU member state	-0.019 (0.066)
East	-0.055 (0.036)
Share Unemployment	-0.002 (0.002)
N Asylum seekers (logged)	-0.005 (0.003)
N Homicides	0.0001 (0.0000)
N Terrorist attacks	-0.002 (0.001)
Share Challengers - Pro-EU x Share Challengers - Anti-EU	-1.680 (1.093)
Share Challengers - Pro-EU x Share MS-Opposition	0.079 (0.347)
Share Challengers - Anti-EU x Share MS-Opposition	0.224 (0.542)
Share Chal. - Pro-EU x Share Chal. - Anti-EU x Share MS-Opposition	19.407*** (5.300)
Constant	1.256*** (0.082)
Observations	1,427
Log Likelihood	1,871.830
Akaike Inf. Crit.	-3,689.660
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	-3,547.550

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix I

Diagnostics: Structural Topic Models

Structural topic models do not have a correct number of topics, which can be easily derived from the respective corpora. It is therefore necessary to use a range of different diagnostic criteria to determine an appropriate number of topics fitting the corpus - the selection of newspapers in the respective country and language - at hand. I make use of four diagnostic criteria deemed important for selecting the number of topics: held-out likelihood, residuals, semantic coherence and lower bound (Wallach et al. 2009; Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019). Each of the criteria alone does not provide sufficient evidence to determine an appropriate number of topics, requiring researchers to weight the criteria against each other. The held-out likelihood criteria is the ‘estimation of the probability of words appearing within a document when those words have been removed from the document in the estimation step’ (Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley 2019, 38). Residuals determines the remaining variance not captured by the number of estimated topics. Semantic coherence refers to whether the most probable words in a given topic occur together. This can of course be accomplished quite easily with a low number of topics (Mimno et al. 2011). Lower bound refers to changes in variation between iterations. Once lower bound does not differ substantially between iterations, the model is usually considered converged. An appropriate number of topics can

be found when held-out likelihood is high and residuals are low. These two measures allow for setting the range of an appropriate number of topics. In order to determine an exact number, lower bound and semantic coherence need to be taken into account. Given the range determined by held-out likelihood and residuals, lower bound should be comparably low when comparing the upper limit for the number of topics with the lower limit and semantic coherence at a moderate level - given the range provided by the first two diagnostic criteria.

As mentioned in the research design chapter, I decided to estimate separate structural topic models for each country, given that public discourse in Europe, though it refers and influences public discourse in other European countries, mostly does not cross national borders. This is mostly due to language and media system barriers. There are, however, some European countries with two (or even more) different languages used in public discourse. These countries are Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Latvia and Finland. In these countries, I decided to estimate structural topic models separately for each language spoken in the country. This of course makes the strong - and potentially incorrect - assumption that public discourse in these countries is separated by the language spoken. However, as I am only interested in whether the content of Europeanized public discourse varies with regard to its level of polarization, separating public discourse in these countries should not invalidate the conclusions derived from these analyses. However, I refrain from interpreting potentially different results between languages in one country too strongly, given that they might also be due to outlet effects, which I cannot control for using this design.

Figure I.1: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics I

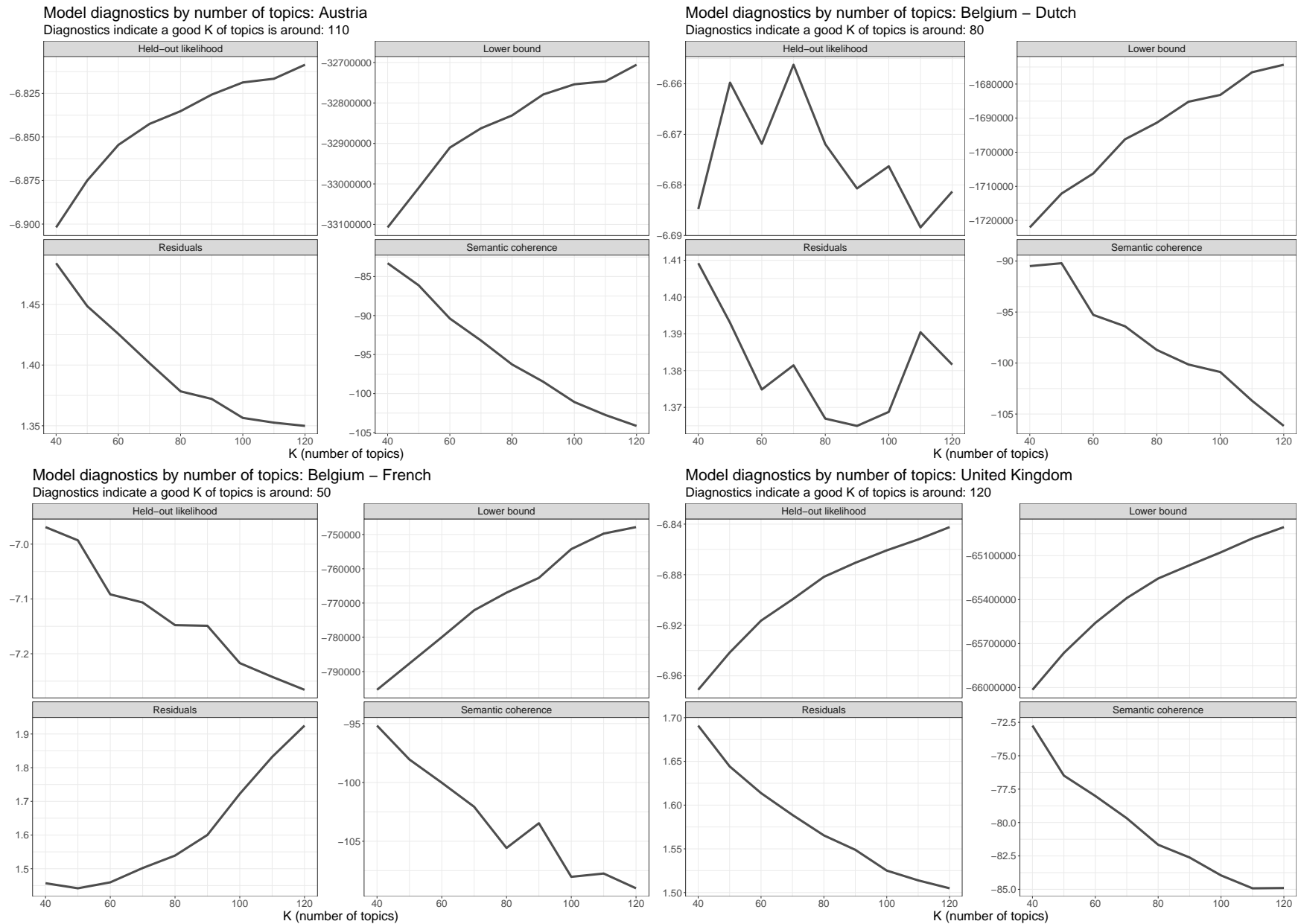


Figure I.2: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics II

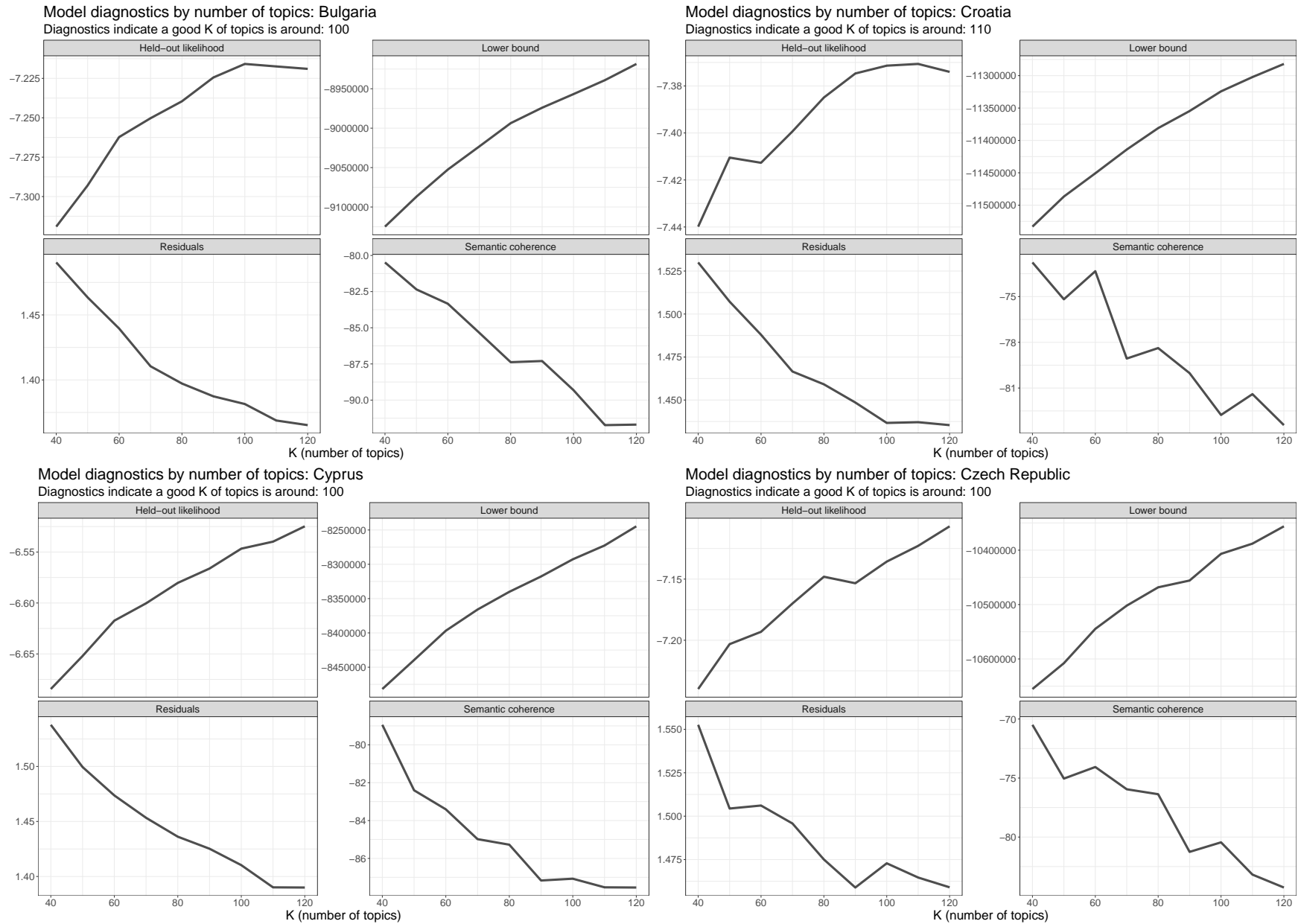


Figure I.3: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics III

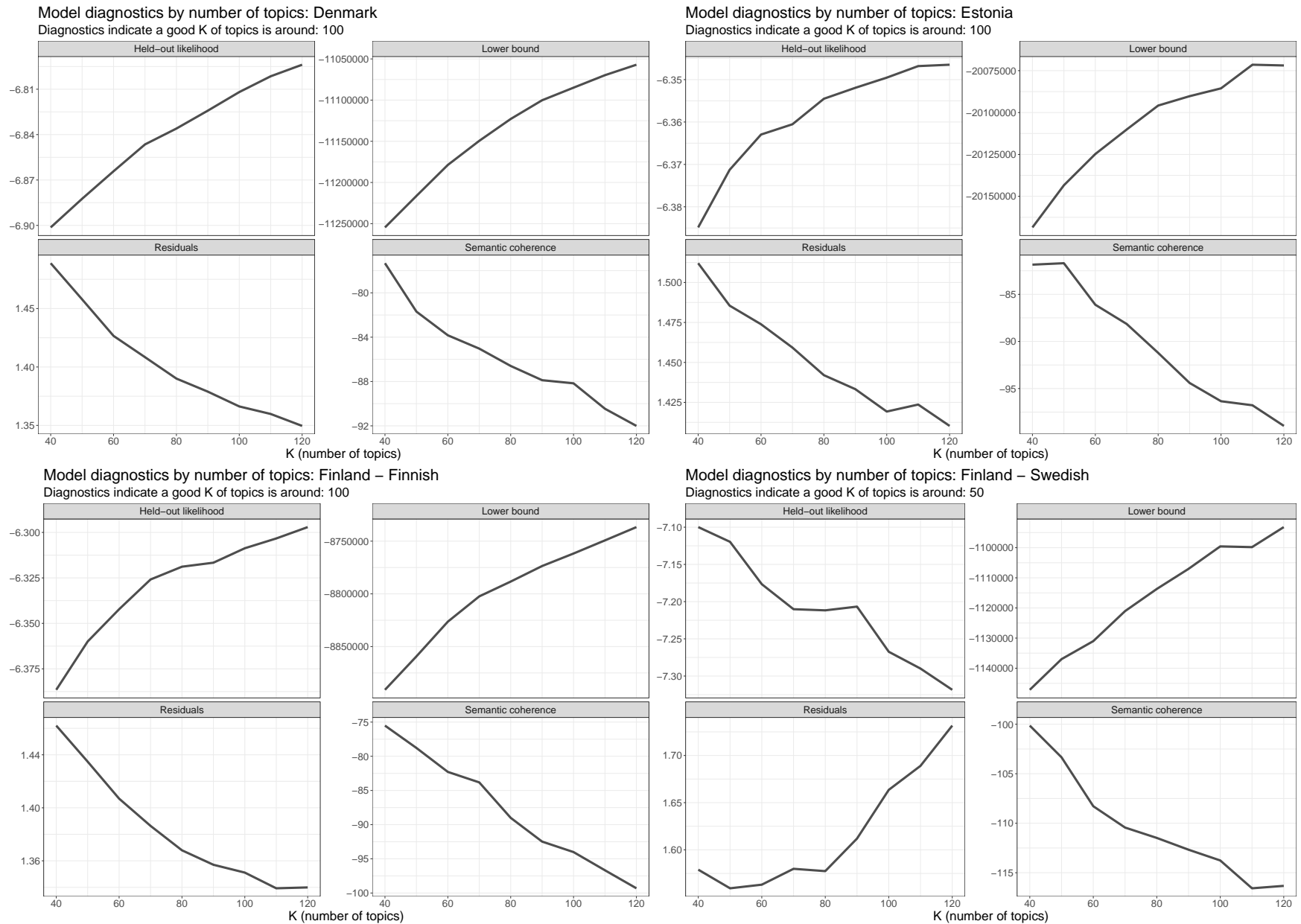


Figure I.4: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics IV

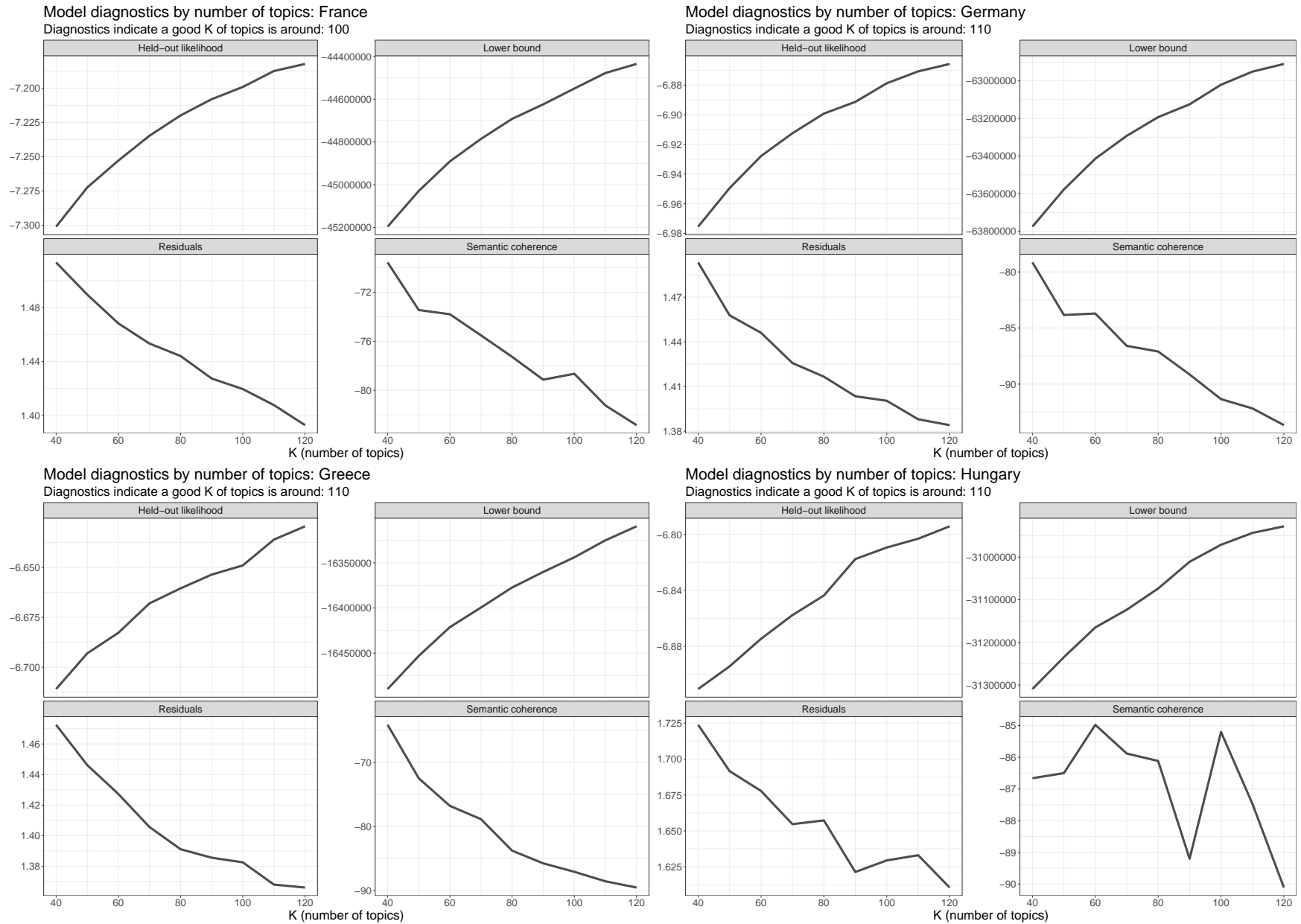


Figure I.5: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics V

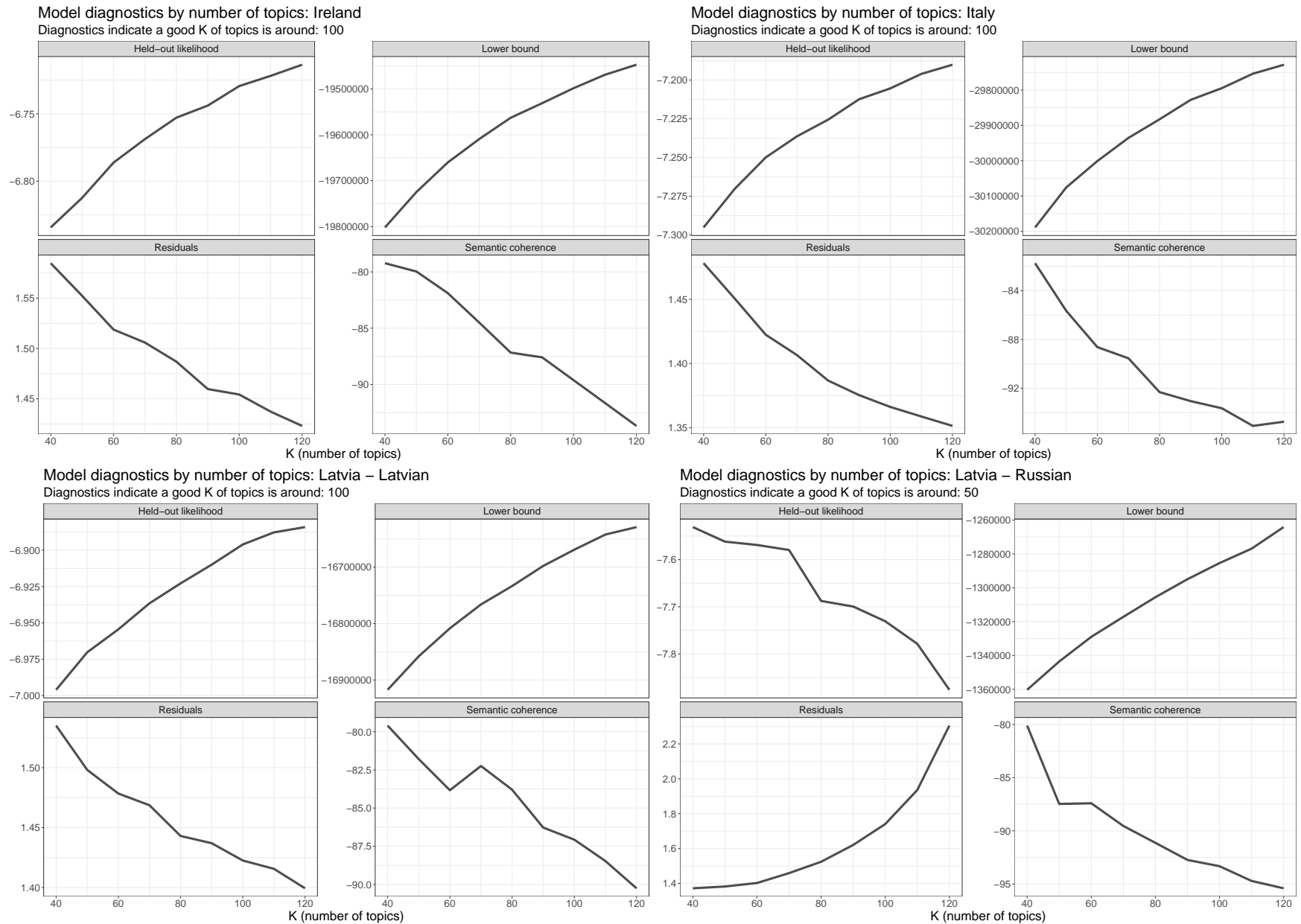


Figure I.6: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics VI

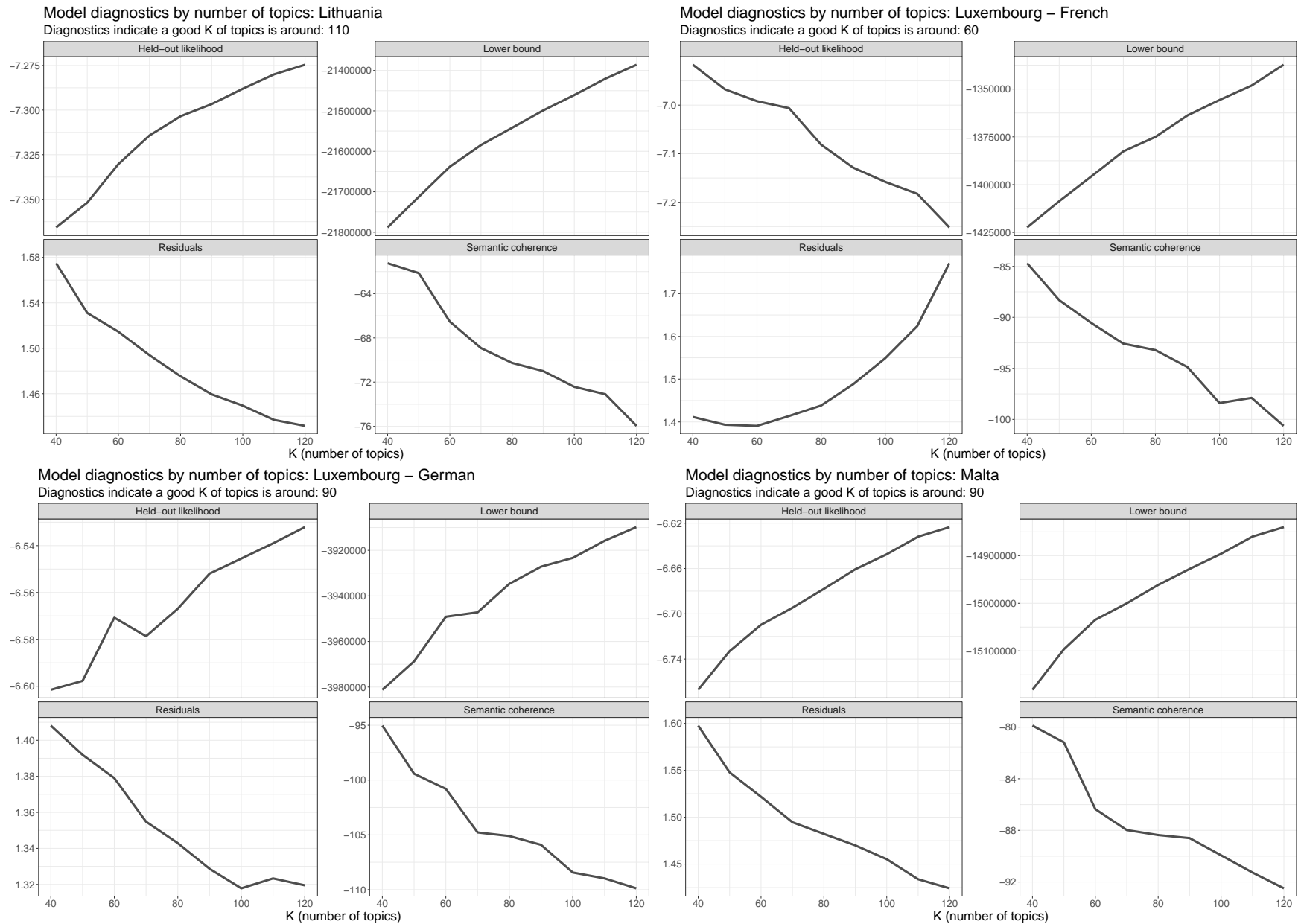


Figure I.7: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics VII

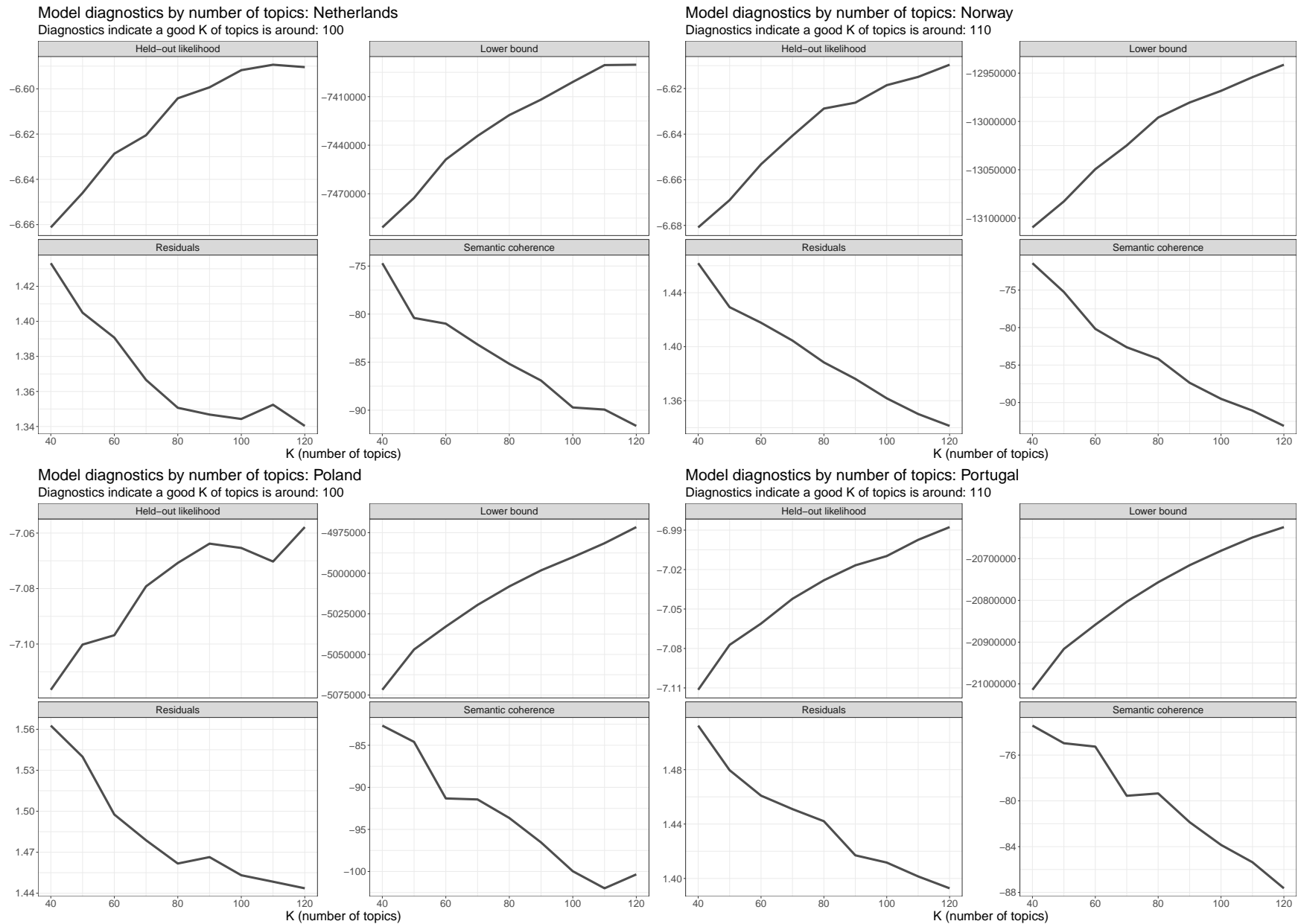


Figure I.8: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics VIII

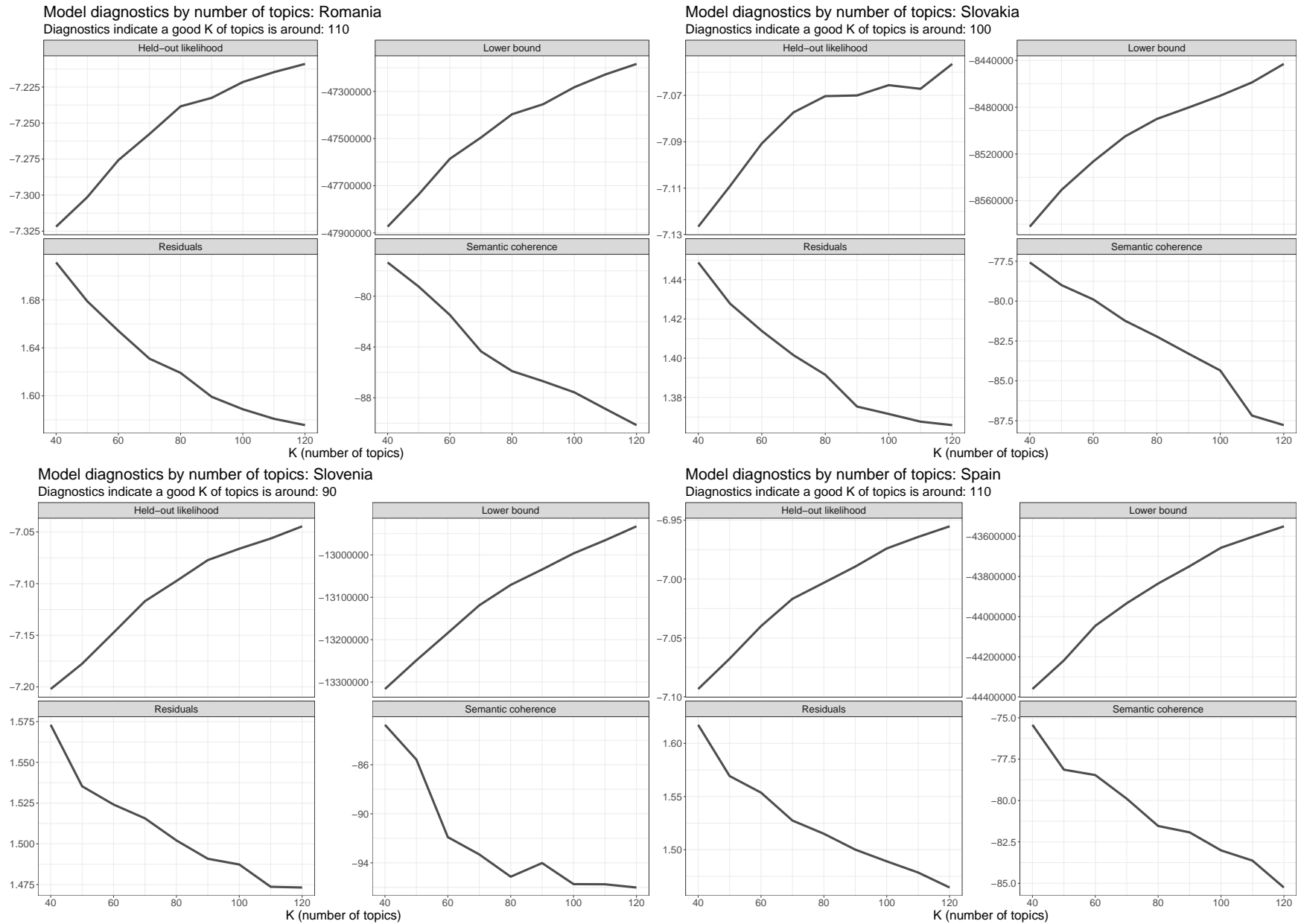
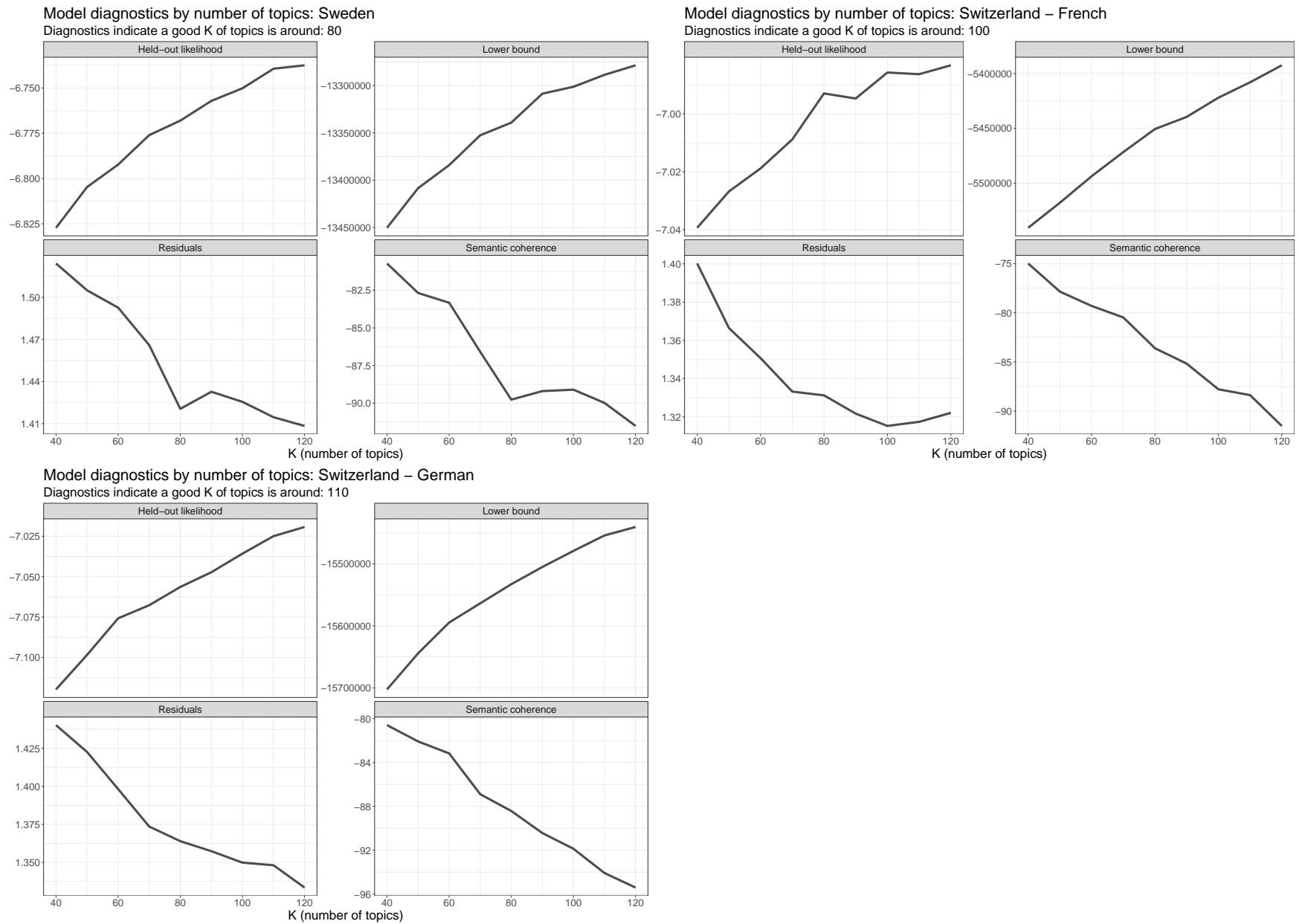


Figure I.9: Structural Topic Models - Diagnostics IX



Appendix J

Polarization of Europeanized Public Discourse by Issues

Table J.1: Regression results: Polarization of Economic Public Discourse I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Economy issues									
	AUT	BEL	BEL (FRA)	BGR	CHE	CHE (FRA)	CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK
Polarization	−0.174*	−0.253*	−0.318*	0.052	−0.132	−0.229	−0.004	−0.224**	−0.160	−0.719***
	(0.087)	(0.114)	(0.156)	(0.086)	(0.088)	(0.158)	(0.101)	(0.073)	(0.084)	(0.085)
Security issues	0.039***	0.070***	0.151***	0.103***	−0.002	0.044***	0.140***	0.056***	0.013***	0.071***
	(0.005)	(0.021)	(0.029)	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.004)	(0.010)
Migration issues	0.048***	−0.036	−0.030	0.027	−0.019*	−0.076***	0.068***	−0.041*	−0.016***	0.024*
	(0.006)	(0.024)	(0.038)	(0.019)	(0.008)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.004)	(0.012)
Other member states	0.051***	0.019	−0.004	0.017	0.021**	−0.001	−0.025	0.031*	0.029**	−0.022*
	(0.005)	(0.020)	(0.027)	(0.012)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.004)	(0.011)
Constant	0.734***	0.666***	0.697***	0.559***	0.868***	0.902***	0.493***	0.615***	0.820***	1.066***
	(0.058)	(0.083)	(0.115)	(0.061)	(0.052)	(0.092)	(0.084)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.051)
Observations	43,378	2,751	1,433	6,241	13,773	4,385	6,831	5,491	57,349	8,156
R ²	0.008	0.007	0.023	0.013	0.001	0.009	0.023	0.006	0.001	0.018
Adjusted R ²	0.008	0.005	0.020	0.013	0.001	0.008	0.023	0.006	0.001	0.017

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.2: Regression results: Polarization of Economic Public Discourse II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Economy issues									
	ESP	EST	FIN	FIN (SWE)	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL
Polarization	−0.368***	−0.340***	0.100	−0.727***	−0.961***	−0.182**	0.024	0.024	−0.383***	0.057
	(0.075)	(0.081)	(0.089)	(0.156)	(0.099)	(0.056)	(0.080)	(0.108)	(0.073)	(0.074)
Security issues	0.102***	0.154***	0.023*	0.129***	0.096***	0.121***	0.063***	0.071***	0.120***	0.050***
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.012)	(0.023)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.007)
Migration issues	0.003	0.144***	0.050**	0.047	−0.011	0.095***	−0.038*	−0.016	0.068***	−0.005
	(0.008)	(0.029)	(0.015)	(0.032)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.018)	(0.023)	(0.006)	(0.012)
Other member states	0.054***	0.046***	0.030*	0.042	0.062***	0.005	0.026**	0.027	0.013*	0.004
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.012)	(0.024)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.007)
Constant	0.743***	0.680***	0.468***	0.954***	1.095***	0.626***	0.415***	0.520***	0.743***	0.642***
	(0.047)	(0.057)	(0.063)	(0.112)	(0.045)	(0.038)	(0.049)	(0.067)	(0.053)	(0.055)
Observations	28,739	15,043	7,340	1,954	23,467	42,058	10,307	5,136	29,892	16,089
R ²	0.016	0.032	0.004	0.034	0.022	0.020	0.005	0.006	0.026	0.003
Adjusted R ²	0.016	0.032	0.003	0.032	0.022	0.020	0.004	0.005	0.026	0.003

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.3: Regression results: Polarization of Economic Public Discourse III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>								
	Economy issues								
	ITA	LTU	LUX	LUX (FRA)	LVA	LVA (RUS)	MLT	NLD	NOR
Polarization	−0.241*	−0.076	−0.198*	−0.488**	−0.426***	−0.209	−0.011	−0.952***	−0.331**
	(0.116)	(0.095)	(0.093)	(0.178)	(0.106)	(0.319)	(0.056)	(0.061)	(0.112)
Security issues	−0.013	0.103***	0.044***	−0.096***	0.078***	0.091**	0.086***	0.117***	0.089***
	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.028)	(0.010)	(0.032)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Migration issues	−0.037***	0.011	−0.041*	0.050	−0.043*	−0.094	−0.105***	0.015	0.090**
	(0.011)	(0.030)	(0.016)	(0.039)	(0.019)	(0.061)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Other member states	0.052***	−0.021	0.062***	0.124***	−0.040***	0.080**	0.004	0.079***	0.019
	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.025)	(0.010)	(0.031)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Constant	0.686***	0.467***	0.736***	1.036***	0.724***	0.623**	0.671***	1.101***	0.872***
	(0.066)	(0.053)	(0.071)	(0.136)	(0.071)	(0.212)	(0.047)	(0.041)	(0.082)
Observations	22,332	6,742	6,802	1,435	10,638	1,116	12,394	8,140	8,068
R ²	0.003	0.010	0.007	0.042	0.009	0.015	0.014	0.051	0.021
Adjusted R ²	0.003	0.010	0.006	0.039	0.009	0.012	0.013	0.051	0.020

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.4: Regression results: Polarization of Economic Public Discourse IV

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Economy issues					
	POL	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Polarization	−0.216**	−0.723***	−0.333***	−0.327***	0.092*	−0.444***
	(0.084)	(0.067)	(0.062)	(0.093)	(0.036)	(0.064)
Security issues	0.094***	0.028***	0.149***	0.089***	0.038***	0.135***
	(0.015)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Migration issues	0.093*	−0.070***	0.025	−0.029	0.016	0.104***
	(0.043)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.019)	(0.012)	(0.011)
Other member states	0.106***	−0.020*	0.073***	0.034**	−0.022**	0.026**
	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Constant	0.445***	1.122***	0.683***	0.759***	0.733***	0.729***
	(0.062)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.072)	(0.026)	(0.045)
Observations	5,931	13,405	27,895	7,048	10,128	13,074
R ²	0.023	0.013	0.033	0.010	0.003	0.038
Adjusted R ²	0.023	0.013	0.033	0.009	0.003	0.038

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.5: Regression results: Polarization of Security Public Discourse I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Security issues									
	AUT	BEL	BEL (FRA)	BGR	CHE	CHE (FRA)	CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK
Polarization	−0.085 (0.090)	0.051 (0.105)	−0.240 (0.142)	−0.271** (0.090)	−0.280** (0.109)	−0.613** (0.189)	−0.029 (0.098)	−0.440*** (0.068)	−0.271** (0.095)	−0.692*** (0.090)
Economy issues	0.042*** (0.005)	0.059*** (0.017)	0.125*** (0.024)	0.111*** (0.013)	−0.003 (0.011)	0.064*** (0.018)	0.133*** (0.012)	0.050*** (0.013)	0.017*** (0.005)	0.079*** (0.012)
Migration issues	0.230*** (0.006)	0.138*** (0.022)	0.185*** (0.034)	0.202*** (0.019)	0.201*** (0.010)	0.081*** (0.018)	0.210*** (0.017)	0.201*** (0.015)	0.182*** (0.005)	0.128*** (0.013)
Other member states	0.034*** (0.005)	0.069*** (0.018)	0.058* (0.024)	0.075*** (0.013)	0.022* (0.009)	−0.003 (0.016)	0.062*** (0.013)	0.043** (0.013)	0.021*** (0.004)	0.055*** (0.012)
Constant	0.364*** (0.060)	0.172* (0.077)	0.360*** (0.106)	0.598*** (0.064)	0.589*** (0.064)	0.793*** (0.111)	0.483*** (0.082)	0.551*** (0.046)	0.581*** (0.056)	0.824*** (0.055)
Observations	43,378	2,751	1,433	6,241	13,773	4,385	6,831	5,491	57,349	8,156
R ²	0.041	0.027	0.048	0.041	0.029	0.009	0.049	0.057	0.028	0.034
Adjusted R ²	0.041	0.025	0.045	0.041	0.028	0.008	0.048	0.056	0.027	0.033

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.6: Regression results: Polarization of Security Public Discourse II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Security issues									
	ESP	EST	FIN	FIN (SWE)	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL
Polarization	−0.392*** (0.075)	−0.385*** (0.079)	−0.033 (0.088)	−0.168 (0.155)	−0.973*** (0.111)	−0.268*** (0.050)	−0.393*** (0.075)	0.081 (0.107)	−0.278*** (0.069)	−0.084 (0.079)
Economy issues	0.103*** (0.006)	0.147*** (0.008)	0.023* (0.012)	0.127*** (0.022)	0.122*** (0.007)	0.096*** (0.004)	0.057*** (0.009)	0.070*** (0.014)	0.108*** (0.005)	0.056*** (0.008)
Migration issues	0.198*** (0.008)	0.232*** (0.028)	0.108*** (0.015)	0.225*** (0.032)	0.141*** (0.007)	0.119*** (0.006)	0.132*** (0.017)	0.201*** (0.023)	0.323*** (0.006)	0.192*** (0.013)
Other member states	0.071*** (0.006)	0.147*** (0.008)	0.104*** (0.012)	0.066** (0.023)	0.043*** (0.006)	0.094*** (0.004)	0.020* (0.009)	0.094*** (0.014)	0.102*** (0.006)	0.120*** (0.008)
Constant	0.667*** (0.047)	0.540*** (0.056)	0.379*** (0.063)	0.444*** (0.113)	0.853*** (0.051)	0.786*** (0.033)	0.531*** (0.046)	0.303*** (0.067)	0.460*** (0.051)	0.544*** (0.059)
Observations	28,739	15,043	7,340	1,954	23,467	42,058	10,307	5,136	29,892	16,089
R ²	0.041	0.056	0.019	0.052	0.037	0.039	0.013	0.032	0.134	0.035
Adjusted R ²	0.041	0.056	0.019	0.050	0.037	0.039	0.012	0.032	0.134	0.035

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.7: Regression results: Polarization of Security Public Discourse III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Security issues									
	ITA	LTU	LUX	LUX (FRA)	LVA	LVA (RUS)	MLT	NLD	NOR	POL
Polarization	0.070 (0.116)	0.020 (0.092)	−0.060 (0.091)	1.271*** (0.167)	0.051 (0.102)	0.605* (0.300)	−0.071 (0.058)	−0.232*** (0.059)	−0.226 (0.122)	0.074 (0.073)
Economy issues	−0.013 (0.007)	0.097*** (0.012)	0.043*** (0.012)	−0.087*** (0.025)	0.074*** (0.009)	0.081** (0.028)	0.096*** (0.009)	0.109*** (0.011)	0.104*** (0.012)	0.073*** (0.011)
Migration issues	0.207*** (0.011)	0.167*** (0.029)	0.228*** (0.016)	0.160*** (0.037)	0.108*** (0.018)	0.145* (0.057)	0.166*** (0.012)	0.147*** (0.013)	0.101*** (0.013)	0.258*** (0.037)
Other member states	0.065*** (0.007)	0.138*** (0.012)	0.066*** (0.012)	−0.123*** (0.024)	0.025** (0.010)	0.065* (0.029)	0.111*** (0.009)	0.028** (0.011)	−0.002 (0.011)	0.074*** (0.011)
Constant	0.381*** (0.066)	0.276*** (0.052)	0.296*** (0.070)	−0.158 (0.132)	0.282*** (0.069)	−0.146 (0.200)	0.508*** (0.050)	0.382*** (0.041)	0.681*** (0.089)	0.114* (0.055)
Observations	22,332	6,742	6,802	1,435	10,638	1,116	12,394	8,140	8,068	5,931
R ²	0.023	0.036	0.040	0.087	0.010	0.023	0.041	0.035	0.020	0.026
Adjusted R ²	0.023	0.036	0.039	0.085	0.009	0.020	0.040	0.034	0.019	0.025

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.8: Regression results: Polarization of Security Public Discourse IV

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Security issues				
	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Polarization	−0.319*** (0.071)	−0.541*** (0.062)	−0.328*** (0.082)	−0.349*** (0.042)	−0.523*** (0.064)
Economy issues	0.031*** (0.009)	0.146*** (0.006)	0.071*** (0.011)	0.051*** (0.012)	0.133*** (0.009)
Migration issues	0.202*** (0.012)	0.117*** (0.015)	0.162*** (0.016)	0.206*** (0.014)	0.164*** (0.010)
Other member states	0.065*** (0.009)	0.138*** (0.006)	0.061*** (0.011)	0.064*** (0.009)	0.056*** (0.009)
Constant	0.696*** (0.043)	0.648*** (0.042)	0.438*** (0.064)	0.480*** (0.031)	0.746*** (0.045)
Observations	13,405	27,895	7,048	10,128	13,074
R ²	0.032	0.052	0.031	0.040	0.055
Adjusted R ²	0.032	0.052	0.030	0.039	0.055

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.9: Regression results: Polarization of Migration Public Discourse I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Migration issues									
	AUT	BEL	BEL (FRA)	BGR	CHE	CHE (FRA)	CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK
Polarization	−0.427*** (0.073)	−0.168 (0.092)	−0.110 (0.108)	−0.251*** (0.059)	0.301*** (0.089)	0.330* (0.155)	−0.136 (0.070)	−0.598*** (0.059)	0.402*** (0.084)	−0.767*** (0.078)
Economy issues	0.034*** (0.004)	−0.023 (0.015)	−0.014 (0.018)	0.013 (0.009)	−0.020* (0.009)	−0.073*** (0.015)	0.033*** (0.008)	−0.028* (0.011)	−0.016*** (0.004)	0.020* (0.010)
Security issues	0.153*** (0.004)	0.106*** (0.017)	0.107*** (0.020)	0.087*** (0.008)	0.134*** (0.007)	0.055*** (0.012)	0.106*** (0.009)	0.153*** (0.012)	0.141*** (0.004)	0.098*** (0.010)
Other member states	0.081*** (0.004)	0.112*** (0.016)	0.104*** (0.018)	0.095*** (0.008)	0.092*** (0.007)	0.057*** (0.013)	0.098*** (0.009)	0.209*** (0.011)	0.096*** (0.004)	0.097*** (0.010)
Constant	0.348*** (0.049)	0.238*** (0.067)	0.140 (0.081)	0.186*** (0.042)	−0.071 (0.053)	0.017 (0.091)	0.097 (0.058)	0.485*** (0.040)	−0.086 (0.050)	0.573*** (0.048)
Observations	43,378	2,751	1,433	6,241	13,773	4,385	6,831	5,491	57,349	8,156
R ²	0.050	0.036	0.046	0.047	0.040	0.015	0.046	0.123	0.039	0.041
Adjusted R ²	0.050	0.035	0.043	0.046	0.039	0.014	0.045	0.123	0.039	0.040

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.10: Regression results: Polarization of Migration Public Discourse II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Migration issues									
	ESP	EST	FIN	FIN (SWE)	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL
Polarization	−0.211*** (0.052)	−0.078*** (0.023)	−0.036 (0.067)	−0.117 (0.110)	−0.882*** (0.098)	0.178*** (0.043)	0.227*** (0.045)	−0.042 (0.065)	−0.368*** (0.065)	0.110* (0.049)
Economy issues	0.001 (0.004)	0.011*** (0.002)	0.029** (0.009)	0.023 (0.016)	−0.010 (0.006)	0.056*** (0.004)	−0.012* (0.006)	−0.006 (0.008)	0.055*** (0.005)	−0.002 (0.005)
Security issues	0.096*** (0.004)	0.019*** (0.002)	0.062*** (0.009)	0.113*** (0.016)	0.108*** (0.006)	0.088*** (0.004)	0.047*** (0.006)	0.074*** (0.008)	0.290*** (0.005)	0.074*** (0.005)
Other member states	0.111*** (0.004)	0.013*** (0.002)	0.049*** (0.009)	0.071*** (0.017)	0.139*** (0.006)	0.084*** (0.004)	0.031*** (0.006)	0.087*** (0.009)	0.118*** (0.005)	0.073*** (0.005)
Constant	0.159*** (0.033)	0.054*** (0.016)	0.123* (0.048)	0.114 (0.080)	0.532*** (0.045)	−0.093** (0.029)	−0.076** (0.027)	0.063 (0.041)	0.356*** (0.048)	−0.070 (0.037)
Observations	28,739	15,043	7,340	1,954	23,467	42,058	10,307	5,136	29,892	16,089
R ²	0.050	0.012	0.014	0.042	0.047	0.033	0.012	0.039	0.131	0.032
Adjusted R ²	0.050	0.011	0.013	0.040	0.047	0.033	0.011	0.038	0.131	0.032

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.11: Regression results: Polarization of Migration Public Discourse III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Migration issues									
	ITA	LTU	LUX	LUX (FRA)	LVA	LVA (RUS)	MLT	NLD	NOR	POL
Polarization	−0.201** (0.073)	0.010 (0.039)	0.154* (0.069)	0.097 (0.121)	0.030 (0.054)	0.023 (0.158)	−0.198*** (0.045)	0.417*** (0.051)	−0.530*** (0.106)	0.009 (0.025)
Economy issues	−0.015*** (0.004)	0.002 (0.005)	−0.023* (0.009)	0.023 (0.018)	−0.011* (0.005)	−0.023 (0.015)	−0.068*** (0.007)	0.010 (0.009)	0.080*** (0.010)	0.009* (0.004)
Security issues	0.082*** (0.004)	0.030*** (0.005)	0.132*** (0.009)	0.080*** (0.019)	0.030*** (0.005)	0.040* (0.016)	0.097*** (0.007)	0.109*** (0.009)	0.077*** (0.010)	0.031*** (0.004)
Other member states	0.045*** (0.004)	0.039*** (0.005)	0.103*** (0.009)	0.069*** (0.017)	0.077*** (0.005)	0.056*** (0.015)	0.121*** (0.007)	0.105*** (0.009)	0.095*** (0.010)	0.022*** (0.004)
Constant	0.172*** (0.042)	0.009 (0.022)	−0.058 (0.053)	−0.072 (0.093)	0.014 (0.037)	0.028 (0.105)	0.260*** (0.038)	−0.166*** (0.035)	0.455*** (0.078)	−0.003 (0.019)
Observations	22,332	6,742	6,802	1,435	10,638	1,116	12,394	8,140	8,068	5,931
R ²	0.024	0.016	0.052	0.024	0.026	0.020	0.054	0.040	0.032	0.017
Adjusted R ²	0.024	0.015	0.051	0.021	0.025	0.017	0.054	0.040	0.031	0.016

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.12: Regression results: Polarization of Migration Public Discourse IV

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Migration issues				
	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Polarization	0.104* (0.053)	−0.012 (0.024)	−0.327*** (0.059)	−0.290*** (0.029)	−0.760*** (0.052)
Economy issues	−0.042*** (0.007)	0.004 (0.002)	−0.012 (0.008)	0.010 (0.008)	0.070*** (0.007)
Security issues	0.110*** (0.006)	0.018*** (0.002)	0.084*** (0.009)	0.099*** (0.007)	0.112*** (0.007)
Other member states	0.123*** (0.006)	0.030*** (0.002)	0.092*** (0.008)	0.071*** (0.006)	0.045*** (0.007)
Constant	−0.014 (0.032)	0.020 (0.016)	0.304*** (0.046)	0.247*** (0.021)	0.611*** (0.037)
Observations	13,405	27,895	7,048	10,128	13,074
R ²	0.056	0.010	0.041	0.049	0.055
Adjusted R ²	0.056	0.010	0.041	0.048	0.055

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.13: Regression results: Polarization of Public Discourse Considering Other Member States I

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Other member states									
	AUT	BEL	BEL (FRA)	BGR	CHE	CHE (FRA)	CYP	CZE	DEU	DNK
Polarization	−0.009 (0.088)	−0.024 (0.110)	−0.058 (0.154)	−0.118 (0.090)	−0.228* (0.102)	−0.197 (0.179)	0.018 (0.091)	−0.387*** (0.070)	−0.018 (0.094)	−0.014 (0.086)
Economy issues	0.052*** (0.005)	0.017 (0.018)	−0.004 (0.026)	0.018 (0.013)	0.028** (0.010)	−0.001 (0.017)	−0.020 (0.011)	0.028* (0.013)	0.036*** (0.005)	−0.023* (0.011)
Security issues	0.033*** (0.005)	0.076*** (0.020)	0.068* (0.029)	0.076*** (0.013)	0.019* (0.008)	−0.002 (0.014)	0.053*** (0.011)	0.045** (0.014)	0.021*** (0.004)	0.050*** (0.011)
Migration issues	0.116*** (0.006)	0.160*** (0.023)	0.212*** (0.037)	0.222*** (0.019)	0.122*** (0.010)	0.076*** (0.017)	0.165*** (0.016)	0.285*** (0.015)	0.121*** (0.005)	0.116*** (0.012)
Constant	0.593*** (0.059)	0.575*** (0.080)	0.551*** (0.115)	0.562*** (0.064)	0.753*** (0.060)	0.761*** (0.105)	0.670*** (0.075)	0.666*** (0.047)	0.534*** (0.056)	0.631*** (0.053)
Observations	43,378	2,751	1,433	6,241	13,773	4,385	6,831	5,491	57,349	8,156
R ²	0.016	0.026	0.030	0.032	0.013	0.005	0.022	0.082	0.014	0.016
Adjusted R ²	0.015	0.025	0.027	0.031	0.013	0.004	0.022	0.082	0.014	0.016

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.14: Regression results: Polarization of Public Discourse Considering Other Member States II

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Other member states									
	ESP	EST	FIN	FIN (SWE)	FRA	GBR	GRC	HRV	HUN	IRL
Polarization	−0.184* (0.075)	0.206* (0.081)	0.083 (0.087)	0.034 (0.150)	0.333** (0.112)	0.192*** (0.057)	−0.034 (0.080)	0.049 (0.105)	−0.154* (0.070)	−0.046 (0.079)
Economy issues	0.055*** (0.006)	0.046*** (0.008)	0.029* (0.012)	0.038 (0.022)	0.079*** (0.007)	0.006 (0.005)	0.026** (0.010)	0.026 (0.014)	0.012* (0.006)	0.004 (0.008)
Security issues	0.071*** (0.006)	0.154*** (0.008)	0.102*** (0.011)	0.061** (0.022)	0.043*** (0.007)	0.122*** (0.006)	0.023* (0.010)	0.091*** (0.014)	0.105*** (0.006)	0.119*** (0.008)
Migration issues	0.232*** (0.008)	0.163*** (0.029)	0.084*** (0.015)	0.131*** (0.031)	0.183*** (0.007)	0.148*** (0.006)	0.097*** (0.018)	0.229*** (0.022)	0.135*** (0.006)	0.188*** (0.013)
Constant	0.532*** (0.047)	0.227*** (0.058)	0.456*** (0.062)	0.571*** (0.108)	0.253*** (0.052)	0.313*** (0.038)	0.515*** (0.049)	0.292*** (0.066)	0.645*** (0.051)	0.563*** (0.059)
Observations	28,739	15,043	7,340	1,954	23,467	42,058	10,307	5,136	29,892	16,089
R ²	0.039	0.031	0.017	0.019	0.035	0.028	0.004	0.033	0.040	0.032
Adjusted R ²	0.039	0.031	0.017	0.017	0.035	0.028	0.004	0.033	0.040	0.032

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.15: Regression results: Polarization of Public Discourse Considering Other Member States III

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>									
	Other member states									
	ITA	LTU	LUX	LUX (FRA)	LVA	LVA (RUS)	MLT	NLD	NOR	POL
Polarization	−0.231*	0.121	−0.097	−0.571**	−0.101	0.814**	−0.055	−0.017	0.134	−0.014
	(0.117)	(0.093)	(0.090)	(0.187)	(0.104)	(0.305)	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.118)	(0.085)
Economy issues	0.052***	−0.020	0.058***	0.137***	−0.038***	0.074**	0.005	0.079***	0.021	0.109***
	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.027)	(0.010)	(0.029)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Security issues	0.066***	0.142***	0.064***	−0.148***	0.025**	0.067*	0.114***	0.030**	−0.002	0.098***
	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.029)	(0.010)	(0.031)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.015)
Migration issues	0.116***	0.221***	0.174***	0.166***	0.279***	0.213***	0.214***	0.151***	0.119***	0.246***
	(0.011)	(0.029)	(0.016)	(0.041)	(0.018)	(0.058)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.043)
Constant	0.571***	0.302***	0.654***	0.976***	0.465***	−0.250	0.481***	0.534***	0.527***	0.321***
	(0.067)	(0.052)	(0.068)	(0.143)	(0.070)	(0.204)	(0.051)	(0.042)	(0.087)	(0.063)
Observations	22,332	6,742	6,802	1,435	10,638	1,116	12,394	8,140	8,068	5,931
R ²	0.014	0.031	0.030	0.062	0.024	0.031	0.044	0.025	0.012	0.028
Adjusted R ²	0.013	0.030	0.029	0.059	0.024	0.027	0.044	0.025	0.012	0.027

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table J.16: Regression results: Polarization of Public Discourse Considering Other Member States IV

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Other member states				
	PRT	ROU	SVK	SVN	SWE
Polarization	−0.055	−0.205**	0.012	−0.231***	−0.232***
	(0.071)	(0.063)	(0.092)	(0.044)	(0.064)
Economy issues	−0.022*	0.074***	0.033**	−0.033**	0.027**
	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Security issues	0.064***	0.142***	0.076***	0.072***	0.057***
	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.009)
Migration issues	0.224***	0.203***	0.221***	0.167***	0.067***
	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.015)	(0.011)
Constant	0.587***	0.525***	0.460***	0.609***	0.685***
	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.072)	(0.033)	(0.045)
Observations	13,405	27,895	7,048	10,128	13,074
R ²	0.037	0.037	0.029	0.025	0.011
Adjusted R ²	0.036	0.037	0.029	0.024	0.011

Note:

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Appendix K

Topics of Europeanized Public Discourse

Table K.1: Topics of Polarized Europeanized Public Discourse - Full Table

N discourses	Topic label
31	european, minister, europe, eu, government, countries, american, united, union, brexit, president, parliament, states, british, prime
20	police, attack, attacks, terrorism, people, brussels, killed, terrorist, islamic, security, terrorists, authorities, investigation, officers, terror
13	refugees, migrants, asylum, migration, europe, turkey, turkish, greece, refugee, erdogan, immigration, seekers, border, greek, illegal
10	friday, tuesday, wednesday, monday, sunday, week, saturday, thursday, evening, afternoon, july, june, morning, said, time
8	french, france, macron, italian, emmanuel, president, merkel, angela, chancellor, germany, italy, german, league, matteo, paris
8	iran, sanctions, agreement, nuclear, military, syria, united, conflict, iranian, israel, ok, tehran, war, weapons, american
6	companies, business, industry, market, clients, company, conference, environment, executive, international, management, new, services, work, abc

- 6 data, services, case, conditions, affected, contract, internet, personal, title, users,
amazon, companies, customers, digital, eu
- 5 university, education, school, students, professor, academy, ceu, classes, college,
educational, institution, languages, luxembourgish, scientific, student
- 5 euro, million, euros, billion, costs, counting, month, per, cent, height, largest,
millions, money, sales, according
- 5 city, town, mayor, hall, municipal, people, residents, building, capital, center,
community, employee, holy, hundreds, kilometers
- 4 family, life, wife, father, friends, mother, son, husband, born, daughter, dead,
death, died, home, live
- 3 russia, russian, ukraine, moscow, nato, putin, vladimir, kremlin, military, putyin,
ukrainian
- 2 museum, art, artist, arts, book, century, history, life, modern, movie, music, time,
told
- 2 euro, finance, greece, minister, billions, budget, debts, expenditure, household,
revenue, schäuble, wolfgang
- 2 election, campaign, chancellor, clinton, democrats, federal, hillary, martin,
presidential, republican, schulz, social, spd, trump
- 2 bridge, incident, told, association, bus, heard, london, night, people, police, scene
- 2 money, pay, brand, cash, cost, europe, help, jobs, paid, purchase, spend, workers
- 2 energy, power, environment, electric, gas, infrastructure, plant, project, projects
- 2 investors, bonds, shares, billion, currently, fund, gold, government, investment,
market, markets, rating, return, returns, states
- 2 e, l, t, ky, m, n, s, u
- 2 air, airline, airlines, airplane, companies, company, flight, flights, malta, passengers,
routes, tourism, tourists
- 2 job, work, boss, busy, employed, employee, health, hungary, national, place,
workers, working
- 2 said, stressed, added, admitted, pauda, pointed, reported, write
- 2 journalist, journalists, press, communication, foundation, interview, media, news,
subject, television, tv

- 2 president, vice, european, german, mep, office, parliament, participate, presidency, psalm, water
- 2 summer, air, august, characteristic, germany, hot, hour, months, north, time, week, winter
- 2 twitter, editors, email, facebook, independent, newspaper, online, read, site, teams, told, wrote

Table K.2: Topics of Unpolarized Europeanized Public Discourse - Full Table

N discourses	Topic label
24	government, minister, united, party, parliament, elections, brexit, president, states, american, eu, prime, agreement, trump, deal
14	people, time, say, think, go, goes, good, know, lot, need, now, world, last, new, problem
6	refugees, asylum, migrants, borders, eu, people, immigration, earth, hospitality, migratory, refuges, said, turkish, yet, border
6	german, germany, merkel, russia, russian, angela, chancellor, berlin, å, putin, ukraine, yet, brand, coalition, government
6	tax, companies, taxes, company, country, customs, days, documents, economics, financial, insolvency, rates, revenue, shadow, vat
5	police, people, officers, crime, spokesman, authorities, authority, commission, deputy, information, investigative, justice, minister, pape, place
4	protesters, protest, manifestation, protests, manifestations, movement, police, thousands, activists, democracy, government, march, people, persons, region
4	turkish, turkey, erdogan, ankara, president, state, tipcat, istanbul, syria, syrian
4	company, companies, production, yet, business, market, receivables, revenue, society, years, brexit, businesses, crown, customers, deal
4	attacks, belgium, brussels, airport, belgian, station, subway, attack, man, paris, police, terrorist, terrorists
3	children, women, child, schools, woman, french, parents, school, time, tongue, zoe
3	sea, ship, coast, mediterranean, migrants, board, harbor, british, libya, navy, port, rescue, rescued, waters

- 3 military, defense, nato, army, born, defence, finland, forces, hultqvist, minister, peter, safety, states, strength, threat
- 3 data, facebook, services, users, security, state, surveillance, content, cyprus, information, internet, mail, messages, personal, products
- 3 muslims, islam, muslim, abuse, al, attacks, freedom, islamic, men, prohibition, religion, religious, secularism, state, terrorism
- 3 students, education, school, college, language, level, schools, student, university, future, people, years, young, youth
- 3 climate, change, sustainable, action, carbon, co2, environmental, global, emissions, energy, goals, industry, paris, protection, reach
- 3 italian, italy, government, rome, di, move, matteo, minister, salvini, star
- 3 bank, banks, credit, credits, bed, nbr, banking, crisis, institutes, nlb, slovenia, system
- 2 images, photo, photos, pictures, afp, ap, com, gallery, image, instagram, mail, media, post, send, social
- 2 weekend, dawn, degrees, heat, met, office, stays, sun, temperatures, tomorrow, weather, week, wind
- 2 health, hospital, aid, care, funding, hospitals, medical, nhs, physician, service, staff
- 2 media, public, information, news, freedom, journalists, press, speech
- 2 billion, government, budget, debt, deficit, euros, finances, kr, kroner, million, money, pay
- 2 attack, security, threat, attacks, dead, intelligence, nice, pet, service, terror, terrorist, victims, wounded
- 2 june, april, christmas, december, january, july, mai, mail, month, months, november, september, vs
- 2 yet, ent, just, ka, ko
- 2 years, century, culture, delivered, history, nation, sta, story, world
- 2 job, andersson, companies, country, government, labor, market, need, social, suggestions, unemployment, use, work, workers
- 2 east, west, brandenburg, gdr, japan, korea, north, saxony, south, test
- 2 catalan, catalonia, government, independence, referendum, generalitat, president, puigdemont, spanish

2 iraq, syria, al, assad, attack, civil, isis, islamic, terrorist, usa, war

2 court, courts, rights, case, constitutionally, decision, human, judgment, judicial,
justice, penalties, right, supreme, tem, yet
