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Politicizing Europe in Elections to the European Parliament (1994–2019): The Crucial Role of Mainstream Parties

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Politicizing Europe in Elections to the European Parliament (1994-2019): The Crucial Role of Mainstream Parties

Online Appendix

This online appendix is divided in two parts. Part I provides additional information on the data used in our article and on our data collection strategy; Part II includes complementary analyses to support the findings presented in the main text.

Part I: Additional information on data and coding

Part I.1: The article is mainly based on a new data set on European election campaigns (EEC) which includes five countries, namely Austria, France, Germany, Sweden and the UK. Since data on national election campaigns is not available for Sweden, we decided not to use the data on Swedish EP elections in this article. In sum, we include data on 24 EP election campaigns in four countries. In our comparative analysis of politicization of European issues in EP elections and national elections, we combine this data with existing data on national election campaigns as provided by Grande et al. (2020) and Kriesi et al. (2020). Table 1 provides an overview of all election campaigns included in our analysis.

Table 1: Overview of countries and elections included

Country	EP elections (N = 24)	National elections (N = 26)
<i>Austria</i>	1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019	1994, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2017
<i>Britain</i>	1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019	1997, 2002, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2017
<i>France</i>	1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019	1995, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017
<i>Germany</i>	1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, 2019	1994, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017

Note: In France, national elections include the first round of presidential elections instead of elections to the national parliament.

Our new European elections campaign (EEC) data set is based on mass media. Such a data collection strategy can use a variety of media sources ranging from quality newspapers and tabloids to TV news (see also Walter, 2017) and, more recently, social media (see Popa et al., 2020). Each of these sources has its distinctive merits. For our purposes the availability over a longer period of time and the comparability across a larger number of countries was crucial. Furthermore, our decision to rely on two quality newspapers builds upon the insights gained in several projects on the European public sphere and on politicizing Europe. These projects show that quality newspapers are the most productive and reliable source for the quantitative analysis of media content (e.g., Koopmans and Statham, 2010; Kriesi et al., 2012; Statham and Trenz, 2013; Hoeglinger, 2015; Hutter et al., 2016). Compared to tabloids and television news they cover political matters in more detail, which is of particular importance for the coding of the discursive relationship between political actors (see Dolezal et al., 2016, p. 45). In each European election campaign, we collected news articles over a period of four weeks prior to election day(s). Our sampling strategy includes not only articles with an explicit reference to EP elections. We also collected articles on European topics more generally in the same period.

Part I.2: Our coding strategy uses established coding schemes and coding categories. This holds in particular for the coding of European issues. In the case of EEC data, we build on the issue categories developed by Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012; see in more detail, Dolezal, 2008: 58-60) and distinguish between eleven broad issue areas (e.g. welfare, economic liberalism) that cover all relevant topics discussed in contemporary politics, with European integration being one of these categories. In the case of the EEC_EU data, we build on the different subtypes of EU issues developed by Hutter et al. (2016). These subtypes are inspired by Bartolini's distinction between general orientations towards Europe, constitutive issues and policy-related issues (see Bartolini 2005, pp. 10). In order to cover the main conflict dimensions related to European integration, we further divided constitutive issues into three sub-categories (widening, economic deepening and non-economic deepening) and policy-related issues into two sub-categories (economic intervention, non-economic intervention). As a result, we used six sub-categories to aggregate European issues in our EEC_EU data. For a detailed description of this coding strategy see Dolezal et al. (2016: 55-60).

The coding of the selected newspaper articles in each country and election relies on the core sentence method (Kleinnijenhuis and Pennings, 2001). It takes the grammatical sentences of an article, so-called 'core sentences', as the basic unit of analysis. Each core sentence consists of a subject (the actor), an object (another actor or an issue), and the direction of the relationship between these two. It allows identifying the salience of issues, the actors involved and the relationship between these actors. For each country we coded approximately 5,000 core sentences per coding step (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of coded articles and core sentences by country and coding strategy

	EEC data (all issues)		EEC_EU data (EU issues only)	
	Articles	Core sentences	Articles	Core sentences
Austria	1,298	5,497	899	5,231
Britain	1,159	4,647	756	4,835
France	1,205	4,397	622	4,440
Germany	1,037	5,920	766	5,462
<i>Total</i>	<i>4,699</i>	<i>20,461</i>	<i>3,043</i>	<i>19,968</i>

Part I.3: We use Euromanifesto data to analyze issue salience of European issues at the party level. In the Euromanifesto data set (Schmitt et al., 2018), European (polity) issues capture debates over constitutive EU matters, i.e. the fundamental features of the EU's political system, such as competencies of different European institutions, membership issues or questions related to the legitimacy or complexity of the EU. The following Euromanifesto coding categories (see Schmitt et al., 2018) are incorporated in this variable: Europe, European Community/ Union in general, Transfer of Power to EU/EC, Competences of the European Parliament, Competences of the European Commission, Competences of the European Council/ Council of Ministers, Voting Procedures in the (European) Council, Competences of the European Court of Justice, Competences of other EU/EC Institutions, Mentions of European Central Bank (until 1993), EU/EC Enlargement, Membership Turkey, Complexity of EU/EC Political System, EU Integration, Constitutionalism, Decentralization, National Way of Life.

Table 3 gives an overview over the parties included in each country, the issue emphasis per party and per party type, i.e. mainstream parties and extreme parties respectively.

Table 3: Emphasis on European issues by political parties in their Euromanifestos

Country	Party name	EU Polity issues (per party)	EU Polity issues Mainstream parties	EU Polity issues Extreme parties
1994				
France	PS	10.3	21.5	11.7
	RPF	32.6		
	RPR-UDF	21.8		
	PRG	13.1		
	PCF	9.7		
	FN	12.2		
Germany	SPD	8.9	10.2	2.6
	CDU	7.3		
	CSU	14.6		
	Linke	4.3		
	REP	0.8		
UK	Lab	5.8	11.8	41.8
	Cons	17.8		
	UKIP	41.8		
Austria	SPÖ	6.9	9.5	11.9
	ÖVP	12.1		
	FPÖ	11.9		
1999				

France	PS	10.4	20.3	7.3
	Nouvelle UDF	17.4		
	UMP	28.9		
	RPF	24.5		
	PCF	3.8		
	PRG	12.3		
	FN	5.6		
Germany	SPD	9.4	16.6	13.4
	CDU	21.4		
	CSU	18.9		
	Linke	10.3		
	REP	16.5		
Austria	SPÖ	12.8	14.4	15.7
	ÖVP	16.1		
	FPÖ	15.7		
UK	Lab	9.4	17.2	23.7
	Cons	25.0		
	UKIP	23.7		

2004

France	UMP	36.4	28.9	16.5
	RPF	50.9		
	PS	7.0		
	Nouvelle UDF	21.2		
	PRG	21.3		
	PCF	10.9		
	FN	17.3		
Germany	CDU	13.0	18.7	20.7
	CSU	30.9		
	SPD	12.3		
	Linke	5.8		
	REP	35.6		
Austria	ÖVP	19.3	15.4	16.5
	SPÖ	11.4		
	FPÖ	16.5		
UK	Lab	6.3	15.9	16.7
	Cons	25.4		
	UKIP	16.7		

2009

France	PS	4.7	5.9	16.4
	UMP	7.3		
	MoDem-UDI	5.8		
	FN	16.4		

Germany	SPD	8.7	13.8	20.9
	CDU	13.9		
	CSU	18.7		
	Linke	3.4		
	REP	38.5		
Austria	ÖVP	8.1	7.0	25.3
	SPÖ	6.0		
	FPÖ	25.3		
UK	Lab	4.5	13.6	40.2
	Cons	22.8		
	BNP	38.0		
	UKIP	42.3		
2014				
France	MoDem-UDI	20.0	21.0	4.4
	PS-PRG	18.7		
	UMP	24.3		
	FN	4.4		
Germany	SPD	8.2	13.0	10.1
	CDU	6.4		
	CSU	24.4		
	Linke	4.2		
	NPD	13.7		
	AfD	12.4		
Austria	ÖVP	8.5	5.6	7.8
	SPÖ	2.8		
	FPÖ	7.8		
UK	Lab	6.0	9.7	6.2
	Cons	13.4		
	BNP	7.1		
	UKIP	5.2		

Additional description of Figure 3: Figure 3 in the main text plots the relationship between the politicization of European issues in EP elections and the emphasis placed on EU issues by extreme challenger parties (left-hand panel) and mainstream parties (right-hand panel) respectively. As we are interested not in individual parties but party types (mainstream parties vs extreme challenger parties), we use average values for each party type as our independent variable. In the following, we give a reading example: In the German EP elections in 1994 (D_94) the EU polity issue salience was extremely low in the case of issue emphasis by extreme parties (left-hand panel): Only 2.6 percent of the overall Euromanifestos of extreme challenger parties was dedicated to EU polity issues. The value of 2.6 percent has been calculated by taking the average values from the left-wing party *Die Linke* (4.3 percent) and the right-wing party

Die Republikaner (0.8 percent). In the case of mainstream parties (right-hand panel) EU polity issue salience was slightly higher: 10.2 percent of the overall Euromanifestos of mainstream parties was dedicated to EU polity issues. The value of 10.2 percent has been calculated by taking the average value from for the three German mainstream parties: CDU (7.3 percent), CSU (14.6 percent), and SPD (8.9 percent). In these elections (D_94), the politicization over European issues, likewise, was relatively low (6.5 at a scale ranging from 0 to 200).

Part II: Complementary analyses

Part II.1: In the following figures, we present additional analyses on the relationship between the politicization of European issues in EP elections and the emphasis placed on EU issues by mainstream parties. These analyses confirm that a positive relationship exists between politicization and EU issue emphasis by mainstream parties in Euromanifestos (EMs), regardless of the cases included and the way of representing mainstream parties. Figure 1 shows the results for the relationship between politicization and EU issue emphasis by mainstream parties in Euromanifestos (EMs) including the French EP election in 2009 (“F_9”). Apparently, this case is a clear outlier and we therefore decided to exclude it in our main analysis. Even if including it, a moderate positive relationship exists. Figures 2 and Figure3 show the same relationship for mainstream parties by taking each party separately rather than average values for party type.

Figure 1: Relationship between politicization and EU issue emphasis by extreme parties in Euromanifestos (EMs), including the case “France 2009 (F_09)”

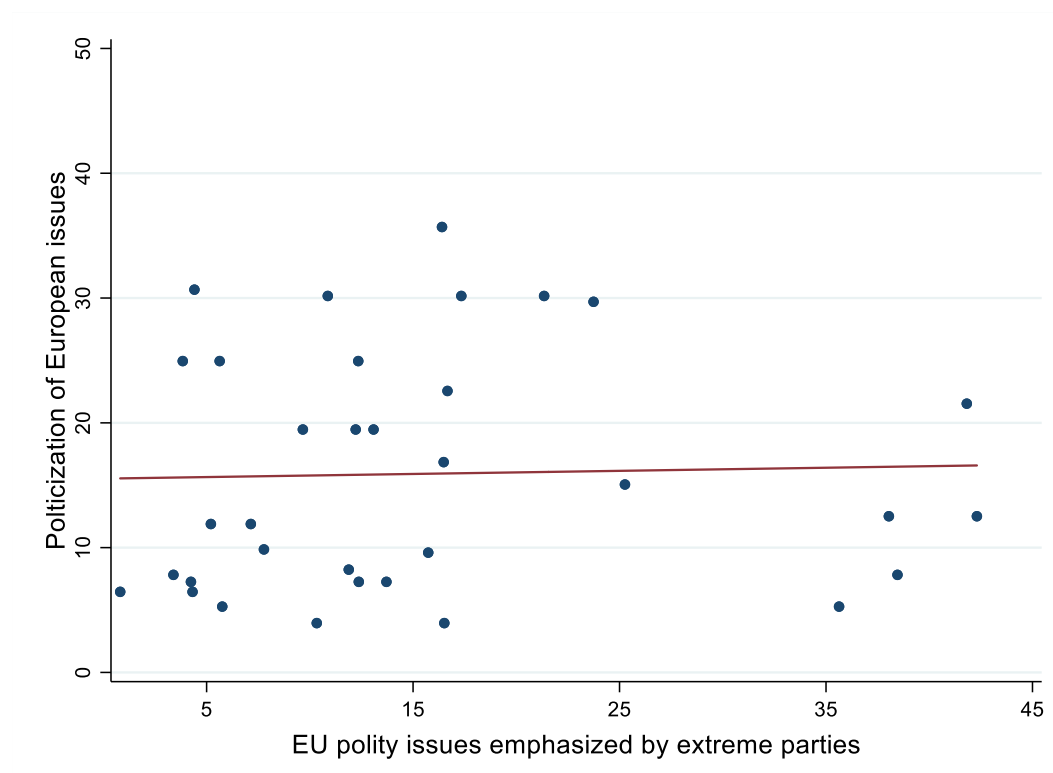


Figure 2: Relationship between politicization and EU issue emphasis by mainstream parties in Euromanifestos (EMs), including the case “France 2009 (F_09)”

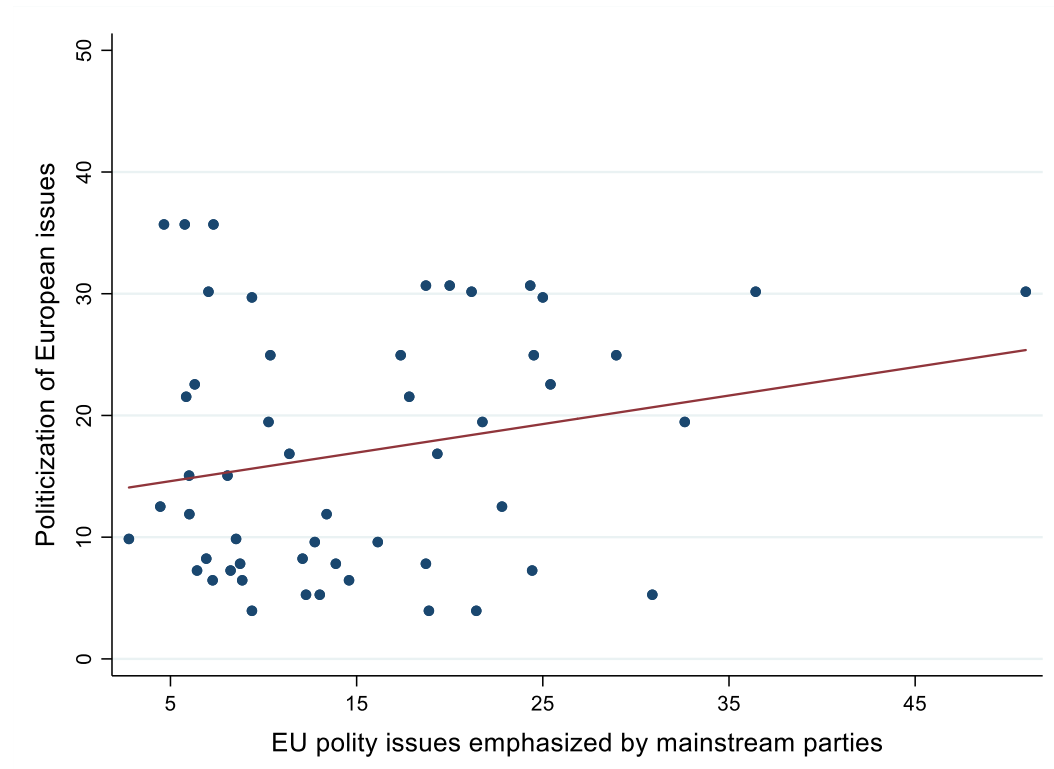
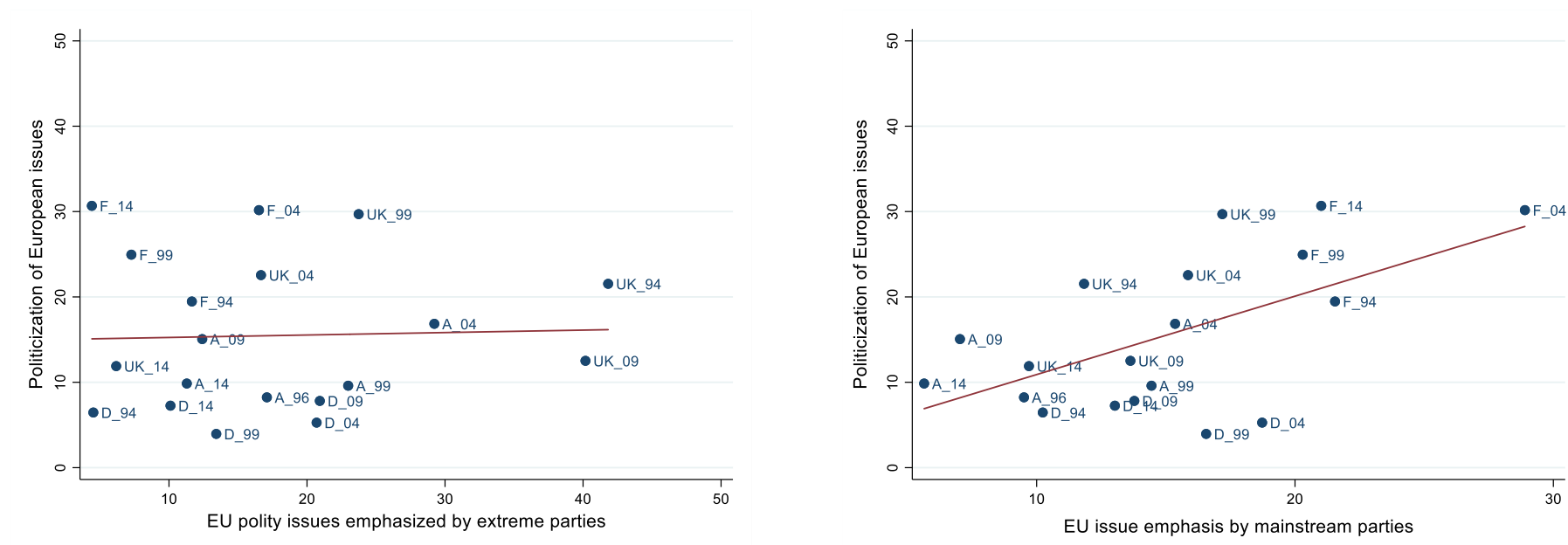


Figure 3: Relationship between politicization and EU issue emphasis by extreme challenger and mainstream parties in Euromanifestos (EMs), party system level



Part II.2: We use our EEC dataset to investigate the role of mainstream parties for emphasizing or de-emphasizing European issues in EP elections in more detail. This data allows for a calculation of the emphasis that mainstream parties place on European issues as the share of these issues in relation to all other subjects. Therefore, we can use this data to examine the role of mainstream parties for the development of issue salience in more detail.

Table 4: *Emphasis on European issues by mainstream parties, 1994-2019*

	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Austria	9.4	11.5	17.6	13.4	6.0	17.8
France	24.8	27.6	24.2	29.5	23.0	62.5
Germany	12.0	7.3	5.4	5.5	6.3	9.0
UK	22.1	37.1	23.0	10.6	10.4	45.9

Note: Issue emphasis of mainstream parties (moderate right and Social Democratic Parties) on European issues (in percent) is measured as the sum of all European issues mentioned per country in EP election campaigns between 1994 and 2019.

Table 4 shows the results for each election in each of the four countries. Most importantly, we find the same two pairs of countries that we previously identified in our analysis of politicization. On the one hand, Austria and Germany display low levels of issue emphasis. This is most pronounced in Germany, where issue emphasis by mainstream parties was very low in the entire period. In Austria, salience was low in 1994 (9.4%), then increased until 2004 (17.6%) before strongly declining in the two subsequent elections (6.0% for 2014). France and the UK represent the group of high salience countries. In France, levels of politicization have been very high and this tallies with the high levels of issue salience accorded to the issue by mainstream parties. In the UK issue salience accorded by mainstream parties was very high in 1999, but declined in the 2000s and reached a very low level in elections in 2009 and 2014. This pattern is fully in line with our findings on the development of politicization in these countries. Apparently, in the British case mainstream parties responded to the rise of a radical Eurosceptic challenger party by de-emphasizing European issues in EP elections in a first period. Our results on the 2019 EP elections clearly support our expectation surrounding the role of mainstream parties. In France and the UK, the two countries where we observed a marked rise in politicization in the 2019 EP election, we also find a marked increase in the emphasis mainstream parties place on European issues in this election. Values for issue salience were extremely high with 62.5% in France and 45.9% in the UK.

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