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Contents

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The Crisis of the European Union and its Reflection in the Romanian Public Sphere. Recent Findings

Alina Bârgăoanu, Flavia Durach*

Abstract: *This paper addresses the implications of the euro crisis, which turned from „a Greek mess" to a political, institutional, economic and confidence crisis of the European Union. In our view, the EU public sphere is relevant for the current debate surrounding the crisis because it represents the setting where solidarity among EU citizens and EU states is created. Given our interest in the concept of the EU public sphere and the way the crisis of the European Union influences the debates in the public sphere, the way in which solidarity among EU citizens and EU states is imagined and enacted, we carried out a research project focused on the Romanian public sphere in the context of the crisis. The research project was carried out around a crucial event in the process of crisis resolution: the signing of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union by 25 EU member states at the beginning of March 2012. The results show that in Romania, for the moment at least, the "EU" has not fallen victim to the crisis. There is a considerable drop in public trust in the EU, but it is our assessment that the descending trend could be reversed, provided a clear vision, accompanied by strong leadership, emerges.*

Keywords: *European public sphere, euro crisis, Euro scepticism, Treaty of Stability, Coordination and Governance*

1. A Crisis in Search of a Name

Back in 2007-2008, while the United States was struggling with the devastating effects of the crisis on its economy, on the life of its citizens and on its global prestige, the European Union appeared to have avoided the worst of the global crisis. 2008 was a stormy year in Europe, though. For example, in October 2008, "two of Belgium's five

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biggest banks – Fortis and Dexia – were bailed out by the Belgian government in alliance with the Dutch, French and Luxembourg authorities. Fortis, a Belgian-Dutch institution, won a $15 billion capital injection, while Dexia, a Franco-Belgian municipal lender, got $8.64 billion" (Elliott, Atkinson, 2009, p. 10). In the same week, "Hype Real Estate Mortgage Bank, Germany's second biggest commercial property lender, was bailed out to the tune of $35 billion" and "one week later, the Hype rescue agreed the previous week had collapsed and a more costly $50 billion rescue had been arranged" (*idem,* p. 9). In October the same year, "the Irish and Greek governments had announced 100 per cent guarantees for all personal bank depositors" (*ibidem,* p. 10). National governments tried to bail-out their national economies; according to an IMF report, "similar to the bail-out strategy put in place by the Federal Reserve in the US, European governments provided guarantees for bank lending in their attempt to equilibrate the financial market. The total commitment done by euro area governments accounted for 28% of the area's gross domestic product (GDP), which is comparable to the total commitment done by the Federal Reserve of 26% of the American GDP" (IMF, 2010).

No signs of concerns were expressed at the level of the European Union overall in 2007 - 2008 and, despite the difficulties, Europeans could still pride themselves on the superiority of their economic and social model. Shortly after that moment of pride and after the above-mentioned considerable efforts made by individual EU states to bail-out their individual economies, the European Union, especially its core - the euro zone - was hardly hit. The so-called "global crisis" has proved to be not so global after all, and its strongest and most enduring effects have been felt at the very heart of Europe. The crisis outburst in Greece; unfortunately, the place of immediate origin allowed for the superficial interpretation that the crisis was a mere consequence of the irresponsible behaviour of the Greek state and its citizens. Over a relatively short period of time, the crisis evolved from a "Greek mess" to a "European mess", from "Greece - the sick man of Europe" (2009 - 2010) to "Europe – the sick man of world economy" (2009 until the present day).

As the events that turned a crisis in tiny Greece into a European/ global problem were unfolding, there was an upsurge in crisis rhetoric and various names were put on the table, such as Euro crisis, euro zone crisis, currency crisis, sovereign debt crisis, financial crisis, banking crisis, trade imbalance crisis, solvency crisis, Greek crisis, German crisis. The attempts at naming the crisis have become more and more complicated, more and more nuanced in order to offset immediate reaction and criticism. For example, the preferred term in the American newspapers is "Europe debt crisis", A. Das and N. Roubini call it "periphery debt crisis" (FT, 3 April 2012), while the Final Report of the Future of Europe Group (a group made of the foreign ministers of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain) opts for the more "politically correct" version "the sovereign debt crisis in the euro area" (17 September 2012). The very variety of the crisis rhetoric reflects the complexity of the crisis in the first place and the theoretical and political stakes associated with its interpretations.

It was not until recently that the most apt, in our opinion, description of the crisis appeared: the crisis of the European Union. That name - put forward by the renowned German philosopher J. Habermas (2012) - encapsulates the essence of the crisis, which has been eluded by the previous interpretations: we do not have to do with a debt crisis,

with a solvency crisis, a financial or a banking crisis, with a Greek crisis, with a crisis of a periphery (whose and what periphery), but with a crisis of the European Union. A political crisis of the European Union created by the different versions as to its future; an institutional crisis of how the European States relate to each other; an economic crisis of the European Union created by its inability to deliver prosperity and create premises for future growth; a confidence crisis created by the huge gap between Europe's leaders and its citizens.

There is general consent that the current crisis, whatever its name, place the European Union at a crossroads (Dobrescu, 2011). The cumulative economic difficulties represent a tough challenge from the micro to the macro level. But the problems arising are not only practical in nature, but also highly symbolic. In a statement issued by the Council for the Future of Europe (*Europe is the solution, not the problem,* 6 September 2011) it is acknowledged that the vision of Europe that will succeed is that which "inspires the commitment of its citizens whose faith in a European future is shaken". In its struggle to stabilize the economic environment, the European Union faces significant symbolic losses - both locally and globally. "The last few years have seen Europe's reputation fall precipitously. From being the world's most widely admired political experiment enjoying widespread respect and a degree of leadership on policy issues with global impact like climate change and fighting Third World poverty, it has in the minds of many been brutally downgraded. Its new image is of a low-growth zone whose member governments have turned away from co-operation and are instead becoming a byword for short-sighted beggar-thy-neighbour tactics imperilling the euro." (Merrit, 2010).

As we have shown elsewhere (Bârgăoanu, 2011), the Union has been suffering from financial, economic, and political standpoints for a long period of time. It suffers from a lack of vision, a lack of a distinct global profile. Some of its leaders are labelled as dull or downright boring, while certain leaders of the member states take on a more and more pronounced role in taking over the economic reigns of the Union. The US has had, for some time, a policy of "benign ignorance" towards its ally across the Ocean, despite statements regarding a firm commitment to revive the trans-Atlantic partnership. In addition, there are demographic problems, such as an ageing population and discrepancies in the growth pace of various countries. These issues have developed in time, making some analysts consider that the current manifestations "are but the latest twists in a drama that began more than two decades ago" (Marsh, 2010).

2. EU Public Sphere and the Issue of EU Solidarity

In this context, one may legitimately wonder whether the issues related to the EU public sphere and related topics such as EU communication, EU citizenship, EU democratic/ communication deficit and EU identity are still worth discussing. In order to understand the worthiness of the topic, let us remind ourselves of the two main paradigms of the EU public sphere that have been put forward so far. These two paradigms do not exclude, but rather reinforce each other (Beciu, Perpelea, 2011, pp. 13-14). The former is linked to the traditional Habermasian view, that focuses on procedures and deliberations in the public sphere, its critical functions and the pressure that it exerts on the political field. The latter is encapsulated by C. Calhoun's view, that focuses on the symbolic functions of the public

sphere, on its expected capacity to create solidarity: "the public sphere be conceptualized not simply as a setting for rational debate and decision making - thus largely disregarding or transcending issues of identity - but as a setting for the development of social solidarity as a matter of choice, rather than necessity" (Calhoun, 2002, p. 148). As we have already underlined, these two paradigms are not mutually exclusive, but place their focus rather differently. For example, J. Habermas, who is highly illustrative for the former vision, makes clear that solidarity - together with critical debate, critical thinking, deliberation and participation - is among the key ingredients/outcomes of the public sphere; according to him, "it is not enough that common policies are institutionalized in Brussels and that the European citizens could influence these policies through the election of a parliament with its own factions. If the citizens are to be able to make factual use of their right to vote, and in the process develop a sense of solidarity through this practice, the European decision-making processes must become visible and accessible within the existing national public spheres." (2009, p. 87).

Combining these two visions, we could rightly say that the EU public sphere - irrespective of the forms it takes, be it Europeanized public spheres, or transnational Europeanized public spheres along common EU topics - is relevant for the current debate around the crisis because it creates/ is the setting where solidarity among EU citizens and EU states is created.

Solidarity has both highly pragmatic and symbolic values, which are relevant for the present discussion. In pragmatic terms, solidarity is a matter of shared interests. Simplifying the terms of the crisis and one of its valid, albeit partial, interpretations according to which we deal with a trade imbalance crisis inside the European Union, as long as "the North" exports to "the South", one can hardly talk about a Union of shared interests and about solidarity; as J. Delors rightly put it, "in a Europe of shared interests, one cannot win at the expense of others" (Eurozine.com, 1 July 2011). There are hard facts, old and new, behind that statement. For example, between 1998 and 2009, Germany's export surplus [with Italy] has grown by 543% (Niglia, 2012). And according to a more recent example, "what on the surface appears to be good news for Germany – the record low yield at its latest government debt auction – is actually an indication of growing stress elsewhere in the region" (El-Erian, 2012).

The Polish thinker Remigiusz Sobanski rightly noticed that: "Europe is conscience rather than geography" (*apud* Sowa, 2008, p. 273). This European solidarity and the conscience of belonging to the Union are a communication and experience-sharing problem. Solidarity is a symbolic, social construct; it is not a political or administrative decision, not an institutional measure that can be enforced by regulations. Instead, it is triggered and born in the public sphere. According to C. Calhoun (2003), the public sphere has three dimensions important to the European integration. The first one is about participation in the process of collective decision making. The second dimension is related to cultural aspects ("the production of a social imaginary") that shapes the notion of "Europe" by imagining it in a certain way. The third dimension is of our concern: the public sphere as "a medium of social integration, a form of social solidarity, as well as an arena for debating others." (*idem,* p.1). Communication in the public sphere generates solidarity by participation in the process of creation and recreation of institutions. Collective choices connect and integrate people. This is the modern perspective on the

shape and role of the public sphere, opposed to the classic 18th century ideas of the public sphere as a dimension of civil society which could potentially steer the state (*idem*, p. 12).

Finally, whether we like it or not, the EU is responsible for loosening traditional relations, loyalties and allegiances, especially those with the national state and the national community. It is therefore still the EU's responsibility to set new relations, compatibilities and loyalties to a territory, to a much bigger territory. Solidarity – designated as a fundamental value of the EU by its founding fathers plays an important role in creating the new relationships and loyalties: "the expectation of solidarity at the Union level can be a strong cement of this process" (Barca, 2009). Communication and public spheres are important for creating those new relationships: they aim at turning isolated persons into citizens who trust one another, have something in common and are able to perform collectively in a meaningful way.

3. Research Project on the Romanian Public Sphere - Methodology

Given our interest in the concept of the EU public sphere and the way the crisis of the European Union influences the debates in the public sphere, the way in which solidarity among EU citizens and EU states is imagined and enacted, we carried out a research project focused on the Romanian public sphere in the context of the crisis. The research was premised on the model of the Europeanised national public spheres. As we have shown elsewhere (Bârgăoanu, Durach, 2011), the literature describes three models for the European public sphere: a) the homogeneous, unique European public sphere (the *heavy* public sphere), b) the horizontally or vertically Europeanized national public spheres, and c) the *ad hoc* public sphere, fluid and created by some opinions on a series of common European topics and concerns. Relative consensus has been reached that the most viable model, both from a conceptual and a practical point of view, is that of the Europeanized national public spheres. With this in mind, it would be fairer to talk about "European public spheres" than to remain stuck with the ideal of a unique European public sphere. To be able to talk about Europeanized national public spheres, several criteria have been proposed: commonality of issues, simultaneity of discussion, mutual responsiveness between national public spheres (Habermas, 2009), common frames of reference, a common European perspective, "the same relevance criteria" (Th. Risse, 2003).

The research project was carried around a crucial event in the process of crisis resolution: the signing of the Treaty of Financial Governance by 25 EU member states on the 1 March 2012. It had three layers:

a. content analysis of Romanian online portals and TV channels one month before and after the event, with a focus on the "Euro crisis" topic; the content analysis sought to identify the visibility and the prominence of the topic, the actors involved and the way in which media discourse frames it;

b. expert interviews with high-profile Romanian specialists in finance and economy;

c. national survey.

For the remaining of this article, we will only present the results of the expert interviews and of the national survey, with a view to revealing the perceptions of the euro crisis in the Romanian society - both at the popular and elite level - and at identifying the effects of this

perception on the attitudes toward the EU. We will compare quantitative and qualitative data resulting from the two methods. We will attempt to identify the differences and similarities between the general public's perception on (and interpretation of) the Euro crisis and the experts' opinions and explanations on the same subject. Apart from the more "technical" issues (such as economic mechanisms which led to the euro crisis), we will be interested in finding out how did the crisis influence the public opinion on the European Union and in offering at least a partial answer to the question "Is the European Union the ultimate victim of the crisis?".

The public opinion was measured using a national survey (N = 1002) on European related topics, conducted between 28 and 30 April 2012. The design of the survey was based on the following research questions:

Q1. What is the degree of general knowledge about the Euro crisis?

Q2. What is the public opinion on the consequences and implications of the crisis?

Apart from the public opinion survey, we have conducted a number of 11 interviews with important Romanian public figures, such as: state officials, leading experts in the economic and financial field, and journalists working for business or financial publications. They are: L.A. (General Director BCR Pensii), R.S. (chief economist, Direction of Economic Studies, the National Romanian Bank), C.V. (editor, "Wall Street"), V.V. (President of the parliamentary Commission for economy, industry and services, former Minister of Economy and Commerce), A.V. (consultant of the Governor of the National Romanian Bank), L.V. (Secretary of State, the Ministry of Science), S.P. (editor-in –chief, "Ziarul Financiar"), I.Ş. (analyst), C.Ş. (editor-in-chief, "Capital"), L.O. (Minister of European Affairs), and V.L. (chief economist, the National Romanian Bank).

The particular context of discussion was the signing of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union. Interviews were taken from 25 March to 11 April, 2012. Experts were asked about the impact of the euro crisis on the future of the European Union, about predictions regarding the evolution of the European Union in the near future, and about personal estimations about the public opinion regarding people's attitude toward the European Union and possible changes due to the crisis.

We took into consideration the following research questions:

Q1. What is the opinion of the Romanian political actors and experts on the Euro crisis?

Q2. What is the opinion of the Romanian political actors and experts on EU's mistakes in coping with the Euro crisis?

Q3. What are the possible short-term solutions for dealing with the crisis and what are the long-term measures required?

In order to structure our analysis, we will focus on the following topics: Euro crisis (sources, influences, consequences, accountable actors), EU-related (the impact of the EU on everyday life), attitudes toward the EU (changes, evolutions), European identity (advantages and disadvantages of membership, presence or absence of an European identity), and the expected evolution of the economic situation (in the near future, the direction in which the EU is going).

4. Data Analysis

The first set of questions, revolving around the perception on the Euro crisis, reveals some similarities between the experts' opinion and the general public's perspective. All experts interviewed agree that Romania is influenced by the Euro crisis, due to the fact that the country is "a tiny part in the EU mechanism" (L.A). The process of influence takes place by contagion: the country's exports are targeted to euro zone countries, and most foreign investments in Romania come from the aforementioned economies, so the drastic changes that took place inside the Euro zone hit the Romanian economic system as well. The financial fluxes and the banking system are other mechanisms of influence mentioned in the interviews. One interviewee adds the psychological factor into the equation: "We (Romanians) are influenced in the decisions we make" (C.V.). On the same matter, the public opinion understands the connection between the economic crisis in Romania and the Euro crisis. Almost half (48.5%) of respondents believe that the local crisis and the Euro zone crisis are connected to a high or a very high degree.

In your opinion, to what extent is the economic crisis in Romania related to the Euro crisis?

- Very less related / Unrelated — 10.7%
- Somewhat less related — 22.3%
- Somewhat related — 13.3%
- Related — 34.2%
- Very much related — 14.3%
- Do not know/Do not answer — 5.2%
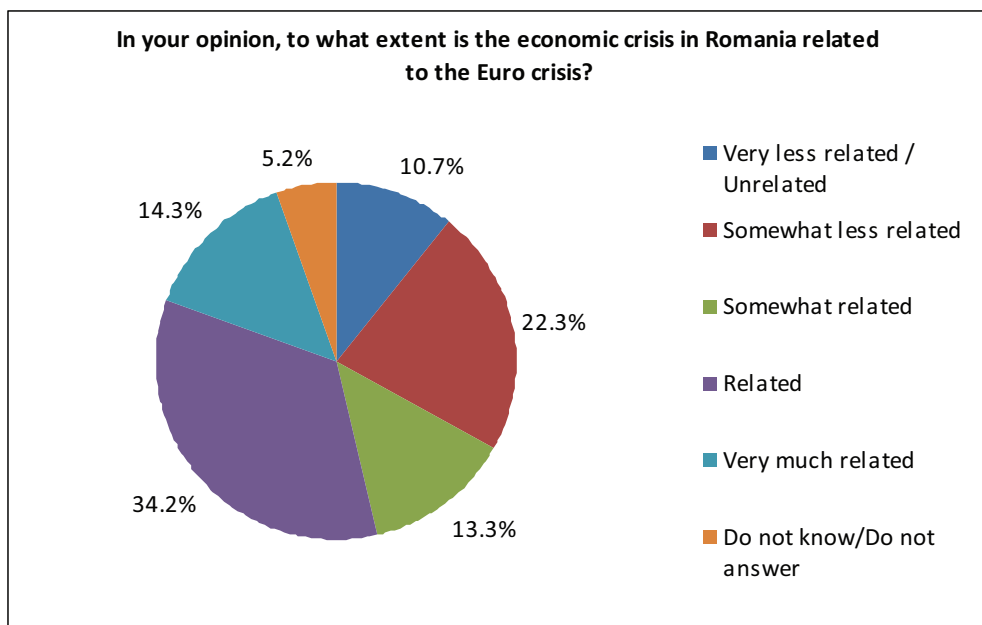
Fig. 1. The relation between the economic crisis in Romanian and the economic crisis in the EU

Concerning the roots of the crisis and the accountability issue, experts give five types of explanations. Some mentioned the design flaws of the Euro zone: "Without a fiscal union, a monetary union solves nothing" (L.A.). The Euro zone is affected also by the imbalances between the North and the South (V.L.) and by insufficient economic integration (L.O.). In A.V's words, "The United States of America act as a single actor in the global arena,

whereas in the case of Europe, only God knows how many speeds there are, how many problems, how many ambitions".

Another category of interpretations argue that the Euro crisis originated in the global economic crisis started in 2007 (A.V., V.L., L.O., L.V., C.V.). In this frame of interpretation, the vulnerabilities of the global banking system surfaced quickly, shifting from the USA to the EU. Most of the public figures interviewed blame the hasty manner in which the member states started rescuing financial institutions. The process was compared to "a golden parachute that we opened blindly in order for the major banks to land safely".

The third set of interpretations refers to the misuse of the public finance, in the absence of a high level of financial and economic education/culture (L.A., R.S., L.V.). The Euro crisis is the result of misuse of two elements: public debt and budgetary deficit in order to support the budgetary system and social policies (V.V.).

Last but not least, the free market mechanisms are responsible, due to lack of regulations, for the crisis of overproduction and inadequate individual economic behaviour. As we can infer from the interpretations above, there is not a single cause for the Euro crisis, but more of a combined perspective:

"The accountability for the current crisis is shared between all: governments, individual households, financial institutions, non-financial institutions, and in the particular case of the Euro we must add to the list the European institutions that have designed and tolerated a suboptimal functional system for the Euro zone" (V. L.).

When asked to name three actors accountable for the economic crisis in the EU, the respondents to the survey gave varied answers, ranging from institutions, to collective and individual actors, to member states, and to policies or economic factors. The main accountability was placed on the political class in general (mentioned first by 5.1% of respondents). Others mentioned banks first (4.4%), USA/the Americans (4.4%), Greece (2.9%), France (2%), governments of member states (1.7%). The EU as whole was mentioned first by 0.9%.

As a second answer, Germany was mentioned by 2% of people, followed by Greece (1.3%), low levels of productivity (1.2%), France (1.1%), the political class (1%). The EU was mentioned second by 0.1% of respondents.

As a third answer, Italy was mentioned by 1.2%, followed by France (0.7%), Germany (0.6%), Spain (0.4%), the population (0.4%).

Overall, the respondents to the survey put responsibility mainly on collective actors, such as: the political class (national and/or European), the population and/or certain groups (wealthy people, bankers, state presidents, parliament members, European leaders), and groups of member states (the underdeveloped states, the wealthy states, the powerful states). The most important European institutions (the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European bank) were also mentioned, but the EU as a whole was blamed far less. Some states that had a great visibility during the peaks of the crisis were also labelled as being responsible: Ireland, UK, Italy, Germany, France, USA. Only a few individual actors were included on the list: the president of Romania Traian Băsescu, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the president of the European Commission, the French president. Other explanations were of political nature (measures,

policies, state decisions) or economic nature (sovereign debt, individual debt, inflation, the euro, overproduction, the financial system)

When asked to choose from a list, the results change. From a multitude of actors, the ones that are held most accountable for the crisis in the public eyes are: the politicians (18,5%), the International Monetary Fund (15.8%) and the banks (15.7%).
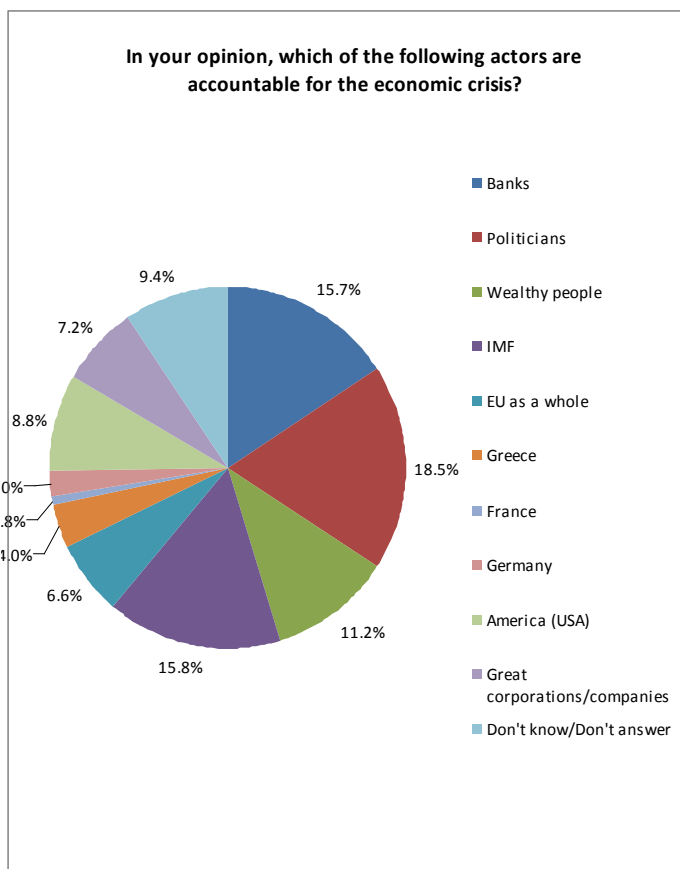
Fig. 2. In your opinion, which of the following actors are accountable for the economic crisis?

In what concerns the short-term evolution of the economic situation in the EU (12 month-time span), the experts agree there is an intimate link between the developments in the EU and developments in Romania. "Romania lacks a buffer, a protective shield. Unfortunately, this situation won't change in the future, because one cannot create a buffer overnight" (L.A.). The worst case scenario anticipates an all-time low for the EU. It is imperative to avoid the risk of falling in a deep recession (L.O.), but this is a difficult task, as the EU has serious difficulties in managing itself (I.Ş.). On the same negative

page, Romania is expected to have a serious deficit in 2012, followed by an almost imperceptible economic growth in 2013 (S.P., L.A, R.S., V.V.).

The best case scenario for the EU includes "a slight economic growth that will bring comfortable stability" (C.Ş). Romania's situation appears to be a bit blurry. The economic developments are influenced by the results of the following elections, which could affect the budgetary deficit (L.V.). The experts are reserved: "Now Romania has a bit of an 'advantage', so to say. [...] We are at our lowest and by consequence any improvement could appear" (C.Ş).

The public opinion seems to be undecided on what the future developments of the economic situation could be, with a tendency toward pessimism. Almost half of the respondents (a cumulated 48.5%) expect the economic situation in Romania to be worse or far worse in the next 12 months, 20.2% see no significant change and 31.3% are optimistic. The respondents give much more credit to the European Union than to the Romanian government Only 28.8% believe that the economic situation in the EU as a whole will be worse or far worse, whereas the majority (51.6%) anticipates clear improvement. 19.5% see no change in the near future.

When we correlate the two questions, we can see that the evolutions of the two (the EU and Romania) go hand in hand in the public judgement: 39% of those who think the economic situation in Romania will be far worse see the same evolutions in the case of the EU, compared to only 6.9% who anticipate a significant improvement in the EU. Similarly, 52.9% of people who think the economic situation in Romania will be much better, have the same opinion in what concerns the EU, and only 5.9% think the economic situation in the EU will take a turn to the worse.
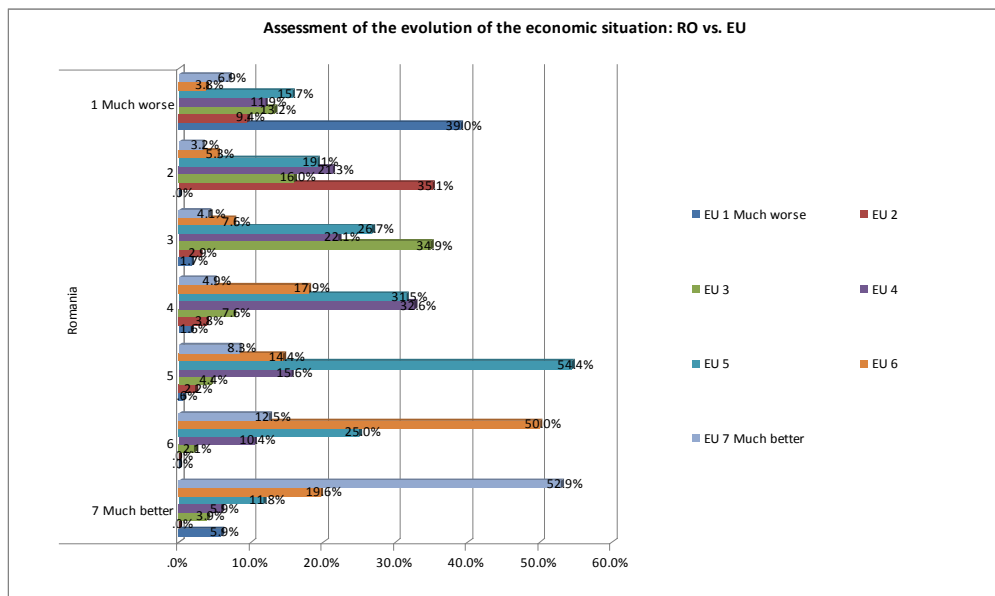
Fig. 3. Assessment of the evolution of the economic situation: RO vs. EU

Another set of questions in the interview and in the survey is dedicated to the attitudes towards the EU. More precisely, we wanted to find out whether the public opinion in Romania relates differently to the EU after the aggravation of the economic crisis. The experts were asked to think about ways in which the attitudes of the Romanian citizens changed.

Some of the experts interviewed saw no significant changes in the levels of trust, at least for the short-term (L.A., V.L., S.P., L.V., C.V.). Others are even more optimistic, and expect higher levels of trust in the EU, for a number of reasons. First, Romanians have the impression that the economic situation in the rest of the EU is more stable than in their own country. Secondly, the EU impersonates a saviour for Romania's development in the long run. Trust in the EU is a counter reaction to the distrust in the national government. Finally, the mobility to travel, study and work abroad fuells up the mirage of the Western civilization.

"The typical Romanian citizen hates himself first and foremost and the main advantage of the EU is that it unshackles one from being oneself" (R.S.)

"Internal problems were so great and felt so intensely on the short term, that Brussels developed a more positive image" (C.V.).

"The EU is the train that pulls us forward" (V.).

In this matter at least, the experts' opinions seem not to reflect reality very accurately. The survey question "How much trust do you have in the EU?" recorded surprising results. 43.7% of respondents have very little or little trust in the EU; only 22% trust the EU and only 5.2% of respondents admitted trusting the EU very much.

Fig. 4. Trust in the EU

Although this result might bring us closer to the EU27 average, when compared to Eurobarometer results in Romania from previous years, a drastic drop becomes obvious.
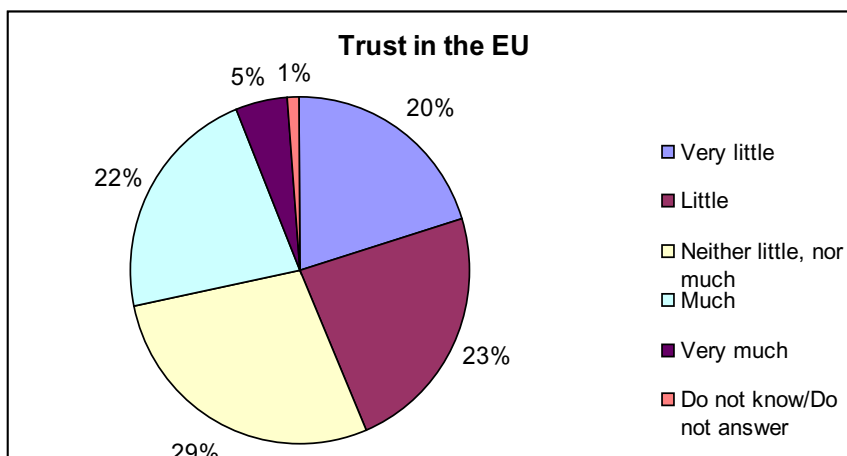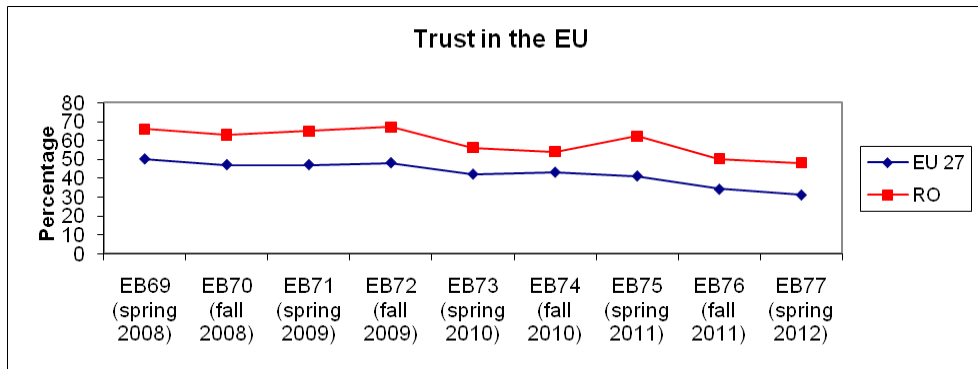

Fig. 5. Trust in the EU: trend (Eurobarometer results)

Although Romania manages to stay above the EU average, we can see that it follows a constantly descending trend with only slight and temporary improvement in 2010. For the first time ever, in spring 2012, less than half (48%) of Romanians trusted the EU. Nevertheless, the public opinion in this country remains less Euro sceptic than the average.

Results can be correlated to the answer to another question in the survey, regarding the direction in which things are going in the European Union. There is moderate optimism; 35.1% believe that the EU is going in a good/very good direction, compared to 24.8% who believe the opposite. A notable 31.2% are undecided.

In the context of this significant decrease in trust, it is legitimate to ask ourselves what are the perceived benefits of EU membership, both at personal and national level. During the interview, the experts and public figures were invited to express their opinion on the subject ("Do Romanians perceive the benefits of EU membership based on pragmatic evaluations or symbolic evaluations?"). Based on their answers, we can group the possible interpretations into two categories. Pragmatically speaking, the country's membership to the EU is related to a higher standard of living, the freedom to travel, the possibility to work abroad, and free movement. The other category includes symbolic references, such as: the desire to overcome the feeling of inferiority, the desire to be in line with the highly developed states, and what can be called "historical consciousness":

"In what concerns mentalities and civic culture, we still have a lot to learn. At a historical level, we [Romania] are in Europe, because the difference between us and the Middle East or North-Eastern regions of Europe (Siberia) are far greater than those between us and the rest of the EU member states" (V.V.)

Overall, there seems to be a balance between symbolic and pragmatic interpretations. This conclusion is backed up by the results of the survey. The majority (45.5%) believes that Romania experiences both advantages and disadvantages deriving from EU membership.

A small fraction (9,9%) sees only disadvantages. At a personal level, the situation differs. There is a greater leverage of opinions: 25.1% feel they have more advantages due to EU membership, 24.9% answered they experience both advantages and disadvantages and an equal 24.9% experience mostly disadvantages.

The perceived advantages of Romanian's membership to the EU are linked to the levels of trust. Half of the respondents who have a lot of trust in the EU also believe that the advantages of membership surpass the disadvantages. Also, 30.5% of those who see only the disadvantages of EU membership and 36% of those who believe that the disadvantages are more numerous than the advantages have very low levels of trust in the EU.
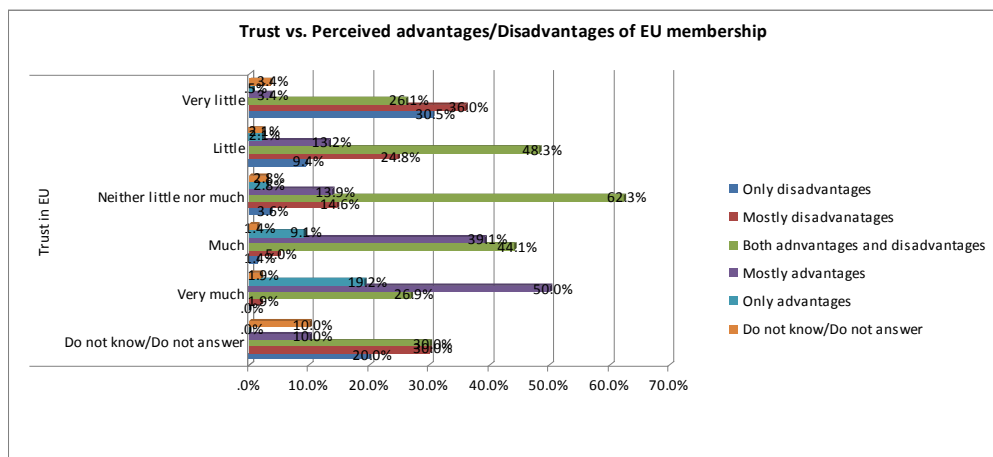
Fig. 6. Trust vs. Perceived advantages/ Disadvantages of EU membership

When asked "What does Romania's membership to the EU mean for you?", people turned to pragmatic and symbolic points of reference in an almost perfect balance. From a symbolic point of view, respondents answered "Being part of the civilized world" (74.2%), "being proud of being European" (59.2%), "peace and security" (66.2%). From a practical perspective, EU membership equals with "freedom of movement" (91.3%), "European funds" (72.5%), "financial advantages" (39.6%).

As we could see, Romanians evaluate EU membership in symbolic and pragmatic terms, but the question is: "do they actually feel European?". We have included a question on the matter of a perceived double identity, Romanian and European, and the results are in line with our expectations.

The experts interviewed were asked to assess whether Romanians have developed a double identity, both national and European, and the results varied. One side carries the belief that the possibility of a double identity is remote. One argument in favour of this idea is that the Romanians are very nationalistic (C.Ş.). Adding to this, the Romanian society faces a serious crisis of identity; in such conditions, the development of a European identity meets hostile ground.

"Romania is obviously facing an identity crisis. [...] At the moment, Romanians have no almost no distinct identity at all. The causes for this situation can be easily identified in the education crisis, the cultural crisis, the situation in which the old communist system has been replaced with a confusing capitalist system; we have no long-term benchmarks." (C.Ş).

The majority of the experts admit that a European identity is extremely desirable and a "prerequisite for a functional European project" (R.S.) but, on the short term, it should not be expected in the case of Romania. As long as the political class, which sets the tone in a society, stays focused on national issues and reinterprets European subjects from a limited, local perspective, it is almost impossible for citizens to feel both Romanian and European (C.V.)

Having a completely different position on this matter, other experts anticipate the development of a double identity in the near future, especially at young generations. One key aspect is the quality of life: "If Romanians' lives are satisfactory, there won't be a problem of identity" (L.A.). Some optimistic opinions state that a double identity already exists. Romanians feel European even if they are not yet aware of this fact.

"One identity does not exclude the other. The European identity exists, although not explicitly identified as such by Romanians. This matter becomes palpable when travelling abroad. In such a situation, one feels part of a larger, albeit different family, having a lot of identities and particularities, but still a family." (L.O.)

In order to shed light on the matter, we have included in the survey one question about the perception of a double identity. Although the majority of respondents feel only Romanian (58.8%), there is also a consistent percentage that admits feeling "Mainly Romanian, but also European" (36.9%). This value entitles us to state that the perception of a double identity is not a marginal phenomenon.

We have found a positive correlation between the perceived double identity and the levels of trust in the European Union: 83.7% of those who have very little trust in the EU consider themselves to be only Romanian. The respondents who admit having a lot of trust in the EU feel Romanian, but also European (59.6%).

We expected the economic crisis in the EU to make regular citizens more aware of the impact of the decisions made at a European level. In order to test this hypothesis, we approached this subject in the expert interviews. The given answers highlight the following situation: people are more of aware of the impact of EU decisions in their lives only when they are directly affected by those decisions.

"Romania lacks the political culture necessary for European subjects to become important for the general public [...] From what I've seen as a journalist, after the crisis people started paying more attention to what happened outside the borders, because they became aware of global system that we live. The receptivity towards international and European subjects started to grow. This kind of awareness is characteristic to 2%, maybe 10% of the population." (C.Ş.).
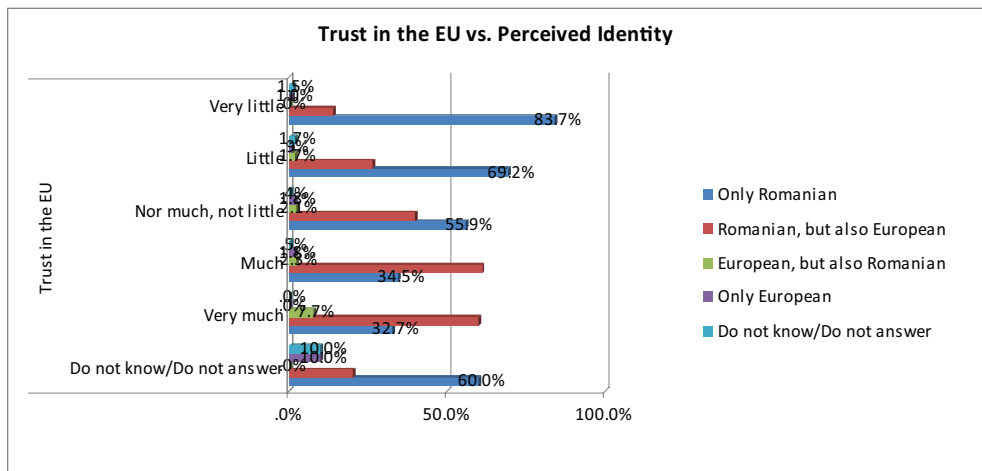
Fig. 7. Trust in the EU vs. Perceived Identity

There is a contradiction between the expert opinions and the results of the survey: 31.4 % of respondents feel that the decisions taken at an European level influence their lives, compared to only 22.7%, who feel that the impact is rather low. At the extremes, 12.3% feel they are influenced greatly by decisions taken at the European level, whereas 14.9% perceive a very low impact on their lives.

When asked to imagine how their lives would change if Romania exited the European Union, 29.9% see no change in their situation, 13.8% believe their lives would be far worse, and 21.6% imagine their lives would become moderately worse. Only 6.9% answered their lives would be much better, given such a scenario.

The results of the survey also suggest an emotional connection to the EU: 39.3% would regret the dissolution of the EU. The answers given to the next question in the survey, "In the next five years, would you like the EU to play a greater or smaller role in your life" indicate clear support for what we could call "more Europe": the majority wants the EU to play a more important role the following years and only 23.2% desires the opposite.
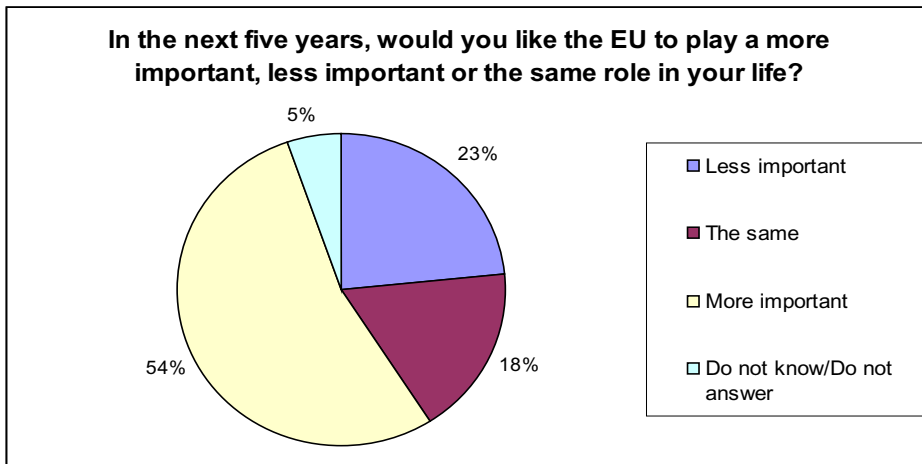
Fig. 8. In the next five years, would you like the EU to play a more important, less important or the same role in your life?

5. Discussion

A strong connection between the crisis in the Euro zone and the economic crisis in Romania is openly admitted both by the experts interviewed and the respondents in the survey. Almost half of the respondents are aware that the euro crisis and the Romanian crisis are linked. As explained by the experts, the process of contagion takes place through "hard" mechanisms (trade and investments) and "soft" mechanisms (psychological factors that influence economic decisions).

There is a lot of public debate on the roots and factors responsible for the crisis. Expert opinions focus more on structural factors and economic mechanisms, whereas the public opinion seems to be more concerned with directly placing blame on something/someone. The experts give five sets of explanations for the causes of the euro crisis, targeting the design flaws of the euro zone, the developments of the global economic crisis started in 2007, the process of rescuing financial institutions, the misuse of the state budget, and the mechanisms of the free market.

When asked to name the most important three factors accountable for the crisis, the survey respondents provided rather simplistic explanations. The accountable actors are the political class (seen as an indistinct group), followed by Germany (the second answer), and Italy (the third answer). Greece, the banks, USA, and France were also frequently mentioned as the first, second or third answer, while the EU was mentioned less frequently. Overall, the crisis seems to be rather faceless: the respondents placed accountability mostly on collective actors, groups or important institutions. When asked to pick the accountable actors from a list, the respondents in the survey consistently chose politicians, followed by the IMF and the banks.

Another area of concern was the evolution of the economic situation in the EU and in Romania on the short term. The forecast made by the experts varied from negative

(recession and a very uncomfortable economic situation in Romania - budgetary deficit, public debt) to slightly positive (very mild economic growth in the EU in 2013 and a potential improvement in the case of Romania). The tendency expressed by public opinion is towards pessimism when assessing the economic developments in Romania, while the European Union is given more credit. The evolutions of the economic situation in the EU and in Romania are perceived by the general public (and experts) as closely linked: those who see improvement in the EU also see improvement at a national level. This interpretation indicates that the European Union still impersonates a saviour, a force that pulls us higher or drags us down, according to the general evolutions.

Although the EU is not directly blamed for the crisis, there is a drop in the levels of trust. The economic crisis has eroded the level of trust, bringing it to an all-time low of 48% in spring 2012 (compared to 66% at the beginning of 2008). The results of our survey confirm the Eurobarometer data: only 22% have a moderate trust in the EU, a small fraction (5.2%) has a high level of trust in the EU, whereas 43.7% of respondents have little of very little trust. These results contradict the speculations of some experts, according to whom no fluctuations in the levels of trust in the EU are expected. Keeping this trend in mind, it is relevant to know if the Romanian citizens see the advantages and/ or disadvantages of their countries' membership to the EU. The perception of Romania's benefits from EU membership is linked to the levels of trust, as the respondents who have a lot of trust in the EU also believe that the advantages are more numerous than the disadvantages.

The expert opinion that citizens evaluate the benefits of membership in both symbolic and pragmatic terms is confirmed by the answers given to the question "What does the EU mean for you?" Symbolically, respondents mentioned "Being part of the civilized world" ,"being proud of being European", "peace and security". Pragmatically, EU membership equals "freedom of movement", "European funds", and "financial advantages".

Identity is an important factor in the equation. The experts agree that European identity is a prerequisite of a functional European Union. Some opinions state that the formation of a double identity, European and Romanian, is a far off expectation, while the more optimistic experts expect the emergence of a double identity in the near future. The latter perspective is supported by the results provided by the survey: although the majority feels only Romanian, there is a consistent 36.9% that feel "mainly Romanian, but also European". The perception of a double identity is positively linked to the levels of trust in the EU.

One would expect the economic crisis to make people more aware of the impact of decisions made at the European level on their own lives. The expert opinions that Romanians lack the political culture necessary to make such a connection are contradicted by the results of the survey – the majority feels that the decisions at a European level do influence them at a personal level.

6. Conclusions

The euro crisis is no ordinary crisis. Due to its implications on the future of the European Union and its institutional design, it represents a genuine existential test. Our research shows that in Romania and for the moment at least, the "EU" has not fallen

victim to the crisis. There is a considerable drop in public trust in the EU, but it is our assessment that the descending trend could be reversed, provided a clear vision, accompanied by strong leadership, emerges. Although Romanians' attitudes toward the EU are negatively affected by the economic downturn of the last years, public opinion remains optimistic about the direction in which the EU is heading, and has a positive outlook on the evolution of the European economic situation within the next 12 months. In what concerns Romania's future, the perspective is much more pessimistic. Taking into consideration the perception of a connection between Romania and the EU, we would have expected that optimism regarding the latter would raise optimism regarding the former; the results contradict these expectations. The paradox is only apparent and it can be explained by one distinctive feature of the Romanian public opinion. Since EU accession, Romanians have pictured the EU as a saviour and as a safe haven. This frame still lingers in the collective memory, fuelled by a chronic discontent with the national political class and a tendency towards self-victimization.

The crisis raises practical and symbolic challenges for the EU. The former can be summarised to one question: political union or economic union? This unsolved dilemma was ignored during prosperous times; when facing prospects of deep recession, social movements, and centrifugal tendencies, such existentialist debates are revived. Whatever vision of Europe will succeed, the main symbolic challenge for the EU is to inspire the commitment of citizens to the new profile of the EU. The European leaders of the future must give convincing answers to the question on EU's new raison d'être. The situation calls for a new kind of solidarity, one that comes from the deep understanding of what the shared interests of the member states are in the year 2012, not what they were a decade, or even five years ago. Solidarity built up in the public sphere is sustainable, authentic and genuine and it makes collective choices easier and wiser.

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Putin's Third Term: The Triumph of Eurasianism?

Paul Pryce*

Abstract: In the midst of the Russian Federation's 2012 presidential election, Vladimir Putin expressed his support for the establishment of a functioning Eurasian Union by 2015. This article attempts to demonstrate that this Eurasian push, taken in context together with a number of other policies and programs pursued by Putin and Dmitri Medvedev, reflects a shift in Russian identity politics towards neo-Eurasianism. In doing so, the potential weaknesses of neo-Eurasianism as an identity framework for the whole of Russian society will be highlighted, indicating that the further centralization of political authority with the core (Moscow) will only exacerbate grievances in the regions of the periphery.

Keywords: Russian Federation, Eurasianism, Eurasian Union, nationalism, Vladimir Putin

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Putin's Legacy

On March 4th, 2012, Vladimir Putin secured a third, non-consecutive term as President of the Russian Federation. Amid widespread reports of procedural irregularities at polling stations across the country, the Central Election Commission announced that Putin had secured 63.6% of the vote. His closest challenger in the final tally was the Communist Party's candidate, Gennady Zyuganov, who received only 17.2% of the vote. As such, Putin is likely to remain a dominant force in Russian politics until at least the conclusion of his latest presidential term in 2018. What impact might this third term have on prevailing narratives of Russian identity and the position of the Russian Federation in the world?

One theme that emerged in the course of the 2012 presidential election was the notion put forward by both Putin and his supporters in United Russia that a Eurasian Union be formed by the Russian Federation and a number of other post-Soviet states. Such a political and economic configuration in the region has been touted as a possible counterweight to the trans-Atlantic community – namely the European Union and the United States of America – on the world stage. Much has been made in particular of the remarks made by then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin on October 4th, 2011, in which he called for the formation of this Eurasian Union in order to "...create real conditions to change the geopolitical and geo-economic configuration of the entire continent and have an undoubtedly positive global effect" (BBC, 2011a).

It will be argued here that this proposal for a Eurasian Union, as well as the attendant notion that Russian identity can be characterized as distinctly 'Eurasian', is intended as

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the basis for Putin's legacy. Accordingly, Putin's successful bid for a third presidential term represents the institutionalization of an increasingly coherent neo-Eurasianism as the dominant political ideology of the Russian Federation in the early 21st century, possibly de-pragmatizing relations between the Russian state and its neighbours as well as between the core and the periphery of Russian society. In order to demonstrate this, the sources of the Eurasian Union proposal will first be examined. Subsequently, the intellectual contributions of Alexander Dugin, Vladislav Surkov, and Sergei Karaganov to the contemporary narrative of Russian identity will be considered, highlighting how the ideational position of Russia has steadily shifted from an Atlanticist orientation to a Eurasian one since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

An Ever Closer Union?

In seeking to understand the ramifications of Putin's increasingly Eurasianist slant, it is necessary to outline the origins of the October 2011 proposal for a Eurasian Union. The concept of such an organization – an intergovernmental or even supranational entity encompassing the Russian Federation and other states in the post-Soviet space – is indeed nothing new. Proposals for a Eurasian Union were initially made in 1994 by President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan (Kilner, 2011). According to Nazarbayev, the process of integration would not have the immediate effect of forming a supranational entity; rather, it would be a gradual process with perhaps even more ambitious aims than those pursued through the formation of the European Union. "This was visualized as a multinational model that would aim at creating a unified state through various stages of a confederation and finally arriving at a union" (Sengupta, 2009). Movement was later made to act upon this proposal in early 1996, when the Treaty on the Deepening of Integration in the Economic and Humanitarian Field was signed into force by representatives of the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Eventually, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan entered into cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Community that would later develop from the 1996 Treaty.

At this point in the concept's development, the Eurasian Union was very much a project of President Nazarbayev, rather than an expression of geopolitical ambition by any Russian leader. Upon the signing of the aforementioned 1996 Treaty, "the Kazakh president Nazabayev saw the treaty as a meaningful step in the realization of the idea of a Eurasian Community that he developed two years earlier" (Malfliet, 1998). This would not simply supplement the already existing agreements that formed the Commonwealth of Independent States, of which both Kazakhstan and Russia are a part, however. Rather, he seemed to perceive the 1996 Treaty as Eurasia's equivalent to the Maastricht Treaty, which transitioned the European Community to the European Union. In fact, when considering the prospects for this gradually developing institution, "he compared the newly formed Eurasian Union to the European Union and said that the treaty lays out a blueprint for the creation of a Community of Integrated States, whose territory will stretch from the Polish to the Chinese border" (Ibid).

It did not take long for dissent to emerge among the Central Asian states regarding the future of Nazarbayev's vision for the Eurasian Union. Even as Tajikistan and Uzbekistan entered into cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Community, Tajik and Uzbek leaders expressed considerable scepticism toward Nazarbayev's proposal, arguing that the post-Soviet space did not need a body separate from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in order to achieve integration. Rather, they argued, the CIS had greater potential as a vehicle for political and economic integration between the Russian Federation and its Central Asian neighbours (Alexandrov, 1999). As such, support for this form of integration soon dwindled and, aside from Nazarbayev, the only remaining proponent of integration outside the auspices of the CIS was President Alexander Lukashenko, who saw ambitious projects of integration like the Eurasian Union as a possible means of remedying the identity crisis with which independent Belarus had been confronted (Trenin, 2002).

Thus, the Eurasian project was largely abandoned or at least lost its significance in the prevailing narratives of post-Soviet politics after the initial enthusiasm experienced in 1996-1997. An agreement establishing the Eurasian Economic Community was signed into force on October 10th, 2000 by Russian, Belarusian, Kazakh and Tajik leaders. At another summit in October 2005, it was decided that Uzbekistan would be granted membership. But few steps were taken to make the Eurasian Economic Community truly functional. After all, the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) has never been a customs union in practice, only a free trade area. No common external tariff has been put into place by the member states, with each member having a different tariff structure with regard to imports from the rest of the world (Broadman, 2005). It is therefore difficult to even call the EAEC an actual economic community.

The lack of political will among most of the member states to cede any degree of sovereignty to a supranational structure was further undermined by parallel agreements between the Russian Federation and some of its neighbours. For example, Lukashenko pressed for a closer relationship between the Russian Federation and Belarus and, as a result, a number of agreements were concluded between the two countries toward forming a 'Union of Two', though later years would see a lack of progress on this front as, according to some scholars, "Presidents Putin and Lukashenko sparred continuously over the form a union between their countries would take" (Donaldson and Nogee, 2009). By the end of the 21st century, a Customs Union of Five had also been agreed upon between the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The Eurasian Union had yet to materialize and the post-Soviet space was becoming rife with partially realized inter-state arrangements. In the midst of this crowded space, "…the Union of Two and the Customs Union of Five have established themselves as more or less self-sustainable projects, competing with other emerging subregional groupings and broader concepts such as Nazarbayev's proposal for a Eurasian union…" (Pazynak, 2000).

In many respects, this clutter of inter-governmental institutions and arrangements in the post-Soviet space has been, and continues to remain, one of the principal obstacles to the realization of a fully functioning Eurasian Union. It is certainly true that the European political space also includes a significant number of inter-governmental arrangements, including such bodies as the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the

Council of Europe (CoE), and many other sub-regional organizations, like the Council of Baltic Sea States or the now defunct Western European Union. However, it could be said that these numerous bodies are to a degree complementary, serving as a semi-coherent European security toolbox (Basu *et al*, 2012). Conversely, while there is much overlap in membership, there is little in the way of complementarity between structures established in the post-Soviet space, such as the CIS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM), the aforementioned Union of Two and Customs Union of Five, as well as the Eurasian Union and its myriad components.

In light of this, one might have expected the project to be utterly abandoned, the decision in 2005 to admit Uzbekistan as an EAEC member being the last hurrah for the Eurasian vision. This was seemingly demonstrated in November 2008 when, after a protracted period of inactivity within the EAEC, Uzbekistan announced its withdrawal from the Community (RIA Novosti, 2008). But Putin's surprising announcement in October 2011 that he would press for the establishment of a functioning Eurasian Union brought about a sudden resurrection of the project, bringing renewed vigour to integration efforts. A month later, Dmitri Medvedev, still serving as President of the Russian Federation at the time, reached an agreement with Nazarbayev and Lukashenko at a November 2011 summit to establish a political and economic Eurasian Union by 2015 (BBC, 2011b). By the start of January 2012, the three states had launched a Eurasian Economic Space, largely similar to the pre-existing Customs Union of Five, and announced preparations to establish a Eurasian Commission, modelled on the European Commission (Interfax, 2012).

This iteration of the Eurasian Union thus far seems to have avoided a pitfall encountered by other inter-state arrangements in the post-Soviet space – namely the lack of criteria designated for associate membership. In the case of the SCO in particular, this led to a lack of coherence in the organization's membership, with Belarus' application for associate membership being rejected yet invitations were extended to Iran and Pakistan (Kembayev, 2009). The lack of interest from Russian, Belarusian, and Kazakh officials in Syria's recently expressed enthusiasm to participate in the Eurasian Union demonstrates an understanding that cultivating the development of this organization will require discretion in growing the Union's membership (Central Asia Newswire, 2012).

For Nazarbayev, the motivation to propose and advocate this Eurasian Union is apparent state interest. Balancing Russia and China against one another ensures that neither secures exclusive hegemony over Central Asia. While there are certainly strong historical ties between Russia and Kazakhstan, "it should also be noted that a strong Russian presence in the area is seen as protection against possible threats from China and Uzbekistan, as the Kazakhs are acutely conscious of the geopolitical consequences of having a large territory and a small population" (Dekmejian and Simonian, 2003). Pursuing some level of integration with Russia, while also promoting other institutions like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, means obtaining security guarantees for Kazakhstan from both Russia and China.

But why have Putin and the Russian political elite renewed the push for a functioning Eurasian Union? There appears to be a number of erroneous ideas being put forward in

the literature as to what the principal motivation for the latest Eurasian push is. Contrary to the suppositions of some observers, the Eurasian Union is not actually intended as a means for Russia to re-establish an empire in the region. Taking over responsibility for the development of the Central Asian states would by all accounts be prohibitively expensive (Giusti and Penkova, 2010). Other authors have suggested that the Eurasian project is pursued by Russia as a means by which to block further EU enlargement into Russia's traditional sphere of influence (Bugajski, 2008). The applicability of this rationale is also dubious, given that the states involved in the Eurasian project would not be likely candidates for EU membership in any case. The accession of Kazakhstan or Tajikistan to the EU is not exactly a topic of debate in Brussels or Strasbourg. If the Eurasian Union has the potential to interfere with any remotely feasible enlargement of the EU, it is the case of Belarus or Ukraine, whose political elite is allegedly mulling the benefits of membership in the Eurasian Union.

In actuality, Putin's new push for the establishment of the Eurasian Union reflects the search by Russian political elites to find a new framework of identity for the broader Russian society. Rather than the result of a complex geopolitical arithmetic, the Eurasian Union is an effort to institutionalize an increasingly dominant political ideology in Moscow: neo-Eurasianism. Once regarded as a fringe view in post-Soviet narratives of Russian identity, neo-Eurasianism has managed to become the mainstream view, supported by many of Putin's closest advisors and even many opposition figures. In order to better understand the nature of this 'Kremlin consensus' on Russia's place in the world, we will next examine its roots in classical Eurasianism and the core concepts around which neo-Eurasianism has formed.

The Roots and Rise of Eurasianism

At the end of the 19th century, concern was mounting among Russian political elites and intellectuals at the emergence of pan-Turkism (Wiederkehr, 2007). This nascent political ideology recognized the precarious position of the Ottoman Empire and sought to conceive of a new identity framework for Turkic peoples, chiefly through promoting the political and cultural unification of all Turkic peoples, whether this take place through Ottoman rule or some other association (Landau, 1995). Presented with the growing influence of this pan-Turkic idea in Russia's Central Asian territories, classical Eurasianism began to take form in response.

This form of Eurasianism enjoyed its greatest degree of development in the 20th century interwar period as Russian emigrant intellectuals in Europe strove to develop a new framework of identity that could both resist the perceived threat of pan-Turkism and embrace the drastic social change brought about by the Bolshevik Revolution (Staalesen, 2004). Regarding the Bolshevik Revolution, this development was initially seen by the Eurasianists as a consequence of Russia's Europeanization, but it was later decided by most Eurasianist thinkers that Bolshevism was a form of national communism, a breaking away from the West, and they supported it (Chaudet *et al*, 2009). Borrowing from the Heartland Theory advanced by Sir Halford Mackinder, Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi and

Nikolai Berdyaev were some of the most prominent proponents of the idea that Russia stood apart from Europe on a civilizational level and represented a distinctly Eurasian character (Jackson, 2003). In essence, classical Eurasianism portrayed Russia not as a common state but as a civilization in its own right, with Russia compared to Europe or 'Atlantic civilization' as a whole, rather than to such states as the United Kingdom, France, or Germany (Shnirelman, 2009).

But classical Eurasianism largely faded away by the 1930s, with many Eurasianists seeking to reconcile with Soviet leaders and merge their ideas with Stalinism (Grier, 2003). The literature composed by classical Eurasianists even came to be prohibited in the Soviet Union for some time. Hints of Eurasianist ideas would occasionally appear in Soviet political discourses, as in Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal for a common European home, which held that the countries of the Warsaw Pact would be allowed to determine their own future but not the republics of the Soviet Union as these constituent units were civilizationally different, even if they shared a European home (Smith, 2006). Proposals with these Eurasianist connotations, however, were few and far between during the Soviet years.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, much more explicitly Eurasianist ideas began to surface in the Russian media by 1993. The right-wing publication *Den* reprinted portions of B.Y. Vladimirtsov's 1922 essay, *The Life of Genghis Khan*. This essay stressed the importance of Genghis Khan on the development of Russian political culture, imbuing the Russian people with an appreciation for strong authority figures (Borer, 1997). Even so, intellectuals and political elites in Russia widely regarded classical Eurasianism as the purview of only the far-right political fringe (Allensworth, 2009).

The transition from classical Eurasianism to neo-Eurasianism was facilitated by the rise of one figure in particular in the Russian political arena: Alexander Dugin. While the publication of Eurasianist pieces like Vladimirtsov's essay on Genghis Khan ignited interest on the far right, Dugin took up the task of modernizing Eurasianism and defining its ideas in a context relevant to Russia in the 1990s. Despite having only a tenuous connection to classical Eurasianism at best, Dugin positioned himself as the successor to Berdyaev and the other various émigré thinkers of the early 20th century, providing some semblance of continuity between classical Eurasianist thought and the neo-Eurasianism Dugin would come to espouse (Bassin, 2008).

It did not take long for Dugin to obtain the patronage of Gennady Zyuganov, the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. At its core, the Eurasianism put forward by Alexander Dugin idolizes medieval Muscovy, places considerable importance on the Orthodox faith within Russian society, emphasizes Russia's distinctly Eurasian civilizational basis and is deeply patriarchal. It rejects not only 'Western' overtures for partnership with Russia but also the notion that Western liberal values could have any place in Russian society (Clowes, 2011). Through the patronage of the Communist Party, Dugin soon garnered considerable media attention for his views.

Yet Dugin soon found that Russian society presented a hardly receptive audience for his ideas. More mainstream contributors to Russian political discourses identified a linkage between the classical Eurasianist thinkers from whom Dugin derived his inspiration and the European conservative *Weltanschauung* of the 19th century that condemned the legacy

of the Enlightenment (Parland, 2005). Even today, many of those espousing Eurasianist sentiments in Russia heap scorn on Dugin for what they perceive as his borrowing of ideas from the European conservative and ultranationalist movements (Laruelle, 2006). At the same time, while Dugin was advising Zyuganov and the Communists, then President Boris Yeltsin was extolling the virtues of Atlanticism, positioning Russia as a partner to the European Union and the United States of America (Molchanov, 2002).

The deep financial crisis that struck the Russian Federation in 1998 changed this orientation, however. Atlanticists, as well as the liberal democracy and civic nationalism promoted by them, were effectively branded as responsible for the socio-economic shocks experienced in the 1990s (March, 2007). For a time shortly thereafter, the only Russian political institution perceived in the country as remaining true to Atlanticist ideals was the opposition party Yabloko, a member of the European Liberal Democrats group in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and an observer in Liberal International (Makinen, 2003). But such has been the dramatic shift in the political environment of Russia that Vladimir Lukin, one of the founders of Yabloko, argued recently that Russia is not necessarily a Western country and that there is a distinct Russian civilization, echoing some of the core beliefs of neo-Eurasianism (Mankoff, 2009). Lukin certainly has continued to press for closer relations between the Russian Federation, the EU, and the United States, but the tone is no longer Atlanticist.

Even if Dugin himself has not seen an increase in popularity, his ideas certainly have taken hold in the years following the 1998 financial crisis. This is most apparent not in the spread of neo-Eurasianist sentiment from the Communist Party on the one hand to Yabloko on the other, but in the now pre-dominantly Eurasianist slant of Putin's three terms in the Kremlin. As one of the authors points out, during Putin's first two presidential terms, the Kremlin drastically increased funding for what has been styled 'patriotic initiatives'. "Under the guise of patriotism, the Kremlin under Putin is undertaking a campaign to indoctrinate the country and in particular its youth with Neo-Eurasianist ideas and values…" (Szaszdi, 2008).

But precisely how has this neo-Eurasianism been instrumentalized through government policy, beyond that seen through the recent push for the establishment of a Eurasian Union? If Alexander Dugin remains ostracized to some degree in Russian society, what figures close to the presidency have become the heirs to Eurasianism? In order to demonstrate this neo-Eurasianism in practice, it will be necessary to next examine the policy contributions of a number of figures within the United Russia party.

Instruments of Eurasianism

By February 2008, neo-Eurasianism had become so well-entrenched as the political consensus in Moscow that leaders within United Russia felt comfortable to acknowledge that some of their policy positions were inspired by the writings of Alexander Dugin. Ivan Demidov, upon being appointed the new head of the Directorate for Ideological Work of United Russia's Central Executive Committee, professed his dedication to neo-Eurasianism and his enthusiasm for Dugin's writings (Umland, 2008). Demidov is perhaps one of the

more explicit proponents of neo-Eurasianism and it should be noted that, while Demidov holds a prominent position within United Russia, he holds no formal governmental office as of this writing.

However, several key proponents of neo-Eurasianism can be identified who have not been as explicit in their support for this ideology as Demidov but hold, or have recently held, governmental office. Two specific figures will be examined here: Vladislav Surkov, to whom we can attribute the idea of 'sovereign democracy', and Sergei Karaganov, who originally engineered the so-called Compatriots Policy.

Vladislav Surkov, who served as Deputy Chief of Staff in the presidential administrations of both Putin and Medvedev from 2000 until the political fallout from the December 2011 parliamentary election, was responsible for introducing the idea of 'sovereign democracy' into Russian political discourse. This concept represents the "...conviction that Russians should define their own democracy and protect themselves from values exported from outside" (Light, 2009). Liberal democracy and Atlanticism is represented here as capitulation to external influence from the Americans and Europeans, whereas embracing a decidedly authoritarian model of society is seen as recognizing the distinctly Eurasianist character of contemporary Russia.

This idea that 'Western models' of liberal democracy are incompatible with Russian society is not purely a matter of scholarly debate in the Russian Federation. Nashi, a youth movement in Russia suspected of having informal connections with United Russia and Putin's presidential administration, has helped to promote the idea of sovereign democracy among the Russian electorate. In previous elections, Nashi activists have reportedly distributed campaign materials criticizing liberal democracy, suggesting that the 'Western model' of governance leads to caustic debate that undermines social cohesion, whereas sovereign democracy and the centralization of political authority in Russia can better facilitate orderly development (Ishkanian, 2008). In the wake of the 2012 presidential election, erroneous reports emerged in the media that Nashi was preparing to dissolve as an organization. However, Nashi not only continues to be an influential force in Russian politics but also maintains its support for the centralization of authority through Surkov's idea of sovereign democracy (ITAR-TASS, 2012).

Sovereign democracy did fall out of favour to some degree during the single term presidency of Dmitri Medvedev. Of particular note is the first speech made by Medvedev on the international stage. In January 2007, then First Deputy Prime Minister Medvedev addressed the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland. In his speech, he remarked that:

"Russia is a country that endured the most severe trials in the twentieth century: a revolution, civil war, the world wars, economic collapse. Today we are building new institutions based on the fundamental principles of full democracy. This democracy requires no additional definition. This democracy is effective and is based on the principles of the market economy, the rule of law, and government that is accountable to the rest of society" (Wall Street Journal, 2008).

Some observers have noted that the standpoint conveyed by Medvedev in his speech to the World Economic Forum was completely opposite to the ideas of Russian democracy

expressed by Putin over the previous years (Ambrosio, 2009). The emphasis that Medvedev gave in his remarks – namely that, 'this democracy requires no additional definition' – suggests a complete rejection on Medvedev's part of the 'sovereign' adjective attached to Russian democracy by Putin and Surkov. But, while the United States of America may have experienced a 'reset' in relations with the Russian Federation in recent years, the Russian government under Medvedev continued elsewhere to pursue similar policies and foreign policy priorities to those that were characteristic of Putin's earlier presidential terms. With the return to the presidency of Putin, it is apparent that sovereign democracy will remain a cornerstone of the neo-Eurasianist establishment in Russian political culture.

While sovereign democracy draws its inspiration from such Eurasianist works as Vladimirtsov's writings on the cultural impact of Genghis Khan and Alexander Dugin's protestations that Russia is civilizationally distinct from Europe, this is not the only attempt by political elites to implement neo-Eurasianism. Another important contribution is the Karaganov Doctrine, put forward by Sergei Karaganov, who is a close associate of Yevgeny Primakov and served as Presidential Advisor to both Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. This Doctrine holds that the Russian Federation should position itself as the defender of ethnic Russian minority rights throughout the former Soviet republics, asserting its influence wherever ethnic Russians are subjected to perceived discrimination by the authorities of the state in question (Smith, 2002). The Karaganov Doctrine has come to be most explicitly applied through the Compatriots Policy. Compatriots are deemed as those who, while not being citizens of the Russian Federation itself, are ethnic Russians or Russian-speakers and are thus defined as part of a 'greater' Russian nation. "Russian Eurasianists who describe the Eurasian region as Russia's 'Near Abroad' claim that no state other than Russia could assert its political dominance in Eurasia" (Tanrisever, 2004). This is in part because actors like the European Union or the People's Republic of China represent civilizations entirely separate from the Eurasian civilization; as such, Russia is understood as the natural and rightful regional hegemon, with Chinese, European, or American influence disruptively unnatural.

Comparisons have been drawn by some between the Karaganov Doctrine and the Monroe Doctrine (Kuzio, 1995). The Monroe Doctrine, first proposed by US President James Monroe in 1823, warned that further attempt at colonization in the Americas by any of the European powers would be perceived by the United States as an act of aggression and would provoke an American military response. This Doctrine sought to enact the popular American belief of the time in Manifest Destiny, which held that the United States of America was destined by divine right to expand its rule across North and South America (McDougall, 1997). In much the same way, the Karaganov Doctrine invokes the imagery of a Russian Manifest Destiny over those territories that once fell under Tsarist rule, ranging from the Baltic States in the west to the expanse of Central Asia east of the Caspian.

It is clear that instrumentalizing the Kagaranov Doctrine has been more so a matter of ideology and identity than pure Russian state interests. In 1999, this concept of foreign policy was enshrined in law, following its approval by the State Duma and the Council of the Federation. This piece of legislation, entitled 'On the State Policy of the Russian Federation in Relation to Compatriots Abroad' "...actually constitutes quite a heavy

burden for the present Russian government, which openly recognizes that it does not know what to do with the 'compatriots' but is still unable to renounce this responsibility" (Morozov, 2003). This form of outreach to the ethnic Russian minorities of neighbouring states obliges the Russian Federation to take a strong stand on perceived grievances, contributing to tensions in relations with these states, yet "…this dispersed group of Russians… has not been a source of noticeable remittances or investments in Russia" (Varadarajan, 2010). Rather than empowering the Russian Federation and affording this state a strategic advantage in its relations with its neighbours, the Karaganov Doctrine and its attendant Compatriots Policy drains state resources to little benefit and irks many of Russia's neighbours.

For domestic audiences, however, who have been inundated with programmes and rhetoric that emphasizes the Eurasianist character of the Russian Federation, the Compatriots Policy holds a certain appeal for segments of the Russian electorate. In condemning the alleged persecution of the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia or advocating for the adoption of Russian as an official language in Latvia, Putin seeks to display the strong, uncompromising leadership that is held in such high regard in Eurasianist literature. "Eurasian agitation is also directed at the dominant part of the Putin constituency, which seeks an ideological rationale to support its nostalgia for a romanticized, great-power past…" (Rumer, 2002).

The Karaganov Doctrine and Surkov's sovereign democracy certainly take inspiration from the Eurasianism of Dugin and his early 20th century forebears, but there has also been a recent move toward blurring the lines between church and state, which has been another important pillar of neo-Eurasianism. Initially, the realization of this pillar of neo-Eurasianism, which would see close ties formed between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Kremlin, was quite elusive but could be said to have at last been achieved in the midst of the 2012 presidential election. With the vote roughly a month away, Kiril I, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russians, endorsed the presidential candidacy of Vladimir Putin, calling the man's leadership a 'miracle of God' (Bryanski, 2012).

The relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian state apparatus has steadily been cemented since. In the Duma, deputies with the United Russia party have been preparing amendments to the Criminal Code that would allow for criminal charges to be brought against any individual criticizing or 'insulting' the Orthodox Church (Russia Today, 2012). Subsequently, considerable controversy arose in the international community when three members of the Russian punk rock band "Pussy Riot" received jail sentences for delivering an impromptu and uninvited performance in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (Kashin, 2012).

It is important to note that neo-Eurasianism does not call only for partnership between the Russian state and the Russian Orthodox Church; this has been more so the position of members of the Slavophile movement, like Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who leads the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia. Rather, neo-Eurasianism calls for an alliance of faiths between Orthodox Christianity and Islam, though with Islam as the inferior partner (Peunova, 2012). According to Dugin, Islam and Orthodox Christianity have their basis in Eurasian civilization and share certain core values, such as a respect for centralized authority and strong leadership. The secessionist conflict in Chechnya is attributed to

'assertive' Wahhabist Islam at odds with the Islam envisioned in neo-Eurasianism, which is essentially subservient to Orthodox Christianity and Russian paternalism (Hunter, 2004). Beyond the Chechen conflict, progress on the Islamic dynamic of neo-Eurasianism has been lacking, though Putin has spoken at various meetings of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) about Russia's special position as a civilizational bridge between Europe and the Muslim world (Tsygankov, 2010).

As has been demonstrated here, efforts are being made to implement the ideas set out in neo-Eurasianist thought. The rhetoric utilized by Putin on the international stage, whether that has been criticizing Estonia and Latvia in accordance with the Compatriots Policy or emphasizing the Eurasian character of the Russian Federation at OIC summits, has always insisted that Russia differs from Europe on a civilizational level. Sovereign democracy becomes less a response to pressure from Europe and the United States to adopt democratic reforms and more a reflection of this distinctly Eurasian civilization that Russia is meant to embody. The Eurasian push can therefore best be understood as entrenching the idea that Moscow must hold increasingly centralized authority over the regions, much as the President of the Russian Federation and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church must have uncontested authority over all aspects of Russian society.

We have discussed *how* neo-Eurasianism has come to dominate the Russian political discourse through projects like the Eurasian Union, sovereign democracy, the Compatriots Policy, and the partnership with the Russian Orthodox Church. Next, we will examine *why* neo-Eurasianism has found such favour with Putin and other Russian political elites.

The Russian Identity Crisis

By casting himself as the Eurasianist champion of a strong and united Russia, Putin has been able to establish for himself a recognizable brand with the Russian electorate. Yet electoral strategy alone cannot be the sole motivation for pursuing such intensive efforts to institutionalize neo-Eurasianism through government policy, especially in light of the shared Eurasianist attitudes of opposition groups that range across the political spectrum from the Communists to Yabloko. The association of neo-Eurasianism with the Putin brand is an advantageous offshoot of this ideology, but it appears that the principal motivation for adopting neo-Eurasianism as a kind of ruling ideology lies in the search for a new framework of Russian identity that can hold all the country's myriad regions together.

Much has been written on the secessionist conflict in Chechnya, but the Russian Federation has been faced with increasingly severe secessionist impulses in other regions of the country. Agitation for independence in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Tuva, and Yakutia has become markedly severe in recent years, with regional leaders accusing the core (Moscow) of neglecting its impoverished periphery (the aforementioned semi-autonomous territories of Russia in Central Asia) and seeking a 'top-down' federal arrangement (Giuliano, 2011). Perhaps the most successful of these territories in claiming concessions from Moscow on political and economic autonomy has been Tatarstan. Unlike Chechen rebel leaders in the past, Tatar political elites have sought a more gradual, non-violent

process for obtaining independence (Graney, 2004). Particular importance has been placed by Tatar leaders on obtaining recognition in the international community for Tatarstan's independence, for example. This has included establishing connections with sovereigntist and separatist groups in the Canadian province of Quebec.

In part, the Russian Federation's willingness to participate in the plethora of inter-governmental arrangements established in Central Asia, including leading the process of establishing a Eurasian Union, is intended to block any efforts by Tatarstan and other such regions to obtain recognition from the Central Asian states through some integration effort that excludes Moscow. This is reflected in the pressure mounted by the Russian Federation in previous years to prevent the development of the Central Asian Union, which the Central Asian states have agreed to fold into the structures of the Eurasian Union (Melvin, 2000). However, the efforts of Moscow have not been sufficient to prevent the establishment of the Turkic Council, which not only includes the Central Asian states but also Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Tuva, and other territories.

Neo-Eurasianism attempts to answer questions as to what place these territories can have in the Russian Federation, drawing upon a mythologized past and assertions of a distinctly Russian/Eurasian civilization for inspiration. To draw upon the concept of nationalism and national identity introduced by Brubaker, Putin has sought to counter the formative nationalizing nationalism of the Tatar secessionist movement with a homeland nationalism that insists on expanding Russian influence, rather than curtailing it. To elaborate further upon the distinction between nationalizing nationalism and homeland nationalism, "…nationalizing nationalisms… are directed 'inward' by states toward their own territories and citizenries, while homeland nationalisms… are directed 'outward'…" so as to encompass members of 'their own' ethnic nationality beyond the boundaries of territory and citizenship (Brubaker, 1996).

In the wake of the Soviet Union's dissolution, Yeltsin had attempted to introduce a number of nationalizing projects around which a new framework of identity could form in the Russian Federation. Given the federal structure of the Russian state, proponents of these nationalizing projects referred to the nascent post-Soviet identity as civic or civil federalism (*grazhdanskii federalism*) (Waller and Malashenko, 1998). The adoption of the 1993 Constitution was an important step toward realizing the civic federalist identity envisioned for Russia. However, since then, this nationalizing nationalism common to all Russians has been eroded. The association of civic federalism with Atlanticism and, thus by extension, the deep financial crisis experienced under Yeltsin undermined public interest in this attempt to build a Russian nationalizing nationalism with a civic tone.

Civic federalism has been further undermined by what has been seen as para-constitutional behaviour by political elites. Para-constitutional behaviour entails those actions which are seen to not be in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, even if these same actions do not explicitly violate particular constitutional provisions. "…Para-constitutional behaviour gets things done, but it is ultimately counter-productive because reliance on bureaucratic managerialism undermines popular trust and promotes self-interested behaviour on the part of elites" (Sakwa, 2011). If elites are seen to be capable of circumventing the Constitution on a whim, the Constitution loses its power as a symbol of Russian identity.

In a sense, in the process of centralizing political power in Russia around himself, Putin has inadvertently contributed to the identity crisis which he now seeks to remedy through neo-Eurasianist policies and the further centralization of power. Engineering amendments to Article 81 of the Constitution in order to extend presidential terms would be one example of para-constitutional behaviour on the part of Putin. More relevant to those agitating for independence in Tatarstan and other territories on the Russian periphery, changes made by Putin to the Council of the Federation have not only been para-constitutional in nature but also cast Moscow as a highly unreliable negotiating partner. The Council of the Federation was originally intended as a representative body for the myriad regions, facilitating dialogue between the core and the periphery of the federation (Bacon, 1998). The terms of the 1993 Constitution detailed how representatives of each region on the Council would be directly elected by their constituents in regionally-mandated elections. After a series of reforms introduced by Putin and United Russia, the Constitution now assigns the presidency the power to appoint all regional representatives to the Council of the Federation, turning this 'bottom-up' federal structure into a 'top-down' managerial instrument. As such, "...the Federation Council has shown itself to be ineffective in the Russian political system. Not being directly elected, its membership has been open to manipulation in the way that it is recruited. The Council has come, in fact, to reflect the dominance of the centre over the regions" (Waller, 2005).

This tendency to seek dominion over the regions, rather than partnership with the regions, has undermined confidence in the reliability of the centre. Accordingly, as Russian nationalizing nationalism eroded, the regions sought to establish their own nationalizing nationalisms, though rooted in ethnic terms similar to those of the Soviet republics that were able to remain independent of Russia in the wake of the Soviet Union's dissolution. To counter this trend and attempt to bring the regions back fully under the dominion of the centre, neo-Eurasianism emphasizes that there is a common Eurasian identity beyond the civic and ethnic dimensions in which previous nationalisms have been rooted. If there is a Eurasian civilization to which Moscow and Tatarstan belong, then the sentiment is that Tatarstan's past, present, and future lies in some form of association or another with Russia.

Whether neo-Eurasianism will prove to be a successful tool for preserving the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation remains to be seen. The homeland nationalism of Slavophiles at least offers a coherent ethnic, linguistic, and religious basis for its worldview and identity framework. Neo-Eurasianism, on the other hand, suffers from numerous internal contradictions that could harm its legitimacy among the intended audiences in the outlying territories. Eurasianists claim that Islam has an important role to play in Russian society, yet insist that this role entails subservience to Orthodox Christianity and Orthodox values. The periphery is held up as integral to the core, yet the periphery is also expected to accept the dominion of the core. The Eurasian Union is presented as a partnership between states that share numerous commonalities, yet these same partners are expected to accept the leadership of Putin and Russia.

Much as confidence in the civic federalism of the 1990s came to be sorely lacking, confidence in neo-Eurasianism may be steadily lost both within Russia and abroad before the Eurasian Union can be realized in 2015. In turn, the authoritarian aspects of neo-

Eurasianism may be emphasized as Russian political elites desperately attempt to shore up the credibility of this identity framework and react to the resurgence of pan-Turkism, the very same intellectual movement that inspired classical Eurasianism a century ago.

Conclusion

Taking account of numerous trends that have emerged in Russian political culture since Putin first assumed the presidency in 2000, it is clear that the Eurasian Union is not a new idea nor can the impetus for its establishment be found in great-power politics. Instead, the Eurasian Union takes its inspiration from the writings of Russian intellectuals in the early 20th century, who feared the influence of pan-Turkism in Central Asia and worried that the Bolshevik Revolution had left Russian society without an overarching sense of identity.

Much as classical Eurasianism was intended to hold Russia together, neo-Eurasianism is intended to keep the Russian Federation from fragmenting as a result of secessionist movements in Russia's Central Asian territories and a lack of public confidence in Russia's civic institutions. As has been demonstrated here, attempts to institutionalize neo-Eurasianism and reinforce the legitimacy of the Russian state have been disjointed and numerous ambiguities can be identified.

Through pressing for the establishment of a fully functioning Eurasian Union by 2015, Putin is gambling with his legacy. The Eurasian Union might well be established by the target year and neo-Eurasianist rhetoric could placate political elites in Tatarstan and elsewhere. However, it is equally possible that interest in the Eurasian project will diminish, much as it did after the enthusiasm of 1996-1997 abated, and the transition from civic-based nationalizing nationalism to civilization-based homeland nationalism will be incomplete and unsuccessful. In the latter scenario, the Russian Federation will not only have failed to preserve its territorial integrity against secessionist forces but will be left heavily isolated from the rest of the international community. In a very real sense, Russia is at a crossroads. It will be incumbent upon Russian political elites to determine whether to forge ahead on this Eurasianist route or articulate a Russian identity that can better include all those communities which now reside within the boundaries of the Russian Federation.

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The Political Citizenship in the Context of the Lisbon Treaty

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Abstract**: The notion of citizenship introduced by the Maastricht Treaty and modified by the Amsterdam Treaty, can be associated, among other things, with the political or democratic citizenship, based on a set of common political rights, with the main purpose of empowering the citizens to be "co-authors" of the law within the European decision-making process. In this context, an important step has been made by the adoption and entering into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, as the general framework containing the legislative power, and by the Regulation (EU) No. 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, which defines the rules and procedure governing this new instrument, that was officially launched on 1 April 2012. This new legal instrument, as one of the major innovations of the Lisbon Treaty will strengthen the democratic foundations of the European Union by regulating the possibility for the citizens to invite the European Commission, within the framework of its powers and in certain circumstances, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where they consider that a legal act of the European Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaty – art. 11 (4) of TFEU – or to be more actively involved in the political life of EU and therefore, to take part in the decision-making process at European level.

Keywords: citizenship, Treaty of Lisbon, Regulation, political rights, right to initiative

JEL Classification: K00

I.   General aspects

Before the 1970s, there were no discussions regarding the concept of citizenship, as it was mainly regulated at national level, but the economic, political and social realities which occurred during the 1970s and in the coming years determined a new approach to it, but in a wider manner, namely at European level.

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In this context, the concept of citizenship was firstly mentioned in 1974, during the meeting of the European Council[1] that took place in Paris, by defining the *"special rights"* to be conferred on nationals of the European Economic Community, as it was then[2], presently European Union.

The above mentioned meeting was the starting point where the term of citizenship has been analysed and taken over by Leonard Clemence "Leo" Tindemans[3] in his Report in 1975[4], which contained an entire chapter entitled "Towards a Europe for Citizens". According to the report *"the construction of Europe is not just a form of collaboration between states,* [but] *it is a rapprochement of peoples who wish to go forward together, adapting their activity to the changing conditions in the world while preserving those values which are their common heritage. In democratic countries the will of governments alone is not sufficient for such an undertaking. The need for it, its advantages and its gradual achievement must be perceived by every* [citizen] *so that effort*[s] *and sacrifices are freely accepted. Europe must be close to its citizen*[s]*[5]"*. In addition, the citizens who are integrated in other Member States should be given a number of civil, political, economic and social rights, which would place them on the same footing with that state's own national residents[6], while the *"measures taken in connection with the social policy of the Union* [...] *will be directly felt in the daily lives of Europeans* [and] *will emphasize the human dimension of the undertaking[7]"*.

After the unsuccessful attempts of the European Commission and the European Parliament during the 1970s and 1980s to bring forward a series of proposals to implement the ideas mentioned in the Tindemans Report[8], the European Council meeting of Fontainebleau[9] (25 and 26 June 1984) marked an important moment because it was decided to create an *ad-hoc* Committee on the European citizenship designed to strengthen and to promote the identity and the image of the European Community among its citizens, but also to improve the perception of the citizenship, to make it more clear, understandable and to put it in the right place among the politic and economic realities[10].

In September 1990, the Spanish government managed to submit successfully a proposal called *"The road to European Citizenship"*, indicating expressly, among other things, that a European Union citizenship should be created, with special rights and

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[1] The European Council was established in 1974 as an informal forum for discussion between EU leaders. In 1992 it was given a formal status and with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 it became one of the seven official EU institutions. Following the Treaty of Lisbon, a new position as President of the European Council was created. Herman Van Rompuy was elected for this position in 2009.

[2] Website: http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/institutional_affairs/treaties/amsterdam_treaty/a12000_en.htm

[3] Former Prime Minister of Belgium, from 25 April 1974 to 20 October 1978.

[4] Website: http://aei.pitt.edu/942/1/political_tindemans_report.pdf.

[5] Website: http://aei.pitt.edu/942/1/political_tindemans_report.pdf.

[6] Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, *European Union Law, text and materials*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pg. 567.

[7] Website: http://aei.pitt.edu/942/1/political_tindemans_report.pdf.

[8] Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, *European Union Law*, text and materials, pg. 566.

[9] Website: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/Conclusions_of_the_Fontainebleau_European_Council_25_and_26_June_1984-en-ba12c4fa-48d1-4e00-96cc-a19e4fa5c704.html .

[10] Carlos Francisco Molina del Pozo, *Manual de Derecho de la Comunidad Europea, cuarta edición*, Dijusa Editorial, 2002, pg. 215 - 216.

duties which will be exercised and safeguarded specifically within its boundaries[11]. The Spanish proposal was supported by the European Parliament, the European Commission and many Member States during the drafting of the Maastricht Treaty, as the future Part 2 of the TEU dealt with the notion of European Union citizenship[12].

Starting with the 1990s and after the political, economic and social changes that took place in Europe, because of the democratization process which started in the Eastern countries after the fall of communist regimes, the notion of citizenship became one of the preferred topics of the debates used by the politicians, legislators, but also by the practitioners and theoreticians.

On the other hand, the term of citizenship has evolved in time from the local, regional and national level to the international level, and presently, from my point of view, we are talking about the internalisation and Europeanization of this concept. Much more, according to the doctrine[13], there is a strong connection between the European Union, as a whole, and the citizen and citizenship, but also an organic interconnectivity between citizen – democracy – fundamental rights – political involvement of citizens into the European political life for better living conditions – non-discrimination - freedom – security – justice, which means that these terms cannot exist and cannot be understood one without the other.

At the institutional level, an important role in the political involvement of the citizens is held by the European Commission, the Council and the European Parliament, which are the most important institutions involved in the legislative process, having at the same time separate attributions in this area.

II.   Political citizenship in the European legislation

The trend to involve citizens in the political life of the European society increased gradually starting with 1976, when the Decision and Act on European elections by direct universal suffrage, by the citizens were signed in Brussels on 20 September 1976. After its ratification by all the Member States, the text came into force on 1 July 1978 and the first elections to the European Parliament by universal suffrage were conducted between 7 and 10 June 1979. It can be noticed that, for the first time, one of the key elements of the citizenship, namely democratic participation of citizens, appeared.

In February 1984, the European Parliament approved the Spinelli informal report on European Union, where one of the elements mentioned in the report was the citizenship, considered to be the main and essential element taking into account its necessity to give a new approach of the supranational integration[14].

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[11] Koen Lenaerts & Piet Van Nuffel *Constitutional Law of the European Union*, second edition, Thomson Sweet and Maxwell, London, 2005, pg. 543; Damian Chalmers, Gareth Davies, Giorgio Monti, *European Union Law: Cases and Materials*, second edition, Cambridge University Press, 2010, pg. 444.

[12] Damian Chalmers, Gareth Davies, Giorgio Monti, *European Union Law: Cases and Materials*, second edition, pg. 444.

[13] Iordan Gheorghe Barbulescu, *Cetatenia Europeana* brochure Bucharest, 2011, pg. 5, website: http://www.form-ecd.ro/assets/files/3_CetateniaEU_IB_.pdf.

[14] Carlos Francisco Molina del Pozo, *Manual de Derecho de la Comunidad Europea*, pg. 215 - 216.

Bearing in mind these two facts mentioned above, on the occasion of the reforms brought to the original Treaties, the Treaty on European Union, signed at Maastricht in 1992[15] introduced a new part two, regarding *"the Citizenship of the European Union"* (Articles 8 – 8e of TEC), as it was subsequently modified and amended by the Treaty of Amsterdam (1999), but without being given great importance[16]. In this context, a new conception of citizenship has been regulated, based on a new democratic practice defined in the doctrine[17] as "participatory" democracy. Thus, all the citizens of the Member States have the European citizenship, but the it does not substitute but rather supplements the citizenship of each State and, at the same time, the sovereignty of each Member State is not abolished, because certain political rights are not included in the Treaty, such as: national elections, which are the exclusive domain of the *nationals*[18]. Instead, the Treaty ensures political rights for the European citizens such as: the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in the local and regional elections as well as for the European Parliament; the right to free movement within the entire territory of European Union and the right to consular protection by other EU states' embassies.

In the same line, on the occasion of analysing a reference for preliminary rulings introduced, in 1999, before the Court of Justice of the European Union, by Tribunal du travail de Nivelles – Belgium on the interpretation of Articles 6, 8 and 8a of the EC Treaty (now, after Lisbon Treaty's amendments, Articles 18, 20, and 21 of TFEU) and Council Directive 93/96/EEC on right of residence for students, repealed by Corrigendum to Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the European Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States[19], the court defined the concept of EU citizenship as the << fundamental status >> of EU citizens, stating also that these articles confer directly an effective right for citizens to reside in another Member State[20].

In other words, the foremost purpose of Europeanization of this new political status was to strengthen and enhance the possibility for citizens to participate more intensively and actively to the European political life[21], apart from enhancing the European identity.

The Treaty of Nice, signed by the European leaders on 26 February 2001 and entered into force on 1February 2003, amended the original articles included in the Maastricht

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[15] Website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/11992E/tif/JOC_1992_224__1_EN_0001.pdf.

[16] Carlos Francisco Molina del Pozo, *Manual de Derecho de la Comunidad Europea*, pg. 215 – 216; Stephen Weatherill, *Cases and Materials on EU Law*, 9th edition, Oxford University Press, 2010, pg. 473 and the following.

[17] Dominique Schnapper, *The European Debate on Citizenship*, Daedalus collection, The MIT Press, 1997, pg. 203.

[18] C. Closa, The concept of the citizenship in the Treaty on European Union, *Common Market Law Review*, 1992, pg. 1137 - 1162.

[19] Corrigendum to Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC, published in the Official Journal L series no. 158 of 30.4.2004, website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32004L0038R%2801%29:en:HTML.

[20] Case C-184/99, Judgment of the Court of 20 September 2001, Rudy Grzelczyk v Centre public d'aide sociale d'Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve, website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:61999CJ0184:EN:PDF; Alan Dashwood, Michael Dougan, Barry Rodger, Eleonor Spaventa and Derrick Wyatt, *Wyatt and Dashwood's European Union Law*, Hart Publishing, 2011, pg. 461.

[21] Website: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_292_sum_en.pdf.

Treaty and the Treaty of Rome regarding the European citizenship and became Articles 17-22 of TEC after the re-numbering of the Treaty, as primary legislation.

Minor modifications of the articles stipulated in the former Treaty establishing the European Community have been made, but now they are renumbered as Articles 20-25, in part two of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which is entitled *"Non-Discrimination and Citizenship of the Union"*[22], while several provisions regarding the political rights of the citizens are also enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, having biding effect, after the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

On the other hand, the Lisbon Treaty stipulates very clearly that citizens *"participate in the democratic life of the Union"*, as part of their new political role, having initiative to draft proposals through citizens' committee, and then to forward them to the European Commission, because the *"decisions shall be taken* [by the European institutions, organs, bodies and agencies] *as openly and as closely as possible to the citizens"* (Article 10 [3] of TEU) and not against them. However, in the cases when their rights are violated by the European institutions, organs, bodies and agencies, the citizens have all the institutional and procedural mechanisms provided by the primary and secondary legislation of the European Union to remove the violated rights and restore the initial situation.

It should be noticed that, at present, EU citizens enjoy a series of civil, social, economic and **political** rights, but in the same time they have duties such as: payment of the taxes and other financial obligations, fulfilling military service, if it is compulsory[23] and in accordance with the national law[24] etc. and that part of the articles regarding the European citizenship[25] are set out also in the secondary legislation adopted on the basis of

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[22] Stephen Weatherill, *Cases and Materials on EU Law*, pg. 476; Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, *European Union Law*, text and materials, pg. 566- 567.

[23] Within the European Union, there are Member States which are not imposing the obligation of military service, such as: Belgium [which suspended this obligation on 31 December 1992 by amending the 1962 Law on Conscription. Thus, since 1 March 1995 the Belgian armed forces consist of professional volunteers only – website: http://www.wri-irg.org/node/6484]; Croatia [where the Government proposed to the Parliament a decision to suspend all compulsory military service, and voted by the Parliament on 5 October 2007. As of 1 January 2008, obligatory military (or civil) service is replaced with voluntary military service – website: http://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/hrvatska-uvodi-profesionalnu-vojsku-od-1-sijecnja-2008/360468.aspx]; Czech Republic [abolished compulsory military service on 31 December 2004 – website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4118461.stm]; France [which suspended peacetime military conscription in 1996 – website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1682777.stm]; Germany [where the German government voted, on 15th of November 2010, in favour of suspending universal conscription with the aim of establishing a professional army by 1 July 2011 - website: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-01-04/final-conscripts-join-german-army/1893272] etc.

[24] In exchange, other Member States of the European Union are still maintaining the obligation of military service, namely: Austria [in according with section 7 (1) of the Military Penal Code (Militärstrafgesetz) – website: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/45b47b5a2.pdf]; Denmark [where this obligation is written in the Danish Constitution on section 81 regarding "Military Duty" – website: http://www.eu-oplysningen.dk/upload/application/pdf/0172b719/Constitution%20of%20Denmark.pdf]; Finland [which stipulates this obligation in section 127 of the Finland Constitution–website: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf]; Greece [which regulates the compulsory military service in the law regarding the Civil Defence Organisation - website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscription_in_Greece#cite_note-1] etc.

[25] Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, European Union Law, text and materials, pg. 567; Carlos Francisco Molina del Pozo *Manual de Derecho de la Comunidad Europea*, pg. 215 - 216.

Article 25 of TFEU[26] according to which *"the* [European] *Commission shall report to the European Parliament to the Council and to the Economic and Social Committee every three years on the application of the provisions of this part* [...]. *On this basis,* [...] *the Council, acting unanimously in accordance with a special legislative procedure and after obtaining the consent of the European Parliament, may adopt provisions* **to strengthen or to add to the rights** *listed in Article 20(2)[27]* [...]*"*.

The right to initiative, as part of the political rights, is regulated by Article 24 of TFEU, which stipulates that *"the European Parliament and the Council, acting by means of regulations in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt the provisions for the procedures and conditions required for a citizens' initiative within the meaning of Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union, including the minimum number of Member States from which such citizens must come"*.

III.   Political participation of the citizens - right to initiative

The doctrine[28] stated that EU citizenship is a composite citizenship which means that it contains elements of **nationality** and **participation**. Thus, to be a European citizen someone must first have the **nationality** of a Member State and then **to participate** actively to the European Union's life having, in this regard, a set of political rights, such as: the right to vote in the municipal elections and European Parliament elections across the entire European Union, in accordance with the primary[29] and secondary legislation[30] and the right to initiate proposals, according to the Treaty of Lisbon[31], as an active involvement

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[26] Former article 22 of TEC; Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, *European Union Law*, text and materials, pg. 567.

[27] According to article 20 (2) of TFEU, these rights are: *(a) the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States; (b) the right to vote and to stand as candidates in elections to the European Parliament and in municipal elections in their Member State of residence, under the same conditions as nationals of that State; (c) the right to enjoy, in the territory of a third country in which the Member State of which they are nationals is not represented, the protection of the diplomatic and consular authorities of any Member State under the same conditions as the nationals of that State; (d) the right to petition the European Parliament, to apply to the European Ombudsman, and to address the institutions and advisory bodies of the Union in any of the Treaty languages and to obtain a reply in the same language.*

[28] Damian Chalmers, Christos Hadjiemmanuil, Giorgio Monti, Adam Tomkins, *European Union Law, text and materials*, pg. 567.

[29] Article 22 of TFEU (former Article 19 (1) of TEC).

[30] Council Directive 94/80/EC of 19 December 1994 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections by citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals, published in Official Journal L series no. 368 of 31.12.1994, website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1994:368:0038:0047:EN:PDF, as amended by Directive 96/30/EC and Directive 2006/106/EC of 20 November 2006 adapting Directive 94/80/EC laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections by citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals, by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, published in the Official Journal L series, no. 409 of 20.12.2006, website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:363:0409:0410:EN:PDF. See also, Alan Dashwood, Michael Dougan, Barry Rodger, Eleonor Spaventa and Derrick Wyatt, *Wyatt and Dashwood's European Union Law*, pg.493.

[31] In accordance with Article 11 of TEU *"Not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the European Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties"*.

of the citizens in the political life of Union, when significant decisions are taken by the European institutions, in the interest of the citizens.

I will analyse hereafter only the second element of citizenship, the **participation** of citizens as part of the political development of the Union[32], through the citizens' initiative, or in other words, political citizenship in the context of the Lisbon Treaty.

The idea to regulate a European Citizens Initiative (ECI) in the European primary law has a recent history and it was a late addition to the draft Treaty submitted by the Convention on the future of Europe to the European Council in June 2003. After the Constitutional Treaty was rejected by referenda organised in France (on the 29 May 2005 with 69%) and in the Netherlands (1 June 2005 with 62%) through a process of direct participatory democracy, where the citizens have been involved in giving their opinion regarding this treaty, this idea was taken over in the Lisbon Treaty as one of the *"Provisions on Democratic Principles"*, especially in Article 10 (3) of the Treaty which stipulates that *"every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union"*, while Article 11 of TEU refers to four types of participation of citizens into the EU's political life[33], as follows: a) horizontal civil dialogue (citizens between themselves); b) vertical civil dialogue (citizens with institutions); c) consultation (institutions asking citizens for their opinion); d) the ECI (citizens asking institutions to make a legislative proposal).

Upon the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 7 May 2009[34] which detailed the guidelines for implementing the citizens' initiative, the proposal of the European Commission (in 2010)[35] and taking into consideration the provisions of Article 24 of TFEU mentioned above, on 16 February 2011 the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Regulation (EU) no. 211/2011[36] on the citizens' initiative, in an area of EU competence, which, among other things, defines the rules and procedure governing this new legal instrument, which entered into force on 1 April 2012.

The doctrine[37] considers that the procedures and conditions required for the citizens' initiative stipulated in this new legal instrument, with huge political potential for strengthening the democracy in the European Union, should be clear, simple, user-friendly and proportionate to the nature of the citizens' initiative in order to encourage the participation of citizens, to make the Union more accessible to them, not to hinder the exercising of this right and be also consistent with the Union's values. Thus, if this new

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[32] A. Warleigh, *Purposeful Opportunists? EU institutions and the Struggle over European Citizenship*, in R Bellamy and A. Warleigh, Citizenship and Governance in the EU, London, Continuum, 2001, pg. 34-35.

[33] Samantha Besson and André Utzinger, Toward European Citizenship, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 39 No. 2, Summer 2008, Blackwell Publishing, Inc., 2008, pg. 185–208.

[34] European Parliament resolution of 7 May 2009 requesting the Commission to submit a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation of the citizens' initiative, website: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0389+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

[35] Adopted on 31 March 2010.

[36] Published in Official Journal L series no. 65 of 11.03.2011, website: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&sqi=2&ved=0CFcQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Feur-lex.europa.eu%2FLexUriServ%2FLexUriServ.do%3Furi%3DOJ%3AL%3A2011%3A065%3A0001%3A0022%3AEN%3APDF&ei=Gy7XT47VBcS50QXDx6SgBA&usg=AFQjCNH7FVvqt4lypd4aLnBK5k_RC9mvHg.

[37] Samantha Besson and André Utzinger, *Toward European Citizenship*, Journal of Social Philosophy, Vol. 39 No. 2, Summer 2008, Blackwell Publishing, Inc., 2008, pg. 185–208

instrument will be implemented in good conditions, the citizens from Finland or other EU Member States will join the political forces with those from Portugal or other EU Member States[38] to initiate the best proposals for their lives.

In order to have a better understanding of this Regulation, I will make a brief analyse of it[39], as follows:

➢ the **citizens' committee** must organise the initiatives and will be composed of at least 7 EU citizens who are resident in at least 7 different EU countries;

➢ **an initiative must be supported by at least one million EU citizens** from at least one quarter of all EU Member States (which means from 7 or more), while the minimum number of signatures is provided in the Annex I of the Regulation;

➢ **the minimum age required** to organise and to support an initiative is the voting age for European Parliament elections which is currently 18 years, in every country except Austria, where it is 16 years;

➢ **the organisers have to ask for the registration of their initiative in one of the EU's official languages** in an online registry made available by the European Commission, which has to answer within two months. If the initiative is registered in good conditions, the organisers can ask to add translations of their initiative in other official EU languages as in the case of the initiative entitled: *"Water and sanitation are a human right! Water is a public good, not a commodity!"*, registered initially in English, and then translated in other 20 languages[40];

➢ **the signatures can be collected either on paper or online** and must comply with the models provided in Annex III of the Regulation. Starting from the date when the initiative was registered, the organisers will have only one year to collect these signatures. The European Commission will make available open source software to be used by the organisers and will also adopt the technical specifications to help organisers build their collection system;

➢ once the organisers have collected the required number of signatures, **they will submit them for verification and certification** to the relevant national authority in each country, within a period of 3 months;

➢ after obtaining the certificates from the national authority, **the organisers submit their initiative to the European Commission**, which will have 3 months to examine it and to decide how to react and will issue a communicate in which it will explain its conclusions on the initiative and what action it intends to take, if any, as well as its reasoning;

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[38] Website: http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/1762/citizens-initiative-marks-fresh-chapter-in-eu-democracy.

[39] More details about this initiative can be found on the website: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/guide.

[40] The subject-matter of the initiative is *"the European Commission is invited to propose legislation implementing the human right to water and sanitation as recognised by the United Nations, and promoting the provision of water and sanitation as essential public services for all"*. The main objectives of this initiative are: 1. The EU institutions and the Member States be obliged to ensure that all inhabitants enjoy the right to water and sanitation. 2. Water supply and management of water resources not be subject to 'internal market rules' and that water services are excluded from liberalisation. 3. The EU increases its efforts to achieve universal access to water and sanitation. In this context, the EU legislation should require governments to ensure and to provide all citizens with sufficient and clean drinking water and sanitation; website: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing/details/2012/000003/en.

➢ starting with 1 April 2015 and every 3 years afterwards, **the European Commission will present a report on the implementation of this Regulation**.

In the first seven months after the entering into force of this Regulation, 12 citizens' initiatives have been registered on the official website of the European Commission, with the deadline of collection of the signatures until October 2013[41]. The "European Initiative for Media Pluralism"[42], the latest one registered on the European Commission's website deals with protecting media pluralism through partial harmonisation of national rules on media ownership and transparency, conflicts of interest with political office and independence of media supervisory bodies. It is translated in 5 languages and supported by the Alliance Internationale de Journalistes.

In the specialised literature[43] other problems regarding the ECI's have been analysed, such as:

a. **the ECI is supposed to be a tool for citizens and in their interest**, allowing them to raise issues seemingly ignored by "Brussels", which implies an important effort made by the citizens to find the proper initiatives, then to gather one million signatures in at least seven countries, which involves time and money;

b. **collecting the signatures from citizens, may be made either on paper or online** by a citizens' committee which implies two approaches depending on the modality to collect the signatures. If it will be online, the law stipulates that the organiser will have to create a specific website, which should be certified by a Member State's relevant authority in order to assure the data protection of all the information in conformity with the Directive 95/46/EC[44] on the protection of personal data, as amended, and the national legislation of the Member States, while the signature must be certified by the respective citizen's Member State as well, in accordance with the European and national legislation. If it will be on paper, the organiser will need to ensure all the financial support and human resources in order to collect and to verify the signatures coming from the citizens, assuring the data protection of the information collected as well;

c. **An ECI won't change the legislation of the EU overnight,** because the proposal coming from the citizens' level, goes through a long process where it will be launched by the European Commission and then discussed in the European Parliament and the Council.

It can be observed very easily that the citizens, through these committees, are already exercising their political right, provided by the primary and secondary legislation. I believe that not all of these initiatives will collect one million signatures to be forwarded to the European Commission in order to start the legislative process.

IV. Conclusions

As it can be noticed, the Treaty of Lisbon gives a new dimension to the political citizenship of the Union, which is the participatory democracy of its citizens in the

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[41] Website: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/ongoing.

[42] Website: http://www.mediainitiative.eu/.

[43] Samantha Besson and André Utzinger, *Toward European Citizenship*, Journal of Social Philosophy, Vol. 39 No. 2, Summer 2008, Blackwell Publishing, Inc., 2008, pg. 185–208.

[44] Published in the Official Journal L series no. 281 of 23.11.1995.

European political life through the European Citizens' Initiative (Regulation no. 211/2011), as a new institutional tool with political potential in the future for enhancing democracy in Europe, as *"a platform for citizens to engage directly with EU politics, to set the institutional agenda* [especially for the European Commission] *and to do so in a manner that involves and facilitates transnational cooperation and a common vision for European politics beyond the strictly national level"*[45].

Furthermore, this new tool, from my point of view, will strengthen the democratic foundations of the Union by empowering the citizens to participate directly in the political life of the Union in a new position as "co-authors" in shaping the development of EU legislation, and encouraging more cross-border debates about EU issues.

I agree with the observations made in the doctrine[46], that this tool does not turn citizens into main actors of the legislative process, because this role belongs to the European Parliament (art. 225 of TFEU) and the Council (art. 241 of TFEU), but it facilitates the connection with these institutions and does not include a popular vote, because it has nothing to do with a referendum, as the right of legislative initiative of the European Commission is not affected at all by this new tool, which merely complements it, because this EU institution has the final decision whether to follow up, or not, a successful initiative proposed by the citizens according to the European Citizens' Initiative.

The importance of this new tool was also highlighted by the European Commission's vice-president Maroš Šefčovič, who said that *"this new right will open a new chapter in the democratic life of the EU. Not only will it provide a direct gateway for citizens to make their voices heard in Brussels, it will also encourage real cross-border debates about EU issues[47]",* but only when several conditions are fulfilled, namely: it must fall within the European Commission's areas in the conditions provided in the Treaties; it must come from least one million of citizens which shall form a citizens' committee; it must invite the European Commission to bring forward proposals for legal acts; it should respect the conditions stipulated in the Regulation No. 211/2011; it should be certified by the competent authorities in the Member States before being forwarded to the European Commission and finally, it must request the Commission to make a legal proposal *"for the purpose of implementing the Treaties"* where the promoters of the ECI have identified some shortcomings[48].

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[45] Website: http://gef.eu/uploads/media/The_European_Citizens__Initiative_Pocket_Guide.pdf.
[46] Samantha Besson and André Utzinger, Toward European Citizenship, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 39 No. 2, Summer 2008, Blackwell Publishing, Inc., 2008, pg. 185–208.
[47] Website: http://www.ccre.org/en/actualites/view/2235.
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The Supply Side of Second-Order Elections in the Czech Republic: A Light at the End of the Tunnel?

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Abstract: This paper attempts to contribute to the debate on the Europeanization of European Parliament elections. Because these elections are supposedly fought over national political issues, the analysis focuses on one aspect of political parties' supply for these elections, namely their election programmes. To this aim, a content analysis is conducted, within a comparative framework, of selected Czech political parties' programmatic documents. At the same time, the question is asked: to what extent do these programmes offer EU-level solutions—in other words, in terms of issues, does Europeanization or domestication prevail in the manifestos? The results show that parties focus on EU issues in their Euro manifestos and feature an apparent degree of Europeanization of this part of their supply for EP elections. From this perspective, these results can be considered a light at the end of the (second-order) tunnel, given that at least the programmatic part of parties' supply is about European integration after all.

Keywords: European Parliament elections, second-order elections, political parties, Europeanization, election manifestos

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Introduction

The decision to hold direct elections to the European Parliament (EP) was intended to establish a direct link between the citizens and decision-making at the European Union (EU) level. This presumption is based on the fact that in a representative democracy, elections serve as an 'instrument of democracy' (Powell 2000), connecting the policy preferences of the voters to public policy. Now, when Article 10 of the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that the 'functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy' and 'citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament' (Official Journal of the European Union 2010), the logic of EP elections as instruments of representative democracy is also formally recognized (see Rittberger 2012).

During the 1970s a number of optimists appeared on the European stage to express their high expectations as regards the introduction of direct elections to the EP. In 1975, Leo Tindemans, the then Belgian foreign minister, told the EP: 'The election of your Assembly by universal suffrage would undoubtedly set the seal on the authority of Community democracy. Such an Assembly would undeniably be in a position to express the desires of the European nations' (Tindemans 1975b). To colleagues

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in the European Council he told that direct elections 'will reinforce the democratic legitimacy of the whole European institutional apparatus' (Tindemans 1975a). Many hoped that, by the introduction of direct elections, issues related to the European integration process would come to the fore through the electoral campaign (see, e.g., Tindemans 1975a: 28). Former Commission President, Walter Hallstein, claimed that the introduction of direct elections would promote an

"...election campaign about European issues. Such a campaign would force those entitled to vote to look at and examine the questions and the various options on which the European Parliament would have to decide in the months and years ahead. It would give the candidates who emerged victorious from such a campaign a truly European mandate from their electors; and it would encourage the emergence of truly European political parties" (Hallstein 1972: 74).

For democratic elections to create this electoral, representative link and fulfil their other crucial functions, the electorate needs to deliver a political verdict 'emanating from the political preferences of voters, preferences that are relevant to the decision-making arena concerned' in these elections (van der Eijk and Franklin 1996: 6). In modern representative democracy, political parties play a key role in this process (McDonald and Budge 2005: 3), which is also the case in the EU (Abromeit 1998: 33-34). In the EU, political parties present the citizens with a European view on issues, discuss core EU issues, and offer the voters different choices on the EU and European integration. In other words, voters must have some awareness of political parties' stances and be offered a real choice to cast their votes on the basis of their preferences (Schattschneider 1942). Throughout Europe representation is commonly understood to work via the 'responsible party government' model (Powell 2004). The model has certain minimum conditions: on the *supply side,* political parties need to provide an alternative set of programmes on the major issues facing the polity; on the *demand side,* voters need to choose parties based on retrospective evaluations of their record in government, or prospective evaluations of their policy platforms; and *free and fair elections* need to be held at regular intervals to translate votes into parliamentary seats (Marsh and Norris 1997).

Yet, related to the supply side of the model, many commentators and scholars alike assert that European Parliament (EP) elections fail to fulfil these conditions, given that they have been labelled second-order national elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980) in which political parties fight mainly over national political issues and concerns. But unless parties campaign on EU-level issues and offer alternative positions, there are few ways in which public preferences can be expressed in an effective manner (Marsh and Norris 1997: 155). Under present conditions, EP elections are thought not to create an effective representative link through the fulfilment of the minimum conditions of the supply side of the responsible party government model. Accordingly, it is suggested that EP elections are failing as an instrument of democracy in that they fail to express the will of the European people on European issues (Mair and Thomassen 2010: 21).

This paper aims to analyse the supply side of the second-order election (SOE) model in the Czech Republic, namely the fact that SOE campaigns are influenced

by the constellation of the national political arena and are fought over national political issues (Norris and Reif 1997: 117). To this end, a content analysis, within a comparative framework, of selected Czech political parties' programmatic documents is conducted. At the same time, the question is asked: to what extent do these programmatic documents offer EU-level solutions or, in other words, to what extent is the EP election campaign *Europeanized*, or alternately, *domesticated* through political parties' programmatic documents?

The paper is structured in several sections, the next section outlining the theoretical and conceptual background, before unveiling the expectations. The third section clarifies methodological issues, operationalizes concepts, presents the data, and delimits the analysed time period. The fourth section presents the results of the analysis, and the final section summarizes the findings and discusses their implications in the light of relevant literature.

Existing Literature

Second-Order Election Model

In the immediate aftermath of the first direct EP elections, Reif and Schmitt (1980) labelled them 'second-order national elections' (for an overview, see Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010). The defining features of SOEs are (1) that, relative to first-order elections (FOEs), there is less at stake in SOEs, since they do not determine the composition of government (Reif and Schmitt 1980), and voter behaviour is thus different from what it is in FOEs; and (2) that SOE results and campaigns are influenced by the political constellation of the national — first-order — political arena and are characterised by the dominance of the first-order arena national political issues (Norris and Reif 1997; van der Brug et al. 2008).[1] In other words, the essence of the SOE model is that the issues remain the same as in the FOEs — domestic political issues (Auers 2005; Irwin 1995; Siaroff 2001). To put it differently, EP elections are generally considered to be highly domesticated rather than Europeanised whereas they 'should be about European politics and the questions of Europe itself' (Mair 2000: 43).

After six more sets of EP elections, the SOE model has, by and large, become one of the most widely tested and supported theories of voting behaviour in elections to the EP (e.g. Ferrara and Weishaupt 2004; Hix and Marsh 2007; Marsh 1998; Schmitt 2005). Most of the work on SOEs (see Reif and Schmitt 1980)—given the aggregate nature of the model's predictions—has focused on election results and election-related survey data. However, by focusing on the strategies of *voters* only, the theory fails to take into account any form of independent action by the other political actors (cf. Marsh 1998: 607; Weber 2007). Therefore, recent studies focus on the context surrounding actual voting choices and thus integrate the SOE model with the behaviours of the other actors that are at the center of attention during election time: the *media* and the *political parties* (e.g. Adam and Maier 2011; Tóka 2007; Weber 2007). These contributions

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[1] Note that the SOE model does not preclude a potential influence of European issues on national elections but it does suggest a strong role for non-European issues (Marsh and Mikhaylov 2010: 13).

suggest that the behaviour of the parties and the news media is crucial in shaping the nature of electoral choices and levels of turnout in second-order EP elections (Hobolt and Spoon 2010). Furthermore, the findings of these studies point to (a) the second-order character of EP election campaigns that are highly domesticated (as opposed to Europeanised) in terms of contested political issues (de Vreese 2009; Tenscher and Maier 2009); (b) parties' low budgets for EP elections, much lower than those of FOEs (Hertner 2011; Maier and Tenscher 2009); and (c) low levels of (nationally framed) coverage that EP elections receive in the media (de Vreese et al. 2006; Kovář 2010; Leroy and Siune 1994). In other words, one cannot blame voters for their electoral behaviour without taking the behaviour of the political parties and the media into account and hence the SOE theory should be integrated with the behaviour of political parties and the media (Strömbäck et al. 2011: 13).

Europeanization of Political Parties

Given that the aim of the paper is to analyse the degree of Europeanization of the supply side of second-order EP elections through the analysis of political parties' programmatic documents, it is necessary to clarify our understanding of the Europeanization concept. The research agenda on Europeanization is somewhat recent; only since the second half of the 1990s has the term 'Europeanization' come to denote a distinctive research area in EU studies (Sedelmeier 2011: 5). There is considerable debate about how to define Europeanization (Börzel and Risse 2003; Cowles et al. 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli 2003), but the literature generally uses the concept as shorthand for 'domestic impact of the EU' or 'influence of/on the EU' (Börzel and Risse 2000; Ladrech 2002; Poguntke et al. 2007a).[2]

The research programme on the domestic impact of the EU has been applied to all three standard dimensions of political science research: *polity*, *policies*, and *politics* (see Börzel and Risse 2000). Nevertheless, probably the latest as well as the least-researched area is the EU's impact on the *politics* dimension, that is, on political actors and their interactions as well as processes of political contestation and interest aggregation (Fiala et al. 2006). Specifically, the Europeanization of national political parties, party systems, and interest groups has emerged only recently as a separate research area (Ladrech 2009: 4-5; Mair 2006), particularly as it relates to the new EU member states (MS) as well as the candidate countries in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, given their historical detachment from the European integration process (Enyedi 2007; Haughton 2010; Sedelmeier 2011: 20-21).

Following the pioneering work of Ladrech (1994, 2002), most of the studies focus on one or more areas in which evidence of Europeanization could be reflected: (a) programmatic change; (b) organizational change; (c) patterns of party competition; (d) party-government relations; and (e) relations beyond the national political system. So far, the research of the pre-2004 EU MSs (Ladrech 2002; Mair 2000; Poguntke et

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[2] For a 'maximalist approach' (Featherstone 2003) that does not limit Europeanization only to the processes related to European integration see, e.g. Flockhart (2010).

al. 2007b) and the candidate countries from the Balkans (Fink-Hafner 2008; Ladrech 2008) has shown no significant impact of European integration upon national political parties and party systems, while studies of the Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 have reported a more significant impact of the EU (Enyedi 2007; Hloušek and Pšeja 2009) — of course, with some notable exceptions (Ágh 2006; Sikk 2009).

According to Ladrech (2002: 396), one of the most obvious and explicit areas in which the impact of European integration unfolded is that of programmatic changes (see also Haughton 2010). Thus far, research on the Europeanization of political parties' programmatic documents has reported ambiguous results in terms of qualitative and quantitative changes incurred by the European integration process. One strand of literature concludes that party programmes tend to embody only limited qualitative and quantitative EU-related changes (Hloušek and Pšeja 2009; Ladrech 2008; Pennings 2006), while the other strand of literature reports much more intensive EU-related changes of political parties' programmes (Baun et al. 2006; Deželan 2007; Havlík 2010). More precisely, studies dealing with the Europeanization of parties' programmes for EP elections report more intensive changes incurred by the EU than research dealing with manifestos for national parliamentary and/or local elections (Kritzinger et al. 2004; Wüst 2009).

Expectations

Based on the discussion in previous sections, I draw expectations concerning the Europeanization of political parties' programmes. Since our aim is to integrate the SOE model with political parties' behaviour, the analysis focuses on one aspect of parties' supply – *election manifestos* – arguing that an analysis of political parties' supply allows us to evaluate and determine whether parties treat EP elections as SOEs. National political parties stand for EP elections, put together the lists of candidates, and establish the procedures governing EP elections. They also formulate election manifestos and control the content of and funding for the campaigns (Hix and Lord 1997: 84-90). The elections are held under national electoral laws and are covered by national media systems. Moreover, national political competition remains crucial for structuring vote choice (Thorlakson 2005). To put it differently, national political parties are 'principal gatekeepers within the European electoral arena' (Mair 2000: 38) and thus remain the major aggregate actors in EU politics and the key actors in EP elections (Hix 2008). Stemming from the highly 'national' structuring of the context of EP elections and following the characterisation of EP elections as SOEs, where the national political arena provides the dominant frame of reference, it is hardly surprising that the campaigns should be nationally differentiated.

Given that I aim to analyse parties' supply for SOEs, I base the expectations on the SOE model, namely on the fact that SOE campaigns are influenced by the

constellation of national political arena and are fought over national political issues.[3] Having this in mind, I expect political parties' election manifestos to display a low level of Europeanization or, in other words, to embody a high level of domestication. Furthermore, previous research on EP elections argues that, given the novelty of the event, the first EP elections ever held in each country embody a lower level of second-order characteristics than subsequent elections (de Vreese et al. 2007; Franklin 2006; Leroy and Siune 1994). Hence, I expect the Euro manifestos for the 2004 EP elections to display a higher level of Europeanization — to be less domesticated — than the Euro manifestos for the 2009 EP elections.

Research Design and Methodology

For our purposes and following the majority of scholars, Europeanization, as a concept applied to the study of political parties' programmes, is employed here in its most generally understood sense. Thus, Europeanization is understood as a process by which domestic actors and institutions adapt to the institutional framework and logic of the EU or, in other words, as the responses of national actors to the impact of European integration (e.g. Cowles et al. 2001; Ladrech 2002). Our research interest is restricted to the top-down, as opposed to the bottom-up or bottom-up-down approach (Exadaktylos and Radaelli 2009) to the Europeanization of the *politics* dimension and more specifically the Europeanization of political parties. Hence, I understand the Europeanization of election programs as a process inspired by European integration. Our definition includes reflection of European integration in national political discourse. This study thus focuses on one of Ladrech's (2002) five research areas of party Europeanization or, more specifically, to the top-down Europeanization of political parties' programmatic documents.

Following our aim to analyse the supply side of second-order—EP—elections, there are several reasons to focus on political parties' programmes. First, given that the election manifestos are issued by the party central office, these documents provide authoritative statements of parties' official positions and thus could be considered an accurate representation of the positions of parties as unitary actors (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2007). Second, election manifestos are 'major elements of the democratic theory of mandate' (Budge 1994; Ihl 2005) since they are arguably the most articulated platforms through which parties place issues on the agenda, presenting to the public the parties' policy preferences and commitments (cf. Gabel and Hix 2002; Mair 2001). Third, given that Europeanization is a process, the choice of parties' programmes allows for a better standardization of the documents, with one document for each party at each election, and hence allows for analyses and comparisons to be made over time and between elections as well as between states (cf. Budge et al. 1987; Pennings 2006). Lastly, they are one of the central aspects of election campaigns and an important source used by the media and parties to shape discussion in the public

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[3] If we look at parties' election manifestos, since I am analysing the EP election campaigns, the question of which issues prevail in these manifestos is somewhat intangible. Naturally, EU-related topics will prevail in EP election manifestos. Nonetheless, European issues are often not dominant in EP election manifestos (Wüst 2009), and that is why the expectations are derived from the SOE model.

sphere (cf. Hloušek and Pšeja 2009)[4].

Furthermore, following Brunsbach et al. (2012), I understand political parties — organisations that seek three different goals: office, policy, and votes (Müller and Strom 1999) — as rational actors that attempt to achieve these goals efficiently and thus distribute their resources reacting to voter behaviour and the institutional context of elections. Pertaining to EP elections, this means that 'rational parties should perceive European elections as second-order elections' (for elaborate discussion, see Brunsbach et al. 2012: 93-94). Based on these arguments, I argue that analysing election manifestos, which represent an important aspect of the supply side of election next to parties' and individual candidates' campaigning and media portrayal of the campaign, can provide insights into whether parties' supply for EP elections is of second-order nature. In other words, an analysis of parties' programmatic supply is a suitable way to determine whether parties regard EP elections as SOEs, given that the creation of election programmes constrains parties' resources. Therefore, the order of the election should have a direct influence on the characteristics of these documents (Brunsbach et al. 2012: 94).

Only relevant political parties are included in this study. To be included, a party had to have gained seats in both the sixth and the seventh European Parliaments. Specifically, I will be analysing programmes of the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), the Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM), and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS). After selecting which political parties to include in the study, another question to answer is which election manifestos to analyse. Since our aim is to analyse one aspect of the supply side of second-order elections, the choice for the manifestos that political parties issue ahead of EP elections (the so-called 'Euro manifestos') is obvious.

The last question to be addressed before the analysis itself is the question of the method used to determine the extent of *Europeanization* or, conversely, *domestication* of the Euro manifestos of Czech. The methods I will use to achieve this goal will be content analysis of Euro manifestos of selected Czech political parties. Content analysis is among the most frequently used techniques for the analysis of political parties' programmatic documents (cf. Havlík 2008: 352-54). Starting from the above-mentioned definition of Europeanization of political parties' programmes, and postulating that relevant changes incurred by the process of European integration may be observed in terms of qualitative and quantitative transformation, I use an approach developed by Havlík (Havlík and Vykoupilová 2008; 2010) in which the extent of the Europeanization of election programmes is examined on the basis of two interconnected dimensions: *quantitative* and *qualitative*. Havlík's approach is suitable, in particular, because it does not demand any area specification and it is neutral towards both political parties'

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[4] One could question the real importance of election programmes since they are often only formal acts, bearing little relevance in reality. Moreover, these documents are not widely known among European citizens and are barely used in parties' election campaign. Even though election manifestos are read by hardly any voters, they still serve as guidelines for the party candidates in the campaign and they help the media to deal with issue emphases of parties and conflicting positions between parties (Klingemann et al. 1994: 21) and thus represent an important aspect of the supply side of elections.

positive or negative attitude to the EU and the degree of consolidation of the respective party system (cf. Smrčková and Hloušek 2011). On the other hand, because Havlík's approach is developed for the analysis of manifestos for national legislative elections and not transnational contests, it is necessary to modify it slightly. The inspiration for this modification partly stems from the work of Hrabicová (2010).[5]

The quantitative dimension reflects the space devoted to the theme of European integration, while the qualitative dimension addresses the detailed elaboration of 'EU' themes in the analysed programmes (see Havlík and Vykoupilová 2008). For the quantitative dimension of Europeanization of election manifestos, Havlík distinguishes four levels: (0) Absence of EU issues — political party leaves out European integration in its election programme (less than 1%; strong-second-order character); (1) *Domination of national issues* — national issues are combined with EU issues but national issues prevail (1–49.9%; strong second-order character); (2) *EU issues mixed with national issues* — the issue of European integration is combined with national issues in the election programme but it is however dominant (50–74.9%; weak second-order character); and (3) *Domination of EU issues* — European integration constitutes the major subject of the programme as a whole (75–100%; no second-order character). For the quantitative dimension to assign issues into categories, it is necessary to come up with an operationalization of issues[6]. I will differentiate between A) national issues, B) European integration issues, and C) international, global, and other issues.

With respect to the qualitative dimension of Europeanization of parties' programmes, Havlík's approach differentiates four levels of elaboration of EU issues: (0) *Absence of issues* — European integration issues are not elaborated on in the programme; (1) *General mention of European integration* — involving normative evaluation of the entire integration process; (2) R*eaction to individual (long-term) aspects of European integration and agenda of the EU* — involving EU policies and their reform, institutional structure, and model of organization; enlargement in general; and (3*) Reflection on current issues having to do with the European integration process* — concerning heretofore unapproved or discussed aspects of European integration such as the Treaty reform, reform of the EU's institutional framework, enlargement in concrete terms, and others (for more information about the methodological approach, see Havlík and Vykoupilová 2008; Hrabicová 2010).[7]

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[5] Due to space limitations, it is not possible to provide a detailed discussion of both approaches. Interested readers may see the works of the respective authors.

[6] Following Hrabicová, issues can be expressed in several ways in the programme: either in a form of short mention, sentence, and passage, or as a whole chapter. The smallest unit that is categorised is a sentence or quasi-sentence.

[7] In relation to the last level of qualitative dimension, Havlík points out that, while analysing concrete election manifestos, it is necessary to reflect the current state of European integration process, meaning that there will be different current issues related to European integration at different points in time.

Analysis of Election Programmes

A content analysis of Czech political parties' programmes for EP elections in 2004 and 2009 was carried out in order to study the Europeanization of the supply side of EP — second-order — elections. All analysed political parties presented to voters a Euro manifesto for both the 2004 and the 2009 EP elections.

The Civic Democratic Party (ODS)

The ODS programme for the 2004 EP elections, entitled *Equal Chances for All*[8], was divided into three sections: "The Future of the European Union," "The Czech Republic and the European Union," and "The Priorities of ODS in the European Parliament." The Euro manifesto reacted to the then-recent wave of EU enlargement and the new possibilities granted to EU newcomers to influence the character of the European integration process. In the programme, it was stated that by joining the EU, the Czech Republic 'becomes an active co-creator of the European integration and ceases to be its passive, at times infra dig, recipient, as was the case in the past' (p. 1). The European integration issue constitutes the only subject of the election programme. ODS generally attaches an important meaning to the geographical and geopolitical position of the Czech Republic, and hence it is important 'to promote the institutional configuration of the EU and the decision-making procedures that will ensure the most attainable level of equality among all EU MSs, regardless of their size or population' (p. 2). ODS regarded the state as the basis of the EU, particularly when the manifesto spoke of social and economic policy.

In the last part of the 2004 Euro manifesto, titled "The Priorities of ODS in the European Parliament," ODS presented its priorities concerning the long-term aspects of European integration, such as the EU's institutional framework (Constitution for Europe), the EU's budget, Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and the monetary union. Among the current EU issues, ODS mentioned its membership in the European Democrat Union and espoused its future membership in the European People's Party – European Democrats (EPP-ED) political group in the EP. Probably the most articulated formulation towards current aspects having to do with European integration relates to ODS preference concerning the future form of the EU or, more concretely, over the Constitution for Europe: 'ODS supports the simplification and elucidation of the EU's treaty basis but does not deem it necessary to construct a constitutional text for the EU [....] ODS considers the draft constitution, refused at the intergovernmental conference in December 2003, unsatisfactory' (p. 4).

Overall, European integration issues constitute the only subject of the ODS 2004 Euro manifesto. From a content viewpoint, the party provided a rather detailed description of its preferences concerning certain individual (long-term) aspects of European integration as well as a rather general description of priorities towards specific current EU issues, such as the Constitution for Europe.

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[8] Stejné šance pro všechny, 2004. ODS EP Election Manifesto, Available at www.ods.cz/eu/download/docs/program_EP.pdf, accessed 10 January 2010.

The title of the ODS Euro manifesto for the 2009 EP elections was simply *ODS Election Programme — EU Election '09*[9]. The preface of the programme was written by the ODS chairman, Mirek Topolánek, and by the leader of the ballot for EP elections, Jan Zahradil. It was followed by the introduction and five sections of the program itself: "The Solution to the Crisis," "The Solution for Maintenance of Job Opportunities," "The Solution for a Fair Social System," "The Solution for Energy Security," and "The Solution for the Czech Republic in the EU." In contrast to the 2004 Euro manifesto, this time ODS avoided an exclusive focus on European integration issues and combined both EU and national issues in its 2009 Euro manifesto. The debated issues related to the national level of decision-making included measures to address the economic crisis, tax policy, employment strategy, national social system and pension policy, and Czech energy security. Throughout the programme, these national issues were often framed in terms of criticism of previous social-democratic governments.

For ODS, European integration 'is not an end but a means to achieve the prosperity of the Czech Republic and its citizens' (p. 7). In the section of the programme titled "The Solution for the Czech Republic in the EU," ODS presented its preferences concerning certain long-term aspects of European integration, such as CAP and the related reform of the EU's budget, EU energy policy, EU security and foreign relations including enlargement, communitarian law, and cohesion policy. ODS thus argues, for example, 'against a contingent increase in the volume of the EU's budget in the next financial term after 2013' (p. 32). The current issues discussed in the programme involved a declaration on the creation of a new conservative European political party as well as a political group in the EP to be established after the 2009 EP elections, and the construction of the Nabucco pipeline, which, it was said, would 'weaken the strong position of Russia towards the EU in the field of energy' (p. 23).

In summary, the European integration issue was mixed with national issues in the 2009 Euro manifesto. Most of the time, the party presented a rather general description of preferences concerning individual (long-term) aspects of European integration as well as general references to the EU. ODS also presented its priorities related to specific current EU issues, such as the creation of a new EU political party. The preferences concerning the current EU issues were, however, often developed only at a general level.

The Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD)

The Euro manifesto of ČSSD for the 2004 EP elections, *Europe Primarily for the People*[10], was divided into 10 sectorally defined sections, plus a preface by the chairman of the party, Vladimír Špidla, and an addendum by the statutory vice-chairman, Stanislav Gross. Each of the chapters was matched with one of the party's candidates for the elections. European integration issues constituted the main subject of the programme, but the party also reflected on a few national issues. Among the

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[9] Volební program ODS – EU volby 09, 2009, ODS EP Election Manifesto, Available at http://www.cssd.cz/soubory/ke-stazeni/cssd_jistota_ep2009.pdf, accessed 12 January 2010

[10] *Evropa hlavně pro lidi*, 2004, ČSSD EP Election Manifesto, Available at http://www.cssd.cz/soubory/kestazeni/brozura_eu_2004_komplet.pdf), accessed 10 January 2009.

national issues discussed were increased support for R&D, development of the Czech countryside and protection of the Czech environment, and consumer protection. ČSSD also called for amelioration of the 'material conditions of the Czech educational system' (p. 12).

A significant part of the Euro manifesto reflected EU issues in terms of general references to European integration. The party understands the EU as a 'community of people living in a fair world, based on solidarity' (p. 14), it regards the EP as the only 'directly elected EU institution representing important democratic linkage to the citizens' (p. 18), and calls for improved transparency of EU decision-making achieved through more effective communication of EU institutions and intensified dialogue with the citizens. The Social Democrats also stressed the importance of values such as equality of opportunities, democracy, basic rights, and prosperity in relation to the EU. ČSSD often discussed its preferences concerning the (long-term) agenda of the EU. The party mentioned, for instance, the construction of the CFSP, cross-border cooperation in criminal matters, protection of external borders, regional policy and structural funds, and the European Welfare Model, which, it was said, would achieve 'European labour for European wages' (p. 6). Reform of the CAP, which is a 'pivotal pillar of the integration system', is also mentioned, as the party promises to aim for the 'achievement of an equal position of our farmers with European farmers' (p. 7). The party did not reflect on any of the current issues pertaining to the European integration process.

To sum up, in the 2004 Euro manifesto European integration issues were mixed with national issues. In terms of qualitative elaboration, ČSSD presented a rather general discussion of preferences concerning individual long-term aspects of European integration. The party also included general and normative references to EU issues but resigned to the discussion of current issues and problems of the EU.

The 2009 EP election manifesto was titled *Certainty for the People, Hope for Europe*[11], and constituted only one part of the broader ČSSD programme for the year 2009 that was titled *Certainty*[12] and consisted of the foreword by the chairman of ČSSD, Jiří Paroubek, and by the leader of the ballot for EP elections, Jiří Havel, the abovementioned Euro manifesto and two other parts: "ČSSD Programme against the Crisis" and the "Manifesto of the Party of European Socialists" (ČSSD is a member of the PES). Only the part related to EP elections is considered in the analysis. ČSSD argues that EP elections are 'as important as other elections in our country' (p. 14), then argues elsewhere, 'European elections are nothing but another referendum on Topolánek's government' (p. 8). A significant part of the Euro manifesto is devoted to the economic crisis. The discussion on it is, nonetheless, confined to the borders of, and in terms of issues and frames related to the Czech polity, not the EU. Given the opposition status of ČSSD at the national level, an important feature of its Euro manifesto consists of criticism of the current ODS-led Czech government in general, and a discussion of economic crisis and measures to tackle it in particular.

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[11] *Jistota pro lidi, naděje pro Evropu*, 2009, ČSSD EP Election Manifesto, Available at www.elections2009.pes.org/files/u1/CSSD_PROGRAM_web.pdf, accessed 12 January 2010.

[12] *Jistota*, 2009, ČSSD 2009 Manifesto.

In the Euro manifesto, ČSSD reacts to several long-term aspects of the EU; however, the presentation of preferences is overly general, to the point of being dull. The party tackles the issue of the European Social Model, arguing that

"today the development and protection of our social model begins in the European Parliament. You can be confident that the convergence of social standards, fight against social pandering, struggle for equal employment rights, and protection of social justice will always be principal objectives of social-democratic Members of European Parliament" (p. 11).

Other long-term aspects of European integration addressed consisted of issues such as immigration policy, EU-level price regulation of monopolies in energy and telecommunication, EU common security policy and energy policy, bureaucracy in the EU, and coordination of education and research and development (R&D) policies. The party hardly reflected on current EU issues at all; the only such reflections concerned the regulation of financial markets, European instruments to prevent future financial crises, and ČSSD's (programmatic) anchorage in the PES.

Overall, EU issues are dominated by national-level issues in the 2009 Euro manifesto. From a content viewpoint, the Social Democrats presented their priorities towards individual (long-term) aspects of European integration in a markedly general way, without attempting to outline concrete approaches and solutions in respective policy areas. In addition, the party often resorted to a simple normative evaluation of Czech membership in the EU and normative proclamations related to specific policy areas, such as when the Euro manifesto reads: 'The concept of common European security within the scope of the EU demands deeper coherence and ability to act' (p. 13).

The Christian and Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL)

The Euro manifesto for the 2004 EP elections was entitled *European Election Programme of KDU-ČSL*[13]. The programme was divided into five sections: "Social Market and Competitive European Economy," "European Agriculture as a New Culture of Countryside," "Safer Europe," "Unified and Strong Voice of Europe in the World," and "Europe Respecting Family Values." KDU-ČSL addresses mainly EU issues in its 2004 Euro manifesto, with only limited coverage of national issues. National issues addressed in the programme included tax policy, employment, protection of families, and development of the countryside.

A noticeable part of the programme deals with a general mention of European integration issues and normative evaluation of the integration process. KDU-ČSL mentions education and research, competitiveness, economic prosperity, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the corporate environment generally, as well as values such as freedom and family values. A good example is the party's proclamation that

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[13] Evropský volební program KDU–ČSL, 2004, KDU-ČSL EP Election Manifesto, Available at http://kdu.cz/Dokumenty/Volby/2004/Volby-do-Evropskehoparlamentu/2004/Evropsky-volebni-program-KDU---CSL.aspx, accessed 12 January 2010.

the 'EU has to be a place where it is not hard to establish a company' (p. 2). Most of the EU issues mentioned in the Euro manifesto relate to individual (long-term) aspects of European integration such as the CAP, cohesion and regional policy, foreign and security policy, immigration and asylum policies and family policy and its related decision-making at the EU level[14]. For instance, the party pointed out that the 'aim of European defence policy shall be the ability to act swiftly and efficiently in the case of regional conflict (...) as well as the conduct of humanitarian operations anywhere in the word' (p. 7).

A relatively small part of the programme consists of the party's presentation of priorities towards current issues having to do with European integration, such as the development of police and judicial cooperation (strengthening of Europol and Eurojust), the creation of a European corps to protect the EU's external borders, putting the European Arrest Warrant into practice, and the adoption of a common definition of terrorism. The party argues that 'Eurojust should gain legal personality' (p. 5) and applauds the creation of a European minister for foreign affairs who provides the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with 'a communitarian extent which we consider as a correct step from the perspective of future policy development' (p. 6).

In sum, the European integration issue constitutes the major subject of the 2004 Euro manifesto. In terms of qualitative elaboration, KDU-ČSL particularly presented rather detailed preferences concerning specific long-term aspects of European integration. The party also included general and normative references to EU issues, as well as the discussion of the priorities related to current issues of the European integration process, especially concerning the then second and third pillar of the EU.

The 2009 Euro manifesto, entitled *Election Programme for the Election to the European Parliament 2009–2014*[15], was divided into an introduction and six broader thematic sections. Discussion of preferences concerning both EU-level and national issues is combined throughout the programme. National issues discussed in the Euro manifesto included measures to tackle financial crisis, budgetary deficit issues, education and R&D, employment and pension system, family policy, energy policy, environmental and agricultural issues, and support for SMEs.

Often, the party presents the EU issue in terms of general references to European integration. KDU-ČSL discussed issues such as the historical development of the EU and the contribution of Christian-democratic politicians to it, mentions its more-than-a-decade-long membership in the European People's Party, and mentions its MEPs, stating they 'were the most successful of Czech backbenchers' (p. 2). Moreover, the party refers to the EU as an area of peace, freedom, and solidarity, an area of freedom of workers and services, and argues that solutions to global problems are possible at the EU level and against protectionism. In the EP, KDU-ČSL says it will 'fight for the EU that is strong, able to make compromise, willing to fight for its citizens and protect them from negative influences of globalisation' (p. 2).

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[14] KDU-ČSL argued for the preservation of unanimous decision-making in the Council of Ministers in the field of family policy.

[15] *Volební program pro volby do Evropského parlamentu 2009-2014, 2009,* KDU-ČSL EP Election Manifesto, Available at: http://kdu.cz/Kdu/media/Kdu/Volby/Volebni_program_KDU-CSL_do_EP_2009-2014.pdf, accessed 15 January 2010.

KDU-ČSL also discusses its priorities towards both individual (long-term) aspects of, as well as current issues related to, European integration. Among the long-term aspects mentioned were EU internal and external security issues including organised crime and illegal immigration, external relations, modernisation of European social model, EU's neighbourhood policy, and common energy policy 'removing market barriers, derogating monopolies (...) [which] will enable diversification of resources and decrease dependence on Russian price policy' (p. 12). The current issues related to European integration on which the party elaborated in the programme included control and regulation of financial markets at the EU level 'to prevent a similar financial crisis' (p. 5), the construction of the Nabucco pipeline, explicit refusal of future Turkey's membership in the EU, which is a potential 'risk in terms of the creation and strengthening of European identity' (p. 15), and the introduction of common asylum policy.

European integration issues were mixed with national issues in the 2009 Euro manifesto. From a content viewpoint, for the most part KDU-ČSL provided a rather general discussion of its preferences concerning the concrete (long-term) agenda of the EU. Nevertheless, an important part of the Euro manifesto is devoted to general and normative references to the process of European integration and only a limited part to the discussion of current aspects of the EU.

The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM)

The Euro manifesto KSČM put together for the 2004 EP elections was entitled *With You and for You, at Home as Well as in the EU*[16]. The document was divided into five broadly defined sections and the conclusion.[17] EU issues constituted the major subject of the 2004 Euro manifesto; nonetheless, the party also included a (limited) number of national-level issues. The national issues debated in the programme included (un-)employment and the generation of new job opportunities, cooperation with neighbouring countries and with Slovakia in particular and social policy and non-discrimination. The largest part of the Euro manifesto focused on the discussion of general and normative references to European integration issues. Here the party states that 'the entry conditions of the Czech Republic are considered inconvenient in many respects' (p. 1) and that

"[not]withstanding the critical relationship toward the current form of European integration, the accession of the Czech Republic into the European Union is a reality. The participation of KSČM representatives in European legislative structures is thus a logical component of our political activities" (p. 6).

The Communists also stressed values such as the 'equality of EU member states' (p. 2), their territorial integrity, peace and prosperity, social state and solidarity, and

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[16] S vámi a pro vás, doma i v EU, 2004, KSČM EP Election Manifesto, Available at http://www.kscm.cz/index.asp?thema=3303&item=28372&category, accessed 14 January 2010.

[17] These sections revolve around democratic and equal cooperation; solidarity, social rights and equality; economic productivity and sustainable development; openness, peace and cooperation; and European left-wing values.

the common commercial policy. To a lesser extent, the party presented its preferences concerning the individual (long-term) aspects of European integration. KSČM discussed, for instance, the democratization of EU institutions in a bid to 'reduce the gap between EU decision-making centres, citizens, and national parliaments' (p. 2), strengthening the competences of the EP, EU structural and regional funds, the revision of the Stability and Growth Pact, deeper involvement of the Committee of Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee in the EU's decision-making, EU security and defence policy, immigration policy and police cross-border cooperation, and energy policy. Only a few references relate to actual issues having to do with the EU. These references pertaine to two areas: first, KSČM argued that the Charter of Fundamental Rights has to be an 'essential pillar' of the EU (p. 2). Second the Communists declared their forthcoming participation in the European United Left/Nordic Green Left political group in the EP.

In sum, preferences in the Euro manifesto concerning EU issues clearly dominated over national and other issues. In terms of content, KSČM mostly dealt with EU issues in terms of general references and normative evaluations. The party also discussed individual (long-term) aspects of European integration and provided a rather general description of priorities towards specific current EU issues.

KSČM Open Election Manifesto for the 2009 European Parliament Elections[18] was the title chosen by the KSČM for the 2009 Euro manifesto. The programme was divided into six broadly defined sections. The largest part of the document was devoted to a discussion of national political issues, followed by and combined with the discussion of priorities over European integration-related issues. National issues featured involved national-level measures to tackle the financial crisis, rejection of the further privatization of public sector, rejection of Czech participation in foreign military missions or placement of foreign troops or bases on Czech territory, tax and price dumping, price stability, support for Czech businesses, development of a strong public sector, environment, transport policy, employment and education policy and support for enterprises.

When the party presented its preferences concerning EU issues, it did so predominantly in terms of general reference to European integration. KSČM thus argues that 'European integration with the ability to act is important" (n.p.) and that the EU shall be an 'area of social and territorial coherence and solidarity between member states' (n.p.). The party mentioned values such as freedom, human dignity, solidarity, rule of law, equality, and democracy; the internal market; rejection of the continuation of neo-liberal policy; and the unification of the European Left. The general nature of KSČM's preferences is well-documented by the following statement: 'We want Europe to be a space in which it is possible to overcome any discrimination against citizens, irrespective of their residence, age, sex, health, religion, etc.' (n.p.).

The Communists also elaborated on individual (long-term) aspects of European integration and did not present their priorities towards any current EU issues. Among the EU long-term agenda issues discussed were the EU's security and defence issues,

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[18] Otevřený volební program KSČM pro volby do Evropského parlamentu 2009, 2009, KSČM EP Election Manifesto, Available at http://www.kscm.cz/index.asp?thema=4146&category, accessed 14 January 2010.

social policy, growing bureaucracy in the EU, and the EU's institutional framework. In the area of social policy, KSČM argues for the 'introduction of a European minimal wage, minimal pensions, and minimal unemployment allowances' (n.p.). The party also demands 'direct democracy and stronger competences for the European Parliament and national parliaments' and rejects 'discriminatory conditions for new EU MSs including the Czech Republic' (n.p.).

Overall, national issues slightly dominated over the European integration-related issues in the 2009 Euro manifesto. National issues, however, outnumbered European integration issues. In terms of qualitative elaboration, the party particularly presented general references about European integration. KSČM also included a discussion of preferences concerning the specific (long-term) agenda of the EU. The Communists did not elaborate on any of the current issues having to do with the European integration process.

Results of the Analysis

The analysis of Czech parties' Euro manifestos provides evidence that the parties include and reflect on EU issues with varying levels of intensity. On the whole, the intensity of Czech parties' treatment of EU issues decreased from 2004 to 2009. At the outset of the paper, I put forward two expectations related to the Europeanization of election manifestos for second-order, EP elections. As concerns the first expectation — that Euro manifestos display a low level of Europeanization and a high level of domestication — the results are presented in Table 1. Contrary to our expectation, out of the 8 Euro manifestos analysed, only two exhibited a strong second-order character according to the conceptualisation presented in the methodological section: the 2009 Euro manifestos of ČSSD and KSČM. Furthermore, Euro manifestos of three more parties embody weak second-order characteristics according to our conceptualisation (ČSSD 2004; KDU-ČSL 2009; ODS 2009).

**Table 1. Location of parties on the quantitative and qualitative dimension**

		Quantitative dimension		
		National issues dominate (strong second-order character)	**EU issues mixed with national issues** (weak second-order character)	**EU issues dominate** (no second-order character)
Qualitative dimension	**General and normative references to the EU**	KSČM 2009		KSČM 2004
	Reflection to the long-term agenda of the EU	ČSSD 2009 ⇑	ODS 2009 ⇑ ČSSD 2004 ⇑ KDU-ČSL 2009	ODS 2004 KDU-ČSL 2004
	Reflection on current issues related to the EU			

Three other parties' Euro manifestos embody a reasonably high quantitative level of Europeanization and the SOE-theory-driven domestication hypothesis does not apply to them. Thus, the results show that when Czech parties put together an election manifesto for EP elections, in most cases the Euro manifestos do not display second-order characteristics at all or display only weak second-order characteristic, according to presented conceptualisation. These results contrast with our initial expectation regarding the presence of national/EU issues. When evaluating the qualitative dimension of Europeanization of Czech parties' programmatic supply, it may be argued that in none of the Euro manifestos did reflection on current issues pertaining to the European integration process dominate the document. On the other hand, in only two out of 8 analysed Euro manifestos, parties resorted to mere general and normative references without much attempt to reflect on the concrete EU long-term agenda and actual problems and issues related to the EU. Most of the Euro manifestos embody the middle layer of Europeanization of our conceptualisation, the parties reflecting on individual long-term aspects of European integration in their Euro manifestos.

For the most part, Czech parties' election programmes for EP elections display a medium to high level of Europeanization on both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions, which contradicts our first expectation derived from the SOE model. Nevertheless, on the qualitative dimension, which is the more significant regarding the importance the party attaches to European integration in its election programme (Havlík and Vykoupilová 2008: 168), none of the analysed parties attained the highest conceptual level. Thus, while in quantitative terms Euro manifestos are mostly dominated by EU issues rather than national issues, the qualitative dimension suggests that the Europeanization of parties' programmatic supply does not reach the highest possible level.

Second, given the conclusion of previous research documenting the intensification of the second-order character of the EP election with subsequent contests held (Leroy and Siune 1994), I hypothesised that the 2004 Euro manifestos would display a higher level of Europeanization — in other words, they would be less domesticated — than the Euro manifestos for the 2009 EP elections. Figure 1 presents the spatial positions of parties' Euro manifestos according to the two-dimensional conceptualisation presented at the beginning of the paper. The expectation was confirmed in all four cases. The Europeanization of ODS Euro manifestos declined on both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions from 2004 to 2009. The decline on the quantitative dimension was considerable: EU issues dropped from 100% to 51% of the Euro manifesto. The Europeanization of Euro manifestos of the other three Czech parties analysed, namely ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, and KSČM, declined only on the quantitative dimension (30–40%), while retaining the level of Europeanization on the qualitative dimension. Overall, the second expectation is confirmed in all four cases documenting that the second-order character of EP elections usually intensifies in subsequent European contests.

Figure 1. EU issues in Euro manifestos, Czech Republic
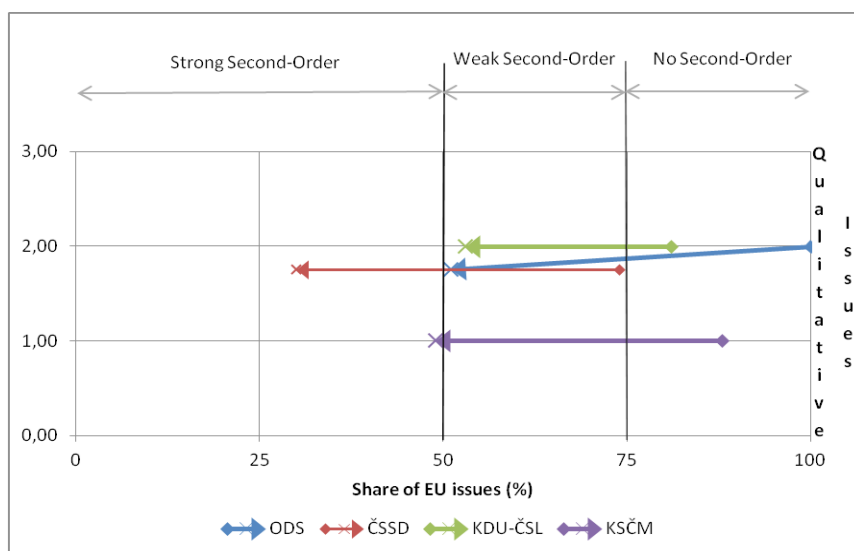
Conclusion

This article has examined one aspect of political parties' supply for SOEs in new EU member states, namely the fact that SOE campaigns are dominated by national political issues in the new EU member states, by analysing the Euromanifestos of four Czech political parties. Using party manifestos for EP elections and the concept of Europeanisation, the analysis has sought to explore two expectations about the ways political parties behave in SOEs to the EP.   The analysis did not find much evidence to support the first expectation of the study — that the Euro manifestos display a low level of Europeanization and are dominated by national issues. Parties clearly focus on European integration issues in their Euro manifestos and feature an apparent degree of Europeanization of this part of their supply for EP elections. This trend is, moreover, consistent with the arguments made in the literature analysing Euro manifestos in other countries (Brunsbach et al. 2012; Kritzinger et al. 2004; Wüst 2009). However the second expectation of the study was supported by the data—all of the Czech parties' Euro manifestos displayed a higher level of Europeanization in the first EP elections than in subsequent ones held in a country.

But how do these results fit into the wider literature on the SOE theory and EP elections in general? At the beginning of the paper, it was argued that EP elections are failing as instruments of democracy, given that they fail to create an effective representative link through the fulfilment of the minimum conditions of the supply side of the responsible party government model. In other words, because parties do not campaign on EU-level issues, there are few ways in which public preferences can be expressed in an effective manner. Consequently, the fact that political parties do not compete for votes on the basis of EU issues is considered a key element of the EU's democratic deficit (Føllesdal and Hix 2006) and is seen as decreasing the legitimacy of the only directly elected EU institution (Fiala 2004). From this perspective, the fact that EP elections are not 'stolen' by parties to sell national issues but that instead an apparent degree of Europeanization of Euro manifestos is observable can be considered a light at the end of the (second-order) tunnel, given that at least the programmatic part of parties' supply is about European integration.

The importance of the EU may be stronger than generally anticipated. However, one should not overestimate the importance of election programmes during EP election campaign, and not just because the 'real policy' may markedly differ from the programmatic proclamations. Furthermore, the findings related to our second expectation dovetail with previous studies arguing that the second-order character of EP elections intensifies as subsequent elections are held in a country, particularly in relation to the behaviour of political parties and media in these elections (de Vreese et al. 2006). In most cases, from 2004 to 2009, the degree of Europeanization of parties' programmatic supply for EP elections declined.

Moreover, and related to the SOE model, the fact that the results support the Europeanization thesis of the programmatic aspect of parties' supply does not mean that other aspects of parties' supply are treated in the same manner (see also Brunsbach et al. 2012). The literature analysing a wide range of campaign elements in SOEs points out that the party representatives (and the media) leave out EU issues when pointing

out the most important issues in the campaign (Deželan 2007; Wüst 2009), and thus a high degree of Europeanization of Euro manifestos may be irrelevant. Thus, unlike other aspects of election campaigns, Euro manifestos seem to be the exception rather than the rule.

Lastly, a range of studies recently started to concentrate on the behaviour of the political parties and media in SOEs to understand the second-order character of voting behaviour in EP elections. The literature in this field argues that there is a reciprocal link among party behaviour, media coverage and voting behaviour and thus the strategies of political parties and media are crucial in shaping the nature of electoral choices and levels of turnout in second-order EP elections (de Vries et al. 2011; Hobolt and Spoon 2010; Hobolt and Wittrock 2011). Hence, the SOE theory should be integrated with the behaviour of political parties and the media instead of focusing only on voters (Hobolt and Franklin 2011; Strömbäck et al. 2011: 13). In this paper, I have attempted to contribute to this line of research by conducting an analysis of the programmatic aspect of parties' supply for SOEs and discovering that the programmatic documents for EP elections embody less of a second-order character than is widely assumed.

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Lobbying the European Union: Institutions, Actors and Issues. David Coen and Jeremy Richardson (eds.), Oxford University Press, UK, 2009, ISBN 978-0-19-920735-0

Book Review by **Alexandra Pop***

Abstract: The volume "Lobbying the European Union: Institutions, Actors and Issues", collects 16 articles on interest group politics at EU level, focusing on the main elements of European lobbying – the existing relations between the EU institutions and the special interests, the main differences between NGO and business lobbying, the specific lobbying strategies adopted in EU's main policy sectors or lobbying regulations. The volume captures the main changes that took place on the European lobbying scene in the last two decades, period in which most EU institutions developed new points of access for lobbyists, while the interest groups became more specialized. The success of an EU lobbying campaign seems to be determined by a combination of various factors such as: a good knowledge of the EU environment, a wise usage of both financial resources and expertise, direct lobbying complemented by an efficient usage of domestic routes and the capability of creating smart alliances.

Keywords: EU lobbying, interest groups politics, lobbying strategies, lobbying resources, lobbying regulation

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The debate on interest groups active at European level is not new but it is more actual than ever, EU lobbying registering a significant growth with each treaty change and deepening of EU competences. European lobbying is a concept that creeps into the debates on the European Union more and more often, but a full understanding of this complex phenomenon can represent a challenge even for those specialized in EU affairs. A "newbie" in the world of European lobbying will most probably have the impression of entering "a wonderland", with paths as tangled as those encountered by a particular Alice in her adventures.

The good news is that there are academic works such as *Lobbying the European Union: Institutions, Actors and Issues,* edited by famous specialists in EU affairs David Coen and Jeremy Richardson that offer for those interested a guide to understanding what EU lobbying is all about. Organized into five main sections, the volume collects 16 very specific studies on EU lobbying, which complement each other and finally create

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one of the most complex and coherent collection on interest group politics. Focusing on the institutional and actors approach to lobbying, the volume transmits a clear message: for understanding EU lobbying one must understand the differences between those who lobby – whom they represent, which institutions they prefer to approach, in which stage of the decision making process they want to get involved, which resources they offer and what kind of lobbying strategy they adopt.

In the introductory section of the volume, editors Coen and Richardson promise that all these issues will be tackled by the volume's subsequent chapters. *Lobbying the European Union* revolves around three main factors: the multilevel feature of lobbying, lobbying resources and political approaches. The first issue is addressed in the second section of the volume, which focuses on European lobbying from an institutional point of view and offers an impressively complex analysis of the specific relations that each EU institution has with special interests. Naturally, the first study deals with the **European Commission** (EC), the EU institution which has the oldest and most complex relation with interest groups. Issues such as the Commission's dependence on external expertise, the multiple access points it offers to lobbyists, its transparency demands and the importance of "early lobbying", are all tackled by Pieter Bouwen. The focus then shifts to the **European Parliament** (EP) depicted by author Wilhelm Lehmann as an institution which became extremely attractive in the eyes of lobbyists in the last two decades, due to the gradual increase of its legislative powers. As for the **Council of Ministers** (CofM) and **European Council**, Fiona Hayes-Renshaw argues that they do not fully deserve their reputation of "impossible to lobby" bodies, as there are several successful ways of approaching them. Thus, for those "brave" enough to try to lobby them, there are various routes to take, varying from domestic lobbying to direct approaches, case in which earlier lobbying, started at the lower levels of the institutions, might be the smartest bet.

The volume does not limit its analysis only to those bodies that play the main roles in the policy making process, but it looks also to other EU actors as well. Thus, the last chapters of the *Institutional Demands* section focus on actors such as the **European Court of Justice** (ECJ) and the **European Economic and Social Committee** (EECS) which offer alternative lobbying routes and are more open to special interests than it's traditionally considered. For example, EECS can offer access to privileged information due to its consultations with the Commission, in the early stages of the decision-making process. Another chapter deals with **COREPER,** which is depicted as a valuable source of information or access point for lobbyists, since it has relations with both intergovernmental and supranational EU actors.

The third section of the book, entitled *Actor Supply,* focuses on the lobbying options of the main players in Brussels - business interests and NGOs – and the resources they use as currencies for more political influence. David Coen does a solid job of explaining the success of **business lobbyists** in Brussels, pointing out to the capacity of business players to make themselves essential to the EU institutions, due to their financial resources and expertise and efficient usage of both domestic routes and direct EU lobbying. By contrast, **environmental NGOs** are less resourceful but they have also managed to successfully adapt to the ever changing environment in Brussels, by establishing a very good collaboration with the EC, by creating smart alliances within their sphere of influence, but not restricted to it, and by knowing how to use the media in their advantage.

The forth section of the book is the most specific one as it deals with **case studies**, concrete examples of EU lobbying strategies applied in different policy arenas being offered to the reader. These sectoral studies show us that the interest groups in Brussels did not have similar evolutions, some groups becoming active faster than others, evolutions usually depending on the strengths of EU's competences in the policy domain they represent. Thus, while some special interests are visible and active in Brussels, such as those active in EU's **trade policy,** others are developing slower, for example those representing the **health policy** sector, in which the EU still has limited competences. However it is very possible that health lobbying will further develop at EU level, due to the desire of special interest actors to influence the EU agenda and the EC's quest for more legislative powers.

Health related issues are raised again in one of the most interesting chapters of the volume, dealing with a controversial episode in the history of EU lobbying, the **tobacco advertising ban** policy. The authors successfully manage to compare the different lobbying strategies and routes adopted by the two main "camps" involved in the debate, the well resourced *tobacco industry* and the then developing *European public health interest groups*. While the tobacco industry's preferred to directly lobby the national policy makers from the Council of Ministers, the public health interest groups worked mostly with the Commission and focused on developing awareness campaigns. The main achievement of this study is that it manages to illustrate the differences between the business and NGO lobbing but also to emphasis the institutions' availability and preferences in granting access to these groups. It also shows that the EU actors themselves can contribute to the development of such groups – the Commission being the example given by the author in this regard – as its need for external back-up in promoting the anti-tobacco law determined it to fund and support the development of public health lobbying at European level.

The importance of being able to quickly adapt must be one of the main themes of the volume, being stressed in almost every study of the book's forth section. It is highlighted in Grant and Stocker's chapter on **agro-industry lobbying**, the authors giving examples of representative groups that adopted different, more or less efficient, approaches to lobbying the EU. COPA's decline from being one of the main interlocutors of the EC regarding the agricultural policy, contrasts with the rise of CIAA, a less cohesive group which however managed to establish itself as one of the most influent discussion partners of the EC and EP. The author concludes that those special interest groups that wish to survive in an environment that constantly changes, should be able to use all the resources they posses in a proactive manner, to develop successful routes and strategies in lobbying the EU. The same theme can be noticed in the chapter on **social policy**, a sector that had a surprising evolution from EU's underdog to one of the fields in which EU is very active. Concepts such as "EU's social partners", "sectoral corporatism" and "bargain legislation" are explained to the readers, who have the chance to discover a surprising EU arena in which the social actors are formally included in the decision-making process by the EC, but only "the lucky few" can have a final say.

As no volume on lobbying the EU would be complete without references to **lobbying regulation,** a whole chapter deals with analyzing the degrees of lobby regulating of the main EU Institutions, the focus falling of course on the Commission. It's trajectory in

regulating lobbying is described as a rather slow one, the small steps approach adopted being illustrated by the few measures taken in time, generally considered insufficient and weak. Author Daniela Obradovic argues that the EC's refusal to introduce stricter rules and to address serious ethic issues proves that full transparency remains for now a utopian goal, especially as long as the EU's general approach to lobbying will remain inconsistent. In the conclusive chapter of the volume, Coen and Richardson address another problematic aspect of EU lobbying - the difficulties of estimating the overall **impact of interest groups**, due to their incredible variety, as showed throughout the volume.

All in all, the volume *Lobbying the European Union* is an extremely satisfying reading. From time to time, it can be noticeable that some author' opinions seem to differ from other views expressed throughout the book, but it is understandable as the volume collects writing pieces from a variety of experts. Despite the small inconsistencies, the book gives the impression of a gigantic puzzle, whose pieces fit together, offering a coherent final image. All contributing authors do a solid job in dealing with their subjects in a comprehensive and professional way, yet using an unpretentious language.

Being written nearly 20 years after its predecessor (*Lobbying in the European Community*, edited by Mazey and Richardson), this volume manages to capture all the important evolutions of the last two decades – the explosion of interest groups activity at EU level and the specialization of European lobbyists being in accordance with the changes the EU itself went through (the doubling of its member states, the gain of new competencies, the EP's growing role in the policy process, the more recent economic and financial crisis). Only time can tell how interests representation at EU level will evolve in the future but it is safe to assume that lobbyists will continue to consolidate their influence at the highest levels of the EU political system.

Rien ne se crée sans les hommes. Rien ne dure sans les institutions.

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