



EUROSPHERE

*Diversity and the European Public Sphere
Towards a Citizens' Europe*

Final Comparative Study

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of EUROSHERE (1 February 2007 and 31 July 2012) is to create new perspectives on the European public spheres and to identify the conditions that enable or undermine the articulation of democratic and inclusive European public spheres. The focus is on whether and how participation of different social and political actors in public debates shapes the articulation and structuring of the emerging European public sphere.

The research activities comprised (1) development of the diversity theory and methodology, (2) tailoring the diversity perspective for the specific purpose of conceptualizing and explaining the formation of the European public sphere, (3) devising tools of data collection and data analysis based on diversity theory and methodology, (4) synchronized data collection activities in sixteen countries, (5) single-case studies of the participants of public debates in 16 countries, (6) Europe-wide comparative analyses of the participants and their involvement channels, patterns, and networks at national and European levels, (7) creation of a EUROSHERE Knowledgebase on the European actors that are participating in public debates at national and European levels.

In addition to the above mentioned research, publication, and dissemination activities, EUROSHERE organized four large-scale international conferences; two EUROFORUMS where policymakers, politicians, civil servants, civil society representatives, and scientists interacted; two ERAFORUMS where EUROSHERE researchers and other scholars of European studies came together to discuss the contributions of our project; and four international researcher training and PhD courses.

EUROSHERE deployed data that give a snapshot of the above-mentioned national and European-level public debate participants, their national and trans-European collaboration and networks, their discourses and perspectives on selected policy issues, and the diffusion patterns of discourses and views across networks at national and European levels. Sixteen European countries, including Norway and Turkey, are included in our analyses. The data material at the member state level consists of (1) media content data (news items) from 45 print newspapers and 28 TV broadcast channels; (2) data on the institutional features and objectives of 61 political parties, 85 public interest organizations (civil society), 56 think tanks, 45 print newspapers, and 28 TV broadcasters; (3) data obtained from interviews with 746 persons who are in leading positions in the aforementioned organizations. In addition, we collected corresponding data from selected trans-European networks: (a) 3 party federations, (b) 3 trans-European networks of civil society, and (c) 3 trans-European networks of think tanks. The data collection work on trans-European think tanks was later extended by the Bergen team to include the most visible European think tanks.

One important sub-goal of EUROSHERE is to map the structuring of the European public sphere. Following the arguments in recent literature that current conceptualizations of public sphere are better suited to understand national public spheres than distinguishing and identifying a transnational public sphere, the project set out to develop a conceptual apparatus to be deployed in applied research on transnational public spheres. This conceptualization is based on the assertion that we can start talking about a trans-European public sphere only when the already existing public spaces (national, sub-national and transnational) come into a relationship of conflict and contestation with the vertical, pro-European, elite dominated trans-European public sphere and with the EU's political institutions. In other words, the European public sphere is defined as a constellation of historically existing and new ethnic/religious, minority-related, national, and transnational public spaces which constitute an agonistic system of discourses and alliances that are in conflict and contestation with each other and with the EU-initiated trans-European public spaces. Currently, our data and analyses document that this necessary condition is more than just fulfilled:

Following this definition, we find in Europe a media sphere that is discursively segmented along the national lines and along the distinctions between old and new member states, where, at the same time, media actors and journalists collaborate horizontally across national borders in order to exchange news and sources. On the other hand, the national media's interest in European issues is not negligible, though issue-dependent. Furthermore, national media's framing of Europe, diversity, and European integration processes are in general more positive than the attitudes of elites and citizens in the respective countries. In other words, our findings concerning the media sphere is largely in line with previous research.

Regarding national political parties, civil society organizations, and think tanks and policy research institutes, we observe more integrated discursive and networking patterns across borders. There are two dimensions here: a vertical discursive and networking pattern starting from the European Union, going downwards through the EU-initiated trans-European networks (European party federations, European civil society networks, and European think tank networks), to the national counterparts/constituencies of these. The second dimension is a horizontal transnational one that has existed since long before the European Union, but has partly transformed from being transnational to trans-European. Our institutional data and our interviews with organizational elites in 16 countries indicate that this transformation occurred with a high probability as a consequence of the existing public spaces coming into a relationship of conflict and contestation with the EU-initiated trans-European networks and discourses on the future of the EU, policies of European integration, policies of enlargement, and policies of diversity (migration, asylum, citizenship, minority, and gender policies).

In other words, the EU policies have to a clearly discernible extent managed to create a vertical trans-European public space aiming to link national constituencies with the EU—a new public space which is in conflict and contestation with the already existing essentializing (ethnic/religious), nationalizing, and transnationalizing public spaces. The dominant discourse in the vertical trans-European public space is that of democratization, pro-diversity, inclusion, and Europeanization. In addition to the representatives of EU institutions and representatives of corporate interests, this vertical public space is inhabited by the trans-European networks of a wide variety of non-state organizations—that is, networks of political parties, civil society organizations, and think tanks and policy research institutes, the majority of which are quite closed towards other discourses than their own. The reactions against the elitist, hierarchical, and exclusionary nature of the vertical trans-European public space have been a factor in transforming the other types of publics and public spaces into horizontal trans-European publics and public spaces. These horizontal trans-European spaces are not linked or only very loosely linked with the EU, and their discourses vary from more democratic and more pro-diversity than the EU's, to anti-democratic, nationalist, racist, and exclusionary.

Our search for the possible links between the citizens and the outcomes of the EU level policymaking showed both weak and strong links. The strong link is found between the EU policies aiming to transform different kinds of national and sub-national publics into trans-European publics. The citizens and organizations that interact with the EU institutions within the EU-initiated frames of “representation”—within both the numeric and corporate-plural channels—increasingly find themselves in a situation where they have to act as messengers of the EU downwards to their constituencies.

We find the weak links in the line of bottom-up communication from the citizens to EU policymakers. On their ways from individual citizens, through national and trans-European elites, in both the numeric and corporate-plural channels; perspectives, views, and preferences are either transformed from particularistic, exclusionary, non-democratic, and anti-EU feelings into universalistic, inclusive, and democratic ones; or this may be happening through elimination or selection processes.

The Corporate-Plural Channel of the European Public Sphere

In spite of using different conceptual, theoretical, and methodological approaches, distinct EUROSHERE-analyses have similar findings on the participation of non-state organizations in the corporate-plural channel of the EU (lobbying, consultation, and dialogue mechanisms).

One important finding is that, in an attempt to consolidate a Europe-wide civil society, EU-policies seem to have resulted in the emergence of a new vertical trans-European public space, with peculiar discourses and alliance patterns, which contests the existing essentializing, nationalizing, and transnationalizing public spaces. Trans-European networks, which are central components of this policy, have a socializing impact on their member organizations, especially when EU-institutions frequently and actively participate in their activities. One result of socialization is that trans-European networks partly or largely adopt the Europeanizing values of the EU and often transmit them downwards to their member organizations—this is in addition to carrying the voices from below to the EU level.

In the case of the trans-European networks of ethnic and religious minority organizations, this is less problematic since the goals of the EU and minority organizations—i.e., protection and development of the rights of minorities—largely coincide. However, concerning other types of organizations such as NGOs, social movement organizations, public interest organizations, and particularly think tanks; there are significant gaps between the goals. This puts the trans-European networks' representative qualities, legitimizing function, and democratizing role into question in the eyes of the national and sub-national organizations, whose interests they are supposed to “transmit” upwards in the EU policy-making processes.

Choosing to treat the sponsored trans-European networks as if they were representatives of the European civil society, the EU-policy lacks a clear focus on the social and political actors that do not participate in these vertical structures created by the EU. Thus, another important consequence of EU policies attempting to create a European civil society top-down, is that those civil society organizations that refuse to partake in the vertical trans-European networks—because they view them as not promoting democracy—continue to develop an alternative, critical, *horizontal* trans-European space which is distant from both the EU and from the trans-European networks that the EU sponsors. This means that the EU-strategies seem to have partly transformed the existing transnational public spaces into EU-critical, EU-skeptical, horizontal trans-European public spaces by putting them in a situation of conflict and contestation with the EU-created vertical trans-European public spaces. At the same time,

In brief, in its attempts to create a European civil society—the most important component of the European public sphere—the EU has restructured the European political space by adding to it an exclusive trans-European public space of pro-Europe and pro-diversity elites, which in turn is in the process of transforming the former public spaces into horizontal trans-European public spaces of resistance. This picture tells us that the EU's goals of legitimacy and democracy cannot be achieved without effectively including the non-sponsored publics in the corporate-plural channel of voice and participation in the EU.

The Numeric Channel of the European Public Sphere

EUROSHERE also assessed how the EU policies aiming to create a common numeric channel (elections, Europarties, a European party system, and a European Parliament) and a *European electorate* have performed. This was done by tracing the links between EU policies, European party groups in the EP, national parties, party sympathizers, and individual citizens.

Concerning the links between national and European level political parties, we find that national parties play a role in aggregating preferences on European integration, which in turn play a role in determining voting behavior in the European Parliament (EP). The EP party groups are aggregating preferences in the parliamentary arena, and they are very cohesive

when it comes to voting. Nevertheless, one should be cautious about the role of the national delegations vis-à-vis the role EP party groups play in determining voting behavior as most national delegations are too small to have any chance influencing the group's structure and parties themselves depend on their participation within the EP party group. This might suggest that EP party groups are adequate substitutes for national parties for representing the European electorate, but they are not because the party politics of the EU does not provide much link between European elections and the voting in the EP. The legislative outcomes of the EP can be well aligned with the preferences of the EP party groups, but given the great variety of parties EP party groups must accommodate as members, it is very plausible these outcomes will be far away from the preferences of the national parties".

Tracing the links between individual citizens, national party sympathizers, national elites, our other findings suggest that elites generally manifest more embracing and tolerant attitudes to diversity than the general public, and at the same time, they express a heightened awareness of relevant social problems. Our analyses also revealed a possible classification of European citizenry based on their various shared values. Rather shockingly, we find here that almost two thirds of the European general public seem to lean to skeptically non-democratic or anti-democratic mentalities. Moreover, this startling general pattern is also mirrored amongst the party sympathizers at national levels. That is, the views of citizens in general are systematically observed in the views of party sympathizers, which, in the Eurosphere research, constitute the link between national parties and citizens. Finding that the democratic values and views required to constitute a national or European demos, are prevalent amongst elites, we find that, still, the vertical perspective reassures us that the democratic spirit seems to significantly and reliably prevail, or at least hold plurality, among the European elites and hence may have a stronger influence than sheer numbers would suggest.

Finally, we also examined the influence that civic engagement and participation in different EU actions and initiatives has on citizen attitudes. The result is that the willingness to be involved in and utilize the EU civic initiative in certain fields and to optimize the integration processes in the Union is a clear indicator that the communicative channels between citizenship and the Commission function regardless of the difficulties and the delays. It is also indicative for the European public sphere in the process of constitution and the relations between citizens and public sphere.

The research components that addressed the formation of a trans-European numeric channel traced the links between citizens and EU policies. They found clear effects of interacting within the structures of communication that are provided by the EU. Similar to what we found concerning the effect of EU policies on the transformation of the corporate-plural channel (see the section above), the EU effect is clearly a level-wise segregation of the numeric channel between citizens and national parties on the one hand, and the European party groups in the EP and European policies on the other hand. Those social and political actors who come into close contact with the European party groups and the EU constitute a distinct vertical trans-European space, which create conflict and contestation with others.

The two links—the weak link and the strong link—in the numeric and corporate-plural channels function as gatekeepers against the surfacing of particularistic, exclusionary, and non-democratic perspectives in the EU political system. In this sense, although undemocratic as such and excludes non-democratic and anti-peace perspectives, these two links may be conceived by many as promoting democracy in Europe—a political rule not by the people, but for the people, and against the people. Certainly, from a substantive democracy perspective, what is happening here is also conceived by many as a serious weakening of supranational legitimacy and democracy. In this report, I will not explore this enormous normative question.

EUROSPHERE FINAL COMPARATIVE STUDY

The main objective of EUROSPHERE is to create innovative perspectives on the European public spheres and to identify the conditions that enable or undermine the articulation of democratic and inclusive European public spheres. The focus is on whether and how participation of different kinds of social and political actors in the public debates—the EU institutions, political parties, social movement and non-governmental organizations, think tanks and policy research institutes, and newspapers and TV broadcasters—shape the articulation and structuring of the emerging European public sphere.

The research activities comprised (1) development of the diversity theory and methodology, (2) tailoring the diversity perspective for the specific purpose of conceptualizing and explaining the formation of the European public sphere, (3) devising tools of data collection and data analysis based on diversity theory and methodology, (4) synchronized data collection activities in sixteen countries, (5) single-case studies of the participants of public debates in 16 countries, (6) Europe-wide comparative analyses of the participants and their involvement channels, patterns, and networks at national and European levels, (7) creation of a EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase on the European actors that are participating in public debates at national and European levels.

In addition to the above mentioned regular research, publication, and dissemination activities, EUROSPHERE organized four large-scale international conferences; two EUROFORUMs where policymakers, politicians, civil servants, civil society representatives, and scientists interacted; two ERAFORUMs where EUROSPHERE researchers and other scholars of European studies came together to discuss the contributions of our project; and four international researcher training and PhD courses.

EUROSPHERE conclusions are based on data that give a snapshot of the national and European-level public debate participants (political parties, civil society organizations, think tanks and policy research institutes, and print and broadcast media), their national and trans-European collaboration and networks, their discourses on selected policy issues, and the diffusion patterns of discourses and views across networks at national and European levels. Sixteen European countries, including Norway and Turkey, are included in our analyses.

The data material at the member state level consists of (1) media content data (8,458 news items and 12,053 directly quoted sources) from 45 print newspapers and 28 TV broadcast channels; (2) data on the institutional features and objectives of 61 political parties, 85 public interest organizations (civil society), 56 think tanks, 45 print newspapers, and 28 TV broadcasters; (3) data obtained from interviews with 746 persons who are in leading positions in the aforementioned organizations. In addition, we collected corresponding data from selected trans-European networks: (a) 3 party federations, (b) 3 trans-European networks of civil society, and (c) 3 trans-European networks of think tanks, and 19 interviews. The data collection work on trans-European think tanks was later extended by the Bergen team to include the most visible European think tanks that are based in Brussels (not networks).

The project developed its conceptual, analytical and data collection tools during the first period. In the second period, we collected the aforementioned data in 16 European countries. The third period was devoted to the production of sixteen country reports—single case studies—which basically descriptively put the collected data in their respective national contexts. This was a step towards our twelve comparative studies, which were conducted and reported during the fourth period. The fifth and last period, extended from twelve months to eighteen months, was devoted to analysis of the effects and consequences of EU policies aiming to initiate an inclusive and democratic European public sphere. In this report, I focus on the last aspect in more depth than the single-country studies and comparative studies, in the above order of appearance.

1. Diversity Theory and Methodology

Approaches to accommodation of diversity in the public sphere are inspired by discussions between individualists, communalists, multiculturalists, and pluralists. To accommodate individual differences, individualists¹ suggest a single, discursive public sphere (e.g., Jürgen Habermas). For the European case, this implies “Europeanization of national public spheres” (e.g., Jürgen Gerhards, Erik O. Eriksen). Communalists and multiculturalists propose multiple, segmented public spheres at two levels to accommodate separate historical/cultural communities in one polity (e.g., Charles Taylor, Will Kymlicka).² In case of Europe, this implies a segmented public sphere divided along the lines of national (and sub-national) cultures (e.g., Peter G. Kiellmannsegg). Criticizing both alternatives because of their singular recipes for good life, pluralists³ advocate the midway perspective of accommodating both individual and group differences in multiple, multi-level public spheres (e.g., Nancy Fraser’s subaltern counter-publics). The implication of this for the European case is “a European sphere of publics” (e.g., Philip Schlesinger).

These four normative approaches unfold differently at various intersections of (1) individualism/collectivism and (2) internal and external openness/ closedness of the political system. Figure 1 illustrates a ranking of six models of political society, which are derived from the above-mentioned ontological approaches, along two dimensions: *vision of political system* and *image of person*. The former dimension represents “political visions” in terms of

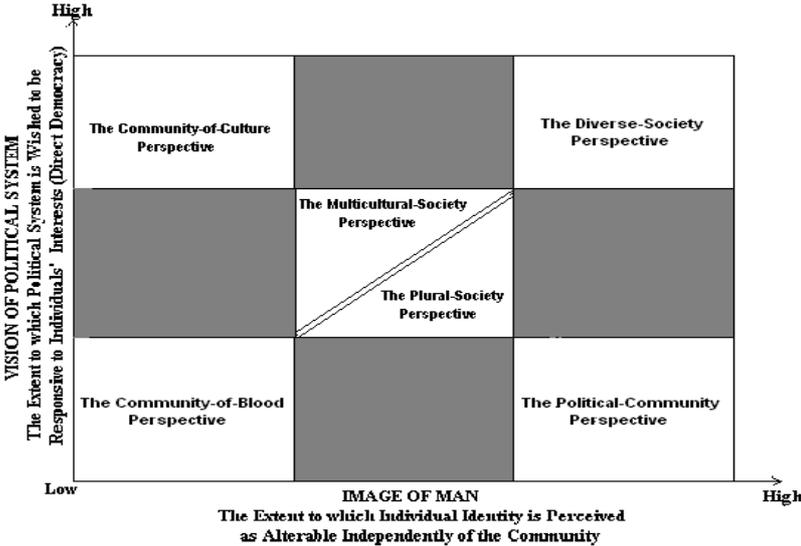
¹ Liberal-republican version of the individualist approach emerges from a rapprochement between liberals and republicans. On the liberal side, Habermas asserted that individual identities needed to change in order to function in a democratic constitutional state. For membership in a democratic constitutional state requires a civic political culture based on public deliberation and communicative action. Effectivity in the public sphere as participating citizens and, for this purpose, assimilation into the deliberative political culture was what Habermas expected from all individuals (Habermas 1994). In the private sphere, he concurred, individuals did not need to adapt their particular identities to society at large. The limit to change was political culture. This stance is, on the one hand, republican, because it requires individuals’ assimilation into a political culture and their identification with a constitution – i.e. constitutional patriotism. On the other, it is also liberal because it allows individual and group identities to exist in the private sphere. From the republican side, Barber argued that it was necessary to create the civic identity that is essential in a “strong democracy”, without requiring individuals to abandon their group identities, as long as such identities allow individuals to assume their civic responsibilities and duties (Barber 1994, 1998).

² There are varieties of multiculturalism: Amongst reputed multiculturalists, Kymlicka (1995) advocated “liberal policies of multiculturalism”. Based on the ontological priority of individuals and their autonomy, he asserted that individuals can choose to belong to certain communities. As long as a communal identity is an individual choice, he claimed, multiculturalist policies and rights regimes based on groups were defensible. On the communitarian side, Walzer defended a type of communitarianism based on individuals’ choice. Walzer made a distinction between two types of liberalism (Walzer 1990). In Walzer’s framework, Liberalism-1 can be similar to the Kantian or Lockean liberalisms. Liberalism-2 emerges from Liberalism-1 as a result of individuals’ free choices to belong to a particular community. In Walzer’s approach, communal identity is defended because it is understood as an individual choice. On the other hand, departing from communitarian premises, Taylor, too, defended multiculturalist policies and rights regimes, but those which were based on the priority and autonomy of communities (Taylor 1992). Although their ethical and ontological premises were substantially different, liberal and communitarian multiculturalisms have become quite similar in their policy implications: recognition of group rights, affirmative action policies, sovereignty devolutions/autonomy to suppressed historical minorities, etc.

³ Similarly, one finds a multitude of pluralist approaches to diversity. Radical pluralism (e.g., John Gray 2000) argues with a point of departure in the incommensurability of value-sets in diverse society. Proposing a context-sensitive *Modus Vivendi* as a solution for co-existence in diverse societies, the basic assumption in radical pluralism seems to be a momentous fixity of individuals’ and groups’ cognitive positions in relation to different identification alternatives that are available in society. The diversity perspective of Eurosphere, accepting the incommensurability argument only partially, assumes that individuals have different degrees of mobility of minds between the existing alternatives as well as self-created alternatives.

preferences concerning direct democracy, which empowers all social groups to be effectively influential in the political decision-making process and allow radical changes in the political system through mass participation. The latter dimension conceptualizes “image of man” in terms of beliefs about the alterability of human identity and belonging independently of individuals’ immediate surroundings. This implies six political society models in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Six Normative Models of Society



Source: Sicakkan (2004) *Belonging and the Quality of Citizenships. A Comparative Study of New Public Spaces in Six European Countries*. Bergen: University of Bergen.

Commonality of these four paradigms—individualism, communalism, multiculturalism, and pluralism—is their embedded perspective of difference and their focus on accommodation of differences. Difference thinking conceives individuals/groups as indivisible wholes and potentially restricts our thinking to what is shared between people and between communities. Even in radical versions of pluralism that are based on incommensurability arguments and *Modus Vivendi* solutions, like that of John Gray (2000), difference thinking underestimates the role of communication, and mental and physical mobility between different types of public spaces and value sets—not the least communication through media. The diversity perspective takes into consideration such “anomalies” to a greater extent than these four perspectives.

The conceptual frameworks in Figure 1 comprise various relationships between internal and external boundaries, norms, institutions, public sphere, form of political society (the perpendicular axis) and individuals’ belongings and identities (the horizontal axis). The models which advocate radical openness for internal systemic changes through direct democracy, and which at the same time assume that individuals’ basic features such as culture, life-style, identity and political preferences are unalterable, prescribe the most restrictive models of inclusion in the public sphere (e.g. the community-of-culture perspective). On the other end of this continuum, those models which advocate radical openness for systemic changes and which simultaneously hold that human identity is utterly changeable, prescribe the most inclusive models of public sphere (e.g. the diverse-society perspective). The way of conceptualizing diversity and inclusion / exclusion of different types of belongings in each model is different.

Table 1: Theoretical Relationships between Models of Public Sphere and Diversity

<i>Visions of Political Society</i>	<i>Types of Belongings and Diversity Allowed in the Public Sphere</i>					
	Singular and Historically Fixed	Singular and Socially Fixed	Singular and Politically Fixed	Singular and Alterable	Multiple and Alterable	Multi-dimensional, Alterable, Mobile
The community of culture	1. Single Protected Sphere					
The multicultural society		2. Multiple Segmented Spheres				
The civic political society			3. Single Shared Sphere			
The civil political society				4. Multi-level Overlapping Nested Spheres		
The civil plural society					5. Multi-level Differential Spheres	
The civic diverse society						6. Multiple Composite Eurospheres

Table 1 gives a simplified overview of theoretical relationships between visions of political society, notions of diversity, and envisioned models of public sphere. These conceptual relationships constitute the alternative scenarios and the general heuristic frame for empirical research in Eurosphere. In our attempt to answer the overall research question (“Are *inclusive* and *democratic* public spheres possible in the context of the European Union?”), extensions / modifications of some of the theoretical public sphere models in Table 1 will be deployed as heuristic tools with respect to how inclusive they are in various concrete European contexts, including both sub-national, national, and European level actors and channels/networks of communication and interaction. I will come back to the details of the empirical research design later. First, the above set of theoretical relationships needs to be presented, before they are elaborated and detailed more in Eurosphere’s smaller research components.

The horizontal axis (*types of belongings*) of Table 1 lists the assumptions about humans’ belongings, indicating the belongings acceptable for inclusion in the public sphere. The perpendicular axis (*visions of society*) represents the envisaged forms political society. Corresponding public sphere models are placed on the diagonal at different intersections of the two prime dimensions. The first three models (*community of culture, multicultural society, and civic political community*) have particularistic or universalistic presuppositions concerning the relationship between diversity and public sphere. The other three models (*civil political community, civil plural society, and the civic diverse society*) can be distinguished from the former three models with their ambition of context-sensitivity. The common concern in the last three models is to include, give voice to, and empower all the segments of the European societies in an effective public sphere, though in different ways. Their differences lie primarily in the ontological status they give to individuals’ different modes of belonging and identity in their perspectives of diversity.

The first model, “community of culture”, largely corresponds to the communitarian vision of society which views the common culture as the essential element of a society that provides

a meaning frame for individuals—there is no meaning outside the context of a community culture. Without community and its culture, thus, the individual cannot exist. In this understanding, public sphere is a social space that accommodates and ensures the continuation of a collective meaning frame that is shared by all members of the community, in a Deweyian⁴ or Taylorian⁵ sense. Public sphere does not only serve as an instrument providing democratic legitimacy to power-holders; as a space where the gist of the community is created, preserved, reproduced, and transferred from generation to generation, the community's common public sphere is an end in itself. Therefore, public sphere has to be a protected space, since by shielding it we also save the community and the meaning frame that it produces and accommodates. According to this understanding, the only way of protecting the community and its public sphere is to organize the society as a small polity, as Dewey suggested, territorially and institutionally separate from other communities. In the case of European Union, this model's viability is low. Indeed, the communitarian paradigm, in its most radical form, would be against creating a common European Public Sphere because this would mean destruction of meaning-bearing communities.

The “multicultural society” model unfolds differently in communalist and individualist perspectives. I deal with individualist multiculturalism under another public sphere model below. In contrast to communalism, communalist multiculturalism does not regard organization in a small sovereign polity as a necessity. Instead, it requires political autonomy for collective groups claiming a right to a unique culture (e.g., ethno-religious and ethno-national groups) in territorially divided federal political systems. Apart from opening for sharing in with other communities in a common federal polity, communalist multiculturalism is similar to the “community-of-culture” perspective in its ontological and normative premises. In communalist multiculturalism, the public sphere model is segmented along the boundaries of the communities constituting the federal polity, and there is little horizontal communication and interaction across the boundaries of communities' public spaces; but much communication, deliberation, interaction, and collaboration through community representatives at the federal level.

The third model in Table 1, “civic political society”, corresponds to the liberal-republican society model. Identities and belongings are viewed as alterable independently from individuals' belonging backgrounds—an assumption that fits nicely with this model's requirement of citizens' assimilation into a common political culture and abidance by the rules of the democratic game, while allowing for all types of belongings in the private sphere (cf. Habermas). As a space between the state and civil society where power-holders are criticized and held accountable, public sphere's main function is formation of common will through public deliberations, following certain rules of communication and deliberation in the public sphere. For this to happen, all citizens and residents are expected to participate in political processes and public deliberation, no matter what belongings they may have. Hence, the civic political society perspective does not tolerate segmentations in the public sphere because, then, the formation of common will would be impossible. What we read between the lines of liberal-republican writings—especially those of Habermas—is that the civic political society model requires a single public sphere that is shared and freely participated in by all citizens and residents of a unitary polity.

The last three models agree that the plurality of belongings should be accommodated in inter-connected multiple public spheres; however, their designs vary between nested-overlapping, differential, and embracive spaces. The “civil political community model” is the

⁴ Dewey, John 1985. *The Public and its problems*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.

⁵ Taylor, Charles 1985. “The concept of Person” in *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers*, vol1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

individualist version of multiculturalism. Viewing the right to belong to a community as an individual choice, the individualist version of multiculturalism does not insist on strict autonomy, but allows it if this is the choice of individuals that freely come together to form a community. The model gives priority to discrete, singular and alterable forms of belonging in its approach to diversity, structures the public space on such belongings, and proposes *ad hoc* institutional solutions for inclusion of multiple and mobile forms of belonging. Its nested-overlapping public spaces pre-suppose a degree of homogeneity of belonging in nested, multi-level political units, based on the existing limitations that the Westphalian states system poses, where the nested overlapping communities have a high degree of autonomy to bypass governance levels above themselves. Therefore, it pre-supposes the existence of a complex set of community specific public spaces which overlap and interact with each other, as components of a larger public sphere. The “civil plural society model”, on the other hand, recognizes the multiple and alterable nature of individuals and proposes a public space model that gives differential access to citizens and residents. The degree of inclusion in the public sphere increases with respect to individuals’ degree of “insiderness” in the political system, defined by society-determined diversity categories. The “civic diverse society model” recognizes all the above forms of belonging as equally valid and moral modes of being, and it problematizes the exclusion of belongings that are based on identities that are mobile between different references of identification and thus that cannot be classified under the political-system-defined group/citizen categories.

2. Conceptualizing the European Public Sphere

The postwar political change in Europe is characterized by a continuous democratization process where the distinction between rulers and the ruled is gradually fading away. As the *demos* becomes both the ruler and the ruled through advanced democracy, the notion of rulers’ legitimacy loses its commonsense meaning, and individuals’ legitimacy *vis á vis* the liberal democratic state as well gains significance. An inadvertent outcome of advanced democracy is, thus, the notion of individuals’ legitimacy in the eyes of the *demos* and of its elected government.

The notion of “legitimacy of individuals” has historical roots, and its content is determined according to different criteria in different socio-political contexts. In social and political theory, examples to such criteria are individuals’ *consent* in the rules of the democratic game (Habermas 1992), their *express consent* in and *recognition* of the values, virtues, and conventions of the *demos* in particularized socio-political contexts, which are thought to have universal features (Oldfield 1990), *cultural belonging* to the community (Taylor 1992), *national belonging* to the polity (Miller 2000), or *primordial belonging* to a community (Scruton 1980, 1990). Europe saw the most extreme consequences of the *individual legitimacy* phenomenon in denationalization policies in the pre-War Germany, and in certain European countries during the Cold War—specifically in the Soviet Union and France.

In this context of reciprocal legitimacy claims by rulers and the ruled, which, in an ideal democracy, are merged in one and the same entity (*demos*), criteria determining states’ legitimacy are supplemented with criteria determining individuals’ legitimacy—based on persons’ belonging, race, ideology, origin, loyalty, participation, gender, sexuality, class, lifestyle, participation, contribution to community, etc. These criteria are devised and institutionalized by the ruling and ruled *demos* through democratic processes.

Legitimacy of individuals unfolds not only as privileging of individuals and groups who qualify as real and worthy citizens, but also as political/social exclusion and marginalization of “semi-legitimate” and “illegitimate” citizens, something which also has consequences for citizens’ exercising of basic political rights—such as pressures on citizens’ right of free

speech, on their participation in politics, on their upward mobility in politics and society—often resulting in their absence or limited appearance in the public sphere. Rousseau called such “legitimately” semi-excluded citizens “foreigners amongst citizens” (Rousseau, 1989).

To be sure, these are criteria for *internal* inclusion and exclusion of citizens and residents in advanced liberal democracies, and they are related with citizens’ and groups’ affairs with power-holders, state institutions, and the majority groups. However, political systems also have external inclusion and exclusion machineries—e.g., immigration, asylum, non-citizens’ rights, enlargement issues. What happens at internal boundaries also recurs onto external boundaries of society, and this symbiotic affair between internal and external boundary making shapes states’ and citizens’ approaches to diversity in society and public sphere. Hence, any attempt at studying the public sphere rigorously has to focus on the interplay between internal and external boundary making, exclusion and inclusion in the public spheres resulting from this interplay, and the consequences of such interplays for democracy.

EUROSPHERE presents the results of a comparative study that takes issue with the question of under which conditions an inclusive, democratic public sphere is possible in contexts of deep diversities and transnational politics—with a simultaneous focus on the “Europeanization of national media”, “the significant institutional actors (of different types) participating in public debates”, “citizens”, and “the EU”. The most recent books that address similar themes are:

- Gripsrud, Jostein, Hallvard Moe, Anders Molander, Graham Murdock (eds) (2010). *The Public Sphere*. Volumes 1,2,3,4. London: Sage.
- Koopmans, Ruud & Paul Statham (eds) (2010), *The Making of a European Public Sphere*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Risse, Thomas (2010). *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*. Cornell University Press.
- Splichal, Slavko (2011). *Transnationalization of the Public Sphere and the Fate of the Public*. New York: Hampton Press.

The first work in the list above, edited by Gripsrud *et al*, is a useful four-volume collection of the 99 pieces of modern-classical and contemporary work on public sphere. Our project is different from Gripsrud *et al*’s four volumes because our comparative focus is based on self-collected, original data from sixteen systematically selected European countries.

On the other hand, the book edited by Koopmans & Statham contains original comparative empirical work, like ours, that contains media content and claims analysis from seven EU-member countries and action repertoires of four different actor types (“state actors”, “political parties”, “interest groups”, and “SMOs”). However, our data and approach differs from Koopmans and Statham’s work. Our selection of institutional actors is systematically based on a theory of public sphere—which means that we used the criterion of “visibility in the public sphere” when selecting the organizations to be interviewed and the media channels to be content and discourse-analyzed. We also intentionally did not use the criterion of “resonance”—which requires selecting only the participants of public debate who receive a response from other debate participants. Therefore, we have the most visible participants in public debates, including also those whose opinions and statements are systematically marginalized in the public sphere. Therefore, in contrast to the above-listed works, we are also able to document inclusion and exclusion in the European public sphere.

The book authored by Risse gives a comprehensive account of the role of transnational identities and transnational communication in the emergence of European public spheres. Risse uses the terms “Europeanization” and “transnationalization” interchangeably at times (e.g. “European identity” and “transnational identity”; “Europeanization of media” and

“transnational communication”—mean occasionally the same things). While this is a legitimate stance in general, our approach distinguishes between these notions, with the consequence that we include also “the non-Europeanized” in our conception of “the transnational”. This allows us for example to include in our analysis both pro-EU and anti-EU actors and both civil society and uncivil society (e.g., racist and religious fundamentalist organizations) as long as they are visible actors in public debates.

The last book in the above-list, authored by Splichal, provides an innovative perspective on the public sphere—offering a revised conceptualization of “public sphere” in the light of the new socio-political, economic and technological changes, also taking account of results from the most recent empirical work. While providing a transnationalism perspective as Splichal does, we move this perspective further in order to see what it adds to the notion of diversity in the public sphere. While the recent work on public sphere conceptualizes the phenomenon in terms of transnational political processes and at the same time searches for some sort of commonality, we try to understand the European public sphere in terms of transnational politics, diversity, and the political system of the EU.

A focus on transnational public sphere and the interconnectedness between its sub-spaces and participants is important for several reasons: Normatively, from a democracy point of view, a transnational public sphere with a transnational public, which is conscious of its role of overseeing the actions of the supranational policymakers, is desirable in Europe due to the increasing powers of the European Union. Theorists of democracy on the neo-functionalist and cosmopolitan flanks call for a transnational European public which can assume the task of holding the supranational power-holders accountable (cf. Eriksen 2005). On the other hand, the intergovernmentalist and communitarian wings do not entirely recognize the need for a transnational public sphere in Europe as their proponents view supranational policymaking as primarily a result of collective decision-making by democratically elected, legitimate representatives of the citizens of the EU-member states.

Theoretically, identity (Risse 2010), universal values like democracy and human rights, economic interdependency and common market, common interests in international politics, and common law and political institutions, among other things, have been highlighted as factors that can energize the growth of a transnational public and a European public sphere in Europe. In this debate, the intergovernmentalist and neo-functionalist camps have focused on, respectively, what divides and what brings Europeans together.

Empirically, in the current decade, research has gone beyond the question of whether a European public sphere exists. Empirical focus has been on Europeanization of national media due to the assumption that, with its public outreach, accessibility, and openness, the media sphere is the best empirical equivalent of the concept of public sphere (Habermas 1974). Media research that offers a structural approach has used (1) media’s attention to “European themes” (e.g., Gerhards 2000, Trenz 2003), (2) the degree of reporting the same events at the same time (e.g., Eder and Kantner 2000), (3) whether news are reported with a “European framing” or “similar framing” (Peters et al 2005), (4) visibility and resonance⁶ beyond national borders (Eder and Kantner 2000, Eder and Trenz 2003, Koopmans 2004, Olesen 2005), (5) legitimacy of foreign speakers in national public spheres (Risse and Van de Steeg 2003). This line of research has documented that media’s attention to Europe-related themes is gradually increasing. Media research that deploys “common/similar discourses” or

⁶ According to Olesen (2005), “Visibility refers to the degree to which frames are heard and seen in the public sphere”, and “Resonance refers to the degree to which frames elicit a response from interested parties; for example likeminded activists and social movements, media, politicians and the targets of claims (for example states and institutions)”.

“common/similar meaning frames” as an indicator of the European public sphere reports either a “halting” process of Europeanization (Peters et al 2005) or contradictory findings because the degree of transnational similarity in discourses and meaning frames varies with respect to the “policy fields one studies” (Koopmans and Erbe 2004, 114).

Every step forward in the conceptualization of the EPS increased our knowledge of the commonalities and differences among the national media in Europe. However, considering the media is not a channel that only mirrors reality, but also forms it in different ways, there is no guarantee that the commonalities found in media research is the artwork of a European public. Except few outstanding examples (e.g., Koopmans 2004, 2007, Splichal 2012), the media research on the EPS has not given us a solid idea about whether a European public exists and how it is structured and interconnected. This is because we have hitherto tried to understand the public sphere by looking at it “directly” through its appearance mirrored by the media and, at the same time ignored its preordained component: the public. Eurosphere attempts to close this gap by focusing on the links between the public opinion, the media (weak) public sphere, strong public spheres (the numeric and corporate-plural channels), and the key actors participating in them.

Conceptually, the EPS and the European public have been imagined in various ways by scholars. On the one hand, those who sought to find in Europe the classical Habermasian model of a public sphere (in spite of Habermas’ repeated warnings against doing so), as a single space shared by a unified, critical European public, were quick to realize that they were looking in vain. On the other hand, those who viewed the EPS and the European public as overlapping public spheres and multiple publics (cf. Schlesinger 1999) have mapped the horizontal overlaps between national public spaces, but they have done little concerning the linkages between the existing public spaces and the EU-initiated vertical public spaces.

A European public is difficult to imagine in isolation from national publics just as national public spheres cannot be imagined without the subaltern and sub-national public spaces that constitute them (Sicakkan 2006). Nor can the EPS be imagined in isolation from the polycentric and multi-level European power structures—some researchers have observed that the EPS might be following the multi-level governance system (MLG) of the EU (cf. Bernhard et al 2005; Koopmans and Erbe 2004).

Indeed, our empirical material clearly supports the thesis that the EPS should be conceptualized as a sphere that consists of several different types of public spaces that co-exist at different levels, where the transnational European (trans-European) public sphere is only one of the constituent public spaces. The same holds true also for the conceptualization of a European public: a trans-European public is only one of the multiple types of public that constitute the European public. Note that I am not deploying “European”, “transnational”, and “trans-European” interchangeably. The condition for imagining this complex set of public spaces and publics as components of the EPS is that they constitute *a cleavage system of discourses and alliances* that conflict and compete with each other. The research conducted in EUROSPHERE assessed the roles of different kinds of actors in this common European system of discourse cleavages and actor alliances—across borders and governance levels.

Thus, from an agonistic perspective of diversity, our overall hypothesis is that the EPS has come into being with the emergence of a trans-Europeanizing public space and a trans-European public that stretches over different levels of the EU political and social systems and that co-exists, interacts and contests with the other current public space types. The key empirical questions at this juncture are:

- (1) *How do the multiple public spaces and publics form the EPS in interaction with each other?*
- (2) *What are the roles of the below-specified different types social and political actors in the articulation of such an agonistic public sphere?*

2.1 European Publics and Public Spaces in Conflict and Contestation

Historically, different types of communicative public spaces have emerged in Europe. Throughout processes of state formation and nation building, the notion of public sphere evolved from being the legitimizing aspect of states' sovereignty and political organization to serving as a tool of collective identity promotion, which led to a conception of public sphere as both a reference and a space of belonging. To the already existing ethnic and religious essentializing spaces, these processes added the national spaces of interaction. National spaces of interaction comprise mass political parties, political and economic interest organizations, nation-wide media, and elites. However, the national spaces have not necessarily expressed the existing diversities within societies, something which resulted in the survival of the essentializing spaces as well as provoking the emergences of new sub-national public spaces. These essentializing public spaces created their own modes of meaning, interaction, and participation both within and beyond the frames of the nation states. Essentializing spaces are those spaces that accommodate singular forms of ethnic, religious or diasporic belongings; they are organized in ethnic and religious political parties, organizations, and ethnically and religiously oriented media as well as elite and expert forums.

Thus, in order of their appearance in European history, the major types of public spaces that currently co-exist are (1) essentializing ethnic, religious, or national spaces, (2) nationalizing public spaces of the modern nation states, (3) trans-Europeanizing public spaces, and (4) globalizing / transnationalizing public spaces, which correspond, respectively to, ethnic and religious publics, national publics, trans-European publics, and transnational / global publics (cf. Sicakkan 2006). Through European integration, each of these public space types has found its expression and representation at different levels.

The forms of belonging reaching beyond the boundaries of nation states and beyond essentializing spaces led to emergence of new public spaces—transnationalizing spaces. Transnational spaces accommodate cross-border political belongings based on common values that challenge the boundaries of national and essentializing spaces. They represent *cross-border social political organizations* that exclude singular ethnic, religious, national, and diasporic modes of belonging. The transnational space is, thus, different from various versions of “transnational politics” where national references of meaning persist and constitute the basis for political action. Transnational spaces are also different from diasporic spaces that relate to *physically* de-territorialized singular belongings. They are about people—and their actions and interactions—which are also *psychically* de-territorialized. The transnational space comprises transnational organizations and associations with non-spatial expressions and de-essentializing symbolisms. This symbolism relates to misalignments between transnational spaces and other types of spaces, including also national and European public spheres. Transnational spaces of interaction accommodate people who relate themselves to multiple references of identification. The transnational spaces find their concrete expressions in trans-border organizations and networks as well as corporative organizations that function as channels of communication with national elites and governments as well as with the EU-institutions.

Conceptualized as a gradually growing process of merging of markets and politics within and beyond the boundaries of nation states, globalization has further affected national states' normative, instrumental, and symbolic influences on public sphere formation. The concept of *glocalization* has in our terminology come to mean the processes of mirroring, protrusion, and appearance of the new ethics, symbols, loyalties, and references of meaning created in globalization, beyond the nation state's frames, and in concrete 'places' located within nation state territories. The glocal space is thus the facade of globalization in our concrete localities. The proliferation of alternative references of identification through globalization has added

new, alternative belonging modes and citizenship practices to persons' lives. These stretch beyond nationality, ethnicity, religion, nation, minorities, majorities, and territorial belongings. The distinguishing characteristic of the new forms of belonging and new practices of citizenship is the mobility of subjects' minds and bodies between different references of identification. Coupled with the conventional politics' insufficient capacity to respond to citizens' and residents' interests emanating from these new modes of belonging, the consequence of this proliferation to politics is the emergence of glocal spaces. Glocal spaces accommodate essentializing belongings, national modes of belonging, transnational modes of belonging, and belongings inspired and informed by the idea of a diverse society. Glocal spaces entail a variety of *local incipient forms of all-inclusive organizations*.

To these, we can add the trans-European spaces which are in formation as a consequence of the processes of European integration. Trans-European spaces are quite similar to glocal spaces in terms of facilitating diversity and equality of belongings. As we found in our previous EU-funded project (Glocalmig), people with glocal and European belongings see the European Union as a better political entity than the nation state "because it gradually eradicates the existing national boundaries in Europe". However, whereas people with European belongings stop reasoning at this point, persons with glocal belongings continue: "The European Union is another political entity that divides humanity with new boundaries, like nation states did. Yet the European Union is better because now the borders are broader than before". This adds a new distinction to our analytical categories, namely the distinction between "the global subject" and "the euro-subject" accommodated in, respectively, "glocal spaces" and "trans-European spaces".

In order of chronological appearance in political history, the first type of public space is that of *essentializing spaces*. Essentializing spaces are at present observed in some of European states' religious and ethnic minorities which view their own other identities as unalterable and fixed for all times. In Europe, they have formed their own spaces of interaction, meaning, and channels of participation in politics and in the society at large. The second type comprises the *nationalizing spaces*, which were created by the nation states. The national space entails state building peoples and minorities that have been assimilated into the national mode of belonging. Also national public spaces may appear with an essentializing belonging-content, and historically this has happened in states with a high degree of ethnic homogeneity. The third type is the *transnationalizing spaces*, which exclude essentializing and territorialized forms of belonging. The interactions in transnational spaces are cross-border, organized in transnational organizations, and aimed at bypassing the existing political and territorial boundaries between humans. The fourth type of public space is *glocal spaces*, where all the above-mentioned modes of belonging and participation forms co-exist. The fifth type is the emerging *trans-European spaces*, which comprise belongings situated in local contexts that are characterized by a high degree of identification with Europe either instead of or in addition to the aforementioned references of identification. Glocal spaces and trans-European spaces constitute an alternative to the traditional notions of communicative public space, and they may be seen as prototypes of the diverse societies of the future. They both are inclusive of essentializing, national, transnational, glocal and European modes of belonging. Glocal spaces are localized in local incipient organizations throughout Europe (Sicakkan 2004b) whereas trans-European spaces are manifested in Europe-oriented political parties, organizations, social movements, and incipient organizations.

The reality is that these public spaces co-exist, and emerging public spaces do not necessarily replace the currently existing ones. When operationalized in terms of their social order discourses and networks, both the publics and public spaces in Europe reach beyond their own boundaries in different ways to constitute a cleavage system of discourses and

alliances in Europe, in competition with each other so as to dominate the general public sphere of Europe. It is the identification of such a cleavage system of competing discourses and actor alliances at the European level that allows us to assert that, with the emergence of a trans-European public sphere of elites and citizens, and its encounters of conflict and contestation with other public spaces and publics, a European public sphere has emerged.

The European public sphere is radically different from the national public sphere: In contrast to the national public sphere, it is level-wise and territorially more clearly *polycentric*; it is *not as expansive* as the national public sphere; it does *not aim to dominate all publics* of Europe; its participants—the trans-European publics—largely conceive themselves as *of equal value in relation to other publics*; but it has *serious problems with inclusiveness*. EUROSHERE explored the role of the EU policies in the puzzle that Europe's latest public space component—the vertical trans-European space—has brought about.

2.1 Normative Premises of EUROSHERE

Earlier research on the European Public Sphere (EPS) has made crucial contributions to our understanding of the making of today's Europe. It has shown us that, under current conditions, it is difficult to realize a common EPS in the foreseeable future, but that there are traces of a EPS in the making on some policy issues. Most importantly, it has drawn our attention to the integrative, democratizing, legitimizing, and meaning-creating roles of the public sphere. The focus on EPS as a means of achieving democratic legitimacy at the European level can easily be justified normatively, but, it has not been substantiated empirically, and earlier research teaches us little about how public sphere can be inclusive in the European context of deep and complex diversities. Existence of a near-perfect procedural or deliberative democracy, including a public sphere where citizens freely exercise their rights of free speech, assembly, critique, deliberation, and opposition in order to form the public will is a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy. If we accept that any notion of state legitimacy produces a corresponding notion of legitimacy of individuals (through which the suitability of individuals' origins, identities, preferences, interests, etc is evaluated by the state-bearing groups), it is important to inquire into what forms of public sphere include / exclude which groups, to what degree, and on which matters.

In this sense, the EUROSHERE project takes a complementary normative starting point with a focus on inclusion/exclusion in and at the boundaries of public spheres. It is urgent to investigate whether the existing focus on democratic legitimacy in EPS studies has inadvertently led to emergence of new criteria for defining who the legitimate participants of the public sphere are or should be. Indeed, it has been empirically shown in numerous sociological and social anthropological studies of national public spaces that, in contexts of diversity, such standards can be discriminatory, marginalizing, and excluding.⁷ As a supplement to the contributions made by the democratic legitimacy debate in empirical EPS studies, EUROSHERE conceptualizes the European Public Sphere as a means of inclusion for democracy. Thereby, the project both contests and complements the existing academic work on the EPS with the following overall research question:

Are inclusive European public spheres (EPS) possible under conditions of complex diversity; national path dependencies of polity forms, institutions and policies; multilevel governance; and shifting boundaries within and of the EU?

⁷ A huge body of contemporary race, ethnicity, minority and migrant integration research; gender and gay studies; research on the disabled; and on other marginalized groups strengthen the view that universalistic discourses and rules of participation/communication in public debates result in exclusion of some groups. For examples of these, see, among many others: Bader (1995), Fraser (1992, 2007), Sandel (1998), Sicakkan (2004, 2005, 2008), Taylor (2001, et al 1994), Walzer (1983), Young (1990, 1995, 1998).

The word “inclusive”, combined with the project’s sub-title “towards a citizens’ Europe” is a manifestation of our overall normative orientation towards inclusion and accommodation of diversity in the public spheres of liberal democracies. At the same time, this is also an empirical research orientation posited against the tendency of earlier European research to focus primarily on the procedures, mechanisms, and legitimizing and democratizing functions of public spheres. This focus has left the substantial question of “what kind of diversity and openness are allowed in public spheres”—i.e., the main normative question posed to earlier public sphere research by many diversity, gender, minority, race, sexuality, disability, and marginalization researchers—mostly unanswered in the existing research on a EPS. EUROSPHERE is thus an attempt to remedy this.

This overall research question brings into focus the different approaches to inclusion and diversity, which also impinge upon how one envisions public sphere, politics, society, and the state. Specifically, it is possible to view inclusion as assimilation, integration, institutional segregation in a shared polity, or simply as co-existence under a minimal state. Likewise, it is possible to view diversity in terms of collective or individual identities and belongings; essentialized collective identities like ethnicity, race, sex, religion, nation; or in terms of constructed group or individual identities. This all depends on the ontological beliefs of the viewer, and not necessarily on reality. Needless to say, each of these ontological priorities includes certain groups and individuals as the prime and relevant components of society, on which public sphere and the design of political institutions are to be based, and, also, which policymaking should address. While determining the relevancy or primacy of groups, individuals, and issues/problems, each of these approaches consequently excludes certain groups, individuals, and themes based on their ontological priorities.⁸

Ontologies and normative visions derived thereof have—through their exclusions and inclusions – direct consequences for, among other things, notions of politics, society, polity, and citizenship.⁹ These different ontological points of departure and their normative exhortations have serious consequences for the definition of the European public sphere, European diversity, European Polity, and designs of empirical research on these phenomena. After choosing any one of these approaches, the resulting research design will undoubtedly reinforce certain visions of society, polity, and public sphere, and reproduce and justify certain inclusions/exclusions from the public sphere. If research ought to be committed to nourishing our restless wonder about how society and politics is possible (as opposed to how a certain vision of society and politics can be realized), it is of utmost importance to assess which models of a EPS are more inclusive than others in a given context.

2.2 Diversity, Polity and the Public Sphere

Although mainstream approaches state that the public sphere is a space located between the state and civil society, they hold that public spheres are not limited to countries’ borders. Participation in the public sphere is not membership based—everybody can freely take part in it. However, if the public sphere is a space between the state and civil society, between citizens and political institutions, its external boundaries are drawn by its very definition: it must have external boundaries in terms of who inhabits it and who speaks in it. From this perspective and, also, in reality, “outsiders” are not expected to take party or “intervene” in “our own” matters; it is the right of those who are directly affected by state actions to speak in

⁸ I do not have enough space here to give an overview of the details of relevant ontological approaches, nor to list what each ontology excludes. However, I did this in my earlier work (cf. Sicakkan 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008).

⁹ It is also a fact that some “rival” normative theories have ended up with similar policy proposals concerning e.g. citizenship, migration and asylum policy, etc. Although this is true at the policy level, the disagreements about models remain strong and still have consequences for which trade-offs are possible.

the public sphere. Earlier research on EPS shows that there is little “foreign” appearance in national public spheres on themes of internal relevance compared to the appearances of national actors.¹⁰ External boundaries of the public spheres must, then, be expected to follow polities’ borders, expansions of states’ territories (unifications, secessions, enlargements, invasions), and the movements of people (transnational and global politics emerging from migration and other sorts of mobility)—because it is these phenomena that affect the composition of the participants in a public sphere. Therefore, polity borders have to be taken as a relevant dimension of the public sphere’s external boundaries.

In contrast to nation-state oriented approach, “polity borders” can also be understood as the zone of a state’s power and influence in and beyond its physical borders. Indeed, this is presently taking place in the European Union: boundaries of national public spheres are gradually changing, as the EU’s political institutions become relevant as a new political center and increase their influence on citizens’ lives. Earlier findings indicating the EPS’ presence on certain themes, can be explained by EU’s influence on the respective themes.¹¹ Therefore, one should expect to observe a more clearly present EPS on, say, enlargement and EU constitution issues than on policy issues concerning citizenship and internal diversity—because the EU has attempted to exert central influence concerning the former.

Secondly, if public sphere is a space inhabited by state institutions, individuals, groups, civil society organizations, etc, then, processes of internal inclusion, marginalization and exclusion that are in place in all human interactions must be expected to be in full force also in the public sphere. Issues of inclusion, marginalization, and exclusion are about internal power relations between the groups constituting the citizen body in a state, and they shape the social and political cleavage structures on which the political system and politics in a country is based. These power relations have historical roots in the initial geopolitical conditions at the onset of a country’s state formation and nation building process. Indeed, state forms and regimes are based on such initial conditions prior to state formation processes.¹² It is largely these cleavage structures entrenched in diversity and power (defined in different ways in different historical contexts) that determine which inclusions/ exclusions and which notions of diversity are legitimate and relevant in the public sphere and in policymaking. Union states (e.g., UK), federal/confederal states (e.g., Germany, Switzerland), and unitary states (e.g., France, the Scandinavian countries) in Europe came into being as a result of the power relations between the groups in the diverse societies inhabiting the territory and public sphere of a political center that attempted to consolidate that territory.

This historical fact about the variation in the formation of the European states is the biggest challenge awaiting the Europeanists longing for a common EPS. If polity boundaries are relevant for the boundaries of a public sphere, then internal territorial power structures of a state should be expected to be reflected on the structure of its public sphere: in federal state forms with strong local governments, for example, the public sphere should be expected to be more segmented than in unitary states with a strong degree of centralization. If a public sphere is about politics between the rulers and the ruled, then a segmented political rule will simply result in a segmented public sphere. Indeed, observed rhetoric about, and practice regarding diversity in the European Union implies that national diversity is the only form of relevant diversity at European level politics.¹³ European level politics simply does not relate to

¹⁰ Peters 2006

¹¹ Latzer and Saurwein 2006

¹² Rokkan (1975), Sicakkan (2005, 2008).

¹³ This does not mean that the EU ignores the internal diversity in its member states. However, the fact that the EU does not have a common definition of a national minority, leaves this question to its member states, and moreover bases its decision making systems primarily on nation states, justifies this view.

member states' internal diversity beyond passively accepting the normative approaches about the minority definition and minority rights developed by the *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe* (OSCE). When it comes to diversity issues, the balance of power between member states and European level institutions favors the member states, and if there is a European public sphere, it should be expected to be segmented along national boundaries with trans-Europeanization tendencies on certain themes. However, the variety of approaches to internal diversity in member states and the emerging complex trans-European multilevel governance system in Europe, which makes some decision-making levels redundant on certain policy issues, should be expected to make this depiction foggier than what the previous statement suggests. The question of which diversities are legitimate in the public sphere and considered relevant for policymaking in national and European public debates is, therefore, a key indicator of the prospects for a common European public sphere. EUROSHERE thus aims to identify the *variations, as well as alignments and misalignments, between European and national level public debates, concerning which diversities are relevant for policymaking*. Such a research effort also serves as an inquiry into the initial conditions of the EU-polity formation processes.

This brief discussion aimed to show the importance of identifying how polity, diversity, and public sphere constitute each other differently in different contexts. These three political phenomena subsist in each other and exist in symbiosis. This symbiotic co-existence is the biggest challenge for research attempting to identify the features of the EPS in the present context of unpredictability about the direction of political development in the EU. In such attempts, it is thus reasonable to base research on multiple scenarios of political change

2.3 Numeric, Corporate-Plural, and Media Dimensions of the Public Sphere

The political history of European states teaches us that states, elites, social and political groups, and individual citizens have created three different channels for public communication for citizen influence: The *numeric channel* (electoral democracy), the *corporate-plural channel* (negotiation democracy), and the *national public sphere* (among others, deliberative democracy). The former two channels were conceptualized and theorized by Stein Rokkan in early 1970s. The notion of public sphere was introduced by Jürgen Habermas in early 1960s.

The *numeric channel* is about political communication on power relations between political elites and citizens through democratically held *elections*. In this channel, one talks about elections, electorates, political parties, party systems, and parliaments. The *corporate-plural channel* concerns political communication and bargaining in policymaking processes whereby interest groups, pressure groups, issue groups, social movements, and other non-governmental organizations try to exert power on governments to generate policy outcomes in favour of their interests. Whereas the numeric channel (elections) is for determining who will have how much power in decision-making (composition of the parliament) based on the degree of popular support (election results), the corporate channel is about bargaining and negotiations on specific policy issues between the governments, parliamentary groups, and citizens' organizations of different types. In some countries, this bargaining system has been institutionalized in the sense that some citizen interest organizations participate automatically in policymaking (e.g., Austria), but in others it is more on *ad hoc* basis. The numeric and corporate-plural channels are, then, respectively, about distribution of decision-making power and negotiations on policy-making. Following Eriksen's typology of public spheres (Eriksen 2005), the numeric and corporate-plural channels can be termed "strong public spheres" because their outputs are collective decisions made through citizens' voting and bargaining.

The notion of weak public sphere (or the general public sphere), on the other hand, is not primarily about decision-making or policymaking. It emerges first and foremost as a space that aims to empower politics and citizens as opposed to markets and to criticize and hold the power-holder accountable. The outcomes of a general public sphere are, depending on the ontological point of departure, the aggregation of citizens' interests, formation of public opinion, formation of the general will, or formation of a common citizen identity. In Habermasian approaches, the mass media, including also digital social media, is considered to be what comes closest to the idea of a general public sphere.

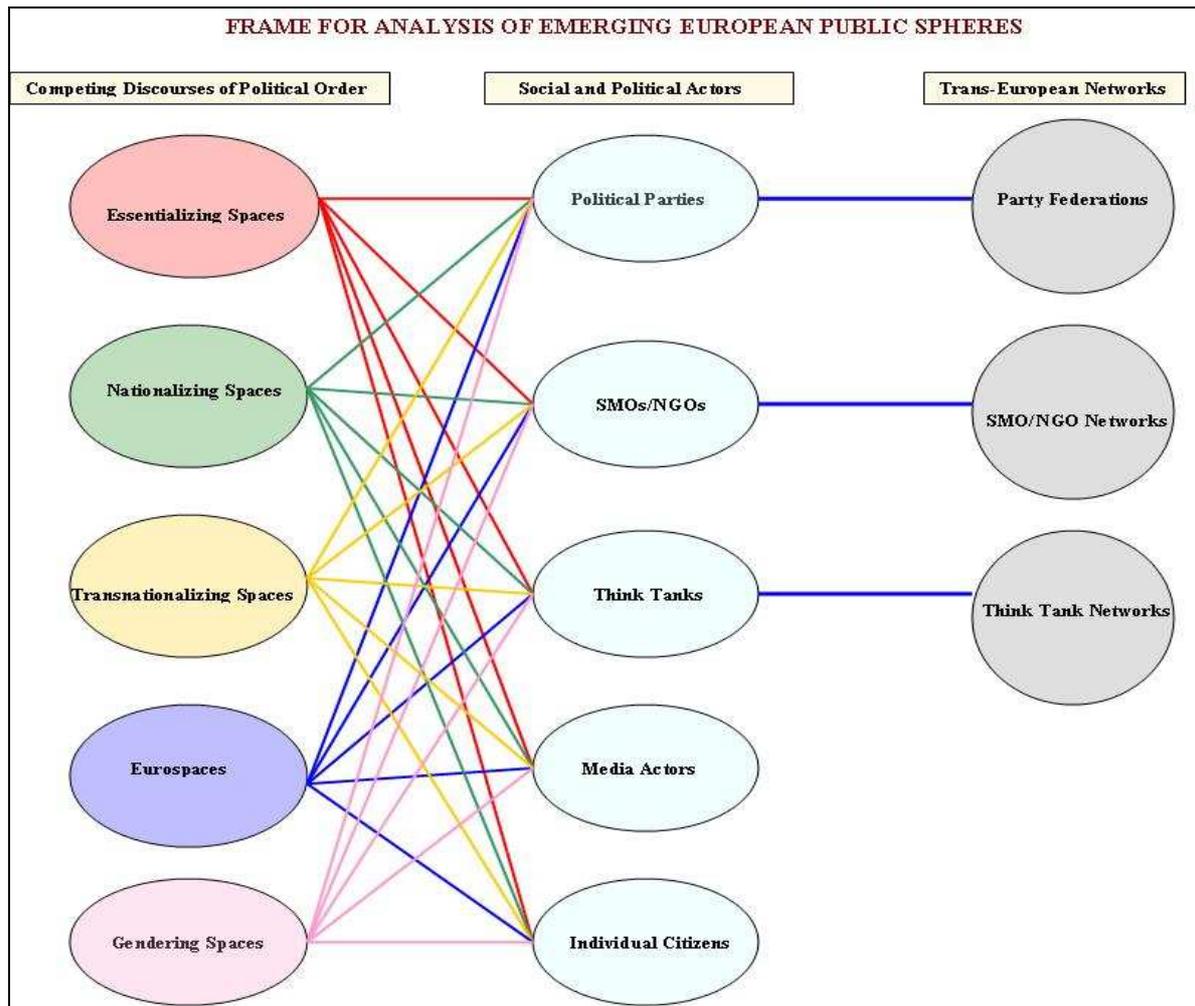
The European Union appears partly to be following the route that its member states once followed in order to establish direct links between themselves and their citizens: The EU introduced direct free elections for the European Parliament and the elected MEPs form party groups in the EP (the *numeric channel*). The EU is also enhancing its public consultation, accreditation, and lobbying systems, whereby different groups can, in theory, negotiate, bargain and influence the EU policymaking (the *corporate-plural channel*) at the stage of preparation of law proposals. The European Commission has also made participation in its public consultations accessible to everyone who has access to internet. On the public sphere side, the European Union has launched the (not so successful) Euronews TV-channel as well as developing common objectives for media and communication and diversity and multilingualism policies in its cultural agenda.

In spite of these efforts by the EU, the political system of the European Union is suffering from insufficient communication and missing links between its political institutions and the citizens of Europe, and the existing links between the EU and its citizens are not working efficiently. It is claimed that lacking democratic legitimacy has become the major factor threatening the future of the European Union. Whether this is the case is one of the main questions of this volume.

To assess the prospects for a democratic, inclusive European public sphere, EUROSPHERE compares the ways in which the European Union, national public sphere participants (media, civil society organizations, political parties, and policy research institutes), and trans-national networks of these are trying to create links between citizens and the political institutions of the European Union. The main focus here, however, is on the European Union policies aiming to create a common European public sphere, and how the EU policies on this matter are aligned or misaligned with the priorities of other participants (including individual citizens) in public debates. We identify the (mis)alignments, conflicts, and contestations in the aforementioned channels of voice and participation: the numeric, the corporate-plural, and the general public sphere.

2.4 Operationalizing the European Public Sphere

The empirical research programme of EUROSPHERE aims to explore whether it is possible to develop an inclusive, democratic public sphere in the European Union. Based on different scenarios and alternative combinations of different approaches to diversity, polity, and the public sphere, EUROSPHERE aims to identify the notions, discourses, and objectives that are in the process of becoming dominant in key European actors and political spaces, how these notions and objectives are spread and made relevant in different political contexts as well as in the context of the European Union politics, and what contestations and conflicts they create in policymaking. Therefore, the overall research question will be answered with a focus on the impact of two specific building blocks of European society, which are seen to be amongst the crucial factors impinging upon the shaping of a public sphere:



- *The roles of different types of social and political **actors** in the articulation of an inclusive EPS* – whether or how different types of social and political actors contribute to or impede the formation of a certain model of an EPS?
 - Individual citizens
 - Policy research institutes and think tanks
 - Political parties
 - Social movement / non-governmental organizations – SMOs/NGOs
 - Print and broadcast media
 - European Union

- *The impacts of different social and political **communicative spaces** on the articulation of an inclusive EPS* – whether or how different types of social and political spaces facilitate or impede the emergence of a certain model of an EPS?
 - Essentializing spaces (ethnic/minority/national/religious)
 - Nationalizing spaces
 - Transnationalizing spaces
 - Trans-Europeanizing
 - Gendering spaces

The above choices are not arbitrary: A focus on public sphere has to include citizens', institutional civil society actors', and mass media's framings of issues. Concerning institutions, one has to focus on key civil society actors operating and maneuvering in the public sphere. Furthermore, both citizens and civil society organizations still relate to and operate within the different types of public spaces that developed historically as components of the existing national public spheres, which will also have to remain as components of an emerging European public sphere for a long time and constitute the contexts in which a European public sphere can develop. It is therefore crucial to assess the impacts of different actors and public spaces and inquire into how they relate to the emergence of different types of European public sphere. As illustrated in the above figure, the European public sphere is inhabited by:

- a set of historically-developed and already existing communicative public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- a set of trans-European networks of organizations (we chose to look at party federations, networks of nongovernmental and social movement organizations, networks of think tanks)
- a set of national and sub-national level social and political actors (we chose to look at political parties, SMOs/NGOs, think tanks, media actors) that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations
- individual citizens that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations

For purposes of empirical research, the European public sphere is conceptualized in four different ways:

- (1) as a set of already existing communicative / discursive public spaces that are increasingly more interconnected and overlapping with each other (horizontal and vertical interconnectedness between sub-national, national and transnational communicative public spaces)
- (2) as a separate, emerging trans-European communicative / discursive space that comes in addition to, and complements and/or competes with, the historically developed existing communicative public spaces
- (3) as a set of collective social and political actors (organizations) that are increasingly more interlinked and collaborate with each other beyond the existing national boundaries
- (4) as a separate set of social and political actors that create European-level networks that come in addition to, and compete with, the already existing trans-European networks

In the current chaotic picture of citizens, organizations, communicative public spaces, and political institutions that interact, interconnect, and interlink with each other, social and political actors are facilitating or inhibiting the emergence of an inclusive European public sphere in different ways. In EUROSPHERE, citizens and organizations' roles in and contributions to the formation of a European public sphere are understood in terms of:

- the inter-linkages, inter-connectedness, and overlaps that they create or deter between the existing Europeanized and non-Europeanized communicative / discursive public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- the new trans-European communicative / discursive spaces that they create or participate in or work against
- the vertical and horizontal trans-European networks of organizations that they create or participate in or work against
- the discourses about the European polity, diversity (including exclusion and inclusion, citizenship, minorities, mobility, migration, asylum, gender, etc) and the European public sphere that they bring into these networks and interconnected spaces

Indeed, all of the above processes of inter-connections, inter-linkages, and overlaps between communicative spaces and networks of organizations as well as a variety of discourses about Europe, the EU polity, and diversity are in place in today's Europe to some degree. Interconnectedness of existing communicative public spaces and inter-linkages between organizations (collective actors) beyond a variety of borders and boundaries constitute each other. It is the social and political actors' transgression of boundaries that create interconnectedness between Europe's communicative public spaces. On the other hand, it is the different degrees of openness / closure of the existing communicative public spaces that facilitate or obstruct such transgression. Hence, to understand the European public sphere, interconnectedness of spaces and networks of organizations are analyzed in one common research frame. One research challenge is thus to assess whether these can be viewed as parts and parcels of a European public sphere in the making. If so, how are these processes structuring the emerging European public sphere? Which types of inclusions and exclusions will a resulting public sphere form and what dominant discourses may it result in? Most importantly, in the normative framework of EUROSHERE, which notions of a European public sphere are more democratic and inclusive than others?

3. Data Collection Tools

Our data collection tools (media content data collection interface and codebooks, institutional data collection interface and codebooks, interview questions and codebooks, and the format of the sixteen reports) have been devised as a step towards devising the Eurosphere Knowledgebase. As part of this work, we developed:

1. Guidelines for selections of actors and respondents (9)
2. Long List of Social and Political Actors Relevant for Eurosphere Research (13)
3. Fieldwork guides and instructions for field researchers (11)
4. Two frames for institutional data collection (24, 25)
5. Three qualitative interview questionnaires (30, 31, 32)
6. Guides for institutional data collection (24, 25)
7. Codebooks and coding schemes for media content data collection (27, 28)
8. Guide for media content data collection (27, 28)
9. Four online interfaces for entering the collected data into the common knowledgebase (36, 37, 38, 41, 44)
10. Standard format for single country reports (40)

The numbers given in parentheses above refer to the numbers of the Eurosphere Research Notes where these research tools are published. These research notes can be downloaded at <http://eurospheres.org/publications/research-notes/>. The qualitative survey questionnaire we used in elite interviews was prepared by University of Bergen, Austrian Academy of Sciences, and the University of Amsterdam, with contributions from all the partners. The fieldwork interview guides, in the questionnaire itself and those in a separate document, have been prepared by the University of Bergen. The dimensions of data collection on institutional features of social and political actors have been prepared by University of Bergen and included in the guidelines for field researchers and guidelines for actor selection (see Eurosphere Research Notes No.9 and 11). The codebook and coding schemes for print and broadcast media have been prepared by University of Cardiff and University of Bergen (see also Eurosphere Research Note No.18).

4. Synchronized Data Collection in Sixteen Countries

EUROSPHERE collects/deploys relevant data about the features of communicative public spaces, of social/political actors, and of individuals, whose effects on the articulation of a European public sphere were assessed at later stages in the project. The scope and depth of data collection has naturally been determined by our research question and the available resources. Concerning data-collection about social/political actors, at least three social/political actors were selected in each category (*i.e.*, 3 think tanks, 3 political parties, 3 social movements, 3 newspapers and 2 TV channels) in each country according to standard selection criteria. Leaders of these organizations as well as their other important members were interviewed.

Concerning data collection about communicative public spaces, also here *the units of observation* are social/political actors; however, this time they are treated as sub-spaces of the communicative public spaces. Here, the key data collection activity focuses on the interrelationships and patterns/substance of interactions between the different types of social/political actors claiming to belong to or to be speaking on behalf of the same communicative public space (*e.g.*, the substance/patterns of interaction between a political party, a social movement, a media actor, and a think tank). We also collected data about the discourses of public spheres, citizenship, involvement, etc. of which social/political actors are a part of as well as data about the features of openness/closure in these communicative public spaces.

Further, existing survey data about the features of individuals who are associated with the five types of communicative public spaces through their engagement/involvement with different social/political actors are being taken from previous European surveys such as ESS, EVS, and Eurobarometer as well as other international sources like IPSS. The survey data concerns individuals' involvement in political processes, their levels of co-otherness, patterns of multiple belonging, mobility patterns, patterns of multiple orientations to public spaces as well as the individuals' relevant background.

Data about the responses/discourses of *the three units of analysis* – individuals, collective social and political actors, and public spaces—towards the selected four issues were also collected. These policy areas are: (1) European Constitution (Reform Treaty) and EU institutions, (2) (European) citizenship and identity, (3) Mobility, migration, and asylum policies, and (4) European enlargement.

The policy areas supplement the data that we are collecting from the same sources about notions of diversity, polity, and public sphere. They were selected with respect to the project's basic focus on the public sphere's internal and external boundaries. The first two policy issues concern whom to include in the European demos and their fundamental rights/duties, and the last two policy issues concern inclusion of outsiders through mobility and migration.

The aim of this project component is to constitute the basis for the comparative studies and the final analyses to be performed at later project stages. The data to be registered, documented and summarized on country-basis are:

At the national level, we are analyzing how and why political parties, social movement and non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and media actors (newspapers and TV-channels) are forming or joining networks and channels for influencing the public debates at sub-national, national, and European levels. At the trans-European level, we are focusing on several European party federations, several trans-European networks of movements and NGOs, and several trans-European networks of think tanks, and how and why different organizations operate in these trans-European networks and channels. Further, we are investigating the modes, methods, and issues of collaboration between the national and trans-

national levels. On both levels, we are collecting data about the institutional features of these organizations as well as data from interviews with their formal, informal, and oppositional leaders in order to understand how, and on which policy issues, they contribute to public debates at which levels (national or European); which arenas, networks, channels, and resources they are using to influence the public debates; and their political objectives concerning diversity, EU-polity, and the articulation of public spheres in Europe.

4.1 Criteria for Selection of Organizations

Interviews and institutional data collection were conducted in the period between February 2008 and July 2009. More than 70 researchers were involved in data collection. EUROSPHERE's data collection activities were divided into four components with respect to the types of social political actors.

The selection of the organizations to be interviewed was largely completed by the end of February 2008. The procedure for selection of social/political actors is outlined below. As stated earlier, EUROSPHERE focuses on political parties, think tanks, social movement organizations and media actors. The idea is to map how these actors represent and confront different visions of polity, diversity, and public sphere and why they do so as well as their ways of participating in national and European public spaces. We selected only relevant organizations and their organizational and opinion leaders as well as internal opposition leaders in these organizations. Social and political actors in each country were selected with respect to the concern that the broad spectrum of the variation in actors' approaches to diversity should be represented. The following procedure was followed while selecting of social/political actors to be focused on in EUROSPHERE:

- At least 3 political parties, 3 social movements or non-governmental organization, 3 think tanks, and 5 media actors (3 daily newspapers and 2 TV-news programmes) in each country.
- However, some exemptions from the above rule were allowed, in following ways: Each partner had to select 14 organizations at minimum for data collection. Based on the contextual particularities in the countries that they collected data in, the partners could choose 2 think tanks instead of three and/or 4 media actors (2 newspapers and 2 broadcast media) instead of 5. Such a procedure was followed by some partners when they found that the proposed division of actor types would prevent them from including some important approaches to the phenomena we are researching. In such cases, these partners increased either the number of political parties or of social movement organizations from 3 to 4, or both. This choice was justified with reference to the particular situation in the respective country (e.g., the impact of the pillars as in Netherlands, the importance of the regional level in certain countries which may require more SMOs and/or political parties, etc).
- Each project partner proposed a larger number of actors in each category – at least 5 political parties, 7 social movements, 8 think tanks, and 9 media actors/channels from the country where their institutions are based.
- From the proposed actors, the EUROSPHERE Steering Committee prepared a proposal for the final list of actors to be focused on.
- Partners justified each of their suggestions, added brief information about the actors' views on diversity and the EU, and specified and their own priorities concerning the selection of actors. For this purpose, the guide given in subsequent tables below for each type of actor was used.

Political parties

The project focuses on the largest party in the government, the largest opposition party and the largest Maverick party in each country. Partners were requested to *propose at least 3 large political parties and 2 Maverick parties* amongst the total of three parties that were selected for analysis in each country. The final selection was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of political party approaches to the EU-polity and diversity at the European level as well as representation in the European Parliament. The partners were advised to base their proposals on party manifestos, party web sites, and literature on political parties.

Political Party Selection Guide

Political Party Type	Specifications	Party names	Short information about the political party	Justification
Mainstream Parties (mass/catch-all parties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Representing the national mainstream views/ideologies * The largest government party * The two largest opposition parties 	The first largest government party (in terms of vote percentage)	Please mention briefly the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * place on the right/left spectrum if applicable * views on the EU-polity * views about diversity * the two most important views/issues that each party otherwise advocates 	Partners' shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each party should enrich our project?
		The first largest opposition party (in terms of vote percentage)		
		The second largest opposition party (in terms of vote percentage)		
Maverick Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sharply different views on the EU and diversity from the mainstream * Can be outside the parliament * System-critical, semi-system loyal * The two largest amongst those that satisfy the above criteria 	Two Maverick Parties – semi-system loyal		

Social Movements/Citizens' Initiatives (SMOS/NGOs)

The project focuses on three social movement organizations (SMO) in each country. One focusing on *the tension between the national and the European & the global*, one focusing on *the tension between the national and the minority rights*, and one focusing on *transnational minority collaboration* in Europe were to be selected in the end of the process. Each partner was requested to propose at least 3 nationally oriented and 4 transnationally/globally oriented social movement organizations. At least two of the transnationally oriented organizations in this category would be selected from amongst the member organizations of the *Platform of European Social NGOs*. Concerning SMOs and NGO's, it was important to represent in our selection of organizations that are constituted and run by (1) majority population members, (2) national minorities/national minorities in border regions, (3) indigenous populations, and

(4) immigrant groups. This was determined by each partner with respect to relevance and importance of these categories in each country. The final selection was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of social movement/NGO approaches to diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European Public Sphere (here, at least one SMO that is a member of the European Social Platform of NGOs was included in the project). The partners were advised to base their proposals on organizational manifestos, web sites, and literature on social movements and NGOs.

Social movement / NGO selection guide

Social Movement Type	Specifications	Movement names	Short Information about the movement	Justification
Nationally-oriented SMOs/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Focusing on nationwide issues *national-oriented ideology/ world view/horizon of action *The three most visible/public in the country *Issues of focus are context-dependent *Ethnic&religious organizations can be included if applicable and justifiable *Totally three nationally oriented SMOs are to be nominated 	The three citizens' initiatives/SMOs that are known to have high publicity.	Please mention briefly the following: * place on the right/left spectrum if applicable * views on the EU-polity * views about diversity * the two most important views/issues that each movement otherwise advocates	Partners' shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each social movement should enrich our project?
Transnationally/globally-oriented movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Focusing on transnational/global issues or having a horizon of action beyond the nation state <i>*At least two SMOs that are members of the European Social Platform will be suggested.</i> *The two most visible/public movements in each category specified on the right * totally four transnationally oriented movements to be nominated *Main focus of these organizations may be on ethnicity, migration, human rights. 	1. One main initiative with pro-European views (this doesn't need to be the main focus of the organization) 2. One main initiative with anti-European views (this doesn't need to be the main focus of the organization)		

Think Tanks

The project focuses on three think tanks in each country. Each partner was requested to nominate 8 think tanks, at least two of which have done projects about the European Union if such exists. The think tank categories in the below table were used as a rough, flexible guide, as not all European countries have all sorts of think tanks. Partners were requested to propose at least 2 or 3 “advocacy think tanks”, 2 “Universities without students” and 2 or 3 contract research institutes. At least one of the proposed think tanks should be a member organization of TEPSA (*The Trans-European Policy Studies Association*).

Think tank selection guide

Think Tank Type	Specifications	Think tank names	Short Information about the think tank	Justification
Advocacy think tanks (ATT)	Think tanks advocating certain views on issues relevant to the EU-polity and social diversity.	2 ATT based in the respective country	Please mention briefly the following: * Proposed think tanks should have previously conducted projects related with European issues * place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable * work on the EU-polity * work about diversity * the two most important views/issues that each think tanks otherwise specialize on.	Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each think tank should enrich our project?
		1 ATT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)		
Universities without students (UTT)	Think tanks claiming to conduct independent research	1 UTT based in the respective country		
		1 UTT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)		
Contract research organizations (CTT)	Think tanks doing research based on contracts with political institutions and organizations	2 CTT based in the respective country		
		1 CTT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)		

The Consortium’s final selection of three think tanks in each country was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of think tank types and their approaches to diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European public sphere. Partners were advised to base their proposals on think tank manifestos, organizational objectives, web sites, and literature on think tanks.

Media Actors

Five media actors are researched on in each country—3 print media actors and 2 broadcast media actors. Each partner was expected to identify and nominate *the three main players* in print media in their respective countries and two (*small*) *print media actors representing/voicing the colours*. Concerning broadcast media, each partner nominated two *public service news programmes* and two *commercial news programmes*. That is, a total of 9 media actors are to be nominated in each country. For each country, we finally chose 5 media actors. The General Assembly’s selection was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of media types and their approaches to the EU-polity/diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European Public Sphere. We advised our partners to base their nominations on information media web sites and secondary literature on media’s framing of diversity.

Media actor selection guide

Media Type	Specifications	Media actor names	Short Information about the media actor	Justification
Print media (PM)	*Daily press/newspapers *The print versions will be used in the data collection	Three main player print media actors	Please mention briefly the following: * place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable * framing of the EU-polity * framing of diversity * the two most important views/issues that each media actor otherwise likes to focus specifically on in the recent years. *please indicate the programme of interest in connection with each broadcast media actor	Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each media actor should enrich our project?
		Two small print media actors voicing colours		
Broadcast media (BM)	*TV-broadcast channels *Requires recording of news/programmes on tape for analysis.	Two main player public service broadcast media actors (only one programme to be selected for analysis)		
		Two commercially driven broadcast media actors (only one programme to be selected for analysis)		

Based on these general guidelines, each partner team sent their justified proposals to the Steering Committee; the Steering Committee made a long list of the proposed organizations, and chose the organizations that were seen as the most relevant for answering EUROSPHERE’s research questions in a comparative framework. The Steering Committee’s selections of actors were approved by each partner university with minor changes.

4.2 Criteria for Selection of Interview Respondents

In the second stage, we identified and selected leaders or elites of these social/political actors as our potential interviewees. These individuals are representative of the institutions that they belong to—that is, organizational, opinion, and internal group leaders were selected. We selected leaders from different categories in each type of social political actor. The following considerations were relevant for our research while selecting the respondents:

- i) For each type of social and political actor, it was an important aim to represent both the dominant group and the internal opposition and dissenters.
- ii) For political parties and SMO/NGO, it was one of our most important targets to represent also the minorities within minorities in our analyses; e.g. for ethnic, religious, and national minorities: class- and elite-positions and usually also along sex/gender lines and age lines: vulnerable minorities such as women, minors
- iii) The gender balance concern determined by our gender action plan was applied when selecting respondents.

The following operative categories were advised to partners when selecting the interviewees from each organization type:

Respondents from Political Parties

	Organizational Leader	Opinion Leader	Internal Opposition Leader	Internal “group” Leader	Total
Political party	1	1	2	3	7

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leader with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a political party. This may include also the individuals who are members of the central steering committee of a political party.

Opinion leader: Individuals who may or may not have formal/official leadership position, but who are known to be the ideologues and opinion-leaders in a political party.

Internal opposition leader: Potential interviewees who have views on diversity or EU-related issues that are distinct from the present formal/opinion leadership.

Internal group leader: This category includes (a) the leader of organized women’s factions (if such exists, at least 1 woman leader should be selected) and (b) leading representatives of 'ethnic, national, immigrant minorities' within parties (if such exists, at least 1 ethno-national minority group leader and 1 immigrant minority group leader should be selected).

Respondents from SMOs/NGOs

	Organizational Leader	Opinion Leader	Internal Opposition Leader	Internal “minority” Leader	Total
SMO/NGO	1	1	1	2	5

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leaders with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a SMO/NGO. This may include also individuals who are members of the central steering committee.

Opinion leader: Individuals who may or may not have formal/official leadership position, but who are known to be the ideologues and opinion-leaders in a political party.

Internal opposition leader: Potential interviewees who have views on diversity or EU-related issues that are distinct from the present formal/opinion leadership.

Internal “minority” leader: This category includes (a) the leaders of organized women’s faction inside organizations (if such exists, at least 1 (female) leader should be selected) and (b.1) *for SMOs/NGOs primarily constituted and run by members of the majority population:* leading representatives of 'ethnic, national, immigrant minorities' within organizations (if such exists, at least 1 ethno-national minority group leader and/or 1 immigrant minority group leader should be selected – according to relevance in different country contexts); (b.2) *for organizations constituted and run by members of national/indigenous/immigrant minority populations:*

Respondents from Think Tanks

	Organizational Leader	Research Leader	Prominent Researcher	Total
Think tank	1	1	1	3

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leaders with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a SMO/NGO. This may include also individuals who are members of the central steering committee.

Research leader: Individuals who are known to be leading the organizations’ research policy and thematic priorities, especially in the area of ethno-national diversity and EU-research.

Prominent researcher: Researchers/authors in the organization who have done the most relevant research on the themes in which EUROSHERE is specifically interested (ethno-national diversity and EU).

Respondents from Print Media

	Editor General’s Office	News Section Editor	News Section Journalist	Total
Print media	1 (or 0)	1	1 (or 2)	3

Editor General’s office: If possible, the newspaper’s editor general should be interviewed. If not, people closely working with the editor general who daily interact with him in the daily work of determining the editorial policy (e.g., member of editorial board).

News section editor: Where possible, the news editor of each selected newspaper should be interviewed. If not, a journalist collaborating closely with the news editor on selection of news items should be selected.

News section journalist: A journalist/reporter who is specializing in or who has proven to have an interest in making news about ethno-national diversity and/or relevant EU-policies and institutions.

4.3 Criteria for Selection of News Items

The media content analysis aims to analyze all news items in the selected newspapers ‘(but not in the sports, fashion, celebrity, lifestyle, housing etc supplements with the newspapers). For both broadcast and print, we only code from Monday-Friday (not the weekend).

Our content analysis focuses on news stories that have an explicit or implicit ‘clear European dimension’ *and* at the same time refer to certain topics. There are two main criteria to identify stories with the aforementioned ‘European dimension’:

- Stories covering EU-institutions affairs, or
- Stories covering issues related to one or more foreign European states (obviously, ‘foreign European states’ will be different for every media analysts team)

Printed news stories complying with at least one of the previously stated conditions were analyzed if the headline, or the banner headline, or the sub-heading, or the opening paragraph, or related infographics also relate *implicitly or explicitly* to at least one of the topics listed below. In the case of broadcast items, the stories were analyzed if they referred *implicitly or explicitly* to at least one of the following topics:

- EU-institutions and/or EU-representatives (also ‘Council of the European Union’, ‘European Commission’, ‘European Parliament’, ‘European Court of Justice’, ‘European Committees’, and sub-divisions of these institutions, etc)
- Reform treaty (also European Constitution, Lisbon Treaty, etc)
- Enlargement (also stories referring to ‘new member states’, etc)
- Minorities or minority policies (also Muslims, Islam, Roma People, Catalonia, etc)
- Immigration or migration policy (also asylum seekers, illegal migration, etc)
- Free movement or mobility (also stories referring to ‘European workers’, ‘European citizens’, ‘Citizenship’)
- Gender and gender policy (also stories referring to ‘women’s rights’, ‘headscarf’, ‘women leaders’, ‘gender equality’, ‘child benefits’, ‘birth leave’, etc)
- Constructing Europe and the EU: National Sovereignty and/or European and national identity(ies) (also ‘Europeanness’, ‘Britishness’, ‘Frenchness’, or EU’s concerns on national / local culture(s) and traditions)

4.4 Main Dimensions of Institutional Data and Sources

The aim of EUROSHERE’s institutional data collection was to map the relevant features of *the political and social actors*. The data collection activity started with the gathering of detailed information about the selected social and political actors’ general features through web-surfing of their internet pages, preliminary analyses of their publications/reports, programme declarations, public debates, daily press/broadcast news, secondary academic literature, and other printed and electronically published material. We collected data about:

- their **dominant discourses** about public sphere, EU- polity, and diversity (citizenship, mobility, enlargement, and migration/asylum)
- the **channels, issues, and types** of involvement/participation they facilitate with their
- **infrastructures** and organizational facilities
- the types of other **social/political actors** they accommodate
- the **types of interaction** they facilitate between different types of social/political actors as well as between their attendants
- the degree of their **openness/closure** towards outsiders and other social/political actors

Different features of collective actors are expected to have different impacts on citizens’ involvement in political processes. In this respect, EUROSHERE distinguishes between two sets of features: Social and political actors operate within, from, on behalf of, and across communicative public spaces. They constitute and are accommodated by public spaces; they are amongst the key determinants of the structuring quality of such public spaces, which in

turn impact upon citizens' involvement and participation at different levels. In this respect, EUROSHERE treats these collective entities both as (1) *political/social actors* that shape the public spaces and as (2) *components of public spaces* that are shaped by these spaces.

Regarding the former (1), the relevant feature is social and political actors' orientations to different public spaces. With their positive, negative, or neutral orientations towards singular, multiple and multi-level types of public spaces—combined with their potential structuring, guiding, and mobilizing capacity, they influence citizens' ways and substance of involvement.

The structuring and guiding relationships between public spaces and social/political actors gains thus relevance as an indirect (spurious) explanatory factor. Eurosphere's data collection activity started thus with a detailed information gathering about the selected social and political actors' general features through (1) *content analyses of their internet pages*, (2) *preliminary analyses of their publications/reports, programme declarations, public debates*, (3) *secondary academic literature and previous research on the selected actors*, (4) *and other printed and electronically published material*.

The data that was collected here was later registered in the Eurosphere Knowledgebase and deployed in the analyses in the country reports and in the comparative reports in order to see whether there are meaningful relationships between organizations' institutional features and the leaders' views on different issues. When information was not available in online and printed resources, researchers contacted the organizations to provide the missing information. In operational terms, information available was collected along the below-given dimensions.

1. officially stated norms, principles, and objectives
2. the means of dissemination they use to influence
3. the strategies for promoting their preferences
4. the channels of influence they use
5. profile of membership, membership policy
6. financial resources and priorities
7. organizational structure and names of leaders
8. other organizations they prefer to collaborate with
9. channels, forms, discourses, and levels of involvement that they make available for their members as well as other citizens/residents
10. main topic of interest in the last 3 years

Concerning the last point the following topics were of particular interest in a EUROSHERE context: (a) the European polity and its institutions and policies, (b) the European public spheres, (c) diversity—as this unfolds along the dimensions of European enlargement, citizenship, and mobility/migration/asylum. The University of Bergen and the Norwegian Social Science Data Services devised an online data registration system for this type of data. This preliminary data collection about the organizations was completed before we interviewed the elites in the organizations.

The data collection activity started with a detailed information gathering about the selected social and political actors' general features through content analyses of their internet pages, preliminary analyses of their publications/reports, programme declarations, public debates, daily press/broadcast news, secondary academic literature, and other printed and electronically published material. These data was collected and registered in the Eurosphere Knowledgebase by each partner. The dimensions of data collection about the general features of *political parties*, *SMOs/NGOs* and *think tanks* are:

- a) When, how, and by whom the organization was founded?
- b) What are the main sources of the organization's financial and other resources (their buildings, personnel salary, etc)
- c) What causes is the organization using most resources (personnel and financial) resources for? (preferably a ranking of the most important 3-5 things)
- d) What are the officially stated (written) objectives of the social/political actor?
- e) What is the membership profile of the organization? (how many members, who want to be their members, whom the organization want to see as their members, women members, youth, whom the organization is hesitant to include as their members, etc)
- f) What types of involvement does the organization facilitate/hinder for its members and the larger public? (leadership, membership, participation in the planning/formulation of the organization's outputs, participation in organizations' activities/meetings without membership, participation in organizations' leisure and entertainment activities).
- g) Is the organization encouraging/hindering its members/audience to be members of other organizations and/or participate in other organizations' activities? Are there any organizations that the organization does not wish its members to be associated with?
- h) Who are the target audience of the organization? Who and/or what is the organization trying to influence? (the general public, specific authorities at different levels, specific social/political groups, other civil organizations, etc)
- i) What issues/themes has the organization defined as its primary field of activity? What are its general stances on the key issues? Have there been or are there any critical, important social/political events that the organization has been specifically interested in?
- j) Who are the formal, officially responsible leaders of the organization?
- k) Who are the informal, influential opinion leaders of the organization? (if it is possible to find this out from their statements in the internet and other written documents)
- l) Who are the leaders of the internal opposition leaders in the organization? What are their points of critique to the official policies of the leadership?
- m) Does the organization as a rule speak *against*, on behalf of, or attempt to voice the interests of a specific social/political group? (a class, an ethno-religious group, a nation, a class, gender, an ideological group, the European society, etc). Specify the groups that the organization focuses most on.
- n) Does the organization have any transnational, global, or European focus on issues?
- o) What are the organization's official stances concerning these groups?
- p) Which channels is the organization using in order to disseminate its messages and to influence the target audience? – e.g. media, internet, lobbying, establishing informal, personal contacts with target audience, briefs/leaflets/brochures/newsletters to target audience, membership/participation in other organizations' activities, meetings, production of outputs, etc (this information should be provided separately for each target group as organizations may be using different channels towards different types of target audience).
- q) Which issues has been the primary focus of the organization during the last 3 years? If any focus on ethno-national diversity, END-institutions/policies, and/or public sphere issues, this dimension will be further detailed in terms of views on European enlargement, citizenship, and mobility/migration/asylum.

Concerning the *broadcast and print media actors* that we have selected, a different set of institutional information is required:

- a) What kind of regulation does the respective country have concerning public service tradition vs commercial media?
- b) What are the general characteristics of the media system in the respective country (the range, type and regional/national/international dimension of news available and consumed)
- c) Where do most people get their news from in the respective country (TV, press, Internet) along with demographic differences (sex, age etc) (from secondary sources)
- d) What is the daily average number of newspaper issues sold (for selected print media) or the daily average number of audience (rating) of the programmes (for selected broadcast media programmes)
- e) When, how, and by whom the selected media actor was founded?
- f) What are the officially stated (written) objectives of the media actor? (if any)
- g) Who are the primary target audience? Who and/or what is it trying to influence? (the general public, specific authorities at different levels, specific social/political groups, civil society organizations, etc)
- h) Who have the editorial responsibility for different sections?
- i) Does the media actor as a rule speak *against*, on behalf of, or attempt to voice the interests of a specific social/political group? (a class, an ethno-religious group, a nation, a class, gender, an ideological group, the European society, etc). Specify the groups that the media actor focuses most on.
- j) What are the media actor's stances concerning these groups (if any)
- k) Does the media actor have any transnational, global, or European focus on issues?
- l) What is the selected media actors' general editorial policy about European issues?
- m) Which issues has been the primary focus of the media actor during the last 3 years? If any focus on ethno-national diversity, END-institutions/policies, and/or public sphere issues, this dimension will be further detailed in terms of views on European enlargement, citizenship, and mobility/migration/asylum.

4.5 Main Dimensions of Interview Data

The questionnaire entails open-ended questions about the following four dimensions:

- 1- Elites' views and notions of diversity in general
- 2- Elites' views and notions of ethno-national diversity
- 3- Elites' perceptions of and preferences about the EU as a political system
- 4- Elites' policy and strategy preferences concerning citizenship, migration, and enlargement
- 5- Elites' perceptions and preferences concerning the articulation of European public spheres

We explored (1) how the above dimensions relate to each other in the views/perceptions of the respondents, (2) the different ways how these are interlinked, and (3) the alignments and misalignments between the above four insofar as these are perceived by the organizations' leaders. The details of our extensive questionnaire (Research Note No.30) can be downloaded from at <http://eurospheres.org/publications/research-notes/>.

5. Overview of the Data and the Eurosphere Knowledgebase

5.1 Institutional Data

	Type of institution				Total
	Political party	SMO/NGO	Think tank	Media	
Austria	3	4	2	6	15
Belgium	3	10	2	3	18
Bulgaria	4	3	3	6	16
Czech Republic	3	4	3	5	15
Denmark	4	4	3	6	17
Estonia	1	3	3	6	13
Finland	4	8	4	5	21
France	6	2	5	7	20
Germany	3	4	3	6	16
Hungary	3	4	4	6	17
Italy	3	7	6	6	22
Norway	4	8	5	5	22
The Netherlands	7	14	4	1	26
Spain	4	3	3	4	15
Turkey	3	4	3	6	16
United Kingdom	6	3	3	4	16
Trans-European	3	3	2	0	8
	61	85	56	82	292

5.2 Interview Data

	Type of respondent's organization					Total
	Political Party	NGO/SMO	Think tank	Newspaper	Broadcaster	
Austria	18	20	6	8	0	52
Belgium	10	3	5	6	0	24
Bulgaria	19	17	13	8	0	57
Czech Republic	15	8	5	4	6	38
Denmark	20	16	10	9	0	55
Estonia	14	13	5	7	0	39
Finland	22	17	8	5	0	52
France	15	11	4	6	6	42
Germany	18	14	8	8	0	48
Hungary	19	15	11	10	0	55
Italy	21	17	9	9	0	56
Norway	15	15	9	5	0	44
The Netherlands	25	13	4	0	0	42
Spain	27	10	8	6	0	51
Turkey	19	16	9	7	0	51
UK	16	14	8	2	0	40
Trans-European	6	9	4	0	0	19
Total	293	219	122	100	12	765

5.3 Media Content Data

	News item or source		Total
	News item	Source	
Austria	1233	1475	2708
Belgium	107	312	419
Bulgaria	1127	1536	2663
Czech Republic	402	562	964
Denmark	551	969	1520
Finland	452	339	791
Estonia	269	263	532
France	509	1240	1749
Germany	650	902	1552
Hungary	589	647	1236
Italy	416	763	1179
Norway	153	252	405
The Netherlands	342	417	759
Spain	610	890	1500
Turkey	562	804	1366
UK	486	682	1168
Total	8458	12053	20511

5.4 The EUROSHERE Knowledgebase

One of the objectives of EUROSHERE is to make the data and knowledge produced by our research available to the general public and the stakeholders as well as those researchers who wish to test or challenge our results. The primary task of the Eurosphere Knowledge Base has been to establish an *online platform* providing services for the Eurosphere research community. This entails providing access to all data generated throughout the Eurosphere project including the necessary and relevant documentation of data and procedures, and all research notes, working papers and workpackage reports.

The Knowledge Base is a comprehensive framework for *data curation with flexibility and visibility*. Curation is about maintaining and adding value to digital information for contemporary and future use. The goal of the Knowledge Base is not merely to store or archive the data collection, but make it subject to revision and enhancement. As such, the goal of the Eurosphere Knowledge Base has been to provide a starting point for a more comprehensive *service for the entire European public sphere research area*. This indicates the possibility of embedding relevant external collections in the Eurosphere Knowledge Base, either through links to relevant sections of larger data collections, or through direct access.

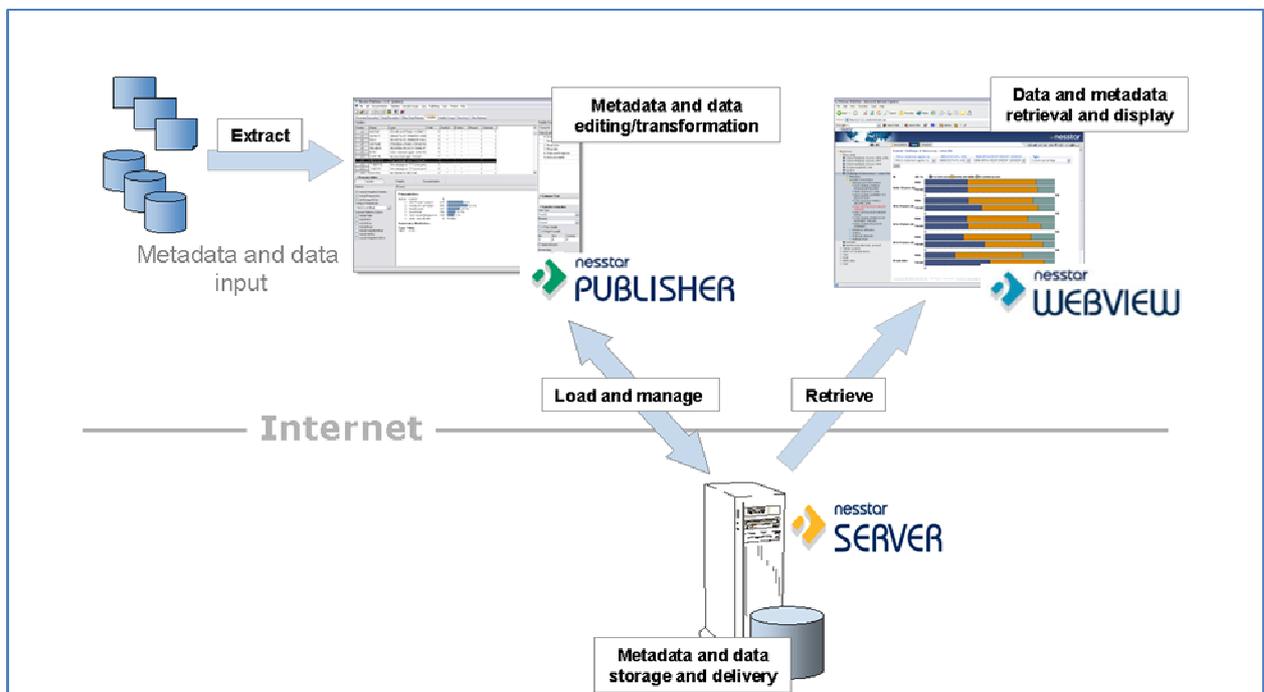
The Online Platform

- The Knowledge Base is built on the Nesstar system. Nesstar (Networked Social Science Tools and Resources) is a software system for data publishing and online

analysis. The software consists of tools which enables data providers to disseminate their data on the Web. Nesstar handles survey data and multidimensional tables as well as text resources.

- The functionality of Nesstar covers four basic facets of the research process: resource location (search and browse); metadata descriptions and data exploration; online analyses; and data download.
- The Nesstar suite comprises of a *Nesstar Server*, *Nesstar WebView* and *Nesstar Publisher*. The *Server* provides the repository of data and metadata and services for their searching, access and analysis. *WebView* provides the web-based user interface to the system, with a variety of visualization and extraction tools, including mapping and graphing. The web-client runs within the web-browser and requires no installation of software. The *Publisher* is the desktop based processing tool, able to accept raw input data from a wide range of formats, and providing facilities to add value to the data and metadata and loading on to the server.

The life-cycle of data within the Nesstar platform.



Resource Location

- The starting page of the Eurosphere Knowledge Base present the user with a free text search functionality and a browsing menu for selection of datasets and resources that may be explored online or downloaded directly.
- There are three main sections in the browse menu: a Eurosphere data catalogue, a Eurosphere library resource and an external projects section. The data catalogue consists of media content data, institutional data and interview data. The library section consists of a collection of country reports, research notes, working papers and work package reports. The external data section provides links to other relevant data.

Metadata

- Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use, or manage an information resource. Metadata is key to ensuring that resources will survive and continue to be accessible into the future.
- An important reason for creating descriptive metadata is to facilitate discovery of relevant information. In addition to resource discovery, metadata can help organize electronic resources, facilitate interoperability and legacy resource integration, provide digital identification, and support archiving and preservation. The Eurosphere Knowledgebase employs the DDI metadata standard.
- In the Knowledge Base metadata is available at the dataset level, as descriptive abstract of the content of the dataset. Below the study level, single variables are grouped together in a topical hierarchy, which makes the search and browse possibilities easier. Within this hierarchy it is possible to browse datasets down to the single variable with frequency counts or summary statistics.

Online analysis

- The Knowledge Base provides the possibility to cross-tabulate selected numeric variables. Once tabulations have been created, graphs can be produced from the data.
- In the 'Analysis' section in the Knowledge Base, two options are available – correlation (listwise and pairwise) and regression. Once a regression is created, it is possible to look at the data as a scatterplot or a regression chart.

Qualitative data

- The Eurosphere Knowledge Base links to an external portal for viewing textual data. Here, data are extracted from the database, using unique id-numbers to recognize specific records, and displays the output, based on an html-script, in full text.
- The opportunity to review coding and text input also proved to be valuable both for interviewers and interviewees in approving the accuracy of the final and official interview record. The tool could also generate text output from the other registration modules (media content data and institutional data); it proved to be most valuable for the institutional data as the registered records contained mainly qualitative data.
- More important, full versions of datasets, including all textual data, are downloadable in custom-made SPSS/excel-format. This allows for importing into CAQDAs (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis programs), like MAXQDA, ATLAS.ti and NVIVO for protocol analysis of e.g. quotations and summaries in interview data.

Data Curation with Flexibility and Visibility

- Data often have a longer lifespan than the research project that creates them. Researchers may continue to work on data after funding has ceased, follow-up projects may analyse or add to the data, and data may be re-used by other researchers.
- Well organised, well documented, preserved and shared data are invaluable to advance scientific inquiry and to increase opportunities for learning and innovation. The Eurosphere repository will continue to be curated by NSD, to guarantee long-term maintenance of both data and supporting services.

- The curation of data involves *preservation*, *dissemination* and *re-use* of data. *Preservation* is about durability and permanence and safe-keeping of research data in a secure environment. This involves (long-term preservation and back-up of data, migration of data to best format and creation of metadata and documentation. *Dissemination* is about distribution and giving access to data. This involves sharing of data, promoting data, controlling access by management and monitoring of usage of data, and establishing copyrights. *Re-use data* involves follow-up and new research; research reviews; scientific enquiry, scrutiny and debate and teaching and learning.
- By embracing flexibility and visibility the Knowledge Base can become a common online platform for current and future research within the entire European public sphere research area. The European Social Survey, European Value Surveys, Eurobarometers, and the International Social Survey Program are examples of survey programs containing data of relevance for the Eurosphere community.

The EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase is now open for public use.

6. Single Case Studies of Sixteen Countries

The EUROSPHERE Country Report Series represents the very first step of our comprehensive comparative research programme. The aim of country report series is to provide a summary of a huge data material collected by the project researchers. Along with the EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase that we created, these sixteen country reports constitute a basis and a data search guide for the subsequent comparative studies of sixteen countries, which are published in *EUROSPHERE Comparative Report Series*. Therefore, the primary readership target of these reports is the EUROSPHERE researchers who are to conduct the twelve inter-related comparative studies of different aspects of the European public spheres. This primary function of the report series necessitated prioritization of a descriptive approach at this stage of our research. Explanations of the findings and applications of theory are identified in our plans as the task of the work groups who will do the comparative analyses, as we believe cross-contextual comparisons and understanding of the particularities of specific contexts should go together in order to obtain a more enhanced picture of reality.

All the 16 partners have carried out single case studies that date back to May 2008. They performed media content analysis, institutional data collection and interviews, data documentation and summary. Although the individual reports form the basis for further analyses for the subsequent stages of the EUROSPHERE-project, they are also intended as a publication that can be read independently. We attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the meaning of diversity for the interviewees and their organizations?
- Do social and political actors (organizations) engage in sub-national, national, and/or trans-European collaboration and communication?
- Do some interviewees believe it is important to have a more or less fragmented / segmented European Polity and European Public Sphere and why?
- Do the interviewees' and their organizations' notions of public sphere, the European Polity, and Diversity differ from the general public opinion in their countries and why?
- Are these variables or opinions related?

7. Europe-Wide Comparative Studies of Public Spaces

This project component attempted to explain why the social/political actors'—i.e., individual citizens, political parties, non-state actors such as social movement organizations, public interest organizations, NGOs, think tanks, and print and broadcast media actors—are open or skeptical to diversity, the EP, and the EPS and why they involve more or less in trans-European collaboration / communication and in European-level public debates. In other words, the objective of this component is to elucidate why some actors contribute more or less to the formation of a EPS. We assessed the relevant features of social/political actors that affect citizens' involvement and the formation of a European public sphere.

We focus on various *think-tanks* working with policy and opinion formation as well as other think tanks that are involved in work with policy and opinion analysis and consultation to decision-makers at different levels. Political parties include all sorts of political organizations and political alliances that have contested for the government power in democratic elections in at least the two last election periods. Social movements and non-governmental organizations are political organizations with defined political objectives around clear issue orientations which do not run for government power, but attempt to influence the political decision making processes and their outcomes in other ways.

Different features of these collective actors are expected to have different impacts on citizens' involvement in political processes. In this respect, Eurosphere distinguishes between two sets of features: Social and political actors operate within, from, on behalf of, and across communicative public spaces. They constitute and are accommodated by the aforementioned types of communicative public spaces; and they are amongst the key determinants of the structuring quality of such public spaces, which in turn impact upon citizens' involvement and participation at different levels. In this respect, Eurosphere treats these collective entities both as (1) *political/social actors* that shape the communicative public spaces and as (2) *components of communicative public spaces* that are shaped by these spaces.

Regarding the former (1), the relevant feature is collective social and political actors' orientations to different communicative public spaces. With their positive, negative, or neutral orientations towards singular and multiple types of communicative public spaces (essentializing, nationalizing, transnationalizing, trans-Europeanizing)—combined with their potential structuring, guiding, and mobilizing capacity—*collective social/political actors influence citizens' ability to think and act as co-others*, and thus citizens' ways and substance of involvement. The structuring and guiding relationships between communicative public spaces and social/political actors gains thus relevance, though as an indirect (spurious) explanatory factor. Eurosphere, therefore, mapped the social/political actors' orientations to different types of communicative public spaces. This was done along four selected policy issues (see the next paragraph). This is tantamount to saying that Eurosphere identified the types of public spaces that each social/political actor attempts to promote at the cost of other types. While doing this, the conceptualization, data collection, and measurement methodology, which are based on the diversity perspective, took into account that these collective social and political actors may have mobile, shifting, and multidimensional orientations to communicative public spaces. Another important feature of social/political actors is the type of their collective vision of political society and public sphere. This is operationalized in Eurosphere with the following models: a single protected sphere, multiple segmented spheres, a single shared sphere, multi-level overlapping spheres, multi-level differential spheres, composite-diverse civic spheres.

Regarding the latter (2), physical presence of collective actors as organizations in these communicative public spaces constitutes the concrete manifestations of these spaces. In other words, with their presence, they make the communicative public spaces “real” and physically

and locally available to citizens. In this sense, their locales and organized activities become arenas, channels, and ways of citizens' participation/involvement. Therefore, EUROSHERE assessed the (1) channels, (2) forms, (3) issues/events, and (4) discourses of involvement that these collective actors make available for citizens.

Our typology of the channels of involvement, following Stein Rokkan's (1966) classification, entails (1) the *numeric channel* (party elections) and (2) the *corporate-plural channel* (interest/voluntary organizations/think-tanks).

Our typology of forms of involvement entails (1) leadership in political organizations, (2) membership in political organizations, (3) participation in organizations' political activities/meetings without membership, and (4) participation in organizations' leisure and entertainment activities.

The issues of involvement that EUROSHERE focus on include (1) the European Constitution, (2) (European) citizenship and identity, (3) mobility, migration, and asylum policies, and (4) European enlargement.

The discourses of involvement were categorized as different combinations of the discourses of (1) individualism, (2) communalism, (3) multiculturalism, (4) pluralism, and (5) the diversity perspective. These can be considered as "root discourses" because they represent "pure" ontologies. When crossed with different belonging preferences such as religious, ethnic, national, territorial, etc., different combinations of the above-discourses result in well-known discourses such as ethno-nationalist, liberal-nationalist, republicanist, communitarian, liberal, and libertarian, etc. discourses.

The first task is, therefore, to identify which types of diversity elements (i.e., social groups etc) and which visions of EP and EPS each social and political actor is open or skeptical towards. The second task is to depict the types and degree of each actor's engagement in trans-European collaboration and European level public debates. The following general questions, common to all actor types, should be answered:

- What sorts and degrees of openness/flexibility exist in organizations which can allow these actors to define themselves and act as parts of a European public sphere?
- What opportunities and facilities exist in organizations to enable communication and interaction between citizens and the institutions of the European Union?
- What additional resources, norms and institutional/legal frames are needed to enable more communication and interaction between these actors and the European Union institutions?

There are five components here: (1) Policy research institutes / think tanks, (2) Political parties, (3) Social movement organizations / non-governmental organizations, and (4) Broadcast and print media. The analyses focus on the features of openness and containment in the communicative public spaces in and beyond which these social and political actors operate. The (potential) alignments and misalignments between these spaces and the European public sphere, regarding the four policy issues that EUROSHERE studies, were examined. For each actor type, the work is organized as follows:

- Identify the attitudes of each actor to
 - Diversity (the types of diversity that an actor is open or skeptical towards)
 - The European Polity (the visions of a EP an actor is open or skeptical towards)
 - The European Public Sphere (the models of EPS an actor is open or skeptical towards)
- Identify the degree of each actor's involvement in trans-European communication and collaboration

- Derive hypotheses to explain the above two, based on the state of the art concerning the European integration or Europeanization of the respective actor type, e.g., think tanks, political parties, NGOs, media, etc.
- Conduct a qualitative-comparative analysis of the organizations in the respective actor type (based on the institutional and interview data in the common database)
- Conduct more in-depth comparative analyses of some selected groups of organizations in the respective actor type in selected countries to test more specific and context-dependent hypotheses

7.1 Impact of Individual Citizens on the Articulation of EPS

This component contributed to the present state of the art by assessing the explanatory powers and policy implications of these three models by comparing them for the first time with each other by using *unintended data* (reconceptualizations of the already existing rounds of ESS, EVS, and IPSS). It will give indications of which factors of belonging, participation, and mobility are effective in increasing the European citizens' involvement and participation in European level politics as well as in the European Public Sphere.

Three explanatory models that are entrenched in the liberal-pluralist, republican, and communitarian perspectives are found to be significantly correlated with citizens' attitudes to the development of an EU polity. These are, respectively, the co-otherness model (in short: mental mobility between different references of identification that provides individuals the ability to see oneself as an 'Other'), the participation model (form and degree of political participation), and the belonging model (the extent to which one belongs to the 'majority' or 'minority' groups).

- To construct and measure the attitude of co-otherness three separate attitudinal indices are constructed. These are: a so-called (1) self-centered orientation (expressing attitudes such as the importance of adventures, success, admiration, wealth, etc.), a (2) co-other orientation (expressing the importance of understanding different people, others' well-being, loyalty, the environment and equal opportunities, etc.), and a (3) community-centered orientation (obedience, security, traditions, strong government and respect etc.). Expressing the co-other orientation is positively correlated with positive attitudes towards the development of an EU-polity, and the community-centered orientation has a roughly equally strong negative correlation. The self-centered orientation has a small positive correlation.
- Actual political participation was measured, and divided into grassroots participation and organizational participation. Both measures are positively correlated with attitudes towards the development of an EU polity, the former marginally stronger.
- Belonging to the majority group has a negative impact on the attitudes towards the EU polity, meaning that belonging to an ethnic or national minority or another group that is discriminated against, is correlated with positive attitudes towards the EU Polity. At this level of analysis religious belonging is not found to play a role.

Overall, all three models contribute to our understanding of the varying attitudes towards the EU polity. Looking at them in combination in a simultaneous analysis reveals even more. Data suggest that the first model—co-otherness—is the strongest explanation.

The above research component demonstrated the variety of diversity and co-otherness in Europe and that there exist differing attitudes to diversity and co-otherness in Europe and that these affect the support for European integration. Another research component extended the previous one to analyze correlation between the same independent variables with a wider range of variables related to diversity, and differentiated between the 8 different countries. In

order to assess the sources of co-otherness, the effects of geographical mobility, belonging and participation on co-otherness is explored. In order to assess other consequences of co-otherness, this study looks at attitudes towards homosexuals, immigration (of several types), trust in Parliament, the European Parliament, and political parties, social-political activeness, and passive political interest. In addition,

- Being born outside the country where the interview takes place, as well as religious belonging has positive effects on co-other orientation
- Being politically active in multiple ways has a positive effect on co-otherness
- Co-other orientation has the strongest positive effect on any form of political participation measured compared to traditionalism/community-centered orientation and orientation towards success/self-centered orientation.
- Traditionalism has a lower positive correlation with passive political interest, while orientation towards success has a negative impact.
- When it comes to socio-political activeness, orientation towards success has no relation and traditionalism has a negative impact.
- Co-otherness has a positive correlation with attitudes towards gays and lesbians, towards immigration (regardless of ethnicity and poverty), trust in Parliament, the European Parliament and political parties.

Further analyses encompass data from a round of EB 2010 and are presented in two evidence perspectives - with concern to influence of citizens' participation in integration processes on citizens' attitudes toward EU politics, and also with concern to influence of factors such as national/European identity on the image that the EU conjures up for citizens.

- When certain possibilities for involvement in EU processes exist, e.g., the European Citizens' Initiative, people manifest willingness to make use of it and this is an indication of EPS formation and also of development of communication channels among different EU levels.
- Still, contemporary Europeans are characterized by complex and diverse identities and various combinations by national and European identity prove to affect citizens' positive attitudes towards politics, although it is not a binding condition for enhancement of positive attitudes towards EU policies.

The third component here identifies patterns behind rejection or acceptance as neighbours of various minority groups, specifically Roma, gays and immigrants in Europe, with a special focus of the case of the Czech Republic. When looking at data from all of Europe, it is clear that behavioural deviance from social norms is more widely rejected than ethnic diversity. Roma are by far the most widely rejected ethnic group, apparently, because of being ascribed behavioural rather than ethnic differences. In many of the cases the most widely rejected groups are those that are associated with both (behavioural) deviance and (ethnic) identity. Also these tendencies are region specific (i.e. Roma factors highly on behavioural deviance in some countries but not in others).

The common thread in these three research-sub-components highlights how broad social-psychological features (such as the ability to see others as co-others) influence identity, belonging and political attitudes. These factors must be both understood and taken into account in order to resolve broad political challenges such as how to sustain democracy in an increasingly transnational Europe. If such attitudes are created and shaped in the public sphere the data demonstrates that, the public spheres are of critical importance for the future of Europe. Thus, even though the other EUROSPHERE Reports are for the most part based on interviews with elites rather than regular citizens, their findings are nonetheless important European citizens.

7.2 Impact of collective social and political actors on the European Public Sphere

In Eurosphere, we studied think tanks, civil society organizations and media; and political parties, respectively. On the one hand, we mapped out the organizational features of these actors, with their institutional standpoint about the issues of diversity, the future of European Polity and communicating with and within the EU. On the other, we inquired into the attitudes and perceptions of the elites, who participate in these organizations, in terms of the aforementioned issues. The below presentation divides our relevant findings with respect to the types of actors which we focused on in Eurosphere – namely, think tanks, political parties, civil society organizations, and broadcast and print media.

The Role of Think Tanks in the Articulation of European Public Sphere

- Even though think tanks operate in an international environment, often focusing on inter-state issues, diversity is not a prominent topic for many of the think tanks.
- Most think tank respondents see diversity as an inescapable fact of life; a few of them think of it as a disadvantage; some as advantage, albeit for functional reasons.
- Ethno-national diversity is widely perceived as a challenge, primarily as an obstacle for social cohesion.
- A vast majority of think tank respondents think that either a European public sphere does not exist, or that it has a highly elitist nature.
- Not surprisingly, the think tank respondents identify themselves as elites, either national public elites or trans-national policy experts. They commonly consider gender, socio-economic and educational characteristics as the main criteria that disconnect them from the public.
- Think tanks conceive of age, technology and linguistic skills as factors that prevent the public from participating or creating a European communication space accessible for the general population.
- The respondents are critical to top-down EU initiatives to create a European public sphere.
- Think tank respondents think that internet and other technological advances may provide avenues for more promising ways of interactions between the European institutions and European citizenry.
- The own potential contribution of the think tanks in providing a link between the citizenry and the EU institutions is limited due their elitist nature and epistemic dependency on expertise.
- Among the think tank respondents, there is no systematic correlation between a certain understanding of diversity and the attitudes towards European integration and the European Public Sphere.
- Think tank researchers, by and large, have coherent and structured systems of beliefs and attitudes: committed to a liberal understanding on most issues of ethno-national and immigration-related diversity by advocating individual rights vis-à-vis group rights; concerned about the elitist nature of the EU political system, albeit being a constituent of it; favourable to the development of an European society.

The Role of Political Parties in the Articulation of European Public Sphere

We studied the political parties in Europe in terms of the following categorizations: ideological party families (namely the right, left, conservative, social democrat, regional); the East-West divide; and government versus opposition split. Our findings in bullet points are:

- The future direction of the EU, preferred by the political parties, was to some extent explained by ideological party belonging. Right-wing and Western European parties tended to be skeptical to federalization, decentralization and for the EU to guarantee minority groups' rights. Social democratic parties and regional parties proved to be more in favour.
- Opposition parties tended to be relatively more skeptical to EU granted rights, and to diversity across and within countries mostly due to their national identity concerns.
- Right-wing and, to a lesser extent, conservative parties were more skeptical towards supranational EU citizenship and dual citizenship.
- Right-wing parties were more positive to restrictions on free movement, welcoming fewer groups of immigrants, and placing heavier restrictions on asylum. Conservative parties were foremost in criticizing political rights for non-citizens and preferential policies on migration.
- Right-wing parties and Western parties wanted the strictest limits on EU enlargement. The right-wing parties were also least likely to believe that enlargement benefits diversity or that enlargement to be good for minority groups. Left-wing parties held the opposite views.
- Right-wing parties, by and large, do not think that sub-spaces for European communication as such exist. They did not either have interest in addressing European actors or civil society, or welcomed more trans-European collaboration. Compared to the right-wing parties, left-wing parties mostly held the opposite views.
- There was a pattern of strong disagreement among the extreme left and right across Europe.
- Opposition parties tended to be slightly more interested in addressing civil society, and thought that the European Public Sphere is exclusive.
- Western parties showed a stronger interest in addressing both European institutions and civil society, compared to their counterparts.
- Respondents with an inclusive definition of diversity tended to see the EU as a factor strengthening diversity within and across countries. A positive view of diversity was also correlated with more positive attitudes towards EU federalism.
- Respondents that were in favour of adaptation to diversity through separate institutions tended to be also in favour of giving the EU a wide scope to grant groups rights.
- Respondents that saw diversity as a normative goal were in favour of the EU deciding on minorities rights.
- Support for dual citizenship correlated with an inclusive definition of diversity, a positive view of diversity, and favourable attitudes toward adaptation to diversity through separate institutions – a factor that also correlated with support for an inclusive citizenship policy- and seeing diversity as a normative goal.
- Support for supranational EU citizenship correlated with demanding high levels of adaptation.
- Diversity attitudes among the political parties, though, help in predicting less of the variation on their views about free movement. Respondents seeing many disadvantages from diversity favoured a restricted asylum policy; while inclusive definitions of diversity corresponded to the support for a wider scope of rights for non-citizens.
- Views on diversity affected the respondent's views on EU enlargement, specifically those on enlargement criteria. Yet again, the most important diversity factor was the inclusiveness of the definition of diversity, which correlated with less strict enlargement criteria.

- We also observed correlations between the respondents' perspectives on the European public sphere and their views on diversity. Respondents expressing an inclusive definition of diversity and few disadvantages of diversity were more likely to consider European communicative spaces to be extensive and less exclusive. Respondents that saw diversity as a normative goal were more likely to be more open for trans-European collaboration and communication on behalf of their party.
- The interest in addressing European institutions and support for a supranational EU citizenship, proved to intersect with the interest in addressing European institutions and an exclusive definition of diversity. Furthermore, support for supranational citizenship and dual citizenship proved to be more open for trans-European collaboration and communication.
- We also found the respondents' views on free movement might explain their willingness to take part in European public sphere. Respondents having liberal views on free movement and support for political rights for non-citizens were willing to participate in trans-European collaboration, and addressing European institutions and civil society.
- The respondents seeing benefits from EU enlargement seemed to see low levels of exclusion from the European public sphere, and more interest in addressing European institutions.

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Articulation of European public sphere

In this component of the Eurosphere research, we have examined the civil society actors having anti-diversity and anti-racist orientations. Our aim was to study the reflections of civil society actors to the recent fact of rising anti-immigrant and populist sentiments in Europe. In this respect, we bring the concept of 'uncivil society' into the theories of (European) public spheres. Associations are commonly considered as crucial components of well-ordered democracies. According to this understanding of civil society, existence of civic associations in a society is considered as an indicator of vibrant democracy. Thus, according to this view, civil society organizations are *sine qua non* of democratic public spheres. Nonetheless, 'uncivil society' offers an alternative type of political participation, particularly in a context when the political institutions loose legitimacy. We define the characteristics of 'uncivil society' as fostering different modes of xenophobia, of hatred and of exclusion, with staying at the borders of legality and illegality, as well, with possible rejection of democratic norms and of committing to violent acts.

- One might expect that anti-diversity groups would favour a homogenous society, which would demand mono-lingualism, mono-ethnic composition and a uniform socio-cultural morality. Our findings suggest that this might not be the case. Far-right groups could celebrate aspects of pluralism, though deviating from the democratic principles
- Our research disclosed differences about these anti-immigration sentiments within the selected groups. While some of the respondents from the anti-diversity groups favour strictly restricting further immigration, others showed tendency of allowing different groups of immigrants, including primarily the highly educated people and labour migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, co-ethnics, culturally/religiously similar immigrants and also Muslim migrants.
- Anti-diversity groups, examined in our research, commonly – with an exception of the populist oriented Danish Association – have a strong fear towards a certain group (or groups), namely anti-Roma, anti-Semitism, homophobia and Islamophobia.
- The respondents of the anti-diversity organizations seemed to agree that immigrants should learn the language of the respective country, while adapting to the political

system, religion and other aspects of cultural life. Anti-racists groups, on the other hand, proved to share one aspect in this regard, learning the language of host country, though some also added secularization of immigrants in this list. To some of the anti-racists, a diverse society could lead to parallel societies: ethnic groups can impose their beliefs, thus restricting individual autonomy while fostering homophobia due to their patriarchal culture.

- Anti-diversity groups mostly suggested expulsion of the immigrants if they reject adapting to the host society. Concerning this, some suggested non-European migrants – mostly referring to Muslims- would not be able to adapt due to their different cultural background. Relatively moderate view, on the other hand, allowed the existence of these groups on the criteria of not disturbing the native society and not insisting on bringing their own values and cultural practices into public spaces.
- One of the common features of the anti-diversity groups is that they have populist tendencies. They appeal to the people; thus, they do not address the political institutions; besides, they perceived they get public support for their claims. Related to this, anti-diversity groups commonly claimed that their views correspond to the public opinion, and they get support from the public when they declare their thoughts.
- The anti-racists considered their voice as marginal. As well, anti-racists also saw anti diversity groups as the dominant voice in the society. Anti-diversity groups, further, complained about the fact that media show them as extremists; the antiracists groups did not complain about the way they are portrayed at media.
- The report shows that across the civil society in Europe there are several examples of organisations whose *raison d'être*, to varying degrees, is to portray ethno-national diversity and immigration as a threat. Among these a common theme is that the current understandings of diversity is disadvantageous because it undermines social cohesion and solidarity, gender rights and the respective national identity and culture. Some of these organizations see homogenous societies as a goal; others see their (possibly diverse) cultural heritage incommensurable to particular out-groups.
- Contrary to anti-diversity groups, anti-racist groups tend to include a wide range of groups in their understanding of diversity, such as gender, immigrant, sexuality, religious identities etc.
- There is not a unanimous understanding of the nature of the EU within the different anti-diversity groups. Some see the EU and European citizenship as a homogenizing threat to 'their' ethno-national culture and national sovereignty; others see the threat mainly as coming from outside the EU.
- The anti-racist groups are also divided in their perspective on the EU. They do, however, criticize the EU from the opposite direction; for giving insufficient recognition of minorities. Some of them see the EU as a force guaranteeing at least a minimum of human rights and minority rights when these come under pressure within individual member states. Others criticize the EU for weakening national autonomy and the distance between the EU and local, as well as for being a 'capitalist' system undermining social progress and social rights.
- The anti-diversity group respondents tend to be more interested in addressing the public than political institutions, suggesting low trust in the current political system.
- Among the anti-racist groups a common view is that the European public sphere is elitist, though some claim that social movements also constitute a common European communication space. However, when it comes to the impact of European integration on the rights of minorities, they mostly underlined the significance of the EU power. This

statement was mostly shared by other groups. Given this, they find the EU institutions relevant for their work.

- Some of the anti-racist group respondents claimed that the Commission is mistaken in believing that apathy and opposition against can be resolved with more information: the problem is rather too much information from too narrow sources.
- We observed that most of the organizations collaborate with 'like-minded' organizations: for instance, anti-racist organizations which concentrate directly on the improvement of the socio-political status of the immigrants in the society collaborate with human rights organizations, relief organizations, organizations that help to asylum seekers.

The Role of Media Actors in the Articulation of the European Public Sphere

The media content data was collected during a nine-month long period in 2008. We divided the research about the print and broadcast media in two components. Concerning the first one, we conducted a quantitative-comparative analysis of media content and framing by focusing on the themes of Reform Treaty (then-Lisbon Treaty) and the concerns about the construction of Europe. Concerning the second component, we examined the views of journalists from ten newspapers in the UK, France, Germany, Turkey and Hungary on the issues of diversity, migration, European integration and enlargement, and European Public Sphere.

Media Framings of Reform Treaty and Constructing Europe

- Although both Norway and Turkey were included as non-members, Norwegian media resembles the old members in giving much attention to the negotiations over the Lisbon Treaty reform while Turkish media was preoccupied with enlargement related issues.
- The media in the old EU members were more focused on the EU citizens' rights and the process of EU democratization as path for further construction of Europe in comparison to the media in the new EU member countries and in Turkey as well.
- Both old and new EU member countries' media focused on subthemes related to the latest EU legislation issues although with different concerns. While the media actors in the old members were more interested in issues of justice and home affairs, Euro currency, monetary union, EU citizenship and EU immigration policy, the media actors in the new members focused on the themes of waste management, healthcare, and power-saving legislation.
- The relatively weak coverage of the issues about the construction of Europe and Reform Treaty can be seen as one of the explanations about the public's limited knowledge and interest about these themes. Though this also might explain why the public discussion on these issues remained limited and led to less media coverage. A vicious circle of causality might explain the relationship between the public interest on European issues and media coverage about these issues.
- By and large, a general positive attitude towards the construction of Europe, diversity and EU in general was observed as a common characteristic of the European media.
- Media in Europe reflected on the issues of construction of Europe and Reform Treaty mainly in printed press than broadcast media.

Selected Eurosphere Media Representative Interviews

- There are differences between the thoughts of the journalists: in the UK a liberal perspective, with an optimistic view on diversity and migration, dominates the views of the journalists. Yet, they are sceptical with the extension of the EU's competencies in these respective areas.

- Journalists from France and Germany tend to be more cautious about the possible or tangible effects of international migration or ethno-national diversity. Furthermore, they have more restrained views about the issues of citizenship and the limits of European integration. With respect to these issues, they attribute greater impact and responsibility to the EU than their British counterparts.
- The Hungarian responses are divided politically between the two newspapers and shaped by low levels of immigration, but acknowledges the importance of cultural differences.
- The journalists from Turkey show less clear patterns of perception about the notion of diversity, European integration and European public sphere. Though they proved to share several common thoughts. Having perceived that the EU has a biased attitude against Turkey due to its Muslim population, journalists from Turkey think that the EU favours the Christian countries in terms of European enlargement. They also favour the dominance of the EU rules over the member-state authority with regards to the issues of national and the EU citizenship. They also believe that the impacts of the European norms as well as Turkey's – possible- EU membership are the assurances for the consolidation of Turkish democracy.
- The views of the media representatives from Hungary by and large reflect the domestic political divisions, or the discussions occupying domestic public sphere.
- Nevertheless, as opposed to the other three countries' representatives, namely France, Germany and Britain, who focus largely on immigrant minorities, in case of the Hungarian journalists co-ethnics living abroad seem to determine clearly the respondents' perspective on questions with regards to diversity and citizenship. This is also mainly the most important factor in determining how they think about the EU and European communication structures.
- The respondents differ in how strongly they believe they have a duty to contribute to a European Public Sphere by writing about European issues. It also varies who they consider to be their target audience.

7.3 The Impact of Communicative Public Spaces on the European Public Sphere

The objective of this research component is to analyze the impact of different European publics and communicative spaces on an inclusive European public sphere. We focused on the following types of publics and communicative spaces: (1) Nation-state spaces, (2) ethnic/national spaces, (3) trans-national spaces, and (4) trans-European spaces.

A key question concerning social and political actors' role in the articulation of EPS is (1) whether the interactions between the European Union and social and political actors generate trans-Europeanized movements that go beyond the boundaries of member states and ethnic/religious boundaries, (2) whether it leads to more fragmentation and segmentation along other lines by encouraging SMOs/NGOs to operate on the basis of smaller units, e.g., regional, ethnic and religious groups—also leading to a more fragmented and segmented public sphere in Europe, or (3) if both goes hand in hand, i.e. the emergence of EPS is accompanied by a complementary process of the growth of more fragmented and segmented public spheres. This question is answered by comparing the discourses and networking patterns of different social and political actors to diversity, the EU, and the EPS that operate in specific types of communicative public spaces.

The above typology (essentializing, nationalizing, transnationalizing, and trans-Europeanizing spaces) is used as a heuristic tool to classify the empirical forms of communicative public spaces. This typology refers to ideal-type public spaces whose pure empirical forms are difficult to find. However, the empirical communicative public spaces can

be conceptualized in terms of how close or distant their features are to these idea-typical models. On the other hand, this “diversity” approach to classification allow us to see different combinations of various types of communicative public spaces. In terms of measurement, each empirical communicative public space included in the study was ranked with respect to each ideal-type, allowing also an assessment of singular, mixed, combined, and hybrid forms of communicative public spaces. The classification is based on qualitative data collected in these spaces—including both individual level data and organizational data.

These groups of social/political actors are identified on the basis of the data entered into the common database. In each type of communicative public space, we find different types of social and political actors that collaborate with each other in common discursive frames on diversity, EU, and EPS, i.e. the dominant discourses of which social/political actors are parts of. These analyses resulted in knowledge of the elements/features of openness/closure in these communicative public spaces. The following features of communicative public spaces have been mapped in our data collection:

- (1) their dominant discourses about public sphere, polity, diversity, including citizenship, enlargement, mobility, citizens’ involvement, and identity and belonging
- (2) the channels, issues, and types of citizen involvement they facilitate with their infrastructures and organizational facilities
- (3) the types of social/political actors they accommodate
- (4) the types of interaction they facilitate between different types of social/political actors as well as between their attendants
- (5) the degree of their openness/closure towards outsiders and the social/political actors known to belong to other types of communicative public spaces

Based on the collected data, the features of sub-European public spaces were mapped; the key factors that lead to an increased citizen involvement in European policy issues were uncovered; the empirical forms of public space that are open to and inclusive of the idea of a European public sphere were identified. In this analysis the *units of observation* were social/political actors, and the *units of analysis* were communicative public spaces. This means that networks of social/political actors are treated as constitutive components/(sub-spaces) of communicative public spaces. Here, the key data analysis activity focus on the interrelationships and patterns/substance of interactions between the different types of social/political actors claiming to belong to or speaking on behalf of the same communicative public space (e.g., the substance/patterns of interaction between a political party, a social movement, a media actor, and a think tank, etc). The comparative analyses in each of the following task groups comply with the following structure:

- Identify by classification the groups / networks of social and political actors with similar attitudes to:
 - Diversity (types of diversity)
 - The European Polity (visions of a EP)
 - The European Public Sphere (visions of EPS)
- Describe the common discursive frames and the networks that they create (e.g. ethnic, national, transnational, European, religious)
- Derive hypotheses to explain the above two, based on the state of the art concerning European integration and Europeanization
- Conduct a qualitative-comparative analysis of each communicative public space type (based on institutional and interview data entered into the common database)
- Conduct more in-depth comparative analyses of some selected features to test more specific and context-dependent hypotheses

Nation State Public Spaces

National communicative spaces largely consist of organizations belonging to the national “mainstream” of their respective countries, i.e., above all political parties considered most important in the politics of each country but also social movements addressing primarily the domestic publics and focusing primarily domestic issues; and think-tanks that have a record of cooperative relations with the government. In other words, this component can be seen as research on organizations representing the state-bearing majorities in Europe.

- In general, our analysis of these organizations showed more similarities across mainstream organizations than national differences. Most interviewees understood ethnic/national diversity as the most important form of diversity, and, mostly, this diversity was seen as an advantage, especially as it assumedly leads to a more dynamic society. With regard to integration, knowledge of the national language was seen as the key requirement.
- Specific policy programs and quotas for ethnic/national minorities were rejected by a vast majority of interviewees. When it comes to the right of minorities to found their own organizations, we can also discern a trans-national attitude of national mainstream organizations: Voluntary cultural associations are mostly approved of while ethnic parties are rejected whenever they are mentioned.
- With regard to the division of competences in the EU multi-level-system, we also find a similar position, namely a general preference for federalization instead of centralization.
- However, we also found some interesting differences between nation states or groups of nation states. While – as mentioned before – ethnic/national diversity was defined as most important in all nation states, gender issues were mentioned mainly by respondents in the Nordic countries, and in Turkey and religious groups played a role for respondents from Turkey, Bulgaria and Denmark. A need to divide between immigrant and traditional, or “allochtonous” and “autochtonous” minorities was mentioned in Austria, Finland, Germany, Hungary and Norway but not in the other countries.
- In some interviews, government structures for the representation of ethno-national minorities were discussed, namely representative councils, and minority quotas in national parliaments. While respondents in other countries basically rejected such institutions, a positive attitude was displayed by organizations in three countries – Finland, Hungary and Norway. In all of them, the respondents referred to already existing structures.
- Finally, the specific approach of Hungary and Bulgaria to immigration and citizenship should be mentioned. In both cases, co-ethnicity is seen as an important reason to let immigrants into the country and/ or as a condition for citizenship. The reason for this exceptional position can be seen in the significant number of co-ethnics that both of the countries have outside their borders.

Ethnic/National Public Spaces

Here, the comparative analysis focused on organizations affiliated with three different categories of ethnic groups: (1) national minorities, (2) ethnic minorities and (3) ethnic majorities. Thereby, national minority refers to a group that obtained its minority position through the process of (nation)state formation; ethnic minority refers to a group of people that obtained its minority position through immigration and majorities are those groups that were actively involved in the process of state formation. With regard to this latter group, we analyzed organizations ethnicizing majorities, i.e., nationalist organizations. For each of these groups, we looked at two types of organizations: (1) regional and non-regional national

minorities (e.g. Sami and Jews), (2) immigrant groups and pro-immigrant, pro-diversity and anti-racist organizations which identify with immigrants and ethnic minorities in general, (3) state-nationalist groups identifying with an existing state and (4) peoples nationalist group identifying with a people/territory that coincides neither with a nation-state nor a national minority.

- Of all analyzed groups, *regional national minorities* show the most inclusive notions of diversity, in which multiple and embedded identities are possible. “European belonging” was most frequently mentioned as a dimension of diversity within this group. Specific group rights for autochthonous minorities are supported by a majority a respondents, many of which would apply these rights also to immigrant minorities. A majority supports the idea to grant territorially concentrated minorities the right to have their own parliaments, and, in general, territorial belonging plays an important role for this group. With regard to the EU, regional national minorities have the most federalist outlook of all analyzed groups. In their connections with the public sphere, however, they are predominantly preoccupied by, and get attention from, actors and media of the regional level.
- Due to the sample of our analysis, the analysis of *non-regional national minorities* was confined to Jews and Roma. These two groups have a rather limited notion of diversity, mostly focusing on ethnic/national diversity, see diversity mainly as advantageous and support cultural and political adaptations of the state according to the needs of minorities as well as group rights. On the other hand, they demand relatively much adaptation of immigrants in the economic realm, which concerns national affairs like the labor market and the welfare state and seem rather nationally oriented in this regard. Interestingly, however, many of our interviewees of these groups opted for giving the EU the power to grant irrevocable group-rights. And they also showed rather high expectations for a well-organized EPS to positively impact on the functioning of the European Polity and to empower (ethno-national) groups.
- *Immigrant groups and pro-immigrant organizations* have rather positive views on the advantages of diversity and a lenient vision on the admittance of immigrants and the mutual adaptation of immigrants and host-society. Expectedly, these groups refrain from nationalist preferences and have a rather centralist vision for the EU. Still, they do not want to give the EU the right to grant irrevocable group rights. Immigrant groups have high expectations for the empowerment of minority groups by the further development of a European Public Sphere while the expectations of pro-immigrant organizations are less ambitious in this regard. In their own work, these organizations are not directed towards European networks and media to a higher degree than it is the case for the overall average of our interviewees.
- As expected, *state nationalist groups* have rather restricted notions of diversity and see ethno-national diversity as disadvantageous, mainly because (increasing) ethno-national diversity undermines national identity, political unity, solidarity and social cohesion. In the same vein, they want to restrict immigration, often preferring ethnically or culturally similar immigrants. Also, they demand a high degree of adaptation from immigrants and are not much inclined to adapt society to the wants and needs of ethnic/national minorities. Unsurprisingly, state nationalists have a nationalist vision of the European Polity and refrain from centralist or federalist preferences. They are largely focused on national media, also in their actual networking activities.
- *People’s Nationalist Groups* share with state nationalists the restricted understanding of diversity, a negative notion of ethnic/ national diversity and restrictive views on immigration as well as high demands on the adaptation of immigrants. They deem

territorial belonging very important and mix nationalist and federalist preferences. They are interested in addressing European actors and institutions, while not particularly attracted to the idea of (participating in) a developing European Public Sphere.

Transnational Public Spaces

This research component provides an assessment of the transnational spaces that exist in Europe. In the context of Eurosphere, the most appropriate conceptualization of the *transnational* captures not only relations and interactions between non-state entities, but also connections which may involve governmental actors. In this sense, we leaned on an earlier approach that defines transnational interactions as those that take place on a recurrent basis across national borders and that require a regular and significant commitment of time by participants. Accordingly, our approach conceives of transnational interactions as sustained transborder exchanges amongst various types of actors. Although transnational activities may involve governmental entities, they can be deemed as transnational only when they include the participation of actors which are not representatives of states. Such actors can be individuals or collectives of them, for example in forms of social movement organizations. As this work is part of a wider series of reports, one of which also involves the analysis of Europeanizing spaces (see below), it excludes from the analysis all articulations of interactions that are explicitly connected to the political institutions of the European Union (EU). Equally, this research component does not take into account articulations of intergovernmental relations, interactions in the supranational institutional setting of the EU, or multinational activities.

- Particular transnational spaces can be found in countries that have co-ethnics residing outside the country's borders, such as Hungary and Bulgaria. These two countries place different emphasis on two separate approaches: In the case of Hungary it has been attempted to maintain the Hungarian-ness of those regions where Hungarian minorities reside, while in the case of Bulgaria state policies concentrate on the repatriation of émigré Bulgarians and on the preservation of their ethno-cultural particularity, both of which are examples of transnational spaces in Europe.
- When looking at migration as a transnational phenomenon it is important to consider this as creating not only transnational links between two societies (sending and receiving) but also cross-level links between a (sending and receiving) state and a society (sending and receiving) and transgovernmental links between two states.
- Political parties are engaged in transnational activities related to political orientation across the political spectrum while transnational activities of NGOs are mostly limited to the far-right part of the political landscape. Beyond ideology and belonging as bases for transnational collaboration, a third category is functional networking. However, transnational activity can take on a wide variety of forms (from sharing of content to common political and research agendas), often dependent on the type of actors involved.
- The most common observation about the European Public Sphere, including its transnational aspects and especially transgovernmental links, is the almost universal agreement that, to the extent that a common sphere exists, it is highly elitist. Some are even warning that the elitist nature of European politics and supranational politics in general may prove to be contagious, and also push existing (national) public spheres towards increased elitism and horizontal divisions. The most obvious limiting factor that limits the emergence of a mass-based participatory infrastructure is linguistic thresholds.

Trans-European Public Spaces

In this research component, it is assumed that borders exist between and within Europe, and that some of these borders are the result of conscious decisions; they have architects, and all of them have gatekeepers, but also trespassers and forces that wishes to transcend or eradicate some of the borders. The report attempts to discover patterns and systems that will allow us to make more sense of the multitude of spaces in which this struggle takes place. It does so by analyzing current European Public Spaces and the structure of spaces that facilitate further growth of a European Public Sphere, or have this as a goal.

The report differentiates between organizations that participate in Trans-European Networks, and those that don't, and those that constitute Europeanizing Spaces, and those that do not constitute Europeanizing spaces whether or not they have Trans-European ties. While most of the existing research considers only media as public spaces, the report also takes into account organizations as discursive spaces. Europeanizing spaces are characterized as having inclusive attitudes towards diversity; inclusive attitudes to EU institutions, and defining European intergovernmental and supranational institutions as relevant receivers of their political message.

- Civil society organizations and think tanks that are involved in vertical trans-European structures usually diverge from their original functions when attempting to adapt to the imperatives of the European Union system:
 - The European think tank networks are using their resources increasingly more to function as dissemination/deliberation platforms that bring the EU institutions, civil society, and researchers together in order to discuss important matters, rather than acting as scientific research agencies that produce knowledge.
 - A similar development is discernible also concerning the trans-European networks of non-governmental and social movement organizations: they are using their limited resources increasingly more to function as agents / platforms of European integration, which is limiting their possibility to voice the interests of the European societies and groups.
- A strong preference for horizontal trans-European interactions is prevalent among collective actors, especially among national level respondents. Some respondents claim to already participate in such horizontal networks of organizations. Some actors are doubtful of the democratic qualities of the EU and are therefore explicitly reluctant to contribute to its legitimacy by being part of the (vertical, legitimization) mechanisms devised by the EU. Other respondents are skeptical to EU initiated publics because they are concerned with the survival of the nation state.
- Trans-European elites perceive their role as brokers between EU institutions and national level organizations that they strive to integrate under their umbrella, even if they don't claim to represent anybody. To balance between acquiring the ear of EU institutions through formal consultation status and being seen as credibly independent actors by national organizations is not always easy.
- Trans-European networks are much more interested than national level organizations in addressing intergovernmental and supranational institutions, especially the European Commission.
- EU-terminology is given as an obstacle for communication between trans-European elites and national level elites.
- Fewer national level organizations than trans-European umbrella networks get involved in collaboration that requires articulation of common objectives.

The results show that there currently exist a vertical discursive division of the European Public Sphere between national and European level elites of organizations on the issues of diversity, the EU polity, and the European public sphere. Furthermore there is reason to believe that this division of spaces will be further deepened and entrenched, since the division is also reflected in network patterns as well as in who the different elites and organizations see as legitimate and/or preferred addressees.

Gender and Intersectionality in the European Public Sphere

The objective of the component of our research was to analyze the role of gender groups and the role of gender-related concerns in the articulation of the European Public Sphere. Gender is approached as both a horizontal issue, concerning all political group actors researched in the EUROPSHERE project, and as a specific policy issue.

The dominant theoretical approaches have not overcome the problematic dualism between models addressing ethno-national diversity and models addressing gender inequality. A further division of theories exist between national and post-national models; national models are concerned with the challenge from ethno-national diversity and transnational models deal with the challenges from globalization and post-nationalism. The former does not deal adequately with trans-national and multi-level governance, and the latter does not adequately address issues of diversity/difference and intersecting inequalities within the nation state. These theoretical dualisms are reflected in unresolved political debates over (state's) affirmative actions, laws for specific groups in particular situations, adaptation of institutions to avoid situations of diversity-related exclusion, demands placed on immigrants to assimilate, etc.

Three general questions have been addressed: 1) Access/power/political agency refers to women and men as political actors and to the role of women's organizations within the national and European Public Spheres (EPS), 2) Gendering as a framing process refers to framing of gender as an issue and the relative importance of gender issues (How are things gendered? Is public sector/politics masculinized? And are family relations feminized?), 3) Intersectionality refers to the intersections between gender and ethno-national diversity, culture and religion as articulated by political actors in different national contexts.

- Gendered discourses about national and European belonging do in some cases serve to demarcate outsiders within and outside the nation and/or the EU. In this regard context matters: national and organizational contexts seem to explain more than the respondent's gender. Specifically, the respondents from the seven selected women's organizations, being mostly women, often hold views that differ from the remainder of the respondents, often serving to highlight or contradict gendered patterns in replies. Both respondents from anti-racist organizations and respondents from women's organizations demonstrate a distinct endorsement of EU-level regulation of gender and minority equality issues, yet coupled with some skepticism about the positive effects of such regulation. Respondents from women's organization couple their endorsement of EU-level regulation within these areas with a less inclusive conception of diversity and of which immigrant groups should be let into the EU compared both to women in general within the sample and compared to the respondents from anti-racist organizations. The women's organizations within the sample display great heterogeneity and hence impact diversely on gendered patterns in replies to several items in the questionnaire. Yet the sensitivity towards issues of ethnicity/race appears to be increasing among women's organizations.
- Female respondents in no way voice a coherent view on gender issues in the EU. Nonetheless, the variance of opinion in some areas such as the future development of the

EU polity and which groups' rights should be granted/protected by the EU could not be understood without applying gender aspects in the analyses. Furthermore, media analysis showed that female sources counted gender issues as a first most important issue more frequently. However, different gender issues are emphasized in different countries, and classification as to what counts as a gender issue can be complex: it is, for example, not obvious whether debates about headscarves are a question about gender or national identity construction.

- The datasets document that transnational civil society actors increasingly incorporate intersectional concerns, and that irrespective of attitudes towards the Union as such, its gender equality legislation is mostly considered legitimate by the respondents. The EU is seen as a key actor in promoting gender equality.
- Paradoxically, women's movements that are actively involved in the process of EPS-building through trans-European networking recurrently state that there is no EPS and that the existing communication spaces are exclusive and elitist. This is an illustration that the EPS is a complex and contested notion, but could also be interpreted as an example of a gap between discourse and practice, that the respondent's practical collaboration is ahead of the discursive understanding.
- Women's organizations tend to lack elaborated images (shared or contested) of the EU's future. Furthermore, focusing exclusively on addressing Brussels is problematic; multi-level activism (i.e. coordinated efforts directed at both European and national institutions) is more effective both in building the EPS and promoting gender equality.
- The studies of the European Parliament (EP) illustrate that there are new discursive struggles about the understanding of gender equality, women's rights and gender issues on the EU level articulated by Conservative and Socialist women represented in the EP. However, they also illustrate that when EP women do manage to agree on key issues across political families on the Right and the Left, for example about the importance of EU funding for projects about violence against women, they did succeed in influencing EU politics.
- Overall, the results indicate that in terms of power/access women political actors in the dataset are not excluded from the European Public Sphere, but nor do they participate on equal footing with men. Women respondents are active participants in the EPS, especially within political parties and SMOs/NGO, but there is a male dominance across the different arenas. One of the indications is that the ratio of women to men in high ranking positions is generally lower across all arenas.
- There exist (often contested) transnational debates on gender and diversity issues, primarily driven by SMO/NGOs. These debates contribute to contestation, collaboration and negotiation in an emerging European Public Sphere, however disconnected from citizens not engaged in issues of gender/intersectionality and diversity.
- These results indicate the existence of a Europeanization from below on the level of political practice, rooted in transnational networks in civil society. It remains to be seen to what extent women organized in SMOs and in general can and will contribute to bridge the divide between ordinary citizens and European political institutions and other policymakers.

7.4 The Publics and Public Spaces of Europe: Alignments and Misalignments

The findings briefly presented above derive from different sorts of data that enabled us to do comparisons of discourses and networking patterns of individual citizens, member-state and trans-European level civil society organizations and political parties, and media actors. We

used (1) survey data on attitudes of individual citizens, (2) media-content data obtained from approximately 12,000 news items and 8,000 sources that appeared in 32 TV-channels, and 48 newspapers, and (3) interviews with approximately 800 European elites representing 250 key institutional participants in member-state level and European level public debates. Political parties, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and media organizations were the types of public sphere actors that we looked at. The number of European countries included in our studies is 16. Our methods of data collection were in-depth interviews with leaders and other key persons in the organizations, document analyses of the written outputs of the organizations, content analyses of media news and statements of the sources that were quoted in media news. Whereas we deployed standard cross-country comparative methods of data collection, our methods of analysis varied between the different work groups. We benefited greatly from the advantages of data triangulation and a methodological-pluralist approach to data analysis. We used interpretive analysis, qualitative-comparative analysis, and statistical multivariate analyses for pattern identification and case classification.

By “national level organizations” (also occasionally referred to as “member-state level organizations”), we refer to political parties, think tanks, non-governmental and social movement organizations, TV-broadcasters, and newspapers that are based in primarily a Member State. By “trans-European networks”, we refer to the Brussels-headquarters of international networks of European organizations – three European party federations (*The Party of European Socialists* “PES”, *European People’s Party* “EPP”, and *Union for Europe of Nations* “UEN”), three civil society networks (*European Women’s Lobby*, *European Network against Racism* “ENAR”, *Platform of European Social NGOs* “SocialPlatform”), two policy research networks (*European Policy Institutes Network* “EPIN” and *Trans European Policy Studies Association* “TEPSA”).

Our sixteen country reports and twelve cross-country comparative reports provide a much more detailed and complex set of results than the below presentation as it is limited to comparison of national-level and trans-European level organizations’ discourses and collaboration patterns. This is in order to draw attention to the political polarization that we identified between the two levels, which imply a potential *center-periphery conflict* in Europe around the issues of diversity policies, European integration, civil society-EU communication, and the future of the EU political system.

In a democracy, different, conflicting and contesting views are desirable. Indeed, this is what renders politics and the very notion of public sphere possible. The political history of the modern European state is full of examples of countries that have based their democratic systems and their party systems realistically on the existing political cleavages between groups and territories. Horizontal cleavages / conflicts are, in other words, not avoidable and they are even desirable, and they define the characteristics of democratic political systems. However, when conflicting views are distributed too unevenly between the political center and the peripheries—that is, when there are strong vertical cleavages—issues of legitimacy are reinvigorated. Our findings show that there may be such vertical cleavages within the European Union, which are discernible in comparisons of national level organizations and trans-European level networks and which need democratic solutions.

The results obtained from the analysis of the interviews are almost identical with the results based on the analysis of the institutional data. Combining these results, a great majority of organizational elites are quite consistent in their intentions and actions: To a large degree, they do not want to have intergovernmental and supranational authorities as addressees of their activities; in practice, they do not collaborate with trans-European organizations that have these authorities as the main addressees of their activities. However,

majority of them both find it desirable and are actually involved in what we call “horizontal” trans-European collaborative structures:

Elites at the national and trans-European levels clearly prefer horizontal trans-European interactions that do not involve links to the European Union. This trend is much more pronounced within the national-level organizations. A closer examination of the in-depth interviews also shows many of those who favor involvement in horizontal networks and who simultaneously want to involve EU political institutions as little as possible in their trans-European affairs do so because they are skeptical about the EU’s democratic qualities, and they do not want to be part of the legitimization mechanisms that the EU has devised.

Some political elites state they already had good communication and collaboration channels with their sister parties in other countries, through party federations and one-to-one contacts between the party elites. Further, the national-level SMO/NGO leaders who prefer horizontal Europeanization say this process started before the European Union existed and should continue especially now in the new political context of Europe, which is characterized by pooling of sovereignties so that the new concentrated power can be effectively criticized and controlled by citizens.

The interviewees also think for issues on which some national governments are not responsive enough (e.g., women’s rights, minority rights, environmental protection), European-level institutions can be a good tool for making national governments change their courses of action. Since the interviewees’ own aim is to make sure that the interests they voice be protected, horizontal Europeanization uninfluenced by EU premises is, for them, a better alternative. If necessary, European political institutions can be addressed for this purpose, but the European level should not, in their eyes, be taken for granted as a legitimate authority in all matters. This trend is clear concerning organizations operating at the national level.

In addition to those who favor horizontal trans-Europeanization, we find national-level elites who seek to address only national governments and authorities in their activities. Here, the concern is the survival of the nation state rather than the democratic legitimacy of EU political institutions.

Trans-European elites, on the other hand, perceive their role as mediators between European Union institutions and the national-level organizations. Trans-European elites are aware they cannot claim to be representing anybody, but what they do is important and needed, they believe, because the new power structures in Europe require trans-European organizations that can articulate the common interests of European civil societies. However, trans-European organizations strive on both fronts. Access to EU decision-making mechanisms is difficult although some of the organizations have been defined by the European Commission as official consultation partners in the matters they specialize in. They think it is also difficult to gain the full trust of national-level member organizations because they are sometimes regarded as too close to the EU.

This view was confirmed by interviews with elites working at national-level political parties and social movement and non-governmental organizations. In addition to the perception that trans-European elites may be ideologically closer to the EU than to the grassroots, national-level elites are also concerned about the EU terminology adopted by trans-European elites. In the eyes of national-level elites, the difficulty of this terminology makes communication between national and trans-European-level elites at times ineffective, and this challenge also makes it difficult for national-level elites to actively participate in trans-European-level activities. However, trans-European elites tend to see EU terminology as a practical necessity that makes it possible to communicate with and disseminate contention toward EU policymakers. The majority of the trans-European elites state that it is important that the national-level civil society and political organizations understand the necessity of

acting together on issues that require European-level solutions, but it is not always easy to persuade their member organizations to be more active. Further, the elite interviews and our institutional data document that trans-European organizations usually operate with a very small number of full-time staff members, which makes it difficult to prioritize integration activities for national-level organizations.

These findings point to misalignments between the value orientations of national and trans-European elites. If trans-European organizations are supposed to represent/articulate/voice the interests of European civil society regarding the EU, this can be perceived as a legitimacy problem on the part of the trans-European organizations. Even when we assume a somewhat less ambitious mission for them, such as voicing interests, it is not possible to ignore this mismatch. Certainly, diversity of views and political polarization in the public sphere are necessary and desirable from a democracy point of view. However, what we observe here is not only a horizontal polarization but also a vertical, hierarchical polarization of discourses between the member-state and trans-European-level organizational elites.

Some of the trans-European elites interviewed work in organizations officially involved in EU-level policy processes as regular consultation partners – this is especially true for the Social Platform, ENAR, and the EWL. Although an overwhelming majority of the interviewed trans-European NGO/SMO elites are aware they cannot claim to represent the European civil society, they claim to represent social and political norms for the good of all – thus investing in output legitimacy rather than input legitimacy.

The three European party federations we interviewed are supposed to represent their member parties, and they have representatives in the European Parliament. Low electoral turnout, combined with mismatches between national-level and trans-European-level elite views, also points to a hierarchical structuring of the trans-European political spaces.

Although the think tank networks – EPIN and TEPSA – and their member organizations we interviewed are not expected to represent anybody other than themselves and their expertise, they provide policy assessments, evaluations, and advice to the European Union.

The European Commission and other EU political institutions take these trans-European organizations as the most relevant conversation partners in certain policy issues, and have privileged them and institutionalized their participation in consultation processes in different ways. However, the views these institutions disseminate about diversity, the future of the EU polity, European integration, and legitimate addressees in the European public sphere are different from the views expressed by elites working in national-level organizations.

Most importantly, our research documents the civil society organizations and think tanks that are involved in vertical trans-European structures usually diverge from their original functions when attempting to adapt to the imperatives of the European Union system

8. EU Policies and Prospects for a European Public Sphere

To assess the prospects for a democratic, inclusive European public sphere, this final research component compared the ways in which the European Union, national public sphere participants (media, civil society organizations, political parties, and policy research institutes), and trans-national networks of these are trying to create links between citizens and the political institutions of the European Union. The main focus, however, is on the European Union policies aiming to create a common European public sphere of diversity, and how the EU policies on this matter are aligned or misaligned with the priorities of other participants (including individual citizens) in public debates. We identified the (mis)alignments, conflicts, and contestations in the aforementioned channels of voice and participation: the numeric, the corporate-plural, and the general public sphere.

Firstly, we mapped the territorial spread and diversity of the European publics that the European Union is currently aiming to link with its political structures. In the spirit of the great Norwegian political scientist Stein Rokkan, this component should be regarded as an exploration into the highly complex relationship between diversity and territorial basis of the European public and public sphere, and the policies that the EU promotes both to respect and to transcend the internal boundaries that territorial diversity maintains.

Concerning the media channel, we asked how media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for European public spheres. Based on the Eurosphere interviews with media leaders in sixteen countries, we mapped the preferences of European actors with regard to the EPS. These preferences are then compared with the actual activities of the European Commission. Finally we discussed possible future developments of media policies furthering inclusive European public spheres.

Regarding the corporate-plural channel, we explored the links between civil society organizations and the European Union decision-making mechanisms with a special focus on the question of how EU policies aiming to create a Europe-wide civil society have performed in legitimizing and democratizing the European Union. We also assessed the (mis)matches between the European Union's public consultation mechanisms and the representation needs of the minority organizations. Three additional analyses assessed the extent to which national think tanks and their trans-European networks contribute to the articulation of a European public sphere. Here, we seek answers to a range of questions about the ways in which policy research institutes and think tanks create public spaces of communication between the EU and other stakeholders, and how they in turn are constrained by the specific features of the EU policymaking mechanisms. We also considered the conditions under which trans-European think tank networks and the EU have a socializing effect on national think tanks. Finally, based on interviews with people in leadership positions in national and trans-European political parties, think tanks, civil society organizations, and media actors in sixteen countries, we mapped the diffusion of Europeanist, nationalist and other discourses on the national and trans-European levels, identified the (mis)matches between the member-state level organizations and trans-European networks, and discussed the consequences of these for the legitimacy of the EU's policies aiming to create a Europe-wide corporate-plural channel. Considered together, the analyses in this section give an overview of how corporate-plural arrangements of the EU function and the extent to which they fulfill the function of democratizing and legitimizing the EU.

As to the numeric channel, the project focused on the question of whether parties contribute or hinder the democratic performance of the European Union and what roles national parties and European party groups play in aggregating political preferences in the European Parliament. Supplementing the focus on the (mis)alignments between national parties and European party groups, we explored the European demos (if any) with a focus on the similarities and discrepancies between the views of the citizens, party sympathizers, and party elites. This section is closed with a discussion on whether and to what extent citizens' political involvement and their attitudes to the EU are in line with the key EU policy objectives. Taken together, these three analyses uncover the issues of conflict and contestation in the numeric channel between different segments of society and different levels of the EU political system, from individual citizens and party sympathizers; from national parties and European Parliament party groups to the EU policy outcomes—giving a rather detailed picture of the extent to which the European numeric channel actually gives voice to the citizens and transmits their concerns to the European level, that is, to the European Parliament and EU policymaking.

As the reader may already have noticed, the comparative analyses in this research component reveal national and trans-European actors' and the EU's roles in the articulation of a European public sphere based on data that are measured on six levels: (1) *individual level* (citizens' perceptions and preferences about diversity, EU polity, and public sphere), (2) *elite level* (the perceptions, preferences, and networking patterns of leaders of national political parties, think tanks, SMOs/NGOs, and media actors), (3) *institutional level* (objectives and institutional networking patterns of member-state level political parties, think tanks, and SMOs/NGOs and how they facilitate or hinder trans-European collaborations / networks), (4) *media sphere level* (representation of the EU and foreign EU actors as legitimate participants in national public debates on the policy areas of Eurosphere), (5) *the trans-European level* (the perceptions and preferences of the leaders of trans-European political parties, think tanks, and SMOs/NGOs and their transnational networking patterns), and (6) *the supranational level* (the EU's policies pertaining to the articulation of a European public sphere. Here, we briefly:

- map the alignments and misalignments between the views of citizens, national elites, national media news content, trans-European elites, and European policies.
- identify the areas of contestation and conflict in articulating a common public sphere based on these alignments/misalignments
- evaluate the feasibility (practical concerns) and acceptability (normative concerns) of the respective EU policies
- assess the potential consequences of these for the articulation and structuring of European public spheres

8.1 The Role of EU Policies in Creating an Inclusive European Public Sphere

Over the last decades, the concept of diversity has attained a pivotal role in the official discourse of the European Union. Since the early 1970s, all main treaties and declarations that document the successive construction of a European polity pay tribute to diversity. The term's normative preeminence becomes especially salient in the context of attempts at defining Europe's political identity, and, in particular, the novel aspects that set this identity apart from previous models of political organization. Thus, the European Union (EU) has given itself the motto "united in diversity", and the unity in diversity which Europe claims to stand for is supposed to introduce a critical element of difference with regard to the institutional legacy of nationalism. While unity in European nation-states was generally conceived of as a synonym of cultural homogeneity, through which the people were linked to "their" state, and the state to "its" people, the rationale of European integration is supposed to follow another direction, namely to pursue common political objectives without menacing the diverse cultural and linguistic affiliations which are observable among the Union's citizenry.

The Treaty of Lisbon, adopted in 2009 as a surrogate of sorts for the aborted Constitution for Europe, offers a compact piece of evidence of the normative status assigned to diversity in the process of European polity-building. Article I-3, which lays down the Union's primary goals, includes the following two paragraphs:

It [the Union] shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States.

The Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.

In a succinct way, the quotation captures the key components of what can be considered Europe's approach to the identity issue, an approach outlined for the first time in the

“Declaration on European Identity”, which the European Community (EC) laid down in Copenhagen in 1973. A first component puts forward a set of political landmarks which is shared by all forces involved in the construction of Europe. In addition to cohesion and solidarity, such landmarks typically include freedom, democracy and human rights as central political values. The second component then emphasizes the importance cultural diversity has for creating a political framework that unites Europeans. In the four decades that have gone by since the drafting of the Copenhagen declaration, there has been a remarkable continuity in connecting these two identity layers. At the same time, the commitment to the protection of cultural diversity has come to be a principle repeated ritualistically in all resolutions of symbolic weight drafted in the name of Europe. Again and again, the EU has kept reassuring its member states and its citizens that regardless of all political common ground that may emerge among Europeans, the European project does not involve any measures making for uniform patterns of cultural identification.

The celebration of diversity, especially when set against the background of nation-state formation, can be regarded as one of the most genuine new contributions European integration has thus far made to the language of contemporary constitutionalism. Since the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) by the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the gradual uniting of Europe has remained connected to the imperative of respecting the particular cultural identities of the Member States. In this respect, the continuous emphasis placed on cultural and linguistic diversity may well be seen, first and foremost, as the tribute the Union has to pay to its key units—i.e. the European nation-states—in order to make them comply with the institutional implications of the process of building Europe. On the other hand, the emphasizing of diversity has also been interpreted as the most substantial innovative element in the normative template that underpins Europe’s semi-constitutional discourse. It may be conceded that, in the course of the last decades, those who have been acting as the architects of an emerging Euro-polity have made a conscious effort at establishing diversity as a core value to be safeguarded by European integration.

But which are the diversities that are to be considered as protected and enhanced by the European project? Which of the many forms of social heterogeneities that structure the European populations are to be considered a significant focus of contention from the point of view of the European public sphere? Which categories of difference-based claims are to be regarded as legitimate interlocutors of the European institutions, and why? And how different categories of diversities have been encountered—sometimes purposefully, sometimes incidentally—by the various agencies and institutions that have a stake in the European project? These questions have gained center-stage during the activities of EUROSHERE.

It is easy to realize that some differences—linguistic, territorial, national—had been a focus of reflection and action since the very beginning of the European project. They have been part and parcel of the notable attempt to create a new kind of institutional reality functionally differentiated from, but fully respectful of, the segmentation of Europe in a variety of nation-states. Nevertheless, as shown in our assessment of EU policies related to language, the recurrent official statements stressing the importance of diversity as a European value do not produce a programmatic frame that would provide us with a set of consistent guidelines fleshing out political criteria for the protection of diversity in the realms of society which are most openly exposed to the standardizing pressures connected with the dynamic of European integration. Along the years, and with the intensification of the European project, EU action has more and more frequently stumbled upon other sources of diversity—such as those related to religious segmentation and the changes in population composition brought about by immigration—that had been initially avoided by the self-understood technocratic nature of seminal European institutions. Since the early ’90, they have become increasingly

salient, raising important issues at the polity and policy level. Still some other—such as gender differences—have acquired a new meaning—and a new European salience—as part of the complex semantic restructuring of what means to be a ‘European’. As a result, European institutions face today a much wider and complex set of ‘diversities’ demanding recognition and claiming protective action than in the past. Each of them raises very different questions, and challenge in different ways the dominant discourses of ‘efficiency’ and ‘justice’ that operate as the dominant justification regimes of the European project. This growing complexity has opened a new scenario, and—as we document in detail in our report—it has made necessary quite a bit of institutional learning, trying out different approaches in different fields. A process, as we argue, that is still very much underway.

It is worth to stress that the new scenario is surely the outcome of the growing significance of EU institutions in a variety of social domains that has made increasingly difficult to respect a tight and clear-cut functional distinction between prerogatives of the EU versus prerogatives of its member-states. But it should not be forgotten it is also the result of a growing set of expectations cast upon European institutions by a variety of difference-based claim-makers, placing requests on ‘Europe’ often extending beyond the strictly established mandate of each single EU institution. From the point of view of the analysis, the impact of EU policies on this penumbra of expectations is often more important than the actual content of each single decision.

Finally, leaving the details of our analysis aside, it will suffice to briefly list here the diversities that are left outside the public domain and outside the public sphere as a consequence of the EU’s diversity policies: Concerning the EU’s linguistic diversity, the EU policies are based on a notion of language as a gate to opportunities—a common market oriented policy path which leaves out the rights of the groups that experience language as a tie that promotes collective identity. Concerning religious diversity policies, the EU’s treatment of religious diversity favors the interests of main stakeholders (majority religious groups and churches). In contrast to linguistic diversity policies, the majority religious diversity groups and institutions have managed to remain outside the EU’s common market logic. Other religious groups are either left out of the policy field or dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis through anti-discrimination measures. Concerning gender policies, the EU gender policy is characterized by the citizen/non-citizen and redistribution/recognition divisions. Gendered non-citizens are excluded at the policy level. Regarding migrant integration policies, based on an analysis of the *European Integration Forum*, we find that the Forum is rather a tool oriented towards the implementation of political priorities established elsewhere.

8.2 The Role of EU Policies in Creating a Democratic European Public Sphere

Following the historical trajectory of its member states, the EU has been attempting to create the three channels of the European public sphere: the numeric, corporate-plural and media channels of voice, participation, critique, and influence. In order to do so, the EU has also been attempting to create the key components of a European public sphere: (1) a central political power through supranationalization in increasingly more policy areas, (2) direct election of the members of the European Parliament and the formation of the trans-European party groups in the European Parliament, (3) a trans-European network of civil society that is supposed to link the European citizenry with the European Commission, European parliament, and with other bodies of the EU, and (4) through standardization of the European national media systems and establishment of trans-European print and broadcast media. Before discussing our findings concerning the latter three dimensions, it is important to underline that the European Union is historically unique in its eagerness to willingly subject

itself to citizen critique, control, and opposition by developing the institutions and channels for this on its own initiative, and not as a result of overwhelming pressure from below.

The European Media, EU policies, and the General European Public Sphere

Earlier research conducted within Eurosphere (cf. Zografova and Bakolova 2011) suggest that the variation in media discourses and media's interest in reporting different themes are largely explained by national borders and national media regimes. In her contribution to this volume, Monika Mokre asks how the EU's media structures and their framing conditions affect the political function of media for European public spheres. After giving a brief history of the development of the EU media and communication policy, Mokre concludes that "Hitherto EU media policies have proven successful in reducing national barriers for broadcasting and establishing a single European media market but they did not succeed in providing centralized forms of information distribution and exchange". Indeed, what happened is that the European media channels that were created as a result of EU initiatives ended up reporting national news in neutral ways: "Euronews can be understood as a particular EPS in itself but its contribution to a more general European public sphere seems doubtful".

With a point of departure in Eurosphere interviews with national media elites, our findings points to the fact that this is very much noticed by not only media elites themselves, but also by political and social elites within political parties and civil society organizations. She highlights that especially the elites with more pro-diversity and pro-EU attitudes recognize the necessity of having common European media channels available to all European citizens. Her proposal to bypass this is:

Still, our empirical results have shown a possible way out of this dilemma in transnational exchange of news and attempts of journalists to include a European dimension in media coverage. Maybe, one could speak here of a hidden form of EPS – the audience is addressed as a national audience but shares similar themes and outlooks with other national audiences. In the long run, this could certainly lead to the Europeanization of public spheres. However, for the time being, national sentiments and perspectives still seem to prevail in media audiences (Mokre, in this volume).

In brief, the European Union has not yet been able to create what we may call the basic instrument of a general European public sphere. On the other hand, our other media analyses show that there is a visible degree of Europeanization of national media that is going on on certain themes.

The European Civil Society and its Corporate-Plural Channel of Influence

In spite of using different conceptual, theoretical, and methodological approaches, the different components addressing this question have similar findings concerning the participation of NGOs, minority organizations, and think tanks in the corporate-plural channel of the EU. Taken together, these findings constitute an evaluation of the EU policies aiming to create a European civil society as the foundation of a common European public sphere.

One important finding throughout the above-mentioned chapters is that trans-European networks of civil society have a socializing impact, especially when EU-institutions actively participate in their activities. This puts their representation capacity, legitimizing function, and democratizing role into question in the eyes of the national and sub-national level organizations, whose interests they are supposed to "transmit" upwards in the EU policy-making processes. One result is that trans-European networks adapt the values of the EU and often transmit them downwards to their constituencies instead of (and in addition to) carrying the voices from below to the EU-level policymaking processes. In the case of the trans-

European networks of ethnic and religious minority organizations, the goals of the EU and minority organizations—i.e., protection and development of the rights of minorities—largely coincide. However, concerning other types of national organizations, there are significant gaps between the goals. Choosing to conceive the sponsored trans-European networks of civil society and think tanks as capable representatives of the European civil society, the EU-policy clearly lacks a focus on the social and political actors that do not participate in the vertical structures of communication created by the trans-European networks. Thus, another important consequence of EU policies attempting to create a European civil society, is that those civil society organizations that refuse to partake in the vertical trans-European networks (because they view them as not promoting democracy) continue to develop an alternative, critical horizontal trans-European space which is distant from both the EU and the trans-European networks that the EU sponsors.

At the same time, this strategy of the EU seems to have resulted in the creation of a new trans-European public space, with peculiar discourses and vertical alliance patterns, which contests the historically existing essentializing, nationalizing, and trans-nationalizing public spaces. Moreover, the same strategy seems also to have partly transformed the historically existing transnational public spaces into critical horizontal trans-European public spaces by putting them in a situation of conflict and contestation with the EU-created vertical trans-European public spaces. This picture tells us that the EU's goals of legitimacy and democracy cannot be achieved without effectively including the non-sponsored publics in the corporate-plural channel of voice and participation in the EU.

The European Citizenry and its Numeric Channel of Influence

This research component assesses how the EU policies aiming to create a common numeric channel and a European electorate have performed.

We find that national parties play a role in aggregating preferences on European integration, which in turn play a role in determining voting behavior in the EP. We have seen that the EP party groups are aggregating preferences in the parliamentary arena, and they are very cohesive when it comes to voting. Nevertheless, one should be cautious about the role of the national delegations vis-à-vis the role EP party groups play in determining voting behavior as most national delegations are too small to have any chance influencing the group's structure and parties themselves depend on their participation within the EP party group (Lord 2006). This might suggest that EP party groups are adequate substitutes for national parties for representing the European electorate but we argue they are not because the party politics of the EU does not provide much link between European elections and the voting in the EP. The legislative outcomes of the EP can be well aligned with the preferences of the EP party group, but given the great variety of parties EP party groups must accommodate as members, it is very plausible these outcomes will be far away from the preferences of the national parties.

On the other hand, while elites generally manifest more embracing and tolerant attitudes to diversity than the general public, at the same time, they express a heightened awareness of relevant social problems. Our further investigation of the traces of a European demos, revealed a possible classification of European citizenry based on their various shared values. Surprisingly, or rather shockingly, we find here that almost two thirds (64.3%) of the European general public seem to lean to skeptically non-democratic or anti-democratic mentalities. Moreover, this startling general pattern is also mirrored and repeated amongst the party sympathizers at national levels. That is, the views of citizens in general are systematically observed in the views of party sympathizers, which, in the Eurosphere research, constitute the link between national parties and citizens. Finding that the democratic

values and views required to constitute a national or European demos, are prevalent amongst elites, we conclude that, still, the vertical perspective (social status paradigm) reassures us that the democratic spirit seems to significantly and reliably prevail (or at least hold plurality) among the European elites and hence may have a stronger influence than sheer numbers would suggest.

Finally, in the last component of this section, we examined the influence that civic engagement and participation in different EU actions and initiatives has on citizen attitudes. We found that the willingness to be involved in and utilize the EU civic initiative in certain fields and to optimize the integration processes in the Union is a clear indicator that the communicative channels between citizenry and the Commission function regardless of the difficulties and the delays. It is also indicative for the EPS in a process of constitution and the relations between citizens and public sphere”.

Each of these three components traces the links between citizens and EU policies within the numeric channel, and each finds clear effects of interacting with the EU within the structures of communication that are provided by the EU.

8.3 Conclusion

In the 21st Century, the term Eurosphere is often used by Mark Leonard and others to connote the EU's zone of influence in the international political arena:

[T]he next wave of European transformation is only just beginning. The European Union is starting to develop an enormous sphere of influence, extending way beyond its borders that could be called the "Eurosphere". This belt of eighty countries covering the former Soviet Union, the Western Balkans, the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 20 per cent of the world's population (Leonard 2005: 4).

However, the term Eurosphere was first introduced by Jacques-René Rabier and Jean Meynaud in the 1960s, and it refers to quite another thing:

Selon une expression suggérée par J.-R. Rabier et J. Meynaud et qui maintenant est devenue courante, l'eurosphère désigne les diverses sphères de personnes ou de groupes qui participent activement à l'intégration ou qui étant directement touchés par ses effets réagissent d'une manière significative. Ces individus ou groupes manifestent donc des solidarités européennes en influent sur le mouvement d'intégration ou en s'en défendant. (Meynaud and Sidjanski 1965: 25).

In this approach, Eurosphere is defined as the spheres of those individuals and groups who participate in the European integration processes actively or are directly affected by its consequences. Also, according to Rabier and Meynaud, these individuals affect the integration process by expressing solidarity to the European.

Rabier and Meynaud's definition of Eurosphere primarily corresponds to the features of one of the public spaces that we studied here—i.e., the vertical, top-down trans-European sphere of pro-EU and pro-diversity elites and citizens. In the second place, it also corresponds to the existing national, sub-national, and transnational publics that are affected by the processes of European integration.

In our approach, following Rabier and Meynaud, Eurosphere does not relate to the EU's position or status in international relations, but to the European public sphere. It is, however, more encompassing than Rabier and Meynaud's notion as it is understood here as the set of sub-national, national, and transnational public spaces that are in contestation and conflict with each other and with Rabier and Meynaud's Eurosphere (the vertical trans-European spaces).

Therefore, the focus of our research has been on the phenomena that link citizens with the EU political institutions. Our search for the possible links between the citizens and the outcomes of the EU level policymaking showed both weak and strong links. We find the weak links in the relationship between citizens' views and preferences and EU policies. On their bottom-up ways from individual citizens, through national and trans-European elites, in both the numeric and corporate-plural channels, the perspectives, views, and preferences are transformed from particularistic, exclusionary, non-democratic, and anti-EU feelings into universalistic, inclusive, and democratic ones.

The strong link is found between the EU policies aiming to transform different kinds of national and sub-national publics into trans-European publics. The citizens and organizations that interact with the EU institutions within the EU-initiated frames of "representation" within both the numeric and corporate-plural channels, increasingly find themselves in a situation where they have to act as messengers of the EU downwards to their constituencies.

These two links—the weak link and the strong link— function in combination with each other as a gatekeeper against the surfacing of particularistic, exclusionary, and non-democratic perspectives in the EU political system. In this sense, although non-democratic as such in its workings and excludes non-democratic and anti-peace perspectives, these two links may be conceived by many as promoting democracy in Europe—a political rule not by the people, but for the people (and against the people, for the sake of the people). Certainly, from a substantive democracy perspective, what is happening here is also conceived by many as a serious weakness of European democracy since many EU-level decisions are made far-away instances from the citizens without citizens' views not being mirrored in the policy outcomes.

Taken altogether, our research results, presented only briefly in this final comparative study, clearly demonstrate that the EU policies have managed to create a vertical trans-European public space aiming to link national constituencies with the EU—a new public space which is in conflict and contestation with the already existing essentializing, nationalizing, and transnationalizing public spaces. The dominant discourse in the trans-European public space is that of democratization, pro-diversity, inclusion, and Europeanization. However, this trans-European public space is inhabited by trans-European networks of political parties, civil society organizations, and think tanks and policy research institutes—networks which are themselves quite closed towards other discourses.

The reactions against the elitist, hierarchical, and exclusionary nature of this trans-European public space have been a factor in transforming the other types of historical and new publics and public spaces within Europe into horizontal trans-European publics and public spaces. These horizontal trans-European spaces are not linked or only loosely linked with the EU political institutions, and their discourses vary from being more democratic and more pro-diversity than the EU's to anti-democratic, authoritarian, racist, and exclusionary discourse.

In the beginning, I stated that we could start talking about a European public sphere only when the different already existing public spaces come into a relationship of conflict and contestation with the vertical trans-European public sphere and the EU's political institutions. Currently, our interview data and analyses of citizen surveys document that this necessary condition is more than just fulfilled.

Returning to Table 1 on page 8, we can assert that the structuring of European public sphere is oscillating between the models 4, 5, and 6—that is between "Multi-level overlapping nested spheres", "multi-level differential spaces" and "multiple composite spaces", but closer to the former two, because of the sharp boundaries and strong gatekeeping mechanisms between the trans-European and national levels.

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