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"Europe is already all around, but no one notices" –
The Europeanization of public spheres in regional newspaper reporting

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ABSTRACT

So far the news coverage on the EU and on Europe within regional newspapers has not been subject to the research on European public spheres, although regional papers target a broader readership than quality papers and in contrast to TV news also cover regional and local issues along with international and national topics. Therefore, our study aimed at analysing, in how far the European integration process is reflected in the regional press across countries and from a longitudinal perspective. In order to do so, we conducted a standardized content analysis of the political reporting in Danish, German, French, British, Austrian and Polish regional papers from 1982 until 2008. The results show patterns that are already known from the analysis of quality and tabloid reporting: Until the year 2003 the visibility of EU institutions indicate a significant trend of vertical Europeanization, while the references towards other EU member countries point to a slight tendency of horizontal Europeanization, however already starting from a fairly high level. Hardly visible were indicators of processes of identification with Europe: there were only a small number of We-references and the category „the Europeans" even became less important. At the same time, the already strong role of nation states partly gained even more importance as a reference point in the newspaper coverage, especially in between 2003 and 2008.

CONTENTS

"Europe is already all around, but no one notices"[1] – The Europeanization of public spheres in regional newspaper reporting[2]

1. EUROPE AND THE REGIONAL PRESS

The EU's history is a story of continuities and breaking points in the light of political integration in Europe. Corresponding with the institutional progress since the EU's founding, scholars of democratic theory have noted the parallel development of a European public sphere as essential to its democratic legitimacy. A considerable amount of research has been undertaken to analyse the emergence of a public sphere within the coverage of the EU and other European institutions in quality print media (e.g. Trenz 2004; van Noije 2010; Veltri 2012). Research on tabloids and local or regional newspapers is rare. If undertaken at all, it typically investigates cross-border news coverage in border regions, considering these regions as motors for European processes of integration (e.g. Roose 2008; Schäfer et al. 2012; Tenscher/Schmidt 2004). This one-sided focus on the quality press in research (cf. also a conclusion of several book reviews, Nitoiu 2013: 35f.) is surprising, as the citizens' view of Europe seems to be strongly affected by regional newspapers.

Beyond the fact that there is little knowledge on how regional papers deal with European issues, we can argue that it is an important and specific type of news outlet. Regional newspapers are newspapers that appear only in a particular area or a particular region of a country. The journalists' selection of topics for news coverage in regional newspapers will typically invest more attention to the events and concerns of the respective region, a focus that is generally disregarded by other national mass media like popular television news. Nonetheless, regional newspapers cover also a broad spectrum of topics. Since most of their readers extract information about national or international events primarily from television, regional newspapers report less on these aspects. By covering these dimension of politics and having a local focus at the same time, news coverage in regional newspapers fill the gap between the elite oriented analytical reporting of quality newspapers and sensational tabloid reporting, both traditionally focused on national reporting. Furthermore, regional newspapers show comparably high circula-

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[1]   Headline in the German "Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" from the 26th of November 2003.

[2]   This working-paper is a revised and enlarged version of the book chapter „Nationalizing Europe regionally – The Europeanization of Public Spheres in Regional Newspaper Reporting and the "Crisis" in Europe. In: Stępińska, Agnieszka (Ed.): Media and communication on Europe. Berlin: Logos Verlag 2014, 13-32.

tions (for Germany cf. Schulz, 1999: 405, for other European countries cf. Elvestad/Blekesaune 2008).

Thus, it remains the question to what extent the results of the research on quality papers can be transferred to regional newspapers or if there are significant differences between the media outlets. Starting from the "guiding function" (Jarren/Vogel 2011) of the quality press, we could assume that regional newspapers take these as agenda setters and try to copy their way of reporting on European politics. Although due to their limited resources, they probably will not be able to report in similar extent and quality on the EU. However, this is not inevitable, bearing in mind that these newspapers are mainly read because of their local or regional coverage. Thanks to the local interests of their readers, regional newspapers could also be understood as an *alternative* to quality newspapers. So, they could focus on content that has regional significance both in the agenda setting of news reports as well as in their comments. While it is virtually impossible for many international issues to create a direct reference to the local or regional impact, this would be possible in the context of European policies. According to the multilevel governance of the European Union, political action on the European level will affect the national, regional and local policies at one point in time.

From newsroom studies, undertaken in previous phases of our research, we noticed that regional papers do not simply follow the same orientations as the quality press in their media coverage. Due to their specific newsroom routines, resources and restrictions, such newspapers establish their own, mostly pragmatic choices when reporting about Europe. The regional papers' orientation towards their readers' everyday lives in combination with the journalists' daily production pressures result in a specific character of newspaper which distinguishes it from other types. Their main aim is to adapt news stories that relate to their readers and that they can present in an understandable, informative and interesting way. For that reason, most regional papers belong to a type of paper that can be labelled as "reporter": Due to their reader-orientation, main events like the introduction of the Euro or the EU enlargement that had a significant direct, or maybe only perceived, influence on people's lives might therefore also be treated differently in regional reporting compared to other types of newspapers (Hepp et al. 2012:168-172).

However, while there are many arguments that the EU coverage of regional newspapers has a specific character, this kind of coverage has been up to now no matter of research. We want to focus on the question how "Europe" and the "EU" are being constructed in regional newspaper reporting. From a longitudinal perspective, we analyse regional news coverage along the main developments and breaking points in EU history. Is there a considerable trend of Europeanization similar to that assessed in the quality press? Or are there – for example, related to the so-called European crisis – other,

possibly reverse trends like (re-)nationalization? And can we link this in a certain way back to the characteristics of the regional newspapers as "reporter"?

If we want to answer these research questions, we should consider two points. Firstly, the EU's integration process from a solely market union to a political unit with the treaty of Maastricht to the EU and the current crisis situation. Secondly, we have to reflect on the different histories and perspectives towards the EU, reaching from founding members of the EU like France and Germany to new members like Poland, from countries with a positive attitude towards the EU like the above mentioned to those that have an ambivalent or rather sceptical view such as Denmark or Great Britain. Within our following analysis, we want to identify, while focusing on an aspect of Europeanized public spheres that has so far received little attention, how regional newspapers report on transnational issues from a longitudinal perspective and in different European countries.

In preparation for the results of the content analysis that we conducted on this matter, we explain in the following section our concept of Europeanization and discuss the facilities and the restrictions of regional journalists reporting on European matters. Subsequently, we introduce our data and methodology. Based on our dimensions of enquiry, we then present and finally discuss our findings on the Europeanization of public spheres in regional newspapers.

2. THE MULTI-SEGMENTED EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPHERE AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE CULTURES

Since the middle of the 1990s, a growing degree of attention has been directed towards European integration, provoking an on-going discussion among scholars from different social science disciplines regarding the appearance and emergence of a European public sphere. The role of national and transnational media was considered as providing thrust for this (Eriksen and Fossum, 2000; Habermas, 1998; 2000; Schlesinger, 1999; Schlesinger and Kevin, 2000). Hence, the existence of a mediated European public sphere is seen as a central feature of a democratic EU, shaping the coherence of political systems and decision-making processes. Such a transnational sphere might create various avenues through which citizens could make their voices heard by the Union's decision makers. This aspiration has also been based on the assumption that equal and open access to public debate fostered by a European public sphere could enhance the EU's transnational democracy and further its collective identity-formation processes. Thus, contestation through public debate within the European public sphere could compel the political authority to explain and justify its actions and policies.

During the past 20 years of research, it became apparent that a European public sphere cannot be grasped merely as an extended national public sphere (Gripsrud 2007:

483-485). The European public sphere is a more complex phenomenon that can be described alongside a shared pan-European transnationalization of historically mainly national political public spheres. Within media and communication studies, it is a well-accepted starting point to distinguish a "horizontal" from a "vertical" dimension of Europeanization (Koopmans/Erbe 2004; Wessler et al. 2008: 10, 56; Koopmans/Statham 2010: 41). *Vertical Europeanization* means an increasing 'monitoring' of Europe and the EU in the public sphere of each country. *Horizontal Europeanization* signifies an increasing 'monitoring of' and 'discussing with' other European countries. For both of these aspects of Europeanization, we can identify two further characteristics which offer us four distinct criteria for the Europeanization of national public spheres within media coverage (Peters 2008: 200): First, the vertical dimension of monitoring EU governance; second, the vertical dimension of a collective identification with Europe; third, the horizontal dimension of discursive exchange, meaning a shared pan-European discourse between the national public spheres; fourth, a European discursive convergence in the national public spheres.

A preceding quantitative content analysis within our own research demonstrated a "segmentation" of the European public sphere for quality and tabloid papers in six European countries over the past 25 years. While vertical Europeanization – the increase of reporting about EU institutions and politics – can be observed over time, the horizontal dimension of Europeanization, the observation of other EU member states, is stagnating on a relatively high level. Collective identification with a European community emerges only faintly. Furthermore, we can argue that a European public sphere remains "multi-segmented": on the one hand regarding nations and on the other regarding transnational newspaper types. While the first is evident, because the European public sphere is articulated through different levels of the transnationalization of national public spheres, the second segmentation is more astonishing. Across the researched EU member states, we find certain types of media outlets that share – in spite of their different national backgrounds – patterns of constructing the European public sphere. Therefore, the European public sphere is multi-segmented in a dual sense: by the nations whose public spheres become transnationalized and by the types of media outlets that report about the EU and its member states (Hepp et al. 2012: 63-84; Wessler et al. 2008: 40-54).

Addressing the question of how we can explain such a multi-segmented character of the European public sphere and how certain types of media can unfold such a segmenting force, the concept of "political discourse cultures" is helpful. In short, we understand political discourse cultures as specific thickenings of cultural patterns of producing, representing and appropriating political communication as well as related cultural patterns of regulation and identification. They form the socio-cultural foundation of the public sphere. While political discourse cultures therefore constitute multi-level phe-

nomena related to the process of mediated political meaning production in total (as shown e.g. through media content), political discourse cultures also become relevant in their re-articulation in the practices of journalists.

Our investigation of journalistic practices – undertaken by conducting qualitative interviews and newsroom observations (cf. Hepp et al., 2012: 85-178; Hepp et al., forthcoming) – revealed various patterns of political discourse cultures. National segmentations can be explained by 'national political discourse cultures' that are articulated by certain 'nationalizing practices' of journalists. At the same time we found patterns of "journalistic professionalization" (cf. for German journalists Offerhaus 2011) that vary transnationally, depending on certain types of newspapers. These types of newspapers, distinguishable by their ways of addressing imagined audiences in the journalists' practices, move beyond the usual distinction of quality, regional and tabloid papers. Different 'types of newspapers' across our countries of investigation are therefore themselves marked by different 'journalistic discourse cultures'. Thus, we could distinguish between four types of journalists: the *analyst*, the *ambassador*[3], the *caterer* and the *reporter*. Results from our research on newsroom production processes demonstrated that journalists from regional newspapers could be predominantly characterized by the term "the reporter". They focus on reporting about major events within EU politics. They feel a need to cover these stories as major EU decisions are likely to influence their reader's everyday lives. Therefore, their readers expect them to 'report' these issues. They are different from quality papers, which often apply an analytical approach to fully and thoroughly cover and analyse European issues as well as contextualize and critically assess ("the analyst"). Tabloids, on the other hand, often cater to the imagined and predefined opinions of their readership ("the caterer"). However, this distinction cannot be drawn so clearly within all researched countries and for all newspaper titles. Across quality, tabloid and regional papers, we also find newspapers of the type of an "ambassador". These outlets follow an explanatory and clarifying, almost pedagogical approach in their reporting on EU politics.

Linking this newsroom research back to our content analysis, it is helpful to reflect these findings and distinctions against the backdrop of Europeanization processes. It seems likely to find such differences also in the re-articulation of political discourse cultures at the level of content if we compare news coverage of regional newspapers with quality and tabloid papers.

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3   The term "ambassador" was introduced by Heikkilä/Kunelius (2008). However, they theorize them in a different way than we do.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The content analysis that we are presenting in the following sections was undertaken within the project "The Transnationalization of Public Spheres in the EU: Citizens' (re)actions" which is part of the DFG funded Collaborative Research Centre 597 "Transformations of the State". Our current focus on regional newspapers is the final step in a research succession that has investigated the transnationalization of political coverage in the Austrian, British, Danish, French, German and Polish print media from 1982 until 2008 in the context of an emerging European public sphere. This research started by analysing political discursive articles within *quality print media* in the five researched countries Austria, Denmark, France, Germany and Great Britain (Wessler et al. 2008). In a next step, the research focus was widened to also include *tabloids* and Poland (Hepp et al. 2012). Our final step is to complement this content analysis with the political reporting in *regional newspapers* which is the subject of this article.[4]

Based on the assumption that different national histories and perspectives towards the EU could have an influence on how the EU and European issues are constructed in the news coverage, we have chosen a diverse sample of countries. France and Germany both represent major political actors in the EU, being among the largest countries population-wise and being among the founding nations. Austria and Denmark are rather small and more recent member states. Denmark and Great Britain are typically in tendency euro-sceptic and are not part of the Eurozone. Poland was included as one of the most recent and larger Eastern member states with a distinct history compared to the other researched countries (due to its historical connection within the 'Eastern Bloc' and to the USSR). For each researched country, the regional paper with the largest circulation was chosen, which in order to avoid a strong focus on national parliamentary politics was not to be located within the capitals of the respective countries.

By taking a longitudinal approach that encompasses 25 years of political reporting within Europe, we also take the EU's long-term development into account. Hence, the sample stretches over diverse phases of the European integration process, including the main developments and breaking points in EU history such as the establishment of the single market in the 1980s, the move towards political union in the 1990s, the introduction of the Euro, the enlargement in the 2000s and until the start of the current financial crisis in 2008. For each year in the sample (1982, 1989, 1996, 2003, 2008), two constructed weeks were created. For each day in these constructed weeks, the edition of one regional paper per country was selected.

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[4]   In order to investigate whether the news coverage has changed during the so-called 'crisis', we have collected data for a further wave of content analysis for the year 2013.

Table 1: Characteristics of the country sample

	Germany	France	Great Britain	Austria	Denmark	Poland
Size/power of a country	Big	Big	Big	Small	Small	Big
Length of EU membership	1958 (Founder)	1958 (Founder)	1973 (Long term member)	1995 (Short term member)	1973 (Long term member)	2004 (New member)
Attitude towards the EU	Euro-phile	Euro-phile	Euro-sceptic	Ambivalent	Ambivalent	Euro-phile
Regional Newspaper	**Westdt. Allgem. Zeitung**	**Ouest France**	**Manchester Evening News**	**Kleine Zeitung**	**Jydske Vestkysten**	**Dziennik Zachodni**

Within these twelve editions per year, only the political, the regional and local news sections were of interest for our sample. Inside those sections, only discursive articles were chosen for analysis in order to reflect the Europeanization of political discourse as a matter of opinion building. This not only included editorials and opinion articles but also news and reports that were published under a journalist's name. Whenever an article was marked with a journalist's specific name, we can assume a journalistic writing and/or editing process instead of a simple takeover of, for example, news agency material. The journalistic editing contributes to a discursive character not necessarily through explicit opinions and arguments but through the selection of what to report on and what to disregard. The sample also encompassed editorials and editorial page opinion articles as well as political columns, interviews and contributions from external authors such as politicians or societal relevant experts. In sum, it contained a range of articles in which political news was analysed, interpreted, argued or justified rather than just being proclaimed. In this line of argument, pure news agency material, service articles, features, letters to the editor etc. were not selected for coding, as they do not represent a discursive exchange. Following this procedure, our sample consists of 11,573 articles.

Following our distinction in the previous section, these articles were analysed focusing on vertical and horizontal Europeanization as well as on European identification. The *vertical dimension* was operationalized by monitoring a certain scope of EU politics. A process of vertical Europeanization could be stated either when EU institutions become more visible within the longitudinal analysis or when an increasing focus on European policies as a main topic occurred within these articles. The *horizontal dimension* was operationalized by the scope of a transnational exchange of arguments. If a considerable focus on other European countries occurred, determined either by their mentioning or through directly and indirectly quoted actors from these countries, we could claim a horizontal Europeanization. A far more demanding indicator, reaching beyond the aforementioned processes of Europeanization, is the process of *collective*

identification as European. It measures whether 'objective' communicative exchange across national borders is acknowledged by its participants 'subjectively' as a common discourse. It defines Europeanization in terms of the emergence of a common transnational "community of communication" (Habermas 2001; Risse 2010: 109). Hence the mentioning of we-references (e.g. "We, the Brits") or the naming of collective identities (e.g. "the French people", "the Europeans") were coded.[5]

Table 2: Dimensions and indicators of Europeanization

Dimension	Indicators
Vertical Europeanization	Monitoring transnational politics: - Visibility of EU institutions - Focus on EU policies
Horizontal Europeanization	Transnational discourse: - Focus on EU countries - Quotation from speakers from EU countries
European Identification	Level of Identification: - European "we"-references - References to EU countries as collectives

Since we have no normative point of reference what is a "good" and what is a "weak" scope of an European public sphere, Europeanization processes on each dimension can only be measured and interpreted by its relational proportions – in our case comparing regional newspaper reporting of several countries and comparing its development over time. Furthermore, we have to consider different scenarios that might be possible: processes of Europeanization can be counteracted by trends of (re-)nationalization at a particular point in time, tendencies of Europeanization can also stagnate and consolidate at a certain level.

## 4. NATIONALIZING EUROPE – EUROPE IN REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS

4.1 Vertical Europeanization

Monitoring European governance – as one dimension of the Europeanization of regional public spheres – is measured by looking at the visibility of EU institutions as well as the focus on EU policies within the regional newspapers in the sample.

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[5] All relevant variables – references to political institutions, countries, speakers, topics, we-identities, and collectives identities – could be coded several times within an article. Coder reliability of content related variables reached an average value of 0.98 according to Holsti's formula. By 98% accordance the intercoder reliability can be perceived highly satisfactory. The coding of topics with a value of 0.88 turned out to be the "most difficult" variable.

We see that the overall distribution of references to political institutions splits up into 72% of references to national institutions (political institutions like local, federal and national parliaments, governmental departments, courts of justice etc. were coded as national political institutions) and 19% into EU-institutions (and its predecessor institutions), whereas UN-institutions and other inter- and transnational institutions such as

Figure 1: References to political institutions (n = 5,225)
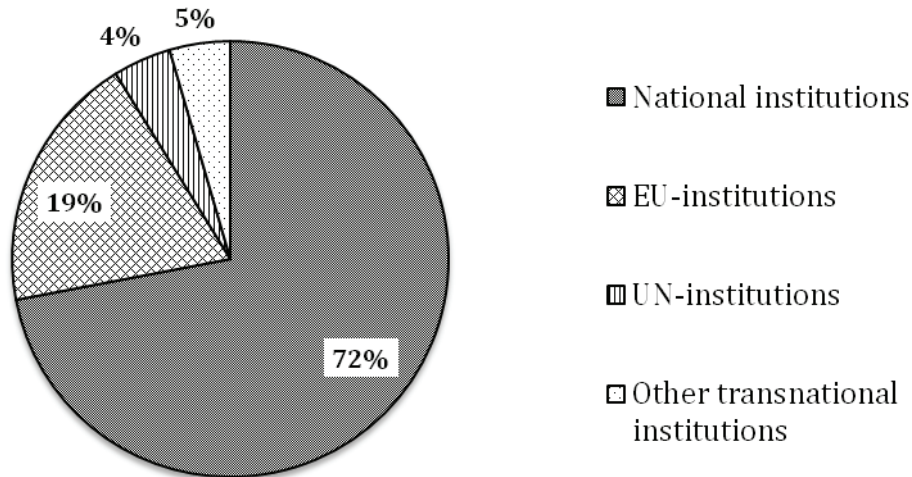
alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Bretton Wood institutions like the World Bank, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are almost irrelevant.

Figure 2: References to political institutions over time (n = 5,225)
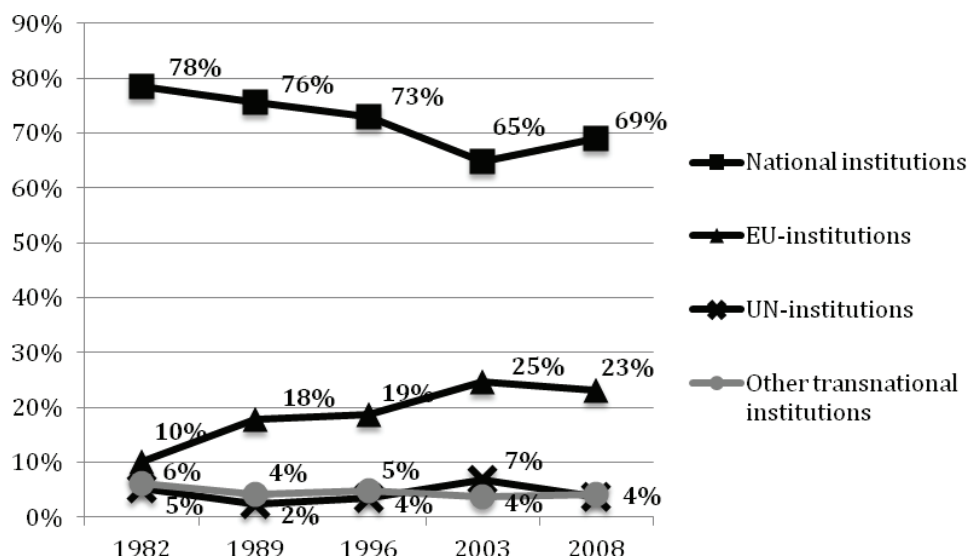
Observing the development over 26 years, we recognise a low, but more or less stable level of references to international institutions and a high, but decreasing level of references to national institutions. The process of European integration is accompanied by a

continuous increase of EU references in the news coverage up to 2003. Since then, trends seem to be returning to a re-nationalization at the expense of references to transnational institutions. But we suggest that this is not just a sign of narrowing the horizon of regional news coverage to national politics. Rather we can understand this, at least partly, as a phenomenon of readdressing national governments for the solution of European and global problems such as the financial crisis.

Table 3:   References to political institutions in different regional newspapers from 1982 to 2008 (lowest and highest percentage is marked)

	Westdt. Allgem. Zeitung (D)	**Ouest France (F)**	**Manchester Evening News (GB)**	**Kleine Zeitung (Ö)**	**Jydske Vestkysten (DK)**	**Dziennik Zachodni (PL)**	**Total**
National institutions	69% (469)	**48% (346)**	**90% (1086)**	69% (527)	70% (867)	77% (467)	3,762
EU-institutions	20% (138)	**37% (268)**	**6% (68)**	24% (183)	20% (245)	17% (101)	1,003
UN-institutions	6% (39)	**9% (65)**	**2% (24)**	4% (31)	4% (49)	3% (16)	224
Other transnational institutions	6% 39	**6% 46**	**2% 25**	4% 28	6% 74	4% 24	236
Total	685 (100%)	725 (100%)	1,203 (100%)	769 (100%)	1,235 (100%)	608 (100%)	5,225 (100%)

Comparing the proportions among the countries within our longitudinal sample, we notice – as expected – for the euro-sceptical *Great Britain* a major concentration on national references (90%) and the lowest percentage of EU-references (6%). Contrasting this with France, Great Britain also rarely displays references to other international institutions. The *French* regional news coverage seems to be the most transnationalized one. According to our data, it has the highest rates of reference to European (37%), United Nations (9%) and other transnational political institutions (6%). The regional news coverage in *Poland* also has high rates of national references, which might be attributable to their shortest duration of EU membership. Although the *Austrian* newspaper draws more attention to national institutions, it also focuses on EU institutions.

Taking political topics as an indicator for monitoring governance on different levels, we differentiated between 'domestic policy making', 'EU policies', 'foreign and international policies' and 'other societal topics'. In this last category, we summarized topics that deal with different societal topics like economy, social problems, crime, health, science, technology, environment, media, leisure, culture etc. but that do not move the process of policy making into the foreground. Most of the topics (68%) deal with such issues. If we focus only on articles in the sample that have the subject of policy making and compare their national or transnational orientation, we notice that domestic policies

dominate with 68%, EU policies are covered by 20% and foreign and international policies by 12% of the articles.

Figure 3: Thematic focus of the article: all topics (n = 13,257); topics relating to policy making processes (n = 4,281)

Analysing the variation over time, these proportions are comparatively stable until 2003. Again in 2008, we can see a slight increase of domestic policies (from 66 to 72%) at the expense of EU policies (from 23 to 21%) as well as foreign and international policies (from 8 to 4%).

Summarizing the results regarding a vertical Europeanization of regional public spheres, both indicators show references to the EU. Compared to the national, these references are on a lower but nevertheless visible and stable level. However, we also need to bear in mind that the Europeanization trend is broken from 2003 to 2008, although this can also be interpreted as a tendency of readdressing national politics for solving global and European problems. It remains to be seen if this trend will continue in the following years.

4.2 Horizontal Europeanization

'Mutual observation' and 'discursive exchange' are our two indicators for the horizontal Europeanization of public spheres. They focus on the cross-border flow of opinions and arguments and thereby show to what extent the public debates in the member states are integrated in a common European discourse. This dimension was measured by considering the range of countries being mentioned in the articles as well as the scope of foreign speakers, being quoted either directly or indirectly. National references and national speakers are those that are explicitly named or implicitly deducible from the content of the article and relate to the domestic origin of the regional newspaper. References to European member states and EU speakers relate to European nations that are EU members and therefore part of the community at the particular point of news reporting. Besides US references, all other foreign countries or their speakers are subsumed as "other foreign countries". Transnational speakers are those who – like Ban Ki-Moon, the Sec-

retary-General of the UN – represent inter- and transnational organizations and are not explicitly connected to their national origin.

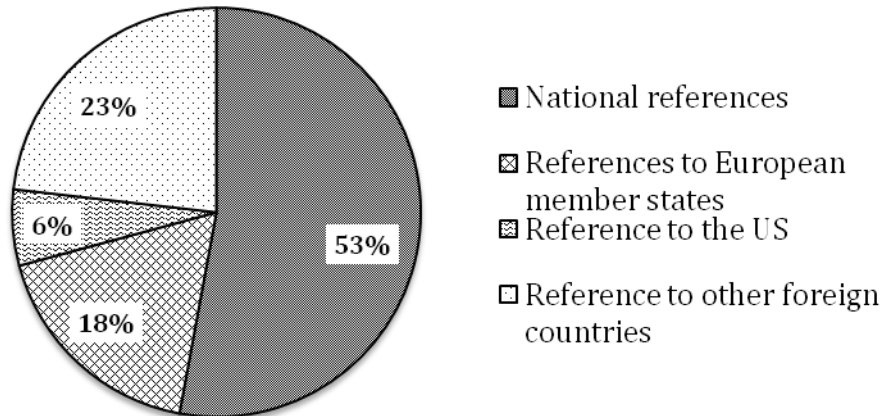*Figure 4: References to countries (n = 20,025)*

Figure 4 demonstrates the already mentioned dominance of national references. Also regarding geographic orientations within the articles, our data reveals that 53% of the country references relate to the home nation of the regional newspapers, 18% of the mentioned countries are European countries[6], 6% relate to the US and 23% to other foreign countries. However, comparing the level of vertical transnationalization, we can notice that the level of horizontal transnationalization is less dominated by domestic references (around 50% rather than 70%). In other words, regional news coverage can be considered to be quite transnational – including all the abovementioned topics.

Referring to figure 5, we can conclude that there always have been considerable proportions of references to European member states, independent from the Union's extent. When reporting about the EC member states in 1982 encompassed 10 member states, in 2008 it already meant 25 EU member states. The leap from 15% to 19% probably mirrors the functional consolidation of the European Union by the Maastricht treaty, which resulted in a growing general attention for other member states. Regarding the continuous extension of the Union, it is no wonder that, at the same time, the high level of references to other foreign countries decreases from 31 to 19%. Furthermore, this is also related to the political situation of the Cold War and the attention paid to the Eastern states until the fall of the iron curtain at the end of the 1980s. Post-9/11 news coverage and an increasing global activity of the US in the fight against international terrorism might have resulted in the peak of US references in 2003. But looking at the trend of domestic references over time, it is fluctuating and difficult to interpret. We can see a

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[6]   Results in the category "European member states" have been calculated dynamically, i.e. country references were recoded from non-EU-member to EU-member depending on their changing status in the respective data-coding wave (e.g. Poland has been coded as a non-EU-member in the years 1982 to 2003 and as a EU-member in 2008).

Figure 5: References to countries over time (n = 20,025)
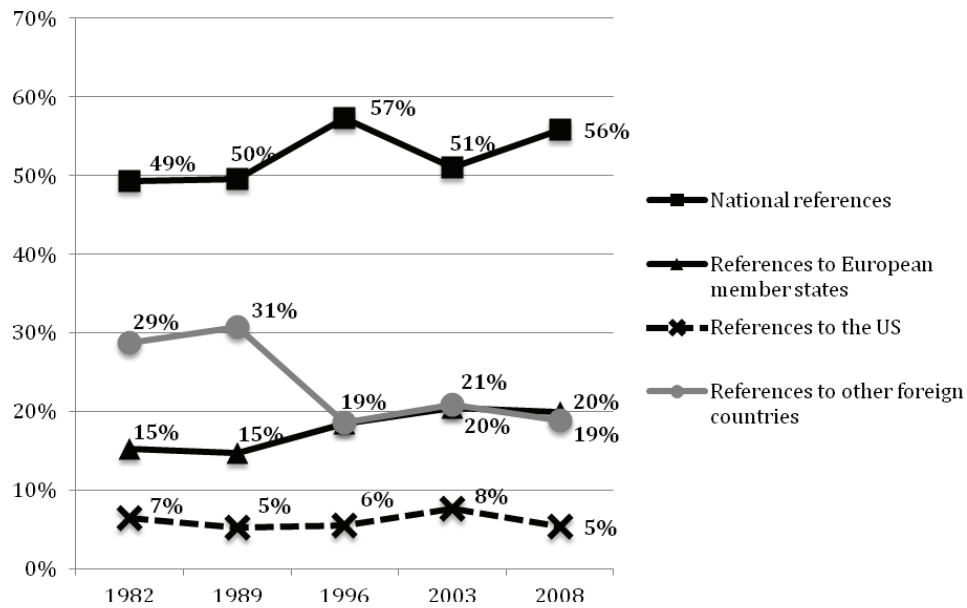
peak of 57% in 1996 and a trend of increasing national references from 2003 to 2008. If this trend continues in future and in case it would be accompanied by lower EU monitoring and sinking references to EU member states, we would term it "renationalization". In that sense, it would indicate an upcoming limitation of news coverage to national discourses at the expense of a wider transnational discourse.

Table 4:   References to countries in different regional newspapers from 1982 to 2008 (lowest and highest percentage is marked)

	Westdt. Allgem. Zeitung (D)	**Ouest France (F)**	**Manchester Evening News (GB)**	**Kleine Zeitung (Ö)**	**Jydske Vestkysten (DK)**	**Dziennik Zachodni (PL)**	**Total**
National references	48% (1,412)	**42%** (1,619)	**67%** (2,495)	46% (1,147)	59% (2,529)	51% (1,382)	10,584
References to European nations	18% (531)	19% (747)	**10%** (375)	**23%** (566)	17% (737)	**23%** (632)	3,588
References to the US	7% (210)	7% (249)	7% (277)	6% (154)	5% (191)	5% (125)	1,206
References to other foreign countries	27% (781)	**32%** (1,228)	**16%** (604)	25% (633)	19% (817)	21% (584)	4,647
Total	2,934 (100%)	3,843 (100%)	3,751 (100%)	2,500 (100%)	4,274 (100%)	2,723 (100%)	20,025 (100%)

Although the *Danish Jydske Vestkysten* is also marked by a higher proportion of national references than transnational ones, it is again the news coverage of the *Manchester*

Evening News (weak transnationalization) and of the *Ouest France* (strong transnation-alization) that mark the opposite poles of the statistical distribution. On the one hand, the euro-sceptical attitude and the insular position of *Great Britain* go along with low levels of attention towards other European countries (10%). On the other hand, France pays attention to other European countries (19%) but even more frequently to other non-European countries (32%). Within our sample, interestingly it is the newspapers of the newest EU member states, *Poland* (2004) and *Austria* (1995) that monitor their Europe-an neighbours intensely. With the exception of *Great Britain*, the level of horizontal Europeanization among the long-term members *France* (19%), *Germany* (18%) and *Denmark* (17%) is on a similar level. The proportion of references to the US in all regional papers is on the same level, varying from 5 to 7%. This low amount of US refer-ences in a British newspaper is quite surprising, considering the Anglo-Saxon geo-linguistic and political space.

A second indicator for a transnational discourse is the origin of the speakers quoted within the articles. If actors, irrespective of their function in society, from other Europe-an countries are directly or indirectly quoted, we could assume an integrated discourse culture among the European member states.

Figure 6: Origin of quoted speakers (n = 18,900)
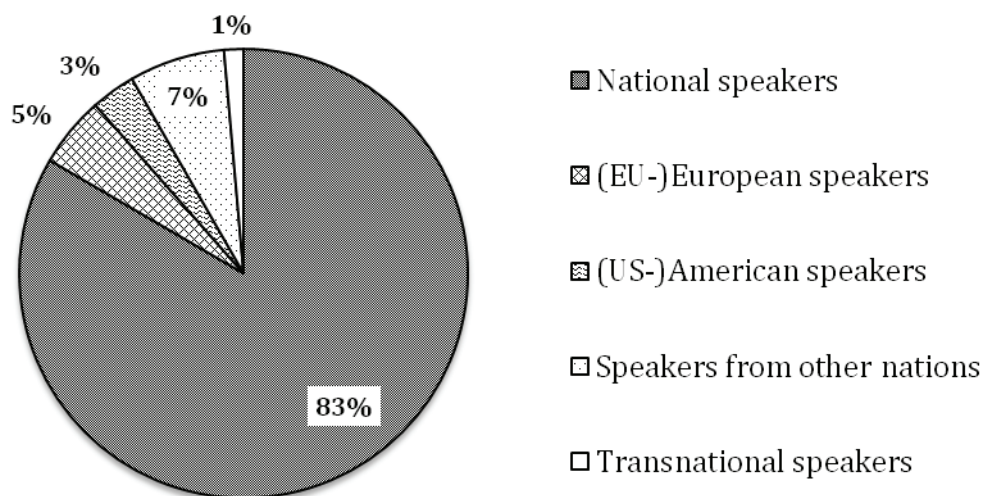
With a proportion of 83% of national actors among all quoted actors, figure 6 illustrates the strongest dominance of national references. We can notice a 50-50 relation regarding national and transnational country references, a 70 to 30 relation regarding national and transnational institutional references, and a 80 to 20 relation when it comes to speakers as sources within the articles in our sample. Speakers from other non-European countries are quoted only in 7% and speakers from European countries in only 5% of the cases. American and transnational speakers are completely marginalized. When analysing our data over time, there are slight fluctuations from one year to the next. But in the long run, the tendency remains stable on each level. Comparing the

proportions among the analysed newpapers, it is the *Kleine Zeitung* from *Austria* with 72% that has the lowest level of national speakers for the benefit of a higher share of European speakers (11%) and speakers from the US (5%). Likewise to its country references, it is *Ouest France* with a share of 12% speakers from other nations turned out to cover the most transnationalized discourse beyond European reach.

Summarizing these results regarding a horizontal Europeanization of regional public spheres, we can conclude an increase in mutual observation but little discursive exchange. Regional newspaper reporting pays attention to other European countries but speakers from these countries are hardly represented at all. Related to country references, we can state a re-nationalization trend between 2003 and 2008 since national references increase at the expense of all references to other foreign countries. However, we have to consider that over this period more and more foreign states (many states from the former Eastern Bloc) became part of the group of EU states and the peak to other states in 1989 might especially result in the special Eastern political transformation situation at that time. On the other hand, between 2003 and 2008, references to EU member states also maintained a consistent level. Therefore, our data might also indicate an intense internal European discourse about solving the crisis and not a pure re-nationalization. Future content analyses have to be undertaken for a deeper understanding of this matter.

4.3 European Identification

Our third and final analytical dimension relates to the construction of communities as they are articulated in the regional newspapers. A precondition for the self-perception as part of the European community is a collective identity, expressed in statements as "We, the Europeans" or at least the existence of a topos like "the Europeans" within the journalistic content. Hence, we distinguish between the dimension of identification "we-references" and "collective identities" as the significant others in the public discourse.

By analysing we-references across time, it becomes obvious that in most regional newspapers we find exclusive we-references on quite a stable level at an average of 81%. "Exclusive we-references" means that the author of the article or an actor who is quoted in the article identifies him- or herself with a certain community, not including the reader (e.g. "We, the trade union" or "We, the homosexuals"). National we-references are at an average level of 18% and increased in the years between 2003 and 2008 from 15 to 21%. Regarding our main focus of interest the amount of European we-references, we have to state a constant level of negligible 0 to 1%.

Figure 7: We-References over time (n = 13,969)
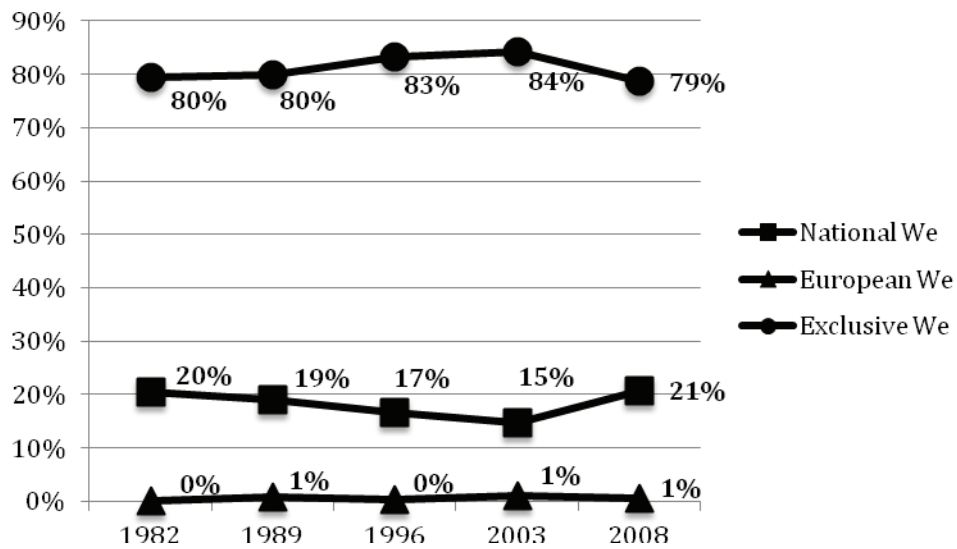

Comparing the proportions among our analysed newpapers, it is remarkable that besides exclusive we-references the *Ouest France* shows a lot of national we-references (20%) and with 2% above-average European we-references.

Figure 8: References to collective identities (n = 2,674)
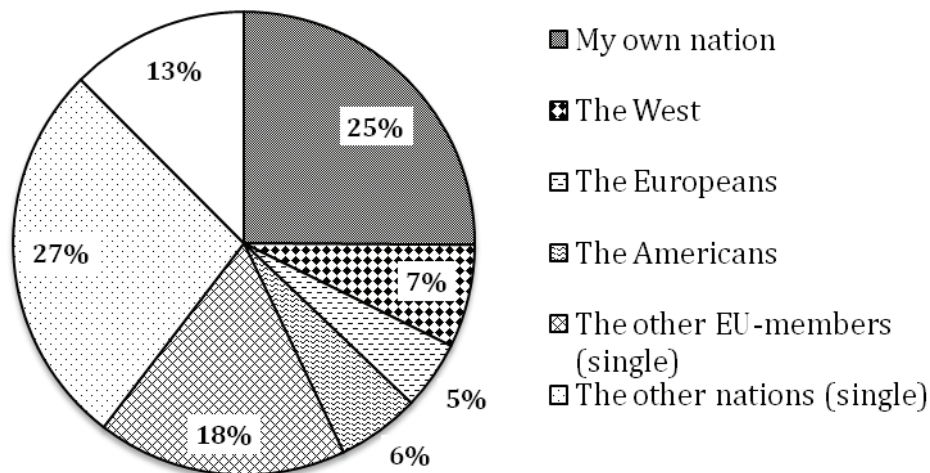
As presented in figure 8, there is a remarkable distribution of different collective identities in our sample. Addressing their own nation as a community (e.g. "The Germans" in the *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*) is on the one hand as common (25%) as addressing other non-Western and non-European nations in the same way (27%). Other European member states are in 18% of the cases individually addressed, whereas "The Europeans" as a collective is only mentioned in 5% of the cases. "The West" as a community is named in 7% and "The Americans" in 6% of the cases. Other transnational communities, for example: communities beyond the national frame like religious or ethnic groups, are referenced in 12% of the cases.

Figure 9: References to collective identities over time (n = 2,674)
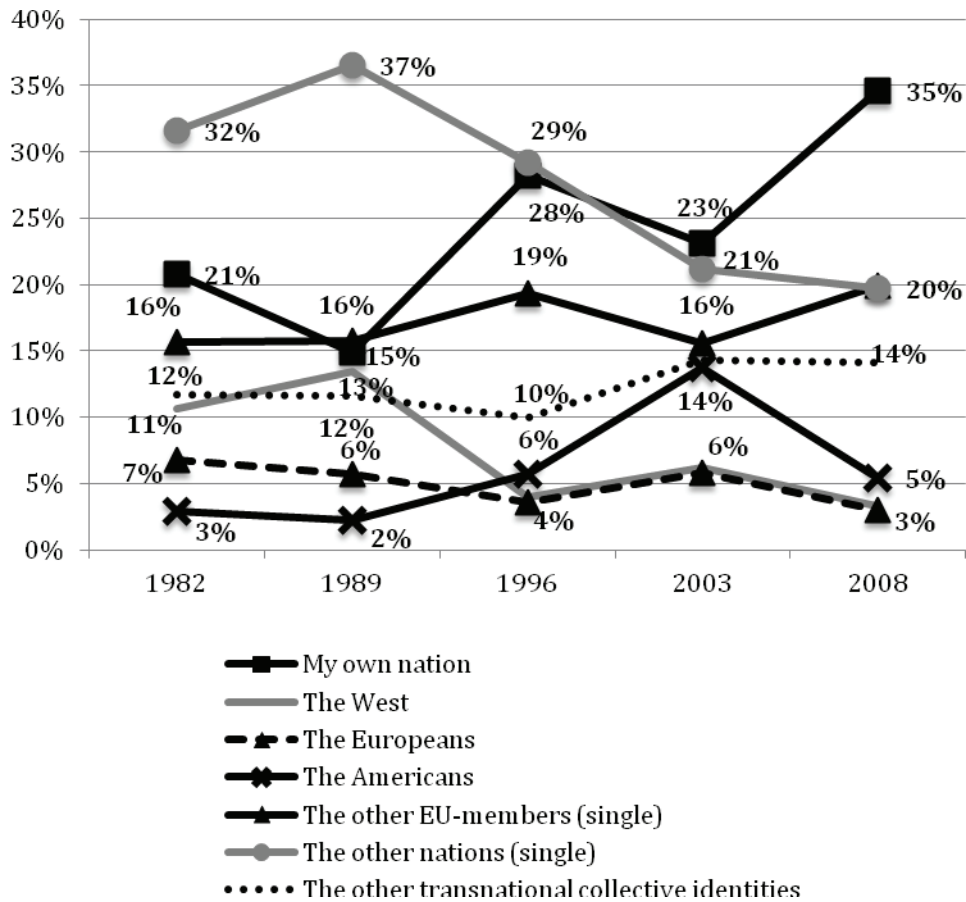
In figure 9, we can notice at first glance that the proportions for all references to collective identities are quite fluctuant over time. Nonetheless, there are some remarkable tendencies. References to the own nation are varying but constantly rising in the long run (from 21 to 35%). References to the West as an identifiable collective are fluctuating but constantly decreasing (from 13 to 3%). Already starting on a low level, and then likewise slowly decreasing, are references to "the Europeans" (from 7 to 3%), whereas single European member states are more frequently addressed as collectives (from 16 to 20%). As in some of the other dimensions, we can also see here in the collective dimension that references to "the Americans" are most frequently made in the post 9/11 era in the year 2003. In 2008, the level of references, however, goes back to the pre-9/11 level of 1996. Regarding references to collective identities to other nations, we can see a major decrease from 37 to 20%. This tendency might be seen as complementing the decrease of references to other nations that we have already seen for the country references in figure 5. Here, we have explained the decreasing interest to other nations as a consequence of the on-going European integration process and the admission of more member states. In addition, we have to keep in mind the collapse of the USSR in 1989 resulting in dissolution of the Western and Eastern spheres as closed political entities.

References to other transnational collective identities are more or less stable at between 10 and 14%.

Summarizing the results regarding European identification within the regional press coverage, we can conclude that there is hardly any evidence of an explicitly expressed shared European identification: there is no growing common reference to "We as European". On the contrary, the collective "the European" even seems to lose weight in the public discourse. But it can be noted that Europe is perceived in another way, namely identified by the single European countries that are increasingly addressed as collectives.

5. CONCLUSION

The following questions formed the starting point of our analysis of regional newspaper coverage: Do we find in European regional press the same, however contested trend of Europeanization as we know it from the quality press? Or are there other trends like (re-)nationalization? And can we link this in a certain way to the characteristic of the regional newspapers as "reporter"? Summarizing our presented research, we can conclude an ambivalent result. A *vertical Europeanization* can be observed until 2003 through an increasing visibility of EU institutions that is referred to at a middle-range level, whereas explicitly European policies are quite rarely addressed in the regional news coverage. The latter is hardly surprising because it seems to be the result of the already mentioned pragmatic choices of journalists in regional papers as "reporters" keeping their broad audience and their interests in mind. Maybe also unsurprisingly, we could show that France and Great Britain often constitute the opposite ends of the scale of Europeanization, paralleling to a certain extent the countries' respectively rather eurosceptic or europhile positions. From starting already at a quite visible level, a slight tendency of *horizontal Europeanization*, i.e. a growing focus on EU countries, can be found up to the year 2003. In contrast to Great Britain, the more recently joined members Poland and Austria show the strongest horizontal tendencies for Europeanization. However, when it comes to the possibility of being quoted in the news coverage, speakers from other European countries are mainly absent. This fact also remains stable over time. It can be explained by the process of newsgathering within regional outlets: due to financially limited resources regional papers usually cannot employ foreign correspondents to get access to international actors as sources and therefore mostly rely on news agencies. The indicators for *European identification* are visible to an even lesser extent. European "we-references" are nearly non-existent and "the Europeans" are losing weight over time. However, what is obvious instead is that references to the single EU members as collectives are on a good middle-range level and increase over time.

Interestingly, these elementary results are completely in line with our previous content analyses of quality and boulevard newspapers (Hepp et al. 2012: 63-83). We also found a rising attention for EU politics since 2003 and a flattening vertical Europeanization in 2008. We could already observe a constant interest in European neighbours as a sign of a stable horizontal Europeanization and only minimal evidence of a European identification. However, what the analysis of the regional papers could furthermore impressively reveal is that Europe as a community is founded and is discussed on the basis of still existing and very strong European nations. Especially between 2003 and 2008, the own nation and 'the national' as point of reference in the news coverage became an important matter in *all* newspapers. In our longitudinal research, the trend increased at the time the financial crisis started in Europe. As already argued, further research is needed to interpret this data in an appropriate way. Is it just an indicator of a re-nationalization? Or do we have a more complex pattern whereby the relation between the own nation, other European nations, and the EU is re-negotiated? Both would have resulted in a higher number of national references in 2008 but the outcome would be quite a different one. Our content analysis of 2013 will at least provide information about further developments and give us the chance to discuss this matter more deeply.

Finally, increasing national references in the news coverage in the context of the EU and Europe is not inevitably an opposition or even contradiction to the process of Europeanization nor is it dysfunctional for European integration. And as Georg Vobruba (2013) argues, the "Eurozone crisis might not be a deadly challenge to the whole European construct, but rather become a further step towards a European society", since it "set off a new dynamic of people's action and institution building" (Vobruba 2012: 276). Therefore, we are confronted with complex processes of struggle and re-negotiation between European countries that are not contrary to a step-by-step constitution of a European society but part of it. Here, Vobruba reminds us of the classical sociological analysis by Georg Simmel that demonstrated how far the national society was also constructed by conflict. It remains a subject for further research whether this ambivalent trend between 2003 and 2008 will continue and actually result in a re-nationalization or in a more intense Europeanization.

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APPENDIX

I. Codebook

Beside several formal categories such as "date of publication", "length of the article", "mode of presentation" etc., the codebook contains five groups of categories for analysing the articles' content: 1) references to authors and speakers, 2) references to countries, (world) regions and political institutions, 3) references to topics, 4) discursive references and citations and 5) references to collective identities.

All relevant variables could be coded several times within an article (e.g. "country reference" 1, 2, 3 up to a predefined maximum of numbers), while each value should not be coded more than once (e.g. "country reference" 1 = United Kingdom), even if one country or speaker was mentioned several times (e.g. Angela Merkel is directly quoted three times, but coded one time). Variables of identification were handled differently. Here, "we-references" and references to "collective identities" were coded as often as mentioned.

Authors and speakers where generally coded through their societal function (e.g. David Cameron, Prime Minister) and their national origin (e.g. David Cameron, United Kingdom). Furthermore, we differentiated between individual actors (e.g. David Cameron) and collective actors like institutions (e.g. the British Government), political parties, groups etc. that were quoted directly and indirectly by the journalist. This distinction is essential in order to observe the degree of personalization within the news coverage. Authors and speakers that have multiple functions (e.g. Tony Blair, Prime Minister and President of the European Council in 2005) or multiple references to their country of origin were coded in their first mentioned function resp. origin (e.g. in an interview with an Egyptian-descent scientist from Harvard, she would be coded as American, if it is first mentioned that she comes from Harvard; she would have been coded as "Egyptian" if here origin was mentioned first). When it comes to transnational politics within the EU, the UN or other transnational organisations, political actors generally are being framed as both national and transnational actors. If their nationality is not explicitly mentioned, they are coded as transnational (e.g. "Nikolas Sarkozy, President of the European Council" would be coded as transnational, whereas "the Spanish commissioner Joaquín Almunia" would be coded as Spanish). If journalists give both descriptions within the article for stylistic reasons, actors are coded as first introduced (e.g. "Nikolas Sarkozy, President of the European Council, pronounced at the summit (…). The Frenchman emphasized (…)". The journalist that has written the article is neither being coded as "author" nor as "speaker". In the first case the variable "author" exclusively concentrated on media-external authors. In the second case every statement would need to be considered as a direct or indirect self-quotation, which makes no sense. Only in

the case of references to "we-identities" and "collective identities" journalists were identified as sources.

Among *references to countries, (world) regions and political institutions* we differentiate between "primary references" and "secondary references". This is important in order to get an insight into which countries and political institutions are in the centre or at the margins of political debates. Moreover, the ratio of "primary references" and "secondary references" can show, how news about foreign countries or transnational organisations are being treated within the domestic context of a newspaper. Should it turn out that the EU is predominantly mentioned through secondary references, it hints at a "domestification" resp. a "nationalization" of European politics. "Primary references" were coded when countries, regions or institutions were explicitly mentioned in the heading, the prefix or in the first paragraph of the text. In exceptional cases, when a country was mentioned in the first paragraph, but evidently was not the main focus of the article, it could be coded as the "secondary reference". If cities like "Brussels" or "New York" were mentioned but the article clearly did not address Belgium or the US but seats of the EU or the UN, they where coded as the corresponding institutions. With regard to world regions the coder coded territorial references and not collective identities such as "the West", "the Africans" or political institutions such as the "EU" for the region "Europe".

The coding of *topics* was introduced to provide information about the similarity of public discourse agendas. A general "topic" was always being coded and also if applicable a "EU policy field" in a separate variable. For the general topic the main theme or the central focus of the article was decisive, which was not always easy to deduct. The most important clue for coding the main topic was the heading and the first paragraph. Further orientation could be provided by terms that were frequently mentioned within the article. As far as possible only one "topic" should have been coded and only if necessary a second or third topic was added. In opposition to that every, even incidental references to "EU policy fields" was coded.

A "speaker" is somebody whose position is directly or indirectly quoted. Only speech acts (such as somebody has said, asked, expressed something) were being coded and not someone's action (such as somebody has decided, abolished, adopted, prevented something). Statements from documents (i.e. laws, directives, studies) were also coded as quotations, when an individual or collective author could be identified as speaker.

The last category of variables dealt with different types of identification. We assumed that references to *collective identities* were marked by self-identification of the speaker on the one hand (we-references) and by addressing external collectives on the other hand (references to collective identities). A "we-reference" was coded if personal

pronouns like "we", "us" or "our" appeared in the article. The use of articles like "the Germans", "the Europeans", "the Muslims" or "the West" was an indicator for referring to national or cultural communities. Coders had to be attentive to only code "the Germans" as a collective identity when it related to the German population and not for example the German government. In English such collective names are generally associated with the word "people", e.g. "the British people". For each we-reference and for each collective identity we coded the function and origin of the person who made the reference.

II. Coding procedure

The leading coding principle was that all assigned codes had to be assignable to specific words or passages in the article (i.e. no free interpretations). Specific situations, however, required additional research by the coders. If, for example, the government in office at a specific time in the past (e.g. 1982) was unknown to the coder, it was legitimate to do research on that topic. It was also allowed to gather more information on the origin of a prominent actor in the article, when it was obvious that his or her origin was assumed to be known by the readers of the newspaper.

III. Coding example

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Snowden (PRIM COUNTR: USA) **asylum <u>'victory'</u> <u>hailed</u> by Assange** (PRIM COUNTR: AUSTR)

• Ex-**US** spy allowed to stay in **Russia** (PRIM COUNTR) for now

• Wikileaks founder <u>welcomes</u> the decision

ALAN JONES

WIKILEAKS founder Julian Assange <u>hailed</u> the granting of temporary asylum by **Russia** to former **US** intelligence contractor Edward Snowden as a victory in the fight against President Barack Obama's <u>'war on whistle-blowers'</u>.

Mr Snowden left the transit zone of a **Moscow** airport and entered **Russia** after authorities granted him asylum for one year.

The former National Security Agency (SEC INST) systems analyst has been at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport since his arrival from **Hong Kong** (SEC COUNTR) on June 23.

WikiLeaks <u>said</u> he left the airport in a taxi accompanied by the whistleblowing website's legal advisor Sarah Harrison and had headed to a <u>'secure, confidential'</u> place.

WikiLeaks <u>praised</u> **Russia** for accepting Mr. Snowden's request for asylum and supporting him for the past few weeks, when many countries <u>'felt so compromised by **US** threats'</u> that they could not.

Mr Assange, who has been living at the **Ecuadorian** (SEC COUNTR) embassy (SEC INST) in **London** (SEC COUNTR: GREAT BRITAIN) for over a year fighting extradition to **Sweden** (SEC COUNTR), <u>said</u>:

<u>"This is another victory in the fight against Obama's war on whistleblowers. This battle has been won, but the war continues.</u>

<u>"The **United States** can no longer continue the surveillance of **world (**SEC REGION**)** citizens and its digital colonisation of sovereign nations. The public will no longer stand for it. Whistle-blowers will continue to appear until the government abides by spy Edward Snowden its own laws and rhetoric."</u>

The article „Snowden asylum 'victory' hailed by Assange" was published on Friday, 2nd August 2013 in the British regional paper Manchester Evening News.

10>>NATIONAL AND INTERNATI[ON]

Snowden asylum 'victory' hailed by Assange

412446

- Ex-US spy allowed to stay in Russia for now
- Wikileaks founder welcomes the decision

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'This battle has been won but the war continues'

Mr Assange, who has been living at the Ecuadorian embassy in London for over a year fighting extradition to Sweden, said: "This is another victory in the fight against Obama's war on whistleblowers. This battle has been won, but the war continues.

"The United States can no longer continue the surveillance of world citizens and its digital colonisation of sovereign nations. The public will no longer stand for it. Whistle-blowers will continue to appear until the government abides by its own laws and rhetoric."

WHISTLEBLOWER Former US spy Edward Snowden

As "primary country references" we coded "USA", "Australia" and "Russia". As "secondary country references" we coded "Japan", "Great Britain", "Ecuador" and "Sweden". A secondary reference to "world" as a "region" can be related back to the mentioning of "world citizens". There are two institutions mentioned in the article: "National Security Agency" and "Ecuadorian embassy". As they cannot be identified as specific political institutions in our codebook, we coded them as "other political institution". The article's main topic is "Human rights, also: freedom of speech" and "Foreign policy, international relationships / organisations". Regarding "discursive references", we find several statements that are related to two different speakers. Julian Assage, who is the leader of a transnational journalistic non-profit organisation, is directly and indirectly quoted in statements like "Snowden asylum 'victory' hailed by Assange", "Wikileaks founder welcomes the decision" and "Mr Assange (…) said…". Wikileaks is being quoted as a collective or rather institutional actor. Wikileaks as a transnational, non-profit online-platform was coded as "Other transnational interest/civil society group". Its origin was therefore coded as "transnational". With reference to Wikileaks we identified statements like "WikiLeaks said he left the airport…", "WikiLeaks praised Russia for accepting Mr. Snowden's request…". According to the rule of coding only one statement per actor we coded two direct (visible through the quotation marks) "discursive references". The article does not contain "we-references" nor references to "collective identities".

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