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PhD Thesis Title: *Investigating the correlation between the practice of EU Cohesion Policy and Euroscepticism: An exploratory qualitative analysis of selected EU regions*

PhD Thesis/Paper Abstract: The aim of the doctoral project consists in investigating whether and at which extent the practice of EU Cohesion Policy has inadvertently impacted upon the centrifugal forces and Eurosceptic dynamics observed in the EU, by focusing in particular on why the policy has not managed to create lasting positive images about the Union and thus contribute to the development and diffusion of the EU identity. Drawing from and aspiring to contribute to the literatures on Europeanization, Euroscepticism and Public Policy, the project explores the perceptions of supranational, national and sub-national elites about EU Cohesion Policy and the extent at which different strategies and organizational/operational modalities at national and sub-national levels influence the efficient implementation thereof. The methodological framework consists in exploratory qualitative case-study research of selected EU regions in Greece, the United Kingdom and Poland, whereas data and findings collated during elite interviews are interpreted through the lens of discourse analysis. The paper submitted to the Symposium represents a section of the literature review and some preliminary theoretical considerations relating to Euroscepticism.

Exploring Euroscepticism: Historical roots, conceptual enquiries and current implications for the future of EU

Introduction

Under the current climate of challenge of the conventional political establishment, strict fiscal discipline leading to economic austerity and ensuing social disruption emerging or prevailing in a number of European Union (EU) countries, fostering *inter alia* Euroscepticism and nationalism, there is increasing academic interest in understanding and framing the limits of Europeanization and the multi-speed Europe phenomenon in a range of policy sectors. Drawing from and aspiring to contribute to the literature on EU studies, the paper focuses on the phenomenon of Euroscepticism and discusses its historical roots, conceptualization and current implications for the future of the European Union construction.

The Roots of Euroscepticism

Having emerged in the early 1990s and gained increasing ground within the discourse on EU politics ever since, Euroscepticism figures as an ever-timely and relevant phenomenon nowadays. The historical roots of the term trace in Britain, where in the course of the 1960s ‘Eurosceptic’ was used as a synonym for ‘anti-marketeters’ or opponents to the country’s accession to the Union, and where it still constitutes “*a very different and much more intensive phenomenon than in the rest of the EU*” (Harmsen 2005). Therefore, although indices of Euroscepticism have surfaced in a more or less concealed manner in certain member states from as early as their accession to the EU, even before that, the phenomenon as such emerged as an open discourse when the 1992 Danish referendum rejected the Maastricht Treaty, the latter signaling the end of the “*permissive consensus*” era (Harmsen and Spiering 2004).

In more detail, the fast-pacing process of European integration taking place between the 1980s-2000s has been generally supported by both European elites and European citizens, the latter being passive or even condescending to the political decisions of the former. This pattern has also been congruent with the neo-functionalist approach sustaining that elite decision-making and behavior was the driving force behind the European integration process. Nonetheless, with supranational institutions pushing towards further integration, a gap has been created between the European and national elites and the population regarding the implications and future of the European construction, and member states’ citizens started scrutinizing and/or questioning the European project as a whole or several aspects and policies thereof (Milner 2000; Wessels 2007). The gap between the two gave birth to Eurosceptic patters, which have been developed around several arguments grounded on different logics and points of departure. Before moving to the most eminent factors susceptible to trigger Euroscepticism, a more in-depth elaboration on the term *per se*, and the different notions and typologies attached to it seems useful.

Conceptualizing Euroscepticism

With regards to the conceptualization of the term, various definitions and approaches to the study of Euroscepticism figure in the literature. In a broader context, the notion implies “*an attitude of doubt or a disposition of belief*” (Hooghe and Marks 2007) towards deeper European integration or specific European policies (Flood 2002), or “*a fundamental opposition towards the European Union*” (Harmsen 2005). The most widely used definition has been provided by Szczerbiak and

Taggart, according to whom Euroscepticism “*expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration*” (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2003). This definition, mainly applicable to party-based Euroscepticism distinguishes between soft and hard opposition to the process of European integration, yet is criticized on grounds of being very broad and all encompassing (Kopecky and Mudde 2002). It is worth mentioning that some positive connotations have been attributed to Euroscepticism as well; in particular, that the latter implies the increased critical capacity of the public to analyze, judge and have a saying on policy directions, and the argument that elites cannot govern without popular consent. In this vein, Euroscepticism has been quoted as a ‘healthy’ phenomenon as it allows for the involvement of citizens in EU policy making processes (Milner 2000). The opposite argument, sustaining that Euroscepticism occurs as a result of the lack of proper information on what is really happening at EU level and how decisions are taken has also been developed.

Typologies of Euroscepticism

Drawing from the ideological dimension of policy perceptions, preferences and positions adopted by both political parties and the public opinion (where applicable), Kopecky and Mudde propose a rather comprehensive typology of Euroscepticism angles grounded on the concepts of ‘diffuse support’ and ‘specific support’ towards general ideas about the European Union and specific EU practices respectively (Kopecky and Mudde 2002). Therefore, they perceive Euroscepticism as a two-dimensional phenomenon. The first dimension focuses on perceptions about the process of European integration *per se*, and distinguishes between *Europhiles* and *Europhobes*, whereas the second dimension looks at perceptions about the European Union as a whole and distinguishes between *EU-optimists* and *EU-pessimists*. Different pairs of ‘labels’ found in the two dimensions lead to a four-fold typology categorizing political parties, or the public, into further categories, such as *Euroenthusiasts*, *Europragmatists*, *Eurosceptics* and *Eurorejects* (Kopecky and Mudde 2002), each characterized by distinct approaches and attitudes vis-a vis European matters (Kopecky and Mudde 2002). Another account, proposed by Flood and Usherwood, distinguishes between six categories, namely *EU-maximalists*, who are in favor of further and fast-pacing European integration; *EU-reformists*, who despite supporting integration are also constructively skeptic towards specific parameters thereof; *EU-gradualists*, who are in favor of a slow and gradual EU integration process; *EU-minimalists*, who although having reconciled with the up-to-date state of EU affairs oppose to further integration; *EU-revisionists*, who would rather prefer less -than achieved- integration; and finally, *EU-rejectionists*, who reject both membership to the Union and thus, the European Union as a whole (Flood and Usherwood 2005). It becomes obvious that the different categories presented by both Kopecky and Mudde, and Flood and Usherwood are not mutually exclusive and that political parties and citizens can identify themselves as belonging to more than one group depending on the policy juncture at a given time.

Factors triggering Euroscepticism

With regards to the main factors and rationale behind the manifestation of Eurosceptic attitudes and perceptions both within national governments, political parties and among citizens, different approaches and explanatory paths can be found in the literature. To begin with, the *utilitarian approach* focuses on the direct and quantifiable benefits or costs resulting from the membership to the Union, and the European integration process (Gabel 1998; George 2000; Hooghe and Marks 2004). Therefore, drawing from the neofunctionalist approach to the study of EU integration, and trade theory, support for or opposition to the European project and integration processes are determined on the basis of utility and profit maximization incentives as well the capacity and efficiency of the EU executive to achieve its objectives and keep the ‘promises’ made to EU citizens, most notably with regards to economic benefits emanating from adhesion to the Union (Haas in Jensen 2003).

The second dimension, known as the *democratic approach*, is centered on the argument that the EU lacks democratic credentials (Follesdal and Hix 2005). In particular, advocates of this approach argue that the Union faces a broader democratic deficit problem, which can be observed at several occasions: the insufficiency of directly elected institutions and bodies, the lack of transparency in the EU decision-making process, the increased power of the EU executive at the detriment of national governments and parliaments, as well as the perceptions of the public on whether they feel represented by EU institutions, or whether they are aware of and feel close to the EU decision-making process (Mény 2003). Nonetheless, this approach has also been criticized, as some might suggest that given its *sui generis* nature and intrinsic characteristics, the Union and its complex governance setting are as democratic as they can be (Moravcsik 2002).

The third dimension of Euroscepticism, also referred to as the *sovereignty approach*, focuses on national sovereignty and identity and the fear or risk for the latter to get ‘overshadowed’, weaken or gradually disappear as a result of increased power transfer at the supranational level, converging policies and practices within and across member states, and EU integration- and Europeanization-driven pressures in a broader context (Hooghe and Marks 2004; McLaren 2007). In fact, in many cases one can observe that “*opposition to the European project is less about hostility to the institutions of the EU or concerns about personal economic/financial losses and more to do with fears of symbolic threat to the national community*” (McLaren 2007). Linking this argument to the previous section, the *rejectionist approach*, consisting in what is quoted in the literature as “hard” Euroscepticism (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002) encompasses *Eurorejects* (Kopecky and Mudde 2002) and *EU-rejectionists* (Flood and Usherwood 2005), who oppose to or reject the totality of the European project and all aspects relating to it. Obviously, this approach constitutes the most extremist dimension of the phenomenon, the latter posing serious threats to the unity and advancement of the European Union. A final point from which Eurosceptic patterns and ideologies might depart lies in the absence of economic and social nets {“Social Europe”} within the EU to countermand the negative implications of neoliberal policies dictated by globalization processes (Marks and Steenbergen 2002).

Current Manifestations & Implications of Euroscepticism

Notwithstanding the fact that Euroscepticism initially appeared and has figured as a marginal or peripheral phenomenon, whether ‘periphery’ relates to the extreme poles of party systems, the geographic landscape of the Union –most commonly linked to the study of EU politics within the UK and/or the Nordic countries- or the margins of domestic societies, in recent years, in particular since the late 1990s, it has “*spread at public opinion and party levels across the EU, contributing thus to changing academic understandings of the term, from a quasi-pathology to a mainstream and enduring phenomenon in European domestic societies and democracies*” (Leconte 2015). This shift from a “*permissive consensus*” (Harmsen and Spiering 2004) to a “*constraining dissensus*” (Michailidou 2015) culture and approach to the European integration process has also coincided and been strongly influenced by the transformation of the European and national EU-related media landscape (Michailidou 2015). For instance, in Britain, the already fragile and ‘complicated’ relationship between successive national governments and citizens on the one hand, and Europe on the other hand has been further aggravated by the eminent role and influence of the media, most notably the tabloid press, the latter providing significant insight on “*how the debate surrounding UK membership of the EU has in recent years completed its journey from the margins to the mainstream of British politics*” (Startin 2015).

Euroscepticism has been further triggered by the Eurozone crisis and the negative implications for European countries’ social structures. In fact, following economic austerity and other political and socio-economic developments informed and resulted by the Eurozone crisis, Eurosceptic patterns

and manifestations have been mainstreamed within the EU and increasingly affected not only the public opinion, as reflected in the negative outcomes of national referenda on different European matters, but also political parties, as manifested in the rise of populism and extreme right- and left-wing parties, civil society groups, media discourses, and even EU institutions themselves (Brack and Startin 2015). In addition, the crisis has not only ‘reinforced’ already existing Eurosceptic trends, but has also changed the traditional landscape between Europhiles and Europhobes by triggering novel – and differential according to the context- reactions in member states. For instance, in the UK, the crisis has been a contributing factor to the deterioration of an already ‘troubled’ relationship with Europe, the latter leading to the decision of the public opinion to withdraw EU membership. Greece, on the contrary, being traditionally one of the most Europhile EU members, has experienced a dramatic change in its political scenery and seen the unprecedented rise of skepticism and/or opposition towards the Union at both party and public opinion levels (Verney 2015). In a broader context, the crisis has strengthened opposition voices focusing on power, solidarity and accountability issues emanating from the past and current EU governance structure, has triggered the de-legitimization of both domestic and EU political institutions in some cases, e.g. Greece, and has paved the way for a debate on the need for a reformed Europe (Michailidou 2015).

Euroscepticism and ‘De-Europeanization’

In this context, Leontitsis and Ladi draw from retrenchment as a possible outcome to Europeanization pressures and make the case for “De-Europeanization” as a distinct form thereof. In more detail, in light of recent developments in Europe, in particular the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis and the ascent of extreme-right and Eurosceptic dynamics, increased pressure and coerciveness of Europeanization [as a EU institutions response to the multifaceted crisis] has rather triggered centrifugal tendencies in Europe, the latter carrying the risk for partial or more generalized De-Europeanization phenomena to be manifested (Leontitsis and Ladi, forthcoming). Therefore, two observations can be drawn from. First, that Euroscepticism and the different manifestations thereof consist in a multi-dimensional phenomenon affecting the EU integration process and the future of Europe in a broader context, and are differential both within and across member states and over time. In fact, as the conceptions and attitudes of the public opinion, central governments and other societal groups are susceptible -to a more or lesser extent- to change, Euroscepticism can also change over time. Second, that Europeanization outcomes are inextricably linked with Europeanization mechanisms given that ‘inappropriate’ mechanisms can trigger opposite to the desired results. As revealed by recent developments within the EU, increased Europeanization, mostly in the form of pressure and imposition, does not necessarily imply more Europe (Leontitsis and Ladi, forthcoming).

Conclusion

It has become clear that Europeanization, both as a normative and an analytical framework seems to be a solid and promiscuous starting point for interrogation and analysis on the broader understanding of EU politics, and in particular on framing the present state of EU affairs and suggesting a possible way out of the Union’s current ‘existential crisis’. Nonetheless, the manifestation and escalation of the current economic, political and social developments in Europe and the implications thereof for the European Union urges one to reflect on the limits of European integration and the multi-speed Europe phenomenon, and take a closer look at the gaps, misinterpretations and limits in the Europeanization literature.

It is in the light of these developments that the present doctoral project investigates whether and at which extent the practice of EU Cohesion Policy has inadvertently contributed to the centrifugal forces and Eurosceptic dynamics observed in the EU, by focusing in particular on why the policy has not managed to achieve one of its implicit objectives, namely the promotion of the EU identity. Although there might be other more evident and already documented factors justifying member states' resentment with the European Union, the fact that hardly any attempts have been made in the literature to associate the practice of EU Cohesion Policy with Euroscepticism makes our question a valid point for interrogation.

To this end, three working hypotheses are developed. Firstly, drawing from the theoretical framework on Europeanization, most notably the domestic mediating factors facilitating or impeding the transposition of EU law into national and sub-national structures and settings, we assume that there is a correlation between Europhile or Eurosceptic perceptions at national and/or sub-national level and the practice of EU Cohesion Policy. Secondly, departing from the literature on Public Policy, we anticipate that different strategies and policy styles employed by national and sub-national elites, as well as the territorial organization and level of decentralization in member states impact upon the practice of EU Cohesion Policy. Thirdly, we assume that the element of regional identity has manifold implications for both the national and European identities and are therefore interested in the correlation between the practice of EU Cohesion Policy and the pro- or anti-EU climate in EU regions with strong regional identities and the impact of the former on the perceptions of the latter about Europe.

It therefore might be that increasing Euroscepticism will prevail against further European integration in the years to come and that the Union will go back into being an exclusive club of countries, this time on grounds of different features and criteria than the ones in place when the EU was founded. But it might also be that the European project has not yet reached the end point and that EU policies might still be designed in an inclusive and implemented in a flexible manner respecting the intrinsic characteristics and capacities of its member states and the *principle of subsidiarity*. In this respect, accounts on how EU common policies are perceived, used and presented at the domestic level; whether long-term strategic objectives of these policies exist and are visible to EU citizens; and whether the feedback mechanisms and learning processes in place are adequate and suitable seem to be limited or altogether missing from the Europeanization literature and, thus are worth being explored.

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Title: The official discourse of Greek extreme right parties in the European Parliament between March 2015 and September 2016: A content analysis.

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Abstract

The relationship between the extreme right and the European integration seems to define the political agenda during the last years in an important degree, as it presents a strongly controversial character. This view usually finds fertile ground in the extreme right's position concerning the superiority of the member – state against the transnational institutions (Mudde 2011: 232 – 235). This kind of studies focuses on the role of the Eurosceptic phenomenon and how this is present at the “Left – Right” ideological axle. Therefore, studies refer either to a total or to a partial rejection of the European institutions (Kopecky & Mudde 2002: 300; Taggart & Szczerbiak 2008: 7 – 8; Vasilopoulou 2009: 4; 2011: 224, 232 - 234). The present study deals with the content analysis of extreme right discourse inside the European Parliament, while it simultaneously focuses on answering the following questions: a) how the appearance and the stabilization of extreme right parties in our country's political scene is connected with the growing dissatisfaction against the role of the EU and b) with which gradations Euroscepticism is presented in the official discourse of the extreme right parties.

Introduction

This article aims to study the political parties of Golden Dawn and Independent Greeks, which, according to theory are placed further than the established right in an ideological axle of “Left – Right”. The period on which our study focuses lasts from the 8th of March 2015, when we have the first official speeches from parties’ members in the European Parliament after the creation of the SYRIZA – ANEL coalition government (Rori 2016: 7), until the 15th of September 2016, when two of our study’s four members of the European Parliament take part in an official discussion for the last time. Our main variables during this study will be the economic crisis, which has already existed before the period considered, as well as the gradually ascending refugee crisis. In conclusion, we have to clarify that the research for the Euroscepticism’s gradations will be conducted through the study of the official discourse of the parties’ members and resources will be found through the official page of the European Parliament.

Analysis

1) *Notis Marias*

The party of Independent Greeks had its worst electoral result during the 2014 European Elections. As a result, only one representative of the party was elected, Notis Marias (Teperoglou et al. 2015: 12). Nevertheless, he left the party after a disagreement he had with its president, Panos Kammenos, in November 2014, although he kept his seat¹. Therefore, we are able to study an Independent European Parliament member who belongs to the European Conservatives and Reformists political party. For his case, we studied 17 texts, which belong as much to the “Debates” section as to the “Parliamentary Questions” of the parliamentary activities. After analysing these texts, the following value categories have occurred: “national interest” (13 times), “solidarity” (7 times), “responsibility” (5 times), “national sovereignty” (4 times), “democracy” (2 times), “respect” (1 time) and “equality” (1 time). Our analysis has the opportunity to delve deeper, striving to offer us the discourse’s dimension. The occurring basic dimensions are as follows: the “social” and the “economic”, followed by the “sovereign” (7 times), the “political” (6 times), the “migratory” (2 times) and the “humanitarian” and the “institutional” occurring only once.

According to the above stated, we accept that the values have a “positive” side, which means that the values’ fitting is linked to the respect of human identity, human rights, law, democracy, equality and freedom². In the case of Notis Marias, the

¹ Newspaper of the Editors (Efimerida twv Sintaktwn), ‘To divorce Independent Greeks – Notis Marias’ (2014), available at <http://www.efsyn.gr/arthro/pros-diazugio-anexartitoi-ellines-notis-marias>, 9 November (accessed 07 May 2017)

² ‘Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union’, (2000/C 364/01). available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf (accessed 07 May 2017)

negative crisis, according to the consequences he cited, is presented 19 times with the emphasis being put on the “economic” dimension (6 times), a fact that can be explained from the anti-memorandum position Marias kept. Simultaneously, the “social dimension” appears 4 times, as the economic crisis has affected immediately and negatively the society. Although we have the expression of a positive crisis (14 times), this usually has to do more with some kind of an antisystemic political movement, an indication of an independence movement, than with documented political views and therefore results in a 4 times expression of both sovereign and social dimension. Our coding takes the following form:

DATE	24 / 6 / 2015	11 / 5 / 2016
TOPIC	REVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK: STOCKTAKING AND CHALLENGES (DEBATE)	RESTORING A FULLY FUNCTIONING SCHENGEN SYSTEM (DEBATE)
SPEAKER	NOTIS MARIAS	NOTIS MARIAS
STATUS	EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEMBER	EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEMBER
PARTY	INDEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT
VALUE	DEMOCRACY	NATIONAL INTEREST
WHO ADOPTS	ANTI-MEMORANDUM CITIZENS - ECR	ANTI-MEMORANDUM CITIZENS - ECR
PURPOSE OF THE SPEECH	REVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK	DEBATE ABOUT THE RESTORING OF THE SCHENGEN SYSTEM
WHAT KIND OF PROBLEM	GREEKS’ DECISIONS NEED TO BE RESPECTED BY THE EUROZONE	INCOMPLETE REFUGEE RELOCATION FROM GREECE TO THE E.U.
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROBLEM	E.U.	E.U.
PROBLEM’S DIMENSION	POLITICAL	MIGRATORY
POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES	REMOVAL OF TROIKA FROM GREECE	COUNTRY’S TRANSFORMATION INTO A VAST REFUGEE CAMP DACHAU
CRISIS OF THE SYMBOL (ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES)	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
CRISIS OF WHOM HE ADOPTS (ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES)	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE

ABSTRACT	SHOULD THE EUROZONE LEARN TO RESPECT THE DEMOCRATIC WILL OF THE GREEK PEOPLE WHO ON THE ELECTIONS OF JANUARY 25 DECIDED TO THROW TROIKA OUT OF GREECE	TO RELOCATE THE THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES FROM GREECE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, EVENTUALLY GREECE TURNS INTO A VAST REFUGEE DACHAU
SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	ACCEPTANCE OF THE GREEK PEOPLE DECISION FROM THE EUROZONE	DIRECT REFUGEES RELOCATION FROM GREECE TO THE E.U.
SOLUTION BODY	E.U.	E.U.
WAYS OF SOLUTION	CHANGE OF LEGISLATION AND TROIKA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM GREECE	MORE EFFECTIVE POLICIES, ABOLITION OF THE SCHENGEN SYSTEM, PENALTIES TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH DID NOT ACCEPT REFUGEES
SOLUTION TIMETABLE	IMMEDIATELY	IMMEDIATELY

2) (Chrysi Avgi) - Golden Dawn

Golden Dawn is represented in the European Parliament for first time after May 2014, when three candidates were elected: Lampros Fountoulis, Eleftherios Synadinos and Georgios Epitideios. Our research material is consisted of these official placements, as they were made visible to use, through 17 texts from the sections of "Debates" and "Parliamentary Question" of the parliamentary activities.

These texts can be analysed in 13 categories depending on the values they express, twice as many compared to the case of Notis Marias. More specifically, we can detect the following values: "security" (11 times), "responsibility" (10 times), "national interest" (8 times), "solidarity" (5 times), "equality" (5 times), "democracy" (4 times), "human dignity" (4 times), "national pride" (3 times), "national sovereignty" (2 times), "identity" (2 times), "economic sovereignty" (2 times), "European interest" (2 time), and "national purity" (2 time). From this analysis we find that their discourse in some sections has similarities per pair. "National sovereignty", "national interest" and "solidarity" can be met only in the discourse of Lampros Fountoulis and Georgios Epitideios, while "identity" only in the discourse of Georgios Epitideios. Except for that, "responsibility" and "national pride" are expressed in Georgios Epitideios's and Eleftherios Synadinos's discourse, while the "economic sovereignty" only in Eleftherios Synadinos's discourse. By expanding our analysis to the significance that the discourse has, we can find the following structure: "migratory" (16 times), "social" (9 times), "economic" (8 times), "political" (6 times), "sovereign" (5 times), "security" (4 times), "labor" (4 times), "value" (3 times), "monetary" (2 times), "institutional" (2 times), "transnational" (2 times),

“identitarian” (1 time), “morality” (1 time), “humanitarian” (1 time) and “messianic” (1 time).

By following the distinction of values we used before, we notice a positive approach from the 3 members of the European parliament we are studying only 12 times. Most of these times were focused on the “European interest” and “responsibility” (3 times), where the need of the E.U. to take care of her responsibilities is highlighted, since the policies she follows do not promote the longevity of the European structure. Migration remains the main subject of their official placements, while economy follows, both being issues that the party has gained “recognition upon thematic competence” (Georgiadou 2014: 191) during the last years. The negative view of the values mainly focuses on the issue of migration, but also on the Greek economic crisis and the reasons for its occurrence, which are to found in the governance model of the E.U. Security is entered on the political agenda due to migration, whereas the way this issue and the economic crisis are handled, had given the opportunity to the party’s representatives to comment on the blows the national interest and the European values have taken from the continuation of these policies. Our coding takes the following form:

DATE	25 / 10 / 2016	14 / 10 / 2015
TOPIC	HUMAN RIGHTS AND MIGRATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES	DRAFT AMENDING BUDGET NO 7/2015: MANAGING THE REFUGEE CRISIS: IMMEDIATE BUDGETARY MEASURES UNDER THE EUROPEAN AGENDA ON MIGRATION
SPEAKER	GEORGIOS EPITIDEIOS	ELEFThERIOS SYNADINOS
STATUS	MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARTY	GOLDEN DAWN	GOLDEN DAWN
VALUE	HUMAN DIGNITY	RESPONSIBILITY
WHO ADOPTS	GOLDEN DAWN	GOLDEN DAWN
PURPOSE OF THE SPEECH	DEBATE ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND MIGRATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES	EMPHASIZING THE NEED TO FOCUS ON THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN IF WE WANT TO SOLVE THE REFUGEE CRISIS
WHAT KIND OF THE PROBLEM	MIGRATION IS RECOGNIZED AS A HUMAN RIGHT	FISCAL MEASURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROBLEM	E.U.	E.U. INSTITUTIONS

DIMENSION OF THE PROBLEM	MIGRATORY	SECURITY
POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES	A DEFECTIVE ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND THE INABILITY TO FIND WORK IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	ABSENCE OF FOCUS ON THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN AND HIS SECURITY
CRISIS OF THE SYMBOL (ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES)	NEGATIVE	NEGATIVE
CRISIS OF WHOM HE ADOPTS (ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES)	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
ABSTRACT	IMMIGRATION IS NOT A HUMAN RIGHT BUT A SYMPTOM OF A DEFECTIVE ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND A FAILURE TO FIND WORK IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	WE THINK IT IS WRONG TO MANAGE THE REFUGEE CRISIS BY THE INSTITUTIONS BECAUSE THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN AND HIS SECURITY IS NOT A PRIORITY
SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS	TRANSFORMATION OF THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND OF THE LABOR MARKET OPERATION	MANAGEMENT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS IN A NATIONAL LEVEL, WITH PRIORITY TO THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN
SOLUTION BODY	E.U.	AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNTRIES OF ENTRY AND THE E.U.
WAYS OF SOLUTION	VOTING IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	STRICTER POLICE CONTROL, CHANGE OF THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK
SOLUTION TIMETABLE	IMMEDIATELY	IMMEDIATELY

Conclusions

1) *Notis Marias*

In the case of Notis Marias we studied 17 official placements he made during the meetings of the European Parliament. The small number of texts is a result of the “topic fragmentation” that every member of the European Parliament has to come up against. The fixed pattern in his discourse has to do with Euroscepticism, as he perceives the memorandum of Greece as a subordinate of the strong Europeans. Therefore, in his discourse he focused on the “national interest” (13 times), which arises from the inconsistency between political actions and European values and also on “solidarity” (7 times) for the same reason.

Apart from that, since his intention was to express his objections regarding the European policies towards Greece, he focused on the economic and social dimension of the political developments. In agreement with the above and by following Taggart's & Szczerbiak's theory, it seems that Marias's speech is an example of "soft" Euroscepticism, because of his objections concerning the European policies towards our country's sovereignty, but it does not constitute an example of opposition against the overall idea of the E.U.(2004: 3).

2) (*Chrysi Avgi*) – *Golden Dawn*

In the case of Golden Dawn's representatives, we also studied 17 texts, which gave us the ability to outline the positions they took when the refugee crisis was at its peak and the economic crisis took a dramatic turn for Greece. At the same moment, the dissatisfaction about the policies of the E.U. dominates the public opinion, especially due to the refugee crisis. Starting with this – and continuing with the introduction of more topics – the members of Golden Dawn attempt to deconstruct the meaning of the E.U., by moving between a "soft" and a "hard" Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak 2004: 3).

More specifically, when the discussion referred to the memorandums and the negatively affected national sovereignty of Greece, we have a complete rejection of the idea of European integration ("rejecting Euroscepticism") (Vasilopoulou 2009: 4; 2011: 224, 232 - 234). But when it was a juxtaposition with external factors (refugees, Islamists), E.U. was viewed as the last fortress, the defence of which was considered imperative for the continuation of E.U.'s existence ("conditional Euroscepticism") (Vasilopoulou 2009: 4; 2011: 224, 232 - 234). Besides that, the "responsibility" they tried to express through their speeches is remarkable, as it shows their disposition to avoid their party's extremities in the Greek Parliament³, whereas it is also an attempt to present themselves as critical against Europe and in the same time able to present some political solutions. A very interesting characteristic of their discourse concerns the complete abstention from any identifying features, as they were interested in focusing on the political developments and not on the features that create the image of the extreme – right Golden Dawn. As a result, there is a huge gap between the way the organisation works in Greece and on a European Union level.

Approaching the above at the level of our research hypotheses and questions, the case of Notis Marias is peculiar, as he follows an individual political path, completely dissociated from the party he was elected. Ideologically, he remains loyal to what he expresses, while with his political decisions and the creation of the movement of the "Anti – memorandum Citizens"⁴ he believes he will have the chance to play an important role in the next national or European elections in Greece.

What is interesting in the case of Golden Dawn's representatives is the rejection of the extreme discourse the party uses in favour of a more responsible position with an emphasis on security. Without distancing from their basic positions,

³ Naftemporiki (2016) 'Serious incident in the Greek Parliament with Golden Dawn's parliamentary members', 6 June, available at <http://www.naftemporiki.gr/story/1112393/sobaro-epeisodio-sti-bouli-me-bouleutes-tis-xruxis-augis> (accessed 07 May 2017)

⁴ Press Release (2017) 'The new political party "Greece – The other road" presented today in Strasbourg by Notis Marias', 5 April, available at <http://notismarias.gr/bodytimeline.php?id=20158> (accessed May 2017)

such as the danger of Islam, they present a more serious image for themselves inside the European Parliament. This has nothing to do with an alteration to their ideological identity; it is however an opportunistic feature that can work in their favour, due to the legal entanglement the party has in Greece. Because of this, the party has lost the funding from the Greek Parliament, a fact that makes the funding from the E.U. a vital resource.

In conclusion, if we want to include the four European Parliament members to a classification of extreme – right theories, we can say that Notis Marias’s case approaches Mudde’s populist radical right criteria better (2011: 63 – 65). The case of Golden Dawn, although it seems to be a kind of paradox based on the image the party has built through the years, we believe that it approaches Betz’s criteria for “radical right – wing populist parties” better (1994: 4). More specifically, during the current period of time, extreme right’s representatives, together with communist representatives and former members of the radical left party SYRIZA are the only political personalities who have not voted in favour of any memorandum. This could attract the electorate in the next elections both in the case of Notis Marias and in the case of Golden Dawn, especially if the later tries to play at the same time with the value of “responsibility” in its political discourse (Minkenberg 2014: 37 – 38). That feature goes with the comment it has been made about the organization’s effort to present a more social face through the strategy of the “executioner and protector” (Georgiadou 2014: 190). The final result of all the above is a confirmation of our research hypothesis with regard to the supply side theory (Eatwell 2003: 47 – 53; Mudde 2011: 277 – 313).

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A Model for Personalized Political Communication in a Social Media Environment

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I. ABSTRACT

Personalization environments using recommendation schemes have been applied to entertainment or e-commerce, providing to the user information suitable to her/his personality, interests, goals or buying behavior. This becomes feasible through the use of a profile, built from known or collected information about the user.

In this paper, our goal is to present a different user profile for the purposes of personalized political communication in Social Media Networks. This political profile allows us to define the user's political attitude on the one hand, and to classify the content transmitted in a social network according to its political load on the other, with a view to matching them. This model will be integrated in a Social Media environment and an adequate set of experiments will take place in order to evaluate its effectiveness during the personalization process.

II. INTRODUCTION

Social Media Networks play an increasingly important role in social and public life and have reshaped the terms for conducting political communication. In particular:

Social media focus on the individual, as the user is able to choose the social group he belongs to and interacts with. This radical change in communication, has led to what Bennett (2012:20-21) calls the "era of personalization", a development that dramatically changes the conditions for practicing political communication.

At the same time, the numerous messages circulating online cause information overload, making the political message difficult to reach its audience.

The personalization process is one way of addressing the problem of information overload. According to Kim (2002:30), "The objective of personalization for the purpose of delivery of personalized information is fairly straightforward. It is to deliver information that is relevant to an individual or a group of individuals in the format and layout specified and in time intervals specified".

Many internet personalization systems, in recent years, are based on recommendation schemes that provide their user with content fit to his personality and interests or navigational behavior (Amazon, YouTube, etc.). Personalization systems assume that human population is not homogeneous. Therefore, in order for personalization systems to operate effectively it is necessary to identify individual users and user groups consisting of individuals with similar characteristics. Accordingly, the construction of full and accurate user profiles is a precondition for the development of personalized applications.

This paper presents an approach for constructing a citizen-user political profile for the purpose of political communication.

III. DEFINING A POLITICAL PROFILE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The political profile is a synthesis of various factors believed to affect political attitudes and electoral choice. Every citizen has his own political profile, consisting of a different mix of these factors. A political profile corresponds to what we call in political theory a political position. A position implies a spatial concept on a spectrum that includes all possible political positions. This concept is known in the literature as "political spectrum".

Political spectrum is defined as a classification system of different political positions on one or more geometric axes that signify independent political dimensions. The most common approach is the single horizontal "Left - Right" axis, inspired by the way seats were attributed in French Parliament after the Revolution (Mavrogordatos G., 2011:1).

Although the "Left - Right" political spectrum has been strongly contested recently as an outdated concept (Wikipedia, Entry "Political Spectrum"), our bibliography review suggests that current socio-political issues can still be examined in terms of the "Left - Right" spectrum.

Bobbio (2013:76) suggests that the “Left - Right” distinction retains its meaning and the ideological load included in positions remains relevant. Giddens argues that despite the controversial nature of the “Left - Right” distinction, the meanings of “Left” and “Right” are not static but evolving over time, in line with the need to explain the characteristics of each era (referred by Pastiadis, 2009 from Giddens “The third way”). Accordingly, the concepts of “Left” and “Right” adapt, thus preserving their value as tools to describe politics. Venizelos (2006:23) highlights, that the “Left - Right” distinction was “obvious and paramount” during the entire 20th century. An older research of Castles & Mair (1984:73-75) also points out that international research has maintained, more or less, the classification of ideological attitudes of the parties in terms of “Left-Right” spectrum. Finally, Marcel et Witkoski in their article “The distinction Left/Right” (2005:196) point out that in January 2002, 91% of French citizens could place themselves in the “Left - Right” axis, while only 9% refused, rejecting this distinction.

In conclusion, even today, in an era when people have adopted a critical view towards politics, the “Left” - “Right” horizontal axis can still define differences of political positions while moving along the axis.

Taking as a basis the confirmed value of the “Left - Right” axis, our next step is to identify the factors that determine the placement of a user on a particular position along the axis and compose a political profile. These factors are the issues that a citizen is expected to have an opinion on.

- McDonald, Mendes & Kim (2007:64) identify as central axes of political differentiation the following: 1) *Economy Perception*, such as government intervention in the economy and means of production control. 2) *Main Services Distribution*, such as health and education. They also refer to the concept of privilege and its relation to social hierarchy, as a factor that over time affects politics. Privilege is a factor, which Bobbio also highlights in his book “Right & Left” (2013:177), underlining that privilege issues significantly affect the main services distribution. Therefore, we consider *Main Services Distribution* and the *concept of privilege* definitive aspects of the social perception.
- G. Michelat (1993:75-76) in his article “In search of Left & Right” proposes the categorization of the important factors related to political position into two main thematic categories: a) *Economic-Social attitudes*, and b) *National-Cultural attitudes*. In these two large thematic categories, Michelat places a number of sub-issues: Economic liberalism, Market economy, Social attainments, Protest action, (1st category) / Antiauthoritarianism, Ethnocentrism, Traditionalism, Sexual permissiveness (2nd category). Michelat suggests that beliefs related to the above sub-issues reveal the political position of a person.
- Norberto Bobbio (2007), trying to describe the dimensions of the ideological difference between Left and Right, mentions some important social issues such as: equality expectation, openness of the society, migration issue, use of violence, relationship with tradition and the concept of emancipation, the relationship between freedom and power, the relationship between freedom and equality.

- A public opinion study (referred by Pastiadis, 2009:4/19), conducted in 2007 by VPRC - a public opinion research company in Greece - identifies the following issues as determinants for a person to self-locate his position on the political spectrum axis:
 - social security feeling,
 - satisfaction by political information provided by media,
 - satisfaction with democracy in Greece,
 - trust in political parties,
 - trust in labour unions,
 - difference between Left & Right governance,
 - citizen's withdrawal from public life,
 - freedom of the economy,
 - state or non-state universities,
 - Europe and national identity,
 - migrants' contribution to the economy,
 - the link between foreigners and criminality

- Venizelos (2006:65-68) in his book "Two words: Left & Right today?", presents 10 main points of ideological difference between Left and Right, adding to the previous factors the notions of "Sustainability and environmental protection", "Peace and global democratic governance" and "International terrorism". These factors, together with "Europe and national identity" of VPRC, represent concerns about global issues.

Table 1: 10 points of Left-Right difference (Venizelos, 2006:65-68) <i>(+ indicates additional elements by Right, while accepting in the first degree the position of Left)</i>	
Left attitude	Right attitude
Pluralist democracy	+ "rationalized" democracy, strong state
Human rights and freedoms	+ respect and protection of individual and collective security
Social liberalism and pluralism, multiculturalism	+ "ethical" unity of society and cultural homogeneity
Social solidarity and cohesion	+ free market operation, development of free competition
Redistributive role of the state, financing the European welfare state (social security, education, health care)	+ macroeconomic and financial stability
Full employment	Flexible labor relations
Social development, diffusion of entrepreneurship everywhere (state itself, small businesses, agricultural sector, self-employed)	Business profitability, private investment, identification of entrepreneurship with large-scale capitals.
Sustainability, environmental protection	+ environment as an economic asset and resource (for example in tourism)
Peace, global democratic governance	+ defense against asymmetric threats and international terrorism
Human dignity and acceptance of cultural diversity	+ emphasis on economic opportunities of globalization, superiority of the Western development model

IV. DEFINING A POLITICAL PROFILE: LITERATURE EVALUATION

From the literature reviewed, we adopt for our research purposes the following elements:

1. **Thematic categories**, consist of closely related issues. In particular:
 - From McDonald, Mendes & Kim's approach on a) *Economy Perception* and *Main Services Distribution* taking into consideration Bobbio's notion of privilege, two main thematic categories are adopted:
 - *Financial Issues*, and
 - *Social Issues*
 - We choose not to follow Michelat's view, believing that placing economic and social issues in a single category leads to a general category, where it is difficult to distinguish the real influence of each issue. In addition, we found that the issues Michelat placed in his second category of National-Cultural attitudes are closely related to Social Issues.
However, Michelat gives us some useful elements about the sub-issues included in the two main thematic categories.
 - Taking into account the special issues mentioned above by Venizelos, we decided to form a third main category, resulting in a model with three main categories:
 - *Financial Issues*
 - *Social Issues*
 - *Global Issues*
2. In order to organize the three main categories into more **detailed sections and issues**, we took into account all the elements identified above (Mc Donald, Mendes & Kim, Michelat, Bobbio, Venizelos, VPRC). In addition to this, we also used Wikipedia entries on political positions.

V. DEFINING A POLITICAL PROFILE: PROPOSED PARAMETERS

Accordingly, we propose to use the following model parameters - organized in categories, sections and issues - for the purposes of our research:

A) Financial Issues

- **Economy:**
 - State intervention in the economy
 - Ownership of means of production
 - Economic globalization
 - Model of wealth distribution

- **Labour:**
 - Full/flexible employment
 - Labour protection
 - Labour unions
- **Taxation:**
 - Tax model

B) Social Issues

- **Social services/Welfare:**
 - State participation in social services distribution
 - The concept of privilege
- **Equality - Social Hierarchy:**
 - Social hierarchy perception
 - Equality perception
- **Citizen participation in public life**
 - Collectivism vs. Individualism
- **Balance between equality and freedom:**
 - Equality vs. Freedom
- **Human Rights, Immigration, Openness of the society:**
 - Openness of society - Multiculturalism - Immigration.
 - Human Rights and diversity
- **Relationship with tradition:**
 - Emancipation vs. Tradition
 - Perception of Religion & National Heritage
- **Perception of use of violence**
 - Acceptance/refusal of violence
- **Perception of power. Protest vs. Repression.**
 - View on power and repression forces
 - Relationship between freedom and power

C) Global Issues

- **Environment:**
 - Environmental protection and the environment as a commodity
- **Foreign policy - International relations:**
 - Non-intervention vs. Fight against terrorism
 - Attitude towards U.S.A., NATO, EU

VI. DEFINING A POLITICAL PROFILE: PROPOSED MODEL

Our model seeks to define a method for placing a political profile spatially along the Left - Right axis of the political spectrum. For this purpose, we organize the above parameters in a table that attributes to them values for each political position along the axis. In particular, we choose - like Marcel & Witkowski (2005:2) - to follow the SOFRES scale of seven positions, as follows: 1. Extreme Left, 2. Left, 3. Centre-Left, 4. Centre, 5. Centre-Right, 6. Right, 7. Extreme Right. Then, we assign specific political statements to each political position, derived from our literature review.

It is important to note that clearly formulated positions do not always exist in the current bibliography for all the political positions of the scale 1 to 7. However, having defined the Left or Right position, we can attribute values to missing intermediate positions using as examples the work of VPRC and Michelat who present the acceptance levels of various issues in different positions across the spectrum (see tables below).

Table 2: Percentage of Acceptability <i>(VPRC - entire table presented by Pastiadis, 2009:9/19)</i>						
	Left	Centre-Left	Centre	Right-Left	Right	Average
Trust in labour unions	45,21	60,00	39,02	37,34	31,82	39,24

Table 3: Percentage of Acceptability <i>(Michelat, 1993:77)</i> <i>*Percentage points difference between highest and lowest percentages</i>							
**	N/A	Left	Centre-Left	Centre	Centre-Right	Right	d*
Economic liberalism (2-4)	25	14	22	44	66	74	60
Social attainments (3-4)	26	69	55	28	20	15	54
Protest action (2-5)	33	75	64	43	31	30	45
Market economy (3-4)	11	17	25	29	40	37	20
Antiauthoritarianism (2-4)	33	61	58	43	32	23	38
Ethnocentrism (2-4)	58	40	41	53	59	74	34
Traditionalism (4)	57	44	56	69	31	83	34
Sexual permissiveness (2-4)	35	63	55	43	35	38	25

In the table below, we present one example of our model for each of the three thematic categories we adopted:

POLITICAL POSITIONS TABLE

Extreme Left	Left	Centre-Left	Centre	Centre-Right	Right	Extreme Right
1. Financial Issues						
Economy						
State controls the economy	Strong government intervention in the economy	Mixed market economy while sustaining the welfare state	<p>In favor of the free market (with state rules that safeguard public interest).</p> <p><i>In economic issues, Centre tends to adopt the right positions.</i></p>	<p>Market economy support and acceptance of government regulation to control monopolies.</p> <p><i>The complete lack of interventionism, with laissez-faire, considered harmful to society.</i></p>	<p>Today Right advocates a cautious intervention of state, where distortions occur in the market.</p> <p><i>There is also the extreme neoliberalism, which advocates the minimization of state intervention in the economy.</i></p> <p><i>State as an observer - Free market as a regulator.</i></p>	<p><i>Perception of the economy is not decisive for the determination of an extreme-Right party</i></p>

2. Social Issues

Social Services/Welfare

<p>State participation in the distribution of services to all without exception.</p>	<p>Recognition of greater need for government involvement in the distribution of goods and services.</p>	<p>Government participation in expanded categories (e.g. providing health care to the financially vulnerable). To ensure public funding of education, health care and related social services to all citizens.</p> <p>Social security system</p>	<p><i>On social issues, the centrist lean towards the left.</i></p>	<p>It seeks a limited welfare state.</p> <p>Government involvement only in very specific categories (e.g. Care for the elderly)</p>	<p>Identifying small need for government involvement in the distribution of goods and services. Access to social goods and services (e.g. care) only for those who can afford it.</p>	<p>All rights and privileges attributed according to blood lineage.</p>
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3. Global Issues

Environment

<p>Capitalism in its efforts to develop further, destroys and contaminates the environment.</p>	<p>Sustainability - Environmental Protection.</p> <p>Ecology movement</p>		<p>Balanced view</p>		<p>Environmental quality as an economic resource, for example in tourism</p>	
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Using this table we can position along the political spectrum a political statement.

For example, Marine Le Pen, head of The National Front party in France, in an interview to Newsweek (Westcott: 2015) stated:

“There’s a big difference between France and the U.S. In the U.S., immigrants must work to live. In France, they’re taken care of by public finances. In France, there are millions of unemployed people already. We cannot house them, give them health care, education... finance people who keep coming and coming. The weight is very, very heavy now”.

According to the theory on state participation in social services distribution, the view expressed above is placed at the Right position of the spectrum (small need for government involvement in the distribution of goods).

VII. FURTHER RESEARCH

This model should be transferred to a social media network in order to fulfill its purpose and work effectively within a recommendation scheme. This scheme will work in two dimensions, trying to achieve a match between user political attitude and social media content.

1. First step to this process is the identification of the political position of:
 - a) *Individual User*. This will become feasible through collecting information about the user, either explicitly by addressing a direct questionnaire or implicitly through intelligent methods (studying user actions, posts, navigational behavior, etc.), or both.
 - b) *Political Texts*. For the identification of political texts (parties’ texts, press releases, comments or press articles) through the over-abundance of texts circulating in social media networks, we will use text analysis techniques, such as a lexicon-based approach or a machine-learning approach. In a lexicon-based approach we extract words from political theory that can convey in a condensed manner the ideological load. For example, the word “progressive” is a word often found in the centre-left political language. For a machine-learning approach, we will study the use of existing algorithms like “naïve bayes” or decision trees.

In order to verify this process, we will conduct tests using official texts found in the websites of the Greek political parties from 2012 onwards. We chose 2012 because this was a milestone year for the Greek political system, since during the elections of that year a radically different political landscape emerged.

2. For the matching process, we will define a distance function and will use it in order to calculate proximity between users and texts, texts and texts, users and users in order to make relevant recommendations.

This model will be integrated in a Social Media Network environment and an adequate set of experiments will take place in order to evaluate its effectiveness during the personalization process, i.e. delivering useful information to the user and gaining a the same time feedback from his behavior.

Adopting such an approach, results in:

- a) Focusing the content of the message of political actors on the specific interests of the citizens, thus reaching them more effectively.
- b) Making public discussion more relevant by concentrating on the interests of the citizens.
- c) Ultimately, result in better-informed citizens, thus upgrading the functioning of public life.

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