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Citation for published version (APA):
Chryssogelos, A. (2015). Patterns of Transnational Partisan Contestation of European Foreign Policy. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 20(2), 227-245.

Citing this paper

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Patterns of Transnational Partisan Contestation of European Foreign Policy

Published in *European Foreign Affairs Review* 20(2): 227-245, 2015
<http://www.kluwerlawonline.com/abstract.php?area=Journals&id=EERR2015017>

Angelos-Stylianos Chryssogelos
angelos.chryssogelos@kcl.ac.uk

Abstract

This article explores the historical and societal roots of transnational partisan foreign and security policy preferences in Europe and assesses whether and how foreign and security policy is structured by the European party system today. It points to the existence of transnational dimensions in the contestation of European foreign policy that are consistent with the dominant axes of partisan competition on a European level (ideology and integration). The ideological dimension is mitigated by the small policy stretch between major party families in the core of the European party system. Even if it is a sign of the maturity of the European party system that it is able to structure in its core a still intergovernmental policy area, the nature of foreign policy as a prerogative of member-states and the adoption of Euroscepticism by parties located in the extremes of national party systems conspire to make the integration axis a more relevant dimension of contestation of EU foreign policy. This means that the relevant patterns of contestation of EU foreign and security policy increasingly escape the existing range of rival views established by mainstream political forces.

Key words: European foreign policy; European party system; Europarties; Atlanticism; European People's Party; Party of European Socialists; European Parliament

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to explore how EU foreign and security policy is contested and structured by European party families. This is a difficult test for the capacity of the European party system to offer citizens distinct options on issues of European governance. Foreign policy is the issue-area where EU competences are still subject to inter-governmental policymaking. However, the increasing willingness of the European Parliament to influence the discussion (if not the actual policies) in CFSP, and the creation of a European 'foreign ministry' (EEAS) and the post of a High Representative for CFSP with footing both in the Commission and the Council (where a partisan dimension coexists with a national one), point to the question whether and how political party competition on a European level has any bearing on EU foreign policy.

This article first examines 'the past in the present'¹ of preferences of major party families on European foreign policy, by showing that the transnational societal cleavages that gave rise to European party families also serve as roots of different preferences on European foreign and security policy. Second, it delves into the positions of European party federations (Europarties) and European Parliament Groups today and inquires whether the dominant axes of party competition on a European level (ideological and integration) also structure rival policy preferences in foreign and security policy. The findings point to a consistency in the way major party families contest issues of EU foreign and security policy along the ideological and integration axes. However, if one takes into account the positions of radical party families of the left and right, these results are mitigated. Competition along the ideological axis is much more meager than the one between major and radical party families that reflects an exacerbation of the integration axis and stretches policy space beyond the confines defined by competition between major party families.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND FOREIGN POLICY: A BASIC FRAMEWORK

Despite its dominance in previous decades, the view that foreign policy is reducible to human rationality or a state's relative position in the international distribution of power is today set aside, in favor of more sophisticated views that account for the contestation of foreign policies on material/institutional (contestation between pressure groups and different sections of bureaucracies, the interplay between

¹ G. Marks and C.J. Wilson, 'The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration' (2000) 30 *British Journal of Political Science*, pp. 433-459.

institutional settings of domestic and international levels etc.)² or ideational grounds (contestation of national identities, foreign policy discourses etc.)³. In this context, the study of the impact of party politics on foreign policies is an important field of research where scholars have inquired, among others, into the role of partisan ideologies in foreign policy⁴, the dynamics of coalition government in foreign policy making⁵, the role of parties as conduits of societal interests in foreign policy⁶, and the relation between foreign policy traditions and the cleavages permeating party politics⁷.

I contend that partisan foreign policy reflects and supports the visions of parties about domestic political, economic and social rule. Such arguments have already been made with reference to questions of European foreign policy and security. For example, Rathbun⁸ has made the argument that military interventions in the Balkans in the 1990s were contested by European parties in accordance with their position on the Left-Right axis, while Schuster and Maier⁹ have highlighted how ideology informed European governments' positions on the 2003 Iraq war. Foreign policy positions of political parties then stem from parties' 'visions of domestic society'¹⁰. Foreign policy is seen here as practically and symbolically underpinning a party's preferences on issues of economic distribution, social values and domestic governance. In this way, contestation of foreign policy is nothing more but a reflection of the main lines of competition around socioeconomic and value issues in a political system. If this is true for nation-states, the question becomes to what extent it also applies to the EU. This is the question, which this article addresses.

² See A. Moravcsik, 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics' (1997) 51 *International Organization*, pp. 513-553; and R.D. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games' (1988) 42(3) *International Organization*, pp. 427-460.

³ For influential examples of literature on the ideational contestation of foreign policy see M. Barnett, 'Culture, strategy and foreign policy change: Israel's road to Oslo' (1999) 5(1) *European Journal of International Relations*, pp. 5-36; T. Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2002); and R. Jepperson, A. Wendt and P.J. Katzenstein, 'Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security' in P.J. Katzenstein, (ed.), *The Culture of National Security* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1996), pp. 33-75.

⁴ B.C. Rathbun, *Partisan Interventions: European Party Politics and Peace Enforcement in the Balkans* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2004).

⁵ J. Kaarbo and R. K. Beasley, 'Taking It to the Extreme: The Effect of Coalition Cabinets on Foreign Policy' (2008) 4 *Foreign Policy Analysis*, pp. 67-81.

⁶ P. Trubowitz, 'Geography and Strategy: The Politics of American Naval Expansion', in P. Trubowitz, E. O. Goldman and E. Rhodes (eds.), *The Politics of Strategic Adjustment. Ideas, Institutions, and Interests* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1999), pp. 105-138.

⁷ B. Ozkececi-Taner, 'The Impact of Institutionalized Ideas in Coalition Foreign Policy Making: Turkey as an Example, 1991-2002' (2005) 1 *Foreign Policy Analysis*, pp. 249-278.

⁸ Rathbun, *supra* n. 4.

⁹ J. Schuster and H. Maier, 'The Rift: Explaining Europe's Divergent Iraq Policies in the Run-Up of the American-Led War on Iraq' (2006) 2 *Foreign Policy Analysis*, pp. 223-244.

¹⁰ P. Manow, A. Schäfer and H. Zorn, 'Europe's Party-Political Centre of Gravity' (2008) 15(1) *Journal of European Public Policy*, pp. 20-39.

ATLANTICISM-EUROPEANISM AS A FOREIGN POLICY CLEAVAGE AND EUROPEAN PARTY POLITICS

The main cleavage in European foreign and security policy has concerned since the end of World War II the balance in Europe's relations between the United States and Russia, first during the Cold War in the context of Europe's division and afterwards from the perspective of a unified Europe's position in a globalized world. As it has evolved since the end of the Cold War, this 'Atlanticism-Europeanism' cleavage¹¹ structures two juxtaposed ideal-types in the way the same issues are perceived. Those who support an increased role for NATO in European affairs also tend to view Europe and the US (the 'West') as natural allies and are suspicious of Russian motives and influence in Europe (so long as Russia remains a semi-authoritarian state at least). Those who prefer a more emancipated role for Europe in global affairs also tend to see Russia as an interlocutor in European security. This cleavage does not only pit some states against others¹², but also cuts across national borders as political forces in all European states hold varying visions of European security.

The European People's Party (EPP) started off in the 1950s as the most coherent and ideological family but has today become the most heterogeneous one. Initially the assembly of Catholic Christian-democratic parties from Western Europe, the EPP today comprises Scandinavian and Mediterranean conservatives, and centre-right parties with origins in dissident anti-Communist movements in Central and Eastern Europe¹³. Today EPP members have converged their policy profiles to a 'centre-right' political identity¹⁴. In general, the centre-right has steadily moved towards the right in socioeconomic issues over the last 30 years, while it diluted its original federalist ideas and turned to leaner versions of integration in Europe¹⁵.

¹¹ B. Stahl, H. Boekle, J. Nadoll and A. Johannesdottir 'Understanding the Atlanticist-Europeanist Divide in the CFSP: Comparing Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands' (2004) 9 *EFA Rev*, pp. 417-441. What Stahl et al term Europeanism in security affairs should not be conflated with Europeanism as an ideology of support for more EU powers generally. In security policy, Europeanism is juxtaposed to Atlanticism. But Atlanticists can very well be in favor of more powers for the EU in security policy (i.e. be 'Europeanists' in the second meaning of the term). And security Europeanists can, by definition, only support more integration of the EU (i.e. be general Europeanists as well). The implication of this will be made clear later in the article.

¹² Stahl et al, *supra* n. 11, at 418-419.

¹³ See K. M. Johansson, *Transnational Party Alliances: Analysing the Hard-Won Alliance between Conservatives and Christian Democrats in the European Parliament* (Lund University Press, Lund, 1997). For centre-right parties in Central and Eastern Europe, see G. Marks, L. Hooghe, M. Nelson and E. Edwards, 'Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West: Different Structure, Same Causality' (2006) 39(2) *Comparative Political Studies*, pp. 155-175.

¹⁴ S. Hix, 'The Transnational Party Federations', in J. Gaffney (ed.), *Political Parties and the European Union* (Routledge, New York, 1996), pp. 308-331 at 315-317.

¹⁵ Marks and Wilson, *supra* n. 1.

EPP members have held during and after the Cold War an Atlanticist stance in European foreign and security policy. Due to different historical trajectories, most party-members of the EPP are historically suspicious of Russia's role in European security¹⁶ and think that Europe has to stand side by side with the US¹⁷. Due to Christian-democrats' and conservatives' strong opposition to Communism, most EPP parties had been supporters of NATO's presence in Europe, a position that has been carried over after the end of the Cold War. The EPP has also carried over the foundational idea of Christian-democratic parties from the Cold War, i.e. that Europe can and should unite not in opposition to, but in conjunction with America's role in the continent¹⁸. But while Christian-democrats were federalist in defence and security, the enlarged EPP after the end of the Cold War became much less so lest Europe's independent foreign and security policy standing lead to disengagement from the US or flirtations with Russia.

The Party of European Socialists (PES) and the Socialist and Democrats Group in the European Parliament (S&D) include labour and social-democratic parties from Northern and Western Europe, socialist parties from the South, and post-Communist parties from Central and Eastern Europe¹⁹. Just like the EPP, due to the waning of most historical cleavages in Europe, PES members have undergone a process of homogenization. In foreign and security policy socialists have occupied a different position on the Atlanticism-Europeanism axis than the EPP. During the Cold War, these parties were at the forefront of efforts to mitigate the consequences of Europe's division and supported détente²⁰. At the same time, social democratic and socialist parties were anti-communist and understood the need for American presence and security guarantees in Europe²¹. This did not always sit well with social-democracy's pacifist inklings (as evidenced for example in the 1980s NATO missile crisis).

¹⁶ For conservatives' largely negative views on the Soviet Union during the Cold War see e.g. P. Hassner, 'NATO and Security Issues', in R. Morgan and S. Silvestri (eds.), *Moderates and Conservatives in Western Europe: Political Parties, the European Community and the Atlantic Alliance* (Heinemann, London, 1982), pp. 252-266 at 264. On the foundations of German Christian Democracy's suspicion towards Russia, see D. Engelmann-Martin, *Identity, Norms and German Foreign Policy: The Social Construction of Ostpolitik and European Monetary Union* (European University Institute doctoral thesis, Florence, 2002).

¹⁷ The French Gaullists are the most important outlier in this narrative. Once proponents of a united Europe as a counterbalance to the US, they have slowly adapted to conservative conceptions on foreign policy and security. See J. Shields, 'The French Gaullists', in J. Gaffney (ed.), *Political Parties and the European Union* (Routledge, New York, 1996), pp. 86-109; Stahl et al, *supra* n. 11.

¹⁸ S. Silvestri, 'Introduction: The Challenge to the Euro-Moderates', in R. Morgan and S. Silvestri, as above, pp. 1-13.

¹⁹ Marks and Wilson, *supra* n. 1.

²⁰ T. Risse-Kappen, 'Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War' (1994) 48(2) *International Organization*, pp. 185-214.

²¹ For the German SPD see J. Bellers, *Reformpolitik und EWG-Strategie der SPD. Die innen- und aussenpolitischen Faktoren der europapolitischen Integrationswilligkeit einer Oppositionspartei (1957-1963)* (tuduv, Munich, 1979). For the Spanish Socialists see R. Gillespie, 'The Spanish Socialists', in J. Gaffney, as above, pp. 155-169.

After the end of the Cold War, PES continued to represent this conditional Atlanticism. As the 2003 Iraq war crisis showed, European social-democracy's support for close links between Europe and the US only goes as far as specific ideological understandings about world politics allow²². America is seen as a needed partner in the management of world affairs, but is also not exempt from criticism. Same with Russia: Continuing the détente tradition, social democrats see it as an inescapable partner in Europe, but not without reservations²³. European socialists' position on the extent of European integration in foreign and security matters has historically been the mirror image of that of Christian-democrats: Once opposed to what they perceived as a polarizing pro-American and divisive model of European integration, from the 1980s onwards they have come to support the notion of European unity in foreign policy, both as a complement and a counterbalance to the US when needed.

The liberal party family is united under the banner of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)²⁴. ALDE membership reflects the historical cleavage inside European liberalism between national-liberalism and social-liberalism²⁵. Social-liberals come closer to social democrats when they seek stronger regulation of the economy, while national-liberals are committed to an unfettered functioning of the market and a lean design of the EU²⁶. The internal tension between national and social liberalism has been expressed in foreign and security policy as well. Historically national-liberal parties have been Atlanticist, while social-liberal parties had found themselves at odds with the US during the Cold War. Liberal parties were also at the forefront of détente, presenting themselves as more pragmatic in dealing with the Soviet Union than conservatives²⁷. After the Cold War, liberals have tried to carve out a distinct profile by stressing their moderation, the originality of their proposals and their ability to see both the US and Russia as important partners of Europe.

HOW IS PARTY COMPETITION ON A EUROPEAN LEVEL STRUCTURED?

Scholarship on European party politics has asserted that competition between political parties on the European level is consistent along an ideological axis²⁸: A

²² Schuster and Maier, *supra* n. 9.

²³ Author's interview with PES Head of International Unit Yonnec Polet, Brussels, 11 July 2013.

²⁴ Until 2012 ALDE was the name of the liberal EP Group. The Europarty called itself European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR), until it decided to assume the name of the Group.

²⁵ See generally E.J. Kirchner (ed.), *Liberal Parties in Western Europe* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988).

²⁶ Marks and Wilson, *supra* n. 1, at 448-449. Marks and Wilson use the terms liberal-conservative and liberal-radical.

²⁷ Kirchner, *supra* n. 25; M. Steed, 'The Liberal Parties in Italy, France, Germany and the UK', in R. Morgan and S. Silvestri, as above, pp. 162-192.

²⁸ M. J. Gabel and S. Hix 'Defining the EU Political Space: An Empirical Study of the European Election Manifestos, 1979-1999', in G. Marks and M. R. Steenbergen (eds.), *European Integration and Political*

'regulation model' posits that the European party system revolves around a socioeconomic axis of competition (left-right), while the work of Gary Marks and his associates describes a pro-and anti-European integration dimension overlying an ideological axis composed of socioeconomic left-right and value-ideological libertarian-authoritarian dimensions²⁹. Gabel and Hix include the integration dimension as an orthogonal axis to the left-right with the possibility of producing multiple combinations of ideological and integration positions in policy space³⁰.

While in socioeconomic matters one could accept the prevalence of a classical 'regulation' left-right pattern of competition³¹, discussions about the direction of EU foreign policy as such cannot be divorced from the question of the extent of EU competences in an as-yet intergovernmental policy area³². Marks and his associates argue that the main dimension of ideological competition in Europe (which absorbs the socioeconomic left-right and the libertarian-authoritarian value axes) consistently structures attitudes towards integration as well, with support for more EU powers increasing as one moves from right-authoritarian to left-libertarian. Yet there are two qualifications to this argument: First, it provides an accurate snapshot of where things stand today, but it is not necessarily always accurate across time³³. Second, and most important, it describes accurately the political space occupied by the big three party families and smaller forces bordering them (such as Eurosceptic Conservatives and Greens), but fails to accommodate the anti-integration attitudes of families even further on either extreme, the radicals of the right and left. As we will see, for these reasons as well as because the integration dimension is crucial in an EU policy area where intergovernmentalism remains strong, a two-dimensional mapping of policy space in European foreign policy is more appropriate.

THE EUROPEAN PARTY SYSTEM AND EUROPEAN FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

The positions of the three big party families, the 'nucleus of the [European] party system', with highly institutionalized structures of cooperation (European party

Conflict (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004), pp. 93-119; A.G. Noury, 'Ideology, Nationality and Euro-Parliamentarians' (2002) 3(1) *European Union Politics*, pp. 33-58.

²⁹ L. Hooghe, G. Marks and C. J. Wilson, 'Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?' (2002) 35(8) *Comparative Political Studies*, pp. 965-989; G. Marks and C. J. Wilson, 'National Political Parties and European Integration' (2002) 46(3) *American Journal of Political Science*, pp. 585-594.

³⁰ Gabel and Hix, *supra* n. 28.

³¹ This is due to supranational competences of the EU in socioeconomic policy, even though the Eurozone crisis may have introduced (or strengthened) the national dimension here recently.

³² R. Ladrech, 'National Political Parties and European Governance: The Consequences of 'Missing in Action'' (2007) 30(5) *West European Politics*, pp. 945-960 at 954-955.

³³ See the discussion in Gabel and Hix, *supra* n. 28, at 107-112.

federations (Europarties) and European Parliament Groups), are crucial in determining the direction of European transnational party competition³⁴. In this section, I will focus on the policies of the big three party families in three foreign policy issues that make up the essence of the Atlanticism-Europeanism axis: EU-NATO relations, transatlantic relations in a global context, and EU-Russia relations. Then I will look into the foreign and security policy positions of the two major radical party families of the right and left. Even though neither boasts the transnational structures of cooperation enjoyed by the three major party families, radicals of the left and the right share enough common characteristics to be considered distinct 'party families'³⁵. Finally, based on this analysis, I will map the space of partisan contestation of European foreign policy and assess to what extent it is consistent with the existing dimensions of contestation of European socioeconomic governance and integration.

a) Ideology and Atlanticism-Europeanism

The ideological axis absorbs foreign policy issues in a consistent way in the core of the European party system, with Atlanticism receding as one moves from right to left. There is a slight polarization between EPP's Atlanticism and PES's Europeanism, with the liberals occupying the middle ground, in conjunction with how these party families are placed along the ideological axis. However, the actual policy distance between the three core party families is pretty small in foreign policy (much as it has shrunk in other policy areas as well). The three core party families have today converged to a foreign and security policy set that may be said to constitute the 'national interest' of the EU. All three see the presence of NATO in Europe as necessary, acknowledge that relations and ties with the US are very important, accept that Europe has to promote some distinct values and norms in the international scene (human rights, multilateralism), understand that dialogue with Russia is difficult but necessary³⁶, and promote a more effective representation of the EU internationally. This set of common assumptions creates a very narrow space within which these party families differ, but still their differences align them along the Atlanticism-Europeanism axis in accordance with their alignment along ideological lines.

³⁴ L. Bardi, 'European Political Parties: A (Timidly) Rising Actor in the EU Political System' (2004) 39(2) *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, pp. 17-30 at 21-23.

³⁵ See L. March, *Radical Left Parties in Europe* (Routledge, London and New York, 2011); and C. Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, 2007). On the inability of radicals, populists and extremists of the right to organize on a supranational level see M. Minkenberg and P. Perrineau, 'The Radical Right in the European Elections 2004' (2007) 28(1) *International Political Science Review*, pp. 29-55. On the far left there exists an EP Group (GUE/EGL), however it lacks a credible Europarty equivalent as the transnational Party of European Left only comprises some of the parties represented in GUE/EGL.

³⁶ European People's Party, *Strong for the People. EPP Election Document* (EPP Congress, Warsaw, 2009), p. 32; R. Scharping and J.M. Wiersma, *Europe's New Neighbours: A Post-Enlargement Strategy for European Foreign Policy* (Party of European Socialists, 2003), p. 2.

The Centre-right is the most energetic in its support for a close transatlantic link. Indeed, as the EPP admits, the transatlantic relation is not a means but a goal in itself³⁷, as it not only ensures European security and prosperity but also serves as a powerful symbol of Europe's identification with a Western community of values. European security policy's main goal should be to maintain NATO's presence in Europe. The EPP sees world affairs through a distinctly 'Western' prism, seeing new global powers as competitors to the US and Europe, who then must close ranks to face up to the challenge together. The EPP stresses the differences between the West and the 'Rest' in issues of democracy, rule of law and functioning of the market³⁸. Finally, the EPP is the most candid party family towards Russia. The family's association with outspoken anti-Russian politicians in Ukraine, Georgia and Belarus intensifies this feeling, and the EPP forcefully highlights human rights issues in Russia³⁹. Also, the EPP, alone among party families, championed an assertive stance against Russia in Ukraine a long time before the crisis there came to a head.

The main dynamic inside the nucleus of the European party system on foreign policy is the opposition between the EPP on the one hand and ALDE and PES on the other. Liberals and socialists express an Atlanticism much more qualified than the one of the EPP. Especially for PES, America is a needed partner, but the US cannot be trusted to be in accordance with European interests and values all the time⁴⁰. During the George W. Bush presidency PES was particularly assertive towards the US, and it is in moments like this that Europe's foreign policy capacity is presented as a potential counterweight to the US (much to the opposite of the EPP's understanding of European defence and its relationship to NATO). While the transatlantic link is the normative reference point of EPP's foreign policy, PES lays more emphasis on multilateralism, and it sees new global powers in a less menacing light than the EPP⁴¹.

The liberals on the other hand can be seen as more Atlanticist than the socialists, but their rationale is much more practical and much less ideological than the one of the EPP⁴². ALDE also accepts the need of the transatlantic link, but is much more willing to

³⁷ European People's Party Group, *Ten Priorities for the EPP Group 2009-2014. Putting People at the Heart of Europe* (Group of the European People's Party [Christian Democrats], Brussels, 2009), p. 6.

³⁸ European People's Party, *supra* n. 36.

³⁹ European People's Party, *supra* n. 36, at 32. Also see the EPP's support for the stationing of anti-ballistic missiles in Eastern Europe, EPP-ED Group, Motion for a Resolution on the EU-United States Summit B6-0283/2008 by J.I. Salafranca Sanchez-Neyra, S. Zappala, J. Saryusz-Wolski, K. von Wogau, E. Brok and J. Evans on behalf of the PPE-DE Group (European Parliament, Brussels, 2008).

⁴⁰ As European Socialists put it succinctly, 'we are not indifferent to who governs America'; Party of European Socialists, *The EU on the International Scene: Promoting Sustainable Peace* (Party of European Socialists, Brussels, 2008), p. 129.

⁴¹ Party of European Socialists Council, *The EU on the International Scene: Promoting Sustainable Peace* (Resolution adopted by the PES Council, Sofia, 22-23 November 2007), p. 18.

⁴² European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists, *Theme Resolution on the External Security and Defence Policy of the European Union* (ELDR Congress Resolution, Bucharest, October 2006), p. 1; A. Graf

stand up to America when issues of particular concern to the liberals (such as privacy and human rights within the context of anti-terrorism policies) are affected. Finally, when it comes to EU-Russia relations, PES and ALDE stress pragmatism and striking a balance between interests and values, considering engagement with Russia more effective than antagonism⁴³. While socialist policy positions seem more stable over time, the Liberals' middle position in the ideological axis creates interesting changes in the tone and outlook of their positions. Indeed, at times ALDE has expressed particularly pro-Russian positions⁴⁴ as well as criticized vocally the state of human rights in Russia⁴⁵, and it has accepted a multilateral vision of world politics while acknowledging the importance of the transatlantic relationship. Liberals also are far less willing to see EU relations with rising powers in an ideological way than the EPP.

When it comes to the radical left and radical right, the concerns of both families meet, and sometimes even overlap, on crucial points. Opposition to NATO and the transatlantic link, and affinity to Russia are the two most striking examples⁴⁶. The ideological sources of these positions differ: For the far right, they go back to anti-democratic and authoritarian ideologies of the 19th and 20th century⁴⁷. For the far left, they reflect the updating of Marxist ideology and anti-capitalist outlook.

The radical left family is unanimous in its opposition to NATO and any antagonizing movements towards Russia. The radical right's anti-Atlanticism concerns especially continental far-right parties like the French Front National and the Austrian FPÖ. Outliers include parties from countries with Atlanticist security traditions and strong anti-Muslim profiles like the Danish DF and the Dutch PVV. However even these parties are not stable in their attitudes towards the US and their pro-Atlanticist positions do not equate principled support for the deeply institutionalized transatlantic partnership as exists today. In the current crisis in Ukraine, radical leftist parties like the German Die Linke and the Dutch SP are markedly the most pro-Russian voices in their respective party systems. The French and Austrian radical right also doubted the democratic credentials of the anti-Yanukovich uprising, supporting, sometimes tacitly

Lambsdorff, 'The Russia Conundrum: EU and US Should Cooperate with the 'Imitation Democracy'', Atlantic Community Open Think Tank, 2007.

⁴³ The PES was much less enthusiastic about the stationing of missile systems in Eastern Europe than the EPP, and instead focused on the prospects of arms control in Europe.

⁴⁴ European, Liberals, Democrats and Reformists, *Response to the Conflict in Georgia* (ELDR Congress Resolution, Stockholm, November 2008).

⁴⁵ Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, *Helsinki 2.0 for Democracy and Rule of Law in Russia* (ALDE press release, 10 November 2011).

⁴⁶ C. Schori Liang (ed.), *Europe for the Europeans: The Foreign and Security Policy of the Populist Radical Right* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007); A.-S. Chryssogelos, *Old Ghosts in New Sheets: European Populist Parties and Foreign Policy* (Centre for European Studies, Brussels, 2011).

⁴⁷ I. Buruma and A. Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (Penguin, London, 2004).

sometimes explicitly, Russia's assertions⁴⁸. Even Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, usually not a big supporter of Russia, took a disinterested stance towards Ukraine.

Summing up, the major party families are aligned along Atlanticism-Europeanism according to their alignment along left-right, but the differences among them concern nuances of mostly commonly shared basic views on European foreign policy. The ideological axis plays a modest-to-strong role in structuring foreign policy alternatives along the Atlanticism-Europeanism cleavage in the nucleus of the European party system. Beyond the nucleus, the radical left's anti-Atlanticism does not equate necessarily Europeanism to the extent that it does not lead to ideas about independent European security and defense capabilities. Rather, the ideological axis is fundamentally upset beyond the nucleus due to the anti-Atlanticism of most of the radical right that interrupts the congruence between the authoritarian-right end of the axis and Atlanticism.

b) The integration axis and European foreign policy

In what concerns party family positions in foreign and security policy in the nucleus of the European party system, the integration axis is coterminous with the ideological axis. Europarty foreign policy positions reflect not just ideological stances on foreign policy but a family's overall attitude towards European integration. Again, matters are quite nuanced: All major party families support in principle that Europe should 'speak with one voice' in global affairs⁴⁹. They all supported the creation of the EEAS and the post of the High Representative, inscribed in the Lisbon Treaty. However, the image becomes more varied if one looks harder into each party family's justification and vision for Europe's foreign policy. The EPP, for example, is adamant that Europe's defence and security capacities be part of a better cooperation with NATO and burden-sharing within the Western alliance⁵⁰. The emphasis the EPP lays on lean and 'smart' integration of Europe's military capacities as complement of the Western alliance fits well with the conservative mindset of European integration.

The PES on the other hand considers a more independent Europe a healthy addition for the Western alliance and the world⁵¹, in the sense that the EU would be able to influence or substitute America when it strays away from values dear to PES like

⁴⁸ These attitudes towards a popular uprising are particularly interesting for parties that otherwise propagate the power and rights of the 'people'.

⁴⁹ European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists, *European Liberals' Top 15 for EP Elections. ELDR Manifesto* (adopted at the Stockholm Congress, 31 October 2008); European People's Party, *supra* n. 41, at 30-31; Party of European Socialists Group, *Common Security in a Changing Global Context* (PES Group Paper, Brussels, 2004), at 6.

⁵⁰ European People's Party, *supra* n. 36, at 34; European People's Party Group, *supra* n. 37, at 7.

⁵¹ Party of European Socialists, *supra* n. 40, at 91.

international criminal justice and multilateralism⁵². This also reproduces PES' positioning along the integration axis, where over the years it has become more integrationist than the EPP, especially when it comes to social and environmental regulation⁵³. PES' Europeanism in foreign policy was on its way to acquiring a more assertive character, but today socialists have had to accept that Europe's independence in the world stage cannot materialize in the area of defence and security, given today's economic situation. In this respect, NATO remains indispensable⁵⁴. Finally, liberals are positioned in the middle of the integration continuum⁵⁵. ALDE is clearly closer to PES in seeing Europe's international standing as a way for the EU to play an independent role in international affairs, vis-à-vis Russia or emergent powers for example. At the same time, ALDE also stresses the importance of the transatlantic link, even though again it seems to be closer to PES than the EPP in thinking that an integrated European foreign policy's goal should be a way to put the two partners on more equal footing⁵⁶.

In the nucleus of the European party system, the integration axis overlays the ideological one in foreign policy as well, with support for integration increasing as one moves from the Right/Atlanticism to the Left/Europeanism. As in socioeconomic issues, one can see the EPP, ALDE and PES align consistently from leaner to more 'political' integration in foreign policy, while the basic opposition dynamic seems to be again the pitting of the lean-intergrationist EPP against the political-integrationist ALDE and PES. European party families promote a vision of EU foreign policy integration that goes hand in hand with their visions of European integration in the socioeconomic sphere and their attachment to various social values. Indeed, socialists have acknowledged in the past that the EU's foreign policy independence is an important practical and symbolical complement of a 'political Europe', a key demand of progressive parties since the 1990s⁵⁷.

Radicals, populists and Eurosceptics of both ends of the spectrum propagate a strong opposition to any extension of EU powers in foreign and security policy. The sources of argumentation of course differ fundamentally. Parties of the far right express concerns about the EU taking over the prerogatives of the nation-state. Parties of the far left oppose what they see as the militarized and reactionary nature of European foreign and security policy. Both far right and far left parties adopt anti-integration positions

⁵² Party of European Socialists Group, *supra* n. 49, at 8; Party of European Socialists, Motion for a Resolution on the EU-United States Summit B6-0277/2008, by J.M. Wiersma, H. Swoboda, V. De Keyser and B. Hamon on behalf of the PSE Group (European Parliament, Brussels, 2008), at 6.

⁵³ Marks and Wilson, *supra* n. 1, at 447-448.

⁵⁴ Author's interview, *supra* n. 23.

⁵⁵ Noury, *supra* n. 28, at 49-50.

⁵⁶ European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists, *supra* n. 44.

⁵⁷ Party of European Socialists, *supra* n. 40, at 17.

as a way to embed and highlight their opposition to mainstream parties⁵⁸. Despite different origins of their anti-integration positions (more identity-based for the far right, more class-based for the far left), it has been shown that both party families have come to express today similar types of discontent with European integration woven around nationalism⁵⁹. In this respect, it is the opposition to European integration as currently constructed that forms the decisive and real common factor that informs their position on EU foreign policy. As a reflection of these parties' position in their national arenas, their role in the political contestation of European issues lies much more in opposing further integration as such than instilling ideological dimensions in the discussion.

In the nucleus of the European party system, as Marks and Wilson claimed, major European party families' support for European integration is a function of their positioning along the main ideological axis: Atlanticism and right-wing reticence towards an empowered and bureaucratic EU inform a reluctance towards an overtly 'political' and independent EU foreign policy, while integrationism and left-wing support for a strong regulatory EU underpin a support for a 'political' and independent presence of the EU in world affairs. In the nucleus, the integration axis seems to overlay (or reinforce) the ideological axis. Yet, the overall consistency of the ideological axis towards integration is undermined by the strong opposition of the far left to foreign and security policy capabilities of the EU – which is even more pronounced than that of the far right. Parties like the German Die Linke or the Dutch SP are explicitly supportive of national prerogatives in foreign policy. Instead, radical right parties like the Front National or the FPÖ, next to a fundamental opposition to the current design of CFSP, also make reference to goals and strategies of Europe (understood as a cultural rather than a political entity) in the world (which should be very different to those of the EU to be sure)⁶⁰.

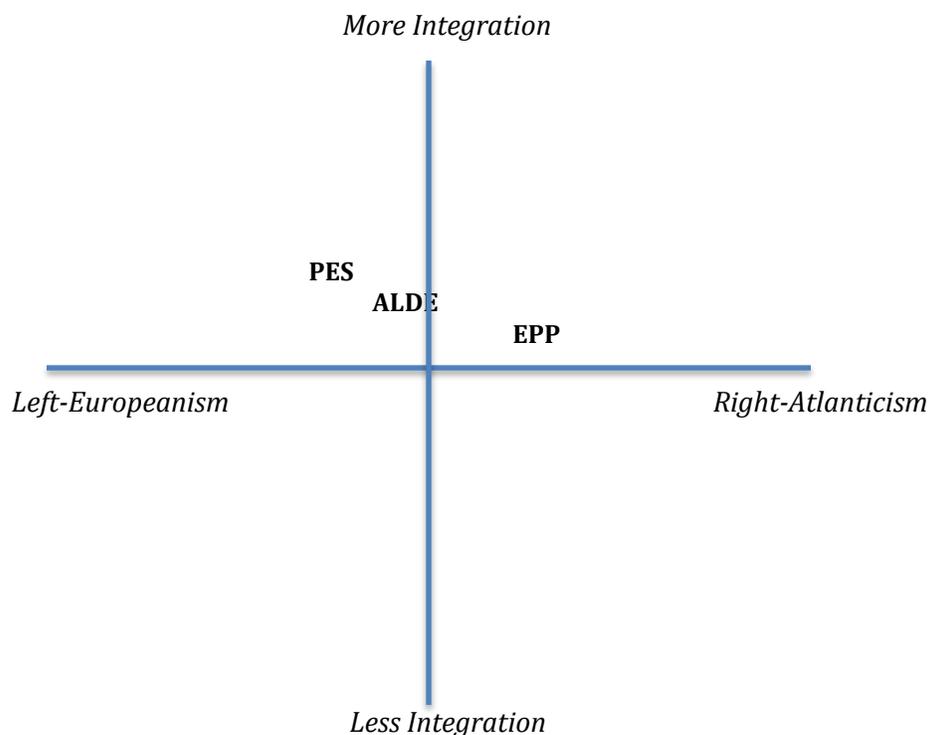
c) Mapping the policy space of European foreign and security policy

Starting with the big three party families, the image one would get would be neat and theoretically consistent, even if somewhat unexciting. The foreign policy cleavage of Atlanticism/Europeanism is perfectly absorbable in an axis containing both ideological

⁵⁸ P. Taggart, 'A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems' (1998) 33(3) *European Journal of Political Research*, pp. 363-388.

⁵⁹ D. Halikiopoulou, K. Nanou and S. Vasilopoulou, 'The Paradox of Nationalism: The Common Denominator of Radical Right and Radical Left Euroscepticism' (2012) 51(4) *European Journal of Political Research*, pp. 504-539.

⁶⁰ Using an influential typology, in foreign and security policy issues the radical left comes closer to a 'hard' version of Euroscepticism while the radical right can be seen closer to (though by no means perfectly fitting in) 'soft' Euroscepticism. See P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, 'Europeanisation, Euroscepticism and Party Systems: Party-Based Euroscepticism in the Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe' (2002) 3(1) *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, pp. 23-41.

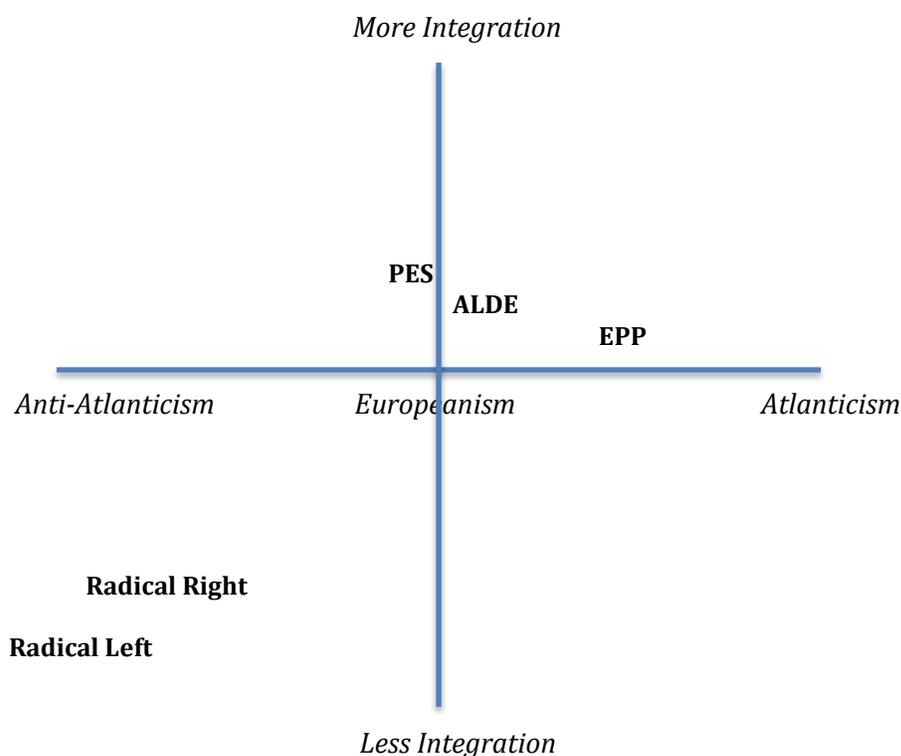


Graph II: Policy Space of the Contestation of CFSP, Ideological and Integration Axes

The problem with such a mapping is twofold: First, while positioning the three major party families is unproblematic, positioning the radical families is much less so. They would both have to be in the lower half of policy space, but in which quadrant? The radical right cannot be in the lower right quadrant because it is not Atlanticist and the radical left cannot be in the lower left quadrant unless one explicitly assumes that the extreme end of Europeanism is anti-Atlanticism. Second, the above mapping poses the problem that the lower left quadrant (Europeanism and opposition to European integration) is a conceptually impossible political profile. It would be paradoxical for a party to support more powers for the EU in the field of foreign and security policy (security Europeanism) while opposing a more political and integrated EU in other fields as well (general Europeanism) ⁶¹.

Given that even within the nucleus of the party system the main competition dynamic seem to be between the principally Atlanticist EPP and the eclectic ALDE and PES, a more accurate mapping of policy space in European foreign and security policy would look like this:

⁶¹ See footnote 11.



Graph III: Policy Space of the Contestation of CFSP, Atlanticism and Integration Axes

Conceptualizing the main axis of contestation of CFSP as one of Atlanticism/Anti-Atlanticism allows us to position the two radical party families accurately. Europeanism is now not an extreme but part of the overall axis of foreign policy, denoting decreasing Atlanticism but not outright hostility towards the US and NATO. This move is necessary also because the anti-Atlanticism of the radicals is different from the third security policy tradition identified by Stahl et al, neutrality⁶². Rather, much as the increasing relevance of radicals, populists and Eurosceptics in national arenas serves to gradually realign party competition away from standard ideological dimensions and towards a novel axis of globalization winners against losers⁶³, in European foreign policy it represents opposition to dominant institutional arrangements in Europe and the transatlantic area, beyond the existing confines of contestation like the Atlanticism-Europeanism divide⁶⁴.

In Graph III the radical left is positioned, by virtue of its preferences, further than the radical right on anti-integration and anti-Atlanticism. The three major party families

⁶² Stahl et al, *supra* n. 11, at 418.

⁶³ H. Kriesi, E. Grande, R. Lachat, M. Dolezal, S. Bornschieer and T. Frey, 'Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared' (2006) 45 *European Journal of Political Research*, pp. 921-956.

⁶⁴ This mapping also has the benefit that it creates four conceptually meaningful quadrants. For example, during the Cold War, the Front National and the FPÖ would fall in the lower right quadrant, as they were Eurosceptic but also pro-NATO.

retain their positions in the broad area where Atlanticism and Europeanism meet. If one wanted to draw a single main line of conflict, it would run diagonally from the Atlanticism/Integration quadrant to the Anti-Atlanticism/Anti-Integration quadrant. This line of opposition is more intense and polarizing than the opposition within the nucleus of the party system, which remains consistent with standard analyses of policy space in Europe and mainstream currents of thought in European security policy. The effect of the radical families on the contestation of foreign policy is the intensification of the integration axis, a reflection of their own adoption of Euroscepticism and populism as a political strategy in national arenas, and the stretching of policy space beyond the Atlanticism-Europeanism cleavage.

CONCLUSION: AFTER THE 2014 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

The analysis of European party families' positions on European foreign and security policy raises some significant conclusions: For the big three party families, prior ideological traditions and preferences on 'domestic' European governance play a big role in their positioning on the main foreign policy cleavage of Atlanticism-Europeanism, even if over time there has been a significant convergence between them. The analysis here vindicates the 'past in the present' view in foreign and security policy, as it reveals not only parties' relative positioning in policy space of foreign policy, but also more specific opposition dynamics, with the EPP more ideological and farther away from socialists and liberals, who in turn share a certain eclecticism with regards to Atlanticism and Europeanism.

The above reflect the ability of the European party system nucleus to offer distinct policy options to voters on issues of European foreign policy, as well as the ability of party competition to absorb the integration axis into ideological discussions. This positive assessment however is mitigated by the second main finding: The integration axis cuts across the ideological axis when one takes into account radicals of the left and right. This upsets the congruence of the ideological and integration axes and makes it imperative to map European policy space along two dimensions, and to rethink the content of ideological competition over European foreign policy. In this view, the strongest opposition is the one between supporters and opponents of EU's independent foreign policy capacity; and the ideological Atlanticism-Europeanism cleavage has to give way to an Atlanticism/Anti-Atlanticism axis as a more accurate depiction of ideological contestation.

The conclusions of this study become all the more relevant after the recent elections to the European Parliament, which resulted in the smallest ever combined strength of the three core party families (from more than 70% to less than two-thirds of seats). These elections also produced the strongest ever result for the main far left group in the EP, as well as a very strong showing for the various Eurosceptic forces of the right

(conservative, populist, radical and extreme), which added together would form the third largest force in the Parliament but remain divided among them. As Eurosceptic forces increased their representation, it is logical to expect a stronger showing for views that challenge the political and normative foundations of CFSP, including the close cooperation with the US and the need for stronger EU presence in world affairs. One expects then a polarization along the diagonal line of conflict between Atlanticism/Integration and Anti-Atlanticism/Anti-integration.

It should be noted however that this polarization is highly unbalanced. In a recent vote in the EP for the ratification of the EU-Ukraine association agreement for example (a highly charged issue indicative of the divides between proponents and opponents of CFSP), the result was an easy win for the mainstream forces (77% to 18% of the vote). The patterns of the vote followed strongly party-ideological lines, not a left-right pattern however but a mainstream v.s. spoilers (or nucleus v.s. extremes) one⁶⁵. In other external policy issues, such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), one already witnesses patterns of ideological contestation within the nucleus along left-right/Europeanism-Atlanticism lines. But again, opposition to TTIP as such from the far left and far right is expected to be stronger and more forceful than the debate among the big three families over specifics of an agreement they all support in principle. If the big three end up supporting the final document, its ratification in Parliament would be all but certain, but again the impression would be that transnational ideological contestation of EU's external policies among them covers only an ideologically narrow (if still numerically predominant) range of European opinion.

Despite their limited input to the day-to-day functioning of the institutional apparatus in Brussels, radicals of the right and left are formidable spoilers of the pan-European ideological game, particularly by constituting radical anti-integration outliers in multiple national arenas. Especially in foreign policy, their ability to influence is very strong, given that many basic foreign policy choices in Europe are still being made on the national level and EU decisions reflect (more than in other policy areas) intergovernmental bargaining. In most member-states party competition increasingly revolves around the opposition between mainstream pro-EU forces and radicals of both ends opposing the EU. This is bound to translate into foreign policy debates as well. As Europe faces important, difficult and interlinked choices in energy policy, relations with Russia and the Muslim world, enlargement and neighbourhood policy, and immigration and security, national governments will be increasingly forced to act upon the Atlanticist and (mild) integrationist consensus of CFSP. The active presence of radicals in national arenas and their joint ability to exacerbate the pan-

⁶⁵ See voting details at <http://www.votewatch.eu/en/term8-eu-ukraine-association-agreement-with-the-exception-of-the-treatment-of-third-country-nationals-lega.html>, accessed 11 October 2014.

European integration axis of competition not only serves to contain substantially the ability of major party families to instill a transnational ideological dimension in the contestation of EU foreign policy (thus keeping it from becoming really 'domesticated' as a policy area in the eyes of the European public), but can also have an indirect but nonetheless important and detrimental impact on European foreign policy making.