



EUReACT

REpresentation in the EU: ACTing Multilevel Democracy



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On the road to democratic legitimacy in the EU...

An introduction to the Tutorial seminar *

(Lecturer: Sabrina Cavatorto)

* *Kick off meeting 24 March h 10-12*

Presidio Mattioli – Siena
21 March 2016 h 13-15

What about politicizing the EU?

- A neo-functional concept (Schmitter 1969)
 - A process of *controversiality* of joint decision making acting as a catalyst for more regional integration

BUT (*we know that*) **this prediction was too rosy**; in fact it rested on **3 main assumptions** which should be now dismantled (Hooghe&Marks 2012):

1. The public's attitudes toward European integration are **superficial** and incapable of providing a stable structure of electoral incentives for party positioning.
2. **Low salience** of European integration for the general public (in contrast to its high salience for business groups); therefore little influence on party competition.
3. The issues raised by European integration are ***sui generis*** and unrelated to the basic conflicts that structure political competition.

Is the EU still a “sleeping giant”?

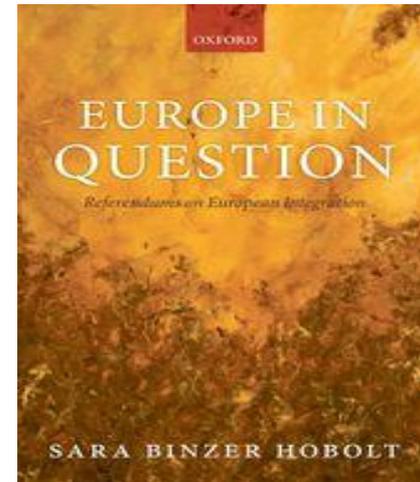
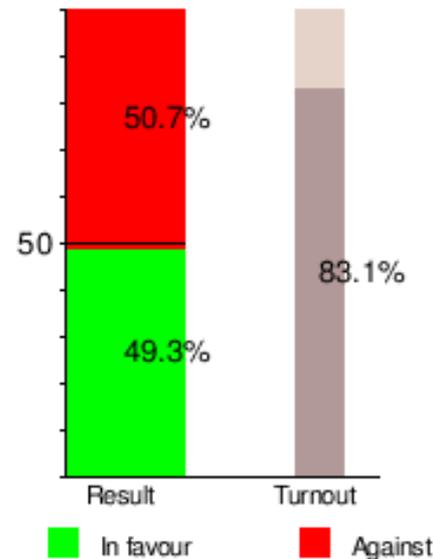
From *permissive consensus & integration by stealth* by European political elites (with no notice or involvement of the public)...

...TO a **“constraining dissensus”** (after the Maastricht Treaty) (Hooghe&Marks 2009)



Decision making on European integration entered the contentious world of party competition, elections and referendums.

Tension between **rapid jurisdictional change VS. relatively stable identities.**



Danish referendum (2/6/1992) together with “the *petit oui* in France (only 51% of voters)

Since 1992 the Eurobarometer begun to ask questions about **identity**

- there is no evidence of an aggregate shift towards less exclusive national identities since the early 1990s

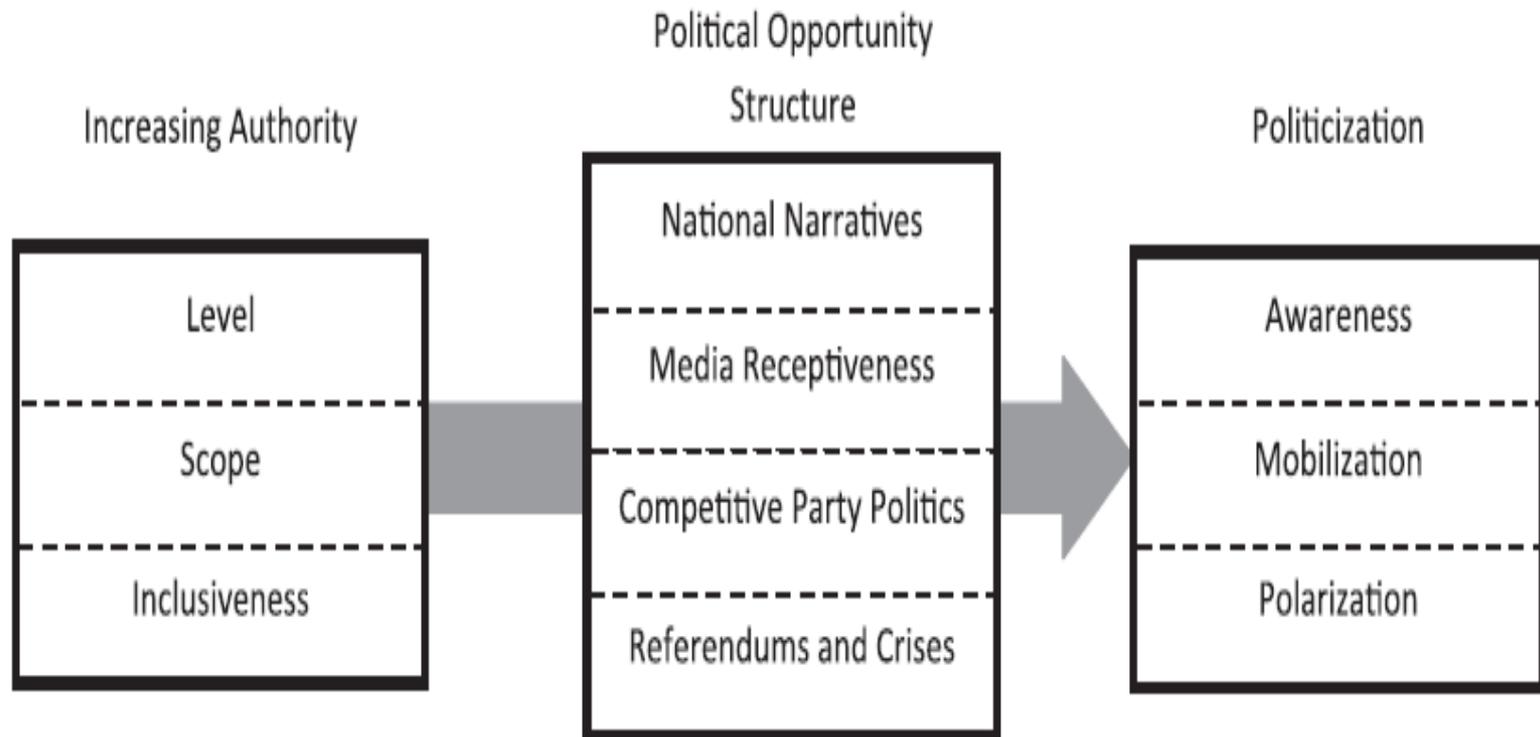
BUT

SALIENCE

- The scope & depth of European integration have increased and their effects have been magnified *(they are part of a broader breakdown of national barriers giving rise to mass immigration and intensified economic competition)*
- Public opinion on Europe is susceptible on “construction”; **political entrepreneurs are needed** for “PRIMING, FRAMING & CUEING” (Hooghe&Marks 2005)

MOBILIZATION

Figure 1: A Model of Politicization



Source: Authors.

De Wilde & Zurn 2012

Conditions for politicization

an increasing **salience** in the public debate

(necessary condition) +

- an **expansion of** the issue- specific **conflict**
beyond the narrow circle of executive actors +
- a process of **polarization** among the political elites carrying the issue-specific debate

(intervening factors)

VARIATION IN DEGREES/PATTERNS OF POLITICIZATION

CONSEQUENCES FOR EU DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

- WHICH ROLE PLAYED BY THE CRISIS/CRISES?..
- IN WHAT WAYS HAVE IT/THEM CONTRIBUTED TO THE POLITICIZATION OF THE EU?
- WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES?

The analysis of political debates about the EU to search the structure of political conflict, if any...