

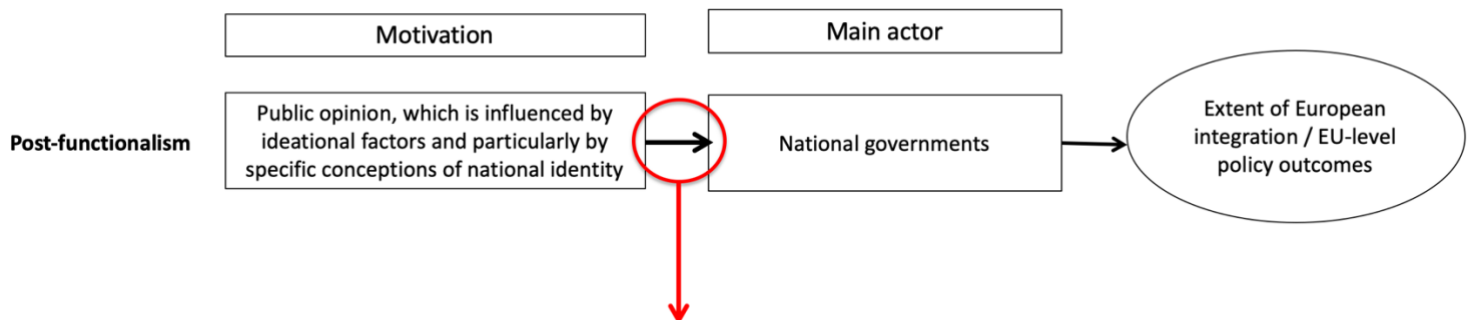
Course: GV251

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## **Week 9: Political Parties and Europe**

## PART I) Positions of national parties on European integration

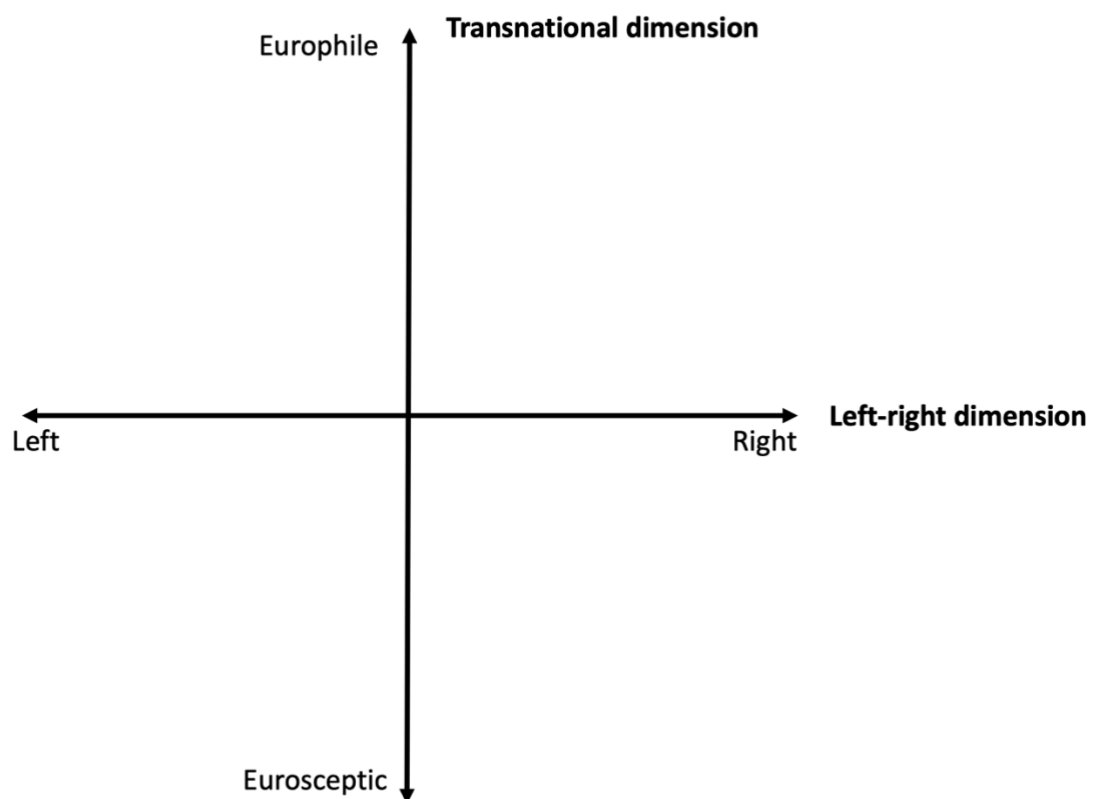
*Introductory remark – flashback to Week 7:*



Today we zoom into this link by examining how the issue of European integration has influenced the national party systems in EU member-states.

(a) Hooghe and Marks (2018) argue that *“something fundamental is taking place [in European politics], namely the generation of a distinct, rooted and durable conflict that will overlay and disrupt the existing structure of party competition. (...) [European countries are witnessing] the emergence of a transnational cleavage, which has as its core a political reaction against European integration and immigration.”*

1. What is the content of (i) the traditional left-right cleavage and (ii) the new transnational cleavage in the party politics of EU member-states? In other words, what are the fundamental divisions in society that have given rise to these two cleavages in party politics? *Please note your answers on the graph below.*



2. *In small groups, please discuss the following questions and fill in the table below:*
- (i) Based on their location on the left-right spectrum, what position would you expect a far-left, a centre-left, and a centre-right party to have on the issue of European integration? Would these parties be in favour of European integration or not?
- (ii) Based on their location on the transnational spectrum, what position would you expect a GAL, a “moderate” TAN, and a “radical” TAN party to have on the issue of European integration? Would these parties be in favour of European integration or not?

Type of cleavage	Party location on the cleavage	Preferences regarding the extent of European integration
<b>Left-right cleavage</b>	Far-left party	
	Centre-left party	
	Centre-right party	
<b>Transnational dimension</b>	GAL party	
	“Moderate” TAN party	
	“Radical” TAN party	

- (b) *In small groups, please pick two of the following countries and consider party politics in those countries at this moment in time: (i) UK; (ii) Germany; (iii) France; (iv) any other EU member-state that you are familiar with.*

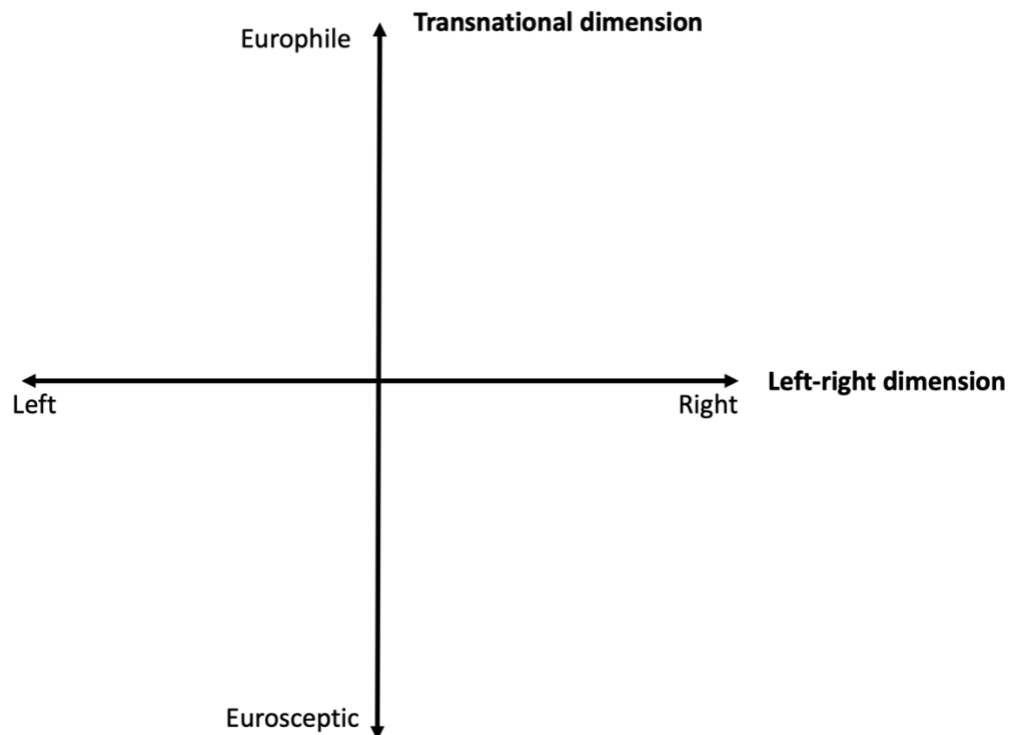
1. *Where would you place each major political party of each country in a two-dimensional political space, characterised by a left-right cleavage and a transnational cleavage? Please make notes on the graph at the top of p. 4.*

Major parties in the UK: Conservatives, Labour, SNP, Liberal Democrats, (UKIP)

Major parties in Germany: CDU/ CSU, SPD, AfD, FDP, Linke, Greens

Major parties in France: La République En Marche (Macron), Republicans, Front National, La France Insoumise (Mélenchon), Socialist Party

Major parties in another EU member-state: ...



2. In each of the above countries, which cleavage do you think more powerfully shapes voting behavior at the moment: the traditional left-right cleavage, or the new transnational cleavage?

UK: \_\_\_\_\_

Germany: \_\_\_\_\_

France: \_\_\_\_\_

Another EU member-state: \_\_\_\_\_

(c) How new is the “new” transnational cleavage?

Consider the views about the European Community expressed by the leaders of the British, French and Greek centre-left parties in the 1980s and early 1990s, as manifested in the extracts below. Are their views influenced more by the left-right cleavage, or the transnational cleavage? Why do left-wing considerations lead the British and French centre-left parties to opposite conclusions regarding the desirability of membership in the European Community?

i) Extract from the Labour Party’s 1983 election manifesto:

“The European Economic Community, which does not even include the whole of Western Europe, was never devised to suit us, and our experience as a member of it has made it more difficult for us to deal with our economic and industrial problems. (...)”

The next Labour government, committed to radical, socialist policies for reviving the British economy, is bound to find continued membership a most serious obstacle to the fulfilment of those policies. In particular the rules of the Treaty of Rome are bound to conflict with our strategy for economic growth

and full employment, our proposals on industrial policy and for increasing trade, and our need to restore exchange controls and to regulate direct overseas investment. (...)

For all these reasons, British withdrawal from the Community is the right policy for Britain - to be completed well within the lifetime of the parliament. That is our commitment. (...)

We emphasise that our decision to bring about withdrawal in no sense represents any weakening of our commitment to internationalism and international co operation. (...) Indeed, we believe our withdrawal will allow us to pursue a more dynamic and positive international policy - one which recognises the true political and geographical spread of international problems and interests."

Source: <http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lab83.htm>

ii) Extract from an interview of François Mitterrand, French President and leader of the Parti Socialiste, on the Maastricht Treaty in 1992:

"-Question: Mr. President, how much autonomy will each state have with the Single Currency, for instance in the area of employment policy?

-Mitterrand: Of course our homelands will continue to exist. (...) As I like to say, 'France is our homeland, and Europe is our future'. (...) France will continue to be France, but it is already integrated in the big economic areas of the world, it is already involved in everything that is happening in Europe, it is not independent, isolated. Some theorists dream of re-enclosing France behind its borders and behind protectionist regulations. This, I am convinced, would very quickly lead to our ruin. That is my belief. This is why on many occasions, for example in 1983, at a difficult juncture, I chose to stay in Europe. (...) Our chances of development will be infinitely stronger in a large market than they would be in a French market of 58 million inhabitants. Everybody knows that."

Source: <http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/927005700.html>

iii) Extract from the speech of Andreas Papandreou, leader of the Greek centre-left party (PASOK), on the decision for Greece's accession to the European Community:

"The accession of Greece, a small and economically weak country, at a large bloc of interests that is dominated by the North European large capital and the multinational companies that are connected to it, cannot but lead to a loss of national control over crucial economic, social and political developments. (...)

Accession will signify unavoidably a major limitation in the implementation of an independent national agenda, since our country will constitute a mere province of a large area, the fate of which will be decided by the Economic Directorate of Brussels. (...)

The acceptance of the accession policy is equivalent to a policy of national desertion, because it cancels Greek responsibility for the future of our homeland and transfers this responsibility to non-Greek decision-making centres, which cannot possibly be inspired by the national political ideals and the vision of socioeconomic change that warm the soul of our people. (...)

When PASOK comes to power, the Greek people will be asked to take their own decision about accession to the European Community through a free referendum."

Source: A. Papandreou, '26-5-1979: Declaration for Greece's Accession', in N. Golemis (ed.), *Andreas and the Foreigners* (Athens, 2003), p. 8.

**(d) Can you think of any non-ideological reasons why particular political parties may adopt specific positions on the question of European integration?**

**PART II) Cohesion of party groups at the European Parliament**

**(a) According to Hix, Noury and Roland (2005), why is transnational party group cohesion in the European Parliament relatively high, even though the EU is a separated-powers system? Why has transnational group cohesion increased over time despite growing national diversity in the main party groups?**

**(b) 1. If voting along transnational party group lines is more frequent in the European Parliament than voting along national lines, does this mean that partisan considerations dominate the EU decision-making process as a whole?**

**2. From a normative perspective, would “greater transnational and party-political - rather than intergovernmental – contestation in the EU policy process”<sup>1</sup> be a good thing for democratic politics at the EU level?**

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<sup>1</sup> Hix, Noury and Roland (2005), p. 211.