

# **Framing the Narrative: the Role of National News Media in the Spread of Public-Level Euroscepticism**

Student number: 2213589

Unit Code: POLI31555

Supervisor: Patryk Czulno

Academic year: 2024/2025

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
BSc Economics and Politics

I declare that this research was approved by the SPAIS Ethics Working Group.

## Abstract:

Recent decades have witnessed the spread of public-level Euroscepticism, a political affiliation defined by varying degrees of opposition to European integration and the European Union. The development may be notable both because it represents a significant shift in public sentiment towards the project and as for the potential negative consequences it could have on future integration efforts. This dissertation contributes to the research on the factors explaining the proliferation of the movement by investigating how news media has utilised framing to negatively shape public perception of the European Union and further public-level Euroscepticism prior to the 2024 European Parliament Elections, which recorded historic gains for Eurosceptic parties. The study focuses on the cases of France and Germany and employs qualitative news frame analysis to detect Eurosceptic media framing within national news media coverage of EU affairs. Specifically looking at a divergence in the framing employed by the EU and national media sources, the nature and intensity of framing choices as well as coverage of competing voter concerns, the study finds that both French and German news media sources employed Eurosceptic framing to create a more critical perception of the EU that deviated from the EU's self portrayal. Furthermore, the study notes that Eurosceptic framing largely aligns with and reinforces pre-existing cultural reservations towards the integration process. Consequently, the study argues that the media employed targeted Eurosceptic framing to further the spread of public-level soft Euroscepticism prior to the 2024 European Parliament elections.

Word count: 10000

## Table of Contents:

List of Abbreviations .....	3
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Conceptual Framework.....	6
2.1 - European Integration.....	6
2.2 - Euroscepticism.....	7
2.3 - The Communication Deficit of the European Union:.....	8
2.4 - Media framing:.....	9
3. Literature Review:.....	10
4. Methodology:.....	11
5. Case Study France:.....	13
5.1 - Introduction:.....	14
5.2 - How does framing employed by the French news media differ from framing employed by EU communication channels?.....	15
5.3 - How does the French news media employ Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs?.....	17
5.4 - How does the framing employed by the French news media vary between economic and social policy coverage?.....	19
5.5 - Conclusion:.....	20
6. Case Study Germany:.....	21
6.1 - Introduction:.....	21
6.2 - How does framing employed by the German news media differ from framing employed by EU communication channels?.....	23
6.3 - How does the German news media employ Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs?.....	24
6.4 - How does the framing employed by the German news media vary between economic and social policy coverage?.....	26
6.5 - Conclusion:.....	27
7. Discussion:.....	29
8. Bibliography:.....	31

List of abbreviations:

AfD: Alternative für Deutschland  
BSW: Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht  
EC: European Commission  
EP: European Parliament  
EU: European Union  
LFI: La France insoumise  
RN: Rassemblement National  
SZ: Süddeutsche Zeitung

## 1. Introduction

Recent decades have witnessed a significant increase in the public contestation of the European Union (Rodriguez-Pose, 2023: 7). The development is mirrored by the spread of public-level Euroscepticism, a political affiliation defined by ‘sceptical or negative attitudes towards the EU and the process of European integration’ (Gabriel, 2022: 152). The Eurosceptic movement, in general, calls for ‘either a partial or complete halt of political and economic integration’ (Topaloff, 2018: 63) and demands a ‘return to the Westphalian model of nation states’ (ibid: 63). While traditionally research on the sources of Euroscepticism has focused on the impact of ‘economic, cultural and institutional factors’ (Hooghe, 2007: 123), some scholars have argued that it is critical to examine the role of narratives in how people relate to the EU (Guerra, 2020: 46). The media, specifically through its function as the primary source of political communication (Meyer, 1999: 621) may significantly contribute to the public narrative of the EU. Thus, this dissertation will explore whether the media’s portrayal of the EU exhibits and thus furthers Eurosceptic sentiments.

While public discontent has increased throughout the Union, the development may be most pivotal in France and Germany. According to 2024 survey data, less than one in five respondents in France perceived EU membership as beneficial for their country, while in the traditionally pro-European Germany, public opinion turned net-negative for the first time, marking a significant deterioration in attitudes towards the European project (Holzhause, 2024: 4). The two largest member states are not only founding members of the Union but have also historically assumed co-leadership over the project (Lequesne, 2019: 1), providing stability and furthering the integration process (Schramm, 2022: 1153). The proliferation of Euroscepticism in these two countries may thus prove detrimental for the future of the EU, both with regard to future integration efforts and the legal, political and economic strength of the Union (Capoccia, 2021).

During the 2024 European Parliament Elections, Eurosceptic parties in France and Germany recorded unprecedented gains, respectively claiming nearly 50% (EP, 2024a) and 22% (EP, 2024c) of the national vote. The development is significant, both with respect to the election results functioning as a mirror of public sentiment towards the EU and, in light of increased voter turnout in both countries (EP, 2024b), the heightened Eurosceptic voter mobilisation (Katsandjou, 2025:4). Furthermore, as the largest member states, Germany and France elect the most MEPs, thus exerting the most influence on EP proceedings (Reinl, 2024).

Consequently, investigating the proliferation of public-level Euroscepticism in France and Germany at the 2024 EP elections, this dissertation will answer the question:

How has the news media utilised framing to negatively shape public perception of the European Union and further public-level Euroscepticism prior to the 2024 European Parliament Elections?

To this end, observing media coverage prior to the 2024 EP elections in France and Germany, the dissertation will employ qualitative news frame analysis to explore:

1. How does framing employed by national news media differ from framing employed by EU communications channels?
2. How does national news media employ Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs?
3. How does framing employed by the national news media vary between economic and social policy coverage?

The dissertation will proceed by establishing a conceptual framework and conducting a literature review. After providing a methodology, the dissertation will separately consider the case studies of France and Germany at the 2024 EP elections. The findings suggest that national news media sources in both countries employed targeted Eurosceptic framing comparable to framing utilised by Eurosceptic parties, thus contributing to the spread of Eurosceptic sentiments in the population and facilitating the electoral success of Eurosceptic parties at the EP elections.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

### 2.1 European Integration

European integration originated in the 1950s as a means to foster close cooperation between postwar European nation-states and may be described as the process of ‘selective pooling of national sovereignty’ (Peterson, 2001: 4923), culminating in the establishment of the European Union in 1992. European integration is not only defined by a unique commitment to inter-state cooperation and value driven politics (ibid: 4923) but also the establishment of the EU as a ‘polity in its own right’ (ibid: 4924), granting it significant influence upon member states governance activities (Schmidt, 2005: 414). Initially an elite driven process enabled by permissive consensus and output legitimacy (Ogurlu, 2019: 20), integration became increasingly contested after the signing of the Treaty on European Union (‘Maastricht Treaty’) in 1992 (ibid: 21) as for the political and economic reforms it entailed (Bradbury, 2009: 17). Nevertheless, integration progressed further. At present, the Union encompasses 27 member states sharing legislation in virtually all policy areas (DGC, 2025a), representing a significant transfer of competencies and hence sovereignty from national to supranational institutions as well as a substantial expansion of the EU’s sphere of influence over time (Dedman, 2009: 7). While the EU’s proclaimed aims may be summarised as the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity (EU, 2025), there has long been a debate about the nature of the integration project’s final stage. Specifically, while many of its pioneers envisioned a ‘federal Europe’ (Begg, 2021: 2), this notion has receded in recent years (ibid: 2), raising the question what propels integration in the absence of further supranational ambitions. The new intergovernmentalism explains this ‘integration paradox’ (Bickerton et al., 2014: 703) with reference to competing factors that both facilitate and discourage ‘pan-European policymaking’ (ibid: 710). The theory specifically notes the relevance of domestic preference formation for integration, arguing that growing rates of scepticism have destabilised the process (Bickerton et al., 2015: 33).

Integration has progressed furthest in the economic domain. Presently, the EU is an economic and monetary union, which entails the coordination of economic and fiscal policy between member states, regulations on government debt and deficit, a single currency in the euro area as well as a common monetary policy regulated by the European Central Bank (EC, 2023). Furthermore, the EU holds exclusive competences over legislation on the customs union and trade. The monetary union is denoted incomplete, partly due to the lack of ‘substantial financial transfers from richer to less developed regions’ (Mourlon-Druol, 2020: 12) and has long proven problematic due to ‘the need to reconcile the interest of participants and non-participants in the euro’ (Begg, 2021: 5). Conversely, social policy integration remains constrained. Due to ‘very distinct approaches at the national level’ (ibid: 6), harmonisation of social policies has been limited. At present, the EU holds shared

competences with respect to policy areas including working conditions, social security and protection of workers (EUR-Lex, 2025). Nevertheless, the idea of a ‘Social Europe’ (Begg, 2021: 6) where cohesion is aided by both more common and distributive social policies remains prominent, albeit contested, in EU discourse (ibid: 7).

## 2.2 Euroscepticism

Euroscepticism may be defined as ‘the idea of contingent or qualified opposition as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration’ (Taggart, 1998: 366). Formally a phenomenon of the margins, Euroscepticism first emerged in the mid 1980s as a reflection of British ‘awkwardness’ regarding European unity (Harmsen and Spiering, 2004: 13). However, in line with increasingly progressive integration efforts after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 (Brack, 2015: 239), Euroscepticism both gained in salience and complexity and assumed a prominent place in political debate throughout continental Europe (Harmsen and Spiering, 2004: 13). Accordingly, the term today commonly captures ‘any form of opposition or reluctance towards the EU’ (Todorova, 2017: 406). This apparent conceptual ambiguity (De Vries, 2009: 10) derives itself from the phenomenon’s multifaceted nature, varying in intensity and substance with ‘specific national contexts’ (Bil-Jaruzelska et al., 2022: 514). Generally, the literature distinguishes between hard Euroscepticism, that is ‘principled opposition to the EU and European integration’ (Orgulu, 2019: 23) and the ‘milder’ soft Euroscepticism, referring to ‘qualified opposition to the EU or (...) the EU’s trajectory’ (ibid: 23). While proponents of hard Euroscepticism oppose EU membership entirely, soft Eurosceptics advocate to reform the Union instead (Ogurlu, 2019: 23). Respective parties are predominantly located at the margins of the political spectrum. Specifically, while on the extreme-left party Euroscepticism is based on ‘the neoliberal character of the project and its negative influence on the welfare state’ (De Vries, 2009: 6), aversions on the extreme-right reflect concerns over ‘national sovereignty and identity’ (ibid: 6). The recent proliferation of public Euroscepticism is attributed both to Eurosceptic parties radically addressing the public’s concerns regarding sovereignty, the economy and the democratic deficit of the EU, in that way ‘capitalizing on public discontent’ (Buhr, 2012: 545), as well as the parties use of ‘emotionalization’ and ‘scandalization’ (Böttger, 2021: 52) of issues to influence people’s perceptions of those. Consequently, Euroscepticism has developed into a mainstream political affiliation, similarly to populism, informed by people’s perception of how the EU and its institutions benefit them (Grimm et al., 2018: 215). Notably, while politicisation and discontent have soared, the general public’s ‘knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the Union’ (DGC, 2025b) have remained remarkably low, posing the question to what extent the Union’s increasingly negative public perception is informed by ‘factual knowledge’ (Spanier, 2010: 5) and unbiased information channels.



### 2.3 The European Union's Communication Deficit

The persistent limited public awareness of the EU's functions, competencies and performance (van den Hoogen, 2024) may be explained with regard to the Union's communication deficit, that is, the 'apparent impossibility of communicating with its citizens' (Spanier, 2010: 5). Historically, the EU's low level of public communication was founded in 'the concern that increased public awareness could undermine support for further integration' (Meyer, 1999: 624). Thus, public debate was stifled rather than encouraged, leaving the masses predominantly unaware of the process and its implications (ibid: 624). As the Maastricht Treaty and subsequent end to permissive consensus exposed 'issues of EU citizenship, democratic legitimacy and social dialogue' (Michailidou, 2010: 66), the Union's strategy shifted, focusing on employing communication as a means to legitimise the European project in the eyes of the public (Soldevila Brea, 2018: 3). However, advancements made by the European Commission proved ineffective as in spite of the creation of a Directorate-General for Communication (DGC, 2025b) as well as an ever evolving pool of 'means, methods and tools' (Soldevila Brea, 2018: 7) employed to draw in citizens, public awareness remained low. This inefficacy is largely attributed to two constraining factors. For one, the EC's public communication is criticised for remaining inaccessible and over-complicated as for a 'fragmentation of political authority, a pervading technocratic mindset and a lack of adequate staffing' (Meyer, 1999: 617), hindering public comprehension. Furthermore, any efforts by the EC towards filling the information gap are stifled by the public's prevailing disinterest in the EU and its procedures (Spanier, 2010: 3). In the absence of a European public sphere, and given the technocratic nature of the EU's institutions, EU politics are perceived as boring (Gioltzidou, 2023: 3) and rank low in the public's 'hierarchy of relevance' (Trenz, 2008: 293), resulting in low levels of engagement. The predicament is further reinforced by the public media, who rather than acting as 'the missing link between institutionalized debates and the general public debate' (ibid: 294) cover European affairs only sparsely and predominantly from a national perspective (ibid: 297). Notably, media coverage of EU affairs is generally described as scarce and largely negative (Peter et al., 2004: 428), delivering a 'distorted image' that 'leads to systematic misinterpretations of the performance of the EU-governance system' (Trenz, 2008: 295). Consequently, for a lack of both salient EU communication and appropriate media coverage, the communication deficit means that EU affairs are 'poorly understood by the public' (Belluati, 2021: 76). As low knowledge levels may lead to 'highly volatile and mood dependent attitudes' (Spanier, 2010: 16), the public may hence be more susceptible to Eurosceptic framing employed by the media and other actors, furthering the spread of Euroscepticism.

## 2.4 Media Framing

The predominantly negative and nationally fragmented portrayal of the EU in public media is of significance for tracing the spread of public Euroscepticism because of what Meyer called ‘the power of the media’ (1999: 621). As the primary provider of political communication (ibid: 621), mass media has the ability to influence public opinion by actively ‘constructing social reality’ (Scheufele, 1999: 105) through selecting, shaping and interpreting ‘issues and actions within a political space’ (Meyer, 1999: 621). This concept is captured by framing theory (Zaklama, 2025: 75). Media framing, accordingly, describes how ‘media outlets present and structure information to shape the public’s interpretation of events, issues, or individuals’ (ibid: 75). By highlighting, repeating or omitting certain elements of an issue, the author may construct an argument that aligns with ‘ideological, political or social perspectives’ (ibid: 75), exploiting existing cultural connotations to influence how the issue is understood and evaluated by the reader (ibid: 77). News frames, specifically, allow for ‘significant and meaningful differences in how recipients think about even controversial issues’ (Lecheler, 2019: 1) depending on the frame adopted by the journalist. Consequently, Eurosceptic framing employed by mainstream media may impact and shift public perception of the EU and the integration process by portraying the EU in a predominantly negative manner. The effect may be enhanced if the framing is based on pre-existing cultural reservations towards the process and its implications or mirrors the critique of established Eurosceptic parties (De Luca, 2025: 114). Thus, through influencing preference formation, media Euroscepticism may be linked to the electoral success of Eurosceptic parties.

The spread of public-level Euroscepticism may thus be regarded as a reflection of a growing negative perception of the EU by the public, which, in view of the EU’s communication deficit, may be informed by a primarily negative and Eurosceptic portrayal of the EU in the media. As one of the most trusted media sources (EP, 2022), prestigious print media specifically may have the ability to systematically reshape the public’s view on the benefits and disadvantages of European integration

### 3. Literature Review

Despite the extensive literature dedicated to identifying the determinants of public-level Euroscepticism, research focusing on the role of prestigious news media in influencing the public's perception of the European Union (EU) has been limited. Hawkins (2012) detected a predominantly Eurosceptic discourse in British print media debates surrounding the Lisbon Treaty, where the EU was framed as a 'hostile, quasi-imperial power which poses an existential threat to the United Kingdom' (565). Similarly, when examining British media coverage after the Brexit referendum, De Luca (2025) identified negative framing of the EU-UK relationship throughout all newspapers. However, the findings may be limited in transferability as for the political context, that is, Britain's historically awkward relationship with the EU (113). Nevertheless, while neither paper ascertains a causal relationship between media framing and public Euroscepticism, both clearly illustrate how framing may be employed to 'reinforce existing biases and agendas' (129). In contrast, De Vreese (2007) demonstrated that strategic news media framing 'can fuel public cynicism and scepticism' (271) about European integration. Importantly, the author stresses the conditionality of the effect upon strategic reporting, that is 'news that focuses on winning and losing' (273), insinuating that effects are intentional. These results are further supported by Vliegenthart et al. (2008), who find that public Euroscepticism is furthered by 'conflict framing' (415) highlighting dissent and inefficiency in the EU (420). The paper additionally shows that 'framing can result in considerable long-term changes in national-level public opinion' (435), arguing that as 'future European integration hinges upon public support' (416), media framing may threaten the European project. However, the results may be limited in topicality due to significant developments in the spread of Euroscepticism in recent decades. Lastly, De Vreese (2004) provided clear evidence that exposure to Eurosceptic media coverage was an important determinant of voters rejecting the Euro in the Danish 2000 referendum, illustrating a link between Eurosceptic news media framing and voter's preference formation.

Thus, while previous research provides a clear account of how Eurosceptic news media framing may further public-level Euroscepticism, several considerations may be raised. For one, due to the time-frames considered, relevant publications may not account for recent developments in media Euroscepticism, limiting their topicality. Furthermore, while de Vreese (2004) links Eurosceptic media framing to the voter decision making in the context of a referendum, existing research does not specifically consider the relationship between framing and the electoral success of Eurosceptic parties at European Parliament elections, which acts as the most direct mirror of levels of EU discontent throughout the Union.

#### 4. Methodology

Hence, this dissertation will investigate how popular newspapers in France and Germany employed framing prior to the 2024 European Parliament Elections to shape public perception of European Union affairs. To this end, it will apply news frame analysis to detect prominent framing utilised by both the EU publications and national news media, allowing for a direct comparison highlighting distinctive framing choices. Consequently, the dissertation will be able to determine how national news media in France and Germany employed Eurosceptic framing to further public-level Euroscepticism prior to the EP elections.

This dissertation will employ qualitative news frame analysis to determine how news media sources presented information on EU affairs. This research method has been selected as it is uniquely suited to ‘capture the meanings embedded in the internal relations within texts’ (Reese in Linström, 2012: 26). Different to thematic analysis, it places a specific focus on cultural and political connotations and ‘how they draw upon a shared store of social meanings’ (D’Angelo, 2010: 18), enabling the researcher to ‘understand the character of experience, particularly how people perceive and make sense of their communication experience’ (Wood, 2004: 69).

Data was collected for May 2024, the month prior to the 2024 European Parliament elections held from 6-9 June, from a selection of prestigious national daily newspapers in France and Germany as well as the European Commission Press Corner. National daily newspapers were selected with reference to readership numbers, to account for reach, and political alignment, to account for bias, ensuring a representative sample of news sources informing potential voters. Thus, the dissertation considered coverage by the French newspapers *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* as well as the German Newspapers *Welt* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Individual articles served as the unit for analysis and were retrieved from the database ‘factiva’ as well as the Le Monde online-archive using the search key ‘European Union’, adjusted to the relevant language. A representative sample of articles was chosen with respect to the articles content, selecting articles which included a discussion of EU economic or social policy.

Furthermore, the dissertation considered coverage of EU affairs by the EC press corner. The publication was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, as subordinate to the Directorate-General for Communication, the EC press corner is tasked with the communication of ‘political priorities as well as other topics of political importance or public interest’ (EC, 2025b) to both the media and the public. Secondly, as a publicly accessible daily publication, it resembles the daily newspapers considered. Consequently, it is deemed a suitable source of comparison to identify differences in framing between EU and national media communication. Relevant articles by the EC press corner

were retrieved from the online archive and identified using the search terms ‘economic policy’ and ‘social policy’, thus allowing for a direct comparison between the EC’s and national media’s framing of EU affairs.

The qualitative news frame analysis was conducted following the methodology outlined by Linström and Marais (2012). Frames were selected inductively by means of a pilot study using articles from the sample. In each article, the analysis identifies both a dominant frame, denoting the main theme of the article, and secondary frames, referring to a ‘supplementary idea that supports the main theme’ (ibid: 30). Operational definitions of news frames were determined to ensure that frames have ‘identifiable conceptual (...) characteristics’ (ibid: 30). The study predominantly distinguishes between positive and negative framing.

All data used in this study has been obtained from official sources and is part of the public domain and thus publicly accessible. Anonymisation has not been deemed necessary.

The research may be subject to limitations. Firstly, as data collection is constrained to May 2024, the findings may not account for time-dependent trends in framing. However, due the proximity to the elections, the timeframe is considered appropriate to gauge how framing was employed in pre-election coverage specifically. Secondly, as data was obtained from archives, there is no guarantee that all eligible articles were accessible to the researcher. However, one may justifiably assume that relevant, popular and notable articles were represented. Lastly, as some data was originally published in a language different to English, the findings may be limited by fluency constraints. The research took precautions to prevent this by referring to both quality translation tools and native speakers.

## 5. Case Study France

Consequently, contributing to previous research on the spread of public-level Euroscepticism, this chapter will examine whether the unprecedented electoral success of Eurosceptic parties in France during the 2024 European Parliament elections may be linked to Eurosceptic framing in French popular news media.

### 5.1 Introduction:

Historically, France's commitment to European integration has been propelled by both a vested interest in safeguarding peace in Europe as well as a desire to 'exercise (...) leadership in its neighborhood' (Lequesne, 2019: 2). Progressive integration was hence not inspired by federalist aspirations but rather seen as a means to both advance French national interests in the region and create a powerful Europe that would amplify French influence on the world stage (ibid: 5). Likewise, opposition to the process has been largely rooted in social-economic concerns over the extent to which the nation would benefit from integration. That is, French Euroscepticism has long been an expression of a perceived necessity to 'defend national sovereignty' and 'protect the national economy from the market' (ibid: 11).

Amidst growing levels of Eurosceptic sentiments in the French population, some scholars argue that 'misconceptions regarding how Europe functions are a major driver of French citizens' distrust of Europe' (Cautrès, 2020), linking the rising discontent to the communication of EU affairs that people are exposed to. Thus, this chapter will examine whether the portrayal of the European Union in French news media coverage contributed to the spread of public-level Euroscepticism by furthering prevalent Eurosceptic narratives in the country. To this end, it will specifically consider coverage of Economic and Social policy, corresponding to the dominant socio-economic concerns in the population.

In France, economic policy comprises an important pillar of legitimising European integration (Lequesne, 2019: 15). On the one hand, this may be linked to the historical context, where European economic integration was used as a tool to guarantee peace on the continent by making warfare between nations irrational (Anastasiou, 2007: 34). On the other hand, economic integration was said to provide protection from 'competition on the part of countries with low labour costs' (Rozenberg, 2015) and in that way provide protection from globalisation. EU economic policy and performance is hence a salient factor in determining public support for the EU. The 2024 post-EP election polls showed that 45% of respondents viewed the economic situation as an important factor influencing

their vote, with this number rising to 52% when specified to rising prices and the cost of living, making economic concerns the greatest determinant of voting behaviour in the country (DGC, 2024b: 15). While France has benefited from economic integration, large areas of the country are affected by regional development traps (Storper et al., 2022) and consequently experience economic stagnation. This has been associated with causing social and political resentment as well as installing the narrative that there is a ‘two-tier Europe’ (ibid) divided between few economically competitive and a vast majority of left behind regions. Thus concerns over how economic policy may hinder French economic growth and prosperity may represent a source of public Euroscepticism.

Moreover, the social dimensions of European integration have long constituted a significant source of friction in France. This may be attributed to the inherent conflict between the French social model, characterised by high social expenditure and opposition to labour market deregulation (Clegg, 2022: 186), and the EU’s more ‘stability-oriented and rule-based governance system’ (ibid:186). The Maastricht Treaty, specifically, coerced France to accept ‘ever-stricter requirements for fiscal consolidation and structural reform’ (ibid: 185), making it difficult for the country to comply with debt and deficit regulations while simultaneously maintaining the social model. While there have since been numerous attempts by France to reform and strengthen ‘the social dimensions of the European Union’ (ibid: 184), failure to do so has resulted in growing discontent with the constraining attributes of EU regulations and thus represent a source of Euroscepticism in the country. Whereas the 2024 post-EP election polls indicated that considerations regarding social protection, welfare and access to healthcare had an impact on voter’s preference formation (22%), the impact is considerably smaller than concerns over the economic situation (DGC, 2024b: 16). This is in contrast to OECD findings of the same year, which indicate that French citizens are highly dissatisfied with national social protection services (OECD, 2024). Hence, it may be that this disparity in salience of economic and social policy concerns during the 2024 EP election was informed by uneven news media coverage and framing of these issues.

During the 2024 EP elections, French Eurosceptic parties recorded their best results to date. Most prominently, the far right party Rassemblement Nationale gained 31.37% of the vote, marking a significant increase from 23.3% in 2019 (EP, 2024a). The party campaigned on a soft Eurosceptic platform, advocating for a rehabilitation of borders, protectionism, less regulations and bureaucracy as well as a significant reduction in the EU’s competencies to return power to the hands of member states (RN, 2024). Accordingly, RN framed the EU as deeply flawed, with Le Pen denoting it a technocratic, ‘intrusive and authoritarian bureaucracy’ (Le Pen in Barber, 2024) leading to a ‘loss of influence, identity and freedom’ (Le Pen in Preve, 2024). On the other end of the political spectrum, the far left La France Insoumise gained 10% of the vote (EP, 2024a), pursuing a repeal of European budget and debt regulations, reforms in workers rights and an end to free trade agreements (LFI, 2024). The

party's framing of the EU is strongly tinted by a rejection of 'Eurocrats' (Varma, 2024). Accounting for splinter parties, Eurosceptic parties thus secured nearly 50% of the vote in France, indicating a significant shift in the public perception of the EU. Corresponding polls showed that 29% of respondents in France believed their country had not benefited from EU membership, a 3% increase from 2019 (DGC, 2024b), while other polls recorded widespread doubts about the EU's ability to defend its citizens interests and consolidate its position on the international stage (Broche, 2024).

Thus, this chapter will examine whether the spread of public-level Euroscepticism in France was aided by Eurosceptic framing in French news media coverage of EU economic and social policy prior to the EP elections. As Eurosceptic parties drew support from every socio-professional category (Breville, 2025), the analysis will consider popular newspapers with a broad range in readership to more accurately gauge their impact on the population as a whole. The French newspaper *Le Monde* is the most widely read daily in the country and further has a significant international following. The paper is known to be center-left and is said to be 'the most influential Newspaper in France' (bpb, 2019). The French newspaper *Le Figaro* is the oldest French newspaper that is still in print. The daily is considered center-right and the most important conservative media in France (bpb, 2022).

## 5.2 How does framing employed by the French news media differ from framing employed by EU communication channels?

The data illustrated a clear divergence in framing employed by the EC press corner and the French national news media, indicating that the media aims to reshape rather than just convey the public narrative of EU affairs. That is, the EC communication predominantly portrayed the EU in a favourable manner, whereas newspapers adopted a comparatively more critical tone. This disparity may specifically be observed with regards to coverage of at the time discussed or newly adopted policies. Framing utilised by the EC can be described as primarily positive, highlighting the Union's strength and efficiency as an actor as well as its ability to protect and advance its citizens interests. For instance, actions undertaken were framed as 'achievements' (Zuber, 2024) and denoted necessary and appropriate (Bahrke, 2024) as well as 'crucial' (Bernsel, 2024) to 'position the EU as a leader' (DGC, 2024a) and 'foster societal and economic benefits and innovation' (Bahrke, 2024). Framing was thus used to generate public support for integration by emphasising the Union's ability to act as an effective and innovative governing body. Conversely, framing employed by newspapers was both more diverse and negative. While *Le Monde* utilised both positive and negative framing, focusing equally on the deficiencies of current legislation and the Union's commitment to change and progress, coverage by *Le Figaro* largely relied on negative framing, depicting a more sceptical view towards integration. That is, while *Le Monde* both acknowledged the 'issues' (Wieder, 2024) within a process



that often produces ‘insufficient’ (Le Monde, 2024) results, the newspaper also stressed the EU’s ‘concerted effort’ (Ricard, 2024) and ‘ambition’ (Le Monde, 2024) to embrace ‘radical change’ (Couppey-Soubeyran, 2024). As one author noted:

*‘After decades of taboos surrounding the matter, the European Union is now finally comfortable discussing industrial policy. Although cautiously and carefully, a revolution is slowly underway’.*  
(Albert, 2024)

The framing both highlights inadequacies of previous treatment of the issue and holds out the prospect of positive change at EU level, encouraging trust towards the process while criticising its inefficiency. In contrast, frames employed by Le Figaro depict a great dissatisfaction with past and present integration efforts. Specifically, the process is portrayed as rushed and ‘insufficiently coordinated’<sup>1</sup> (Verdier-Molinié, 2024) as well as characterised by ‘ill-calibrated voluntarism’<sup>2</sup> (ibid). Notably, the coverage does not oppose integration as such but rather the manner in which integration has progressed. As one author stated:

*‘To want Europe, our fellow citizens need to be able to believe in a prosperous future, not one of decline. Europe must no longer be seen as a burden, but as a booster.’*<sup>3</sup> (ibid)

The author implies both that the EU has the potential to serve its citizens and that it does not currently do so, in that way making support for integration conditional upon reform. Consequently, while to varying extents, French newspapers utilised negative framing of EU affairs to actively highlight the institutions shortcomings. They thus aimed to portray a more critical assessment of European integration than the EC coverage, intentionally altering how information is passed on to the public. This may have several implications. For one, due to the low salience of EC reporting, the media was able to set a different dominant narrative than set out by the EC. Secondly, while coverage by Le Monde may be considered a balanced assessment, the persistent negative framing employed by Le Figaro could result in a public negative bias towards integration, furthering Eurosceptic sentiments in the population.

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘insuffisamment coordonné’

<sup>2</sup> ‘à force de volontarisme mal calibré’

<sup>3</sup> ‘Pour avoir envie d'Europe, nos concitoyens doivent pouvoir croire à un avenir prospère et pas à un déclin. L'Europe ne doit plus être ressentie comme un fardeau mais comme un booster.’

### 5.3 How does the French news media employ Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs?

Given the presence of negative framing of the EU in national news media, the analysis identified several prevalent Eurosceptic frames employed to further a negative perception of the Union in the public.

For one, French media frequently framed the EU as an imprudent polity whose actions infringe on member states interests. That is, the EU's policymaking efforts were often characterised as infeasible and misguided. For instance, when discussing the EU's agreed ban on combustion engines, one author argued the EU was 'not at all ready to make the transition'<sup>4</sup>(Verdier-Molinié, 2024), further criticising its willingness to 'risk jeopardising its own industry'<sup>5</sup> (ibid) and noting:

*'It would appear that Europe's 'normative' strategy does nothing to enhance its competitiveness in the face of its global competitors.'*<sup>6</sup>(ibid)

The framing employed thus seeks to create the perception that both the policy and the Union's strategy as a whole are ill-conceived and will adversely affect its members. Similarly, measures for budgetary consolidation are described as 'weighing on growth prospects'<sup>7</sup> (Collomp, 2024), further reinforcing the notion that rather than benefiting citizens, EU policy is hindering progress. Subsequently, the EU is portrayed as 'falling behind'(Le Monde, 2024) and in dire need of 'radical change'(Couppey-Soubeyran, 2024) to remain relevant and competitive. Consequently, the media's use of framing encourages Eurosceptic sentiments by highlighting the negative implications arising from the shortcomings of the EU polity's considerations.

Secondly, framing was used to portray the EU as inefficient, stifling member states' progress and productivity. Specifically, the media highlighted the burden imposed by bureaucracy, leaving the Union 'hampered by too many rules' (Darbon, 2024)<sup>8</sup> and 'bogged down in control procedures'<sup>9</sup> (Verdier-Molinié, 2024). As one author noted:

*'By inventing ever more environmental and social standards, we risk producing less and less'*<sup>10</sup>(ibid),

---

<sup>4</sup> 'pas du tout prêts à assurer cette transition'

<sup>5</sup> 'risque de mettre en danger sa propre industrie'

<sup>6</sup> 'Il apparaît que la stratégie « normative » de l'Europe ne favorise en rien sa compétitivité face à ses concurrents mondiaux'

<sup>7</sup> 'pèse sur les perspectives de croissance'

<sup>8</sup> 'entravent trop de règles'

<sup>9</sup> 's'enliser dans les procédures de contrôle'

<sup>10</sup> 'à force d'inventer toujours plus de normes environnementales et sociales, nous risquons de produire de moins en moins'

suggesting that the regulations are redundant and impede economic activity in the Union. Moreover, the depiction indicates that future potentially beneficial policies would be equally impaired by the existing procedures. As one author questions:

*‘European debt, but what for? To continue over-regulating everything?’<sup>11</sup> (ibid),*

portraying policy advances as pointless in the absence of reform. Framing in French media coverage is thus used to convey the sentiment that due to the inefficient nature of the Union’s processes, membership hinders rather than promotes citizens’ interests by complicating procedures and slowing down progress. The media may have subsequently contributed to the spread of Eurosceptic sentiments in the population by questioning the usefulness and thus legitimacy of EU policymaking.

Lastly, the French media used framing to highlight how the internal divisions within the EU may impede the formation of coherent and effective policy and thus adversely affect citizens. That is, by stressing member states diverging policy interests, the media questioned the extent to which they were truly committed to cooperation and, by implication, formation of policy that benefits everyone. For instance, when discussing the EU’s response to current challenges, the media described member states as ‘sharply divided’ (Malingre, 2024) while portraying the lack of cohesion as a threat to member states interests. As one author noted:

*‘In this context, the question is whether "Berlin will choose a path of European cooperation, or whether the German bulldozer will crush the rest,” (Wieder, 2024) .*

The framing not only portrays cooperation as uncertain but also highlights the threat posed by existing interdependencies if member states choose to deviate from cohesion. Furthermore, the media chose to highlight disagreements with Germany in particular, spreading doubts about the two countries ability to effectively work together. A special emphasis is put on ‘tensions’ (ibid) and worries that ‘Germany is increasingly going it alone (...) without considering the consequences of such a strategy for the internal market’ (ibid). Framing is thus employed to highlight how a lack of cohesion not only impacts the Union’s ability to form relevant common policies but also inadvertently poses a threat to other members’ wellbeing. Consequently, the public may be led to perceive further integration as inadvisable due to risk of further exposure, driving the spread of public-level Euroscepticism.

---

<sup>11</sup> ‘Une dette européenne, mais pour quoi faire ? Pour continuer à tout réglementer de manière excessive?’

Hence, the French news media employed Eurosceptic framing highlighting the EU's imprudence, inefficiency and divisions to create the perception that EU policies and thus membership are detrimental to member states' national interests.

#### 5.4 How does the framing employed by the French news media vary between economic and social policy coverage?

Furthermore, the difference in importance voters attached to social and economic policy concerns in their voting decision was reflected in the difference in coverage of these two topics in the French media. Specifically, the analysis detected a discrepancy in both the framing and frequency with which the two topics were addressed in the French news media. Compared directly, social policy coverage was both more sparse and positive than reporting on economic policy, indicating the media considered social policy to be less critical of an issue. That is, the media predominantly highlighted the insufficiencies of EU social policy efforts, both with respect to the lack of a common budget and debt (Couppey-Soubeyran, 2024) and associated constraints for social Europe as well as how existing policies penalised some regions (Charrel, 2024). Critique further centered on the threat the EU's market-driven strategies pose to France's social security system. As one author noted:

*'The legislation continues to give extensive powers to the European Commission, and risks accelerating the trend toward cuts in public services and social rights.'* (Meda, 2024),

suggesting that EU policy may worsen issues already faced by the French public. Thus, framing of social policy largely focused on conveying the inefficiency of the Union as well as the discrepancy between EU and national interests, in that way furthering concerns in the public about the benefits of membership. Conversely, framing of economic policy stressed the dangers integration poses for French economic prosperity, hence adopting a comparatively more negative and alarming tone. Specifically, the coverage frequently links the Union's economic policy to a trajectory of economic decline (de Guigne, 2024) and a 'falling behind' (Le Monde, 2024) on the global scale. Economic policy failures are consequently not only associated with personal restrictions but also a decline of the EU's global relevance. As one author stated:

*'Europe is mortal'* (Couppey-Soubeyran, 2024),

framing flawed policy as an existential threat. Thus, while negative framing is used in the coverage of both social and economic policy, it varies in intensity. Additionally, the imbalance in frequency with which the two topics were addressed in the French news coverage may have further contributed to a

difference in salience of the two concerns with voters, thus impacting which topics most affect voters' election decision. Consequently, it may explain why some issues were deemed more relevant.

## 5.5 Conclusion

Consequently, the findings indicate that French news media sources, albeit to varying extents employed targeted Eurosceptic framing in their coverage of EU affairs prior to the EP election, thus furthering prevalent Eurosceptic narratives in the country. Specifically, next to choosing a more critical frame than EU sources, the media sought to create the perception that the EU is imprudent, inefficient and internally divided, furthering the narrative that benefits to membership may be outweighed by the drawbacks. While *Le Monde* also utilised positive framing, one may argue that the negative depiction of both European integration and the EU as a polity may contribute to the formation of Eurosceptic attitudes in the population. Notably, framing employed by the media complemented framing used by prominent Eurosceptic parties in the country, increasing the salience of Eurosceptic party positions. Furthermore, by proclaiming the need for radical change to uphold the Union's benefits, the media may have additionally reinforced the position of Eurosceptic parties. Thus, Eurosceptic framing may have contributed to the spread of public level Euroscepticism and thus facilitated the electoral success of Eurosceptic parties in the country

## 6. Case Study Germany

Furthermore, this chapter will examine whether the unprecedented electoral success of Eurosceptic parties in Germany during the 2024 European Parliament elections may be linked to Eurosceptic framing in German popular news media.

### 6.1 Introduction:

Germany's longstanding commitment to European integration is closely tied to the nation's history. After the war 'politically isolated and economically devastated' (Schwarzer, 2016: 2), West Germany pursued integration as a means to both facilitate economic recovery and build trust with its western allies (ibid: 2). Support for the project was hence rooted in a desire to regain international recognition as well as to reconstruct its national identity and overcome its past (Risse, 2009: 294). Opposition to integration only arose gradually after reunification and the Maastricht Treaty, fuelled by sentiments that 'the EU had overstepped the mark in its policy solutions' (Bulmer, 2019: 15) as well as the notion that burdens within the EU were unequally distributed, disproportionately affecting Germany (Baluch, 2018: 113). Notably, while the rise of Euroscepticism in East Germany is often attributed to a difference in socialisation and political culture (Bulmer, 2019:16), the shift in West German attitudes is more difficult to account for.

Thus, in light of the recent proliferation of public-level Euroscepticism in Germany, this chapter will examine whether the shift in public perception of the EU may have been facilitated by the German news media's negative portrayal of the European Union. In line with prevalent concerns in the German public, it will specifically consider coverage of economic and social policy.

The benefits of economic integration have historically contributed to generating public support for the European project in Germany. Next to facilitating 'Franco-German reconciliation' (Patel, 2022), market integration brought significant economic gains, supporting the nation's post-war recovery and furthering economic growth. The process subsequently not only aided Germany's 'economic miracle' (Bulmer, 2019: 4) but also provided the nation with the necessary influence to shape the European market order (ibid: 10). Discontent with economic integration thus emerged as a reflection of an apparent conflict between Germany's 'economic self-interest' (Becker, 2023: 1474) and popular opposition to risk-sharing within the eurozone (Baccaro et al., 2022: 2). During the Euro crisis specifically, the violation of the 'no-bailout clause' (ibid: 1) propagated the notion that the EU exploited German taxpayers (Baluch, 2018: 115). Thus economic integration has become a salient determinant of Euroscepticism in Germany. The 2024 pots-EP election polls indicated that 37% of respondents in Germany considered the cost of living and rising prices as the most important topic

encouraging them to vote, while 36% further mentioned the economic situation (DGC, 2024b: 15). Similarly, a poll conducted by Allianz prior to the elections indicated that Germans perceived economic policy as the most important policy area on which the new EU Commission should focus, while support for the euro has hit a historic low (Holzhausen, 2024: 7).

Conversely, European social policy integration in Germany long benefitted from permissive consensus, that is, a public detachment from the process (Bulmer, 2019: 1, Garcia-Guitian, 2021: 45). However, in line with recent expansions in the EU's social dimensions (Eick, 2024: 673), integration has become increasingly politicised. As German social policy has traditionally been defined by a conservative welfare state as well as a 'historical stratification of German society along industrial sectors' (Preece, 2009: 129), that is, market-friendly institutions (ibid: 129), harmonised welfare policies are regarded critically (Eick, 2024: 673). Opposition is partly directed at stricter market regulations. More prominent, however, are concerns regarding common welfare policies which promote redistribution of budgets, require significant financing from net contributor members and are universal (Eick, 2024: 673- 681), often titled 'welfare Euroscepticism' (ibid: 673). Consequently, social policy integration has become an increasingly salient component of German voters preference formation on the EU. Post-EP election polls indicated that 16% of respondents identified social protection and welfare as an important determinant of their decision to vote (DGC, 2024b: 16). Furthermore, as in Germany the social welfare debate is strongly entwined with discussions regarding to which extent immigrants should be able to obtain benefits (Dochow-Sonderhausen, 2024), the prominence of migration concerns with respondents (44%) (DGC, 2024b: 15) further highlights the salience of the policy area.

During the 2024 EP elections, German Eurosceptic parties recorded historic gains. Most notably, the far-right party Alternative für Deutschland gained 15.9% of the vote, representing a significant increase from 11% in 2019 and making them the second strongest party in the country (EP, 2024c). The AfD's framing of the EU is strongly influenced by distrust and an 'increasing suspicion of the EU's plans' (Roch, 2023:548), portraying the European project as 'misguided' (ibid: 544), threatening to 'impoverish the country' (ibid: 548) and endangering its citizens 'peace' and 'freedom' (ibid: 547). The party's EP election manifesto exhibited hard-Eurosceptic tendencies, calling the EU a failed project (AfD, 2024: 8) and advocating to strengthen nation states sovereignty by reforming the EU into a confederation of European nations (ibid: 10). The party further stressed its disdain for social Europe and the sanction regime placed on Russia, arguing to abandon both (ibid: 25). Moreover, the newly established far left party Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht gained 6.2% of the vote in its first ever EP election (EP, 2024c). The party's manifesto demanded a reduction in EU competencies, arguing that legislation at the national level may be more efficient, as well as comprehensive economic policy reforms aimed at increasing intergovernmental cooperation within the EU. Notably, while supporting

a limited homogenisation of social policy on EU level, BSW opposes the idea of social Europe, thus distinguishing itself from other left wing-Eurosceptic parties. Subsequently, the BSW's framing of the EU reflects soft Euroscepticism, denoting the EU's current form inefficient, technocratic and harmful to its member state's interests (Ipd, 2024). The election results thus signify a significant shift in public opinion in the formerly pro-Europe Germany.

This chapter will examine how the proliferation of public-level Euroscepticism in Germany was facilitated by Eurosceptic framing in German newspaper media coverage of EU economic and social policy prior to the EP elections. While support for Eurosceptic parties in Germany is most concentrated in the East of the country, the movement has managed to establish itself in the West as well, primarily attracting a working class electorate (Debus, 2025). Consequently, to account for the increase in Eurosceptic sentiments throughout the country, the chapter will consider two prestigious national daily newspapers likely to inform a significant fraction of potential voters in Germany. The conservative daily 'Welt' is one of the most influential newspapers in the country, focusing in its coverage on analysis and commentary of current affairs (FFO, 2024). Moreover, the left-leaning daily Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ) was the most circulated prestigious daily in the country in 2024 (SRD, 2025) and distinguishes itself through 'strong positions' (FFO, 2024).

## 6.2 How does framing employed by the German news media differ from framing employed by EU communication channels?

The analysis identified a noticeable difference in framing employed by the EC press corner and the German news media, suggesting that the media intended to alter the EU's public portrayal and thus the way in which the Union was publicly perceived. Specifically, the data showed a distinction between the, as previously established, positive framing used by the EC and the more negative portrayal conveyed by the newspapers. That is, next to outlining the advantages associated with EU membership, particularly peace, economic prosperity but also funding for local development (Hügenell, 2024), German news sources further highlighted the Union's deficiencies, both with respect to its structures and policies. Notably, the analysis revealed a general conformity between framing employed by Welt and SZ, as both sought to convey the sentiment that while the achievement of European unity was worth protecting (Busse, 2024; Poschard, 2024), the project's benefits were constrained by flawed policies, procedures and strategies (Kelnberger, 2024). For instance, as one author noted:



*'In Brussels, (...) the challenges and interests of the member states must once again be better recognised and understood. (Reinhart, 2024)<sup>12</sup>*

The framing not only implied that current policy efforts did not optimally serve members but also demanded a return to previous conditions that were considered better. The German media thus expressed both an appreciation for and criticism of the EU. However, the analysis also detected some deviations between the two news sources. Whereas framing employed by SZ was largely limited to criticising the EU's 'design faults' (Wetzel, 2024a)<sup>13</sup> and annoying (Kelnberger, 2024) attributes, Welt frequently adopted a comparatively harsher tone, denoting policies 'unnecessary' (Reinhart, 2024), encroaching (Poschard, 2024) and generally dangerous to the nation's well being (Fromm, 2024). Thus, while both news outlets portrayed a more critical stance towards the EU and integration than EC coverage did, the framing employed by Welt served to further emphasise and dramatise the Union's mistakes, increasing the salience of the negatively framed coverage. Furthermore, as opposed to SZ, framing by Welt also exhibited critique towards domestic mainstream's parties interactions with the EU, condemning the lack of a 'decidedly liberal force that substantially criticises EU statism - to the point of being disruptive' (Poschard, 2024)<sup>14</sup>. The newspaper hence conveyed the sentiment that the EU needs to be held accountable or even stopped. Consequently, framing employed by the German news media served to create a more critical perception of the EU than conveyed by EC coverage, which, due to the use of dramatised negative framing, may have sparked Eurosceptic sentiments in the public.

### 6.3 How does the German news media employ Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs?

Hence, in line with the presence of negative framing in the German news media, the analysis further identified several prevalent Eurosceptic frames employed which may have facilitated the spread of Eurosceptic sentiments in the German public prior to the 2024 EP elections.

For one, the German news media employed framing to portray the EU as a weak polity, highlighting its limited influence and power both within and outside the member states, hence putting into question its ability to protect member states interests. For instance, the EU was frequently characterised as helpless (Wetzel, 2024a), fearful (Kunkel, 2024) and 'submissive'<sup>15</sup> (Schlauch, 2024), creating the perception that the Union is either unwilling or incapable of asserting itself. As one author noted:

---

<sup>12</sup> 'In Brüssel müssen (...) die Herausforderungen und Interessen der Mitgliedsstaaten wieder stärker gesehen und verstanden werden.'

<sup>13</sup> 'Konstruktionsfehler'

<sup>14</sup> 'dezidiert liberale Kraft, die den EU-Etatismus substanziell kritisiert – bis hin zum Disruptiven'

<sup>15</sup> 'unterwürfig'

*‘This has impressively shown where power ends.’ (Wetzel, 2024a)<sup>16</sup>,*

suggesting that the Union’s influence is limited. The media further suggested that EU directives were often ignored (Krüger, 2024) and left affected parties ‘virtually unimpressed’ (Fritz, 2024)<sup>17</sup>, thus questioning the Union’s legitimacy. Similarly, the coverage highlighted the shortcomings of EU policies, described as overcautious (Wetzel, 2024b), overdue (ibid) and lacking confidence (Zwick, 2024). Consequently, by creating the perception that the EU was weak and had limited leverage, the media may further Eurosceptic sentiments in the public as people may lose trust in the Union’s ability to protect the rule of law.

Secondly, framing was employed to create the perception of conflicting interests within the EU frequently resulting in policies that disadvantaged Germany and harmed the nation's interests. That is, coverage frequently highlighted disagreements between Germany and other member states, particularly France, on strategy and policy, with Germany subsequently being portrayed as the loser (Brössler, 2024) of such negotiations. For instance, when discussing the EUs planned tariffs on electric car imports from China, the media highlighted both France’s enthusiasm and Germany’s opposition (Kunkel, 2024), subsequently denoting it a lost altercation (ibid) ‘at the expense of the domestic industry’ (ibid)<sup>18</sup>. Similarly, coverage on the impact of new industry regulations stressed the ‘enormous disadvantages for Germany as a business location’ (Vetter, 2024)<sup>19</sup> while also noting that they benefited France (ibid). Framing was thus used to both highlight disputes within the Union and portray Germany as disadvantaged compared to France. Furthermore, the discourse conveyed the sentiment that European policy actively impeded German economic prosperity. This is especially significant with regard to the history of the Union, where integration was often portrayed as a means to limit German power (Bulmer, 2019). Consequently, by highlighting the persistent conflict between German national interest and EU policy, the media may facilitate the spread of public-level Euroscepticism.

Lastly, the German news media framed the EU as inefficient both with regard to its legislative processes and the resulting policies that impeded its economic prosperity and international significance. Specifically, media coverage criticised how the nature of policymaking within the Union impeded progress, highlighting the effects of internal divisions (Poschardt, 2024), a lack of resolve

---

<sup>16</sup> ‘Dieses hat eindrucksvoll gezeigt, wo die Macht endet’

<sup>17</sup> ‘nahezu unbeeindruckt’

<sup>18</sup> ‘auf kosten der heimischen Industrie’

<sup>19</sup> ‘enorme Nachteile für den Standort Deutschland’

(ibid) and the properties of the system that allow individual member states to block processes (Kelnberger, 2024). For instance, one author noted:

*‘Europe could be the future. But it is not, because Europe’s political elites have become self-sufficient and lazy about change.’ (Poschardt, 2024)<sup>20</sup>*

The framing not only suggests that the EU’s stagnation is self-inflicted but also portrays doubts about the future of the project. Furthermore, the media emphasised the constraints on efficiency imposed by bureaucracy (Reinhart, 2024), the Union’s ‘excessive moral standards’ (Siems, 2024)<sup>21</sup> and a detachment from reality. As one author argues:

*‘A large number of rules and laws not only ignore people’s lifestyles, but also the requirements of the economy’ (Reinhart, 2024)<sup>22</sup>.*

Thus, framing is used to portray the EU as inefficient, raising concerns over the appeal of membership and thus contributing to the spread of Eurosceptic sentiments in the population.

Consequently, the media employed Eurosceptic framing that highlights the EU as weak, inefficient and systematically penalising German national interests in its decisionmaking, thus furthering the perception that EU membership may not be beneficial to Germany.

#### 6.4 How does the framing employed by the German news media vary between economic and social policy coverage?

The data displayed a discrepancy between framing employed to convey EU social and economic policy. Specifically, the analysis found that social policy concerns were both addressed less frequently and treated as comparably insignificant and non-decisive. For instance, when discussing the possibility of European debt, the idea was dismissed as unnecessary (Welt, 2024) and not up for discussion (ibid). Thus, while social policy coverage generally exhibited negative framing, suggesting that advancements would be ‘at the expense of Germany’ (ibid)<sup>23</sup>, it also conveyed the sentiment that it was less critical of an issue due to both a general consensus in the domestic political scene and

---

<sup>20</sup> ‘Europa könnte die Zukunft sein. Ist es aber nicht, weil die politischen Eliten Europas selbstgenügsam und veränderungsfaul geworden sind.’

<sup>21</sup> ‘überzogenen Moralvorstellungen’

<sup>22</sup> ‘Eine Vielzahl von Regeln und Gesetzen gehen nicht nur an den Lebensgewohnheiten der Menschen, sondern auch an den Anforderungen der Wirtschaft vorbei’

<sup>23</sup> ‘zulasten Deutschlands’

Germany's weight in the decision making process (ibid). Conversely, framing of economic policy was both often negative and served to dramatise the issue. That is, discrepancies in economic policy were denoted 'misguided developments' (Reinhart, 2024)<sup>24</sup> strictly linked to 'significant disadvantages' (Vetter, 2024)<sup>25</sup> for the German economy, highlighting associated risks and adverse effects. As one author noted:

*'There you see how quickly you can shoot yourself in the knee' (Zwick, 2024)<sup>26</sup>,*

implying that by enacting the policy, the EU inadvertently impeded its own progress and prosperity. Similarly, framing was used to warn of future adverse effects if strategies were not amended. For instance, one author argued:

*'Europe is in danger of being left behind economically' (Reinhart, 2024)<sup>27</sup>,*

suggesting policy failures may threaten the EU's position on the international stage. Framing is consequently used to highlight how the inefficiency of the Union negatively impacts future prosperity, hence furthering sceptical attitudes towards the current trajectory of the Union and increasing the public's demand for reform. Thus, the difference in salience of economic and social policy concerns exhibited in the post election polls may be linked to the different treatments of the issue in German news media, where framing of social policy served to make concerns appear less significant, while the portrayal of economic policy heightened their relevance in the public eye.

## 6.5 Conclusion:

Consequently, the findings indicate that the German news media employed Eurosceptic framing in its coverage of EU affairs to further a critical perception of the EU in the public. Specifically, while utilising both positive and negative framing, the media's portrayal of the EU as weak, inefficient and systematically discounting German interests may encourage demands for significant reform or reduced integration efforts in the population, thus facilitating the electoral success of Eurosceptic parties in the country. Furthermore, both the news treatment of economic and social policy coincided with framing employed by Eurosceptic parties in the country, thus reinforcing populist sentiments in the population. Additionally, as the divergence in attention paid to social and economic policy issues

---

<sup>24</sup> 'Fehlentwicklungen'

<sup>25</sup> 'signifikante Nachteile'

<sup>26</sup> 'Da sehen Sie, wie schnell man sich ins Knie schießen kann'

<sup>27</sup> 'Europa droht, wirtschaftlich abgehängt zu werden'

aligns with the salience of the issues indicated in the post election polls, this may indicate that the media's treatment of the issues impacted their public salience levels.

## 7. Discussion

The results thus illustrate that both the French and German news media have utilised Eurosceptic framing highlighting the discrepancies with both the integration process and the EU as a polity to negatively shape public perception of the European Union, plausibly furthering public-level Euroscepticism prior to the 2024 European Parliament elections.

Directly comparing media framing between France and Germany, several points stand out. For one, economic concerns dominated both national coverage and voters' electoral decision making processes in both countries, while EU coverage on the topics was more balanced. Furthermore, while national media sources in both countries adopted a more critical stance towards European integration than EU sources and thus both engaged in actively reshaping the narrative of the EU conveyed to the public, the specific Eurosceptic frames employed only coincided to a limited degree. That is, while both sought to highlight the inefficiency of the Union, other framing choices varied with prominent cultural connotations within the countries. This divergence may be interpreted as evidence for both the use of targeted framing aimed at reinforcing pre-existing reservations and the multifaceted nature of Eurosceptic drivers between countries. Moreover, a comparison shows that Eurosceptic framing varied in intensity between France and Germany. Notably, the higher intensity of framing in France aligned with the comparably higher rates of electoral success of Eurosceptic parties in the country, thus indicating that the two may be linked. Lastly, a comparison showed that conservative-leaning newspapers both more frequently and intensely employed Eurosceptic framing than their left-leaning counterparts. This may be explained with respect to the conservative focus on 'individual responsibility' (Skovsgaard, 2024: 1143) and thus a greater concern for the negative implications of cross-national dependencies. The divergence aligns with the significantly greater electoral success of far-right Eurosceptic parties in both countries, and may be linked through people's tendency to consume news that are consistent with their political philosophy.

Thus, the clear presence of Eurosceptic framing and a reshaping of the narrative raises the question what role the media should play in political communication. While most scholars agree that the media is pivotal for 'communication between politics and citizens' (Rexha, 2014: 53), this study illustrated that the media has the power to change the tone, focus and thus public perception of an issue. While some argue that it is the media's role to act as the 'watchdog' (ibid: 53) of the political arena, others emphasise the importance of 'impartiality' (Mazor, 2018). It may certainly be true that the EU's own communication channels exhibited a positive bias which should be accounted for and corrected in national news media coverage. However, one may argue that the use of emotive and overly negative language, as has been detected in this study, serves to dramatise and realign rather than complement the perspective offered by EU communication on EU affairs.

In consequence, there are two notable implications that may be drawn from the results. For one, the media, including prestigious sources, may employ Eurosceptic framing to further a more critical public perception of the EU and the process of integration. Given the destabilising effect the integration paradox has had on the process since 1992, the spread of public-level Euroscepticism through the media may thus pose a threat to the future of the European project. Secondly, if the EU wishes to take back control of the narrative of EU affairs from national media sources, it may have to address its persistent communication deficit in a way that both simplifies and increases the salience of its communication.

## 8. Bibliography

Albert, E. (2024). *Europe's reindustrialization: A challenging work in progress*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at:

[https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/09/europe-s-reindustrialization-a-challenging-work-in-progress\\_6670854\\_19.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/09/europe-s-reindustrialization-a-challenging-work-in-progress_6670854_19.html) [Accessed 18 Dec. 2024].

Alternative für Deutschland (2024). *EUROPAWAHL PROGRAMM 2024*. [online] Available at:

[https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/AfD\\_EW\\_Programm\\_2024.pdf](https://www.afd.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/AfD_EW_Programm_2024.pdf) [Accessed 16 Apr. 2025].

Anastasiou, H. (2007). The EU as a Peace Building System: Deconstructing Nationalism in an Era of Globalisation. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, [online] 12(2), pp.31–50. Available at:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41852961> [Accessed 20 Mar. 2025].

Baccaro, L., Bremer, B. and Neimanns, E. (2022). *Strategic Interdependence and Preferences for Debt Mutualization in the Eurozone*. [online] Available at: [https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/atg8p\\_v1](https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/atg8p_v1) [Accessed 16 Apr. 2025].

Bahrke, J. (2024). *Commission establishes AI Office to strengthen EU leadership in safe and trustworthy Artificial Intelligence*. [online] European Commission Press Corner . Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex\\_24\\_2986](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_24_2986).

Baluch, A. (2018). The Dynamic of Euroscepticism in Germany . In: *The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism* . Abingdon : Routledge , pp.113–126.

Barber, T. (2024). *Europe's hard-right parties differ in important ways*. [online] FinancialTimes. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/8b88f81f-34cb-4bcc-8560-f4cfa7ef7ce2> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2025].

Becker, P. (2022). Germany as the European Union's status quo power? Continuity and change in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 30(8), pp.1–21.

doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2022.2085770>.

Begg, I. (2021). *BRIEFING The EU system in perspective*. [online] Available at:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689369/EPRS\\_BRI\(2021\)689369\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/689369/EPRS_BRI(2021)689369_EN.pdf) [Accessed 10 Mar. 2025].

Bernsel, J. (2025). *More than 27,000 unitary patents registered in the first successful year of the*



*unitary patent system*. [online] European Commission Press Corner . Available at:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex\\_24\\_3048](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_24_3048) [Accessed 2 Apr. 2025].

Bickerton, C.J., Hodson, D. and Puetter, U. (2014). The New Intergovernmentalism: European Integration in the Post-Maastricht Era. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 53(4), pp.703–722.

Bickerton, C.J., Hodson, D. and Puetter, U. (2015). The New Intergovernmentalism and the Study of European Integration. In: *The New Intergovernmentalism: States and Supranational actors in the post Maastricht Era* . Oxford Academic , pp.1–48.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198703617.003.0001>.

Bil-Jaruzelska, A. (2022). Mark Gilbert and Daniele Pasquinucci , eds. Euroscepticisms: The Historical Roots of a Political Challenge. European Studies 36. Leiden: Brill, 2020. Pp. 235. *Journal of British Studies*, 61(2), pp.513–514. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2022.16>.

Brack, N. and Startin, N. (2015). Introduction: Euroscepticism, from the margins to the mainstream. *International Political Science Review*, 36(3), pp.239–249.

Bradbury, J. (2009). The European Union and the Contested Politics of ‘Ever Closer Union’: Approaches to Integration, State Interests and Treaty Reform since Maastricht. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 10(1), pp.17–33. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850802699961>.

Breville, B. (2025). *France’s far-right voters: ‘We all think the same thing here’*. [online] Le Monde diplomatique. Available at: <https://mondediplo.com/2025/03/03rassemblement-national> [Accessed 27 Apr. 2025].

Broche , A. (2024). *Les français et l’Union européenne*. [online] Institut Viavoice. Available at: <https://www.institut-viavoice.com/francais-ue/> [Accessed 2 May 2025].

Brössler, D., Richter, N. and Krüger, P. (2024). *Unser Europa ist kein Supermarkt*. [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at:  
<https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/emmanuel-macron-rede-dresden-europa-1.7438496?reduced=true> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2025].

Buhr, R.L. (2012). Seizing the Opportunity: Euroscepticism and Extremist Party Success in the Post-Maastricht Era. *Government and Opposition*, 47(4), pp.544–573.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2012.01374.x>.

Bulmer, S. (2019). Germany and the European Union. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*.

doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1063>.

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2019). *Le Monde*. [online] eurotopics.net. Available at: <https://www.eurotopics.net/de/148683/le-monde#> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2025].

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2022). *Le Figaro*. [online] eurotopics.net. Available at: <https://www.eurotopics.net/de/148679/le-figaro> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2025].

Busse, C. (2024). *Warum große deutsche Unternehmen plötzlich für die Europawahl werben*. [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/europawahl-konzerne-deutschland-afd-deutsche-bahn-deutsche-bank-siemens-1.7246104> [Accessed 19 Apr. 2025].

Capoccia, G. (2021). *An increasingly Eurosceptic French electorate threatens the EU*. [online] The Loop. Available at: <https://theloop.ecpr.eu/an-increasingly-eurosceptic-french-electorate-threatens-the-eu/> [Accessed 2 Apr. 2025].

Cautrès, B., Chopin, T. and Riviere, E. (2020). *French public opinion and Europe between distrust and ambivalence*. [online] Institut Jacques Delors. Available at: <https://institutdelors.eu/en/publications/les-francais-et-leurope-entre-defiance-et-ambivalence-2/>.

Charrel, M., Kaval, A. and Morel, S. (2024). *Europe's regional inequalities fuel anger and despair*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/10/europe-s-regional-inequalities-fuel-anger-and-despair\\_6671028\\_19.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/10/europe-s-regional-inequalities-fuel-anger-and-despair_6671028_19.html) [Accessed 10 Apr. 2025].

Clegg, D. (2022). A more liberal France, a more social Europe? Macron, two-level reformism and the COVID-19 crisis. *Comparative European Politics*, 20(2). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-022-00279-4>.

Collomp, F. (2024). *Tout juste sortie de la récession, l'Allemagne continue de peser sur la croissance économique de l'Europe*. [online] Le Figaro. Available at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/tout-juste-sortie-de-la-recession-l-allemande-continuer-de-peser-sur-la-croissance-economique-de-l-europe-20240515> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2025].

Coupey-Soubeyran, J. (2024). *'Europe suffers from its incomplete union between states that share the euro but not their budget or taxation'*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/13/europe-suffers-from-its-incomplete-union-between-states-that-share-the-euro-but-not-their-budget-or-taxation\\_6671259\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/13/europe-suffers-from-its-incomplete-union-between-states-that-share-the-euro-but-not-their-budget-or-taxation_6671259_23.html) [Accessed 6 Apr. 2025].

2025].

D'Angelo, P. and Kuypers, J.A. (2010). *Doing News Framing Analysis*. Routledge.

Darbon, L. (2024). *Européennes : les candidats défendent leurs programmes devant les petits patrons*. [online] Le Figaro. Available at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/europeennes-les-candidats-defendent-leurs-programmes-devant-les-petits-patrons-20240516> [Accessed 5 Apr. 2025].

De Guigné, A. (2024). *Européennes : en France, le protectionnisme emporte tous les suffrages*. [online] Le Figaro. Available at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/conjoncture/europeennes-en-france-le-protectionnisme-emporte-tous-les-suffrages-20240528> [Accessed 12 Apr. 2025].

De Luca, M. (2025). From opponents to enemies? How the British press framed the EU–UK relationship in Brexit news. *Communication Research and Practice*, 11(1), pp.113–132. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2024.2410668>.

De Vreese, C.H. (2007). A Spiral of Euroscepticism: The Media's Fault? *Acta Politica*, 42, pp.271–286. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ap.5500186>.

De Vreese, C.H. and Semetko, H.A. (2004). News matters: Influences on the vote in the Danish 2000 euro referendum campaign. *European Journal of Political Research*, 43(5), pp.699–722. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0304-4130.2004.00171.x>.

De Vries, C.E. and Edwards, E.E. (2009). Taking Europe To Its Extremes. *Party Politics*, 15(1), pp.5–28. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068808097889>.

Debus, M. and Traunmüller, R. (2025). Former Social Democratic Partisanship, Working-Class Background, and Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties: A Research Note. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11615-025-00604-y>.

Dedman, M. (2009). *The Origins & Development of the European Union 1945-2008*. Routledge.

Directorate-General for Communication (2024a). *Commission establishes AI Office to strengthen EU leadership in safe and trustworthy Artificial Intelligence*. [online] European Commission Press Corner. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_24\\_2982](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_2982) [Accessed 3 Apr. 2025].

Directorate-General for Communication (2024b). *EU Post-electoral survey 2024*. [online] Europa.eu. Available at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3292> [Accessed 10 Feb. 2025].

Directorate-General for Communication (2025a). *Areas of EU action*. [online] European Commission. Available at: [https://commission.europa.eu/about/role/law/areas-eu-action\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/about/role/law/areas-eu-action_en) [Accessed 12 Apr. 2025].

Directorate-General for Communication (2025b). *Communication*. [online] European Commission. Available at: [https://commission.europa.eu/about/departments-and-executive-agencies/communication\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/about/departments-and-executive-agencies/communication_en) [Accessed 2 Apr. 2025].

Dochow-Sondershaus, S. and Céline Teney (2024). Opinion polarization of immigration and EU attitudes between social classes – the limiting role of working class dissensus. *European societies*, 26(5), pp.1–32. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2024.2312948>.

Eick, G.M. (2024). The hidden side of Social Europe: Revealing welfare Euroscepticism through focus group discussions. *Social Policy & Administration*, 58(4), pp.672–685. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.13023>.

EUR-Lex (2025). *Social policy - EUR-Lex*. [online] eur-lex.europa.eu. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:social\\_policy](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:social_policy) [Accessed 25 Apr. 2025].

European Commission (2023). *What is the Economic and Monetary Union? (EMU)*. [online] economy-finance.ec.europa.eu. Available at: [https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu\\_en](https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-monetary-union/what-economic-and-monetary-union-emu_en) [Accessed 13 Apr. 2025].

European Parliament (2024a). *National results France | 2024 Election results | 2024 European election results | European Parliament*. [online] European Parliament . Available at: <https://results.elections.europa.eu/en/national-results/france/2024-2029/> [Accessed 14 Apr. 2025].

European Parliament (2024b). *Turnout | 2024 European election results | European Parliament*. [online] <https://results.elections.europa.eu/>. Available at: <https://results.elections.europa.eu/en/turnout/> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2025].

European Parliament (2024). *Germany 2024 European election results* . [online] European Parliament . Available at: <https://results.elections.europa.eu/en/germany/> [Accessed 1 May 2025].

European Parliament Press Service (2022). *EU citizens trust traditional media most, new Eurobarometer survey finds | News | European Parliament*. [online] [www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu). Available at:

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20220704IPR34401/eu-citizens-trust-traditional-media-most-new-eurobarometer-survey-finds> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2025].

European Union (2025). *Aims and Values*. [online] European Union. Available at: [https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values_en) [Accessed 18 Apr. 2025].

Federal Foreign Office (2018). *National newspapers in Germany*. [online] deutschland.de. Available at: <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/knowledge/national-newspapers> [Accessed 14 Apr. 2025].

Fritz, P. (2024). *Neue Regierung: Milliarden für Polen – Wo die EU mit zweierlei Maß misst*. [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/plus251802720/Neue-Regierung-PLUS-Milliarden-fuer-Polen-Wo-die-EU-mit-zweierlei-Mass-misst.html?icid=search.product.onsitesearch> [Accessed 19 Apr. 2025].

Fromm, T. and Wetzel, H. (2024). *Strafzölle: Droht der deutschen Autoindustrie ein Handelskrieg mit den USA und China?* [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/strafzoelle-autoindustrie-handelskrieg-usa-china-1.7251371> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2025].

Gabriel, S.G. (2022). Europe And Euroscepticism Today. *Annals - Economy Series*, [online] 1, pp.152–158. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/a/cbu/jrnlec/y2022v1p152-158.html> [Accessed 2 May 2025].

García-Gutián, E. (2021). Citizens' 'Permissive Consensus' in European Integration Scholarship: Theoretical Reflections on EU Politicisation and the Democratic Deficit Discourse. In: *Tracing the Politicisation of the EU*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.45–66. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82700-7\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82700-7_3).

Gioltzidou, G., Gioltzidou, F. and Chrysafis, T. (2023). Media Communication in the European Union: How do Media Cover EU? A Comparison Analysis of Germany, Croatia, Belgium and Greece. *European Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 2(2), pp.1–10. doi:<https://doi.org/10.24018/ejmedia.2023.2.2.17>.

Grimm, R., Pollock, G. and Ellison, M. (2018). Eurosceptic Youth. In: *The Routledge handbook of Euroscepticism*. New York: Routledge.

Guerra, S. (2020). Understanding public Euroscepticism. *Quaderni dell'Osservatorio elettorale - Italian Journal of Electoral Studies*, 83(2), pp.45–56. doi:<https://doi.org/10.36253/qoe-9672>.

Harmsen, R. and Spiering, M. (2004). *Euroscepticism : party politics, national identity and European integration*. Amsterdam : Rodopi.

Hawkins, B. (2012). Nation, Separation and Threat: An Analysis of British Media Discourses on the European Union Treaty Reform Process\*. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50(4), pp.561–577. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2012.02248.x>.

Holzhausen , A. and Pelayo-Romero, P. (2024). *Allianz Pulse 2024: What unites and separates the demos of Europe*. [online] Allianz Trade Corporate. Available at: [https://www.allianz-trade.com/en\\_global/news-insights/economic-insights/allianz-pulse-2024.html](https://www.allianz-trade.com/en_global/news-insights/economic-insights/allianz-pulse-2024.html) [Accessed 15 Apr. 2025].

Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2007). Sources of Euroscepticism. *Acta Politica*, 42, pp.119–127. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ap.5500192>.

Hsu, J. (2009). *People Choose News That Fits Their Views*. [online] Live Science. Available at: <https://www.livescience.com/3640-people-choose-news-fits-views.html> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2025].

Hügenell, I. (2024). Wenn Europa den Alltag erleichtert. *Süddeutsche.de*. [online] 31 May. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/fuerstenfeldbruck/europawahl-inklusive-spielplatz-mobilitaet-eu-foerderung-digitalisierung-ampermoos-leader-lux.P6rnvFriq2N4cFEyYQpJWX?reduced=true> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2025].

Katrin Böttger and Tekin, F. (2020). Germany: Eurosceptics and the Illusion of an Alternative. In: *Springer eBooks*. Springer Nature, pp.51–53. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41272-2\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41272-2_13).

Katsanidou, A. (2025). *BRIEFING Requested by the AFCO Committee Policy Department for Justice, Civil Liberties and Institutional Affairs*. [online] Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/771520/IUST\\_BRI\(2025\)771520\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/771520/IUST_BRI(2025)771520_EN.pdf) [Accessed 1 May 2025].

Kelnberger, J. (2024). *Interessiert da draußen eigentlich jemanden, was hier drinnen passiert?* [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/leben/eu-von-der-leyen-europa-europawahlen-bruessel-1.7501950?reduced=true> [Accessed 21 Apr. 2025].

Krüger, P. (2024). *75 Jahre Europarat: Dankbar für ein Fundament aus Regeln und Werten*. [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/europarat-75-jahre-baerbock-1.7252850?reduced=true> [Accessed

18 Apr. 2025].

Kunkel, C., Diesteldorf, J., Müller, F. and Hulverscheidt, C. (2024). *Staatsdumping: Die deutschen Autobauer und ihre Angst vor Pekings Rache*. [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/wirtschaftspolitik-eu-kommission-handelspolitik-autoindustrie-zoelle-china-olaf-scholz-robert-habeck-1.7263668?reduced=true> [Accessed 12 Apr. 2025].

La France Insoumise (2024). *Le Programme De L'Union Populaire*. [online] La France Insoumise. Available at: <https://lafranceinsoumise.fr/europeennes-2024/programme-de-lunion-populaire/> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

Landeszentrale für politische Bildung (2024). *Wahlprogramm Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht Europawahl 2024 - Europawahlprogramm BSW - Zusammenfassung*. [online] Europawahl-bw.de. Available at: <https://www.europawahl-bw.de/wahlprogramm-buendnis-sahra-wagenknecht> [Accessed 16 Apr. 2025].

Le Monde (2024). *Reindustrialization: A joint European challenge*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/09/reindustrialization-a-joint-european-challenge\\_6670861\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/09/reindustrialization-a-joint-european-challenge_6670861_23.html) [Accessed 2 Apr. 2025].

Lecheler, S. and de Vreese, C.H. (2018). *News Framing Effects*. [online] Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2019.: Routledge. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315208077>.

Lequesne, C. and Behal, A. (2019). France and the European Union. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1146>.

Linström, M. and Marais, W. (2012). Qualitative News Frame Analysis: a Methodology. *Communitas*, 17, pp.21–37. doi:<https://doi.org/10.38140/com.v17i0.991>.

Malingre, V. (2024). *Brussels forecast confirms EU's economic stall*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/16/brussels-forecast-confirms-eu-s-economic-stall\\_6671647\\_19.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2024/05/16/brussels-forecast-confirms-eu-s-economic-stall_6671647_19.html) [Accessed 3 Apr. 2025].

Marinella Belluati (2020). The European Institutions and Their Communication Deficits. In: *Europe and the Left. Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century*. Springer eBooks, pp.73–91. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54541-3\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54541-3_4).

Mazor, J. (2018). *Media Impartiality, Part 1: What, When, and Why*. [online] Philosophy, Logic and

Scientific Method. Available at:

<https://www.lse.ac.uk/philosophy/blog/2018/08/14/media-impartiality-1/> [Accessed 4 May 2025].

Méda, D. (2024). *Sociologist Dominique Méda: 'We need more European Union'*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at:

[https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/27/dominique-meda-we-need-more-eu\\_6672760\\_23.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2024/05/27/dominique-meda-we-need-more-eu_6672760_23.html) [Accessed 3 Apr. 2025].

Meyer, C. (1999). Political Legitimacy and the Invisibility of Politics: Exploring the European Union's Communication Deficit. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 37(4), pp.617–639. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00199>.

Michailidou, A. (2010). Vertical Europeanisation of online public dialogue: EU public communication policy and online implementation. In: *Mapping the European Public Sphere*. Routledge.

Mourlon-Druol, E. (2020). History of an Incomplete EMU. *Oxford University Press eBooks*. [online] doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198793748.003.0003>.

OECD (2024). *Content or Discontent? Perceptions of Social Protection in France, Germany and the United Kingdom*. [online] Paris: OECD Publishing . doi:<https://doi.org/10.1787/57b4436c-en>.

Oğurlu, E. (2019). Mainstreaming euroscepticism in European politics. *EASTERN JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN STUDIES*, [online] 10(2). Available at: [https://ejes.uaic.ro/articles/EJES2019\\_1002\\_OGU.pdf](https://ejes.uaic.ro/articles/EJES2019_1002_OGU.pdf) [Accessed 18 Feb. 2025].

Patel, K. (2022). *Foes into friends: Germany's role in postwar European integration*. [online] Engelsberg Ideas. Available at: <https://engelsbergideas.com/essays/foes-into-friends-germanys-role-in-postwar-european-integration/> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2025].

Peter, J., Lauf, E. and Sementko, H.A. (2004). Television Coverage of the 1999 European Parliamentary Elections. *Political Communication*, 21(4), pp.415–433. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600490518315>.

Peterson, J. (2001). European Integration. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, pp.4923–4925. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/b0-08-043076-7/01261-4>.

Poschardt, U. (2024). *EU-Parlament: Make Europe great again*. [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/plus251630022/EU-Parlament-Make-Europe-great-again.html> [Accessed 20 Apr. 2025].



Preece, D.V. (2009). 6 The 'Europeanization' of the German Welfare State. In: *Dismantling Social Europe: The Political Economy of Social Policy in the European Union*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp.127–156. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1515/9781626373358-008>.

Preve, C. (2024). *France: Le Pen's far-right party makes historic gains in EU elections*. [online] euronews. Available at: <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/06/09/france-marine-le-pens-far-right-party-makes-historic-gains-in-eu-elections> [Accessed 6 Apr. 2025].

Puetter, U. (2012). Europe's deliberative intergovernmentalism: the role of the Council and European Council in EU economic governance. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 19(2), pp.161–178. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2011.609743>.

Rassemblement Nationale (2024). *Programmatique Jordan Bardella - Européennes 2024*. [online] Vivementle9juin.fr. Available at: <https://vivementle9juin.fr/projet> [Accessed 2 Mar. 2025].

Reinhart, A. (2024). *Continental-Vorständin: Die Brüsseler Regulierungswut eindämmen*. [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article251735630/Continental-Vorstaendin-Die-Bruesseler-Regulierungswut-eindaemmen.html> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

Reinl, A. (2024). *Germany: the 2024 European Parliament elections – a triumph for Eurosceptic parties?* [online] LSE. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2024/05/03/germany-the-2024-european-parliament-elections-a-triumph-for-eurosceptic-parties/> [Accessed 29 Apr. 2025].

Rexha, G. (2014). *The role of media in political communication: the case of Kosovo*. [online] Available at: <https://knowledgecenter.ubt-uni.net/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1106&context=conference> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

Ricard, P. (2024). *Macron and Scholz coordinate to present united front against China*. [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/05/04/macron-and-scholz-coordinate-to-present-united-front-toward-china\\_6670385\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/05/04/macron-and-scholz-coordinate-to-present-united-front-toward-china_6670385_4.html) [Accessed 5 Apr. 2025].

Risse, T. and Engelmann-Martin, D. (2002). Identity Politics and European Integration: The Case of Germany. In: *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.287–316.

- Roch, J. (2023). From Qualified to Conspirative Euroscepticism: How the German AfD Frames the EU in Multiple Crisis. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 32(2), pp.538–554. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2023.2271854>.
- Rodríguez-Pose, A., Dijkstra, L. and Poelman, H. (2023). The geography of EU discontent and the regional development trap . [online] doi:<https://doi.org/10.2776/164290>.
- Rozenberg , O. (2015). *France in quest of a European narrative*. [online] Foundation Robert Schuman . Available at: <https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/european-issues/345-france-in-quest-of-a-european-narrative> [Accessed 7 Apr. 2025].
- Scheufele, D.A. (1999). Framing as a Theory of Media Effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), pp.103–122. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1999.tb02784.x>.
- Schlauch, R. (2024). *Europas Umgang mit China: Immer noch naiv bis unterwürfig*. [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/meinung/deutschland-china-basf-mercedes-scholz-kommentar-rezzo-1.7078129?reduced=true> [Accessed 17 Apr. 2025].
- Schmidt, V.A. (2005). The EU ‘Polity’ and the Europeanization of National Politics. *The State of the European Union Vol. 7*, 7, pp.411–438. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/0199283958.003.0018>.
- Schramm, L. and Krotz, U. (2023). Leadership in European crisis politics: France, Germany, and the difficult quest for regional stabilization and integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 31(5), pp.1153–1178. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2023.2169742>.
- Schwarzer , D. (2015). Germany’s Historical Relationship with the European Union. In: *The New Palgrave dictionary of Economics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Siems, D. (2024). *Handelskrieg: In der China-Falle – Moral ist falsche Antwort auf US-Zölle*. [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/plus251524888/Handelskrieg-In-der-China-Falle-Moral-ist-falsche-Antwort-auf-US-Zoelle.html> [Accessed 19 Apr. 2025].
- Skovsgaard, M. (2024). Framing Policy Reform in Europe. A Comparative Study of Frame Variation Across Countries, Newspapers, and Time. *Journalism Studies*, 25(10), pp.1138–1159. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2024.2358117>.
- Soldevila Brea, M.I. (2018). *The European Commission’s Strategic Shifts in Communication in Times*

of *Contestation*. [online] University Libre de Bruxelles Institut d'Etudes Europeennes . Available at: <https://www.tee-ulb.eu/content/uploads/2019/10/SOLDEVILA-Maria-Isabel-MEUS-thesis-2019-final-version-with-annexes.pdf> [Accessed 29 Apr. 2025].

Spanier, B. (2010). *The 'Communication Deficit' of the European Union revisited - Structures, Key Players and the New Communication Policy* -.

Statista Research Department (2025). *Überregionale Tageszeitungen: Auflage 2020*. [online] Statista. Available at: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/73448/umfrage/auflage-der-ueberregionalen-tageszeitungen/> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2025].

Storper, M., Iammarino, S., Rodriguez-Pose, A. and Diemer, A. (2022). *The regional development trap in Europe*. [online] CEPR. Available at: <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/regional-development-trap-europe>.

Taggart, P. (1998). A touchstone of dissent: Euroscepticism in contemporary Western European party systems. *European Journal of Political Research*, 33(3), pp.363–388.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1006853204101>.

Todorova, E. (2017). The Future of the European Union- The Consequences of Euroscepticism. *Vizione*, 28, pp.405–412.

Topaloff, L.K. (2018). Euroscepticism and Political Parties . In: *The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism*. Abingdon, Oxon : Routledge.

Trenz, H. (2008). Understanding Media Impact on European Integration: Enhancing or Restricting the Scope of Legitimacy of the EU? *Journal of European Integration*, 30(2), pp.291–309.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/07036330802005516>.

van den Hoogen, E., de Koster, W. and van der Waal, J. (2024). Filling the EU information deficit mitigates negative EU attitudes among the least knowledgeable. Evidence from a population-based survey experiment. *Journal of European Integration*, 46(6), pp.923–942.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2024.2352765>.

Varma, T. (2024). *The European Parliament elections have upended French politics*. [online] Brookings. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-european-parliament-elections-have-upended-french-politics/> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2025].

Verdier-Molinié, A. (2024). *Agnès Verdier-Molinié: 'Endettement, normes, bureaucratie... L'Union européenne a-t-elle été contaminée par la France?'* [online] Le Figaro. Available at: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/economie/agnes-verdier-molinie-endettement-normes-bureaucratie-l-unio-n-europeenne-a-t-elle-ete-contaminee-par-la-france-20240531> [Accessed 8 Apr. 2025].

Vetter, P. and Zwick, D. (2024). *Nachteil Atomausstieg - Die neue CO2-Formel der EU stellt Deutschland ins Abseits.* [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/plus251686412/Atomausstieg-Gruene-Rechentricks-Die-neue-CO2-Formel-der-EU-stellt-Deutschland-ins-Abseits.html?icid=search.product.onsitesearch> [Accessed 19 Apr. 2025].

Vliegenthart, R., Schluck, A., Boomgaarden, H. and De Vreese, C. (2008). News Coverage and Support for European Integration, 1990-2006. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* , 20(4), pp.415–439.

WELT (2024). *Europäische Schulden: „Schlechte Idee“ – Lindner weist Vorstoß von der Leyens zurück.* [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article251619952/Europaeische-Schulden-Schlechte-Idee-Lindner-weist-Vorstoss-von-der-Leyens-zurueck.html?icid=search.product.onsitesearch> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2025].

Wetzel, H. (2024a). *Die EU ist nicht wehrlos, aber hilflos.* [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/meinung/eu-rechtsstaat-polen-ungarn-kommentar-1.7533766?reduced=true> [Accessed 22 Apr. 2025].

Wetzel, H. (2024b). *Die feige Strategie der EU bei den Sanktionen gegen Russland.* [online] Süddeutsche.de. Available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/meinung/eu-sanktionen-russland-eu-ukraine-fluessiggas-kommentar-1.7010518?reduced=true> [Accessed 21 Apr. 2025].

Wieder, T. (2024). *Macron and Scholz: Two weakened leaders face a Europe in turmoil.* [online] Le Monde.fr. Available at: [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/05/26/macron-and-scholz-two-weakened-governments-face-a-europe-in-turmoil\\_6672695\\_4.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/05/26/macron-and-scholz-two-weakened-governments-face-a-europe-in-turmoil_6672695_4.html) [Accessed 2 Dec. 2024].

Wood, J.T. (2004). *Communication Theories in Action.* Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Zaklama, S. (2025). Exploring the Foundations of Media Framing Theory. *European Modern Studies Journal* , [online] 9(1). doi:[https://doi.org/10.59573/emsj.9\(1\).2025.7](https://doi.org/10.59573/emsj.9(1).2025.7).

Zuber, L. (2024). *Executive Vice-President Vestager in Catania to visit STMicroelectronics' new semiconductor manufacturing plant*. [online] European Commission Press corner . Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex\\_24\\_3023](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_24_3023) [Accessed 2 Apr. 2025].

Zwick, D. (2024). *BMW: „Wird viel mehr Schaden als umgekehrt“ – Die überraschende China-Volte des BMW-Chefs*. [online] DIE WELT. Available at: <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article251433604/BMW-Wird-viel-mehr-schaden-als-umgekehrt-Die-ueberraschende-China-Volte-des-BMW-Chefs.html> [Accessed 22 Apr. 2025].