

Towards transnational voting in/for¹ Europe!?

1. SUMMARY

The European Union (EU) as the flagship of supra-nationalism is in a severe crisis. Its legitimacy is increasingly questioned by populist and nationalist parties which claim that the political elites and procedures have become detached from the people and that immigrants endanger the welfare and the culture of the autochthonous population. In this context, the project investigates the potential of transnational citizenship and voting opportunities as current and future pathways contributing to reduce the distance between the people and politicians and to overcome the dichotomy between migrants and sedentary populations.

Based on normative theorizing, current empirical tendencies, and existing ideas, we first develop two proposals for transnationalizing voting spaces on the European and on the national level. The first proposal lays out how voters from EU member states could vote for parties from other member states in the election to the European Parliament. The second proposal envisions that voters from other EU member states could elect (a limited number of) representatives in the national parliament of each EU member state. These proposals build on and expand current trends to allow voting beyond the confines of territory (requirement: residency) and nationality (requirement: citizenship).

Second, with the help of a pan-European Electronic Voting Advice Application (VAA), we will gather information not only about the current extent of transnational voting (by external and dual citizens) and transnational campaigning of parties. We will also find out whether and where people and parties are willing to support and use those further opportunities for transnational voting that we lay out in our two proposals. VAAs play a double role in our project: Conceptually, they are necessary preconditions for making our proposals viable. Empirically, a VAA that we will set up together with the European University Institute in Florence will create the data for our and further scientific studies.

Finally, our project brings together two strands of research: The first strand of research is concerned with citizenship rights and practices beyond the realm of the Westphalian nation state, while the second deals with the design of electoral systems for multi-national polities. We will test whether voters and parties are mainly driven by polity-centered considerations (interest in and identification with particular or multiple nation states or with the EU) or by policy-centered considerations (policy positions and preferences).

Altogether, the project will stimulate the discussion about a third transnational pathway for securing the effectiveness and legitimacy of the European Union beyond supranationalism and nationalism. It will tremendously expand our empirical knowledge out the current level of transnational orientations and practices of people and parties in Europe, and at the same time we will find out whether and where people and parties support expanded options for transnational voting. Furthermore, the project will allow us to keep at the forefront of research dealing with VAAs. Finally, the gained insights might be stimulating for other multi-lingual or multi-national democratic systems.

¹ The „in“ indicates that we look at the current situation, whereas the „for“ points to the fact that we lay out future possibilities. The “!” signals that our project contains normative proposals, whereas the “?” indicates that we will describe and explain existing and potential future practices.

2. RESEARCH PLAN

2.1. Current State of Research in the Field

The research project aims to investigate transnational pathways for making the European Union (EU) more effective and legitimate. In order to do so, we bring together two strands of research: The first and main strand of research is concerned with citizenship rights and practices beyond the realm of the Westphalian nation state, while the second deals with the design of electoral systems for multi-national polities.

For both research strands, it makes sense to start with a sketch of the so-called Westphalian political order, which serves as an ideal-typical background for describing and understanding current and proposed changes in the political system within the EU (and beyond). In the Westphalian world order, our understanding of citizenship, political will-formation, voting, decision-making and governance has been based on the assumption of a territorial congruence between the national citizenry as the author of democratic rule-making, the national polity as the arena of political will-formation and decision-making, national parties as the main actors for forming and transmitting the will of the people, the nation state as the agent for the implementation of resulting policies, and the residents of the national territory as the addressees of democratic rules.

Citizenship practices beyond the confines of the nation state

The massive growth of cross-border flows of information, capital, goods, “bads” (e.g., pollution) and people together with the corresponding (inter)dependencies² among nation states in the last decades has led to the emergence of Post-Westphalian spaces of citizenship, will-formation, decision-making and governance. The EU is the flagship of those who try to complement the system of nation states with strong institutions on a supra-national level. On the European level, we do not only find institutions which resemble all branches of government, but since 1979 the European people can directly elect their European representatives and since 1992 there exists the formal status of a European citizenship. The latter represents a multi-level form of citizenship derived from national membership which *inter alia* allows sedentary and mobile citizens to vote for the European parliament from their place of residence (e.g. Bellamy and Warleigh 2001).

Nevertheless, citizenship scholars have emphasized that the main impact of the notion of a European citizenship is less the formation of a supranational form of citizenship but the Europeanization of national citizenships (Delanty 2007). Furthermore, whereas the emergence a supranational form of citizenship is essentially limited to Europe, the “expansion of citizenship” (Bauböck 2005) through transnational forms of citizenship is a genuinely global phenomenon. The empirically most important expansion of citizenship has taken place in transnational arenas through the global trend of tolerating dual citizenship and extending the right to vote in national elections to citizens abroad (Schlenker and Blatter 2013).

The transnational perspective has also gained ground in the burgeoning normative scholarship on the ‘problem of inclusion’ and discussions on the legitimate boundaries of the demos (see, e.g.: Goodin 2007, Beckman 2009). The growth of external citizenship has been mentioned as hopeful sign for paving the way towards the inclusion of the

² The brackets indicate the fact that the power distribution in transnational relations often creates asymmetric dependencies instead of interdependencies on an equal footing.

affected externals (Koenig-Archibugi 2012), but the inclusion of interests or people beyond the confines of territory and nationality remains disputed (Owen 2011, Blatter and Schlenker 2013, Lopez-Guerra 2014, Bauböck 2015).

Empirical research on the practices of post-Westphalian forms of citizenship has started to shift from the earlier focus on partial citizenship within the realm of nation states (e.g.: Soysal 1994, Hammar 1990, Hansen 2009) and on multi-level citizenship on the supranational European level (e.g.: Bruter 2005, Delanty 2007, Schlenker 2016) towards analyzing transnational forms of citizenship. First, research on dual citizenship and on external citizenship focused on describing the spread of those transnational statuses (e.g.: Brønsted-Sejersen 2008, Blatter, Erdmann and Schwanke 2009, Rhodes and Harutyunyan 2010). Furthermore, it has been primarily concerned with explaining why they were introduced (e.g.: Jones-Correa 2001, Lafleur 2011), and whether these expanded forms of citizenship and associated rights (e.g., the right to vote) can be justified by normative theories of democracy (e.g.: Bauböck 2007a, 2007b; Beckman 2009; Blatter 2011; Owen 2012; Lopez-Guerra 2014).

These debates have been accompanied by research on the citizenship practices (attitudes, voting and non-electoral activities) of migrants (and their descendants) across the boundaries of nation states (e.g. DeSipio et al. 2003, McCann et al. 2009, Leal et al. 2012, Lafleur 2013, Déllano 2014, Brand 2014). The applicant and his team contributed to the empirical literature by focusing on the transnational aspects of external and dual citizenship and found that among Swiss immigrants and emigrants a minor but significant part of dual and external citizens is active in two countries at the same time (Schlenker 2016; Schlenker, Blatter and Bierka 2016). Furthermore, the research indicates that the more migrants are active across national and territorial boundaries, the more they take external interests into account (Blatter and Schlenker 2016). Those results should be treated as encouraging first indicators for a potential transnationalization of citizenship practices in Europe. Simultaneity and cross-border interest representation seem to be not only possible in principle but take place in practice.

Nevertheless, our knowledge on the current practices within and the future potential of an expanded European voting space is severely limited. We do not know how far we can generalize the findings among Western European and Swiss immigrants and emigrants to EU member countries. Given that external and dual citizenship are sometimes connected to neo-imperial strategies of nationalist and semi-autocratic regimes, as in in Central and Eastern Europe (e.g.: Bauböck 2010, Riedel 2012), the current practice and future potentials of transnational voting might vary strongly across Europe.

Most importantly, the current possibilities of transnational citizenship are also severely limited, since only external citizens can cast a vote from abroad in national elections, with marked variations in regards to eligibility criteria and voting methods across European Member States (IDEA 2007, Arrighi and Hutcheson 2015). All citizens of EU member states can elect the members of the European Parliament. Nevertheless, this practice is far from being a form of transnational citizenship as long as residents of nation states tend to “misuse” the election for the European parliament as a second-order election for signaling verdicts on the national government (Lord 2004, Carrubba and Timpone 2005, Hix and Hoyland 2011). In our project, we envision a European voting space which overcomes these limits and where all citizens could cast a vote for parties and in elections beyond their country of residence (for a more detailed presentation, see section 2.3).

Another severe limitation of the research on transnational citizenship practices is the fact that it has largely ignored the role of political parties as mobilizers and addressees of transnational voting. There exists a long research tradition on the role of parties on the European level (for a review, see: Bardi et al. 2010), but we know almost nothing about

transnational and cosmopolitan attitudes and behaviors of national parties and their European alliances.³ Approaches to explain transnational citizenship practices have focused on the formal status and on the national, multinational or supra-national orientations and identities of external/dual citizens (Schlenker, Blatter and Birka 2016). In other words, they have concentrated their explanatory efforts on the de-jure and de-facto relationships between citizens and polities, thereby neglecting the fact that citizens' electoral behavior may be primarily driven by policy considerations. In consequence, it makes sense to combine the research on transnational citizenship with research that focuses on the role of electoral systems, parties and policies for the transnationalization of the European Union.

Voting spaces beyond the confines of the nation state

Within the latter strand of research we already find several proposals for the transnationalization of the elections of the European Parliament. Typically, these proposals aim also to improve the quality of representative democracy in the EU by increasing the involvement of citizens or national parliaments in the decision-making process on the supra-national level. Popular proposals include politicising the EU in competitive fashion by linking the outcome of the elections to some kind of "government formation" such that the EP is viewed as a more consequential institution by both voters and their representatives (e.g.: Hix 2008). An alternative route, which has been less explored, is to allow voters to choose from candidates within a transnational electoral district. British MEP Andrew Duff (2010), writing on behalf of the EP's Committee on Constitutional Affairs, presents a persuasive case for such reform. He recommends that 25 representatives in the European Parliament are elected by the citizens of Europe at large. This pan-European electoral district would be an addition to the EP's existing 751 seats which are divided among member states, each of which forms its own electoral district for electing MEPs. In Duff's view, the overall effect of his proposal would be to add an important Euro-centric dimension to EP elections while giving a greater role to European political parties who would take the lead in campaigning across the transnational electoral district.

Since Europarties are currently not much more than federations of national parties whose policy platforms are often the vaguely stated results of protracted compromises, this proposal has been questioned by scholars who perceive policy congruence between citizens and representatives as the major criteria for the functioning of a representative democracy. Bright et al. (2016) suggest that national rather than European political parties should compete for the seats of the transnational electoral district. Their proposal would involve allowing voters to vote for parties in any European country when they went to the polls (for a portion of seats in the EP). According to Bright et al., this would allow the European elections to break free from the clutches of national politics: in particular, when campaigning, national parties would have to adjust their electoral offer to both take account of the increased competition for their "national" vote and also to potentially address voters in other countries.

Such a proposal faces two major practical challenges. The first is the absence of a common language (Kymlicka 2001). Theorists disagree about the extent to which a common language is a fundamental part of any democratic polity: whilst some have claimed that the possibility of communication between citizens is vital for any kind of democracy to take place (e.g.: van Parijs 2011: 28), others have argued, pointing to the successful functioning of a multi-lingual democracy in Switzerland, that the presence of a unified voting space and hence common political discourse is sufficient to unite multiple peoples amongst whom communication is difficult (Lacey 2014). However even if we accept that multilingual democracy is possible, the practical challenges involved for a political party in communicating its

³ To our knowledge, Jean-Michel Lafleur (2013) has been the only scholar who investigated the transnational activities of political parties, but his insights remain limited to specific cases and to specific activities.

message in the 24 official languages of the European Union would be considerable. The second practical problem would be the complexity of the political offer made available to voters. Over 250 major parties competed in the 2009 EP elections, each of which could conceivably be a candidate for a citizen's vote (Lefkofridi and Katsanidou 2014). Even presupposing that all of these parties made electoral material available in a language that an individual citizen could understand, systematically assessing the appeal of all parties would be an impossible task for any individual voter to undertake.

Considering both of these challenges, any partly transnationalised European voting space would have to be supported by some sort of multi-lingual informational device. In this respect, Bright et al. (2016) point to the potential use of online based Voting Advice Applications (VAAs) as a means to simplify the connection between parties and citizens. While differing in their precise implementation, in broad terms VAAs offer citizens advice about the extent to which their policy preferences overlap with the political parties competing for their votes. Hence simply by completing this questionnaire parties are able to campaign "indirectly" (Garzia et al. 2014) and citizens are able to quickly sort through a large amount of partisan offers. The empirical analysis presented by Bright et al. (2016) provides evidence of the extent to which a transnational voting space of this sort would be welcomed by European citizens. By making use of the data gathered during the EP election campaign by the *EU Profiler* transnational VAA, they could show that the proportion of users willing to cast a vote for a party from another country is indeed a minority (i.e., around 18% of respondents indicated that they would be interested in doing this). These people were more likely to be ones who could find a much better "party match" in another country; they also found that these people were more likely to be those who were dissatisfied with the state of their current national democracy.

Overall, by taking parties and VAAs into account, the proposed project would be able to overcome the current limitations that we identified within the first strand of research. First, the data that we generate with a transnational Voting Advice Application will tremendously expand our knowledge about the current transnational voting activities of external and dual citizens across all EU member states and about the transnational mobilizing activities of parties. Second, we will develop proposals for expanding the possibility for transnational voting to all citizens and find out how much and where these proposals are endorsed in Europe. Finally, we will be able to test whether the current practices and future willingness to engage in transnational campaigning/voting depends more on the polity-orientations or the policy-preferences/positions of parties and voters. The next section indicates that we are well prepared to engage for this endeavor.

2.2. Current state of your own research

The main applicant for this proposal is Prof. Dr. Joachim Blatter. He is Professor of Political Science at the University of Lucerne since 2008. He studied Social Sciences, Political Science, Public Administration and Law at the University of Konstanz (Germany). In 1999, he received his PhD in Political Science with a thesis on "Political Institution Building in Cross-Border Regions in Europe and North America" from the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. In 2006, he finished his Habilitation titled "Governance: Theoretische Formen und historische Transformationen" at the University of Konstanz (more information about his publications will be provided elsewhere).

He has started to contribute to the scrutinized field of research through a grant that he gained from the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO) during his stay at the University of Rotterdam for investigating dual citizenship (2006-2008). This

resulted in a documentation of the spread of dual citizenship throughout the world (Blatter, Erdmann, Schwanke 2009) and in an article where he evaluated dual citizenship on the basis of different normative theories of democracy (Blatter 2011). In the latter article, he argued that the spread of dual citizens represents an opportunity to democratize a world of trans-border flows and (inter)dependencies because as citizens who are at the same time “insiders” and “outsiders” dual citizens have the potential to function as powerful representatives of affected externals during the will-formation processes of interdependent nation states. Dual citizens provide a starting point to think about transnationalism as an alternative or as a complement to supra-national means to deal with the external effects of national policy making and the resulting (inter)dependencies. Compared to an order in which sovereign and clearly separated nation states dominate, a transnationalized order has the advantage that the perspectives and interests of “external others” are already getting recognized and internalized during the political will-formation process within the nation states and not just taken into account in intergovernmental negotiations. Compared to an order in which nation states are complemented by supra-national forms of citizenship, will-formation, decision-making and governance, the transnationalization of nation states keeps all these processes closer to the people and they are taking place within well-developed structures of interest formation and intermediation (i.e., parties, interest organizations, media outlets).

In order to clarify the normative and empirical relevance of the spread of dual citizenship for transnationalism, Blatter published an article with Andrea Schlenker (his Oberassistentin) in which he identified the central place of dual citizenship within the much more general trend towards expanded citizenship (Schlenker and Blatter 2013). In order to find out whether dual citizens are fulfilling the envisioned role as representatives of external others, he started empirical research projects as soon as he became Professor in Lucerne. Two SNSF grants allowed to conduct surveys among immigrants in Switzerland and among Swiss emigrants, thereby comparing dual citizens with (autochthonous and alien) mono citizens. As indicated before, these studies lead to encouraging results (Schlenker 2015, 2016, Schlenker, Blatter and Birka 2016, Blatter and Schlenker 2016) but it is not clear whether and how far these findings can be generalized. This project would be the perfect opportunity to make major progress in this respect. Finally, Blatter has an invitation from the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB) to spend his sabbatical in the first half of 2017 in Berlin for finalizing a book on the boundaries of the demos in times of trans-border flows and interdependencies (building on Blatter and Schlenker 2013). This book will develop normative principles for granting political rights in a Post-Westphalian world order and will contain detailed specifications of the idea that we scrutinize in this research project for the further transnationalization of voting spaces in Europe. This proposed research project would not only allow to spread these normatively derived ideas but also to find out how far parties and people(s) in Europe are supporting the existing and potential possibilities of transnational citizenship and voting.

The main collaboration partners within the Department of Political Science in Lucerne, Dr. Diego Garzia and Prof. Dr. Alexander Trechsel have not only co-authored a recent proposal for the de-nationalization of EU elections (Bright et al. 2016), they are leading figures in respect to the making of transnational Voting Advice Applications as well as the scientific use of VAA-generated data.

Alexander Trechsel is Professor of Political Communication at the University of Lucerne and a Faculty Fellow of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. He received his PhD in Political Science (1999, with distinction) from the University of Geneva. There, he was Vice-Director of the Research and Documentation Centre on Direct Democracy (c2d) at the Law Faculty (1999-2005), where he intensively worked on direct democratic processes and on voting behaviour in elections and referendums in a comparative perspective. In 2005 he joined the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence as first full-time holder of the Swiss Chair in Federalism and Democracy. He

initiated the European Union Democracy Observatory (EUODO) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the EUI. EUODO serves as a permanent observatory of democratic processes in and of the European Union, through which he directed the *EU Profiler* project in 2009, a pan-European Voting Advice Application for the European Parliamentary Elections. The project won the 2009 World E-Democracy Forum Award and the data gathered has been used in prominent academic publications, including articles in leading journals such as *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, *Party Politics* and *Electoral Studies*. For the 2014 European elections, the project was followed by **euandi**, the first social VAA and the first Voting Advice Application in history to connect people based on their political views.

Diego Garzia is a Senior Researcher and Lecturer at the University of Lucerne, where he will start his SNF Ambizione fellowship as of January 2017. He holds a PhD in ‘Comparative and European Politics’ from the University of Siena. Previously, he studied at the Universities of Rome “Sapienza” (BA), Leiden (MA), and Oxford. Between 2012 and 2014, he held a Jean Monnet Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence. His research focuses on political communication and the connection between (new) media and voting. He worked extensively on internet-based Voting Advice Applications (VAAs) and significantly contributed to the development of this field of studies within political science. In 2010, he co-edited the first volume ever devoted to VAAs together with Lorella Cedroni: *Voting Advice Applications in Europe: The State of the Art*. His publications on the topic include several articles in highly-ranked journals such as *European Union Politics*, *International Journal of Electronic Governance* and *Party Politics*, and a volume co-edited together with Stefan Marschall for ECPR Press: *Matching Voters with Parties and Candidates: Voting Advice Applications in a Comparative Perspective*. Featuring the biggest number of European experts on the topic ever assembled, the volume provides the most comprehensive overview of the VAA-phenomenon in a truly comparative perspective. During these years, he has also been involved in the development of VAAs at both national and European level. In 2014, he took part in the development of **euandi** as scientific coordinator and supervisor of the 121 researchers working for the project.

2.3. Detailed research plan

2.3.1. Core Concepts

Citizenship status, rights, identities and voting

In the literature on democratic citizenship, it has become common use to distinguish four elements of citizenship: (a) the status as a citizen via formal membership in a political community, (b) civil, political and social rights, (c) participatory practices, and (d) belonging/collective identity (Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul 2008, Delanty 1997). These elements are linked to different political philosophies and to distinct normative theories of democracy. Neo-Republicans put most emphasis on the legal status that polities grant individuals in order to secure individual as well as collective non-domination; liberals focus on the rights (and duties) of individuals; the actual participation in political decision-making is crucial for classic republican understandings; and the identification of citizens with a political community is seen as a necessary precondition of democracy by communitarians (Blatter 2011). Empirically, we want to know how these elements relate to each other in practice. We are primarily interested to find out how status, (existing and potential) rights and identities impact on the most important form of political participation: voting.

Supranational and national voting spaces

We build on Schlenker and Blatter (2013), but take also the literature on voting spaces (Lacey 2014, Bright et al. 2016) into account in order to specify our terminology and concepts in respect to the institutionalized arenas or spaces in which political will formation, voting and decision-making takes place and in respect to the principles and practices which structure those processes within the various arenas/spaces. In respect to the institutionalized arenas of political process we exchange Schlenker and Blatter's term "arena" with the term "voting space" in order to signal our focus on voting. A voting space has been defined as 'the totality of procedural devices employed by a democratic community that formally open up the main institutions of political decision-making to the input of individual citizens through the ballot' (Lacey, 2014).

Furthermore, in the current project, we will focus on two kinds of voting spaces: the "supranational voting space" that is institutionalized by the rules that regulate the elections of the European Parliament, and the "national voting spaces" which are regulated by the electoral rules for the national parliaments in the EU member states. Below, we indicate our conviction that our experiences and findings could stimulate similar endeavors for further voting spaces on the sub-national level (see section 2.5).

Nationalist, supranationalist and transnationalist rules and practices

The political process that takes place within institutionalized arenas or voting spaces can follow quite different principles and practices. Also in respect to these principles and practices we build on Blatter and Schlenker's differentiations (Blatter and Schlenker 2013, Schlenker and Blatter 2013), but exchange the terminology in order to tie into the less principled/philosophical and more practical debate on voting and electoral systems. Accordingly, we distinguish between nationalist, supranationalist and transnationalist rules and practices:

- a. **Nationalist** rules and practices are characterized by the principle of **particularism**. In terms of voting regulations, this means that only nationals are allowed to vote in the elections for the parliaments of the EU member states, and that nationals can only vote for their national parties in the election to the European Parliament. In terms of political practice, particularism implies that voters focus solely on their experiences with and the expected consequences for their nation state when they cast their vote in national and European elections.
- b. **Supranationalist** rules and practices are defined by **universalism**. In respect to electoral rules, this principle would imply that all residents (citizens and aliens), but only residents (and not citizens residing abroad) can vote in the elections for the parliaments of the EU member states. Furthermore, it implies that all citizens of all EU member states can vote for Europarties in the EP elections. Concerning practices, it implies that voters take into account primarily the interests of Europe when they vote in national and European elections.
- c. Finally, **transnationalist** rules and practices are characterized by **pluralism**. In a first account (below, we provide an extended account), this principle could be translated into voting rules which allow all residents (independent of citizenship status) and all citizens (independent of residence) to vote in national elections. For the electoral system of the EP, the principle of pluralism translates into rules which allow citizens of EU member states to select (the major) part of EU representatives on the basis of voting for parties within their nation states and to select (a minor) part of the EU representatives on the distinct basis that they can choose among all national parties within all EU

member states. In respect to political practices, transnationalism implies that voters take the interests of and the consequences in a plurality of member states into account, which means they overcome a narrow mono-nationalist perspective, but their orientation is not geared towards the entire European Union.

When we look at the current reality in the EU and its member states, we see that particularist principles still predominate, but that universalism and pluralism are emerging on the side-lines:

- a. In national elections, a particularist understanding of the demos prevails and only nationals are allowed to vote – but nation states are increasingly reaching out to their nationals abroad. They do not only allow but facilitate voting from abroad – which implies a trans-state form of voting, but not a trans-national one. In local elections, in contrast, we discover a trend towards universalist principles – stimulated and strengthened by the EU: Many states and localities allow all residents to vote – independently of their nationality (Blatter, Schmid and Blättler 2016; Arrighi and Bauböck forthcoming). Pluralism, in contrast, emerges not as a result of deliberative political decisions, but as unintended side-effects. As a growing part of the population, dual citizens are allowed to vote in two national elections – and a part of them is actually using this right in two nations (e.g. Schlenker, Blatter and Birka 2016).
- b. In EP elections, particularism shows up in the fact that the citizens of the member states can vote only for parties of their own state. Nevertheless, EU citizens residing in another EU country can vote in the country of residence, which means they can vote for parties who do not belong to their country of nationality. In consequence, also in respect to this voting space, we see first signs of pluralism emerging.

In the following section, we scrutinize two proposals for the further transnationalization of voting spaces in Europe. These proposals are committed to the principle of pluralism and build on existing proposals and/or on existing forms of transnational voting.

Two proposals to transnationalize voting spaces in Europe

Our first proposal aims to transnationalize the supra-national voting space that exists in the form of the EU-wide elections to the European Parliament. Here, we can draw on Bright et al. (2016), who argue that a transnational European voting space is achievable through a combination of institutional reform – allowing voters to cast votes beyond their national constituencies – and technological innovation in the form of a pan-European Voting Advice Application (VAA). Whereas the first aspect would stimulate national parties to advocate policies which might draw voters beyond the confines of their nation states, the latter aspect helps to overcome the informational and linguistic difficulties in aligning party positions and voter preferences. Essentially, the accessibility of all European party policy positions to all citizens, via the multilingual VAA, presents citizens with the opportunity to engage with and attach themselves to a national party that is rooted in a different national polity. Once candidates are elected in the transnational voting space, the extensive translation service at the disposal of the EP offers the possibility for these MEPs to address citizens of the EU at large. At the same time, this service allows citizens to keep track of their chosen candidate just as they could an MEP elected in a national voting space. Bright et al's justification for such a transnationalization of the voting space on the European level is solely policy-centred. But such a transnationalization of the EP election can also be justified in those terms that dominate in the citizenship literature. If national parties can

strive for transnational votes in the EP elections, they can overcome their particularistic mono-national orientation and identity and start to develop transnational or supranational orientations and identities (beyond specific policy positions). The same is true for voters – if they are allowed to vote for parties from other EU countries, they might develop a less particularistic orientation and identity.

Our second proposal aims to transnationalize the most important voting spaces in Europe – those which exist in the form of nation-wide elections of national parliaments.⁴ As indicated before, these national voting spaces have already experienced a certain extension in comparison to the ideal-typical Westphalian form due to the fact that non-resident citizens are allowed to cast their vote across the territorial boundaries of the nation states. In some national parliaments (e.g., Italy and France), external citizens vote for their specific representatives. This means that they are treated as a collective group that is distinctive to the rest of the demos and therefore deserves a special representation. In other states there exist no special representatives for the external citizens, and the external votes are added to the internal votes in the voting districts they (or their descendants) come from. But even in the latter countries, where the demand of the external citizens to get special representatives is not fulfilled (yet), we find indicators which support the presumption that external citizens should be recognized as a distinct community. In Switzerland, for example, the Swiss abroad are called “die fünfte Schweiz” in official statements, indicating that they are recognized as a fifth community beyond the officially recognized four communities, despite the fact that the established four are defined with reference to their language, whereas the community of the Swiss abroad is not.

Our proposal takes the pluralistic principle that lies behind the recognition of the external citizens as a distinct community that deserves special representation in national parliaments one step further. It proposes that the national parliaments of the EU member states should not only have a limited amount of seats for the representatives of their external citizens but another limited amount of seats for the representatives of the citizens of the other EU member states. Thereby, the EU member states would explicitly recognize their strong interrelationships and they would signal that they are willing to take into account the perspectives/interests of the other EU nations in their will-formation and decision-making process.

Currently, we have the following specification of this idea in our mind: Only national parties and politicians compete for the votes of the citizens of the other EU countries, because the goal is to make national parties/politicians more sensitive for constituencies in other EU member states, thereby strengthening “centripetal” forces within the EU in the nation realm. Furthermore, specific seats in the national parliaments would be assigned for specific constituencies (e.g., one for Western Europe, one for Eastern Europe, and so on) since the main goal is to bring in all relevant external interests/perspectives in the will-formation process of European nation states. As a welcome side effect, this would make it impossible that one specific group in the other EU countries could be mobilized in order to capture all reserved seats in a national parliament. Finally, at least in an introductory phase, each EU citizen would have just one vote during a long legislative period (5 years) to cast in a national election beyond its country of residence. This would reduce the danger that a certain class of people would participate in all or many elections and other classes would not participate at

⁴ Please note that our proposal differs decisively from recent proposals for giving the national parliaments a stronger role in EU policy making (Bellamy and Kröger 2016a and 2016b). There is an overlap in as much as these proposals assume that national parliaments are crucial for making the EU more effective and legitimate, but these proposals aim to strengthen the role of national parliaments in the political processes *on the European level*. Our proposal, instead, aims to strengthen the role of fellow Europeans in political processes *on the national level*. An example might make the difference clear: Whereas the former proposals would have given the Greek and the German parliaments (among others) more influence during the EURO crisis, our proposals would have made it very likely that the Greek perspective would have been present in the debates in the German parliament, and the German perspective would have been articulated in the Greek parliament by elected representatives.

all or very seldom. In the long run, this could be expanded: the more the EU is getting integrated, the more transnational votes EU citizens should get. Of course, VAAs would play a similar important role for making this proposal viable than they play in our first proposal.

The second proposal is clearly the more far-reaching one. We expect that it would have much stronger consequences in respect to the transnationalization not only of voting-spaces but also of public discourses, since national elections and national parliaments are much better embedded in public spheres and organizational systems of interest formation and intermediation than the EP. On the other hand, whereas the former proposal can build on a political and scholarly discourse, the second proposal is quite new. This does not mean that the second proposal cannot draw on a long line of argumentation and many examples in history. We transfer ideas and historical examples which have been developed and discussed under the headings of “centripetal institutional designs” (Horowitz 1985, Reilly 2012, Stojanovic 2006, 2011) and “cross-voting” (Elster 2013: 236-271) to the European Union.

Since we are aware of the fact that our proposals might raise concerns and opposition, we will use our already strongly established connections to major experts in this field (see section 2.3.4) in order to specify both options for transnational voting further, so that we will be able to present well-considered, concise and brief descriptions of both options of transnational voting to parties and to voters.

2.3.2. Research Questions

Our project aims first to describe and compare the currently existing transnational practices of parties and voters [Research Question (RQ)1]. Secondly, we want to gain information about the potential practices of parties and voters, if further transnational opportunities would be opened up for them [RQ2]. Finally, we want to bring together and test two theoretical approaches which could explain not only the current practices and future potentials of transnational campaigning/voting as such, but also - and perhaps most importantly - a major part of the variance among parties and voters across Europe. In order to explain the factors affecting varying degrees of transnationalization across both parties and voters [RQ3] we will test two competing hypotheses. On the one hand, we will focus on factors linked to the level of interest in/identification with a **polity** [Hypothesis (H)3a]. On the other hand, we will concentrate on the idea of expected **policy** congruence [H3b]. A graphical illustration of the analytical framework guiding our research is provided in Figure 1 below.

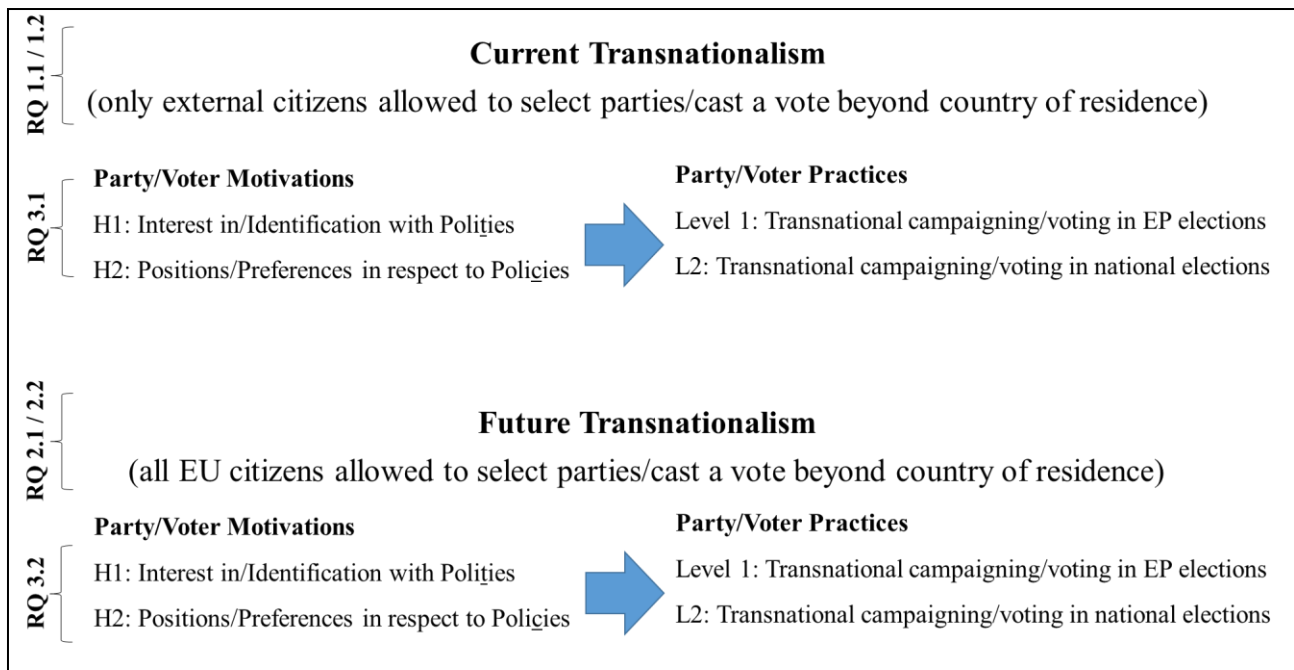
The first, descriptive goal leads to the following two-fold research question:

[RQ1.1] *To what extent do parties campaign abroad or address external citizens otherwise in national and/or supranational elections?*

[RQ1.2] *To what extent do eligible voters (as external citizens) cast their vote beyond their country of residence?*

With these two questions we want to provide a picture on the current situation in Europe which is legally characterized by the fact that only external (mono or dual) citizens are allowed to cast a vote in national and European elections beyond their country of residence.

Figure 1. Analytical framework



The second two-fold research question aims at finding out how far the transnational practices will expand, if not only external citizens of the respective nation states but all citizens of all EU member states would be allowed to cast a transnational vote. In consequence, the second, predictive⁵ goal leads to the following two-fold research question:

[RQ2.1] *To what extent would parties be willing to campaign abroad or address otherwise national and non-national citizens who live in other EU countries, if all citizens of EU member states could vote for them?*

[RQ2.2] *To what extent would voters be willing to cast a vote for a party abroad if they could vote for all parties that are active in all countries of the EU?*

As laid out in the section on the state of the art, the strand of research that approaches voting across territorial and national boundaries from the perspective of transnational forms of citizenship focuses on **polity** aspects. It assumes that people (would) vote for parties from other countries in the EP election or (would) cast their vote in elections for the

⁵ The term “predictive” is used here in order to indicate that with these research questions we want to gauge the potential for transnational practices in the future (within specific scenarios); we do not want to imply that we will be able to predict in a strict sense how strong the transnational practices will be.

parliament of other EU countries beyond their country of residence, if they have the legal right to do so (currently, if they are external citizens), and if they are interested in, feel obligations towards or identify with political communities/polities beyond a single nation state. Those who approach transnational voting spaces in Europe from the perspective of party politics and electronic VAAs focus on the **policy** positions of parties and the policy preferences of voters. In our research project, we bring the two perspectives together and develop corresponding research hypotheses in our framework for the causal analysis.

On the one hand, variance in transnational electoral attitudes and behaviour could be accounted for on the basis of **polity-centred orientations**. Parties/voters can be particularistic in respect to their identities, their feelings of obligations and/or the polities they are interested in. This means that they identify with a single nation and are just interested in the politics of their country of residence. But parties/voters can also be pluralistic or universalistic. In this case, parties recognize (both in the sense of being aware of and in the sense of acknowledging as legitimate) electorates beyond the territorial and membership boundaries of their nation state; voters identify with multiple nations or with all Europeans and they are interested in the politics of more than one nation state and in the politics on the supranational level. More transnational voting, in this case, could be explained with a comparatively stronger degree of pluralism and/or universalism in party platforms and citizen attitudes. On these bases, the first hypothesis can be formulated as:

[H3a] *Current transnational campaigning/voting practices depend on parties' recognition of a transboundary electorate as well as on voters' attitudes towards polities beyond the country of residence.*

On the other hand, we hypothesize that the differences across parties/voters in terms of transnational campaigning and willingness of deepening transnational electoral practices relate to **expected policy congruence**. Following Bright et al. (2016), we know that party systems in Europe are far from well-tuned with the policy preferences of their national electorates (i.e., the average Polish voter is much better represented by a German party than a Polish one, from a purely policy-centred point of view). The willingness of voters to cast a vote abroad might well be linked to this fact. In a similar vein, parties might be interested in looking abroad for voters, precisely as a consequence of their policy-based appeal to a number of voters abroad. The second hypothesis can thus be spelled out as follows:

[H3b] *Current transnational campaigning/voting practices depend on the policy preferences of voters and their relationship with the policy positions of the parties.⁶*

The third, explanatory goal, which builds upon the theoretical apparatus spelled above, is therefore captured by the following two-fold research question:

⁶ Note that we are not necessarily expecting [H3a] and [H3b] to perform as rival hypotheses. Quite to the contrary, we allow for the possibility of a null hypothesis, either in the form of mutual interaction between the two explanatory hypotheses [Hnull1] or as a result of no significant connection between each of the hypotheses and the outcome of interest [Hnull2].

[RQ3.1] *Do the current practices of parties to address external citizens and their willingness to expand these practices, if all EU citizens could vote for them, depend more on their orientation towards politics [H3a] or on their policy positions [H3b]?*

[RQ3.2] *Do the current voting practices of external citizens and the willingness of citizens to vote for non-national parties in the election to the EP or to cast a vote for parties in other nation states depend more on their orientation towards politics [H3a] or on their policy positions [H3b]?*

2.3.3. Methodology

We will investigate these questions in the context of the next European Parliament (EP) elections to be held in May 2019. EP elections feature all parties and voters in the Union at the same time. As such, they represent the best chance to study simultaneously both kinds of actors while involved in a supranational election campaign.⁷

To gather the data required to investigate these questions, this project will rely extensively on an online-based Voting Advice Applications. In particular, we will resort to a cooperation with the developers of **euandi** (reads: EU and I) (www.euandi.eu) in view of a forthcoming version of this VAA in the context of the 2019 EP elections. **euandi** is a transnational VAA developed by the European University Institute in Florence in 2014 as a follow-up to the successful *EU Profiler* project of 2009 (www.euprofiler.eu). A transnational VAA is by all means the best data gathering method to study the two populations of major interest. For one thing, because VAAs code all relevant political parties on the policy issues of interest and gather the opinion of millions of voters on the same policy issues.⁸ As a result, VAA-generated data allow comparisons of the issue positions of parties and voters using the same data source. In turn, this can support our research objectives by means of a straightforward measurement of the extent to which parties and voters are mutually congruent. Furthermore, it can be used to gather all the necessary information for gauging the polity-centred pathway towards transnational voting.

While traditional analyses of the ideological positions of the general population commonly resort to traditional surveys, VAA generated data feature a number of advantages *vis-a-vis* more traditional research tools. As a matter of fact, VAAs are able to attract a much wider number of respondents as compared to election surveys. VAAs attract users because they simplify the complex, multi-dimensional pre-electoral stances of political parties. Today, in countries such as Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland the availability of one or more VAA during an electoral campaign can be taken for granted (for an overview of the spread of VAAs across Europe, see: Marschall 2014). And they are rather extensively used by citizens. To give a few examples, in the run-up to the 2012 parliamentary election in

⁷ It must be noted that our decision represents a pragmatic stance, since the EP elections are certainly the most adequate context for gaining data in respect to the current and potential transnationalization of the voting space of a supranational level, but not the most adequate context for getting the positions and preferences in respect to current practices and future possibilities to transnationalize elections on the national level. Using the EP elections should be seen as a first step, which should be followed up by similar studies using national elections. The main reason for using the EP elections is that we can get data across the entire European Union, which allows not only for cross-country comparisons, but for broad – albeit cautious – generalization of the findings.

⁸ In essence, VAAs allow respondents to fill in a questionnaire marking their degree of (dis)agreement with a wide range of concrete policy statements. After comparing the user's profile with that of the parties included in the tool, the VAA provided an illustration of the degree of issue proximity between the user and the parties.

the Netherlands, 4.9 million users resorted to the pioneering VAA *StemWijzer*. In absolute numbers, the German *Wahl-O-Mat* launched before the Federal elections of 2013 was consulted by the largest number of users ever, i.e., 12.3 million. VAAs are a well-known feature also of Swiss election campaigns. During the electoral campaign of the 2011 national elections the *smartvote* VAA was used more than 1.2 million times.

Even more interesting from our point of view is the constantly growing popularity of VAAs across European citizens (Marschall 2014), on the basis of which we can expect an extremely large dataset stemming from our collaboration with the forthcoming version of **euandi**. Based on currently available figures and the upwards direction of the VAA-usage trend, we have strong reasons to believe that the dataset at our disposal will feature (at the very least) hundreds of thousands of completed user profiles. In turn, this will represent the largest dataset ever assembled on citizens' attitudes towards transnationalization of voting rights. The sheer size of the user base will allow us to study the sub-population of interests (e.g., dual citizens) in ways that are simply unrealistic by means of traditional representative survey datasets.⁹

The Making of a Voting Advice Application

In essence, Voting Advice Applications are web-based tools that help users casting a vote in elections by comparing their policy preferences on major issues with the programmatic stances of political parties on such issues (for a comprehensive overview of the VAA phenomenon in a comparative perspective, see: Cedroni and Garzia, 2010; Garzia and Marschall, 2012; 2014).

While VAAs have initially been developed at the national level, one could recently witness the appearance of *transnational* VAAs. In the six weeks preceding the European elections of 2009, the transnational VAA *EU Profiler*, developed under the auspices of the European Union Democracy Observatory (EUDO) based at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, attracted over 2.5 million users. The coding of over 270 European parties complemented one of the biggest datasets on European voters' attitudes and behaviour ever assembled. In occasion of the European Parliament elections of 2014, EUDO launched a new VAA: **euandi**. With 242 parties coded and the opinions of over a million users, the resulting dataset provided a key integration to the original EU Profiler dataset. To our purposes, it is worth noting that unlike traditional nationally-based VAAs, both *EU Profiler* and **euandi** offered to their users the possibility to compare their position with parties from the whole EU, irrespective of whether they were actually competing in the electoral constituency of the user. In turn, this was made possible by the development of a supranational questionnaire that have been administered to all parties in (and users of) the VAA. The questionnaire was available in 24 languages, and it invited users to react to 28 common policy statements covering a wide range of contemporary policy issues and political values in in Europe.

As already mentioned, the proposed project involves a comparative analysis of party positions on the current as well as future prospects of transnational voting. Since this will be investigated as part of the coding effort involved in the making of the VAA, it is illustrative to briefly mention how party positions will be measured (for a better description of

⁹ The choice of relying to a convenience sample based of self-selected VAA users is due to the current unavailability of national census or registration data for dual citizens in Europe, which makes it impossible to resort to a representative survey as a means to study our sub-population of interest. We consulted leading experts on this topic, including Rainer Baubock and Maarten Vink, to ascertain the extent to which such data is available across EU countries. As it turns out, most of EU countries have no such registers at all. And even those few countries that used to register citizenship status, no longer do so (e.g., Basic Registration of Persons Act, the Netherlands, 2014). In this sense, our choice to resort to a transnational VAA platform will increase enormously the chances to “capture” such type of citizens in the user base (yet with the caveat of non-representativeness). This choice is also justified from the point of view of the budget, given the massively cheaper cost of VAA-generated data vis-à-vis traditional representative surveys.

the coding procedure, see: Trechsel and Mair 2011, Garzia, Trechsel and De Sio, 2015). The parties targeted by the VAA team for inclusion in the tool will be given the opportunity to react to the statements and to provide their self-placement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree" plus a "no opinion" option. In parallel, country teams will proceed to code the parties' positions. The coders will be asked to specify what documentation they had used in order to place parties amongst a list of eight types of sources, hierarchically ordered in terms of timeliness and relevance. Once the party self-placement and the expert coding are completed, the two results will be compared, and the so-called calibration stage will begin. Where there are discrepancies, the party will be asked to provide more support for its declared position, and a final answer will be eventually identified. Where parties decline the invitation, country teams will take care of positioning the parties based on the available documentation. The results of the expert coding will then be submitted to all parties, independently of them having previously cooperated with the VAA team or not. Parties will be offered the choice to engage once more with the coders in case of disagreements.

Operational measures and respective Research Questions and Hypotheses

[RQ1.1] Transnational electoral practices on behalf of parties will be measured on the basis of documentation research and contact with the political parties themselves during the coding phase of the VAA. We will construct an additive index taking into account whether: (a) parties held campaign events beyond their national borders during the last five years, and (b) parties did put foreign citizens in their electoral lists for the latest national/transnational elections.

[RQ1.2] Measurement of the extent to which voters (external as well as dual citizens) took advantage of the possibility to cast a vote in elections beyond their country of residence will take place in the opt-in questionnaire offered to all users after having completed the main VAA questionnaire.

[RQ2.1] [RQ2.2] We investigate these research questions from two different angles. We look both at the transnationalization (i.e., the possibility to cast a vote beyond the national constituency of the voter) of *EP elections*, as well as at the possibility of casting a vote in *national elections* abroad. To tap the extent to which parties would be willing to address external citizens should voters be allowed to vote beyond their national constituency in EP elections, as well as how far voters would be interested in such a possibility, we will resort to a policy statement that will be included in the main VAA questionnaire: "***European Union citizens should be allowed to cast a vote for a party from another member state in EP elections***". As our research design also allows for extending the possibility of transnational voting to *national* elections abroad, the following statement will also be included: "***European Union citizens should be allowed to cast a vote for a party competing in national elections of another member state***".¹⁰ All parties and individual respondents to the VAA will thus be coded on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" on such statements. A "no opinion" option will also be offered.

[RQ3.1] [RQ3.2] To investigate the factors affecting variance in responses to the aforementioned question we will resort to three distinct set of variables. The first bloc of independent variables operationalizes [H3a] based on the idea

¹⁰ Since the idea to vote in another national election is far away from everyday discussions, the VAA will provide a brief explanation on how this could be applied in a pop-up window.

that variance in transnational electoral attitudes and behaviour could be accounted for on the basis of **polity-orientation**. This concept includes the following components: (a) identification, (b) involvement and (c) interest representation. In line with Blatter and Schlenker (2016) identification will be measured by two items: cognitive self-description and feeling of belonging. Involvement is operationalized as political interest and political knowledge. Finally, interest representation will be measured as support for a specific polity and by representing the (perceived) interests of a polity in the personal voting practice. In respect to concrete questions, we can start with the formulations that we have applied in the surveys among Swiss immigrants and emigrants, but we have to adjust some of the questions for the new purpose. This will be done in the first stage of the research project. Data about the polity-orientations of the voters will be collected through an extra-questionnaire that we offer the users of the VAA. Data about the corresponding positions of parties will be collected through a combination of documentation/literature research and direct contacts during the coding phase of the VAA.

In line with [H3b] we hypothesize instead that differences across parties/voters in terms of transnational campaigning and willingness of deepening transnational electoral practices relate to **expected policy congruence**. To put it down with an example, one could think of a given party with a significant amount of issue-opinions in common with a number of voters whose right to vote is confined beyond its electoral constituency. In this case, that party might be driven to campaign transnationally exactly in view of gaining the vote of all those foreign voters. Correspondingly, voters might be incited to vote for a party abroad exactly because this party might provide a better “match” (i.e., a higher degree of issue congruence) as compared to the parties competing in their national electoral district.

With regard to voters, the extent to which their willingness to cast a vote abroad is determined by potentially increasing policy congruence due to the existence of a party abroad that represents their interest better is already calculated by the system, which evaluates (and show to users) the proportion of congruence between the user and all parties (national and foreign) included in the transnational VAA. In a similar vein, we calculate the impact of expected policy congruence on varying party positions by taking into account the relative proportion of foreign voters that could potentially be “acquired” by each of the parties in the system on the basis of issue congruence.

Finally, we will include a number of control variables to rule out the possibility that potential relationships between parties and voters along the hypothesized lines is not due to structural characteristics of parties and/or basic socio-demographic and attitudinal variables at the individual level. Basic documentation research will be performed in order to gather information on party size, their governing status in national politics and the supranational party family they belong to, under the expectations that certain party families may stand for more “universalistic” ideals and practices than others. When it comes to their position on overreaching ideological dimensions (i.e., socio-economic left-right and GAL/TAN) we will resort to the VAA itself. As a matter of fact, all parties are already coded on both dimensions by the VAA makers.¹¹ The reduction of the political hyperspace to two dimensions allows us to position all parties and users as points in a two-dimensional space (see Figure 2).

When it comes to voter data, the relevant measures will be gathered in two separate stages. Basic socio-demographics will be provided by the VAA users right before the presentation of results. Note that in the case of euandi 2014, more than 80 percent of users provided information on selected socio-demographics (i.e., age, gender, educational level,

¹¹ Parties' position on these two dimensions is calculated on the basis of parties' answers to the full questionnaire. The calculation algorithm is based on an idea that opinions on individual issues can be aggregated to a limited number of issue dimensions, on the basis of a Euclidean distance model to combine preferences on a reduced number of issue-dimensions. The computation of averaged positions on such dimensions thus depends on a priori considerations, both in terms of which dimension an issue belongs to, and which side of the dimension a specific issue positions belongs to.

geographical location). With regard to basic political and ideological characteristics, they will be provided by users while answering the main questionnaire, while their position on the left-right and GAL/TAN scales will be automatically calculated by the system on the basis of their responses (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Placing parties and users in a two-dimensional political space



Source: www.euprofiler.eu

2.3.4. Research Team

Principal investigator: Prof. Dr. Joachim Blatter is the applicant and the head of the Political Science Department at the University of Lucerne. As scrutinized in section 2.2 and visible in his publication record, he has been strongly involved in normative debates and empirical studies on dual and external citizenship since 2006. He will be responsible for both, the conceptual and the empirical part of the project. Together with the project partners, he will further specify the proposals for the transnationalization of voting spaces in Europe and the questionnaires that will be used during the data collection process. He will sign contracts with the European University Institute (EUI) which will lay out the partnership between Blatter (in his role as SNSF project leader) and the EUI in conducting the VVA for the European Election in 2019 and in using the collected data for analysis. Together with the project partners, he will publish a series of articles for disseminating the concepts and findings of this project.

Internal Collaboration: The project will be conducted in close collaboration with further members of the department of Political Science at the University of Lucerne. Prof. Dr. Alexander Trechsel and Dr. Diego Garzia have recently joined the department, and this project is intended to bring the experiences and strengths of the main applicant and these new department members together in order to create a coherent and highly visible profile for the still young department in Lucerne. Prof. Trechsel and Dr. Garzia will act as key link between the principal investigator and the EUI-based team in charge of the development of the VAA for the 2019 EP election. On the basis of their experience with the making of

transnational VAAs, they will provide crucial support when it comes to the development of operational measures, questionnaire items and throughout the data collection stage.

External Collaboration: The applicant and principal investigator will work in close cooperation with the EUI on the basis of an agreement that has been already negotiated between the two parties (see attached document). The leadership for the 2019 VAA project will remain with the EUI, while the principal investigator of the proposed project will be involved as of the initial stage of the VAA project for all matters related to its conceptual development (e.g., statement selection, criteria for inclusion of political parties). Part of the resources allocated to the proposed project will be redirected to the EUI as a way to cover a portion of the costs involved in the data gathering. In return, the EUI commits to extend data access privileges (i.e., embargo) to the principal investigator until the end of the proposed project. Numerous structuring effects can be envisaged as a result of this collaboration, including access to the infrastructures of one of the major European research centers on citizenship (EUDO Citizenship, led by Prof. Rainer Bauböck).

Advisory Board: An advisory board will be formed at the initial stage of the project. A mix of senior and junior scholars within the PI's broad professional networks will be invited to this body, focusing on those that have distinguished themselves in the research areas covered by the project. Several scholars have already accepted to take part in this board. Prof. Dr. Rainer Bauböck is Professor of Social and Political Theory at the EUI, where he also directs the EUDO Citizenship Observatory. A leading figure in the field of citizenship and migration, he authored over 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes. Dr. Nenad Stojanovic is Senior Research Fellow (SNFS Ambizione Grantee) and Lecturer at the University of Lucerne. His recent research and Habilitation focusses on the role of "centripetal" institutions for the stability and legitimacy of multi-lingual polities (Stojanovic 2016). Dr. Joseph Lacey is Junior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. His research focus is on democratic theory and European politics, and his more recent works include a forthcoming monograph on developing a democratically legitimate voting space compound for the EU with Oxford University Press. Dr. Jean-Thomas Arrighi is a postdoctoral fellow within the NCCR *On The Move* and lecturer at the Universities of Lucerne and Neuchatel. He has published several articles on the transformation of the demos in a context of migration, most recently in *Democratization* and the *European Journal of Political Research*. The board will be consulted throughout the various stages of development of the project.

Employees: The research team will consist of a post-doctoral researcher and a student assistant at the MA level for the full duration of the project. The post-doctoral researcher will fulfil major tasks on the operational level of the project, especially when it comes to the analysis of the collected data. Together with the other members of the research team, (s)he will publish the articles and books laid out in the following section (2.4). The MA student will provide services in several stages of the project: e.g. literature research, preparation of the questionnaires, data file management, preparation of manuscripts, etc. It is envisioned that both, the Post-Doc and the MA student attend training courses and participate in conferences and workshops in order to enhance their skills and visibility.

2.4. Schedule and milestones

The time of the project for which we are asking for funding will cover the years 2018 to 2020. First and foremost, this timing will allow the research team to be involved in the conceptualization and development phases of the VAA as well as to have enough time to analyze the resulting data and to produce scientific outputs. Furthermore, the start in 2018

allows us to use the time from the SNSF decision on to further develop the conceptual parts, to negotiate and sign a final cooperation agreement with the EUI and to look for an excellent young scholar who can use the envisioned publication for making a major step in his academic career. Needless to say, the extensive conceptual and analytical efforts involved in the project necessarily carry challenges for the research team to face. One way of limiting risks is to allocate time in such a way that the critical phases of the project receive the full attention of the research team. The various milestones envisioned are indeed scheduled in temporal sequential order, allowing enough time in between them to be conducive to background research and preparatory work. The timeframe proposed below gives sufficient time for recalibrating the different steps and also guarantees time to implement corrective actions in the wake of possible complications:

- 2017** Preparatory activities: hiring of personnel, setting up of the advisory board, finalization of the scientific cooperation agreement with EUI.

- Jan/Apr 2018** First paper, normative specification of our proposals for transnationalizing European voting spaces. Organization of a journal's special issue in which the proposals are presented and commented on by major figures in the field.

- May/Dec 2018** Full operationalization of concepts, formulation of definite questionnaire, technical setting up of the VAA.

- Jan/June 2019** Supervision of data collection: party data (Jan/Mar) and user data (Apr/June).

- Jul/Sep 2019** Preliminary assessment of the data, in view of timely drafting three empirical papers while data remains at unique disposal of project partners (see below)

- Oct/Dec 2019** Second paper, descriptive analysis of cross-national differences across parties and voters in **current** transnational practices and attitudes.

- Jan/Mar 2020** Third paper, descriptive analysis of cross-national differences across parties and voters in **future** transnational practices and attitudes.

- Apr/June 2020** Fourth paper, explanatory analysis of the factors driving cross-national differences in current/future transnational practices and attitudes.

- Jul/Sep 2020** Integration of findings into a book proposal to be submitted to a major academic publishing company (i.e., Oxford, Cambridge).

- Oct/Dec 2020** Final reporting and concluding activities. Part of these months can easily be accounted for as time for re-calibration should the production of outputs should slow down because of unexpected difficulties with the data and/or delays with the production process of the resulting journal articles.

2.5. Relevance and impact

The proposed project is scientifically significant in many respects:

- With our proposals for transnationalizing voting spaces we will stimulate the normative debate in political theory on the adequate principles for specifying the boundaries of the demos in times of intensive transnational flows and (inter)dependencies (in Europe and beyond).
- Empirically, the project will not only tremendously expand our knowledge on the current extent of transnational voting practices in Europe, but will give us first indications on whether and where people and parties are willing to support and use further possibilities for transnational voting.
- Furthermore, by integrating the citizenship/polity-centered and the party/policy-centered strands of research, the project overcomes existing shortcomings in each strand. For understanding current and predicting future development in the multi-level system of the European Union, it is very important to find out whether people and parties are driven mainly by polity- or policy-considerations.
- Finally, the project offers us the opportunity to stay on the cutting-edge of the research strand that at the same time introduces and analyses the usage of VAAs. VAAs are important phenomena in themselves since they have developed into major transmitters of information between parties and voters almost everywhere, but they might be even more important in voting spaces which are characterized by a multi-lingual or multi-national demos.

The project promises to have strong and direct practical relevance and impact:

- It will stimulate the political debate on transnational solutions for dealing with the strong cross-border flows and (inter)dependencies within the European Union. The project promotes transnationalism as a helpful complement and not as a substitute to nationalism and supra-nationalism. This might help to overcome the problematic dichotomy between national particularism and supranational universalism.
- The EU-wide VAA will serve as a powerful tool for spreading the proposals for transnationalizing European voting spaces among parties and among citizens.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the fact that the concepts and tools that we develop in our project could be transferred to other democratic systems which are characterized not only by strong transboundary flows and (inter)dependencies, but also by a multi-lingual or multi-national demos. In consequence, after a successful project, we envision to transfer our concepts and insights not only to countries like Belgium and Canada, but also to Switzerland. If current tensions among linguistic regions rise and the inter-cantonal competition threatens regional or national collaboration, the trans-cantonalization of voting spaces in Switzerland might a valuable contribution to strengthen “centripetal forces” in this multi-lingual multi-level democracy.

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