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The Impact of EU Referenda on National Electoral Politics: The Dutch Case

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with the issue of increasing contention regarding European matters in national arenas. Specifically, it focuses on the impact of European Union referenda on national elections. EU referenda have two important consequences for national politics: they increase inter-party conflict over Europe and gear up voters' salience to EU matters. In doing so, EU referenda allow voters to identify parties closest to them on the EU issue, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will vote for a party on the basis of EU attitudes (i.e. EU issue voting). These propositions are evaluated empirically in a quasi-experimental setting by comparing two parliamentary elections before and after the first Dutch EU referendum in 2005. The findings show that referenda indeed facilitate the development of EU issue voting. Consequently, the conclusions of this study are not only relevant to observers of Dutch politics, but also contribute to a larger debate within the field of EU studies.

Introduction

When answering a journalist's question about the factors that most easily steer a government off course, Harold Macmillan, former British Prime Minister, famously replied 'events, dear boy, events'.¹ On 1 June 2005 Dutch government officials must have felt similarly as the results of the Dutch Constitutional Treaty referendum poured in from across the country. Although no supporter of the Treaty expected the 'yes' side to gain an upper hand in the referendum contest, the results were more devastating than expected. While almost two-thirds of Dutch voters turned out to vote, a clear majority of over 60 per cent opposed the Treaty. Mainstream politicians from both sides of the aisle were left in a state of shock. After the dust settled, Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende noted that although the government referendum campaign had been unsuccessful much was to be gained from that day in early June: 'The high turnout. The lively discussions regarding Europe that sprang up all over the country. Although the outcome was negative, these factors turn the result into a victory.'² Balkenende's statement nicely illustrates the potential impact of European Union referenda on national political arenas. An EU referendum puts a spotlight on an issue – i.e. European integration – that seems inherently distant from voters' everyday lives. Referenda bring EU issues to the centre-stage of political discussion; at least for a period of time (see also Christin and Hug 2002).³ Consequently, EU scholars argue that referenda play a vital role in the politicisation of EU matters in national arenas (Hobolt 2006; Hooghe and Marks 2009). They allow for a transfer of EU issues from the domain of elite politics to that of mass politics (Hooghe and Marks 2009: 22–4).

Until now, the large body of work dealing with EU referenda has focused on voters' choices in EU referenda (for an overview see Hug 2002; Garry et al. 2005) and the role of political institutions, parties and the mass media in referendum campaigns (Schneider and Weitsman 1996; Hug and Sciarini 2000; De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006; Hobolt 2006). Notwithstanding their importance, hardly any of these studies concentrate on the implications of EU referenda for national politics. This study advances existing research by examining the extent to which EU referenda influence the principal arena of political legitimacy and accountability in national politics, namely elections. It seeks to explore the conditions under which EU referenda matter for national electoral politics.

Thus far, we have yet to provide empirical evidence to address this issue. By exploring the impact of the referendum on the 2005 Constitutional Treaty on Dutch electoral politics, this article examines the extent to which EU referenda affect the likelihood of voters' EU attitudes influencing their decisions at the national ballot box, i.e. EU issue voting (De Vries 2007). The Dutch Constitutional Treaty referendum provides an interesting testing ground to study the effect of EU referenda on the development of EU issue voting as it constitutes a somewhat 'critical case study'. The 2005 referendum was the first ever EU referendum in Dutch history. Until then EU issues played a minor to no role in Dutch elections and party politics (see Hamsen 2004; Van Holsteyn and Den Ridder 2005; De Vries 2007). Consequently, if we do not find an EU referendum effect in this setting, it is unlikely that we will find an effect elsewhere. In addition to being a critical case, we can treat the comparison of the extent to which vote choice in the 2002 and 2006 Dutch elections is affected by voters' EU preferences as a quasi-experiment. Comparing EU issue voting in both elections allows us to study the effect of an EU referendum while keeping many country-specific factors constant, such as the development of the party system or electoral system features. As such, this study provides a quasi-experimental setting in which we are able to control for as many relevant factors as possible, while varying the extent of the treatment, i.e. the absence or presence of an EU referendum. The design is quasi-experimental in that it lacks proper randomisation of subjects and a control group (Campbell and Stanley 1963: 34).

The findings show that EU referenda are indeed a lubricant for the development of EU issue voting. Nevertheless their impact is largely indirect. By increasing inter-party conflict over Europe and gearing up voters' salience on EU matters, the 2005 Dutch EU referendum increased the likelihood of EU issue voting in the subsequent national election. These results contribute to our understanding of the conditions under which conflict regarding Europe may arise in national political arenas. Consequently, the conclusions are not only relevant to observers of Dutch politics, but also speak to a larger debate within the field of EU studies about contestation regarding EU matters in national contexts.

How Do EU Referenda Impact National Electoral Politics?

One of the most remarkable developments in the European integration process in recent years has been the steady increase in the number of EU referenda. Not only did all of the 2004 enlargement states – with the exception of Cyprus – hold a popular referendum on the accession question, but the recent Constitutional Treaty sparked off a wave of planned popular referenda which were postponed after the Dutch and French rejections. Just recently, we witnessed a referendum on the successor of the Constitutional Treaty, the Lisbon Treaty, in Ireland where a majority of Irish voters voted 'no'. Currently, a majority of member states have held one or more EU referenda. To date, only seven out of 27 EU member states – i.e. Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus,

Germany, Greece, Portugal and Romania – have not held a referendum on matters relating to European integration. Table 1 provides an overview of all EU referenda thus far.

This steady increase in the number of EU referenda is a particularly interesting development as scholars often highlight the importance of referenda in increasing the conflict regarding EU matters within national party and electoral politics. Evidence presented by Steenbergen and Scott (2004) as well as by Netjes and Binnema (2007), for example, shows the role of EU referenda in raising the salience of Europe for political parties. Moreover, Hooghe and Marks (2009) in their ‘Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration’ carve out the role of referenda in understanding the recent conflict over Europe. Referenda force political parties as well as voters to take a clear stance on European integration issues. As a result, they pave the way for a shift of EU issues away from elite and interest group politics to mass politics. Although European integration may still be of secondary concern to most voters and parties, EU referenda bring the issue right to their doorsteps.

Despite the possible impact of EU referenda on national politics, our understanding of their precise consequences on the national realm remains limited. So far, the scholarly work on EU referenda mainly focuses on the explanations of voters’ choices (see Garry et al. 2005). The debate in this field centres on the issue of second-order versus issue voting. Are EU referenda decided by voters’ attitudes to their national government or political parties – the second-order voting perspective (see Franklin et al. 1994, 1995; Franklin 2002) – or by their attitudes towards Europe – the issue voting perspective (see Siune and Svensson 1993; Siune et al. 1994; Svensson 2002)? Next to this dispute, scholars have studied the role of political institutions, political parties and the mass media in framing the referendum campaign (see Schneider and Weitsman 1996; Hug and Sciarini 2000; De Vreese and Boomgaarden 2006; Hobolt 2006). This work provides important insights into EU referenda but does not tell us much about their implications for national politics. Do EU referenda really spark off increased contestation regarding EU matters in national party politics and elections as some authors suggest?

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF EU REFERENDA THE 27 EU MEMBER STATES

Referenda on EU Issues	
Austria	1 (1994 ^b)
Belgium	None
Bulgaria	None
Cyprus	None
Czech Republic	1 (2003 ^b)
Denmark	6 (1972 ^b , 1986 ^a , 1992 ^a , 1993 ^a , 1998 ^a , 2000 ^a)
Estonia	1 (2003 ^b)
Finland	1 (1994 ^b)
France	3 (1972, 1992, 2005)
Germany	None
Greece	None
Hungary	1 (2003 ^b)
Ireland	7 (1972 ^b , 1987 ^a , 1992 ^a , 1998 ^a , 2001 ^a , 2002 ^a , 2008 ^a)
Italy	1 (1989)
Latvia	1 (2003 ^b)
Lithuania	1 (2003 ^b)
Luxembourg	1 (2005)
Malta	1 (2003 ^b)
Netherlands	1 (2005)
Poland	1 (2003 ^b)
Portugal	None

Romania	None	United Kingdom	1 (1975)
Slovenia	1 (2003 ^b)		
Slovakia	1 (2003 ^b)		
Spain	1 (2005)		
Sweden	2 (1994 ^b , 2003)		

Notes: ^aRequired by constitution/constitutional court; ^bReferenda on joining the European Community/European Union.
Sources: Centre d'études et de documentation sur la démocratie directe in Geneva, Switzerland, available at <http://c2d.unige.ch/> (accessed 25 June 2008); Hug (2002).

This article develops and tests arguments about the way in which EU referenda influence national elections. I contend that EU referenda play an important role in the development of EU issue voting, i.e. the extent to which EU attitudes influence voters' decisions at the national ballot box (De Vries 2007). Recent research demonstrates that the existence of EU issue voting depends on the level of salience that the public attaches to this issue and to the level of contestation among political parties in each country. Put simply, EU issue voting occurs in those instances where there is either a higher level of salience attached to the issue or parties differentiate themselves on the issue, allowing voters to choose a party closest to them on the issue (De Vries 2007; also see Gabel 2000; Tillman 2004). Why would EU referenda play a role in the EU issue voting process? The intuition is simple. EU referenda 1) raise partisan conflict over Europe and 2) boost voters' EU issue salience.

First, inter-party conflict is expected to heighten as a result of EU referenda. By and large, there has been a tendency by political elites to depoliticise European integration or at least to have low interest in EU matters (Mair 2000). But referenda force political parties to position themselves on important EU issues relating to joining, enlarging, or deepening the regime. Referendum campaigns leave little room for nuanced EU positions. Consequently, they are very different from national or European parliamentary (EP) campaigns in which parties can carefully construct their positioning towards Europe (see also Hobolt 2006). Although political parties usually are able to steer clear of the issue of European integration, EU referenda bring EU issues to the forefront of the political debate, at least for a limited amount of time. As parties position themselves on the EU issue, voters become increasingly aware of the differences among parties. This is especially true for referenda as these only allow dichotomous issue positions – i.e. a party is either favourably disposed towards the alternative at hand or opposed to it. Indeed, research shows that although parties may not always be able to effectively cue their party supporters, voters are increasingly more informed about parties' varying stances on European integration as the referendum campaign progresses (Aarts and Van der Kolk 2005; Hobolt 2006). In all, EU referenda are expected to raise inter-party conflict over Europe and with that the visibility of party positions to voters. This increased differentiation, in turn, facilitates EU issue voting by allowing voters to choose the party closest to them on the EU issue.

The second consequence of EU referenda is that they boost voters' EU issue salience. EU referenda raise the stakes of EU issues in national arenas. Research shows that in the context of referendum campaigns there is an increase in the attention given to EU affairs by political parties and media outlets (see De Vreese and Semetko 2004; Kleinnijenhuis et al. 2005 on the Dutch Constitutional referendum; De Vreese 2004 on the Danish Euro referendum). There is also evidence that EU referenda raise the salience of Europe for political parties (Steenbergen and Scott, 2004; Netjes and Binnema, 2007). This logic is easily extended to voters. We know that European integration is of minor concern to the average voter as European institutions are simply 'too distant from ordinary European citizens' (Føllesdal and Hix 2006: 536). Not only is

turnout in EP elections decreasing in most EU member states, but the characteristics of the European polity – such as the lack of transparency of decision-making within the Council (Wallace and Smith 1995) or the weakness of a European public sphere (Meyer 1999) – exacerbate the lack of interest on the part of European citizens. In fact, recent studies demonstrate that the attention given to EU institutions and policies is virtually nonexistent in national arenas (De Vreese et al. 2001; Peter et al. 2003).

While EU affairs on average seize only limited popular attention, EU referenda are likely to change this. Referenda inform voters through the debates they provoke in parliament and through their representation in media reporting. Existing research demonstrates that referendum campaigns in effect increase the extent of media reporting on EU matters, if only in the short term (Leroy and Siune 1994; De Vreese et al. 2001). An important side effect of this is that referendum campaigns bring EU matters closer to home. As noted earlier, EU affairs are far removed from voters' everyday lives. Referendum campaigns highlight specific EU issues and their potential implications for specific EU member states. This 'domestication' of EU matters makes it easier for voters to grasp the integration process and to understand its consequences. For these reasons, EU referenda are expected to increase the stakes of EU matters in national arenas while simultaneously enhancing voters' EU issue salience. Although on average European integration may still be a secondary concern for most voters, EU referenda bring the issue closer to home. As a result, there is a greater likelihood that some voters view the EU issue as important enough to let it co-determine their vote choice in the next election.

To summarise, I hypothesise that EU referenda will intensify inter-party conflict over Europe and increase EU issue salience among voters. These expectations are formalised in hypotheses H1A and H1B.

Hypothesis (H1A): The occurrence of an EU referendum increases the level of inter-party conflict over Europe.

Hypothesis (H1B): The occurrence of an EU referendum increases the level of EU issue salience.

Hypotheses H1A and H1B relate to the role of EU referenda in facilitating EU issue voting in the following way. Previous research tells us that the EU must be salient to at least a part of the public and that there must be significant disagreement among the parties for voters to be able to identify which parties are closer to them on the EU issue. Only in this context is it possible for EU issue voting to occur (De Vries 2007). Consequently, EU referenda indirectly affect national electoral politics, because they increase partisan conflict and voter salience over Europe which in turn increases the likelihood of EU issue voting. This expectation is formalised in hypothesis H2.

Hypothesis (H2): By increasing the extent of inter-party conflict over Europe and EU issue salience, an EU referendum increases the likelihood of EU issue voting in subsequent national elections.

Thus, we expect EU referenda to play an important role in the EU issue voting process. If this is indeed the case, EU referenda may serve as an important democratic legitimisation mechanism through which citizens can make their EU preferences heard. Although referendum outcomes may initially shock or disappoint political elites, their consequences are likely to be increased

public debate, awareness and participation regarding EU affairs at least for a limited amount of time.

The First EU Referendum in the Netherlands: A Quasi-Experiment

Do referenda really affect political contestation over Europe within national arenas? The Dutch 2005 Constitutional Treaty referendum offers an interesting testing ground to study this question. In addition to providing a quasi-experimental setting (discussed below), the Dutch case has three beneficial attributes. First, it constitutes a 'critical case study'. The 2005 Constitutional Treaty referendum was the first ever EU referendum in Dutch history. Overall, Dutch voters are characterised by low levels of interest in EU affairs and EU issues are of low salience in Dutch party competition (see Harmsen 2004; De Vries 2007). Additionally, studies show that European integration did not play any role in Dutch electoral campaigns (see Van Holsteyn and Den Ridder 2005; De Vries 2007). So, if we do not find an EU referendum effect here, it is unlikely that we will find an effect elsewhere. Second, the 2005 referendum took place in the midst of an electoral cycle; that is to say, at least some time passed (i.e. more than one year) between the stimulus and the post-test, the 2006 parliamentary election. If the subsequent election had been in very close proximity to the EU referendum campaign, the experimental set-up would have been biased towards finding a referendum effect. The Dutch case, thus, provides a conservative test of the impact of EU referenda on national elections. A final reason for selecting the Dutch case is data availability. The 2002 and 2006 Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies entail all relevant questions relating to voters' and parties' issue positioning with identical question wordings. This allows me to examine the change between the 2002 and 2006 elections due to the EU referendum.

The Dutch referendum also constitutes a quasi-experiment set up with a pre- and post-test (see Campbell and Stanley 1963). The extent of EU issue voting in the 2002 parliamentary election serves as the pre-test, the 2005 EU referendum as the stimulus and the extent of EU issue voting in the 2006 parliamentary election as the post-test.⁴ Note that a snap parliamentary election took place in 2003 after disagreements within the government coalition, especially between members of the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF). Unfortunately, this election could not serve as the pre-test because the 2003 Dutch Parliamentary Election Survey did not include any EU related questions.

This design differs from a classic experimental set-up in that there is neither a control group nor randomisation of subjects. Consequently, the results exhibit some degree of uncertainty. A quasi-experimental design allows for the measurement of change between the pre- and post-tests, but causality cannot be established conclusively (Campbell and Stanley 1963: 35–6). Nonetheless, this set-up does allow for a controlled comparison of EU issue voting at both time-points as it controls for many important factors, such as party system or electoral system characteristics.

The Referendum and Its Aftermath: Increased Contention behind the Dykes?

The first day of June 2005 will go down as an exceptional one in Dutch political history. On this day, the Dutch witnessed two novelties. Not only did the Constitutional Treaty referendum constitute the first ever referendum on EU matters, but it was also the first popular national referendum in Dutch politics.⁵ The result turned out to be disastrous for both the Dutch governing coalition – consisting of the Christian

Democrats (CDA), the Liberal Party (VVD) and the Progressive Democrats (D66) – as well as the largest party in opposition – the Social Democrats (PvdA) – all of whom were in favour of the Treaty.⁶ Table 2 provides an overview of the official results of the referendum.

In the aftermath, journalists and scholars alike were left wondering what had happened to the pro-EU consensus behind the dykes. Citizens of one of Europe's founding members, the Dutch, had given a clear signal: until here and no further. On this infamous night in June many politicians came together to watch the results. The faces of pro-constitutionalists such as Femke Halsema (Leader the Green Left – GL) or Atzo Nicolaï (Government Secretary for European Affairs) turned pale as the devastating results poured in. The contrast could not have been starker when cameras turned to the avid critics of the Treaty – the Socialist Party (SP) and the Group Wilders (now called the Party for Freedom – PVV) – who were cheering and celebrating their victory. The outcome of the first EU referendum in the Netherlands was a clear defeat for both the biggest mainstream parties in government and opposition.

TABLE 2
RESULTS OF THE 2005 REFERENDUM ON THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY

	Absolute Numbers	Percentages
No	4.705.685	61.5
Yes	2.940.730	38.5
Total	7.646.415	100

Notes: 58,781 voters (0.76%) voted blank or invalid. The overall turnout was 62.8%.

Source: Parlement & Politiek, Parlement Documentatie Centrum, Den Haag, the Netherlands, see <http://www.parlement.com/9291000/modulesf/h17d1wlf> (accessed 26 February 2008).

What followed was an intense debate in parliament and the media about the exact reasons behind the 'no' vote. Politicians and commentators were ready to point out that Dutch citizens had voted down the Treaty simply because they could not understand the elaborate and technical reforms laid down in the Constitution. The Treaty was just voted down for the wrong reasons. Viewed in this light the outcome did not constitute a vote of no confidence, but was rather an issue of a lack of understanding concerning European affairs.⁷ First analyses of the voting behaviour show that this was not necessarily the case. Although the Constitutional Treaty was clearly a difficult document to grasp, by the end of the campaign Dutch voters were quite well informed about it. They were even more informed about party stances on the issue (Aarts and Van der Kolk 2005: 164–8). Moreover, the reasons for the 'no' vote were not necessarily second-order related issues (like government approval for example) as is often the case in EU referendum campaigns. Rather, voters' decisions were largely driven by their EU perceptions (see Van der Kolk and Aarts 2005: 187–201). Interestingly, however, the most influential EU issues affecting voters' choices in the referendum were the Euro and Turkish accession to the EU, both of which were not part of the Constitutional Treaty (Van der Kolk and Aarts 2005: 195–8). These issues did, however, lie at the heart of the campaigns of the Eurosceptic SP, which criticised the expanding European Monetary Union and the Euro, and the Eurosceptic politician Geert Wilders, who fiercely opposes Turkish accession and who is now the Parliamentary Leader of the PVV (Lucardie 2005: 117–20).

After the initial shockwave, Dutch politics seemed swiftly to return to normal. The Prime Minister, the Finance Minister and the Secretary of European Affairs made it clear that they would safeguard Dutch interests (especially monetary ones) when the Treaty was renegotiated.⁸ In the meantime, there were other more pressing issues (e.g. welfare state reform, military deployment to Afghanistan and the tightening of immigration laws) topping the political agenda. Indeed, by early 2006 the government coalition was in crisis over immigration issues and the functioning of the Minister of Immigration Affairs, Rita Verdonk. This finally resulted in the resignation of the Balkende III cabinet, and on 22 November a parliamentary election took place. In the midst of such turmoil the stir-up regarding the Constitutional Treaty seemed long forgotten, but had it already left its mark?

Examining the Impact of the First EU Referendum on Dutch Parliamentary Elections

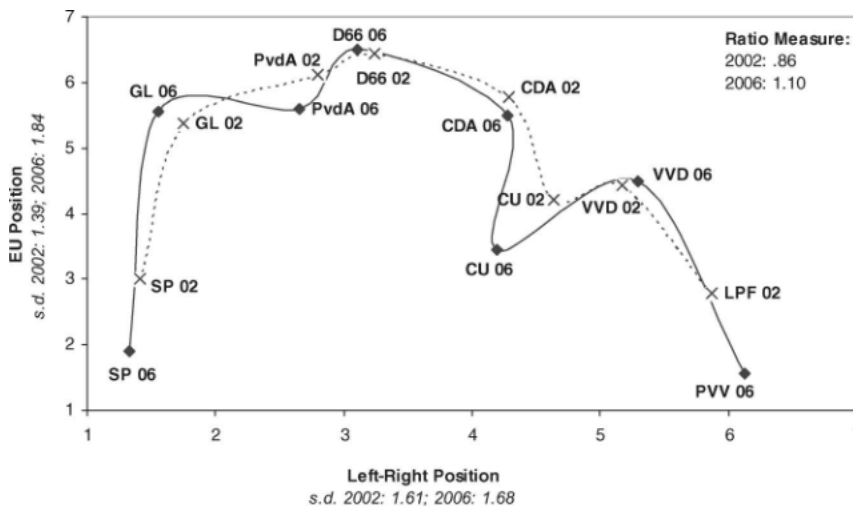
My theoretical expectations suggest that EU referenda have two important consequences for national politics: 1) they increase inter-party conflict over Europe and 2) they heighten voters' salience to EU matters (hypotheses H1A and H1B). As a result, EU referenda indirectly influence national elections by allowing voters to identify which parties are closest to them on the EU issue, thereby increasing the likelihood of EU issue voting in the subsequent national election (hypothesis H2). I evaluate these propositions by comparing the extent of EU issue voting in parliamentary elections before (i.e. the 2002 elections) and after (i.e. the 2006 elections) the first Dutch EU referendum in 2005.

Let us first examine hypotheses H1A and H1B and determine the extent of inter-party conflict and voters' salience on Europe in the 2002 and 2006 elections. Figure 1 compares the party positions on European integration using the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys from 2002 and 2006.⁹ The figure shows party positions in a two-dimensional space plotting left–right placements against those on an EU scale.¹⁰

The figure shows that the relationship between left–right ideology and EU positioning resembles somewhat of a curvi-linear relationship. This fits with recent literature stating that the relationship between left/right placement and support for European integration is best described as ‘the inverted U-curve’ (Hooghe *et al.* 2002: 968). The inverted U-curve indicates that the ideological mainstream – i.e. conservative, social and Christian democratic parties – are generally supportive of the integration process, as they have frequently been part of governing coalitions throughout Western Europe and were therefore largely responsible for the course of integration. Left-wing and right-wing extremist parties, however, most strongly oppose European integration.

Figure 1 provides two additional pieces of information which discern inter-party conflict in 2002 and 2006. First, it provides the standard deviations (s.d.) in party positioning on the left–right and EU dimensions for both election years. These standard deviations give an indication of the degree of dispersion between parties on both of these dimensions. They show that while the standard deviation in terms of left–right placements is relatively stable between both elections, the degree of dispersion between parties on the EU scale increases slightly. I calculated a t-test to examine if the differences in parties' EU positions between both elections are statistically significant. The result indicates that the mean EU position of Dutch parties in 2006 is indeed significantly different from that in 2002, i.e. $t(7) \text{ } \frac{1}{4} 72.332$, $p \leq .05$.¹¹

FIGURE 1
PARTISAN CONFLICT ON THE LEFT–RIGHT AND EU DIMENSIONS



Notes: The dotted line with xs indicates party positions in left–right and EU two-dimensional space in 2002, while the black line with diamonds indicates party positions in left–right and EU two-dimensional space in 2006. Note 6 provides a list of Dutch parties including abbreviations.

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey entails uncertainty estimates for these positions by means of the standard deviation among country experts in placing a particular party. The uncertainty estimates for left–right and EU positions 2002/06 are:

– *Left–right:* CDA .64/.60; PvdA .53/.67; VVD .74/.53; D66 .46/.53; GL .25/.97; SP .16/.71, LPF/PVV .84/.46.

– *EU:* CDA .83/.71; PvdA .60/.52; VVD 1.59/.97; D66 .53/.53; GL .74/.53; SP 1.07/.99, LPF/PVV .83/.53.

Sources: Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2002 and 2006.

Second, the figure includes a ratio measure dividing the standard deviation (i.e. party dispersion) on the EU issue by the dispersion on left–right ideology. A value of one indicates a situation in which party dispersion on the left–right is equal to party dispersion regarding the EU. Thus, if the measure takes on the value greater than one partisan conflict is considered high, while values smaller than one indicate low conflict. This measure has an advantage over other measures used in the literature – such as range between all parties, range between parties with largest vote share, or the variance or standard deviation of parties’ EU positions (for an overview, see Mattila and Raunio 2007). All of these measures fail to provide a clear yardstick with which to determine the extent to which EU conflict is high, normal or low within a party system as they provide no comparison. In order to circumvent this problem, I ‘ground’ the partisan conflict measure, so to speak, by relating it to partisan conflict regarding left–right ideology. The ratio measure amounts to 0.86 in 2002 (i.e. 1.39/1.61) and 1.10 in 2006 (i.e. 1.84/1.68). These values indicate that inter-party conflict is more extensive in the 2006 compared with the 2002 election. This being said, the Chapel Hill expert judgments come with some degree of uncertainty, namely the standard deviation among country experts in placing a particular party. These estimates are included in the notes to Figure 1. Although the uncertainty estimates for EU positions are smaller in 2006 compared to 2002 and smaller compared to those for left–right positions, they are substantial and on average amount to more than half a point, namely 0.68, on a seven-point scale. Given this fact, the differences between the ratio measures for both election years are rather small.

In all, there is slightly more partisan conflict on EU matters in the 2006 compared with the 2002 elections, which provides some evidence for hypothesis H1A stating that an EU referendum should increase the level of inter-party conflict. The results indicate that this increase in partisan conflict is mostly due to the more Eurosceptical positioning by the parties on the extremes (i.e. the SP and PVV) of the political spectrum in 2006. The EU positions of the other parties in the system remained relatively unchanged between 2002 and 2006. This radicalisation at the left- and right-wing extremes is not entirely surprising given the fact that the SP and PVV were the main antagonists of the Constitutional Treaty.

Do Dutch voters view issues relating to European integration as more important in the 2006 compared to the 2002 elections? Table 3 provides an overview of EU issue salience in both elections. The table also breaks down the importance given to issues relating to European integration by party voters, i.e. voters that indicated voting for the party in the given election. EU issue salience is measured using an open-ended question format in which respondents were asked to name the most important topics of the election campaign. The variable is thus operationalised as the share of respondents that mentioned issues regarding European integration (such as the EU institutions, the Euro or Turkish accession) as important concerns to themselves personally or to their country.

The results show that the level of EU issue salience for all voters is indeed more extensive in the 2006 compared to the 2002 campaign. EU issue salience is over eight times higher in 2006 compared to 2002. If we look at the level of EU issue salience in 2006 across party voters, we see the levels for the extreme right PVV, D66 and the small Christian party the Christian Union (CU) are higher than

the overall average. These levels are nevertheless still considerably low, not even exceeding the 2.5 per cent mark.

A t-test was used to determine if the differences in the mean salience of the EU issue for party voters between 2002 and 2006 are statistically significant. The result indicates that on average the EU issue is more salient to voters in the 2006 compared to the 2002 election, i.e.

$t(7) \frac{1}{4} 3.424, p \leq .01$. That said, the overall level of EU issue salience in the 2006 campaign is still quite low. Only 0.83 per cent of Dutch voters

consider EU issues of great importance. These findings are less surprising in light of the fact that the questions used require voters to weigh the relative importance of the EU with other pressing issues, such as the economy or health care. Hence, one would not expect many voters to see the EU as one of the most important issues. In all, these results are in line with H1B, which states that the occurrence of an EU referendum increases the level of EU issue salience.

The results presented in Figure 1 and Table 3 are in line with my theoretical predictions (H1A and H1B), although the evidence for hypothesis H1A is fairly weak. The presence of an EU referendum seems to have resulted in higher levels of inter-party conflict and of voters' issue salience regarding Europe. The overall increase in conflict and salience is statistically significant though modest in size. The question we turn to now is if these slightly higher levels of partisan conflict and issue salience in 2006 facilitated the development of EU issue voting. And is EU issue voting more extensive in the 2006 election compared to the 2002 election?

TABLE 3
EU ISSUE SALIENCE (%)

Party Voters	2002	2006
List Pim Fortuyn – LPF/Party for Freedom – PVV	.00	1.67
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy – VVD	.00	.63
Christian Union – CU	.00	1.06
Christian Democratic Appeal – CDA	.00	.50
Democrats 66 – D66	.00	2.13
Labour Party – PvdA	.40	.63
Green Left – GL	.00	.00
Socialist Party – SP	.00	.76
<i>All Voters</i>	.10	.83

Note: Table entries show the share of respondents (in %) that mentioned issues regarding European integration in an open-ended question asking them to name the most important topics of the election campaign.

Sources: Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2002 and 2006.

The results presented in Figure 1 and Table 3 are in line with my theoretical predictions (H1A and H1B), although the evidence for hypothesis H1A is fairly weak. The presence of an EU referendum seems to have resulted in higher levels of inter-party conflict and of voters' issue salience regarding Europe. The overall increase in conflict and salience is statistically significant though modest in size. The question we turn to now is if these slightly higher levels of partisan conflict and issue salience in 2006 facilitated the development of EU issue voting. And is EU issue voting more extensive in the 2006 election compared to the 2002 election?

In order to explore the extent to which voters' EU attitudes influence their voting behaviour – i.e. the extent of EU issue voting – I estimate a conditional logit (CL) regression model. I also estimate a multinomial logistic (MNL) regression in order to examine the effect of EU attitudes on the likelihood of a voter choosing one alternative (i.e. a particular party) over another baseline category. Finally, for MNL results I also provide subsequent post-estimation simulations.¹² Note that different assumptions underlie CL and MNL regression when modelling vote choice. While MNL regression does not allow for the inclusion of alternative-specific (i.e. party-specific) independent variables, CL regression models vote probabilities as both a function of the characteristics of individuals and of party alternatives (see Alvarez and Nagler 1998: 58–9). These properties have some implications for the operationalisation of EU issue voting in both types of analyses. In the case of the CL regression models presented (see Table 4), EU issue voting is operationalised as the distance between respondents' self-placement and their mean placement of a party's position on an EU scale. Here EU issue voting constitutes an alternative-specific characteristic. In the results of the MNL regression (see Tables 5 and 6), EU issue voting is an individual-specific characteristic operationalised as a respondent's self-placement on an EU scale.

Let me first elaborate the CL regression results which are reported in Table 4. The dependent variable in these analyses is the vote choice of the respondent in the 2002 and 2006 Dutch parliamentary election, respectively. For the purpose of operationalising the actual extent of EU issue voting, I calculate the squared distance between a respondent's EU position and a party's EU position.¹³ I expect voters to vote for the party that most accurately resembles their EU positions (smallest distance hypothesis, see Enelow and Hinich 1984: 38). If EU issue voting exists, the effect of EU issue distance should be negative and significant. In other words, an increase in disagreement between a respondent's EU position and a party's EU position should lead to a decrease in the likelihood of the respondent to vote for the party.

To construct the EU distance variable, I subtract a respondent's self- placement from their mean party-placement on an EU scale for each individual party. I then square this distance to derive a Euclidean distance measure. Respondents were asked to place themselves, as well as several political parties, on a 7-point European integration scale, where 1 stands for high EU support and 7 stands for low EU support. To assess the importance of the EU issue in relation to other concerns, I also include three non-EU related policy variables (left/right, and two 'new politics' policies, namely immigration and environmental policy). Each is constructed in the same manner as EU issue distance.¹⁴ Finally, I include a set of socio-demographic control variables, namely gender, income, education and religiosity. These socio-demographic controls tap into the impact of cleavage structures on voting behaviour. All of the predictors are centred on their respective means. Table A.1 in the appendix summarises the operationalisations of the variables employed in the CL regression analyses.

TABLE 4
EU ISSUE VOTING IN THE 2002 AND 2006 DUTCH ELECTIONS

	2002	2006
Left/Right Ideological Distance	7.39* (.04)	7.29* (.03)
EU Issue Distance	7.10 (.06)	7.09* (.02)
Immigration Issue Distance	7.04 (.03)	7.05 (.03)
Green Issue Distance	7.07* (.02)	7.06* (.01)
<i>LR w²</i>	514.72*	734.65*
<i>Log Likelihood</i>	7634.27	7730.31
<i>Pseudo R²</i>	.29	.33
<i>N</i>	554	682
<i>Stacked Obs.</i>	2770	3410

Notes: Table entries are CL regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The Christian Democrats (CDA) is the omitted baseline group for individual-specific variables. The analysis includes socio-economic controls and party dummies. Full results are presented in Tables A.3 and A.4 in the appendix. *significant at p 5 .05 (two-tailed).

Sources: Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2002 and 2006.

Do EU attitudes influence Dutch voters' decisions in the 2002 and 2006 elections? Remember that in order for EU issue voting to occur, the overall effect of the distance between voters and parties in terms of the EU issue on national vote choice should be negative and significant. The results in Table 4 show that while EU issue distance is not a significant predictor for vote choice in the 2002 elections, it does reach significance in the 2006 elections.

The overall size of the EU issue distance coefficient in 2006 is substantially smaller than the coefficient of the left–right ideological distance in the same elections. This is not surprising as previous research tells us that the left/ right dimension is the main predictor of vote choice (Van der Eijk and Niemoëller 1983; Van der Eijk et al. 1999). In order to get a real sense of the contribution of the EU issue distance variable to the overall fit of the model, I calculated log-likelihood ratio tests which compare the full model including all predictors to a nested model excluding the EU distance variable for both elections. These tests indicate that the overall fit of the model when the EU distance variable was removed is only significantly worse in 2006 (LR $\chi^2(1)$: 32.63 $p \leq .001$ for 2006 compared to LR $\chi^2(1)$: 3.99 $p \leq .10$ for 2002). In 2006 the exclusion of the EU issue distance variable resulted in a 4.4 per cent decrease in terms of the overall log-likelihood.

These results corroborate my theoretical predictions. The previous findings highlighted that the inter-party conflict and voters' issue salience are more extensive in the 2006 compared to the 2002 elections. These augmented conflict and salience levels should in turn facilitate the development of EU issue voting. The results in Table 4 underline this hypothesis (H2): while EU issue voting is not present in the 2002 elections prior to the 2005 Constitutional Treaty referendum, it does exist in the subsequent electoral campaign in 2006.

Next, I examine EU issue voting in more depth by determining the impact of EU attitudes on the likelihood that a voter will choose one alternative over another baseline category, in this case the Christian Democrats (CDA). By choosing such a large and centrist party in the party system as the baseline category, the MNL estimates provide a conservative test of EU issue voting across parties as it is harder for coefficients to reach statistical significance than when a more extremist party would have been chosen. The dependent variable is vote choice for a particular party in a respective election. The main independent variable is a voter's EU preference on a 7-point scale where 7 indicates low and 1 indicates high EU support. To assess the importance of the EU issue in relation to other central concerns, I also include non-EU related policy variables (left–right ideology, preferences regarding immigration and the environment) and socio-economic controls (i.e. gender, income, education and religiosity). All the predictors are centred on their respective means. Table A.2 in the appendix summarises the operationalisations of the variables employed in the MNL regression analyses.

The results of the MNL analysis are reported in Tables 5 and 6. To interpret the results, one must remember that the coefficients indicate the change in the log odds¹⁵ of voting for a party in relation to the baseline category as a result of a one-unit increase in the independent variable. A positive coefficient indicates an increased likelihood of voting for a party other than the baseline category. For example, in the 2006 election the log odds of voting for the PVV rather than the CDA increase by 0.72 for a one-unit increase on the European integration scale. In other words, when a voter becomes more Eurosceptical the log odds of voting for the PVV increases by a factor of 0.72 in comparison with voting for the Christian Democrats.

TABLE 5
EU ISSUE VOTING AND PARTY CHOICE IN THE 2002 ELECTION

	LPF	VVD	CU	D66	PvdA	GL	SP
Left/Right	7.41* (.20)	7.37 (.20)	7.11 (.24)	71.33* (.24)	72.09* (.21)	72.19* (.21)	72.27* (.24)
EU	.03 (.11)	7.09 (.11)	.20 (.15)	7.35* (.11)	7.24* (.09)	7.12 (.10)	.00 (.10)
Green	7.18* (.09)	7.26* (.09)	.03 (.12)	.03 (.10)	.06 (.08)	.29* (.11)	7.01 (.09)
Immigration	7.34* (.15)	.01 (.13)	.25 (.18)	7.06 (.13)	.03 (.10)	.14 (.11)	.14 (.12)
Gender	7.15 (.36)	.27 (.36)	.61 (.47)	.78* (.36)	.35 (.30)	.23 (.33)	7.15 (.35)
Education	7.02 (.28)	.02 (.20)	.41 (.36)	.57* (.29)	.36 (.23)	.90* (.26)	.75* (.27)
Income	7.15 (.27)	.62* (.27)	7.04 (.33)	.11 (.25)	7.14 (.22)	7.38 (.24)	7.45 (.25)
Religiosity	7.65* (.14)	7.86* (.16)	.97* (.27)	7.89* (.16)	7.90* (.12)	7.57* (.12)	7.77* (.14)

LR w² 686.46*
Log Likelihood -1044.14
Pseudo R² .25
N 605

Notes: Table entries are MNL regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The Christian Democrats (CDA) is the baseline category. *significant at p .05 (two-tailed).

Sources: Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2002 and 2006.

TABLE 6
EU ISSUE VOTING AND PARTY CHOICE IN THE 2006 ELECTION

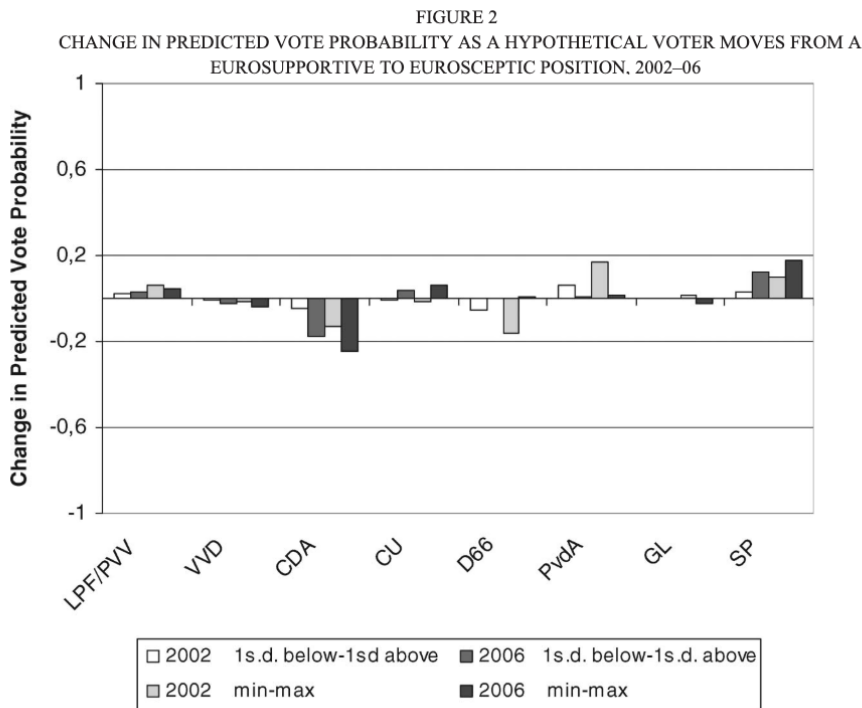
	PVV	VVD	CU	D66	PvdA	GL	SP
Left/Right	7.52 (.30)	.76* (.23)	7.52* (.24)	71.13* (.38)	71.99* (.19)	71.85* (.39)	71.86* (.20)
EU	.72* (.28)	.00 (.13)	.57* (.20)	.27 (.30)	.19 (.15)	7.49 (.32)	.74* (.17)
Green	.16 (.21)	7.21* (.08)	.44* (.17)	7.19 (.31)	.33* (.14)	1.05* (.38)	.39* (.14)
Immigration	7.21 (.31)	7.07 (.18)	.27 (.19)	.39 (.30)	7.28 (.15)	.69* (.31)	7.16 (.17)
Gender	.22 (.24)	.16 (.15)	7.19 (.18)	.00 (.30)	.18 (.15)	.06 (.31)	.04 (.15)
Education	7.53* (.23)	.41* (.16)	7.53* (.23)	1.24* (.58)	7.21 (.14)	.04 (.16)	7.04 (.16)
Income	7.38 (.27)	.16 (.14)	7.38 (.27)	.01 (.28)	7.24 (.15)	7.16 (.32)	7.07 (.16)
Religiosity	7.51* (.23)	7.56* (.15)	.51* (.23)	7.56 (.34)	7.42* (.15)	7.38* (.34)	7.77* (.18)

LR w² 613.18*
Log Likelihood -903.49
Pseudo R² .25
N 744

Notes: Table entries are MNL regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The Christian Democrats (CDA) is the baseline category. *significant at p .05 (two-tailed).

Sources: Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2002 and 2006.

MNL regression coefficients should be interpreted with care since they indicate by how much the log odds change with a one-unit increase in the independent variable. Hence, it is more intuitive to conduct post-estimation simulations to obtain a sense of the EU issue voting effects and to determine the predicted changes in vote probabilities. By manipulating the values of the EU scale, it is possible to observe changes in the predicted probabilities for each alternative while keeping all other variables in the model at their respective means. I simulate the predicted changes in vote probabilities as a hypothetical voter moves from being Eurosupportive – i.e. one standard deviation below the mean on the EU scale – to being Eurosceptic – i.e. one standard deviation above the mean on the EU scale, as well as minimum– maximum movements. In order to provide a comparative yardstick for these EU effects, Figure 3 includes similar changes in predicted probabilities as a result of a hypothetical voter changing their left–right positioning. These simulations are performed using CLARIFY, which employs Monte Carlo simulations to convert raw statistical results into more intuitive quantities without changing the statistical assumptions (King et al. 2000).¹⁶ Figures 2 and 3 provide an overview of these post-estimation simulations.



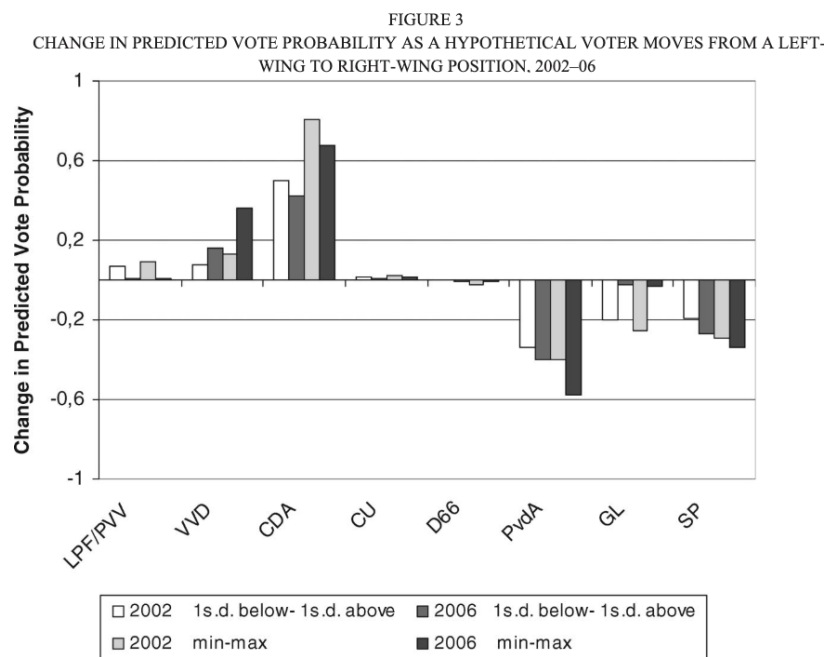
Notes: Values indicate the change in predicted probabilities of choosing each alternative when a voter's EU position is varied, while keeping all other predictors at their respective means. The light coloured bars indicate the 2002 results and the dark coloured bars signify the results for 2006.

These figures present two types of change. First, they show the change in predicted vote probabilities when a voter's EU or left-right position moves from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above for both election years (see D 1 s.d. below-1 s.d. above). Second, they show the change in predicted probabilities when a voter moves from fully supporting European unification to fully opposing it or from being extremely left-wing to extremely right-wing for both elections (see D min-max). Note that maximum effects may not always be entirely realistic as usually not many respondents occupy the end-points of a scale, yet they do give a good sense of the variation in EU issue voting across parties in the data.

Figure 2 shows that the marginal changes in vote probabilities as a result of changes in EU support levels are more extensive in 2006 compared with 2002. However, these effects on average are rather modest when compared with the changes in vote probabilities due to diverging left-right positions shown in Figure 3. The EU effects range between a maximum increase and a maximum decrease in vote probability of about 0.2 on a -1 to +1 scale, while the range in terms of left-right effects varies between 0.8 and -0.6.

Figure 2 also highlights that the effect of a change in EU attitudes on vote probability differs greatly among parties. For example, when a hypothetical voter moves from the most Euroenthusiast (i.e. 1 s.d. below) to a more Eurosceptic stance (i.e. 1 s.d. above), the Christian Democrats would lose a substantial part of their vote share in 2006 (17.4 per cent) while this effect is much smaller in the

2002 (4.7 per cent). Other parties, such as the LPF, PVV or the SP would gain as a result of a more Eurosceptic voter. The SP and LPF gain 3.4 and 2.0 per cent in 2002 respectively, while the SP and PVV stand to gain respectively 12.4 and 3.3 per cent in 2006. These results provide an indication of the extent to which EU attitudes influence the likelihood of voting for the different parties within the Dutch party system. On average, the EU issue voting effects are rather small compared with the impact of changes in left–right ideology on vote probabilities.



Notes: Values indicate the change in predicted probabilities of choosing each alternative when a voter's left–right position is varied, while keeping all other predictors at their respective means. The light coloured bars indicate the 2002 results and the dark coloured bars signify the results for 2006.

On the whole, the CL and MNL analyses presented in 4–6 and Figures 2 and 3 show that while EU attitudes hardly influence vote choice in the 2002 Dutch elections, they do in the first subsequent elections after the Dutch EU referendum in 2006. With some exceptions, like the CDA or SP, the overall size of these EU effects is rather modest. Nonetheless, the findings support the theoretical notion of the indirect impact of EU referenda on the development of EU issue voting. In line with hypotheses H1A and H1B, we find higher inter-party conflict and voter issue salience over Europe in the elections after the first Dutch EU referendum. In turn, these factors induce the development of EU issue voting in the following national election in 2006, which is in line with hypothesis H2. Consequently, the results from the Dutch case lend credence to the idea that by increasing the extent of inter-party conflict over Europe and EU issue salience, the occurrence of an EU referendum increases the likelihood of EU issue voting in a subsequent national election.

That said, the research design employed in this study cannot establish this causality conclusively. Recall that quasi-experimental designs do not include a control group and nor do they allow for the randomisation of subjects. By definition, then, such a design cannot rule out alternative explanations

(see Campbell and Stanley 1963: 35–6). Consequently, it is important to explore potential alternative explanations in light of the findings presented above. What else could have contributed to the development of EU issue voting between the 2002 and 2006 elections? Particular EU events may have been important (see Van der Eijk and Franklin 2004). Of course the Constitutional Treaty and the subsequent referendum constituted important EU events in the time span of 2002 and 2006, but in this same period we witnessed two other important EU events: enlargement and the start of formal negotiations with Turkey regarding possible EU membership. These events could have played a role in the development of EU issue voting in the Dutch context. In particular, the accession of several East-Central European countries in 2004 may have instigated debates on Europe in Dutch politics. The Dutch EU Commissioner Bolkestein's remark regarding the 'Polish plumbers' is exemplary in this respect.¹⁷ In addition to the 2004 enlargement, the EU decided to start formal negotiations with Turkey regarding possible membership in autumn 2005. Recent studies indicate that Turkish accession is among the chief EU concerns of European citizens, especially those in Western Europe (see for example Ahtisaari 2004; Jones and Van der Bijl 2004; McLaren 2007). Moreover, a recent analysis by Schoen (2008) demonstrates that the Turkish accession question has influenced recent German federal elections. Interestingly, both issues (but especially Turkish accession) featured extensively in the Dutch referendum campaign and were among the major issues for voters when casting their referendum ballot (see Van der Kolk and Aarts 2005: 191–6). As a result, it is difficult to disentangle the specific impact of these issues from an overall referendum effect.

Conclusion

The steady increase in popular referenda regarding European matters within EU member states is one of the most important developments in the process of European integration in recent years. Although we have a clear understanding of why voters decide the way they do and which factors affect the way in which voters make up their minds, we know very little about the ramifications of EU referenda for national politics. This study addresses this lacuna by examining the role of EU referenda on national electoral politics. It argues that EU referenda have an indirect effect on national electoral politics: they boost public attention and partisan conflict regarding European affairs which, in turn, induces the development of EU issue voting in a subsequent national election. These propositions are tested by comparing two Dutch elections: one before and one after the EU referendum on the Constitutional Treaty in 2005. The results from the Dutch case show that in the 2006 elections after the first EU referendum we find slightly elevated levels of EU partisan conflict as well as voter salience, and, in turn, evidence of EU issue voting. However, these EU effects are relatively modest. European integration is still merely of secondary concern to Dutch voters, though the EU referendum did bring the issue closer to home. These findings underscore the indirect impact of EU referenda on the development of EU issue voting in national elections. Therefore, this study is not only relevant to observers of Dutch politics, but also speaks directly to a larger debate regarding the way in which increased politicisation over Europe influences national political arenas.

The Dutch case was presented as a 'critical case study' because Dutch voters are characterised by low levels of interest in EU affairs. In addition, research thus far has demonstrated that European integration did not play any role in Dutch electoral campaigns. The fact that this study indicates that the 2005 EU referendum did indeed raise inter-party conflict and voters' issue salience on Europe and, sequentially, indirectly affected the subsequent national elections in 2006 is a remarkable result. If we did not find an EU referendum effect in Dutch elections, it is unlikely that we would find an effect elsewhere.

Notwithstanding the importance of these results, this study has limitations. This article uses a quasi-experimental design which lacks a control group and true randomisation. As a result, we have to be somewhat careful when interpreting its results. Although the current design allows for a measure of change between the pre- and post-tests, it cannot conclusively establish causality (see Campbell and Stanley 1963). As such, by design it cannot irrefutably rule out alternative explanations. That said, the quasi-experimental design does allow for the control of many important factors (such as party system or electoral system characteristics) that may affect EU issue voting. In a next step, it is important to expand the number of cases by including other countries that have experienced EU referenda in order to test the generalisability of these findings in diverse contexts. This would also allow for an investigation of other contextual effects on the development of EU issue voting, such as other EU events or party systemic factors.

Despite these limitations, this article has taken an important step towards understanding the conditions under which recent changes in the European integration process, such as the influx in EU referenda, influence national politics. Although the outcomes of EU referenda often stun and disappoint national politicians – especially those in the mainstream – this study shows that they have important implications: they spark debate and make voters more aware of party stances on Europe. Although politics may swiftly return to normal after a referendum campaign, EU referenda are not easily forgotten.

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Notes

1. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/3752579.stm (accessed 7 July 2008), see also Van der Eijk and Franklin (2004: 49).
2. Author's own translation of a part of a speech by Jan Peter Balkenende on the evening of 1 June. The exact Dutch quote reads: 'De hoge opkomst. De betrokken discussies over Europa die overal hebben plaatsgevonden. En dat is bij het 'nee' duidelijk als winst te classificeren'. Available at http://www.nos.nl/nosjournaal/dossiers/europesegrondwet/01062005_verklaring_balkenende.html (accessed 5 March 2008).
3. Christin and Hug (2002) demonstrate that EU referenda have important implications, namely they boost support for European integration. At the same time, however, their analysis shows that this impact is short-lived and dies away fairly quickly after the referendum.
4. Note that by using two socially stratified samples as my pre- and post-test groups, I ensure that differences in group composition do not bias the results. The two samples, however, differ in terms of their respective response rates, but weighting measures in both surveys allows me to deal with this issue. For further information on the surveys see section 1 of the Appendix.
5. This discounts the referenda in the Batavian Republic of over 200 years ago and some recent regional referenda (see Elzinga 2005)
6. The following parties occupy at least one seat in the current Dutch parliamentary term (2006–present): Christian Democrats (Christen Democratisch Appèl – CDA) 41 seats, Social Democrats (Partij van de Arbeid – PvdA) 33 seats, Socialist Party (Socialistische Partij – SP) 25 seats, Liberal Party (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie) 21 seats, Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid – PVV) 9 seats, Green Left (Groen Links – GL) 7 seats, Christian Union (Christen Unie – CU) 6 seats, Democrats 66 (Demokraten 66 – D66) 3 seats, Political Reformed Party (Staatskundig Gereformeerde Partij – SGP), Party for the Animals (Partij voor de Dieren – PvdD) 2 seats, Member Verdonk (Lid Verdonk, now called Proud of the Netherlands, Trots op Nederland – ToN), 1 seat.

7. This argumentation was frequently used by Dutch parliamentarians in the parliamentary debate following the referendum. See *Referendum Europese grondwet: Kamer bespreekt kloof tussen politiek en burger*, 2 June 2005, available at <http://www.elsevier.nl/dossierartikel/asp/dossier/320/hoofdstuk/1/artikel/47239/Index.html> (accessed 27 February 2008).
8. See *Nederland eist korting van 1.5 miljard Euro*, 19 June 2005, available at <http://www.elsevier.nl/dossierartikel/asp/dossier/361/hoofdstuk/1/artikel/50144/index.html> (accessed 27 February 2008).
9. Note that I use expert party placements rather than voters' placements; this is due to the fact that the 2002 and 2006 Dutch Parliamentary Election Surveys only include voters' placements for six Dutch parties on an EU scale. For the 2002 and 2006 election the party placement of the SGP and for the 2006 election the placement for the PvdD could not be added since these parties were not included in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey.
10. The left/right scale included in the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys was initially measured using an 11-point scale. This scale was recoded to fit the seven-point EU scale.
11. The t-test for change in left-right positioning between 2002 and 2006 indicates no significant change, $t(7) = 71.055$, $p = 0.326$.
12. A potential problem with a CL and MNL models is the independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA) assumption. IIA means that the ratio of the choice probabilities for two alternatives, A and B, is independent from all other alternatives in the choice set (see Agresti 2002). I computed the respective Hausman test statistics for both elections, which demonstrated that the IIA assumption seems reasonable.
13. This conceptualisation of the independent variable builds on a specific issue voting model: the *proximity model* (Enelow and Hinich 1984).
14. The Dutch Parliamentary surveys of 2002 and 2006 only included party placements on the EU, immigration and environment scales for a small number of parties. In order to guarantee comparability of the results in both election years only the five parties that featured in both surveys were included in the CL regression analyses. As a robustness check, I ran CL regression analyses including all six parties at both time-points which indicated that the exclusion of parties did not change the substantive results. These results are available upon request.
15. A log odds is the logarithm of the odds in favour of or against a given event. In this case, it is the factor by which we multiply the odds of voting for party rather than for the reference category for each one-unit increase in the independent variable. It is important to note that log odds are not identical to probabilities; rather they signify the log-likelihoods of voting for one party rather than another (Menard 1995: 49ff.).
16. *CLARIFY* 2.1 is a STATA application that can be downloaded from Gary King's website: <http://gking.harvard.edu/clarify/>.
17. The term 'Polish plumber' was originally coined by a French right-wing politician, Philippe de Villiers, in response to Bolkestein's Service directive. It gained fame when Bolkestein himself used the term in a press conference, see <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/26/international/europe/26poland.html?pagewanted=print>.

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Appendix

1. Data Sources

Chapel Hill Expert Survey on Party Positioning regarding European Integration, 2002: Primary investigations: Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks, Marco R. Steenbergen, David J. Scott and Milada A. Vachudova (with help from Erica E. Edwards and Moira Nelson) (2003) *Data File and Codebook*. Centre for European Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, URL: <http://www.unc.edu/>

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Chapel Hill Expert Survey on Party Positioning regarding European Integration, 2006: Primary investigations: Ryan Bakker, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks, Marco R. Steenbergen, Milada A. Vachudova and Catherine de Vries (with help from Jan Rovny and Anna Brigevich) (2008) *Data File and Codebook*. Centre for European Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Nationaal Kiezersonderzoek, 2002: Primary investigators: Galen A. Irwin, Joop J.M. van Holsteyn and Josje M. den Ridder (2004) *Data File and Codebook*. P1628, Amsterdam: Dutch Data Archiving and Networking Services (DANS).

Nationaal Kiezersonderzoek, 2006: Primary investigators: Henk van der Kolk, Kees Aarts, Martin Rosema and Martha Brinkman (2007) *Data File and Codebook*. P1719, Amsterdam: Dutch Data Archiving and Networking Services (DANS).

2. Operationalisation Tables

TABLE A.1
DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLE(S) DESCRIPTION OF THE
CL RESULTS

Dependent variable	
Vote choice	Vote choice for a particular party in a given election.
Independent variables	
EU distance	Operationalised by subtracting a respondents' self-placement from their mean party placements on a 7-point European integration scale (where 1 stands for the fastest possible build-up of the EU and 7 stands for a standstill of EU) for each party. I then squared this distance to derive at a Euclidian distance measure (0 = high correspondence between self-placement and party placement; 36 = low correspondence between self-placement and party placement). Centred on the mean.
Left-right distance	Operationalised by subtracting a respondents' self-placement from their mean party-placements on a 7-point left/right ideological scale (where 1 indicates left and indicates 7 right) for each party. I then squared this distance to derive at a Euclidian distance measure (0 = high correspondence between self-placement and party placement; 36 = low correspondence between self-placement and party placement). Centred on the mean.
Immigration distance	Operationalised by subtracting a respondents' self-placement from their mean party placements on a 7-point immigration scale (where 1 indicates restrict immigration and 7 indicates welcome more immigrants) for each party. I then squared this distance to derive at a Euclidian distance measure. (0 = high correspondence between self-placement and party placement; 36 = low correspondence between self-placement and party placement). Centred on the mean.
Environment distance	Operationalised by subtracting a respondents' self-placement from their mean party placements on a 7-point environment scale (where 1 indicates not very green policy and indicates 5 green policy) for each party. I then squared this distance to derive at a Euclidian distance measure (0 = high correspondence between self-placement and party placement; 36 = low correspondence between self-placement and party placement). Centred on the mean.
Gender	Respondent's gender (1 = female; 0 = male). Centred on the mean.
Religiosity	Respondent's church attendance (1 = high; 0 = low). Centred on the mean.
Income	Respondent's household income (1 = high; 0 = low). Centred on the mean.
Education	Respondent's level of education (1 = high; 0 = low). Centred on the mean.

TABLE A.2
DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLE(S) DESCRIPTION OF THE MNL
RESULTS

Dependent variable	
Vote choice	Vote choice for a particular party in a given election.
Independent variables	
EU position	A respondent's self- placement on a 7-point European integration scale where 1 stands for the fastest possible build-up of the EU and 7 stands for a standstill of EU. Centred on the mean.
Left-right position	A respondent's self-placement on a left/right ideological scale where low values indicates left and high values indicates right. Recoded to 1-7 and centred on the mean.
Immigration position	A respondent's self- placement on a 7-point immigration scale where 1 indicates restrictive immigration and 7 indicates welcome more immigrants. Centred on the mean.
Environment position	A respondent's self- placement on a 7-point environment scale where 1 indicates not very green policy and indicates 7 green policy. Centred on the mean.
Gender	Respondent's gender (1 = female, 0 = male). Centred on the mean.
Religiosity	Respondent's church attendance (1 = high, 0 = low). Centred on the mean.
Income	Respondent's household income (1 = high, 0 = low). Centred on the mean.
Education	Respondent's level of education (1 = high, 0 = low). Centred on the mean.

3. Full Results

TABLE A. 3
CONDITIONAL LOGIT ESTIMATES, 2002

	ALL	VVD	PvdA	D66	GL
Left/Right	7.39* (.04)	–	–	–	–
	.68				
EU	7.10	–	–	–	–
	(.06)				
	.91				
Immigration	7.04	–	–	–	–
	(.03)				
	.96				
Green	7.07*	–	–	–	–
	(.02)				
	.94				
Gender	–	.09	.16	.44	7.00

		(.35)	(.29)	(.33)	(.33)
		1.10	1.17	1.55	1.00
Education	–	.07	7.05	.04	.01
		(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.11)
		.94	.95	.96	.99

TABLE A. 3

(Continued)

	ALL	VVD	PvdA	D66	GL
Religiosity	–	71.34*	71.24*	71.22*	7.57*
		(.26)	(.18)	(.24)	(.18)
		.26	.29	.20	.62
Income	–	.60*	.00	.43	7.00
		(.24)	(.20)	(.23)	(.23)
		1.82	1.00	1.82	1.00
<i>LR w²</i>		514.72*			
<i>Log Likelihood</i>		7634.27			
<i>Pseudo R²</i>		.29			
<i>N</i>		554			
<i>Stacked Obs.</i>		2770			

Notes: Table entries are CL regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses and odds ratios. The Christian Democrats (CDA) is the omitted baseline category for individual-specific variables. The analysis includes party dummies, these are suppressed in the table, but available from the author on request. *significant at p 5 .05 (two-tailed).

TABLE A.4
CONDITIONAL LOGIT ESTIMATES, 2006

	ALL	VVD	PvdA	D66	GL
Left/Right	7.29* (.03)	–	–	–	–
	.68				
EU	7.09*	–	–	–	–
	(.02)				
	.89				
Immigration	7.05	–	–	–	–
	(.03)				
	.97				
Green	7.06*	–	–	–	–
	(.01)				
	.93				
Gender	–	7.38	7.22	7.03	.48
		(.29)	(.27)	(.31)	(.37)
		.68	.81	.97	1.62
Education	–	.31*	7.06	.18	.09
		(.13)	(.10)	(.14)	(.12)
		1.36	.94	1.20	1.10
Religiosity	–	7.34*	7.24*	7.24*	7.45*
		(.09)	(.09)	(.11)	(.12)
		.72	.79	.79	.63
Income	–	.11	7.13	7.02	.00
		(.10)	(.09)	(.11)	(.14)
		1.11	.87	.98	1.00
<i>LR w²</i>		734.65*			
<i>Log Likelihood</i>		7730.31			
<i>Pseudo R²</i>		.33			
<i>N</i>		682			

Notes: Table entries are CL regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses and odds ratios. The Christian Democrats (CDA) is the omitted baseline category for individual-specific variables. The analysis includes party dummies, these are suppressed in the table, but available from the author on request. *significant at p < .05 (two-tailed).

