THE EURO CRISIS AND EUROPEAN IDENTITIES

Political and Media Discourse in Germany, Ireland and Poland

Charlotte Galpin

New Perspectives in German Political Studies

Far reaching changes are now taking place in Germany. Stability lay at the core of the German model and much of the writing from Peter Katzenstein and Manfred Schmidt onwards sought to explain this enviable stability. Changes in the external environment have created a number of fundamental challenges which pose a threat to that stability. Germany is now Europe's central power but this has generated controversy about how it is to exercise this new power. Although attention is often centred on German power the migration crisis demonstrates its limits. *New Perspectives in German Political Studies* aims to engage with these new challenges and to cater for the heightened interest in Germany. The Editors would welcome proposals for single-authored monographs, edited collections and Pivots, from junior as well as well-established scholars working on contemporary German Politics.

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The Euro Crisis and European Identities

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For my dad.

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Contents

List of Acronyms

AfD	Alternativ für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union in Bavaria)
DI	Discursive Institutionalism
DF	Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's Party)
EC	European Communities
ECB	European Central Bank
EEC	European Economic Community
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ESM	European Stability Mechanism
EU	European Union
FAZ	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
FCC	Federal Constitutional Court (Germany)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party of Germany)
FPÖ	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs
GW	Gazeta Wyborcza
HI	Historical Institutionalism
IMF	International Monetary Fund
RZ	Rzeczpospolita
SGP	Stability and Growth Pact
SI	Sociological Institutionalism
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)

SZ	Süddeutsche Zeitung
TSCG	The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Euro Crisis and Identity

In early 2010, Greece fell into a sovereign debt crisis which plunged the European Union (EU) into what has been described as the biggest crisis of its history. A long period of multiple and intersecting crises reached a peak in June 2016 when the UK voted for Brexit—a British exit from the EU—in a referendum. Brexit is just one manifestation of a new wave of Euroscepticism and right-wing populism in Western liberal democracies that has emerged since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008. Following the November 2016 victory of Donald Trump in the US presidential elections, the EU is now turning its sights to France, where Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right National Front, is seen as a real contender in the 2017 presidential election. The EU now faces years of uncertainty not just about the future of the Euro but also about the European project, as more and more people appear to be losing trust in the EU and are turning to nationalist movements. More than just an economic or currency crisis, therefore, the Euro crisis seems to have precipitated a much wider crisis of politics. In fact, it has been considered by international scholars and commentators as a 'profound legitimacy crisis' (Hall 2014, p. 1238), a 'crisis of trust' (Haughton 2012b), a 'crisis of identity' (Siedentop 2011) and a 'crisis of institutions' (Hansen and Gordon 2014, p. 1199). It was, however, even from the early days, described as a crisis that risked the very future of the EU, having been labelled a '1989 moment' (Sarotte 2010) or 'an existential crisis not just for the EU, but for the notion of "Europe" as

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a whole' (Jones 2012, p. 54). A crisis of the Euro presents such a risk, Bastasin maintains, as it is 'the fragile crown of the European project of shared sovereignty' (2012, p. 1).

One reason why the Euro crisis has been seen as an existential challenge is that it has presented a test of Europeans' willingness to act in solidarity with other Europeans and accept further sharing of sovereignty for the greater good of the community. The crisis required a massive contribution of funds in the form of bailout programmes, sums which 'dwarfed, in real terms, the sums of money mobilized to repair Europe after the end of the World Wars I and II' (Marsh 2011, p. 47). Moves towards fiscal union initially through the Fiscal Compact[1] have touched on these fundamental questions of national sovereignty. As a result, it has been claimed that the Euro crisis 'threatens to destroy European unity by reinforcing latent animosities between its constituent nations' (Auer 2012, p. 60), where the crisis has weakened 'feelings of transnational solidarity' (Auer 2014, p. 1). The crisis has, therefore, presented a 'challenge to the stability of an integrated European social, economic and political space' (Guiraudon et al. 2015, p. 1). Marsh even talks of a 'spiral of discontent in some ways reminiscent of the atmosphere engendered by demands for reparations from defeated Germany after World War I' (2011, p. 49). As he notes, the crisis has created divisions between creditor and debtor nations amid painful economic reforms (Marsh 2011, p. 50). As such, the crisis risks a 'sharp deepening of social polarization and divergence in the quality of life' across the EU (Guiraudon et al. 2015, p. 1). Extending far beyond economics, then, the crisis has opened up questions about the purpose and meaning of the European project and the existence of European solidarity between member states.

Nevertheless, the crisis has affected the EU member states differently. While the crisis played a role in the UK's vote to leave the EU, the status of Germany, in particular, has changed as a result of the crisis by thrusting it into a greater leadership role. Since the early days of European integration, Germany has been committed to 'reflexive multilateralism' (2011, p. 72) on account of its Nazi past, marked by what Paterson calls a 'leadership avoidance reflex' (Paterson 2011, p. 58) in its relations with its neighbours. Germany was what Katzenstein describes as a 'tamed power' (1997), leading only as one-half of the Franco-German alliance. Since the onset of the Euro crisis, however, Germany has had to take a central role in crisis management on account of its economic strength. Paterson argues that it has become Europe's 'reluctant hegemon' (2011). Indeed, Germany 'now wields greater clout over European politics and economics than anybody else'

(Marsh 2013, p. 2). As part of this, Angela Merkel has become arguably Europe's most important leader – the 'pivotal politician in Europe' (Marsh 2013, p. 7), named by Forbes as the 'most powerful woman in the world' in 2013 (Pop 2013). The more recent success of far-right and right-wing populist movements, furthermore, has seen Merkel branded internationally as the 'new leader of the free world' (Noack 2016) following her response to Trump's victory in which she reasserted Germany's commitment to democratic values. Germany has, therefore, been thrust into a leadership role that marks a distinct shift from the post-war days of integration.

The new role for Germany in the EU has, however, served to strengthen the Eurosceptic discourse, particularly as a reaction to Merkel's perceived slow response during the crisis and steadfast commitment to austerity. Internationally, it has resulted in the stereotyping of Germans in the media across Europe, with images of the *'hässliche Deutschen'* (the 'ugly Germans') featuring in many reports of crisis policies. For example, the Greek press has been known to feature images of Merkel as Hitler and German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble in SS uniform (see e.g. Heyer and Batzoglou 2012). Anti-German sentiment was also clearly present in the UK's referendum on the EU membership and used as justification for a Leave vote (Ross 2016). This has been related to the perception that Germany has 'fallen out of love with Europe' (Proissl 2010), and to arguments that it has strengthened a process of 'normalisation' of Germany's European identity, where it has become less conscious of its past and more willing to assert its national interest. Domestically, Germany's heavy financial involvement in Greek bailouts sparked the emergence of a new Eurosceptic party in Germany, the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), which opposes deeper integration and refutes the notion of a single European identity. As a consequence, fears about the rise and spread of nationalism began in the early days of the crisis (Auer 2012, p. 56), both in light of increasing anti-EU sentiment across Europe and the perception that Germany had lost its commitment to the European project.

The Euro crisis, therefore, has extended far beyond the economic, political and institutional spheres, having also touched on fundamental issues of identity important for supporting policies that require a sense of European solidarity and willingness to share sovereignty (see e.g. Habermas 2001; Cerutti 2010; Schmidt 2011a), or indeed, a desire to remain part of the EU at all. However, these claims need to be considered in greater detail, using a more systematic theoretical and empirical base. Has there really been such a crisis in identities, and if so, how and why has this happened? Is the

effect of the crisis the same across the EU, and between different actors? The central research questions of this book are, therefore:

- To what extent has the Euro crisis affected the construction of European identities?
- How and why does the effect of the crisis differ between countries with different identities and experiences of the crisis?

Following on from this, the book is also interested in whether the effect of the crisis on constructions of European identity differs between the political and media discourse. To answer these questions, this book is focused on European identities as constructed through communication in the public sphere (see e.g. Risse 2010; Lucarelli et al. 2011; Medrano 2009). Rather than seeking to measure European identities per se, the aim is to analyse *constructions* of European identity through discourse, that is, the meanings and ideas associated with Europe and being part of a European community. The theoretical framework combines a social constructivist approach to European identities which considers European identities to be 'multiple', taking the form of 'Europeanised nation-state identities' (see e.g. Marcussen et al. 1999; Risse 2010; Risse and van de Steeg 2014; Malmborg and Stråth 2002; Díez Medrano 2003) with constructivist and discursive institutionalist literature on crisis and ideational change (Hay 1996; Schmidt 2008, 2011; 2014; Widmaier et al. 2007; Blyth 2002) in order to investigate the extent to which a crisis can constitute a 'critical juncture' in European identity discourses. Using three case study countries – Germany, Ireland and Poland – this research draws on extensive qualitative frame analysis of the political and media discourse at key moments in the first two years of the crisis. While the dataset is relatively small, detailed analysis of the political and media texts from the three countries serves to empirically map the ways in which the political and media actors constructed European identities in debates about the crisis and crisis policies in the early stages. In so doing, it allows for a better understanding of the possibilities for changes to identity discourses at a time of crisis, identifying the various constraining factors that ensure the continuity of discourses on European and national identities. As such, it provides an empirical and theoretical base for further research on the later stages of the Euro crisis, additional case studies and the study of other crises both within the EU and beyond.

The central argument is that, contrary to expectations we might have had, the Euro crisis has had a limited effect on European identity discourses

because actors make sense of the crisis in their respective national contexts. In doing this, they draw on existing identities and ideas which then incorporates the crisis into the existing national discourses so that it becomes part of the identity construction that it is expected to change. Where change is possible, it is incremental over a longer period of time, as new ideas are incorporated into the existing discourses and result in subtle change rather than the dramatic shift that might be expected. These findings counter assumptions about a fundamental shift in constructions of European identity. However, this does not equate to an argument that the EU has remained unified during the course of the crisis. In fact, the findings help to explain the rise of Eurosceptic parties, as well as the British decision to leave the EU. Because the crisis generally serves to reinforce, rather than challenge, existing identity constructions, the crisis has strengthened competing discourses on European and exclusive national identities and reinvigorated old national stereotypes that have created or reinforced divisions particularly between northern and southern Europe and core and periphery. In countries such as the UK, where EU membership has primarily been justified through economic benefit, support for the EU falls away at times of economic crisis.

Furthermore, the findings can help to explain the relative continuity in neoliberal policy-making during the crisis (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013; Schmidt 2016; Hay and Smith 2013), as well as the continued survival of the Euro. In particular, the developments in the Eurozone have sparked new political economy research into the role of German ideas in Eurozone policy-making (Matthijs 2015, pp. 1–2; see also; Nedergaard and Snaith 2015; Jacoby 2014b; Newman 2015), namely the continued dominance of ordoliberal ideas and commitment to austerity in the crisis countries. This book demonstrates the role of identity constructions in legitimising, and therefore, sustaining both an ordoliberal approach to crisis management, as well as the political commitment to the single currency.

Why Does Identity Matter? The Euro, EU Democracy and European Solidarity

In the minds of many of the architects and proponents of the single currency, the Euro was intended as an identity-building project from the beginning (Kaelberer 2004, p. 12). Money has long been connected with the formation of collective identity (Helleiner 1998), through the

notion of 'one nation/one money' associated with the Westphalian model of sovereign states (Cohen 1998, p. 14). National currencies encourage people to 'feel themselves bound together as a single social unity', something which helped governments achieve the necessary social cohesion for the development of nation states (Cohen 1998, p. 35). Helleiner identifies a variety of ways in which national currencies promote national identities, such as creating 'collective tradition and memory', and of being in a 'community of shared fate', by providing a 'common medium of communication', fostering a 'sense of popular sovereignty', and by creating a 'kind of quasi-religious faith' (1998, pp. 1430–1431). There has therefore been an important relationship between money and identity, in particular, since the development of the nation-state.

In this respect, the Euro has been one of many symbolic attempts by the EU to construct a European identity (Kaelberer 2004, p. 14). An advisor to Charles de Gaulle, Jacques Rueff, was once quoted as stating that 'Europe will be made through a currency, or it will not be made'[2] (cited in Marsh 2009, p. 15). In fact, the European Commission website explicitly states that 'the euro gives the EU's citizens a tangible symbol of their European identity' (European Commission 2014). Former President of the European Central Bank (ECB), Wim Duisenberg, stated in 2002 that it is 'the first currency that has not only severed its link to gold, but also its link to the nation-state' (cited in Marsh 2009, p. 1). Agreed after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a European single currency was intended to 'bridge the past, the present and the future, healing social wounds, strengthening political bonds and reviving economic fortunes' (Marsh 2011, p. 5). The Euro was therefore seen as a means to transcend nationally bounded identities and create a European collective political identity. Considered, therefore, as the 'most important public symbol of European identity to date' (Shore 2000b, p. 115), the imagery and symbols of Europe are intended to promote 'affective ties to Europe' (Kaelberer 2004, p. 12), with the Euro banknotes and coins designed for this purpose. The architectural images on the banknotes were to symbolise the theme of 'building Europe' and the development of the 'European construction', where EU elites saw themselves as the 'architects of the new Europe' (Shore 2000b, p. 112). Furthermore, the images represent the construction of a European collective history by telling the 'story of progress' through an 'imagined classical ancestry' (Shore 2000b, p. 114). The incorporation

of national designs on one side of the Euro coins also epitomised the connection between European and national identities (Katzenstein 1997, p. 22).

The Euro was therefore always intended to construct European identity. However, Kaelberer argues that the 'relationship between money and collective identity is reciprocal', aiding in the construction of European identities on the one hand, and at the same time needing to rest on a sense of collective identity in order to be sustained (2004, p. 2). The Euro crisis, therefore, raises the question: To what extent has sufficient European identity developed for the Euro to survive the crisis? If the Euro was an identity-building project, what happens at a time of crisis, almost 10 years after the introduction of Euro notes and coins? As Nikolarea notes, 'while supranational economic policies such as the EMU and the Euro can... function as a centripetal force creating a unified source of authority and an imaginary self (i.e. a European Other) – supranational politics function rather as a centrifugal force which, at times of crisis, destabilises the illusory, constructed European identity into multiple national and cultural identities' (2007, p. 147). Shore notes, furthermore, that EU policy-makers involved in Maastricht were concerned that 'if Maastricht were to founder, the whole question of the future of European integration would be in doubt and the EU would face a shattering crisis of identity and direction' (2000, p. 99). In the context of the Euro crisis, then, to what extent does the Euro rest on a sense of shared European identity? These questions will be considered throughout this book.

Beyond the issue of currency, however, identity is also important more broadly for legitimising policy at an EU level and tackling the EU's so-called 'democratic deficit'. As Castiglione argues, political identity 'plays an important role in sustaining citizens' allegiance and loyalty to their political community' (2009, p. 29). Hooghe and Marks note that 'to understand European integration we need [...] to understand how, and when, identity is mobilized' (2009, p. 2). The notion of a democratic deficit at its most fundamental level relates to an increase in the power of the executive and a decrease in the scrutiny of national parliaments (Follesdal and Hix 2006). While the powers of the European Parliament have been increased to tackle this problem, the European Parliament elections are still generally 'second-order national elections' (Reif and Schmitt 1980) and often lack a truly European dimension (Follesdal and Hix 2006). The debate about a democratic deficit emerged for the first time, in the 1990s, in the wake of the Maastricht Treaty (see e.g. Hix 2008;

Warleigh 2003b) and has been linked to the question of European identity since the German Constitutional Court ruled, in 1993, that the Maastricht Treaty was undemocratic due to the lack of a European *Volk* (Weiler et al. 1995b, p. 10). Referred to as the 'no demos thesis', this argument rests on the view that there is not sufficient European identity to support democracy beyond the nation-state. This highlights an ongoing division amongst EU scholars, and indeed politicians and commentators in the different member states, over the preferred model of European integration. Those who support an intergovernmental model of European integration see the EU as an association of nation-states whose governments have opted to delegate certain decisions to EU bodies (Moravcsik 2002). Majone, for example, argues that the EU should be considered a 'regulatory state' to which governments delegate tasks that are more efficiently handled at the European level (1998). On this basis, EU legitimacy would be based exclusively on what Fritz Scharpf refers to as 'output-oriented legitimacy' – 'government *for* the people', where legitimacy is derived from policies that provide solutions to common problems (1999). From this perspective, a European identity to support the EU is unnecessary because, as Moravcsik argues, democratic accountability 'lies in the democratically elected governments of the Member States, which dominate the still largely territorial and intergovernmental structure of the EU' (2002, p. 612).

As EU issues have become more salient and reached areas of 'high' politics, however, some level of European identity becomes necessary, that is, the EU requires some level of 'input-oriented legitimacy' – 'government *by* the people' (Scharpf 1999b). EU policy-making according to this model should, thus, reflect the preferences of a European political community. As Follesdal and Hix already noted in 2006, EU competences now extend far beyond purely regulatory policies and have clear redistributive effects, which should be subject to democratic contestation at the EU level (2006, p. 543). They maintain that there are clear 'net contributors' and 'net beneficiaries' to many EU policies, and thus call for reforms of EU electoral procedures that allow partisan contestation over EU leadership and policy direction. Europe-wide debate and contestation of EU politics would, from this perspective, help to further develop a European political identity. Following Habermas' notion of a postnational identity, deliberation in a European public sphere would help to create the 'European demos' needed for EU democracy (2001). In the context of the Euro

crisis, EU bailouts and moves towards fiscal union demonstrate that there are clear redistributive consequences of the EU that require some level of democratic accountability at the EU level.

As such, European identity is necessary to support the functioning of EU democracy and grant additional legitimacy to EU institutions and decisions. In fact, Hooghe and Marks find that exclusive national identity is an important driver of opposition to European integration, particularly when national elites are divided on the EU (2005). Müller-Peters, furthermore, finds that nationalistic attitudes can explain negative attitudes towards the single currency, whereas feelings of European patriotism are positively related (1998, p. 711). As Cederman argues, 'there has to be a sense of community, a we-feeling, however "thinly" expressed, for democracy to have any meaning' (2001, p. 145). For elites, a collective identity will 'make possible and influence shared political decisions' (Cerutti 2010, p. 6), enabling political leaders to work together and agree on joint responses to political issues. Collective identities also feed into what Sternberg calls the 'discursive politics of legitimation' that have underpinned the continued success of European integration (2013, pp. 5–6). For the wider population, a collective political identity provides the legitimacy to accept decisions that will affect them, even when they may not agree. Identity and institutional legitimacy are, therefore, linked; Schmidt argues that 'whereas the former involves the development of people's shared sense of constituting a political community, the latter relates to people's sense that the political institutions of that community... conform to accepted and acceptable standards' (2011a, p. 16). Some sense of collective identity in a political community, such as the EU, therefore, provides legitimacy to many decisions of the EU political institutions.

This link is likely to be even more important at times of crisis. Eder notes that this legitimising role of political identities functions 'even at times when political institutions do not work well' (2011, p. 38). In the context of the Eurozone crisis, therefore, the extent to which European citizens are able to identify with EU institutions becomes of even greater importance at a time when they are implementing policies designed to ease or solve the crisis in the single currency. In particular, this relates to the form of solidarity possible beyond the nation-state. In his discussion of the need for a postnational civic identity at European level, Habermas argues that 'positively coordinated redistribution policies must be borne by a Europe-wide democratic will-formation and

thus cannot happen without a basis of solidarity' (2001, p. 99). He maintains that the social or civic solidarity experienced within nations 'has to expand to include all citizens of the union, so that, for example, Swedes and Portuguese are willing to take responsibility for one another' (2001, p. 99). What the Eurozone crisis has brought into question is the extent to which European citizens are willing to 'accept the redistributive effects of more "positive" forms of integration' (Castiglione 2009, p. 40) and on what basis. With difficult decisions currently affecting areas of 'high politics' such as the single currency, including reductions in the welfare state, large bailout funds, and greater sharing of sovereignty in economic and fiscal policy, the basis of the EU's relationships of solidarity has been brought into question.

So far, the EU treaties have not laid down a clear conception of European solidarity beyond a single clause—the 'solidarity clause'—which states that the EU and Member States 'shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of a natural or man-made disaster' (Art 222, TFEU). During the crisis, however, it was clear that there were few solidarity mechanisms that could be employed at a time of economic crisis, particularly redistributive measures, leaving the political field open for new constructions of European solidarity. The solidarity that sustains national redistributive welfare states is typically a nationally bounded solidarity based on a sense of national identity and an ongoing commitment to social justice as part of a community of equals (Kymlicka 2015). This, Kymlicka argues, contrasts with the global forms of solidarity among strangers which are based on a humanitarian notion of universal justice in response to human suffering. Whether Europeans see each other as part of the same political community is, therefore, a key question at moments of institutional or economic crisis because it determines the kind of solidarity that is perceived as legitimate. So far, the crisis seems to have resulted not in a collective articulation of common purpose and identity but rather have born witness to the 'the weakening of the bonds of social integration' (Guiraudon et al. 2015, p. 5), within and between member states. The construction of solidarity during the crisis can, therefore, reveal the extent to which it is grounded in a sense of shared identity within a community of equals, an in-group, an 'us', and if so, the ethics, set of values or obligations associated with the membership of that community.

It can also tell us about the boundaries of the community, who belongs, and who is deserving of assistance (Kymlicka 2015). Chapter 2 will outline

the importance of the 'Other' in the construction of European identity. A consideration of solidarity provides (political) meaning to these 'us' versus 'them' relationships. According to Karagiannis, solidarity is a 'politically committed re-specification of the social' (2007a, p. 1). While solidarity can be considered as a descriptive tool to illuminate existing social bonds, she argues, it also performs a 'normative function' serving to 'programmatically announce a political project' (2007b, p. 18). In the European context, solidarity illustrates what Europeans are willing to do for each other at a time of crisis and what they understand the European community to be. The former German Constitutional Court judge Böckenförde (2005, p. 31) argues that 'the solidarity required in a free trade zone or economic community is thus different from that demanded by a political community'. European solidarity, he notes, 'presupposes an answer to the question of the *telos*, the purpose and goal of European integration' (2005, p. 31). Solidarity might be, as the treaties so far suggest, envisaged primarily in extreme emergency or crisis situations. Alternatively, it could rest on a particular understanding of European identity that supports a European redistributive justice that one might expect in a federal EU. As Hall argues, 'some national leaders suggest that "more Europe" means a fiscal compact with stricter rules on debt and deficits, whereas others seem to hope it will entail a more aggressive form of transnational Keynesianism, if not something tantamount to European economic governance' (2014, p. 1238).

However, while solidarity might be an expression of identity, it can also serve to re-articulate, renegotiate or weaken existing identities, social bonds or community boundaries. The development—or not—of European identity 'certainly owes a lot to a sense of European solidarity that is promoted, notably, by European institutions' (2007a, p. 3), and by extension, national governments. A particular articulation of solidarity can recreate a (new) sense of belonging, a new identity (Karagiannis 2007a, p. 6). During the Euro crisis, the solidarity promoted by European institutions, national governments and other actors in the public spheres can, therefore, serve to reconstruct existing identities by defining boundaries and specifying the framework, the political project, which maintains the social bonds between Europeans (Mau 2007, p. 130). Having outlined the reasons why the issue of European identity is important for the Euro crisis, the next section will outline the theoretical and empirical contribution of the book, before an outline of the main arguments and structure.

Theoretical Approach and Case Studies

This book makes both a theoretical and empirical contribution, adding to bodies of literature on the institutionalisms, social constructivist approaches to identity, as well as to existing empirical data on European identity in three European countries: Germany, Ireland and Poland. It also relates the question of identity to research on the Euro crisis, usually studied from a political or economic perspective. Firstly, it builds upon the theoretical literature on European identity by developing a better understanding of the processes of change and continuity in identity constructions at a time of crisis, a moment in time that institutionalists refer to as a 'critical juncture'. So far, it is acknowledged that European identity constructions can change at such times of 'critical junctures' (see e.g. Marcussen et al. 1999). However, the processes of change are little understood. The primary problem with the existing literature on identity and crisis is that they understand crises as exogenous shocks. Rather, crises have to be constructed by political and social actors so that they 'resonate' with the public (see e.g. Widmaier et al. 2007b). Because of this, they tend to reflect existing identity constructions rather than change them. This book, therefore, incorporates discursive and constructivist institutionalist understandings of ideational change with a social constructivist approach to European identity in order to explore the dynamics of discursive change and continuity at a time of crisis in much greater detail than has been done before.

This book also contributes to the empirical body of knowledge on the Euro crisis and European identities by providing an in-depth comparison of three case study countries – Germany, Ireland and Poland. In the conclusion, it also discusses the relevance of the findings for Brexit and the UK context. The Euro crisis is studied first and foremost from a political or political economy perspective either generally or with a single case study (see e.g. Hall 2014; Donovan and Murphy 2013; Featherstone 2011; Pappas 2014; Vasilopoulou et al. 2014b; Hay and Smith 2013). There is also a growing body of work on the Euro crisis, the public sphere and support for European integration, such as, for example, support for economic governance (Kuhn and Stoeckel 2014), the politicisation of European public spheres during the crisis (see e.g. Risse and Van De Steeg 2014; Hechinger 2014; Statham and Trenz 2014), and an increasing number of studies of discourse and the crisis (see e.g. Boukala 2014; Bickes et al. 2014; Kutter 2014; Schmidt 2014). However, the book is

unique in that it is a comparative study with three case studies rarely studied in this combination in such a systematic way. The research crosses three languages, stretches from West to East, includes a founding EU member state, a newer and new member state, large and small states, Euro and non-Euro members and provides an analysis of data ranging from political discourse to articles from three leading newspapers in each case study country. On the one hand, Germany represents an important case study for European solidarity as the largest contributor to the EU bailout funds (Risse 2013, p. 15). On the other hand, Poland and Ireland are particularly understudied. As Risse notes of research into the politicisation of EU politics, there is insufficient data available for Scandinavia and the Central and Eastern European member states to make any conclusions (2014, p. 12). There has been no systematic study of European identity in Poland or Ireland in the English language since the crisis. This book therefore contributes to the theoretical literature on discursive institutionalism and social constructivism, adding to our understanding of crisis and changes in constructions of identity, and to the literature on European identity and the Euro crisis in Germany, Ireland and Poland.

Structure of the Book

The structure of this book is as follows. Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework of this book. It reviews the existing literature on European identity and crisis and how scholars have so far understood the processes of change at a critical juncture. After justifying the broadly constructivist approach to identity, it highlights particular problems with the existing literature, particularly the conceptualisation of crises as exogenous, external events. This chapter argues that crises are instead constructed by political and social actors in their respective national contexts. Because of this, understanding the processes of change and continuity requires a focus on discourse in the public sphere. This allows for an understanding of how identities are constructed through the language used in 'communicative discourse' about the crisis between the elites and the media. It then outlines the way in which identity discourses are likely to be reproduced in the construction of the crisis, particularly through giving meaning to 'Europe' and the construction of the 'Other'. Chapter 3 reviews the existing literature on European identity discourses in Germany, Ireland and Poland and justifies the three case studies. It then outlines the

research methods used, including the time periods and materials chosen and the method of data analysis.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the empirical findings from each case study in turn. Chapter 4 examines the debate surrounding the 'normalisation' of Germany's European identity and argues that the crisis in Germany reflects both its post-war European identity and the incorporation of ordoliberal values into understandings of Europe, ongoing since the early 1990s, due to German elite efforts to legitimise EU measures to the public and the Federal Constitutional Court. While both German elites and media actors present the Euro crisis as a broad European crisis threatening the very project of European integration, the crisis has also seen the development of a particularly German flavour of European solidarity and the 'good European' based on an 'ordoliberal ethic' of economic discipline and individual responsibility. Hostility to Greece in the conservative and populist press can be understood in this light – rather than signalling a strengthening of German national identity constructions, this rather represents the development of a new Northern European identity from which Greece and other southern Europeans are excluded.

The Ireland case study in Chapter 5 offers the opportunity to study the dynamics of identity construction in a country with a rather different experience of the crisis – one as a 'debtor' nation on the receiving end of European solidarity. The crisis is primarily constructed as an Irish crisis, touching on fundamental questions about Irish identity and strengthening populist discourse. Where the crisis is understood as a wider European crisis, it reflects the original motivations for Irish membership of the EU. Whereas crisis policies are debated in terms of European solidarity in Germany, in Ireland, they are primarily debated in terms of the economy and the extent to which they serve Irish national sovereignty. In the conservative and populist press, this often results in anti-German sentiment and a strong perception that the smaller peripheral countries are being dominated by the larger core ones.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings of the Polish case. It argues that the crisis debates in Poland primarily reflect the existing polarisation in Poland between those who view European and Polish identity as two sides of the same coin and want to ensure Poland's place in the 'core' of Europe, namely Civic Platform and the pro-European press, and those who passionately defend Polish identity and sovereignty from Poland's historical enemies in Europe, Russia and Germany—notably Law and Justice. The crisis moves from being a crisis located at the margins of Europe, in Greece and

Southern Europe, to a crisis about Poland's marginalisation in Europe. Debates about the crisis, thus, involve a struggle over the meaning of sovereignty, in which Polish sovereignty is seen to be either strengthened or threatened by European integration.

Finally, Chapter 7 brings together the three case studies and considers the theoretical implications of the findings. It argues that, while the crisis is constructed in different ways in the three case study countries, the various constructions of the crisis reflect existing discourses on European and national identities in those countries because of the legitimation strategies of different national actors. It then outlines the variety of domestic constraints identified in the case study countries that limit the possibility of change, including the continued importance of national historical narratives, economic ideas and interests and the pressures of party politics. Finally, it comments on the broader resilience in ideas about the economy in the EU, as well as the continued survival of the single currency, arguing that the mobilisation of identity discourses has played a key role in sustaining existing paradigms.

Chapter 8 concludes the book by reflecting on the wider implications of the findings with regards to the increasing support for Eurosceptic parties. In particular, it considers the recent vote against EU membership in the UK in light of the book's findings, as well as the implications of the recent arrival of large numbers of refugees for Eurosceptic and far-right parties in Europe and Germany. Finally, it makes some broader conclusions about the effect of the crisis on the EU's democratic legitimacy.

Notes

1. The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (TSCG)
2. 'L'Europe se fera par la monnaie ou ne se fera pas'.

CHAPTER 2

European Identities at Times of Crisis

Introduction

> *Identities… become salient and are fought over in particular historical moments, especially in times of crisis… Ever since the end of the cold war… Europe has been facing identity crises.* (Risse 2010, p. 2)

As outlined in Chapter 1, the Euro has been envisaged and seen in part as an identity-building project. The Eurozone crisis presents an opportunity to examine the identity dynamics connected with the Euro, in particular, the question of what happens when the currency is in crisis. The primary research question posed by this book, therefore, considers the extent to which a crisis of the Euro can lead to a crisis of identity discourses. As a result, the book will also be able to comment on the degree to which the Euro is able to serve as an identity-building project at all. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the limitations in the European identity literature in EU studies by showing how it is inadequate for dealing with 'postformative institutional change' (Hay 2011, p. 66). In the social constructivist literature on European identity, it is argued that identity constructions can change at times of crisis, a so-called 'critical juncture'. However, neither the identity literature nor the historical institutionalist (HI) literature on critical junctures is sufficient to understand the dynamics of change to discourses on identity at such a time of crisis. The primary limitation can be attributed to the assumption that crises are necessarily exogenous events. Furthermore, the over-focus on the structure and the initial

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development of identity leads to a neglect of the role of the actors who define and communicate crisis.

This book, therefore, presents a theoretical framework which integrates these social constructivist approaches to European identity with discursive institutionalist (DI) conceptions of ideational change and crisis. By examining communication in the public sphere, it will show how discourses on European identity are more resilient at a time of crisis than might be expected. This chapter will show how we can expect that elites are constrained by their social and political context which limits opportunities for change, in so doing helping to understand the possibilities of changes in identity at a time of crisis. Shifting the focus to discourses allows us to examine the contestations over identity that emerge at a time of crisis and how they reproduce and construct old and new meanings of European identities. In so doing, this book does not seek to measure identity change at an individual level but examines continuity and change in the meanings associated with European identity that become pivotal to Europeans' self-understanding during a crisis. Firstly, it will show how European identities are 'multiple' and come in 'national colours' but that these are considered to be path-dependent and mostly open to change at times of so-called 'critical junctures'. It shows, however, how the existing EU studies literature on European identity and critical junctures are insufficient for understanding the dynamics of change at a time of crisis, primarily because of the conceptualisation of a 'critical juncture' as an exogenous event, and a lack of attention to the constraints placed on actors in their domestic contexts. Secondly, then, it outlines how DI understandings of ideational change and a public sphere perspective are useful for understanding the prospects for and the dynamics of discursive change, particularly with regard to how the crisis is constructed by social and political actors. Finally, it outlines the way in which identity discourses are likely to be reproduced in the construction of the crisis, through the meaning given to Europe and the construction of the 'Other'. Overall, it will posit that dramatic change at a time of crisis is highly unlikely, and any change that does occur will be incremental.

European Identity Construction

This book is interested in constructions of European collective social or political identity, that is, ideas about who 'we' are as Europeans and what it means to be part of a European community. The notion of collective

identity comes from social psychology, particularly Social Identity Theory (see e.g. Tajfel 1982b; Brewer 2001) and relates to an individual's sense of belonging to a group. According to Brewer, collective identity 'involves shared representations of the group based on common interests and experiences, but also refers to an active process of shaping and forging an image of what the group stands for and how it wishes to be viewed by others' (2001, p. 119). In terms of European or national identity, such collective identities are understood as 'imagined communities' in the sense that one does not know everyone considered as part of the group but nevertheless imagines it to be real (Anderson 2006). Furthermore, Fligstein argues that

> Collective identities refer to the idea that a group of people accept a fundamental and consequential similarity that causes them to feel solidarity amongst themselves. This sense of collective identity is socially constructed, by which I mean that it emerges as the intentional or unintentional consequence of social interactions. Collective identity is also by definition about the construction of an 'other'. Our idea of who we are is usually framed as a response to some 'other' group. (2008, p. 127)

European identity, thus, relates to membership of an 'in' group and of likeness amongst members, but also to the boundaries of the group, who does not belong – the 'Other', and is socially constructed through communication. This book thus examines European identities as discourses, constructions that reveal the meanings, the content of 'Europe' and 'being European', and the constructed boundaries of the community.

This study, therefore, adopts a constructivist ontology in the study of identity. While there are different constructivist approaches to the study of identity formation, particularly regarding epistemology (Risse 2009, p. 145), these approaches differ starkly from the essentialist conceptualisations of identity that were widespread prior to the development of social constructivism and view identities as static and unable to change. As part of the 'constructivist turn' in political analysis (Checkel 1998), constructivist approaches to identity overcome the problems of essentialist conceptions of identity that assume 'each ethnic core produces a political identity more or less straightforwardly' (Cederman 2001, p. 142). As such, constructivism views identity as shaped in our social and political environments and thus helps us to answer questions about how identities

develop and change over time and, as is the interest of this book, what happens to them at times of crisis.

This book argues, however, that many existing constructivist approaches inadequately deal with change at a time of crisis. As will be shown, constructivism offers useful insights, but a greater focus on actors and discourse helps to understand the way in which particular identities are reproduced and contested during a crisis. Social constructivism came to prominence in political science and particularly EU studies in the 1990s, when scholars started to focus on the role of international structures and institutions in shaping particular state identities and interests (Wendt 1992b; 1994; see also Adler 1997). These scholars understood that the 'building blocks of international reality are ideational as well as material; that ideational factors have normative as well as instrumental dimensions; that they express not only individual but also collective intentionality; and that the meaning and significance of ideational factors are not independent of time and place' (Ruggie 1998, p. 33; see also; Christiansen et al. 1999). As sociological institutionalism (SI), the 'constructivist-inspired version of institutional research' (Risse 2009, p. 158), social constructivism was applied to the study of European integration in order to provide a better understanding of the *process* of integration, that is, examining how and to what extent 'a new polity is being constituted in Europe' (Christiansen et al. 1999, p. 537). Spearheaded by March and Olsen (1998), SI thus explains how identities in institutions change slowly over time. Constructivists emphasise the role played by interaction and communication in social and political structures, such as the EU and national institutions and the public sphere, in forming the political identities of the social actors (Risse 2009, p. 148) and the institutional processes which maintain and reproduce these identities (Cederman 2001, p. 147). The attention given to social and political structures opens up the possibility of a greater understanding of identity change, raising the question of whether changing institutional contexts, such as at a time of crisis, may impact on these identities.

SI, thus, posits that European identities develop through interaction and communication. While much of the research is focused on elite identities (see e.g. Checkel 2003), many scholars have also looked at the Europeanisation of mass-level identities (see e.g. Bruter 2005; Fligstein 2009). There are many institutions and arenas which may contribute to the construction of European identity – civil society organisations (De Clerck-Sachsse 2011), the Erasmus programme (Stoeckel 2016), schools

(Faas 2010), and families (Quintelier et al. 2014), as well as the media, which is citizens' primary source of information about the EU. Following Michael Billig's banal nationalism, however, Cram argues that European identity can be predicated on everyday use of signs and symbols of European integration such as the EU flag, passports or driving licences that 'remind citizens of their involvement in the larger EU system' (2009b, p. 105; see also; Billig 1995). As noted in the introduction of this book, money has long been associated with national identity (Helleiner 1998) to the extent that it can help to forge a sense of community within nation-states. The Euro can, therefore, serve as a daily symbol of Europeanness which can, in time, further strengthen the relationship between Europe and national identities (Kaelberer 2004, p. 18). Through this, Kaelberer argues, the Euro can be considered 'something of a European public space' which 'serves as a tool of European-wide communication' where citizens 'recognize euros as "their" money even if they deal with a foreigner' (2004, p. 22). The Euro serves, therefore as an 'identity marker' and 'important symbol of European integration' (Risse 2003, p. 493). Understanding the role of the EU in the development of European identities thus involves an 'analysis of the extent to which secondary symbols, carrying implicit messages about European Union identity, become attached to daily events and patterns of communication amongst the various European people(s)' (Cram 2009a, p. 123).

Following Habermas's notion of postnational identity (2001), political identity is, nevertheless, also understood to develop through politicised democratic deliberation, seen to have a 'powerful formative effect, promoting a gradual evolution of political identities' (Follesdal and Hix 2006, p. 550). This approach views exposure to and participation in contested public debate about EU politics in Europeanised public spheres as integral to the development of political identity (Gerhards 2000; Koopmans and Statham 2010). Bruter argues that institutions can influence European identity through news media (2005). In a large-scale experimental study, he found that prolonged exposure to good and bad news, as well as symbols of the EU, were able to influence individuals' European identity, constituting a kind of political socialisation (2005, p. 31). Bruter even suggests that at a time of crisis the upward trend towards a mass-level Europeanised identity will nevertheless continue (2005, p. 171). The development of European political identity is therefore related to exposure to symbols of European integration, political

communication and interaction in the EU polity. As people become aware of the influence or the 'entitativity' of the EU in their lives and engage in public deliberation of EU issues they come to identify more with the EU institutions (Risse 2002, p. 10; Herrmann and Brewer 2004, p. 14).

This process is not, however, expected to create a single European identity but instead, results in 'Europeanised nation-state identities' where constructions of European identity come in 'national colours' (Marcussen et al. 1999; Risse 2010). Local, national and supranational identities are not considered to be mutually exclusive; instead, they can exist alongside each other, allowing us to 'strongly identify with our region, our nation-state, and feel loyalty toward the EU' (Risse 2010, p. 23). Hooghe and Marks differentiate between *inclusive* and *exclusive* national identity, the former referring to those who consider themselves European, and for example, Belgian, and perhaps also Flemish (2005, p. 424). Exclusive national identity, however, would mean that one conceives of themselves as exclusively Belgian. As such, Cram argues that 'European integration may in fact reinforce or become integral to rather than undermine national identities even within existing member states' (2009a, p. 115). In fact, she argues, the EU has also played a role in the strengthening of sub-national identities, particularly in the case of Scotland and Catalonia (Cram 2009a, p. 124). This is what Risse terms the 'marble cake' concept of multiple identities, which suggests that identities blend together, making it 'very hard to separate out the various components of one's identity' (2010, p. 25). Instead of European identity subsuming national identity, European identity can be incorporated into national identity constructions to create a Europeanised nation-state identity (Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 13). This means that 'being European might mean different things to different people' (Risse 2003, p. 491), that there are 'multiple Europes', multiple EUs and multiple understandings of what it means to be European, which vary between member states (see also Schmidt 2009).

According to Marcussen et al., however, norms, values and identities in a new institution will only become internalised or embedded in a particular context if they 'resonate with existing identity constructions embedded in national institutions and political cultures' (1999, p. 617). As such, the Europeanisation of national identities is related to longer-standing, historical ideas about Europe (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, p. 13) and depends upon the 'way in which national political and cultural discourses including constructions of historical memory relate Europe and the nation-state to

each other' (Risse 2003, p. 491). The construction of European identity therefore differs between countries and in some member states hardly develops at all. What matters is whether national identities are exclusive or whether people identify with Europe as well as the nation-state (Risse 2003, p. 489). According to SI approaches, then, European identities become connected to national identities through the 'marble cake' model, as a result of interaction in EU institutions, through daily contact with symbols of European integration such as a European currency, and through Europeanised public spheres. However, these European identities develop differently according to existing collective identities and the extent to which these identities are inclusive or can be strengthened by the relationship with the EU.

Identity Change and Crisis – The Problem with Critical Junctures

SI can, therefore, help us to understand how European identities might develop slowly over time during the process of European integration. With its focus on 'critical junctures', however, it is insufficient for dealing with the question of crisis and the role of actors in constructing identity. Following Hay, SI helps to understand 'institutional genesis at the expense of postformative institutional change' (2011, p. 66). Likewise, SI can help to understand the initial development of European identities but falls down when explaining the dynamics of change at a time of crisis. This problem is particularly clear with regards to the Euro. Stressing the importance of mutual trust for the impact of the single currency on European identities, Kaelberer notes that, 'while a successful euro may forge greater levels of European identity, a badly managed euro would produce exactly the opposite effect' (2004, pp. 23–24). The way in which a crisis of the euro might affect European identities, therefore, warrants further theoretical exploration. According to SI, European identities are difficult to change and highly path-dependent precisely because European identity is so interconnected with national identities. As argued by March and Olsen, 'identities, resources, values, norms and rules guide action, but they are simultaneously shaped by the course of history' (1998, p. 955). These path-dependent identities then constrain the options of political leaders and other social actors to change or reconstruct identities, creating an 'institutional feedback effect' (Cederman 2001, pp. 142–143). Development of and change to European identities is, therefore,

complicated by the path-dependence of existing identities which create a feedback loop that constrains political actors.

Despite this stability, however, it is argued that identities can change at times of crisis, that they 'become salient and are fought over in particular historical moments' (Risse 2010, p. 2). It is argued that identity constructions can change at times of 'critical junctures', a concept which was developed in historical institutionalism (HI), particularly the work of Pierson (2004). A critical juncture is considered an event or crisis which disrupts the path of institutional development and creates a situation when 'influences on political action are significantly relaxed for a relatively short period' (Capoccia and Kelemen 2007, p. 343). This pattern of institutional continuity and sudden change is known as 'punctuated equilibrium' (Krasner 1984).[1] With regards to identity constructions, it is argued that a critical juncture can destabilise existing European and national identities if a critical juncture does not 'resonate' with the existing identity (Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 616). This creates an 'ideational vacuum' when 'previously held stable ideas no longer provide a base for problem-solving and policy-making' (Flockhart 2005, p. 259). At such moments, Risse argues, 'even deeply held beliefs and convictions can undergo profound and fast transformations' (2010, p. 32). Given the path-dependence of discourses at a time of stability, the critical juncture opens up a wider variety of options for an institution than would have previously been available, by creating 'multiple paths of future development' (Horak 2007, p. 21). In so doing, it may allow actors, such as the political elite and mass media, to introduce new ideas, offering a 'window of opportunity' for actors to change and promote new identities (Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 629; Risse 2010, p. 100).

Nevertheless, it is argued that a critical juncture will not necessarily lead to change, nor will it always have the same effect in every context as Blyth maintains, 'simply making an existing institutional equilibrium unstable does not automatically create a new one' (2002, p. 44). Rather, Capoccia and Kelemen argue that a critical juncture merely creates more options and greater opportunity for change, leading to 'structural fluidity and heightened contingency' (2007, p. 352). The opportunity for change is seen to be limited in two ways – how the crisis is 'perceived' and the 'institutional legacies' already in place in different contexts. Following Marcussen et al., critical junctures are only critical junctures 'in so far as they are perceived and constructed as such', meaning that a crisis may actually reinforce rather than challenge identity depending on the social or

political context (1999, p. 630). Identities can change at these moments only when the crisis 'severely contradicts given identity constructions' (Risse et al. 1999, p. 156). Furthermore, whether or not significant change emerges from the critical juncture is highly dependent on the context and what Horak describes as 'institutional legacies', that is, norms and rules in place over a long period of time which are not entirely washed away in a period of crisis (2007, p. 26). These existing 'legacies' may affect the extent to which a critical juncture can or will effect change. As Marcussen et al. note, elites introducing a new identity 'need to make these new ideas fit with pre-existing identity constructions embedded in political institutions and culture' (Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 627). The ability of a critical juncture to lead to change is, therefore, limited by how they are perceived, and the existing institutional and identity contexts where they are taking place.

However, the dynamics of change at a time of crisis are, thus far, inadequately understood. The primarily problem is that this literature conceptualises a critical juncture as an 'exogenous' shock. According to Marcussen et al., critical junctures constitute 'perceived crisis situations occurring from complete policy failures, but also triggered by external events' (1999, p. 616). As Morin and Carta maintain, 'for this ideational punctuated equilibrium model to be valid [. . .] one must assume that crises are exogenous shocks rather than endogenous' (2014, p. 124). As such, the punctuated equilibrium model ignores the ongoing struggles over identities in the public sphere. The manner in which crises are interpreted in political and social contexts needs to be considered in order to understand prospects for identity change. We know that a crisis must be *perceived* as a crisis, but this still does not tell us much about the processes of identity change – what change is possible, and how any change occurs. The particular interpretations of the crisis, and how these interpretations clash or resonate with existing identity discourses, determine whether change is likely and the form that any changes might take. The construction of crisis is, therefore, important; as Hay argues, crises are 'constituted in and through narrative' (1996, p. 254), they are 'representations and hence "constructions" of failure' (1996, p. 255). They are not, then, a 'material', 'external' crisis or failure, they are not '"objective" phenomena; they have to be perceived and constructed in such a way that they actually challenge social identities' (Risse 2010, p. 33). This means that crises 'cannot be defined simply in terms of their material effects, but that agents' intersubjective understandings must first give meaning to such material changes' in the public sphere

(Widmaier et al. 2007, p. 748). The issue here is that, when the crisis is constructed by national actors, it ceases to be an objectively 'external event' and instead becomes part of the identity discourse it is expected to change. How, then, do we know when a crisis is 'perceived' in such a way that it challenges constructions of identity? Under what circumstances does a crisis 'clash' with identity discourses, and how does this differ between countries? This is dependent on the institutional contexts, actors and identities in the different national contexts.

Given that crises have to be constructed by political and social actors in the national contexts, this therefore warrants a focus on discourse in the public sphere, the actors involved in constructing the crisis, and the discursive processes involved in shaping these different understandings. This, in turn, will help to better understand the role of and consequences for identities. Currently, it is unclear under what circumstances new ideas might lead to changes to identity discourses and what dynamics prevent new ideas being introduced. Thinking about these issues can help us to understand how and why ideas about Europe and European policies change in some circumstances and not others (Flockhart 2010, p. 796). As Hay and Rosamond show in their research on the discourse of globalisation, there can be a whole host of conditions which impact on a particular discourse being adopted (2002, p. 163). What is necessary, therefore, is to 'consider the complex institutional and ideational mediations' (2002, p. 64) present in different contexts. It is helpful to consider the contexts in which crises are constructed, who is constructing them and for whom, and the extent to which these constructions resonate or are contested by the public. Drawing on DI concepts of ideational change can, therefore, be useful for understanding the discursive interactions that take place at times of crisis, for understanding how a crisis can reproduce or reconstruct long-standing and path-dependent identity discourses (Schmidt 2008b, p. 316).

Actors, the Public Sphere and 'Communicative Discourse'

This section argues that DI concepts can be applied to the study of European identity on the basis that an understanding of the processes of change at a time of crisis requires a greater focus on actors, their language and their contexts than SI allows for. As already noted, this book is interested in discourses, or constructions, of European identity. A discursive approach to European identity, therefore, 'takes words, language, and communicative utterances seriously' (Risse 2009, p. 149) and emphasises

the 'constructive power of language' in shaping identities (Christiansen et al. 1999, p. 535). It helps to elucidate the dynamics of identity construction in an institutional context by considering more closely the language used to discuss the EU and the actors involved in articulating these ideas. As Diez maintains, there are many different competing discourses on the EU between and within member states which are continually contested (2001, p. 7; see also; Malmborg and Stråth 2002). Ideas expressed about Europe and the EU therefore 'take part in the construction of the polity itself' (Diez 1999, p. 599). Criticising what he calls the trap of 'national coherence', furthermore, Diez refutes the idea there exists one single national identity or discourse on the EU and instead brings to the fore the diversity inherent to EU debates in the national sphere (2001, p. 25). A discursive approach therefore considers contestations about the meaning of the EU and European and national identities in public debates about the EU, which can shed light on 'how members of a society engage with collective stories of what it means to inhabit a particular political entity' (Manners and Murray 2016, p. 3).

Following Schmidt, however, a DI approach also engages with the 'interactive processes' of discourse (2012). The effect of crisis on identity discourses in various contexts, therefore, depends very much on the 'communicative conditions' (Cerutti 2008, p. 8) which shape the way in which the crisis is interpreted. Schmidt argues that

> we miss a vital element in the construction of identity if we fail to recognize that it not only involves a sense of belonging to Europe and active engagement in Europe but also that it demands communication about Europe. European identity is established not just by the ways in which member state elites and citizens self-identify as *being* European but also by what they are *saying* about Europe as they engage with Europe. (2011a, p. 16)

What matters is what people say about Europe and the EU as they are communicating about the crisis and why they communicate about it in the way that they do. It is not just the practice of speaking about Europe that matters for European identity, but how Europe is talked about. As Sternberg maintains, 'public discourses [...] are key in shaping how citizens relate to the EU' (2013, p. 2).

Drawing on ideas from DI can, therefore, help us understand two things with regards to identity – the possible dynamics of postformative identity change at a time of crisis, and variation between and within

contexts. Beyond this, examining the way in which actors construct identities can also shed light on policy outcomes (Matthijs and Blyth 2015, p. 4). As such, this approach can also identify the linkages between identity discourses and crisis management policies. An 'agent-centered constructivist approach' to crisis (Widmaier et al. 2007, p. 756; see also; Matthijs and Blyth 2015), therefore, envisages a greater role for actors in the process of identity construction. For example, is the crisis considered an issue affecting all of Europe, so that people perceive themselves to be part of a European community, or are debates focused on the national context, with implications for the national community? An actor-centred approach helps us to understand how crises become incorporated into existing discourses and what motivates actors to construct crises in certain ways. This section outlines the strategies and constraints faced by actors when making sense of crises in the public sphere. It argues that political actors construct crises as a form of policy and polity legitimation but they are constrained particularly by the media in their respective national contexts which limit their discursive options. Both elites and the media, therefore, play an important role in constructing crisis.

One the one hand, political elites can explain crises strategically in order to legitimise policy action (Waever 2009b, p. 165). At a time of crisis, the political response involves a 'causal story' of crisis that involves 'attributions of causation and blame and suggests a specific scenario of action' (Kutter 2014, p. 452). As noted above, a critical juncture can open up a 'window of opportunity' which, to a certain extent, allows actors the freedom to put forward new ideas based on their perceived political or economic interests (Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 617) and construct a crisis in a way that serves these interests. Actors have what Schmidt labels 'foreground discursive abilities' which allow them to act strategically to legitimise policy, something which she argues is necessary to explaining change 'because they refer to people's ability to think outside the institutions in which they continue to act, critique, communicate, and deliberate about such institutions' (2011b, p. 56). Through so-called 'communicative discourse', actors engage in the 'presentation, deliberation, and legitimation of political ideas to the general public' (Schmidt 2008b, p. 310). In so doing, they try to make sense of the crisis and enter into a process of legitimation of crisis policy. In this sense, leaders in the member states are the 'prime communicators to the "markets" and to "the people" or, better, to their national publics' (Schmidt 2014b, p. 189), where deliberation and contestation of these ideas in the public sphere involves other actors such as

the mass media (Schmidt 2014b, p. 189). This can be understood as a 'process of mass persuasion' when leaders 'seek to *communicate* with both the markets and the people on the results of the coordinative discourse in the effort to convince them of the necessity and appropriateness of their decisions' (Schmidt 2014b, p. 202). The crisis can, therefore, offer an opportunity to introduce new ideas about identities during the process of communicating the crisis and crisis policies.

In the context of the EU, however, political elites engage not just in a process of policy legitimation but also of polity legitimation and contestation due to the 'the unsettled nature of the EU as a political entity' (De Wilde et al. 2013, p. 9; see also; Mair 2007). According to Statham and Trenz, political elites 'critically evaluate European integration' as part of politicised debates about EU politics (2013, p. 4). As Sternberg notes, discursive struggles over the EU's legitimacy throughout the history of integration has 'Europe played a crucial role in making integration possible' (2013, p. 5). Especially, during an EU crisis, the legitimation of crisis policy is closely tied to the legitimation of the EU polity given that crisis policies often involve transferring additional competences to EU level, and thus, greater sharing of sovereignty. Political actors, therefore, have to justify not just their policy choices, but also 'the basic purpose or rationale of the political system, what sort of principles, procedures and institutions are seen as appropriate for it, or why we should (not) want to have it' (De Wilde et al. 2013, p. 10). This process, therefore, 'strongly depends on the imaginative effort of political representatives and experts who are involved in EU institution-building' (Kutter 2015, p. 45). At a time of crisis, then, political actors will act strategically to legitimise the EU polity as part of the crisis response and crisis construction, but this polity legitimation requires drawing on discourses of what Europe and being European means.

Nevertheless, the possibility of change to identity discourses at these moments of crisis is expected to be relatively limited. Even if there is a 'window of opportunity' for actors to introduce new ideas, the need to make sense of the crisis means that it is incorporated into national discourses. We know that new ideas have to 'resonate' with the existing identities in order to take hold (Marcussen et al. 1999). Yet, if new ideas have to 'resonate' with the existing identities, and new ideas are selected on the basis of perceived interests, themselves constructed, to what extent are ideas put forward during a crisis actually likely to be 'new'? As Smith and Hay argue, 'given the highly path-dependent nature of political discourse,

there are strong *a priori* reasons for anticipating distinct, even divergent, ideational responses even to common pressures and imperatives' (2008, p. 363). Actors are constrained by their social, political and institutional contexts which affect the way the crisis is constructed in different contexts (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 755). Leaders 'evoke frames that resonate within the respective national cultures' (Schmidt 2014b, p. 9), which limits the extent to which a crisis might lead to change. They are limited in their ability to introduce new ideas and alter identities because of the need to persuade the public, needing to construct the crisis in a way that makes sense by drawing on ideas and identities available in their particular contexts. Elites, for example, 'must consider what ideas will be persuasive and establish institutional and political support for ideas to translate into policy action' (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 754). During the Eurozone crisis, social and political agents will, therefore, have interpreted the crisis according to particular ideas about the economy in order to navigate out of an economic crisis and reduce uncertainty (Blyth 2002). The crisis is, therefore, interpreted in terms of the existing ideas in the various national and political contexts, thus reinforcing these ideas more than challenging them. Crises are likely to be less an 'external event' and more a reflection of existing ideas.

Furthermore, elite constructions of these crises and framing of policies can be rejected or contested by the wider public (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 755) which leads to struggles over the meaning of crisis. Even if elites construct a crisis and frame policies in a certain way according to their perceived 'interests', this may not be accepted by others. The difficulty for elites is that they must often speak to different institutional contexts when constructing a crisis and identity, at different levels – national, European and international. Crespy and Schmidt note that actors are involved in a 'simultaneous discursive double game' of EU politics' (2014), where preferences and identities are constructed in overlapping domestic and European institutional contexts. Here we can perceive institutions not simply as formal 'external rule-following structures' (Schmidt 2011b, p. 55), but also non-formal institutions which constitute 'dynamic webs of meaning, understandings, norms and ideas' (Moon 2013, p. 114) that are 'internal to sentient agents' (Schmidt 2011b, p. 55). When talking about discursive change, then, it is important to consider not just resonance in formal European and national institutions but also discourses on national and European identities in the different contexts (Schmidt 2014b, p. 6). There are a variety of different audiences at an international and national level with whom elites must communicate and who also take part in the

process of communication about a crisis. During the crisis, elites have had to speak to both the 'markets' (often located beyond national borders) and 'the people', the latter of which includes such diverse audiences as 'national and European electorates, interest groups, members of civil society and social movements [. . .] opposition parties, members of legislatures, and political commentators' (Schmidt 2014b, p. 204). This means that they are constrained in terms of what ideas they can put forward.

A key actor in this respect is the media, which constitutes a 'key communication platform connecting citizens to political elites in today's 'mediatised' democracies' (De Wilde et al. 2010, p. 5). The media can be considered a political arena like any other, in which political elites seek to 'tell their own stories' and gain public attention (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2016b, p. 5). Because of this, media coverage is 'crucial to the strategies of actors from the core of the political system, such as governments and political parties, for legitimating their claims and decisions' (Statham and Trenz 2013b, p. 11). Political actors therefore need to act strategically when framing the crisis given that national media cultures 'continue to determine the normative framework within which EU politics is publically discussed' (Michailidou and Trenz 2015, p. 234). When making sense of a crisis, then, political elites consider the discourses and ideas likely to gain the most traction in public debates. Nevertheless, the media also play an autonomous role in constructing crisis (Stråth and Wodak 2009b, p. 18; see also; Statham and Trenz 2013b, p. 7). Michailidou and Trenz note that the media

> function as agenda setters (e.g., highlighting particular aspects of crisis, and actors who are to deal with crisis); as crisis actors themselves (e.g., by exacerbating a critical situation, or creating financial 'panics'); and, perhaps above all, as the general 'interpreter of public voice'. (2015, p. 239)

The ideas put forward by elites, therefore, both gain resonance and are contested and reframed by media and opposition actors, when discussion of the crisis focuses on 'the persuasiveness of claims concerning the necessity of change' (Widmaier et al. 2007b, pp. 753–754) and where the public is able to 'reject elites' attempts to legitimate or naturalize changes made during periods of crisis' (2007, p. 755). At a time of crisis, the media is, therefore, often 'the primary agent which "makes sense" because it dominates the national public spheres' (Stråth and Wodak 2009b, p. 26). The communication of crisis depends not just on 'political logics' but also 'media logics', where factors

such as 'technical requirements of the media, the evolution of journalistic professionalism and commercial imperatives' (Statham and Trenz 2013b, p. 10) shape the selection and framing of crisis news. News values such as familiarity, negativity and conflict also determine what issues gain visibility and how they are framed (Galtung and Ruge 1965). The media can thus intensify a sense of crisis in the sense that it acts as a 'threat multiplier, amplifying negative ideas about events that potentially threaten the onward trajectory of EU integration' (Davis Cross and Ma 2015, p. 211). The media can, therefore, determine how crises and crisis policies are constructed, given that it is 'often key to framing the terms of the communicative discourse, creating narratives, arguments, and images that become determinant of interpretations of a given set of events' (Schmidt 2012b, p. 16) and feeds back into the elite discourse.

The elites and media, therefore, engage in a process of legitimation and contestation of particular policy action which ensures that dramatic change is highly unlikely. In order for these processes of persuasion to be successful, actors, therefore, need to construct the crisis in such a way that it 'resonates' with discourses in their political and social contexts. Nevertheless, subtle change might become possible during the course of a struggle for legitimacy and in the event of competing understandings of the crisis. As Schmidt argues, 'during the moment of crisis, the mechanisms of change are often understood as incremental, involving bricolage or layering of one new idea onto the other, although they can also involve the recurrence of old ideas reintroduced in a new guise' (2014, p. 198). In light of these dynamics, then, how does this debate and process of persuasion about the crisis relate to identity constructions? The dynamics of change and continuity in identity discourses will be explored in the next section.

Constructing Crises – The Limited Possibility of Change in European Identities

Having established the role of different actors in crisis contestation, the question then becomes a matter of how their constructions of crisis relate to the constructions of identities. This section will argue that the effect of the crisis on constructions of European identities is likely to be minimal because crises are incorporated into existing identity discourses at the national level. Ideas about the crisis are necessary for understanding how identity discourses would be stabilised and potentially reconstructed; crises are relevant for identity, constituting 'moments where public agents

attempt to persuade each other over "who they are" and "what they want" ' (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 756). With regards to the 2008 financial crisis, Froud et al. argue that 'as long as no story wins out, group identity, institutional affiliation, and crude calculations of interest become more important as the new polity is "turf wars" writ large' (2012, p. 50). However, just because discourses on identity become salient, it does not mean they are likely to change. In calling for and contesting the necessity of policy action, elites and the media draw on existing political and economic ideas as well as particular understandings of European and national identity in order to justify and legitimise their claims. As this section will argue, European identities are, therefore, constructed through representations of the EU and the meaning of Europe, other Europeans, and perceived interests in the competing crisis frames.

As mentioned above, Marcussen et al. describe a critical juncture as originating from 'policy failure' or 'external events'. However, how far can a crisis actually constitute an 'external event'? For a crisis to be relevant for European identities, it must be seen as a crisis affecting Europe or a country's place in Europe. Yet, to understand a 'European' crisis it is necessary to have an understanding of what 'Europe' and 'European identity' actually is. This relates to what is at risk from the crisis, to what is at stake. If a crisis is a European crisis, it raises the questions: what is Europe, and who are the Europeans, and what values, institutions, interests are under threat? As mentioned earlier, there is not one single European identity, but multiple Europes, multiple European identities and multiple understandings of what it means to be European (see also Waever 2009b, p. 168), and these constructions become infused with the construction of a European crisis. For the crisis to be understood as a common European crisis, therefore, it is likely that there is some sense of European identity already in existence. Krzyżanowski et al. argue that it is during crises that 'perceptions and definitions of political objects of reference (such as Europe or the nation-state) are contested, negotiated, reformulated and reorganized'. (2009, p. 5). In particular, it is values related to Europe or the nation-state which become relevant. They maintain that

> it is within these crises that values are sometimes violated [. . .] while different actors also use those crises to express (in/through the media) their defence of other values (e.g. democracy, social justice or peace) with a view to legitimizing their ideas about the existing social, political and economic order. (2009, p. 6)

A European crisis will, therefore, result in contestation over the 'various understandings and meanings of Europe [. . .] the value basis of Europe emerges and is transformed through these processes' (Stråth and Wodak 2009b, p. 17).

Furthermore, whether the crisis and crisis policies are framed as issues of European concern or issues of national concern are of importance here. It is argued that during a critical juncture elites communicate new ideas about identity based on their interests. However, interests can reflect European identities, where the notion of common European interest identifies 'the set of political and social values and principles in which [actors] recognize themselves as "we"' (Cerutti 2008, p. 6). Rather than just informing identities, interests and identities are mutually constitutive. Following Lucarelli, 'identities imply interests: this means that interests are not exogenously given [. . .] but are identity-contingent' (2008, p. 31). What is considered in the 'European interest' or the 'national' interest, therefore, cannot be separated from the identities that inform them; identities both construct and are constructed by interests. What actors might perceive to be in their interests may, in fact, be determined by identities that already exist, which further integrates the crisis into the existing discourse. Framing issues as a matter of 'European interest' can, therefore, be expected to both construct and reflect discourses on European identity in that context.

Given that a European crisis will be constructed by actors in their national context, communication about a 'European' crisis will incorporate the crisis into particular national discourses on Europe and European identity. This means that it is primarily the diverse national understandings of Europe which become infused with the crisis constructions. Krzyżanowski et al. highlight the 'crucial role of a *national filter of perception of Europe*' which determines the way in which Europe is constructed during crises (Krzyżanowski et al. 2009, p. 262). In the same vein, the construction of a 'national' crisis might reflect an understanding of national identity and interest as distinct from the European interest, constructing and reflecting a more exclusive national identity. Whereas Europe has been incorporated into the national identity in some contexts, in others it 'represents a challenge or even a threat to the nation' (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, p. 10). It is also possible that Europe functions merely to serve the national. That is, rather than becoming intertwined with the idea of the national to create a Europeanised identity, Europe can merely function as a vehicle for the consolidation of national

identity. In his study of British and Danish European policies, for example, Larsen identifies the dominant discourse on Europe as a primarily instrumental discourse in which Europe was 'primarily legitimized by its utility for the states' (1999, p. 456). He found that this either constituted an external 'we/they' dynamic where 'national sovereignty versus Europe is presented as a zero-sum game' (1999, p. 457) or one where European cooperation was deemed necessary for the purposes of the national interest (1999, p. 457). There might be an element of pro-Europeanism in these discourses, but the dominant focus remains on the national level. While these are two particularly Eurosceptic countries, the study identifies what Hawkins describes as a 'nationalist meta-narrative' (2012, p. 6), arguing that the focus on national interest 'cues people to think of the EU not in terms of issues and policies, but in terms of nationality' (2012, p. 9). These identities are, therefore, not Europeanised – Europe has merely an instrumental function for the construction of national identity. This means that an understanding of the crisis as a 'national' crisis will to a certain extent reflect national identities that have not been Europeanised, where Europe features in instrumental terms for the benefit of or detriment to national identity.

Nevertheless, as discussed, understandings of Europe are inherently contested (Malmborg and Stråth 2002, p. 4), opening up the possibility for change. This contestation might emerge through disagreement amongst elites, for example between political parties on the left-right spectrum or along Grande and Kriesi's cosmopolitan-nationalist cleavage (2014). It may also translate into a division between elites and citizens; according to Medrano, there is 'currently an unbridgeable mismatch between the national leaders' conceptions of the EU and those of a significant minority of citizens, and at the same time, a strong disagreement among the elites about Europe's political identity' (2009, p. 82). This opens up potential for changes to identity discourses if new ideas are incorporated into existing understandings of Europe and national identity. Given the process of persuasion between elites and the media, then, a European crisis could potentially lead to new meanings of Europe in the different national contexts. The values and interests associated with Europe in the crisis constructions, therefore, need to be traced.

As noted earlier, collective identities refer not just to shared understandings of the community, but also to the boundaries of that community. One way in which identity discourses may change is through the construction of internal Others. A crisis may reinforce or challenge

existing discourses through Othering processes, something which constitutes an important element of identity construction and will also vary across and within countries. Just as there are multiple Europes, then, so Europe has 'multiple Others' (Risse 2010, p. 53). Hay argues that 'crises are representations and hence "constructions" of failure' (Hay 1996, p. 255). Here the politics of blaming (Ntampoudi 2013) and the attribution of responsibility become important (Schmidt 2014, p. 11). What or who is the threat, what was the cause of the crisis? Following Hall, 'it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its constitutive outside that the "positive" meaning of any term – and thus its identity – can be constructed' (1996, pp. 4–5). By presenting a threat to the existence or the 'distinctiveness' of the community (Triandafyllidou 1998b, p. 600), the 'excluded outside' is fundamental to the construction of the Self, and plays a vital role in constructing identities. The practices of inclusion and exclusion can shed light on the meanings and values associated with the 'we' community – they 'determine and define similarities and differences, to draw clear boundaries between 'Us' and 'Them', frequently via the construction of alleged dangers and threats to 'Us', the 'Europeans'' (Wodak and Boukala 2015, p. 89). These practices can lead to the development of new boundaries, ones that potentially 'transcend the traditional distinctions between 'left and right' and 'East and West'' (Wodak and Boukala 2015b, p. 105). Particularly in crisis communication in which blame is attributed, new conflict lines can emerge which define 'new national or transnational spaces of democracy, belonging and solidarity' (Michailidou and Trenz 2015, p. 242).

As Eder maintains, 'a collective identity only works if the narrative boundary is coextensive with the boundaries that delimit the legitimate members of a political community'. Collective identity struggles 'in cases where this narrative boundary is narrower than the citizens around it' (2011, p. 47). An Other can, therefore, be both 'external' and 'internal', 'so called 'out-group[s] from within'' (Risse 2010, p. 53). Internal Others are 'those that belong to the same political entity with the in group' and the external Others as 'those that form a separate political unit' (Triandafyllidou 1998b, p. 600). With regards to Europe, the Other identifies *who* the Europeans are, *who* is the Self, the 'we', in constituting European 'imagined communities' (Anderson 2006). It stipulates who is considered a legitimate member of the community, and where the boundaries of Europe lie. Following Triandafyllidou, then, an internal Other may

constitute not just ethnic minorities and immigrant communities within the nation state, but also other EU member states (1998, p. 601) or indeed groups of member states. It is therefore important to determine whether the Other is a European Other or a national Other, that is, does it serve to construct European or Europeanised identities, or strengthen exclusive national identities? Following Risse, what matters for identity in the context of the Euro crisis is 'whether the conflict pitches Europeans as *Europeans* against each other rather than Germans against Greeks' (2014, p. 18). Othering practices can, therefore, help us to understand variation and change in European identities during the crisis.

It is during 'periods of social, political or economic crisis' that such outside groups become salient 'significant others' (Triandafyllidou 1998b, p. 603). They play a role in helping people overcome the crisis 'because it unites the people in front of a common enemy, it reminds them of "who we are" and emphasizes that "we are different and unique" ' and thereby acting as the 'lever for the transition towards a new identity' (1998, p. 603). As Lieberman notes, Othering of an out-group at a time of crisis helps 'to promote in-group cohesion' and help 'members of the in-group to view their fates as collectively pooled' (2009, p. 110). In his discussion on the development of taxation policy, Liebermann argues that the socially constructed perception of risk is important for determining social boundaries (2009, p. 117). He finds that 'the stronger the collective identity and the weaker the lines of internal division, the more likely it is that citizens will sacrifice as long as the benefits of that sacrifice can be credibly restricted to group members' (2009, p. 111). The crisis itself may, therefore, play an Othering role. If the crisis is constructed as an exogenous crisis presenting a threat to Europe, Europeans and EU institutions, it may be read and understood as a common European experience or question of 'collective fate', reinforcing existing identity discourses on Europe. Where the crisis is endogenised within Europe, it creates internal divisions (such as if the EU or an EU member state can be blamed), and challenges the existing boundaries in Europe or reinforces discourses on exclusive national identity. If blame is attributed to Greece, for example, it may result in its exclusion from the European community (see e.g. Ntampoudi 2013, pp. 11–12; Schmidt 2014b). The emergence of internal Others within Europe may, therefore, open up the possibility of change to European identity discourses.

However, it is also important to restate that 'Others' may also be constructed according to existing identities rather than create new

divisions. As discussed in the previous section, crises are constructed in such a way that they resonate with the respective social and political contexts. Existing identities and ideas might determine these constructions and the attribution of blame. Lieberman notes that 'feelings of collective identity are malleable and may be shaped by the precipitating crises that motivate initial calls to sacrifice, but preexisting boundary institutions are still likely to shape the interpretation of objective dangers as posing significant risks or not' (2009, p. 110). The interpretation of the crisis is therefore to a certain extent defined by *existing* boundaries – and the perception of the meaning of the crisis as posing a threat to the community is defined by those existing identities. For example, Othering often involves reference to history. As Stråth and Wodak note, we can consider 'discursive construction of histories as creative and purposeful processes that serve in identity construction' (Stråth and Wodak 2009b, p. 23). Boukala, furthermore, highlights that historical narratives can function as 'polarising discourses' in political debates (2014, p. 484), meaning that collective memory be mobilised by either side of a political conflict to reinforce each actor's argument. The use of historical Others can, therefore, be expected in the constructions of the crisis which will rather reinforce existing understandings of Europe and the nation. Where there may be new internal Others in the context of crisis, then, this is unlikely to demonstrate a radical shift in identity but rather reflect longer-standing ideas about Europe. The dynamics of change and continuity in identity discourses therefore need to be examined empirically in order to further understand what happens at a time of crisis.

The different constructions of the crisis and potential for change in identity discourses can, therefore, be summarised in the table below (Table 2.1).

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the theoretical foundations of the book and developed expectations for the processes of change and continuity of European identity discourses at a time of crisis. To do this, it combined social constructivist literature on European identity and discursive/constructivist institutionalist concepts of ideational change to understand the role of actors in reinforcing and reshaping identities in the

Table 2.1 Constructions of the crisis

Crisis constructions (Discourse)	*Exogenous European crisis*	*Endogenous European crisis*	*Exogenous national crisis*	*Endogenous national crisis*
Origin of the crisis/threat	Cause external to Europe	Cause internal to Europe	Cause external to nation-state	Cause internal to nation-state
What is at risk?	EU institutions, interests, or values	EU institutions, interests, or values	National institutions, interests, or values	National institutions, interests, or values
Possibility for discursive change?	*New external Others, reassertion of European values and interests.*	*New internal Others, European boundaries change.*	*New external Others, reassertion of national values and interests.*	*New internal Others, creation of new national boundaries.*

communicative discourse about the crisis. Firstly, it demonstrated the constructivist ontology by outlining the importance of social and institutional contexts for identity construction. However, it showed how existing sociological institutionalist (SI) understandings of European identity are much better equipped to understand the gradual development of identities but insufficiently conceptualise change at a time of crisis, a so-called 'critical juncture'. It explained how identities are understood to change at times of critical junctures, which can open up 'windows of opportunity' for elites to change identity discourses, if the crisis clashes with existing ones. However, it argued that there is a problem with this literature to the extent that a crisis is always understood as an 'exogenous' shock. Because crises have to be constructed by social and political actors, they are interpreted according to existing ideas and identities in the national contexts.

Secondly, then, this chapter outlined how DI concepts of ideational change are useful for understanding how crises are constructed, particularly the role of actors and the discursive interactions between elites and the media when framing crises and reconstructing identities. On the one hand, actors have 'foreground discursive abilities' where they can think to a certain extent beyond the existing discourses in the institutional context. On the other hand, in order to legitimise policies and make sense of the crisis in their 'communicative discourse' with the public, they have to draw on existing identity constructions and ideas in order that their ideas 'resonate' in their national context. Moreover, these ideas can be contested by the public and particularly the media, which play a key role in constructing crises. By considering the interplay of different institutional contexts, both European and national, and the 'communicative discourse' between elites, the media and citizens in legitimising and debating EU issues, it is possible to better understand the dynamics of change and continuity in identity discourses between and within EU member states at a time of crisis for the EU.

Thirdly, this chapter outlined expectations that the crisis will lead to minimal change on the basis that the multiple discourses on Europe already present in EU member states in large part determine how the crisis is understood. It argued that dramatic change in identity discourses is unlikely given the path-dependence of such discourses and the need for actors to create 'resonance' with different national publics in order to make sense of the crisis. In order to impact on constructions of European identity, the crisis must be seen as being a European crisis affecting Europe or that country's place in Europe. However, in order to make sense of a 'European' crisis, this

will likely reflect national discourses on Europe, which can help to illuminate 'what Europe is' and 'who the Europeans are'. Furthermore, perceiving the crisis to be an issue of common European interest will reflect existing discourses on European identity, the perception of being part of the same community. Nevertheless, Othering practices are important for considering how boundaries of Europe might be reconstructed. In the process of constructing failure and attributing blame, the construction of an external Other or external threat to Europe is likely to reinforce existing identity discourses. However, the emergence of internal Others or internal divisions may challenge identities and redraw boundaries. In order to change to identity constructions, therefore, we must trace the meanings and values associated with 'Europe' during the crisis and the various constructions of the Other which are tied to constructions of the causes and risks of the crisis. The next chapter will review research on existing European identity discourses in the three countries under analysis – Germany, Ireland and Poland – as well as outline the methods used in this study.

NOTE

1. It should be noted that the concept of punctuated equilibrium is taken from a theory of evolution by Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould (1977) intended to explain gaps in the fossil record by suggesting that species remain stable except at rare moments of sudden change. This theory has been criticised and rejected by other scientists. For example, Gingerich notes that Eldredge and Gould based their theory on negative evidence – the absence of fossils – rather than positive evidence (1984). Furthermore, John notes that the use of evolutionary theory in the social sciences tends to be vague and fails to offer satisfactory explanations of the selection mechanisms involved in evolutionary change in public policy (2003, p. 491). John, thus, highlights the need to 'address the problems of transferring models from the natural to the social world, mainly because the causes are different' (2003, p. 495). The use of punctuated equilibrium within the social sciences therefore often functions as an analogy rather than direct application of evolutionary biological theory to the study of political institutions. This book, therefore, does not seek to develop a model for identity change based on punctuated equilibrium but rather engages with one of the specific problems with viewing institutional change in this way – that of the conceptualisation of crisis.

CHAPTER 3

Comparing European Identities in Germany, Ireland and Poland

Introduction

Chapter 2 set out the theoretical framework for exploring the possibility of changes to European identity discourses at a time of crisis. In order to explore the effect of the Euro crisis on European identity discourses empirically, this book explores three case studies: Germany, Ireland and Poland. As set out in Chapter 1, this book has two main research questions: To what extent has the Euro crisis affected the construction of European identities, and how and why does the effect of the crisis differ between countries with different identities and experiences of the crisis? The three countries chosen have never before been compared in a single study, with Ireland and Poland being particularly under-researched especially in the English language. With different experiences of the crisis, the three countries have contrasting histories and relationships with European integration and represent various emerging groups in the EU – Eurozone and non-Eurozone, 'creditor' and 'debtor' as well as old and new member states. They therefore offer the opportunity to investigate to what extent the crisis is constructed in similar ways across these types of countries (Risse 2014, p. 14) as well as the possibility for change in different contexts. The following reviews existing literature on the different facets of elite and media discourses on European identity in Germany, Ireland and Poland before the crisis and explains and justifies the choice of case studies. Finally, it outlines the materials chosen for analysis – political speeches and press releases and broadsheet and tabloid newspaper articles

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alongside the frame analysis method adopted to analyse the data. Altogether, this chapter sets the stage for a study which offers rich empirical data on the early stages of the Euro crisis.

As discussed, there is not 'one' European identity but multiple identities, multiple Europes. The meaning of Europe and European identity is constructed and continually contested across and within EU member states. Research has shown that there is a variety of competing discourses on the meaning of Europe and the 'Others' in Germany, Ireland and Poland. In Germany, Europe was tied in with discourses on national identity in the post-war period as a way to reconstruct its shattered identity, where the Nazi past functioned as the Other for Germany's new European identity. Alongside this, the history of hyperinflation and *Deutschmark* patriotism of the post-war *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle) have led to the incorporation of values, such as monetary stability into Germany's identity. In discourses in Poland, Europe has often served as a means for strengthening Poland's self-image and overcome its perceived inferiority at the 'margins' of Europe, something which came to expression in the post-1989 period as the 'return to Europe' discourse. As part of this, Russia and the 'barbaric East' have served as the Other of European identity in Poland. Nevertheless, Europe in Poland is a much more contested concept than in Germany, with a strong competing discourse on Polish sovereignty, where Europe is seen as a threat to a sovereign Polish nation. In dominant Irish discourses, however, Europe has an instrumental function, firstly, for serving Irish national economic interests in light of slower economic development during the course of the twentieth century. The Irish economy, however, also serves as a proxy for Irish national sovereignty, where securing the country's economic future at the same time secures its sovereignty from Britain, the long-standing Other of its national identity. It is those identity discourses, this book will argue, that have been reproduced and reinforced in discourses on the Euro crisis.

Germany[1]

Germany has traditionally been the committed advocate of increased European integration throughout the post-war period. In West Germany, the idea of 'Europe' was incorporated into discourses on national identity after the war, where relinquishing national sovereignty to the nascent European Community stood as a symbol of the country's

commitment to European integration. German novelist and Nobel Prize-winner Thomas Mann's famous mantra 'we do not want a German Europe but a European Germany' anticipates this Europeanised identity (cited in Marcussen et al. 1999, p. 622), something which continued to be present with the introduction of the Euro. The development of Germany's European identity took place within the context of a policy of *Westbindung* – integration in Western international organisations such as the European Economic Community (EEC) and NATO – pursued by Konrad Adenauer, Germany's first post-war Chancellor, in order to satisfy the country's European neighbours that it would not again become too powerful (Van Esch 2012b, p. 38). As part of this, Germany has been committed to 'reflexive multilateralism' in its European and foreign policy (Anderson 1997). This has placed particular importance on the Franco-German relationship, often considered the 'motor' of European integration because major treaty changes were generally initiated by the two countries in tandem (Paterson 2011, p. 61). Described by Katzenstein as 'semisovereign state' that exercises power 'only in multilateral, institutionally mediated systems' (1997, p. 4), Germany has, therefore, exerted influence not through hard power politics but by promoting 'structures, norms and policy principles within the EU context' (Jeffery and Paterson 2003, p. 62).

Germany's *Westbinding* thus developed into a 'discourse of Europatriotism' (Van Esch 2012b, p. 38). Germany's European identity was, Jeffery and Paterson argue, 'largely perceived as part of a virtuous circle that transformed the Federal Republic into a stable, liberal-democratic state embedded at the heart of a wider (West) European stability' (2003, p. 61). As Hedetoft notes, German discourse on Europe has, therefore, been characterised by a 'European framework of values' that includes references to freedom, democracy and social justice (1998, pp. 4–5) where expressions of German identity were, therefore, limited primarily to *Verfassungspatriotismus* (constitutional patriotism). Given this history, collective memories of the Nazi past have functioned here as the Other against which its European identity was constructed (Marcussen et al. 1999; Banchoff 1999). Political discourse has consistently linked the Franco-German relationship to the achievement of overcoming centuries of conflict between the two countries (Banchoff 1999, pp. 273–274). This applies not just at the elite level; Díez Medrano finds that journalists and ordinary citizens have consistently connected the Nazi past with arguments for European integration throughout the post-war period (2003, p. 179). This was related in particular to the need to 'reassure' other European

countries of Germany's peaceful intentions, as well as a concern about 'other countries misgivings and negative stereotypes' about Germany (2003, p. 181), a result, he argues, of the preoccupation by historians and writers with understanding the Nazi period and dealing with questions of collective and individual guilt (2003, p. 192).

While the prospect of a single currency had been discussed throughout the 1980s to facilitate the single market, the process was accelerated post-reunification in light of French fears of a stronger Germany (Marsh 2009, p. 133; Katzenstein 1997, p. 8). With the Maastricht Treaty, which was signed in 1992, just over a year after formal reunification on 3 October 1990, European leaders agreed to Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) alongside moves towards political integration and the formal creation of the European Union. The Euro was consequently presented by German and European leaders as an issue of European identity – former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, for example, explicitly connected the introduction of the Euro with the notion of 'good Europeanness' related to 'overcoming the German militarist and nationalist past' (Risse 2002, p. 13) thus tying the new united Germany closely to Europe. The EU, the Euro and European integration were, therefore, clearly linked to German national identity – to be a 'good European' was simultaneously to be a good German. In fact, Kohl had always seen German reunification and European unification as 'two sides of the same coin' (Van Esch 2012b, p. 43; see also; Wicke 2015b, p. 7). In 1989, when German reunification was becoming a clear possibility, he stated in his 10-point plan for German unity that 'the future architecture of Germany must fit into the future architecture of Europe as a whole' (1989). The Euro was, therefore, launched in the context of German reunification and within a discourse of Germany's post-war European identity. Indeed, as Banchoff finds, German elites across the political spectrum shared this European identity and commitment to political union in the immediate post-reunification period (1999, p. 272).

Post-war identity in West Germany was, however, also associated with so-called *Deutschmark patriotism* as a result of the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle) of the 1950s where the country's historical experience of hyperinflation in 1923 and 1948 served as an 'Other' of the post-war national identity (Risse 2002, p. 14), counting 'among the traumatic experiences that have remained deeply fixed in the collective German conscience' (Mertes 1996, p. 6; see also; Kaelberer 2005, p. 292). During this time, the *Deutschmark* 'acquired a highly identity-inducing value as a powerful national symbol of Germany's prosperity and its

economic miracle after the second World War' (Risse 2002, p. 14) – it became the 'founding myth of the new (West) Germany' (Kaelberer 2005, p. 291). Connected to the German economic model of ordoliberalism (to be considered in greater detail in Chapter 4), the *Deutschmark* 'symbolized the "rise from the ruins" of World War II' (Risse 2002, p. 14). For this reason, Van Esch argues, reluctance towards EMU was always connected to collective memories of hyperinflation during the Weimar years, which was perceived to have precipitated the Nazi rise to power (2012, p. 38). Many ordoliberals in Germany, therefore, opposed the Euro from the beginning, with scholars arguing that ordoliberalism clashed with the post-war commitment to European integration with the introduction of EMU (see e.g. Risse 2002). With guarantees that the Euro would be built on the model of the *Deutschmark* and correspond with ordoliberal economic principles such as price stability and Central Bank independence, Maastricht arguably provided the opportunity for Germany to 'reconcile its European identity with economic nationalism' (Kaelberer 2005, p. 294). As Kaelberer argues, 'transferring a German conceptualization of money to the rest of Europe was the most logical solution to the complex interaction of currency and collective identity in Europe' (2005, p. 294). Germany's adoption of the single currency therefore highlights the connectedness of European and national interests and identities in German discourses on Europe.

European integration did not, however, just serve to strengthen European identity in Germany. Rather, much like in Poland and Ireland, Europe serves to strengthen a sense of German national identity for a generation of Germans wary of strong expressions of nationalism. As Banchoff notes, it was not a question of choosing between European or German identity. Rather, Germany's leaders 'insisted on the continued importance of a robust national identity rooted in shared values and traditions – and of resilient regional and local identities below the national level' (1999, p. 276). Furthermore, multilateralism actually allowed Germany to regain much of the sovereignty it had lost to the Allies as well as to pursue its domestic economic interests through foreign market access (Anderson 1997, p. 83). The same applied upon reunification. According to Wicke, Kohl's insistence on the link between German reunification and European integration allowed him to express a 'legitimate' and 'safe' conception of German national identity (2015, p. 7) that would otherwise recall fears of German domination once a reunited Germany assumed a more powerful position in Europe. Quality newspapers in Germany have also viewed

European integration precisely through this prism – how to regain German sovereignty, from the early post-war period through to British accession to the EEC and how to protect German and European security in the face of the Soviet threat (Díez Medrano 2003, pp. 118–123). As such, German and European identities must be considered inextricably linked, where 'pursuing German interests in a particular way one is, eo ipso, pursuing the interests and objectives of European unity' (Hedetoft 1998, p. 5).

In recent years, however, a debate about the so-called 'normalisation' of European identity in Germany has emerged, understood broadly as the development of a more self-confident German national identity, where Germany is seen as 'casting off post-war constraints acting on its foreign policy' (Hyde-Price and Jeffery 2001, p. 690) This arguably began in the immediate post-reunification period in the early 1990s, but intensified during the term of Gerhard Schröder, who came to office in 1997. Schröder signified a generational change in Germany, and he was able to articulate a discourse rooted more clearly in notions of national interests and identity (see e.g. Hyde-Price and Jeffery 2001, p. 698). The Euro crisis offers an opportunity to study potential changes in European identity discourses in Germany in more recent years. Scholars have suggested that the crisis is acting as the catalyst for a change in Germany's relationship with Europe. Paterson, for example, has argued that the crisis has signified 'a tipping point for classic German Europeanism' (Paterson 2011, p. 59). Proissl, moreover, argues that the crisis shows Germany has 'fallen out of love with Europe' (Proissl 2010). The emergence of Germany's first real Eurosceptic party *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), originally founded in 2013 as an anti-Euro party, is particularly notable in this regard. It is possible that the Euro crisis has served to continue this process of 'normalisation', completing the break with Germany's traditionally strong pro-European discourse and leading to a strong focus on national interests. In light of the bailouts of Greece during the crisis, with Germany seen as expected to transfer large sums of money to struggling EU economies to protect the Euro, we might expect the emergence or strengthening of discourses in Germany that more avidly defend Germany's national economic interests and construct a more bounded 'we' community of Germans. Furthermore, the crisis also presents an opportunity to consider the extent to which ordoliberal values can be considered compatible with Germany's European identity, in light of fears about inflation and a potential collapse of the Euro.

As the dominant 'creditor' state in the Eurozone, furthermore, Germany's economic policy-making in the Eurozone has come under

increased scrutiny more broadly. With its leadership role in the Eurozone, it has been argued that Germany has 'controlled which crisis narrative would carry the day' (Matthijs 2015, p. 2). Matthijs argues that after the May 2010 Greek bailout, 'German discourse and ideas would continue to deepen the crisis over the course of two years, leading to "panic-driven austerity", with widening sovereign bond spreads between Germany and vulnerable periphery countries justifying ever deeper cuts' (2015, p. 3). Likewise, Snaith and Nedergaard (2015) argue that the uploading of German ordoliberal ideas to the Eurozone have resulted in 'unintended consequences' for Germany, other EU member states and EMU. The construction of identities in Euro crisis discourse in Germany in the early days can, therefore, shed light on the trajectory of the crisis and crisis policy outcomes in the years that followed, particularly with regard to the way in which Germany's policies in the Eurozone were publicly legitimised by key political actors and debated and contested in the media. Chapter 4 of this book, therefore, explores the German case.

Ireland

Compared with Germany, the case of Ireland offers the opportunity to analyse a quite different dynamic in the Eurozone. As one of the so-called 'debtor' states and a recipient of EU bailout funds, Ireland is likely to have had a different experience of 'European solidarity' to Germany – being on the receiving side of redistribution rather than the giving side. There is an obvious absence in this study of any of the other worst afflicted 'debtor' countries such as Greece, Spain or Portugal. The inclusion of Greece in particular would undoubtedly be a useful and interesting comparison particularly in relation to the German case, where the 'Greek crisis' was of particular salience in the public debates. Furthermore, Ireland can perhaps be considered an exceptional case in the crisis, having fared the best out of the crisis countries and having formally exited the bailout programme at the end of 2013 (Hodson 2013). As noted in Chapter 1, however, Greece has already been the focus of a lot of new research as the country worst hit by the crisis, in terms of crisis discourses (see e.g. Boukala 2014; Ntampoudi 2013) and the political and economic causes of the crisis (Featherstone 2011; Pappas 2014; Vasilopoulou et al. 2014b). Furthermore, while there have been a number of publications focused on the political economy of the Irish crisis (see e.g. Donovan and Murphy 2013; Kitromilides 2012; Hay and Smith 2013) and politicisation of the

EMU in the public sphere (Hechinger 2014), there has not been a systematic investigation of identity in Ireland since the crisis.

In discourses in Ireland, Europe has primarily taken an instrumental role in the strengthening of Irish national identity, either serving or conflicting with discourses on Irish nationalism. Some scholars interpret discourses on Ireland's national identity to be Europeanised. Hayward, for instance, argues that pro-European discourses in Ireland have involved myths about Ireland's history in Europe, particularly in relation to the Celts as a 'European people', which reveals a 'nationalist desire to write Ireland into the European story' (2009, p. 173). Hayward stresses that the 'notion that Ireland naturally "belongs" in Europe has enabled EU membership to be presented by elites as a means of *reintegration* into the international community as an active player' (2009, p. 127). The role of Europe in Irish nationalism is, thus, 'based upon a particular conception of the relationship between national interests and European interests, and thereby, national identity and European identity' (2009, p. 135). In the Irish case, however, the emphasis on national identity, national interests and national sovereignty takes primacy. This is evidenced by the primarily economic motivations for Irish EU membership (Rees 2009, p. 97; Ferriter 2004, p. 681). In fact, there was rapid economic development in Ireland after the EU succession in 1973, but particularly from the mid-1990s, when Ireland became known as the 'Celtic Tiger', a 'miracle economy' in Europe (Smith 2005b, p. 37). In this context, the EU is framed in Irish discourses as a question of Irish economic interest.

Beyond economic considerations, however, Hayward emphasises that 'the phrase 'the economy' is now frequently substituted for the term 'nation-state'' (2009, p. 237). Strengthening the Irish economy by opening up its trade opportunities had the consequence of reducing its dependence on trade with Britain, therefore, also serving as a means to secure Irish symbolic sovereignty from the British. As Hayward asserts, EU membership has been seen as 'the means by which the potential of Irish nationhood is fulfilled' (2009, p. 129). In the case of Ireland, Britain has long functioned as the significant Other in Irish national identity discourses. Gillespie maintains that Irish nationalism has 'always had a European vocation as the source of inspiration and allies against domination by its more powerful and larger neighbour Britain' (2012, p. 8). Ireland's membership of the European Monetary System, and later the EMU, formally broke Ireland's long-running monetary union with Britain (O'Donnell 2000, p. 23). But more than just breaking an economic link, they also served as a symbolic

break with Britain. Quinn and Connaughton note that there was a 'prevailing belief that being Irish was irreconcilable with being ruled from England and that sovereignty was necessary to underpin Irish identity' (2009, p. 35). While Irish accession to the EEC actually depended on Britain joining at the same time, Irish sovereignty has been perceived in discourse as exercised through participation in the EU as a means to free the country from British rule (Hayward 2009, p. 167).

Discourses on Europe in Ireland, therefore, position Britain as Ireland's external Other. Like in Poland, there is a self-conscious awareness in Irish discourses of the country's peripheral location in Europe. Whereas in Poland this often results in the desire to discursively construct Poland as part of Western or Central Europe against the Russian East, in Ireland, this awareness arguably serves to consolidate a more exclusive Irish national identity – according to Hayward, Ireland's geographical position 'has been traditionally interpreted in Irish nationalist discourse as a clear indicator of its distinctiveness' (2009, p. 167). Rather than promoting a Europeanised Irish identity, then, these discourses with their British Other have, as Gillespie maintains, 'historically provided the setting for the development of Irish nationalism and the principal context in which it sought allies against Ireland's conquest by Britain from the sixteenth century onwards' (2012, p. 2). In this respect, then, Europe serves as a facilitating mechanism for Irish identity.

Given that economic interests have been a primary motivation for EU membership since its accession, the experience of economic boom followed by severe economic crisis makes Ireland an interesting case study for questions about identity and discourses on Europe. The Celtic Tiger boom led to a reputation for Ireland of being the EU's 'unparalleled success story', an 'example to be emulated among new EU member states' (Rees et al. 2009, p. 1). After EU accession in 1973, there was continual economic development in Ireland, but the country experienced rapid economic growth particularly from the mid-1990s onwards, when it became 'one of the fast growing economies in Europe, outperforming its European neighbours' (Rees 2009, p. 95). It was a time when Ireland 'outperformed all industrialized economies [. . .] with an average annual growth two to three times that of EU and OECD countries' (Dorgan 2006, p. 13). Attributed to its favourable corporate tax rate, massive foreign direct investment and high levels of EU structural funds, along with its English-speaking workforce (Smith 2005b), Ireland had a 4% unemployment rate and an annual rate of growth of 9.4% by 2002 (Kitromilides 2012, p. 166).

Whilst it has been argued that the success of the Celtic Tiger has been overstated, amidst claims that it should, in fact, be considered the 'Celtic kitten' or 'paper tiger' (Smith 2005b, p. 38), more important in the context of this research is rather the perception of a boom (and later crisis) than the realities of economic growth. As Smith argues, elites in Ireland have been keen to use the 'Celtic Tiger discourse' as a political strategy both domestically and on the international stage (2005, p. 53). Furthermore, a change in attitudes has been attributed to the Celtic Tiger years, where Ireland 'is now open to the world not only in trade terms but also in thoughts and attitudes . . . today's younger generation has a well-grounded confidence created by the country's new role in Europe since 1973' (Dorgan 2006, p. 12). Given the dramatic turn-around in the country's economic fortune after 2008, the question of Irish identities and discourses on Europe becomes interesting. If European identity discourses in Ireland have been closely linked to economic growth and independence from Britain, we might expect change to such discourses in a situation in which Ireland requires financial support from the EU, to which Britain has contributed a significant amount, when Ireland is perhaps perceived to have become dependent on British support through the bailout programme. It is possible that Irish national interests have become less compatible with Europe given the harsh bailout conditions and the role of EMU membership in the crisis. However, we might also find that the crisis served to strengthen a sense of European identity – a 'we' community – in light of a clear reliance on the EU for bailout funds and being on the receiving end of European solidarity. Here it will be particularly important to note how the crisis has been constructed in the Irish public sphere and where blame has been attributed. These issues will be addressed in Chapter 5 on the Irish case study.

Poland

The decision to include Poland, an EU member state currently outside the Eurozone, might not be obvious at first glance. It could be argued that it would be more appropriate to use, by way of example, France, another founding member of the EU and EMU, and that Poland is perhaps less affected by the crisis as a non-Eurozone member state. The crisis has, however, had profound implications for the future of European integration far beyond the Eurozone. Poland, along with the UK, has

been cited in relation to the dangers and difficulties of a further institutionalisation of a 'two-speed Europe' between the 'Ins' and 'Outs' of the Eurozone (see e.g. Proissl 2010, p. 12). Rather than examining the consequences of the crisis exclusively in the Eurozone, this book examines the consequences in the wider European Union, in the wake of fears about any potential disintegration or fracturing of the EU. Indeed, as The Economist argued, 'the bigger peril is that a rush to create *Kerneuropa* ("core Europe") may fracture the EU between 17 "ins" and ten "outs" ', potentially damaging the single market on which the prosperity of both groups rests' (2011).[2] With formalisation of Eurozone-only summits and further integration within this bloc to manage the crisis, the 'out' group will have inevitably become more side-lined. Poland, therefore, serves to represent the so-called 'out' group in the EU alongside the 'in' group to which Germany and Ireland belong. To focus purely on Eurozone countries would risk contributing further to the consolidation of the 'in' group and isolation of the 'out' group. It is, however, also an unusual case as a large member state outside of the Euro which, in contrast to the UK, is treaty-bound to join the Euro in the future and has previously expressed a desire to join.[3]

Poland thus presents an opportunity to study the effect of the crisis on identity constructions in a country which, in contrast to Ireland and Germany, is not a member of the Eurozone but, as a new EU member state of the 2004 enlargement, it is treaty-bound to join in accordance with the *acquis communautaire*, once the country meets all the economic criteria. Under the previous Civic Platform government during the early years of the crisis, the country was officially committed to adopting the single currency. As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a particular lack of data about CEE countries when it comes to the politicisation of EU politics and the role of the Euro crisis (Risse 2014, p. 12). While it should not be considered representative of all CEE countries, it can provide some interesting insights as a new member state, particularly in light of the 'return to Europe' discourse, which was an important justification for EU accession across the CEE states.

In contrast to Germany's European identity based on the experience of World War II and post-war period, then, Poland's move towards EU membership took place within the so-called 'return to Europe' discourse following the fall of communism, which tied the new post-1989 Poland discursively to Europe. The EU accession saw Poland return to what it had always viewed as its cultural or spiritual home in Western

Europe (Kundera 1984). European debates in Poland are, therefore, 'tremendously historically determined' (Góra and Mach 2010, p. 239). After the communist period, the country was left economically weak with underdeveloped democratic and governmental institutions (Góra and Mach 2010, p. 225). After 1989, the country aimed at a fast modernisation and wanted to 'overcome its marginalization and 'return to Europe' – in other words, join the more dynamic part of Europe it has always wanted to belong to but never succeeded in attaining' (Jedlicki 1993, p. 84). Not just focused on the economic imbalance with Western Europe, then, this idea related to a return to the perceived 'cultural' home of Poland in Western or Central Europe present in Poland over centuries. According to Jedlicki, it re-articulates a 'perpetual' return to Europe which has been part of the Polish discourse for a millennium.

This idea of Europe reveals what has been described as an 'inferiority complex' in the Polish discourse which has developed over time, related to slower economic modernisation and a perceived lack of modernity in relation to the 'civilised' Western Europe (Törnquist-Plewa 2002b, p. 219). The insecurity of Poland's position in Europe was also related to the experience of the three partitions as well as the years it spent excluded from Western Europe behind the Iron Curtain (Kundera 1984). These ideas have dominated the Polish relationship with Europe, leaving it feeling like the 'unwanted child' (Törnquist-Plewa 2002b). Central to this is the notion that Poland lies on Europe's periphery, which has resulted in a 'lack in self-confidence as to the strength of the native culture' (Törnquist-Plewa 2002b, p. 229). This was strengthened during the communist period, which Jedlicki argues, 'deepened the civilizational gap in Europe' (1993, p. 84). During this time, Europe became 'a symbol for prosperity, freedom, a dream and an unreachable goal' (Törnquist-Plewa 2002b, p. 235). The idea of Europe has therefore been closely linked to Polish identity discourses particularly in the post-communist period – the stronger and more secure Poland's position in Europe, the stronger Polish identity becomes, representing 'another example of intertwined identities' (Risse 2010, p. 79).

In Poland, conflictual discourses present the EU as a threat to Polish sovereignty and the Polish nation. These are related in particular to the legacy of Poland's communist experience (Sidorenko 2008b, p. 100), as well as to a longer history of 'victimization' by foreign powers (Risse 2010, p. 77). According to Sidorenko, the populist nationalist discourse in the post-communist period is related to two conceptions of patriotism – a

Romantic notion of national unity as a 'spiritual entity' (rather than as a political or communal one) (2008, p. 106) and the notion that 'sovereignty of the nation must come before the liberty of its citizens' (2008, p. 107). These ideas are related to the experience not just of the communist era but also of the partitions when Poland was carved up between Prussia, Austria-Hungary and Russia for a period of 125 years. Finally, sovereign after having 'paid an enormous price for its freedom' (Risse 2010, p. 79), this is an exclusive nationalist narrative which 'connects Poland's fate as a victim of European powers, namely Germany and Russia, and its heroic struggles for freedom, understood as independence and sovereignty' (Risse 2010, p. 80). Europe, therefore, does not resonate with Polish identity here at all; instead, Europe represents a threat to the new, sovereign Polish nation which needs to be defended from new foreign powers.

In Poland, the 'barbaric east' described above, usually represented by Russia, functions as an Other for Europeanised identities in Poland as in many other CEE countries. According to Törnquist-Plewa, in some Polish discourses, Europe takes the position of debtor, owing Poland for its role as a bridge between East and West and 'as the bulwark of Europe, as the shield of free, democratic Europe against Eastern barbarism' (2002, p. 230), a notion 'deeply rooted in Polish identity discourse' (Zarycki 2004b, p. 610). Furthermore, continuing a long history of Russian Otherness, Neumann argues that Russia functioned as a constitutive Other in the construction of a post-1989 political identity for Central Europe, particularly in an appeal to the Maastricht negotiations of the early 1990s, when the central European countries of Poland, Hungary and (at the time) Czechoslovakia presented themselves as an integral part of the European integration project (1993, pp. 365–366). This, he argues, emerged from 'frustration with the Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe' (1993, p. 366). The Russian Other in Polish identity, thus, clearly places Poland firmly within a European identity context. However, Germany also functions as an 'Other' of an exclusive Polish national identity (Góra and Mach 2010, p. 3), seen as another dominant power in Europe that poses a threat to Polish sovereignty. Indeed, in many nineteenth and twentieth century discourses, the Germans were considered 'as traditional enemies, occupiers and oppressors, [. . .] the violators of European cultural values' (Törnquist-Plewa 2002b, p. 225). Both Germany and Russia can, therefore, be considered as significant external Others of Polish identity.

The crisis saw Poland emerge as the only country not to go into recession – what the then Prime Minister Donald Tusk dubbed the so-called 'green island' of growth in an otherwise entirely 'red' map of the European Union (Pomorska and Vanhoonacker 2012, p. 76). The early crisis period also saw Poland become a more powerful player in the EU, exemplified in particular by Poland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2011 (Pomorska and Vanhoonacker 2012, p. 78) and later by the choice of Donald Tusk to be the next President of the European Council. Considering the 'inferiority complex' mentioned above, a development where Poland emerges as the only European economy to escape recession and takes on a leadership role in the EU could be highly significant for discourses on Europe in Poland, signifying perhaps a new self-confidence for Poland and a moment when the country finally 'returns'. Nevertheless, Poland signed the Fiscal Compact in December 2011 and agreed to contribute financially to the bailout mechanisms, something which presents an important test of European solidarity in Poland given its long-standing status as a net-recipient of EU funds and relates directly to the Polish sovereignty discourse.

The relationship to Germany during the crisis is particularly important here. Given the fear of Germany in Polish sovereignty discourses, we might ask to what extent Germany's position as Poland's 'Other' has shifted. On the one hand, Poland's relative economic success and new leadership role may have calmed historical fears about German hegemony. On the other hand, Germany's clear economic and political power in overcoming the crisis may serve to reinforce such fears. There may also be parallels here with Germany in our expectation that it is becoming a more self-assertive player in the EU. Whereas the normalisation debate in Germany implies that Germany's *national* identity will become more assertive with a stronger focus on *national* interest in political and media discourse; however, we might expect here that Poland's *European* identity becomes more assertive and self-confident. These three case studies, therefore, present a unique and interesting exploratory study of the role of crisis in shaping European identities, offering data about three countries that are both understudied and rarely studied in comparison. Table 3.1 below summarises elements of European identity discourses identified in the three case study countries. Table 3.2 summarises the main similarities and differences between the chosen case studies in relation to the EU. The next sections outline the materials and methods used.

Table 3.1 Case study comparison

	Germany	*Ireland*	*Poland*
EU accession	Founding member	1973	2004
EMU member?	Yes	Yes	No – treaty-bound to join, but no current target date.
Large/small EU country	Large	Small	Large
Justification for EU membership (discourse)	Vergangenheits bewältigung ('Coming to terms with the past')	Trade/economics, independence from Britain	Return to Europe
Economic model	Ordoliberalism/ social market economy	Liberal market economy	Post-communist capitalism
Economic crisis	Strongest European economy, contributed to bailouts	Severe economic crisis, end of boom years, received EU/IMF bailouts	Only EU member not to enter recession, 'green island', although not unaffected.
Recent changes of government (as of time of publication)	2013 – CDU/CSU-SPD Grand Coalition 2009 – CDU/CSU-FDP coalition replaces CDU/CSU-SPD Grand Coalition. Angela Merkel remains Chancellor.	2016 – Fine Gael minority government 2011 – Fine Gael-Labour coalition replaces Fianna Fáil-Green Party coalition Taoiseach–Enda Kenny replaces Brian Cowen	2015 – Law and Justice wins election. Beata Szydło replaces Ewa Kopacz as prime minister. 2014 – Ewa Kopacz replaces Donald Tusk as prime minister after his appointment as European Council President. 2007 – Civic Platform-Polish People's Party replace Law and Justice (re-elected 2011)

Table 3.2 National discourses on Europe in Germany, Poland and Ireland

National discourses on Europe	*What is Europe?*	*Who is the other?*	*What is Europe for?*
Germany	Post-war consensus – Europe of peace, democracy. Multilateralism *Deutschmark* patriotism	Nazi past, WW2 → Germany's peaceful role Experience of hyperinflation →monetary stability	European Germany – German interests as European interests
Ireland	Economic growth through EU membership Irish sovereignty – strengthening of Irish nation through Europe	Britain and colonial past → EU secures Ireland's independence from Britain	Primacy of Irish economy and Irish nation →EU as instrument
Poland	Return to Europe, post-communism, Poland's rightful place in (Western)Europe, Europe as foreign power, threat to Polish sovereignty	Russia and the 'barbaric East' – long history of Russian occupation Germany as foreign occupying force	Polish interests in Europe/Poland as protector of West – European/Polish interests

Data Analysis

Chapter 2 argues that the capacity of the crisis to change constructions of European identity lies with how the crisis is framed by political and media actors in the national contexts. In order to better understand the dynamics of change and continuity in identity discourses at a time of crisis, then, the way in which the crisis is constructed by political and social actors in their national contexts and the related struggles over the meaning of European identity are key. The methods must, therefore, be able to identify the different ways in which the crisis and crisis policies are constructed by these actors in the three case study countries and how these constructions relate to identity discourses. As such, this study uses a qualitative frame analysis that draws on Entman's approach. A frame can be defined as 'an interpretive scheme used to make sense of the "world out there" ' (Risse and Van De Steeg 2003, p. 5) helping to 'render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action'

(Benford and Snow 2000, p. 614; see also; Entman 2004). Frames, therefore, fulfil a function by political elites to create a narrative about an event or issue to maintain public support, whereas journalists use frames to make sense of events and to attract and maintain the attention of readers (Valkenburg et al. 1999b, pp. 550–551). According to Entman, framing involves 'selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation' (2004, p. 5). He identifies the following elements of frames (though a text does not have to include all of them):

> *define problems* – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; *diagnose causes* – identify the forces creating the problem; *make moral judgements* – evaluate causal agents and their effects; and *suggest remedies* – offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects. (1993, p. 52)

In this process, frames offer particular interpretations of events at the same time as excluding others, the omission of which 'is as significant to outcomes as inclusion' (1993, p. 54). Nevertheless, Entman argues, framing is not necessarily homogenous in a given context. The framing of an event by different elites and media actors might be uniform at one level but involve 'competing frames at another' (1993, p. 55). When it comes to political news, Entman notes, politicians 'compete with each other and with journalists over news frames' as part of their legitimation strategies (1993, p. 55). In the case of the Euro crisis, then, we might see a common identification of the problem (e.g. Europe under threat) but, for example, competing interpretations of the cause (e.g. Greece, the domestic government, the Euro) or the remedies (what solutions to the crisis are needed).

When it comes to construction of crisis, the media constitutes 'a carrier of ideas and images of Europe and of the nation state, and the framing of media content is crucial for the attribution of responsibilities' (Michailidou and Trenz 2015, p. 235). Frame analysis can therefore identify the implications and causes of the crisis as well as the responsibility that is attributed for the crisis. Through the identification of a problem (what is at stake), the attribution of responsibility (who or what is the threat) and the solutions offered (what are Europeans willing to do for each other), crisis frames can reveal particular ideas about Europe, European identity and the 'Other', as well as strength of identity.

According to Entman, the power or capacity of a frame lies in the extent of its 'cultural resonance'. Those frames that have a high level of 'cultural congruence' are likely to be most powerful, but where there is ambiguity in the framing is when contestation and conflict over interpretations can take place (2004b p. 6). Thus, frames that have a high level of resonance with existing understandings and ideas about Europe are likely to provide powerful explanations for the crisis that reproduce existing discourse. More ambiguous framings, on the other hand, may open up the possibility for new ideas to be introduced in the course of contestation and struggles over meaning.

Frame analysis can therefore both reveal particular meanings – as Díez Medrano argues, analysis of frames about European integration is a heuristic device which can 'inductively improve our explanations of people's attitudes and of international variation in these attitudes' (2003, p. 6), but also have effects, to the extent that they influence public opinions (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000b, p. 94). Frame analysis thus serves to identify the various meanings and interpretations of the crisis with and between countries which can, though qualitative analysis, pinpoint the different understandings of Europe embedded within them. However, it can also identify the possible changes in identity constructions likely to impact on existing understandings of Europe.

As such, this book adopts a qualitative form of frame analysis. There are a number of studies which conduct quantitative frame analysis of European public spheres (see e.g. Van De Steeg 2006b; Risse and Van De Steeg 2003; Trenz 2004a; Díez Medrano 2003) and as part of political claims-making analysis, which analyses the ways in which political actors express opinion in the public sphere (Koopmans and Statham 2010; Statham and Trenz 2013b). Frame analysis can thus be deductive or inductive (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000b, pp. 94–95). Quantitative studies use frames which are fixed *a priori*, such as, for example, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000b) or instrumental, identity or historical frames (Koopmans and Statham 2010). By determining in advance the kinds of frames used to discuss the crisis, such approaches risk missing important elements of the debates. For this reason, the frames in this study have been generated entirely inductively through repeated readings of the texts. Each overarching frame category has a number of sub-frames that identify different related elements. This allows for more detailed capture of the ways in which the crisis is constructed (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000b,

p. 94) and means that key similarities and differences between the case studies can be easily identified. As Díez Medrano finds, frames may cut across national borders but are also imbued with specific national cultural narratives (2003, p. 7). While, as Semetko and Valkenburg note, the inductive strategy reduces the size of the sample, it also allows for analysis of a much larger sample than forms of critical discourse analysis which analyse linguistic structures and argumentative strategies in smaller numbers of texts (see e.g. Boukala 2014; Wodak and Boukala 2015b; Kutter 2015).

As argued, what is important for European identity is not just engagement with Europe but what elites, the media and citizens are '*saying* about Europe as they engage with Europe' (Schmidt 2011a, p. 16), particularly as they try to make sense of the crisis. To account for the fluid and dynamic nature of identity constructions, the identification of broad categories and subcategories has been complemented by interpretative textual analysis, constituting a flexible approach to frame analysis (see e.g. Ragin 1994, p. 122). An interpretive textual analysis can 'shed light on the subtle narrative, argumentative, and inter-subjective dynamics by which meaning is continuously re-created' (Sternberg 2013b, p. 8). Given the research focus on the particular context-specific framing of the crisis and the construction of European identities through these frames, a qualitative approach allows for a deeper interpretive study within the different political and cultural contexts. By interpreting the language used to communicate about the EU at a time of crisis, we can identify the identity content of crisis frames and trace the way in which these identities are reproduced in political debates (Schmidt 2014b, p. 6). In so doing, this book does not seek to provide quantitative data about the frequencies of frames used in different countries and newspapers, but rather unpack the complex ways in which the contestations over the crisis give meaning to European identities in different contexts.

Furthermore, while there are a number of quantitative studies of European identity using survey and experimental methods (see e.g. Bruter 2005, 2009; Fligstein 2009; Risse 2013), such methods 'risk imposing a conceptual unity on extremely diverse sets of political processes that mean different things in different contexts' (Checkel and Katzenstein 2009, p. 10). In so doing, they can lead to an 'over-essentialisation' of identity and an impression of homogenous national identities in each country (Manners 2014, p. 294). While survey data can provide important background to questions of European identity, such methods are thus unsuitable

for these research purposes which are focused on the identification of meaning and content of identity. As Risse notes, however, determining the 'we' in identity research poses methodological challenges (2010, p. 124). We cannot measure 'identity' simply through explicit references to identity issues. Rather, the identity constructions are embedded within the texts, and the language used to discuss policy issues. Moreover, because there is no single European identity, but a multitude of European identities, identifying the content of the various national European identities becomes paramount. Here, the focus is not necessarily a matter of being 'European' or not, or 'less' or 'more' European, but rather what kind of Europe is constructed and what it means to be European. It is also necessary to determine the 'other' which is constructed in the discourse. Is it an internal Other or an external? Furthermore, the frames of reference – European or national – must also be determined. Are matters perceived as common European or as national issues? As Risse notes, framing can be 'completely different and hardly Europeanized despite strong politicization of EU issues in national public spheres' (2014, p. 7). News is often 'highly bound by national and sub-national concerns relative to the supranational (international or transnational)' (Preston and Metykova 2009, p. 48). On this basis, key concepts from the theoretical framework have been operationalized which formed a number of questions to ask of the texts during the inductive generation of frames and interpretive analysis:

- How is the Euro crisis constructed? What is the nature of the crisis? Is it a common European crisis or, e.g. a Greek problem?
- How are the EU and the Euro constructed through these texts and specifically through policy solutions? What meanings are attributed to the EU and the Euro? What kind of Europe is portrayed? What are the main themes through which the EUand the crisis are discussed?
- What is the frame of reference (European/National)? Which internal/external others are constructed?

Time Periods

This study involved extensive analysis of newspaper articles alongside political speeches and press releases relating to the crisis at specific periods of time in 2010 and 2011 in the three case study countries. In order to capture the dynamics of identity construction during the early stages of the

crisis, two specific points in time were selected for analysis. The snapshots in time involve key moments during the crisis when EU policies were particularly salient in the public sphere and when we might expect to see change. As Davis Cross and Ma note, the 'key phase in which the media clearly has an independent role is immediately after the crisis trigger, when coverage disproportionately turns something relatively average into something that threatens the very existence of the EU' (2015, p. 229). Furthermore, in his activation model that traces how frames can spread, Entman argues that 'early stimuli arising from new events and issues generally have primacy, since activation spreads out from the initial idea' (2004, p. 7). The early stages of the crisis, therefore, likely determine narratives of the crisis in the later stages. While these are brief time periods, the broad body of sources allows for a comprehensive overview of debates at two different and important stages of the crisis and across three countries. The snapshots are as follows:

April/May 2010 (Germany and Poland)
This period constitutes the two weeks spanning the Eurozone meeting on 7 May at which leaders agreed to the first Greek bailout as well as other economic coordination plans to help the Euro. This was a time when the German government needed to legitimise the Greek bailout, and the first fears about an existential threat to the Euro had begun to emerge. This time period raises particular questions about the effect on identity discourses. Given Germany's substantial contribution to the Greek bailout during this time, we can, for example, expect that this period in time presented a test of strength of European solidarity in Germany. In the case of Poland, we might question the extent to which Poland's political and economic future was linked to a crisis in the Eurozone (to which Poland does not belong) at this stage. Whereas Poland was not expected to contribute financially at this time, from April-June 2010 the Euro had begun to fall heavily against the dollar, something which would also have had implications for the Polish economy and currency, which are closely tied to the Euro. Furthermore, the then Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk was awarded the Charlemagne Prize presented to those considered to have made a significant contribution to European unification in May 2010. We can, therefore, expect press coverage and public statements relating to this award and to Poland's position in the EU more generally.

November 2010 (Ireland)
Considering Ireland's position as a so-called 'debtor' or bailout recipient country, the period at the end of November 2010 was selected in order to capture the debates which took place at a moment when Ireland was on the opposite side of the crisis to Germany, a 'creditor' or 'net contributor' country. At the end of November 2010, the Irish government formally requested a bailout from the EU. While the bailout was designed to save Ireland from default, the funds were attached to conditions such as far-reaching austerity measures, a large contribution from its national pension reserves and high-interest rates on the loans provided. The period from 21 November to 5 December 2010 spans the moment at which Ireland applied for financial assistance from the EU/IMF on 28 November to deal with the growing fiscal crisis that followed its banking crisis in 2008. This period provides an opportunity to consider the extent to which the politics of blaming plays a role in identity construction. How far were Europeans, Germans, or the British blamed for Ireland's plight at this time? Alternatively, was this a moment at which Ireland was reminded of the benefits of EU membership, in the sense that the EU was 'coming to the rescue'? While including Ireland in the May 2010 time period would also have been interesting, it has been noted that November 2010 was the moment at which EMU issues were most visible in Irish public debates (Hechinger 2014, p. 96). Furthermore, Ireland's financial situation rather than that of Greece has been found to be the focus of Irish debates during May 2010, when Greece presented a 'test case' for Ireland's developing crisis situation (Hechinger 2014, p. 202). The period covering the Irish bailout was, therefore, the most important period for the Irish case study during 2010.

December 2011 (all cases)
The second time period comprises approximately the first two weeks of December 2011, the fortnight spanning the European Council summit on 8-9 December which saw the agreement of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (TSCG, otherwise known as the Fiscal Compact) between twenty-six EU member states, with the exception of the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. This Treaty agreed on strengthened budgetary rules and increased economic policy coordination. This period also follows the agreement of a second bailout of Greece in October 2011. December 2011 also saw the conclusion of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. This time period was extended to

begin on 28 November 2011 in the case of Poland to include the debate following former Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski's speech in Berlin at which he now famously declared that he 'fears German power less than German inactivity' on the Euro crisis. In the case of Poland, in order to deal with the volume of articles, the time period has been split to range from 29 November to 3 December (the days following this speech and prior to the European Council summit) and 13–17 December (the days surrounding Tusk's speech to the Sejm during a debate on the outcomes of the Council summit). This summit was widely dubbed as the summit to 'save the Euro', and therefore, highly salient for all three case studies. It is a point at which the crisis became one affecting all of Europe rather than individual crisis countries, demanding justifications and motivations for 'saving' the currency as a whole. Given the agreement to further integration in economic policy, this time period presents a test of the willingness to share sovereignty in this domain. It also presents a test of European solidarity in both Germany and Poland with commitment from both countries of additional funds to the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). The chosen time periods, therefore, constitute three highly relevant political moments for Germany, Poland and Ireland during the Euro crisis.

Materials

Given the focus of this research on the 'communicative discourse' between elites, the media and citizens for examining how the crisis is constructed, the primary focus of this research is media discourse complemented by political communication in the form of speeches and press releases by political elites, namely government elites and political parties. Analysis of elite and media discourse cannot provide us with a comprehensive understanding of European identity discourses in a given context. It does, however, allow for an understanding of how political and social actors, who have considerable influence over public debates, construct European identities which may then influence public opinion. In accordance with Entman's cascading activation model, which shows how frames flow between elites, the news media, and the public (2004, p. 9), elites arguably have most initial power in determining the success of frames, which are then picked up and contested in the news media. Analysing both political speeches and news media thus best highlights the dominant frames about the crisis that come into being, helping to untangle which frames 'attract dissent, which earn acceptance, and what difference this makes to politics and policy' (2004, p.12). According to Schmidt, the media is the

intermediary between leaders and citizens, the 'main transmission belt for information, reporting, commenting, critiquing EU leaders; press conferences, speeches, declarations, and actions, as well as the responses from informed publics and ordinary citizens' (Schmidt 2014b, p. 204). Furthermore, Trenz argues that European quality newspapers are the 'principal carrier of the discourse on European unity and collective understanding of the EU' (2004b, p. 1). In this sense, the quality press functions as a 'public entrepreneur' meaning that newspapers should be 'analysed in their most active role as a political actor and campaigner' (2004b). However, the inclusion of the tabloid newspapers is particularly important in order to gain a full picture of EU debates and to avoid an 'elite bias' resulting in a more 'Europeanised' impression of public debates (Risse 2010, p. 114), especially as we know that elites have long been the most pro-integration actors across the EU (Hooghe and Marks 2009). This study therefore examines the reporting of the crisis in three different newspapers in each country and allows for comparison both across and within cases (George and Bennett 2003, p. 18). The newspapers chosen are outlined in Table 3.3.

These newspapers include the two most widely-read broadsheets from each country, representing both the conservative and left/liberal-leaning sections of the press, and the most widely-read tabloid newspaper. All articles dealing centrally with the Euro crisis were selected and those not dealing with the crisis as a central theme were discarded. In total, 583 articles have been analysed. In addition to newspaper articles, 45 major speeches and press releases by heads of government and high-level government ministers as well as the main opposition leaders during the key time periods were collected from the websites of the largest governing and opposition political parties and analysed. Political discourse in addition to media discourse allows us to identify contestation of crisis legitimation and differences between elite and media or mass level.

Table 3.3 Newspapers analysed

Country	*Conservative broadsheet*	*Left/Liberal broadsheet*	*Tabloid*
Germany	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)	Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ)	BILD Zeitung
Ireland	Irish Independent	Irish Times	Irish Daily Star
Poland	Rzeczpospolita (RZ)	Gazeta Wyborcza (GW)	Fakt

Overview of Frames

The purpose of the frame analysis was to understand what meanings are given to the crisis and to Europe and European identity in the public sphere and to consider the 'communicative conditions' in which European identities are likely to be promoted, reinforced or challenged. The crisis frames can reveal particular understandings of national and European identities and help us to understand the meaning or 'content' of 'Europeanness' as a political identity. Five broad and sometimes overlapping categories were identified which then each had a number of sub-frames. In the following empirical chapters, the textual analysis provides examples from the key frames and sub-frames in each country.

Crisis Frame

This frame refers to the overarching meaning of the crisis in terms of the problem or cause attributed to it, and reveals the extent to which the crisis is 'framed as issues of common European concern and of common European fate' (Risse 2010, p. 125). This is particularly important for questions about 'critical junctures'. For European identity discourses to change, there must be a crisis that strongly relates to European discourses. For example, if the cause is constructed solely as the result of the 'markets', the crisis could function as an 'external Other' posing a threat to Europe, thus serving to reinforce European identities. If it is constructed as a broader European crisis which invokes European values and risks the break-up of EU as a whole, this may also function in the same way to encourage solidarity amongst Europeans. However, the framing of the crisis also serves to create divisions in Europe. Blaming Greece, 'southern European' or 'peripheral' countries creates internal Others within the EU, as does a framing of the crisis which attributes its cause to the so-called 'design flaw' or 'birth defect' of the Euro. Finally, if the crisis is framed as a domestic crisis or a broader global crisis the impact on European identities is unlikely to be significant.

Interests Frame

This frame relates to the extent to which the EU and crisis policies are presented in terms of either the European or national interest or both. Here, the European Union is not discussed explicitly in terms of identities or values but perceived material interests of either Europe or the nation-state. Sub-frames here include the perceived threat to national economic interests

or the political strength of a member state or European economic interests in view of globalisation trends. Nevertheless, this frame still has implications for identity. Framing crisis policies in terms of the national interest, for example, draws a boundary that is limited to the national context and may limit willingness to exercise European solidarity. A threat to European interests may signify a conception of a political community with shared concerns.

Solidarity Frame

This frame is related to the proposed solutions to the crisis and identifies the instances in which they are framed in terms of solidarity with other Europeans or EU member states, particularly salient in light of the large sums of public funds contributed to the bailout programmes. Furthermore, this frame identifies the competing understandings of 'European solidarity' present in the case study countries. The solidarity frame reveals particular understandings of the 'good European' through moral evaluations. For example, in the German context, accepting such measures as austerity and adhering to treaty rules are sometimes linked to the 'European idea' and presented as a display of solidarity in a European community. References to, for example, economic sacrifices, adherence to rules, and handing out punishments for breaking them, are made within the context of a 'we' community where, for example, 'Defizitsünder' (deficit sinners) are 'sinners' as EU member states, and are to be punished as such. This nevertheless represents a weak kind of solidarity, in contrast to forms of egalitarian solidarity involving wealth redistribution, debt-sharing and economic sacrifices by creditor states in a community of equals. There are also instances where solidarity is primarily expressed in relation to the national populations. This frame can also reveal the boundaries of the European community, for example, in the instances where debtor countries have broken the 'community rules' as laid down in the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) in particular.

Sovereignty Frame

Sovereignty emerged as a key frame in all case study countries, but particularly in Poland and Ireland. This frame relates to the instances where crisis policy solutions are linked to questions of national sovereignty – including fiscal or budgetary sovereignty and threats to national sovereignty by other EU member states – particularly Germany, along with France. It identifies the instances where opposition to crisis policies such as the bailouts, debt-sharing or, in the case

of Ireland, common taxation policy, is framed in terms of implications for national sovereignty rather than European solidarity. This frame, therefore, highlights the implications of the crisis for questions of European and national statehood. Furthermore, it sheds light on the strength of European political identity at the level of discourse and the extent to which there might be a willingness to share sovereignty with other EU member states. Finally, it illuminates emerging divisions in Europe, particularly between core and periphery. Concern about German (and to some extent French) dominance over national affairs emerges as a strong point of antagonism.

History Frame

This frame brings together history narratives used to make sense of the crisis and justify or oppose policy solutions. This frame also helps to reveal the content of European and national identity constructions. For example, there are some references to the early days of European integration post-1945 and the EU and single currency's 'founding fathers', in particular, the need to remember their founding vision during this time of crisis. There are also many references to Germany's past and the need to prove to Europe its peaceful intentions, as well as recurring references to Germany's fear of inflation. In the German context, these might function to solidify the need for European unification or cooperation, but rising fear of German dominance in other EU member states may lead to the 'Othering' of Germany and an increased desire to protect national sovereignty. There are also references to the fall of communism in 1989 and the Irish war of independence and the Anglo-Irish Treaty which relate to motivations for and opposition to further European integration in Poland and Ireland. This frame serves to demonstrate the lack of a shared founding narrative for the EU.

Table 3.4 lists these main frames and the sub-frames that were identified during the coding process.

Conclusion

There are many different competing discourses on Europe in Germany, Ireland and Poland. On the basis of previous scholarly literature on European discourses, this chapter has identified the primary discourses on European identity in the three countries. This outline serves as a framework against which the Euro crisis discourses

Table 3.4 Crisis frames

Crisis frame	*Solidarity frame*	*Sovereignty frame*	*History frame*	*Interests frame*
– Financial markets – European/institutional crisis – Euro design flaw – Southern European crisis – National politics – Domestic politics – Global crisis	– Thick solidarity – Debt-sharing/ redistribution – Economic sacrifices – Ordinary people – Further integration – Thin solidarity – Community rules and punishments – Budgetary discipline and austerity – Creditors responsible – National solidarity	– Fiscal sovereignty – No bailouts – No debt-sharing – No tax harmonisation – German dominance – National sovereignty – EU increases national sovereignty	– 1989/reunification – Fear of German dominance – Fear of inflation – Founding days of EU – War in Europe – European colonialism – Fall of empires – National Socialism – Wirtschaftswunder – Irish War of Independence	– European interests – Globalisation – European economy – EU institutions – National interests – Strength of member state – Trade, exports, economy – Member state in Europe's interests

can be compared. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that there are always struggles and negotiations over the meaning of Europe and national identities in public sphere debates which lead to the dominance of certain ideas to the exclusion of others. The empirical analysis has adopted an interpretive, qualitative frame analysis approach to analysing the political and media discourse. Through an examination of political and media discourse – two quality newspapers and a tabloid in each country as well as political speeches and press releases – the book analyses discourses on the crisis during its early stages at key moments in 2010 and 2011. The following chapters will outline the construction of the Euro crisis and European identities in the three countries. It now turns to the first empirical chapter – the German case study. As arguably the most influential EU member state when it comes to Eurozone policy-making, the findings can shed light on the path dependencies involved in the German approach to crisis as well as their effects on the construction of Germany's European identity in public debates.

Notes

1. This section draws on parts of my article (2015) entitled 'Has Germany "Fallen out of Love" with Europe? The Eurozone Crisis and the "Normalization" of Germany's European Identity', published in the journal *German Politics and Society*.
2. Latvia joined the single currency on 1 January 2014 and Lithuania joined on 1 January 2015, bringing the number of Eurozone member states to 19.
3. *The Economist* also points out that there is no homogeneity even amongst this 'out' group, arguing that 'Britain's prime aim is to avoid entanglement with the euro zone, but Poland's is to avoid exclusion. Britain is calling the lawyers to set the terms for divorce [. . .] Poland wants to be included in all discussions, and to avoid new obstacles to joining the monetary union' (2011). There are, therefore, those members who are intent on remaining outside of the Eurozone and those members seeking eventual Euro membership.

CHAPTER 4

Has Germany Fallen Out of Love with Europe?

Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 set out the theoretical framework, methods and background to the three case studies. The primary objective of this book is to examine the extent to which the Euro crisis has affected the construction of European identities in Germany, Ireland and Poland, and how and why the effect of the crisis differs between countries and types of discourse. To do this, the competing ways in which the crisis is framed in the communicative discourse between media and political actors are investigated. This chapter constitutes the book's first empirical case study and argues that, in line with expectations set out in Chapter 2, the crisis has primarily reflected existing ideas and identities in Germany rather than changed them due to the political constraints in the German context[1]. It has been argued that the Euro crisis in Germany has presented a clash between the German economic model of ordoliberalism – the theoretical foundation of the social market economy which has been strongly linked to the country's post-war identity – and the country's commitment to European integration (see e.g. Bulmer and Paterson 2013), which is expected to have sparked a shift in European identity in Germany. This chapter takes these claims as a starting point and argues that the crisis and the ordoliberal model have not necessarily proved incompatible with European integration and European identity. Instead, debates during the Euro crisis were framed both in terms of Germany's long-standing post-war European identity

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which, as outlined in Chapter 2, emphasises the importance of the European project for overcoming Germany's Nazi past, and in terms of an 'ordoliberal' Europe, less a federal state-in-the-making and more so based on an 'ordoliberal ethic', where the 'good European' demonstrates such values as economic discipline and individual responsibility (see also Galpin 2015). While the crisis opened up a 'window of opportunity' for actors to articulate a different idea of Europe for strategic purposes, in some cases redrawing the boundaries of Europe to construct a 'Northern European' community, it has not introduced new ideas, but rather strengthened ordoliberal conceptions of Europe that were already in existence with the introduction of the single currency, particularly amongst conservatives and the Constitutional Court.

Germany's experience of the crisis differs starkly from Ireland and Poland. Whereas Ireland suffered as a 'debtor' country and bailout recipient and Poland emerged as the 'green island' of growth in an indebted Europe, Germany was largely responsible for agreeing and making a significant financial contribution to the bailout programmes as one of the most important 'creditor' countries. In this context, Germany is an important study of European solidarity (Risse 2013, p. 15). While the country did not experience an economic crisis in the same way as other EU member states, the debates about the crisis were of high salience because of Germany's expected financial contribution. These bailouts were highly controversial and met with an enormous backlash in the populist press, particularly in 2010, when *BILD Zeitung* ran a vociferously anti-Greek campaign. Since the onset of the crisis, Germany has seen the development of a new 'Eurosceptic' party – Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) – which formed in 2013, and despite missing out on any seats in the 2013 *Bundestag* election, won 7% of the vote and 7 seats in the 2014 European Parliament election. In 2016, they were represented in eight state parliaments, having reached 24% of the vote in the 2016 state parliament election in Saxony-Anhalt. Furthermore, public opinion in Germany has consistently opposed the bailout packages, with a majority of Germans disagreeing with the Greek bailout in 2010 and a significant number even advocating the exclusion of Greece from the Eurozone. Altogether, both the actions of the German government and the apparent development of a public backlash against the EU have led to the accusation that Germany has 'fallen out of love' with Europe, a consequence of a 'normalised' national identity (see e.g. Proissl 2010). The German reluctance to offer a bailout to Greece in 2010 is often read as a reluctance to express European solidarity,

where Germany puts its own national economic interests before the common European good.

Drawing on in-depth and systematic analysis of German political and media discourse, this chapter argues that this opposition to the bailout mechanisms should be read primarily in terms of Germany's economic model of ordoliberalism rather than a turn away from Europe per se. In so doing, it will offer new and original empirical research on European identity in Germany. Following Hillebrand (2015), it will show how it is the ordoliberal values of economic discipline and individual responsibility that drive opposition to EU action on the Euro crisis rather than a shift away from European identity. This compares to findings from the Poland and Ireland case studies, where the crisis also reflects the long-standing national discourses on Europe. In Poland, it reflects both the 'return to Europe' and national sovereignty discourses. In Ireland, it reflects both Ireland's economic and sovereignty-based motivations for European integration and particular understandings of Irish identity. However, it differs from both cases to the extent that even opposition actors voice their opposition to the EU and government policy in terms of 'Europeanness', therefore, contradicting the assumptions of normalisation. The first section will outline in greater detail the normalisation debate in relation to the crisis as well as the German economic model of ordoliberalism. The following sections draw on detailed qualitative analysis of political communication and media reporting of the crisis. The second section will show how German elites framed the crisis in terms of its existing post-war European identity arguably to safeguard Germany's position in Europe rather than to move it away from Europe. While there was a strategic element to this discourse in order to gain legitimacy for the Greek bailouts and later the EU's Fiscal Compact, it is clear that they are constrained by veto players such as the Constitutional Court and other factors, most notably the need to create resonance with the German public and existing discourses on Europe. The next section will explain the various understandings of European solidarity, showing how what is often interpreted as signaling an absence of solidarity can instead be read as a weak form of solidarity nevertheless supported by a European identity based on an ordoliberal 'capitalist' ethic. The final section will show how, despite the articulation of national interests and national sovereignty in some parts of the press, debates about the crisis measures construct a new 'Northern European' community which redraws the boundaries of Europe, but nevertheless positions Germany as solidly European.

The Normalisation Debate

As outlined in Chapter 3, 'normalisation' here refers to primarily international responses to perceived changes in Germany's historical post-war commitment to Europe. Germany was the committed advocate of increased European integration throughout the post-war period, from the early days of European integration in the 1950s right through to the launch of the European single currency in the early 1990s, a time when 'multilateral integration had entered the German elite's genetic code' (Bulmer and Paterson 2013, p. 1393). In recent years, however, a debate about the 'normalisation' of European identity in Germany has emerged, understood broadly as the development of a more self-confident German national identity. According to Hyde-Price and Jeffrey, normalisation involves 'Germany becoming more like other powers in its class, e.g. France, and the UK' (2001, p. 690) whose European policies involve the explicit and open pursuit of self-interest in contrast to the common 'European' interest (see also Jeffery and Paterson 2003, p. 68) as well as a decline in the importance of the Franco-German relationship. Jeffery and Paterson argue that a 'shifting of tectonic plates' sparked, in this sense, a 're-evaluation and recasting of traditional European values' (2003, p. 73) driven by 'transformational actors' (2003, p. 71). As noted in Chapter 3, one of these actors is considered to be former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, seen as representing a younger generation of Germans less conscious of the country's past. He was able to articulate a discourse rooted more clearly in notions of national interests and identity (see e.g. Hyde-Price and Jeffery 2001, p. 698), particularly in his attempts to reduce Germany's contributions to the EU's budget (Jeffery and Paterson 2003, p. 68). If, with the generational change, Germany's past becomes less present in the national consciousness, Germany's need to be tied to Europe may wane, and an opportunity for a change in discourses on European identity could emerge.

However, the question of normalisation long precedes Schröder's time in office. Normalisation has, historically, meant 'to be recognised as a normal (read: legitimate and non-aggressive) country by the international community' (Hedetoft 1998, p. 2). The strive for normality was also an element of the political discourse during the post-war period and in the run-up to German reunification. It was Kohl in particular, who, Wicke argues, 'emerged as the embodiment of German normality' (2015, p. 207). Around the time of reunification, Kohl stated that the goal was

to become a 'wholly normal country, not "singularized" in any question' (cited in Wicke 2015b, p. 7). Viewing himself as part of a generation 'free of Nazi guilt' (Wicke 2015b, p. 208), normality for Kohl involved, throughout his political career, portraying a form of 'de-radicalised nationalism', which comprised of a confident Germany embedded in Western and European institutions and a political identity focused on 'individualism, economic freedom, representative democracy, constitutionalism and a stable but limited welfare state' (Wicke 2015b, p. 210). The normalisation process is, nevertheless, often considered to have begun in the immediate post-reunification period (Berger 1997, p. 202). With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the country was able to shed the clearest symbol of its abnormality as it 'repaired the most tangible consequence of German enthusiasm for Nazism' (Taberner 2002b, p. 1). The Two Plus Four Agreement of 1991, the final peace treaty between the four Allied powers, saw the return of full sovereignty to Germany as well as the formal recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as the German-Polish border – the latter long demanded as a condition of the 'normalisation' of German-Polish relations (Bingen 2005). All in all, reunification resulted in a formal 'restoration of normality in German foreign policy' (Díez Medrano 2003, p. 195) as well as furthering reconciliation with the country's eastern neighbours (Phillips 1998).

Changes to Germany's European identity are, however, also attributed in part to the incorporation of citizens of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) who developed their own distinctive East German identity (Hogwood 2000). In light of the GDR's very different relationship with the Nazi past, citizens of the former GDR did not necessarily have the same emotional connection to European integration as West Germans. Díez Medrano finds that, prior to reunification, the EEC was discussed in almost exclusively negative terms in the GDR press (2003, p. 127). Furthermore, East German journalists and ordinary citizens at the time of reunification did not express the same concerns about reassuring their European neighbours as West Germans (2003, p. 115). What is more, given the challenges associated with reuniting two nations separated for many decades, a sense of national identity 'from the top down' was necessary to try to overcome the much discussed *Mauer im Kopf* – the wall in the minds (Berger 1997). It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that, in the wake of reunification, constructions of European identity in Germany changed as they included voices from the former east – indeed, this is a common explanation of Merkel's perceived pragmatic approach to EU

policy-making. Related to this, the supposed re-focus on national interests has also been associated with the introduction of the Euro as well as Germany's economic difficulties during the 1990s. Given the importance of the *Deutsche Mark* and the '"social market economy" (soziale Marktwirtschaft) that contributed much to West Germany's self-confidence' (Risse 2002, p. 14) in the post-war period, the loss of that national symbol along with a perception of increased prices following the introduction of the Euro led to disillusionment with the single currency amongst the German public and to low levels of support for the Euro in polls in the early 2000s. Furthermore, due to the economic slowdown of the late nineties, Germany became known as the 'sick man of Europe' (The Economist 1999b). With many in West Germany resentful of the *Solidaritätszuschlag* ('solidarity tax') introduced to cover the costs of reunification, many Germans were concerned that European integration would worsen unemployment and wage depreciation through immigration (Díez Medrano 2003, p. 34). Eurobarometer polls also corroborate this fall in support for European integration in the mid-to-late nineties.

The Euro crisis is, therefore, presumed to have exacerbated this shift away from the European interest in German discourse. The assumption in the more recent normalisation literature is that discourses more avidly promoting Germany's economic interests and national identity were strengthened and its European vision weakened, particularly during the first Greek bailout negotiations in the first half of 2010, when Merkel's initial refusal to consider a bailout 'represented a new German normality' (Bastasin 2012, p. 183). Alongside this, *BILD* ran a vociferous anti-Greek campaign during the first half of 2010 which famously called on the 'bankrupt Greeks' to sell their islands to pay off their debts ('Verkauft doch eure Inseln, ihr Pleite-Griechen', BILD, 4 March 2010). This reluctance has been interpreted as revealing a lack of European solidarity. Paterson, for example, argues that the crisis signifies a 'tipping point for classic German Europeanism' (2011, p. 59), where the particular nature of the crisis and Germany's position as the largest European economy has led to a 'gradual process of hollowing out' of its European vocation (2011, p. 67). Bulmer and Paterson maintain that Merkel has eschewed the 'pro-European rhetoric of a common European destiny (Schicksalsgemeinschaft)' (2010, p. 1071) that previous German leaders have upheld, and departed 'dramatically from Germany's traditional solidaristic approaches to EU partners' (2010, p. 1055). Other scholars have provided bleak prognoses. Proissl argues that Germany has 'fallen out of love with

Europe' (2010), while Guérot asserts that Germany 'no longer sees itself as Europe's architect and conductor but as its victim' (2010, p. 2); Young and Semmler note that the reluctance to agree to the bailout might indicate that 'the Eurozone could be confronted with a less committed Germany, and thus, even a possible collapse of the Eurozone' (2011, p. 5). Germany's actions during the early stage of the crisis have therefore led to the view that it has turned away from Europe and is focused on a stronger sense of national identity and national interests.

In light of the normalisation literature, we would expect German discourse to re-evaluate or shy away from expressions of 'European values' long associated with Germany's European identity and avoid references to the Nazi past when justifying EU policy. On the one hand, normalisation is defined as an articulation of national interests separate from the European interest; on the other hand, the strive for normality involves an 'unthreatening' Germany tied closely with Europe. According to the normalisation debate, we would expect that having achieved 'formal' normality upon reunification, German leaders felt less obliged to articulate European values when constructing German identity and communicating European policy. This chapter will show, however, that German political and media discourse during the Euro crisis does not demonstrate this shift. Whereas Germany was trying to protect its perceived national economic interest to a certain extent during this time, the discourse should be interpreted rather in terms of the constraints of the German context – the dominance of German ordoliberalism and the Constitutional Court. Contrary to expectations of the normalisation debate, the crisis is framed in terms of both Germany's longer-standing post-war European identity as well as its economic model of ordoliberalism, reflecting alternative conceptions of 'what it means to be European' long present in the German context.

German Ordoliberalism

This chapter argues that the perceived changes in the German discourse on Europe during the crisis can primarily be understood as a continuation of the incorporation of ordoliberalism into understandings of Europe which has defined German 'Euroscepticism' since the launch of EMU in the 1990s, particularly the notion of Europe as a 'community of stability' as ruled by the German Constitutional Court as early as its Maastricht Decision in 1993 (Bundesverfassungsgericht 1993, 1998; see also

Herdegen 1998, p. 14; Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013). Serving as the 'theoretical foundation of the postwar German social market economy' (Bonefeld 2012, p. 633), the economic model of ordoliberalism (*Ordnungspolitik*) is a particularly German variant of neoliberalism, which requires that markets be regulated in order to achieve 'the theoretical outcome in a perfectly competitive market' (Dullien and Guérot 2012). In contrast to Keynesianism, which envisages far more direct state intervention in the market, regulation is achieved primarily through a framework that can be understood as a *Wirtschaftsverfassung* – an economic constitution – which lays down the rules for establishing economic efficiency (Nedergaard and Snaith 2015, p. 1096). It places a strong emphasis on values of competitiveness and budgetary discipline, monetary stability and individual responsibility. Ordoliberalism, going beyond the purely economic sphere, touches upon 'the ethical, moral and normative frameworks of individual behaviour' (Bonefeld 2012, p. 651; see also; Hillebrand 2015), and is 'deeply ingrained in the German political culture' (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 751). It is a powerful economic orthodoxy that 'transcends party lines' (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, pp. 715, 757) including the main opposition party, the SPD, whose core support base depends on a strong export-led economy (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013, p. 1033).

According to Bulmer and Paterson, there have been the 'two strands' present in German elite discourse on European integration – the first based on Germany's post-war European identity and the second based on ordoliberal values for the benefit of Germany's export economy, which combined to 'shape the rules of integration' (2013, p. 1393). With the onset of the Eurozone crisis, this second strand is seen to have become more important than the first, where debates about further integration by means of, for example, the mutualisation of debt through Eurobonds, bailout mechanisms and the reform of the ECB (Hillebrand 2015) have come into conflict with the ordoliberal model which precludes such moves on economic grounds (Wolf cited in Bulmer and Paterson 2010, p. 1069). As Van Esch notes, EMU has always presented a clash between the country's *Europatriotism* and its *Deutschmark patriotism,* manifested in a rift between government departments: 'the pro-European political elite including the Bundeskanzler and Auswärtiges Amt, and the skeptical German financial elite in the Bundesbank and Ministries of Financial and Economic Affairs' (2012, p. 38). In order to manage this conflict, however, the very institutional architecture of the

single currency was modelled on the *Deutsche Mark* and the German 'stability culture'. As early as 1988, the preferences of the ordoliberals and the Bundesbank were incorporated into former Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's plan for EMU (Van Esch 2012b, p. 39). In order to preserve the economic achievements of Germany and particularly to assuage the fear of inflation associated with memories of the Weimar Republic, the Maastricht Treaty, and later the SGP, thus, involved 'uploading ordo-liberal principles to the EU level' (Bulmer 2014, p. 1247). The ECB was modelled on the *Bundesbank*, with price stability as its primary objective, and the convergence criteria required to adopt the single currency reflect ordoliberal budgetary principles (Bulmer 2014, p. 1247). During the Euro crisis, Van Esch notes, German elites were nevertheless caught between two sets of values:

> 'Good Europeans' come to the aid of fellow member states, but 'Sound Economics' dictates that the culprits should be responsible for tightening their own belts or learn to abide by the rules the hard way. Europatriotism entails working together, give-and-take and allowing each other room for manoeuvre in difficult times, while ordo-liberalism demands automatic sanctions and the revocation of voting rights. (Van Esch 2012b, p. 45)

However, this chapter shows that, in order to overcome this clash, ordoliberal values have been incorporated into discourses on Germany's post-war European identity. These values, alongside traditional European ones, have, however, been used to justify EMU since the beginning; they were 'crucial in building support for EMU' in Germany (Van Esch 2012b, p. 36). The notion of Europe as a 'community of stability' has been present in the German discourse since the earliest days of the Euro. Even after the early 1970s, 'a consensus on traditional German economic values like price stability, budgetary restraint and Central Bank independence spread throughout Europe' (Van Esch 2012b, p. 36). As Howarth and Rommerskirchen find, the CDU, in particular, has referred to the German 'stability culture' to legitimise EU policy since the 1990s (2013, p. 751) as part of 'a deliberate strategy to challenge widespread public opposition to the introduction of the single currency' (2013, p. 760). In attempting to satisfy the ordoliberal elite when negotiating EMU in his goal to achieve German reunification (Van Esch 2012b, p. 44), Helmut Kohl, for example, called for support for EMU by speaking of a 'European Stability Culture' (cited in Howarth and

Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 759), as did his finance minister Theo Waigel (Hedetoft 1998, p. 5). Perhaps most strikingly, former German President Horst Köhler, at the time undersecretary of state in the ministry of finance, argued in an interview that the Maastricht Treaty meant that 'we have succeeded in turning our currency concept into the currency constitution of Europe. What can be better than exporting this good piece of German identity – and it really is good – to Europe?' (Der Spiegel 1992b). From its launch, then, European integration and European identity did not necessarily clash with Germany's economic model but instead involved Germany 'exporting it throughout the Eurozone' (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 760). German ordoliberalism was presented as a kind of gift to Europe, an unequivocal good that would benefit not just Germany but the whole of Europe. By bringing ordoliberalism to Europe, Germans are, therefore, also being 'good Europeans'. Rather than representing a shift in discourse after reunification, these ideas instead reflect a longstanding coexistence between German and European identity where 'pursuing German interests [. . .] is, *eo ipso*, pursuing the interests and objectives of European unity' (Hedetoft 1998, p. 5). It is therefore primarily Germany's 'ordoliberal heritage' and its particular interpretation of the crisis rather than a shift away from Europe that helps to explain not just Germany's reluctance to act and public opposition to the bailout programme but also public discourse on the crisis (Hillebrand 2015).

Ordoliberalism attributes the crisis to lack of competitiveness and high levels of debt in the crisis countries, that is, a failure on the part of the Greeks to exercise economic responsibility, as well as to the failure of Eurozone institutions, in particular, the problems associated with having a monetary union without political union (Hillebrand 2015). Bailing out these peripheral countries once the crisis hit was perceived to pose a risk to Germany's international competitiveness, especially if the bailout was provided without strict conditionality through economic and structural reforms (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013, p. 1024). This explains why German leaders refused to acknowledge alternative explanations for the crisis such as the Eurozone's trade imbalances (Jacoby 2015, pp. 192–193). Concern for the continued health of Germany's strong economy is, therefore, related to the concern that the bailout would put its social market economy under pressure. The Germans had already been undergoing tough reforms, particularly Agenda 2000 and Hartz IV, which saw significant cuts to Germany's social welfare system in order to deal with the costs of reunification (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013, p. 1024) and large

public debt (Bulmer 2014, p. 1256). Moreover, instead of solving the problems of the periphery, a bailout was seen as likely to reinforce the existing structural problems in both Greece and the Eurozone that had allowed the lack of competitiveness and economic discipline to develop (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013, p. 1036). More than just a question of economic interest, then, ordoliberalism constitutes a value system and a certain perception of fairness. Given the German experience of austerity, the suggestion that they should pay to assist those who had not undergone the same reforms was a difficult pill to swallow.

The commitment to this economic model by both the German public and main political parties therefore creates a number of practical constraints in German domestic politics which complicated the reaction to the crisis (Bulmer and Paterson 2013, p. 1400). Firstly, a fear of moral hazard by German leaders prevented an early bailout agreement (Jacoby 2015, p. 195). Secondly, Merkel also needed to support her liberal coalition partners, the Free Democrats (FDP), who have traditionally been the most committed to the ordoliberal model and who were able to exercise a strong influence on the government at that time (Bastasin 2012, p. 134). She also needed to take account of public opinion. The Germans were doggedly anti-bail out, and she was facing a regional parliamentary election in North Rhine-Westphalia on 9 May 2010 at a time when support for the coalition was 'at a historical low' (Bastasin 2012, p. 183; see also; Young and Semmler 2011b, p. 8). However, her biggest constraint was arguably the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*, the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, which has long been committed to ensuring an ordoliberal commitment to monetary stability – a 'guardian and ultimate arbiter of ordoliberal beliefs' (Nedergaard and Snaith 2015, p. 1097). It was highly influential in determining the German management of the crisis starting with the Greek crisis in 2010 (Bastasin 2012, p. 124) and became 'the primary site for the assessment of the legality of relations between Berlin and the European Union' (Bastasin 2012, p. 128). The Court has become a 'co-shaper of German European policy' (Bulmer and Paterson 2013, p. 1399). The most important of its decisions relating to the Euro was its decision on the Maastricht treaty in 1993. Following the ratification of the treaty which launched EMU, the Court reasserted the notion EMU as a 'community of stability' and maintained that if the stability requirements, that is, the convergence criteria set out in the Maastricht Treaty, not be met, then Germany 'could pull the plug and leave the Monetary Union altogether' (Herdegen 1998, p. 14). As discussed, the Euro has, therefore, long

been defined as a 'stability community' in the German context. The empirical parts of this chapter will show how the crisis in Germany was framed in terms of its long-standing European identity as well as in terms of its ordoliberal model, leading to new understandings of Europe in the discourse of the opposition to the Euro and EU policy action.

A European Crisis?

The perceived changes in identity should, therefore, not be read as a dramatic change or 'normalisation' of European identity in Germany but rather evidence of the constraints on Merkel posed by the ordoliberal model and Constitutional Court. German elites come to frame the crisis as a European crisis that draws on long-standing meanings of European identity in Germany, as a strategy to legitimise the EU bailout due to the constraints placed on them by the German context. Before the German government accepted that a bailout would be necessary, German elite discourse was noticeably different. Prior to May 2010, there was a steadfast refusal to consider the possibility of a bailout. In speeches to the *Bundestag* in March 2010, Merkel insisted that Greece alone was responsible for the crisis, claiming that 'we must put a stop to trickery' (25th March 2010). A week earlier, she stated that

> The Greek situation was not produced by the speculators [. . .] but by the fact that the Stability and Growth Pact was violated over many years. The Euro is therefore facing the biggest challenge it has ever had to deal with. I can also say that the Karamanlis government participated in this. The previous government was also involved in it. (17 March 2010)

At this time, the crisis was framed as a Greek crisis for which Greece alone bore ultimate responsibility. While she accepted that the 'ultima ratio' – the last resort – could be IMF and bilateral aid (although not 'community aid') (25 March 2010), primary responsibility was given to Greece to guide its own way out of the crisis through the implementation of austerity measures (17 March 2010). She also steadfastly denied any responsibility for Germany in causing the crisis:

> It is downright absurd, to turn Germany, with its competitive economy, quasi into a scapegoat for the development which we now have to overcome [. . .] We are making an important contribution to strengthening Europe's

> competitiveness on the world markets. We can be rightly proud of this. (25 March 2010)

Finally, and most controversially, she accepts the notion, already put forward by her finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble, that the EU was in need of a contractual agreement in which 'as a last resort, it is even possible that a country be excluded from the Eurozone if it consistently fails to meet the conditions in the long-term' (2010b). These statements were met with controversy across Europe, including accusations, as outlined above, that Germany was refusing to act in solidarity with Greece. It was certainly an unprecedented suggestion that a member state could be excluded from the single currency. However, we can also understand this as an awareness of the constraints of the German context, where Merkel's reluctance to come to Greece's aid can be understood as a strategy by Merkel to avoid a challenge by the Constitutional Court, which could technically force Germany out of the Eurozone. Any financial aid package, therefore, had to be for the purposes of the stability of the single currency and the future of the Euro as a whole rather than for the future of Greece; speaking in terms of solidarity with Greece would automatically signal to the Court that Germany was violating the treaty (Bastasin 2012, p. 171). According to Bastasin, Merkel was also conscious of the need to ensure that the German public did not become so disenchanted with the Euro in such a way as to threaten Germany's future in the EU or the rise of populist parties (2012, p. 172). Given that Germany's position in the Euro could be put at risk if this were the case, it can be argued that her delay was actually a strategy to maintain Germany's position in Europe rather than to limit it.

> If the Euro fails, then Europe fails. (13 May 2010)

By May 2010, however, there is a distinct shift in German elite attitudes to the Greek crisis. By this point, the crisis came to be framed by German elites as a crisis for the Euro as a whole, and indeed for all of Europe in order to legitimise the negotiation of the Greek bailout, something which found particular resonance in the left/liberal press but also across the political spectrum. On the one hand, we see clearly how the crisis is framed as one affecting the whole of the Eurozone rather than just Greece, with Schäuble's assertion that we 'must defend the common European currency as a whole' (7 May 2010). On the other hand, in a

nod to the Constitutional Court, Schäuble also reminds of the commitments laid down in German Basic Law to a united Europe. The crisis is, therefore, framed as a broader European crisis which reflects long-standing European identities in Germany. Risse notes that, despite mixed opinions in Germany, the introduction of the Euro was always linked with European identity by German political elites: Helmut Kohl explicitly associated support for the single currency with a notion of 'good Europeanness' related to 'overcoming the German militarist and nationalist past' and tying the new united Germany closely to Europe (2002, p. 13). Likewise, Merkel and FDP leader and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle both drew heavily on the history of the EU and the original goals of European integration and linked them to the future of the Euro, in so doing invoking the *'Schicksal'* (fate) of the European project. In a speech at the Charlemagne Prize Award Ceremony, Merkel declared that 'if the Euro fails, then it is not just the currency which will fail. It will be Europe that fails, it will be the idea of European unification which fails' (13 May 2010). She expresses similar ideas in the *Bundestag*, declaring that 'the currency union is a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (community of fate). It is therefore a question, no more and no less, of protecting and withstanding a test of the European idea' (19 May 2010). Westerwelle also continued this idea, arguing that the EU is facing its greatest crisis. He highlighted what was at stake: not just the Euro, but the very achievements of the EU's German founding fathers:

> What Konrad Adenauer and Theodor Heuss began, Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel, Helmut Schmidt, Helmut Kohl and Hans-Dietrich Genscher continued. They deepened European integration and in doing so lay the foundation for German and European unification. Today 500 million Europeans from 27 countries live in a common legal space in peace, in freedom and with a prosperity that has never been known before. (27 April 2010)

In the German elite discourse, then, the crisis is framed as a threat to the entire process of European integration, to German unity and the unification of the European continent, and to the achievements of peace since the end of the World War II, equating the Euro with 'Europe' more broadly. In fact, the notion of a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* has long been present in German political discourse on Europe (Hedetoft 1998, p. 5). They also reinforce the long-standing Other of Germany's European

identity – its past. For example, Merkel and Westerwelle call upon the support of the *Bundestag* and the German people to support the bailout proposals. By invoking the 'original' motivations for European integration, that is, European peace in the post-war period, they quietly hint that a failure to save the Euro would result in a reversion to the 'dark' days of the European continent, and to Germany's Nazi past. Recalling the 'great European' leaders of post-war Germany, Westerwelle reminds Germans of their post-war duties in Europe. Moreover, Schäuble even begins his speech on 7 May by reminding his audience of the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II the following day, which closed the 'darkest chapter in our history' (2010). In a country still highly conscious of its past, such discursive strategies leave little room for dissent, for disapproval, for refusing support.

In order to legitimise policy action, then, German elites, like Irish and Polish ones, framed the crisis through the lens of existing discourses on Europe in order to achieve resonance. On the one hand, they are acting strategically and framing the crisis in a particular way to achieve resonance for political ends. On the other hand, it is clear that they are constrained by both the practical and discursive constraints of the German context. Because of concerns about the Constitutional Court, German government leaders had to frame the crisis as a Euro or European crisis for the bailout to be viewed as constitutional. However, the meaning of a 'European' crisis had to have resonance in the German context – that is, a crisis of the post-war 'idea of European unification' inextricably linked to German unification, which helped to overcome the Nazi past. This framing of the crisis resonated in the media discourse and extended through to 2011, when a similar legitimising process took place around the European Council summit designed to 'save the Euro'. This is particularly important in the left/liberal press but also present in all newspapers particularly in 2011. First, the historical motivation for European integration is re-articulated, as is the importance of a strong Franco-German relationship. In one article in the SZ, it is stated that Europe's fate will depend on Merkel and former French President Sarkozy's ability to come to an agreement and find a solution to the crisis:

> Adenauer and de Gaulle, Kohl and Mitterand, and now Merkel and Sarkozy: Europe's destiny is always decided by the constellation of the most important leadership duo which steers the fate of the continent. As the largest nations in the EU, Germany and France [. . .] represent perfectly the ruptures which

> have led to war time and time again for centuries and now determine the tension in the Eurozone [. . .] Now having to reconcile the continent in its fiscal and budgetary policies, Merkel and Sarkozy's personalities are as different as their models for the EU's design. ('Ein Paar', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 December 2011, p. 6)

Their ability to solve the crisis is, therefore, not just a question of saving the single currency, but also a question of continuing the entire process of European unification. The implication is that solving the crisis is a not just a question of economics or straightforward politics, but also a symbol of Franco-German and European reconciliation, a 'defining mark of the infant Republic's identity' in the post-war period (Bulmer and Paterson 2013, p. 1393). This idea is also present in *BILD* which also discusses the 'fate of the community' and the importance of a 'united Europe' led by a strong Franco-German alliance. For example, it reports French President's '*Schicksalsrede'* (speech of fate), stating that 'Shoulder-to-shoulder with Merkel: France and Germany finally came together after tragic times, said Sarkozy. A united German-French partnership means a united Europe' ('Sarkozy hält Schicksalsrede an die Nation', BILD, 2 December 2011). Moreover, the summit is described as a 'summit of fate for the whole EU' ('Briten drohen mit Reform-Blockade', BILD, 6 December 2011). The references to the war again remind Germans of the Other of their European identity – its past – and the references to *Schicksal* remind Germans of Europe's shared destiny. References to the 'founding fathers' of the EU such as Monnet, Schuman and Delors, also reinforce a founding narrative of the EU. As will be shown in the coming chapters, a similar pattern is found in Poland and Ireland where long-standing identities and motivations for EU membership are invoked in order to legitimise policy. In Ireland, the 'pro-Europeans' draw on economic interests and sovereignty frames to legitimise EU policy action, on the basis that the EU and the Euro remain the best guarantees of the Irish economic interest and Irish national sovereignty. In Poland, the government and 'pro-Europeans' legitimise Poland's participation in the Fiscal Compact by emphasising the importance of playing an active role in the EU as 'good' Europeans in order to secure Poland's rightful place in the European core.

On the one hand, therefore, German elites and the media invoke Germany's long-standing European identity to legitimise EU action. They remind Germans of the country's long-standing commitment to

European integration, to the Franco-German relationship, European reconciliation and the 'Other' of Germany's European identity – its past. On the other hand, Merkel and other German elites have to include ordoliberal values into her conception of Europe/European identity in order to satisfy ordoliberal opponents and the Constitutional Court. The crisis, therefore, does not just reinforce the long-standing post-war European identity in Germany it also continues the process of incorporating ordoliberal values into the European community since the launch of the single currency. This can be understood as both a strategy by German elites to ensure EU policy resonates and a reflection of the importance placed on these values by the German public which constrains elites. This is particularly well reflected by examining understandings of European solidarity in Germany, which constructs new understandings of what it means to be European.

European Solidarity and the 'Good European'

Alongside notions of 'Europe' as a community designed to bring peace, freedom and prosperity to Europeans in the post-war period, the European community and the idea of the 'good European' have, in the German political and media discourse, been connected with the values of ordoliberalism. This can be considered a strategic manoeuvre by German politicians, especially those from the CDU, to justify crisis measures, and something that resonates with ordoliberal principles valued by the German public (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 759). It has also been part of the German discourse on the Euro since the beginning. This is reflected in the various constructions of European solidarity that can be identified in the German case study and constitutes a stark contrast to the two other case studies. In Germany, despite some focus on national sovereignty and national interests as will be elucidated in the final section, the debates are framed in terms of European solidarity and European values. The crisis is related to what it means to be European, who belongs to the European community, and who has responsibility for the crisis. Rather than being a question of European identity or not, then, the German case centres around the question of what a good European should be and also what kind of identity exists to support political union and redistributive policies.

Framing crisis policies in terms of European solidarity reflects Germany's existing European identity as well as helps to construct new meanings and community boundaries. In the German case, then,

European solidarity is a bounded solidarity based on a conception of European identity, but one which differs quite substantially from understandings of European identity and solidarity in Ireland and Poland. Solidarity is, therefore, contested on the basis of alternative constructions of Europe. In all cases, solidarity shows us alternative visions of what it means to be European. There are 'several ties of solidarity – several specifications of the social' which reflect co-existing and competing ideas of Europe and European identity (Karagiannis 2007a, p. 1). The question is therefore not just whether or not European solidarity exists, but what exactly this solidarity means and whether it serves to construct a particular understanding of European identity. In Germany, notions of solidarity engage with or are tied to the German economic model of ordoliberalism. This section will show that there is a different understanding of European solidarity in Germany that highlights the moral duties and obligations to conform to EU rules and ensure the stability of the Eurozone. Despite some contestation, this is propagated by German elite actors and resonates across the political spectrum.

> An oil spill of bad 'Ordnungspolitik' is moving across Europe.[2]

As discussed in the first section, ordoliberalism goes beyond the purely economic sphere, touching upon 'the ethical, moral and normative frameworks of individual behaviour' (Bonefeld 2012, p. 651; see also; Hillebrand 2015). It places a strong emphasis on values of competitiveness and budgetary discipline, monetary stability and individual responsibility, enforced by rules set by the state. These ordoliberal values have been incorporated into Germany's European identity, where the 'good European' comes to mean the 'good ordoliberal'. That is reminiscent of Max Weber's modern capitalist spirit, where non-compliance with the rules of the capitalist spirit is 'treated not as foolishness but as forgetfulness of duty [. . .] it is an *ethos*' (Weber 2003b, p. 51). In his elucidation of the historical roots of solidarity, Fiegle notes that, 'whereas in France the history of *solidarité* was related to a Catholic concept of 'collective guilt' and a 'community of sinners'' (2007, p. 50), *Solidarität* was developed into a Protestant notion of individual responsibility for one's sins (2007, p. 54). Along these lines, Hechinger attributes the nature of the German debate on EU fiscal policy to the 'deep-seated beliefs among German elites and citizens that debts are morally wrong' (2014, p. 193) – here it is worth noting that the German word for 'debt' – *Schuld* – is also the word for

'guilt'. German insistence on economic reforms and budgetary and monetary discipline can, thus, be understood as a 'a sort of civil religion' (Bastasin 2012, p. 179; see also; Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 752). As former President of the European Commission Jacques Delors is quoted as saying, 'not all Germans believe in God, but all believe in the Bundesbank' (Issing 2002). In the discourse on the crisis, holding debts becomes associated with guilt and immorality.

In the context of the Euro crisis, breaking the rules, such as the EU treaties, the guidelines laid down in the SGP, and bailout conditions such as structural reforms and austerity measures, constitutes not just an infraction of a capitalist or ordoliberal ethos but an infraction of the rules and values of a European community. Infringing these rules, therefore, allows for moral judgements about what it means to be a 'good European'. Overall, the good European who exercises solidarity is one who understands the obligations and responsibilities of EU membership and contributes to economic stability. At the same time that the EU is becoming what Falkner labels a 'non-compliance union', where 'non-compliance with EU rules has recently happened at an increasing number of levels' (2013, p. 2), this understanding of European solidarity in Germany demands individual responsibility for economic behaviour and compliance with EU rules. Although evident across the political spectrum and throughout the press, this idea is demonstrated particularly well by Merkel, who has declared that:

> A good European is not necessarily one who helps quickly. A good European is one who complies with the European treaties and the respective national law and in doing so ensures that the stability of the Eurozone is not endangered. (5 May 2010)

Here, Merkel justifies the delay in agreeing to the Greek bailout, arguing that the 'good European' is one who complies with the European treaties in order to ensure the stability of the Eurozone.

However, outright opposition to the bailout funds reflects this ordoliberal ethic, emphasising both the responsibility of EU leaders to respect the rules of the EU treaties and the responsibility of the crisis countries to exercise economic discipline. This notion of the 'good European' is, therefore, directed at German or EU leaders in general who have not kept their promises or complied with treaties and agreements such as the SGP, constituting both opposition to the bailout and opposition to the

government more generally. For example, one *BILD* headline asks: 'why are our politicians breaking this EU treaty?' ('Warum brechen unsere Politiker diesen Vertrag?', BILD, 4 May 2010, p.1), referring to the so-called 'no bailout clause' in the Maastricht Treaty which states that one member state should not be liable for the debts of another.[3] Politicians supporting a Greek bailout are accused of being 'bad Europeans' because they are advocating breaking the EU treaty rules. For example, FAZ engages with Merkel's notion of the 'good European' and highlights that she constitutes, by her own definition, a 'bad European' due to the consistent by-passing of EU treaties by the German government ('Im Namen Europas', FAZ, 7 May 2010, p. 1).

By the same logic, being a good European for the crisis countries involves the implementation of austerity and structural reforms to comply with the budgetary rules laid down in the SGP. Descriptions of the crisis countries as the 'deficit sinners' (*Defizitsünder)*, the 'Euro debt sinners' *(Euro-Schuldensünder*) ('Sarkozy kündigt neuen Rettungsplan an', BILD, 2 December 2011, p.1) and 'sinner country' *(Sünderland*) ('Was Sie Was Sie über den EU-Gipfel wissen müssen', sueddeutsche.de, 8 December 2011) imply an immorality in the economic behaviour of those countries and evoke an almost religious condemnation of debt. One FAZ article justifies its opposition to the bailout, or rather to 'bypassing the no-bail-out clause', on the basis that it will seriously endanger the stability of the Euro, maintaining that 'solidarity is proved only through solidity' ('Solidarität bewährt sich in der Solidität', FAZ, 24 April 2010, p. 12). These findings also resonate with earlier findings by Diéz Medrano, who revealed that the FAZ in particular 'constantly stressed that EMU should not take place at the cost of monetary stability' in the post-Maastricht period, often arguing that 'Germany and a few other countries would go ahead with monetary union until other countries met the required economic criteria' (2003, p. 124). Solidarity is, therefore, expressed not through the transfer of money from one country to another, but through 'solidity', that is, through all member states accepting the responsibility to ensure 'solid' state finances – through austerity measures, fiscal discipline, and economic structural reforms. Ordoliberal values of economic discipline, monetary stability and compliance with the legal rules are, therefore, incorporated into understandings of Europe and the 'good European'.

As noted in Chapter 3, Germany's history of hyperinflation during the Weimar and post-war periods functions as an 'Other' of Germany's post-war identity. Just as World War II is reflected in other crisis

frames, and Irish and Polish history are reflected throughout the crisis debates in those countries, the collective memory of inflation also informs the fear of currency instability during the crisis (itself linked to the memories of the Nazi period). For example, FAZ maintains that 'the Euro zone is not a liability or inflation community' ('Solidarität bewährt sich in der Solidität', FAZ, 24 April 2010, p. 12) amid concerns that 'the currency union is becoming an inflation union' ('Die Euro-Zone steht auf dem Spiel', FAZ.net, 7 May 2010). However, it also engenders a debate about the understanding of history. For example, another FAZ article argues that the memory of hyperinflation as caused by a central bank loaning the state money as an 'implanted memory'. Instead, it was 'rather the reparations which caused the Reichsbank to flood the currency market with Reichsmarks in order to pay the Allies' claims in pound sterling, francs and other currencies' ('Der Krieg der Banken gegen das Volk', FAZ, 4 December 2011, p. 28). Furthermore, there are varying interpretations of the impact of the Euro, for example, one SZ article claims that the Euro 'has until now brought us better protection from inflation than the national currency' ('Finis Melancholia', SZ, 6 December 2011, p.18). Referring to the later Weimar period, another SZ article suggests that 'Papandreou finds himself in a comparable situation as Reich Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, who worsened the crisis with his austerity measures' ('Die Krise ist auch eine Chance für Griechenland, SZ, 24 April 2010, p. 29). This leads us into competing understandings of European solidarity constructed primarily by left-leaning opposition and media actors.

There are voices in the German political and media sphere who construct a different understanding of solidarity based on the principle of wealth redistribution, the mutualisation of debt or calls for full political union. Left-wing political actors such as the left of the SPD, for example, have opposed the 'sound money paradigm' (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 765), something which can be seen in competing constructions of solidarity. In contrast to the purely ordoliberal solidarity, where exercising ordoliberal values is deemed an expression of solidarity, solidarity here is more than simply solidity. This model constructs the 'good European' as those committed to a European political union. In fact, the origin of the word 'solidarity' lies with the Roman legal concept of *in solidum*, meaning 'an obligation for the whole, joint liability *[Gesamthaftung]*, common debt, solidary obligation: *obligation in solidum*' (Brunkhorst 2005, p. 2). While this original meaning has been lost along the way, there are some references, particularly in the German

debate about Eurobonds coming from the left, to the need to share debt liabilities amongst EU member states linked to a consciousness as a single European people. One letter to the editor in SZ, for example, calls for Eurobonds to be introduced quickly on the basis that 'if we want to be a single European people, then we have to accept the disadvantages, because the advantages of the common currency outweigh them' ('Gesucht: Eine Alternative zum Superstaat', SZ, 8 December 2011 p. 29). In particular, the opposition SPD and the Green Party constitute the political actors expressing this kind of solidarity, based on a strong notion of community and commitment to the European project. For example, a joint SPD/Green Party declaration published by SZ calls for the agreement of a European development programme, investment in infrastructure and youth unemployment, as well as support for the creation of a European 'sinking fund'. The document maintains that

> The sinking fund connects a clear political commitment to a common Eurozone and joint liability with necessary solidaristic efforts for stable budgets on the part of the member states. We are extending the government's fiscal union into a solidarity union. Because only with solidarity between member states can we ensure the stability of our currency. ('SPD und Grüne attackieren die Kanzlerin', *sueddeutsche.de*, 8 December 2011)

Such policies are then linked to the 'economic and political future of Europe'. Joint European debt liabilities and the funds for a European development programme are explicitly linked to a notion of European solidarity to safeguard the future of Europe. Redistribution of wealth and shared European debt – the solidarity union – therefore, constitute European solidarity before stability can be ensured. Going beyond this, solidarity is also accompanied by a call for further and deeper integration, especially for the completion of a full political or economic union, that is, full unification of the European continent. In this model, the 'good Europeans' are those who call for further integration, in so doing remembering the broader purpose and values of the European Union. This is reflected in one SZ article which remarkably refers to elite financial actors, such as (former) CEO of Deutsche Bank Josef Ackermann (who was in fact criticised for pushing for Greece to bear a heavy burden in the bailout programmes) alongside other directors and managers throughout the

European economy, as the 'best Europeans' – the only ones calling for the 'unification of the continent'. The article claims that:

> It is quite noticeable that the representatives of the financial and economic system are among the active Europeans. That they defend and value what was generally sacrosanct in the first decades after the war – the unification of the continent [. . .] Unmistakeably, managers and businessmen and women have been the best Europeans all these years – because they need the Euro, export everywhere and open subsidiary companies. ('Monnets wahre Erben', SZ, 5 December 2011, p. 18)

The financial elite are, therefore, perceived to be doing a better job at calling for more integration through the single currency or full political union than European politicians. Whereas in Ireland, domestic politicians are accused of causing the Irish crisis and bringing the country to ruin, domestic politicians in Germany are accused of failing Europe in their duty of furthering European integration and pursuing the path to political union. Instead, they were slow to act or made the wrong decisions. For example, claiming that Germany 'holds the key for the future of European integration as well as the wellbeing of 330 million citizens of the Eurozone', the SPD and the Greens argue that it 'would be fatal if Europe failed at the small-mindedness of a German government' ('SPD und Grüne attackieren die Kanzlerin', *sueddeutsche.de*, 8 December 2011). Furthermore, the SPD's Steinmeier argues that:

> The decisions which were taken on 8th or 9th May – far-reaching decisions on saving the Euro – were right. [. . .] But, ladies and gentlemen, don't be too proud of this. Others in Europe had this courage, not the German Chancellor or the German Government. What happened to Germany's leading role in Europe? They went from the accelerator pedal to putting their foot on the brake, but this was the wrong move. (19 May 2010)

Here, Steinmeier accuses Merkel of failing to move European integration forward to fight the crisis. A similar notion is expressed by Sigmar Gabriel, leader of the SPD, who argues that 'since Konrad Adenauer, nobody has ruined the German-French alliance so fundamentally as you have done in the last months' (21 May 2010). Merkel is accused by the main opposition party as failing her duties in Europe – she 'failed' to act as a good European by

remembering her obligations to the European community and the post-war consensus for reconciliation and cooperation.

Nevertheless, most of these challenges continue to reinforce this conception of solidarity based on an ordoliberal ethic and construct a form of 'solidarity with conditions' based on an EU/German contribution to a bailout fund in exchange for a commitment to structural reforms and austerity in the debtor countries, as seen in the above quote calling for solidarity from the EU alongside the 'solidarity efforts' of the crisis countries. This solidarity is often connected to the original values of European integration. Rather than connecting the idea of European unification to just the Euro, Merkel has repeatedly linked it explicitly to the concept of a stability union. In so doing, she is able to turn the ordoliberal value of stability and sound money into one of many important values of the EU. For example, in 2010 she maintained that 'ultimately it is a question of our values and principles: democracy, protection of human rights, sustainable economic growth, a stable currency, social peace. The 21st century can be Europe's century' (13 May 2010). She continues this idea in 2011 when she argues that

> We are advocating [. . .] for a specific stability and growth culture, but we are doing this in the European spirit of Konrad Adenauer and Helmut Kohl. German and European unification were and are two sides of the same coin. We will never forget that. (1 December 2011)

In so doing, Merkel makes the exact same links between European unification and a European stability culture as Kohl and his ministers did when communicating their agreement to EMU in the early 1990s. Working to ensure economic stability through strict budgetary criteria is, therefore, equated with the work of other 'good Europeans' in the history of European integration. This finds resonance particularly in the SZ, where the moral duty for economic discipline is considered even the 'moral duty' of all Western nations ('Zwei Freunde, eine Botschaft', SZ, 30 April 2010, p. 27), linked not just to the Euro but to the future of the EU and the European integration project. Another SZ article calls for reform of the SGP and strict stability criteria by arguing that 'we should not allow today's difficulties undo the achievements of the last 50 years' ('Finis Melancholia', SZ 6 December 2011, p. 18). Invoking the achievements of European integration in this context automatically connects

compliance with community rules such as the SGP with the European integration project.

Support for crisis measures of this kind constitutes a conditional, reciprocal form of solidarity, where bailout funds are provided in exchange for guarantees of structural reforms and austerity measures. Where Germany acts in solidarity by offering Greece and other 'crisis countries' a bailout, the crisis countries play their part and express solidarity through economic reforms. Reporting of the situation, therefore, often highlights the conditional nature of the arrangements, where, for example, the Greek Parliament passes the bailout package obligating them to €30 billion of cuts in exchange for the €100 billion loan from the EU/IMF ('SPD enthält sich bei Griechenland-Hilfe', SZ, 7 May 2010, p. 1; 'Die Euro-Zone steht auf dem Spiel', FAZ.NET, 7 May 2010). Moreover, the economic sacrifices undergone in the debtor countries as a result of austerity and structural reforms are linked explicitly to the idea of a Europe which was built in the aftermath of World War II. Economic discipline through austerity and structural reforms, therefore, come to constitute a form of European solidarity, to serve not just the stability of the Euro but also the European integration project. For example, the document from SPD and Green Party leaders published in the SZ reminds us that:

> all crisis countries have, this year and last year, shown the willingness to undergo great sacrifice in order to make their contribution to the stability of the currency union. The chance for a new beginning in solidarity arises from the history of today's Europe, built on the rubble of the Second World War. ('SPD und Grüne attackieren die Kanzlerin', sueddeutsche.de, 8 December 2011)

Here the economic sacrifices made by the debtor countries through austerity and structural reforms are recognized and linked explicitly to the idea of a Europe that was built in the aftermath of World War II. Because the crisis countries have undergone the 'sacrifices' required for a stable Eurozone, Germany will, in turn, act in solidarity and provide the necessary financial assistance, thereby creating a 'solidarity union'. Such measures are repeatedly presented as a necessarily reciprocal expression of solidarity.

Furthermore, even the main opposition parties use this notion of an ordoliberal ethic, the notion of the 'good European' who promotes stability and complies with community rules. There was considerable

opposition in Germany to the Federal Government's bailout plans, with the SPD failing to support the bailout package in early May 2010. Bulmer and Paterson describe this as 'the first major breakdown in the European policy consensus between the main parties in half a century' (2010, p. 1062). While this was certainly the case, it should not be read as a breakdown of their European identity, but rather as a debate about who should take responsibility – indeed, the left parties are the primary advocates for deeper political union. Stemming from a particular understanding of the crisis as caused or prolonged by the financial markets, these voices call for the involvement of the creditors in the bailout programmes and for a financial transactions tax to share the burden fairly.

In opposing the rescue package, therefore, the SPD was calling for the involvement of creditors in the bailout as an act of solidarity on their part, something that further supports this ordoliberal concept of the 'good European'. The SPD extends this 'community morality', otherwise applied to EU leaders and crisis countries, to the banks and creditors. In light of their perceived role in the crisis, the banks and creditors are called upon by some political and media actors to express their solidarity too, and a moral judgement is passed on the banks' and creditors' perceived bad behaviour, irresponsibility and lack of discipline. The 'financial markets' and rating agencies function here as an external Other for Europe. For example, when demanding that investors take a cut on their debts owed, the SPD demand that 'strict action should also be taken against speculators who bet on state bankruptcy' ('Bundestag zu Hilfe für Griechenland bereit', SZ, 27 April 2010, p. 1). Quoted in the SZ, then president Köhler, 'castigates financial capitalism' and calls for 'drastic consequences' for those investors and financial institutions, including banning high-risk transactions, maintaining that 'disarmament for such weapons of mass destruction' is necessary ('Köhler geißelt den Finanzkapitalismus', SZ, 30 April 2010, p. 1). SZ again reports of demands for banks take part in the bailout plans, on the basis that 'those who own Greek government bonds have been pocketing a high level of interest for a long time and should, therefore, also participate in the financial restructuring of the country' ('Griechische Anleihen jetzt Ramsch-Papiere', SZ 28 April 2010, p.1). FAZ cites the deputy chair of the Left Party's parliamentary group, Gesine Lötzsch, who likens the 'speculators' to the 'Taliban in pin-stripes' ('Die Euro-Zone steht auf dem Spiel', FAZ.NET, 7 May 2010). The SZ quotes one political analyst

who states that 'the markets want to see blood. When help fails to appear, they will get it' ('Chaos', SZ 24 April 2010, p. 28). Another article in FAZ labels the crisis 'the banks' war against the people' and laments the power the 'financial oligarchy' is exercising over democratic governments. It argues that

> now the financial sector has started a new form of warfare – seemingly less bloody, but with the same objectives as the Viking invasions more than a thousand years ago and the actions of the European colonial powers who took possession of land and mineral resources, infrastructure and other profitable means of income. ('Der Krieg der Banken gegen das Volk', FAZ, 4 December 2011, p. 28)

The perceived irresponsibility on the part of the banks and investors, therefore, results in the expectation that they contribute to the Greek bailout, and later, in the form of a financial transactions tax. This relates to calls for an international financial transactions tax to force banks to play their part in solving the crisis.

This form of solidarity is confirmed by findings of other studies which show that opposition to bailouts in Germany is a complex question demanding consideration of the 'multidimensionality' of the bailout programmes (Bechtel et al. 2012, p. 2). For example, Bechtel et al. find that Germans are much more supportive of bailouts with conditionality and a fairer contribution from other member states. They find that support for EU bailouts dramatically increases when they include conditionality, that is, bailout funds with the condition of structural reforms and austerity measures and burden-sharing – where the burden of payment to the bailout funds is shared more fairly between other member states – which remains true across the political spectrum and across different sections of the population (2012, p. 24). The majority of citizens in the 'creditor' countries are found to be broadly supportive of this kind of conditional solidarity linked to the rules of fairness (Risse 2013, p. 17). On the other hand, it is found that support for bailouts which include significant 'hair cuts' on the part of investors is relatively low (Bechtel et al. 2012, p. 19), reflecting perhaps the fact that such calls are found only in some, mostly left-leaning parts of the political and media spectrum. We can, therefore, see a European identity based on an ordoliberal ethic and European solidarity which demands economic discipline and compliance with European community rules. This can help us further understand the

hostility to the bailout in the German press and the proposed exclusion of Greece and southern Europe from the EU. The next section will show how the crisis opened a 'window of opportunity' for the staunchest ordoliberals to criticise the very design of the Euro and call for the exclusion of Greece and other southern European countries from the Eurozone. In contrast to the normalisation thesis, this section argues that, whereas these frames do not necessarily present a 'federal' vision of the EU, rejecting wealth redistribution and debt mutualisation, they do still discuss EU crisis measures in terms of Europeanness and reproduce a discourse on EMU that has existed in Germany long before the start of the crisis.

National, or Northern European? – What Kind of European Union?

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, there has been much discussion of a 'normalisaton' of Germany's European identity during the course of the crisis. Indeed, there was stark opposition to bailout programmes voiced particularly in the populist press, but also in the conservative press and sometimes also the left-liberal press. Furthermore, in 2013, Germany saw the creation of a new 'Eurosceptic' party, the AfD, formed in 2013 and originally comprising of a number of economists and academics, which labelled itself an 'anti-Euro' party. While there has been a quite radical shift to the right since a split in the party in 2015, in its early days the party comprised of members of the CDU and FDP who left their respective parties to a certain extent due to their pro-EU policies but also to a more general disillusionment following the CDU/FDP coalition in 2009–2013. In particular, the AfD opposed the bailout programmes, Euro membership of 'debtor' countries such as Greece, banking union and debt-sharing. The crisis can, therefore, be considered a 'window of opportunity' for German 'Euroscepticism' to take hold. They are not new ideas, but rather the crisis allowed them to gain traction in the context of the crisis. This section will show that, whereas there is some focus on German national interests and German sovereignty from the conservative, 'Eurosceptic' actors, this needs to be qualified in two ways – first, German 'Euroscepticism' found expression in the crisis as anti-Euro, rather than anti-EU (in this sense, the AfD was not, at this stage, comparable with British Euroscepticism in the form of UKIP – indeed, following the 2014 European Parliament elections the AfD joined the grouping with the

British Conservatives[4]). Second, it is expressed in terms of a Northern European community based on an ordoliberal ethic, a community of the 'economically virtuous' who comply with community rules. Both, however, result in calls for a different kind of Europe that does not necessarily have full political union as its final objective.

On the one hand, opposition to bailout programmes and other common economic policies sometimes reveal a framing in terms of national interests and identity and imply an absence of European solidarity. For example, Kuhn and Stoeckel find that 'exclusive nationalists are less likely to endorse European economic governance' given that it 'touches on [. . .] macro-economic sovereignty' (2014, p. 637). Particularly in the early 2010 period, there are references to German economic interests and German sovereignty in much of the debates opposing bailout programmes. First, in the backlash against the Greek bailouts particularly in April-May 2010, there is a concern with German national (economic) interests with seemingly little empathy for the struggling EU member state. In blaming the Greeks for the crisis, the headlines such as 'So the Greeks do want our money!' ('Griechen wollen unser Geld', BILD, 24 April 2010, p. 1) have contributed to the view that Germany has become less 'European'. Concerned about the burden on the German taxpayer, *BILD* reports that 'Germany is liable for up to €22.4 billion for Athens up to 2012 alone – with taxpayers' money!'('Liebe Politiker . . . ', BILD, 4 May 2010, p.2). Another declares that 'the German contribution alone amounts to 123 billion for the bankrupt neighbours. But for us, there is now no more money for tax decreases! Are we actually the idiots of Europe?' ('Wir sind wieder mal Europas Deppen!', BILD, 11 May 2010, p. 1). It also publishes a list of alternative options of how to spend the €110 billion bailout package ('Was man mit 110 Mrd. Euro tun könne', BILD, 3 May 2010, p. 2). This list includes improving German streets, more child allowance for German children, and lowering pension contributions or the national rate of VAT. The more Germany spends through the EU, then, the less it can spend on its own social system. Such arguments view the Germans as the only legitimate recipients of German tax revenue, constructing a solidarity bound to the nation-state and based on an exclusive national identity.

Particularly by 2011, attention is transferred somewhat from Greece to the single currency itself. Designating the crisis the result of a flawed Euro design, there are references to the importance of German national sovereignty, particularly over budgetary matters. This frame

reveals not new ideas created by the Euro crisis, but rather a strengthening of existing opposition to the Euro and full political union which has been growing since the Maastricht Treaty, especially by the Constitutional Court. In particular, the Court's 1993 Maastricht Decision emphasised that the EU constitutes an 'association of democratic states' in which the citizens of the member states must legitimise EU decision-making through their respective national parliaments (Bundesverfassungsgericht 1993). In addition, the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon ruling maintained that, on the basis that there is no single European people, sovereignty over issues such as fiscal and social policy must be retained by the member states (Bundesverfassungsgericht 2009). This reflects the notion, upheld by conservative actors in Germany, that there is not sufficient sense of Europeanness for political union (Hechinger 2014, p. 169). In this vein, the Euro crisis is understood to pose a threat to Germany's fiscal sovereignty on the basis that there is not sufficient European identity to support a federal EU. For example, one article maintains that 'neither the EU treaties nor the Basic Law permit Germany's automatic liability for foreign debts' ('Europa kann vom deutschen Finanzföderalismus lernen', FAZ, 7 December 2011, p.21). The reference to 'foreign' debts again places Greece and other debtor countries as external, and therefore, not legitimate recipients of a German guarantee or German money. The same article notes that 'the core area of budgetary sovereignty must be protected as an inviolable element of the constitutional state'. The way in which FAZ reports the crisis is, however, also not a new phenomenon but reflects ongoing scepticism towards the Euro in conservative discourse; the FAZ has long advocated a more intergovernmental vision of integration and expressed more doubt about the Euro and significant transfers of sovereignty than other German newspapers (Díez Medrano 2003, p. 118).

On the other hand, articles which oppose EU action on the basis of national interests are relatively uncommon, more prominent in the spring of 2010 than later on in the crisis and primarily found in *BILD* and FAZ. There has also been a significant softening of the *BILD* discourse since 2010 when anti-Greek sentiment was at its worst. Moreover, the hostility identified should not necessarily be read simply along the lines of a dichotomy of national vs. European identity, but rather as a debate about European values and what the EU should be. Firstly, criticism of the Euro does not necessarily translate into a loss of commitment to European integration or a dramatic shift in European identity discourses.

For example, one letter to the editor published in FAZ suggests that the Euro has damaged the values of the community:

> The Euro has divided the European Union. The execution of the 'bail-out fund' along the lines of a fiscal protectorate is to destroy the idea that Europe is not just a currency union but also a Europe of justice, freedom, security and collaboration, to which countries like Great Britain, Sweden, Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary also belong. ('Der Euro hat die Europäische Union gespalten', FAZ, 3 December 2011, p. 9)

The author of the letter reasserts a notion of what it means to be European that extends beyond the Eurozone and highlights the argument that opposition to the Euro does not necessarily mean Germans have become 'less European'. Likewise, the above article in FAZ argues that 'in order to protect itself, Europe should remember the values which allowed it to flourish and blossom: the values of rights and democracy, freedom and diversity' ('Europa kann vom deutschen Finanzföderalismus lernen', FAZ, 7 December 2011, p. 21). The AfD also reproduces this discourse. For instance, in its 2014 European election manifesto, the party reasserted its commitment to the EU but sets out its reform proposals for the Eurozone. The preamble of the manifesto stated that:

> The Alternative for Germany wants a European Union of sovereign states. The AfD rejects a European federal state modelled on the United States of America, as there is no European nation and no European people. The European Union is committed to freedom, peace, prosperity and social security. It has contributed to German and European recovery, to the economic boom, to international understanding and to German reunification. (Alternative für Deutschland 2014b)

They reaffirmed the connection between European integration and German reunification, German and European economic interests, as well as the EU and European reconciliation, but also reject the concept of a single European identity in the same way as the Constitutional Court in its Maastricht decision. Claiming that the *'Einheits-Euro'* (unity Euro) has been a disaster, they nevertheless proposed mechanisms for its dissolution or for a country to leave the Eurozone without leaving the EU if they do not fulfil the conditions of membership. They also proposed the formation of a smaller monetary system between the 'stability-oriented Euro countries'

along the lines of the European Monetary System. They called for Germany's succession from the Eurozone should these proposals not be met. These frames, therefore, still utilise Germany's post-war construction of Europe but also reflect longstanding concerns about the Euro amongst German ordoliberals.

Anti-Greek sentiment should therefore not be read simply as a refusal of Germany to exercise European solidarity, but rather as part of a discourse that deems Greeks to be 'bad Europeans', as part of a 'crisis of the "European" Stability Culture' (Howarth and Rommerskirchen 2013, p. 762). Lieberman argues that '*groupness* is contingent upon the existence of the formal and informal rules that help to sort out membership, providing guidelines about who is in and who is out' (2009, p. 110). The Euro crisis in Germany has led to the discursive construction of new boundaries in Europe on the basis of compliance with the ordoliberal ethic. This new divide sees Greece and other southern European countries excluded from the new Northern European identity, and former eastern European countries such as Poland incorporated within the new community. As Hechinger notes, the scandal relating to falsified statistics 'delegitimized Greek demands for solidarity and disconfirmed claims that Greece was subject to "exceptional circumstance" beyond the country's control which would have justified solidarity of its European partners from a German perspective' (2014, p. 189). In line with the ordoliberal solidarity outlined in the previous section, Greece is considered to have been a drain on the EU and broken the 'rules' of the European community, particularly given the idea that bailing out Greece would fly in the face of the Germans' tough experience undergoing structural reforms to adapt to the costs of reunification (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013, p. 1024). Greece, presented as a bankrupt state, with inefficient institutions, irresponsible politicians and corrupt governments, is considered to have lacked economic discipline and deceived the EU through falsified statistics. One *BILD* article criticized what it perceives to be grossly luxuriant lifestyles and a culture of corruption in Greece, describing a country of 'the bankrupt and luxury pensions, tax dodgers and con-artists' ('Krise? Welche Krise?', BILD, 26 April 2010, p. 2). In another edition of *BILD*, a template letter to German MPs voting on the bailout reminded them that Greece has been 'living beyond its means', that 'bankrupt Greece is getting the biggest cheque in history' ('Pleite-Grieche kriegt den dicksten Scheck der Geschichte', BILD, 3 May 2010, p. 2) and that the government 'has deceived the appropriate EU institutions with many kinds of

trickery' ('Liebe Politiker . . . ', *BILD Zeitung*, 4 May 2010, p. 2). Other BILD headlines during this time included 'why are we saving this Greek billionaire' (30 April 2010), 'why are we paying the Greeks their luxury pensions' (27 April 2010), and 'the Greeks want even more money from us' (29 April 2010) which all contributed to a scapegoating of Greece during this period.

The FAZ likewise implies that Greece has demonstrated a culture of wastefulness and a mismanagement of EU funds, claiming that

> while Ireland and Spain reduced their dependence on EU transfer payments considerably in the years prior to the outbreak of the financial crisis and Portugal's net position fluctuated only slightly, Greece received more and more money. A glance at its economic performance also shows that, unlike the other states, the Greeks have not recovered economically. ('Pigs-Staaten hängen schon lange am Tropf der EU', FAZ, 8 May 2010, p. 14)

In contrast to other net receivers, therefore, Greece has in the eyes of some German journalists particularly from the conservative and populist press, misused or wasted EU money by failing to stimulate economic growth, and has not exercised the responsibility or met the expectations placed on it through membership of the European community by reducing its dependence on such financial aid. *BILD* points out that 'you do not believe anyone who has already lied once. Especially when it is a question of money. This applies to every community that is based on reciprocity – from a business through to a union of states' ('Wer soll die Griechen noch glauben?' BILD, 27 April 2010, p. 2). Greece is, thus, presented as a kind of 'problem child' to be excluded from the EU on the basis that it has broken basic rules of good behaviour in a European community. The notion that anti-Greek sentiment during this time can be attributed to the country's perceived bad behaviour rather than a lack of European solidarity can be further supported by evidence that the number of Germans opposed to Greek bailouts was the same as the number opposed to bailouts of large German corporations such as Opel (Bastasin 2012, p. 154). These findings are also reflective of the particular ordoliberal reading of the crisis which interprets the crisis as one of public debt at the national level – it became in large part a 'Greek story of failure' (Kutter 2014). AfD posters during the 2014 European election campaign reflect this quite well, with slogans such as 'The Greeks suffer. The Germans pay. The banks cash in,' 'Con artists, facilitators, Euro-saviours' (a reference to

a ZDF TV show 'Vorsicht Falle! Nepper, Schlepper, Bauernfänger' which warned about the methods of con artists) and 'stable currency instead of EURO debt insanity' (Alternative für Deutschland 2014a).

However, this ordoliberal notion of the 'good European' is also transferred to 'southern European' countries more broadly, serving to create a Northern European community based on an ordoliberal ethic; it became, as Matthijs puts it, a 'morality tale of 'Northern saints' and 'Southern sinners' (2015, p. 2). As Ntampoudi finds, Greece is understood as the 'centre-piece representative' of a wider group of 'PIGS' countries (2013), meaning that, while it is the focus of the most hostility, it represents a wider 'problem' with the incorporation of southern European countries in the single currency. Moreover, Bechtel et al. find that bailouts in Germany 'face the strongest opposition when the recipient country is Greece and are most popular when the recipient country is Ireland, with Italy and Spain falling in the middle' (2012, p. 17), suggesting further that opposition to bailouts does not take place on principle through a lack of solidarity but rather depends on the extent to which the countries in question are seen to be good Europeans. The ordoliberal ethic along the lines of Weber's 'modern capitalist spirit' necessarily risks a dividing line between North and South Europe. For example, Weber argued that 'the lack of a *coscienziosita* of the labourers of such countries, for instance, Italy as compared with Germany, has been, and to a certain extent still is, one of the principle obstacles to their capitalistic development' (2003, p. 57). The 'ordoliberal ethic', therefore, fuels not just anti-Greek sentiment but also facilitates the re-emergence of long-standing stereotypes about southern Europe. In the crisis discourse, Greeks and other southern Europeans are presented as lacking in this 'capitalist self-discipline, honesty and efficiency' natural to the North. The construction of a Northern European community along these lines is most evident in FAZ. For example, it is manifested in proposals for Greece to leave the Euro or for the creation of a North Euro on the basis of their compliance with northern European ordoliberal values:

> if Greece and other southern European countries cannot rigorously improve their conditions – that is: increase competitiveness, adapt the labour market, decrease spending and budget deficits, increase taxation, reform social services – they have to consider leaving the Eurozone and establish their own economic area, which in ten or 15 years could once again join the 'North Euro'. ('Griechenland muss aus dem Euro', FAZ, 7 May 2010, p. 25)

The FAZ in particular draws a very clear geographical line between northern and southern Europe in doing so making strong value claims between the two parts of the continent. For example, one article about Portugal notes that 'the most south-western country in the European Union has always been considered the poorest of the 16 Euro countries and has recently gotten into increasing difficulties', explaining the risk that the Portuguese government will not manage to pay back its debts ('Wird Portugal das nächste Griechenland?' FAZ.NET, 27 April 2010). In another article about Greece, FAZ asserts that 'the south-eastern country will be spared insolvency and the investors will be – at least for the time being – protected from debt restructuring' ('Unsicherheit trotz Griechenland-Hilfe', Bettina Schulz, FAZ, 26 April 2010, p. 22). Another FAZ article claims that 'you will not find a political majority in Germany to support the building of a pipeline through which dozens of billions will be pumped every couple of years into the southern part of the EU in order to maintain the fiction of an economic and monetary union' ('Im Namen Europas', Berthold Kohler, FAZ, 7 May 2010, p. 1). Furthermore, the PIGS acronym is used to group the crisis countries together, in so doing invoking long-running stereotypes of the southern countries:

> That the 'PIGS states' of Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain, currently in financial difficulties, are the largest recipients of EU aid is not surprising, for the crisis has primarily affected countries which are traditionally economically weak. A glance at the sum of aid which Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain have received from Brussels since 1999 shows how much these countries have been being drip-fed by the European Union for years. ('Pigs-Staaten hängen schon lange am Tropf der EU',FAZ, 8 May 2010 p. 14)

Ntampoudi argues that the 'processes of dehumanization and objectification' inherent to the use of this term 'can make the imposition of tough austerity measures on these populations seem palatable and appropriate, even desirable' (2013). The 'unstable', 'indebted' southern European countries are, therefore, excluded from a northern European community because of their failure to comply with 'northern' European standards. In these examples, we can see which values are associated with being part of a northern European community – economic stability and fiscal discipline, competitiveness, and individual responsibility. Again, this is also not necessarily new and would require further research into German discourse on the Euro in the early days. It is clear, however, that concerns that

Germany would have to financially support southern European countries was present in the early days (Der Spiegel 1992b).

Interestingly, the former eastern European countries are incorporated into this emergent Northern Europe, in so doing overcoming, at least in the context of the crisis, the long-standing divisions in Europe between East and West long based on a notion of economic underdevelopment and 'backwardness' (Wolff 1994b, p. 9). This division has then returned to what Wolff considers the pre-Enlightenment, Renaissance division of Europe between North and South (albeit at that time between the 'cultured South' and the 'barbaric North') (1994, pp. 4–5). For example, discussing Poland's economic success as the 'green island of growth' in an otherwise 'red' indebted Europe, FAZ notes that 'Poland, which since the 1990s has had a debt brake in its constitution, sees itself in the tradition of a northern European stability culture' ('Polen als Insel im Osten', FAZ, 9 December 2011, p. 11). Furthermore, in an interview with the FAZ, the then Czech President Václav Klaus discusses the potential of Germany, Austria and the Netherlands as an optimal currency area. He questions 'whether countries such as Portugal, Spain or Greece belong to such an optimal currency area' but maintains that 'the Czech Republic more or less belongs to the German economic area' ('Der Euro war eine falsche Entscheidung', FAZ, 28 April 2010, p. 7). Although he spoke of the benefits for the Czech Republic of leaving the EU after he left office (Haughton 2014, p. 85), he suggests here that the Czech Republic could belong to such a 'core' northern European Euro on the basis of its shared economic values with other Northern member states. Furthermore, he also claims that 'the differences between Ireland and Greece or between Portugal and Finland are very big', indicating that Ireland, despite in the throes of a sharp economic slowdown, nevertheless belongs to the North. As will be shown in later chapters, this northern European identity can also be found in other countries in the 'North': in Poland there is a sense of self-identification as part of the 'virtuous North', particularly in view of the perceived injustice of Poland's contribution to the ESM as a country much poorer than Greece. In Ireland, there is a sense that Ireland differentiates itself from other crisis countries in 'southern Europe' by presenting itself as the 'good child' of the EU's bailout programme.

Kidder and Martin find in their study of everyday tax discourse in the USA that Americans discussed taxation 'in moral terms' between 'virtuous, hard-working citizens and undeserving people who do not work hard' (2012, p. 126). In the Euro crisis in Germany, then, the issue of

bailouts, debt-sharing and economic reforms divides Europe not necessarily between member states, but between the deserving (those who work hard, exercise fiscal discipline, implement reforms) and the undeserving, that is, the 'lazy Greeks' in some cases, as well as the bankers and investors who have also demonstrated a lack of responsibility and economic morality, or the EU leaders who have not respected the treaty rules. This translates into a European identity based on an ordoliberal ethic, forming a solidarity derived from compliance with European community rules and the implementation of fiscal discipline at a national level. In light of this, we might, therefore, read the hostility towards the bailouts and crisis policies as not void of a European vision, but rather articulating a new vision of the EU, one which is indeed less federal, where further sharing of sovereignty is minimal, and the mutualisation of debt ruled out, but one which nevertheless constitutes a European community based on the stability and competitiveness of the European economy. This is an EU to which Greece and southern Europe may belong if they play their part as 'good Europeans'. Europeanness is, thus, still very much evident in the German public sphere, albeit with a meaning sometimes different from the older post-war constructions of Europe.

Conclusion

Rather than signalling a dramatic shift in European identity, then, the crisis in Germany instead reflects existing identities and ideas, in part due to the strategic goals of German elites to legitimise crisis policies and find resonance with the public. While the Euro crisis opened a 'window of opportunity' for German opponents of EMU to oppose it more than they have done in the past, the ideas expressed reflect a longer process of incorporating ordoliberal values into the values of the European community since the early debates about EMU. The Euro crisis, therefore, did not open the door to new ideas about Europe and European identity in Germany, it strengthened older ones. Firstly, this chapter outlined the 'normalisation' thesis and the German economic model of ordoliberalism, which presents a number of constraints on ideational change in the German context. Secondly, it showed how the crisis reflects Germany's post-war European identity where the Nazi past functions as the 'Other', ensuring an identity based on peace, democracy, justice and European reconciliation. Thirdly, it showed how different understandings of European solidarity demonstrate the way in which the crisis reflects a

continuation of efforts to incorporate ordoliberal values, the German 'stability culture', into conceptions of Europe and Europeanness which has been ongoing since the introduction of EMU. In the final section, it showed that what is often considered evidence of Germany's strengthened national identity, that is, anti-Greek sentiment and opposition to EU bailouts, can actually be considered a reflection of this alternative conception of the European community, where the 'good European' contributes to the stability of the currency and exercises proper economic discipline. This translates into a 'Northern European' community of the economically virtuous in contrast to the 'profligate' southern Europeans.

With regards to the normalisation debate, it is possible to argue that a new German Euroscepticism was intensified to some extent by the Euro crisis. However, in the early crisis period, it was a soft form of Euroscepticism which did not voice opposition to the EU in general but to the Euro – promoting an intergovernmental EU instead of the European political or federal union called for by many other German actors. Even the most 'radical' Eurosceptics at the time still affirmed their commitment to the European integration project and placed Germany within a 'Northern European' community. While the AfD has been gaining significant ground in regional elections in recent years, the reasons for their more recent success warrant further research. Given the intensification in AfD support since the onset of the refugee crisis, as well as the emergence of the protest movement Pegida ('Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West') in October 2014, it seems that the dynamics involved in recent populist movements in Germany extend beyond the debate about the single currency. The findings of this case study, which show that European identity discourses during the Euro crisis have not radically changed, are also in line with opinion polls which show that Germans are broadly supportive of European integration (Pew Research Center 2014) but yet strongly opposed to further enlargements of the EU (European Commission 2013b).

Furthermore, what exactly does it mean to be 'normal'? Discussions about normalisation in Germany often draw on different definitions of Germany's 'abnormality' – German division, multilateralism, a strong European identity, an eastern border that had not been formalised, or, of course, Auschwitz. The problem with normalisation in the context of European identity and the Euro crisis is that the EU has always been in Germany's national interest even if it was not packaged in this way. As discussed, EMU was designed on the basis of the German model, with the ECB set up as a 'European *Bundesbank'*,

and the commitment to monetary stability and budgetary discipline reflected German ordoliberal values. Studies also show that Germany has been the major beneficiary of the single market due to its export-based economy (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014b). Moreover, European identity in Germany was always closely related to the desire to regain national sovereignty and strengthen national identity. There was also always opposition to EMU amongst conservative actors in Germany, which led to German leaders needing to legitimise the Euro in terms of ordoliberal values. While Germany has clearly taken on a much more pronounced leadership role in the Eurozone (Paterson 2011), the Euro crisis has not lead to significant changes to discourses on European identity.

What is more, it is possible that the very debate about normalisation highlights, in fact, its continued abnormality, for any discussion of German normality automatically invokes memories of the Nazi past. As we will see in the coming chapters, anti-German sentiment often appears in other EU countries when people are confronted with German leadership or power. One problem for Germany is the extent to which other European countries accept the concept of ordoliberal solidarity. If demands for austerity and structural reforms are read not as reciprocal solidarity but as the imposition of painful conditions from a more dominant member state, resentment towards Germany will develop. The case of Ireland will be able to shed some light here. In contrast to Germany, Ireland is one of the countries directly affected by the crisis and a recipient of an EU bailout – placing them on the other side of debates about European solidarity. Poland, on the other hand, has not been so directly affected by the economic crisis, but as President of the EU in 2011 and a non-Eurozone member, faces political consequences of the crisis. The next chapter describes the findings of the Irish case study, which, similarly to Germany, also reflects existing discourses on national identity and European integration. However, in contrast to Germany, and to a certain extent Poland, Europe has a primarily instrumental function for Irish national interests and identity.

NOTES

1. This chapter draws on my article entitled 'Has Germany "Fallen out of Love" with Europe? The Eurozone Crisis and the "Normalization" of Germany's European Identity', published in the journal *German Politics and Society*, Vol. 33, No. 1/2, pp. 25–41.
2. 'Ein Ölfleck über Europa', FAZ, 27 April 2010, p. 13.

3. There is debate about whether this clause does actually constitute a 'no-bail-out' clause in a strict sense, see e.g. Falkner (2013). However, for the purposes of this argument it is the perception of non-compliance which is important for the question of solidarity and trust.
4. In the summer of 2015, a number of early founders of the party including former party leader and co-founder Bernd Lucke left the AfD to form a new party, the 'Alliance for Progress and Renewal' (Allianz fuür Fortschritt und Aufbruck – ALFA) in response to a shift to the right. Five out of the AfD's seven MEPs switched their allegiances to ALFA, which has taken on much of the AfD's original manifesto. In the months following, the AfD has adopted a much more extreme rhetoric, particularly regarding refugees and Islam. In March 2016 the AfD was asked to leave the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) and Beatrix von Storch, a vice chair of the AfD, joined UKIP's Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy.

CHAPTER 5

Irish Identity and the Utility of Europe

Introduction

Chapter 4 outlined the findings of the German case, which showed that the crisis was framed in terms of Germany's post-war European identity and alternative ordoliberal conceptions of Europe and European solidarity which have developed since the 1990s to legitimise the single currency, and which, in the context of the Euro crisis, sometimes result in the construction of a Northern European identity. This chapter focuses on the effect of the Euro crisis on the construction of European identities in Ireland, and how the effect differs in Ireland compared with Germany and Poland and between political and media discourse. As with the German case (and later as we will see, with the Polish case) and in accordance with expectations set out in the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, the crisis is constructed in such a way as to reflect existing discourses on both Irish identity and the relationship between Europe and the Irish state. The crisis in Ireland is first and foremost constructed as a domestic crisis. However, the attribution of responsibility in Ireland depends on the strategies of the actors. Government actors in 2010 attribute responsibility primarily to Irish banks, whereas the opposition highlight the failures of government and public authorities. In the populist press, the crisis becomes part of a populist discourse dividing the Irish elite from the 'ordinary' Irish. The crisis at this stage represents less a crisis of European identity than a crisis of Irish identity. Where there is the perception of a 'European' crisis in 2011, it is primarily understood to be a European economic crisis, reflecting the primarily economic motivations of Irish

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membership of the EU. In the debates about EU crisis programmes, however, Irish elites and media actors frame the discussions in terms of Irish economic interest and sovereignty in order to legitimise and contest EU policy. This often results in a core versus periphery divide and strong anti-German sentiment mostly in the populist press.

The Irish case is an interesting comparison to Germany and presents some striking similarities with Poland. Whereas there have been claims of a turn away from Europe in Germany, there has not been a significant drop in support for the EU in Ireland despite the crisis and the introduction of strict austerity measures and reforms required as a condition of its bailout. Although perhaps the result of a pragmatic approach to the crisis than a clear statement of support for the EU, in May 2012 the Irish population passed the Fiscal Compact by 60.4% (FitzGibbon 2013) with over 50% turnout despite the economic crisis and austerity which had shaken the country since 2008 (Gillespie 2012, p. 6). The previous year, opinion polls showed that over 65% of people in Ireland believed it was better off within the EU (Gillespie 2012, p. 6), with just 21% of Irish believing that the country could better face the future outside it (European Commission 2013b). Moreover, the extent to which the Irish tolerated the bailout programme is notable, as Whelan maintains, the Irish 'accepted the extraordinary scale of fiscal adjustment with a remarkable level of equanimity and without any significant turn towards radical politics' (2013, p. 20; see also; Laffan 2013, p. 48). Given the oft-cited turn to Euroscepticism during the crisis in different member states, we might ask why there does not seem to have been a turn against the EU in Ireland. The Irish have also consistently ranked as one of the national populations reporting the lowest levels of European identity in public opinion surveys (see e.g. European Commission 2002, p. 27), with the numbers declaring themselves to be 'Irish only' remaining below the EU average by 2004 (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 255). Why has there not been a significant turn against the EU in Ireland, despite the low levels of identification with the EU as reported by the Eurobarometer polls? Alternatively, is the crisis likely to have generated a greater degree of European identity in Ireland? It is with these questions that this chapter will seek to engage.

Like in Germany and Poland, the crisis reflects Ireland's original motivations for joining the EU, that is, economic interests and sovereignty. Whereas in Germany, a 'European' crisis constitutes first and foremost a threat to the European idea – the European project of peace, democracy and freedom – a 'European crisis' in Ireland is a European banking or economic crisis which

highlights the interdependence of the Irish economy with the European economy and banking system as a whole. In a similar way that the crisis discourse in Germany reflects both its post-war commitment to the European project and to monetary stability, the crisis discourses in Ireland reflect the path-dependent nature of discourses on the state – the importance of the EU for Ireland's economy as well as sovereignty stretching back to the fight for independence from Britain in the early part of the twentieth century. There are strong similarities to Poland here, as will be seen in the Polish case study described in Chapter 6. In both countries, the historical experience of occupation and colonisation and the ensuing struggles for independence are salient in the debates on EU crisis policies. Nevertheless, in contrast to both Germany and Poland, Europe for Ireland primarily has an instrumental function to strengthen Irish sovereignty and the Irish economy.

This chapter will firstly show how the crisis is first and foremost understood as a domestic crisis and placed in the context of past economic crises in Ireland. Although in December 2011 in particular the crisis is constructed as a broader European economic crisis, it still reflects existing discourses about European integration in Ireland – perceived national interests. Secondly, it will show how crisis policies are legitimised by Irish elites and pro-European media actors by highlighting the utility of Europe for Ireland, particularly in terms of the economy and Irish sovereignty. Although there is some reference to European solidarity and the 'European interest', this ultimately relates to a demand for aid for Ireland. Thirdly, it will show how opposition to EU policies on the part of opposition party elites and the conservative and populist press also draw on the same themes to justify their claims. In particular, they oppose the prospect of tax harmonisation as a fundamental threat to Irish self-determination. Furthermore, the Othering of Germany and France as large, dominant states who have taken Irish sovereignty reinforce a core/periphery divide also present in the Polish case. In contrast to Germany and Poland, Europe therefore plays a primarily instrumental role for Ireland for most actors in the Irish debate.

Ireland and the Crisis – Domestic or European Factors?

> *One of the most dramatic and largest reversals in economic fortune ever experienced by an industrial country.* (Donovan and Murphy 2013, p. 2)

In contrast to Germany and Poland, which were affected by the crisis much later, Ireland was first hit by the crisis in September 2008

following the collapse of Lehman Brothers in the wake of the 2007 subprime mortgage crisis in the United States (Connor et al. 2010, p. 4). During the course of the following years, the crisis was to be extremely painful for Ireland – described as the country's 'tragic journey' (Kitromilides 2012, p. 161) – with the necessary reliance on an EU/International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout 'deeply traumatic' for a country that 'since its foundation in 1922, has been able to meet external obligations to financial markets even when poor' (Laffan 2013, p. 47). Before examining the representations of the crisis in the public sphere, this section will give a brief overview of the crisis in Ireland. To what extent was it a home-grown crisis or a failure of EU institutions such as the Euro? This will help to understand the significance of the perception in the Irish public sphere of a 'domestic' crisis and the mechanisms of attribution of blame. As outlined in Chapter 3, Ireland was, before 2008, considered a '"miracle" growth economy', which became one of the richest economies in Europe after decades as one of the poorest (Kitromilides 2012, p. 160). The Celtic Tiger was not necessarily as strong as it seemed, however, known better perhaps as a 'Celtic kitten' (Smith 2005b, p. 38). The crisis has been considered the perfect storm of both domestic and European factors working in interaction (Kitromilides 2012, p. 180). This section will therefore show how the crisis was not only caused by domestic factors but also facilitated by membership of EMU.

Domestic Factors

The crisis in Ireland originated first and foremost in the domestic sphere rather than in the EU. These domestic factors were situated in various sections of Irish society – property developers, investors, the banks and the political elite. The crisis can initially be considered the result of the bursting of a housing bubble in Ireland, which firstly developed as a result of over-confidence during the Celtic Tiger boom that property prices would continue to rise (Connor et al. 2010, p. 7). Policy incentives such as tax breaks for the property market and lax regulation of lending to property developers fuelled investment in the property market (Dellepiane and Hardiman 2010, p. 9) and resulted in a significant part of the working population employed in the construction sector – exceeding 13% in 2007 (Honohan 2009, p. 4). This property bubble was financed by a significant increase in bank lending to property

developers. Two banks in particular, Anglo Irish and the Irish Nationwide Building Society (INBS), were found to have engaged in high-risk lending, with the former described as a 'genuinely rogue bank' (Kelly 2009, p. 22). In his report into the crisis, former Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland, Patrick Honohan, attributes much of the responsibility for the crisis to the directors and senior managers of Ireland's banks (2010, p. 6). Bank lending had developed into a 'Ponzi-style financing', where borrowers were given extremely lax terms for their loans (Donovan and Murphy 2013, p. 74). The worst institutions for reckless practices were overseen by directors who exerted enormous power over the running of the institutions – none of which, however, were held accountable for their actions (Connor et al. 2010, p. 18). This behaviour was supported by pressure for conformity amongst staff and encouraged high-risk practices at other banks under pressure to match the success of the Anglo Irish (Nyberg 2011).

In turn, the Irish regulatory authorities failed to sufficiently supervise the activities of the country's banks or to prevent the housing boom from getting out of control (Whelan 2013b, p. 8), which led to the presence of moral hazard in the day-to-day running of the banks. Honohan finds that the crisis constituted a 'major failure' for banking regulation (2010, p. 7). Since the 1990s, Ireland has been running a system of 'light touch regulation' popular in the United States and UK in particular (Connor et al. 2010, p. 15), which emanated from a belief that markets would ultimately self-regulate (Donovan and Murphy 2013, p. 40). The Central Bank of Ireland and the Financial Regulator were, therefore, found to have 'enabled' the activities of the Anglo Irish Bank by failing to judge the risks appropriately or implementing appropriate measures, whereas external auditors of the banks maintained a narrow remit and did not report issues they found outside of it (Nyberg 2011). In addition to this, it has been argued that the 'rogue' banks and speculative developers profited from their connections with the governing party, Fianna Fáil (Connor et al. 2010, p. 64; Donovan and Murphy 2013), although Honohan found no evidence of corruption in this respect (2010).

The bursting of the housing bubble, followed by the collapse of the banking system, then resulted in a full-scale national fiscal crisis. Firstly, the government was overly dependent on the revenue from the property sector and other less stable forms of revenue, which meant that it immediately lost a significant amount of revenue when the housing bubble burst (Whelan 2013b, p. 10; see also; Honohan 2010). Secondly, the

government issued a blanket guarantee of all Irish banks in September 2008 when the banking crisis reached its peak following the collapse of Lehman Brothers, in so doing effectively turning banking debt into sovereign debt (Clancy and McDonnell 2011, p. 3). By late 2010, this guarantee had become unsustainable and the country was forced to apply for an EU/IMF bailout. The bailout that was agreed in November 2010 ultimately amounted to €67.5 billion, including contributions from the IMF, EU and EU member states in bilateral loans and an additional €17.5 billion from Irish assets (Clancy and McDonnell 2011, p. 4). The crisis was, therefore, in large part a domestic crisis brought about by 'self-inflicted mistakes' made over the course of several decades (Whelan 2013b, pp. 30–31). However, some elements of the crisis can be traced back to Ireland's participation in EMU.

European Factors

Although the domestic factors which led to the crisis in Ireland are clear, the crisis was nevertheless facilitated to a certain extent by the so-called design flaws of the Eurozone (Kitromilides 2012, p. 174; Clancy and McDonnell 2011, p. 4). The primary problem was the provision of cheap funds from international markets, available thanks to Ireland's membership of the single currency (Connor et al. 2010). Because of the low interest rates provided to Ireland on account of the 'one-size-fits-all' monetary policy, where the interest rate for the entire Eurozone is set centrally by the ECB, Irish banks funded the housing boom with an influx of cheap credit (Kitromilides 2012, p. 175). As Kitromildes explains, peripheral countries like Ireland 'suddenly experienced a massive surge in the availability of consumer credit which was considerably cheaper than could be justified by their own growth potential' (2012, p. 175; see also; Arestis and Sawyer 2012, p. 8). By 2008, internationally owed debt held by Irish banks constituted over 60% of GDP (Honohan 2009, p. 4). The crisis in Ireland can therefore be considered in part the consequence of this so-called design flaw in the Euro. In addition to this, Nyberg finds that Ireland's EU membership meant that foreign banks entered the Irish market, which resulted in greater competition with domestic banks and led to pressure to increase profits and inflate lending (2011). Furthermore, there was very little supervision of banking practices at a European level, reflecting another flaw in the design of EMU which left financial supervision

entirely to the member states (Donovan and Murphy 2013, p. 96; Arestis and Sawyer 2012, p. 24). Although Ireland had officially run a budget surplus consistently until the fiscal crisis hit, the Maastricht Treaty and SGP had no provision for identifying potential future problems in national fiscal policies, in Ireland's case, the over-reliance on tax revenue from the property sector (Donovan and Murphy 2013, p. 110) as well as low reliance on other common sources of tax revenue. While the primary causes of the crisis were domestic factors, these factors were facilitated to a significant extent by Ireland's membership of the single currency.

While there were European factors that played a role in the crisis, they were perhaps not a reason to blame the EU. The European institutions might have created the environment in which this collection of domestic policy mistakes interacted, but ultimately it was at the national level that these mistakes were made. Despite the structural inadequacies of EMU that made cheap credit available and allowed bad banking practices to go unsupervised, this did not mean that Irish banks had to avail themselves of the available credit to the excessive extent that they did, or engage in irresponsible practices. Kitromilides maintains that all of the causal factors identified resulted from decisions made by Irish politicians (2012, p. 180). Furthermore, the Irish political sphere could have stepped in to curb the development of the housing bubble and lending boom, which the Irish authorities had the power to do (Whelan 2013b, p. 27). Keeping in mind the crisis can primarily be considered a domestic crisis with some interacting European factors, we might ask why the EU has not served as a scapegoat, given that support for the EU in Ireland does not appear to have suffered. Menon, for example, argues that part of the 'paradox of integration' is that while national politicians take the credit for policy successes, they blame the EU in the event of policy failures (2008, p. 27). The next section will posit that this did not happen because the crisis is constructed in terms of older discourses on Ireland's perceived political and economic failings, for which the EU is often seen as a solution.

A Domestic Crisis – A Crisis of Irish Identity?

As in Germany and Poland, the crisis in Ireland reflects existing discourses on Irish identity and European integration. In contrast to Germany, and to a certain extent Poland, Europe has a primarily instrumental role for

Irish identity and interests. In terms of the crisis frame, the crisis in Ireland is understood first and foremost as a domestic Irish crisis which reflects existing identities and ideas about Irish society. This construction of the crisis in Ireland can be read in light of a long period of economic underdevelopment and a succession of economic crises during the twentieth century, leading it to be considered a 'case study in failure' (Smith 2005b, p. 37). In the late 1970s and 1980s, in particular, Ireland experienced a severe economic crisis when its economy performed 'worse than that of the other member states of the Union on most dimensions' and where the possibility of IMF intervention was real and present in political consciousness (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 223). Although the recent crisis was very different, it is in the context of these experiences that reporting of 2010–2011 must be read – the crisis was experienced with an 'intense and wrenching sense of economic failure' (Gillespie 2012, p. 1) alongside a feeling of returning to normal, that is, the pre-Celtic Tiger era of poor economic development. This section will, therefore, argue that the crisis was understood primarily as an Irish crisis, but the attribution of blame within Ireland depends on the strategies of the different actors – government or opposition politicians, or quality or tabloid press. Where the EU or Europe becomes relevant is in its utility for Irish identity and interests. Although the specific nature of the crisis in Ireland makes this unsurprising, what is notable is the absence of a sense of European community or Europeanised identity that is reflected in the crisis discourse in Germany and Poland. The following sections will show how the debates about crisis policies are constructed in terms of existing Irish discourses on Europe, where the EU functions to serve or threaten Irish identity, sovereignty and the economy.

In its initial stages, the crisis is understood as a domestic crisis rather than one caused by the EU across all political and media actors analysed. However, the attribution of responsibility within Ireland differs between sources. Firstly, the crisis constructed primarily as a crisis of the Irish banking sector, either as a strategy by government elites to deflect blame from the government for their role in the crisis or simply as a reflection in the media of the public anger, as the collapse of Irish banks resonates with common understandings of a history of corruption in Irish banks. As Ross argues in his popular analysis of the Irish banking system, Ireland has a 'shameful banking history' (2009, p. 1). After years of repeated banking scandals, he suggests that 'banking skulduggery is endemic' (2009, p. 1). In his speech announcing Ireland's application for financial assistance,

then Taoiseach Brian Cowen explains that the bailout package will provide funding for the banks and instigate a restructuring programme for a banking system that has collapsed:

> The agreement will include a fund for potential future capital needs of the banking sector [. . .] Put simply, the Irish banks will become significantly smaller than they have been in the past so that they can gradually be brought to stand on their own two feet once more. (22nd November 2010)

The origins of the crisis in the Irish banking system, therefore, determine the initial construction of the crisis, particularly the Anglo Irish Bank, which is described as 'Ireland's most toxic lender' ('Anglo brand to go but its legacy to linger for years', *Irish Independent*, 30 November 2010), one of Ireland's numerous 'zombie banks' ('Get ready for the great bank restructuring', *Irish Independent*, 21 November 2010). The *Irish Times*, citing then Finance Minister Brian Lenihan, maintains that 'the issues besetting Irish banks were ultimately too big a problem for this country' ('Bank problems just too big – Lenihan', *Irish Times*, 22 November 2010, p. 9). However, while the *Irish Times* acknowledges the problem with the banks, an enormously strong sense of anger is discernable particularly in the *Daily Star* and the *Irish Independent*, which frequently condemn the 'reckless' behaviour of Irish bankers. The *Daily Star* denounces the 'Irish wanker bankers' who 'haven't just destroyed this country – they are now on the verge of destroying the entire euro currency' ('First they broke Ireland, now they'll break Berlin', *Irish Daily Star*, 24 November 2010, p. 1). The banks did not just collapse, they destroyed Ireland and also risked destroying the Eurozone altogether. The problem with Irish banks, however, is not a recent phenomenon.

Given that the collapse of the banking system caused the crisis in the short term and sparked the Irish application for financial assistance, it is not surprising that the crisis is framed in this way. However, the crisis is also blamed more broadly on Irish politicians or the 'Irish elite', who become an internal Other in Ireland, feeding into discourses on Irish identity. This can be understood in the context of significant populist sentiment – manifesting in anti-government and anti-politician rhetoric – in Ireland in the years prior to the crisis (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, pp. 117, 121). The Irish crisis thus becomes part of a populist discourse constructed primarily in the tabloid and populist press. Indeed, the crisis saw 'massive public outcry' over the cuts carried out by the Fianna Fáil

government in the early stages of the crisis (Hay and Smith 2013). More than this, however, the crisis is seen to have been engendered by the political elite who have for years been tolerating irresponsible and corrupt behaviour at all levels of the economic and political sphere, especially the government and governing party at the time, Fianna Fáil, who are deemed to have destroyed the country. In fact, the Irish government in 2010 appears to have relatively little power to shape the debate because so much of the blame for the crisis is attributed to the Irish political class. The incumbent government collapsed in early 2011 shortly after the Irish bailout and a general election was called for 25 February. There appears to be a political consensus that the government had failed and an election must be held, including in the *Irish Times* which calls for a general election and admits the failings of the government and governing elite which 'have brought the State to its knees' ('Was it for this? The state of the nation', *Irish Times*, 22 November 2010, p. 15). This is significant given that the *Irish Times* is considered to be generally supportive of the interests of the Irish government and banking elite (Mercille 2013, p. 12). Beyond this, an almost indescribable amount of anger is discernible in *The Independent* and *The Daily Star*, encapsulated particularly well by the *Daily Star* headline 'burn them at the stake for what they've done' (*Irish Daily Star*, 21 November 2010, p. 24) An image of crucifixion of the (then) current Taoiseach Brian Cowen and former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern accompanying the article is a powerful representation of the intensity of the anger in the wake of the 'crimes' perpetrated by the political class against the Irish people. The article claims that:

> There's a Gang of Fifteen [the Irish cabinet] up in Dáil Éireann who have lied repeatedly, been economical with the truth, ducked, dived, dithered, weaved, fudged, and hedged and all seasoned with a lethal mixture of arrogance, ignorance and contempt. They have committed economic treason, they stand accused of criminal negligence and they are guilty of a horrendous, glaring lack of duty of care towards the people of Ireland . . . But while we might see a banker or two doing time here, the politicians who enabled this felonious feckology will not be touched. ('Burn them at the stake for what they have done', *Irish Daily Star*, 21 November 2010, p. 24)

The view that the crisis originated from 'within' means that the crisis, specifically the request for an EU/IMF bailout, was experienced as a

national humiliation. In particular, it was seen as the death of the 'Celtic Tiger', which required a sobering of national consciousness. One letter published in *The Independent* maintains that 'with the Irish begging bowl out once again, we are now being looked at by our euro-neighbours in the same pitiful way as an out-of-control gambler who's just lost his house' ('Nothing has changed since the Eighties', *Irish Independent*, 24 November 2010). It was constructed as a moment of enormous shame for the country. One Fianna Fáil supporter is quoted as saying, 'I feel angry and let down. It's the saddest time in our history because it's clear there is no pride left in this nation' ('FF lose grassroots', *Irish Daily Star*, 21 November 2010, p. 12–13). Early elections are anticipated not just to clear out the current government but also to 'mark the first step on the road to recovery of national well-being and self-esteem' ('Early election needed to draw line under ignominy', *Irish Times*, 22 November 2010, p. 13). Beyond this, the crisis sounds the death knell of the Celtic Tiger:

> Now, with the Tiger dead and buried under a mound of ever-increasing debt, a silence is falling over the land. This year, the eve of All Saints passed in a deathly hush . . . There seemed little left to celebrate, with nothing to be seen in the skies save, in the murky distance but approaching ever nearer, the Four Horsemen of our particular Apocalypse: the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission, Brussels and the Iron Chancellor, Angela Merkel'. ('A silence falls over a nation cowed by an astronomical debt', *Irish Independent*, 21 November 2010)

This is a powerful metaphor which constructs a feeling of the fear and hopelessness felt by the 'Irish people'. This 'death' or 'war' imagery is also continued elsewhere. The *Irish Independent* again states that 'Central Bank governor Patrick Honohan said he feels as if he is serving in a war cabinet and most of the country's weary, shell-shocked citizens feel much the same [. . .] There may even be a need to forge a second republic – like the French are wont to do – to blow away the corruption that is a canker in our political system' ('We must unite in front of the world', *Irish Independent*, 27 November 2010). The death and war references represent the desperation felt in Ireland and the fear that everything that had been fought for both at the time of gaining independence and in the Celtic Tiger years had been lost. The reference to France signals, whether it be a serious call to revolution or not, a desperation to remove the sitting elite from power and return Ireland to 'the people'. There are also instances

where Taoiseach Brian Cowen is described as an 'executioner' who has 'sentenced generations of Irish people to a lifetime of debt and misery' ('I sentence you all to debt', *Irish Daily Star*, 25 November 2010, p. 1). The Biblical references also reflect the importance of Catholicism in Irish society.

The effects of the crisis, or its perceived roots, therefore, go much deeper than a straight-forward banking crisis, touching on fundamental questions of Irish national identity. The crisis is seen as a domestic crisis not just because the root cause of the crisis can be found in Ireland but also because of a perception that there was something fundamentally wrong with Irish society. The loss of the Celtic Tiger is, in the populist discourse, constructed as a national shock and a crisis of identity. In this context, the Irish 'wanker bankers' and the political elite serve as an internal Other to promote solidarity amongst the 'ordinary Irish people'. In contrast to Germany and in some cases Poland, solidarity in Ireland is primarily a bounded national solidarity rather than European. The national humiliation and the metaphor of death and war serve to unite the 'ordinary' Irish against a common enemy, the Irish elite. We can see this very stark divide between the political and financial elite and the so-called ordinary folk throughout the reporting of the crisis. In the following excerpt from the same article as the aforementioned image, one can ascertain a very clear 'us' versus 'them' dynamic:

> All at the expense of the taxpayers, whom they have betrayed; the social welfare recipients whose payments they've reduced; the low-income workers they've sucked into the tax net; the employees whose incomes have been gouged by income levies. These incompetent gobshites are being rewarded for ruining our prosperity, destroying our economy, selling our sovereignty at bargain basement prices, bringing back the dole queues, enslaving home-owners to decades of debt and forcing hundreds of thousands of our young people to hit the emigration trail. This is the real scandal that we ourselves have to deal with – not the EU or the IMF. ('Burn them at the stake for what they have done', *Irish Daily Star*, 21 November 2010, p. 24)

The crisis in Ireland, at least in November 2010, can therefore be considered a crisis not just of the Irish economy or Irish banks, but also one which had a profound impact on Irish national identity, on the very state of the nation, the future of the Irish people. The EU is mostly external to the debate at this time. In fact, reports of the crisis

sometimes ignored any involvement of the EU itself, referring to the bailout purely as an IMF bailout rather than an EU bailout, or an 'IMF/EU' bailout. This is particularly interesting considering two-thirds of the bailout funds were provided by the EU or EU member states, but can perhaps be explained by the near-involvement of the IMF in previous economic crises in Ireland and therefore contributed to more sensational image of the crisis.

In some articles, the significance of the IMF's presence is clear, in particular, that of Ajai Chopra, deputy director of the IMF's European department and head of the IMF's mission to Ireland. Describing the bailout negotiations, *The Irish Times* reports that 'the leader of the 12-person International Monetary Fund (IMF) team involved in drawing up the terms of Ireland's bailout will fly back to his organisation's base in Washington DC tomorrow morning' ('An old hand at prescribing financial rescue medicine', *Irish Times*, 30 November 2010, p. 1), whereas *The Irish Independent* reports that the 'IMF swoops in to slash and burn Irish banking' ('IMF swoops in to slash and burn Irish banking', *Irish Independent*, 21 November 2010). Furthermore, the *Daily Star* talks about the '€100 billion on offer from the IMF', stating that the IMF specifically 'will take no prisoners when it comes to enforcing cutbacks – their one and only aim will be to ensure they will get their money back' (*Irish Daily Star*, 'Fianna Fáil brought this ruin upon us', 21 November 2010, p. 24). *The Irish Times* quotes a father telling his children: 'We live in the Republic of IMF now' ('This week they said', *The Irish Times*, 27 November 2010, p. 16). It is clear that the IMF is often seen as the most significant or relevant institution drawing up Ireland's financial assistance programme rather than the EU. The involvement of the IMF/EU is also sometimes considered a necessary evil to take Ireland out of its home-grown crisis, as an instrument for the Irish economy. They are considered, to a certain extent, as 'coming to the rescue', a sentiment which appears across the press, from *The Times* to the *Daily Star*. For example, one letter to the editor in *The Irish Times* states that 'The IMF experts involved in crafting future strategy will be unbeholden to vested interests, wafer-thin parliamentary majorities and local political considerations, allowing them to fully pursue strategies for the economic betterment of our country' ('Was it for this? The state of the nation', *Irish Times*, 22 November 2010, p. 15). Given the absolute loss of confidence in the Irish political class, the IMF is viewed as a credible alternative to fix Ireland's economic problems.

By 2011, however, the crisis is also constructed as a 'European' crisis when attention was drawn to the implications for the Eurozone more broadly. Nevertheless, in contrast to Germany where a 'European crisis' constitutes a threat to the European idea, to the 'fate of the community', and in Poland where it presents a threat to Polish marginalisation in Europe, in Ireland the emphasis is on the 'fate of the euro'. The 'European' crisis is therefore a European *currency* crisis, a European *banking* crisis, or a European *economic* crisis, something which serves to remind the Irish of the original motivations for membership – the Irish economy and independence from Britain. On the one hand, this framing highlights the reality of the crisis for Ireland, which faced a severe economic crisis. On the other hand, it highlights what was primarily at stake for Ireland – the collapse of the single currency and further economic instability, compared to the potential collapse of the broader European project for Germany or political influence for Poland. For example, the December 2011 European Council summit is described as a 'make or break summit to save the single currency' ('Summit tension tightened by London and Berlin' Arthur Beesley, *Irish Times* 8 December 2011, p. 14). In the run-up to the summit, *The Irish Times* considers the prospects for a collapse of the single currency:

> THE 350 MILLION inhabitants of the euro zone face the risk of the money in their pockets ceasing to be legal tender. A collapse of the world's second most important currency, in a continent that still accounts for more of the planet s economic activity than any other, would amount to the biggest shock to the global economy in living memory [. . .] At the very least, there would be a period of disruption to everyday transactions, from buying groceries to paying electricity bills. A disruption of that kind [. . .] would have very serious consequences for economic activity. [. . .] Earlier this week Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton spoke of living standards being driven back to levels of the 1950s in a worst-case scenario. ('Crunch time', The Irish Times, 3 December p. 1)

Here we can identify a number of fears which play into the need to save the single currency. The risk of not just a collapse of the European economy, but also the global one, the everyday disruption normal people would experience, the effect the loss of wealth would have on European economies, and, more specific to Ireland, a dramatic fall in living standards, something which had been consistently rising in Ireland until the

financial crash of 2008. One quote from a business representative in The *Irish Independent* suggests that a break-up of the Euro would constitute the 'economic and financial equivalent of a satellite breaking up in space with unimaginable consequences' ('Big companies prepare euro break-up plans', *Irish Independent*, 4 December 2011).

However, this frame also strongly relates to a defence of Irish national interests. This is in one sense self-explanatory, given Ireland's urgent need to improve its economic situation. The comparison with Germany and Poland, however, demonstrates that motivations for EU membership also become salient at such moments of crisis – elites draw on ideas that resonate in the national context. In Ireland, this can also be viewed as a strategy by elites and media actors to defend the interests of the Irish political and economic class (Mercille 2013, p. 12). It is necessary to 'save the Euro' because the Euro is in the best interests of the Irish economy. For example, one article in the *Irish Times*, discussing the possibility of a new treaty, argues that 'the future of the euro is at stake and, given the calamity that would befall this country if the currency were to collapse, there is really not much of a choice [. . .] it would be economic madness not to sign up for the discipline required' ('Logic dictates that we support new deal for Europe', Stephen Collins, *Irish Times*, 10 December 2011, p. 15). What is more, the *Irish Independent* notes that 'the global financial system could be set back 30 years if the euro was to collapse. Speaking yesterday at a briefing on the future of the single currency, Bloxham's chief economist Alan McQuaid said the collapse of the euro would be "horrendous" for Ireland' ('Returning to the punt would be "horrendous for Ireland"', *Irish Independent*, 2 December 2011). Therefore, while the crisis by 2011 has evolved into a wider 'European' crisis, the issue at stake remains the future of the Irish economy. The utility of Europe for the Irish economy and Irish sovereignty becomes clearer in the debates about EU crisis policies particularly in 2011.

Irish Interests and the Utility of Europe

> *My only counsel to Ireland is that in order to become deeply Irish, she must become European.* (Kettle cited in Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 199)

The crisis, particularly in 2010, is framed primarily as a domestic crisis in terms of Irish identity, particularly through the lens of historical experience of economic crises. This results first and foremost from the (at least

short term) causes of the crisis but is channelled through a populist discourse in the popular press. By 2011, however, there is a greater perception of a 'European' economic crisis. This is framed in terms of both the European and Irish economic interest. In contrast to Germany and Poland, debates about crisis policies are not generally framed in terms of European solidarity or the 'good European'. Rather, they are framed as a question about how best to serve the European economy, and with it the Irish economy and Irish sovereignty, reflecting both the immediate interests of the Irish economic situation as well as longer-standing discourses on Europe in Ireland. This section will demonstrate that, while some Irish elites and media actors refer to the 'European' interest and 'European solidarity', EU policies are primarily framed by Irish politicians and the media in terms of economic interests and national sovereignty in order to garner support for EU policies. Europe here plays an instrumental role in strengthening the Irish economy, securing Irish sovereignty, and with it, supporting Irish identity.

Economy

The framing of EU policy debates in terms of economic interests raises the question of how the Irish state and economy can best be served through participation in the EU. As highlighted in Chapter 3, economic interests form a major element of the Irish discourse on Europe. On the one hand, there is a 'European interests' frame where the EU institutions, and the ECB, in particular, are called upon to defend the common interests in Europe – that is, to show 'European solidarity' in the form of burden-sharing, redistribution and for the ECB to act as a lender of last resort to ensure the Eurozone's recovery. Some opposition actors and newspaper articles call for 'federal' policies including fiscal union and a central bank which acts in a similar way to other national central banks. This can be understood as a strategic discourse by opposition actors to call on the EU to do more to solve the crisis – instead of placing the bulk of the burden on Irish people – and to criticise the agreements made by the sitting government, particularly in the wake of the bailout agreement in November 2010. The Irish elites' construction of European solidarity thus differs starkly from German elites. However, as will be seen in Chapter 6, there are similarities with the strategic construction of European solidarity by Polish elites, where further integration through the strengthening of EU institutions and wealth distribution from rich to poor member states

constitute the primary understanding of European solidarity. For example, in the political discourse from Fianna Fáil leader Micháel Martin, this is even referred to as real 'solidarity' in contrast to Germany's calls for fiscal discipline:

> Tighter fiscal rules are reasonable, but only if accompanied by a change in ECB policies, an EU fund large enough to help stimulate economies in need and tight, unified financial regulation. A control-only fiscal union would just entrench flaws which even Jacques Delors says were caused by politicians looking for the quick fix rather than the right solution. Every piece of major progress seen in Europe has come from solidarity and respect between nations. There has been precious little of either in recent months'. (7 December 2011a)

Here we see contestation over the meaning of fiscal union and the extent to which integration should go in order to save the Eurozone. In this frame, solidarity constitutes the mutual sharing of debt and redistribution from the richer to poorer states. Micháel Martin also states that:

> A genuine fiscal union would involve a dramatic increase in the central budget and in the transfers from wealthy countries to poorer ones [. . .] The country which has done more than any to build up Europe and which has shown a deep solidarity within the Union now stands as its biggest threat. (30 November 2011)

Solidarity here involves redistribution of wealth from rich to poor, and Germany is considered to be sidestepping its responsibilities and commitment to European solidarity. This use of solidarity by those opposing EU crisis policies has been found in other contexts as well; Closa and Maatsch, for example, find that Eurosceptic or anti-austerity actors refer more to solidarity in opposing EU crisis policy than those in favour of the legislation (2014, p. 835). This narrative is also present in some parts of the press. One *Irish Times* article suggests that solidarity must involve 'burden-sharing', where the bailout programme introduces punishment over European solidarity.

> Yesterday's bailout of broken and delinquent Ireland is much more Versailles than Marshall. There is no sharing of the burden. There is no evidence of a single thought for the consequences of mass unemployment, mass emigration and war on the most vulnerable. There is no European

> solidarity. And there is not even a genuine sense of self-interest. The sadistic pleasures of punishment have trumped the sensible calculation that an Ireland enslaved by debt is not much use to anyone. ('Abysmal deal ransoms us and disgraces Europe', Irish Times, 29 November 2010, p. 11)

The expectation that the EU institutions express solidarity is extended to the ECB, particularly in 2011, which is seen to have responsibility for helping the Eurozone out of the crisis. One article in the *Irish Independent* argues that 'anyone with a brain knows the solution is for the ECB to be the lender of last resort, as a central bank should be, and for there to be eurobonds with the requisite treaty changes so as to allow central control of the dysfunctional financial regulatory systems in countries like Ireland, Greece and Italy' ('Another fine mess', *Irish Independent*, 1 December 2011). The *Irish Times* also calls for fiscal union to stem the crisis, arguing that 'agreement on steps towards a fiscal union could have paved the way for the ECB to provide more aggressive support for strained euro zone government bond markets' ('ECB to shore up banks as credit squeeze threatens euro zone', *Irish Times*, 5 December 2011, p. 20). Calls for European solidarity on the part of European institutions on behalf of the 'European interest' can therefore be considered a strategy by opposition elites and the press to demand action by the EU and other member states to help the Eurozone, and Ireland, cope with the crisis.

On the other hand, the debates are also framed explicitly in terms of the Irish economic interest, reflecting the immediate needs of the Irish economy as well as existing discourses on the EU. Economic interest here is seen as a driving force for integration where the utility of Europe for Irish interests is evident. This is explicitly noted in one *Irish Independent* article:

> But yes, we have a low corporation tax and yes, we do allow companies to 'shunt profits around' to avoid paying tax. It's not nice, it's not neighbourly – Toynbee's right about that – nor is it the European way. But then, we've always been rather disingenuous about our loyalty to the values of the European Union. Remember Boston or Berlin? How strange that we would choose the Boston way while simultaneously insisting that we were all passionately European. Did we do it for the money? Hand on heart, yes, we did. ('Hardly a pause in listing our flaws', *Irish Independent*, 28 November 2010)

This article recalls a speech by former Tánaiste Mary Harney in 2000 emphasising the close links between Ireland and the United States – when she argued that 'spiritually, we are probably a lot closer to Boston than Berlin' (2000). In particular, despite the fact that there have been early attempts to increase it by, for example, Sinn Féin, the idea that Ireland's low corporate tax rate is essential for Irish economic growth remains unchallenged across the political spectrum (Hay and Smith 2013). Finance Minister Michael Noonan reconfirms in a statement to the Dáil that 'much of Ireland's growth at present can be attributed to the attractiveness of Ireland for inward investment. The Corporate Tax Rate of 12.5 per cent and our place in Europe are central to this' (Noonan, 6 December 2011). Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin maintains that 'the only independent study of a consolidated and harmonised tax base shows that it would inflict immediate and permanent damage on Ireland – while adding absolutely nothing to Europe's growth potential' (7 December 2011b). This is reflected throughout the press. The *Irish Times* notes that a common tax base 'would lessen scope for multinational investors to maximise the profit they record in Ireland to benefit more from the low 12.5 per cent Irish tax rate' ('Paris and Berlin revisit tax base plan', *The Irish Times*, 8 December 2011, p. 10). An *Irish Independent* article also reports warnings given by US technology companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Google and Intel that they would consider halting investment in Ireland if the corporate tax rate was increased (Hewlett Packard jobs at risk if corporation tax rises', *Irish Independent*, 23 November 2010). Crisis policies are therefore framed in terms of the Irish economic interest. Unlike in Germany and Poland, there is little sense of a European community or Europeanised Irish identity when legitimising or contesting crisis policies; rather, they are evaluated here in terms of potential effects on the Irish economy.

Sovereignty

However, as noted in Chapter 3, the economy has been used to express Irish nationalism since the country won independence in 1922 and has since been closely linked with the question of sovereignty (Hayward 2009, p. 237). The issue of economic modernisation became important after the 1950s when it was clear that, while Ireland had gained formal independence from Britain, it remained highly dependent economically (Dorgan 2006, p. 2). The move to join the single currency was a further step

towards ensuring economic independence from Britain by symbolically detaching the Irish punt from the British pound. In the pro-European discourse, the crisis has continued the re-definition of the meaning of sovereignty which has been taking place since Ireland's entry into the EU. In order to deal with the implications of pooling sovereignty, the Irish elite began to focus on the '*utility* of sovereignty' versus the '*ideal* of sovereignty' (Hayward 2009, p. 208). Sovereignty is no longer necessarily viewed in zero-sum terms but rather as something that can be enhanced through participation in international organisations, where 'pooling sovereignty enhances real independence of action' (Gillespie 2012, p. 2; see also; Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 245). As Chapter 6 will show, this is a similar process to that seen in Poland, where pro-European elites draw on a sovereignty discourse in order to justify European integration. Accepting the conditions of the bailout programme is sold, therefore, as a way for Ireland to *regain* its sovereignty, by returning to the markets as a 'sovereign' nation and recovering its economic independence from the IMF/EU. In order to justify the bailout conditions, Irish government actors therefore draw on Ireland's original motivations for EU membership and highlight its associated vulnerabilities as a small state in the EU. This finding contrasts with the German perspective, where the bailout programmes have been framed in terms of European solidarity, and bears similarities to the Polish case, where further integration is justified as a means to protect Poland from Russia. The official position of the Irish government and the views of pro-European media actors therefore reinforce this notion of the 'utility' of sovereignty and reflect longer-standing narratives on EU membership.

Firstly, policies such as austerity measures introduced as part of the bailout programme are legitimised in terms of sovereignty. Completing the bailout programme and implementing the 'necessary' crisis measures will serve to reclaim Irish sovereignty – by allowing it to return to the markets as a sovereign nation. For example, Taoiseach Enda Kenny maintains that:

> We were voted into Office with the largest ever majority by the people in order to do a job: to restore our economic sovereignty; to get Ireland working again; to return our economy to growth; and to radically reform our politics and public services. [. . .] Our ultimate goal now is to regain our national sovereignty by maintaining our fiscal commitments in the years ahead. (7 December 2011)

Fine Gael's coalition partner the Labour Party also draws on the same notion; one Labour Party minister claims that 'our over-riding commitment to the Irish people is to restore the economy, promote job creation and restore our economic sovereignty' (Pat Rabbitte, 7 December 2011). The bailout programme here serves as a means by which Ireland can regain its sovereignty and perhaps return to its position as the EU's success story, to be the 'good child' of the bailout programme, differentiating the country from the other 'southern' European crisis countries and reclaiming its Celtic Tiger status. During the Celtic Tiger years, Ireland was seen as the EU's great success story – a 'model' of EU economic development in particular for the new member states that joined in 2004 (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 221). In contrast to countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal, it caught up with the wealthier member states (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 221) and during the 1990s 'accomplished a transition away from peripheral "Mediterranean" status' (Gillespie 2012, p. 3). Whereas in Germany, implementing fiscal commitments laid down by bailout programmes and the SGP is understood as European solidarity, as every country playing its part in ensuring the stability of the Eurozone, these commitments are therefore understood in Ireland as a path to regaining the sovereignty it lost through the bailout programme and returning to its role as a 'model' for economic success in the EU. Likewise, contributing to the bailout programmes is presented in Polish discourse as a means for Poland to guarantee its security and strengthen its sovereignty by positioning itself at the core of Europe. This is reflected in the *Irish Times*, which argues that

> in banding together [member states] did not diminish their individual sovereignty, but created a capacity to act, created a sovereign power where none existed. That is the essence of the European Union in a range of domains [...] where challenges are beyond nation-states acting alone. ('Question of sovereignty', *Irish Times*, 6 December, p. 17)

There has therefore been an acceptance of the implications of the globalised world for the capacity of states to be truly sovereign. Thus, Ireland can participate in the pooling of sovereignty to maintain its 'capacity to act' in the international community – another *Irish Times* article asserts that 'to be alone in our current circumstances would be a very cold, lonely and penurious place to be', and that Ireland needed to 'ensure that the integrity of the EU, at the level of 27 member states, was maintained' ('Gilmore says

Ireland may need another EU referendum', *Irish Times*, 9 December 2011 p. 8). Furthermore, just as when Ireland originally joined the European community, participation in the EU serves to ensure Ireland's independence from the United Kingdom. Bearing striking similarities to the Polish case, where the memories of partition and the historical fear of Russia are reasserted in order to legitimise further integration, the possibility of a collapse of the Euro or Ireland's exit from the Eurozone reignites this fear of British rule and the memories of Ireland's struggle for independence. Remaining within the Eurozone is then justified on the basis of independence from the United Kingdom. Denouncing a 'theoretical, outdated notion of sovereignty', one article in the *Irish Times* maintains that:

> The only alternative would be to leave the euro zone and attempt to peg the Irish currency to sterling. That would effectively amount to an application to rejoin the United Kingdom on the 90th anniversary of the treaty that led to the establishment of this State. [. . .] It's ironic that Sinn Féin has joined with the burn the bondholders brigade in the Dáil in promoting the argument for leaving the euro and, in effect, throwing ourselves at the mercy of the United Kingdom. ('Logic dictates that we support new deal for Europe', Stephen Collins, *Irish Times*, December 10 2011, p. 15)

Further integration through fiscal union, the author argues, 'will enhance rather than diminish that freedom in real terms' ('Logic dictates that we support new deal for Europe', *Irish Times*, 10 December 2011, p. 15). Remaining within the Eurozone therefore ensures Ireland's continued independence from the UK and even increases its sovereign power. Pro-European elites and media actors therefore draw on existing discourses on the utility of Europe in order to legitimise their claims about EU crisis. The next section will show how opposition discourse also reflects this discourse on Irish sovereignty.

Irish Sovereignty and the Threat of Europe

> *What's this fecking 'we' business, all of a sudden?*. ('EU cannot be serious', *Irish Daily Star*, 9 December 2011, p. 10)

The previous section showed how EU policies are framed in terms of Ireland's existing discourses on Europe, where the EU serves as an instrument for the Irish economy and Irish sovereignty, in order to legitimise

them. However, opposition to EU policies is also framed in terms of sovereignty. In contrast to Germany, where even opposition policies are discussed in terms of a particular conception of European solidarity and the 'good European', crisis policies in Ireland, as in Poland, are framed in terms of national sovereignty. In the opposition discourse, particularly in the conservative and populist press, Ireland is deemed to have lost its (economic) sovereignty, conceded to a 'foreign power' in the form of the EU or IMF. In particular, this is expressed through opposition to tax harmonisation (which would result in the loss of Ireland's low corporate tax rate, demonstrating therefore an unwillingness to express the 'solidarity' required for redistributive measures relating to taxation at a European level) and through Othering of Germany and France as representatives of the 'large' EU member states who are perceived to be dominating the small, peripheral states.

The bailout programme and the ensuing crisis policies proposed in 2011 were seen as a threat to national (economic) sovereignty, reconstructing the collective memory of the fight for independence. References to Ireland's fight for independence and the 'betrayal' of the 'heroes' of that struggle evoke not just a perceived loss of economic autonomy but also a dramatic loss of national sovereignty bringing Ireland's statehood into question. There are strong similarities with the Polish case, where the memory of the 'heroes' of Poland's struggle for independence, particularly during Martial Law of the 1980s, is evoked by conservative political and media actors to oppose government EU policy. Where the long-standing Others of Polish identity, Russia and Germany, are evoked in such frames, Britain is reasserted as Ireland's threatening Other. For example, the day the bailout was announced it was described in both the *Irish Daily Star* and the *Irish Independent* as 'the blackest day of the blackest week seen since the Civil War' ('The blackest day . . . ', *Irish Independent*, 21 November 2010). Furthermore, in the run-up to the European Council summit in December 2011, Michael Noonan, Fine Gael Irish Finance Minister since 2011, declared that:

> On this day 90 years ago, on the 6th of December 1921, the Treaty was signed. The Treaty restored Ireland's sovereignty which for so long had been lost. In the last days of the Treaty negotiations, the British conceded fiscal autonomy to Ireland. This, as Dick Mulcahy said 'Gave Ireland back her purse'. I am afraid the Fianna Fáil/Green Government gave the purse away again this time last year as fiscal autonomy was conceded to the IMF and the European authorities. (Michael Noonan, 6 December 2011)

Just as conservative actors in Poland argue that Polish independence has come to an end with the Fiscal Compact, some commentators argue that Ireland has lost its status as an independent country. This can be considered a strategy by opposition actors and the media to criticise and contest government policy. It also forms part of an anti-elite sentiment in Ireland and matches populist discourse in other member states as well, such as Greece (Boukala 2014). One article in the *Irish Independent* maintains that 'it is shocking an Irish government might voluntarily agree to a permanent ceding of that degree of sovereignty. If it succeeds, then it would not be credible to describe ourselves as a republic' (Europe's bullies must be defeated', *Irish Independent*, 4 December 2011). Losing control over economic policies such as taxation, setting the national budget and moves towards fiscal union are not simply understood within the economic sphere, but are viewed as a judgement on the very status of the nation-state. In light of later evidence that the then ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet threatened to stop emergency liquidity unless Ireland applied for a bailout (see e.g. Taylor 2014b), it is interesting to note that it was the Irish government which is seen to have voluntarily conceded Irish sovereignty to a foreign power, rather than it having been taken forcibly by an external power – something which is also evident in the Polish case. It also further constructs the idea of the Irish elite as an internal Other to the Irish people – Irish politicians 'surrendered' Irish sovereignty to the IMF/EU and in so doing betrayed the 'heroes' of 1916/1922. As the *Irish Daily Star* admits, 'in the midst of all our justified anger about losing our sovereignty, many of us must also have breathed a deep, contented, secret sigh of relief. At long last, this government of gougers have had serious economic decision-making taken away from them' ('Burn them at the stake . . . ' *Irish Daily Star*, 21 November, p. 24). Furthermore, the paper angrily maintains in another article that:

> The Biffo bunch has disgraced itself and dishonoured the country by surrendering our economic sovereignty to the EU and the IMF, and we are now faced with decades of debt repayments . . . And less talk about how our 1916 heroes are spinning in their graves – at least they're dead and can suffer no more. ('Tell us now, Mr Gilmore . . . ', *Irish Daily Star*, 22 November 2010)

The 'Biffo bunch' (Biffo being a commonly used nickname for former Taoiseach Brian Cowen, standing for 'Big Ignorant Fecker From Offaly')

has betrayed and dishonoured Ireland and the country's heroes – who should be glad they cannot witness the shame of recent events. Moreover, an article in the *Irish Independent* questions the very notion of Irish self-determination:

> If self-determination is so important (and it is), perhaps we should ask who this 'self' is who has been determining how the country is run? [. . .] Within this republic, there's a layer of well-off people who have had an inordinate and unaccountable influence on the running of the country. Golden circles, if you will. They are surrounded by cheerleaders – professionals and media fans – who amplify their every wish [. . .] Have we forgotten all that? It's a bit rich, now that Mr Chopra has arrived in town, to pretend that a handful of reckless politicians crippled our sovereignty. ('Elite stand ready to serve new overlords', *Irish Independent*, 21 November 2010)

This excerpt clearly identifies the Irish as the perpetrators, that is, not just a small elite in government but a class that extends far further within Irish society than many want to believe.

However, while the Irish elite are seen to have conceded sovereignty, it is the EU's large states, represented by Germany and France, who have seized it, something which also reflects much longer-standing concerns that Ireland would end up dominated by the larger, core member states, expressed by the opposition as early as the 1972 referendum on EEC membership (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 222). Of course, these concerns are also grounded in the reality that German ordoliberalism has come to define the EU's crisis response. These sentiments were particularly salient in 2011 when the Franco-German alliance was perceived to be dominating decision making at the European Council summit in December. 'Othering' of Germany and France therefore reveals a core/periphery dynamic which has long been salient in Ireland's relationship with the EU which, in theory, should bolster the position of small states such as Ireland in the international system (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 199). This core/periphery dynamic is also present in the Polish case, where Germany is seen to be dominating the peripheral countries. In the crisis, the larger core member states are seen to control the smaller, peripheral states and in so doing threaten the status of those small states as equal partners – as one article names it, Ireland has received 'satellite status' ('Enda settles for satellite status', *Irish Independent*, 4 December 2011). Like Poland, the discourse in Ireland highlights long-standing

insecurities about the country's position in the world and in Europe, which frames the contemporary relationship with the powerful players in the EU.

For example, one *Irish Independent* article maintains that 'that is why it is so deeply regrettable that the "Merkozy" axis is behaving in such a dictatorial way. Their dogged pursuit of totalitarian capitalism will have catastrophic consequences' ('Remember we are a people . . . ', *Irish Independent* 5 December 2011). Furthermore, moves towards fiscal union, in particular, the threat of tax harmonisation (and therefore the loss of Ireland's favourable low corporate tax rate) is interpreted as a kind of French 'plot':

> Ostensibly, the new powers will grant the right to enforce 'fiscal discipline' over the 17 group members. Behind the arras, the real power will lie with Paris and Berlin, operating through the European Central Bank in Frankfurt, pretending to be Brussels. [. . .] Unsaid is the real message: 'So in future your economies will all be governed by a central Ministry of France.' Also unsaid is: 'and behind that Ministry we shall be standing calling the shots.' And yes, my friends, it is a coup d'etat by another name – for if you control the economy you control the country. ('Only salvation . . . ', Frederick Forsyth, *Irish Independent*, 4 December 2011)

Furthermore, old stereotypes of Germany are evoked in Ireland, and as we will see in Chapter 6, also in Poland. As one article in *The Times* maintains, 'it is an irony of recent European history that a mechanism designed to contain German power and maintain French influence has done precisely the opposite' ('Crunch time', *Irish Times*, 3 December 2011, p. 1). In this context, German economic power is presented as a threat to small nations across Europe:

> . . . whereas Germany represents herself as being on a special level, enjoying the solitary splendour of supremacy and dictating the non-democratic terms of its fiscal empire, we are representative of a majority of the other nations. Prodigal, ill-governed, foolish, greedy, blind and above all fearful, we are the norm. We should be standing together, with the majority, both of Mediterranean member states and of central European and Atlantic states ('Our new place in Europe..', *Irish Independent*, 5 December 2011)

This places Ireland alongside other peripheral states including both southern and central Europe in a battle with the threat of German 'empire', placing the peripheral countries as the victims of Germany's perceived economic domination. One article goes so far as to compare Ireland with Czechoslovakia in 1938:

> Ireland is, like the poor Czechs in 1938, a small unimportant country in a wrong place that is out of options. The Taoiseach and the Minister for Finance could bluff all they wanted. But, like the Sudetenland in 1938 where the plucky Czechs were told by their irritated allies that Mr Hitler 'is a pretty straight guy', only the deluded, the deceitful or the obtuse could mistake the clarity of the message Europe was sending us. ('Our Taoiseach is now Europe's puppet king', *Irish Independent*, 21 December 2010)

The Taoiseach is then reduced to the role of 'puppet king' to the new European 'masters'. ('Our Taoiseach is now Europe's puppet king', *Irish Independent*, 21 December 2010). Whereas the Nazi past is used in the debates in Germany as a motivation for European integration and saving the European project, in Ireland, and in Poland, it is a reason to be fearful of it.

In the same way as in Poland, the historical question of Irish sovereignty and the self-perception of marginalisation at the periphery of Europe in decision-making terms, therefore, frame the debate about the crisis in the public sphere. The emphasis on the 'foreignness' of the EU and IMF prevents identification with Europe and positions Europe as external to Irish interests – in terms of either its utility or threat to the Irish state. One *Irish Daily Star* article, responding to calls from Merkel and Sarkozy for joint European action, asks 'what's this fecking "we" business, all of a sudden?' ('EU cannot be serious', *Daily Star*, 9 December 2011, p. 10), suggesting that never has there been consideration for the well-being of any European community. Furthermore, what is understood in Germany as 'European solidarity', that is, accepting fiscal discipline in exchange for financial assistance for the greater good of the European community, is perceived in Ireland, and Poland, as an exercise in domination, the spread of empire, as economic colonisation. This has implications for the legitimacy of measures touted as necessary in the name of European solidarity.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the Euro crisis has not acted as a critical juncture of European identity discourses in Ireland. Rather, the crisis is framed in terms of path-dependent discourses on the Irish state – in particular, the struggle for independence in the early twentieth century and repeated economic crises, particularly of the late 1970s and 1980s – where Europe is viewed in terms of its impact on Irish identity. As illuminated in the introduction, support for the EU in Ireland has not suffered significantly since the onset of the crisis. Although there has been a drop in trust towards and image of the EU since the onset of the financial crisis, the Irish are still amongst the countries that rate the EU most positively and report a higher-than-average attachment to the EU (Standard Eurobarometer 84, 2014). This chapter firstly argued that this can be explained by the fact that the crisis was understood most widely as a domestic crisis, as it was in the short term, and attributed to longer-standing problems in Irish society, particularly amongst the political and economic elite. Rather than acting as a *European* identity crisis, the crisis in Ireland can be considered a crisis of *Irish* identity, where the Irish elite came to act as a kind of internal Other to the 'ordinary' Irish people. Having revealed widespread corruption in the country's banking, economic, and political system, the crisis was seen as one brought about primarily by the Irish elite themselves.

The second and third sections of this chapter showed how crisis policies such as the bailout programme and further integration through banking and fiscal union are primarily framed around the issues of sovereignty and the economy. Although the crisis in Ireland very much affected these issues objectively, opposition and media actors drew primarily on sovereignty frames and collective memories of occupation to contest government policy. The second argued that the pro-European elite and media actors legitimise EU policy by emphasising the utility of Europe for Ireland. European solidarity in Ireland is constructed as redistribution of wealth and strengthening of EU institutions for the benefit of the Eurozone and the Irish economy. Given that European solidarity in Germany is often understood as compliance with rules on budget deficits and austerity measures, the findings suggest that European solidarity is generally constructed in terms of perceived national interests rather than a shared understanding of what solidarity means. Furthermore, the best way to Ireland's actual

sovereignty in practice is ensuring that it has a secure place in the international community, within an EU which has improved member states' capacity to act through the 'utility' of sovereignty rather than the 'ideal' of sovereignty (Hayward 2009). However, the third section showed how actors who oppose such policies also draw on the same themes to justify their claims. The bailout programme and further integration measures are seen to have deprived Ireland of its (economic) sovereignty and in doing so experienced a loss of its status as a republic that the Irish had fought so hard to obtain. Here, the core EU member states, particularly France and Germany, are perceived as Ireland's 'threatening Other', the ones who have deprived Ireland of its sovereignty. Most actors, however, use Europe as a utility or a threat to Ireland in legitimising their ideas, meaning that the crisis reinforces rather than changes Irish discourses on Europe.

The implication of the 'utility of Europe' finding is that the Irish are supportive of further integration to the extent that it serves the Irish interest; Ireland is 'conditionally integrationist' to the extent that the Irish 'ask what Brussels could do for the Irish economy rather than the reverse' (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, p. 32). By the time of the referendum on the Fiscal Treaty, the Irish were relatively convinced that 'Ireland is better off anchored in the EU' (Laffan 2013, p. 49). Furthermore, by spring of 2013, 48% of Irish people surveyed agreed that they felt closer to other citizens in the EU because of the crisis, compared with 40% in Germany (European Commission 2013a). The Irish have confirmed their interest in being part of the EU because the crisis has highlighted the country's vulnerabilities and what would be at stake were its participation in the EU and the single currency endangered. It has reinforced the original purpose of European integration and reminded the Irish of the necessity of their participation in the European community. Gillespie asserts that the 'strategic impulse that originally attracted Ireland towards EEC/EU membership in the 1960s and 1970s as a means of reducing dependence on the UK resurfaces now that the euro is facing an existential crisis requiring deeper integration to save the euro' (2012, p. 7). Furthermore, supporting further integration in the areas of European banking supervision and fiscal policy to a certain extent provide a way to liberate Ireland from their elite. In the frame of domestic crisis, the Irish political system failed; therefore, the pooling of sovereignty in these areas can be legitimised on the basis that this is best for Ireland's future.

However, it is clear that Ireland differs starkly from Germany and Poland, in that there is relatively little conception of Europe as a 'we' community. Ireland is not presented as part of a wider European community; rather, Europe plays either an instrumental or a threatening role for Irish identity. As Gillespie argues, it makes more sense to talk of a 'post-sovereign' rather than a 'post-national' Europe in the Irish context. While pooling sovereignty can be justified, he argues, 'abandoning nationalism is a much more demanding condition – indeed an unacceptable one – for a country which sees it as a liberating force from imperialism and therefore as a means of realising the international' (2012, p. 8). In contrast to the German case, there is no conception of 'ordoliberal' solidarity in Ireland; rather, the conditions attached to the bailout programme were seen as an erosion of Irish sovereignty by Germany and France. European solidarity in Ireland is understood as wealth redistribution, burden sharing and the strengthening of EU institutions such as the ECB, as a strategy to demand further assistance from the EU. Whereas some actors in the Polish case sign up to the 'ordoliberal' solidarity, pro-European Polish elites and media actors also understand European solidarity to be the strengthening of EU institutions in order to secure Poland's place in the core of Europe. The next chapter will introduce the Polish case and show how, like in Ireland, the question of Polish sovereignty and the quest for independence constrain Polish elites and frame the debate about the crisis.

CHAPTER 6

The Battle for the European Core: Polishness as Europeanness?

Introduction

The previous two chapters presented the results of the first two case studies, Germany and Ireland. This chapter will consider the effect of the crisis in Poland compared to the other two case studies. As in Germany and Ireland, this chapter will demonstrate that the crisis is constructed in such a way that it reflects existing identities as a strategy by elite and media actors to legitimise their claims. In particular, the crisis reinforced the deep divisions present in Polish politics. While these divisions generally do not relate to the EU but rather to 'attitudes towards the past and moral-cultural issues in general, and levels of religiosity in particular' (Szczerbiak 2003b, p. 741) and Polish election campaigns generally do not deal with European politics (Szczerbiak and Bil 2009b, p. 463), the dividing lines during the crisis can be drawn along a cosmopolitan-nationalist cleavage (Grande and Kriesi 2014). Adam Michnik, current editor of *Gazeta Wyborcza* and former anti-communist dissident, once claimed that 'the most important conflict in Polish culture today is being fought between those who see Poland as part of Europe and those characterised as natiocentric' (cited in McManus-Czubińska et al. 2003). Debates about the crisis in the early stages were fought on these terms, divided between the economically liberal governing party Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska – PO, in opposition since October 2015) along with the left/liberal press (particularly *Gazeta Wyborcza* – GW), and the

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conservative-nationalist party Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość – PiS, which won a majority in the October 2015 general election) and the conservative press (here *Rzeczpospolita* – RZ). While pro-European actors drew on the 'return to Europe' discourse to legitimise their calls for further integration, they were also constrained by the Polish sovereignty discourse. This led to intensified calls for a federal Europe on the one hand, and a strengthening of the historical fear of Russia and Germany on the other. The recent election of Law and Justice will likely lead to a quite different engagement of Poland within the EU in the coming years.

Firstly, this chapter will first outline Poland's experience of the crisis. Secondly, it will explain how the crisis moves from being a crisis located at the margins of Europe, in Greece and Southern Europe, to a crisis about Poland's marginalisation in Europe. When understood as a Greek or Southern European crisis, the crisis sees Poland positioned in the media discourse within the Northern European core of the virtuous, the 'economically disciplined' and 'responsible' EU member states in contrast to its southern European (Greek) Other. By 2011, however, the crisis was a European crisis which became an issue of Polish identity, once again risking marginalisation at the periphery of Europe. The chapter will then proceed to explain how the debates deal with this question of identity. Firstly, like their German counterparts, the pro-European elites and media present Polishness as Europeanness, arguing for a federal Europe and defence of the common European good as an expression of intertwined European and Polish identities. As part of this, the EU is seen as the best way to guarantee the security and sovereignty of the Polish state. Secondly, however, the debates also become an outlet for the construction of divisions in Europe. On the one hand, the Othering of Greece in light of Poland's commitment to contributing to the bailout fund in 2011 created both a North/South division at the same time as reinforcing the perceived economic division between Poland and the rest of Europe. On the other hand, Eurosceptic actors presented the EU and Germany as an ultimate threat to Polish sovereignty, calling Poland's very independence into question. This fuelled anti-German sentiment and strengthened Germany's role as a historical 'Other' for Poland. The Polish case therefore further confirms the overall argument of this book that crises are incorporated into national contexts and framed according to existing political and social discourses.

Poland, Party Politics and the Crisis

As mentioned in the introduction, Polish politics have long been polarised, particularly around the question of the past. As Haughton argues, in post-communist countries, the past shapes not only 'the terrain on which the battles are fought [. . .] it provides some of the ammunition and marks out members of the different units with their different uniforms' (2012a, p. 257). After 1989, party politics in Poland was built around post-communist divisions and attitudes to the Catholic Church – Solidarity Electoral Action (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność – AWS), the centre-right bloc comprising members of the former Solidarity movement, and the Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej), a centre-left bloc comprising former members of the communist party (Szczerbiak 2003b, p. 729). After the 2001 election, the right-wing blocs collapsed and two new parties emerged – Civic Platform (PO) and Law and Justice (PiS) (Szczerbiak 2003b). While these new parties were based more on socio-economic divisions than the relationship with the past, Szczerbiak argues that these old divisions still remained (2003, p. 731). In particular, the division relates to the left/liberal view that Poland belongs at the core of Europe, in contrast to the nationalist conservative Poland envisaged particularly by Law and Justice. The latter involved the party's campaign to replace the post-1989 Third Republic with a 'Fourth Republic' which would introduce a 'moral revolution entailing a rebirth of religious and patriotic values, an uncompromising decommunization, and the strengthening of collective memory', comprising the 'fulfillment of the 1980s Solidarity revolution' (Brier 2009, p. 64). As mentioned, the EU has remained relatively absent in party politics in Poland at least in the first four years of EU membership (Szczerbiak and Bil 2009b). However, this division manifests itself in EU politics in a particular way and, this chapter will argue, was reinforced by the Euro crisis rather than changed.

Over the past decade, Poland's relationship with the EU has been mixed. Between 2005 and 2007, Poland's relations with the EU were strained, with Law and Justice pursuing a European policy based primarily on the notion of a 'strong, independent Poland with undiluted and undivided sovereignty' (Szczerbiak 2012b, p. 187). During this time, Poland played the role of 'new awkward partner' in Europe (Szczerbiak 2012b), particularly in the context of the debates surrounding the Constitutional Treaty and Lisbon Treaty, when Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński

famously lobbied for an increase in population-based voting rights for Poland by claiming that the country's population would be significantly higher if Nazi Germany had not murdered so many Poles during World War II (Mulvey 2007). Having fought to defend Polish sovereignty within the EU, this nationalist camp generally represents the Eurosceptic elements of Polish politics. After Civic Platform came to office in 2007, having defeated Law and Justice as governing party and Donald Tusk having replaced Kaczyński as Prime Minister (with his twin brother Lech continuing as President until his death in 2010), Poland transformed into a committed European actor in the EU, in so doing making a decisive break from the Eurosceptic approach of the Kaczyńskis. This led to suggestions that Poland had made a 'second return to Europe' and had positioned itself as the 'new heart of Europe' (Szczerbiak 2012b, p. 2). The October 2011 re-election of Civic Platform as governing party and Tusk as prime minister saw the party become the first in post-communist Poland to win a second term. Poland's EU Presidency in the second half of 2011 coincided with an apparent shift in Polish elite attitudes to the EU, in particular, when then Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski give his now-famous speech in Berlin announcing that he 'fears German power less than German inactivity' in the Euro crisis. The findings of this chapter relate to Civic Platform's time in office, but can be considered in light of the change of government in October 2015 when Law and Justice won an outright majority. In their first months in office, they already attracted condemnations from the EU for reforms to weaken the country's constitutional tribunal as well as new media laws which have resulted in the sacking or resignation of many journalists. Both parties benefit, however, from their respective positions along this cleavage, as Szczerbiak argues, their 'long-term future cohesion depended upon their ability to frame the kind of broad, integrative ideological narratives' (Szczerbiak 2012a, p. 28).

Poland's experience of the crisis and its role as President of the Council of the EU in 2011 might lead us to expect a shift in the long-standing perceptions in Poland during that time, as outlined in Chapter 3, of being at the 'margins' of Europe or as the victim of foreign oppressors. In contrast to Ireland and Germany, Poland is not a member of the Eurozone and has a very different experience of the crisis. Whereas Ireland and Poland have had a similar experience of slow economic development, in contrast to Ireland, Poland did comparatively well during the crisis. The so-called 'economic backwardness' of Poland and CEE preceded the communist years (Epstein 2014) and contributed to the presence in

national discourses of an inferiority complex towards the West. Epstein and Jacoby note the view that 'when the Iron Curtain was constructed, it was as if leaders across the European continent were looking at a much older map of prosperity and lagging development' (2014, p. 3). The slow economic and technological development in eastern Europe mirrored the fast pace of modernisation and industrialisation in western Europe from the 1400s onwards (Epstein and Jacoby 2014, p. 6), after which eastern Europe remained rural and agricultural through its dependence on western Europe (Rae 2007, p. 28). It has been argued that this historical east-west divide has 'not yet' been transcended during the course of ten years of EU membership in central and eastern Europe (Epstein and Jacoby 2014, p. 12). However, Poland cannot automatically be taken as representative of CEE countries, despite similarities such as the 'return to Europe' discourse. Although CEE countries in general experienced a very sharp downturn from 2007 onwards (Jacoby 2014a, p. 53), Poland was in a relatively good position to weather the crisis despite a number of economic problems such as increasing unemployment and high public debt (Rae 2013, p. 411). In 2009, when all other EU member states fell into recession, Poland's economy grew by 1.7% (Connolly 2012, p. 38). Prime Minister Tusk seized upon this statistic when, in May 2009, he announced that Poland was the 'green island of growth in the red map of Europe'. By 2010, the Polish economy 'continued to grow at a high speed of 3.9 percent compared with the EU average of 2.1 percent' (Kaczyński 2011, p. 24). In contrast to Ireland, Poland was therefore insulated from the worst of the crisis and experienced living standards 'more in line with the Western European average' (Rae 2013, pp. 411–412).

Given its relative success during the economic crisis, we might predict that the so-called inferiority complex has eased and there is a greater sense of security of Poland's place in Europe and its progress in 'catching up' with Western Europe. As Kaczyński suggests, Poland was 'no longer a poor irritating cousin everybody had to deal with; the message was of a new Poland with a solid economy, political responsibility and social stability' (2011, p. 23). Indeed, during the crisis, EU approval ratings remained high. On the one hand, European elections of 2014 indicated a disillusionment with the pro-European political parties, through the collapse of the pro-European Europa Plus coalition and the success (winning four MEPs) of the radically conservative and Eurosceptic New Right Congress (Kongres Nowej Prawicy – KNP) headed by eccentric and controversial veteran politician Janusz

Korwin-Mikke. European elections in Poland also indicate a fundamental lack of engagement in European politics, with turnout remaining painfully low – just 22% in 2014 (although turnout in general elections is also low and in the middle of the electoral cycle it is possible that many suffer from election fatigue). However, Poles remain amongst the most positive about the EU despite an understandable drop in support for the single currency. For example, a recent Pew Research Center survey of seven large EU member states found that Poland reported by far the strongest support for EU institutions, with 72% favourable towards the EU compared with a median of 52% amongst the other member states surveyed (2014). Poland's experience of the crisis might therefore have clashed with Europe discourses that place Poland in a position of marginalisation and economic backwardness. For example, one might ask whether Polish elites and the media consider Poland to have finally 'returned' to Europe, whether they perceive it to have overcome its political and economic marginalisation in Europe. The empirical sections will show that, contrary to these expectations, the crisis is interpreted according to existing Polish identity discourses, especially the 'return to Europe' discourse.

From Greek Crisis to European Crisis – The Threat of Poland's Marginalisation in Europe

> *The crisis is not just in our banks, it is also in our hearts.* (Tusk, 14 December 2011, Strasbourg)

While the early stage of the crisis in 2010 suggests a reconstruction of European identities comparable to the 'Northern European' community identified in the German case, by 2011, the crisis became an issue for Poland that reinforced existing discourses on Europe. Between 2010 and 2011, there was a noticeable shift in the perception of the crisis in Poland, something which was less clear in Germany and Ireland. The framing of the crisis shifted from a crisis on the margins of Europe, when it was primarily viewed as a (self-inflicted) Greek debt crisis where Greece functions as Europe's Other, to a crisis about Poland's marginalisation in Europe, when it was framed as a broad European institutional crisis. At this time, the country faced political marginalisation as a non-Eurozone member state during its EU presidency, bringing Poland's place in the EU core into question. This reinforced existing discourses on European

identity in Poland, which strengthened the divisions in Polish politics and the competing discourses outlined in Chapter 2 of 'return to Europe' and national sovereignty. Altogether, findings show that the crisis touches on fundamental questions about Poland's place in Europe.

Greek and Southern European Crisis – Poland in the Northern European Core.[1]

In 2010 in particular, the framing of the crisis constructs a Greek Other for a mostly European core. This was particularly the case in 2010 when the focus was on the Greek sovereign debt crisis and EU bailout, but was also present in 2011 when Poland agreed to contribute to the ESM. This frame endogenises the crisis within the EU and leads to a re-drawing of the boundaries of Europe through the creation of a 'Northern European' community of 'good Europeans' who act with economic discipline. On the one hand, there was a clear perception in 2010 that the crisis will impact on the whole of Europe and Poland together (Markiewicz 2012, p. 21). The crisis is experienced as a common European crisis where Poland, as part of the EU core, suffers alongside the Eurozone against a common threat – Greece. Despite being outside the Eurozone and not in recession, the złoty is vulnerable to market confidence and dropped in value in the wake of the Greek crisis. This framing thus reflects Polish interests that are seen to be strongly tied to Europe. For example, GW begs: '"Please God, save the euro": it seemed that there will not be any help for the euro and the złoty' ('Boże, Broń Euro', GW, 8 May 2010, p. 15). There is a threat to the Polish economy, with the Polish currency, the złoty, weakening alongside the Euro, as GW notes, 'investors are therefore liquidating their investments in the European currency, bonds and shares not just in countries directly afflicted by the crisis, that is, Greece, Spain and Portugal, but also, for example, right here in Poland' ('Złoty zjeżdża po równi pochyłej przez…Grecję', GW, 6 May 2010, p. 23). RZ also notes the common fate with the Eurozone, arguing that 'our currency is already strongly associated with the European one and when that is in trouble, the złoty will weaken fast' ('Euroland: ekskluzywny klub bez wykidajły' RZ, 6 May 2010).

On the other hand, the blame for Poland and the Eurozone's problems is placed squarely with the Greeks, excluding them discursively from 'Europe' and creating a common threat for the rest of Europe. Given

the direction of the Polish economy, Poland has been considered a 'Northern European' member state and supporter of German austerity policy (Łada 2013, pp. 6–7). Chapter 4 argues that the crisis has created a new Northern European identity in Germany based on an ordoliberal solidarity where financial aid is provided in exchange for compliance with EU rules on budgetary discipline, the implementation of austerity measures and structural reforms – a community to which Poland also belongs. In the Polish case, this is evident particularly in the Greek/Southern European frame, which positions Poland and other CEE member states alongside Germany as part of the Northern European core. For example, GW talks of the 'Greek disease' where the country needs an IMF/EU bailout 'without which the indebted country will go bankrupt', maintaining that it is 'the careless effect of successive Greek governments which falsified financial statistics' ('Grecka Choroba', GW, 6 May 2010, p. 1). Another article argues that Europe has been 'taken hostage by Greece', but maintains that 'regardless of the harsh rhetoric, especially from Germany's side which looks unsympathetically at the Greeks living beyond their means at Europe's expense as it cuts its own social programmes, alternatives for the aid package were less digestible than the package itself' ('Grecki poker czy domino?' GW, 10 May 2010, p. 28). RZ also criticises the Greeks who were 'protesting because they had to lose some of their privileges' ('Krach państwa socjalnego', RZ, 8 May 2010). Greece is therefore blamed for the crisis for not complying with 'proper' European economic standards.

Where Greece is Othered against the rest of Europe, Poland is included in the European core. Highlighting Poland's economic success during the crisis, GW describes Poland as the new 'tiger of the EU', which, as the only member state to avoid recession, 'maintains the position of the EU's model student' ('Polska tygrysem Unii', GW, 6 May 2010, p. 23). Here Poland is clearly placed within the EU core of 'good Europeans' who achieve economic success. This framing incorporates not just Poland, but also other CEE member states into the Northern European core. For example, the aforementioned article in GW notes that 'there are countries which accept austerity calmly – amongst them Latvia, but the Greeks are not Latvians. Nationwide strikes are paralysing the country' ('Grecki poker czy domino?' GW, 10 May 2010, p. 28). There is a clear distinction made between the culture and behaviour of the Latvians and the Greeks. The Latvians, also hit hard by the crisis, are seen to have borne the consequences of the crisis quietly and honourably. The Greeks, on the

other hand, have risen up and brought the country to a standstill. Other articles present the willingness of the CEE states to conform to EU rules in contrast to Greece, for example, RZ notes Slovenia's suggestion to exclude Eurozone members not complying with the convergence criteria and quotes the Slovakian prime minister who states that, 'I don't trust the Greeks' ('Grecy szukają oszczędności', RZ, 7 May 2010). While it must be emphasised that Poland cannot be taken as representative of the CEE states, there are some comparable aspects. There are significant differences between Poland and Latvia, first the fact that Latvia experienced a severe economic crisis, and secondly the fact that as a large member state and as a result of its history, Poland sees itself as a core EU member state. However, there are some similarities, in particular, the reluctance to contribute to bailout funds for Greece, something which brought down the Slovakian government in 2011. Altogether, the crisis in 2010 creates a Greek Other positioned against Poland and other CEE countries as part of the core of Europe.

European Crisis – Poland's Marginalisation in Europe

However, where Poland was safely part of the European core in 2010, by 2011 the political implications of the Euro crisis for Poland became much clearer, putting the country's place in Europe at risk. By this time, the crisis served mostly to reinforce existing discourses on Europe in Poland and strengthen divisions in Polish politics. In particular, the framing of the crisis by Polish government elites, that is, Civic Platform leaders, and many parts of the media, especially GW but also RZ and Fakt, first and foremost reflects the 'return to Europe' discourse. Like in Ireland and Germany, the crisis is constructed in such a way that it reminds of the original motivations for Poland's membership of the EU – 'returning to Europe' after decades, and even centuries, of marginalisation at the European periphery. Firstly, as in Germany, the crisis constitutes a common European crisis, one which affects the future of Europe as a whole. This framing exogenises the crisis to create a kind of 'external Other' for Europe, promoting a sense of shared European experience in the face of a common threat. As then Prime Minister Donald Tusk stated in a speech to the *Sejm* (the Polish Parliament) at the inauguration of his second term, the changes taking place in Europe 'make for a dramatic, disturbing political landscape, a new political landscape in Europe' (18 November 2011). Furthermore, in his speech in Strasbourg to close the Polish Presidency of the EU,

he labels the crisis the 'most serious crisis to have afflicted our continent in the history of the united Europe', warning that Europe is at a crossroads (Tusk, 14 December 2011). He emphasises the importance of European unity, arguing that the debates engendered by the crisis about the EU's very foundations signal that 'the crisis exists not just in our banks, but also in our hearts'. As in Germany, political leaders in Poland emphasise the importance of protecting European unification for the purposes of legitimising European action.

This construction of the crisis found resonance in the pro-European media during this time. This frame constructs an exogenous threat to the European institutions and in doing so reinforces European identity, particularly through the threat of war. For example, GW writes on the day of the summit that 'today the fate of Europe will be decided' ('Walka o rewizję traktatów. O co chodzi w szczycie UE?' GW, 9 December 2011). Rather than it just being an economic and banking crisis, a collapse of the Euro would mean 'a step towards the break-up of the European Union', resulting in populist parties who 'can treat us to a return to the situation before the Second World War – that is, nation-states, protectionism etc. And what then? It remains to say, what minister Rostowski and Chancellor Merkel said – war' (Fakt, 29 November 2011, p. 2). Europe's violent past is evoked to warn against the break-up of the EU as a whole. The crisis posed the threat of a break up of Europe, which would mean 'its decline or renationalisation, relying on each country concentrating only on its own fate' (Fakt, 28 November 2011, p. 2–3). Indeed, former Finance Minister Jacek Rostowski warned the European Parliament in Strasbourg in September 2011 that the crisis was 'making wars in Europe imaginable again' (Novinite.com 2011). Quoted in GW, then President of European Parliament (and former Prime Minister) Jerzy Buzek cites Rousseau in recalling historical instances of the fall of empire: 'if Sparta and Rome perished, what state can expect hope to endure forever?'. GW notes that he was trying to 'make the audience aware that the European Union can also fall if Europeans do not come to its rescue' ('Przewodniczący Buzek się żegna', GW, 16 December 2011 p. 10). The threat of war, therefore, serves as an external Other to call for joint European action to 'save' the continent.

In the German case, the threat presented to the future of the EU reinforced Germany's post-war European identity, for which European integration serves as a means to overcome the country's Nazi past. Likewise, the framing of the crisis in Poland also reflects and reinforces Poland's

European identity and the 'return to Europe' discourse, where membership of the EU was touted as a means for Poland to return to its rightful place in Western/Central Europe. The crisis was understood as posing a significant threat of marginalisation at the periphery of Europe. This was reinforced by Poland's experience as President of the EU during this time, when, as a non-Eurozone member, it found itself excluded from core decision-making processes in the EU (Lauenroth and Von Ondarza 2014, p. 61). As Gebert argues, the division of the EU into two speeds, Eurozone and non-Eurozone, would involve 'relegating Poland to where its absolute economic size and Eurozone non-membership [...] suggest it should be: the European periphery' (Gebert 2012, p. 6). This is particularly evident in Tusk's speech to the *Sejm* in November 2011. He argues that in the current debate about the EU:

> we do not have, in my opinion, a political dilemma of whether to be at the centre of Europe, or to be at its periphery [...] The real dilemma for Poland is how to be at the centre of Europe, how to be a real, major player on the European stage, and not, as a result of the crisis, to find ourselves at the margins, at the periphery, or outside the European Union [...] Today we often hear about the concert of powers in Europe that is difficult to accept. Today at the European table, or as some witty politician said, at this political meal, either you are at the table, or you are on the menu. Poland has to be at the table. (18 November 2011)

In both Germany and Poland, the possibility of multi-speed EU risks the very motivations they have for EU membership. In Germany, multi-speed EU threatens the unity of Europe and the project of European integration. In Poland, it represents the risk of political marginalisation. The fear of marginalisation through two-speed Europe is expressed strongly in the press. In GW, it is noted that 'countries of the first speed, that is, the Eurozone, will be able to marginalise the rest in decision-making, as well as in the distribution of funds from the EU budget. And this will be very dangerous for us' ('Unia Według Polski', GW, 2 December 2011). Mikołaj Dowgielewicz, Minister for European and Economic Affairs, warns that the summit could result in the 'division of Europe into several groups of countries – the better ones, which will adopt new rules on budgetary discipline, and those who will be at the tail end of the EU', expressing the concern that Poland may not end up in the first group (cited in 'Walka o rewizję traktatów. O co chodzi w szczycie UE?' GW, 9

December 2011). There is also explicit expression of the desire to be in the European 'core', that is, in the 'first speed' of the EU: 'Has Chancellor Angela Merkel pledged that the treaty change pushed through by her will not result in the marginalisation of Poland? The Community is preparing for treaty change which will create two groups of states. Poland wants to be in the better one' ('Nowy traktat podzieli Unię? RZ, 2 December 2011). By 2011, therefore, the crisis has become a European crisis reflecting the long-standing 'return to Europe' discourse. The crisis reinforces a fear of marginalisation at Europe's periphery and a desire to secure its position in the European core.

The next sections will show how the debates about crisis policies deal with this fear of marginalisation, highlighting how the crisis has reflected the polarised nature of identity in Poland. While the crisis presented a window of opportunity for pro-European Polish elites to call for further European integration, these actors reinforce long-standing discourses on Europe and the past in order to legitimise their claims rather than instigate change. As a result, the crisis strengthens existing divisions in Polish politics. The first section will show how this framing of the crisis opened up an opportunity for pro-Europeans in Poland to argue in favour of a federal union, expressing dual European/Polish identities where being a 'good European' is simultaneously to be a good Pole. Whereas Poland is understood as an integral part of Europe, Europe is presented as an instrument for the benefit of Polish sovereignty and Polish security. The second section will show how, in opposition and conservative/populist media discourse, the crisis has also served to reinforce divisions between Poland and the southern European countries, as well as between Poland and Germany. In their fierce defence of Polish sovereignty and the historical battle for independence, conservative-nationalist actors express strong anti-German sentiment, which further reinforces the core/periphery divide also present in the Irish case.

Europeanness as Polishness – A Federal Europe and a Secure Poland

This section will show how pro-European elite and media actors call for further integration and the positioning of Poland in the EU core in order to manage this threat of marginalisation presented by the crisis. As mentioned in the introduction, it must first be noted that Europe plays relatively little role in Polish politics in general. In a study of the EU's

impact on Polish party politics prior to the crisis, Szczerbiak and Bil find 'very little evidence of the EU or the European issue being used increasingly or impinging upon patterns of inter-party competition' (2009, p. 462; see also; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013b). However, when confronted with the issue of Europe, pro-European actors express a Europeanised Polish national identity where being European is simultaneously to be Polish, and vice versa. As in Germany, where being German is simultaneously to be European, this reflects a 'contemporary Polish *hybrid* identity' (Bayley and Williams 2012, p. 255). Defining Polish identity has become an important task for post-communist Poland (McManus-Czubińska et al. 2003). McManus-Czubińska et al. differentiate between 'nested', dual European Polish identities and exclusive Polish identity. The pro-European elite in Poland use the crisis as a 'window of opportunity' to call for further European integration to solve the crisis on the basis of this dual European and Polish identity. As part of this, pro-European actors are drawn into a debate about Polish sovereignty which instrumentalises Europe for the purposes of Polish sovereignty.

In contrast to Ireland, where European integration is framed primarily as a means to strengthen Irish interests and identities, and compared with Germany, where crisis policies are framed in terms of being a 'good European', the pro-European elite and media, particularly GW, call for further integration, and indeed a federal Europe, in the name of the common European good and European solidarity. While the call for unity and strengthening of the EU institutions is driven by a concern that without them Poland's interests will not be taken into account, the framing in terms of European solidarity reflects the European identities of the pro-European actors. This compares to Germany but stands in contrast to Ireland, where policy debates tend to be framed in terms of the national interest. Firstly, as explained in Chapter 3, one element of the discourse on European identity in Poland draws on Poland's historical role as 'bulwark' to the East. In his Berlin speech, Sikorski explains Poland's historical role as a nation that upheld the values of democracy, religious freedom, inclusiveness and protected Western Europe from invasion (28 November 2011) in order to justify his vision of a federal Europe. Drawing on a discourse which 'identifies Poland with European culture and, conversely, Europe with Polish culture' (McManus-Czubińska et al. 2003), Sikorski presents a particular vision of intertwined and inseparable European and Polish identities where Poland has an important role to play in defending and protecting (Western) Europe. This idea is also reflected

particularly in GW, where Sikorski's speech is warmly welcomed as a reflection of Poland's important role in helping Europe overcome the crisis, defend its unity and uphold its democratic values. For example, GW noted that 'Sikorski recognised the need for the democratic support of Europeans for EU reform. And he defended the unity of 27 countries when he appealed to all leaders and finance ministers to always debate at the community table' ('Europa mówi Sikorskim', GW, 30 November 2011). Furthermore, another GW article explains that

> For the first time, Poland, perceived up until now as a country only interested in union funds, offered Europe a new role – architect of the new order. 'Now we can and want to make our contribution,' said Sikorski. Alongside the experience of transformation and the fact that the Polish economy coped quite well with the crisis, Poland brings trust and confidence to the Union. And that is something in short supply in the West today. ('Sikorski i nowa rola Polski w Europie', GW, 30 November 2011, p. 5)

The warm reception Sikorski's speech received across Europe is also reported in the GW in an article entitled, 'Europe is proud of Sikorski'. They report such praise as

> 'Poland is standing guard over a yet more integrated Union in order to strengthen the Community methods', 'If every European country now thought about the common Europe like Sikorski [. . .] we would be on the verge of exiting the crisis', 'The Poles are lucky that they have politicians of such calibre who really care about the common good'. ('Europa jest dumna z Sikorskiego!', GW, 1 December 2011)

Europe therefore needs Poland to overcome the crisis, and Poland is understood to be playing a vital role in helping the European economy and keeping European integration on track. Europe is seen to be benefitting from both Poland's vision and commitment to European values as well as its resilient economy, export opportunities and commitment to fiscal discipline. It is the protector and defender of the common European good, guarding European interests when all other European states fail.

Secondly, strengthening EU institutions such as the European Parliament is presented as an expression of European solidarity. On the one hand, the call for the strengthening of EU institutions reflects Poland's need to ensure it is not excluded from the decision-making

core, and also reflects events surrounding the Fiscal Compact, in which the United Kingdom refused to allow the use of core EU institutions for administering the deal, something which would threaten Poland's influence over EU policy-making. On the other hand, this construction of European solidarity can also be understood as a reflection of the particular historical meaning of solidarity in Poland. Solidarity immediately recalls the *Solidarność (Solidarity)* trade union movement which, led by Lech Wałęsa, developed in the 1980s in opposition to the communist regime. As a result of the Round Table discussions between *Solidarity* and the communist Polish United Workers Party, the movement ultimately secured the introduction of partially free elections in 1989 and led to the 'first fully democratic parliamentary elections' in 1992 (Davies 2005, p. 506). In advance of the elections in June 1989, it also achieved the right to publish its own independent newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza* (which means 'electoral newspaper') headed by *Solidarity* activist Adam Michnik, still the paper's editor today (Davies 2005, pp. 503–504). The link between solidarity and democratic institutions is evident during the crisis amongst the pro-European elites and in GW. For example, Tusk argues at the beginning of the Polish EU Presidency that

> I am certain that the answer to the crisis is more Europe and more European integration, and this requires strong European institutions. I believe this profoundly, but that belief is also underpinned by the experience of an entire generation of millions of Europeans who once lived on the other side of the former Iron Curtain. (6 July 2011)

Solving the crisis through strengthened institutions is therefore called for on behalf of all Europeans. Furthermore, in his November 2011 speech, Sikorski advocates for a strengthening of the power of the institutions, especially the European Parliament, maintaining that 'we have a united Europe. We have Europeans. What we need to do is to give political expression to the European public opinion' (Sikorski 28 November). Here we can see that Sikorski sees the existence of a European people, which simply needs representation in the form of a federal parliament. The supranational EU institutions such as the Parliament are therefore presented by the Polish government and GW as the institutions 'defending solidarity in the EU' ('Unia fiskalna czy unia transferów?' GW, 1 December 2011). Having called for increased powers for the Commission and EP, Sikorski argued that it would be 'possible to strengthen the role of

the common EU institutions, whose job it is to care about solidarity and decreasing the difference between strong and weak' ('Europa Mówi Sikorskim', GW, 30 November 2011, p. 1). Moreover, another GW article highlights Sikorski's promise of Polish solidarity in 'building a federal union, possessing institutional strength and social support' in return for German action on solving the 'European' crisis ('Niemiecka odpowiedzialność, Polska solidarność', GW, 30 November 2011, p. 6). Here, there is a very particular understanding of solidarity that refers to the building of strong, democratic institutions, which, similar to the meaning of solidarity in Ireland, contrasts with that ascribed to solidarity in Germany. German elite and media actors present a particular ordoliberal variety of solidarity as exercised through a reciprocal arrangement of bailout funds on the condition of fiscal discipline and structural reforms. In contrast, Irish elite actors refer to the responsibilities of institutions such as the ECB to show solidarity through redistribution and burden sharing. In a similar way, the Polish case reflects the existing European identities held by social and political actors, where the call for European solidarity through the strengthening of European institutions positions Poland in the core of Europe.

Where Poland is in the interests of Europe, Europe is seen to be in the interests of Poland. While these understandings of solidarity reflect existing identities and ideas in the national contexts, they also reflect the view that Poland is best served as part of Europe. At the same time as promoting the common European good, the same actors also call for further integration for the well-being, security and prosperity of Poland. This presents European and Polish interests and identities as two sides of the same coin – the 'dual European and Polish identity' discussed earlier. Firstly, the prosperity of Europe and Poland is seen as inseparable. For example, Tusk declares that 'the future of the European Union is, as I understand it, practically synonymous with the future of Poland. The future of Poland outside the European Union is difficult to paint in bright colours' (15 December 2011). While Europe is understood to need Poland, Poland needs Europe for a prosperous and secure future. By ensuring the unity of the EU-27, Poland would, therefore, not just contribute to the well-being of Europe as a whole, but also guarantee its own security. Janusz Palikot, leader of the secular, pro-European party the Palikot movement (now called Your Movement – Twój Ruch) summarises this succinctly:

> The advantages for Poland will be the survival and development of the federation, through membership of which we realise our needs for security and prosperity. We do not want to wrench out some privileges just to escape with them to the periphery, rather, as patriotic Poles and patriotic Europeans, we just want to have seen to it that the federation worked well on the one hand, and that we respected our national identities on the other. ('Suwerenność to tylko retoryczna figura', RZ, 9 December 2011)

By contributing actively to the development of (a federal) EU, Poland would be simultaneously ensuring its own security as well as the survival of Europe. This is, in his words, to be simultaneously European and Polish.

However, in order to legitimise European integration, the pro-Europeans are using the sovereignty frame, where the EU serves to secure Polish sovereignty. Although they begin with a defence of European unity and European solidarity from a decidedly European perspective, they soon enter into a debate about sovereignty and, in particular, draw on long-standing fears of Russia. As in Ireland, the pro-European elite in Poland emphasises the 'utility' of sovereignty as opposed to the 'ideal' of sovereignty (Hayward 2009, p. 208), where Europe is utilised for the primary benefit of Polish sovereignty. Like in Ireland, the debate is no longer about Europe but rather the survival of the nation-state. The Polish government elites tap into long-standing historical fears to legitimise their actions on the European stage. Where Irish elites and pro-European media actors argue that implementing the bailout programme can restore Irish sovereignty, for Polish elites, sovereignty can best be guaranteed not by isolating Poland outside of the EU but by participating in European integration. Firstly, the notion of financial sovereignty becomes important. Whereas the conservatives were calling for the so-called 'repolonization of the banking sector', that is, the repatriation of Poland's banks controlled by foreign investors using Polish capital (Piotrowski 2012), the overriding message from Sikorski's Berlin speech was that 'the biggest threat to the security and prosperity of Poland would be the collapse of the Eurozone' (28 November 2011). Tusk associates sovereignty with the health of a country's debt, as he announces to the *Sejm*, 'sovereignty today is measured less by the number of guns and more by the level of debt and the profitability of debt securities, bonds' (15 December 2011). Signing up to the Fiscal Compact was, therefore, in the words of the Civic Platform leaders, actually a defence of Polish sovereignty rather than a surrendering of it, as the opposition argue. To sign up to such agreements, then, is to do what is best for Poland. Tusk goes on

to ask: what does 'the fact that so much European debt is held today by China or Russia mean for the sovereignty of Europe and member states of the European Union?' (15 December 2011). He also reminds his audience of the plight of Iceland during the economic crisis:

> the first who were ready to buy up debt, to 'save Iceland' [. . .] was Russia. Today, when we look at in whose disposal and in what proportions the debt of many European countries could be in the near future, we have to seriously consider whether the most important guarantee of our Polish sovereignty will be looking for such mechanisms to prevent the recurrence or advancing of this process. I do not have any doubts that the first, absolutely necessary condition of Polish sovereignty is maximum financial security. Ours, all of Europe and the Eurozone. (15 December 2011)

On the one hand, this creates a notion of a European sovereign alongside Polish sovereignty and supports a form of European federalism. Tusk links the financial sovereignty of Poland with that of the EU and the Eurozone, and the threat from Russia constitutes a threat not just to Poland but also to all European countries which have been made vulnerable through the build-up of high levels of debt. Just as earlier sections of this chapter demonstrate the perception of a common European fate, here we get a hint of a common European sovereign. On the other hand, Tusk plays on the existing fears of Russia present in Polish society in order to legitimise his signing of the Fiscal Compact. As demonstrated, a new understanding of warfare or occupation has been constructed – in the twenty-first century the biggest threat posed by external powers is economic rather than military. Here, then, the possibility that Russia will buy up the debt of European countries to wield power over them is presented as the justification for agreeing to the new fiscal rules in a 'federalising' Europe.

Beyond a redefinition of the meaning of sovereignty, these actors therefore suggest that the very existence of the Polish state is at risk. By supporting further integration, Poles can also ensure that Poland is not dominated by external powers, whether they be Europe, large EU member states such as Germany, or Russia, as seen earlier. When Tusk argues that 'the future of Poland outside the European Union is difficult to paint in bright colours', he is drawing some very powerful implications about what could happen to the Polish state if Poles fail to support further integration. The EU offers protection from the 'domination' of large powers where a failure to integrate more deeply would signal 'a return

to a model, a model that would appear archaic, but constantly very active, full of verve, that is, a concert of powers or, as some fear, one power' (15 December 2011). Furthermore, he argues that 'we will try to avoid the situation in which, faced with this powerlessness of the Union as we all so painfully feel, this community is replaced by the dictat of one, two, three or four capitals' (Tusk, 15 December 2011). Here the crisis threatens the development of a 'concert of powers' in Europe – a term that in itself invokes Poland's experience of partition by the great European powers of the nineteenth century. Sikorski also paints the following picture with reference to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth:

> Our 3rd May Constitution of 1791 abolished unanimity, unified the state and created a permanent government. But reform came too late. We lost the war to defend the Constitution and in 1795 Poland was partitioned for over a century. Moral of the story? When the world is shifting and new competitors arise, standing still is not sufficient. Institutions and procedures that have worked in the past are not enough. Incremental change is not enough. You have to adapt fast enough even to retain your position. I believe we have the duty to save our great union from the fate of Yugoslavia, or the old Polish Commonwealth. (28 November 2011)

Here, Sikorski effectively warns that if the EU does not become more closely integrated, it, and by implication Poland, will cease to exist in its entirety, just as the former Yugoslavia or the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Polish elites, therefore, use the crisis as an opportunity to argue that Poland should be a pro-active, committed European player, by presenting it as necessary to overcome the risk of marginalisation in Europe, and even the risk of losing sovereignty. The next section will show how opposition to EU policies both represents existing divisions in Polish politics and reinforces divisions within Europe, either between Poland and southern Europe or between Poland and Germany.

Polish Sovereignty and Divisions in Europe

The previous section showed how support for further European integration in the context of the crisis is framed in terms of a dual European/Polish identity, reflecting the 'return to Europe' discourse where Poland seeks to be in the European core. As part of this, it reflects the idea of Poland as the 'bulwark to the east', the protector of the common

European good. However, it showed how Polish elites also use the sovereignty frame in order to legitimise their claims. This section will show how opposition to the government's EU policies is framed primarily in terms of an exclusive national identity discourse that constructs the EU as a threat to Polish interests. The debate thus turns into a struggle over how sovereignty can best be secured as well as fears about economic marginalisation. Firstly, despite Poland's relatively successful weathering of the crisis, there is still awareness that Poland is one of the poorer EU member states. This manifests itself in opposition to Poland's contribution to the bailout programme promised in December 2011, where Poland is considered much more deserving of aid than the 'rich' Greeks, Italians and Portuguese. In particular, this reflects a common understanding in Poland of European solidarity as 'the transfer of funds from wealthier Member States to poorer ones' (Copsey and Haughton 2009, p. 275). In comparison with Ireland, where redistribution in Europe is expected to flow from the richer states to the poorer ones, the Polish tabloid press in particular expresses indignation that a poor country such as a Poland is expected to subsidise the southern European 'life of luxury'. Furthermore, just as opposition actors in Ireland criticise the notion that Ireland, a country in deep economic crisis, should carry the burden of responsibility instead of EU institutions such as the ECB, the Polish press criticise the idea that richer states should have recourse to a poorer country's funds. In response to Poland's contribution to the ESM agreed in December 2011, headlines such as 'I my mamy płacić na ich luksusy?' (Fakt, 13 December 2011, p. 3) over a number of days dealt with the question of the so-called luxury lifestyle enjoyed in Greece and Italy. The following article lists the unemployment benefit available in the southern member states:

> For unemployed Italians: 4000 zł. 2000 zł for a Greek pension. Spanish pensioner: 2500 zł. For the Greek women on child support: 4400 zł. 700 zł for a child in Ireland. For the poor Portuguese: 2500 zł. Poles, this is what you will have to pay extortion money for! ('Za to zapłacisz Polaku haracz', Fakt, 14 December, p. 4)

In particular, the articles compare the average earnings and social welfare payments received by Poles, Greeks, Italians, Portuguese and the Irish, and conclude that there is little justification for the expectation that Poland contribute to the bailout mechanism. For example, Fakt maintains

that it is the Poles who are working hard for very little money while the much richer Greeks and Italians take advantage of their earnings:

> **And we have to pay for their luxury?** Polish workers have to slave away for a measly 1400 złoty. But we have to save Greece's privileges, where the minimum wage is 2.5 times higher. A pensioner north of the Vistula, living on minimum benefits of a measly 730 złoty has to lend money to Italians who receive a state pension of at least 2600 zł every month! The countries with citizens much richer than us will be saved using the reserves of our national bank. And taking advantage of privileges that we, Poles, can only dream of! Is this supposed to be that ideal European justice? ('I my mamy płacić na ich luksusy?' Fakt, 13 December 2011, p. 1)

Opposition to Poland's contribution to the bailout therefore reflects a continuing understanding of Poland as poor EU member state, which results in new divisions between North and South, or between Poland and Greece. On the one hand, this can be compared to the German case, where 'being a good European' means respecting the 'European' values of economic discipline and individual responsibility. In the event that a member state is perceived to have infringed on these values, they are excluded from the European community. This sees Poland positioned within a similar 'ordoliberal' Northern Europe present in the German case. On the other hand, it reflects the understanding that Poland is still a poor EU country and therefore the continued perception of the country's economic marginalisation in Europe. There is a strong sense of injustice in the notion that a richer country such as Greece would have to be 'bailed out' by a poorer country like Poland that has tried so hard to develop a sound and modern economy – the difference perhaps between the deserving and the undeserving poor.

However, the crisis also reinforces divisions based on Polish sovereignty, which in turn reinforces the divisions within Europe seen in the Irish case, particularly between Poland and Germany, and core and periphery. One article in RZ notes that 'the dispute about Polish sovereignty and attitudes to change in the European Union will become the main axis of conflict in Polish politics' ('Polski spór o nową umowę w UE', RZ, 13 December 2011). Sikorski's Berlin speech in November 2011 sparked considerable debate in the Polish media about exactly this issue, particularly his controversial statement that he 'fears German power less than German inactivity' in the Euro

crisis. Following this, the Polish government's signing of the Fiscal Compact at the December 2011 European Council Summit initiated discussion about its implications for Polish independence. Opposition actors therefore frame this debate primarily in terms of national sovereignty, which turns the crisis into an exclusively exogenous national crisis that reinforces exclusive Polish identity with Europe, Russia and Germany as Poland's external Others.

As noted in Chapter 3, the question of sovereignty is central to the opposition discourse on Europe in Poland. This is marked by Poland's historical experience of partitions, given that Poland was partitioned for 123 years prior to the end of World War I. Furthermore, it spent decades under communist rule behind the Iron Curtain, what Kundera describes as the 'tragedy of Central Europe', the disappearance of these countries from the map of Western Europe (1984). As this section will demonstrate, the fear that the country will once again cease to exist as a sovereign nation therefore drives the response to European policy and informs the discourse of the opposition, conservative-nationalist actors. There are comparisons to be drawn here with the Irish case, where the crisis is framed in terms of Irish sovereignty, and where both countries differ starkly from Germany. Observing the common historical experience of colonisation or occupation, Norman Davies notes the 'fascinating discrepancy between the objective circumstances of modern Ireland and modern Poland, which are somewhat different, and the subjective psychology of the two nations, which is remarkably congenial' (2006, p. 24). Through the discourse on the crisis, an insecurity or self-consciousness about the national cultures is revealed, as well as a sense of victimhood, of oppression by more dominant powers, which in particular results in strengthening anti-German sentiment. Primarily, the crisis instigates a concern about the future of the respective nation-states. In both countries, the debate focuses on the potential loss of economic sovereignty, and the future independence of the nation-state. In Ireland, the Irish elite are seen to have betrayed the heroes of Ireland's fight for independence and risked handing over sovereignty either to Britain or to the EU core. In Poland, Polish elites are accused of capitulating to the demands of Germany and the threat of Russia, in so doing presenting a serious danger to the very existence of the country.

It is worth noting that the conflict surrounding the issue of sovereignty arguably intensified in the wake of the Smolensk tragedy in 2010, which killed 96 people, including President Lech Kaczyński and high-ranking

members of the Polish political and intellectual elite.[2] For Sokołowski, Smolensk created a new political cleavage around the notion of sovereignty (2012, p. 463), where the incumbent government was a party supportive of further European integration, and where questions of Polish independence were particularly significant and emotionally charged (2012, p. 472). Furthermore, Sokołowski claims, the Polish media became strongly partisan and supportive of one of the two main parties after Smolensk (2012, p. 463). Particularly from the Polish right, that is, primarily Law and Justice and its supporters, came suggestions of a Russian conspiracy, along with accusations of negligence by the Tusk government to both prevent the disaster as well as sufficiently investigate it (Koczanowicz 2012). The catastrophe therefore touched upon historical notions of sovereignty, victimhood and suspicion towards their Russian neighbours, which have long formed dominant understandings of Polish identity, serving as an occasion when 'Poland once again was betrayed by a foreign power and abandoned by its allies' (Koczanowicz 2012, p. 825). This is important context for the onset of the Euro crisis in the period following the tragedy and indeed continues to be a salient topic since the election of Law and Justice in 2015.

In both Poland and Ireland, opposition actors argue that the government elite have betrayed their national heroes who fought for independence. On 13 December 2011, the week following the European Council Summit when the Polish government agreed to support the Fiscal Compact, Law and Justice organised a 'March for Independence and Solidarit`y' in Warsaw on the 30th anniversary of the imposition of Martial Law (Markiewicz 2012, p. 11). This demonstration saw around 10,000 people gather on the streets (TheNews.pl. 2011b) chanting such slogans as 'Wake up Poland! We have had enough!' 'Honour and glory to the heroes'; 'Independence is not given once to Poles for ever' (PiS.org.pl, 13 December 2011). The demonstration and rally included speeches from Kaczyński and other members of his party, alongside a reading of the list of names of victims of martial law. Those who died following martial law are the 'heroes' of the fight for independence – as Kaczyński says, those who imposed it and helped enforce it are culpable along with those actors who, after 1989, also failed bring them to justice. Kaczyński declared at the march that 13 December 1981 was the 'beginning of Poland's war of independence', still being fought with a government, in his view, set on selling Poland's hard won sovereignty to 'foreign' powers (TheNews.pl. 2011b).

These elites are therefore understood to have put the very existence of the nation-state at risk. As the most vocal critic of Sikorski and the government in general, Law and Justice leads the conservative-nationalist opposition to Civic Platform's European policy on the basis of the 'damage' to Polish sovereignty. Claiming that the government is bringing independence to an end, Kaczyński argues that 'it is very sad, it could mean that Polish sovereignty was another 20-year episode' (PiS.org.pl, 29 November 2011b). The Polish government is therefore seen has having betrayed the nation and conceded Polish sovereignty.

Furthermore, the government leaders have not just dismantled Polish sovereignty; they have also exhibited servitude to Poland's historical oppressors. This bears striking similarities to the Irish case, where the Irish government is seen to have dismantled the republic and betrayed the 'heroes' who achieved independence from the British. Following Sikorski's speech in Berlin, Anna Fotyga, Law and Justice foreign affairs spokesperson and former foreign minister of Poland, delivers some extremely vocal criticism. She argues that, while Donald Tusk had cited 'improving relations with Poland's neighbours' as a major foreign policy objective, the 'symbol of improving this relationship is, firstly, Minister Sikorski's speech in Berlin, and secondly, Minister Sikorski's presence in Moscow on the 30th anniversary of the introduction of martial law in Poland' (15 December 2011). His absence from Warsaw on this date, she argues, indicates his subservience to Russia and Germany and his disrespect for Polish interests, even claiming that Poland has 'become the spokesperson for Russia in the European Union'. This understanding of Sikorski's actions in Berlin led Law and Justice to call for Sikorski's effective impeachment, by bringing him to the State Tribunal, the Court in Poland responsible for trying politicians accused of violating the Polish Constitution. At a press conference following the Berlin speech, Kaczyński cites the articles of the Polish Constitution that Sikorski is accused of breaking, in particular, the article which reads that 'the Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and integrity of its territory'. Kaczyński maintains that Sikorski had 'no constitutional, legal or any other grounds' to give this speech and that it 'is simultaneously offering Poland (. . .) a subordinate position which we had for decades' (PiS.org.pl, 29 November 2011a).

Like in Ireland, the Polish government, and Sikorski in particular, are seen to have conceded sovereignty to the external power. The debate is

centred on the fear of a return to the situation, well within living memory, of Poland as a country essentially occupied by the Soviet Union during the communist era, as well as the prospect of partition, an experience which remains ever present in Polish collective memory. In both countries, this fear of losing independence is expressed in particular in terms of anti-German sentiment. Bayley and Williams note that the Polish-German relationship has normalised in recent years, and that 'whatever suspicion, distrust, or resentment is still there, it is fairly marginal, limited to nationalistically-minded groups' (2012, p. 244). While the pro-European elites have demonstrated this shift in attitude towards Germany, the conservative-nationalist actors still exhibit extreme distrust of Germany. In Ireland, this sentiment is not only driven by Germany's leading role in the crisis and the dominance of German economic ideas in the bailout agreements, but also represented through the perception of a core/periphery dynamic where the small peripheral states are dominated by the more powerful ones. While this core/periphery relationship is important in Poland given that the crisis presented the threat of Polish marginalisation in Europe, anti-German sentiment draws on the very specific historical relationship between the two countries. Indeed, McManus and Czubińska find that 'exclusive identifiers are 22 percent more likely than dual identifiers to distrust Germany, most probably for historic reasons that have little to do with the EU' (2003).

Law and Justice still, therefore, combine 'the historical fears of the Polish population with their real concerns about the consequences of EU integration' (Rae 2013, pp. 149–150). Along with the conservative press, the party has long been generating controversy in its accusations towards Germany, particularly during the party's time in government from 2005 to 2007 when it offended Germany on a number of occasions, in particular, when it demanded increased voting rights on the basis that Germany had murdered large numbers of Poles during World War II and in a stream of offensive media representations, such as the front cover of the conservative magazine *Wprost* in 2007 which, with the headline 'Europe's Step Mother', depicted a nude Angela Merkel breast-feeding the Kaczyński twins (Hawley 2007). The opposition and the conservative press, here *Rzeczpospolita* and *Fakt*, therefore draw heavily on this fear of Germany in crisis debates. The EU and Polish government's policies are viewed as German hegemony in Europe and domination over Poland. In calling for the march in Warsaw, Kaczyński states that it is to oppose further 'vassalisation' towards Germany because 'Germany's domination in Europe

is striking, and it is in the Polish interest that we oppose them' (PiS.org.pl, 1 December 2011). Arguing against the federalisation of Europe along the lines of the USA, he notes that American states have only certain elements of sovereignty and lack the 'key attributes required for the actual exercise of sovereignty, like fiscal policy, armed forces, foreign policy'. Rather, he argues, in his call for a federal Europe, Sikorski is presenting 'simply a project to turn us into a colony'. He continues that

> Surrendering to the guardianship of Germany does not protect us from the humiliating subjection to Russia at all. Because Germany is not strong enough. [...] Germany will be a weak hegemon, taking self-determination from us, not giving anything in return. Remember that the state is conducting traditional pro-German policy [...] the policy of the current government, so openly surrendered to Moscow and Berlin, has unfortunately deprived us of a lot of our credibility. (PiS.org.pl, 29 November 2011b)

Just as in Ireland where there are concerns about the spread of a 'German fiscal empire', then, there are concerns in Poland about German domination and even colonisation. One Law and Justice MP, Joachim Brudziński, argues that the independence of the Polish state has been brought into question and even suggests that the Prime Minister and Sikorski have ensured a 'return to the Fourth Reich' (cited in 'IV RP kontra IV Rzesza', GW, 30 November 2011, p. 4). Another Law and Justice MP, Krystyna Pawłowicz, was cited as accusing Sikorski of 'taking part in a hostile takeover of Poland, which she previously associated with the Taliban, but now with the Germans' ('Po co nam euro, po co Unia', GW, 16 December 2011, p. 6). Nevertheless, these claims about Germany are by no means limited to Law and Justice party members and are not just fringe views, as Bayley and Williams (2012) argue. They are also to be found particularly in the more conservative press. One article in RZ argues, in a section entitled 'domination or vassalisation', that Germany has lost support even in France, where Nicholas Sarkozy is a loyal partner. He quotes a variety of French political actors who chastise Germany for its role in the crisis. Most strikingly, they quote a former advisor to François Mitterrand, who apparently claimed that '"Europe has already committed suicide two times: in the first and second world wars. Now the tools for collective suicide are again in the

hands of the Germans." The third collective suicide caused by Germany? Is that possible? Wäre das denkbar?' ('Trzecie samobójstwo Europy', RZ, 29 November 2011). Another RZ article notes that Germans are responsible for imposing austerity measures in crisis countries, given that Germans head the important institutions involved. It argues that

> admittedly France pretends that it is contributing to the new architecture of Europe, but we see that in practice Germany is creating the future legal framework of the new European Union, which is to be created in the image and likeness of Germany. In past centuries diplomacy was supported by military strength, hence after all the name 'gunboat diplomacy', that is, using the threat of military intervention in order to obtain political concessions. In the 21st century money and economic power has assumed the role of armed ships and military power [...] But the progressive economic Germanisation of Europe is about to awaken past ghosts that have been dormant for 60 years. ('Geopolityczne skutki Eurogedonu', RZ, Rybiński, Krzysztof, 2 December 2011)

Whether this discourse becomes more dominant in the wake of the re-election of Law and Justice in 2015 would be the subject of further research. As in Ireland, and as has been witnessed in other member states, especially countries such as Greece (see e.g. Ntampoudi 2013), however, Germany finds itself unable to escape from its past. Poland and Europe's relationship with Germany is viewed, by the conservative-nationalists in Poland, through the lens of history, as occupiers, as war-mongers, as a nation to be viewed at all times with suspicion that they are renewing their quest for occupation of Poland and indeed the rest of Europe. In this frame, therefore, Germany is Othered mostly against an exclusive Polish identity where Poland is the victim of German occupation. The Polish nationalist discourse on victimhood, as identified in Chapter 3, is therefore reproduced and reflected in the crisis debates. Poland's historical experience as a victim of foreign oppression, particularly by Germany and Russia, is connected with its long-running battle for independence. There is therefore no 'new' Other in this discourse, and Europe remains foreign, little more than a threat to Polish sovereignty. This section has shown that, while there are some instances of a new Greek 'Other' and a new North/South divide in opposition discourse, this nevertheless reflects existing perceptions of economic underdevelopment and economic

ideas. Moreover, the opposition to EU crisis policies are primarily framed in terms of long-standing path-dependent discourses on Polish sovereignty, with the historical 'Others' of Polish identity – Germany and Russia – ever present. The Euro crisis in Poland therefore primarily reflects existing identities rather than changes them.

Conclusion

The Polish case study confirms the overall argument of this book that change to identity discourses at a time of crisis is likely to be minimal. Contrary to what the existing literature on European identity and 'critical junctures' suggests, crises are not external events, exogenous to local identities and interests. Rather, they are socially constructed and framed by political and social actors who construct them in such a way that they resonate with the local populations. In Poland, the crisis reflects existing discourses on Europe – both the 'return to Europe' and the 'Polish sovereignty' discourses. After outlining the existing divisions in Polish politics and the country's experience of the crisis, this chapter argued that the crisis went from being an external 'Greek' or Southern European crisis in 2010, where Poland was part of the 'virtuous' Northern European community, to a question of Poland's place in Europe. By this point, the crisis came to represent the 'return to Europe' discourse, presenting a risk for Poland of marginalisation at the periphery of Europe, particularly as it found itself excluded from the Eurogroup, swiftly becoming the core decision-making body in the EU.

At this point, the crisis came to reinforce existing divisions in Polish politics. The next section showed how this risk of marginalisation represented a 'window of opportunity' for Polish elites to argue for further integration, who framed their arguments in terms of dual European and Polish identities. They call for support for EU policies on the basis of the common European good, where Poland takes the role of 'bulwark' of Europe, and on the basis of European solidarity through democratic institutions. They also argue that Europe is the best way to secure the security and prosperity of Poland, demonstrating the inseparability of European and Polish interests. Similarly to the Irish case, they argue that Poland's sovereignty, and even its existence as a nation-state, is best ensured as part of Europe. The final section showed how the crisis reinforces divisions in Poland. Firstly, Poland's contribution to the bailout programme is read on the basis that Poland remains an economically weak

and poor EU member state. Secondly, however, conservative-nationalist actors express exclusive Polish identities, where European integration presents a fundamental threat to Polish sovereignty. While the Polish government is seen to have conceded Polish independence, it is Poland's historical enemies, Germany and Russia, that have taken it. In both cases, the crisis primarily serves to reinforce existing discourses on Europe – the 'return to Europe' discourse in the case of the pro-Europeans, and the Polish sovereignty discourse in the part of the opposition.

Populist actors such as Korwin-Mikke as well as the new right-wing populist party Kukiz'15 have gained relative success in Poland in recent years as a new channel of Euroscepticism and disillusionment amongst young people. With the election of Law and Justice in 2015, the situation for Poland in the EU has changed quite considerably. In particular, the party's first period in office has raised serious questions in the EU about democracy and the rule of law in Poland, following reforms to the constitutional tribunal and media laws as part of the party's general programme of 'repolonisation' of Polish society. How Poland's relationship with the EU will develop from now on will be an important matter of future research. As the final empirical case study chapter of this book, it does, however, open up a number of questions for comparison and consideration. Firstly, the findings of this book raise questions about the quality of democratic debate in the EU. In Germany and Poland, in particular, EU action on the crisis is legitimised through the explicit threat of European war, through the collapse of European institutions, the failure of the European project and in Ireland through the threat of the collapse of the single currency and European economy. In Poland and Ireland, it is also legitimised by the threat of a loss of independence, a loss of sovereignty, and even the disappearance of the nation-state altogether. Such frames make democratic contestation of EU policy difficult. While it certainly succeeds in achieving support for EU policies, what does it say about the prospects of an open, democratic debate in the European public sphere, one that encourages participation in EU-level democracy? In EU public debates in Poland, the EU is often a question of Polish sovereignty and security, where pro-Europeans imply that to oppose European integration is essentially to oppose Polish security, sovereignty, and even the very existence of the Polish nation-state. In light of the results presented in the previous chapters, the following comparative chapter will bring together the key similarities and differences between the three case studies and outline key factors preventing change to identity constructions in the three countries.

Notes

1. It should be noted that there is a lack of salience in Poland with respect to the Greek sovereign debt crisis. Very few speeches were given on this topic during the 2010 time period. This can in part be attributed to the presence on the political agenda of other highly salient domestic issues during April–June 2010 that will have detracted attention, the most momentous of which was the tragic aeroplane crash of 10 April 2010 in Smolensk, Russia.
2. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyń Massacre of World War II, when approximately 20,000 Polish army officers were murdered by Soviet forces, the plane carrying the Polish delegation to the anniversary commemorations crashed prior to arrival. The crash killed Polish President Lech Kaczyński and his wife Maria, as well as other senior political figures such as President-in-Exile Ryszard Kaczarowski, the deputy foreign secretary, the deputy defence secretary, the head of the National Security Office, the deputy speaker of the Sejm (Lower House of the Polish Parliament), the deputy head of the Law and Justice Party, the Governor of the National Bank of Poland, the chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, and head of the Polish Olympic Committee, along with members of the Solidarity movement, leading historians, relatives of victims of Katyń and other MPs (Spiegel Online, 2010; BBC News, 2010; Prezydent.pl, 2010).

CHAPTER 7

Identity Continuity: Actors, Institutions and Interests

Introduction

As its primary research focus, this book has investigated the extent to which the Euro crisis has affected the construction of European identity discourses. As part of this, it has considered whether, how and why the effect of the crisis differs between Germany, Ireland and Poland and between political and media discourse. The previous three chapters have presented the empirical findings for the three case studies and argued that, rather than acting as a 'critical juncture' for European identities, the crisis has reinforced existing discourses on Europe due to the fact that political and media actors need to construct the crises in a way that resonates in their respective national contexts in order to gain support for or oppose EU crisis policies. While there has been a lack of change with regard to discourses on Europe, this has strengthened particular divisions in Europe, especially those between core and periphery and North and South. Europe's divisions became clearer yet in June 2016 when British people voted to leave the EU. What ties the three case studies together is the need for national actors to engage in legitimation strategies when communicating or opposing policy decisions. While actors can frame the crisis in a strategic way, they do so in such a way that reflects existing identity constructions rather than engenders dramatic change because of the need to find resonance in the debates. This chapter will show how political and media actors in each country engage in a struggle over the meaning of crisis and Europe but in doing so draw on familiar themes to make sense of

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their claims. In all three case studies, there are also a number of related domestic and institutional constraints that limit the possibility of change. These include, in particular, collective memories, economic ideas and interests, and party politics. Such constraints demand familiar understandings of the crisis and crisis policies, which result in different competing meanings given to Europe and European solidarity. Altogether, this chapter argues that the crisis has not dramatically changed discourses on European identity because of the actor dynamics and domestic constraints in the three case study countries.

This chapter will therefore compare and explain the main findings in light of the theoretical framework. Chapter 2 outlined how crises do not exist as material, 'objective phenomena' (Risse 2010, p. 33) but are interpreted according to existing ideas in the national contexts. In Germany, the crisis is constructed in terms of Germany's post-war European identity, where European integration served as a means to overcome the country's Nazi past and reunite Europe after the trauma of World War II. Nevertheless, the crisis continued the ongoing incorporation of ordoliberal values into understandings of Europe that has been taking place since the early days of EMU. Contrary to what we might expect in the context of the 'normalisation' debate, opposition to the bailout programmes and hostility towards Greece should not be read in terms of a strengthened German identity but rather in terms of a Northern European identity based on an ordoliberal ethic. Ireland offered the opportunity to study a country on the receiving side of the bailout programme. In contrast to Germany, the crisis is not primarily understood in terms of European identity and solidarity but in terms of the 'utility' of Europe for Irish interests. Whereas the crisis was first and foremost understood as a domestic crisis, the construction of a European crisis in 2011 reflects Ireland's original motivations for EU accession – economic interests and national sovereignty. These motivations are reflected throughout the crisis debates, where the EU is seen either to serve or to challenge Irish identity, the Irish economy and Irish sovereignty. Whereas the crisis highlighted the need for Ireland to be in the EU and single currency, it also strengthened the divisions between core and periphery in light of long-standing concerns about a domination of the smaller states by the larger ones.

In Poland, the crisis primarily reflects the 'return to Europe' and 'Polish sovereignty' discourses and strengthens existing divisions in Polish politics. For pro-European actors, the crisis presents a threat to Poland's

perceived rightful home in Western Europe, as it faces exclusion from the core decision-making bodies. As a result, the crisis presents these actors with an opportunity to call for a federal Europe on the basis that European and Polish identities are two sides of the same coin. In this discourse, Europe serves to ensure and protect Polish sovereignty, highlighted in particular by claims that suggest the very future of Poland as a nation-state is at risk. This stands in contrast to the discourse of the opposition actors, who construct an exclusive understanding of Polish identity and see the EU and Germany as a threat to national sovereignty. As part of this, the crisis serves to strengthen the fear of Poland's historical enemies – Russia and Germany – seen as external powers threatening the integrity of the Polish state. Given the dramatic descriptions outlined in Chapter 1 about the nature and consequences of the crisis for Europe, why has there been so little change to discourses on European identity? The next section will explain these findings in light of the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter 2. Finally, the significance of these findings for broader continuity and change in the EU will be discussed.

Actor Legitimation and Contestation Strategies During Crisis

The continuity in identity discourses can be understood first and foremost in terms of the legitimation strategies of actors in the national contexts. The literature on European identity and crisis posits that the path dependence of existing identities constrains political actors and limits change. This book emphasises a focus on actors to understand the prospects for change – an 'agent-centered constructivist approach' to crisis (Widmaier et al. 2007, p. 756). This approach emphasises the role played by 'ideational entrepreneurs' in ensuring the resilience of ideas about Europe in their communication and construction of crisis (Schmidt 2016b, p. 11). As outlined in Chapter 2, actors have 'foreground discursive abilities' which allow them to act strategically to legitimise policy, something which helps to explain change 'because they refer to people's ability to think outside the institutions in which they continue to act, critique, communicate, and deliberate about such institutions' (Schmidt 2011b, p. 56). In the 'communicative discourse' between elites, media and citizens (Schmidt 2008b, p. 310), leaders engage in a process of legitimation by communicating to the public (Schmidt 2014b, p. 189). Schmidt attributes the resilience of neoliberal ideas to 'key actors' who reproduce these ideas to promote

their interests (2016, p. 14). In the same vein, we can attribute the resilience of identity discourses to actors strategically promoting their perceived interests. Elite actors are motivated not just by perceived economic or political interests, but also by their relationship to European integration, as Statham and Trenz note, actors are also likely to express support for the EU or EU policy if they are likely to benefit from 'increased access to decision-making arenas from a shift of competences to the EU-level' (2013, p. 9). The crisis has not just presented a challenge to the European as well as national economies but has also served to reinforce long-standing vulnerabilities closely linked with each country's relationship with the EU. Copsey and Haughton argue that the perceived vulnerabilities of member states, such as historical experience, size, and economic position, shape their preferences in the EU (Copsey and Haughton 2009). This means that political elites are not just motivated by ideas about the economy but are also called to action to defend their country's position in Europe as questions about identities and sovereignty are raised. In the context of the Euro crisis then, actors shift from policy legitimation to polity legitimation as a strategy to communicate the crisis and policy decisions.

However, institutional contexts – understood not only as formal structures but also informal norms, rules and identities – affect the way crises are constructed and can constrain change (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 755). Whereas actors can use discourse strategically (Waever 2009b, p. 165), they are limited in their ability to introduce new ideas and identity constructions because of the need to persuade the public. Particularly in the case of polity legitimation, elites need to draw on commonly held ideas about what the polity is, why it is needed and what values it represents. Actors thus have to construct the crisis in a way that makes sense by drawing on ideas and identity discourses available in their particular contexts. Elites, for example, 'must consider what ideas will be persuasive and establish institutional and political support for ideas to translate into policy action' (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 754). Schmidt argues that

> If sentient (thinking and speaking) agents are the drivers of change, and their ideas (what they think and argue about what to do) and discourse (what they say about what to do) are the vehicles of change, then the institutional context is the setting within which their ideas have meaning, their discourses have communicative force, and their collective actions make a difference (if they do what they say they think about what to do). (2012, p. 17)

Thus, the institutional context in terms of constructions of Europe matters because it gives weight to actor discourse. In the case of the Euro crisis, this concerns the broader discourses on Europe that give meaning to events and issues and that must be mobilised to legitimise EU policy and the EU polity at a time of crisis. Existing identities and national discourses on Europe are thus reproduced in the crisis debates so that actors can persuade the public and their readers of the merits of their arguments.

These ideas gain resonance and are contested and reframed by media and opposition actors, when the public is able to 'reject elites' attempts to legitimate or naturalize changes made during periods of crisis' (Widmaier et al. 2007b, p. 755). In this sense, the media can also be considered an 'ideational entrepreneur' (Schmidt 2016b). Media actors are also motivated by economic interests to a certain extent, in terms of the need to sell newspapers. Journalists may also be motivated by a desire for career advancement (Entman 2004, p. 13). As such, they may be driven by news values, particularly negativity, when reporting the crisis (see Galtung and Ruge 1965). A story of drama which conveys anger towards different member states or institutions and pits one group against another may maintain audience interest more when it comes to a complex international economic crisis. Many newspapers also have a political motivation in terms of the ideological leaning of the publication and whether or not it supports or opposes the governing party. Both elites and media actors are therefore 'often key to framing the terms of the communicative discourse, creating narratives, arguments, and images that become determinant of interpretations of a given set of events' (Schmidt 2012b, p. 16). The elites and media therefore engage in a process of legitimation and contestation of particular policy action as well as of the polity itself – reproducing 'basic ideas of what a legitimate Euro-polity should look like' (Jachtenfuchs et al. 1998, p. 433). In order to contest government and pro-European ideas, opposition and media actors draw on similar and long-standing ideas and identities within the national context. Rather than introduce completely new ideas, the differences amongst opposition actors and within the media reveal national political cleavages and struggles over identity, which are always ongoing, reflecting debates and ideas about Europe which have long preceded the crisis. While they often result in the construction of new internal and external Others, the wider meanings of Europe and European identity remain broadly stable. As Schmidt argues, at a time of crisis the 'mechanisms of change are often understood as incremental' and involve

the 'layering of one new idea onto the other' (2014, p. 198). Nevertheless, different strategies are adopted in the public construction of crisis.

Exogenising the Crisis

To justify and legitimise EU crisis policies, the crisis is constructed in all countries as an exogenous and existential threat to Europe or the Europeanised national identity. During the crisis, and particularly by 2011, the EU had to act quickly in order to 'save the Euro' and lead the single currency out of crisis. This action has often demanded a significant sharing of sovereignty and sacrifice on behalf of the member states, in particular through the Fiscal Compact, which strengthens existing budget deficit rules and introduces provision for economic policy coordination, and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) followed by the ESM, which constitutes the primary financial assistance programme for member states. Given the action these policies have warranted, there has been a need for elites to legitimise the EU policy action to which they have agreed and to 'sell' their policies to their national constituencies. Pro-European voices in the media also engage in a similar process of legitimation. In order to 'save Europe', however, it is necessary to rearticulate why Europe needs to be saved, and what Europe is for. This often then becomes a form of polity legitimation and contestation, in which it is not the particular policy that is being justified but the EU itself. To do this, the crisis is discursively exogenised through the construction of an external, existential threat to the European project. Because there are multiple meanings of Europe, the construction of the crisis for Europe differs starkly between member states, however, and demonstrates the way in which the crisis frames reflect different national discourses.

In Germany, government elites evoked Germany's post-war European identity in order to garner support for the Greek bailouts and EU bailout mechanisms. By constructing the crisis as a threat not just to the Euro but also to Europe as a whole and to the 'idea of European unification', elites and pro-European media actors legitimised the crisis measures as necessary for the European project of reconciliation, justice and democracy which had secured peace in Europe since World War II. The framing in terms of 'Europeanness' reflects the overall perception that Germany is fundamentally European. The ability of the crisis to dramatically change Germany's dominant construction of European identity is therefore minimal because

it is incorporated into the existing European identity constructions in Germany. In Ireland, particularly in 2011, Irish government elites construct the crisis as a 'European' crisis. They need to gain public support for the bailout programmes which involve harsh austerity measures and call upon EU leaders to show solidarity. However, just as a 'European' crisis in Germany and Poland reflects the respective European identities in those countries, a 'European' crisis in Ireland echoes the country's original motivations for EU membership. The crisis becomes a 'European currency crisis' or a 'European banking crisis' or a 'European economic crisis', reflecting the economic motivations for EU accession and ongoing justification for EU and EMU membership. In Poland, government elites frame the crisis as a European crisis, which threatens Poland's place in Europe in order to justify signing the Fiscal Compact. Like in Germany, it is understood to pose a risk to European institutions with the threat of war should the European project collapse. However, it is also framed by Polish elites as a threat to Poland's very place in the European 'core'. Faced with exclusion from core decision-making processes as a non-Eurozone member, Poland must fight the risk of marginalisation at the European periphery that it is perceived to have occupied over centuries, particularly during its time behind the Iron Curtain, when it was excluded from its perceived home in Western Europe. This frame reinforces the multiple European/Polish identities held by the pro-European elite and media. In all three countries, the crisis therefore became part of the national discourse on Europe and served to reinforce existing identity constructions because the crisis is discursively exogenised through the construction of an existential threat.

Endogenising the Crisis

Whereas pro-European elite and media actors construct an exogenous European crisis that reinforces existing discourses on European identity by functioning as a kind of external Other, actors opposed to the given EU crisis policy often construct an endogenous European crisis, where the failure or threat is either attributed to the crisis countries in 'southern Europe', to the EU institutions for allowing such failure to take place or to core EU member states such as Germany for violating the sovereignty of weaker member states. This constructs internal Others for Europe, often redrawing the boundaries of the imagined European community, and in so doing strengthening divisions between member states. However, this does not

mean that identity discourses have changed significantly. In constructing a threat located within the existing community, where the crisis is attributed to particular failures in Europe or the EU institutions, actors primarily reproduce opposing discourses on Europe present in the national contexts. While new internal Others emerge in the debate, such as when Greece and 'Southern Europe' or the single currency itself can be blamed, these are not dramatic shifts in identity discourses. Rather, they can be understood as incremental changes which add to, rather than overturn, the existing identity constructions that are often more exclusively national and support a less federal model of the EU.

On this basis, what has been described as further evidence of the 'normalisation' of European identity in Germany towards a stronger national identity should therefore be understood as a much subtler development that began not with the Euro crisis but much earlier. These changes have been driven by differences between the 'traditional' pro-Europeans and the 'ordoliberals' who have long had concerns about the viability of the single currency, particularly by *BILD Zeitung* and FAZ, which constituted the main opposition to government policy on Greece. Through a re-definition of the meaning of European solidarity, Germany's ordoliberal economic tradition has allowed ordoliberal ideas to be grafted onto Germany's existing European identity. Through this, ordoliberal values of stability, economic discipline and individual responsibility become not just economic values, but define the meaning of the 'good European'. In this sense, European solidarity is defined by many in Germany as compliance with an ordoliberal ethic, meaning that any bail-outs offered to struggling member states should always be accompanied by strong conditionality on the part of the receiving country, exercised through a commitment to budgetary discipline and structural reforms. Amongst the most 'Eurosceptic' actors in Germany, then, this meaning of Europeanness translates into the creation of a Northern European identity through the exclusion of Greece or Southern Europe from the Northern European core. Through this, countries such as Poland, formally considered to be part of 'eastern Europe', are incorporated into what FAZ describes as the 'Northern European stability culture'.

This constitutes a new internal Other, which is also identified in the Polish context. Positioning Poland as part of the Northern European core, some media actors construct Greece and southern Europe as the Other, representing the undeserving recipients of EU financial aid and placing Poland in a Northern European community of the economically virtuous.

This should, however, also not be read as a dramatic change to discourses on European identity in Poland. Although this frame constructs Greece and southern Europe as the new 'internal Other' of Europe, it also reflects a desire to be part of the Northern European 'core' on the part of the pro-European actors in Poland, as well as a perception of being economically weak. It therefore does not represent a shift in discourses but instead constitutes a new manifestation of the existing ones. Opposition to government EU policy is primarily expressed in terms of a competing but polarising discourse on national sovereignty. The conservative-nationalist opposition party Law and Justice and the conservative press, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Fakt*, often frame the crisis as a threat not just to Polish sovereignty but also to the very existence of the nation-state. Government elites are accused of conceding Polish sovereignty to 'external' powers, the long-standing 'Others' of Polish national identity – Russia, on the one hand, and Germany on the other. Here, Germany functions as an external, threatening Other for the Polish nation, and the Polish elite, having agreed to 'hand over' Polish sovereignty to an external power, are threatening the Polish nation from within. In both cases, though, the crisis simply reinforces rather than challenges the existing Polish national discourses on Europe. Opposition discourse therefore strengthens divisions between Poland and Germany, but this is a reflection of long-standing exclusive national discourses rather than a change in discourse.

In Ireland, the debate first centres primarily on Irish identity where Europe functions in opposition discourse as a threat or challenge to Irish interests and Irish sovereignty. The main cleavage here is manifested in a populist discourse that pits the elites against the 'ordinary' Irish. This is present in all newspapers, the *Irish Independent*, the *Irish Daily Star*, and even the generally pro-European *Irish Times*, which ultimately calls for the resignation of the government and new elections in 2010. The crisis is understood firstly as a domestic crisis amongst the opposition (which became the government in 2011) and in particular, the populist press. Particularly in the *Irish Daily Star* and *Irish Independent*, the crisis constructs the idea of a wider problem in Irish politics and society. This reflects longer-standing insecurities about Irish identity and the trauma of previous economic crises, which were perceived to be home-grown. Here, the Irish elite become the 'internal Other' of the 'ordinary' Irish. By 2011, the debate served to reinforce Ireland's national discourse on Europe. Just as elites and pro-European media actors such as *The Times*

use the sovereignty frame to garner support for their policy positions, so 'Eurosceptic' elites and media actors such as *The Independent* and the *Daily Star* frame their opposition in terms of Irish independence and national sovereignty, drawing heavily on Ireland's historical experience of colonisation. The bailout and new treaties are framed as yet another attack on Irish sovereignty and threaten the country's very existence as a republic. In particular, opposition actors in Ireland strengthen a core/periphery divide where Germany and France, as core EU member states, dominate the smaller states such as Ireland. The EU, France and Germany and the Irish elite become the external Other of an exclusive Irish identity discourse. Like in Poland, this does not represent a shift in identity discourses in Ireland but rather reinforces longer-standing divisions in Europe between the larger, core EU countries and the smaller, peripheral ones.

In all three countries, therefore, the crisis serves to reinforce existing and competing identity constructions rather than change them. Crises have limited power to change identities because they are integrated into existing discourses by the actors who construct them in the national contexts. Whereas actors have the ability to act strategically in order to legitimise policy, they draw on existing identities in order to justify their claims. This means that the crisis then becomes part of the identity it is expected to change. Nevertheless, this results in a polarisation between inclusive and exclusive discourses on Europe. The next section will explore in greater detail the constraints in the different national contexts which limit the ability of actors to introduce new ideas and identities.

Institutional Contexts and Domestic Constraints

Existing identities and national discourses on Europe are mostly reproduced in the crisis debates so that actors can persuade the public and their readers of their arguments. This means that there are significant differences in how the crisis is understood, and how crisis policies are framed, particularly with regard to the meaning of Europe, European solidarity, and national sovereignty. This book has identified a variety of constraints in the different case study contexts that reduce the possibility of identity change. Institutional contexts can affect which ideas are selected in a number of ways, from 'intersubjective understandings', 'mass political views', 'formal structures [. . .] and more diffuse norms' as well as the 'lessons of history' in a particular context (Widmaier et al. 2007b, pp. 754–755). These

different contexts limit the possibility for change and ensure that existing identity discourses are reinforced in the national contexts. The following outlines a number of different constraining factors in the three countries, including collective memory, economic ideas and interests, and party politics. While not an exhaustive list of possible constraints faced by different actors, these key factors nevertheless help to explain how and why existing identities are reproduced at a time of crisis.

Collective Memories: The Role of National Historical Narratives

In order to make sense of crises, actors often place them in the context of past experience. The constructions of the crisis thus reveal the importance of national historical narratives for the framing of the crisis and crisis debates and especially for identity and making sense of 'who we are' (Triandafyllidou 1998b, p. 603). Widmaier et al. note that research into how crises are constructed would allow for a deeper understanding of 'expressive struggles over the "lessons of history," as intensified debate over the meaning of contemporary events often fosters reinterpretations of past wars and crises' (2007, p. 755). If crises are understood in the context of past crises, national collective memories become relevant in the absence of a common European historical or founding narrative. The multiple and often competing discourses on European identity are reinforced in part due to the varied historical discourses in different member states. In this sense, historical narratives 'inform state interests by drawing links between past experience, present problems and intended future actions' (Banchoff 1999, p. 277). Even within member states, while 'all societies have experienced traumatic events', there is also never one single narrative about them, rather, as Wodak and De Cillia argue, competing narratives which are continually renegotiated and mobilised by different groups with conflicting political interests (2007, pp. 338–339). Collective memories present in the different national contexts which inform European and national identities then become a significant constraint on actors in making sense of the crisis as well as in the legitimation and contestation of the EU. As Boukala finds in her study of Greek crisis discourse, collective memories of civil war and dictatorship are used as a legitimation strategy by both the left and the right in the construction of their identities and legitimation and contestation of crisis policy (2014). All three case studies demonstrate the salience of nationally relevant collective

memories that are contested in the context of the crisis and limit the possibilities for new ideas about Europe.

In the German case, the framing of the crisis and discussions about European solidarity draw on the experiences of World War II, German reunification and inflation of the Weimar period. At a time when Germany has considerable (economic) power, German leaders attempt to re-assert and prove their commitment to a common European project. If Germany needed indirect institutional power to be considered 'less threatening' in post-war and post-reunification Europe (Bulmer and Paterson 2010, p. 1058), then that is still the case in the context of the Eurozone crisis. German elites and the left/liberal media, in particular, frequently refer to European integration as a project of peace, reconciliation and economic recovery in the aftermath of World War II. Merkel, Schäuble and Westerwelle speak of the 'idea of European unification', the end of the war and the legacies of former German leaders considered the 'founding fathers' of European integration. Given that the agreement to the single currency was in part a concession to France in exchange for German reunification, the achievements of these 'founding fathers' are understood to have been integral to bringing about German reunification (Westerwelle 27th April 2010). Media actors also refer to the importance of the Franco-German relationship for ensuring European reconciliation and to save the *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (community of fate) of the post-war era. Some articles also call for 'solidarity' in the form of financial sacrifice on Germany's part with reference to the destruction during World War II. However, the 'ordoliberal solidarity' framing of crisis policies in particular relates to memories not just of World War II, but of the experience of hyperinflation during the Weimar period and the Great Depression. Calls for price stability in the Eurozone and in the debate about Eurobonds in particular are marked by fears about inflation, with the concern that the 'currency union' will become an 'inflation union'. All in all, crisis debates in Germany are marked by the country's particular experiences of the twentieth century, which frame the implications and dangers of the crisis.

In the Poland and Ireland cases, however, the historical narratives are quite different and reflect the collective memory of occupation and fight for independence in both countries. Furthermore, the debates in both countries reflect a perception of economic underdevelopment in some way, either through the trauma of past economic crisis as in Ireland or through the experience of slower economic modernisation in Poland. In Ireland, therefore, debates about crisis policies invoke the history of

colonisation by the British and the important moments in the struggle for independence, in particular, the Easter Rising of 1916, when armed Irish republicans demanded independence from the British, the declaration of the Irish Republic in 1919, the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 which established the Irish Free State in 1922, and the ensuing Irish Civil War. Both political elites and media actors evoke these memories, remembering the sacrifices made by those who fought for independence in 1916 and 1922 and the achievements of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. In particular, the Fianna Fáil government, which signed the bailout programme, is seen to have betrayed the 'heroes' of 1916/1922 to the extent that they 'signed away' Ireland's fiscal sovereignty. The events of 1916 and 1922 are used by both supportive and opposition actors – for the former, leaving the Euro would once again result in Ireland's dependence on the United Kingdom, for the latter, the possibility of tax harmonisation and economic governance is tantamount to occupation by France and Germany and threatens the very existence of the Irish Republic. In addition to this, the collective memory of economic and banking crises informs the crisis debate. The experience of the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s has particular salience, interpreted, through the Euro crisis discourse, as a result not of external economic circumstances but caused by a domestic political culture that was not able to lead Ireland through a process of economic modernisation. The potential break-up of the Euro also invokes a fear that Ireland would return to the long period of economic hardship it experienced for much of the twentieth century.

Similarly, debates in Poland are framed in terms of a history of colonisation. As in Germany, a potential collapse of the European project is understood as risking war in Europe once again. However, the implication of a potential European war is a loss of Polish sovereignty through partition by neighbouring powers. The experiences of 123 years of partition, the 'traditional' enemies of Germany and Russia, the Solidarity movement and fight for independence during the 1980s, and the experience of communism all feed into the debates about the crisis. Both pro-European actors and the conservative-nationalist opposition draw on fears about Poland's security and the very existence as a state. As in Ireland, the Polish government, and Foreign Minister Sikorski in particular, is considered by the opposition to have betrayed the 'heroes' of the 1980s, who fought for Polish independence after the imposition of Martial Law in 1981, by agreeing to the Fiscal Compact. However, pro-European actors draw on historical fears of Russia and of partition. In arguing

in favour of the Fiscal Compact, Polish elites and pro-European media actors remind Poles of the importance of financial security, positioning European economic coordination as protection from the economic (and by extension political and military) power of Russia. In addition to this, they justify further integration and Poland's position in the core EU institutions on the basis that, were they to remain outside the new institutions, Poland risks domination and even eradication by the large EU member states in the model of the nineteenth-century 'concert of powers' that saw Poland's long partition. In addition to this, Poland's historical position in central Europe as a 'bulwark to the East' is also invoked, used as a justification for Poland playing a key role in the European institutions and crisis solutions. By emphasising Poland's historical 'defender' role, Polish participation in measures to solve the crisis can be understood as a Polish contribution to saving the European economy and future of European integration.

In both Poland and Ireland, memories of World War II translate very differently when compared with Germany. Instead of recalling the importance of European integration, World War II functions as a 'reminder' of the danger of German domination. Emerging from a strong sense of victimhood and oppression in both countries, strong anti-German sentiment can be identified particularly in the conservative and populist press. This sentiment expresses, in both countries, fears of 'German fiscal empire' and the ongoing perceived 'Germanisation of Europe', accusations of capitulation to Germany by both countries' elites, and predictions of the Fourth Reich and the destruction of Europe by German hands. As small or 'peripheral' states with a history of colonisation, the concerns about being dominated from the core resonate strongly. Whereas the experience of World War II in Germany is used to rearticulate Germany's commitment to European integration, in Ireland and Poland the memory of World War II gives reason to be sceptical of German leadership in Europe and is used as a strategic tool to contest European integration. This suggests that while German and EU elites seek to construct a particular narrative of the crisis which calls on Europeans to remember the post-war motivations for European integration, this narrative does not necessarily resonate across the EU, particularly in countries which were not founding members and which have particular historical reasons for defending national sovereignty. The dominance of particular national historical narratives is therefore a primary constraint on change, as they play a strong role in helping different actors give meaning to the crisis in the national context and, in doing so, reconstruct and reinforce existing identity discourses. Historical

narratives are also often linked to economic ideas and interests, which present an additional constraint.

Economic Ideas and Interests

Related to historical experience, economic ideas and (perceived) interests are important to understanding the dynamics of change and continuity in the case study countries. Perceived economic interests also play a key role in constraining how actors frame the crisis. While there might be some outspoken critics of the single currency in Germany, the crisis has also reminded people of the interdependence of European and German interests. On the one hand, Germany has always been acting in its interests in Europe, even if it has not always framed them in this way. A recent study by the Bertelsmann Foundation found that Germany has been the biggest winner of the internal market, with a 2.3% boost to the country's GDP, which can be attributed to European integration since 1992 (2014, p. 2). Furthermore, with German banks holding significant debts in Greek banks, Germany needed to ensure that Greece does not default. As the primary beneficiary of the single currency and with an export-driven economy, therefore, Germany needs the Euro, and with it the EU, to survive. Pooling more sovereignty particularly over budgetary matters, as stipulated, for example, by the Fiscal Compact, would take some pressure off Germany to be the 'paymaster' of the EU as well as ensure the survival of a single currency vital for allowing Germany's trade with its European neighbours. In contrast to other member states, it has also been in the position of being able to shape the development of the EU since the beginning – designing the ECB to be modelled on the *Bundesbank* is a case in point.

On the other hand, its crisis response does not necessarily correspond with its material interests. In Germany, in particular, dominant economic ideas present a significant constraint on actor discourse and identities. In fact, Matthijs argues that the 'perverse logic' of German ordoliberalism that characterised the German response to crisis actually exacerbated the crisis and contradicted German economic interests (2015). The attachment to ordoliberalism in Germany relates to the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle) of the 1950s as well as to the memory of inflation during the Weimar period. Schmidt argues such dominant ideologies are the hardest to change even during a crisis (2014, p. 196). As discussed in Chapter 4, the German economic model of ordoliberalism is extremely

important for shaping both Germany's European economic policy and the meaning of European identity. During the course of the crisis, ordoliberalism has come to determine not just the perceived cause of the crisis, but also how European solidarity and the 'good European' are understood. As argued in Chapter 4, it constitutes not just a purely economic model, but also a value system permeating the political and private spheres (Bonefeld 2012, p. 651; see also; Hillebrand 2015). According to this model, there is a moral obligation to be debt free and exercise economic discipline and responsibility; those who have failed in this duty have failed not just in their moral duty, but also their duty to the European community. The Federal Constitutional Court in Germany plays an important role in enforcing this economic model particularly when it comes to EU policy and has a significant influence particularly over elite discourse. In order to avoid a challenge to the bailout programmes by the Constitutional Court and to defend a violation of the so-called no-bailout clause, German elites needed to justify why they were necessary for Europe as a whole. As shown in Chapter 4, it was originally the Constitutional Court in the early 1990s which ruled that the EU/EMU must remain a 'stability community'.

Germany's 'ordoliberal ethic' also seems to have resonance in Poland which positions itself as part of the 'virtuous' Northern European community of good ordoliberal Europeans. On the one hand, Poland's relative economic strength as the 'green island of growth' allowed the Polish government to present the country as the new 'model student' in the EU. On this basis, there is support for Germany's European economic policies in Poland. On the other hand, there is still the perception that Poland is a poor, economically weak country which fuels a sense of injustice that a country such as Poland should have to contribute to a bailout for a 'richer' country which has failed to exercise the proper economic responsibility. As a poor member state, Poland's interests in redistribution from richer to poorer member states for their economic recovery and economic development also underpins the understandings of 'solidarity' in these terms – particularly in terms of financial assistance from the ECB and the development of strong federal EU institutions.

In Ireland, the utility of Europe for Irish interests remains important. The neoliberal model remains dominant throughout the crisis which determines policy responses (Hay and Smith 2013). The original success of the 'Celtic Tiger' model drives concerns that Ireland will be forced to

let go of the low corporate tax rate seen as vital to Ireland's economic success and the continued inward flow of direct foreign investment. Both the corporate tax rate and membership of the single currency are understood to have contributed to Ireland's success during the Celtic Tiger years and are therefore vociferously defended in Irish public debates. The prospect of tax harmonisation in the EU is perceived to jeopardise Ireland's economic recovery and feeds into both the sovereignty and economic interest frames that define Ireland's identity and relationship with the EU. However, it also sparks contestation about how Irish sovereignty and economy can best be served, which sees a reassertion of the importance of being in the Eurozone in this context. Furthermore, the view, opposed in Germany, that the ECB should act as the lender of last resort for the Eurozone results in an alternative conception of 'European' solidarity than the conception in Germany but rests on the idea that Irish economic interests are best served at EU level.

In all case studies, external economic factors play a role in the construction of the crisis. Marsh notes that the strategic importance of the Euro for China in particular, along with the United States and Japan constituted 'one development helping the bloc to hold together' (2011, p. 50). This reality also impacted on the construction of the crisis and representations of European identity. There are calls by the international financial elite for Europeans to 'save the Euro' and further European integration, along with persistent downgrade threats from US-based rating agencies unless the EU reassures the markets that no country will be allowed to default its debts. Likewise, the 'save the Euro' framing by German elites can be considered part of what Schmidt describes as 'speaking to the markets' (2014) in order to provide assurance that there will be financial assistance for Greece and that the country will not default on its debts. Furthermore, there is also an awareness in all countries of globalisation and that the EU is the best way for countries to deal with the challenges of a globalised world, particularly one in which China, the United States and Russia have much more economic power than individual European countries. European integration provides protection from these economic powers and helps Europe to compete in the international community. In Poland, for example, Polish elites play on fears of Russia to legitimise EU policy on the basis that Russian economic power is now the greatest threat to Polish security rather than its military power. In Ireland, the recognition of the country's dependence on investment by US companies drives attachment to its economic model. Economic ideas and perceived economic interests therefore feed into

particularly elite constructions of the crisis. However, political interests also play a role, particularly when it comes to party politics.

Party Politics

The party-political landscape can also be a constraining force in domestic politics and can affect how a crisis is constructed. As Carstensen and Schmidt argue, during a crisis 'it matters hugely who has the authoritative capacity to interpret events as anomalous and thus as a challenge to the reigning paradigm' (2016, p. 329). Party ideology is also known to be a determining factor in how political actors construct the EU (Jachtenfuchs et al. 1998). Which parties are in power or in opposition thus matter in terms of who frames the initial debates – according to Entman's model, frames 'cascade' from government elites (2004). Furthermore, the strategic political interests of a governing or opposition party in terms of upcoming elections, as well as the political motivations of media actors to criticise or support governing parties, also play a role. In Poland, the most pro-European party, Civic Platform, was in government, meaning that it was able to articulate a positive role for Poland in the EU and give prominence to Poland's dual European/Polish identity. However, there is a strong cosmopolitan-nationalist cleavage found in Poland, and the election in October 2015 of Law and Justice has already shown to have significant consequences for Poland's relationship with the EU. In Poland, then, pro-European elites and media were able to frame their arguments in terms of Poland as a core European country, but, under pressure from the opposition Law and Justice party and conservative press, drew heavily on sovereignty frames that present Polish sovereignty as strengthened and secured through EU membership.

Nevertheless, with elections a number of years away, the party-political landscape was less of a constraining factor in Poland than in Germany. Domestic politics are considered to be placing increasing constraints on German European policy in general (Bulmer and Paterson 2013). However, these constraints also limit the possibility of change in identity constructions. The FDP, some wings of the CDU/CSU and later, the emergence of the AfD, constrained the way in which Merkel was able to discuss the crisis particularly in a European context due to the salience of the ordoliberal model amongst these particular actors. With a regional *Landtag* election on 7 May 2010, Merkel was conscious of the unpopularity of a Greek bailout and the need to avoid, if possible, any extra reason for a fall in

support for the CDU. With its particularly vociferous anti-Greek campaign, the *BILD Zeitung* was also a constraining factor and shaped public opinion on the Greek bailouts during the election campaign period. Furthermore, European policy in Germany has arguably become more politicised with increased party-political contestation on Europe due to the German Constitutional Court rulings that the *Bundestag* must approve of and therefore debate all major EU policy changes in order to be deemed legal (Bulmer and Paterson 2013, p. 1399). Merkel's discourse, particularly during the first half of 2010, should therefore not be read necessarily as a sign that she, and Germany overall, is less committed to the European integration project but rather as evidence that she needs to consider the practical constraints of party-political contestation and the Constitutional Court when 'selling' EU crisis policies at home. In order to satisfy her potential opponents in her own party, her coalition partners and her voters, Merkel, along with her government, had to continue to incorporate ordoliberal values into understandings of Europe and European solidarity. In contrast, however, the other parties, particularly the SPD and the Greens, as well as a strong European federalist wing of the CDU, retain the primary focus on Germany's post-war European identity and commitment to European integration. They are especially critical of the German government for 'failing' in its duty towards Europe and the project of European reconciliation. In needing to satisfy both the ordoliberals and the 'federalists', German government elites incorporate ordoliberal values into existing conceptions of the European community.

The Crisis and EU Resilience? The Power in Ideas about Europe

One of the most striking things about the Euro crisis is, given the intense media and academic focus on the issue of 'crisis', how little actually changed in the medium term – both with regard to identity discourses as well as to EU policy-making. As expected, the crisis was a moment at which identities became salient, where the meaning and boundaries of the community were rearticulated. All three case studies have showed, however, that the crisis served to reinforce existing identity constructions rather than dramatically change them. Beyond identities, though, the third Greek bailout in July 2015 demonstrated how, despite years of crisis and continued stagnation of the Greek economy, the discourse of austerity

dominates the EU's crisis policies. Despite an election victory by the anti-austerity party Syriza in early 2015 led by Alexis Tsipras and a rejection of the bailout package by the Greek people in a referendum in July 2015, Greece eventually signed a third Memorandum of Understanding for financial assistance. This was perhaps the closest Greece had come so far to leaving the Eurozone, having defaulted on its loan repayments for the first time at the end of June 2015 and having closed the country's banks for five weeks. At the time of writing in 2016, however, the Eurozone seems to have stabilised once again.

Amongst political economists, there has been growing attention to identifying the reasons for 'resilient neoliberalism' since the start of the crisis (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013b). Despite a global financial crisis and a profound shock to the global capitalist system, Schmidt and Thatcher argue, neoliberal ideas have prevailed in EU and national level discourse for several decades, with the Euro crisis a particularly striking example (2013, p. 411). Hay and Smith find that, in terms of the Angloliberal model, the crisis turned out to be 'paradigm-reinforcing' rather than 'paradigm threatening' (2013, p. 290). While policy actions have often diverged from the neoliberal approach to crisis resolution, in particular in moves towards banking union and the ECB's quantitative easing programme, political discourse during the crisis has remained focused on neoliberal ideas (Schmidt 2016b). While the long-term implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU remain to be seen, it is also notable that despite early predications of a collapse the Eurozone has actually integrated further (Davis Cross and Ma 2015, p. 212). At the very least, it has not yet led to the collapse of the single currency that was expected or predicted by a number of public commentators and economists in the early stages of the crisis. It can be argued that the panic discourse in the media about a collapse of the Euro actually worsened the crisis by hitting investor confidence and increasing contagion (Davis Cross and Ma 2015, p. 223). There are of course also growing challenges to the EU's legitimacy by Eurosceptic and right-wing populist parties. Yet, the single currency has so far survived and the EU has continued integrating particularly in economic and fiscal policy as well as in a number of other areas. Rather than leading to a breakdown of policy paradigms, the crisis has demonstrated a remarkable stability in policy-making.

This book demonstrates the power of identities in maintaining this stability. Carstensen and Schmidt argue that actors are constrained by

the power *in* ideas as they engage in public debates about Europe, ideas relating to 'deeper-level ideational and institutional structures that actors draw upon and relate their ideas to in order for them to gain recognition among elites and in the mass public' (2016, p. 329). What is missing from this literature is the role of identities in the legitimation and contestation of polity and policy ideas and paradigms. Ideas about the economy are not divorced from ideas about Europe and each member states' role within it. An identity perspective demonstrates the power in ideas and discourses about Europe for sustaining current paradigms and legitimising further integration. In order to demonstrate the influence of identities on policy-making, it is important to demonstrate how the content of nation-state identities 'informs the content of interests communicated by national leaders' (Banchoff 1999, p. 277). The empirical chapters of this book have demonstrated that crisis discourses have been inextricably linked with identity discourses.

While this book cannot provide a definitive causal link between European identity discourses and EU policy-making, it does, however, provide an empirical map of the key role given to identities in legitimising and contesting the EU at a time of crisis. It can therefore offer an additional explanation for how and why neoliberal economic ideas and European integration more generally have remained broadly resilient since the beginning of the crisis. While there are different and competing discourses on European identity that have been mobilised to legitimise further European integration in the three case studies, they have been remarkably successful in legitimising a common response, that is, 'saving the Euro' and further integration in EMU. Despite contestation on all sides of the political spectrum – from the conservatives in particular – Germany has continually approved of bailout measures as well as steps it had initially resisted, in particular, moves by the ECB to act as a lender of last resort. Furthermore, the construction of a Greek crisis, where blame was placed with the national government that had failed in its 'European duties', constituted, as Kutter argues, 'a catalytic moment in the institutionalization of a specific model of EU economic governance' (2014, p. 461). It can also go some way to explaining Poland's commitment to further integration despite the fact that economic interests are perhaps less clear on contributions to bailout negotiations. The construction of a domestic crisis in Ireland and the perception that Ireland's economic interests lie within the EU make challenging the dominant economic paradigm difficult. Following the UK's vote to leave the European

Union, the question now is why the UK diverged from these cases and what the implications will be for European integration. These questions will be considered briefly in the concluding chapter.

Conclusion

This book has demonstrated the importance of political and media actors in the construction of European identities during a crisis. What matters for the development of European identities is not simply the act of talking and communicating about Europe in the public sphere, but what people are saying and how Europe and the crisis is understood. This chapter has argued that the Euro crisis has not led to significant change in European identities in the three case study countries because of the strategies by national political and media actors to legitimise their claims by drawing on existing narratives. There are also a variety of domestic constraints which limit their options in doing otherwise. While the literature on European identity stipulates that identity discourses can change at times of 'critical juncture', this chapter has argued that change becomes difficult when crises are constructed by elites and the media in the national context. As soon as the crisis is communicated, it is incorporated into the national discourse so that it reflects existing identity constructions. While elites can act strategically to a certain extent in their 'communicative discourse' with the public in order to legitimise EU crisis policies, they are constrained by their national institutional contexts in terms of how they can frame these policies. Although some gradual changes are possible, such as the development of a Northern European identity, these are more so reflections of existing ideas in a new form rather than dramatic shifts in identity discourse.

These findings shed doubt on the concept of punctuated equilibrium. It was noted in Chapter 2 that criticisms of the theory of punctuated equilibrium in evolutionary biology strongly emphasise that the theory rests on 'negative' evidence, that is, the lack of fossils to prove otherwise, rather than positive empirical evidence. We might make a similar argument with regard to identity change in institutions. Periods of crises are identified and perceived changes are noted. In most cases, however, we do not have a comprehensive backstory, we have not traced the discursive struggles over identity over a long period of time. It is quite possible that we identify changes precisely because we do not have empirical evidence of how the discourses have evolved and changed up to that period. The German case

highlights this particularly well. The ordoliberal opposition to the Euro has been ongoing in Germany for many years, which led German leaders to incorporate ordoliberal values into discourses on Germany's European identity at least as early as the 1980s. Rather, identities are subject to constant reconstruction and renegotiation and any changes are likely to take place slowly over a number of many years. Depending on institutional contexts, crises instead allow for the possibility that some ideas, temporarily or not, become more prominent.

This chapter also opens up questions about the so-called normalisation of European identity in Germany, insofar as how we can really know what is 'normal'. The 'normalisation' argument works on the assumption that Germany was or is 'abnormal' because it is so driven by its past in its approach to the EU. This chapter has shown, however, that all three countries' European identity discourses are shaped by their past and long-standing attitudes towards European integration, which are difficult to change. Each country has its own national and often competing discourses on Europe with their own historical and strategic motivations for EU membership. Moreover, while the debates in Ireland and Poland revolve much more around the issue of national sovereignty and German actors more consistently frame the debates in terms of the European interest, pro-European actors in all countries link European interests with national interests when legitimising or contesting EU policy. Nevertheless, the findings have shown that, despite suggestions that it is moving away from Europe, Germany's interests and identity remain closely tied with European interests and identity to the extent that it is difficult to disentangle them.

In light of these findings and considering the overall finding of stability, it raises the question of why the UK voted to leave the EU. The concluding chapter will consider the relevance of this book's overall argument for the UK's uncertain position in Europe, as well as the ongoing refugee crisis and the EU's legitimacy more broadly.

CHAPTER 8

Euroscepticism, Identity and Democracy in the EU

Introduction

Chapter 1 showed how the Euro crisis has been considered one of the most significant crises of European integration to date – described as an 'existential crisis for Europe' (Jones 2012, p. 54) or the 'unravelling of the European project' (Auer 2012, p. 82). The crisis does not seem to have abated since the early days. There have been two further bailouts for Greece, most recently in July 2015, and at the time of writing the country's economic problems seem far from over. This book set out to examine the effect of the Euro crisis for the construction of European identities in political and media discourse in three case study countries – Germany, Ireland and Poland. The findings suggest that, contrary to what we might have expected, the crisis has not led to a clear shift in constructions of European identity. Rather, the challenges to its unity that the EU faces can be explained precisely by the finding that the crisis has reproduced and polarised existing, but competing, discourses on identity. Such a finding of 'no change' is significant, as identities have been mobilised across the EU in order to both legitimise and oppose EU policy during the crisis. In particular, political elites and the media have drawn on national understandings of Europe and European identity in order to obtain support for both further integration as well as bailout agreements. These competing identities and visions of Europe, based on differing values and historical memories, will, as Jachtenfuchs et al., note, lead to 'very different reactions towards further developments of the EU' (1998, p. 434). On the one

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hand, these discourses have helped to keep the EU, or the Eurozone, united – said to have been on the brink of collapse at many moments since 2010 – and helped to achieve further integration in the Eurozone.

On the other hand, they have, in some contexts, encouraged Eurosceptic and right-wing populist parties. Although the rise in Euroscepticism cannot be attributed solely to the Euro crisis, but also to the intersecting crises of migration and a broader loss of political trust, the EU is nevertheless facing fundamental challenges to its legitimacy in a number of member states. Following the continuing success of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and entrenched divisions within the Conservative Party on the issue of Europe, the United Kingdom voted to leave the EU in a national referendum in June 2016. Having already led to the resignation of Prime Minister David Cameron and dramatic contests for the leadership of both main parties in the immediate days afterwards, the vote has also sparked a constitutional crisis in the UK after Scottish and Northern Irish voters backed remaining in the EU. The referendum is, however, also an unprecedented situation for the EU and the ensuing uncertainty surrounding exit negotiations risks the very foundations of the European project. Eurosceptic and populist movements are not limited to the UK, however, and have seen their support rise since the arrival of over a million refugees in 2015. In December 2016, the Austrian People's Party (FPÖ) candidate Norbert Hofer suffered a surprise defeat in a re-run of the presidential election, having previously lost to Independent/Green candidate Alexander Van der Bellen in May by just 0.7% of the vote. Although they failed to gain control of regional councils in elections in December 2015, the French National Front achieved a share of the vote of over 27%, and leader Marine Le Pen is widely expected to make it into the second round of the 2017 presidential election. In autumn 2015, the conservative-nationalist Law and Justice won an outright majority in Polish parliamentary elections and immediately drew stark criticism for their reforms to the country's constitutional tribunal and media laws. A minority liberal government in Denmark is relying on the support of the Danish People's Party (DF) and has attracted controversy not least for its plans to confiscate jewellery from incoming refugees. In Germany, the AfD has enjoyed considerable success in regional elections in Germany – now represented in 10 out of 16 state parliaments.

While the reasons for the rise in support for Eurosceptic parties are complex, the Euro crisis strengthened long-standing competing discourses on national and European identities in the different national

contexts, which in many cases serves to entrench divisions both within and between member states rather than promote unity, as well as offer the opportunity for those that challenge the EU's legitimacy to gain prominence. Following de Wilde and Trenz, Euroscepticism can be understood as the 'counterpart of EU legitimation discourse [. . .] an element of public discourse denouncing the legitimacy of European integration' (2012, pp. 539–540). At the same time that pro-European discourses are reproduced to legitimise the EU, then, so are exclusive national identity discourses that oppose it, discourses that polarise the domestic political landscape. In light of these findings, it is worth considering their relevance to recent Eurosceptic movements, including the UK referendum, the refugee crisis and the recent success of the AfD, and EU democratic legitimacy more broadly.

Brexit? The UK Referendum and English Identity

The effect of the crisis on British discourses on Europe may have had far more negative consequences as far as EU legitimacy is concerned than in other EU member states. In the UK, the crisis has given renewed power to long-standing negative discourses on Europe that view the EU as the 'enemy' and the EU, and especially the Euro, as a flawed project. In line with this book's argument, the UK referendum campaign can be considered in light of continuity in discourses on Europe and English national identity.[1] As such, there are a number of things that can be learned from the UK context to take forward in any future constructive relationship with the EU.

The UK has long been the EU's most 'awkward partner' (George 1994). This was not the first referendum the UK held on EU membership; the first took place in 1975, two years after accession to the EEC, after Labour Party Prime Minister Harold Wilson's 'renegotiation' of the terms of the country's relationship with the EEC. That the 2016 referendum took place at all must be considered in the context of the long-standing rift in the Conservative Party over the issue of Europe. It was an attempt by David Cameron to placate the more than 100 Conservative backbench MPs who oppose Britain's membership of the EU (Haughton 2014). This sits against the backdrop of rising support for UKIP which, because of the UK's majoritarian electoral system, First Past the Post, posed a significant risk to the Conservative Party's electoral success in the run up to the 2015 general election. After winning a majority in the May 2015

general election, Cameron announced a plan to 'renegotiate' the terms of the UK's EU membership that would culminate in the in/out referendum that he had promised in January 2013 in his Bloomberg speech, if the Conservatives were re-elected. After a number of difficult negotiations with European Council leaders throughout 2015 and early 2016, he secured a renegotiation deal, comprising concessions in the areas of economic governance, competitiveness, sovereignty and welfare and free movement, which was put to a referendum on 23 June. In total, 51.9% of voters chose to leave the EU with a 71.8% turnout.

The vote is, in large part, the consequence of the fierce internal battle in the party that has been fought since the late 1980s and indeed one that has intensified in the context of European monetary integration. The result can, nevertheless, also be understood in light of broader British discourses on Europe and the Euro crisis (and global financial crisis) that have divided the two major parties and been vociferously promoted by an extremely anti-EU media system. While the UK has never been a member of the Eurozone, the primary justification for EU membership in the British context – economic interest – collapsed. As such, the crisis served as a window of opportunity for British Eurosceptics on both the left and right to argue that the European project had failed. The crisis reinforced the view that Europe is the enemy or a threat to British interests and that the single currency is a flawed project. Furthermore, the public debate about the EU in British newspapers is almost impossible to separate from the debate about immigration. High levels of immigration from central and eastern European countries – especially Poland – after the 2004 enlargement and the recent arrivals of refugees in Europe combined with the decline in prosperity and social welfare since the economic crisis resulted in the increased media-driven animosity to EU and non-EU migrants.

The problem in England, compared with, for example, Ireland and Poland, which are two countries where national identity and national sovereignty are often strengthened through EU membership, is that English identity has never been connected with Europe in a positive sense. The English have always been 'reluctant Europeans' (Gamble 2003) and the EU is generally seen as a threat to the nation (Rowinski 2014; see also Anderson and Weymouth 1999; Díez Medrano 2003; Risse 2010). The idea of 'Europe' is continually in conflict with English identity, it is the perpetual 'Other', where 'Europe' signifies, even for pro-

Europeans, '"the Continent" over the Channel – a place to which Britons go rather than belong' (Haughton 2014, p. 8). In (particularly right-wing) discourses, the EU is presented as a growing federal 'superstate' that challenges British democracy (Schmidt 2006b, p. 16), perceived as incompatible with Britain's tradition of parliamentary sovereignty (Schmidt 2006b, p. 28). Opposition to European integration along these lines has primarily been led by a Conservative Party committed to the Empire and later the Commonwealth (Gamble 2003, p. 115), and mobilised using exclusive national identity discourses that construct a 'national myth of British exceptionalism' (Gamble 2012, p. 473). As Hugo Young notes in his introduction to the Blessed Plot, the European Community came to represent 'a place of British failure – proof of Britain's failed independence, site of her failed domination' (1999, pp. 2–3). The rise of Conservative Euroscepticism thus developed into what Gifford calls 'post-imperial populism', in which Eurosceptics presented themselves as the voice of the people in defence of the nation (2006).

Tied in with this are collective memories of World War II, which is remembered in England as a victory over European fascism. Whereas for other core countries such as Germany and France European integration has been a question of European reconciliation, for the English it means relinquishing 'power' to the very country it fought to defeat – namely Germany. Anti-German sentiments, therefore, also pervade British public discourse in the EU. Anderson and Weymouth, for example, find clear evidence of 'Germanophobia' in the broadsheet Eurosceptic press, which is based on the country's perceived 'expansionist ambitions' and strongly tied to opposition to the single currency (1999, pp. 65–76). This became particularly clear in the reporting of the crisis, which also reflected historical constructions of Germany as its external Other and as the historical aggressor, which once again seeks to dominate Europe this time through economic rather than military means. Headlines such as 'We must stop Germany now' (*Express*, 8 June 2012) in response to EU plans for banking union and the New Statement's front page story about Merkel as 'Europe's most dangerous leader' (26 June 2012) on account of her pursuit of fiscal austerity in Europe demonstrate how German leadership in the EU results in instant references to World War II and renews fears of German aggression. During the referendum campaign, Leave campaigner and former London Mayor Boris Johnson argued that the EU is comparable to Nazi Germany with 'different methods' (Ross 2016), while Justice

Secretary Michael Gove compared economists arguing that Brexit would trigger a recession with Nazi propagandists. In the context of collective memories of English history, therefore, 'Europe', amongst Conservative actors in particular, represents an enemy to be fought rather than a friend with whom to cooperate.

In addition to the historical component, there has also been a strong sense of identification with the United States, driven in part by an ideological commitment to a neoliberal global free market economy by Conservative actors (Gifford 2006, p. 854). Consequently, the single currency came to play a significant role in Conservative Party opposition to the EU. Party divisions on Europe intensified during the 1980s after the agreement to the Single European Act and gained force after the UK's exit from the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) in 1992. Former Conservative Prime Minister John Major fought a significant battle with his party to ratify the Maastricht Treaty in Parliament as opponents believed the single currency would inevitably result in the further development of the EU's supranational institutions particularly in economic policy (Gamble 2003, p. 123). In the conservative press, Eurosceptic discourse was found to be strongly associated with the view that EMU would limit British sovereignty and damage the economy as well as the perception that the EMU convergence criteria were damaging other European economies (Anderson and Weymouth 1999, p. 63). While Britain never adopted the euro as its currency, during the Euro crisis the UK government has contributed to bailouts and advocated deeper Eurozone integration to prevent negative effects of a potential break-up of the single currency on the British economy (Gamble 2012, p. 471). The Euro crisis has thus confirmed for Eurosceptic Conservatives the 'inevitable' development of a supranational economic policy, their belief that the Eurozone could impact upon the British economy and finally that the Euro altogether is a failed economic project. The crisis therefore presented Eurosceptic political actors with an opportunity to continue to argue against EU membership, and to do it successfully.

In addition to Conservative Eurosceptic discourse, the Euro crisis has also renewed long-standing concerns about European integration on the left-wing of the Labour Party, which has always had concerns about the ability of the EU to pose a realistic challenge to capitalism (Jachtenfuchs et al. 1998, p. 428). The Eurozone crisis has, for many left-wing voters, intensified a view of the EU as a neoliberal organisation, leaving many on the left of the Labour Party reluctant to espouse a positive

vision of the EU or, later, play an active role in the referendum campaign. The Greek crisis in particular has fuelled a left-wing Euroscepticism, the supporters of which called for a 'Lexit' (a left-wing exit) in the referendum campaign and view the demands connected to the EU's bailout programmes as an unacceptable betrayal of the Greek people. This development takes place in the context of the long-standing concerns in the Labour Party. Prior to the 1980s, it was in fact Labour which was formally opposed to European integration – Tony Benn, for example, argued for an 'independent socialist Britain' during the 1975 referendum campaign (Gifford 2006, p. 857). While understanding itself now to be a generally pro-European party, Hertner and Keith also find that Labour Party manifestos in recent years have still expressed 'half-hearted, lukewarm' Europhilia and have focused heavily on the need for EU reform (2016, p. 22). The opportunities for left-wing opposition to the EU grew with the election of Jeremy Corbyn to the Labour Party leadership after the 2015 general election, an unexpected contender from the left of the party able to win thanks to reforms to the leadership election process. A long-time Eurosceptic, Corbyn was persuaded to publically back remaining in the EU but, as Hertner noted, was notably absent from the referendum campaign (2016). In the aftermath of the vote it was reported that he had 'deliberately sabotaged' Labour's efforts in the Remain campaign (Kuenssberg 2016). The Euro crisis therefore intensified divisions over the issue of Europe at the heart of the two main political parties in the UK and provided both right- and left-wing Eurosceptics with an opportunity to make the case for Brexit.

The divisions on Europe in the UK's political parties have, however, been accompanied (and arguably driven by) an extraordinarily Eurosceptic media landscape, which, as Daddow argues, exercises 'destructive dissent' in reporting about Europe and is driven by the interests of media magnate Rupert Murdoch. Coverage of the EU has therefore continually involved 'vigorously partisan hostility bordering on a nationalist and in some arenas xenophobic approach to the coverage of European affairs' (2012, p. 1220). As noted earlier, Anderson and Weymouth find extreme hostility to the European project across the broadsheets and tabloids. In recent years, the tabloid press in particular has been instrumental in linking the issue of migration, especially but not exclusively those from the central and eastern European countries which arrived after the 2004 enlargement (Startin 2015b, p. 317). In the context of ongoing government austerity which has slowed economic growth and seen drastic cuts to social welfare, the Eurosceptic press (and subsequently the Leave campaign, which

argued that Britain had 'lost control of its borders') found a useful scapegoat – EU migrants who voters were told had taken their jobs, were putting pressure on the National Health Service, pushing down wages and taking large amounts of money in welfare benefit payments (Galpin 2016b). In addition to EU migrants, however, refugees became a part of the campaign, with the EU blamed for the UK's high levels of immigration (despite the fact that it has accepted very few refugees). The Leave campaign, particularly the UKIP-affiliated Leave.eu and supported by the tabloid press, ran a highly xenophobic campaign which culminated in a campaign poster depicting queues of refugees with the slogan 'Breaking point: The EU has failed us all'. The poster drew immediate comparisons with Nazi propaganda images amid claims that it incited racial hatred (The Guardian 2016b). The same day the poster was released, pro-Remain Labour MP Jo Cox was brutally murdered in her constituency by a white supremacist who shouted 'Britain First' during the attack. The British press has therefore engaged in many years of blame shifting, criticism and hostility towards the EU, making it easy for the responsibility for both the Euro crisis and the UK's high levels of immigration to be attributed to 'Europe'.

Because of this opposition rooted deep in the political and media elite, pro-European elites in Britain have primarily focused on the economic arguments (Schmidt 2006b) and generally avoided speaking of the benefits of European integration. There are certainly alternative, positive visions of European integration present in the UK context, particularly amongst the 'Europhile' Liberal Democrats (Hertner and Keith 2016) and the Green Party. Polling data has also shown that almost three-quarters of voters under 25 voted to remain (YouGov 2016b). A few days after the referendum, an anti-Brexit protest primarily by young people took place outside Westminster where the crowds were chanting things like 'We are European', 'we're not going out', and 'fromage not Farage', and holding signs including 'Born UK, Born EU', 'Vote Again', 'We are all immigrants', 'Europe forever', 'Stop Brexit', 'Refugees r human beings', 'Never gunna give EU up' as well as banners with EU flags that show the stars in a heart shape (watched live on Channel 4 online). Furthermore, the other nations in the UK have historically been much more pro-European, with Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to remain in the EU.

However, the primary justification for EU membership has nevertheless been the economic benefits of the single market and the role of integration in economic modernisation (Haughton 2014, p. 9). Pro-European

Conservative and Labour Party actors have always put forward a vision of the EU as an economic community rather than a supranational organisation which can be explained by the 'strong position of market liberalism within the national discourse' (Jachtenfuchs et al. 1998, p. 432). Focused so heavily on the benefits of free trade and the single market, discourses on Europe generally do not include shared European values that underpin European identities in other member states (Haughton 2014, p. 8). A concept of a Europeanised British or English identity therefore does not exist in the dominant discourses on Europe nor has the public ever been made aware of the advantages of European integration beyond the economy to any significant extent. As such, Euroscepticism in Britain has always been higher at times of economic crisis when the economic advantages of membership become less clear (Haughton 2014, p. 5). British citizens have now endured over six years of austerity since the onset of the financial crisis in 2009 and the long-running tendency of British politicians to shift blame to the EU has deepened Eurosceptic attitudes. While the UK's financial crisis cannot be attributed to the Eurozone, and the divisions in English society involved in the vote for Brexit are deep and complex, the economic arguments for EU membership no longer worked in a country where many people were suffering badly from the effects of austerity. English identity discourses are therefore not Europeanised in a way that would support continued attachment to the EU at a time of economic crisis.

Migration, European Identity and Solidarity

The way in which polarised identities become strengthened at times of crisis is relevant not just to the Euro crisis but also to wider policy areas beyond the single currency. The arrival of large numbers of refugees that reached unprecedented levels in 2015 has also strengthened polarised identities and emboldened Eurosceptic and far-right parties. Over one million people arrived in Europe by sea in 2015, primarily fleeing war-torn zones in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and many more arrived by land – figures comparable only with European migration flows at the end of World War II. Almost 4,000 are thought to have drowned trying to cross the Mediterranean (Clayton and Holland 2015). The potential consequences of a strengthening of polarised identities in this context are perhaps even more serious considering the rise in anti-Muslim discourse and the large numbers of people who have fled conflict zones.

Amid the arrival of thousands of people in the Western Balkans and Hungary, Germany announced the suspension of the Dublin rules for refugees fleeing from Syria, rules that mean people have to claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. The vast majority of refugees arrived in Germany, with Sweden also accepting a disproportionately high number in relation to its population. As a result, some border controls have been re-imposed within the Schengen area, most notably between Denmark and Sweden, in response to populist concerns about migrant numbers and the sustainability of national welfare systems. Both Germany and Sweden now face the huge administrative task of accommodating such large numbers of newcomers. Further research could investigate the extent to which the crisis has reaffirmed exclusive Christian European or 'Western' identity constructions that have Islam as a significant Other, allowing them to become more prominent in mainstream debates. It could also look at the construction of European identities in Germany and the ways in which 'European solidarity' is contested in Germany and other member states to call for, or oppose, joint action on managing the flow of people in Europe. In addition, it would also consider the extent to which Germany's management of the crisis – such as the decision to suspend the Dublin rules and pushing for the deal with Turkey – has exacerbated anti-German sentiment and Euroscepticism in other member states – Wolfgang Streeck, for example, has argued that this has resulted in 'rapidly rising anti-German sentiment in the form of anti-European sentiment' (2016).

Related to this, the new flows of migration have highlighted the limitations of 'European solidarity' between member states. Swedish and German leaders in particular have explicitly called for more solidarity between member states to 'share the burden', that is, to accept the resettlement of refugees across the EU. While a voluntary resettlement quota was agreed in 2015, this related to just 120,000 refugees (Galpin 2016a), and only a small minority have actually been resettled. While there has been a quite significant display of solidarity between people, with many, for example, greeting refugees at train stations and bringing clothes, toys and food – a humanitarian solidarity – many member states such as Hungary and the UK are actively resisting the relocation scheme. In 2016, the Visegrád countries called for 'flexible solidarity' in terms of the relocation of refugees, solidarity which should be voluntary and at a level and form decided by the member states themselves. Many refugees also do not want to be resettled in countries that are so openly hostile. Instead, the EU has turned its focus to preventing the arrival of refugees

from Turkey through a deal with Ankara to return what it seems as 'illegal' arrivals.

This book has shown how 'European solidarity' becomes a sort of empty signifier in public debates. While there are identity-based constructions of European solidarity in different member states, this is not based on a set of commonly shared values, on Kymlicka's 'egalitarian' solidarity based on collective identity (2015). Instead, it is continually contested and constructed according to nationally defined interests and identities. During the Euro crisis, calls for 'European solidarity' often served as a tool by political elites to defend their national interests and legitimise or contest policy. With regard to refugees, when 'European solidarity' often means member states accepting newcomers frequently defined as a 'burden', reaching agreement becomes considerably more difficult. Both the Euro crisis and the refugee crisis highlight the limitations of the current institutional architecture of the EU to protect the most vulnerable; while Germany's initial response in September 2015 can be read as an act of solidarity in the face of a looming humanitarian crisis, the crisis shows the weak basis for solidarity in Europe that is now having severe consequences for human lives. It also appears to be strengthening Eurosceptic discourses as well as exclusive European identities based on 'Fortress Europe'.

Alongside other EU member states, Germany has been witnessing a resurgence of the far-right as well as violence against refugees, in particular, through repeated arson attacks on refugee homes. In October 2014, a new protest movement emerged in Germany – initially in Dresden but later spreading to other cities – called Pegida (*Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes* – Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West). With weekly protests taking place primarily between October 2014 and January 2015, the movement is anti-Islam and anti-immigration and articulates a general dissatisfaction with the political and media elites (Dostal 2015). A second wave of protests began in October 2015 following the highest numbers of new arrivals that saw crowds reaching over 20,000. With regard to the AfD, immigration gradually replaced the Euro crisis as the main issue of concern for AfD voters since the party was founded and it has increasingly campaigned on these terms (Schmitt-Beck 2016b). Since the party's split in summer 2015, furthermore, it seems to have taken a quite significant lurch to the right with the leadership of Frauke Petry. It is now clearly appealing to Pegida supporters, particularly with its 2016 decision to include in its manifesto a ban on minarets, calls for prayer and wearing the burqa in

public. The party has reached new levels of popularity as it has sought to capitalise on opposition to accepting refugees and has employed extreme rhetoric in public debates (such as, for example, advocating that border police could shoot at refugees). In March 2016, the party achieved a high level of support in three regional elections in Germany, when it won seats in state parliaments in Baden-Württemberg, Rheinland-Pfalz and especially the eastern German state of Saxony-Anhalt, where they placed second with 24% of the vote. In elections to the state parliament in Berlin in September 2016, the AfD won 14.2%, a share of the vote significantly higher than their national polling average of 9% at the time.

The rise of such right-wing populist and far-right parties reminds us that 'European identity' is not always an unequivocal good. As Katzenstein wrote in 1997, 'European identity contains a good deal of xenophobia' (1997, p. 30). We are now witnessing renewed expressions of exclusionary European identities based on Fortress Europe, which drives xenophobic and especially Islamophobic sentiment. Right-wing populist parties in Europe have consistently opposed liberal conceptions of the EU with a Fortress Europe identity that 'emphasizes traditional values, Christianity, and exclusionary policies' (Risse 2010, p. 102). Recently, Pegida groups have emerged in a number of other EU member states and collectively called for 'Fortress Europe' (DW.com 2016; Wolf and Alexe 2016b). Although so far the movement has failed to mobilise any significant numbers of people transnationally, the impact on wider discourse remains to be seen. There is also a risk that Germany's post-war European identity – based on the values of freedom, democracy and human rights – is being reconstructed in public discourse with Islam as its significant Other. Particularly in the wake of the events in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2015, debates about the extent to which young, male Muslim refugees can assimilate into a 'liberal and democratic Europe' have taken place not just in Germany but across the EU. While the challenges of integrating almost a million newcomers into Germany should not be underestimated, such debates involve the Othering of Muslims in Germany and Europe, feed xenophobic and Islamophobic attitudes and put many people at risk of violence.

The danger is therefore that the new flows of migration have created a 'window of opportunity' for such discourses, long present amongst members of the far-right, but now potentially able to gain increased traction and legitimacy in public debates. The rise of right-wing populist and far-right movements in Germany and the EU more broadly, their

constructions of European identity and the extent to which these are able to achieve mainstream legitimacy should be the focus of further research. The crisis does, however, also highlight the need for 'ideational entrepreneurs' to incorporate Europe's new arrivals into inclusive discourses on European identity and to challenge those based on Fortress Europe. Finally, however, the implications of the EU's crises for the EU's broader democratic legitimacy need to be considered.

The EU and Democratic Legitimacy

While many scholars argue that a European identity is required for EU-level democracy to function (see e.g. Cederman 2001; Cerutti 2010; Weiler et al. 1995b), the findings of this book shed doubt on the ability of the Euro, or a European public sphere, to develop a single European identity necessary to sustain a well-functioning European democracy. While it is clear that the Euro has created economic interdependence that make its continued survival politically expedient, what is not clear is that the creation of a single currency has been successful as an identity-building project. In particular, the findings demonstrate the difficulties in developing a common European founding narrative to form the basis of a European identity. As Stråth and Wodak note, EU member states have not lived a 'shared trauma' to underpin a European founding myth or collective sense of purpose (2009, p. 25). Manners and Murray also argue that the EU's 'Nobel peace narrative' is the 'narrative of old Europe' (2016, p. 4), perhaps still salient in the founding members but much less so in the newer member states. Instead, competing discourses over national histories inform the debates; while the post-war peace narrative is frequently mobilised in Germany, in Poland and Ireland it is almost entirely absent from public discourse. In the member states studied, there are instead a variety of competing discourses on Europe that mobilise different values, histories and Others.

However, does this matter? On the one hand, the findings of this book suggest that the EU does not always require one single European identity to be perceived as legitimate. Rather, the EU can be incorporated into existing national identities (see e.g. Risse 2010) where each country has its own reasons for EU membership and its own understanding of what it means to be European. Nicolaïdis argues that the EU can strive to be a *demoicracy*, where Europeans 'govern together but not as one' (2013, p. 351). On the other hand, it has demonstrated that there are also

competing identity discourses and interpretations at the national level. The possibility of those that challenge the EU's legitimacy and foster exclusive national identities gaining dominance in the debates depends on a number of domestic and European factors, most notably which party is in government. The plurality of European identities also becomes problematic during an economic crisis, when such different visions of Europe can have real and practical consequences. Actors draw on different meanings and provide different motivations for common action. The findings demonstrate the problems encountered during an economic crisis when EU membership is justified primarily on the basis of economic interest. One of the problems is that EU elites call for 'European solidarity' to deal with the crisis, but findings show that European solidarity is shaped according to perceived economic interests, historical experience and economic ideas in the different countries. Currently, there are no sufficient solidarity mechanisms in the EU to deal with the kind of redistribution needs that were highlighted by the Euro crisis and there is little shared understanding of what solidarity between member states or between Europeans means. Such a mismatch in understandings of solidarity leads to divisions and resentments between EU member states, complicates decision-making and opens the EU up to greater legitimacy challenges.

Furthermore, the crisis has shown that the debates can be considered part of a wider process of increased politicisation of EU policy since the so-called permissive consensus of the early days of European integration started to break down (Hooghe and Marks 2009, p. 67). On the one hand, politicisation has been viewed by scholars as a means to develop a European political identity along the lines of Habermas's postnational identity (2001). As European issues become more salient, they are debated in the public sphere and Europeans start to view themselves as part of the same political community. Indeed, the Euro crisis appears to have advanced the Europeanisation of public spheres along some indicators – involving debates about similar issues and the involvement of EU and other European actors in national public debates (Koopmans and Statham 2010; Risse 2010). Furthermore, politicisation of EU politics in public debates in the form of Europeanised public spheres can also play a positive role in developing EU democracy by increasing public awareness of the EU and opening up EU policy-making to scrutiny by a wider set of actors (Statham and Trenz 2014b, pp. 5–6). It is clear that the Euro crisis has sparked more debates about the EU than we have seen before. But is

this a positive development? Findings suggest that, while identity discourses have not changed dramatically in meaning and there are some common frames in debates across member states, politicisation of the EU in the context of the Euro crisis has led to the development of cleavages with increasingly negative consequences for integration.

Firstly, the division between the proponents of a federal EU and those who want to limit it to a looser intergovernmental association – 'pro-integrationists' and 'anti-integrationists' (Statham and Trenz 2014b, p. 11) has increased. Guiraudon et al. argue that the crisis has resulted in a 'spiral of political legitimation' in which elite discourse aimed at legitimising the EU and EU policy meets an increasing amount of contestation from opposition actors and the media (2015, p. 12; see also; Trenz and Eder 2004b). As such, the crisis results not just in increased contestation over policy decisions, which is vital and indeed normal in political debate and which can help develop an informed and engaged public, but also an increasing level of polity contestation in which the legitimacy of the EU's political system is challenged (De Wilde et al. 2013; Mair 2007; Statham and Trenz 2014b). The debates about EU politics that have emerged through the Euro crisis, therefore, has not necessarily helped the democratic legitimacy of the EU, rather it has widened and intensified the existing divisions between those who want to continue European integration, those who envisage other models of European cooperation and indeed those who want sovereignty to be restored to the nation-state.

Secondly, it has opened up cleavages between EU member states, both between northern and southern Europe – the 'creditors' and 'debtors' – as well as between the core and periphery (Statham and Trenz 2014b). Hooghe and Marks have argued that 'identity politics' drives contestation over European integration (2009). In the context of the Euro crisis, this contributes to the creation of new boundaries in the European community which is related to what Grande and Kriesi identify as the 'new re-distributional conflicts between member states' (2014, p. 18). Contestation over EU bailouts and integration in economic policy in particular bring to the fore the imbalances in power and economic resources that result in conflicts and boundary-making in Europe and open up divisions, especially between the perceived 'deserving' and the 'undeserving', that is, the perceived 'good Europeans' and 'bad Europeans', and between the more powerful countries in the core who are seen to be dominating weaker countries of the periphery. This further opens up the opportunity for legitimacy challenges, as those in the debtor or periphery states reject

the legitimacy of the stronger countries to demand painful reforms and those in the 'northern' or creditor states reject the expectation that they should pay for what they perceive to have been home-grown problems. Politicisation of the EU during the Euro crisis has therefore not resulted conclusively in the development of 'normal' political debate, but it instead risks the development of attitudes and indeed parties that reject the legitimacy of the EU as a political institution.

Finally, the way in which the crisis is constructed and contested by both elites and the media raises additional questions about the quality of democratic debate about EU politics. In particular, findings show that elites called for support for further integration by drawing on long-standing fears in their respective countries – fears of Russia in the case of Poland, of the Nazi past or inflation in the case of Germany, or of Britain in the case of Ireland. What options are there for open, democratic debate when, according to pro-European governing elites, to oppose European policy is to stand in conflict with the very values and norms of the national discourse and, even, the very existence of one's country? In many cases, such identity discourses have been used to justify the implementation of painful austerity measures. Incorporated into the discourses on a 'logic of no alternative', therefore, identities have played a key role in sustaining support for the neoliberal paradigm.

The media also engages in this dramatising process – in the construction of crisis, media actors have portrayed a sense of impending disaster, regardless of where blame is attributed. The theory of news values dictates that negative news is considered more newsworthy than good news, especially in 'foreign' news (Galtung and Ruge 1965). This requires a sense of drama, conflict or crisis to bring attention to EU affairs, which are generally much more distant to the general population. However, this kind of negativity can have consequences for EU democracy to the extent that it can reduce knowledge of the EU and participation in EU politics (Galpin and Trenz 2017). In particular, the use of fear in campaigning and media reports can prevent critical engagement with the issues (Soroka et al. 2015b; Scheufele 2008b). Furthermore, such negativity in political news, and in particular news that focuses on political problems and ineffectual politicians, has been found to promote distrust of politicians and political cynicism (Cappella and Jamieson 1997). This, in turn, can lead to support for populist parties who promote a sense of detachment between elites and 'ordinary' people. Framing of the crisis in this way can therefore result in a 'spiral of Euroscepticism' (Galpin and Trenz 2017; De Vreese 2007).

The EU therefore needs pro-active 'ideational entrepreneurs' who engage with citizen concerns, communicate and scrutinise EU policy in such a way that opens EU issues to debate, but also promotes constructive engagement with the EU. So far, however, the Euro crisis has strengthened the existing and competing identity discourses and has intensified Eurosceptic discourse, both of which have serious consequences for the EU's democratic legitimacy.

Conclusion

The EU is facing a number of crises that put the future of the European integration project in jeopardy. The Euro crisis has not yet abated; despite economic growth in Ireland, Spain and Portugal, the Greek economy has not recovered and youth unemployment is extraordinarily high. The EU is still resisting the possibility of debt relief, continuing to demand additional cuts and reforms to reduce the budget deficit. The refugee crisis is placing additional pressures on Greece, with tourism on Greek islands down and permanent refugee camps to house people stuck between the EU and deportation to Turkey. The EU now faces tough negotiations over the UK's future relationship following the activation of Article 50 in March 2017. The Union faces the multiple and conflicting pressures – needing to protect the EU's economies by reducing uncertainty and maintaining trade, protecting the British and non-British EU citizens who are dependent on free movement of labour, at the same time as needing to maintain the integrity of the single market and discourage other Eurosceptic movements in the EU. Finally, the EU faces the challenge of growing Eurosceptic and right-wing populist parties in a number of member states and indeed EU governments such as Poland which are now threatening the rule of law.

While there has been broad stability in identity discourses in the context of the Euro crisis, it has also demonstrated that the EU has a number of deep divisions between member states, and it cannot rely on a common European identity that maintains support for common action. Such an identity is also not likely to develop in the near future. Although it remains to be seen how the EU will manage the UK's exit, and whether it will be used as a catalyst for further integration amongst the EU27, major steps towards further European integration look increasingly unlikely. Instead, we are likely to see further patterns of differentiated integration as smaller groups of member states take greater advantage of the Lisbon Treaty's provisions for enhanced cooperation. At the same time, groups of

countries may emerge that serve to contest the EU's legitimacy for action in a given field, and Eurosceptic, particularly right-wing populist parties, are likely to continue to grow.

In order to improve legitimacy, the EU needs to develop its solidarity mechanisms in ways that are clear and well defined. The continent's most vulnerable, most economically disadvantaged, are currently unable to grasp the opportunities of European integration. The fact that many areas in the UK that voted to leave the EU were some of the greatest recipients of EU regional development funds highlights that EU solidarity programmes are failing to reach public consciousness. It also needs to respond radically to public concerns about democracy raised by the recent crises. While the EU has done much to improve democratic controls in recent decades, the Euro crisis has returned decision-making power not just to the executive of member states through the Euro group and European Council but also to financial elites in the ECB and IMF through 'depoliticised economic governance' (Statham and Trenz 2014b, p. 10). Finally, however, political elites and media actors need to be more proactive in incorporating common ideas and values into national discourses on the EU. Justifying EU policy or European integration on the basis of fear that greater disasters and crises loom does nothing to develop an engaged European public. Instead, 'ideational entrepreneurs' need to promote constructive engagement with the EU, encourage debate over the shape of EU policy and construct inclusive European identities in the public sphere.

Note

1. English identity is referred to in this context instead of British identity, as the other nations of the UK have slightly different relationships with the EU and are generally more inclusive of multiple identities.

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