

## Domestic and supranational political opportunities: European protest in selected countries 1980-1995

Uwe K.H. Reising

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### Keywords

protest, political opportunity structure, participation, Belgium, France, Germany, political science

### Abstract

This paper attempts to explain the rates of European protest in three core countries of the EEC/EU – the Belgium, France, and Germany – over a sixteen-year period from 1980 to 1995 based on their institutional differences as suggested by the literature on political opportunity structures.

First, the findings support the notion of a Europeanization of protest that is spurred by the changing constellation of national vs. supranational powers in the wake of European integration. The Europeanization of protest occurs, displaying systematic cross-national differences. These differences are, as the results suggest, related to the differential between the constraints of the actors' domestic environments and the common-to-all evolving opportunities on the level of European politics.

Secondly, the findings suggest that the rates of protest in cross-national perspective are not simply random. The macro-political structure plays a (statistically) significant, logically consistent, and visible role in the explanatory bundle leading to occurrence or absence of protest actions.

### Kurzfassung

Ausgehend von den theoretischen Vorschlägen des Konzepts der "politischen Opportunitätsstrukturen" untersucht die folgende Studie den Zusammenhang zwischen der Häufigkeit europäischen Protestes in drei Mitgliedsstaaten der Europäischen Gemeinschaften – Belgien, Frankreich und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland – und den jeweiligen institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen der drei politischen Systeme über eine Zeitspanne von sechzehn Jahren (1980 bis 1995).

Die Ergebnisse deuten zum einen darauf hin, daß die Europäisierung von Protesten mitbestimmt werden von der sich als Folge der europäischen Integration verändernden Konstellation zwischen nationalen und supranationalen Politikkompetenzen. Im zwischenstaatlichen Vergleich zeigen sich deutliche und systematische Unterschiede in der Häufigkeit europäischen Protestes. Diese Unterschiede werden hier erklärt als das Ergebnis des Differentials zwischen dem spezifischen institutionellen Umfeld auf nationaler Ebene zum einen und den allen Akteuren gemeinsamen Möglichkeiten zur Partizipation auf supranationaler Ebene zum anderen.

Darüber hinaus scheint die Häufigkeit europäischen Protestes in vergleichender Perspektive nicht zufällig: Vielmehr üben die makropolitischen Strukturen als zentrale Erklärungsfaktoren einen statistisch signifikanten und logisch folgerichtigen Einfluß auf das Auftreten oder Ausbleiben von Protestaktionen aus.

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## I. Introduction

This paper focuses on an empirical analysis of the concept of political opportunity structure (POS) and its impact on the "Europeanization of protest." Can we explain the occurrence and different rates of European protest in three countries with institutional differences?

I analyze POS through contentious collective action, or protest, by citizens of three member countries of the European Union – the Belgium, France, and Germany – over a sixteen-year period from 1980 to 1995.

I examine whether and how citizens in selected member countries of the European Union respond to the increasing shift of political power from their national governments to the institutions of the European Union. Particularly, I am interested in whether the concept of POS allows us correctly to determine the level of protest directed at the European Union institutions or responding to European Union-influenced policies. Several authors have suggested that the growth of multi-level governance in Europe has created new opportunities for citizens' participation (Marks and McAdam 1996). While this argument has an immediate intuitive appeal, social scientists have not been very successful in devising rigorous empirical tests of the impact of POS. Indeed, the unresolved debate on the importance of structural vs. individual factors explaining contentious collective action is one of the most fundamental questions in the present debate on the study of protest and contentious politics (Lichbach 1997a; McAdam, Tilly, Tarrow 1997).

Analyzing contentious politics within the European Union provides a unique possibility to test the impact of domestic macro-structures on protest in a less ambiguous way. Within the context of the European Union one can investigate how differences in – the member countries' *domestic* political opportunities translate into the common-to-all, supranational level of governance, the arena of

Europeanized protest. To what extent is the occurrence or non-occurrence of European protest a function of structural characteristics of the respective states? Or more precisely, is European protest a function of the domestic-supranational POS-differential?

If the on-going process of European integration indeed creates new possibilities for non-state actors to press their grievances and claims, then the notion of political opportunity structure should provide a powerful diagnostic tool that would allow us to explain systematic cross-national differences in the patterns of European protest as being determined by the differential between different domestic and the common-to-all supranational POS.

In order to address these questions, I use a rich set of event data on domestic and European protest and compare the development of European protest in the three countries with the countries' structural characteristics. I distinguish between, first, general protest in each of the countries, second, protest within the individual countries that is directed towards or affected by the existence of the European Union, and third, "pure" European protest, at the location of EU institutions and as a product of transnational European coordination.

At the center of this analysis is the concept of political opportunity structure (POS), or more precisely, the formal and institutional dimensions of POS. The concept of POS originates in Michael Lipsky's (1970) and Peter Eisinger's (1973) studies of urban unrest in America. Since then it has become one of the explanatory "workhorses" in the comparative study of social movements and protest (Tarrow 1983; for a review of its origins see e.g., McAdam 1996; McAdam, Tilly, Tarrow 1997). Based in the tradition of structuralist approaches students of contentious politics theorize POS to be one of the central contributing factors of contentious political action.

The study of social movements and contentious politics distinguishes between three levels: between political opportunities – addressing macro-conditions of collective action – , mobilizing structures – the meso-level organizational building blocks for social movements, and framing processes – the cognitive, "ideational" or cultural dimension of collective action (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). In their recent review McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) advocate a theoretical synthesis in the study of social movements that encompasses those three perspectives – political opportunity, mobilizing structures and cultural frames – capturing the role of politics, society and culture respectively. In their view these three aspects interactively determine the formation and success of collective action (CA). Within this triad, the concept of political opportunity has been central in the study of social movements: POS has been hypothesized to explain the emergence of a movement on the basis of "changes in the institutional structure or informal power relations of a given national political system." (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 3) Similarly, the political process paradigm assumes that "expanding political opportunities as the ultimate spur to CA." (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 7)

Political opportunity structures are commonly defined along four main dimensions (e.g. Kriesi 1995: 168): (1) the degree of openness or closure of formal political access, (2) the degree of stability or instability of political alignments, (3) the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners, and (4) the political conflicts within and among elites. Yet, there are also a number of differences with respect to emphasis and operationalization (for a recent review see McAdam 1996). For example, Kriesi's (1995) operationalization is based on the notion of *stability*: he assumes the general structure as being given and stable. And although he acknowledges the possibility of changes over time, the central point for him is, "that the actors cannot anticipate such shifts at the time when they engage in collective action, which means that they have to take the political opportunity structure as a given in their short-term strategic calculations." (Kriesi 1995: 168)

Alternatively, Tarrow's (1994: 86-88) operationalization of POS stresses its dynamic aspects. He specifies POS as *changes* in opportunity: (1) opening up of access to participation, (2) shifts in ruling alignments – a central factor in democratic systems – , (3) availability of influential allies, and (4) cleavages within and among elites. Here, social changes are crucial in that they can "render the established political order more vulnerable or receptive to change." (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 8)(1)

However, shared among those typologies (see McAdam 1996) of political opportunity and protest is the idea that the formal institutional structure of a polity defines the general setting for the interaction between challengers (protesters, social movements, dissidents) and the regime, and that changes along the four dimensions affect some kind of equilibrium between the challenging groups and the state (McAdam 1996, 32). Thus, a polity's formal institutional or legal structure is a crucial factor in determining the conflict and alliance systems that patterns social movement emergence and development (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 4). Applied empirical research into the role of political opportunity structures has consisted of both single case studies ("the American perspective") and cross-national comparisons ("the European scholars"). As McAdam, McCarthy and Zald point out (1996: 18), the POS concept is particularly suited for comparative research across regions, movements, or national contexts. Comparativists attempt to explain cross-national variations in possible institutional locations of mobilization, the role of the political system in structuring the organizational profile of the movement, or the role of structure for movement survival. The first cross-national comparison of the effects of political opportunity structures is Kitschelt's (1986), studying differences in anti-nuclear movements in four countries. He examines whether cross-national differences in social movement strategies and amount and type of social movement activities, are a function of POS defined as input and output structures of the political system.

Taking Kitschelt's study as their starting point, Kriesi and collaborators (1995) analyze the role of political opportunity structure in explaining the occurrence and repertoires of New Social Movements in Western Europe. Recently, Koopmans (1996) uses another derivative of the POS concept to explain cross-national differences in extreme rightist violence. He operationalizes political opportunities as the public position that political elites take in political debate surrounding asylum legislation in Germany.

While the use of POS in these studies provides at times a powerful heuristic and explanatory metaphor, its application is, at the same time, marred by serious methodological shortcomings. Those range from ambiguous specification, murky data, and the absence of systematic analysis, to make-shift and ad-hoc utilization of POS as the explanatory concept, that is made to bear the weight of the analysis in the final paragraphs without having been part of the research design in the first place. Some of the methodological problems in the application of the POS concept are not coincidental, nor necessarily due to sloppy research designs. The main problem in the testing the POS is its vagueness.

Not surprisingly then, the criticism of the POS concept has lately been rising in pitch. During its rise to the center of social movement theory the concept has become bloated and overloaded: it has lost much of its explanatory edge by incorporating an increasing array of causal factors. Furthermore, its vague content and often contradictory causal direction have rendered it vague and ambiguous, leaving it for practical research both potentially unfalsifiable and thus unassailable. Gamson and Meyer (1996: 275) invoke Tilly's famous criticism of Ted Gurr's relative deprivation paradigm by attacking POS as a "sponge." They are concerned that POS "threatens to become an all-encompassing fudge factor for all the conditions and circumstances that form the context for collective action. Used to explain so much, it may ultimately explain nothing at all."(Gamson and Meyer 1996: 275)

The most fervent and succinct critique of structural explanations of collective action and the POS research program has come from Mark Lichbach (e.g. Lichbach 1997b) and his Collective Action Research Program (CARP). Grounded in work of political economists such as Mancur Olson, Gordon Tullock, and sociologists like Gamson, CARP is concerned with problems of free-riding and non-participation in contentious politics. Based on assumptions of the preeminence of self-interest and instrumental rationality, it extends the insight that collective action involves public goods and "perverse" aggregation outcomes like Prisoner's Dilemma characteristics to the study of protest and rebellion (Lichbach 1997b: 90). CARP stresses solutions to the collective action problem as its basic building blocks and sees the struggle between challengers and authorities in the realization of those solutions as the essential *political* aspect of collective dissent (Lichbach 1995). The contribution of CARP that in their view goes beyond the POS research program, is the conviction that CA theories "lead to a study of the causes and consequences of collective dissent (i.e., CA processes) and to comparative and historical analyses of the strategic situations in which regimes and dissidents confront one another." (Lichbach 1997b: 92) Consequently, Lichbach challenges the limitations and boundaries of the "Synthetic Political Opportunity Theory" (SPOT): in his view (1997a: 23) an exclusive focus on the structural or macro-level that neglects the micro-level of group processes spurred by dissent replaces "the study of dissent with the study of authority systems against which dissent is conducted."

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While researchers working close to the CARP acknowledge the importance of structural conditions, such as the type of state institutions and the institutional environment within which collective action takes place (see Lichbach 1995: 336-337), in their practical research the focus is placed on aspects of *agency* of collective action rather than on the structure. Lichbach questions the usefulness of the four dimensions of political opportunity structure as explanations of levels of protest. In his view the basic problem of the concept – the structural shortcoming of structural explanations so to speak – is that the relationship between POS and protest is basically indeterminate and holds instead that "[h]appenance determines context; politics decides solutions. Ergo, aggregate levels and particular outbreaks of collective dissent are unpredictable." (Lichbach 1995: 281-282)

Scholars working within the tradition of structural explanations acknowledge many of these problems (e.g. Rucht 1996b: 188; Tarrow 1988: 430). At its best, the POS can only explain part of the mobilization process because it constitutes only a necessary and not sufficient condition for collective action – or in Most and Starr's (1989) poignant terminology it is the difference between "opportunity" and "willingness."

Thus, the explanatory power of POS is potentially contingent on a number of mediating factors such as the mobilizing strategy of a movement, on the current stage in the mobilization process (the assumption being that POS are more crucial for the onset of a movement), and size and importance of social movements and their ability to generate their own POS (see Kriesi et al. 1995: xv).

With these limitations in mind, in the next section I portray the potential for contentious collective action within the evolving environment of the European Economic Communities/European Union (EEC/EU) and then attempt to devise an operationalization of political opportunity structure that can overcome at least some of these problems.

## **II. Institutional changes in EEC and the opening of political opportunities for protest**

Why would we expect citizen groups to direct their protest against the policies and institutions of the European Community, or the project of European Integration? Even though the European Union is not (yet) a full-fledged polity comparable to that of the individual European states, its development is in many respects analogous to the process of state formation, and it has been increasingly taking on state like characteristics (Grant 1993; Marks and McAdam 1996). Observers have suggested that these changes constitute emerging political opportunity structures for participation and influence on the EU level that can be expected to lead to the evolution of new forms and strategies of political contention.

Thus, structural changes on the level of supranational power affect the balance of national policy competencies and traditional power arrangements between subnational and national actors and in turn transform the politics of collective action: "shifts in the geographic locus of institutionalized power can be expected to be accompanied by simultaneous changes in the structure and locus of mass politics." (Marks and McAdam 1996, 250) There is already sound evidence in the areas of regional mobilization (Marks et al. 1996), interest group politics and lobbying activities within the European Union in response to changes in the institutional constellation/balance within the European Union.

The time period investigated in this paper covers two major institutional reforms of the European Community: the passing of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986, which revised the original Treaty of Rome, and the Treaty on European Union (TEU), or Maastricht Treaty in 1992-93. The stagnant period of 'Eurosclerosis' in the late 1970s and early 1980s came to an end with the appointment of new Commission president Jacques Delors in 1985. Plans for a Single European Market (SEM) and steps toward the European Monetary Union (EMU) culminated in the passage of the Single European Act (SEA). The implementation of the SEA in summer of 1987 was arguably the most significant modification of the structure of the original Community at the time. More importantly, the scope of majority voting in the Council of Ministers was expanded into areas that hitherto required unanimous agreement (e.g. taxation, the relaxation of border controls, and workers' rights). Furthermore, the scope of the Community's authority was extended into new policy areas, and the European Parliament's power was increased *vis-à-vis* the Council of Ministers and the Commission (see e.g. Nicoll and Salmon 1993, Archer and Butler 1996). Mazey and Richardson (1993a: 37) consider the passing of the SEA as a "watershed" for the process of integration that had important implications for the activities and impact of sub-national actors operating within the institutional environment of the European Communities. The SEA led to a significant increase in lobbying activity in Brussels and Strasbourg. Due to the SEA, the EC now has a legal basis in a number of policy areas in which it can act more independently from national governments. Consequently, the "reform of its decision-making process has begun to weaken governments' influence at the EC level." (Mazey and Richardson 1993a: 37). This has potentially significant consequences for the political agendas and strategies of citizen groups within the member countries:

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[T]he primacy of EC law over national legislation means that no group can afford to ignore EC legislative developments which might undermine policy compromises being negotiated nationally. This is especially important in such areas as industrial policy and regional policy, where intervention by national governments can be overruled and reversed by the EC as being contrary to the principles of the single market. (Mazey and Richardson 1993a: 43).

Compared to the Single European Act, the Treaty on European Union (TEU) was probably considerably less dramatic in the scope of the institutional changes it brought about. However, it was

to become strikingly more momentous as a symbol of the rising politicization of the European integration project. To a considerable part the Maastricht Treaty was the result of the political pressures to widen and deepen the institutions of the European Communities in the wake of German unification, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the resulting shifts in the configurations of political power among some of the member states within the existing framework. Richard McAllister (1997: 225) characterized the Maastricht Treaty's final form as janus-faced, containing both "intergovernmentalist" and "federalist" elements. According to Mazey and Richardson (1993b: 3), the Maastricht Treaty continued the "erosion of the powers of individual national governments." The main points of the Treaty were the commitment to a common European currency by 1999 at the latest; it laid down rights for European citizens and expanded on the concept Union citizenship; the European Union obtained new powers in a number of areas (such as consumer protection; public health; visa policy; establishment of trans-European transport, telecommunications and energy networks; provisions for cooperation; industrial policy; education; culture; greater importance for environmental protection; increase in research and development; progress on social policy; co-operation in field of justice and home affairs) and it introduced a Common foreign and security policy (CFSP).

While the Treaty constituted a partial retreat from more ambitious visions of a federalized and supranational Europe in a number of areas (the principle of subsidiarity in Article 3b and changes in Article A), it nevertheless (if only hesitantly) addressed the increasing awareness of the potentially destabilizing aspects of the democratic deficit within the European Communities. In the TEU the member countries agreed on altering the power relationship within the EEC's institutional structure: mostly by limiting some of the Commission's and Council of Minister's powers *vis-à-vis* its only directly elected institution, the European Parliament in Strasbourg. In the "Europhoria" that had accompanied the negotiations of the TEU, the required national ratification procedures were subsequently considered to constitute merely *pro forma* steps in passing the Treaty. French president François Mitterand resorted to a grand, DeGaulleian gesture of having the ratification settled through a referendum - a decision that turned out to be ill-advised. The trouble for the Maastricht Treaty started with its rejection in the first Danish referendum on 2 June 1992 and culminated in the razor-thin "yes"-vote in the French Referendum almost four months later.(2)

In sum, during the sixteen years between 1980 and 1995 the process of European Integration underwent several significant institutional reforms that strengthened the European dimension and created an increasingly favorable environment for the articulation of grievances through contentious collective action.

### **III. European integration and the expanding arena for political activism**

Until recently, most research that has been conducted to address the role of citizens and their input into the European political process has focused on electoral turnout, the politics of institutionalized interest groups (e.g. Mazey and Richardson 1993a, Greenwood, Grote, and Ronit 1992), or the role of public opinion (Niedermayer and Sinnott 1995).

A number of scholars have now begun to examine issues of contentious politics as a response to the increasing degree of integration into the EU (notably, Tarrow 1995a; Imig and Tarrow 1997; Marks and McAdam 1993; Opp 1994; and Rucht 1996a) thus adding a different and new perspective on the process of supranational integration within the European Union that has previously been neglected.

These reflections and analyses on European protest are based within the broader theoretical suggestions and the concepts of the literature on protest and social movements, particularly the notion of POS. Therefore, the examination of issues relating to European protest can in turn shed light on broader, theoretical puzzles and debates.

Routinely, the *national* level of POS has been considered to be predominant (e.g. Jenkins and Klandermans 1995). Scholars of POS regard the state as the foremost conflict and alliance system shaping the emergence of protest movements. However, considering the declining role the state within the European Community outlined before, it is rather straightforward to assume a growing role of "supranational" political opportunity structure as well: the domestic POS becomes increasingly complemented by new forms of opportunities for protest that form within the framework of EU politics (e.g. Kriesi 1995).

Furthermore, much of the previous research on POS has dealt with the manifestation of protest events as they are linked with particular national social movements and their respective organizations and not the occurrence of contentious politics events *per se*. Social movements are understood as a sustained series of interaction between the state and challenging groups (e.g. Jenkins and Klandermans 1995). However, European protesters are not social movements in this sense. Rather, European protest is conducted by a wide variety of actors with a multitude of different claims and agendas. An only small fraction of those protest manifestations address the project of European integration as such, and those events do not maintain the perceivable momentum and frequency that would allow us to qualify them as a social movement. For most protesters the link between their social, economic or political claims and the European Union is neither a persistent nor an exclusive one. By and large, European protesters are concerned with immediate and specific issues such as farm subsidies, unemployment or working conditions, whose targets can simultaneously consist of their own governments, the European Union institutions, or other member countries' governments. Thus, the phenomenon of Europeanization of protest does not lend itself to the same classificatory homogeneity than for example the phenomenon of New Social Movements did in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Marks and McAdam (1996) highlight the definitional boundaries of the concept of social movements within the context of European integration and compare the process of supranational integration in its effects on changing opportunity structures during the emergence of nation-states. Therefore, they are critical of applying concepts to the study of European mass politics that are "historically contingent" and "inextricably linked to the historic rise and refinement of a *national* system of politics" (Marks and McAdam 1996: 251). In a similar vein, they question the theoretical distinctions between interest groups and social movements in the EU context, because all are "challenging groups" that thus stand in the same relationship to the "integration *process*"

Consequently, I broaden my unit of analysis to protest events as such – the collective and public action of citizens that are attempting to alter the representation system of the European Union, influence its public policies both on the national and supranational level, or the general relationship between citizens and both the states or the EU institutions – contending that some of the classificatory tools of the theoretical literature are too narrow and ill-suited for studying the manifestation of supranational protest.

I define protest broadly as including politically, socially as well as economically motivated non-institutionalized action intended to exert pressure on other social actors, state institutions and policies, as well as on the institutions or representatives of the European union (e.g. Opp 1994). These forms of protest can include demonstrations, strikes, blockades, the signing of petitions, hunger strikes, bombings and other forms of public and contentious collective action.

In order to capture the phenomenon of "European protest" I distinguish between protest events that are directed towards issues without explicit connection to the European Union, that I subsume under the broad category of "domestic protest", and "European protest." Following Tarrow (1995a) I define "European protest" as any protest event that

(a) either explicitly addresses the EU polity, its policies, institutions, or the project of integration as such, or is directed towards national/domestic policies, which presumably, emerged due to and affected by the European Union. Here, protesters attempt to address the EEC/EU, an issue of EEC/EU policy, their national governments or other member governments as an agent of desired policy change in addition to the respective national agency, or

(b) is targeted at domestic state policies that are seen to represent a conflict between domestic interests and EU interests.

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## IV. Data(3)

The data on protest underlying this research are event data that have been manually coded, and collected from multiple, electronically available full-text news sources, using the on-line news service *Lexis/Nexis*. The availability of on-line news archives like *Lexis/Nexis* allows the use of multiple sources that increase coverage and verifiability of news content without compromising the parsimony and efficiency of the data collection.(4)

We chose to use the Reuters Textline service within *Lexis/Nexis* as our media source. The Textline service records stories from over 400 media organizations, including English language translations of many European sources. Although several of the media sources recorded in Textline are not likely to contribute any useful information to our project (i.e. specialized publications like *Carpet and Floorcovering Review*) this service contains several major news sources (like Reuters, BBC, *Agence France Presse*, *International Herald Tribune*) as well as regional media outlets that are likely to cover the local events ignored by the major media sources. Table 1 provides a summary of the coverage by different sources. Reuters News service clearly provides the backbone the events in the data set accounting for between over half to more than two thirds of the protest events.

Table 1

Through the Boolean search capabilities of *Lexis/Nexis* we can effectively limit the number of stories we obtain and that provide the basis of the coding. For example, the search phrase "France or Germany" would return all stories involving either France or Germany, but the phrase "France or Germany and protest" will yield only those stories that contain one of the two countries' names *and* the word "protest." By using in our search commands several terms that one would expect to find in a story regarding domestic protest – such as "protest," "riot", "demonstrator," etc.) we were able to eliminate a large number of irrelevant stories. This presents a departure from previous efforts in the systematic collection of data on collective action or protest, each relying on different sources and employing different methods of data collection (Tilly 1978, 1986; Tarrow 1989; Kriesi et al. 1995, Rucht et al. 1992, McCarthy, McPhail and Smith 1996; for a review see Olzak 1989, 1992).

We increase the efficiency of the information processing stage through the use of the machine-assisted coding using the Kansas Event Data System (KEDS) (Schrodt 1996), a computer program that "reads" the news stories and makes initial coding decisions for many of our variables. This method differs from similar projects employing machines such as the PANDA project (Bond et

al. 1994; Bond and Bond 1995; Bond et al. 1997) in a number of ways: First, we do not rely on 'pure' machine-coding, where the computer program makes automatic coding decisions based on dictionary and actor lists. Instead human coders look at every news story and analyze its content for predefined variables. Second, we use a variety of sources instead of relying on single-source coding. And third, we code full-text stories instead of headlines and the lead-paragraph. The data are collected by event and for the present analysis aggregated by six-month periods.

I discuss the operationalization of the political opportunity structure concept, the independent variable, in the next section.

## V. Testing POS in the European Context

The discussion above showed that one of the weaknesses of the POS concept is the ambiguity that results from the clustering of explanatory variables under its label. This has serious implications for practical research: if one were to incorporate all aspects of POS into any research design (see e.g. Gamson and Meyer 1996: 281 for a list of POS components), this would quickly exhaust any explanatory power in a typical small-N study. In following Tarrow's advice (1996: 800) who advocates pinning down political opportunity structure in a "more testable and widely accepted form," I will attempt the first part and hope for the second.

The changes due to European integration can be linked to at least the first three of the four dimensions of political opportunity structure presented earlier: First, and with respect to the relative openness or closure of the institutionalized national political system, the emergence of the European Community/European Union simply offers a variety of new possibilities in accessing and shaping nascent political processes forming at the supranational level (see Marks and McAdam 1996). This can be dubbed a "political opportunity structure differential." With this I mean that we could expect groups hampered by rather closed and inaccessible domestic political structures, e.g. France's, to be more inclined to make use of additional channels of access at the European level than domestic actors in other countries encountering more favorable and responsive circumstances for influencing policy formation and implementation (such as Germany and Belgium).

Secondly, the expansion of policy fields and the shift of policy powers from the national to the supranational level should affect the nature of established national elite alignments by allowing political actors to search for political allies outside of their national boundaries (Milner and Keohane 1996a, and Marks et al. 1996 on the formation of cross-national linkages among regional movements). Furthermore and due to the intergovernmental aspects of the EU integration project, these processes open a relatively wide array of possibilities for nationally based as well as supranationally operating movement alliances to exploit the disagreements and conflicting agendas between and within their respective governments.

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Next, in the literature on political opportunity structure the role of third party support or the presence of elite allies has been consistently found to be a central aspect for the formation of protest (Burstein et al. 1995, Tarrow 1983, 1989). Within the context of European integration the institutions and processes of the EU offers a new set of constellations in gaining potential elite allies. In the words of Mény (1989: 363; cited in Ladrech 1994):

The State is no longer in a position to 'guarantee' policy output nor to assure selected intermediaries a monopoly of access to effective centres of decision; as for the groups, they can, if they wish, utilize a range of interventions larger and more open than has been the case or even, when they are

marginalized, short-circuit the State.

Therefore, groups can choose between a variety of allies and targets for their actions, depending on the utility that differing constellations can offer. Marks and McAdam (1996) provide the most systematic treatment of the possible emergence of POS at the European level. Marks and McAdam (1996: 251) summarize the general argument:

to the extent that European integration results in the replacement, or, more likely, the decline in the importance of the nation-state as the exclusive seat of formal political power, we can expect attendant changes in those forms of interest aggregation/articulation historically linked to the state.

In brief, institutional changes brought about by the European integration process can be regarded as an opening of political spaces for the articulation of grievances in several ways: (1) its institutional setting provides a new forum and new channels of influence; (2) through the increased politicization of the integration process, groups can attain publicity beyond their traditional target groups; (3) it creates the possibility to form alliances with a larger number of actors outside of the nation-state, (4) it limits the judicial and legislative capacity and independence of states, and (5) in that it reduces the nation-states' ability to produce binding outputs for the challengers.

For this paper I focus on the first aspect of the institutional differential between the states' domestic structural setting and the possibilities offered by the expanded protest environment of the European Union. Based on the theoretical suggestions of the POS literature I examine whether cross-national differences in the absolute number of European protest events coincide with the differences between Belgium's, France's, the Federal Republic of Germany's respective institutional structures. Thus I attempt to integrate the POS's static aspects with the notion of change and the opening of POS. I understand the domestic political opportunities as providing the *static* structural background against which potential supranational opportunities *evolve* on the European level.<sup>(5)</sup> Even, if we assume that protesters have to take their domestic political opportunity structure as given (Kriesi 1995: 168), they *can* anticipate and react to the changes provided by the integration of the European Union.

Specifically, I concentrate on the broadest characteristic of institutional differences, the countries' degree of institutional openness to challengers as reflected in the system's degree of centralization. The assumption is that a more closed political structure is more likely to lead to an expansion of domestic protest, to include European issues, policies and targets. Groups mobilizing and acting within a more closed political system will tend to be more inclined to make use of new opportunities at the European level because those new opportunities can empower them more than groups in other, comparatively open and accessible systems who can already be heard more easily within their traditional domestic setting.

Kriesi's (1995: 171) classification of cross-national POS provides a useful starting point: he stresses that formal access to the national political system is determined by: (1) the degree of (territorial) centralization: the more decentralized the state structure the more access points it offers; (2) degree of (functional) concentration of state power: the more dispersed/separation of powers, the easier is access; (3) coherence of the public administration: the greater coherence, the greater is the state's ability to restrict the challengers' access; (4) degree to which direct democratic procedures are institutionalized. Based on these characteristics he distinguishes between "open" and "closed" states.

I choose to limit the operationalization of POS to this institutional dimension, because it best and most cogently embodies the concepts original and *structural* notion that is arguably at the core of the POS concept in its most essential and compelling form.

Consistent with Marks et al.'s "regional autonomy index" (1996), Lane and Ersson's "institutional autonomy index" (1991), and Bullmann's classification (1997) I proceed to rank-order the three

countries with respect to the degree of their territorial and functional centralization and the scope of the regional governance.

Of the three countries France comes closest to the notion of a closed state and classic unitary country. The French Fifth Republic is characterized by an extremely closed and centralized decision-making system. This is compounded by its fairly inaccessible party-system on the national level. France comprises 21 administrative regions containing 96 departments. Beginning in 1982 France under President Mitterand and the socialist government initiated a process of reform and limited devolution, moving the system closer to what Bullmann (1997) calls 'devolving unitary:' a system that underwent a "process of reform to establish elected regional authorities above the local level... [which] enjoys a certain degree of constitutional protection and autonomy." The decentralization law of March 1982 transferred administrative and financial power in France from the level of *préfets* to locally-elected departmental assemblies. Thus, although these reforms established elected regional authorities above the local level, France's centralized structure of governance with its limited numbers of access at all levels continues to be the least "hospitable" political system of the three for protesters to successfully advance their claims (see also Rucht 1996b; Kriesi et al. 1995; Kitschelt 1986).

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Next in the ranking, I place Belgium as representing a 'regionalized unitary' (Bullmann 1997) or 'semi-federal' (Fitzmaurice 1996) system. Beginning in the 1960s, the Belgium state has been undergoing a process of decentralization after the old unitary state became increasingly ungovernable. This was mostly due to the emergence and deepening of the language or community cleavage mainly between the Flemish-speaking Flanders in the north and French-speaking Wallonia, or Wallony, in the south. "[F]rom 1970, the date of the first major constitutional revision, Belgium began to move towards a more complex structure of the federal type. The process is still going on and is far from complete, but already the Belgian state has taken on important federal characteristics with devolution of significant powers to the communities and regions." (Fitzmaurice 1996: 83). Over the last two decades a number of amendments to the Constitution that represented important revisions in connection with the Reform of the State were passed (in 1980, 1983, 1988, 1993). Most observers characterize Belgium as moving towards a form of federalized structure. In the words of Fitzmaurice (1996: 145): "Few would now contest that Belgium's institutions are evolving in a federal direction and that they show many *sui generis* features, that, while not found in other federal systems and while lacking some features normally found in federal systems, certainly do not disqualify Belgium from being considered virtually a federal state." (6) This cooperative climate is also reflected in the general pattern of interest mediation in Belgium (van den Bulk 1992, Compston 1994). One of its key characteristics is the system of 'pillarization' or *verzuiling*, leading to an arrangement of relations between networks of social and economic actors, political parties and the state, making Belgium "an example *par excellence* of a co-sociational democracy" (Fitzmaurice 1996: 222). Another unique feature of the Belgian form of federalism is that the federal and sub-national levels are not layered hierarchically: a federal law cannot alter a sub-national law nor can it alter a subnational executive decision (Kerremans and Beyers 1997: 42).

Based on this classification and according to the suggestions of the POS literature, Belgium's political structure would allow for comparatively more possibilities for social actors to gain access to the political system and would make it less necessary for the citizens to engage in European protest.

Finally, the Federal Republic of Germany's (FRG) constitutional scope for regional governance is the largest of the three countries. The FRG constitutes the classic federal system in this triad in that the "regional tier exists in its own right and cannot be abolished ... unilaterally." (Bullmann 1997)

Germany is composed of sixteen *Länder* (states), each of which has its own constitution, legislature and government. These state assemblies have far-reaching rights to enact their own state-laws in areas such as education, police, culture and environmental protection. Thus, the FRG is characterized by "institutional permeability" and constitutes the most typical federal system among the three countries. With respect to the POS it provides, Kriesi et al. (1995: 220) characterize the Federal Republic of Germany as an example of a comparatively "weak state." Furthermore, decision-making powers are fragmented along the federal dimension and provide numerous access points for challenging groups through e.g. administrative courts and other institutions (Rucht 1996b: 200-201). The system also provides for the "formalistic inclusion" of other societal actors in the policy formation process. In addition, the execution and implementation of federal and state laws is to a large extent the local responsibility of city boroughs and counties.

Figure 1 summarizes the rank-ordering of the three countries based on the previous discussion. While the comparative institutional structure and thus the domestic POS is for the most part stable, the classification takes into account the changes that particularly France and Belgium (indicated by the arrows and boxes representing the institutional reforms), and to a much smaller extent Germany (e.g. Deeg 1995), underwent since the 1980s.(7)

### Figure 1

This operationalization attempts to conform to two essential conditions for sound research design: it results in a dependent variable that *varies*,(8) and, more importantly, it allows for a research design whose efficiency mirrors the attributed explanatory power of the underlying theoretical concept (see King, Keohane, and Verba 1994: 42).

## **VI. Results**

Based on this classification, I now turn to comparing the relationship between the countries' institutional political opportunity structures and the occurrence of European protest events.

The null hypothesis is that there is no systematic relationship between the differences in the countries' institutional structures and the occurrence of European protest. The alternative hypothesis is then, that the rank-ordering of the occurrence of the number of European protest events in each of the three countries corresponds to the rank ordering of the degree of territorial centralization – that is in the order France, Belgium, Germany – at least in the majority of each of the thirty-two six-month periods between 1980 and 1995.

### Table 2 Table 3

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Table 2 provides some descriptive statistics for the biyearly aggregation and Table 3 shows the total number of European protest events, their relative rank-order in brackets, and the sequence of the event frequency across the three countries. It is noticeable that there is *no* clear trend reflecting a steady increase in protest activity directed towards the EEC/EU over time. The protest event data is dominated by long periods of torpor interrupted by relatively short periods of intensive activity. The distribution of protest events appears rather bimodal with heightened activity in the early to mid 1980s, a period of relative calm stretching from the mid- to late 1980s and again a stronger and more sustained upsurge beginning by the early 1990s.(9)

### Table 4

The resulting sequences of relative event frequency are counted and summarized in the sequence count in Table 4. In addition to the sequence count for the total number of protesters, table 4 also reports two subsamples – farmers and non-farmers. Farmers are not only the most successful and best organized Community-level pressure group (Grant 1993), but they are also the most active European protesters in France and Germany, accounting for close to sixty percent of all European protests. As [Table 3](#) indicates, there are several time periods where there were either no events, or the same number of events in all three countries. These instances did not enter into the sequence count. For the cases where the number of European protest events were equal in two of the three countries I assigned the two event frequency sequences that are consistent with the respective relative event counts.

The sequence France-Belgium-Germany receives the highest count – both overall, as well as for the farmer subsample. In seventeen out of the thirty-two time periods, the sequence predicted by the concept of political opportunity structure differential is realized. Only in the case of non-farmers the pattern is somewhat ambivalent. European protest events by non-farmers in Belgium tend to outnumber those in both France and Germany: in twelve out of the thirty-two periods there were more protest events in Belgium than in both France and Germany – compared to eleven periods, that are in concordance with the propositions of the POS concept. Furthermore, the count also decreases with the number of transpositions in the sequences consistent with the structural argument. The strong showing of non-farmer protest in Belgium over France and Germany is in part caused by labor conflicts between EEC staff working for the EEC bureaucracies situated in Brussels.

#### Table 5

In order to assess the significance of these findings I conduct two statistical tests: A crosstabulation analysis of the rank-ordering (reported in [Table 5](#)), and an ANOVA test of the original event counts ([Table 6](#)).

Since the political structure is clearly the independent variable, and the protest event frequency is the dependent, an asymmetric coefficient like Somers' D is the appropriate statistic to assess the association between the two ordinal measures. (10) Somers' D indicates a fairly strong and positive relationship between the relative occurrence of European protest events and the countries' political opportunity structure differential. Moreover, the Chi-square measure indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. These findings are further supported by the ANOVA test of the association of original protest counts before having been translated into ordinal variables with the degree of territorial centralization.

#### Table 6

These findings lend support to the alternative hypothesis: If the institutional opportunity structure were irrelevant for the relative frequency of European protest across the three countries, and the null hypothesis were true, we would expect the counts to be distributed more equally or randomly and not follow the pattern predicted by the theory. Based on the two tests we can confidently reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the two variables.

## **VII. Concluding remarks**

This paper set out to explain the rates of European protest in three core countries of the EEC/EU

based on their institutional differences as suggested by the literature on political opportunity structures. The analysis thus has a dual purpose: first, to find out more about the dynamics of the Europeanization of protest and second, to provide an answer to the wider theoretical question of the relationship between political opportunity structures and contentious collective action.

With respect to the first issue, the findings support the notion of a Europeanization of protest that is spurred by the changing constellation of national vs. supranational powers in the wake of European integration. Furthermore, the Europeanization of protest occurs displaying systematic cross-national differences. These differences are, as the results suggest, related to the differential between the constraints of the actors' domestic environments and the common-to-all evolving opportunities on the level of European politics.

This leads to the second goal of the paper: While we ultimately cannot predict the occurrence of single protest events (Kuran 1991), these findings *do* suggest that the rates of protest in cross-national perspective are not simply random (Lichbach 1995). The macro-political structure plays a (statistically) significant, logically consistent, and visible role in the explanatory bundle leading to occurrence or absence of protest actions.

However, the results provide a suspiciously "simple structural answer to complex political problems." (Tarrow 1994: 91) While the research design attempts to operationalize the notion of POS in a testable way, it is difficult to assess how convincing these results are in a larger perspective. This research and the findings are the product of several assumptions. The most important of which is narrowing the notion of POS down to its institutional dimension, thus not controlling for the other dimensions of POS such as informal political alignments, the repressive capacity the political systems etc.

At a closer look, the findings also indicate that structural explanations can only be a partial explanation of mobilization. In the [Appendix I](#) report the analyses for the two subsamples (farmer and non-farmer European protest): They show that the structural explanation loses some of its explanatory power when we disaggregate and shift our focus on how the systems' overall political structures translate into, and interact with individual groups' motivations and strategies.(11)

This does not need to be contradictory, though. No single research endeavor can exhaustively test all alternative hypothesis. Rather, these results could encourage and suggest different avenues for further research.

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## Endnotes

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(1) McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald's (1996: 10) account differs on the last dimension: In their typology the state's capacity and propensity for repression is the fourth dimension of POS.

(2) These shifts in the policy competencies and powers from the nation-state to the European level were the bases for a legal challenge put before the German Constitutional Court during the ratification process of the TEU in 1993 by a motley coalition of Greens, far-right Republicans, and a former German senior Commission official. Their complaint was that the TEU violated the German basic law by giving too many of its powers to Brussels (Nicoll and Salmon 1994: 229). Another case in point is the adaptation of the social protocol by eleven of the twelve member states during the negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 which was in part motivated by the necessity to "retain the support of workers and their representatives for the integration project" (Lange 1993: 8).

(3) This section is based on Reising, Francisco, Huxtable 1997.

(4) For more detail on the project and data collection process see Reising, Francisco, and Huxtable 1997.

(5) Following Rucht's (1996b) reminder that structural analysis needs a common reference point to be meaningful this analysis holds that the EU provides the common reference point for a meaningful comparison in the explanatory power of the POS concept for the differences in protest rate occurrences across the three countries.

(6) Witte (1992: 113-115) characterizes Belgian federalism as "unionist" and "co-operative"; 'unionist' because "there is a fairly strong political current working to restrict any far-reaching autonomy for the communities or the regions." The 'co-operative' feature places much importance to discussion and collaboration between the regions, communities and the federal state. e.g. "solidarity grant" (similar to horizontal equalization in Germany)

(7) These domestic developments are secondary, however, since this research is only concerned with a consistent relative rank-ordering with respect to the common reference point – the EEC/EU.

(8) Admittedly a minimum condition. But in one of the "standard" dataset for structural comparisons, Polity III (Jagers and Gurr 1996), there is neither variation over the sixteen year period, nor differences between the three countries under study here.

(9) Public opinion research finds an almost uniform 'Europeanization' of opinion" between 1981-85, in the years before the beginning of the Single Market (Everts and Sinnott 1995)

(10) Somer' D also takes into account the tied pairs on the dependent variable.

(11) See for example Rucht's (1996a) findings on the relative powerlessness of environmental groups at the European level or Marks and McAdam's (1996) comparative analysis of different movements' responses to European integration.

## **Table 1**

### **Coding Sources (in percent)**

Source \ Country	BBC	CSM	ECON	FT	Le Monde	Reuters	SDZ	Xinhua	other	N
Belgium	2.22	0.19	3.71	7.11	0.00	56.63	0.00	3.67	26.48	2617
France	0.21	0.34	0.45	3.14	6.77	54.42	0.00	4.20	30.46	15295
FRG	0.12	0.65	0.08	1.77	0.05	71.62	4.82	6.66	14.21	7503
mean	0.85	0.39	1.41	4.01	2.28	60.89	1.61	4.85	23.72	

BBC

British Broadcast Cooperation

CSM

Christian Science Monitor

ECON

Economist

FT

Financial Times

SDZ

Süddeutsche Zeitung

## **Table 2**

### **Descriptive Statistics for Biyearly European Protest Counts (N=32)**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Belgian protest (total)	14.25	25.15	632.32	0	100
Belgian protest (farmers)	.88	1.60	2.56	0	6
Belgian protest (without farmers)	13.38	24.76	613.15	0	96
French protest (total)	21.69	30.59	935.96	0	120
French protest (farmers)	13.03	23.21	538.81	0	108
French protest (without farmers)	8.66	14.05	197.33	0	62
German protest (total)	2.97	3.84	14.74	0	15
German protest (farmers)	1.78	3.44	11.85	0	15
German protest (without farmers)	1.19	2.13	4.54	0	9

## **Table 3**

### **Number of European protest events and rank-order of event frequency (1980-1995: six-month aggregation)**

<b>Period</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Belgium</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>sequence of event frequency</b>
1980-1	2 [1]	0 [2]	0 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1980-2	0 [2]	0 [2]	5 [1]	Germany-Belgium-France Germany-France-Belgium
1981-1	2 [2]	33 [1]	0 [3]	Belgium-France-Germany
1981-2	1 [-]	1 [-]	1 [-]	
1982-1	10 [2]	100 [1]	0 [3]	Belgium-France-Germany
1982-2	1 [1]	0 [2]	0 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1983-1	21 [1]	7 [2]	1 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1983-2	3 [2]	73 [1]	1 [3]	Belgium-France-Germany
1984-1	43 [1]	7 [2]	1 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1984-2	3 [1]	1 [2]	0 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1985-1	34 [1]	1 [2]	0 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1985-2	6 [1]	1 [2]	1 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1986-1	2 [2]	0 [3]	4 [1]	Germany-France-Belgium
1986-2	16 [1]	0 [2]	0 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1987-1	7 [2]	3 [3]	15 [1]	Germany-France-Belgium
1987-2	0 [2]	1 [1]	0 [2]	Belgium-France-Germany Belgium-Germany-France
1988-1	11 [1]	1 [3]	7 [2]	France-Germany-Belgium
1988-2	0 [-]	0 [-]	0 [-]	
1989-1	5 [1]	3 [2]	3 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1989-2	1 [1]	0 [2]	0 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1990-1	30 [1]	2 [3]	10 [2]	France-Germany-Belgium
1990-2	8 [1]	6 [2]	1 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany

1991-1	3 [2]	6 [1]	0 [3]	Belgium-France-Germany
1991-2	52 [1]	2 [3]	3 [2]	France-Germany-Belgium
1992-1	120 [1]	5 [2]	4 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1992-2	100 [1]	14 [2]	6 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1993-1	91 [1]	43 [2]	9 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany
1993-2	41 [1]	41 [1]	7 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany Belgium-France-Germany
1994-1	20 [1]	4 [2]	4 [2]	France-Belgium-Germany France-Germany-Belgium
1994-2	7 [3]	13 [1]	10 [2]	Belgium-Germany-France
1995-1	21 [2]	53 [1]	1 [3]	Belgium-France-Germany
1995-2	34 [1]	2 [2]	1 [3]	France-Belgium-Germany

The first row denotes the number of protest events and the numbers in paranthesis in the second row indicate the rank-order of event frequency among the three countries.

## **Table 4**

### **Sequence count of European protest**

<b>Sequence count</b>	<b>all protesters</b>	<b>farmers</b>	<b>non-farmers</b>
<i>France-Belgium-Germany</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>16</i>	11
France-Germany-Belgium	10	15	3
Belgium-France-Germany	7	1	<i>12</i>
Belgium-Germany-France	2	1	5
Germany-Belgium-France	1	1	1
Germany-France-Belgium	3	3	1

## **Table 5**

### **Crosstabulation of relative event frequency and relative degree of territorial centralization (for all protest events)**

Observed Count Expected Value	France (high)	Belgium (medium)	Germany (low)	Row Total
1 10.3	20 10.3	8 10.3	3 10.3	31 34.4%
2 12.7	9 12.7	17 12.7	12 12.7	38 42.2%
3 7.0	1 7.0	5 7.0	15 7.0	21 23.3%
Column Total	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	90 100%

Number of Missing Observations: 6 Somers' D .50593 Chi-Square 32.21028 (4 DF; significance: .00000)

## **Table 6**

### **Analysis of Variance For All Protest Events**

Source	degrees of freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F-ratio	Probability
<b>Territorial Centralization</b>	2	5622.02	2811.01	5.5286	0.0054
<b>Error</b>	93	47285.9	508.451		
<b>Total</b>	95	52907.96			

## **Appendix**

### **Table A1**

#### **Crosstabulation of relative event frequency and relative degree of territorial centralization (only farmer protest)**

Observed Count Expected Value	France (high)	Belgium (medium)	Germany (low)	Row Total
1 8.7	21 8.7	1 8.7	4 8.7	26 33.3%
2 12.3	4 12.3	17 12.3	16 12.3	37 47.4%
3 5.0	1 5.0	8 5.0	6 5.0	15 19.2%
Column Total	26 33.3%	26 33.3%	26 33.3%	78 100.0%

Number of Missing Observations: 18 Somers' D .43442 Chi-Square 40.53264 (significance: .00000)

## Table A2

### Analysis of Variance For Farmer Protest

Source	degrees of freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F-ratio	Probability
<b>Territorial Centralization</b>	2	2935.02	1467.51	7.9580	0.0006
<b>Error</b>	93	17149.9	184.408		
<b>Total</b>	95	20085.0			

## Table A3

### Crosstabulation of relative event frequency and relative degree of territorial centralization (all non-farmer protest)

Observed Count Expected Value	France (high)	Belgium (medium)	Germany (low)	Row Total
1	14 8.7	11 8.7	1 8.7	26 34.7%
2	9 10.3	14 10.3	8 10.3	31 41.3%
3	2 6.0	0 6.0	16 6.0	18 24.0%
Column Total	25 33.3%	25 33.3%	25 33.3%	75 100%

Number of Missing Observations: 21 Somers' D .51947 Chi-Square 38.02564 (significance: .00000)

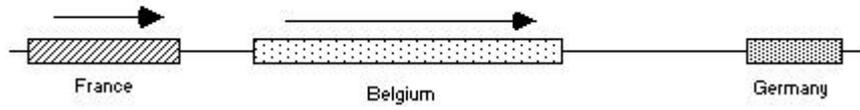
## Table A4

### Analysis of Variance For Non-Farmer Protest

Source	degrees of freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F-ratio	Probability
<b>Territorial Centralization</b>	2	2070.19	1035.09	4.1116	0.0195
<b>Error</b>	93	23412.97	251.752		
<b>Total</b>	95	25483.16			

# **Figure 1**

## **Temporal changes and the comparative degree of (territorial) centralization**



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