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and Falk Ostermann

## **POLITICIZATION, PARTY POLITICS AND MILITARY MISSIONS**

Deployment Votes in France, Germany, Spain,  
and the United Kingdom

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Abstract

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by Wolfgang Wagner, Anna Herranz-Surrallés, Juliet Kaarbo and Falk Ostermann

This paper examines whether decisions at the core of international security politics, namely decisions on the deployment of military forces, have undergone a process of politicization. It is guided by two interrelated questions, namely a) whether deployment decisions have been politically contested and b) what kind of party-political cleavage has emerged in this process. We examine data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) as well as data that we gathered on parliamentary votes on deployment decisions in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. We find that military deployments have indeed been contested amongst political parties. Further and notwithstanding country-specific peculiarities, we find that the party-political cleavage is by and large captured by the left/right-axis.

*Keywords: party-political contestation, parliamentary vote, foreign policy*

## Zusammenfassung

### **POLITISIERUNG, PARTEIPOLITIK UND MILITÄREINSÄTZE**

Einsatzentscheidungen in Frankreich, Deutschland, Spanien und dem Vereinigten Königreich Großbritannien

von Wolfgang Wagner, Anna Herranz-Surrallés, Juliet Kaarbo und Falk Ostermann

Dieses Arbeitspapier untersucht, ob Entscheidungen über den Einsatz von Streitkräften als Kernbereich internationaler Sicherheitspolitik einem Politisierungsprozess unterworfen sind. Wir benutzen Daten des Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) sowie von uns selbst gesammelte Daten von Parlamentsabstimmungen zu Einsatzentscheidungen in Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Spanien, um zwei Fragen nachzugehen: erstens, ob Einsatzentscheidungen politisch kontrovers waren; und zweitens, welche Art parteipolitischer Auseinandersetzung und Trennungslinien dabei zu erkennen sind. Unsere Ergebnisse zeigen zum einen, dass militärische Einsatzentscheidungen tatsächlich parteipolitisch umstritten waren. Zum anderen wird trotz verbleibender länderspezifischer Unterschiede deutlich, dass sich diese Politisierung größtenteils an einer parteipolitischen links-rechts-Achse entlang bewegt.

*Stichwörter: Militäreinsätze, politische Parteien, Politisierung, Parlamentee*

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Scholars of international relations have noted a trend towards politicization (Zürn 2014). Decisions are no longer simply accepted, but instead are increasingly salient and publicly contested. The politicization and partisanship of international politics has been best documented in the areas of trade, development, environment and public health. In this paper, we examine whether decisions at the core of international security politics, namely decisions on the deployment of military forces, have undergone a process of politicization as well. Our analysis focuses on European democracies. It is guided by two interrelated questions, namely a) whether deployment decisions have been politically contested and b) what kind of party-political cleavages have emerged in this process.

We use two types of data to examine whether and in what way the deployment of military forces has been contested amongst political parties: first, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) provides us with data on experts' estimates of political parties' positions in 31 European countries. In particular, we use the two latest CHES rounds in 2010 and 2014 which include a question on peace and security missions (Bakker et al. 2015a). Second, we have gathered data on parliamentary votes on deployment decisions in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom (Section 4). Both types of data capture the entire spectrum of military deployments ranging from peacekeeping and observer missions to actual combat. Both types of data suit this paper's interest in political parties' *general* position on military missions, rather than their position on specific deployments. Whereas the CHES data come with the advantage of covering a large number of countries, the voting data provide us with further insights into the degree of contestation between and within political parties. Before we turn to data analysis, we discuss why we might expect party political differences over the use of military force.

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<sup>1</sup> Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the workshop "*Legislatures and foreign affairs: political parties, committees, and individual MPs*" at the University of Tampere, 14 April, 2016, at the "Research on International Security and Conflict"-seminar at the University of Amsterdam on 20 April 2016, at the convention of the Central and Eastern European International Studies Association in Ljubljana on 24 June 2016 and at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin on 28 July 2016. The authors are grateful to Sebastian Bödeker, Brian Burgoon, Aron Buzogany, Pieter de Wilde, Benjamin Faude, Piet Hays Gries, Dieuwertje Kuijpers, Matthias Kranke, Onawa Lacewell, Thomas Malang, Kai Oppermann, Trineke Palm, Brian Rathbun, Christian Rauh, Tapio Raunio, Mathew Stephen, Alexandros Tokhi, Paul van Hooft, Gijsbert van Iterson Scholten, Mariken van der Velden and Michael Zürn for useful comments and suggestions.

## MILITARY MISSIONS AND CONTESTATION AMONG POLITICAL PARTIES<sup>2</sup>

Traditionally, neither students of international relations nor their colleagues in comparative politics expect a great deal of party political contestation over foreign policy. International Relations scholars are trained to think in terms of 'national interests', rather than conceptualizing competing party political visions over foreign policy. Comparative politics scholars emphasize that the emergence of political parties is best understood as a response to domestic conflict (Lipset and Rokkan 1967), whereas conflicts over foreign and security politics do not figure prominently in explanations of party systems (with Ireland as a noteworthy exception). With a view to military missions, sociologists of conflict have pointed out that group cohesion indeed increases in the face of an external threat. According to Georg Simmel, 'war with the outside is sometimes the last chance for a state, ridden with inner antagonisms to overcome these antagonisms, or else break up indefinitely' (1955:93; see also Levine & Campbell 1972; and Huddy 2013). Students of foreign policy have confirmed that international crises bring about, at least temporarily, a "rally-around-the-flag" effect (Waltz 1967:273; Oneal et al 1996) that makes criticism of the government look inappropriate. In a similar vein, the Copenhagen School in Security Studies propose that the "securitization" of an issue – i.e. its framing as a matter of security – takes it beyond "normal politics". Taken together, the "politics stops at the water's edge"-paradigm suggests that dissenting votes on deployment decisions are rather unlikely as such votes may transcend party politics and demonstrate national unity instead.

More recently, however, research on foreign policy has suggested that foreign policy is indeed an important area of disagreement among political parties (see, for example, Kaarbo 1996, 2012; Thérien & Noël 2000; Ozkececi-Taner 2005; Schuster & Maier 2006; Chryssogelos 2015; Joly & Dandoy 2016). Students of political parties and security policy have suggested three rationales why political parties differ on military missions. First, foreign policies may impact *domestic policy programs* because they compete for the same resources. Expenditure for the military competes with spending on other issues such as health care, education and social programs. For this reason, Koch and Sullivan (2010:619) argue that parties that promote the welfare state tend to oppose large armies, expensive military procurement as well as the actual use of armed force abroad.

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<sup>2</sup> This section builds on Wagner *et al.* 2017.

Second, political parties may have *genuine foreign policy differences* that have no discernible link to domestic politics. For example, Brian Rathbun (2004:19) argues that some parties believe in what Robert Jervis called the 'deterrence' model of international politics whereas others subscribe to what he dubs the 'spiral' model. According to the former, interests are best guarded by military strength and resolve; in contrast, the latter stresses empathy and 'security dilemma sensitivity' (Jervis 1976). Whereas the former translates into more 'hawkish' policies, the latter implies more 'dovish' ones (see also Schuster & Maier 2006; Williams 2014).

Third, foreign policies may result from the same *core values and principled beliefs* that also inspire domestic policies. Rathbun suggests that liberty and equality are such core values and that 'partisan debates can generally be reduced to fundamental disputes about the importance of equality and liberty, whether at home or abroad' (2004:2). For example, parties emphasizing equality are concerned about minorities and the underprivileged and thus favour the welfare state as well as interventions on behalf of minorities and underprivileged abroad. Taken together, this leads us to expect that party political support for military missions differs systematically along a *left/right* axis (Laver & Budge 1993; Budge et al. 2001; Clare 2010; Wagner et al. 2017).

Previous research on the influence of a government's left/right orientation on the propensity to use military force has proceeded on the assumption that the relation would be linear (see, for example, Palmer *et al.* 2004). However, it is not obvious that a radical-right political party would be more supportive of military missions than a conservative or Christian Democratic party. The former may score higher on a general preparedness to use military force but it may also be more hesitant to use such force for any goal other than territorial defence (see the country studies in Liang 2007; Chryssogelos 2010; Verbeek & Zaslove 2015).

Finally, 'wars of choice' may even transcend the left/right logic entirely. If military force is justified by governments as 'saving strangers' (Wheeler 2000) from state-sponsored violence (as in Kosovo 1999 and in Libya 2011), to topple a dictatorship (as in Iraq in 2003) or to support a state and nation-building process (as in Afghanistan from 2001 on), the justifications resonate with 'post-materialist' values that are characteristic of a cultural cleavage, rather than the socio-economic one. In exploring this alternative hypothesis, we make use of the new politics dimension, conceptualized by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Carole Wilson (2002) that ranges from 'green/alternative/libertarian' (GAL) to 'traditional/authoritarian/nationalist' (TAN) party positions. For example, this GAL/TAN scale is found to capture the structure of contestation on European integration better than the traditional left-right scale (*ibid*). An alternative expectation

therefore is that party political support for military missions differs systematically along a *green/alternative/libertarian* (GAL) to *traditional/authoritarian/nationalist* (TAN) dimension.

The next section problematizes and investigates the nature of the relationship between political parties' positions on peace and security missions. We explore both left/right and GAL/TAN dimensions and the differences between party families' support for military missions.

### **MAPPING POLITICAL PARTIES' POSITIONS ON MILITARY MISSIONS**

In this section we examine data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). In 2014, the CHES asked more than 300 experts to map the positions of 268 political parties in 31 European countries. Figure 1 visualizes political parties' support for peace and security missions<sup>3</sup> and their position on a left/right axis in 2014.<sup>4</sup>

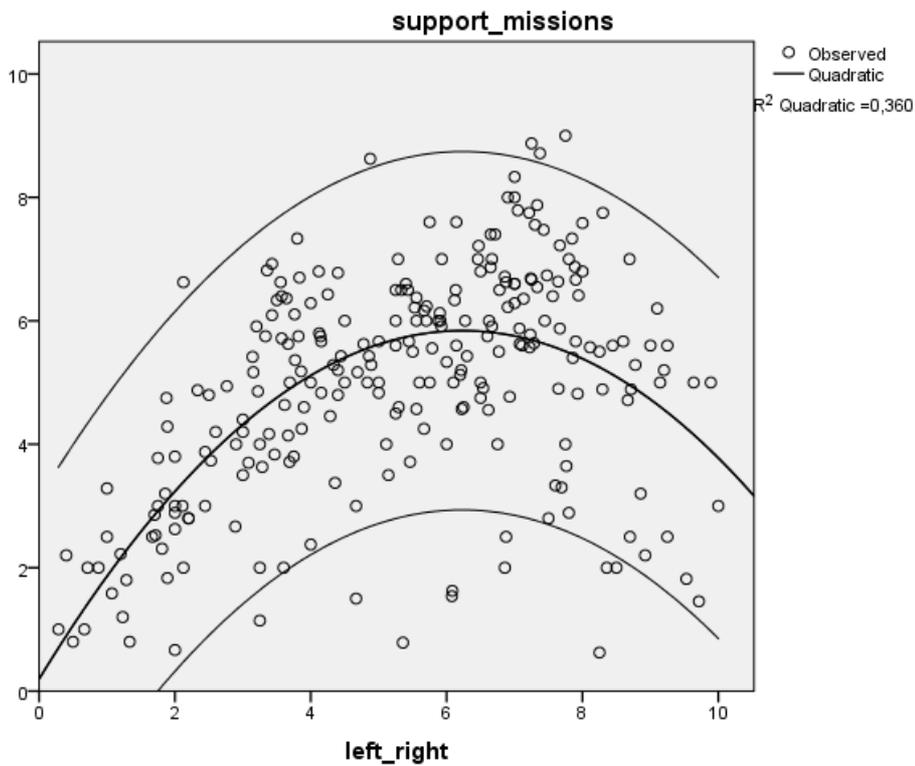
With regard to politicization and partisanship, Figure 1 clearly demonstrates that peace and security missions are contested. Considerable numbers of parties can be found amongst the supporters (6 and above on the y-axis) as well as amongst the opponents (4 and below on the y-axis). A comparison of average values with CHES 2010 data reveals that the average level of support has remained almost unchanged (5,02 in 2014 vs. 5,01 in 2010).

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<sup>3</sup> Under the heading 'position towards international security and peace keeping missions', experts are asked to determine a political party's position on a scale from 0 ('strongly favours COUNTRY troop deployment') to 10 ('strongly opposes COUNTRY troop deployment'). For this article we have reversed the scale and re-coded the 'international\_security' variable into a support\_mission variable that ranges from 0 (strongly opposes) to 10 (strongly favours).

<sup>4</sup> 0 indicates extreme left and 10 extreme right. We have reversed the scale used by the CHES so 0 means that a country's troop deployment is strongly opposed whereas 10 means it is strongly favoured (y-axis). It is important to note that the parties plotted in 2014 are not entirely identical with those in 2010: some may not have been re-elected into parliament while others may have been newly established. To maximize comparability over time, however, parties from Cyprus, Malta and Luxemburg, which were included in the 2014 survey, were manually excluded because these three countries were not part of the 2010 survey, either. Figure 1 thus plots 253 political parties in 28 countries.

**Figure 1:** Mapping of political parties' positions on military missions and on a left/right-scale, 2014



$$R^2 = 0,36; p < 0,000$$

Because the CHES data gathered political parties' positions on numerous issues, we can compare the variance of positions on peace and security missions with those on other issues. With a score of 3,4, variance on peace and security missions is lower than variance on environmental issues (4.2), redistribution (4,5), civil liberties/law and order (5,5), immigration (5,7) or social lifestyle (7,9). This indicates that peace and security missions are less contested amongst political parties than are many other political issues.

The CHES data are particularly useful to examine our second question, namely what kind of party-political cleavage has emerged. In a previous study, we used data from the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) to demonstrate that party political contestation over military missions follows a curvilinear left/right pattern (Wagner *et al.* 2017). The 2014 CHES data allow us to examine whether our previous findings hold for 2014 as well. Figure 1 demonstrates that they do. In terms of the left/right cleavage, the correlation is indeed curvilinear: using a quadratic

model, the correlation is statistically significant at the 0,001 level with a  $r^2$  of 0,36 (2014).<sup>5</sup> Support for peace and security missions increases as one moves from the left to the centre-right and declines again towards the radical right.

We also examine whether the GAL/TAN scale captures party political contestation over military missions.<sup>6</sup> As in 2010, the GAL/TAN scale is also highly significant but it explains less variation than the left/right scale (for 2014,  $r^2$  equals 0,15). Compared to 2010, the differences in variation explained have declined (0,36/0,15 for 2014 vs. 0,35/0,11). Additional data from future surveys is needed to judge whether this is a significant trend.

Finally, we draw on the notion of party families to cluster parties into groups with shared core values and interests. We examine whether there are significant differences across party families. We exclude the 'Confessional/Protestant', 'Agrarian' and 'Regionalist/Ethnic' party families as well as all parties that are coded as not belonging to any family. Furthermore, we merged the party families 'Conservatives' and 'Christian Democrats' into one category because they occupy comparable positions on both the left-right scale as well as on military missions, and they do not compete with each other in any of the countries studied in depth below. For most parts of our analysis, therefore, we zoom in on the differences between the main party families, namely *Conservatives/Christian Democrats, Socialists, Liberals, Greens, Radical Left* and *Radical Right*.

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<sup>5</sup> A linear model is also statistically highly significant at the 0,001 level but the  $r^2$  is much lower (0,165 in 2014).

<sup>6</sup> In order to map political parties' position on a left/right axis, experts are asked 'Please tick the box that best describes each party's overall ideology on a scale ranging from 0 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right). On GAL/TAN, experts are asked: 'Parties can be classified in terms of their views on democratic freedoms and rights. Libertarian or post-materialist parties favour expanded personal freedoms, for example, access to abortion, active euthanasia, same-sex marriage, or greater democratic participation. Traditional or authoritarian parties often reject these ideas; they value order, tradition, and stability, and believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues' (Bakker et al. 2015b: 144). 0 indicates extreme GAL and 10 extreme TAN.

**Figure 2:** Boxplot of party families' support for peace and security missions

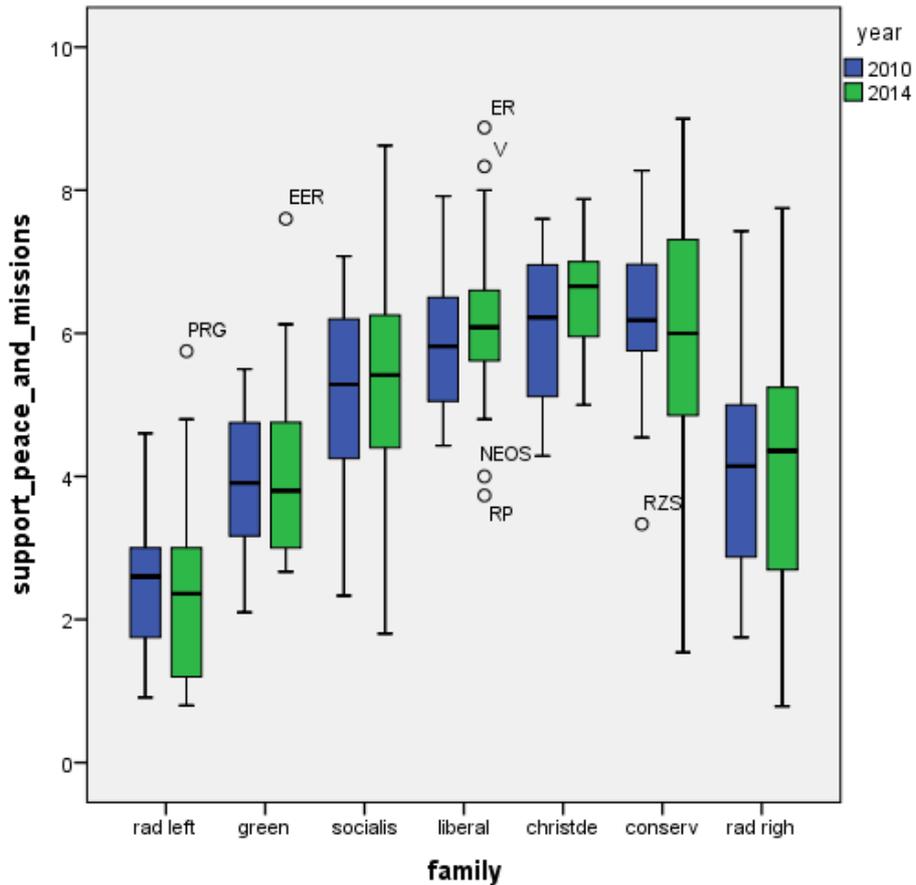


Figure 2 and Table 1 examine differences in support for military missions across the main party families for 2010 and 2014.<sup>7</sup> As the boxplot visualizes and as the ANOVA analysis demonstrates, party families systematically differ in the degree to which they favour their country's participation in peace and security missions. As a comparison of the standard deviations shows, differences within most party families increased, thus pointing to higher levels of contestation. The boxplot further confirms the analysis above: support for peace and security missions follows a curvilinear pattern and is lowest amongst radical-left parties. Green parties are more supportive than radical-left parties, and Socialist parties are more supportive than Greens and radical-left ones. Support is highest amongst Liberals and Christian Democrats/Conservatives. The Radical Right is about as supportive as the Greens. Although the boxplot shows considerable

<sup>7</sup> Data on party families are made available in the "trendfiles", which, in contrast to the data used for Figures 1 and 2, exclude political parties from Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. In addition, political parties from Cyprus, Luxemburg and Malta are missing for 2010. To maximize comparability, we manually excluded them for 2014 as well.

variation within party families, the ANOVA analysis reported below demonstrates that differences between party families are statistically highly significant. The data also suggests that the gap between the Radical Left as the main party family opposing peace and security missions and the parties of the centre is widening, rather than narrowing down.

**Table 1:** ANOVA analysis of support for peace and security missions across party families

Family		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Radical Right	2014	20	4,14	1,836
	2010	21	4,17	1,540
Conservatives	2014	35	5,87	1,824
	2010	27	6,28	1,113
Christian Democrats	2014	16	6,51	0,778
	2010	16	6,14	1,046
Liberal	2014	36	6,18	1,082
	2010	35	5,87	0,941
Socialist	2014	35	5,34	1,422
	2010	29	5,21	1,324
Green	2014	19	4,12	1,307
	2010	17	3,92	0,948
Radical Left	2014	22	2,49	1,359
	2010	21	2,58	1,003

p<0.00 between-group comparison for both 2010 and 2014

**DEPLOYMENT VOTES IN PARLIAMENT**

Building on our analyses of the CHES data, in this section, we assess parliamentary votes on deployment decisions to examine whether they have been politically contested and what kind of party-political cleavage has emerged in this process. We collected data on a total of 183 roll-call votes<sup>8</sup> in plenaries for the period between 1991 and August 2016 in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom (Tables 3 to 6 list the specific votes per country).<sup>9</sup> We first examine the annual number of votes over the period 1991-2015 as an indicator of politicization. We then examine the degree of cross-party consensus and contestation through an *agreement index*. We subsequently turn to analyse the share of no-votes per party and legislature in the four

<sup>8</sup> Strictly speaking, the votes we study are not roll-call votes because individual MPs are not called to indicate their vote (as practiced in the US Congress). Instead, individual MPs' votes are usually recorded electronically or by way of voting cards (for an overview see Saalfeld 1995).

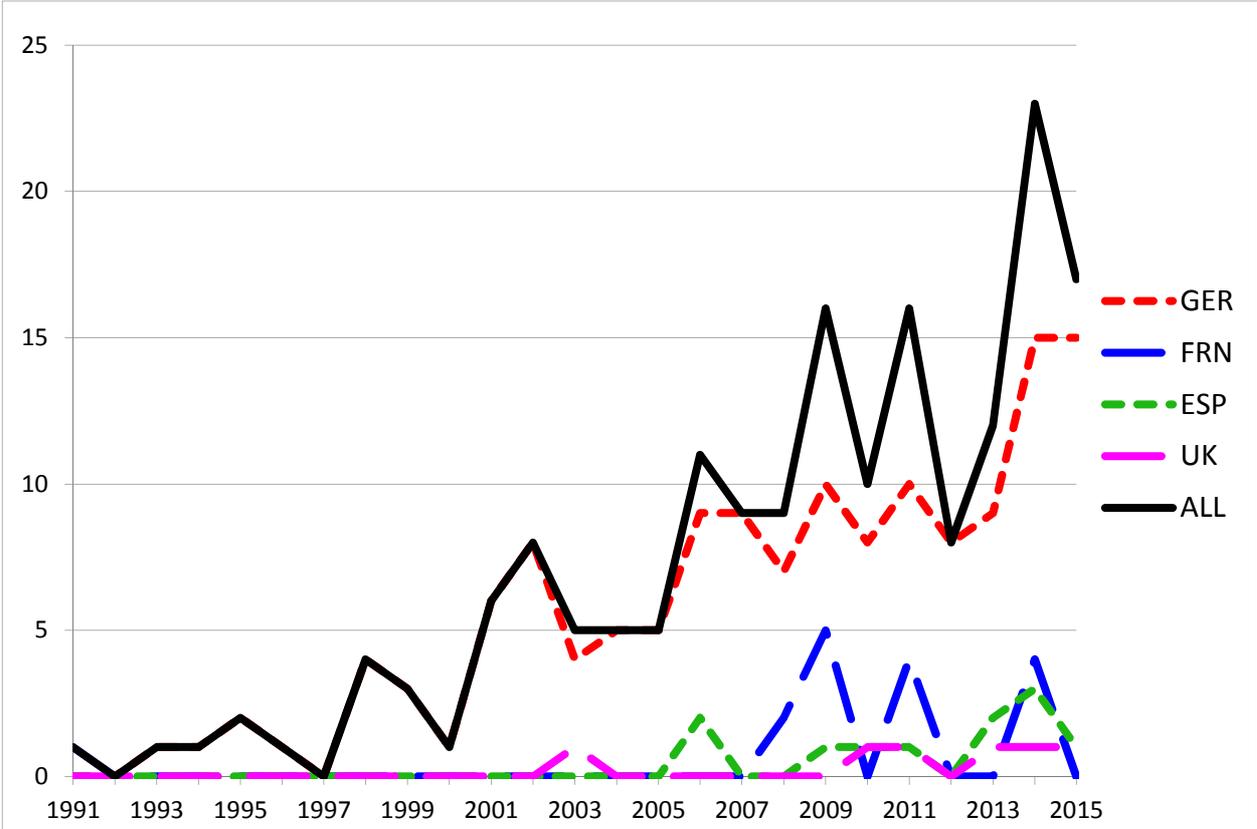
<sup>9</sup> All data can be retrieved from [www.deploymentvotewatch.eu](http://www.deploymentvotewatch.eu).

countries under study to find out whether there is any common pattern of party-political contestation. Finally, we discuss more in detail the deployment votes in each country. This allows us to explore the commonalities and country-specific differences across the votes and missions.

**Rising numbers of deployment votes**

One indication of the politicization of military deployments is the growing number of deployment votes in the four countries for which we collected data. As Figure 3 shows, the vast majority of these votes have been held in the German Bundestag but the overall upward trend is not limited to Germany: In the UK, deployment votes have become more common in the wake of the 2003 Iraq War (Kaarbo & Kenealy 2017) and have even led some to see this as a new convention (Strong 2014; Mello 2017). In Spain and in France, deployment votes have been introduced via a new deployment law (Spain in 2005) and a constitutional reform (France in 2008) respectively (see below).

**Figure 3:** Number of annual deployment votes, 1991-2015



The growing number of deployment votes indicates that deployment of military forces is not considered as “dictated” by international events but as a political decision that requires public justification. Even when votes are not constitutionally required, parliaments are increasingly

seeking to extend their role and PMs are feeling the political need for the legitimacy of parliamentary approval.

### **Agreement and contestation in parliament**

Another indicator for the politicization of deployment decisions is the degree of dissent recorded in deployment votes. Especially for MPs from parties of the opposition, voting against a government proposal is anything but unusual – as long as domestic politics is concerned. To investigate the degree of dissent, we calculate an agreement index (AI) that Hix, Noury and Roland (2005) originally developed to measure party cohesion in the European Parliament.<sup>10</sup> The AI equals 1 when all MPs vote together and it equals 0 when they are equally divided between the voting options. This index has become an established measure to assess the unity of groups within legislatures – mostly political parties –, but in studies of the European Parliament also members of the same country. To our knowledge, the AI has not been used to measure degrees of consensus within a parliament as a whole,<sup>11</sup> most likely because the recording of individual votes already is a sign of contestation; uncontroversial parliamentary decisions are often adopted without the time-consuming recording of individual votes. Moreover, parliaments differ enormously in the ways they vote, with some often recording votes and others doing so only rarely (Saalfeld 1995). Hence, recorded votes may be a very unrepresentative sample of all votes in a parliament (Carruba, Gabel & Hug 2008). Yet for the purposes of this study, the AI allows an assessment of the degree of dissent on all military mission votes in our four countries and a comparison with the degree of dissent on other matters.

Our study of roll call votes on military missions shows that degrees of politicization of military missions differ across the four countries under study: whereas decisions in Spain are highly consensual, those in the UK have been highly controversial. With the exception of the Cameron II cabinet, levels of politicization of military missions in all four countries are clearly lower than those for other legislative business.<sup>12</sup> Agreement tends to be higher when left parties that tend to vote against deployments are in government.

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$$AI_i = \frac{\max\{Y_i, N_i, A_i\} - \frac{1}{2}[(Y_i + N_i + A_i) - \max\{Y_i, N_i, A_i\}]}{(Y_i + N_i + A_i)}$$

<sup>10</sup> The precise formula is:

<sup>11</sup> Students of the US Congress typically measure bipartisanship as ‘the extent to which majorities or near majorities of both parties in Congress vote together’ (Kupchan & Trubowitz 2007:11).

<sup>12</sup> For the calculation of the Agreement index for recorded votes on other business, data on Germany and

**Table 2: Agreement Indexes**

Country	term	Votes on military missions		Other Votes	
		Agreement Index	n	Agreement Index	n
France (only AN)	Mitterrand	0,89	1	<u>n.a.</u>	<u>n.a.</u>
	Sarkozy	0,66	2	0,51	694
	Hollande	0,94	4	0,54	1267
Germany	Kohl III	0,62	2	0,48	127
	Kohl IV	0,70	5	0,41	175
	<u>Schröder I</u>	0,82	16	0,53	147
	<u>Schröder II</u>	0,95	16	0,42	86
	Merkel I	0,78	32	0,69	144
	Merkel II	0,69	38	0,42	237
Spain	Merkel III	0,77	40	0,71	114
	Zapatero I	0,96	1	0,73	107
	Zapatero II	0,98	3	0,68	83
UK	<u>Rajoy I</u>	0,92	6	0,54	134
	Blair	0,6	1	0,55	1246
	Cameron I	0,76	4	0,5	1226
	Cameron II	0,46	1	0,48	319

### Party political cleavages in deployment votes

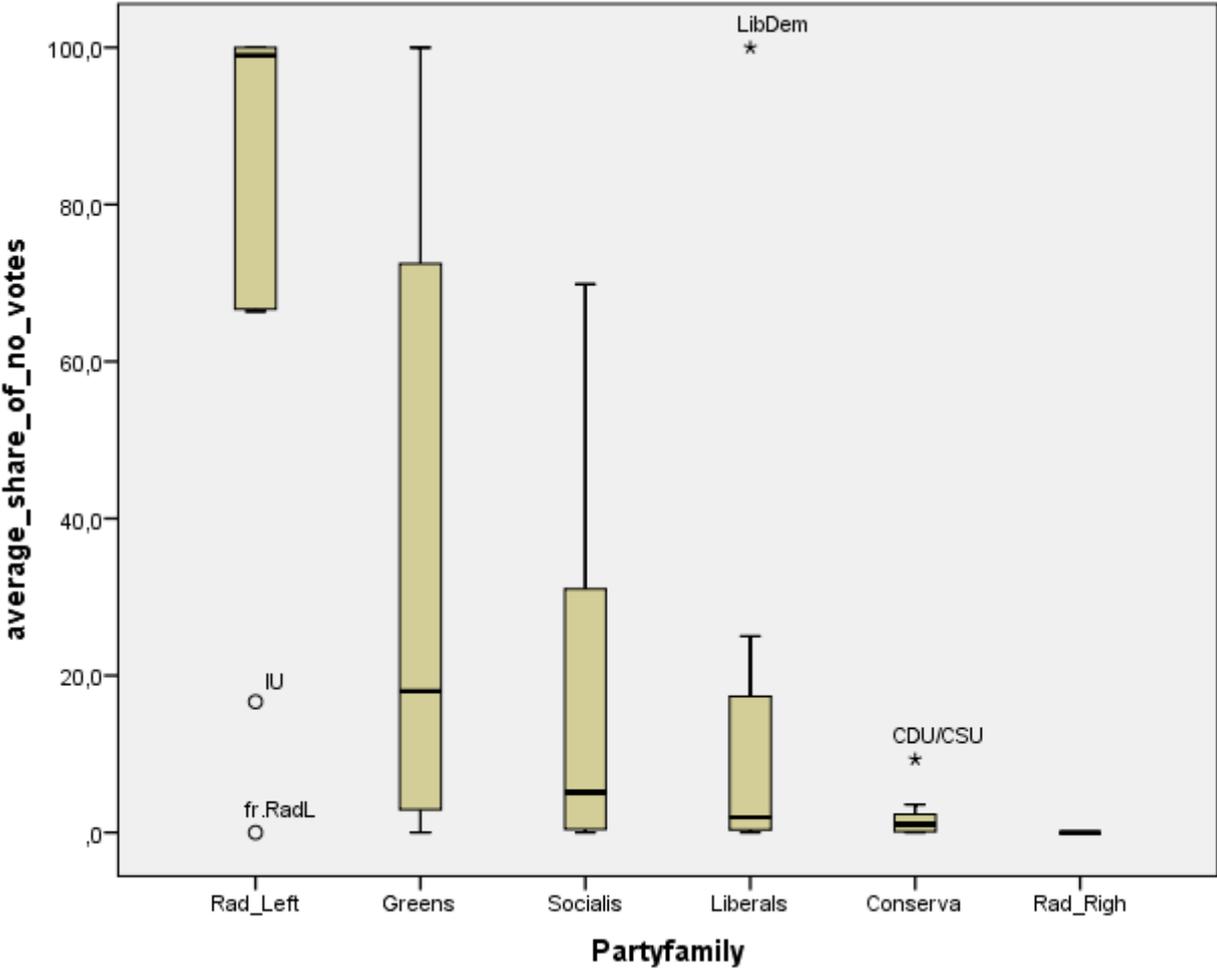
The actual votes confirm the importance of the left/right-cleavage. Whereas the Chapel Hill Expert Survey data pointed to a curvilinear relationship, the roll call votes in these four countries suggest a linear relationship. As Figure 4 demonstrates, the average share of no-votes is highest among parties of the Radical Left and lowest among those of the Radical Right, followed closely by Christian-Democrats and Conservatives with Greens, Socialists and Liberals in between. However, the boxes and whiskers also indicate that there is a considerable spread: radical-left, Green and liberal parties have all voted both unanimously for and against military deployments throughout a particular legislature. Additionally, the Radical Right is only

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on France are taken from the homepages of the Bundestag ([https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/datenhandbuch/datenhandbuch\\_archiv](https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/datenhandbuch/datenhandbuch_archiv), last accessed 14 July 2016) and the *Assemblée nationale* (<http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/scrutins/liste/%28legislature%29/14>, last accessed September 2016), data on the UK from Firth & Spirling (2003) and from publicwhip (<http://www.publicwhip.org.uk>; last accessed September 2016). Because voting data for the Spanish *Congreso* had to be imputed manually, we decided to limit our sample to votes on adopted legislative acts and to exclude votes on amendments and non-legislative business. The data were retrieved from <http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso/Iniciativas/LeyesAprob>, last accessed 16 September 2016).

represented in France and in one government in the UK in our sample, and with very little votes in both cases.

**Figure 4:** Average share of no-votes across party families in the four countries under study

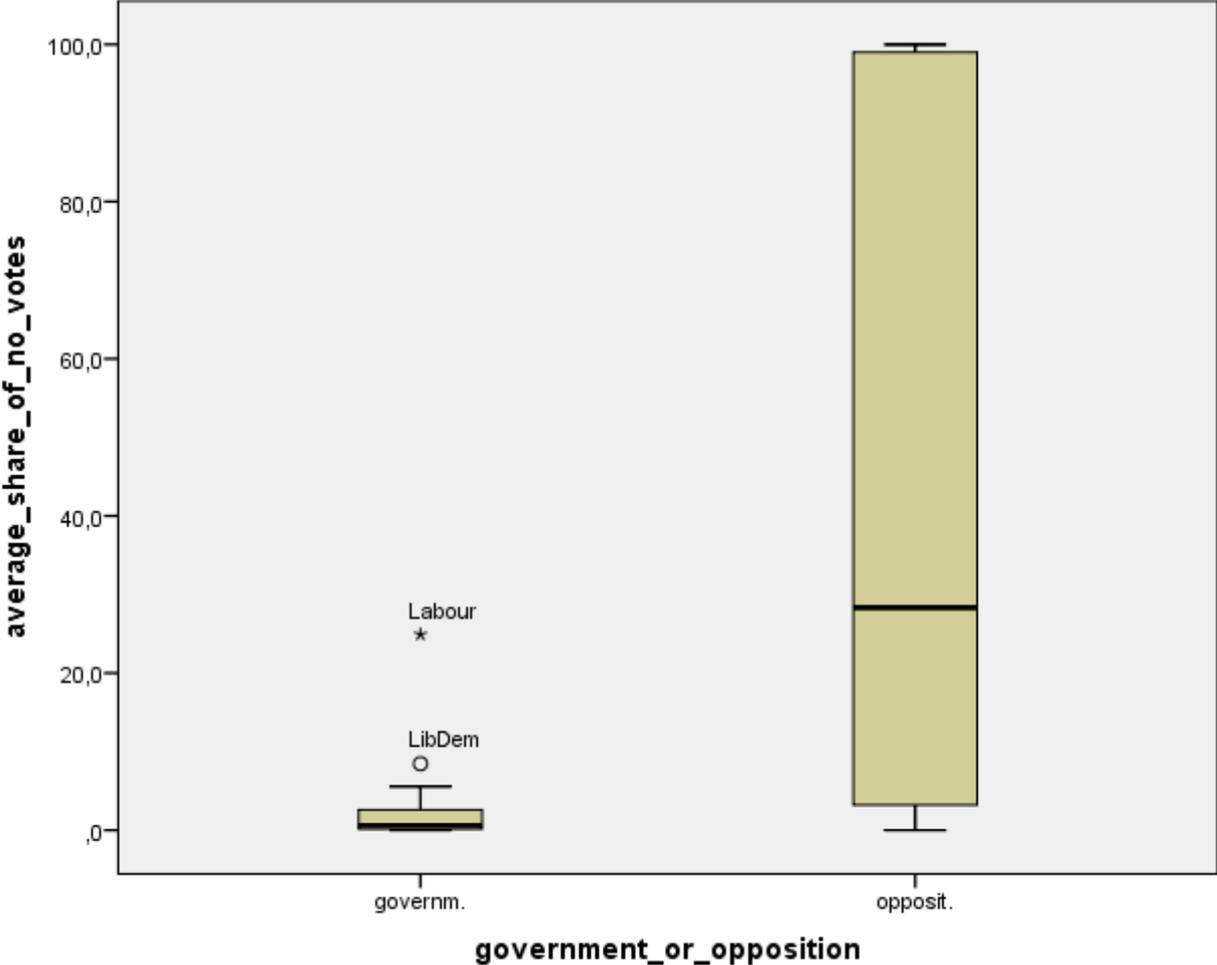


In a study on voting in the foreign affairs committee of the German Bundestag, Leuffen and Malang (2011) argued that MPs' voting is influenced by their affiliation with either the governing majority or the opposition. As Figure 5 demonstrates, our data confirm that membership in government has a statistically significant ( $p < 0,001$ ) impact on the number of no-votes: the average number of no-votes per party per legislature drops from 42,8% (in opposition) to 2,4% (in government).<sup>13</sup> Outliers all come from the UK: In 2003, 84 out of 338 Labour MPs voted against their own government on the Iraq war. Whilst part of the Cameron/Clegg government, Liberal Democrats mostly voted with the government but the average number of no-votes is driven up

<sup>13</sup> This test includes lower chambers only and thus excludes the French *Sénat*.

by 10 out of 42 Liberal Democrats voting against their own government on a possible Syrian intervention in 2013.

**Figure 5:** Comparison of average share of no-votes between parties in government and parties in opposition in the four countries under study



This begs the question whether the requirements of governing make party-political differences melt away entirely. An ANOVA analysis of the average share of no-votes across party families in government indeed suggests that differences between parties are not significant. It should be noted, however, that there is a strong selection effect: by way of intra-coalition (or, in case of single-party governments, intra-party) bargaining, parties in government can prevent proposals to deploy troops from getting on the parliamentary agenda in the first place, or they may trade their support for concessions on the actual mandate of the deployment. In other words: parties in government may vote in favour of deployments because they managed to pre-select only deployments they support.

## Country Studies

In this section, we analyse voting data available for Germany, France, Spain, and the UK. Together these four countries account for approximately two thirds of defence spending in the EU. Across the four countries under study, the practice of voting on military missions differs enormously. Whereas MPs in Germany voted more than 140 times, British MPs did so only six times, indicating widely differing interpretations of the circumstances under which a vote would be necessary or politically desirable. We now provide an overview of votes on military missions per country and then turn to interesting differences and commonalities among them.

### France

The French parliament was only endowed with voting rights on military operations (*opérations extérieures* – OPEX) through the constitutional reform of 2008. Nevertheless, in January 1991, President Mitterrand decided to have a parliament vote on the French contribution to the Gulf War even though military deployments were the exclusive competence of the President. The new formulation of Article 35 of the French constitution now endows parliament with the right to vote on the extension of military operations if they reach beyond four months (for a discussion see Ostermann 2017). As of 31 August 2016, almost a dozen votes have been taken for missions to Iraq (1991), Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Kosovo, Lebanon, Chad, Libya, Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR), and against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

**Table 3:** Analysis of Roll Call Votes in France

Presi- dency <sup>1</sup>	Num- ber of votes (Ass. Nat., Sénat)		Share of no votes (ave- rage) <sup>2</sup>	AI	'No'-votes per political party family: absolute number and share within party family (both on average)											
					Radical Left		Greens		Socialists		Liberals		Conservat ives		Radical Right	
					total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share
<b>Mitter- rand<sup>3</sup></b>	1	A	7,6%	0,89	26	100%***	not in parliament		7	2,59%*	4	3,1% ***	4	3,2	not in parliament	
<b>Sarkozy (2007- 12)</b>	2	A	21,27%	0,66	15	66,4%	2,5	75%	88	48,7%	0	0%*	1	0,3% *	not in parliament	
	7	S	10,83%	0,83	12,1	46,1%	2,5	50%	43, 5	50%	0	0%*	0	0%*	not in parliament	
<b>Holland e (since 2012)</b>	4	A	0,99%	0,94	0,25	2,3%***	0	0%**	0,5	0,19%*	0	0%	3,25	2,09 %	0	0%
	4	S	0,22%	0,91	0	0%***	0	0%**	0	0%*	0,7 5	2,42 %	0	0%	0	0%*

\* = in government      \*\* = temporally in government      \*\*\* = partially in government

As to the distribution of no-votes, we can recognize big differences between the conservative-liberal presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy and the socialist-left ones of Mitterrand and Hollande. Mitterrand's decision to contribute to the 1991 Gulf War found broad support. The same holds for the missions in Mali, the CAR and against Daesh in Iraq and Syria during Hollande's presidential term. In contrast, during Sarkozy's presidency, a left/right cleavage is more clearly discernible with considerable numbers of MPs from the radical left, the Greens and the Socialist Party voting against. As expected, these numbers decrease considerably the further we move to the centre and the political right. During Sarkozy's presidency, the Socialists are split in two, while liberal and conservative lawmakers generally support operations with only zero to 3,2 per cent of no-votes throughout all three presidencies.

Contrary to the curvilinear support for peace and security missions that the Chapel Hill Expert Survey found across the political spectrum, the *Front national* voted in support of extending the mandates. However, these results must be taken with a pinch of salt, as they are only based on a very small number of votes and parliamentarians alike.

A closer look at the Socialist vote reveals big differences across military missions: whereas 175 Socialists in the *Assemblée nationale* and 87 socialist senators voted against the Afghanistan mission extension in 2008, only one Socialist in the *Assemblée nationale* voted against Libya in 2011, and no senator at all. This opposition can be explained with doubts about the usefulness of the Afghanistan mission and the widening of its mandate, which were further aggravated by the death of ten French soldiers in an ambush in August 2008, shortly before the vote took place. Finally, the decision of Sarkozy to expand the French ISAF forces by 1.000 troops (what comes close to half of the former force size) without prior consultation of parliament strongly angered the opposition. With regard to the Greens, all representatives and senators voted against the Afghanistan mission; for the Libyan mission, the vote was split 2:2 in the *Assemblée nationale*, whereas all Green senators supported the mission or abstained.<sup>14</sup>

The French case suggests that the government/opposition logic partly supersedes the left/right cleavage. For some missions such as in Mali and against Daesh, however, parties across the entire political spectrum are highly supportive, indicating an at least partial consensus about the use of force in French foreign policy. The voting patterns also indicate, however, that

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<sup>14</sup> The green Anny Poursinoff had been elected in a partial election in the meantime. On Libya see Ostermann, 2016.

politicization is on the rise. When five missions got formally extended in January 2009 (the second time only that such a vote took place after the constitutional changes in 2008), for instance, the board of presidents of the *Assemblée nationale* did not even opt for a roll-call vote but for a mere show of hands, whereas the *Sénat* already took a roll call. All later extension votes, however, were conducted by roll call in both chambers. Additionally, the Socialists and Greens in the *Sénat* did not participate at all in the votes on the same five extensions, as the procedure has been pushed swiftly through the parliamentary agenda without sufficient time for deliberation. This suggests that there is increasing political awareness as to the need to discuss missions sufficiently.

## Germany

In a landmark ruling, the Federal Constitutional Court in 1994 declared that deployments of the *Bundeswehr* require the prior approval of the *Bundestag* (see also for the following Paulus & Jacobs 2012). Since then, the *Bundestag* has voted more than 140 times on Germany's contributions to military missions. In 2004, the *Bundestag* adopted a deployment law that codifies the then established practice. In a series of further rulings on borderline cases, the Federal Constitutional Court has followed a "parliamentary-friendly" interpretation and established a low threshold for what requires parliamentary approval. The high number of votes results from a low threshold above which parliamentary approval is required and the requirement to approve not only initial deployments but also their extension every year.

**Table 4:** Analysis of Roll Call Votes in Germany

Legislative term	No of votes	Average percentage of 'no' votes in parliament	AI	'No'-votes per political party family: absolute number and share within party family (both on average)									
				Radical Left		Greens		Socialists		Liberals		Conservatives	
				total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share
<b>Kohl III</b> (1990-1994)	2	22,2%	0,62	12	100%	4	100%	99	56,3%	0,5	0,8%*	0	0%*
<b>Kohl IV</b> (1994-1998)	5	17,5%	0,70	26,4	98,3%	20,6	44,9%	63	26,3%	0,2	0,6%*	0,4	0,2%*
<b>Schröder I</b> (1998-2002)	16	10,4%	0,82	31,2	99%	2,1	4,7%*	2	0,7%*	5,9	0,2%	21,8	9,3%
<b>Schröder II</b> (2002-2005)	16	3,0%	0,95	2	100%	0,6	1,2%*	0,1	0%*	8,8	20,8%	5,3	2,5%
<b>Merkel I</b> (2005-2009)	32	12,8%	0,78	43,3	92,2%	7,5	15,6%	9,7	4,7*	7,8	13,9%	2,7	1,3*
<b>Merkel II</b> (2009-2013)	38	17,8%	0,69	63,7	99%	11,3	18%	24,8	18,9%	0,5	0,5%*	0,7	0,3%*
<b>Merkel III</b> (2013-2016)	40	13,6%	0,77	56,5	99,2%	16,4	28,3%	6,5	5,6%*	not in parliament		0,2	0,1%*

\* = in government

The data in Table 3 are in line with the findings of the CHES survey: Support for military missions grows as we move from left to right. In contrast to France and the UK, however, there has never been any representative of a radical right party in the *Bundestag*. As a consequence, we cannot say whether support for military missions is curvilinear, as CHES finds, or linear, as the few votes in France and the UK suggest.

For the parties represented in parliament, a left/right pattern is very clear. As in France and Spain, the Radical Left opposes military deployments most consistently. Exceptions are the 5 MPs of *Die Linke* who voted in favour of the Bundeswehr's participation in the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons in 2014 and the 10 to 15 MPs who abstained in votes on the Bundeswehr's deployment to Darfur and South Sudan.

The Greens were the traditional home of the German peace movement and initially shared the Radical Left's principled opposition to military missions. Even though the Bundeswehr's early deployments were non-combat missions, the Greens consistently voted against them during Helmut Kohl's third government between 1990 and 1994. Starting after the 1994 elections, however, the Greens embarked on a painful process of recalibrating their position on the use of force (Vollmer 1998). Spurred by future Foreign Minister Fischer, this process was highly conflictual but also signalled to the Social Democrats that a possible coalition would be feasible. When in government between 1998 and 2005, the share of no-votes dropped indeed but remained consistently above the share amongst Social Democrats. Back in opposition (from 2005 on), the share of no-votes rose again but not to the level of pre-government period. A closer look shows that the Greens are especially divided over the Afghanistan missions. At the same time, their opposition against the Bundeswehr's contribution to the EU-led maritime operation against human trafficking and their support for the missions in Darfur, South Sudan, Bosnia and Kosovo has been unanimous.

Segments of the Social Democrats were almost as closely affiliated with the peace movement as the Greens. However, the 'pacifist' wing of the SPD was always outnumbered by a pragmatic majority that preferred diplomacy over the use of force but did not oppose force under all circumstances. By and large, therefore, the Social Democrats' share of no-votes moves in parallel to the Greens' but on a generally lower level. A turning point was the 2001 vote on "Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)" that Schröder linked to a motion of confidence, thereby disciplining his own party to vote unanimously in favour of a mission that many MPs supported only lukewarm. However, the opposition to OEF remained and the Social Democrats resumed voting against it once back in opposition (with shares of no-votes between 100% in 2009 and 2010 and 98,5% in 2011 and 2012).

Christian Democrats and Liberals were overall supportive of military missions. Of course, both parties voted against OEF when it was tied to the vote of confidence in Schröder (which explains the outlier position of the CDU/CSU in Figure 4 above). Apart from the 2001 OEF vote, there was some dissent on the mission to Macedonia in 2001 (61 no votes) and the DR Congo in 2003 (26 no votes). For the Liberals, the major exemption to the rule of supporting Bundeswehr deployments was their opposition to a German contribution to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) because of a possible conflict with Israel.

For all parties under discussion, being in government or in opposition made a big difference.

However, the government/opposition logic does not supersede the left/right cleavage entirely. When in government, the share of no votes never surpassed 1,5% for the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, whereas for Social Democrats and Greens it was above 4% in half of the cases.

## **Spain**

The Spanish Congress has traditionally been considered a weak parliament, given the political culture of “presidentialism” (Montabes 2001) and strong intra-party discipline (Field 2013). However, a period of intense politicization of Spain’s foreign policy during the first half of the 2000s led to the introduction of a parliamentary authorization procedure for military deployments in the Organic Law on National Defence of November 2005. The number of roll-call votes on military operations since 2005 is still quite low (10 votes), particularly when compared to the German Bundestag’s number of votes in the same period (see above). This is partly due to the fact that the threshold for the kind of operations that require parliamentary approval by the Spanish Congress is relatively high: roll-call plenary votes are usually only held for troop dispatches in new operations. Extensions of the operations and/or increase of troops in on-going missions have generally been voted in Committee or sometimes not voted at all.<sup>15</sup> Actually, there is no clear practice yet on whether the prolongation or modification of the mandate of operations requires the authorization of parliament, a question that has sometimes sparked debate between government and opposition.

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<sup>15</sup> Since 2005 there have been 11 authorization votes in Committee, all of them approved with the votes of the PP and PSOE.

**Table 5:** Analysis of Roll Call Votes in Spain

Legislature	No of votes	Share of no votes (average)	AI	'No'-votes per political party family: absolute number and share within party family (both on average)					
				Radical Left (IU)		Socialists (PSOE)		Conservatives (PP)	
				total	share	total	share	total	share
Zapatero I (2004-2008)	1	2,06%	0,96	2	100%	1*	0,6%*	1	0,82%
Zapatero II (2008-2011)	3	0,30%	0,98	0,33	16,67%	0*	0%*	0	0%
Rajoy (since 2012-)	6	3,06%	0,92	6	66,67%	0	0%	0,2*	0,10%*

\* = in government

Compared to the other cases examined in this paper, a particularity of the voting pattern on military operations in the Spanish Congress is that the share of no-votes of the two main parties on the right (PP) and left (PSOE) is almost negligible. The established culture of inter-party foreign policy consensus (as well as intra-party discipline) is relevant to account for this pattern. The consensus among the two only ruling parties so far can be traced back to the goal of normalizing Spanish foreign policy after a long period of dictatorship, and in doing so achieving its full integration into the European and Atlantic security structures as a “middle power” (Del Arenal 2008:16). This trend was cemented during the first decade of transition to democracy, when the PSOE radically changed its position from being opposed to Spain’s accession to NATO in the early 1980s to campaigning for ‘yes’ to Spanish continuity within the Atlantic Alliance in a referendum in March 1986 organised by the Socialist government of Felipe González. The foreign-policy consensus built around Europe and the principle of multilateralism came to a rupture during the 2000-2004 parliamentary term, epitomized by the decision of the PP’s government to involve Spain in the US-led invasion of Iraq. The unprecedented parliamentary and public mobilization against the Iraq war was one of the main triggers for the introduction of the procedure of mandatory parliamentary authorization of military deployments.

However, the voting data is in line with the left-right cleavage, in that the only political party consistently opposing military interventions is the radical-left IU. After the PSOE’s political volte-face on NATO during the 1980s, IU remained the sole standard-bearer of anti-Atlanticist and anti-militarist positions. The effect of IU on the total share of no-votes is moderated by the fact that this party has often voiced its reluctance to military operations with an abstention vote, not captured in Table 4. The five cases where IU abstained instead of voting against concern mostly UN-led operations (increase of Spanish troops in UNIFIL mission in Lebanon in 2006 and the UN operation in the Central African Republic in 2013) and EU military operations focussed on training or maritime surveillance (EUNAVFOR Atalanta in 2009, EUTM Somalia in 2010 and the more recent EUNAVFOR MED in 2015). The left-right cleavage is also visible in the regional

parties represented in the Spanish Congress (around 20-30 MPs in the three legislatures covered in table 4). Regardless of the party in government, left-wing regional parties have generally joined IU in voting against military operations (or abstaining)<sup>16</sup>, and regional right-wing/liberal parties voted consistently in favour.

The political standstill that Spain is involved in since the general elections of December 2015 does not allow for an analysis of the new parliamentary term. However, the seachange in the Spanish political map, in particular the increase in the number of radical-left MPs (from 22 to more than 80, including both the newly created *Podemos* and other regional left-wing parties), anticipates a growing politicization of decisions on troop dispatches. According to its latest party manifesto, *Podemos* has moderated its initially strong anti-NATO and anti-militarist rhetoric, but continues to propose a foreign policy based on disarmament, revision of relations with the Atlantic Alliance and the introduction of public consultations on decisions to send troops abroad (*Podemos* 2015:222-224). The left-right cleavage on military operations could hence become a more central trait of Spanish foreign policy and party politics in the years to come.

#### *United Kingdom*<sup>17</sup>

Parliamentary votes in the House of Commons on the use of military force are, historically, very rare. Indeed, no vote occurred to authorise deployment of military force between 1950, when parliament voted on troop deployment to Korea, and 2003, with the vote on U.K. participation in the Iraq war. This includes British military involvement in Suez, Oman, the Falklands, Iraq (in the first Gulf War), Bosnia, Kosovo, and Sierra Leone (although parliamentary debates were held at times during British involvement in these conflicts). There is no legal requirement for parliamentary approval for the use of force. War powers are part of the Royal Prerogative – ‘those powers left over from when the monarch was directly involved in government, powers that include making treaties, declaring war, deploying armed forces, regulating the civil service, and granting pardons. Prerogative powers are exercised, today, by government ministers. The defining characteristic of the prerogative is that its exercise does not require the approval of the Parliament’ (Poole 2010:146). Thus, the authority to deploy British armed forces resides in the collective responsibility of the cabinet, led by the prime minister (PM).

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<sup>16</sup> The most significant exceptions to this pattern are the yes-votes of *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) to the EU Atalanta operation in 2009 and to the NATO-led operation in Libya in 2011.

<sup>17</sup> This section draws upon previous research by Kaarbo and Kenealy (2016).

PMs may, however, choose to seek parliamentary approval and PM Blair’s choice to do so for British participation in the Iraq war may have set a precedent for parliament’s involvement in matters of security. Indeed, five of the six votes on the use of military force since 1950 came during the recent governments led by PM Cameron. According to Strong (2014:2), ‘successive prime ministers have (...)allowed a political convention to develop granting parliament a veto over actual deployment decisions.’ The record of parliamentary involvement is, however, inconsistent, even in the recent years. The 2010 vote to continue deployments in Afghanistan, for example, occurred nine years after the introduction of British troops there. The 2011 vote on the use of force against Libya was post-hoc, after the mission had begun, and in 2013, the UK government deployed military assets and military personnel (in non-combat roles) to Mali without a parliamentary vote.

**Table 6:** Analysis of Roll Call Votes in the UK

Legisla- ture	No of votes	Share of no votes (averag- e)	AI	'No'-votes per political party family: absolute number and share within party family (both on average)									
				Greens (Green Party)		Socialists (Labour <sup>1</sup> )		Liberals (Liberal Democrats)		Conservatives (Conservative Party)		Radical Right (UKIP)	
				total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share
<b>Blair (1997- 2007)</b>	1	26,56%	0,6	Not represented		84	24,85%*	52	100%	2	1,35%	Not represented	
<b>Camero- n I (2010- 15)</b>	4	16,34%	0,76	1	100%	65,75	35,05%	3,25	8,53% *	9,5	3,49%*	Not represented	
<b>Camero- n II (2015- 16)</b>	1	35,97%	0,46	1	100%	153	69,86%	2	25%	7	2,17%*	0	0%

\* = in government

When votes were held, voting in the House of Commons followed similar patterns as in Germany and France: opposition to military deployments was more pronounced among Labour and Greens than among Conservatives and radical-right parties (there have been no MPs from radical-left parties). The largest regional parties, particularly the Scottish National Party, have generally opposed military deployments. With the exception of the Conservative Party, the share of no-votes in government has always been smaller than in opposition. This finding is particularly pronounced amongst Liberal Democrats: all Liberal MPs voted against the Iraq war in 2003 but most of them voted for interventions in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and Daesh in Iraq when in government. The 2015 vote on using force against Daesh in Syria again saw one out of four Liberal Democrats (returned to opposition) voting against the mission.

Internal party divisions are as important as cross-party differences in UK debates on the use of force. In the vote on UK participation in Iraq in 2003, most of the no-votes came from within Labour, PM Blair's own party. Many of the no-votes on military strikes against Syria in 2013 came from within the two coalition parties, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives. This was unusual for the Conservatives, a party that has historically been more divided over issues like UK-EU relations than over security policy (Heppell 2013). Divisions within Labour continued in the 2015 vote on air strikes against Daesh.

The 2013 vote on Syria was unusual in a number of other ways as well. MPs actually voted on two motions – one supported by the Government (Reflected in the figures in Table 5) and one introduced by Labour. There were only minor differences between the two motions; both called for a second vote before military action. The irony of the vote was that although most MPs supported the use of force (by voting for one motion or the other), since no motion gained majority support, UK participation in military strikes against Syria was taken off the table. As PM Cameron put it: 'It's clear to me that the British parliament and the British people do not wish to see military action; I get that, and I will act accordingly'.<sup>18</sup> This outcome was unprecedented as it was the first defeat for a British PM on a security matter since 1782.<sup>19</sup>

To some, recent parliamentary debates and votes reflect a growing scepticism on the use of force in the parliament and the British public, largely based on the experiences of the Iraq war (See Gaskarth 2014). Yet a majority of British MPs have endorsed military operations in all post-Iraq votes. In 2014, the same parliament that was divided over Syria, solidly supported force against Islamic State in Iraq, although here again, opposition did come from the left (some in Labour and the green MPs). In addition to this longer term trend of scepticism on the use of force, parliamentary voting on military deployments may become more politicized with changes in the party system. With the 2015 general election, the Scottish National Party, which generally opposes the use of military force, increased its share in the House of Commons from six to fifty-four seats, becoming the third largest party in the parliament. As the post-Brexit referendum landscape saw further divisions within Labour and may foster more support for the radical right (in the form of UKIP) in the next general election, a more fragmented party system could lead to more distinct ideological positions in UK security policy.

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<sup>18</sup> Hansard 29 August 2013, Col. 1556.

<sup>19</sup> In 1782 Lord North, then PM, lost a vote of no confidence following the British defeat at Yorktown.

## CONCLUSION

Military missions are no exception to the general trend towards politicization that has been noted in other issue areas. The Chapel Hill Expert Survey, the growing number of deployment votes and their party-political contestation all suggest that politicization has reached the hard core of national security and defence policy.

Our analysis of deployment votes shows that they are often far from unanimous, although the level of agreement is usually higher than for other issues. Moreover, the four countries under study differ considerably as regards the degree of party political contestation when it comes to deployment votes. The 'politics stops at the water's edge' idiom thus resonates more in Spain and partly so in France than in Germany and the United Kingdom. In all countries, however, votes against deployments drop considerably when a party enters government.

We used CHES data and our own dataset on deployment votes to further examine the *pattern* of party-political contestation of military missions. We find that the left/right axis captures the pattern of party political contestation very well. Both the CHES and the voting data indicate growing support for military deployments as one moves from the Radical Left via Greens, Socialists and Liberals to Christian Democrats and Conservatives. As regards the Radical Right, however, the two datasets differ: the CHES data suggest an overall curvilinear relationship according to which support declines again as one moves from the Conservatives to the Radical Right. In contrast, our voting data suggest staunch radical right support for deployments, but the data are based on a very small number of cases. The few members of the *Front National* who were represented in the *Assemblée nationale* and the *Sénat* and the one UKIP member in the House of Commons after the 2015 elections are the only representatives of this party family in the four parliaments under study in this paper. Their votes in favour of deployments, however, may be deceptive as the Radical Right has been ambivalent on military missions. On the one hand, radical-right parties tend to accept the use of force as necessary to advance national interests; on the other hand, these parties tend to be isolationist and weary to engage in military missions for the sake of human rights or state building.

Another party family whose policy on military missions warrants further study are regionalist parties. We have excluded them from the analysis in this paper mainly because they are only represented in two of the four parliaments under study. The country studies above suggest that their position on military missions may result from their position on the left/right axis with the Scottish National Party and several left regionalist parties in Spain voting against and several right regionalist parties in Spain voting in favour of deployments. However, only a more

comprehensive examination can find out whether a regionalist identity makes parties show a critical distance from the central government's military engagements.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to study systematically how voting cohesion amongst parties of the same family across countries compares to voting cohesion amongst the parties in the same country. Our data on the voting behaviour of the Radical Left suggests that for this party family, transnational cohesion may well be higher than national cohesion. However, additional research – and ideally additional data from further countries – is required to examine systematically to what extent there is a transnational party-political dimension in this core area of foreign and security policy.

Additional case study research is also needed to investigate the rationales behind party voting on military missions. At the outset of this paper, we suggested three rationales for party contestation over military missions relating to foreign policy impact on domestic policy programs, genuine foreign policy differences, and differences that derive from the same core values and principled beliefs that underpin domestic policy orientations. Our data do not allow us to make conclusions on these rationales, and how parties balance policy commitments with political calculations. Our study does, nevertheless, suggest that countries' positions on military missions are indeed contested, partisan, and politicized.

**Appendix:** Party classification in families according to the Chapel Hill Expert Survey, (only parties represented in parliament)

	France	Germany	Spain	United Kingdom
Socialists	Parti socialiste (PS)	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD)	Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)	Labour Party
Conservatives	Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) / Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP) / Les Républicains		Partido Popular (PP)	Conservative Party (CP)
Christian Democratic		Christlich-Demokratische Union (CDU); Christlich-Soziale Union (CSU)		
Liberals	Nouveau centre (NC), Alliance centriste (AC)	F.D.P.	Unión, Progreso y Democracia; Ciudadanos	Liberal Democrats
Green	Europe Ecologie Les Verts (EELV)	Die Grünen		Green Party
Radical Left	Parti communiste français (PCF), Parti radical de gauche (PRG)	PDS / Die Linke	Izquierda Unida (IU); Podemos	
Radical Right	Front national (FN); Mouvement pour la France (MPF)			United Kingdom Independent Party (UKIP)

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