Research Article

From the 2005 Constitution's 'Permissive Consensus' to TTIP's 'Empowering Dissensus': The EU as a Playing Field for Spanish Civil Society

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Abstract

The negotiations of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) saw the development of a transnational campaign that gained momentum as the negotiations reached a critical status, including in Spain. The Spanish anti-TTIP campaign is interesting in that it has gained some salience among media, civil society, trade unions and some political parties in a country where trade and EU affairs are rarely controversial. In order to explain the transformation of the attitudes of Spanish civil society vis-à-vis the EU in the case of TTIP, we formulated descriptive and explanatory research questions, respectively: how is the mobilisation against TTIP different from the traditional involvement of Spanish civil society actors in EU issues? Why have actors which did not work together in previous campaigns cooperated in the case of TTIP? We analyse the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign, and we argue that the change of positions of Spanish civil society actors in relation to the EU in the case of TTIP can be explained on the basis of a change in the field, a notion that is suggestive because of the degree of continuity in the identity of the entrepreneurs of the anti-TTIP campaign in relation to past EU-critical mobilisations. Rather than an increased political cost of EU decision-making at national level, we argue that the introduction of EU-critical ideas can lead to an 'empowering dissensus' where the ability to mobilise citizens on EU issues acquires a renewed importance. We tackle our puzzle through a combination of methods, using semi-structured interviews and network analysis.

Keywords

The contestation of the European Union (EU) and its policies has traditionally been weak in Spain. The 2005 referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty ended with 82 per cent of the votes supporting it (on a low turnout, of 42 per cent), despite the campaign led by alter-globalisation actors (such as Ecologistas en Acción or ATTAC) against it. The mainstream political parties, Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and Partido Popular (PP), government and leader of the opposition, and the two biggest trade unions, Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) and Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) supported the 'yes' vote for the Constitutional Treaty, while civil society actors in most cases remained silent about it, an attitude that is consistent with the idea of the 'permissive consensus' (Hooghe and Marks 2009). As a result, the political field in relation to the EU generally marginalised the opponents of the European Constitutional Treaty as 'Eurosceptics'. However, ten years later, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations, a trade agreement with the United States (US) negotiated on the European side by the European Commission triggered massive contestation in Europe, including in Spain. TTIP is a unique case of a long-lasting mobilisation that has maintained considerable energy over time, from the announcement of the negotiations (February 2013) until the negotiations were frozen (November 2016). According to the Commission, the aim of TTIP was

> to increase trade and investment between the EU and the US by unleashing the untapped potential of a truly transatlantic market place. The agreement is expected to create jobs and growth by delivering better access to the US market, achieving greater regulatory compatibility between the EU and the US (European Commission 2013).

However, civil society critics of TTIP (such as those present in our analysis) have argued that it followed a Neoliberal paradigm that could reduce or bypass some social, environmental, consumer or labour protections, increasing the power of corporations. For this reason, the European Stop TTIP coalition has argued that TTIP is 'a threat to democracy, the rule of law, the environment, health, public services as well as consumer and labour rights' (STOP TTIP 2014).

The Spanish coalition against TTIP ('No al TTIP') was composed in December 2016 by 340 organisations from a wide array of sectors, such as trade unions, environmental protection organisations and political parties. The campaign collected 90,868 signatures in Spain for the self-organised European Citizens' Initiative STOP TTIP[1] and organised several demonstrations against the Treaty. The organisation of EU-critical demonstrations had no precedent in Spain before the 2011 anti-austerity protests that led to the Indignados movement. The intensity of the politicisation of the issue is attested by the involvement of Podemos (the emerging left-wing party) in the contestation of TTIP, along with trade unions that actively supported the 2005 EU Constitutional Treaty. As we will see, the STOP TTIP mobilisation in Spain resulted from the convergence of two streams of civil society activists that do not often mobilise together: institutionalised actors such as CCOO or Greenpeace and actors close to social movements, such as Ecologistas en Acción (EeA) or the Spanish chapter of ATTAC. In order to explain the transformation of the attitudes of Spanish civil society vis-à-vis the EU in the case of TTIP, we formulated descriptive and explanatory research questions, respectively: *How is the mobilisation against TTIP different from the traditional involvement of Spanish civil society actors in EU issues? Why have actors which did not work together in previous campaigns cooperated in the case of TTIP?*

We address these questions by analysing the network of actors mobilised against TTIP. We contextualise it with the mobilisation of actors in the 2005 EU Constitution Referendum and the 2011 Indignados Movement. We argue that the success of the anti-TTIP campaign can be explained by a transformation of the forms of involvement of Spanish civil society in the field of EU affairs, providing a favourable opportunity to the small group of EU-critical cause entrepreneurs that had been involved since at least the early 2000s. In this light the ongoing transformation of the field results from national level changes in the attitudes of Spanish civil society actors towards the EU, and also changes in the type of connection between the field of civil society and the pan-European field of protest and activism. This unusual mobilisation results from the transformation and re-assignment of the transnational mobilisation resources of Spanish civil society activists, therefore changing the types of resources that are valued in the field. Rather than simply channeling EU affairs through its vertical membership in Brussels-based umbrella organisations, national organisations can improve their position in the Spanish civil society field by encouraging the politicisation of EU issues at the national level.

Our research shifts attention from the role that EU institutions play in encouraging civil society participation in EU policymaking (Armstrong 2002; Kohler-Koch & Quittkat 2013; Ruzza 2004; Smismans 2006), a process that essentially takes place in Brussels, towards the involvement of national civil society organisations (CSOs) in EU policymaking (Sánchez Salgado 2014), taking into account not only the vertical relationships between national and EU level organisations, but also horizontal dynamics. Then we assume that protests triggered by civil society actors beyond the 'Brussels bubble' on EU issues follow both national and transnational dynamics (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov in this special issue). Such a position is coherent with the understanding of the process of Europeanisation (Coman, Kostini and Tomini 2013) as a dialectical interaction between EU and national level actors, where both influence and shape each other.

Following the introduction of our research focus, the second section will outline the involvement of Spanish civil society actors working on EU affairs in the domestic arena, which we conceive as a field

(Fligstein & McAdam 2012). The third section will describe the end of the 'permissive consensus' in the field, the explored hypotheses and the used methodology in order to respond to the two research questions. The fourth section, divided into two subsections, presents the empirical analysis undertaken, leading to an explanation of the atypical cooperation and competition patterns in the anti-TTIP mobilisation. Lastly, we summarise the main findings in the conclusion.

THE CHANGING FIELD OF EU AFFAIRS IN SPAIN AND TTIP

This section introduces existing literature on the evolution of mobilisation on European issues in Spain. This preliminary review is essential to understand to what extent the mobilisation against TTIP was atypical. We approach it by employing the theoretical notion of a field.

We conceive fields as the social space where actors compete for positions following a set of 'rules of the game' that make full sense within this field. Field theory bridges agency and structure by assuming that the field is the result of the actors' agency and that their strategies are heavily influenced by the structural properties of the field, such as their relative position in comparison to other actors and available resources embedded in the field. Field approaches have been applied to EU integration for more than a decade in order to account for how the construction of EU markets (Fligstein 2008) and day-to-day work in EU institutions (Georgakakis and Rowell 2013) are the result of competition and strategic behaviour by actors involved in regular patterns of interaction. This approach has recently been applied to the analysis of the competition and cooperation patterns of Brussels-based CSOs (Johansson and Kalm 2015), but not to the involvement of civil society on EU issues beyond Brussels. We follow the approach of Fligstein and McAdam (2012) rather than approaches inspired by Bourdieu's work (Georgakakis and Rowell 2013) because they deliver greater emphasis on agency and strategic behaviour by comparison to the conditions of structure.

Following this approach, we assume that the involvement of Spanish civil society in the domestic debate on EU affairs reflects its traditionally weak position in the national political field. Despite a strong role in opposition to Francoism and in the transition to democracy (Laraña 1999; Pastor 1999), most organisations experienced a strong demobilisation during the 1980s and 1990s, as some of the members of the organisations were co-opted into the new political parties. Just as the PSOE co-opted the members of the neighbourhood associations in the 1980s, all the contestation against the Maastricht Treaty was expressed via the newly formed leftist coalition Izquierda Unida (IU) that emerged out of the co-optation of activism against NATO in the late 1980s (Vázquez 2010: 156-158). Contestation by civil society regained salience in the late 1990s, around the emerging alter-globalisation movement (Adell 2000). These years mark a turning point in the normalisation of protest. They also introduce a key feature of Spanish civil society: a cleavage between organisations institutionalised into semi-corporatist arrangements in areas such as the labour market, consumer protection and international cooperation on the one hand and those in emerging areas such as the environment, global justice, anti-poverty and coalitions of users and employees of public services on the other hand. The latter group of organised civil society has little recognition from the authorities and is thus more prone to contestation. This cleaved field results in differentiated forms of mobilisation and resource levels, with organisations involved in semi-corporatist arrangements enjoying higher levels of resources, expertise and access to the policy process, but left in a situation of structural dependence on state authorities (McDonough, Barnes & López Pina 1984). This general cleavage was strongly epitomised by the Indignados movement that started in Madrid in 2011: a strongly decentralised network of alter-globalisation, youth and internet culture activists led a strong social movement (Flesher Fominaya 2015) that associated traditional groups such as trade unions, left-wing parties and cultural organisations in their challenge to the national authorities.

Within Spanish civil society, the field of European affairs at the national level is particularly unfit for mobilisation by non-institutional actors. As a multilevel transnational field, EU affairs are particularly prone to venue shopping as national level mobilisation is only one of at least three options, thus making mobilisations more difficult to follow up. However, because of strategic considerations and weak EU opportunity structures, most national CSOs often have no chance of being involved in both fields at the same time (Karamichas 2007; Liebert 2011; Poloni-Staudinger 2008). National organisations endowed with weak European resources (Dür & Mateo 2012; Eising 2009) tend to concentrate on the national arena unless faced with very favourable political opportunity structures at EU level (Marks & McAdam 1999). In normal conditions, the opportunity structures favouring a stronger involvement of national organisations are membership in EU level groups (Dür & Mateo 2012; Eising 2007, 2009; Liebert 2011) and the combination of favourable venues at EU level with a weak position in the national field (Karamichas 2007; Poloni-Staudinger 2008). Because CSOs at the EU level have similar levels of professionalisation as EU business groups (Klüver 2013) and rarely engage in protest activities, the connection between national CSOs and EU level CSOs tends to be vertical, given that most participation of national CSOs is channelled through membership of EU level CSOs rather than by shared membership in multilevel mobilisations (Johansson and Lee 2014; Karlberg & Jacobsson 2015; Kröger 2013, 2014). In the case of Spain, membership in EU level groups reproduces the incumbent / challenger division in the field since organisations in semi-corporatist arrangements such as Caritas, ONCE or trade unions such as CCOO and UGT are embedded in EU level organisations and institutions. The vertical contacts established by incumbent national actors contrasts with national EU-critical (rather than anti-EU) cause entrepreneurs, organisations embedded in transnational networks that create strong horizontal connections between national and European fields of activism. Transnational networks provide these organisations with resources, frames of reference and political support that transform the strategic considerations related to transnational activism (Keck and Sikkink 1998) and create organisational isomorphism pressures typical of organisational fields (Di Maggio & Powell 1983).

This has traditionally resulted in dual mobilisations where resource endowed organisations were involved in institutionalised EU and national policy-making arenas whereas outsider groups elaborated EU critical frameworks in direct mobilisation. This cleavage has also resulted in a fragmented debate on EU affairs both at the public and activist level given the lack of clear focal points. This is well exemplified by the national referendum on the Constitutional Treaty for Europe (2005). The Treaty received overwhelming support (82 per cent yes) but it experienced the weakest mobilisation in Spanish political participation history (42 per cent turnout). This national referendum is interesting since it confirms the patterns of relations between hegemonic and peripheral actors in the national field. The coalition opposing the Treaty was composed of actors strongly involved in the Global Justice Movement and replicated frames resonating with the social movement against the Iraq war in 2002-2003; for instance, the Constitution adopted the 'preemptive strikes' doctrine and aimed to build the EU into a military superpower (Asamblea contra la globalización y la Guerra 2004). Other arguments of the campaign suggest a strong replication of the French campaign against the 2005 EU Constitution (Dufour 2010). However, unlike the campaign for 'no' in France (supported by a wing of the French Socialist party), the Spanish campaign failed to achieve support among political parties. On the other hand, most of the 'insider' organisations such as ONCE, Caritas or the CONGD expressed their support for the Treaty, even claiming influence on the EU level convention that drafted it, but failed to contribute to the national public debate and mobilisation.

FROM PERMISSIVE CONSENSUS TO EMPOWERING DISSENSUS: HYPOTHESES AND METHODOLOGY

Hypotheses

As mentioned above, the stop TTIP coalition is atypical in many aspects. One of them is that it has mobilised a significant number of organisations despite the low salience of trade in Spanish politics. Trade issues are among the most central issues for the networks of transnational activism usually labelled anti- or alter-globalisation, including Spanish civil society activists since the 1990s (Adell 2000). However, they have never been salient in the Spanish public or political agendas (Chaqués-Bonafont, Palau and Baumgartner 2015: 56-61). According to the data of the Spanish Policy Agendas Project, trade issues were the object of only 20 bills in Parliament out of 2,529 legislative proposals from 1980 to 2015. If this is a testimony to the very fact that trade is an EU competence, the lack of interest of political actors in the affairs is more obvious in the fact that in the same period there were just 151 parliamentary questions on trade out of a total of 16,870 (Chaqués-Bonafont, Palau and Muñoz 2014). This is also reflected in the growing presence of TTIP in the media as mobilisation increased, as measured by the number of articles published by the leading mainstream newspaper in Spain, *EL PAÍS* (figure 1 includes articles where TTIP is mentioned in the title, subtitle or image in the online version of *EL PAÍS*). The importance of agency in the politicisation of TTIP is reflected by the fact that *EL PAÍS* did not report much on it until Greenpeace leaked official documents of the negotiation exclusively to the Spanish leading mainstream newspaper. The leak seems to have provided an opportunity for journalists within EL PAÍS to give a voice to civil society actors. The implications of this atypical case study are twofold: on the one hand, it is clear that we cannot extend our findings to other areas. On the other hand, however, the salience of an unexpected issue such as TTIP implies that a transformation is going on in the field beyond trade issues. We come back to this question in the conclusion.
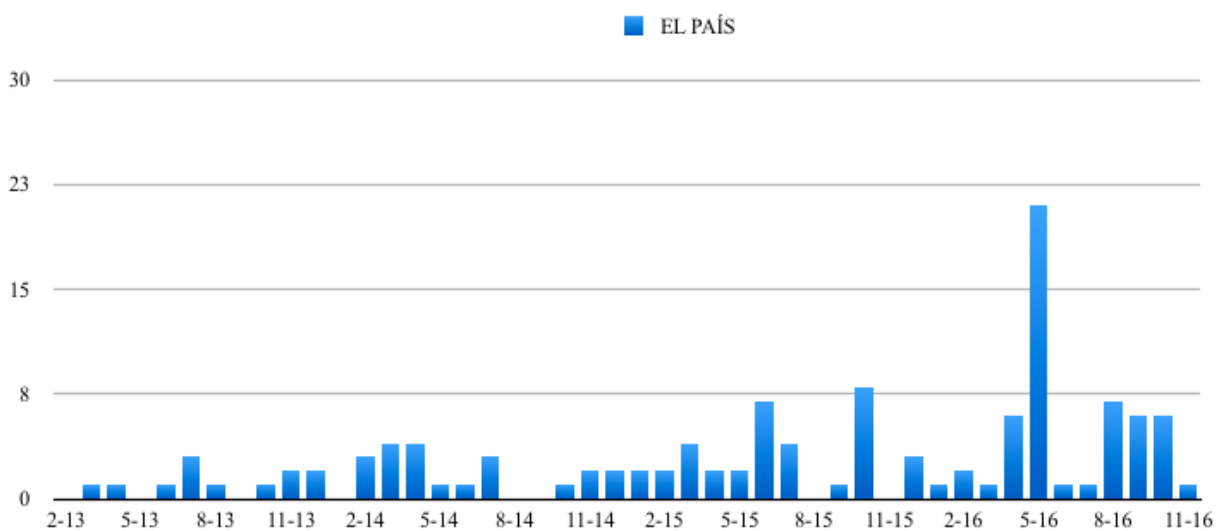

Figure 1. Number of articles that refer directly to TTIP in the online version of EL PAÍS in the title, subtitle or the main image per month February 2013 - November 2016

The Spanish civil society field vis-à-vis European affairs therefore leaves us with a situation by which organisations with structurally different positions are also expected to have differentiated mobilisation structures and where the ability to challenge the agenda of the EU by mobilising citizens

in protest has gained importance in a more politicised environment. In this context, the mobilisation against TTIP has constituted a meeting point for two streams of Spanish civil society that rarely work together, a puzzle that will be tackled both descriptively and explanatorily. We analyse what has changed in the field and how can we explain the atypical cooperation and competition patterns via the following two hypotheses.

Firstly, we expect organisations with EU level membership not to engage directly in the mobilisation against TTIP at the national level (Sánchez Salgado 2014: 169-196), while CSOs lacking vertical contacts with EU groups will use national mobilisation. If this hypothesis is to be confirmed, we expect the traditional EU-critical actors to engage in national protest, while the incumbents of the field will remain in a distinguishable neutral position at the national level, trying to influence TTIP through its EU level membership organisations rather than engaging in protest. The discussion of this hypothesis does not imply a quantification and direct comparison of vertical ties to EU groups versus horizontal ones in the context of protest campaigns: these are clearly different forms of collective action and thus it would be impossible to compare them simply in terms of number of ties. Instead, our approach is to discuss whether patterns in the form of networking – related to repertoires of collective action – correspond with the position of the actors in the field.

Our second hypothesis is that the 'empowering dissensus' context has an effect on the cooperation and competition patterns in the field, increasing the value of collective action. This change would empower national actors to engage in the EU policymaking process through dissensus at the national level, contributing to the generation of new critical forms of engagement with the EU (Oleart and Bouza 2017). In this way, politicisation would have transformed the meaning of EU-critical protest at the national level: unlike in previous EU-critical campaigns, to mobilise against TTIP would not imply opposing the EU as a whole. This hypothesis would be confirmed if we see both incumbent and EU-critical cause entrepreneurs joining forces in the anti-TTIP campaign, which could be seen as a success of the latter given its capacity to attract incumbent actors to their preferred playing field: collective action.

The mobilisation is not the result of a sudden change in the salience of trade issues but rather of the effects of the politicisation of EU affairs among Spanish civil society actors. The pan-European mobilisation against TTIP reflects more EU-related concerns than principled opposition to stronger exchanges relating to the EU's bargaining power (Eliasson and García-Duran 2017: 2-5). Similarly, the contestation of TTIP in the Spanish arena is related to changing attitudes towards the EU by activists and citizens in general: net trust on EU institutions (those trusting them minus those who distrust) went from +42 points in favour to -50 distrust (Torreblanca 2014: 119). This indicates that the EU in the Spanish context is starting to enter the cycle of politicisation, understood as 'making collectively binding decisions a matter or and [sic] object of public discussion' (Zürn, Binder and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012: 74). An interviewee from Greenpeace gave us an explanation of how the positions on TTIP have been politicised from the bottom-up by saying that contestation emerged from a coalition of CSOs, gained salience by attracting left wing parties like IU and Podemos and forced parties such as the PSOE to take their own stance.

METHODOLOGY

To explore these hypotheses, we need to measure the number of actors involved in the field, the type of relations that Spanish organisations have among them and with European level organisations and the type of resources that organisations obtain via their distinct types of contacts. This empirical approach is suitable for a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches as a way of operationalising the notion of a field of EU affairs in the multilevel forms of collective action.

Network analysis is an excellent way to analyse the dynamics of competition and cooperation in a field. However, the relationship between both approaches is controversial in relation to the debate on structure and agency: whereas Bourdieu and Wacquant argued that network analysis paid insufficient attention to structure in comparison to his field approach (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 114), social movement network theorists argue that networks are the underlying social structure in collective action (Gould 2003: 240-241). We use network analysis as a methodological tool for charting the field, analysing resource exchange and agency patterns (Fligstein and McAdam 2012: 29-30) rather than as a theoretical model (see Diani 2003) because of our interest in agency rather than in the structural preconditions of collective action. We use social network analysis to represent: the structure of the field (allowing for a test of the structural position of the actors in terms of centrality); the type of capital of each actor (relating to their relational capital measured in terms of degree and of specific brokering positions measured by betweenness centrality); and the forms of collective action of the organisations (by focusing on the type of relations with other European organisations). We complete the analysis of these positions in the field by analysing the strategies of collective action of the actors by distinguishing between different types of links in the network (we thus distinguish between coalitions and oppositions) and by discussing the motivations of the organisations and their attitudes to protest and the EU.

The mixed methods approach is also reflected in our type of data. We use public data on the membership of the coalition available on the website of the Spanish campaign against TTIP (No al TTIP 2014) and data on membership in EU level groups and involvement in the previous campaigns from public registers and secondary sources (Bouza García 2014). These data on membership in the Stop TTIP campaign and involvement in previous campaigns on EU issues at the national level have also been used to determine the boundary of the domestic EU affairs field. The data allow us to construct an affiliation matrix indicating the position of the organisations in the context of EU affairs in the campaigns we analyse. However, these data must be triangulated for confirmation (sometimes protest websites are unreliable) and to understand the types of relations among and the strategies and motivations of actors. To do this we conducted 17 semi-structured interviews and one focus group discussion with organisations connected in one way or another to the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign (see the list in annex 1). We have coded interview data about contacts with other organisations in the context of the campaigns into the matrix to triangulate the affiliation data, confirm or reject the existence of some links and to determine the type of interaction suggested by the affiliations or lack of contacts.

THE MOBILISATION AGAINST TTIP IN SPAIN

The headline of the Spanish manifesto of the anti-TTIP campaign signed by 340 organisations was the following: 'People, the environment and democracy before profits and the rights of corporations'. Such a framing resembles strongly the ideas put forward in previous EU-critical campaigns (Strange 2011). In 2005, the campaign for 'no' in the referendum for the EU Constitutional Treaty (Mateo Gonzalez 2008) was organised by EeA, arguing that '(B)ehind the great declarations of principles (…) it is evident that this Europe that they are trying to sell responds much more to the interests of capital than that of the citizens'[2] (López Marijuán 2005). The Indignados movement of 2011 had a strong European dimension – with up to 200, 000 demonstrators across the country against the 'Euro pact' on 19/06/2011, a first for EU issues (Ortega Dolz 2011), which is reflected in demands and frames such as 'Europe for the citizens and not for the markets' (see figure 2). Therefore, the anti-TTIP campaign does not build on a vacuum but on a growing stream of activism of EU-critical campaigning.

Figure 2. Posters for the June 19th 2011 demonstrations against the "Euro Pact"

The presentation of the empirical analysis results will be presented in two subsections. The first will descriptively present through a network analysis how the campaign against TTIP differs from past mobilisations that have been previously discussed: the campaigns (for and against) the 2005 Constitutional Treaty and the 2011 Indignado*s* movement. While not aiming to compare all the campaigns empirically, we put our case study, the anti-TTIP mobilisation, in perspective, in order to exemplify the traditional differentiated mobilisation patterns in the Spanish civil society field on EU affairs. Secondly, the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign will be thoroughly analysed. We focus on the cooperation and competition patterns in the Spanish civil society field, while also providing an explanation for this atypical mobilisation.

'No al TTIP': an Atypical Wave in a Quiet Pond

As discussed above, we use a network graph (figure 3) to represent the field in which the campaign against TTIP (figure 4) took place. Figure 3 represents a diachronic two-mode network where Spanish organisations involved in the national field of EU affairs are represented as yellow circles and European organisations as blue ones. Meanwhile, the three campaigns (for and against the EU Constitution of 2005, and the anti-TTIP campaign) and the Indignados social movement are represented as red squares, indicating these are not 'actors' but events to which organisations were affiliated. The decision to analyse the anti-TTIP campaign in the context of the four campaigns as one network is not only grounded in the theoretical consideration of conceiving of Spanish civil society in relation to EU issues as a field. It is grounded also in empirical reasons, as some organisations were involved in more than one of the campaigns and all organisations are connected directly or indirectly between them. We do not seek to represent the relations among organisations in general – since organisations involved in the field are among the largest and more influential groups in Spain we assume the organsations have frequent contacts – but rather the contacts in the context of the campaigns considered. Thus, such a network does not represent the whole Spanish civil society field, but rather the organisations that have been active in any of the campaigns analysed.

The fact that the entire network is connected confirms the existence of a social space beyond the four individual campaigns since relations of cooperation and competition are established across and beyond the campaigns. Secondly, the network shows different profiles for each campaign which are coherent with the assumption that in a field incumbents and challengers occupy these positions because of their different social traits (Fligstein & McAdam 2012:13-14). Except for Ecologistas en

Acción, the central EU-critical cause entrepreneur in the field, most of the organisations show similar measures of connection to the rest of the network in terms of closeness centrality, represented by the size of the nodes. Thirdly, the network shows that there is a visible difference between the vertical contacts of Caritas or ONCE, and also Ecologistas en Acción or Greenpeace, that are in the position of gatekeepers for EU contacts in their policy area, in contrast to the more horizontal involvement of the protest network Seattle to Brussels (S2B). Rather than being connected with a national member of the network, S2B is connected directly to the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign and has contacts with a greater number and a more diverse type of groups than the other European organisations.
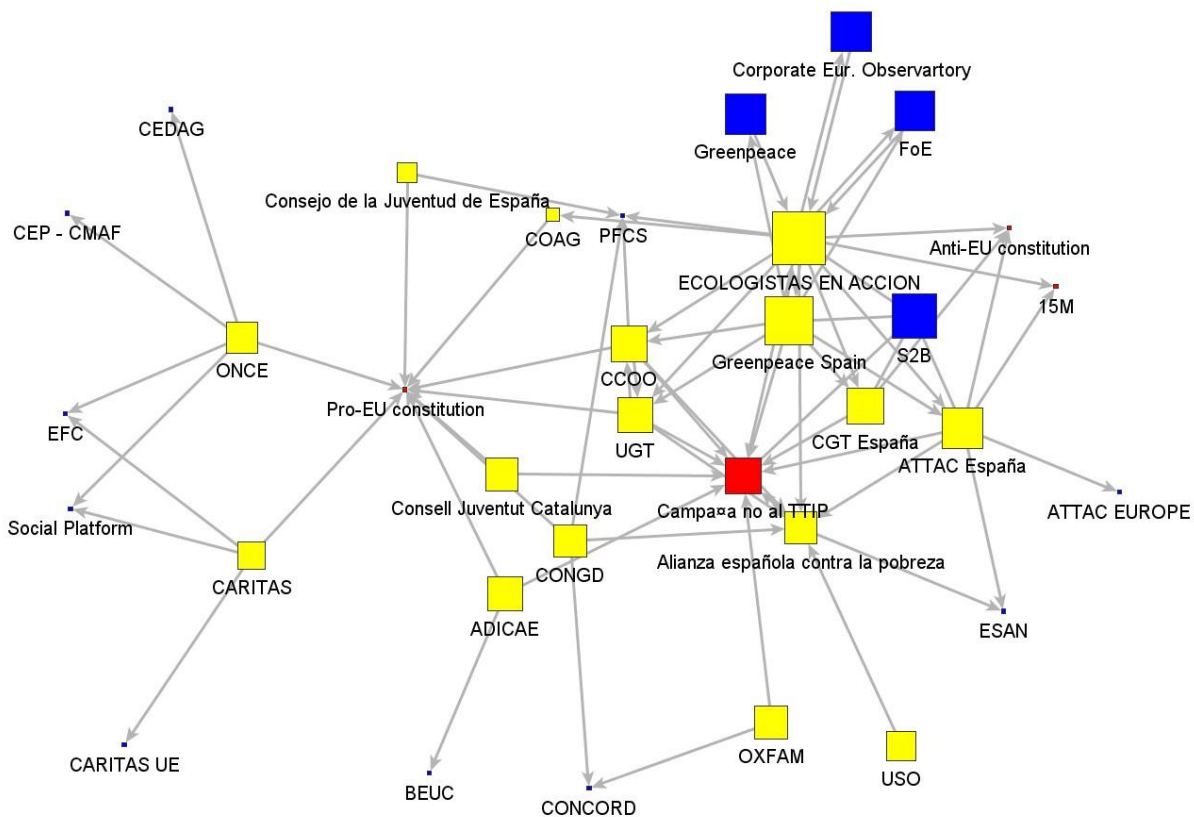

Figure 3. 2005 – 2017: an enlarged and more competitive field for EU affairs and civil society

Among the campaigns, 'No al TTIP' stands out because it was supported by more organisations with different profiles, including a novel involvement of transnational activist networks like S2B and Spanish institutionalised actors such as ADICAE, Greenpeace or CCOO. These new patterns of EU networking do not only imply changes in vertical contacts (including EU level organisations), but also horizontal. The campaign against TTIP was not only supported by European protest networks but also by other national organisations from other countries. While not being the focus of the article, several interviewees pointed out the importance of foreign institutionalised actors (such as the German trade union DGB) in the decision of Spanish institutionalised actors to participate in the campaign. By contrast with the EU-critical campaigns against the Constitution (2005) and the Indignados movement, the campaign against TTIP has seen an unprecedented group of actors working together. Ecologistas en Acción kickstarted the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign thanks to its involvement in the European network, Seattle to Brussels (S2B). ATTAC and the CGT (the leading Spanish anarcho-

syndicalist trade union, historically opposed to the Spanish mainstream trade unions, CCOO and UGT) were the initial partners at the national level. However, a significant number of organisations in more institutionalised positions such as Greenpeace, CONGD, Alianza Española contra la Pobreza or CCOO joined the campaign gradually, ending with 340 organisations supporting it, an unprecedented politicisation of an EU issue in Spain.

Having shown the way in which the anti-TTIP campaign broadly differs from past mobilisations in Spanish civil society on EU affairs, we now discuss in detail the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign, focusing on the (new) cooperation and competition patterns that have been established.

'No al TTIP': New Patterns of Cooperation and Competition

The centrality in the network of a small group of well-connected cause entrepreneurs that are active in the three campaigns from an EU-critical perspective confirms our expectations that the role of Spanish EU-critical cause entrepreneurs, namely Ecologistas en accion, is crucial in the success of the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign. This has also been confirmed by several interviews. The success of the anti-TTIP campaign cannot be explained on the basis of agency alone: the campaign against TTIP gained salience and visibility because of the participation of actors that were usually not involved in the field and by the involvement of incumbents, such as Greenpeace or CCOO.

Figure 4 represents the network of the actors involved in the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign. This figure is a one-mode network (all members are actors except the central node, which represents the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign) representing the national campaign against TTIP. It includes organisations that have no European connections and were not involved in the previous debate such as taxi drivers or public health system associations. The different colours represent different types of relationships: turquoise links imply contacts in the context of the campaign in the form of engagement in debates and other informal exchanges. Yellow links imply formal membership in a coalition, whereas red ones imply strategic collective action such as shared resources, coordinated action or leadership in the organisation of a coalition.
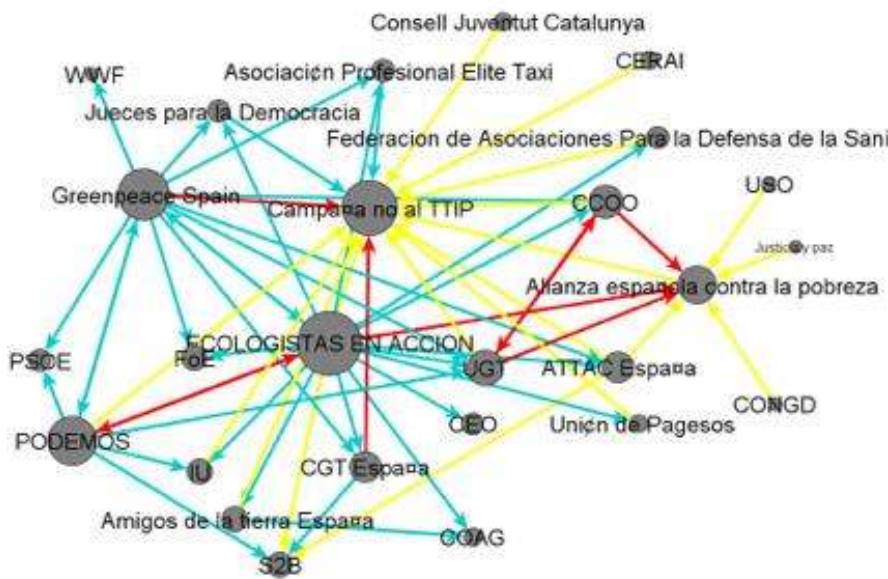

Figure 4. Network of the anti-TTIP campaign in Spain

Even though political parties are not part of our analysis, we asked interviewees about their role in the campaign to gain reliability by considering other factors. We asked interviewees to assess the role of Podemos as an emergent force (both in the European and the Spanish parliaments) that openly advocates against TTIP. The results clearly indicate that none of the left wing political parties is in the leading position, and interviews show that it was the campaign that obliged political parties to enter the public debate. The peripheral position of most incumbent organisations (UGT, CCOO, Greenpeace) is the result of the centrality of the EU-critical cause entrepreneurs (EeA and ATTAC, mainly) that dragged many other actors with them to the anti-TTIP coalition. The leading EU-critical cause entrepreneur in Spain is EeA, mainly due to its capacity to connect with different types of actors and drag certain powerful actors towards the anti-TTIP campaign, being the main driver of the transformation of the field in the case of TTIP. This is confirmed by the semi-structured interview that we undertook with one of the EeA members: 'I see the fight against TTIP and CETA as an entry point to increase criticism to the EU and a critical and anti-capitalist reflection of the European project'. Referring to the success of the anti-TTIP campaign in pulling certain incumbents, this member argued that

> many militants of CCOO and UGT are close to ATTAC and EeA, and I think we did a very good job from the beginning as a campaign ['No al TTIP'], and this has had an impact in the trade unions. Sooner or later they wanted to join the campaign.

Furthermore, a member of ATTAC Spain confirms how these entrepreneurs were aware of the strategic importance of gaining support by key incumbents:

> For us it is a real pleasure to see that trade unions that do not often cooperate start doing it. The fact that CCOO and CGT sit down and work together is a demonstration that we have a common goal.

The graphs present very significant findings concerning our two hypotheses, neither of which can be fully validated or rejected. Organisations channelling their EU affairs engagement through EU level membership are well connected to large EU organisations such as CONCORD, ETUC or the Social Platform. On the other hand, national EU-critical cause entrepreneurs such as EeA and ATTAC also have vertical contacts but are immersed in a denser network of ties. As a result, the former find themselves in the periphery of the graph whereas the latter are at the centre in terms of closeness, measuring the ability of any organisation to access any other organisation in the graph. This is true even for alliances or organisations with a large number of contacts (represented by the size of the node), such as the campaign in favour of the EU Constitution or ONCE. Obviously, this finding must be qualified to the context of this research: we do not argue that the incumbents in the field have only vertical ties. Instead we consider that actors have sufficient social skills to choose the repertoire of action per campaign and that in this context some of the pro-European incumbents opted to be in touch with their EU level organisations rather than, for instance, organise a pro-TTIP campaign. This is in itself telling of the dynamics of the multilevel field: when national organisations are satisfied with the state of affairs at EU level they rarely have incentives for activism at the national level, leaving more room for contentious action.

The figure shows EU-critical actors tend to act as a network and exchange resources and support campaigns in a horizontal way. This implies that organisations are not merely supporting one or another event but cooperating and engaging in collective action. While affiliation with a European organisation has traditionally been seen as an 'uploading' factor facilitating organisations' choice of whether to engage in EU campaigns or not, these also have 'download' effects in that they may push organisations into national advocacy for EU issues (Sánchez Salgado 2014). However, these networks are not a novelty in themselves. We argue that membership in these transnational networks is

'thicker' for the organisations than membership in EU groups for two reasons. First, in a context of increased contestation of EU issues, the ability to mobilise and engage citizens directly beyond Brussels-based groups already involved in EU affairs is a resource that is more valued today than 15 years earlier (Imig and Tarrow 2001). In a sense these networks do not only facilitate flows of information of frame amplification but are a new type of resource-pooling coalition (Mahoney 2007). Second, the result of politicisation is that domestic EU affairs are not only connected to the Brussels civil society field, but also to other EU-related transnational mobilisations (Della Porta 2007; Della Porta and Caiani 2009). The mobilisation of civil society on EU issues in one country can create opportunities for transnational networking among CSOs of different countries and EU level CSOs. Consistent with Keck and Sikkink's (1998) 'boomerang effect' and DiMaggio and Powell's institutional isomorphism (1983), we argue that successful mobilisation in one country encourages collective action in other countries, providing leverage to the national actors that are connected to the transnational mobilisation. In our case Ecologistas en Acción and the national chapters of Friends of the Earth (FoE) and ATTAC (all of them connected vertically to the Seattle to Brussels network) are the leading national EU-critical cause entrepreneurs.

The graph also provides an important finding about the evolution of the field, in that organisations such as CCOO, UGT and the anti-poverty and youth constituencies have moved from supporting the EU Constitution into the campaigns against TTIP. For some organisations such as the trade unions, this change of position is the result of the horizontal contacts with other European organisations: an interviewee from CCOO confirmed that Spanish trade unions experienced intense pressure from German unions to join in the campaign against TTIP. From this point of view, the prominence of the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign can be interpreted as the result of the involvement in protest of more organisations from both the national and EU level, which is atypical because of the differentiated patterns of incumbents and challengers in the field. Similarly, figure 4 shows that the national organisations leading a strong EU-critical position were successful at attracting new organisations to the field such as taxi drivers associations protesting against Uber, judges or anti-poverty groups. Our interviews suggest that this change is the effect of politicisation (which confirms the transformation in attitudes towards the EU and its policies by Spanish civil society), pressure from grassroots members in trade unions and of the successful mobilisation in other countries. Field related changes (the growing contention of issues together with the strong mobilisation in similar sectors in other countries) imply that the cause entrepreneurs could successfully make the framing of TTIP as a danger for taxi drivers or ability to judge corporations both more credible and less risk-prone. In a sense, challenging TTIP was no longer perceived by these new constituencies as a form of marginal Euroscepticism but as a legitimate and potentially successful cause.

The new value of mobilisation resources at national and EU level allows organisations to combine national and EU activism rather than having to engage in a venue-shopping strategy choosing between vertical channels through EU level groups and national protest. As for horizontal networks, the ability to engage both in national and EU campaigns is not a novelty in itself: successful advocacy groups are those that can combine grassroots mobilisations and inside lobbying, by using the European citizens initiative, for instance (Oleart and Bouza 2017). However, what we consider an 'empowering dissensus' is different in that there are also national advantages associated with EU contention. However, given that our research is based on a single case study, the fact that the mobilisation against TTIP has attracted several national institutionalised actors does not necessarily indicate that the change in the field is structural and permanent. As we have shown, the anti-TTIP campaign has changed the way in which actors in the Spanish civil society field on EU affairs engage in it, but the extent to which such change will be reproduced in other EU policies is nonetheless unknown.

CONCLUSION

Whereas during the 2000s the field of Spanish civil society concerned with EU affairs was characterised by the involvement of a few professionalised organisations along with some alter-globalisation activists (as was empirically demonstrated through the 2005 pro- and anti-EU Constitution campaigns), coherent with the idea of the 'permissive consensus', the Indignados Movement of 2011 was the first Spanish mass mobilisation where EU-critical ideas were present. Subsequently, the STOP TTIP mobilisation took place, and it is of particular importance for Spain because it constituted a meeting point for two streams of civil society activists that do not often mobilise together: institutionalised actors (such as CCOO or the anti-poverty networks) and protest actors (EeA or ATTAC).

The present article has aimed at explaining the wide EU-critical contestation that took place in Spain regarding the TTIP negotiations, a real puzzle considering the generally 'permissive consensus' stance of Spanish civil society actors in the past. Rather than arguing that the anti-TTIP campaign has created a new field or changed the identities of the incumbents and challengers in this field, we have shown that this campaign has brought about a new type of resource in the Spanish civil society field vis-à-vis EU affairs: the ability to mobilise citizens on EU issues at the national level. This is confirmed by our analysis, in which we have found that a small group of cause entrepreneurs (essentially led by EeA) have managed to sweep along incumbent actors towards their EU-critical campaign ('No al TTIP'). A good example of this process is the engagement in the Spanish anti-TTIP campaign of several organisations that supported the 'yes' vote in the 2005 Spanish EU Constitutional Treaty referendum, such as CCOO, UGT (the biggest Spanish trade unions) or ADICAE (a consumer organisation). The change in the Spanish civil society field in relation to the EU can largely be explained as a result of the politicisation of Spanish civil society, induced initially by the Indignados movement and later expanded by the anti-TTIP coalition, which incentivised EU-critical cause entrepreneurs involved in the movement (ATTAC and EeA) to amplify the movement's frames of protest towards the EU. Spanish civil society actors increasingly see the EU as a normal polity and no longer as a benevolent entity. As a result, it is possible to challenge its policies without being labelled as 'Eurosceptic'. This is an atypical mobilisation: a successful campaign against the agenda of the Commission in a country known for its pro-European attitudes and a protest against trade in a political system where this issue has low salience. As such, we do not pretend that these findings can be generalised to all forms of mobilisation. But we do not think that it is a black swan; rather than an exception, we think the mobilisation is telling about ongoing transformations in the field. Our research has shown that the politicisation of the EU is not simply a vertical process, but that the agency of socially skilled EU-critical cause entrepreneurs is key in transforming politicisation into a national resource in the national field of EU politics. Further research on contention by Spanish civil society on other EU policies is required to assess the magnitude of that change.

Contrary to the thesis that politicisation of EU issues will lead to a national 'constraining dissensus' (Hooghe & Marks 2009) in terms of an increased political cost of EU decision making, we argue that the introduction of EU-critical ideas can lead to an 'empowering dissensus' where the ability to mobilise citizens – a rare resource for most Brussels-based organisations – on EU issues acquires a renewed importance. The politicisation of EU policies at the national level would then be a symptom of the normalisation of the EU as a playing field (Imig and Tarrow 2001), where the dominant arguments are EU-critical, rather than anti-EU, in such a way that the EU is accepted as the legitimate framework of action. In the case of TTIP's 'empowering dissensus', both the supporters and the opponents of TTIP accept the EU as the playing field, therefore enlarging the field and 'empowering' European issues to be considered matters worth discussing at the national level. The introduction of

political conflict over EU issues at the national level normalises the EU as a polity, and it is therefore good news for European democracy.

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ENDNOTES

[1] The ECI was active from 7th October 2014 until 6th October 2015.
[2] Original in Spanish, authors' translation.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Representative of Campaña no al TTIP, Madrid
Representative of Ecologistas en Acción (2), Madrid and Barcelona
Representative of UGT, Madrid
Representative of CCOO, Madrid
Representative of Alianza Española contra la pobreza, Madrid
Representative of ATTAC España, Madrid
Representative of CEO, Brussels
Representative of CGT España, Madrid
Representative of S2B, Brussels
Representative of Podemos (2), Madrid and Brussels
Representative of PSOE, Madrid
Representative of Greenpeace (2), Madrid
Representative of COAG, Madrid
Representative of CONGD, Madrid
Representative of CJU, Madrid
Focus group with representatives of ATTAC Spain, USO, Justicia y Paz and CONGD