

ConstEPS Working Paper No. 2006/2

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and the Constitutional Discourse in the Czech Media**

Petra Rakušanová

„Citizenship and Constitutionalisation: Transformation of the Public Sphere in East-West European Integration” (ConstEPS) is a research project funded by Volkswagen-Foundation (No. II/80386 – 4/2005-3/2008) and based at the Jean Monnet Centre for European Studies (CEuS), University of Bremen (<http://www.monnet-centre.uni-bremen.de/projects/consteps/index.html>)

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The Constitutional Debate: A One Man Show?

Václav Klaus and the Constitutional Discourse in the Czech Media

Petra Rakušanová¹

Introduction

Looking at Czech media coverage of the European Union over recent years both in general terms and in terms of the Czech Constitutional debate in particular, it seems as though the voice of the Czech President, Václav Klaus, drowned out all others. Aside from his active participation in political as well as public debates, the Czech President wrote an endorsing foreword to the pamphlet *Say Yes or No to the European Constitution* (Coughlan and Klaus 2005)².

The main arguments of this pamphlet, some of which are highly controversial and much contested, can be summarized in ten points: (1) upon the ratification of the Constitution, the EU will become a state with all that that implies; (2) the member states will become regions or provinces of this supranational entity (i.e. the EU); (3) the Constitution of the EU will take precedence over those of the member states; (4) the term “constitutional agreement” is vague and will only have temporary validity—after ratification the document will become a constitution *sui generis*; (5) the current EU paradigm of “shared sovereignty,” in other words, shared by all the nation states equally, will be undermined and replaced by a new kind of “pan-European sovereignty,” which will undermine each state’s legislative independence (6) citizens of member states will become citizens of the EU including rights and duties; (7) member states will only have the authority that the EU grants them, and not, as was originally the idea behind the EU, the other way round, or, in other words, the hierarchy of primary and secondary legal acts will have been inverted; (8) with a “joint foreign and security policy,” the EU and not the individual member states, will be eligible to conclude international agreements; (9) overturning the Nice Agreement, the voting power of the small member states will decrease; (10) the “flexibility” or “bridging clause” will allow the EU to widen its scope of competences (Coughlan and Klaus 2005).

¹ An early draft of this article was presented at the workshop **Constitutional Ratification Crisis: Exploring the European Public Sphere**, Fiesole, 19-20 May 2006. I would like to thank the commentator, Dr. Zdenka Mansfeldová, for her invaluable comments and insights both in her response to my paper at the session in Fiesole and subsequently, during editing of the paper into article form, as well as for her on-going support of my work. **My thanks also go to** Prof. Ulrike Liebert and Dr. Alexander Gattig for their constructive comments on the draft version of this article, and to my colleague Sonke Maatsch for her help with ATLAS.ti and the production of tables. Last but not least, I would like to thank the participants in the discussion at the Fiesole workshop for sharing their insights on the development of the European public sphere.

² Here it is important to state that in Dr. Anthony’s Coughlan view the title should read Anthony Coughlan, “An Analysis of the EU Constitution”; with a preface by President Vaclav Klaus; Institute for Economics and Politics, Prague, Czech Republic; 2005, however, the pamphlet was published under the title given, so as a compromise, I include the name of both authors and keep the original title and its English translation.

With these views, Václav Klaus was departing from the mainstream of opinion, both within the political arena of the Czech Republic and the European Union. His vision of Europe is best illustrated by the following quotation:

“We need a “New Europe,” a Europe without Europeanism. We need a Europe of economic freedom, a Europe of small and non-expanding governments, a Europe without state paternalism, a Europe without pseudo-moralizing political correctness, a Europe without intellectual snobbery and elitism, a Europe without supra-national, pan-continental ambitions. If someone on the other side of the Atlantic would then like to call this Europe the “New Europe,” it would be useful. Nonetheless, I have to stress, that we are still far away from such a “New Europe,” in fact, today we are moving in the opposite direction.” (Klaus 2004)

In light of the lively exchange between the Czech President and two prominent members of the European Parliament in April 2005,³ the major question that our discourse analysis of the constitutional media debate in the Czech Republic intends to address is, if and to what extent the Czech constitutional debate can be regarded as Václav Klaus’s ‘one man show.’

In connection with our detailed examination of the role of the Czech President, another aim of the analysis is to shed light on Czech “euroscepticism.”⁴ Compared to other new member states, the Czech Republic tends to rank high on the euroscepticism scale (Taggart and Szcerbiak 2004). However, in line with Kopecký and Mudde, we will be arguing that the picture is more complex than this (Kopecký and Mudde 2002), and propose a two-dimensional typology of party positions on Europe, distinguishing between support for European integration and support for the EU. While on average, the Czech Republic might score high on the “eurosceptic scale” according to Taggart and Szcerbiak, one should not overlook the polarized nature of Czech domestic politics which is also reflected in the relationship between supporters and opponents of the EU Constitution. Thus we aim to demonstrate that, in addition to the two dimensions identified by Kopecky and Mudde, the issue of the Constitution creates a third dimension, cross cutting these two and establishing a three-dimensional analytical space which alone allows a truly accurate portrait of the various actors’ positions on Europe.

In a recent analysis examining the Czech national position-formation process during the Constitutional Convention, Schulz and Chabreckova—based on expert interviews—

³ See “Klaus hits back at European Parliament Critics” article available on-line <http://www.europeannocampaign.com/381.html> last visited 12.5.2006

⁴ With Kopecky and Mudde (Kopeckz and Mudde 2002), we define euroscepticism as a multi-layered concept in relational rather than absolute terms thus distinguishing between diffuse and specific support for European integration in general and for the European Constitution in particular. It is also important to note that we apply a typology initially developed for party actors to all actors involved in the Czech ratification debate.

showed that the Czech political actors (government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Civic Democratic Party and the national Convention) mainly concentrated on substantive topics such as the number of Commissioners, the Qualified Majority Threshold and the regulation of jurisdiction with respect to external policy (Schulz and Chrobakova 2006). Another issue viewed as important especially by the Czech government was the Charter of Fundamental Rights. In addition, the Czech Republic along with Austria headed up a group of 15 smaller states criticizing the Draft Constitution. However, in the domestic political arena, political conflict during the Convention mainly focussed on the ratification method—popular referendum vs. parliamentary ratification (Schulz and Chabreckova 2006). On the basis of our in-depth analysis of the domestic constitutional debate in the Czech Republic, we will be able to determine if and to what extent these issues shaped media debates during the ratification process.

I. Description of Methodology Design and Data

For the period of analysis (26 October 2004–30 October 2005) a set of 973 articles was selected from following Czech media: two dailies, two weeklies, one tabloid and one sectoral public paper.⁵ (For further details of the publications in question see below.) From the total set of Czech articles (N=973 articles) a sample of 38 articles was drawn for our qualitative analysis. The qualitative sample is representative with regard to following criteria (1.) **overall coverage by month** and (2.) **the share in overall coverage in percent for each newspaper by month over the period of analysis;**⁶ and, in conjunction with the other two elements (3.) **coverage of specific key events in the ratification debate.**⁷

For the purposes of comparative discourse analysis,⁸ a coding scheme was developed by the ConstEPS research team and applied using the computer package ATLAS.ti. Aside from basic information about the article (title, author, origin of actor, etc.), the coding scheme includes information on following categories and subcategories:

(1.) **Actors:** both individual and institutional involved in the constitutional debate includ-

⁵ Two search engines were used: Factiva (for MF Dnes) and Newton IT (for the remaining newspapers). The key words were ‘ústava,’ ‘ústavní smlouva’ and ‘ratifikace.’ For further information on the sampling process and the list of selected articles see appendices.

⁶ For details, see the table “Appendix 2: Media Coverage of the Constitutional Debate—Overview in Time (in %).”

⁷ Where available, the following ‘substantial’ issues were covered in the qualitative sample: (1.) the signing of the Constitutional Treaty in Rome; (2.) the outcome of the Spanish referendum; (3.) the outcome of the French referendum; (4.) the outcome of the Dutch referendum; (5.) the outcome of the Luxemburg referendum; (6.) the Luxemburg EU Presidency Summit, (7.) reflection period; (8.) the British EU Presidency Summit (Southampton) and/or Tony Blair’s speech in the European Parliament; (9.) national parliamentary ratification of EU constitution—in this case in the Czech Republic.

⁸ Within the framework of ConstEPS research “Political discourse analysis determines how political elites and mass media construct public opinion—and, hence, potentially, how the social constituencies of the emerging European polity conceptualize the EU, its legitimacy, and the roles and competences of member governments, citizens and civil society.” (Liebert 2006: 2-3).

ing the actor's origin;⁹

(2.) **Topics** (divided into following subcategories): *substantive topics* (codes referred to the different areas included in the Constitutional treaty), *the Constitution as such* (Constitution in general as well as specific text-related issues such as references to the translation) and *procedure* (codes referred to the dynamics of the constitutional process);

(3.) **Argumentative Strategies**: here we distinguish between four major statement sub-categories, *definitive*, *designative*, *evaluative* (i.e., positive, negative or neutral) and *advocative*, as well as different *elements of style* (e.g. direct speech, metaphor, unusual language and aggressive language);

(4.) **Justifications**: we distinguish between the following four major justification types, *interests* (such as European, state, sectoral and strategic interests), *ideas* (past, present and future visions of Europe,¹⁰ shared collective identities); *democracy* (including transparency, accountability, participation, representation, coherence, elite-citizen link etc.) and *political ideologies* (here we concentrated on different conceptions of rights including sub-categories such as human rights, negative and positive freedoms, equality, diversity, xenophobia, liberalism, republicanism etc.); **dejustifications** were also considered;

(5.) **Interaction and Relation**: this category captures different types of actor interrelationships, both horizontal and vertical relationships, from EU level down to citizens at a domestic level, also allowing for multi-level engagement of actors. We also identified the type of relationship between the actors, ranging from alliance, co-ordination and co-operation through interdependence to competition, collision and polarized conflict; and

(6.) **Domestic Context Issues**: domestic topics in relation to which the constitutional issue is mentioned; here we distinguish between EU, national and international issues; a cross cutting category was place of origin which was assigned to actors, topics, justifications and context issues.

The coding scheme was tested on a pre-test sample of 15 articles¹¹ before applying it to the qualitative sample (in the Czech case N=38 articles). Each sample was coded by one coder. Furthermore, an inter-coder reliability test was conducted to ensure the comparability of individual samples.

In summary, this media discourse analysis of the Czech constitutional debate within the ConstEPS comparative framework aims at following specific aspects of the constitutional

⁹ In terms of individual as opposed to institutional actors, the Czech sample included a total of 48 named actors both domestic and international. (Note, this does not take into account the 38 authors of the articles. For details about authors see "Appendix 3: Articles Selected for Qualitative Analysis.")

¹⁰ This category plays important role in both coding and analysis, as we attempt to determine the dominant as well as contesting visions of Europe both within the individual countries and more broadly in a comparison of old and new member states.

¹¹ The criteria for selecting the pre-test articles—i.e. for testing the comparative framework—were the following: (1.) media type (newspapers, tabloids, weeklies); (2.) date of publication (covering the whole period under study, with attention to the key events); (3.) key actors (to cover diverse set of actors both domestic and European); (4.) content (based on theoretical background and current discussion, an attempt was made to cover key issues in the debate); (5.) length (a variety of lengths to see any variation in results).

debate over the ratification period: (1.) **Actors**: to determine what actors were taking part in the debate (both in terms of origin and type) and what were the dominant patterns of interaction among them; (2.) **Topics**: how was the debate structured by choice of or focus on specific subject matter; (3.) **Argumentative Strategies**: description of the four statement types (definitive, designative, evaluative and advocative) with stress on the positive and negative aspect of evaluative and advocative statements; attention is also paid to the use of metaphors; (4.) **Motivations and Justifications**: analysis of major motives either recognized, foregrounded or denied by dominant actors; special attention is paid to ideas about and visions of Europe and the use of history as a justification.

Based on these categories, ConstEPS comparative discourse analysis aims at: (1.) description of the similarities and differences in reporting on European constitutional issues in the following national public spheres: Britain, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Poland and Sweden; (2.) to describe the communicative exchange between the national public spheres and possibly the supranational public sphere (based on visibility of foreign actors,¹² synchronization and homogenization¹³ of topics and argumentative strategies); (3.) to describe the patterns of Europeanization as well as the level of transnationalization of individual national public spheres in terms of the extent to which the issue of the European Constitution is embedded in the domestic discourses.

Data

The Czech sample includes two major dailies, the selection of which was based upon their circulation rate. (For further details on newspapers see Appendix 1.) The pro-government center-left *Právo* contributed the largest number of articles to the total sample (over 55%). The second largest daily *MF Dnes*, with its more centre-right political orientation, contributed over 22% of the total number of articles. The political orientation of the reporting media was reflected in their prioritization of certain actors and the amount of coverage given to them: for example, while in *Právo* the Prime Minister, ministers and prominent members of the Social Democratic Party featured quite often both as authors and as the passive actors mentioned by articles, considerably less space was devoted to the key actor of the constitutional debate in the country, President Václav Klaus.

MF Dnes offers a rather different picture. In the case of this paper, the political orientation of the authors is more balanced or at least less in evidence, however members of the opposition were given slightly more space. As far as Václav Klaus is concerned, both major

¹² The involvement of foreign actors is measured in terms of **discursive interaction** – references to foreign actors (observation), foreign authors making statement (presence), reaction to the statements made by foreign authors (engagement).

¹³ The term synchronization is defined as “the degree to which topics in different national public spheres are discussed at the same time under the same criteria of relevance,” (Pausch et al. 2006: 33) and the term homogenization is “the degree to which a discursive process of will and opinion formation takes place simultaneously in various European public spheres” (ibid.).

quality papers recognize him as the key actor in the debate, however *Právo* gave more coverage to the President's opinions on the EU constitution, and also devoted more space to critiquing his views while *MF Dnes* published several articles, some of which were about, others interviews by and with the President.

The tabloid *Blesk* offered rather limited coverage of the constitutional debate concentrating solely on the domestic struggle between the President, Václav Klaus, and the Prime Minister, Jiří Paroubek as it played out in terms of support for or opposition to the EU Constitution. The language and style of the articles shows a strong tendency towards vulgarization of the issue.

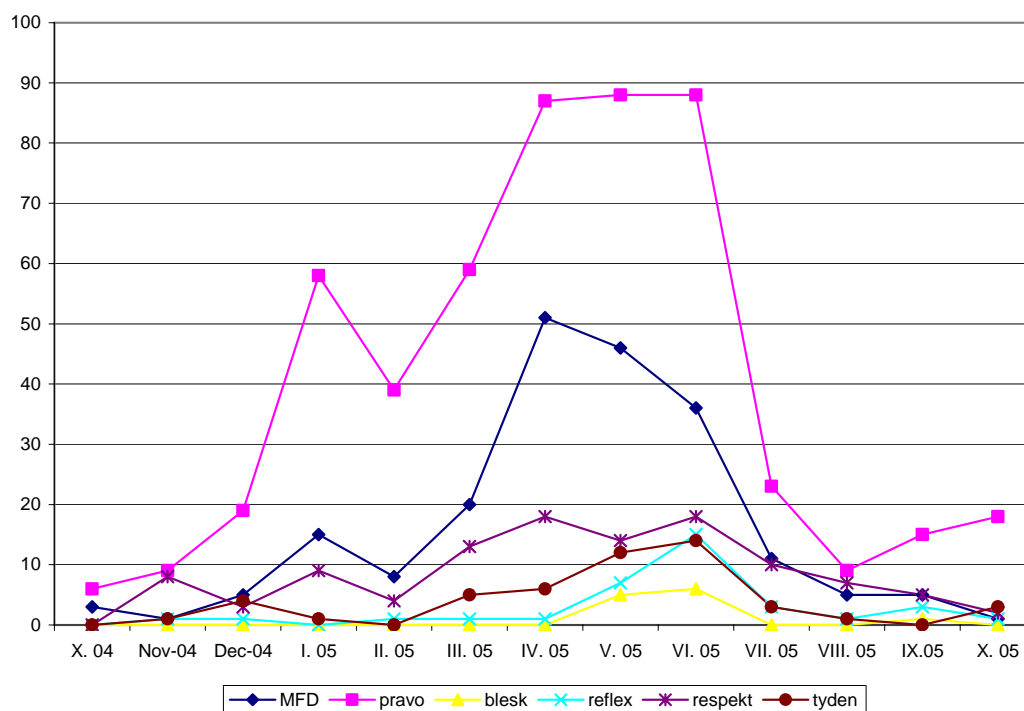
In addition, two weeklies and one sectoral public paper were also included in the sample. The sectoral public paper *Respekt*, with its rather small circulation but disproportionately large impact in intellectual and political circles, contributed more than 11% of overall coverage. Unlike the dailies, where political actors dominated among the authors, the articles published by *Respekt* were more often written by actual journalists. Two weeklies, *Reflex* and *Tyden* contributed only 3.75% and 5.36% respectively to the total sample.

In terms of the strength of coverage¹⁴, the dailies tend to reflect the overall trend in the media coverage outlined in the Figure 1. Contrary to the dailies, the coverage of the weeklies in terms of number of articles tends to remain stable over time.

Considered diachronically, the sample reveals that coverage of the constitutional debate in the Czech media reflects certain key European events relevant to the constitutional debate (see Figure 1). The first mid-peak point was reached in January with the media concentrating on the prospects for ratification and general evaluation of the ratification process so far. After a small dip in coverage in February, there is steady growth with a peak just before and after the French and Dutch referenda (April-June 2005) during which period more than 65 percent of the articles issued on the topic appeared. In July the trend returned to its pre-referendum level of intensity and coverage steadily decreased for the rest of the period under study.

Figure 1. Media coverage of the Constitutional Debate in the Czech Republic (by newspaper and by month for the period October 2004-2005)

¹⁴ Strength of the coverage is defined by the number of articles published in given time by a given media.



Source: ConstEPS media analysis

II. Analysis

II.1 Actors

In analysing the actors involved in the constitutional debate we will proceed from the description of their origin and type to the overview of the individual actors. In terms of origin, the majority of the actors were Czech. However, some international actors were involved in the debate as well—mainly from France, Germany and England. Nevertheless, foreign actors were mainly involved in a passive way, in other words, they were instrumentalised to justify or prove certain points made by Czech actors in the domestic debate. Very often direct quotations were used, both by supporters and by opponents of the Constitution, citing foreign actors with a similar opinion to theirs to lend force to the author's own arguments. Social Democrats in particular made reference to their European counterparts to show that their stance on the Constitution is a widely shared one elsewhere in Europe and has strong support.

The transnational links of the major Czech political parties can be summarized as follows:

Christian democrats (KDU-CSL): strong orientation towards the German CDU; their program documents seem to be little more than translations of those of CDU

Civic democrats (ODS): strong links to the British Conservative Party, often adopting similar argumentative strategies

Communists (KSCM): strong but vague orientation towards the East (not specified if means Eastern enlargement or Russia);

Social Democrats (CSSD): this party has the strongest European orientation; it often refers to other European socialist parties in general without being country-specific;

Table 1. Type of Actors

Actor Type	Occurrence*		No. of Articles**	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of articles
EU institutional actors	23	10	13	34
Governments/executives/party actors	111	49	28	74
Experts/intellectuals	17	7	13	34
Citizens/civil society	30	13	13	34
Media	47	21	37	97
Total	228	100	38	100

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Notes: * No. of times the actor type was coded, ** No. Of articles that included a given actor type

In terms of type, the dominant actors of the Czech constitutional debate were clearly political actors—government/executives and political parties. This phenomenon is examined further when we look more closely at the top ten actors involved (see Table 2). Although the majority of the actors supported an EU Constitution, in terms of visibility, constitutional opponents played a more significant role.

As far as political parties are concerned, our analysis of the Czech debate shows the presence of French, German and British parties including their high-ranking representatives, EU actors and foreign heads of states. However, explicit descriptions of actors' political affiliations in terms of left and right did not occur very often.

Aside from political actors, journalists, experts, academics and intellectuals took quite an active role in the debate.¹⁵ The involvement of actors from civil society in the debate was rather limited. Think tanks constituted an important exception to this.¹⁶ Our media analysis

¹⁵ Unlike the findings of Trenz et al., according to whose analysis EU-correspondents play the central role “as the avant-garde of political journalism” leading authors to develop and elaborate the notion of EU-punditocracy (Trenz et al. 2006:6). However, our findings support the notion of the subordinate role of EU-correspondents in the opinion-making process as, rather than expressing their own opinions, they mainly provide technical information.

¹⁶ The distinction made in the ConstEPS comparative framework between think tanks and organised civil society is very important. As Schneider points out “Think tanks are institutions, which mediate expert communication of interest groups, politicians and media.” (Schneider 2003:12). “They are preoccupied with research and/or policy analysis and operate on the boarder between the sphere of research, education, politics, business, and nongovernmental (civil) sectors and are financially and institutionally independent from state and particular interest groups.” (Schneider 2003: 31).

identified the following domestic groups of this kind: the Institute for International Relations (UMV), the Association for International Issues (AMO), and the Center for Economy and Politics (CEP). Their members have contributed to the media both as active participants (writing articles) and passively (being cited by the media). In terms of foreign think tanks, the Heritage Foundation – an US conservative think tank – was visible during the debate.

The visibility of think tanks in the constitutional debate shows that they successfully fulfilled one of their major roles: to play an active part in public debate about policies and public interest issues in general (Schneider 2003). Further more, it is important to point out that the majority of Czech think tanks – CEP, AMO as well as the US based Heritage Foundation were rather critical in regard to both the Constitutional Treaty and the constitutional process. Thus the Czech think tanks can be seen as articulating partial rather than general public interest. At a general level, this partiality contributes to the overall rather introverted character of the Czech political scene, and, as Schneider points out, reflects the clientelist character of the political process (Schneider 2003).

Turning to civil society actors, it is rather remarkable that the former President Václav Havel did not figure prominently during the debate on the issue of the European Constitution at any point during the period under study, either as an active participant in the debate or as a passive actor. Havel's recently published book (Havel 2006) sheds some light on his curiously low profile here: first, during the peak of the debate (spring and part of summer 2005), Vaclav Havel spent several months in Washington D.C. as a guest of the Library of Congress in a deliberate attempt to distancing himself from current affairs in Europe and the Czech Republic so that he could devote himself to his writing.

Secondly, although Havel acknowledges the importance of the Constitution for Europe as an historical event, for him it is not important if the current document is be adopted. What is of greater concern to him is the size of the document as well as its language: *“I think it [the Constitution] should be ten times smaller, should be written in human and not bureaucratic language, and should be so readily understandable that children could learn it at school.”* (Havel 2006: 216).

And thirdly, the current wave of anti-Americanism—the polarization of Europe against the United States—makes it difficult for Havel to take more active role. He is very critical of the EU's attempt to “catch up with and get ahead of the USA,” as well as of the current nature of the EU:

“...I find the EU in its current form very technocratic and materialistic. Perhaps it still has—at least its Western part—more respect for civic culture, human rights, economic justice, non-renewable resources and generally for the

environment than in our country, but in these respects it still has a long way to go on all sides, as is rightly expected of it.” (Havel 2006: 217).

While Havel the politician is critical of the EU as it currently stands and the process of Constitutionalisation, Havel the philosopher or political thinker has a clear vision of Europe, its identity and role in the world:

“Its identity cannot be based on trying to keep up with global economic progress or lagging behind it. I think Europe can do better than this. It can be an example not only of a peaceful and just political order spanning a continent, but also in terms of the creative and considerate treatment of its traditions, its culture, its landscape and resources. It seems to me that the rising tide of trivial worries—for example which customs or tariffs will be where—it is in danger of swamping its spiritual dimension, causing it to forget to engage in truly fundamental discussion about the direction of the modern world, the dangers this direction brings and the role, which, in this global background, this unique polity can play.” (Havel 2006: 217)

Among the academics taking part in the debate, social scientists predominate. But while some more substantive articles were written by political scientists, others covered sociologists, often commenting on the development of public opinion vis-à-vis the Constitutional Treaty, as well as commentaries by historians, philosophers, etc. The vital role of intellectuals in public debate in post-communist countries can be traced back to the important role they played in the dissent movements against the various communist regimes both prior to social change as well as in the course of the transition period (see, for example, Kopecky, Mudde 2003).

In May 2006 a group of 66 key intellectuals and academics protested against the euroscepticism of President Klaus, arguing against the president’s overly critical view of the European integration process:

“We do not agree with the President’s proposal to turn the EU clock back 20 years, returning us to a time when it was merely a custom union. We are persuaded that further strengthening of the EU and institutional deepening of relations between member states is of vital interest to our country. We believe it is correct to endeavour for the establishment of general consciousness and an awareness of ‘European citizenship’ as soon as possible, as well as to adopt a basic European constitutional document and to strengthen the importance of a democratically elected European Parliament.” (Danda and Vavron 2006).

The argument’s in favour of the EU Constitution made by the intelligentsia can be summarized as follows: (1.) based on current developments in the EU, fears about the loss of national or cultural identity are empty; (2.) concerns about post-accession economic problems

are also unfounded—on the contrary the country's economic growth is continuing unabated; and (3.) there is no evidence of the expected suffocating pressure of Brussels bureaucracy (Danda and Vavron 2006).

Among the important foreign actors was the Irish economist Anthony Coughlan, whose critical analysis of the Constitution was published with the President's appraisal as a foreword (Coughlan and Klaus 2005).¹⁷ Overall in terms of the visibility of foreign actors, the Czech debate shows strong tendencies towards transnationalization—from the total number of actors within the sample (48 actors excluding the authors) only 42 % of actors are of Czech origin, while of the top 10 actors only 4 are of Czech origin (see Table 2).

Table 2. Top 10 Actors

Actor Name	Position	Nationality	Occurrence*		No. of articles**	
			Total	% of Total	No.	% of Articles
Klaus, Vaclav	Against	CZ	34	28	10	26
Paroubek, Jiri	For	CZ	17	14	5	13
Chirac, Jacques	For	FR	7	6	4	11
Zahradil, Jan	Against	CZ	5	4	2	5
Blair, Tony	For	UK	4	3	2	5
Brdeckova, Tereza	For	CZ	4	3	1	3
Barroso, Jose	For	EU	3	2	3	8
Giscard d'Estaing, Valery	For	FR	3	2	3	8
Raffarin, Jean-Pierre	For	FR	3	2	2	5
Coughlan, Anthony	Against	IR	2	2	2	5
Total	3:7 For	4:6 Foreign	122	100	38	100

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Notes: * No. of times the actor type was coded ** No. of articles that included a given actor type

Overall, the dominant actors in the debate were domestic ones—primarily politicians. In total, as an individual actor President Václav Klaus occurs most often (28%) followed by Prime Minister Jiří Paroubek (14%). However, since he only took office in April 2004, he actually played a relatively prominent role during the second half of the period under study. Both actors not only articulated opposing views of the European Constitution and had diametrically different visions of the future of Europe, but held completely opposing world views as such (neo-liberalism vs. social justice and the welfare state model).

Other domestic politicians from both the governing coalition and the opposition took part in the debate—ministers, deputies and high-ranking party members in the case of the former, as well as other deputies such as European deputies, etc. The governing coalition voice was dominated by the Social democrats, as the small parties within the governmental coalition rarely made public pronouncements.

¹⁷ The neo-liberal Klaus in this case formed a rather awkward coalition with a long-term critic of European integration and leftist intellectual.

It is very interesting to note that the opponents of the Constitution in general as well as among political elites were able to distinguish between support for the Czech Republic's membership of the EU and opposition to the current Constitutional Treaty in both substantive and procedural terms¹⁸.

Nevertheless, Václav Klaus remains the dominant actor, featuring both actively, writing articles himself and giving interviews about the Constitutional Treaty and his vision of Europe's future, and passively in the (both positive and negative) reactions of other actors to his statements and arguments. There is hardly an article in the qualitative sample that does not mention Václav Klaus in one form or another. It should also be noted that Václav Klaus, unlike some other high-ranking politicians, is known to write his articles personally, and to be well-read and up-to-date on the issues involved in the debate, both at a political and an academic level.

Also in the period under study, an international exchange took place between MEPs (Vice-chairperson of the EP, Alejo Vidal-Quadras Roca, and Chairperson of the Constitutional Committee, Jo Leinen) in an attempt to challenge Klaus as the only head of an EU country opposing the Constitutional Treaty. This intervention on their part contributed to the overall transnational character of the Czech debate.

Since Prime Minister Paroubek only really became a figure in the debate spring 2005 after he entered into office, it is important to note that Klaus, who as President enjoyed both high visibility and an increased ability to shape public opinion, essentially did not have any opponent of comparable rank for most of the ratification period. Indeed, Alexander Mitrofanov, editor-in-chief of *Právo*, made this very point, stating that Václav Klaus did not have an opponent of his own stature in the domestic debates. And so, while highly critical of the President's arguments, he was forced to acknowledge his dominant role:

“But at home he [Václav Klaus] does not have any opponents of his own stature. And all foreign opponents of equal rank will be regarded with mistrust for interfering in our affairsGiven the fact, therefore, that the President will continue to go through discussions like a diamond outshining all his opponents, he will manage to have a negative effect on a large number of people, influencing their attitudes towards European projects and focussing their attention exclusively on domestic issues.” (Mitrofanov 2005)

It should be noted that the President's language often verges on populism, but, precisely because it is readily comprehensible, it is very influential and can be easily swallowed

¹⁸ The opponents of the Constitution mostly support the country's EU membership and thus it is erroneous to simply label them euro-skeptics.

wholesale by the general public.¹⁹ However, the President's arguments are not necessarily simple in and of themselves. On the contrary, he is able to capture the core of the issues at stake and translate them into readily understandable terms without losing their essence.

Another important point to note is the need for the power dimension to be included in our media discourse analysis. Power accounts for the differences in the reception of different claims made by different actors—based on the analysis of additional resources (Klaus 2002, Klaus 2005), we agree that Vaclav Klaus speaks differently as a president than say a citizen or member of a think tank. Former minister of Foreign Affairs, Jiri Dinsbier, has pointed out that the President is first a president and then a citizen, and therefore his points carry considerably more force in the domestic arena and internationally (Dinsbier 2005). Interestingly and revealingly, the Center for Economy and Politics (CEP) presents Vaclav Klaus as a citizen and its honourable chairman rather than as the Czech president, thus trying to underplay the power dimension at work in his pronouncements. As the former Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs put it:

“The current international and domestic exchange arises from the fact that the citizen K. does not understand—or chooses not to understand—the difference between these two roles [i.e., citizen and president]. Any citizen has the right to express his opinions regardless of what they are. The head of state however has accepted responsibility for all citizens and his public actions influence perception of the Czech Republic in Europe.” (Dinsbier 2005)

Interaction Among and Relations Between Actors

Given the polarized nature of the domestic debate, the dominant type of relationship between actors was competitive and characterized by conflict. On the other hand, as far as relations between domestic and international actors were concerned, more positive types prevailed such as sympathy, alliance, coalition and co-operation—this is incidentally also true of relations between domestic parties and their ideological allies at an European level which were characterized by coalition building. As mentioned above, this is demonstrated by the attempts of domestic actors to further strengthen their arguments by reference to key European actors.

At a domestic level, references to the relationship between the political elite and citizens in the publications surveyed are rather sporadic. Conversely, at a European level it is more accentuated. In both cases, however, the citizens are treated as passive actors (constitu-

¹⁹ This argument is supported by public opinion polls on the levels of trust felt by the general public for institutions and politicians. For the period under study (October 2004–October 2005) the highest level of trust among Czech population was felt for President Václav Klaus (around 70%), followed by the government with a significantly lower trust rating (40%) (Čadová 2006). The gap between trust in President and in the government, including, the Prime Minister as the second most visible actor in the constitutional debate, supports our ascription of a dominant role to President Klaus in the Czech constitutional debate.

tional ratification is basically happening to them, in their name). In terms of horizontal relationships among member states the hierarchy is depicted mainly in terms of old and new as well as small and large member states. The role of newer and smaller member states is viewed as limited and evaluated negatively from a democratic perspective.

Table 3. Attitudes of Key Political Actors and Preferred Ratification Method.

Political Actors Function	Political affiliation	Govern- ment/ Opposition	Ratification method	General Attitude to the Constitu- tion	Alternative op- tions out of crisis
Václav Klaus <i>President</i>	*)	-	Referendum	Against	Discard constitu- tion
Social Democratic Party	Left	Government	Parliamentary ratification (until 2/2005) Referendum (from 3/2005)	For	Reflection period Continue informa- tion campaign
Stanislav Gross <i>Chairman of Social Democratic Party, Prime Minister until 3/2005</i>	Left	Government	Parliamentary ratification	For	Reflection period
Jiří Paroubek <i>Prime Minister from 4/2005</i>	Left	Government	Referendum	For	Reflection period Continue ratifica- tion by referen- dum ²⁰
Christian Democ- ratic Party-People's Party	Centre	Government	Referendum	For	Reflection period Stop Governmental Information Cam- paign
Freedom Union	Right	Government	Referendum	For	Reflection Period
Civic Democratic Party	Right	Opposition	Referendum	Against	Constitution is death – Re- draft/Discard
Jan Kasl <i>Chairman of Euro- pean Democrats</i>	Right	-	Referendum	For	Continue ratifica- tion

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Note: *) The Czech President is former Chairman of the Civic Democratic Party, but as a President he has to be apolitical.

II.2. Constitutional Topics

Six major issues dominated the Czech domestic context within the period under study, two of which were domestic, one European and three transnational: (1.) the ratification debate; (2.) domestic conflict; (3.) enlargement; (4.) internationalization of the political arena, (5.) French and Dutch referenda, their potential failure to ratify the Treaty and the various options for resolving the ensuing constitutional crisis and, finally, (6.) globalization. Let us

²⁰ According to public opinion polls carried out by STEM, a private independent Czech organization which focuses on sociological research and conducts some of the largest surveys in the country, 65% of people were in favour of continuation of debate about the Constitution or for ratification (Paroubek, *Právo*, 2.9.2005).

know briefly analyse the development of each of these issues over the period under study. (For a chronological description of the Czech debate see Table 4.)

One of the major issues of the ratification debate in the Czech Republic was the ratification procedure. There was no clear cleavage on this issue among the major political actors. In September 2004 the majority of the political actors favoured ratification via referendum and the discussion centred on the necessity to adopt the bill on referenda and to amend the Czech Constitution²¹. It was Civic Democratic Party which in January 2005 proposed a referendum on the European Constitution. During the following months polarized conflict among the LR cleavage could be detected as disadvantages (possible failure) as well as advantages (democratic debate) were debated. In March the government agreed on and put forward the bill on general popular referenda (also applicable to the Constitution ratification referendum).

However, in April 2005, in response to developments in France, the discussion came full circle, and returned to its beginnings with the majority of the political elite starting to shift in favour of parliamentary ratification. The failure of the French and Dutch referenda led to a discussion of whether it was wise to continue with the planned and costly governmental campaign.²² In the summer and autumn of 2005 the government finally decided to postpone the campaign as well as ratification itself.

Domestic conflict between supporters and opponents of the EU Constitution was mapped along a left-right axis and involved key actors from the domestic political scene—the President, the government, the parliament, and the Czech Constitutional Court²³. The major division or fault line ran between the Social Democrats (supporters of an EU Constitution) and the President (opponent thereof). And, to reiterate, the major player with regard to this issue, and who to a large extent structured and determined the direction of public debate on

²¹ In the case of the Czech Republic, the Parliament would have to pass a special law to allow a referendum as there was no provision for one in the Czech Constitution

²² The government planned to spend 218 million CZK (approx. 8 million Euro) for the propagation of the European Constitution. The President on the other hand initiated a translation of the pamphlet by an Irish euro-sceptic Anthony Coughlan entitled *Say yes or not to the European Constitution* (Coughlan and Klaus 2005). Klaus had written an endorsing foreword and organized several high profile conferences on the event. The publishing was also supported by billboards and the book became bestseller.

²³ The Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic came into existence together with the country itself on the January, 1st 1993. The Court does not form part of the system of ordinary courts; its jurisdiction can be summarized as follows: 1. Constitutional review of enacted norms; 2. Concrete constitutional review (dealing with petitions lodged incidental to a dispute); 3. Proceeding on the compliance of international treaties under Articles 10 and 49 of the Czech Constitution with constitutional laws; 4. Constitutional complaints (constitutional review of decisions and official acts); 5. Cases concerning impeachment of the President or his incapacity to hold office; 6. Disputes concerning a Member of Parliament's election or eligibility for office; 7. Jurisdictional disputes between state bodies and self-governing regions and 8. Proceedings concerning measures necessary to implement a decision of an international tribunal. The Court has no power to give advisory opinions. The court is composed of 15 Justices, appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate.

the matter, was none other than President Václav Klaus. In January 2005, President Klaus appealed to the Czech Constitutional Court, questioning the compatibility of the European and the Czech Constitutions. But, in early February, the Constitutional Court answered that according to the Czech Constitution the Constitutional Court can and will only review the compatibility of the European Constitution with the Czech Constitution upon the initiation of the ratification process of the European Constitutional Treaty in the Czech parliament²⁴.

Table 4. Key Events and the Czech Constitutional Debate.

<i>Time</i>	<i>EU Event</i>	<i>National Reception of the EU Event and the National Debate</i>
Oct 2004-	Signing of the Constitutional Treaty in Rome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of ratification • Discussion of further enlargement (Turkey) • President Klaus openly criticizes the EU and the Constitution both at home and abroad • Polarized conflict about the Constitution between the President and Chairman of the Parliament of the Czech Republic and some other politicians, mainly Social Democrats • Civic Democratic Party proposes referendum • President refers the question of the constitutionality of the EU Constitution to the Czech Constitutional Court²⁵
Feb 2005-	Spanish referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional Court Ruling: European Constitution not in conflict with Czech Constitution • Dangers and advantages of ratification by referendum discussed • Government approves “Referendum Bill” (allowing, <i>inter alia</i>, a Constitutional ratification referendum) • Governmental as well as coalition crisis; discussion of preliminary elections • First reports of a shift in French public opinion on EU Constitution towards “No” • President recommends that citizens read the Constitution • EP criticizes Václav Klaus for his anti-Constitution stance; Klaus fires back, resulting in polarized conflict in which domestic actors participate both nationally and transnationally
May 2005-	French referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of first year after accession • Governmental crisis resolved, reconstruction of the government, new Prime Minister Paroubek makes Constitution focal point of his program • Prime Minister threatens to stop governmental funding of President’s official travels if President continues to criticize Constitution • Social Democrats intensify cooperation with other European ruling social democratic parties (German SPD, French Socialist Party and British Labour Party) • First discussions of the potential failure of referendum in France • Discussion about whether to call a halt to or continue governmental campaigning on the Constitution
June 2005-	Dutch referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister Paroubek proposes an extension of the ratification period

²⁴ Open letter of the Chairman of the Constitutional Court Justice Pavel Rychetský to the President Vaclav Klaus as published on the website of the Czech Constitutional Court (available online http://test.concourt.cz/cs_verze/aktuality.html last visited 20th October 2006).

²⁵ In February 2005 the President expressed concerns that the European Constitution would contradict the Czech Constitution because it limited Czech sovereignty. Letter available on-line <http://www.klaus.cz/klaus2/asp/clanek.asp?id=PfEVn8EeTyJe> last visited 12.5.2006.

June 2005-	Luxembourg presidency, Reflection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visegrad countries, including the Czech Republic, support Ukrainian membership of the EU • Various options for turning crisis around discussed
July 2005-	Luxembourg referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Klaus invites leaders of the political parties to discuss the future of the EU • Reflexion on the EU crisis • Discussions about further EU enlargement
Sep 2005-	British presidency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various options for turning crisis around discussed • EU summit and its agenda discussed, dangers of globalization
	Parliamentary ratifications in Luxembourg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on Czech voters

Source: ConstEPS discourse media analysis Czech Republic

The President was also the most active political actor in terms of engaging in dialogue with members of the Czech public, attending debates with students at the major universities as well as talking to the general public around the country. And, when the Czech translation of the Constitution became available, the President recommended that all citizens read the document.

The spring of 2004 brought about a further escalation of the governmental and coalition crisis. Contrary to the expectations of many and to the particular distaste of Civic Democrats, the President did not call for anticipated elections but vowed to reconstruct the existing government. At the end of April 2005, upon his inauguration, the new Prime Minister, Jiří Paroubek, made the ratification of the European Constitution a corner stone of his governmental agenda. From the very beginning of his term in office, and under growing international pressure, the new Prime Minister also attempted to get the President ‘under control’ by threatening to discontinue his official travel funding if he persisted in being so vocally against the Constitution. This conflict further fuelled Czech domestic debate.

After the failure of the French and Dutch referenda, the conflict between supporters and opponents of the Constitution continued to shape discussion of the various options for resolving the resulting constitutional crisis. In July 2005 the President invited the leaders of all the major political parties to discuss the future of the EU.

Whereas we have shown above that the President was a central figure and an engine of the constitutional debate at political level, it is also important to remember that his engagement also took the form of direct discussions involving the think-tank *The Center for Economy and Policy (CEP)*. CEP organized several workshops, conferences and lectures to discuss the Constitution, including panel discussions involving young scholars and students. Unlike any other high-profile domestic politician, Václav Klaus was also very active in discussing the European Constitution and his views on the future of Europe with university students, taking part in numerous public debates. For the duration of the period in question

the President can therefore be regarded as the motor of Czech public debate on the Constitution, attracting attention both within domestic and transnational political arenas and drawing civil society, general and segmented publics into the debate.

The issue of further enlargement had also featured prominently in the Czech debate, although to a much lesser extent than the other three topics. Throughout the period under study the positions of the major political actors with regard to further EU enlargement (mainly in reference to Turkey) differed from one another—generally speaking, further enlargement was viewed with moderate approval by supporters of a Constitution and with moderate disapproval by its opponents. The issue of Turkish accession evolved into polarized conflict, including a clash within the governmental coalition. The Christian Democrats viewed EU membership for Turkey as not very desirable and tended to advocate special relations with Turkey instead. In this case the left-right cleavage was not so much a determining factor, nor was the constitutional supporters/opponents cleavage. Rather a religious-secular cleavage among the major political actors emerged and structured the debate. This religious-secular polarization was also in evidence in the public debate, as well as taking the form of more active participation by Czech citizens, including several demonstrations (both for and against Turkey's accession).

While the political elite supported further EU expansion eastwards in general, this support was not wholesale. For instance, there was little enthusiasm for the inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania, but the states formerly part of Yugoslavia met with approval and, as mentioned before, the Czech Republic supported Ukrainian EU membership along with the other Visegrad countries.

Last but not least, the topic of enlargement was also discussed in historical terms. In other words, it was discussed in terms of earlier accessions including, particularly, the Czech Republic's accession to the EU. In these discussions positive as well as negative assessments of the Czech Republic's membership of the EU were voiced. In this context some eurosceptics made a connection between the accession and current affairs, criticizing some unfavourable conditions of accession such as the restriction of freedom of movement.

Now we will turn to the key transnational issues, such as cooperation between the Visegrad countries and the role played by the Czech Republic in this group, which shaped the domestic debate. Other influential international issues include the French and Dutch referenda and reaction to the constitutional crisis caused by non-ratification abroad, and globalization. The internationalization of the Czech political debate was fuelled by the polarized nature of the domestic conflict, and here again the major actor was President Václav Klaus, who openly criticized the Constitution and the EU in general both at home and abroad. In April 2005, the European Parliament criticized Václav Klaus' attitude towards the Constitutional Treaty. Klaus fired back, and the exchange resulted in polarized conflict in which

domestic actors participated both nationally and transnationally both in support of and in opposition to the President.

The transnational character of the domestic debate was further heightened by the new Prime Minister, Jiří Paroubek, who immediately got involved in the ratification debate at European and national level. Under his leadership, the Social Democrats intensified their cooperation with other European social democratic parties in government (German SPD, French Socialist Party and British Labour Party). This process of reaching out across European borders also took place in reverse, with transnational actors taking an active part in the domestic debate.

From March 2005 onwards, the central focus of the debate was two major foreign referenda, the French and the Dutch, including discussions of a (hypothetical) failure to ratify the TCE in France and possible failure in the Netherlands. In the summer months following failed ratification, different ideas on how to surmount the ensuing constitutional crisis became the focal point of the constitutional debate in the Czech Republic. This issue was also of a transnational nature as the Prime Minister Paroubek officially proposed the prolongation of the ratification period on the meeting of EU heads of state.

Last but not least the dangers of globalization were discussed throughout the period under study, intensifying around the time of the EU summit under the British Presidency in September and October 2005. The major issues were of the ability of the EU to compete at a global level, its international role and security.

In the Czech media the Constitution was predominantly understood and presented as a continuation of and further step in the direction of European integration. Often a link was created between the Czech Republic's accession to the EU and ratification of the Constitution by the country. The politicians who were opposed to the latter were able to distinguish between supporting the country's membership of the EU (which they tended to support, although to different degrees) and the matter of the EU Constitution (which they opposed). Within the media, the Constitution was presented in both procedural and substantive terms. However, the emphasis was mainly on the constitutional process, both in the Czech Republic and in referendum countries (mainly France and the Netherlands).

Table 5. Types of Constitutional Topics

Issue Types	Occurrence*		No. of articles**	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of articles
Constitution as such	82	22	22	58
Substantive topics	118	31	16	42

Constitutional process	178	47	32	84
Total	378	100	26	100

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Notes: * No. of times the actor type was coded, ** No. of articles that included a given actor type

That strand of public discourse which interpreted the Constitution as a rupture with the conditions accepted upon the country's accession to the EU is well represented by the following quotation:

“It is necessary to point out that the Constitution changes the conditions, under which we joined the EU. ... [W]ith a majority voting principle, no matter how the percentages are set, the classroom syndrome will come into effect—groups will emerge, as will conflicts, and we will be confronted with self-assured tyrants and bullies. A division into THEM and US will take place. The influence of the Czech Republic and its voting share on common decision-making will not only decrease, but under the majority voting principle will be continually eroded. Even today, we are handing over to Brussels—with our power and sovereignty—nothing less than part of our freedom. Actually, we are giving it away—selling it for subventions from the European purse, for functions, for directives and orders. None of these things are free. We pay with our freedom and we pay hard cash.” (Bratský 2005)

Before the “No” votes in the French and Dutch referenda, procedural matters tended to dominate the debate, the major question being how the Constitutional Treaty would be ratified—by referendum or by parliamentary ratification. Although democratic rhetoric was often used to either support or oppose both positions, clear vote-seeking motives can be discerned among the various actors.

Around the time when the debate reached its highest level of intensity in terms of media coverage (April-June 2004), the debate among both supporters and opponents of the Constitution shifted to substantive issues, including the character of the future polity; here major competing conceptions included “ever closer union” vs. an “organization of European states”. After the failure of the referenda in France and the Netherlands, the procedural character of the debate was still rather strong, although it shifted towards the search for possible ways out of the constitutional crisis. At a national level, the procedural character of the debate was also discussed in terms of debates on the type (how/and by whom: by consultative or legally binding referendum or by parliamentary ratification) and timing of ratification.

In substantive terms, issues such as the EU's values, objectives, competences, institutional framework and its legal personality²⁶ were well represented in the Czech debate. Policies of the Union were discussed mainly in regard to the EC acquis that was still not fully implemented by the Czechs.²⁷ The Services Directive was a subject of domestic debate and discussed in terms of the EU citizenry. For instance, the Civic Democratic Party's deputy, Petr Bratský, pointed out that Czech citizens, together with the citizens of other new member states, were currently eligible to fully enjoy only two out of the four basic freedoms of the European Union, freedom of movement and freedom of services being restricted.

With regard to the discussion of the constitutional process, the "No" votes in the referenda in France and the Netherlands changed the Czech media debate. Before the referenda, issues such as the Constitutional Convention, the Laeken Mandate, the IGC and the general constitutional debate were prominent in the media. There were also discussions about the different modes of ratification in different countries, mainly in reference to the domestic question of referendum vs. parliamentary ratification.

After the French and Dutch rejections of the TCE, the focus shifted to the EU crisis that the ratification failure had unleashed, and the issue of what the possible options were for getting past this crisis. The following ideas were voiced: **(1.) ignore the crisis:** continue the ratification process and resolve the issues during the EU 2006 summit; **(2.) emergency summit:** call an emergency summit to deal with the crisis and include a social appendix to the Constitution for France (in other words, **partial re-draft**); **(3.) change the actors:** Jacques Chirac has discredited himself and should not be allowed to play a dominant role in further debates on the behalf of France, and he should name someone else to replace him in constitutional treaty negotiations (the name of Jacques Delors was mentioned as a possible substitute for Chirac; and **(4.) re-write:** a new Convention on the Future of Europe should be convened in a few years to shorten the Constitution, and this time members of civil society should play an important part in the drafting, an improvement in the Convention method that would enhance the democratic legitimacy of the Constitution (in other words, **discard**).

It is interesting but not surprising that the successful Spanish referendum was not given as much coverage as the French and the Dutch referenda. In fact, coverage of the Luxemburg referendum was so minimal that there was little more than a simple report that it had taken

²⁶ The „legal personality" that the Constitution would confer on the EU would break down distinctions between first, second and third pillar issues as set out by the Maastricht treaty, and would establish the EU as an independent international body, so that, viewed from the outside, it will look like a state in its own right. This issue was discussed in the Constitutional Convention by the Working Group III on Legal Personality (CONV 73/02).

²⁷ The Czech Republic continues to be criticized by the European Commission for its slow adoption of European directives and legislation. By the end of 2004, 9.6% of the total number of regulations still had not been adopted as national law.

place. One of the articles in the qualitative sample refers to this unevenness of coverage, maintaining that the European Commission had not fully exploited the potential of the Spanish “Yes”. According to this article, the Spanish referendum highlighted three major problems with constitutional ratification: (1) **domestic political struggles vs. Constitutional ratification**: the focal point of ratification becomes the struggle between domestic parties rather than the Constitution itself, (2) **brain washing**: one-sided arguments are often presented, and (3) **presentation of adoption of the Constitutional Treaty as the only possibility**: put in negative terms, it was made to seem as though the EU would be unable to continue functioning as a flexible and prosperous community if the Constitution were not adopted. (Friedrich 2005; for comparison see also. Grecco 2006)

II.3. Argumentative strategies

The polarized nature of the domestic debate was reflected in the argumentative strategies employed in it—evaluative as well as advocative strategies played a dominant role (see Table 6). Both opponents and supporters of the TCE favoured negative arguments, in other words the former using national interests and the threat of the total erosion of the nation state in the European Union with the current Constitutional Treaty to justify their refusal of the TCE, and the latter pointing to the negative impact of globalisation to support the need for further integration of the European Union.

Table 6. Argumentative Strategies

Statement Categories	Occurrence*		No. of articles**	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of articles
Definitive	29	11	10	26
Designative	60	23	23	61
Evaluative	85	32	28	74
<i>Positive</i>	10	4	8	21
<i>Negative</i>	68	26	24	63
Advocative	89	34	29	76
<i>For</i>	61	23	25	66
<i>Against</i>	28	11	17	45
Total	263	100	38	100
Positive/for	71	27	28	74
Negative/against	96	37	28	74

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Notes: * No. of times the actor type was coded, ** No. of articles that included a given actor type

Very often, the key political actors engaged in active exchanges over significant periods of time, referring directly to their arguments as well as taking direct issue with their oppo-

nents' arguments.²⁸ In this regard, auto-citation by authors very often appears, mainly in the conflict between Prime Minister Paroubek and President Klaus, but also between high-ranking members of the Civic Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party.

The following quotation by the Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, Stanislav Gross, illustrates the polarized nature of the debate as well as its ideological character:

“The question of continuity of European integration is now, more than in the past, a political struggle for basic European strategic aims. In it [the struggle] Social Democrats support far-reaching and gradual economic, political, social and cultural integration, while the Neo-Liberals only want to push economic integration.” (Gross 2005)

In to the case of the Constitution, authors very often use definitive statements, couched both in positive and negative terms, identifying categorically what the Constitution is and what it is not. Statements advocating the Constitution are also used, but negative evaluations are by far the more dominant argumentative strategy.

The use of Metaphors

Metaphors are often used to ‘reproduce’ social reality – both reflecting the conditions prevailing in social reality and having vital potential for production of a different social reality - and thus play an important role in bringing about social change (Drulák 2005). Given the polarized nature of the Czech constitutional debate, analysis of the use of metaphors can shed further light on the argumentative strategies employed. In the qualitative sample four strong metaphors were used to describe the Constitution, the situation after ratification failure and the interaction between key domestic political actors. In a nutshell they all amount to: hard times call for hard measures.

In the following interesting example of metaphoric language in our context, the author uses an extended storm-tossed, pelagic metaphor to represent both of the opposing positions (pro and contra) on the Constitution, with the EU cast as a beleaguered island in danger of being swamped from the outside:

“A storm surrounds the island. Some suggest the building of breakwaters, and want to sit together in the courtyard, holding hands and wait there together until the bad times are over. Others suggest the training of sailors, the building of sturdy boats and want to set off into the waves. The storm is called globalization and the island is the European Union.” (Sobota 2005)

²⁸ The most interesting exchanges were covered in the qualitative analysis thus raising the overall number of articles analyzed but leaving the sample's representativeness unchanged.

The two approaches to globalization depicted by this metaphor refer, *inter alia*, to the two major competing ideologies. While the image of ‘waiting in the courtyard’ refers to an attempt of proponents of the European Social Model to preserve Europe’s unique welfare system at any price, the alternative, ‘heading out onto the storm-tossed seas,’ in other words the liberal concept, stresses the active attempt of one section of the European political elite to increase the EU’s role as a global player and a shaper of globalization.

Another metaphor referring to the EU crisis following the rejection of the Treaty in certain referenda compares the EU crisis to key events of world relevance such as the fall of Communism or the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Referring to the deeply formative character of these events, it suggests that this crisis too, by analogy, will change the general tenor and fabric of the social reality in which we exist. Critics of the constitutional process, on the other hand, argue that the development of the Constitution was rushed and that its result therefore was not up to the standards expected from a Constitution: “*An apple picked too early is green and sour.*” (Bratský 2005)

While the preceding quotes were used in the quality press as well as in the sectoral media, the final quote describes the attempts by Prime Minister Paroubek to control President Klaus’s international activity that did not toe the official governmental line and was perceived as damaging the position of the Czech Republic in Europe: “*Klaus should dance to Paroubek’s tunes.*” (Pospisilova and Ovcacek 2005).

II.4. Justifications

A wide range of different kinds of justification was used in the Czech debate by both sides. While supporters of ratification stressed European interests and focussed on global competitiveness and the EU’s role in the world, opponents stressed the unique nature of the European welfare model and the need to avoid liberalization (especially in relation to the Services Directive.)²⁹ Overall, economic, social and security arguments dominated among the Constitution’s supporters. Constitutional opponents on the other hand used a larger variety of argumentative strategies, with the primary focus on economic and security issues in relation to member state interests, however not ignoring the issue of national sovereignty. The preponderance of justifications and dejustifications reflects the polarized nature of the Czech debate, the nature of the conflict being determined by the ideological cleavage between Left and Right, in other words between the vision of an ‘ever closer’ social federalized Europe and the neo-liberal vision of a market-driven (international) organization of independent states.

²⁹ To a certain extent, this tallies with the findings of Baldwin, who states that “[T]he new member states are likely to view the imposition of the [sic] West European social policies as a way of robbing them of their competitive edge.” (Baldwin 2006:13) However this argument would only hold for constitutional opponents.

It should also be noted that some actors did not seek to justify their statements either at all, or chose to use direct quotations of influential European leaders to justify their claims.

The concept of history plays a small but nevertheless interesting role in the Czech debate. History is usually referred to in general and in negative terms. Supporters of the Constitution use European history to depict the Constitution as the final line drawn under negative events such as Communism and WWII. And while its supporters define European identity in terms of an “ever closer union” and as an attempt to form a “we-community,” constitutional opponents tend to depict the EU as a common market and/or intergovernmental organization, an “organization of European states.” In the qualitative sample some references to the troubled European past such as wars, communism or authoritarianism were also present. European Integration is perceived as a way to overcome this often problematic past.

The most prominent ‘historical’ (or at least backward-looking) reference occurs in the context of the enlargement debate. There was a tendency among both political actors and journalists to evaluate enlargement in light of Czech accession. Constitutional opponents stressed the unfavourable conditions under which the country acceded to the EU, with frequent references to the issue of restricted freedom of movement, while supporters of the Constitution generally stress the positive aspects and impact of Czech accession.

Political ideologies are not explicitly used very often to justify positions on the TCE, although general references are made to human rights, ecology and multiculturalism by supporters of the Constitution and to obligations to the national community by constitutional opponents.

In terms of democracy, similar justifications were used by both sides to support their diametrically different positions: While the former pointed out as positive features of the Constitution its transparency, accountability and attempt to breach the democratic gap by strengthening the link between citizens and elites, the latter used the same arguments to justify their stand against the Constitution.

III. Synthesis

The overall the Czech domestic debate shows strong tendencies towards Europeanization of domestic political conflict: The European Constitutional Treaty has become a symbol of the cleavage between the government and opposition, in both political and ideological terms. While the government manifested strong pro-European and pro-constitutional tendencies, and the new Prime Minister Social Democrat Jiří Paroubek, made ratification the focal point of his agenda, the opposition both on the left (Communists) and on the right (the conservative Civic Democratic Party) was very critical of the Constitutional Treaty both in substantive and procedural terms.

The constitutional treaty was understood and presented as a further step in the direction of EU integration. The link between the Czech Republic's accession to the EU and constitutional ratification by the Czechs was often made. It is important to note that the politicians of the opposition parties made a distinction between support for the country's membership of the EU (which they tended to support although to differing extents) and the Constitution (which they opposed).

The Constitutional treaty was presented in the media in both procedural and substantive terms. Before the rejection of the Treaty in France and the Netherlands, procedural matters had tended to dominate the debate, the major question being the ratification method (referendum vs. parliamentary ratification). Although democratic justifications were often used both to support or object to both variants, clear vote-seeking tendencies can be detected among the actors.

The overall discussion can be summarized as (1.) rather general with very few actors capable of (or indeed interested in) a more complex and indepth discussion of substantive constitutional topics, leaving many of their claims unjustified; (2.) polarized conflict on several levels, including that of the governmental coalition and opposition, and (3) personalisation, with the Prime Minister Paroubek and President Klaus becoming personal adversaries. The high polarization and politization of the Czech Constitutional debate accounts for the dominant role of the political elite in the debate at the expense of other actors such as members of civil society and the citizenry.

Around the peak period, the debate on both sides of the divide shifted to substantive issues, including discussion about the character of the future polity and orbiting around major competing visions of Europe such as "ever closer union" vs. "an organization of European states." After the failure of the referenda in France and the Netherlands, procedural issues remained in the foreground, although there was a noticeable shift towards searching for alternative ways out of the constitutional crisis. At a national level the debate's procedural focus is in evidence in the debates on the appropriate type and timing of the constitutional ratification.

In terms of argumentative strategies and justifications, both sides of the constitutional divide favoured negative argumentative strategies, with opponents of the TCE arguing in terms of national interests and the threat of the total erosion of the nation state within a European Union based on the Constitutional Treaty as it stands, and its supporters on the other hand, pointing to the need for further integration of the Union for social and economic reasons with the dominant negative justification being globalization. (For a summary of the patterns and dynamics of Europeanization see Table 7).

Table 7. Patterns and Dynamics of Europeanization of the Czech media debate

DIRECTION/ QUALITY	COVERAGE Context Process/Events	VISIBILITY AND REP- RESENTATION of Elites and Institu- tions	VISIBILITY AND REP- RESENTATION of Citizens and Civil Society	JUSTIFICATIONS
NATIONAL Predominantly national context issues	CZ Period I. Czech debate con- centrates on ratifica- tion method	CZ Period I. Dominant actor is the President, presenting anti-constitutional views		CZ constitutional opponents Periods I. + II. Use larger variety of argumentative strategies - member state interests dominant, but also economic and security issues → focus on national sovereignty
TRANSNATIONAL (horizontal dimen- sion) Foreign events e.g. French/Dutch/Spain ish referenda	CZ Period II. Czech debate con- centrates on the (pos- sible) effects of the ratification failure as well as substantive issues	CZ Period II. President challenged both at home and abroad, transnational dimension of conflict fuels the domestic debate	CZ Period I. Citizens are treated as passive actors— ratification is basically happening <u>to them</u> , in <u>their name</u> CZ Period I and II. Domestic think tanks dominate in terms of civil society actors, but deal with transna- tional issues	
EUROPEAN (vertical dimen- sion) Signing of the con- stitution, summits			CZ Period II. 'Citizens of Europe' are treated as passive actors who voiced an opinion (the French and Dutch "No" in referenda)	CZ supporters of Constitution Peri- ods I. + II. European interest, European welfare model, economic, social and security argu- ments dominated

Source: ConstEPS qualitative media analysis Czech Republic

Note: Period I. (October 2004–March 2005), Period II. (April 2005–October 2005)

Overall two major discourse strands can be identified within the Czech debate on ratification of the Constitutional Treaty: (1) the Constitution is portrayed as the logical continuation of EU integration, and is linked it to the country's accession to the EU and (2) the Constitution is seen as as the main formative document determining the ideological character of the European Union. The first discourse is used by both sides of the debate. While supporters of the Constitution stress the need for the further integration of Europe and the

democratic values of the Constitution which would establish “ever closer Union,” its opponents claim that the constitutional Treaty changes the conditions under which the Czech Republic joined the EU, stressing the shortcomings of the documents in both substantial and procedural terms. The second discourse strand is ideologically highly loaded, with the main point of friction the clash between a view of the Constitution as establishing a European social model (evaluated positively by constitutional supporters such as the Social Democrats, and negatively by constitutional opponents, such as President Václav Klaus or the Civic Democratic Party) or as dangerously entrenching liberalism in the European way (which is the view of constitutional opponents from the left).

Thus we can say in summary that the Czech constitutional debate has a moderately pluralist pattern, and a two-dimensional cleavage structure with the conflicting line between European proponents and opponents drawn both in ideological terms (the left-right cleavage) and in terms of the division national sovereignty vs. European interest. At a domestic level, the need for debate on the Constitution and visions of Europe was used as an argument in the ratification debate³⁰. The opponents of the constitution used the gap between elites and citizens on the European level to de-justify the constitution.

Furthermore, based on our findings, we can support Kopecký and Mudde’s typology of party positions on Europe (Kopecký and Mudde 2002) because our media discourse analysis has demonstrated that the Czech political elites distinguish between support for the country’s EU membership³¹ and support/criticism of the Constitution/constitutional Treaty. Thus we can reassert our initial assumption, that alongside support for European integration—both retrospective in regard to the actor’s own country and prospective in regard to further Eastern enlargement- and support for EU in general (which is rather diffuse)—support of/opposition to the Constitutional Treaty is an equally important dimension and constitutes a useful extension of Kopecky and Mudde’s typology. This division line between supporters and opponents of the Constitution does not arise solely from the Constitution *per se*, but is rather an expression of a more general pattern of transnational political conflict between competing models for the European polity.

Conclusions

Our media discourse analysis shows that the struggle over the ratification method, which played an important role within the position formation process during the Constitutional Convention (Schulz and Chabreckova 2006), continued to shape the Czech debate even during the ratification period. However, our analysis reveals a shift from substantive issues which played a more important role during the Constitutional Convention towards proce-

³⁰ By supporters of the referenda, which at the end recruited from among both constitutional opponents and proponents?

³¹ In Kopecky and Mudde’s wording, support for European Integration (Kopecky and Mudde 2002).

dural issues. The definition of the Constitution both in positive and negative terms continued to play an important role.

In regard to Czech “euroscepticism,” our media analysis shows that the picture indeed is more complex. While generally speaking the Czech Republic scores high on the “eurosceptic scale,” closer analysis reveals that this is a result of deeply polarized party political conflict that resurfaced between constitutional supporters (Social Democrats, Christian Democrats) and constitutional opponents (the Civic Democratic Party and Communist Party). Another factor that further strengthened the “eurosceptic camp” is the politicisation of the process, with a relatively low number of non-political actors involved in domestic media debate.

The overall political character of the constitutional debate further supports the argument that a strong Europeanization of Czech politics took place in pre-accession periods, and that political parties played an important role in this both communicating and cooperating transnationally with other European political parties and shaping voter’s preferences with regard to the Constitution and European issues in general (Baun et al 2006). Thus political parties continue to play a role as important actors, mediating and shaping the processes of Europeanization in the Czech Republic. However, based on our analysis, we see that a culture of debate (mainly the personalization of conflict) prevails.

Unlike Trezn et al. who characterize the constitutional debate in Europe as distant and cut off from domestic partisan contestation, with the exception of France and Sweden (Trezn et al. 2006), we find a high level of both politization and domestic contestation.

Thus, we see political and ideological conflict as having a key role in fuelling the Czech Constitutional debate (reflected in high profile of the issue in the Czech media as compared to say its profile in Poland, Estonia or Latvia). The Czech case thus serves as an example of the importance of including the dimension of power in media discourse analysis as well as the notion of conflict, thus demonstrating the need to incorporate elements of radical democracy into the prevailing framework of deliberative democracy used in studies of European public sphere.

This takes us back to the initial question of our paper: if and to what extent can the Czech Constitutional debate be regarded as a ‘one man show?’ Based on our media discourse analysis, we can sum the Czech Constitutional debate up by saying that this is **not the case**. Although President Václav Klaus was unarguably the key actor, shaping and contributing to the Czech Constitutional debate to a great extent, as well as contributing considerably to its transnationalisation, he was clearly not the only and certainly not an uncontested player.

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Appendix 1. Description of the Czech Media

Overall the media discourse analysis of the Czech constitutional debate within the ConstEPS comparative framework aims at following four aspects of the constitutional debate over the ratification period: (1.) actors: to determine what actors were taking part in the debate (both in terms of origin and type) and what the dominant patterns of interaction among them were; (2.) topics: how was the debate structured in terms of subject matter; (3.) argumentative strategies: description of the four types of argumentative strategies (definitive, designative, evaluative and advocative) with stress on the positive and negative aspects of evaluative and advocative strategies; close attention is also paid to the use of metaphor; (4.) motivations and justifications: analysis of major motives recognized, foregrounded or denied by dominant actors; special attention is paid to ideas about and visions of Europe and the use of history as a justification.

Kommentar [YUN1]: Again, these are very relative categories and I need to know what you mean by them here as elsewhere.
REPLY general comment refers to ConstEPS framework

Media Type		Name (National Language)	Name (English)	Political Orientation	Circulation Rate (31.12.2004) aprox.	Source/Search Engine	Total No. of Articles	No. of Articles in Qualitative Sample	No. of Articles Selected for Analysis
Dailies	Quality Press	<i>MF Dnes</i>	Youth Front Today	center-right	300,000	Factiva	358	8	205
		<i>Právo</i>	Right	center-left	170,000	Newton IT	806	19	560
	Tabloid/Yellow Press	<i>Blesk</i>	Lightning	tabloid	570,000	Newton IT	89	1	12
Weeklies		<i>Týden</i>	Week	centre	54,000	Newton IT	69	2	50
		<i>Reflex</i>	Reflex	center-right	57,000	Newton IT	44	2	36
Sectoral public		<i>Respekt</i>	Respect	center-left	17,000	Newton IT	110	6	110

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Total	1476	38	973
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Appendix 2. Media Coverage of the Constitutional Debate—Overview in Time (in %)

	X. 04	XI.04	XII.04	I. 05	II. 05	III. 05	IV. 05	V. 05	VI. 05	VII. 05	VIII. 05	IX.05	X. 05	Total
<i>MFD</i>	1.45	0.48	2.42	7.25	3.86	9.66	24.64	22.22	17.39	5.31	2.42	2.42	0.48	22.19
<i>Právo</i>	6	9	19	58	39	59	87	88	88	23	9	15	18	55.52
<i>Blesk</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	0	0	1	0	1.29
<i>Reflex</i>	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	7	15	3	1	3	1	3.75
<i>Respekt</i>	0	8	3	9	4	13	18	14	18	10	7	5	2	11.90
<i>Tyden</i>	0	1	4	1	0	5	6	12	14	3	1	0	3	5.36
Contribution to Total	0.96	2.14	3.43	8.90	5.57	10.50	17.47	18.44	18.97	5.36	2.47	3.11	2.68	100.00

Appendix 3. Articles Selected for Qualitative Analysis

	Source	Date of Publication	Author	Author's Position	Title in Original Language	Title in Translation
1.	<i>Právo</i>	29.10.2004	Petr Drulák	Expert, Director of the Institute for International Relations	Turecko patří do Evropy	Turkey is part of Europe
2.	<i>MFD</i>	11.12.2004	Václav Klaus	Czech President	Evropa své problémy neřeší	Europe is not solving its problems
3.	<i>Právo</i>	11.12.2004	Lubomír Zaorálek	Chairman of the Parliament (Social Democratic Party)	Začala válka o ústavní smlouvu	The battle for the Constitutional Treaty has begun
4.	<i>MFD</i>	7.1.2005	Emanuel Mandler	Academic/intellectual, historian	Svízelná volba mezi dvěma zly	Difficult choice between two evils
5.	<i>Právo</i>	11.01.2005	Miroslav Ouzký	EP Vice-Chairperson, Civic Democratic Party	Euroústava – volba, nikoliv nutnost	European Constitution : A choice not a necessity
6.	<i>Právo</i>	18.01.2005	Pavel Machonin	Academic/intellectual, sociologist	Postoje k EU, mezery a posuny	Attitudes towards the EU: gaps and shifts
7.	<i>Právo</i>	09.02.2005	Jiří Pehe	Academic/intellectual, political scientist	Euroreferendum je obětí demagogie	Euro-referendum is the victim of demagoguery
8.	<i>MFD</i>	15.2.2005	Johanna Grohová	Journalist	Euroústavu ano, referendum ne	EU constitution yes, referendum no
9.	<i>Respekt</i>	28.2.2005	Milan Fridrich	Journalist	Španělsko řeklo euroústavě Ano	Spain said “Yes” to the European constitution
10.	<i>Právo</i>	24.03.2005	Iveta Krámesová	Journalist	Summit hlasitých obrů a tichých trpaslíků	Summit of loud giants and quiet dwarves
11.	<i>MFD</i>	26.3.2005	Mírek Topolánek	Chairman, Civic Democratic Party	Evropa slov versus Evropa činů	A Europe of words versus a Europe of deeds
12.	<i>Respekt</i>	29.3.2005	Marek Hudema	Journalist	Liberalizace EU se odkládá	Liberalization of the EU is postponed
13.	<i>Týden</i>	4.4.2005	mk	Journalist	Klaus startuje velkou antikampaň	Klaus starts big No-campaign
14.	<i>Respekt</i>	11.4.2005	Václav Nekvapil	Expert, member of think-tank The Association for International Issues	Až galský kohout zakokrhá	When will the French cock crow
15.	<i>Právo</i>	16.04.2005	Václav Bělohorský	Academic/intellectual, philosopher	Skepse ústava	Scepticism and the constitution
16.	<i>MFD</i>	22.4.2005	Václav Klaus	Czech President ³²	Dvě pojetí Evropy	Two visions of Europe
17.	<i>Právo</i>	22.04.2005	Alexander Mitrofanov	Editor-in-Chief, <i>Právo</i>	Klaus nemá protihráče	Klaus does not have a challenger
18.	<i>Právo</i>	26.04.2005	Jiří Dinsbier	Academic/intellectual, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1990-1992)	Občan K. a hlava státu	Citizen K. and the head of state

³² President since 2002; Prime Minister 1990-1998; Chairman of the Parliament 1998-2002; Chairman of the Civic Democratic Party 1992-2002.

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19.	<i>Respekt</i>	9.5.2005	Tereza Brdečková	Academic/intellectual, writer	Jedinec, ne stát	Individual, not state
20.	<i>Právo</i>	10.05.2005	Jiří Paroubek	Prime Minister, Social Democratic Party	Proč jsem pro Ústavní smlouvu	Why I am for the Constitutional Treaty
21.	<i>Respekt</i>	16.5.2005	Ondřej Šrámek	PhD student, political science	Stát, ne jedinec	State, not individual
22.	<i>Právo</i>	23.05.2005	Petr Bratský	MP Civic Democratic Party	Evropská ústava – výprodej svobody	Europ.Constitution–freedom for sale
23.	<i>Reflex</i>	26.5.2005	Jiří Brož	Journalist	Dobrá rada nad Evropu	Good advice over Europe
24.	<i>Blesk</i>	27.5.2005	Eva Pospíšilová a Jiří Ovčáček	Journalists	Paroubek vzkázal Klausovi: Zmlkni, nebo jsi dolétal!	Paroubek sent word to Klaus: Hush up or you've finished flying
25.	<i>Právo</i>	01.06.2005	Jiří Pehe	Academic/intellectual, political scientist ³³	Zvoní, zvoní zrady zvon	Ding dong, the bell of betrayal
26.	<i>Respekt</i>	6.6.2005	Václav Nekvapil	Expert, member of think-tank The Association for International Issues	Ústava v agonii, kudy dál?	Constitution in agony, where to go next?
27.	<i>Týden</i>	6.6.2005	Miroslav Korecký	Journalist	Mrtvá, ale naše!	Death, but ours!
28.	<i>Právo</i>	07.06.2005	Jan Kasl	Chairman European Democrats	Referendum je nezbytné	A referendum is necessary
29.	<i>Právo</i>	20.06.2005	Petr Uhl	Journalist	Kdo hájí české národní zájmy	Who is looking out for Czech national interests
30.	<i>Reflex</i>	23.6.2005	Bohumil Pečinka	Journalist	Událost, jež změní Evropu	An event which will change Europe
31.	<i>MFD</i>	25.6.2005	Vladimír Dlouhý	Expert (Minister of Industry and Trade 1990-1997)	Evropská integrace se nachází na rozcestí	European integration finds itself at the crossroads
32.	<i>Respekt</i>	27.6.2005	Jiří Sobota	Journalist	Tony Blair jako eurovůdce	Tony Blair as the leader of Europe
33.	<i>Právo</i>	01.07.2005	Petr Zgarba	Minister of Agriculture, Social Democratic Party	Krize EU naše zemědělství neohrozí	Crisis of EU will not endanger our agriculture
34.	<i>MFD</i>	30.8.2005	Petr Ježek, Pavel Telička	Consultants/lobbyists ³⁴	Unie je v překerní situaci	Union is in a precarious state
35.	<i>MFD</i>	2.9.2005	Jiří Paroubek	Prime Minister, Social Democratic P.	Na „mrtvého koně“ nesázím	I don't back dead horses
36.	<i>Právo</i>	7.9.2005	Zdeněk Jičínský	MP Social Democratic Party, constitutional lawyer	Unie je v krizi – a co dál?	The Union is in crisis: what next?
37.	<i>Právo</i>	10.09.2005	Stanislav Gross	Chairman of the Social Democratic Party	Nechceme pouze ekonomickou integraci Evropy	We want more than just European economic integration
38.	<i>Právo</i>	26.10.2005	Jacques Chirac	French President	Síla a solidarita – tak zní odpověď na očekávání Evropanů	Strength and solidarity: this is the answer to the expectations of Europeans

³³ Advisor to Václav Havel during his presidency (1990-2002)

³⁴ Pavel Telička was the head negotiator of the Czech EU Accession and the first Czech EU Commissioner