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Campaigning for Europe ‘after’ the Economic ‘Crisis’: The Cases of Greece and Portugal

The European elections held in May 2019, were the first in which political discourse in both Greece and Portugal adopted a moderately optimistic tone after a rather long period of austerity. Indeed, the eagerness of parties, in both countries, to create a narration for the ‘day after the crisis and the memoranda’ figured prominently in the electoral campaigns.

In our research, we analyse the identity frames that prevail in 2019 electoral campaign narratives, as evident in the commercials of the twelve parties which elected MEPs to the European Parliament in both Greece and Portugal, while seeking to understand the degree of intertwining or separation of domestic politics and the European public sphere. Our analytic corpus is constituted by pre-electoral political commercials of the Greek and Portuguese parties that elected at least one MEP in the 2019 European elections.

Among the major findings one can find a rather intense “domestication” of the messages of the political commercials (especially in Greece, where three MEP’s coming from far-right parties were elected), and a focus of the political parties on economy and other related issues, such as (un)employment, wages, pensions, taxation, with a “double” rationale: first, to “hit” their political rivals for the allegedly wrong policies implemented in the past, which led to serious recessions, and, second, to mark the need for a steady return and continuation of growth and prosperity, according to the ideological orientation of each party.