

The EU in Swedish News

Assessment of SVT's Broadcasted EU News Coverage



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Abstract

This research has analyzed SVT's broadcasted EU news coverage in 2012. SVT is Sweden's main public service media outlet, and the point of the research was to understand how EU news has been covered by this media outlet. The reasons for why this is important is because the media plays a vital role in democracies for a number of reasons looked upon in this research, one of them being that the media acts as the watchdogs of democracy, particularly the public service ones. The theoretical aspect is based upon Foucault's power relations in discourses, as well as Habermas' normative values regarding the media. Additionally, a discourse analysis is used to uncover trends in the EU news coverage.

The material used has been collected from SVT's TV-archives, and contains 177 news clips. The analysis was approached in two ways. The first one, macro-analysis, looked at general trends in frequency, topics, reasons, and agents; the second one, micro-analysis, looked at lingual examples of the coverage.

There are four conclusions. Firstly, there is a low frequency of EU coverage. Secondly, the EP is almost neglected in the coverage. Thirdly, there is a biased EU coverage. And lastly, the EU is presented unrepresentatively.

Keywords: SVT, EU, news, coverage, discourse

Words: 19999

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1 Introduction

A significant proportion of Swedish law-making is done at the EU level. However, there are no precise numbers for the amount of EU laws that Sweden has to implement. EU-upplysningen (2013), the Swedish office for public impartial EU information, estimates that around 30% of all new Swedish laws come from the EU; additionally, Swedish communes have estimated that up to 60% of all political matters are related to EU laws. As such, one can say that the political laws and decisions that are made at the European level do significantly influence the daily lives of people living in Sweden. Furthermore, one can ask whether the people living in Sweden are adequately informed about the EU and its laws, and the extent to which the news media cover, as well as includes, the legislative process in order to ensure that citizens are well-informed.

A survey conducted by the Eurobarometer from 2007 shows that on average 63% of all EU citizens obtain their information on EU politics and institutions from television; on the other hand, 41% of EU citizens obtain their information on the EU from the printed press (“Eurobarometer 67” 2007:135). Consequently, if the media, and in particular the broadcasted media, does not cover politics in general adequately well, then, as Scheuer (Lazaroui 2012:147-148) argues, the quality of a democratic society is questioned as the level of informed citizens decreases which becomes problematic for political accountability and governance. Peter Berglez, an associate professor at Örebro University researching global journalism and the Swedish news media’s EU news coverage, points out that the systemic problem is a discontinuity of the EU coverage in Swedish news media: “One has to include EU news coverage in the daily routine...It should be as common to report from Brussels or Strasbourg as it is from Stockholm”¹ (Wester 2009:10). Vanni Tjernström (2001:401), the former lecturer on journalism at Kalmar University, concludes that apart from a lack of continuous EU news coverage in the media, there is a problem with the manner in which national news media covers EU politics. For example, according to numerous studies, the European political journalist culture has been found to be rooted in national agendas, and thereby cover EU matters from a nationalistic point of view (Tjernström 2008:517).

As a result, taking into consideration the important role that media has in a democratic society (Mihailidis and Thevenin 2013:1614; Hoskins 2013:27; Tworzecki and Semetko 2012:408), poor EU coverage by the news media in Sweden becomes problematic when remembering the amount of impact that the EU has on the Swedish society. As such, the starting point for this thesis is the

¹ ”Man måste få in EU-bevakningen i vardagsrutinen. Mer journalistik måste integreras i till exempel vanlig lokaljournalistik. Det borde vara lika naturligt att rapportera från Bryssel eller Strasbourg som från Stockholm”

very way in which news media communicates political issues or institutions like the EU. For example, discourses in the media have a significant importance for an individual's affinity and identity with a political system such as a state (Rosas-Moreno, Harp et al. 2013:13; Roosvall 2014:56). Subsequently, this has a direct consequence for citizens' perception of, for example, the EU, as well as their level of support for the former's institutions, especially if the image of the EU appears to be threatening Sweden and the Swedish way of life. According to Raunio's (2007:205) research on Nordic euroscepticism, the EU is perceived as a "political giant" who is a threat to the traditional Swedish state, as well as community. The problem could well be related to the challenge that both the Swedish political system and the national news media are faced with the issue of adaptation to the contemporary EU political system. Additionally, this problem is reinforced due to the limited EU coverage as noted above; for example, apart from certain key events in the EU like ministerial summits or national referenda, the national outlook on the EU, in combination with missing EU public debates, undermines the EU's credibility, as well as the relative democratic nature of the EU, with the people and thereby its support too (Boomgaarden, Vreese et al. 2013:608-609).

Vanni Tjernström's (2001) comprehensive analysis of EU political communication is remarkable as it covers a comparative EU coverage analysis of four major Nordic² newspapers. However, Tjernström's (2001:15) analysis only includes one major newspaper from each of the Nordic countries in her analysis, and she points out that her results lack validity. On the other hand, Baisnee (2007:500) points out that extremely few studies on EU broadcasted news coverage has been done compared to the printed press. Consequently, the problem here with the lacking analyses of broadcasted EU news coverage is that the vast majority of EU citizens obtain their primary information on EU politics and institutions through the televised media as opposed to the printed one³. In that perspective, it is remarkable that there is a lack of analyses related to broadcasted media not just in Sweden, but even in Europe. According to Baisnee's (2007:500) own research, the reason for the lack of televised news analyses is because it has been easier to deal with the empirical material from news articles compared to broadcasted video clips.

In Sweden, the national public TV broadcaster is SVT which is paid for by people through a television license fee. As such, SVT, the most trusted national media in Sweden, is the Swedish public service television company that is independent of all pressure groups, political or commercial; furthermore, SVT's most important aspect is to scrutinize public authorities and institutions, as well as private firms which exert political influence (Ahlgren 2012). This subsequently means, in relation to other Swedish television companies, that SVT has a particular duty to closely monitor the EU decision-making processes and institutions to the extent to which Sweden itself is influenced by the EU. Consequently, this paper wants to do an empirical study of SVT's broadcasted

² The Nordic countries cover Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Furthermore, the four newspapers picked for the analysis respectively were Politiken, Hufvudstadsbladet, Aftenposten, and Dagens Nyheter.

³ The EU average is 63% as related to the Eurobarometer analysis cited above.

news coverage of the EU; from the results, the paper will be able to assess SVT's public service obligation to scrutinize politics: seen in relation to the Brusselization of legislative powers to the EU's supranational institutions from the Swedish parliament: Riksdag.

1.1 Research Question and Aim

Based upon the aforementioned introduction on the EU's influence on Sweden, the TV media's influence on people's EU information, and SVT's public service obligations, the following question is what will be analyzed in this thesis:

How has the EU been covered by SVT in their Rapport 19:30 news in 2012, and what consequences does it have for SVT's public service duty?

The aim of this research is to uncover the trends and structures of SVT's EU news coverage so as to be able to understand the way in which the EU is portrayed in SVT's news media. The importance of such a research will be theoretically elaborated upon in chapter two which deals with the general ideas of the role of the media in democracies.

1.2 Disposition

The thesis is structured in the following way. Chapter two thoroughly explains the research question's societal importance; here, the normative considerations on the role of media with a public service obligation in a European-level democracy will be examined from a theoretical perspective. Chapter three of the thesis looks at the methodological aspects of the coming analysis; for example, the respective concepts, the theoretical choices, and others. In the following three chapters, there will be a macro-analysis, micro-analysis, and a perspectivizing part. The macro-analysis will expose the general thematic structures in SVT's EU news coverage; the micro-analysis will look at the articulated trends in SVT's coverage; and finally, the perspectivizing part of the analysis will combine the results of the macro- and micro-analysis in a perspective in relation to the normative considerations taken up in chapter two. The final chapter of the thesis will be the conclusion where the research question will be answered; in addition to the answer, the thesis ends with a recommendation for further research in this area.

2 The Role of Media in Democracies

This chapter will argue in depth, both theoretically and empirically, the thesis' research question and why it is politically and socially relevant to explore. With that said, this chapter is a thorough description of the arguments framed in the introduction. Apart from the aforesaid, this chapter should also emphasize certain normative ideals in regards to the role of the media in democracies, as well as the concept of public service which will subsequently be used in the latter part of the analysis.

The first part of the chapter will argue for why the media has an important democratic role in society, as well as how the media gives public legitimacy to a democratic political system. This theoretical walkthrough ends with an argumentation for how the Swedish media, in interaction with other European national media, is potentially able to create a Europe-wide public space that, through a network of other national public spaces, can create a common European public sphere needed for an EU-wide democracy.

The second part of the chapter will describe how the media and public spheres have an identity creating political function via discourse theory, thereby linking the political system with citizens. Within this part, it will be described how the media influences citizens' knowledge and attitudes, and vice versa.

In the last part of the chapter, the paper will empirically support the assumption that televised news has a special status in relation to other media, especially in regards to EU affairs. The chapter is then ended with a review of SVT's position as a public service institution and how this should matter in the EU news coverage; here, there will be a particular focus on the areas of the public service obligation which is about strengthening citizens' capacity to scrutinize political power.

2.1 Media and public space in democracies

This paper looks upon the media as key actors in society: categorized as the public space which subsequently then links the political system on the side with the citizens on the other. Almost all research on democracy and the media in the EU commences with the concept of the public space in which the media is emphasized as an important actor to the democratic legitimacy of a political system (Trenz 2012:8; Aalberg, Blekesaune et al. 2013:282). Additionally, the theoretical "battleground" is not whether a European public space and the media are important for a European democracy, but rather if the former exists today, if it

is possible to exist at all, and in which form it would exist (Machill, Beiler et al. 2006:79).

The starting point for the concept of public space lies with Jürgen Habermas as he has conceptualized it, and as he has been developing the concept further (Habermas 1962; Eriksen and Weigård 1999:236-259). Consequently, what follows is an outline of the most relevant aspects of Habermas' theory for this thesis; however, the actual theory is not included in this thesis' analysis per se. Conversely, the point is to use Habermas' normative thoughts on democracy and public space as a theoretical argument for the research question, and, as a starting point, for a broader discussion of the role of the media in democracies; this should lead to some normative considerations which this paper will use to put the results of the analysis into a subsequent perspective. This paper will primarily look at Habermas' idea of communicative action through the work of Eriksen and Weigård on communicative action and deliberative democracy from 1999.

Habermas' emphasis on the communication between individuals which links together the society is rooted in his theory on communicative action from 1981; in this work, Habermas rejects the notion that something is definitely true or right, and that the most suitable solution to a given problem is via deliberation: it is through the communicative process in a public space that a society is maintained and developed (Habermas 1996:196; Eriksen and Weigård 1999:18). As such, problems should subsequently be solved in the public sphere through a deliberative process where everyone, in principle, should have the possibility to express their opinions which should in turn ensure a critical outlook on societal issues and strengthen the democratic legitimacy in solutions. Consequently, as Habermas (1996:5) argues, the communicative action is necessary in order to create a mutually intelligible understanding of the world we live in. The discussion on the nexus between identity, media, and the political system is central, but, for now, this will be discussed later in this chapter.

2.2 A Deliberative Democratic Model

Habermas' deliberative democratic model is a combination from parts of the traditional liberal democratic idea with its focus on the individual and civil society, and the republican idea of democratic legitimacy with its roots in active citizenship with a continuous engagement and dialogue within a public sphere (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:151). This synthetic perception of a democratic society is interesting in regards to the Europeanization of national politics as it opens up the possibility to have a democracy with a political community without necessarily belonging to the same cultural community.

In addition to the aforesaid on the deliberative democratic model, the essential features that Habermas includes in this model from the liberal democratic tradition are the ideas of the protection of citizens and civil society from the state authorities; consequently, in order to ensure the civil society, citizens' sovereignty and democratic legitimacy, a democratic system must take into account the fact

that in a modern pluralistic society, many different opinions on values and morals exist, and each are in a constant competition with one another; on the other hand, republican democratic values perceive that legislative procedures should be based on a general agreement on values and morals while the liberal democratic adherents claim that legislative procedures must be structured so that different groups can coexist under the same laws; consequently, Habermas argues that there should be fundamental rights and governance ideals which everyone in principle can agree upon (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:167).

Subsequently, in relation to the EU, Habermas claims that a “nation” is not necessary for a successful political community as the latter should simply be based, as aforesaid, on certain fundamental rights and governance ideals; as a result, this would then enable a well-functioning democratic and supranational political system where different values, morals, cultures, and languages can politically interact in a democratic and legitimate manner. This is where the media plays a crucial role in the democratic legitimization of a political system as the legitimacy of political power happens in interaction with the legally institutionalized legislative procedures, and the public sphere where the citizens have the freedom and possibility to participate in politics (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:170). It is then through the public sphere that the citizen has a possibility to participate, and obtain information on certain societal issues; from this then, a public sphere should be understood as an overall concept for the different open and free spaces for the civil society to debate as a way for people to exchange information (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:139).

As already mentioned, mass-media are central elements in a modern, well-functioning public sphere, and this is then even more emphasized in a large-scale democracy like the EU. Discussing EU affairs and creating public opinion can indeed occur in a smaller local community, but that would probably include a fraction of all EU related matters; consequently, for EU politics to be more representative and seen by many, mass-media is necessary. In the following part, there will be a description on how national mass-media in a European-wide network can make a European public sphere.

2.3 EU Public Sphere and Media

The concept of a public sphere is somewhat vague and without a clear definition. This vagueness in the concept can have a significant impact on how the role of the media in a European public sphere is understood. For example, the traditional perception of the concept describes the public sphere as a coherent unit based upon media that covers the entire democratic, political, and cultural community (Machill, Beiler et al. 2005:5). With such a perception of the concept of a public sphere, then the EU’s political community will naturally appear to have a significant democratic problem as there is no common European media which all Europeans can utilize.

However, this perception of a European public sphere has been criticized. In Habermas' terminology, the concept is depicted as "a highly complex network that branches out into a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional, and local sub subcultural arenas" (Haahr 2001:8). This means that, according to Habermas at least, public spheres should not be regarded as coherent units: rather it should be seen as a network of public spheres on all levels; for example, one speaks of a myriad of European public spheres on different levels that supplements each other. Similarly, other researchers have followed Habermas' understanding of a European public sphere, although they have started using the term "transnational public spheres" which describes how different national public spheres deal with EU affairs, but from different starting points (see Esmark 2005, Ørsten 2006; and Eriksen 2000). This is interesting as it is logical for newspapers to look at how a new law will affect the local area; for example, how would a new law on CO₂ emissions affect southern Sweden and so forth. However, democratic problems could occur if the news coverage in local media would emphasize a local angle on the legislative process, focusing unilaterally on the higher decision-making organ, for example the EU, without presenting the political perspectives upon which a new law is based. In that way, citizens would not be informed through a local public sphere about the legislative reasons behind a law, and that could make the decision appear undemocratic.

It is important to notice that a public sphere should be understood as a political public sphere rather than a cultural one which is seen as a network, primarily for mediated communication in which the participants are citizens and the authorized members of a political system (Esmark 2005:47). Consequently, a European political public sphere is therefore a mediated network of actors that subsequently includes EU citizens and EU decision makers. Mass-media and journalists have a central role as the mediating factor in this public sphere as they are the ones that link the former with the latter. The role of a mediating factor for media is then what this thesis focuses upon.

2.4 The Transnationalization of Politics

As aforementioned, the media's treatment and dissemination of EU related stories is the nexus between citizens and political actors. Subsequently, in connection with the Europeanization of national decision-making to Brussels, it is up to the media to adapt to this development. For example, Ørsten (2005:83) argues that national news media is limited to its national territory as it cooperates closely with national parliaments which make it hard to report well on EU matters; subsequently, he argues that the transnationalization of national politics via the EU has problematized the news media's work.

This transnationalization of politics means that more decisions are made at the EU level, and, according to the survey above, 60% of all political matters in Swedish communes come either directly or indirectly from the EU (EU-upplysningen 2013). Dai (2003:194) describes transnationalization as a process

that takes national decision-making to a higher political level: the EU level; however, for the EU specifically, transnationalization is a multi-way direction of improving governance in the EU polity by engaging and cooperating both horizontally and vertically with all actors: between local levels across EU countries, and with the EU institutions in Brussels. Consequently, with the transnationalization of politics in mind, and from a deliberative democratic model perspective, it is logical that news media should adapt to the contemporary political system which is yet another reason for why it is relevant to examine a publically owned news media like SVT.

2.5 The Media and Identity Creation

In this part of the chapter, the paper will highlight how the media and citizens affect each other's identities through communication. With the discourse theory as the thesis' starting point, one can understand and decode social constructions by analyzing the language. As such, it is assumed that a language is an epistemic approach to understanding social constructions in the world; consequently, through discourse analysis, one can study how languages describe the world, and uncover the way in which we experience and understand the world (Wiener 2006: 40). As discourse theory builds on the constructing capacities of language, this means that by studying how something is framed, one can gain insight into significant aspects of the structured discourses and identity formative relations.

Additionally, Pietikäinen and Dufva (2006:207) argue that discourses are relevant in order to understanding the formation of identities as one is able to explore socially shared and historically rooted significations which are present in discourses. These aforementioned social realities are firstly not fixed: this means that the former is open to redesign which subsequently adds a constructivist dimension to discourses; and secondly, social reality and identities are created in discursive contexts through deliberations, norms, and interactions rather than simply given (Delanty and Rumford 2005 15-16). In general, discourses can be explained as a combination of different communicative aspects which mutually give each other meaning in the social world. As such, discourses structure our realities by providing meaning, as well as framing what can be interpreted and communicated; with that said, discourses can likewise be changed to suit new circumstances and contexts.

Subsequently, both individuals and groups are bearers of certain identities that are open; as discourses are flexible and changeable, so are the accompanying and respective identities which are produced by the discourses. For example, Jørgensen and Phillips (1999:55) in their book describe identities as something that one acquires and obtains during discursive processes, and, as such, identities are then understood as something entirely social. One can then view identities as relational, and composed of a number of discursive correlations that socially then places individuals and groups in different "camps:" something that one is, and something one is not; however, these identities are not fixed. In principal, the

same is true for the formation of groups, even national groupings like a nationality. For example, as groups are socially constructed and are weighed against other groups for identification purposes, they are not formed until they are presented in discourses where people are then put into certain categories (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002 45-46).

Similarly, the senior researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies, Ulla Holm, argues on how foreign politics defines, and reinforces a national group identity as foreign policy is about who “we” are, and how “we” perceive ourselves in relation to others (Holm 2001:56). The question now is whether Swedes’ relation to the EU can be categorized as external relations. If one regards that the EU creates laws that has a direct consequence for Swedes, and that the decision-takers in the European Parliament are democratically elected, albeit with a lower voter turnout than in national parliamentary elections, to represent the public interest of Europeans in the EU, then one cannot claim that EU affairs are external relations to Swedes; however, the national media can still portray the EU in such a light.

Subsequently, this is interesting in relation to this paper’s research due to SVT’s role as the identity formative nexus between the EU institutions and the politicians on the one hand, and the Swedish citizens on the other. Furthermore, this is natural since SVT, as a significant source of information on EU matters, has a noteworthy discursive influence on Swedes’ public opinion on the EU and the respective EU identity. Apart from this, it is also important to note that SVT’s employees are all Swedes, or at least a significant majority as information is diffused in Swedish, and so it can be assumed that the workers at SVT share the same collective Swedish group identity with the rest of the Swedish population. Some other group identities that one can expect to play a part in the results is the journalist identity which draws upon the idea that journalists should be critical to politics, polities, and policies: the self-portrayed image of the democratic watchdog (Levine 2004:21; Holt 2012:8); this journalist group identity could be consequential for SVT’s EU news coverage as SVT should ideally present the political debate and guard democracy, but there is risk that the political debate could conflict with a potentially strong Swedish group identity where SVT will appear to be more “Sweden’s watchdog” rather than the “watchdog of democracy.”

2.6 Broadcasted News and SVT’s role

So far, the paper has covered how and why the media has a significant role as the mediating factor in a European public sphere: the correlation and nexus between citizens and political actors. In this part of the chapter, the TV-media will be examined more closely as the central medium in relation to the citizens’ access to the EU, and, more precisely, SVT’s special status as a publically financed public service media outlet with contractual obligations to the Swedish society.

The aforementioned studies in chapter one by Tjernström and Baisnee on the media coverage of the EU mainly focus on the printed press; however, as explained above, they lack validity as they have mainly focused on certain events in a limited amount of papers. Subsequently, as discovered by Baisnee, the lack of televised news analyses has been because of the difficulty of managing the empirical material: broadcasted video clips compared to news articles in relation to the time management of the researcher and accessible resources at her/his disposal. Scholars have also claimed that the most important source of information for many Europeans has been television news (Boomgaarden, Vliegthart et al. 2010:519); this is interesting because it coincides with the aforesaid Eurobarometer study showing that a significant majority of EU citizens obtain their information on the EU and its political system and processes via televised news: 63% of all EU citizens.

The choice of SVT as an analytical object is connected to SVT's position as a public service organization. Apart from its public service responsibility in the sense that it is politically independent of all political and pressure groups, it also has the responsibility to scrutinize public authority and private actors; Additionally, it is Sweden's most trusted national media as described above in chapter one (Ahlgren 2012). Similarly, Peter and Vreese (2004:16) concludes the argument that, so far, EU coverage is more prominent in public broadcasting outlets compared to private ones in the sense that public broadcasters go more in depth with their EU coverage, although coverage in both types of outlets is significantly low; this is then an interesting point for the coming analysis as it will be able to be compared and scrutinized in later research on this topic from various other angles.

So far, the paper has described how much of Swedish laws come from the EU. Principally, this means that SVT as Sweden's public service organization has the responsibility to cover the EU in a way that relatively relates to the amount of laws coming from the EU, as well as the level of the legislative competences placed in the EU political system. This is in part why an evaluation and investigation into SVT's EU coverage is highly relevant. Swedish citizens pay their radio and TV license to have a media outlet that covers significant legislative processes and public affairs, regardless of the level: national or supranational. This is why it is interesting to uncover if SVT covers the news material from the EU in a fair manner.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter, two arguments have been presented; firstly, the argumentation for the significance of the thesis' research; and secondly, the argumentation relating to a number of normative aspects that the public service news outlet, SVT, has on the Swedish society. This summary focuses on the latter argumentation as it will act as a normative measurement for the results in chapters four and five.

According to a Habermasian deliberative democratic model, a well-functioning political public is a central factor for an equally well-functioning democracy. In this type of democratic model, all citizens should have an equal opportunity to partake and gain insight in relevant political issues in society, even in a transnational democracy like the EU. The most important political actors publically are the media, and particularly the TV-media in relation to the EU, as surveys show that EU citizens obtain their primary information on the EU from that aforesaid media. Now, as the EU is a transnational political actor, so should the public sphere be as well. Furthermore, when the legislation is made in transnational political institutions, with a direct influence on Swedish laws, and when the people that create these laws are elected by Swedish citizens via the European parliament (EP), then the political institutions cannot be considered to be foreign politics in Swedish broadcasted news. As a result, the news media should cover all the politically related EU affairs in such a way that citizens are well-informed so that they can politically act accordingly; if this does not happen, then there is a risk that citizens will perceive the EU legislation as undemocratic, and illegitimate.

This aforesaid argumentation is also reflected in the SVT's public service purpose. If one then places this in relation to the EU, especially when considering the amount of influence EU legislation has on Swedish communes and as direct laws, and in accordance to the idea of a transnational political public sphere, then one can say that SVT should follow EU affairs closely so as to enable citizens to hold public authorities accountable.

In chapter six, there will be an evaluation on the extent to which SVT's broadcasted news fulfil their public duties to include citizens by informing them of EU affairs.

3 The Analysis Strategy

The analysis strategy has three overarching functions. Firstly, the theory of science and analytical traditions which this thesis is basing itself upon will be presented. Secondly, the analytical concepts will be set up: these will be drawn from the discourse theory. And lastly, the concrete analytical choices will be discussed.

With that said, this thesis will take a different approach by combining and integrating the theory and methodology chapters into this chapter under the concept of an analysis strategy. The reasoning behind this approach can be found in the constructivist scientific tradition. Subsequently, the argument is taken from professors Flyvbjerg and Åkerstrøm which, despite different research areas, focus on the same research paradigms; for example, both are inspired by Michel Foucault's focus on language and context in analyses of social reality.

As a starting point, Flyvbjerg's book on rationality and power⁴ is a central work in understanding constructivist social science. In his book, Flyvbjerg (1991) describes how and why social sciences should be conducted upon the premises of constructivism. Similarly, Esmark's (Esmark, Lautsen et al. 2005) standpoints are closely related to Flyvbjerg's and Åkerstrøm's perspectives, but the latter revolve their work around the idea of an analysis strategy which acts as the basis for constructivist research. For example, to a great extent, the latter authors try to develop an analytically strategic approach to the social sciences. As such, for this coming empirical analysis on a socially constructed context put forward by actors like the media, SVT in my case, the traditional rationalist scientific approaches would not be the most appropriate point of departure as they would not provide validity. Conversely, the approach here will be taken from what Flyvbjerg (1991) calls *det konkrete videnskab* (the concrete science in translation) which means a scientific model where the context determines the analysis. Here, theory and method are merged in what Esmark (Esmark, Lautsen et al. 2005) calls the analysis strategy.

The disposition of this chapter will begin with deepening the aforesaid scientific model, and from that point, the chapter will work down into more concrete levels and the contextual specific analysis strategy which will be used on the empiricism: SVT's EU coverage in 2012.

The first subpart of this chapter is a scientifically theoretical discussion that is supposed to explain which research model and tradition that this thesis draws upon, and why a constructivist approach has been chosen to answer the research question in this thesis. In the second subpart of this chapter, the context and the concept of an analysis strategy will be discussed in relation to traditional research

⁴ A direct translation from Danish. In Danish, the book is called *Rationalitet og Magt*

methodological approaches; additionally, this will cover which type of research questions should ideally be posed in this type of empirical analysis: news coverage.

In the third subpart of the chapter, the combination of the Foucault inspired contextual focused analysis, and the Habermas inspired normative value perspective will be examined and explained. In this part, the thesis will draw upon the arguments from the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method which is represented by Fairclough and Dijk. The point of this approach is to combine and merge the context based (subjective) and normative with a discourse analysis.

In the fourth part, the paper will present the discourse analytical concepts and operational indicators which will be used in the forthcoming analysis. Here, these concepts will be drawn from the CDA and the discourse theory as described by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. In the fifth part and sixth part, the paper will present the concrete analysis strategy which will play out between the concepts in part four and the empiricism.

3.1 Analysis Strategy instead of Methodology

Here, the paper will go in depth with the aforesaid scientifically theoretical discussion; the background for this discussion is the character of the thesis' research: socially constructed news about a socially constructed political institution like the EU. The traditional positivist and rational scientific approaches perceive that theories should be universal, abstract, discrete, complete, and predictable (Flyvbjerg 1991:55). However, this thesis approaches the scientific research tradition through scholars like Foucault, Flyvbjerg, and Esmark which then focuses on the particular, and on the context in which the analysis and knowledge are located. With that said, the point is not to identify a universal explanation about EU coverage, or to generate a theory on media coverage in general; Conversely, what is being sought here is to uncover a concrete knowledge on how SVT has covered EU news in 2012.

Subsequently, when one cannot hold the object constant, then one cannot generate universal causal effects; for example, one cannot claim that when a new proposal from the Commission has been proposed that it will always be a major news story in the SVT news. To illustrate this, one can think about the probability of how dependent media outlets are of a number of circumstances for their news: from the health of correspondents to natural catastrophes, and then, for example, to royal weddings in Sweden. As such, one could ask how much, and to what extent a context focused research could be used scientifically. Subsequently, one can see constructivist research as not trying to give universal results, but rather to reverse the results vis-à-vis the research object and subsequently assess it from certain normative values. For example, Flyvbjerg (1991:87) argues that the constructivist approach helps to assess society's practical rational choices in relation to where one is, and where one wants to be seen from the perspective of different values and interests; additionally, this occurs by preferably combining

the concrete empirical analyses and the practical philosophical considerations in one's research. More concretely then, the aforesaid means that this thesis tries to look at where SVT currently is when it comes to EU coverage, where they are potentially headed, and put this then into a perspective in relation to the aforesaid values in chapter two on democracy, public service, and so on.

From this then, one has to notice the dive towards a discussion on objectivity and subjectivity in research. As aforementioned, this thesis builds upon normative values; as such, an objective truth will not be sought after, and there will thereby not be an imperative to achieve positivist validity in the results. Validity will be considered to be achieved by being aware of the choices one has made to the extent to which it would be possible to test the results. This then is related to the tenet of constructivism that objectivity is not possible in social sciences and that one achieves the greatest "truth" in research by being aware of the choices and values one chooses (Flyvbjerg 1991:144). From this perspective, social science research should try to describe instead of explain and predict; the purpose would be to create an awareness of what is going on, how one is acting, and which consequences it has in relation to certain values. This point is relevant as it meets the criticism that constructivism is relativistic and nihilistic.

As such, with a departure in the constructivist perspective, the approach chosen in this thesis will be a descriptive one where the focus is on how SVT covers the EU, and not why the former's coverage is done in a certain manner; this is clearly reflected in the thesis' aforesaid research question. On the other hand, there is yet another reason for why this approach has been chosen; for example, the unpredictable human factors that could affect SVT's coverage could be numerous: layoffs in SVT due to budget cuts, correspondents falling ill, other issues which are perceived to be more important than EU matters, limited time coverage, and so on. These factors, along with others, could be explanations for why SVT has been covering EU affairs as it has, and so trying to keep these factors constant would be absurd. As a result, a why question would not be appropriate in this thesis' context.

The constructivist perspective to science poses other demands to how science is conducted; for example, when one cannot frame a standardized methodology to social science research, then one should instead create an analysis strategy to the certain research at hand. Context based criteria on validity and reliability must be developed as well. Conversely, the analysis strategy cannot include all relevant aspects of a given area within the research (for example, all factors or contexts), so choices must be made by the researcher on the most important aspects to include; however, the setup of the criteria upon which the analysis is built upon need to be examined and presented (Andersen 1999:15).

With that said, it is not enough to reflect over these types of criteria. In this context based analysis, it will be necessary to a greater extent to let the empiricism run the analysis as it is the former that actually is the object of the analysis, and it thereby delimits the context of the analysis. This means that one has to constantly and continuously reflect over the questions that the empiricism "poses" and be aware of the analytically strategic problems that will appear in the discursive frames. As such, the analysis will deal with the methodological

problems when they occur. For example, as the empiricism in this thesis comes from numerous video clips from SVT's evening news, then the starting point is to firstly collect the empiricism and then to categorize and systematize the collected material in different ways. To work in this manner, for example by placing the empiricism in focus, does not mean that there are no guidelines for the methodology; the advantage here is not to let the analysis, and thereby the conclusion, be driven by beforehand framed perceptions of which rationales dictate human behavior and action. Consequently, the guideline followed in this methodology is composed of the discourse analytical principles and concepts that has been chosen, and presented below. As Esmark (Esmark, Lautsen et al. 2005:9) puts it, social constructivist analyses start with establishing a certain perspective on a part of the social reality by unfolding a number of concepts relevant for the analysis. Subsequently, the concepts chosen here come from discourse theory which will then frame how the analysis will play out with the type of conclusions that will be able to be determined.

3.2 Foucault and Habermas

This thesis includes aspects from different branches of social science. These different branches build then upon different scientific arguments and ideas. For example, it could be considered to potentially be problematic to include two different thinkers like Foucault and Habermas in one thesis. However, in this part, the reasoning behind choosing these two will be further elaborated, as well as how one can combine Foucault and Habermas. Accordingly, the biggest difference between Foucault and Habermas' work is that the latter works from the idea of how the world should look like while the former focuses on how the world "actually" looks like: the difference is working normatively and descriptively; additionally, Habermas focuses on the political and societal ideals whereas Foucault focuses on the societal processes and power relations (Flyvbjerg 1998:219). Furthermore, unlike Foucault, Habermas cuts off context and power relations and thus criticize the former of being relativistic and nihilistic while Foucault believes that he avoids relativism by working with situational ethics (Flyvbjerg 1998:218-221). Academically then, we can see that both scholars work from different starting points as Foucault focuses on power and submissive relations among subcultures and minorities in order to inform and give them the opportunity to act while Habermas works with normative ideals upon which society should base itself on.

Foucault's criticism of Habermas, which is shared by Flyvbjerg and in this thesis too, is that the latter does not perceive dialogues to have power relations. For example, the very lingual action and intersubjective process is filled with power relations; however, not all parties can, or has the knowledge to argument equally effectively in a discussion, and so, in all communications, there will be a power relation (Flyvbjerg 1998:216). Subsequently, one can then say that SVT's

role as the actor exercising that aforesaid power in public is what this thesis will examine.

With that said, the way that this thesis will use Habermas is by taking his values on the democratic process and the preconditions that are needed in order for a decision to be termed “democratic” (Flyvbjerg 1998:228). It is exactly in this way that Habermas will be used, although with a focus on public space and its role in relation to the democratic legitimization of the EU. So, Habermas’ view that the public space is important for the creation of public opinion and democracy, and, that in principle, all should have access to information in the public space is shared in this thesis; however, Habermas’ “elimination” of power relations between various communicative actors is not shared.

By enrolling oneself in a certain hegemonic discourse as is done in this thesis, for example, by seeing the EU as the framework for a European democracy, or that the media plays an important role in the public space in a democracy, the thesis then contributes to a reproduction of a discourse that some might see as unwanted. At the same time, the thesis shares Habermas’ normative values and perceptions of how a democracy should look like, and, as such, does not see a problem in including it the way that is done here. Additionally, to emphasize the point of Flyvbjerg (1991:87), social scientific research should deal with “where one is, and where one is headed in accordance to normative values which are most valued in society.

The use of normative values as a starting point for a discourse analysis is perhaps best represented in the media research approach, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), by scholars like Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk. Here, a political-ideological ideal is the most common starting point as, for example, in Fairclough’s (2003) book on the issues of capitalism. In the case of this research, one can say that the political-ideological ideal is replaced with the ideal of the media’s role in democracies, or perhaps SVT’s role in the Swedish democracy. Although the thesis is not of a political-ideological character, certain concepts and points from the CDA can be used in a meaningful way here; however, this will be further elaborated upon in the next part of the chapter.

3.3 Concepts of the Analysis

As aforesaid, the empiricism will drive the analysis as the point is not to make the conclusion into a “victim” of previously framed universal criteria. Subsequently, every analysis needs to be able to draw upon a certain structure, or more precisely concepts. Furthermore, the thesis will base the understanding of discourses on Laclau and Mouffe. This part will elaborate upon the appropriate concepts for the analysis. To start with, the concept of discourse will be defined.

3.3.1 The Concept of Discourse

Discourse is a theoretical concept that gets defined differently by different scholars, but in general, it can be defined as a articulation of concepts and symbols that mutually give each other meaning and significance; subsequently, everything in the social world is composed of discourses as these are the mirror in which the social world is examined from; additionally, objects and events exist, but they make sense for humans when they are articulated (Laclau and Mouffe 2002:56). For Laclau and Mouffe, the core of discourses is the perception desired by the sender which given meaning to a discourse through either an equivalence or difference (Laclau and Mouffe 2002:52). The same applies in principle to actors' identities with whom one identifies with, and with whom one does not do so. Similarly, the process of a public opinion creation can be said to be a hegemonic power struggle where different configurations of equivalences and differences strive to be the most accepted label for a certain topic (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). As a result, one can see discourses as an exclusion of alternative meanings as they are relational vis-à-vis each other: framing what something is in relation to something else. These alternative meanings, which are excluded from a dominant discourse, stand opposed to the former so the lesser tries to obtain a greater amount of influence in order to be able to redefine the dominant public opinion. These are defined as antagonistic poles working and "fighting" against each other in order to be the main public opinion, and thereby achieve hegemony (Laclau and Mouffe 2002:74).

This can be related to politization as used in this analysis. For example, an antagonistic relation composed of discursive struggles where a political debate is fought in order to create a certain public opinion on a political topic. To illustrate this, one can think about a debate between the Swedish government and the EU Commission on Sweden's membership fee, thereby creating a certain public attitude; then, if one actor speaks more, then this actor's opinion will dominate the discourse more, and so the public opinion. In turn, this creates a certain "reality" for citizens, and then establishes a respective hegemony in public attitudes. Additionally, in relation to citizens' ability to act in a democratic society, it is important that a politicization of EU laws occur before the legislation is passed so that citizens have an understanding of what is being passed when it subsequently is presented to them.

Additionally, discourses structure our reality in a way that it becomes meaningful, and yet frames what can be interpreted and articulated; however, discourses can be changed as the opinion formation process never ends in society (Laclau and Mouffe 2002:60). As such, there is always the potential to redefine a discourse, and thereby public opinion, and so the hegemonic structure; this means that the discourse theory according to Laclau and Mouffe have challenged the idea of structuralism on a point from where everything is structured. This is then interesting in relation to this thesis' research question as SVT functions as the identity creating nexus between the EU political institutions and Swedish citizens. It is logical that SVT then, as an important EU informative source, has a significant discursive influence on the people's public opinion on the EU. However, according to the logic of the discourse theory, there must subsequently

be an influence the other way around as well. This is linked to the overlap between the communicating partners' opinions as these are necessary in order for each to be able to understand each other. This then means that SVT needs to communicate and represent the EU in a way that makes sense for its audience while, at the same time, SVT's EU coverage then develops people's opinion on the EU.

3.3.2 Discourse Analysis

It must be said that a discourse analysis is not about uncovering what really happened and why, but it is rather about uncovering and understanding the prevalent discourses and narratives. Andersen (1994:33) describes the discourse analysis as a way of looking for the eye-catching and obvious in one's material, but then one needs to be aware of interpreting the typical as it gets harder to analyze. This means that one must keep in mind to be mindful of the habitual occurrences in one's material as it might blind the researcher over time, and that is then a difficult aspect that one faces. As such, it is important to keep in mind the type of discourse analysis that is being done here where the empiricism is structured and analyzed with a starting point in the empiricism itself.

To emphasize this, the empiricism will be looked upon in two different ways here. Firstly, the macro-analysis which will be a systematic approach where general structures and relations in the material will be analyzed, for example topics and agents; the empiricism will be treated from a quantitative perspective from all the collected broadcasted news clips. And secondly, the micro-analysis will largely be a lingual analysis where it will go deeper into the material (the broadcasted news), and look at concrete articulations and existing hegemonic discourses in SVT's EU coverage. Consequently, the combination of these two approaches will make it possible to treat a large number of empirical material coherently in a discourse analysis. Furthermore, the macro-analysis will enable a mapping of general discursive structures in SVT's coverage of the EU, and contribute to a solid analytical base for the selection of the particular empirical material for the micro-analysis; subsequently, the micro-analysis will then be able to map general trends that occur within the frames of the mapped structures of the macro-analysis.

A similar discourse analytical approach has been used by Steiner (2012), the senior lecturer of peace and conflict studies at Malmö University; here, Steiner analyses quantitatively and qualitatively the image of Islam and Muslims in Swedish radical Christian media outlets. Another example is Langer (1998:11-12) at Copenhagen Business School where the empirical material used was the basis for his quantitative analysis which aimed at identifying topical and narrative macro-constructions about Germany's and the German image in Danish media; then he combines his quantitative analysis with a qualitative analysis which enabled him to take into account numerical and structural/qualitative aspects into account when concluding the characteristics of Germans and Germany.

3.3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

The way that this thesis uses the CDA is primarily connected to some analytical concepts that help to systematize the macro-analysis, and, to a lesser extent, the micro-analysis which is slightly different than how the CDA is normally used. Normally, the CDA is used in an analysis of few texts where one examines different semiotic, grammatical, and thematic aspects of the respective text and its social relation and significance. However, there should not be any problem in using some of the CDA's basic tenets on mapping discursive structures by examining different aspects of what Fairclough calls a discursive event and a discursive order which will be done here.

What follows is an elaboration of the most basic CDA concepts which will be drawn upon in the structuralization of the analysis. However, other elements of the CDA will be presented in the next part as it fits that coming correlation. Now, in Fairclough's version of the CDA, there are a number of concepts that, in correlation with the thesis' context, can contribute to the analysis; as a starting, the concepts used will be the order of discourse, discursive practice, and discursive event. According to Fairclough, "an order of discourse is a structured configuration of genres and discourses (and maybe other elements, such as voices, registers, styles) associated with a given social domain" (Bell and Garret 1998:145); subsequently, an order of discourse is a certain discursive structuring of a certain field which, in this case, the overarching order of discourse is SVT's news coverage of the EU. Fairclough (1995:58-59) expands the discourse concept by including discursive practices that do not just include lingual factors in the structuralization of a given field, but he also includes institutional aspects such as the work approach of the workers at SVT. In this thesis, the focus will only be on the lingual factors.

Previously in chapter two, there has been a discussion on the media's role in terms of identity and public opinion formation in society. In this context, it is relevant to see how the discursive practices constitute (produce and reproduce) a given order of discourse in different ways: "Discursive practice is constitutive in both conventional and creative ways: it contributes to reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) as it is, yet also contributes to transforming society" (Fairclough 1992:65). This connects well with the aforementioned roles of the media as earlier emphasized: the creation and reproduction of citizens' public opinions in relation to the EU and its decision-making processes.

When it comes to the discursive events, then that is what this thesis will look at the micro-level of the analysis: the specific broadcasted news clip. Fairclough (1995:56) describes the analytical correlation between a discursive event and the order of discourse in the CDA in the following manner: "On the one hand the analyst is concerned with the particular, with specific communicative events, for instance a particular newspaper editorial or television documentary ... On the other hand, the analyst is concerned with the general, the overall structure of the order of discourse." Furthermore, Fairclough (1992:97) describes the relation

between the two aforesaid concepts in a way that discursive events contribute to preserve traditional relations and hegemonies by either challenging or transforming those respective relations. Consequently, these aforesaid relations between the specific news clip on the EU (the discursive event), SVT's general coverage of the EU (the order of discourse), and the social reality is what this thesis will try to uncover and understand.

Conversely, Fairclough also focuses on other elements as well and not just articulations. Accordingly, by examining different characters in the object of analysis (the empiricism here), one is able to understand more about news discourses. For example, in this thesis, the focus will be on agents; these are used often in the representation of certain orders of discourse. To emphasize this more clearly, Fairclough (Bell and Garret 1998:148-150) argues that one needs to identify the different categories of agents if one wants to be able to understand better the structure of mediatized politics; for example, the categories range from professional politicians, journalists, experts, and activists to economic agents like employers and unionists, and to "ordinary people," and so all of these types of agents are potential protagonists and antagonists in hegemonic struggles in the media. These different types of agents naturally occur in news, and will thus also be dealt with here. With that said, it must be emphasized that the journalist plays a particular role as she/he primarily should not at least directly represent a certain political view; however, the thesis will look at how journalists at SVT present the political hegemonic struggles. Fairclough argues accordingly that journalists should articulate different discourses together by giving the different agents voices to express their concerns (Bell and Garret 1998:155). However, it must be mentioned that a politization can still occur even in cases where journalists do not use external agents in their coverage.

Naturally, in a limited amount of empiricism, it would be problematic to mainly examine the type of agents, or the type of discourse that this agent represents without looking at what is actually being said. However, when one works with a large amount of empiricism, then one can map out some structures in an order of discourse when one takes into consideration who is most often being represented, and in which contexts. Here then, it is important to mention that the focus will be on SVT's representation (use of language, use of themes, agents, and so on) of the EU, and so the focus will not go in depth with specific agents' articulations of the EU as such. Naturally, SVT does have an important editorial role on who will be included, but the point is to rather analyze the portrayal of the political debate on the broadcasted SVT news.

Lastly, it might be confusing that the CDA is used in the macro-analysis, and not in the latter; however, only the aforementioned concepts of the CDA are used in the macro-analysis which will help to systematize the analysis, and so it is not used fully. Conversely, the lingual part of the micro-analysis is then a discourse analysis of certain below-mentioned topics; traditionally, one would go more in depth with a few amounts of texts, but the micro-analysis here should be seen in relation to the macro-analysis, and not how a discourse analysis is normally used.

3.4 Operationalization

In this part, the operationalization will be elaborated upon. In general, the analysis is divided into an analytical part, and a perspectivizing part; the former will clarify and uncover trends and structures in SVT's coverage by using the aforesaid concepts. The perspectivizing part will relate the results from the analysis to the normative ideals discussed in chapter two. Furthermore, the analytical part is further divided into two parts: a macro- and micro-analysis. Now, for simplicity and clarification reasons to the reader, the reflections from chapter two will partly be placed into the analysis (chapters four and five) so as to make it easier to understand.

The context of this thesis is SVT's EU coverage in the year 2012, and the starting point for the analysis is the democratic and societal relevance of how EU news is covered. As aforementioned, it has been described that the empiricism will run the analysis; however, there is a starting point from which the empiricism is examined. The starting point is then the analytical concepts presented in this chapter, and the aforesaid normative ideals around democracy and the role of the media. This enables an analysis of the empiricism from a certain angle which will subsequently be important for the coming conclusion. Accordingly, other conclusions could also appear from this structure of the empiricism than what is respectively emphasized here.

Furthermore, the primary source to the empiricism is SVT's database on its broadcasted news. Firstly, the broadcasted news by SVT will be the evening news, *Rapport*, at 19:30 on SVT1: the first program. Now, there are two reasons for why these two were chosen: the news program *Rapport* at 19:30. Firstly, according to the MMS (Årsrapport 2013:14), the Swedish media measurement agency that collects statistics on the amount of TV hours watched, rate that Swedish people watch most TV between the hours 19:00-21:00. This means that most people are watching the main news at 19:30 as the later one airs at 23:10, and the earlier one airs at 18:00. Secondly, according to Olov Carlsson (2014), the one in charge of the news program *Rapport* at SVT, this aforesaid news program is the biggest in Sweden and mostly watched one as well, especially the 19:30 news. Subsequently, choosing this respective hour and program is a good choice because it has the biggest impact and greatest reach. In relation to the time period, the year chosen is 2012 (one year); more exactly, it is the period from the 1st January 2012 to the 31st December 2013. There were three rationales for this period that was chosen. Firstly, the empiricism, and hence the results, should be as contemporary as possible. Secondly, choosing an earlier period would be invalid and twist the empiricism due to the Lisbon Treaty ratification; this would be problematic because treaty change does not occur often and it would most likely receive more coverage than normal daily coverage would, and because, in terms of political structure, the EU changed in many ways: for example from the introduction of the Citizens' Initiative to the institutionalization of the European Council. And thirdly, choosing the year 2013 would be problematic because of the upcoming European Parliamentary elections in May 2014.

When searching on SVT’s TV-archive for the Rapport 19:30 news in 2012, it was noted that there were a number of non-broadcasted EU clips as well. This was interesting as there existed produced clips which were not aired. However, in the general search, EU clips were encountered that did not have the title “EU” or anything else related to the EU in name and so these are not part of the analyzed empirical material; however, these “EU” clips had nothing to do with the EU per se: the EU was merely mentioned. Additionally, the number of these clips was very low so it was chosen not to use them in the empirical material as it would not have changed the conclusion of the research.

3.4.1 Macro-analysis

All of the EU clips in 2012 from SVT’s Rapport 19:30 news have been put as an attachment to the thesis. Here, all of the data for the clips show when it was broadcasted, the length of the clip, topic, agents, and much more. The data gives a larger perspective into the type of EU clips that SVT has chosen to broadcast. Additionally, the central feature here is that it is possible to divide the EU clips into topics and put that into a larger context. Subsequently, this is the approach used here as the topics have been created based on actual data. Additionally, the focus here will be amongst others be the frequency of EU coverage in relation to months and time, as well as when topics are covered.

The first thing done was to divide the topics into their respective categories; however, some topics were only broadcasted once or twice, and so the category of “other” was created. Conversely, some similar topics, for example economy and finance or CFSP and external trade, were merged into one category. The reason for this way of dividing and merging topics was to emphasize the larger perspective, otherwise there would have been many more topics than one could handle systematically. Subsequently, there are 11 topics in total:

Table 3.1: The number of topics

Topic Number	Topics
1	Economy/Finance
2	Institutions
3	Sweden in EU
4	Member States in EU
5	CFSP/Trade
6	Home Affairs
7	Social Affairs
8	CAP/Fisheries
9	Enlargement
10	Environment
11	Other

Apart from dividing the clips into topics, other characteristics have been noted as well in which the most important ones are partaking agents (who is represented), and reasons for the clip (motivation to broadcast it). As aforesaid, the agents and reasons are found in the empirical data in the attachment. On the other hand, one thing to notice is that topics are central to the EU coverage as it demonstrates what is being focused upon by SVT, as well as how it is being articulated⁵. For example, it matters if the EU is covered with a focus on Council meetings compared to EP meetings. However, the discursive order does not say much with individual clips so one must look at the articulation instead.

3.4.2 Micro-analysis

As it would not have been manageable to analyze all the EU clips from the macro-analysis, then there has been a selection of a smaller amount of clips only in the articulation⁶ aspect of the micro-analysis. One can either do this selection based on representation, or by deliberately choosing to focus on something else. As a representative selection was not possible due to the size, then the selection was chosen based upon the topics. More precisely, the selection was based on considerations of democratic ideals and SVT's role in the society; for example, legislation that affects Swedes directly like social policy, Sweden's membership fee, fishing etc. This means that other topics will not be analyzed. Now, the topics that will be analyzed are the following:

Table 3.2: The reduced number of topics

Topic Number	Topic
1	Social Policy
2	Swedish Economy
3	Membership Fee
4	Fishing
5	Budget

However, it should be emphasized that not all of the clips in these topics will be analyzed as the point is to show the general tendency of how these are reported. Another aspect that should be emphasized is that these topics are not covered frequently so the ones that will be looked at will be roughly half of them. This does not mean that the others are not interesting or worth analyzing, but it would be unnecessary for this specific research as aforementioned.

With that said, it is important to notice that the articulation has only focused on what SVT has said as SVT cannot be responsible for what other agents say, even if they have an editing power at their disposal, they cannot tell people what to say in interviews. Conversely, the representing agents will then instead be analyzed in

⁵ This is a part of the micro-analysis in chapter five

⁶ What is meant with an articulation is the way in which the EU is being spoken about: what is actually being said.

the macro-analysis. This means that what other agents say will not be included in the transcriptions in chapter five. Additionally, the articulations have been translated to English⁷, and they follow the following structure:

Date	xxxx-xx-xx (year – month – day)
Rapport	19:30
Length	xx:xx
Partaking agent	X (name of person, position of person)
<p>Anchorman: “Here, the actual articulation of what is being said by SVT will be shown in the coming analysis, so this is merely an example for you to see how it will look like.”</p>	

Also, the anchorman’s articulation will only be transcribed in this research. The reason is because it was impossible to source the reported footage due to SVT’s copyright on the clips, and so there would have been a transparency issue with the material in regards to sourcing as readers would not be able to check the credibility of the material. However, this issue has only been problematic for this specific part of the analysis as everything else was able to be sourced properly.

3.4.3 Delimitations

This research will not cover anything related to how journalists and media companies they work, as well as other structural factors concerning the aforesaid. For example, one interesting aspect in this particular regard could be available resources in terms of correspondents, or perhaps monetary limits. Subsequently, this could affect the frequency of the reports, but even the quality as there might be a lack of human resources for investigative purposes. However, this should not be relevant if SVT mainly focuses on a Swedish perspective instead of a more representative one.

Moreover, looking at the editorial work will not be examined as well as this is a part of how the media operates. For example here, one could look into the commercial aspect of media companies as it might be the case that EU is simply not interesting enough for it to have a larger role although this should not be an imperative (Fairclough 1995:11).

Lastly, the thesis will not look at when the actual decisions taking, and subsequently then when they are reported by SVT to see if there is a difference as people might get the information that a law has passed and that it is not possible to affect it anymore while this is not the case.

⁷ The original texts in Swedish are in the attachment file of this thesis

4 Macro-analysis

This chapter will analyze the overarching structures in SVT's EU coverage. Additionally, this analysis looks at quantitative data in the form of processed figures on the background of the database research conducted on EU clips in the Rapport 19:30 news. The results will be displayed graphically as it is easier to understand, and there will be an explanation as well. Moreover, the quantitative data has been processed through a large amount of empirical data, and all this data is available as an attachment to this research. Lastly, the structure of this chapter is as follows: the total amount of clips; secondly, the topics of the news clips; thirdly, the reason for the coverage; and lastly, the types of agents/actors partaking in the clips.

4.1 The Amount of EU Coverage

To put SVT's EU coverage into perspective, there will be a description of the total amount of EU coverage in a three year period. This has been done by finding out the total amount of news clips in Rapport 19:30 from 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2013; naturally, the sport and weather news have been excluded from the calculation; subsequently, the total number of EU clips was found. The calculation is presented in the table below.

Table 4.1: percentage of all EU clips in Rapport's 19:30 news from 2011 – 2013

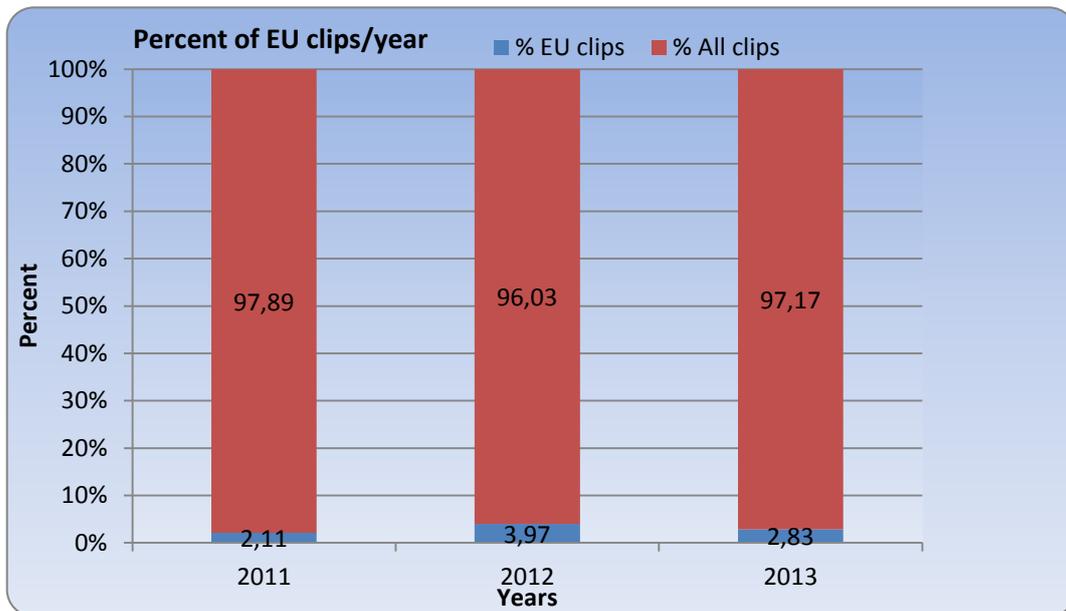
Search of all broadcasted clips	
<i>Period:</i>	<i>2011-01-01 – 2013-12-31</i>
<i>Material:</i>	<i>Rapport 19:30</i>
<i>Number all of broadcasted clips:</i>	<u>13850</u>
<i>Number of all broadcasted EU clips:</i>	<u>408</u>
<i>The amount of EU clips in percentage of the total amount:</i>	$408/13850 \times 100 =$ <u>≡ 2,95%</u>

Source: SVT's TV-Archives

From this perspective then, the EU news coverage in three years amounts to less than 3% of all the news clips in the Rapport 19:30 news. As aforementioned, if the sport and weather news were included, then this number would be further reduced. This calculation is based on all the broadcasted clips found in SVT’s TV-archives.

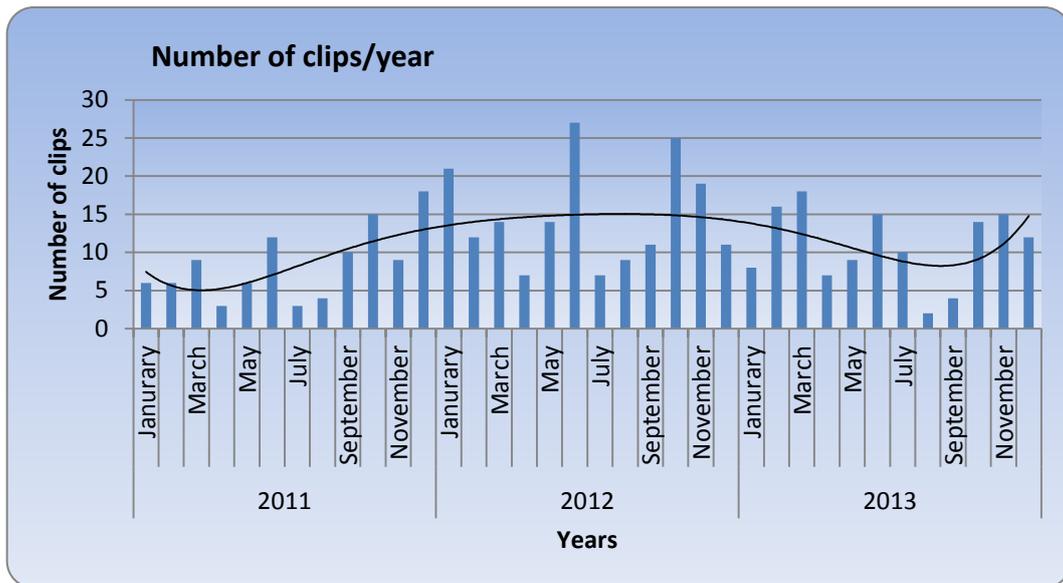
As this is the collective amount of the three years, another calculation has been made so as to present the total amount in another way. Figure 4.1 below shows the percentage of all broadcasted EU clips per year in 2011, 2012, and 2013, and subsequently puts the number in relation to all the broadcasted news clips. Here, it is evident that the total amount of all EU clips is nearly kept constant around 2-3% of the entire news coverage. Additionally, what is noticeable here is that the EU coverage increases in 2012, but decreases again in 2013. This comparison is important as it gives a deeper perspective to the EU coverage in 2012 by allowing us to see the relative change according to the other two years: 2011 and 2013. Lastly, what we can say is that the coverage of the EU in SVT’s Rapport 19:30 news contains a low frequency; however, as other comparisons with other news outlets have not been conducted, then one cannot say if this is a trend, or if the number is higher in, for example, the printed press like Dagens Nyheter, or Afton Bladet.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of EU clips in the Rapport 19:30 news from 2011-2013



The next figure that will be presented is the temporal division of these 2,97% of SVT’s Rapport news coverage of the EU. Figure 4.2 shows how many EU news clips have been shown per month in the period 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2013.

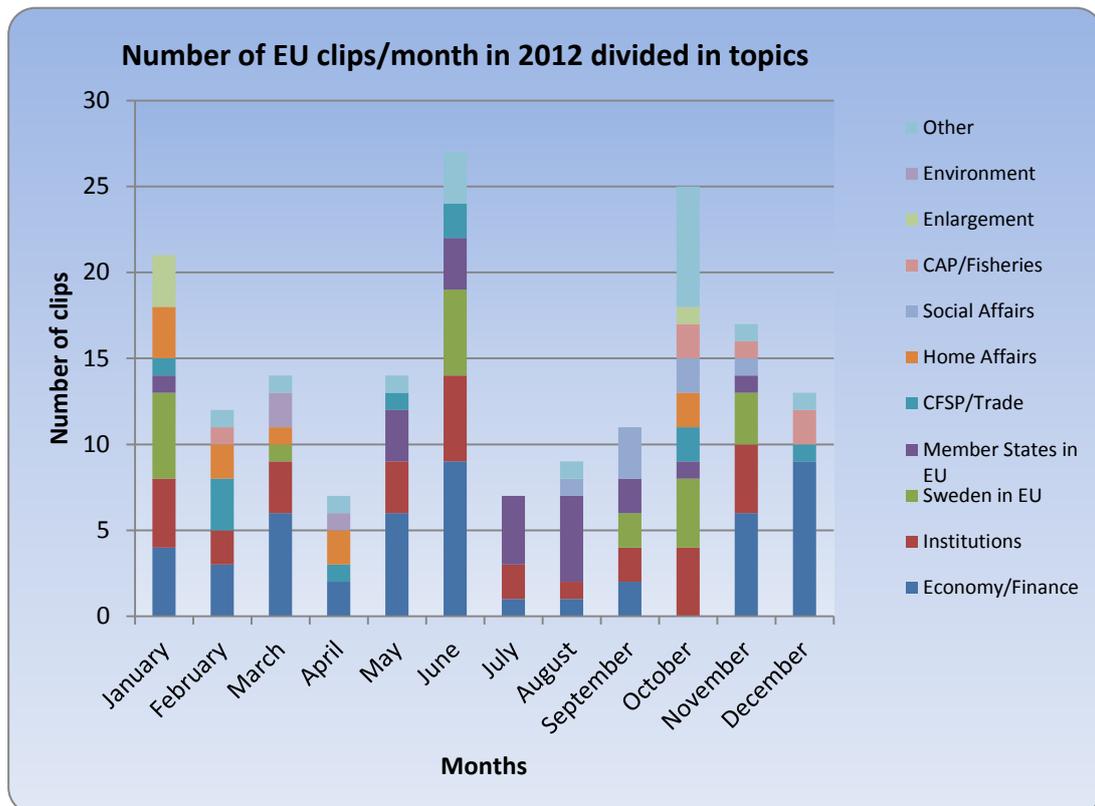
Figure 4.2: The number of EU clips per month in the years 2011 to 2013



One can probably attribute a number of reasons for why the coverage looks like it does in figure 4.2; however, this is not something that will be dealt with in this research. Conversely, what one can notice is that there is indeed a discontinuity from month to month as aforementioned in chapter one; additionally, the trend line shows that SVT keeps on increasing their EU coverage up to November 2012 when the coverage subsequently starts decreasing until the end of 2013 when it increases once more. Consequently, one can deduce that the year 2012 was the year when SVT had the highest number of EU reports in the past three years. This means that this research will actually look at the most covered EU year conducted by SVT.

Figure 4.3 shows the monthly division of how SVT's Rapport 19:30 news program has covered EU news in 2012. Moreover, this figure shows both when the EU has been covered (the amount), but also which topics have been most covered during each month. For example, one can notice how much the economy has been covered in relation to any other topic throughout the year. However, it is also interesting to notice how little all other political topics have been covered. Additionally, it is particularly interesting that certain topics are covered in short periods of the year (for example the CAP and fisheries policy, enlargement, or social policy) while other topics (mainly the economy) is more equally divided throughout the year. Subsequently, one can say that the topics that are more intensely covered in short periods could be that there have been unexpected events; for example, Croatia's referendum on EU membership in January 2012 is one such instance.

Figure 4.3: The number of EU clips per month in 2012 divided in topics



4.2 SVT's EU Topic Coverage

The figures 4.4 and 4.5 below give a thematic overview of how SVT has covered the EU in 2012. Each column in figure 4.4 represents the amount of clips that reflect a certain topic. As mentioned in chapter three, these categories were developed as the empiricism was being processed, and from then, the categories were developed; moreover, each piece in figure 4.5, the pie chart, represents the percentage of a certain topic in relation to the total amount of EU clips there were in 2012.

Figure 4.4: All EU clips divided in topics in 2012

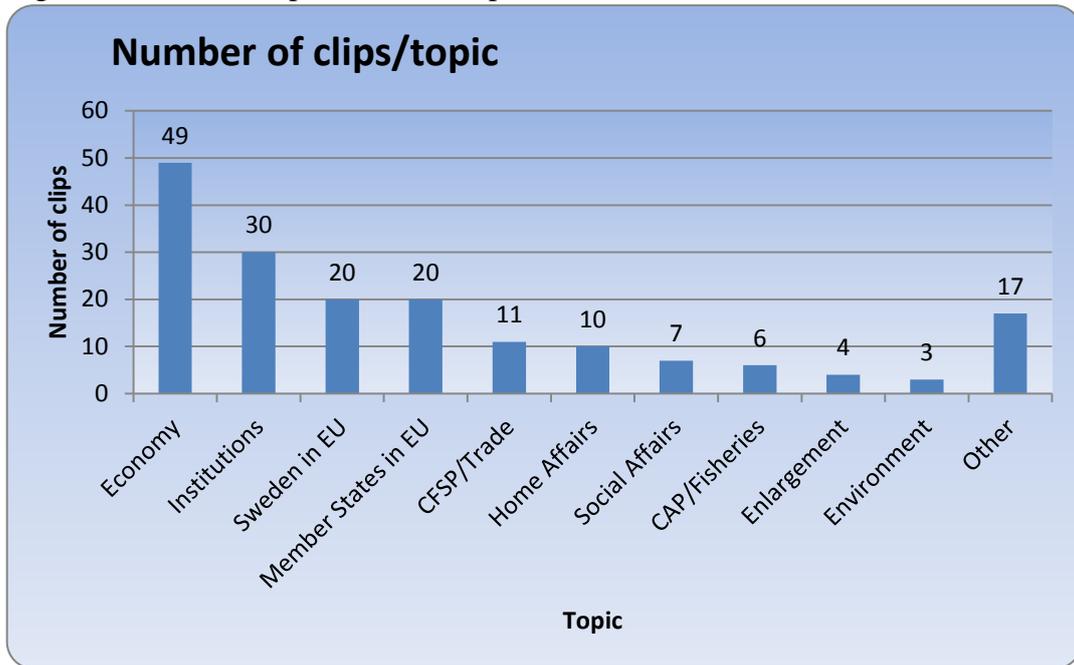
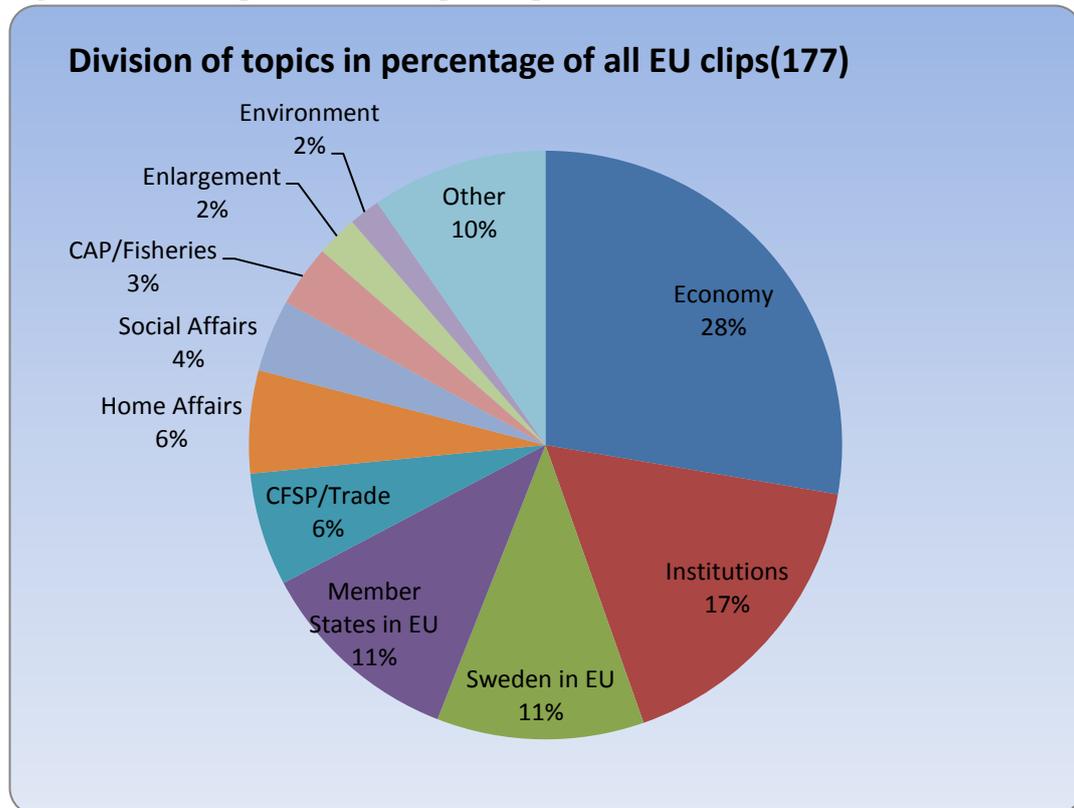


Figure 4.5: EU clips divided in topics in percent of the total amount in 2012



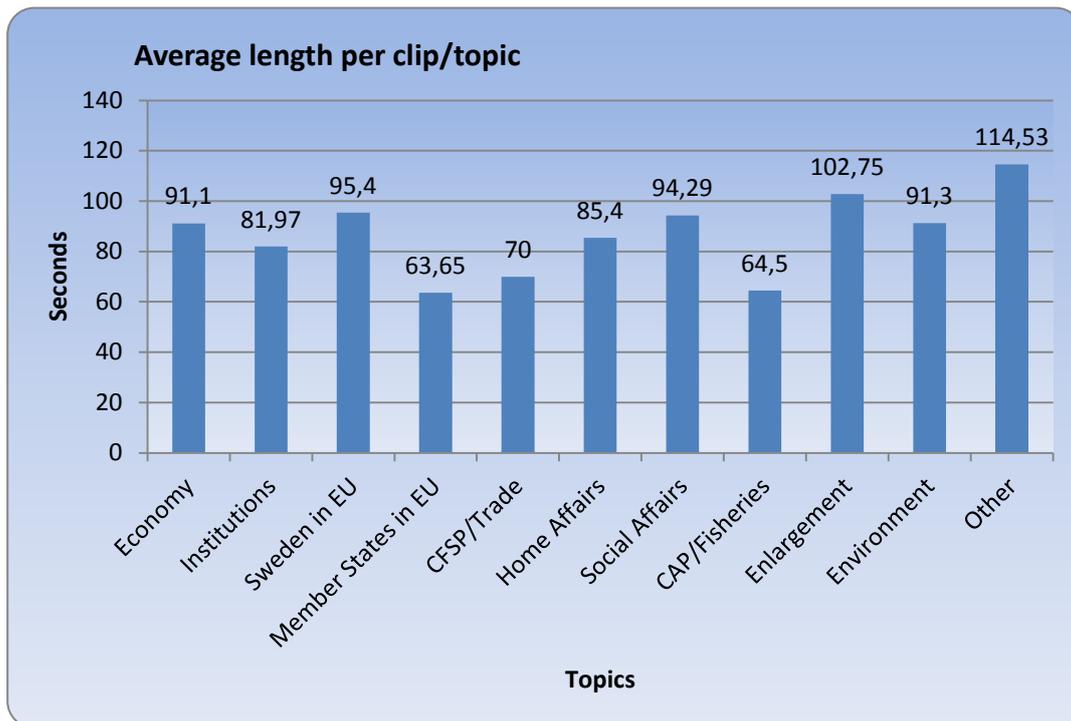
What is worth noticing here is how little the other topics have been covered in relation to the economy, the institutions, Swedish EU relations, and bilateral

member state (MS) relations in the EU. One very interesting observation that one can make is the large amount of miscellaneous topics that stand out in relation to the other less covered political topics in figure 4.5. One issue here is that the topics in the “other” category were covered so little in relation to the above categories so it appears that they take more coverage time; however, when actually separated into their respective political topics, then they would be at a miniscule relation in comparison with the above categories. For example, some political topics in the “other” category were consumption issues, energy, health, chemicals, regional and structural funds, and others.

On the other hand, the two main topics that take up more than 33% of all coverage are economic, and institutional matters. One characteristic that then stands out here with these two topics is the EU as an actor since these two topics cover how the EU acts. For example, the topic of institutions cover the institutions in some way; however, the topic of the economy does exactly the same, but the difference is that in the former case, the economy was not being dealt with while in the latter it was, thus reporting on the same aspects, just a different political topic. For example, when the institutions were covered, the coverage dealt with meetings, institutional changes, or daily occurrences in the institution; these were then similar to the economic topic as they would essentially be covered in the same way, except for that the economic part would stand out.

Although figures 4.4 and 4.5 show the amount of themes in percentage of the total, they do not tell us anything about how long the clips have been. This has a significant importance when covering a case in terms of actual length; for example, when it comes to shortly covered cases, then a problem occurs with actually explaining complicated topics or issues. The observation that has been made while processing the empiricism is that time is often used in a way that describes that the EU has decided something instead of covering the actual political debate, and where the political actors are in terms of the decision-making process. The issue is that too little coverage time is dedicated to cases’ correlation and significance.

Figure 4.6: The average length per EU clip in 2012 per topic

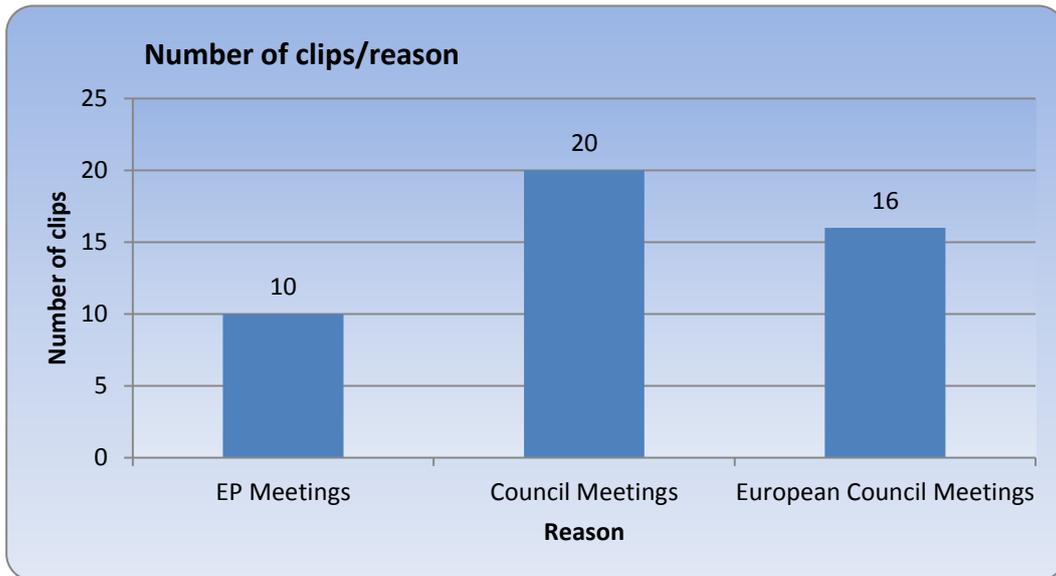


What is interesting with this figure is that it shows a different picture than might be expected. For example, here it is noticeable that the political topics that have been covered the longest are the topics that have gotten very little coverage in general as demonstrated in the above figures. Furthermore, an interesting observation in this figure is that SVT has actually covered the environment longer in average per clip than the economy, and even social affairs like workers' hours and quotas on women. Moreover, the perhaps most surprising observation is that enlargement has gotten the longest coverage time in average per clip. On the other hand, the large amount of actual EU coverage in the political topics of economy or bilateral EU member state relations does outweigh the average coverage length of the topics above.

4.3 Reasons for the EU news

What is meant with the "reasons" is the event which could be referred to as the motivation to an aired clip. This means that the actually reason is not actually mentioned in the clip. With that said, as this research focuses on the EU, three "reasons" thus become particularly interesting to look at; these are the European Parliamentary meetings, Council meetings, and European Council meetings. Figure 4.7 shows how much these aforesaid institutions have been covered.

Figure 4.7: The division of EU news clips on three EU institutions in 2012



The interesting aspect here is that the European Parliament has been covered much less than both the Council and European Council meetings. One can observe that the EP has been covered at least half of the times as the Council has, despite of the increasing co-legislative position and power that the parliament has which it gained with the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Another way of interpreting this is that the main coverage concentration lies with the intergovernmental body of the EU, thereby focusing on the national heads of state with their respective ministers. This is problematic as the coverage subsequently underrepresents the only democratically elected co-legislative institution in the EU.

Figure 4.8 shows which topics SVT has covered from which meetings in those three aforementioned EU institutions. What one can observe from this figure is the extent to which SVT's EP coverage is more diverse than the Council and European Council coverage. Additionally, the main topic covered by far in the Council and European Council meetings by SVT is the economy, and to a significantly lesser extent the CFSP. The question becomes whether this is a typical trend which is followed by SVT, or if the year 2012 was special in this particular regard. One can also discuss whether it is the actual content of the topics that is being covered, or rather that the decisions are made at these Council and European Council meetings which is then why the two latter ones are covered more by SVT than the EP. In any case, the two latter institutions in the EU are the ones that have gained the most coverage in 2012 by SVT.

Figure 4.8: The division of EU clips in 2012 on three institutions and topics

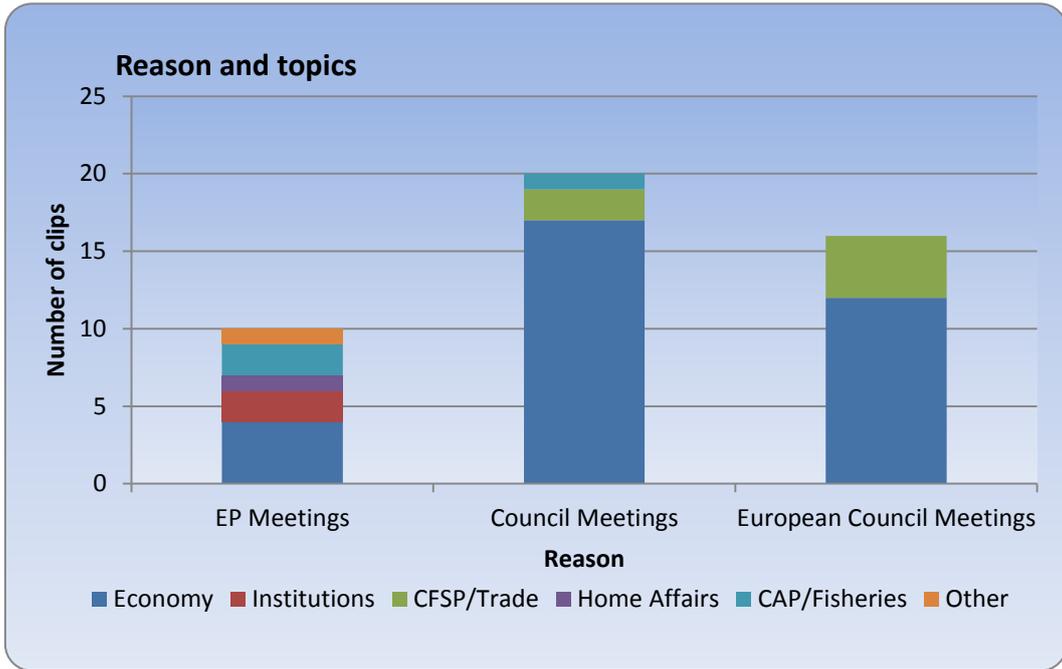
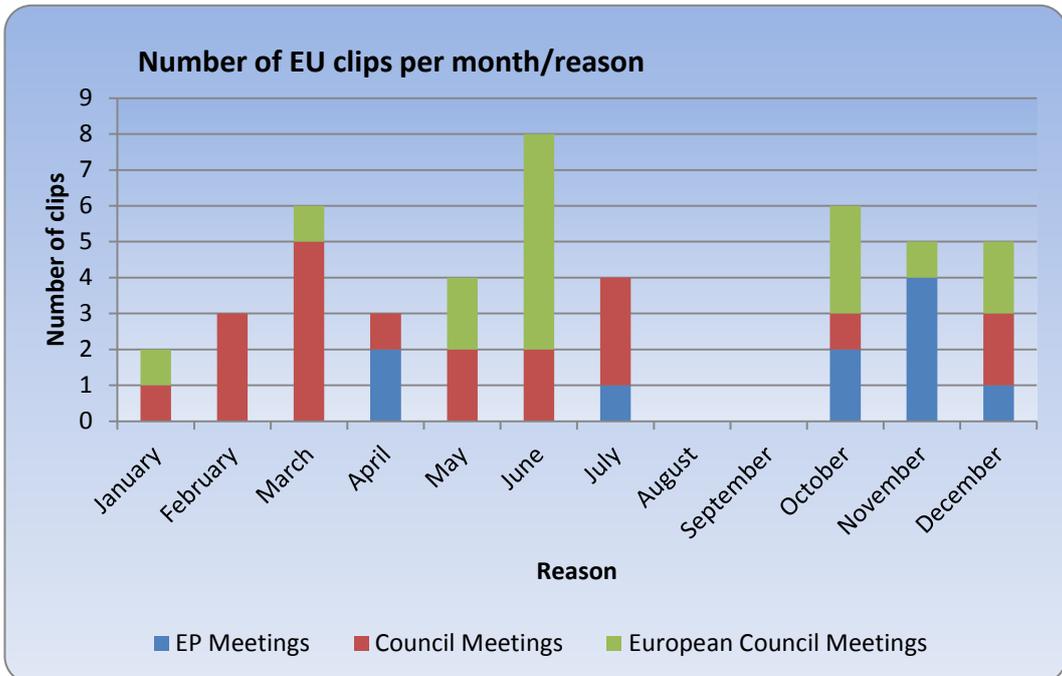


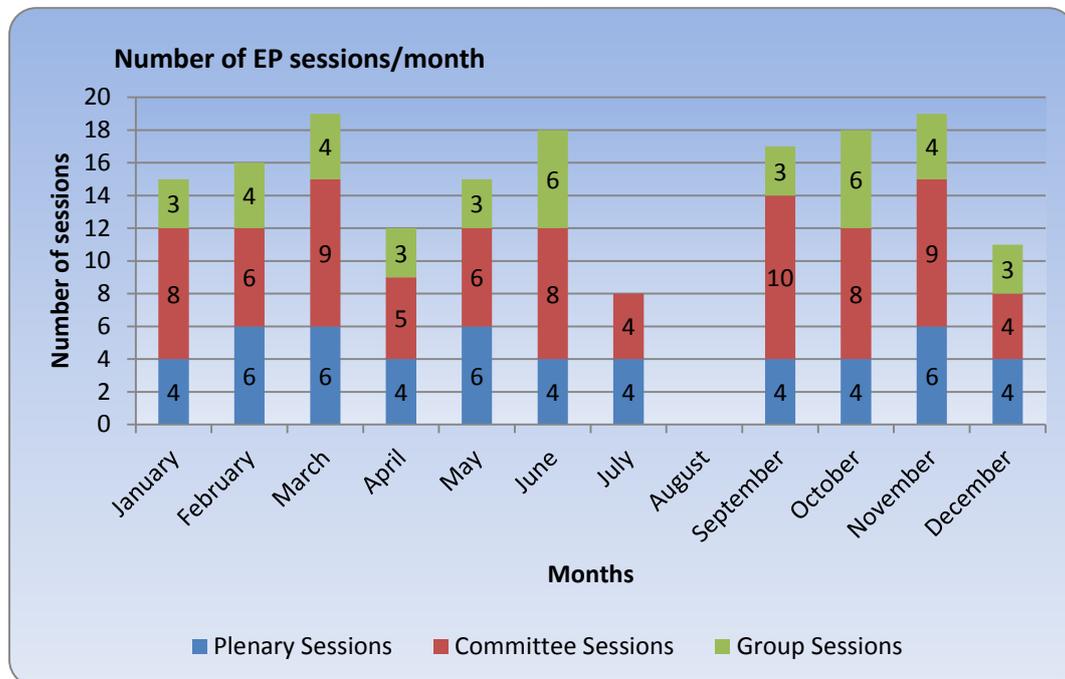
Figure 4.9 shows when the different meetings of the three institutions have been covered. This gives an opportunity to compare with “reality:” for example, when the EP has actually held meetings, and thereafter examine if a particular meeting has been covered or not.

Figure 4.9: EP, Council, and European Council meetings in 2012 in months



If one regards the European Parliament's yearly schedule from 2012⁸, then one can notice which months and weeks that the EP has held plenary, committee, and group sessions. As such, figure 4.10 shows the division of different sessions that the EP has held in 2012.

Figure 4.10: The number of EP sessions per month in 2012



So, when comparing figure 4.9 and 4.10, one can observe that the amount of coverage that SVT has done on the EP has been very little. For example, if we calculate the total amount of EP sessions throughout 2012, we find that SVT has only covered 10 out of 168 (5,92%) sessions; on the other hand, if we keep in mind that the actual SVT EP coverage was plenary sessions, then we can calculate how much of the total amount of plenary sessions were covered. For example, out of the 52 plenary sessions, 10 were covered (19,23%). Now, apart from the relatively low number of plenaries covered by SVT, another problem is also that much of the EP's work is "neglected" as the discussions in the other sessions are important for the overall legislative process in the EP, at least if looking at the respective Rapport news which this thesis is examining.

4.4 Participating Actors in the EU news

Among the interesting factors in the macro-analysis to examine are the participating agents/actors in the news coverage. Moreover, these actors have

⁸ The following link contains the EP schedule for the year 2012 in a pdf file format:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/general/cal2012.pdf>

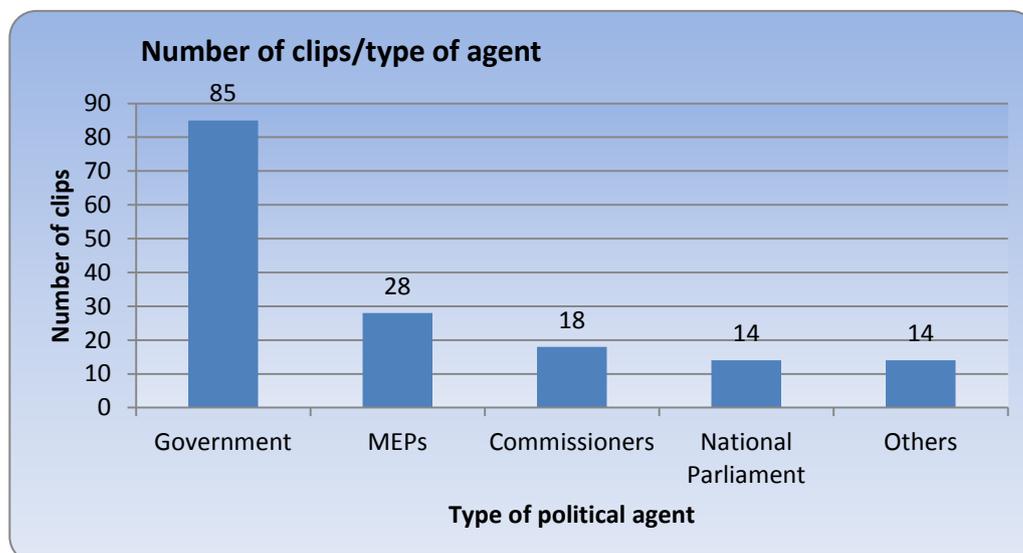
been noted down thoroughly in the metadata in the SVT’s TV-archives; additionally, examining these actors in the news coverage can be interesting from a democratic point of view, as discussed in chapter two of this thesis. Similarly, as Fairclough (chapter three) points out, agents do play a central role in relation to the political power struggle which plays out in the media. As such, the agents in this thesis have been divided into categories of their democratic roles in society: politicians, unions, businesses and others. With that said, these categories have been formed along the way so as to not interfere with the empiricism as described in chapter three; this means that new categories have been created when necessary.

On the other hand, there are plenty of “grey” zones when it comes to agents; for example, when a biologist from an NGO talks about a certain issue, is she/he then an expert, or an NGO representative. In these cases, the category which this person would belong to would be related to the context that SVT uses. So, if this is the case, then this person would be categorized as both an expert and an NGO representative. This means that the amount of actors in the figures below do not cover the precise amount of agents, but the precise amount of clips of a category in which the agent partakes. In other words, the emphasis here is put on who is being represented rather than how much; additionally, this means that although two Swedish ministers partake, then this is only registered as one Swedish minister.

4.4.1 Political Agents

In figure 4.11, all ministers and heads of state from all MS in the EU have been put together in one category, and all parliamentarians from all MS have been placed in the group of MEPs; finally, all Commissioners from the EU have been put into one group as well.

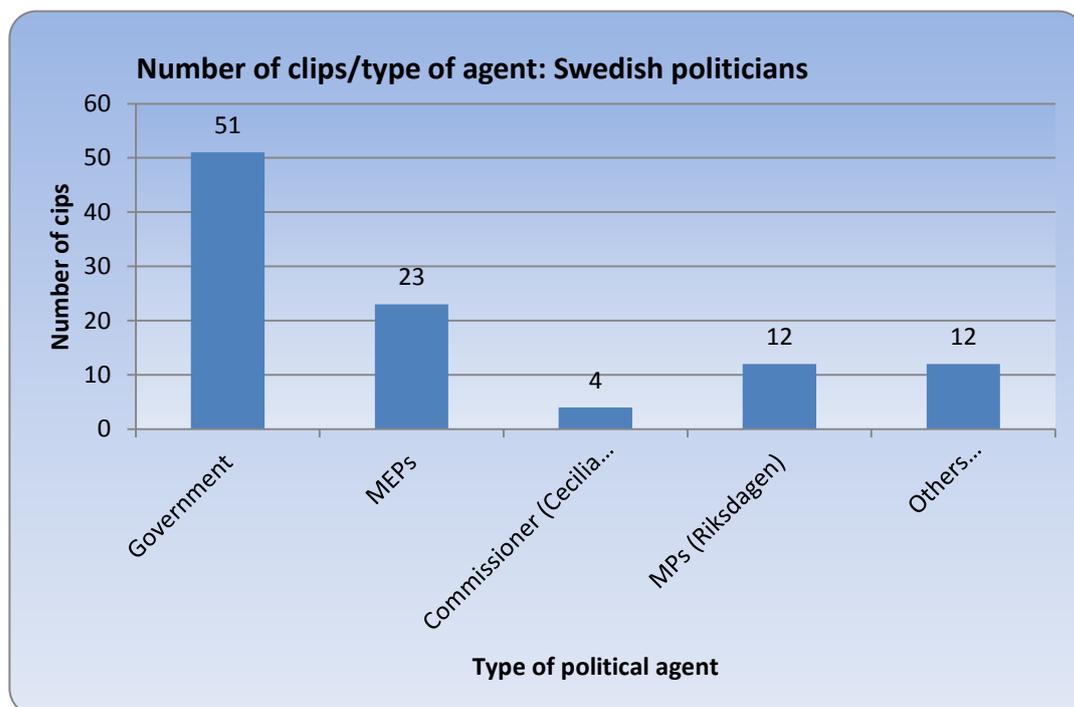
Figure 4.11: EU Political agents in SVT’s Rapport 19:30 EU news in 2012



As it is apparent from figure 4.11, the vast majority of partaking agents in the EU news clips are representatives from the EU MS' governments: ministers and heads of state. On the other hand, MEPs have a marginal role which then reflects the aforesaid tendency with the "reasons" (incentive) for why a clip has been broadcasted. Moreover, one can observe that the EP is significantly underrepresented in SVT's EU coverage in relation to the MS' governments. Similarly, the Commissioners have been even less covered than the MEPs which is interesting as the Commission is the principal institution that proposes laws in the EU. Additionally, the main agent from the Commission was the President: Barroso.

Figure 4.12 shows the division of Swedish political agents that partake in SVT's Rapport 19:30 news of the EU. The relation between government agents and MEPs is similar in that the former is represented more times than the latter. However, what is interesting to note when comparing figure 4.11 and 4.12 is that only five MEPs that were covered by SVT in 2012 came from another MS while all other represented MEPs came from Sweden (82,14%). Conversely, the main agents from the Swedish government that were represented were the Prime Minister, the Foreign Affairs Minister, and the Financial Minister; however, this is logical when comparing with the actual topic that was mostly being reported on in the Council and European Council meetings: the economy. One interesting observation is the amount of Swedish MPs that is represented, as well as the amount in the "other" category which usually was the Swedish opposition, or representatives from the Swedish Parliament's Committee groups; these were nearly represented as much as the EU Commissioner Barroso.

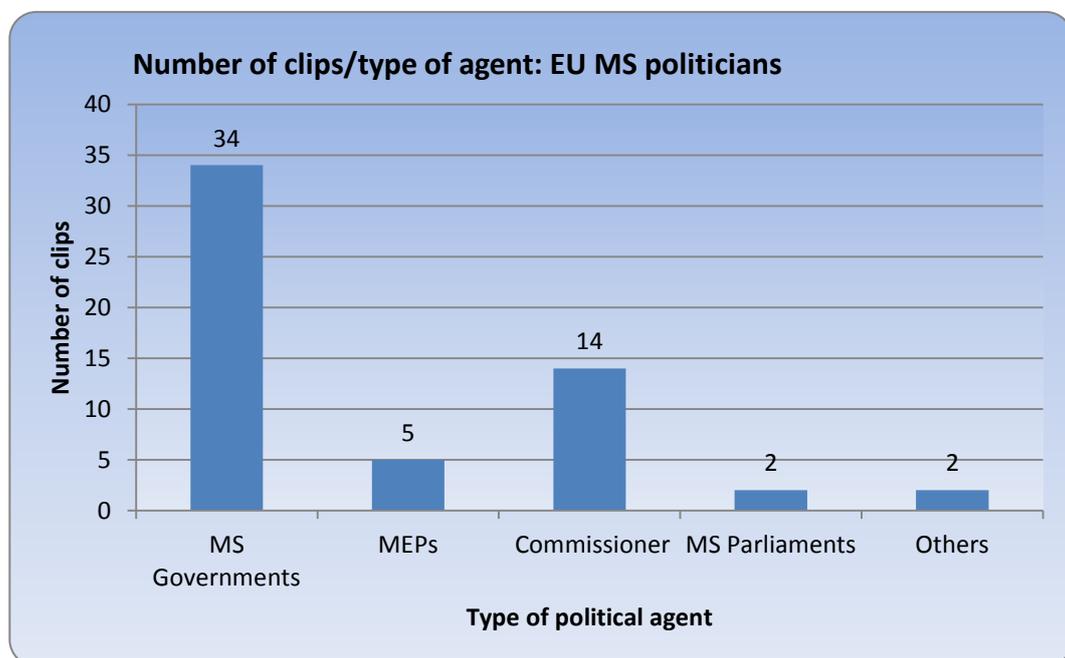
Figure 4.12: Swedish political agents in SVT's Rapport 19:30 EU news in 2012



What is also important to mention is that Cecilia Malmström, the Swedish Commissioner for Home Affairs, has been represented in four clips which is perhaps surprising as, disregarding Barroso, she has been the Commissioner that has mostly been represented in the Swedish news. The reason for why this is surprising is because the topic of home affairs has not been covered that much in relation to the economy; consequently, one could then have expected more coverage on for example the Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs: Olli Rehn.

Now, as other politicians from other EU countries also have an impact of the legislative process in the EU, they have to be included as well.

Figure 4.13: MS political agents in SVT's Rapport 19:30 EU news in 2012



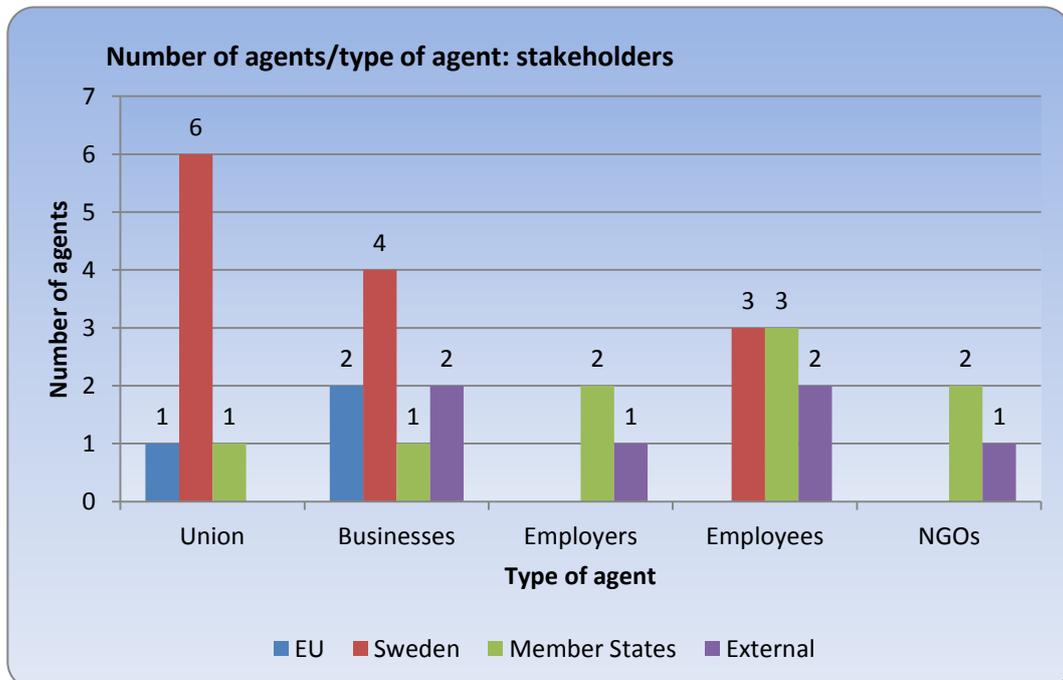
What is worth observing in figure 4.13 is the larger number of clips representing Commissioners from the other MS, but, as discussed above, almost all of these are representations of Barroso. Similarly, another problem is that the biggest countries' main ministers are overly represented and they are reoccurring often; for example, the most occurring one is German Chancellor Angela Merkel. On the other hand, it is evident that other MS' MEPs are barely represented in SVT's EU coverage: in relation to the Swedish MEPs. In one way, it is not necessarily a problem as knowing how e.g. Swedish MEPs act, vote, and participate gives Swedes a greater channel of influence since they can directly affect their MEPs by, for example, voting or contacting them, and thereby affect their respective parliamentary committee in Brussels; however, the issue lies in the discourse as it is vastly a Swedish outlook on the political situation in Brussels.

4.4.2 Stakeholders

The following figures present the results of stakeholders in the SVT’s EU news clips: not political actors such as politicians or civil servants of any sort. The stakeholders are divided into the following groups: unions, businesses, employers, employees, and NGOs. The problem with agents in the “grey zone” was that some could both be from the category business or employers, but here, the context dominated which category such an agent would be placed into. One thing to note is that the topics have been elaborated so as to provide as accurate a depiction as possible in relation to where the stakeholders were most actively included in the news coverage; this was a strategic choice as there were very few agents in these categories that were included in the coverage. Lastly, any underlying motives or interests will not be discussed here.

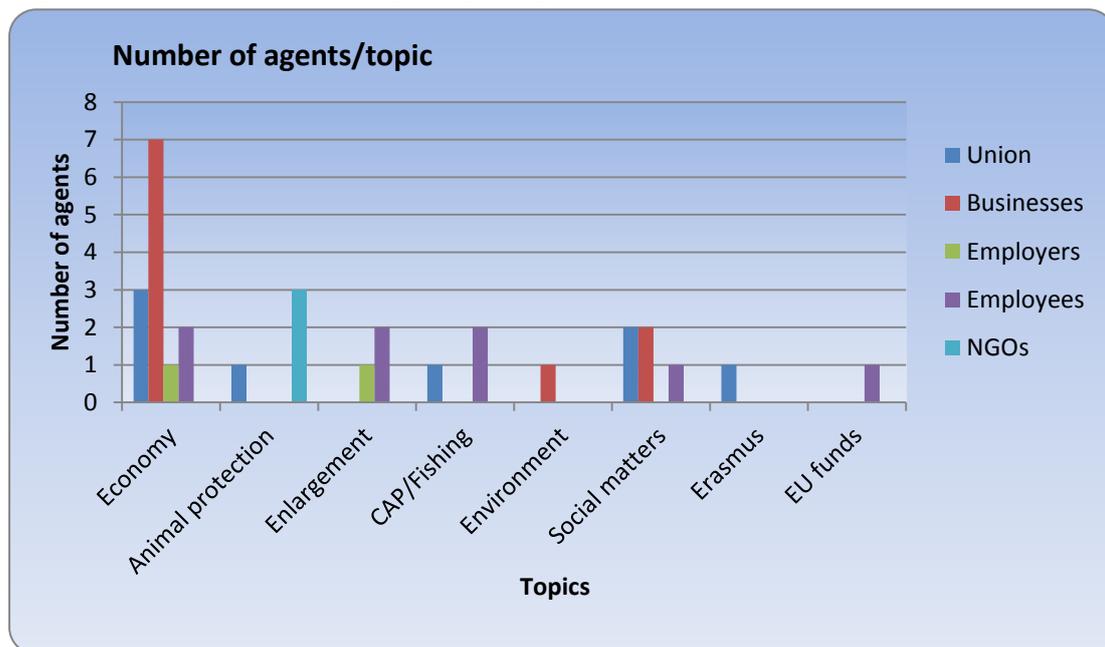
As figure 4.14 below shows, spokesmen for various types of businesses are mostly represented, albeit a bit more, followed then equally by unions and employees, and lastly employers together with NGOs. Furthermore, most stakeholders covered in SVT’s Rapport EU news come from Sweden while stakeholders in other MS are covered less. Consequently, what one can deduce is that there is a bias towards other non-Swedish stakeholders when it comes to EU politics; however, a more mixed picture is present with the type of agents covered, albeit Swedish. For example, agents from the categories of employees and businesses are covered more from different areas like other member states, non-EU states, and Sweden. On the other hand, unions and employees agents outweigh the ones from businesses. However, the agents representing employers and NGOs are clearly more underrepresented than the rest.

Figure 4.14: The number of agents per type of agent in SVT’s EU news in 2012



As figure 4.15 shows, there is a significant representation of the economy with the respective agents; consequently, there is a topic bias in terms of the political topics represented. For example, it is evident that the “fight” is not fair as the corporate agents together with the employers are represented more in the news compared to the unions and employees; subsequently when one then compares figures 4.14 and 4.15, then one can note that, even though unions and employers seem to have been the most dominant agents in the news, when it then comes to the economy, it is clearly not the case as businesses and employers are the dominating agents.

Figure 4.15: The number of agents per topic in SVT’s EU news in 2012



Another interesting observation from figure 4.15 is that in the news clips on social matters, businesses are nearly as much represented as unions and employees combined. However, the reason for this is not something that this research will explore. Additionally, the topic of the environment is particularly interesting as there has only been one non-political agent talking about it; however, this person was someone from a business. On the other hand, the political topic of the CAP and fishing has only been covered with agents from the unions and employees: no industry. Lastly, the only instance of NGO agent inclusion was covered when it came to the topic of animal protection.

These two figures and their results are interesting as the business industry is over represented in the political topics compared to, for example, NGOs, unions, and employees. Democratically, the low amount of total coverage of these topics in a European context is significantly problematic as the general discourse within certain topics and contexts is then strongly affected to suit a certain type as discussed in chapter three; ideally, all topics should at least have a relative balance in the overall representation. On the other hand, the very low frequency of other

political topics, not including the economy, is democratically questionable, especially when the majority of stakeholders are Swedish.

4.5 Summary

The first aspect that was uncovered in the micro-analysis was the total amount of EU news clips in SVT's Rapport 19:30 news in the period 2011-2013. The amount in itself does not say much about the actual coverage, but with calculations, it was calculated that the EU news coverage has been 2,95% of the total news coverage. This is of course remarkable as SVT is a public service media outlet with a duty to inform people so as to enable them to act in a democratic society. Additionally, the development of SVT's EU coverage was then uncovered where a tendency line shows that coverage has been increasing since 2011, and then peaked in mid-2012 only to then decrease again in 2013 to lower coverage rates again.

The division of the news clips in topics in the year 2012 shows that SVT has mainly focused on the economic aspects in European affairs, and to a lesser extent on the EU as an object, or actor. For example, the greatest coverage was dedicated to the economic (euro crisis, budget deficits, debts, banking union, loans, and others) issues in the EU; on the other hand, institutional matters, like institutional meetings or institutional changes in the EU, were covered often too. When it came to other political topics, if one adds up all of the other topics, excluding the "Sweden and MS in the EU" and "institutions" categories, then these only outweigh the economic topic with nine clips. However, when one turns around matters and look at the actual length of the clips in average per topic, then it is evident that the political topics with least coverage have had the longest coverage time on average; nonetheless, the significantly lower frequency in all other topics, except for the economic one, poses the question whether or not the average length per clip per topic is relevant enough in the larger perspective.

In relation to the reason for the individual EU news clips, there is a significant proportion of coverage mainly focused on the meetings in the Council and European Council while the EP is covered much less. This is a good indication of what SVT finds most relevant: the intergovernmental aspect of the EU compared to the supranational one where the EP represents people's interests. Furthermore, the topic covered in the Council and European Council meetings has almost exclusively been the economy, while the coverage in the EP has been more representative, at least in relation to the actual covered topics in 2012. Lastly, SVT has covered just under 20% of all EP plenary sessions, while when taking into account other important sessions in the EP as well, then that number fell with nearly 75% to merely 5,92%.

When it comes to the agents that were included in the coverage, then there is no doubt that the focus on governmental ministers show a clear tendency for the coverage to be presented more from a nation-state context than a European one, especially when noting that most agents were repeated multiple times.

Additionally, the vast majority of all political agents were Swedish which is significant as it creates a certain bias, and thus discourse towards the “others:” both the EU institutions, but certainly also other EU states. Finally, the stakeholders that were represented came mainly from businesses and employers while unions, NGOs, and employees did not get the same coverage, at least when it came to economic issues. The interesting point was that on social matters, businesses were almost equally as much represented as unions and employees. Additionally, the vast majority of stakeholders came from Sweden which is not as balanced as it ideally should be.

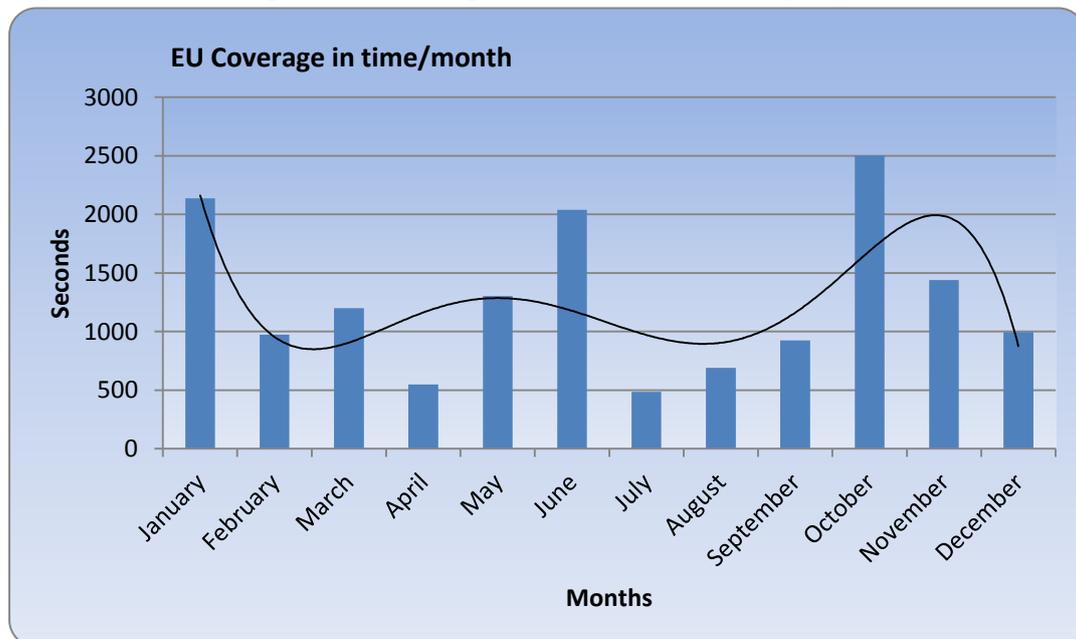
5 Micro-Analysis

In this part of the analysis, the thesis will go more in depth with the EU clips. The most relevant features of the news clips have been re-examined in other analytical indicators which has made it possible to “uncover” some overarching structures in the EU coverage which was articulated and presented in the collective news coverage. Furthermore, the analysis departs from the macro-analysis and starts with describing some general relations in the EU coverage which have not yet been covered in the previous analysis. After that, the analysis here will then examine locality of the reports which is subsequently followed up by an analysis on the articulation of the coverage: how is the EU spoken about.

5.1 Tendencies and Thematic Structures

To start with, figure 5.16 shows the development in time in relation to how much SVT has covered. Each column shows the amount of seconds that SVT has spent on the EU per month in 2012.

Figure 5.16: Development in time spent on EU news coverage by SVT in 2012

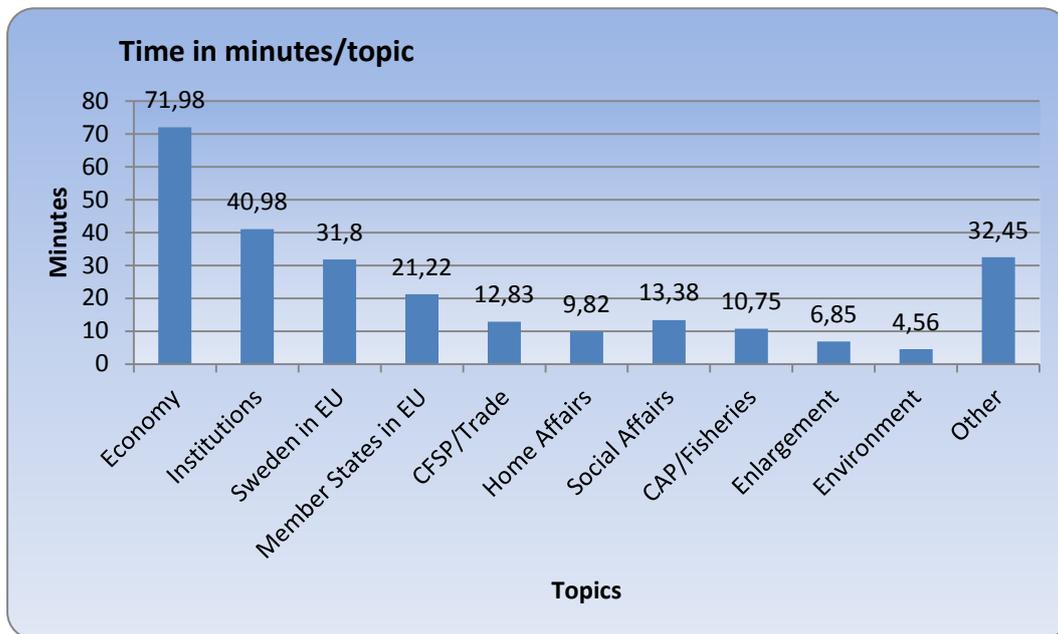


What is noteworthy here is that throughout 2012, the tendency line shows that the time spent on EU coverage is quite low compared to the start, and the end of

2012. Conversely, the columns do indicate that the middle of 2012 was a month where more coverage time was dedicated to the EU. If one compares figure 5.16 with figure 4.3, one can notice that they correspond well in terms of overall coverage with a more diverse range of topics covered in relation to some other months where usually one or two topics were given most coverage time.

Figure 5.17 below shows how much time in minutes that SVT has used on each topic in 2012. Here, one can notice how the time was spent on EU matters divided in topics. Furthermore, it is evident that the economy has been covered a lot in 2012, and one can see that the economy has received almost three to five times as high a coverage as the other topics. This shows that the EU economy has been the greatest topic of interest to SVT in 2012.

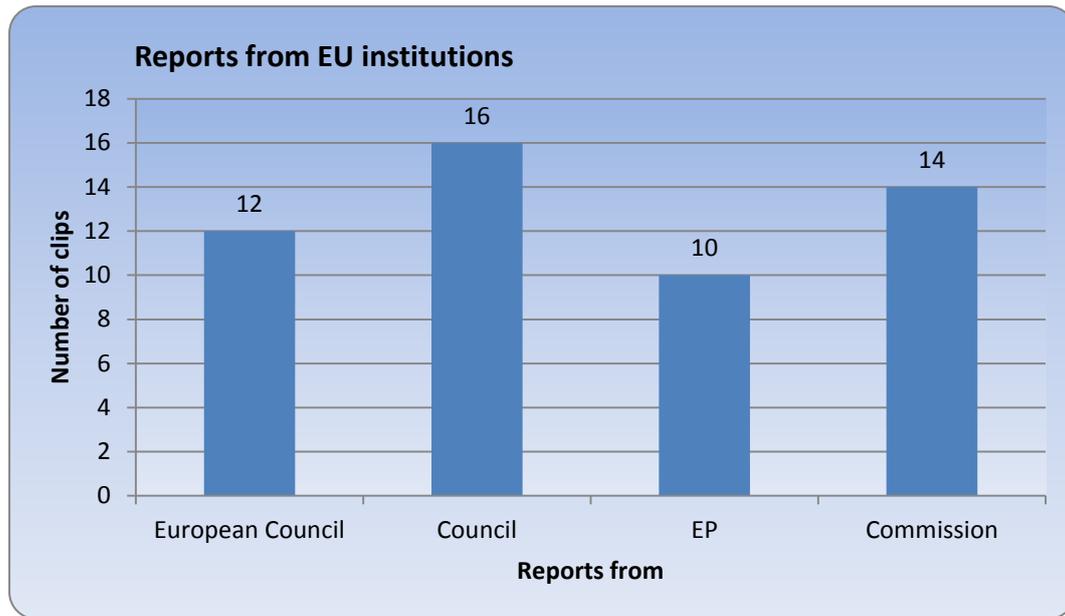
Figure 5.17: The total amount of time in minutes per topic covered by SVT



5.2 Institutions and Locality

In this part of the macro-analysis, the reports will be presented: where do the reports come from. This occurs in 44 out of the 177 clips; however, not in all clips has there been an external report. This means that there has been some form of report from outside the studio in 140 out of the 177 clips. In figure 5.18, the columns show the division of the reports in relation to the European Council, Council, EP, and Commission meetings respectively.

Figure 5.18: The number of reports from EU institutions in 2012

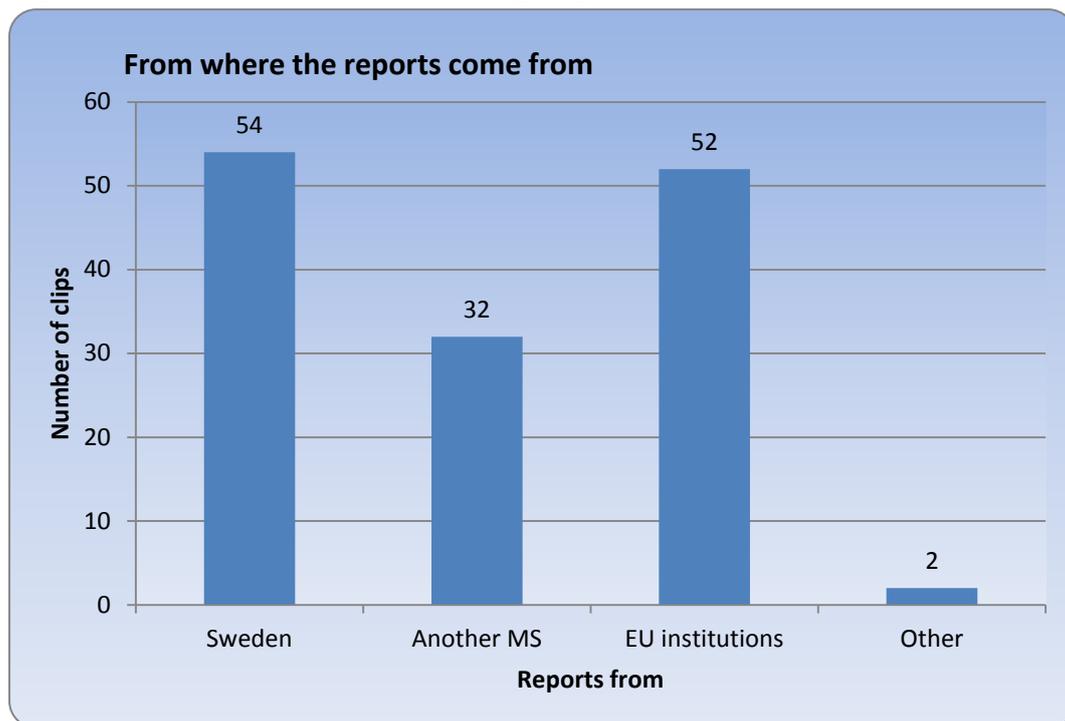


One can observe that the meetings in the Council and European Council are the ones from where most reports are done: reported from in SVT's EU coverage in 2012; however, what is perhaps surprising here is that the relatively neglecting coverage of the events and political agents in the EP does not correspond to the higher number of reports coming from meetings in the EP as in the Council and European Council meetings. With that said, it should be emphasized that some of these reports from the EP were demonstrations outside the EP building, and so that might have increased then the relative number of reports coming from the EP.

Another surprising aspect when we compare figure 5.18 with figure 4.8 and 4.9 is that many reports are not covered in Brussels, but rather in SVT's studio. This is interesting because Council and European Council meetings include various ministers from Sweden and other MS. It should be mentioned that a number of these reports were conducted over the telephone which then explains the lower number in reports from Brussels.

Figure 5.19 shows all the EU clips where an SVT journalist has reported from abroad back to the studio. As is evident, just above half of all the EU clips are reported from Sweden. This figure additionally shows that there is a significant national approach to EU journalism at SVT, at least when it comes to the actually broadcasted news clips on Rapport 19:30. Another matter that could be said with the below figure is that it perhaps portrays the image that SVT is concerned with the type of consequences that the EU decisions have on Sweden and its people; this should then make the EU more understandable to the people, and it works well in the context of transnational journalism as European law is placed in a Swedish context.

Figure 5.19: From where are the EU clips reported from in 2012

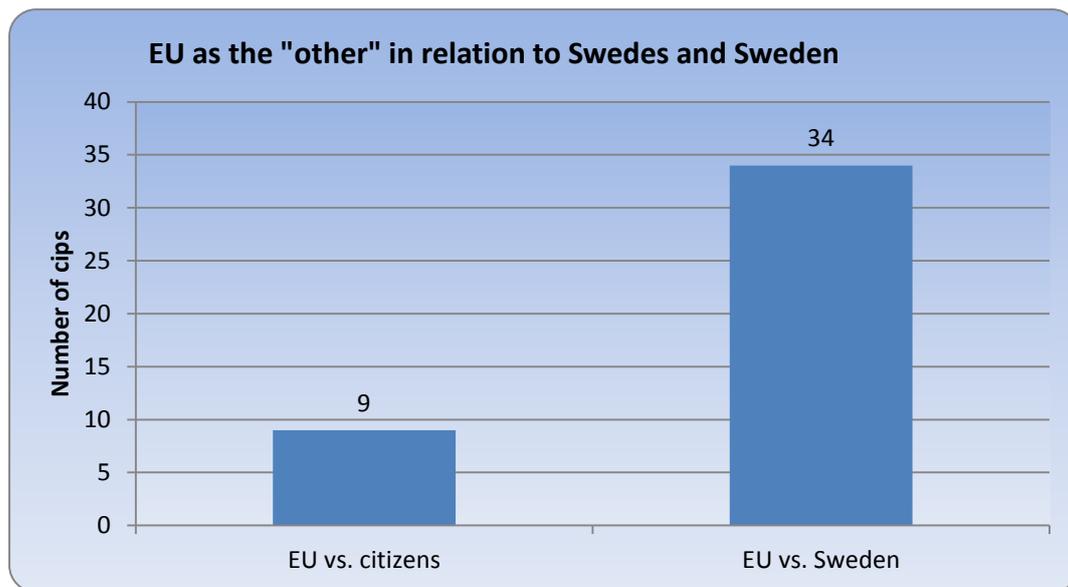


However, some problems exist when it comes to the actual content of these clips as will be analyzed in the following section. This problem is linked to an issue of “otherness” by portraying the EU decision-making process as a “fight” between Sweden and the EU which the former needs to take up in order to protect its citizens.

5.3 The Lingual Portrayal of the EU

This part will present the results from a lingual perspective: the way in which the EU is presented and talked about. There are many occasions where the EU is portrayed as an “other” in relation to the inclusive “we/us” as Swedish citizens or the Swedish state, or even both. This subsequently contributes and reflects the idea of the EU as something that is a foreign body, and something that one would negatively identify oneself with. There are many forms of this type of articulation which portray the EU as an unspecified third person that merely decides without “us;” for example, anything from “the EU has decided,” or “the EU wants to” are common ways to objectify people working in the EU, whether they are directly elected MEPs, or the Commissioners that were approved by the EP to start with. Naturally, one cannot argue that SVT’s anchorman and journalists are intentionally portraying the EU this way, but the articulation and repetition of stereotypes contribute to the distantiation of the former with Sweden and its people. Figure 5.20 shows the number of clips where there is an articulation of opposition between the EU on the one side, and Sweden and its citizens on the other.

Figure 5.20: The number of clips where the EU is articulated as an “other”



There is a difference whether the EU is placed as an opposition to Sweden or to the people, but, in terms of identity, both have a negative image construction of the EU. One thing to point out is that this figure does not contain clips that present the EU as an unspecified third person since it was not possible to combine these two different aspects in one figure. In the following, the analysis will move into lingual examples of how the negative identification in relation to the EU is exemplified in the clips.

5.3.1 Examples of the EU vs. Sweden and its People

This example shows the struggle between the EU and the Swedish labor union LO.

Date	2012-04-09
Rapport	19:30
Length	2:27
Partaking agent	Laszlo Andor, EU Commissioner and Claes-Mikael Jonsson, LO lawyer
<p>Anchorman: “The EU Commission thinks that the Swedish unions are ignorant and too emotional when they criticize the proposal for the new rules for workers that work in another EU country. But LO stands by that the proposal threatens Swedish rules.”</p>	

Here, there are two interesting observations. The first one is that the Commission is portrayed as impolite by calling the Swedish labor union LO ignorant, and that it seems that the former can do what they like: for example by proposing any law because they think that they know better. Secondly, the LO is portrayed as being

polite despite the accusation of being ignorant, and as the well-behaved actor, the LO seems more credible; additionally, the point that LO believes that the new proposal by the Commission threatens Swedish rules makes the LO stand out as the ones who protect the Swedish workers against the EU which seemingly does not care to the same extent.

Another example shows how the EU wants Swedish banks to be put under EU supervision by then subsequently taking power away from Stockholm.

Date	2012-09-17
Rapport	19:30
Length	1:58
Partaking agent	Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner
<p>Anchorman: “The EU Commission thinks that Swedish banks are so big and strong in Finland and the Baltic that Sweden should be a part of the banking union which is now being created. Swedish banks should be put under ECB control. The EU Commissioner which is visiting Stockholm today thinks that.”</p>	

Although one cannot claim that it is directly a case of the EU vs. Sweden, there are important features to emphasize here. One aspect is that since Swedish banks are doing well, then they should be punished by bringing them under EU control, even though the ECB is ironically meant for the Eurozone countries which Sweden is not a part of, and so Sweden would automatically lose their voice in this matter. Additionally, viewers could see this as a problem indirectly since it seems that Sweden should not do well abroad, otherwise the EU will restrict Sweden economically, unless Sweden joins the banking union: a form of blackmail.

The following example below indicates the issue of the EU being portrayed as a power struggle between the EU and Sweden, but even other EU member states.

Date	2012-10-02
Rapport	19:30
Length	2:36
Partaking agent	Birgitta Ohlsson (FP), EU Minister
<p>Anchorman: “Sweden risks to be forced to pay 10 billion SEK more per year in membership fee to the EU. In the negotiations with the Commission, Sweden has created an alliance with other countries who also demand that the EU must slim down its activities considerably.”</p>	

Here, there are a few things that one can notice which are significant in the way that the EU has been portrayed. Firstly, it appears that the EU has the power to force Sweden to pay what it must, thus inflating the strength of the EU to a superstate-like entity; here, it is evident that the EU is presented as the “other.” Secondly, viewers get the impression that Sweden is desperately fighting back by forming an alliance with other countries who try to fight back the EU “giant”

which seems to have a monopoly on power. Thirdly, viewers also get the impression that the EU is practically “fat” as it needs to “slim down” which is a metaphorical way of describing that the EU has a large bureaucracy with too many activities at hand; however, the problem becomes that the anchorman does not specify whether it is the Commission, Parliament, or Council, and so all of these bodies are put into one category. Lastly, what was noticed during the research is that the Swedish government initialized the negotiation on Sweden’s membership fee on the 23rd June in 2012 to actually increase it rather than that being an EU demand.

In the below example, one can observe the threat to the people in Sweden, and where the EU does not seem to have any emotional or rational thoughts to the laws it proposes.

Date	2012-10-08
Rapport	19:30
Length	1:53
Partaking agent	Ordinary people, and the union for pilots
Anchorman: “A 16 hour work day. Yes, that could be the reality for Swedish pilots due to an EU agency that wants to impose new work-time rules. If that become so, the flight security will be threatened. This is claimed by the pilots’ union which now demands that the government acts.”	

Here, one can notice how Swedish citizens are targeted. For example, an unknown EU agency wants to impose new work rules on how long people must work; the issue is that it seems that any EU agency can just propose new laws without any form of accountability, or democratic process: a voting in the EP. This is interesting as both the Council and Parliament have to agree on a proposal for it to become law, so it does not make any sense how just any agency could legislate. Secondly, it appears that pilots should work like robots without any form of rest, or at least minimal amounts; subsequently, this would be highly risky to everyone that travels by plane. Additionally, there is an appeal to the government to act and stop the “madness” by the EU. With that said, it is interesting how such a proposal is not questioned, or elaborated upon: for example, is it true or simply a rumor. Subsequently, as there is no explanation, then the proposal, and the agency proposing it, seems cold and irrational while the proposal seems real enough.

This example shows how the EU forces its member states to implement its laws.

Date	2012-10-24
Rapport	19:30
Length	1:40
Partaking agent	Adelheid Byttebier (Chairman) MIVB/STIB
Anchorman: “The demand that EU’s member states must legislate on at least 40% women in company boards has met fierce opposition. Now it can be stopped before it even	

could be a law proposal. But more countries have gone head and implemented national laws, among others Belgium.”

Indirectly, the EU is portrayed as the dominant actor who will legislate unless countries do not legislate themselves on the laws that the former wants. Subsequently, one way of preventing an EU law is to create a similar national one. Here then, Sweden is the subordinate actor in the power struggle.

In another example, we can see how Sweden is portrayed as being defeated by the EU once again.

Date	2012-10-24
Rapport	19:30
Length	1:40
Partaking agent	Eskil Erlandsson (C) Fishing Minister
Anchorman: “Sweden retracted in the negotiations on fishing in the EU tonight. The Swedish government said yes to subsidies in billions to the EU’s large fishing fleet, even though the government has earlier been against it. ”	

Apart from the aforesaid point that it is a power struggle between Sweden and the EU, one can observe that it seems like Sweden is no match for the EU who has the power to say how money will be spent, and that the EU can spend as much as it likes. One point that should be emphasized is the fishing fleet which seem to be owned by the EU while the Swedish fishing fleet is independent; consequently, what is not mentioned is that each state owns its own fleet, or rather companies. As such, viewers get the impression that Sweden is losing a lot of money by paying others.

This example is yet another instance of consequences for Sweden as it is seemingly powerless in the face of the EU.

Date	2012-11-22
Rapport	19:30
Length	0:35
Partaking agent	Fredrik Reinfeldt (M), Prime Minister
Anchorman: “It could be an increase of the Swedish EU fee. This is what Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt today said when he arrived to the European Council meeting in Brussels regarding the EU’s long-term budget. Reinfeldt met today with the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and the Netherlands, countries that together with Sweden demand cuts in the budget.”	

Here, we can see an alliance of stronger and richer countries in the EU teaming up against the EU who needs more money to sustain itself. In regards to the budget, it is presented as something foreign to Sweden as it seems that the money is consumed by the EU, and that Sweden does not get anything back. Conversely, during the research, it was noted how some months earlier, students from Sweden

were at risk of not being able to study abroad through the Erasmus program as the EU budget was depleted which is ironic as Sweden wanted to downsize the EU budget, while at the same time complaining about that Swedish students should be able to go on the Erasmus exchange programs.

In this example, Sweden cannot afford politeness anymore and threatens the EU with a war.

Date	2012-12-10
Rapport	19:30
Length	1:10
Partaking agent	Ewa Björling (M), Trade Minister
<p>Anchorman: “The Minister of Trade, Ewa Björling sharpens now the tone regarding the snus. She met today the new Trade Commissioner in an attempt to convince the EU Commission to take away the export ban on the Swedish snus. Sweden threatens the EU with a full-scale war regarding the snus... The meeting should have lasted 15 minutes but it lasted an entire hour. Björling presented the market aspect that Sweden believes that the snus is not treated fairly in the EU’s internal market, but also the health aspect...”</p>	

Here, it is evident that the EU is treating Swedish products unfairly, and that the Commission is not sensible and rational enough to understand why snus does not pose any issues in the internal market; however, words are not enough and something “trivial” like that which should have taken 15 minutes was prolonged to an hour; subsequently, war seems to be the only option for Sweden because of the injustice shown to it by the EU. The war rhetoric is strong language to use for a trade dispute, and SVT indirectly then portrays the EU as irrational, stubborn, and unwilling to compromise, especially since they do not talk to other agents, but stick to the Swedish perspective which then creates a certain discourse.

5.4 Summary

A presentation of the precise lengths of the clips shows that there is a downward going tendency when showing EU news. Another point is that the collective time spent on the topics is very low. Apart from the economy, EU institutional matters, and general topics of Sweden in the EU, all of the other topics have an extremely low amount of coverage in relation to those aforesaid.

The larger amount of reports from the Council and European Council meetings show that there is a greater coverage of the intergovernmental institutions in the EU, and hence the more national aspect of the EU rather than the supranational one; however, it was surprising that there were also quite few reports from the EP. Collectively, there have been more reports from Sweden on what was happening in the EU than in Brussels where the instances were played out. This is not problematic per se, but the problem rather occurs with what is being articulated.

The significant issue here is that the EU is often portrayed as the “other” compared to Sweden and its people. Additionally, the elaboration on the actual legislation barely receives coverage; the main aspect is that laws are dictated to Sweden which the country must follow. In one case, the rhetoric amounted to a war-like one when it came to the snus case; in other cases, one could observe a power struggle between Sweden and the EU where the former tries to either be reasonable and discuss the issues, or form alliances to have a better chance against the EU. Moreover, there is a created opposition between the citizens and the EU where Sweden tries to protect the former while the latter wants to impose “irrational” laws on them. Lastly, in none of the clips presented above, or in any other of the ones analyzed has SVT had an inclusive “we” when it came to the EU.

6 Perspectivizing the Coverage

The structure of this chapter is as follows: the results of the analysis will be briefly refreshed so as to be put against the normative starting point described in chapter 2. Moreover, it is important to remember that the analysis was a critical one, and this is why there is natural focus on the problematic relations; so to reiterate, the analysis did not examine SVT's EU coverage from a journalistic perspective, but a political and societal one. Finally, the last part of this chapter will look into the debate about SVT's democratic role in the society in relation to their public service duty.

6.1 How does SVT Cover the EU?

The results have shown that SVT's EU coverage merely covers 2,95% of the total news coverage, excluding sports and the weather; additionally, the frequency peaked in 2012, and later decreased in 2013. This is problematic given that SVT is the only public service media outlet in Sweden, and that the vast majority of people obtain their EU information from TV, as well as that Rapport is the most watched news program on SVT and in Sweden.

By dividing the coverage into topics, one could observe that economic news nearly outweighed all the other news combined, excluding news on EU institutional matters, as well as news with heads of state meetings, or opinions of political parties in Sweden on the EU. Essentially, this is not directly a problem since there is no problem in covering these topics more in depth; however, it is problematic that all other political topics are covered much less as SVT has a democratic role in society to inform people which subsequently then stimulates public participation.

In the micro-analysis, the results show a significant proportion of EU coverage which focuses mainly on national political agents, and on those EU institutions that are intergovernmental in structure; conversely, the EP plays a much smaller role (barely 22%). This shows that there is a stronger national orientation presented in the coverage which also be interpreted as a "foreign policy" approach to the EU. This is an issue democratically as EU laws are decided by democratically elected politicians in the EP, and indirectly by MS' ministers in Council; furthermore, these laws are also directly become part of national law. One could subsequently argue whether or not EU politics is equally as much a domestic policy material as a foreign policy one for Sweden. This re-emphasizes the issue with the identity formation in Sweden in relation to knowing who "we"

are compared to “them.” Additionally, this is evident then from the results of the micro-analysis when it came to the anchorman’s articulation of the EU.

The national approach to EU coverage deals with the Swedish relation to EU law. This is not problematic per se as this is how a transnational public space should work (chapter two); basically, it is a way to illustrate the consequences of certain laws in a national context. The problem becomes when SVT describes linguistically certain laws or recommendations as a dictate from the higher governance levels; in the coverage then, it appears as if the EU has arbitrarily decided something that Sweden must follow in a certain way. Consequently, the argument for the EU legislative process, and subsequent political debate which lies behind the imperative to legislate, is rarely covered; one indication of this was shown with the actual amount of EP sessions covered in relation to how many there were in 2012. Additionally, it does not seem that Swedish politicians have participated in the legislative process on an equal basis with other MS’ politicians, even though the political agents coming from Sweden greatly outnumbered the others. Metaphorically, one could almost satirically say that SVT appears to be “Sweden’s watchdog” rather than “the watchdog of democracy.”

To re-emphasize, there is no problem with being critical towards the EU, but being so in a way that criticizes the system rather than the political discussions and actors is a problem. For example, one could say that SVT does not criticize the players (politicians) or the ball (law), but the EU (playing field); consequently as a citizen, one does not become then for or against the political views as there are not really presented in the coverage, but one is subsequently for or against the EU as a whole, albeit with very limited information on the latter itself, as well as the latter’s governance structure. In this way, this does not strengthen citizens’ ability to act in a democratic society, or the stimulation to partake in public debates and democratic processes in Europe as one could say that SVT underperforms in relation to their expectation, at least in relation to their public service duty vis-à-vis the people. Consequently, this makes it additionally harder to estimate who one should eventually vote for in EP elections as well.

On the other hand, the large role of business agents in the reports on social matters, and on the environment is peculiar, especially since the latter has not been represented from any NGOs in SVT’s coverage in 2012. Conversely, the large focus on businesses when it comes to the economy is democratically worrying since there is no balanced and representative image of the economic consequences for the broader public, and so a particular discourse is largely emphasized: the one of businesses and industries. From the perspective of the role of the media, as well as the increasing transnational role described in chapter two, this does not contribute to a “fair” public opinion formation in society: a dialogue between citizens, and between citizens and the political system, especially when most agents are Swedish ones as the European dimension diminishes in importance due to the lower level of inclusion in SVT’s reports.

The central question here is then, whether on the basis of SVT’s EU coverage, could one “accuse” SVT for not fulfilling their public service duty to the people in Sweden. Subsequently, the answer has to be yes according to Ahlgren (2012) since SVT’s public duty is to scrutinize public authorities and monitor the

political process so that people are well-informed about the political debate, and are able to act accordingly. Additionally, the analysis' results show that SVT does not live up to their democratic role in a European transnational public space, especially taking into consideration the power shift to Brussels from Stockholm. One argument against this critique could be that the public service duty of SVT relates to their collective supply of programs while this research focused exclusively on SVT's Rapport news coverage; however, this argument is problematic since Rapport is the most watched news program on SVT, and this is why that respective program plays the biggest role in relation to the public service duty in this matter.

7 Conclusion

To answer the research question, the thesis concludes that there are several problems connected to SVT's EU coverage in 2012. These problems can be summarized in four subsequent points. Firstly, there is a low frequency of the EU coverage, especially the legislative work; secondly, there is a relative neglect of the EP and European political actors; thirdly, there is an unbalanced and one-sided lingual presentation and coverage of the EU; and lastly, there is a one-sided focus on EU laws in relation to Sweden where the former is presented as something foreign that dictates what Sweden should do. In this way, the EU appears as an object that creates problems for Swedes while SVT appears to be the medium that is the watchdog of Sweden.

In general, the research depicts a picture of SVT's EU news coverage which is heavily focused on the national aspect of the EU and European politics, while simultaneously neglecting the European debate and legislative process that does not mirror the political power that has been shifted to Brussels. Based on this background, it must be concluded that SVT does not live up to its role as a public service actor in a transnational European society. Subsequently, citizens are not able to act properly in a democratic society since they are not well-informed. Conversely, in order for a transnational public sphere to work, then it is not enough that SVT fulfils its role to such an extent as seen here. On the other hand, the problems are not unsolvable as one could focus more on the European political actors and debates which take place in the EP, as well as in the Council. Depending upon SVT's resources, they could for example increase their number of EU correspondents where tasks could be divided on the different institutions.

7.1 General Evaluation of the Thesis' Results

The results from this research have increased our knowledge on the extent to which SVT covers EU politics. The results have also opened up the possibility to compare SVT's EU coverage with other public service media outlets' EU coverage, thus gaining a greater insight into how these types of media outlets cover EU affairs in general. Furthermore, these results contribute to the evaluation of how SVT covers EU news in a way that one can say what is good, and what should be changed in their coverage. Additionally, the results have also contributed to uncovering the idea about how well SVT is actually doing when reporting on the EU, for example by being able to say that the former should be more representative with the agents that partake in the EU news coverage, or that

SVT should cover the substance of the laws that are being discussed in Brussels more than they currently do.

Lastly, although the results cannot say anything about other media outlets, whether private ones like TV4, or public ones like the BBC, it still seems appropriate to show a greater caution when listening to what is being said on other media outlets as one should perhaps not assume that SVT underperforms in their EU coverage compared to other media outlets that also air EU news. So, the assumption that public service media outlets report objectively is something that should not be taken for granted as this thesis' results have shown.

7.2 General Evaluation of the Analysis Strategy

The strength of using Habermas and Foucault in the same paper has enabled the thesis' results to be put into a normative context which has made it more comprehensible as arguments have been discussed which relate to SVT's significance and role in society. Conversely, using elements of the CDA like a discursive order, practice, and event has helped to elaborate certain structures and trends in SVT's EU coverage with regard to power relations. This has subsequently fitted nicely with the discourse ideas of Foucault, as well as Fairclough. Moreover, in combination with Habermas' normative ideas, these discursive structures by SVT have helped to understand issues of identity formation and perception between Swedes and Sweden on the one hand, and the EU on the other which turned out to be a valid choice when choosing the theoretical perspectives for this thesis.

In regards to the methodological approach, the constructivist framework seems to have been suitable as the thesis dealt with a socially constructed reality, which is how it then relates well to the aforesaid theoretical scholars. Furthermore, in relation to the constructivist scientific ideal, since news patterns cannot be held constant, which is something that was shown with different levels of frequency in the monthly EU coverage, then the constructivist approach is further strengthened in this case. Accordingly, merging the method and theory made even more sense since the scientific approach was derived from scholars that could be described as constructivists, which is then why this was a suitable and valid merger. Moreover, this enabled the thesis to let the empiricism "dictate" the circumstances in the analysis which was necessary as demonstrated in section 4.4 in regards to the partaking agents, especially the non-political agents.

7.2 Recommendations for Further Research

One recommendation for further studies relates to how the media works when it comes to EU affairs. For example, an interesting aspect is to research the EU

awareness of the staff that work with news. It might be so that the editorial at SVT, but in general as well, lacks sufficient amount of knowledge on the EU in relation to the correspondents, or perhaps it could be that both lack more knowledge on the EU. Conversely, it might be interesting to investigate whether or not there is one editorial for domestic, and one for foreign news; consequently, there might be a gap in how to bridge these two more closely together, especially in terms of EU politics. This could then improve the point as aforesaid that the Swedish angle dominates the EU coverage instead of it being more representative. Additionally, one could also look into whether or not SVT, or any other media company, cooperates with specialists within certain areas that could help to clarify the content of new laws in a more comprehensive manner to both SVT, and thereby to the people.

Another related aspect to how the media company works is to look at the level of transparency for correspondents operating in Brussels. It might be so that journalists have a hard time to attain more information on what is going on. This could be combined with the issue of media commercialization by looking at the criteria that media outlets use to define what classifies as interesting news that should subsequently be prioritized.

If one would like to do something more comparative with this research, then one could examine other media outlets that air their news, and which also have a significant public reach. For example, in Sweden, that could be TV4. Additionally, depending upon one's language skills and whether one is able to attain data from other countries' TV-archives, then one could extend such a research to other countries for comparative reasons. This might show if there could be a correlation between EU-skepticism and the level of information that people get, or if there are other factors that "pull" in a skeptical direction.

Another interesting study could look at a longer period of time, perhaps five years, and exclusively focus on the legislative process which is being covered. For example, closely investigating whether the news correctly follow the legislative process, or if there is a gap in the information presented to people. This is relevant as people could think that a law has already been passed while it is actually merely being debated.

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9 Attachment

Attachment: PDF file

1. Metadata for 177 EU clips from 2012 from SVT's TV-archives