

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS, PRAGUE**  
**FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**2017**

**Bc. Irina Kruhmalova**



UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS, PRAGUE

FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



International and Diplomatic Studies

European integration through sceptical prism in the European Parliament

(Master's Thesis)

Author: Bc. Irina Kruhmalova

Supervisor: Ing. Mgr. Jan Němec, Ph.D.

## Author's Declaration

Herewith I declare that I have written the Master's Thesis on my own and I have cited all sources.

Prague, 28 April 2017

.....  
*Author's Signature*

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank to my supevisor, Ing. Mgr. Jan Němec, Ph.D. for his advices and useful notes during the time of my research.

Also I would like to thank my father, EMBA. Sergii Krukhmalov, who has inspired and supported me in choosing the subject of research.

## Abstract

The current rise of Euroscepticism has been observed in all EU Members States and has become the central concern in the European Union for governing bodies to deal with. Therefore, continued French dissatisfaction with the European Union, the British exit from the European Union and a rise of both left and right radical wings throughout the Union have appeared at the center of European debate. Regarding the fact that the only directed body at the supranational level is the European Parliament, it is necessary to understand how national demands for sovereignty can be projected on supranational level.

With the ratification of Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament was established as a significant co-decision body. As an additional outcome, political groups inside the EP got an opportunity to introduce their nominees to the Commission presidency through the lead candidate (*Spitzenkandidaten*) system, where appointed politicians were expected to present their programmes in all EU countries and become familiar to European citizens. The conducted study pays attention to the phenomenon of Euroscepticism and its place in the European Parliament.

## Keywords

Euroscepticism, European Parliament, European elections, Populism, 2014 EP elections, European integration, UKIP, National Front, ENF, EFDD, GUE/NGL, ECR.

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	11
1. Theoretical framework .....	16
1.1. Euroscepticism and operationalization of this concept .....	16
1.2. Party cleavages .....	22
1.2.1. Rokkan and Lipset's classification .....	22
1.2.2. European integration as a new cleavage .....	25
1.3. Populism and its operationalization .....	28
2. Sceptical prism in the European Parliament .....	33
2.1. Parliamentary groups in the European Parliament .....	38
2.1.1. Main characteristics and dividing lines .....	40
2.2. EP elections 2014 .....	43
3. Parties' attitudes towards European integration .....	52
3.1. Group of European People's Party as central representatives of Euro-optimism .....	52
3.2. Phenomenon of Euroscepticism in the European Parliament .....	55
3.2.1. Europe of Nations and Freedom .....	56
3.2.2. Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy .....	58
3.2.3. Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left .....	62
3.2.4. European Conservatives and Reformists .....	65
3.3. Influence of populist domestic policies over the European Parliament .....	69
3.3.1. UKIP .....	70
3.3.2. National Front .....	73
Conclusion .....	77
References .....	83
Appendices .....	90

## List of Abbreviations

ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

CSDP – Common Security and Defense Policy

ECR – European Conservatives and Reformists

EDD – Europe of Democracies and Diversities

EFDD – Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy

EN – Europe of Nations

ENF – Europe of Nations and Freedom

EP – European Parliament

EPP – European People's Party

EU – European Union

FN – Front National (in French) or National Front (in English)

FPÖ – Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs

Greens/EFA – Greens/European Free Alliance

GUE/NGL - Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left

IMF – International Monetary Fund

IND/DEM – Independence and Democracy group

M5S – Five-Star Movement

MENL – Movement of a Europe of Nations and Freedom

MEP – Member of the European Parliament



PESCO – Permanent structured cooperation

PS – Socialist Party (France)

RCV – Roll Call Vote

S&D – Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats

UEN – Union for Europe of the Nations

UK – United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UKIP – United Kingdom Independence Party

UMP – Union for a Popular Movement (France)

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Typology of party position on Europe. ....	20
Figure 2. Lipset and Rokkan's typology of party systems on the basis of cleavages.....	24
Figure 3. Occurance of themes in the Euromanifestos (1979–2004).....	26
Figure 4. Representation and policy in 2009 by party (coefficients model).....	27
Figure 5. EP composition 1958 – 2014. ....	33–34
Figure 6. Tendencies to trust/distrust the European Parliament in Member Countries.....	37
Figure 7. 2014 EP elections results – seats allocation .....	46
Figure 8. Comparison of European Parliaments: 2009 and 2014. ....	46
Figure 9. Tendency to trust/distrust the European Union. ....	47
Figure 10. Results for radical parties, 2014 European elections. ....	49
Figure 11. Electoral support for the EPP. Percentage of seats in the EP (1979-2014).....	54

Figure 12. Seats in the European Parliament for the EFDD. 2009-2017.....	59
Figure 13. Seats in the European Parliament for the GUE/NGL. 1999-2014.....	62
Figure 14. Seats in the European Parliament for the ECR. 2009-2017.....	66
Figure 15. UKIP's electoral results – general and EP elections.....	71
Figure 16. Seats in the National Assembly for the National Front, 1986–2012.....	73
Figure 17. Percentage of seats in Regional Councils for the National Front, 1986–2015.....	74
Figure 18. Seats for National Front in the European Parliament, 1984–2014.....	74

## Introduction

The current rise of Euroscepticism has been observed in all EU Members States and has become the central concern in the European Union for governing bodies to deal with. Therefore, continued French dissatisfaction with the European Union, the British exit from the European Union and a rise of both left and right radical wings throughout the Union have appeared at the center of European debate. Regarding the fact that the only directed body at the supranational level is the European Parliament, it is necessary to understand how national demands for sovereignty can be projected on supranational level.

With the ratification of Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament was established as a significant co-decision body. As an additional outcome, political groups inside the EP got an opportunity to introduce their nominees to the Commission presidency through the lead candidate (*Spitzenkandidaten*) system, where appointed politicians were expected to present their programmes in all EU countries and become familiar to European citizens. The conducted study pays attention to the phenomenon of Euroscepticism and its place in the European Parliament.

The first mainstream research about this phenomenon were made in 1990s, however the roots go to the 1970s and British position of ‘anti-marketers’. Nowadays there is a lot of evidence that a critical attitude towards integration is on the rise. Two decades have passed since the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, which was the main critical objective for debates in different member states. But more widespread and vocal scepticism of the European Union has risen in recent years. It was evident in the various referendums about EU Treaties till 2008. Moreover, in 2016 the British vote to leave the EU and the Dutch referendum against an association agreement with Ukraine added the list.

Getting closer to the main point of this work, it is crucial to understand that parties’ attitudes towards European integration have been divided between European optimists and sceptics. The main goal of this thesis is to study the broad range of Eurosceptics inside the European Parliament. This legislative body, which consists of many national parties, reflects the main existing Eurosceptic trends across the Union. An additional goal of this thesis is to study populist appeals, which at the supranational level mirror national concerns and help to promote either reformation or dissolution of the European Union.

The first chapter of the thesis is divided into three subchapters. Each of them is dealing with different theoretical terms. As far as the biggest part of this work is concerned with the concept of “Euroscepticism”, the thesis attempts to define what Euroscepticism means, how it emerged, how this phenomenon can be operationalized. However, it should be stated that there is no agreement on definition and so one definition, that of Taggart and Szczerbiak, has been chosen as the central. It introduces the broad categorization of Eurosceptics (Hard vs. Soft) and helps to explain the inconsistency of Eurosceptic movement inside the EP, reflected in this work. On the other hand, the classification of Kopecky and Mudde serves as an explanatory theory for the study of chosen parliamentary groups in the fourth chapter. It provides a logical link to strategies of coalition formation and to the choice of ideological program in different fractions. Besides the subchapter is concerned with operationalization of this process and possible implications for the European parliamentary arena. Among main quantitative characteristics, which help to operationalize the concept, belong EP and national election results, changes in the power of Eurosceptic blocs and internal groups cohesion. However, it has one more additional qualitative concept – sovereignty sharing.

The following subchapter works with a concept of social cleavages, firstly introduced by Lipset and Rokkan. These four basic lines claim to determine the emergence and the content of European parties: center vs. periphery; state vs. church; owner vs. worker; land vs. industry. However, the thesis revises this concept in terms of European integration. Because the European Parliament consists of different blocs formed by national parties and is mostly based on cleavages, the idea of European integration future serves as one of them as well.

Of course, the important factor, which this thesis highlights, is the growing voter support for populist parties; a fact seen by Taggart and Szczerbiak as a source of opposition not only to integration, but to the Union as a whole. Populist agenda in member countries spreads a certain disbelief in a bright future of the European Union. The next subpart examines the phenomenon of populism, which is, according to Mudde and Kaltwasser, (2017: 6): “*a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite,” and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people.*” This opposition can be expressed differently, as well as implemented. However, much attention in Europe, specifically anti-European agenda, has focused exclusively on the populism of the right. This idea of reformed or rejected European integration often appears in the rhetoric of

national parties and rapidly gains a lot of support among European population. This methodological framework and its operationalization help to find commonalities between national agenda and Eurosceptic agenda on the level of the EP by using the parliamentary questions. They appear to be the main instrument of Eurosceptics with no regard to their role and bring domestic concerns to the European level. It is carried out by the questioning of those, who are responsible for decision and policy making inside the EU. Moreover, in order to strengthen their position and underline the position of pro-Europeans on national level, parliamentary questions often concern controversial topics and address the most insecure part of the population.

The second chapter explores the sceptical bloc inside the European parliament. At the beginning it introduces the European Parliament as a whole and explores recent changes in the EP power capabilities. Another important aspect of this chapter is constraints, which are put on Eurosceptic movement. Moreover, it eliminates areas where substantial internal change is still required. In the following subpart it focuses on different parliamentary groups, where special attention is drawn upon main characteristics and dividing lines that are dictated by the rule of proportional representation of groups within Committees. Using Lipset and Rokkan's classification, the thesis finds similar cleavages on the level of working Committees, not parliamentary groups.

The next subchapter deals with the results of last EP election in 2014 and a main cross-cutting line – attitude towards European integration. It is worth mentioning that the lead candidate (*Spitzenkandidaten* in German) system was initially perceived as a great achievement. However, after its implementation European citizens still remain distant and hostile to European politics. In this section are analysed certain trends which are typical for Euroscepticism inside the European Parliament.

The third chapter is divided into two parts. Firstly, it deals with political programs and behavioral patterns of chosen political groups: the representative of Euroenthusiasm (the European People's Party) and the representatives of Euroscepticism. The main goal of this section is to find out the causes which create the diversification of the movement and limit its possibility for closer cooperation. Therefore, the main focus remains on four main Eurosceptic representatives: the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), the Confederation of European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) and the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR).

These blocs are closely tied with the idea of reforming or even rejecting the project of European integration. The subchapter studies an electoral performance of each group since its emergence, its political agenda and the use of available instruments.

In the subchapter that follows, the influence of populist domestic policies within the European Parliament is discussed. More precisely, it examines them through the prism of two significant member countries and their populist parties – French National Front (FN) and British United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). The most interesting case in this regard is Great Britain after recent developments, namely Brexit. By having one of the most Eurosceptic societies in the Union and after the government's badly chosen strategy, Brexit has challenged the national government, the European Union and has created one of the most difficult law cases to deal with. The UKIP has played a significant role in shaping both public and governmental debate thanks to the outstanding increase of electoral support.

Likewise, France has been also recently connected with an idea of rising nationalism. National Front, a political party led by Marine Le Pen, appears to be the most controversial party in the Union. The party is actively using its rhetoric both on national and supranational levels. It shapes the attitude of mainstream parties in the country and threatens the future path of the EU. However, recent lifting of her immunity shows that the European Parliament is trying to eliminate right-wing populist appeals and to restrain the popularity of such political groupings.

To sum up, this master thesis deals with the political attitude towards integration in the European Union called Euroscepticism. It is focused on the Eurosceptic trends which have appeared in the European Parliament. The central objective is to discover them and to define the stages of the evolution of policy in different Eurosceptic parties. The additional purpose of this work is to find out what are the outcomes of nationalistic policies for European integration with regard to the European parliament. The following hypotheses are being tested:

- In the last fifteen years<sup>1</sup> the electoral support for Eurosceptic movement inside the European parliament has grown.

---

<sup>1</sup> The first official Eurosceptical group (the Europe of Nations) inside the EP was formed in 1994, so it is reasonable to have a look on the electoral support for Eurosceptics during four consecutive elections – 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014 EP elections. More explanation is given in Chapter 2.2.

- The inconsistency of Eurosceptic parties' policies and a low cohesion of political groups lead to the diversification of the movement inside the European parliament and limits their blackmail and governing potentials<sup>2</sup>.

This master thesis is written using different study designs. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 are based on a single-case study design. According to Arch Woodside, a case study design is a detailed analysis of the case which was chosen as a subject of research. Its goal is to provide a deep understanding or causal explanation of the selected case (Woodside, 2010). However, case studies have a lot of branches and, as such, this thesis operates using both cross-case and single-case studies. Single-case study provides further background information and helps us to understand the logic of the process and its development. The instrumental use of this study design brings the theoretical richness in the Chapter 1, when it researches few definitions and different approaches towards Euroscepticism, populism and party cleavages.

A cross-case study design is used in Chapter 2, where the European Parliament is studied in the frame of blocs and their main characteristics and dividing lines. It creates two figures, where the first figure can be marked as a Eurosceptic, the second as a Euroenthusiast. Thanks to this study design the main goal of this thesis could be achieved – to delineate the Eurosceptic trends in particular political parties. Chapter 3 is based on the same type of research design as Chapter 2. With the usage of this design are drawn the most desirable possibilities.

As this work illustrates the concept of Euroscepticism in the European Parliament, it could appeal to the general public, the academic community of social scientists or students – especially those who are interested in the current political agenda of the European Union.

---

<sup>2</sup> This hypothesis is based on the theory of Giovanni Sartori. More broadly it is discussed at the end of Chapter 1.1.

## 1. Theoretical framework

The European Union started to be at the center of academic research at the date of its creation. It has gone through different institutional changes, and the Treaty of Lisbon, entered in force in 2009, has declared its current structure and functions. The central object of this thesis is one of institutional bodies, namely the European Parliament. Recent changes in European politics have raised a lot of questions about its future and even possibility of its existence. European integration has become one of the top policy directions for parties on both national and supranational levels. That is why it is important to define and operationalize three noteworthy trends connected with the topic of research. The first subchapter introduces the concept of “Euroscepticism”, whereas the second is concerned with the theory of party cleavages and appoints European integration as a cleavage. And the last part of this chapter explores the theory of populism and puts special attention to the right-wing concept.

### 1.1. Euroscepticism and operationalization of this concept

The phenomenon of Euroscepticism gained its mainstream position in the 1990s. The earliest roots can be dated to the 1970s, when in Britain started a discussion about the referendum, concerning membership of the European Community. The position of so-called ‘anti-marketers’ was placed at the core of the debate. It included the idea of opposition to British participation in the European integration project. The referendum itself took place in 1975 and results were pro-European. The study of this issue faded into the background and re-emerged only after Thatcher’s speech in Bruges (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008: 151; Kruhmalova, 2014).

Nowadays there is a lot of evidence that critical attitude towards integration rises. Two decades have passed since the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty which was the main critical objective for debates in different member states. But more widespread and vocal scepticism of the European Union has risen in recent years. It was evident in the 2005 referendums in France and the Netherlands that were concerned with the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty and in the 2008 Irish referendum rejection of the Lisbon Treaty (Torreblanca and Leonard, 2013; Kruhmalova, 2014). Moreover, in 2016 the British vote to leave the EU and the Dutch referendum against an association agreement with Ukraine added the list.



As Taggart and Szczerbiak (2013: 17) point out, Euroscepticism has been leaving the edges of the party system. This has all happened thanks to the collapse of the permissive consensus, the invasion of radical parties into government and developing economic and political crises in Europe. Meantime parties, which were always pro-European, have taken the Eurosceptical positions. Eventually last year had been appointed as a year of global paradigm shift, where Brexit and election of Donald Trump happened. The Eurosceptic (2016) underlines the ten most significant events with a focus on European integration. This thesis does not deal with all of them, however it is crucial to mention one: Brexit and its legal challenge. British voters have decided to leave the EU, though the central idea was a rejection of the status quo in the UK. The feeling of losing sovereignty, connected with inability of the political establishment to limit the influence of the EU, brought its outcomes. Nevertheless, a legal challenge has come right after the UK's vote to leave. The current situation displays a government's suffering from ruling elite, namely House of Lords. In March 2017, a second Brexit defeat happened.

There are a number of definitions of Euroscepticism which vary greatly according to their authors. Someone can argue that this concept can be narrowed down, but in this thesis it remains more multidimensional. The author wishes to explore different types of scepticism which are prominent in the European Parliament today. Also there is an existing critique that Euroscepticism has become a kind of 'buzzword' used by the media, the political elite and the academic world with a lot of different meanings and connotations.

To begin with, this thesis uses the famous definition of Euroscepticism, where it appears as a *“relatively new term, although the general attitudes to which it refers – opposition to, or doubts about, the progress of the European project are as old as the project itself”* (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008: 151). Anthony Forster (2002: 7; Kruhmalova, 2014) captures European integration as two interrelated processes – economic and political integration within Europe. He uses the term of Euroscepticism to describe opponents of European integration concerning both opportunity and principles.

On the other hand, these processes can be divided by Taggart and Szczerbiak's classification of Euroscepticism – soft vs. hard. Opposition towards everything about EU integration introduces 'hard' Euroscepticism. It appeals to a complete withdrawal from membership and a development of a strong national policy. The 'soft' version of Euroscepticism argues against some certain aspects of integration, policy outcomes or institutional features. The primary

goal of it is to reform the EU rather than give up on the entire project (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008: 2).

In their study, Szczerbiak and Taggart discuss the two main features of Euroscepticism. The first one is an extension of new policies resulting in a new populism or neo-fascism, while the second one is the position and structure of political parties and the party system (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008: 12–13; Kruhmalova, 2014). Therefore, Gifford (2008: 8–9) conducts his research by careful exercising of modern politics and new policies that represent popular democracy. He emphasizes that constitutional democracy is continuously losing its prominence and the will of the people centers the way of governance. Party politics turns into the times of decline, where political parties become more dependent on other actors and gradually transform into populist units thanks to national appeals.

Also, the Taggart and Szczerbiak's findings state that Euroscepticism is most presumably to be adopted by protest-based parties that stand on borderlines of the existing party system and outside of the government. By doing so, Euroscepticism challenges existing political systems and leadership structures. They believe that protest parties and populist parties can adopt it in order to secure electoral support. Another purpose is the strengthening of their position among the political core by adapting the EU issue as a secondary appropriate issue (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2008: 256–258).

The next author, who was mentioned previously, is Anthony Forster. In his book *"Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties Since 1945"* (2002: 2) the movement is seen as a phenomenon with a multi-faced nature which helps to prolong the Eurosceptic agenda's durability. There are, of course, different context in which it exists. The questioning of involvement in European integration projects, doubts about the membership in the EU community, the competence of some governmental bodies of the EC/the EU, disengagement and withdrawal are the topics which show a strong division among sceptics.

A more deep and careful study, which defines the entire range of Eurosceptic possibilities, was made by Kopecky and Mudde (2002: 300–301; Kruhmalova, 2014). This range is built on the distinction between European integration as an ideal, and the European Union as an existing set of institutions. Besides authors argue that division between only soft and hard versions has few weaknesses. First, a broad definition of 'soft' Euroscepticism gives a space

for any disagreement with EU policy decisions. Second, an absence of clear distinction between hard and soft versions is blemished. ‘Hard’ Euroscepticism in reality starts to be identified by the objection to the current form of European integration. Third, criteria for connection and separation between two versions continue to be vague, which creates difficulties in explanations of Eurosceptic origins. Fourth, the categorization for soft/hard often wrongly subscribes parties and ideologies that are pro-European to the Eurosceptic camp, as well as outright anti-European. This ascription generates the over- or underestimation of the trend in any system. Therefore, Kopecky and Mudde describe Euroscepticism as one of four ideal types produced by intersecting orientations towards the European Union (EU optimism/pessimism) with orientations towards the idea of European integration (Europhilia /Europhobia).

Starting with the ideas of European integration, Europhiles are those who believe in EU political and economic fundamentals such as institutionalized cooperation on the basis of shared sovereignty and the integration of economies. This group includes both federalists, who support the project of supranational state, and those who see integration only through economic means. At the same time, there is a disregard of how European integration is defined and realized. As a clear example, the authors mention Jean Monnet’s reflection of the community. Another category is Europhobes which includes those who are not in favor of European integration. They may consist of nationalists, socialists, isolationists or simply those who believe in incompatibility among European states. Nevertheless, an important fact is the absence of any support towards European integration’s ideas. One of the well-known examples is the UKIP (Kopecky and Mudde, 2002: 301–302).

Looking at the orientations towards the European Union, EU-optimists present the group that believe in the EU as it is and/or see its future development as a positive. It is important to understand that criticism towards one certain EU policy aspect does not cross off the party from being optimists. On the other hand, EU-pessimists do not support the current EU or are critical about the direction of its development. This does not mean the immediate rejection of the membership, but the hope to improve the EU and to create a union that reflects them (ibid, 2002: 302).

These two orientations produce four ideal types which are illustrated in Figure 1. “Eurorejects” who oppose ideas of any kind of integration and the reality of the EU, “Euroenthusiasts” who support both the general ideas about European integration and the

ideal of an ever-closer union, “Europragmatists” who do not support integration, but pragmatically view the EU as useful, and “Eurosceptics” who support the idea of integration, but are pessimistic about its realization through the current EU. While this conceptualization has the theoretical appeal of separating out Europe from the actual EU, this distinction often appears in actual political debate.

**Figure 1. Typology of party position on Europe.**

		Support for European integration	
		<i>Europhile</i>	<i>Europhobe</i>
S u p p o r t  f o r  E U	<i>EU-optimist</i>	Euroenthusiasts	Europragmatists
	<i>EU-pessimist</i>	Eurosceptics	Eurorejects

Source: Kopecky and Mudde (2002: 303).

Therefore, the operationalization of any theoretical concept is important for every research. The purpose of this process in this thesis is to go into more depth with the concept of Euroscepticism and deduce the nature or sources of various Eurosceptical ideas. For example, in the book of Taggart and Szczerbiak (2008: 156–160), this concept is operationalized in absolute or relative terms. They provide an example of studies for people’s categorization, in which a Eurosceptic scale is created. Evaluation of respondents’ answers divides them into categories such as Hard Eurosceptics, Soft Eurosceptics and Europhiles.

However, as far as the main research question closely connected with trends in the European Parliament, this thesis uses its own categories. Among them can be found European Parliament election results, changes in the power of Eurosceptic bloc and internal group

cohesion. One more additional aspect is a sovereignty dimension which is very substantial for the Eurosceptic movement nowadays.

Starting with a related view to this additional aspect, it can be argued that contemporary academic literature has a lot of similar theories. They often combine the Eurosceptic movement with the ideas against further integration or even future reflections of European ideas. The EU competencies' increase is perceived as the weakening of a nation state and the loss of sovereignty. According to Anthony Coughlan, who argues that national sovereignty is undermined by EU institutions, “... *[i]n practice countries and peoples that surrender their sovereignty to the EU become ever more subject to laws and policies that serve the interests of the others and in particular the bigger EU States... The nation that gives up its sovereignty or is deprived of it, ceases to be an independent subject of international politics. It becomes more like a province than a nation...*” (Coughlan, 2004: 40).

As a major factor in the rising of successful Eurosceptic public campaign can be seen the ability to create and successfully use resources and ideological dimensions through modern technologies and media. At the same time, it can be argued that Euroscepticism changes its nature: from just a view to campaigning force, where an analysis of policy-making, decisions and Treaty outcomes have started to be a weapon in critics' hands. An enormous research base has become a definite characteristic of Euroscepticism (Forster, 2002: 8).

However, numbers and the relocation of mandates cover more practical reflection of operationalization in this thesis. One can argue that ideological dimension remains on paper, but figures reflect the reality. In this case usage of the European Parliament election results helps to measure a possible growth or decline of the trend. Also, the number of gained mandates indicates changes in the power of Eurosceptic blocs. It is important to note that it does not necessarily mean the real share of power, but it is more about governing or blackmail potential<sup>3</sup>. That is why another useful operational variable is internal group cohesion that helps to display how consistent and cooperative the Eurosceptic movement can be in legislative terms.

---

<sup>3</sup> Governing or also called coalition potential is the fact whether party has or had entered a coalition government, or has/had given the support to take office or to stay in it. While blackmail potential is a situation when the party has close to the anti-system nature and it is able to exercise veto power with respect to the enactment of legislation (Sartori, 2005: 109–110).

In conclusion, it is worth reminding that there is no clear-cut definition of Euroscepticism, and it involves a large diversity of characteristics. This thesis is based on the concept created by Kopecky and Mudde and uses four ideal types, which are the Euroenthusiasts, the Europragmatists, the Eurorejects and the Eurosceptics. Also, operationalization characteristics, created in this thesis, help to confirm or disprove the stated hypotheses.

## 1.2. Party cleavages

Every coalition and power sharing is dependent on the ideological closeness of members. But what brings different parties together is not the subject of this research. In the case of European integration and institutions it is a better way to study cleavages between players. The Rokkan and Lipset's classification of party cleavages can be applied to the European Parliament. However, there is a new phenomenon which can be claimed as newly emerged cleavage. The question of future European integration has started to be at the centre of EP debate and has brought separately even potential partners. The purpose of this subchapter is to briefly discuss traditional cleavage theory and to elaborate on a question of new cleavage – European integration.

### 1.2.1. Rokkan and Lipset's classification

Competing issues always rule any political structure which consists of different political parties. Therefore, party cleavages are located at the center of party systems' analysis thanks to their ability to mobilize voters, to shape the relations' stability between the party and voters, to provide the content of political competition and, of course, to affect the formulation of public policies (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2009: 280–281).

Different studies pay a lot of attention to the development of these cleavages. The most prominent work in this regard remains the book of Lipset and Rokkan, "*Party systems and voter alignments: cross-national perspectives*". The authors argue (1967: 4–5) that political cleavages formulate the content of party competition and more generally – the political conflict. In democratic systems, parties play a significant role in summarizing conflict issues into manageable policy choices. On the contrary, Sitter (2002: 428–429) sees Lipset and Rokkan's analysis as a sociological model which is concentrated only on central structures and actors with no regard to policy choices.

However, Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2009: 283) do not support this view. They state that political cleavages are soon becoming ideological dimensions. Some of them are starting to reflect social and ideological differences and to increase the possibility of potential conflicts. On the other hand, authors also believe that political cleavages can contribute to the democratic stability in a form of strengthening linkages between the party and citizens, as well as an increase of political outcomes' predictability.

According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 13, 27) political cleavages which can be found in Western party systems mirror differences in the national histories of conflict and compromise. They argue that these histories are closely connected with state-building, religion and class and can be dated from the Protestant Reformation to the Industrial Revolution. Hence, the interaction of conflicts has created a variety of identities, social institutions and the patterns of political contestation which can define variations of party systems and the freezing of them. However, authors underline that political cleavages always remain salient in systems, where the conflict issues have not been resolved. They emphasize three important conditions for it. First of all, there is a need for the distinguishing of people on at least one important characteristic by the cleavage. Second, the individual's identification on certain groups plays a significant role. And third, political parties have to organize support and competition around the cleavage. Political, economic and cultural differentiation in this case is highlighted and the members of community are divided into groups.

Onwards, Lipset and Rokkan (ibid: 14) try to translate four different sets of cleavages into political competition. The first cleavages' set is based on the idea of national revolution, a so-called center-periphery line. It is a conflict between core nation-builders and peripheries which include cultural, ethnical or even political centers. The second cleavages' set is based on the conflict between the state and the church, which is also a part of national revolution, and where secular forces are pitted against religious ones. The industrial revolution forms another two cleavages' sets. Firstly, there is a fight between rural interests against urban industry. And secondly, it is a division between owners/employers and workers. Figure 2 perfectly illustrates the differences of party systems created on the basis of these sets.

Figure 2. Lipset and Rokkan's typology of party systems on the basis of cleavages.

	Central core of nation-builders' alliance on the religious front	Nation-builder's economic alliance	Examples of nation-builders	Periphery or opposition's response	Examples of opposition
1	National church dominant (i.e. allied with the state)	Rural: landed interests	Britain: Conservative	Dissident religious, urban	Liberal
2	National church dominant	Urban: commercial and industrial	Scandinavia: Conservative	Dissident religious, rural	Liberal or 'old' left.
3	National church dominant, Catholic strong minority	Rural	Prussia/Reich: Conservative	Secular, urban vs. Catholic	Liberals vs. Catholic
4	National church dominant, Catholic strong minority	Urban	Netherlands: Liberal	Dissident rel., vs. Catholic vs. rural	Religious parties
5	Secular state against Catholic Church	Rural	Spain: Liberal	Urban vs. Catholic	Catalans vs. Carlists
6	Secular state against Catholic Church	Urban	France, Italy: Radicals, Liberals	Catholic, rural	Conservative Catholics
7	State allied with Catholic Church	Rural	Austria: Catholics	Secular, urban	Liberals, Pan-Germans
8	State allied with Catholic Church	Urban	Belgium: Catholics vs. Liberals	Rural	Flemish separatists

Source: Sitter (2002: 430).

To sum up, Lipset and Rokkan have created a useful guide for party systems' analysis. They have explained the causes behind the mobilization of voters, the shaping of the relations between party and voters, the new content of political competition and the formulation of public policies. However, this schema is no more a satisfactory explanation of existing political systems. The emergence of a supranational body, such as the European Parliament, requires a new understanding of this approach. The following subchapter tries to point out if an attitude towards European integration can play a role of a new cleavage set.



### 1.2.2. European integration as a new cleavage

One can argue that European integration has become a new cleavage between parties on the national level. Nationalist appeals or appeals for more integration become a part of the political program in many EU member countries. Though there are a lot of studies concerned with traditional social cleavages, which remain powerful in the way, how political parties respond to the new issue. For example, Marks and Wilson (2000: 435) talk about class, religious and center-periphery cleavages as costs that represent new incentives in democratic party systems. They also believe that these cleavages institutionalize frameworks or prisms through which political parties respond the issue of European integration.

There are a lot of speculations about similar developments, so this thesis justifies the idea of the European integration process as a potential line of conflict in national party systems. Respectively, nowadays a social mobility has increased and the sources of political socialization have become more individualized. A need for more complex political strategies in order to attract more voters has appeared. Populist calls have formed the center of voters' support. In EU member countries all of this is somehow connected with the question of further European integration.

One prominent idea about this is that the future of European integration and the European Union itself has become one of the consequences of the Europeanization of the party competition patterns (Ladrech, 2002: 397–398). Similar arguments are visible in work of Kriesi (2005: 2–4). He underlines that since the referendum in Denmark on the Maastricht Treaty, some political parties have started to use the issues of European integration for the active mobilization of voters. A part of Kriesi's research is also concerned with the described phenomenon of Euroscepticism, and given results have shown the increasing importance of European issues in the national electoral campaigns.

A perfect example is also illustrated in work of Conti and Memoli (2012: 93–95). Their research has studied the attitude of several actors, such as elites, parties, masses, experts and the media toward the EU and consisted of the declared Euromanifestos in 15 first EU member states. The authors try to analyse it through a long time span: from 1979 to 2004. They use data from the IntUne project and also from the EP election results in 2009. In the analysis certain conclusions are made. First, radical parties' attitudes have changed less. Second, mainstream parties have shown their changing attitude, but still remained a point for a

comparison with radical parties. Figure 3 illustrates different topics which had appeared in Euromanifestos. The representation section had formed more than 88 per cent, while identity issues had stayed at the low level. Authors mention one interesting point: in Euromanifestos the functional areas of representation and policy are more widely spread than any identity specters.

More actual results are illustrated by Figure 4 which reflects the EP elections in 2009 and shows representation and policy coefficients. They can be comparable with earlier numbers. By doing such comparison, it can be stated that mainstream parties have continued the trend of criticism towards the EU. Nevertheless, it excludes the attitude on Common Defense system that is seen as a positive possible achievement.

*Figure 3. Occurance of themes in the Euromanifestos (1979–2004)*

	<i>Mentioned in % of Euromanifestos</i>		
	<i>All parties</i>	<i>Mainstream parties</i>	<i>Radical parties</i>
<i>Representation</i>			
Membership	88.8	87	95.3
EU decision-making	70.1	67.8	78.1
<i>Policy</i>			
Foreign policy	71.3	71.7	69.8
Defence policy	71.4	73.5	64.1
Social policy	71.4	69.1	79.7
<i>Identity</i>			
National identity	35	30.9	50
European culture	52	54.8	42.2

Source: Conti and Memoli (2012: 94)

Figure 4: Representation and policy in 2009 by party (coefficients model)

	<i>Transfer of power to EU: negative</i>	<i>Majority voting in the Council: positive</i>	<i>Majority voting in the Council: negative</i>	<i>Common Defence system: positive</i>	<i>Social policy: positive</i>
Mainstream parties	−0.20***	−0.09***	−0.12***	1.05	—
Radical parties	−0.67	−0.05***	−0.03***	−0.29**	—
Centre-left parties	—	—	—	—	2.21**
Centre-right parties	—	—	—	—	−0.95
Radical parties	—	—	—	—	1.67
<i>Reference category: no reference</i>					
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> (Mc Fadden)	27.5	62.9	57.9	5.6	6.4
<i>N</i> (valid cases)	167	167	167	167	167

\*\*\*Significant at 0.001; \*\*significant at 0.01.

Note: All models are significant at the  $\leq 0.05$  level.

Source: Conti and Memoli (2012: 96)

Hence, Bartolini (2005: 399–405) in his work describes four possible schemes of interaction between “European cleavage” and cleavage on the national level. The first two scenarios are based on the idea of the Europeanization of cleavages, where the first is a transfer of national cleavages to the EU level and the second is a strict separation between national and EU levels, where European issues are the main cleavage at the supranational level. Another scheme is to include the European issue to the existing structure of cleavages, but by doing this European elections would be automatically classified as the second-order elections. The last scenario is the formation of a fully implemented European cleavage at the national level. Bartolini also thinks that the European integration cleavage could assume different forms – from the variation of conflict between center and periphery to a cultural opposition against Brussels and bureaucracy.

Vit Hloušek (2011) goes further than any other researcher and creates four general conditions for the possible structuring of European cleavage. First, an active mobilization of voters by themes connected with European integration must be present within parties. Parties start to use the European issue as their identity source and introduce it to electoral contests. This study can be done on the basis of a content analysis of manifestos or electoral campaigns. Second, specific segments in the population created by re-structuring must be apparent. An essential element for them is not identification with the influence of European integration, but the stability of the element and the distinguishing character of European integration’s sources from others. The third condition is the presence of constituted structural, normative and organizational components. They must combine the methods of political science and

sociology in order to help with the establishment of political and social stratification of the society. At last, the political relevance of such cleavage emerges in a situation when the representing political party meets the classic criteria of party relevancy.

In conclusion, European integration can be seen as a new cleavage, though it still needs to meet certain criteria. Recent developments on the national levels, such as growth of support for UKIP and Brexit, growth of support for radical parties in other EU member countries, show the relevance of this research. In order to understand better what is going on the national level, the following subchapter deals with the political movement called populism.

### 1.3. Populism and its operationalization

As it was stated before, a growing dissatisfaction with the European Union, especially with the political union, revives populism in the most of European countries. This phenomenon is closely connected with Euroscepticism in most recent years. According to Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017: 6), populism is “*a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite,” and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people.*” However, much of the attention in Europe has focused exclusively on the populism of the far right. This thesis deals with visions of different mainstream authors, such as Paul Taggart, Margaret Canovan, Cas Mudde and others.

According to Krouwel and Abts (2007: 264–265), populist ideologies have at least two elements: a) a sovereignty call that means a rule of a homogeneous nation who has a single leader or a movement and b) an aversion against political agents which results in strong separation between the public and the governing elite. The populist leader takes the peoples’ side and becomes a real attacker of the existing political establishment. He/she starts to criticize the government for its alleged privileges, corruption, non-responsiveness, the lack of representativeness and incompetence. It enables the process of the de-legitimization of political opponents. However, populism is not an anti-system ideology in terms of the wholesale rejection of current order. It attacks political intermediary organizations, more precisely the specific organizational and institutional elements of representative democracy which limit the will of people. Populist criticism pays a lot of attention to political parties which are seen as disruptive, while bureaucratic and institutional structures are seen as a mechanism for complication in policy-making.

Paul Taggart, on the other hand, (2004: 270) states that populist movements or parties emerge and grow quickly and gain a lot of attention, though it is extremely difficult for them to remain on the same position, what means that such movements are episodic and have an image of something unstable and impossible. Populism is always connected with the far right, because in its ideology axis are mixed the agenda of anti-immigration, the hostility to taxation, the ethnic regionalism and the Eurosceptic movement.

Nevertheless, the author believes that three tendencies exist, the form of which can be taken by populism. The first is to describe the specifics of a particular phenomenon that is unusual and has little regard to the wider definition of the term. The second tendency concerns approaches to define the different types of populism and to provide an overall taxonomy. For example, Margaret Canovan in her work covered a range of populist movements and divided populism in general into two different types: agrarian and political populism, where agrarian populism existed almost in a past and current populism can be appointed as political. The third approach is to find out the common features of populism and to try to build a universally applicable concept to populism (Taggart, 2004: 271–273).

Paying more attention to the Canovan's classification of political populism (1999: 3–9), there are four types of it: populist democracy, populist dictatorship, reactionary populism and politicians' populism. She finds populist dictatorship in non-European areas, such as Peronism in Argentina. Regarding populist democracy, the author focuses on a direct democracy, e.g. of Switzerland, where there is an extensive use of referendums. Right-wing populists currently build their common calls on this perception. In relation to reactionary populism, the author speaks about the contrast between the elite tolerance and the mass attitudes of chauvinism on the issue of immigration and on a certain distrust of progressive ideas, which was fully introduced in the Enoch Powell's famous speech 'Rivers of Blood'. Finally, there is politicians' populism that is closely connected with the ambitions of politicians to justify their values. As an example, Canovan assumes the justification of one-party rule in Africa or the creation of effective electoral constituencies, as J. Carter did in his campaign in 1970s in the US. On a European scale, it is more relevant to talk about populist democracy or politicians' populism. So this concept is included to the analysis of thesis' two cases – the UKIP and the National Front.

Another interesting point about how to study populism is introduced by Krowel and Abts (2007: 263–265) and concerns populist transformative abilities. They argue that populists are

seeking to transform and channel attitudes towards negative and rejective positions. In such cases populism can be responsible for the transformation of political attitudes, of political establishment, of institutions and the system in general, as well as of transnational actors and institutions. It often insists on an idea that the government and things could be better and appoints populists as political outsiders which can deliver people's expectations. A central belief, however, is that traditional politicians have created an existing system for themselves and cannot be trusted, whether populists diminish an existing order and a system-trust and deliver power to the single individual – their leader.

Going back to the idea of Canovan, Paul Taggart (2004: 273–276) defines five characteristic features of the ideal type of political populism. Among them are the hostility to representative politics, the identification of populists with a 'heartland' conception, the lack of core values, the functioning as a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis and the self-limiting quality. Looking closer at these features, it can be stated that populism is very limited in all terms and appears as a political crisis indicator. Besides talking more about these features, the new populists of Europe are actively working with them. As an example can be mentioned their vision of a world as the rejection of immigration, the complications of globalization and the encroachment of taxation, or the spread of Eurosceptic attitudes which represents 'heartland' concept. The variety of these attitudes brings us to the lack of core values which divided them from far left ideological position to far right. This concept introduces a key to understand what links and what limits populist potential in Europe. Especially, it is closely connected with the limitations of the capacity or propensity to build coalitions.

However, the most interesting characteristic is the hostility to representative politics. Populism is seen as potentially universal in cultural terms or political style, but it is possible only under conditions created by representative politics that it can become a political force. Here, a link can be created between functioning populism and the party system (Taggart, 2004: 273). According to this rule, populism will not be hostile in a system where there are different political parties represented, and they are able to gain more seats in the parliament and even join a ruling coalition. This is more visible in political systems with proportional voting systems, where the threshold is lower and the percentage of representation is higher.

One thing that was not mentioned yet is a categorization of populism. It can be divided into different categories, such as right wing populism, questionable neoliberal populism and social populism. According to Cas Mudde (2007: 34–36), right-wing populism is one of the most

popular within the field. It can be used as non-egalitarian and umbrella term for the different subgroups of parties, most often referred to a neoliberal populism and national populism. However, current European populism, in a prevailing number of cases, is connected with nationalist policies and movements. So it is rational to focus attention on it and to eliminate the neoliberal approach.

Anton Pelinka (2013: 7–8) separates populist right wing from traditional by the anti-elitism socialist principle. This assumption is highly connected with the identification of ‘the people’ who are different than others. The current distinction lies upon cultural values more than economic. Right-wing populist parties are trying to create a distant enemy, one who is ethnically, culturally and religiously foreign. Contemporary populism has become more ethno-nationalistic and has been more connected with those who are responsible for Europeanization and globalization, and especially mass migration.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that to all researches it is always difficult to identify right-wing populist parties. As well there are different methods how to classify them. The first method is identified with the refusal of populist radical right parties to call themselves a “party” because of their antidemocratic or antiparty position as a reliable indicator of ideological similarity. The second method is a criterion of classification that aligns political parties cross-nationally with ideologically similar organization. The third approach is very simple and uses the party’s self-determination. This means that different parties define themselves in a similar way, but such a fact helps to categorize the party. But according to Mudde (2007: 36–39), reliance upon such methods, especially self-determination, evokes a lot of questions. The way to avoid them is based on a few approaches of ideology preservation. The first element is to determine what or who represents the ideology of political party. It can be based on the special characteristics of party electorates working with the model of cleavage politics, where parties represent specific social groups. The second method is relying on the basis of voters’ attitudes to these parties. It is a very tricky approach, because electorates might and do change; however, it is difficult to say whether parties might change as well. And one more important note is that their electorates are far from homogeneous, which is true for different parties within the wider family, notably the more electorally successful ones. The third approach is a categorization on the basis of the ideology of party members. This method is considered to be more stable than the method based on voters, because membership in a party is more stable than the electorate. The fourth approach is based on the ideological views

of party leaders, where official speeches, published media interviews or original interviews are analysed.

This thesis operationalizes the method introduced by Mudde, which is connected with the determination of what or who represents the ideology of political party. In order to draw a link between national and supranational agendas, the author works with parliamentary questions and defines the level of populist appeals in selected groups. Also, it arises a question, whether they appeal to national public or not.

To sum up, populism is the term related to a non-egalitarian form of ideology or political movement that mobilizes the population against an institution or government. There are different approaches how to define populism and how to identify populist parties, though this thesis works with only a few of them. First of all, it chooses Canovan's typology and uses two of the ideal types: populist democracy and politicians' populism. The first model perfectly illustrates the case of the United Kingdom, while the second one is connected with the French political party – the National Front. Second, the author adapts Taggart's characteristic features, giving prominence to the concept of hostility to representative politics and to a 'heartland' approach.



## 2. Sceptical prism in the European Parliament

Before starting with the sceptical position in the European Parliament, it is necessary to describe the body itself and to briefly mention changes in past two decades. Therefore, the first subchapter of this part defines main dividing lines, according to which parliamentary groups are created. Meanwhile, the second subchapter places a special focus on last elections to the EP in 2014.

The European Parliament has 751 Members (including the President) elected from 28 countries for a five-year period on the basis of universal suffrage since 1979. However, it is the matter of each country to decide on the form of elections with a guarantee of sexual equality and a secret ballot. The allocation of seats in the EP is given due to the number of population in each Member state. More specifically, it is based on the principle of ‘degressive proportionality’ that considers the population of each Member State, but in a case of larger population this advantage decreases. Elected Members organize political groups on the basis of political affiliation. In the following parts of work these groups are discussed more broadly. However, some MEPs may deny belonging to a political group, so they are known as non-attached members (European Parliament (a) n.d.). Figure 5 illustrates different EP seat allocations since 1958 to 2014.

*Figure 5. EP composition 1999 – 2014.*

Country	1999	2004	2007	2009	Lisbon	2011	2013	2014
Austria	21	18	18	17	19	19	19	18
Belgium	25	24	24	22	22	22	22	21
Bulgaria	-	-	18	17	18	18	18	17
Croatia	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	11
Cyprus	-	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Czech Republic	-	24	24	22	22	22	22	21
Denmark	16	14	14	13	13	13	13	13
Estonia	-	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Finland	16	14	14	13	13	13	13	13
France	87	78	78	72	74	74	74	74
Germany	99	99	99	99	96	99	99	96
Greece	29	24	24	22	22	22	22	21

<b>Hungary</b>	-	24	24	22	22	22	22	21
<b>Ireland</b>	15	13	13	12	12	12	12	11
<b>Italy</b>	87	78	78	72	73	73	73	73
<b>Latvia</b>	-	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
<b>Lithuania</b>	-	13	13	12	12	12	12	11
<b>Luxembourg</b>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
<b>Malta</b>	-	5	5	5	6	6	6	6
<b>Netherlands</b>	31	27	27	25	26	26	26	26
<b>Poland</b>	-	54	54	50	51	51	51	51
<b>Portugal</b>	25	24	24	22	22	22	22	21
<b>Romania</b>	-	-	35	33	33	33	33	32
<b>Slovakia</b>	-	14	14	13	13	13	13	13
<b>Slovenia</b>	-	7	7	7	8	8	8	8
<b>Spain</b>	64	54	54	50	54	54	54	54
<b>Sweden</b>	22	19	19	18	20	20	20	20
<b>UK</b>	87	78	78	72	73	73	73	73
<b>Total</b>	626	732	785	736	731	754	766	751

Source: Viola (2016: 81).

Remarkably, the European Parliament has gone through major reforms in last forty years. But a special attention should be drawn on the development of the supranational party system and party groups within the EP (Kreppel, 2002: 28, 50–51). During the first stage of European integration process, MEPs were appointed by their national parliaments. This led to the over-representation of mainstream parties and representatives, who were in favor of integration. Therefore, former opposition towards the EU inside the EP was restrained. Since the first direct elections in 1979, small and protest parties have had a chance to be represented in the Parliament. Growing dissatisfaction with EU policies and constitutionalization of the European Union has involved the growth of populist representatives. Nowadays, the Eurosceptic position is much stronger than ever before and accounts for more than one-fifth of the Parliament (Brack, 2012: 87).

Moreover, Kreppel emphasizes (2002: 102, 151–152, 172–174) that during the early years of the EP's functioning with the less power and potential to influence legislative outcomes, MEPs were gathering on the basis of power increase and efficiency. After the progress was

made, the strategy has changed and main lines have begun to be formulated around own policy objectives and rules' manipulation with a goal to gain a relative power within the body.

With regard to Treaties, the Maastricht Treaty brought the biggest change in the path of European integration process. It changed the name to Union and created a new political order. Also, it marked a period when domestic policies began to soften in the areas of political, economic, social, legal, environmental and foreign affairs. The question appeared to be more about the rationale of the EU's route, not about pros and cons anymore. Moreover, the new treaty brought changes in the ratification process: referendums had become a regular occurrence in some countries, e.g. 1992 Denmark's rejection of Maastricht Treaty, the French narrowly voting 'yes' for Maastricht in 1992, and so on. Therefore, it can be stated that these changes helped to activate the Eurosceptic movement and spread it across the EU in the boundaries of political parties and public opinion (Usherwood and Startin, 2012: 3–4). As Brack and Startin (2015: 240) conclude EU-related referendums have become the most widely-used weapon of the EU citizens who want to suspend or even demolish European integration process.

On the other hand, major changes in the European Parliament during last two decades have come along with the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon. The core point which was under discussion was the EP's composition. This change of parliamentary representation from of population size to of citizenship was largely opposed by Italy. An additional change was the greater involvement of the EP in EU decision-making, where the body has reached an equal status with the Council of the EU as a law-making body and has got a role of co-legislator.<sup>4</sup> Also, possibilities to question commissioners and to elect the President of the Commission have become a part of EP's legal instruments. It was believed that these changes would help to overcome the lack of democracy in the legislative body. However, the EP still remains distant and unknown to most European citizens because of three main factors: different

---

<sup>4</sup> *"The EP's role as a co-legislator is fully recognized in virtually all fields of EU action, and more specifically in 85 policy areas including agriculture, energy, security, asylum and immigration, justice and home affairs, public health as well as structural funds... The European Parliament shares with the Council the prerogative to adopt European laws, thus accepting, amending, or rejecting the content of directives and regulations. Besides, the EP may examine the Commission's annual programme of work by pointing out which laws it would like to see adopted. Moreover, in accordance with Article 48 of the TEU, Parliament can exert the new power to propose treaty amendments and has the final say over the decision of setting up a convention with the task of laying the basis for further institutional reforms"* (Viola, 2016: 66).

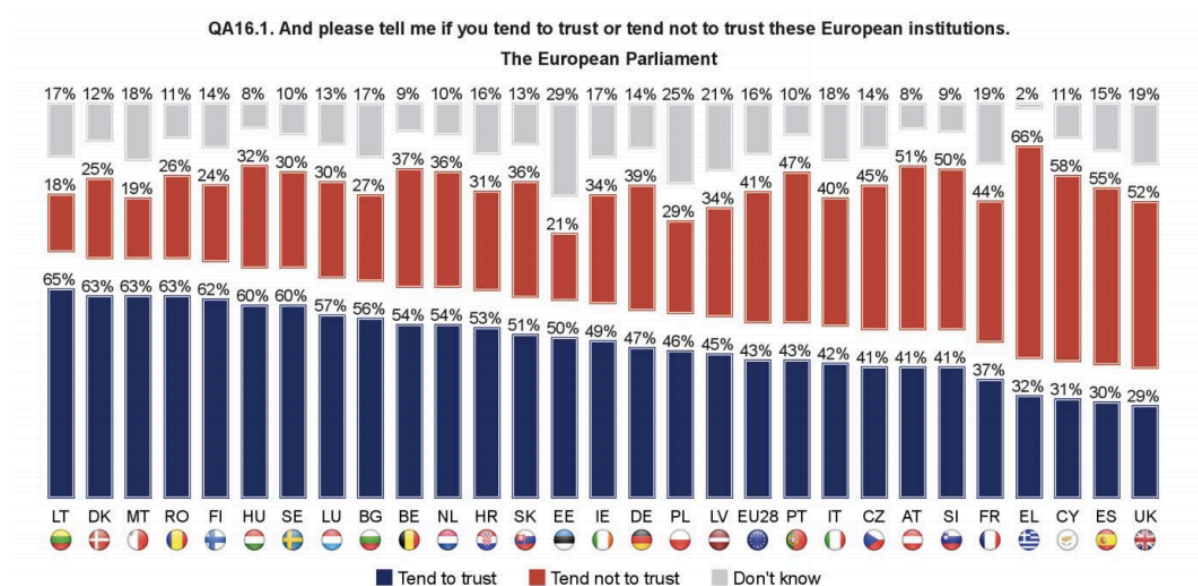
electoral systems in member countries, the insignificant political legitimacy of the EP and a narrow sense of European identity (Viola, 2016: 66–67).

Another author who shares with the same opinion is Servent (2015: 17–18). The author's central argument is that the increase of the EP's power was dictated by the need to overcome a democratic deficit. Initiated reforms were supposed to fill the gap in the direct representation of EU citizens. However, in fact, the EP elections are still second-order elections, where focus is placed on domestic affairs and the obvious ignorance of most European concerns. Another disruptive element is the absence of political groups at the EU level, which would reflect the positions of national parties. Furthermore, a low voters' turnout and the presence of vote switching between national and European election can be partly explained by both the lack of interest in European matters and the mistrust towards the EP among with general EU's dissatisfaction.

McElroy and Benoit (2010: 377–380) study the connection between national parties and the functioning of political groups inside the EP. They argue that the election manifestos of each EP group serve as a guide to their activities which is universal and should be accepted by all members. On the other hand, costly conflicts between national parties and EP party group voting positions can still occur because of a strong divergence in policy positions. Attempts to promote important domestic positions are largely ignored in the median position. Moreover, in a case of national political influence of one country, parties tend to leave or not to join the fraction.

Supporting the question of a democratic deficit, this thesis uses statistics created by Eurobarometer. Figure 6 illustrates that the average level of trust regarding the European Parliament is 43 per cent, while the level of distrust reaches 41 per cent. The tiny difference between these results can serve as an evidence of public dissatisfaction with the European Parliament. Noteworthy is that the distrust remains widespread in countries like Greece, Cyprus, Spain, the United Kingdom (52%), Slovenia, Portugal, Czechia and France (44% vs. 37%).

Figure 6. Tendencies to trust/distrust the European Parliament in Member Countries



Source: Eurobarometer (2015: 85).

Addressing the Eurosceptic wing, Brack (2012: 89) concludes that Eurosceptic members are freer to act and their ability to act is not limited by rules of conduct and voting instructions at the level of the European Parliament. The author uses the example of IND/DEM and EFD members, where the main voting strategy is built on the fact of suitability to members. The basis for most Eurosceptic groups is purely an 'agreement to disagree' that involves only the triggering of different procedures and gives MEPs more room for manoeuvre and a potential for action.

However, there are some constraints put on the actions of Eurosceptic members. First, the debate about having more or less Europe inside the EP is not present with an exception of some treaties' debates. The core function of the EP is legislative tasks which have nothing to do with the future of EU integration. Second, an existing tendency to compromise inside the EP undermines the position of any political opposition. Therefore, constructive minds have no space to express themselves. The third constraint is the inability of ordinary members to promote their European ideas on sensitive issues in the form of reports. Some of them are unwilling to be in charge of writing, while others pose risks to be unaccepted by the majority of the European Parliament. Their actions are mainly restricted to speeches and parliamentary questions (Brack, 2012: 90).

Therefore, one of thesis tasks is to outline Eurosceptic trends in the EP, such restrictions can be named as a first Eurosceptic trend inside the legislative body. By being out from a process of future construction of the EU, Eurosceptic parties remain alien to the system. The only instrument that is left to them is to question an existing system and to express itself with an aim to influence public opinion and promote radical views in respective countries. On the other hand, it can have a significant impact on mainstream parties at the national level, where the exponential pressure over European issues is put (Brack, 2015: 348).

By going back to Kreppel's (2002) and Brack's (2012; 2015) ideas, another Eurosceptic trend can be observed. The dependency of individual members on domestic political parties inside the EP supranational groups makes the coalition formation process more complicated and promotes a certain level of no action across ideological borders. Moreover, it largely limits the influence of any oppositional force and discourages the desire to participate on European matters inside the EP, leading to the idea of total EU rejection.

To conclude, reforms in the European Parliament, which were primarily aimed at the overcoming of a democratic deficit at the supranational level, had failed. The evidence of low voters' turnout and the presence of vote switching between national and European election limits the competition. The tendency to maintain median position of the political group in the EP makes it impossible to form a broad opposition. Also, the co-decision process with the Council of the EU limits the EP rights in shaping the future of the Union, while the consideration of the EP elections as second-order elections creates an absence of true competition. All of these factors spread the feeling of alienation towards European integration and support disinterest of voters in both the Union and legislative body.

## 2.1. Parliamentary groups in the European Parliament

Nowadays, there are nine political groups since June 2015 in the European Parliament, including the European People's Party (EPP), the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D)<sup>5</sup>, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)<sup>6</sup>, the

---

<sup>5</sup> This group forms the second largest group in the EP and includes MEPs of all EU nationalities from far-left state interventionist to more moderate social democrat parties, occupying 25 per cent of the Parliament (189 mandates) (Viola, 2016: 84). It is formerly known as the Socialist group. Nowadays the leader is Italian MEP Gianni Pittella (BBC, 2015).

Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA)<sup>7</sup>, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (EUL/NGL) and non-attached MEPs (European Parliament (b), n.d.). Going back to history, the Socialists, the Liberals, and the Christian Democrats with the varying number of members, size and composition represented the political fractions of the EP. Nevertheless, the main feature for former and current groups is their construction on the basis of political allegiance. So, an ideological identification plays a central role in groups' unification (Viola, 2016: 83–85).

However, the structure of the EP is still more fluid and cohesive than that of most national legislative institutions. The appointment of candidates at home and their dependency on home parties can explain this fact afterwards (Viola, 2016: 91). As Servent (2015: 20) sees it: “[n]ational delegations tend to join those EP political groups that present the highest political congruence, which enhances competition between the various EP groups. Cohesion is, therefore, the product of both policy specialisation across committees and internal organization.” In this regard, McElroy and Benoit (2010: 377) emphasize that national political parties at the EP are tend to fulfill many of the legislative and representative functions of their national counterparts. Also, it is important to note that political groups have only few sanctioning tools against disloyal members such as less favorable committee membership or delegation allocation, rejection of new rapporteurships and speaking time in plenary for debates (Viola, 2016: 92).

Nevertheless, there are some other common factors that pull different national political parties to join certain supranational political groups at the EP level. The consecutive part eliminates main dividing lines and introduces the main characteristics of Eurosceptic movement inside the EP.

---

<sup>6</sup> It is fourth group in terms of size in the EP, which attracts around 9% of MEPs from 19 different countries (Viola, 2016: 85). In comparison with elections in 2009, the group has lost its support due to fall in support for UK Liberal Democrats and German Free Democrats. Belgian MEP Guy Verhofstadt leads it (BBC, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Group is consisted of 17 different nationalities from ecological and regionalist movements with very diverse policies (Viola, 2016: 85). They hold 51 mandates and generally follow left of centre position on most issues. Current leaders are German MEP Rebecca Harms and Belgian MEP Philippe Lamberts (BBC, 2015).

### 2.1.1. Main characteristics and dividing lines

From the theoretical point of view, as it was stated in Chapter 1, the existence of alliances and coalitions in democracies stems from political cleavages. However, in a case of the European Parliament little was studied. Starting with traditional cleavages, most of researchers assumed that with deeper politicization of the Union something similar to national coalition patterns would emerge at the European level. Using the Lipset and Rokkan's classification, the pattern connected with owners and workers alliance can be found in the density of communication between political groups. Therefore, there are contacts between liberal, Christian and conservative party groups mixed with business interests; an alliance between communist and socialist party groups and working unions; and also links between fringe national parties such as Greens, radicals with consumer interest groups. In order to understand other cleavages, it is better to address Committees, in which MEPs are cooperating with each other. There one can find four main patterns: the arena of consumer interests, the arena of industry interests, the arena of trade and transport interests, and the arena of agricultural and fishery interests. Also, it is important to underline that religious cleavage is not noticeable at the EU level (Katz and Wessels, 1999: 120–122).

As was stated in the theoretical part of this thesis, the question of European integration can be seen as a new cleavage for group formation inside the European Parliament and the issue of EU's future can be seen as a transnational political cleavage on the level of the EP. However, McElroy and Benoit (2010: 380–383) underline three main characteristics of political groups inside the EP. First, the EP group affiliation is a dynamic phenomenon and cannot be explained in terms of party family theory. It means that in reality the party and policy competition in the EP is primary an extension of national politics. Second, classic cleavages introduced by Lipset and Rokkan do not correspond with the organizational basis of parliamentary groups in the EP. This is given due to two reasons: a) many national parties struggle with a clear identification within party family; b) some national parties are structured around new single issues like European integration or immigration. Third, with a strict measure of party policy position there are still a significant number of parties with diverse policy positions, especially regarding new issues (environment, immigration, European integration). Therefore, a tendency to adapt strategies close to their median members exists. But in a case of any incongruence, party is ready to move to the bloc with closer positions.



Addressing the dividing lines, there is a certain difference between former and current legislatures. Kreppel (2002: 151–152, 172–174) argues that the defining characteristic of voting behavior in the first legislature was ideological polarization and clear coalitions of the left and the right. Acceptable compromise positions were not required, as far as institutional weakness was present. However, in the late 1980s a fundamental shift had started, where ideological extremes had receded into the background and an increase in cooperation and compromise had manifested itself. It marked the era of a new moderate party system on the basis of bipartisan cooperation. An explanation of this change can be found in structural and institutional changes. Even with limited legislative power the European Parliament was forced to work with other institutions as a whole in order to achieve any effect. It involved the creation of compromise proposals moderate enough to be acceptable to a wide range of political and national interests, meaning a shift from dogmatic to pragmatic character.

The recent study of Parson and Weber (2011: 385–386) finds two dividing lines inside the EP nowadays. The first one is represented by the left-right axis, and the second one divides the former over the questions of integration or independence (supranational vs. national). In terms of the latter division line, sides from both left and right deal mostly with economic matters and remain vague on the stance about political integration. Therefore, the phenomenon of radical parties appears and becomes prominent. Their extreme positions catch voters' attention and become a part of a broader fight over globalization. In their conclusion, the authors come to the idea that the EU issue is highly suppressed by mainstream parties' division to the left/right axis, yet still plays a certain role in shaping the way of mainstream leaders' representation.

However, the Eurosceptic movement inside the European Parliament has its own characteristics and dividing lines. The most extensive analysis can be found in works of Brack (2012; 2015). She divides Eurosceptic MEPs into three categories which appoint them a certain role and help to understand their behavior at the supranational level. The first role is that of Absentee which is characterized by limited involvement inside the Parliament and places an emphasis on the national arena and the voters. This type of MEP can be represented by a person who has a lack of interest in the mandate or refuses to participate in the daily functioning of the institution. They also do not actively participate in the work of Committees and are not involved in reporting, speeches or other parliamentary activities; some of them skip meetings on a regular basis. The only instrument used by Absentees is written questions

which help to draw a link with domestic voters and to defend the interests of their constituency. They are very active at home and spend most of the time there, arguing that the primary role of such an MEP is to explain inefficiency and the lack of democracy of the EU in their home country. So, the seat in the EP is mostly perceived as an opportunity to become popular at home and gain some more legitimacy, while not being much involved at the level of the European Parliament. Populist British and French representatives can be appointed as the closest to this ideal-type. Appendix 1 illustrates examples of Absentees in Seventh legislature. Using the classification of Kopecky and Mudde, this role is closer to the Eurorejects.

The second role is that of Public Orator, where public speaking and the spread of negative information about the EU form their strategy. Therefore, the essential goal is to publicize and to defend Eurosceptic positions by all means, because the self-evaluation largely depends on publicity and reactions on their speeches and behavior. They often use parliamentary questions, though the focus is placed on controversial topics like costs arising from the running of EU institutions, requests for investigation on an individual Commissioner and the cost of bodyguards for Commissioners. The main goal is to highlight the lack of democratic legitimacy and spread negative information among the public. Involvement in other parliamentary activities except for speeches and questions is limited. Also being familiar with the Rules of Procedures and an ability to get speaking time distinguish them from other Eurosceptic MEPs. Among typical representatives of this type belong British MEPs, whose goal is to import the Westminster style into the EP <sup>8</sup> (Brack, 2012: 97–98). In the scale of Kopecky and Mudde this category is closer to Eurosceptics.

The third role is that of Pragmatist which is connected with a greater involvement in the daily work of the EP, a need to achieve results and a tendency to respect the rules. Their main goal is not only to get attention, but also to be efficient and contribute in some policy areas through so called “constructive opposition” – balance between the promotion of their views and the pursuit of concrete results. Two subgroups can be found in this category: the first one seeks to amend and control initiatives in specific areas or the national government, second one is concerned with the defense of national/regional interest in the EP. Pragmatists also use various parliamentary tools, such as amendments, motions and reports. Therefore, work in

---

<sup>8</sup> Examples are illustrated in Appendix 1.

committees is perceived as essential thanks to the ability to propose amendments. Cooperation with officials from other institutions belongs to their practices as well. This ideal type is mostly adapted by reformist MEPs, who accept some limited and institutionalized cooperation at the European level and concentrate their criticism on the current state of the EU<sup>9</sup> (Brack 2012: 99–101). From the Kopecky and Mudde's classification they are a clear example of Europragmatists.

To sum up, another Eurosceptic trend inside the EP can be found in dividing lines. Roles which are chosen by Eurosceptic MEPs create a significant difference between them. Therefore, the possible unification of the Eurosceptic movement is undermined by diversified roles and unwillingness to cooperate on necessary questions at the level of the Parliament.

The primary goal of addressing the domestic public, which is clearly visible in two previous subchapters, is another prominent characteristic of the Eurosceptic movement. As it was mentioned previously, Eurosceptic MEPs tend to influence their mainstream national parties and picture the EU as a destructive element for their own country. Moreover, this trend underlines the auxiliary of cooperation between different representatives of this phenomenon.

## 2.2. EP elections 2014

Before studying the latest elections, it is appropriate to explain the growth of Eurosceptic movement since early 1990s. Anti-EU groups were not unified under the group umbrella till 1994. For the first time throughout the history of the European Parliament, after 1994 elections was formed the Europe of Nations (EN). It gained 17 members and was first sign of growing Euroscepticism. After the 1999 EP elections the group transformed into the Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD), which held 16 mandates. Nevertheless, after the 2004 EP elections few Eurosceptical parties in different member states gained seats in the EP and join the EDD. The group took a decision to change its name to the Independence and Democracy group and consisted of 37 members from the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Ireland, Sweden and the UK. Moreover, during both terms existed the Union for a Europe of Nations (UEN) which included various conservative and Eurosceptic forces (1999 EP elections – 21 MEPs, 2004 EP elections – 27) (Lodge, 2005: 35–36, 43).

---

<sup>9</sup> Examples can be found in Appendix 1.

Nevertheless, the last European Parliament elections were held in May 2014. They took place as the first after the entry of the Lisbon Treaty into force. Moreover, an official 2014 EP campaign slogan was: “*This time it is different: act, react, impact*”, where the EP role in elections of the EU Commission’s President was aimed at challenging EP elections’ second-order character (Viola, 2016: 875).

As an outcome, political groups inside the EP got an opportunity to introduce their nominees to the Commission presidency through the lead candidate (*Spitzenkandidaten*) system, where appointed politicians were expected to present their programmes in all EU countries and become familiar to European citizens. Also, European reformers hoped that EP political campaigns would focus more on supranational rather than just national issues. Nevertheless, this expectation occurred only in Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, and Estonia, but not elsewhere (Viola, 2016: 875–876). Sio (2014: 19) argues that the biggest restriction for European campaigns was their introduction by national actors. Another element that had undermined initial expectations was a marginal addressing of EU political and policy subjects in TV debates and newspaper articles. Also, looking at the voter’s turnout, the further slight decrease of 0.55 per cent was registered, from 42.99 to 42.61 per cent (Viola, 2016: 876). So again, center-right groups won elections thanks to their image as most competent political forces for many Member states.

As it was stated before, nowadays there are nine political groups in the European Parliament, including non-attached MEPs. Figure 7 depicts the present number of seats allocated to different political groups inside the EP. It is worth noting that the current distribution among groups has emerged in July 2015, when the ENF has been formed.

Starting with the European People’s Party, in the 2014 EP election even after a major setback (34.6 per cent of the votes), the party has managed to remain in its leading position and won the race of ‘lead candidate’. Its political rival S&D won the second place in Euro-elections and gained an extra 0.4 per cent. Moreover, their official candidate to the Commission presidency, Martin Schulz, was instead elected as a President of the European Parliament and for the first time since the 1979 elections has kept the office for two consecutive governing half terms (Viola, 2016: 881–882). From Figures 7 and 8 it is observable that the support for two major and leading political fractions between 2009 and 2014 elections had declined at around 7 per cent with a loss of 44 seats in total.

The third large political group is the ECR which increased its number of MEPs to 74. Their best performance was noticed in Germany, where the anti-Euro party Alternative for Germany, won 7 per cent of votes. Their Europragmatist nature had managed to attract new members, such as the Danish People's Party and the New Flemish Alliance. The group had also decided not to submit their lead candidate because of their belief in non-existing European political space (Viola, 2016: 882–883). Looking at the Figures 7 and 8, it is obvious that total support had increased by 2 per cent with a gaining of 20 seats.

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) has suffered from an obvious fiasco with almost 2.5 per cent decline in total. Reasons behind that can be found in the unpopularity of certain parties on the national level, e.g. British liberal democrats. Accordingly, the fifth place has been occupied by the GUE/NGL with its highest results in the history of European elections. The political fraction has managed to attract politicians not only from radical left, but also those who are concerned with social, economic and regional problems (Viola, 2016: 883–884). From Figures 7 and 8 is noticeable the loss of 16 seats in the EP by ALDE, and the growth of GUE/NGL electoral support by 2.2 per cent with 17 additional seats.

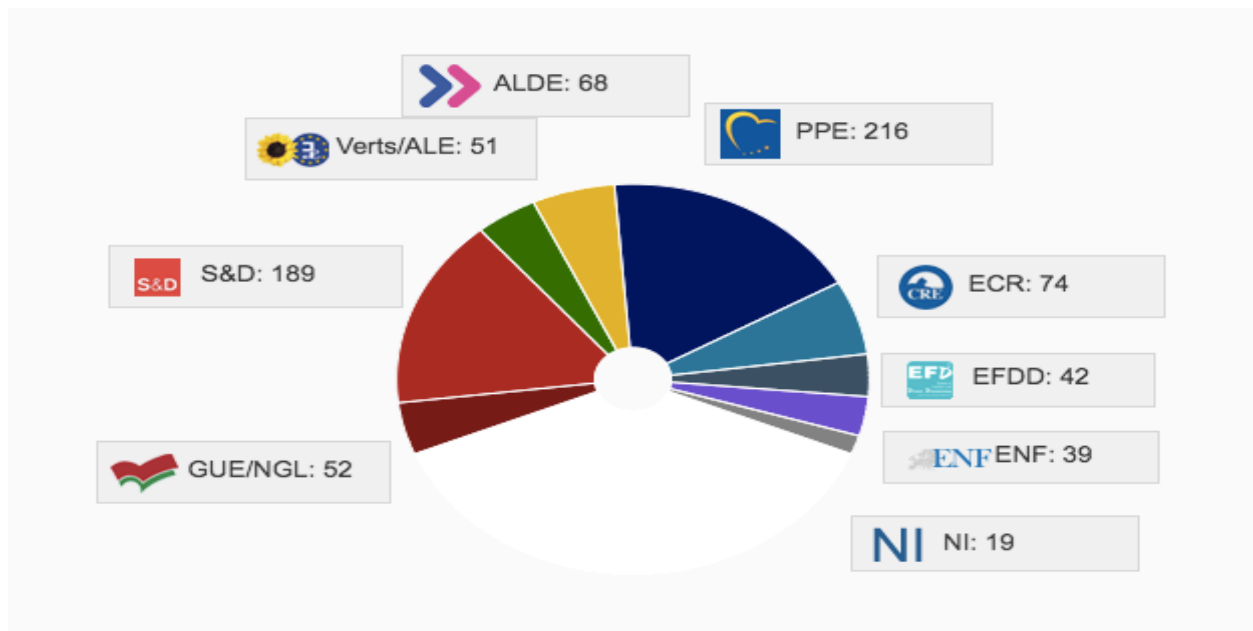
The next group that has scored seats in the European Parliament is the Greens. Their electoral success in comparison with the 2009 EP elections has significantly decreased because of the poor performance of French, German, Dutch and Finnish Ecologists. A noteworthy fact is that the spread of the Green family has spilled over across Eastern Europe. The political group also had nominated two *Spitzenkandidaten* (man/woman) in order to support its gender equality principle (ibid: 884–885). Figures 7 and 8 illustrate the loss of 4 seats, which is 0.7 per cent of popular vote.

The leading political group of Eurorejects in the 2014 EP elections is the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), which consists of 42 MEPs. Its existence was largely and still is dependent on the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S). By being hard Eurosceptics, the group had decided not to nominate their lead candidate (ibid: 885). Even after significant reformation since 2009 EP elections, the groups increased the number of its seats by 1.3 per cent (10 seats).

In July 2015 Marie Le Pen managed to form a new Eurorejective group, the Europe of Nations and Freedom, with 39 mandates. After more than a year of negotiations, Italian

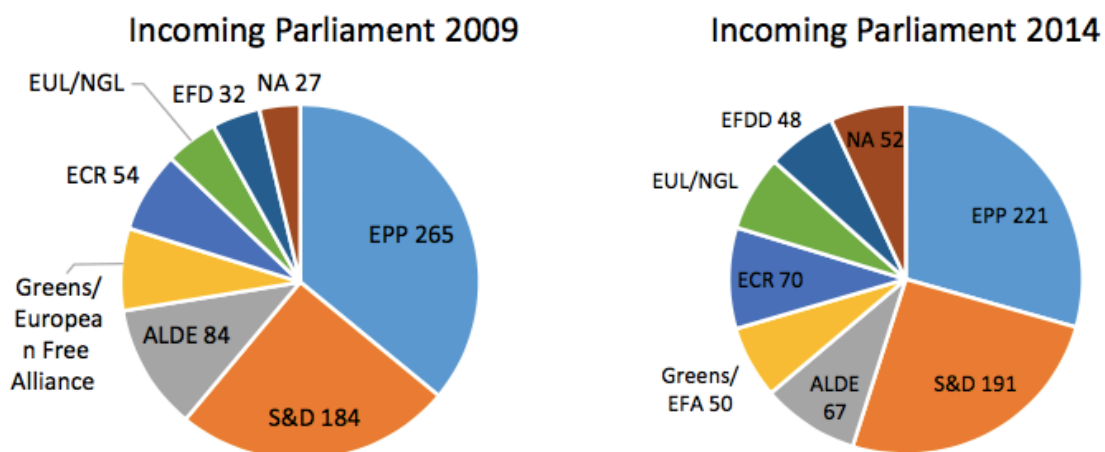
Northern League together with Dutch Freedom Party agreed to join the coalition, so the number of independent MEPs significantly reduced from 52 to 19 (BBC, 2015).

*Figure 7. 2014 EP elections results – seats allocation*



Source: European Parliament (b), n.d.

*Figure 8. Comparison of European Parliaments: 2009 and 2014.*



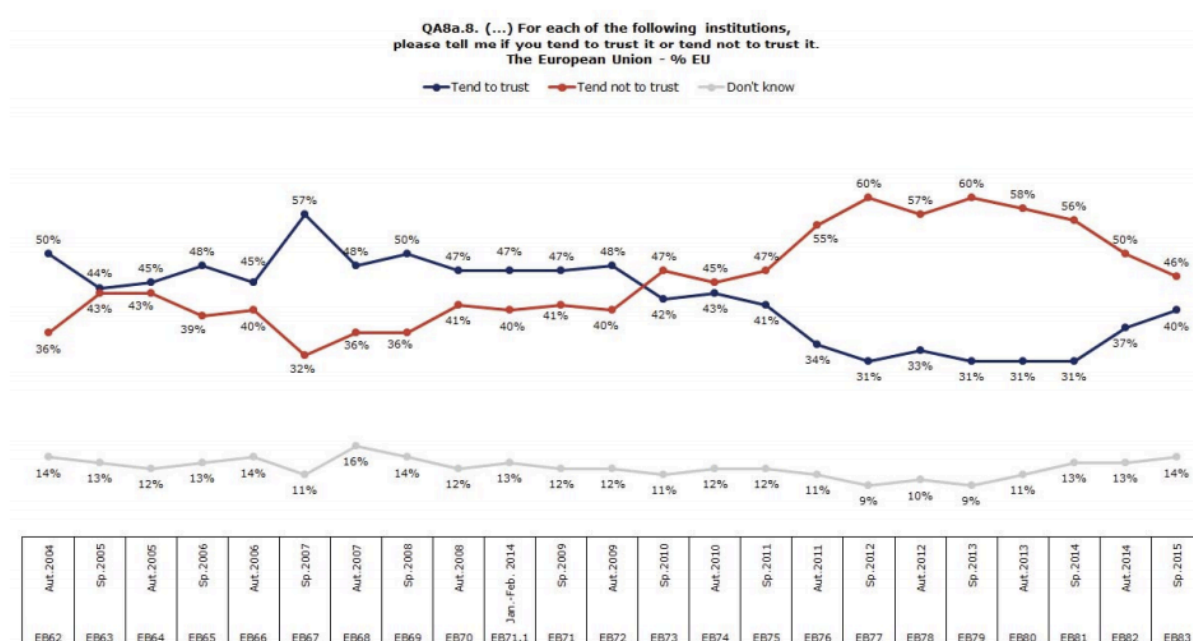
Source: Brack and Startin (2015: 243).

To sum up, the results of 2014 EP election have shown the significant growth of support

towards both left and right Eurosceptic groups. Even though the pro-European bloc (the EPP, the S&D, the ALDE and recently the Greens) covers around 70 per cent of the whole parliament, the Eurosceptic bloc (including Eurorejects, Europragmatists and Eurosceptics) exceeds 30 per cent and represents an ever-stronger oppositional force. Also, it can be stated that the electoral support for Eurosceptic bloc is growing. In comparison with election in 1999 or 2004 or 2009, the outcome of 2014 EP elections helped sceptics to become an opposition, which could not be ignored on the supranational level.

Looking at the results, made changes and ‘new’ trends in elections, Hobolt (2015: 8) states that expectations about the principled difference of 2014 EP elections were two-fold: the introduction of ‘lead candidates’ for the position of Commission president and the Eurozone crisis. With regard to new institutional change, according to Lisbon Treaty’s Article 17, the European Parliament had decided to reinforce the link between the EP ballot and the selection of the Commission’s President. Hence, the European Parliament hoped to strengthen the European issue in electoral campaigns and to personalize European bureaucratic apparatus, while by doing so to increase the interest in the EU democracy. From Figure 9 it is noteworthy that the trust in the EU after 2014 EP elections has grown, though the tendency to distrust still dominates and reaches 46 per cent.

*Figure 9. Tendency to trust/distrust the European Union*



Source: Eurobarometer (2015: 106).

Another important factor which made these elections different was the economic and political contexts. An increase of sovereign debts in many EU states along with new financial and legal instruments<sup>10</sup>, which were aimed at helping to highly debt countries, was extensively covered in media and had a certain effect on public opinion as well (Hobolt, 2015: 8, 10). Figure 9 perfectly illustrates the decline of ‘trust’ between the EP elections in 2009 and 2014 – from 47 per cent in spring 2009 to 31 per cent in spring 2014.

Yet, Viola (2016: 879) emphasizes that “[u]ndoubtedly the nomination of the Spitzenkandidaten and the subsequent election of the Commission President did not suddenly transform the European Parliament’s contest from a lacklustre affair into a first-order political event, but indicated the right direction to take in the future in order to arouse motivation for voting”. However, as Hobolt (2015: 10–11) argues, it was unreasonable to expect more voters’ motivation in 2014 EP elections, taking into account low preliminary indications. Also, the introduction of lead candidates did not make a substantial difference to voting behavior. With the election of EPP candidate, nothing had changed significantly. Moreover, it is worth noting that only a minority of Europeans (around 19 per cent) was able to link either Juncker or Schulz with their parties. Thus, for the vast majority of voters, these candidates appeared to be same.

According to Viola (2016: 878), another trend of the 2014 EP elections is the progressive decline of attendance, in most cases going in parallel with a weaker participation in national elections. Therefore, it is not appropriate to talk exclusively about the process of alienation from the European integration project. It is rather continuous disappointment in national parties. Besides, the need for EU reform is always connected with the expanding and the enhancing of EP competencies and tasks.

So what are the Eurosceptic trends captured in the 2014 EP elections? According to Brack and Startin (2015: 242), the mainstreaming of Euroscepticism in the EP after the 2014 elections can be indicated by the decline in representation of pro-EU groups – the EPP and the ALDE.

---

<sup>10</sup> Among them can be found the European Financial Stability Facility (the European Stability Mechanism), the Six-Pack, the Two Pack, the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure. Also there was adopted new intergovernmental treaty – the Fiscal Compact and new decision-making procedures – the European Semester (Hobolt, 2015: 8).



Overall, they see the net reduction of 65 MEPs among pro-EU groups<sup>11</sup>. Hobolt (2015: 12) observes this rise of Eurosceptic votes as a clear message to domestic political systems. Moreover, the absolute winning position of radical parties in the UK, France and Denmark together with popular vote in all member countries, except for Malta, has shown a non-isolated character of this phenomenon.

However, Hobolt's (2015: 7, 16, 18) analysis arrives to a conclusion that there were different reasons behind the support for leftist and rightist Eurosceptic wings in the 2014 EP elections: while the leftist movement was elected thanks to its discontent with EU policies, a contrasting set of attitudes (from favouring immigration to redistribution from rich to poor) and a desire for more European solidarity, the rightist movement was supported thanks to its anti-globalist and anti-immigration campaigns. In general, however, the trend of dissatisfaction with national governments' performances and the EU remains. So far, Figure 10 perfectly illustrates the heightened appeal of Eurosceptic parties in last EP elections with a clear left-right division between north-south and east-west countries. It is clear that the radical right gained broader support in richer north, as well as it is absent in poorer south-west.

**Figure 10. Results for radical parties, 2014 European elections.**

Country	Parties*	Eurosceptic Left vote %	MEPs	Eurosceptic Right vote %	MEPs
Austria	<i>Freedom Party [R], EUStop [R], Coalition for another Europe [L]</i>	2.1	0	22.5	4
Belgium	<i>Vlaams Belang [R]; PTB-GOI [L]</i>	2.0	0	4.3	1
Bulgaria	<i>VMRO-BND/Bulgaria without Censorship [R]**, National Front [R], ATAKA [R]</i>	-	-	16.7	2
Croatia	<i>Croatian Party of Rights [R]</i>	-	-	**	1
Cyprus	<i>Progressive Party of Working People [L]; ELAM [R]</i>	27.0	2	2.7	0
Czech Republic	<i>Communist Party [L]; Party of Free Citizens [R]; Dawn of Direct Democracy [R]</i>	11.0	3	8.4	1
Denmark	<i>Danish People's Party [R]; People's Movement against the EU [L]</i>	8.1	1	26.6	4
Estonia	<i>Conservative People's Party of Estonia [R]</i>	-	-	4.0	0
Finland	<i>Finns Party [R]</i>	-	-	12.9	2
France	<i>National Front [R]; Left Front [L]; France Arise [R]</i>	6.3	3	28.7	23
Germany	<i>Alternative for Germany [R]; Left Party [L]; National Democratic Party [R]</i>	7.4	7	8.1	8
Greece	<i>Syriza [L]; Golden Dawn [R]; KKE [L]; ANEL [R]; Popular Orthodox Rally [R]</i>	32.7	8	15.5	4
Hungary	<i>Fidesz [R]; JOBBIK [R]</i>	-	-	66.1	15
Ireland	<i>Sinn Féin [L]</i>	19.5	3	-	-
Italy	<i>Five Star Movement [R]****; Northern League [R]; The Other Europe with Tsipras [L]</i>	4.0	3	27.3	22
Latvia	<i>National Alliance [R]; Union of Greens and Farmers [R]</i>	-	-	22.5	2
Lithuania	<i>Order and Justice [R]; LLRA [R]</i>	-	-	22.3	3
Luxembourg	<i>Alternative for Democratic Reform [R]</i>	-	-	7.5	0
Malta	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	<i>Freedom Party [R]; Socialist Party [L]; CU-SGP [R]</i>	9.6	2	21.0	6
Poland	<i>Law and Justice [R]; Congress of the New Right [R]; United Poland [R]; Right Wing of the Republic [R]</i>	-	-	42.9	23
Portugal	<i>United Democratic Coalition [L]; Left Bloc [L]</i>	18.6	4	-	-
Romania	<i>People's Party - Dan Diaconescu [L]; Greater Romania Party [R]</i>	3.7	0	2.7	0
Slovakia	<i>Ordinary People and Independent Personalities [R]; Nova [R]; Freedom and Solidarity [R]; Slovak National Party [R]</i>	-	-	24.6	3
Slovenia	<i>United Left [L]; Slovenian National Party [R]</i>	5.5	0	4.0	0
Spain	<i>United Left [L]; Podemos [L]; Peoples Decide [L]</i>	20.1	12	-	-
Sweden	<i>Sweden Democrats [R]; Left Party [L]</i>	6.3	1	9.7	2
United Kingdom	<i>UKIP [R]; Conservative Party [R]; Sinn Féin [L]; Democratic Unionist Party [R]</i>	0.7	1	50.6	44
<b>Total MEPs</b>			<b>50</b>		<b>170</b>

Source: Hobolt (2015: 13).

<sup>11</sup> For better illustration see Figure 8.

An interesting Eurosceptic theme which appeared at the center of the debate in 2014 EP elections was the emergence of the single-issue 'Alternative for Germany' party. Their electoral success reached 7 per cent, and the party won seven seats in the European Parliament. The biggest wonder, however, was the party's decision to join a soft-Eurosceptic group – the ECR instead of the EFDD (Brack and Startin, 2015: 245).

Another substantial trend that was observed by Hobolt (2015: 18–19) is that left-wing Eurosceptic supporters are more pro-European than mainstream party supporters. They openly welcome greater financial transfers between EU members, as well as their knowledge about the EU is higher than that of average voter. In reality, leftist Eurosceptics have started to call for greater European redistribution across and within EU borders, for greater solidarity and for changing of EU policies. Regarding the classification of Kopecky and Mudde, the left-Eurosceptic wing can be appointed as an ideal type of 'Eurosceptics'.

As it was stated before, the inability of Eurosceptic MEPs to cooperate remained visible after 2014 elections. The leaders of the French FN and the Party for Freedom in Netherlands till June 2015 were not able to form a transnational grouping of 'pan-European' nationalist members. On the other hand, the UKIP felt itself as the biggest winner and together with the Italian Five Star movement led the EFDD group (Brack and Startin, 2015: 244). Moreover, Viola (2016: 884) underlines that the formal alliance between the French and British far-right seemed possible on the basis of a perception of Brussels as a common enemy, though strong personal leaders' ambitions and unwillingness to run the spectre together made it impossible.

Hobolt shares the same opinion (2015: 19–20) and comes to the conclusion that Eurosceptic parties are not able to transform policy-making in the EP, not only because of their unwillingness but also because of pro-European political groups' domination. Nevertheless, he believes that the signal to national governments is clearly sent along with request for another EU reform. Viola (2016: 886, 893) argues that radical Eurosceptic voices should not be ignored at the European level. Moreover, the awareness of the 'No-vote virus' should be at the center of pro-European agenda because of its likeliness to spread throughout the whole Union. Abstention, in fact, can affect democratic representation in the future and undermine the authority and the legitimacy of the EU. On the other hand, the author points out that during the 2014-2019 term mainstream EP political groups will rely even more on coalition building with a goal to eliminate anti-EU rhetoric.

To sum up, Brack (2015: 337–338, 346–348) argues that Euroscepticism has gained stronger position at both national and supranational levels, especially after elections in 2014. However, the diversity of their activities and the usage of different strategies remain as main obstacles for goals' achieving. Furthermore, the author believes that the presence of sceptics in the EP can improve the Parliament's functioning and legitimize the EU as a democratic political system which is open to conflict. Their ability to make dividing lines, introduce EU issues to the wider public in the form of visible and understandable speeches breaks the line between a closed elite-dominated arena and the people's platform. Moreover, the Eurosceptic presence could enhance the linkage between citizens and EU institutions, where the voices of dissatisfaction could be heard.

### 3. Parties' attitudes towards European integration

In the previous chapters were broadly discussed different classifications of EP political groups and their attitudes towards European integration. The following part addresses political programs and the parliamentary behavior of main Eurosceptic fractions. Special attention is focussed on the question as to why they cannot effectively cooperate and create a coalition that would stand against centrist blocs inside the EP. As Jansen and Hecke (2011: 201) argue, since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, it has become possible for European political parties to establish their own research departments with a goal to strengthen long-term development as a political family responsible for the future of the EU, its institutions and policies, as well as societies.

However, this claim is seen not to be valid for Eurosceptic groups. Therefore, this Chapter starts with the most significant and influential Euro-enthusiast group, the European People's Party, and their political program regarding the future outlook of the European Union. The last subchapter deals with two Eurorejects' cases in Member countries – the UKIP and the National Front. It studies both their EP political programs, activities inside the European Parliament and channels of communication with their voters, where the critical attitude towards the EU is mostly reflected.

#### 3.1. Group of European People's Party as a central representatives of Euro-optimism

From the outset until 1975 and then again since 1999, the European People's Party (EPP) has embodied the strongest political force within the European Parliament, comprising approximately 36 per cent of MEPs by the end of the 2009–2014 legislature. After the 2014 EP elections the fraction has managed to maintain its position, however the number of MEPs has significantly decreased. Founded in 1953 as the Christian Democrat Group, it changed to its current name after the first direct elections in 1979. Historically dominated by the German *Christlich Demokratische Union* (Christian Democratic Union) and the *Christlich-Soziale Union* (Christian-Social Union), the EPP also includes the Italy's *Popolo della Libertà* (People of Freedom), the France's *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement), the Spain's *Partido Popular* (People's Party), the Poland's *Platforma Obywatelska* (Civic Platform), and numerous other Christian Democratic and centre-right

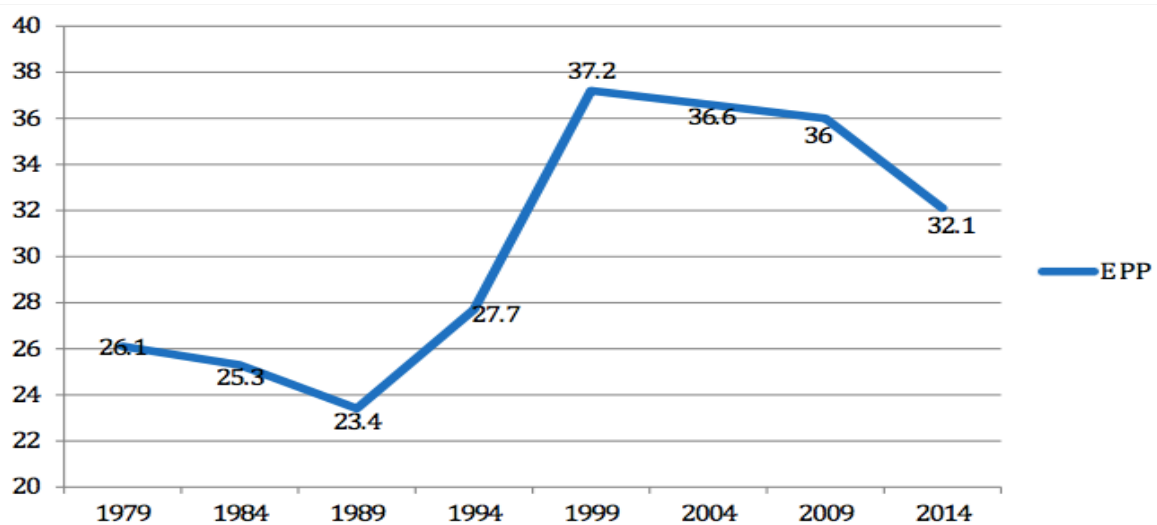
parties from all Member States except for the UK (Viola, 2016: 880–882). Representatives of the EPP are the chairs of eight permanent standing Committees. Moreover, around half of the European Commissars are members of the broader EPP party, including Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (BBC, 2015).

According to Jansen and Hecke (2011: 188–193), the establishment of pro-European parties went far beyond EP elections. Main political figures at the national level are now significantly concerned with the transnational cooperation and the future of the Union itself. However, the problem of national consolidation on the supranational level still exists. The sale of common ideas beyond party structures appears to be one of the most difficult tasks. So, the strategy of joint action was adapted by main centrist blocs the EPP, the S&D and the ALDE in order to establish the proper functioning of democracy and the success of the European Union.

Looking at the electoral support, Sio (2014: 51–55, 57, 287) comes to the conclusion that the European People's Party has always obtained the relative majority since 1999. The strengthening of the enlargement policy, when in 1992 the British and the Danish conservatives were allowed to join the EPP group supported this fact. Moreover, in 1999 a decision was taken to adopt the powerful strategy of inclusion: the entry of *Forza Italia*, the Portuguese social democrats, the French Gaullist Party, the Austrian Christian-democrats of the ÖVP, the Swedish conservatives of *Moderata* and the Finnish KOK. On the other hand, such inclusion has put the electoral success at the expense of the internal coherence of the group. In the elections in 2009 the British Conservatives had left the EPP, however this loss was compensated by the entry of new Romanian and Bulgarian delegations. Therefore, the EPP is now perceived like a leading political force responsible for the policies inside the European Parliament. Another point of its significance is the presence of CDU led by Merkel in the European People's Party. It is noteworthy that the EPP still remains the leading European force mostly due to the contribution of the Central and Eastern Europe.

As it was stated before, the 2014 European elections have brought the decline of EPP seats inside the European Parliament. Figure 11 illustrates that from 36–37 per cent the support went down to 32 per cent which is the lowest result in the last 15 years. This change was predicted by many experts, especially because of low consensus for the austerity policies carried out by the European Union and the growing support for the Eurosceptic parties both in national and supranational elections (Sio, 2014: 283–284).

*Figure 11. Electoral support for the EPP. Percentage of seats in the EP (1979-2014).*



Source: Sio (2014: 284).

The European People's Party has different pledges about the outlook of the Union. Their main argument is that the European institutions should deal with specific major issues. Moreover, the EPP rejects centralized Europe and keeps other matters to Member countries. Unified protection and the promotion of values are seen as a core blueprint in the fraction (EPP, n.d.). Another prominent priority in the EPP program is the creation of a liquid, stable and diversified European Capital Markets Union that is intended to support entrepreneurs and companies for their innovation, growth and more work places (EPP, 2015a). Furthermore, initiatives like the Energy Union and Digital Single Market will encourage the broadening of the Single Market. Also, the membership of a Monetary Union should involve responsibility and solidarity for the single currency and call for more sound policies, fiscal discipline and continuous economic reform (EPP, n.d.). Therefore, in addressing current economic and financial crisis the EPP believes in a more dynamic, competitive and prosperous Union which will be based on Judeo-Christian and democratic values (EPP, 2015c).

Commitment to an international order based on the international law and the UN Charter is their top priority. The enhancing of Frontex and the strengthening of external border security are put forward in their European strategy (EPP, 2015c). The creation of a European Coast Guard is supposed to promote these steps (EPP, n.d.). So, a special place in their program is also held by a stronger commitment to the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) which is currently not achieving its goals. More internal resilience, the full range of operational means, push for more pooling and sharing, defense cooperation and integration

are main components to be changed. The political group believes in the strengthening of the EU-NATO strategic partnership and cooperation with other important security actors. Furthermore, it stands for three concrete steps in order to put forward the European defense and security integration. The first idea is the strengthening of EU Operational Headquarters for territorial defense and higher intensity interventions. Second, the EPP believes that European defense integration should be realized through Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). The third proposition is a creation of permanent forum, where defense and foreign affair ministers of Member states will gather and make propositions for further EU cooperation and integration (EPP, 2015b).

To sum up, from all of the commitments made by the European People's Party it is visible that the political group tries to reflect national concerns. However, it remains interested in a further deepening of ties between Member states in a number of different areas. Using the classification of Kopecky and Mudde, this political group can be classified as 'Euroenthusiasts' because of their vision for closer union in many regards.

### 3.2. Phenomenon of Euroscepticism in the European Parliament

The previous chapter broadly discussed the division of Eurosceptics inside the European Parliament. However, there is a certain need to exercise their political programs and groups' internal cohesion in order to understand the reasons behind the limitation of Eurosceptic potential.

Firstly, the attention is based on political groups, which are runned by national parties hostile to European integration, namely the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) and the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD). Usherwood and Startin (2013: 5) argue that these blocs adopt a 'hard Eurosceptic' and anti-globalist discourse and their main focus is concerned with the influence on domestic main parties. Using the classification of Kopecky and Mudde, these groups can be described as 'Eurorejects'.

Afterwards, the reader finds a mainstream left-wing Eurosceptic party – European United Left–Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL). As Usherwood and Startin (2013: 5) see it, this political group has enjoyed a certain success in recent years, especially thanks to its alternative vision of a more social Europe with a unique global vision. From the perspective of Kopecky and Mudde, GUE/NGL belong to the category of Eurosceptics.

The last political group, which has some Eurosceptic concerns, is the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). In their article, Usherwood and Startin (2013: 6) see this fraction as 'soft Eurosceptics' because of their criticism towards the euro and further enlargement. Moreover, in the scale of Kopecky and Mudde they appear to be 'Europragmatists'.

### 3.2.1. Europe of Nations and Freedom

The Europe of Nations and Freedom was formed in June 2015, a year after the elections. By being the most recently formed group, there are a lot of speculations about its future and stability. The group has its members from France (National Front), Italy (Northern League), Netherlands (Freedom Party) and the UK (ex-UKIP MEP Janice Atkinson) and holds 39 mandates (BBC, 2015). Immediately after the 2014 EP elections some of anti-European parties had failed in the coalition formation because of multiple reasons. First, the EFDD leader Nigel Farage in virtue of anti-Semitic principles initially rejected the FN. Second, a deep-rooted isolation and a long-standing ostracism of National Front had stopped the formation of far-right Eurosceptic group with French, Dutch, Italian, Belgian and Austrian counterparts (Viola, 2016: 884).

During the negotiation processes, Mudde (2014) in his article argued that the first step to success was the founding of a new Euro-party – the Movement of a Europe of Nations and Freedom (MENL) by Marine Le Pen. The National Front has decided to establish the platform with a full control of it and to overcome the image of loser gained through association with the European Alliance for Freedom (EAF).

Since the emergence of this supranational political party, it has gained the support of five national parties: Belgian Flemish Interest (*Vlaams Belang*), Italian Northern League (*Lega Nord*), French National Front (*Front National*), Austrian FPÖ and Czech Movement of Freedom and Direct Democracy (*Svoboda a Přímá Demokracie*) that is not a member of the European Parliament (Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom (b), n.d.).

The Europe of Nations and Freedoms is guided through five central principles: democracy, sovereignty, identity, specificity and freedom. Starting with democracy, participants reject any affiliation, connection or sympathy to any authoritarian or totalitarian project (ENF Group – European Parliament (a), n.d.). Addressing the principle of sovereignty, members reject the creation of a supra-state or supra-national model. The best reflection can be found in the



program of Front National. The party stands for the renegotiation of the EU treaties to restore national sovereignty, the restoration of the control on national sovereignty, the recovering of national currency (the franc), the refusal of Turkish accession to the EU, the protection of the French internal market (Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom (b), n.d.).

The third principle is the preservation of identity, where the right to control and regulate immigration remains fundamental. The clearest example is the Flemish Interest which stands for the importance of the concept of national identity and the independence of the Northern Dutch speaking part of Belgium. Moreover, the principle of regulation is broadly associated with the Northern League. The party was founded in 1989 with an aim to make Italy a federal state and had participated in centrist government coalition in the 2000s. Their main political contribution was realized through the approval of a restrictive reform of the law regulating immigration and asylum, and as a main achievement – a significant reduction of illegal immigration. Regarding the supranational European level, the Northern League is known for its broad criticism against the Economic and Monetary Union and the campaign on “no euro” which definitely contribute to success in the 2014 EP election results (Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom (b), n.d.).

The next principle is freedom that rests on defending individual freedom and emphasising the particular importance of protecting freedom of speech (ENF Group – European Parliament, n.d., a). The main representative of this principle is the FPÖ (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*), one of the oldest and strongest Austrian national parties. Their ideological program in the country is based on the protection of Austrian cultural identity, traditional family, the preservation of interests and the freedom of citizens. On the European field their agenda is concerned with the self-determination of peoples and rejects any form of forced multiculturalism, globalization, centralization and mass immigration (Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom (b), n.d.) To conclude, such a diversity of national programs reflects the last, “specificity” principle.

Looking at the group’s activities, according to VoteWatch Europe (a, n.d.), the ENF has drafted only 7 reports and 3 opinions. In comparison with any other group this number is very small and testifies the role of Absentee, where the main target of this group is the domestic public. On the other hand, the ENF average participation in roll call votes belong to the highest – 90.53 per cent (VoteWatch Europe (b), n.d.). Moreover, their internal groups

cohesion in roll-call votes is 66 per cent, which is in the top three lowest results inside the EP<sup>12</sup> (VoteWatch Europe (c), n.d.).

Another important aspect of their agenda in the European parliament is written and oral (interpellations) parliamentary questions. The Europe of Nations and Freedom from July 2015 till April 2017 has asked in total 1632 questions, 20 of which are oral and 1612 – written. Among the most popular topics belong Turkish accession to the EU, the questioning of Commissioners on private topics, the interference of the European Commission in French presidential elections, the financing of the Union and the allocation of the EU funds, China and its exports, CETA, national issues in Italy and France (European Parliament/Plenary, n.d.). With answers to these questions, the group is able to spread information among its domestic public through their Facebook page and web site (Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom (a), n.d.), where it posts different opinions and videos which are based on answers and concerning similar issues. The ENF also attempts to organize various meetings, discussion clubs and cultural events.

Therefore, it is unclear whether the group can become broader and gain more electoral and political support. Even though the ENF stands for another Europe and defends national freedoms, a lot of speculations can emerge. Of course, appeals to establish a national budget, draw up laws, take control over borders, have one's own currency can be in theory attractive to many Eurosceptics (ENF Group – European Parliament (b), n.d.). But which goals will be achieved is the question of time and political image of the new group. As Cas Mudde (2015) points out *“the ENF is a pure financial success, but a political failure”*. Thanks to its financing, the group is now able to create the necessary paid positions and distribute the patronage. In spite of a slightly larger presence within the EP through speaking time and questioning, the Europe of Nations and Freedom is still strongly isolated. Moreover, convincing desired parties to join the fraction seems unrealistic.

### 3.2.2. Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy

The second ‘Eurorejects’ group in the European Parliament is the Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFDD) which has changed its name slightly after the 2014 EP elections. This

---

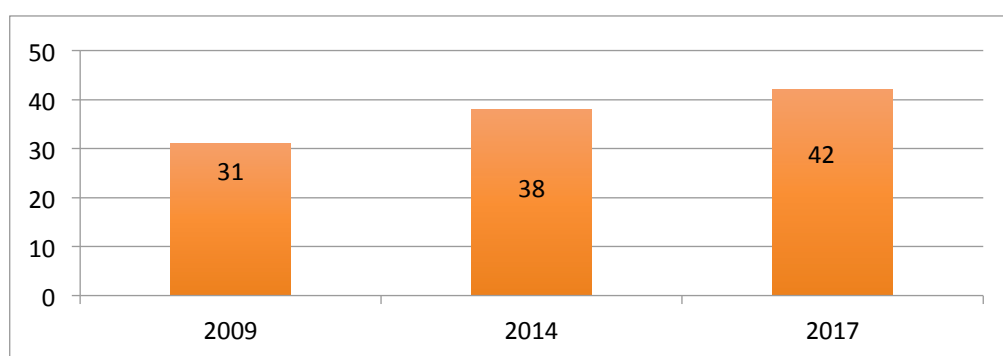
<sup>12</sup> Results are illustrated in Appendix 2.

group, as well as the ENF, attracts right-wing populist parties and currently has 42 mandates (BBC, 2015). It emerged in 2009 after EP elections after the dissolution of the Independence and Democracy group (IND/DEM) and the Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN). The first fraction was gathering MEPs with Eurosceptic nationalist or democratic appeals from 1999 to 2009, while the second one consisted of the national conservative right representatives from 2004 to 2009. Among its founding members were the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Northern League, LAOS (Greek Orthodox-Christian Party), the Danish People's Party, the Movement for France, the Reformed Political Party of the Netherlands, the Finns Party and the Slovak National Party (Sio, 2014: 79–80, 82–84).

In her article, Brack (2013: 90–92) talks about incohesion inside this group, which afterwards led to its transformation. The author underlines that co-operation between founding members outside the EP was low and controversial. Some of MEPs were a part of the European Alliance for Freedom or the Alliance for Europe of the Nations or unrelated to any European political party. Therefore, most issues lacked a broader support and the group was primarily taking the advantage of available resources from the European Parliament.

Figure 12 illustrates the changes in the number of seats for the EFDD in the European Parliament. But as the aforesaid information considers, the political fraction is still facing a huge risk to fall apart.

*Figure 12. Seats in the European Parliament for the EFDD. 2009-2017.*



Source: European Parliament (c), n.d.

Nevertheless, after the 2014 EP elections the EFDD has managed to increase its presence in the European Parliament. However, it is important to underline that the number of parties had decreased from thirteen to six with the same number of countries (Sio, 2014: 309). As Viola (2016: 885) states the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy has lost few of its members:

the Northern League, the Danish People's Party and the Finns Party. The group was almost at the edge of not reaching seven-nation threshold, and its survival depended on the entry of Italian Five-Star Movement (M5S) and on the membership of non-attached members.

On the other hand, this was not the end. In October 2014 Latvian MEP Iveta Grigule after the conversation with EP President Martin Schulz had decided to leave the group and become a member of ALDE. The EFDD leader, Nigel Farage, had accused Schulz of blackmailing and expressed his worries about the future of the fraction (BBC, 2014). Therefore, Nigel Farage had invited Sweden Democrats and ex-Front National member to enter the EFDD with an argument of their changing behavior and distance from extreme right positions (Viola, 2016: 885).

Another striking point for the future of the EFDD happened earlier in 2017. The second biggest party inside the fraction, the M5S, has voted to leave the group and sent a request to the ALDE. According to Five-Star Movement leader, after Brexit UKIP will step back and disappear from the EP arena, so an independent political group for the next legislature is needed. Even though its application was rejected, a common statement between two sides was expressed (BBC, 2017).

Regarding the EFDD agenda, it is noteworthy to have a look at the Charter. Only four driving principles can be found there: freedom and cooperation among people of different states; more democracy and respect of people's will; respect for Europe's history, traditions and cultural values; respect for national differences and interests. With an aim to sum them up, the following points are made:

- An open, transparent and accountable cooperation between members is promoted;
- A full rejection of single centralized European state and bureaucratization of Europe;
- An opposition toward new treaties and policies, which create the lack of democracy and promote centralist political position inside the EU;
- A promotion of free and fair national referenda regarding further development of the Union;
- A right to protect national borders and values;
- An ultimate check on political elites.

(EFDD Group in the European Parliament (b), n.d.).

Moreover, their stance on the euro is more than just extreme. The EFDD believes that “[t]he euro was adopted for reasons of political ideology of EU centralisation and is regarded as sacrosanct by those federalists who proposed it. However from an economical and financial perspective it is indefensible...” (EFDD Group in the European Parliament (c), n.d.). Consequently, the group does not see this project as working and promotes the return to national currencies.

The main Eurosceptic goal of this group is to achieve publicity through different channels. As Whitaker and Lynch (2013: 241, 252) conclude for many of the EFDD MEPs the allocation of seats in Committees was seen as a significant benefit, which rests in the ability to question senior figures. On the other hand, their activity in the distribution of reports is broadly under-represented (from 2009 to 2014 – 17 reports, which is around 2 per cent of the total amount; 2014 – 2017: 19 reports, which is around 2 per cent as well) (VoteWatch Europe (a), n.d.). The UKIP distances itself from the distribution of reports, while the Five-Star Movement is a bit more active. Parties’ attendance at plenary sessions along with roll call voting also shows extensive differences within group. It is noteworthy that the average participation for the whole group reaches 83.67 per cent, the lowest result among all EP political fractions (VoteWatch Europe (b), n.d.). Also, internal group cohesion in all policy areas is 43 per cent, the first lowest result after non-attached members<sup>13</sup> (VoteWatch Europe (c), n.d.).

Furthermore, the number of questions asked by different parties inside the EFDD reflects Eurosceptic roles, chosen by its participants. The group appears to be more active than its rival the ENF. During eighth parliamentary term 2070 questions were asked, where 74 are oral question (interpellations) and 1996 are written questions. It is noteworthy that in comparison with the ENF the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy asks questions which are not a part of their official agenda. Among the most popular topics belong UK overseas territories and EU relations with developing countries, EU accounting and funds’ distribution, the question of woman’s representation in the EP, environmental issues and food control. Questions about migration policies along with national issues were mainly asked till 2015, after that time they rarely appear (European Parliament/Plenary, n.d.).

---

<sup>13</sup> Results can be found in Appendix 2.

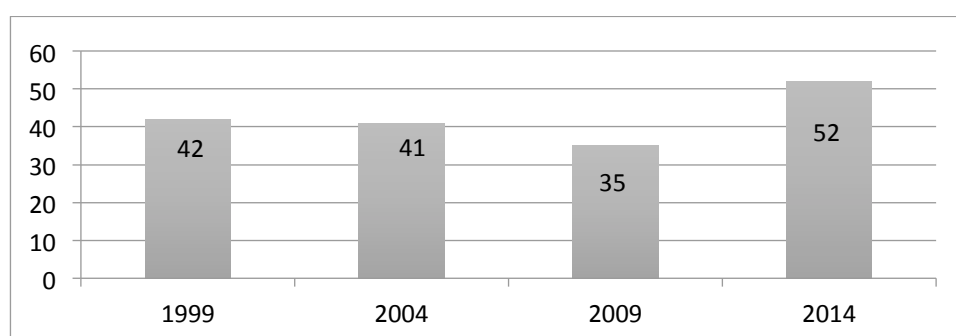
Looking at the channels of spreading the information, the EFDD is quite successful. The group runs few projects and actively uses its website, Facebook page and other media sources. It spreads the work of their representatives through live coverage, short reports, documentaries, interview, on-the-spot reactions and various articles and published opinions (EFDD Group in the European Parliament (a), n.d.).

To sum up, the future of this European Parliament political group nowadays is highly questioned. With the UKIP leaving the European Union, growing misunderstanding between its participants and different Eurosceptic roles this assumption appears more than just real.

### 3.2.3. Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left

The Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) is characterized as a broadly Eurosceptic group with a more anti-austerity and anti-capitalist point of view. The fraction consists of 14 nationalities from various Communist, Socialist and other left-wing parties (BBC, 2015). Sio (2014: 73–75) underlines that the group's members are mostly inspired by the ideals of international solidarity and are willing to change the path of European integration. Ideological stances can vary, but a basis of more democracy remains common characteristic for all. The fraction has emerged in the beginning of 1990s and had included Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Greek communist along with the Swedish, Danish, Austrian and Finnish left parties. Figure 13 illustrates seats allocation of the group since 1999.

*Figure 13. Seats in the European Parliament for the GUE/NGL. 1999-2014.*



Source: European Parliament (c), n.d.

The GUE/NGL went to elections firstly in 1999 and gained 42 members, becoming the fourth largest group in the EP. The emergence of new group has produced positive results till the

elections in 2009, when the group had lost mandates. However, this decline appeared as a temporary swing. In the 2014 EP elections, with a new charismatic Greek leader, Alexis Tsipras, and a vision the GUE/NGL has gained extra 1.4 per cent in comparison with 2009. The new strategy criticizes neoliberal worldview and its consequences for economic crisis, especially in Southern countries, and has helped to invert the decreasing trend. Criticism towards austerity policies, created by Troika of IMF, European Commission and European Central Bank, has attracted voters from Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus. Moreover, a high level of cohesion between members compared to the EU average has benefited to their success. Another important element of growing support is the feeling of disagreement with the current status quo of the Union (Sio, 2014: 301, 303–306).

So what specifically was brought by the new vision of the Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left? There are fifteen stated goals, which belong to different areas. The GUE/NGL's agenda starts with a call to defend the rights of all migrants and asylum seekers, where humanitarian visas and resettlement of asylum seekers will be main instrument. The second goal is social justice for all, which consists of social protections and welfare provisions and fights against the privatization of healthcare and water. The next goal is the protection of labour rights together with the rights of migrant workers. The fourth target is the fight against youth unemployment, where all fresh graduates will be able to get the job. Moreover, the GUE/NGL emphasizes the importance of human rights. They believe in a fight against abuse and discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, religion or race. Besides more general goal, which to some extent corresponds with previous one, is the prioritization of gender equality. It assumes the elimination of gender pay gap, fight for LGBTI rights and fostered participation in decision making (GUE/NGL, n.d.).

The seventh goal is the promotion of peace in the world, when EU foreign and security policies should be constructed respectively. Furthermore, the GUE/NGL opposes the establishment of the EU military-industrial complex and EU's role as a driving force for armament within and outside Europe. Correspondingly, the group stands for the role of a global partner instead of a player. The ninth goal is the promotion of sustainable development, access to education and fight against malaria and AIDS. A more specific call in this regard is for a fair trade policy with developing countries. Another broad belief is a protection of biodiversity and the growth of renewable energy (GUE/NGL, n.d.).

As European Innovation Trends (2016) states, the GUE/NGL also strongly criticized the EU's finding priorities and calls for broader support to regions, enhancing cohesion and reducing inequality between rich and poor states. It can be found in their program as well. First, the group tends to promote changing in consumer rules such as full certification of country of origin markings. Second, the GUE/NGL stands for fisheries policies with clear social and economic objectives and measures, which will promote the reduction of dependency on fossil fuels. Third, the group emphasizes the importance of sustainable agricultural policies, which will save small rural farmers and communities. Fourth, they believe in more regional solidarity, where the increase of investment would be top priority. And last but not least, the GUE/NGL calls for trade justice, where free trade and free circulation of goods will be controlled and interests of SMEs will be strongly promoted (GUE/NGL, n.d.).

Regarding the activities of the GUE/NGL, a numerous number can be found. First of all, it is important to underline that their average participation in roll-call votes reaches 90.15 per cent and is close to the average for the whole European Parliament (VoteWatch Europe (b), n.d.). At the same time, the GUE/NGL shows the highest result among Eurosceptic groups for internal group cohesion in RVCs – 79 per cent<sup>14</sup> (VoteWatch Europe (c), n.d.). As for drafting opinions and reports, the group is also more active than the EFDD and the ENF. As of April 2017 they conducted 42 reports and 53 opinions, which is around 5 per cent from the total number, which is still a low indicator of participation.

On the other hand, the number of questions is significant and captures a broad range of topics. At the time of research, the group has asked 4618 questions, 101 of which are oral ones. Among the most popular topics were environmental issues in member states, asylum seekers, taxation and subsidies, employment and social justice. They significantly reflect the GUE/NGL agenda and moreover the occupied position of a chair in the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Justice (European Parliament/Plenary, n.d.).

To sum up, from the aforesaid information it is clear that the GUE/NGL holds a position of typical 'Eurosceptics' and has a strong potential to become an influential force inside the

---

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 2.



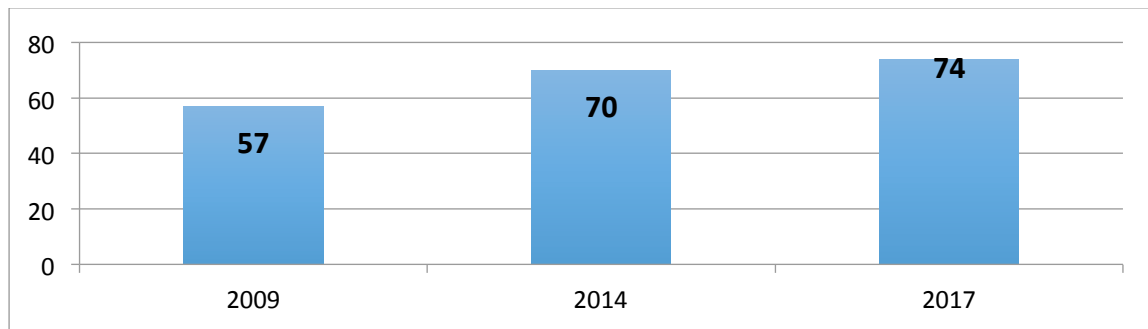
European Parliament. Moreover, because of their high internal group cohesion the fraction is capable of achieving the better results in 2019 elections.

#### 3.2.4. European Conservatives and Reformists

The single soft Eurosceptic group inside the European Parliament is the European Conservatives and Reformists. The fraction was created in 2009 after the members of the UK Conservative Party decided to leave the EPP because of disagreements on Lisbon Treaty and over a vision of a federal Europe. Alongside the Conservatives, the UK Ulster Unionist Party, the Polish Law and Justice Party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*) and the Czech Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*) and other members from five countries formed the new group. This mix has represented socially conservative political parties with an aim to promote economic liberalism (Viola, 2016: 882–883). Moreover, the European Conservatives & Reformists Group (a, n.d.) states that they are ready to cooperate with local and regional politicians on ensuring a stronger voice for their governments in guiding EU policies. So, the fraction encourages greater localism and believes in the cost effectiveness of this decision.

On the other hand, Bale et al. (2010: 98) argue that since the beginning it was difficult for the group to attract significant parties with the exception of the UK, Poland and Czech Republic. However, some speculation about the possible entrance of the Danish People's Party and the Italian Northern League took place. Whitaker and Lynch (2013: 238–239) share the same opinion, but nevertheless eliminate a few positive points for group's strengthening. Firstly, the chair in the Internal Market Committee for many British Conservatives was seen as a great achievement. Secondly, a greater chance of securing positions at the group level has emerged. Thirdly, participation in the ECR allows any national party to influence the EP's legislative outputs without joining a big group. It is probable that thanks to these circumstances new members have been attracted.

*Figure 14. Seats in the European Parliament for the ECR. 2009-2017.*



Source: European Parliament (c), n.d.

As Figure 14 illustrates, the ECR in 2009 obtained 57 seats and its blackmail potential is insignificant. However, after the 2014 elections the European Conservatives and Reformists managed to attract the anti-Euro Party Alternative for Germany with 7 seats granted, the Danish People's Party with 4 representatives and the New Flamish Alliance with 4 seats as well and has become third largest group in the European Parliament with 70 seats in total. After the elections, four more MEPs have joined the group.

Addressing their agenda, the ECR has signed the Prague declaration with its ten principles. First, the group appeals to free enterprise, free and fair trade and competition with minimal regulation and lower taxation. Furthermore, the government should provide individual freedom and personal and national prosperity by being more democratically accountable. Third, energy security should be maintained through sustainable and clean energy supplies. Fourth, the ECR believes in the concept of a family as bedrock of society. Fifth, the fraction stands for the sovereign integrity of the nation state and opposition to EU federalism. Sixth, overwhelming relations with NATO and support for young democracies cannot be ignored on the European level. Seventh, with the crisis and wars outside Europe the effective framework for migration control is required along with an end of asylum procedures' abuse. Eighth, the ECR wants efficient and modern public services and sensitivity to the needs of both rural and urban communities. Ninth, the group tends to fight against excessive bureaucracy and to promote greater transparency in the EU institutions and the use of EU funds. At last, the ECR calls for respectful and fair approach for all EU countries with no regard to size and the date of entrance (ECR, n.d.).

In comparison with other Eurosceptic groups, the ECR has developed specific proposals about the future design of the European Union and has established Policy Groups, which are responsible for outlining new options for reform. The area of coverage is:

- Budget – among discussion topics belong the appropriateness of current spending priorities, ways to improve the management of the EU Budget and to tackle the lag between commitments and payments;
- TTIP – a strong support for this project and a belief in its positive impact on the EU and US economies, where updates from trade experts and latest developments are discussed;
- Eurozone – a study of the economic and political consequences of the euro, where the developments of Eurozone crisis and potential solutions are proposed;
- Freedom of movement – an examination of the free movement of workers, including their rights to reside, to be employed, to have an access to welfare and national services and to study their integration and communities;
- Demography, intergenerational and family policies – a study of demographic crisis, which includes causes, predictions for future, solutions and actions at the EU level;
- Digital Single Market – a formulation of balanced ECR policy priorities;
- Religious freedom – a study of religious communities around the world and their current situation and an organization of meeting with an aim to help minority faith groups;
- Rural economy – a study how to make rural areas more attractive for living and working in;
- Energy security – comments on major initiatives connected with EU energy policy and their realization;
- Institutional reform – ideas for reform on powers and roles played by EU institutions, on principles and processes on which is based European law;
- Better regulation and re-shoring – innovative proposals for better regulation and accelerating the trend of re-shoring;
- Defense policy – an examination of EU's Common Security and Defense Policy from the point of ECR founding principles;
- SMEs, industry and research – a study of important challenges for these components;

- Subsidiarity and localism – a development of “subsidiarity score board”, which indicates the political willingness of the EU to return legislative power back to Member states;
- Wealth creation – a development of innovative international policies, which focus in growing economies in a form of ECR Charter on International Development.

(European Conservatives & Reformists Group (b), n.d.).

Regarding the parliamentary activities, the ECR occurs as the most active. According to VoteWatch Europe (a, n.d.), as of April 2017 the group’s members have drafted 114 reports (around 13 per cent of the total number) and 69 opinions. To this fact prospers the existence of different policy groups, which are responsible for similar tasks. On the other hand, their overall participation in the roll call votes is only 87.33 per cent, one of the lowest results (VoteWatch Europe (b), n.d.). The level of group cohesion in the ECR is the same as the average among political fractions<sup>15</sup>, however this result is still insignificant (VoteWatch Europe (c), n.d.).

Also, it seems that the group is not actively using parliamentary questions. Till April 2017 were asked 2218 questions, 83 of which are oral. But they definitely reflect their agenda, principles and chairing Committees: the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and the Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs (Security and Defence). Among ‘hot’ topics belong EU foreign relations, treatment of Member States, taxation, financial products, environmental issues and SMEs (European Parliament/Plenary, n.d.).

It is noteworthy that the ECR does not have Facebook page, does not organize public events and the only channel of communication with its voters is their official web site. This gives evidence that the group is not seeking publicity in nation states and reflects the position of “constructed opposition”.

From the aforementioned information, it can be concluded that the group is seeking to follow the pragmatist approach and stands for new Europe with a limited level of cooperation. However, as it was stated in the case of EFDD after British departure from the EU, the transformation of this group will also happen and it is difficult to predict its future.

---

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix 2.

### 3.3. Influence of populist domestic policies over the European Parliament

Populist and right-wing political parties in the EU Member States have gained a lot of attention in the last ten years. Two outstanding cases are the United Kingdom and France. Starting with the UK, Brack and Startin (2015: 240, 246) conclude that the country has always had troubled relations with the EU and opposed further EU integration. However, partly because of the UKIP activities and provocations, the 'Euroreject' movement had spread around the UK. Moreover, the United Kingdom and Independence Party has become the leading party at the 2014 EP elections. Among other reasons can be named an influence of British media, especially while covering the debate around EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 and an economic crisis.

Nevertheless, the United Kingdom has already made its choice in Brexit. The country's population has decided to leave the Union and most researchers are now more than ever concerned with the future of European integration. According to Barber (2016), Brexit will disrupt the EU's internal equilibrium. Therefore, the increase of German supremacy, less EU cohesion, confidence and international reputation are the main political consequences for the Union itself.

Moreover, another case, which is actively discussed, is France. The National Front has managed to poll short of 25 per cent in the last EP elections and become the leading French Party. Marine Le Pen has got both symbolic and material resources from the European electoral context. The party has managed to gain seats and legitimacy, make itself more professionalized and to sustain its political activity (Brack and Startin, 2015: 240, 246). Moreover, Marine Le Pen's high electoral support in French president elections arises a lot of questions, concerning the future of France in the European Union.

Usherwood (2007: 5–6, 12–18) outlines possible factors for the mobilization of right-wing populist movements in France and the United Kingdom in the EP elections. The most significant role plays the dissatisfaction with national governing parties, where a significant part of voters perceives EP elections as another way to address domestic concerns. Therefore, only few of them understand the marginal weight of individual members states in EU decision making. The second factor is the government's way to deal with the European integration. With regard to the British case, this is obviously true. Beginning with Bruges speech and

following Cameron's pledge on a referendum, the oppositional forces had got at the forefront of political and public discussion. Another cause is the nature of the group's formation. Parties, which are first and foremost defined as anti-EU, are likely to remain focused on European integration. Likewise, groups formed by non-European events do not tend to focus on the future path of the EU. The fourth factor is the political opportunity structure. Thanks to first-past-the-post voting system in the UK, non-party and radicalized groups are much likely to occur with an aim to externalize the conflict. At the same time, the two-round system in France supports party fragmentation and creates weak parliamentary institution, where the creation of new parties is a relatively common phenomenon.

So the first subpart deals with the UKIP's overlapping policies for both the domestic and EU level, while the second one concentrates on the case of National Front.

### 3.3.1. UKIP

The United Kingdom Independence Party is a right-wing populist party, which was created in 1992 and founded in 1993 as a reaction to Europe's federalist project of creating an even closer political and economic union by Maastricht Treaty (Hunt, 2014). However the party roots can be dated to Bruges speech, which led to the creation of Bruges group and a highly diffused opposition to European opposition. At the early beginning, the party was a part of the Anti-federalist League, but its leader Sked and the small group of followers launched a new structure with a new constitution, logo and new aims. The central aim was "*to make pressure on the British government of the day by not taking up any European Parliament seats it might win*" (Usherwood, 2010: 5–6). Yet, the party performance in 1994 EP elections as illustrated in Figure 15 was weak because of small media coverage and a few MPs joining it (ibid: 6). The situation has changed in 1999, when the UK changed its electoral system for EP elections from first-past-the-post single member districts to multi-districts elected by proportional representation. The UKIP won 3 seats in European Parliament and their representatives joined the New Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD) group (Hunt, 2014).

*Figure 15. UKIP's electoral results – general and EP elections.*

<b>Election</b>	<b>Percent of Vote</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>
1997 General Election	0.3 (105, 722)	0
1999 EP Election	6.9 (696, 057)	3
2001 General Election	1.5 (390, 563)	0 (saved deposit in 1 seat)
2004 EP Election	16.1 (2, 660, 768)	12
2005 General Election	2.2 (603, 298)	0 (saved deposit in 38 seats)
2009 EP Election	16.5 (2, 498, 226)	13
2010 General Election	3,2	0 (saved deposit in 100 seats)
2014 EP Election	27,5	24
2015 General Election	12,9	1

Source: Hunt (2014) and European Parliament (c), n.d.

During the Labour office, the UKIP was limited by the capacity of government to retain its populist credentials and to adapt the European issue to both British public opinion and contemporary European developments. Britain's relationship with the EU was articulated in terms of 'red lines', opt outs and negative negotiating positions pursued in defense of the national interest. This situation left no space for UKIP's activities and until 2009 elections party was an outsider in General and EP elections (Gifford, 2008: 145–146).

The first party change was seen in 2004 EP elections, when the party began to contest local elections on the basic of environment and libertarian values. Also it began to make more efforts in developing policy beyond EU withdrawal. This was showed in the development of an immigration and asylum policy. Some leaders, such as Max Clifford and Kilroy-Silk, helped to manage the party's media image. Those recruitments to UKIP aroused massive media interest and gave the party the image of distrust in metropolitan, political-correct elites (Usherwood, 2010: 9–10).

Under the leadership of Nigel Farage, starting from 2006, the party went through further reforms. The UKIP has gained even more electoral success in 2009 EP election, when the party won 13 seats and came second to the Conservatives in terms of votes won (Hunt 2014). New MEPs had teamed up with other Eurosceptics and formed a new group in the European

Parliament, called Europe of Freedom and Democracy (BBC, 2009). In 2014 EP elections the UKIP came in at first place and won 24 seats, leaving ahead the Conservatives and Labour with 18 seats each. Alike growing electoral support had shown that it is almost impossible to prevent the rise of UKIP (Hunt, 2014). Last general elections in May 2015 were seen as additional approval of growing support. For the first time in UKIP history, the party won 1 seat at the Parliament and has gained control of Thanet District Council (BBC, 2015).

The next real pressure on the Cameron's government was the question of the referendum about exiting the EU. A Cabinet reshuffle and a visible hardening of the Conservative leadership stance on EU reform followed on in the aftermath of the elections. The government has had more desires to reform the EU and British relations with it. The UKIP's success may also have influenced the government's ongoing plans to renegotiate terms of the UK's membership in the EU. The appointment of a British Conservative, Lord Jonathan Hill as EU Financial Services Commissioner may be seen as an adjustment by Brussels to deter such an eventuality. As well, this situation may be calculated as reviving Britain's revisionism on one hand, and of France's and Germany's hostility over Britain's notion to leave the EU on the other (Parau, 2014).

In order to understand the influence over the European Parliament, it is good to start with their European program, also called Manifesto 2014. The party called for active and effective negotiations on an immediate withdrawal from the EU. The UKIP emphasized that it is a mistaken view to think that the UK withdrawal from the EU will cost Britain too much. This program addressed a question to re-imagine the real economic and trade situation with the EU, which caused Britain a lot of jobs and money. Moreover, the manifesto included environmental calls that the fuel and energy economic sector of Britain is under threat from European laws and restrictions. Therefore, the UKIP saw independence as positive thing, which will make the country wealthier and stronger both economically and nationally (UKIP, 2014).

Before Brexit happened, none of these goals was brought to the center of European debate. However, it had changed the national debate and partly led to what the Europe has to deal with now – British withdrawal from the European Union. In this case, the European Parliament has to create and to adopt a broad legal framework and to find less-harmful conditions for both the EU and the UK.

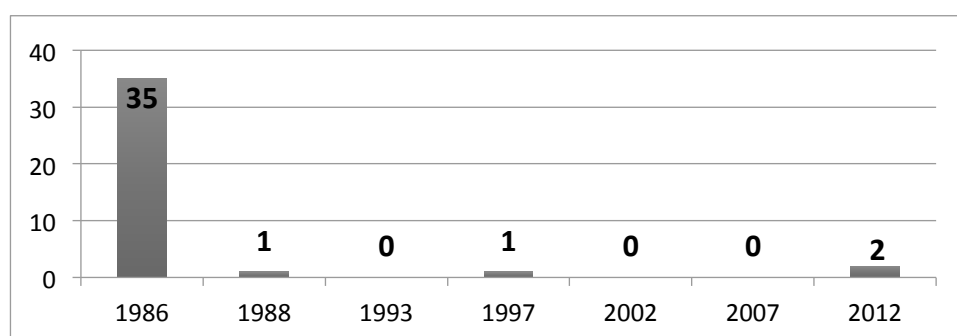


### 3.3.2. National Front

The National Front is the famous right-wing populist party in France, which has emerged in the beginning of 1970s and in last five years has gained popularity again. Bréchon and Mitra (1992: 64) see the party a marginal point of the political system, which was deriving its ideological basis from traditions before the Fifth republic and promoting very specific interests. The authors underline that there was a diversity of factors swchich helped the FN to rise rapidly, such as the resurgence of old national-populist tradition at the right moment; the personality, character and mobilizing skills of its former leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen; voter's displeasure with the Socialist government; an experimental application of the system of proportional representation; the fragmentation of the moderate right and last, but not least, the political consequences of the economic crisis of the 1970s.

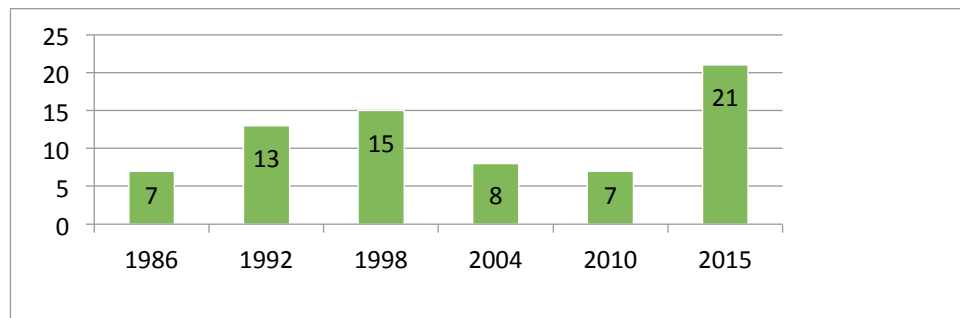
According to Williams (2011: 680–681, 685), it was difficult for radical parties to emerge in France after World War II. When the Fourth Republic collapsed, only few nationalist, authoritarian and ethnocentrist groups left. In fact, among new parties were only the National Front and the Greens. Moreover, they disposed minor influence and only in 1980s the National Front had localized its success in gaining public office. Such growth of influence was visible till 2002, when Jean-Marie Le Pen had managed to get to the second round of president elections. This change was at large extent brought by Le Pen's rhetoric and ideology dating to Poujadism. The FN had managed to put at the front of political agenda issues concerned with immigration, law and order, which were never popular issues in public debates. But right after 2002, the electoral support decreased and was almost unseen till 2011, when the new charismatic leader Marine Le Pen has taken office from her father.

*Figure 16. Seats in the National Assembly for the National Front, 1986–2012.*



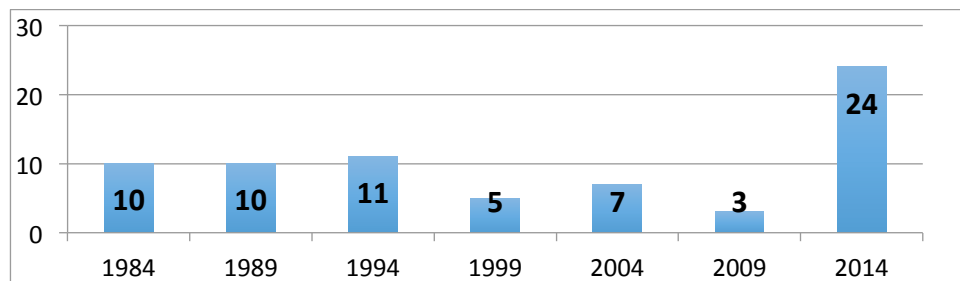
Source: NSD, n.d.

*Figure 17. Percentage of seats in Regional Councils for the National, 1986–2015.*



Source: NSD, n.d.

*Figure 18. Seats for National Front in the European Parliament, 1984–2014.*



Source: NSD, n.d.

What were the reasons for the first electoral success of the FN at the European level? Bréchon and Mitra (1992: 65–66) come to a conclusion that EP elections in 1984 were not of much political importance to domestic public, so voters were freer in terms of party affiliation, political partisanship and social class. From Figure 18 can be confirmed that the party managed to gain significant electoral success in the election to the EP in 1984 and received 10 mandates. As Williams (2011: 682, 685–686) puts it, the FN at the early stage benefitted from the lack of ideological coherence among mainstream parties at that time. This was relevant thanks to two reasons: a possession of high level of ideological orientation and a political alternation from right to left in governing party coalitions. Therefore, the party had aimed at securing the median voters not only on the right but on the left also, especially those connected with the working class. Figure 17 reflects that a catch all strategy had worked for the FN in regional elections by the late 1990s, where the party had started to threaten two mainstream right parties. However, as it can be seen from Figure 16, the majoritarian electoral system to the National Assembly, apart from 1986 when electoral law was temporarily changed, the National Front has restricted access to seats.

Goodliffe (2015: 328–331) explains the recent rise of the National Front in terms of economic and social crisis, which started in 2008 with the European sovereign debt crisis. Trust in the EU fell to a low 30 per cent in 2011 among the French public and also resulted in the pessimism about Eurozone. The author states that in 2012 only 12 per cent and in 2013 9 per cent of French population had believed that their economy was performing well. This attitude had resulted into a decrease of support for European integration. It is also noteworthy that the same level of criticism was present only in the crisis-ridden states on the southern Eurozone. So, the National Front has managed to channel the party with Eurosceptic voters. Marine Le Pen's presidential campaign in 2012 in comparison to other principle candidates was concerned with popular issues and had accounted Europe for 6.04 per cent of communication, economy for 6.47 per cent and immigration 3.89 per cent. Afterwards, these ideas had spread into the 2014 EP elections. Moreover, the National Front has made its anti-EU position well known. Thanks to the new image of Marine Le Pen as a leader of the party, political rhetoric has turned away from identity issues and focused more on insecurity and economics (Williams, 2011: 690–691).

As Nielsen (2017: 24–25) argues, in general anti-EU party discourse had become more radical and the 2014 campaign was way more offensive. Mainstream French political parties, the PS and the UMP, had expressed their willingness to change the path of the EU. Therefore, the FN was forced to extent its criticism with an aim to preserve critical added value on European integration and start strong critical campaign against euro, Europe and Schengen area.

Nevertheless, Sio (2014: 181–187) emphasizes that the National Front was dictating terms and issues for more France and less Europe. That is why the party has become the largest party at the national level and won 24 mandates (see Figure 14) for the first time in its existence. The support has almost quadrupled since elections in 2009 and has reversed the roles inside the country, making the voices of protesters to be heard. Looking closer at their agenda, main points were institutional changes (redefinition of the legislative powers in terms of national sovereignty and subsidiarity principles, re-examination of enlargement policies, effective solution for unemployment on national level instead of European, holding national referendums on issues of common interest), economic matters (end of supporting measures to Member States in financial difficulties, possibility to leave Eurozone and return to national currency, protection for SMEs and other businesses from third countries' imports), social aspect and immigration issues (strengthening of traditional family policies; own asylum and

immigration policies, including social and labour rights for immigrants; protection of secularism and affirmation of people's identity) (EAF, 2014).

According to Goodliffe (2015: 331–336), post-election surveys had pictured growing public's interest both in elections and European issues. Moreover, abstentionist voters expressed stronger anti-European feelings – 66 per cent were seeing EU as a bad thing and supported euro exit, as well as 76 per cent stood for abandoning of the Union.

At the same time, the FN's move from the position of political outsiders to the center plays a certain role in the formation of European agenda. The threat that the National Front would win the upcoming president and parliamentary elections becomes a part of the European agenda and has a potential to influence the whole future structure of the European Union. Moreover, taking into account party behaviour on the supranational level and the effective use of its main instrument, parliamentary questions, the National Front is able to strengthen its position and spread the general disagreement with European integration.

## Conclusion

Euroscepticism on the level of the European Parliament is not something new. Remarkably, the European Parliament has gone through major reforms in last forty years. During the first stage of European integration process, MEPs were appointed by their national parliaments. This led to the over-representation of mainstream parties and representatives, who were in favor of integration. Therefore, former opposition towards the EU inside the EP was restrained. Since the first direct elections in 1979, small and protest parties have had a chance to be represented in the Parliament.

Till the 1999 EP elections, Eurosceptic parties were gaining insignificant number of mandates and operating as non-attached members or uniting into small political groups. With the emergence of the Europe of Democracies and Diversities in 1999, a new perspective for Eurosceptic movement had emerged. After the Eastern enlargement, more and more MEPs had felt the need to reform the European Union. Some of them have even started to oppose the integration project as a whole.

Nowadays, there are nine political groups since June 2015 in the European Parliament, including the European People's Party (EPP), the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), the Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD), the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (EUL/NGL) and non-attached MEPs. Four/five groups can be identified with some sort of scepticism. It is noteworthy that the Eurosceptic movement now stands for more than one-fifth of the EP.

Besides two political fractions, the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) and the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) can be appointed as 'Eurorejects'. At the same time, the Confederation of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) holds a position of 'Eurosceptics' and the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) stands for 'Europragmatist' course. Noteworthy, the Eurosceptic movement inside the European Parliament has its own characteristics and dividing lines. In a study of Brack (2012; 2015) can be found three categories which appoint Eurosceptics a certain role and help to understand their behavior at the supranational level. The first role is that of Absentee which is characterized by limited involvement inside the Parliament and places an emphasis on the

national arena and the voters. The only instrument used by them is written questions, which help to draw a link with domestic voters and to defend the interests of their constituency. Moreover, the seat in the EP is mostly perceived as an opportunity to become popular at home and gain some more legitimacy, while not being much involved at the level of the European Parliament. The second role is that of Public Orator, where public speaking and the spread of negative information about the EU form their strategy. Therefore, the essential goal is to publicize and to defend Eurosceptic positions by all means, because the self-evaluation largely depends on publicity and reactions on their speeches and behavior. They often use parliamentary questions, though the focus is placed on controversial topics like costs arising from the running of EU institutions, requests for investigation on an individual Commissioner and the cost of bodyguards for Commissioners. The third role is that of Pragmatist which is connected with greater involvement in the daily work of the EP, a need to achieve results and a tendency to respect the rules. Their main goal is not only to get attention, but also to be efficient and contribute in some policy areas through so called “constructive opposition” – balance between the promotion of their views and the pursuit of concrete results. Pragmatists also use various parliamentary tools, such as amendments, motions and reports. Therefore, work in committees is perceived as essential thanks to the ability to propose amendments.

The main goal of this thesis was to outline the Eurosceptic trends that are characteristic for the European Parliament. The first trend that has been observed is activities’ restriction inside the legislative body. By being out from a process of future construction of the EU, Eurosceptic parties remain alien to the system. The only instrument that is left to them is to question an existing system and to express itself with an aim to influence public opinion and promote radical views in respective countries. The second trend is the dependency of individual members on domestic political parties inside EP supranational groups, which makes the coalition formation process more complicated and promotes a certain level of no action across ideological borders. Moreover, it largely limits the influence of any oppositional force and discourages the desire to participate on European matters inside the EP, leading to the idea of total EU rejection. The third trend is diversity of roles, chosen by Eurosceptics. They create a significant difference between them and unable the unification of the movement.

Another observed trend is the over-concentration on the addressing of the domestic public. Eurosceptic MEPs tend to influence their mainstream national parties and picture the EU as a destructive element for their own country. Moreover, this trend underlines auxiliary of

cooperation between different representatives of this phenomenon. The fifth characteristic of Euroscepticism in the EP is growing electoral support. As it was shown since 1994 EP elections the Eurosceptic blocs have managed to get to the heart of the Parliament and to exceed 30 per cent of the total number of MEPs, representing ever-stronger oppositional force.

The sixth important trend is a non-isolated character of Euroscepticism. With a sole exception of Malta, absolute winning position of radical parties in the UK, France and Denmark together with popular vote in all member countries has arisen a lot of questions about dissatisfaction with the current course of European integration. The last observed substantial trend is that left-wing Eurosceptic supporters are more pro-European than mainstream party supporters. They openly welcome greater financial transfers between EU members, as well as their knowledge about the EU is higher than that of average voter.

However, the diversity of their activities and the usage of different strategies remain main obstacles for the achievement of the goals of the parties. Therefore, there is a certain need to understand Eurosceptic instruments and groups' internal cohesion. Starting with the ENF, in comparison with any other group it has drafted very small number of reports and opinion. But the important aspect of their agenda is written and oral (interpellations) parliamentary questions. The Europe of Nations and Freedom from July 2015 till April 2017 has asked in total 1632 questions, 20 of which are oral and 1612 – written. Among the most popular topics belong Turkish accession to the EU, the questioning of Commissioners on private topics, the interference of the European Commission in French presidential elections, the financing of the Union and the allocation of the EU funds, China and its exports, CETA, national issues in Italy and France. These facts testify its role of Absentee, where the main target of this group is domestic public. Moreover, their internal groups cohesion in roll-call votes is 66 per cent, which is in the top three lowest results inside the EP.

The Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy aims at achieving the publicity through different channels. By doing so, the group can be appointed as Public Orator. Therefore, their activity in the distribution of reports is broadly under-represented (2014 – 2017: 19 reports, which is around 2 per cent of total). It is noteworthy that the average participation for the whole group reaches 83.67 per cent, the lowest result among all EP political fractions. Also, internal group cohesion in all policy areas is 43 per cent, the first lowest result after non-attached members. Furthermore, the number of questions asked by different parties inside the

EFDD reflects Eurosceptic role, chosen by it. During the eighth parliamentary term 2070 questions were asked, where 74 are oral question (interpellations) and 1996 are written questions. It is noteworthy that in comparison with the ENF the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy asks questions which are not a part of their official agenda. Among most popular topics belong UK overseas territories and EU relations with developing countries, EU accounting and funds' distribution, the question of woman's representation in the EP, environmental issues and food control. Questions about migration policies along with national issues were mainly asked till 2015, after that time they rarely appear.

Regarding the activities of the GUE/NGL, a numerous number can be found. First of all, it is important to underline that their average participation in roll-call votes reaches 90.15 per cent and is close to the average for the whole European Parliament. Also, the GUE/NGL shows the highest result among Eurosceptic groups for internal group cohesion in RCVs – 79 per cent. As for drafting opinions and reports, as of April 2017 they conducted 42 reports and 53 opinions, which is around 5 per cent from the total number and is still a low indicator of participation. On the other hand, the number of questions is significant and captures a broad range of topics. At the time of research, the group has asked 4618 questions, 101 of which are oral ones. They significantly reflect the GUE/NGL agenda and moreover the occupied position of a chair in the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Justice. That is why the role of typical 'Eurosceptics' can be appointed to them.

The last Eurosceptic group is the European Conservatives and Reformists. As of April 2017 group's members have drafted 114 reports (around 13 per cent of the total number) and 69 opinions. To this fact prospers the existence of different policy groups, which are responsible for similar tasks. On the other hand, their overall participation in the roll call votes is only 87.33 per cent, one of the lowest results. Moreover, it seems that the group is not actively using parliamentary questions. Till April 2017 were asked 2218 questions, 83 of which are oral. But they definitely reflect group's agenda, principles and chairing Committees: the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and the Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs (Security and Defense). It can be conducted that the group occupies the role of Pragmatist.

From aforesaid information, it is clear that these parliamentary groups are inconsistent in their parties' policies. Moreover, they engage with a broad range of national issues, which creates other barriers for cooperation. A low internal cohesion underlines the fact of movement's diversification and therefore limits their blackmail and governing potentials.



An additional goal of this thesis is to find out how populist appeals, which at the supranational level mirror national concerns, help to promote either reformation or dissolution of the European Union. Two case studies were chosen – the UKIP and the FN. A few remarkable points dictated this choice. First, the EU-rejectivist nature of these parties plays a crucial role in their states. The UK has always had troubled relations with the EU and opposed further EU integration. However, partly because of the UKIP activities and calls, the ‘Euroreject’ movement had spread around the country and ended up in Brexit. The country’s population has decided to leave the Union and most researchers are now more than ever concerned with the future of European integration. In the case of France, the National Front has managed to poll short of 25 per cent in the last EP elections and become the leading French Party. Moreover, Marine Le Pen’s high electoral support in French president elections arises a lot of questions, concerning the future of France in the European Union. The second reason for this choice was the political opportunity structure. Thanks to first-past-the-post voting system in the UK, non-party and radicalized groups are much likely to occur with an aim to externalize the conflict. At the same time, the two-round system in France supports party fragmentation and creates a weak parliamentary institution, where the creation of new parties is a relatively common phenomenon. However, the process of decision making still remains in the hands of central parties and eliminates the influence of the right-wing on domestic scene.

With regard to the question of influence, the following conclusions are made. The UKIP together with media support brought the UK withdrawal at the center of European debate. It changed the national debate and partly led to what Europe has to deal with now – the British withdrawal from the European Union. In this case, the European Parliament has to create and to adopt a broad legal framework and to find less-harmful conditions for both the EU and the UK. At the same time, the FN’s move from the position of political outsiders to the center plays a certain role in the formation of European agenda. The threat that the National Front would win the upcoming president and parliamentary elections becomes a part of the European agenda and has a potential to influence the whole future structure of the European Union.

These developments can serve as a request for another EU reform. Therefore, radical Eurosceptic voices should not be ignored at the European level. Moreover, the awareness of the ‘No-vote virus’ should be at the center of pro-European agenda because of its likeliness to

spread throughout the whole Union. Abstention, in fact, can affect democratic representation in the future and undermine the authority and the legitimacy of the EU.

## References

- Bale, T., Hanley, S., & Szczerbiak, A. (2010). 'May Contain Nuts'? The Reality behind the Rhetoric Surrounding the British Conservatives' New Group in the European Parliament. *Political Quarterly*, **81** (1), 85–98.
- Barber, T. (2016). Five consequences of the UK's exit from the EU. *Financial Times*. 24 June 2016. Retrieved April 10, 2017, from <https://www.ft.com/content/b1a2d66e-3715-11e6-9a05-82a9b15a8ee7>.
- Bartolini, S. (2005). *Restructuring Europe: Centre formation, system building and political structuring between the nation-state and the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BBC News. (2014). Eurosceptic MEP group collapses. 16 October 2016. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29646414>.
- BBC News. (2017). EU liberals refuse to unite with Italy Five Star Eurosceptics. 9 January 2017. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38558366>.
- BBC. (2015). European Parliament: Guide to the political groups. 21 October 2015. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-parliaments-34574041>.
- Brack, N. (2012). Euroscepticism at the Supranational Level: The Case of the 'Untidy Right' in the European Parliament\*. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, **51** (1), 85–104.
- Brack, N. (2015). The roles of Eurosceptic Members of the European Parliament and their implications for the EU. *International Political Science Review*, **36** (3), 337–350.
- Brack, N., & Startin, N. (2015). Introduction: Euroscepticism, from the margins to the mainstream. *International Political Science Review*, **36** (3), 239–249.
- Bréchon, P. & Mitra, S. K. (1992). The National Front in France: The Emergence of an Extreme Right Protest Movement. *Comparative Politics*, **25** (1), 63–82.
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust The People! Populism And The Two Faces Of Democracy. *Political Studies*, **47** (1), 2–16.

Conti, N., & Memoli, V. (2012). The multi-faceted nature of party-based euroscepticism. *Acta Politica*, **47** (2), 91–112.

Coughlan, A. (2004). Nation, State Sovereignty and the European Union: Some Democratic Principles. *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, **93** (369), 33–43.

EAF. (2014). EAF Party Manifesto: European Elections 2014. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from <http://www.eurallfree.org/sites/default/files/Manifesto%20EAF%20.pdf>.

ECR. (n.d.). Prague Declaration. Retrieved January 24, 2017, from <http://ecrgroup.eu/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/Prague-declaration.jpg>.

EFDD Group in the European Parliament. (a). (n.d.). Media. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.efddgroup.eu/medias>.

EFDD Group in the European Parliament. (b). (n.d.). Our Charter. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.efddgroup.eu/about-us/our-charter>.

EFDD Group in the European Parliament. (c). (n.d.). The Euro. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.efddgroup.eu/about-us/the-euro>.

ENF Group – European Parliament. (a) (n.d.). Charter. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.enfgroup-ep.eu/charter/>.

ENF Group – European Parliament. (b) (n.d.). Home. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.enfgroup-ep.eu/>.

EPP - European People's Party. (2015, a). Capital Markets Union – More Investments, More Growth. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.epp.eu/papers/capital-markets-union-more-investments-more-growth-2/>.

EPP - European People's Party. (2015, b). For a stronger European security and defence. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.epp.eu/papers/for-a-stronger-european-security-and-defence/>.

EPP - European People's Party. (2015, c). Protecting the Union and Promoting Our Values. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.epp.eu/papers/protecting-the-union-and-promoting-our-values/>.

EPP - European People's Party. (n.d.). Commitments. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.epp.eu/our-commitments/commitments/>.

EU Innovation Trends. (2016). GUE/NGL Criticises EU Spending as out of Touch with Reality. 5 July 2016. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <https://www.eufundingtrends.eu/news/guengl-criticises-eu-spending-out-touch-reality>.

Eurobarometer. (2015). Public Opinion in the European Union: Report. Retrieved March 02, 2017, from [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83\\_publ\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb83/eb83_publ_en.pdf).

European Conservatives & Reformists Group. (a). (n.d.). About us. Retrieved January 24, 2017, from <http://web.cor.europa.eu/ecr/about-us/Pages/default.aspx>

European Conservatives & Reformists Group. (b). (n.d.). Ideas For Reform. Retrieved January 24, 2017, from <http://ecrgroup.eu/ecr-policies/ideas-for-reform/>

European Parliament / Plenary. (n.d.). Parliamentary questions. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html>.

European Parliament. (a). (n.d.). Organisation. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/20150201PVL00010/Organisation>.

European Parliament. (b). (n.d.). Seats. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/hemicycle.html>.

European Parliament. (c). (n.d. ). EP Timeline: from past to present. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/external/html/ephistory/default\\_en.htm#event1999-06](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/external/html/ephistory/default_en.htm#event1999-06).

Forster, A. (2002). *Euroscepticism in Contemporary British Politics: Opposition to Europe in the British Conservative and Labour Parties Since 1945*. London: Routledge.

Gifford, C. (2008). *The Making of Eurosceptic Britain: Identity and Economy in a Post-Imperial State*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Goodliffe, G. (2015). Europe's salience and 'owning' euroscepticism: Explaining the front national's victory in the 2014 european elections in france. *French Politics*, **13** (4), 324–345.

GUE/NGL. (n.d.). Who We Are, What We Work For. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.guengl.eu/policy/publication/who-we-are-what-we-work-for>.

Hloušek, V. (2011). European Integration as a Party Cleavage? A Conceptual Debate. *Central European Political Science Association Annual Conference 2011*. Retrieved March 09, 2017, from [http://cepsa.at/ablage/2011/paper\\_hlousek.pdf](http://cepsa.at/ablage/2011/paper_hlousek.pdf).

Hobolt, S. B. (2015). The 2014 European Parliament Elections: Divided in Unity? *Journal Of Common Market Studies*, **53**, 6–21.

Hunt, A. (2014). UKIP: The Story of the UK Independence Party. *BBC*. 21 November 2014. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-21614073>.

Jansen, T., & Hecke, S. V. (2011). *At Europe's Service The Origins and Evolution of the European People's Party*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

Katz, R. S., & Wessels, B. (1999). *The European Parliament, the national parliaments, and European integration*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kopecky, P., & Mudde, C. (2002). The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in Central East Europe. *European Union Politics*, **3** (3), 297–326.

Kreppel, A. (2002). *The European Parliament and Supranational Party System: a study in institutional development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kriesi, H. (2005). *The mobilization of the political potentials linked to European integration by national political parties*. Paper presented at the Conference on „Euroscepticism“, at the Pulitzer Hotel, Amsterdam, July 1 and 2, 2005. Retrieved March 09, 2017, from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237596853\\_The\\_Mobilization\\_of\\_the\\_Political\\_Potentials\\_Linked\\_to\\_European\\_Integration\\_by\\_National\\_Political\\_Parties](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237596853_The_Mobilization_of_the_Political_Potentials_Linked_to_European_Integration_by_National_Political_Parties).

Krouwel, A., & Abts, K. (2007). Varieties of euroscepticism and populist mobilization: Transforming attitudes from mild euroscepticism to harsh eurocynicism. *Acta Politica*, **42** (2–3), 252–270.

- Kruhmalova, I. (2014). *Analysis of British relations with the European Union during the last four decades: Is Britain becoming increasingly eurosceptic? Will Britain pull out of the European Union eventually?* [bachelor thesis]. Plzeň: West Bohemian University.
- Ladrech, R. (2002). Europeanization and Political Parties: Towards a Framework for Analysis. *Party Politics*, **8** (4), 389–403.
- Lipset, S. M., & Rokkan, S. (1967). *Party systems and voter alignments: cross-national perspectives*. Free Press.
- Lodge, J. (2005). *The 2004 elections to the European Parliament*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Marks, G., & Wilson, C. J. (2000). The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration. *British Journal Of Political Science*, **30** (3), 433–459.
- McElroy, G., & Benoit, K. (2010). Party Policy and Group Affiliation in the European Parliament. *British Journal of Political Science*, **40** (2), 377–398.
- Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom. (a). (n.d.) Facebook page. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from [https://www.facebook.com/MENLeuropa/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/MENLeuropa/?ref=page_internal).
- Movement for a Europe of Nations and Freedom. (b). (n.d.). National Delegations. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <http://www.menleuropa.eu/national-delegation/>.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2014). The EAF is dead! Long live the MENL! *Open Democracy*. 12 October 2014. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/cas-mudde/eaf-is-dead-long-live-menl>.
- Mudde, C. (2015). Why the new far-right political group in the European Parliament is a political failure. *Open Democracy*. 15 June 2015. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/cas-mudde/why-new-farright-political-group-in-european-parliament-is-destined-to->.

Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: a very short introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.

NSD. (n.d.). European Election Database - France. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from [http://www.nsd.uib.no/european\\_election\\_database/country/france/](http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/france/).

Parau, C. E. (2014). The 2014 European Elections in Britain: The Counter-revolt of the Masses? *Politics Oxford*. Retrieved January 12, 2017, from: [http://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/materials/The\\_2014\\_European\\_Elections\\_in\\_Britain\\_The\\_Counter-revolt\\_of\\_the\\_Masses.pdf](http://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/materials/The_2014_European_Elections_in_Britain_The_Counter-revolt_of_the_Masses.pdf).

Parsons, C., & Weber, T. (2011). Cross-Cutting Issues and Party Strategy in the European Union. *Comparative Political Studies*, **44** (4), 383–411.

Pelinka, A. (2013). “Right-wing Populism: Concept and Typology”. In: Wodak, Ruth – Majid Khosravinik, and Brigitte Mral. *Right-wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Rohrschneider, R., & Whitefield, S. (2009). Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems. *Comparative Political Studies*, **42** (2), 280–313.

Sartori, G. (2005). *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Servent, A. R. (2015). *Institutional and policy change in the European Parliament: deciding on freedom, security and justice*. Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sio, L. D. (2014). *The European Parliament elections of 2014*. Roma: CISE - Centro Italiano Studi Elettorali.

Sitter, N. (2002). Cleavages, party strategy and party system change in Europe, east and west. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, **3** (3), 425–451.

Taggart, P. (2004). Populism and Representative Politics in Contemporary Europe. *Journal of Political Ideologies*[online], **9** (3), 269–288.



Taggart, P., – Szczerbiak, A. (2008). *Opposing Europe? The Comparative Party Politics of Euroscepticism, Volume 2 Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Taggart, P., – Szczerbiak, A. (2013). Coming in from the Cold? Euroscepticism, Government Participation and Party Positions on Europe\* Coming in from the Cold? Euroscepticism, Government Participation and Party Positions on Europe. *Journal Of Common Market Studies*, **51** (1), 17–37.

The Eurosceptic. (2016). Top 10 moments for euroscepticism in 2016. 22 December 2016. Retrieved March 03, 2017, from [http://theeurosceptic.com/index.php/2016/12/22/\\_\\_\\_trashed/](http://theeurosceptic.com/index.php/2016/12/22/___trashed/).

Torreblanca, J. I., & Leonard, M., eds. (2013). The Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism. *ECFR* [online]. May 2013. Retrieved April 2, 2017, from [http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR79\\_EUROSCEPTICISM\\_BRIEF\\_AW.pdf](http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR79_EUROSCEPTICISM_BRIEF_AW.pdf).

UKIP (2014). Manifesto 2014: Create an earthquake. Retrieved April 10, 2017, from <https://d3n8a8pro7vbm.cloudfront.net/themes/5308a93901925b5b09000002/attachments/original/1398869254/EuroManifestoLaunch.pdf?1398869254>.

Usherwood, S. (2007). Proximate Factors in the Mobilization of Anti-EU Groups in France and the UK: The European Union as First Order Politics. *Journal of European Integration*, **29** (1), 3–21.

Usherwood, S. (2010). *UKIP's Political Strategy: Opportunist Idealism in a Fragmented Political Arena* [research paper]. Bruges: University Association for Contemporary European Studies College of Europe.

Usherwood, S., & Startin, N. (2012). Euroscepticism as a Persistent Phenomenon\*. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, **51** (1), 1–16.

Viola, D. M. (2016). *The Routledge handbook of European elections*. London: Routledge.

VoteWatch Europe. (a). (n.d.). Activities of the Members of the European Parliament. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.votewatch.eu/en/term8-activity-statistics.html#/0/0/2014-07-01/2017-08-01/13/>.

VoteWatch Europe. (b). (n.d.). Average participation in (roll-call) votes in EP plenary by political groups. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.votewatch.eu/en/term8-political-group-participation.html>.

VoteWatch Europe. (c). (n.d.). Cohesion of (trans-national) political groups in the European Parliament. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from <http://www.votewatch.eu/en/term8-political-group-cohesion.html>.

Whitaker, R., & Lynch, P. (2014). Understanding the formation and actions of eurosceptic groups in the european parliament: Pragmatism, principles and publicity. *Government and Opposition*, **49** (2), 232–263.

Williams, M. H. (2011). A new era for French far right politics? Comparing the FN under two Le Pens. *Analise Social* [online], **46** (201), 679–695.

Woodside, A. G. (2010). *Case study research: theory, methods, practice*. Bingley, UK: Emerald.

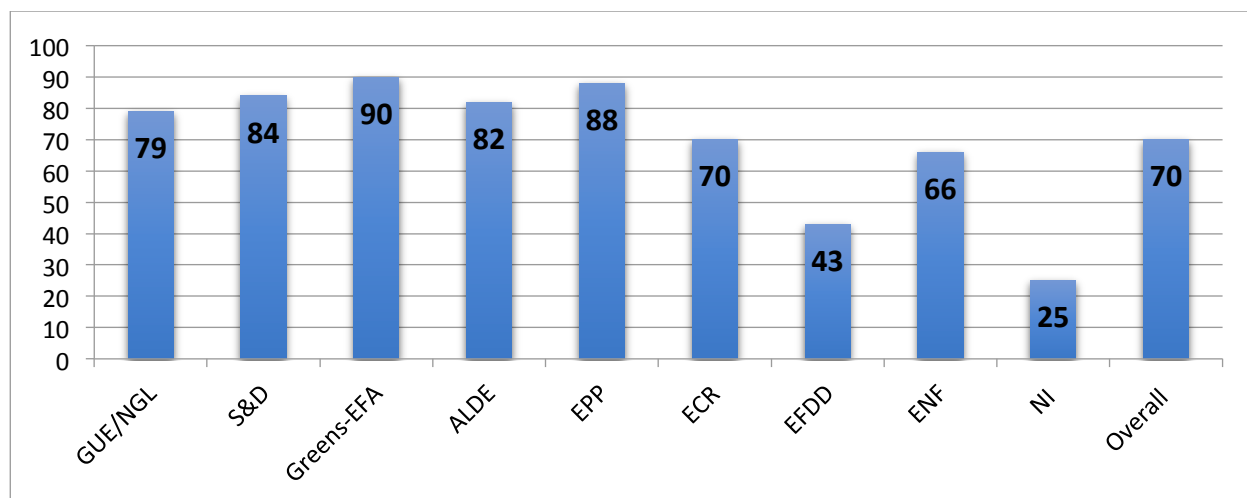
## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Distribution of MEPs According to the Typology of Roles – Seventh Legislature (July 2009 – January 2012)

Name	Group	Attendance plenary (%)	Reports	Motions	Amendments	Speeches	Questions
<i>MEPs closer to the ideal-type Absentee</i>							
de Villiers	EFD	53	0	2	0	16	1
Le Pen	NA	61	0	0	0	22	2
Le Pen	NA	72	0	0	0	15	0
Becali	NA	25	0	0	8	82	3
Salvini	EFD	72	1	2	30	19	104
Natrass	EFD/NA	81	0	0	0	12	1
Tudor	NA	62	0	0	0	18	0
Agnew	EFD	86	0	0	1	39	126
Kovacs* <sup>a</sup>	NA	86	0	0	1	15	4
Bloom	EFD	56	0	0	0	32	26
Colman	EFD/NA	76	0	0	0	15	1
Nuttall	EFD	62	0	1	5	31	22
Binev	NA	68	1	0	13	69	32
Borghezio	EFD	87	0	9	15	59	114
Griffin	NA	86	0	1	0	38	86
Morvai	NA	63	0	1	14	89	0
Stassen	NA	87	0	1	6	31	50
<i>MEPs closer to the ideal-type Public Orator</i>							
Batten	EFD	78	0	0	0	109	34
Szegedi	NA	69	0	1	1	100	14
Buifon	EFD	79	0	0	0	137	73
Van Hecke	NA/EFD	86	0	2	4	28	121
Clark	EFD	83	0	0	0	61	8
Farage	EFD	–	0	0	0	83	61
Dartmouth	EFD	72	0 <sup>b</sup>	1	13	107	264
Sinclair	EFD/NA	89	0	0	3	104	34
Dodds	NA	90	0	0	9	150	42
Gollnisch	NA	90	0	31	0	218	3
Brons	NA	95	0	1	0	149	39
Mölzer	NA	98	0	7	124	743	420
Obermayr	NA	97	0	3	51	433	229
Paska	EFD	100	0	21	2	300	25
Morganti	EFD	91	0	4	5	125	61
<i>MEPs closer to the ideal-type Pragmatist</i>							
Madlener	NA	87	0	1	9	53	88
Messerchmidt	EFD	83	0	3	14	35	175
Andreassen	EFD	96	0	0	54	73	40
Werthmann	NA	98	0	2	37	451	88
Paksas	EFD	72	0	20	212	239	27
Erhenhaussen	NA	99	0	0	7	52	329
Martin	NA	97	0	0	32	85	250
Bizzotto	EFD	90	0	24	31	105	461
Fontana	EFD	99	0	36	38	59	92
Stoyanov	NA	75	0	1	16	61	34
Imbrasas	EFD	93	0	17	120	145	35
Claeys	NA	98	1	8	8	75	108
Belder	EFD	98	1	24	12	86	6
Tzavela	EFD	80	1	16	37	52	357
Salavrakos*	EFD	78	0	20	21	56	248
Rossi	EFD	100	3	29	79	141	396
Salvini	EFD	72	1	2	30	19	104
Scotta	EFD	97	1	8	22	14	84
Provera	EFD	91	1	83	34	53	151
Speroni	EFD	–	4	13	10	31	59

Source: Brack (2012: 95–96).

*Appendix 2. Cohesion of political groups in terms of roll-call votes in the European parliament.*



Source: VoteWatch Europe (c), n.d.

