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“Opposing the EU from the Inside? Exploring patterns of EU opposition in the European Parliament”

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List of abbreviations in alphabetical order

AFD: Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)

CDU-CSU: Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands - Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern
(Democratic Christian Union of Germany- Democratic Social Union in Bayern)

CEE: Centre and Eastern Europe Member states

CHES: Chapel Hill Expert Survey

CMP: Comparative Manifesto Project

CON: British Conservative Party

COP21: 21st Conference of the Parties

DV, DVs: Dependent Variable, Dependent Variables

EASO: European Asylum Support Office

EBCG: European Borders and Coast Guard

ECB: European Central Bank

ECHR: European Court of Human Rights

ECJ: European Court of Justice

ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists

ECSC: European Coal and Steel Community

EFD: Europe of Freedom and Democracy

EFDD: Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy

EMS: Euromanifesto Study

EMU: European Monetary Union

ENF: Europe of Nations and Freedom

EP: European Parliament

EPP: European Peoples' Party

EPPG: European Parliament Party Group

EU: European Union

EUP-EUN: European Union positive – European Union negative

FDP: Freie Demokratisch Partei (Free Democratic Party)

FN: Front National (National Front)

FSM: Movimento Cinque Stelle (Five Stars Movement)

GAL/TAN: Green Alternative Libertarian/ Traditional Authoritarian Nationalist

GMO: Genetically Modified Organism

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

HLM: Hierarchical Linear Model
ILO: International Labour Office
IMF: International Monetary Fund
IR: International Relations
IV, IVs: Independent Variable/ Independent variables
LNT: Lean NOx Trap
LO: Left-wing EU-opposition Party
M: Mainstream party
MEP/MEPs: Member of the European Parliament/ Members of the European Parliament
MP/MPs: Member of Parliament/ Members of Parliament
PD: Democratic Party
POS: Political Opportunity Structure
PP: Partido Popular (Popular Party)
PRG: Party of the Radical Left (France)
PS: Partie Socialiste
QE: Quantitative Easing
QS/QSs: Quasi-Sentence/Quasi-sentences
RILE: Right-Left index of parties' positioning
RO: Right wing EU-opponent
S&D: Socialists and Democrats
SE: Standard Error
SEA: Single European Act
SM/SMs: Social Movement/ Social Movements
SME: Small Medium Enterprise
SYRIZA: Coalition of the Radical Left in Greece
TEU: Treaty of the European Union
TFEU: Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union
UKIP: United Kingdom Independence Party
UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VW: Volkswagen

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The European Union (EU) is, once again, challenged by several crises. The economic crisis, the more recent immigration crisis and the general ‘political crisis’ epitomized by the results of the Brexit referendum are challenging the stability, unity and shape of the European integration project.

In connection to a diffuse ‘democratic malaise’ (Brack 2018), these crises contributed to the consolidation and stabilization of a polymorphic opposition flank addressing the shape and the competencies of the EU and, depending on its intensity, also rejecting it.

This mechanism is exemplified by the success of parties critical of the EU in recent rounds of national elections around Europe. Some prominent examples of this trend are Hungary, Poland and Greece where the FIDESZ, Law and Justice – PIS – and SYRIZA cover major governing positions. Spain, where the left-wing PODEMOS won 71 seats in the national parliament after the 2016 Spanish elections. France, where the National Front – FN – led by Marine Le Pen challenged Emmanuel Macron and his newly created centrist party ‘En Marche’ during the second round of the French presidential elections in May 2017 and got 8 seats in the French National Assembly in the June 2017 legislative elections. Germany, where the right-wing party Alternative for Germany – AFD – managed to get representation in the Bundestag after the 2017 national elections becoming the main opposition party in Germany (Lees 2018). Austria where the Freedom Party of Austria – FPÖ – is the junior coalition party of the Kurz government since December 2017, and Italy, where the re-branded League – former Northern League, LN – and the Five Stars Movement – FSM – scored unprecedented electoral results at the expenses of their mainstream governing counterparts¹ and formed the so-called ‘yellow-green’ governing alliance.

This ‘polymorphic opposition’ encompasses political parties that differ in several characteristics (e.g.: their origin and role at the national level) and range from the extreme-left to the extreme-right of the ideological spectrum. However, they are conceptualized by the literature under a single ‘umbrella concept’: Euroscepticism.

Initially, the literature considered Euroscepticism as a political phenomenon belonging to the ‘margins’ of the political competition (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008c) at the national level and was thus studied within the national arenas as a phenomenon related to the government vs. opposition dynamics of political competition at the national level (Taggart 1998; Sitter 2001, 2003). The parties not

¹ This is particularly true for both the centre-left Italian Democratic Party (PD) and the centre-right Forza Italia (Go Italy) that scored the lowest result in their history.

belonging to governing coalitions at the national level take up the EU issue to challenge the mainstream governing majority and attract electoral consensus (Taggart 1998; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2017).

If in the past it was legitimate to consider Euroscepticism as a ‘marginal’ concept, this consideration now clashes with more recent developments in Europe: parties critical of the EU are gaining ground at the national level (see the electoral results mentioned above) and will probably score even better results in the upcoming EP elections in 2019. Consequently, ‘Euroscepticism’ should not anymore be relegated to the margins of the national political competition. On the contrary, it should be studied at the various levels of the EU multi-level governance (Hooghe and Marks 2001) as suggested by Usherwood (2017), or at least at the two major levels of the EU governance: national and supranational (Helms 2008).

In spite of these considerations, instances of ‘Euroscepticism’ in the EP have been widely neglected, due to two main reasons. First, the political competition in the EP is hindered by the fact that mainstream governing parties operate in the so-called ‘grand coalition’ *de facto* excluding their challengers from the political competition. This is why the EP is widely regarded as a consensual institution, a ‘bastion’ of pro-European integration sentiments. Second, the EP has been considered as an ‘unrewarding location’ for forces critical of the EU, since its activity is mainly concerned with legislation rather than issues of more or less Europe (Benedetto 2008). In fact, apart from some eminent exceptions (Katz 2008; Brack 2012, 2018; Brack and Costa 2012; Lynch et al. 2012; Whitaker and Lynch 2014), studies concerning Euroscepticism within the supranational EP arena are rare.

This work aims at partially filling this gap. It starts questioning if the concept of Euroscepticism is still adequate to understand the variegated nature of criticism toward the EU that has developed over the last decade or so. It then relies on the assumption that the EU is a political system (Kassim 2003; Hix 2005; Hix and Høyland 1999, 2011; Kreppel 2012; Mair 2013) where political parties take stances on its various components (the authorities, the institutions, the political community and the output of the system, the policies, see Easton 1975) and, finally, proposes a reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of political opposition. Parties working within the EU system position themselves toward the various aspects of the EU system (in terms of either opposition or support) thus configuring a broad range of stances toward the system. Using EU-opposition as the central concept for research, this work focuses on the supranational level of the EU multi-level governance, specifically on the EP, and proposes to answer to this central RQ: Which aspects of the EU do national parties oppose from within the arena of the EP?

To highlight the relevance of this question, it is useful to trace back the origin of the European integration process, the consequent constitutionalisation of the EU – intended as the development of

democratic parliamentary institutions and the codification of fundamental rights (Rittberger and Schimmelfennig 2006)² – and how such process interacts with the crises affecting Europe.

The process of constitutionalisation is widely regarded as an ‘elite-led process’ originating from the mainstream governing elite that decided to pool part of the national sovereignty for the development of a supranational community (Mair 2007, 2013). This elite-led process gave origin to a peculiar *polity* with a peculiar multi-level system of governance³ (Hooghe and Marks 2001), where political actors share decision-making competencies at different and increasingly interconnected levels of governance (sub-national, national and supranational) rather than monopolise them at the national level. To put it more simply, the EU is ‘a construct, a system designed and built by constitutional architects’ (Mair 2013, 216) who were government and parties’ leaders at both the national (national governments) and the supranational levels (Council of Ministers and European Commission – EC) and built the EU without any substantial room for either politics or parties.

This ‘consensual’ decision-making style of the European integration process was, initially, ‘largely unexplained and certainly under-advocated to the average citizens’ (Bellamy and Warleigh 2001:9) and the EU issue was almost absent from the national political competition. Europe was framed positively – as a common good – by those mainstream parties inhabiting the decision-making arenas at the national and, consequently, at the supranational level. In other words, initially, the European integration process could progress smoothly thanks to a diffused ‘permissive consensus’ among the elite and the public at large (Mair 2007).

Signs of contestation of the EU integration process were, however, present since its inception and became more apparent in the 90s with the first referendum on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty (held in France and Denmark where it was repeated twice). In other words, we assist to the passage from ‘permissive consensus’ to the ‘constrained dissensus’: thanks to the action of ‘Eurosceptics’ capitalizing on the EU issue, people become more aware of the European integration process and start criticising it. Besides the fact that criticism of the EU developed in correspondence to key events shaping the European integration process (e.g.: the above mentioned Maastricht Treaty, the

² Traditionally, the term ‘constitutionalisation’ has been employed to describe the process of European legal integration leading to a remarkable transformation of the EU ‘[d]isplacing the traditional state-centred, “international organization” of the diplomat and the “regime” of the international relations scholar with a polity which has evolved from a set of legal arrangements binding upon sovereign states into a vertically integrated legal regime’ (Rittberger and Schimmelfennig 2006, 1148).

³ While proposing this interpretation of the European governance Hooghe and Marks challenged the intergovernmentalist interpretation – what they call the state-centric interpretation – according to which European integration is driven by bargaining among national governments. National governments can decide how much authority they want to devolve to the supranational sphere to achieve specific goals and the supranational institutions exist to facilitate this bargaining process providing information that would not otherwise be available (for an extensive explanation see Hooghe and Marks 2001).

Single European Act – SEA – or the Lisbon Treaty), the burst of the economic crisis which effects are nowadays coupled with the immigration crisis, contributed to increase the salience of the EU issue that has been easily capitalized by populist Eurosceptic parties attracting consensus among the broad public.

The consensual decision-making style of the EU alongside its multi-level governance limiting both political competition and the scope of action of national governments (Mair 2007, 2013) are key aspects to fully understand the rise in consensus of so-called populist Eurosceptic parties at the expenses of their mainstream-governing counterparts, especially in the midst of the economic crisis (Cotta 2016). Once the economic crisis originating in the USA hits the European shores, the EU struggles to find common solutions to counteract it. National governments are somehow ‘forced’ to accept European measures oriented to cure the symptoms of the economic crisis rather than solving it at its roots. The measures implemented had far-reaching socio-economic – rising unemployment, falling growth rates and soaring public deficit and debt (Serricchio, Tsakatika and Quaglia 2013) – and political consequences (e.g.: the resignation of the government in office in some member states like Greece) and contributed to increase citizens’ awareness of the cost of the EU. In other words, ‘it seems that the EU is not anymore able to guarantee one of the key promises of the European integration process i.e.: prosperity’ (Brack 2018,1). ‘Populist Eurosceptic parties’ easily capitalized on the renewed public awareness to challenge their mainstream counterpart. In fact, besides the fact that such actors endorse a variegated mix of stances to the EU, they easily took the EU issue and used it against the political establishment recognised as the main responsible for the crisis since their exponents cover decision-making positions at the national and, consequently, at the European level.

If the increased consensus for ‘populist Eurosceptic parties’ in the national political arenas is a more recent phenomenon, in the EP they, generally, enjoy a stronger representation also thanks to the second-order nature of the EP elections, where governing parties are eventually punished for their actions at the national level and ‘protest parties’ perform better (Reif and Schmidt 1980). The results scored by so-called Eurosceptic parties during the last round of the EP elections in 2014 are an evidence of this process (two major examples are the French FN and the British United Kingdom Independence Party – UKIP).

This tendency is likely to be confirmed or to increase with a view to the future EP elections in 2019 and, in the optic of the European multi-level governance; it is inextricably bonded with the aforementioned results that Eurosceptic parties scored at the national level. In other words, the success obtained by these parties at national level, enabled part of them to obtain governing positions (see the cases of SYRIZA in Greece; PIS in Poland; FIDESZ in Hungary; FPÖ in Austria, or LN and FSM in Italy), thus to be represented in the Council of Ministers and potentially influencing the future composition of the EC. In parallel, such parties are already represented in the EP, where they are likely to increase their seat-share in the future round of EP elections. This is not to say that ‘Eurosceptic

parties' will surely manage to stop the European integration process but rather to state that the inter-institutional dynamics at the supranational level are likely to change and to constrain the role played by mainstream governing parties, thus impacting on the consensual decision-making style of the EU governance.

A study of patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the arena of the EP is thus relevant in this regard. It enables to shed light on the complexity of the polymorphic phenomenon of opposition to the EU, consequently, to differentiate between political parties critical of the EU, further understanding which are the most criticised aspects of the EU by so-called Eurosceptics.

1.1 Research design and the main research objectives

To achieve its central objective, this work relies on both EU studies (specifically on Euroscepticism literature) and on the comparative politics literature. As mentioned in the previous section, it starts questioning the suitability of 'Euroscepticism' as central research concept to investigate the variegated nature of criticism toward the EU, which has developed over the last decade or so and proposes to reconceptualise it in terms of EU-opposition.

As recent studies report, Euroscepticism is not anymore to be considered as a passing phenomenon or as a grit in the developing European political system (Usherwood and Startin 2013) but as something that is there to stay. Furthermore, it is a chameleonic and multidimensional phenomenon encompassing different types of criticism expressed by a variegated plethora of actors (social movements, political parties, the media or the public at large). It is precisely for this last consideration that it is so difficult to conceptualize Euroscepticism, to produce a broadly accepted definition thereof, and to elaborate an all-encompassing theoretical framework explaining its presence (for a valuable review see Vasilopoulou 2013 and Mudde 2012). Euroscepticism is not an ideology but rather an element connoting other ideologies linked together by some sense of disliking of the EU and the European integration project (Usherwood 2017; Flood 2002). Furthermore, it is a media-driven concept generally used by political competitors to disparage their challengers.

It is essentially for these reasons and for the implicit normativity hidden in the term⁴, that this work proposes to reconceptualise Euroscepticism in more 'neutral terms' relying on the concept of political opposition. More specifically, starting from the classical works by Dahl, Sartori, Schapiro, Kirchheimer, Ionescu and de Madariaga concerning the concept of political opposition and considering more recent developments in this field (Brack and Weinblum 2011), this work reconceptualises

⁴ As deeply discussed in the next chapter (see chapter 2, section 2.2.3, pages 23-26) Euroscepticism is a negatively-constructed concept immediately reminding of some negative feeling addressed to the EU while implicitly referring to a positive pro-EU side which in its turn not defined.

Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition. To do that, as mentioned previously, it relies on the assumption that the EU can be conceived as a political system and can be studied through the tools of comparative politics (Brack 2018; Mair 2013): ‘regardless of what occurred in previous decades, the EU today resembles a ‘normal’ political system’ (Kreppel 2012, 636)⁵. If we consider the EU as a political system, it is then plausible to think that support or opposition may be oriented both to the *objects* composing the political system – the political community, the regime and the political authorities – and to the *outputs* of the political system, the policies resulting from the interaction between the institutions of the political system (Easton 1975; Almond and Powell 1966; Norris 1999).

Relying on this assumption, the proposed concept of EU-opposition encompasses three main aspects: 1) the targets toward which parties’ stances are directed; 2) the directionality of the positioning (negative, positive or neutral), and 3) the character of the positioning. As sketched above, the ‘targets’ are conceptualized as: a) the output of the EU, the EU-policies; b) the actors inhabiting the EU, the EU-elite⁶; c) the values norms and functioning of the EU-institutions, the EU-regime and d) the EU-community defined as a group of member states united by shared values and norms but also as the specific geometries deriving from the process of EU integration, e.g.: the Euro area, Schengen, etc. The positioning may assume two main directionalities: negative indicating opposition and positive referring to support. Lastly, the character of the expressed positioning may be either principled if based on a normative judgement or pragmatic if based on practical considerations (see Chapter 2, section 2.4, page 35).

Starting from the central reconceptualisation of Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition, this work has two main empirical objectives (see Figure 1.1 below for a schematic representation of the research’s steps): the first one is descriptive and aims at understanding patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP from the perspective of both their ‘quantity’ (how much are parties opposed to the EU-targets) and their ‘quality’ (which is the character of EU-opposition and which are the motivations used to justify opposition to the EU-targets). The second objective is explanatory aiming at explaining the patterns of EU-opposition found: which factors shape different patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP?

⁵ Such process of ‘normalization’ does not only concern the EU as a political system but also the way scholars study it. In other words, if at the beginning the EU was mainly studied by the international relations (IR) literature, nowadays this subject of analysis has expanded well beyond the realm of IR into the realm of comparative politics (for an updated meta-analysis on studies concerning ‘Euroscepticism’ see Vasilopoulou 2017).

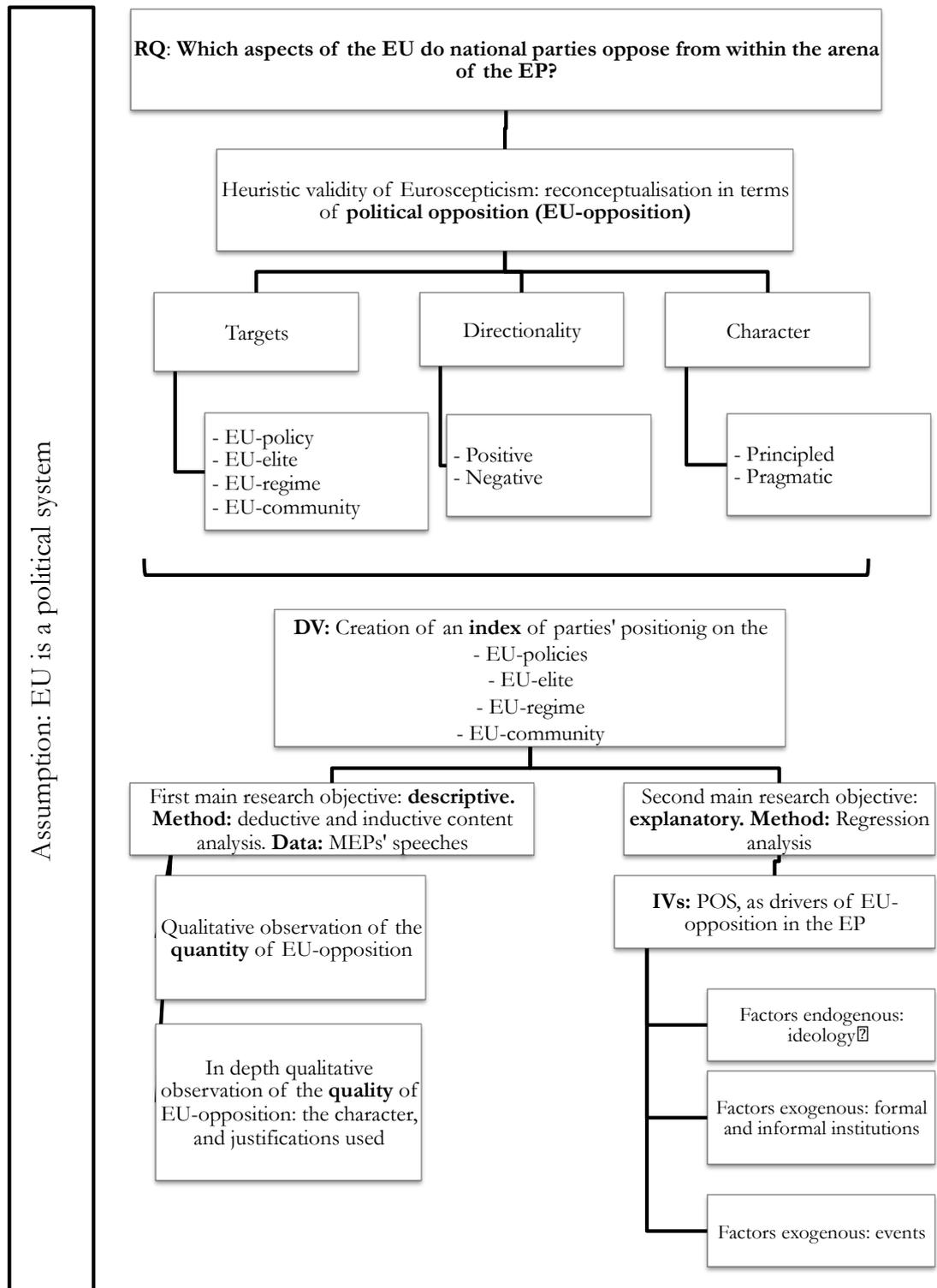
⁶ As further detailed in chapter two (see chapter 2, section 2.4 page 37), this work relies on a broad definition of EU-elite encompassing all the actors inhabiting EU-institutions (functionaries and politicians) thus considering also the representatives of so-called Eurosceptic parties. This is done because the work analyses the stances of both ‘Eurosceptic’ and mainstream national parties. Thus this broad definition of the EU-elite target allows the research to observe how mainstream parties relate to their political challengers.

To accomplish these tasks, the work formulates an index of positioning for the considered EU-targets. It then relies on a recently elaborated framework to study the formation of pan-European and transnational ‘Eurosceptic’ groups (Usherwood 2017) adapting it to the study of patterns of EU-opposition in the EP. This framework draws on the concept of political opportunity structure (POS) elaborated by Kitschelt (1986) to denote the degree of ‘openness’ or ‘accessibility’ of a given political system for would-be political entrepreneurs (Arzheimer and Carter 2006, 422). The proposed framework aims at analysing the effects of three different sets of factors on patterns of EU-opposition in the EP: 1) ideology as a factor endogenous to the parties; 2) national and supranational institutional factors both formal and informal (e.g.: the role covered by parties in the national political arena); 3) event-related factors – exogenous variables – referring to countries’ vulnerability to exogenous shocks like the economic and immigration crises.

To achieve both objectives the work relies on a restricted sample of national parties – both ‘Eurosceptic’ and mainstream parties⁷ – and uses the speeches that their representatives deliver in the EP arena as empirical data for the construction of indexes of positioning to the various EU-targets.

⁷ The analysis focuses its attention on seven ‘Eurosceptic’ parties from both the left and the right of the political spectrum (the French, FN; the German Alternative for Germany, AFD; the Italian Northern League, LN, the British UKIP; the Spanish PODEMOS and the German LINKE). Furthermore, the work uses five mainstream parties as ‘baseline comparison’ one for each of the included countries (the French Socialist Party, PS; the German CDU-CSU; the Italian Democratic Party, PD, and the Spanish Popular Party, PP). See chapter 4 section 4.2.

Figure 1.1 Schematic representation of the research's steps



1.2 Contribution to the literature

Since more than 40 years, so-called Eurosceptic parties are represented in the EP but were unable to block the process of European integration: '[t]he EU has a remarkable integrationist track record: it has faced multiple crises, has weathered them and continued to integrate. The institutions, though in persistent turmoil, are still standing; integration has widened (...) and deepened' (Brack 2018, 4-5). So, why bother about Euroscepticism in the EP now?

Even if it is true that so-called Eurosceptic forces did not manage to stop the European integration course also because of their relatively scarce representation in the EP, it is evident that something has changed in the last years. Thanks to their electoral success in national but especially in European elections, Eurosceptic actors managed to get visibility and 'legitimacy'. Their presence in such arenas potentially exercises pressure on the mainstream establishment: on the one hand, Eurosceptic members consolidate their role as 'agenda setter' (Brack 2018), while, on the other hand, they contribute to framing the future of the EU and of European integration in a different way. Such change is epitomised in the results of the Brexit referendum, considered by most 'Eurosceptic' parties as a direct victory. Even if it is true that the Brexit referendum was not directly proposed by the UKIP that played a rather 'marginal' role in its promotion, (Usherwood 2016) Brexit has far-reaching implications for the future of European integration. While before conflicts on the EU were solved with solutions concerning either more integration or the maintenance of the status quo, nowadays the options 'less integration' or 'leave the EU' are not anymore to be discarded (Young 2016; Brack 2018). In a nutshell, Euroscepticism is the result of a prolonged legitimacy crisis in the EU (Pirro and Taggart 2018; Pirro and van Kessel 2018) and its consolidation contributes at least to slow down the process of European integration (Brack 2018; Brack and Startin 2015; Usherwood and Startin 2013). In more speculative terms, the success of Eurosceptic parties at national level coupled with their potentially increased success in next year EP elections will probably contribute to change the dynamics of political competition at the supranational level. To put it more simply, a potential increase in 'Eurosceptic' parties' seats-share in the EP coupled with a potential increase of 'Eurosceptic' parties' governing positions at the national level (as it is now the case in Italy), thus an increased presence of 'Eurosceptic' exponents in the Council of Ministers, could potentially change EU's consensual decision-making style. Against this backdrop, it is thus fundamental to study opposition to the EU in all its forms and expressed in all the available arenas: a study of patterns of EU-opposition in the EP is fundamental in this regard.

Conflicts about the nature of the EU and the European integration project are vivid and extremely important nowadays that the option 'less Europe' is a plausible one and the EP is the perfect 'laboratory' to provide answers to the above-formulated questions. The EP, being the only directly

elected supranational arena, is one of the few channels of representation available to opposition actors⁸: in the EP, parties representatives from all member states can express their views about the future trajectories of the EU in a rather free way (Brack 2012, 2013). This is not to state that the EP is entitled to take decisions concerning ‘more or less Europe’ (Benedetto 2008), but rather to say that debates in the EP not only concern the choice of the preferred policies but also the future trajectories of the EU. At which level of the multilevel European governance should decisions be taken? How much sovereignty should each member state give to the supranational sphere?

Particularly, this work makes three main contributions to the literature. Firstly, from a conceptual point of view, reconceptualising Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition, this work contributes to the literature on Euroscepticism in four main ways. A) Considering the EU as a political system composed of specific *objects* and producing specific *outputs* enables to single out which are the aspects of the EU that a variegated plethora of parties opposes. Thus, identifying the objects of criticism (Krouwel and Abts 2007; Weßels 2007) targeted by parties enables researchers to avoid considering the EU and the European integration project as a monolithic unit. B) A ‘target-oriented’ definition of EU-opposition (and a consequent pragmatic consideration of the objects and outputs of the EU) does not imply a pre-emptive normative evaluation of the perpetrators of opposition. As mentioned previously, Eurosceptic is a normative concept that implies an implicit negative evaluation of political parties and can be easily misused in political competition for strategic reasons (Neumayer 2008; Flood 2002; Caruso 2016; Verzichelli and Pellegrino 2016; Cotta 2016). Interestingly, several groups refused to be labelled as such, considering themselves as ‘Eurorealist’⁹ or as alternative voices to the current state of European integration (Leruth 2017). C) The definition of EU-opposition allows also the delineation of support toward the EU-targets, expressed as the contrary of EU-opposition. Consequently, its application allows comparing EU-opponents and EU-supporters’ stances toward the EU. D) A reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition investigating the character of the expressed critique provides further insights on the relationship between such criticism and future developments of the EU. The elite-led origin of the EU polity is based on one interpretation of the EU, of the European integration project, and of the future trajectories it should take, that is unanimously shared by mainstream parties. A consequent normative categorization of the challengers of this general interpretation classifies ‘alternative views’ of the European integration process as destructive. However, are all critiques of the EU to be considered as such? Isn’t it possible to find

⁸ A prominent example is the UKIP that had only one seat within the national lower chamber and lost it after the last UK elections in 2017, while having 24 seats in the Strasbourg chamber after the impressive result scored in EP elections 2014 (UKIP obtained 26.77% of the national vote share becoming the most voted party in the UK)

⁹ As further specified in the next chapter ‘Eurorealist’ is a term coined by the European Conservatives and Reformist party group in the EP to rebrand their stances to the EU (See Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3, page 24).

forms of criticism that are alternative to the mainstream one and do not aim at dis-integrating the EU?

Second, such a reconceptualisation of EU-opposition also contributes to the comparative politics literature. Studying criticism of the EU through the lenses of EU-opposition helps scholars to avoid the use of concepts created *ad hoc* for the EU, in this case, Euroscepticism (Cotta 2016). In other words, it helps to bring the phenomenon of opposition to the EU back to the realm of comparative politics. The proposed concept has, in fact, two main advantages: firstly, it is flexible enough to be applied to the observation of criticism of the EU expressed by political parties in other institutional arenas (like national parliaments). Consequently, it enables an inter-level comparison of negative stances to the EU, something of core importance in the study of a multi-level system of governance (Helms 2008). Secondly, such concept can potentially be applied to the study of a wider range of political actors expressing criticism toward the EU.

Lastly, and connected to the first point, the application of a target-oriented definition of EU-opposition in the EP contributes to the still limited literature concerning ‘anti-system’ and ‘anti-establishment’ opposition in democratic institutions. As mentioned in the previous section, the EU is widely considered as a consensual system (Lijphart 1999) where governing forces at the national level generally cover governing positions also at the supranational level. This translated into the lack of an institutionalised divide between governing and opposition forces typical of the national political system. According to Mair, it is exactly the way in which the EU is constructed that deprives the EU of one of the three great milestones in the development of democratic institutions (Dahl 1966): political opposition. The fact that the EU has always been governed by a ‘cartel’ of mainstream parties ostensibly competing against one another and with few or no meaningful differences dividing them, led either to the ‘elimination of opposition’ or to the mobilisation of a principled opposition directed against the political system¹⁰. Using Peter Mair’s words: ‘once we cannot organize opposition *in* the EU, we are then almost forced to organize opposition *to* the EU’ (Mair 2007, 7). This is to say that all the ‘non-governing’ forces at the supranational level are deprived of the possibility to exercise opposition and organise themselves against the system. However, even if the EU and, more specifically, the EP lack an institutionalised divide between governing and opposition flanks, this work argues that not all forms of opposition represented in the EP should be treated as opposed *to* the EU. Thus, the application of a target-oriented definition of EU-opposition helps to shed light on the heterogeneous mix of voices represented in the EP: are all these parties to be considered as opposed *to* the EU? Would

¹⁰ In his theorization of political opposition, Dahl distinguishes between three main types of opposition: classical opposition (government vs. opposition distinction); the ‘opposition of principle’ rejecting the government, its policies and the very system of governance and the ‘elimination of opposition’ indicating the absence of any meaningful difference between the parties competing for office (Dahl 1966). This latter might not be considered as a form of opposition *per se* but more as a ‘government by cartel’, where opposition instances are directed toward the *personnel* of government (Mair 2007, 5).

it be possible to find criticism of the EU that goes in the direction of more (or different) integration rather than proposing less EU integration?

1.3 Contents of the thesis

This work is divided into nine chapters: after this introductory chapter, chapter 2 focuses its attention on the concept of Euroscepticism and its reconceptualization in terms of EU-opposition. The chapter starts by presenting the evolution of the concept in the media, the political and the academic environments. It then details the progresses done by the literature in this field particularly focusing on the theoretical efforts to provide a definition of the concept and to formulate typologies of parties' scepticism to the EU. Once the general evolution of the concept is sketched, the chapter contests the suitability of 'Euroscepticism' as a theoretical instrument for the analysis of the variegated forces opposing the EU (political parties in the case object of this work). It then reconceptualises Euroscepticism in terms of political opposition and formulates a definition of EU-opposition that details the targets toward which negative sentiments may be addressed as the EU-policies; the EU-elite; the EU-regime and the EU-community.

Once the definition of EU-opposition is detailed, chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework suited to explain patterns of EU-opposition in the EP. This chapter sketches a literature review concerning the explanation of party-based Euroscepticism mainly aggregating around two schools: the Sussex School (based on the work conducted by Paul Taggart at the University of Sussex) and the North Carolina School (originating from the PhD dissertation by Leonard Ray – 1999 – and further developed in the work by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks). The first one identifies the government vs. opposition dynamics at the national level as the main source for the explanation of Euroscepticism; the second one considers ideology as the core explanation for opposition to the EU. Having performed a brief literature review, the chapter presents and adapts Usherwood's model for the study of the emergence of pan-European and transnational Euroscepticism to the study of patterns of EU-opposition in the EP (Usherwood 2017). As mentioned before, the chapter relies on three sets of factors that can potentially constitute a political opportunity structure (POS) suited to explain patterns of EU-opposition and formulates six hypotheses alongside two general associations to be empirically tested in the following analysis.

Chapter 4 focuses on the data and the methods used in performing the analysis. The chapter firstly proposes justifications for the selected national parties (see *supra* footnote 7 in page 7) and for the time period of the analysis (2014-2016). It then analytically presents the data used in the analysis (an original collection of almost 8000 speeches divided into 36 different corpora), alongside the two methods used for the content analysis: deductive and inductive coding techniques. Finally, the chapter

illustrates the development of the dependent variables used in the work (i.e.: EU-opposition index), summarizes the formulated hypotheses and proposes a description of the independent variables used to explain party-based EU-opposition in the EP.

Then chapter 5 focuses on the ‘quantity’ of EU-opposition or support expressed by parties within the EP arena. It starts reporting the obtained index of the quantity of EU-opposition in both static and dynamic ways (how the quantity of EU-opposition evolves in the period of observation). To do that the chapter compares the ‘heterogeneous’ group of EU-opponents with their mainstream counterparts allowing the observation of potential criticism expressed also by the last-mentioned group of actors. The chapter then compares the obtained index of the quantity of EU-opposition across policy issues to assess the presences of differences and similarities in the expressed positioning¹¹.

Once patterns of opposition are detected, chapter 6 focuses on the parties expressing opposition to one of the above-mentioned EU-targets (to recall them: EU-policies, EU-elite, EU-regime and EU-community) and proposes an in-depth description of the motivations used. The chapter disentangles differences and similarities among parties’ negative stances to the EU: all the parties (both Eurosceptic and mainstream) expressing opposition to one of the EU-targets are thus considered. To do that, the work relies on the results obtained from the inductive coding analysis of MEPs’ speeches mentioned above further emphasizing differences in the character of the expressed opposition (either principled or pragmatic).

Once patterns of EU-opposition are described both from a quantitative and from a qualitative perspective, chapter 7 assesses the hypotheses and the associations formulated in chapter 3. Relying on the formulated indexes of positioning *vis-à-vis* the studied EU-targets – encompassing both the quantity and the quality of the expressed stances – the chapter performs a regression analysis (multivariate hierarchical regression analysis – OLS) to assess how the three sets of factors (ideology, institutional factors both national and supranational and exogenous factors impacting on each parties’ country such as the effects of both the economic and migration crises) shape patterns of parties’ positioning toward the EU. The chapter proceeds presenting the results of the regression analysis for each of the included EU-targets.

Chapter 8 starts summarizing the core objectives of this work. It then stresses how the observation of Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition helps researchers to find two main dimensions of competitions along which EU-opponents tend to cluster: 1) the anti-EU-establishment vs. pro-EU-establishment one, and 2) the anti-EU-system vs. the pro-EU-system one. EU-opponents

¹¹ It is to be noted that the work analyses speeches delivered by national parties’ MEPs with reference to three broad policy issues: economy; immigration, asylum and borders control and environmental protection.

may, in fact, be divided along these two main dimensions. Furthermore, the chapter underlines the factors mainly contributing to shape the found patterns of EU-opposition.

A last conclusive chapter proposes a systematization of both the patterns and the ‘determinants’ of EU-opposition. Furthermore, it stresses the higher heuristic value of the concept of EU-opposition when compared to the normativity of Euroscepticism further detailing the main contributions to the literature in the field. The last section of the chapter underlines some avenues for further research that go also beyond the arena of the EP.

Chapter 2: Reconceptualising Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the central theoretical question of this work: is Euroscepticism still an adequate concept to understand the variegated nature of criticism toward the EU, which has developed over the last decade or so? To answer this question section 2.2 reviews the evolution of the concept of Euroscepticism, how it was adopted in the political and academic environments and how it became central to the study of the EU (subsection 2.2.1). This section also reports the theoretical efforts done by the literature in providing a definition of this concept, stressing both the pros and contra of such definitions (subsection 2.2.2) and the biases related to the concept of Euroscepticism: why should scholar pay attention to apply Euroscepticism as the central concept of research? (Subsection 2.2.3). The chapter then proposes a reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of a more ‘neutral’ concept: political opposition. To do that section 2.3 proposes a review of the literature concerning ‘political opposition’ stressing the biases related to it (subsection 2.3.1). The section then explains the reasons why scholars are generally reluctant to talk about political opposition at the supranational level of the EU (subsection 2.3.2). Once presented the problems and constraints of opposition at the supranational level, section 2.4 proposes a way to ‘overcome’ such problems defining EU-opposition in a target-oriented way. The definition disentangles the objects toward which disagreement may be addressed: the policies enacted by the EU, its political establishment, its political regime and the political community as a whole or one of its geometries deriving from the process of European integration (see below for a further discussion). The section also stresses how, besides the target of opposition, also the character that it assumes (either principled or pragmatic) plays a role in determining parties’ stances to the EU. Crossing these two components (target and character of the expressed opposition) section 2.4 proposes a set of guidelines for the observation of parties’ positioning on the EU. The conclusive section highlights the advantages related to EU-opposition as the central concept for research stressing its higher heuristic validity when compared to Euroscepticism.

2.2 Euroscepticism: the state of the field

Academics in the field define the variegated forces opposing the EU using the central concept of Euroscepticism. This section guides the reader through the evolution of this term highlighting the major theoretical contributions that enhanced our knowledge of this phenomenon further focusing on the problems related to the use of Euroscepticism in both academic and political fields.

2.2.1 Euroscepticism: the origin of a contested concept

“Britain does not oppose the idea of removing the barriers to trade, only the idea that these and other measures should be written in the Treaty of Rome”.

“Tomatoes Throw Europe’s Summit Progress”, *The Times* 11th of November 1985.

The British media were the first to use the hyphenated version of ‘Euro-scepticism’, to indicate those British Conservative party’s flanks opposed to the construction of a supranational common market, as epitomized by the quotation reported above (Harmsen and Spiering 2004). Several events were fundamental to the development of Euroscepticism like the negotiations held for the signing of the SEA, the Maastricht Treaty or the constitutional project blocked by the French and Dutch ‘no’ to the referenda held in that occasion. Among these events, Margaret Thatcher’s Bruges Speech was the first occasion that placed the issue of European integration from ‘sideshow to centre stage’ (Holmes 2001, 1)¹. While in the short-run Margaret Thatcher was outmanoeuvred by her cabinet that was favouring the European integration project, in the long run, the consequences of her speech were favourable to the development of Euroscepticism in the British environment. In fact, it is exactly after this period that Euroscepticism started to ‘crystallise in any meaningful, mainstream way’ (Usherwood and Startin 2013, 3) becoming popular among the British media (Flood 2002).

The tendency to frame opposition to the EU using Euroscepticism spilt over to the academic environment especially during the negotiations held for the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. This latter is widely regarded as the real turning point in the development of academic interest around the phenomenon of Euroscepticism (Ray 1999; Flood 2002; Taggart 2006; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013; Usherwood and Startin 2013; Brack and Startin 2015; Sørensen 2004). Indeed, from Maastricht onwards, the Community of Member states becomes a Union of Member States, a Union of the European Peoples with shared objectives and shared values (see art. 1 of the TEU). Moreover, Maastricht marks the moment when the demarcation between national and supranational competencies in economic, social, legal, environmental, and foreign affairs become even more blurred. Furthermore,

¹ The Margaret Thatcher foundation reports the entire text of the Bruges speech at: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332> Consulted in January 2017.

in the post-Maastricht era, the European integration project begins to be politicised² among the European publics by parties opposing the intensification of both political and economic integration (Vasilopoulou 2017). As evidence of this process, after the Maastricht Treaty, scholars notice an increase in the use of referenda to ratify changes to the EU Treaties (Mair 2007). In the period between 1972 and 1992 eight referenda were held: the Maastricht Treaty triggered the vote in five different referenda (in Italy, Ireland, France and Denmark where it was repeated twice). After the Maastricht Treaty in the period between 1992 and 2016, 35 referenda concerning EU issues were held all around Europe³. In other words, Maastricht determined a departure from the normal political practices applied in the various EU member states, a move toward a more plebiscitary politics as a possible solution to the European ‘democratic deficit’⁴ (Hug 2000; Taggart 2006)⁵.

From Maastricht onwards, the European integration project undergoes a period defined by scholars as the passage from ‘permissive consensus’ to ‘constrained dissensus’. Better explained, until there was agreement concerning the European integration project among the political elite (consensus), coupled with the absence of public conflict, or even awareness, on its scope and objectives in public opinion (permissive), the European integration project could progress smoothly. When political dissensus and public conflict (awareness) began to set ‘the elite became vulnerable. And, as they became vulnerable, so too did their projects, and in particular that for Europe’ (Mair 2013, 114).

During the period of ‘permissive consensus’, only some scattered small Eurosceptic formations existed. An example is the case of the Danish Peoples Movement against the EU (*Folkebevægelsen mod EU*). This party was founded in 1972 as a cross-parties campaign platform for the ‘no vote’ in Denmark’s referendum on the European Community membership, it obtained a considerable success at its first EP election in 1979, gaining around 20% of the national vote share and 4 seats in the EP. However, it struggled to impact on the debate surrounding the European integration project (Usherwood and Startin 2013). It is precisely due to this lack in political weight that scholars dealing

² The term politicization is related to the increasing salience and divisiveness of a specific issue (EU or the European integration process) inside member states’ polities (de Wilde and Zürn 2012).

³ Since the Lisbon Treaty, the use of referenda related to EU treaties decreased. Noticeable exceptions are the referendum held in Ireland in 2012 for the ratification of the Fiscal Compact (as required by the Irish Constitution), the Croatian accession referendum in 2013 and the UK Brexit referendum held in June 2016. Further two important referenda ‘related’ to the EU are to be mentioned: in 2015 the Greek bailout referendum and in 2016 the referendum held in Hungary for the abolition of the Hungarian migration quota (invalidated by a turnout that was too low)(Carlotti 2017).

⁴ The problem of the European ‘democratic deficit’ relates to how much the European channels of representation (direct and indirect, see below for further indication) are effective in connecting European citizens’ preferences to the outcome of the EU decision-making.

⁵ According to Sørensen (2004) the Maastricht Treaty is central also to the development of studies concerning popular Euroscepticism since it faced the European elite with three dilemmas: 1) accepting both public Euroscepticism and overt criticism to the EU coming from the elite and the academic world; 2) increased use of referendum; and 3) connected to the previous point, finding solution to a potential negative outcome of a referendum.

with Euroscepticism in this early phase considered it as a niche, maybe even a passing phenomenon, a “grit in the system” that occurs when political systems are built and develop’ (Usherwood and Startin 2013, 2). Moreover, due to the fact that the impact of Euroscepticism was more likely to be felt at the national level, the majority of early works used a national perspective when studying it (see for example Ward 1996; Helms 1997; Benoit 1998). Furthermore, national case studies of Euroscepticism were unevenly distributed among the various countries and the majority of them focused on countries where Euroscepticism was a prominent phenomenon (like in Britain or in the Nordic countries: e.g.: Evans 1998; Sitter 2001; Aspinwall 2000) disregarding the others (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004, Usherwood 2017).

The changing nature of the EU, its increased competencies, its developments, such as the advent of the euro, the ‘big bang enlargement’ in 2004, the negotiation for the constitutional project alongside its failure and the subsequent signing of the Lisbon Treaty have placed progressive strains on the notion of permissive consensus (Brack and Startin 2015), shifting public and political leaders’ opinion to the ‘constraining dissensus’ flank. The advent of the economic and financial crisis in the Eurozone exacerbated this trend pushing the literature’s debate about Euroscepticism toward a new phase. As observed in the previous chapter, the way in which the EU is constructed somehow forces EU-leaders to deal with the increased hostility coming from various member states both from the North – like the UK and Denmark rejecting to aid countries in financial difficulties – and from the South – like Italy, Spain and Greece that struggle to solve the social consequences of the crisis, such as the increased youth unemployment. Moreover, the current refugee crisis and the inability to reach an EU-wide consensus over refugees’ resettlement (see the case of Hungary but more generally the opposition of Central and Eastern European – CEE – Member states) have sharpened tensions over the EU, its current state and its future trajectories. The effects of such tensions are already visible in the results of the Brexit referendum. Most commentators now agree that the notion of Euroscepticism is not anymore to be considered as a ‘passing phenomenon’ but as something that is here to stay: Euroscepticism ‘moved from the realm of political phenomenon to constituent element of the European political sphere’ (FitzGibbon et al. 2017, 3).

If the evolution of Euroscepticism follows the development of the EU, also its study follows a similar trend: the literature dealing with Euroscepticism evolves hand in hand with the direction taken by the EU and the European integration project. During this second phase, in fact, a considerable body of literature has developed and it is nowadays regarded as a fully-fledged subfield of European Studies (Flood 2009; Mudde 2012; Brack and Startin 2015). Two main approaches have been used to study Euroscepticism from a party-based perspective⁶: the first one provides definition(s) of Euroscepticism

⁶ Academic literature also focuses on the phenomenon of popular Euroscepticism aiming at providing cross-cutting explanations of the reasons leading voters to express their preferences for Eurosceptic

and formulates typologies to classify parties' stances to the EU – what Mudde calls the Sussex School (Mudde 2012) – while the second one tries to explain the phenomenon mainly relying on socio-political cleavages – described by Mudde as the North Carolina School (Mudde 2012). This chapter focuses on the first strand of the literature highlighting the main theoretical efforts to define Euroscepticism and to categorise political actors, while the following chapter (chapter 3) provides insights on models explaining the phenomenon from a party-based perspective.

2.2.2 A critical literature review of Euroscepticism

Proposing a 'one-size-fits-all definition' of Euroscepticism and categorising parties positions to the EU are the core objectives of the first strand of the literature⁷ mentioned above. However, the classificatory schemes that have been proposed are now so many and detailed that sometimes it is difficult to recognize differences and/or potential similarities among critical actors. Some commentators state that similarly to populism, also Euroscepticism suffers under the 'Cinderella Complex'. This is to say that there is a shoe in the shape of Euroscepticism but no foot to fit in (Caruso 2016). Just to mention an example, Euroscepticism becomes even more complex when looking at the recent developments of the literature assessing the 'mainstreaming of Euroscepticism' (Vasilopoulou 2013). According to this theory, if it is, on the one hand, true that Eurosceptic parties are generally located at the extreme of the ideological spectrum (Hooghe and Marks 2007b; Hooghe et al. 2002), or at the periphery of the national political system (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2002), nowadays also parties situated toward the centre, generally mainstream parties, are critical of the EU: Euroscepticism becomes a phenomenon of the mainstream. If the concept of mainstreaming of Euroscepticism (or Euroalternativism – Flood 2002) is useful to rationalize mainstream parties' opposition to the inability of the EU decision-making system to face the economic crisis, understanding what Euroscepticism entails becomes an even harder task. Up to now the only thing that is clear is that the mix of voices labelled under the term Euroscepticism differ from several viewpoints (e.g.: their position along the left-right ideological continuum, their role within the national political system or their stances along the national-supranational axis), but are equated by some undefined negative sentiment to the EU and the European integration project which in its turn is considered as a monolithic construction.

The first remarkable attempt to conceptualise the phenomenon of Euroscepticism was done by Paul Taggart, who defined Euroscepticism as a 'contingent and conditional opposition to the EU integration as well as a total and unconditional opposition to it' (Taggart 1998: 366). According to

parties (Gabel 1998; McLaren 2002, 2006). This literature review is centred on party-based Euroscepticism even though some hints concerning popular Euroscepticism are provided in the next section.

⁷ See chapter 3 for a brief literature review of the models explaining Euroscepticism.

Taggart, these forms of opposition are detectable among parties (more likely parties which identity is tied up with a single issue such as ecology or immigration) that cannot aspire to achieve any governmental positions (thus covering peripheral positions at the domestic level) and, consequently, might be critical of the European integration project in a relatively costless way. The first refinement of this definition was provided later on by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002). The two scholars categorise the concept of Euroscepticism between two main poles: 1) 'hard' Euroscepticism (parties rejecting the EU as such) and 2) 'soft' Euroscepticism (parties expressing dissatisfaction either with some policies enacted at the supranational level or with the current state of the European integration project).

Being the most widely used typology even nowadays and having paved the way to further terminological innovations in the field, this dichotomy presents some problematic aspects. First, there are difficulties in recognizing a clear-cut distinction between the soft and the hard pole of the concept (Beichelt 2004; Kopecky and Mudde 2002; Vasilopoulou 2009): if hard Euroscepticism is comparable to a principled rejection of the EU, its softer counterpart is still not well defined. To avoid this problem, the authors further specified that soft Euroscepticism implies the opposition to some areas of policies 'that are core part of the European project as embodied in the EU or encapsulate its current and future trajectory', however admitting that this is 'open to dispute' (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008a, 250). This led Vasilopoulou to question how many (and which) policies should one party oppose being considered as soft Eurosceptic (Vasilopoulou 2009, 5)⁸. Furthermore, applying Taggart and Szczerbiak's framework, how should we then classify a party that rejects the current trajectories of the European Integration project but does not aim at destroying it? Second, the hard vs. soft Euroscepticism dichotomy can hardly be classified as a typology of critical stances to the EU. Crespy and Verschueren (2009) using Sartori's argumentation (1970) argue that a typology as such should distinguish between categories (differentiation in *kind*) rather than differentiating within the categories (differentiation in *degree*). Furthermore, according to Kaniok (2012), 'the ranking of soft and hard Euroscepticism alongside one another renders problematic the position of the former, who are typologically [...] put into an imaginary camp with the latter'. This is to say that in political reality (and discourse) the media and commentators generally do not distinguish between hard and soft Euroscepticism but tend to conflate them in a single category. Consequently, soft Eurosceptic parties' instances are generally deemed as non-democratic due to their association with their hard counterpart (Kaniok 2012). Thirdly, this definition only looks at the current state of the EU, thus not identifying any form of opposition to further integration or to a widening and deepening of EU's competencies⁹.

⁸ According to Brack and Costa, the EU is a political system in a state of 'quasi-permanent crisis' which very existence is often questioned and where the debate not only concerns the type of desired policy but also how and at which territorial level decisions should be taken (Brack and Costa 2017, 370).

⁹ This is the main reason why Taggart and Szczerbiak refined their work by stating that soft Euroscepticism should be considered as the absence of a 'principled objection to the European

Fourthly, this approach rightly points to the strategic use of Eurosceptic stances by protest parties, however, it is not applicable to the study of Euroscepticism enacted by mainstream parties. This consideration is related to the last critique moved to Taggart and Szczerbiak's approach concerning the causes of Euroscepticism. The scholars, in fact, stress the institutional dimension of Euroscepticism (e.g.: the position of the party in the national political system, its electoral strategies and potential coalition tactics) however little space is left to the role of ideology.

Adapting Easton's framework concerning *diffuse* and *specific* support for a political regime (Easton 1975)¹⁰, Kopecký and Mudde bring ideology back to the fore distinguishing between diffuse support for the European integration project (along the Europhile/Europhobe dimension) and specific support for the EU (the EU-optimist/EU-pessimist axis). Crossing these two dimensions they obtain four ideal types of party positioning on the EU. Euroenthusiasts (Europhile and EU-optimist), Eurosceptics (Europhiles and EU-pessimist), Europragmatists (Europhobe and EU-optimist) and Eurorejects (Europhobe and EU-pessimist). The resulting typology has the advantage to encapsulate both negative and positive stances to the EU (Rovny 2004) – an important aspect since parties' stances to the EU vary over time and space (Flood 2002) – but it is not free from problems. In fact, the bipolar distinction along the Europhile/Europhobe axis does not pinpoint all the nuances of fluid party positioning on the EU (Flood 2002). Let's take as an example a party that opposes its country's membership to the European Monetary Union (EMU) but not to the Schengen area and vice-versa, where should researchers collocate this party in this theoretical framework? Furthermore, as admitted by Kopecký and Mudde, the Europragmatist category is counterintuitive since it defines parties that express a 'diffuse' opposition to the European integration project while supporting the general practices of the EU (Kopecký and Mudde 2002, 303, Taggart Szczerbiak 2002, postscript, Beichelt 2004, Vasilopoulou 2009). Moreover, the Eurosceptic category is not able to tap all the nuances of pessimism toward the EU (especially at the mass level) (Krouwel and Abts 2007), something that was also stressed by Taggart himself: 'opposition and support to the EU are rarely either binary or absolute' (Taggart 1998, 365). Breaking parties positioning on the EU in two analytical dimensions concerning support for the EU and support for the European Integration process helps to differentiate between 'parties that are critical only of the EU, and those that are also negative about the ideas underlying the general process of European integration'. However, what is still not clear is what does it mean 'being critical only of the EU'. For example, how can we differentiate between a party rejecting the values of the EU

integration project of transferring powers to a supranational body such as the EU, but there is opposition to the EU's current or future planned trajectory based on the further extension of competencies that the EU is planning to make' (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2003: 12).

¹⁰ The adjective *diffuse* is used by the two scholars to identify support for the general ideas underlying the EU integration project, while the term *specific* indicates support for the general practice of the EU integration, that is 'the EU as it is and as it is developing' (Kopecký Mudde 2002, 300).

and a party proposing their reformation? Shall we label both in the same way? Lastly, if *diffuse support* refers to the ideas underlying the European integration project and *specific support* refers to the practice of the EU, it is still not clear what constitutes the general ideas and practices of the European integration project. In fact, there is no precise vision of how the EU could or should be (Brack and Costa 2017) and there have been since the very beginning competing views concerning the nature, scope and *finalité* of the European project (Mény 2012). In other words, the very meaning of European integration changes over time and space (Ray 2007, Brack and Startin 2015, Usherwood 2017). In summary, ‘even if these terms were specified, the key difficulty is that there is no trans-historical general practice of European integration since the integration practice can – and indeed does – change quite fundamentally’ (Kný and Kratochvíl 2015, 209).

The flourishing of different typologies highlights the complexity of the phenomenon from both a popular and a party-based perspective, this work reports only the most cited or applied ones. Flood (2002, further elaborated in Flood and Usherwood 2007) proposes a set of six categories providing researchers with some guidelines about parties’ positioning on the EU: EU-rejectionist, EU-revisionist, EU-minimalist, EU-gradualist, EU-reformist and EU-maximalist¹¹. Sørensen attempts to classify popular Euroscepticism starting from the identification of six broad types of attitudes toward the EU deriving from: a) the concern about the integrity of the nation state; b) the values of the EU; c) the transfer of new competencies toward the EU with the main aim to enhance efficiency; d) the economic rationale of integration; e) the (lack of) emotional attachment to the EU; and f) the stances toward the very principles of the EU (determining the principled opposition to the EU) (Sørensen 2004, 3). Conti (2003) building on Taggart and Szczerbiak’s (2001) *hard* vs. *soft* Euroscepticism adds three further categories looking at the positive and neutral sides of the phenomenon: ‘no commitment’, when a party displays no clear attitude toward the EU; ‘functional Europeanism’, when support for European integration is understood as a function of domestic interests or parties’ objectives and ‘identity Europeanism’, when there is a principled support for the EU. Rovny’s (2004) conceptualizes Euroscepticism along two scales: the first one dealing with its magnitude (the *hard* vs. *soft* distinction) and the second one dealing with the motivations guiding it (that according to the scholar are to be defined as ideology and strategy). Vasilopoulou’s (2009) tripartition of Euroscepticism based on parties’ position to the principles, the practices and the future development of the EU: Rejecting Euroscepticism (principles of the EU), Conditional Euroscepticism (practices of the EU), and Compromising Euroscepticism (future of the EU).

¹¹ In the elaboration of his typology, Flood has been clear in not linking it to issues of ideology and/or strategy. His aim is to provide in-depth specifications of parties’ positioning to the EU that could vary over time (Vasilopoulou 2017). For further insight about the formulated guidelines see Flood and Soborski (2017).

It is, however, to be noted that in comparison to Taggart and Szczerbiak (2001) and Kopecký and Mudde's (2002) typologies, these new theorizing efforts remain 'marginal' since they tend to introduce new terminology aiming at replacing the term Euroscepticism (Crespy and Verschuere 2009, Kaniok 2012). What emerges from these typologies is that the more complex and detailed the theoretical framework for the analysis of Euroscepticism is, the more difficult it is to operationalize it (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2017). Relying on complex models for the observation of Euroscepticism requires a considerable amount of data with the main risk to fall in the non-mutual exclusivity of the formulated categorization. In other words, the major risk is to categorize the same party in more than one cell of one of the proposed typologies.

Without disregarding the advancements of the literature in the field, this work focuses on the limitation of the concept of Euroscepticism and contests its ability to analyse the differentiated parties' positions on the EU. The next section concentrates on this aspect proposing a structured review of Euroscepticism's biases.

2.2.3 Euroscepticism as a problematic concept: detailing its biases

Coming 'in from the cold' (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2013), Euroscepticism is now part of the mainstream of European politics with a high probability of growing in importance and coherence in view of the forthcoming EP elections in 2019. However, as reported in the previous paragraph, no generally respected and uncontested definition and/or typologies of Euroscepticism exist (Vasilopoulou 2017). Despite this, Euroscepticism is still the most widely used concept to analyse parties' negative stances to the EU, but why researchers should pay particular attention when applying it?

A useful starting point to review the problems related to the concept of Euroscepticism is the composition of the term itself. 'Euroscepticism' consists of three main parts, the 'Euro' prefix, the 'sceptic' component and the 'ism' suffix. The 'Euro' part blurs the distinction between the EU as a political system (Kassim 2003; Kreppel 2012; Mair 2013) and Europe as a geographically situated set of peoples grouped in States. This led scholars to stress that it would be worth eliminating such semantic confusion (Cotta 2016). Despite this, it may be associated with a tangible object of criticism and used as a proxy for the EU or the European integration project. The second element, the 'sceptic' component, as reported in the Oxford Dictionary recalls the attitude of a person who questions the truth of Christianity or any other religion, or of one who maintains a doubting attitude with reference to some

particular question¹². In the context of our word the ‘sceptic’ part refers to the contraposition to the pro-EU ‘religious orthodoxy’ (Cotta 2016), an intellectual posture of doubt with regard to the object, the EU, the European integration project or Europe¹³, as well as a generic attitude of doubt or a disposition of disbelief toward the EU (the European integration project or Europe). The last part of the word, the ‘ism’ suffix is a component widely used to refer to ideologies. However, the use of this suffix clashes with the findings of the literature assessing that Euroscepticism is not an ideology per se, it might be considered as a ‘thin-centred ideology’ but it is more usefully viewed as a component or a local application of other major ideologies (Flood 2002; Vasilopoulou 2009; Usherwood 2017; Flood and Soborski 2017). Consequently, starting from the literal meaning of each single components of the term, Euroscepticism is equated to an ideologically, intellectually, religiously-driven posture of doubts toward a belief system that represents the EU or the European integration project: not a clear concept so far.

A second major problem related to Euroscepticism is its normativity. Euroscepticism is in fact a clearly negatively constructed concept (Crespy and Verschueren 2009, Usherwood 2017) that can easily be misused in political competition for strategic reasons (Neumayer 2008; Flood 2002; Verzichelli Pellegrino 2016; Cotta 2016; Caruso 2016) both in intra-party (see the above-motivated example of Margaret Thatcher) and in inter-party competition. In other words, it is easy for European political leaders to point their finger toward Eurosceptic parties accusing them to be the major cause of EU’s problems, warning that the EU is currently facing a ‘battle for survival against nationalism’¹⁴. This is the main reason why several political groups refused being labelled as Eurosceptic and decided either to adopt other names like ‘Eurorealist’, a term used by the European Reformist and Conservatives (ECR) group in the EP to rebrand their stances toward the European integration project (Leruth 2017), or to become the voices of alternatives to the current form of the EU like in the case of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL) political group that took as its motto: ‘Another Europe is possible’ (in terms of national parties see the cases of SYRIZA in Greece, but also the Spanish PODEMOS, not objecting Europe per se, but delineating alternatives to the integration course). It is to be noted that also the academic sphere has played its role in identifying Euroscepticism as a negative phenomenon. While confining Euroscepticism to the margins of political reality could be seen as legitimate in the early years of research, this normative approach continued also in more recent works, where scholars treat Euroscepticism as a phenomenon to be ‘confronted with’ (Usherwood, Startin and

¹² As a matter of fact, the first antonyms of “sceptic” is “believer” (<http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/sceptic?s=t>)

¹³ As far as it makes sense for a party to be opposed to Europe as a geographical area or as a set of countries.

¹⁴ Juncker’s declaration in front of the EP. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3788765/EU-faces-battle-survival-warns-President-Juncker-points-murder-Polish-man-Britain-example-happens-nationalism-allowed-fester.html>

Guerra 2013) or to be ‘responded to’ (Leconte 2015, 264). In other words, Euroscepticism has generally been treated as pathology or as a malaise of the EU. This tendency might also find its origin in a diffuse pro-European bias among scholars in the field. As reported by Leconte ‘EU studies have long been influenced by the proximity between many EU experts and EU Institutions, or, at least, by the shared belief in the durability of the integration process’ (Leconte 2015, 252). This same proximity may have influenced the process of theorization of the concept itself that, as its current construction suggests, seems to reflect also this pro-EU bias: ‘support for European integration is implicitly identified with support for one specific form of European integration: the one that dominated the EU throughout the 80s and the 90s’ (Kaniok 2012, 40).

Thirdly, and connected to the second point, being negatively constructed, the term implies the recognition of a positive side, the pro-EU side which in its turn is not well specified. This is to say that defining both Eurosceptic and pro-EU attitudes, researchers are stuck in a theoretical deadlock since ‘any definition of Euroscepticism presupposes a necessarily subjective definition of the EU’ (Leconte 2015, 254, see also Kaniok 2012) and of the European integration project. The literature presents some attempts to define pro-EU stances of parties (see the typologies by Conti 2003, Conti and Verzichelli 2003, Flood 2002 and Kopecký Mudde 2002 mentioned above) that help researchers to avoid considering negative stances to the EU in isolation. However, these attempts classify support for European Integration as a monolithic unit, while proposing some variant in terms of opposition to the EU. This is to say that besides the implicit recognition of an undefined positive pole (pro-EU), there is also a tacit assumption of what the EU and the European integration project consist of. The Manichean distinction between what is positive and what is negative about the EU is connected to the implicit assumption that there is only one viable way to integrate Europe that is the one unanimously shared by those mainstream parties that have dominated the process of European integration until today. Consequently, all those forces expressing any sort of opposition to the European integration process are ‘automatically’ to be framed as opponents of the process. But, wouldn’t it be possible to find forms of opposition that are not destructive but constructive? Wouldn’t it be possible for some political actors to express criticism of the EU that goes in the direction of more integration but following alternative paths? In summary, on the one hand, a reconceptualisation of Euroscepticism helps researchers to disentangle parties’ stances to the EU, while, on the other hand, it helps the literature to consider criticism toward the EU – or at least part of it – as more ‘legitimate’.

The fourth problem concerning Euroscepticism is related to the mere absence of a commonly shared definition of it. If it is true that Euroscepticism should be seen as an *umbrella concept* hosting a panoply of different voices (Taggart 1998, Flood 2002, Mudde 2002; Vasilopoulou 2009, 2013), the analytical application of one of the definitions mentioned above may lead to stretch the concept of Euroscepticism. The available typologies may become, in some cases, rather *exclusive* while, in other

cases, rather *inclusive* (Vasilopoulou 2013; Cotta 2016). Researchers who use one of the above-presented typologies risk either not to capture all the nuances of criticism toward the EU or to categorize actors as opponents when they are not. In this latter case, if the researcher opts to apply a ‘rather inclusive’ typology, then the risk is to categorize any form of critique to the European integration project as an expression of Euroscepticism, consequently removing an important function to the EU political system: the ability to receive feedbacks and react to them (Kaniok 2012)¹⁵.

Connected to the previous point, one last bias consists in the fact that researchers dealing with parties’ positioning on the EU generally tend to consider the EU or the European integration project as a monolithic unit avoiding to identify the targets of opposition¹⁶. As reported by Krouwel and Abts (2007) in their analysis of popular Euroscepticism, if it is evident that the concept of Euroscepticism evokes negative feeling that may cover a variety of different intensities, the targets of dissatisfaction are still not clearly defined and ‘vary from the very idea of European integration to EU institutions, EU policies or its politicians’ (Krouwel and Abts 2007, 253)¹⁷. Similarly also Weßel (2007) applying the theoretical framework proposed by Easton (1965) distinguishes between the various targets of opposition’ to the European political regime as the authorities; the regime; and the community. To put it more simply: what is that parties, political actors, the masses or any form of organised actor oppose? The entire EU? The policies it enacts? Its institutions? Its political establishment?

This literature review has sketched the problems related to the use of Euroscepticism as the central concept of research. To overcome such problems, this work proposes to reconceptualise Euroscepticism starting from a more neutral concept at the basis of the development of democracies: political opposition. The next section reviews this concept, stressing its problematic aspects and proposes a theorization of critical stances to the EU that further details the targets toward which opposition to the EU may be directed.

¹⁵ According to Kaniok (2012), the critical elements providing the EU political system with feedbacks are already chronically neglected or under evaluated by the EU political elite, something that scholars should avoid.

¹⁶ As recent studies suggest those groups or movements opposing the EU are equated by some sense of disliking the general object (the EU). However, assessing what the EU is open to dispute. In some countries, other European institutions suffer under ‘collateral scepticism’ purely because they have the word ‘European’ in their name (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2017; Startin 2015).

¹⁷ In their study of popular Euroscepticism Krouwel and Abts argue that negative sentiments to the EU should be seen alongside two main axes: the first one identifies the targets of discontent as the authorities, the institutions composing the political system and the political community. The second axis refers to the degree of intensity and reflexivity of the expressed judgement (how much people are able to monitor the political environment; how much the system is open to evaluations and how much information is available; how much people are able to differentiate between the targets) (Krouwel and Abts 2007; Vasilopoulou 2017).

2.3 Opposition as an alternative to Euroscepticism

As mentioned in the previous section, before defining opposition to the EU, it is important to understand the general *objects* toward which political parties' attitudes are oriented (the EU and the European integration project), unpacking all its potential targets. In fact, as rightly pointed out by Kaniok (2012), the whole body of conceptualization of Euroscepticism implies a hidden assumption: everybody knows what the EU is, which kind of polity it is, which are its positive sides and how it will transform through time. In other words, the EU is conceived as a 'structure' that sooner or later is going to become a federation of member states. If this is the general conception of the EU, then it follows that the only options left to political parties are either to support it (be Europeist) or to exercise a systemic opposition to it (be Eurosceptic). For the purposes of this study, it is of primary importance to understand what the EU consists of, moving then to delineate the potential objects of criticism.

This work starts from the basic assumption that the EU should be considered as a political system (Kreppel 2002; Kassim 2003; Hix and Høyland 1999 and 2011; Mair 2013; Brack 2018; Brack and Costa 2017). Understanding the EU as a political system enables researchers to observe 'Euroscepticism' as a natural component of the system, thus avoiding considering it from a normative perspective.

Taking back the work done by David Easton (1975) and further deepened by Pippa Norris (1999), political support within a political system may be directed to a series of *objects*: the political community, the regime and the political authorities. Drawing a parallel with the European level, it is thus possible to argue that support for the EU ranges from: a) support to the EU political authorities; b) support for the EU institutions (e.g. specific formal institutions like the European Parliament or the European Commission); c) support for the EU policies configuring the main *outputs* of the interaction between EU institutions (Almond and Powell 1966) and d) support for the process of widening and deepening the European Integration (along the national-supranational axis) alongside the support for the principles and the values underpinning the EU political community.

These considerations on political support could be applied to political opposition to the various *objects* of the EU (Weßels 2007)¹⁸. However, as observed in the previous chapter, the lack of an institutionalised government vs. opposition distinction coupled with a restricted definition of political opposition in the literature led scholar to argue against the presence of a proper opposition in the EP and to frame opposition in terms of its anti-systemic characteristics (Helms 2004; Helms 2008; Mair 2007, 2013). This section firstly focuses on the biases connected to the concept of political opposition presenting a flexible definition to be applied to the case of the EU (sub-section 2.3.1). Secondly, it

¹⁸ It is to be noted that the lack of support might also include indifference (Weßel 2007). This work also considers potential indifferent stances to the various EU-targets, see below and chapter 4 (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.2) for further insights about the operationalization of neutral stances.

explains the reasons why scholars are reluctant to talk about political opposition at the supranational level (sub-section 2.3.2).

2.3.1 Political opposition: a brief literature review

The concept of political opposition¹⁹ has always been conceived as a key element of democracies. According to Dahl, opposition represents the first axis (alongside the ‘inclusion/participation’ axis) that constitutes polyarchies (Dahl 1971) and it is one of ‘the three great milestones in the development of democratic institutions’ (Dahl 1966, xiii).

In spite of its centrality for the study of democracy, Brack and Weinblum observe how the theorization of political opposition is still anchored to the classical works conducted by eminent researchers in the 60s and the 70s. Scholars like Dahl (1966), Ionescu and De Madariaga (1968) and Schapiro (1972) conceptualized opposition in the context of Western European democracies where strong political parties played a relevant role in the major political arenas of national Parliaments (Brack and Weinblum 2011). However, since then the political reality has evolved and quite strong changes took place like the democratization of ex-authoritarian states, the regionalization of Unitarian states, changes at the level of the executive-legislative relationship, changes in the role performed by parties and the development of the supranational political system of the EU (Brack and Weinblum 2011, 70).

Furthermore, opposition is generally conceived as a concept implying contraposition between one body and another body (Norton 2008). In a nutshell, this is to say that political opposition has been generally equated to the legitimate contraposition between parties composing the governing majority and those pertaining to the non-governing minority where the objective of the latter is to take the place of the former. This is the approach of Dahl’s minimal definition of political opposition: ‘[S]uppose that A determines the conduct of some aspects of the government of a particular political system during some interval (...). Suppose that during that interval B cannot determine the conduct of the government; and B is opposed to the conduct of government by A. Then B is what we mean by an opposition’ (Dahl 1966, xviii).

Proposing an in-depth review of the classical literature, Brack and Weinblum argue that, beside the fact that there is still no clear-cut definition of political opposition, the legacy of the traditional literature on more contemporary studies engenders three (rather interconnected) biases concerning: the locus of political opposition, the actors exercising political opposition and the ‘repertoires of action’

¹⁹ This work focuses on political opposition expressed by organized actors (more specific political parties) working within the institutional arena of the EP. However, this theoretical chapter does not aim at excluding any other form of political opposition, expressed by any other type of organized actor. The only form of opposition that is excluded is the one exercised by non-organized actors or actors not belonging to the political context.

alongside the objectives of political opposition. The classical theorization of opposition foresees a restricted conception of the arena where it can be enacted: parliaments. If it is on the one hand true that parliaments are the ‘privileged locus for the institutionalisation of political action in our contemporary democracies’ (Brack and Weinblum 2011, 73), on the other hand considering parliaments as the only place to exercise opposition is limiting. This is why Blondel encourages scholars to study forms of what he defines ‘extra-parliamentary opposition’ (Blondel 1996). Secondly, classical works have also a limited understanding of the actors exercising opposition: political parties composing the minority contrasting the governing majority. However, there are different *modes of opposition* that should be further studied: the inter-party mode of opposition (opposition of one party from within the coalition), the intra-party mode of opposition (opposition within the parties, also called factionalism), the cross-party mode of opposition (political parties exercising opposition on a specific policy issue independently from the majority or minority divide) and the non-party mode (actors exercising opposition on the bases of shared interests independently from political parties) (Norton 2008). Furthermore, Brack and Weinblum suggest that in some cases, like in the Nordic countries or in Switzerland, it is difficult to delineate which parties compose the minority opposed to the governing majority, generally because governing parties tend to rely on opposition parties to fulfil their duties. In a similar vein, also the EU political system does not foresee a majority vs. minority distinction in traditional terms. Third, constraining the concept of political opposition to the majority vs. minority divide also implies a restriction in terms of its objectives and functions (generally related to the construction of a viable alternative to the governing majority aiming to take its place). However, ‘it should not be taken for granted that the roles of opposition are only related, basically, to the purpose of controlling and restraining the exercise of power’ (Sartori 1971, 31). As seen previously, opposition may also work alongside the government in specific cases (see Nordic countries). Furthermore, opposition groups may also channel the voice of underrepresented minority groups in a society, or act as a communication channel or even represent a ‘safety valve’ (Sartori 1971, 32). According to its objectives, opposition has been defined either as ‘normal’ (Schapiro 1965), identifying parties with the main objective to replace the one holding governing positions or as ‘deviant’, considering all the other forms of opposition. Kirchheimer (1964) for example distinguishes between a ‘classic’ (loyal) opposition as the one that is legally recognised and proposes alternatives to the policies enacted by the governing majority and a ‘principled opposition’ opposing both the policies and the constitutionality of the political system. Similarly, Sartori recognises a difference between a ‘real opposition’ and an anti-system opposition. Differently from the former, the latter does not accept the fundamentals of the regime thus opposing it on the basis of its principles. Sartori (1971) provides a further development of the notion of opposition tracing a difference between responsible (opposition that is potentially called to govern) and irresponsible opposition (opposition that does not have the chance to govern or does

not even wish to do that²⁰). He also adds a further type of opposition that is neither constitutional nor responsible, termed as contestation. This differentiation has been further crystallised by Norton (2008) who delineates two broad categories of opposition: the one accepting the legitimacy of the political system and agreeing to work within it and the one rejecting and opposing the system (Norton 2008; Brack and Weinblum 2011).

This normative conception of opposition had one main consequence: it helped the development of two separate fields of research about opposition, the one dealing with the ‘responsible’ flank and the other dealing with the unconstitutional side. Consequently, it contributed to negatively connote forms of opposition not belonging to the classical view. As Helms (2004) puts it, there is a quasi-theoretical distinction in opposition forms in Western European democracies that is widely used by authors and where parliamentary opposition is ‘considered to be the true form of opposition’ differently from other deviant ones (Helms 2004, 24). Consequently, the existence of these two separate fields of research affected the study of opposition within those political systems where alternation in government does not happen or is not foreseen as in the case object of this work (Mair 2007, Helms 2008). This happened against the warnings of eminent scholars in the field like Dahl who stated: ‘If all oppositions are treated as dangerous and subject to repression, opposition that would be loyal if tolerated becomes disloyal because it is not tolerated’ (Dahl 1973, 13). In summary, even if the classical majority vs. minority distinction does not strictly exist at the supranational level, this should not push scholars to consider all forms of opposition as non-legitimate, unconstitutional or irresponsible.

Considering all the above-mentioned problematic aspects, Brack and Weinblum define opposition as:

A disagreement with the government or its policies, the political elite or the political regime as a whole, expressed in the public sphere, by an organised actor through different modes of action. (Brack and Weinblum 2011, 74)

This intentionally open definition provides sufficient room for manoeuvre to: a) be applied on different types of organized actors (among them we find of course the political parties) and b) observe it from the inside and the outside of the parliamentary arena. This definition has two further properties: firstly, it is extremely flexible and applicable to all political systems. Secondly, it precisely highlights the *objects* toward which it can be directed, as the government (as in the classical government vs. opposition divide), the policies that the government enacts (as for example in the case of the aforementioned cross-party mode of political opposition), the political elite (to be conceived as both governing and opposition forces as for example in the case of populist parties) and the political regime as a whole.

²⁰ Sartori (1971) recognises two types of irresponsible (constitutional) opposition: a semi-responsible and a fully-fledged irresponsible opposition.

Once identified the targets of opposition, it is furthermore possible to delve deeper in its character questioning if it is pragmatic thus criticizing one of the aforementioned targets out of pragmatic considerations or principled thus *a priori* rejecting all or some of the mentioned targets.

Being extremely flexible I argue that this definition can be applied to the supranational sphere of the EU aiming at re-conceptualizing the debated concept of Euroscepticism. However, before moving in this direction, it is important to understand why scholars are so reluctant to talk about political opposition at the supranational level of the EU. The next paragraph accomplishes this task.

2.3.2 Why are scholars reluctant to talk about opposition at the EU level?

Van der Eijk and Franklin refer to popular contestation of the EU as a ‘sleeping giant’ arguing that ‘[i]t is only a matter of time before policy entrepreneurs in some countries seize the opportunity (...) to differentiate themselves from other parties in the EU’ (Van der Eijk and Franklin 2004, 47). In other words, sooner or later parties opposing the EU will successfully use the anti-EU issue to gain consensus. The last EP elections are an evidence signalling that this time might have come. As underlined before, the EU has been previously described as a political system (Kreppel 2002; Hix 2005, Hix and Høyland 1999 and 2011). Thus, being the EU a political system, it should be natural to talk about both political support and political opposition in a non-normative way. However, scholars are still reluctant to talk about opposition at the supranational level mainly for reasons related to the same EU’s construction.

Starting from the classical view about opposition (governing majority vs. opposition minority), scholars have rightly underlined the difficulty of recognising sources and manifestations of parliamentary opposition in a polity ‘in the absence of a sufficiently clear understanding as to what or whom the opposition is directed against’ (Helms 2008, 213, see also, Mair 2007, 2013). To put it more simply, if political opposition is conceived as the majority vs. minority divide then there is no possibility to observe it at the supranational level²¹, just because there is no precise definition of what the government of the EU should consist of²². As already observed in chapter 1 of this work, the

²¹ This absence of a stable government vs. opposition divide has also been empirically confirmed by Stefano Braghiroli, who analysing roll call votes (RCVs) in the EP discovers a shifting majority vs. minority divide in the EP depending on the issue at stake (Braghiroli 2015).

²² To solve this dilemma, scholars propose three viable solutions: some authors envisage the presence of a ‘dual executive’ at the EU level, where both the Commission and the Council cover governing positions (Hix 2005), some others describe the EU as a two chamber system, where the Council is a powerful Senate, an upper house working together with the EP (especially after the Lisbon Treaty when the co-decision procedure was re-named ordinary legislative procedure becoming the main legislative procedure of the EU), while the Commission holds a governing position (Helms 2008). Other scholars describe the EU as a system of government characterised by a ‘sharing of decision making power among four institutions’ (Fabbrini 2015, 33): a dual executive composed by the European Council (recognised as a formal institution of the Union after the approval of the Lisbon

institutional complexity of the EU (the same EU as a construct) has led to its depoliticisation: ‘we cannot organize opposition in the EU – we cannot appeal for votes against the government in election or in parliament – because the EU has been depoliticised’ (Mair 2007, 7). The elite-led project of European integration gave origin to a multilevel structure of the EU polity²³ that has blurred the distinction between the ‘channels’ available to parties to express their political opposition (national or supranational). On the one hand, citizens might seek to exercise control on their ‘delegates’²⁴ populating the EU institutions through both national and the supranational elections; on the other hand, parties might use the EU issue in both channels to attract votes. However, due to the very construction of the EU, these two channels overlap in two main ways: firstly, issues and appointments are decided on the basis of two channels at the same time; secondly the same delegates generally populates both levels: ‘the same political parties, subject to control by the same political leadership and by the same organized membership, compete in both channels’ (Mair 2007, 8-9). Consequently, an institutionalised form of opposition at the supranational level is almost impossible to be achieved (opposition *in* the EU) and opposing forces tend to express harsher forms of opposition (opposition *to* the EU) (Mair 2007, 2013).

What this work proposes is not to ignore the different configuration of the supranational level ‘polity’ but rather to argue that in spite of these limitations it is still possible and useful to think about Euroscepticism in a non-normative and unbiased way through a reconceptualization of it in terms of EU-opposition exercised in the EP. Furthermore, the neutral definition of political opposition provided by Brack and Weinblum represents a valid alternative suited to unpack the notion of Euroscepticism tracking more precisely what it entails.

Starting from the limits that political opposition has to face at the supranational level, the next section proposes an adaptation of Brack and Weinblum’s definition of political opposition to the supranational sphere of the EU.

Treaty) and the Commission, working together with a bicameral legislative branch constituted by the EP (the lower house) and the Council (the upper house).

²³ This concept has been studied in-depth by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks (2001) who refers to the EU as a multilevel governance.

²⁴ Mair uses the term ‘delegates’ in Strøm’s sense (Strøm, Müller and Bergam 2003). In the case of the EU there are two channels of delegations: firstly, legislators at national level delegate the executive branch to compose the national government and, consequently, the Council of Ministers and the European Council. Secondly, European voters delegate their national representatives through a direct election of the EP.

2.4 Defining EU-opposition

Brack and Weinblum's definition of political opposition (2011) highlights four precise targets toward which opposition may be directed. To recall them:

1. Opposition to the *government* with the main aim to propose an alternative policy program and maybe take its place;
2. Opposition to the *policies* that the government enacts aiming at changing them more or less radically;
3. Opposition to the *political elite* (actors belonging both to the governing and to the opposition establishment) (Cotta 2016);
4. Opposition to the *political regime* proposing to change it more or less radically (e.g.: proposing the reformation of the institutional setting).

As observed in the previous paragraph a major limitation that led scholars to argue against the presence of political opposition at the EU level is the absence of a 'government' defined in the classical terms. It is true that one may argue that opposing the European Commission (EC) in its activity or for its stances with respect to some specific policies may be conceived as a sort of opposition to the government of the EU. However, a similar reasoning could be applied to the Council as well as to the European Council or the growing powers and centrality of some prominent EU-leaders (e.g., Juncker). One may, in fact, argue that criticism targeting this or that specific leader should be considered as a critique to the government of the EU. However, such criticism (apart from being captured from the EU-elite target) will not be stable through time. Furthermore, changes in leaders' positioning with respect to some specific policy should not be equated to changes in the 'EU-government' positioning within that specific policy field. It thus follows that, despite recognizing the potential limitations of excluding the first target, since it is not precisely defined, it is better to observe forms of opposition to EU institutions or to specific EU-leaders as forms of opposition to the EU-regime or to the EU-elite targets (see below for further details) (Carlotti 2017).

In spite of this limitation, political opposition may still be directed to the other three remaining targets. A party can oppose the *policies* enacted by the EU (target 2); the *elite* configured as the entire political establishment (both mainstream and opposition parties) as well as the panoply of functionaries vital to the work of the EU (target 3); and the *EU regime* (target 4) encompassing the EU institutions, their performance and the values underpinning them (Krouwel and Abts 2007).

As Cotta (2016) rightly points out, when dealing with opposition to the EU it is of particular interest to add to these three targets (EU-policies, EU-elite and EU-regime) a further one:

- ‘The existing *political community* with the central objective of changing, more or less radically, its borders for example through a secession’ (Cotta 2016, 238).

This target encompasses forms of political opposition related to the undefined general idea of European integration as well as conceiving it as a common good for Europe. Moreover, it concerns also ‘the basic political principles and values that underpin the transnational European democracy’ (Krouwel and Abts 2007, 257) and conceives the EU as a player securing peace prosperity and democracy. In other words, forms of opposition targeting the political community relate to the identification with the political community itself. Consequently, as further detailed below, forms of opposition referring to this target may preach for a more or less stronger reformulation of the community itself (along the national, supranational axis) as well as stronger forms of opposition asking to redesign the borders of the community (see the Brexit framed as a direct victory scored by EU-opponents). However, a further specification of this target should be added: an actor (e.g. a political party) may, in fact, oppose or support one of the geometries resulting from the process of European integration. The implementation of some specific policies (e.g., the common monetary policy) also defines a territorial scope of that policy (e.g., the Euro area). A party may demand either the exit of its country from the group of Member States constituting the ‘territorial scope’ of a specific policy or the elimination of that ‘territorial scope’ or the reformation of the rules governing it (Carlotti 2017). Taking as an example the Euro area, a party can either preach for the reformation of the policies governing the Euro area, or demand the exit of its country from the Euro area or (in most extreme cases) the dissolution of the Euro area.

The four delineated targets (EU-policies, EU-elite, EU-regime and EU-community alongside the various EU-geometries) are in line with the general assumption of this work that considers the EU as a political system (see section 2.3 above). This is to say that the outlined targets of EU-opposition match the *objects* of political support as delineated by Easton (1975).

Taking into account the specificities of the EU political system alongside the characteristics of its targets and starting from Brack and Weinblum’s definition of political opposition, this work defines EU-opposition as:

A disagreement with the policies enacted by the EU, its political elite, the EU institutions and the political community as a whole alongside the various geometries deriving from the process of European integration, expressed in the public sphere, by an organized actor through different modes of action²⁵.

²⁵ This work considers the speeches delivered by national parties’ representatives as *modes of action* used to express their opposition to the EU. Surely enough, MEPs might also use votes to express their

Such definition of EU-opposition implies also the definition of its positive counterpart: political support for the EU or EU-support. In other words, applying this definition to the study of political parties enables the researcher to understand the targets of both political opposition and political support to the EU.

Once the targets toward which political opposition may be oriented are detailed, it is important to underline a further characteristic of EU-opposition: its character. For this purpose, it is possible to draw a parallel with Taggart and Szczerbak's hard-soft dichotomy. Similarly to Euroscepticism, also EU-opposition entails a 'harder' and a 'softer' pole, more precisely, a principled form of opposition (principled opposition to the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community) and a more pragmatic and contingent one (pragmatic opposition to the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community). In the case of pragmatic opposition, parties justify their criticism toward one of the studied targets on the basis of a "means-ends" type of rationality where actors are considered to take decisions made on calculations of utility based on a given set of interests' (Sjursen 2002, 494). For example, a party A opposes the target EU-elite because a specific politician does not have the required qualities to accomplish her or his tasks. On the contrary, principled opposition refers to normative arguments based on claims about values or moral standards of justice and legitimacy (Wendler 2016). For example, a party B opposes the EU-elite on a principled basis because a specific politician does not have the moral qualities to accomplish her or his duties (e.g.: accusations of corruption). As stressed before the same consideration holds true also for the counterpart of EU-opposition: EU-support. It is, in fact, imaginable that a party expresses support to the four delineated targets, which is either principled (principle-based support for the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime or the EU-community) or pragmatic (pragmatic support for the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime or the EU-community). Crossing the two above-delineated characteristics of EU-opposition (target and character), Table 2.1 below presents a set of guidelines to understand parties' positioning on the EU.

Table 2. 1: Guidelines defining parties' positioning on the EU

Targets	Expressed positioning (Support or opposition)	Character of party positioning on the EU	Resulting attitude (EU-Opposition/EU- support)
<i>EU policy</i>	Support	Principled	Principled support
	Support	Pragmatic	Pragmatic support: Conditional Support

opposition. However, as further detailed in chapter 4 (See Chapter 4, section 4.3.1), MEPs' are freer to express themselves through speeches than through votes. However, any other *mode of action* might be taken into consideration for future research (e.g.: Roll Call Votes held in the EP arena).

	None	None	No-commitment
	Opposition	Principled	Principled Opposition: Total Rejection
	Opposition	Pragmatic	Pragmatic Opposition: Partial rejection
<i>EU elite</i>	Support	Principled	Principled support
	Support	Pragmatic	Pragmatic support: Conditional Support
	None	None	No-commitment
	Opposition	Principled	Principled Opposition: Total rejection
	Opposition	Pragmatic	Pragmatic Opposition: Partial Rejection
<i>EU regime</i>	Support	Principled	Principled Support
	Support	Pragmatic	Pragmatic support: Conditional Support
	None	None	No-commitment
	Opposition	Principled	Principled Opposition: Total rejection
	Opposition	Pragmatic	Pragmatic Opposition: Partial Rejection
<i>EU community</i>	Support	Principled	Principled Support
	Support	Pragmatic	Pragmatic support: Conditional Support
	None	None	No-commitment
	Opposition	Principled	Principled Opposition: Total Rejection
	Opposition	Pragmatic	Pragmatic Opposition: Partial Rejection
<i>EU-geometries</i>	Support	Principled	Principled support
	Support	Pragmatic	Pragmatic support: Conditional Support
	None	None	No-commitment
	Opposition	Principled	Principled Opposition: Total Rejection
	Opposition	Pragmatic	Pragmatic Opposition: Partial Rejection

A party may also decide to express ‘no commitment’ or judgement toward one of the discussed targets, thus lacking a specific positioning toward that specific target. Similarly to Conti’s typology of party attitudes to the EU (2003), this work considers such stances as neutral²⁶. The below-presented description of Table 2.1 intentionally takes this attitude for granted.

Starting from the first target, a party may decide to oppose or support the EU-policies either in a pragmatic or in a principled way. For what concerns opposition, a party may pragmatically oppose EU-policies accepting the general policy framework but rejecting some specific part of it out of pragmatic considerations. On the other hand, a party expressing principled opposition to a specific EU-policy rejects it on the basis of normative argumentations. For example, a party rejects EU-asylum policies on the basis of its nationalistic stances. In a similar vein, also support to the EU-policies may be either pragmatic (utility-based considerations) or principled (normative-based considerations).

The EU-elite target encompasses attitudes to the EU-authorities: politicians, functionaries and institutional actors (Serricchio, Tsakatika, and Quaglia 2013). This target is intentionally defined in a broad way to encompass both the ‘governing’ elite (e.g.: commissioners) and the ‘opposition elite’ (e.g.: MEPs belonging to so-called Eurosceptic parties). This broad definition of the EU-elite enables the observation of both mainstream and EU-opponents attitudes *vis-à-vis* this target. In a similar vein, Vasilopoulou et al. (2014) study populism in the Greek political system as a form of ‘blame-shifting’ happening between the various political actors throughout the domestic political debate. Their main conclusion is that there are two types of ‘blame-shifting’ in the Greek political system: the *mainstream blame-shifting* and *fringe blame-shifting* (Vasilopoulou et al. 2014, 401). The former is exercised by mainstream parties (generally parties of government) and it is directed against few actors (generally challenger parties or external elite). The latter is instead exercised by smaller parties and it is directed against a wider array of actors (like governing parties, parties of opposition, external elite and so on). Thus, even if it is true that the expression of criticism toward the EU-elite target exercised by mainstream parties could be seen as a normal adversarial dynamic within the parliamentary arenas (national parties belonging to the ‘grand coalition’ blame their ‘challengers’), adopting a broad definition of the EU-elite allows the study to observe if and how the mainstream reacts *vis-à-vis* their so-called Eurosceptic challengers. Parties’ stances to the broadly-defined EU-elite target concern two main dimensions: the first one implies a judgement of the moral values and conduct of the EU-elite that taps into assessments concerning how much the elite is committed, motivated, reliable, consistent and integer in its activity. The second one concerns evaluations about the performance of the EU-elite: how much it is competent, efficient, skilful and productive in exercising its duties (Levi and Stoker 2000; Krouwel and Abts 2007). Thus a party supporting the elite in a principled way will exalt its moral-

²⁶ The empirical part of this work aims at registering also potential neutral stances toward the above-mentioned targets.

ethical conduct, while, a party opposing this target in a principled way will denigrate the moral aspects of EU-elite (e.g., accusing the EU elite to be corrupted). Whereas, a party that supports or opposes the EU-elite in a pragmatic way will focus on its ability to accomplish its tasks.

The EU-regime target encompasses judgements of specific EU institutions (e.g.: the EP, the EC, the Council of Ministers and so on) either in terms of their performance or of the values and principles underpinning them. On the one hand, the expression of a pragmatic attitude (support or opposition) is associated with the performance of such institutions: how much such institutions are able, skilful effective and efficient in solving specific problems. Thus pragmatic opposition to the EU-institutions consists of a negative judgement of the performance of the whole complex of EU-institutions or part of them. Consequently, pragmatic support implies a positive judgement of the action performed by EU-institutions and does not involve any reference to the values, the norms and the principles underpinning them. On the other hand, principled expressions (both positive and negative) refer to judgements concerning the sphere of the values, norms and principles underpinning EU-institutions. In extreme cases, these forms of opposition imply the total rejection of a specific or of all the EU-institutions (e.g.: AFD's denial of the powers of the European Central Bank). On the contrary, principled support exalts the values, the norms and the principles beneath EU-institutions.

For what concerns opposition to the EU-community, parties criticising this target on a principled basis do not identify themselves with the EU-community. They reject the very idea of the EU, criticise the impact that the EU-community exercises on member states' sovereignty considered as of special value, refuse to enlarge it (both in terms of widening and deepening the EU), and would like to modify more or less radically the borders of the community (e.g.: through a secession). While parties exercising a pragmatic opposition to the EU-community identify themselves with the EU-community but are pragmatically critical of the EU (using utility-based argumentations). Such parties generally accept the values of European democracy, however, they are critical of the current state of the EU. With reference to the support side, parties supporting the EU-community on a principled basis do identify themselves in the EU-community, accepting and exalting its values. Whereas parties pragmatically supporting the EU-community express a positive evaluation of the EU and accept the values of the EU-community but propose reforms of it on the basis of pragmatic argumentations. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, a similar reasoning should be applied also to the territorial geometries deriving from the process of European integration. Even in this case, parties can express support or opposition, which are either principled or pragmatic. A party expressing principled support for one of the EU-geometries (e.g.: EMU or Schengen area) share the values, the principles and the rules underlying that specific geometry also aiming at expanding its territorial borders (e.g.: the entrance of new member states in the Euro area). Conversely, a party expressing pragmatic support for a specific EU-geometry (e.g.: Schengen area) is more oriented to support contingent factors. With reference to the negative side of

parties' stances to the EU (opposition), a party expressing principled opposition to a specific EU-geometry rejects its mere existence and would like to opt for the redefinition of the territorial borders of its application (e.g.: preaching for the exit from the EMU or from the Schengen area). Conversely, a party exercising pragmatic opposition to a specific EU-geometry does not reject the existence of that geometry per se but contests some of its specific aspects out of pragmatic considerations.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviews the origins of the concept of Euroscepticism and presents the theoretical developments aimed at defining it, particularly focusing on the critical points connected to the use of Euroscepticism as a central concept for the empirical analysis. It then reconceptualises Euroscepticism in terms of political opposition. After a brief literature review concerning the concept of political opposition, this chapter has provided a definition of EU-opposition that disentangles the targets toward which it can be addressed as the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community alongside the geometries deriving from the process of European integration. The concept of EU-opposition implicitly encompasses also indications about support for the EU and its various targets. Furthermore, the chapter also stresses the differences in the character that EU-opposition may assume: either principled or pragmatic. Crossing the two characteristics of parties' positioning – direction and quality – this work proposes a set of guidelines to better disentangle parties' positioning on the EU and to answer the central research question of this work: Which aspects of the EU do national parties oppose from within the arena of the EP?

The guidelines reported in the previous section should not be seen as a fixed and stable typology. On the contrary, they provide researchers with a set of ideal type positioning on the EU (including negative, positive and 'neutral' stances). Parties' positioning on the EU may, in fact, vary in terms of both the addressed targets and the endorsed character. In other words, this work argues that EU-opposition should be considered as phenomenon varying according to the issue at stake, the period and the context of observation (national, supranational level).

The use of the concept of EU-opposition presents four main advantages when compared to the one of Euroscepticism. Firstly, starting from the composition of the term itself, differently from Euroscepticism, EU-opposition does not report any conceptual confusion concerning its general object. In other words, while the 'Euro' component of Euroscepticism blurs the distinction between the EU and Europe as a geographical area, the concept of EU-opposition unequivocally identifies the EU political system as the central object of criticism. Furthermore, while the 'sceptic' component points toward a sort of posture of doubt, opposition refers to disagreement with one of the proposed targets that can assume either a principled or a pragmatic character. Lastly, while the Euroscepticism's

'ism' suffix reminds an ideology, EU-opposition as a term does not necessarily refer to any 'ideological roots' but rather refers to an action or position that a party may decide to perform or endorse.

Secondly, conceptualizing parties' positioning following the theoretical indications provided in the previous section, allows researchers to avoid describing criticism of the EU in a normative way. This is to say that EU-opposition does not imply a normative judgement of the party performing the action. While the term Euroscepticism can be easily used to denigrate political competitors, EU-opposition is more 'neutral'. Even if it also considers harsh forms of criticism such as the one directed to the very existence of the EU-community, it does not treat the opponents as the pathology of the European democracy (Leconte 2015), but as an important component of the system itself, thus aiming at framing criticism toward the EU as a more 'legitimate' phenomenon.

Thirdly, similarly to the concept of Euroscepticism, also the one of EU-opposition presupposes the existence of a positive side. However, in the case of EU-opposition, the positive side is defined as the counterpart of EU-opposition, EU-support. This is to say that delineating the targets and the character of EU-opposition implies also a clear-cut distinction between the targets and the related character of EU-support. Such clear-cut distinction reduces the risk of conceptual stretching related to Euroscepticism. Furthermore, the distinction between different 'types' of opposition (assuming a different character) helps researchers to understand if the broad flank of EU-opponents also reports forms of opposition that go in the direction of more integration rather than aiming at reducing it. Moreover, differently from Euroscepticism, the concept of EU-opposition may be applied not only to parties critical of the EU but also to the study of their mainstream counterparts. This last assertion opens up new questions for empirical research that will be partially addressed in this work such as: Is opposition to the EU to be relegated only to some specific type of parties such as those belonging to the nationalist family? Do mainstream parties express opposition to the EU? If the answer to this last question is positive, which are the aspects that mainstream parties oppose of the EU?

Finally, differently from Euroscepticism, the above-presented guidelines do not consider the EU or the European integration process as a monolithic unit but proposes a way to unpack them. This is useful to provide an in-depth description of parties' positioning avoiding flattering difference among them.

The next chapter presents a model to observe Euroscepticism in the EP proposing a way to understand the causes behind parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU.

Chapter 3: Explaining national parties' EU-opposition in the EP, a framework for the analysis.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical framework to accomplish the second objective of this work: understanding what shapes patterns of EU-opposition in the EP.

Similarly to the evolution of taxonomies and definitions of Euroscepticism, models dealing with understanding what shapes this controversial phenomenon evolved in close step with the development of the EU itself (Usherwood 2017). Researches about drivers of party-based Euroscepticism can be fundamentally divided between two main camps: those examining Euroscepticism as originating in party-political divisions at the national level (Taggart 1998; Sitter 2001, 2003) and those providing wide-ranging explanations rooted in the existence of a new 'social cleavage' shaping parties' positions on to the EU.

Mudde has labelled these two branches of the literature as the 'Sussex School' the former, and the 'North Carolina School', the latter (Mudde 2012). Despite providing useful insights into the nature of 'Euroscepticism', more recent studies argue that the two schools still have a considerable way to go before addressing everything that concerns Euroscepticism (Usherwood 2017). Such models have in fact given very little consideration to the phenomenon in a transnational and in a pan-European perspective. The transnational dimension of 'Euroscepticism' refers to the coordination of opposition to the EU and the process of European integration as expressed across several countries, while the pan-European dimension of 'Euroscepticism' relates to the coordination of opposition to the EU and the European integration process as expressed at the supranational level, in institutions such as the EP (Leruth and Startin 2017).

As mentioned before, this work focuses primarily on opposition to the EU in a pan-European perspective, in the EP. Since the models elaborated by the literature so far focus on the national political arenas of contestation, this work relies on the theoretical framework elaborated by Usherwood (2017) to study the formation of Eurosceptic groups both in a pan-European and in a transnational perspective. This model is based on the concept of Political Opportunity structures (POSS) elaborated by Kitschelt (1986) and enumerates three different sets of factors shaping the development of such forces in the above-mentioned contexts: 1) ideology as a factor endogenous to the group; 2) institutions as the first set of factors exogenous to the group; and 3) events as a second set of factors exogenous to

the group (both intentional and unintentional events). While this theoretical framework has been formulated to study the emergence of both transnational and pan-European ‘Eurosceptic’ groups, this work applies it to the study of the found patterns of EU-opposition.

As further detailed in the conclusive section, the application of this theoretical framework has three main advantages. Firstly, it enables researchers to consider factors that are both exogenous and endogenous to the studied actors (political parties). Secondly, it allows considering both the national and the supranational levels of analysis, something that is of crucial importance when dealing with the EU multilevel system of governance (Hooghe and Marks 2001, see also Helms 2008; Mair 2007; Cotta 2016). Lastly, it merges together elements from both schools of Euroscepticism: the ‘Sussex school’ and the ‘North Carolina School’.

This chapter firstly reviews the main models proposed by the literature to study Euroscepticism stressing their limitations and problematic aspects. It then presents the three different types of factors potentially influencing patterns of EU-opposition. The chapter then adapts the three sets of factors to the study of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP (section 3.4) formulating six hypotheses alongside two general associations to be tested in chapter 7 of this work. The conclusive section summarizes the advantages deriving from the application of the presented framework.

3.2 Strategy vs. ideology. Explaining Euroscepticism: the state of the art

As observed in chapter 2 theorizations of Euroscepticism have been relatively scarce (Vasilopoulou 2013) and the literature still strives to produce exhaustive frameworks to understand the development of this phenomenon (Usherwood 2017). Euroscepticism was initially studied as a sub-field of international relations rather than from a comparative politics perspective. The comparative study of Euroscepticism diffused mainly after the Maastricht Treaty aiming at understanding the variegated responses to the ever-deeper process of European integration. From the 90s onwards the boundaries between domestic and foreign policies become more blurred, consequently, also the demarcation between the ‘new EU studies’ and the traditional European studies becomes fuzzier. It is in this period that a ‘true cottage industry of Euroscepticism studies has emerged, which has given way to hundreds of publications in increasingly prominent journals’ (Mudde 2012, 193).

While the literature explains Euroscepticism from the perspective of different actors (e.g., the public at large, the mass media, social movements and so on), this literature review focuses on political parties. In his article ‘The Comparative Study of Party-Based Euroscepticism: the Sussex versus the North Carolina Schools’, Mudde reviews studies explaining Euroscepticism dividing them, as the title of his work suggests, between two main schools: the so-called ‘Sussex School’ articulating around the works by Paul Taggart and the ‘North Carolina School’ originating from Ray's dissertation (1999) and

further developed in the work by Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Marco Steenbergen (see Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson 2002; Marks and Steenbergen 2004; Hooghe 2007; Hooghe and Marks 2007) (Mudde 2012). According to Mudde, these approaches differ in 1) the provided motivations at the basis of Euroscepticism; 2) the methods applied in the analysis (quantitative and qualitative methods); 3) the type of data used, and 4) the final scope of the research. This literature review focuses on the main aspects of these two schools specifically, on the scope of their research, and on the conclusions reached.

The first school, the Sussex school¹, as stressed in the previous chapter, devotes most of its efforts to conceptual issues alongside the cornerstone dichotomous distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism. The 'bread and butter' of the works originating from this school is the observation of Euroscepticism from a party-based perspective using qualitative methods and data and concluding that the roots of the phenomenon are to be found in party competition at the national level (Mudde 2012). The first scholar to provide an explanation of the nature of party-based Euroscepticism was Taggart defining the phenomenon as a 'touchstone of domestic dissent' (Taggart 1998). In his work, Taggart argues that ideology plays a role in shaping parties' positions on the EU, however, it '[i]s not necessarily a guide to parties' position on the EU' (Taggart 1998, 379). In fact, the degree to which ideology serves as a constraint in determining parties' stances to the EU depends on parties' role in the national party system (government vs. opposition dynamics at the national level, including different types of opposition parties like 'anti-system parties'). According to Taggart, in fact, parties covering political positions at the periphery of the national political system (e.g.: Single issue Eurosceptic parties or Protest-based parties with Euroscepticism²) do not consider the EU as a central issue. Lacking access to governmental offices at the national level, they are unlikely to influence decisions concerning the EU, since the policy-making in that area is mainly intergovernmental. However, the parties at the fringes of the national political system (especially the ones which identity is tied up with some particular issues like environmental protection or immigration) can in a relatively costless way take up the EU issue to strengthen their claims to be alternatives to the political centre, to be alternatives to the

¹ The Sussex school takes its name from the University of Sussex where the European Parties Elections and Referendums Network – EPERN – is based. The network was established in 2003 and is currently jointly convened by Aleksz Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart. For further information see EPERN website at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/research/europeanpartieselectionsreferendumsnetwork>

² In his work Taggart recognizes four types of Eurosceptic parties to be found in the national party systems: the *Single issue Eurosceptic parties* (whose *raison d'être* is the opposition to the EU), the *Protest based parties with Euroscepticism* (for them the anti-EU position is an adjunct to their general opposition to the functioning of the political system, thus they stand outside the established group of parties), the *Established parties with Eurosceptic positions* (either parties that have covered governmental positions or parties that covers position close to the governmental one that adopt Eurosceptic positions) and the *Eurosceptic factions* (significant factions within the existing established party that endorse Eurosceptic positions while the general orientation of their party is pro-EU) (Taggart 1998, 368-369).

political establishment. There are two main reasons explaining why the parties at the margins of national political competition take up the EU issue: the first one is connected to the construction of the EU (as an elite-led project) where the political establishment – the main ‘challenger’ of parties at the margins of the political competition – is dominated by pro-European stances. Consequently, the appropriation of the EU issue by ‘marginal’ parties could be seen as a way to differentiate themselves from the establishment. Second, as observed in chapter 2 (See Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3), pro-European positions are not well defined and are dominated by the tacit assumption that everyone knows what the EU is and in which direction the European integration process should progress. As a consequence, the EU issue is conceptually malleable. This malleability ‘allows different political forces to use scepticism (...) as a mobilising force’ (Taggart 1998, 385). Consequently, Euroscepticism is to be intended as a reaction of certain parties to the party system where they operate and to the ‘prevailing model of political party’ found in that national political system: the pro-European cartel of dominant parties (Taggart 1998, 384; see also Katz and Mair 1995). In a similar vein, Sitter conceives Euroscepticism as a government vs. opposition dynamic at the national level where patterns of competition translate the European issue into party politics (Halikiopoulou et al. 2012). According to Sitter, in fact, Euroscepticism is to be intended as the ‘politics of opposition’ (Sitter 2001, 23). Party-based Euroscepticism relates to several factors like voters alignments, ideology, interest and identity but also to party strategy and organization. However, all these factors are translated into party competition in the context of the national party system, thus if an extreme party (either from the left or from the right of the political spectrum) wishes to participate in governing coalition at the national level, it needs to mitigate its opposition to the EU.

On the contrary, the original purposes of the second mentioned school, the North Carolina School, was to study parties’ positions on the European integration project in general, providing broad explanations of the phenomenon and relying on quantitative data and methods. It is, in fact, indicative that early works by these scholars did not even mention the term ‘Euroscepticism’ (Mudde 2012). Scholars affiliated to this school further developed the study of Euroscepticism not only from a party-based perspective but also from other perspectives such as popular-based Euroscepticism (Eichenberg and Dalton 2007; Krouwel and Abts 2007; Gabel and Scheve 2007) and the diffusion of Euroscepticism in the media (Kriesi 2007; de Vreese 2007)³. According to these scholars, party-ideology is the main driver of Euroscepticism (see also De Vries and Edwards 2009 and Flood and Soborski 2017 for further insight about the role of ideology in shaping parties’ positions *vis-à-vis* the EU). As mentioned before, these works originates from Leonard Ray’s dissertation (1999) who later on

³ These works are contained in two special issues: one edited by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, ‘Understanding Euroscepticism’ (Hooghe and Marks 2007) and one edited by Liesbet Hooghe ‘What drives Euroscepticism?’ (Hooghe 2007).

published a research note⁴ presenting the results of his analysis of parties' positions on the EU deriving from the observation of three main sources of data: parties' manifestos, mass surveys (like the Eurobarometer) and an original expert survey⁵. While Ray's objectives were descriptive (focused on parties' positions on the EU and the increased salience of the EU as a result of the increased EU competencies), his work paved the way to the now famous Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) the first release of which was conducted in 1999⁶. Later studies used the CHES dataset to understand parties' positions on the EU, elaborating the famous 7-points index of parties' positioning on the EU with the lowest score indicating strong opposition to the European integration and the highest score indicating strong support for it⁷. Nowadays the CHES is one of the most widely used sources of parties' positioning on the EU (Bakker et al. 2015). Building on Lipset and Rokkan cleavage theory (1967), the scholars affiliated with the North Carolina School argue that parties' positions on the EU are mainly structured around a new cleavage in European politics. This new dimension of competition has been labelled in various ways: Inglehart (1990) named it post-materialist/materialist; Franklin (1992) labelled it old/new politics while Kitschelt (1994) chose the terms left-libertarian/authoritarian. One pole of these scales includes ecology, alternative politics and libertarianism as core elements; the other pole combines support for traditional values, opposition to migration and defence of the national community. In later works, Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks and Carol J. Wilson summarize those denominations in a new dimension of contestation delimited by two poles: the Green – Alternative – Libertarian – pole (GAL) in opposition to the Traditional – Authoritarian – Nationalist pole (TAN). Relating political parties' stance along the 7-point scale to their position along the GAL/TAN axis, the scholars found an 'inverted U curve relationship'. Parties positioning toward the extremes of the

⁴ The published research note is titled 'Measuring Party Orientation toward European Integration: results from an expert survey' (Ray 1999).

⁵ According to Mudde the data contained in the first expert survey (encompassing four EP elections in 1984, 1988, 1992 and 1996) was sent to 258 scholars, but only a few of them worked specifically on party positions on European integration in general or Euroscepticism in particular. This is why Mudde describes this first wave of data as a *peer survey* rather than an expert survey (Mudde 2012).

⁶ The Chapel Hill Expert Survey, as its name suggests, is an expert survey estimating party positioning on European integration, ideology and policy issues for national parties in a variety of European countries. The first release of the CHES dataset is in 1999. This dataset merges the so-called Ray-Marks-Steenbergen Dataset with Ray's survey (conducted for the EP election in 1984, 1988, 1992 and 1996). See: <http://chesdata.eu/>

⁷ 'An expert survey conducted in 1999 by Gary Marks, Marco Steenbergen, David Scott, and Carole Wilson asks country experts to evaluate the positions of national political parties on European integration on a 7-point scale (ranging from 1 to 7)' (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002, 967). Ray in later works combines the 7-point index with the Sussex distinction between hard and soft Euroscepticism. He argues that parties scoring a value between 1 and 2 of the 7-point scale are to be considered as hard Eurosceptics while parties scoring values ranging between 2 to 3.5-4 should be considered as soft Eurosceptic. On the contrary, parties located between 4 and 5.7 along the 7-points scale are equated to Conti's 'Functional Europeanism' and parties scoring values between 5.7 and 7 on the 7-points scale may be equated to Conti's 'Identity Europeanism' (Conti 2003; Ray 2004).

GAL/TAN axis tended to display a higher level of opposition to the European integration project, while parties positioning toward the centre of the GAL/TAN axis mostly favoured European integration.

Apart from the evident differences between the two approaches summarized in Table 3.1 below, works by scholars belonging to these two schools have contributed to our current understanding of party-based Euroscepticism. However, these two approaches present both strong and weak points.

The Sussex school's main strength is its validity. Works belonging to this approach, in fact, consists of in-depth and detailed studies conducted by experts in the field of Euroscepticism. Furthermore, this approach relies on a more precise typology for the classification of Euroscepticism. However, on the one hand, it still lacks reliability that could be improved by providing clearer definitions and stating the basis upon which parties positions on the EU are evaluated (Mudde 2012). On the other hand, the explanations provided by the Sussex's approach relies heavily – if not exclusively – on strategic tactical explanations of party politics (Flood and Soborski 2017). In other words, as stressed also by Taggart and Szczerbiak in retrospect, the strategies adopted by parties are influenced in complex ways by their ideological identities (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008b).

On the contrary, the North Carolina school uses quantitative data that are reliable (especially from a cross-time perspective), easily available and combinable with other cross-time datasets. Its weakness lies in the lack of detail and depth of the analysis. In fact, if on the one hand, the North Carolina school combines the historical institutional approach to party families with the cleavage theory. On the other hand, the use of quantitative data underplays 'significant differences lying beneath apparent similarities, and significant similarities underlying apparent differences, within or between families' (Flood and Soborski 2017, 38). In other words, an in-depth closer reading of parties' ideological sources could be of help to this approach⁸.

As Mudde points out, what is still striking about the evolution of these two schools is that there has been little 'cross-fertilization' (Mudde 2012, 200) between them, something that can be easily attributed to the differences in their methodological, ontological and epistemological approaches. As a matter of fact, the EU is a set of 'hybrid interlocking institutions' and the role played by parties in one of the levels is fundamental to understand its' position on the EU. However, the EU is also a project, created to guarantee peace and prosperity to its member states, as a consequence, ideology is somehow inseparable from political debates on the EU issue (Flood Soborski 2017, 36).

⁸ Flood and Soborski suggest that an analysis of parties' ideologies should not only be restricted to the analysis of policy programmes and party manifestos but should also include documents for internal audiences within parties, party factions and other political organizations.

Table 3. 1: Comparison of the Sussex and the North Carolina School's models of party-based Euroscepticism

The two main models explaining Euroscepticism		
Issues related to the approaches to Euroscepticism	Sussex School	North Carolina School
<i>Definitions</i>	Great importance. Most influential definition: 'Hard vs. soft' dichotomy of Euroscepticism	No particular attention to definitions. 7-point scale index ranging from strong opposition (value of 1) to strong support (value of 7) to the European integration project
<i>Data and method</i>	Mainly qualitative data and research methods	Mainly quantitative. Longitudinal dataset (CHES). Expert survey on parties positioning on the EU.
<i>Scope</i>	Predominantly focused on party-based Euroscepticism.	Initially intended to study parties' positions on the European integration, later on enlarged beyond party-based Euroscepticism
<i>Explanations</i>	Strategic tactical party competition factors (recognizing the role of ideology)	Ideology as central element of party-based Euroscepticism (elaboration of the GAL-TAN axis as new cleavage).
<i>Strength</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validity (depth, detail, and expertise); • Use of a more precise typology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability (cross-time); • Availability of the data (potential combination with other cross-time datasets)
<i>Weakness</i>	Reliability	Lack of detail and depth

Source: the table is elaborated on Mudde's article 'The Comparative Study of Party-based Euroscepticism: the Sussex versus the North Carolina School' (Mudde 2012)

Besides the fact that both models advanced the scientific understanding of the phenomenon, neither of them is suited to the study of Euroscepticism either from a transnational or from a pan-European perspective, as further explained below (Usherwood 2017).

The next section firstly presents the concept of POS; the early stages of its development related to the study of social movement's (SMs) evolution and performance and its application beyond the realm of SMs to actors like interest groups or political parties. The first part of the next section also reviews the limitation of this concept and how the literature faces them. Later on, it proposes a summary of Usherwood's framework for the study of the emergence of Eurosceptic groups in both pan-European and transnational contexts further detailing the three sets of factors enumerated by the scholar.

3.3 The ‘baseline’ model: drivers of EU-opposition in pan-European and transnational contexts

The two main models presented above refer to two main ‘drivers’ of Euroscepticism: the dynamics of the national political system and parties’ ideology. However, both of them, and more generally the literature on Euroscepticism, focus their attention on the national political arena as the main locus where to observe the phenomenon (Brack 2012, 2013). Nonetheless, more recent researches argue for a more ‘holistic’ approach to the study of this phenomenon considering actors others than political parties (e.g., the media or non-party groups) and dimensions others than the national one (Usherwood and Startin 2013). These works primarily conclude that Euroscepticism should no longer be regarded as a passing phenomenon; on the contrary, it should be seen as a ‘constituent element of the European public sphere’ (Risse and van Steeg 2003; Usherwood 2017). According to Usherwood, in fact, the assumption that Eurosceptic actors are unlikely bedfellows in terms of cross-border cooperation due to their nationalist, pro-sovereignty sentiments is no longer given. Such dynamics are, in fact, likely to become more influential in the coming years. Consequently, studies on the development and functioning of Eurosceptic groups operating both in transnational and in pan-European contexts should consider factors pertaining to the characteristics of the actors themselves, the national sphere where the actors evolve, and the characteristics of the supranational environment where they operate. This is the main reason why Usherwood argues for the application of the concept of POS developed by Kitschelt (1986), to understand which opportunities (and/or constraints) affect the mobilization of both transnational and pan-European opposition. The next paragraph starts with a presentation of the concept of POS in general, detailing the main steps of its evolution and reporting how it can be adapted to study Eurosceptic actors operating in the supranational context of the EP.

3.3.1 The concept of POS applied to the study of pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups.

The concept of POS has been firstly developed by Kitschelt in his influential work ‘Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies’ (Kitschelt 1986). As the title suggests, the concept of POS was firstly used in the study of the impact of SMs’ protest on the development of nuclear technologies in four countries (France, Sweden, USA and West Germany). Kitschelt was the first one to formulate a set of exogenous POS impacting on SMs’ formation and performance. He defined POS as a ‘specific configuration of resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents for social mobilization which facilitates the development of protest movements in some instances and constrains them in some others’ (Kitschelt 1986: 58).

According to this scholar, the application of such concept explains 1) the variation among SMs with similar demands in different settings, 2) the choice of SM's protest strategy, and 3) SMs' impact on their environment. For this purpose, Kitschelt identifies three different sets of variables mainly exogenous to the SMs, the first set deals with coercive, normative, remunerative and informational resources that an SM can extract from the setting and employ in its protest. The second set of factors entails the potential for an SM to access to the public sphere and the political decision-making arena that is shaped by the existent institutional rules. The last set of factors relates to the appearance or disappearance of other SMs engaged in the same cause over time. He argues, in fact, that the simultaneous appearance of SMs contesting the institutions of social control may represent one of the best POS for SMs.

This theoretical framework received criticism from several viewpoints, mainly contesting its precision. Understanding if this framework is enough suited to the study of SMs' protest is not the core point of this work, however, two critiques are of central importance to the development of Usherwood's theoretical framework for the study of pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic actors. Kitschelt's model was in fact mainly criticised due to its understanding of POS as composed by factors exogenous to the SMs, while living aside factors endogenous to the groups (Tarrow 1998). In their study of interest groups in the context of the EU multi-level system, Princen and Karremans (2008) state that POSs can be both exogenous and endogenous to the political process since POSs may advantage or constrain interest groups but may also vary as a result of group activity. In fact, POSs are exogenous in origin but still need to be recognized by such groups, thus being framed as opportunities and used alongside the groups' resources (Usherwood 2017). The second set of critiques is also central to this work, the first models of POS (e.g.: Kitschelt 1986, Tarrow 1998) indeed tended to conflate structural and contingent factors. This had two main consequences: first, the 'very success of the idea has led to extensive concept-stretching, to the point that almost anything could be considered as a part of an opportunity structure under certain conditions' (Usherwood 2017). Second, the increased focus on contingent factors at the expenses of structural ones risked downgrading the role played by those structural factors within the POS that might condition the action of all actors. These are the main reasons why recent works moved away from an explicit discussion and definition of POS.

However, the literature still uses the concept of POS when addressing the aforementioned problems also beyond the realm of SMs and applies it to the study of the success of political parties. Arzheimer and Carter (2006) in their study about the success of right-wing extremist parties in seven European countries⁹, explore the effect of voters' socio-demographic variables alongside institutional, party system and conjunctural variables (defined by the two authors as long-term, medium-term and

⁹ The countries included in the analysis are Austria, Belgium, France, Denmark, Germany, Italy and Norway.

short-term contextual variables respectively)¹⁰. According to their analysis, socio-demographic factors, combined with permanent institutional factors and more short-term (volatile or conjunctural) factors, produce an overall peculiar POS that explains the rise of right-wing extremist parties in the studied countries.

Usherwood's theoretical framework is more 'modest' (Usherwood 2017) when compared to Arzheimer and Carter's one (2006) due to two main reasons: first, data for the study of Eurosceptic groups in both transnational and supranational environments are more limited. Second, the opportunity of comparative work is much more restricted due to the very nature of pan-European and transnational Euroscepticism. However, his framework suggests three sets of factors both endogenous and exogenous to Eurosceptic actors that are useful to understand the dynamics of this phenomenon. This is of particular importance due to the fact that the political space in which such forces operate (both supranational and transnational arenas) is largely unstructured 'making an appreciation of what matters internally to any given group all the more consequential' (Usherwood 2017).

Starting from these preliminary considerations, Usherwood elaborates a theoretical framework to observe how the combination of three specific sets of factors may create a POS favouring the formation of pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups as detailed below.

Endogenous perspective: ideology to the fore. The European political sphere – as much as it exists (Risse and Van de Steeg 2003) builds upon pre-existing national political spheres; consequently, it is imaginable that the 'ideological imperatives' of transnational and pan-European political groups will reflect those of the national political spheres. In other words, transnational and pan-European groups' ideology will be reflective of national political ideologies: pan-European and transnational groups are likely to form out of pre-existing national groups coming together under similar ideological groundings. This dynamics is clearly reflected in the EP where generally 'Eurosceptic' groups have formed among MEPs but with little or no ideological depth behind them (Usherwood 2017; Brack 2013). As a consequence, we might expect that the ideological difference between different Eurosceptic groups will tend to be bigger than that between Eurosceptics and non-Eurosceptics. Taking the EP as the central object of research, this is to say that the pro-anti European distinction in the EP is not so much developed (Cheneval and Schimmelfenning 2013) and that national delegations tend to aggregate according to pre-existing ideological distinctions following an extreme-left-left-right-extreme-right divide (Bressanelli

¹⁰ The analysis done by Arzheimer and Carter (2006) considers as long-term institutional variables the electoral system and the degree of decentralization/federalism. The medium-term party system variables considered refer to: the ideological positions of other competitors in the party system, the degree of convergence between mainstream parties and the coalition format in the respective party systems. The short-term contextual variables refer to the level of immigration within a nation-state and the economic performance of that member state. This last factor is related to the supposed competition between the indigenous population and non-EU migrants.

2012). This is to say that, even if weak, ideology is a pervasive glue holding together national delegations from different member states¹¹. 'To draw on physical analogy, ideology is like gravity: it pervades the space and provides some general structuration, but a structuration that is much weaker than the other dynamics and forces that occasionally encounters' (Usherwood 2017, 19).

The exogenous perspective: institutional opportunities. Within the national context, institutions represent the dominant, highly articulated and regulated, structures. However, Usherwood argues that it is possible to draw a parallel with the supranational level. As a consequence, the most important set of institutional POS is to be found at the heart of the EU: in its archipelago of activity and activists – the Brussels bubble – but also in secondary nodes around other institutions such as the Council of Europe or the North Atlantic Free Trade Organization, the European Free Trade Organization and sub-European groupings (Usherwood 2017). Such institutions provide pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups with the sufficient material and non-material resources to pursue their objectives; consequently, both pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups will form around such institutions. He also stresses the potentiality of informal institutions in shaping the formation and the activity of Eurosceptic groups. Informal institutions are particularly relevant in the evolution of transnational groups of EU-opponents. He argues that besides the fact that mobilization against the EU is unevenly distributed (both in form and in content) among countries, whenever such mobilization directs itself to European level activities, it creates the possibility for further mobilization in other countries, similarly to a sort of contagion. Among the informal institutions, he also highlights the role played by the media: both public and personal communication channels (e.g.: classical media outlet or personal social media) can contribute to the development of Eurosceptic groupings helping them to broadly diffuse their claims. Having access to a public arena constitutes, in fact, a valuable weapon for Eurosceptic actors. In summary, additionally to their benefits and potentials of attraction for such groupings, institutions provide a degree of stability and are reliable (at least in the medium-term perspective).

A third exogenous perspective: events as opportunities. According to Usherwood, events besides being an 'eclectic' category difficult to model and predict, 'create extended moments where pre-existing political actors and processes move into a contingent constellation of interaction, to debate and seek policy outcomes' (Usherwood 2017, 21). Generally speaking, such pan-European events have no national source but affect many if not all EU member states or even beyond. There are two types of events, those intentionally driven (intentional events) and those that are independent of the political context,

¹¹ It is to be noted that the ideological core of the resulting pan-European group will be thinner than to the one of each national delegation.

thus unintentional. Intentional events are rare and mainly represented by Treaty reforms. A major example in this case, as seen previously, is the Maastricht Treaty that favoured the passage from ‘permissive consensus’ to ‘constraining dissensus’ helping the formation and consolidation of Eurosceptic groups all around Europe. The second set of events is generally less clearly definable, however, such unintentional events follow logics similar to the intentional ones. The simple fact that such events exist moves attention and interest toward the European level, providing space for the rise of views that are alternative to the dominant one: Euroscepticism is thus the alternative to the dominant pro-European view. An example of unintentional events favouring the development of Eurosceptic groups around Europe is the Euro area crisis. The main difference between intentional and unintentional events is that in the second case the national political order plays a larger role. This is to say that the development of contestation to the EU depends on country-specific needs in the context of the unintentional events. In summary, for both types of events, Usherwood hypothesizes that the more wide-reaching the event (and its effects) the more profound the impact, so the more likely there will be a transnational or pan-European response and contestation. Nevertheless, according to the scholar, the shape of contestation will be highly dependent on the type of event itself. Table 3.2 below summarizes the three sets of factors highlighted by Usherwood.

Table 3. 2: Political opportunity structures shaping the formation of transnational and pan-European Eurosceptic groups.

POS shaping pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic mobilization		
Structure	Nature of the impact	Examples
Ideology	Endogenous. Ideologies represent a <i>weak</i> but <i>pervasive</i> effect. Groups align first with national political current, then with pan-European/transnational ones.	Far-right/right/left/far-left cleavage in the formation of EP party groups.
Institutions	Exogenous impact. Both formal and informal institutions in transnational political space affect groups’ formation and activity.	Material and non-material incentives provided to political groups in the EP help shaping their formation.
Contingent events	Exogenous impact. It provides the opportunity for mobilization (public profile and impact). Two types of contingent events: <i>intentional</i> (e.g., treaty reforms); <i>unintentional</i> (e.g., crises)	Formation of groups in times of treaty reforms and/or in times of crisis (e.g., Euro area crisis).

Source: re-elaboration of Usherwood model (Usherwood 2017).

This ‘baseline model aims at studying the formation of pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups, however, this work argues that it can be applied to the study of national parties’ positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU in the EP.

As further detailed below, the national parties entering in the EP, on the one hand, show a 'pre-constituted' ideologically grounded stance *vis-à-vis* the EU, on the other hand, they play a more or less marginal role in political competition at the national level that might shape their attitude with relation to the EU. Once national parties populate the EP arena, they are somehow 'forced' to constitute political groups that, on the one hand, have their own ideological grounding and, on the other hand, play a more or less marginal role in political competition in the EP, two factors that potentially impact on national parties' positioning on the EU. Finally, national parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU might be conditioned by country-specific reactions to contextual factors like the degree of vulnerability of their respective countries to both the migration and the economic crises. Consequently, it is imaginable that all the three sets of factors reported above, not only influence the formation of transnational and supranational groups but also national parties' positioning on the EU. The next section further details how these three sets of factors might influence national parties' positions toward the EU.

3.4 POS shaping patterns of EU-opposition in the EP

This section firstly presents the 'endogenous' ideology-related factors (sub-section 3.4.1), it then details the exogenous factors impacting on parties positioning on the EU starting from the institutional POS belonging to both the national and the supranational sphere of political competition (sub-section 3.4.2). Finally, it presents the exogenous factors related to the country-specific degrees of vulnerability to two exogenous events: the economic and the migration crisis (sub-section 3.4.3). The section formulates six hypotheses and two general assumptions to be tested in chapter 7 of this work.

3.4.1 Endogenous factors: ideology

The first factor taken into consideration by Usherwood is 'endogenous' in the sense that it pertains to each observed national party referring to its ideological orientation. National parties enter the EP arena through a direct election held every five years in each of the EU Member states. Once parties enter in the EP, they are granted the right to compose party groups, which are generally an 'aggregation of like-minded sharing at least some policy objectives' (Bressanelli 2012, 751). In fact, according to the EP's rule of procedure no. 32 'Members form themselves into groups according to their political affinities. Parliament need not normally evaluate the political affinity of a group. In forming a group together under this Rule, the Members concerned accept by definition that they have political affinity'. However, if this process of aggregation based on the general ideological orientation is 'easier'¹² for mainstream national parties (they own more seats and can fulfil the criteria foreseen by the

¹² EPPGs are the result of pre-existing national groups coming together following the prevalent, pre-existing lines of competitions (left-right distinction). However, the resulting group have a narrower

EP's rules of procedure¹³), a similar reasoning is not always applicable to so-called Eurosceptic parties that typically struggle to reach the sufficient number of MEPs from the sufficient number of member states to compose an EPPG also due to their ideological divergences. As observed in the previous chapter, opposition to the EU is exercised by a variegated group of actors which general ideological orientation varies between the far-left and the far-right of the ideological spectrum. This pushes some researchers to describe their presence in the EP as a 'paradox' since such parties are commonly equated by strong nationalistic stances while working in a supranational environment (Benedetto 2008) (according to Halikiopoulou et al. 2012 this consideration holds true for both right and left wing nationalism).

Considering EU-opponents' presence in the EP as a paradox is, however, to confuse strategies with objectives (Usherwood 2017). These actors gain representation in the EP, a relatively easy-to-access arena, due to the second-order nature of the EP elections (Reif and Schmidt 1980). Once there, they rationally profit from the benefit of a public arena in terms of access to both the public sphere and to material and non-material facilities: to do that they should aggregate in EPPGs. Thus, being, on the one hand, 'forced' to build an EPPG and being, on the other hand, ideologically heterogeneous, the resulting EPPG will 'forcefully' be ideological heterogeneous. As former researches in the field observe, strategy or the pursuit of 'pure office goals' (Bressanelli 2012, 752) alongside material and non-material incentives offered by the EP arena guide national parties in the choice of their partners to compose an EPPG¹⁴. Emblematic in this sense is the case of UKIP that, despite the ideological divergences, works together with the FSM in the EFDD. UKIP could not count on resources coming from the national level due to its low representation in the British House of Commons. Consequently, the only resources at its disposal are the one coming from the EP. This is why UKIP and FSM have been described by previous research in the field as an 'odd couple' working in the same EPPG (Carlotti 2017; Franzosi, Marone, and Salvati 2015).

In summary, EU-opponents may 'opportunistically' choose to form an EPPG with other parties from other member states (as long as they have the requisites to do so) despite only partially sharing

ideological depth when compared to national party groups in the national arenas (Usherwood 2017). Bartolini describes the existence of what he terms 'Europarties' as surprising due to their generally low ideological homogeneity. He justifies the feasibility of these aggregations noting that, on the one hand, the advantages to building a group in the EP are small but, on the other hand, they are bigger than the costs since 'these alliances have no palpable perspective of electoral reward/punishment in either the European or national election' (Bartolini 2012, 161).

¹³ According to the EP's internal rules of procedure (see rule 32) a group of 25 MEPs from at least one-quarter of all EU member states can form an EPPG. EPPGs are granted higher financial and administrative allocations when compared to non-attached MEPs.

¹⁴ Brack argues that so-called Eurosceptic MEPs use their time and the resources obtained from the EP to campaign elsewhere since both their attendance to the EP sittings and their relative EPPGs' voting record are low (Brack 2013).

their ideological orientation. Consequently, the formed EPPG will be ideologically heterogeneous. On the contrary, mainstream parties tend to aggregate in larger EPPGs that are based on a relatively stronger ideological homogeneity.

What is still not clear is how and if the degree of ideological heterogeneity of the EPPGs might shape patterns of national parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU. Do national parties belonging to more ideologically heterogeneous EPPGs tend to propose a similarly higher opposition to the EU? To answer this question this work formulates the following association:

A1: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP are associated with the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG they belong to.

Even if it is true that ideology might be considered as a 'weak glue' holding together EPPGs in the EP, a potential influence of the general EPPGs' ideology on patterns of EU-opposition in the EP cannot *a priori* be discharged. In fact, as proposed by Tsebelis and Garrett (2000) political conflicts among EU institutions reflect 'varying preferences about the regulatory environment at the European level that may be arrayed on the traditional left-right dimension' (Tsebelis and Garrett 2000, 11). According to the two scholars, politics at the supranational level is mainly concerned with economic-related issues. Thus political competition at the EU level mainly relates to choices on whether the EU should employ market-based solutions to social problems or if it should opt for government regulation (Otjes and Van der Veer 2016). Consequently, the dominant dimension shaping political conflict concerning the future trajectories of the EU is based on decisions on how much the EU should leave the market free or regulate it, which in their turn are shaped around the left-right ideological distinction.

Aiming at analysing political competition in the EP, previous research on Roll Call Votes (RCVs) has demonstrated that EPPGs tend to be cohesive in their voting patterns and that cohesiveness of EPPGs over the years has increased constantly (especially for larger EPPGs): 'national parties only rarely instruct their MEPs to vote differently from the party group because they are not interested in weakening the group' (Franzosi, Marone and Salvati 2015, 118). As a consequence, considering Tsebelis and Garetts' model of political competition in the EU, we should expect that EPPGs' voting patterns and, consequently, national parties' voting patterns are structured around the left-right continuum.

Thus, if on the one hand, EPPGs' general ideological orientation influence voting patterns in the EP, on the other hand, what it is still not clear is if the general ideological orientation of the EPPG impacts on patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP. This is why this work formulates the following association to be empirically tested:

A2: Patterns of EU-opposition are associated with the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which national parties belong.

As observed above, since national parties' incentives to create an EPPG are not only ideologically driven, it is plausible to think that national parties' ideological orientation influence patterns of EU-opposition independently from both the ideological heterogeneity of an EPPG and the general ideological position of the EPPG they belong to. As showed before, the orientation of national parties to the EU is seen as depending on their position on the left-right cleavage, on the GAL versus TAN axis (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002; 2004). From an ideological perspective, right-wing parties oppose the EU due to their traditionalist, authoritarian and nationalist ideological characteristics (TAN) and parties from the extreme left oppose the EU due to their green-alternative-libertarian ideological orientation (GAL). From a strategy view-point right-wing parties strongly link their opposition to the EU to immigration and the defence of the national community and culture against foreigners, while left-wing parties' opposition to the EU is 'rooted in the perception that European integration fundamentally threatens cherished radical left goals' (Hooghe et al. 2004, 128), since the EU favours neoliberal policies (Halikiopoulou et al. 2012).

It is thus fundamental to generate a hypothesis that goes beyond the EPPGs' ideology. Other things been equal, we can, in fact, imagine that national parties belonging to different EPPGs are similarly opposed to the EU depending on their degree of extremism along the left-right continuum (extreme left and extreme right parties). In other words, two parties belonging to two different EPPGs may share their views about the EU as a function of their general ideological extremeness:

H1: Patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of each national party's ideological extremeness, independently of the general ideological position of the EPPG. The more parties position themselves toward the extremes of the left-right ideological continuum the higher their degree of EU-opposition will be.

3.4.2 Exogenous factors: institutions as POS

Euroscepticism at the supranational level remained for a long time unstudied also due to the development of the EP itself. The EP starts its history in 1952 as the Common Assembly of the nascent European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The Assembly was initially not central to the plans of the founding fathers of European integration (Scully 2005); together with the European Court of Justice, it played a role of control and scrutiny (Neunreither 2000). Members of this Assembly were nominated among the members of member states' national parliaments, thus leading to an over-representation of mainstream parties or, more generally, representatives favourable to the European

integration project (Brack 2013). In other words, expression of opposition to the EU and the European integration project in the EP was almost limited if not even absent¹⁵.

The first enlargements to Denmark and the UK (1973) brought some changes in the composition of the 'EP'. In fact, representatives from both the Conservative (UK) and communist parties (Denmark) entered in the EP bringing instances of Euroscepticism in the parliamentary arena. However, it is only in 1979 with the first direct EP elections that most of the Eurosceptic parties face an opportunity to easily enter the EP arena through direct elections (Leconte 2010), especially due to the already mentioned second-order nature of the EP elections (Reif and Schmidt 1980). This theory suggests three main conclusions: 1) turnout in EP election is generally low when compared to national elections (first-order elections); 2) small (and generally protest) parties perform better in such elections; 3) governing parties (at national level) are punished for their performance (Hobolt and Wittrock 2011). In summary, 'intentional' events (e.g., the first direct election of the EP) coupled with the nature of EP election (second-order elections) contributed, on the one hand, to the dissemination of Euroscepticism around Europe and, on the other hand, to its consolidation in the EP arena (see the results of the last EP elections), something of particular importance for the EU's future developments.

However, if it is on the one hand true that such parties are consolidating in the EP; on the other hand, Eurosceptic forces still, generally¹⁶, play a 'marginal' role in the political competition at national level, being relegated to the opposition flank, but increasingly getting representation. Consequently, one further aspect to be taken into consideration to understand patterns of EU-opposition in the EP is the role played by national parties in the national political sphere that indirectly affects the inter-institutional arrangements of the supranational sphere. In their study about the impact of Europeanization on ethno-regionalist parties, De Winter and Cachafeiro (2002) argue that two structural factors of the EU must be taken into consideration. According to these scholars, the main party families in the EP have extra-parliamentary access to EU-decision making bodies. This is due to the fact that national parties belonging to the main EPPGs (the European People Party – EPP, the Socialists and Democrats for Europe – S&D, the European Conservatives and Reformists – ECR and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe – ALDE) also cover governing positions at national

¹⁵ According to Brack (2013), the only prominent exceptions to these rules were the representatives of the French Gaullist and some from some liberal parties in the Netherlands and Germany.

¹⁶ A major example of party generally belonging to the 'margins' of the national political sphere that scored impressive results in the last rounds of elections both national and European is the Greek Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA). This party is currently represented in the EP and belongs to the left-wing ('soft-Eurosceptic' – Cammino and Verzichelli 2016) EPPG of the Green United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL). Furthermore, it holds the majority in its national government and, consequently, it is also represented in the Council even though not in the Commission. The current Greek commissioner (Dimitris Avramopoulos) has in fact been nominated under the Greek national government led Antonis Samaras (active between 2012 and 2015) exponent of the New Democracy party a liberal conservative party in Greece.

level. Consequently, due to their participation in national government, they influence the nomination of commissioners (thus the composition of the EC) and form by default the Council; conversely, ethno-regionalist parties are excluded from such channels of influence¹⁷. Thus such parties see their political action, their resources and their visibility ‘dramatically reduced by size and structural opposition status’ (De Winter and Cachafeiro 2002, 485). This line of reasoning can be applied to parties opposing the EU independently of their ideological standpoint. Indeed, if it is, on the one hand, true that after the last EP election in 2014 such dynamics partially changed. On the other hand, most of the ‘Eurosceptics’ either do not cover governing positions at the national level or are not even considered as eligible partners. Consequently, since they have no possibility to ‘use’ other channels of representation (e.g., having a commissioner in the EC or being represented in the Council) they will take advantage from their participation in the EP’s activities (e.g.: speeches held during the EP’s plenary sessions). It is thus imaginable that parties not ‘represented’ in the EC or in the Council or more generally parties not covering governing positions at national level, will be freer to express EU-opposition when compared to their mainstream counterparts. Other things being equal, we can formulate a second hypothesis as follows:

H2: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP vary as a function of their ‘marginality’ in political competition at the national level. Parties not belonging to governing coalitions at the national level (or not even eligible to cover governing positions at the national level) will display a higher degree of opposition to the EU.

As observed in the previous section, national parties’ aggregation in EPPGs in the EP (either according to some general ideological lines or to strategic moves) is central for the mere redistribution of material and non-material resources. However, the construction of EPPGs represents an institutional incentive that is fundamental for political competition at the supranational level. If it is, on the one hand, true that so-called Eurosceptic groups might create EPPGs, such EPPGs are generally ‘marginal’ in the supranational political competition.

Political competition in European politics in general and in the EP, in particular, has been explained by previous research in the field according to three main models (Marks and Steenbergen 2002): the first one is the called IR model (Gabel and Hix 2002) stating that political conflict in the EU focuses on the nature and speed of the integration process concerning the division of powers and competencies between national states and the supranational level (Hix 2001). According to this model

¹⁷ An example of exception thereof as argued by De Winter and Cachafeiro is the Italian Northern League. This party participated twice in the centre-right governing coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi (briefly in 1994 and more successfully from June 2001 to April 2005) (De Winter and Cachafeiro 2002).

political competition is shaped along a pro-anti European dimension. The second model already sketched in the previous section is the one elaborated by Tsebelis and Garret (2000) and is called 'Regulation Model', where political competition is mainly shaped around the left-right ideological dimension. The third model is called the 'Hix-Lord model' and states that the left-right and the integration dimensions are perpendicular and independent. According to this model, the left-right distinction is the dominant one because the EU focuses primarily on economic issues¹⁸. The pro-anti European integration is neither as important nor as stable as the left-right distinction (Hix et al. 2006), however it sees the large established pro-European groups in the EP (EPP, S&D and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe - ALDE¹⁹) standing against so-called Eurosceptic EPPGs that are as a consequence more marginal to political competition in the EP. The EPP and S&D (and more recently ALDE) always had a majority coalition in the EP, as a consequence they operate similarly to a majority coalition in national parliamentary systems and has been labelled the 'grand coalition' (or 'giant coalition' – Neuhold and Settembri 2007) akin to Christian and Social-democratic coalitions in Germany and Austria (Kreppel and Tsebelis 1999; Kreppel and Hix 2003; Otjes and Van de Veer 2016).

Among the three proposed models, the Hix Lord model is largely considered as the more adequate to explain political competition at the supranational level. Besides the left-right dimension of competition, the pro-anti EU dimension enables to capture the inter-institutional dynamics at supranational level with parties represented in the Council voting one way and parties not represented voting in the other way (Hix et al. 2006). In summary, the existence of a 'grand coalition' enables the largest established groups in the EP (EPP, S&D and ALDE) to work together so as to avoid compromise with marginal EU-opposition EPPGs (Benedetto 2008), this is the main reason why the EU has generally be seen as a consensual system.

A further consideration concerning more marginal EPPGs is fundamental to formulate the next hypothesis. Recent works, in fact, assess that MEPs coming from more 'marginal' EPPGs are freer to act in the EP when compared to representatives of larger and more established party groups (Brack 2012; 2013). This is mainly due to the fact that most of the 'marginal' EPPGs have been constituted 'on

¹⁸ It is, however, to be noted that some researches in the field account for the fact that the left-right distinction not only encompasses purely economic issues but also environmental and law-and-order policies (Hix 2001, Hix et al 2006).

¹⁹ While in the first three EP legislatures both the EPP and the Party of European Socialist (the PES, the current S&D) composed the so-called grand-coalition, since the 4th EP legislature, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) EPPG is considered as an integrative part of the grand-coalition.

the basis of an “agreement to disagree”²⁰ and members act and vote as they see fit’ (Brack 2012, 160)²¹. Other things being equal, national parties’ members belonging to marginal EPPGs are less constrained from the internal rules of each EPPG and are freer to express their opposition to the EU. In other words, MEPs from marginal groups are freer to express EU-opposition through ‘individual type of actions such as speeches or parliamentary questions’ (Brack 2013, 90).

Allegedly, future EP and national election will subvert the composition of the EP and the inter-institutional arrangements of the supranational level of governance favouring on the one hand, the creation of larger and probably less marginal EPPGs opposed to the EU and, on the other hand, the increased representation of EU-opponents in other EU decision-making arenas. However, the current situation still sees EU-opponents (and their EPPGs) playing a relatively marginal role in political competition in the EU in general and in the EP in particular. Consequently, taking into consideration both the models of political competition in the EP and the studies on MEPs’ behaviour it is possible to formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP vary as a function of the ‘marginality’ of the EPPG they belong to. The more marginal the EPPG the higher EU-opposition expressed by national parties belonging to that EPPG will be.

As mentioned previously, EU-opposition may vary as a function of both formal and informal institutional POS. The two hypotheses reported above refer to formal institutional POS. However, one last informal institutional POS is to be taken into consideration when assessing patterns of EU-opposition.

EU institutions (especially the EC, the Court of Justice and the EP) are considered as the bastions of European integration inhabited by pro-integrationist actors whose activities favoured the process of European integration. This is particularly true for the EP especially since its first direct elections in 1979. After this date, in fact, the EP and its members have promoted a stronger and more ambitious political union at the supranational level, an example of this is the adoption of the Spinelli Report²² in 1984 urging EU institutions to move forward in the process of European integration (Brack

²⁰ A recent example of this compromise is the ENF EPPG: it took approximately one and a half year of intensive negotiations to find the sufficient number of MEPs from the sufficient number of member states to build up an EPPG.

²¹ According to Brack: ‘The situation of Eurosceptic MEPs is particular in this respect. Unlike members of large groups, they (MEPs belonging to smaller groups) are freer to act: they have to comply to a lesser extent with rules of conduct and voting instructions’ (Brack 2013, 89).

²² The Spinelli Report is based on the *Manifesto di Ventotene* written by Altiero Spinelli and Alberto Rossi in 1941 during Spinelli’s exile period in the island of Ventotene in the Tyrrhenian Sea advocating the idea of the *United States of Europe*.

and Costa 2017). In other words, parties' representatives in the EP might be considered as promoters of the European integration project.

The literature dealing with MEPs' behaviour within the supranational arena of the EP signals a potential relationship between the degree of MEPs' socialisation within the EP and their attitude toward the EU and the European integration project. In a nutshell, this theory suggests that MEPs' showing a longer experience within the EP (thus covering more mandates within the EP) tend to be less opposed to the EU than the 'younger' exponents (Brack 2017). More into details, starting from pragmatic considerations related to the political practice of the EU, Navarro sustains the thesis that the 'socialization effect' that MEPs may experience in the EP is strictly related to the concept of European integration since 'both notions refer to the cohesion of a group' (Navarro, 2007: 181)²³. Alongside this consideration, Navarro argues that the EP plays a voluntary crucial role in the reinforcement of the European construction. As stressed previously, the EP moved from a simple scrutiny institution (in 1952 as the assembly of the ECSC) to a pure decision-making body, such shift has been possible also thanks to the same EP's representatives. In other words, the representatives belonging to a supranational institution have an interest in defending that institution and increasing its powers. As a consequence, it is legitimate to think that those MEPs spending longer time within the institutional framework of the EP will show a higher degree of support for the EU than their 'younger' colleagues. The effects of seniority in connection to a socialization effect have been tested also outside of the EP; an example above all is the study by Mughan and colleagues (1997) concerning the British House of Commons. The scholars demonstrate that the time spent in the institution lowers the degree of radicalism expressed by parliamentarians. From these considerations it is thus possible to think that an 'informal' institutional factor shaping patterns of EU-opposition is related to the socialization effect deriving from the degree of MEPs' experience in the EP:

H4: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP will vary as a negative function of the seniority of their MEPs. The less national parties' MEPs are socialized within the EP the higher their EU-opposition will be.

3.4.3 Exogenous factors: events as POS

Usherwood's framework recognises two different types of events shaping the formation of pan-European and transnational Eurosceptic groups: intentional and unintentional. For the purposes of this

²³ As stressed by Navarro, European integration may be defined through Haas definition as 'the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over pre-existing national states' (Haas 1958, 17).

work, the attention is focused on unintentional events, more specifically the two main crises affecting the EU: the immigration crisis and the economic crisis.

‘Have the Euro crisis and the immigration crisis congealed a distinctive structure of conflict in Europe?’, with this opening question, Hooghe and Marks’ work (2018, 1) argues that Europe has been transformed by a new divide which has in its turn mainly developed around the two crises that the EU is experiencing: the immigration crisis and the economic crisis. They argue for the rise of a *transnational* cleavage concerning the defence of national, political and social-economic ways of life against external actors who penetrate the state by migrating, exchanging goods and exerting rules. The two scholars argue that both the economic and the immigration crises ‘reveal the causal power of social forces in the face of established institutions’ (Hooghe and Marks 2018, 2). This is to say that both the economic and the immigration crises contributed to unpredicted developments throughout Europe such as the formation of rejectionist parties from the left and the right (Hobolt 2016; Hobolt and Tilley 2016) and gave an impulse to the British rejection of the EU membership. Consequently, they constitute two events with a transnational character that can potentially impact on patterns of EU-opposition as expressed by national parties within the EP arena. The next paragraph shortly describes the evolution of both the economic and the immigration crises alongside the main measures taken by the EU to face them. The core objective of the next paragraph is to explain the reasons why the two crises created distinctions between the EU member states, how such distinctions translated in higher or lower levels of vulnerability of the various EU member states to the crises, and how such different degrees of vulnerability could impact on patterns of EU-opposition.

3.4.3.1 Economic and migration crises: unintentional events shaping EU-opposition

In the immediate aftermath of the economic crisis, after Lehman Brothers’ collapse, Angela Merkel declared that ‘the guarantee that no other important financial institutions would be allowed to fail should be given by each country separately, not by the EU acting jointly’²⁴. As a consequence of this declaration, the economic crisis transmuted in a distinct European crisis, where each member state was pushed to act on its own to save its financial institutions. This observation is coupled with other two factors: on the one hand, the anti-bail-out German public was fed by Merkel government’s commitment to preserving Article 125 of the Maastricht Treaty²⁵ (Hooghe and Marks 2018). On the

²⁴ <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/george-soros-on-the-euro-crisis-germany-must-lead-or-leave-a-855270-3.html>

²⁵ Art 125 co. 1 of the TFEU: ‘The Union shall not be liable for or assume the commitments of central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of any Member State, without prejudice to mutual financial guarantees for the joint execution of a specific project. A Member State shall not be liable for or assume the commitments of

other hand, the ordo-liberalist rhetoric described by Angela Merkel as the values of a Swabian housewife²⁶ with 'saving, parsimony and the avoidance of debt, being the key to success' (Blyth 2013, 115) quickly diffused around Europe.

This rhetoric was translated in practice into series of *ad hoc* negotiations among national executives deciding for financial bailouts for indebted countries in return for their implementation of stringent national austerity policies. Some scholars argue that these negotiations have advanced as a form of "depoliticized" economic governance, led by the national financial ministers in alliance with the European Central Bank (ECB) and with support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF)' (Statham and Trenz 2015, 10). According to Statham and Trenz, the Fiscal Stability Treaty illustrates the new 'defensive strategy' enacted by national executives delegating their power to supranational (more or less accountable) institutions to avoid conflict. As an example, under the mantra of 'doing whatever it takes to save the Euro'²⁷, since 2012 the ECB (an institution with no popular pressure) instrumentally provided the needed liquidity to face the Euro crisis. This is coupled with piecemeal reforms, mechanism of financial surveillance and the banking union that did 'just enough to save the Eurozone and avert the default of heavily indebted states' (Hooghe and Marks 2018, 9).

In summary, the economic crisis led to the 'depoliticisation' of the economic governance by national executives that relied on supranational and international institutions' interventions. However, the growing involvement of EU institutions²⁸ in national economic politics contributed to increasing citizens' perception that the EU is the main actor to be blamed for the consequences of the economic crisis (Hobolt and de Vries 2016). Consequently, being the EU citizens more aware of the fact that the 'EU matters', the European integration issue becomes politicised and increases its salience (Statham and Trenz 2014; Börzel and Risse 2017; Hooghe and Marks 2018)²⁹ also thanks to the role played by the media (both old and new) in the diffusion of public conflict around this thematic (Börzel and Risse

central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of another Member State, without prejudice to mutual financial guarantees for the joint execution of a specific project.'

²⁶ See: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/17/angela-merkel-austerity-swabian-housewives>

²⁷ See: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/9428894/Debt-crisis-Mario-Draghi-pledges-to-do-whatever-it-takes-to-save-euro.html>

²⁸ Alongside supranational institutions, the crisis saw the involvement of international institutions like the IMF. In the context of the Euro crisis, the IMF worked alongside the ECB and the EC in the so-called Troika with the main aim to monitor countries experiencing difficulties in their economic situations.

²⁹ Hooghe and Marks (2018) using expert survey data (Chapel Hill Expert Survey) demonstrate that the salience of the European integration issue has increased markedly since 2006 moving from a mean of 4.6 in 2006 to a mean of 5.93 in 2014 (a difference that is highly significant $p=.000$).

2017). According to several scholars, such increased politicization of the European integration³⁰ issue contributed to the rise in consensus of parties critical of the EU particularly during the last EP elections (even though not exclusively confined to such elections) (Hobolt and De Vries 2016, Hobolt and Tilly 2016, Vasilopoulou, Halikiopoulou and Exadaktylos 2014).

EU's inability to face the economic crisis and the renewed politicization of the European integration issues had a twofold impact. Firstly, a distinction between EU member states emerged: on the one hand, there are the 'creditor' member states that experienced a lighter impact of the economic crisis and were 'forced' to save those countries in economic difficulties. On the other hand, there are the 'debtor' member states where the economic crisis had a stronger impact and that, in some cases, needed the financial assistance from the EU. The latter were helped to solve their sovereign debt crisis through more formal institutional reform of the European Monetary Union constraining national fiscal policy. Such formal policies were highly contested in the public sphere across the EU for several reasons, such as the increased transfer of competencies toward the supranational sphere or the imposition of severe austerity measures. Secondly, the renewed salience of the EU issue has been capitalized by parties both from the left and the right of the political system. Such parties blame both the EU and their national governments for their failure in handling the economic crisis and display different levels of criticism toward the EU as a whole, its policies, its elite and its institutions. While North European 'creditor' countries saw the rise of right-wing parties (see only as an example AFD's raising consensus in Germany despite the historic resistance of this country to extremism), left-wing parties gained consensus in South-European 'debtor' countries (e.g., Podemos in Spain or Syriza in Greece).

In a similar vein, also the migration crisis has variegated effects on EU member states even if the mechanisms implemented to face it are different from those used during the economic crisis. While the handling of the economic crisis was first left to EU member states, then brought to the supranational sphere (e.g., through the Fiscal Compact, the European Stability Mechanism, the Banking Union, the Macro-Economic Imbalance Mechanism and the European Semester), in the migration crisis, the EU failed to coordinate Member states' actions especially due to their non-compliance to the supranational decisions (Börzel 2016).

2015 is recognized as the year when the migration crisis reached its peak. According to EUROSTAT³¹ data, the number of first-time asylum seekers rose from 61000 in January 2015 to 153000 in November 2015. Consequently, between the end of 2015 (approximately the end of

³⁰ European issues have generally be addressed as low salience issues by scholars in the field (see implicit discussion by Mair 2000, 2007 or Netjes and Binnema 2007).

³¹ For more information see EUROSTAT webpage at: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

September) and April 2016 a series of measures have been taken at the supranational level with the main aim of 'sharing the migration burdens' among member states both for the refugee already present in the EU territories and for those yet to come (Börzel 2016). Generally speaking, such measures included funds for member states most heavily affected by migration flows, the adoption of a common list of safe third countries³², measures dealing with the relocation of migrants from Italy and Greece to other Member states alongside the creation of additional hotspots³³ in the territory of these two countries (such actions were taken drawing on the EU's legal framework for a common asylum and migration policy).

Despite this supranational, solidarity-oriented approach, most of the measures enacted by the EU failed due to a lack of compliance: in general member states more 'lightly' affected by the migration crisis rejected to share the burdens of the migratory pressure and blamed their counterpart of not being able to handle the immigration fluxes. An example of this is represented by the failure of the relocation mechanism delineated by two binding decision of the Council in 2015 (European Commission 2016)³⁴. Among the member states lacking compliance with the EU's decisions, Hungary is one of the most famous cases. In June 2015 the Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán ordered the construction of a 175-kilometres-long fence along the Hungarian Southern border with Serbia to block migrants coming from the so-called 'Balkan route'. Furthermore, he rejected the Council decisions mentioned above and announced, on the 24th of February 2016, that Hungary would hold a referendum on whether to accept EU's mandatory quotas for the relocation of migrants. The referendum was held on the 22nd of

³² 'By definition of the law, all Member States of the European Union are safe third countries. In addition, a list of further safe third countries can be drawn up. In those countries, the application of the 1951 Refugee Convention and of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) has to be "ensured"'. For further information see:

<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/asylum-procedure/safe-country-concepts/safe-third-country>

³³ Hotspots areas are defined by the European Border and Coast Guard regulation (see below) as sites: where a Member State faces specific and disproportionate migratory challenges at particular areas of its external borders characterised by large, inward, mixed migratory flows the Member States should be able to rely on technical and operational reinforcements. This should be provided in hotspot areas by migration management support teams. These teams should be composed of experts to be deployed from the Member States by the Agency and by EASO and from the Agency, Europol or other relevant Union agencies. The Agency should assist the Commission in the coordination among the different agencies on the ground. Source: <https://frontex.europa.eu/>

³⁴ "In September 2015 the Council adopted two legally binding decisions which established a temporary and exceptional relocation mechanism for 160.000 applicants in clear need of international protection from Greece and Italy (...) As the flows continue in 2016, so far however only 937 people have been relocated from Italy and Greece, and only 4555 have been resettled. The unsatisfactory level of implementation of both schemes is due to a variety of factors, including the lack of political will of Member States to deliver in a full timely manner on their legal obligations to relocate" (European Commission 2016, 2).

September 2016 and eventually did not pass due to a too low turnout (around 44% of Hungarian voters)³⁵.

Besides member states' voluntary non-compliance with the supranational solutions to the migration crises, another mechanism that contributed to the diffusion of criticism toward the EU's migration policy is the 'EU-Turkey joint action plan' on migration strongly endorsed by Angela Merkel who considered it as a 'priority' for the EU³⁶. The agreement was thought to alleviate the migratory pressure in Greece through the re-allocation of Syrian refugees from both Greece to Turkey and from Greece to the EU following a 1:1 scheme: for every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled in the EU³⁷. However, the operational support (in terms of specialized staff and personnel) was mainly left on the Greek shoulders (with some participation of the other member states of the European Asylum Support Office – EASO and of Frontex)³⁸. The agreement lowered the fluxes of migrants to Greece even though the arrival of migrants to other member states' coasts (especially to Italy) was not reduced. Furthermore, it has been perceived as a way for the EU institutions to force the entrance of Turkey in the EU, an issue that has always been rejected at least by right-wing parties.

³⁵ After the referendum, both Hungary and Slovakia asked the European Court of Justice (ECJ) to annul the Council decision on mandatory migration quotas. According to both Hungary and Slovakia such decision are in fact both vitiated from a procedural point of view (article 78, comma 3 of the TFEU represents the legal basis of the decision) and neither suitable nor necessary to the handling of the migration crisis. The ECJ in its recent judgement (6th of September 2017) rejected the pledges by Hungary and Slovakia considering the Council decisions non-vitiated from a procedural point of view and important to the handling of the immigration crisis. The ECJ further notices that 'the small number of relocations so far carried out under the contested decision can be explained by a series of factors that the Council could not have foreseen at the time when the decision was adopted, including, in particular, the lack of cooperation on the part of certain Member States'. See the complete text of the ECJ's decision at: <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2017-09/cp170091en.pdf>

³⁶ Angela Merkel declared that: 'The important statement for me today is that we have not only reaffirmed the EU-Turkey action plan, but we have said it is our priority' see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/19/refugee-crisis-eu-calls-extraordinary-summit-with-turkey> See also the 'European Council Conclusions on Migrations (18th of February 2016) at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/02/18-euco-conclusions-migration/>

³⁷ This agreement states among other points that: 1) all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands will be returned to Turkey, 2) for every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled in the EU (following a 1:1 scheme), 3) Turkey will take all the necessary measures to prevent the use of new or old sea and/or land routes for irregular migrants, 4) once the fluxes of migrants from Turkey will be reduced then a Voluntary Admission Scheme will be activated, 5) the visa liberalization for Turkish citizens will be accelerated, 6) Turkey will receive 3 billion Euro under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey while other 3 billion Euro will be paid to Turkey after September 2018.

³⁸ For a detailed account of the Greek operational support to the EU-Turkey agreement see: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-963_en.htm

Despite member states voluntary non-compliance, the EC pushed for more supranational solutions to the migration crisis. On the one hand, Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at External Borders founded on the 26th of October 2004³⁹) was transformed in the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG)⁴⁰. This latter has the power to require member states to take timely corrective actions in the field of migration and, in case of failure to do so, the EBCG is empowered to intervene without the direct consent of Member States. On the other hand, in April 2016 the EASO has been transformed into the European Union Agency for Asylum having the main task to monitor Member States implementation of asylum policies (Börzel 2016). The migrants' redistribution system foreseen by such changes would have to be activated whenever a member state receives a number of migrants that overwhelms its capacities. In such cases, migrants would be relocated according to member states' absorption capacity. Those member states rejecting to welcome asylum seekers would have to pay a 'relocation contribution' to the hosting member states. Such relocation scheme breaks the Dublin regulation according to which Member states of 'first arrival' of migrants are those responsible to handle asylum applications. Despite the efforts to supra-nationalise the mechanism of relocation of asylum seekers and handling of migrants more generally, most of them (if not all) failed to be implemented again due to member states' non-compliance.

In summary, the migration crisis contributed to the development of two (mostly overlapping) distinctions between EU member states: the first regarding the role they play in handling the migration crisis (welcome and processing of asylum seekers but also more generally of migrants), thus distinguishing between 'donors' (especially Northwest European countries) and 'recipient' states especially South European countries). The second distinction is mainly related to the geographical position of EU member states. Indeed, those states more proximate to the routes used by migrants to reach the EU (e.g., those states bordering with the Mediterranean sea like Greece and Italy) are by nature more exposed to migration fluxes than their Northern counterpart.

In parallel to these developments, as showed by Hooghe and Marks (2018) the salience of the immigration all around the EU has increased sharply and has been highly capitalised by extreme parties, especially by those on the right of the political spectrum that justify national unilateral responses to the alleged absence or failure of a supranational response to the migration crisis (Börzel 2016).

To sum up, the observations presented in this section show that the two above-mentioned crises impacted differently on EU-member states. Due to the distinction between creditor/debtor and

³⁹ Frontex was officially established by the Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004. See the complete text of the regulation at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A133216>

⁴⁰ Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 repealed the Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004 and established the European Border and Coast Guard on the 14th of September 2016. The EBCG is still commonly known as Frontex. See the complete text of the Regulation at: http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Legal_basis/European_Border_and_Coast_Guard.pdf

donor/recipient member states created by the two crises, opposition to the increased politicised EU-issue assumes the characteristics of a two-sided phenomenon. On the one hand, it is, in fact, imaginable that the harder effects of stringent austerity policies to face the economic crisis coupled with an increased share of migrants trigger criticism toward the EU in debtor/recipient member states. On the other hand, it is imaginable that creditor/donor member states less affected by the effects of the two crises reject to contribute to solidarity mechanism 'imposed' by the EU to help those countries more in need. In other words, criticism toward the EU in creditor/donor member states might be associated with their rejection of the constraints imposed by the EU in providing financial and material assistance to help those member states that are perceived as not able to face the crises. Other things being equal it is thus possible to formulate the following two hypotheses:

H5: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The more debtor/recipient member states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.

H6: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a negative function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The less creditor/donor states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.

3.5 Conclusion: summary of the theoretical approach and advantages deriving from its application

This chapter focuses on the second aim of this work: explaining patterns of EU-opposition in the EP. It starts by revising and comparing the models explaining the phenomenon of Euroscepticism (the Sussex vs. North Carolina Schools), stressing their limitations especially in dealing with the development of Eurosceptic groups both in a transnational and in a pan-European perspective.

Having done this, the chapter presents Usherwood's framework centred on the concept of POS. As stated above, Usherwood's model foresees three sets of factors (one endogenous – ideology – and two exogenous – institutions and events) contributing to the formation of a POS that can help the constitution and the performance of Eurosceptic groups both in a pan-European and in a transnational perspective.

This model is then adapted to the study of national parties' positioning on the EU within the EP underlining the three sets of factors summarized in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3. 3: Summary table presenting the formulated hypotheses and associations to explain patterns of EU-opposition in the EP**Summary representation of the model for the study of EU-opposition as expressed by national parties in the EP**

Factors	Perspective with respect to the actor	Hypotheses and Associations	National vs. supranational level
Ideology	Endogenous	A1: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP are associated with the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG they belong to.	Supranational level (ideological heterogeneity of the EPPG)
		A2: Patterns of EU-opposition are associated with the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which national parties belong.	Supranational – (ideology of the EPPG)
		H1: Patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of each national party's ideological extremeness, independently of the general ideological position of the EPPG. The more parties position themselves toward the extremes of the left-right ideological continuum the higher their degree of EU-opposition will be.	National (pertaining to the ideological characterization of each national party)
Institutions	Exogenous	H2: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP vary as a function of their 'marginality' in political competition at the national level. Parties not belonging to governing coalitions at the national level (or not even eligible to cover governing positions at the national level) will display a higher degree of opposition to the EU.	National and supranational level (government/opposition dynamics at the national level granting extra-parliamentary access to other EU decision-making bodies)
		H3: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP vary as a function of the 'marginality' of the EPPG they belong to. The more marginal the EPPG the higher EU-opposition expressed by national parties belonging to that EPPG will be.	Supranational (marginality of the EPPG in the supranational political competition)
		H4: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP will vary as a negative function of the seniority of their MEPs. The less national parties' MEPs are socialized within the EP the higher their EU-opposition will be.	Supranational (MEPs' seniority)
Events	Exogenous	H5: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The more debtor/recipient member states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	National level (concerning each country's high degree of vulnerability to both the economic and the immigration crises)
		H6: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a negative function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The less creditor/donor states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	National level (concerning each country's low degree of vulnerability to both the economic and the immigration crises)

The application of this model to explain patterns of EU-opposition presents three main advantages. First, from the perspective of the observed actors (political parties), this model enables the observation of the impact on EU-opposition of both endogenous and exogenous factors.

Second, this framework considers both national and supranational dynamics of political competition. ‘Only an analysis that includes at least the two major levels (the supranational and the national level) and the manifold interdependencies between them, may hope to produce realistic insights into the working logic of European governance’ (Helms 2008, 213). This is especially true when looking at factors exogenous to parties, more specifically at institutions. In fact, on the one hand, taking into consideration the inter-institutional dynamics of the EU political sphere means considering the role played by national parties within their national environment, the government-opposition distinction. On the other hand, the EP as a supranational institution enables the existence of pure supranational dynamics of political competition that may impact EU-opposition.

Third, the proposed framework encompasses elements that are present in both models formulated by previous literature in the field: the Sussex School and the North Carolina School. In fact, as just mentioned, on the one hand, national dynamics of party competition (considered by the current model under the second set of exogenous factors) are at the basis of the Sussex School’s model, on the other hand, ideology (considered by the current model as the first set of factors endogenous to parties) is the core element of the North Carolina School.

The next chapter focuses on the operationalization of both the dependent and independent variables of this work further detailing the research design of this work, the method, the time framework and the cases selected for the empirical analysis.

Chapter 4: Methods, selection of cases, time-framework and variables for the analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the selected national parties on which the analysis is focused alongside the data and the methods used to assess national parties' positioning on the various 'targets' of the EU. The first section delineates both constraints and criteria used to select the national parties to be included in the analysis, relying on quantitative data, the section proposes a description of the used cases with reference to their ideological stance, their positioning to the EU, and the role they play at both the national and the supranational level. The second section presents the data and the methods used to 'build' the dependent variables of the work. As further detailed below, this work uses MEPs' speeches as the main source of data relying on two different methods of content analysis to understand both the 'quantity' and the 'quality' of opposition, alongside an in-depth review of the motivations used by parties opposing some specific targets of the EU. The third section of the work presents the independent variables used in the explanatory phase of the analysis providing answers to the hypotheses formulated in the previous chapter.

4.2 Heterogeneous but equated by their EU-opposition: the selected national parties

This work is a comparative study relying on a small/medium N sample of national parties represented in the EP. National parties' positioning to the EU is derived from the analysis of textual data (speeches delivered by national parties' representatives in the EP (see below for an extensive discussion of the included speeches). Consequently, the selection of the national parties to be included in the analysis is constrained by one major limitation: the languages in which the speeches are delivered. Due to a 'spending review', since 2012¹ the translation service of the EP does not translate anymore all

¹ Since the 20th of November 2012, the EP approved the 'decision on the amendment of Rule 181 of Parliament's Rule of Procedure concerning verbatim reports of proceedings and Rule 182 concerning the audiovisual record of proceedings'. According to the approved amendment, 'a verbatim report of the proceeding of each sitting shall be drawn up as a multilingual document in which all oral contributions appear in their original language'. See the entire text of the amendment at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2012-0423&language=EN&ring=A7-2012-0336>

the speeches in all the official languages of the EU, for this reason, the work relies on speeches delivered in Italian, English, French, German and Spanish. Obviously enough, this restricted sample of languages influences also the choice of national parties to be included in the analysis.

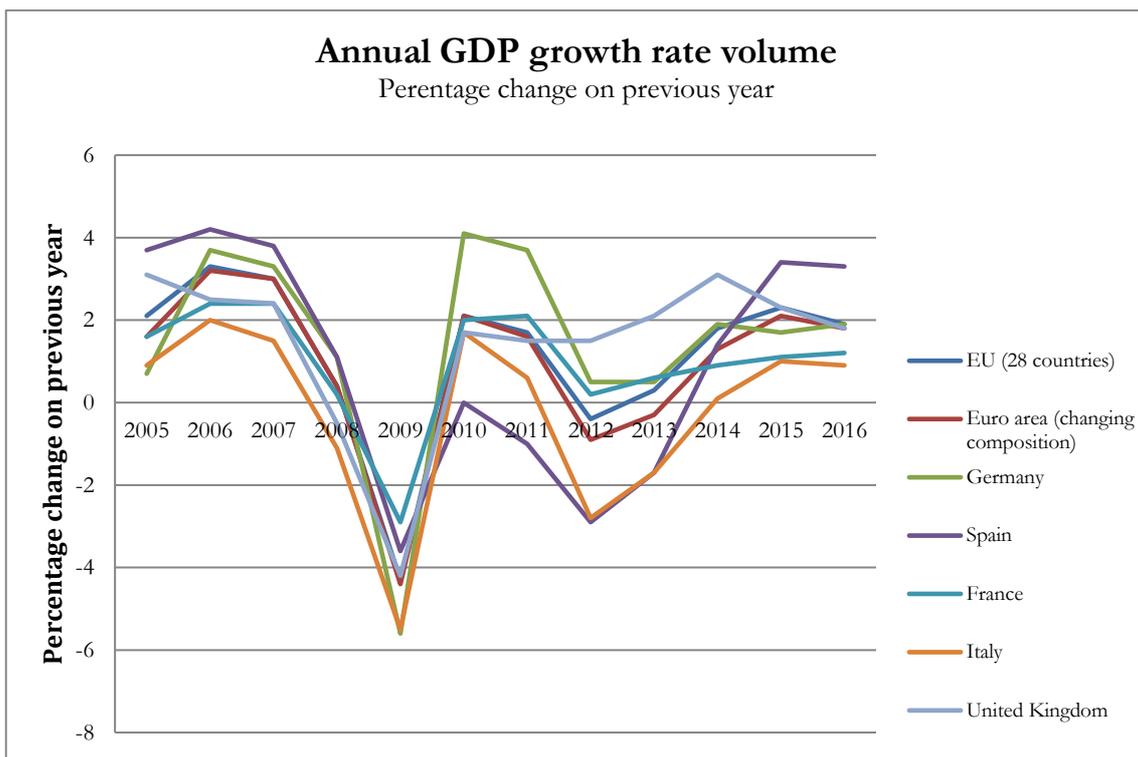
The selection of national parties to be included in the analysis starts from the choice of countries on which to focus the attention. The second main objective of this work is, in fact, to understand the effects of three sets of POS (both exogenous and endogenous to the national parties) on patterns of EU-opposition. As mentioned in chapter 3 (See Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3, pages 61-68), the effects of the two major crises (economic and immigration) are considered as POS shaping EU-opposition in the EP arena. Thus, the choice of national parties to be included in the analysis considers variations in the effects of the two crises on EU member states; this is done to assure variability in the included independent variables (see below for further details). The objective is to have countries where, on the one hand, the two crises have both stronger and lighter effects (keeping in mind the language restriction reported above), while on the other hand, so-called Eurosceptic formations from the left and the right of the political spectrum are present and 'relevant' in the EP (as further explained below). According to these indications, the countries whose national parties are selected for the analysis are Italy, France, Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Starting from the effects of the economic crisis, the three indicators presented in Figures 4.1 - 4.3 below (Annual GDP growth Rate; annual Government gross debt as percentage of GDP and quarterly total unemployment rate²) distinguish countries where the economic crisis had stronger repercussions (Italy and Spain) from countries where the crisis' effects were lighter. The annual GDP growth rate reports a neat distinction between Italy and Spain and the other included countries. Besides the fact that the economic crisis heavily impacted in all included countries in 2009, between 2010 and 2013 the two South European countries (Italy and Spain) show negative values of GDP growth rate, recovering since 2013 onwards (with Spain showing a stronger recovery). Similarly, looking at the trend of General Government gross debt, noticeably Italy shows the highest values on this indicator when compared to the other included countries. Furthermore, while Spain was showing the lowest level of government gross debt in the period between 2006 and 2011 when compared to the other countries, the levels of

² The Annual GDP growth rate volume Gross domestic product (GDP) is a measure of the economic activity, defined as the value of all goods and services produced minus the value of any goods or services used in their creation. The calculation of the annual growth rate of GDP volume is intended to allow comparisons of the dynamics of economic development both over time and between economies of different sizes. The General Government gross debt is defined in the Maastricht Treaty as consolidated general government gross debt at nominal (face) value, outstanding at the end of the year in the following categories of government liabilities (as defined in ESA 2010): currency and deposits, debt securities and loans. The general government sector comprises the subsectors: central government, state government, local government and social security funds. The Quarterly total unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force (the total number of people employed and unemployed) based on International Labour Office (ILO) definition.

this indicator steeply increase since 2008. On the contrary, apart from the just mentioned exception of Spain in the period between 2006 and 2011, Germany and the UK show the lowest levels of yearly Government gross debt to GDP when compared to the other countries while France positions itself between South and North European countries. Such considerations are furthermore confirmed by the last reported graph showing the percentage of total unemployment. In this case, Spain presents skyrocketing levels of unemployment reaching its peak in correspondence to the 1st quarter of 2013 scoring 26.9% points), then following a decreasing trend but still remaining the country with the highest level of total unemployment among the five included. Spain is followed by Italy where the level of unemployment standing increases since the 3rd quarter of 2013 and reaches its peak during the 1st quarter of 2014. France closely follows Italy, even though the level of unemployment in this country is generally lower. In general, the graph shows a neat distinction between the three abovementioned countries and Italy and Spain.

Figure 4. 1: Annual GDP Growth rate (Percentage change on previous year).



Source: EUROSTAT

Figure 4. 2: Trend of General Government Gross debt (percentage of GDP).

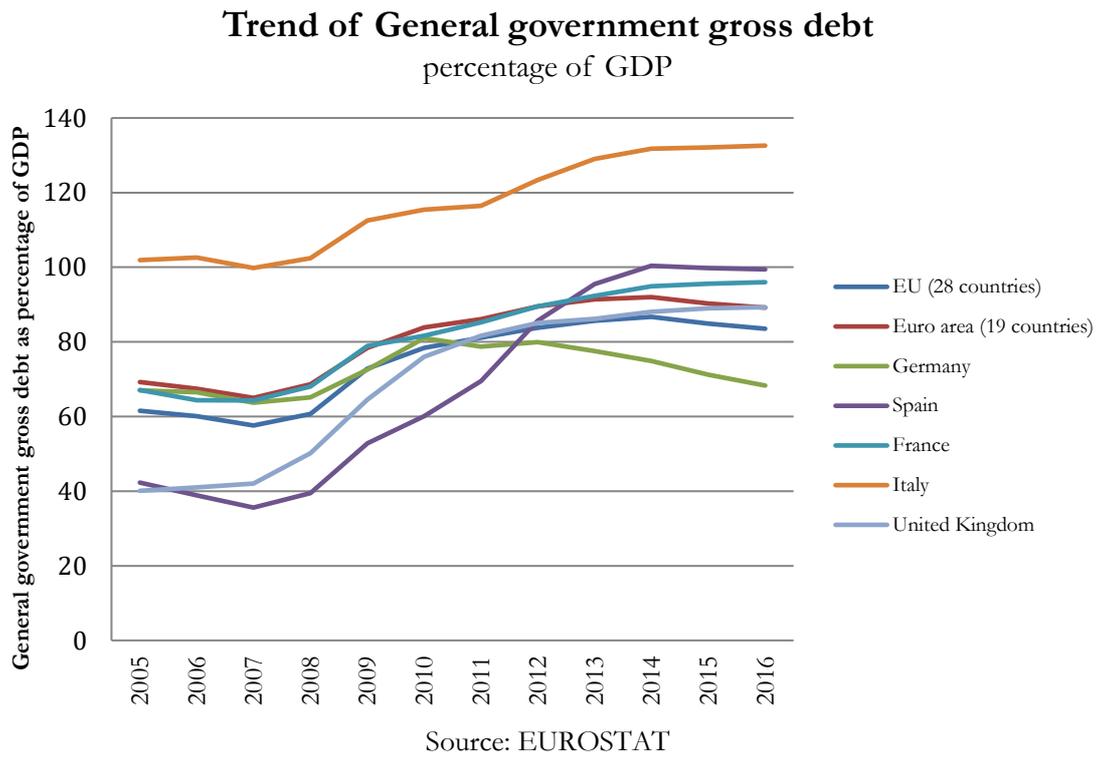
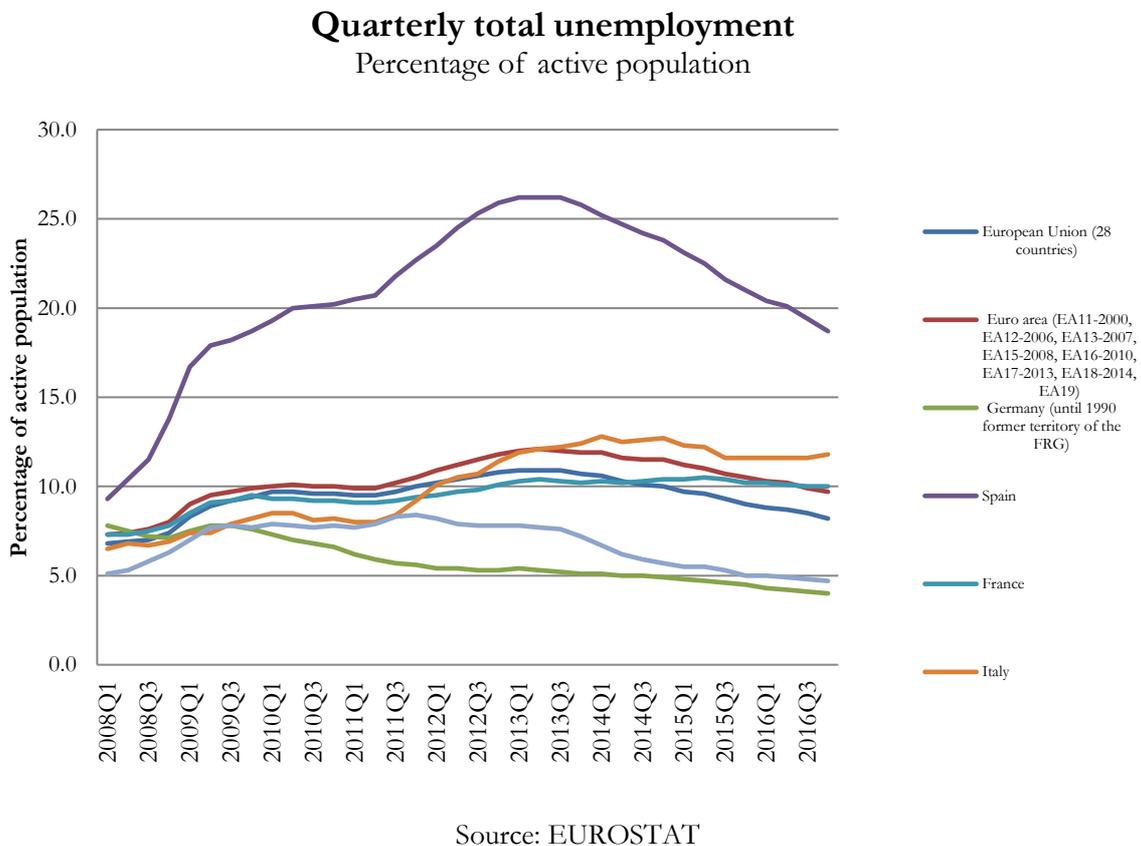


Figure 4. 3: Total unemployment quarterly (percentage of active population).



Besides the effects of the economic crisis, the countries considered for the selection of national parties are also differently affected by the migration crisis. Figures 4.4 – 4.6 below report three indicators from the EUROSTAT dataset: the total number of migrants, the total number of Asylum applicants, and the total number of first-time asylum applicants. It is interesting to notice how Germany is an attractive country for migrants and refugees witnessing increasing trends in both the number of migrants and the total amount of asylum applications in the period between 2010 and 2016. Also the UK presents higher levels of total immigration when compared to Italy, Spain, and France, even though the trends of Asylum applications (both total and first-time applicants) are lower when compared to the other included countries. On the contrary, Italy, France, and Spain generally report lower levels of total immigration, even though Italy and France witness an increased number of Asylum applications especially in the period between 2014 and 2016. A further distinction is, however, to be done, in fact, the data reported in the three figures below generally refers either to asylum seekers or to so-called ‘legal migrants’. According to Frontex, there is currently no EU system in place capable of tracing each person’s movement following an illegal border crossing. This is to say that it is not possible to establish the precise number of persons who have illegally crossed the external borders of the EU. However, due to their geographical position, two out of five of the included countries (Spain and Italy) are ‘destination countries’ on two different migration routes: Spain is the destination country on the ‘Western Mediterranean route’³ while Italy is in the middle of the so-called ‘Central Mediterranean route’⁴. According to Frontex, the number of detections of illegal border crossing for the Central Mediterranean route steeply increased between 2013 and 2016 moving from 40000 detections in 2013 reaching its peak in 2016 with 181126 detections. Similarly, the trend of detections of illegal migrants on the Western Mediterranean route increased in the period between 2013 and 2016 reaching its tipping point in 2016 with 10231 detections. This is to say that, besides the official statistics considering the total number of legal migrants or asylum seekers, countries may be divided between those facing the burden of rescuing migrants from the sea (mainly Italy but also Spain) and having external borders more ‘exposed’ to migration fluxes, and those countries that may be considered as ‘final destination countries’ by migrants (like Germany, the UK or France). Furthermore, according to the ‘Reception condition directive’ (2013/33 EU), Member states where ‘asylum applicants’ are present shall ensure the ‘material condition’ and make them available to applicants (Art. 17.1 Directive 2013/33 of the EU) granting asylum applicants ‘adequate standards of living’ (Art. 17.2 Directive 2013/33 of the EU), until the status of refugee is granted or rejected⁵.

³ The so-called ‘Morocco to Spain route’ see further information at <https://frontex.europa.eu/>

⁴ As of October 2014, the Central Mediterranean route includes also the so-called Apulia and Calabria route. See further information at <https://frontex.europa.eu/>

⁵ The determination of the member state responsible for processing the asylum application is laid down by the so-called Dublin III regulation (604/2013).

Figure 4. 4: Trend in the number of long-term immigrants present in the reporting country during the reference year.

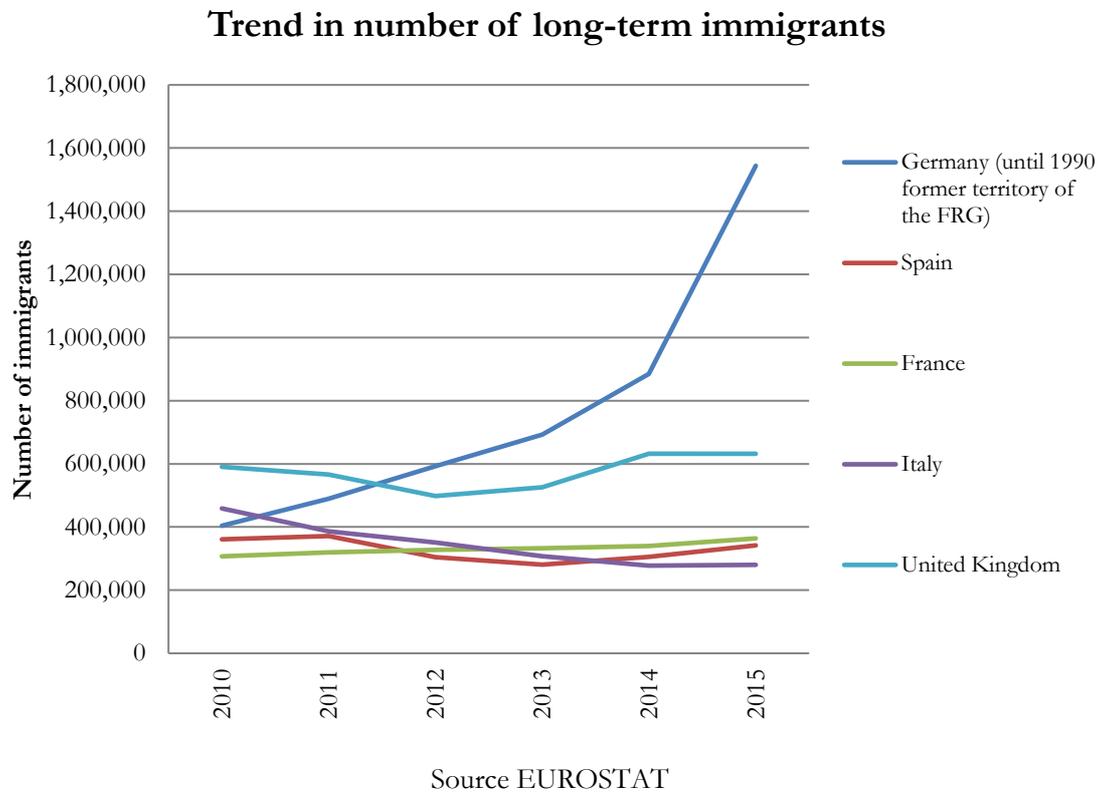
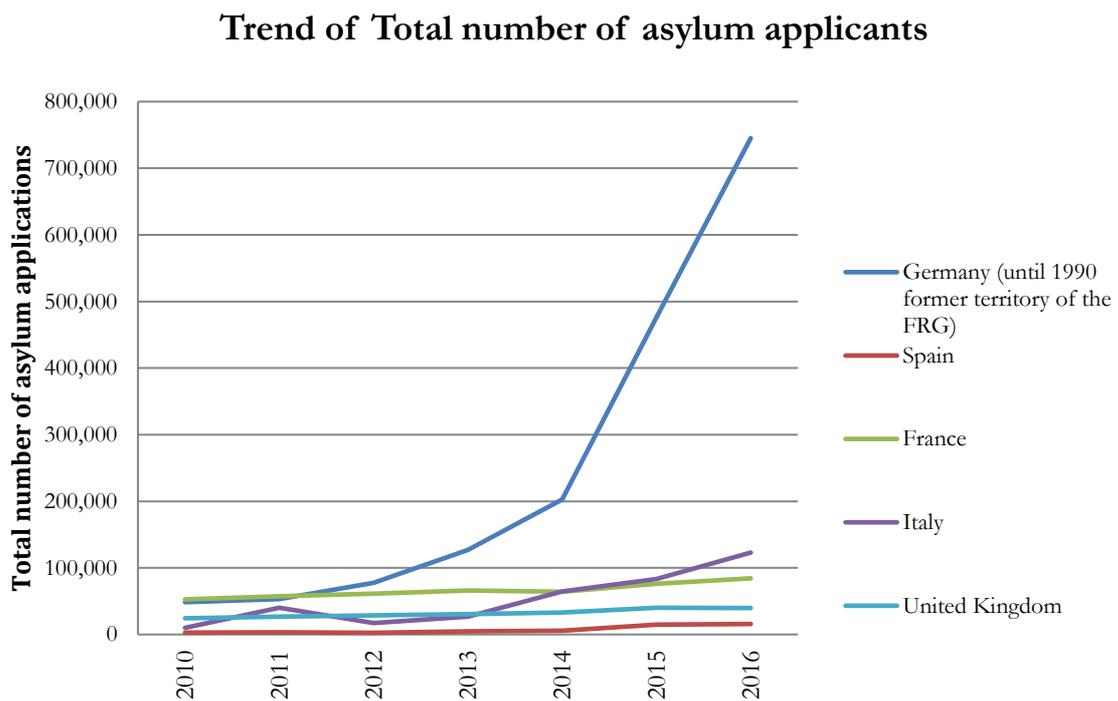
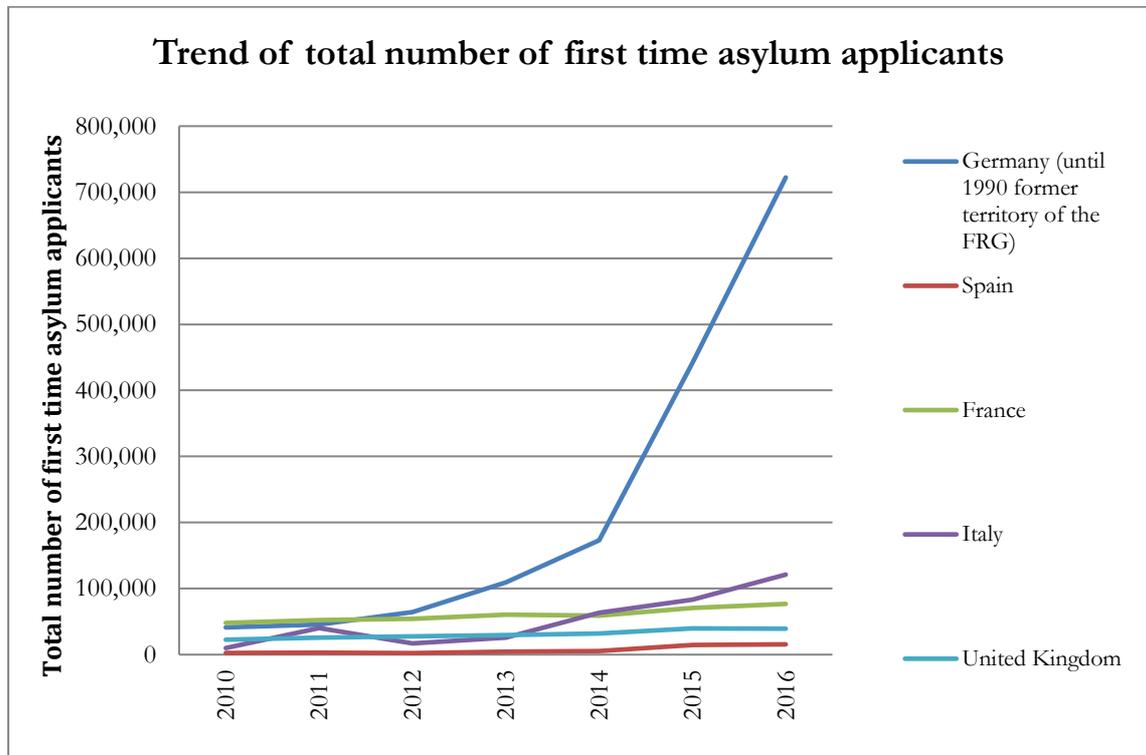


Figure 4. 5: Trend of the total number of asylum applicants (aggregated annual data).



Source EUROSTAT

Figure 4. 6: Trend of total number of first time asylum applicants (annual aggregated data).

With ‘first time asylum applicants’ are meant all those people that applied for asylum for the first time in a specific country. Source EUROSTAT

Once the countries are selected, it is important to stress another major constraint shaping this research: the time at disposal for an analysis of parties’ stances to the EU has implied a further restriction of the time-scope of the analysis. This study, in fact, focuses on a restricted time period taking the first two years of the current EP-legislature as the reference time-span. This choice has, drawbacks since it hinders the possibility to observe changes in parties’ attitude through time and in correspondence to events shaping the EU, like the ‘Big Bang enlargement’ to the CEE in 2004 or the period before and after the spread of the economic crisis (before and after 2007-2008). However, the choice to focus on a restricted time period enables an in-depth observation of national parties’ stances to the EU during the ‘normal’ activity of the EP. As further documented below, this study intends to analyse national parties’ positioning to the various aspects of the EU (its policies, its elite, its regime and the community), without focusing on specific debates where the level of opposition or support to the EU may be higher (e.g.: in the speeches concerning the Brexit referendum). In other words, the work studies EU-opposition in the EP without imposing a ‘selection bias’ on the proposed speeches (even though restricting the policy areas under observation – see below for further details). Moreover, even if

it is true that so-called or self-declared Eurosceptics have been in the EP from the very beginning⁶, over a period of 30 years (from the first EP elections in 1979 to the elections in 2009) they had increased their combined seat-share by no more than 2 per cent (Leconte 2010: 130), in other words, they were a ‘residual’ category not attracting researchers’ attention (Cammino and Verzichelli 2016). It is after the last EP election in 2014, defined by the BBC as a ‘Eurosceptic earthquake’ rocking the EU⁷ that the EU-opponents steeply increase their share of representatives in the EP.

One last constraint applied to the selection of cases relates to the ‘parties’ relevance’ within the EP arena: in order to have ‘enough material’, this work relies on parties that have a sufficiently high and relevant number of representatives delivering speeches in the EP. Consequently, for the purpose of this study, only EU-opposition parties having 5 or more representatives in the EP are included. Following the selection criteria enumerated above, Table 4.1 below reports the seven EU-opponents included in the analysis alongside the results they obtained in the last two rounds of EP elections. The parties reported in Table 4.1 below scored well in the last EP election with only two exceptions: the Italian Northern League (LN), that lost 4 seats lowering its vote-share by 4.05% points and the German LINKE decreasing its national vote share by 0.1% points and losing one seat in the current EP legislature.

⁶ They entered the EP in waves with the communist and the nationalist-conservatives in the 70s followed by right-wing extremists in the 80s and some single-issue anti-EU parties in the 1994 election (See Fitzgibbon, Leruth and Startin 2017 for a historical overview about the representation of ‘Eurosceptic’ delegations in the EP).

⁷ ‘Eurosceptic earthquake rocks the EU’, this is how the BBC headed its online report on the EP election 2014, thereby accepting the label used by the leader of the French Front National (Marine Le Pen). See the report at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27559714>

Table 4. 1: Electoral results obtained by the seven EU-opposition parties included in the analysis during the last two rounds of EP elections (2009 and 2014).

Party name abbreviation in parenthesis	Country	EPPG (2009)	Vote share (2009)	Seats (2009)	EPPG (2014)	Vote share (2014)	Seats (2014)	Difference in vote share (%)	Difference in number of seats
Northern League (LN)	Italy	EFD	10.2	9	ENF*	6.15	5	-4.05	-4
Five Stars Movement (FSM)	Italy	-	-	-	EFDD	21.15	17	+21.15	+17
National Front (FN)	France	NI	6.3	3	ENF *	24.86	23	+18.5	+20
Alternative for Germany (AFD)	Germany	-	-	-	ECR**	7.10	7	+7.10	+7
The Left (LINKE)	Germany	GUE/NGL	7.5	8	GUE/NGL	7.40	7	-0.1	-1
We can (PODEMOS)	Spain	-	-	-	GUE/NGL	7.98	5	+7.98	+5
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)	United Kingdom	EFD	16.09	13	EFDD	26.77	24	+10.68	+11

ENF: Europe of the Nations and Freedom; EFD: Europe of Freedom and Democracy; GUE/NGL: Groupe Gauche Unitaire Européenne/Gauche Verte Nordique (Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left); EFDD: Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy. * The ENF formed only after the second half of 2015, **AFD stays in the ECR only until March 2016, then a splinter group, the ALFA, stayed in the ECR while two members of the EFD joined the ENF (Markus Pretzell) and the EFDD (Beatrix von Storch). Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-nl-2014.html>

The parties reported in Table 4.1 above are generally classified as ‘Eurosceptic’ (Treib 2014; Cammino and Verzichelli 2016), even though displaying differences in the ‘intensity’ of their critique (see Table 4.3 below). However, such parties are heterogeneous from several viewpoints: 1) their origin and ‘age’; 2) their ideological orientation (alongside the party family they belong to); 3) the role played at national level; 4) their affiliation to the EPPG, and 5) the criteria used for the selection of their MEPs at the supranational level. Table 4.2 below provides a summary of such characteristics. To assess national parties’ positioning along the left-right continuum (and party family) three main data sources are used. First, the Comparative Manifesto Project dataset (CMP)⁸ reports the RILE index of left-right positioning which is given by the difference between the rightist codes and the leftist codes present in the latest version of parties’ manifestos issued in the occasion of national elections (for further information about the coded categories see Laver and Budge 1992). The RILE index values range from -100 (left) to 100 (right). Second, the Euromanifesto Study dataset (EMS)⁹ reports the coders’ rating of parties’ left-right positioning at European elections, a variable ranging from 0 (left) to 10 (right). Lastly, the CHES¹⁰ contains expert level judgements of 31 political parties (including all European member states). The variable indicating the general left-right position of the party ranges from 0 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right) while a value of 5 indicates centrist positioning.

⁸ Further information about the Comparative Manifesto Project may be found at <https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/>

⁹ Further information about the latest edition of the Euromanifesto study (2014) may be found at <http://europeanelectionstudies.net/european-election-studies/ees-2014-study/manifesto-study-2014>

¹⁰ Further information about the Chapel Hill Expert Survey at <https://www.chesdata.eu/>

Table 4. 2: Main characteristics of the included EU-opponents alongside their left right positioning.

Party name	Country	Origin of the party (year and initial configuration of the party)	Positioning of the party along the left-right continuum/ party family					Current role played at national level	Selected representatives in the EP	Current EPPG
			CMP		EMS		CHES			
			RILE	Party family	Left-right coders' rating	Party family	Left-right positioning			
FSM	Italy	Foundation: 2012 Self-defined as a movement 'anti-party-party'	-49.03	Special issue party	No answer	Other	4.66	Opposition party (109 seats in the Chamber of Deputies; 54 seats the Senate after 2013 national elections)	MEPs showing no previous political experience selected through primaries elections via web (so-called 'Parlamentarie')	EFDD
LN	Italy	Foundation: 1991 Alliance of regionalist leagues	3.81	Nationalist Parties	8	Regional parties	8.86	Opposition party: (20 seats in the Chamber of Deputies; 16 seats in the Senate after 2013 national elections)	MEPs showing previous political experience	ENF
FN	France	Foundation: 1972 Confederation of radical right politicians	8.08	Nationalist parties	10	Nationalist parties	9.6	Opposition party (8 seats in the national assembly after 2017 national elections)	MEPs showing previous political experience	ENF
AFD	Germany	Foundation: 2013 Campaign platform for the dissolution of the Eurozone	-2.74	Special issue party	8	Special interest parties	8.9	Opposition party (94 seats in the Bundestag after 2017 German federal elections)	Mix of MEPs showing previous political experience and exponents from civil society (academic and professional experience)	ECR (EFN/EFDD)
LINKE	Germany	Foundation: 2007 Union between WAGS and PDS	-34.55	(Post-) Communist parties	2	(Post-) Communist parties	1.23	Opposition party: (69 seats in the Bundestag after 2017 national elections)	MEPs showing previous political experience	GUE/NGL
POD	Spain	Foundation: 2014 Mixing horizontal mobilization (grassroots movements) and vertical institutionalisation	-32.95	(Post-) Communist parties	2	(Post-) Communist parties	1.66	Opposition party (71 seats in Chamber of Deputies; 23 seats in the Senate after 2016 national elections)	MEPs showing previous political experience within PODEMOS (activists included)	GUE/NGL
UKIP	United Kingdom	Foundation: 1993 Campaign platform preaching for UK withdrawal from the EU	-7.78	Special issue party	8	Special interest parties	9.14	Opposition party (currently not represented in national institutions after 2017 national elections)	MEPs showing previous political experience	EFDD

Source: author's search and CMP, EMS, and CHES datasets. EMS and CHES data refers to 2014 European elections. CMP data refers to the latest available elections for each considered country at the time of observation: 2013 elections for Germany and Italy; 2012 for France; 2015 for the UK and 2016 for PODEMOS.

Starting from right-wing EU-opponents, the proposed selection includes the French Front National (FN), the Italian LN, the German AfD and the British United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).

Many scholars consider the FN as the prototype of ‘populist radical right parties’ (Mudde 2007; Ivaldi 2018); it was founded in 1972 as ‘not much more than a confederation of extreme radical right *groupuscules* under the leadership of the veteran radical right politician Jean-Marie Le Pen’ (Mudde 2007, 41). Initially, its position towards the EU was rather ambivalent, in fact, during the 1980s the party showed support for a common defence and currency, it is only in the 1990s, with the Maastricht Treaty, that the FN hardens its positions on the EU (Ivaldi 2018). As shown in Table 4.2 above, FN is a right-wing party (scoring 8 points on the RILE index, 10 points on the EMS coders’ rating and 9.6 points for the CHES¹¹) being generally classified as belonging to the ‘Nationalist’ party family. However, since 2011, Marine Le Pen¹² becomes the head of the party and employs a ‘stratégie de dédramatisation’ - de-demonization strategy - to soften the party’s image, make it credible on issues other than immigration and diversify its electoral audience (Déze 2016, 36)¹³. This process enabled the party to score 17.9% of the national vote share in the first round of national presidential elections in 2012 improving the result obtained by her father in the former presidential elections in 2007 by 1% points, despite not classifying herself for the second round¹⁴. Until 2012, FN had only 1 representative in the French national assembly after both the electoral turns in 1988 and 1997. Under Marine Le Pen’s presidency, FN obtains 2 seats and 8 seats in the national assembly after the French national elections in 2012 and 2017 respectively. However, the party neither had governing positions nor was ever

¹¹ According to Budge (2013) parties mostly present policies in left-right terms, and RILE is a holistic index working as a summary indicator of policy tendencies over the whole of the party programme and it ranges from -100 (extreme left) to 100 (extreme right). For further information about the RILE index calculation see ‘The Standard Left-Right scale’ Budge Ian 2013 at https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/down/papers/budge_right-left-scale.pdf The EMS Coders’ rating is a variable ranging from 0 to 10 where 0 means extreme left and 10 means extreme right while the CHES indicators is given by mean values of responses provided by experts and it ranges from 0 to 10 where 0 means ‘extreme left’ and 10 means ‘extreme right’.

¹² Marine Le Pen wins the position as head of the party winning 67.65% of the votes against Bruno Gollnisch.

¹³ According to Déze, however, this de-demonization strategy is not new to the FN that has been founded following a similar strategy. What is really new in Marine Le Pen strategy is the use of a more widely accepted discourse relying on the notions such as: ‘national priority’, ‘secularism’ or ‘Republic’ (Déze 2016, 36)(see also Ivaldi 2018).

¹⁴ Her strategy worked relatively well also during the last presidential election in 2017 (first round held on the 23rd of April 2017, second round held on the 7th of May 2017) where the FN was able to gain more than 21% of the national vote share in the first round. Despite being defeated by Immanuel Macron during the second round of the presidential election, the FN obtained more than 33% of the national vote share, an impressive result that definitely moves the party out of the margins of the national politics. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/8261969/Marine-Le-Pen-becomes-Front-National-leader-A-pivotal-moment-for-French-politics.html>

considered as a suitable partner to form a governing coalition. Marine Le Pen's organizational turn is also mirrored by the representatives selected for the EP: among the new MEPs, generally showing previous political experience, it is possible to find Gilles Lebreton who in the past campaigned for the citizens movement led by Jean Pierre Chevènement and Aymeric Chauprade a political scientist belonging to the geopolitical school emphasizing *realpolitik* over ideology (Cammino and Verzichelli 2016). The French FN currently works in the same EPPG with the Italian LN, the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF). After some initial struggles, mainly related to the rules governing the formation of EPPG in the EP, the group was founded in June 2015.

LN was first founded as an alliance of regionalist leagues in the North of Italy¹⁵ in 1989 and merged in the Northern League in 1991 (Tarchi 2002, Mudde 2007). According to Mudde, the league started as a fairly liberal party and became more authoritarian during the 90s. Furthermore, while the party is characterised by nativism, it has always oscillated between regionalism and nationalism (Mudde 2007), developing from an exclusively populist regionalist party into a radical right party (Ruzza 2009; Verbeek and Zaslove 2015; Zaslove 2008). This is the main reason why several scholars have included LN (at least at its inception) among the category of (ethno)regionalist parties (Mudde 2007, Ignazi 1992). This plurality of characterizations is also mirrored by the data reported in Table 4.2 above defining the LN as belonging to the family of either Nationalist party (CMP) or Regionalist parties (EMS). According to EMS and CHES indicators of left-right positioning the party belongs to the right, extreme-right-wing of the ideological spectrum (scoring 8 and 8.8 points in the EMS and CHES indicators respectively), while the CMP reports softer values of right-wing positioning (3.8 points on the RILE index). LN has a longer and stronger experience of representation at the national level. Since the 1992 Italian election, the party holds a considerable number of seats in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. In the past, the party scored its highest result under Umberto Bossi's leadership in coalition with the Pole of Freedom in 1994 (obtaining 117 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 60 seats in the Senate), while the lowest score was obtained by the party during 2013 Italian elections under the leadership of Roberto Maroni (gaining 20 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 18 seats in the Senate). Nowadays, under the leadership of Matteo Salvini, the re-branded League scored its highest historical result attracting 17.8 per cent of the national vote share and formed a governing coalition with the FSM¹⁶. Furthermore, the Italian LN has already been a partner of government serving three times in centre-right governing coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi (briefly in

¹⁵ The alliance was first composed by the Lega Lombarda, the Liga Veneta, the Piemonte Autonomista, the Union Ligure, the Lega Emiliano Romagna and the Alleanza Toscana.

¹⁶ After some coalition bargaining the two parties managed to propose a feasible yellow-green governing coalition. The coalition was firstly repelled by the Italian president of the Republic (Sergio Mattarella) due to the parties' positions on both the Euro and the EU in general. Later on, the two parties composed the current governing alliance under the Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.

1994 and more successfully from 2001 to 2006 and from 2008 to 2011). Lastly, LN's MEPs show a long political experience also at the supranational level (see the case of Mario Borghezio present in the EP since 2001¹⁷).

Differently from the two above-mentioned parties, the AFD enters in the EP among the ranks of the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) thus presupposing 'softer Eurosceptic' stances to the EU (similarly to the British Conservatives). Unusually in the widely pro-European German political scene, the AFD was founded in 2013 (only some months before the general elections¹⁸) to campaign for the dissolution of the Eurozone and for a general reconfiguration of German foreign policy (Arzheimer 2015). Although the party has been considered as a right-wing populist party¹⁹, its categorization is still widely debated among the literature; interestingly both the CMP and the EMS consider the party as a 'special issue' or 'special interest' party. In terms of its left-right positioning AFD is classified as a right, extreme-right-wing party as the data in Table 4.2 confirm (AFD scores 8.9 points on the CHES' left-right scale and 8 points on the EMS left-right coders' rating) with the only exception of the CMP's RILE index that identifies AFD as a 'centrist' party scoring -2.7 points. The AFD starts its political life in 2012 thanks to three major exponents exiting from the CDU: the journalist Konrad Adam, the lawyer and journalist Alexander Gauland and the professor in economy Bernd Lucke. However, the AFD should not be considered as a splinter party of the CDU since its founding members are recruited from a broader centre-right political background constituted by university professors, entrepreneurs and managers and by a former Land party chair of the Free Democratic Party of Germany (Freie Partei Deutschland – FDP). The party was officially founded in February 2013, however only six months later an internal discussion began in order to broaden its programmatic platform moving away from the single anti-Euro issue. In parallel, the various factions (mainly conservatives, liberals and Christian-Democrats) were struggling to influence the party. In the occasion of its first EP election (see Table 4.1 above), the party was able to obtain 7 seats in the Strasbourg Chamber, however, immediately after the elections, internal conflicts emerged to determine which EPPG should AFD belong to. The choice was, in fact, between the ECR and the EFDD. All 7 elected MEPs eventually entered the ECR group in the EP, however, they were all expelled from the ECR on the 8th of March 2016²⁰; only on the 18th of March 2016, 5 of the 7 members were re-admitted

¹⁷ For further info see http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/21817/MARIO_BORGHEZIO_history.html

¹⁸ During the first general election, the party obtained 4.7 % of the German vote share missing the opportunity to get a representative in the Bundestag due to the presence of a minimum 5% threshold.

¹⁹ Both among the German media and among its party challengers, this party is generally considered as a populist radical right party since its inception, see as an example <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/deutschland/alternative-fuer-deutschland-spd-und-gruene-verfen-afd-populismus-vor/8061482.html>

²⁰ See the official ECR note at <http://136.173.159.70/newsletter/afd/>

in the group under the new political formation called the ALFA (Allianz für Fortschritt und Aufbruch)²¹ a splinter party from the AFD created on the 19th of July 2015 in Kassel (a city in the centre of Germany). The other two members, Beatrix von Storch and Marcus Pretzell were included into two different groups, the EFDD (von Storch) and the ENF (Pretzell)²². After the last general election in 2017, the AFD was able to get 12.6% of the national vote share finally obtaining 94 seats in the Bundestag but without being considered as a suitable partner for a governing coalition.

The last selected party among the right wing EU-opponents is the British populist radical-right or right-wing anti-establishment party (Mudde 2007; Hayton 2010; Clarke et al. 2016), UKIP. It was founded in 1993 by Alan Sked a university lecturer involved in the Bruges Group²³ and was mainly intended to contest EP election securing British withdrawal from the EU (Usherwood 2008). It was only in 1999 that the party was first able to gather a consistent support (16% of the national vote share) entering in the EP with a larger delegation of representative (12 MEPs). After a change in the party's leadership with the election of Jeffrey Titford and Roger Knapman, the party started to find more stability and began to broaden its policy base while gathering support for the 2004 EP elections. However, it was only with the election of Nigel Farage in 2006 that UKIP's leadership started to mainstream the party in the British political life (Usherwood 2008). In short, with Farage's leadership UKIP broadens its political platform beyond the EU issue, casting doubts on climate change and supporting the cut of immigration (Bale 2018). However, according to the CMP and EMS data, UKIP is to be classified as a 'single issue party' (see Table 4.2 above). Despite being widely considered as a right, extreme-right-wing party, the CMP RILE index identifies UKIP as 'centrist' party scoring -7.78 points. On the contrary, both the EMS and the CHES depict UKIP as a right, extreme-right wing party, scoring 8 and 8.9 points on the respective left-right scale. Similarly to the other right-wing EU-opponents (with the only exception of the LN), UKIP covers no important role at national level. It is, in fact, a residual party occupying only one seat in the House of Commons in spite of losing it in the last national elections in 2017. With reference to its current delegation in the EP (the larger one belonging to the EFDD), its MEPs are a 'patrol of populist exponents' (Cammino and Verzichelli 2016: 163), who generally show previous political experience.

²¹ Such distinctions are taken into consideration during the empirical analysis phase of this work.

²² According to the declarations delivered by Beatrix von Storch, the expulsion of the two members was a conspiracy between Angela Merkel, trying to damage the party before the regional elections in Germany, and David Cameron who was trying to distance his party from AFD's positioning before the referendum on the British EU-membership. See: <http://www.politico.eu/article/ecr-afd-von-storch-pretzell-two-members-of-german-far-right-party-asked-to-leave-voluntarily/>

²³ The Bruges Group is a think tank that produces discussion related to the EU and European integration issues. 'Through its work, the Bruges Group spearheads the intellectual battle against European integration, EU federalism, centralization and enlargement. The Bruges Group promotes alternatives to membership of the European Union and the need to restore British sovereignty and democracy'. Further information at www.brugesgroup.com

Before moving to the left side of the Strasburg hemicycle, it is noteworthy to focus on the ‘strange’ case of the Italian FSM. Formally constituted in 2012, the movement rejects to be defined as a party and challenges the traditional criteria of left-right²⁴ positioning. This rejection is portrayed by the sources presented in Table 4.2 above; while EMS’ coders do not provide any answer to the FSM’s left-right positioning, the CMP RILE index categorises the party as belonging to the left (scoring -49 points) and CHES experts’ evaluations position the party more or less toward the centre of the political spectrum (leaning toward the left and scoring 4.6 points²⁵). The party advocates direct democracy proposing to turn citizens into the protagonists of democracy (under the mantra ‘One is worth one’²⁶), overcoming the mechanism of representation through the use of the Internet. It is extremely difficult to define FSM under a single label since it is fundamentally unclear how it is to be understood (Diamanti 2014). Some scholars define it as an ‘anti-party party’ (Diamanti and Natale 2014), other as ‘anti-establishment party’ (Mosca 2014), or as an ‘ideologically hybrid organization’ (Pirro and van Kessel 2018), or as a ‘strange animal’, a ‘web-populist’ (Corbetta and Gualmini 2015) due to both the diffuse use of internet as mean of communication and the organisation of the party. This difficulty is clearly mirrored by the data reported in Table 4.2 above: while the CMP categorises FSM as a ‘special issue party’, the EMS identifies it under the ‘Other’ category. The party obtained its first successes participating in local elections and winning the majority in several municipalities (the biggest one was Parma) in 2012, and afterwards in the regional election in Sicily, obtaining 15% of the regional vote share and becoming the largest party in the region. However, FSM obtained its first important success during the Italian national election in 2013 scoring 25.6% of the national vote share and gaining 163 seats in both Chambers (Parliament and Senate). FSM’s participation to governing coalition was initially hindered by the party’s rejection of any potential alliance with other parties, especially with mainstream ones²⁷. Such position has changed after the results of the last Italian elections that saw a high increase in Italian voters’ consensus for the party (scoring more than 33% of the national vote-share). Luigi di Maio, FSM’s leader, declared, the day after the general election, that the party is open to the dialogue with any potential governmental partner stressing however that the FSM will play the leading role of the government following Italian peoples’ will. As abovementioned, FSM is currently in a governmental alliance with the LN. In the last EP election 2014 (Table 4.1 above), the party’s result was described as

²⁴ The official blog of the ‘Movement’ states: ‘The time for ideologies is over. The Five Stars Movement is not fascist, it is neither right-wing nor left-wing’. (Italian version available at http://www.beppegrillo.it/2013/01/il_m5s_non_e_di_destra_ne_di_sinistra.html).

²⁵ It is, however, to be noted that FSM’s left-right position has a high standard deviation $\pm 1,96$ points thus potentially encompassing positioning ranging between 6.62 and 2.7 points.

²⁶ In other words, everyone has equal weight inside of the movement.

²⁷ The official blog of the Movement states: ‘the FSM has allied with other movements sharing their objectives (...) While for parties (...) the doors are closed, locked forever’. See the Italian version at http://www.beppegrillo.it/2013/01/il_m5s_non_e_di_destra_ne_di_sinistra.html.

a ‘political setback’ (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2015) even though FSM competing in its first EP election scored 21.2% of the vote share and obtained 17 seats in the EP in a country described in the past as pro-EU (Carlotti 2017). With reference to the methods used for the selection of their representatives, the FSM has the objective to bring ordinary citizens into the institutions with a sort of online primaries called the ‘Parlamentarie’. In other words, the ‘supporters’ of the FSM logged on the FSM online-community have the right to vote for a list of self-determined candidates thus choosing their would-be representatives through the internet²⁸.

Moving now the attention to the left side of the Strasbourg hemicycle, the analysis focuses on both the German LINKE and the Spanish PODEMOS. The first one is generally identified as a radical left-wing party and also widely considered as a populist radical left party (Mudde 2008; Akkerman and Rooduijn 2015). It is the result of the fusion between the Party of Democratic Socialism (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus – PDS) the successor of the Communist Party and the Electoral Alternative for Labour and Social Justice (Wahlalternative Arbeit und Soziale Gerechtigkeit – WAGS) a breakaway movement of the left wing of the social democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland – SPD). The mixed nature of the LINKE is perhaps portrayed by the data reported in Table 4.2: CMP and EMS define the party as belonging to the ‘socialist party family’ or the ‘communist party family’ respectively. However, in terms of positioning along the left-right continuum all the measures reported above confirm that LINKE is a radical-left party (scoring 2 on the EMS coders’ rating and 1.2 on the CHES left-right scale), the only partial exception is the CMP RILE index that positions the party to the left (scoring -34) but still considers the Italian FSM as more ‘left-wing’ than the German LINKE. Despite their divergence (WAGS’ objective was to cover an opposition role at national level, while PDS sought to become a left-wing institutionalised actor) WAGS and PDS firstly united in 2005 (in the occasion of the anticipated federal elections in Germany) under the name Linkspartei (known in western Länder as LINKSPARTEI.PDS) (Damiani and Viviani 2015). A first good and unexpected electoral result at the federal level (the Linkspartei obtained 8.7% of the national vote share alongside 54 seats) represented an incentive for the foundation in 2007 of the LINKE. The ‘rational marriage driven mainly for electoral reasons’ between ideologically divergent personalities, whose main goal was vote-seeking and the establishment of a relevant left-wing party in Germany (Coffé and Plassa 2010, 275), was fruitful in the 2009 federal election when the party increased its vote share by 3.2% (scoring 11.9%). On the contrary, during the subsequent federal election, the party saw a decrease of its vote share that, however, never went below 8.6% (LINKE scored 8.6% and 9.2% in 2013 and 2017 federal elections respectively). LINKE’s delegation in the EP is composed by exponents

²⁸ The results of the ‘Parlamentarie’ held for the last EP elections are available at http://www.beppegrillo.it/2014/04/i_candidati_del_movimento_5_stelle_alle_elezioni_europee.html

with previous political experience, probably the only exception in the current EP legislature is the case of Fabio De Masi, a lecturer in macroeconomics at the University of Berlin who nevertheless was already a candidate for the LINKE in 2009 EP elections²⁹.

The LINKE works in the GUE/NGL EPPG, similarly to the last included EU-opponent: the Spanish PODEMOS, a ‘new entry’ in the EP that is generally described as a left-wing populist party or radical-left-wing populist party (Kioupkiolis 2016; Ramiro and Gomez 2017). It finds its origins in the so-called 15-M movement, a protest movement formed in May 2011 accusing the financial elite to cause the material deprivation of the people at the expenses of democracy and proposing participatory democracy as an alternative to neoliberalism (Kioupkiolis 2016). While the movement failed to achieve its objectives, it opened up a political space for new actors thus giving way to a new institutional phase, where PODEMOS plays a leading role. This is clearly mirrored by the words of Miguel Urbán Crespo (co-founder of the party and current MEP for PODEMOS): ‘Podemos has been created at the time of greatest crisis of politics and it represents the biggest act of insubordination to those who thought to blackmail the country with the fear of the crisis’ (extract of the interview cited in Pucciarelli and Russo Spena 2014: 61). According to Kioupkiolis, PODEMOS was, in fact, able to merge together two aspects: the *horizontal* one, referring to the mobilization of the multitude on the streets and the web; and the *vertical* one, concerning the hierarchical and formal representative structure of party formations. In other words, PODEMOS is a mix of grassroots movements and coherent actions within institutions. Probably these are the reasons why the indicators mentioned in Table 4.2 associate the party with either ‘(post) Communist party families’ (EMS) or ‘socialist party families’ (CMP), in line with the left (or extreme left) categorization of the party (PODEMOS scores -33.2 and 1.7 on the RILE, the EMS left-right coders’ rating and the CHES left-right scale respectively). Officially founded in 2014, PODEMOS engaged in its first electoral competition during the 2014 EP election winning 8.98% of the Spanish vote and gaining 5 seats in the EP, while PP and PSOE scored their historical minimum confirming Spain as one of the few cases (alongside Greece) where mass realignment in party preferences translated in an increased support for populist radical left parties (Ramiro and Gomez 2016). The party then took part in two subsequent national elections in December 2015 and June 2016 (the elections were repeated since no party was able to conquer the majority and no possible governing alliance was formed), obtaining in the end 21% of the national vote share alongside 71 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 23 seats in the Senate. Despite being potentially considered as a suitable partner of government, the party remained in the opposition after the results of the June 2016 elections when it confirmed itself as the third largest political force in Spain but was unable to impose itself against the mainstream PP. The MEPs composing PODEMOS’ delegation in the GUE-NGL group, have generally no previous political (institutional) experience but are active members of PODEMOS at

²⁹ MEP Fabio De Masi ended his mandate in the EP in December 2017.

national level (or in some cases also co-founder of the party, as Miguel Urbán Crespo) and, in terms of professional experience, they generally come from the academic field.

As mentioned before, despite being different from several viewpoints, the parties included in the analysis are generally critical of the EU and the European integration project and, consequently, defined as 'Eurosceptic'. Table 4.3 below reports the most commonly used 'quantitative' indicators of party-based Euroscepticism derived from the three data sources already mentioned in Table 4.1 and 4.2 above. The CMP data report two indicators of parties' negative or positive stances to the EU. The variable 'EU positive' includes positive mentions reported in the national manifesto of each party concerning 1) the desirability of the manifesto country joining or remaining a member of the EU; 2) the desirability of expanding the EU; 3) the desirability of expanding EU's competencies, and 4) the desirability of expanding the competencies of the EP. The variable 'EU negative' encompasses negative mentions with reference to 1) the opposition to specific European policies which are preferred by European authorities, and 2) the opposition to the net contribution of their country to the EU budget. The variable EUP-EUN is a self-calculation of the difference between EU-positive and EU-negative values, in line with the methodology used by the CMP. The EUP-EUN variable potentially ranges from 100 – the party is extremely in favour of the EU – to -100 – the party is extremely critical of the EU. The indicators taken from the EMS refer to the: 1) pro-anti EU stances of the party, an index which is given by the difference between the sum of pro-integration codes and the sum of integration-sceptic codes (ranging from -100 – anti-EU – to 100 – pro-EU), and 2) the pro-anti EU coders' rating, a variable ranging from 1 (pro EU) to 10 (anti EU integration) which is derived from the coders' evaluation of the parties. With reference to the CHES dataset, three different variables are included in Table 4.3: 1) the 'EU-salience' representing the experts' judgements with reference to the relative salience of European integration in the party's public stance in 2014 (the variable ranges from 1 – European integration is of no importance – to 10 – European integration is of great importance); 2) the 'EU-position' referring to expert judgements on the overall orientation of the party leadership toward European integration in 2014 (ranging from 1 – strongly opposed – to 7 – strongly in favour), and 3) 'EU-benefit' representing the expert judgements with reference to the position of the party leadership in 2014 on whether the country has benefited from being a member of the EU (1 – benefited – 2 – neither benefited nor lost – 3 – not benefited).

Table 4. 3 EU-opponents' positioning toward the EU according to three data-sources: CMP, the EMS and CHES.

Party name	Country	CMP			EMS		CHES		
		EU positive	EU negative	EUP-EUN	Pro-anti-EU	Pro-anti EU coders' rating	EU-salience	EU-position	EU benefit
FSM	Italy	0	0	0	0	8	8.85	1.42	3
LN	Italy	2.85	0	2.85	-30.99	8	8.85	1.14	3
FN	France	0	5.051	-5.051	-13.23	10	8.46	1.21	3
AFD	Germany	1.37	13.69	-12.32	-10.08	7	9.53	1.61	2.61
LINKE	Germany	0.485	0.60	-0.11	4.24	4	5.69	3	2.16
POD	Spain	0.22	0	0.22	1.69	6	6.2	4.4	2.33
UKIP	United Kingdom	0.66	16.53	-15.87	-3.12	10	9.14	1.14	3

CMP data refers to the latest available elections for each considered country at the time of writing: 2013 elections for Germany and Italy; 2012 for France; 2015 for the UK and 2016 for PODEMOS.

Starting from CMP indicators, precisely the EUP-EUN indicator, the positioning of the selected parties is not clear, besides the fact that the Italian FSM does not mention the EU (or the European integration project) in the national manifesto, the other included parties show negative stances to the EU with the only exception of the LN and PODEMOS. It is noteworthy that the LN is more supportive of the EU (scoring 2.85 points) than the Spanish left-wing party (scoring only 0.22 points of support). Furthermore, according to CMP data, FN's criticism of the EU is weaker than UKIP and AFD's one. Interestingly, the LINKE only shows -0.11 points of criticism of the EU according to CMP dataset. As for the EMS pro-anti-EU indicators, while the Italian FSM does not report any mention of the EU in its manifesto (scoring 0 points), the LN shows the highest level of criticism of the EU when compared to all the other included parties (scoring -30.99) followed by the FN, the AFD and UKIP (scoring -13.23; -10.08 and -3.12 respectively). Interestingly, the EMS pro-anti-EU indicator classifies both the LINKE and PODEMOS as pro-EU parties even though scoring low levels of support (4.24 and 1.69 respectively). Such data are only 'partially' confirmed by the pro-anti EU coders' rating indicator of the EMS dataset. In fact, while also according to the pro-anti-EU coders' rating indicator, the LINKE should be considered as a party showing some degree of support for the EU, both the FN and UKIP score 10 points indicating an extreme level of anti-EU sentiments. This observation is not in line with the former variable that sees the Italian LN as the party most critical of the EU. Lastly, according to the CHES salience indicators, the EU issue is generally highly relevant for all the considered parties, besides the fact that some difference may be delineated. In fact, there is a neat distinction between the German LINKE and the Spanish PODEMOS scoring lower values of EU-salience when compared to the other included parties. Similarly, also the EU-position indicator reports some differences between LINKE and PODEMOS on the one hand and the other parties on the other hand. LINKE and PODEMOS display a higher level of endorsement of the EU (scoring 3 and 4.4 points respectively³⁰). The other considered parties are positioned closer to the value of 1 thus presenting a general strong opposition to the EU. The last indicator, the 'EU-benefit' shows that all the considered parties generally tend to see their countries' EU-membership as a loss, the only exceptions are the LINKE, the AFD and PODEMOS. According to the experts' judgements, these last three parties show a more 'neutral' position with reference to their countries' EU-membership.

In summary, the quantitative measures reported above show a partially contradictory classification of parties' stances to the EU. However, for the purpose of this work, besides variations in degree, all the included parties may be considered as 'positive' cases exercising significant opposition to the EU. This is to say that all the included parties are cases where the outcome of interest (EU-

³⁰ Ray argues that all those parties recognised by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002) either as 'soft' or as 'hard' Eurosceptic generally record values lower than 4 on this CHES indicator (Ray 2007). However, this consideration is only partially in line with the other data sources reported in Table 4.3 above.

opposition) occurs (Della Porta 2008). Besides the fact that the general idea behind this case selection is to consider a sample of parties critical of the EU as representative as possible of the left-right continuum, the strategy of selecting positive cases has generally been criticised since cases are chosen upon the dependent variable. However, Mahoney and Goertz defend this strategy arguing that the selection of positive cases is a useful way to single out different paths of a certain outcome (Mahoney and Goertz 2006; Mahoney and Rushmeyer 2003). In other words, for the purpose of this study, different national parties critical of the EU (positive cases) are chosen to single out different patterns of EU-opposition expressed within the EP (the outcome of interest for this analysis).

To strengthen the analysis, this work proposes to focus the attention not only on political actors critical of the EU but also on those actors that are generally regarded as mainstream pro-EU parties. To select such parties, this work relies on the definition of ‘mainstream governing parties’ proposed by de Vries and Hobolt according to which mainstream governing parties are: ‘the clearest example of what it means to be a political winner as they occupy political office and are likely to be close to both the mean party and the mean voter on the main dimension of political competition’³¹(de Vries and Hobolt 2012, 250). Thus, drawing a parallel with parties critical of the EU, the mainstream parties may be considered as ‘negative cases’ where the outcome of interest (EU-opposition) does not occur or is highly probable that it does not occur. As mentioned in chapter 3 (See Chapter 3, section 3.2, pages 45-46), mainstream parties tend to position themselves toward the centre of the new politics dimension (the GAL/TAN dimension), consequently, they also tend to support the EU (EU-position indicator). For the purpose of this study, one mainstream governing party for each country is included. The work focuses on those mainstream parties covering the most important governing position at the moment when the analysis was carried on. Table 4.4 below presents the five mainstream parties included alongside the results they obtained in the last two rounds of EP elections.

³¹ De Vries and Hobolt study electoral losers’ attempt to restructure political competition by mobilizing previously non-salient issues to attract voters obtaining electoral gains. To do that they differentiate parties according to their position in the political space defining three types of parties: *mainstream governing parties* (definition mentioned in the text); *mainstream opposition parties* (those parties that has been in government before but are not currently holding governing positions) and *challenger parties*, those parties that has never cover governing positions. It is to be noted that, according to this classification, the Italian LN is to be considered as a ‘mainstream opposition party’ since it covered governing positions in the past. However, considering LN as a mainstream governing party may be counterintuitive since LN is unlikely to be close to both the mean party and the mean voter on the main dimension of competition (see Table 4.3 above).

Table 4. 4: Mainstream parties' electoral results of the last two rounds of EP elections, number of obtained seats and name of the corresponding EPPG.

Party name	Country	EPPG (2009)	Vote share (2009)	Seats (2009)	EPPG (2014)	Vote share (2014)	Seats (2014)	Difference in vote share (%)	Difference in the number of seats
PD	Italy	S&D	26.13	21	S&D	40.81	31	+14.68	+10
PS-PRG	France	S&D	16.48	14	S&D	13.9	13*	-2.58	-1
CDU-CSU	Germany	EPP	37.9	42	EPP	35.30	34	-2.6	-8
PP	Spain	EPP	42.23	23	EPP	26.9	16	-15.33	-7
CON	United Kingdom	ECR	27	25	ECR	23.31	19	-3.69	-8

Source: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-nl-2014.html>. * The French PS runs for the EP election in coalition with the Party of the Radical Left (PRG). Currently, the PRG has only one seat in the EP occupied by MEP Virginie Rozière

All the mainstream parties included in the analysis lost seats (and vote share) between 2009 and 2014 EP elections, with the only exception of the Italian PD that won 10 seats more in 2014 EP elections³². Similarly to the EU-opponents, also the included mainstream parties differ from several viewpoints, Table 4.5 below reports the three above-mentioned data sources (CMP, EMS and CHES) with indicators referring to mainstream parties' positions both along the left-right continuum and on the EU.

Starting from left-right positions, there is a neat distinction between centre-left and centre-right parties emerging from all the three used sources. The only exception is the CMP's RILE index that classifies the CDU-CSU as the only centre-right party while all the other four considered parties show leftist values ranging from the -32.71 points scored by the French PS (the highest value of leftist positioning) to -1.63 points scored by the British CON thus situating in the centre – leaning toward the left - of the left-right continuum. EMS left-right positioning identifies centre-left parties (PD and PS) scoring values between 3 and 4, while centre-right parties are located closer to the value of 7 (CDU-CSU, PP and CON). Similarly, also on the CHES left-right indicator, centre-left parties position between 3 and 4 (PD and PS) while parties leaning toward the right score values closer to 7 (CDU-CSU, PP and CON). The included mainstream parties show positive stances to the EU according to all the reported indicators from the three data sources, the only visible exception is the British CON. This party scores a negative value both on the CMP EUP-EUN index (-4.03) and on the EMS pro-anti EU indicator (-9.83). Furthermore, the CON party scores 3.14 points on the CHES EU-position indicators, thus identifying some degree of criticism toward the EU. The only exception is the EMS pro-anti-EU coders' rating that positions the British CON in the middle of the pro-anti-EU scale, thus denoting a neutral position of the CON on the EU.

³² The results of 2014 EP elections have been considered by the party as a major victory (scoring the highest historical vote-share) against the FSM. See: http://www.repubblica.it/speciali/politica/elezioni-europee2014/2014/05/26/news/elezioni_europee_pd_renzi_risultati-87203700/

Table 4. 5: Mainstream governing parties position along the left-right continuum and on the EU according to three main data sources, the CMP, the EMS and the CHES.

Party name	Country	Party Family	CMP				EMS				CHES			
			RILE INDEX	EU-positive	EU-negative	EUP-EUN	Party family	Left-right positioning (coders' rating)	Pro-anti EU	Pro-anti EU (coders' rating)	Left right positioning	EU-salience	EU-position	EU benefit
PD	Italy	Liberal parties	-6.86	11.76	0	11.76	Social democratic parties	3	6.83	3	3.57	7.57	6.57	1
PS	France	Social Democratic Parties	-32.71	2.33	0	2.33	Social democratic parties	4*	15.06*	2*	3.83	5.07	5.78	1
CDU-CSU	Germany	Christian democratic parties	2.56	2	0.66	1.34	Christian Democratic Parties	7.14 **	2.89**	2.29**	6.11**	6.85**	6.15**	1.12**
PP	Spain	Conservative Parties	-4.24	3.07	0	3.07	Conservative Parties	7	8.28	3	7.3	6.9	6.8	1
CON	United Kingdom	Conservative Parties	-1.63	0.56	4.59	-4.03	Conservative Parties	7	-9.83	5	7	7.42	3.14	2

* EMS data referring to the French PS consider the party in coalition with the Radical Party of the Left. **EMS and CHES data referring to the coalition CDU-CSU are self-calculated as the average between the scores obtained on the various indicators weighted by the number of MEPs of each party. CMP data refers to the latest available elections for each considered country at the time of observation: 2013 elections for Germany and Italy; 2012 for France; 2015 for the UK and 2016 for PODEMOS.

4.3 Data and methods used for the construction of the dependent variables: EU-opposition

This section presents the data and the methods used for the construction of the dependent variable. Section 4.3.1 presents the policy issues selected for the analysis and the collected speeches alongside a description thereof. Section 4.3.2 illustrates the methods used in the construction of the dependent variables: both deductive and inductive methods of content analysis are used to observe the ‘quantity’ and the ‘quality’ of the expressed EU-opposition.

4.3.1 Data used in the analysis: MEPs speeches to the fore

As mentioned in section 4.2, this work proposes an analysis of EU-opposition expressed by ‘Euro-sceptic’ parties (taking mainstream parties as a baseline comparison) during their ‘normal’ activity in the pan-European arena of the EP. While this work does not rely on specific speeches where the level of expressed criticism or support might be higher (e.g.: EP debates about the outcome of the Brexit referendum), analysing the entirety of MEPs’ speeches held in the time framework selected for the analysis, would have overcome the capacity of a single researcher. For this reason, this work focuses on speeches concerning three policy areas:

1. Immigration, asylum and borders control;
2. Economy³³;
3. Environmental protection.

The first two included policy issues are directly related to the two main crises that the EU is facing, thus constituting two ‘transnational, politically significant, nationally divisive and ideologically divisive’ policy areas (Braghiroli 2015, 110). The third chosen issue, environmental protection, is not directly related to the two main crises that the EU is experiencing, but is inserted in the analysis for four main reasons: firstly, issues related to the protection of the environment (e.g.: climate change) are pressing nowadays; secondly the EU generally plays a prominent role in this policy field; thirdly besides not being directly crisis-related, the economic crisis has had an impact on it (Burns and Tobin 2016); lastly including environmental protection enables the comparison of national parties’ positioning to the EU in crisis and non-crisis related policy issues. Since the Maastricht Treaty, the EU increased its powers in all these three policy fields; furthermore, since Lisbon, the decisions concerning these policy

³³ This policy issue encompasses speeches mainly referring to macroeconomics and budgetary coordination thus excluding speeches related to the Single Market.

areas are taken under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure where both the Council of Ministers and the EP have a deciding vote in the legislative process³⁴. Consequently, focusing the analysis on these three policy issues allows the observation of all potential aspects of EU-opposition (and patterns thereof) in crisis and non-crisis-related policy fields under the general expectation that opposition is higher in crisis-related issues rather than in non-crisis-related issues.

Once the policy issues are selected, the work proceeds with the selection and collection of the data to be used in the subsequent steps of the analysis, thus to create the dependent variables of this work. Starting from the sample of national parties included in the analysis (see the previous section), the work collects the speeches that MEPs held during the EP plenary debates through a technique of automated data collection using Python³⁵. Speeches are then filtered according to the policy area they belong to (immigration; economy and environmental protection) and aggregated by national parties. Thirty-six different corpora³⁶, three for each of the included party, are thus created and stored. Table 4.6 below reports the total amount of collected data by party while Table 4.7 presents the 36 created corpora alongside their average length expressed in tokens, each word in the corpus (the standard deviation is presented in parenthesis), and the average number of speeches by MEP.

³⁴ See article 77(2), 78(2) and 79(2) of the TFEU concerning immigration, asylum and borders control. See article 121(6) of the TFEU concerning economic policy and see article 192(1) of the TFEU for what concerns environmental protection.

³⁵ Appendix A further details the criteria used for the selection of the speeches and the techniques used for the download of the data through Python. Speeches are available online in the verbatim reports of the EP. According to Rule of Procedure of the EP no. 194 comma 1 ‘A verbatim report of the proceedings of each sitting shall be drawn up as a multilingual document in which all oral contributions appear in their original language’. Furthermore, verbatim reports are published in the Official Journal of the European Union, they are preserved in the record of the EP and publicly accessible through the EP website at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/minutes.html>

³⁶ A corpus is a collection of spoken or written text, according to the Oxford dictionary a corpus may be defined as: ‘A collection of written or spoken material in machine-readable form, assembled for the purpose of linguistic research’. Source: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/corpus>

Table 4. 6: Total number of collected speeches by party and average number of speeches by MEP.

Total number of speeches by party			
Party name	Country	Total no. of speeches	Average no. of speeches by MEPs
FSM	Italy	667	39.2
LN	Italy	493	98.6
PD	Italy	1241	40
FN	France	1840	80
PS	France	334	25.7
AFD	Germany	477	68.1
LINKE	Germany	42	6
CDU-CSU	Germany	495	14.5
PODEMOS	Spain	661	132.2
PP	Spain	328	20.5
UKIP	United Kingdom	976	40.6
CON	United Kingdom	259	13.6
Total	--	7813	--

Source: own calculation

Table 4. 7: Constructed corpora by party and policy issue.

Party name	Country	Total number of speeches	Average number of speech by MEP	Average length of speeches (SD in parenthesis)
Immigration/asylum/borders control				
FSM	Italy	122	7.2	231.6 (97.1)
LN	Italy	142	28.4	162.7 (89)
PD	Italy	308	9.9	241.3 (111.7)
FN	France	398	17.3	180.9 (75.4)
PS	France	92	7.07	264.3 (89.3)
AFD	Germany	145	20.71	236.2 (50.9)
LINKE	Germany	17	2.4	352.4 (214.3)
CDU-CSU	Germany	120	3.5	303.9 (260.5)
PODEMOS	Spain	141	28.2	202 (95.8)
PP	Spain	86	5.4	254.5 (146.7)
UKIP	United Kingdom	293	12.2	161.2 (102.7)
CON	United Kingdom	65	3.4	288.5 (196.4)
Total	--	1929	--	
Economy				
FSM	Italy	322	18.9	214 (84.5)
LN	Italy	218	43.6	118.7 (59.2)
PD	Italy	548	17.7	220.7 (94.8)
FN	France	871	37.8	183 (64.6)
PS	France	141	10.8	249.4 (163.3)
AFD	Germany	236	33.7	108.5 (73.8)
LINKE	Germany	22	3.14	329.3 (141)
CDU-CSU	Germany	228	6.7	242.2 (167.8)
PODEMOS	Spain	295	59	158.8 (56.5)
PP	Spain	144	9	191 (98.7)
UKIP	United	424	17.6	122.2 (87.6)

	Kingdom			
CON	United Kingdom	97	5.1	200.5 (117.9)
Total	--	3546	--	
Environmental protection				
FSM	Italy	223	39.2	221.2 (82.7)
LN	Italy	133	26.6	108.3 (56.8)
PD	Italy	385	12.4	210.8 (68.5)
FN	France	571	24.8	182.4 (81.7)
PS	France	101	7.7	226.6 (109.7)
AFD	Germany	96	13.7	205.5 (52.8)
LINKE	Germany	3	0.5	272.8 (88.4)
CDU-CSU	Germany	147	4.3	223.7 (146.7)
PODEMOS	Spain	225	45	166.9 (62.9)
PP	Spain	98	6.1	199.5 (102.6)
UKIP	United Kingdom	259	10.8	149.3 (77.16)
CON	United Kingdom	97	5.1	245.8 (146.5)
Total	--	2338	--	--
Total overall	--	7813	--	--

Source: own calculation. Number of speeches by party and policy issue, alongside information about the average number of speeches by MEP and the average length of speeches (expressed in tokens) (standard deviation in parenthesis)

The largest corpora reported in Table 4.6 above encompass speeches related to the economy (scoring a total amount of 3546 speeches) followed by environmental protection and immigration, asylum and borders control in declining order. It is noteworthy that the included EU-opponents score a higher average number of speeches by MEP thus denoting a more ‘intense’ use of the EP arena to express their views than their mainstream counterparts. This consideration holds true in all the considered policy areas, the only exception among the EU-opponents is UKIP in the context of environmental policies. On the contrary, mainstream parties tend to speak less in the EP plenary, with the only exception of the Italian PD that shows average numbers of speeches by MEPs more similar to the one of the EU-opponents³⁷.

³⁷ This pattern is typical of opposition parties also in national parliamentary arenas. As demonstrated by Proksch and Slapin, opposition parties tend to use more the parliamentary arena when compared to governing parties’ exponents. Representatives from opposition parties are largely excluded from the decision-making process and they tend to use the parliamentary arena as a way to scrutinize government’s activity and propose alternatives to it (Slapin and Proksch 2015). The fact that a similar dynamic is found also in the EP might suggest that a sort of government/opposition distinction applies also to the EP.

4.3.2 Deductive content analysis, index of EU-opposition and inductive coding of speeches

‘Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use’ (Krippendorff 2012, 24). This work relies on both quantitative and qualitative techniques of content analysis applied to the speeches delivered by national parties’ representatives in the EP arena.

The first part of the analysis uses a ‘deductive’³⁸ technique of quantitative content analysis inspired by the CMP. This first phase detects both the directionality and the character of parties’ stances to the four main targets (and related sub-targets) of EU-opposition (with the main aim to detect the ‘quantity’ and ‘the quality’ of EU-opposition (or support) expressed by national parties in the speeches they deliver in the EP arena. To do that, the ‘preparation phase’ of the analysis implies choices with reference to: 1) the unit of analysis and 2) the definition of a codebook to be applied during the analysis alongside the clarification of coding rules³⁹.

The selected unit of content analysis is the so-called ‘quasi-sentence’ adopting the definition provided by the CMP’s coding instructions: ‘[O]ne quasi-sentence contains exactly one statement or “message”. In many cases, parties make one statement per sentence, which results in one quasi-sentence (equalling one full sentence). Therefore the basic unitizing rule is that one sentence is, at minimum, one quasi-sentence. In no case can two sentences form a quasi-sentence. There are, however, instances when one natural sentence contains more than one quasi-sentence’⁴⁰.

After this first step, this work defines the codebook to be applied to the empirical evaluation of MEPs’ speeches. It is created starting from the definition of EU-opposition provided in chapter 2 and refers to 1) the addressed targets; 2) the directionality of the expressed position (positive, negative or neutral) indicating support or opposition (or neutral stance) for one of the proposed targets, and 3) the character used in the expression of opposition (or support) to the addressed target (either principled or pragmatic).

With reference to the targets, four main categories of the codebook are formulated and refer to the four main targets of EU-opposition: EU-policies, EU-elite, EU-regime and EU-community. Further sub-categories are created to indicate the main sub-targets belonging to two of the just-mentioned targets: the EU-regime that includes sub-targets referring to the main EU-institutions (the EP, the European Commission – EC –, the Council adding a further ‘Other institutions’ target

³⁸ Deductive content analysis is used when the structure of analysis is operationalized on the basis of previous knowledge and the purpose of the study is theory testing (Elo and Kyngäs 2008).

³⁹ The complete version of the codebook alongside the applied coding instructions are presented in appendix A of this work.

⁴⁰ Definition taken from the “Handbook” of the Comparative Manifesto Project. The electronic version of the current handbook is available at https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/information/documents?name=handbook_v4

including institutions like the European Central Bank – ECB) and the EU-community for which two sub-targets are used to distinguish the EU (as a community) from the two main geometries deriving from the process of European integration (the Euro area and the Schengen area).

The directionality of parties' positioning to one of the just-mentioned targets is detected by creating three categories for each identified target and sub-target: directional negative, in case a quasi-sentence expresses opposition; directional positive, in the case of support; and non-directional in case no specific directionality is expressed.

To detect the last 'property' of EU-opposition, the character of each coded quasi-sentence (either principled or pragmatic), the codebook assigns values to each category such that: a value of 2 corresponds to principled expression; a value of 1 corresponds to a pragmatic stance and a value of 0 refers to a 'neutral' affirmation. As a result, a quasi-sentence expressed by a party X referring to the EU-policy target, assuming a negative direction and showing a principled character will be coded as 'EU-policy directional negative 2'.

After the definition of the codebook MEPs' speeches are analysed following three main steps: 1) texts are divided into quasi-sentences following the definition reported above; 2) each quasi-sentence is coded under one of the observed categories, and 3) a value is assigned to each coded quasi-sentence mirroring its character.

CMP's methodology is based on saliency theory stating that parties' '[t]aking up of positions is done by emphasizing the importance of certain policy areas compared to others' (Budge 1994, 455). The fact that a party does not hold any specific position with reference to some specific policy, is to be interpreted as a lack of saliency of that specific policy to the party. In fact, 'operationally, "saliency" theory suggests that the relative mention of different policy areas in the manifesto provides a direct measure of their importance to the party' (Lowe et al. 2011, 133). Similarly, this analysis assumes that national parties emphasise a specific target (either positively or negatively) the more that target is important to them. The fact that a party does not hold any specific position with reference to a specific target is taken as a lack of salience of that specific target to the party. In other words, the relative mentions of different targets provide a direct measure of their importance to the party (Lowe et al. 2011). Once speeches are coded, the frequencies of the quasi-sentences aggregate by national party are used to build up an index of the 'quantity' of EU-opposition or support (Q_o) for each of the specified targets (and sub-targets). It is to be noted that the aggregation of MEPs speeches by party does not allow the observation of potential discrepancies among MEPs positioning on the EU and the related targets. In other words, the method applied does not allow the detection of different positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU expressed by national parties' factions. Future research in the field can accomplish this task. The formula used to construct the index of the 'quantity' of EU-opposition or support is the following:

$$Q_o = \frac{\log CN + 1}{\log N + 1} - \frac{\log CP + 1}{\log N + 1}$$

Where CN is the number of coded ‘directional negative’ quasi-sentences, CP represents the coded ‘directional positive’ quasi-sentences and N represents the total number of quasi-sentences included in each of the collected corpus described in section 4.3.1⁴¹. The formulated index is an adaptation of Prosser’s re-elaboration of Lowe et al.’ ‘logit scale of position’ (Lowe et al. 2011; Prosser 2014) that is, in turn, an improvement of CMP’s left-right scale (the so-called RILE index). The value of 1 is added to each component of the index because it ‘makes the value of no quasi-sentences in a component consistently 0’ (Prosser 2014, 96) since $\log_{(1)} = 0$. Moreover, the log element enables researchers to avoid centrist or extremist biases in the analysis. The obtained index refers to the ‘quantity’ of expressed opposition or support to the related target; it ranges from -1 to 1, where -1 indicates the total support for a specific target, while 1 designates the total opposition. Whenever the index takes value of 0 either no quasi-sentence is coded under the two categories (positive or negative), thus denoting either a lack of salience of that specific target to the party, or that the same proportion of coded ‘directional positive’ and coded ‘directional negative’ quasi-sentences referring to a specific target is present.

The constructed index of the quantity of EU-opposition is used to provide a first quantitative description of parties’ stances to the EU both overall and across policy issues (see chapter 5 of this work). This first evaluation aims at understanding, which are the parties exercising opposition to the studied EU-targets and it is combined with a deeper evaluation of the motivations used by parties to exercise opposition (see below for further information about the inductive coding phase).

Once the indexes of the ‘quantity of opposition’ are created (one for each EU-targets), the values related to the character of EU-opposition are used to quantitatively establish the ‘quality’ of the expressed opposition: if a party displays a positive value on the EU-opposition index (thus denoting the presence of opposition) and if the majority of the coded negative quasi-sentences are principled in character, then the party is exercising a principled opposition to that specific target.

All these steps culminate in the creation of four main additive indexes of parties’ positioning to the EU (one for each of the four EU-targets) encompassing the three main characteristics of party positioning cited above (directionality, intensity – or quantity – and character – pragmatic or principled) according to the following formula:

$$(Q_o \pm q_o) * 100$$

⁴¹ It is to be noted that N includes quasi-sentences belonging to both non-directional and no match categories.

Where Q_o represents the ‘quantity’ of expressed opposition or support to the four targets of the EU, and q_o refers to the ‘quality’ of EU-opposition. The quality of EU-opposition takes the value of 1 if the expressed positioning is principled and the value of 0 if the expressed positioning is pragmatic. The formula presents the \pm operator to obtain a symmetric scale of opposition/support. In other words, if Q_o is positive (thus indicating that a party n is opposing one of the studied targets) the value of q_o is added. On the contrary, if Q_o is negative (thus indicating that a party n supports a specific target of the EU) the value of q_o is subtracted. The resulting index is a continuous variable ranging from -200 indicating the maximum degree of principled support to +200 indicating the maximum level of principled opposition, whereas a value of -100 relates to the maximum degree of pragmatic support and a value of +100 indicates the maximum degree of pragmatic opposition. If the index takes the value of 0 it indicates that either the party does not refer to that specific target or that an equal proportion of opposition and support is present⁴². The assumption behind the resulting EU-opposition index is that, if two parties express a similar ‘quantity’ of opposition or support, the final value of the index will vary as a function of the character of the expressed opposition or support, being always higher for a principle-driven opposition. The resulting indexes are used in the second phase of the analysis detailed in the next section.

As mentioned above, the second step of the analysis aims at understanding the motivations guiding opposition to the analysed EU-targets. It is performed relying on a method of inductive content analysis that follows two main phases: firstly, coded negatively quasi-sentences are examined taking care of both the ‘manifest’ and ‘latent’ content. Each quasi-sentence reporting motivation for the opposition is classified in category expressed in ‘simple language’ (Cregan 2005). Whenever possible, this process is carried out through an evaluation of the motivations on the basis of their ‘manifest content’: the content physically present and countable (Gray and Densten 1998; Neuendorf 2002). Just to mention an example, all the quasi-sentences expressing opposition to the EU-policies in economic field citing the word *austerity* alongside similar motivations for their opposition (e.g.: austerity policies leading to higher levels of poverty) are placed under the same category. If it is not possible to evaluate the manifest content of a quasi-sentence, the analysis evaluates them on the basis of their latent content: the content which is hidden and needs to be interpreted by the researcher⁴³. This first phase of the inductive analysis culminates in a large number of micro-categories that, during the second phase of inductive coding, are aggregated into broader categories (or macro-categories) and finally in themes⁴⁴.

⁴² Appendix A further provides some examples of the constructed index.

⁴³ According to Neuendorf, manifest and latent content distinguish between the ‘surface’ and ‘deep’ structures of language and have its origin in Freud’s interpretation of dreams (Neuendorf 2002).

⁴⁴ Appendix C reports the created macro-categories and themes alongside further explanations about the reliability and validity check of the inductive coding.

Once themes are detected a comparative analysis of the motivations used by parties is carried out in chapter 6 of this work.

4.4 Data and method used in the second phase of the analysis: explaining EU-opposition, POS as independent variables.

Starting from the concept of POS and translating it into three sets of factors both ‘endogenous’ and ‘exogenous’ to the considered parties, the second phase of the work relies on multivariate hierarchical regression analysis (OLS) to understand the drivers of patterns of EU-opposition in the EP. The next paragraph details the data used to operationalise the hypotheses presented in chapter 3.

4.4.1 Operationalization of the independent variables

Table 4.8 below reports a summary of the included independent variables (IVs) alongside the formulated hypotheses. The first set of POS refers to the endogenous characteristics of both the included national parties and the EPPG they belong to. A1 points toward a positive relationship between the degree of ideological heterogeneity of an EPPG and the degree of EU-opposition expressed by each national party belonging to that EPPG. The elaborated IV ‘measures’ the ideological heterogeneity⁴⁵ of the EPPG and is calculated as the sum of the absolute values of the distances between each party’s ideological position and the ideological position of the EPPG according to the following formula:

$$\frac{\sum_{p=1}^{n_e} |(P_p * S_{pe}) - M_e|}{S_e}$$

Where P_p is the position of the national party along the left-right continuum; S_{pe} is the number of seats owned by the national party in the EPPG; M_e is the weighted average left-right position of the EPPG (variable EPPGs’ left-right positioning) and S_e is the total number of seats owned by the EPPG.

The second generated association (A2) looks at the potential relationship between patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP and the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which each national party belongs. To calculate the IV ‘general ideological orientation of the EPPG’ this work relies on the following formula:

⁴⁵ The IV related to the ideological heterogeneity of an EPPG is elaborated on the basis of the index of ‘ideological diversity’ of an EPPG proposed by Hix Noury and Roland in their study about cohesion and competition in the EP (Hix et al. 2005, 224).

$$M_e = \frac{\sum_{p=1}^{n_e} (P_p * S_{pe})}{S_e}$$

Where P_p is the position of each national party along the left-right continuum; S_{pe} is the total number of seats owned by each national party in the corresponding EPPG and S_e is the total number of seats owned by the EPPG in the EP. The variable ranges from 0 – extreme left – to 10 – extreme right.

Hypothesis 1 refers to the relationship between patterns of EU-opposition and the general ideological orientation of national parties. The IV included in Table 4.8 below refers to the centrist-extreme positioning of each national party. The variable is constructed rescaling the CHES variable ‘general left-right ideological orientation’ such that a value of 0 corresponds to centrist positioning and a value of 10 corresponds to both the extreme left and right of the ideological spectrum.

Moving the attention to the second set of factors concerning the institutional POS shaping patterns of EU-opposition in the EP, Hypothesis 2 sustains that there is a positive relationship between higher levels of EU-opposition and the marginality of a political party in the national political competition. To answer this hypothesis the constructed IV is a dichotomous variable taking the value of 0 for parties covering governing positions at the national level and the value of 1 for parties not belonging to governing coalitions.

Hypothesis 3 sustains that there is a negative relationship between the ‘marginality’ of the EPPG in the supranational political competition and the EU-opposition expressed by those national parties belonging to that marginal EPPG. As observed in chapter 3 of this work, generally larger established EPPGs play a dominant role in the decision-making process (working in the so-called giant or grand coalition) excluding smaller, more marginal, generally Eurosceptic EPPGs. As a consequence, a good indicator to operationalise the degree of ‘marginality’ of an EPPG is its size expressed as the number of MEPs composing each EPPG (yearly variations in the composition of each EPPG are taken into consideration when constructing the IV).

With reference to ‘informal’ institutional POS, this work focuses its attention on the degree of expertise of MEPs belonging to the considered national parties arguing in hypothesis 4 that there is a negative relationship between national parties MEPs’ degree of experience in the EP and the expressed opposition. To assess this relationship, this work relies on the IV ‘seniority’ calculated as the average number of years spent in the EP by each MEP belonging to each national delegation⁴⁶.

The last set of factors potentially shaping EU-opposition in the EP refers to the effects of the two main crises (economic and immigration) on patterns of EU-opposition. H5 argues that higher

⁴⁶ The variable is calculated on a yearly basis, taking variations in the composition of each national delegations into account (i.e.: incoming and outgoing MEPs, further details may be found at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/incoming-outgoing.html>)

levels of vulnerability of parties' country to both crises produce a higher degree of EU-opposition expressed by national parties coming from debtor/recipient member states. On the contrary H6 argues that the vulnerability of each country to the two crises is negatively associated with the degree of expressed EU-opposition, consequently, national parties coming from creditor/donor states will express a higher level of EU-opposition. To assess these relationships the work relies on both 'objective' and 'subjective' measures of countries' vulnerability to the two crises. As for the economy-related independent variables the work includes two objective and one subjective measures. The first objective measure is the percentage difference in the total amount of the country's GDP between time T2 and time T1. The second included objective measure is the percentage variation in the poverty and social exclusion index between time T2 and time T1 (e.g.: percentage variation in the national index of poverty and social exclusion between 2014 and 2013). The economy-related subjective measure is represented by the percentage of people in each included counties expressing a fairly bad or bad judgement of the national economy for each year included in the period of observation, this variable is formulated using data from the Eurobarometer⁴⁷. With reference to the immigration crisis' indicators, the two included objective IVs refer to 1) the percentage variation in the number of refugee present in each country between time T2 and time T1 (e.g.: percentage variation in the total number of refugees present in the country between 2014 and 2013) (variable Refugee population T2-T1) and 2) the percentage variation in the number of asylum applicants between time T2 and time T1 (e.g.: percentage variation in the total number of asylum applications presented in the country between 2014 and 2013) (variable Asylum applications T2-T1). As for the 'subjective' measures of country's vulnerability to the immigration crisis, this work includes the variable 'perception of immigration' reporting the percentage of people in each of the included countries expressing a fairly negative or very negative judgement of immigration of peoples coming from outside the EU for each year included in the period of observation (source Eurobarometer)⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ The exact question used in the survey is: 'How would you judge each of the following: the situation of the national economy? The available answers are: 1) very good; 2) fairly good; 3) rather bad; 4) very bad; 5) Don't know

⁴⁸ The exact question of the Eurobarometer survey used in the analysis is: please tell me whether each of the following statements evokes a positive or negative feeling for you: Immigration of people from outside the EU. Available answers: 1) very positive; 2) fairly positive; 3) fairly negative; 4) very negative; 5) Don't Know.

Table 4. 8: Summary table reporting the formulated hypotheses and associations and the relative independent variables

Type of POS (and perspective with reference to the party)	Hypotheses and Associations	IV's name	Source
Ideology (endogenous)	A1: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP are associated with the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG they belong to.	EPPG ideological heterogeneity	CHES
	A2: patterns of EU-opposition are associated with the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which national parties belong.	EPPGs' left-right positioning	CHES
	H1: Patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of each national party's ideological extremeness, independently of the general ideological position of the EPPG. The more parties position themselves toward the extremes of the left-right ideological continuum the higher their degree of EU-opposition will be.	Extreme left-right positioning	CHES
Institutional factors (exogenous group 1)	H2: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP vary as a function of their 'marginality' in political competition at national level. Parties not belonging to governing coalitions at the national level (or not even eligible to cover governing positions at the national level) will display a higher degree of opposition to the EU.	Parties' role at national level	Own elaboration
	H3: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP vary as a function of the 'marginality' of the EPPG they belong to. The more marginal the EPPG the higher EU-opposition expressed by national parties belonging to that EPPG will be.	Size of the EPPG	Own elaboration using data from the EP website
	H4: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP will vary as a negative function of the seniority of their MEPs. The less national parties' MEPs are socialized within the EP the higher their EU-opposition will be.	Seniority	Own elaboration using data from the EP website
Unintentional events economic and immigration crises (exogenous group 3)	H5: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The more debtor/recipient member states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	GDP T2-T1	Eurostat
		Poverty risk T2-T1	Eurostat
		Perception of national economy	Eurobarometer
	H6: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a negative function of their country's level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The less creditor/donor states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	Refugee population T2-T1	Eurostat
		Asylum applications T2-T1	Eurostat
		Perception of immigration	Eurobarometer

Chapter 5: Quantitative patterns of EU-opposition

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comparative overview of the ‘quantity’ of EU-opposition¹ expressed by different national parties through the speeches they held in the EP arena.

Starting from the central research question - Which aspects of the EU do national parties oppose from within the arena of the EP? – the chapter provides descriptive answers also to further collateral questions: Does the expressed opposition differ across the three studied policy issues? Do mainstream parties show some signs of opposition to the EU? Does opposition change over time?

Consequently, the core objective of this chapter is not explanatory but rather descriptive providing a first evaluation of the presence or absence of EU-opposition, which motivations will be further investigated in the next chapter.

The chapter is structured around three main sections: section 5.2 starts analysing national parties’ positioning on the EU from an overall perspective both in a ‘static’ and in a ‘dynamic’ way, looking at its evolution across the observed time period. This section also compares the heterogeneous group of left and right-wing EU-opponents with the group of mainstream parties, allowing the detection of potential criticism expressed by the last mentioned actors. The following section 5.3 presents the quantity of EU-opposition across the three studied policy issues to observe how and if parties’ behaviour toward the EU changes in more – economy and immigration – or less – environmental protection – contentious policy fields. A conclusive section summarizes the obtained results.

5.2 Patterns of EU-opposition: the overall picture

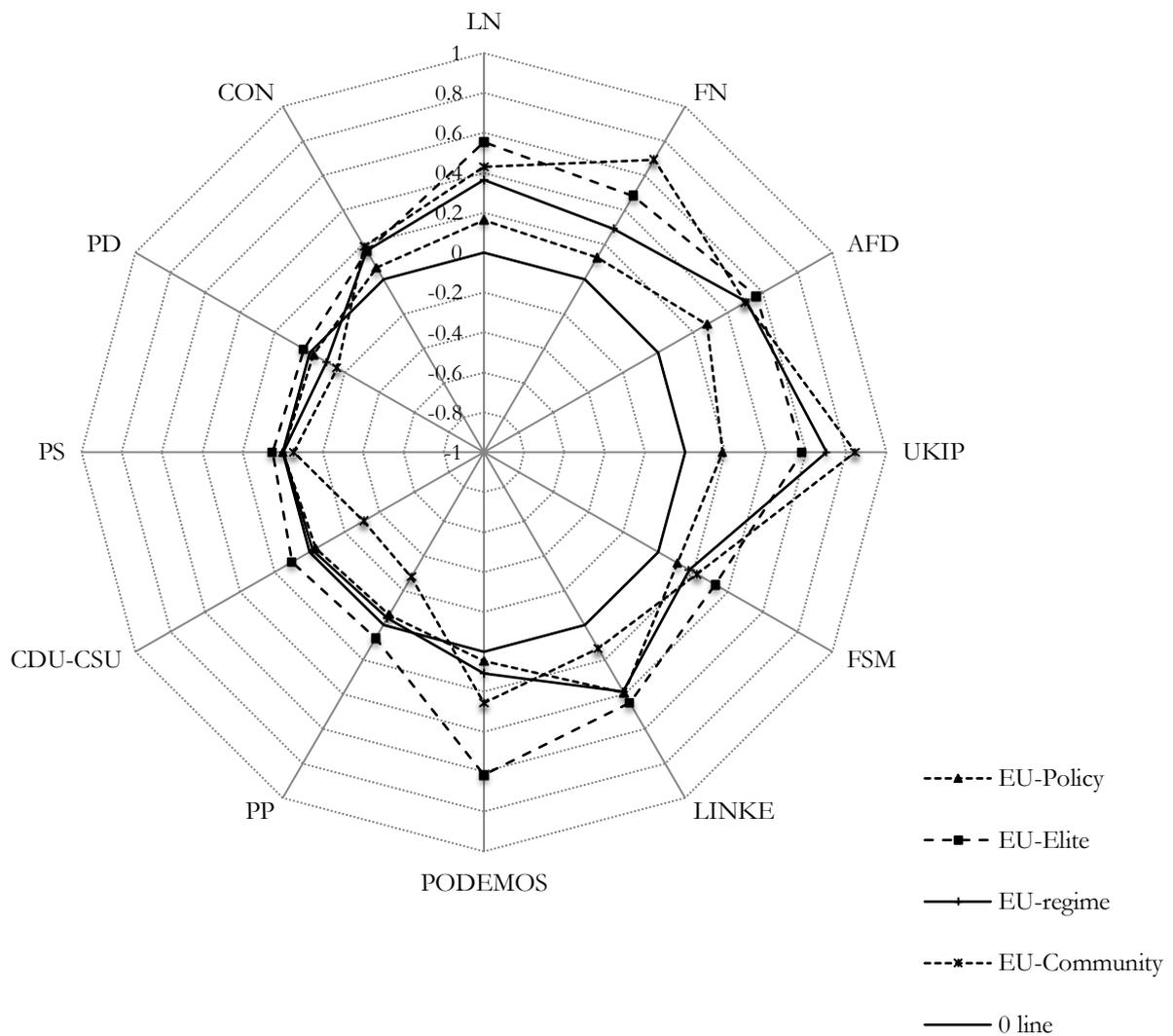
The three Figures below portray three spider-plots presenting the quantity of EU-opposition with reference to 1) the four EU-targets: EU-policies, EU-elite, EU-regime, EU-community (Figure 5.1); 2) the sub-targets of the EU-community – the EU, the Schengen area and Euro area geometries (Figure 5.2), and 3) the sub-targets of the EU-regime – the EC, the EP, the Council of Ministers and the ‘Other institutions’ targets (Figure 5.4). To each plots’ vertex corresponds one national party while

¹ It is to be noted that the term EU-opposition is related to the index calculated through the analysis of textual data presented in the previous chapter. The term EU-opposition is generally used throughout the chapter, even though whenever it assumes negative values it indicates support for one of the examined targets.

the black patterned lines represent the quantity of expressed EU-opposition for each of the proposed targets. On the black continuous line (the 0 line) the quantity of EU-opposition takes the value of 0 (either no opposition or support is expressed or an equal proportion of both opposition and support is reported in the speeches). Whenever a party opposes one of the proposed targets, the line is drawn in the positive side of the graph and vice versa².

Figure 5.1: Spider-plot of parties' positions on the EU-targets from an overall perspective.

Parties' positions on the EU-targets: 2014-2016



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: 2014-2016. Data are reported in Table B.1 of Appendix B.

² Detailed information about the obtained indexes of EU-opposition is reported in tabular form in Appendix B of this work.

From Figure 5.1 above emerges an evident distinction between mainstream parties – left-hand side of the graph – and EU-opponents' stances: EU-opponents generally oppose all the targets reported in the graph, even if noticeable differences among them exist.

Interestingly, a relatively intense opposition to the EU-elite target equates all the considered EU-opponents. The European establishment represents the first object of criticism for all left-wing parties alongside the Italian FSM. On the contrary, right-wing parties, particularly the FN and UKIP, focus their attention on the EU-community target. These two parties take the EU-community as the first and foremost addressee of criticism scoring 0.69 and 0.85 points respectively. Similarly to more left-leaning EU-opponents, both AFD and LN primarily focus their criticism on the EU-establishment – the AFD scores 0.56 and the LN scores 0.55 – while the EU-community is the second most addressed target by LN and AFD – 0.50 points scored by the AFD and 0.43 points scored by the LN.

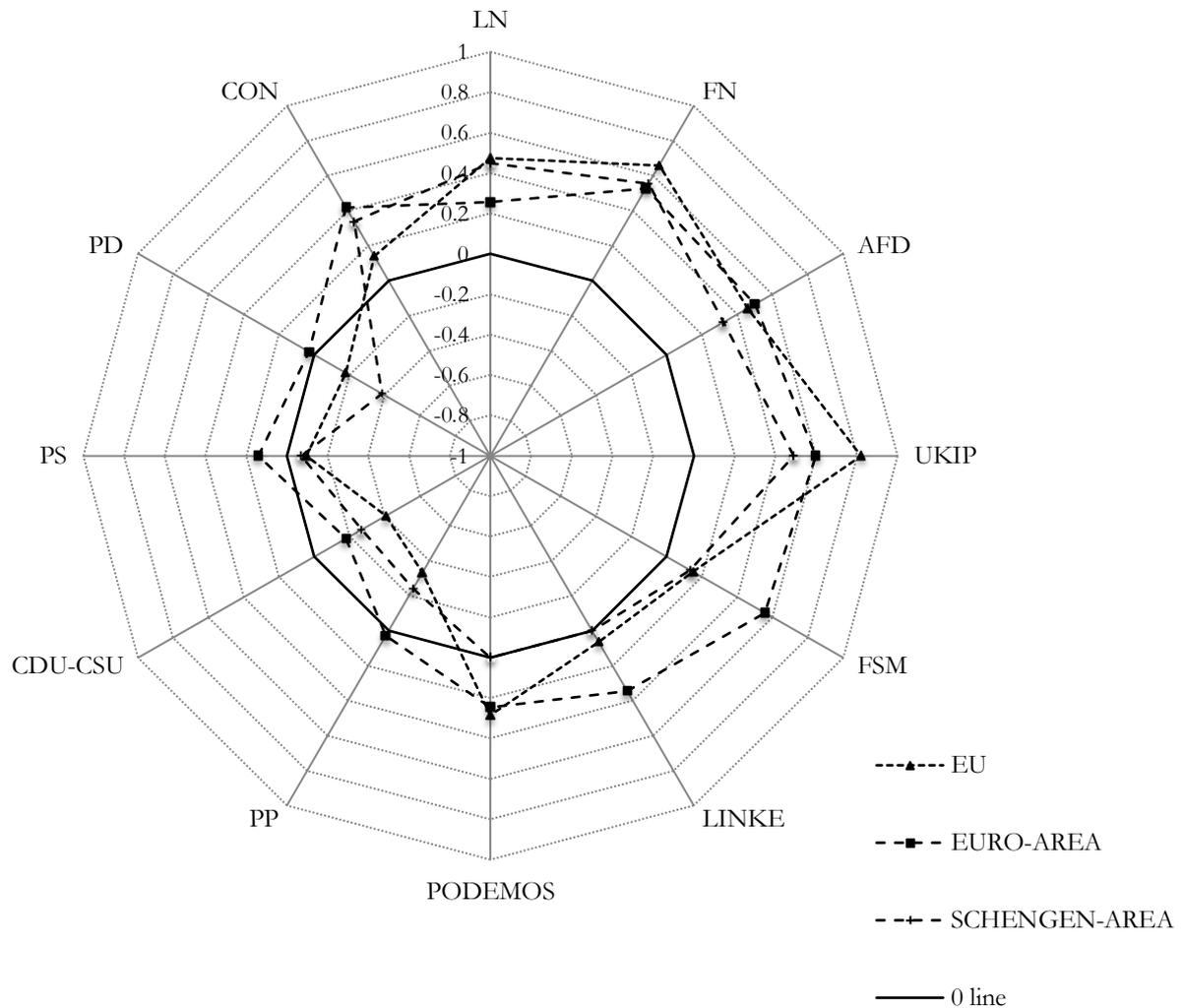
Interestingly, the EU-policy target is weakly criticised by EU-opponents that prefer to focus their attention on the other three studied targets with the only remarkable exception of the German LINKE. This party takes the EU-policy as its second most addressed target (scoring around 0.39 points) closely followed by criticism of the EU-regime (scoring 0.38 points).

Furthermore, right-wing EU-opponents are generally more critical of all the studied EU-targets when compared to their left-wing counterpart. The only exception is the opposition to the EU-elite target that equates all the considered EU-opponents.

From this first overall description, the EU-elite and the EU-community are the most criticised aspects of the EU. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4, page 38), differently from the EU-elite target, opposition to the EU-community involves also criticism directed to the two studied geometries deriving from the process of European integration: the Euro area and the Schengen area (see Figure 5.2 below). Also in this case, right-wing parties, particularly UKIP, FN and LN share their first object of criticism, the EU (scoring 0.82, 0.66 and 0.47 respectively). In spite of the fact that right-wing parties are critical of all the observed sub-targets of the EU-community, what differentiate them from left-wing parties, alongside the FSM, is their hard opposition to the Schengen area: the party most critical of the Schengen geometry is the FN followed by UKIP, LN and AFD in declining order. Neither the LINKE nor PODEMOS show any instances of opposition to this geometry, while some degree of criticism is present in FSM's discourses, scoring 0.13 points on the index of the quantity of EU-opposition. Interestingly, all EU-opponents, independently from their ideological standpoint, are critical of the Euro area geometry (generally constituting the first target of criticism for more left-leaning parties).

Figure 5.2: Spider-plot of parties' positions on the EU-community sub-targets from an overall perspective.

Parties' positions on the EU-community sub-targets: 2014-2016

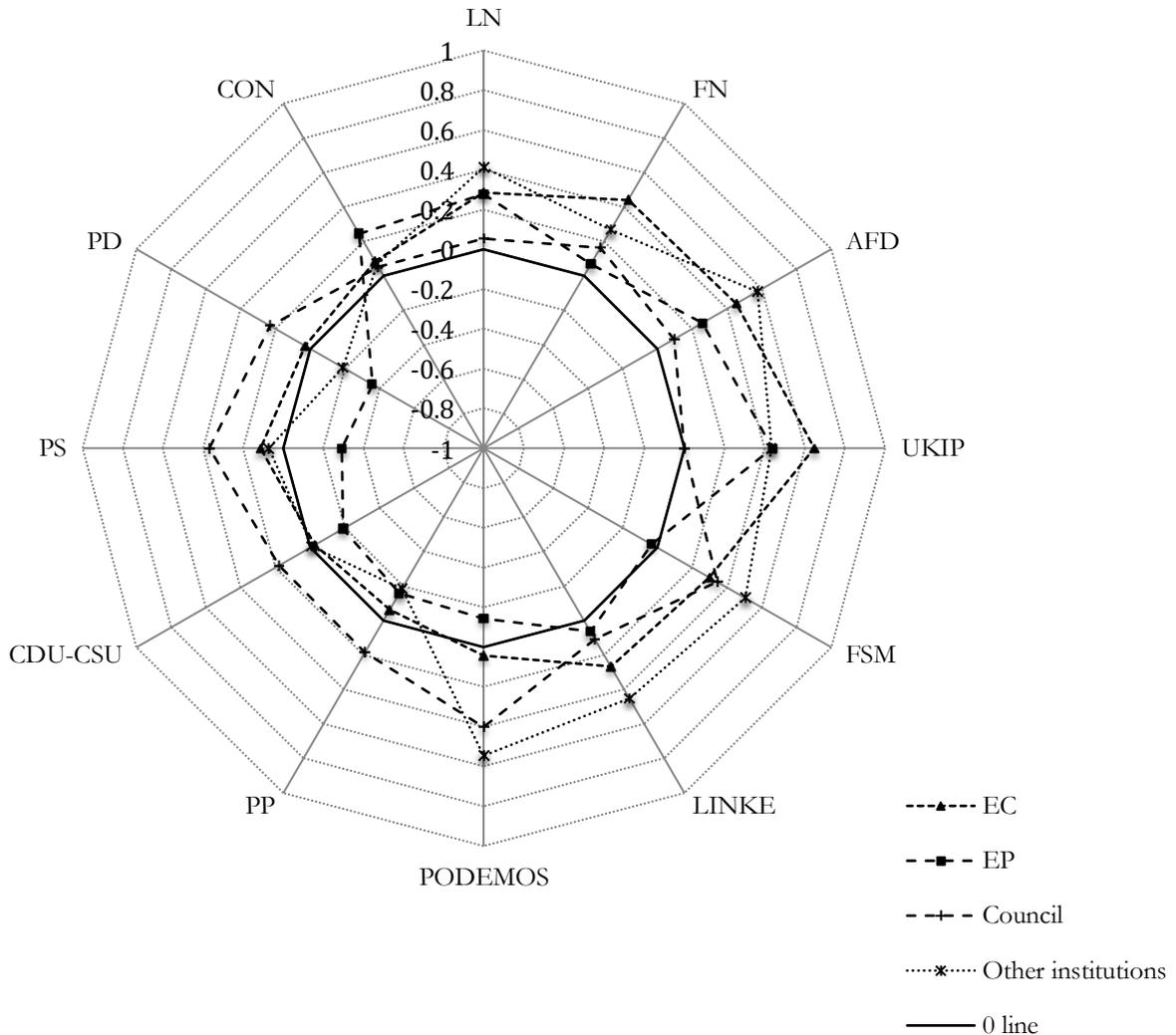


Source: Own calculation. Period of observation: 2014-2016. Data are reported in Table B.1 of Appendix B.

From an overall perspective, it is also interesting to dig deeper in parties' stances to the EU-regime sub-targets, see Figure 5.3 below. This work focuses on three main institutions, the EP, the EC and the Council, adding an 'Other institutions' target referring to institutions such as the ECB. As it is observable, EU-opponents positioning towards these sub-targets is more heterogeneous. However, two observations might be stressed: firstly, the targets attracting the higher levels of opposition are the EC and the 'Other institutions'. Secondly, both PODEMOS and FSM, differently from the other observed EU-opponents show some low degree of support toward the EP (PODEMOS scores -0.14 and FSM scores -0.03 points).

Figure 5.3: Spider-plot of parties' positions on the EU-regime sub-targets from an overall perspective.

Parties' positions on the EU-regime sub-targets overall 2014-2016



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: 2014-2016. Data are reported in Table B.1 of Appendix B.

A clear-cut distinction between EU-opponents and mainstream parties is visible in all the three graphs reported above. Mainstream parties generally support the analysed targets even though four considerations deserve more attention. Firstly, the British Conservative party is a visible outlier among the studied mainstream parties. This party behaves more similarly to the EU-opponents; it opposes all the four main targets of the EU (see Figure 5.1 above) designating the EU-community target as the first object of criticism (scoring 0.19 points). It follows a dynamic of opposition similar to UKIP's one: CON's quantity of expressed opposition is lower than UKIP's one, however, the EU-targets are addressed in the same order thus confirming that the British Conservative party is an exceptional case of mainstream EU-opposition party. These considerations are not surprising since the Conservative

party is widely regarded by the literature as a ‘soft Eurosceptic party’ (e.g.: Treib 2014; Verzichelli and Cammino 2016) or as a ‘Eurorealist’ party (Leruth 2017), in line with the description of its EPPG’s – ECR – core ideology: ‘Our ideas are based on Eurorealism which distinguishes our agenda from the other political groups in the European Parliament. We do not look at each issue asking whether it will further EU integration, or promote EU breakup. We look at each issue asking whether it will help people that we represent in a practical everyday manner’³.

Secondly, Figure 5.2 above highlights that all the included mainstream parties present some – even though generally low – opposition to the EU-elite target. As observed in Chapter 2 (Chapter 2, section 2.4, page 37), the definition of EU-elite is intentionally kept as broad as possible including all the politicians and functionaries working within the EU-institutions. As further stressed in the next chapter, mainstream parties blame their challengers of not offering feasible alternatives to the discussed policies accusing them to be Eurosceptic, extremist and populist. Thus, even if it is true that the expression of criticism of the EU-elite target exercised by mainstream parties could be seen as a normal adversarial dynamics within the EP (parties belonging to the ‘grand coalition’ blame their ‘challengers’), what renders such criticism ‘special’ is its content as further detailed in the next chapter.

Thirdly, criticism of the EU exercised by mainstream parties is not only confined to the EU-elite target. As emerges from Figure 5.2, in fact, the Italian PD, the French PS and the Spanish PP show some signs of criticism of the Euro area geometry, differently from the German CDU-CSU that endorses this target.

Lastly, when observing parties’ positioning towards the EU-regime’s sub-targets, criticism toward both the Council and the EC are present. What really differentiates mainstream parties’ stances toward the EU-regime from the one of the EU-opponents – especially from right-wing EU-opponents – is their strong support for the EP.

To complete the observation of patterns of overall EU-opposition, Figure 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 below report the EU-opposition’s evolution over the observed time period for each considered party. On the y-axis of each line plot the index of the quantity of EU-opposition is reported (ranging from -1, total support, to 1, total opposition), while the numbers reported on the x-axis represent the five observed semesters⁴. The black solid line depicted in each line plot, the 0-line, is where the index of parties

³ For more information see ECR’s webpage at <http://ecrgroup.eu/about-us/>

⁴ To calculate the index of EU-opposition by semester, the coded quasi-sentences are aggregated by semester of observation: the 1st semester goes from May-June 2014 to December 2014 included, the 2nd one ranges between January 2015 and June 2015 included; the 3rd one goes from July 2015 to December 2015; the 4th one refers to the period between January 2016 and June 2016 while the last one includes the months between July 2016 and December 2016. It is to be noted that the 1st, the 3rd and the 5th semesters include 5 months of activity, unlike the other semesters that last six months. This is due to the fact that the EP suspends its activity each year during August.

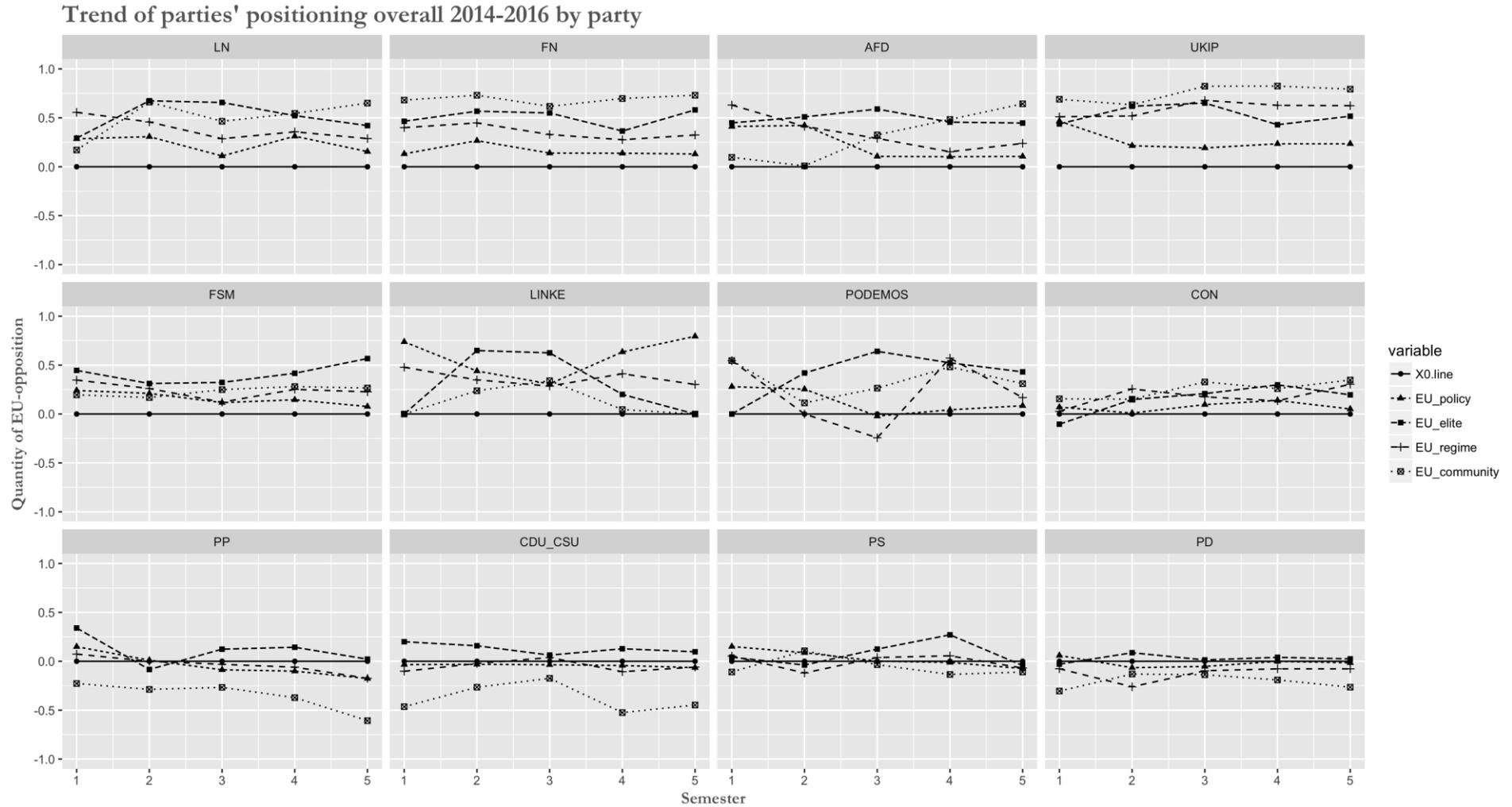
positioning takes the value of 0 – neutral position. A patterned line is drawn above the 0-line whenever a party is in opposition to a specific target (corresponding to the pattern of the line).

Also the diachronic observation of parties' stances to the EU mirrors a neat distinction between mainstream parties and EU-opponents. The former are generally supportive of the EU-targets while the latter generally oppose them.

As for right-wing EU-opponents, it is interesting to notice that since their union in the same EPPG – the ENF in June 2015 – the French FN and the Italian LN's opposition to the EU-community tends to follow a similar trend increasing in correspondence to the third semester of observation, June-December 2015 (see Figure 5.4 above). Such a consideration is furthermore confirmed by FN and LN's trend of opposition to the three sub-targets of the EU-community: while their opposition to the EU in general increases in correspondence to the third semester of observation, their negative stances to the Schengen area geometry peaks in correspondence to the third semester, decreasing afterwards. This relationship is, however, not confirmed with reference to the EU-regime sub-targets (see Figure 5.6 below). As further detailed below, EU-opponents' stances to the EU-institutions is less homogeneous and it is difficult to recognize common patterns among them. Right-wing parties' opposition to the Schengen area (see Figure 5.5 above) reaches its highest value in correspondence to the third semester of observation that is widely regarded as the peak of the migration crisis (June-December 2015) (See Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3, page 64). The only exception is represented by the British UKIP, which opposition to the Schengen area peaks in correspondence to the fourth semester of observation (January-June 2016). This party's negative stances to both the EU-community and the EU-regime follow an increasing trend and reach their highest point in correspondence to the fourth semester of observation – January-June 2016 – when Cameron, the Conservative party's leader and Prime Minister of the UK, announced the Brexit referendum⁵. Such a trend in UKIP's positioning is also confirmed by the findings reported in Figure 5.5 below, where UKIP's negative stances to the EU alongside the two studied geometries follow a similar trend potentially highlighting a 'strategic' use of the EP political arena by the party to remark their rejectionist position *vis-à-vis* the EU.

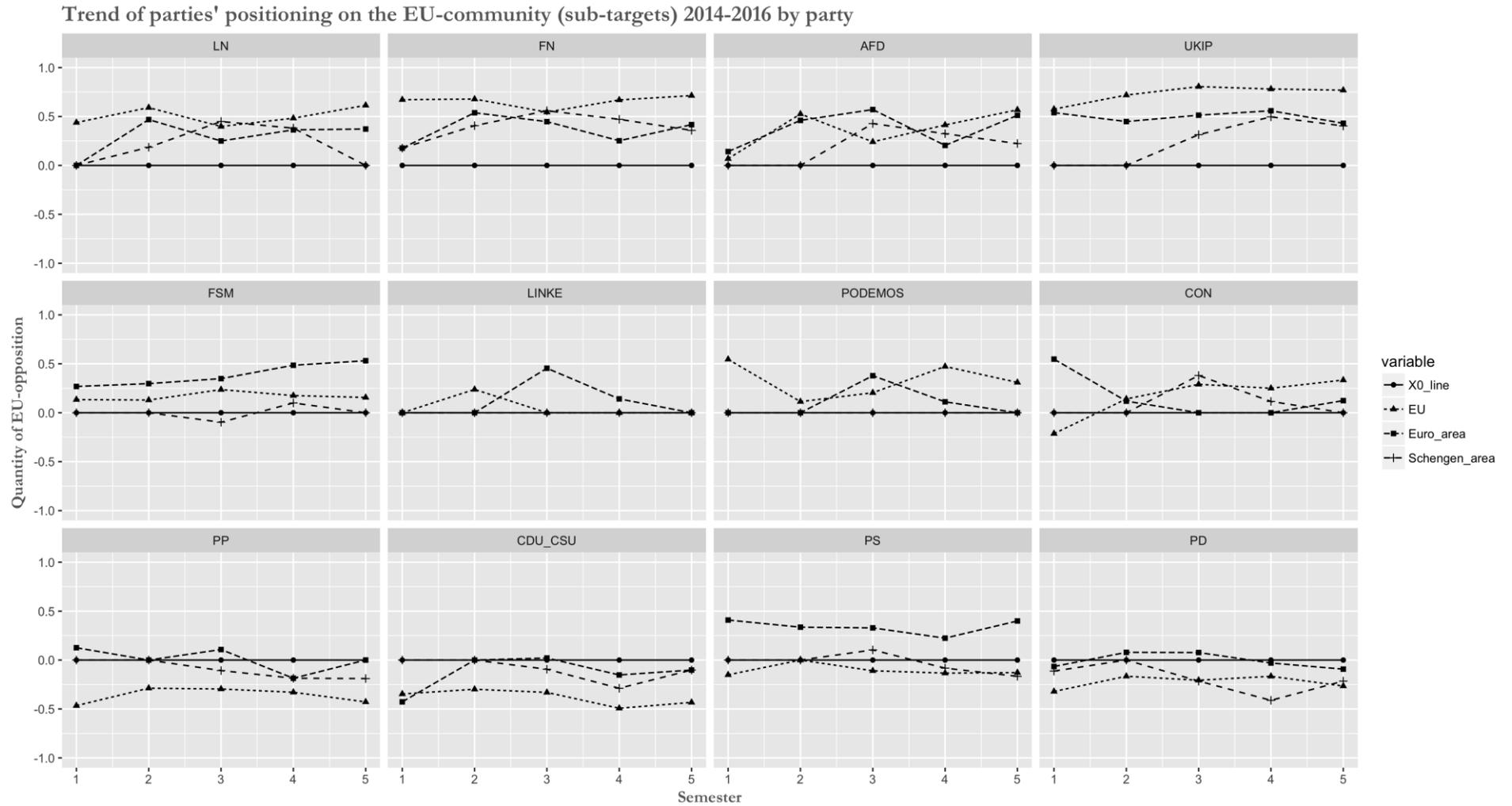
⁵ David Cameron officially called for the Brexit Referendum on the 22nd of February 2016 in front of the House of Commons. The complete text of the debates held in the house of Commons is available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm160222/debtext/160222-0001.htm#16022210000001>

Figure 5.4: Trend of EU-opposition over time.



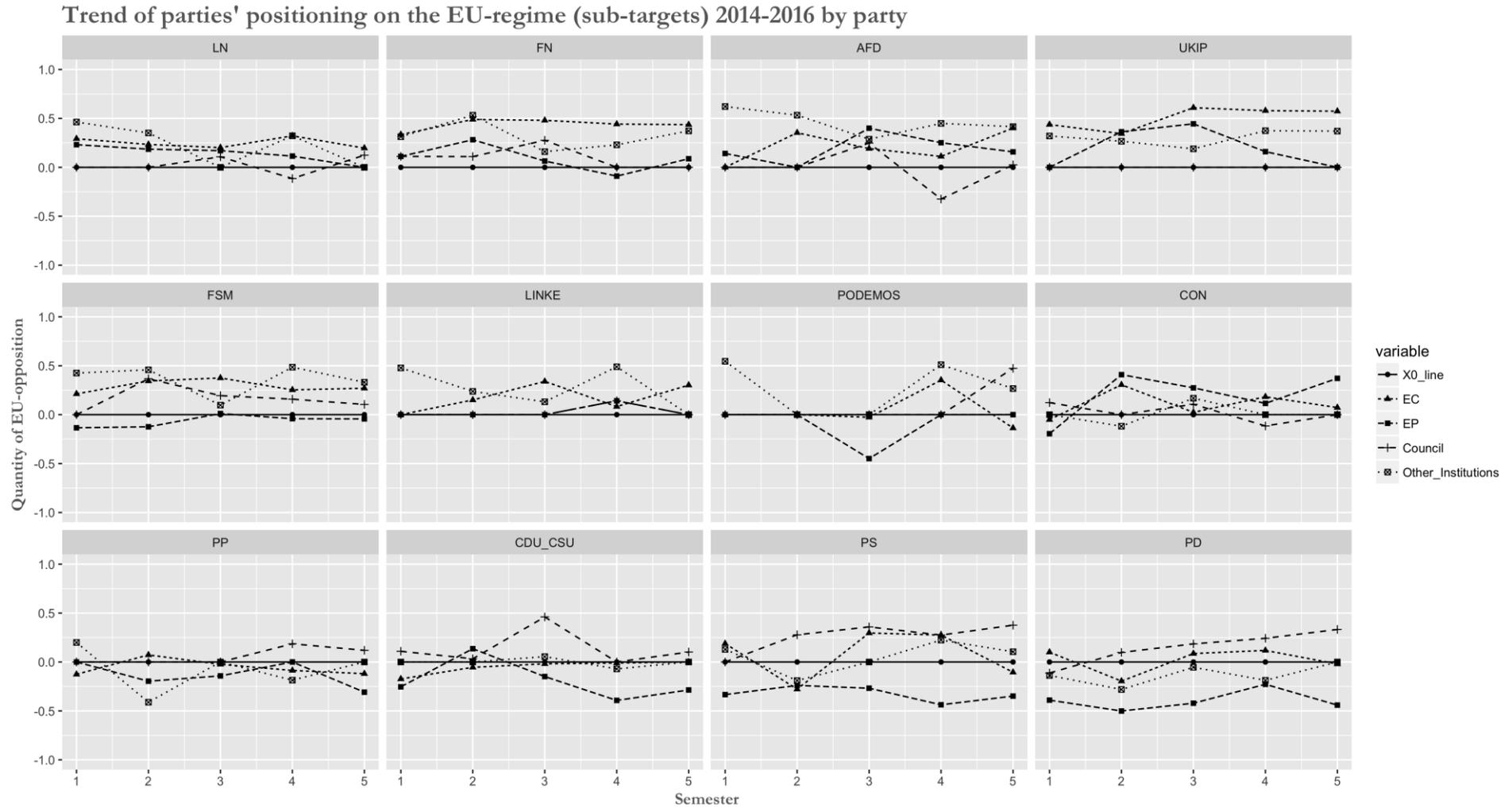
Source: Own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.2 of Appendix B.

Figure 5.5: Trend of EU-opposition: sub-targets EU-community over time.



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.3 of Appendix B.

Figure 5.6: Trend of EU-opposition: sub-targets EU-regime over time.



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.4 of Appendix B.

Another interesting case is AFD's opposition to the EU-community that experiences a steep increase moving from values close to 0 in the first and second semesters, reaching 0.77 points in the last observed semester, thus suggesting a radicalization of the parties' stances toward the EU. This steep increase is also mirrored in Figure 5.5, where the EU, in general, is taken as the first objective of criticism by the AFD.

Interestingly, more left-leaning EU-opponents, LINKE and PODEMOS, show a less stable opposition to the four EU-targets over time when compared to their right-wing counterpart. The two parties focus their negative stances to the EU-elite target in correspondence to the third semester of observation (June-December 2015), while for them the Schengen area geometry does not represent a target of criticism. As observed in the next chapter, in correspondence to the right-wing parties' increased criticism *vis-à-vis* the Schengen area, left-leaning EU-opponents adopt an anti-xenophobic rhetoric accusing the EU-establishment to allow the diffusion of extremist positions on migration and migrants.

The last included EU-opponent, the FSM, shows more stable levels of opposition to the EU when compared to both PODEMOS and LINKE. However, its criticism of the EU-elite follows an increasing pattern especially since the third semester of observation (see Figure 5.4 above). FSM's opposition to the Euro area geometry (Figure 5.5 above) tends to increase over time, while similarly to both the LINKE and PODEMOS, the Schengen geometry does not constitute a salient target for the FSM.

As mentioned above, the studied EU-opponents' stances toward the EU-regime sub-targets are more heterogeneous and no common pattern between the considered parties is actually detectable (see Figure 5.6 above). However, EU-opponents tend to focus their negative stances on both the EC and the 'Other institutions' targets. Furthermore, there is a neat distinction between mainstream parties and EU-opponents, the former in fact tend to support the EU-institutions. The diachronic observation of parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU-regime confirms that both the FSM and PODEMOS show some signs of support toward the EP.

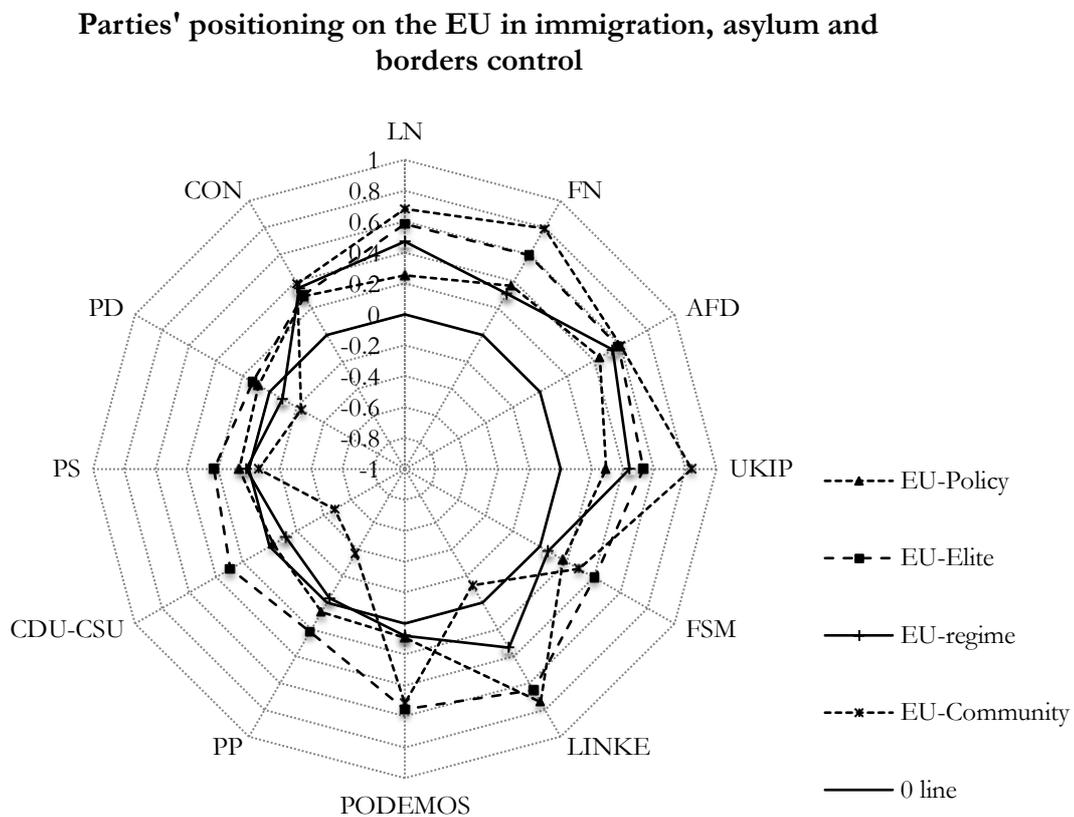
This first overall observation of parties' stances to the EU demonstrates that there is a neat distinction between mainstream and EU-opposition parties. However, some remarkable differences are observable also among the group of EU-opponents, which opposition seems shaped by a left-right ideological cleavage, with the only exception of the EU-elite target representing a common objective for both left and right-wing EU-opponents. Moreover, opposition to the EU is not a prerogative of EU-opponents, as above-mentioned, also mainstream parties show some instances of EU-opposition. Lastly, parties' stances are not constant through time but varies also as a consequence of phenomena both internal and external to the EP, see above FN and LN's convergence of negative stances after

their union in the same EPPG, or UKIP's increase of opposition to the EU community in correspondence to the Brexit campaign.

5.3 Patterns of EU-opposition: a policy issue perspective

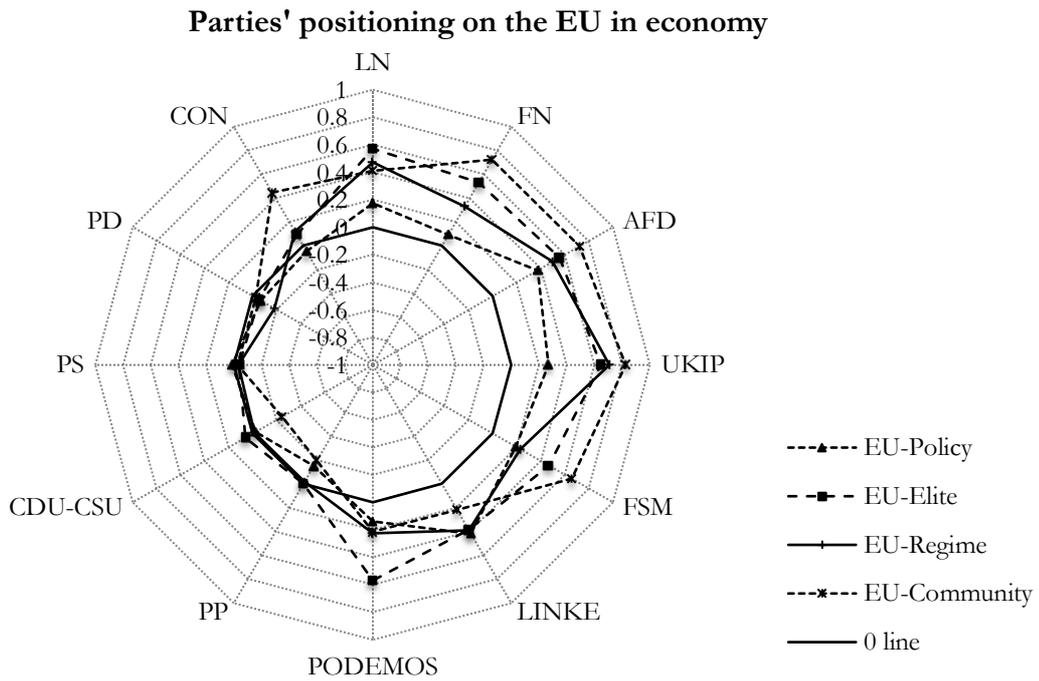
This section presents patterns of EU-opposition comparing them across the three studied policies with the main objective to detect parties' stances to the EU both within the group of EU-opponents and between these latter and their mainstream counterparts. Figures 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 below report parties' stances on the four main targets of EU-opposition for each of the three studied policy fields.

Figure 5.7: Parties' positioning on the EU in the field of immigration, asylum and borders control.



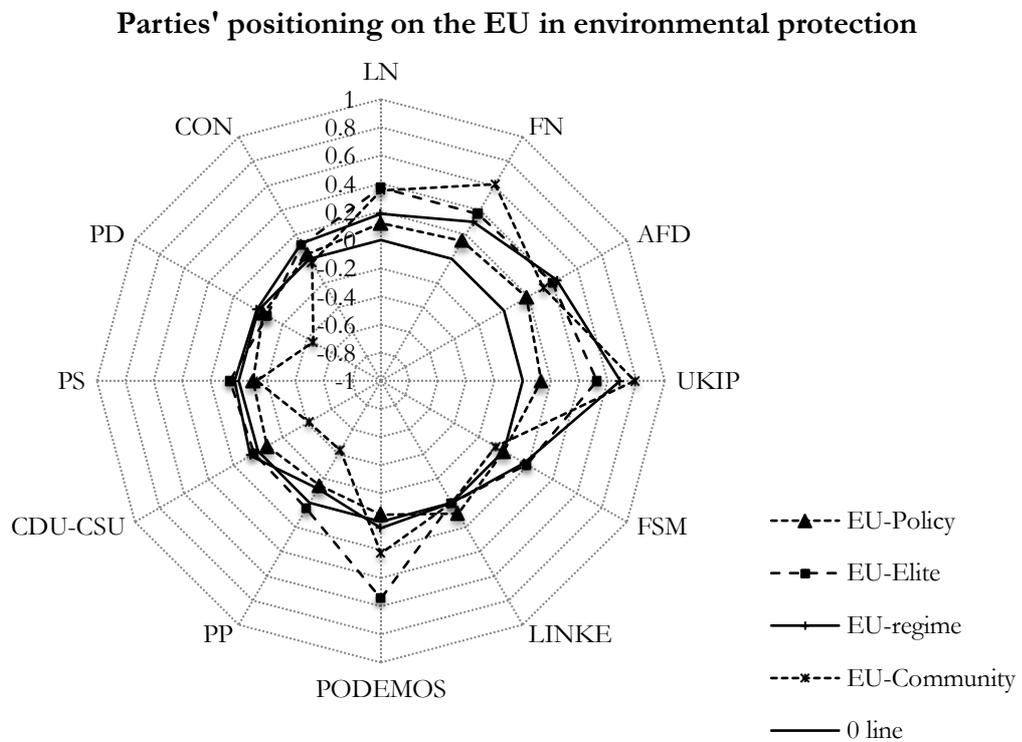
Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.5 of Appendix B.

Figure5. 8: Parties' positioning on the EU in the field of economy.



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.5 of Appendix B.

Figure5. 9: Parties' positioning on the EU in the field of environmental protection.



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.5 of Appendix B.

Firstly it is remarkable that there is a neat distinction between mainstream and EU-opposition parties in all the considered policy fields, with the only exception of the British CON that behaves more similarly to the EU-opponents (as further detailed below). This first general finding confirms the distinction between mainstream and non-mainstream parties found at the aggregated level.

The policy issue where opposition to the four targets of the EU is higher is immigration, asylum and borders control, while the policy field that attracts a comparatively lower ‘quantity of opposition’ is environmental protection. Furthermore, EU-opponents’ criticism focuses on two targets: the EU-community (the EU and the two studied geometries) and the EU-elite.

Besides these general considerations, it is also noticeable that right-wing EU-opponents tend to behave more similarly when compared to more left-leaning parties, in all the three considered policy issues. This is particularly true for the French FN and the British UKIP, mostly addressing their criticism of the EU-community in all the studied policy areas. In fact, their critique is similar across the studied issues: the FN scores values ranging from 0.61 in environmental policies to 0.79 in immigration, asylum and borders control policies. Similarly, UKIP scores values ranging between 0.79 in environmental protection policies to 0.84 in the field of immigration. The EU-community is not always the first target of criticism for the LN and AFD, even though it always constitutes an important objective for them.

As for the other three EU-opponents, FSM, LINKE and PODEMOS, their stances to the EU across the three policy issues are more heterogeneous when compared to right-leaning EU-opponents. Noticeably, the German LINKE focuses on the policies enacted by the EU in all the three analysed policy fields (scoring 0.74 in immigration policies, 0.42 in economic policies and 0.09 in environmental protection). The party generally does not address much criticism to the other proposed targets with the only exception of negative attitudes to the EU-elite expressed in the field of immigration, asylum and borders control (0.65). Interestingly, in environmental protection, the LINKE only addresses the EU-policies target.

The case of the FSM is of particular interest, as mentioned in chapter 4 (See Chapter 4, Section 4.2, page 85), FSM works together with the UKIP in the same EPPG – the EFDD – however, its attitudes toward the EU are radically different when compared to UKIP’s one. The only noticeable exception is FSM’s behaviour in economic policy where the party displays a high level of criticism of the EU-community (0.66) more similarly to what UKIP does. Conversely, in the other two policy issues, the party mainly focuses on the EU-elite target. Furthermore, FSM’s criticism toward the EU in environmental protection is lower when compared to the other policy areas.

The last included EU-opponent, PODEMOS, focuses its attention on the EU-elite target in all the three policy fields reaching its highest level in issues related to economy and immigration (scoring 0.57 and 0.55 points respectively).

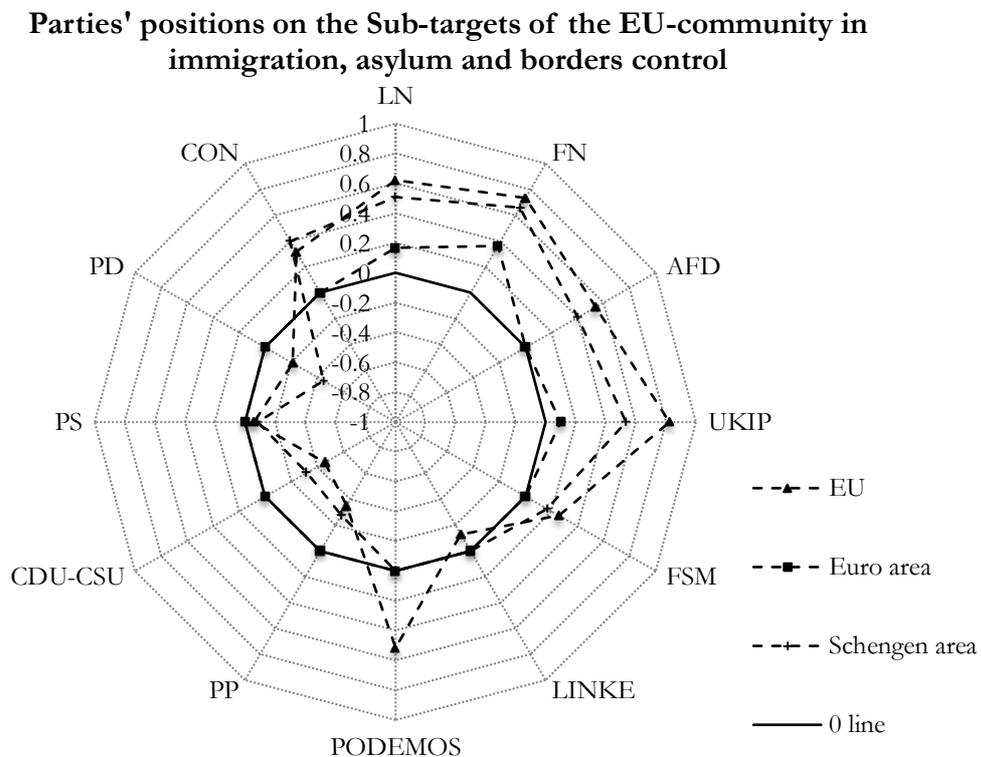
The observation of mainstream parties' stances across policy issues confirms their different position on the EU. However, the CON party is still to be considered as an outlier among the mainstream cohort. Indeed, the party opposes all the four analysed EU-targets following a dynamic more similar to EU-opposition parties like UKIP: the first addressed target in both economic and immigration-related policies is the EU-community. However, CON's opposition is lower in environmental protection where it lowly endorses the EU-community (-0.03 points).

Secondly, all mainstream parties display a higher degree of opposition to the EU-elite in the field of immigration, asylum and borders control where the level of opposition exercised by the studied EU-opponents is, on the overall higher.

Lastly, there is a distinction in the support to the EU-community within the group of mainstream parties (except for the British CON). The centre-right PP and CDU-CSU report comparatively higher degrees of support to the EU-community when compared to the centre-left PS and PD.

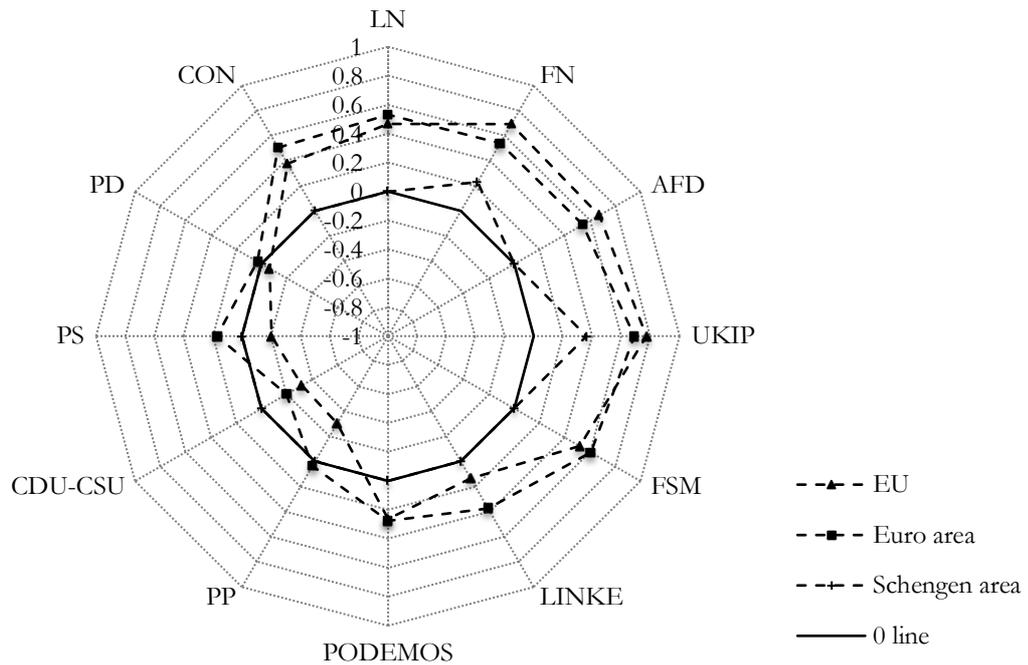
Figures 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12 below depict parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU-community sub-targets in the three studied policy fields.

Figure 5.10: Parties' positioning on the EU-community sub-targets in the field of immigration, asylum and borders control



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-2016. Data are reported in Table B.6 of Appendix B.

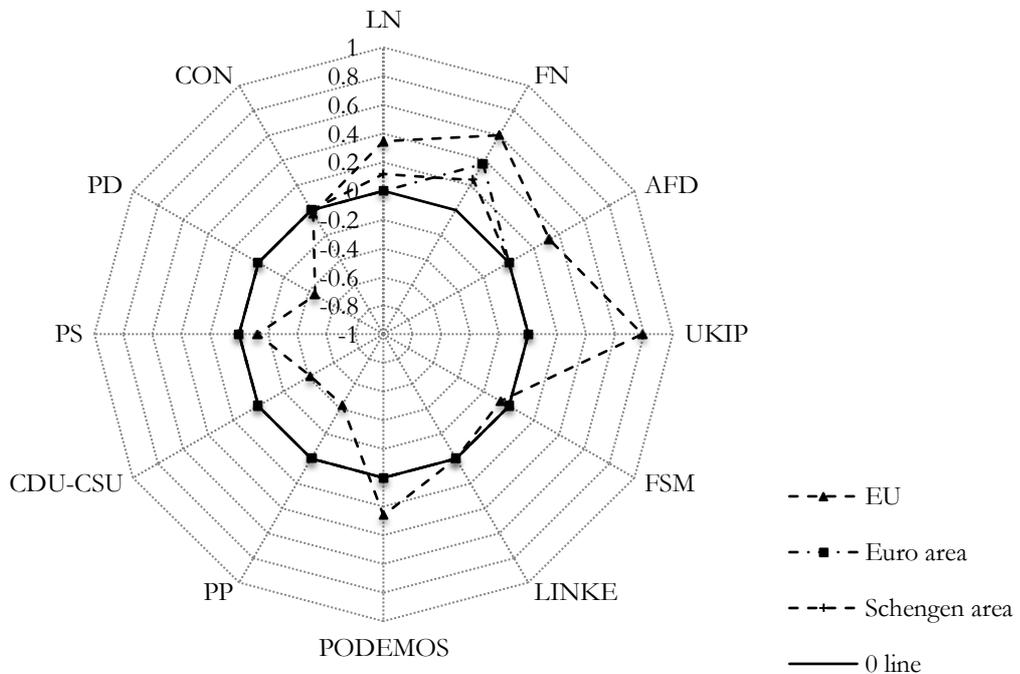
Figure 5. 11: Parties' positioning on the EU-community sub-targets in the field of economy.
Parties' positions on the Sub-targets of EU-community in economy



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.6 of Appendix B.

Figure 5. 12: Parties' positioning on the EU-community sub-targets in the field of environmental protection

Parties' positions on the sub-targets the EU-community in environmental protection



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.6 of Appendix B.

From an in-depth observation of parties' positioning toward the EU-community sub-targets, the findings reported in the previous section are confirmed: opposition to the EU-community (and the two studied geometries) is higher in both immigration and economy-related discussions than in the field of environmental protection. Furthermore, from a first visual examination, right-leaning EU-opponents show higher levels of opposition to all the three considered sub-targets of the EU-community in all the included policy issues.

Right-wing EU-opponents' most addressed sub-target is the EU in all the three policy fields, the only exception being the LN that mainly targets the Euro area geometry in economic related discussions. Another highly addressed target of criticism by right-wing EU-opponents is the Schengen area geometry. Not surprisingly, the highest level of opposition to this geometry is present in immigration, asylum and borders control-related discussions. However, FN and UKIP use the EP arena to criticise the Schengen area geometry also in policy fields that are not strictly related to immigration. Similarly, also the Euro area geometry is mainly criticised in economy-related speeches (see Figure 5.11 above), however, right-wing EU-opponents criticise the Euro area also in policy fields related to both the environmental protection and immigration policies.

As stressed before, FSM, PODEMOS and LINKE position themselves differently to the EU-community target when compared to the right-wing group. Some degree of similarity is, however, to be found in the field of economic policy, where the Euro area is the first target of opposition for all the three parties (FSM – 0.61 points – LINKE – 0.37 points – and PODEMOS – 0.28 points). In the other two considered policy fields, neither the Euro area nor the Schengen area is addressed by PODEMOS, FSM, and LINKE – the only exception being a low criticism of the Schengen area expressed by the FSM in immigration-related speeches. Interestingly, PODEMOS is the only left-wing party that is always in opposition to the EU. On the contrary, some degree of support to the EU is showed by the German LINKE in immigration policies – -0.13 points – and by the FSM in environmental protection policies – scoring -0.06 points. Furthermore, the German LINKE does not address any of the sub-targets of the EU-community in the field of environmental protection.

Five considerations concerning mainstream parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU-community sub-targets are noteworthy: firstly, differently from the EU-opponents – especially those right-wing parties – mainstream parties tend to talk about both the Schengen and the Euro areas in the corresponding policy fields. Secondly, the British CON confirms itself as an exceptional case of mainstream EU-opposition party. Indeed the party opposes the EU, the Schengen area and the Euro area in economy and immigration-related speeches respectively. However, it is not critical of the EU-community's sub-targets in the field of environmental protection. On the contrary, some extremely low signs of support for the EU are present in this last policy field where the party scores -0.03 points.

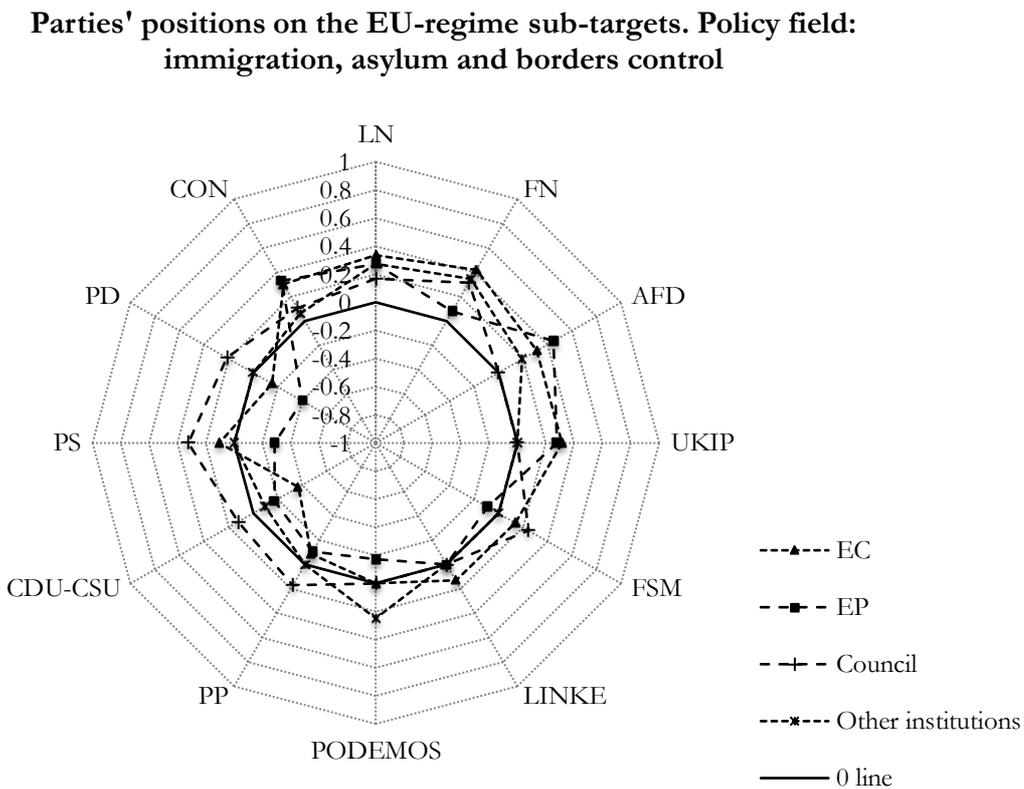
Thirdly, Figure 5.11 above confirms the findings reported in the previous section: the PD, the PS and the PP are critical of the Euro area geometry while being generally supportive of the EU.

Fourthly, in immigration-related discussions, mainstream parties are extremely favourable of the Schengen area geometry, particularly the Italian PD that scores the highest degree of support for this geometry (-0.45 points).

Lastly, in the field of environmental protection, apart from the British CON, mainstream parties strongly endorse the EU-community.

To conclude this description of parties' positioning on the EU, Figure 5.13, 5.14 and 5.15 below provide the reader with a detailed account of parties' stances to the EU-regime sub-targets across the studied policy fields.

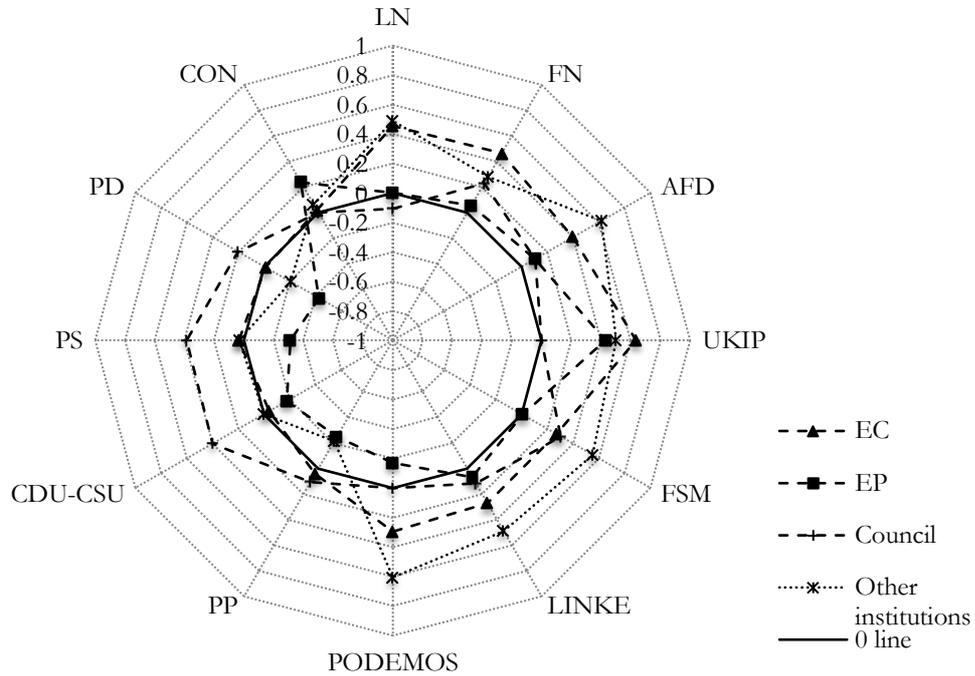
Figure 5.13: Parties' positioning on the EU-regime sub-targets in the field of immigration, asylum and borders control.



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.7 of Appendix B.

Figure5. 14: Parties' positioning on the EU-regime sub-targets in the field of economy.

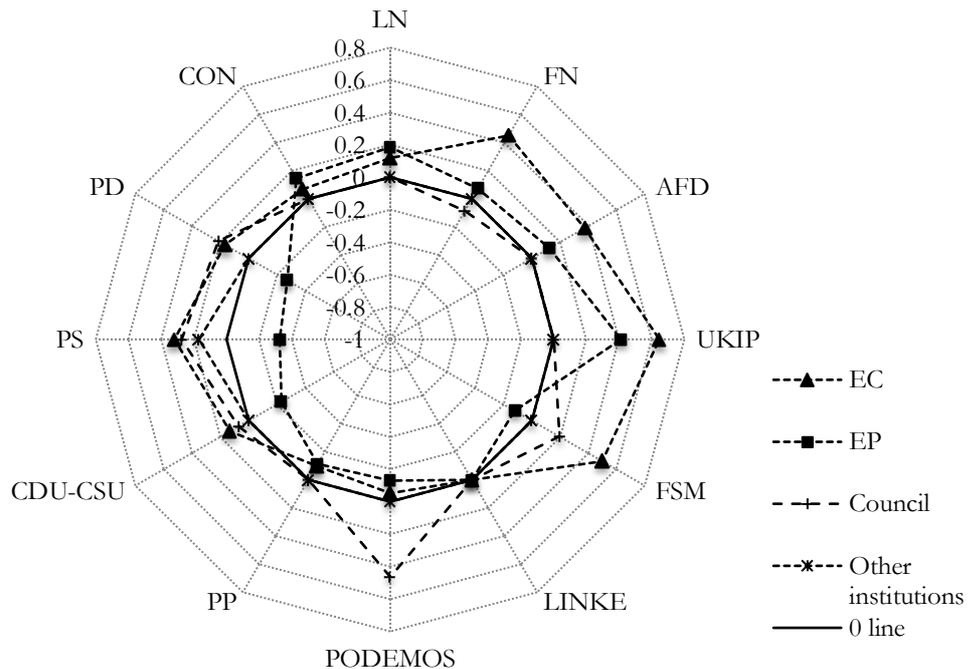
Parties' positions on the EU-regime sub-targets. Policy field: economy



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.7 of Appendix B.

Figure5.15: Parties' positioning on the EU-regime sub-targets in the field of environmental protection.

Parties' positions on the EU-regime sub-targets. Policy field: environmental protection



Source: own calculation. Period of observation: May 2014-December 2016. Data are reported in Table B.7 of Appendix B.

From the three figures above, the distinction between mainstream and EU-opposition parties is less clear and patterns of opposition or support to the EU-regime are more heterogeneous. However, similarly to the other graphs commented above, the CON confirms itself as an outlier among the mainstream parties behaving more similarly to the group of EU-opponents.

Besides the fact that there is no clear distinction between left and right-wing EU-opponents, the observation of parties' position *vis-à-vis* the EU-regime sub-targets across the three policy fields confirms the finding reported in the previous section. Indeed, EU-opponents tend to focus their attention mainly on two targets: the EC and the 'Other institutions'.

An interesting case is the one of AFD's negative stances to the 'Other institutions' target in the field of economy. The fact that the AFD mainly addresses this targets when dealing with economy related issues is perfectly in line with the general stances of the party that would like to reform and reduce the current role played by the ECB in the European context⁶. Critical stances to the 'Other institutions' target in economy-related issues equate the AFD with left-leaning EU-opponents. What really differentiates right-wing from left-wing EU-opponents are their stances to the EP: right-wing parties oppose the EP while left-leaning parties and the Italian FSM are more supportive of this institution.

As mentioned before the distinction between mainstream and EU-opposition parties is not as neat as in the other targets. Besides the fact that the CON represents an exception, mainstream parties are generally equated by their negative stances *vis-à-vis* the Council in both immigration and economy-related discourses. What really differentiates mainstream parties from the EU-opponents group are their stances toward the EP, constantly supported in all the three studied policy fields.

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter has presented the patterns of the expressed quantity of EU-opposition, proposing two lines of comparison: 1) among EU-opponents, and 2) between EU-opponents and mainstream parties.

The two Tables below summarize parties' positioning toward the studied EU-targets both from an overall perspective (Table 5.1) and across the three studied policy issues (Table 5.2). Each target is reported in the first left-hand column while the second left-hand column is used to distinguish right-wing EU-opponents (RO) from left-wing EU-opponents (LO) and mainstream parties (M).

⁶ In its electoral manifesto prepared for the EP elections in 2014 the party states that AFD calls for 'a return to the independence of the ECB, stable currencies and budgetary discipline'. (Programm der Alternative für Deutschland für die Wahl zum Europäische Parlament, 22nd March 2014, p. 5).

From the results of the analysis a first general consideration is to be stressed: opposition to the EU is a complex phenomenon that only with difficulty can be observed through the lenses of a single indicator since it entails components that are not always linear and easily detectable.

As mentioned several times in the previous section and as it is visible from both Table 5.1 and 5.2 below, there is a neat distinction between EU-opponents and mainstream parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU: the latter generally support the EU while the former are critical of several of its aspects. However, mainstream parties' support of the EU-targets is not always guaranteed. On the one hand, the British Conservative Party might be considered as an exceptional case of 'mainstream EU-opposition party' since it follows patterns of EU-opposition similar to UKIP's one. On the other hand, centre-left mainstream parties – the PD and PS – show some signs of criticism of the Euro area geometry. Furthermore, mainstream parties express criticism of the EU-elite target that has to be observed from the perspective of its content as further detailed in the next chapter.

The complexity of the phenomenon becomes even more apparent when observing parties' positioning on the EU across the three studied policy issues. Taking into consideration the group of EU-opponents, a visible distinction between left and right-wing parties is detectable. The latter, in fact, behave more similarly across the three studied policy issues with the EU-community being among the first addressed target (especially for UKIP and FN). On the contrary, the behaviour of left-leaning parties (alongside the FSM) is more heterogeneous. For such parties, the EU-elite surely constitutes an important target, while the EU-community is criticised in a 'softer way'. This difference is furthermore evident when comparing the stances of left and right-wing EU-opponents with reference to the sub-targets of the EU. While all the studied EU-opponents are extremely critical of the Euro area (especially in economy-related speeches), differently from right-wing parties, the Schengen area is not a salient target for left-wing EU-opponents alongside the FSM. Furthermore, the EU-opponents differ also in terms of their stances to the EU-regime sub-targets. While, on the one hand, it is true that the main targets of criticism for both right and left-wing EU-opponents are the EC and the 'Other institutions', on the other hand, left-leaning parties alongside the FSM show also some degree of support *vis-à-vis* the EP, a difference that is further detailed in the next chapter.

The observation of mainstream parties' positioning across the three policy issues does not underline a strong left-right distinction. Interestingly and differently from the German CDU-CSU, all South-European mainstream parties – PD, PS and PP – are opposed to the EU immigration policies, and are critical of the Euro area. However, all mainstream parties are equated by their support to the Schengen area geometry. Moreover, mainstream parties tend to refer to the two studied geometries in those discussions concerning either economic – for the Euro area geometry – or immigration policies – for the Schengen area. Contrarily, this tendency is not common among right-wing EU-opponents that

criticise the two geometries even in policy fields that are not strictly connected to them, thus indicating an instrumental use of the EP for the promotion of negative stances to the EU.

This chapter has also presented a dynamic view of the overall index of parties' positioning (see Figure 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 above) demonstrating that parties' stances to the EU are not stable through time. Firstly, the French FN and the British UKIP feature trends of opposition to the EU-community target (see Figure 5.5 above) that are much more stable over time when compared to the other included EU-opponents. Secondly, as reported in the previous sections, an increase, a decrease or a peak in the trend of opposition can potentially be associated with both institutional and external events. An example of the effects of the second type of events on EU-opposition is given by UKIP's increasing trend of opposition to the EU-community (Figure 5.5 above) that peaks in correspondence to the beginning of the Brexit campaign during the 4th semester of observation. Furthermore, negative stances to the EU (especially to the EU-community and its sub-targets) peak in immigration-related speeches in correspondence to the third semester of the analysis, considered as the tipping point of the migration crisis. In correspondence to this enhanced negative stances to the EU, mainstream parties tend to increase their opposition to the EU-elite target, this is particularly visible in the case of the German CDU-CSU coalition and of the Spanish PP.

The observation of the patterns related to the quantity of the expressed opposition to the EU is coupled with an in-depth analysis of both its character and the motivations used by parties to justify their opposition performed in the next chapter.

Table 5. 1: Summary table of the overall national parties' positioning on the four main EU-targets.

		Overall		
		Support	Opposition	None
Policies	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE PODEMOS	
	M	PP CDU-CSU PD	CON PS	
Elite	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE PODEMOS	
	M	PD	PP CDU-CSU PS CON	
Regime	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE POD	
	M	PP CDU-CSU PD	CON PS	
Community	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE POD	
	M	PP CDU-CSU PS PD	CON	

Source: own elaboration. RO: Right-wing EU-opponents; LO: Left-wing EU-opponents; M: Mainstream parties

Table 5. 2: Summary table of national parties' positioning on the EU across the three considered policies

		Immigration, asylum and borders control			Economy			Environmental protection		
		Support	Opposition	None	Support	Opposition	None	Support	Opposition	None
Policies	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE POD			FSM LINKE POD		POD FSM	LINKE	
	M	CDU- CSU	PP PS PD CON		PP CDU- CSU PD CON	PS		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON	
Elite	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE POD			FSM LINKE POD			FSM POD	LINKE
	M		PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON		PS PD	CDU-CSU CON	PP	PD	PP CDU- CSU PS CON	
Regime	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE POD			FSM LINKE POD			FSM POD	LINKE
	M	PP CDU- CSU PD	PS CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP	CDU-CSU PS PD CON	
EC	OR		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO		FSM LINKE	POD		FSM LINKE POD		POD	FSM	LINKE
	M	PP CDU- CSU PD PS	CON		CDU-CSU PD	PS CON PP		PP	CDU-CSU PS PD CON	
EP	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			FN AFD UKIP	LN		LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO	FSM POD		LINKE	POD	FSM LINKE		FSM POD		LINKE
	M	PP CDU- CSU PD	CON PS		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON	
Council	RO		LN FN	AFD UKIP	LN	FN AFD	UKIP	FN		LN UKIP AFD
	LO		FSM	LINKE POD		FSM LINKE	POD		FSM POD	LINKE
	M		PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON			CDU-CSU PS PD PP	CON		CDU-CSU PS PD	PP CON
Other institutions	RO		LN FN AFD	UKIP		LN FN AFD UKIP				LN FN AFD UKIP
	LO		POD	FSM LINKE		FSM LINKE POD				FSM LINKE POD

	M	CDU- CSU	CON	PP PS PD	PP PD	PS CON	CDU- CSU		PS	PP CDU- CSU PD CON
Community overall	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO	LINKE	FSM POD			FSM LINKE POD		FSM	POD	LINKE
	M	PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON		
EU	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP			LN FN AFD UKIP	
	LO	LINKE	FSM POD			FSM LINKE POD		FSM	POD	LINKE
	M	PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON		PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON		
Euro area	RO		LN FN UKIP	AFD		LN FN AFD UKIP			FN	LN UKIP AFD
	LO			FSM LINKE POD		FSM LINKE POD				FSM LINKE POD
	M			PS CDU- CSU PD CON PP	CDU-CSU	PP PS PD CON				PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON
Schengen area	RO		LN FN AFD UKIP			FN UKIP	LN AFD		LN FN	AFD UKIP
	LO		FSM	LINKE POD			FSM LINKE POD			FSM LINKE POD
	M	PP CDU- CSU PS PD	CON				PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON			PP CDU- CSU PS PD CON

Source: own elaboration. RO: Right-wing EU-opponents; LO: Left-wing EU-opponents; M: Mainstream parties.

N.b.: POD indicates PODEMOS.

Chapter 6: The ‘quality’ of EU-opposition

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an in-depth description of the patterns of EU-opposition detected in the previous chapter providing a deeper understanding of the character and the motivations that parties use to oppose the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community.

To do that, all the parties exercising opposition to one of the studied targets are included in the analysis (both ‘Eurosceptics’ and mainstream parties¹, see Table 5.1, Chapter 5, page 130). The chapter presents the findings resulting from the inductive coding procedure of negatively coded quasi-sentences (QSs) reported in the speeches delivered by MEPs during the studied EP plenary sessions (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2, pages 103-104 for the details concerning the applied inductive coding technique).

The chapter is divided into five sections each reporting the main motivations used by parties to oppose the studied targets. Section 6.2 focuses on parties’ positioning on the EU-policies in the three observed policy fields (immigration, economy and environmental protection). Section 6.3 details the character and the main motivations used by parties to oppose the EU-elite target. The following section (6.4) reports the finding of the inductive coding procedure with reference to the EU-regime target (character and motivations related to the exercised opposition). Section 6.5 focuses on the character and the motivations used by parties to oppose the EU-community target. Each section presents three word-clouds of the parties’ coded-negative QSs providing the reader with a global overview of the most frequently used words. Lastly, a conclusive section summarises the obtained results and points toward the empirical analysis performed in chapter 7².

¹ Parties are classified as opposing one of the studied targets according to the results obtained in Chapter 5, see Table 5.1 on page 130. The chapter considers only the parties that show opposition to the EU from an overall perspective.

² A detailed description of the inductive coding scheme (macro-categories and themes emerging from the analysis) is reported in Appendix C of this work, alongside further specifications concerning the studied sub-targets of both the EU-regime and the EU-community and the construction of the word-clouds.

6.2 Justifying EU-opposition in the EP: the EU-policy target

A neat distinction in the character of the exercised opposition between left and right-wing EU-opponents emerges from the data. While in the field of environmental protection all the included parties generally pragmatically oppose the EU policies (with the only exceptions of the FSM and PODEMOS that support them). In the other two observed fields, right-wing EU-opponents propose a principled opposition differently from the other included parties pragmatically opposing this target (the only two exceptions are AFD's pragmatic opposition to the economic policy and PODEMOS' principled opposition to EU immigration policies as further detailed below). Interestingly, also mainstream parties show some signs of opposition to the EU-policies (PS in economic policies, PS, PD, PP and CON in immigration policies and CON in environmental protection), which has always a pragmatic character.

The remaining of this section better disentangles parties' motivation to oppose the EU-policy by policy field.

The motivations used in the field of economy cluster around three broad themes: 1) EU's regulation of the economy; 2) the supranational redistribution of resources between the Member States, and 3) the EU's economic orthodoxy (i.e.: austerity). All the included EU-opponents devote most of their speeches to the first mentioned theme; however, there is a visible distinction between left and right-wing EU-opponents with the only exception of the German AFD (as further detailed below).

Right-wing EU-opponents reject on a principled basis the EU's regulation of the market, banking, financial, and fiscal sectors (words like 'banques' – banks –, 'marché' – market –, 'finanziario' – financial – and 'istituzioni' – institutions – are extremely frequent in both LN and FN's word-clouds, see Figure 6.1 above). Particularly, FN and LN reject the regulation of such sectors because they perceive it as benefiting only banks and big financial or economic powers while heavily affecting European citizens. If it is true that also UKIP is critical of EU's regulation of the above-mentioned sectors, the party emphasizes also its opposition to the harmonization of fiscal policies at the supranational level defined as an 'anathema to what UKIP stands for'³ ('harmonization' is one of the most frequent words in UKIP's speeches, Figure 6.1 above). The rejection of any form of EU's regulation strongly emerges from FN's speeches. According to the party, the only viable solution to solve Europe's economic problems is to implement protectionist policies because it is the 'anti-protectionism dogmatism in the name of globalized free trade that leads to massive deindustrialization' (Montel, FN's MEP). Interestingly, alongside this first type of motivations, FN, AFD and UKIP are harshly opposed to the EU's economic orthodoxy because it 'recognises Member States' policies as the only cause of the increase in public debt, while most of it comes from the transfer of private debts to the public national banks (...) reinforced by austerity policies demanded by Brussels' (Bilde, FN' MEP). These parties consider EU's economic orthodoxy as detrimental since its 'results are clear to anyone: long-term unemployment, social disease and Member States unable to make ends meet' (Buonanno LN's MEP).

Contrary to the other right-wing EU-opponents (FN, LN and UKIP) the German AFD proposes a pragmatic opposition to the EU economic policies asking for a stronger planning of the economy by the EU and the respect of EU's economic orthodoxy through the implementation of austerity policies. According to AFD's representatives the main problem of EU's economy is not 'that too much is saved, but that too much debt is being made' (Lucke AFD's MEP). Stable public finance is the first and foremost mantra of the AFD, being against the violations of the thresholds imposed by the Stability and Growth Pact. The difference between AFD and the other right-wing parties is also

³ The cited segments alongside further information concerning both the debates and the speakers are reported in Appendix C of this work.

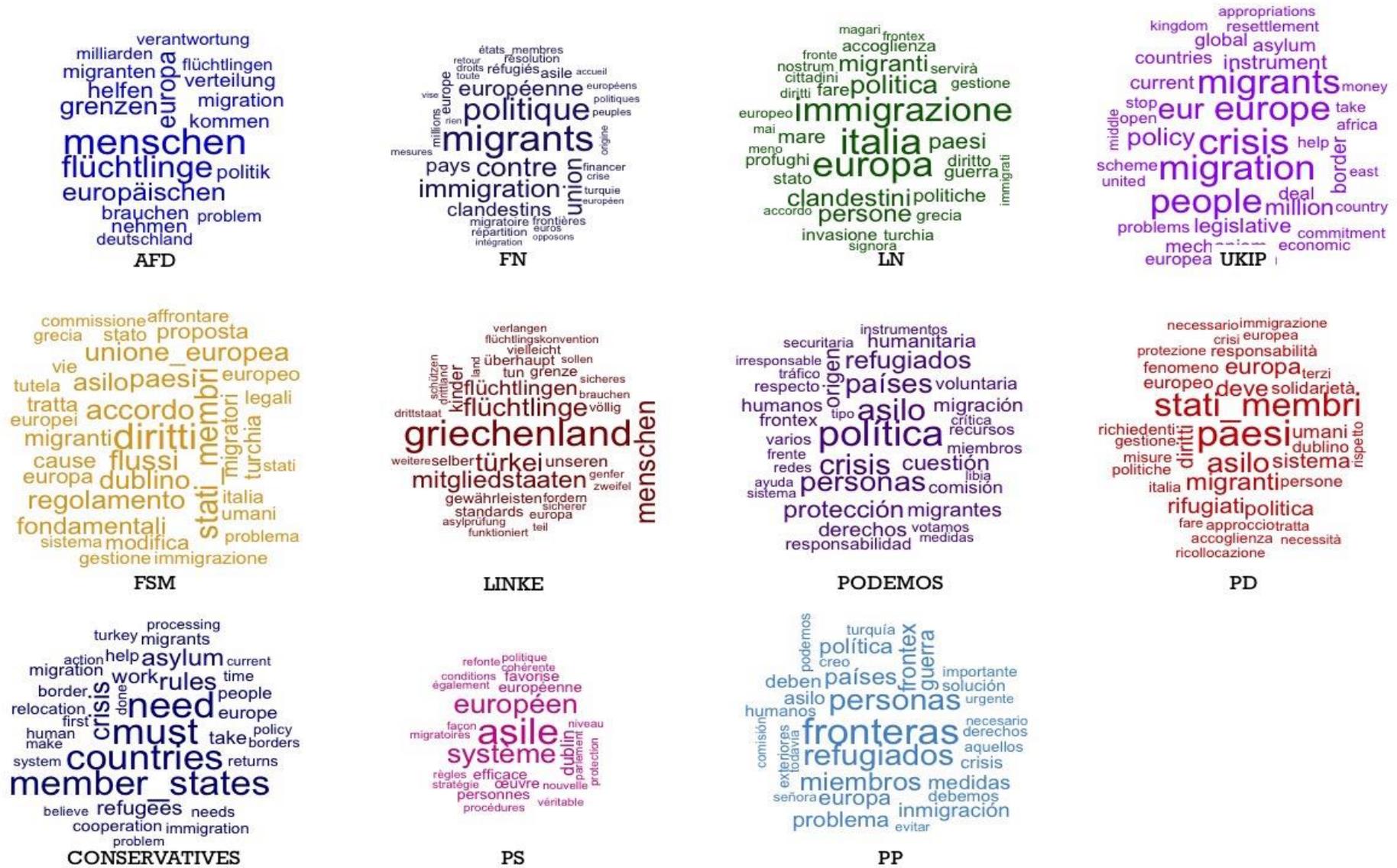
visible from AFD’s word-cloud. Among the most frequent words it is possible to see ‘Wirtschaftspolitik’ (political economy), ‘Verordnung’ (regulation) or ‘Aufsicht’ (supervision)⁴.

On the contrary, left-wing EU-opponents (PODEMOS and LINKE) alongside the Italian FSM, express opposition to the EU-policies that is pragmatic in character and would like to see a stronger EU’s regulation of the market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors. According to them, the harmonization of fiscal policies and the increase of transparency and equity in taxation specifically targeting multinational enterprises is the only solution to achieve more equity and reduce the social dumping in the EU. Words like ‘trasparenza’ (transparency), ‘Investitionen’ (investments), and ‘fondos’ (funds) are highly frequent in FSM, LINKE, and PODEMOS’ word-clouds. Such parties ask for a ‘complete structural reform of the banking system, separating credit from financial activities’ in order to ‘bring the system back to its true function that is to guarantee credit to the real economy’ (Castaldo FSM’s MEP). Furthermore, these parties motivate their opposition to the EU-policies preaching for the redistribution of richness in the EU. According to them a ‘countercyclical bet is what the EU needs’ (Sanchez Caldentey, PODEMOS’ MEP) to counteract the effects of EU’s austerity measures identified as ‘[t]he cause of growing unemployment, especially among the youths, since they are undermining social systems in the field of education, healthcare and welfare, which should constitute the pillars of the European society’ (Ferrara FSM’s MEP). In other words, even if it is true that both left and right-leaning parties reject austerity measures, left-leaning EU-opponents alongside the FSM propose solutions that foresee the implementation of redistributive policies rather than protectionist one.

The only mainstream party opposing the EU-policies in the field of economy is the French PS. Similarly to FSM, PODEMOS, and LINKE, it criticises the lack of a common EU regulation in fiscal issues, particularly with reference to multinational enterprises: ‘we need to push the legislation a bit forward, asking for a common European taxation on multinational enterprises’ (Thomas PS’ MEP). Furthermore, the party is extremely critical of EU’s economic orthodoxy since EU’s austerity measures are having ‘disastrous consequences on EU’s peripheral countries’ (Balas PS’ MEP). PS’ word-cloud confirms these finding since words like ‘investissement’ (investments), ‘fiscale’ (fiscal) or ‘multinationales’ (multinational enterprises) are widely used by the party.

⁴ The analysis provides a static picture of opposition to the EU-policies in the economic field. This is to say that it does not track changes in AFD’s stances before and after its exit from the ECR.

Figure 6.2: Word-clouds of the coded-negative QSs related to the EU-policy target in the field of immigration policy.



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.9 of Appendix C.

In the field of immigration the studied parties cluster their opposition around three main themes: 1) immigration control policies; 2) asylum seekers control, and 3) integration of migrants. Furthermore, a clear-cut distinction between left and right wing parties is visible. The former express a restrictive view on immigration control policies, while the latter are more permissive.

The cornerstone of UKIP, LN, FN, and AFD's opposition to the EU-policies is their negative stances toward illegal migrants and the identification and the eventual expulsion of those who do not enjoy asylum right. Words like 'invasione' (invasion), 'clandestines' (illegal migrants), 'Grenzen' (borders), 'stop' are highly frequent in AFD, FN, LN, and UKIP's word-clouds (Figure 6.2 above). The rhetoric of the 'invasion of migrants' or 'mass migration' is widely used by these parties blaming EU immigration policies to be 'foolish and useless to stop the invasion of illegal migrants' (Bizzotto LN's MEP) and to be ideologically in contrast with 'the battle against mass migration that FN has been pursuing for more than 40 years' (Lebreton FN's MEP). AFD's position toward asylum seekers is even harsher, according to the party '[a]sylum right is not the solution to world's poverty. (...) State asylum right should be replaced and framed on a private basis' (Von Stroch AFD's representative). Furthermore, this party sustains that 'the repatriation is the first and the highest goal, for anyone who comes to us with asylum reason or even without' (Pretzell AFD's exponent). Another aspect of particular concern for right-wing EU-opponents is related to the integration of migrants in the European society. Migrants represent a cultural threat to the otherwise homogeneous European society and Islam is frequently associated with the issue of terrorism. However, UKIP, FN, and LN are mostly worried by the economic integration of migrants within the EU territory. According to these parties, the EU is facing the migration issue 'in a superficial way without distinguishing between economic migrants and refugees' (Bizzotto LN's exponent) since economic migrants will 'enter in concurrencies with European people especially for what concerns their access to the labour market' (Goddyn FN's exponent).

As mentioned above left-wing parties (alongside the FSM) endorse a permissive approach to migration, this is clearly portrayed in their word-clouds where words like 'diritti' (rights), 'Menschen' (people), 'refugiados' (refugees) or 'protección' (protection) are highly frequent (Figure 6.2 above). The LINKE is mainly concerned with the need to increase humanitarian aid to migrants and asylum seekers stressing the necessity to guarantee 'safe access routes' to the EU, especially for vulnerable persons ('Kinder' – child in English – is one of the most frequent words in LINKE's word-cloud): 'the fact that there is no legal route to Europe exposes children to existential threat for their lives and bodies' (Ernst LINKE's MEP). Furthermore, LINKE sustains that the only way to solve the migration crisis is to deeply understand its roots and be 'ready to accept the fact that our way of life, our standards should change to provide people with the help that they really need' (Zimmer LINKE's exponent).

Also FSM is concerned with the lack of humanitarian corridors to safely access Europe, however the party mainly stresses the need of a ‘compulsory mechanism for the redistribution of migrants from those member states suffering an exceptional migratory pressure’ (Valli FSM’s exponent) alongside a reform of the Dublin system (‘Dublino’ – Dublin – ‘regolamento’ – rule – and ‘modifica’ – modify – are recurrent expressions in FSM’s word-cloud). According to FSM’s representatives, the Dublin system currently penalizes ‘the first country of entry that still has the greatest responsibility in the examination of asylum applications and in the management of disembarkations’ (Ferrara FSM’s MEP). PODEMOS is the only party opposing EU’s policies on a principled basis due to its rejection of the externalization of European borders: ‘the xenophobic policies of the fortress Europe are transforming the Mediterranean Sea in the largest mass grave of the world’ (Urbán Crespo PODEMOS’ MEP). Such ‘xenophobic policies’ are also criticized because they ‘systematically violate human rights, not only with the ‘hot returns’ but also by installing blades on fences, mistreating migrants in detention centres, charging with our patrol-both flimsy boats full of migrants, and there have been cases in which European authorities even pulled the trigger’ (Sanchez Caldentey PODEMOS’ exponent).

Also some of the included mainstream parties are critical of the EU’s migration policy presenting interesting differences among them. Left-leaning mainstream parties have a more permissive approach to migration, while the British Conservatives and (partially) the Spanish PP show more restrictive stances to EU’s migration policies. Such differences are recognizable also from the word-clouds of these three parties. While CON and PP show words like ‘must’, ‘need’, ‘countries’ or ‘fronteras’ (borders), PS and PD’s word-clouds present ‘asile’ (asylum), ‘sistema’ (system) and ‘solidarietà’ (solidarity) among the most frequent words (see Figure 6.2 above).

Similarly, to the other left-wing EU-opponents and to the FSM, both the PS and the PD underline that the ‘priority is the construction of both legal migration-channels for migrants and humanitarian corridors to let asylum seekers safely reach EU’s territory’ (Bonnetfoy PS’ MEP), stressing the need for a common system for the redistribution of migrants. Differently, the CON endorses a position more similar to right-wing EU-opponents. Its exponents preach to ‘improve border security and functioning systems for the processing of migrants, including the return of those that are not genuine refugees’ (Van Orden CON’ MEP). PP’s position to the EU’ s migration policy only partially matches CON’s one. PP sustains the increase of external borders’ security as a way to ‘avoid the construction of new internal borders’ (Gonzales Pons PP’s MEP), however, differently from the CON, PP’s exponents ask for a holistic understanding of the migration issue calling for a Common Asylum System as a potential solution.

In environmental protection, parties justify their pragmatic criticism of the EU-policies on the basis of two main themes: 1) the relationship between the environmental protection and economy, and 2) the Dieselgate Scandal⁵. Generally, only right-wing parties (with the only exception of the German LINKE, as detailed below) oppose the EU-policies in this field. As shown in Figure 6.3 above, words like ‘produzione’ (production), ‘Automobilindustrie’ (automotive industry), ‘industrie’ (industry), ‘market’ or ‘Absagaskandal’ (emission scandal) are widely present in all the formulated word-clouds.

Right-wing parties sustain that EU’s environmental efforts at the international level are useless because only the EU complies with environmental protection rules that contribute to the deindustrialization of the EU: ‘favouring a greener world does not mean to impose thresholds and disadvantages only to the EU and to its enterprises’ (Fontana LN’s MEP); ‘our green policies are forcing energy-intensive business out of Europe altogether, taking their jobs and their investments with them’ (Helmer UKIP’s MEP).

As for the Dieselgate scandal, AFD, FN, and UKIP are concerned about the proposal of a common European regulation of the automotive sector since European solutions ‘lack any long-term evaluation of their impacts on the European automotive sector’ (Bilde FN’s MEP), thus ‘the potential hit to Volkswagen could damage all of us, especially if, as many expect, other companies are drawn into the scandal’ (Helmer UKIP’s MEP). Only the Italian LN favours a European solution of the Dieselgate scandal that should be based on stricter rules concerning real driving emissions tests.

The German LINKE is the only left-wing party pragmatically opposing EU’s environmental policies. LINKE’s representatives do not deny EU’s efforts in environmental protection but contend that the European Emissions Trading System (ETS)⁶ increases and reinforces the role played by financial markets in EU’s citizens’ everyday life. Furthermore, the LINKE endorses the achievement of a European solution for the Dieselgate scandal since ‘what we need are reliable processes and tests to implement our standards so that European cars will actually be low in emissions and energy efficient’ (Ernst LINKE’s MEP).

⁵ The expression ‘Dieselgate’ scandal refers to the Volkswagen (VW) scandal. In response to EPA Tier 2 emission standards, all cars’ producers had to comply with very strict rules concerning the emission of NOx (chemical component made up of Nitrogen Oxide and Nitrogen Dioxide). To do that, VW cars model (particularly Jetta 2009 and Golf 2010) were equipped with a new LNT technology (Lean NOx Trap). However, the LNT NOx trap was not doing much. Instead, the cars were installed with software that detected when they were being tested and were programmed so that NOx emissions would indeed be minimal under test conditions.

⁶ Defined as the ‘cornerstone’ of EU’s environmental policy, the ETS system works on the ‘cap and trade system’. The cap is set on the total amount of certain greenhouse gases that can be emitted by an installation. The cap is reduced over time such that the total emissions fall. Within the cap, companies receive or buy emission allowances that they can trade with one another as needed. Further info at https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets_en

Among the mainstream parties, the British CON is the only one pragmatically opposing this target mainly focusing on the de-industrialization effects of EU’s environmental policies. Similarly to the Italian LN, it, however, endorses a European solution to the Dieselgate scandal.

6.3 Justifying EU-opposition in the EP: the EU-elite target

EU-opponents’ opposition to the EU-elite target is almost always principled independently from the discussed policy field. Interestingly, also part of the analysed mainstream parties proposes a principled critic to this target. However, as already mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter 5, section 5.4, pages 128-129) and as further detailed below, their opposition is oriented to a specific part of the EU-elite: the challenger of the ‘grand coalition’, what mainstream actors define as populist and Eurosceptic parties.

From an overall perspective, EU-opponents are extremely united in their opposition to the EU-elite target. Generally, they all rely on similar motivations across the three studied policy issues. They accuse the EU-elite using motivations that target either the moral conduct of the establishment, or the inability of the EU-establishment to accomplish its duties, or some specific EU-politicians (e.g.: Jean Claude Juncker).

Turning to each policy field, parties’ opposition to the EU-elite in economy-related policies clusters around four main themes, the performance of the EU-elite, its moral conduct, its ideological orientation and the moral conduct of some specific members of the EU-elite: Jean Claude Juncker and Mario Draghi, whose names appears as most frequent words in the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.4 below.

The most widely used motivations relate to the moral conduct of the EU-elite that is criticized to favour ‘strong and hidden powers, financial but also political’ (Bizzotto LN’s representative) (the so-called ‘poteri forti’ – strong powers – as emerges from LN’s word-cloud) and to impose un-democratic decisions on EU-citizens: ‘the other feature I have noticed here is the growth of what I can only describe as authoritarianism. You know, we actually saw the Prime Minister of Greece removed effectively by a coup d’état and we saw Mr Berlusconi removed by a coup d’état and in both cases represented by appointees who were former directors of the Goldman Sachs’ (Farage UKIP’s leader). To confirm this assertion, the word-clouds reported in Figure 6.4 below show that terms like ‘Betrüger’ (fraudster), ‘autorité’ (authority), ‘poteri forti’ (strong powers), ‘responsabilità’ (responsibility), ‘multinazionali’ (multinational enterprises), and ‘lobby’ appear frequently in EU-opponents’ speeches.

Figure 6.4: Word-clouds of the coded-negative QSs related to the EU-elite target in the field of economic policy



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.11 of Appendix C

Interestingly, both right and left-wing EU-opponents are equated by criticism addressing specific members of the EU-elite. FN, LN, LINKE, and FSM are extremely critical of Juncker's moral conduct (see word-clouds above) accusing him to be the 'main architect of the LuxLeaks affair'⁷ (Monot FN's MEP). Juncker's moral integrity is criticised with reference to its role as the President of the EC: 'you are the magician of facilitated Luxembourg's taxation' whose action has repercussions on the credibility of the entire EU: 'With Juncker steering the European vessel the EU lacks credibility' (Zanni FSM's MEP). When talking about the LuxLeaks affair, LINKE's MEPs not only blame Juncker for its direct complicity in the scandal but also address the EU elite for its complicity in building an 'omertà wall of silence. When the finance ministers of the big member states – like Germany, my country – were silent about it because local companies profited. The finance ministers have been sleeping or looking away' (De Masi LINKE's exponent). Noteworthy, LINKE's word-cloud reports the word 'leaks' among the most used expressions.

The only right-wing EU-opponent not focusing on Juncker is the German AFD. In connection to its criticism of the ECB (as further detailed below), AFD harshly contests Mario Draghi's moral conduct (Draghi is the central term of AFD's word-cloud) perceiving his intention to do 'whatever it takes to save the Euro'⁸ as illegal and performed outside of the ECB's mandate: 'You are making politics. You want to make labour policies, you want to impede Italy and Greece's exit from the Euro. You are making politics. You do not have the mandate to do so' (Von Stroch AFD's MEP).

Apart from being critical of the EU-elite's moral conduct, the British UKIP also attacks its pro-integrationist attitude. According to its MEPs, the mainstream elite is a group of hedonists concerned only about widening and deepening the scope of EU-integration: 'Mr president, most people in this place talk about one of three things: themselves, their own amendments or how wonderful the EU is, or indeed the three at once' (Coburn UKIP's MEP).

Differently from the other EU-opponents, the Spanish PODEMOS proposes a pragmatic opposition to the EU-elite being particularly critical of the 'grand coalition' between centre-left and centre-right EPPGs. According to PODEMOS' MEPs the EU-elite is unable to listen to peoples' needs and should change its attitude endorsing 'the side that defends social rights and abandoning, once for all, that damn grand coalition that is leading us to the disaster' (Iglesias PODEMOS' leader). This assertion is confirmed by the high frequency of words like 'socialistas' (socialists), 'popular'

⁷ The expression LuxLeaks affair (or Luxembourg Leaks) refers to a financial scandal revealed in November 2014 by a group of journalists. The produced dossier reported a set of documents showing that Luxembourg's tax authority has been systematically delivering secret deals to multinationals.

⁸ At a speech held in the occasion of the 'Global investment conference' in London (26 July 2012) Mario Draghi (president of the ECB) announced that: 'Within our mandate, the ECB is ready to do whatever it takes to preserve the euro. And believe me, it will be enough'. See the entire verbatim report of the speech at <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2012/html/sp120726.en.html>

(referring to the EPP), ‘grupos’ (groups) and ‘gran coalición’ (large coalition) in PODEMOS’ word-cloud (Figure 6.4 above).

Also in the field of immigration EU-opponents tend to cluster the majority of their critique around the moral conduct of the EU-elite followed by a harsh criticism of their activity. Words like ‘ipocrisia’ (hypocrisy), ‘Zynismus’ (cynicism), ‘vergognatevi’ (shame on you), and ‘volontà’ (will) are frequently used as emerges from the word-clouds reported in Figure 6.5 above. The EU-elite is accused to be hypocrite by both right and left-wing EU-opponents ‘in shedding tears for a day in front of a photograph without doing anything on the field’⁹ (Castaldo FSM’s exponent) to fight against the deep roots of the migration crisis. Furthermore, the mainstream elite is blamed to act on the basis of personal interest: ‘Is it that maybe someone is letting all those peoples in the EU out of personal interest? It looks like someone would like to create chaos. Creating chaos, I do not know why, but, evidently, there are important interests that someone does not wish to vanquish’ (Fontana, LN’s exponent).

In spite of the common criticism of the EU-elite’s moral values, right and left-wing EU-opponents’ motivations partially diverge. Left-wing parties alongside the Italian FSM criticize the mainstream EU-elite which exponents ‘ignore the anti-democratic drift in the heart of Europe and clear their consciences as ostriches do putting their heads in the sand’ (Ferrara FSM’s exponent)¹⁰. In relation to this anti-democratic drift, on the one hand, left-wing parties are concerned about mainstream inactivity *vis-à-vis* the ‘violence against refugees that spread like a virus’ (Ernst LINKE’s exponent) and ‘that demands immigration policies doomed to bunker Europe’ (Urbán Crespo PODEMOS’ representative) accusing the mainstream elite to be responsible for the diffusion of hate against migrants since they ‘remain silent, look away, cannot see the dead and do not want to look at victims’ families in the eyes’ (Ernst LINKE’s exponent). To confirm this position from PODEMOS and FSM’s word-clouds emerge words like ‘derecha’ (right) or ‘extrema’ (extreme).

On the contrary, right-wing EU-opponents are critical of the ‘bleeding hearth liberalism’ of centre-left and centre-right mainstream parties that: ‘through their speeches give the impression that Europe is in a position to supply thousands and thousands of economic migrants’ (Pretzell AFD’s MEP).

AFD’s attitude toward the EU-elite is peculiar, the party addresses most of its criticism toward the performance of a specific member of the EU-elite, Angela Merkel, accused to have fuelled the

⁹ The speech refers to the picture of the dead young Syrian boy found on the beach near Turkish resort of Bodrum. The boy, named Aylan Kurdi, was one of the twelve Syrian who drowned in the attempt to reach Greece’s borders. The diffusion of the pictures was followed by a wave of different types of reactions among the broad public. See: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/02/shocking-image-of-drowned-syrian-boy-shows-tragic-plight-of-refugees>

¹⁰ The speech is related to the developments of the Hungarian situation in particular the speaker refers both to Orbán’s decision to construct a fence at Hungary’s border with Serbia (to impede the transit of migrants from the so-called Balkan route) and to the request of a popular referendum on the reintroduction of the death penalty in Hungary.

migration crisis in Germany: ‘all migrants want to come to Germany since they have been invited by Chancellor Merkel’ (Von Stroch AFD’s MEP)¹¹. The word ‘Merkel’ and ‘Bundeskanzlerin’ (Federal chancellor) are among the most used in AFD’s speeches.

¹¹ The speech refers to Angela Merkel’s declaration about the capacity of Germany to welcome new migrants and/or asylum seekers in the German territory. The declaration of the German Chancellor ‘*Wir schaffen das*’ (we can do this) held during the Chancellor’s summer press conference in August 2015 marks the beginning of what the media define as the *Willkommens-Kultur* (welcome culture) toward migrants. See the entire text of the conference at <https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Mitschrift/Pressekonferenzen/2015/08/2015-08-31-pk-merkel.html>

The performance of the EU-elite, its moral conduct, and its characteristics are central to parties' justifications of opposition in speeches related to the environmental protection issue.

Right-wing EU-opponents focus on the technocratic and bureaucratic nature of the EU-elite that lacks democratic accountability: 'the only people who should create laws are our democratically elected and accountable government, not unelected bureaucrats in Brussels' (Batten UKIP's exponent). Interestingly, right-wing parties' word-clouds report a high frequency of words such as 'bureaucrats', 'technocrate' (technocrat), 'democratically', 'accountable' and 'elected'.

Justifications concerning the EU-elite's moral conduct favouring green lobbies equate both right-wing EU-opponents and the FSM, especially in those speeches referring to the Dieselgate scandal. In this framework, the Italian LN laments the lack of a self-defense mechanism against the 'undue pressure' of the green lobbies also accusing part of the EU-elite to be VW's accomplice. The supposed collusion between the EU-elite and more or less licit systems is mirrored in the word-clouds in Figure 6.6 above reporting words like 'interessi' (interests), 'fizioso' (factious) and 'lobby'. The rhetoric of the collusion between the EU-elite and green lobbies is present also in FSM's speeches even if the party is also critical about the performance of the EU-elite accused to impose their views through their behaviour: 'the bullying dictatorship of the majority transforms the only European elective institution in a disgusting horse trade between just two groups so that every parliamentary act, each fantastic New Deal that you will prepare will be spoiled by a progressive loss of a minimum common ethical denominator since its very beginning' (Tamburrano FSM's MEP). The Spanish PODEMOS pragmatically opposes the EU-elite accusing the action of the grand-coalition also in this field, while its EPPG's partner, the LINKE, does not oppose the EU-elite in this policy field. Also in this case, PODEMOS' word-cloud reports the words 'grupos' (political groups) among the most frequently used by the party.

As for the mainstream parties, it is noticeable that some signs of criticism toward the EU-elite are present, particularly in the fields of immigration and economy where mainstream parties oppose a specific part of the EU-elite in a principled way: the EU-opponents. From both Figure 6.4 and 6.5 above, mainstream parties' word-clouds (the only exception is partially the CON's one) show the presence of words confirming this dynamic: 'Linke' (left-wing), 'Lucke' (AFD's exponent), 'Tsipras', 'Farage', 'Viktor Orbán', 'Fidesz', 'droite' (right-wing), 'antisémitisme' (anti-Semitism), 'paura' (fear), 'extreme', and 'Populismus' (populism). Mainstream parties accuse the EU-opponents to offer oversimplified solutions to complex phenomena without observing reality in the long run. For example, CDU-CSU's MEPs state that EU-opponents are not 'concerned with a substantive discussion, but use short-sighted and populist arguments against the common currency' (Langen CDU-CSU representative).

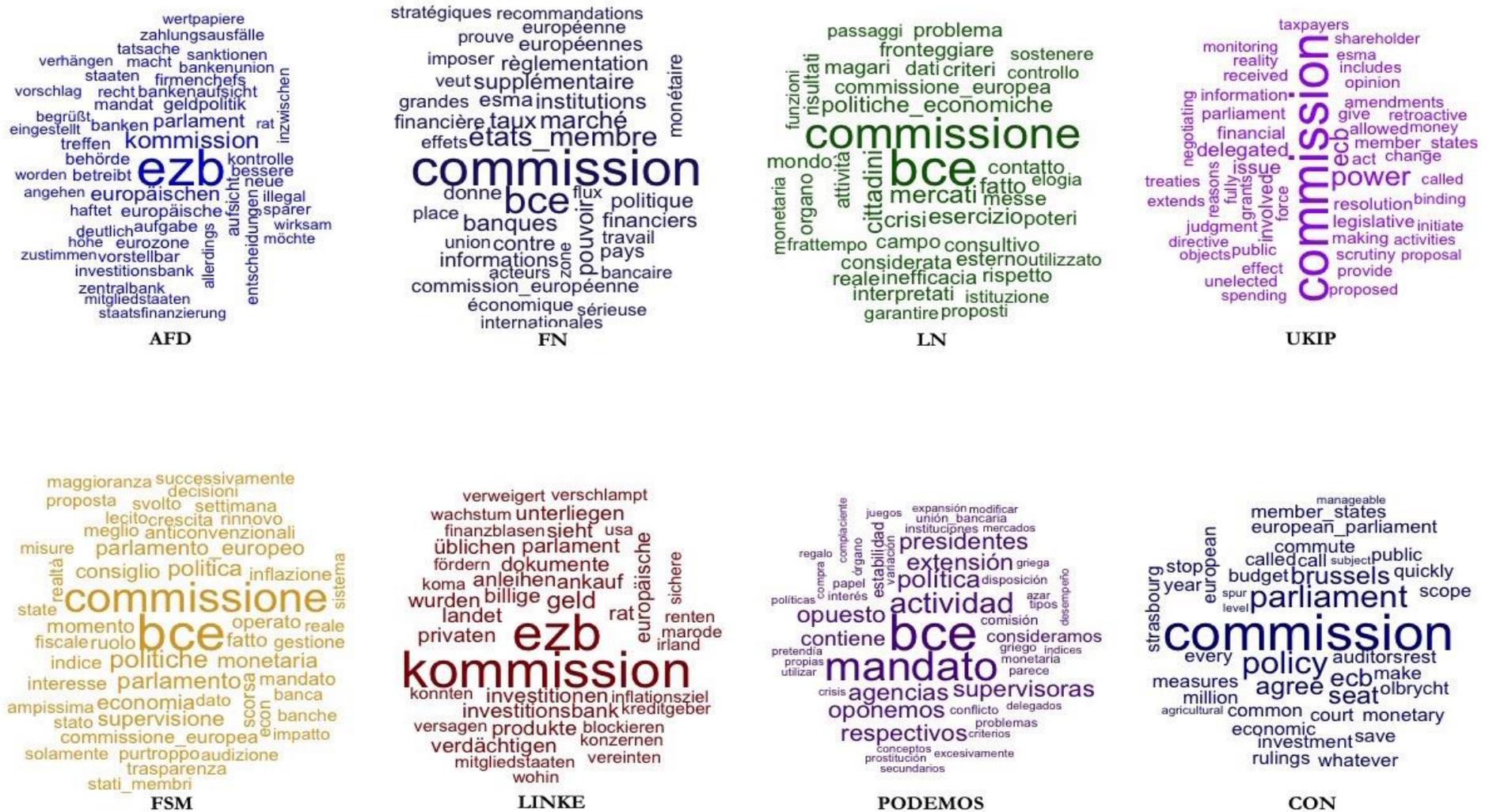
Most of mainstream parties' criticism of the EU-opponents is related to the field of immigration. On the one hand, centre-right mainstream parties accuse the EU-opponents to be shallow proposing 'populist short-term solutions to the migration crisis that simply do not exist' (Hohlmeier CDU-CSU' S MEP). On the other hand, left-leaning mainstream parties (PD and PS) are worried about the 'continuous spread of racism anti-Semitism and xenophobia throughout the EU' (Bonney PS' MEP), stressing the fact that such 'populist parties' 'lose their time, lose our time in populist demagogic pledges only for their electoral interests' (Giuffrida PD's exponent).

In the field of environmental protection, the mainstream opposition is pragmatic and blames the EU-elite for its professional activity in the framework of the Dieselgate scandal.

6.4 Justifying EU-opposition in the EP: the EU-regime target

If in terms of the expressed quantity of opposition to the EU-regime no precise pattern was detectable (see Chapter 5, section 5.2, pages 111-112), however, a closer analysis of the character and the motivations used by EU-opponents stresses some differences among them. In fact, right and left-wing EU-opponents radically diverge in the character of the expressed opposition. While right-wing parties oppose the EU-regime on a principled basis, left-wing parties (alongside the FSM) propose a pragmatic opposition even though some exceptions are visible. The Italian right-wing LN exercises a pragmatic opposition to the EU-regime both in immigration and in environmental policies, the left-wing Spanish PODEMOS expresses a principled opposition to the EU-regime in the field of immigration policies, and the German LINKE does not consider the EU-regime as a salient target in environmental protection-related speeches. Also some of the included mainstream parties exercise a pragmatic opposition to the EU-regime target as further detailed below.

Figure 6.7: Word-clouds of the coded-negative QSs related to the EU-regime target in the field of economic policy



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.14 of Appendix C

Parties opposing the EU-regime in the field of economic policies use motivations that cluster around three broad themes: 1) the performance of the EU-regime (mainly left-wing EU-opponents); 2) the characteristics, the powers, and the competencies of the EU-regime (mainly right-wing EU-opponents), and 3) the ‘Other institutions’ theme (both left and right-wing EU-opponents).

Right-wing EU-opponents criticize the characteristics, powers and competencies of the EU-regime on a principled basis (see the recurrence of words like ‘power’ and ‘supplémentaire’ (supplementary) in the word-clouds proposed in Figure 6.7 above). The power grab exercised by the EC toward member states is central to FN and UKIP MEPs’ criticism rejecting the ‘economic governance of the commission imposed on the Member States’ (Goddyn FN’s exponent) (the word ‘commission’ is central to both UKIP and FN’s word-clouds). On the contrary, LN and AFD focus their attention on the ECB’s power grab toward member states and their national authorities (‘EZB and ‘BCE’ are central to LN and AFD’s word-clouds). LN’s MEPs define the ECB monetary governance as a ‘monetary dictatorship’ (Borghesio LN’s exponent) on Eurozone member states lacking democratic accountability. Of particular interest in this respect is the position of the German AFD that dedicates the majority of its criticism to this institution. As observed in the previous section, for this party Mario Draghi represents a central target of criticism. The rhetoric of Mario Draghi’s power-abuse is indeed connected to AFD’s rejection of the ECB’s independence. According to AFD’s MEPs, the ‘ECB should be controlled and forced, through legal action, to limit its activity within the boundaries of its mandate’ (von Stroch AFD’s representative) rather than doing ‘whatever it takes’ to save the Euro. Interestingly, LN’s exponents address the whole complex of EU-institutions for their lack of ‘democracy, transparency and respect for the principle of subsidiarity’ (Bizzotto LN’s representative).

Left-wing parties alongside the FSM focus on the EU-regime’s performance. Interestingly enough, there is a neat distinction between FSM and UKIP’s opposition to this target even if the two parties belong to the same EPPG. LINKE and FSM contest the performance of the EC stressing the ‘severity used by the European Commission to impose stifling rules on Member states’ (Zullo FSM’s exponent) advocating austerity measures ‘since more than 5 years (...) without obtaining any results other than producing record levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality’ (Valli FSM’s representative). The performance of the ECB is the second broader source of concern for left-wing EU-opponents alongside the FSM sustaining that ECB’s activity favours big financial powers to the detriment of households and SMEs: ‘We need public investment because the FED may raise interest rates tomorrow and because the ECB’s cheap money¹² ends up in the financial markets and not in investment companies and households’ (De Masi LINKE’s exponent). Criticism to the ECB is

¹²The speech refers to the quantitative easing (QE) operation by the ECB. With the expression QE is intended the action of the ECB that since March 2015 started to buy assets from commercial banks as a part of non-standard monetary policy measures. The aim of the asset purchase is to support economic growth across the Euro area and help keep inflation levels below 2%.

particularly important for PODEMOS¹³ in relation to the Greek crisis. The party argues against ECB’s power abuse *vis-à-vis* the democratically elected Greek government: ‘the ECB will incur in a clear overreach of its functions by using the means at its disposal to exert a political pressure on the Greek government’ (Zilagua PODEMOS’ MEP). The fact that both the ‘commission’ and the ‘ECB’ are central to the criticism of left-wing parties and the FSM is moreover confirmed by the central position of these two words in their word-clouds (see Figure 6.7 above).

Similarly to the previous policies field, also in immigration right-wing EU-opponents generally propose a principled opposition to the EU-regime (the only exception being the Italian LN). On the contrary, left-wing EU-opponents express a pragmatic criticism to this target (the only exception being the Spanish PODEMOS).

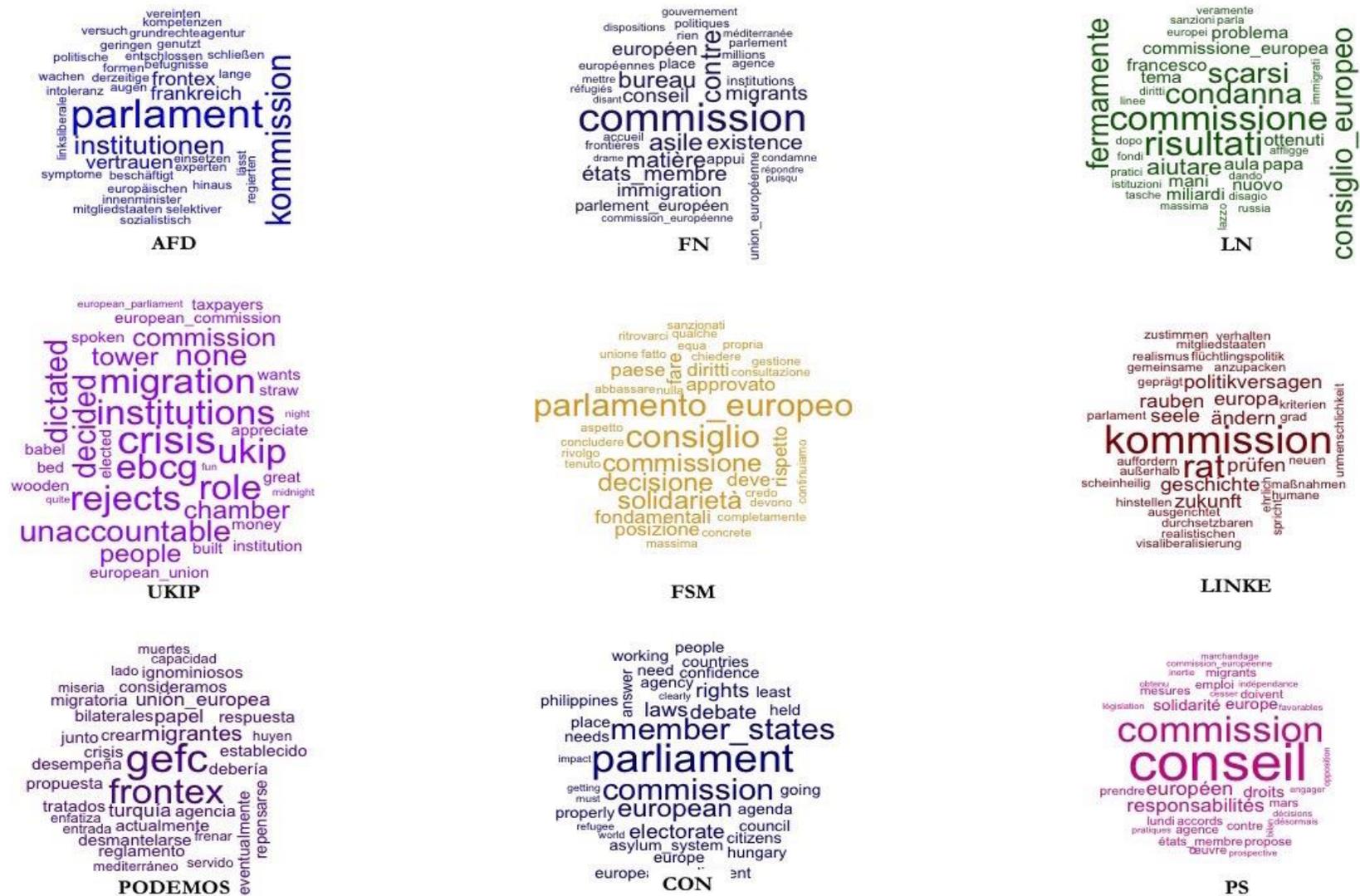
UKIP and FN address the EU-regime focusing on the characteristics, powers and competencies of the EC that is described as a bureaucratic institution lacking democratic accountability. Words like ‘commission’, ‘unaccountable’ or ‘dictated’ have a central position in both UKIP and FN’s word-clouds (Figure 6.8 below). These parties reject ‘advocating even more power to the European Commission, in particular through the creation of a common European Asylum system’ (Le Pen FN’s leader). In a similar vein, the British UKIP is against the whole complex of EU-institutions since procedures related to immigration should not ‘be decided or dictated by unaccountable EU institutions’ (Seymour UKIP’s MEP). Interestingly, UKIP is particularly critical of a specific institution of the EU, the European Borders and Coast Guard (EBCG¹⁴) which construction is regarded as a squander of European taxpayers’ money (see the presence of the ‘EBCG’ acronym in UKIP’s word-cloud in Figure 6.8 below).

As above-mentioned, beside the fact that the LN and FN share the same EPPG, LN contests EU-institutions out of pragmatic reasons focusing on the slowness of the EU-regime’s decision-making process in the field, as further confirmed by words such as ‘scarsi’ (low) and ‘risultati’ (results) reported in LN’s word-cloud (Figure 6.8 below).

¹³ PODEMOS dedicates all of the negative QSs coded under the EU-regime target to the performance of the ECB, see Appendix C, Table C.15, page xlvi.

¹⁴ The ECBG is a European agency that was officially launched in 2015 to extend the Frontex mandate in response to the migration crisis.

Figure 6. 8: Word-clouds of the coded-negative QSs related to the EU-regime target in the field of immigration policy



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.15 of Appendix C

Differently from the other right-wing EU-opponents, AFD's opposition is centred on the EC's ideological orientation criticized for its naïve behaviour in relation to the migration crisis and for its 'left-liberal' orientation (Von Stroch AFD's exponent) ('linksliberale' as indicated in AFD's word-cloud in Figure 6.8 above).

FSM and LINKE's opposition is focused on the performance of the EU-regime; FSM concentrates on the EC's inability to formulate 'proposals or concrete measures to improve the management of migration fluxes' (Ferrara FSM's exponent). On the contrary, the LINKE addresses the whole complex of the EU-regime stating that it should stop delaying taking decisions and 'finally tackle a common human EU policy on refugees' (Michels LINKE's MEP). Interestingly, FSM's MEPs preach for an increase in EP's competencies and powers: being aware of the fact that the EP is the 'maximum democratic institutions representing EU's citizens' (Ferrara FSM's exponent) they think that its role is still marginal in the supranational institutional arrangement and wish to see it expanded. As mentioned before, PODEMOS is the only left-wing EU-opponent criticizing the EU-regime on a principled basis. In connection with its position concerning the EU migration policy, PODEMOS concentrates all the negative QSs coded under the EU-regime target to reject the creation of a new EBCG since it 'reinforces the idea of the construction of the fortress-Europe and represents one step ahead in closing the borders' (Urban Crespo PODEMOS' MEP). This last consideration is strengthened by the central presence of the words 'Frontex' and 'GEFC' (Spanish acronym of EBCG) in PODEMOS' word-cloud.

Also in the field of environmental protection right-wing parties criticise the EU-regime on a principled basis (the only exception being the LN) focusing the majority of their criticism on the characteristics, powers and competencies of the EC, a consideration further confirmed by the fact that 'commission' and 'European commission' are among the two most widely used words in all the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.9 below.

Similarly to the other policy fields, the EC is criticized for its lack of accountability, for its power grab toward member states (AFD, UKIP and FN) but partially also for its 'ultraliberal', 'integrationist' and 'pro-global' orientation (particularly for the French FN). In connection to their hard opposition to the EU-elite in this field, UKIP's exponents are concerned about the EC's role within the framework of the Dieselgate scandal asking for 'answers to the tough questions about the emissions scandal – not least to find out what, if anything, the Commission knew about it' (Arnott UKIP's MEP).

As mentioned before, LN is the only right-wing party pragmatically opposing the EU-regime in environmental protection arguing against the performance of both the EC and the EP and pragmatically criticizing the ideological orientation of the EC with reference to its support for the GMO (confirmed by the presence of words such as ‘OGM’ – Italian acronym for GMO – and ‘insoddisfacente’ – unsatisfactory in LN’s word-cloud in Figure 6.9 above).

Both the FSM and PODEMOS propose a pragmatic critique to the EU-regime while the LINKE does not address this target. Criticism of the performance of the EC with reference to the Dieselgate scandal represents the first and foremost objective of both parties. Interestingly, however, FSM and PODEMOS are aware of the centrality of the EP within the supranational level and would like to see the realization of a ‘democratic decision-making process in which the Parliament holds more powers than it currently has’ (Lola Sanchez Caldentey, PODEMOS’ representative). Furthermore, PODEMOS also addresses the Council of Ministers as highlighted by the centrality of the word ‘consejo’ – council – in the word-cloud in Figure 6.9 above.

Mainstream parties generally propose a pragmatic critique to the EU-regime in all the included fields. The French PS criticises the EU-regime in the field of immigration and environmental protection policies while the Italian PD, the Spanish PP and the German CDU-CSU oppose the EU-regime target only in the field of environmental protection. An interesting case, as also stressed in Chapter 5 is the one of the British Conservative party. The party opposes the EU-regime target in all the included policy fields referring to the characteristics, powers, competencies, and performance of the EP. Its opposition is pragmatic in economic and immigration policies, apart from being principled in the field of environmental protection, where the party accuses the EC to grab power *vis-à-vis* member states. Furthermore, the British CON is particularly critical of the EP’s seat in Strasbourg questioning the ‘extra climate effect of the Strasbourg circus’ (Girling CON’s MEP).

6.5 Justifying EU-opposition in the EP: the EU-community target

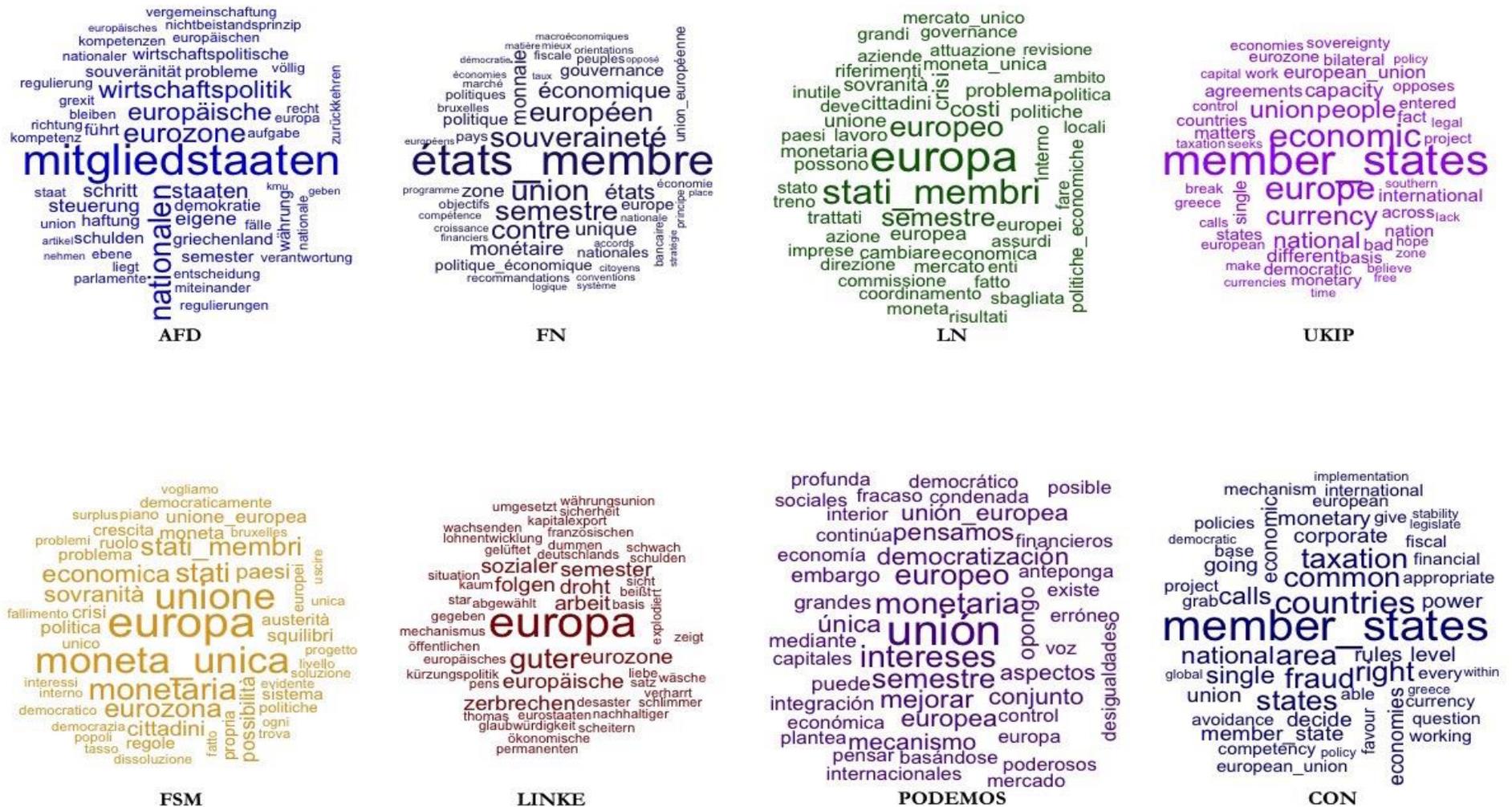
The distinction between right and left-wing EU-opponents is visible also with reference to the EU-community target. While right-wing parties generally oppose the EU-community on a principled basis, left-wing EU-opponents and the FSM tend to pragmatically oppose this target in all the included policy fields. The only exceptions are PODEMOS and FSM that criticise the EU-community on principled basis in the field of economy; PODEMOS that proposes a principled critique to the EU-community in the field of environmental protection, and the LINKE that supports the EU-community in the field of immigration and does not consider the EU-community as a salient target in

environmental protection-related speeches. Furthermore, criticism of the EU-community is present also in the speeches held by the British CON as further detailed below.

Opposition to the EU-community in the field of economy is motivated around four broad themes: 1) the powers and competencies of the EU *vis-à-vis* member states; 2) the characteristics of the EU; 3) expressions of reformist positions, and 3) the Euro area geometry.

Interestingly, in this policy field, all the included parties (with the only exception of the German LINKE) propose a principled critique of the EU. However, while right-wing EU-opponents focus their attention on the EU's power grab *vis-à-vis* member states, left-wing parties (alongside the FSM) are mainly concerned about the Euro area geometry (the only exception being PODEMOS as further detailed below). This distinction between right and left-wing EU-opponents is visible also from the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.10 below. While AFD, FN, LN, and UKIP's word-clouds (alongside the British CON) report the word 'member state' as most frequent one, PODEMOS, LINKE, and FSM's word-clouds highlight terms like: 'Europa' (Europe) for the LINKE; 'unión' (union) for PODEMOS and 'moneta unica' (common currency) in the case of the Italian FSM.

Figure 6. 10: Word-clouds of the coded-negative Qs related to the EU-community target in the field of economic policy



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.17 of Appendix C

AFD, FN, and LN are concerned about the erosion of national sovereignty, particularly with reference to the European Semester allowing ‘the establishment of a federal and ultraliberal economy at the EU level’, thus considering EU’s action in economy as an ‘intolerable attack to the sovereignty of member states’ (Bilde FN’s MEP). Interestingly, the AFD frames the erosion of member states’ sovereignty in terms of its rejection of the so-called transfer union¹⁵: ‘if we go back to the principle of non-assistance, then each state will have its sovereignty to make its fiscal and economic decisions on its own, such that it will be that member state to pay for its own debt’ (Lucke AFD’s exponent). These assertions are further confirmed by the presence of words such as ‘souveraineté’ (sovereignty), ‘semester’, ‘sovranità’ (sovereignty), ‘Kompetenzen’ (competencies), ‘Souveränität’ (sovereignty), ‘gouvernance’ (governance) in right-wing EU-opponents’ word-clouds.

Surely enough, also UKIP is worried about EU’s erosion of national sovereignty that is also framed in terms of secession from the EU for both the UK and for other EU’s member states: ‘Britain will not be the first. It will not be the last either, come the revolution’ (Aker UKIP’s exponent). However, the party prefers to stress the impossibility for the EU to reach unity and harmonization among its members: ‘it is a nonsense to think that the North and the South of Europe would converge; that we would all start to love each other; that we would all begin to feel a European identity; that we would all begin to show allegiance to the flag and the anthem’ (Farage UKIP’s leader). Interestingly, in UKIP’s word-clouds are present words such as ‘sovereignty’, ‘Southern’, but also words such as ‘bilateral’. This last term refers to UKIP’s wish to see an intergovernmental community of member states working and trading together on a bilateral basis.

On the contrary, UKIP’s EPPGs political partner the FSM is worried about the lack of unity among member states not because it sees it as an impossible achievement but because it represents a ‘dangerous direction leading to a Two-speed Europe, to a deep cleavage between less and more developed States’ (D’Amato FSM’s exponent).

Even if right-wing parties are more worried about EU’s power grab toward nation states, they share a common opposition to the Euro area geometry with their left-leaning counterpart. All the included EU-opponents stress the bad consequences of the Euro on European economy defining the EMU as the ‘cardinal mistake of the European economic policy today’ (Lucke AFD’s exponent). This consideration is further reinforced by the word-clouds in Figure 6.10 above reporting words such as: ‘moneta unica’ (common currency), ‘Eurozone’, ‘monetaria’ (monetary), ‘monétaire’ (monetary).

According to the right-wing EU-opponents, the Euro area is to be considered as an economic and financial ‘dictatorship’, that is contributing to creating macroeconomic divergences both between those states within and outside of the Euro-zone and among those member states belonging to the

¹⁵ ‘Transfer union’ is a term referring to the transfer of resources among member states depending on their specific needs.

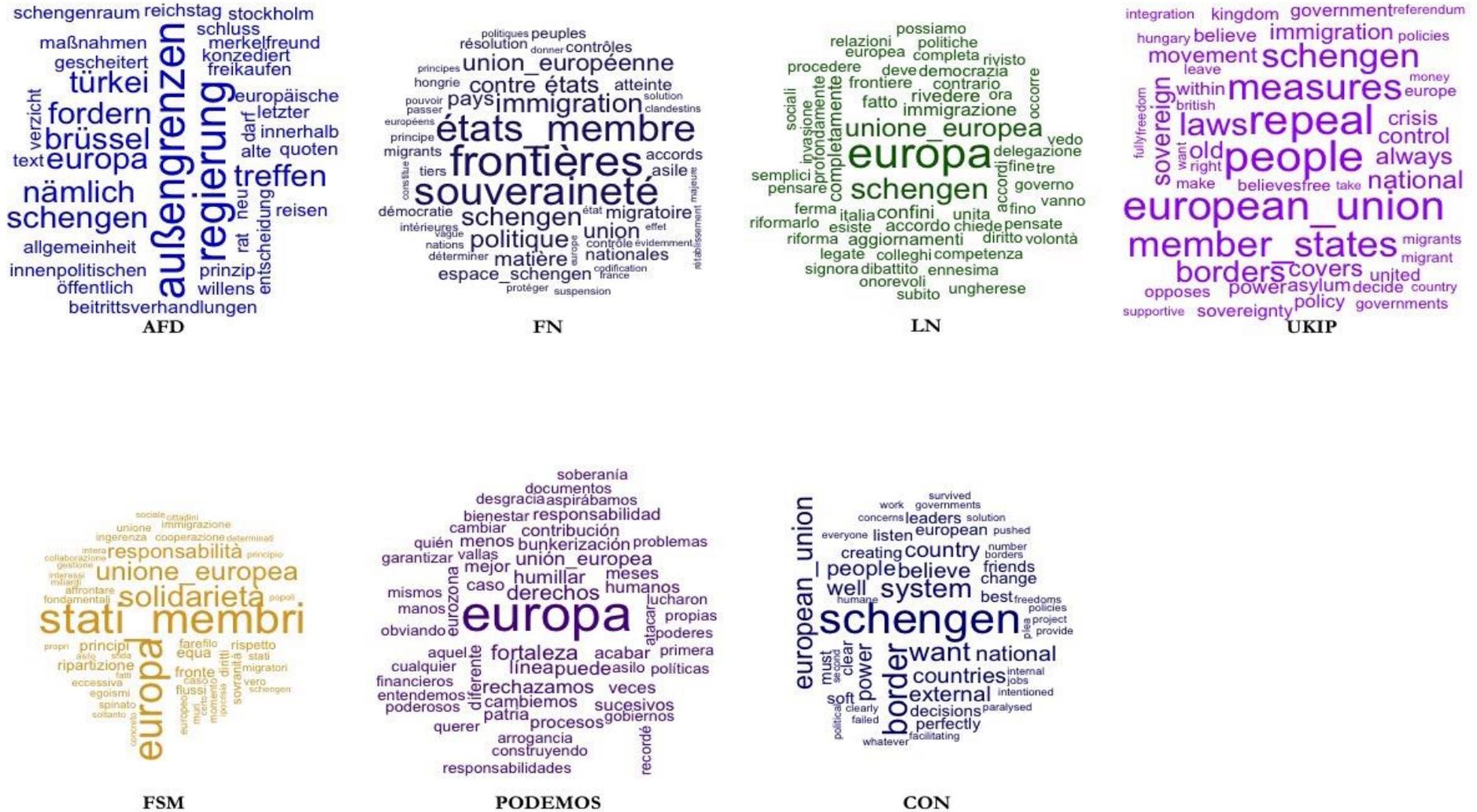
Euro area: 'those European countries outside of the euro are doing much better. The poor are getting poorer, the rich are getting richer, the tensions are rising and the people are standing against each other' (Philippot FN's MEP). According to right-wing parties: 'the continent is now divided from North to South: there is a Berlin Wall and it is the euro' (Farage UKIP's Leader).

Right-wing parties, alongside the FSM sustain that the only solution to get an economic recovery in the EU is to 'introduce a democratic mechanism to allow countries to exit from the Euro area and to prepare a plan for a controlled and coordinated dissolution of the Eurozone' (Valli FSM's exponent) such that member states will 'get back their national sovereignty and take democratic decisions concerning their fiscal and monetary policy' (Valli FSM's MEP).

Besides the fact that both the LINKE and PODEMOS are against the Euro area, they do not reject it *tout court* but rather offer some possibility of reformation. On the one hand, PODEMOS states that 'the monetary union *as* it exists today is a source of imbalances and it is doomed to failure if it continues to be subordinated to the interests of the large Central European Banks' (Torres Martinez PODEMOS' MEP). On the other hand, the LINKE states that this Euro as it is today 'is not democratic, this Euro only serves the interests of Le Pen' (De Masi, LINKE's MEP). However, similarly to the French FN, PODEMOS is concerned about national sovereignty especially with reference to the role of the European Semester as an instrument to 'submit governments' budgets to the fiscal oversight of the European Commission that ensures compliance with certain macroeconomic objectives and the implementation of the badly-defined structural reforms' (Gonzales Penas PODEMOS' representative).

The only party that directly proposes a reform of the EU in the field of economy is the German LINKE, clearly stating that: 'what we need is a Europe with social justice, with good work from which people can leave independently and without poverty, good education for all, more public services and a more economically and ecologically sustainable economy' (Händel LINKE's exponent).

Figure 6. 11: Word-clouds of the coded-negative Qs related to the EU-community target in the field of immigration policy



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.18 of Appendix C

In the field of immigration, the cleavage between left and right-wing parties in justifying their opposition to the EU-community is stronger than in economy. This is also mirrored in the word-clouds reported in Figure 6.11 above. Right-wing EU-opponents' word-clouds report words such as: 'member states', 'Außengrenzen' (external borders), 'Schengen', 'schützen' (protect) and 'souveraineté' (sovereignty). On the contrary, PODEMOS and FSM's word-clouds highlight words such as 'solidarietà' (solidarity), 'fortaleza' (fortress), 'derechos' (rights) and 'Europa' (Europe).

AFD, FN, LN, and UKIP relate their opposition to the EU-community to: 1) the EU's power grab towards member states; 2) the characteristics of the EU, and 3) the Schengen area geometry. The rhetoric of EU's dictatorship is present also in the speeches related to the immigration crisis: 'What has been made clear here, with Greece and indeed with Portugal, is that a country has democratic rights if it is in favour of the project. (...). There can be no democratic choice against the European Treaties' (Farage UKIP's leader). According to these parties each member state 'should be freed from the EU's solidarity system' (Pretzell AFD's MEP) in the redistribution of migrants, favouring an intergovernmental approach to the issue: 'each country should manage its own policy and work together on a bilateral basis to deal with the current crisis' (Parker UKIP's exponent). What emerges clearly from UKIP's speeches, thus confirming the findings reported in chapter 5 of this work (see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 124), is that its MEPs use the EP arena to campaign for the 'upcoming' Brexit referendum: 'I say to the British people: if you want your voice to be heard, if you want direct democracy on a whole range of subjects where referenda could and really make a difference, if you want freedom, then when this referendum does come on our membership of the EU, take note of the example of how they have treated Hungary and let us get out: vote to leave!' (Etheridge UKIP's MEP). Furthermore, in almost all UKIP's word-clouds appears the word 'people' as if the party uses the EP arena to achieve a direct contact with its potential electorate.

About the Schengen area, there are a variety of opinions expressed by right-wing parties: the Italian LN is harshly critical of the Schengen agreement. However, its exponents propose a reform of it but without providing precise indications of the way such reform should be performed: 'about Schengen we cannot limit ourselves to update it, a complete reform of the agreement is needed' (Buonanno LN's exponent). Also the German AFD does not ask for the suspension of the agreement, however, it encourages those member states 'that either do not want or are not able to protect the Schengen borders, to leave the Schengen area' (von Stroch AFD's representative). Indeed, also in this field, the party rejects the implementation of solidarity measures between member states (see above their rejection of the so-called transfer union). Lastly, the French FN is the party showing the stronger opposition to the Schengen agreement. According to the FN such an agreement is 'not anymore wanted by the European people' (Lebreton, FN's MEP) and the only way to face this 'migratory

pressure is to re-establish controls at European borders, dismantle Schengen and bring migrants back to their countries of origin' (Boutonnet FN's MEP).

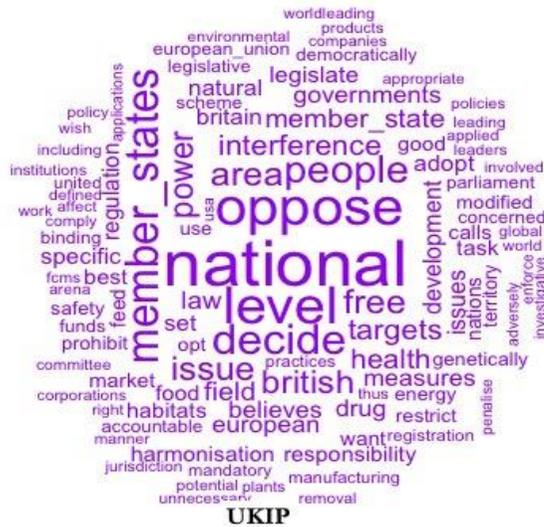
On the contrary, PODEMOS and FSM show a diametrically different position about the EU-community in this policy field. Besides the fact that they both recognize that the EU has worsened the immigration crisis instead of solving it, from their speeches emerges a desire of 'another Europe' a 'different Europe, a Europe that is less strong with the weakest and less compliant with the strongest, (...) a social Europe, a democratic Europe, an Europe that respects human rights' (Iglesias PODEMOS' leader). However, FSM's MEPs are disillusioned by 'member states egoism in front of a global emergency, in front of an historical moment when Europe should show its solidarity' (Corrao FSM's MEP) further arguing that EU's values of 'solidarity and cooperation are recognized only on paper and on the Treaties but need to be put in practice' (Ferrara FSM's MEP).

Moving the attention to the last included policy field, environmental protection, opposition to the EU-community is almost an exclusive prerogative of right-wing EU-opponents with the only exception of PODEMOS.

EU's erosion of member states' power is the core element of right-wing EU-opponents also in this field. Words like 'member state' and 'sovereignty' are among the most frequently used (see Figure 6.12 below). Such parties are worried about EU's power grab toward member states in international arenas rejecting to be represented by the EU at international conferences like the COP21¹⁶. FN and LN relate this rejection to a manifest anti-Americanism since the EU: 'is subject to the American power' (Buonanno LN's exponent). UKIP is extremely critical of the one-way-ever-growing integration process in this field. According to UKIP's MEPs, in the EU 'any success is seen as a green light for further harmonization, whereas any failure requires harmonisation as the solution' (Arnott UKIP's MEP).

¹⁶ The abbreviation COP21 refers to the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris from the 30th of November to the 12th of December 2015. It was the 21st yearly session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 11th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The main objective of the conference was to negotiate on the Paris Agreement, a global agreement on the reduction of climate change.

Figure 6.12: Word-clouds of the coded-negative QSs related to the EU-community target in the field of environmental protection



Detailed information about the motivations used by parties is provided in Table C.19 of Appendix C

PODEMOS is the only exception among left-leaning EU-opponents also because of the motivations it uses to justify its positioning. On the one hand, part of its opposition refers to EU's subjection to big economic powers and to the 'interests of oil producers' (Sanchez Caldentey PODEMOS' MEP). On the other hand, instances of opposition to the EU's power grab are majoritarian. Words like 'soberanía' (sovereignty), 'pueblos' (people) and 'defiende' (defends) are frequently used by PODEMOS (see Figure 6.12 above). However, such expressions are confined to discussions on the production and distribution of GMOs in the EU. PODEMOS' exponents state clearly that: 'our group stand for peoples' sovereignty and, why not, also for our alimentary sovereignty' (Sanchez Caldentey PODEMOS' representative). It is, however, noteworthy that PODEMOS' MEPs do not refer to the 'Spanish people' but more generally to 'the people' differently from the other right-wing EU-opponents (see as an example the presence of the word 'British' in UKIP's word-cloud).

Differently from the analysed EU-opponents, mainstream parties tend to support the EU-community in all the observed policy fields with the only exception of the British CON opposing this target in both economy and immigration-related issues (principled and pragmatic opposition respectively).

Conservatives' MEPs are concerned about the EU's erosion of member states' competencies especially in fiscal policies since they do not wish the EU to act on member states' place. They criticise the effects of the Euro (and the Euro area) on EU's economic situation arguing that the EU should 'let those states that cannot keep up with the Deutschmark, such as Cyprus and Greece, go in an organised manner, or rich countries are going to have to pay them very large sums of money, as happens in the United States' (Fox CON' MEP). Interestingly, among the most frequent words used by the Conservatives in economic policy, the word-cloud in Figure 6.10 reports: 'member state', 'monetary' and 'national'. However, in the immigration field, the Conservatives oppose the EU-community on a pragmatic base criticising Schengen that 'like the euro, was a fair-weather system. Neither has survived its first crisis. They worked perfectly well when the sun was shining. They have crumbled beneath the storms' (Hannan CON' MEP). Also in this case, the Conservatives' word-cloud in Figure 6.11 confirms these findings reporting words such as 'Schengen', 'borders' and 'national'. However, CON's MEPs generally endorse a reformist position *vis-à-vis* the EU in line with ECR's position: 'my Group does not want the EU to break up, but to avoid this the EU must seriously change how it works' (Kamall CON' MEP).

6.6 Conclusions

This chapter provides an in-depth description of the motivations guiding parties' opposition to the EU (the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community) in three policy fields (economy, immigration and environmental protection). To do that, it reports the result obtained through the inductive codification of MEPs speeches' negatively-coded QSs. It is possible to draw five main conclusions from the obtained results.

Firstly, EU-opponents' positioning to both the EU-policies and the EU-regime targets is mainly guided by their ideological orientation. Such distinction is most evident in economic policies: right-wing EU-opponents reject EU's economic policies on a principled basis. The only partial exception is the German AFD that through its pragmatic critique sustains an 'ordo-liberal' position and endorses the respect of the rules and the application of austerity measures. On the contrary, PODEMOS, LINKE, and FSM propose a pragmatic critique favouring the implementation of redistributive, Keynesian-oriented policy measures. However, EU-opponents share their criticism of EU's austerity measures with the just-mentioned exception of the AFD. Similarly, in the field of immigration, right-wing parties criticise the EU-policies on a principled basis endorsing a restrictive position toward both 'immigration control policies' and the economic integration of migrants in the European labour market. On the contrary, FSM and LINKE's MEPs express a pragmatic opposition to the EU's migration policy. Indeed, they endorse a permissive approach to the control of immigration and ask for an increased respect of human rights particularly for asylum seekers (e.g.: the creation of humanitarian corridors). PODEMOS is the only left-wing party opposing the EU migration policies on a principled basis being against the construction of a 'fortress Europe' and endorsing a permissive approach to immigration in general. In environmental protection, all the observed EU-opponents express a pragmatic opposition based on different motivations: right-wing EU-opponents criticise EU's environmental protection because it hinders EU's economic development, while left-leaning EU-opponents alongside the FSM endorse EU's action in environmental protection even if it goes at the detriment of the economic growth. As for the EU-regime target, right-wing parties criticise it on a principled basis while left-wing parties and the Italian FSM generally exercise a pragmatic opposition. In terms of the used motivations, left and right-wing EU-opponents are similar only in the field of economic policies, where the ECB represents the main target of criticism (even questioning its existence as the FN does). In immigration right-wing EU-opponents focus on the EC's characteristics, powers and competencies blaming the institution to grab powers vis-a-vis elected national authorities. On the contrary, the FSM and LINKE are concerned about the performance of EU's institutions asking for the increase of EP's powers since it is the only truly democratic supranational institution. The only exception is PODEMOS focusing its attention on the EBCG in connection to its rejection of the 'fortress Europe'. In environmental

policies, right-wing parties again propose a principled critique to the EU-regime centred on the characteristics, powers and competencies of the EC and on its alleged collusion with lobbies especially in connection with the Dieselgate scandal. On the contrary, FSM and PODEMOS ask for an increase of EP's powers.

Secondly, right and left-wing EU-opponents show a similar opposition to the EU-community in economy-related speeches. In fact, all the included parties (with the only exception of the German LINKE) criticise the EU-community on a principled basis, specifically targeting the Euro area (and proposing its eventual dismantling). Interestingly and differently from PODEMOS and FSM, the theme of EU's erosion of Member states' sovereignty is central to right-wing EU-opponents. Both PODEMOS and FSM's positioning toward the EU-community in the field of immigration is more moderate and never targets the Schengen area differently from UKIP, AFD, FN, and LN that harshly criticise the Schengen agreement. Furthermore, in the field of environmental protection, all right-wing EU-opponents (alongside PODEMOS) criticise the EU-community on a principled basis.

Thirdly, what really equates EU-opponents (independently from their ideological orientation) is their positioning toward the EU-elite target in all the observed policy fields. This observation holds true also with reference to the argumentations used to motivate their opposition. Indeed, both left and right-wing parties (alongside the FSM) are critical of the EU-elites' moral conduct (either generally or in relation to specific members of the EU-elite like Mario Draghi, Jean-Claude Juncker or Angela Merkel). Accuses of alleged corruption and collusion with economic and financial powers are present in all the observed policy areas. The only thing that differentiates right-wing parties from the other EU-opponents is their criticism of the pro-European orientation of the EU-elite. In fact, while right-wing parties despise the pro-European orientation of the EU-elite, for left-wing parties (alongside the FSM) this motivation does not play a significant role.

Fourthly, while the findings portray a general convergence of the stances expressed by parties working within the same EPPG like the FN and LN (ENF) and PODEMOS and LINKE (united in the GUE/NGL EPPG), the case of the Italian FSM and UKIP (working in the EFDD) represents a remarkable exception. Their positioning, the character of their opposition, and the motivations they use are partially divergent. Two aspects equate them: firstly, their positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU-elite target. Indeed, both parties endorse a principled critique of the EU-targets in all the observed policy fields and use similar motivations criticising the EU's elite's moral conduct. Secondly, both UKIP and FSM show a similar positioning toward the EU-community in the field of economy. Specifically, both parties are extremely critical of the Euro area geometry aiming at dismantling it even if UKIP's main focus is still the EU's erosion of national sovereignty. These considerations are in line with recent findings of the literature pointing toward a 'utilitarian' union between the two parties within the same EPPG (Carlotti 2017).

Lastly, the included mainstream parties are critical of the analysed EU targets. In relation to this, three further considerations might be stressed: firstly, mainstream parties’ positioning is guided by their ideological standpoint particularly with reference to the EU-policy target. This is evident in the field of immigration: the left-leaning Italian PD and French PS justify their pragmatic opposition showing a permissive approach to ‘immigration control policies’ contrary to the right-leaning British CON and the Spanish PP endorsing a more restrictive approach. Secondly, in both the fields of economy and immigration, mainstream parties’ opposition to the EU-elite is generally principled and based on a harsh critique of the so-called populist, Eurosceptic, extreme parties (left and right-wing) pointing toward the presence of a sort of ‘counter-extremist-parties rhetoric’ in mainstream parties’ speeches. In other words, if, on the one hand, EU-opponents criticise the EU-elite for its moral conduct, on the other hand, mainstream parties shift their blames on EU-opponents’ ‘glibness’, considering them unable to propose serious alternatives and to use the EP arena for their electoral purposes. Even if it is true that the contraposition between mainstream parties and their challengers might be considered as belonging to the normal adversarial dynamics between ‘governing’ and ‘non-governing’ parties in parliamentary arenas (see Chapter 2, section 2.4, page 37), what is peculiar of mainstream parties’ criticism of this target is the content of their speeches. In other words, mainstream parties criticism of part of the EU-elite is not to be equated to a generalized anti-EU-elite attitude of these parties but to a form of specific *mainstream blame-shifting* upon their challengers (Vasilopoulou et al. 2014). Thirdly, as emerges also from the findings presented in chapter 5, the British CON is an exceptional case of mainstream EU-opposition party. On the one hand, the party tends to pragmatically oppose the EU alongside all its targets in all the included policy fields; on the other hand, instances of principled opposition are present. Particularly significant is CON’s principled opposition to the EU-community in the field of economy, where the party justifies its criticism using motivations against both the EU’s erosion of member states’ sovereignty and the Euro area geometry similarly to what UKIP does.

Starting from the finding presented in both this chapter and in the previous one, the next chapter uses the obtained indexes of EU-opposition to propose an analysis of the causes potentially shaping this phenomenon.

Chapter 7: What drives EU-opposition in the EP?

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the potential drivers of EU-opposition in the EP providing an answer to the hypotheses and associations formulated in chapter 3 of this work. To do that, the chapter explores the relationship between the ‘final version’ of the index of parties’ positioning on the EU-targets and the three sets of Political Opportunity Structures (POSs) presented in chapter 3 (see Chapter 3, section 3.4, pages 53-68). The indexes encompass two main components: the ‘quantity’ – total amount of opposition or support – and the ‘quality’ – either principled or pragmatic – of the expressed positioning on the various EU-targets: the policies, the elite, the regime and the community (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1, pages 101-103). The chapter is structured around three main sections: the first one details the formulated dependent and independent variables (DVs and IVs) proposing a summary of the hypotheses and the associations to be tested and the method applied. The second section reports the obtained findings with reference to the impact of the proposed predictors on patterns of parties’ positioning on the EU-policies (sub-section 7.3.1), the EU-elite (sub-section 7.3.2), the EU-regime (sub-section 7.3.3), and the EU-community (sub-section 7.3.4). A conclusive section discusses and summarizes the obtained results.

7.2 Data and method used in the analysis

This chapter uses four DVs ‘measuring’ support or opposition to the four EU-targets: the EU-policies, the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community. Each DV results from the calculation of the ‘final version’ of the index according to the formula presented in chapter 4 (See Chapter 4, section 4.3.1, page 102). To recap: the index is a continuous variable ranging between -200, indicating the maximum degree of principled support, and +200 indicating the maximum degree of principled opposition. A value of -100 relates to the maximum degree of pragmatic support and a value of +100 indicates the maximum degree of pragmatic opposition whereas a value of 0 indicates a neutral position. The assumption behind the resulting positioning index is that, if two parties express a similar ‘quantity’ of opposition or support, the final value of the index will vary as a function of the character of the expressed positioning. In other words, principled opposition is stronger than pragmatic

opposition. Table 7.1 below reports the values of the index for each of the EU-targets aggregated by policy issue for the entire period of observation.

Table 7.1: Table presenting the ‘final version’ of the index of EU-opposition for each observed EU-target.

Party name	Target	Parties’ positioning to the EU-opposition’ targets by policy field					
		Immigration		Economy		Environmental protection	
		Positioning	EU-opposition	Positioning	EU-opposition	Positioning	EU-opposition
EU-opposition parties							
AFD	EU-policy	Principled opposition	144	Pragmatic opposition	38	Pragmatic opposition	19
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	158	Principled opposition	156	Principled opposition	139
	EU-regime	Principled opposition	154	Principled opposition	150	Principled opposition	143
	EU-community	Principled opposition	160	Principled opposition	172	Principled opposition	132
FN	EU-policy	Principled opposition	137	Principled opposition	110	Pragmatic opposition	15
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	159	Principled opposition	153	Principled opposition	137
	EU-regime	Principled opposition	130	Principled opposition	133	Principled opposition	130
	EU-community	Principled opposition	179	Principled opposition	172	Principled opposition	161
LN	EU-policy	Principled opposition	125	Principled opposition	117	Pragmatic opposition	12
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	158	Principled opposition	157	Principled opposition	137
	EU-regime	Pragmatic opposition	47	Principled opposition	147	Pragmatic opposition	18
	EU-community	Principled opposition	168	Principled opposition	141	Principled opposition	135
UKIP	EU-policy	Principled opposition	129	Principled opposition	127	Pragmatic opposition	13
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	153	Principled opposition	165	Principled opposition	152
	EU-regime	Principled opposition	144	Principled opposition	171	Principled opposition	169
	EU-community	Principled opposition	184	Principled opposition	183	Principled opposition	179
FSM	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	17	Pragmatic opposition	19	Pragmatic support	-1
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	140	Principled opposition	146	Principled opposition	119
	EU-regime	Pragmatic opposition	6	Pragmatic opposition	23	Pragmatic opposition	16
	EU-community	Pragmatic opposition	29	Principled opposition	166	Pragmatic support	-7
LINKE	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	74	Pragmatic opposition	42	Pragmatic opposition	9
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	165	Principled opposition	139	No mentions	0
	EU-regime	Pragmatic opposition	33	Pragmatic opposition	39	No mentions	0
	EU-community	Pragmatic support	-13	Pragmatic opposition	22	No mentions	0
PODEMOS	EU-policy	Principled opposition	109	Pragmatic opposition	14	Pragmatic support	-5
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	155	Pragmatic opposition	57	Pragmatic opposition	54
	EU-regime	Principled opposition	108	Pragmatic opposition	22	Pragmatic opposition	4
	EU-community	Pragmatic opposition	51	Principled opposition	121	Principled opposition	123
Mainstream parties							
CDU-CSU	EU-policy	Pragmatic support	-2	Pragmatic support	-2	Pragmatic support	-7

	EU-elite	Principled opposition	129	Principled opposition	106	Pragmatic opposition	3
	EU-regime	Pragmatic support	-12	Pragmatic support	-2	Pragmatic opposition	6
	EU-community	Principled support	-148	Pragmatic support	-24	Pragmatic support	-41
PS	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	6	Pragmatic opposition	1	Pragmatic support	-10
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	122	Pragmatic support	-4	Pragmatic opposition	6
	EU-regime	Pragmatic opposition	2	Pragmatic support	-3	Pragmatic opposition	3
	EU-community	Principled support	-106	Principled support	-103	Principled support	-113
PD	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	8	Pragmatic support	-7	Pragmatic support	-4
	EU-elite	Principled opposition	113	Pragmatic support	-5	Pragmatic support	-7
	EU-regime	Pragmatic support	-9	Pragmatic support	-18	Pragmatic opposition	1
	EU-community	Principled support	-123	Pragmatic support	-3	Pragmatic support	-45
PP	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	7	Pragmatic support	-15	Pragmatic support	-14
	EU-elite	Pragmatic opposition	21	Neutral	0	Pragmatic opposition	4
	EU-regime	Pragmatic support	-3	Pragmatic support	-2	Pragmatic support	-11
	EU-community	Principled support	-137	Principled support	-119	Pragmatic support	-43
CON	EU-policy	Pragmatic opposition	29	Pragmatic support	-5	Pragmatic opposition	3
	EU-elite	Pragmatic opposition	30	Principled opposition	109	Pragmatic opposition	11
	EU-regime	Pragmatic opposition	35	Pragmatic opposition	12	Pragmatic opposition	12
	EU-community	Pragmatic opposition	38	Principled opposition	144	Pragmatic support	-3

The values of the index are calculated on an aggregate basis (for the three years under consideration) for each included party and presented both by EU-target and by policy field. Source: own calculation.

The chapter uses multivariate hierarchical regression analysis (OLS) to understand the impact of the three sets of POSs on the four main DVs reported in Table 7.1 above, to allow the use of multivariate linear regression, the DVs are disaggregated on annual basis¹. This is to say that the index of EU-opposition is observed for each of the three years (2014, 2015 and 2016) of national parties' activity within the EP arena. While the unit of analysis is always the national party (delegation) represented in the EP, the disaggregation of the index on an annual basis allows having a sufficiently large N to perform regression analysis (N=108)². Table 7.2 below reports a summary of the tested hypotheses and of the correspondent IVs.

In estimating the regression models, several problems are considered. First, multicollinearity between the IVs is a potential source of concern since it may force one or more IVs to not be significant, this is particularly true for two of the included IVs: 'Marginality of the national party' and 'Marginality of the EPPG'. To check for robustness of the obtained results one of the two correlated variables is excluded in separated models (see the next section for further indications). Furthermore, tests to check for the assumptions at the basis of the OLS regression are also performed³.

Table 7. 2: Summary table presenting the formulated Hypotheses and Associations alongside the used IVs

Type of POS (and perspective with reference to the party)	Hypotheses and Associations	IVs' name	Source
Ideology (endogenous)	A1: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP are associated with the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG they belong to.	EPPG ideological heterogeneity	CHES
	A2: patterns of EU-opposition are associated with the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which national parties belong.	EPPGs' left-right positioning	CHES
	H1: Patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of each national party's ideological extremeness, independently of the general ideological position of the EPPG. The more parties position themselves toward the extremes of the left-right ideological continuum the higher their degree of EU-opposition will be.	National parties' ideological extremeness	CHES
Institutional factors (exogenous group 1)	H2: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP vary as a function of their 'marginality' in political competition at	Marginality of the national	Own elaboration

¹ Even if the data are nested (different level of observation are present – i.e.: party level and country level observations), the number of included observations (i.e.: 108 cases) does not allow the application of hierarchical linear model (HLM) that requires larger samples for an adequate power.

² The calculation of the index has not been done semester-wise – as in chapter 5 of this work because some of the included IVs are available only on an annual basis.

³ All the tests performed on the regression analysis are available in Appendix D of this work.

	national level. Parties not belonging to governing coalitions at the national level (or not even eligible to cover governing positions at the national level) will display a higher degree of opposition to the EU.	parties	
	H3: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP vary as a function of the ‘marginality’ of the EPPG they belong to. The more marginal the EPPG the higher EU-opposition expressed by national parties belonging to that EPPG will be.	Marginality of the EPPGs	Own elaboration using data from the EP website
	H4: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP will vary as a negative function of the seniority of their MEPs. The less national parties’ MEPs are socialized within the EP the higher their EU-opposition will be.	Seniority	Own elaboration using data from the EP website
Unintentional events economic and migration crises (exogenous group 3)	H5: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a function of their country’s level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The more debtor/recipient member states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be. H6: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a negative function of their country’s level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The less creditor/donor states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	GDP T2-T1	Eurostat
		Poverty risk T2-T1	Eurostat
		Perception of national economy	Eurobarometer
		Refugee population T2-T1	Eurostat
		Asylum applications T2-T1	Eurostat
		Perception of immigration	Eurobarometer

7.3 Results of the analysis

This section presents the result obtained from the multivariate hierarchical regression analysis (OLS) for the four used DVs of parties’ positioning on: the EU-policies (section 7.3.1); the EU-elite (section 7.3.2); the EU-regime (section 7.3.3) and the EU-community (section 7.3.4).

The IVs will be inserted in each multivariate OLS model following a similar scheme: 1) Model 1: null model; 2) Model 2 adds the first group of IVs related to POSs endogenous to the analysed parties (i.e.: ideology); 3) Model 3 inserts in the regression those variable exogenous to the party and related to the institutional architecture both at the national and at the supranational level (exogenous POS – group 1) excluding the variable ‘Marginality of the EPPGs’ due to multicollinearity reasons; 4) Model 4

considers the institutional POS but excludes the variable ‘Marginality of the national parties’ due to multicollinearity reasons; 5) Model 5 adds to the analysis those IVs exogenous to the party and related to the degree of vulnerability of each national country to the two main crises that the EU is facing (economic and immigration crises) excluding the variable ‘Marginality of the EPPGs’ due to multicollinearity reasons; 6) Model 6 includes the last set of exogenous POS but excludes the variable ‘Marginality of the national parties’ to avoid multicollinearity.

7.3.1 Opposition to the EU-policies explained

Table 7.3 below reports the results of regression analysis with reference to the DV opposition to the EU-policies. The input of the three sets of predictors related to the three sets of POS contributes to the increase the R-squared of the models that moves from 0.47 (accounting for the 47% of the total explained variance) in the model 2 to 0.53 both in models 5 and 6. However, the largest increase in the total amount of explained variance is detectable between model 2 and model 3 and 4, thus, from an overall perspective it is possible to state that the third set of predictors related to the third set of POS, (Model 5 and 6) have a restricted impact on the DV and weakly contribute to explaining variation in patterns of parties’ positioning on the EU-policies.

Table 7. 3: Regression analysis for the DV opposition to the EU-policies.

Variables name	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β
Intercept	39.56*** (5.6)	0	-16.84° (20.47)	0	4.12° (21.02)	0	19.83° (25.85)	0	-39.19° (52.68)	0	-37.31° (52.54)	0
EPPG ideological heterogeneity	--	--	21.82** (8.27)	0.22	12.45° (8.65)	0.12	14.04* (8.34)	0.14	14.55° (11.25)	0.14	18.63* (9.49)	0.18
EPPGs' left-right positioning	--	--	2.85* (1.68)	0.13	3.78* (1.65)	0.17	3.53* (1.70)	0.16	2.90° (1.85)	0.13	2.62° (1.88)	0.12
National parties' ideological extremeness	--	--	13.35*** (4.01)	0.63	10.18*** (2.32)	0.48	10.75*** (2.09)	0.51	11.76** (3.49)	0.56	12.84*** (2.61)	0.60
Marginality of the national parties	--	--	--	--	15.74° (14.75)	0.14	--	--	14.78° (18.54)	0.25	--	--
Marginality of the EPPGs	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.07° (0.08)	-0.10	--	---	-0.08° (0.09)	-0.11
Seniority	--	--	--	--	-2.55° (1.68)	-0.16	-2.89* (1.56)	-0.18	-1.78° (1.97)	0.06	-1.62° (1.94)	-0.10
GDP T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.18 (1.06)	-0.01	-0.40 (2.34)	-0.03
Poverty risk T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.19 (1.67)	0.01	0.62 (1.58)	0.03
Perception of national economy (yearly)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.10 (0.17)	0.06	0.14 (0.18)	0.08
Refugee population T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.03 (0.17)	0.02	0.10 (0.15)	0.06
Asylum application T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.02
Perception of immigration	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.56° (0.52)	0.10	0.63° (0.50)	0.11
Issue ID	--	--	-18.16*** (5.09)	-0.26	-18.16*** (4.88)	-0.26	-18.16*** (4.88)	-0.26	-18.16*** (4.98)	-0.26	-18.16*** (4.97)	-0.26
Year	--	--	-4.7° (5.27)	-0.07	-3.44 (5.26)	-0.04	-3.09 (5.22)	-0.04	-3.89 (6.78)	-0.05	-4.86° (6.93)	-0.06
N	108		108		108		108		108		108	
R-squared	--		0.47		0.52		0.52		0.53		0.53	
Adjusted R-squared	--		0.44		0.48		0.48		0.46		0.47	

Significance codes: p-values<0.001 ***; p-value <0.01 **; p-value<0.05 *; p-value<0.1°. b and beta coefficients are reported in the table, standard error (SE) are reported in parenthesis. Source: own calculation.

Model 2 shows that all the three observed indicators are statistically significant and positively associated with the DV. The variable ‘EPPGs ideological heterogeneity’ has the largest impact on the DV (one unit increase in the degree of heterogeneity of an EPPG produces an increase of 21.82 points of EU-opposition, $p < 0.01$), thus confirming Association 1: national parties belonging to ideologically heterogeneous party groups tend to perform a higher opposition to the EU-policies. This latter is also influenced by the degree of extremeness of the parties’ ideological orientation as formulated in Hypothesis 1 (one unit increase in the degree of extremeness of the national party produces an increase of 13.35 points of opposition to the EU-policies, $p\text{-value} < 0.001$) and by the general ideological orientation of the EPPG as stated by Association 2 (b-coefficient +2.85 $p < 0.05$). This is to say that parties positioning toward the extreme (both left and right) of the ideological spectrum and those parties belonging to right-leaning EPPGs are more opposed to the EU-policies than their counterparts.

Adding to the regression equation those predictors related to the institutional POS, Models 3 and 4 confirm the relationship found in the model 2 especially with reference to the ‘National parties’ ideological extremeness’ (in a positive relationship with the DV and statistically significant, $p\text{-value} < 0.001$). With reference to the institutional POS, model 3 shows a positive relationship between parties’ marginality in the national political competition – Hypothesis 2 – and the degree of opposition to the EU-policies. Indeed, if a party belongs to the opposition flanks at the national level its degree of opposition to the EU-policy increases by 15.74 points – $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. Model 4 presents the variable ‘marginality of the EPPGs’ – Hypothesis 3 – that is negatively related to the DV ($p\text{-value} < 0.1$) but has a markedly restricted effect on it: one unit increase in the size of the EPPG thus a decrease of its marginality in the supranational political competition contributes to reducing the expressed opposition to the EU-policies by 0.07 points. Interestingly, the variable ‘Seniority’ is statistically significant ($p < 0.10$) in both models (3 and 4) and negatively associated with the DV, thus confirming Hypothesis 4 stating that the national parties which MEPs have on average a longer political experience within the EP tend to be less opposed to the EU-policies.

The last two models (Model 5 and 6) insert in the regression equation those predictors referring to the effects of both the economic and the immigration crises on national parties’ countries – Hypotheses 5 and 6. As it is visible from Table 7.3 above, the impact of such variables on opposition to the EU-policies is generally scarce and most of the variables are not statistically significant. However, in both model 5 and 6 the variable ‘Perception of immigration’ is positively associated with the DV, thus indicating that one unit increase in the percentage of the national country’s population perceiving immigration of people from outside the EU as a ‘very negative’ or ‘negative’ issue contributes to increasing parties’ opposition to the EU-policies by 0.56 points in model 5 and by 0.63 points in model 6.

One last observation is of interest for this research, both control variables are in a statistically significant relation with the DV. The ‘Issue-ID’ variable ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$) is always negatively associated with the DV and displays the same b-coefficient throughout the six presented models. This signals that national parties are more opposed to the EU-policies when they deal with economy and immigration issues rather than with environmental protection related policies. The relationship between the control variable ‘Year’ and the DV is negative and statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.10$) reporting similar b-coefficients in all the six calculated models: other things being equal, the opposition to the EU-policies follows a decreasing trend over time.

7.3.2 Opposition to the EU-elite explained

Table 7.4 below reports the results of the regression analysis for the DV opposition to the EU-elite. The inclusion of the three sets of predictors related to the three sets of POS contributes to increasing the models’ R-squared that moves from 0.37 in Model 2 to 0.53 in Model 5 (+16 % of the total explained variance). From an overall perspective, it is to be noted that those models accounting for national parties’ marginality show a higher R-squared when compared to those models inserting in the analysis the IV ‘Marginality of the EPPGs’. Furthermore, the largest increase in the amount of the total explained variance happens between Model 2 and Model 3 when the institutional POS are inserted in the analysis (+ 12 % of the total explained variance). The crises-related variables presented in Model 5 and 6 account for a smaller increase in the explained variance (0.04 points difference between model 3 and Model 5 and 0.06 points difference between Model 4 and 6).

Turning the attention to Model 2, all the included IVs are statistically significant and positively associated with the DV. The IV ‘EPPGs’ left-right positioning’ – Association 1 – plays the largest effect on the DV: one unit increase in the EPPG’s left-right positioning (indicating a more right-leaning EPPG) contributes to increase opposition to the EU-elite by 10.01 points. In other words, those national parties belonging to right-leaning EPPGs are keener to oppose the EU-elite. A similar effect on the DV is played by both the variable ‘National parties’ ideological extremeness’ – Hypothesis 1 –, statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$) and positively associated with the DV, and by the variable ‘EPPG ideological heterogeneity’ – Association 2 –, statistically significant ($p\text{-value} 0.10$) and positively associated with the DV. Thus, other things being equal, on the one hand, those parties positioning themselves toward the extreme of the left-right ideological continuum tend to display a higher opposition to the EU-elite, and, on the other hand, those national parties belonging to heterogeneous EPPGs are associated with higher levels of opposition to the EU-elite.

Moving the attention to the models adding to the analysis the IVs related to the second set of POS (institutional), the model that best fits the regression analysis is Model 3 presenting the

independent variable ‘Marginality of the national parties’ – Hypothesis 2. The variable is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$) and positively associated with the DV, suggesting that if parties do not cover governing position at the national level, they are 69.97 points more opposed to the EU-elite target than their governing counterpart. It is interesting to notice that once the variable ‘Marginality of the national parties’ is inserted in the analysis, the variables related to both the degree of extremeness of the national parties along the left-right ideological continuum – Hypothesis 1 – and to the ideological heterogeneity of the EPPG – Association 2 – are not anymore statistically significant and negatively related to the DV. On the contrary, once the regression accounts for the variable ‘Marginality of the EPPG’ – Hypothesis 3 – (statistically significant – $p\text{-value} < 0.01$ – and negatively associated with the DV, even though exercising a lower effect on the DV) both the variables ‘National parties’ ideological extremeness’ and ‘EPPG ideological heterogeneity’ are positively associated with the DV even though they are not statistically significant. This might suggest that those parties belonging to the opposition flanks at the national level (Model 3) tend to display a higher degree of opposition to the EU-elite target independently from their degree of extremeness along the left-right ideological continuum or from their membership to heterogeneous EPPGs. Thus, opposition to the EU-elite is mainly shaped by the marginality of national political parties in the national political competition (governing vs. non-governing parties at the national level). Furthermore, a similar dynamics is detectable also with reference to political competition at the supranational level: one unit increase in the size of the EPPG, thus a decrease in its marginality at the supranational level is negatively associated with the DV. Consequently, the effect of supranational political competition on the DV ‘opposition to the EU-elite’ formulated in Hypothesis 3 is confirmed by the regression analysis.

Adding to the regression equation the third set of event-related predictors – Hypotheses 5 and 6 – contributes to increasing the total amount of explained variance by 4% points in the case of model 5 (when compared to the respective model 3) and by 6 % points in the case of model 6 (when compared to its corresponding model 4). The effects of such variables on patterns of opposition to the EU-elite are generally smaller when compared to the one of the other two sets of IVs. Focusing the attention on model 5, the only variable among the economic indicators that is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.10$) and negatively associated with the DV is the Poverty risk T2-T1: one unit increase in the percentage of people at poverty risk in each country contributes to decreasing the opposition to the EU-elite by 2.13 points. This relationship can be explained by the fact that the presence of EU-opposition parties is higher and more consolidated in those Northern European countries (e.g.: France and the UK) where the national economy is sounder. In other words, opposition to the EU is higher in those creditor member states. The effects of the predictors associated with the immigration crisis (both objective and subjective) are generally irrelevant. The only variable that presents a relatively higher effect on the DV is the perception of immigration, according to the obtained results: one unit increase in the total

amount of the national population considering immigration of people from outside the EU as a negative or very negative issue, contributes to increasing the opposition to the EU-elite by 0.97 points. With reference to Model 6, the only two IVs belonging to the third set of predictors that are statistically significant (both showing a p -value <0.05) and positively associated with the DV are the ‘Asylum application T2-T1’ and the ‘Perception of immigration’. However, their effect on the DV opposition to the EU-elite is extremely scarce. All in all, Hypotheses 5 and 6 are not confirmed by the results obtained in the analysis. In fact, factors related to countries’ vulnerability to the two crises (economic and immigration crises) plays a marginal effect on parties’ opposition to the EU-elite target.

Two further considerations related to the two inserted control variables – ‘Issue-ID’ and ‘Year’ – are of interest for this work. Firstly, the control variable Issue-ID is always negatively associated with the DV, statistically significant (p -value <0.01) and shows the same b coefficient in all the six included models: in all the calculated models, one unit increase on the control variable Issue-ID corresponds to a decrease in opposition to the EU-elite by 20.39 points. Consequently, other things being equal, the opposition to the EU-elite is higher in economy and immigration-related issues rather than in environmental protection-related discussions. Secondly, the control variable ‘Year’ is positively associated with the DV and is statistically significant (p -value <0.05) in all the six included models. Considering model 5, presenting the highest R-squared, one unit increase in the variable ‘Year’ corresponds to an increase by 21.19 points of the DV. Differently from the opposition to the EU-policies, opposition to the EU-elite expressed by national parties represented in the EP arena increases over time.

Table 7. 4: Regression analysis for the DV opposition to the EU-elite.

Variables name	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β
Intercept	77.33*** (6.55)	0	-21.98° (27.06)	0	-3.08° (26.29)	0	45.34° (33.93)	0	-60.64° (64.02)	0	-81.17° (66.25)	0
EPPG ideological heterogeneity	--	--	17.90° (10.93)	0.15	-2.92 (10.82)	-0.02	6.27 (13.67)	0.05	-5.83 (13.67)	-0.04	15.28° (11.97)	0.18
EPPGs' left-right positioning	--	--	10.01*** (2.21)	0.38	10.65*** (2.06)	0.40	10.14*** (2.23)	0.38	8.98*** (2.25)	0.34	8.64*** (2.37)	0.12
National parties' ideological extremeness	--	--	6.15** (2.30)	0.24	-2.91° (2.32)	-0.11	1.22 (2.75)	0.04	-2.42 (4.25)	-0.09	4.95° (3.29)	0.60
Marginality of the national parties	--	--	--	--	69.97*** (18.44)	0.51	--	--	69.69** (22.53)	0.50	--	--
Marginality of the EPPGs	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.23 * (0.11)	-0.25	--	---	-0.19* (0.11)	-0.11
Seniority	--	--	--	--	0.96 (2.09)	0.05	-1.91° (2.04)	-0.09	1.37° (2.39)	0.07	-0.70 (2.44)	-0.10
GDP T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.30 (1.28)	0.01	-0.53 (1.32)	-0.03
Poverty risk T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-2.13° (2.03)	-0.09	-0.11 (1.99)	0.03
Perception of national economy (yearly)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.05 (0.21)	-0.02	0.03 (0.22)	0.08
Refugee population T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.19° (0.20)	-0.10	0.07 (0.20)	0.06
Asylum application T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.08° (0.11)	0.06	0.21* (0.11)	-0.02
Perception of immigration	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.97° (0.63)	0.15	1.37* (0.64)	0.11
Issue ID	--	--	-20.39** (6.73)	-0.24	-20.39** (6.10)	-0.24	-20.39** (6.41)	-0.24	-20.39** (6.05)	-0.24	-20.39** (6.27)	-0.26
Year	--	--	16.99* (6.97)	0.20	14.27* (6.57)	0.16	17.29* (6.85)	0.20	21.19* (8.23)	0.25	20.88* (8.74)	-0.06
N	108		108		108		108		108		108	
R-squared	--		0.37		0.49		0.44		0.53		0.50	
Adjusted R-squared	--		0.33		0.45		0.40		0.46		0.42	

Significance codes: p-values<0.001 ***; p-value <0.01 **; p-value<0.05 *; p-value<0.1°. b and beta coefficients are reported in the table, standard error (SE) are reported in parenthesis. Source: own calculation.

7.3.3 Opposition to the EU-regime explained

Table 7.5 below reports the results of the regression analysis taking opposition to the EU-regime as the DV. As it is visible from the constructed models, the input of the three sets of independent predictors both endogenous and exogenous to the national parties contributes to increasing the R-squared of the models that moves from 0.62 in model 2 to 0.71 in model 5 and 6 (+9% points). However, the highest increase in the amount of the total explained variance happens between model 2 and model 3 (+7 per cent of the total explained variance) while between model 3 and model 5 or 6 the total explained variance increases only by 2 per cent points.

Starting from model 2, all the independent predictors associated with the endogenous characteristics of political parties (ideology) are always positively related to the DV and statistically significant (p -value <0.001). The variable ‘EPPG’s ideological heterogeneity’ – Association 1 – is the one showing the stronger effect on the DV: one unit increase in the degree of ideological heterogeneity of the EPPG increases the index of opposition by 27.99 points. In summary, other things being equal, parties belonging to heterogeneous EPPGs display a higher opposition to the EU-regime, a similar dynamic is detected also for parties belonging to right-leaning EPPGs – Association 2 – or positioning themselves toward the extreme of the left-right ideological continuum – Hypothesis 1.

Once the IVs related to the institutional POS are inserted in the analysis (Model 3 and Model 4) the relationship observed in model 2 are still valid and statistically significant (p -value <0.001 or p -value <0.01). Interestingly and differently from the results related to the EU-policy and the EU-elite targets, both the variable ‘Marginality of the national parties’ – Hypothesis 2 – (Model 5) and ‘Marginality of the EPPGs’ – Hypothesis 3 – (Model 6) are not statistically significant. While the variable ‘Seniority’ – Hypothesis 4 – is statistically significant and negatively associated with the DV (p -value <0.001) in both models 3 and 4. This indicates that parties’ MEPs having on average a longer political career within the EP tend to be less opposed to the EU-regime than their ‘less experienced’ counterpart.

Once the predictors related to the third set of POS (exogenous events as POS) are added to the regression equation, there is an overall weak increase of total variance explained by the models (as mentioned before the total amount of explained variance increases by 2% points between Model 3 and Models 5 or 6), thus indicating that the variables related to the countries’ vulnerability to both the economic and the immigration crises – Hypotheses 5 and 6 – are of little contribution for the explanations of patterns of opposition to the EU-regime. However, two conclusions may be drawn. First, in both models 5 and 6 both the variable ‘poverty risk’ and ‘perception of the national economy’ are statistically significant and negatively associated with the DV: parties from countries where the economic situation is objectively worse (Poverty risk T2-T1) or perceived as such (Perception of

national economy) tend to present a lower degree of opposition to the EU-regime target. A conclusion similar to the one drawn for the models taking opposition to the EU-elite as DV might be formulated: in countries where the economic situation is worse or perceived as such, thus in debtor member states, EU-opponents propose a lower opposition to the EU-regime when compared to EU-opponents from creditor member states – Hypothesis 5. Conversely, those variables related to the immigration crisis – Hypothesis 6 – play an extremely low effect on the DV both in model 5 and 6.

The two inserted control variables behave similarly to the model explaining opposition to the EU-elite: firstly, the control variable 'Issue-ID' is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) and negatively associated with the DV (the relationship shows the same b-coefficient throughout all the six calculated models). Thus, opposition to the EU-regime is higher in issues related to both economy and immigration policies than in issues related to the environmental protection. Secondly, the control variable 'Year' is positively associated and statistically significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$) in all the six considered models: opposition to the EU-regime increases over time.

Table 7. 5: Regression analysis for the DV opposition to the EU-regime.

Variables name	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β
Intercept	43.16*** (6.07)	0	-102.30*** (19.07)	0	-71.17*** (18.64)	0	-75.04** (23.16)	0	-18.48° (45.91)	0	-17.46° (45.90)	0
EPPG ideological heterogeneity	--	--	27.99*** (7.70)	0.25	23.69** (7.67)	0.21	20.07** (7.47)	0.18	15.17° (9.80)	0.13	11.46° (8.29)	0.10
EPPGs' left-right positioning	--	--	7.95*** (1.56)	0.33	9.48*** (1.46)	0.39	9.35*** (1.52)	0.39	9.48*** (1.61)	0.39	9.63*** (1.64)	0.40
National parties' ideological extremeness	--	--	15.44*** (1.62)	0.66	15.56*** (2.05)	0.66	13.61*** (1.87)	0.58	12.37*** (3.04)	0.52	11.23*** (2.28)	0.48
Marginality of the national parties	--	--	--	--	-19.92 (13.07)	-0.15	--	--	-12.83 (16.16)	-0.10	--	--
Marginality of the EPPGs	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.008 (0.07)	-0.01	--	---	0.05 (0.08)	0.06
Seniority	--	--	--	--	-6.31*** (1.48)	-0.35	-4.86*** (1.39)	-0.27	-7.00*** (1.72)	-0.39	-6.89*** (1.69)	-0.39
GDP T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.08 (0.92)	-0.005	0.09 (0.91)	0.006
Poverty risk T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-1.16° (1.45)	-0.05	-1.53° (1.38)	-0.07
Perception of national economy (yearly)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.26* (0.15)	-0.14	-0.29* (0.15)	-0.15
Refugee population T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.17° (0.14)	-0.09	-0.23° (0.13)	-0.12
Asylum application T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.02	-0.05° (0.07)	-0.04
Perception of immigration	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.19 (0.45)	-0.03	-0.25 (0.44)	-0.04
Issue ID	--	--	-8.17* (4.74)	-0.10	-8.17* (4.32)	-0.10	-8.17* (7.08)	-0.10	-8.17* (4.34)	-0.10	-8.17* (4.34)	-0.10
Year	--	--	7.12° (4.91)	0.09	12.01* (4.66)	0.15	10.47* (4.68)	0.13	14.11* (5.90)	0.18	14.57* (6.05)	0.18
N	108		108		108		108		108		108	
R-squared	--		0.62		0.69		0.68		0.71		0.71	
Adjusted R-squared	--		0.60		0.67		0.66		0.66		0.66	

Significance codes: p-values<0.001 ***; p-value <0.01 **; p-value<0.05 *; p-value<0.1°. b and beta coefficients are reported in the table, standard error (SE) are reported in parenthesis. Source: own calculation.

7.3.4 Opposition to the EU-community explained

Table 7.6 below reports the results obtained from the analysis of the opposition to the EU-community. The three sets of predictors included in the analysis significantly contribute to increasing the total variance explained by the model, which R-squared is 0.52 in Model 2 and reaches its maximum in model 6 (0.75 thus explaining the 75 per cent of the total variance).

Turning the attention to model 2, all the independent predictors related to the parties' ideology are positively associated with the DV and statistically significant (p -value <0.001). The variable showing the highest impact on opposition to the EU-community is the one related to the degree of EPPG's heterogeneity – Association 1 -: one unit increase in the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG produces an increase of 47.51 points in the index of opposition to the EU-community. Similarly, both the degree of extremeness of national parties' positioning along the left-right ideological continuum – Hypothesis 1 – and the general ideological positioning of the EPPG – Association 2 – are statistically significant (p -value <0.001) and positively associated with the DV. In summary, it is thus possible to state that parties belonging to highly heterogeneous EPPGs or, positioning themselves toward the extreme of the left-right ideological continuum or belonging to right-leaning EPPGs tend to show a higher degree of opposition to the EU-community.

Once those factors related to the institutional POS are inserted into the regression equation (Model 3 and 4), the relationship between the first set of predictors and the DV holds true. Moreover, the variable 'Marginality of national parties' – Hypothesis 2 – is statistically significant (p -value <0.01), positively associated with the DV and has a great impact upon it: those parties not covering governing positions at the national level report a degree of opposition to the EU-community that is 69.39 points higher than their governing counterpart. Furthermore, similarly to patterns found in the regression analysis studying the determinants of opposition to the EU-elite, the variable 'Marginality of the EPPGs' – Hypothesis 3 – is statistically significant (p -value <0.001) and negatively associated with the DV, however, its impact upon it is more restricted: one unit increase in the size of the EPPG, thus a decrease in its marginality produces a decrease of 0.70 points of opposition to the EU-community. In any case, this relationship points toward the fact that, other things being equal, national parties belonging to EPPGs that are more marginal in the supranational political competition tend to perform a lower opposition to the EU-community.

Interestingly, the variable 'Seniority' is negatively associated with the DV and statistically significant in both Model 3 (p -value <0.05) and 4 (p -value <0.10). This is to say that national parties' MEPs having shorter political careers within the EP tend to express a higher degree of opposition to the EU-community target than their less experienced counterpart.

Model 5 and 6 insert in the analysis the set of predictors related to the effects of exogenous shocks (economic and immigration crises) on national parties' countries. Model 5's R-squared increases by 5% points when compared to the corresponding Model 3, while Model 6's R-squared increases by only 1% point when compared to the corresponding Model 4. Looking at model 5, the effect played by the marginality of political parties in the national competition – Hypothesis 2 – is confirmed: parties not covering governing positions at national level express a 130.25 points higher opposition to the EU-community when compared to their governing counterpart. Interestingly, while both the variable 'EPPGs' left-right positioning' – Association 2 – and 'National parties' ideological extremeness' – Hypothesis 1 – are positively associated with the DV (although the variable 'National parties' ideological extremeness' is not anymore statistically significant), the variable 'EPPG ideological heterogeneity' – Association 1 – is negatively associated with the DV. This suggests that, independently from the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG, national parties covering an opposition role at the national level display a higher degree of opposition to the EU-community. With reference to the last set of predictors inserted in both models 5 and 6, also in this case the contribution to the overall fit of the model of this last set of predictors is small. Two conclusions might, however, be drawn: first, with reference to the economy-related variables, the reported results for both Model 5 and 6 show that opposition to the EU-community expressed by parties from debtor member states tends to be weaker. Second, similarly to the previous conclusions, national parties coming from recipient member states tend to display a lower degree of opposition to the EU-community (see Model 5 results). In summary, opposition to the EU-community expressed by parties from creditor/donor member states is generally higher when compared to opposition exercised by parties from debtor/recipient member states.

Similarly to the models having opposition to the EU-elite and the EU-regime as DVs, also in this case the two inserted control variables behave in the same way. The control variable 'Issue-ID' is statistically significant (p -value <0.05) and negatively associated with the DV (showing the same b -coefficient in all the six calculated models). This suggests that opposition to the EU-community is generally higher in economy and immigration-related issues rather than in policies referred to the environmental protection. Second, the control variable 'Year' is statistically significant (p -value <0.10) and positively associated with the DV in all the studied models, this consideration points toward the fact that opposition to the EU-community increases over time.

Table 7. 6: Regression analysis for the DV opposition to the EU-community.

Variables name	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β	b	β
Intercept	42.74*** (10.08)	0	-173.49*** (36.70)	0	-112.85*** (33.44)	0	18.84° (36.00)	0	-9.58° (76.28)	0	1.87° (72.79)	0
EPPG ideological heterogeneity	--	--	47.51*** (14.83)	0.25	15.11° (13.47)	0.07	15.84° (11.61)	0.08	-22.57° (16.29)	-0.11	13.69° (13.15)	0.06
EPPGs' left-right positioning	--	--	11.19*** (3.00)	0.27	13.80*** (2.62)	0.33	10.92*** (2.36)	0.26	12.70*** (2.68)	0.31	10.44*** (2.61)	0.26
National parties' ideological extremeness	--	--	25.17*** (3.12)	0.62	13.33*** (3.60)	0.33	11.00*** (2.91)	0.27	1.55 (5.06)	0.04	11.44** (3.61)	0.28
Marginality of the national parties	--	--	--	--	69.39** (22.96)	0.32	--	--	130.25*** (26.84)	0.60	--	--
Marginality of the EPPGs	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.70*** (0.12)	-0.49	--	---	-0.74*** (0.12)	-0.50
Seniority	--	--	--	--	-5.97* (2.61)	-0.19	-3.50° (2.17)	-0.11	-3.03° (2.85)	-0.10	-2.09° (2.69)	-0.08
GDP T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.20° (1.53)	0.08	0.24 (1.45)	0.005
Poverty risk T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-5.79* (2.42)	-0.16	-1.99° (2.19)	-0.02
Perception of national economy (yearly)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.005 (0.25)	0.001	0.34° (0.25)	0.10
Refugee population T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.66** (0.24)	-0.21	-0.07 (0.22)	-0.03
Asylum application T2 T1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.29* (0.13)	-0.14	-0.01 (0.12)	-0.03
Perception of immigration	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.65° (0.75)	-0.06	-0.008 (0.70)	0.11
Issue ID	--	--	-17.04* (9.13)	-0.13	-17.04* (7.59)	-0.19	-17.04* (6.80)	-0.13	-17.04* (7.21)	-0.13	-17.04* (6.89)	-0.14
Year	--	--	8.45° (9.44)	0.06	10.47° (8.18)	0.07	7.74° (7.27)	0.05	14.79° (9.81)	0.11	7.01° (9.60)	0.04
N	108		108		108		108		108		108	
R-squared	--		0.52		0.67		0.74		0.72		0.75	
Adjusted R-squared	--		0.50		0.65		0.72		0.69		0.71	

Significance codes: p-values<0.001 ***; p-value <0.01 **; p-value<0.05 *; p-value<0.1°. b and beta coefficients are reported in the table, standard error (SE) are reported in parenthesis.

7.4 Discussion and conclusion

To further disentangle and summarize the effects of the used predictors on patterns of EU-opposition two main operations are done. Firstly, Table 7.7 and 7.8 below classify national parties' opposition according to the character it takes (either principled – higher opposition – or pragmatic – lower opposition). Table 7.7 presents the parties according to the character of their opposition in a target-oriented way (how parties oppose each observed target): if party A proposes a principled opposition to one of the included targets in the majority of the considered policy issues (two out of three) then party A exercises a principled opposition to that specific target. On the contrary, Table 7.8 below presents parties according to the character of their opposition by policy field: if a party B opposes the majority of the analysed targets (three out of four) in a principled way then its opposition is classified as principled and vice versa. Secondly, for each IV the mean is calculated and parties are classified as having values either below or above the mean on each IVs⁴. Parties are then inserted in the following tables (Tables 7.9-7.14) according to both the type (quantity and quality) of the exercised opposition and their positioning with reference to the used IVs.

Table 7.7: Classification of parties' opposition according to the related EU-target.

Target	Character of the expressed opposition	
	Principled	Pragmatic
EU-policies	UKIP; LN; FN	AFD; LINKE; PODEMOS; FSM PS; CON
EU-elite	UKIP; LN; FN; AFD; FSM; LINKE; CDU-CSU	PP; PS; CON; PODEMOS
EU-Regime	UKIP; AFD; FN	LN; FSM; PODEMOS; LINKE PS; CON
EU-Community	UKIP; AFD; LN; FN; PODEMOS	LINKE; FSM CON

Only parties exercising opposition are considered (both mainstream and non-mainstream parties)

⁴ More specifically parties are classified as 1) belonging to right-leaning EPPG if their value on the 'EPPG's left-right positioning' variable is above the average; 2) belonging to heterogeneous EPPGs if their corresponding value is above the sample's average; 3) extreme if the value of their positioning along the 'national parties ideological extremeness' variable is above the sample's average; 4) belonging to less marginal EPPGs if their correspondent value on the variable 'Marginality of the EPPGs' is above the sample's average; 5) 'more experienced' if the level of experience scored by their representatives is above sample's average; 6) coming from countries highly exposed to the economic crisis if the majority of the used indicators (two out of three) are worse than the sample's average (lower GDP, higher poverty risk, higher negative feeling about the national economy); 7) coming from countries highly exposed to the immigration crisis if the majority of the used indicators (two out of three) are above the sample average (higher number of refugees, higher number of asylum applications, and higher percentage of people judging immigration from outside the EU as a very negative or negative phenomenon).

Table 7. 8: Classification of parties' opposition according to the related policy field.

Policy issue	Character of the expressed opposition	
	Principled	Pragmatic
Immigration	UKIP; LN; FN; AFD; PODEMOS	LINKE; FSM PS; PP; CON
Economy	UKIP; FSM; FN; LN; AFD; PODEMOS	LINKE CON
Environmental protection	UKIP; FN; LN; AFD	FSM; PODEMOS; LINKE CON; CDU-CSU

Table 7.9 and 7.10 below show the relationship between patterns of opposition and parties positioning along the IVs belonging to the first set of POS both in a target-oriented way (Table 7.9) and by policy issue (Table 7.10).

Table 7. 9: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the first set of POS.

Target			Character of the Opposition							
			Principled				Pragmatic			
EU-policy	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	LN FN	UKIP			AFD		CON	FSM	
	Non right-leaning					LINKE PODEMOS		PS		
		Non-het.*	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										
EU-elite	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	AFD LN FN	UKIP		FSM			CON		
	Non right-leaning	LINKE		CDU-CSU		PODEMOS		PS PP		
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										
EU-regime	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	AFD FN	UKIP			LN		CON	FSM	
	Non right-leaning					LINKE PODEMOS		PS		
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										
EU-community	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	AFD FN LN	UKIP					CON	FSM	
	Non right-leaning	PODEMOS				LINKE				
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										

Source: own calculation. The values are presented in a target-oriented way. * the abbreviation 'het.' refers to the word heterogeneous.

Table 7. 10: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the first set of POS.

Policy issue			Character of the Opposition							
			Principled				Pragmatic			
Immigration	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	LN FN AFD	UKIP					CON	FSM	
	Non right-leaning			PODEMOS		LINKE		PS; PP		
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										
Economy	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	LN FN AFD	UKIP		FSM			CON		
	Non right-leaning					LINKE; PODEMOS				
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										
Environmental protection	EPPG' left-right positioning		Extremeness of the national party							
			Extreme		Non-extreme		Extreme		Non-extreme	
	Right leaning	LN FN AFD	UKIP					CON	FSM	
	Non right-leaning					LINKE PODEMOS		CDU-CSU PS		
		Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	Non-het.	Heterogeneous	
EPPG Heterogeneity										

Source: own calculation. The relationships are presented by policy field. * the abbreviation 'het.' stands for heterogeneous.

From Table 7.9 above six general conclusions might be drawn. First, the highest levels of opposition to the EU-policies, the EU-regime and the EU-community are performed by those national parties positioned toward the extremes of the ideological continuum (specifically extreme right), belonging to right-leaning EPPGs that are both heterogeneous (EFDD) and non-heterogeneous (ENF): UKIP, FN, LN, and AFD, with the only exception of both the German AFD that shows pragmatic opposition to the EU-policies and the Italian LN pragmatically opposed to the EU-regime. On the contrary, lower values of opposition (pragmatic opposition) are performed by parties belonging to non-heterogeneous and non-right-leaning EPPGs (GUE/NGL) independently from their degree of extremeness along the left-right continuum: the LINKE and PODEMOS (the only exception being the Spanish PODEMOS showing principled opposition to the EU-community).

Secondly, it is noticeable that those parties belonging to the same EPPG (e.g.: the GUE/NGL and the ENF) tend to oppose the EU-targets in a similar way (see for example the principled opposition expressed by parties belonging to the ENF – FN, LN, and AFD). However, this consideration does not hold true in the case of the EFDD. In fact, FSM and UKIP show a different character (thus a different degree of intensity) of their opposition (pragmatic the first and principled the latter) even though they belong to the same EPPG. This consideration is a further confirmation of their strategic (rather than ideological) union in the EFDD (Franzosi, Marone, Salvati 2015, Carlotti 2017).

Thirdly, factors belonging to the first set of POS only partially explain opposition to the EU-elite. This is to say that parties, independently from their degree of ideological extremeness along the left-right continuum, the degree of ideological heterogeneity of their EPPGs, and the general ideological position of their EPPGs tend to display a principled opposition to the EU-elite. In fact, as observed in model 3 of section 7.3.2 above (Table 7.4), the factor that mostly shapes opposition to the EU-elite is parties' marginality in political competition at the national level.

Fourthly, the results reported in Table 7.9 suggest that opposition to the four main targets of the EU is not only a prerogative of so-called Eurosceptic parties but also of their mainstream counterpart. As it is visible, the British CON is pragmatically opposed to all the four EU-targets and its opposition is mainly guided by ECR's general ideological orientation (right-leaning). The French PS shows a pragmatic opposition to the EU-policies, the EU-elite and the EU-regime targets even if it does not belong to the extremes of the left-right continuum or to heterogeneous EPPGs and if its EPPG is non-right-leaning. Interestingly, the CDU-CSU reports a principled opposition to the EU-elite, this is related to the fact that the EU-elite target is intentionally kept as broad as possible encompassing both 'governing' and 'opposition' representatives alongside the complex of personnel working within the EU-institutions. As observed in the previous chapter (See Chapter 6, section 6.6) mainstream parties shift their blames to their challengers identified as populist, Eurosceptic parties.

Lastly, the results reported by policy issue in Table 7.10 above, confirm the just-mentioned conclusions stressing the fact that opposition to the EU is generally higher in issues related to both economic and immigration policies, in connection to the negative, statistically significant relationship between the control variable 'Issue-ID' and all the studied DVs.

Turning to the second group of predictors (Table 7.11 and Table 7.12 below) it is possible to draw five general conclusions. Firstly, opposition to the various EU-targets (with the only exception of the EU-elite target as further detailed below) is generally higher for non-governing national parties belonging to more marginal EPPGs which MEPs are either less experienced (FN and AFD) or more experienced (UKIP and LN). Similarly to the findings reported for the first set of IVs, LN and AFD are two exceptional cases. In fact, AFD proposes a pragmatic opposition to the EU-policies while LN pragmatically opposes the EU-regime. In connection to this observation, the non-governing national parties belonging to less marginal EPPGs (LINKE and PODEMOS) propose a pragmatic opposition to the EU-policies, the EU-regime and the EU-community, the only exception being PODEMOS opposing the EU-community on a principled basis.

Second, national parties belonging to the same EPPG tend to follow similar patterns of opposition in relation to the various EU-targets (with the only exception of the EU-elite). However, this is not the case for parties belonging to the EFDD (UKIP and FSM) further confirming that their union within the EP is mainly driven by opportunistic reasons rather than by their ideological orientation.

Third, patterns of opposition to the EU-elite target are a special case. In fact, as it is observable from Table 7.11, all non-governing parties, independently from their MEPs' degree of experience in the EP and from the marginality of their EPPG, display a higher (principled) level of opposition to the EU-elite. Interestingly, as emerges from the results of the regression analysis, pattern of political competitions at the national level play a stronger role on the DV opposition to the EU-elite, then patterns of political competition at the supranational level. In fact, even if a lower degree of 'marginality of the EPPGs' is related to a lower level of EU-opposition, the effect of the IV on the DV is weaker.

Fourth, some signs of opposition to the various EU-targets are present also with reference to mainstream parties. If, on the one hand, mainstream parties tend to perform a pragmatic (lower) opposition, the German CDU-CSU exercises a principled opposition to the EU-elite target, confirming the above-mentioned assertions.

Lastly, the results reported in Table 7.12 below confirm the fact that opposition to the various EU-targets tends to be higher in economy and immigration-related policy issues rather than in environmental related policies where the only parties performing an overall principled opposition are FN, LN, AFD, and UKIP.

Table 7. 11: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the second set of POS.

Target			Character of the Opposition							
			Principled				Pragmatic			
EU-policy	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal				PS CON					
	Marginal		UKIP LN	FN	LINKE	PODEMOS		AFD FSM		
		More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	
Seniority										
EU-elite	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal		CDU-CSU CON		PS PP					
	Marginal		LINKE	UKIP LN	AFD FN FSM			PODEMOS		
		More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	
Seniority										
EU-regime	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal				PS CON					
	Marginal			UKIP	AFD FN	LINKE	PODEMOS	LN	FSM	
		More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	
Seniority										
EU-community	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal				CON					
	Marginal		PODEMOS	LN UKIP	AFD FN	LINKE			FSM	
		More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	
Seniority										

Source: own calculation. The relationships are presented by EU-target.

Table 7. 12: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the second set of POS.

Policy issue			Character of the expressed opposition							
			Principled				Pragmatic			
Immigration	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal						PS PP CON			
	Marginal		PODEMOS	UKIP LN	FN AFD		LINKE			FSM
			More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced
		Seniority								
Economy	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal						CON			
	Marginal			UKIP LN	FN AFD FSM		LINKE	PODEMOS		
			More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced
		Seniority								
Environmental protection;	Marginality of the national party		Marginality of the EPPG							
			Less marginal		Marginal		Less marginal		Marginal	
	Less marginal						CON CDU- CSU PS			
	Marginal			UKIP LN	FN AFD		LINKE	PODEMOS		FSM
			More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced	More experienced	Less experienced
		Seniority								

Source: own calculation. The relationships are presented by policy field.

Moving now the attention to the third set of factors included in the regression analysis no clear pattern is detectable; see Tables 7.13 and 7.14 below. This is to say that national parties tend to perform either a principled or a pragmatic opposition to the various targets of the EU in the EP independently from the degree of exposure (low or high) of their country to both the economic and the immigration crisis. This consideration confirms the results of the regression analysis showing that the third set of predictor exercises only a limited impact upon the used DVs. However, Table 7.14 below confirms that parties tend to exercise a higher opposition in both the fields of economy and immigration than in environmental protection.

Table 7. 13: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the third set of POS.

Target		Character of the exercised opposition				
		Principled		Pragmatic		
EU-policy	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN		PODEMOS FSM	
		Low	FN	UKIP	AFD LINKE PS	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
			Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis			
EU-elite	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN FSM		PP PODEMOS	
		Low	FN AFD CDU-CSU LINKE	UKIP	PS	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
			Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis			
EU-régime	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High			LN FSM PODEMOS	
		Low	FN AFD	UKIP	LINKE PS	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
			Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis			
EU-community	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN PODEMOS		FSM	
		Low	AFD FN	UKIP	LINKE	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
			Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis			

Source: own calculation. The relationships are presented by EU-target.

Table 7. 14: Relationship between parties' opposition and the IVs related to the third set of POS.

Policy area			Character of the exercised opposition			
			Principled		Pragmatic	
Immigration	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN PODEMOS		FSM PP	
		Low	FN AFD	UKIP	LINKE PS	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
	Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis					
Economy	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN FSM		PODEMOS	
		Low	FN AFD	UKIP	LINKE	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
	Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis					
Environmental protection	Country vulnerability to the economic crisis	High	LN		FSM PODEMOS	
		Low	FN AFD	UKIP	LINKE CDU-CSU PS	CON
			High	Low	High	Low
	Country vulnerability to the immigration crisis					

Source: own calculation. The relationships are presented by policy field

Table 7.15 below summarizes the obtained findings in correspondence to the formulated associations and hypotheses for each of the studied DVs. The table reports the word 'confirmed' if the related hypotheses or associations are confirmed by the regression models calculated in the previous sections (model 5 and 6) and vice versa.

Table 7. 15: Summary table of the studied hypotheses and associations

Hypotheses and Associations	Results of the analysis for each dependent variable aggregated			
	EU-policy	EU-elite	EU-regime	EU-community
First set of POS				
A1: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP are associated with the degree of heterogeneity of the EPPG they belong to.	Confirmed	Not confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed
A2: patterns of EU-opposition are associated with the general ideological orientation of the EPPG to which national parties belong.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed
H1: Patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of each national party's ideological extremeness, independently of the general ideological position of the EPPG. The more parties position themselves toward the extremes	Confirmed	Not confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed

of the left-right ideological continuum the higher their degree of EU-opposition will be.				
Second set of POS				
H2: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties in the EP vary as a function of their ‘marginality’ in political competition at national level. Parties not belonging to governing coalitions at the national level (or not even eligible to cover governing positions at the national level) will display a higher degree of opposition to the EU.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed	Confirmed
H3: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP vary as a function of the ‘marginality’ of the EPPG they belong to. The more marginal the EPPG the higher EU-opposition expressed by national parties belonging to that EPPG will be.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed	Confirmed
H4: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties represented in the EP will vary as a negative function of the seniority of their MEPs. The less national parties’ MEPs are socialized within the EP the higher their EU-opposition will be.	Confirmed	Not confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed
Third set of POS				
H5: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a function of their country’s level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The more debtor/recipient member states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed
H6: Patterns of EU-opposition expressed by national parties within the EP vary as a negative function of their country’s level of exposure to both the economic and the migration crisis. The less creditor/donor states are vulnerable to both the economic and the immigration crises, the higher the EU-opposition of national parties coming from those member states will be.	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed

All in all, six general conclusions may be drawn: firstly, patterns of EU-opposition vary as a function of the first two sets of factors that are central to the theses of both the Sussex and the North Carolina Schools (see Chapter 3, section 3.2, pages 42-47). By and large, those parties opposing the analysed targets: 1) position themselves toward the extreme of the left-right continuum; 2) belong to heterogeneous and right-leaning EPPGs; 3) are marginal in political competition at the national level; 4) belong to marginal EPPGs, and 5) are represented by ‘less experienced’ MEPs.

Secondly, the third set of POS including variables related to both the objective and the perceived effects of the two crises on each studied member states either creditor/donor or debtor/recipient does not influence opposition to the EU expressed by national parties in the EP, thus leading to the rejection of Hypotheses 5 and 6.

Thirdly, patterns of opposition to the EU-elite target are a special case. In fact, no particular relationship between the considered ideological factors (Associations 1 and 2 and Hypothesis 1) and the DV opposition to the EU-elite is found. On the contrary, opposition to this target is related to the role played by national parties and their respective EPPG in both the national and the supranational political competition – Hypotheses 2 and 3. In other words, parties at the opposition at the national level and belonging to more marginal EPPGs in the EP propose a higher (principled based) opposition to the EU-elite. This consideration might be a signal of the relationship between the ‘populist’ nature of the analysed EU-opponents and their negative stances to the EU-establishment. In fact, one of the characteristics of populist parties is their strong use of the ‘us vs. them’ rhetoric when referring to the governing political establishment (Mudde 2004).

Fourthly, institutional POS only poorly influence criticism toward the EU-regime. In fact, national parties opposing the EU-regime do that independently from their marginality in the national political competition and from the marginality of their EPPG. Interestingly, however, the role of seniority shapes patterns of opposition to the EU-regime that is lower in correspondence to an average higher degree of experience of parties’ MEPs within the EP.

Fifthly, opposition to the EU-community is shaped by both ideological and institutional factors. National parties belonging to more heterogeneous EPPGs – Association 1 –, to more right-leaning EPPGs – Association 2 –, and positioning themselves toward the extreme of the left-right ideological continuum – Hypothesis 1 – are keener to express higher levels of opposition (principled) to the EU-community and the related geometries. Furthermore, a higher degree of marginality of both the national parties in the national political competition – Hypothesis 2 – and of the EPPGs in the supranational political competition – Hypothesis 3 – translates itself in a higher opposition to the EU-community. However, national parties’ marginality in the national political arena plays a stronger role when compared to the marginality of the EPPG. Moreover, those national parties represented in the EP by more experienced MEPs – Hypothesis 4 – tend to be less in opposition to the EU-community.

Lastly, as resulting from the regression analyses reported in the previous section one further noticeable conclusion is to be stressed. The control variable ‘Year’ is in a negative relationship only with the DV associated with parties’ opposition to the EU-policies. This indicates that while opposition to the EU-policies decreases over time, parties’ negative stances to the other three studied targets tend to increase over time. This points toward a potential institutionalization of opposition to ‘what the EU is’ (the complex of EU-institutions, inhabited by both political and technical personnel belonging to the

same community and/or to different EU-geometries) rather than ‘what the EU-does’ (the policies enacted by the EU).

Further research is however needed to assess the generalizability of the reported findings, the impossibility to perform the analysis on a larger sample of data (due to linguistic barriers) and on a longer period of time does not allow to assess whether the found relationship holds true in a diachronic perspective.

Chapter 8: Landscapes of EU-opposition

8.1 Introduction

Is Euroscepticism still an adequate concept to understand the variegated nature of criticism toward the EU, which has developed over the last decade or so? This was the central theoretical starting point of this work. The answer to this central question is: No, it is not. In fact, the lack of a univocally shared and precise definition of Euroscepticism hinders the possibility to disentangle the different aspects of opposition to the EU, thus equating stances that should, on the contrary, be differentiated. This consideration is particularly important nowadays that forces critical of the EU are gaining more visibility and are increasingly represented in the institutional political arenas both at the national and at the European levels.

As stressed in the introductory chapter and further detailed in chapter 2 of this work, initially ‘Eurosceptics’ were confined to the ‘margins’ of national political systems, at the extremes of the ideological continuum. However, nowadays those national systems of ‘limited contestation’¹ (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2008b, 349) are not anymore so common in Europe. A recent example is given by the results scored by two parties differently critical of the EU during the last Italian national election (4th of March 2018): Salvini’s re-branded League and Di Maio’s FSM. The two parties scored unprecedented results – 17.8 per cent the former and 32.8 per cent the latter – stealing consensus from the governing mainstream counterparts. The former main governing party, the PD, scored the lowest result in its history getting approximately 18.7% of the national vote share, similarly to the centre-right ‘Go Italy’ (Forza Italia) that scored its lowest results getting 14.01 per cent of the national vote-share. As mentioned several times in this work, the case of Italy exemplifies a common trend regarding most of the EU member states; indeed criticism toward the EU is now an integral part of European political systems. Thus, on the one hand, the media and the literature should not consider it anymore as a passing phenomenon, a grit in the system (Usherwood and Startin 2013), or as a temporary malaise of democracy (Leconte 2015), but as something that is here to stay and that in some sense ‘re-injects politics into a large depoliticised polity’ (Leconte 2015: 256, Neunreither 1994). On the other hand, a

¹ Three aspects characterize the political systems where contestation of the EU is limited: 1) the major parties in the party system display a pervasive commitment to the European integration project; 2) European integration is not an issue of political competition; and 3) Euroscepticism is an issue that is generally politicised by parties at the ‘margins’ of political competition (Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008b).

better understanding of such political actors' stances to the EU is needed with a view to the important challenges that the EU is facing after a long period of crises and also to the upcoming 2019 EP elections when EU-opponents will probably score even better results.

To deeply understand this phenomenon, this work has reconceptualised Euroscepticism by using the 'more neutral' and less contested concept of political opposition. This enables to distinguish criticism toward the EU addressed to 'what the EU does' – the policies enacted by the EU – from criticism toward 'what the EU is' – the EU-elite, the EU-regime and the EU-community alongside the geometries deriving from the process of European integration. This reconceptualization of Euroscepticism helps to answer this work's central research question: Which aspects of the EU do national parties oppose from within the arena of the EP?

The concept of EU-opposition facilitates an in-depth observation of both the 'quantity' (chapter 5) and the 'quality' (chapter 6) of criticism toward the EU and allows the formulation of an index of positioning on the EU-targets, a step that is extremely important to further understand the drivers of such criticism (chapter 7). Furthermore, the observation of EU-opposition in the EP allows a cross-national comparison of parties that are differently critical of the EU with their mainstream counterparts. The EP is the perfect laboratory to study critical stances to the EU since it is the arena where MEPs from different parties and countries can freely express their positioning through their speeches (Brack 2012; 2013) while working together on the same topics at the same time.

The rest of the chapter is divided in two main sections. Section 8.2 describes how political parties position themselves on the EU-targets highlighting two main dimensions of competition shaping EU-opposition mainly differentiating parties between anti-EU-establishment and anti-EU-system parties. Furthermore, it summarizes how the three sets of factors considered in Chapter 7 impact on patterns of parties positioning. The conclusive section, 8.3, summarizes the found patterns of EU-opposition while the next chapter reports the general conclusions of this work.

8.2 Understanding patterns of EU-opposition and their determinants

It is difficult, if not even impossible, to provide a single definition of criticism toward the EU as much as it is difficult if not even impossible to formulate a typology of parties' positioning on the EU. Four general remarks emerge from the findings: firstly, the analysis confirms the fact that the so-called Eurosceptic parties can be redefined as EU-opponents (see Figure 8.1 below); secondly and connected to this observation, there are important differences between EU-opponents; thirdly, criticism toward the EU (alongside its targets) is a phenomenon that does not have to be confined to the EU-opponents, as also mainstream parties are differently critical of the EU; lastly, EU-opposition is a

moving target, a changing phenomenon varying according to the issue at stake (Ray 1999; Flood 2002; Taggart 2006; Leconte 2010, 2015; Usherwood and Startin 2013).

Starting from the guidelines presented in chapter 2 (see Chapter 2, section 2.4, pages 35-36), this section relies on previous literature on parties and parties' systems (Sartori 1976, Dahl 1966, Kirchheimer 1966) to conceptualize and categorize parties' stances to the EU.

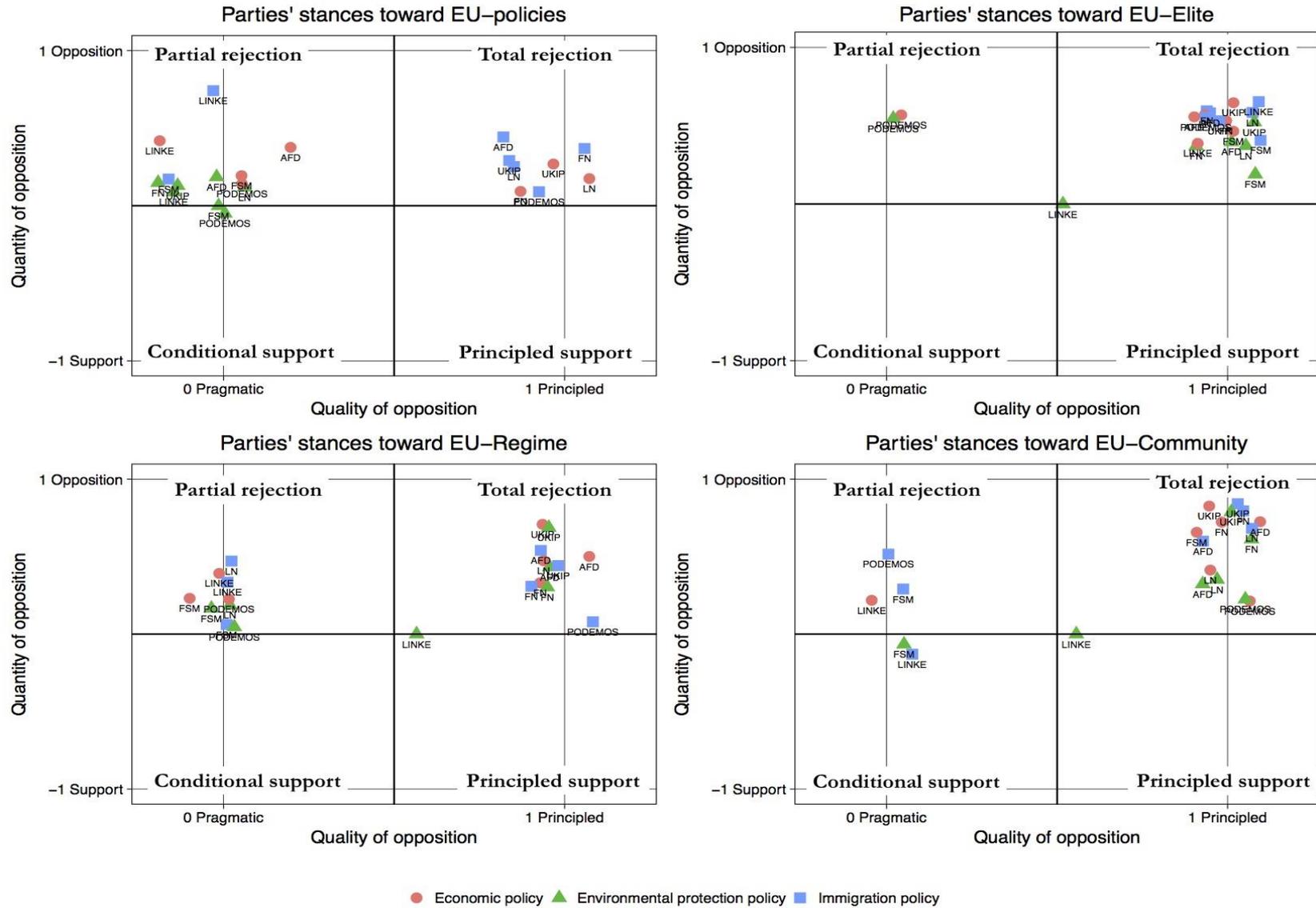
Figure 8.1 below graphically represents EU-opponents' positioning to the various EU-targets in the three studied policy fields according to the 'quality' and the 'quantity' of EU-opposition, thus providing the reader with a visual representation of the above-mentioned guidelines. For each of the graphs presented in the following Figures (8.1-8.4), the 'quantity' of opposition is depicted on the y-axis and ranges between -1 – highest degree of the quantity of opposition – and +1 – highest degree of the quantity of support – while the 'quality' of opposition, depicted on the x-axis, is a dichotomy distinguishing pragmatic stances (values of 0) from principled ones (value of 1)².

Following chapter 2's guidelines, the upper right-hand quadrant of each graph indicates a 'Total rejection' of the related EU-target. On the contrary, those parties showing 'Principled support' of the specific target are portrayed in the lower right-hand quadrant of each graph. The 'Conditional support' – support with a pragmatic character – is reported in the lower left-hand quadrant of each graph, while parties showing a 'Partial rejection' (opposition with a pragmatic character) toward the studied EU-targets are depicted in the upper left-hand side of each graph. Lastly, on the x-axis, the 'No-commitment' position is illustrated³.

² Note that the graphs have been constructed using the software R and the package 'ggplot2'. The representation of parties' position on the x-axis (the quality of opposition) intentionally reports some 'noise' to better distinguish parties that would have otherwise clustered along a single vertical line due to the dichotomous nature of the x variable. This is obtained using the 'jitter' function from the base package in R.

³ Please note that for visual purposes the origin of the y and x axes in the proposed graphs is set at $x, y=(0.5; 0.5)$.

Figure 8. 1: EU-opponents' positioning toward the four main EU-targets.



As it is visible from Figure 8.1 above (focusing its attention only on EU-opponents), apart from some residual exceptions, all the studied parties oppose all the reported EU-targets thus confirming the consideration mentioned above: these parties may be considered as EU-opponents even though some visible differences among them exist. Starting from the first graph in Figure 8.1 above, as confirmed by the empirical analysis performed in both chapter 6 and 7, the ideological left-right cleavage strongly shapes parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU-policies: right-wing parties tend to express a harsher opposition to the EU-policies in both the economic and the immigration fields. As a matter of fact, parties' opposition to both EU's economic and migration policies is higher than criticism toward the EU environmental protection policies⁴. According to Hooghe and Marks (2018), in fact, the rise in importance of the EU and the immigration issues, coupled with the aftermath of the economic crisis, are creating a transnational cleavage potentially resulting in a new decisive critical juncture for parties and party systems around Europe. Thus, it is of no surprise that EU-opposition is shaped around the economic and the immigration issues rather than the issue of environmental protection. Indeed, in this last policy field, EU-opponents cluster in the 'Partial rejection' quadrant, denoting a lower and pragmatically oriented opposition to the EU-policies⁵. These considerations confirm the general expectation reported in chapter 4 of this work: opposition to the EU is higher in more adversarial and crisis-related issues rather than in less adversarial and non-crisis-related issues. The case of the FSM is a peculiar one: the party describes itself as a sort of 'post-ideological party' but endorses positions very similar to the ones of left-wing EU-opponents (LINKE and PODEMOS) both in terms of the 'quantity' and the 'quality' of its opposition and in terms of the used motivations. For example, as observed in chapter 6, when talking about the EU immigration policy, and by asking for the construction of safe access routes to Europe for migrants, the FSM endorses positions very similar to the ones of the Italian PD and the French PS.

If parties' positioning toward the EU-policies is mainly driven by their ideological platform, this consideration does not hold true in the case of the EU-elite target. Independently from their ideological standpoint (see Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 180), EU-opponents are similarly critical of the EU-elite target. These parties cluster in the upper-right hand side of the EU-elite graph in Figure 8.1 above and configure a 'Total rejection' of the EU-elite with the 'residual' exceptions of PODEMOS in both

⁴ As observed in chapter 7 (See Chapter 7, section 7.4) the control variable 'issue ID' is statistically significant and negatively associated with the dependent variable 'opposition to the EU-policies'. In other words, parties' opposition to both economic and migration policies is higher when compared to opposition to the EU environmental policies.

⁵ This is not to say that left and right-wing parties' positioning on the EU's environmental policies relies on similar motivations. On the contrary, as noted in chapter 6 (See Chapter 6, section 6.2, page 142) right-wing parties oppose EU's intervention in environmental protection if it hinders economic development, while, left-wing parties and the FSM endorse the protection of the environment even if it goes at the detriment of the economic growth.

environmental protection and economic policies, and of the LINKE in environmental protection. Criticism toward the EU-elite is hard and based on its moral quality, eventually contesting also the potential collusion between the EU-elite and illicit systems or, more generally, big financial and economic powers. The way such parties blame the EU-elite for the current EU's situation is comparable to their harsh criticism toward the political elite at the national level. This is to say that there is a common denominator alighting these parties' stances to the national and the EU establishment: it is their fervent opposition to the establishment, their contestation of both alleged corruption and of the doubtful moral quality of the elite that has covered governing positions at the national and, consequentially, at the supranational level up to now. This is also confirmed by the findings reported in Chapter 7 (see Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 181) that show the lack of association between the opposition to the EU-elite and both the degree of extremeness and ideological heterogeneity of the EPPGs, but also the lack of a relationship between criticism toward the EU-elite and the degree of national parties' ideological extremeness. Conversely, the analysis confirms a positive relationship between high levels of opposition to the EU-elite and the marginality of parties in the national political competition as well as the marginality of the EPPGs to which parties belong in the political competition at the supranational level.

In summary, the parties constantly opposing the EU-elite on a principled basis might be defined as 'anti-EU-establishment parties' since they embody the 'politics of opposition to those wielding power' (Barr 2009, 31). The term 'anti-establishment parties' has been used and specified in several ways (anti-party parties, anti-political-establishment parties, anti-establishment parties) by academics in the field (Scarrow 1996; Schedler 1996; Ignazi 1996) to identify the conflict between the 'ruled' and the 'rulers' (Schedler 1996)⁶. According to Schedler those anti-establishment actors 'accuse the establishment of forming an exclusionary cartel, unresponsive and unaccountable, and they portray public officials as a homogenous class of lazy, incompetent, self-enriching and power-driven villains' (Schedler 1996, 291). This definition is perfectly in line with the results of the inductive coding of the speeches performed in chapter 6 of this work: the European elite is perceived as a cartel of parties (what PODEMOS calls the 'maldita gran coalición' – damned grand coalition – Chapter 6, section 6.3, page 145), unaccountable, unresponsive and caring only about their business and not about the interests of the broader European people (the use of words like 'European' and 'people' is extremely common in all the analysed EU-opponents' speeches, see Chapter 6, section 6.3, pages 143-152).

⁶ This contraposition is regarded by scholars in the field as one of the core elements of populism (Canovan 1981, de la Torre 2000, Mudde 2004). Besides the fact that it is not the central business of this work to establish which are the core elements of 'populism', one clarification is needed here. According to Schedler, populism sums up the whole variety of discourses that contrast the 'friends of the people' against their enemies (Schedler 1996). In this case, the concept of anti-establishment party (declined in the European arena as anti-EU-establishment party) refers to parties' contrast *vis-à-vis* the 'enemies of the people' understood as the EU-elite.

However, if the parties represented in the upper right-hand quadrant of the second graph in Figure 8.1 propose a principled opposition to the EU-elite, not all of them reject the EU-political system *tout court*. In fact, generally anti-establishment parties do not go so far as to advocate the replacement of the system per se even if they frequently propose improvements to the system (Barr 2009). In other words, to further understand EU-opponents' stances to the EU, it is fundamental to observe parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the last two included EU-targets, the EU-regime and the EU-community. To better explain this point, anti-establishment-parties (consequently also anti-EU-establishment parties) may 'invoke criteria to assess the performance of a political system' (Scarrow 1996, 301) appealing to potential avenues of change. According to Scarrow (1996) such avenues of change might either be connected to 'pluralist' motivations thus invoking the fair access to the decision-making process ('representative democracy should be *representative*' – Scarrow 1996, 301) or to 'inclusive' argumentations judging how institutions are able to give individuals a direct role in the decision-making process ('representative democracy should be *democratic*' – Scarrow 1996: 301). Indeed, the parties that do not reject the EU *polity* (the political system of the EU represented by both the EU-regime and the EU-community targets – See Chapter 2, section 2.4, pages 32-38) *tout court* but strive to change it, also endorse a pragmatic criticism toward both the EU-regime and the EU-community thus positioning themselves in the 'Partial rejection' quadrant of the graph reported in Figure 8.1 above. Getting into more detail, Figure 8.1 above portrays a neat distinction between AFD, UKIP, and FN and all the other studied EU-opponents with reference to the EU-regime target. This is to say that the first group of parties rejects the EU-regime on a principled basis questioning the authority of EU-institutions in all the analysed policy fields. The case of the Italian LN is somewhat exceptional since the party proposes a pragmatic (thus pro-active) opposition to the EU-regime in both environmental and immigration-related policies. The results reported in the last graph of Figure 8.1 (EU-community target), depict a somewhat mixed situation. In fact, both PODEMOS and the FSM appear in the upper right-hand quadrant of the graph (FSM in economy-related issues and PODEMOS in both economy and environmental-related issues). However, once the target EU-community is further disaggregated (see Figure 8.2 below), a distinction between the EU-opponents that is similar to the one presented for the EU-regime target emerges. LN, FN, UKIP, and AFD constantly position themselves in the upper right-hand quadrant of the each graph presented in Figure 8.2 below, thus delineating a 'Total rejection' of the EU and of the two studied geometries. On the contrary, FSM, LINKE, and PODEMOS are critical of the EU but in a more pragmatic way. Interestingly, the LINKE supports the EU in a principled way in the field of immigration and the FSM pragmatically endorses the EU in environmental protection. FSM, PODEMOS, and LINKE cluster together with the other EU-opponents in the graph referring to the Euro area geometry. This is to say that such parties do not configure a rejection of the EU as such but rather a strong rejection of the Euro area.

Consequently, FSM, PODEMOS, and LINKE might be considered both as purely anti-EU-establishment parties and as anti-Euro parties: firstly, similarly to the other included EU-opponents, they strenuously oppose the EU-elite in a principled way but, differently from the other parties, they leave some room for manoeuvre in proposing changes to the EU-regime and the EU-community. Secondly, they position themselves in the upper right-hand quadrant of the Euro area graph, thus indicating a ‘Total rejection’ of the Euro area independently from their positioning *vis-à-vis* both the Schengen area and the EU as such. As observed in chapter 6, FSM, LINKE, and PODEMOS (apart from some exceptional cases) are generally pragmatically critical of the activity of the EC (the ECB in relation to economic policies) and ask for an increase of EP’s powers. According to them, the EP still plays a marginal role in the supranational decision-making process while it should be the centre of it since it is the only directly elected EU-institution and represents the will of European citizens: European democracy should be more *representative*. Furthermore, when addressing the EU – excluding both the Euro area and the Schengen area geometries – these three parties clearly endorse a reformist position particularly in the field of immigration. Interestingly, such parties ask for a solidarity-oriented community that is able to go beyond member states’ peculiar interest and egoism (see for example Chapter 6, section 6.5, page 166). In this vein, it is thus difficult to classify such parties under the ‘umbrella concept’ of Euroscepticism. Indeed, they ask for an increased integration between member states, begging for a more inclusive (social oriented) and pluralist (democratic) community.

If it is true that FN, UKIP, LN, and AFD share their anti-EU-establishment attitude with the other EU-opponents, their principled criticism does not stop at the EU-elite target but moves further toward the central components of the European political system: the EU-regime – EU-institutions alongside their functioning and funding values – and the EU as a community (see the upper right-hand quadrant of the EU’s graph in Figure 8.2 above). These parties might not be considered as purely anti-EU-establishment since they reject any sort of potential change to both the EU-regime and the EU-community: ‘they would not change – if they could – the government but rather the very system of government’ (Sartori, 1976: 133). The extension of the concept of anti-system parties⁷ to the supranational sphere seems to be most adequate to describe the behaviour of these parties. According to Sartori, an anti-system party might work both from inside and from outside the system (Sartori 1976) because democratic systems are based on the assumption that political dissent should be institutionalized (Ionescu and de Madariaga 1968) no matter how strong such dissent is (Capoccia 2002). Indeed, looking at the EU, it is clear that such parties are institutionalized – they regularly

⁷ Originally used to identify those parties (especially communist, Nazis and fascist parties) participating ‘in order to destroy’ the system (Capoccia 2002: 11), such concept has been attributed to Sartori, however, according to Capoccia (2002) it already existed among the academic community and might be compared to the concept of major structural opposition (Dahl 1966), opposition of principle (Kirchheimer 1966) or disloyal opposition (Linz 1978).

participate to the decision-making arenas of the EU – even though their actions and propaganda aim at delegitimizing the EU political system alongside its founding values and norms. Consequently, a term that can be used to identify these parties is anti-EU-system parties. As showed in chapter 6, the criticism expressed by UKIP, FN, LN, and AFD *vis-à-vis* the EU-elite is similar to the one expressed by the other EU-opponents blaming the moral quality of the European ruling class. On the contrary, when dealing with both the EU-regime and the EU-community, these parties behave differently from FSM, LINKE, and PODEMOS. They reject the authority of the supranational institutions accusing them to erode member states authorities' sovereignty and to lack the respect for the principle of subsidiarity. In some cases, their exponents also clearly express the rejection of some specific EU-institution – as in the case of the FN that rejects the existence of the ECB, see Chapter 6, section 6.4, page 154. Such 'principled rejection' is clearly visible also with reference to the EU-community. Not only these parties reject to widen and deepen the EU but also its current *status quo*. These considerations do not aim at proposing a 'normative' judgment of such parties, on the contrary, it is crystal clear that the positioning of such parties goes against one of the fundamental aims of the EU as expressed in article 1 comma 1 of the common provisions of the TEU marking a 'new stage in the process of creating an *ever closer* Union among the peoples of Europe'. As emerges from the content of their speeches, such parties, in fact, wish to reduce the degree of EU integration getting back to a more 'intergovernmental' collaboration between states, alias eliminating the EU as it currently is. This is clearly stated by Farage who wishes to see a European Union of member states working and trading together on a bilateral basis but without the flag and without the anthem (See Chapter 6, section 6.5, page 162). A similar conception is also clearly present in ENF EPPG's charter stating that ENF MEPs' alliance is based on the 'sovereignty of states and their citizens, relying on the cooperation between nations, therefore rejecting any policy designed to create a supra-state or supra-national model'⁸. Other two examples are: firstly, the re-branded League's electoral program stating that 'Italy cannot exit from Europe. Italy geographically belongs to the European continent. However, the European Union is another thing. It is a giant supranational body without democratic legitimacy having a tentacular bureaucratic structure dictating the agenda to our governments'⁹. Secondly and similarly, AFD's current position toward the EU confirms the finding reported in this work. According to the party, the 'Lisbon-Europe might step back to an organization of States that defend their interests and perform their tasks on the basis of the International law'¹⁰.

As it is visible from Figure 8.2 above, FN, UKIP, LN, and AFD are also similarly hardly opposed

⁸ The complete text of the ENF's charter is available at: <http://www.enfgroup-ep.eu/about/>

⁹ The Italian version of the League electoral program is downloadable at: <http://www.leganord.org/politiche2018>

¹⁰ The German version of AFD's electoral program (2017) is available at: http://www.bundestagswahl-bw.de/wahlprogramm_afd_btwahl2017.html

to the two studied EU-geometries: they reject the Schengen area (also in relation to their positioning *vis-à-vis* EU's migration policy) and the Euro area (similarly to PODEMOS, LINKE, and FSM). Furthermore, these parties tend to use the EP arena to express their opposition to the EU-geometries even in policy fields that are not strictly related to the corresponding geometry. This is to say that, for example, FN, LN, and UKIP express a total rejection of the Euro area also in immigration-related discussions (FN does it also in environmental protection-related speeches). This last consideration confirms the 'opportunistic' use of the EP as a public arena to diffuse their claims to a broader audience. Interestingly, the ideological factors play a central role in shaping patterns of opposition to the EU-community and the EU-regime. In fact, a high degree of opposition to these targets is generally associated with parties' ideological extremeness and, particularly, with the right extreme-right ideological position of the EPPGs to which parties belong. It is, however, noteworthy that also factors related to the marginality of parties and EPPGs in the political competition are fundamental to understand patterns of opposition to the EU-community. In fact, those right-leaning parties not belonging to governing coalition at the national level and belonging to marginal EPPGs at the supranational level propose a higher, generally principled, opposition to the EU-community. Table 8.1 below summarizes EU-opponents' positioning toward the EU-targets.

Table 8. 1: Categorization of the EU-opponents' stances to the EU.

Parties' categorization	Parties name	
Anti-EU-policy party	<i>Economy</i>	FN, LN, UKIP
	<i>Immigration, asylum and borders control</i>	AFD, FN, LN, UKIP, PODEMOS
	<i>Environmental protection</i>	---
Anti-EU-establishment party	FSM, PODEMOS*, LINKE, AFD, FN; LN, UKIP	
Anti-EU-system party	AFD, FN, LN**, UKIP	
Anti-Euro-party	AFD, FN, LN, UKIP, PODEMOS, LINKE, FSM	
Anti-Schengen-party	AFD, FN, LN, UKIP	

*PODEMOS proposes a pragmatic position to the EU-elite in two out of three of the studied policy fields, however the motivations it uses to oppose the EU-establishment in economy are similar to the one used by the other parties. ** See the text above.

This work explores also the mainstream parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU as detailed in Figure 8.3 and 8.4 below. Mainstream parties generally pragmatically support the policies enacted by the EU in all the three studied policy fields. However, some exceptions are present as in the cases of the PD and PS in immigration policy or of the British CON as discussed later on. Furthermore, similarly to the group of EU-opponents and as demonstrated in chapter 6 and 7, their general pragmatic support for

the EU-policies is driven by their ideological orientation.

Interestingly, the findings demonstrate that no principled pro-EU-establishment position expressed by mainstream parties allegedly exists. In fact, some of the studied mainstream parties show a principled opposition to the EU-elite especially in relation to the economic and immigration policies. As explained in chapter 2 and empirically supported in chapter 5 and 6, this result is connected to a broad-definition of the EU-elite target encompassing both ‘governing’ and ‘opposition’ elite. This is to say that even if some of the considered mainstream parties are depicted in the upper right-hand side of the EU-elite graph in Figure 8.3 below, they should not be considered as anti-EU-establishment. In other words, mainstream parties shift their blames on a specific set of actors, the populist Eurosceptic parties, accusing them to be unable to propose feasible alternatives to the discussed policies and to be there only to campaign and attract voters’ attention. In other words, while the group of EU-opponents diffusely directs its criticism toward the ‘governing’ EU-establishment, mainstream parties specifically propose a sort of ‘counter-extremist-party rhetoric’ directed against a specific part of the EU-elite: left and right-wing EU-opponents. In a nutshell, even if the contraposition between mainstream and EU-opponents might be framed as a normal adversarial dynamic of parliamentary arenas, mainstream parties exercise a *mainstream blame shifting vis-à-vis* their political challengers, the group of EU-opponents.

Contrary to the anti-EU-system parties (UKIP, FN, LN, and AFD), mainstream parties endorse the EU on a principled basis thus configuring a pro-EU-system position. However, differently from the anti-EU-system flank, this positioning also includes a pragmatic – thus pro-active – criticism to the EU-regime. In fact, if it is true that, as emerges from Figure 8.3 below, mainstream parties do not show a principled support for the EU-regime their stances to the EU clearly go in the direction of a ‘Total EU-support’ (see also Figure 8.4 below disaggregating the EU-community target). In other words, mainstream parties, differently from part of the EU-opponents accept the EU political system as it is but also propose some avenues of change to its institutions. The pro-EU-system position of mainstream parties is confirmed by the content of their more recent national electoral manifestos. The French PS sustains that the only way to relaunch France is ‘to invest in the European Project. Europe has to be stronger, more social and more democratic’¹¹. Similarly, in its 2017 Bundestag electoral program, the CDU-CSU coalition defines its objective to achieve a ‘stronger, self-conscious and dynamic Europe’¹². The Italian PD pushes its pro-European and pro-integration stance even further. Similarly to the Spanish PP, the party preaches for the United States of Europe proposing to overcome

¹¹ The 2017 electoral program of the French PS has been consulted from the Comparative manifesto project dataset (<https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/>)

¹² The German version of the CDU-CSU electoral program (2017) is available at: http://www.bundestagswahl-bw.de/wahlprogramm_cdu_btwahl2017.html

EU's institutional fragmentation through the direct election of an EU-president¹³.

Some criticism toward the Euro area (pragmatic) is present also among the mainstream parties (CDU-CSU, PD and PS) that instead support the Schengen area on a principled basis, thus configuring a pro-Schengen-area position (see the fourth quadrant of the corresponding graph in Figure 8.4 below).

As mentioned above, the case of the British CON is peculiar: the party is to be included among the EU-opposition flank since it always exercises either a pragmatic or a principled opposition to all the studied targets. In summary, the party is an outlier when compared to the other mainstream parties and shall be classified as a mainstream-EU-opposition party.

8.3 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the finding obtained from the empirical research carried out in this work. It highlights how the reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of political opposition using the tools of the comparative politics literature is useful to single out similarities and differences between EU-opponents. More specifically, it highlights how EU-opposition can be conceived as a 'cumulative' concept entailing various aspects of criticism toward the EU political system: political actors might decide to endorse negative positions on the EU-targets in a cumulative way.

Other three points deserves more attention. Firstly, the analysis of EU-opponents' positions on the EU-targets enables to single out two main dimensions of competition distinguishing them. The first one relates to the anti-pro EU-establishment axis configuring those parties rejecting the EU-establishment on principle and motivating their opposition relying on judgements of their moral values and integrity. While, the second one concerns to the pro-anti EU-system position and refers to those parties not only opposing the EU-establishment on principle but also rejecting the very system of the EU and wishing to take back national control.

Secondly, both endogenous (ideology) and institutional factors contribute to explain patterns of EU-opposition. This points toward the fact that the cross-fertilization between both the thesis of the North Carolina (highlighting the role of ideology) and of the Sussex (relying on strategy) Schools are crucial to understand parties' positioning on the EU.

Lastly, the pure pro-EU position (principled support for all the aspects of the EU political system) is not confirmed by the results. In other words, there is no party represented in the EP that supports the EU in all its aspects on a principled basis.

Next chapter systematises parties' EU-opposition highlighting the conditions useful to identify them and stresses how factors both endogenous and exogenous to political parties influence them. Furthermore, it highlights three main avenues of further research in the field.

¹³ The Italian version of the PD's electoral program (2018) is available at: http://ftp.partitodemocratico.it/programma2018/PD2018-programmaA4_5feb.pdf

Figure 8. 3: Mainstream parties' positioning toward the four main EU-targets

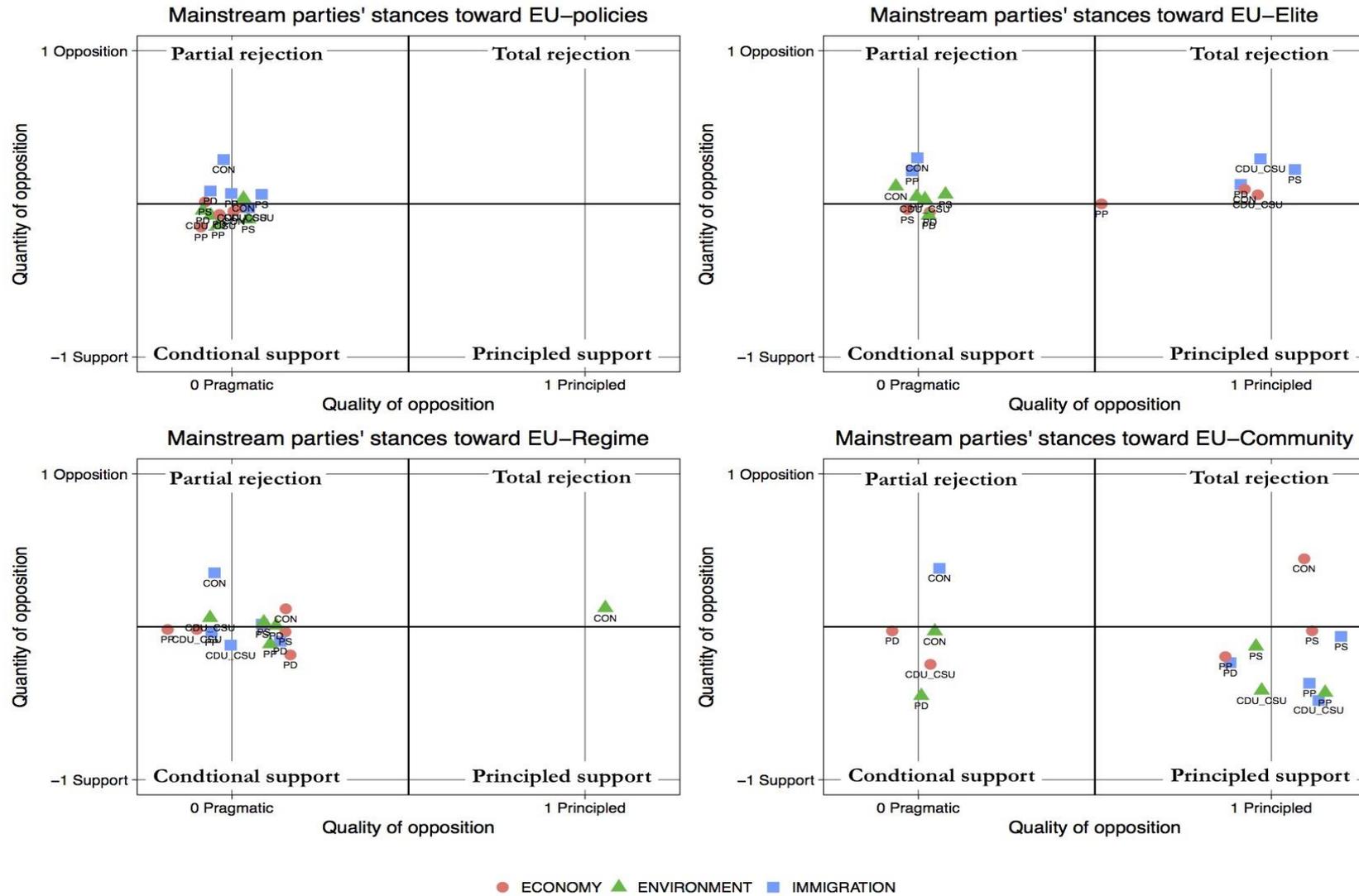
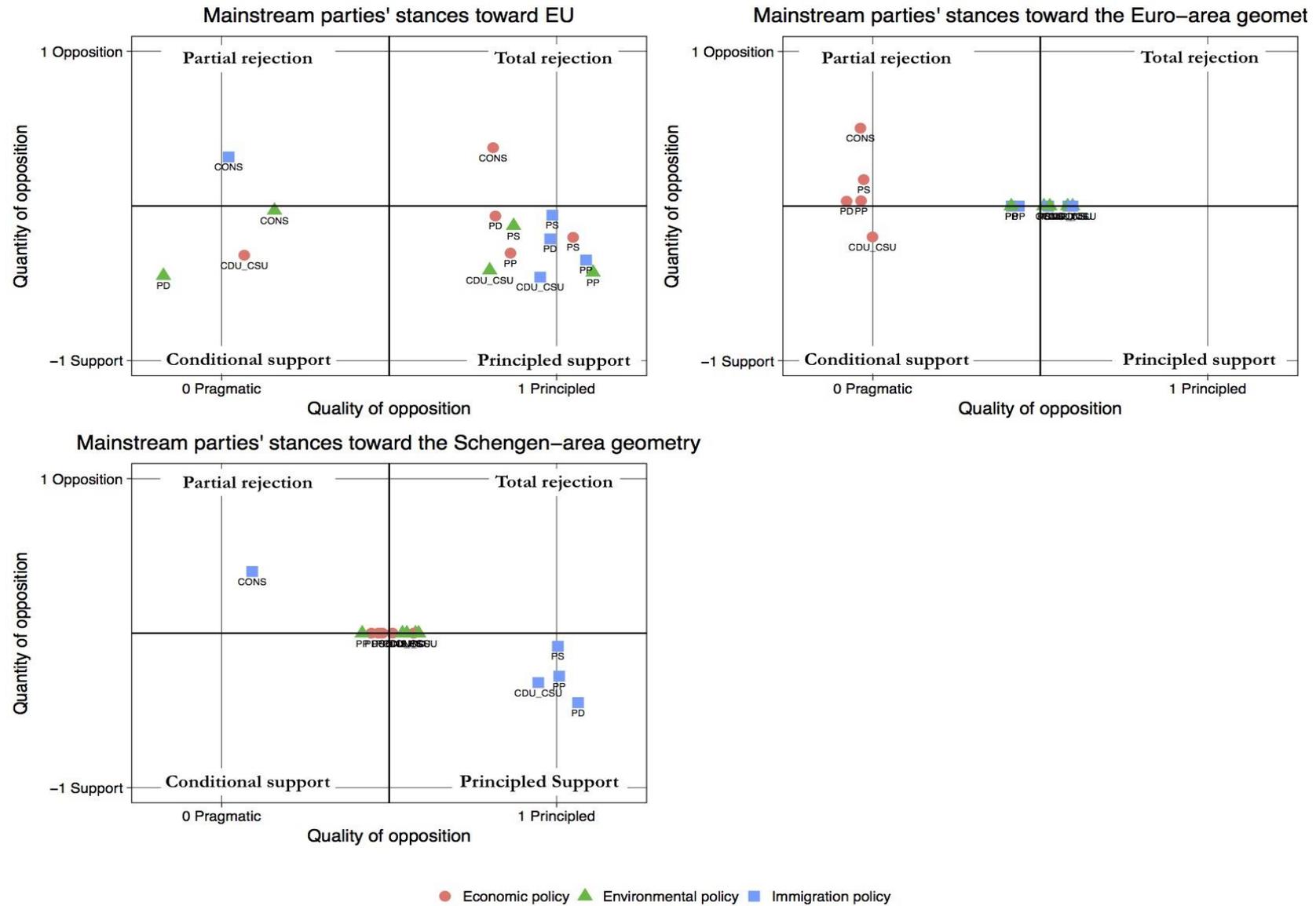


Figure 8.4: Mainstream parties' positioning toward the three sub-targets of the EU-community



Chapter 9: General Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a systematization of the patterns of EU-opposition described in Chapter 8 of this work. Section 9.1 delineates the conditions useful to distinguish political parties' EU-opposition furthermore pointing toward the factors enabling such positioning. Moreover, the section stresses the higher heuristic value of the concept of EU-opposition when compared to the normativity of Euroscepticism further detailing the main contributions to the literature in the field. The following section – 9.2 – identifies the avenues for further research clustering around three main objectives. The first one aims at providing a broader understanding of patterns of EU-opposition's evolution within the EU multi-level governance. The second research avenue accounts for a broader understanding of the factors impacting on patterns of EU-opposition within the EU governance. The last one concerns the development of a theoretical framework able to conceptualize the interconnections between two broadly discussed and 'contested' concepts: Euroscepticism and populism.

9.2 An assessment of parties' EU-opposition

The core objective of this work was to understand toward which targets parties represented in the EP express their opposition. From such an evaluation it is now possible to trace some guidelines useful to classify parties' opposition to the EU. It is, however, important to stress that such guidelines are not meant to be considered as a fixed and stable typology since, as mentioned several times in this work, EU-opposition varies through time. Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous chapter EU-opposition should be considered as a cumulative concept: various aspects of the EU are criticisable and parties shape their opposition to the EU choosing which aspects to criticise. Table 9.1 below summarizes the conditions to identify the paths of political parties' EU-opposition: such conditions are either necessary or non-necessary but possible or impossible (see below for further explanations).

However, before detailing the patterns of parties' EU-opposition, it is important to stress that a party can always express some form of 'soft' criticism toward one of the EU-targets. Once such criticism is pragmatically oriented – pragmatic opposition – it has to be framed as a normal feedback that political actors deliver to the EU-system.

Table 9.1: Paths of political parties' EU-opposition

Classification of party's positioning	Targets												
	EU-policy		EU-elite		EU-regime		EU		Euro area		Schengen area		
	Pragmatic	Principled	Pragmatic	Principled									
Anti EU-policy	X	✓	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Anti-EU-establishment	O	O	X	✓	O	X	O	X	O	O	O	O	O
Anti-EU-system	O	O	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	O	O	O	O	O
Anti-Euro	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	✓	O	O	O
Anti-Schengen	O	O	X	✓	O								
Legend													
✓ : necessary condition; O : non-necessary but possible condition; X : impossible condition													

Starting from the first target of EU-opposition, a party can be classified as anti-EU-policies if it exercises a principled opposition to this target discharging any pro-active – pragmatic – criticism. Such opposition depends mainly upon both the treated policy and the ideological platform of the party per se. This conclusion resembles the one reached by the North Carolina School distinguishing ‘Euro-sceptics’ according to their positioning along the GAL-TAN axis. Left and extreme-left wing parties oppose the EU-policies because they fundamentally threaten ‘cherished radical left goals’ (Hooghe et al 2004, 128). This is to say that radical-left-wing parties oppose EU-policies that go in the direction of market-driven EU-integration but discharge social-oriented and market-corrective policies (Scharpf 1996, 1999), furthermore endorsing the social inclusion of the ‘outsider’ groups like immigrants or asylum seekers. On the contrary, right-wing parties link their opposition to the EU-policies to the defence of the national community threatened by ‘immigrants, foreign cultural influence, cosmopolitan elites and international agencies’ (Hooghe et al. 2004, 131). Furthermore, they oppose the market-oriented EU-policies because they threaten the national economic development, thus identifying protectionist policies as a solution. Interestingly, however, the only necessary condition for a party to be considered as anti-EU-policy is that it opposes the EU-policies on a principled basis. This is to say that a party can express a principled opposition to the EU-policies independently from its position on the other EU-targets. Generally, however, whenever a party opposes the whole EU political system – anti-EU-system party – it tends to oppose also the output of the system, the EU-policies, on a principled basis.

Moving now to the second target, the EU-elite, as emerges from Table 9.1 above, an anti-EU-establishment-party: 1) must reject the EU-establishment on a principled basis; 2) might propose pragmatic changes to both the EU and its institutions; 3) must accept the existence, the values and the norms of both the EU and its institutions. While the first and the third conditions are compulsory for a party to be considered as anti-EU-establishment (necessary conditions), the second one is not. In fact, an anti-EU-establishment party may preach for an assessment of the performance of the political system by appealing to potential avenues of change. However, an anti-EU-establishment party is not forced to do that. This is to say that a pragmatic criticism addressed toward the EU-regime is a ‘non-necessary but possible condition’ for a party to be classified as anti-EU-establishment. This type of parties’ stances is mainly reflected in the thesis exposed by the Sussex School identifying ‘Euro-scepticism’ as ‘the politics of opposition’ (Sitter 2001). The distinction between pro and anti-EU-political-establishment is rooted in the differentiation between the ‘ruled’ and the ‘rulers’ or, alternatively ‘the conflict between audience and politics, audience and parties, citizens and politicians, society and state, electorate and elected, (silent) majority and political establishment, private men and public officials, simple men and power elite, or civil society and *partitocrazia*’ (Schedler, 1996, 294). This kind of parties is not opposed to the EU-system but generally propose its reformation. However, they

are ‘self-referential and exploit (or create) an intra-political conflict’ between the mainstream governing elite and the non-governing elite (Schedler 1996, 307).

With reference to the third target, the EU-community, an anti-EU-system party has to: 1) reject the EU-establishment on a principled basis; 2) reject the EU-regime; and 3) reject the EU-community. As mentioned above, an anti-EU-system party is not forced to reject the EU-policies, however, it is logical to think that an anti-EU-system party will exercise a principled opposition also to the policy output of the system it opposes. In other words, proposing a principled or pragmatic critique toward the EU-policies is a ‘non-necessary but possible’ condition for a party to be defined as ‘anti-EU-system’. Interestingly, the anti-EU-system positioning is explained relying on the theses of both the North Carolina (ideology) and the Sussex Schools (strategy). From a strategy point of view, those parties excluded from the governing circle (mainstream governing elite) tend to be opposed to a project which nature is fundamentally elite-driven and perceived as distant from citizens’ needs. However, the ideological factor plays a crucial role in determining a potential rejection of the EU. In fact, left-leaning parties are worried about the market-oriented nature of the EU but they still endorse solidarity among EU member states to achieve a social-oriented Union able to guarantee European citizens’ fundamental rights and social inclusion. On the contrary, right wing parties reject the EU supranational system because it fundamentally threatens the nation state autonomy thus preaching for the abolition of the EU as it exists today asking for a more ‘intergovernmental approach’ to European integration. They ask for the cooperation between autonomous member states (e.g.: on a bilateral basis) and recognize the EU as an unwanted and undemocratic supranational body forcefully imposing its decisions on sovereign member states.

Finally, the only necessary condition for a party to be considered either as anti-Euro area or as anti-Schengen area is that it rejects on a principled basis the existence of the geometry itself.

From these conditions, it emerges that EU-opposition is a cumulative concept: parties might be opposed to: ‘the activity of the EU’; the people inhabiting the EU institutions; the complex of the EU-institutions; the very idea of the EU-community, or the geometries deriving from the process of European integration. For example, an anti-EU-establishment party opposes the EU-elite on a principled basis potentially proposing changes to both the EU-regime and the EU-community. Furthermore it may choose to oppose also the EU-policies, the Euro area and the Schengen area either on principle or pragmatically.

In conclusion, the main contribution of this work is to propose a way to avoid being ‘[t]rapped in the theoretical deadlock’ of Euroscepticism (Leconte 2015, 254) that presupposes a subjective definition of the EU. The reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition, in fact, relies on the assumption that the EU fulfils the conditions to be considered as a political system (Kreppel 2002; Hix and Høyland 1999 and 2011; Hix 2005). As all political systems, also the EU entails

specific objects (Easton 1975) – the four EU-targets – that political actors might oppose or support either in a principled or in a pragmatic way. The conceptualization of EU-opposition along the four main EU-targets allows to further separate differences and similarities among political actors, enabling to categorize them more accurately. From this renewed categorization it emerges that, on the one hand, there is no party among the ones studied that accepts and supports all the aspects of the EU on a principled basis, this is to say that the pure pro-EU position is not empirically supported by the findings of this study. This confirms Usherwood’s statement that there is probably no one in the EP accepting the EU in all its aspects (Usherwood 2017). On the other hand, the differentiation between anti-EU-establishment and anti-EU-system parties reveals the fundamental heterogeneity of the EU-opponents studied here. Similarly to what Ignazi does in his analysis of the Italian political system (Ignazi 2017), it is possible to state that the so-called Eurosceptic parties – especially the new ones like the FSM – brought a new dimension, or axis, of conflict in the EU political competition: the ‘pro-establishment vs. anti-establishment’ one. Such dimension has become more pronounced since those parties competing upon it gained electoral consensus both at the national and at the European level. However, this dimension of competition is not the only one defining them. Indeed, there is a neat difference between those political actors that reject the EU-elite but accept the system – eventually proposing to change it – and those actors rejecting the elite, the institutions and the EU as a community alongside its funding values and norms. Some of the parties that are opposed to the current ‘shape of the EU’ – like PODEMOS or the FSM – propose solutions going in the direction of more but different EU integration – more solidarity and harmonization among member states – rather than rejecting the EU and the European integration project *tout court*. Consequently, the political competition in the EP is also shaped around the pro-political-system vs. anti-political-system axis. The detection of these two axes of conflict – the pro-anti EU-establishment and the pro-anti EU-system – only partially confirms Mair’s assertion of the absence of opposition *in* the EU. On the one hand, it is true that an institutionalised government vs. opposition distinction does not exist at the EU level (as also confirmed by studies relying on RCVs – Braghiroli 2015). However, on the other hand, if most of the EU-opposition in the EP is opposed *to* the EU and rejects it, some of the EU-opponents are exercising an opposition *in* the EU aiming at changing the EU. In other words, some parties are not simply opposed to the EU but are critical of the EU, do not reject it but aim at changing it. As long as such criticism remains unheard, those opposition parties proposing a ‘constructive’ criticism toward the EU will probably move toward a harsher position: opposition will transform itself into rejection. This is to say that if every criticism to the EU is framed in terms of Euroscepticism and considered as negative, then the system loses an important function of opposition: receiving feedback and reacting to them (Kaniok 2012). This last assertion leaves room for the study of what Weßels defines as the ‘cumulation hypothesis’: ‘[p]olitical scepticism is likely to cumulate, in that, specific discontent (*à la Easton*) should

translate into generalised discontent and should spill over from authorities to regime' or to the political community itself (Weßels 2007, 290).

9.3 Where to go from here?

Three main avenues for further research emerge from this study. The first one aims at providing a broader understanding of the evolution of parties' paths of EU-opposition within the EU multilevel governance through time. The second one concerns the understanding of the factors shaping parties' positions on the EU in the EU multilevel governance also with reference to the EU's future developments. The last one deals with the development of new theoretical models able to link the phenomenon of populism to the one of Euroscepticism. In what follows, the chapter details how further research could address each of these three objectives.

First, starting from the observation of EU-opposition within the EP, further studies could include a wider sample of national parties (e.g.: parties coming from different regions of the EU like CEE countries) and enlarge the time framework of the analysis focusing on a smaller sample of keynote speeches. This would allow observing the development of EU-opposition hand-in-hand with the development of the EU itself, especially with reference to key intentional (e.g.: Treaty reforms) and unintentional (e.g.: crises) events (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.1, pages 51-52) that contributed to burst criticism toward the EU. Did opposition to the EU evolve as a function of key intentional and unintentional events over time? This branch of research is extremely important with a view to the future developments of the EU. In fact, the next EP elections in 2019, will, probably, partially change the dynamics within the EP and, more broadly, within the general EU institutional architecture. In this sense, a study dealing with EU-opposition over a longer time period will help scholars to better understand criticism within the 'consensual' arena of the EP and to start questioning if a higher presence of critical voices in the EU institutions could signify the end or the modification of the EP as a consensual institution and of the EU as a consensual political system.

Furthermore, as stressed in the methodological chapter of this work (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1) the parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the EU is elaborated on the overall production of the speeches by the national parties (the main unit of analysis), excluding the evaluation of intra-parties divergences. An alternative procedure is to propose case-study analyses on specific parties to observe if internal parties' factions position themselves differently toward the EU and if their position changes in relation to both the reference context and the time framework. Are national parties homogeneous in their stances to the EU? Does the degree of homogeneity of internal parties' factions' positions on the EU change depending on the context and the time framework of the analysis?

Considering the evolution of EU-opposition in the EP, future research could also investigate the relationship between patterns of EU-opposition expressed by MEPs through their speeches and MEPs' voting behaviour. Brack and Costa (2017) argue that mainstream parties are generally able to compose a stabilized majority on key political issues in the EP, which enables them to avoid cooperation with so-called Eurosceptic EPPGs. However, the same scholars note that the main political groups (EPP and S&D) lost approximately 10% of their seat share in the EP after the last EP elections and, to secure their majority in the EP, they needed to increase the number of RCVs held together: 'during the first year of the 8th term, the two main groups voted together in four out of five times' (Brack and Costa 2017, 377). Consequently, it is imaginable that variations in the number of representatives from so-called Eurosceptic parties will influence also the patterns of votes in the EP. But, are such votes related to the patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP? Do MEPs vote like they speak? Is there any mismatch between the position expressed in their speeches and the way MEPs vote? Further research in the field could look at the interaction between patterns of EU-opposition deriving from MEPs' speeches and patterns of voting behaviour considering different types of RCVs where the EP has an 'institutional power' like in the case of the investiture or censure of the commission.

Furthermore, the proposed reconceptualization of Euroscepticism in terms of EU-opposition is flexible enough to allow researchers to understand how the various aspects of the EU are politicised within the institutional arenas at the national level and how such politicisation evolves through time. A comparison of parties' positioning on the EU in two political arenas, national and supranational, could provide insights about the development of this phenomenon in the multilevel system of the EU. A comparison between the two levels will provide scholars with a more detailed picture of EU-opposition in Europe since 'only an analysis that includes at least the two major levels (the supranational and the national level), and the manifold interdependencies between them, may hope to produce realistic insights into the working logics of European governance' (Helms 2008, 213). Data availability, like freely consultable speeches held in the various national arenas, provides researchers with sufficient empirical resources to enable this comparison: do parties oppose the EU in a similar way between the two levels? How do their stances on the EU evolve through time between the two levels? New researches could also question whether there is a mismatch in parties' positioning *vis-à-vis* the European and their national political systems. As above-mentioned, a party like the Italian League – former LN – endorses a different stance toward the national and the supranational political systems. Consequently, further investigations could aim at understanding how EU-opponents around Europe behave *vis-à-vis* the European and their national political systems and if their behaviour toward the national system changes through time as in the case of the Northern League (the current League). At the national level, the League does not anymore oppose the political system. In fact, its position toward the national political system has profoundly changed moving from an anti-political-system position – preaching for

the independence of the Padania¹ – to a sovereigntist position, which became even stronger during the last national election (see the study by Ignazi 2017 for further insights). On the contrary, at the supranational level, the League shows strong signs of principled rejection of the EU. Consequently, if a mismatch is detected, what shapes such mismatch?

Studying the evolution of patterns of EU-opposition between the two main levels of the EU multilevel governance (national and supranational) opens a further avenue for future research concerning the impact of such patterns on the policy output of the political system where forces critical toward the EU operate. It is, in fact, imaginable that the presence of voices critical toward the EU in the decision-making arenas of the EU multilevel governance might exercise a long-term effect on the policies formulated within such arenas.

As for the factors shaping patterns of EU-opposition, the analysis performed in chapter 7 of this work points toward the central role played by two sets of factors: parties' ideological orientation (endogenous characteristic of parties) and parties' marginality within the national political system (i.e. governing or non-governing position). The parties positioning toward the extremes (left and right) of the political spectrum or belonging to right-leaning EPPGs tend to express a higher opposition to all the included EU-targets. Similarly, the parties that are marginal to the national political competition and, consequently, do not cover governing positions at national level exercise a higher opposition to the studied EU-targets than their governing counterpart. The cross-fertilization between the theses of both the North Carolina and the Sussex School is thus fundamental to understand criticism toward the EU in connection with the renewed relevance of ideologically extreme forces at the national level (see Chapter 3, section 3.2, pages 42-47). In fact, the possibility that 'Eurosceptic' parties will cover governing positions in some EU member states is not anymore to be *a priori* discarded: how will this change in the composition of both national and European institutions impact on their EU-opposition? The current case of Italy is an example of this mechanism. On the one hand, the recently formed yellow-green alliance between the FSM and the League enables these two parties to be represented both in the EP (see the results of the last EP elections in 2014) and in the Council of Ministers, covering roles that are typical of mainstream pro-EU parties. On the other hand, following the conclusion drawn in the previous chapter, the League and FSM's positions on the EU have already changed. This can be seen in the so-called 'Contract for the government of change'² a document written by the two parties and containing the guidelines for the activity of the newly formed Italian

¹ The term 'Padania' refers to the invented macro-region of the Centre-North extending as far as Tuscany in the South and Umbria in the South-East (Tarchi 2002)

² The Italian name of the document is 'Contratto per il Governo del cambiamento', the Italian version of the document is available at https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/associazionerousseau/documenti/contratto_governo.pdf

government³. From this document, it emerges that both parties have mitigated their position *vis-à-vis* the Euro area and foresee the objective to change ECB's statute according to the model of the most important central banks in the world with the main objective to achieving a 'monetary union that is more adequate to face both geopolitical and economic imbalances and that is coherent with the objectives of the economic union'. However, both parties in the period between May 2014 and December 2016 rejected the Euro area and asked for its dissolution. Consequently, their position concerning the Monetary Union has drastically changed. Furthermore, the League has also mitigated its intergovernmentalist position *vis-à-vis* the EU-community accepting to share with the FSM the political objective to achieve a common 'European identity in the international scene avoiding the supremacy of one or more Member states over the others that is fundamentally in contrast with a democratic Union'. An objective that is further highlighted in one of the subsequent points of the above-mentioned contract stressing the need to comply with the Lisbon Treaty's objective to achieve an 'European citizenship that is the expression of the European citizens' equality in terms of their interests and rights'. From these considerations, it is thus possible to hypothesise that patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP will be affected by future changes in EU-opponents' role in the national political competition, thus by changes in the institutional Political Opportunity Structure (POS) shaping the composition of both the national and the supranational arenas.

In a similar vein, it is also imaginable that the renewed strength gained by parties critical of the EU, both at the national and at the supranational level, will exercise an impact on mainstream political actors. Further research should thus investigate this potential question: are mainstream parties becoming more critical of the EU political system as a consequence of the increased strength gained by their 'Eurosceptic' political challengers? This study shows that mainstream parties are critical of some of the analysed EU-targets, particularly addressing a principled critique to a specific component of the EU-elite: their populist 'Eurosceptic' challengers. While this finding could be framed as a normal adversarial dynamic in the EP (See Chapter 5, section 5.2, page 113), the analysis of the used motivations points toward the presence of a counter-extremist-party rhetoric in mainstream parties' speeches. But, has this rhetoric developed as a function of the increased presence of 'populist-Eurosceptic' representatives in the EP? One way to answer to this question is to propose a fine-grained definition of the EU-elite target differentiating between its various components (Halikiopoulou et al 2018): functionaries; mainstream ruling parties; non-governing parties; economic elite, and so on. Doing that, further research in the field will also achieve a deeper understanding of what does the EU-

³ After several months of post-electoral bargaining, the winning centre-right coalition did not have enough seats to secure a majority in the Parliament and in the Senate. Consequently, both the FSM (the party most voted during the last national election) and the LN (currently the League, the most voted among the parties composing the centre-right coalition) agreed to form a governing coalition based on the just-mentioned contract.

elite means to different types of parties and how they politicize this target.

Apart from the institutional POS deriving from the marginality of national delegations in the national political competition, the empirical findings reported in chapter 6 and 7 stress the role played by supranational institutional POSs. In fact, the parties' belonging to the same EPPG in the EP tend to express a similar criticism toward the EU – see the example of the FN and LN working in the ENF. However, such consideration is true only for some of the analysed parties. The case of the FSM and UKIP's union in the EFDD is of particular interest. As highlighted several time in this work, these two parties show a 'quantitatively' and 'qualitatively' different position on the EU-targets thus confirming their 'opportunistic' union within the EP, they work in the same EPPG to receive funding from the EP. However, future EP elections could contribute to further change these dynamics: EU-opponents scoring better electoral results in the next EP elections could increase the number of seats allocated to these parties, thus contributing either to the numerical expansion of already existing EPPGs or to the creation of new EPPGs. Further research could thus provide an in-depth analysis of similarities and differences between parties working in the same EPPG, speculating also about their future aggregations.

Besides the effect of 'formal institutional' POSs on patterns of EU-opposition (i.e. the marginality of both national parties and EPPGs in the political competition at the national and the supranational level respectively), this work considers also 'informal institutional' POSs. Chapter 7 shows that there is a negative relationship between MEPs' degree of political experience and their level of opposition to the EU-targets. In other words, there is a sort of 'socialization effect' (Navarro 2007) played by MEPs' seniority on parties' stances to the EU⁴. However, as mentioned in chapter 3 (See Chapter 3, section 3.3.1, page 51) it is fundamental to consider different sources of informal institutional POS: this is particularly true with reference to the media, both 'traditional' and social. Public media play a fundamental role in making European citizens 'more aware' of the EU issue thus potentially shaping the politicization of the EU issue and increasing its salience (Statham and Trezn 2014; Börzel and Risse 2017). For example, as observed by Berry (2016) the use of both types of media helped the 'leave' campaign in the context of the Brexit referendum in two main ways. On the one hand, the Leave campaign was able to deliver simpler and more direct messages than its pro-EU counterpart, relying on the so-called KISS strategy⁵ (Keep it simple, stupid). On the other hand, the short-term effect of the leave campaign – particularly effective in the social media sphere – was coupled with the long-term process of political socialization where voters are exposed several times to the same

⁴ This is particularly evident with reference to the EU-regime targets, where parties, which MEPs are more experienced – politically 'older' – are less opposed to the EU-regime in general.

⁵ The message 'Take back control', repeated by pro-Leave political actors at each available occasion is an example of effective message that could be easily understood by the broad public and open to multiple interpretations.

message. According to Berry, in fact, the short-term effect of the Leave campaign – through both traditional and social media – is coupled with the long-term negative picture delivered by the media, especially tabloid, of key issues like immigration and the EU. This is to say that when confronted with in-out options, British voters were unable to weight up the ‘costs’ and the ‘benefits’ of the EU membership in a rational and informed way. In summary, further research could explore the interaction between patterns of EU-opposition expressed in the EP and the politicization of political issues – like the EU – in the media. Is there a relationship between the way media in different countries politicise the EU issue and patterns of EU-opposition in the EP? Is there a relationship between patterns of EU-opposition and parties’ use of social media like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram?

The last avenue for further research emerging from this study deals with the development of new theoretical models able to link the phenomenon of populism with the one of EU-opposition. From a theoretical perspective, the anti-EU-establishment attitude of the EU-opponents points toward a broader research agenda concerning the interconnection between two increasingly discussed concepts: ‘Euroscepticism’ and populism as more recent researches propose⁶. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the contrast between the ‘ruling’ and the ‘ruled’ might be associated with an ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ populist parties’ rhetoric⁷ (Mudde 2004, Carlotti 2015, Caiani and Graziano 2016), a consideration that is furthermore confirmed by the fact that all the analysed parties are widely regarded as populist. In fact, the EU-opponents’ anti-establishment rhetoric lies in the contrast between the ‘pure people’ and the corrupted elite. As emerges from this study the EU-elite is mainly criticized for its lack of morality and contrasted to the pure people that are subjected to the selfish behaviours of the governing EU-elite. Being Euroscepticism and populism two ‘variegated’ political phenomena (Pirro and Taggart 2018), further research could investigate the link between the varieties of EU-opposition and the varieties of populist stances formulating a theoretical framework to analyse them simultaneously: is there any relationship between populist stances and EU-opposition? Is EU-opposition to be considered as a ‘component’ of populism?

⁶ See the special issue edited by Pirro and Taggart (2018) proposing the elaboration of an initial theoretical framework to understand the connection between populism and Euroscepticism in the midst of the multiple crises hitting the EU (Great Recession, migration crisis and the broad political crisis epitomized in the Brexit referendum).

⁷ In contrast to Mudde’s ideological interpretation of populism, some other scholars have proposed a strategic understanding of the concept, according to which ‘populist ideas’ are empty signifiers strategically used to serve specific ends (Weyland 2017).

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Appendix A

This appendix is divided into five sections: the first one (A.1) details the method used for the collection of the data alongside further insights distinguishing the collected speeches between the three analysed policy areas. The second section (A.2) provides the coding rules applied to the codification of the speeches, while the third section (A.3) details the codebook applied to the deductive coding of the speeches. The fourth section A.4 accounts for the validity and reliability checks applied to the deductive coding procedure. Lastly, section A.5 summarizes how the index of parties' positioning on the EU-targets is constructed providing the reader with further examples thereof.

A.1 Data-collection criteria

For the purposes of this analysis, a total amount of 7813 speeches has been collected for the period between May 2014 and December 2016 (first two years of the VIII EP legislature). A speech by a MEP is considered as:

Each written or spoken intervention held in the plenary sitting of the European Parliament (EP) or related to the voting time in the plenary sitting of the EP.

Speeches have been collected using a Python-based script available at <https://github.com/alexeygridnev/MEPs-speeches>

The original version of the script allows the collection of the first 100 speeches by each MEP. To enable the collection of all the speeches delivered by each MEP, this work, instead of relying on pages URLs, uses the HTML page sources of each MEPs' webpage following these steps:

1. the HTML page sources reporting all the speeches for MEP are downloaded and saved in .txt file format;
2. the .txt files are then used to download the entire collection of speeches through the Python shell.

To filter the speeches according to the three used policy areas, a qualitative research has been conducted on the EP's agenda of the meetings¹. Furthermore, speeches have been divided into three main policy areas according to two main criteria:

¹ The EP meetings' agendas are freely consultable at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/agendas.html>

1. The parliamentary committee responsible for presenting a report (e.g. ECON committee defines the speech as belonging to the macro-areas of economy);
2. The subject of the speech held in the plenary sitting as indicated by the procedural files available on the webpage of the EP. The image below shows an example of speech belonging to the macro-area of ‘Immigration, asylum and borders control’ policies.

Figure A. 1: Example of classification criteria for a specific speech held in the plenary session of the EP.

The screenshot displays the following information:

- Basic information:**
 - INI - Own-Initiative procedure (2015/2095(INI))
 - Procedure completed
 - Situation in the Mediterranean and need for a holistic EU approach to migration
 - Subject: 7.10.08 Migration policy
 - Geographical area: Mediterranean Sea area
- Key players:**
 - European Parliament
 - Committee responsible: LIBE - Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
 - Rapporteur: METSOLA Roberta, KYENGE Cécile Kashetu
 - Appointed: 26/02/2015

Source of the image:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2015/2095\(INI\)](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2015/2095(INI))

A.2 Coding instructions

The deductive analysis of the collected speeches is divided into two phases: first, speeches are split into quasi-sentences (Qs) according to the definition provided by the Coding scheme of the Comparative Manifesto Project:

‘One quasi-sentence contains exactly one statement or “message”. In many cases, parties make one statement per sentence, which results in one quasi-sentence. Equalling one full sentence. Therefore the basic unitizing rule is that one sentence is, at minimum, one quasi-sentence. In no case can two sentences form a quasi-sentence. There are, however, instances when one natural sentence contains more than one quasi-sentence’²

² Definition taken from the “Handbook” of the Comparative Manifesto Project. Electronic version of the handbook available at https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/information/documents?name=handbook_v4

In the second phase, each QS is coded in one and only one of the categories belonging to the coding scheme presented below.

The general scheme of the codebook is divided according to the four main targets of EU-opposition:

1. **EU-policies:** to this target belong all the references that MEPs do with respect to the policies under discussion, the implementation of the specific policy or the analysis of the obtained results.
2. **EU-elite:** to this target belong all the references expressed by MEPs toward politicians (at the EU level) like for example some specific commissioner or groups of people like ‘technocrats’. Such mentions encompass both the evaluation of EU-elite’s performance and judgements of the moral conduct or values of the EU-elite. It is to be noted that the definition of elite is intentionally kept as broader as possible and that it encompasses also non-elected authorities playing a role in the activity of the EU.
3. **EU-regime:** to this target belong all the references done to the institutions of the EU, to their values, their norms and their activity. It is essential that the quasi-sentences either report the name of the institution or a substitute thereof. **It is to be noted that the target ‘EU-regime’ is further subdivided into 4 main sub-targets:**
 - a. **European Parliament;**
 - b. **European Commission;**
 - c. **Council of Ministers;**
 - d. **Other institutions (e.g. European Central Bank).**
4. **EU-community:** to this targets belong all the references that deal with:
 - a. The current state of the EU;
 - b. The competencies of the EU along the national vs. supranational axis;
 - c. The ‘values’ of the EU (as expressed by the Treaties);
 - d. The state of democracy at the EU level;
 - e. The geometries resulting from the process of European integration (e.g. the Euro area or the Schengen area, main recipient of opposition in this work).

To sum up, this target includes all the references that can be detected along the alienation-integration continuum expressing the position of every single orator with reference to the community.

The identified QSs belonging to one of the four targets mentioned above are coded in one of the categories proposed in the codebook (presented below) according to their directionality:

1. **Directional Positive:** QSs expressing a positive judgement;

2. Directional Negative: Qs expressing a negative judgement;
3. Non-directional (this category has been inserted to collect all the quasi-sentences that do not report a judgement by the orator, but only a description of facts).

Besides recognizing the targets of support or opposition, this work aims at understanding the character of the expressed positioning (either pragmatic or principled). To do that it assigns different values to each quasi-sentence during the coding procedure: 1 for pragmatic expressions; 2 for principled expressions; and 0 for neutral assertions. Details about the used values are provided below for each category. Examples of coded quasi-sentence will be provided whenever possible.

A.3 Codebook

A.3.1 EU-POLICIES

- **EU-policy positive:**
 - Positive mentions of the policy under discussion or of some of its aspects (the endorsement of specific technical aspects is included);
 - Positive mentions regarding the results obtained through the implementation of the specific policy under discussion or aspects thereof (even metaphors may be accepted).
 - The Qs coded under this category use expressions of support like: ‘I support’, ‘I endorse’, ‘I am favourable’.
- **EU-policy negative:**
 - Negative mentions of the policy under discussion or of some of its aspects (specific technical aspects are included);
 - Negative mentions of the results obtained through the implementation of the specific policy under discussion or aspects thereof. Negative mentions of the lack of implementation of the specific policy under discussion (or aspects thereof) are also included (even metaphors may be accepted).
 - The Qs coded under this category use expression of opposition like: ‘I oppose’; ‘I am not favourable’, ‘I regret’.
- **EU-policy non-directional:**
 - Explanation of what has been debated, voted or treated during the plenary session;
 - Explanation of the results brought by the (also future) implementation of some specific

policies. These explanations do not provide the position of the orator but an ‘aseptic’ description of the potential results of a specific policy;

- Rhetorical questions regarding the policies but not expressing a precise direction (positive or negative).

Values applied to the quasi-sentences referring to the target of EU-policies:

- **EU-policy positive:**

- **Value of 1:** defines a pragmatic character of the expressed support. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). The speaker expresses support for the substantial policy under discussion. Generally, the speaker refers positively – thus using positive expressions – to specific details of the policy under discussion. Example: ‘I *support* this report that allows the EP to indicate the European Commission which are the points to be added to the legislation regarding the circular economy’ (Marco Zullo’s speech on the ‘Resource efficiency, moving toward a circular economy’ 9th July 2015);
- **Value of 2:** defines the principled character of the expressed support. The speaker expresses support deriving from the ideological stance of the party itself. Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. Example: ‘I voted *firmly* in favour of EU adhesion to the Convention on international trade in Endangered species of Wild Fauna and Flora because I *believe* that the moment has come for the EU to work in this direction’ (Marco Zullo Speech on the ‘Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species-CITES’, 16th December 2014, emphasis added).

- **EU-policies negative:**

- **Value of 1:** defines the pragmatic character of the expressed opposition. The speaker expresses opposition for a substantial policy under discussion, generally proposing the implementation of changes. Example: ‘the funds for the reception of migrants and management of immigration fluxes allocated by the EU and by each Member State must be subjected to stricter surveillance in order to prevent frauds, speculations and wastes’ (Laura Agea’s speech on the ‘Summary expulsions and the proposed legalization of “hot returns” in Spain’ 25th November 2014);
- **Value of 2:** defines the principled character of the expressed opposition. The speaker expresses opposition for the substantial policy under discussion that is based on principle. Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. Example: ‘It is time to question our *hysterical* obsession with the new religion

of climate *alarmism*' (Roger Helmer's speech 'Towards a new international climate agreement in Paris' 14th of October 2015, emphasis added).

- **EU-policies non-directional:**

- **Value of 0:** the coded quasi-sentences belonging to the 'non-directional' category are provided with a neutral value (0) since no evaluation of the specific character of the expressed party positioning is to be detected. Example: 'With regard to the motion for a resolution on the EU strategic objectives for the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in Johannesburg (South Africa) from 24th September to 5th October 2016, this vote is not about CITES itself' (Diane James' speech on the 'Key objectives for the CITES CoP17 meeting in Johannesburg', 15th September 2016).

A.3.2 EU-ELITE

- **EU-elite positive:**

- Positive mentions of the activity of one or more specific politician part of the EU-elite (functionaries are included in the definition of EU-elite);
- Positive mentions concerning the moral conduct and/or the values of a specific politician or group thereof (functionaries are included in the definition of EU-elite).
- Positive references to a set of people who do not strictly belong to the political sphere but are, nevertheless, considered as a sort of powerful elite ruling Europe, like in the case of lobbyists.

- **EU-elite negative:**

- Negative mentions of the activity of one or more specific politician part of the EU-elite (functionaries are included in the definition of EU-elite);
- Negative mentions concerning the moral conduct and/or the values of a specific politician or group thereof (functionaries are included in the definition of EU-elite);
- Negative references to a set of people not strictly belonging to the political sphere but are, nevertheless, considered as a sort of powerful elite ruling Europe, like in the case of lobbyists.

- **EU-elite non-directional**

- Non-directional references to the elite, like explanations of what a specific group of people or a specific member of the EU-elite do or say in the EP plenary sittings or in other political occasions. All these mentions do not provide a judgement by the orator.

Values applied to the quasi-sentences regarding the EU-elite target:

- **EU elite positive:**
 - **Value of 1:** defines the pragmatic character of the expressed support. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). In this case, it refers to pragmatic support for the activity exercised by either a specific authority or group thereof. Example: ‘Mister President, honourable colleagues, I will use these two minutes to thank the colleagues who gave me the opportunity to show that it does not matter where one seat in this Parliament if one really wants to represent citizen’s needs’ (Laura Agea’s speech on the ‘Green employment initiative- Guidelines for the employment policies of Member States’, 7th July 2015);
 - **Value of 2:** defines the principled character of the expressed support. In this case, it refers to the principled support for either a specific authority or group thereof (e.g. positively stressing their moral value or their moral conduct). Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards.
- **EU-elite negative:**
 - **Value of 1:** defines the pragmatic character of the expressed opposition. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). In this case, it refers to the pragmatic opposition of the activity exercised either by a specific component of the elite or group thereof. Example: ‘So one lesson that I want to leave with you all is that you have created mass unemployment by pushing forward this legislation that kills jobs and kills British industry’ (Tim Aker’s speech concerning the ‘Limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air’, 7th October 2015);
 - **Value of 2:** defines the principled character of the expressed opposition. This criticism is centred on the evaluation of the moral conduct and/or the values of the specific component of the EU-elite or group thereof. Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. Example: ‘Instead of *censure* of politicians like Mr Juncker, who were *involved* in allowing corporations to extract exceedingly large profits from the ordinary citizens of Europe (...)’ (Steven Woolfe’s speech on ‘Tax rulings and other measures similar in nature and effect’ 24th November 2015, emphasis added).

- **EU-elite non-directional:**

- **Value of 0:** the coded quasi-sentences belonging to the non-directional category are provided with a neutral value (0) since no evaluation of the specific character of the expressed party positioning is to be detected.

A.3.3 EU-REGIME

As stressed before, this target is split into sub-targets to enable the observation of parties' attitudes to the three most important institutions of the EU (the EC, the Council and the EP) including also an 'Other institutions' category (encompassing institutions like the ECB). Nevertheless, it is to be noted that positive, negative or non-directional mentions can refer to the whole complex of EU-institutions. During the coding procedure, also these mentions are taken into consideration. Here we have an example.

- Helmer UKIP (10/2015) ENVIRONMENT: 'These decisions and these targets should be taken and set by democratically elected parliaments at the national level, and not by *unrepresentative, unaccountable bureaucratic institutions* in foreign countries' (emphasis added).

A.3.3.1 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- **European Parliament positive:**

- Positive mentions of the EP in general (e.g. references to the values of the EP);
- Positive mentions of the activity and the competencies of the EP;
- Positive mentions of the powers and role played by the EP;
- Positive mentions of a potential implementation of the role and powers of the EP.

- **European Parliament negative:**

- Negative mentions of the EP in general (e.g. references to the values of the EP);
- Negative mentions of the activity and the competencies of the EP;
- Negative mentions of the powers and role played by the EP;
- Negative mentions of the potential implementations of the role and powers of the EP.

- **European Parliament non-directional:**

- References to the activity of the EP, to its role and/or its powers that do not express any kind of evaluation;

A.3.3.2 EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- **Commission Positive:**
 - Positive mentions of the Commission in general;
 - Positive mentions of the activity and the competencies of the Commission;
 - Positive mentions of the powers and role played by the Commission;
 - Positive mentions of a potential implementation of the role and powers of the Commission.
- **Commission negative**
 - Negative mentions of the Commission in general;
 - Negative mentions of the activity and the competencies of the Commission;
 - Negative mentions of the powers and role played by the Commission (e.g. a power grab accusation directed toward the Commission);
 - Negative mentions of the potential implementations of the role and powers of the Commission.
- **Commission non-directional:**
 - References to the activity of the Commission, to its role and/or its powers that do not express any kind of evaluation;

A.3.3.3 COUNCIL

- **Council Positive:**
 - Positive mentions of the Council in general;
 - Positive mentions of the activity and the competencies of the Council;
 - Positive mentions of the powers and role played by the Council;
 - Positive mention of a potential implementation of the role and powers of the Council.
- **Council negative:**
 - Negative mentions of the Council in general;
 - Negative mentions of the activity and the competencies of the Council (e.g. lack of transparency);
 - Negative mentions of the powers and role played by the Council (e.g. interference or imposition of the Council over other institutions of the EU);
 - Negative mentions of the potential implementations of the role and powers of the Council.

- **Council non-directional:**

- Reference to the activity of the Council, to its role and/or its powers that do not express any kind of evaluation.

A.3.3.4 OTHER INSTITUTIONS:

- **Other institutions positive:**

- Positive mentions of other institutions in general;
- Positive mentions of the activity and the competencies of other institutions;
- Positive mentions of the powers and role played by other institutions;
- Positive mention of a potential implementation of the role and powers of other institutions.

- **Other institutions negative:**

- Negative mentions of other institutions in general;
- Negative mentions of the activity and the competencies of other institutions (e.g. lack of electoral accountability);
- Negative mentions of the powers and role played by other institutions;
- Negative mentions of the potential implementations of the role and powers of other institutions.

- **Other institutions non-directional**

- References toward other institutions that do not express any judgement concerning their activity or their roles and/or powers.

Values applied to the quasi-sentences coded under the category EU-regime:

- **EU-regime positive:**

- **Value of 1:** pragmatic support for one or a group of EU institutions. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). The speaker generally proposes endorsement for the activity done by each EU institution or group thereof. Example: ‘This revision has been improved thanks to the EP’ (Marco Zanni’s speech on the ‘Access to anti-money-laundering information by tax authorities’ 22nd October 2016);
- **Value of 2:** principled support for one or a group of EU institutions. Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. The speaker expresses principled support for the values underpinning the specific institutions, favouring also a potential enlargement of the competencies of the specific institution. Example: ‘I’d like to recall that the European Parliament is the *only* institution

democratically elected by citizens, it represents, de facto, European citizens' will' (Laura Ferrera's speech on the 'Provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece', 8th September 2015, emphasis added).

- **EU-regime negative:**
 - **Value of 1:** pragmatic opposition to one or a group of EU institutions. The evaluation is based on 'means-ends' rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). In these quasi-sentences, the speaker opposes the activity of that specific institution or group thereof, without contesting its existence. Example: 'we denounced the management of the Supervision Mechanism by the ECB, demanding to the ECB a higher transparency' (Marco Valli's speech regarding the 'European Central Bank annual report 2014', 25th February 2016);
 - **Value of 2:** principled opposition to one or a group of EU-institutions. Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. In these quasi-sentences, the speaker opposes the values underpinning that specific institution and/or contests its existence. Example: 'We do not *trust* the *unelected* EU Commission to decide on the protection of the environment and animal welfare' (Gerard Batten's speech on the 'Mid-term review of the EU biodiversity strategy', 2nd February 2016, emphasis added).

A.3.4 EU-COMMUNITY

- **Community positive:**
 - Positive mentions of the current state of the EU;
 - Positive mentions of the competencies of the EU (the national vs. supranational debate on EU competencies);
 - Positive mentions of the current state of democracy in the EU;
 - Positive mention of some geometries deriving from the process of European integration (i.e., Euro area or Schengen area);
 - Positive mentions of the values of the EU;
 - Positive mentions of the process of European integration.
- **Community negative:**
 - Negative mentions of the current state of the EU;
 - Negative mentions of the competencies of the EU (the national vs. supranational debate on EU competencies);
 - Negative mentions of the state of democracy in the EU;

- Negative mentions of some geometries deriving from the process of European integration (e.g. Euro area or Schengen area);
- Negative mentions referring to values of the EU;
- Negative mentions of the process of European integration.
- **Community non-directional:**
 - References toward the EU in general or some of its specific configurations that do not imply any judgement.

Values applied to the quasi-sentences coded under the category EU-community:

N.B: Since this target (EU-community) encompasses also the two main geometries deriving from the process of EU-integration (Euro and Schengen area) a further variable is created such that it is possible to understand when a quasi-sentence refers to the EU in general or to one of its different geometries.

To do that three further values are defined during the coding procedure:

- Value of 5: for all the quasi-sentences that refer to the EU-community in general;
- Value of 3: for all the quasi-sentences that refer to the Euro area;
- Value of 4: for all the quasi-sentences that refer to the Schengen area.

All the quasi-sentences coded under the main category of the ‘EU-community’ (thus also to the ones referring to the various EU geometries) report a value to distinguish between principled and pragmatic positioning:

- **EU-community positive:**
 - **Value of 1:** pragmatic support for the EU or for some of its geometries. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). The speaker refers positively to some aspects of the EU or to some of its geometries. These quasi-sentences are positive in nature: ‘The EU can play an ambitious role taking the responsibility to act as an example in the important field of climate change’ (Marco Zullo’s speech on the ‘UN Climate change Conference in Marrakesh’ 6th October 2015);
 - **Value of 2:** principled support for the current state of the EU, its values and the state of democracy in the EU (also principled support for one or some of the geometries deriving from the process of European integration have a value of 2). Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. Example: ‘Yet, belonging to the CITES³ will enable the Union to act with a *single voice* in facing

³ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

international actors that have a less advanced legislation in the field, thus reinforcing its vision aiming at protecting plants and animals’ (Marco Zullo’s speech on the ‘Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species- CITES’, 16th October 2014, emphasis added).

- **EU-community negative:**

- **Value of 1:** pragmatic opposition to the EU. These quasi-sentences are negatively constructed, however, the expressed critique is pragmatic in the sense that it is open to potential changes of the EU. In other words, these negatively coded quasi-sentences referring to the EU community do **not** refer to a rejection of the EU as such but proposes to change it. The evaluation is based on ‘means-ends’ rationality according to the given utility (the speaker wants to maximize the utility). The same value is used also for quasi-sentences referring to one or some EU’s geometries. Example: ‘The EU cannot be transformed in an under siege fortress for those people living on the other side of the Mediterranean’ (Laura Agea’s speech on the ‘Summary expulsions and the proposed legislation of ‘hot returns’ in Spain’, 25th November 2014);
- **Value of 2:** principled opposition expressed to the EU community. Such opposition is not open to compromises but delineates a rejection per se of the EU (and/or of its geometries). Such evaluations are based on normative arguments about values and moral standards. Example: ‘Madam President, having been to the camps along the northern coast of the Schengen area, I can tell you it is a *bonanza* for criminal gangs and terrorists’ (Jane Collins and Diane James’ speech on the ‘Situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic approach to migration’, 12th April 2016, emphasis added).

A.3.5 NO-MATCH

- Formally addressing gratitude toward some rapporteurs, commissioners or other political actors for the work done in preparation of the plenary sitting (generally done by all MEPs and should be considered as lacking specific meaning, like a formal address);
- Simple points of order are generally regarded as no-match;
- Sentences that remains incomplete (e.g. due to cuts of the speaking time);
- Statistical data or descriptions of the state of the specific policy field;
- Citations are generally also considered as a no-match category;
- Descriptions of some specific events that do not make any reference to any other of the above-cited categories.

A.4 Assessing reliability and validity of the deductive coding procedure

An in-depth definition of the codebook is done to minimize the measurement error. However, the deductive coding procedure also relies on two different methods to assess the validity and intra-coder reliability (consistency of the coding between time T1 and time T2).

Apart from the in-depth definition and exemplification of the codebook reported in the previous section, the validity of the executed coding is ensured by two operations: firstly, a one-by-one in-depth analysis of the identified Qs ensure a higher validity of the coding procedure. Secondly, the word-clouds presented in chapter 6 of this work represent a further instrument of ‘face-validity’ applied to the coded-negative quasi-sentences. Furthermore, relying on a double process of coding (deductive and inductive) enable to further reduce measurement errors.

Unfortunately, the work relies on a single coder during both phases of coding, thus it is not possible to assess the inter-coder reliability. However, to provide further insights into the soundness of the used method of measurement, the coder’s reliability is assessed by comparing the same sub-sample of data coded at time T1 and at time T2.

To do that, the reliability check is done on 5% of the analysed segments: 390 speeches are randomly extracted between the three policy issues and are coded both at time T1 and at time T2.

The comparison between the samples of segments coded at time T1 and the sample of segments coded at time T2 provides 91% segments agreement. A percentage that is enough high to confirm the reliability of the coding procedure. The percentage of segments agreement is calculated relying on MaxQDA’s inbuilt function.

A.5 Formulation of the index of EU-opposition: further examples

As mentioned in chapter 4 of this work (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1, pages 100-102), the index of EU-opposition is created starting from the frequencies of the coded Qs to calculate the ‘quantity’ of opposition according to the following formula

$$Q_o = \frac{\log CN + 1}{\log N + 1} - \frac{\log CP + 1}{\log N + 1}$$

Where CN is the quantity of coded-negative Qs, CP is the quantity of coded-positive Qs and N is the total number of Qs present in each corpus (each corpus relates to a target of the EU), thus including also the neutral Qs and those Qs belonging to the ‘No-match’ category reported in the previous section. The quantity of opposition is a continuous variable ranging between -1 (indicating the

maximum degree of support for a specific target) and +1 (indicating the maximum degree of opposition to a specific target). Once the quantity of opposition is calculated, the final version of the index takes into consideration also the ‘quality’ of opposition – deriving from the codification of the character of the expressed opposition either principled, taking the value of 1, or pragmatic, taking the value of 0. This is to say that a party endorses a principled opposition if the majority of the coded-negative Qs for each target are coded under the principled character. The final version of the index is then calculated adding to the ‘quantity’ of opposition the ‘quality’ of opposition according to the following formula:

$$(Q_o \pm q_o) * 100$$

Where Q_o represents the ‘quantity’ of expressed opposition or support to the four targets of the EU, and q_o refers to the ‘quality’ of EU-opposition. The quality of EU-opposition takes the value of 1 if the expressed positioning is principled and the value of 0 if the expressed positioning is pragmatic. The formula presents the \pm operator to obtain a symmetric scale of opposition/support. In other words, if Q_o is positive (thus indicating that a party n is opposing one of the studied targets) the value of q_o is added. On the contrary, if Q_o is negative (thus indicating that a party n supports a specific EU-target) the value of q_o is subtracted. The resulting index is a continuous variable ranging between -200 indicating the maximum degree of principled support and +200 indicating the maximum level of principled opposition, whereas a value of -100 relates to the maximum degree of pragmatic support and a value of +100 indicates the maximum degree of pragmatic opposition. If the index takes the value of 0 it indicates that either the party does not refer to that specific target or that an equal proportion of opposition and support is present.

The following examples help the reader to further understand the construction of the index:

- Case 1: consider a party expressing a maximum ‘quantity’ of opposition to one of the used targets (thus scoring the value of 1), which opposition is pragmatic (thus scoring the value of 0), the creation of the additive index provides a total value of opposition of 100 (maximum pragmatic opposition).
- Case 2: consider a party expressing a ‘quantity’ of opposition of 0.5, which opposition is principled (thus scoring the value of 1). The creation of the additive index provides a total value of opposition of 150. This is to say that even if the quantity of opposition expressed by ‘case 2’ is lower than the one expressed by ‘case 1’, an opposition based on principled considerations will be higher than an opposition based on pragmatic considerations.

- Case 3: consider a party expressing a maximum ‘quantity’ of support (thus scoring a value of -1), which support is pragmatic (thus scoring 0), the creation of the additive index provides a total value of support of -100 (maximum pragmatic support).
- Case 4: consider a party expressing a ‘quantity’ of support of -0.5, which support is principled (scoring 1). The creation of the additive index provides a total value of support of -150. This is to say that even if the quantity of support expressed by case 4 is lower than the one expressed by ‘case 3’, a support based on principled considerations will be stronger than a support based on pragmatic considerations.

Appendix B

This appendix presents the values of the EU positioning index used for the construction of the figures presented in chapter 5 of this work (see tables' captions for further information).

Table B. 1: Parties index of positioning toward the four main EU-targets.

Targets of EU-opposition	Overall Index of EU-opposition by party and target											
	AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
EU-policies	0.28	0.13	0.16	0.19	0.11	0.39	0.05	-0.06	-0.03	-0.001	-0.02	0.07
EU-elite	0.56	0.48	0.55	0.58	0.33	0.45	0.62	0.07	0.10	0.06	0.03	0.16
EU-regime	0.51	0.29	0.36	0.70	0.18	0.38	0.11	-0.04	-0.02	-0.003	-0.10	0.17
EP	0.26	0.07	0.28	0.44	-0.03	0.06	-0.14	-0.16	-0.19	-0.29	-0.36	0.24
EC	0.45	0.44	0.28	0.65	0.30	0.27	0.04	-0.06	-0.03	0.11	0.03	0.09
Council	0.10	0.16	0.05	0	0.34	0.11	0.40	0.18	0.18	0.37	0.23	0.05
Other institutions	0.58	0.27	0.41	0.43	0.51	0.45	0.55	-0.18	-0.01	0.07	-0.19	0.07
EU-community overall	0.50	0.69	0.43	0.85	0.22	0.13	0.26	-0.28	-0.31	-0.05	-0.16	0.19
EU	0.46	0.66	0.47	0.82	0.15	0.06	0.28	-0.33	-0.41	-0.10	-0.18	0.14
Euro area	0.50	0.53	0.25	0.60	0.56	0.34	0.24	0.03	-0.18	0.14	0.03	0.42
Schengen area	0.32	0.55	0.45	0.49	0.13	0	0	-0.24	-0.27	-0.07	-0.38	0.34

Source: Own calculation. The table reports both the EU-regime sub-targets and the EU-community sub-targets (grey cells). The data presented in the table have been used to construct Figure 5.1 (chapter 5, section 5.2, page 108), Figure 5.2 (chapter 5, section 5.2, page 110) and Figure 5.3 (chapter 5, section 5.2, page 111) of this work.

Table B. 2: Evolution of parties' index of EU-opposition toward the four main EU-targets calculated for each of the five semesters of observation.

Targets of EU-opposition	Semester	Parties' index of EU-opposition											
		AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
EU-policy	1	0.40	0.13	0.29	0.45	0.24	0.74	0.29	0.15	-0.03	0.15	0.06	0.07
	2	0.41	0.27	0.31	0.19	0.21	0.44	0.25	0.01	-0.03	0.09	-0.07	0.01
	3	0.31	0.13	0.11	0.20	0.12	0.31	-0.03	-0.09	-0.04	0.002	-0.05	0.10
	4	0.21	0.12	0.31	0.23	0.15	0.63	0.05	-0.10	-0.04	-0.01	-0.001	0.14
	5	0.39	0.12	0.14	0.23	0.08	0.80	0.07	-0.18	-0.06	-0.07	-0.01	0.05
EU-elite	1	0.45	0.46	0.30	0.44	0.45	0	0	0.34	0.20	0.04	-0.03	-0.10
	2	0.50	0.57	0.67	0.62	0.31	0.65	0.42	-0.08	0.16	-0.04	0.09	0.15
	3	0.57	0.56	0.66	0.65	0.32	0.63	0.64	0.12	0.06	0.12	0.01	0.21
	4	0.46	0.36	0.52	0.43	0.42	0.20	0.52	0.14	0.13	0.27	0.04	0.30
	5	0.64	0.58	0.41	0.51	0.56	0	0.43	0.02	0.10	-0.04	0.02	0.20
EU-regime	1	0.45	0.40	0.56	0.51	0.35	0.48	0.55	0.07	-0.10	0.05	-0.07	0.03
	2	0.41	0.45	0.46	0.52	0.26	0.35	0	0	-0.02	-0.12	-0.26	0.26
	3	0.58	0.33	0.29	0.68	0.12	0.29	-0.16	-0.03	0.04	0.04	-0.10	0.17
	4	0.46	0.30	0.36	0.63	0.25	0.41	0.57	-0.06	-0.11	0.06	-0.08	0.13
	5	0.54	0.34	0.29	0.62	0.23	0.30	0.17	-0.17	-0.06	-0.07	-0.08	0.30
EU-community	1	0.09	0.68	0.17	0.69	0.20	0	0.54	-0.23	-0.46	-0.11	-0.30	0.15
	2	0.009	0.73	0.66	0.63	0.17	0.24	0.11	-0.29	-0.27	0.11	-0.13	0.15
	3	0.37	0.62	0.46	0.82	0.25	0.34	0.26	-0.27	-0.17	-0.03	-0.14	0.29
	4	0.59	0.71	0.545216537	0.82	0.28	0.05	0.48	-0.37	-0.52	-0.13	-0.19	0.26
	5	0.77	0.74	0.65	0.79	0.26	0	0.31	-0.61	-0.45	-0.11	-0.26	0.35

Source: own calculation. The data have been used to construct Figure 5.4 (see Chapter 5, section 5.2, page 114) of this work.

Table B. 3: Evolution of parties' index of EU-opposition toward the three sub-targets of the EU-community calculated for each of the five semesters of observation.

Targets of EU-opposition	Semester	Parties' index of EU-opposition											
		AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
EU	1	0.07	0.66	0.44	0.62	0.13	0	0.42	-0.47	-0.35	-0.15	-0.32	-0.21
	2	0.53	0.68	0.59	0.71	0.13	0.24	0.11	-0.29	-0.30	0	-0.17	0.14
	3	0.59	0.55	0.40	0.80	0.24	0.13	0.24	-0.29	-0.33	-0.11	-0.21	0.29
	4	0.69	0.69	0.48	0.78	0.18	0.08	0.47	-0.33	-0.50	-0.13	-0.17	0.25
	5	0.63	0.72	0.50	0.77	0.16	0	0.51	-0.43	-0.43	-0.13	-0.27	0.33
Euro area	1	0	0.18	0	0.54	0.27	0	0	0.13	-0.43	0.41	-0.07	0.55
	2	0.46	0.54	0.47	0.53	0.30	0	0	0	0	0.34	0.08	0.12
	3	0.40	0.47	0.25	0.54	0.35	0.39	0.26	0.11	0.02	0.33	0.08	0
	4	0	0.27	0.38	0.56	0.49	0.14	0.11	-0.18	-0.15	0.22	-0.03	0
	5	0.40	0.42	0.37	0.43	0.54	0	0	0	-0.10	0.40	-0.09	0.12
Schengen area	1	0	0.31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-0.11	0
	2	0	0.41	0.19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0.20	0.56	0.45	0.31	-0.10	0	0	-0.11	-0.09	0.10	-0.21	0
	4	0.38	0.47	0.38	0.50	0.10	0	0	-0.18	-0.29	-0.08	-0.41	0.12
	5	0	0.36	0	0.40	0	0	0	-0.19	-0.10	-0.17	-0.21	0

Source: own calculation. The data have been used to construct Figure 5.5 (see Chapter 5, section 5.2, page 115) of this work.

Table B. 4: Evolution of parties' index of EU-opposition toward the four sub-targets of the EU-regime calculated for each of the five semesters of observation.

Targets of EU-opposition	Semester	Parties' index of EU-opposition											
		AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
EP	1	0.14	0.11	0.23	0	-0.13	0	0	0	-0.25	-0.33	-0.39	-0.19
	2	0	0.28	0.19	0.36	-0.12	0	0	-0.20	0.14	-0.24	-0.50	0.41
	3	0.44	0.06	0.17	0.49	0.01	0	-0.45	-0.14	-0.15	-0.27	-0.42	0.27
	4	0.20	-0.06	0.11	0.16	-0.04	0.14	0	0	-0.39	-0.44	-0.23	0.11
	5	0.24	0.09	0	0	-0.04	9	0.02	-0.31	-0.29	-0.35	-0.44	0.37
EC	1	0	0.33	0.29	0.44	0.21	0	0	-0.13	-0.17	0.19	0.10	-0.05
	2	0.33	0.49	0.23	0.34	0.34	0.15	0	0.07	-0.05	-0.28	-0.20	0.30
	3	0.35	0.48	0.20	0.61	0.38	0.34	-0.03	-0.03	-0.02	0.30	0.09	0.02
	4	0.29	0.44	0.32	0.58	0.25	0.08	0.35	-0.09	-0.01	0.28	0.12	0.18
	5	0.39	0.44	0.25	0.58	0.27	0.30	-0.14	-0.12	0	-0.10	-0.02	0.07
Council	1	0	0.11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.11	0	-0.11	0.13
	2	0	0.11	0	0	0.37	0	0	0	0.03	0.28	0.10	0
	3	0.13	0.28	0.11	0	0.19	0	0	0	0.46	0.36	0.19	0.11
	4	0	0	-0.11	0	0.163	0.14	0	0.18	0	0.28	0.24	-0.11
	5	0	0	0.12	0	0.10	0	0.47	0.12	0.10	0.38	0.33	0
Other institutions	1	0.63	0.31	0.46	0.32	0.42	0.48	0.62	0.20	0	0.13	-0.14	0
	2	0.54	0.55	0.35	0.27	0.46	0.24	0.23	-0.41	0	-0.19	-0.28	-0.12
	3	0.20	0.15	0	0.28	0.10	0.13	0.44	0	0.05	0	-0.05	0.17
	4	0.35	0.27	0.41	0.37	0.49	0.49	0.51	-0.19	-0.07	0.22	-0.19	0
	5	0.39	0.42	0.25	0.37	0.33	0	0.41	0	0	0.10	0	0

Source: own calculation. The data have been used to construct Figure 5.6 (see Chapter 5, section 5.2, page 116) of this work.

Table B. 5: Parties' index of EU-opposition toward the four main EU-targets by policy area.

Targets of EU-opposition	Index of EU-opposition by policy issue: four main targets											
	AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
Immigration, asylum and borders control												
EU-policies	0.44	0.37	0.25	0.29	0.17	0.74	0.09	0.07	-0.02	0.06	0.08	0.29
EU-elite	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.53	0.41	0.65	0.55	0.21	0.29	0.22	0.13	0.30
EU-regime	0.54	0.30	0.47	0.44	0.06	0.33	0.08	-0.03	-0.12	0.02	-0.09	0.35
Community	0.60	0.79	0.68	0.84	0.29	-0.13	0.51	-0.37	-0.48	-0.06	-0.23	0.38
Economy												
EU-policies	0.38	0.09	0.17	0.27	0.19	0.42	0.14	-0.15	-0.02	0.01	-0.07	-0.05
EU-elite	0.56	0.53	0.57	0.65	0.46	0.39	0.57	0	0.06	-0.04	-0.05	0.09
EU-regime	0.50	0.33	0.47	0.71	0.23	0.39	0.22	-0.02	-0.02	-0.03	-0.18	0.12
Community	0.72	0.72	0.41	0.83	0.66	0.22	0.21	-0.19	-0.24	-0.03	-0.03	0.44
Environmental protection												
EU-policies	0.19	0.15	0.12	0.13	-0.0004	0.09	-0.05	-0.14	-0.07	-0.10	-0.04	0.03
EU-elite	0.40	0.37	0.37	0.52	0.19	0	0.55	0.05	0.03	0.06	-0.07	0.11
EU-regime	0.43	0.30	0.19	0.69	0.16	0	0.05	-0.11	0.06	0.03	0.01	0.12
Community	0.32	0.61	0.35	0.79	-0.07	0	0.23	-0.43	-0.41	-0.13	-0.45	-0.03

Source: own calculation. The data presented in the table have been used for the construction of the three spider-plots presented in Figures 5.7 (policy field: immigration, asylum and borders control, see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 118); 5.8 (policy field: economy, see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 119); and 5.9 (policy field: environmental protection, see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 119) of this work.

Table B. 6: Parties' index of EU-opposition toward the three sub-targets of the EU-community by policy area.

Targets of EU-opposition	Index of EU-opposition by policy field: sub-targets of the EU-community											
	AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
Immigration, asylum and borders control												
EU	0.54	0.73	0.62	0.82	0.26	-0.13	0.52	-0.35	-0.46	-0.06	-0.21	0.32
Euro area	0	0.36	0.17	0.10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Schengen area	0.40	0.66	0.51	0.53	0.17	0	0	-0.28	-0.32	-0.08	-0.45	0.40
Economy												
EU	0.67	0.69	0.47	0.77	0.52	0.13	0.26	-0.30	-0.32	-0.20	-0.06	0.38
Euro area	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.69	0.61	0.37	0.28	0.03	-0.20	0.17	0.03	0.50
Schengen area	0	0.23	0	0.36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental protection												
EU	0.32	0.60	0.34	0.79	-0.06	0	0.26	-0.43	-0.41	-0.13	-0.45	-0.03
Euro area	0	0.37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Schengen area	0	0.24	0.12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: own calculation. The data presented in the table have been used for the construction of the three spider-plots presented in Figures 5.10 (policy field: immigration, asylum and borders control); 5.11 (policy field: economy); and 5.12 (policy field: environmental protection) of chapter 5 of this work (see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 121, 122 and 122 respectively).

Table B. 7: Parties' index of EU-opposition toward the three sub-targets of the EU-regime by policy area.

Targets of EU-opposition	Index of EU-opposition by policy field: sub-targets of the EU-regime											
	AFD	FN	LN	UKIP	FSM	LINKE	PODEMOS	PP	CDU-CSU	PS	PD	CON
Immigration, asylum and borders control												
EP	0.45	0.08	0.27	0.28	-0.09	0	-0.17	-0.11	-0.17	0.10	-0.40	0.33
EC	0.31	0.42	0.33	0.31	0.14	0.13	0	-0.09	-0.37	-0.29	-0.15	0.30
Council	0	0.31	0.17	0	0.24	0	0	0.17	0.12	0.32	0.21	0.11
Other institutions	0.19	0.35	0.27	0	0	0	0.25	0	-0.10	0	0	0.06
Economy												
EP	0.10	0.06	0	0.43	0.005	0.07	-0.17	-0.25	-0.18	-0.31	-0.43	0.24
EC	0.40	0.47	0.45	0.63	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.04	-0.043	0.03	-0.01	0.02
Council	0.10	0.23	-0.10	0	0.30	0.12	0	0.11	0.40	0.38	0.20	0
Other institutions	0.62	0.28	0.49	0.50	0.55	0.50	0.60	-0.21	0	0.03	-0.21	0.06
Environmental protection												
EP	0.12	0.08	0.19	0.41	-0.12	0	-0.13	-0.10	-0.23	-0.32	-0.27	0.15
EC	0.37	0.45	0.12	0.65	0.50	0	-0.05	-0.11	0.13	0.32	0.16	0.07
Council	0	-0.08	0	0	0.20	0	0.46	0	0.07	0.27	0.21	0
Other institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.17	0	0

Source: own calculation. The data presented in the table have been used for the construction of the three spider-plots presented in Figures 5.13 (policy field: immigration, asylum and borders control); 5.14 (policy field: economy); and 5.15 (policy field: environmental protection) of chapter 5 of this work (see Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 124, 125 and 125 respectively).

Appendix C

The first section – C.1 – of this appendix details the structure of the inductive coding procedure for each of the analysed targets of EU-opposition: the EU-policies; the EU-elite; the EU-regime and the EU-community.

Section C.2 reports the assessment of both validity and reliability of the inductive coding procedure applied in this work. Section C.3 details the construction of the word-clouds presented in chapter 6 of this work. Section C.4 reports the tables indicating the result of the inductive coding procedure for each included target of EU-opposition.

The conclusive section C.5 reports the speeches' segments cited in Chapter 6 in their original language following their order of appearance and providing further information concerning the speeches.

C.1 Structure of the inductive coding procedure

The inductive coding for the EU-policy target is the only one presenting three different schemes, one for each of the included policy issue: economy, immigration, asylum and borders control and environmental protection.

Starting from the field of economic policy, 23 macro-categories aggregated in 6 broad themes have been created (see Table C.1 below). The first theme classifies Qs depending on parties' stances on EU's regulation of the economic policy. Parties' motivation are classified as belonging to the categories of: freedom of enterprise; private property rights; the supranational economic planning; EU's control over prices; the introduction of a European minimal wage; EU's action to encourage enterprise (incentives) and European regulation of the market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors.

A second theme emerging from the analysis relates to parties' stances on the redistribution of resources in the EU's horizontal (transnational) dimension. Depending on their wish to redistribute resources across member states, parties' negative stances can either oppose or support a Keynesian management of the economy by the EU alongside the implementation of transnational solidarity mechanisms to help the member states experiencing a difficult economic situation. Due to the importance played by austerity measures in the EU's economic crisis, the third theme encompasses motivations endorsing or not 'EU's economic orthodoxy' and relates to parties' negative or positive stances to both the implementation of austerity measures and structural reforms. Three 'residual' themes are created to collect justifications of opposition related to 1) EU's economic imperialism (parties' stances toward the European model of growth, thus either favouring economic growth even if

it is damaging the society and the environment – pro EU’s economic imperialism – or disapproving it – against EU’s economic imperialism); 2) EU’s protectionism encompassing motivations either favouring or rejecting the implementation of protectionist policies at the EU level, and 3) general non-specified (critique to technical aspects of the policy under discussion).

Table C. 1: Scheme of the inductive coding procedure related to negatively coded Qs addressing the EU-policy target in the field of economic policy.

Inductive coding scheme: opposition to the EU-policy in the field of economy	
Macro category	Theme
Pro free enterprise (laissez-faire)	EU’s regulation of economic policy
Against EU’s economic planning	
Against EU’s controlled economy	
Against EU’s economic incentives	
Against EU’s regulation of market/banking/financial and fiscal sectors	
Against free enterprises (lasses faire)	
Pro EU’s economic planning	
Pro EU’s controlled economy	
Pro EU’s economic incentives	
Pro EU’s regulation of market/banking/financial and fiscal sectors	
Against EU’s Keynesian management	
Against transnational solidarity among EU member states	
Pro EU’s Keynesian management	
Pro transnational solidarity among EU member states	
Against EU’s austerity measures	EU’s economic orthodoxy
Against EU’s structural reforms	
Pro EU’s austerity measures	
Pro EU’s structural reforms	
Against EU’s economic imperialism	EU’s Economic imperialism
Pro EU’s economic imperialism	
EU’s Protectionism positive	EU’s Protectionism
EU’s Protectionism negative	
General technical critique	General non specified

Also in the field of immigration policies, 6 broad themes are created. Interestingly, such themes mirror the distinction between ‘immigration control’ and ‘immigrant’ policies already formulated by scholars in the field (see Hammar 1985). The theme ‘immigration control policies’ concerns the regulation of the entry and stay of foreigners in the EU, thus the control of external borders, ‘illegal’ migrants crossing, illicit systems connected to the entrance of migrants in the EU territory (e.g.: migrants’ smugglers); the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory; the resources used alongside a ‘law and order’ dimension concerning the effects (real or perceived) of migrants’ entrance on EU’s internal security. Parties can either endorse a restrictive or a permissive approach to the ‘immigration control policies’ as reported in Table C.2 below.

The second broad theme reports motivations concerning ‘asylum seekers’ including the recognition of the status of asylum seeker; alternative ways to help asylum seekers (even help in their country of origin); the reform of the Dublin system and the effects that asylum seekers may have on

the EU territory. Also in this case, national parties may endorse either a restrictive or a permissive approach. The choice to separate this thematic from the general ‘immigration control policies’ (either restrictive or permissive) is done to track parties’ stances to an issue (asylum) that rose in importance during the last three years in connection with both the Syrian and the so-called ‘migration crisis’ reaching its peak in mid-2015.

The third broad theme concerns the ‘immigrants policies’ reported above referring to the integration of migrants within the EU territory from several perspectives: the economic integration (e.g.: integration of migrants in the labour market); the impact of migrants on EU’s welfare state, and the cultural and religious integration of migrants. Even in this case, parties’ motivations can be coded either as restrictive or as permissive.

Other three ‘residual’ themes are constructed to include motivations for: 1) EU’s agreement with Turkey (general references to the EU-Turkey agreement, the internal Turkish situation and the respect of human rights in Turkey); 2) Effects of the EU policies on the immigration crisis (e.g.: EU policies’ effects on Africa), and 3) general technical critiques (related to technical aspects of the policies under discussion).

Table C. 2: Scheme of the inductive coding procedure related to negatively coded Qs addressing the EU-policy target in the field of immigration policy.

Inductive coding scheme: opposition to the EU-policies in immigration/ asylum and borders control policies	
Macro-categories	Theme
Restriction of borders control (identification of migrants at border)	Immigration control policies
Illegal migrants	
Collusion with illicit systems (e.g.: human trafficking)	
Help migrants in third or origin countries	
Restrictive approach toward the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory	
Restrictive approach in the use of resources to welcome migrants	
Restrictive approach to the transfer of resources to other MS in difficult situations	
Enlarging security control	
Permissive approach to Borders control (identification of migrants at the borders).	
Increased guarantee of human rights and application of humanitarian measure to welcome migrants.	
Collusion with illicit systems (e.g.: human trafficking)	
Permissive approach to the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory	
Permissive approach to the use of resources to welcome migrants	
Deepening the understandings of the migration’s roots	
Stricter rules for the recognition and eventual expulsion of Asylum seekers (at borders)	Asylum seekers’ control
Help asylum seekers in their country of origin	
Connection between asylum seekers’ arrival and increase of immigration	
Negative effects of asylum seekers’ entrance on the EU territory	
Need for an holistic approach to asylum seekers	

Reform of the Dublin system to ensure more protection for asylum seekers	
Increase of humanitarian aid targeting asylum seekers' arrival	
General restrictive address to the integration of migrants	Integration of migrants
Negative perception of economic integration of migrants	
Negative effects of integration of migrants on the welfare state	
Restrictive approach to the cultural and religious integration of migrants	
General permissive address to the integration of migrants	
Positive perception of the economic integration of migrants	
General addresses	Agreement with Turkey
Relationship between the Turkish agreement and 'mass migration'	
Turkish internal situation	
Human rights (protection) in relation to the Turkish agreement	
Role of the EU in foreign countries	Effects of EU policies within the immigration crisis
Cooperation with third countries permissive	
Cooperation with third countries restrictive	
General technical critique	General non specified

Turning to environmental protection, the inductive coding procedure highlights the presence of 10 macro-categories that are aggregated into four broad themes (see Table C.3 below).

Parties that justify their opposition using motivations belonging to the first broad theme refer to the relationship between European environmental protection policies and economy; the use of alternative energy resources and the European Emissions Trading System (ETS).

The second included theme relates to the genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and includes motivations either sustaining or opposing the production and distribution of GMOs within the EU territory. The analysis creates this 'ad hoc' theme for GMOs because they represent a highly politicised issue in the EU creating deep divisions among EU member states (Mühlböck and Tosun 2017).

The third created broad theme refers to all the motivations either endorsing or rejecting a European solution of the so-called 'Dieselgate' scandal.

Lastly, a 'residual' theme includes the motivations reporting a general technical critique of the procedure under discussion.

Table C. 3: Scheme of the inductive coding procedure related to the negatively coded Qs addressing the EU-policy target in the field of environmental policy

Inductive coding scheme: opposition to the EU-policies in environmental protection policies	
Macro-categories	Theme
Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of the economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	Relationship between environmental protection and economy
Opposing EU's action in the implementation of alternative energy resources	
Opposing the EU ETS (Emission Trading System)	
Favouring EU's environmental protection even at the expenses of the economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	
Favouring EU's action in the implementation of alternative energy resources	
Favouring the EU ETS (Emission Trading System)	

Against GMOs' distribution and/or production in the EU	GMO
Favouring GMOs' distribution and/or production in the EU	
Opposing the EU's solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	Dieselgate scandal
Favouring the EU's solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	
General technical critique	General non specified

Moving the attention to the EU elite target the inductive coding procedure highlights 12 macro-categories that are aggregated into five broader themes (valid for all the analysed policy issues, see Table C.4 below).

Parties may motivate their opposition to the EU-elite evaluating their 'performances' – how much the elite is competent, skilful, and productive in carrying out its duties (theme 1). Alternatively, the EU-elite can be judged for its moral conduct (e.g.: accuses of collusion between the EU-elite and illicit systems), for its general ideological orientation (e.g.: pro-Europeanism, liberalism, pro-globalization and so on), or for the characteristics, powers and competencies related to its role (e.g.: democratic accountability or lack thereof). The analysis stresses the presence of a 'residual' category including motivations targeting the performance, the characteristics, powers and competencies and the moral quality of specific members of the EU-elite (e.g.: Jean Claude Juncker).

Table C. 4: Summary table of the inductive coding procedure referred to the negative coded Qs related to the EU-elite target in all the three considered policy fields.

Macro-categories and themes deriving from the inductive coding procedure of negatively coded segments related to the EU-elite target (three policy fields considered)	
Macro-category	Theme
Activity of the EU-elite	Performance of the EU elite
Ethical behaviour of the EU-elite	Moral conduct of the EU elite
Collusion of the EU-elite with illicit systems	
EU elite favours particular/personal interests	
Federalist attitude of the EU-elite	Ideological orientation of the EU elite
Attitude of the EU-elite toward integration	
Attitude of the EU-elite toward globalization	
Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	
General ideological orientation of the EU elite in the three policy fields	
Democratic accountability of the EU-elite	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU elite
Technocratic/bureaucratic nature of the EU-elite	
EU-elite's authority	
Performance of specific members of the EU-elite (e.g.: Merkel, Draghi, Juncker)	Specific members of the EU elite
Moral conduct of specific members of the EU-elite (e.g.: Merkel, Draghi, Juncker)	

For the third included target, the EU-regime, the inductive coding procedure highlights the presence of five broad themes valid for all the discussed policy fields (see Table C.5 below).

Parties judging the EU-regime on the basis of the first theme are critical of its performance evaluating how much the EU-institutions are efficient in fulfilling their duties.

Alternatively, parties express judgements of the characteristics, the powers and the competencies of the EU-regime using motivations belonging to the second theme (e.g.: evaluations concerning the lack of democratic accountability of the EC).

The third broad theme encompasses accuses of collusion between the EU-regime and illicit systems (e.g.: involvement of the EC in the Dieselgate scandal) while the fourth theme refers to parties' judgement concerning the general ideological orientation of the EU-regime (e.g.: the liberal orientation of the EC).

Similarly to what have been done for the previous targets, also in this case a 'residual' theme is constructed to collect motivations targeting other EU's institutions (like the ECB, Frontex and so on), their performance, their values, their characteristics, powers and competencies, their potential collusion with illicit systems and their ideological orientation.

Table C. 5: Summary table of the inductive coding procedure referred to the negative coded Qs related to the EU-regime target in all the three considered policy fields.

Macro-categories and themes deriving from the inductive coding procedure of negatively coded segments related to the EU-regime target (three policy fields considered)	
Macro-categories	Themes
Performance of the EC	Performance of the EU-regime
Performance of the EP	
Performance of the Council	
Performance of the EU-regime in general	
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EP	
Characteristics powers and competencies of the Council	
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime in general	
EC and illicit systems	EU regime in general and illicit systems
EP and illicit systems	
Council and illicit systems	
Ideological orientation of the EC	Ideological orientation of the EU-regime
Ideological orientation of the EP	
Ideological orientation of the Council	
Performance of specific institutions (ECB, Frontex and so on)	Other institutions
Characteristics powers and competencies of other specific institutions (ECB, Frontex and so on)	
Other specific institutions and illicit systems	
Ideological orientation of other specific institutions	

As for the last included target, the EU-community, 6 broad themes (alongside 24 macro-categories) are created (see Table C.6 below).

Parties' contestation of the EU-community on the basis of the allocation of competencies and accuses of power grab toward member states and international organizations are coded under the first broad theme. Alternatively, parties criticise the EU on the basis of its current (and future) characteristics powers and competencies or lack thereof (second theme). This theme collects

motivations targeting EU's unity and harmonization, the values of the EU as emerging from its founding Treaties (e.g.: democracy, rule of law, subsidiarity, solidarity), the perceived ideological orientation of the EU-community (e.g.: multiculturalism, liberal orientation) and the degree of 'complexity' of the EU (e.g.: perception of the EU as a bureaucratic construct).

Parties justifying their opposition referring to the role that the EU plays within the relative policy field use motivations belonging to the third theme.

The fourth included theme collects justifications related to the widening and deepening of the EU, thus reporting motivations addressing either the EU enlargement or the process of European integration.

The fifth created theme gathers all those motivations expressing a wish to reform the EU (even vague motivations, like the expression of the need of 'another Europe' are included in this theme).

Conversely, a sixth theme collects parties' justifications expressing the rejection and the potential secession from the EU.

Two further themes account for the two geometries studied in this work: the Euro area and the Schengen area. The first one collects all those motivations dealing with: the role of the Euro in the economic crisis; the need to reform the Euro area; the wish to take back national currencies' control, and the rejection of the Euro alongside the proposals to exit from the Euro area. The theme 'Schengen area geometry' includes all those instances dealing with: the role of Schengen in the migration crisis (effects of Schengen); the need to reform the Schengen area; the wish to take back national borders' control and the rejection of the Schengen area alongside demands for suspension or abolition of the Schengen agreement.

Table C. 6: Summary table of the inductive coding procedure referred to the negative coded QSs related to the EU-community target in all the three considered policy fields.

Macro-categories and themes deriving from the inductive coding procedure of negatively coded segments related to the EU-Community target (three policy fields considered)	
Macro-categories	Theme
Power grab of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> member states	Powers and competencies of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> national and supranational bodies
Power grab of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> international bodies	
Unity and harmonisation among member states.	Characteristics of the EU
Perceived ideological orientation of the EU (e.g.: liberal, socialist union)	
EU as a technocratic/bureaucratic construct	
EU's values (democracy, rule of law, solidarity etc.)	
Role of the EU in the economic crisis	Role of the EU in the three analysed policy fields
Role of the EU in the immigration crisis	
Role of the EU in environmental protection	
EU integration	Widening and deepening of the EU
EU enlargement	
Need to reform the EU	Reformist position
Rejection of the EU	Rejectionist position
Rejection and secession from the EU	
Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the economic crisis	Geometry Euro

Reform of the Euro area	
National currency control	
Rejection of the Euro and the Euro area (exit)	
Role of the Schengen agreement in the current immigration crisis	Geometry Schengen
Reform of the Schengen agreement	
National borders' control	
Rejection of the Schengen agreement (exit from the Schengen area)	

C.2 Validity and reliability of the inductive coding procedure

As mentioned in Chapter 4 of this work (See Chapter 4, section 4.3, page 102-103), the applied inductive procedure relies on the analysis of both the ‘manifest’ and the ‘latent’ content of the coded-negative Qs.

As for the manifest content, it creates few problems of reliability because of its relative objectivity: a quasi-sentence showing the word ‘austerity’ associated with words like ‘creation’ and ‘unemployment’ objectively points toward the negative consequences of the application of austerity policies on the labour market.

On the contrary, the analysis of the latent content is less reliable because of the higher level of the coder’s subjectivity. However, as mentioned in appendix A with reference to the deductive phase of coding, also the inductive phase rests on careful case-by-case examination. In other words, in spite of the large amount of coded-negatively Qs inductively examined (see Table C.7 below), it was possible to analyse all of them applying the same personal evaluation (Neuendorf 2002; Creagan 2005). Furthermore, a higher standard of accuracy has been achieved thanks to a three-steps examination implying: 1) sorting segments into micro-categories; 2) aggregating the identified micro-categories into macro-categories, and 3) aggregating the identified macro-categories into broader themes (see Tables C.1-C.6 above reporting the aggregation of macro-categories into broader themes). Indeed, a higher standard of accuracy is enforced by iterative data examination and analysis done by the same researcher, thus preserving self-reliability.

Unfortunately, as mentioned for the deductive coding procedure, also the inductive coding procedure relies on a single coder, thus inter-coder reliability cannot be assessed. However, the work relies on the instrument of ‘word-clouds’ – see the next section – which provide the reader with a sort of ‘face validity’ concerning the content of the coded negative Qs.

Table C. 7: Frequency of the coded-negative QSs used in the inductive coding analysis.

Issue	Party name	Number of coded negative QSs by policy target				Row total
		EU-policy	EU-elite	EU-regime	EU-community	
Economy	AFD	217	81	90	109	497
	FN	1031	158	364	401	1954
	LN	209	44	44	118	415
	UKIP	326	110	167	439	1042
	FSM	820	169	161	164	1314
	LINKE	140	38	30	18	226
	PODEMOS	469	54	58	56	637
	CDU-CSU	SUPPORT	110	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	110
	PS	288	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	288
	PD	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	---
	PP	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	---
CON	SUPPORT	18	19	65	102	
Total coded-negative QSs economy		3500	782	933	1370	6585
Immigration, asylum and borders control	AFD	110	26	13	29	178
	FN	588	184	75	393	1240
	LN	232	138	19	86	475
	UKIP	333	79	25	353	790
	FSM	297	28	12	65	402
	LINKE	105	32	5	SUPPORT	142
	PODEMOS	197	35	19	31	282
	CDU-CSU	SUPPORT	123	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	123
	PS	220	21	29	SUPPORT	270
	PD	603	88	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	691
	PP	168	27	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	195
CON	250	75	27	37	389	
Total coded-negative QSs immigration, asylum and borders control		3103	856	224	994	5177
Environmental protection	AFD	87	8	11	26	132
	FN	1050	58	125	238	1471
	LN	131	8	11	24	174
	UKIP	305	38	122	249	714
	FSM	SUPPORT	58	48	SUPPORT	106
	LINKE	11	NO MENTIONS	NO MENTIONS	NO MENTIONS	11
	PODEMOS	SUPPORT	41	37	15	93
	CDU-CSU	SUPPORT	38	43	SUPPORT	81
	PS	SUPPORT	14	33	SUPPORT	47
	PD	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	45	SUPPORT	45
	PP	SUPPORT	15	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	15
CON	186	43	15	SUPPORT	244	
Total coded-negative QSs environmental protection		1770	321	490	552	3133
Total number of coded negative QSs		8373	1959	1647	2916	14895

Source: own calculation. Frequencies are presented by party, issue and target of opposition. Row and column totals are provided.

C.3 Word-clouds

The word-clouds presented in Chapter 6 of this work have been constructed relying on the R-studio software using both the package ‘tm’ and the package ‘wordcloud’¹.

To construct the word-clouds, different corpora corresponding to each party’s negative coded Qs have been constructed. Texts have been pre-processed following some standard guidelines:

1. Elimination of the so-called stop-words² for each of the five included languages (English, Spanish, German, French and Italian, see the lists of stop-words reported below)
2. Texts have then been lowercased and cleaned from eventual punctuation signs, double spaces and numbers;
3. A list of so-called n-grams³ has been created to allow the word-cloud taking into consideration n-grams as single words.

The lists of removed stop-words for each of the five included languages are the following:

English stop-words: ("i"; "me"; "my"; "myself"; "we"; "our"; "ours"; "ourselves"; "you"; "your"; "yours"; "yourself"; "yourselves"; "he"; "him"; "his"; "himself"; "she"; "her"; "hers"; "herself"; "it"; "its"; "itself"; "they"; "them"; "their"; "theirs"; "themselves"; "what"; "which"; "who"; "whom"; "this"; "that"; "these"; "those"; "am"; "is"; "are"; "was"; "were"; "be"; "been"; "being"; "have"; "has"; "had"; "having"; "do"; "does"; "did"; "doing"; "would"; "should"; "could"; "ought"; "i'm"; "you're"; "he's"; "she's"; "it's"; "we're"; "they're"; "i've"; "you've"; "we've"; "they've"; "i'd"; "you'd"; "he'd"; "she'd"; "we'd"; "they'd"; "i'll"; "you'll"; "he'll"; "she'll"; "we'll"; "they'll"; "isn't"; "aren't"; "wasn't"; "weren't"; "hasn't"; "haven't"; "hadn't"; "doesn't"; "don't"; "didn't"; "won't"; "wouldn't"; "shan't"; "shouldn't"; "can't"; "cannot"; "couldn't"; "mustn't"; "let's"; "that's"; "who's"; "what's"; "here's"; "there's"; "when's"; "where's"; "why's"; "how's"; "a"; "an"; "the"; "and"; "but"; "if"; "or"; "because"; "as"; "until"; "while"; "of"; "at"; "by"; "for"; "with"; "about"; "against"; "between"; "into"; "through"; "during"; "before"; "after"; "above"; "below"; "to"; "from"; "up"; "down"; "in"; "out"; "on"; "off"; "over"; "under"; "again"; "further"; "then"; "once"; "here"; "there"; "when"; "where"; "why"; "how"; "all"; "any"; "both"; "each"; "few"; "more"; "most"; "other"; "some"; "such"; "no"; "nor"; "not"; "only"; "own"; "same"; "so"; "than"; "too"; "very")

French stop-words: ("au"; "aux"; "avec"; "ce"; "ces"; "dans"; "de"; "des"; "du"; "elle"; "en"; "et"; "eux"; "il"; "je"; "la"; "le"; "leur"; "lui"; "ma"; "mais"; "me"; "même"; "mes"; "moi"; "mon"; "ne"; "nos"; "notre"; "nous"; "on"; "ou"; "par"; "pas"; "pour"; "qu"; "que"; "qui"; "sa"; "se"; "ses"; "son"; "sur"; "ta"; "te"; "tes"; "toi"; "ton"; "tu"; "un"; "une"; "vos"; "votre"; "vous"; "c"; "d"; "j"; "l"; "à"; "m"; "n";

¹ Further information about the R package ‘tm’ can be found at: <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/tm/tm.pdf> Further information about the R package ‘wordcloud’ can be found at: <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/wordcloud/wordcloud.pdf>

² Stop words are the words that are generally filtered out before or after processing of natural language data (texts). The term stop-words refers to the most common words in a language that can be considered as ‘empty words’. Some examples are conjunctions, articles, modal verbs and so on.

³ N-grams can be defined as a contiguous sequence of n items from a given sample of text or speeches. In this case, n-grams are a contiguous sequence of words (bigrams or trigrams generally). Such sequence of words has a meaning per se that differs from the meaning of each single component of the n-gram. The classical example of n-gram is European Union.

"s"; "t"; "y"; "été"; "été"; "étés"; "étés"; "étant"; "suis"; "es"; "est"; "sommes"; "êtes"; "sont"; "serai"; "seras"; "sera"; "serons"; "serez"; "seront"; "serais"; "serait"; "serions"; "seriez"; "seraient" "étais"; "était"; "étions"; "étiez"; "étaient"; "fus"; "fut"; "fûmes"; "fûtes"; "furent"; "sois"; "soit"; "soyons" "soyez"; "soient"; "fusse"; "fusses"; "fût"; "fussions" "fussiez" "fussent"; "ayant"; "eu"; "eue"; "eues"; "eus"; "ai"; "as"; "avons"; "avez"; "ont"; "aurai"; "auras"; "aura"; "aurons"; "aurez"; "auront"; "aurais"; "aurait"; "aurions"; "auriez"; "auraient" "avais"; "avait"; "avons"; "aviez"; "avaient" "eut"; "eûmes"; "eûtes"; "eurent"; "aie"; "aies"; "ait"; "ayons"; "ayez"; "aient"; "eusse"; "eusses"; "eût"; "eussions" "eussiez" "eussent" "ceci"; "cela"; "celà"; "cet"; "cette"; "ici"; "ils"; "les"; "leurs"; "quel"; "quels"; "quelle"; "quelles"; "sans"; "soi")

German stop-words: ("aber"; "alle"; "allem"; "allen"; "aller"; "alles"; "als"; "also"; "am"; "an"; "ander"; "andere"; "anderem"; "anderen"; "anderer"; "anderes"; "andrem"; "andern"; "andere"; "anders"; "auch"; "auf"; "aus"; "bei"; "bin"; "bis"; "bist"; "da"; "damit"; "dann"; "der"; "den"; "des"; "dem"; "die"; "das"; "daß"; "derselbe" "derselben" "denselben"; "desselben" "demselben" "dieselbe" "dieselben" "dasselbe" "dazu"; "dein"; "deine"; "deinem"; "deinen"; "deiner"; "deines"; "denn"; "derer"; "dessen"; "dich"; "dir"; "du"; "dies"; "diese"; "diesem"; "diesen"; "dieser"; "dieses"; "doch"; "dort"; "durch"; "ein"; "eine"; "einem"; "einen"; "einer"; "eines"; "einig"; "einige"; "einigem"; "einigen"; "einiger"; "einiges"; "einmal"; "er"; "ihn"; "ihm"; "es"; "etwas"; "euer"; "eure"; "eurem"; "euren"; "eurer"; "eures"; "für"; "gegen"; "gewesen"; "hab"; "habe"; "haben"; "hat"; "hatte"; "hatten"; "hier"; "hin"; "hinter"; "ich"; "mich"; "mir"; "ihr"; "ihre"; "ihrem"; "ihren"; "ihrer"; "ihres"; "euch"; "im"; "in"; "indem"; "ins"; "ist"; "jede"; "jedem"; "jeden"; "jeder"; "jedes"; "jene"; "jenem"; "jenen"; "jener"; "jenes"; "jetzt"; "kann"; "kein"; "keine"; "keinem"; "keinen"; "keiner"; "keines"; "können"; "könnte"; "machen"; "man"; "manche"; "manchem"; "manchen"; "mancher" "manches"; "mein"; "meine"; "meinem"; "meinen"; "meiner"; "meines"; "mit"; "muß"; "mußte"; "nach"; "nicht"; "nichts"; "noch"; "nun"; "nur"; "ob"; "oder"; "ohne"; "sehr"; "sein"; "seine"; "seinem"; "seinen"; "seiner"; "seines"; "selbst"; "sich"; "sie"; "ihnen"; "sind"; "so"; "solche"; "solchem"; "solchen"; "solcher"; "solches"; "soll"; "sollte"; "sondern"; "sonst"; "über"; "um"; "und"; "uns"; "unser"; "unserm"; "unsern"; "unser"; "unser"; "unser"; "unter"; "viel"; "vom"; "von"; "vor"; "während"; "war"; "waren"; "warst"; "was"; "weg"; "weil"; "weiter"; "welche"; "welchem"; "welchen"; "welcher"; "welches"; "wenn"; "werde"; "werden"; "wie"; "wieder"; "will"; "wir"; "wird"; "wirst"; "wo"; "wollen"; "wollte"; "würde"; "würden"; "zu"; "zum"; "zur"; "zwar"; "zwischen").

Spanish stop-words: ("de"; "la"; "que"; "el"; "en"; "y"; "a"; "los"; "del"; "se"; "las"; "por"; "un"; "para"; "con"; "no"; "una"; "su"; "al"; "lo"; "como"; "más"; "pero"; "sus"; "le"; "ya"; "o"; "este"; "sí"; "porque"; "esta"; "entre"; "cuando"; "muy"; "sin"; "sobre"; "también"; "me"; "hasta"; "hay"; "donde"; "quien"; "desde"; "todo"; "nos"; "durante"; "todos"; "uno"; "les"; "ni"; "contra"; "otros"; "ese"; "eso"; "ante"; "ellos"; "e"; "esto"; "mí"; "antes"; "algunos"; "qué"; "unos"; "yo"; "otro"; "otras"; "otra"; "él"; "tanto"; "esa"; "estos"; "mucho"; "quienes"; "nada"; "muchos"; "cual"; "poco"; "ella"; "estar"; "estas"; "algunas"; "algo"; "nosotros"; "mi"; "mis"; "tú"; "te"; "tí"; "tu"; "tus"; "ellas"; "nosotras"; "vosotros"; "vosotras"; "os"; "mío"; "mía"; "míos"; "mías"; "tuyo"; "tuya"; "tuyos"; "tuyas"; "suyo"; "suya"; "suyos"; "suyas"; "nuestro"; "nuestra"; "nuestros"; "nuestras"; "vuestro"; "vuestra"; "vuestros"; "vuestras"; "esos"; "esas"; "estoy"; "estás"; "está"; "estamos"; "estáis"; "están"; "esté"; "estés"; "estemos"; "estéis"; "estén"; "estaré"; "estarás"; "estará"; "estaremos"; "estaréis"; "estarán"; "estaría"; "estarías"; "estaríamos"; "estaríais"; "estarían"; "estaba"; "estabas"; "estábamos"; "estabais"; "estaban"; "estuve"; "estuviste"; "estuvo"; "estuvimos"; "estuvisteis" "estuvieron" "estuviera"; "estuvieras"; "estuviéramos" "estuvierais" "estuvieran"; "estuviese"; "estuvieses"; "estuviésemos" "estuviésemos" "estuviésemos" "estuviésemos"; "estando"; "estado"; "estada"; "estados"; "estadas"; "estad"; "he"; "has"; "ha"; "hemos"; "habéis"; "han"; "haya"; "hayas"; "hayamos"; "hayáis"; "hayan"; "habré"; "habrás"; "habrá"; "habremos"; "habréis"; "habrán"; "habría"; "habrías"; "habríamos"; "habríais"; "habrían"; "había"; "habías"; "habíamos"; "habíais"; "habían"; "hube"; "hubiste"; "hubo"; "hubimos"; "hubisteis"; "hubieron"; "hubiera"; "hubieras"; "hubiéramos"; "hubierais"; "hubieran"; "hubiese"; "hubieses"; "hubiésemos"; "hubieseis"; "hubiesen"; "habiendo"; "habido"; "habida"; "habidos"; "habidas"; "soy"; "eres"; "es"; "somos"; "sois"; "son"; "sea"; "seas"; "seamos"; "seáis"; "sean"; "seré"; "serás"; "será"; "seremos";

"seréis"; "serán"; "sería"; "serías"; "seríamos"; "seríais"; "serían"; "era"; "eras"; "éramos"; "erais"; "eran"; "fui"; "fuiste"; "fue"; "fuimos"; "fuisteis"; "fueron"; "fuera"; "fueras"; "fuéramos"; "fuerais"; "fueran"; "fuese"; "fueses"; "fuésemos"; "fueseis"; "fuesen"; "siendo"; "sido"; "tengo"; "tienes"; "tiene"; "tenemos"; "tenéis"; "tienen"; "tenga"; "tengas"; "tengamos"; "tengáis"; "tengan"; "tendré"; "tendrás"; "tendrá"; "tendremos"; "tendréis"; "tendrán"; "tendría"; "tendrías"; "tendríamos"; "tendríais"; "tendrían"; "tenía"; "tenías"; "teníamos"; "teníais"; "tenían"; "tuve"; "tuviste"; "tuvo"; "tuvimos"; "tuvisteis"; "tuvieron"; "tuviera"; "tuvieras"; "tuviéramos"; "tuvierais"; "tuvieran"; "tuviese"; "tuvieses"; "tuviésemos"; "tuvieseis"; "tuviesen"; "teniendo"; "tenido"; "tenida"; "tenidos"; "tenidas"; "tened").

Italian stop-words ("ad"; "al"; "allo"; "ai"; "agli"; "all"; "agli"; "alla"; "alle"; "con"; "col"; "coi"; "da"; "dal"; "dallo"; "dai"; "dagli"; "dall"; "dagli"; "dalla"; "dalle"; "di"; "del"; "dello"; "dei"; "degli"; "dell"; "degli"; "della"; "delle"; "in"; "nel"; "nello"; "nei"; "negli"; "nell"; "negli"; "nella"; "nelle"; "su"; "sul"; "sullo"; "sui"; "sugli"; "sull"; "sugli"; "sulla"; "sulle"; "per"; "tra"; "contro"; "io"; "tu"; "lui"; "lei"; "noi"; "voi"; "loro"; "mio"; "mia"; "miei"; "mie"; "tuo"; "tua"; "tuoi"; "tue"; "suo"; "sua"; "suoi"; "sue"; "nostro"; "nostra"; "nostri"; "nostre"; "vostro"; "vostra"; "vostr"; "vostre"; "mi"; "ti"; "ci"; "vi"; "lo"; "la"; "li"; "le"; "gli"; "ne"; "il"; "un"; "uno"; "una"; "ma"; "ed"; "se"; "perché"; "anche"; "come"; "dove"; "dove"; "che"; "chi"; "cui"; "non"; "più"; "quale"; "quanto"; "quanti"; "quanta"; "quante"; "quello"; "quelli"; "quella"; "quelle"; "questo"; "questi"; "questa"; "queste"; "si"; "tutto"; "tutti"; "a"; "c"; "e"; "i"; "l"; "o"; "ho"; "hai"; "ha"; "abbiamo"; "avete"; "hanno"; "abbia"; "abbiate"; "abbiano"; "avrò"; "avrà"; "avrà"; "avremo"; "avrete"; "avranno"; "avrei"; "avresti"; "avrebbe"; "avremmo"; "avreste"; "avrebbero"; "avevo"; "avevi"; "aveva"; "avevamo"; "avevate"; "avevano"; "ebbi"; "avesti"; "ebbe"; "avemmo"; "aveste"; "ebbero"; "avessi"; "avesse"; "avessimo"; "avessero"; "avendo"; "avuto"; "avuta"; "avuti"; "avute"; "sono"; "sei"; "è"; "siamo"; "siete"; "sia"; "siate"; "siano"; "sarò"; "sarai"; "sarà"; "saremo"; "sarete"; "saranno"; "sarei"; "saresti"; "sarebbe"; "saremmo"; "sareste"; "sarebbero"; "ero"; "eri"; "era"; "eravamo"; "eravate"; "erano"; "fui"; "fosti"; "fu"; "fummo"; "foste"; "furono"; "fosti"; "fosse"; "fossimo"; "fossero"; "essendo"; "faccio"; "fai"; "facciamo"; "fanno"; "faccia"; "facciate"; "facciano"; "farò"; "farai"; "farà"; "faremo"; "farete"; "faranno"; "farei"; "faresti"; "farebbe"; "faremmo"; "fareste"; "farebbero" "facevo"; "facevi"; "faceva"; "facevamo"; "facevate"; "facevano"; "feci"; "facesti"; "fece"; "facemmo"; "faceste"; "fecero"; "facessi"; "facesse"; "facessimo"; "facessero"; "facendo"; "sto"; "stai"; "sta"; "stiamo"; "stanno"; "stia"; "stiate"; "stiano"; "starò"; "starai"; "starà"; "staremo"; "starete"; "staranno"; "starei"; "staresti"; "starebbe"; "staremmo"; "stareste"; "starebbero"; "stavo"; "stavi"; "stava"; "stavamo"; "stavate"; "stavano"; "stetti"; "stesti"; "stette"; "stemmo"; "steste"; "stettero"; "stessi"; "stesse"; "stessimo"; "stessero"; "stando")

The final part of this section reports the R-script containing the n-grams constructed to build the word-clouds. It is to be noted that n-grams are translated in all the used languages to assure comparability between the word-clouds.

for (j in seq(docs))

{

```
docs[[j]] <- gsub("steven maijoor", "steven_maijoor", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("front national", "front_national", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("national front", "national_front", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("movimento cinque stelle", " movimento_cinque_stelle ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("five stars movement", " five_stars_movement ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("lega nord", " lega_nord ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("liga nord", " liga_nord ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("liga norte", " liga_norte ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("northern league", " northern_league ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european parliament", "european_parliament", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("parlement européen", "parlement_européen", docs[[j]])
```

```

docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäische parlament", "europäische_parliament", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("parlamento europeo", "parlamento_europeo", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("consiglio europeo", "consiglio_europeo", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäische rat", "europäische_rat ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäischer rat", "europäische_rat ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european council", "european_council ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("consejo europeo", "consejo_europeo ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("comisión europea", "comisión_europea ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european commission", "european_commission ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäische kommission", "europäische_kommission ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("commission européenne", "commission_européenne ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("commissione europea", "commissione_europea ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european union", "european_union", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäische union", "europäische_union", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("unión europea", "unión_europea", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("unione europea", "unione_europea", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("union européenne", "union_européenne", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("member state", "member_states", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("member states", "member_states", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("états membre", "états_membres", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("états membres", "états_membres", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("état membre", "état_membres", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("états membre", "états_membres", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("estado miembro", "estados_miembros", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("estados miembros", "estados_miembros", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("estado miembro", "estados_miembros", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("stato membro", "stati_membri", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("stati membri", "stati_membri", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banking union", "banking_union", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("unión bancaria", "unión_bancaria", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("union bancaire", "union_bancaire", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("unione bancaria", "unione_bancaria ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("capital market union", "capital_market_union", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("mercato unico", "mercato_unico", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("mercado único", "mercado_único", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("common market", "common_market", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("poteri forti", "poteri_forti", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("gran coalición", "gran_coalición", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("bail in", "bail_in", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("bail out", "bail_out ", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("politiche economiche", "politiche_economiche", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("política económica", "politiche_economiche", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("politique économique", "politiques_économiques", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("politiques économiques", "politiques_économiques", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("políticas económicas", "políticas_económicas", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("política económica", "políticas_económicas", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("bilancio europeo", "bilancio_europeo", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european budget", "european_budget", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("porsupuesto europeo", "porsupuesto_europeo", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("riforme strutturali", "riforme_strutturali", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("riforma strutturale", "riforme_strutturali", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("structural reform", "structural_reforms", docs[[j]])

```

```

docs[[j]] <- gsub("réforme structurelle", "réformes_structurelles", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("réformes structurelles", "réformes_structurelles", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("reforma estructural", "reformas_estructurales", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("reformas estructurales", "reformas_estructurales", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("structural reform", "structural_reforms", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("structural reforms", "structural_reforms", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("strukturelle reform", "strukturelle_reformen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("strukturelle reformen", "strukturelle_reformen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("settore bancario", "settore_bancario", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banking sector", "banking_sector", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("shadow banking", "shadow_banking", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banca sombra", "bancas_sombra", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("bancas sombra", "bancas_sombra", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("gue ngl", "gue_ngl", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("deutsche bank", "deutsche_bank", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("europäische zentralbank", "ezb", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banca centrale europea", "bce", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european central bank", "ecb", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banco central europeo", "bce", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banque centrale européenne", "bce", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banca centrale", "banca_centrale", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("banco central", "banco_central", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("central bank", "central_bank", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european borders coast guard", "ebcg", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("guardia europea fronteras costas", "gefc", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("european border coast guard", "ebcg", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("zona euro", "area_euro", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("area euro", "area_euro", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("euro area", "euro_area", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("euro zone", "euro_area", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("zone euro", "zone_euro", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("area schengen", "area_schengen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("zona schengen", "area_schengen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("schengen area", "schengen_area", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("espacio schengen", "espacio_schengen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("grandes grupos", "grandes_grupos", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("grandi gruppi", "grandi_gruppi", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("espace schengen", "espace_schengen", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("schengen raum", "schengen_raum", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("schengen raums", "schengen_raum", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("emissions trading system", "ets", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("emissionshandelssystem", "ets", docs[[j]])
docs[[j]] <- gsub("asylum system", "asylum_system", docs[[j]])
}

```

C.4 Tables presenting the inductive coding procedure's results.

As mentioned before this section presents the tables related to the results obtained during the inductive coding procedure applied on the coded-negative Qs for each included EU-target by policy

field. The tables presented in this section refer to the analysis reported in chapter 6 of this work and to the constructed word-clouds (see Figures 6.1-6.12 presented in chapter 6 of this work).

The constructed Tables (C.8-C.19) report the two most used themes by each party to oppose the corresponding target alongside the corresponding percentage and frequency of the coded-negative Qs; the main used motivations alongside the related percentage and frequency of the coded-negative Qs; and the character of the exercised opposition (principled or pragmatic) alongside the relative percentage of Qs)⁴.

⁴ As observed in chapter 4 (see Chapter 4, section 4.2, page 101), a party exercises a principled opposition if the majority of the coded negative Qs display a principled character; otherwise its opposition is classified as pragmatic.

Table C. 8: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-policy target (economic policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
EU's regulation of economic policy	AFD	41 (54)	Pro EU's economic planning	38 (21)	Pragmatic	61 (135)	217
	FN	35 (183)	Against EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	33 (62)	Principled	51 (516)	1031
	LN	10 (15)	Against EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	40 (6)	Principled	71 (148)	209
	UKIP	85 (184)	Against EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	78 (144)	Principled	67 (217)	326
	FSM	53 (323)	Pro EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	71 (230)	Pragmatic	74 (605)	820
	LINKE	83 (75)	Pro EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	77 (58)	Pragmatic	64 (90)	140
	PODEMOS	62 (170)	Pro EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	78 (133)	Pragmatic	59 (276)	469
	PS	52 (120)	Pro EU's regulation of market, banking, financial and fiscal sectors	75 (91)	Pragmatic	81 (232)	288
Redistribution of resources at the EU level	LINKE	7 (6)	Pro EU's Keynesian management	100 (6)	Pragmatic	64 (90)	140
	PODEMOS	13 (37)	Pro EU's Keynesian management	97 (36)	Pragmatic	59 (276)	469
	FSM	8 (47)	Pro EU's Keynesian management	76 (36)	Pragmatic	74 (605)	820
EU's economic orthodoxy	AFD	12 (16)	Pro EU's austerity measures	75 (12)	Pragmatic	61 (135)	217
	FN	19 (100)	Against EU's austerity measures	100 (100)	Principled	51 (516)	1031
	LN	34 (51)	Against EU's austerity measures	100 (51)	Principled	71 (148)	209
	UKIP	15 (32)	Against EU's austerity measures	100 (32)	Principled	67 (217)	326
	PS	21 (49)	Against EU's austerity measures	100 (49)	Pragmatic	81 (232)	288

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.1 of chapter 6, section 6.2, page 134.

Table C. 9: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-policy target (immigration policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Immigration control policies	AFD	53 (44)	Illegal migrants	45 (20)	Principled	74 (82)	110
	FN	68 (334)	Illegal migrants	47 (158)	Principled	83 (588)	588
	LN	59 (101)	Illegal migrants	57 (58)	Principled	74 (171)	232
	UKIP	57 (152)	Illegal migrants	38 (59)	Principled	80 (267)	333
	FSM	71 (166)	Permissive approach to the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory	27 (46)	Pragmatic	78 (232)	297
	LINKE	30 (19)	Deepening the understandings of migration's roots	42 (8)	Pragmatic	59 (62)	105
	PODEMOS	32 (36)	Permissive approach to Borders control (identification of migrants at border).	69 (25)	Principled	56 (110)	197
	PS	51 (101)	Permissive approach to the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory	27 (28)	Pragmatic	90 (199)	220
	PD	49 (266)	Permissive approach to the redistribution of migrants within the EU territory	46 (123)	Pragmatic	90 (543)	603
	PP	54 (89)	Restriction of borders control (identification of migrants at border)	23 (21)	Pragmatic	97 (163)	168
CON	43 (104)	Restriction of borders control (identification of migrants at border)	38 (40)	Pragmatic	96 (241)	250	
Asylum seekers' control	AFD	19 (16)	Stricter rules for the recognition and eventual expulsion of Asylum seekers (at borders)	87 (14)	Principled	74 (82)	110
	LINKE	42 (26)	Increase of humanitarian aid targeting asylum seekers' arrival	88 (23)	Pragmatic	59 (62)81	105
	FSM	15 (35)	Reform the Dublin system to ensure more protection for asylum seekers	58 (21)	Pragmatic	78 (232)	297
	PODEMOS	25	Increase of humanitarian aid targeting	60	Principled	56	197

		(28)	asylum seekers' arrival	(17)		(110)	
	PS	19	Need of an holistic approach to	53	Pragmatic	90	220
		(39)	asylum seekers	(21)		(199)	
	PD	13	Reform the Dublin system to ensure	81	Pragmatic	90	603
		(69)	more protection for asylum seekers	(56)		(543)	
	PP	14	Need of an holistic approach to	95	Pragmatic	97	168
		(23)	asylum seekers	(22)		(163)	
	CON	11	Stricter rules for the recognition and	52	Pragmatic	96	250
		(27)	eventual expulsion of Asylum seekers	(14)		(241)	
			(at borders)				
	FN	15	Negative perception of economic	75	Principled	83	588
		(76)	integration of migrants	(57)			
Integration	LN	15	Negative perception of economic	76	Principled	83	232
of migrants		(25)	integration of migrants	(19)		(171)	
	UKIP	11	Negative perception of economic	80	Principled	80	333
		(31)	integration of migrants	(25)		(267)	

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.2 of chapter 6, section 6.2, page 137.

Table C. 10: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-policy target (environmental protection policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Relation between environmental protection and economy	AFD	54 (28)	Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	57 (16)	Pragmatic	60 (52)	87
	FN	74 (431)	Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	70 (304)	Pragmatic	55 (578)	1050
	LN	57 (41)	Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	87 (36)	Pragmatic	54 (71)	131
	UKIP	79 (178)	Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	65 (116)	Pragmatic	69 (212)	305
	LINKE	62 (5)	Opposing the EU ETS (Emission Trading System)	100 (5)	Pragmatic	73 (8)	11
	CON	49 (91)	Opposing EU's environmental protection at the expenses of economic growth (e.g.: EU climate policy)	75 (69)	Pragmatic	99 (184)	186
Dieselgate scandal	AFD	25 (13)	Opposing the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	69 (9)	Pragmatic	60 (52)	87
	FN	6 (34)	Opposing the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	73 (25)	Pragmatic	55 (578)	1050
	LN	3 (2)	Favouring the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	100 (2)	Pragmatic	54 (71)	131
	UKIP	4 (8)	Opposing the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	100 (8)	Pragmatic	69 (212)	305
	LINKE	38 (3)	Favouring the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	100 (3)	Pragmatic	73 (8)	11
	CON	16 (30)	Favouring the EU solution of the 'Dieselgate' scandal	96 (29)	Pragmatic	99 (184)	186

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.3 of chapter 6, section 6.2, page 140.

Table C. 11: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-elite target (economic policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Performance of the EU-elite	PODEMOS	100 (42)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (42)	Pragmatic	77 (42)	54
	AFD	25 (15)	Ethical behaviour of the EU elite	80 (12)	Principled	75 (61)	81
Moral conduct of the EU elite	FN	43 (49)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	75 (37)	Principled	72 (114)	158
	LN	37 (11)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	63 (7)	Principled	68 (30)	44
	UKIP	49 (37)	Ethical behaviour of the EU elite	75 (28)	Principled	68 (75)	110
	LINKE	56 (19)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	57 (11)	Principled	64 (34)	38
	FSM	33 (42)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	71 (30)	Principled	75 (127)	169
Ideological orientation of the EU elite	UKIP	29 (22)	Attitude of the EU-elite toward integration	100 (22)	Principled	68 (75)	110
	CDU-CSU	58 (64)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (64)	Principled	58 (64)	110
	CON	100 (12)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (12)	Principled	67 (12)	18
Specific members of the EU elite	AFD	37 (23)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Mario Draghi	95 (22)	Principled	75 (61)	81
	FN	20 (23)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Jean Claude Juncker	69 (16)	Principled	72 (114)	158
	LN	33 (10)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Jean Claude Juncker	90 (9)	Principled	68 (30)	44
	LINKE	32 (11)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Jean Claude Juncker	100 (11)	Principled	64 (34)	38
	FSM	34 (43)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Jean Claude Juncker	88 (38)	Principled	75 (127)	169

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.4 of chapter 6, section 6.3, page 143.

Table C. 12: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-elite target (immigration policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Performance of the EU-elite	FN	28 (46)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (46)	Principled	87 (160)	184
	UKIP	11 (8)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (8)	Principled	87 (69)	79
	FSM	4 (1)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (1)	Principled	75 (21)	28
	PP	100 (16)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (16)	Pragmatic	59 (16)	27
	CON	80 (41)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (41)	Pragmatic	68 (51)	75
Moral conduct of the EU elite	FN	42 (67)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (67)	Principled	87 (160)	184
	LN	58 (73)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (73)	Principled	91 (125)	138
	UKIP	75 (52)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (52)	Principled	87 (69)	79
	LINKE	79 (19)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (19)	Principled	75 (24)	32
	PODEMOS	39 (11)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (11)	Principled	80 (28)	35
	FSM	96 (20)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (20)	Principled	75 (21)	28
	PS	12 (2)	Ethical behaviour of the EU elite	100 (2)	Principled	85 (18)	21
	PD	15 (12)	Ethical behaviour of the EU elite	100 (12)	Principled	89 (79)	88
Ideological orientation of the EU elite	AFD	37 (9)	General ideological orientation of the EU elite in the three policy fields	100 (9)	Principled	92 (24)	26
	LN	19 (24)	Attitude of the EU-elite toward integration	100 (24)	Principled	91 (125)	138
	LINKE	16 (4)	General ideological orientation of the EU elite in the three policy fields	100 (4)	Principled	75 (24)	32

	PODEMOS	46 (13)	General ideological orientation of the EU elite in the three policy fields	100 (13)	Principled	80 (28)	35
	CDU-CSU	100 (106)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (106)	Principled	86 (106)	123
	PS	88 (16)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (16)	Principled	85 (18)	21
	PD	83 (66)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (66)	Principled	89 (79)	88
	CON	17 (9)	Extremist orientation of the EU-elite	100 (9)	Pragmatic	68 (51)	75
Specific members of the EU elite	AFD	33 (8)	Performance of specific members of the EU elite: Angela Merkel	100 (8)	Principled	92 (24)	26

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.5 of chapter 6, section 6.3, page 146.

Table C. 13: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-elite target (environmental protection policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Performance of the EU-elite	LN	40 (2)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (2)	Principled	63 (5)	4
	PODEMOS	100 (24)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (24)	Pragmatic	58 (24)	41
	FSM	19 (8)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (8)	Principled	71 (41)	58
	CDU-CSU	100 (29)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (29)	Pragmatic	76 (29)	38
	PS	100 (10)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (10)	Pragmatic	71 (10)	14
	PP	100 (14)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (14)	Pragmatic	91 (14)	15
	CON	68 (26)	Activity of the EU-elite	100 (26)	Pragmatic	88 (38)	43
Moral conduct of the E U elite	AFD	20 (1)	Ethical behaviour of the EU elite	100 (1)	Principled	63 (5)	8
	LN	60 (3)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (3)	Principled	63 (5)	8
	UKIP	29 (6)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (6)	Principled	55 (21)	38
	FSM	61 (25)	EU elite favours particular, personal interests	100 (25)	Principled	71	58
Ideological orientation of the EU elite	CON	26 (10)	General ideological orientation of the EU elite in the three policy fields	100 (10)	Pragmatic	88 (38)	43
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU elite	AFD	40 (2)	Technocratic, bureaucratic nature of the EU elite	100 (2)	Principled	63 (5)	8
	FN	26 (13)	Technocratic, bureaucratic nature of the EU elite	100 (13)	Principled	84 (49)	58
	UKIP	52 (11)	Technocratic, bureaucratic nature of the EU elite	100 (11)	Principled	55 (21)	38
Specific members of the EU elite	FN	26 (13)	Moral conduct of specific members of the EU elite: Jean Claude Juncker	100 (13)	Principled	84 (49)	58

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.6 of chapter 6, section 6.3, page 149.

Table C. 14: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-regime target (economic policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Performance of the EU-regime	LINKE	47 (9)	Performance of the EC	88 (8)	Pragmatic	63 (19)	30
	PODEMOS	17 (6)	Performance of the EC	100 (6)	Pragmatic	60 (35)	30
	FSM	57 (58)	Performance of the EC	55 (32)	Pragmatic	63 (101)	161
	CON	31 (5)	Performance of the EC	60 (3)	Pragmatic	84 (16)	19
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime	AFD	12 (6)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	50 (3)	Principled	56 (50)	90
	FN	43 (103)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	93 (96)	Principled	66 (240)	364
	LN	39 (9)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime in general	66 (6)	Principled	53 (23)	44
	UKIP	75 (105)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	93 (98)	Principled	83 (139)	167
	CON	62 (10)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EP	80 (8)	Pragmatic	84 (16)	19
Other institutions	AFD	86 (46)	Characteristics powers and competencies of other specific institutions: ECB	84 (39)	Principled	56 (50)	90
	FN	41 (100)	Characteristics powers and competencies of other specific institutions: ECB	46 (46)	Principled	66 (240)	364
	LN	43 (10)	Characteristics powers and competencies of other specific institutions: ECB	70 (7)	Principled	53 (23)	44
	UKIP	14 (20)	Characteristics powers and competencies of other specific institutions: ECB	55 (11)	Principled	83 (139)	167
	FSM	31 (32)	Performance of specific institutions: ECB	78 (25)	Pragmatic	63 (101)	161
	LINKE	53 (10)	Performance of specific institutions: ECB	100 (10)	Pragmatic	63 (19)	30
	PODEMOS	80 (28)	Performance of specific institutions: ECB	78 (22)	Pragmatic	60 (35)	58

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.7 of chapter 6, section 6.4, page 152.

Table C. 15: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-regime target (immigration policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded negative QSs
Performance of the EU-regime	AFD	29 (3)	Performance of the EP	66 (2)	Principled	79 (10)	13
	FN	24 (13)	Performance of the EC	54 (7)	Principled	72 (54)	75
	LN	60 (6)	Performance of the EP	100 (6)	Pragmatic	52 (10)	19
	LINKE	80 (4)	Performance of the EU regime in general	100 (4)	Pragmatic	100 (5)	5
	FSM	67 (6)	Performance of the EC	66 (4)	Pragmatic	75 (9)	12
	PS	100 (29)	Performance of the Council	100 (29)	Pragmatic	100 (29)	29
	CON	86 (20)	Performance of the EP	55 (11)	Pragmatic	85 (23)	27
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime	FN	37 (20)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	50 (10)	Principled	72 (54)	75
	UKIP	52 (12)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime in general	50 (6)	Principled	92 (23)	25
	FSM	33 (3)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EP	100 (3)	Pragmatic	75 (9)	12
Ideological orientation of the EU-regime	AFD	30 (5)	Ideological orientation of the EC	80 (4)	Principled	79 (10)	13
	LINKE	20 (1)	Ideological orientation of the EU regime in general	100 (1)	Pragmatic	100 (5)	5
Other institutions	LN	40 (4)	Other specific institution: European Council	100 (4)	Pragmatic	52 (10)	19
	UKIP	26 (6)	Other specific institutions: European Borders and Coast Guards (Frontex)	200 (6)	Principled	92 (23)	25
	PODEMOS	100 (12)	Other specific institutions: European Borders and Coast Guards (Frontex)	100 (12)	Principled	63 (12)	19
	CON	9 (2)	Other specific institutions: European Borders and Coast Guards (Frontex)	9 (2)	Pragmatic	85 (23)	29

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.8 of chapter 6, section 6.4, page 155.

Table C. 16: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-regime target (environmental protection policy field)

Theme	National parties' clusters	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Performance of the EU-regime	AFD	20 (2)	Performance of the EU regime in general	100 (2)	Principled	90 (10)	11
	LN	86 (6)	Performance of the EC	(4)	Pragmatic	63 (7)	11
	PODEMOS	88 (24)	Performance of the Council	(18)	Pragmatic	73 (27)	37
	FSM	80 (20)	Performance of the EC	(16)	Pragmatic	52 (25)	48
	CDU-CSU	100 (34)	Performance of the EC	100 (34)	Pragmatic	79 (34)	43
	PS	90 (19)	Performance of the EC	(12)	Pragmatic	64 (21)	33
	PD	100 (41)	Performance of the EC	(29)	Pragmatic	91 (41)	45
	CON	40 (4)	Performance of the EP	100 (4)	Principled	67 (10)	15
Characteristics powers and competencies of the EU regime	AFD	80 (8)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	(7)	Principled	90 (10)	11
	FN	76 (89)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	(82)	Principled	93 116	125
	UKIP	83 (90)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	(75)	Principled	88 (108)	122
	FSM	8 (2)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EP	(2)	Pragmatic	52 (25)	48
	PODEMOS	11 (3)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EP	(2)	Pragmatic	73 (27)	37
	CON	60 (6)	Characteristics powers and competencies of the EC	100 (6)	Pragmatic	67 (10)	15
EU-regime and illicit systems	UKIP	9 (10)	EC and illicit systems	100 (10)	Principled	88 (108)	122
Ideological	FN	19	Ideological orientation of the EC	(20)	Principled	93	125

orientation of the EU-regime	LN	(22) 14 (1)	Ideological orientation of the EC	100 (1)	Pragmatic	(116) 63 (7)	11
Other institutions	PS	5 (1)	Performance of specific institutions (ESMA)	100 (1)	Pragmatic	64 (21)	33

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.9 of chapter 6, section 6.4, page 157.

Table C. 17: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-community target (economic policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Powers and competencies of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> national, supranational and international bodies	AFD	56 (59)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (59)	Principled	97 (106)	109
	FN	64 (250)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (250)	Principled	51 (392)	401
	LN	35 (31)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (31)	Principled	71 (88)	108
	PODEMOS	74 (23)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (23)	Principled	55 (31)	56
	CON	73 (38)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (38)	Principled	80 (52)	65
Characteristics of the EU	UKIP	28 (122)	Unity and harmonisation among member states.	100 (122)	Principled	97 (430)	439
	FSM	2 (2)	Unity and harmonisation among member states.	100 (2)	Principled	66 (108)	164
Reformist position	LINKE	27 (4)	Need to reform the EU	100 (4)	Pragmatic	83 (15)	18
Geometry Euro	AFD	30 (32)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	56 (18)	Principled	97 (106)	109
	FN	19 (74)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	45 (34)	Principled	51 (392)	401
	LN	37 (33)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	57 (19)	Principled	71 (88)	108
	UKIP	29 (123)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	66 (82)	Principled	97 (430)	439
	FSM	84 (91)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	46 (42)	Principled	66 (108)	164
	LINKE	47	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	85	Pragmatic	83	18

	(7)	area) in the current economic crisis	(6)		(15)	
PODEMOS	16 (5)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	100 (5)	Principled	55 (31)	56
CON	19 (10)	Role of the Euro (and the Euro area) in the current economic crisis	50 (5)	Principled	80 (52)	65

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.10 of chapter 6, section 6.5, page 160.

Table C. 18: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative Qs for the EU-community target (immigration policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of Qs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of Qs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative Qs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative Qs
Powers and competencies of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> national and supranational bodies	AFD	43 (12)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	75 (9)	Principled	96 (28)	29
	FN	51 (200)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (200)	Principled	99 (392)	393
	UKIP	39 (138)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	94 (130)	Principled	100 (353)	353
Role of the EU in the three analysed policy fields	PODEMOS	10 (2)	Role of the EU in the immigration crisis	100 (2)	Pragmatic	67 (21)	31
	FSM	11 (6)	Role of the EU in the immigration crisis	100 (6)	Pragmatic	80 (52)	65
Characteristics of the EU	LN	29 (25)	EU's values (democracy, rule of law, solidarity etc.)	100 (25)	Principled	98 (85)	86
Reformist position	PODEMOS	90 (19)	Need to reform the EU	100 (19)	Pragmatic	67 (21)	31
	FSM	88 (46)	Need to reform the EU	100 (46)	Pragmatic	80 (52)	65
	CON	32 (9)	Need to reform the EU	100 (9)	Pragmatic	76 (28)	37
Geometry Schengen	AFD	32 (9)	Rejection of the Schengen agreement	55 (5)	Principled	96 (28)	29
	FN	38 (151)	National borders' control	30 (46)	Principled	99 (392)	393
	LN	29 (25)	Reform of the Schengen agreement	18 (16)	Principled	98 (85)	86
	UKIP	18 (65)	Role of the Schengen agreement in the current immigration crisis	52 (34)	Principled	100 (353)	353
	CON	36 (10)	Role of the Schengen agreement in the current immigration crisis	80 (8)	Pragmatic	76 (28)	37

Source: Own calculation. Table connected the to word-clouds presented in Figure 6.11 of chapter 6, section 6.5, page 163.

Table C. 19: Results of the inductive coding analysis of the coded-negative QSs for the EU-community target (environmental protection policy field)

Theme	National parties	Percentage of QSs belonging to the theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Main used macro-category	Percentage of QSs for each macro-category in relation to each theme (frequency in parenthesis)	Character of the opposition	Overall percentage of negative QSs showing the related character (frequency in parenthesis)	Total number of coded-negative QSs
Powers and competencies of the EU <i>vis-à-vis</i> national and supranational bodies	AFD	79 (19)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (19)	Principled	92 (24)	26
	FN	56 (132)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (112)	Principled	99 (235)	238
	LN	38 (8)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (8)	Principled	86 (21)	24
	UKIP	66 (162)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (148)	Principled	99 (247)	249
	PODEMOS	77 (10)	Power grab of the EU vis-a-vis member states	100 (10)	Principled	87 (13)	15
Role of the EU in the three analysed policy fields	FN	29 (70)	Role of the EU in environmental protection	100 (70)	Principled	99 (235)	238
	LN	29 (6)	Role of the EU in environmental protection	50 (3)	Principled	86 (21)	24
	PODEMOS	23 (3)	Role of the EU in environmental protection	100 (3)	Principled	87 (13)	15
Characteristics of the EU	AFD	12 (3)	EU's values: EU as a non-democratic construct	100 (3)	Principled	92 (24)	26
Widening and deepening of the EU	UKIP	24 (58)	EU integration	100 (58)	Principled	99 (247)	249

Source: Own calculation. Table connected to the word-clouds presented in Figure 6.12 of chapter 6, section 6.5, page 166.

C.5 Cited segments

This section contains the details concerning the segments cited in chapter 6 of this work. The segments are reported in the original language of the speaker. Further information concerning each speech is contained in the bold parts. Such information concerns the date and place of the plenary session, the title of the related speech and the name of the speaker alongside the name of the national party to which the speaker belongs.

Wednesday, 16 December 2015, Strasbourg. ‘Bringing transparency, coordination and convergence to corporate tax policies’. Speaker: Jonathan Arnott (UKIP).

‘Finally, the call for a common consolidated corporate tax base is an anathema to what UKIP stands for’.

Wednesday, 26 November 2014, Strasbourg. Collection of statistical information by the European Central Bank. Speaker: Sophie Montel (FN).

‘Nous considérons que cela ne doit pas se faire au profit de la Banque centrale européenne, dont nous rejetons les orientations en matière de gouvernance monétaire et le dogmatisme ultralibéral.’

Wednesday, 28 October 2015, Strasbourg. European Structural and Investment Funds and sound economic governance. Speaker: Dominique Bilde (FN).

‘D’autre part, ce rapport fait reposer l’augmentation de la dette publique uniquement sur les politiques des États membres, alors que la majeure partie vient d’un transfert de dette privée vers le public (notamment depuis l’euro ou les lois interdisant l’emprunt à 0% auprès des banques nationales), renforcée par la politique austéritaire exigée par Bruxelles’.

Wednesday, 24 June 2015, Brussels. Review of the economic governance framework: stocktaking and challenges. Speaker: Gianluca Buonanno (LN).

‘I risultati delle politiche europee sono sotto gli occhi di tutti: disoccupazione di lunga durata, disagio sociale e Stati membri che non riescono a far quadrare i conti’.

Thursday, 30 April 2015, Strasbourg. European Investment Bank annual report 2013. speaker: Bernd Lucke (AFD).

‘Entschuldigung, das Problem in Europa ist nicht, daß zu viel gespart wird, sondern daß zu viele Schulden gemacht werden’.

Tuesday, 10 March 2015. Strasbourg. European Central Bank annual report for 2013. speaker: Fabio Massimo Castaldo (FSM).

‘Per sviluppare una politica monetaria realmente efficace, sarebbe necessaria una ristrutturazione completa del sistema bancario, che separi l’attività di credito da quella finanziaria, al fine di riportare il sistema stesso alla sua vera funzione, ovvero quella di garantire credito all’economia reale’

Wednesday, 24 June 2015, Brussels. European Fund for Strategic Investments. Speaker: Lola Sanchez Caldentey (PODEMOS).

‘Votamos en contra de la propuesta de la Comisión ya que, si bien el resultado del diálogo tripartito mejoró la intolerable propuesta de la Comisión, este Fondo no constituye en absoluto, ni por su dimensión ni por sus formas de administración, la apuesta contra cíclica que Europa necesita’.

Thursday, 25 February 2016. Brussels. European Central Bank annual report for 2014. Speaker: Laura Ferrara (FSM).

‘Sono causa di una crescente disoccupazione, soprattutto giovanile, e stanno minando i sistemi sociali in materia di istruzione, sanità e welfare, che dovrebbero costituire i pilastri della società europea’.

Tuesday, 27 October 2015 – Strasbourg. Mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation. Speaker: Isabelle Thomas (PS).

‘Mais nous devons aller plus loin en adoptant une taxe européenne sur les multinationales, seul instrument capable de mettre fin à la course au moins-disant fiscal en Europe’.

Wednesday, 11 March 2015 – Strasbourg. European Semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social aspects in the Annual Growth Survey 2015 - European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2015 - Single market governance within the European Semester 2015. Speaker: Guillaume Balas (PS).

‘En effet, le rapport concernant l'emploi et les aspects sociaux dans le cadre de l'examen annuel de la croissance dresse une analyse lucide des conséquences désastreuses des politiques d'austérité ayant sévi dans les pays périphériques de l'Union mais aussi des mesures accélérées de consolidation budgétaire qui ont cassé la mécanique de la reprise’.

Thursday, 15 September 2016, Strasbourg. Prospectus to be published when securities are offered to the public or admitted to trading. Speaker: Mara Bizzotto (LN).

‘Tuttavia questa relazione insiste sul fatto che la colpa del fallimento di questo meccanismo degli Stati membri e non della UE, che con le sue folli politiche non fa nulla per fermare l'invasione di clandestini in corso in Italia’.

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 – Brussels. Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council on migration (14 September 2015). Speaker Beatrix von Stroch (AFD).

‘Asyl ist nicht die Antwort auf die Armut in der Welt. Wir müssen darüber reden, das staatliche Asylrecht durch ein privates zu ersetzen. Die Kirche soll Kirchenasyl gewähren. Wir müssen anfangen, das Asylrecht neu zu denken!’.

Wednesday, 14 September 2016 – Strasbourg. Travel document for the return of illegally staying third-country nationals. Speaker: Markus Pretzell (AFD).

‘Die Rückführung ist das erste und das oberste Ziel, und zwar für jeden, der mit Asylgrund zu uns einreist oder auch ohne’.

Tuesday, 8 September 2015 – Strasbourg. Provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. Speaker: Mara Bizzotto (LN).

‘Questa decisione, però affronta il problema immigrazione in modo del tutto superficiale: basti pensare che l'Europa non solo non distingue fra migranti economici e profughi, ma che nell'affrontare il nodo centrale della ricollocazione, non terrà conto degli arrivi di clandestini precedenti alla sua entrata in vigore’.

Wednesday, 9 September 2015 – Strasbourg. Provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. Speaker: Sylvie Goddyn (FN).

‘Ces nouveaux arrivants, motivés le plus souvent par des raisons économiques, entreront en concurrence directe avec les Européens les plus démunis dans le domaine de l'accueil au travail, à la santé et au logement’.

Wednesday, 26 October 2016 – Strasbourg. EU policies and actions to protect children in the context of migration. Speaker: Cornelia Ernst (LINKE).

‘Und die Tatsache, daß es eben keine legalen Wege nach Europa gibt, setzt diese Kinder existentiellen Gefahren für Leib und Leben aus’.

Wednesday, 20 May 2015 – Strasbourg. European Agenda on Migration. Speaker: Gabriele Zimmer (LINKE).

‘Sind wir bereit, zu akzeptieren, daß wir uns selber, unser Leben, unseren Standard ja auch verändern müssen, um den Menschen wirklich die Hilfe anzubieten, die sie brauchen?’

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 – Brussels. Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council on migration. Speaker: Marco Valli (FSM).

‘Senza un meccanismo di ricollocazione obbligatorio e permanente per tutti quegli Stati membri che subiscono un'eccezionale pressione migratoria’

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Decision adopted on the Common European Asylum System reform. Speaker: Laura Ferrara (FSM).

‘Come si tutela il primo paese d'ingresso, che continua ad avere ancora il maggior onere nella responsabilità e nell'esame delle richieste di asilo e nella gestione degli sbarchi?’

Wednesday, 5 October 2016 – Strasbourg. Preparation of the European Council meeting of 20 and 21 October 2016. Speaker: Miguel Urbán Crespo (PODEMOS).

‘Las políticas xenófoba de la Europa fortaleza están convirtiendo el Mediterráneo en la mayor fosa común del mundo’.

Wednesday, 11 February 2015 – Strasbourg. Way forward for Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office. Speaker: Lola Sánchez Caldentey (PODEMOS).

‘Estamos violando sistemáticamente derechos humanos, no solo con devoluciones en caliente, sino también instalando cuchillas en las vallas, maltratando en centros de internamiento para extranjeros, embistiendo con nuestros barcos patrulla endebles embarcaciones repletas de migrantes, e incluso ha habido casos en los que las autoridades europeas han apretado el gatillo’.

Tuesday, 13 January 2015 – Strasbourg. Recent human smuggling incidents in the Mediterranean. Speaker: Christine Revault D'Allonnes Bonnefoy (PS).

‘La vraie priorité, c'est le développement de canaux légaux de migration pour les migrants et la définition de voies d'accès sûres vers l'UE pour les demandeurs d'asile’.

Tuesday, 8 September 2015 – Strasbourg. Provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. Speaker: Geoffrey van Orden (CONSERVATIVES).

‘Instead of making the problem worse we should focus on improving border security and a functioning system for the processing of migrants, including the return of those that are not genuine refugees’.

Wednesday, 25 November 2015 – Strasbourg. Outcome of the Valletta summit of 11 and 12 November 2015 and of the G20 summit of 15 and 16 November 2015. Speaker: Estéban González Pons (PP).

‘Debemos reforzar nuestras fronteras exteriores para que nadie caiga en la tentación de levantar nuevas fronteras interiores’.

Wednesday, 10 June 2015 – Strasbourg. Conclusion of the Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. Speaker: Lorenzo Fontana (LN).

‘Ribadiamo il voto contrario. Essere a favore di un mondo più verde non significa imporre solo all'Europa e alle proprie imprese dei limiti e degli svantaggi’.

Wednesday, 26 November 2014 – Strasbourg. 2014 UN Climate Change Conference - COP 20 in Lima, Peru. Speaker: Roger Helmer (UKIP).

‘Our green policies are forcing energy-intensive business out of Europe altogether, taking their jobs and their investment with them’.

Wednesday, 3 February 2016 – Strasbourg. Objection pursuant to Rule 106 on emissions from light passenger and commercial vehicles (Euro 6). Speaker: Dominique Bilde (FN).

‘J’ai souhaité voter contre cette proposition de résolution, une nouvelle fois née d’un scandale politico-médiatique et sans aucune vision à long terme des intérêts de l’industrie automobile européenne’.

Tuesday, 6 October 2015 – Strasbourg. Emission measurements in the automotive sector. Speaker: Roger Helmer (UKIP).

‘I am concerned that the potential hit to Volkswagen could damage all of us, especially if, as many expect, other companies are drawn into the scandal’.

Tuesday, 6 October 2015. Emission measurements in the automotive sector. Speaker: Cornelia Ernst (LINKE).

‘Was wir brauchen, sind sichere Verfahren und Tests zur Umsetzung von Standards, damit europäische Autos auch tatsächlich Abgasarm und energieeffizient sind’.

Tuesday, 24 November 2015 – Strasbourg. Tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect. Speaker: Mara Bizzotto (LN).

‘Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, si ravvisa molto chiaramente l’azione dei poteri forti e occulti, finanziari ma anche politici, che impediscono addirittura alla Commissione di lavorare, impongono a chi di dovere, signor Moscovici, parlo di lei di dare alla commissione TAXE i documenti su cui indagare’.

Wednesday, 8 June 2016 – Strasbourg. Mid-term review of the Investment Plan. Speaker: Nigel Farage (UKIP).

‘They rejected a disastrous bailout deal created by technocrats in a vacuum detached from the misery of the ordinary Greek people. And the other feature I have noticed here is the growth of what I can only describe as authoritarianism. You know, we actually saw the Prime Minister of Greece removed effectively by a coup d’état and we saw Mr Berlusconi removed by a coup d’état and in both cases represented by appointees who were former directors of Goldman Sachs’.

Tuesday, 15 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Bringing transparency, coordination and convergence to corporate tax policies. Speaker: Bernard Monot (FN).

‘Mais je doute de la sincérité des intentions lorsque l’on sait que M. Juncker est le principal artisan du scandale des LuxLeaks’.

Wednesday, 30 November 2016 – Brussels. MFF revision. Speaker: Marco Zanni (FSM).

‘Inutile parlare di flessibilità del quadro finanziario pluriennale e chiedere più risorse, quando alla prima occasione il falco di turno, come ha fatto ieri il presidente dell’Eurogruppo, invita esclusivamente al rispetto rigoroso delle regole’.

Tuesday, 24 November 2015 – Strasbourg. Tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect. Speaker: Fabio de Masi (LINKE).

‘Der Ausschuß wir hätten uns einen echten Untersuchungsausschuß gewünscht ist auf eine Omertà, eine Mauer des Schweigens, gestoßen. Und auch nicht die Finanzminister der großen Mitgliedstaaten D wie meines Heimatlands Deutschland D die dazu schwiegen, weil heimische Konzerne profitierten. Die Finanzminister haben doch gepennt und weggesehen’.

Monday, 21 November 2016 – Strasbourg. European Central Bank annual report for 2015. Speaker: Beatrix von Storch (AFD).

‘Sie machen Politik. Sie wollen Arbeitsmarktpolitik machen, und Sie wollen Italien oder Griechenland am Austritt aus dem Euro hindern. Sie machen Politik. Aber Sie haben dazu kein Mandat’.

Wednesday, 28 October 2015 – Strasbourg. European Semester for economic policy coordination: implementation of 2015 priorities - Steps towards completing the Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: David Coburn (UKIP).

‘Mr President, most people in this place talk about one of three things: themselves, their own amendments or how wonderful the EU is, or indeed all three at once’.

Wednesday, 8 July 2015 – Strasbourg. Conclusions of the European Council (25-26 June 2015) and of the Euro Summit (7 July 2015) and the current situation in Greece. Speaker: Pablo Iglesias (PODEMOS).

‘Ojalá sepan escuchar ustedes, señor Weber, ojalá sepan escuchar ustedes, señor Juncker, lo que han dicho los griegos en el referéndum del pasado domingo.(...) Pásense al bando que defiende los derechos sociales y abandonen, de una vez, esa maldita gran coalición que nos está llevando al desastre’.

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 – Brussels. Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council on migration. Speaker: Fabio Massimo Castaldo (FSM).

‘Ho visto ancora più ipocrisia nel versare lacrime per un giorno davanti a una fotografia senza fare nulla sul campo’.

Tuesday, 2 February 2016 – Strasbourg. Refugee emergency, external borders control and future of Schengen - Respect for the international principle of non-refoulement - Financing refugee facility for Turkey - Increased racist hatred and violence against refugees and migrants across Europe. Lorenzo Fontana (LN).

‘Dall'altra parte, però, la cosa che mi sorprende che non ci sia magari un interesse. Che qualcuno magari non abbia l'interesse a fare in modo che tutte queste persone entrino? Perché mi sembra quasi che qualcuno voglia creare il caos. Creare il caos, non so per quale motivo, ma evidentemente ci sono interessi importanti che qualcuno non vuole debellare’.

Tuesday, 19 May 2015 – Strasbourg. Situation in Hungary. Speaker: Laura Ferrara (FSM).

‘Inaccettabile ignorare questa deriva antidemocratica nel cuore dell'Europa e lavarsi la coscienza, come fanno gli struzzi che mettono la testa sotto la sabbia’.

Tuesday, 2 February 2016 – Strasbourg. Refugee emergency, external borders control and future of Schengen - Respect for the international principle of non-refoulement - Financing refugee facility for Turkey - Increased racist hatred and violence against refugees and migrants across Europe. Speaker: Cornelia Ernst (LINKE).

‘Und wir müssen auch eines wohl sagen: Der Aufstieg der Rechten in Europa und die Gewalt an Flüchtlingen, die sich wie ein Virus verbreitet, das hat auch seine Ursachen. Nämlich, daß hier in diesem Hause nicht gesagt wird: Gewalt an Flüchtlingen ist ein Verbrechen’.

Thursday, 17 September 2015 – Brussels. Council Decision establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy, Greece and Hungary. Speaker: Miguel Urbán Crespo (PODEMOS).

‘Esperamos que la posición de la UE al respecto sea clara y aisle y margine las solicitudes de la extrema derecha en materia de migración, que pretenden, siguiendo su agenda, la bunkerización de Europa y el consiguiente cierre de fronteras’.

Wednesday, 29 April 2015 – Strasbourg. Report of the extraordinary European Council meeting (23 April 2015) - The latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies. Speaker: Cornelia Ernst (LINKE).

‘Sie sind die Schuldigen. Genau wie alle anderen, die mitmachen, die schweigen, die wegschauen, die Toten nicht sehen können, die den Familien der Opfer nicht in die Augen schauen wollen’.

Tuesday, 16 December 2014 – Strasbourg. Shortage of funding for the World Food Programme aid scheme to Syrian refugees. Speaker: Markus Pretzell (AFD).

‘Aber auch jene Gruppen tragen Verantwortung, welche durch ihre Reden den Eindruck erwecken, Europa sei in der Lage, abertausende Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge angemessen zu versorgen’.

Thursday, 17 September 2015 – Brussels. Council Decision establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy, Greece and Hungary. Speaker: Beatrix von Storch (AFD).

‘Fast alle Migranten wollen nach Deutschland; sie wurden von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel eingeladen’.

Wednesday, 25 November 2015 – Strasbourg. EU Strategic framework on health and safety at work 2014-2020. Speaker: Gerard Batten (UKIP).

‘UKIP is not against good and sensible health and safety rules, but the only people who should create laws to protect workers are our democratically elected and accountable government, not unelected bureaucrats in Brussels’.

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 – Brussels. Decision adopted on 15 July 2015 on the energy summer package. Speaker: Dario Tamburrano (FSM).

‘Oggi si è imposta invece una forma di democrazia degenerata in questo Parlamento. La dittatura bullista della maggioranza che trasforma l'unica istituzione europea elettiva in un non rivoltante libero mercato delle vacche tra due soli gruppi politici, per cui ogni atto parlamentare, qualsiasi New Deal fantastico che voi preparerete, parte viziato alla base da una perdita progressiva di un minimo comune denominatore etico’.

Wednesday, 29 April 2015 – Strasbourg. Report of the extraordinary European Council meeting (23 April 2015) - The latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies. Speaker: Monika Hohlmeier (CDU-CSU).

‘Jetzt populistisch eine kurzfristige Lösung zu fordern, ist schlichtweg nicht die Wahrheit’.

Wednesday, 16 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Situation in Hungary: follow-up to the European Parliament Resolution of 10 June 2015. Speaker: Christine Revault D’Allonnes Bonnefoy (PS).

‘Le spectre de la peine de mort réapparaît dangereusement. Le racisme, l'antisémitisme et la xénophobie ne font que progresser. Cette situation préoccupante constitue un véritable test pour évaluer la capacité de l'Union à réagir fermement quand un de ses États membres agit en contradiction flagrante avec ses valeurs’.

Wednesday, 20 May 2015 – Strasbourg. European Agenda on Migration. Speaker: Michela Giuffrida (PD).

‘E stamattina molti hanno speso il loro tempo, il nostro tempo, in populismo e demagogia a fini elettorali. Per guadagnare consenso o, è il caso dei più, per non perderlo’.

Tuesday, 10 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Statistics concerning balance of payments, international trade in services and foreign direct investment. Speaker: Sylvie Goddyn (FN).

‘Cette gouvernance de la Commission dans le domaine économique est imposée aux États membres’.

Wednesday, 25 February 2015 – Brussels. European Central Bank annual report for 2013. Speaker: Mario Borghesio (LN).

‘Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, se avessimo avuto dubbi sul fatto che siamo soggetti a una dittatura monetaria della BCE, il comportamento di oggi ce lo avrebbe confermato’.

Tuesday, 10 March 2015 – Strasbourg. European Central Bank annual report for 2013. Speaker: Beatrix von Storch (AFD).

‘Die Kontrolle der EZB sollte bei den Vertragsstaaten der Eurozone liegen. Diese weigern sich jedoch, die EZB zu kontrollieren und die EZB durch rechtliches Vorgehen zu zwingen, dass sie ihr Handeln in den Rahmen des Mandats zurückführt’.

Thursday, 29 October 2015 – Strasbourg. European Semester for economic policy coordination: implementation of 2015 priorities. Speaker: Mara Bizzotto (LN).

‘Considerata la governance delle istituzioni europee in cui si riscontrano gravi lacune in fatto di democrazia, trasparenza e principio di sussidiarietà’.

Wednesday, 11 March 2015 – Strasbourg. Single market governance within the European Semester 2015. Speaker: Marco Zullo (FSM).

‘Il semestre di coordinamento delle politiche economiche negli ultimi anni caratterizzato dalla freddezza severità con cui la Commissione europea impone agli Stati membri l'applicazione di regole soffocanti’.

Thursday, 25 February 2016 – Brussels. European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2016. Speaker: Marco Valli (FSM).

‘Ho votato contro l'ennesima relazione che dovrebbe individuare le priorità strategiche per la crescita e l'occupazione in Europa analizzando ciò che non ha funzionato sinora, ma che finisce ancora una volta per insistere ciecamente sulle solite ricette fallimentari propugnate da oltre cinque anni dalla Commissione europea senza ottenere altro risultato se non quello di produrre livelli record di disoccupazione, povertà e diseguaglianze’.

Tuesday, 15 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Euro area recommendation - Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: Fabio de Masi (LINKE).

‘Wir brauchen öffentliche Investitionen, weil die FED die Zinsen vielleicht schon morgen anhebt, weil das billige Geld der EZB auf den Finanzmärkten, nicht aber für Investitionen bei Unternehmen und privaten Haushalten landet’.

Tuesday, 22 November 2016 – Strasbourg. European Central Bank annual report for 2015. Speaker: Xabier Benito Zilagua (PODEMOS).

‘Consideramos que el BCE incurrió durante 2015 en una clara extralimitación de sus funciones al utilizar los medios a su disposición para ejercer una presión política sobre el gobierno griego’.

Wednesday, 9 September 2015 – Strasbourg. Provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. Speaker: Marine Le Pen (FN).

‘Le rapport de Mme Keller fait exactement le contraire, en préconisant encore plus de pouvoirs pour la Commission européenne, notamment par le biais d'un régime d'asile européen commun’.

Tuesday, 5 July 2016 – Strasbourg. Refugees: social inclusion and integration into the labour market. Speaker: Jill Seymour (UKIP).

‘The only people who should take decisions on these things are elected national governments in compliance with the 1951 Geneva Convention on refugees. None of this should be decided on or dictated by unaccountable EU institutions’.

Wednesday, 10 June 2015 – Strasbourg. Situation in Hungary. Speaker: Laura Ferrara (FSM).

‘La massima istituzione democratica che rappresenta i cittadini dell'Unione non può permettersi di abbassare la guardia sul rispetto dei diritti fondamentali’.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016. Turkey's progress in fulfilling the requirements of the Visa liberalisation roadmap Speaker: Martina Michels (LINKE).

‘Es sollte jedoch zugleich den Rat und die Kommission auffordern, endlich eine gemeinsame humane EU-Flüchtlingspolitik anzupacken’.

Wednesday, 6 July 2016 – Strasbourg. European Border and Coast Guard. Speaker: Miguel Urbán Crespo (PODEMOS).

‘Señora Presidenta, la creación de la Guardia Europea de Fronteras y Costas refuerza la idea de la construcción de la Europa-fortaleza, es un paso más, justamente, en el cierre de fronteras’.

Thursday, 17 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Setting up a Committee of Inquiry on emission measurements in the automotive sector, its powers, numerical strength and term of office. Speaker: Jonathan Arnott (UKIP).

‘It is important to hold the Commission to account, and for us to have answers to the tough questions about the emissions scandal – not least to find out what, if anything, the Commission knew about it’.

Wednesday, 28 October 2015 – Strasbourg. Use of genetically modified food and feed. Speaker: Lola Sanchez Caldentey (PODEMOS).

‘Pero desde un proceso legislativo más democrático en el que el Parlamento Europeo tenga una mayor participación que la que hasta el momento se le ha otorgado en dicho informe’.

Tuesday, 15 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Outcome of the COP 21. Speaker: Julie Girling (CONSERVATIVES).

‘The extra climate effect of the Strasbourg circus – no, we are not going to change that. That is not going to change; we will carry on as we were. So it is fine words’.

Wednesday, 15 April 2015 – Brussels. Amendment of the MFF 2014-2020. Speaker: Dominique Bilde (FN).

‘Ce système absurde justifie pour certains un nouveau saut fédéral qui n’est rien d’autre qu’un saut dans le vide et qui serait une atteinte intolérable à la souveraineté des États’.

Tuesday, 16 December 2014 – Strasbourg. Economic governance review of the 6-pack and 2-pack regulations. Speaker: Bernd Lucke (AFD).

‘Wenn wir uns wieder an das Nichtbeistandsprinzip halten, dann hat jeder Staat seine Souveränität, seine finanzpolitischen und wirtschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen so zu treffen, wie er das selbst verantworten kann vor dem Hintergrund der Tatsache, daß er selbst und nur er seine Schulden wird bezahlen müssen’.

Tuesday, 4 October 2016 – Strasbourg. Macroeconomic situation in Greece, structural reforms and their impact, as well as prospects for future negotiations within the Programme. Speaker: Tim Aker (UKIP).

‘Winston Churchill called socialism the equal sharing of miseries. At what point are you willing to concede that the misery the Eurozone has created across southern Europe is the point at which it should be dissolved and that the best boost for Greece and southern Europe is to revert back to national currencies? Surely that is the way forward if you want to stop countries leaving the European Union. Britain will not be the first. It will not be the last either, come the revolution’.

Wednesday, 8 July 2015 – Strasbourg. Conclusions of the European Council (25-26 June 2015) and of the Euro Summit (7 July 2015) and the current situation in Greece. Speaker: Nigel Farage (UKIP).

‘They believed there would be acceptance of this project; that the North and South of Europe would converge; that we would all start to love each other; that we would all begin to feel a European identity; that we would all begin to show allegiance to the flag and the anthem’.

Tuesday, 5 July 2016 – Strasbourg. Synergies between structural funds and Horizon 2020. Speaker: Rosa D’Amato (FSM).

‘Questo significa che stata imboccata una pericolosissima direzione verso un’Europa sempre più a due velocità, verso una frattura sempre più profonda tra Stati più e meno sviluppati’.

Thursday, 30 April 2015 – Strasbourg. European Investment Bank annual report 2013. Speaker: Bernd Lucke (AFD).

‘Das ist der Kardinalfehler der europäischen Wirtschaftspolitik heute’.

Tuesday, 15 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Euro area recommendation - Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: Florian Philippot (FN).

‘Au contraire, les économies sont de plus en plus divergentes, les pays européens en dehors de l’euro s’en sortent beaucoup mieux. Les pauvres s’appauvrissent, les plus riches s’enrichissent, les tensions montent et les peuples se dressent les uns contre les autres’.

Wednesday, 8 July 2015 – Strasbourg. Conclusions of the European Council (25-26 June 2015) and of the Euro Summit (7 July 2015) and the current situation in Greece. Speaker: Nigel Farage (UKIP).

‘I feel that the continent is now divided from north to south: there is a new Berlin Wall and it is called the euro’.

Thursday, 25 February 2016 – Brussels. European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2016. Speaker: Marco Valli (FSM).

‘Noi abbiamo insistito sulla necessità di cambiare rotta, introducendo subito meccanismi democratici che consentano di uscire dall’euro e preparando un piano per la dissoluzione controllata e coordinata dell’Eurozona’.

Thursday, 17 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: Marco Valli (FSM).

‘E sulla necessità di ripensare radicalmente l’attuale quadro di governance, mettendo al centro la sovranità nazionale sulle scelte democratiche di politica monetaria e fiscale’.

Thursday, 17 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: Estefanía Torrez Martínez (PODEMOS).

‘Por nuestra parte pensamos que la unión monetaria tal como existe hoy en día es una fuente de desequilibrios y está condenada al fracaso si continúa supeditada a los intereses de los grandes bancos centroeuropeos’.

Tuesday, 15 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Euro area recommendation - Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. Speaker: Fabio de Masi (LINKE).

‘Ein solcher Euro ist nicht demokratischer, ein solcher Euro wird nur den Le Pens nutzen!’

Thursday, 29 October 2015 – Strasbourg. European Semester for economic policy coordination: implementation of 2015 priorities. Speaker: Tania González Penas (PODEMOS).

‘Con el Semestre Europeo se pretende someter los presupuestos de los Gobiernos a una fiscalización por parte de la Comisión Europea que asegure el cumplimiento de ciertos objetivos macroeconómicos y la implementación de las mal llamadas reformas estructurales’.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Tackling inequalities in order to boost inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the EU. Speaker: Thomas Händel (LINKE).

‘Wir brauchen ein Europa mit sozialer Gerechtigkeit, mit guter Arbeit, von der man eigenständig und armutsfrei leben kann, guter Bildung für alle, mehr öffentlicher Daseinsvorsorge und ökonomisch wie ökologisch nachhaltiger Wirtschaft’.

Tuesday, 27 October 2015 – Strasbourg. Conclusions of the European Council meeting of 15 October 2015, in particular the financing of international funds, and of the Leaders' meeting on the Western Balkans route of 25 October 2015, and preparation of the Valletta summit of 11 and 12 November 2015. Speaker: Nigel Farage (UKIP).

‘What has been made clear here, with Greece and indeed with Portugal, is that a country only has democratic rights if it is in favour of the project. (...) Perhaps none of this should surprise us, as Mr Juncker has told us before that there can be no democratic choice against the European Treaties’.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Decision adopted on the Common European Asylum System reform. Speaker: Markus Pretzell (AFD).

‘Freikaufen kann man sich aus diesem europäischen Solidaritätssystem!’

Wednesday, 14 October 2015 – Brussels. Mobilisation of the Flexibility Instrument for immediate budgetary measures under the European Agenda on Migration. Speaker: Margot Parker (UKIP).

‘Each country should manage its own policy and work together on a bilateral basis to deal with the current crisis’.

Wednesday, 10 June 2015 – Strasbourg. Situation in Hungary. Speaker: Bill Etheridge (UKIP).

‘I say to the British people: if you want your voice to be heard, if you want direct democracy on a whole range of subjects where referenda could really make a difference, if you want freedom, then when this referendum does come on our membership of the EU, take note of the example of how they have treated Hungary and let us get out: vote to leave!’.

Tuesday, 24 November 2015 – Strasbourg. Repealing certain acts from the Schengen acquis. Speaker: Gianluca Buonanno (LN).

‘Sulle politiche legate a Schengen non possiamo limitarci a semplici aggiornamenti ma occorre procedere a una completa riforma’.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Restoring a fully functioning Schengen system. Speaker: Beatrix von Storch (AFD).

‘Wer verantwortlich, aber nicht willens oder in der Lage ist, die Schengen grenzen zu schützen, muß den Schengen-Raum verlassen’.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 – Strasbourg. Restoring a fully functioning Schengen system. Speaker: Gilles Lebreton (FN).

‘Il est temps de voir la réalité en face. Schengen est un échec total, une passoire dont il est impossible de boucher les trous. Les peuples européens n'en veulent plus. L'Union européenne devra les écouter ou elle disparaîtra’.

Wednesday, 25 November 2015 - Strasbourg. Mobilisation of the Flexibility Instrument for immediate budgetary measures to address the refugee crisis. Speaker: Marie-Christine Boutonnet (FN)

‘Au lieu de prendre les mesures qui s'imposent face à cette pression migratoire, C'est-à-dire le rétablissement des contre les aux frontières de l'Europe, et la fin de Schengen, avec le retour de ces migrants dans leurs territoires d'origine’.

Tuesday, 27 October 2015. Conclusions of the European Council meeting of 15 October 2015, in particular the financing of international funds, and of the Leaders' meeting on the Western Balkans route of 25 October 2015, and preparation of the Valletta summit of 11 and 12 November 2015. Speaker: Pablo Iglesias (PODEMOS).

‘Dije entonces que aspirábamos a una Europa diferente, a una Europa que fuera un poco menos dura con los débiles y un poco menos complaciente con los poderosos. Creo que, por desgracia, esa afirmación de hace quince meses sigue siendo y sigue estando vigente hoy.

Recordé, en aquel discurso de hace quince meses, a los combatientes españoles que lucharon contra el fascismo y contra el horror como la mejor contribución de mi patria al progreso de Europa, como la mejor contribución de mi patria a una Europa social, una Europa democrática y una Europa respetuosa de los derechos humanos’.

Wednesday, 20 May 2015 – Strasbourg. European Agenda on Migration. Speaker: Ignazio Corrao (FSM).

‘E qui siamo di fronte all'ennesimo caso in cui gli Stati si mostrano egoisti di fronte a quella che □ un'emergenza globale, di fronte a quello che un grande momento in cui l'Europa si dovrebbe mostrare solidale’.

Wednesday, 16 September 2015 – Brussels. Decision adopted on 15 July 2015 on the energy summer package. Speaker: Gianluca Buonanno (LN).

‘Questi sono due dati di fatto che fanno capire come l'Europa in realtà sia succube del potere americano e sia accondiscendente su tante politiche che alla fine si dimostrano demenziali, grazie’.

Thursday, 17 December 2015 – Strasbourg. Setting up a Committee of Inquiry on emission measurements in the automotive sector, its powers, numerical strength and term of office. Speaker: Jonathan Arnott (UKIP).

‘Any success is seen as a green light for further harmonisation, whereas any failure requires harmonisation as the solution’.

Wednesday, 28 October 2015 – Strasbourg. Use of genetically modified food and feed. Speaker: Lola Sánchez Caldentey (PODEMOS).

‘Nuestro Grupo defiende la soberanía de los pueblos y, cómo no, también como resultante, defendemos nuestra soberanía alimentaria’.

Tuesday, 16 December 2014 – Strasbourg. Economic governance review of the 6-pack and 2-pack regulations. Speaker: Ashley Fox (CONSERVATIVES).

‘If it is going to work, then you either have to let those states that cannot keep up with the Deutschmark, such as Cyprus and Greece, go in an organised manner, or rich countries are going to have to pay them very large sums of money, as happens in the United States’.

Thursday, 10 September 2015 – Strasbourg. Migration and refugees in Europe. Speaker: Daniel Hannan (CONSERVATIVES).

‘Like the euro, was a fair-weather system. Neither has survived its first crisis. They worked perfectly well when the sun was shining. They have crumbled beneath the storms’

Tuesday, 5 July 2016 – Strasbourg. Conclusions of the European Council meeting of 28 and 29 June 2016. Speaker: Syed Kamall (CONSERVATIVES).

‘My Group does not want the EU to break up, but to avoid this the EU must seriously change how it works’.

References cited in Appendix C

Cregan, Christina. (2005). "Individual Attitudes Toward Union Membership." *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 58 (2): 282–305.

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Appendix D

This appendix shows the tests done to assess the assumption of the OLS regressions presented in chapter 7 of this work.

The first Table D.1 reports the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for both model 5 and 6 of each regression tables. Values of the VIF should be lower than 10 to account for the absence of multicollinearity. As showed in the table the highest value of VIF is 5.18, thus confirming the absence of correlation between the dependent variables and the used predictors.

The following figures account for the graphical tests of normality in the distribution of residual, hetheroskedasticity of the sample data and linearity relationship between the dependent variables and the used predictors.

The first and the second above-mentioned assumptions are graphically tested in Figures D.1, D.3, D.5, D.7, D.9, D.11, D.13, and D.15. To test the first assumption each of the just-mentioned figures reports two different plots:

1. The histogram of the residuals that should follow a normal – bell-shaped – distribution;
2. The QQ-plot further assessing the normality in the used data.

To test for the absence of hetheroskedasticity, each figure reports – lower left-hand side of each figure – the plot of the residual against the fitted values. The distribution might be considered as homoscedastic if the residuals do not funnel out; if they do not create any recognizable pattern.

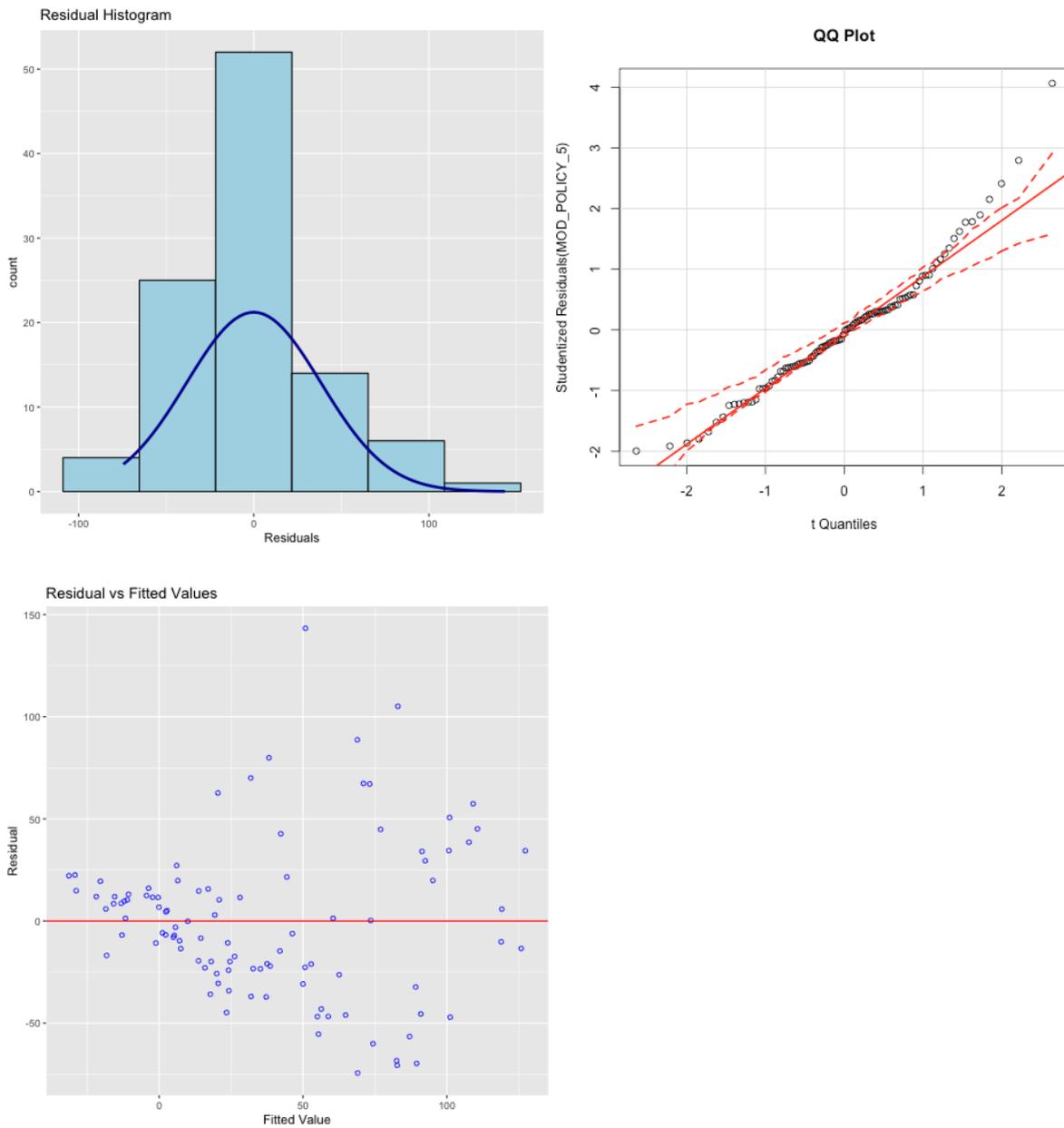
To graphically test for the linearity of the relationship between the dependent variable and the used predictors, Figures D.2, D.4, D.6, D.8, D.10, D.12, and D.14 present the partial residual plots with the addition of the fitted line (ideal in red and effective in green). If the relationship between the dependent variables and the predictors is not linear, the fitted line is not a line.

According to these observations, the assumptions of the regressions presented in this work are not violated.

Table D. 1: Values of the Variance inflection Factors (VIF) for models 5 and 6 reported in each regression table presented in chapter 7

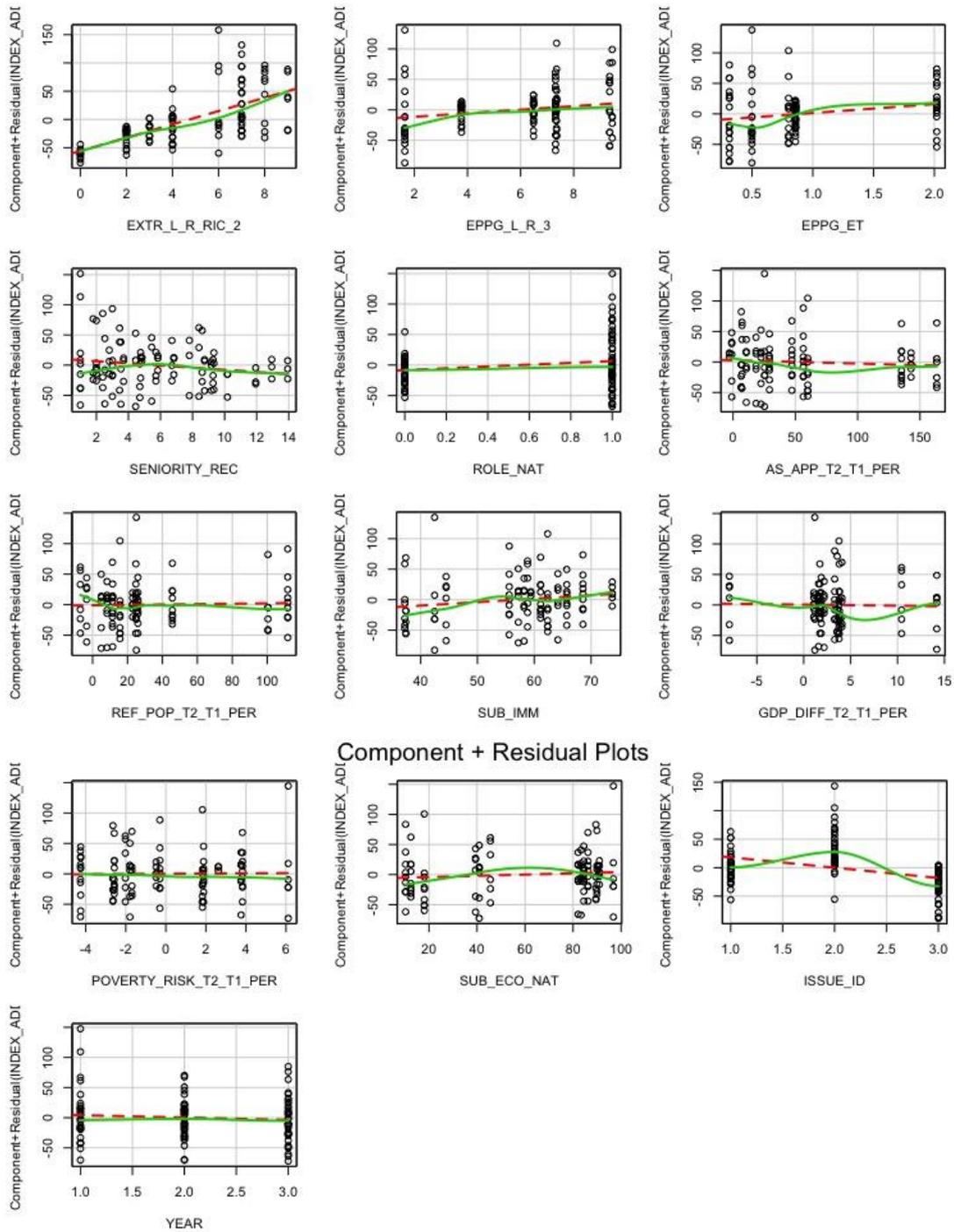
	Model regression EU-opposition target EU-policy Table 7.3 of Chapter 7		Model regression EU-opposition target EU-elite Table 7.4 of Chapter 7		Model regression EU-opposition target EU-regime Table 7.5 of Chapter 7		Model regression EU-opposition target EU-community Table 7.6 of Chapter 7	
	VIF model 5	VIF model 6	VIF model 5	VIF model 6	VIF model 5	VIF model 6	VIF model 5	VIF model 6
IVs' names								
EPPGs' left-right positioning	1.410857	2.901576	1.410857	1.468192	1.410857	1.468192	1.410857	1.468192
EPPGs ideological heterogeneity	2.388596	1.705314	2.388596	1.705314	2.388596	1.705314	2.388596	1.705314
National parties' ideological extremeness	5.188428	1.468192	5.188428	2.901576	5.188428	2.901576	5.188428	2.901576
Marginality of the national parties	5.120711	----	5.120711	----	5.120711	----	5.120711	----
Marginality of the EPPGs	----	2.893569	----	2.893569	----	2.893569	----	2.893569
Seniority	2.909383	2.825537	2.909383	2.825537	2.909383	2.825537	2.909383	2.825537
GDP T2 T1	1.273441	1.252959	1.273441	1.252959	1.273441	1.252959	1.273441	1.252959
Poverty risk T2 T1	1.499985	1.349514	1.499985	1.349514	1.499985	1.349514	1.499985	1.349514
Perception of national economy (yearly)	2.017772	2.14217	2.017772	2.142172	2.017772	2.142172	2.017772	2.142172
Refugee population T2 T1	2.075331	1.837255	2.075331	1.837255	2.075331	1.837255	2.075331	1.837255
Asylum application T2 T1	1.423330	1.270166	1.423330	1.270166	1.423330	1.270166	1.423330	1.270166
Perception of immigration	1.810314	1.719511	1.810314	1.719511	1.810314	1.719511	1.810314	1.719511
Issue ID	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
Year	1.786464	1.874854	1.786464	1.874854	1.786464	1.874854	1.786464	1.874854

Source: own calculation. The data refers to the regression Tables 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 presented in chapter 7 of this work.

Figure D.1: Regression tests for model 5 presented in Table 7.3 of chapter 7 (DV: opposition to the EU-policy).

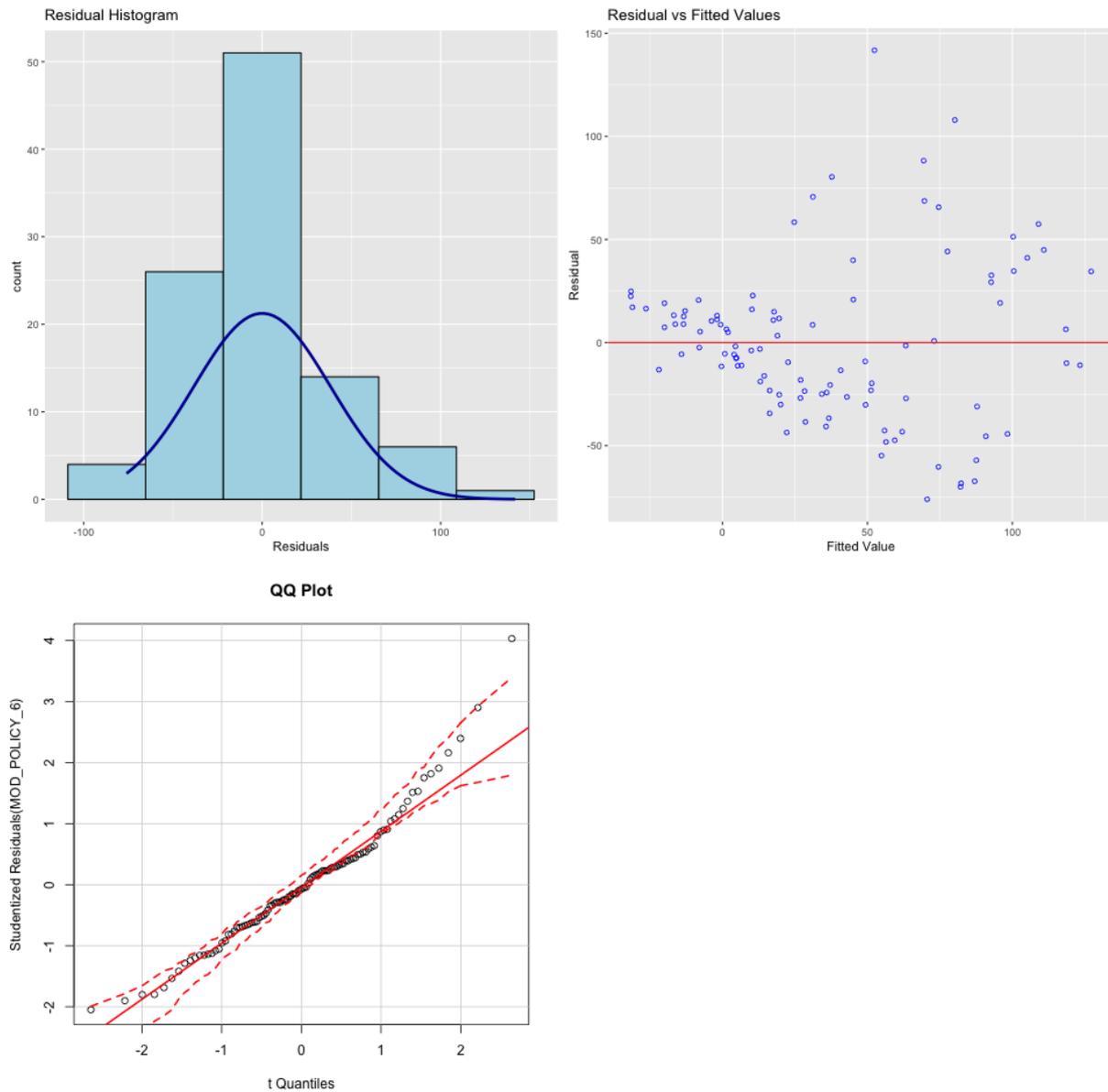
Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.1, page 177

Figure D. 2: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-policies.



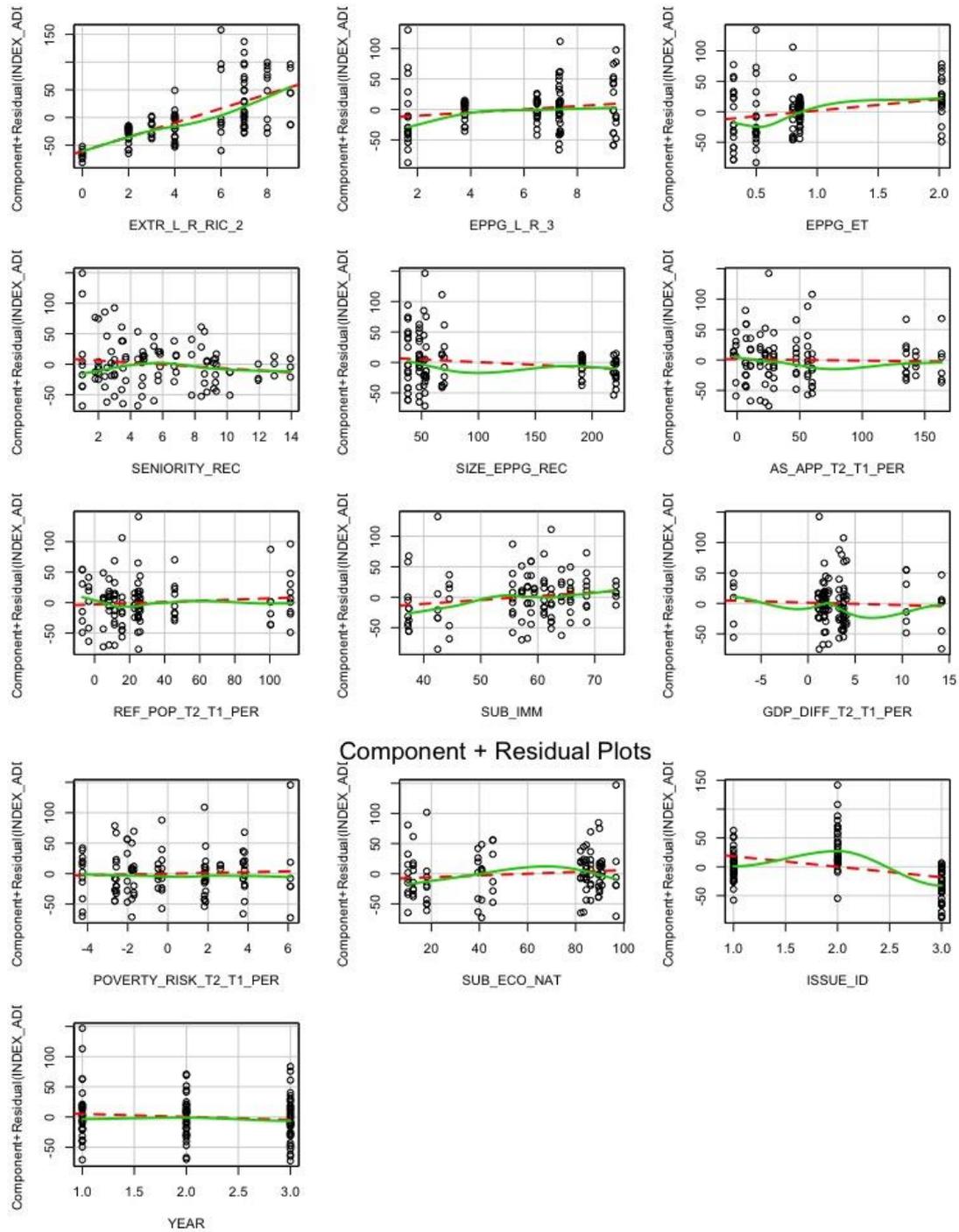
Source: own calculation. The data refer to the regression model 5 presented in Table 7.3 of chapter 7. (See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.1, page 177)

Figure D.3: Regression tests for model 6 presented in Table 7.3 of chapter 7 (DV: EU-opposition to the EU-policy target).

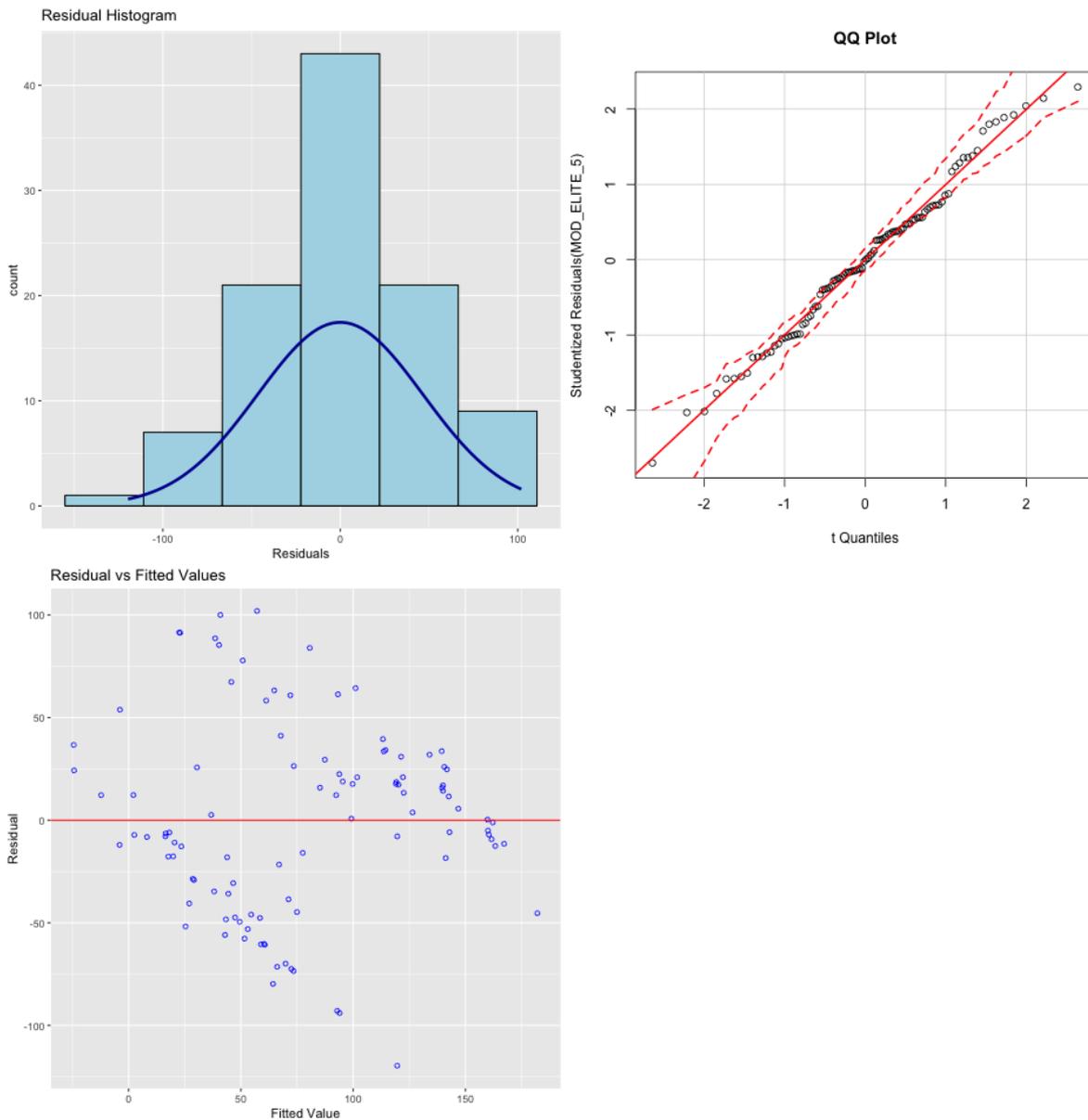


Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.1, page 177

Figure D. 4: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-policies.

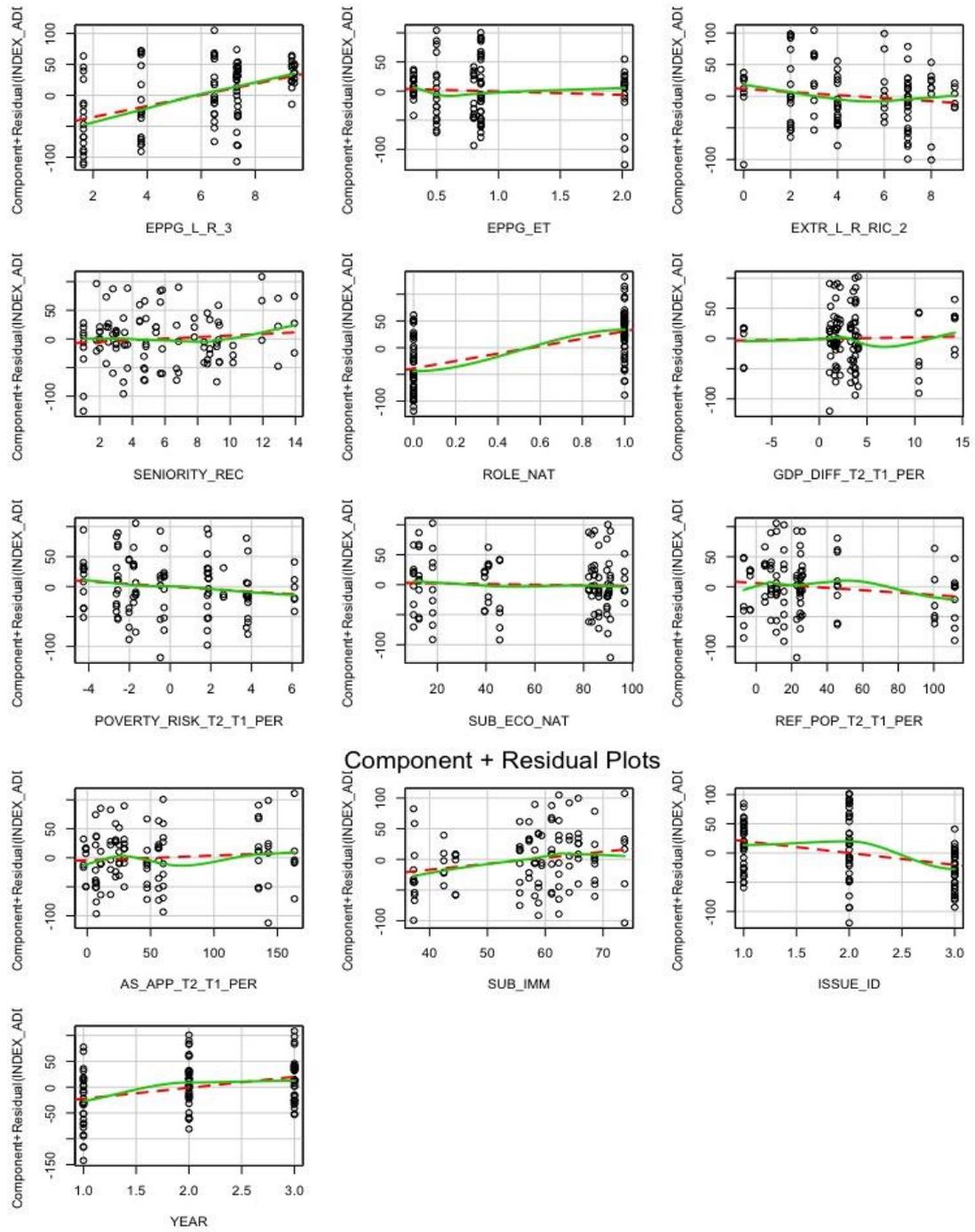


Source: own calculation. The data refer to the regression model 6 presented in Table 7.3 of chapter 7. (See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.1, page 177)

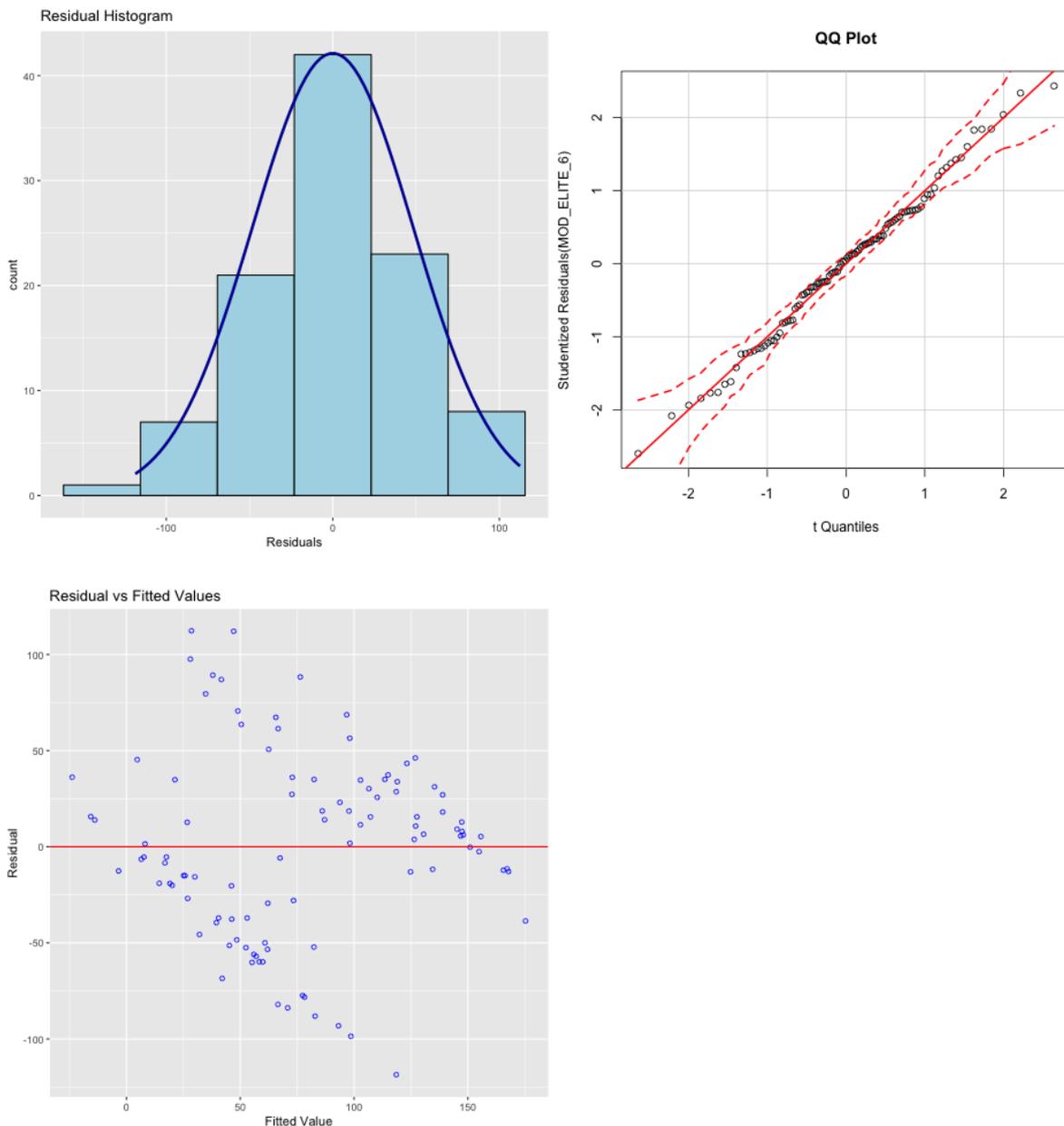
Figure D.5: Regression tests for Model 5 of Table 7.4 (DV: opposition to the EU-elite target).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 182.

Figure D. 6: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-elite.

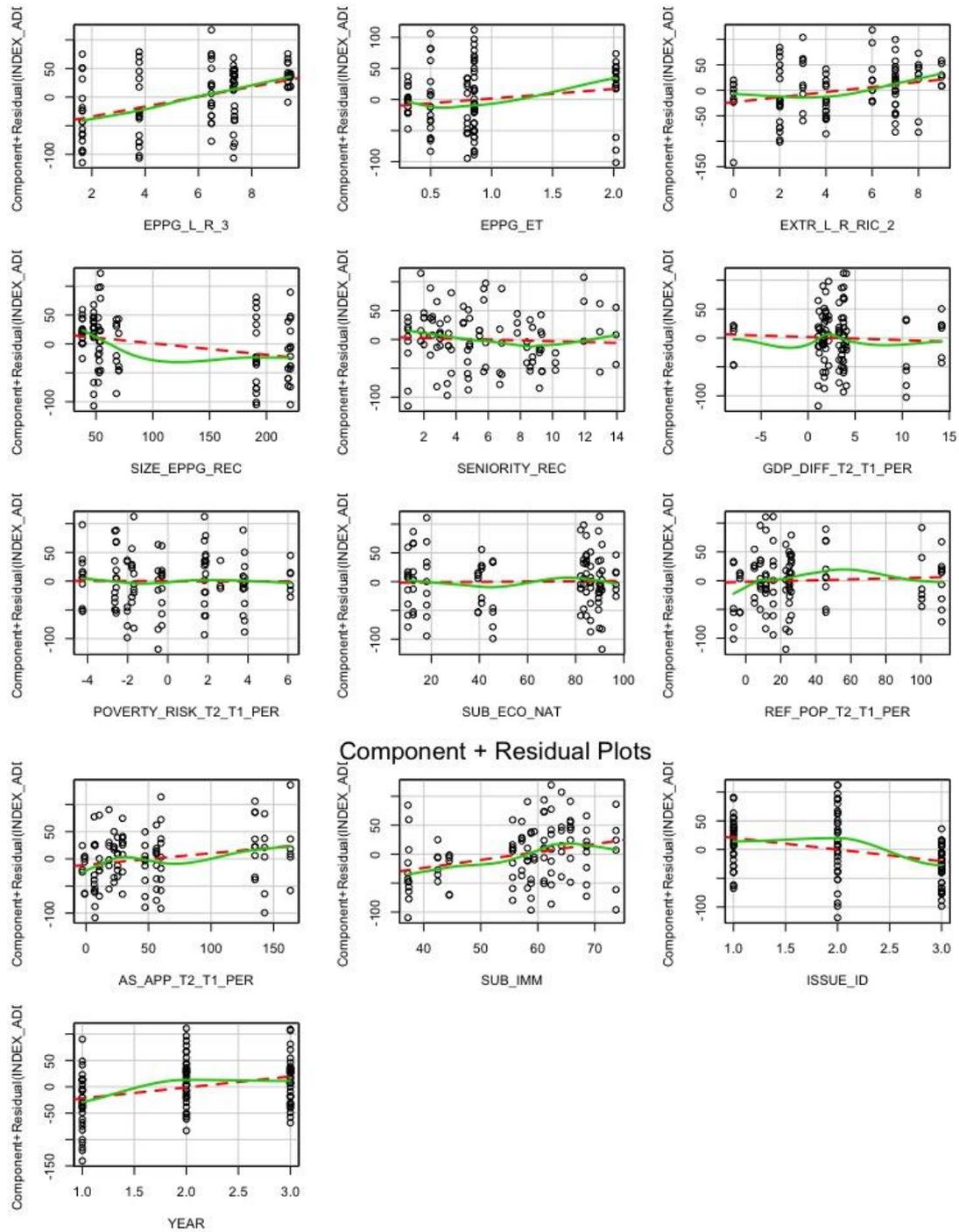


Source: own calculation. The data refer to regression Model 5 presented in Table 7.4 of chapter 7. (See Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 182).

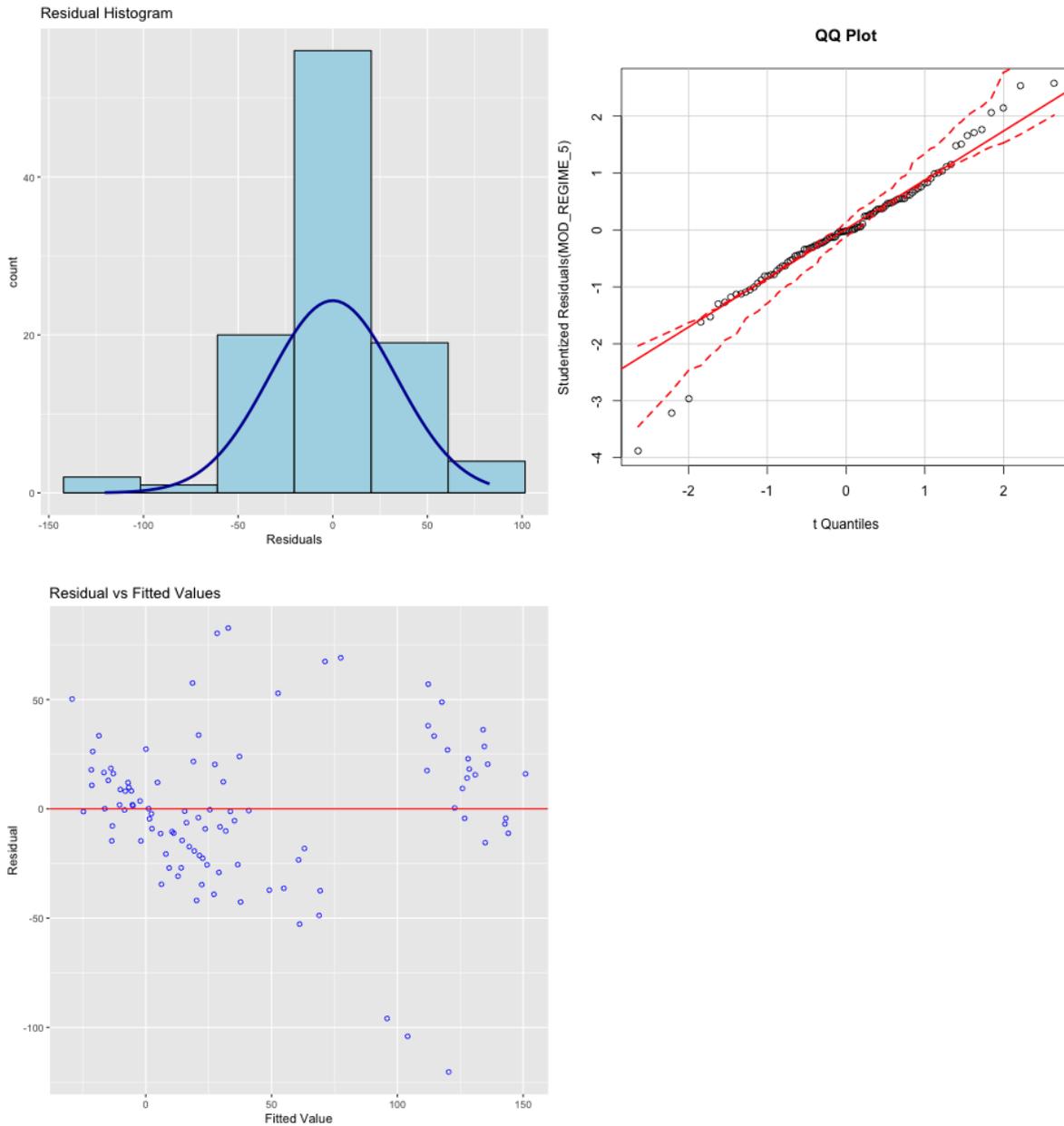
Figure D.7: Regression tests for model 6 of Table 7.4 (DV: opposition to the EU-elite).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 182.

Figure D. 8: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-elite.

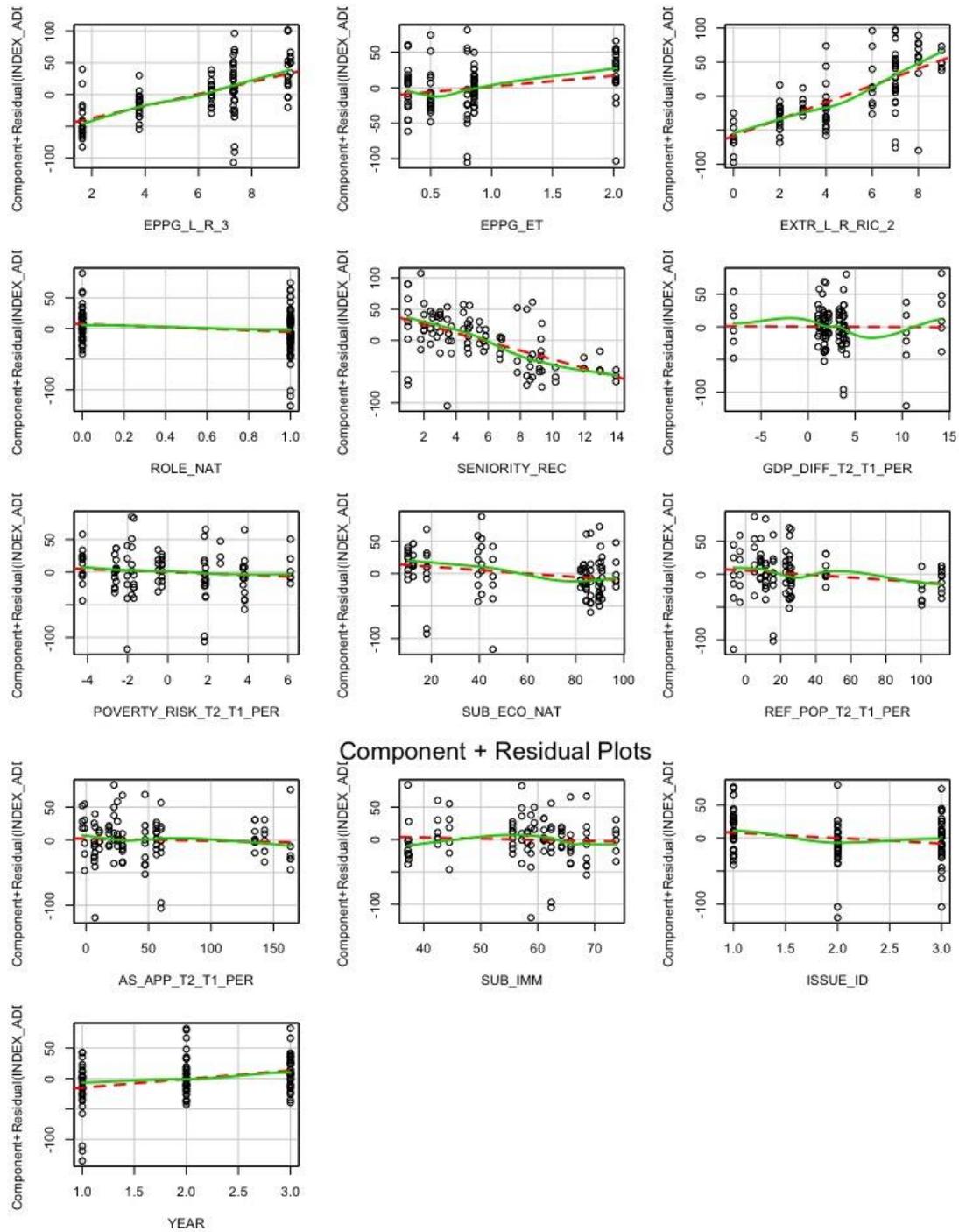


Source: own calculation. The data refer to regression Model 6 presented in Table 7.4 of chapter 7. (See Chapter 7, section 7.3.2, page 182).

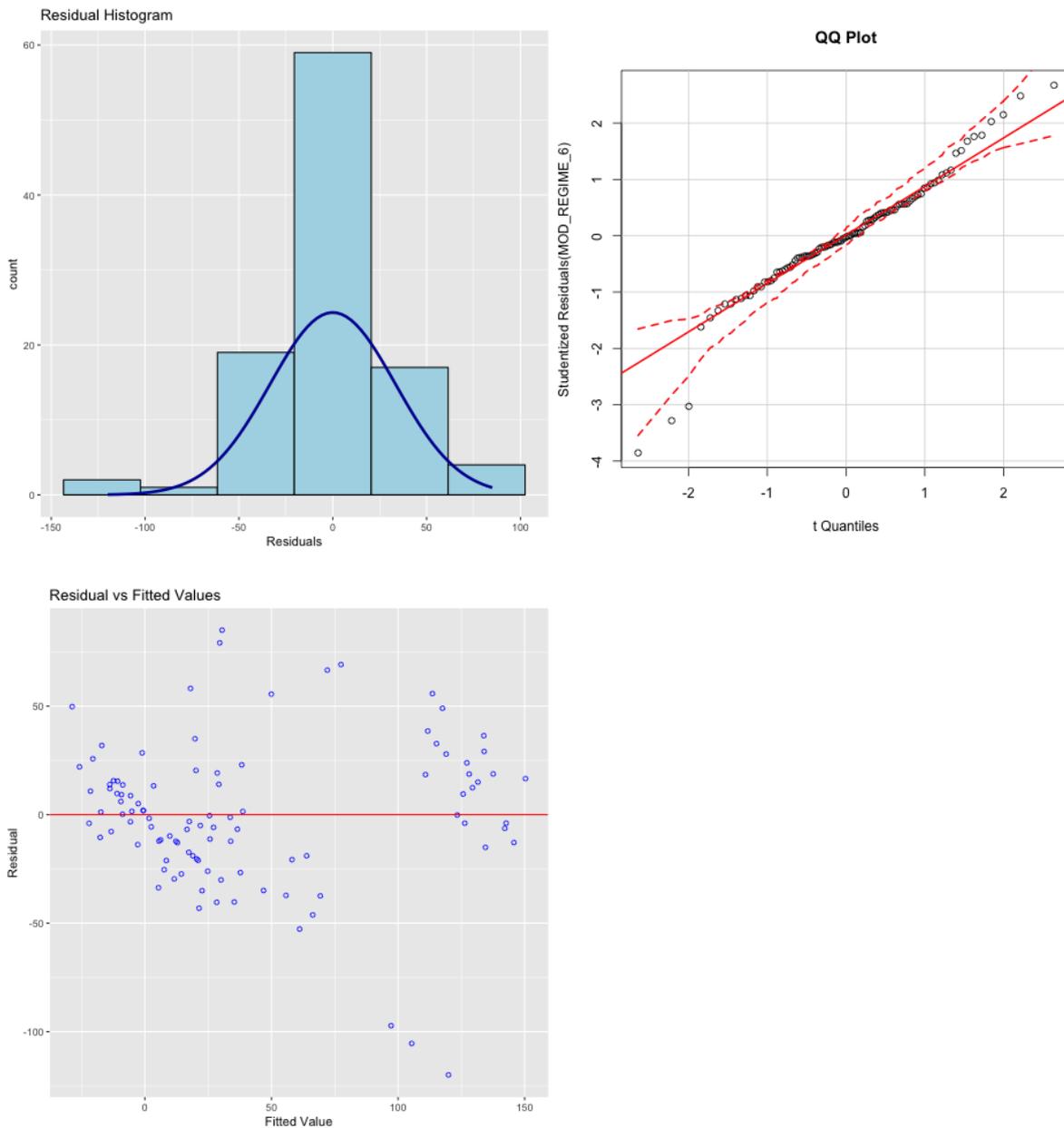
Figure D.9: Regression tests for Model 5 of Table 7.5 (DV: opposition to the EU-regime).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: chapter 7, section 7.3.3, page 185.

Figure D. 10: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-regime.

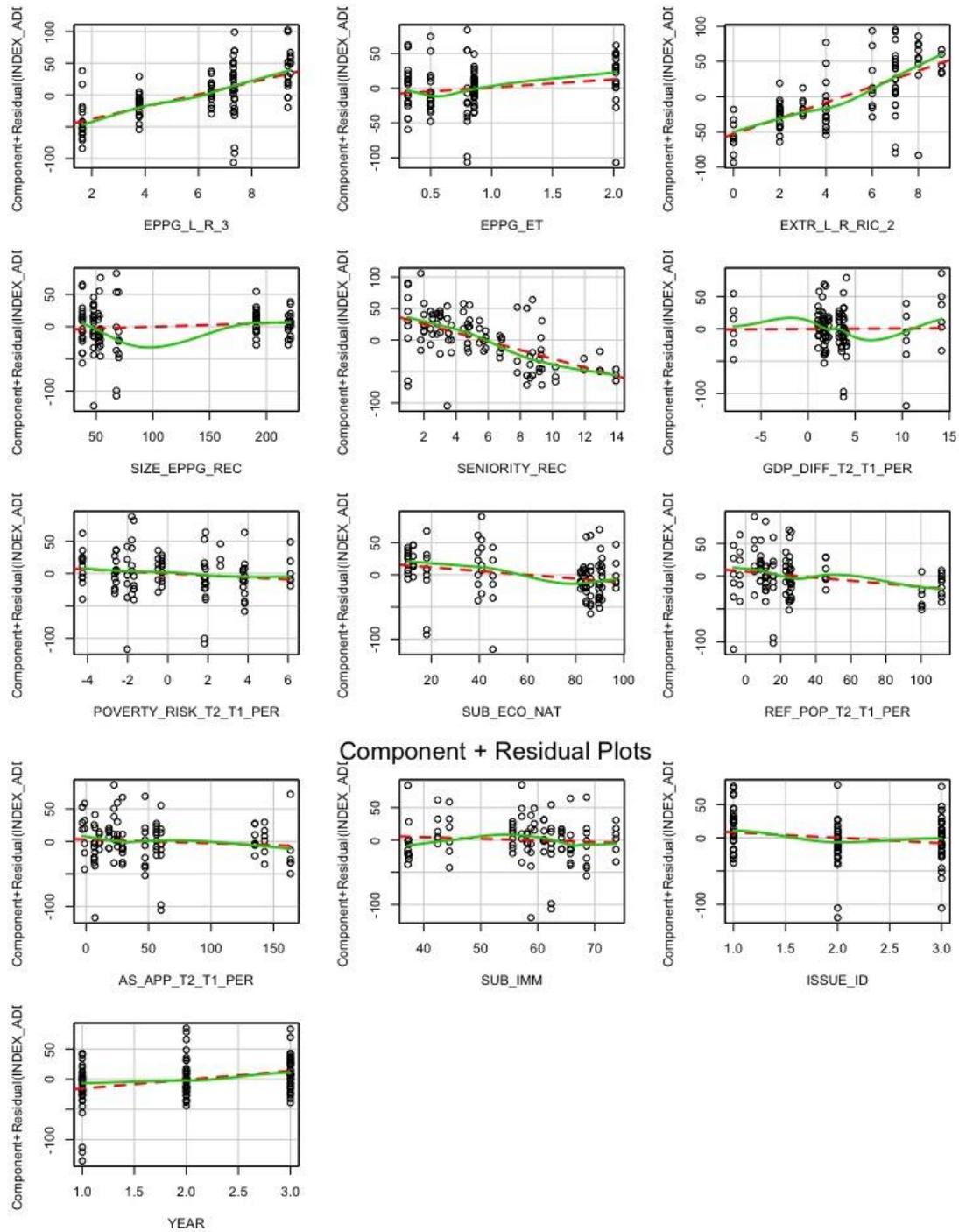


Source: own calculation. The data refer to the regression Model 5 presented in Table 7.5 of chapter 7. (See: chapter 7, section 7.3.3, page 185).

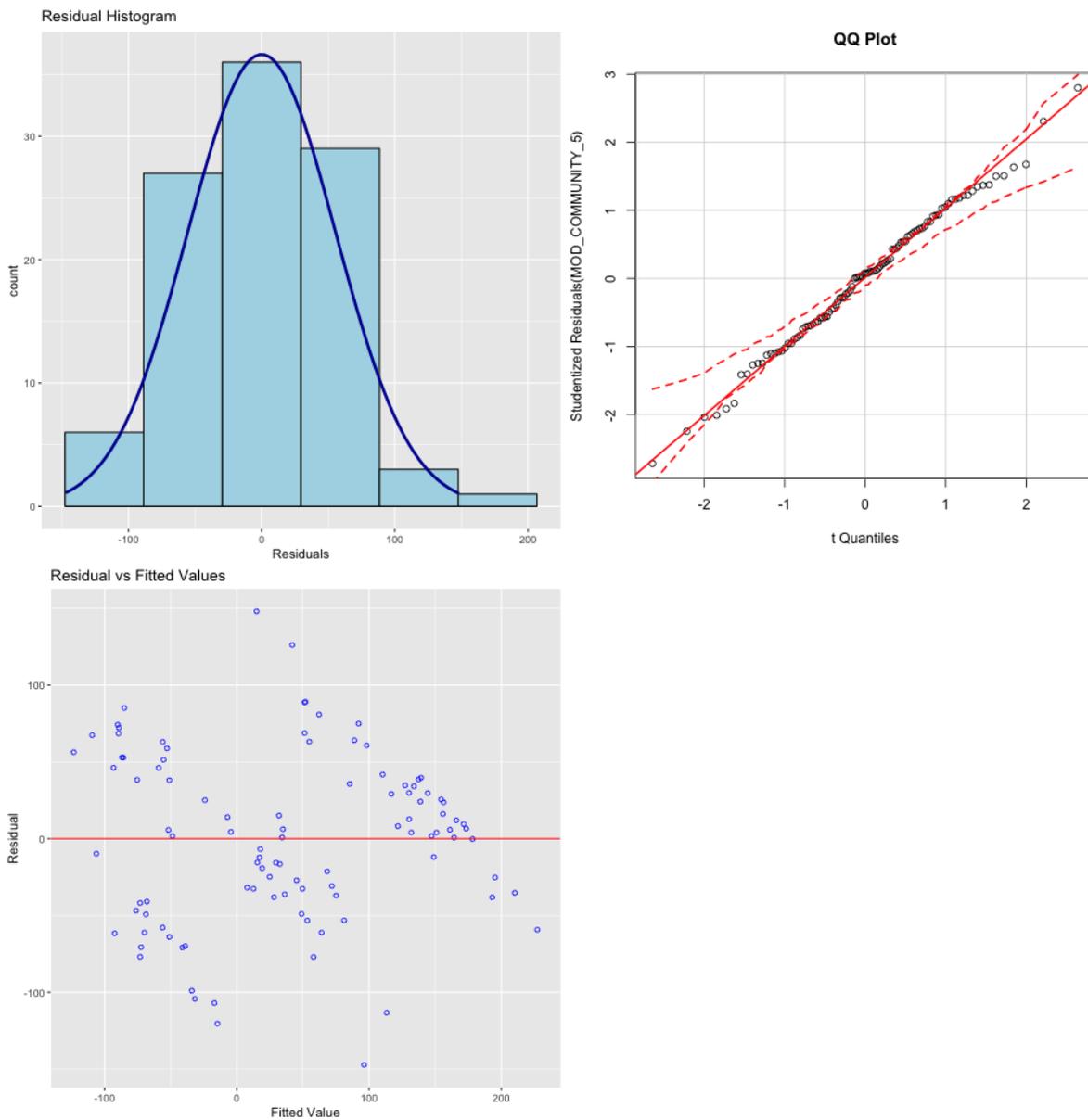
Figure D.11: Regression tests for Model 6 of Table 7.5 (DV: opposition to the EU-regime).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: chapter 7, section 7.3.3, page 185.

Figure D. 12: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-regime.

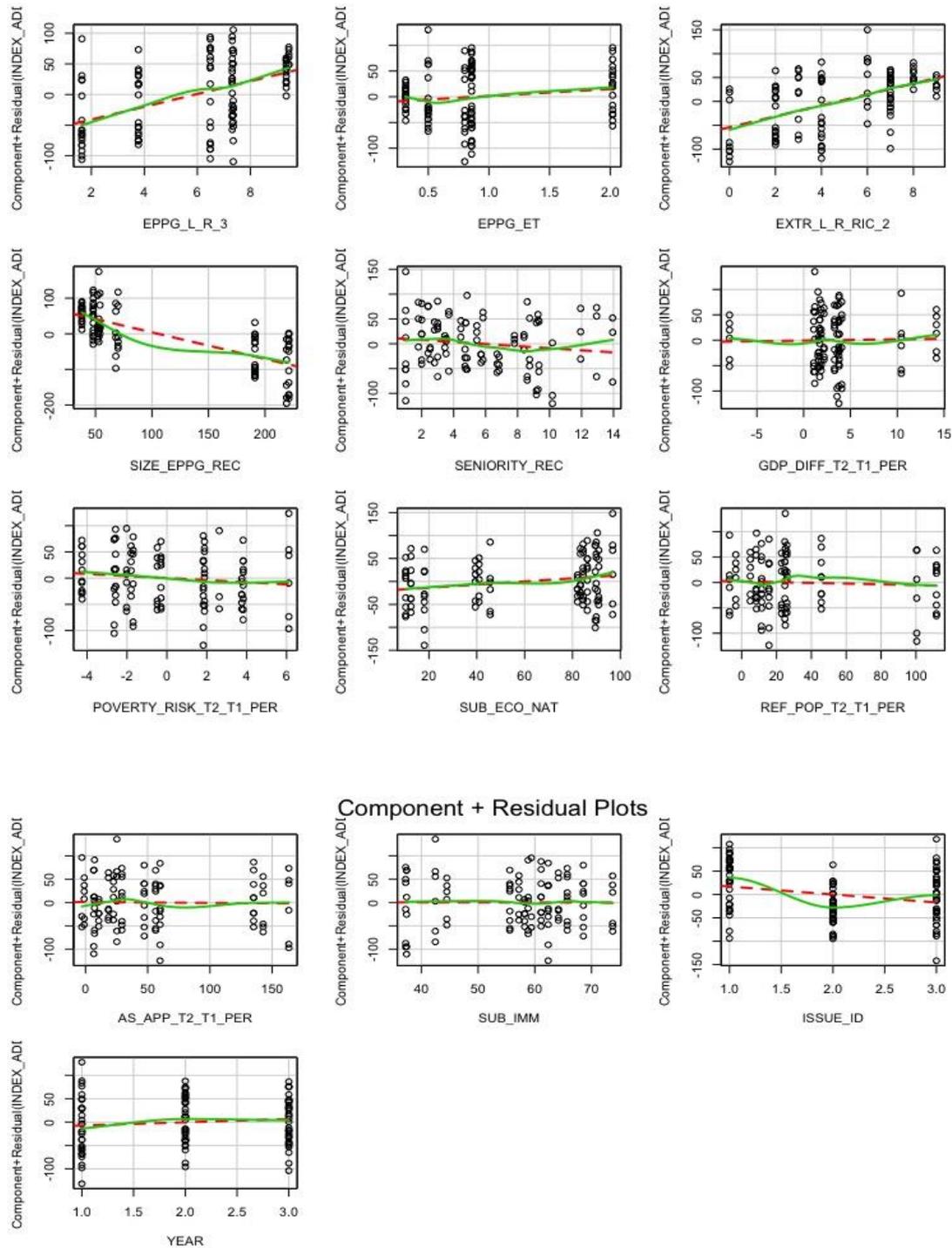


Source: own calculation. The data refer to the regression Model 6 presented in Table 7.5 of chapter 7. (See: chapter 7, section 7.3.3, page 185).

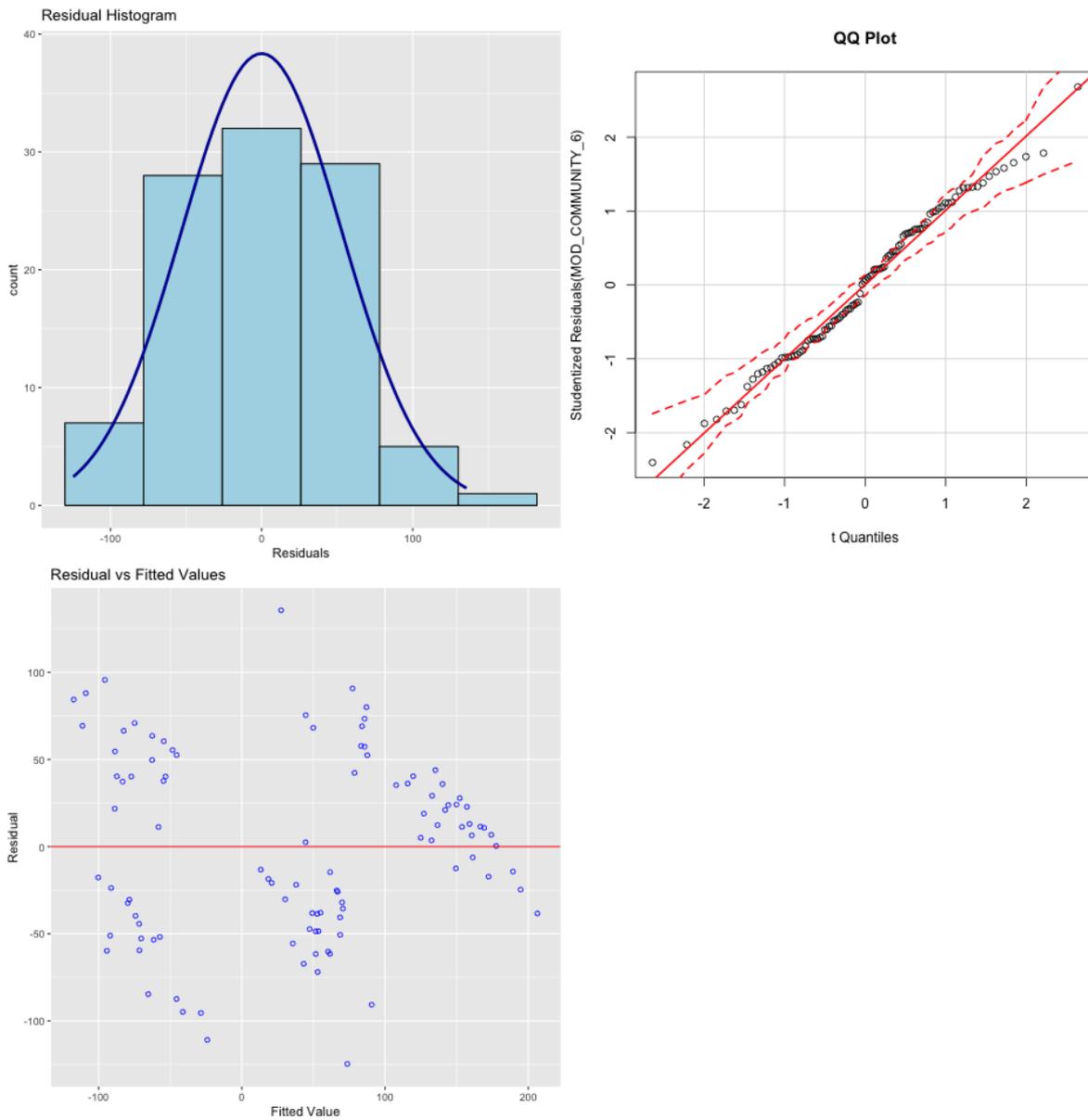
Figure D.13: Regression tests for Model 5 of Table 7.6 (DV: opposition to the EU-community).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.4, page 188.

Figure D. 14: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-community.

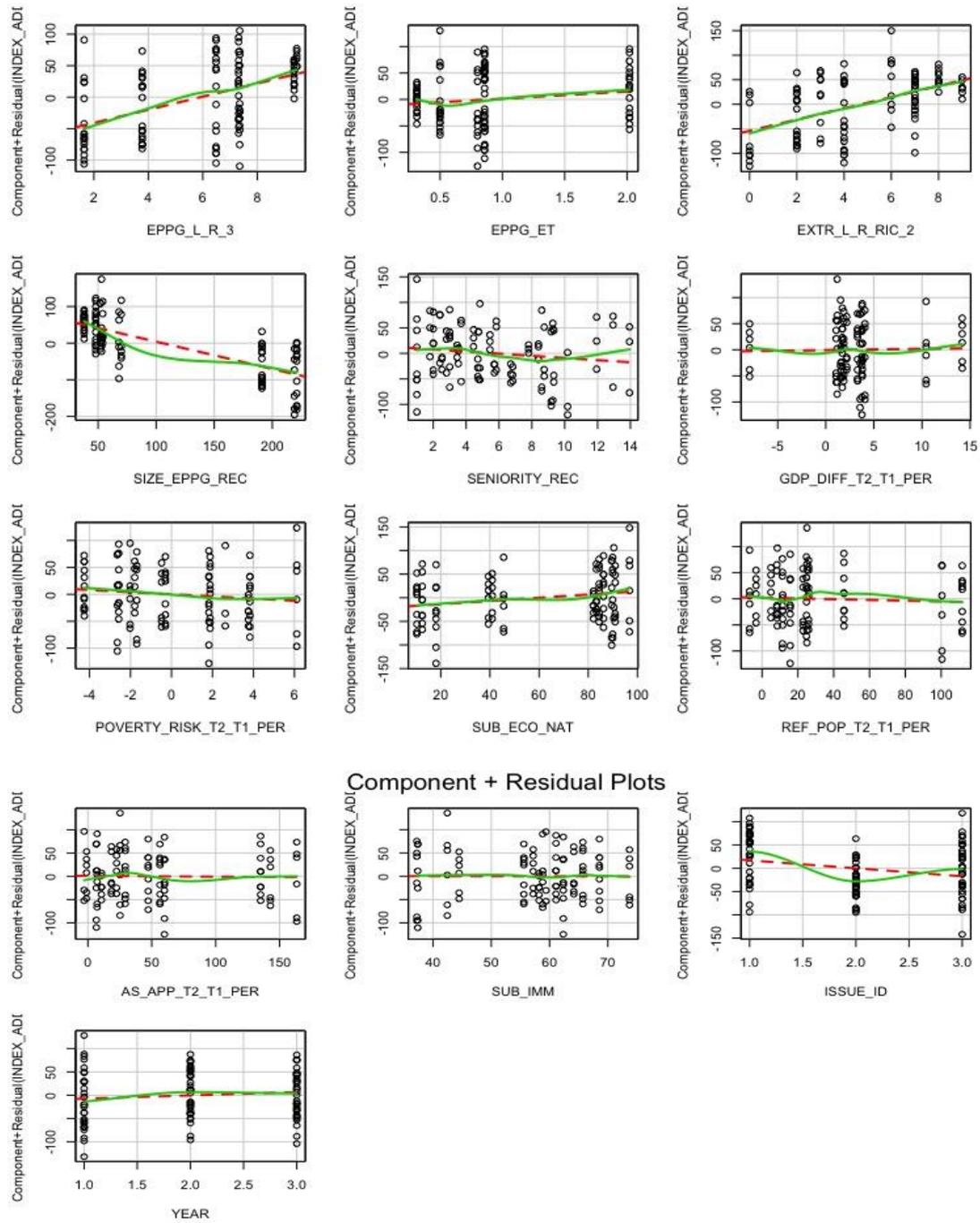


Source: own calculation. The data refer to regression Model 5 presented in Table 7.6 of chapter 7. (See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.4, page 188).

Figure D.15: Regression tests for model 6 of Table 7.6 (DV: opposition to the EU-community).

Source: own calculation. The first graph on the left-hand side of the figure represents the histogram of the residuals; the second graph on the upper right-hand side of the figure represents the QQ-plot of the residuals; and the last graph plotted on the lower left-hand side of the figure represents the Residuals plotted against the fitted values. See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.4, page 188.

Figure D. 16: Partial residual plots with fitted regression line for the dependent variable opposition to the EU-community.



Source: own calculation. The data refers to regression Model 6 presented in Table 7.6 of chapter 7. (See: Chapter 7, section 7.3.4, page 188).