

**PREVIEW OF THE 2004
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS
RESULTS OF AN EPIN SURVEY OF NATIONAL EXPERTS**

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EPIN WORKING PAPER NO. 11/MAY 2004

Executive Summary

The upcoming election for the European Parliament appears in many respects less like one European-wide election than like 25 parallel elections in each of the EU member states. Rather than identifying clearly discernible patterns running across the whole of the European Union, we find different trends emerging in different countries in the principal aspects of the elections: namely campaign issues, likely voter turn-out, the kinds of candidates whose names will appear on the slates and the eventual outcome.

The findings presented in this paper are based on the results of a survey conducted among national experts associated with the European Policy Institutes Network (EPIN). As such they are inherently subjective, but well-informed. While the actual outcomes of the election are bound to prove our findings wrong in one or another respect, they do indicate some interesting trends that in the end do not hinge on the predictions being exactly right for one country or the other. Rather, it is the recognition of a slow, faltering but at times undeniable emergence of a European political dynamic that is the main object of this study.

The main findings are outlined below:

Campaign Issues

- Five subjects dominate the European election campaign in most member states:
 - Turkey's prospects for membership of the EU
 - The European Constitution
 - (National) foreign policy and security issues
 - Social policy and unemployment/economic policy
 - National interests and national benefits from the EU
- European Parliamentary elections remain to a high degree 'second-order' national contests whose campaigns are dominated by domestic perceptions and problems.
- A certain convergence of the different national campaigns can be observed on social and economic policy as well as on constitutional matters and CFSP.
- Even campaign themes that directly relate to the EU often have little to do with the European Parliament and its core competences.
- The debate about the 'democratic deficit' and the perceived threat of an unaccountable centralised bureaucracy assume less importance in most member states than they did in the 1999 campaign (following the resignation of the Santer Commission).

Voter Turn-out

- The average weighted turn-out of the June EP elections is likely to fall even (slightly) below the 49.4% that was recorded in 1999.

- In some of the EU-15 member states, the turn-out level may well have reached its lowest point in 1999, and can be expected to rise again. This is likely to occur in particular in the founding states of Germany and the Netherlands, but also in the more recent members Finland and Sweden.
- On the other hand, the turn-out may well continue to decline in Italy and Austria. We are also sceptical whether the UK will rebound from the 24% turn-out in 1999.
- Among the new member states, it is above all the largest one, Poland, that may well weigh in strongly on the negative side. We would not be surprised if turn-out in Poland would stop at around 30%. Also in the other new member states we expect the turn-out to remain below that of the accession referenda.

Candidates

- The selection of the candidates is left to the national parties, with no coordination at European level. Thus, the balance of power between political forces within individual countries and vote-attracting personalities play an (over)significant role in the process.
- From the candidates' point of view, our survey seems to confirm that the European elections are regarded as a second-order contest, with the top figures remaining above the fray.
- As a consequence, the lists consist of a mix of young talent and 'old hands'. The big member states seem to rely on the latter, having chosen to confirm a number of well-established MEPs who are expected to safely steer them around.
- Lacking experienced members of the European Parliament, the new member states have opted for very senior politicians, including several former prime ministers and foreign ministers, thereby demonstrating that they are taking Europe very seriously.
- Although much remains to be done in this regard, gender equality seems to be making progress, as reflected in the composition of the lists, with women faring better on average in the northern European countries.
- Would-be MEPs seem to have a penchant for policy areas that are on the fringe of the Parliament's competences. Their attention is focused in particular on foreign affairs, followed by employment and social affairs and regional policy, while apparently the internal market does not catch the imagination of many.

Results

- Overall the political party composition of the European Parliament will only change to a very limited degree. The Christian-Conservative party group (EPP-ED) is bound to remain the largest party group, followed by the Social-Democrats (PES), which is likely to see its size increase slightly.
- The principal loser is the United Left, which may well lose more than 10 seats, representing a fifth of its overall size. Also the Greens will drop back from 46 to around 40 seats.
- The Liberals (ELDR) present the greatest factor of uncertainty. They are likely to retain more or less their present share, unless the German liberals (FDP) pass the 5% electoral threshold.

- Beneath this rather stable surface, we foresee some rather dramatic shifts compared to the outgoing Parliament. However, since the trends across the Union move in contradictory directions, they tend to cancel each other out at the aggregate level. The most notable example is that the probable decline of the Polish Alliance of the Democratic Left fully obscures the gains of the Social-Democratic group in several other EU states.
- Since the EDD group looks for the moment unlikely to gain members from the 10 new member states, it may well fail to establish itself as a group under the revised EP Rules of Procedure, which require at least five different member states to be represented in a group.

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Introduction

While most people have an idea about the European Parliament elections in their own country, few have an overview of the elections as a whole throughout the 25 old and new EU member states. With members drawn from institutes spread across the whole of the European Union, the European Policy Institutes Network (EPIN) is in a unique position to bring together the expertise available in the different member states. To tap that expertise, we have drafted a survey of four questions (see Annex 2) addressed to national experts in 20 of the 25 member states (see Annex 1), covering campaign issues, voter turn-out, candidates and likely results.

Specifically, on the basis of the results of an EPIN survey of national experts, this paper aims to:

- point out notable parallels and differences in the way the 2004 campaigns for the European Parliament are being conducted in the different member states, and
- give an impression of the likely composition of the European Parliament after the June 2004 elections.

The 20 national experts canvassed attempted to answer the four questions as precisely and comprehensively as possible, drawing on their experience with the political dynamics in their member state, their perceptions of the campaigns and other analytical information (e.g. opinion poll results). For the remaining five member states (Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Latvia and Cyprus), the authors have made an estimate of the likely election turn-out and outcome on the basis of recent polling results. Readers can consult the complete data set used for this research on the EPIN website (<http://www.epin.org/EPsurvey2004.xls>).

The results presented in this document are subjective but well-informed. Being estimates, they are bound to miss the mark in one respect or another. Still, few individuals, if any, will be as well-informed about the political dynamics in the 25 member states as the collective expertise brought to bear here. Thus, within the natural limits of the powers of prediction, we think these results are valid.

Even if predictions for individual countries may be proven wrong, the main merit of this exercise is its European-wide scope. Thus, we think we are able to discern some interesting trends, which in the end do not even depend on the predictions being exactly right for one country or the other. Rather, it is the recognition of a slow and faltering but at times undeniable emergence of a European political dynamic, which is the main object of this study.

1. An emerging European election campaign?

In this year's European election campaign, we find five issues that are widely discussed in a large number of member states:

- Turkey's prospects for membership of the EU
- The draft European Constitution
- (national) foreign policy & security questions
- social policy and unemployment/economic policy
- national interests and national benefits from the European Union.

On closer examination, however, this apparent convergence is mitigated by two phenomena that have already been observed in former European election campaigns:

- the different election campaigns remain very much dominated by national specificities and the respective domestic situation; and
- Even campaign themes that directly relate to the EU often have little to do with the European Parliament and its core competences.

Two of the most important issues illustrate these phenomena. The European Parliament will not play a key role concerning Turkey's membership of the EU (important topic in B, D, GR and F), nor is it a major driver in the making of the EU Constitution (B, DK, E, GB, PL, SK and F). Moreover, these two 'European' issues are often raised from a particularly national perspective. In Denmark, for example, the national 'opt-outs' mark the constitutional debate, in France or Britain it is the debate about national referenda, whereas in Poland and Spain the focus is on the voting weights in the Council.

In several countries political parties seize the European election campaign to address foreign policy questions, but often again with a strong national imprint. In Germany, Spain and Italy the government's policy towards Iraq and the US administration is a main subject. In Malta the country's possible function as a 'bridge' to Northern Africa is often raised. Additionally, the broader subject of 'security' is debated in Germany, Slovenia and Spain – and in a more national context (the question of military non-alignment), it also features in Finland.

Another important subject in many countries is social policy and unemployment. In some countries it is discussed in a national as well as a European context (B, F, A, GB, CZ and SLO), whereas in others the emphasis is very much on the national realities (LUX, FIN and PL). The same holds true for economic policy: European tax harmonisation is an issue in Luxembourg or Slovakia, whereas the economic performance of the national government is at the heart of the campaign in Italy or Greece. Both issues are part of the campaign in Germany.

Another big issue, especially in the new member states (CZ, EST, LT, PL, SK and SLO), but also in Finland is the question of the national benefits from EU-membership. The debate about profiting from cohesion policy (CZ, EST and E) is somewhat mirrored in other member states (especially in the Netherlands) in a discussion about the EU budget and its role as a 'net contributor'. In some of the new member states – such as Slovenia or Lithuania – the problem concerning the administrative capacity to absorb EU funding also appears as an election theme.

Migration, especially in the context of EU-enlargement, is a dominant campaign issue in the United Kingdom, Austria and Malta. The debate in Malta has an interesting twist in that here the population of a 'new' member state seems to be afraid of immigration and 'cheap labour' from the 'old' member state Italy.

Table 1. Main issues in 2004 EP campaigns

Issue/Context	EU context*	National context**
Turkish EU-membership	B, DK, D, F, GR	
Constitution	B, DK, E, GB, PL, SK	DK (opt outs), F, GB (referenda)
Foreign policy	S (EU's role in the world)	D (Iraq war, government's position) E (Spain's role in EU-US relations) IT (Iraq war, Italian troops) MT (bridge to Mediterranean)
Security	D, E	FIN (military non-alignment), SLO
Social Policy, (un)employment	B, F, A, GB, CZ, SLO	LUX, A, FIN, PL, CZ, SLO, SK
Economic policy	D, LUX, SK	D, GR, IT
National interest & benefits from EU	FIN, PL, CZ, SK, LT, SLO, EST	
Budget	CZ, LT	NL (net contribution) LT, SLO (capacity to absorb)
Cohesion policy	E, CZ, EST	
Corruption/transparency	DK, NL	PL
Competencies & centralisation	S	S, GB, SLO (relationship to EU)
Democracy	DK, CZ	
Migration	GB, A, MT	
Enlargement consequences	A	
Compliance with EU rules/SGP	NL	
Education		LUX
Freedom of information		IT
Common market		SLO (real estate)
EMU		EST (joining EMU)

* 'EU context'. Respective issue is debated in the light of EU politics.

** 'National context'. Respective issue is debated in the context of national politics; neither dimension is necessarily mutually exclusive.

The subject of the EU's 'democratic deficit' and the possible threat of centralisation in a European 'super-state' are prominent campaign themes in Denmark, the Czech Republic, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Slovenia. The related issue of 'transparency' and corruption at the EU level is in the spotlight in the Netherlands (where "whistle-blower" Paul van Buitenen will campaign with his newly founded party 'Europa Transparant') and Denmark. Corruption in the national context is part of the election campaign in Poland, which has been shaken by several domestic scandals in the past months.

Other campaign issues are only prominent in one or two member states. In Italy for example, freedom of information is an important subject due to the specific situation created by Prime Minister Berlusconi's role in the media sector. In Slovenia, the impact of EU membership on the country's real estate market is debated. Estonians discuss the advantages and disadvantages of joining EMU at the earliest possible time, whereas in the Netherlands, compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact is an important point on the campaigning agenda.

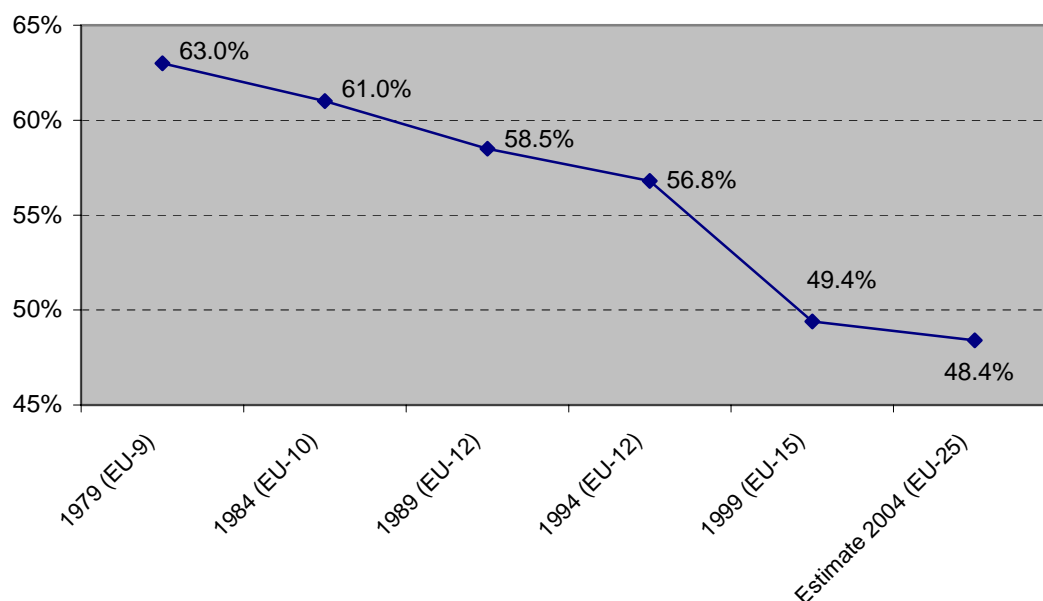
One major conclusion to be drawn from these observations are that the European Parliamentary elections remain – as in the past years – to a high degree 'second-class national contests' where campaigns are dominated by distinctly domestic perceptions and problems. However, a certain convergence of the different national campaigns can be observed in social and economic policy as well as in constitutional matters and foreign and security policy. Unfortunately these are policies where the European Parliament has only a very limited say, so that the actual choices that the voters are offered remain of minor importance for EU policy-making in these areas. In contrast, the debate about the 'democratic deficit' and the perceived threat of an unaccountable centralised bureaucracy are areas where the European parliamentarians could make a difference, but in comparison with the 1999 campaign (which followed in the wake of the resignation of the Santer Commission), this campaign theme has declined in importance in most member states.

2. Changing the trend of declining voter turn-outs?

In 1999 for the first time, less than half of those eligible for the European elections actually turned out to cast their vote. To be precise, the average weighted turn-out was 49.4%.

For the 2004 elections, we expect a similar figure and indeed we would not be surprised if it turned out to be one or two percentage points lower. Notably, however, if we only look at the EU-15 ('old') member states where elections were held in 1999, we expect some upward trends again, most particularly in founding states such as Germany and the Netherlands, but also in the more recent members Finland and Sweden. Spain's turn-out may well also rise again to return above the 65%. Given that voting is compulsory, 90% turn-outs can again be expected in Belgium and Luxembourg and in Greece the percentage is likely to lie above the 70%. On the other hand, however, decline may well continue in Italy (which in 1999 registered still above 70%) and Austria. Also we are sceptical whether the UK will rebound from the 24% turn-out in 1999. Turn-outs in France, Denmark and Ireland are likely to remain rather stable around the 50%.

Among the new member states, it is above all the biggest one, Poland, that may well weigh in strongly on the negative side. We would not be surprised if turn-out in Poland would stop at around 30%. Also in the other new member states, we expect turn-outs to remain below those of the accession referenda. Hungary and Slovakia are likely to remain below the 50%. Healthier turn-out figures around 60% are expected in the Baltic states. The Mediterranean isles of Malta and Cyprus (with compulsory voting) may well register turn-outs in the region of 80-90%. Given their small population, however, they do little to raise the Union average.

Figure 1. Average turn-out for EP elections

3. Incoming MEPs to watch: New talents and ‘old hands’

The selection of candidates for the European Parliament is still the exclusive prerogative of national parties with little to no European coordination. For that reason, we find that national balances between political forces (and powerful figures) generally play an important role. Furthermore, the list of candidates for the European Parliament has only been made public in most member states rather close to the date of the elections.

Table 2. New talent standing for the European Parliament

Name (Country, party group)	Profile
Cecilia Malmström (Sweden, ELDR)	Young MEP focusing on human rights and transparency
Said El Khadraoui (Belgium, PES)	Already served one term as an MEP, active in the Environmental Committee
Alexander Stubb (Finland, EPP-ED)	High-profile civil servant moving into politics
Ellen Trane Nørby (Denmark, ELDR)	Pro-EU candidate with strong personal support
Tine Mach (Denmark, EDD)	Euro-sceptic with strong personal support
Joseph Muscat (Malta, PES)	Very young economist/financial adviser
Camiel Eulings (the Netherlands, EPP-ED)	Young MP moving to Strasbourg as head of delegation
Edith Mastenbroek (the Netherlands, PES)	Young ambitious party activist
Jonas Sjöstedt (Sweden, EUL)	Skilled young politician, staunch euro-sceptic

The European elections are often portrayed as a pipeline for talented young politicians who can fortify themselves in Brussels before returning to the forum that matters (the national one) or as a reward for senior political figures who are sent to Strasbourg/Brussels at the end of their distinguished careers. Indeed, in many respects our survey confirms this thesis. This

tradition, in fact, can be looked upon as a merit as long as the young members are indeed talented and the old hands are genuinely committed to work for the European cause – and that there is a good balance of freshness and experience.

Overall the impression is that ‘new talent’ is more likely to be brought in from the northern European states, whereas the experienced ‘old hands’ tend to come from southern member states. Rather experienced in Brussels but fresh as politicians are EU scholar and civil servant Alexander Stubb, running in Finland, and EU accountant and whistle-blower Paul Van Buitenen running in the Netherlands on a transparency ticket.

As regards ‘old hands’, a distinction has to be drawn between those experienced politicians who have earned their reputation in the European Parliament itself, and those who have made their name in national politics. From this point of view, the founding six seem to be the more inclined to confirm long-standing MEPs (e.g. D, F, I), probably because the latter’s expertise in navigating the troubled waters of the EP will be handy when it comes to retaining a grip on key positions (and identifying them in the first place) to influence the decision-making process. One rather distinctive ‘old hand’ is EP doyen and arch-euro-sceptic Jens-Peter Bonde, who will attempt to be elected for the sixth time, for a total of 25 years spent commuting between Strasbourg, Brussels, Luxembourg and his native Denmark.

Table 3. ‘Old hands’ likely to return in the European Parliament

Name (Country, party group)	Profile
Hans-Gert Pöttering (Germany, EPP-ED)	MEP, Chairman of the EPP-ED group
Martin Schulz (Germany, PES)	MEP, tipped as future leader of the PES group
Jo Leinen (Germany, PES)	Experienced MEP, likely to make a mark on Foreign Affairs
Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Germany, Greens)	MEP elected in 1999 for France now standing for Germany, co-chair of the Green group
Michel Rocard (France, PES)	MEP, Former Chairman of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
Pervenche Berès (France, PES)	Leader of the French PES Delegation, former member of the Convention
Alain Lamassoure (France, EPP-ED)	MEP, former Member of the Convention
Jean Louis Bourlanges (France, EPP-ED)	Very experienced MEP, UDF-spokesman
Guido Podestà (Italy, EPP-ED)	MEP, Vice-President of the Parliament
Francesco Fiori (Italy, EPP-ED)	MEP, Vice-Chairman of the EPP-ED group
Giuseppe Gargani (Italy, EPP-ED)	MEP, Chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee
Pasqualina Napolitano (Italy, PES)	MEP, Leader of the Italian PES Delegation
Jonathan Evans (UK, EPP-ED)	MEP, Leader of the British Conservatives in the EP
Caroline Jackson (UK, EPP-ED)	MEP, Chairwoman of the Environment Committee
Gary Titley (UK, PES)	MEP, Leader of the Labour delegation
David Martin (UK, PES)	MEP, Vice-President of the Parliament
Graham Watson (UK, ELDR)	Present Leader of the Liberal Group
Jan Marinus Wiersma (the Netherlands, PES)	MEP with strong Foreign Policy expertise, Vice-President of the PES party
Ann Van Lancker (Belgium, PES)	MEP, social policy advocate, former member of the Convention
Johannes Vogenhuber (Austria, Greens)	Very active MEP, former member of the Convention
Jens-Peter Bonde (Denmark, EDD)	MEP, famed euro-sceptic

Nevertheless, some experienced MEPs do not return. To name but two examples that have had a certain resonance, the German Social-Democratic chairwoman of the important Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs Christa Randzio-Plath has decided not to run for office in protest against the low position that her party had reserved for her on the list. Even worse was the fate of veteran Italian Deputy Renzo Imbeni, whose name had been aired as one of the possible Presidents of the Parliament but had not even been included in the electoral list of the *Uniti nell'Ulivo* party.

The new member states obviously cannot line up experienced members of the house, but they are taking things seriously and are fielding an impressive array of politicians who have held (or in some cases are holding) a variety of ministerial posts (PL, LT, Est and SLOV). Notable is the candidacy of former Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Bronislaw Geremek for the Liberals. Thus, the new countries confirm the high esteem with which they had already shown they hold European politics with the appointment of the observer MEPs.

Table 4. Experienced politicians from the national level moving to Europe

Name (Country, party group)	Profile
Jean-Luc Dehaene (Belgium, EPP-ED)	Former Prime Minister, Former Vice-Chairman of the Convention
Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (Denmark, PES)	Former Prime Minister, President of the PES
Anneli Jäätteenmäki (Finland, ELDR)	Former Prime Minister
Pierre Moscovici (France, PES)	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Antonis Samaras (Greece, EPP-ED)	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ioannis Varvitsiotis (Greece, EPP-ED)	Former Minister of Defence
Bronislaw Geremek (Poland, ELDR)	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Dariusz Rosati (Poland, PES)	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Kazemiera Prunskiene (Lithuania, EPP-ED)	Former Prime Minister
Antanas Valionis (Lithuania, ELDR)	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Toomas Hendrik Ilves (Estonia, PES)	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Franci But (Slovenia, EPP-ED)	Minister of Agriculture

The tendency to appoint former ministers is not just specific to the new member states: some of the EU-15 member countries are also asking former members of their respective executives to make the move to Brussels/Strasbourg. In some cases, the composition of the lists shows certain contempt of the electorate, since they have at their top candidates that quite clearly will never take up their post in case of election. Obvious examples are the Prime Ministers of Italy and Belgium who lead the lists of *Forza Italia* and the Flemish liberals, respectively.

Among genuine cases of (former) national ministers standing to join the European Parliament, one may cite for instance the former Belgian Prime Minister and Commission President-in-waiting Jean-Luc Dehaene, former Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, former French Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Moscovici and various members from former Greek governments. Also Anneli Jäätteenmäki who was Prime Minister of Finland for just a couple of months has after the crisis surrounding her resignation decided to change Helsinki for Strasbourg/Brussels.

Notably the European Convention turns out to have been a good preparation ground for candidates for the European Parliament. From the new member states we can, for example expect the Poles Genowefa Grabowska and Edmund Wittbrodt, the Czechs Jan Zahradil and

Jozef Zieleniec and the Slovenes Alojz Peterle and Jelko Kacin to return to the blue seats in Brussels. Some of their colleagues from the old member states have also been tempted following their Convention experience to make the move to Strasbourg/Brussels, such as Josep Borrell Fontelles from Spain and Kimmo Kiljunen from Finland.

We also signal a marked presence of female candidates in prominent positions though there are obvious differences between the various states. The tradition according to which northern European countries tend to be more advanced in terms of gender equality is reflected to a certain extent in the selection of candidates, with the Netherlands, Belgium, and Denmark all having a fair share of women in their lists. The new member states seem to have caught up with the EU-15 also in this respect, with Estonia and Slovenia leading the way in terms of female candidates. Italy for once seems to be trying to shed its image as the stronghold of macho-politics, with the new grouping that is largely expected to get the highest percentage of votes in the elections listing three women in the top three positions.

Furthermore, we also observe a marked presence of ethnic minorities in the Parliament with the probable election of candidates of Arabic (in Belgium) and Turkish (in Germany) origins.

This time around, political parties seem to have been less active in engaging expertise of civil society on their lists for the European Parliament. To the extent that we find people transferring from another occupation to the political domain of the European Parliament, they tend to have had close associations with politics already for some time. In particular, we see several journalists making the move into the political arena, followed by lawyers and university professors, with trade unionists also making a good showing.

Table 5. Societal expertise joining the EP

Name (Country, party group)	Profile
Mia De Vits (Belgium, PES)	Former trade union leader
Janno Reiljan (Estonia, UEN)	Professor of economics
Matti Wuori (Finland, Greens)	Human rights lawyer
Yannis Stournaras (Greece, PES)	Professor of economics, economist at the Bank of Greece
Christos Polyzogopoulos (Greece, PES)	Former President of the Greek Confederation of Labour Unions
Donata Gottardi (Italy, PES)	University Professor
Giovanni Berlinguer (Italy, PES)	University Professor
Eugenijus Gentvilas (Lithuania, ELDR)	Mayor of one of the biggest cities in Lithuania
Simon Busuttil (Malta, NI)	Lawyer
Krzysztof Bobiński (Poland, EPP-ED)	Journalist, former Financial Times correspondent
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (Poland, EPP-ED)	Rector of Natolin Campus, College of Europe
Mojca Drčar (Slovenia, ELDR)	Journalist

There appears to be a strong interest among the most prominent candidates, in issues that may be high on the European agenda these days but in fact lie at the margins of the Parliament's competences. Very popular is the Foreign Affairs Committee, both among candidates from the old and the new member states. Next in line is the area that can be broadly defined as employment and social affairs. Not surprisingly, this will be the focus of the work of various French, Belgian and Danish MEPs, but will have Lithuanian, Greek and Spanish advocates as well. The area of regional policy, which may well undergo some fundamental reforms, can

count on interest from prominent MEPs representing beneficiary countries such as Spain and Greece but also from new member states like Slovakia and Slovenia. Other areas of widespread interest are human rights, security (and defence) policy and the rapidly developing justice and home affairs. Notably, few prominent candidates seem keen to become involved in the EP's area of key competence, that of the Internal Market committee.

Finally, we should not ignore the presence of some 'celebrity candidates', who owe their fame to their achievements in fields other than politics. Thanks to the imagination of the list compilers, voters will have the possibility to choose among well-known journalists (Italy, Poland), (former) athletes from different sports (a decathlon gold medallist in Estonia, an ice hockey champion in Slovakia and a skier in Italy), singers, top-models, TV presenters and even an astronaut.

Table 6. Celebrity candidates for the EP

Name (Country, party group)	Profile
Dietlinde (Lilli) Gruber (Italy, Ulivo)	Anchorwoman on main public channel
Michele Santoro (Italy, Ulivo)	Journalist, media-guru of the left
Manuela di Centa (Italy, EPP-ED)	Cross-country skiing champion
Peter Št'astný (Slovakia, EPP-ED)	Ice hockey star
Vladimír Remek (Czech Republic, GUE/NGL)	Astronaut
Erki Nool (Estonia, EPP-ED)	Olympic gold medallist in decathlon
Carmen Kass (Estonia, EPP-ED)	Top fashion model

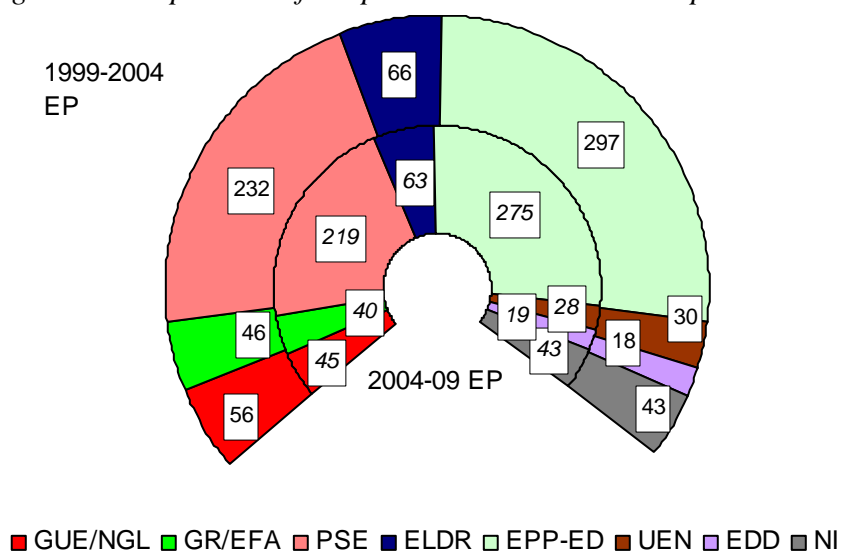
4. The composition of the new European Parliament

According to our estimates, overall the political party composition of the European Parliament will only change to a very limited degree. In terms of the absolute number of seats, all party groups are likely to lose some, since the new Parliament will have only 732 seats compared to its present size of 788 (including former observers). The losses, however, are unevenly distributed.

The Christian-Conservative party group (EPP-ED) is bound to remain the largest. The second largest party group, the Social-Democrats (PES), is likely to see its size increase slightly by a half percentage point. The principal loser is the United Left, which may well lose more than 10 seats, a fifth of its overall size. Also the Greens will go back from 46 to around 40 seats. The greatest uncertainty surrounds the fate of the Liberals (ELDR), who are likely to retain more or less their present share – unless the German liberals (FDP) pass the 5% electoral threshold, in which case, they would suddenly increase their presence substantially. Whether or not the FDP will cross the threshold remains to be seen. We tend to be sceptical on this prospect.

Beneath this rather stable surface, however, we foresee some rather dramatic shifts compared to the outgoing Parliament. Since the trends across the Union go in contradictory directions, they tend to cancel each other out at the aggregate level. Most notable is that the probable decline of the Polish Alliance of the Democratic Left fully obscures the gains of the Social-Democratic party group in several states, most notably France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Figure 2. Composition of the present and the new European Parliament



Note: The format of this figure follows the example of S. Hix & M. Marsh (2004), “Predicting the Future. The Next European Parliament”, Burson Marsteller, Brussels, p. 8. Notably, using a fundamentally different methodology, Hix and Marsh come to rather similar predictions regarding the overall composition of the 2004-09 European Parliament.

Also other party groups combine gains in some countries with losses in others. The EPP-ED wins in Germany, Poland and Belgium, but loses in Italy, Spain and France. The United Left loses in most of its traditional strongholds (France in particular) but stands to gain in the Czech Republic and Italy. The Greens see their likely gain in Germany annulled by losses in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Notably, the Greens are unlikely to get more than one seat (in Latvia) in the 10 new member states. The United Right can expect losses in France but gains in Poland.

Table 7. EP Shares by Party Group

	EU-25		EU-15		EU-10	
	EP election 2004	EP pre- 2004 election	EP election 2004	EP election 1999	EP election 2004	EP observers 2004
EPP-ED	275 (37.6%)	297 (38%)	206 (36%)	232 (37%)	69 (43%)	65 (40%)
PSE	219 (29.9%)	232 (29%)	179 (31%)	175 (28%)	40 (25%)	57 (35%)
ELDR	63 (8.6%)	66 (8%)	52 (9%)	53 (8%)	11 (7%)	13 (8%)
GUE/NGL	45 (6.1%)	56 (7%)	36 (6%)	49 (8%)	9 (6%)	7 (4%)
GR/EFA	40 (5.5%)	46 (6%)	39 (7%)	45 (7%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
UEN	28 (3.8%)	30 (4%)	18 (3%)	23 (4%)	10 (6%)	7 (4%)
EDD*	19 (2.6%)	18 (2%)	19 (3%)	18 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
NI	43 (5.9%)	43 (5%)	21 (4%)	31 (5%)	22 (14%)	12 (7%)
Total	732 (100%)	788 (100%)	570 (100%)	626 (100%)	162 (100%)	162 (100%)

* Given that the 17 EDD MEPs would come from less than five member states, they would no longer qualify as a party group under the revised EP Rules of Procedure.


































Finally, the EDD looks for the moment unlikely to gain members from the 10 new member states. Since the revised EP Rules of Procedure require a party-group to involve representatives from at least five different member states, this may well bid the end of the

EDD unless it can integrate some non-attached parliamentarians or lure members away from other party groups.

Overall then, the party-group dynamics of the 2004-09 European Parliament are unlikely to deviate much from those of the 1999-2004 Parliament. Again the two biggest groups (EPP-ED and PES) will dominate the Parliament while they are at the same time condemned to work together to get decisions passed. In the middle of the political spectrum, the Liberals may well be able to play out their position as a 'balancer', by exploiting disagreements between the two biggest groups. The other smaller groups have to face a gradual decline of their position.

Indeed, if there is to be any major upset in the European Parliament, it is likely to take place only after the elections. Following previous European elections, there always was some party-group reshuffling. This time around there are indications that the Liberal group may well re-invent itself as an enlarged centre formation incorporating several factions that as of yet are still part of the Christian-Conservative group. Such a move would create a third largest group, even if its size is unlikely to surpass much beyond the 100 seats. Perhaps more dramatically, it would challenge the position of the EPP-ED party group as the biggest group in the house and might also cause a redrawing of its boundary on its right side with the UEN.

Table 8. Composition of the European Parliament before and after the 2004 EP elections

	 EPP-ED	 PSE	 ELDR	 GUE/NGL	 GR/EFA	 UEN	 EDD	 NI	Total	
									Election 2004	Pre 2004-elections
Belgium	 7 (5)	7 (5)	6 (5)	- (-)	2 (7)	- (-)	- (-)	2 (3)	24 (25)	
Denmark	 1 (1)	3 (2)	4 (6)	1 (3)	- (-)	1 (1)	4 (3)	- (-)	14 (16)	
Germany	 55 (53)	30 (35)	- (-)	5 (7)	9 (4)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	99 (99)	
Greece	 11 (9)	8 (9)	- (-)	5 (7)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	24 (25)	
Spain	 23 (28)	23 (24)	2 (3)	3 (4)	3 (4)	- (-)	- (-)	- (1)	54 (64)	
France	 18 (21)	24 (18)	- (1)	7 (15)	8 (9)	- (4)	12 (9)	9 (10)	78 (87)	
Ireland	 4 (5)	1 (1)	1 (1)	- (-)	1 (2)	6 (6)	- (-)	- (-)	13 (15)	
Italy	 22 (34)	16 (16)	13 (8)	8 (6)	3 (2)	9 (10)	- (-)	7 (11)	78 (87)	
Luxembourg	 2 (2)	2 (2)	1 (1)	- (-)	1 (1)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	6 (6)	
Netherlands	 7 (9)	8 (6)	6 (8)	2 (1)	2 (4)	- (-)	1 (3)	1 (-)	27 (31)	
Austria	 7 (7)	8 (7)	- (-)	- (-)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (5)	18 (21)	
Portugal	 10 (9)	10 (12)	- (-)	2 (2)	- (-)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	24 (25)	
Finland	 4 (5)	3 (3)	4 (5)	1 (1)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	14 (16)	
Sweden	 5 (7)	7 (6)	3 (4)	2 (3)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	19 (22)	
United Kingdom	 33 (37)	28 (29)	12 (11)	- (-)	4 (6)	- (-)	- (3)	1 (1)	78 (87)	
Poland	 19 (13)	9 (27)	1 (-)	- (-)	- (-)	7 (4)	- (-)	18 (10)	54 (54)	
Czech Republic	 14 (14)	4 (7)	- (-)	6 (3)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	24 (24)	
Hungary	 13 (12)	11 (10)	- (2)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	24 (24)	
Slovakia	 5 (7)	4 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)	- (-)	1 (1)	- (-)	2 (2)	14 (14)	
Lithuania	 3 (4)	5 (5)	4 (4)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (-)	13 (13)	
Latvia	 5 (5)	2 (1)	- (-)	- (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	- (-)	- (-)	9 (9)	
Slovenia	 3 (3)	2 (1)	2 (3)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	7 (7)	
Estonia	 2 (2)	1 (1)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (1)	- (-)	- (-)	6 (6)	
Cyprus	 2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	6 (6)	
Malta	 3 (3)	2 (2)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	5 (5)	
Total EU-15	206 (232)	179 (175)	52 (53)	36 (49)	39 (45)	18 (23)	19 (18)	21 (31)	570 (626)	
Total EU-10	69 (65)	40 (57)	11 (13)	9 (7)	1 (1)	10 (7)	0 (0)	22 (12)	162 (162)	
Total EU-25	275 (297)	219 (232)	63 (66)	45 (56)	40 (46)	28 (30)	19 (18)	43 (43)	732 (788)	

Annex 1

National Experts

Austria	Irina Michalowitz, Institut für Höhere Studien (IHS)
Belgium	Wouter Coussens, Royal Institute of International Relations
Cyprus	-
Czech Republic	Radomir Spok, EUROPEUM, Lenka Škrábalová, Charles University, Prague
Denmark	Catharina Sørensen, Danish Institute for International Studies
Estonia	Andres Kasekamp and Viljar Veebel, Estonian School of Diplomacy
Finland	Kristi Raik, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs
France	Maxime Lefebvre, Institut Français des Relations Internationales
Germany	Rebekka Göhring, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)
Greece	Ruby Gropas, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)
Hungary	-
Ireland	-
Italy	Marco Incerti, Centre for European Policy Studies
Latvia	-
Lithuania	Jurga Valančiūtė, European Studies Integration Centre
Luxembourg	Antoine Kasel
Malta	Leslie Agius, Foundation for International Studies University of Malta
Netherlands	Ben Crum, Centre for European Policy Studies
Poland	Jacek Kucharczyk and Michał Czaplicki, Institute of Public Affairs
Portugal	-
Slovakia	Aneta Antušová and Vladimír Bilčík, Slovak Foreign Policy Association
Slovenia	Irena Brinar, Centre for International Relations, University of Ljubljana
Spain	Charles Powell, Real Instituto Elcano de Estudios Internacionales y Estratégicos
Sweden	Fredrik Langdal, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies
United Kingdom	Aurore Wanlin, Centre for European Reform

Annex 2

The Survey



EP ELECTIONS 2004 NATIONAL EXPERTS SURVEY

COUNTRY: _____
 RESPONDENT _____(name)
 _____(organisation):

Central issues in national campaign

1. What topics, do you expect, will dominate the campaign for the June EP elections in your country?
 If needed, please specify whether the issues are addressed from a national or from an EU perspective (e.g. national unemployment or EU unemployment).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Turnout

2. What is in your expectation the likely turn-out of the electorate in your country for this June's EP elections? (*Please use turnouts of recent elections as a benchmark.*)

_____%

Candidates

3. Can you identify the most notable candidates from your country that are likely to leave a mark on the next European Parliament?
 (e.g. candidates with a strong established profile in the EP; candidates with a prominent record in national, regional or local politics; young and promising candidates; candidates with a notable background in other professions; candidates with a strong media profile, etc.)

Please specify in the third column whenever possible also in which EP-policy domains they can be expected to become active.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Notable features</i>

Distribution of seats

4. How do you expect the seats for your country in the European Parliament to be distributed?

Please fill in the last column, and complete or correct other details wherever needed. Please add important parties not mentioned below.

Use present number of seats/observers in EP (fourth column) as a reference point. Crosscheck with general political trends and available polls.

Note that for most old member states the total number of seats will be reduced.

Party Name	English translation	(Likely) EP Party Group	# seats 1999-2004	Number of seats 2004-09
Total				

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Founded in 1983, the Centre for European Policy Studies is an independent policy research institute dedicated to producing sound policy research leading to constructive solutions to the challenges facing Europe today. Funding is obtained from membership fees, contributions from official institutions (European Commission, other international and multilateral institutions, and national bodies), foundation grants, project research, conferences fees and publication sales.

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- To build collaborative networks of researchers, policy-makers and business across the whole of Europe.
- To disseminate our findings and views through a regular flow of publications and public events.

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- Formation of seven different research networks, comprising some 140 research institutes from throughout Europe and beyond, to complement and consolidate our research expertise and to greatly extend our reach in a wide range of areas from agricultural and security policy to climate change, JHA and economic analysis.
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Energy, Environment & Climate Change
Agricultural Policy

Politics, Institutions and Security

The Future of Europe
Justice and Home Affairs
The Wider Europe
South East Europe
Caucasus & Black Sea
EU-Russian/Ukraine Relations
Mediterranean & Middle East
CEPS-IISS European Security Forum

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